

Gumbad Imadul Mulk at Badaun: An Archaeological Study of Medieval Tomb Building

Ashok Kumar

Dr. S. Radhakrishnan Post Doctoral Fellow,
Deptt. of History, Bareilly College, Bareilly

Abstract

The present study is an attempt to study the Tomb Building at Badaun known as Gumbad Imadul Mulk in art historical perspective. Gumbad Imadul Mulk can be located between 28.02349 north of latitude and 79.06479 east of longitude. Gumbad Imadul Mulk is situated in the locality of Basti Chotte-Sarkar in the western part of Badaun near Badruddin Shah Willayat. Gumbad Imadul Mulk is also known as dargah of Imadul Mulk Alias Pisanharika. According to A. Fuhrer the structure of Gumbad Imadul Mulk was built in A.H. 820 (1417 A.D.). The structure of the Gumbad Imadul Mulk was built on a square plan. The structure existed on a high raised ground with a solid foundation. Interiorly the structure is too built on a square plan with three arched opening at the cardinal point on north, south and eastern side whereas western side is closed and contain a mehrab corner corbelling has been used to provide base. The building of Imadul Mulk was built with bricks and lime mortar. The size of the bricks indicates the dimensions of the brick prevailing during the Lodi period and early Mughals for example Babur and Humayun. The structure has register a little slope exteriorly, which confirms the influence or Sur architecture. All these features ascribe its construction during the Sur period which was characterized with the synthesis of various feature of the sultanate architecture with new innovations in dimensions.

Key Words: Gumbad, Tomb Building, Arch, Phase of Transition, Squinch, Sultanate Architecture

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Presently an attempt has been made to study the Tomb Building at Badaun known as GumbadImadulMulk in art historical perspective. It is existed in the city of Badaun. The district Badaun is situated between 27°40' and 28°29' north of latitude and between 78°16' and 79°31' east of longitude¹. Badaun is one of the most important district of western Uttar Pradesh. History of the district Badaun is very significant as in early medieval period Badaun was the part of the dynastical rulers of Panchalas, Haihyas, Mitras, Guptas, Harsha, Gurjara-Partiharas, Rashtrakutas of Vodamayuta, etc.² During sultanate and Mughal period Badaun's importance has not diminished as a town. In sultanate period Badaun was remained as one of the important towns of Sultans of slave, Khalji, Tughluq, Sayyid and Lodi dynasties.³

A large number of religious and non-religious structures such as mosque, palaces, *Havelies*, *Makbaras*, Tomb, etc. have been built at Badaun by the successive dynasties during medieval period. These structures could be considered as the best example of contemporary architecture and building technology. The present work is a part of my study which I am carrying UGC funded Dr. S. Radhakrishnan Post-Doctoral Fellowship. Present paper includes the study of medieval tomb building known as GumbadImadulMulk with the help of the archaeological tools.

GumbadImadulMulk can be located between 28.02349 north of latitude⁴ and 79.06479 east of longitude.⁵ GumbadImadulMulk is situated in the locality of BastiChotte-Sarkar in the western part of Badaun near Badruddin Shah Willayat. GumbadImadulMulk is also known as dargah of ImadulMulk Alias Pisanharika. According to A. Fuhrer the structure of GumbadImadulMulk was built in A.H. 820 (1417 A.D.).⁶

The structure of the GumbadImadulMulk was built on a square plan.⁷ The structure is existed on a high raised ground with a solid foundation.⁸ The building of GumbadImadulMulk has four gate at the cardinal points except on western side.⁹ Western side of the building is closed to accommodate *mehrab* to denote the pious kava.¹⁰ All the three entrance of the structure are similar to each other and has resemblance with each other in dimension and shape.¹¹ The structure of the Gumbad building is highly elevated and the entrances have been height half of the whole elevation of the structure.¹² Each entrances of the structure is composed of arch in a recessed profile fixed in a oblong orientation.¹³ The entrance with their oblong frame was recessed to the main façade of the structure.¹⁴ At the top of this entrance a toothed design surmounting the whole entrance.¹⁵ There is a lining of inscribed design below the toothed design of the entrances.¹⁶ Above the arch on both side square sprindels have been provided.¹⁷ The upper line of the arch and upper and sides of the triangular area above the arch have been provided with brick moulding.¹⁸

The foundation and above the foundation approximately 0.5 metre of the wall have been built with roughly dressed stone. In orientation and composition all the facades of the structure GumbadImadulMulk are having a striking resemblance with each other except western façade.¹⁹ The western façade has no arched entrance.²⁰ Each façade contain niches flanking to the entrance arch at the half elevation from ground.²¹ In the portion above the arched entrance three closed lattice window in square size have been provided little below the cornice line.²² At the roof level corbelled cornice has been provided. Below which there provides a arcade design in miniature.²³ Above the cornice a masonry railing have been built with parapet design.²⁴ The structure is surmounted by a big dome placed on two tier circular drum.²⁵ Minus the drums the shape of the dome is shallow. Presently remains of crowning elements are found on the dome but once it was crowned with inverted lotus etc.²⁶ The exterior of the ImadulMulk structure presently has no plaster as the exterior of the building has been embellished with decoration in brick or lattice and niches.

