

Laveno Street Houses by Marco Zanuso. An Outstanding Experiment in Lightweight Prefabrication

Giovanni Conca^{1*}

^{1*} – Fondazione Archivio del Moderno, Università della Svizzera Italiana, Balerna (Switzerland),
giovanni.conca@usi.ch

Abstract

The paper focuses on one of the most interesting experiences in Italy about light prefabrication, developed by the Milanese architect and designer Marco Zanuso (1916-2001), a major protagonist at the national level in the debate on building industrialisation, together with the company FEAL (*Fonderie Elettriche Alluminio e Leghe*), an important Italian enterprise developing steel construction systems and producing aluminium building components. In the first half of the 1960s, Zanuso experimented with the VAR/M3 prefabricated system produced by FEAL for school buildings and tested its application to two housing complexes in Milano. Using this system, Zanuso built two apartment complexes, both in Milano: one at Laveno Street (1960-1963) and the other at Solaroli Street (1965-1967), now Coari Street. The first of these two projects is especially significant for its experimental approach and the formal result achieved, which was favourably received by critics at the time but is still little studied today.

Keywords: Marco Zanuso, FEAL, Laveno Street Houses, Lightweight prefabrication

1. Introduction

In Italy, after the World War, the industry significantly developed mainly in the mechanical sector, but the building practice remains primarily tied to traditional masonry construction methods. Even the most modern and advanced concrete technology grows, in fact, in a substantially handcrafted manner, which «does not entail an industrial conception of building construction but stands as an evolved version of masonry work» [1].

In such a context, the use of steel, which had characterised some important experiences in the pre-war period, retains its episodic character, even if there are also experiments for a revival of metal construction. Due to the expansion of the steel industry and thanks to the promotional activity carried out by lots of magazines, among them *Costruzioni Industriali* published since 1949, a greater awareness of the technical possibilities offered by light prefabrication spread in the 1960s. These changes lead to a series of important realisations by well-known designers, from workplaces to commercial buildings.

At that time we face the development of two strands in metal construction research. The former is directed towards the study of the curtain wall, considered a typical element of modernity; the latter, on the other hand, attempts to pursue an Italian line characterised by a form of the expressive potential of structural steel skeletons.

Unlike the international framework, Italian designers start exploring metal construction as a technology with specific characteristics and a linguistic field only from the end of the 1950s, mainly in office buildings. For the first stand, there are a series of exemplary works, such as the *Centro Direzionale Eni* by Marco Baciagalupo and Ugo Ratti (1960-1962), that remained for years the largest steel building constructed in Italy, and the ESSO headquarters at EUR (*Esposizione Universale di Roma*) by Luigi Moretti (1961-1965). There are also less important examples, but significant at the same time, including the RAI Management Centre by Francesco Berarducci and Alessandro Fioroni (1961-1965) and the INA (*Istituto Nazionale delle Assicurazioni*) complex by Venturino Ventura (1960-1961). These buildings, where the main structure and the façade are made of steel, are flanked by others, such as the office building in Via Torino by Adalberto Libera (1957-1958) and the Pirelli

47 skyscraper in Milano by Gio Ponti (1955-1960), for which the frame structure is in concrete, and all façades in
48 a glass and aluminium curtain wall. To the second line of research, closer to constructive realism and
49 characterised by structural expressionism, we can list works such as the *Rinascence* in Roma by Franco Albini
50 and Franca Helg (1957-1961), the ADISU (*Azienda per il Diritto allo Studio Universitario*) headquarters
51 (1967), also in Roma, by Enrico Mandolesi and the office building in Piazza Meda in Milano by BBPR (1969).
52 The exponential population increase at the beginning of the 1960s determined the political and social urgency
53 to build many schools in a short time and at a low cost [2]. Therefore, the Ministry of Education launched a
54 public programme to adopt alternative construction techniques to develop lightweight prefabricated
55 dry-mounted systems. In 1960, the *XII Triennale di Milano* set up the *La Casa e la Scuola* (The Home and School)
56 Exhibition, promoting several collateral initiatives, including the *Competition for the study of industrialised
57 elements for elementary school buildings*.

