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Safavid Epigraphy in Bavanat County, Iran: Architectural and Funerary Inscriptions

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Abstract: *One of the most important achievements of humankind is the invention of writing systems that have enabled the recording of information and the transmission of knowledge. Inscriptions and other written materials are important sources for historical and archaeological studies. They provide information about beliefs, ideas, and historical events and are used in the dating of monuments and the study of calligraphic traditions. During the archaeological survey conducted in 2015 in Bavanat County, a collection of inscriptions from the Safavid period was identified. The aim of this paper is to document these inscriptions and analyze their content in order to understand religious beliefs, cultural characteristics of the region, and assist in dating monuments and cemeteries. These inscriptions are classified into two main groups: architectural inscriptions and gravestone inscriptions, and are written in three scripts: Thuluth, Naskh, and Nasta'liq. The Imamzadeh Seyyed Shah Mirhamzeh inscriptions contain information about the construction date, the name of the architect, and Qur'anic verses. In addition to the Qur'anic verses, the gravestones also contain the names of the deceased and the date of death, which can be used in dating cemeteries and studying the historical developments of the region. The results of this study show that the Safavid inscriptions of Bavanat, in addition to their artistic and calligraphic value, are an important source for understanding the religious, social, and historical dimensions of this region during the Safavid period.*

Keywords: Bavanat County, Iran, Safavid Period, Epigraphy, Gravestones, Funerary Inscriptions

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Introduction

Man has made numerous inventions and achievements throughout history, but one of the most important of them is the invention of writing and writing systems. The emergence of writing enabled the recording and transmission of economic, social, administrative, and religious information¹ and created the basis for the transmission of knowledge and experience across generations. Writing is therefore known as one of the most important indicators of distinction between the prehistoric period and the historical period.² Archaeological studies indicate that the earliest writing systems developed in both Mesopotamia³ and the Iranian Plateau.⁴

These systems were initially used mostly for administrative and economic recording and initially lacked a complete alphabetic structure, but gradually developed.⁵ In historical studies and archaeology, inscriptions are among the most important primary sources for understanding past societies. The study of such texts is known as epigraphy, which deals with the study of inscribed texts on durable materials such as stone, metal, and architectural surfaces. These texts can provide important information about the construction of monuments, the names of architects and rulers, religious beliefs, and social traditions, and in many cases play an important role in the dating of monuments and historical structures.

In Iran, calligraphy, in addition to its communicative function, has long had artistic and aesthetic dimensions, and in different historical periods, various styles of calligraphy such as Naskh and Nasta'liq have been used in writing texts and inscriptions.⁶ This artistic tradition reached its peak during the Safavid period, and numerous prominent calligraphers were active during this period, whose works left a significant impact on Iranian art and culture. During an archaeological survey conducted in 2015 in Bavanat County,⁷ a number of inscriptions belonging to the Safavid period were identified, which are located on historical monuments and gravestones in the region. Despite the importance of these works, no independent study has yet been conducted on these inscriptions, and this study is the first to introduce and analyze them. Therefore, studying these inscriptions can provide valuable information about the religious, social, and artistic characteristics of the Bavanat region during the Safavid period, and also play an important role in dating historical monuments and cemeteries in the region. In addition, studying the writing styles used in these

¹ Trigger 1998, 2004.

² Buccellati, 1981.

³ Englund, 1996, 1998.

⁴ Damerow, 2006; Dahl, 2009, 2012; Matthews, 2013; Yeganeh, 2021.

⁵ Houston, 2004.

⁶ Aliei & Vasegh Abbasi, 2026.

⁷ Khanipour, 2025a, 2025b.

inscriptions can help to understand the characteristics of calligraphy and writing traditions of the Safavid period in this region.

The aim of this research is to introduce, document and analyze the Safavid inscriptions identified in Bavanat county and to examine their content and artistic features. Accordingly, this research seeks to answer the following questions: What types of Safavid period inscriptions exist in Bavanat county and how are these inscriptions classified in terms of location and function? Also, what languages and writing styles were used in these inscriptions? Finally, what information does the content of these inscriptions provide about the beliefs, construction of monuments and cultural and historical developments of the Bavanat region during the Safavid period?

