



3.

HALK KÜTÜPHANECİLİĞİ
SEMPOZYUMU

"KÜTÜPHANELERDE MEKÂN TASARIMI"

8-10 MAYIS 2013, BODRUM



BİLDİRİLER, KÜTÜPHANE SUNUMLARI, POSTERLER

3. Halk Kütüphaneciliđi Sempozyumu

Kütüphanelerde Mekân Tasarımı

8-10 Mayıs 2013, Bodrum

Bildiriler, Kütüphane Sunumları, Posterler

Yayına Hazırlayanlar

Hasan Sacit Keserođlu – Sacit Arslantekin



T.C. KÜLTÜR VE TURİZM BAKANLIđI



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3. HALK KÜTÜPHANECİLİĞİ SEMPOZYUMU KURULLARI

Düzenleme ve Danışma Kurulu Eşbaşkanları

Erkin Yılmaz Genel Müdür Kütüphaneler ve Yayınlar Genel Müdürlüğü

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Düzenleme Kurulu

Prof. Dr. Sacit Arslantekin Ankara Üniversitesi

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Erol Sönmez Daire Başkanı Kütüphaneler ve Yayınlar Genel Müdürlüğü

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Meral Erdoğan Kütüphaneci Kütüphaneler ve Yayınlar Genel Müdürlüğü

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Prof. Dr. Mehmet Emin Küçük Aksaray Üniversitesi

Doç. Dr. Hülya Dilek Kayaoğlu İstanbul Üniversitesi

SEMPOZYUM PROGRAMI

3. Halk Kütüphaneciliği Sempozyumu: Kütüphanelerde Mekân Tasarımı

8-10 Mayıs 2013, Bodrum

Çarşamba, 8 Mayıs 2013

09.00-09.30	Kayıt
09.30-10.10	Açılış Konuşmacılar Prof. Dr. Hasan Sacit Keseroğlu Semra ATINÇ / Kütüphaneler ve Yayınlar Genel Müdür Yardımcısı Dr. Mehmet Gödekmerdan / Bodrum Kaymakamı
10.10-10.50	Genel Müdürlük Sunumu Türk Halk Kütüphanelerinin Mekânsal Tasarımlarında Yeni Gelişmeler Semra Atınç/ Genel Müdür Yardımcısı
10.50 - 11.05	Çay - Kahve Arası
11.05-12.10	Çağrılı Konuşma 1 Kültür ve İnsanlar İçin Kamusal Mekânlar Tasarlamak Doç. Dr. Marco Muscogiuri, İtalya Milano Politeknik Üniversitesi
12.10-12.30	POSTER SUNUMLARI
12.30 - 14.00	Öğle Yemeği
14.00-15.00	Çağrılı Konuşma 2 Daha İyi Mekânlar Yaratmak Dr. Jonas Fansa, Almanya Berlin Merkez ve Bölge Kütüphaneleri Planlama Danışmanı
15.00 - 15.15	Çay - Kahve Arası



15.15-16.30	1.OTURUM Yönetici: Semra Atınç/Kütüphaneler ve Yayınlar Genel Müdür Yardımcısı Kültürel Dönüşüm İçinde Kütüphane Yapılarını Anlamak ve Anlamlandırmak Prof. Dr. Celal Abdi Güzer Kütüphane Binaları İçin İhtiyaç Programları ve Fonksiyon Şemaları Prof. Dr. Sacit Arslantekin Halk Kütüphanesi Mekânı Olarak Tarihi Yapılar Arş. Gör. Mehlika Karagözoğlu Aslıyüksek
19.00	Akşam Yemeği

Perşembe, 9 Mayıs 2013

10.00-10.50	2. OTURUM Yönetici: Prof. Dr. Sacit Arslantekin Güzel Kütüphane Nedir? Prof. Dr. Hasan Sacit Keseroğlu Halk Kütüphanesi Mekân Estetiğinde Nereye Doğru? Prof. Dr. Bülent Yılmaz Estetik Yrd. Doç. Dr. Sibel Kibar
10.50 - 11.05	Çay - Kahve Arası



