

## Function of Iranian Cities in Safavid Era: Political Cities or Commercial Cities

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### Abstract

*History of City and Urbanization in Safavid dynasty is one of the most active as well as complicated social category. Distribution and function of each city in accordance with their political, economic, social and cultural role indicated their various functional changes. Besides the political origin of Iranian cities in this era, the economic relations that are depended on urban society, is one of the most important functions of the city as a social phenomenon. In Safavid Iran, this has played a decisive role in the activity of urban social life regarding to an organized definition of commodity, distribution and exchanging system between urban and rural society as well as defining the role of organization in commercial process. This paper is based on historical analyzing method, utilizing historical sources, and social and economic studies on urbanization defining Persian cities economic structure in Safavid era. Farah Abad, Isfahan and Bandar Abbas in north, center and south of Iran are examined to realize the developments which are logical and documentary. These are selected because of their functional nature which was producer, industrial (processor) and exporter cities. The result of this research shows that the founded and developed cities in Safavid Iran, specially expanded on Silk Road in Shah Abbas I's reign (996-1083H.), played the role of producer, distributor and exporter in North, Center and South of Iran. According to this produce and exchange system, the functional cities in Safavid era are divided in to three types: producer of raw materials, intermediary and processing and finally exporter (port) cities. The analysis of economic relations of cities in Safavid era indicates that the presented kinds in exchanging system concentrated on all aspects of king's despotic monopolization and possessory exploitation, deep dependence of urban economy on agricultural economy in countryside and finally organizing the system which acted as intermediary and retail in cities.*

**Keywords:** Islamic cities Economic relations, Safavid cities, Silk trade, and Economic function.

### Introduction

According to the economic theories in seventies Europe, economic variables and wealth sources distribution are known as a factor of rapid growth in historical cities.

In accordance with earning and wealth producing, cities were belonged to specific social classes. This was so important that division of architectural spaces in cities were determined based on economic power and different citizenship services were presented to social classes in an absolute caste (Karimian.1382.111-121). This theory was manifested in Iran middle centuries during Islamic era and to achieving this aim, city converted to a mass place for social participation of economic sectors; and social force division, exchange relations and development commercial system were its results (YusefiFar.1385. 277-279). This was an effective stimulus to found ports, trade cities and generally the cities with economic function.

Safavid cities-as the most important place of social, political and economic changes- are known as an important category to research on principles, concepts, thoughts and functions of society and government. Organizing sect and religious fractions, bureaucracy, guilds and establishing commercial network, knightly and army system are all the result of the phenomenon which is called city. A place that indicated the authority of Safavid Kings to legitimize political and religious power. For the first time, the institution of economy was established in Safavid Iran during Islamic era at a national and international level (Guodarzi.1387.342).

To activating native commerce and rapid growth of international trade, Safavid cities- founded and developed cities - were divided to three kinds of producer, industrial and finally exporter cities to implement Safavid Kings' economic policies in the best way. In this research, Farah Abad, Isfahan and Bandar Abbas in North, Center and South of Iran are examined to study the role and the position of functional cities in Safavid era by utilizing social and economic studies on urban and historical analyzing method to study. These are selected because of their functional nature which was producer, industrial and exporter cities. The prime question of this research is: How functional cities play their role through process of foreign and native trade in Safavid Iran especially during Shah Abbas reign?

In this research, Safavid cities are evaluated by social and economic studies as well as historical written sources, form and urban spatial analysis. The compiling methods of information are based on library studies which are the original sources of history (general and regional histories) and geography (itineraries) and the contemporary researches.

### **Safavid Iranian Cities: Political Cities or Commercial Cities?**

In the general view, the geographical distribution could be known as a Safavid Kings 'general dependent of policy. This is resulted in functionalism which is base and priority of city-planning. Safavid Kings decided to implement their political, economic and social policies by founding and, in many cases, developing urban complex next to old texture. Since, place distribution could be followed up explicitly in this era. Ports and coastal cities in North of Iran ,as Farah Abad and Mashhadsar (the present Babolsar), and in south (Bandar Abbas), mountain cities in west and North-West as Ardabil, Tabriz and Sanandaj , outskirts desert cities as Isfahan, Kashan and Yazd are founded and ,in some cases, developed for specific political, economic and social (religious) aims.

