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### COLONIAL ARCHITECTURAL STYLE'S INFLUENCE ON BUILDINGS FAÇADE DESIGN IN ADEN CITY, YEMEN

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#### *Abstract*

In the colonial era, the colonists had established style of architecture that are in response to warmth and humid climate context. Without any hesitation, past era colonists had apparently established own effect on development of architecture. This type of colonial buildings in Aden city, Yemen, also consists of a series of styles, a mixture of Indian and Arab cultures. These special and unique styles of architecture and motives possess heritage values. The motive behind the establishment of the colonial towns and buildings was to dominate the regional trade and to exploit the local economy. The evolutions of architectural styles in Aden city from the pre-colonial era and the colonial period have been a significant story for the growth and development of architectural style design after the post-colonial era. Many of the immigrant's legacies and cultural inheritance that exists during the colonial era had created substandard impacts on the country's cultural development and architectural style. This research will employ descriptive analysis to review the impact of colonial building facade design in Aden city of Yemen from 1839 to 1967. This review will create a foundation for further research on the other architectural style of facade design such as classical, neo-classical and baroque style in Aden city.

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## 1. Introduction

The ancient city of Yemen was considered a rich land, the Romans initially tagged it Arabia Felix, which connotes, “Happy Arabia”. The basis of its wealth is founded in her spices, myrrh and frankincense trade. Majority sought for the control of the land in the past decades. According to history, the foremost rulers were called the Qahan descendants. The Qahtanis founded the most significant trade routes and constructed dams to withstand the flash-flooding in (23<sup>rd</sup> century to 8th c. BCE). The peak of the Yemeni ancient wealth and power was between 8th c. BCE and 275 CE in the era when small size kingdoms cohabit within the border lines of the country. These consists of different kingdoms such as Kingdom of Saba located in the western part, city state of Aswan, which is the central trading hub of Qataban, kingdom of Himyar in the south western part, the kingdom of Ma’in in the north western part. It was recorded that all the kingdoms developed in prosperity by selling spices and incense along the Mediterranean, Abyssinia and India. These kingdoms usually raised wars after each other, and this usual squabbling brought Yemen to a position of vulnerability, occupations and manipulations by foreign powers (Innes-Robins, 2018).

In the 14th century, Yemen was acknowledged for a new crop, coffee and the coffee was exported throughout Mediterranean countries. The Ottoman Turks dominated and ruled Yemen in the period of 1538 through 1635 and later retreated to the North Yemen between 1872 and 1918, while, Britain dominated and ruled South Yemen from 1832 onward as protectorate. The location of the city is shown in Figure 1.



**Figure 01.** Location of city Aden

Colonial architecture can be explained as style of architecture which are from a mother country and incorporated into buildings constructed in a colonies or settlements located in a far location. Generally, Colonists usually construct settlements that abridge the architecture of their origin, that is their own country, with the features of the design found in their new locations, thereby establishing hybrid designs (Bone, Hillyer, & Joh, 2014).

According to Hornby (2008), Facade can be expressed as building front. It is explained to be a wall that is open to the weather, it is usually the basic item that depict an interior space that is shelters

(Comerma, 2008). According to the explanation given by Ching (2012), facade is the buildings' front or any of its sides facing a public view path or space particularly one that distinguishes its architectural features. Meanwhile, Hassan and Che Yahaya (2012) opined that every building expressed cross-cultural images correlations with different architectural features such as facade decorations blended with other ethnic elements of architectures such as motifs. Some parts of the buildings also incorporate the typical local architectural settings such as shades, the maximum permitted openings for cross ventilation, cantilever floor and construction of double roof for internal circulation of hot and cool air, that result into hybrid style of architecture.

The Yemen architectures' identity is very certain, and it has its background through the influence of several factors and over time has developed to what it is today in their architectural style. The new architecture in Yemen especially in Aden is not specifically following any patterns or style. In this dispensation, the architectural style is under the influence of postcolonial culture and amalgamation of western architecture with several styles of urban physical perspective in adjacent to one and another can be obvious. Some of the architectural styles that are very common in physical facade of buildings are classical, neo classical and Baroque architectural style.