11.05-12.30	3. OTURUM Yönetici: Prof. Dr. Bülent Yılmaz Renkli Yaşam Merkezlerinin Tasarımı Prof. Dr. İnci Önal 21. Yüzyıl Kütüphanelerinde Işık ve Teknoloji Buluşması Doç. Dr. İpek Fitoz, Cansel Bozkurt Trakya'daki İl Halk Kütüphanesi Binaları İçin Optimum Aydınlatma Tasarımı Önerileri Yrd. Doç. Dr. Bahtiyar Dursun, Arş. Gör. Ahmet Altay Halk Kütüphanelerinde Renklerin Dili Lütfi Uğuz
12.30 - 14.00	Öğle Yemeği

14.00-15.30	4. OTURUM Yönetici: Prof. Dr. Fatoş Subaşıoğlu Kütüphanelerde Afet Yönetimi ve Planlama Dr. Güler Demir Depreme Dayanıklı Kütüphaneler Arş. Gör. Elsa Bitri, Arş. Gör. Neslihan Er Halk Kütüphanelerinde Bina ve Deprem Gerçeği İlişkisi: İzmir Örneği Dr. Mehmet Ali Akkaya
15.30 - 15.45	Çay - Kahve Arası
15.45-16.30	Firma Sunumu Andreas Ptack
19.00	Akşam Yemeği



Cuma, 10 Mayıs 2013

10.00	5. OTURUM Yönetici: Prof. Dr. Hasan Keseroğlu Geleceğe Miras: Yeşil Kütüphane Doç. Dr. Ümit Konya, Dr. Berrin Küçükcan Yeşil Kütüphane Yaklaşımı Safiye Esra Kılınç Kütüphanelerde Engellilere Yönelik Mimari ve İç Mekân Düzenlemeleri Yrd. Doç. Dr. Banu Altunay Arslantekin Gezici Kütüphane Hizmetlerinde Günümüzün Modern Koşulları Kapsamında Mekân Estetiği ve Tasarımı: Kastamonu Örneği Arş. Gör. Ayşenur Güneş
12.30 - 14.00	Öğle Yemeği

14.00-15.00	Kütüphane Sunumları Hatay İl Halk Kütüphanesi Diyarbakır İl Halk Kütüphanesi Eskişehir İl Halk Kütüphanesi İstanbul Ahmet Hamdi Tanpınar Edebiyat Müze Kütüphanesi
15.00 -15.15	Çay - Kahve Arası
15.15-16.15	DEĞERLENDİRME ve KAPANIŞ OTURUMU
19.00	Akşam Yemeği

A public library project is one of the most interesting and complex projects that an architect can undertake, precisely due to the many variables that come into play. Public libraries are relationship spaces par excellence, places of purposeful contamination: multiplicity and contamination of publics, of documents and their different formats and media, of services offered, of information tools, of opportunities for meeting and socialising.

But the public library model which I have been proposing for some years now, precisely because it is based on the considerable contamination of various functions, is quite unlike the majority of public libraries currently operating in Italy, and has much more in common with certain recent experiments in Northern Europe, particularly in London and in the Scandinavian countries.

The primary function of the public library has always been to act as a “centre for the dissemination and transfer of knowledge” and as a means to promote reading and provide a support to education that is as broad as possible. The new information technologies do not endanger this function of the library, rather they amplify it. The public library also becomes an “information hub and laboratory”, an access-point to the multimedia universe, a bridging of the “digital divide” that separates those with access to the tools and the know-how of the information age and those who are cut off from it.

But the public library is also increasingly operating as a “social gathering place”, a point of reference and a new town square: a space of encounter, communication, creation and consolidation of a sense of belonging to a collective entity which succeeds in countering exclusion and isolation. The library is also one of the few remaining genuinely “public” spaces, a “safe” place where people of different ages, cultures, social classes and origins can meet one another, all the more so today when the public space no longer functions as a collective social area for the exchange and encounter of cultures, and the large multifunctional shopping and entertainment centres have taken over as the principal public spaces of social life.

