

CDEC Foundation: A new Venue for the Library and Archive

by *Gadi Luzzatto Voghera*



I am very proud to announce that the CDEC Foundation (Contemporary Jewish Documentation Center) inaugurated its new headquarters at the Memorial of the Shoah in Milan, Italy, on June 14th, 2022. A place dedicated to the memory of the deportation of Jews and antifascists located in the belly of the Central Railway Station and visited by dozens of thousands of people every year is now associated with an Institution devoted to historical research. The new space houses the offices of the Educational Department, the Antisemitism Watchdog and the Department dedicated to historical research. In a separate space, in the heart of the Memorial, visitors can find the Archives and the Library, designed by the Morpurgo De Curtis architectural studio. The new library of the CDEC Foundation features large windows at street level, symbolically opening up to citizens to become a place for aggregation, dialogue and participation. The library is spread over three levels (ground floor, basement and mezzanine), has 48 reading places and is easily accessible even from considerable distances thanks to its geographical location. This is not meant to be just a place for study, reading and individual confrontation

with knowledge, but also a place of encounter, connection and pluralism. A cultural defense against disinformation, where people can take part in the circulation of knowledge and reach shared reflections. CDEC offers a welcoming and inclusive space, made available to the city, where you can spend time and imagine possible paths on which to travel together, as individuals and as a community. Next to the library, it is possible to use the Auditorium for conferences and public events, and various laboratory spaces for organizing workshops and educational events. Temporary exhibitions are displayed in the same area in a pleasant exhibition space.

The CDEC Foundation archive is partly included in the library space and collects paper and digital documentation related to the history of Jews in Italy from the age of emancipation to the present day. About 600 linear meters of material have been preserved here since the mid-1950s. The collections, both personal and belonging to Jewish organizations and institutions include, among other things, testimonies, personal papers, diaries, memoirs and photographs. The inventory of the collection is available on the Foundation's online website www.cdec.it in the section dedicated to the Digital Library <http://digital-library.cdec.it/cdec-web/>. We imagine these spaces as the most appropriate to give substance to the existing conventions and agreements with universities and research departments, offering young researchers the opportunity to spend periods of work in a welcoming place that offers the largest specialized library and archival collection on contemporary Judaism in Italy.

Gadi Luzzatto Voghera, CDEC Foundation Director