The way of distribution and spatial arrangement of economical cities in Safavid eras is meant that there are three kinds of their placement which are producer of raw materials, industrial (intermediary and processing) and exporter cities. This implemented pattern of spatial arrangement in cities was manifested by trade silk especially through the commercialization of Iran during Shah Abbas I's reign. The producer cities which were Northern cities produced and grew silk worms.

The second groups were industrial cities as Isfahan, Kashan and Yazd where raw material (silk) were converted to textile commodity as carpet and cloth which were woven at workshops. In such cities, active weaving workshops produced the most important export commodity with silk based which are textile as brocaded carpets and luxury clothes. In this era, workshops or producer factories were divided to governmental and native (regional) sectors. Producer workshops, that government controlled them, were called Royal Possession Land (Byutat-e-Saltanati). According to Tavernier the workshops were located between Chehel Sotun Palace and Maidan-i- Shah (Shah square):

*'...there is a vast yard belonged to Royal Possession Land (Byutat e Saltanati) where at the corner, weaving machine(loom) is settled to weave brocaded by silk and gold for King'( Tavernier.1363.386).*

It should be mentioned that eight guilds out of thirty-three main guilds cooperated with cloth-weaver guild (Baker. 1385.119). In general, not only luxury carpets were woven for mosques and Safavid King's Palace but also was sent to governors of different country -as gifts- as Ottoman and Uzbeks kings and exported, too. These cities played the role of intermediary and retail in urban economy during this era. Final stage was ports and exporter cities in south of Iran in which the commodity were exported, imported and transported. It is important to mentioned that ports in North of Iran were capable of this process at the same time but it didn't implement because of large amount of exchanging as well as the target market was located in south so their trade function limited to Tsarist Russian.

The implementation of mentioned policy were resulted in commercializing of vast parts in country and participating in all cities from north to south. Also, activating the north-south road and inactivating east-west overland arterial road, which ended to Ottoman territory, led to decreasing Ottoman political and economic pressure on Safavids. There is no mistaking in implementing this policy, serious cooperation of British and Netherland companies in south as well as Portuguese's absolute trade seclusion and King's foreign policy on new economic ways are indisputable. (Taghavi 1388. 59-60).

Activity of this era's cities, as in Iran middle centuries, was implement in this way that raw material were sent from effective district ,which usually were countryside's, to cities and specific commodity was produced there. Then products entered into distribution cycle and flow of purchase and sell within inner or outer urban economy. Another economical function of cities were related to the activity of a sector of productive forces who were active in agricultural economy sector (Yusefifar.1390.104).

The other urban economical relation was concentrating on monopolization and possessory exploitation of forced labour on farms(Savory.1384.194;Roymmer.1384.232) and through land reforming policy (converting Mamalik-state funds- to Khadssa-crown revenues)(Navaei and Qaffari Fard.1381.289), omitting intermediaries and direct purchasing by king, an enormous productive capital of this sector were transferred to the court treasury.

## **Studies Urban Centers:**

### **1-3-Farah Abad Urban Complex:**

Historical city of Farah Abad is located in a rural place by same name: a distance of three kilometers from South-East of Mazandaran Sea, at twenty five kilometers from North of Sari. Network roads were one of the important factors that played an effective role in developing of Farah Abad spaces. Shah Abbasid road, as the most important economic and strategically road in the region, created a peace and safe way between Iran Northern cities and Southern regions of Alborz chain mountains.

In fact, this road started in Isfahan and ended in Farah Abad in Sari. Shah Abbasid road was passed through Isfahan, Kashan, Khar and Firoozkooch and after passing ten acres reached Polsefid. Then reached Zirab, Shirgah and near countryside of Azadgaleh ended in Farah Abad.