In Italy almost 17 % of young people spend their free time exclusively in shopping and entertainment centres. In his book *The Great, Good Place* published a over twenty years ago, the American sociologist Ray Oldenburg made a case for the significant role played by what he terms “third places” in the development and consolidation of democracy and community vitality (in contrast to the “first places” and “second places” represented by the home and the workplace or place of education). The “third places” are a safe, informal and neutral territory where people feel comfortable and have the opportunity of relaxing, meeting and socialising. These spaces are characterised by their freedom of access or by their low charges (“the price of a cup of coffee”), by being welcoming and comfortable, easily accessible on foot and frequented by regular users.¹

Cafes and pubs are “third places”, more so than shopping and entertainment malls, which have other purposes. From this point of view a good public library, if modern and attractive, can become a “third place” even more so than a pub or a coffee shop. Above all, the library has one key feature that differentiates it from other public spaces and makes it even more significant: its neutrality.

It is essential for libraries to become multipurpose, multifaceted, transformable places, in which many things can happen at the same time: offering services for culture, education, information, imagination, creativity, study and leisure time. In a public library people should be able to find books, films, music, internet access, newspapers and magazines, but also concerts, book presentations, meetings, training courses, leisure courses, exhibitions, reading groups, events of all types. This is the model of library which I have sought to promote and create in recent years.

¹ Ray OLDENBURG, *The Great, Good Place: Cafes, Coffee Shops, Community Centres, Beauty Parlors, General Stores, Bars, Hangouts, and How They Get You Through the Day*, New York: Paragon House, 1989; Ray OLDENBURG, *Celebrating the Third Place: Inspiring Stories about the “Great Good Places” at the Heart of Our Communities*, New York: Marlowe & Company, 2000.

* Assis.Prof. at Politecnico di Milano, ABC Department



I see public libraries as urban catalysts for the promotion of cultural policies. It is no coincidence that my definition of library makes no direct reference to the promotion of reading and of books, even if this remains the “core business” of the library. This is because investing primarily in the promotion of books and of reading will not enable the library to attract the 70% of the population which, based on current statistics in Italy, neither buys nor reads books. But these are the very people who need libraries all the more. And it is not possible to attract these potential users exclusively by promoting books/reading/related services, nor should one delegate to shopping or entertainment centres alone the task of deciding how the leisure time of this significant slice of the population should be spent.

In general, the provision of services to individuals and to families, in terms of culture, leisure and quality of ambiance is becoming an increasingly important factor for local development, a factor which enhances the attractiveness of urban areas and territories in terms of the competitive advantage between them. Culture can become the engine and glue of the socio-economic development of a territory. Therefore, the local cultural offering should not be reduced to easy entertainment, offering little more than the consumption of “disposable cultural products”. Rather, it should invest in facilities and activities that are durable.

Public libraries such as the ones I am describing may represent significant nerve centres not only within the whole cultural system, but also within the welfare system of a city. Libraries can thus become important tools of social cohesion and inclusion, and can help avert conflicts, especially in a situation of economic crisis such as the current one. This moment of economic crisis is not the ideal one to consider making new investments, but I would argue that the very scarcity of public economic resources makes necessary to optimize investments and to prioritise the services that can impact most positively on the city. Public libraries are one of these services, and they have huge potential not simply as borrowing points for books or as study rooms, but above all as reference points for the local community and as means to maintain and protect social life in each neighbourhood, places for social gathering and cohesion that are capable of providing services for culture, information, lifelong learning and leisure time.



A recent study of New York libraries, for example, highlights the fact that despite digitization, the spread of the Internet and the massive dissemination of e-books, public libraries prove to be even more necessary and popular than before. Loans have gone up by 60 % in New York libraries in just ten years, and they doubled the number of training courses. The economic crisis, therefore, has made the libraries even more important and more present in people's lives.²

In Milan, too, libraries are beginning to be recognised as a part of the welfare system. In the last three years I have had the opportunity to work on a number of projects within a major project funded by the CARIPLO Banking Foundation, amounting to over half a million euro, aimed at turning libraries into “places of social inclusion and cohesion”.³ So, the Milan Libraries Department has implemented the project “Vieni! Ci vediamo in biblioteca” (“Come on! See you in the library”), created in collaboration with many local associations and involving activities for children, adolescents, Italian and foreign women, immigrants and the elderly. My involvement as an architect in this project included defining guidelines which involved rethinking the nature of local public library spaces in Milan, to make them more welcoming, more flexible and able to accommodate all categories of citizens.

