

Original Research Article

## Investigation and adaptation of Baba-Tavakol and Mir-Motahhar as two mausoleums in the village of Babalanger

Fateme Nourabadi<sup>1</sup>, Javad Shekari Niri<sup>2</sup>, Sajad Moazen<sup>3\*</sup>

- 1- MA student in the restoration and revitalization of buildings and historical structures and the conservation and restoration of architectural heritage, Imam Khomeini International University, Qazvin, Iran.
- 2- Associate professor, School of Architecture and Environment Design, Imam Khomeini International University, Qazvin, Iran.
- 3- Assistant professor, School of Architecture and Environment Design, Iran University of Science and Technology, Tehran, Iran.

doi: 10.22034/ahdc.2023.19266.1703

Received:  
November 25, 2022

Accepted:  
October 26, 2023

**Keywords:**  
Rural heritage,  
Anatomical  
knowledge,  
Construction  
techniques,  
Baba-Tavakoll  
mausoleum,  
Mir-Motahhar  
mausoleum,

### Abstract

This research focuses on the two mausoleums of Baba-Tavakol and Mir-Motahhar located in the village of Babalanger in Khorasan Razavi Province, which are in better conditions compared to the other monuments in the village. These two buildings have rich cultural and natural backgrounds among the historical buildings in that place, but they have not been investigated in detail yet. This research seeks to study these buildings, their development, and founders. Getting to know these two tombs as much as possible will lead to more effective decisions in the future to repair the damages and ensure their durability. The proximity of the two tombs is also addressed in this research. It is done in the first stage by documenting the tombs and studying their historical background and then by examining the periodization and additions of the buildings. The data are finally compared to achieve the expected results. The characteristics of the two tombs are investigated using collection methods and documentary and field studies. The Documentary studies include the study of books, travelogues, dedication letters, photographs, articles, journals and periodicals, related theses, and other research items. The field studies are also conducted by visiting the site, mapping, modifying the maps, and taking photos as well as interviews and discussions with experts, experts, and residents of the region. The research shows that the construction period of the building is related to the Timurid era, and a person with the nickname "Belqeis Zaman" was the founder. The initial core of the tombs was a domed four-room tomb with four openings, which were closed in later periods, and two porches were added in the eastern part of the building. According to the results of the investigation, there are similarities and differences between the two tombs in the arch plans and coverings and the implementation techniques and materials. The findings also show that the mausoleum of Mir-Motahhar was built with a time gap from the mausoleum of Baba-Tavakol, and the previous structural defects were repaired in it.



## Extended Abstract

### 1. Introduction

The tombs of Baba-Tavakol and Mir-Motahhar are among the most valuable monuments in the village of Babalanger. According to the new country divisions, Babalanger is part of the Meshkan section of Khoshab City in Razavi Khorasan Province. These two tombs are located in the northern part and outside the village at the foot of Mount Asghalan. To access the two tombs, after passing the village, go to the top of the opposite mountain, first reach a dry tree and then Mazhar Qanat in the middle of the village and the bathroom, which are located on the right side of the path. A sheriff's fort or prison is located at a higher altitude, a short distance from the bathroom. On the left, there is a cave or shelter. There are crypts on the way to the tombs, these two tombs are surrounded by an entrance gate which is located on the south side of the two tombs and the wall connected to it. On the south side of this entrance is a caravanserai, and, next to it and on the southwest side of the tombs, there is a reservoir building. Some quadrangle and a healing spring are located on the east and west sides of the tombs. Among other natural works are the sea fossils, many gardens, and water springs in the region. Native architectural style, canvas materials, simple plan and facade design, and local techniques in the construction of these two tombs have made them unique.

### 2. Research Methodology

In this research, various written documents such as dedications and inscriptions, field observation, and analysis of the structural components and elements of tombs are discussed. Questions about the construction system of tombs, the degree of influence on each other, and more detailed matters of buildings such as the type of covering and their construction techniques are answered with descriptive-historical and analytical methods through field studies. In the descriptive-historical section, the recognition of the tombs of Baba-Tavakol and Mir-Motahhar is based on the collection of documents such as inscriptions and dedicatory deeds and their re-reading as well as field observations of the buildings. In the comparative part, a comparison is made between the two tombs based on the quality of the construction system and the techniques used. For this purpose, first, various data about the primary structure of the building, and the type of arches and vaults are collected, and then a comparison is made between the two tombs. Finally, in the third part, the information on how to build and the common features in the two parts is analyzed and examined.