The Safavid Period in Iran

In Iranian history, the Safavid period (1501-1736 CE) is considered one of the most important political and cultural eras.⁸ The most important developments of this period include the establishment of Twelver Shi'ism, the stabilization of Iran's political borders, and the formation of organized administrative and economic structures.⁹ These developments had a profound impact on Iran's cultural and religious identity and were reflected in various fields such as architecture, urbanism, art, and calligraphy. Political and economic stability and commercial development led to the construction of numerous buildings in different regions of Iran.¹⁰

From the perspective of archaeological and historical studies, the Safavid period is of particular importance because, in addition to extensive written sources, this period is characterized by extensive material evidence such as religious monuments, caravan-serais, bridges, inscriptions, and gravestones, which allows for a multidimensional study of Safavid society.¹¹

The examination of this material evidence helps researchers to better understand the different dimensions of social structure, economy, religious beliefs, and artistic developments of this period. In this regard, inscriptions, as primary historical sources, play an important role in dating monuments, identification of patrons and architects, and the study of calligraphy traditions, and can provide information that is sometimes not mentioned in written sources. For this reason, the study of Safavid inscriptions, especially in less studied regions, can help to complete our understanding of the cultural and artistic history of Iran in this period.

⁸ Matthee, 2012.

⁹ Newman, 2006.

¹⁰ Gray, 1986; Canby, 2002; Newman, 2006.

¹¹ Hillenbrand, 1986; Blair & Bloom, 1996.

The Archaeology of Bavanat

Bavanat County is located in the northeast of Fars Province in southern Iran. This region is of considerable importance for archaeological studies due to its geographical position on the edge of the Zagros Mountains and its location on historical communication routes. The first archaeological studies in this region were carried out by Aurel Stein during his travels and surveys in various regions of Iran in the 1930s. He mentioned some preliminary observations, surveys and excavations in this region in his reports.¹²

The first phase of the systematic archaeological survey in Bavanat County was conducted by the first author in 2015. During this survey, approximately 200 archaeological sites were identified and recorded. These sites include a variety of archaeological features and remain, including settlement sites, fortifications, ritual sites, historical mosques, bridges, cemeteries,¹³ water mills, rock art,¹⁴ ancient mines, and slag sites. Based on surface finds, architectural remains, and inscriptions, these sites have been dated from the Neolithic period to the Late Islamic period,¹⁵ indicating continuous human occupation and activity in the area throughout different periods.

The Safavid Inscriptions of Bavanat

During an archaeological survey conducted in Bavanat, a collection of inscriptions from various historical periods including the Sasanian, Medieval Islamic, Safavid, and Qajar periods was identified [Fig. 1]. In most cases, the dating of Islamic inscriptions is based on the inscribed dates, which provide precise information about the construction time of the buildings or the date of death of the individuals buried in the cemeteries.

These inscriptions vary considerably in terms of location and script, and include architectural inscriptions and gravestone inscriptions. Architectural inscriptions are usually written on tiles or as stucco inscriptions on the walls of buildings and are sometimes found on wooden doors or zarih (shrine lattice structures). In contrast, cemetery inscriptions are carved on gravestones and often include Qur'anic verses, the name of the deceased, honorific titles, prayers, and the date of death.

It seems that only a limited number of inscriptions remain from the pre-Safavid period in this region, but during the Safavid period, the use of large inscribed gravestones in the cemeteries of the region became more common. In addition to their historical value, these inscriptions are also important from calligraphic and artistic perspectives, and are usually written in scripts such as Naskh and Nasta'liq. The study

¹² Stein, 1936.

¹³ Khanipour, 2025a.

¹⁴ Khanipour, 2024.

¹⁵ Khanipour, Sidikova & Berdiyev, 2026.

of these inscriptions can provide valuable information about religious beliefs, social structure, burial traditions, as well as the development of calligraphy in the Bavanat region during the Safavid period. In the remainder of this article, the identified inscriptions from the Safavid period in Bavanat County will be introduced and examined in terms of content, script, function, and historical context.