This model of hybrid and multifaceted library has been implemented in various ways in many countries worldwide. There are obvious examples, such as the Library Parks in Medellin, Colombia, a network of five cultural centres built close to the shantytowns in the poorest neighbourhoods of the city, thanks to which an extraordinary process of social and urban regeneration has been initiated.

²Branches of Opportunity, curated by Center for an Urban Future, 2013, www.nycfuture.org

³In Milan, in 2009 and 2011, the Libraries Sector received € 525,000 in funding from the Cariplo Foundation on foot of the public notice “To foster cohesion and social inclusion through public reading libraries” for the implementation of the project “Vieni! Ci vediamo in biblioteca”, coordinated by the ABCittà cooperative (www.abcitta.org), developing activities and experiments in five local libraries, in collaboration with local associations, with a view to promoting the involvement of people traditionally excluded from access to and the production of culture. ABCittà was responsible for developing a survey (through interviews, workshops, etc.) examining the perception of the library held by users and by a number of stakeholders representing local interests. The Municipality of Milan commissioned the company Alterstudio Partners (www.alterstudiopartners.com) to produce an analysis of the libraries involved, requesting design ideas to be put forward for renewal and expansion, as well as guidelines for future intervention for individual libraries and for library system in general.

Or the Idea Stores in London, which integrate library services with spaces for lifelong learning, courses for free time, services for the citizen (associated with work or health), cafeteria, spaces for children and teenagers. To date, five Idea Stores have been created, and another is being inaugurated, replacing the old Victorian-era libraries and quadrupling the number of users. These places are visited by all kinds of people, irrespective of age, ethnicity, income, education level, and these are the only libraries that have succeeded in increasing the number of library loans, in contrast to the general trend of progressive decline throughout the United Kingdom.

But if a library is to be successful, the building's architecture and the spaces and furnishings contained in it are just as important as the services offered. Library buildings should be beautiful, user-friendly, attractive and comfortable: special places which are pleasant to visit and spend time in and - of course - where people can find the right content and services, because otherwise they won't go back. In this era of widespread social networks, libraries can now exploit the one thing that Google, Facebook or Amazon do not have and will never have: the physicality of a wonderful place to go to, combined with the competence and human contact of the librarian who welcomes you, and the opportunity to meet other people.

The criterion that should inform any future intervention should be to make libraries meeting places and centres for social cohesion, information, the creative use of one's free time, the promotion of cultural policies, capable in particular of attracting people who are not library users, either because they are not interested in books and in reading or because, on the contrary, they are indeed "strong readers" but are not interested in the library services currently offered (those who prefer buying books to borrowing them from the library). A "friendly" library which is open to all and does not intimidate people who are unaccustomed to going there, but which attracts them and stimulates their curiosity, while at the same time satisfying all the needs of those who are familiar with the experience of using libraries, who will be able to find all services they require optimised in that space.

To this end, the architecture of the building is crucial, not only to permit the efficiency and functionality of the services offered, but also to attract new users. Indeed the efficacy of a library also depends very much on the choices made in architectural and planning terms, from its location within the city to the planning of the external spaces and the façades of the building itself, the interior spaces and their distribution, the furnishings and their arrangement.

As well as their obvious functional value, the architectural choices also play a key role in communicating an image, a 'perception' of the library. The library building must be able to capture the attention and the imagination, to remain in the memory, to have an evocative power which makes it a point of reference for the community.

The library must assert itself as an urban sign, depositary of the identity of a city or a community, an urban icon in the collective imagination. I like to call this characteristic "imageability" ,a kind of iconic pregnancy, recalling the words of American architect Kevin Lynch.⁴

Indeed a public library can become an important vehicle of political-cultural communication and a valid instrument in urban planning strategies, allowing an administration to leave a 'tangible sign' of its work and to start up processes of urban and social requalification. In large metropolises and small towns alike, libraries can become focal elements of 'urban marketing', strongly influencing the development of a city.

The imageability, therefore, is in my opinion a key concept of the architecture of a library, in order to be successful. Another key aspect is its articulation. Articulation means the composition of the formal elements which define the architecture of the building. It means correctly dimensioning the parts which compose it, to create an organised sequence of places suitable for hosting the functions it was intended for. It means organising the spaces and routes in a hierarchical manner, making it easier for visitors to find their way, and

⁴ Imageability, coined by Kevin Lynch in *The Image of the City* (1960); "is the quality of a physical object, which gives an observer a strong, vivid image." This can refer to a monument, a building, a park, and a city among other things. Imageability is not the same as iconography, as it pertains to one's ability to instantly recognize an object, than the singularity and formal aspects of the object that cause recognition.

