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THE LIBRARY REVIEW

Founded in 1927

SPECIAL ISSUE

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The Oldest Polish Research Journal in Library and Information Science

SPECIAL ISSUE

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INTRODUCTION

For the fifth time, we are pleased to present another thematic special issue. This time it is dedicated to library architecture.

The subject of library construction has been discussed in the literature appearing on national and foreign websites for many years and is of interest to both librarians and architects.

Both groups of professionals work to create platforms for cooperation so that as a result of discussions in which architects learn about the social needs and expectations communicated by librarians, libraries are created that meet not only the ten most important features of good library space proposed by Harry Faulkner Brown, but also meet the expectations corresponding to the concept of Andrew McDonald which expands Faulkner Brown's „commandments“ and gives them a more comprehensive and human approach. They show what to do to make existing libraries modern in order to meet the needs of the changing environment, what criteria should be followed, and whether the capabilities of the libraries themselves allow them to become innovative, taking into account both criteria and needs.

These issues are dealt with by the IFLA Library Buildings and Equipment Section (IFLA LBES), which includes librarians and architects with a passion for design and modern library technologies.

The Section supports the exchange of experiences between these groups of professionals, collects and disseminates knowledge on the design, construction and equipment of libraries, and promotes excellence in this field, among other ways by preparing a very helpful tool, the *IFLA Library Building Guidelines: Development and Reflections*.¹

LBES, as a result of cooperation with other IFLA sections, popularizes the best solutions in the field of library construction, combining functionality and creativity while taking into account both technological progress and local culture.

In line with the Section's action plan, adopted in 2019, a project has been implemented to support IFLA's strategy of inspiring and improving professional practice by presenting a variety of libraries, large and small,

¹ *IFLA Library Building Guidelines: Development and Reflections*. Karen Latimer, Helen Niegaard (eds.). München: K.G. Saur, 2007.

in all parts of the world. Promoting these inspirational libraries is done through Instagram, with the first post appearing at the end of September 2020.

It is worth recalling that in Poland too there has been cooperation between architects and librarians. In 2009, the Association of Polish Architects joined the Information Society Development Program, and as a result of joint activities, on the initiative of the Minister of Culture and National Heritage, a mini guide was created,² thanks to which librarians can learn how to make the space of their library more user-friendly with little financial outlay³. The guide is addressed to people planning or carrying out all kinds of investment works, ranging from small projects such as renovation to reconstruction or construction of new facilities. The publication was developed primarily for small public libraries operating in rural or urban-rural communes and small towns. It contains very useful information on the preparation of a functional and operational program for library space, showing the design and implementation phases of the investment project as well as providing auxiliary materials, e.g. a description of sample public consultations in the form of participatory architectural workshops, examples of contracts, and other useful materials.

Also in the monthly "Murator" there are texts about the projects for the best Polish libraries: for example, the Wrocław University Main Library, the Łopaciński Provincial Public Library in Lubin, and the building of The Scientific Information Center and Academic Library (CINiBA) in Katowice, known as "redhead"⁴.

In this 5th issue, in addition to presenting new architectural solutions in library construction, using, among others those proposed in the above guide as well as others presented in the *IFLA Guidelines*, we wanted to give readers an opportunity to see whether changes in the library environment can and indeed do affect the external appearance and internal arrangement in a visible way. Has the biggest problem we are currently facing – the COVID-19 pandemic, which has had repercussions in virtually all areas of human activity (as we discussed in the previous thematic issue) – also left its mark on library construction?

² Karol Langie, Dariusz Śmiechowski & Maciej Walczyna: Biblioteka małe pomysły na wielkie zmiany (The Library: small ideas for great changes)

file:///C:/Users/selle/Downloads/Biblioteka_dobre_miejsce_poradnik_architektoniczny_dla_bibliotek.pdf; Karol Langie, Dariusz Śmiechowski & Maciej Walczyna: Meble w bibliotece. Małe różnice, duże znaczenie. (Furniture in the library. Small changes, big impact.)

http://www.biblioteki.org/poradniki/meble_w_bibliotece_male_roznice_duze_znaczenie.html;

³ Odkryć na nowo biblioteczną przestrzeń - rozmowa z Dariuszem Śmiechowskim. (Rediscovering library space – a conversation with Dariusz Śmiechowski) http://www.biblioteki.org/artykuly/Odkryc_na_nowo_biblioteczna_przestrzen_rozmowa_z_Dariuszem_Smiechowskim.html. Date of publication 14/01/2010budy. „Biuletyn Programu Rozwoju Bibliotek” 2009, No. 1, September 2009 r.

⁴ Polish libraries with excellent architecture: https://archirama.muratorplus.pl/architektura/polskie-biblioteki-ciesza-architektura,67_1557.html

The current special thematic issue of "Przegląd Biblioteczny" includes the following texts:

Karen LATIMER (THE DESIGN OF LIBRARY BUILDINGS: SOME RECENT TRENDS), co-editor of *Guidelines* and author of one of its chapters, presents trends in library design in the 21st century, illustrating it with examples from Great Britain and Ireland.

Iwona OSŁOWSKA (THE ARCHITECTURE OF CONTEMPORARY POLISH LIBRARIES: SELECTED PROJECTS), basing her discussion on new, modernized, or adapted Polish libraries, shows how technologies, materials and current trends affect the language of design and architecture and how they shape the appearance of library objects in the 21st century, created in accordance with the new understanding of the functionality of architecture.

Monika SIMONJETZ (IS SPACE FOR PEOPLE MORE IMPORTANT THAN SPACE FOR BOOKS? LIBRARY CONSTRUCTION IN THE LUBUSKIE VOIVODSHIP – NEW SEATS AND ARRANGEMENTS) presents the implementation of 13 library projects in the Lubuskie Voivodship in 2010-2019.

Barbara KORYŚ (SURVEY OF DOMESTIC LITERATURE – SELECTION) introduces a review of Polish literature in the field of library science which has been published in the years 2020-2021.

With best wishes for a pleasant and inspiring reading,

Prof. dr hab. Elżbieta Barbara Zybert
Editor in Chief of "Przegląd Biblioteczny"

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THE DESIGN OF LIBRARY BUILDINGS: SOME RECENT TRENDS



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work in the field of library design. Key publications: Latimer, Karen (2018). 2050 a library space odyssey: planning the future library. *Legal Information Management*, vol.18(4). pp. 203-209. Appleton, L, Latimer, K and Christie, P. (2017). New, renovated and repurposed library spaces: responding to new demands. IN *Handbook of Art and Design Librarianship*. 2nd ed; ed by J. Dyki and P. Glassman. London, Facet. pp. 263-276. Latimer, Karen. (2014). Architektur für den Zugang: Bibliotheksräume im 21.Jahrhundert neu denken. (Architecture supporting access: redesigning library space in the 21st century). IN *Formierungen von Wissensräume*; ed. by O Eigenbrodt and R Stang. Berlin: De Gruyter Saur. pp. 37-49. Latimer, Karen. (2011). Connections to collections: changing spaces and new challenges in academic library buildings. *Library Trends*, vol. 60(1). pp. 112-133.

KEYWORDS: Library buildings. Buildings – Remodelling for other use. Sustainability. Wellbeing.

ABSTRACT: This paper looks at trends in library design in the 21st century drawing on examples mainly in the UK and Ireland. Early trends are identified before a more detailed review of the recent trends of sustainability and wellbeing.

A wider definition of sustainability which includes the reuse and adaption of old buildings into beautiful and functional modern libraries is considered. This connects to the sense of identity and belonging that stem from embedded memories contained in existing historic buildings and links to the increasing awareness in library design of the need to consider the wellbeing of users. An additional aspect of wellbeing discussed is the importance of indoor/outdoor connectivity as a key library asset.

INTRODUCTION

Identifying trends and gazing into crystal balls can be a tricky business. As is attributed to the physicist Niels Bohr, "Predictions can be very difficult – especially about the future". (Sherrin, 2008). Twenty years ago, at the turn of the century, there was speculation about the future of the physical library in the face of increasing digitisation. Approaching the end of the first quarter of the 21st century, however, the issue no longer seems to be whether there is a need for physical library buildings in the digital age but rather what library spaces should look like as the future unfolds. The topics dominating the literature are concerns about library budgets, the need to entice an ever more diverse body of users into libraries, and the nature of more collaborative space in both academic and public library buildings. Most recently, and indeed unpredictably, the impact of the global Covid pandemic has become of major interest to those procuring, planning, and managing library spaces. Fortunately, librarians are, as a profession, adaptable and fleet of foot and this is reflected in the demands they make of the architects who design, extend and renovate library buildings in the 21st century.

EARLY 21ST CENTURY TRENDS

The three key publications that record trends in UK library building design from the end of the 20th century to the second decade of the 21st century are contained in the library buildings chapters in *British Librarianship and Information Work* which is published on a five-year cycle. (Dewe, 2007, Latimer, 2012, Latimer, 2017). In the first of these, Dewe and Clark note the increasing provision of self-service facilities, a move towards co-location with other services, the mirroring of a retail approach to designing spaces as exemplified by the Idea Stores concept in London, and the development of the library "as a community centre, a public forum, a socially inclusive space, a place to hang out – the third place. A place in which to escape the loneliness of prolonged computer use" (Dewe and Clark, 2005, p. 378). In the academic library sphere the emphasis was on learning centres and converged services with IT departments. Recording major trends and de-

velopments in library building design in the UK between 2006 and 2010, Latimer noted a “shift from new build to refurbishment and reordering of spaces. (Latimer, 2012, p. 374). Other trends identified included incremental transformation of spaces, a focus on community engagement, the impact of technology and a move towards more sustainable buildings. Writing five years later in the subsequent edition, *British Librarianship and Information Work 2011-2015*, Latimer pointed out that many of these trends continued to underpin designs for new and refurbished library buildings. (Latimer, 2017, pp. 411-426). By then digital collections, high-quality IT and wifi were essential components of any successful library but many new trends were emerging. In universities, learning and teaching spaces were increasingly being incorporated into libraries, and public libraries were seeing the inclusion of makerspaces and other collaborative, creative spaces. The question of what good digital spaces look like was being discussed as was off-site, and indeed on-site, storage using robotics and automation. Community engagement continued to be important but this was morphing into participatory design where users are involved more formally, more frequently and throughout the planning process. (Meunier and Eigenbrodt, 2014). In library planning, there was an identifiable trend of an increasing use of questionnaires, focus groups and UX (user experience) evaluations to ensure that services were targeted to meet user needs and high-quality spaces were provided to enable such services. Another emerging example of working closely with communities was that of partnership and co-location with public libraries combining with Registries of Birth, Deaths and Marriages or other public services.

In the London Council of Clapham, architects Egret West very successfully combined a health centre, social housing and a library, and more recently, in the north of England, the highly-acclaimed community-based South Shields Hub designed by FaulknerBrowns and known as The Word combines a library, a cultural centre and is the National Centre for the Written Word (Fig. 1). Perhaps the ultimate example of co-location is The Hive in Worcester (Fig. 2, Fig. 2a). The Hive marks a new development for libraries in the UK as it is a joint venture between the University of Worcester and Worcestershire County Council bringing together a university library, a public library (with shared staff) and the Council’s Archives & Archaeology Service and Customer Service Hub. It is also a distinctive and highly sustainable building which developed from a very detailed design brief.

RECENT TRENDS

Throughout the whole of the 21st century there has continued to be an emphasis on the need for flexibility in library design underlining the need to be able to respond to change. This goes hand in hand with the need to

formulate, and adhere to, a strong vision for library designs which can vary from place to place, and from type to type. Although the fundamental mission of supporting learning, literacy and reading, as encapsulated in the IFLA Global Vision Report (International Federation of Library Associations, 2018) has not changed, the way services and support are delivered has, and will continue to do so. The need for what Andrew McDonald in discussing the top ten qualities of good library space described as “the wow factor” remains critically important but the sense of amazement and excitement can be achieved in many different ways. (McDonald, 2007, p. 25). Increasingly, the reuse of old buildings creates a wow factor while also chiming with an increasing desire for sustainability and a sense of identity and belonging. There is no doubt that spectacular libraries have been built all over the world during the first quarter of this century and ones that clearly meet users’ varied and changing needs and are welcoming and pleasant places to be in. These include both new and restored buildings.

In large part in response to climate change and the global pandemic, the emerging trends in recent years are around sustainability and well-being with an emphasis on reuse, green buildings, and indoor-outdoor connectivity. The digital revolution emphasized the need for libraries to be places where people wanted to be rather than places where they had to be in order to gain access to sources of information. As the 21st century unfolds, the need for a “third place” (Oldenburg, 2001) and the move from “connections to collections” (Latimer, 2011) is growing and morphing into a vision of both public and academic libraries as places for social interaction. “They are being reimagined as places where people can be together, a natural point in the city to gather, and exchange information”. The library is ‘a place where the life of the city unfolds’ according to SHL (Schmidt Hammer Lassen), the architects for the new Aarhus DOKK1 (Fig. 3) library. (John, 2016). The vision for the new Central Library for Limerick (a city in the mid-west of Ireland) published a few years later also stresses the concept of a library as a living room for all its citizens with an emphasis on inclusivity, combating educational disadvantage and providing a dynamic, vibrant and innovative venue in the heart of the city. The brief picks up on the need to address what good digital spaces should look like, incorporating the latest technology, while recognising, the “sophisticated interplay between physical spaces and physical collections and the virtual space.” (Limerick City and County Council, 2018, p. 12). There is a further interplay between old and new with the existing town hall being incorporated into the overall design and there is also a recognition of the need to anchor the library in the city as a civic building which connects to the outdoor spaces and activates the public realm. Its architects, Henry J Lyons, were also responsible for the award-winning library in Dublin for

the Royal College of Surgeons Ireland (RCSI) (Fig. 4, Fig. 4a). The RCSI Library demonstrated a step change in library design in Ireland and beyond. Located at the heart of a new state-of-the-art health sciences education building, it won a plethora of awards and is an exemplar of flexibility, user engagement and of how to design learning spaces in the digital age. Another exciting Irish library project is that by Grafton Architects/Shaffrey Architects for Dublin City Council as part of plans for a cultural quarter for Dublin anchored by a city library. The proposed development will encompass work to eight Grade I listed Georgian houses with a significant new build to the rear and the development of a new public plaza.

There are clear opportunities for libraries to play a key civic or campus role in the knowledge economy and in the social life of a city or university. In the UK and Ireland, and indeed all over Europe, this is coupled with the decline of the High Street as retail moves increasingly online resulting in the need to find ways to draw people back into town and city centres. Libraries have an opportunity here and there is a growing trend to reuse landmark buildings which already have a place in the hearts of their community and adapt them for new uses. The need to retain a sense of place and history is increasingly of paramount importance in a changing world and has the added benefit of taking a sustainable approach through reuse. There is a notable increase in buildings incorporating existing structures and a growth in the prestige of such projects also as they bring with them strong sustainability credentials.

SUSTAINABILITY

Sustainability, particularly in the context of energy efficiency and environmental issues generally, is at the forefront of all building design and has been for some time in most countries. Much has been written about green buildings and this is no exception in the field of library building design. Brian Edwards, a notable commentator on many aspects of library buildings, points out that, “the architectural approach to the twenty-first-century library is returning to the roots of the modernist library found in Scandinavia with its emphasis upon high levels of daylight, natural materials, social harmony and contact with nature.” (Edwards, 2011, p. 190). More recently, in a systematic literature review covering 2000-2020, the authors note that, “all types of libraries need to be socially, environmentally and economically sustainable to be available for future generations”. (Khalid, Malik, Mahmood, 2021, p. 2.). The Environment, Sustainability and Libraries Section of the International Federation of Library Association (IFLA) has been promoting the role of libraries in sustainable development for some time providing advice and guidance and offering a Green Library award since 2016 in two categories: Green Library

and Green Library Project (www.ifla.org/environment-sustainability-and-libraries). Secretary to the Section, Petra Hauke, has edited two key publications on the topic. (Hauke, Latimer, Werner, 2013 and Hauke, Charney and Sahavirta, 2018). The first of these includes a helpful checklist for sustainable buildings, equipment, and management. Information on sustainable design is also available in the international standard relating to the space, function and design of library buildings which includes a section on sustainable building (ISO/TR, 2012).

There are numerous examples of libraries of all types designed to a sustainability agenda. A major new university library project that is being keenly anticipated in the UK, for example, is that for the University of Bristol. Sustainability is one of the project's guiding principles and informs all aspects of the design. The design includes the use of natural materials, passive or light-touch interventions for environmental conditioning, a light-filled atrium, and rooftop green terraces. The library at Queen's University Belfast which opened in 2009 established a sustainability action plan from the outset and sustainability was a critical factor in the project throughout construction, design and management post occupancy (Fig. 5). Indeed, a study of almost any new library of note will reveal a keen awareness of the importance of sustainability in these days of climate change. The much-acclaimed Student Centre at University College London (UCL) which is managed and run jointly by Library Services staff and Student and Registry Services staff is a flagship for sustainability and is one of the greenest student centres in the UK (Fig. 6). It achieved a BREEAM Outstanding award, the highest measure of a building's environmental, social and economic impact, due to its use of low impact, highly durable building materials, natural ventilation, zero carbon technologies such as ground source cooling and solar energy (<https://www.breeam.com/case-studies/the-student-centre-ucl-london/>). BREEAM (Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method) is the assessment tool used to establish environmental credentials which is most commonly used in Europe. The equivalent tool used in the United States and Asia is LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design).

Tight budgets, demands on space and the sustainability agenda are all leading to a growing trend to refurbish and extend library buildings, often also adopting an incremental approach, rather than always embarking on new buildings. The reuse and renovation of existing buildings emits far less CO² than the construction of new buildings, even though new buildings can be more efficient in terms of operational energy. Wilkinson Eyre's exemplary restoration and refurbishment of Giles Gilbert Scott's New Bodleian in Oxford into the Weston Library (Fig. 7), which was shortlisted for the prestigious Stirling Prize, is a masterclass in opening up a previously rather forbidding building to the public while still retaining the

highest of scholarly standards for its own researchers. Two other university libraries in the UK which have carried out award-winning renovations to, and reordering of spaces in, their Modernist buildings of the late sixties are those at the University of Edinburgh and at the Brynmor Jones Library at the University of Hull. At Hull, an Art Deco building of the 1950s and a Brutalist building of the 1960s were refurbished and connected by a new central atrium. Spacious new learning spaces were created alongside the more traditional facilities. A new library fit for purpose in the 21st century was created while retaining much of the original fabric and original light fittings, and even including the poet and former Librarian Philip Larkin's office and conference room. The building won the UK's premier award for library building design, the SCONUL Award, in 2016 and is much admired by staff and students past and present. The University of Edinburgh took an incremental approach to the refurbishment of their library. It is a historic listed building designed by renowned architect Basil Spence so there were severe limitations on what could be done both internally and externally. Nonetheless, exciting and functional new spaces were created which completely retained the atmosphere and ambience of the original building whilst enabling the library to provide the services expected of a library today.

Two UK public libraries which also carried out major and much acclaimed upgrades to their historic buildings were the central libraries in Manchester and Liverpool. A little further afield a major renovation project by gmp (Gerkan, Marg & Partners) is currently in progress at the iconic Berlin State Library designed by Hans Scharoun which opened in 1978. Here additional public spaces such as workshops, meeting rooms, cafés and reading terraces are being created along with the introduction of greater indoor/outdoor connectivity while still retaining and respecting the original important organic architecture of Scharoun. Similar examples can be found all over Europe and the rest of the world.

A more recent trend noted, however, is sustainability in the sense of adaptive reuse rather than sustainable design in new buildings or sustainable strategies for managing environmentally focused libraries and library services. Retaining buildings rather than demolishing them avoids the environmental and ecological cost of disposing of often contaminated building materials. The energy embedded in an existing building – that is the energy used to produce the materials which make up the building – is wasted if the structure is demolished. Nowadays, thanks to new insulation materials and new developments in building physics, old buildings can achieve a good energy performance also. And it is not only the physical structure that is lost when a building is demolished but also the embedded memories that lie within it. Increasingly the importance of preserving community identity, a sense of belonging and architectural distinctiveness

is recognised. Furthermore, as the American planner Jane Jacobs argued in her seminal work on American cities (Jacob, 1961), large scale demolition and replacement of older, smaller buildings with large new structures drains the life and vitality from urban neighbourhoods. More recently the political economist, Martin Sandbu, has written of the need to establish a policy agenda which could recreate an economy where everyone feels they belong (Sandbu, 2020). Libraries pride themselves on their role as key components of modern urban culture, as places at the heart of their communities which are inclusive and have a deep awareness of social capital. Who better, therefore, to offer the chance for everyone to acquire and create knowledge and to meet and connect in a sustainable way?

This emerging trend of reusing existing buildings to create new libraries is encapsulated in a recent book on the topic (Hauke, Latimer, Niess, 2021) in which ten public libraries and nine academic libraries created in a diverse range of buildings from all over the world are described in detailed case studies and many more are referenced in the introductory chapters. The range of building types that are demonstrably shown to lend themselves to new life as beautiful and functional libraries include hospitals, fire stations, churches, factories, agricultural and industrial buildings, old barns, a post office, a shop, a locomotive shed, a Rococo castle and even a traditional Chinese courtyard house and an abattoir. What is more this is just a small selection from a much wider pool and does not even touch on the even broader subject of renovating existing library buildings to adapt them to the new demands of 21st century library life as discussed above.