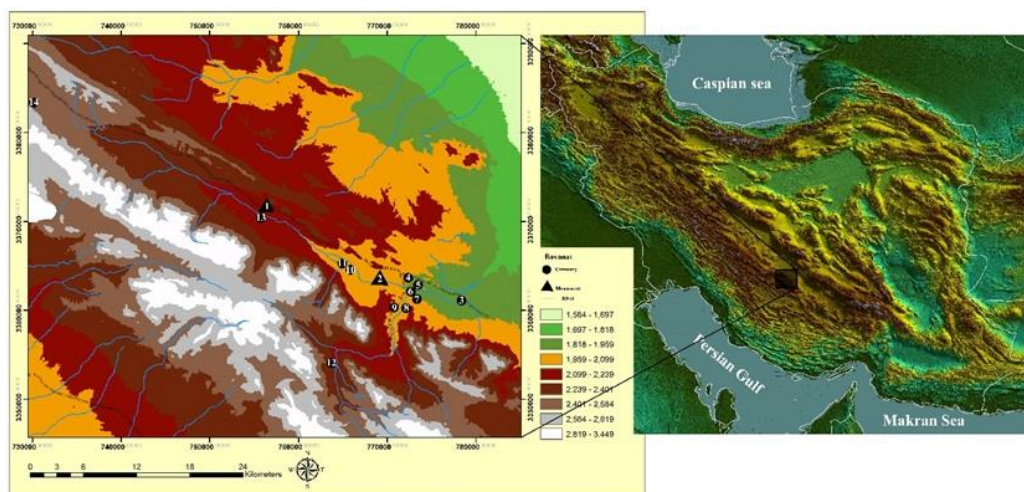


Fig. 1. Location of the historical monuments and cemeteries of Bavanat. 1. Jameh Mosque, 2. Imamzadeh Seyyed Shah Mirhamzeh, 3. Mosalla-e Monj, 4. Sarvestan, 5. Shahzadeh Abolqasem, 6. Jafariyeh, 7. Bagh-e Sheikh Jafariyeh, 8. Qadamgah, 9. Khajeh-e Nasir, 10. Shidan, 11. Ghaziabad, 12. Pirkadoo, 13. Surian, 14. Pir Morad (by Morteza Khanipour).

Imamzadeh Seyyed Shah Mirhamzeh Shrine

Imamzadeh Seyyed Shah Mirhamzeh Shrine is located about 18 kilometers from the city of Bavanat in the village of Bazm. Despite the historical and architectural importance of this building, it has not been introduced and studied comprehensively. This monument was registered on the National Heritage List of Iran in 1936. This monument was first described in the book *Aqlim-e Pars*.¹⁶

This building has a rectangular plan with a brick façade. On the drum of the dome of the building, inscriptions are written in Kufic script. The height of the dome is about 11 meters and the height of its southern iwan is about 8.3 meters. The entrance to the building is on the south side and its porch is surrounded by two engaged columns on either side [Fig. 2, No. 1]. The iwan measures approximately 4.30×5 m. This entrance has a double-leaf wooden door. There are inscriptions on the top of each leaf and metal door knockers are installed in the middle of each leaf. The outer door is decorated with diamond-shaped geometric patterns and lobed medallions. On the right

¹⁶ Mostafawi, 1964.

leaf, the inscription reads: “La ilaha illallah, Muhammad Rasul Allah” (There is no god but Allah, Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah), and on the left leaf: “Aliyan Wali Allah Haqqan Haqqan” (Ali is truly the friend of Allah), inscribed in Thuluth script [Fig. 2, No. 2].

It appears that two decorative panels once existed on the lower section of the door, but they have now disappeared. The door frame is also adorned with a geometric wood lattice.

After passing the iwan, there is a rectangular space measuring 8.5×4 meters, the ceiling of which is decorated with muqarnas stucco decoration [Fig. 2, No. 3]. This space has another wooden door on the west side that leads to another room. This door, 247 cm high and 124 cm wide, has two leaves. Each leaf is decorated with wood marquetry and its frame is decorated with carved geometric motifs. Considering the type of decoration, color and type of wood, it seems that the door leaves are newer than the frame and lintel. Above this door there is a decorated lintel that is decorated with inscriptions and girih patterns [Fig. 2, No. 7]. In its center and on a shamsa medallion, the phrase “Amal Ostad Ali Najjar 953” is written, which indicates the name of the builder and the date of its construction. There are also inscriptions around it. Above the doorway is a verse from the Quran written in Thuluth script: Allah, Blessed and Exalted, says: “Indeed, Allah only desires to remove from you the impurity, O People of the House, and to purify you thoroughly.”

