



### A Study of Coronation Library Faisalabad-Focusing on Aesthetics

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**Abstract:** Pakistan is a developing country which is working at it best for its better growth. The major sectors which are working for the country's development are agriculture and industry. While considering its industrial growth, District of Faisalabad is one of the primary areas. This city is best known for its textile industry which is one of the major reasons for the city's population increase as this industry is creating many jobs. Since the creation of this industry people are moving towards this city. Thus, the city's educational institutes are rising in number. Consequently, the use of city libraries is enhancing day by day. One of the major and oldest libraries is The Allama Iqbal Library built in 1912 in the heart of the city. The utilization of this library is getting increased with the passage of time but a little is known about its historical developments and architectural character. To discover the architectural aesthetics of this building is a paramount significance for which a research was required to deeply study and observe the building. To achieve this objective the library was visited for visual observations and review of literature has been done. Offices of the Deputy Commissioner Faisalabad, Tehsil Council City Faisalabad and Lyallpur Heritage Foundation were visited to gather related information.

**Key words:** Library, Colonial, Coronation, Lyallpur, Faisalabad, Pakistan

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#### 1. Introduction and Background

In December 1911, a decision was taken by the British Government to build a library at Lyallpur to commemorate the Coronation of King George 5.<sup>1</sup> Lyallpur was the third largest educational center of Punjab Province after Lahore and Amritsar at the time when decision was taken to build the library, therefore, the area was having a necessity to build this library building. Its foundation stone was laid on 24<sup>th</sup> January 1912. It was formally opened for public on 14<sup>th</sup> December, 1914. The name of the library was nominated as The Coronation Library-Lyallpur which was constructed by the funds raised from public contribution and donations from District Board Lyallpur and Municipal Committee Lyallpur. On 14<sup>th</sup> May 1945, the Deputy Commissioner of the time laid a foundation stone to erect a new hall at the back of the front Halls constructed while considering the privacy of Muslim Ladies. The funds was generated from both public and government sector amounting to Rs. 18000.<sup>2</sup>

The Coronation Library was constructed as principal library. In 1945, when this library was extended by considering the current and future use, 40 rural libraries were also developed, covering whole district, in rural schools. These rural libraries along with The Coronation library as central library were thought to be form a literary planetary system.<sup>2</sup> after independence in 1947, this literary system was not continued due to other priorities.<sup>1</sup>

Currently, this library is functioning as a central library for the city of Faisalabad. The library comprises of an English Hall, Urdu Hall, Newspaper Hall, computer section, female section and children section. An average of 40 people visit this library per day and get benefit from approximately 35000 books at the library on the subjects of agriculture,

geography, history, religion, ethics, economics, science, first aid, English literature, Urdu literature, Arabic etc.<sup>7</sup>

### **1.2 Research Question**

There are many heritage buildings and structures in Faisalabad. Which are deteriorating with the passage of time. Due to their deterioration some of them are vacant, some of them have been demolished, some of them have been renovated, some of them are upgraded to serve new function but a small number of built heritage are still in good condition due to the attention of administration and their maintenance. They are still functioning under the same purpose for which they were built. Now the question arises:

Why only some of the heritage buildings have been considered important to be maintained with the same function?

### **1.3 Objective**

To discover the aesthetics of Coronation Library for understanding the reason of its existence with the same function even after a time of around 100 years.

## **2. Methodology**

The primary thing done was to set a criterion for selection of a building for aesthetic appraisal. The primary considerations included that the selected building would be a public building instead of private or specific users building so that appraisal can be done in the best interest of public. The other consideration was that building would have a vital role for the upbringing of the present and future generations, so that, not only current users but future users can also be get aware of the study related to the building they use and finally the building should be easily accessible to the author to visit it frequently and on the other hand no formal approvals should be required for visits, so that, intensive work without any restriction can be carried out.

While considering all the above mentioned criteria an old library building was selected for this study. Consequently, the Coronation library was visited to observe its architectural character and for its architectural documentation. After completing the architectural documentation the aesthetics appraisal was done.

The aesthetic appraisal was based on the fundamental design principles. These principles are important for an architect to create a visually attractive building.<sup>3</sup> Following fundamental design principles were considered:

1. Emphasis<sup>3</sup>
2. Balance<sup>3</sup>
3. Contrast<sup>3</sup>
4. Repetition<sup>3</sup>
5. Movement<sup>6</sup>
6. Proportion<sup>3</sup>
7. Unity<sup>4</sup>

Thus, these design principles acted as parameters for the aesthetic appraisal of library building exterior, interior and functionality.

