

The Library as a Service Point. The Case of the Bozen University Library: Planning, Building, Financing

by FRANZ BERGER & KLAUS KEMPF

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 South Tyrol and its Particularities

The historical denomination of Tyrol as „The Land in the mountains” characterizes South Tyrol in the best way. Since the time of the „ice-man” - five thousand years ago - the mountains have been the most important origin of fortune and unfortune for the people in this territory.

The geographical position at the crossroads of German and Italian-speaking areas featured this southern part of the historical Tyrol as a meeting point of languages and cultures. Its population of 460,000 (four hundred and sixty thousand) people is mainly composed of three linguistic groups: the group of people with German as a native language (65 % of the population), the people with Italian as a native language (26 % of the population), and a small minority of 4.5 % speaking a local Rhaeto-Romanic language (Ladin). But almost everybody speaks or understands at least the two official languages of the territory: Italian and German.

Since 1972, the „Autonomous Province of Bozen-Bolzano / South Tyrol” has had a far-reaching territorial autonomy within Italy, especially with regard to the fields of culture, education, economy and infrastructures of regional importance. In the last years, this large autonomy – regarding different legislation and administration fields – has become a model of regional autonomy in Europe, particularly for territories in Eastern European countries with linguistic minorities in their population.

1.2 Foundation of the University in its Historical and Political Context

In the recent history of South Tyrol, after the annexation to Italy in 1918, we can distinguish three main periods:

- the period of the fascist repression of linguistic and cultural peculiarity (1922 - 1945);
- the period of ethnic conflict and political compromise (1945 - 1992); in this period the Autonomy Statute of the Bozen Province was elaborated, approved and actuated;
- and the period of a new and growing regional self-awareness and self-confidence, which, in 1997, led to the foundation of the Free University of Bozen-Bolzano.

1.3 Reasons for the Foundation of the University

In this new political context, three factors favoured the foundation of the University:

- a first approach to a university reform in Italy in the first nineties – especially the introduction of university diploma courses for a lot of professions;
- the opportunity to found a university not run - but recognized - by the State;
- a strong shortage of graduates in the economy of the region.

Digression: Economy in South Tyrol

The economy of South Tyrol is characterized by

- a medium-sized structure and
- an advantageous mix of economy areas; the most important areas are:
 - peculiar agriculture, especially fruit and wine growing,
 - prosperous tourism,
 - traditional commerce,
 - strong handicraft,
 - and modernized industry.

In the last twenty-five years the economic development has been stable. From all this there results a general prosperity with minimum unemployment and high per-capita income, compared with other European regions.

The capital city of this prosperous region is Bozen-Bolzano. With its almost 100,000 Italian- and German-speaking inhabitants, today Bozen is a multilingual, international business centre.

2 THE FREE UNIVERSITY OF BOZEN-BOLZANO – A PROJECT OF EUROPEAN DIMENSION

2.1 *Characteristics of the Bozen University*

The Free University of Bozen-Bolzano will be a project of European dimension. This will become evident, if we consider its following characteristics:

- Lectures are held in three languages: German, Italian, and English. The students must have a good knowledge of two of the three languages, as well as a basic knowledge of the third one.
- The teaching staff is composed of professors coming from different European countries, and mostly having an international professional background.
- The adjectiv „free” in the name of the university means: privately run, not run by the State. Of course, the courses of study are offered according to the general regulations of the State, but all is planned and organized according to an entrepreneurial philosophy.
- The three main financial funds are: the Province of South Tyrol, the Italian State, and sponsors.
- The fundamental conception is: small but beautiful. It means concentration on a few, well-defined faculties and courses, and orientation towards the students, who should have optimal conditions to study, improve their linguistic abilities, and acquire competence in the using of different information supports.

2.2 *Locations and Courses of Study*

The university offers its courses of study in three locations, which are very well interconnected by the university network:

- The province capital Bozen-Bolzano is the seat of the School of Economics and of university diploma courses in Economics of Agriculture and Industrial Engineering.
- The historical town Brixen-Bressanone - since centuries seat of academic courses in theology - accomodates the Faculty of Education.
- The economically dynamic town Bruneck-Brunico is the seat of the diploma course in Management of tourist services.

2.3 *Conception of the Library*

The Bozen University Library in its seats of Bozen and Brixen is intended to be:

- a specific information centre for the University and the region;
- a learning resource centre similar to the Learning Resource Centres in Britain;
- an innovative media laboratory.

For this reason, a logistical and personal integration of the Computer Centre and the Language Centre within the Library seems to be important.

