

The Tomb of Meer Buzerg at Barkhan, Balochistan: History and Architecture

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Abstract: District Barkhan is one of the neglected regions of Balochistan in terms of archeological and ethnological investigation, in which it is very rich. Recently in 2013, an exploratory team of Balochistan Study Center, University of Balochistan made a three-day archaeological exploration in Barkhan to record archaeological sites and monuments. Apart from other discoveries, the team also discovered an Islamic Period tomb. But proper documentation was carried out later on by the principal author. The tomb is situated in a small town about 15 km south west of Barkhan city. This is a 17th century tomb erected by the Mughal ruler Jahangir to entomb one of his brave generals who passed away while going to Kandahar. The history of this long march has been written by a Hindu historian Raie Bahadur Lala Aturam in his famous book *Tarikh-e-Balochistan* in 1903. He has also mentioned this tomb and the information pertaining to the buried personage. Architecturally this monument is octagon in plain. The octagonal architecture resembles the Tomb of Shah Rukn-e-Alam, Multan with its architectural elements as well the tombs of Lal Mara Sharif in DI Khan, Uchchh Sharif in Bahawalpur, and other pre-eminent Muslim Architectural shrines of Pakistan.

Keywords: Balochistan, Sooran Barkhan, Tomb, Meer Buzerg, Tombstone, Architectural decoration.

Introduction

Barkhan has 1317 square miles area and is 1216 ft above mean sea level. It is bordered on the east by Dera Ghazi Khan, on the west by Loralai, north by Musa Khel, and south by Kohlu and Dera Bugti districts (Pl. 1.) (Loralai District Gazetteer 1986: 329). Scattered low hills bound Barkhan on the north side. The Rakhni stream drain the water from the valley. The Jandran range runs on the west and north-west of the Barkhan valley, connected with the Suleiman Range. The structure of these mountains shows stones at one place and earth, sands and cliffs at other. From distance these mountains look like a ship. Locally this mountain has been termed as *Nakhmund* means “under the nose.” It is noteworthy that a lot of fossils of sea urchin are lying scattered all over in the foothills of this *Nakhmund*. Different hill torrents such as *Han*, *Dhaura*, *Bela Dhaka* are flowing from these ranges (Barkhan District Profile 2011: 5).

Nomenclature of Barkhan

History shows that the name of this region kept changes from time to time. The present name “Barkhan” is derived from its Chief’s name *Baro Khan* who once ruled this valley. When the British occupied this region, it was difficult for them to pronounce Khan, which as replaced for Kaan and thus the name changes from Baro Khan to Barokhaan and then Barkhan. It is also worth mentioning that in Balochi alphabets there is no letter of Persian or Urdu *Kha* and instead it is read or written as *ha*, or *Ka*. It is also possible that the Baloch also pronounce it the same way as the Britishers (Sodrohi 2009: 11).

Moreover, Abu-al-Fazal, mentioned (A’in-i-Akbari, volume 2/ 166) this valley regarding the financial income of the Government of Swistan/Sibistan (present Sibi) as *Chanijah*, later on *Janjah/Junjeh*. It is suggested by A.R. Buller that at the time of Akbar’s reign, this valley was called as *Janjah* (Nasir 1998: 21).

Archaeological History of Barkhan

It is one of the neglected regions of Balochistan where no archaeological explorations took place. However, the region is potentially very productive in terms of archaeological and heritage sites. The present authors have also observed Chalcolithic and Bronze Age mounds in their visit. A thorough and comprehensive survey and archaeological investigations will surely unfold new cultures and sites in the region, which will present a new picture from the prehistoric age to the Islamic period. There are also Islamic graveyards with a large number having different carved motifs on both headstones and gravestones. Local Baloch embroidery consists of stiches sewn onto female clothes resemble the motifs engraved on these gravestones. The stones differ in sizes with some are 3 meters tall. There are certain headstones shaped like swords, which are lofty, probably represent battles or warriors martyred in this valley.

Throughout Pakistan, Barkhan is the only region where the Geological Survey of Pakistan discovered dinosaur's fossils while doing a geological mapping and bio-stratigraphic research. This discovery ranked Pakistan among those countries of the world where these fossils were found, after North and South America, Mangolia and China.

In 1905, Major C. A. Kembal stated that there are not any such ancient buildings that could demonstrate its medieval days, but of course, there are mounds and ruins of mud forts attributed to Mughal Emperors commonly seen throughout the district. The early written accounts reveal that once including this valley from Kashmir to Makran was in command of Hindu Raja, named Sihan or Sihar. Subsequently, it can be speculated that by the arrival of Mughals the massive Hindu rule faced a thrash and came to an end as suggested by ruins left behind them (Loralai District Gazetteer 1986: 44).

Beyond this, once a great number of gold coins were discovered from the areas of Dabar Kot, but today none of them is accessible. Other than this, in 1903, six copper coins were unearthed from Barkhan, among which two of them belonged to Sikandar Lodi II (1488-1517). The silver coins identified to be of Umayyad Caliph Marwan II, were obtained in 1903 from Duki area. These were struck around ACE 745 (Aturam 1986: 52). Recently in 2014, 6 copper coins probably belong to Kushan dynasty, were also discovered during an illegal digging of a Muslim cemetery at Ishani Barkhan. However, these coins were later on donated by Wahid Khetran to the Balochistan Study Center Museum, University of Balochistan, Quetta.

The Tomb of Meer Buzerg (Sooran)

The historical records suggest that Ameer Khosro, the prince of Mughal Emperor Jahangir, chose the route of Barkhan to march towards Kandahar in AH 1010 (AD 1601). During this march, one of his daring generals, called as Meer Buzerg, passed away in Vatakari in Barkhan, and was buried here (Nasir 1998: 23).