## **4. Architectural Documentation**

The library was visited to document its architectural features and to prepare its drawings for further observation and record. The floor plans are as follows:

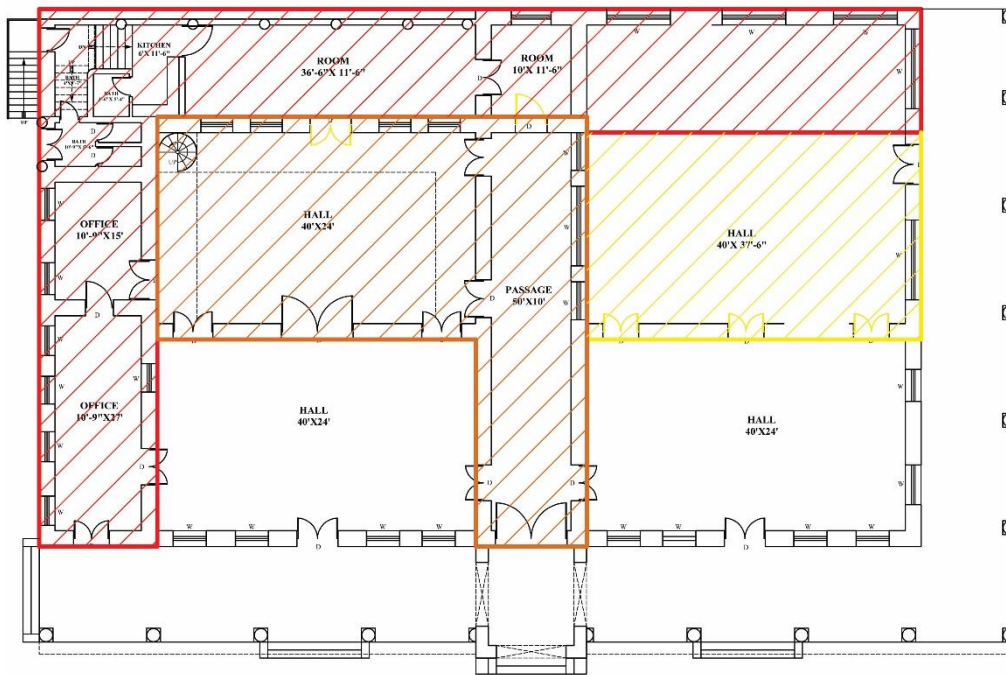


Figure 1: Ground Floor Plan (Source: Author)

The ground floor of the library has gone through several changes and up gradations. Initially the first two halls were constructed with a central covered path and surrounding verandah in 1914. In 1945, the central covered path was blocked by constructing an office at the end and a third hall was constructed especially for the females with *Pardah* (veil). The rear and sides verandahs were also covered to make offices and stock rooms at that time. The second phase construction is highlighted in brown in the above shown plan. The red part of the plan shows the side and rear verandah which was covered. In 1980's a new hall was constructed according to the need of the users. This hall is highlighted in yellow. The latest constructed hall has three sections at the present i.e. computer section, women section and children section. Some small later additions were also made to construct toilets and a small kitchen etc. At the present, the black plan (also under the heighted parts) is functional for the library building.

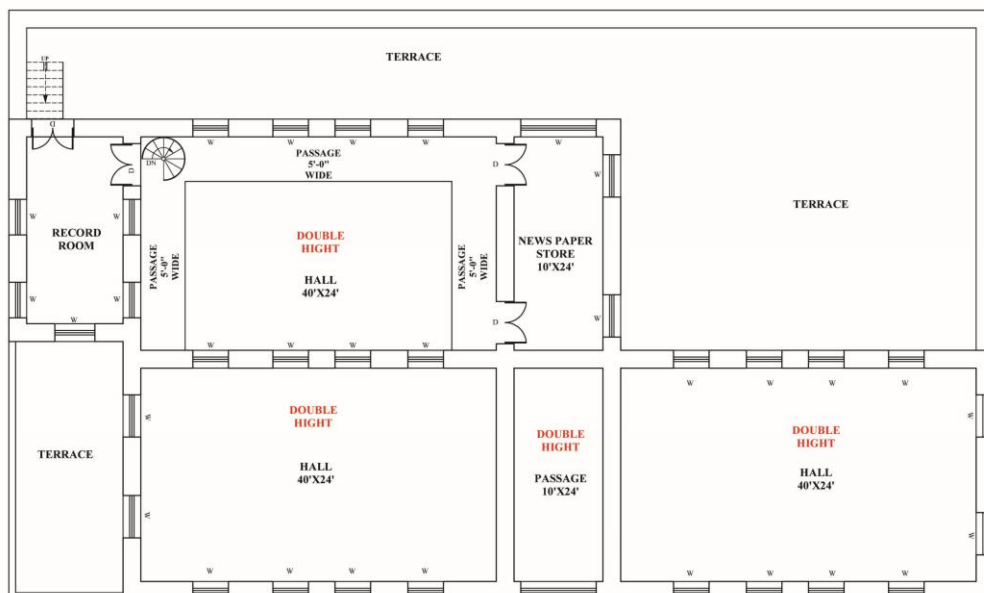


Figure 2: Mezzanine Floor Plan (Source: Author)