Exciting adaptations into libraries of buildings formerly used for other purposes can be found all over the world and almost no building type is exempt from this approach. In the UK and Ireland, the problem of redundant churches is often solved by reuse and there are several examples of churches becoming libraries thereby breathing new life into their communities. The architects McCullough Mulvin took quite a radical approach to the transformation of the 19th century St Maur's Church in the small village of Rush in north County Dublin into a public library. Scottish architects, Page and Park, took a more traditional line, however, in the reuse of the Martyr's Kirk into a postgraduate library at St Andrews University on the east coast of Scotland (Fig. 8). Both, however, retained a sense of history and belonging that resonates with their respective library users today.

Cinemas are another building type at risk and there are examples here, too, of transformation into libraries. One excellent example is The Storyhouse, an Art Deco Odeon cinema in Chester, a historic city in northwest England (Fig. 9). The 1930s cinema was adapted into a theatre, cinema and library building with restaurants and bars and has won many awards including one for the best reuse of an existing building. The library is fully incorporated into the building weaving its way across all three floors

providing reading rooms, meeting and study spaces, a children's library with opportunities for arts and crafts and storytelling (<https://www.story-house.com/about/the-building>).

Warehouses and industrial buildings have also been successfully adapted worldwide. The University of the Arts Central St Martins library located in an old granary warehouse in central London, a brewery in Cornwall in the south-west of England and the stunning Luxembourg Learning Centre for students at the University of Luxembourg designed by Valentiny HVP in an old steelworks being just a few successful examples (Fig. 10, Fig. 10a). The transformation of a locomotive shed in Tilburg in the Netherlands into the LocHal Library has received many plaudits and has redefined the function of a library in the 21st century with a range of thematic labs (a FoodLab, WordLab, DigiLab, GameLab, TimeLab and FutureLab) in which users can experiment with new skills. There are even examples of slaughterhouses, perhaps not usually seen as the most promising of sites, being recreated as beautiful and functional libraries. The library of the HTWG University of Applied Sciences in Konstanz is a particularly stunning example of this (Fig. 11). New life has been breathed into all these old buildings creating welcoming and inspiring library spaces.

WELLBEING

Creating such spaces leads to another recent trend in library design. Designing libraries in which library users feel inspired and safe has always been important but no more so than in the wake of Covid. The term *biophilia* was coined in 1973 by the psychoanalyst Erich Fromm to describe a love of life but it was the Pulitzer-prize-winning American scientist, EO Wilson who developed the theory of an innate and genetically determined affinity of human beings with the natural world in his 1984 book *Biophilia*, (Wilson, 1984). This was soon picked up by architects and incorporated into green and sustainable design strategies. Connecting people to the natural world was seen to be important in improving mental health and wellbeing more generally and was soon in use in hospitals and health buildings to help speed up the healing process of patients. It is relatively recently that the term has been used in connection with library design. Philip Kent in his IFLA LBES blog on wellbeing (Kent, 2020) lists a number of approaches that can be incorporated into the design of libraries to support student wellbeing. These include the use of natural light and pleasing colour palettes, good air quality, the use of natural materials and furnishing as well as the incorporation of landscapes and maximising views wherever possible. Building design that encourages the users to circulate, use stairs rather than lifts, and connect visually with others, promotes health and facilitates connectivity within communities.

All types of libraries increasingly incorporate wellbeing strategies into their design focusing on wayfinding, accessibility, good lighting, colour and acoustics. In the UK the University of Stirling's Dementia Services Development Centre (SDSDC) provides accreditation for dementia-friendly architecture, design and facilities. The Great Sankey Neighbourhood Hub, which includes the local library, was an early recipient of an SDS-DC Gold Award. The Merton Library and Heritage Service in London has done pioneering work on providing unique sensory spaces for children particularly those with learning disabilities and in May 2019 was awarded £94, 826 of funding from Arts Council England for a ground-breaking project known as Project Sense. Seven libraries were themed into sensory spaces: Artic, Forest, Jungle, Space, Weather, Under the Sea and Circus. Indeed, art generally is seen as a restorative element in library buildings and something to be encouraged.

The wellbeing of users, and indeed library staff, is increasingly the focus for design teams. A sense of wellbeing derives in part from taking pleasure in one's surroundings whether these be beautiful, well-designed new libraries or, as noted above, old buildings sensitively restored and bringing with them embedded memories and a sense of identity and belonging. Fortunately, many of the 21st century trends in library design facilitate best practices in physical spaces in pandemic times. New libraries tended to be more spacious than the older buildings, with generous circulation spaces, wide corridors, multiple staircases/lifts, automated doors and good ventilation and they adapted well to one-way systems. They were designed with flexibility in mind so adjusting to social distancing proved not to be too challenging. Study spaces are in many ways Covid friendly, with high partitions and generous personal space; the growth of e-collections support working beyond the library walls; access management systems help to control numbers; the strong emphasis on self-service technologies such as self-service borrowing and return, book sorters and robotic storage all help to minimize contact. Excellent wifi and other technologies in libraries continued to attract those struggling with slow wifi, inadequate devices and the distractions of family life. Generally, libraries were designed to operate with minimal staff and staff workplaces were well partitioned and generously sized thereby enabling social distancing for library staff also.

Recent library designs balance the need to create spaces where people can meet, talk and create together with intimate, quiet places to study or work undisturbed. Outdoor spaces and the connection between indoors and outdoors and to the public realm is another identifiable trend. The concept design for the new Central Library in Macau by Mecanoo noted the importance of enhancing the working and study environment with high quality indoor greenery thereby improving wellbeing and productiv-

ity. A recent webinet held by the IFLA Library Buildings and Equipment Section (IFLA LBES, 2021) looked at outdoor spaces as key library assets. As well as a presentation on the Berlin State Library project mentioned above where emphasis is being placed on bringing currently dismal and unused courtyards and terraces back into use and connecting the library to the surrounding public space, there was also a talk on a new university campus in Savannakhet in Laos by the architect Marina Stankovic (Fig. 12). Here the buildings, including the library, blend into the landscape with buffering areas offering views to the interior and exterior spaces and with connecting walkways acting also as places to study, read and meet. Central to the design is the concept of porous spaces and greenery inside and out providing clean air and boosting wellbeing.

Architect Traci Lesneski, of US firm MSR Design, writing on the impact of the pandemic on library design notes that the onslaught of information on how to re-open safely can be somewhat daunting. She looks at the topic through the prism of sensory design – touch, sight, smell and taste (through breathing the air), and hearing – and proposes both short-term and longer-term solutions (Lesneski, 2021). Libraries will have to be flexible enough to accommodate variations in occupancy levels and allow for social distancing while still being places where people want to be.

CONCLUSION

The 21st century has seen a move from the collection-dominated library buildings of the 20th century to user-centred, greener and more inclusive libraries where social interaction and openness are the key factors in design. Trends identified at the beginning of the 21st century included, amongst others, the move to ubiquitous self-service, e-collections growing at the expense of print particularly in academic libraries, co-location, user engagement, flexibility, and sustainable strategies in new buildings. More recently, while many of the trends identified continue to develop, there has been an increasing focus on spaces where people create knowledge together as well as learning from what has gone before. Academic libraries provide a wide range of study spaces from meeting rooms and group study rooms to silent study space. Cafés are provided for social interaction but so too are technology-free areas and even sleep pods where people can relax in a frenetic and often stressful world. Public libraries, too, provide variety with makerspaces, sensory rooms and FabLabs but also peaceful nooks and crannies where you can curl up with a book or connect with nature in courtyards and reading terraces.

The most recent trends identified in this paper, however, are sustainability in the sense of reuse and adaptation of existing buildings and wellbeing through thoughtful design and including a connection with nature.

Of course, there will continue to be spectacular new library buildings but increasingly buildings which matter to their communities and are often well-located and worthy of retention are being adapted to create wonderfully atmospheric, beautiful, and functional libraries with the added bonus of representing a more sustainable approach and preserving all the memories contained within them. Such buildings provide a sense of identity and belonging and thus contribute to the wellbeing of the people who use them. Other recent trends towards wellbeing identified include design strategies that are conducive to good mental health including greater connectivity between the indoors and outdoors whether through buffering zones, making the most of views or incorporating greenery into the design. Indoor greenery has been found to have a positive connection with wellbeing also.

One potential trend which has not quite materialised despite the best efforts of many involved in library design is that of post-occupancy evaluation (POE). Architects and building managers tend to use POE to measure the quantitative aspects of design such as lighting and energy efficiency whereas librarians want to evaluate the more qualitative aspects such as impact on users and on service delivery and innovation. In a 2015 publication on the topic, the benefits of using POE for testing new concepts in practice and as a tool for continuous improvement in library design are strongly made and it is hoped that this will become a growing trend. (Latimer and Sommer, 2015).

There is a plethora of spectacular new and refurbished library buildings all over the world but in a short paper it is only possible to mention a few. The UK Designing Libraries website (www.designinglibraries.org.uk), the LIBER Architecture Group's Library buildings in Europe website (www.librarybuildings.eu) and the IFLA Library Buildings and Equipment website (www.ifla.org/library-buildings-and-equipment) are all sources of further information on library building design projects, issues and trends that should be consulted by anyone with an interest in the subject.

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APPENDIX



Figure 1. The Word, South Shields, UK.
FaulknerBrowns © Hufton+Crow



Figure 2. The Hive, Worcester, UK.
FCB © Hufton+Crow



Figure 2a. The Hive interior atrium.
FCB © Hufton+Crow



Figure 3. DOKK1, Aarhus, Denmark.
Schmidt Hammer Lassen Architects © Adam Mørk



Figure 4. Royal College of Surgeons Ireland, Dublin, Ireland.
© Henry J Lyons Architects and Hufton+Crow



Figure 4a. Reading room, Royal College of Surgeons Ireland, Dublin, Ireland.
© Henry J Lyons Architects and Hufton+Crow



Figure 5. Queen's University Belfast Library, Belfast, UK.
ShepleyBulfinch©Queen's University Belfast.



Figure 6. Student Centre, University College London, UK.
© Daniel Kordik, UCL Library Services, University College London.



Figure 7. Weston Library reading room, Bodleian Libraries University of Oxford, UK. Wilkinson Eyre, Photographer: John Cairns @ Bodleian Libraries, University of Oxford.



Figure 8. Martyrs Kirk postgraduate library, St Andrews University. Page and Park Architects © Andrew Lee.



Figure 9. The Storyhouse, Chester, UK.
Bennetts Associates © Peter Cook.



Figure 10. University of Luxembourg Learning Centre entrance, Belval.
Architects Valentiny HVP © Ignasi Bonet.



Figure 10a. University of Luxembourg Learning Centre interior, Belval.
Architects Valentiny HVP © Ignasi Bonet.



Figure 11. Library interior, HTWG University of Applied Sciences, Konstanz, Germany.
© Ignasi Bonet.



Figure 12. University Library, Savannakhet campus, Laos.
© Prof. Marina Stankovic / Marina Stankovic Architekten BDA, Berlin

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THE ARCHITECTURE OF CONTEMPORARY POLISH LIBRARIES SELECTED PROJECTS



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KEYWORDS: Library construction. Library design. Arrangement of library space.

ABSTRACT: Purpose of the article - Technologies, materials and current trends are the elements that influence design and architectural language. They shape the face of objects created in accordance with new perceptions of the functionality of architecture, including contemporary libraries, which, while remaining part of the culture industry, must have an appropriately designed and arranged space. Multifunctionality is now a unique feature of architecture, which allows libraries to implement a variety of projects. The final shape depends on the architect's comprehensive view of a given space, and projects commissioned in the 21st century are the best example of this. The objects described herein are not exclusively new constructions, but also those that have been modernized or adapted. The competition designs, which express the architects' visionary imaginings of the future, are also important for getting to know the perceptions of modern libraries. Delving into their architectural form and design will allow us to understand them and set the direction in which their design should go. **Research methods** – Architectural literature, technical and design documents, photos, competition designs, and the

content of websites of individual institutions contributed to the source materials, which were the basis for describing their history. The analysis of the above made it possible to indicate the changes that have occurred since the beginning of the 21st century in the field of design. **Results and conclusions** – Contemporary libraries, being carriers of material and non-material values, are an area of strong influence on the user, who is invited to explore on many levels. Their modern architecture further deepens these feelings. An architect who wants to create an excellent library, regardless of whether it will be a university library or a facility dedicated to local communities, must plan it so that users experience positive emotions while inside. Only then will the library be not only a place of practical development, but also a place for dialogue and the exchange of experiences. It is also worth remembering that libraries, being part of the municipal infrastructure, turn good cities into great ones, creating the reality of its surroundings. The library space is a constantly developing fabric, a network of connections, which, if properly designed, can have a positive impact on the lives of the inhabitants.

INTRODUCTION

At the beginning of the 1930s, the classic concept of the functional tripartite division formulated by the Italian architect Leopoldo Della Santa began to wane. The division of the library space into zones intended for readers, staff, and book collections was abandoned (Della Santa, 1816) in favor of an open library enabling direct contact with the book collection, which first took place in the United States and then in Europe (Maj, 1987, p. 13). At that time, the architects again looked critically at library architecture and presented a proposal for change. For the next decades, following the ideas developed in 1933 by Angus Sned Macdonald who believed that modern buildings should be characterized by „flexibility, changeability, adaptability”, conceptualizations were based on the needs of utility (flexibility). The issue of the appearance and functionality of libraries was revisited in 1994. The solutions proposed by the British architect Harry Faulkner-Brown in the field of construction, technology, and interior architecture (Faulkner-Brown, 1994; Szczygłowska, 2008, p. 468) were revised in 2006 by Andrew McDonald, who announced that the new century required a different perspective (McDonald, 2006; Świrad, 2010, p. 13). Without rejecting the principles of Faulkner-Brown, he presented new solutions that took into account ongoing social and technological changes (Tokarska, 2013, p. 683).

Contemporary libraries, classified as belonging to the cultural and creative industries sector, require special buildings to fulfill their assigned functions (Lewandowski & Munk & Skrok, 2010, pp. 3-7; Horkheimer & Adorno, 2002, pp. 94-137). Their position in this sector is strong because they are in the first circle known as the “core of creativity” or the “root of creativity”, which brings together initiatives related to art and cultural

heritage (KEA European Affairs, 2006, p. 2; Krapieński, 2014, p. 24). The remaining creative industries fall within the subsequent circles that radiate around this core. Libraries are at the very center as institutions promoting cultural values, as well as enabling people to spend free time away from the hustle and bustle of the city (Jankowska, 2012, p. 179; Oldenburg, 1999; Płócienniczak, 2014, pp. 177-187; Tomaszewska, 2013, p. 13; Zybert, 2017, pp. 14-47). However, in order for them to play an important role in this sector, they need appropriately designed multifunctional spaces. Whether such unique places attract users and improve the quality of life in the region (Krapieński, 2012, p. 22) depends on architects, who are also included in the core of the creative class according to Richard Florida (Florida, 2010, p. 61). The technological and design solutions used by them will not only determine their success, but will also affect the emotions and intellectual sensitivity of visitors. Of course, the reception of the facility by the society will ultimately be influenced by the attractiveness of the programs being implemented, but the issues of proper management are no less important here (Konieczna, 2009, p. 21). Today, modern library buildings tell a story about a changing architecture and a revolutionary approach to the designed space and are the result of cooperation between architects and investors. In the case of adapted or modernized facilities, it is also a dialogue between the existing structure and the surroundings in which the building is located. Nowadays, next to monumental university institutions, more and more small centers dedicated to local communities are being built. Then, libraries share space with cultural centers and together provide access to knowledge. The development of civilization has provided us with many educational opportunities, and the library plays an important role in this chain.

Reflection on the image of the contemporary library will not be limited to discussing purely architectural issues, but will be an attempt to describe them in a broader context. Answers to the following questions:

– why is it necessary to have a different perspective on buildings designed for the needs of modern libraries?

– how do architects belonging to the creative class see new libraries that are multifunctional centers?

– what materials and technologies are dominant in their projects?

– how do they shape the space to make it user-friendly and functional?

– what is the participation of female architects in the project being executed?

will allow us to indicate the direction of changes in the architecture of contemporary libraries. The facilities presented here were selected due to the time of their creation (2000-2019) and their method (adaptation, modernization, new implementation). For each object, its architectural and design values are described, which determine its character and evoke po-

sitive emotions not only when we look at their visual aspect, but also when we become direct users. It is also worth discussing the competitions for library buildings, which are more and more often announced by city authorities. On the example of projects prepared for Szczecin, contemporary trends in shaping library spaces have been shown. The winning projects offer a wealth of knowledge on this subject. In the selected and described spaces, regardless of whether they were adaptations, modernizations, or completely new projects, a cultural code has been written and various types of experiences are being shaped which increase their attractiveness in the eyes of their users.

RITUAL OF TRANSITION – ADAPTATION

Intelligent libraries define the visions of their own development more and more effectively and develop indicators of their success. With the help of designers, they shape their own spaces to encourage visitors and integrate local communities. Their interestingly arranged buildings are not necessarily new investments. Only in recent years, architects have implemented several successful adaptations, modifying railway stations or historic factories. This is not a new phenomenon, such solutions have been used before, and abroad as well, for example in Braunschweig, Luckenwalde, Lucerne, and Siena (Hauke & Werner, 2012). Regardless of the period in which these transformations took place, these objects have one thing in common: they are not isolated entities, but function within the local structures and serve the local communities. Adaptations confirm that architecture, thanks to a strange mixture of science and art, is magic (Piano, 2003, p. 16). The award-winning branch of the Florian Ceynowy Municipal Public Library in Rumia and the Wiktor Bazielich County and Municipal Public Library in Stary Sącz are good examples of this, because in these places the world of science and rationalism coexists with the world of poetry and symbols¹. For these institutions, recognition of this is very important, but their fate depends on the acceptance of the local community and whether they will be perceived as attractive places, with a rich educational offer where one can spend interesting leisure time in well-designed spaces. Their design is an expression of the present times and of the intentions of the project's authors and investors, aimed at creating a specific effect for the user. Originally arranged spatial structures

¹ This Branch of the Florian Ceynowy Municipal Public Library in Rumia won, among others: second place in the Solidarity 2014 competition; first place in the 7th edition of the Polska Architektura XXL plebiscite; the POLITYKA Architectural Award (2016); and the Library Interior Design Awards in the "Single Space Design" category (2016). The Wiktor Bazielich County and Municipal Public Library won 3rd place in the competition for the Stanisław Witkiewicz Małopolska Voivodship 2018 award in the category of public utility architecture.

can be found, among other places, in Rumia, where a railway station from the 1950s was adapted to the needs of a library. In this case, interference was limited to the interior. A center was established that combined the functions of a library and a cultural center. The „Stacja Kultura”, a name acquired from the neon sign inside, is a „third place” for the inhabitants which favors the equalization of educational opportunities and provides entertainment. A reading room, a computer room, a conference room, and a playroom for children have been designed in this small space, and cultural events take place in the courtyard of the ticket hall. The new library would not be so attractive if it were not for the interior arrangement and direct reference to the history of the building and the world of railways.

Crossing the threshold, we see black wall racks made of steel I-beams, reminiscent of railroad tracks, and red seats similar to those of historic wagons. Stairs leading to the mezzanine and slats masking the lighting above the information center are also made of I-beams. The advantage of „Stacja Kultura” is its designer interior, emanating with positive energy. Red sofas and hangers for clothes, a library counter, skirting boards and door frames in the same color enliven this building inconspicuous from the outside. Red, which is the dominant color, is contrasted interestingly with the gray stone floors and the wood-like stoneware tiles filling the spaces between the shelves. The look is complemented by white sofas, wall murals with the history of the city, and the library logo. The type of narrative proposed by the Sikora Wnętrza architectural studio, a story about an accessible and user-friendly library, met with approval and the project became an interesting answer to the challenges of the present times (Załoski, 2015, p. 84; Cymer, 2015; *Dworzec kolejowy w Rumii. ...*, 2014; *Rumia: Stacja ...*, 2016; *Stacja Kultura ...*, 2019; *Stacja Kultura ...*, 2014). Library facilities also appeared in the historic spaces of railway stations in Rabka Zdrój, Oborniki Śląskie, Wrocław, and in the bus station in Kielce. In all these cases, the basic functionality of the buildings has been preserved. Adaptations of their individual parts for library purposes were carried out in accordance with the guidelines of the conservator of monuments (*Rabka ...; Wkrótce otwarcie ...*, 2020; *Dworzec autobusowy ...*, 2020; *Biblioteka na dworcu ...*, 2017; *Biblioteka im. Jarosława Iwaszkiewicza*).

The Wrocław library in Psie Pole has also come to form a significant element in the city’s metabolism, thanks to which the perception of the area has also changed. The FAMA Library and Cultural Center, despite its small space, is popular among the local community, whose members can use the auditorium, art and movement laboratory, computer laboratory, and recording studio in addition to the library itself. The new facility inherited from its predecessor – the FAMA cinema – not only its building plot, but also its name and historic neon sign. The former building was replaced by a modern structure that fits perfectly into the existing space. It

is not a typical transformation of a building's function, but more an adaptation of space that previously played a culture-forming role. The interior of the new facility, which can be seen through the glazing at the pavement level, encourages one to stay there for a long time. The gray, cozy space is enlivened by a yellow ribbon of workstations and seats, and graphite furniture completes the arrangement (Głowacki, 2017, p. 56; *Centrum Biblioteczno-Kulturalne ...*, 2016; *Konkurs ...*, 2014).