Interiorly the structure is too built on a square plan with three arched opening at the cardinal point on north, south and eastern side whereas western side is closed and contain a mehrab.²⁷ At the half elevation of the arch opening, each entrance is flanked by niches.²⁸ Interiorly since structure is square and surmounted by a circular dome, phase of transition have been employed to convert the square into circle.²⁹ In the phase of transition both stages are found. First stage i.e. square converted into octagon has been achieved with squinches.³⁰ Each side of the octagon contained alcove built with three recessing squinches.³¹ Last squinch contain a niche.³² Below the squinches in the corner corbelling has been used to provide base.³³ The second stage of the phase of the transition that is octagon converted into sixteen sided polygon has been achieved in corbelling, which took place between two squinchalcove in the first stage of phase of transition. Above the phase of the transition circular drum has been built to bear the circular dome.

Presently the whole interior of the structure has no plaster though some fragments of the plaster indicate that once the interior was well plastered with lime mortar.³⁴ Stucco decorative motifs have been faded away in the course of time. Some fragments of the plaster with stucco design can also be seen on the ceiling of the door.³⁵

The building of ImadulMulk was built with bricks and lime mortar.³⁶ The size of the bricks indicate the dimensions of the brick prevailing during the Lodi period and early Mughals for example Babur and Humayun. The structure has register a little slope exteriorly, which confirms the influence or Sur architecture. All these features ascribe its construction during the Sur period which was characterized with

the synthesis of various feature of the sultanate architecture with new innovations in dimensions.

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- ⁴. *Geo Coordinates are based on Google Earth.*
- ⁵. *Geo Coordinates are based on Google Earth.*
- ⁶. A. Fuhrer, *The Monumental Antiquities and the Inscriptions in the North Western Provinces and Oudh , Allahabad, 1891, p. 23IIa.*
- ⁷. *See Figure I.*
- ⁸. *See plates 1, 2 & 13.*
- ⁹. *See Figure I and plates 1, 2, 3 & 4.*
- ¹⁰. *See Figure I and plates 7, 8 & 13.*
- ¹¹. *See Figure I and plates 1, 2, 3 & 4.*
- ¹². *See plates 1, 2, 3 & 4.*
- ¹³. *See plates 1, 2, 3 & 4.*
- ¹⁴. *See plates 1, 2, 3 & 4.*
- ¹⁵. *See plates 1, 2, 3 & 4.*
- ¹⁶. *See plates 1, 2, 3 & 4.*
- ¹⁷. *See plates 1, 2, 3 & 4.*
- ¹⁸. *See plates 1, 2, 3 & 4.*
- ¹⁹. *See Figure I and plates 1, 2, 3 & 13.*
- ²⁰. *See Figure I and plate 13.*
- ²¹. *See plates 1, 2, 3 & 4.*
- ²². *See plates 1, 2, 3, 4 & 12.*
- ²³. *See plates 1, 2, 3, 12 & 13.*
- ²⁴. *See plates 1, 2, 3, 12 & 13.*
- ²⁵. *See plates 1, 2, 3, 12, 13 & 14.*
- ²⁶. *See plates 1, 2, 3, 12, 13 & 14.*
- ²⁷. *See Figure I and plates 5, 6, 7, 8 & 9.*
- ²⁸. *See plates 5, 6, 8 & 9.*
- ²⁹. *See plates 6, 8, 9, 10 & 11.*
- ³⁰. *See plates 6, 8, 9, 10 & 11.*
- ³¹. *See plates 6, 8, 9, 10 & 11.*
- ³². *See plates 6, 8, 9, 10 & 11.*
- ³³. *See plates 6, 8, 9, 10 & 11.*

³⁴. See all plates.

³⁵. See plates 1, 2, 3 & 4.

³⁶. See all plates.

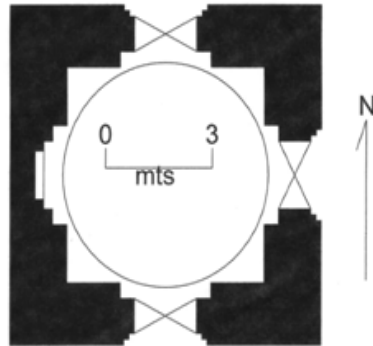


Figure I.
PLAN OF GUMAD IMADUL MULK



Plate 1: A General View of
Gumbad Imadul Mulk



Plate 2: Another General View of
Gumbad Imadul Mulk.



Plate 3: A closer View of
Gumbad Imadul Mulk.



Plate 4: A View of Arched Opening
of Gumbad Imadul Mulk.



Plate 5: A View of Inner Arched Entrance of GumbadImadulMulk.



Plate 6: A View of Phase of Transition of GumbadImadulMulk.

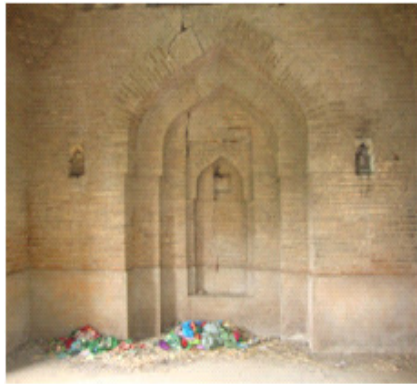


Plate 7: A View of Qibla of the Gumbad Imadul Mulk.



Plate 8: Another View of Phase of Transition of Gumbad Imadul Mulk.



Plate 9: Another View of Phase of Transition of Gumbad Imadul Mulk.



Plate 10: A Closer View of Phase of Transition of GumbadImadulMulk.



Plate 11: A View of Phase of Transition along with Ceiling of the Dome.



Plate 12: A View of Dome of Gumbad Imadul Mulk.



Plate 13: A Rear View of Gumbad Imadul Mulk.



Plate 14: A View of Crowning Elements on the Dome of Gumbad Imadul Mulk.