This 45 acres road was built because of Shah Abbas the Great's order in 1031 A.H under the supervision of Mirza Mohammad Taqi Khan Mazandarani (Sarootaqi) (Mokhlesi. 1379.204). Although Alborz mountain-were difficult to pass- many rivers, forests and swamps were natural obstacles in building orderly road ways networks, but Shah Abbas's long-term strategies and goals for economic development made the problems easy. So, Iran Northern regions from Gaskar to Astar Abad were connected to central palace by Shah Abbasid road. Population reform was done because of suitable environmental space. As in 1023 A.H, Shah Abbas ordered Armenians, Georgians and Kurds to be emigrated from Northwest parts of Iran and Caucasian region to Farah Abad, Astar Abad, Barforoush and other Northern cities (Torkaman. 1377.881).

The migrated labour force, were achieved one-tenth of national product of silk by growing silk worm. (Savaqeb. 1370.97-121). during this time, the amount of silk product was 2484000 kilogram's in Mazandaran and Gilan province which was 65% of Khadssa produced silk. (Navidi. 1386.169). This resulted in developing of economic bases and ports as Farah Abad, Barforoush, Mashhad sar, Astar Abad in Northern province of Iran. Because of the structural changes, the atmosphere of Iran Northern cities converted from a pleasure area for Safavid kings and court to the active ones where commercial and trade relations were done with their North neighbor- Tsarist Russian.

The vast spatial space that Rabino believed was the largest plain part in Mazandaran in which the distance between mountain and sea reached in its highest level (17 acres) (Rabino. 1383. 25) was one of the important variables which made Farah Abad the capital rather than old Sari. Farah Abad as a coastal town played the main role in trade presses; since Sari was a place of purchase and sell, trade exchanges and also intermediary city. On the other hand, Farah Abad which played the executive role in commercial affairs, was in a suitable condition for storing, transferring and loading commodity and Sari was changed to a city should decide because of urban dense texture and lack of suitable space for implementing mentioned affairs. Delavalleh explained Farah Abad in his itinerary:

*'In 1027 this city , I mean Farah Abad, could be called half-port, because the little ships that move in Caspian Sea between Gilan and Mazandaran, Badkoubeh (present Baku, capital of Republic of Azerbaijan), Mirqapuo and a little farther in Hashtarkhan as well as transfer commodity; are able come to central Tejen bridge and berth next to it. He mentioned ships are the same as central Tejen bridge boats in their cities which come on a higher level than water and but their bottom didn't go so down because of sea shallow.'* (Delavalleh. 1370.144).

This is applied to Barforoush (present Babol). As if Mashhad sar (the present Babolsar) played the same role as Farah Abad. As mentioned before, forced migration of the minority Armenians ,Kurds ,Georgians and the residents of Shirvan and Qarebaq in Azerbaijan into suitable and examined places for growing silkworm, was one of the Shah Abbas I's economical actions (Savaqeb. 1385.52-53) which resulted in reducing their destructive power in organizing rebellions and tribal insurrections and also utilizing their ability to develop the economy of new founded cities.

Also, forced migration policy led to population changes and speeded up organizing new combined population and multi-cultural society.

One of the most famous ones is forced migration of Shirvan and Qarebaq's tribes in Azerbaijan which was happened in 1023H. In same year, a 15000 population which was the combination of Jewish, Muslims and Armenian, were forced to migration from Mazandaran (Torkaman.1350.881). These tribes accused to have close relations with Ottomans and uprising in western border of Iran so were exiled to Farah Abad and Ashraf-al-Belad to prevent probable riot and their force and also increase the population in these cities. Delavalleh says about this minority and their activities:

*“Armenians, who knew about growing vine, were given farm and related instruments, Georgians and other Christian and Jewish were growing silk worm in the suburb of Farah Abad with a wealth of berry trees, because they were familiar with this skill. Azerbaijanis of Shirvan who are very lazy had to work and were forced to make silk.”*