Examples that illustrate well the appropriate use of the adapted space are also the Wiktor Bazieliński County and Municipal Public Library in Stary Sącz, the Library in Cieszyn, the Municipal Public Library in Opole, the H. Łopaciński Regional Public Library in Lublin, the TUVIM Municipal Library in Łódź, the MOKSIR Public Library in Chełmek, and the Julian Przyboś Municipal Public Library in Przeworsk. Such libraries are multifunctional centers that carry out educational and cultural tasks in originally arranged and expanded interiors. The facility in Stary Sącz offers a reading room with a children's and youths' section in bright rooms inspired by Scandinavian tradition and design. In *Książnica Cieszyńska*, additional space following renovation has been arranged separately for: a library, a conservation workshop, a conference room, user services, an exhibition gallery, and a special glass room for the book collection of Father Leopold Jan Szersznik. In the case of the library in Opole, readers acquired an interesting reading room, media library, conference room, social room, and a café with a periodical reading room which can be accessed from the park. An interesting solution was also chosen in Lublin, where the underground area was developed and designated for warehouses, a conference room, and an internet reading room, while the TUVIM Municipal Library in a revitalized tenement house in Łódź is set to attract readers not only with its programs, but also with an interesting interior design, swings, an energy bike, and a picturesque green patio. Recently opened branches in Chełmek and Przeworsk offer readers interesting programs and additionally access to a common room for children, a multimedia room, and a café. All activities are undertaken not in modern facilities, but in the revitalized and re-arranged spaces of the former kindergarten and the building of the "Sokół" Gymnastic Society. (*Powiatowa i Miejsko ...; Siedziba – Książnica ...; Hamada; Stiasny*, 2008, p. 52; *Biblioteka Publiczna MOKSIR...*, 2020; *Otwarcie nowej ...*, 2020; *Zaglądamy do...*, 2020; *Sąsiadka ECI ...*, 2019). It is also worth mentioning one of the latest adaptations, namely the transformation of a former gym belonging to the Klementyna Hoffmannowa High School in Warsaw. The project, executed in 2019, was created as a result of cooperation with students of the Faculty of Interior Design of the Academy of Fine Arts in Warsaw. The bright, minimalist interiors have a place for group and individual work as well as a relaxation space and meeting zone. The designers' inventiveness allowed them to design

a space with a unique atmosphere which quickly gained the approval of young people (Knysak, 2020, p. 108).

The increasingly common trend for institutions from the cultural sector to use existing infrastructure in a manner different from its original purpose meant that, for example, a historic villa or an apartment house could be adapted and expanded for future library and cultural institutions. Despite the use of contemporary architectural language, architects created spaces that fit perfectly into the old fabric of the city. The key problem in this type of project, when the existing functionality of the facility changes, is always the protection of old buildings. Reconciling investors' expectations with conservation requirements is difficult, but not impossible. In the cases described, compromises were achieved. FAMA from Wrocław is one example of a project falling within a zone subject to supervision. The architects from the ENOE Architecture and Design studio had to take into account the proximity of tenement houses from the turn of the 20th century. Thanks to the adopted solutions, the building blends into the street frontage and, by making reference to the form of modernist projects, engages in a dialogue with them. A historic villa in Stary Sącz from the beginning of the 20th century has also retained its former appearance. The local library has gained space while recalling the times of its first owner, the lawyer Edward Seuchter. The architects decided only to extend its rear part. The façade, preserved and restored, is the most beautiful part. Thanks to the works carried out, the building has become a showcase for the city and through its architecture it exudes an atmosphere of creativity (Hajok, 2018, p. 76; *Powiatowa I Miejsko-Gminna ...*, *Rozbudowa ...*, 2018). A new life, filled with history, has also been breathed into the historic apartment house called "The Mint",² which houses the collections of the Cieszyn Library. Blending into the Old Town buildings, it houses two institutions - a library and a museum. Prepared by the architect Krzysztof Barysz of studio Urbi S.C., the project incorporated the extension of the existing structure within the space of the former city walls. The result was an interesting tension between the old and new parts of the converted building. The proposed solutions abound in quotes from historical architecture. In this way we have references to former mansions in Moravia (a façade with a stylized colonnade), the defensive character of the old part of the building (a stylized escarp as the base of the building), and the eclectic architecture of Cieszyn from the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries (Majewski, 2004, p. 29). A nineteenth-century apartment house in Opole also serves the functions of a library and a cultural institution. The

² In the 17th century, the mint of Duchess Elisabeth Lucretia was located in the apartment house. Later, the building was taken over by the Jesuits, and in the 18th century it was in the hands of Baron Jerzy Fryderyk Bludowski, whose coat of arms has been preserved on the front wall (https://kc-cieszyn.pl/strona_glowna/siedziba/).

historic space was a challenge for architects from the ARCHITOP studio, who decided to expand the building's volume. Its original character and historical neoclassical façade have been preserved. The added part is in keeping with the old buildings and surroundings (the nearby Młynówka canal, the Old Town, the Gothic-Baroque Franciscan monastery, and the Museum of Prisoners of War) (Majewski, 2011, p. 56; Hamada). The completed adaptation and extension was appreciated by both users and architects,³ being praised for the "exceptionally careful design of the municipal library building, well referencing the existing building and the rich urban context; for the harmony and proper articulation of individual elements of the complex in relation to the park and the bank of the Odra River; for great architectural culture; restraint and elegance of the applied material, texture and color solutions" (*Nagrody SARP rozdane 2011*). In the 21st century, the baroque outbuildings of a former monastery, previously adapted for the needs of the Hieronim Łopaciński Municipal Library in Lublin, were also expanded. The building underwent reconstruction for the first time in the interwar period, when a three-story building was added. As the result of another architectural intervention that took place after World War II, the library gained a new book warehouse. Thanks to the works carried out in 2004–2006, underground warehouses and a four-story block were built, located on the side of the baroque convent of the Visitation Sisters (Stiasny, 2008, p. 52; *Polskie biblioteki ...*).

Buildings that house cultural institutions are often some of the most interesting and visible objects in the city space. This is also the case with the library of the Łódź University of Technology, which has taken over the former warehouse of the Fryderyk Schweikert Wool Auction Society. Although the adaptation of historic architecture always raises a lot of controversy and fears, in this case it was possible to save the factory-town spirit of Łódź. The architects refrained from interfering with the external structure and kept the original shape of the building with its red brick façade which is associated with austerity and industrial spaces. Inside they left brick vaulted ceilings and undivided halls which were intended for warehouses. In this case, the brick gives the whole interior a period atmosphere. Designed at the beginning of the 20th century, this building was one of the first on the European continent to use reinforced concrete. Thanks to little interference, a space was created that is full of references to history, and at the same time is modern and multifunctional (Skubała & Kazan, 2011).

³ The building received awards from, among others, the Internet plebiscite for the architectural Favorite of Poland 2000–2012, which was part of the *Życie w Architekturze* competition (3rd place); and the Mister Architecture of the Opolskie Voivodship 2010–2011 competition (distinction). The facility was recognized as the best architectural facility built with public funds in 2010 under the honorary patronage of the Minister of Infrastructure (<https://mbp.opole.pl/biblioteka/nagrody>).

A railway station, a historic apartment house, a factory, a kindergarten are an open-ended catalog of spaces that are now adapted to the needs of libraries. Another unusual location worth adding to this list is that of a green house. The Glass Trap Media Center was opened in 2012 in the Zielonogórska Palmiarnia (Zielona Góra Palm House). In its interior spaces we can not only admire exotic plants, but also pass time with our favorite reading. Located on the top of Winne Wzgórze and surrounded by a vineyard park, together with the 19th century vintner's house which belonged to August Grempler, it is a tourist attraction (Nędzyńska, 2012). The library is an asset to this locale, as is the Grafit Library in Wrocław, as well as the Manhattan Library in Gdańsk and Sopoteka in Sopot, which are located in shopping centers. It is worth devoting a few words especially to the Sopoteka, whose space was arranged by the studio of Jan Sikora, already known for his project in Rumia. In the case of "Stacja Kultura", we had a direct reference to the history of the building in which it is located, and in Sopot the architect was inspired by the city itself, the beach and greenery. Bright, harmonious and natural interiors encourage visits, especially after the summer season, because in the library spaces you will find deckchairs and multimedia beach baskets as well as comfortable sofas and cushions. Light wood, white and green colors and the various seats mentioned above define the character of this place (*Mediateka w Sopot ...*, 2015; Safader; Warnke, 2016; *Tak wygląda...*, 2015).

In the cases described here, the historical architecture provides a perfect complement to the newly created spaces without losing any of its character and originality. When expanding these libraries, technologies and materials commonly used all over the world were used. Glass, concrete, and aluminum are among those most frequently used in these projects. Glass has gained particular importance in modern architecture, although its use poses problems with regard to thermoregulation and lighting. From the beginning of the 20th century we find it used in the projects of Bruno Taut, Walter Gropius, Mies van der Rohe, and Le Corbusier. Currently, we find it most often in public buildings. The façade of the Wrocław FAMA was made of glass whose panes reflect the surroundings and encourage passers-by to enter. In this case, it was combined with gray grooved concrete plates and aluminum. In Stary Sącz, glazing from the garden side makes it possible to contemplate nature, and the brackets supporting the ceiling structure seen through them resemble tree branches. The same material was also used by architects in Lublin, where it was used in the construction of the south-west façade. Daylight reaches the building through glass walls and narrow window slots, and its intensity is regulated by shutters: wooden and rotating inside, vertical outside. In Opole, on the other hand, the main entrance to the building is hidden among glass and pylons. In this way, the old building was connected with the added module with

reinforced concrete and layered external walls. Glass and openwork metal mesh panels also enliven the façade of the new part made of graphite fiber-cement panels. In addition, they were used to build an open patio on the side of the Museum of Prisoners of War. Thanks to this solution, the building is better lit, and the readers have the opportunity to look out at the old town buildings. From the side of the park, the glazing reaches two stories, which makes the two worlds, the outer and the inner one, interpenetrate. The historic and modern spaces are connected by a system of footbridges separated by an "illuminated, stone-filled 'moat' with bamboos, which continues with a crack in the interior running through all floors, and on the outside appears as a narrow glass connector illuminating individual stories" (*Wnętrza biblioteki...*, 2011). The interiors exude austere character, not only because of the glass. This impression is intensified by leaving ventilation systems visible and by the use of stone and two-color granite paving bricks (Hamada; *Miejska Biblioteka Publiczna ...*, 2011).

However, it is not only the ubiquitous glazing that determines the reception of adapted objects. Architects use various solutions to catch the eyes of passers-by and encourage them to visit the re-imagined spaces. In Opole, it was decided to place fragments of Edward Stachura's poetry on part of the facade. Additionally, the medieval city walls with stone stairs were revealed and restored. From the side of the canal the building was constructed on a high pedestal, and the partially reconstructed fortifications protect it against flooding. The architects referred back to the historic tower located in this place through ornate, open-work balconies with metallized laminate cladding. All these elements affect the visual perception of the building. In Wrocław, recreational terraces created on the back courtyard side, on an annexed avant-corps and a square with concrete seats, are designed to encourage a visit. In Lublin, on the other hand, a portico was designed along the side façade with historical references. Thanks to this solution, the entire project fits in better with the surroundings and the reinforced concrete columns, moved away from the glass curtain wall, give it an impression of monumentality (Majewski, 2011, p. 56; Głowacki, 2017, p. 56; Stiasny 2008, p. 52).

The current location of libraries in buildings originally meant for other purposes confirms that architecture, being a living creation, allows for their use in a different way than intended, thanks to technology and design ideas. In these cases, the architects' task is to find connections between the existing state and the investor's expectations in order to create a functional space and at the same time preserve the historic substance. Thus, an architect never works alone, and the designed buildings are the result of cooperation. In the cases described here, the architects managed to carry out the reconstruction with respect for historical values and to reveal the potential hidden in these buildings, confirming that architecture

is a product of the mind. "Architectural thought is something conceptual, while perception, on the contrary, is completely sensual. [...] on the one hand, the intellectual sphere to create architecture, and on the other, a completely sensual world to experience it" (Perrault, 2003, p. 29).

LIBRARIES ENVISIONED ANEW – MODERNIZATION

Currently, „we live in times of a technological revolution, the Internet can be considered one of the most important inventions of our era. We live in large agglomerations, we are developing rapidly, and information has become one of the most valuable currencies. At the same time, we are constantly busy, we do not have time for ourselves, and the ubiquitous technology reduces the sense of security and violates our privacy. Cities generate a huge amount of pollution, poisoning us and our planet every day. In the rush of duties, we lack time for contact with nature and rest" (Granosik, 2019, p. 50). All this means that local communities expect their cities to have a variety of spaces enabling relaxation and development. The library is to be one of these, different from the library known a decade ago, still evolving and adjusting to the changing reality. Would the word „place" or „space" be more appropriate to describe its character? We most often see a place as a „quiet center of established values", which we experience as a pause, somewhere we can stay. Such a place, safe and predictable, is the opposite of a space, which is associated with movement, size, or openness. However, what at the beginning is a space, becomes a place as you get to know it. It is no different in the case of modern libraries, which we initially look at as multifunctional objects, and when we get to know them better gain a different dimension in our eyes, becoming a „third place" where we like to spend our free time. The changing needs of users and the progress of civilization lead cities more and more often to decide to modernize old buildings and make them functional and friendly places, and not just spaces which we move around in (Matlina, 2013, pp. 3-20; Tuan, 1987, pp. 16-24). It is a natural course of things, but in order to bring a positive result, before sitting down to work, the architect should think about the reader's expectations and what makes him or her feel good in a given place. Contemporary architecture is a thinking machine whose soul is initially created by an architect but whose later functions are taken over by the user, as in the modernized libraries in Strzemieszyce in Dąbrowa Górnicza, Sosnowiec, Mielec or Warsaw (Warsaw Public Library), Poznań (Raczyński Library), and Krakow (Jagiellonian Library). Recently, it is not only smaller centers that have gained a new face, but also large academic institutions whose interiors, over time, have required a new look at their functionality.

In the case of libraries dedicated to local communities, their common feature is multifunctionality. Architects for the City Library in Strzemieszyce, Dąbrowa Górnicza, the Gustaw Daniłowski library in Sosnowiec, or the Municipal Public Library of the Local Government Cultural Center in Mielec assumed the creation of a common space for the implementation of library and cultural tasks. In Strzemieszyce, cooperation with the local community resulted in the creation of a center with a place for a club-café and a cinema and entertainment hall, and the revitalized area around the area allowed for the preparation of a place for an outdoor stage and a parking lot (*Biblioteka w Dąbrowie ...*, 2015, p. 13). The same intentions guided the creators of the library in Sosnowiec, which, after reopening, offered access to, among others, multimedia and regional collections. Children in these new spaces have a separate room (The World of Science and Fantasy). The proposed changes met with a positive response also due to the new interior design. The old design from the 70s was replaced with a modern design. The redesigned Zagłębiowska Mediateka is eagerly visited and has received awards (*Zagłębiowska Mediateka...*, 2019; J.F, 2019)⁴. The library in Mielec, which was reopened in 2019, is also popular among the local community. The facility has a separate space for: a library, a children's corner, a teenager's zone, an audiovisual and exhibition room, as well as a reading room with a terrace, where you can read daily newspapers. In this way, it was possible to implement the idea of a multifunctional space, which additionally serves as a "third place" (*W Mielcu powstała...*, 2019).

The cooperation of architects and investors, as well as their innovative approach to modernized buildings, resulted in interesting solutions that will serve the readers well. In the projects described here, a whole range of materials were used, from glass to brick and concrete, thanks to which the facelift was a success. Glass has been used in a traditional manner in Mielec to illuminate the interior of the building, being extended by one floor. Thanks to this maneuver, the library gained more space for the implementation of tasks, as well as a visually interesting exterior. Locating the main entrance from the park side turned out to be a good decision that allowed nature to become an integral part of this project. The rebuilt library is an expression of the harmonious coexistence of nature and architecture (*W Mielcu ...*, 2019). Glass was also used in Strzemieszyce, but in this case it is complemented by traditional brick, concrete, and weathering steel (COR-TEN). Such a combination made the façade eye-catching and entices users to visit and delve into the functional layers of the facility.

⁴ The Gustaw Daniłowski Municipal Public Library in Sosnowiec took third place in the National Open Competition "Modernization of the Year and Construction of the 21st Century" Edition XXIII 2018 in the category of "public utility buildings" (*Zagłębiowska Mediateka ...*, 2019).

The expanding book collections and the expectations of readers force modernization also in large institutions. In recent years, necessary work has been carried out in, among other places, the Warsaw Public Library, the Raczyński Library in Poznań, and the Jagiellonian Library in Kraków. As the result of a comprehensive renovation, the library in Warsaw saw remodeling done in the Reception Area, Lending Room, Audio Book Lending Room, Faustyn Czerwijowski Reading Room, Information Center, Children's Book Museum, Władysław Bartoszewski Reading Room (Magazines), Władysław Bartoszewski Reading Room (Varsaviana), Stanisław Kierbedź Reading Room, the Reading Room of Art and Cartography, and the Reading Room of Old Prints and Manuscripts, among other places. The former layout of the outbuildings has been preserved and greater functionality was provided by roofing the courtyards and extending the warehouse wing. Currently, the functions of the reading room and café have been taken over by the existing internal courtyards. Moving around the facility is facilitated by elevators and a system of footbridges. The works carried out allowed for the redesign of an attractive space in the city center, which is functional and interestingly arranged. Inside, one will find not only a green wall of plants that pleases the eye, but also some art in the form of Marcin Bogusławski's Sgraffito. In this way, the historical interiors gained their own atmosphere. In the construction, glass was used in a traditional manner, covering the roof in the eastern and western courtyards. The latest design achievements were also employed to design the space used by readers and librarians (Mycielski, 2015, p. 76; Kloc, 2020). Further renovation works are currently underway, which will also include the façade of the building. Throughout the library, readers have the opportunity to use computer workstations with Internet access, connect their own devices to the wireless Internet, access databases subscribed to by the library, and use reprographic services and cafés if they need a break from studying.

Following its modernization, the Warsaw library has often been compared to the Raczyński Library in Poznań. In both cases, thanks to the architects' non-standard approach, modern spaces were created. For the Raczyński Library, architects from the JAMS Architects' Studio designed a new building, which became a part of this historic library. By referring to classical motifs, "the unity of form and function" was achieved, and the resulting section, despite the larger volume, was in line with the aesthetics and scale of the surrounding buildings (*Biblioteka Raczyńskich ...*, 2013, p. 40; Warnke, 2016; Pięciak, 2014). The solutions adopted meant that the past was enriched with an intriguing future. The combination of history and modernity achieved by displaying the historic façade of the neighboring building in the new hall gave an interesting visual effect. The impression of harmony between the two buildings was achieved through the use

of polished concrete blocks imitating multicolored aggregates from which the outer cladding of the added part was made. The same material was used to design the interior wall mosaic. The openwork three-dimensional façade, allowing one to admire the interior with an interesting and consistent design, encourages passers-by to visit. Inside, the designers abandoned traditional lighting placed on the ceiling in favor of lamps above desks and bookcases. During the day, daylight passes through “rhythmically arranged windows with deep embrasures” (*Biblioteka Raczyńskich ...*, 2013, p. 32). The decision to support the ceiling of the building only in the corners not only influenced its perception (the impression of lightness), but also facilitated the arrangement of the resulting space. Readers have at their disposal an information center, reading room, lending room, and free access and an open book repository for those who like to work alone. The atmosphere is additionally enhanced by specially designed equipment in the form of wooden furniture and colorful elements. The use of the facility is facilitated by a system of several entrances, available at different times of the day (*Biblioteka Raczyńskich ...*, 2013, pp. 38-39). The decision to expand the library in Poznań was dictated by the necessity to meet the expectations of users. The expanding collection of books kept in several locations and the new cultural and educational functions required more space. The building was also adapted to the needs of people with disabilities, like other modern buildings of today. In this case, the architects managed to find a proverbial golden mean and design architecture that will not only make life easier for readers, but will be as functional as possible. The architects carrying out the metamorphosis of the Jagiellonian Library probably also asked themselves similar questions. The former modernist building by Waław Krzyżanowski was expanded in 1996-2001, according to a design by Atelier Loegler & Partners. It was then decided that the new rear wing would be placed parallel to the front part, behind the block of the main reading room. Red granite on the side walls and sandstone cladding of a similar color to the one existing in the old part resulted in a stylistic unity with the existing buildings. The lightness of the entire project is provided by the skylight and, paradoxically, the stone blinds. Inside, the glazing has been applied traditionally, which illuminates the building and allows the users to admire the greenery. The expansion gave readers a contemporarily arranged space, while the book collection gained additional warehouses in the high wings of the building and rooms on the ground floor and the first floor of the connector above the main reading room. Apart from the lending library, the new building also houses the Main Reading Room, the Scholars’ Reading Room, the Europeanists’ Reading Room & Austrian Library, the Information Science Reading Room, Audiovisual Documents, Manuscripts and Old Prints Reading Rooms, the Graphical and Cartographic Collections Room, the Rare Publications Room, and the Documents

of Social Life and Music Collections Rooms. The conference and exhibition rooms and café are at the disposal of employees and readers. Employees treat books in danger of deterioration at the Acid Paper Clinic (Stiasny, 2002, pp. 28-31; Warnke, 2016).