The mezzanine floor was also added in 1945 to build a space for storage purpose. The back hall gives an access to the store room, currently functioning as newspaper storage, through a spiral staircase. All the three halls constructed

in 1914 and 1945 were placed at double height considering the ventilation and number of users. The following sections are showing the heights of the interior halls:

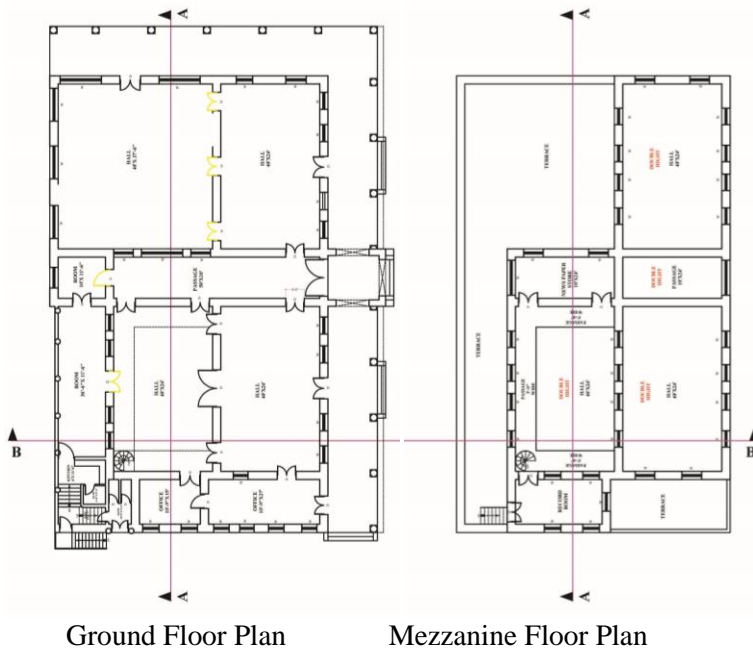


Figure 3: Floor Plans showing Sections AA' and BB' (Source: Author)

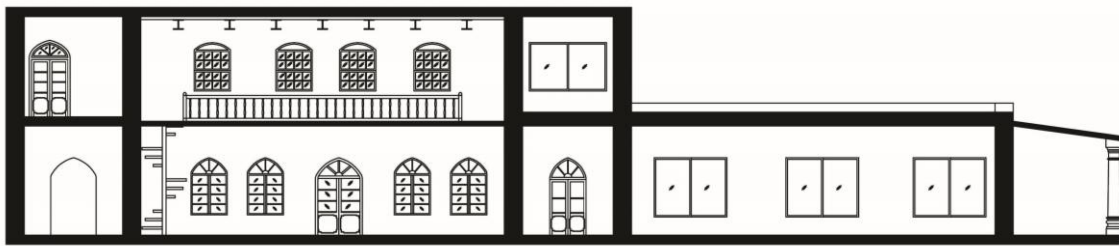


Figure 4: Section AA' (Source: Author)

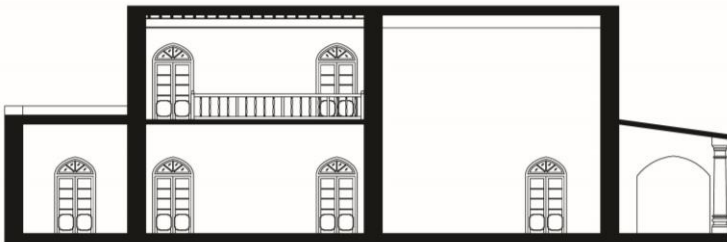


Figure 5: Section BB' (Source: Author)

Section AA' is showing the horizontal view of the double heighted hall with a mezzanine floor constructed in 1945 in the right. In the left the hall constructed in the third phase with a low heighted roof can be seen. There is no air conditioners installed in the library except in the latest hall constructed with low heighted roof. All other halls and offices are of double height with ventilators. The library does not get suffocated due to its double height and the time lag of passing of heat or cold is also larger due to thick walls of 1.5 feet. This double height and thick walls can also be seen in Section BB' in both the front and rear halls.