### 3. Results and discussion

In this part of the article, the transformations and physical additions of the two tombs were studied based on historical documents and the analysis of maps through field visits. A comparative study of the architecture of the two tombs showed that their structures were in the form of a four-room domed house in which there were intrusions in different periods such as inclusion of three openings and porches.

Another difference between the two buildings is their decorations. In appearance, the tomb of Baba-Tavakol is simpler and is built with local materials, plaster decorations (mostly in Qajar

period), and paintings (Teimuri and Safavi periods). They show the honor and respect that people gave to this buried figure (who was probably one of the mystics). The decorations of Mir-Motahhar focus on the same brickwork as on the exterior of the building, which increases the suspicion that the buried person was an emir.

The use of arches that are completely identical to the primary structure of the two tombs is considered as a similarity of these two tombs. According to the study of the technique of constructing the two tombs, it can be stated that the tomb of Baba-Tavakol was built with a time gap and earlier than the tomb of Mir-Motahhar. Also, the defects that existed in the construction of the tomb of Baba-Tavakoll were not repeated in the building of the tomb of Mir-Motahhar; rather, they were corrected.

#### 4. Conclusion

Examining and comparing the construction periods and the characteristics of the construction techniques of the two tombs revealed that, although the physical structures of the two tombs look similar, the difference in the construction techniques and the type of materials proves that these two buildings were not built at the same time. The defects of Baba-Tavakol's tomb were not repeated; they were corrected in the building of Mir-Motahhar's tomb that was built after that. The architect used different materials according to his needs in the construction of the Mir-Motahhar tomb. The foundation of the building was made with rubble stone and wood to control and restrain the thrust and traction forces in different parts of the building. Another important point about Mir-Motahhar's tomb is the correct use of three-arched designs in the construction of the dome.

#### References

- Abedi, Mehdi and Dazhand, Gholamhasan. (2018). Historical history of tomb buildings and holy places in Iran during the Islamic period (a case study of holy places in Kohgiluyeh province and Boyer Ahmad. History, politics, and media research journal. 1(4), 493-512.
- Afshar, Iraj. (2017). *Golgasht Dar Watan* (travel book). Tehran: Akhtaran.
- Asadi, Elaha, (2013). Babalanger Village Leader Plan, Khorasan Razavi Islamic Revolution Housing Foundation, Rural Development Deputy, Technical Affairs Office.
- Bakhtiari Shahri, Mahmoud. (1995). Master's thesis in the field of archeology "Introduction of the religious-historical complex of Babalanger in connection with the historical monuments of the Neishabur servitude region and Yam Sabzevar valley". The University of Tehran.
- Blair, Sheila, and Bloom, Jonathan. (1948). *Islamic Art and Architecture in Iran and Central Asia: Ilkhanate and Timurian Period*, Volume 1, translator: Mohammad Musa Hashemi Golpaigani (2013). Tehran: Printing and Publishing Organization of Islamic Culture and Guidance.
- Dekhoda, Ali Akbar. (1939). *Dekhoda dictionary*. Tehran: Amir Kabir.
- Ebrahimi, Elahe. (2019). A descriptive study of the architecture of Timurid era tombs. *Specialized Scientific Quarterly of Religious Culture Approach*. 2(6), 116-136.
- Ebrahimi, Elahe. (2018). Investigation of Timurid period architecture (with emphasis on mosques and schools). *Specialized scientific quarterly of religious culture approach*. 1(4), 136-159.
- Ebrahimidooost, Mohammad Ali and Abdullahzadeh Thani, Mohammad. (2007). *Khoshab* (cultural, geographical, and historical background of Khoshab). Sabzevar: Omid Mehr.