58 The prefabrication topic, which was already widespread abroad, start to be discussed by the major designers
59 who, in these years, establish various partnerships with some enterprises (Disegnor-SALVINI, Magnaghi-
60 Terzaghi-SNAM, Albini-SECCO, Minoletti-HOLIDAY, Pellegrin-BENINI, Pellegrin-Dea-MONTEDISON,
61 Valle-VALDADIGE). The design challenge of prefabrication begins: it gives rise to a series of interesting
62 experiments. Industrialisation quickly extends from school buildings to residential buildings, where steel frames
63 and light metal components were not employed, but heavy prefabrication with concrete panels on the French
64 model was employed. The only notable exceptions among the numerous *INA-Casa* Plan construction sites are
65 the Prà district in Genoa (1960-1961) and the CECA (*Comunità Europea Carbone e Acciaio*) district in
66 Piombino, Livorno (1963-1967), both built by the steel company *Italsider* for its employees. The synergy
67 between Marco Zanuso and FEAL (*Fonderie Elettriche Alluminio e Acciaio*), leading to the realisation of the
68 houses in Milano at Laveno Street and those at Solaroli Street between 1960 and 1965, is particularly significant.
69 Using the prefabricated VAR-M3 System developed by FEAL for school buildings, Zanuso is one of the first
70 architects to use light prefabrication for a residential complex, paving the way for the debate on open-cycle
71 building industrialisation with metal components that would only develop in the following years.

72 2. For industrialised construction. Marco Zanuso and FEAL

73 After the war, Zanuso was interested in industrial prefabrication within the debate promoted by the MSA
74 (*Movimento Studi per l'Architettura*), publishing in the first issues of *Domus* magazine, together with Paolo
75 Chessa, three articles titled *The prefabricated house*. In these writings, Zanuso and Chessa declare a clear
76 programmatic purpose to renew building methods according to the possibilities offered by industry: «[...] we
77 cannot longer think of construction as modelled, cast, conglomerate – the two architects write – but assembled.
78 We must think of construction elements, prefabricated in the workshops and mounted on the building site using
79 exact and well-defined jointing pieces» [3]. The focus is therefore on the «ready-to-assemble element», which
80 provides for the same «organisation of transport and assembly as for any other industrial product, such as
81 cars, aircrafts, boats» [4]. The adoption of the first seven years of the *INA-Casa* Plan inhibits and interrupts the
82 debate on building industrialisation, promoted by several Milanese architects and partly tested in the well-
83 known O7S (*Quartiere Triennale 8*) district. Despite this, at the *Convegno del progresso edile*, held in Milano
84 in April 1953, Zanuso relaunches the idea of an architectural design approach based on the *industrial model*. In
85 his intervention, the Milanese architect declares his aim to establish a replicable *principle* that has «as broad a
86 validity as possible in adhering to similar requirements» and also states that «the house is an object of use» [5].
87 During the same year, Zanuso has the opportunity to visit some schools in England built by the county of
88 Hertfordshire following prefabricated and modular systems. This trip represents for the Milanese architect a
89 revelation about the potential of building industrialisation [6]. Zanuso remains particularly impressed by this
90 experiment in social architecture by using industrial methods, and the following year, he writes an article for
91 *Casabella* magazine about the school planning experience in England. By publishing in the magazine the *punt*
92 *system* designed by the engineer Ove Arup [7] Zanuso is aware of a functional way of building, not based on

93 finished elements and their assembly, but on «a constructive simplicity, a structural evidence, materials
94 economy and especially a compositional flexibility» such as to confirm his conviction that industry can «take
95 part in architecture as a propulsive energy of new forms and new compositive freedom»[8]. In this way, Zanuso
96 renews his interest in architecture, which is closely linked to industrial design and building industrialisation
97 matters. However, the Milanese architect believes that industrial construction should not be limited to
98 standardized buildings but should be oriented towards open prefabrication that, through many combinations and
99 a wide dimensional range of mass-produced components, can provide an efficient and sufficiently adaptable
100 approach to building.