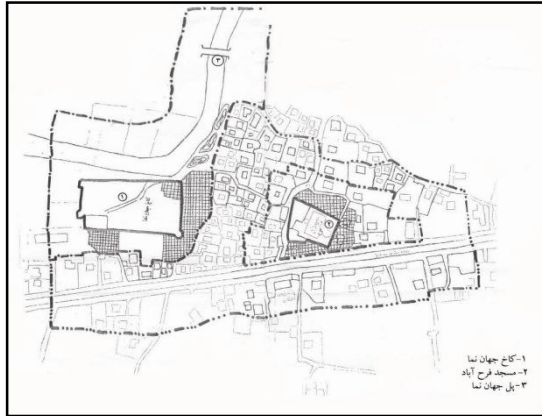
Ordering and placement of micro-complex or half-independent in the spatial organization of the city are in such a way that parts of remained spaces as mosque and palace as well as reconstructed ones as square and bazaar, are located in central core of the city (Fig1). The spatial analysis of city core elaborates that in this part mosque, palace and bazaar were in a direction with a linear order which shows the effect of logic and cosmic thoughts in Isfahan's city planning method. It is because in the first form -logic- the appearance of elements were based on the needs of society and government, and in the latter spatial arrangement were in accordance with spirituality and teachings of Iranian-Islamic mysticism.

At the beginning , the central core of Farah Abad started with main mosque- and its school-mosque's function- in southern part of the city ,then the rectangular main square -in an organic form- and also bazaar and shops- two side of square- were located and then it ended to Jahan-Nama palace in North of city. It is important to know a steady and logical form of the concept of space is inspired in this complex by partial hierarchy by considering of elements as symmetry, balance and entrances lobby in each part.

The extroversion of Jahan-Nama palace, its divisions to public and private sections and differentiation of level between them, show the authority and controlling over around area. This would be real when you imagine the palace with Tejen River view with its beautiful scenery. In a comparison between the plan of Naqsh-e-Jahan square in Isfahan and Farah Abad square, it is inferred that Farah Abad square were somewhat similar to Naqsh-e-Jahan square in construction and providing necessary space to arrange and organize half-depended elements, but ten years later. But in Farah Abad square, mosque and palace were next to each other. Also the vacant space of east and west of square could be for a church or Doulat khanih.

This hypothesis could be accepted when according to documents of itineraries, it is elaborated that compound population and tribal city were consisted of the majority of Christians (Armenians and Georgians)who were more than twenty thousands, Muslims of Qarebaq and Jewish (Delavalleh. 1370.171). It is obvious there should be specific place ,as church, for the majority of citizens due to a wealth of such a population. Bazaar of the city, as in Naqsh-e-Jahan in Isfahan, was organized around the square of the complex, too. Archeological evidences and written sources show that there were no specialized bazaars as Qeysarieh , copper smiting and various jobs and all commercial exchanges were done there.

That Farah Abad was one of the Iran's ports and is suggested many wharves, landing-stages and harbors had been built, it seems common the necessity of construction caravanserai and wharf as a place for economical exchanges in harbors. So, Farah Abad, harbor and constructed installations played the direct role in trade and export.



**Fig1. Urban Spaces of Farah Abad city in Safavid era (ICHO, 1386)**

Generally, Farah Abad had the main factors of spatial organization of Safavid city. Also according to the evidences as documents, analysis of aerial pictures and remained signs could be inferred that city of Farah Abad is constructed on the basis of urbanization and architecture in Isfahan School. As the main elements of Urban-planning in this era which are mosque, bazaar and palace, were constructed symmetrical and in a spatial hierarchy way. It should be mentioned that these factors resulted in the division of city in to royal and public.

The royal city has a central core which is consist of Jahan-Nama palace with its public halls, garden, harem and private halls and also main square with bazaar, mosque-school, governmental bath, church(?), Doulat khanih(?) and Barrack. Although each parts made micro-complexes and gave meaning to the complex. Tejen River divided the city in to two mentioned parts. The public sector was one of the main structure of the city, located North-Eastern part of city in which there were various quarters with the majority of people as farmers, shopkeepers, trader of different minorities.

