

## Original Research Article

**Reidentification of the Historical Evolution in Yazd *Vaght-o-sā'*at Square  
From the beginning to the end of the Pahlavi era**

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**Abstract**

**Problem Statemet:** Vaght o Saat Square is one of the oldest and most important historical squares in Yazd. This square was located within the Rokniyeh school complex in the eighth century A.H.. Due to the famous observation of Vaght o Saat, this name has still remained on this square. For this reason, most of the research that has been done on Vaght o Saat square focuses on the historic background of the square in the eighth-century A.H, while in the current situation, none of the elements surrounding the square belong to the eighth century AH, but pertain to more contemporary periods.

**Research objective:** Introducing historical evolution and layers of Vaght o Saat square

**Research method:** In the data collection section, comprehensive data on the history of the square is collected by using a mix-method, referring to various references such as local history, contemporary historical research, field evidence, the archive of historical photographs, aerial photographs and especially using oral references. In the analysis section, through applying descriptive-analytical method and relying on the interpretation of historical texts and documents, the history and evolution of the Vaght o Saat square are explained from the outset of the Pahlavi era to its end.

**Coclusion:** The results of this study show that the oldest element enclosing the square in its current state is the water reservoir of Vaght o Saat. Also, most of the buildings surrounding the square belong to the Qajar era. In the Pahlavi era, important developments took place in the square, which are: 1) Construction of two buildings in the first Pahlavi era on the north and south sides 2) Construction of a building in the second Pahlavi era on the south side 3) Reconstruction of Afshar school 4) Interventions in Mesgarnejad house 5) Restoration of the tomb of Seyyed Rokn al-Din 7) Discovery of the Zarch Payab and its reburial 8) Renovation of Kalak's façade.

**Keywords:** *Qajar, Pahlavi, Vaght o Saat Square of Yazd, Historic Evolut.*

**Introduction and problem statement**

Vaght o Saat Square is one of the squares whose current composition is not formed by

a predetermined plan and in a short era, but has been formed over several centuries and in different historical periods. For this reason, it is very important to study and document historical

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evolution and explain the process that led to its current form composition. However, no studies have been conducted on the historical process of formation and developments of this square during its several hundred years to the contemporary period in an integrated and coherent manner, and the present article has dealt with this issue. In this article, while referring to the naming process and historical background of the square, the current elements and components of the Vaght o Saat square and the precedence and delay of the construction of each of them are described.

The reason for choosing the Pahlavi era as the last period to study the developments of the square is that after the Pahlavi era no new architectural elements were added to the square and the current main composition of this square is entirely the result of historical developments before the end of Pahlavi era. For this purpose, after describing the history of the square in the Safavid era and its historical background from the eighth century AH, the developments and elements of the square in the Qajar era, and finally the changes in the Pahlavi era, especially in the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s are explained.

## Literature review

Despite the importance of the Vaght o Saat square<sup>1</sup> and its remarkable historical background, various dimensions of this historical square have remained unknown. Most of the studies that have referred to this square have studied the subject of the clock and the old observatory of the square, including the studies by Karimian Sardashti (1990 & 2004), Habibi Ghaeni Baigi (2009), Haji Shabani (1998), Shams-Ol-Dini (2015) and Bastani Parizi (2006). Other historical studies such as Ayati (1938), Afshar (1975), Khademzadeh (2009), Tashakkori Bafghi (2013), and Abui Mehrizi (2012) are based on historical references of the ninth and eleventh centuries AH, including *Jame Jafari's* book, *The New History of Yazd* and *the Jame Mofidi* And have no information about the developments of the square after the eleventh century A.H. Tavassoli (1989, 2006 & 2012) have studied the square from the perspective of urban design and

as valuable urban space. In relation to the studies that have reflected the contemporary developments of the square, we can only refer to the article "Reidentification of Historical Water Structures in Yazd Vaght o Saat Square" (Shahabinejad, 2019) which is a complete description of the water structure of the square and their evolutions. In general, it can be concluded that no comprehensive research has been carried out on the historical layers and elements of the square, which are mainly related to the Safavid era and beyond, and the present article has dealt with this issue.

## Brief introduction of Vaght o Saat square

Vaght o Saat Square is one of the squares of the historical fabric of Yazd, which is located next to the city's Grand Mosque (Fig. 1). This square was inscribed on the list of national monuments in 1999 along with *Hosseinieh* on its southern side. The geometric shape of the square is close to a square with dimensions of about 40 meters, but its bodies



Fig. 1. Location of Vaght o Saat Square in Yazd: 1) Vaght o Saat Square, 2) Grand Mosque, 3) Grand Mosque Street, 4) Imam Street, 5) Amir Chaghmaq Square, 6) Ghiam Street, 7) Seyed Golsorkh Street, 8) Fahadan Street - drawn. Source: Google Earth aerial photo.

do not follow completely straight and right angles and have a relatively organic shape due to the historical precedence and delay of the formation of various buildings around this square. The name of this square comes from the astronomical facilities and observatory in the eighth century AH which had been established by Seyyed Rukn al-Din Mohammad Ghazi, of which no trace can be seen today<sup>2</sup>. The current Functions around the square are shown in Fig. 2.

### Formation and historical background of Vaght o Saat square

In many historical references, due to the nominal similarity and being close to the place of the observation of Vaght o Saat in the early eighth century AH, the formation of the square is attributed to the eighth century, including Afshar (1975, 710) and Abui Mehrizi (2012, 75).

However, careful study of historical references reveals other facts. In both *The History of Yazd* and *The New History of Yazd* related to the ninth century A.H, the name of Vaght o Saat square is not used anywhere, and even in the description of the Waqfabad qanat route, it is mentioned that the water of the Waqfabad qanat passed through the Rokniyeh school complex and has reached the house of the master on his way, but there is no reference to the square of Vaght o Saat (Jafari, 1959, 150); (Kateb Yazdi, 1978, 118).

In the *Jame e Mofidi* book related to the eleventh century AH, the square of Vaght o Saat is explicitly mentioned as the water passage of Waqfabad qanat (Mostofi Bafghi, 1963, 556). This shows an important fact in the history of the Vaght o Saat square. Mostofi Bafghi, who wrote his history three centuries after Rokn al-Din's life, points out that there are no signs of buildings that have been mentioned in the book of *The History of Yazd* as buildings adjacent to Rokniyeh school, which include a 3000-volume library. The book also mentions that the tomb of Seyyed Rokn al-Din has also been deteriorated (ibid., 654-655).

