

## **BOOKSTORE**

### **A Cultural Center on the Fortress**

The building which is an example of traditional civil architecture is situated on Burçüstü Street in the Tophane district of Bursa. Due to a fire in 1995, it had lost its roof completely and was open to all weather conditions. Thus, the roof structure was demolished, the building construction was eroded and some details were worn out. The original load bearing structure of the building constituted of wood frame filled in with brick: a half timber construction.

The new owner of the building who bought it in 1996, decided to refunction it as a bookstore also to be used as a library, preserving its architectural characteristics, spatial and structural qualities, contributing to the cultural identity of Bursa.

Even though this new function was appropriate in conserving the building, its situation being apart from the central trade area, the addition of such functions as exhibition and meeting halls, music center and coffee house was recommended.

It is a known fact that if such conserved buildings are not actually enlivened, conservation does not go beyond the concept of museum and it requires governmental funds for reconstruction and management.

The project design kept the original spatial structure of the building only adding some minor changes the new function required. The central-hall plan was preserved but some of the rooms were unified to gain exhibition space. High book shelves replaced the previously existing separation walls of these unified spaces, thus maintaining the original plan. Although the number of available rooms was diminished, a supplementary structure in the garden, which did not have any relationship with the building was pulled down. The burned down wooden structure of the building was rebuilt in reinforced concrete, but in order to preserve the original interior details, their surveys were made (such as ceiling, floor, interior doors, eaves). Some of these components were reused after being exposed to physical and chemical conservation processes and some of them were rebuilt according to the survey drawings in order to revitalize the original image of the building. The detail surveys were used as application details combined with the reinforced concrete structure in all possible points.

In the restoration process the main aim was to keep the original details of the building which were accurately identified. Another important aim was to solve the essential elements of the present building such as heating, ventilation, lighting and communication, not contradicting with the original details but fulfilling the requirements of the bookstore.

Adapting historical buildings to their new functions enables them to survive. Usually, one of the most frequent problems in the restoration of old buildings is such details which lose the original qualities of the building while keeping up with the present

comfort qualifications.

All the furniture of the building was designed in harmony with the old style without imitating them.

The first and second floors are mainly reserved for such functions as reading, studying and book sale. Meeting and exhibition halls designed to accommodate various cultural and social activities are arranged in the second floor. The coffee house in the ground floor opens up to the garden. This area can also be used as a meeting hall and offers a pleasant space to read periodicals, living every hour of the day. The garden with its high stone walls is a typical, withdrawn Ottoman garden. Besides being an extension of the coffee house with its natural and unexaggerated flora, it is a unifying, relaxing element perceived from all floors.

The music house in the basement does not follow the concept of designing new details in accordance with the original ones. The annex basement which was gained in order to reach firm ground because of static reasons, emphasizes the difference of this space from the historical building through its contemporary materials and modern design. In this area, people are offered unique and distinguished musical pieces not available everywhere and the relation of the building to the present is pointed out.

The bookstore, besides fulfilling a social and cultural mission, is a small scale, humble example that shows that historical buildings and sites can survive in the present without losing their historical identity and value.