This idea of western architecture imitation has caused colonial architecture in Aden city and Yemen as a country lack of the ancient identity or novelty of quality architecture. Classical, Neoclassical and Baroque architecture, imitating from discontinued architectural style relevant to colonial and historical place features being utilised alongside with other rich styles incorporating colonial motifs, but this always collaged on to contemporary buildings without proportions understanding and its fundamental principles (Jalili, Kaboli, & Zirak, 2015). Colonial architecture in Aden city is metamorphosing to Classical, Neo classical and Baroque architecture styles which is rear to see in many locations in the world. According to record, this matter is yet to be explored fundamentally.

The classic design generally is stimulated by the total and partial composition. It contains a part that is whole and vice versa. There is a relationship between both part and whole which is developed different pattern necessities, such as convex, symmetry, and concave (Georges, 2012). In the 5th century, urbanisation pride and wealth escalate in Athens particularly, hence Greek art commenced its own season of classic. The era was expressed by the continuous progress in term of technical skill and progressive change in Greek traditions framework aspirations. The main objective of classical art is attaining body and notions aesthetic in a perfect order according to the desires (Bani, 2013). The peculiar system is the manner and ways Greek utilised in columns design, the design is as Doric, Ionic and Corinthian. On the other hand, renaissance, was peculiar to Italy and it was developed from their ideas of art tastes with aesthetic meaning evolved all over Europe (Grütter, 2012). The architecture style of Renaissance possesses two major goals which are humanistic and space geometry. The space geometry was actualised by means of geometry application and mathematics with humanism through the use of single classical design system. Meanwhile, Baroque was created in an Italianism logical continuation. Therefore, Baroque style of architecture can be expressed as a union of the Renaissance experience and the mannerism dynamism. Baroque architecture was systematically changed and a fundamental changed that occur in building facades. Baroque was the sarcastically word used to express architectural work that is lack in some classical relationship. Even though, the Baroque style, like their renaissance precursors, possess a positive impact on the general design unity and appearance. The distinguish features of Baroque style is

its peculiar stress on transformation and movement, particularly the emotions effect on human body. It was concluded that it was a response to mannerism (Little, 2011).

## **2. Problem Statement**

The evolutions of architectural styles in Aden city from the pre-colonial era through the colonial period and after having been a significant story for the growth and development of architectural design. It is certain and sure that the colonists had established their impact on the development and growth of architectural design in Yemen and particularly in Aden city. Many of the Indian immigrant's legacies and cultural inheritance that exists during the colonial era had created substandard impacts on the architecture style and cultural developments of the country relatives to their building's façade.

In the colonial era, the colonists had embraced styles of architecture that are in response to the warm and humid climate context of Aden. Without any iota of hesitation, the colonists in those era had seemingly implied influence on the development of architecture as argued by Chun, Hasan, and Noordin, (2005). However, in addition to these types of colonial buildings in Aden city, Yemen also consists of series of styles mixed with other cultures like Indian expatriates and tradition of Arab region. These special and unique styles of Architecture and motives possess some heritage values. The motive behind the establishment of the colonial towns is to control the regional trade and to exploit the local economy Galantay (1975) as cited by Hassan (2009).

Many and several modern houses design in Aden city fail to showcase the exact features of the colonial, local and regional style of architectural design (Dresch, 1994). Although many of them were constructed for decades, after the country's independence as stated by Damluji (1996). The effort of the government to meet the house need of the populace through mass housing production has resulted to distortion and conflicts of architectural styles and little or no attention was paid to the colonial architectural style of housing design that reflects fundamentals of the Aden people and tradition.

## **3. Research Questions**

The review paper will respond to the following questions:

- What is the level of classification architectural style adoption in Aden city of Yemen between 1839 to 1967?
- Is, classical, neo classical and baroque incompatible with colonial architecture style of building façade in Aden city of Yemen?

## **4. Purpose of the Study**

The main focus of this study is to review the colonial building architectures and the classical, neo classical with baroque architectural style of building facade from 1839 to 1967 in Aden city of Yemen.

## 5. Research Methods

A typical colonial military museum was used to do the general review of this study with the engagement of descriptive analysis. Figure 2.