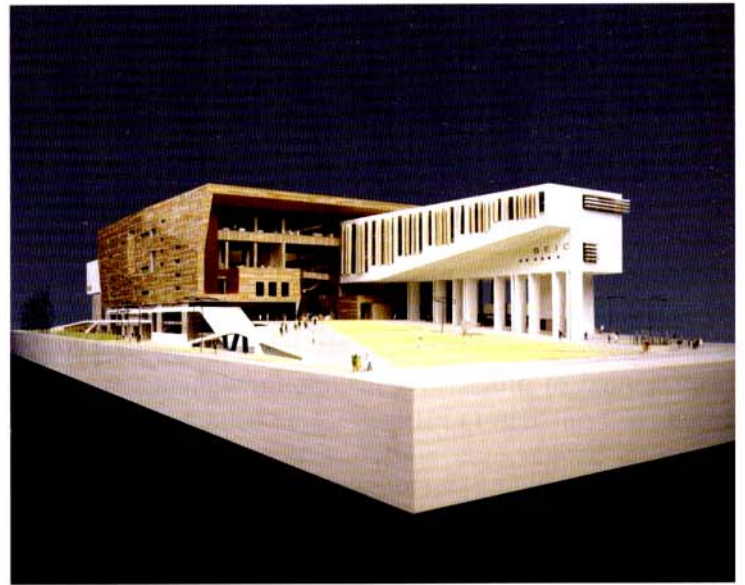


simplifying the work of the librarians. A good articulation also includes creating a spatial experience which is fascinating and constantly changing. The articulation of the building is not only concerned with its functionality, but should also appeal to the imagination of its users, and their taste for exploration and discovery.

Other two issues are essential in library design: flexibility and sustainability (economic as well as environmental).

There are many project that I have developed in which I have sought to apply the ideas described so far.

The first one is the BEIC - Biblioteca Europea di Informazione e Cultura (European Library of Information and Culture), the huge new Milan Public Library. This is huge project which I have been working on in the last ten years together with the German studio Bolles+Wilson of Münster. A public library with over 500 thousand works in open-access shelves and in digital format, covering all the branches of knowledge; a hugely rich array of newspapers and magazines; a cutting-edge music and entertainment section which offers listening but also creative music experiences in recording rooms; more than 3.5 million books on closed shelves; 3,000 sitting places; cafeterias, refreshment areas and a book and media store. The building is like a vessel of culture, run aground in the centre of Milan, whose large central atrium is an 'urban interior' open to the city and looking out over a park. The 5-metre high basement encloses conference rooms, an educational centre, a media forum, the children's library with its garden, and parking areas. Over the main atrium, welcoming the visitor, are the three departments (Arts and Literature, Sciences and Technologies, Human and Social Sciences). The 'Beic Box' hosts the 'browsing area', the reference, the open shelves and some reading spaces. The bridges that host reading and studying spaces on sloping terraces stretch out towards the light and the city.



BEIC - Biblioteca Europea di Informazione e Cultura, Milano (2001-2012, with Bolles+Wilson)

Another project, much smaller than the BEIC, is that for the new Cultural Centre of Samarate (2009), not very far from Milan, including a public library and an auditorium. The new complex will be located in a residential area, next to the educational centre. To further increase its attractiveness, the project proposes to create also a system of squares and green spaces, including various commercial activities from the area, which will increase the vitality of the area, promoting a natural protection of the public spaces at all times of the day. The building complex consists of the compact body of the auditorium (with a glazed foyer overlooking the street and a stage which can be opened to the outside for use in the summer) and that of the library, more articulated. The architecture of the building plays on the contrast between full and empty, light and dark, the smoothness of the polished metal and glass and the roughness of the plaster. The two bodies (which can be built in successive phases) are separated by a public gallery, that takes to the park and to the library entrance. The volumes in burnished copper, jutting out on to the square, seem to rise over the windows of the auditorium foyer and the library. Asymmetric, a high monolithic element rises up in opaque glass (containing the stairs and the lift, as well as the shafts for natural ventilation), illuminated in the evening with colours, images and videos. As regards the interior articulation, the focus is on maximum flexibility, with large open spaces and



