

Docks Torino Dora: The not discriminating library

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The choice to develop in the Docks Torino Dora (the ex-customs-houses of the homonymous station) a not discriminating library, where everybody can have access, come out whether of the interest in an architecture without barriers, in which all people are free to move without depending on anybody and have a place to meet other people, or of the importance of the reading, one of the main learning and cultural training instrument for everyone. The thesis is structured in three parts: the opening is a historical excursus about the development of the library from that of Ninive, the first archives that we know, until the contemporary examples. The study of the library and of its dimensions is followed from some examples of Nineties' library. The second part treats in detail of the theme of the library for visually disabled people, where the general subjects of blindness and of the blind's stereotype are followed from a part about the writing and reading methods used from the blinds. Whether the old methods already in use or the modern technologies are described. The main subject of the thesis is the multisensorial planning; here are analysed the elements, that a not discriminating planning must always take into consideration. Then we dwell, as in the previous part, upon the features, that a library specifically for blind must have and we describe the necessary devices to make it accessible and independently enjoyable for a visually disabled person. We concluded with the filing of some examples of libraries, which were planned for blinds. The third part describes the project. The opening is a presentation of the area of the intervention: the Docks Torino Dora. We analyse the connection with the territory, the architectural and building features (specifically the Hennebique system) and the connection with the town-planning scheme. Afterwards are presented the selected functions and consulted reference rules. The specific data of the project inform of the dimensions of the library, of its organising scheme and of the contrivances to make the library a not discriminating one (study of the ways, the flooring, the finishes, the colours, etc...).

The multisensorial planning

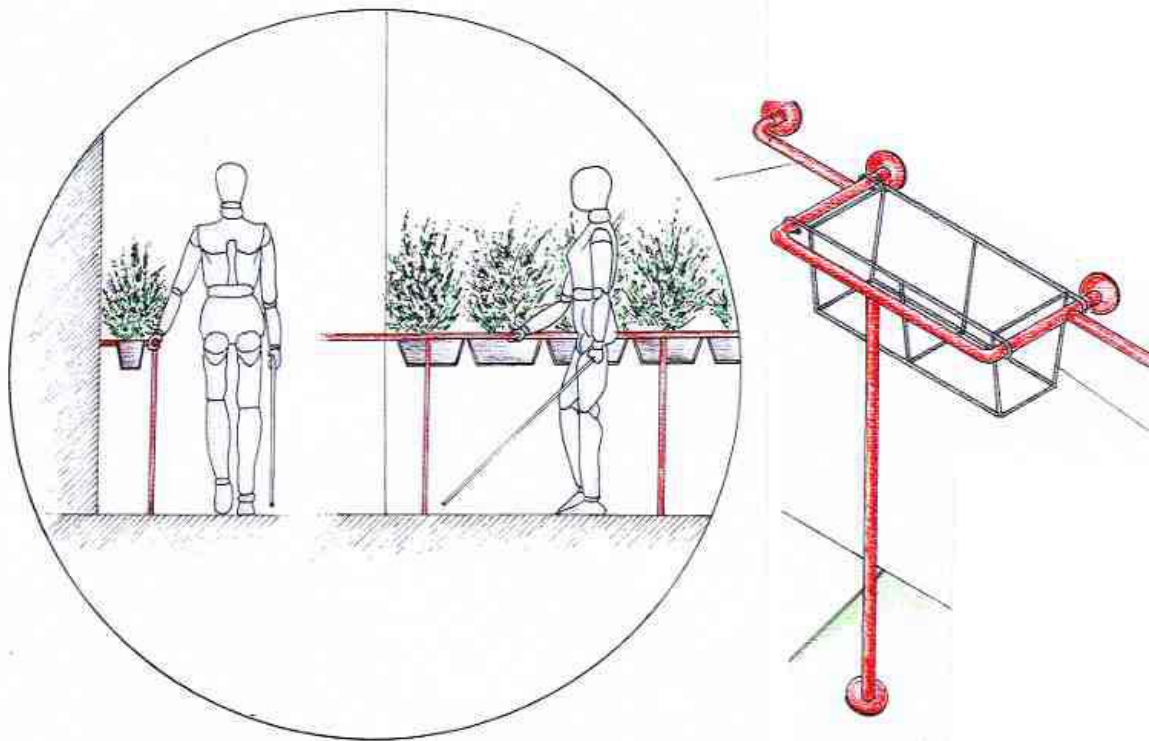
Traditionally in the planning of a built environment is believed that the orientation and the mobility of normally seeing people are a direct consequence of the number and quality of the visual clues, that can be located in the room, besides of the subject's perceptive faculties. The image is therefore the predominant element. If you think, that it doesn't identify itself with the objet, but it is only a representation of it, it is obvious, that the simultaneous usage of all senses stimulates the human perceptive potential, because the human being "...knows only through the experience of the body, through an incarnate acting."

This is the reason, that "a planning, that takes into consideration the visually disabled people's needs, ..., must base on the usage of clues and contrivances, which can be caught on by other senses too, and therefore which can be really recognised from everybody, making concrete the possibility to assure the conditions of accessibility, safety and comfort in all environments."

So, using the theorised directions and considering the space as composed of different clues, the human senses are stimulated (the most dozy too) and an immediate comprehension of the message and its memorisation along the time are allowed.