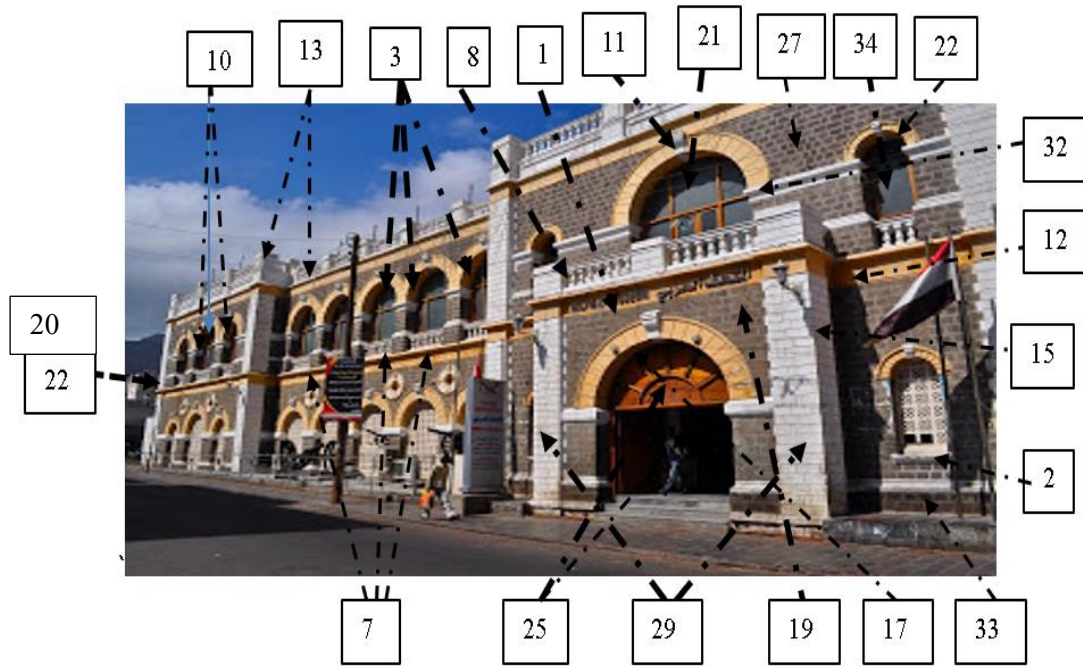


**Figure 02.** The Museum military building in colonial era – in Aden, Yemen

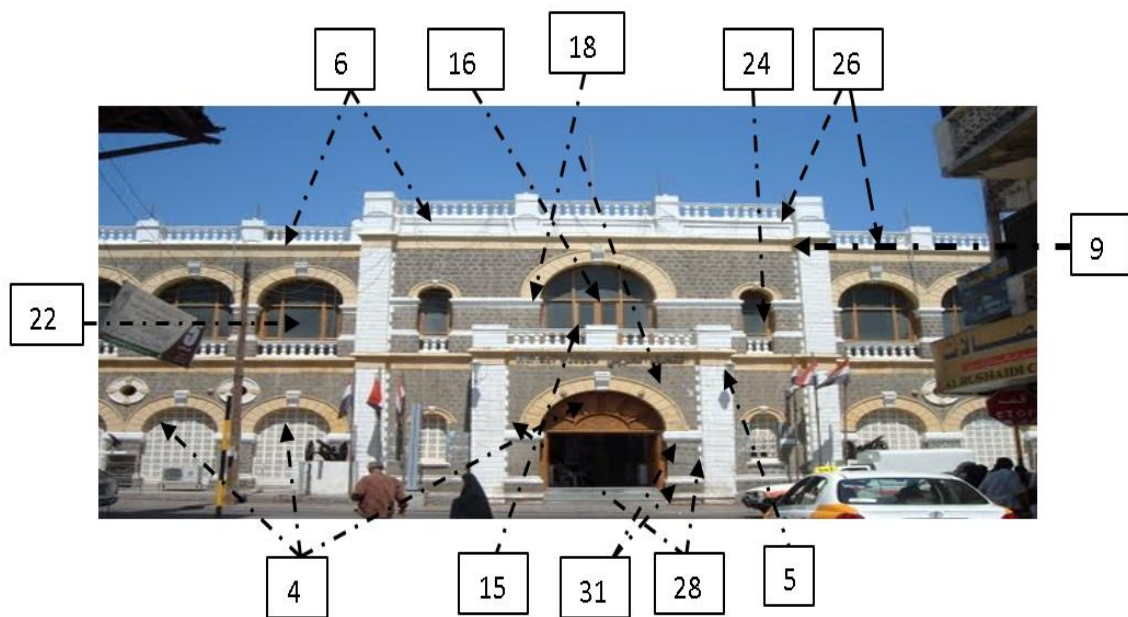
## 6. Findings

Military Museum building in Aden city was dated back to year 1918. Then it was a school for primary education which was converted after independence from Britain to a museum in 1970 and dedicated to Yemeni Military heritage. The museum was used as British military cantonment during the colonial era in Aden city and the British brought along with them a high taste of design that was inspired classically by ancient Romans and Greek. They were keen in making a rational, formal and serious classical architectural qualities. Based on this fact, the military museum building in Aden city seems to express a high symmetry devotion, most importantly in the facade. The symmetry was attained by means of citation of doors and windows in the large span single story building. Apart from this fact, it is common practices of the British to place pilasters or columns around the door especially the entrance door, as well as shutters around the windows. In terms of materials, bricks and wood are the common building materials used in the museum which is largely because of the availability.