The modernizations and expansions of the libraries described here were necessary due to the growing collections of books and the expectations of readers. It allowed for the creation of places where one can not only read books, but also develop one's passions, watch exhibitions, and take part in meetings with authors, debates, and book promotions. Libraries have also gained additional space for the implementation of tasks resulting from their status as scientific institutions: publishing activities, conferences, and cooperation with other institutions for the development of culture and science. The adopted solutions, both in terms of the exterior and interior design, made it possible to design attractive spaces that will intrigue with their exterior form for years to come and enable the implementation of program tasks within interestingly designed interiors. The changes introduced in them may inspire architects to develop new concepts for modernizing library buildings.

WELL-TUNED LIBRARIES – NEW INVESTMENTS

„[...] architecture consists of *Ordinatio* [...], of *Dispositio* [...], of *Eurythmia*, of *Symmetria*, of *Decor* and *Distributio* [...] *Ordinatio*, means the ordering of the building and determining of the proportions of the entire work [...] *Dispositio* is the appropriate arrangement of the building elements and obtaining by their juxtaposition of the exquisite work and its quality [...] *Eurythmia* consists in the graceful appearance of the building and in the proper juxtaposition of individual elements. It is achieved when the individual parts of the structure have an appropriate ratio of height to width, width to length and generally meet the requirements of symmetry. *Symmetria* is also a harmonious agreement resulting from the parts of the work itself and the interdependence between specific parts of individual pieces and the whole work [...] *Decor*, i.e. appropriateness in a building consists in the impeccable appearance of the whole composed of individual elements which are considered good [...] *Distributio*, that is, economy is about the proper management of the materials and about saving and moderation in calculating construction expenses. The architect will achieve this first of all if he does not look for materials that can only be found or bought at a high price [...] And in general the layout of buildings should be adapted to the people who are to use them” (Vitruvius, 2004 pp. 15-16). The architectural solutions proposed by Vitruvius are still valid and probably not unfamiliar to designers of modern libraries who are looking for innovative and timeless solutions capable of creating three-dimensio-

nal spaces full of nooks and crannies, where the reader will find a moment to rest and the opportunity to establish interpersonal relations. In such a case, an interesting design will be important for the final evaluation of a given facility (Zych, 2009, pp. 326-327; Kuśnierski, 1996, p. 145). The architecture of today's libraries reflects the current trends and expectations of society towards modern and functional buildings, the design of which, as Vitruvius has already pointed out, „[...] should take into account: durability, purposefulness and beauty. The durability of the building [...] will be achieved when the selection is made carefully, without being stingy, among the many building materials. Purposefulness will be provided to the building by a flawless layout of the space, not limiting its use [...] Beauty will be ensured if the appearance of the building is nice and refined, and the dimensions of individual parts are based on the proper principles of symmetry „(Witruwiusz, 2004, p. 16- 17). Buildings put into use in recent decades meet these recommendations. Bringing together thousands of collections, they are also multifunctional centers that activate local communities. Well-designed, perfect and harmonious facilities are the result of cooperation between architects, investors and users. The results of these many hours of consultations are architectural gems of various forms. Looking at them, we probably ask ourselves what direction the architecture of libraries will take in the coming years, to what extent the buildings under construction will reflect civilizational changes, and how the digitization of intellectual property will affect their design, or whether the new centers will be even more multifunctional. These dilemmas reappear with each new project. The emergence of an interesting layout depends to some extent on whether the architect has “forgotten” what he has already seen and designed. Then there is a high probability that a unique design will appear on his drawing board. Only then will an ideal library be created, resulting from a change in the approach to its role and function in society. Whether it will be a traditional facility or a Mediatheque, Culturetheque, or Interactive Center, depends on the investor's vision. Architects, responding to the individual needs of the client, offer “tailor-made” solutions so that the new building, once completed, fulfills all the requirements as to the form. Currently, modern libraries offer spaces that allow the implementation of diverse functional programs in multimedia studios or various zones dedicated to specific readers. This is the case at the Public Library in Szywna, or at the County Public Library in Czarny Bór, which organize courses in dance and chess, theater performances, film screenings, and conferences. From the sociological perspective the library has an important role to play as a “third place”. By serving the local community as a platform that facilitates communication between people, it helps in building mutual relations, and through its unique and individual architecture it affects the quality of public space. Designing unique forms,

especially nowadays, is a challenge for architects (Bulikowska, 2019; Kruszewski, 2012; Konieczna, 2006, pp. 217-228; Mueller, 2012). As early as the 1960s, Michael Foucault wrote that we live “in a time of simultaneity, an epoch of juxtaposition, an epoch of the near and far, of the side-by-side, of the dispersed” (Foucault, 2006, p. 7). Currently, this phenomenon has become even more intense, and thus has influenced the design process and forced the inclusion of many new functionalities that were not taken into account in the 20th century as we make postulations about future libraries. We see a new approach to shaping their form, as in the library in Szywnwałd mentioned above. In this case, glass was used, making the building light, as well as wood and appropriately selected colors. The glass was used to make glazing on the ground floor, separated by wooden shutters (*Biblioteka w Szywnwałdzie ...*, 2015; Cymer, 2015), while color appeared on the upper floor and the gable roof, giving an interesting effect. The building has “a horizontal, three-layered composition: a dark graphite roof crowns the white plastered floor, which in turn rests on the light glass-and-wood ground floor. The contour of the ground floor is ‘unruly’, repeatedly broken – it goes beyond the floor plan, then it goes back radically, never following the geometry of the upper part. On the western façade, the height of the ground floor and the first floor is changed by sloping lines adjusting to the level of the drainage terrace [...]” (Głowacki, 2015a, p. 68). In search of a visionary form, architects sometimes refer to concepts already implemented, looking for inspiration. Scandinavian libraries are a model that is willingly referred to. The reference to local implementations can be seen, among others, in a project prepared for the Municipal Public Library in Czarny Bór, for which a glass pavilion covered with a wooden roof suspended on a reinforced concrete structure was designed. Glazing allows readers to admire the natural beauty of the Boracz Mountains and the Dzikowiec range. The three-meter-long broken overhang above the entrance, from the patio and street side, also refers to the mountain landscapes seen from behind the glass. The combination of glass and wood give an interesting visual effect. Thus, the urban space has been enriched with an interesting architectural form that fits perfectly into the surroundings and does not disturb the relationship with nature (Głowacki, 2015b, p. 64; *Gminna Biblioteka ...*, 2016). Nature is also an important element of the facility in Brzeg Dolny. The architecture of the building of the Municipal and Communal Public Library resembles the dam on the Odra River in the town of Wały. This is not the only reference to the Odra River environment. We can also find them in the ways the landscape surrounding the facility is arranged. Riverside meadows and a green roof terrace are among these. The greenery warms the concrete body of the building with a glazed façade hiding the main entrance (*Tama pięknieje ...*, 2019).

We also come across the dematerialization of glass – which reappears

in subsequent projects – in the Mediateka of the Interactive Educational and Social Center in Grodzisk Mazowiecki, where it harmoniously co-exists with the exterior surroundings: the Rokicianka River and the picturesque park named after count Skarbek. The nearby greenery reflected in the glass façade encourages one to rest after a walk and connect with a book. In this case, the right location and an interesting program made the new facility popular⁵. The form of the new building is the result of a compromise between the investor's requirements and the spatial development plan. A two-story cube was designed by the ENONE Architecture and Design studio, with a non-uniform façade, partly glazed, masking the division into floors, and partly clad with dark graphite aluminum panels, which enliven the narrow, rhythmically arranged window gaps with horizontal brise soleils. The logo of the institution was inscribed in the geometric motif. There are plans for creating a place to rest in the arcades on the side of the river (*W Grodzisku Mazowieckim ...*, 2015). Supporting "pillars are extended in the form of irregularly scattered lesenes, rhythmizing the elevations and creating a lattice with the beams which they carry. It is a kind of tribute to tradition, broken, however, by asymmetry" (Majewski, 2019, p. 61). The necessary ventilation and air conditioning installations are located on the roof. In the case of the Mediateka, glass is combined with aluminum panels, but architects use different solutions, reaching for concrete, brick, or wood. In the Józef Lompy Municipal and District Public Library in Lubliniec, they relinquished concrete in favor of brick, which, in combination with glass, gave the building the desired lightness. Lubiteka is unique because it is full of references to the history of the area, which used to be part of the property of a knight's castle centuries ago. The aforementioned brick is a reference to the old buildings. The perception and definition of this place, where the past is mixed with the present, is probably influenced by the emotions of its users, which are intensified by the adopted architectural solutions, such as a reference to Silesian functionalism from the 1920s and 1930s manifested by window cuts in the plane of the brick wall. The building was built on an L-shaped plan, with a large terrace accessible to readers from which one can see the park and the river, and through glazing one can also see its interior (Majewski, 2019c, p. 62; *Library in ...*, 2016; *New library - not only...*).

The architectural form of modern libraries is influenced not only by the past of a given place, but also by the present in the form of a spatial development plan and the need to refer to the existing buildings, as in the case of the Public Library in Wesoła, which was built near a housing estate and school. This is probably why it was decided to adopt a minimalist form

⁵ The library won an award in the National Open Competition "Modernization of the year and construction of the 21st century" Edition XXIII 2018 in the category "public utility buildings" (1st place).

for the building, with glass used in a traditional manner. The glass gable wall adds spaciousness to the interior, which is further enhanced by the barrel grooves on the ceiling (Majewski, 2019a, p. 54). On the other hand, the County Library in Rokietnica is part of a commercial and service facility whose multifunctional space can be perceived in terms of "heterotopia" (Foucault, 2006) or "non-place" (Augé, 2012). However, thanks to the library, which enables establishing interpersonal relations, the way it is perceived changes from being anonymous to being a place with a specific identity that facilitates interactions. This two-story building, with a modernist form, is designed so that its users do not experience mixed feelings resulting from the combination of culture and commerce. The communication between the library and the County Cultural Center is facilitated by a glass connector. The functionality of the area in front of the building was also managed by placing elements of small architecture there: concrete benches, bicycle stands, litter bins. An interesting solution was to locate a terrace and a garden on the top floor, which in the summer season serves as a reading room. External spiral stairs lead to it, which, together with fan-shaped technical stairs, enrich the visual appearance of the building. The project uses a modular pillar and slab reinforced concrete structure, which facilitated internal division and provided the possibility of countless interpretations of the space. Glass was used in a traditional manner, thanks to which the interiors are properly lit, as well as gray and white AARHUS clinker brick with an interesting surface structure, rough and uneven, as well as concrete, from which the stairs leading to the library were created. By combining these materials, an interesting result was achieved, and the building gained an intriguing form and functional layout (Marciniak, 2018, p. 64; Banaszak, 2018; Wesołek, 2018). Such features were also carried out in Rembertów, where the librarians employed in the Public Library joined the process of designing the project. The realization of public buildings as specific as libraries requires concerned parties to think about architecture in terms of a process, from design to use. It is dictated by the fact that public libraries and local communities are elements of the same story relating to the relationship between contemporary architecture and its users. As a result of this cooperation, the architects designed a building with a clear functional layout and a delightful exterior, which made the city look beautiful. The first thing that draws one's attention is the unusual façade, the corner part of which is made of a perforated and illuminated steel sheet in a shade of pink, while the rest is made of clinker brick in a sienna color. Brick, one of the oldest building materials, combined with sheet metal gives an original and lasting effect. The surprising façade is not the only element of this building that renders both its exterior and interior intriguing. The architects abandoned traditional windows in favor of openings in the ceiling to protect the book collection from daylight,

which penetrates the interior through the glazing at the front and the glass roof over the single-space hall leading to the other rooms. Only in the part dedicated to children and in the administrative section are there windows (Malkowski, 2011, p. 50).

Due to their remarkable architecture, local libraries are showpieces for their cities. In each of these cases, the form strictly complements the function. In order for the analysis of contemporary library architecture to be comprehensive, attention should also be paid to their interiors, where programs and extra-curricular tasks are implemented. In the small library in Szywna, the library zones, with bright shelves and colorful seats, are located on the ground floor and in the attic, connected by fan-shaped stairs and separated from the multi-functional part by a hall. A characteristic element of the design is a triangular cut in the ceiling, which gives the impression of the two surfaces interpenetrating. The rooms, in pastel colors, are illuminated by lamps with an industrial design (Głowacki, 2015a, p. 68). On the other hand, in Czarny Bór the architects presented a completely different concept for the arrangement of the library interior. The unusual solution allowed for an increase in its functionality. Inside the rooms there are cylindrical forms, one of which is a café (accessed from the hall side) and the librarian's station (from the reading room side), and the other is a multimedia room and reading room, connected by fan-shaped stairs. The decision was made to leave the walls, made of sandlime brick "in monochromatic tones, locally broken with intense yellow", unplastered (*Gminna Biblioteka ...*, 2016). Colorful furniture provides an interesting look in these mostly white and graphite interiors. The post-industrial character is complemented by a reinforced concrete structure and an exposed roof structure made of glue laminated wood and sheet metal. Today's libraries, realizing extended social and educational tasks, require architects to develop a clear spatial disposition. The facility in the Mediateka in Grodzisk Mazowiecki has been divided into two functional zones that delight with their design. Various cultural events take place on the ground floor, while the second floor is completely taken over by the library. An interesting solution, rather rare in public spaces, was the abandonment of the traditional cloakroom in favor of built-in wardrobes. Inside, raw, gray architectural concrete walls are enlivened by the yellow concrete balustrades of the stairs leading to the upper floors. Numerous glazings, also in the center of the building, allow the light to create an atmosphere in the rooms, even those located in the back. Thanks to these, the two worlds, external and internal, interpenetrate, revealing the heart of the library and encouraging a visit. In addition, some rooms are illuminated by natural skylights using a system of mirrors. In this case, glass and concrete complement each other perfectly. The lightness of the glass combined with a strong accent provided by the concrete structure determines

the character of the building (Majewski, 2019b, p. 60). Another project in which glass was used in the arrangement process is the library in Wesoła. Thanks to the glazing, the rooms are better lit. After dark, daylight is replaced by lamps mounted on shelves, the glow of which is diffused by the flattened arches of the ceiling. Inside, the readers' attention is caught by a neon sign with the word *Biblioteka* (Library), reminiscent of the 1960s. The clear structure makes it easier to move around the facility (Majewski, 2019a, p. 54). This is also the distinguishing feature of the facility devoted to the inhabitants of Lubliniec. Its wooden interiors are well lit thanks to the use of glass. Wooden blinds and openwork brick walls covering the façade, designed at the conceptual stage, protect the readers from harsh daylight. Bright spaces invite one to visit multi-functional rooms and use books arranged on two floors, connected by an open staircase. On the walls, between the ground floor and the first floor, the names of people related to the area were placed, thereby encouraging visitors to delve into the history of the region (Majewski, 2019c, p. 62). Functionality, individual style, and modern design are the features that distinguish the library in Rembertów, reached by the readers through an intriguing interior. To increase the utility of this small facility, it was decided to use glass partitions and a sliding wall separating the auditorium. On the upper floors, a suspended footbridge facilitates moving around the building. Gray shelves, armchairs, and hassocks in intense colors give an amazing effect to the interior, along with a motif repeated from the facade incorporated into the wooden library counters. Perforated sheet metal in a shade of pink, the same as on the outside, stylistically binds the interior and the external form (Malkowski, 2011, p. 50). A pleasant surprise is also derived from the interiors of Lublin's *Biblioteka na Poziomie* (Library on a Level), which took second place in the Polish Interior 2018 plebiscite in the "Public Interior" category. The architects managed to combine functionality with an interesting design. The first thing that draws attention is the high sloping ceiling. The exposed roof truss adds a dynamic, which is additionally enhanced by the open spaces. The designers decided that the single-story interior would take the form of an open space, with no permanent internal divisions. In order to obtain a larger usable area, two mezzanines, a lower and a higher one, were placed directly into the structure of the roof truss. The library took its name from them. However, these are not the only elements that affect how we perceive the new facility. Most of all, one is attracted by bright, sterile interiors, sometimes broken with the color of books, or by the furnishings in the relaxation area: a green carpet and purple seats. In addition, the glass "windows" in the lower mezzanine floor, through which one can view the room with audiobooks, arouse curiosity. A wheel for audiobooks, seats within the bookshelves, shelves on the stairs, or, as the designers like to say, stairs on the shelves leading to

the mezzanine are some of the more interesting ideas for arranging a small space (*Biblioteka na Poziomie* in Lublin, 2018; *Biblioteka na Poziomie...*, 2019). The solutions adopted will likely allow the Lublin library to adapt easily to the changes that will be brought about in the coming years. As in Lublin, the architects in Oświęcim decided to leave the interiors open, which evokes associations with a shopping mall at first. Two entrances to the facility resemble nothing so much as a shopping arcade. Natural light seeping in through the skylight in the roof and internal glazing optically enlarge the space. They encourage people to visit and tempt young readers with an unusual small reading room adorned with a Fiat 126p. (*Biblioteki w Polsce ...*, 2017; *Miejska Biblioteka Publiczna Galeria ...*, 2012). An interesting design solution was also hit upon in Brzeg Dolny. The architects' wide and functional stairs leading to the mezzanine can be used as an amphitheater, providing additional space for meetings. Bright, open spaces have been divided with furniture into several zones, including a relaxation zone, a children's corner, and a multifunctional room. Attention was also paid to the area in front of the library, where, among other things, there is an educational route showing the course of the Oder river and the fauna and flora of the area. In addition, a green terrace was developed and benches with an interesting design in shades of green and blue were placed with an additional functionality that allows you to charge your phone (*Tama pięknieje...* 2019; *Nowoczesne ławki...*, 2020). The institutions presented here delight with their style and are a showcase for the towns. Recognized by the local communities to which they are dedicated, they fulfill their role in the cultural sector and remain functional as a third place. The culture-forming functions implemented within their interestingly arranged interiors are aimed at the readers, as are the commercial functions designed for their convenience.

In the minds of users and of tourists, it is not only small centers but also large ones, visited in person or virtually, that are remembered. Are any of these projects close to the ideal library model described by Umberto Eco and Jorge Luis Borges? Which of them is more delightful in its interior and which in its external form? Which of the large investments made in the 21st century - in Gdańsk, Gdynia, Wrocław, Kraków, Poznań or Warszawa - deserves to be called the most beautiful library? The Main Library of the University of Gdańsk can be proud of its remarkable shape, which resembles a book on its side, with the three capsules mounted on its façade that are in fact individual work cabins, making a reference to ship architecture. As in many contemporary projects, the architects used glass in the design of the entrance area. Glazing, depending on the weather and time of day, allows a kind of play with light, and after dusk it reveals illuminated interiors, encouraging people to visit (Załoski, 2007, p. 68; *Polskie biblioteki ...*). Glass was also used in the design process of the Lech Kaczyński

Main Library of the Naval Academy in Gdynia, where a partially glazed façade was made from the side of the main reading room and the entrance. Thanks to this, the building, built on an L-shaped plan, is better lit, and from several corridors you can admire the landscape of Oksywia (*Morska Biblioteka ...*, 2014). The form of the new library was also influenced by the immediate vicinity, i.e. the historic buildings of the Academy, designed in 1924 by Marian Lalewicz. In order to ensure a uniform style, it was decided that the new design would use concrete, which is a raw and cold material, and sandstone, from which sharp vertical stone blades were made, constituting “the negative of the gaps cut in the façade of the conference part” (Arczyńska, 2014, p. 70). The entire project is completed on the south side by two small half patios. The University Library in Zielona Góra is also architecture in its highest form, combining harmony and precision. As with many other projects, the building, a result of sustainable design, uses glass for the wall covering and main entrance. The remaining glass fronts are connected with graphite panels made of aluminum sheets. This six-story trapezoidal building is designed to interact with its surroundings. The large windows of the library make the nearby Zacisze Park appear to blend in with it. Due to the glass roof over the five-story atrium, the building, despite its large volume, seems to be lighter than it really is. The creativity of architects and the trust placed in them by investors resulted in the creation of a structure of intriguing form which will positively affect the environment in the coming years (Głowacki, 2013, p. 70; *Biblioteka Uniwersytecka w Zielonej Górze*, 2012; *Biblioteka Uniwersytecka w Zielonej Górze - NOW Biuro ...; Nowa biblioteka...*, 2012). The project for the Environmental Library of Exact and Technical Sciences for the Purposes of the Innovative Economy, of the Wrocław University of Technology, developed by the Heine, Wischer and Partner Architecture Studio, also required conceptual thinking. The institution, opened in 2011 and colloquially referred to as the Bibliotech, corresponds perfectly to the neighboring buildings from the 1950s and fits into the context of this section of the city’s foundations. Its façade, designed with fiber-centered panels, with a layout referring to the surrounding architecture, is enlivened by atypical windows of various sizes (Głowacki, 2014, p. 56). This kind of blending with the surrounding historical context is also achieved by the Scientific Information Center and the Academic Library in Katowice, which, thanks to constructive solutions adopted by architects from the HS99 studio, fits in well with the neighboring buildings: the modernist building of the University of Silesia, high-rise buildings, family houses, and further away mine shafts. Winner of many awards,⁶ it is remarkable thanks to the interestingly de-

⁶ The building of the library has received many awards, including: Grand Prix in the competition for the Polityka Architectural Award for 2011; the title of the Building of the Year 2012 in the Building of

signed façade, which in its red color, changing depending on the time of day, refers to the color of the nearby family houses. Hidden in the structure there are 4,004 windows, through which diffused light penetrates into the interior, giving the entire building its character. The distance from which we look at the library is crucial due to the solutions found for the façade and window design. We can see a monolith from a distance, and close up the body, the creators of which, without distinguishing the façade and unifying the elevations, referred back to the Bauhaus concept of the new space. "Monolithic, reinforced concrete coffer-type ceilings were based on prefabricated columns, the outer walls of the basements were poured wet, and the walls of the upper floors were made of prefabricated slabs with openings for skylights" (*Biblioteka w Katowicach*, 2012, pp. 46, 48). The decision to place the building on a slab based on reinforced concrete piles will allow for the future gathering of a huge book collection (ultimately 2 million volumes). Due to the adopted technical solutions, this space, refined in its ordinariness, will serve its users for years.