### **2-3-Isfahan:**

There is no mistaking it is complicated and time-consuming to analyze the signs and spaces of city in Safavid Isfahan in detail. The enormous research with different views on this city is led to a wealth of information. In this part, the authors' aim is to evaluate architectural elements, type of texture distribution and urban life in Isfahan in Shah Abbas I's reign, by the means of short glance on the process of organizing and developing the core of city. Hence, in this part elements aren't described as a case and also not to analyze in detailed and instead, its general architectural characteristics are examined in the culture and appearance context of the city.

The most important reasons which resulted in relocating the capital from Qazvin to Isfahan in 1006 A.H. were Shah Tahmasp I's death and its outcomes that were people uprising, feudal Qezelbashs and continual losing in wars against Ottomans and Uzbek's as well as natural disasters as destructive flood and the shortage of drinking water for residents.

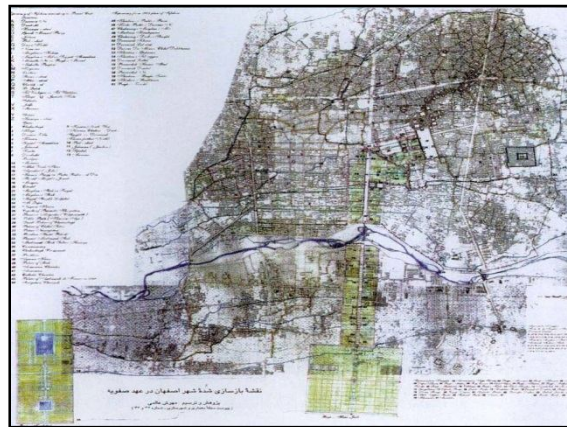
In fact, Shah Abbas I's reign (996-1038H) is known the second stage of Safavid Urban-planning in which was paid attention to development of physical urban texture, establishing urban complex besides social and economic activity as a principal in most cities in this era. A group of the historian believe that the reasons of singling out this city as the capital had their roots in various factors: geographical factors (fertile plain and sufficient water sources as Zayande-rood) (Urojbeyk. 1338. 259), economic factors (converting the trade road from east-west to north- south), long distance from enemies (Ottomans and Uzbek's) (Lockhart.1383.413), reducing Qezelbashes' force in structure of power, prohibiting different opinions and struggle between political and religious groups (Monajjem Yazdi.1360. 131), securing residents' life and property against natural disasters as seasonal flood and earthquake. But authors believe the reason for singling out Isfahan is that this city -as one of the industrial cities- besides economic intermediary was an important passage in the cycle of foreign trade via the new trade road from North to South of Iran.

During Shah Abbas's reign, Isfahan was converted to one of the leading cities in economy by changing the way of silk trade, which had been eastern-western, and affected on national and international changes in politic, economy and social life. It is evidenced by European travelers' itineraries (Delavalleh. 1370. 35-36; Figueroa. 1363.211; kampfer. 13630185). For certain, the glory and physical development of Isfahan was took place Shah Abbas I's reign. Changing the triple traditional construction- Ark, Sharistan, Rabaz- of early and middle Islamic centuries to a new construction in an urban complex form was the most important alteration in physical appearance of city in Safavid era.

Theses complexes made the central core of this era's cities in an organic form. The separation of residential quarters of the city in accordance with tribe, job and religion and their centralization were shown a peaceful and symbiotic relationship among various social classes. During this era, the core of the city was established (1011A.H) around a square which was called Naqsh-e-Jahan, in South-Western part of Saljuq old city (Gaubeh.1365.290). The main constituent elements in this square are comprised Shah (Imam) mosque at Southern part, Ali-Qapu palace at western part, Sheykh Lotf-Allah mosque at Eastern part, rest of bazaar and Gate of Qeysarieh at Northern part (Fig 2).

Qeysarieh bazaar was utilized in northern part, as a connective element between the Old main mosque (Atiq) at Old Square and the main constructed mosque at square, to encourage people in making use of new city. Hence, the economic focal point of the city was gravitated to the new square and resulted in develop this area of the new city. The large number of caravanserais around the Naqsh-e-Jahan square which played the role of impermanent wharf, led to increasing economic flourishing of the complex. In fact, Qeysarieh bazaar, besides other elements of royal and religious architecture, had been known as the symbol of Isfahan urban economy in Shah Abbas's reign (Blake.1999.115).