The museum offers various weapons and old photographs in the era of revolution against the British occupation. The museum is located in the Crater, Museum Road. The outlook of the museum reflects the impact of the British colonial building which are mostly followed as shown in Figure 3 – 4. several architectural model like gothic, imperial, Christian, English renaissance, as well as Victorian which are the essentials.



**Figure 03.** Side façade of museum colonial building



**Figure 04.** Front façade of museum

Viewing the museum from the front façade, the design of the entrance porch draws a parallel similarity to the Indo-Persian style, which is flourish in Mughal with spandrel, chattery, dado calligraphy and arches specially design which showcase their ancestral and adopted home. It is an emblem of power that their patriotism endorsement. The museum entrance displays two classical columns with a well articulation designs on each column which protruded out of the building wall. The top of the two columns was finished with cornice, ashlar, dentil, and as well adorned with pedestal and pediments. The facade is also showing tympanum which is well decorated as it was bounded on the lintel. The entrance door was perfected at the top with muntin and lines of loggia which was created by lines of colonnade. The top of

the entrance porch was finished with balustrade and balcony or veranda. All along the front facade of the museum, it was embellished with several antefix. arcades, balustrades, colonnade and balcony.

All these features were repeated along the side facades of the museum, making it a unique resemblance of the typical great cantonment of the British colonist military. All round the buildings are edges at the top before the flat concrete roof were cornice and cresting. These were generally horizontal decorative mouldings used to crown the building while cresting was ornamental attached to the roof and the cornice with coping and the parapet. On top of the slab roof was series of decorated balustrade and short columns at interval for strengthen of the balustrades which was done inform of parapet wall. The expansive flat roof is finished with milk coloured clay tiles that has resistance to water penetration and there were embedded drains. The building is bejewelled with eight laminated carving wood doors to facilitate easy access to and from the building because of the expected large number of people that may be visiting the building at a time. Summarily, it can be established that the museum reveals the Gothic architecture ornaments, style and construction of the British colonists which is the predominantly indicative of Indo-Saracenic revival style, European style and Indo-Islamic components. The overall summary of the architectural elements of all styles, classical, neo classical and baroque are as shown in Table 1.

**Table 01.** General summary of the architectural elements

No.	Architecture Elements Façade	Front View Façade	Side View Façade
1	Accolade	/	/
2	Apron	/	/
3	Arcade	X	/
4	Arch	/	/
5	Architrave	/	/
6	Balustrade	/	/
7	Bay	/	X
8	Balcony	/	/
9	Cornice	/	/
10	Colonnade	/	/
11	Keystone	/	/
12	Lintel	/	/
13	Mullion	/	/
14	Parapet wall	/	/
15	Porte-cochere/portico	/	X
16	Rake	/	/
17	Round arch	/	/
18	Springer	/	/
19	Tympanum	/	/
20	Quoins	/	/
-	<b>Window</b>		
21	Fan-light	/	/
22	Muntin	/	/
23	Pelmet	/	/
24	Sash	/	/
-	<b>Door</b>		
25	Wood panel door	/	X
-	<b>Roof</b>		
26	Flat roof	/	/
-	<b>Wall</b>		

27	Ashlar	/	/
28	Pilaster	/	X
-	<b>Column</b>		
29	Column	/	/
30	Classical column	X	X
31	Cincture	/	/
32	Collarino	/	/
-	<b>Material Used</b>		
33	Blocked stone	/	/
34	Glass	/	/

## 7. Conclusion

By reviewing the different styles of architecture style that are peculiar to the Western world relative to colonial building's facade in Aden city, Yemen. It can be concluded that the architecture style of Aden city's colonial buildings, classical, neoclassical and baroque styles have been consistent and assured of continuation in the architectural style of different facades of building in Aden city with certain proportions and principles.

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