On the three other sides, invocations to the Fourteen Infallibles are inscribed.

On the northern wall of this space is a wooden door that leads to the central chamber and wooden zarih. On the western wall of the central chamber is a set of stucco inscriptions. On the northern side of the central chamber is a square room measuring 5×5 meters. The interior surfaces of the building are covered with stucco decoration and numerous inscriptions can be seen in it. Some of these inscriptions are written in square Kufic script and include phrases such as: “La ilaha illallah, Muhammad Rasul Allah, Ali Wali Allah” (There is no god but Allah, Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah, Ali is the friend of Allah).

On one of the stucco inscriptions, the date of construction is recorded as: “Through the efforts of Homam al-Anam, it was completed in the year 953 [AH] with victory and triumph” [Fig. 2, No. 6].

Additionally, on the western wall, another stucco inscription names the master builder of the structure as: “Executed by the master builder Shams al-Din ibn Abd al-Hossein Isfahani” [Fig. 2, No. 4].

The wooden zarih of the Imamzadeh is also a valuable work of art in this building. This zarih is made of wood carving and has dimensions of $2.30 \times 1.95 \times 3.40$ meters. Three sides are decorated with relief wood carvings and two inscriptions are carved on it, which specify the names of the builders and the date of its construction. The following is written on the door of the zarih in Thuluth script: “Kataa Al-faqir

bemanad Aala fi sanah alef va saba” (The humble servant remained with Ali in the year 1007 AH).

Additionally, the name of the carpenter or maker of the zarih is recorded on the lower panel as: “Executed by the master Sharaf al-Din Yazdi.”

On another side of the zarih, inscriptions indicate that this work was produced during the reign of Shah Abbas I, and the date is given as 1007 AH.

Based on the existing inscriptions in this shrine, it seems that the monument was built in 953 AH, during the reign of Shah Tahmasp I. Inscriptional evidence also shows that in 1007 AH, during the reign of Shah Abbas I, a wooden zarih was built for this tomb. The inscriptions indicate that the monument was originally constructed in 953 AH and remained an important religious monument throughout the Safavid period, receiving later additions such as the wooden zarih in 1007 AH.



Fig. 2. Imamzadeh Seyyed Shah Mirhamzeh: entrance view, iwan, and its Safavid-period inscriptions (by Morteza Khanipour).

The Jameh Mosque of Bavanat

The Jameh Mosque of Bavanat is located in the city center of Bavanat. The width of the mosque is about 17.2 meters and its length is 19 meters. The height of the building from the roof to the courtyard floor is about 9.4 meters and from the stair landing to the courtyard floor is about 11.3 meters [Fig. 3]. The eastern façade is made of brick. The mosque has a dome that is located above the mihrab. Within the dome, a Qur'anic inscription in Thuluth script is adorned with arabesque motifs. According to the inscription, it was executed by Master Mohammad Esfahani and is dated 772 AH.¹⁷ Also, among these muqarnas decorations, eight small medallion inscriptions have been created in a symmetrical manner with the titles of Allah, Muhammad, and Ali.

There is also a wooden minbar in this mosque, which is considered one of the finest examples of historic wooden artifacts of Iran in the 8th century AH (14th century CE), notable due for its craftsmanship and woodworking technique. This minbar has a door and eleven steps, and its body is decorated with geometric patterns and geometric latticework. The steps are uniformly decorated, with the front of each step featuring solid geometric lattice carving within medallion frames.

There is an inscription on the minbar in Thuluth script, which records the name of the patron and the date of construction. According to the text of this inscription, this minbar was built by order of Khajeh Izzal-Dowleh Valdedein Mozaffar in 771 AH. Another inscription is located at the end of the eleventh step and above the minbar, in which verse 255 of Surah Al-Baqarah (Ayat al-Kursi, Qur'an 2:255) is carved in relief on the wooden surface. On the lower frame of the right door leaf, the phrase "La ilaha illallah" is written in Thuluth script, and on the left door leaf, the phrase "Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah" is written, which has now been destroyed and replaced with a modern replacement panel.