3. NEW BUILDING OF THE BOZEN UNIVERSITY LIBRARY

3.1 *University Campus in Bozen*

- Site of the old hospital near to the city centre
- Logistically well situated
- Mixture of new buildings and conservation of old structures

3.2 Planning Data for the Building of the University Library

3,000	students
2,000	other users
350,000	printmedia
25	staff

3.3 University Library Building: Briefing Aspects

- Prominent position in the campus
- 4.700 qm main usable area
- Flexibility in the use of space
- Integration of the central services („one stop shopping”)
- Close to lecture halls, Student Secretariat and cafeteria
- No „greenhouse-library”

3.4 Architecture Competition for the New University Buildings

- 1998: architecture competition (European tender)
- 146 participants
- Winning project by the architecture studio *Bischoff&Azzola*, Zürich

3.5 Characteristics of the Winning Project

- Creation of an new urban form
- main buildings
- inner courtyards
- good functional and urbanistic design

3.6 *Characteristics of the „Public Building” (with the library)*

- Inward-looking building like an ancient Roman house
- Multistorey building
- Spacious and high quality areas in the library

3.7 *Function of this „Public Building”*

- Integration of all the public services of the University:
 - Underground parking
 - Stacks
 - Cafeteria, canteen
 - Student Secretariat
 - Library
 - Language Centre
 - Computer Centre
- Corridor to the lecture halls and the faculty buildings

3.8 *Library – Division of Areas*

Usuable area	5,456 m ²
Main usable area	5,156 m ²

Open shelf and reading area	3,254 m ²
Seminary rooms, mediatheque, PC-pools	625 m ²
21 carrels	240 m ²
Enquiry desk and book circulation	119 m ²
Administration / staff area	198 m ²
Stacks	720 m ²

User workplaces (50 % PC-workplaces)	400
--------------------------------------	-----

3.9 Library – Technical Particularities

- Internal spatial interconnections
- Lighting
- Acoustics
- Air conditioning
- Heating
- Cabling

3.10 Time Schedule, Building Process

1998	architecture competition
2000	beginning of the first stage of building (with library)
2002	completion of the library building
2006	completion of all the new university buildings

4. FINANCING AND INCOME GENERATION

4.1 Financial Practice of Italian Universities

Principally we have to distinguish between the State universities and the small number of free or privately-run universities.

The State universities, until a few years ago, were run and financed by the State in a quite centralized form. But in 1993 a new financial system by budget was introduced by law. In the future the State universities shall have a large financial autonomy and responsibility, according to the new radical university reform approved by Parliament this year. Until today, the main financial funds of the State universities have come from the State itself. In some cases the town or regional councils support the foundation and the growing of universities or of their infrastructures.

The few free or privately-run universities are mostly financed by economically powerful institutions, foundations, banks, firms, and by study fees.

4.2 *The Bozen Case: 1 - Financing of the Current Costs of the University*

<i>Income generation</i>	<i>1999</i>	<i>Future</i>
Contributions of the Province of South Tyrol	87.4 %	50 %
Contributions of the Italian State	6.8 %	25 %
Sponsors, foundations etc.	4.1 %	15 %
Study fees	1.7 %	10 %

The Free University of Bozen-Bolzano, in the first two years after the foundation, has been financed above all by the Autonomous Province of South Tyrol. The State contributed with funds based on the number of students. The University - especially the University Library - is funded, in addition, by sponsors and foundations. A small part of the income is supplied by study fees.

4.3 *The Bozen Case: 2 - Structuring and Financing of the Current Costs of the University Library*

In 1999, the University had the following expenses for the Library:

	<i>in %</i>
Media acquisition	49.3 %
Staff	32.6 %
Other costs	18.0 %

The media acquisition is exclusively financed by the Foundation of the South Tyrol Savings Bank. Staff and other costs are covered by the University from its own income.

4.4 *The Bozen Case: 3 - Financing of the University Buildings*

The temporary sites and the new buildings for the University in Bozen and in Brixen are provided and financed by the Autonomous Province of Bozen-Bolzano.

The following items will give you an exact view of the foreseen expenses (building, furniture and equipment, fees):

*The Library as a Service Point. The Case of the Bozen University Library:
Planning, Building, Financing*

Temporary university sites Bozen and Brixen	9,810,000 Euro
New university buildings Bozen	91,840,000 Euro
New university buildings Brixen	55,470,000 Euro
Total costs university sites	157,120,000 Euro

New library building Bozen	16,840,000 Euro
New library building Brixen	5,615,000 Euro
Total costs library buildings	22,455,000 Euro

Dr. Franz Berger & Klaus Kempf
University Library
Free University of Bozen-Bolzano
Seminargasse 4
39042 Brixen, Italy
Franz.Berger@unibz.it