

ARAB-SOUTH AMERICAN LIBRARY

location:	Zeralda (Algeria)
client:	Algerian Ministry of Culture
consultants:	STUDI Ingénierie (structure and services); IOSIS (project management); LUXIGON (visuals)
gross surface:	67 300sqm
cost:	109,0M € excl. VAT
phase:	restricted competition
timetable:	03.2008-06.2008
awards:	honourable mention

The project for the Arab-South American new public library finds its origin in the desire to assert clearly, almost literally, the duality of the program: while it is composed by two entities (representing two cultures), these two entities are closely connected, sharing a common basement of knowledge and history.

The geographic analogy of continental drift seems to be so strong and quite obvious.

Plate tectonics explains their current form by this theory: at the origin the African and American continents formed just one land; they slowly split into two separate entities. However, both of them have retained in their shape, the memory of the other.

The project takes this beautiful image: two parts, each one representing a culture leaned on a common core, each having a shape that get married to the other one. In this way, the building is formed by a single volume for the first five floors, then it splits into two different towers facing each other till the rooftop.