The mosque entrance features a double-leaf wooden door on which is written an inscription containing the Islamic declaration of faith (Shahada), dated 1109 AH [Fig. 3, No. 3-4]. Considering the date of the inscription under the dome (772 AH) and the minbar of the mosque (771 AH), it seems that the original construction of the mosque dates back to the 8th century AH (14th century CE); however, the date of the inscription on the entrance door is related to the Safavid period.

Two hypotheses may be proposed. First, the mosque may have undergone architectural renovation during the Safavid period and the current wooden door was also built and installed at that time. Second, considering the officialization of Shi'ism as the state religion during the Safavid dynasty and the religious conversion of the local population, this inscription was created on the door to signify the Shi'ite identity of the mosque. In this case, the date 1109 AH could refer to the time of

¹⁷ Khanipour, Sidikova & Berdiyev, 2026.

the inscription. Such evidence shows that religious transformations can sometimes be reflected in the material culture and architectural elements of religious buildings, allowing scholars to trace signs of social and religious changes in the region.

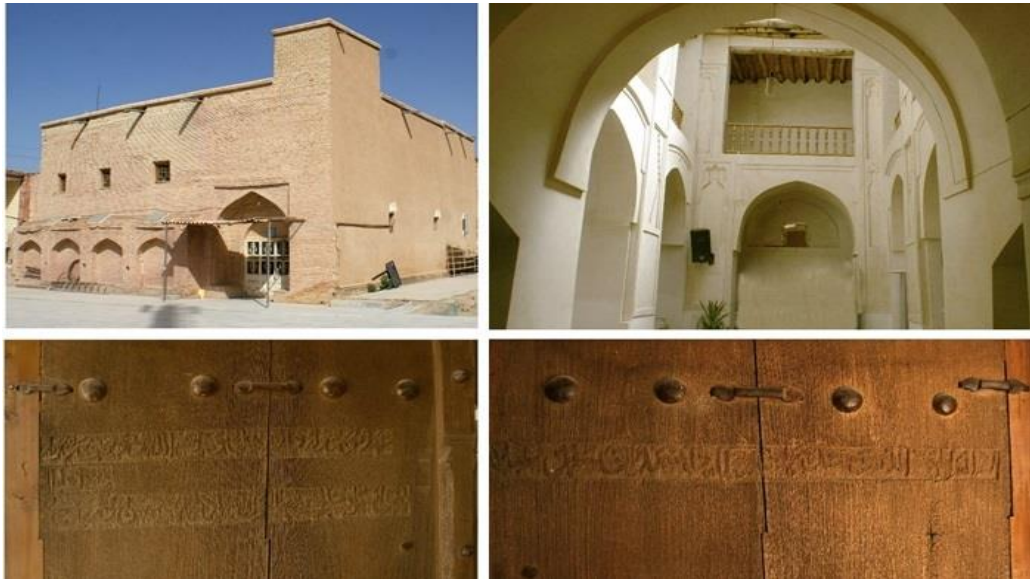


Fig. 3. Exterior and interior views, and the Safavid inscription of the Jameh Mosque of Bavanat (by Morteza Khanipour).

Safavid Gravestone Inscriptions in Bavanat

During archaeological surveys conducted in Bavanat County, twelve historical Islamic cemeteries were identified: Mosalla-e Monj, Sarvestan, Shahzadeh Abolqasem, Jafariyeh [Fig. 4], Bagh-e Sheikh Jafariyeh, Qadamgah, Khajeh-e Nasir [Fig. 5], Shidan, Ghaziabad, Pirkadoo, Surian, and Pir Morad [Fig. 1 and 6]. Based on the epigraphy, the oldest graves date back to the Safavid period (1501-1736 CE), although some cemeteries were used until the Qajar period (1789-1925 CE), and some, such as Qadamgah Cemetery, are still active.

Despite the identification of graves from the Parthian and Sassanian periods in this region, no cemeteries from the early Islamic centuries to the Timurid period have been found; This is likely due to the Sunni religious and religio-cultural traditions of the people of that time, who seldom constructed funerary monuments and elaborate gravestones. With the conversion of the people of Bavanat to Shia Islam during the Safavid period, the practice of constructing regular and decorative gravestones increased, which made the cemeteries of this period easily identifiable. The quality of the stone and the craftsmanship of the construction of Safavid gravestones were usually higher than those of the Qajar period, reflecting their social and religious significance.



