



# **Old buildings new spaces:** *how to organize an academic library in an ancient building*

***By Elisabetta Marinoni, Francesco Tricomi,  
Maria Cristina Vettore, Michela Zorzi***

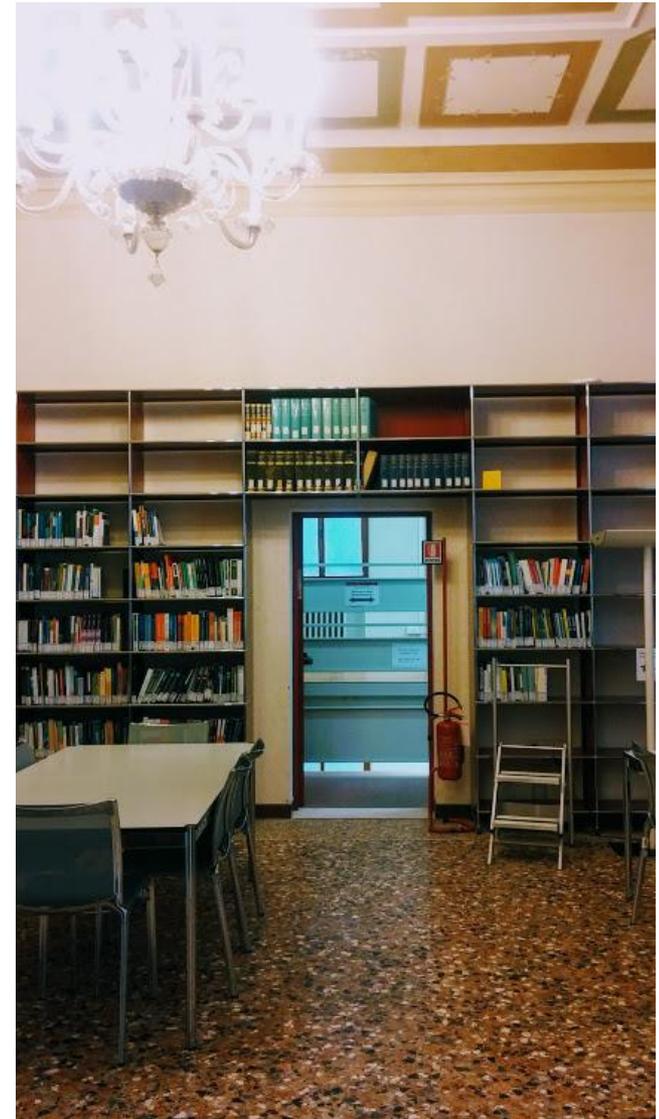


This project arises from the need to conform to safety regulations four spaces very different from each other:

- Social Science Periodicals Library,
- Geography Department Library,
- Geography Museum
- Library of Economics.

## Safety needs:

- to remove asbestos
- to joint two buildings creating a door and an escape route
- to install a fire escape





**requirements**  
**radical**  
**spaces kids scholars**  
**environment**  
**public buildings needs**  
**space academics school**  
**arrangement**  
**safety different rethinking**  
**types historic value**  
**library**  
**students**

These libraries are set in two adjoining historical buildings from the 17th and 18th centuries, overlooking one of the oldest streets in Padua.





# Social Science Periodicals Library

## *Palazzo Ca' Borin*

900 square metres, 96 seats



The Geography Library takes up two floors of  
*Palazzo Wollemborg*  
(500 square metres, 35 seats)





## Geography Museum (200 square metres)





# Library of Economics



Originally these facilities had very different purposes: the Geography Library was traditionally attended by academics and, for security reasons, shelves were not accessible to the general public.