The remains of this tomb are still present with some residual crumbling walls (Aturam 1986: 597). This domical structure was built near a mosque and the mosque has been built before this tomb long ago some two hundred thirty-one years. And during the British period a road was constructed alongside of this monument that connects Dear Ghazi Khan to Kandahar, now known as Pishin Road. The monument stands tall on the fringe of a natural mound (between 29°45'38.50" N, and 69°26'30.74" E), 17m high from the ground level, occupying an area of 81 m from east to west, making the monument visible from 3 km distance (Pl. 4.). This monument was discovered in the beginning of 20th century by Raai Bahadur Lala Aturam who mentioned it in his book *Tarikh e Balochistan* in 1903 who also wrote a brief history of the person and the tomb,

reconstructed from the Persian inscriptions, which are no longer there. According to local sources, these inscriptions were removed by the British army during the colonial Period.

Besides, it was revisited on 19th December, 2013 by a team of Balochistan Study Center (BSC), University of Balochistan and on 5th of January 2015.

Temporal Context

The prescribed date for this cenotaph is based upon three solid evidences i.e. the first one is the Persian inscriptions quoted by Aturam, (Aturam 1903: 597); the second is the Mughal control over these regions (Amanullah: 70-71) and the third is the architectural ornamentation, bearing Mughal influences (Pl. 19). However, we do not have the actual Persian inscriptions attached at the tomb wall. But through the authentic source of Aturam this is dated to the beginning of 17th century.

Tombstone One

On 17th of Ramadan AH 1010 (AD 11-02-1602) on the instruction of the chosen conqueror Hazrat Noor-ud-Din Muhammad Jahangir Shah King, he (the buried) was caused to go to Kandahar and reached this destination at last. This tomb is erected for Meer Buzerg (saint) son of late Nawab Muhammad Bakri (Pl. 5.).

Poetry Inscribed on the Tombstone

Not merely this, they also inscribed tragic poetry for the deceased on the tombstone. As a matter of fact, this two-lined poetry narrates the complete charter of the entombed personage. These lines of the poetry substantiate the claim of his sainthood and positive behavior towards his king and the commoners. The poetry translation is

That beneficence bright star (the late) is no more,
That personified being is no more,

Where a needy (destitute) goes when the merciful is
no more (Pl. 6.).

In fact, he was someone very especial to the emperor that at a place where it could have been quite difficult at that time to contrive such a magnificent edifice which is commemorating him. From the historical annals, it has been confirmed that Meer Massom Bakari was the father of Meer Buzerg.

Meer Masoom Bakari (the father of Meer Buzerg) was a famous historian of the Mughal Period. He has written many inscriptions during his travels *en route* India to Kandahar through the valleys of Sindh and Balochistan. He was an unparalleled calligrapher of his time. Because of his childhood's trainings he became a multi-talented man. His talents were so high that simultaneously he was a historian, calligrapher, writer, poet and a brave general. Akbar the great did not remain unimpressed by this talented man and that is why, he was made ambassador to Persia (Shafi 1970: 63-4). After his return from Persia he got ill and died in AD 1610. Later on, on the order of King Jahangir, an octagonal tomb was built over his grave at Sukur, Sindh (Pl. 23).

The Perimeter Wall of the Tomb

Beside the façade, the domical structure on the east, the foundation remains of a perimeter wall were exposed showing that once it was enclosed in a perimeter wall. It is mainly damaged but the exposed part suggests that the wall is 60cm thick. It is composed of two elements i.e. baked bricks and stones. On the interior and exterior sides, it is made from bricks whereas in the middle of brick courses, the wall is provided with cut stones in mud mortar. This stylistic architecture is still being imitated in parts of Balochistan in order to make the wall stouter from any sort of natural or manmade disasters.

The Buttresses and Entrances

The monument of Meer Buzereg is internally 27m and externally 30m in diameter. The present height of this fallen monument without its dome is 7.2 meters, resting on 1.3 m thick foundation wall. Internally it has been provided 6 blind arches of 2.4x1.3 m size and two main entrances. It used to be a domical structure with an octagonal plan (pl. 8). The dome as well as parts of the drum are no more there due to ravages of time. Each corner has attached tapering buttresses, supporting the structure. Currently six buttresses are visible whereas two are completely damaged (Pl. 11). The buttresses are plain but may have been decorated with glazed tiles. This building has two arched entrance, one on the east and other on south (Pl. 8), measuring 2.4x1.3m (height and width respectively). Both entrances are damaged by clandestine diggers.

The External Arch Panels

The second storey (drum) was provided with 8 small-sized blind arches externally, one on each side, having 1.6m height. The arches decorate the drum, which is 1.8m high. The middle of the blind arches is aesthetically embellished with a pair of diaper pattern. They are separated with a double band of blue glazed tiles. And in the middle of these two glazed tiles a white glazed plug brick with a single net ornamentation has been inserted. In fact, they form as a divider between these designs in the blind arches. Further, the above diaper pattern has also been decorated with white glazed plug brick in X shaped. The lower one possesses an akin diaper shape, with only difference recorded that it has a baked clean brick placed in the midpoint in stretcher position. The same pattern has also been applied at the arch springers of both sides where it is forming a gothic-arch variant. Thus, this likeness has been employed in the other remaining seven blind arches of the drum. From the cavity appeared between each brick-course, it

yielded remains of lime mortar (Pl. 11).

Nevertheless, the hemispherical dome, which seems to be hemispherical in shape, has once been lying on the round drum which still stands atop of the monument with some of the remnant brick courses. Presently, these all brick courses are in weather-beaten positions, and thus, look unglazed without any embellishments. The present estimated height of the drum measures 1.3 meters with 9 brick layers which are clearly visible on the top.

Use of Bricks and Mortar

The mausoleum has been erected with fine quality of terracotta bricks and plugs. The largest size of the terracotta brick used in the construction measure 26.2×6 cm. In fact, this is an unbaked brick but well refined with sharp straight edges. The second type of the unglazed terracotta brick measure 16.2×10 cm. The terracotta plugs and other cut dressed bricks have a length of 16.2×3.7 cm. The V shaped terracotta molded (curved) bricks were also reported between the centers of the blind arches as well in the panel arches. Generally, they are of distinct sizes but the quality and refinements look of equal value. The other curved-bricks were used at the top corner of the recessed pillars of the blind and panel arches (Pls. 19 & 20).