furnishings on wheels. In addition, the auditorium hall (with mobile seats) can also be used as a multi-functional space, for celebrations, events and exhibitions. The heart of the complex is the 'Information Piazza', with its double height, facing the adjoining garden. Here there is the cafeteria, the Music&Cinema section (with a specially-equipped room for listening to music and viewing films), news, actual topics, fiction and the newspapers area. The counter is barycentric (with an office and stockroom behind), and controls access to the children's section, to the teaching rooms (these too are flexible and modular), to the rehearsal rooms for music and to the first floor, where the open-shelf section and study hall are located, with an open gallery and reading terrace.



Cultural Centre in Samarate, Varese (2009)

The same criteria can be applied both in a huge buildings and in a very small one. For example, a very small library is the branch library "Parco Sempione" (2011), located in a wonderful park of Milan. The building has great historical and architectural significance, because it was designed by architects Ico Parisi and Silvio Longhi, during the Tenth Triennial in 1954. It was intended as a "Living Pavilion" and, once the exhibition was over, had been donated to the city as a library. My project aims at enhancing the interior and resolving the existing critical issues, maximizing the limited space available. The custom-made furniture are all very flexible and easy to move: shelves, counters, special exhibitors tower and e-reader exhibitors have been designed, all on wheels and with lighting. Particular attention has been paid to

the graphics and the choice of furniture design: elegant lines, light, contemporary, yet not far from the fifties design that inspires the architecture of the building. This re-designing of the distribution layout creates a place that allows maximum flexibility, giving the opportunity to organize different activities at different times and in the future to rethink easily the functional distribution of spaces and services.



"Parco Sempione" branch library, Milano (2012)

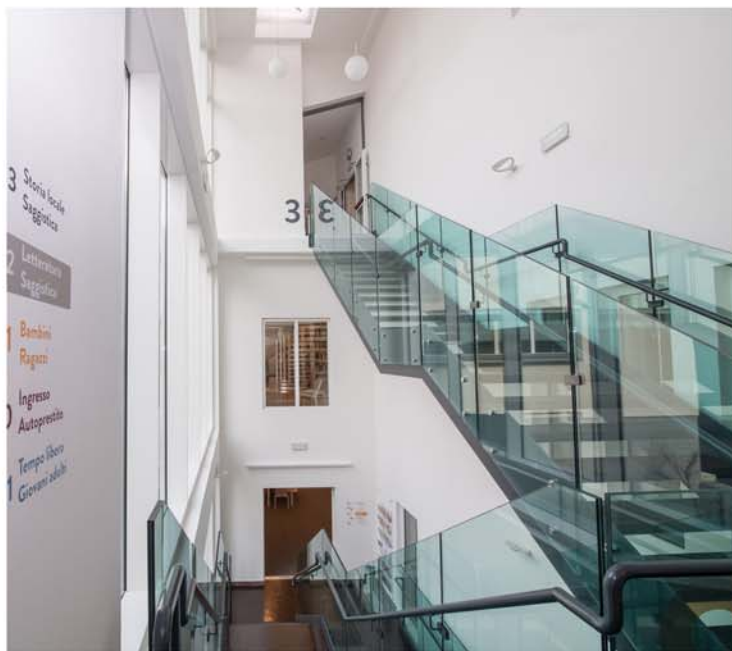
Also in Melzo (a small town near Milano) the intent is to build a home for readers rather than for books: a meeting place for all citizens, strategically located with respect to the city and its other



functions (historical centre, schools, a centre for the elderly). The building will be opened at the end of 2013. Urban planning and typological constraints are re-interpreted using split levels, wide windows opening on to inner courtyards, sheet-zinc which encases the whole building, forming the roof and the façade. On one side, the library overlooks an inner courtyard crossed by a pedestrian and cycle path, and on the other side the parvis of the Church of S. Andrea, hosting an exhibition area. The flooring materials and design further highlight the continuity between indoors and outdoors. The entrance area has been conceived as a town and community lounge. Here users can find the more public-oriented services: the reception, information for the community and information on cultural events in the city and its territory, newly published books and topical issues of great interest, current magazines and newspapers, as well as a cafeteria corner. The staircase and panoramic lift, developing upwards with a large window panel that overlooks the inner courtyard, connect the split levels: the music, entertainment, and leisure section in the basement opening on an underground court; the children's section on the mezzanine overlooking the garden; the open-shelf section with a study room and a reading terrace.