Fig. 4. General view of the Jafariyeh Cemetery (by Morteza Khanipour).



Fig. 5. General view of the Khajeh-e Nasir Cemetery (by Morteza Khanipour).

Gravestones are typically divided into three categories: flat horizontal, box-shaped, and upright. Flat gravestones are low in height and have inscriptions only on their surface. Box-shaped gravestones are rectangular in shape and have an average height of about 50 centimeters. Their surface usually contains the name of the deceased, the date of death, elegiac poems, and religious phrases, and in many cases, cypress tree motifs, geometric shapes, birds, animals, or plants are also carved on them. These motifs, and especially the cypress, are considered a symbol of immortality in Iranian culture. Some gravestones also bear Qur'anic verses as well as the names of the Prophet and the Twelve Shia Imams. The inscriptions are written in both Arabic and Persian; the Quranic verses are mainly in Arabic and the elegiac poems are in Persian. The calligraphy style also includes Thuluth for verses and prayers and Nasta'liq for poems. Each line is inscribed within a separate frame around the surface of the gravestones, with the aim of creating visual harmony and distinction.

From a content perspective, these gravestones provide valuable insights for understanding the culture, religion, social structure, and family hierarchy of the people of Bavanat. In addition to recording the name and lineage of the deceased, the inscriptions include moral and religious virtues, prayers for mercy and forgiveness, and sometimes poetic elegy that shows the influence of Sufi culture and Shi'ite religion. Mention of the burial place and terms such as "Qadamgah" or the addition of titles such as "Chir" also indicate the deceased's connection to the villages of the Bavanat region. Despite their high value, many gravestones, have suffered damage or destruction. Some have been broken or moved, and in some cases have been used by the residents to build walls or other structures [Fig. 7]. The preservation and documentation of these gravestones are essential for historical and archaeological studies of the region, because they are not only a source of historical and social information, but also valuable examples of Safavid art and calligraphy.



Fig. 6. Safavid-period gravestones from Bavanat (by Morteza Khanipour).



Fig. 7. Reuse of gravestones from the Shidan Cemetery in the construction of a garden wall (by Morteza Khanipour).

Discussion

Although the interpretation of past societies based on archaeological materials such as pottery,¹⁸ and architecture¹⁹ is primarily the task of archaeologists, epigraphic sources provide direct and reliable information about the life, religion, art, and social structure of the past communities. Because they contain dates, names, prayers, and poems, inscriptions serve as primary sources for the precise identification of historical

¹⁸ Baghizadeh, 2022; Farjami, 2024; Nemati, Baghshikhi & Sharahi, 2025; Bakhtiari *et al.*, 2025; Azizi Kharanaghi, 2026.

¹⁹ Hozhabri & Montazer Zohuri, 2022; Sorouri, 2024; Tajrishy, 2024; Qauomy & Urokov, 2025.

periods and individuals and play a significant role in the archaeology of the Islamic period and historical studies.²⁰

Inscriptions and epigraphy possess artistic, religious, and cultural significance simultaneously, allowing us to understand the connection between religion, art, burial rituals, and the daily lives of the people of the Safavid period. In other words, without inscriptions, many details about the life and beliefs of the people of Bavanat during the Safavid period would not have been identifiable, because material remains such as pottery and architecture do not directly provide detailed cultural or religious information.

In archaeological surveys of Bavanat County, numerous inscriptions were identified, which can be broadly divided into two categories: architectural inscriptions and gravestone inscriptions. In terms of content, these inscriptions include prayers, the date of construction of the building or the year of death of the deceased, the name of the deceased or the builder, Persian poems, and religious and mystical themes. Such information allows for a detailed examination of the social, religious, and cultural life of the local population and reveals the role of religion, Sufi and Twelver Shia beliefs in art, architecture, and burial rituals. Although the architectural and funerary inscriptions at Bavanat had different purposes, they display common religious vocabulary, similar calligraphic traditions, and common artistic features. Together, these inscriptions demonstrate how Safavid religious identity was consistently expressed in both religious architecture and funerary contexts.