The elevation of the building façade to understand its exterior elements is as follows:

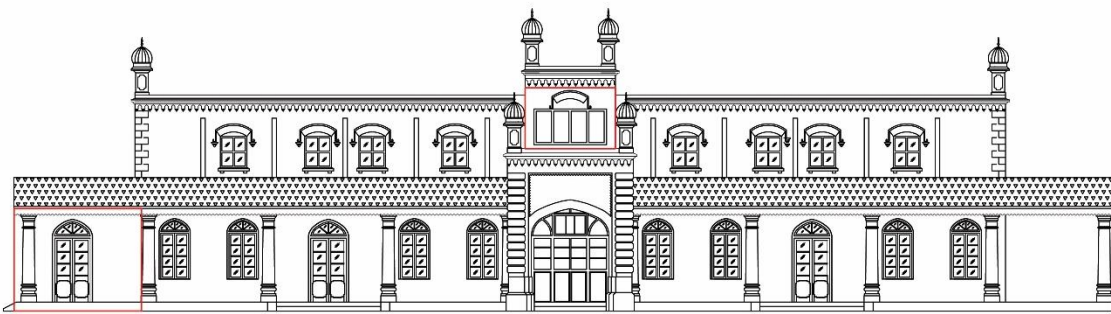


Figure 6: Coronation Library Elevation (Source: Author)

The red part in the elevation shows the later additions. The left side verandah was closed by constructing office, store room, toilets, a small kitchen and a narrow stairs which leads to the record room. These spaces can be seen in ground and mezzanine floor plans. This elevation is showing the entrance door to the store room as heightened in red. The central part, heightened in red, was constructed during the first phase but the window was erected in place of the ventilator at some unknown time.

#### 4.1 Aesthetics of the Coronation Library

The aesthetics of a building can be described as the beauty and positive impact of a building on its users and every person who views it. This positive impact or attraction is a combination of various architectural elements known as the design principles.<sup>5</sup> The author has applied these design principles to analyze the aesthetics of The Coronation Library. There are many design principles out of which the author has selected the following seven principles on the basis of their vital roles as described below:

##### 1. Emphasis:

Emphasis is basically deals with the process or idea to make building elements prominent. It can be done by centralizing the important building elements or making some building elements larger in size so that the viewer's eye can focus on these elements.<sup>3</sup>

##### 2. Balance:

Balance is related to the distribution of building elements in an equal method. There are two types of balance i.e. symmetrical-equal weighted building elements are placed on both sides of the center line, and asymmetrical-contrasting (in size i.e. larger and smaller) building elements are planned in such a way that equilibrium is maintained.<sup>3</sup>

##### 3. Contrast:

Contrast is the condition in which one building element is strikingly different from other.<sup>3</sup> Building elements with the natural sky background is also a type of contrast.

##### 4. Repetition:

The repetition deals with repeating some building elements to create familiarity among the whole building design.<sup>3</sup>

##### 5. Movement:

Movement is directing the viewer's eye to a specific or focused part of the building. These directions can be achieved through edges, shapes, colors etc.<sup>6</sup>

##### 6. Proportion:

Proportion is the characteristic of a building design which deals with the comparison of sizes of various building elements. It organize the building parts considering their magnitudes so that they wouldn't look odd or alien to one another.<sup>3</sup>

##### 7. Unity:

Functioning of all elements placed in a building design together is unity of a building design if they are not disturbing one another and creating a smooth ambience by supporting one another. Thus, creating a compelling composition through arrangement of the building elements.<sup>4</sup>

The above explained design principles are applied on the design of The Coronation Library to find the aesthetics that exists in the heritage building of the British Era.

#### 4.2 Balance in the Coronation Library

The Coronation Library is symmetrically balanced i.e. if we consider a vertical line in the center of the building

façade then it can be observed that equally weighted and equally arranged elements are present on both sides of the central vertical line as shown in the following elevation:

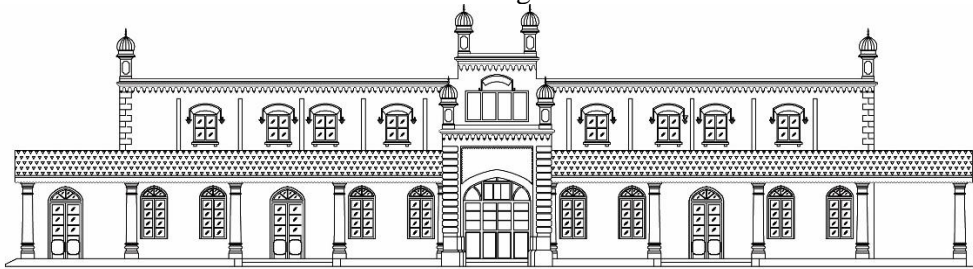


Figure 7: Elevation of the building with central vertical line (Source: Author)

It was observed that currently some elements of the façade are not equally balanced i.e. the elevation shows verandah in the right but in the left it is having a wall with the entrance. As studied and found by the author these imbalanced features were introduced in the later renovation and up gradation stages which are also mentioned in the historic timeline table of the library under section 10.