In addition to the economic function of Naqsh-e-Jahan square, the aspects of social and political function are important. Because many of foreign ambassadors and representatives are received to king here at Ali-Qapu palace. Celebrating national events as Nourooz, attending polo and being the place of wrestling were other social functions of this square (Shafaqi.1379.41). In a general definition Naqsh-e-Jahan square, as the royal performance of Shah Abbas's political and economic power, is interpreted by an obvious form and architectural elements, mosque, bazaar and palace (Briniuli.1385.65). It could be concluded from studies on physical appearance of Isfahan that Safavid urban-planning is in accordance with the tradition of Islamic urban-planning in which three aspects of human life that is spirituality, life and aristocracy(political power), has been shown by mosque, bazaar and palace as the main constituent element of urban texture. King's second main action on urban-planning in Isfahan was constructing and developing Chahar-Bagh Street.



**Fig 2. Isfahan In Safavid Period(Gaubeh,1365:295)**

As, it had the same spatial and physical functions of Qazvin street in Shah Tahmasp's reign. The theaters were performed in Chahar-Bagh Street besides helping people to pass their spare time, would prepare the ground for providing the sense of unity and integration by the first national independent government in Iran (Ahari. 1385056-57). Uncommon size of street in length and utilizing four rows of green field and its connection with flow of water are the reasons to build Allahviridi Khan Bridge (known as Si-o-se pol) over this street. So optimum management and fair sharing of water in city and outskirt countrysides were done by Madis (Majedi and Ahmadi.1387.41-45).

It should be mentioned Allahviridi Khan Bridge, which was known by other names as Si-o-se pol, Chahar-Bagh Bridge and Jolfa bridge (HonarFar. 1350. 487), connected Chahar-Bagh street to a Thousand-acre garden (Kampfer.1350.189).In accordance with spatial analysis, Chahar-Bagh street possessed three levels in Northern part which were in South-North direction:

Firs level: lowest level which was on a level with bridge and river

Second level: elementary level which was on a level with aristocratic gardens

Third level: secondary level which was on a level with the wall of Ali-Qapu castle in Naqsh-e-Jahan as well as Abbas Abad garden in southern part (ibid.67)

Beside this royal street and natural criterion condition of Zayande-rood river, new quarters as quarters of Tabrizis (Abbas Abad), Khajoo, Jolfa (residency place for religious minority of Armenian), Saadat Abad and Farah Abad were appeared in southern parts (Shafaqi. 1379.38).These quarters, as the central core of city, were formed in accordance with Isfahani direction (northwest-southeast) according to environmental and climatic conditions (Pirniya.1390.155-156).

Studies on social structure of urban quarters in Isfahan during this era indicated that the Safavid kings flourished urban life as well as national and international commerce by utilizing the skill of religious minorities as Jewish, Armenian and others and making use of it in economic sectors. Jolfa quarter is realized as an evident sample of this kind of thoughts in which economic activities were grown by centralization of forces and social shared duty –especially foreign trade- among them, and then king possessed their enormous profit (Jafari.1391.18).



By means of this policy, Shah Abbas assist to support economic sub-structure of the government as well as was legalized his governing position at international level by centralizing the minorities in quarters. Delavalleh says about king's intention of converting Jolfa quarter to a New Rome and believed Shah was decided to establish the great catholic society in Isfahan (Delavalleh.1370.445).

The complex of Safavid palaces in Isfahan is another element of urban physical appearance which are characterize in two forms: royal palace (kings' residence, place of receiving ambassadors and foreign guests) and residential palaces (king and royal family's permanent residence). The structural nature of them shows completely two different functions. First group of palaces, with an eight angles plan, were rather extrovert and manifested by locating in a vast area, mostly around Chahar-Bagh. The famous gardens could be named are Takht, Kaj, Baba Amir, Toopkhaneh, Nastaran, Bolbol, Fath Abad, Goldasteh, Kavooos khaneh and Pahlevan (Pirniya. 1387.276). In opposition, residential palaces are introvert regarding the principle of veneration in Islam.