New public library in Melzo, Milano



Another issue that is worthwhile examining talking about the library design is the re-use of historic or disused buildings as public libraries. It is an issue of great significance especially in a situation such as that in Italy, where city centres normally lack free space (apart from demolitions) and green areas and open public spaces are usually scarce, while there is usually an abundance of under-used or abandoned historic buildings. For these reasons, the practice of re-use very often seems almost an obliged choice when creating a new library.

However, it is necessary to carefully examine the pros and cons, since locating a public library in a pre-existing building may prove to be a profoundly erroneous decision. In my opinion, the re-use of existing buildings may give



satisfactory results in the case of a favourable location and a suitable typology of building. In fact, too often it is decided to locate a library in a certain building simply because it is available, without considering its location in relation to the routes taken by the city's inhabitants and to the surrounding area's activities. It is also essential that the building type is suited to the intended use, in other words a building which permits an adequate flexibility of the interior spaces and which is not subject to too many restrictions in terms of distribution, structure, historic or artistic peculiarities.

The functional organisation of a library inevitably clashes with the characteristics of a pre-existing building in terms of the morphology and distribution of its interior spaces, which can often be modified only minimally. Spaces which are too small and fragmented, or too large without the possibility of being divided, lead to a betrayal of the prescriptions of the functional programme, affecting the organisation of the service and the planned dimensional standards.

From this point of view, some historical buildings are quite suitable, such as for example ex-convents, which are often located in the city centre; often they are not subject to excessive artistic restrictions; they are sufficiently big so as to host other public functions (exhibition halls, museums, conference rooms and cultural centres); they have rooms of various types and sizes, particularly suited to hosting the functions of a library (reading rooms, deposit areas, private rooms, offices, common rooms, etc.), and often include green areas (cloisters, gardens and vegetable gardens).

One case involving the re-use of an ex-convent is the new public library of Monza (2012). This is an international competition that my office did not win, but was awarded with a special mention.

The competition required to set up the new Monza's central library in the "San Paolo" former barracks (an old convent heavily transformed over the centuries). In addition to restoring the facades in a philological way, our project aimed to give monumentality to the building complex, to allow it to compete "on an urban scale" with the other surrounding public buildings (the Cathedral, the ancient and the modern Town Hall), and at the same time to overcome the problem of the typological and dimensional inadequacy of the existing interior spaces.

To this end it is proposed to surmount a part of the building complex with a volume of new construction, irregularly shaped, with a coating of microperforated aluminum plates

white in color, that will clearly differentiate it from the historic building and visually dematerialize the mass. The new volume placed over the courtyard creates a sort of covered plaza, and allows to create a one level open shelves area, creating also a new outdoor plaza at the top floor.

On the ground floor of the building there would be the thematic sections, the magazines and newspapers area, the adolescents and young adults space, the cafeteria, auditorium and a garden. On the first floor there are teaching rooms, the mediatheque, the hall for temporary exhibitions, the reference area, the offices. This articulation allows the optimization of spaces in relation to the proposed action, allowing to open the different areas separately from each other, with maximum flexibility and maximum permeability of the atrium.



New public library in Monza (competition, selected project, 2012 - with DAP Studio)



Another project of ours that involves the re-use of an ex-convent is the new cultural centre inside the complex of the former Hospital of St Augustine, in the historical center of Modena (2010). Various cultural activities will find place inside the complex, such as a large library center including the Estense University Library and the Poletti Public Library, exhibition spaces, the Center for Photography and Image, the Language and Internationalization Centre, a guesthouse and shopping and catering activities.

Also in this competition we did not win, but we were selected in the final step. Our project recovered the inner courtyard, triangular in shape, turning it into a large entrance hall: a multipurpose space open to the city. The buildings are restored by removing superfetations and additions that have been added over time, creating new double-height spaces, with balconies and mezzanines.