101 Zanuso finally has the opportunity to implement these intentions through relationships he established with
102 engineer Giovanni Varlonga, a member of ADI (*Associazione per il Disegno Industriale*) since 1957 and
103 founder of FEAL founded in 1945 in Milano, which initially produced die-cast joints and later expanded
104 production into building components (door and window frames, handles, false ceilings, movable walls,
105 radiators, roofing and facade panels). For the innovations brought in the field of construction, FEAL excels
106 among other companies and, in the 1960 award edition of the *Premio Compasso d'Oro*, it receives an
107 honourable mention for the up-and-down window frame and is also awarded for the aluminium radiator
108 *Thermovar*. Varlonga is involved, already in the 1950s as an industrialist and designer, on lightweight
109 prefabrication: at the *X Triennale* in 1954, FEAL had, in fact, participated with the *Industrialised Vertical House*
110 *Element*, designed with engineer Fabio Fratti of the company's Technical Office and in collaboration with
111 architect Ippolito Malaguzzi Valeri (Fig. 1). In later years, FEAL begins intensive activity in exhibition
112 construction, reaching international notoriety, and patents several new building solutions (Fig. 2). In the mid-
113 1970s, at the top of its economic success, FEAL comes to own three operating divisions: Components (to
114 manufacture the components in its two plants in Milano and Pomezia), Construction (to design civil and
115 industrial buildings), and Plants (to set up industrial complexes for production). Other than Salvit of Milano,
116 FEAL becomes the leading company in Italy to develop open-cycle lightweight prefabrication, developing in
117 the late 1950s the VAR-M3 dry modular system (Fig. 3). The VAR-M3 system, then modified and
118 commercialized until the 1980s, uses a 30 cm module on which all other components are sized in multiples
119 and submultiples. Zanuso plans to test the feasibility of applying to housing construction the VAR-M3 system,
120 employed until then for school buildings, checking «its versatility in responding to a need of architecture, for
121 richer and more complex volumetric articulation, with the possibility of being used with different materials and
122 coexisting with other complementary building systems»[9].
123

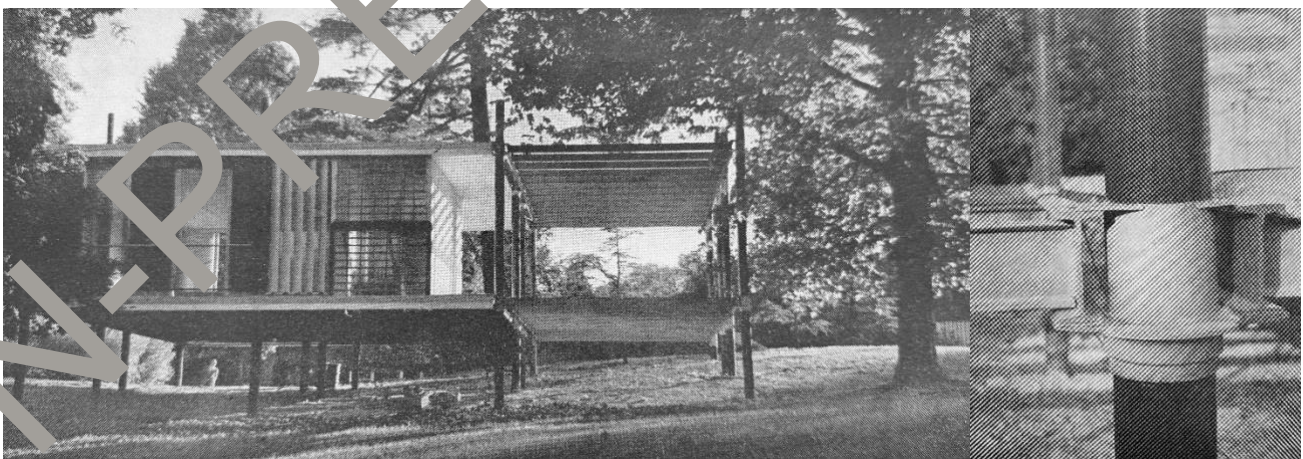


Fig. 1. Right - Industrialised Vertical House Element at the X Triennale in 1954, designed by FEAL. Source: CASABELLA 203; Left - Detail of Vertical House Element at the X Triennale. Source: CASABELLA 203

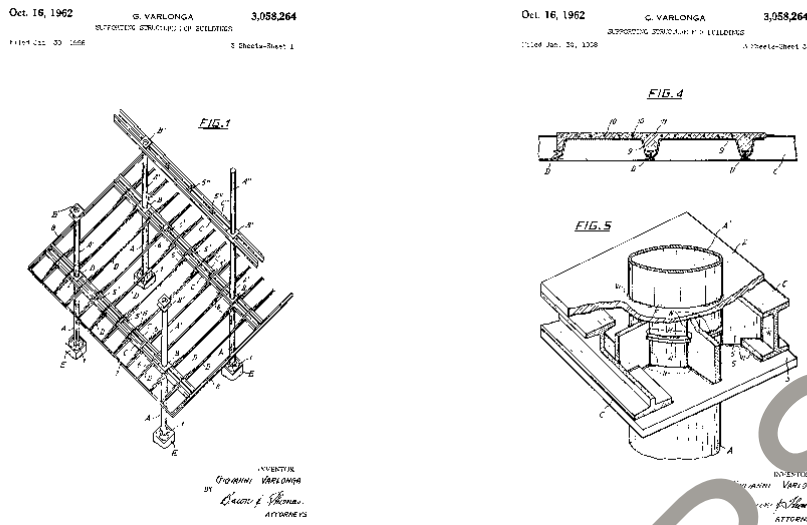


Fig. 2. Patents of the load-bearing steel frame structure. Source: Google Patents