The mortars used were of two types of mortars-mud and lime. It has been analyzed that prior to application of the decorated glazed tiles, first the mason used the mud mortar. The mud mortar has been prepared from the fine sieved clayey soil mixed and applied with straw. This mortar has been only used for bonding the terracotta bricks to raise the height of structure. The second type of mortar was lime probably mixed with gypsum. This lime mortar has been applied only between the decorated glazed tiles, cut and dressed bricks, and glazed terracotta plugs both on the interior and exterior of the tomb.

Beams

The domical-tomb has been provided with wooden beams at three different heights. It aimed at to sustain the heavy load of the dome chamber and to show elasticity against the sudden violent jolts of earthquakes. The first wooden beam has been set horizontally after 6 brick-courses just above the foundation bricks and the first-floor blind arches. The second wooden beam was set above the first beam with a maximum space of 7 brick-courses from the first beam. This beam also runs horizontally fixed in the core of the structure. While the third and last beam is running horizontally in the transitional phase of the structure just above the interior blind-arch panels. This third beam has a *spatio-context* of 39 brick-courses from the middle (second) beam (Pl. 14). Furthermore, the wooden beams used on this monument are locally called *Kahoor* (a mountainous tree). This tree still can be seen just below the natural mound of the tomb area. It can easily can grow everywhere in the district without needing regular water. So, from here it can be hypothesized that these wooden beams used in the construction of this structure were obtained and prepared from the surrounding areas.

Interior Decoration

Being an octagonal structure, it is also beautified with 6 blind arches along with two entrances on the ground-floor. The blind arches were ornamented with double chessboard decorations in the interior. Similarly, two other chessboard patterns were provided at the springers above the ogee-shaped arches, and hence, divided by pointed atop curve of the arch. More specifically, these patterns have been demonstrated as a diaper style both up and down. The lower one has been provided with 24 blue glazed plug bricks facing glazed color in the face and making the diaper embellishment. The first circle (diaper) has been formed with 8 decorative plugs and smaller in size while the second circle has been worked out

with 16 t/c plugs and encompassing the first diaper pattern in it. In them, two decorative diaper-shaped circles X shaped white glazed tiles have been installed to fabricate the diaper ornamentations more lavishly. While the above diaper pattern has an analogous look but smaller in size than the lower one. These all terracotta plugs have been utilized as tesserae from a mosaic shaped decoration. The divider between these two diaper patterns is a simple solo blue glazed band. Similarly, this architectural element is also reported from Lal Mara in DI Khan (Pl. 14).

A double horizontal dental ornamentation can be seen with double unglazed tiles just above each arch. Additionally, a decorative horizontal line of $\frac{1}{11}$ style is running throughout the structure above the dental patterns. It was made with blue glazed t/c plugs with further an X shaped white plug between each single decoration. We could report only a single wooden beam running horizontally in the first storey of this monument while as earlier mentioned the other two are above this floor.

Arch Squinches

The zone of transition has been raised with 8 stepped pattern squinches on each corner. The corner squinches have been architecturally patterned in dental ornamentations. Just above these squinches, the third layer of wooden beam is running horizontally. Indeed, throughout the monument one would notice 3 certain squinches which are residual. The lime mortar can effortlessly be seen between different brick courses lower and above the squinches. From the dental design one could behold the straight edges of the t/c bricks of excellent quality.

More generally, the zone of transition is more eye-catching from the middle wooden beam. It looks like as though, that the artist has emphasized here more to yield an aesthetic art.

The 16 pillars of the zone of transition along with the 16 arch panels, are more striking than any other part of the edifice. These 16 corner arch panels are functioning as dividers between each arch panel. Like the blind arches in the ground-floor (entrance level) of the monument, the arches of the zone of transition are also provided with a pair of diaper embellishments in the middle. Similarly, inside each blind arch is divided with a blue glazed band. The only distinction that could be recorded between the blind arches of ground-floor and zone of transition is a bottom ornamentation applied in the lowest most part of the arch with a double banded motif of blue glazed tiles. In the middle the double band was beautified with white net pattern design. At the vertical support (pillar between each arch) of the arch panels, it has been enclosed with triple brackets of blue glazed plugs. These brackets are in fact, forming as outlines at equal intervals. At the springers of each blind-arch arabesque motifs are applied. These arabesque motifs are depicted on two white glazed tiles attached together and decorated with blue arabesque ornamentations on white.

The Zone of Transition

The zone of transition is decorated with lozenge beautifications running horizontally. Above this a double blue glazed horizontal line forming a double band with the application of chain ornament running horizontally throughout the tympanum. This chain pattern is made of white and blue glazed cut and dressed bricks. The lozenge, double blue glazed band and chain pattern is thicker than seven brick. As mentioned the chain ornamentation is being completed by a double band glazed tile decoration, likewise above this chain motif the same double pattern has also been applied to make the design more prominent. Thus, the chain ornamentation is in the central position. After a space of 9 brick courses, another blue glazed band is visible

running horizontally. Over the top of this single blue glazed band another series of dental embellishment is running horizontally with double blue glazed plug courses. This series of dental ornament has in fact initiated the rim of the dome and functioning as the supporting element to tolerate the heavy load of the hemispherical dome (Pl. 14).

Site Vandalism

Two irregular shape of illegal pits have been excavated inside the tomb in the northern area. According to some senior locals, the two pits have been illegally exposed after 1990s. They merely recovered some potsherds. However, these all iconoclastic activities have deteriorated this last Mughal artistic example found in Balochistan (Pl. 13).