### 4.3 Repetition in the Coronation Library

The repetition in the library is achieved by cupolas, arches and dentils as can be seen in the following image:



Figure-8: Façade of the building (Source: Author)

A colossal arch designed in the center of the building serves as main entrance. Other arches are designed in the form of doors and windows. A verandah supported with Tuscan columns runs surrounding the library originally but currently its serves on only two sides due to addition of some rooms. A series of dentils was running under the cornice through the building. At present this continuity was break with the new construction. These elements were used to move the eye through the building. The similar elements like windows, doors, series of dentils, column style etc. express the buildings unity which cannot be obtained by using different style of elements. It can be judged by assuming if this library would having different shapes of arches or different styles of columns. With such elements the building would had been looked disunited or divided into parts rather than united one.

### 4.4 Emphasis in the Coronation Library

Emphasis is basically pointing the eye to an element which required to be viewed chiefly and most of the times. In Coronation Library the emphasis is done through creating a heightened central volume and breakage of repeated elements in the center of the building.



Figure 9: Building Façade (Source: Author)

It can be seen in the above figure that there is a high volume central element, as compared to the verandah sides, with a play of recessed and raised space. This point is serving as main entrance of the building since the time of its first phase construction in 1914. It can also be observed that there is a continuous flow of cornice and dentils at the height. These elements are also seems recessed as compared to the cornice and dentils found in the central volume. The flow of arched openings i.e. doors and windows also break at the central point. There are total six cupolas in the building façade from which four are designed on the central volume. Other parts seem recessed and the central volume is designed as enlarged and extended part. All these elements i.e. breakage of continuity of doors, windows, cornice and dentils, creating large central volume and concentration of more than half of cupolas crowing the central volume creates an emphasis. The eye of the viewer stops or focus at the central point.

Emphasis is one of the primary concerns of design as the point of the building emphasized will be mostly interacted by the viewer. In the library case the emphasized point is the right one according to the author because it leads the viewer to enter the building and a person who is watching the building just passing by the road will also focus on this point from where he will be aware about the standing building status and function.

#### 4.5 Contrast in the Coronation Library

Contrast is achieved in the building through colors. The building is located in an area which was having the similar heighted buildings. At the present, this area is having some multistory buildings which are very less in number. This similarity of surrounding buildings i.e. low height is creating the background sky clear instead of having some buildings on that. This clear and light color sky background supports the building form to strike in the viewers eyes smoothly. The current colors applied on the building, as finishing in paint, are white and dark brown. This light and dark combination is creating a contrast in the building façade and sides as can be seen in the above façade figure-8 and below side figures:



Figure 10: Right side (Source: Author)



Figure 11: Left side (Source: Author)

It can be seen in the above images that details like cornice, dentils, verandah batters, ventilators and their crowning moldings, doors and windows are in dark brown color while the rest of the building elements like columns and walls are in white color. These light and dark colors are strikingly differently creating a contrast.

#### 4.6 Movement in the Coronation Library

Movement is a design principle which is important to make the building elements focused. It is related to the movement of the viewer's eye which leads towards the main points. This leading towards the main or primary points of the building uses design principles like repetition and contrast to move and lead the eye towards the primary elements. As also discussed in section 6.2 and 6.4 respectively. It depends on such design principles that how the eye of the viewer can be moved. In the library building, there are two types of movements observed in the building. One is starting from central or emphasized part (when viewer's eye directly focused on the main entrance part) and moving towards the sides by following the repeated and contrast elements, other is starting from an edge or side of the building (when viewer's eye does not got focused to central part initially and start moving from side) and moving towards the central or emphasized point. Both these movements encourages the viewer to see whole building instead of just watching a part of the building and moving to other neighboring buildings.

#### 4.7 Proportion in the Coronation Library

Coronation library building is having accurate proportions. All the elements seen in the building are in an appropriate relationship of magnitudes. As can be seen in the elevation of the building in image---every element is creating an appearance of unity and balance. No element is creating an odd visualization. The height, width and depth of the elements like columns, arches, cupolas etc are creating a balance for one another i.e. no element is having a unique or different measurement. Everything is in a harmony. As it is a library building no monumental dimensions are used so that the person feels smaller in front of a building. The building goes with the human scale. As can be seen in the below picture:



Figure 12: Proportions of Coronation Library (Source: Author)

In the above picture a person/user is coming out of the main entrance of the library which is also the focus point of the building. It can be seen that the whole building height, width and depth is not appearing awkward to the human. The man is not looking too small as compared to the building. The human and the building elements are complimenting each other. The columns are not too heighted, the verandah roof is at acceptable height, the circulation space of the verandah is providing a proper width for a human body to move, large distances were not created, comfortable environment for human was proposed. Thus, an accurate proportion was achieved by considering human comfort and balance between building elements.