Based on this, it can be concluded that due to the destruction of buildings around Rokniyeh school, an

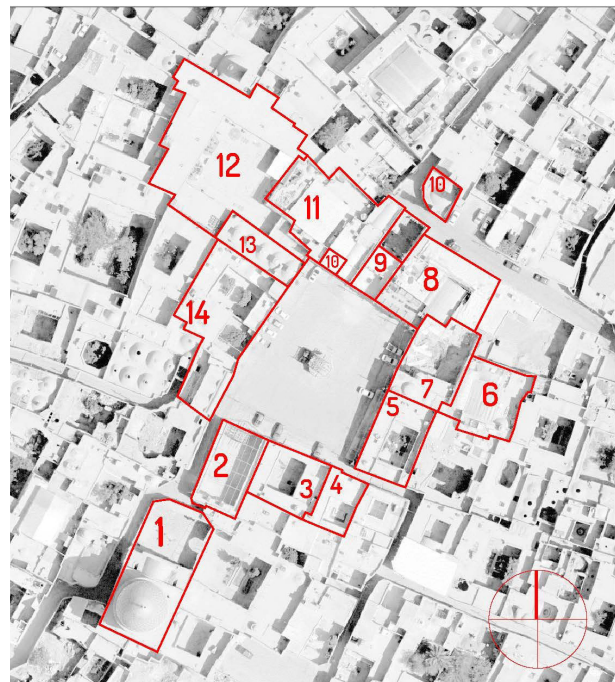


Fig. 2. Vaght o Saat square and the function of the building around it in the current situation: 1) Seyed Rukn al-Din tomb, 2) Hosseinieh of Vaght o Saat, 3) hotel, 4) residential, 5) residential, 6) hotel, 7) hotel ( Under construction), 8) Hotel, 9) Commercial, 10) Water reservoir entrance, 11) Commercial, 12) School, 13) Sharbafi workshop, 14) Residential – Drawn on the aerial image of 2020 city of Yazd. Source: Aerial image, archive of Yazd historical city cultural heritage organization.

open space has been created in front of Rokniyeh school<sup>3</sup> (the location of Rokniyeh Observatory) and around the location of Waqfabad *Payab*, on which the Vaght o Saat square is formed. In a way that in the Safavid era, Mostofi Bafghi mentions a space called the square of Vaght o Saat.

The oldest building that can be seen today in the surrounding of this square is the water reservoir of Vaght o Saat on the north side of the square (Fig. 3), which according to the stone inscription<sup>4</sup>, is related to the year 1709 and the reign of Shah Sultan Hussein Safavid<sup>5</sup>. The location of the Vaght o Saat water reservoir at the northern edge of the square and the presence of the Waqfabad<sup>6</sup> *Payab* in the center of the square is evidence that the current structure and current shape of the square is in the continuation of the water reservoir facade line and in a arrangement based on the location of the Waqfabad *Payab* in the center and the square façade was gradually completed in four directions by the end of the Pahlavi era.

Due to the fact that this model was created from the





Fig. 3. Location of the Vaght o Saat water reservoir in the square; 1) The entrance and Rachineh<sup>7</sup> of water reservoir 2) storage part of the water reservoir- (on the aerial image of Yazd in 1956. Source: archive of Yazd historical city cultural heritage organization.

late Safavid era, the tomb of Seyyed Rokn al-Din (eighth century) is located outside the edge of the square and does not have a direct presence on the edge of the square. Except for the water reservoir on the north side, other elements and components enclosing the open space of the square have been formed from the Qajar era onwards.

### Vaght o Saat square in the Qajar era

The Qajar era is the most important era in the formation of the main structure of the square and especially its spatial physical pattern. During this era, several houses were constructed around the square.

One of the oldest houses built during the Qajar era and still standing is the Kheradmanf House, which is now owned by Mr. Fazeli. According to local surveys and questions from local elders, this house was initially the residence of Seyyed Mirza Ali Naghi Vaght o Saati<sup>8</sup>, one of the scholars of the era of Mohammad Shah Qajar. After him, his son Agha Seyyed Ali lived in this house. After that, the son of Agha Seyyed Ali, namely Mirza Seyyed Ali Naghi (second), then his son Seyyed Mohammad Kheradmand<sup>9</sup>, lawyer of Reza Shah, and after him, Seyyed Mehdi Kheradmand, lawyer lived there (Shokouhi, 2018 a). Mr. Kheradmand was one of the famous lawyers of

the Pahlavi era in Yazd, and this house, in addition to his residence, was his lawyer's office. The house has two parts, public and private.

The public part, which was once an office for legal affairs, was built on the water reservoir of the Vaght o Saat and parts of the ground floor of the house as well as the north *Sabat*<sup>10</sup> of the square and has separate access from that *sabat* and has a balcony facing the square. The access of the Vaght o Saat Square to the north and the Bazaar-No neighborhood is from this *sabat* (Fig. 4).

The other building located around the square is a building on the west side, which covers most of the west side of the square and extends from the vicinity of the weaving workshop to the end of the west side. This building has two parts facing the square, a double door on the top of the entrance of the house and a six-door space on the west side of the square. *Sabat* below this building makes it possible to connect the square to Shah Abolghasem neighborhood. According to local studies, the house was built by Abbas Mohammad Ali Bashi during the reign of Nasser al-Din Shah (Khojasteh, 2018b).