The task of linking a newly designed building with existing buildings was also faced by architects preparing the project for the Novum Philological Library in Poznań, which is adjacent to the modernist headquarters of the university (designed by Lech Sternal in 1968) and the Chamber of Crafts and Trades (designed by Piotr Wilczyński and Leon Madejski, 1926-1929). Despite the concerns surrounding the design process, the building, consisting of cuboid blocks, corresponds well with the surroundings. Its external glazed façades, partially faced with sandstone, are enlivened by steel shutters, reducing the intensity of daylight. While working, readers have the opportunity to look out on the nearby Marcinkowski Park. The harmony emanating from the entire building was interestingly disturbed by the decision to have the third floor overhang on the Kościuszko Street side. The new library blends into the historic fabric of the city thanks to one more detail, which is the false entrance and portal on the west side. The structure, illuminated after dark, looks exceptional. The value of the entire project is determined not only by the aesthetic values, but most of all by the fact that the architects, when developing the concept, took into account the possibility of extending the building (Piątek, 2005, pp. 68-69). In recent years Poznań has gained one more building as an expression of modern library architecture. The Library of the Faculty of Polish and Classical Philology of the Adam Mickiewicz University was integrated between the two rear wings of the Collegium Maius. Its visual appearance

the Year 2012 poll; The main prize and the Grand Prix distinction in the 17th edition of the competition for the Architecture of the Year of the Silesian Voivodship organized by the Katowice branch of the Association of Polish Architects; 2nd degree award in the science and culture buildings category in the competition organized by PZITB – Construction of the Year 2011 (<https://ciniba.edu.pl/o-ciniba-przeglad/57-narzenia-i-wyroznienia>).

refers to the neighboring building, built in the style of “Wilhelman Baroque”, which is referenced, for example, by a stone pedestal, equal to the height of the cordon cornice in the neighboring building, and by the elevation, especially in the lower story, where the rhythm is irregular due to the different width of the rustication. The plinth, over two stories high, is made of sandstone, which is pierced by a row of windows, and its slightly lower top is completely glazed, thus giving it a lightness. These are only visual impressions, because the core of the structure is made of reinforced concrete pillars, which are additionally an element of the minimalist interior (Majewski, 2009, pp. 72, 74).

The architects designing the Modern Education Center of the Białystok University of Technology also referred to the past. Its form is inspired by the Baroque Branicki Palace. What attracts the eyes of passers-by is not so much the body of the building, built on a horseshoe plan, as its original façade, which is decorated with panels made of glass fiber reinforced concrete incorporating cutout folk ornamentation. Adolf Loos would likely not have found such a solution particularly attractive, because he believed that by rejecting decorative motifs, art moves to a higher level (Loos, 2013, pp. 133-144), but in this particular case it is difficult to agree with him, because the building has gained an interesting setting. Its external structure is also enlivened by blinds and printed glass panels, reducing the intensity of daylight. The library includes not only the building itself, but also the space around it. For the convenience of users, small architecture was designed, and at the end of the main axis of the campus is a garden that serves readers and residents. The implemented project was appreciated by both its users and the industry, receiving awards in, among others, the 7th edition of the *Życie w Architekturze* (Life in Architecture) competition (Mycielski, 2013, pp. 42, 46, 48; *Białystok ...*, 2013; *Centrum Nowoczesnego ...*, 2014; Cymer, 2015; *Nowy budynek ...*, 2012). Small architecture is an element that makes public space more attractive. An interesting example of this is a modern bench located at the entrance to the new library of the University of Wrocław. Its openwork structure is a counterbalance to the monumental building, which was built on the boulevards along the Oder. The building, commissioned in 2011, took over the function of the old building at Szajnochy Street, which has been visited by thousands of students over the years and has hosted many film crews. The latest technological achievements have replaced the old 19th-century shelves and ceilings made of cast-iron openwork spans. The raw building impresses one with its form. The architects designed two compact blocks with different functionalities, separated by a passage leading from the main entrance to the building. During the implementation, concrete was used, which was combined with the glazing in the front part. The intention of the authors of the project was to create a space that would allow for flexible shaping of

the interior, depending on the functional needs and the growing book collection (Wysocki, 2018; *Biblioteka Uniwersytecka we ...*; 2009; *Jest mała i piękna ...*, 2014; Lose, 2000).

Projects being currently implemented more and more often take into account environmental protection issues in addition to land development conditions. Architects do not limit themselves only to developing the greenery around the building, but they also make sure that it complies with ecological standards. A good example of this is the Library of the Pontifical University of John Paul II in Kraków. The glazing used provides natural sunlight and reduces lighting costs. In the summer season, low-emission glass louvers installed in the skylights on the roof reduce heat (Czapnik, 2011, p. 50). The most famous and award-winning project to take into account the requirements of ecology, however, is the University of Warsaw Library. This building with a soul was designed by the team of Marek Budzyński and Zbigniew Badowski, and the garden layout was created according to a concept by Irena Bajerska. The beginnings of the green building movement date back to the 1960s. Currently, architects who create our surroundings take into account its ideas in their designs. However, in many projects they are only small plantings, enriching the visual layer. The case of the University of Warsaw Library is unique here, because thanks to the roof garden, greenery is an integral and inseparable part, making it blend in easily with the Vistula landscape. In addition, the diverse vegetation captures air pollutants, reduces street noise, and protects the waterproof layer of the roof by retaining and evaporating water. As a result it reduces the load on the air conditioning system by cooling the building down. Rainwater flowing into the storm sewer system is naturally filtered. The openly accessible garden provides an opportunity for calm and relaxation in the fresh air, away from the hustle and bustle of the city, for anyone who wants to visit it. The combination of public space with a garden layout was possible thanks to the architectural solutions adopted. The building consists of a front and a main part, connected by a passage with a glass roof, which allows for the passage of daylight. The façade is covered with green panels with quotations from books, and, as befits a library, an open book with the inscription *Hinc omnia* invites one to the interior. The new building was designed as a multi-purpose facility. Four above-ground stories hide the treasures of the library, and part of the ground floor and the underground are used for commercial and sports purposes (with a multi-purpose sports hall). A cloakroom, exhibition halls, and service points are located on the ground floor. In the spaces inaccessible to the reader there is a depository, the Library's vault, and the Collection Conservation Workshop. The first floor is primarily free access, where workplaces are built into the lines of shelves, making it easier to use the collections. This level also houses formal and subject studies work-

shops, the office of the librarian on duty, general and catalog information, archival card catalogs, laboratories, the seminar room of the Information Science and Didactics Department, and the Lending Room. On the second floor, accessed by wide stairs, there is a main reading room with a reference collection, a librarian's stand, and a magazine reading room with specially designed shelves and free access. Special collections and the 19th-century collection have been gathered together on the third level. Documents stored there are made available in separate rooms, secured with an additional control system. The space that the library currently has at its disposal allows for the organization of cultural and educational events, such as the Night of Museums, University of Warsaw Library for owls, exhibitions, concerts, and conferences. It also favors integration and is adapted to the needs of various user groups. It offers tools to facilitate independent use of its resources. In front of the building there is a historic cast-iron library bookcase from the 19th century, coming from the former library building. With this symbolic gesture, the continuity of its history was ensured. Currently, the former University Library, designed by Stefan Szyller and Antoni Jasieńczyk-Jabłoński, built in the academic Renaissance and Classicist styles, serves educational purposes (Majewski, 2005, pp. 50-51; Warnke, 2016; Budzyński & Loegler, 1995; Hollender, Kobierska-Maciuszko, 1996; Kobierska-Maciuszko, 2001).

In contemporary projects, the traditional way of dividing the interior is being deconstructed more and more often, which manifests itself in the abandonment of the former functional layout in favor of multifunctional, open spaces with an interesting design that can be adapted depending on the educational programs being implemented. Such a result was achieved in the facilities described above, where the users have at their disposal spaces that can be freely arranged into reading rooms, seminar rooms, exhibition and conference rooms, computer rooms, information rooms, individual work stations, and social rooms. The designed interiors are a display of balance and creativity in their approach to a space that plays a culture-creating role. Most libraries have a large part of the book collection open to the public. The ability to freely use the collections greatly facilitates the work of users, but for architects it is an additional challenge, as it requires the use of different solutions than those used in traditionally planned spaces, both in the construction phase and in the interior arrangement. The departure from the traditional understanding of space is particularly visible in the example of the University of Warsaw Library, which, apart from a large free-access zone, has a roof garden much loved by filmmakers and residents.

Apart from functionality, currently designed buildings are also characterized by clean form and careful selection of finishing materials. In the austere interiors of the University of Warsaw Library, which are made

inviting by sculptures by Adam Myjak depicting philosophers from the Lviv-Warsaw school, simplicity allows for concentration and tranquility (Omilianowska, Uchowicz, 2017, p. 29). Austerity of form and even an industrial character are also features of the Library of the University of Gdańsk. In this case, it is offset by the color and light openwork balustrades of massive stairs leading to the individual floors. Its spaces also contain references to maritime themes: The aforementioned balustrades and steel decks are reminiscent of a ship's engine room. The interior of each library has elements that catch the eye right after one crosses its threshold. These can be fan-shaped stairs as in the Polish Naval Academy, or instead a hall serving as a public space, with a three-story atrium, as in the Library of Wrocław University of Science and Technology. The solution adopted in Wrocław allowed for the design of open and spacious interiors, illuminated by daylight flowing from the skylight located above the cascading stairs. Thanks to designers who, in experimenting with form and material, focused on the tactile and sensual aspect of the project, a space was created that emanates calm and elegance. Walls and ceilings of light colors in rooms separated by glazing contrast with the gray of the floors. The whole is complemented by wooden furniture. A space in front of the building containing small architecture, to which an anthracite-colored basalt floor leads, completes the project. A similar aesthetic concept was implemented in the Library of the University of Zielona Góra, where materials were carefully selected to give the rooms an individual character. The arrangement uses wood, with which the staircase and the entrance area are designed and where various meetings take place, and a grassy square with elements of small architecture made of white concrete available to users in front of the building. Another library full of positive impressions is the Center of Modern Education in Białystok, where, with future guests in mind, different colors were used in individual parts of the building to make it easier to navigate through its spaces. Thus the new library is green and the public part is red. Inside, glass was used for the reading room boxes, hanging on poles above the hall, and for the elevator shafts bringing the volumes from the depositories. Interior colors are one of the elements that affect how we perceive a given space. In the Collegium Novum in Poznań, colors mark individual zones on three floors intended for the book collection. As in other institutions, concrete and glass were used, the qualities of which breathe simplicity, and the combination of which with carpets, wooden elements, and the colors of the walls create interesting contrasts. By referring to the basics of design thinking, it was possible to design interiors where every element of the composition seems to be essential. It is no different at the Scientific Information Center and the Academic Library in Katowice. Subtle design and materials, which are the hallmarks of many modern implementations, such as the use of glass and wood, have

determined the way the facility is perceived by users. Glass was used to make vertical planes inside, giving not only the impression of transparency, but also providing an interesting visual effect due to its installation at a specific angle. Wood on horizontal planes warmed the rooms, and the installations hidden under a suspended ceiling made of expanded metal does not disturb their harmony (*Biblioteka w Katowicach ...*, 2012, p. 52, 56). These materials were also used in the arrangement of the Library of the Pontifical University of John Paul II in Kraków. The steel stairs leading to the reading room were finished with wood, and glass cubes conceal the air conditioning installations (Czapnik, 2011, p. 51; Czapnik, 2012). On the other hand, the interior of the Wrocław University Library focuses on stylistic austerity provided by concrete. At the same time, its natural gray gives these spaces a calm character and elegance (Wysocki, 2018).

The examples of local libraries and their much larger sister projects presented here were intended to show common features, both in terms of the material used and the way of planning or arranging the space. In all these projects, the perception of the library occurs through the active participation of almost all the senses, corresponding with each other and interpenetrating with one another. In the case of the above-mentioned establishments, a minimalist design proved to be successful, and thanks to modern design concepts, they will serve users for a long time. Their rooms have been assigned a certain functionality. Even the former boiler room of the philological library in Poznań gained a functionality, becoming a place for cultural meetings (Majewski, 2009, p. 74). The conceptualizations described indicate the direction of changes in the architecture of modern libraries and of social expectations in this regard. Dazzling projects are the result of the cooperation of many people - architects, investors and, more and more frequently, librarians. However, today it is not easy to propose an original and functional form. Architects, as representatives of creative industries, face a great challenge. Projects realized by them in the first decades of the 21st century set a good direction for the design of modern library spaces. What, then, will be on the drawing boards of the future? In what directions will user expectations go, and what will be the intelligent library of the future? How many unconventional spaces will be designed? The most important question for the future of libraries, however, may be whether users will want to listen to the narratives created by these modern and intelligent institutions.

INTELLIGENT LIBRARIES OF THE FUTURE – PROJECTS IN THE COMPETITION PHASE

When considering the architecture of modern libraries, it is worth devoting a few words to competition projects which provide knowledge about current trends, the expectations of clients and, above all, architects' ideas. Currently, intelligent libraries are multifunctional centers that not only collect, develop, and make available book collections. The implementation of tasks for education and integration, especially for local communities, by these institutions requires that they have adequate space. The competition proposals, although they may evoke extreme feelings in us due to the adopted architectural solutions, show the direction of changes in the approach to shaping the library space. The example that I will refer to will be the concepts of development and spatial development for the future Municipal Public Library in Szczecin on Prawobrzeże that were submitted to the competition for that project in 2018 (*Biblioteka Miejska w Szczecinie*, 2019, pp. 48-50; BIP - *Miejska Biblioteka ...*., 2018). Going beyond an analysis of the form of the projects by Polish and foreign architects included here, one notes that the main emphasis was placed on the multi-functionality of the facility, which is to serve not only the implementation of tasks, but also to provide intellectual relaxation and awaken the senses. The library in Szczecin is to be built in a large housing estate, where there is no larger cultural institution, and is to be a showcase for the city. The first prize was awarded to architects from the studio APP Architekt Karol Barcz, Kamila Buczkowska KABU STUDIO, who developed a model of the future library, its architectural DNA. Therefore, it is worth consulting the detailed description of the author, because it shows the elements that determined the project's success: "The starting point was to organize the relations between existing objects and to look for added value that would define this space in a new way. Our concept assumed the construction of an object directed simultaneously to all elements of the surrounding buildings, which would allow for free communication between them. The basic concept was to divide the building into three dominant blocks, each of which has a different purpose. The main hall of the library, located in the largest of them, also serves the basic function of the facility, the next block is the meeting room with the stage and the audience, and the third part houses administration and other tasks. These blocks were connected with a ground floor connector serving as the hall. The shape of individual parts of the building and the spaces between them is a direct consequence of the analysis of the directions of the surrounding objects. The 'break-down' of the building allowed for the creation of a system composed not only of cubes, but also of interiors between them. In this way, the idea of an object consisting of three blocks and three squares was born. This procedure made it possible to maintain a more friendly scale and inti-

mate character, and the use of roofs with diagonal ridge axes was intended to give greater plasticity and dynamics to the designed form" (*Biblioteka Miejska w Szczecinie*, 2019, p. 52). In addition to the awarded project, two more studios, which were awarded the second (ARPA Architektoniczna Pracownia Autorska Jerzy Gurawski, SKI Studio Błażej Szurkowski) and third prize (Pracownia Architektury Witold Sienkiel), described the visual concept of the designed institution in a most convincing way. The second awarded work assumed that the new facility would fit into both the social and cultural context of the place. According to the architects, the shape of the future library should be characterized by „homogeneous, smooth surfaces of the façades, ending with characteristic, modularly arranged roof slopes, in their form referring to the surrounding residential and sacred buildings" (*Biblioteka Miejska w Szczecinie*, 2019, p. 53). They believed that the „wide openings of aluminum and glass façades visually and functionally connect the interior space with the surroundings, reviving and illuminating the severe image of the building in the night scenery" (*Biblioteka Miejska w Szczecinie*, 2019, p. 53). The space designed by them is intended to serve the implementation of a wide educational and cultural program. For this reason, it was decided to introduce sliding partition walls and a movable auditorium. Glazing, which not only seduces with its delicacy, but also allows the greenery to penetrate to the inside, and art to the outside, also facilitates contact with the reader, inviting him straight in from the street, from his everyday duties. The role of the „third place" was also envisaged in the third awarded project, where the local community could benefit from its wide cultural offer. It was planned that the body of the new building would be energy-saving and would take the shape of a cuboid with a sloping roof, with interiors that could be quickly rearranged. The jury also gave an award to the SAS studio – Studio Architektoniczne Siennicki, Beyond Visual, and the studio Tomasz Berezowski, Marta Dyrda, Radosław Fikus. The first project conceptualized the separation of an open, multi-functional zone (café, meeting room, games room) and a quiet zone (library). In the accompanying author's description we read that: „a closed top constructed of glue-laminated wood panels, enabling the covering of large spaces of an expressive character, and an open bottom in a reinforced concrete structure, with a ceiling on pillars, providing a stable base for expressive rooflines, gives full freedom in shaping the ground floor space with mobile glazing" (*Biblioteka Miejska w Szczecinie*, 2019, p. 55). The second distinguished project, on the other hand, envisaged the construction of a one-story pavilion, covered with a steep roof, the center of which would serve cultural initiatives. The library, illuminated and open to the surrounding greenery, was planned around its perimeter. The solution adopted here was to facilitate the arrangement and use of the new facility (*Biblioteka Miejska w Szczecinie*, 2019, p. 56).

Nowadays, cities more and more often announce competitions for public use buildings, wanting to create interesting architectural forms in their area that will have an impact on the area. The projects prepared for the library in Szczecin were unique, and in this case their multifunctionality was an added value. It could not have been built without the knowledge and experience of architects. It is worth referring at this point to Vitruvius, who wrote: "The assessment of each building should be threefold and include: careful workmanship, the grandeur of the building and its layout [...] if it is impressive due to its perfect proportions and symmetries, then due praise will be awarded to the architect. The result will be good if the architect takes into account the advice of both workers and unlearned people. For every man, not only an architect, can judge a good thing, but there is such a difference between them that an ordinary person cannot imagine a thing before finishing it, while an architect, if he imagines a building, has a clear picture of it before starting, both in terms of the general impression as well as purposefulness and proper appearance" (Witruwiusz, 2004, p. 18). The winning design is captivating with its form, and in the future it will have a positive impact on shaping the spatial order of the city. In line with Vitruvius's recommendations, it takes into account the expectations of investors and future users, thanks to which it will be positively received by the local community for many years to come. Contests for the libraries of the future are a good idea because they help to find the best solutions, albeit sometimes too futuristic, for their new form in the rapidly changing modern world.

SUMMARY

When analyzing subsequent projects, regardless of whether it is an adaptation, modernization, or a completely new proposal, we wonder why a given project was chosen. What captivated the architect so that made him stop looking for another form? Looking at the building, we are aware that he has made a selection from an infinite number of other possibilities and the choice made reflects his viewpoint, but also the investor's expectations. Only wandering around these new spaces, observing them, gives us an idea of what determined the decision to implement a given conceptualization, which in the future will invite the user into the world of books, fantasy, and culture, and will be a testimony to the world that surrounded people in a given era. Many of us would probably like to visit an architectural studio to see rejected projects, because they too are a source of knowledge about how contemporary libraries are perceived and what the future predicts for them. The more so because library architecture is an element that changes cities in several ways. Not only does it attract tourists, as in the case of award-winning projects, but it also introduces

a creative and aesthetic ferment. Often inconspicuous from the outside, architectural objects tempt one with functionally planned interiors, with an original design that is a record of the inner life of each building. The monopoly on the perception of library buildings as centers with uninteresting and standard solutions is also broken. Thirdly, thanks to the new enclosures, these centers can support local communities and participate in their lives to a greater extent, becoming more and more often a “third place” offering intellectual entertainment in interesting spaces. In this context, the question posed by Jorge Luis Borges in the essay *The Library of Babel* is a perfectly valid one - What is a Library? Although perhaps it would be more appropriate to ask what is a modern library? Nowadays, thanks to complex functional programs, the library connects generations and invites everyone to travel to the land of books and culture. Due to their interesting visual appearance, wandering around these contemporary architectural conceptions is particularly attractive. In times of rapid changes, when new challenges appear on the horizon, libraries are a permanent element ever present in our space. Of course, they evolve along with civilizational changes and are now characterized by greater complexity than their predecessors from the end of the 20th century. Thus, the requirements to be met by architects who create their spaces are growing, and they should still remain functional even after several years past their commissioning. Most of the projects discussed here were created by design teams in which architects were the leaders. The names of female architects are most often mentioned among people supporting the development of a comprehensive project (collaborative authorship, interior or landscape architecture). In a few cases, they are the co-authors of architectural concepts (including in Białystok, Lubliniec, Opole, Stary Sącz, Szczecin, Szywnawałd), and only in Rembertów and Czarny Bór were they the lead architects. So in the future, will the participation of women in creating Polish architectural culture, in the case of modern libraries, be greater? Although the number of female students at architectural faculties is constantly growing, it does not translate into the projects which they implement, especially when we speak of large facilities built in public spaces. Over the years, the Pritzker Prize, the architectural Nobel Prize, has only gone to five women (Zaha Hadid, Kazuyo Sejima, Carme Pigem, Yvonne Farrell, Shelley McNamara), and unfortunately there are no Polish women in this group. The community of female architects is paying more and more attention to their position in the profession, and publications indicate the need for changes (Stratigakos, 2019; Kunz, 2016; Dąbrowska, 2019; *Zawód architektka*, 2020). However, regardless of who does the designing, the most important thing is that architecture “should be primarily functional, that it should use the latest materials [...], that its form corresponds to the structure, and the structure to the material properties, and finally, that it has its

own artistic expression" (Jakimowicz 1966, p. 5). Although these guidelines of the architect Viollet-le-Duc do not refer directly to libraries, they are universal and current enough to provide a hint for future creators that the designed objects, including those intended for cultural purposes, should be functional, beautiful and immortal.