The Remains of a Mosque

The debris of the mosque is scattered over a large area, particularly on the northern sloping edge of the natural mound. The foundation courses of the mosque measure a height of 25cm. From the debris, it can be suggested that the length of this mosque measured some 8.3×5.3 meters. The fallen debris is likely to demonstrate that this monument was east-open with the *mehrab* on the west. The thickness of the wall could be assumed 90cm with an entrance on the east. This entrance was not wide more than a meter (pls. 12 & 19).

However, the masonry of the mosque was constructed through locally dressed-stones brought from the surrounding mountains. Somehow this stone work is an easy job to perform because the mountains from where these stones are collected are naturally divided in different layers locally called *ragg*. Therefore, during the need such stones are cut from the mountains where the entire row (layer of stone) is taken out painstakingly and transported to the constructional scene. Where later it is dressed and polished according to the architectural styles.

The colors of these mountains are mostly light greyish and yellowish. Sometimes it also can be experienced that after the constructional work there would not be any need of rendering as it looks more beautiful and thus need not any plaster work. Moreover, the chip stones have also been applied to cover small gaps between different courses and beautified the monument accordingly. The mortar used for bonding these stone masonries was adobe. We could not document any remains of roof but it is possible to assume that it could have been an adobe roof as this style is still prevailing in the vicinity.

Literary Evidence of the Mosque

A mosque inscription has also been quoted by Lala Aturam. Nevertheless, Aturam has not mentioned wherefrom he has quoted it. Either the time when he was exploring these monuments-the tomb and mosque both were standing, or the mosque inscription has later been engraved and fixed in the tomb too.

Translation- the Tombstone Two

(With the name of Allah who is kind and merciful)

Malik Buyātoor Tareeni Khail Moosyani engraved the tombstone during the reign of Sultan Feroz Shah on 20th Friday in the month of Zulhaj, while he commenced the construction of this masjid on the 20th of Zulhaj AH 770, (AD 26-07-1369). May God bestow mercy upon the people who come to this site and recite the verse of Fathiā (from Holly Quran) earnestly! Blessings on Hassan and Hussain! (Pl. 7).

Remains of a Room-like structure

We also noticed some foundation walls probably of a room through the scattered stone masonry. The present height of this room from the ground level could not accede more than 15cm. It was lying on the western portion of the mound. The entire architectural pattern is almost similar to the

mosque. This uniformity in the architectural style suggests that both these building were built at the same time.

The Architectural Continuity

On the other hand, the alike cultural-continuum of architecture could be observed in the vicinity. We observed the same building style found from the mosque remains that still prevails comely in the whole district and the adjacent regions as well. The houses were rendered after a smooth and thick coating of mud mixed with straw both internally and externally so that the house or room could be bi-seasonal in terms of weather. Barkhan is one of those districts in Balochistan where the winter gets severely cold and alike with extremely hot summer. So, for making both seasons pleasant this stylized architecture is productive for the winter and summer seasons and thus commonly adopted.

The Other Existing and Non-Existing Octagonal Tombs in Balochistan

Throughout Balochistan the number of octagonal tombs are quite limited. Still some octagonal monuments exist with cursive conditions and rest of the others have completely vanished from the surface of the earth. From the present standing ones, the tomb of Misri Khan in Sibi, is still famous one. The second octagonal tomb belongs to Moti-Gohram which is located in Jhal Magsi town that has tapering towers atop. The other two non-existing octagonal tombs were once situated within the fortified palace of Khan of Kalat. Although the last two monuments have not been mentioned so far by any archaeologist and neither by any chronicler, however, these came into consideration from the old pictures of the Khan of Kalat Palace. The images of these two tombs were firstly reported by Hameed Baloch (Pls. 21 & 22). In fact, the aim of these two pictures was not to show these monuments rather to explain the sudden assault of the British Army on the

place of Khan of Kalat in 1839. Unfortunately, hitherto nobody knows what happened to these two octagonal tombs which disappeared completely with leaving no remains behind at all.

Comparative Analysis and Conclusion

According to A.N. Khan, the best models for octagonal mausoleums ever built on Pakistani soil, are the tomb structures of Baha al-Din Zakariya and Shah Rukn-i-Alam, which in true sense paved a way for the future architects to imitate architectural traditions. This architectural standard got more and more fame when it was amalgamated with Mughal School of Architecture. Now, one can declare how many certain mausoleums were structured in Pakistan from this school of architecture. Many of such monuments have crumpled into the ground over the years without any documentation and proper consideration. Thus, from the above statement, it could be speculated that the tomb of Barkhan is also one of them which was erected by a Mughal ruler and remained undocumented ever since.

Tomb of Muhammad Bin Haroon

Moreover, this domical edifice has an impact on the Islamic architecture in the tombs of not only Balochistan but also other parts of the country. While on the architectural background, the tomb of Meer Buzerg has similarities with the tomb of Muhammad Bin Haroon at Bela, Balochistan, which is the first Islamic tomb ever built in Balochistan. The tomb of Meer Buzerg has a deep architectural resemblance with the other cut and dressed-brick constructional imitations of Balochistan, Multan School of Architecture, Uchhh Sharif in Bahawalpur, and Lal Mara Sharif in DI Khan.

As Khan states, the other provincial tomb architectural regularity can also be noticed on the tomb of Muhammad Bin Haroon at Bela. Architecturally speaking, the external portion of Muhammad Bin Haroon tomb has been divided

into two sections i.e. lower and upper. The lower is marked with plain brick-tiles with recessed panels, while the upper is faced with cut and curved bricks so that to form the dental (denticulate) friezes. Slightly lower, a chain pattern is running horizontally throughout the exterior. Accordingly, this all uniformity is also found on the tomb of Meer Buzerg though with slight differences in styles and intervals, however, but the architectural notion is alike.