Then the house was in the possession of his son Haj Khalil Khojasteh<sup>11</sup>. After him, the house was used by Reza Khojasteh, son of Haj Khalil, and then Mostafa Farsad bought it and finally it was owned by Mesgarnejad (Mesgarnejad, 2018). The house

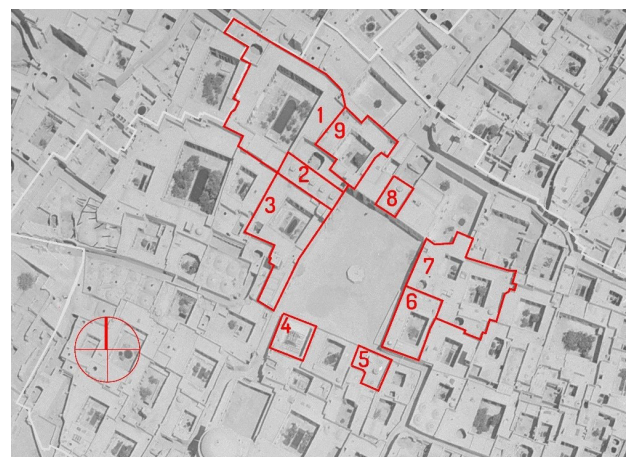


Fig 4. Representation of Qajar buildings in the square: 1) Afshar House, 2) Sharabafi Workshop, 3) Mesgarnejad House, 4) Hosseinieh, 5) Sharabafi Workshop, 6) Ghahraman House, 7) Dr. Riyazi House, 8) Sharabafi workshop and 9) Kheradmand house - on the aerial image of Yazd in 1956. Source: archive of Yazd historical city cultural heritage organization.

had a wind tower and a hall, an entrance, and a magnificent pool. But in the second Pahlavi era, the owner disrupted its composition and destroyed all of this part.

Another residential building in the square is the house of Nazim al-Attebbba on the eastern side of the square. The house belongs to the time of Nasser al-Din Shah. The entrance of this house is from a small roofed darband on the east side of the square. This property was originally belonged to Haj Seyyed Kazem, the grandfather of Mr. Shokouhi. Its oldest resident is Seyyed Hossein Nazim al-Atebbba. Later, Seyyed Mohammad Motamed Riyazi<sup>12</sup> (Motamed al-Hakma), the son of Nazim al-Ataba, settled there (Shokouhi, 2018). The house has two parts including public and private which are with a combination of the central courtyard. The private part was the residence of Nazim al-Atebbba, where his son Mohammad Motamed later settled. Dr. Motamed had a medical office and a pharmacy in the public part which is adjacent to the square. The outer part has a balcony that faces the square and its access is separated from the entrance of the house (Kerias) (Shokouhi, 2018; Rastegar, 2018).

The private part of the house was bought by Mirza Agha Malakouti. Then a few time were bought and sold. It had a tenant in the 2000s. Eventually, Mr. Hosseini bought it and Turned it into a hotel (Shokouhi, 2018). The public part of the house was bought by Mr. Ahmad Rastegar<sup>13</sup>, the teacher of literature, in 1971, from the heirs of Dr. Motamed, and he lived there until 1995. Because Payab of Ellah Abad qanat was under their house, they got into trouble and finally, they were forced to leave the house (Rastegar, 2018). When Mr. Rastegar left, the house turned into ruin. After Mr. Rastegar, the property was bought by Ahmad Ghahraman and then had given to the municipality, and then Mr. Fazeli bought it from the municipality to renovate and build a hotel (Khojasteh, 2018 b).

The three houses mentioned above have unique features in terms of architectural composition so that in addition to maintaining the introverted pattern,

they are extroverted in the part which faces the square and they have a significant relationship with the square space. This relationship has been reflected by the extroverted architecture on the first floor which face the square. are considered as one of the most prominent elements of the facade of the square.

On the northwest side of the square is a building whose appearance from the square is only limited to its entrance. This building was a beautiful residential house belonging to the era of Nasser al-Din Shah Qajar. In the 1960s, the owner of the building, Haji Mohammad Javad Afshar Yazdi<sup>14</sup>, endowed a third of his property, and for this reason, his property became the Afshar High School of Islamic Studies. This high school was managed under the supervision of the Seyyed Ali Mohammad Vaziri and was one of the most important schools in Yazd in the second Pahlavi era (Shokouhi, 2018).

Another residential building in the square, which is related to the late Qajar era, is located in the east of the square. The building belonged to Assadollah Sheikh Ali Sharabaf. This building has been renovated in the Pahlavi era. The house was given to several tenants in the 2000s and was eventually bought by Mr. Ahmad Ghahraman as his residence.

The other Qajar building of the square is Vaght o Saat *Hosseinieh*, which is located in the western part of the southern side. Other non-residential buildings that were constructed around the square during the Qajar era include the Sharabafi workshops. One of these workshops, located on the east side of the square, continues to work today and is known as Khojasteh Workshop and was built during the reign of Nasser al-Din Shah and at the same time as Mr. Mesgarnejad house. Another workshop was on the north side of the square, which changed its use in the 1980s. Another workshop was established on the south side of the square, which had 6 machines and worked until the 1970s.

These three workshops show the active presence of production units and workshops in the Qajar era. For the dumpsters of these three workshops, three garbage dumps were created on the north, east and south sides

of the square. The northern and southern garbage dumps were destroyed during the interventions of the first Pahlavi era, but the eastern garbage dump has become a platform that can still be seen on the eastern side of the square.

### Vaght o Saat square in the Pahlavi I era

Among the buildings related to the first Pahlavi era around the square, we can mention a residential building on the south side of the square, which Hossein Abbas built for his eldest son, Akbar Khojasteh. The house has a well-house where its small door is located on the south side of the square and was covered in the 2000s (Fig. 5). There was also access to the Elhabad qanat from the basement of the house (Khojasteh, 2018 b). In the 2010s, the property was purchased from Mr. Khojasteh's heirs and its function changed into a hotel by Mr. Montazer Ghaem.

Another building that was built in the early Pahlavi I is a building located on the east corner of the north side of the square. The house was built by Seyyed Mohammad Motamed Riyazi Tabib for his son Dr. Seyyed Ahmad Riyazi<sup>15</sup> to provide medical services, but he went to Shiraz after returning from the United States (Rastegar, 2018). This property was a clinic in the first Pahlavi era. Then Seyyed Kazem Vaziri bought the property from Mr. Riazi's heirs and lived in it until the 1990s (Farahza, 2018). In the 2010s, this property was purchased by Mr. Fazeli, and with major



Fig. 5. Location of elements related to the first Pahlavi era in the Vaght o Saat square: 1) Ahmad Riyazi House (now Fazeli hotel), 2) Akbar Khojasteh house- on the aerial image of Yazd in 1956. Source: archive of Yazd historical city cultural heritage organization.

changes in its architectural pattern and the addition of new sections, it was turned into a hotel, which is still active.