APPENDIX

LIST OF LIBRARIES MENTIONED IN THE TEXT

Biblioteka Akademii Marynarki Wojennej im. Lecha Kaczyńskiego w Gdyni (The Polish Naval Academy Library) – project: Warsztat Architektury Pracownia Autorska, architekci Krzysztof Kozłowski, Maciej Jaśkowiec; construction: 2010-2012; bg.amw.gdynia.pl.

Biblioteka Filologiczna Novum w Poznaniu (The Novum Philological Library in Poznań) – project: architekt Tomasz Durniewicz; construction: 2003-2005; bfm.amu.edu.pl.

Biblioteka Główna Uniwersytetu Gdańskiego (The Library of the University of Gdańsk) – project: ArchiCo-projekt Sp. z o.o., architekci Konrad Tanasiewicz, Robert Muszyński; construction: 2002-2006; www.bg.ug.edu.pl.

Biblioteka Grafit we Wrocławiu (Filia nr 5 Miejskiej Biblioteki Publicznej) (Grafit Library in Wrocław, Branch No. 5 of the Municipal Public Library) – project by Grupa Synergia Anna Bać, Krzysztof Cebat, Piotr Michalski, Sandra Piasek; facility is located in Hala Grafit since 2015; www.biblioteka.wroc.pl.

Biblioteka Jagiellońska w Krakowie (The Jagiellonian Library in Kraków) – project: Atelier Loegler & Partnerzy, architects Romuald Loegler, Ewa Fitzke; construction: 1996-2001; www.bj.uj.edu.pl.

Biblioteka Manhattan w Gdańsku (Filia Wojewódzkiej i Miejskiej Biblioteki Publicznej im. Josepha Conrada Korzeniowskiego) (The Manhattan Library in Gdańsk, Branch of The Joseph Conrad Voivodship and City Public Library) – facility is located in Gdańsk Shopping Center; www.wbpg.org.pl.

Biblioteka Miejska TUVIM w Łodzi (The TUVIM Municipal Library in Łódź) – created in a revitalized apartment house; construction finished in 2020; facebook.com/pages/category/local-service/Biblioteka-TUVIM-100580881720249.

Biblioteka Multimedialna Biblio w Lublinie (Filia Miejskiej Biblioteki Publicznej) (Multimedia Library Biblio in Lublin, Branch of Municipal Public Library) – project by ReaDesign; construction: 2012; www.biblio.lublin.pl.

Biblioteka na dworcu Wrocław Główny (Filia nr 12 Miejskiej Biblioteki Publicznej) (Library in the Wrocław Main Rail Road Station, Branch No. 12 of the Municipal Public Library) – project: pracownia ReaDesign; construction: 2017; biblioteka.wroc.pl.

Biblioteka na Poziomie (Filia nr 40 MBP w Lublinie im. Henryka Łopacińskiego) (Library on a Level, Branch No. 40 of the Municipal Public Library in Lublin) project: Grzegorz Kłoda pracownia GK-Atelier; construction: 2018; facebook.com/bibliotekanapoziomie/.

Biblioteka Publiczna im. Jana Pawła II w Dzielnicy Rembertów m.st. Warszawy (John Paul II Public Library in Rembertów, city of Warsaw) – project: Architektki-Grupa Projektowa for the general designer ZUB Wilmer, architects Paweł Chwalibogowski, Anna Smogór-Chwalibogowska, Anna Sochacka; construction: 2008-2010; bpremebertów.waw.pl.

Biblioteka Publiczna im. Jarosława Iwaszkiewicza w Obornikach Śląskich (Jarosław Iwaszkiewicz Public Library in Oborniki Śląskie) – operating in a modernized station from 1958; construction: 2015; kultura-oborniki.pl/biblio/.

Biblioteka Publiczna m. st. Warszawy. Biblioteka Główna Województwa Mazowieckiego (Warsaw Public Library, Central Library of the Masovian Voivodship) – project: Bulanda Mucha Architekci, Andrzej Bulanda, Włodzimierz Mucha, Jacek Chyrosz, Michał Brzychcy; construction: 2013-2015; www.koszykowa.pl.

Biblioteka Publiczna MOKSIR w Chełmku (Public Library MOKSIR in Chełmek) – established in a modernized preschool; construction finished: 2002; moksie.chelmek.pl.

Biblioteka Publiczna w Szywnaldzie (Public Library in Szywnałd) – project: Kucia Tyczyński Pracownia Architektoniczna Architektki Mirosława Kucia – Tyczyńska, Maciej Tyczyński; construction 2012-2014; <http://szywnald.pl/institucje/biblioteka>.

Biblioteka Publiczna w Wesolej (Filia Biblioteki Dzielnicowej przy szkole Podstawowej nr 172) (Public Library in Wesoła, Branch of the Regional Library in Elementary School No. 172) – project: +48 Architektura, architects Karol Szpakowski, Kamil Miklaszewski, Marta Feder, Dymitry Ryabow; construction: 2017-2018; bibliotekawesola.pl.

Biblioteka Raczyńskich w Poznaniu (The Raczyński Library in Poznań) – project: JEMS Architekci, architects Olgierd Jagiełło, Maciej Miłobędzki, Marek Moskal, Marcin Sadowski, Jerzy Szczepanik-Dzikowski; construction: 2013; www.bracz.edu.pl.

Biblioteka Uniwersytecka w Warszawie (University of Warsaw Library) – project: architekci Marek Budzyński, Zbigniew Badowski; construction: 1995-1999; furnishing: 2000; www.buw.uw.edu.pl.

Biblioteka Uniwersytecka w Warszawie (zabytkowy gmach) (University of Warsaw Library, historic building) – project: PKZ Zamek, Jarosław

Grzegory, Przemysław Woźniakowski, Dorota Śliwińska, Krzysztof Rutkowski, Marcin Urbanek, Joanna Zajdel; construction 2004-2005.

Biblioteka Uniwersytecka w Zielonej Górze (University Library in Zielona Góra) – project: NOW Biuro Architektoniczne, architect Andrzej Owczarek; construction: 2012; www.bu.uz.zgora.pl.

Biblioteka Uniwersytecka we Wrocławiu (Wrocław University Library) – projekt: architects Jacek Rzycki, Jerzy Ruszkowski, Jacek Kopaszewski; construction: 2003-2012; www.bu.uni.wroc.pl.

Biblioteka Główna Uniwersytetu Papieskiego Jana Pawła II w Krakowie (Library of the Pontifical University of John Paul II in Kraków) – project: Ingarden & Ewy Architekci, architects Krzysztof Ingarden, Jacek Ewy; construction: 2001-2010; biblioteka.upjp2.edu.pl.

Biblioteka Wydziału Filologii Polskiej i Klasycznej Uniwersytetu im. Adama Mickiewicza w Poznaniu (Library of the Faculty of Polish and Classical Philology of the University of Adam Mickiewicz) – project: Consultor Sp z o.o./APA Jacek Bulat/neostudio. Architects Joanna Kapturczak, Michał Kapturczak, Paweł Świerkowski; construction: 2007-2009; wfpik.amu.edu.pl.

Centrum FAMA we Wrocławiu (The FAMA Library and Cultural Center in Wrocław) – project: ENONE Architektura i Design Rafał Sokołowski, architect Rafał Sokołowski; construction: 2015-2016; fama.wroc.pl.

Centrum Nowoczesnego Kształcenia Politechniki Białostockiej (The Modern Education Center of the Białystok University of Technology) – project: aa_studio/group-arch, architects Agnieszka Staszczyszyn, Adrian Staszczyszyn, Sebastian Bieganowski, construction: 2010-2012; www.cnk.pb.edu.pl.

Centrum Informacji Naukowej i Biblioteka Akademicka w Katowicach (Scientific Information Center and the Academic Library in Katowice) – project: HS99, architects Dariusz Herman, Wojciech Suwalski, Piotr Śmierzewski; construction: 2009-2011; www.ciniba.edu.pl.

Galeria Książki (w ramach Miejskiej Biblioteki Publicznej im. Łukasza Górnickiego w Oświęcimiu) (The Book Gallery, part of the Łukasz Górnicki Municipal Public Library in Oświęcim) – project: Suseł & Strama Architekci s.c., Marcin Suseł, Krzysztof Strama; construction: 2009-2011; mbp-oswiecim.pl.

Gminna Biblioteka Publiczna w Czarnym Borze (Municipal Public Library in Czarny Bór) – project: ISB Grupa Projektowa, architects Joanna Styryjska (lead architect), Tomasz Boniecki, Joanna Friedrich, Marcelina Marszałkiewicz, Hubert Stelmasiewicz; construction: 2014; ck.czarnybor.pl.

Gminna Biblioteka w Rokietnicy (Municipal Library in Rokietnica) – projekt: architect Dominik Banaszak (currently LAB 3 Architekci Sp. z o.o.o.); construction: 2017; bibliotekarokietnica.pl.

Interaktywne Centrum Edukacyjno-Społeczne Mediateka w Grodzisku Mazowieckim (Interactive Educational and Social Center in Grodzisk Mazowiecki) – project: ENONE Architektura, architect Rafał Sokołowski; construction: 2017-2018; biblioteka.grodzisk.pl; www.centrumkultury.eu.

Książnica Cieszyńska (Library in Cieszyn) – project: Urbi S.C., architect A. Krzysztof Barysz; construction: 1996-2002; kc-cieszyn.pl.

Lubiteka – Miejsko-Powiatowa Biblioteka Publiczna im. J.Lompy (Lubiteka – Józef Lompy Municipal and Regional Public Library in Lubliniec) – project: H2 architekci, architects Marek Happach, Marlena Happach; construction: 2019; www.biblioteka.lubliniec.pl.

Mediateka-Poczytelnia na Dworcu w Kielcach (Filia Miejskiej Biblioteki Publicznej w Kielcach) (Mediatheque-Reading Room at the Station in Kielce) – project of modernization of the station by Marcin Kamiński Bartosz Bojarowicz Architekci; refurbishment: 2018-2020; mbp.kielce.pl.

Mediateka Szklana Pułapka (The Glass Trap Media Center) (Filia nr 7 Wojewódzkiej i Miejskiej Biblioteki Publicznej im. C. Norwida w Zielonej Górze, Zielonogórska Palmiarnia) (Branch No. 7 of the C. Norwid Municipal and City Public Library, Zielona Góra Palm House) – modernization of Palmiarnia 2006-2008; opening of Mediateka 2012; szklanapulapka.zgora.pl.

Miejska Biblioteka Publiczna im. Juliana Przybośa w Przeworsku (Julian Przyboś Municipal Public Library) – construction: 2019-2020; biblioteka-przeworsk.pl.

Miejska Biblioteka Publiczna w Opolu (Municipal Public Library in Opole) – project: Małgorzata Zatwarnicka, Andrzej Zatwarnicki; construction: 2009-2010; mbp.opole.pl.

Miejska Biblioteka Publiczna w Rabce Zdroju (Municipal Public Library in Rabka Zdrój) – project of modernization of a historic railroad station from 1925: Rail Projekt Sp.z o.o.; construction: 2015; biblioteka.rabka.pl.

Miejska Biblioteka Publiczna w Szczecinie na Prawobrzeżu (Municipal Public Library in Szczecin) – competition project: first prize APP ARCHITEKT Karol Barcz, Kamila Buczkowska KABU Studio.

Miejska i Gminna Biblioteka Publiczna w Brzegu Dolnym (Municipal and County Public Library in Brzeg Dolny) – project: Autorska Pracownia Architektury Bożeny Marszałkiewicz; construction: 2017-2020; www.biblioteka.brzegdolny.pl.

Powiatowa i Miejsko-Gminna Biblioteka Publiczna im. Wiktora Bazielicha w Starym Sączu (Wiktor Bazielich County and Municipal Public Library in Stary Sącz) – project: 55 Architekci, architects Wojciech Świątek, Anna Szewczyk-Świątek; construction: 2016-2018; biblioteka.stary.sacz.pl.

Sopoteka (Miejska Biblioteka Publiczna im. J. Wybickiego w Sopocie) (Sopoteka – J. Wybicki Municipal Public Library in Sopot) – project: Jan Sikora Wnętrza; construction: 2015 r.; www.mbp.sopot.pl.

Stacja Kultura w Rumi (Filia Miejskiej Biblioteki Publicznej im. Floriana Ceynowy) (Stacja Kultura in Rumia, Branch of Florian Ceynowy Municipal Public Library) - project: Jan Sikora Wnętrza; construction: 2014 r.; www.bibliotekarumia.pl.

Środowiskowa Biblioteka Nauk Ścisłych i Technicznych na potrzeby Innowacyjnej Gospodarki Politechniki Wrocławskiej (Environmental Library of Exact and Technical Sciences for the Purposes of the Innovative Economy of the Wrocław University of Technology) – project: Heine, Wischer und Partner Architekci Sp. z o.o., architect Thomas Heine; construction: 2011-2013; biblioteka.pwr.edu.pl.

Wojewódzka Biblioteka Publiczna im. H. Łopacińskiego w Lublinie (H. Łopaciński Regional Public Library in Lublin) – project: Stelmach i Partnerzy Biuro Architektoniczne Sp. z o.o., architect: Bolesław Stelmach; construction: 2004-2006; wbp.lublin.pl.

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APPENDIX



Figure 1. The Polish Naval Academy Library
(Biblioteka Akademii Marynarki Wojennej im. Lecha Kaczyńskiego w Gdyni)



Figure 1a. The Polish Naval Academy Library. Interior
(Biblioteka Akademii Marynarki Wojennej im. Lecha Kaczyńskiego w Gdyni. Wnętrze)



Figure 2. The Novum Philological Library in Poznań (Biblioteka Filologiczna Novum w Poznaniu). Fot. Karolina Fabiś



Figure 2a. The Novum Philological Library in Poznań. Interior (Biblioteka Filologiczna Novum w Poznaniu. Wnętrze). Fot. Karolina Fabiś



Figure 3. The Library of the University of Gdańsk (Biblioteka Główna Uniwersytetu Gdańskiego)



Figure 3a. The Library of the University of Gdańsk. Interior (Biblioteka Główna Uniwersytetu Gdańskiego. Wnętrze)



Figure 4. The Jagiellonian Library in Kraków (Biblioteka Jagiellońska w Krakowie).
Fot. Mariusz Paluch



Figure 5. Biblioteka Raczyńskich w Poznaniu (The Raczyński Library in Poznań).
Fot. Janusz Sokołowski.



Figure 5a. Biblioteka Raczyńskich w Poznaniu. Interior (The Raczyński Library in Poznań. Wnętrze). Fot. Janusz Sokołowski.



Figure 6. University Library in Zielona Góra (Biblioteka Uniwersytecka w Zielonej Górze). Fot. Wojciech Kryński



Figure 6a. University Library in Zielona Góra. Interior (Biblioteka Uniwersytecka w Zielonej Górze. Wnętrze). Fot. Iwo Adaszyński



Figure 7. Wrocław University Library (Biblioteka Uniwersytecka we Wrocławiu)



Figure 7a. Wrocław University Library. Interior (Biblioteka Uniwersytecka we Wrocławiu. Wnętrze)



Figure 8. Library of the Pontifical University of John Paul II in Kraków (Biblioteka Główna Uniwersytetu Papieskiego Jana Pawła II w Krakowie)



Figure 9. Library of the Faculty of Polish and Classical Philology of the University of Adam Mickiewicz (Biblioteka Wydziału Filologii Polskiej i Klasycznej Uniwersytetu im. Adama Mickiewicza w Poznaniu). Fot. J. Bułat



Figure 9a. Library of the Faculty of Polish and Classical Philology of the University of Adam Mickiewicz (Biblioteka Wydziału Filologii Polskiej i Klasycznej Uniwersytetu im. Adama Mickiewicza w Poznaniu). Fot. Stanisława Kostić



Figure 10. The Modern Education Center of the Białystok University of Technology (Centrum Nowoczesnego Kształcenia Politechniki Białostockiej)



Figure 10a. The Modern Education Center of the Białystok University of Technology. Interior (Centrum Nowoczesnego Kształcenia Politechniki Białostockiej. Wnętrze)

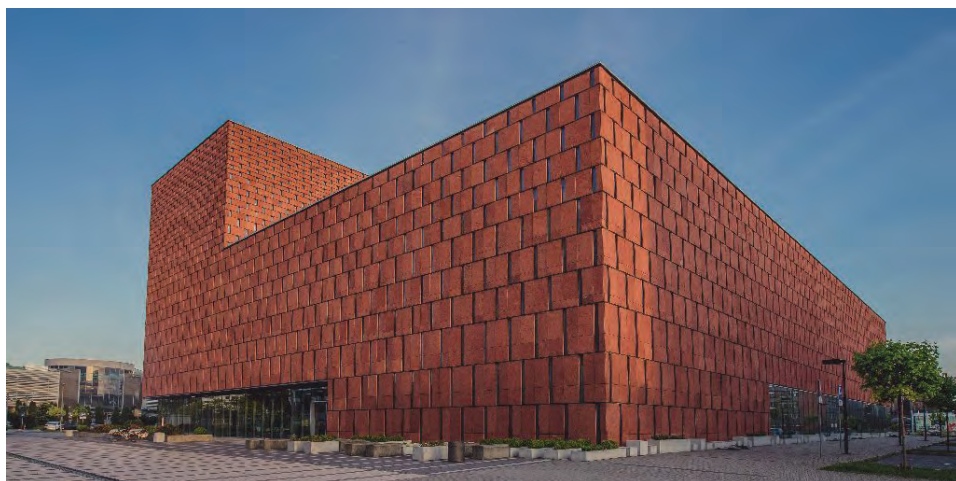


Figure 11. Scientific Information Center and the Academic Library in Katowice
(Centrum Informacji Naukowej i Biblioteka Akademicka w Katowicach).
Fot. Wojciech Mateusiak

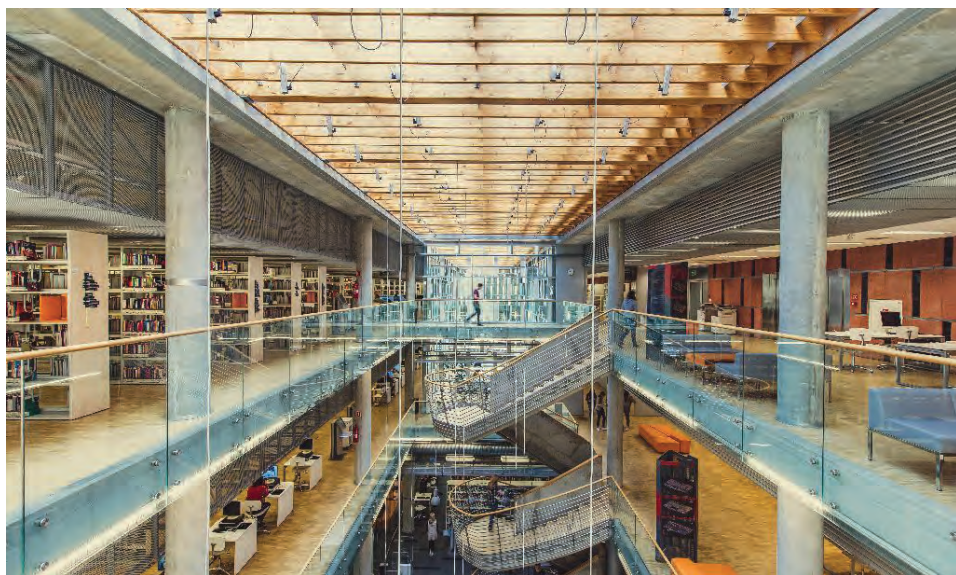


Figure 11a. Scientific Information Center and the Academic Library in Katowice. Interior
(Centrum Informacji Naukowej i Biblioteka Akademicka w Katowicach. Wnętrze).
Fot. Wojciech Mateusiak

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IS SPACE FOR PEOPLE MORE IMPORTANT THAN SPACE FOR BOOKS? LIBRARY CONSTRUCTION IN THE LUBUSKIE VOIVOD- SHIP – NEW SEATS AND ARRANGEMENTS



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KEYWORDS: Public Libraries. Lubuskie. Modernization. Library infrastructure.

