

Findings of Badoh Pathari and Gyaraspur

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Abstract: This paper examines Badoh-Pathari and Gyaraspur, twin towns in Vidisha district with rich Gupta, Pratihara, and Rashtrakuta historical connections. In Badoh, two notable structures have been unearthed near the Jain temple: a Gateway (Toran Dwar) and the Bedi, the former having become part of a residential structure and the latter obscured by vegetation. Gyaraspur, another town in the Vidisha district, features prominent landmarks like the Bajramath temple, Dhekinath stupa, Ath Khamba, Hindola Torana, and Maladevi temple, reflecting the coexistence of Hinduism, Jainism, and Buddhism. These towns contain various archaeological sites, some protected but many unexplored or incorporated into residences. The paper also discusses a watchtower-like structure near Hindola Torana, emphasizing the region's religious diversity and tolerance.

1 INTRODUCTION

Badoh-Pathari and Gyaraspur are towns with rich historical and archaeological significance. Dynasties like Guptas, Rashtrakutas, Pratiharas and Parmaras ruled here. A trace of Kalchuris of Tripuri is also found in one of these towns. Many architectural structures have been found in the twin towns of Badoh-Pathari. These towns are filled with architectural remains like temples, small water tanks, pillars, rock-cut caves with sculptures, etc. In the town of Gyaraspur, architectural structures related to various religions of various periods are visible. A structure like that of Bajramath is a good example of mixing different religions under one roof. Although the temple was made for Hindu Gods and Goddesses, later on, Jain iconography is found inside the temple's *garbhgriha*. Another religious structure was that of the Dhekinath Buddhist stupa. Few other structures were found that reflect the height of architectural development of its time.

2 OBJECTIVE

The objective of this paper is to repost the findings of the archaeological structure found in the towns of Badoh and Gyaraspur. Pathari has been mentioned in this paper, so as to have an idea of what the surroundings are of the remains in Badoh.

2.1 Geographical Features

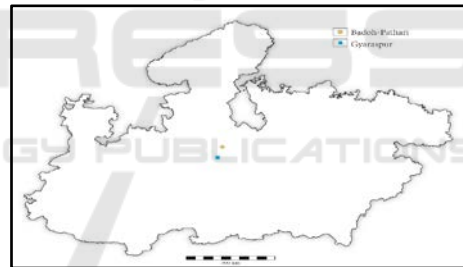


Figure 1: Location of the sites in the state of Madhya Pradesh.

The towns of Badoh-Pathari and Gyaraspur (Map 1) lie in the Vidisha district, Madhya Pradesh, with the former being a part of Kurwai tehsil and the latter being a part of Gyaraspur tehsil. The District of Vidisha lies on the Vindhya plateau, off the main Vindhya range. The plateau slopes towards the north and is drained by several rivers of Malwa and Bundelkhand. The Bina valley extends in a narrow belt along the eastern boundary and also includes the valleys of its tributaries, the Babuai and the Bagaru. The village of Pathari also overlooks the Bina valley.

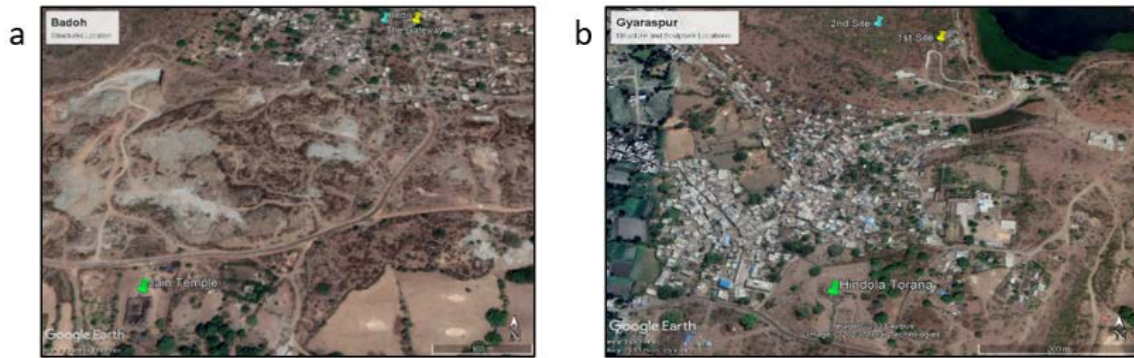


Figure 2: (a) Location of the Structures in Badoh (b) Location of Structures in Gyaraspur.



Figure 3: General View of the Gateway/Torana Dwar.