These palaces were located in residential texture. The location and geographical distribution of Isfahan palaces elaborated that their distribution was centralized in an area of Naqsh-e-Jahan square, Chahar-Bagh Street and outskirts of Zayande-rood river. As government officials' palaces were located in different quarters of the city. Generally, physical appearance and spatial characteristics of this kind of royal architecture in the era are: paying attention to principle of extrovert and introvert, utilizing height instead of flat surface in construction, applying a wealth of rectangular geometric shapes, symbolism, symbiosis with environment (natural ordering) and paying attention to the principles of aesthetic, simple but symmetrical, The veneration, hierarchy and holy ordering and connection (Ahari. 1380.17-25).

Urban relations of Isfahan in Safavid era under the political governing in organizing the new urban complex beside old texture of Saljuq era, indicate Isfahan is fiat city. The tradition of endowment (waqf) which developed the urban physical appearance in Shah Abbas's reign, was led to the activity in urban life and providing facilities and services for all citizens by constructing mosques, baths and drinking foundation (saqqa khaneh). For instance, Shah Abbas endowed his landed property, crown properties (raqabat), small caravanserais (khanat), Qeysarieh and four bazaar around Naqsh-e-Jahan square and its baths to twelve Imams, The Prophet Mohammad and The Prophet's daughter-Fatima, in twenty-first anniversary of his ruling (Sefatgol.1381.322). Also, Chardin mentioned the list of Isfahan endowments (waqf) in Shah Abbas II's reign:

162 mosques, 48 mosques, 1802 caravanserais and 273 baths. (Chardin, Vol. 8. 121-1335). Hence, Safavid era were known as the period of the reviving the endowment (waqf) tradition. The numbers of caravanserais was the sign of economical flourishing and intermediary trade which was the major pattern in atmosphere of the city in this era. On the other hand, the endowment of the farms increased the flourish of agricultural economy and resulted in more mutual relations between the countryside's outskirts in Isfahan and the new urban. There is no mistaking the Isfahan fame in Shah Abbas's reign owed to economical function of the city and its presence in the cycle of national and international trade.

### **Bandar Abbas:**

One of the important changes in the eleventh century during Shah Abbas I's reign (996-1038 A.H.) was the conquest of Hormuz and defeating Portuguese's in south island of Iran in 1031 A.H. (Vosooqi.1384. 273). Falling of Hormuz, first of all and above all, was the sign of decline in specific distribution system which was based on total utilizing and supporting the exchange process of commodity around the world.

So, the fall of Portuguese's forts and the controlling over of companies around vast part of trade in Europe and Asia were taken place at the same time and made decrease the Persian Gulf trade but didn't prevent it and the situation of Iran was important in international trade even after fall of Hormuz and although in early years European companies had decided to gain from silk trade but after a short time they realized Iran transit situation and did their best to connect Iran due to utilizing all its capacities (Steensgaard.1974.398). This led to that Hormuz Island exited Iran sea trade cycle as well as Bandar Abbas was substituted as the focal point of sea exchanges for 120 years.

Bandar Abbas already was a small countryside with population of 200; called Gambron, that Imam Qoli Khan-Fars governor- conquered it in 1022 A.H. This small countryside was progressed by Shah Abbas I's supports and Imam Qoli Khan's sagacity by a short time. In 1031 A.H, Imam Qoli Khan wrote a letter to one of the British agents in which this was named as Bandar-e-Abbasi (Abbasieh), the first title instead of Gambron (Vosooqi.1388. 114). Gambron is located in the three countryside's of "Soroo", "Nakhooda" and Bander so it is demanding to determine its right placement among them. In early Islamic centuries' scripts is mentioned a port by the name of "Soroo" or "Shahroo" which were located on the trade road of Hormuz to Kerman and Shiraz (Istakhri, 145. Moqadasi, 638).