ABSTRACT: Thesis/goal: The aim of the article is to present the implementation of library construction in the Lubuskie Voivodship in 2010-2019. **Research methods:** participant observation was the basis; visits to libraries at various stages

of construction/modernization, analysis of articles and statements about projects in the pages of regional literature, talks with librarians. **Results and conclusions:** on the basis of the analysis, 13 projects were presented, implemented in 10 towns of the Lubuskie Voivodship: Kargowa, Nowa Sól, Wschowa, Zwierzyniec, Szczaniec, Kostrzyn nad Odrą, Międzyrzecz, Iłowa, Krosno Odrzańskie and Zielona Góra. In Zielona Góra, two modern branches were created in the main building, the seat of one of the city branches was changed, and an out-of-town branch was created.

INTRODUCTION

In 2018, at the Cyprian Norwid Provincial and Municipal Public Library in Zielona Góra, a National Scientific Conference was held, entitled „Libraries of multimodalities. New technologies and new spaces “. In his inaugural speech, Dr hab. Tomasz Kruszewski, professor of the Nicolaus Copernicus University in Toruń, emphasized that architecture in Poland has been experiencing a lively quantitative and qualitative growth in recent years. In addition to spectacular business and commercial facilities, projects of cultural institutions are being implemented, including interesting architectural concepts for libraries. Attractive shapes are conducive to interesting undertakings. The library does not have to fit into any context: It is a self-governing institution that can point towards a place that creates culture. Paul Henrik Kielland, director of the Tromsø Public Library in Northern Norway, said that Norwegian libraries are transforming from book lending and storage facilities into an open meeting space, becoming a literary house and a cultural center, and users can enjoy the freedom to use the library at a convenient place and time for them. Despite the continuous development of digital services, the most important product offered to users by a library is a paper book, and the basic value – a space for people. „In the future, space for people will be more important than space for books” (Simonjetz, 2019).

It is worth investing in libraries! Why? “Because it’s worth investing in people. The library is a social space, a place of free access to culture, knowledge, information and technology, conducive to the development of society. Therefore, expenditure on libraries should not be treated as an unnecessary cost, but rather as an investment in human capital. An investment that will pay off in the form of educated, creative and committed citizens ” (Buck, Simonjetz, Kotlarek, 2018, p. 121). The new, functional facility is as a rule popular among residents. It draws attention. Even at the project implementation stage, it encourages co-creation of a cultural center, especially in small towns, where each investment becomes a local event. Dedicated to the local community, it is linked to special attention.

NEW LIBRARY SPACES IN THE LUBUSKIE VOIVODSHIP

The construction of new facilities is a huge challenge. Library directors who carry out infrastructure investments make an invaluable contribution to the cultural life of the local community. When analyzing the modernizing projects in the area of library construction in the Lubuskie Voivodship, one can risk the statement that it all started with the Cyprian Norwid Provincial and Municipal Public Library in Zielona Góra, where the first media outlet in Lubuskie was established.

Góra Mediów (Mountain of Media) was built in the main building of WiMBP, in the space of the former Music Reading Room. The interior designers were Anna Modrzejewska and Mariusz Kołodziejczyk, graduates of the Art Department of the University of Zielona Góra. The space is divided into several thematic zones. In the film and music zone, films and music are gathered on various media (CD, DVD, Blu-ray, vinyl discs). The knowledge zone gives access to the Internet and to computer programs, including educational applications and databases. The e-book zone offers audiobooks and e-books. The hobby zone offers game consoles and computer games. The meeting zone is a place for cultural and educational activities. The media library is also equipped with robots, tablets and educational games that are used to conduct coding classes for children, adolescents and adults. Users have at their disposal VR goggles, MP3 players, board games and readers.

The walls of Media Mountain are decorated with tricolor mosaics evoking computer pixels. Similar geometric and color motifs (blue, gray and green) were used on the floor covering and the ceiling. White furniture with multimedia brighten up the interior.

Users crossed the threshold of this modern establishment on December 14, 2010. Góra Mediów is a place for various ventures, and at the same time the best meeting place for people learning foreign languages (Language Café), fans of new information and communication technologies (TechClubs), young artists preparing their vernissages, and for lovers of games, movies and music.

After the first implementation in Lubuskie, which was revolutionary for the region at that time, new projects appeared. Among them, we can distinguish structures that have been rebuilt and modernized for the needs of the new location of a library (Mediatka Światowid in Kargowa, MBP in Nowa Sól, BPMiG in Wschowa, CKiB in Szczaniec, MBP in Kostrzyn nad Odrą, Mediateka in Krosno Odrzańskie, Mediateka Szklana Pułapka in Zielona Góra), major refurbishment of buildings or rooms with the reconstruction of the existing headquarters (BPMiG in Międzyrzecz, BK in Iłowa, Center for Children and Youth at WiMBP in Zielona Góra) and newly established facilities (GBP in Zwierzyno, Lubuskie Laboratorium Książki).

MUNICIPAL PUBLIC LIBRARY IN NOWA SÓL

In 2011, readers passed through the doors of the new seat of the Municipal Public Library in Nowa Sól. In January, the Department for Children was opened; in February, the Main Library. The library had moved to a historic villa from the 1920s. The investment was carried out as part of the task: "Reconstruction of facilities at ul. Bankowa for the needs of the Municipal Public Library". The total value of the project was over 8.5 million PLN. The historic buildings have been fully adapted to the needs of a modern library facility. A ramp, a platform for wheelchairs and a passenger elevator guarantee comfortable access to all rooms.

In the Main Lending Room, free access to shelves is accompanied by two self-service kiosks that facilitate the process of returns and loans. On the ground floor, next to the Lending Room, there is a Multimedia Reading Room. On the first floor there are General and Regional Reading Rooms. In the first of these, two stations have been equipped with scanning mice, which enable easy and quick transfer of printed text to computer programs. At the entrance, in a separate space, there is a periodicals lounge. On the lower ground floor there is a small conference room and a spacious *Galeria pod Tekstem*. All library processes have been automated in the Library in Nowa Sól. The loan system is based on RFID technology.

The investment in Nowa Sól also included the development of the adjacent area. The Garden of Arts was established in the vicinity of the Library's seat. In a space with fountains and a pergola there is an outdoor chessboard, tables with chess tops and an exhibition system enabling the implementation of outdoor exhibitions. An amphitheater was built on to the walls of the Municipal Museum adjacent to the Library – a place for musical concerts, theatrical performances, and campaigns promoting reading. In the quiet of the building of the Children's Department, an Alley of Lovers has been arranged with a Romeo and Juliet bench erected on the 400th anniversary of the birth of William Shakespeare. Nearby, under a large linden tree, there is a swing, which refers to the famous poem by Jan Kochanowski, „The Linden Tree”. In July 2019, the Melpomene Swing was ceremonially opened.

THE EUGENIUSZ PAUKSZTA COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY IN KARGOWA (MEDIATEKA ŚWIATOWID)

In 2012, the Public Library in Kargowa moved to its new seat. The cost of the entire investment is over 2.5 million PLN, of which one million was subsidized by the Ministry of Culture and National Heritage. The county's special-purpose subsidy amounted to over a million zlotys. The building of an old cinema of the same name was converted into the Mediateka Światowid.

The stage part has been preserved in the new facility. The screen, cinema sound system and digital projector allow one to display movies. Mobile shelves facilitate the modification of the space. In a dozen or so minutes, the library becomes an auditorium or a conference hall. The floor is decorated with the city's logo, in which a vivid red contrasts with the gray of the laminate. The emblem of Kargowa appears on the double-leaf internal doors. The shield is the coat of arms of the Unrug family who founded the town in 1641. The facility has a tourist information center and an exhibition hall. Places were designated for a permanent exhibition on Eugeniusz Paukšta – the patron of the library - and actor Maciej Kozłowski, associated with Kargowa, among others places. A librarian's stand was located at the entrance, and an open space for the periodical reading room was also arranged. In the largest room, between the elements supporting the mezzanine structure, there are white illuminated shelves. Mobile multimedia cabinets were placed closer to the center. From here you go directly to the Toddler's Corner and the computer room. There is also an exit to the outside, where a loggia has been set aside which can serve as both a summer reading room and a place for games and activities in the open air. A cloakroom and utility facilities are hidden at the far end of the building. There are DVD movies, music, audiobooks, e-books, games, six computer stations, a console game stand and an interactive board waiting for the visitors. On the mezzanine there are shelves holding a traditional book collection. In total, 519 m² of usable space was made available to the residents.

PUBLIC LIBRARY OF THE CITY AND COUNTY IN WSCHOWA

The library in Wschowa found a convenient location in 2013 within the walls of the former Jesuit College. The purchase of the equipment for the new seat of the Wschowa facility was carried out under the Multiannual Program Culture + Priority „Library + Library Infrastructure”. The total value of the project is 1,250,000 PLN, of which a grant of 500,000 PLN was obtained. The remaining amount is the commune's own contribution, under which Wschowa received 150,000 PLN from the Marshal's Office of the Lubuskie Voivodship. The arrangement of 900 m² of space makes reference to the history of the city, visited by Władysław Jagiełło, Kazimierz Jagiellończyk, Zygmunt I Stary, August II the Strong, and Kazimierz Wielki.

The reading room resembles the buildings of the city square. There is a fountain surrounded by racks topped with an arched lintel. Instead of water, it features interactive educational games, such as “Coins”, “Polish Kings”, and multimedia checkers. There is an e-gallery in the hall; a system of LCD screens enclosed in decorative frames can display any multime-

dia content in the form of photos, videos, or animations. The Multi Touch board also allows access to other applications, including library maps and an e-learning application dedicated to the history of Wschowa and the region. The elevator opens the three-story building up to the elderly and the disabled. On the first floor, where a rental shop for adults is located, frescoes discovered during the renovation have been preserved.

On the top floor, next to the lending room and reading room for children and teenagers, the Kingdom of the Youngest Users was created. In addition to a PlayStation console, computers, an interactive floor, and lots of interesting books, a royal canopy and colorful seats await the toddlers.

PUBLIC LIBRARY OF THE CITY AND COUNTY IN MIĘDZYRZECZ

In 2014, as part of the Multiannual Culture + Priority "Library + Library Infrastructure", the Międzyrzec Cultural Center obtained 1,875,000 PLN for the project "Renovation and reconstruction of the Public Library in Os. Center 8 in Międzyrzecz ". The total value of the investment was 2,439,090.00 PLN. 89,000 were obtained from the State Fund for the Rehabilitation of the Disabled. The project budget was supplemented by a special-purpose subsidy of the Międzyrzec County and the personal funds of the MOK (Pawłowska, 2015). The general renovation included the roof, thermal modernization with the replacement of windows, thermal insulation of external walls, modernization of heating systems, gas and sanitary installations. A new driveway has been built. The main entrance has been rearranged. Social rooms were provided. The entire building was repainted.

Inside the two-story building, an elevator has been installed (a platform lift). Toilets have been adapted to the needs of the disabled. The floor surfaces have been replaced. Local carpeting islands were used, which ensured the proper acoustics of the rooms, the safety of communication routes, and the comfort of playing in the areas of active work with children. Color combinations attract attention. Kept in neutral colors, the spacious corridor opens up the perspective of the Lending Room and the Reading Room for Adults. Here orange dominates combined with gray and accessories in shades of fuchsia and lime. The white frames are accompanied by anthracite-colored windows that correspond to the orange seats, or traditional panes in orange and gray frames. Glazed doors and partition walls provide lots of natural light and optically enlarge the area of even large rooms. Directly from the reading room, you can go to the multimedia room with a projector and new media for borrowing and sharing on the spot.

There is a children's area on the first floor. In the children's toilet, one wall is lined with the colorful text of Julian Tuwim's "The Locomotive".

On the next ones we find colorful letters of the Polish alphabet. A wall-mounted baby changing table has also been installed.

COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY IN ZWIERZYN

The new headquarters of GBP in Zwierzyn were visited by the first users at the beginning of 2017. The cost of building the library was over 1,300,000 PLN. The contribution of the county amounted to 268,000 PLN, the rest of the amount was subsidized under the „National Program for the Development of Reading” Priority 2 „Library infrastructure 2016-2020”.

A one-story, ergonomic building has been erected near the school and kindergarten. During the construction, the technology of structural steel and ready-made elements was used, which allowed for quick implementation of the investment.

The interior of the Library is devoid of architectural barriers. “All over the building there are signs for rooms, shelves and information pictograms. The interior of the library is in gray tones and natural wood colors, the whole is enlivened by lime-colored accessories that harmonize with the library’s logo” (Markiewicz, 2017). The 390 m² area houses a reading room, a rental room, an auditorium, an office, and toilets. The hall is partially used as an exhibition space. In the open space for sharing resources, zones for users of different ages have been separated. There is a children’s corner at the entrance, opposite the service and rental registration point. Near the library counter there are shelves with audiobooks and board games. Eight modern computer workstations, tablets, robots, a TV set and a projector make up the Internet reading room. There is an area for newspapers and magazines in the opposite corner.

Almost along the entire length of the room, perpendicular to the window line, there are white bookshelves with a collection of books. All of them are equipped with wheels, enabling efficient rearrangement of space. “The advantages of the new facility are certainly its location and gathering all services and collections in one place. The interior has been designed with care for functionality, proper collection and sharing, exhibition of collections and the organization of various types of projects” (Markiewicz, 2017).

CULTURE AND LIBRARY CENTER IN SZCZANIEC

On January 5, 2017, the Szczaniec Mediateka was officially introduced. The meeting took place in a new space, over 224 meters large. The layout of the room where films were once viewed has been translated into a characteristic arrangement, similar to the Mediateka in Kargowa which had inspired the contractors of the investment in Szczaniec County. Taking

into account the architectural features of the premises, it was possible to find an additional 54 m² for a glazed mezzanine. Codex books were placed on white and maroon shelves. Single seats are placed between the shelves. The entire room is kept in subdued colors. Classic shades of white and gray are enlivened by wine red accents.

A computer lab, games room, exhibition system, small kitchen facilities and an unrestricted relaxation zone make Mediateka an attractive meeting place. The preservation of the stage area opens up additional possibilities. Mobile shelves, folding tables and chairs allow one to freely arrange the space.

The value of the entire investment was almost 855,000 PLN. The grant was obtained under the priority "Library Infrastructure 2016-2020" of the National Program for the Development of Reading.

CITY PUBLIC LIBRARY IN KOSTRZYN UPON ODER

The Municipal Public Library in Kostrzyn upon Oder is located in a spacious two-story building. Two stories are arranged on the principle of top-bottom, sky-earth. The opening of the library in the renovated premises took place on December 28, 2017.

On the ground floor, with greenery and with bronze and sand-gold accents dominating the walls and ceilings, multi-functional rooms are located in which library projects and users' own ideas are implemented. The space is organized in black and white pictograms. The main entrance directs the reader to „Your Coffee Shop” or „Your Space”. In the first, you can drink coffee, meet friends, read periodicals. There are three rooms in „Your Space”: a room for children with board games and a reading armchair, a workshop, and a fully equipped IT lab. The latter, apart from computer stations, is dominated by educational sets LEGO WeDo 2.0 and LEGO Mindstorms EV3. Thematic rooms can increase or decrease their size thanks to folding partition walls.

The traditional user service departments (on-site sharing and outside lending) are located on the first floor. Blue ceilings are combined with white lamps and furniture. Fluorescent light was supplemented with lampshades stylized as white clouds. White in combination with dark blue is reminiscent of the sky. The main color theme is broken only by single shelves and armchairs in shades of pink. Two entrance units actually lead to one room, in which the shelves are arranged in analogous sequences, and the readers are free to move around and communicate. The age zones are informally demarcated by a pillar with a table top and chairs placed next to it. Here you can work with a laptop or tablet.

The reconstruction and adaptation of the premises of the Library in Kostrzyn upon Odra, taking into account the needs of the disabled, was

carried out under the Priority „Library Infrastructure 2016-2020” of the National Program for the Development of Reading.

MEDIATEKA – PUBLIC LIBRARY IN KROSNO ODRZAŃSKIE

On April 25, 2019, the Mediateka in Krosno Odrzańskie was officially opened. The library changed its seat and gained a new arrangement and equipment.

The library space is open, but divided into zones, which can be additionally separated thanks to sliding doors. The area for adults is the farthest from the main entrance, closer to the media library, followed by a cafe and a zone for children with characteristic hammocks. A colorful, friendly space for children welcomes everyone entering the library. Various seats are also waiting for guests in other areas: high dark blue and gray pouffes in the cafe, orange ones in the media library. You can also sit by the windows that stretch almost along the entire length of the library rooms. In the adult area, handy tables are attached to the orange seats.

The individual zones take on their character thanks to their patrons. The youngest are kept company by Grzegorz Kasdepke, users of the media library by Steve Jobs, and the adults by Agnieszka Osiecka.

Among the libraries in Lubuskie, the library in Krosno is undoubtedly distinguished by hammocks. They coexist well in combination with touch screens and a yellow round seat integrated into the bookshelves. Consoles, computers, tablets, books, magazines, toys, an interactive floor – no element is accidental here.

The project, developed by Justyna Fryszkowska-Kosmala, a resident of the Krosno Odrzańskie county, was carried out for almost 3,000,000 PLN. The funds came from the county’s budget.

CULTURAL LIBRARY IN IŁOWA

The Municipal Public Library in Iłowa is located in farm buildings next to the palace. The two-winged palace was built during the Renaissance. In spring, the gardens of Iłowa bloom in the vicinity of the Library, including a Japanese garden, established at the beginning of the 20th century, the first garden of this type in Europe.

For the task named “Reconstruction of the Municipal Public Library in Iłowa with the creation of a multimedia room, knowledge and magic”, the Iłowa County received 85% co-financing from the Regional Operational Program - Lubuskie 2020, which was over 1,355,000 PLN. The subsidy was allocated to the renovation and furnishing of the existing MBP rooms and the adaptation of the attic for a multimedia room. The contract was im-

plemented under the Priority Axis "Environment and Culture", activities "Resources of culture and cultural heritage".

Inside the modernized library rooms, put into use in May 2019, attention is drawn to multimedia totems, thanks to which one can view digitized documents on the history of the city. The resources were obtained from the inhabitants and from enthusiasts with knowledge about the region. One of the touch-activated devices allows one to send a virtual postcard, the other allows one to check the current cultural offer and tourist attractions. In the multimedia room there are drones, VR 3D glasses, apparatuses, cameras, and equipment facilitating the handling of conferences and special events, also with the use of audiovisual projections on three-dimensional objects (3D mapping).

Traditional collections reign supreme on the ground floor. Everything is colored in white. In the children's and youth zone, white is enlivened by the greenery of individual shelves and maroon seats. The uniqueness of the place is provided by the large windows divided by muntins. They let in light while simultaneously stopping time. Deeply recessed, they create an additional space to use, e.g. for mascots or for displays of the creative achievements of the youngest members.

SZKLANA PUŁAPKA (THE GLASS TRAP), LIBRARY CENTER FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTHS, LUBUSKIE BOOK LABORATORY

In Zielona Góra, following Góra Mediów (Mountain of Media), the time came for another media library. Since 2012, a municipal branch, no. 7, has been operating in the Zielona Góra Palm House - the Szklana Pułapka media center. The project was implemented with the help of the city authorities, who allocated 100,000 PLN for the adaptation and furnishing of the former Palm House conference room. The visual setting and logotype were created by a local visual artist, Agata Buchalik-Drzyzga. On an area of 160 m², multimedia and paper collections are gathered. Users have at their disposal computer stations with Internet access, a Play Station console and lots of friendly nooks and crannies with a view of the Winny Park and city buildings.

The name is closely related to the glass facade of Zielona Góra's tourist attraction. The library is arranged around the cafe on the first floor, on a terrace overlooking the restaurant filled with exotic plants. The zone of access to knowledge, entertainment, culture and new technologies, like a trap, is meant to intrigue and tempt potential users so that anyone who once crosses the threshold of the Glass Trap will forever remain a regular recipient of an attractive media offer.

In 2016, after several months of renovation, the Library Center for Children and Youth was opened in the Main Building of the Provincial

Library. The project was carried out as part of a grant from the Ministry of Culture and National Heritage, with the financial support of the voivodeship's self-government and the Mayor of Zielona Góra. In the space of the former Children's Ward, some of the walls were demolished and modern lighting was installed. An animation room has been arranged in the place of the former reading room. The interiors were filled with new furniture and fittings, which, in combination with dedicated colors, distinguished zones for different age groups on an area of 383 m². Additionally, information pictograms were hung above the shelves. Blots of different colors on the floor were called for: It is a hallmark, because the full name of the department is: Library Center for Children and Youth – Mr. Kleks (Mr. Blot) Library.