In the first Pahlavi era, the Sharabafi workshop on the north side of the square was given to master Gholam Sanati<sup>16</sup> (Khojasteh, 2018 c) and five machines were engaged in it. Then the workshop will be given to his son-in-law, Haj Abbas Khojasteh (brother of Haj Khalil Khojasteh) (Shokouhi, 2018).

The workshop was active until the 1980s, and after Mr. Khojasteh's heirs sold the property to Mr. Ahmad Ghahraman, the building function changed to residential and became Mr. Ghahraman's residence until the 2000s. In the 2010s, the building function changed again and first turned into a tourist services office and then into a commercial and coffee shop.

The oldest image of the square of Vaght o Saat is the image of Robert Byron related to 1933, which shows the tomb of Seyyed Rokn al-Din from two angles. In these pictures, the ruined condition of the tomb and the destruction of the porch on the north side of the tomb can be clearly seen (Fig. 6).

### Vaght o Saat Square in the 1950s

The 1950s can be considered as the decades when the most important visual documents of the square are created, the most important of which is the map of Yazd in 1956, the aerial photograph of 1956 of Yazd, and the photograph of Rahim Khan Shirmohammadi from the square. The first city map of Yazd from the Pahlavi era is related to the year 1956. In this picture, the Vaght o Saat square is mentioned as Vaght o Saat *Hosseiniyeh*, and the old name of all the passages around the square is mentioned (Fig. 7).

One of the important visual documents of Vaght o Saat Square is the photograph of Rahim Khan Shirmohammadi in 1957 (Fig. 8). In this picture, the *Nakhl*<sup>18</sup> of the square is located inside *Hosseiniyeh* and the northern front of the tomb of Seyyed Rukn al-Din can be seen, which lacks the current porch. In front of *hosseiniyeh* wall, if you look closely, there is a volume in the form of a lying rectangular cube, which is the famous tombstone that is kept today inside the



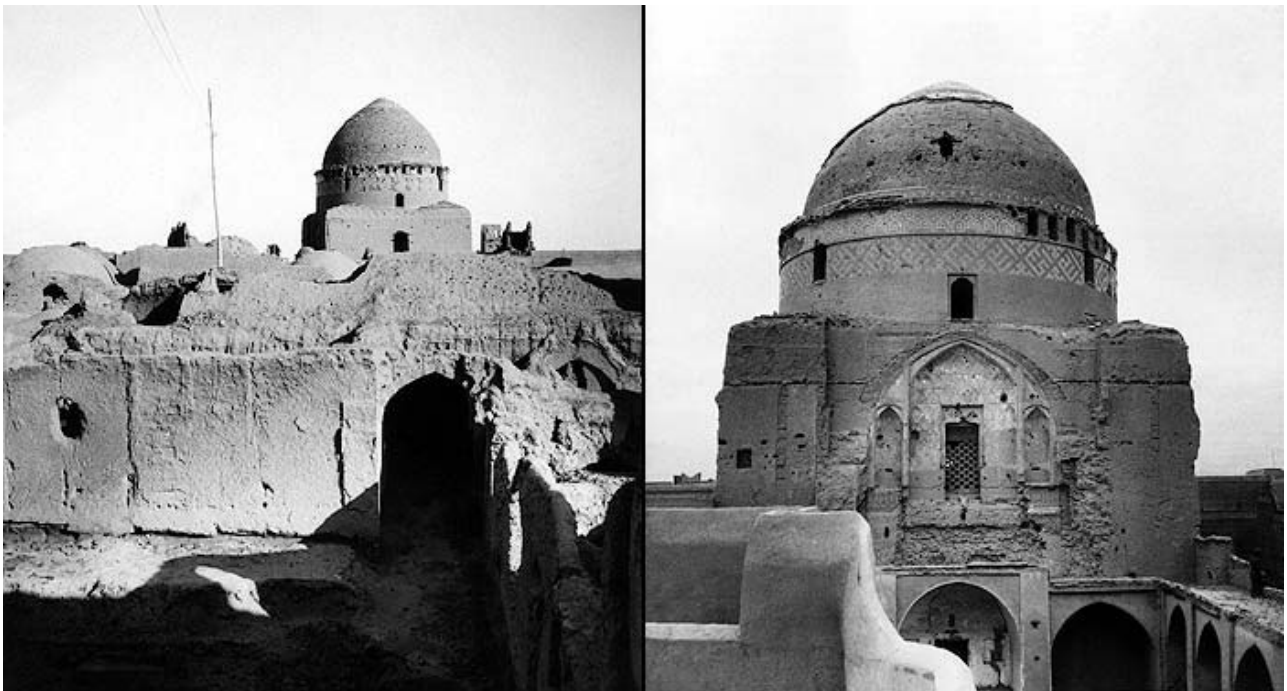


Fig. 6. The condition of the Seyyed Rukn al-Din tomb in the first Pahlavi era and before restoration measures. Source: Robert Byron, 1934, archive of Yazd historical city cultural heritage organization.

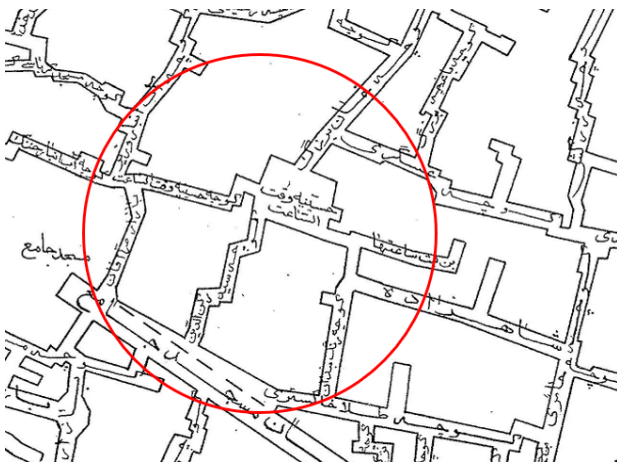


Fig. 7. Map of Yazd city, prepared by the General Statistics Office, August 1956, the original map was prepared on the scale of 1: 2000. In this map, the passages connected to the square in the north with the name of Khan Bozorg, in the west with the name of Vaght o Saat *Hosseinieh*, in the south with the name of Seyed Rukn al-Din, and in the east with the name of Bonbast-e-Saatha, Shahzadeh alley and Rangbandan alley (Originally it was Digbandan<sup>17</sup> that was mentioned by mistake. Source: Shahabinejad, 2019).

tomb of Seyyed Rukn al-Din. On the left side of *hosseinieh* wall, there is a frame on the wall that is related to the well of the house of Akbar Khojasteh. The wooden electric columns in the picture show that the city electricity is supplied for the Vaght o Saat neighborhood and the square. In the left of the image are steps that provided access to the

top of *Kalak* in the middle of the square, and these steps were removed in the 1970s. The presence of men and women and children playing is thought-provoking. Also in this picture, the material of the floor of the square, which was made of soil, is clear.