Bandar probably was a place that would have named as Gamron or Gambron (Nikitin.1960.109). Shah Abbas I's reign, this place was described by itineraries and historian as a countryside with a mosque and one hundred population as well as poor people and houses made by cane and reed (Newberier.1905. 456-460; Teixeira.1970. 209). Main economic and population changes began as soon as falling Hormuz and transferring all population and trade facilities to the new port. Pietro Delavalleh, the Italian tourist, write about the new port of Abbasi months after the conquest of Hormuz:

*"We arrived Gambron twenty –first of Septembers on Wednesday. A vast and populated area on the coast which its name changed because of changing its possessor. People from different nationality gathered there. Besides Muslims and a wealth of local Jewish, many Indian idolater and follower of other fractions live there"* (delavalleh.26-1226).

Seven years later of Hormuz conquering, Sir Thomas Herbert known this port as a multi-national city where traders from different parts of the world as England, Portugal, Netherland, Armenia, Georgia, Russia, Ottoman, Indian and Arabic lands. He believed that international trade was the reason for the flourishing of this port. Herbert had estimated the port population about one-thousand families and described bazaar and urban constructions compellingly (Herbert.1928. 41-49). Considering precious experience of designers and architectures Safavid era, implementing planned policy for urban development of "Bandar-e-Abbasi" is expected. The quality of the forms of locating buildings and beautiful scenes in this port is so excellent that eighteen years after the revival of this port, a European tourist wrote:

*"...Bandar-e-Abbasi, the city in which only eighteen families lived during my initial visit, is now the largest city and on a trade scale is similar to the best city of England, as it couldn't be found a similar city all around the Asia (Boothy. pp.43-44).*

These evidences elaborate that progress and development was carried out by means of special planning and supervising as well as all installations and necessary building were constructed to convert it into a main transit port in a limited time. The sudden increasing of urban population made officials to supply daily needs, especially drinking water and, at the beginning, decided to construct some underground cisterns.

Then, the instruments of carrying the water provided from neighbor areas as “Abbasid”, “Isin” and “Naband” so the water problem was solved. A large amount of daily needs as fruit, vegetables and meat provided from Qeshm island (LeBruyn. vol2. 75; Thevont. vol,2. 137). Despite inappropriate placement and inexpedient choosing in altering the trade Centre from Hormuz to Bandar-e-Abbasi, it converted to the focal point of trade exchanges of Persian Gulf in less than 14year as well as an international trade city, the mystery and symbol of Iranian existence in regional and international trade.

### **Conclusion**

Safavid kings’ Economic expedients, especially Shah Abbas I, of the foreign trade development resulted in special flourishing of regional and international trade. Economic function of cities played the organizer role in urban economy, rural economy and pastoral economy which were the three important parts in structure of economy in Safavid era. Natural state and climate conditions (agricultural economy), locating in trade roads (exchange system) and existence of ports (exporter) resulted in that Safavid cities create a new network of exchanging commodity organization at national and international levels by utilizing territorial possession and potential of sea and overland road ways.

Here, king, local elites, Armenian traders and foreign trade companies were the main important elements in this era’s trade cycle. Structure of economy in Safavid era shows king’s especial and authoritative characteristics in produce to export process. As, king implemented constructive encouraging policies to gain profit processing products (sumptuous silk carpets) throughout land reforming policy (converting Mamalik and Khadssa to Khalisi-crown land), monopoly of silk trade against European countries. It could be mentioned that to varying forms of commerce, king gave the duty of national marketing to Iranian and Jewish, international marketing to Armenians in silk trade and he himself, as a supervisor, controlled the process of the trade.

The conclusion studies on the role of these cities in process of product, distribution and consumption of commodity indicated that Shah Abbas I made a network of retail system of agricultural products which was under king’s monopolization. Mechanism for trading especially silk trade in this era acted in a way that all silk-growers must sell their products to Shah Abbas’s office-holder in trade affairs’ vizir (primary minister). Shah Abbas purchased silks from possessor in half-valued which other customers as Armenian of Isfahan did , then he sold the silk to Iranian and foreign traders in a value which he determined himself. King’s possessory exploitation as well as despotic monopolization was vanished in Shah Safi era and in addition to other factors prepared the ground for downfall of functional cities.

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