The Garhi-Teonda range extends from south to north between the valleys of the Betwa and the Bina. It is the most extensive hill range in the district and the most prominent. The twin towns of Badoh-Pathari lie in the eastern part of this range, with an average elevation of 520m. The town of Gyaraspur lies in the foothills of this range (Topography, Badoh, Gyaraspur, Pathari, 1979).

1.1 Badoh-Pathari

In the towns of Badoh-Pathari, many archaeological remains are found. While some have been conserved, others are still found in ruins. These remains are a path to great knowledge of the past and are a testament to their time. They help determine a time's political history, religious beliefs, and art and architecture. The towns prospered the most during the 9th-10th century, architecturally. These were the periods when Pratihars and Parmars were ruling in this place. It consists of a large tank, which is surrounded by remains of temples, monolithic pillars, rock-cut panels, etc. (Gyaraspur, Badoh-Pathari, 1998) The findings of a new architectural remain have been found in the town of Badoh. In an exploration done in August by officers of the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI), Bhopal Circle, the ruins of a Gateway (*Torana Dwar*)

(23°55'39.04"N, 78°13'23.47"E) and a structure, called Bedi (23°55'39.04"N, 78°13'21.93"E), by the locals, was found in the village of Badoh (Map 2). Both of these areas lie to the north of the Jain Temple of Badoh, which lies on the main road to the village of Badoh, at a distance of 700 m.

The Gateway (Fig. 1) has been whitewashed and lies at a house's entrance. It is a complete structure. No damage as such was visible in it. There is a possibility of a nearby structure (Ghosh, 2022). The area where the Gateway is standing is not a private land. At the bottom of the right-side pillars, two motifs can be seen. The motifs look partially broken. Since it has been whitewashed, it is difficult to understand the embossing.

At the centre of the Gateway, a seated female figure (Fig. 2 a) is visible. This is Goddess Lakshmi, in *Lalitasana*. Her front hands rest on her respective legs and the hands at the back are holding her attributes. Near the head, on both sides are the heads of elephants whose trunks are raised. The figures are present inside the *Lalathimba*.

Going further to the north-west of this structure remains of another structure (Fig.2 b) are visible, which the locals call Bedi. This structure is completely covered in bushes. Only a lintel is visible initially. Some fallen part of the structure was also found strewn around.

When the lintel was further checked, it revealed a whole structure (Fig. 3) beneath it. The lintels were monolithic and at the top of the shaft, beautiful designs can be seen. A part of this structure was still covered by a roof. In one part of the structure, the pillar had fallen in. The roof was barely balanced. The whole structure had some 10 pillars that were viewable.



Figure 4: (a) The Structure (b) Ala.



Figure 5: (a) & (b) The Structures of 1st Site.

On the walls of the structure is some *Ala*, (Fig. 4) inside which might have been sculptures, at one point. No sculptures were found inside the structure but some sculptures were found nearby. The *Ala* was completely covered with algae. Just above it was a lintel, supporting two pillars. On the lintel, it can be viewed, that there are some embossed designs.

Although most of the parts of the structure are completely covered with bushes and some part of it is inaccessible due to the dense bush, it can be said that the structure looked more like a *Baodi* (Well) than a *Bedi*. It even had some steps inside to walk down.

Another reason to consider it a *Baodi* is because of the presence of tanks in the north and the south of it. During the rainy season this place and many other such tanks gets filled with water. Moreover, since the river is far from here. It is a good reason to store water, in the form of tanks.

Some scholars in the earlier 1990s (Mahapatra, 1995) explored this area had found some sculptures

of Vishnu and Surya, which were then taken by the ASI officers of Bhopal circle to be kept safe.

3 GYARASPUR

The town of Gyaraspur has been a town of importance in the late ancient to medieval period, as is evident from the scattered remains, in and around the town. The place has had an influence of Hinduism, Buddhism and Jainism. Some of the principal monuments of this place are- Athkhamba, Bajramath, Maladevi Temple, Dhekinath Temple and Hindola Torana (Gateway). These monuments all show the work of the Pratiharas and Parmaras. One of the structures even has the influence of Kalchuris. Besides these major monuments, there are a few minor monuments like *Garhi* (fortress), Masarovara tank, sati stones, fragmentary sculptures, etc., deserve special mention (Badoh-Pathari, Gyaraspur, 2002).