- Ebrahimidoost, Mohammad Ali and Abdullahzadeh Thani, Mohammad. (2009). Sultanabad Negin Khoshab. Sabzevar: Omid Mehr.
- Faridi Majid, Fatemeh and Malekpour, Najmeh. (2009). History of Iran's country divisions 2006-1906. Introduction, preparation and final review: Hassan Habibi. Publications: Iranology Foundation.
- Geographical Organization of the Armed Forces, Geographical Culture of the Country's Settlements, Razavi Khorasan Province, Sabzevar City, Publications of the Geographical Organization of the Ministry of Defense and Support of the Armed Forces. (2005).
- Gholami, Gholamhossein. (2014). Investigating the architectural features of the Timurid tomb of Khosrowieh, North Khorasan, with an emphasis on recognizing the course of physical evolution. Scientific Quarterly Journal of Promotion. 66(35), 97-114.
- Hooshyar, Farimah; Heydari, Dariush and Hemat Zadeh, Saeed. (2020). A Study on the Methods of Weight Lightening of Vaults in Historical Buildings. Athar. 41 (2), 130-155.
- Hassanzadeh, Soheila. (2018). Goharshad Begum is a role model of a migrant woman. Two specialized scientific quarterly "Women's Research Studies". 5(8), 91-114.
- Jafarian, Rasool. (1994). Islamic heritage of Iran. The sixth volume. Publisher: Public Library of Hazrat Grand Ayatollah Marashi Najafi.
- Khannikov, Nikolai Vladimirovich. (1996). Khanikov's travelogue: trip report to the southern part of Central Asia. Translation: Aqdas Yaghmai and Abu al-Qasim Baighnah. Mashhad: Astan Quds Razavi.
- Memarian, Gholamhossein. (2017). Iranian architecture. Soroush Danesh
- Maiel Hervey, Noble. (1996). Anchor. Kalk Tir, Mardad and Shahrivar, numbers 76, 77, 78 and 79.
- Raeeszadeh, Mahnaz and Mofid, Hossein. (2010). Revival of the forgotten arts (basics of traditional architecture in Iran according to Professor Hossein Lorzadeh). Tehran: Molla.
- Rahimnia, Reza; Mahmoudzadeh, Amin; Tehrani, Farhad and Zamanifard, Ali. (2012). Recognition of Vernacular Architectural Practices in the South of Khorasan, an Approach for Conservation and Restoration of Earthen architecture. Housing and village environment. 32 (142), 19-22.
- Rasouli, Ehsan; Etesam, Iraj and Matin, Mehrdad. (2020). The Style and Architectural Decorations of Timurid Structures. Scientific Research Journal of Islamic Art Studies. 16(37), 110-128.
- Sani al-Douleh, Mohammad Hassan Khan. (1922). Matlaal-Shams (in the detailed history and geography of the lands and places of Khorasan). With an introduction: Teimur Borhan Limodehi (1983). Tehran: Yesavali.
- Tavousi, Mahmoud; Shekhari Niri, Javad and Behloli Niri, Behzad. (2015). Cemetery Monuments with Eight Half-Plan in the Cultural Scope of Iran. Two Quarterly Journals of Architectural Thought, 1(1), 24-38.
- Wahdattalab, Massud and Ghadimzadeh, Somayyeh. (2018). The Study of Formal Elegance in the Iranian Domed Squares (Ninth to Twelfth Hijra Centuries). Journal of Honar-ha-ye-ziba memari-va-shahrsazi. 23(3), 27-40.
- Wilber, Donald and Glembeck, Lisa. (1995). Timurid architecture in Iran and Turan. Tehran: Iran's Cultural Heritage Organization.
- Wilber, Donald. (1986). Islamic architecture of Iran during the Ilkhanian period. Tehran: Scientific and Cultural.
- Yate, Charles Edward. (1986). Khorasan and Sistan: Colonel Yate's travelogue to Iran and Afghanistan. Translated by Ezzatalah Roshani Zafferanlou and Mehrdad Dahbari. Tehran: Yazdan.
- Zomorshidi, Hossein. (1994). Arch and arch in Iranian architecture. Tehran: Keihan.