We speak then about *multisensoriality*: a planning which uses many sensorial channels to obtain more pleasant and comprehensible spaces, a redundancy of clues, that stimulates everybody (the most inattentive too), a "different" way of planning, in order that there are no more people to consider "different". There are many sensorial clues, which make up the *planning for everybody*:

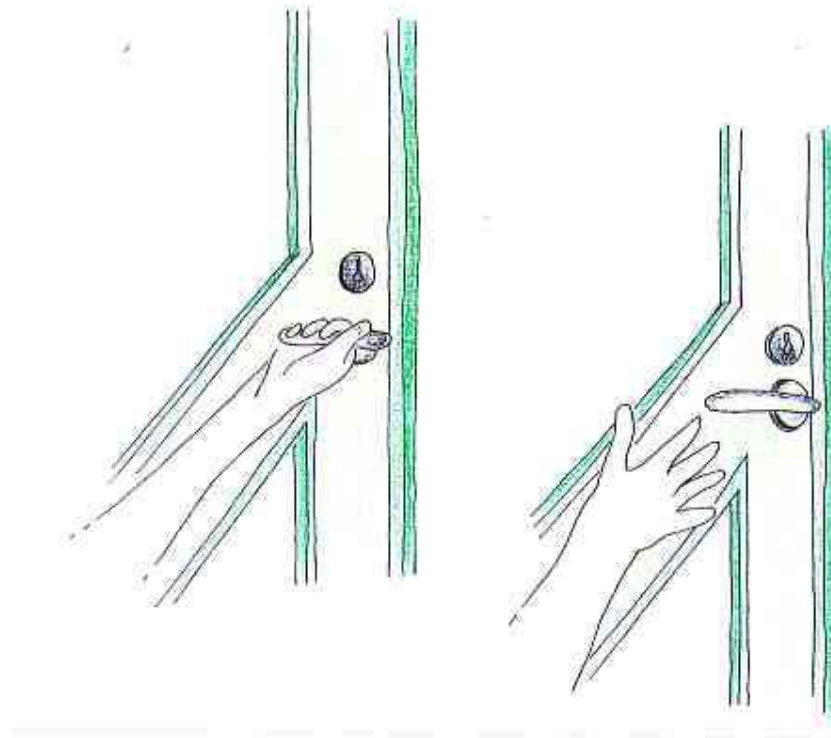
- *the visual clue*: it plays an important part, because it allows to locate the way to follow, to keep one's balance, to anticipate and to avoid the obstacles;
- *the hearing clue*: it is, so as the sight, a remote perception, which helps the mental structuring of the space;



Handrail with sweet-smelling plants

Active tactile clue as a support for the deambulation and natural diffusive olfactory clue through a particularly scented smell (jasmine, lavender, ...).

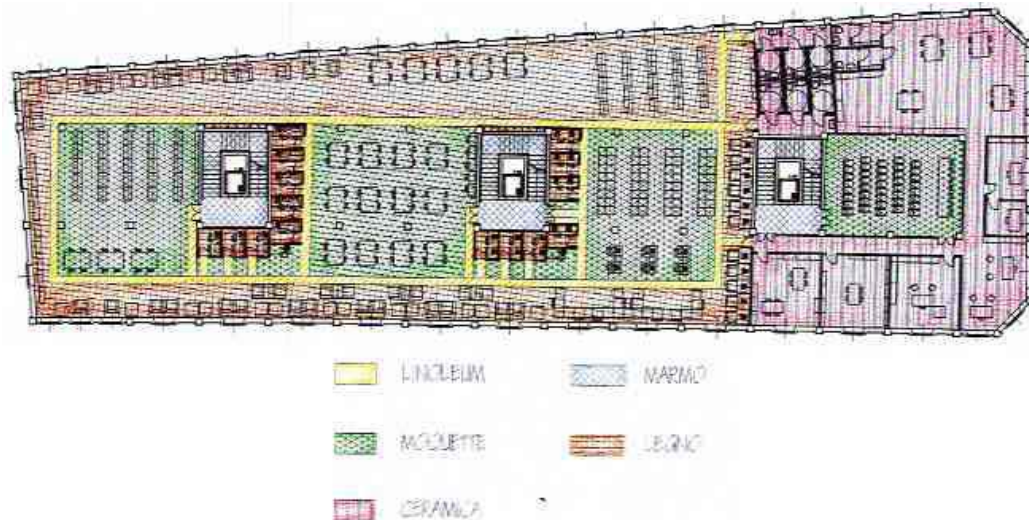
- *the olfactory clue*: it points out the nature and if an objet is near or not, even if the faculty to locate exactly the position of the source is very restricted;



Planning contrivance.

Active tactile clue to help the sensorially disabled person to orientate himself in a new environment.

- *the tactile clues*: it is connected to a direct approach with the objet: it can be a passive incentive (something/someone touches the person) or an active feeling (the person explores);



Man-made guide path

Plantar tactile clue, this is to say expressly realized floorings, which because of colour, shape and texture, help the visually disabled people in unknown places too.

- *the hygrothermal clue*: it is based on the perception of the radiant energy, that is given out from a source in the surrounding or on the relative humidity, that the person perceives;
- *the kine-aesthetic clue*: it is connected to the movement and to the person's position in the space, it allows to perceive the distance and the dynamic and static tridimensionality.

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