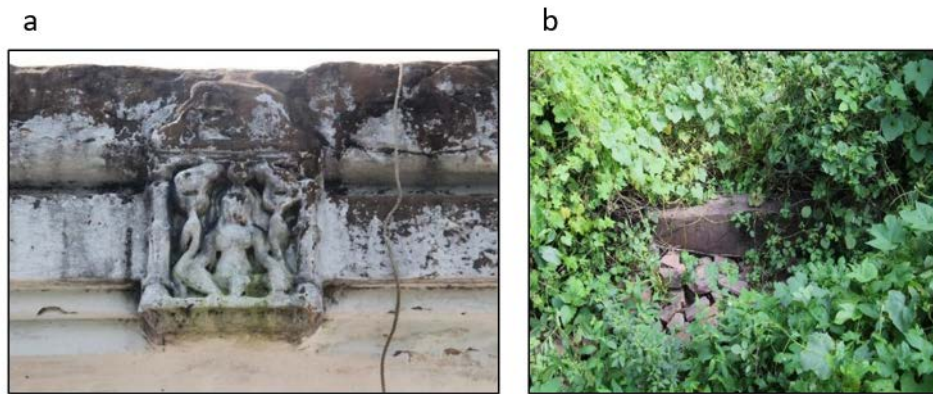


Figure 6: (a) Seated Goddess (b)View of Structure.



Figure 7: (a) Buddha's statue (b)Face of the Buddha's statue.

The ruins of Gyaraspur are found approximately 1 km away, (Map 3) to the north of the Hindola Torana. The sites lay at an elevation of 480-490 m.

The 1st site (23°40'16.19"N, 78° 7'2.24"E) is at the top of Jain Gufa (Fig. 5), Gyaraspur. The area looks like a guard watch tower, with a decorated window, facing the Mansarovar tank. It can also be an open mandapa, to place the sculpture of gods and goddesses for decoration or viewing purposes (Ghosh, 2022). After further research, it is still difficult to determine what architectural structure it was and in whose period, this was made. From the different books, these structures are a part of the Vishnu temple, as they mention a figure of the Garuda in the lintel (Gyaraspur, Badoh-Pathari, 1998) and judging from its appearance, it seemed to have been built in the 8th-9th century CE. Although the figure of Garuda is not visible today. It could have either been stolen or fallen.

The 2nd site (23°40'17.29"N, 78°06'58.63"E) is on the west of the 1st site at the top of the hill, at a distance of 100m. The area is covered with shrubs, that have some thorns on them. The area is strewn with small sculptures and panels. In this area, a large

seated Buddha sculpture in *Padmasana* on a lotus (Fig. 6a) is seen, lying on its back. The face is weathered (Fig. 6b), but still, some features are visible. The hands of the Buddha are broken; therefore, the hand mudra cannot be determined. The base of some structures was also visible partially. From the different books, it can be determined that through past explorations, platforms built on dry rubble masonry which may be the remnants of a Buddhist stupa, were found (Mahapatra, 1995). The books also mention about three more Buddhist sculptures found around the site stupa in the cardinal directions.

4 CONCLUSION

The district of Vidisha is rich in heritage, due to its location. It has seen the rise and fall of countless dynasties. These dynasties have left behind important remains, which help us understand the past. Almost all the dynasties ruled here. Badoh-Pathari and Gyaraspur are such towns, which have countless remains of humans. Some of them have been

discovered while some still await, to be discovered. The discovered ones are protected either by the Archaeological Survey of India or by the State Department. Their protection keeps these sites safe and sound. Some have been explored and discovered, yet they wait for the necessary action to be taken. The ruins of Badoh-Pathari and Gyaraspur are of such kind.

The findings of Badoh mentioned here, are a Gateway and a Bedi/Baodi. When the sites were explored, it was found, that the sites are close to getting destructed, through the increasing amount of encroachment. Most of the nearby parts of the Bedi was already encroached and many of the sculptures were found around the structure, some of which might have been taken by the locals to offer daily prayers, in their home. These sculptures are lying around in a dilapidated condition, getting covered by the daily garbage thrown by the inhabitants of the village.

The Gateway has already become a part of someone's house, resulting in the structure getting whitewashed and losing its originality. Not only this, even nature is taking its course and covering up the ruins and after some time, the ruins might not even be visible to anyone. The structures found in Gyaraspur, although have been discovered by many other scholars, are still left in a dilapidated condition. The structural remains are constantly tolerating the pressure of nature, without any outward help. Some of them are destructed, due to certain reasons and in order to keep them safe and show their glorious past, they need outward help. Also from the current exploration it was understood that some parts of the structure mentioned by the earlier scholars are not visible today. This could be due to the part of the structure either falling down or getting stolen.

What both these sites require at the present time is some form of conservation and restoration. This way we can all protect our heritage and bring back the beauty of the site. Conservation will also keep the site safe from its parts being stolen. As we visit these sites, we will see an enriched culture that has pulled the best aspects from previous centuries.

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