#### 4.8 Unity in the Coronation Library

As explained in above sections of design principles i.e. balance, repetition, emphasis, contrast, movement and proportion, every element of the building is properly designed and located which creates an arrangement which gather all the building parts establishing an impact of uniformity rather that of varied building system. This togetherness of Coronation library building elements is their unity which comforts the viewer's eye to recognize the wholeness of the building. All the building elements, as can be seen in the above figures under section 6, are forming a group rather than forming disparate parts. The elements like windows, doors and ventilators are repeated with same color, shape and standard size for each opening with a background of white color. All these things are complementing each other on the same wall. On the other hand, all the columns and cupolas are in monotone i.e. white shows equal importance of different elements as both of them are prominent visual elements of the library building. This complementation and equalness establishes unity in design of Coronation library.

#### 4.9 Interior of Coronation Library

The interior of Coronation library is comprising of two offices for officers and staff, four main halls, two galleries, gents toilets, caretaker's residence and two store rooms. The pictures of the main areas are as below:





Figure 13: Newspaper Hall (Source: Author)



Figure 14: Urdu Hall (Source: Author)



Figure 15: English Hall view-1 (Source: Author)



Figure 16: English Hall view-2 (Source: Author)



Figure 17: New Hall View-1 (Source: Author)



Figure 18: New Hall View-2 (Source: Author)

The newspaper and Urdu halls shown in the above images were constructed in 1914 i.e. in first phase of construction, English hall in 1945 i.e. in second phase of construction and new hall comprising of male, female and children sections, was constructed in 1980s i.e. in third phase of construction. Consequently, the Coronation library building went through three phases of construction yet.

It can be seen in the images that the first phase construction is having high ceiling, ventilators and vaulted roof. Second phase of construction is having high ceiling, ventilators, girder and batten roof and a mezzanine floor. Third phase of construction is having low ceiling level as compared to the previous constructed halls, no ventilators and column beam structural system. It has been observed that first two constructions considered natural light and ventilation while providing both ventilators and windows which is sustainable while the third construction didn't considered the natural light and ventilation as important due to which air conditioners are being installed and

functional in this hall but not in other halls.

**4.10 Materials and Structure**

The primary halls erected for the library were constructed by using bricks for both walls and roofs. Lime plaster was used as bonding material. First phase halls are having vaulted roofs made with bricks whereas girders and battens were used in the roof of the hall constructed in second the phase. The third phase hall is the modern one and was constructed with column beam structural system using concrete, brick and cement plaster. Originally the brick was used as finishing material at the façade and all other sides of the library. Currently, these bricks are being painted in white. Small details like cornice and dentils are painted in brown.

**4.11 Current Condition of the Building**

The current condition of the building is not good as observed by the author. The building is having painted exterior which is not the original finishing. Originally the library was beautified with the unpainted bricks.<sup>1</sup> Termite is a serious problem which damaging the doors, windows, ventilators, book cupboards etc. Roof leakage is the issue of the building which was started around 50 years back<sup>1</sup> but still not rectified. Plaster at the interior of the building had left from many places.

**4.12 Historic timeline study of The Coronation Library**

Since the library building has been erected it has gone through various changes related to its external appearance, function and maintenance. The historic timeline of the library building is explained in the following table:

Year	Description
1900-1950	1911: Decision to build the library was taken. 1912: Foundation stone was laid. 1919: Building was completed. 1945: Building renovation and upgradation was done.
1951-2000	1967: A small room at south-west side was constructed to rent out to the press related people. 1970's: Four rooms as servant quarters were built at the south-west side of the building. 1979: The name of the Library was changed from Coronation Library to Allama Iqbal Library. The building was painted in red color. 1983: Some maintenance work was done. 1987: New buildings at south-east side were built to generate revenue. 1990: Decision was taken to demolish the library building and to erect a new one.
2001-Mid of 2021	2009: A complete building of press club built at south-west side. 2014: Lyallpur museum was constructed at south-east side. 2015: The buildings built in 1987 were demolished to restore the original site plan. 2021: The decision to execute maintenance work of the library building taken.

The historic timeline of the library is explained in the above mentioned table. The total land of library is 14 kanals but due to some interventions the library is functioning in a decreased area as explained in the above mentioned table. The interventions of area minimization were started in 1967. A small room for press related people was built to give them on rent. The decided rent was Rs.60 which was decreased to Rs. 05 which was also not paid by the tenants. That time clerk submitted rent of some months from his own pocket with an intention that these people should be tenants in the record and would not become owners. But in 2009, the administration constructed a complete building as the Press Club and the boundary wall was erected between library and newly constructed building. In 2013, Lyallpur Museum was built at the seuth-east side of the library decreasing area of its grassy plots.<sup>1</sup>

There were some other important decisions, related to the historic timeline of library, whose details are worth mentioning here. In 1979 the name of the library was changed from Coronation Library to Allama Iqbal Library by