### Vaght o Saat square in the 1960s

One of the most important events related to the Vaght o Saat square in the 1960s is the revealing of the Zarch payab in the open space of the square<sup>19</sup>. According to the contents of the book “Zarch qanat” written by Samsar Yazdi (2014), this payab is related to the freshwater branch of Zarch qanat. After the revelation, payab was buried again in the 1960s after a few years due to reasons such as urban water piping<sup>20</sup> and increasing car traffic in the city<sup>21</sup>, as well as security problems.

Also, from this decade and after finding the Zarch payab, the Nakhlbardari ceremony in the square stopped (R. Khojasteh, 2018). In relation to the buildings around the square, by comparing two aerial photographs of 1956 and 1964, it can be seen that the Sharabafi workshop located in the south of



Fig. 8. A photo of Yazd Vaght o Saat Square - March 1957, Photo by Rahim Khan Shirmohammadi. Source: Personal archive of Mr. Morteza Vaziri.

the square has been destroyed at this distance (Fig. 9).

One of the good documents related to the square and the neighborhood of Vaght o Saat in the 1960s is the map of 1963. In this map (Fig. 10), the names of some buildings and alleys can be seen around the square.

One of the important measures taken in the late 1960s was the restoration and consolidation of the dome of the tomb of Seyed Rukn al-Din. These restoration measures, which were carried out with the efforts of Master Pirnia and the pursuit of some residents around the square, including Haj Khalil Khojasteh<sup>22</sup>, included consolidation and operations of the main dome and repairs of its tiles and outer shell (Reza Khojasteh, 2018).

### Vaght o Saat square in 1970s

In this decade, we can see major changes in the four buildings around the square. The first case can be considered the reconstruction of the porch of the tomb of Seyed Rukn al-Din in the early 1970s. As mentioned, the consolidation operation of Seyed Rukn al-Din tomb began in the second half of the 1960s, which included strengthening the dome and other measures to prevent structural damage. After these measures in the early 1970s, the reconstruction of the porch of this important building began. As can be seen in the aerial picture of 1956 and Fig. 8, the tomb of Seyed Rukn al-Din in the 1950s had only a dome and its porch had collapsed. In the early 1970s, during the continuation of restoration and



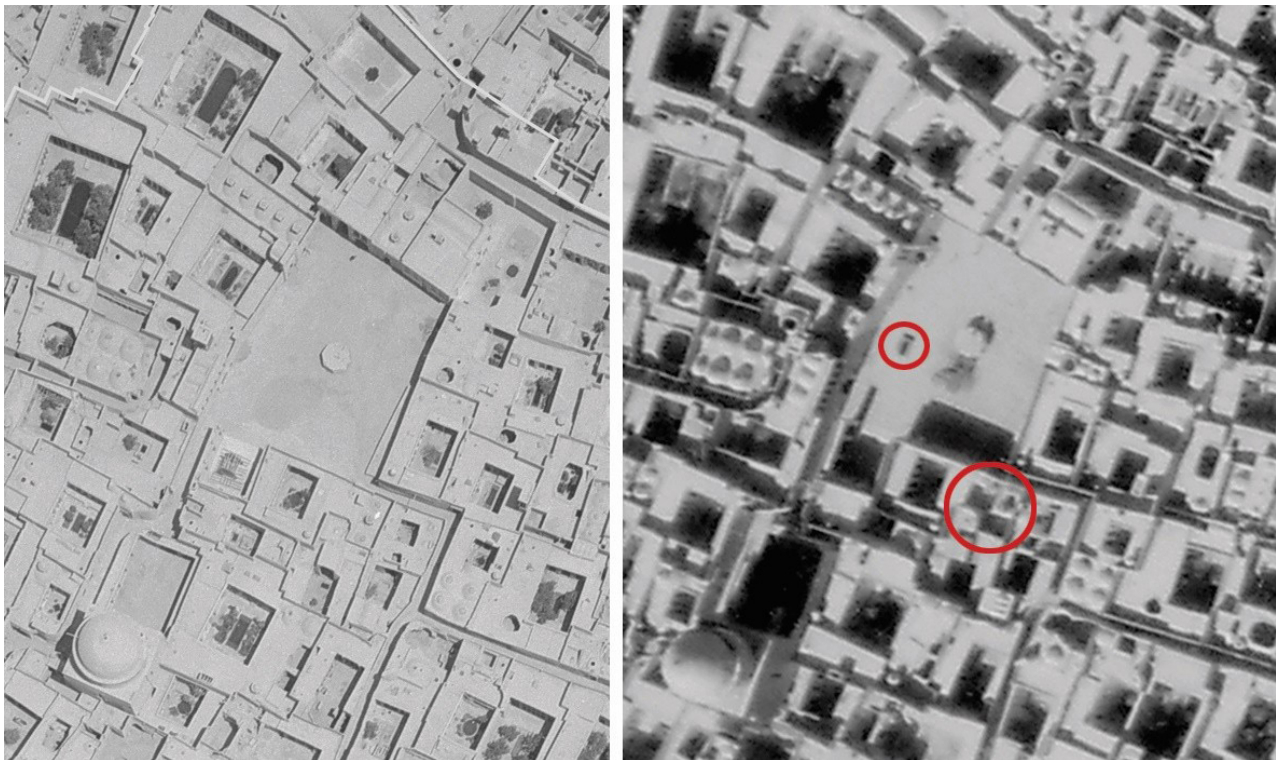


Fig. 9. Comparison of aerial photographs of the 1950s (left) and 1960s (right). Demolition of Sharabafi workshop in the south of the square and revealing of Zarch *payab*. Source: Aerial image, Yazd Municipality.