In 2019, in the Zielona Góra district of Jędrzychów, the GreenBook Lubuskie Book Laboratory (LLK) was established - a new department of the Cyprian Norwid Provincial Library. Its name is meant to connect Zielona Góra with books, and the activities focus on workshops around the beginnings of printing, the rich history of writing, the present day and modern technologies supporting contact with words and living literature. At LLK you can borrow, read, watch, research, write, learn about, create, review and have fun with books. "The new library department is impressive, it contains not only a lot of books (several thousand!), But also a place for meetings, workshops, a kids' corner, and computer stations with modern readers" (Dyjas-Szatkowska, 2019).

SUMMARY

Steve Jobs, co-founder of Apple, proved that people don't know what they want until it is shown to them. Passionate about innovation, he was infected with the willingness to change, learn and improve the quality of everyday life, and he was successful. We have more and more interesting libraries in Poland. They are known for their precision in searching for information and reliability in accessing reading material. Therefore, they retain their traditional DNA, but at the same time persistently strive for an attractive design. Modern space offers new opportunities and opens up broad development prospects. The Cyprian Norwid Provincial and Municipal Public Library in Zielona Góra, supporting Lubuskie libraries in the process of change, continues to strive for funds for further infrastructure projects. Thanks to this, it becomes a place of inspiration, creating social and professional activity among the library staff in this area.

The library is an investment in people and the future of the community. Culture should not be seriously considered in isolation from libraries, their resources and activities. It is impossible to ignore these institutions or disregard their achievements. Behind the latter are people: their courage,

self-sacrifice, dedication, sense of mission and responsibility, and creativity. It is self-evident that the library is not an ordinary place. These are thematic zones of uncommonness, where the rhythm is determined by words, sounds and images. The library offers a chance for such a reality, broadens horizons and creates opportunities. Here, every detail matters.

Modern arrangements change the image and way of thinking about cultural institutions. They influence the prestige of the profession, the quality of the tasks performed and the basic indicators of functioning. Libraries are people. You need to have intuition and the courage to create in order to find areas in the local community where there is a shortage, and then to accurately complement and strengthen them. Librarians, with the support of the organizers and/or extra-budgetary funds, do great things, and their potential and imagination know no limits. Libraries function in local communities to add color and make life easier. Dr. Dawid Kotlarek, analyzing "Reading in the digital age", sums up: "The answer to the needs of modern users is certainly a hybrid model of a library, which in an attractively arranged spatial interior will offer access to traditional and modern collections as well as a rich set of cultural projects" (Kotlarek, 2012/ 2013, p. 29). It is worth investing capital in libraries.

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APPENDIX



Figure 1. Mountain of Media (Góra Mediów)



Figure 1a. Mountain of Media (Góra Mediów)



Figure 2. Municipal Public Library in Nowa Sól
(Miejska Biblioteka Publiczna w Nowej Soli)



Figure 2a. Municipal Public Library in Nowa Sól. Surroundings
(Miejska Biblioteka Publiczna w Nowej Soli. Otoczenie)



Figure 3. The Eugeniusz Paukšta County Public Library in Kargowa. Interior (Mediateka Światowid) (Gminna Biblioteka Publiczna im. Eugeniusza Paukšty w Kargowej. Wnętrze [Mediateka Światowid])



Figure 3a. The Eugeniusz Paukšta County Public Library in Kargowa. Interior (Mediateka Światowid) (Gminna Biblioteka Publiczna im. Eugeniusza Paukšty w Kargowej. Wnętrze [Mediateka Światowid])



Figure 4. Public Library of the City and County in Wschowa
(Biblioteka Publiczna Miasta i Gminy we Wschowie)



Figure 4a. Public Library of the City and County in Wschowa. Interior
(Biblioteka Publiczna Miasta i Gminy we Wschowie. Wnętrze)



5. Public Library of the City and County in Międzyrzecz
(Biblioteka Publiczna Miasta i Gminy w Międzyrzeczu)



5a. Public Library of the City and County in Międzyrzecz. Interior
(Biblioteka Publiczna Miasta i Gminy w Międzyrzeczu. Wnętrze)



Figure 6. County Public Library in Zwierzyn
(Gminna Biblioteka Publiczna w Zwierzynie)



Figure 6a. County Public Library in Zwierzyn. Interior
(Gminna Biblioteka Publiczna w Zwierzynie. Wnętrze)



Figure 7. Culture and Library Center in Szczaniec
(Centrum Kultury i Biblioteki w Szczaniecu)



Figure 7a. Culture and Library Center in Szczaniec. Interior
(Centrum Kultury i Biblioteki w Szczaniecu. Wnętrze)



Figure 8. City Public Library in Kostrzyn upon Oder
(Miejska Biblioteka Publiczna w Kostrzynie nad Odrą)



Figure 8a. City Public Library in Kostrzyn upon Oder. Interior
(Miejska Biblioteka Publiczna w Kostrzynie nad Odrą. Wnętrze)



Figure 9. Mediateka – Public Library in Krosno Odrzańskie. Interior
(Mediateka – Biblioteka Publiczna w Krośnie Odrzańskim. Wnętrze)



Figure 9a. Mediateka – Public Library in Krosno Odrzańskie. Interior
(Mediateka – Biblioteka Publiczna w Krośnie Odrzańskim. Wnętrze)



Figure 10. Cultural Library in Iłowa (Biblioteka Kultury w Iłowej)



Figure 11. The Glass Trap (Szkłana Pułapka), Library Center for Children and Youths, Lubuskie Book Laboratory (Centrum Biblioteczne dla Dzieci i Młodzieży, Lubuskie Laboratorium Książki)



Figure 11a. The Glass Trap (Szkłana Pułapka), Library Center for Children and Youths, Lubuskie Book Laboratory. Interior (Centrum Biblioteczne dla Dzieci i Młodzieży, Lubuskie Laboratorium Książki. Wnętrze)

SURVEY OF DOMESTIC LITERATURE (SELECTION)

A carefully published, richly illustrated publication by Lena Kaletowa, *Bibliotheca viva. Opowieść o 200-letnich dziejach i zbiorach Biblioteki Uniwersyteckiej we Wrocławiu* (Bibliotheca viva. The story of the 200-year history and the collections of the University Library in Wrocław) (Kaletowa, 2020), is largely devoted to the construction of the new building of the Wrocław University Library, located in one of the most beautiful parts of the city – the Frederick Joliot-Curie boulevard on the Odra river. In the first part of the book, the author outlines the difficult history of the library, beginning with its discovery in May 1945, in a ruined city, undemolished with its book collection in the German City Library, which became the first seat of the University Library. Then, post-war efforts over several decades for a new library building are described, in a situation of deteriorating conditions for storing the collections, including the valuable special collections. The turning point was the year 1999, when an architectural competition for the design of a new library was announced. The author presents the social lobbying developed for the construction, describing in detail the design work and the selected project, as well as the construction works completed in 2011. The book ends with a presentation of the treasures of the library – the most valuable objects of the special collections.

In the bilingual Polish-English album publication *Tradycja i Nowoczesność* (Tradition and Modernity) (Strojek et al., eds., 2020), the implementation of the project of expansion and modernization of the Public Library of the Capital City of Warsaw is presented, beginning with the decision by the library management to rebuild the library in 2005 and the competition for an architectural concept. The introduction outlines the history of the library and its center, as well as the schedule of activities aimed at its modernization. In the chapter on Architectural design, the designers are given the opportunity to characterize in their own words the assumptions and visions accompanying the design. In the subsequent chapters, the effects of the first and second stages of the library expansion are described and presented in numerous photographs. One of the many interesting solutions is the creation of a Rest Room – a place of relaxation for readers.

The main purpose of Renata Aleksandrowicz's research presented in the dissertation *Książka w życiu seniorów na początku XXI wieku* (The book in the life of seniors at the beginning of the 21st century) (Aleksandrowicz, 2020) was to understand and describe the reading behavior of active seniors. The first, introductory part of the book introduces the problem of old age against the background of contemporary social and cultural changes. The second, main part covers the analysis of the results of the author's own research conducted among students of the University of the Third Age at the University of Wrocław. The basic techniques used in the work were face-to-face questionnaire interview, participant observation, and analysis of documents of the University of the Third Age, whose enrollees were the surveyed seniors. The results of the research indicated, inter alia, the dichotomous nature of the use of new technologies (from the reluctance to acquire information competencies to openness to new technologies and information sources), the universality of reading books, the diversity of reading choices resulting from environmental diversity, and the treating of reading as a cultural value, sometimes of a prestigious nature.

The publication *Wojewódzka i Miejska Biblioteka Publiczna im. Zbigniewa Herberta w Gorzowie Wielkopolskim w latach 1946 – 2020* (The Zbigniew Herbert Provincial and Municipal Public Library in Gorzów Wielkopolski in the years 1946 – 2020) (Jaworski et al., eds., 2021) is an extensive, carefully published monograph concerning the Provincial and Municipal Public Library in Gorzów Wielkopolski. The authors outline the complicated path of the library's structural changes, beginning with the Poviats Public Library established in 1946 in Gorzów Wielkopolski. In the subsequent chapters the instructional, methodological and informational-bibliographic activity of the library in Gorzów is presented in a historical perspective, while the library collections are characterized and their collection and development discussed, along with their research and publishing activities, library computerization and digitization processes, and services. The current, important cultural and scientific role of the Gorzów library in the region is also described in the book and connected with the library's expansion. In 2006, the implementation of the project "Extension of the historic building of the Provincial and Municipal Public Library in Gorzów Wlp." was launched, including the construction of a modern building next to the historic building, which housed the library, and connecting both buildings. The implementation of the project was awarded the 2nd place award in the competition of the Polish Association of Construction Engineers and Technicians "Construction of the Year 2007" and the award of the Lubuska Chamber of Construction "Lubuski Mister Budowy – 2007 edition" for modern construction and architectural solutions, adapted to modern civilization requirements in the category of public facilities.

Józef Grycz is undoubtedly one of the most important creators of Polish librarianship in the twentieth century. Andrzej Mężyński has presented a comprehensive biographical monograph on this figure, based on extensive archival material. In the publication *Józef Grycz (1890-1954). Organizator polskiego bibliotekarstwa* (Józef Grycz (1890-1954). Promoter of Polish Librarianship) (Mężyński, 2020), the author presents the successive stages of Józef Grycz's professional and private life chronologically, in fifteen chapters divided into four parts (*Nauka i początki aktywności zawodowej; Józef Grycz w Warszawie w latach 1930 – 1939; Pod okupacją niemiecką w latach 1939 – 1945; W Polskiej Rzeczypospolitej Ludowej w latach 1945-1954*) (Studies and beginnings of professional activity; Józef Grycz in Warsaw in the years 1930-1939; Under the German occupation in the years 1939-1945; In the Polish People's Republic in the years 1945-1954). The book exemplifies the thesis formulated by the author in the introduction: „Grycz's advantage was not political support, but professional and scientific advantages, and his undiminished faith of a state citizen and social activist in the sense of building Polish librarianship as a field necessary for the development of culture. The fact that Grycz was always apolitical turned out to be his weakness in a situation where he wanted to take positions determining the directions of development of Polish librarianship” (p. 16). The outstanding achievements of the biography's hero, documented in the book and still important in Polish librarianship, include, among others: the development of alphabetical cataloging regulations in Polish libraries (first edition in 1934), work on the decree on libraries and the passage of its enactment in 1946, participation in research on the losses of Polish libraries during the Second World War, and the development of the first textbook for librarians in the post-war period.

Questions about the situation of libraries in the crisis arising during the pandemic formed the impulse to conduct the research presented in the publication *Biblioteki publiczne w kryzysie. Doświadczenie pierwszego etapu pandemii* (Public libraries in crisis. Experiencing the first stage of the pandemic) (Kisilowska, 2021). The presentation of the research is preceded by chapters in which the author, based on the global literature on the subject, discusses the theoretical foundations and research experience in the field of the functioning of libraries in crisis situations, presents the chronology of the development of the SARS-CoV-2 pandemic on a global scale and in Poland and its impact on the functioning of public libraries, and analyzes the available data showing the impact of the pandemic on the society and the cultural sector in Poland. In the study described in the second part of the publication, a questionnaire was used, addressed to Polish public libraries, consisting of open-ended questions regarding the following issues: internal communication and team work, communication with the institutional environment, and communication with users. In addition, questions

were asked about an individual assessment of the impact of the pandemic on the situation of libraries. The research results showed, among other things, that the most frequently chosen course of action by libraries was to transfer some of their activity to the Internet, which allowed for maintaining contact with the reader, providing them with access to cultural and educational activities, and providing various types of information.

The Warsaw bibliological community has prepared an extensive collection of studies by researchers from all over the country, presented to professor Barbara Bieńkowska, librarian and cultural historian, entitled *Książki mają swoją historię* (Books have a history) (Puchalski, ed., 2021). "The articles presented in this volume prove that research on the broadly understood culture of books and other media in a historical context is successfully continued both in Poland and abroad" (p. 17). The texts were placed in three thematic sections, preceded by the biography of Barbara Bieńkowska and the bibliography of her publications. The section *Bibliology – theory and practice begins with an article by Bożena Koredczuk about the need to develop a new paradigm of bibliology, tentatively called media studies bibliology. In this section a historical sketch on the Polish Bibliological Society by Andrzej Mężyiński is also presented. The most extensive section, on book and press research covering twenty-one works, is represented by, among others, articles by Grzegorz Nieć on the first stages of the history of the Czech book, Maciej Matwijów about the manuscript collections of public life materials created during the reign of King Stanisław August, and a description by Janusz Kostecki of the censorship of imported Polish calendars brought to the Russian partition in 1865-1904. Among the texts of the section From the history of book collections, libraries and reading there is an article by Anna Kamler presenting the recommendations of the 17th-century writer Jakub K. Haur on the creation of libraries and noble archives, and a sketch by Anna Dymmel describing the home library of Colonel Stanisław Ciesielski from Samokłęska, tutor to the sons of Prince Adam Czartoryski.*

The conviction that it is possible to shape culture in the library (literary, reading, theater, digital) accompanies the authors of the publication *Wiedza, gust, kompetencje. Kultura literacka, teatralna, czytelnicza i cyfrowa we współczesnej bibliotece (na przykładzie województwa lubuskiego)* (Knowledge, taste, competencies. Literary, theater, reading and digital culture in the contemporary library (on the example of the Lubuskie Voivodship)) (Buck et al., 2020). The first two chapters contain definitional suggestions and considerations on the latest reading trends. In the third, main chapter of the book, entitled *Czytelnik. Widz. Kreator. Kształtowanie i współtworzenie kultury w bibliotece* (Reader. Spectator. Creator. Shaping and co-creating culture in the library) numerous examples of animation works in the libraries of the Lubuskie Voivodship are presented, divided into three thematic parts. The thematic part *Tekst na scenie – scena w bibliotece* (Text on the

stage – theater in the library), describes, among others, the project “Pacynkowa Wieczorynka” (Puppet Evening), addressed to the youngest public, implemented at the Library Center for Children and Youth – Mr. Kleks’s Library in Zielona Góra, while in thematic part “Maker space” describes examples of the implementation of the makerspace idea in libraries, understood as a space with tools which serves to realize one’s own ideas (e.g. the Creativity Club in Świebodzin or the Young Artist Club in Żagań). The section *Słowa. Dźwięki. Obrazy* (Words. Sounds. Pictures) presents, among others, the project “Młodzieżowa komiksomania” (Youth Comics) carried out at the Public Library in Świebodzin. The publication is supplemented by statements from Lubuskie librarians reflecting on the tasks of a modern public library and its culture-forming role.

The collection of articles *W poszukiwaniu wzorów i wzorców osobowych wykonawców zawodów bibliotekarskich i informacyjnych* (In search of patterns and individual models of executors of the library and information profession) (Kurek-Kokocińska, Tokarska, eds., 2021) is the aftermath of the conference of the same title, which took place in December 2019 in Katowice. The volume opens with a theoretical and research-based sketch by Stanisława Kurek-Kokocińska, in which the author, based on the literature on the subject, identifies potential model-creating factors and reconstructs the model of a librarian in contemporary librarianship. The historical aspect of the issue is presented, among others, by Tomasz Stolarczyk in an article describing the routine of a religious librarian in the Middle Ages and the Early Ancient period, and Jadwiga Konieczna, who studies the image of a librarian presented in the literary works of the Polish People’s Republic. Other articles include an analysis of the competency and personal profile of employees in libraries of various types based on international and national standards and resulting from various studies on the image of a librarian (Anna Tokarska), and of the characteristics of a librarian’s personal routine based on job advertisements in German libraries (Agnieszka Łakomy-Chłosta).

Cultural practices referred to as electronic participatory culture form the subject of Krzysztof Gajewski’s work *Tryumf amatora. O społecznościowych praktykach tekstualnych w świecie mediów elektronicznych* (The triumph of the amateur. On social textual practices in the world of electronic media) (Gajewski, 2020). „The electronic culture of participation, which is the main focus of this work, emerged from digital virtual spaces, and even if it has found its way into the non-computer world, «real», to «actual» (in the real world, according to the language of the network), it never would have been created if personal computers had not spread and a global computer network had not been born” (pp. 11-12), the author writes. The research methodology referred to as media anthropology was adopted for the work, to which the introductory chapter of the book is devo-

ted. In the second chapter, selected technologies of information processing, transmission and preservation important for the Internet culture of participation (artificial intelligence, visual technology, social network) are analyzed. The third chapter is devoted to genres characteristic of the era of participation, such as electronic commentary, meme, fake news, while the fourth considers textual forms of larger dimensions, such as home pages, science blogs, social networks, and Wikipedia. The monograph ends with an analysis of textual phenomena of over-text dimensions (lifestreaming practices, user accounts on the website, the discussion forum).

The dissertation of Anna Kazimiera Folta-Rusin, *Twarz i ciało książki. Wizualne manifestacje tekstów a problemy interpretacji* (The face and body of the book. Visual manifestations of texts and problems of interpretation) (Folta-Rusin, 2020) "... proposes to look at the method of creating literature as a production process in which not only the author is involved, but also the publisher, editor, graphic designer and printer." (p. 12). The book focuses on visual manifestations of prose published in Poland after 1989. The author defines the concept of manifestation of a literary text as a way of materializing it, giving it a specific form. Chapter One, *Wizualne manifestacje a interpretacja* (Visual manifestations and interpretation), is devoted to theoretical, definitional and methodological issues. In the second chapter, *Twarz książki zamiast zwierciadła okładki* (The face of the book instead of the mirror of the cover), the author analyzes the representations on the front cover, while the third one deals with blurbs, i.e. advertising notes, as well as short text forms placed in various places on the cover and the author's pictures appearing on the back of the volume or on the flaps. The fourth chapter is devoted to the interpretation of the internal components of the book - inserts, artwork, illustrations. The work is of an interdisciplinary nature, the author used literary and bibliological tools as well as methods of analysis created by art historians and cultural anthropologists.

The most important goal of the author of the book *Dostłownie. Liternicze i typograficzne okładki polskich książek 1944-2019* (Literally. Lettering and typographic covers of Polish books 1944-2019) (Górski, 2020) is "... an encouragement to look carefully at projects – one that notices not only the formal features of the study (typeface, arrangement of the typographic layout or the method of hierarchy of texts). What is most interesting is in the meanings. Depending on the shape of the letter, they can be the actors of the cover composition – they represent a forest or lace adorning a lady's dress from the end of the 19th century. They can be built up by a graphic artist from fragments of a glacier or from a sausage" (p. [401]). The reproductions of 873 book covers presented by the author are an integral part of the work, which is divided into the chapters *O tytule, Definicje, Problemy, Przykłady* (On the title, Definitions, Problems, Examples). The publication carefully published by the Karakter publishing house uses an interesting

typographic arrangement, referring to, inter alia, incunabula – in the margins parallel to the main text there are additional examples, supplements, quotations in a smaller font, as well as additional illustrative material.

The National Library has once again presented a fragment of its valuable collections of documents on social life in the publication *Żydowskie druki ulotne w Siedlcach, Chełmie, Białej Podlaskiej 1919-1931. Katalog*. (Jewish leaflets in Siedlce, Chełm, Biała Podlaska 1919-1931. Catalog.) (Łętocha et al., eds., 2020). At the same time, it presents another catalog of Jewish leaflets from the collections of the National Library. The volume includes 455 reproductions and accompanying descriptions of posters and leaflets printed in the years 1919-1931 in three cities of the then Lublin Province: Siedlce, Chełm and Biała Podlaska. The publication presents posters and leaflets illustrating the rich social, political and cultural life of the Jewish community, e.g. posters inviting the public to political meetings, recruitment at schools, historical papers, theater performances, balls, sports events. Posters and leaflets also document the creation and operation of political parties, educational and cultural societies, charity organizations and hospitals. The study is bilingual - an extensive introduction and descriptions are published in Polish and English, and are complemented by indexes of organizations, institutions, associations and companies, as well as an index of printing houses where the documents discussed were printed.

The two-volume catalog of incunabula of the National Library *Catalogue of incunabula in the National Library of Poland* (Spandowski, ed. 2020a, b), prepared by Michał Spandowski in cooperation with Sławomir Szyl-ler, was published in English, suitable to the international nature of research in this field and enabling its use by a wide group of researchers around the world. The catalog includes provenance entries showing the turbulent history of the incunabula gathered in the National Library. The entries also contain descriptions of gothic, renaissance, and seventeenth and eighteenth-century bindings prepared by Maria Brynda. A carefully edited book, based on Aleksandra Toborowicz's graphic design, it has received distinctions and awards, including the Silver Award In Print in the Published Media Design category of the international A' Design Award & Competition.

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