Lal Mara School of Architecture

According to Taj Ali, on the monuments of Lal Mara Sharif two bands of unglazed-bricks were created. These bands were ornamented with lozenge designs and further applied with single beaded patterns and fixed with glazed bricks at different intervals. The other lozenge decorations were finished in simple X shape with glazed t/c plugs. The interior panel bears a pattern made of chain embellishment at the top and further provided with a single course of glazed works both up and down. At the zone of transition the Lal Mara Sharif is also furnished with some single dental friezes as I have noticed similar likeness at the Sooran tomb too. Further, the wooden beams are set at regular intervals at the tomb of Meer Buzerg, nevertheless, similar architectural continuity is also found at Lala Mara Sharif tombs. Thus, these all ornamentations introduced here, have already been mentioned during the architectural description of the Sooran tomb, which have also been applied at the Lala Mara Sharif monuments.

Tomb of Baha al-Din Zakariya

The octagonal mausoleum of Baha al-Din Zakariya is also provided with two entrances alike the tomb of Meer Buzerg in Sooran- one on the east and the other on the west. Further, the exterior of the tomb was executed with blue and green glazed tiles of diaper arrangements. As earlier mentioned, the same diaper pattern style

can also be seen externally on the tomb of Meer Buzerg. So far, the octagonal Shah Rukn-i-Alam edifice is concerned, it is marked with a chain-pattern made of cut-bricks likewise the tomb of Meer Buzerg. Above this panel a thin dental frieze comprised of a double course of cut brick-plugs makes its presence too.

Conclusion

Beside the above comparative analysis, the tomb of Meer Buzerg in actual sense is a unique and master piece tomb structure ever erected in Balochistan; nonetheless, this architecture is common in other provinces of Pakistan, Afghanistan, and Central Asia as well. In view of the fact, until now this is the first Mughal tomb structure reported in Balochistan. On the one hand, the local people and the other natural consequences have not shown mercy on this striking piece of Mughal architectural example. Although, at present, we lack the complete monument however we have some scanty information regarding its architectural elements from the residual endangered walls.

Hitherto, this is the lone surviving constructional paradigm of the Mughal subjugation in Barkhan and other parts of Balochistan. Additionally, this long-lasting tomb does not only tell us the Islamic history of the region but as well demonstrates us more regarding the subjugation and the Mughal

rule over these parts of Balochistan.

The purpose and function of these shrines is not only to commemorate the dead but as well to show the glory of the art and architecture of the past. This tomb construction was carried out for enlightening and accepting the vast and expanded Mughal dynasty. These secular and non-secular edifices also signify the taste of Mughal esthetic. The Muslim rulers like the Pharos of Egypt had known that one day people come here and will raise questions about these bewildering structures which were erected for whatsoever means. So, by these all extraordinary constructions, one can be compelled to think of their glory and the expansion of their rules as signified from these standing monuments.

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Plate 1. District-wise map of Balochistan showing District Barkhan with a Red arrow (courtesy google)

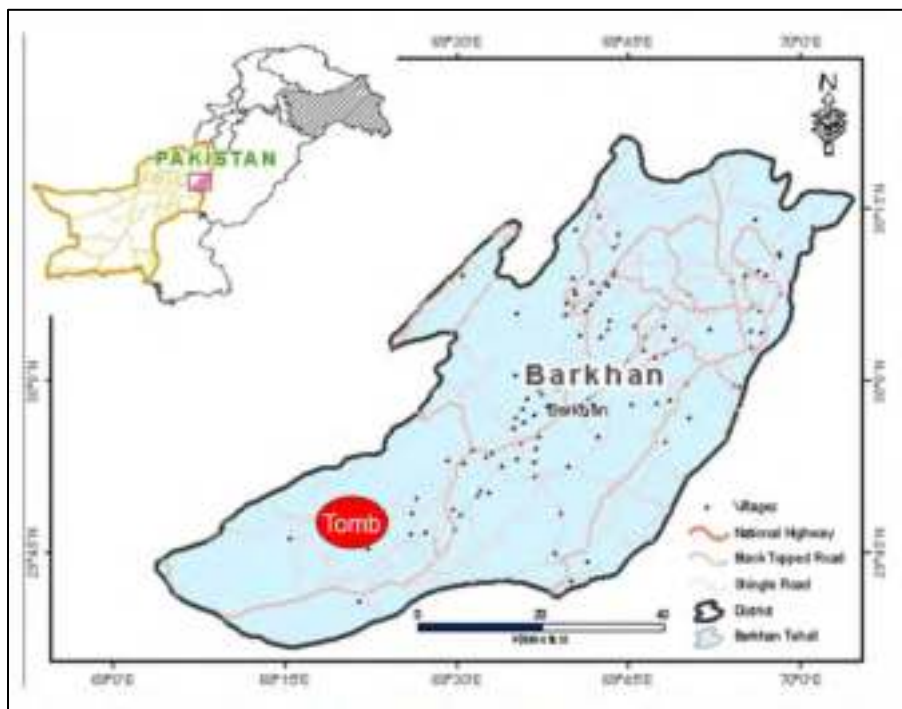


Plate 2. The map of District Barkhan with location of the tomb on the SE with Red circle (courtesy google).



Plate 3. Sketch landscape of Kurakli hill station in Loralai (courtesy Michael).