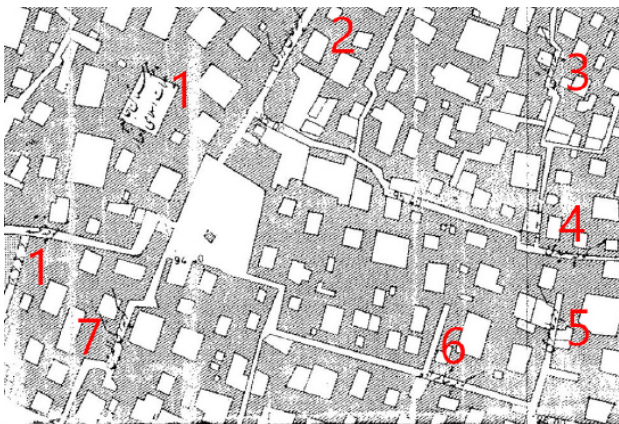


Fig. 10. Vaght o Saat square and its adjacent area in the 1963 map of Yazd; 1) Afshar Islamic Education Society High School, 2) Khan Bozorg Alley, 3) Mofidi Alley, 4) Haeri Alley, 5) Shahzadeh Alley, 6) Rokn al-Din Alley, 7) Khojasteh Alley. Source: Mapping Organization of the country.

protection measures in the tomb of Seyed Rokn al-Din, its porch was rebuilt (Fig. 11). Afshar points out in his book that “fortunately in recent years, with the cooperation of the National property Association and the National Antiquities Preservation Organization, the restoration of this unique building has begun. “and now that my book is publishing in April 1973, I have to add that repair measures have progressed a lot, and

two weeks ago, when I saw it, it had a dignified form.” (Afshar, 1975, V. 2, 570).

Comparison of aerial images of the 1960s and 1970s (Fig. 12) and field evidence show that another physical change in this decade is the redesign of Haj Khalil Khojasteh’s house in the west of the square, which was accompanied by the destruction of the wind tower and the building hall. A second yard is created in place of these spaces.

In this decade, we also see two land-use changes in the buildings around the square, which are accompanied by demolition and reconstruction with new building methods. One of these buildings is the Qajar-era residential building in the northwest of the square, which was used as a high school of the Afshar Islamic Education Society in the 1960s. In the late 1970s, the Qajar era building was demolished and a new school building was built on it, the mass and space pattern of which is in accordance with the previous building, but it has been implemented with new materials and methods<sup>23</sup>. Also in this decade, the Sharbafi



weaving workshop in the south of the square was bought by Mr. Akbar Khojasteh and then turned into a residential building by his son Mr. Ahmad Khojasteh (Khojasteh, 2018 b). This building has maintained its residential use so far and Mr. Khojasteh's family lives in it. Also, the building is

in contrast to other buildings of the square in terms of architectural and structural pattern.

Other changes in the square in this decade include the renovation of the Vaghfabad payab in the middle of the square, which led to the removal of its northern steps, which provided access to the roof (ibid.). In addition, the

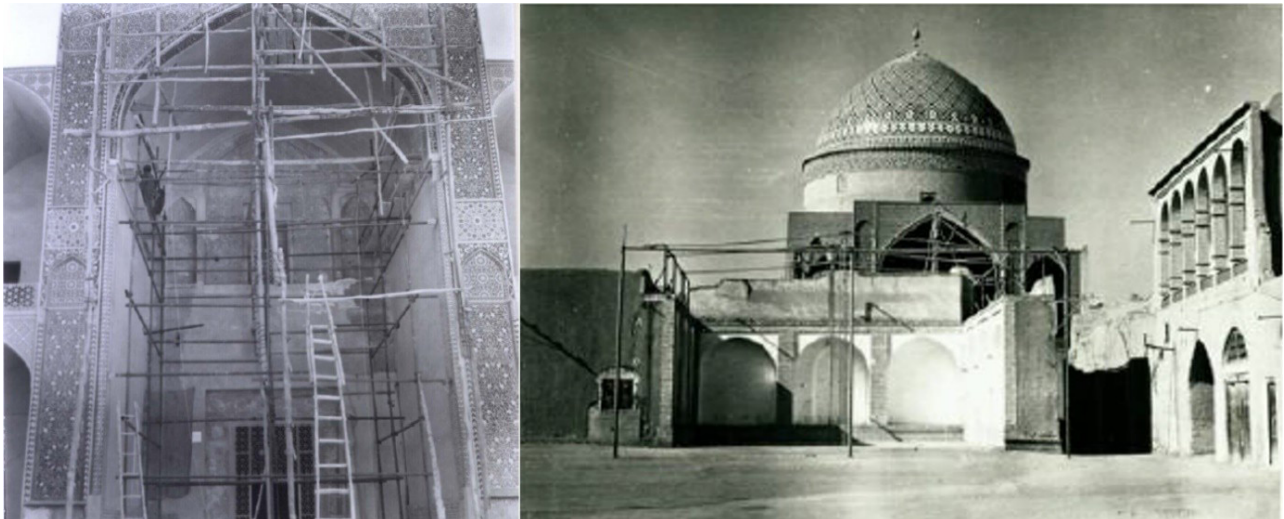


Fig. 11. Reconstruction of the north porch of Seyed Rokn al-Din tomb in the early 1970s. Source: Right: Seyed Rokn al-Din tomb registration file, Left: Yazd historical city research base archive).



Fig. 12. Comparison of aerial photographs of the 1960s (left) and 1970s (right): Re-burial of the Zarch payab, installation of scaffolding on Vaght o Saat Hosseinieh, reconstruction of the porch of Seyyed Rokn al-din tomb, removal of the hall and wind tower in the house on the west side of the square. Source: Aerial image, Yazd Municipality.



Zarch Payab, which was discovered in the 1960s, was re-buried due to its unuse (Shahabinejad, 2019). Also in that time, for the first time, the open surface of the square becomes asphalt. The installation of scaffolding on Hosseinieh is one of the other changes in the square in the 1970s (Khojasteh, 2018 a); (Fig. 13).