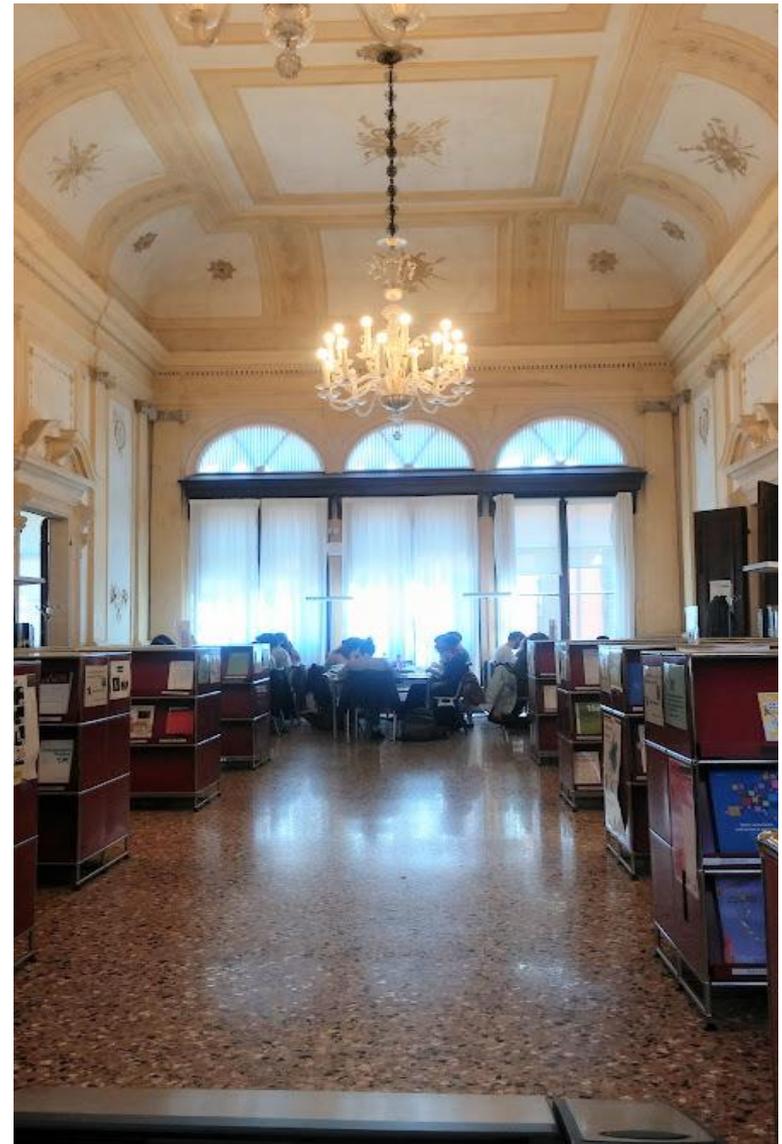


The Geography Museum plays an important role in the educational activities for primary schools and as one of the scientific museums of the city of Padua





The Social  
Science  
Periodicals  
Library houses a  
collection of  
subject-related  
periodicals, the  
European  
Documentation  
Centre with  
extended  
opening hours



The Library of Economics is a Department library, attended by academics and students, with almost 30.000 books on open shelf, computers but not very comfortable spaces





In order to satisfy the needs of such a diverse audience, the space has been rearranged with an approach similar to that found in public libraries, and adjusted according to different users' needs  
(Third place)

# Ancient halls are intended for individual and silent study



The spaces between the buildings offer small “havens of rest” to those who might want to take a break.



The ground floor, where no rooms of value are present, houses books and periodicals in open shelves



Spaces are mostly dedicated to the users.  
The 70% of the periodicals are e-only and the  
purchase of e-books has increased.



Students can choose the most appropriate space based on their needs: for studying in silence or getting inspired, for group work or exchanging ideas (learning commons).



38th Annual IATUL Conference Bozen 2017

Primary school kids have  
at their disposal both  
educational workshops  
and the museum as well  
as the library, in order to  
run a search or go on a  
treasure hunt





There is a precious room with reserved spaces for academics, phd students and visiting professors



Every space is flexible thanks to adaptable furniture, and the reading rooms can be used for workshops, lectures and exhibitions.

All spaces have wired and wireless connections





PROS	CONS
<p><b>Historic buildings:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>-beautiful spaces</li><li>-inspiring spaces</li><li>-many users</li></ul> <p>-widespread presence of librarians</p> <p><b>Union of 4 spaces:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>-liveness and high attendance</li><li>-extended timetables</li><li>-less need of staff</li></ul>	<p><b>Historic buildings:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>-high ceilings</li><li>-precious floors (preservation)</li></ul> <p>-distant offices for librarians</p> <p><b>Union of 4 spaces</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>-different and conflicting needs</li></ul>



and what about the future?

-TO REORGANIZE THE STOREHOUSES PREFERRING  
ELECTRONIC FORMAT

-TO OBTAIN A SPACE FOR THE PATRONS TO RELAX AND  
HAVE A COFFEE

-TO EQUIP AN OUTDOOR SPACE AS A READING GARDEN



UNIVERSITÀ  
DEGLI STUDI  
DI PADOVA

SBA SISTEMA BIBLIOTECARIO  
DI ATENEIO

## [Virtual tour of the library](#)



Contacts:

[emeroteca.caborin@unipd.it](mailto:emeroteca.caborin@unipd.it)

<http://emeroteca-caborin.cab.unipd.it/>

facebook