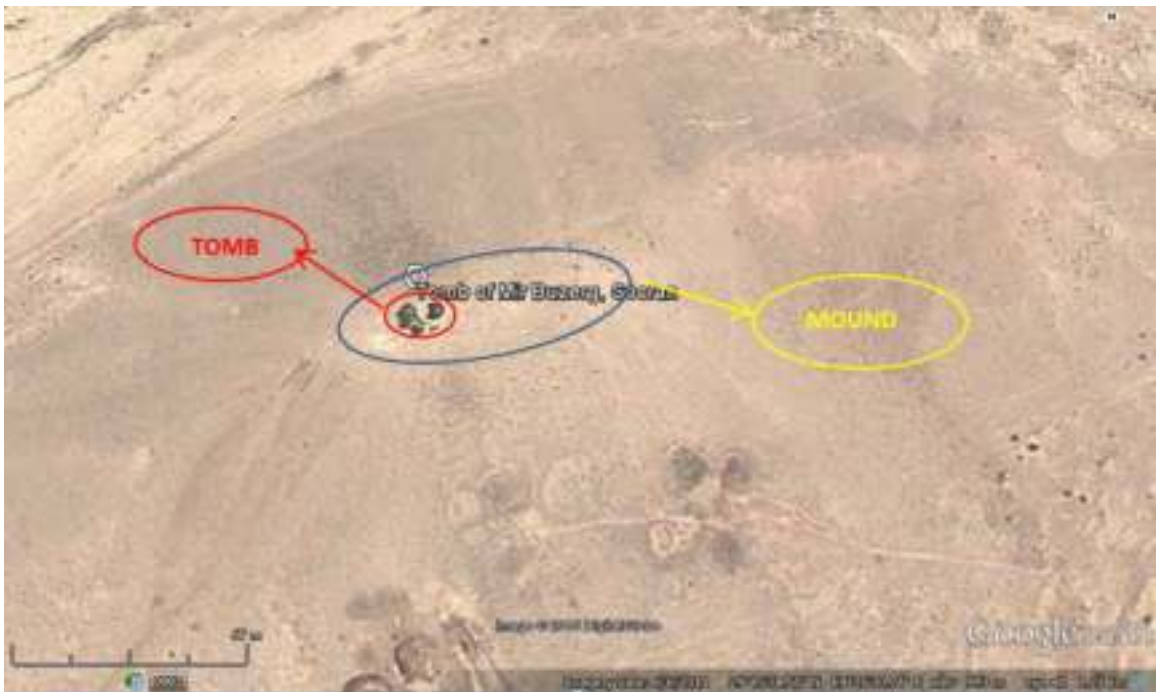


Plate 4. An aerial view of the tomb with a Red circle and the natural mound in Yellow circle (courtesy google earth).

نقل سنگ اہل
بتاریخ سہندیم ماہ رمضان شمسہ بکر بندگان
حضرت لڑا الدین محمد جہانگیر شاہ بادشاہ علی
ہنگ قذحار تعین شدہ بودانین منزل
عمور نمود مقبرہ میرزاگ امین نواب مرحوم
میر محمد مصمم بکری استخلص بنا ہے

Plate 5. The actual Persian text quoted by
Lala Aturam in 1903 (courtesy Aturam).

در دایہ کی کو کب خوشندہ نماذ زان نماز شبیسے کی زینہ نماذ
آن کر خا تیش پر تودہ لیل نماز ہندہ کجلہ و د کہ بخشدہ نماذ

Plate 6. The actual Persian poetry 1903 (courtesy Aturam).

نقل سنگ دوم
بسم اللہ الرحمن الرحیم
نہا شد مسجد اہل ملک بودا تر تری اہل
حسبانی در عہد سلطان فیروز شاہ شانزدہم
ماہ ذوالحجہ روز دوشنبہ نقل گردید بسم اللہ
در الحج روز آدھینہ مسجد برآمدہ شد سن سیم
بسمہ مایہ شمسہ بکر۔ خدا بمان بندہ
رحمت کند کہ در ہی مقام رسد تو خدای
در د بایہ حسن میر حسین غیر۔

Plate 7. The actual Persian inscription 1903
(Courtesy Aturam).

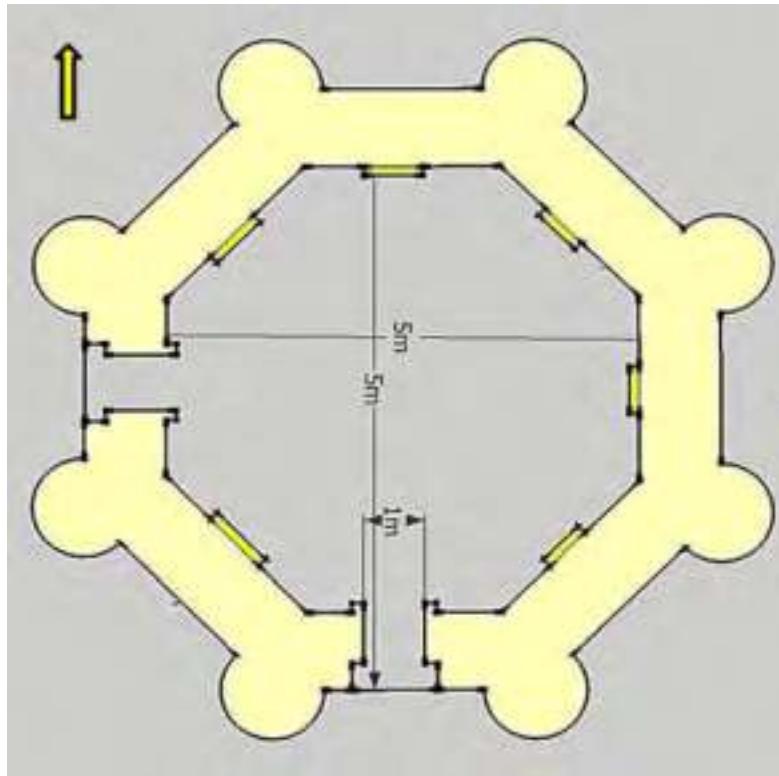


Plate 8. The general layout of the tomb.