## Conclusion

What was mentioned in this article included the most important historical documents related to the historical background, the process of formation, and the evolution of the square until the end of the Pahlavi era. For this purpose, a variety of references including historical photographs, aerial photographs, urban maps, local history text, contemporary books, oral references, and field studies were referred to. The documents and studies of this article show that although the Vaght o Saat square has a background and a name derived from the early eighth century A.H. and the constructions of Seyyed Rukn al-Din, the current structure of this square was formed from the Safavid era and was completed by the end of the Pahlavi era. The oldest building located

in its body is the water reservoir from the late Safavid era and the time of Shah Sultan Hussein.

Today, most of the buildings that surround the square and enclose the middle space of the square, belong to the middle of the Qajar era, late Qajar and early Pahlavi. In the second Pahlavi era, two old buildings were destroyed and replaced with new construction methods. Until the Qajar era, the main functions of the surrounding area were residential, urban facilities (water reservoir, *Payab*, etc.), workshops (Sharabafi workshops), and religious (The *Hosseinieh* of the square and the tomb of Seyed Rukn al-Din in the south of the square). In the Pahlavi era, office, service, and educational functions were added to the previous set of functions, including the law office in the *Kheradmand's* house and the medical office and pharmacy of Dr. Seyed Mohammad Motamed Riyazi and the adjacent clinic, as well as the Afshar School of Islamic Education.

Other physical changes in the square in the Pahlavi era include the restoration of the tomb of Seyyed Rukn al-Din and the reconstruction of its porch, the renovation of *Kalak* of the square, the revelation and reburial of

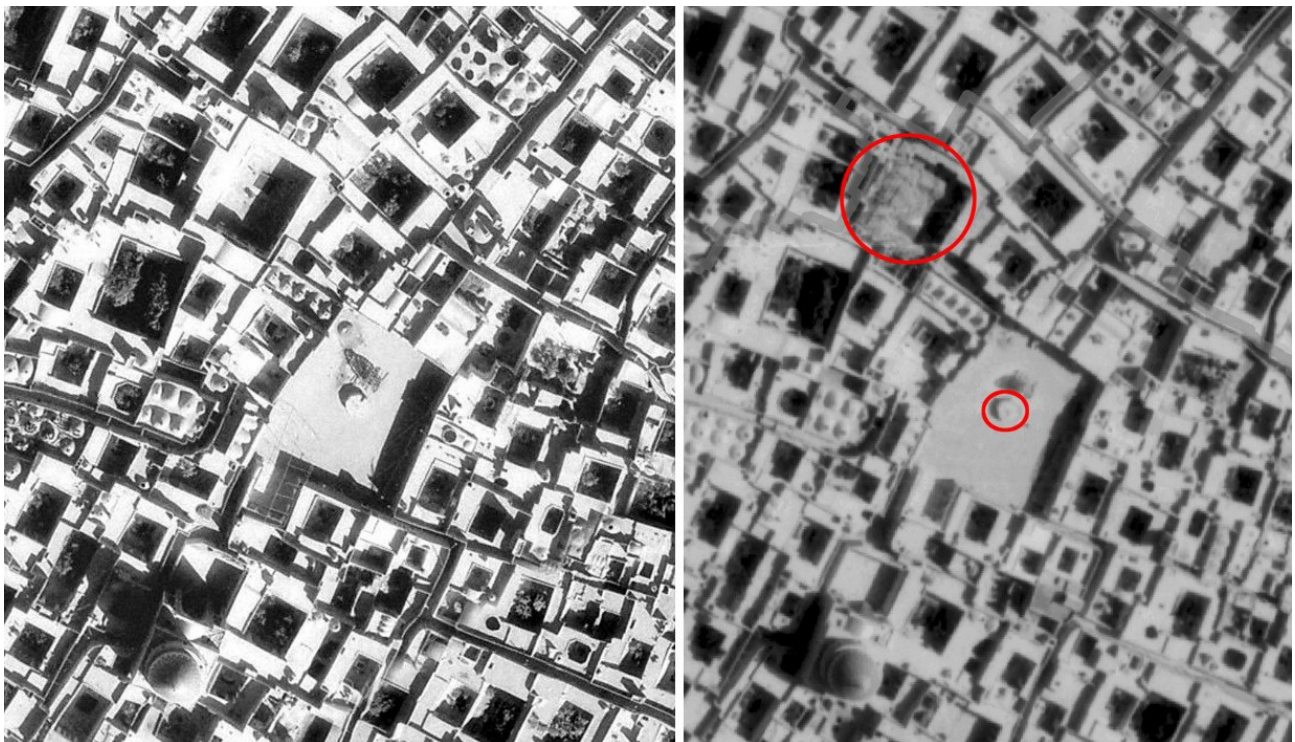


Fig. 13. Comparison of aerial photos of 1977 (left) and 1980 (right): Demolition of a Qajar house to build a new school building, renovation of *Kalak*. Source: Aerial image, Yazd Municipality.



the Zarch *Payab*, the installation of scaffolding on *Hosseiniyeh* and the asphalt of the square.

In addition, the study on the social context around Vaght o saat Square shows that in the past a significant number of well-known families in Yazd lived or worked in buildings around the square, a matter that in late several decades has been accompanied by the migration and settlement and employment of these people in other parts of the city or other cities, and has led to the decreasing of part of the social values of the square.

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## Endnotes

1. In summary, some of the values and aspects of the importance of this square can be described as follows: 1) The historical background of this square from the Safavid era, which is marked with a stone inscription at the entrance of the water reservoir, 2) The name of this square which is related to the observation of Vaght o Saat as part of the Rokniyeh school complex in the eighth A.H. century and it is considered to be the first urban observation and clock in the world<sup>3</sup>.) The importance of this square as a connection of four historical neighborhoods includes the neighborhood of Vaght o Saat in the east, Shah Abolghasem neighborhood in the west, Bazaar-e-No neighborhood in the north and Chaharsooq neighborhood in the south, 4) The intact structure of this square, which, unlike the square / Hosseiniyehs such as Mir Chaghmaq and Shah Tahmasb, has not undergone any changes due to the construction of streets in the first Pahlavi era, 5) The location of this square in the world subscribe zone of the historical fabric of Yazd and also adjacent to the Grand Mosque, 6) The location of the square in the main tourism axis of the historical context of Yazd between the Grand Mosque and Ziaieh School, 7) Existence of unique architectural examples of Yazd residential, which in addition to the aspect of introversion and the form of the central courtyard, in the facade connected to the square have an extroverted state and have established a significant relationship with the square space (Kheradmand House, Mesgarnejad House, Motamed Riyazi House and Seyyed Ahmad Riazi House), 8) Connecting three important qanat of Yazd includes Waqfabad, Zarch and Elhabad to this square and the existence of several historical water structures including *Payab*, water reservoir and well house that has connected the square with these qanats.