Cultural Centre in Modena (competition, selected project, 2010 - with Atelier Podrecca)

Other historical buildings, like villas and palaces are actually rather unsuitable to be used as public libraries, although often they are used for this purpose.



For example the public library of Sondrio is located in the Villa Quadrio since 1936, a beautiful villa, dating back to 1913, with internal and external fresco and stucco decoration. In the public library of Sondrio we have recently designed the interiors and the furniture (2013), rethinking the functional distribution of the library and replacing most of the existing furniture to make the rooms more flexible and more comfortable, and to make the library the “living room of the city”. The large hall on the ground floor accommodates the fiction, magazines and newspapers, music and cinema, the children’s and infant’s area. The non-fiction area is located on the first floor, along with study areas. In this case, too, although the many restrictions due to the building, the project is focussed on maximum flexibility: informal seating and bistro tables, all the shelves arranged on wheels, enable the ground floor area to be used for events, parties and conferences.



Public library in Sondrio, interiors and furnishings design (2013)

One last case is another project we have already finished in Meda, near Milano, opened in 2012.

The construction of this new library has provided the opportunity to recover an ugly building, owned by the municipality and left unfinished since the Eighties, while also radically rethinking the library services themselves. Thus the new library, called MedaTeca, truly becomes a significant social catalyst for the city and its community life.

Although subject to severe constraints (the structure first and foremost), the project rethinks the container as made for the content, modifying the façades, and the morphological and material characteristics in order to achieve an expressive architecture capable of communicating the new public mission of the building. Everything combines to define the function of a new 'urban condenser': the design, materials and colours of the new aluminium façades; its wide windows overlooking the street.

As all floors have a small surface area, five levels were needed to develop the structure: to make up for this unfortunate internal articulation and to invite users to explore the whole building, each floor overlooks the adjacent ones and there are double height spaces with overhead lighting.

The entrance area is located on ground floor and the first underground level. Here we find the newly published books, magazines and newspaper, music and performing arts, some topical issues; the first floor hosts the children's section; open-shelf areas and reading spaces occupy the second and third floor; at the second underground level there is a conference and party hall and a warehouse. The building is completed by a study room on the first underground floor and a panoramic reading terrace.

The internal organization of the library is so flexible that it is possible to keep each part of it independently open, including terrace and study-hall.

Much more than a library, the Meda Teca is really a "social catalyst" for the local community.

Here people can borrow a book or a dvd, but also meet up, go deep into ones' interests and hobbies, drink a cup of coffee listening to the music, keep up with what happened

in the town and the world, surf the internet, watch a movie, research or study, attend cultural events, or spend enjoyable hours with friends and children, even the youngest, or take a class during the spare time. Currently there are more than 40 thousands books available that can be borrowed and returned using the self service stations.

There are silent and fully equipped study halls, meeting and classrooms; a space for teenagers and cinema, hobby and free time sections; a polyvalent area for exhibitions, events and conferences, the Job Desk and the Cultural Office. An entire floor is devoted to kids, with a lot of surprises for the youngest and several supplies and commodities for parents (bottle warmer, changing tables, newborn baby's chair, etc.).

Great attention has been paid to energy saving, with regard to the technological solutions (using heat pump system and low energy lighting) as well as to the technical specifics of the façades and windows that are highly performing. The interior combines customised furniture with articles of the best design, some of which were donated by Artemide and B&B Italy, which have sponsored MedaTeca.

The building has been selected between the finalist projects for the Gold Medal to the Italian Architecture 2012.

But let's see also some figures. The cost of the building construction for Meda Teca has been less than 2 Million Euros (Vat included), equal to the unit cost of about 1.040 euro/sq. m. Vat included.

The library opened in 2012 and was an instant success. The city of Meda counts 23.000 inhabitants; one year after the opening we see +80 % of loans, almost 10.000 loans every month and more than 700 users every day, up to 1.000 on some Saturdays.

Architecture and furniture quality, imageability, flexibility, sustainability (economic as well as environmental): these are the keywords for the design of cultural spaces in the city of the future.





MedaTeca, new public library of Meda, Milano (2012): before and after.



MedaTeca, new public library of Meda, Milano (2012)



MedaTeca, new public library of Meda, Milano (2012)



MedaTeca, new public library of Meda, Milano (2012)



MedaTeca, new public library of Meda, Milano (2012)