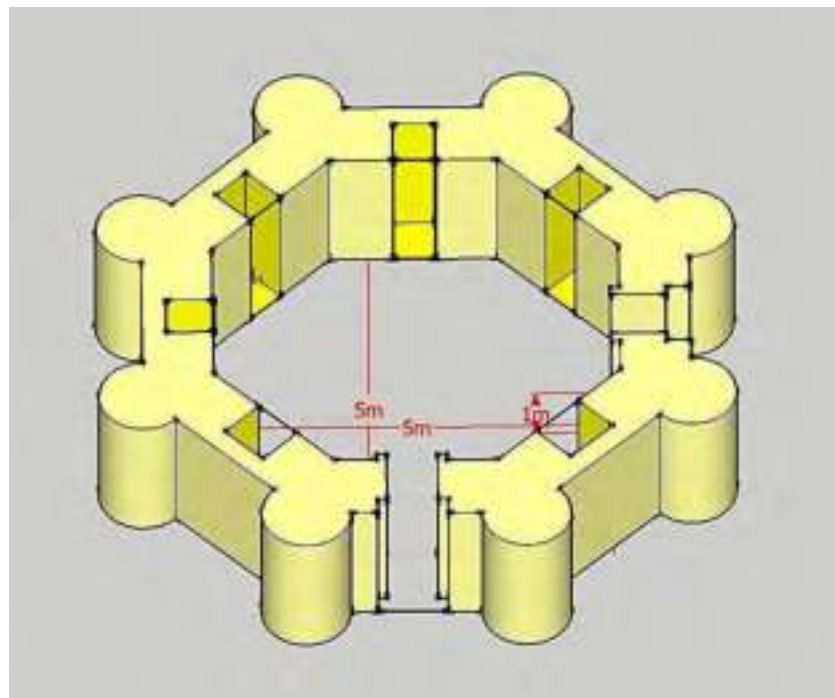


Plate 9. 3D elevated plain of the tomb with 8 buttresses at angles.

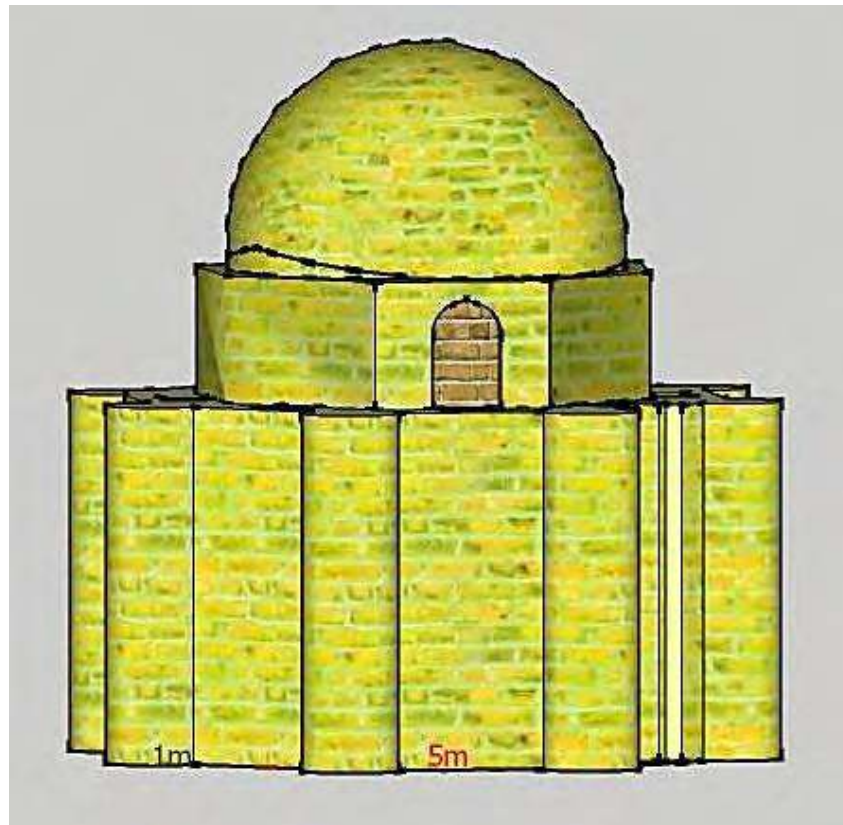


Plate 10. The reconstructed tomb showing the missing dome.



Plate 11. The southern view of the tomb.



Plate 12. The Eastern view of the tomb.



Plate 13. The Northern view of the tomb.



Plate 14. The interior view showing the zone of transition.



Plate 15. A picturesque landscape during the summer season (Courtesy Misri Khan Khetran).