The presence of dates in many of these inscriptions shows that since the Safavid period, it has been common to build tombs for the descendants of the Imams and erect gravestones for the deceased. Interestingly, most inscriptions clearly emphasize the Shi'ite identity of the local population of the region, such as the threefold testimony of faith, the verse of purification, the name of Imam Ali (peace be upon him) and the twelve Shi'ite imams, as well as phrases such as "Ali is the true friend of Allah" and "Ali, the designated successor (waṣī) of the Prophet Muhammad". These inscriptions are an example of the direct influence of religion on local arts and crafts during the Safavid period and show that the religious change of the people also affected cultural traditions and burial rituals. Historical sources show that the region of Fars has been associated with the Shi'ism since the early Islamic centuries. During the Buyid dynasty, which was Shi'ite, Shiraz was chosen as the capital in 322 AH.²¹ However, inscriptions, as material and documentary sources, provide information that is often absent from historical sources. The inscriptions of the Bavanat Mosque show that although this mosque was built in the eighth century AH (772 AH), an inscription was added to its entrance door during the Safavid period. This indicates the Shi'ite

²⁰ Feyzi & Mousavi Haji, 2026.

²¹ Jafarian, 1990: 240.

identity of the mosque and highlights the influence of religion on the architecture, art, and culture of the Safavid period. Beyond their value for dating monuments and identifying individuals, the Bavanat inscriptions demonstrate how Safavid religious and artistic traditions were also adopted in provincial regions of Iran such as Isfahan or Qazvin. Although Bavanat was a provincial region, its inscriptions display the same emphasis on Twelver Shia identity, Quranic verses, and high-quality calligraphy that is well known from larger Safavid centers. This suggests that the religious and artistic policies of the Safavid state were not limited to the major urban centres, but were also expressed through architecture, funerary monuments, and epigraphic traditions in local communities.

In addition to their scientific value, historical inscriptions and tombstones also have great potential for interdisciplinary research and the development of cultural tourism. These monuments are valuable resources for researchers in archaeology, epigraphy, calligraphy, Persian language and literature, art history, and religious studies. Furthermore, their documentation, preservation, and public presentation can contribute to the development of cultural tourism,²² raise public awareness of the region's historical heritage, and support the local economy²³ by attracting visitors, tourists, and researchers.

Conclusion

During an archaeological survey conducted in Bavanat County, numerous inscriptions from the Safavid period were identified. Beyond their value for dating historical monuments, these inscriptions show how religious identity, artistic production, and local society were closely intertwined in the provincial landscape of Safavid Iran. The presence of precise dates and personal names allows for precise chronological dating, the study of family genealogies, and the analysis of social structure, and shows how people's religious beliefs influenced daily life and local art. During the Safavid period, Thuluth and Nasta'liq script were common in this region; Qur'anic verses and religious themes were generally written in Thuluth script and poetry was mostly written in Nasta'liq. Meanwhile, in the Safavid period, a special emphasis is observed on the names of Shi'ite Imams, especially Imam 'Ali (Amir al-Mu'minin). Although the Jameh Mosque was built in the 8th century AH, with the establishment of Twelver Shi'ism as the state religion in the Safavid period, an inscription containing the triple testimony alongside the Shahadatayn was added, which indicates the influence of the Shi'ite religion on the art, crafts, and architecture of this period. The analysis of these works shows that with the institutionalization of

²² Urokov *et al.*, 2026.

²³ Yuldosheva *et al.*, 2026.

Shi‘ism in the Safavid period, the making of ornamented gravestones became popular and religious concepts were widely used in their design and decorative motifs. The use of symbols such as the cypress tree motif, vase motifs, and geometric motifs, as well as the writing of Qur’anic inscriptions and prayers and supplications in the Thuluth script, indicate a combination of biographical information with aesthetic and religious values. Evidence suggests that Safavid religious and artistic traditions were not limited to major political centers such as Isfahan or the major cities of the period, but were also actively reflected in the provincial landscape through architecture, funerary monuments, and epigraphic traditions. Safavid gravestones and inscriptions in Bavanat represent a clear example of the coexistence of religious, cultural, and artistic values in a local community, and their study allows for a better understanding of the social, religious, and cultural transformations of the region. This study represents the first comprehensive documentation and analysis of the Safavid inscriptions of Bavanat County. This study provides a new body of epigraphic data for Islamic archaeology and lays a foundation for future comparative research on epigraphy, funerary monuments, and regional religious landscapes of the Safavid period.

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