General Zia-ul-Haq (that time President of Pakistan) upon his visit to Faisalabad. In 1983, some maintenance work was done by the Deputy Commissioner of that time. Since then no maintenance work has been done upto now. In 1990, a decision was taken to demolish the heritage building completely to erect a new one with an estimated cost of 4.5 million. This decision was based on the bad condition of the library roofs where water leakage was an issue. But due to some financial constraints the building was not demolished.<sup>1</sup>

#### 4.13 Comparison with the Surrounding Built Heritage of the same Era

A comparison of the Coronation Library with the contemporary surrounding heritage buildings was made to observe the same era architectural elements which were used repetitively in the buildings i.e. which were of fundamental importance to that time architecture. The buildings found in the neighborhood of the library are:

- District Courts (to the east) built in 1904
- District Health Authority (to the west) built in
- District Council (to the south) built in 1900

The location map of these buildings in relation with the Coronation Library is as follows:

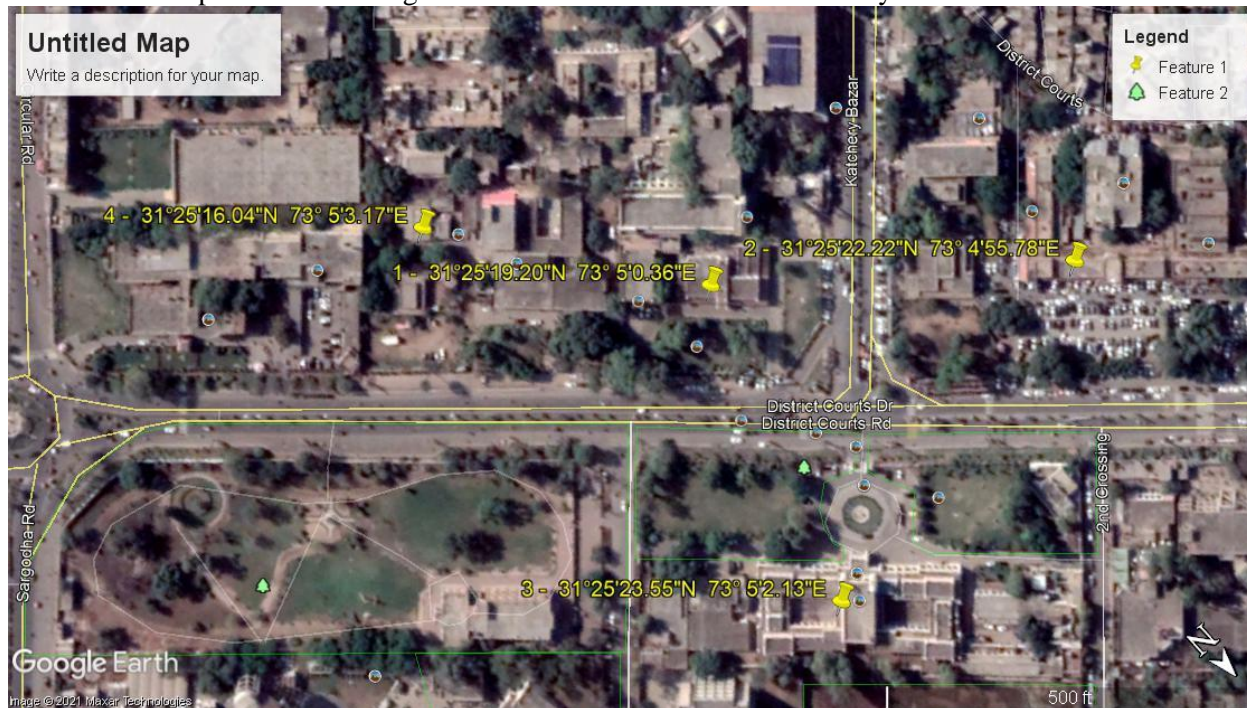


Figure 19: The location map of Junction (Source: Google Earth)

The location map of the junction is showing all 4 buildings present here. At 1- Coronation Library, 2- District Courts (some new buildings are erected in the premises according to the current need), 3-Old Women Hospital (currently working as District Health Authority with the addition of new building blocks in the premises), 4-District Council. The importance of the junction, where the above mentioned buildings are located, can be considered by observing that this junction was crowned with the most important buildings of the area which are still in original function. Due to the junction's importance all the protests of Faisalabad District are being executed here by the public. The appearance of the buildings, featuring architectural elements, is shown as follows:

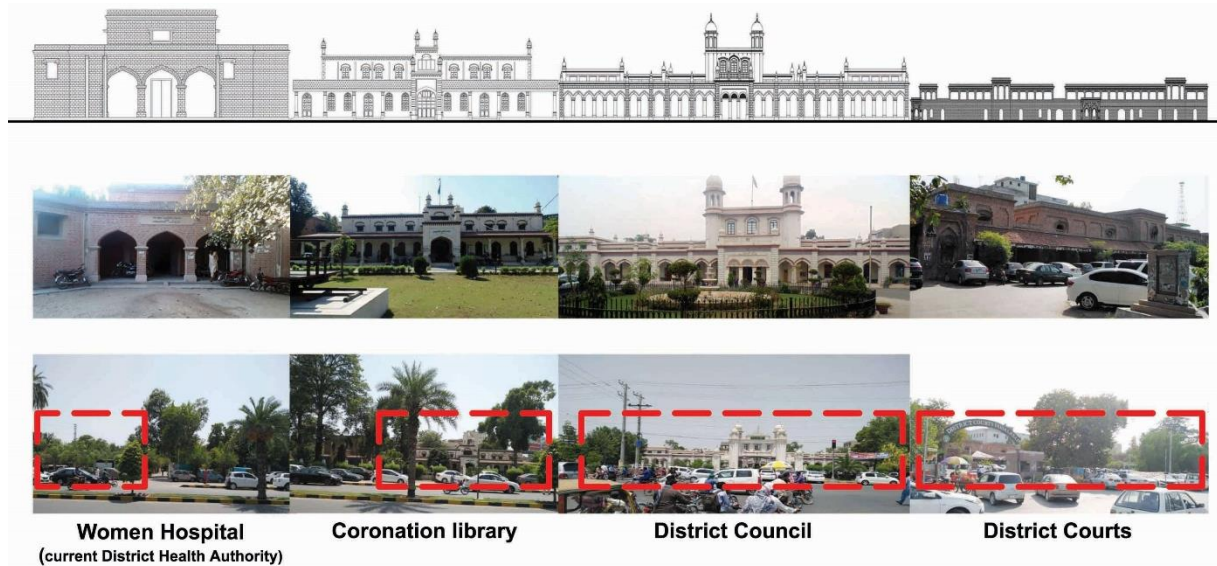


Figure 20: Montage of buildings at the junction (prepared by author)

The above mentioned montage is showing the elevations, facades and premises entrance views of all four buildings at the junction. The common architectural elements found in all four buildings are:

- Brick finishing, tudor arches, double storey, cullis at façade.

The common architectural elements found in Coronation library building and District Council buildings, being in the exactly opposite positions are:

- Cupolas, finials, emphasized entry.

As all the three buildings were built earlier than the library, so, these prominent elements were re-used in the library building design giving it an impact of the British Era building of the same time period and showing its function as worthy as were the functions of other important buildings already present at the junction.

#### 414 Findings

The elements that can be seen on the building façade are cupolas locally known as *Kalse* taken from Renaissance architectural style<sup>9</sup>, pointed arches taken from Islamic architecture<sup>8</sup>, recessed and tuck pointing brick work that is a method developed in late 18<sup>th</sup> century at Britain<sup>10</sup>, columns with base and capitals, pointed arch entrances having straight doors and tympanums, straight windows with tympanums, stained glass ornamentation at tympanums of doors and windows-a feature from Gothic architecture<sup>11</sup>, ventilators which emerged after verandah roof in the façade with a curvilinear projection creating an impact of dormer type openings taken from Gothic architectural style<sup>12</sup>.

The features incorporated in the building interior are vault roofs created by a series of arches, girder and battens roofs, pointed arch entrances with straight doors and pointed tympanums, spiral stairs leading to the mezzanine floor having stock room, straight windows built during later construction phase, false ceiling hanged in some parts which was also added in the latest renovation phase done in 2014.

Thus, it can be concluded that European and Islamic architectural elements joined to form the façade of Coronation Library designed in the Colonial era architecture of Lyallpur which is actually the 4<sup>th</sup> and last style of British era known as hybrid style of architecture.<sup>13</sup>

#### 5. Conclusions and Recommendations

Faisalabad is the third largest city of Pakistan known for its textile industry at the present. It is not known for educational betterment or any other related characteristic but as already mentioned that in 1945, currently Faisalabad, Lyallpur was the third largest educational center of Punjab Province due to which a necessity was felt to construct a central library here to support the students and intellectuals. At present, this library is primarily facilitating students who are interested to appear in Central Superior Service exams. They explore the facts from the old books newspaper of both the past and present time. This library has no attraction for current students because there are no updated books available, no computerized or updated library facilities and books catalogues. The reason came to be known to the author is shortage of funds and less attention of the library staff and administration to upgrade the library

according to the current generation requirements.

This is a beautiful building as featuring all the seven principles of design in a good manner as explained by the author in section 6. This building requires much conservation works. Being one of the declared heritage buildings and one of the primary libraries of the city of Faisalabad, this building is required to be greatly attended to restore its diminished original beauty and to upgrade its educational functions.

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