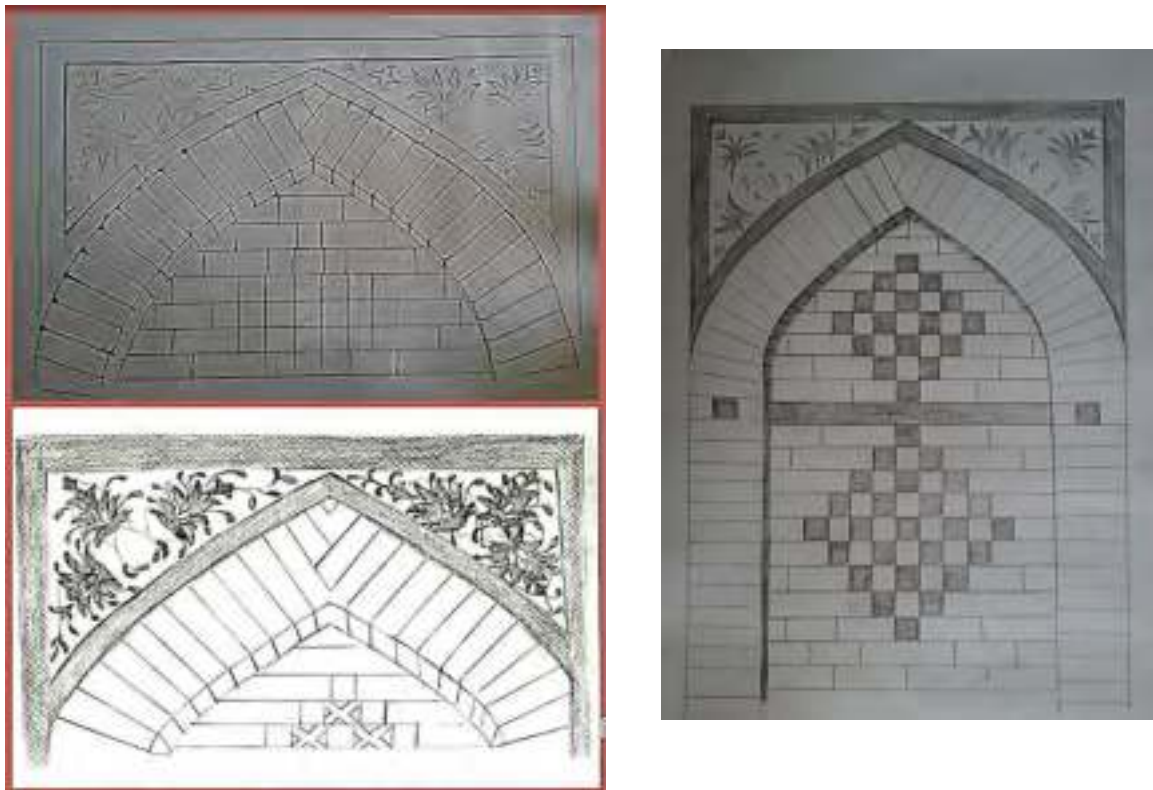


Plate 16. The interior arch panels in sketch forms.

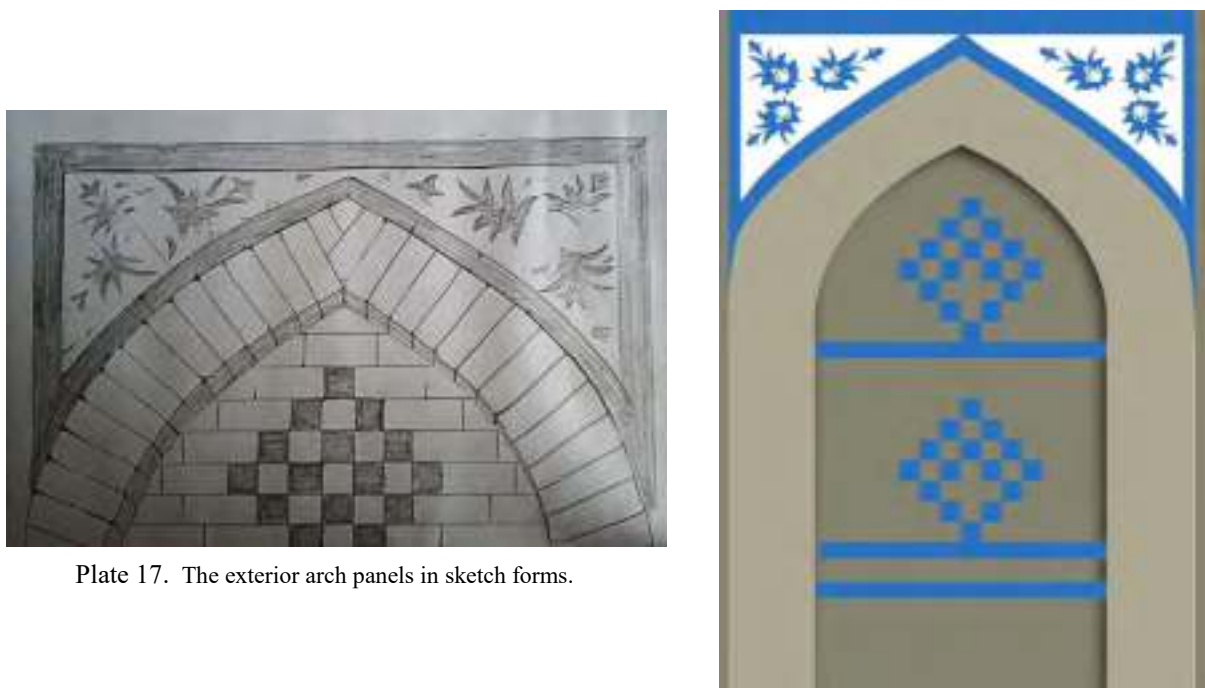


Plate 17. The exterior arch panels in sketch forms.

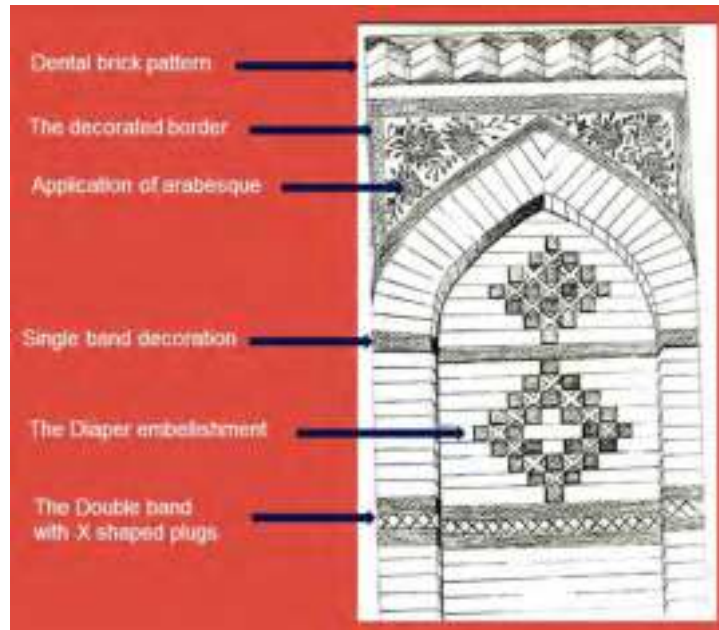


Plate 18. The interior blind arch panel with arabesque and diaper friezes.



Plate 19. On the left showing Mughal Period arch and on the right an arch of the Sooran Tomb (Courtesy Percy Brown).



Plate 20. Terracotta blue and white glazed plugs used in the constructional work of the tomb.



Plate 21. The double storey tomb at the palace of Khan of Kalat 1839 (Courtesy Hameed Baloch)



Plate 22. The single storey tomb at the palace of Khan of Kalat 1839 (Courtesy Hameed Baloch)



Plate 23. The tomb of Meer Masoom Bakari with the tall tower in Sukur (courtesy google)