2. In order to know the history of this observatory, refer to *the history of Yazd* (Jafari, 1959) and *the new history of Yazd* (Kateb Yazdi, 1978).
3. In both books of the *history of Yazd* and *the new history of Yazd*, it is stated: "An observatory has been built in front of the school and two small minarets have been built on its two sides" (Jafari, 1978, 81).
4. The text on this inscription is mentioned in the book of Islamic Inscriptions of Yazd City (Danesh Yazdi, 2008).
5. To know about the condition of this water reservoir in the contemporary period, refer to Shahabi Nejad (2019).
6. To know more about the Waqfabad qanat in Yazd, refer to the following references: Cheraghi (2012), Samsar Yazdi and Cheraghi (2004), Samsar Yazdi and Karimian (2017) and Papoli Yazdi & Labaf Khaniki (2009).
7. Staircase
8. Seyyed Mirza Ali Naghi Mousavi Vaght o Saati, one of the descendants of Imamzadeh Seyyed Mohammad Aghdaci, a religious scholar of the thirteenth century AH. He studied religious sciences with professors such as: Mullah Ismail Aghdaci and Mirza Soleiman Tabatabai Yazdi. Translation of the Savab-o-olamaal by Sheikh Saduq is one of his works. People like Seyyed Mohammad Ali Riyazi Malekshoara and Seyyed Ali Mohammad Vaziri are from the family of Mirza Ali Naghi (ibid., 1660).
9. Seyyed Mohammad Kheradmand, the son of Seyyed Ali Naghi, started working as a lawyer in 1942. He was one of the first high school principals in Yazd (ibid., 538).
10. Roofed alley
11. Khalil Khojasteh, son of Hussein, was born in the "Vaght o Saat" neighborhood of Yazd. After elementary school, he started knitting with his father. Then, with experience and skill, he mechanized the *termehbafi* industry. Khojasteh received a commendation from the Ministry of Economy and Finance in 1998. He was proficient in digging qanat and related technical issues (ibid., 529).
12. Seyyed Mohammad Motamed Riyazi, the son of Nazem al-Atebba and known as "Motamed al-Hokama". He studied medicine in Isfahan and Tehran. Then he returned to Yazd and practiced medicine in the neighborhood of Vaght o Saat (Kazemini, 2003, 1446). He was one of the physicians educated in Russia and a graduate of the Dar al-Fonun school and a very prominent and honorable physician in Yazd. When Dr. Motamed's education ended and he returned to Yazd, his father Nazem al-Ataba died (Rastegar, 2018).
13. Seyyed Ahmad Rastegar, son of Hussein, poet and teacher, was employed in the educational system in 1954 and retired in 1981 (Kazemini, 2003, 642). On page 242 of the book *Iranshahr Mandegar* (Qalamsiah, 2018) there is a description of him as one of the teachers of Iranshahr school.
14. Mohammad Javad Afshar, son of Ahmad and grandson of Karbala'i Ashour, first engaged in business. Then he started to have a factory and was also active in the field of textile weaving. His children are Ataullah, Abbas, Mohammad Hussein, Mohammad Baqir, Ahmad and Mohammad Sadegh. After Afshar's death, his children turned his house into Afshar High School with the help of, Seyyed Ali Mohammad Vaziri (Kazemini, 2003, 152).
15. Seyyed Ahmad Motamed Riazi, the son of Seyyed Mohammad, known as "Yazdi Riazi", received his medical degree from the University of Tehran in 1951. After his primary education in Yazd. He then went to the United States to study ophthalmology at the University of Detroit, and postgraduate studies at the Wilmer Institute at Johns Hopkins University in the United States. He completed his clinical training course at the hospital of university of Vienna, Michigan. Also in 1970s, he completed a three-month course at Moorfields hospital in London. After passing the subspecialty course, he started to work in Namazi hospital in Shiraz. Motamed is the managing director of Khalili Ophthalmology Hospital in Shiraz. He collaborated in the construction and operation of this hospital. He has traveled to the United States several times to participate in ophthalmological conferences (ibid., 1445).

16. Soleimanshahi, a master of Termeh-weaving. After a while, he became skilled in traditional Yazd textile. Then he went to Karbala and established an *ababafi* factory there. Then he returned to Yazd and enhanced the quality of the product by converting the old weaving machines into “*makopran*” machines. In 1921, with the help of Amir Khan Koraghli, he brought the first machine knitting machine to Yazd with a power generator from Germany. In 1921, Hossein Ali Herati asked him to cooperate in establishing a Derakhshan factory. Sanati went to Germany to buy machinery and undergo an internship. Two years after returning to Iran, he established the Saadat Textile Factory in Yazd. He was the technical manager of the factory until the end of his life (ibid., 919).

17. Attributed to Sayyed Nezam al-din Heidar, known as Digbandan, a religious scholar and leader of Sufism in the eighth century AH. In 733 AH, he built a large mosque in Digbandan alley and built a tomb for himself next to it (ibid., 616).

18. An elements used in mourning ceremonies

19. For more information about this qanat, refer to the article “Reidenification of historical water structures in Yazd Vaght o Saat Square” (Shahabinejad, 2019).

20. For information about the situation of drinking water in Yazd in the second Pahlavi era, refer to the book *History of Executive Developments of Water and Sewerage in the Provinc* (2007).

21. For information about the traffic situation of the city in the second Pahlavi era, refer to Monshizadeh (2008) and Modarres (2011).

22. Mr. Reza Khojasteh is the son of Haj Khalil Khojasteh. Haj Khalil was in charge of the tomb and followed the restoration measures and after his death he was buried in the courtyard of the tomb. After his death, his son (Reza) is one of the trustees of the tomb.

23. This building has maintained its educational use so far, but today it is used as a girls’ primary school. In the early 2010s, during the repairs of the building, they noticed the connection of this building with Zarch qanat.

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