125

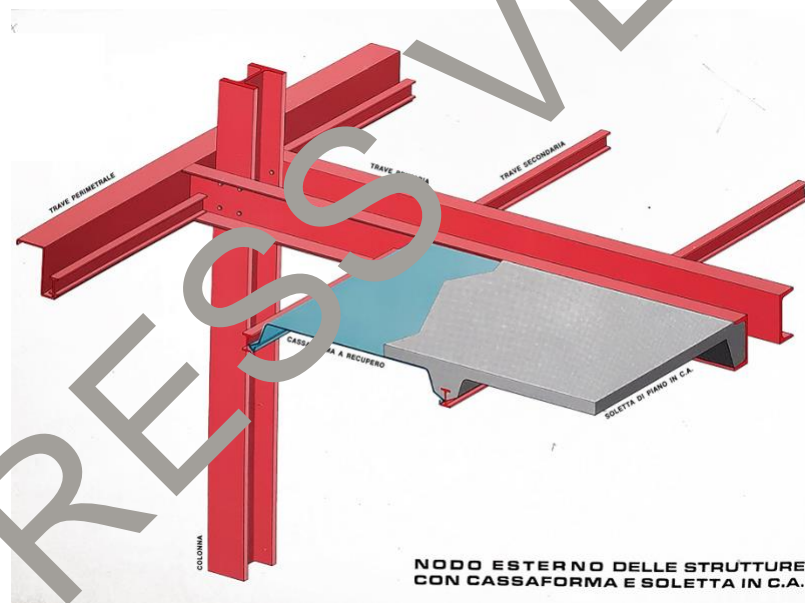


Fig. 3. Var M3 system steel structure. Source: catalog, Var M3: sistema coordinato di edilizia industrializzata, n.d. [Published after 1975]

126 The Laveno Street Apartment Complex: a prototype for mass-produced lightweight 127 prefabrication in housing

128 The project for FEAL Houses at Laveno Street fits fully into the debate on building industrialisation relating to
129 low-cost and social housing, especially rooted between the 1950s and 1960s in the Milanese context [10].

130 It is important to premise that the theme of affordable housing already interested Zanuso at the end of the 1940s
131 when he designed several affordable houses: the best known of them are those built for veterans in the QT8
132 district in Milano (1947-1948) with Roberto Menghi. Even in the second half of the 1950s, as a municipal

133 councillor, Zanuso worked on social housing initiatives, presenting reports and a motion to the city council in
134 1960 on the housing problem [11]. Although he is by now an established designer and architect with many
135 projects in progress, in these years, he takes part in one of the many urban planning projects of the *INA-Casa*
136 Plan, the largest urban development programme promoted by the Italian government. Indeed, together with
137 Luigi Caccia Dominioni, Alberto and Gian Paolo Valenti, he designs the *INA-Casa* Vialba I district in the
138 northern suburbs of Milano between 1957 and 1960. However, the standardization and prefabrication
139 hypotheses advocated by Zanuso and other Milanese architects since the immediate post-war period clash with
140 a situation still characterized in the 1950s by construction techniques that remain craft or semi-craft-based.
141 Despite being the most important social housing experiment in Italy, the *INA-Casa* Plan has been conceived to
142 increase employment, requiring a high labour input for building houses and excluding the widespread use of
143 prefabrication. This *anti-industrial* approach finally seems to be overcome, at least in part at the beginning of
144 the 1960s, when Milano is the scene of some political changes and sees a more concrete technological
145 development in the field of construction due to some important initiatives. The ever-increasing population
146 growth affecting the metropolis since 1951 and the consequent need to provide housing become the main issues
147 for the city council. In 1962, Piero Bassetti – budget councillor of the first centre-left council elected in 1960
148 with Gino Cassinis as mayor – entrusts the IACPM (*Istituto Autonomo Case Popolari di Milano*) with a four-
149 year plan for social housing, expecting to build 34,000 flats and approximately 120,000 rooms. A year later, the
150 Municipality of Milano also approves the *PEEP (Piano per l'Edilizia Economica e Popolare)*, which set out
151 the location of sixteen public housing projects in peripheral areas of the city, including the Sant'Ambrogio
152 district, the Gallaratese completion, Gratosoglio district, Missaglia district, the Olmi district and the Quarto
153 Cagnino district. In May 1955, on the IACPM's initiative, the *CRAI-CR (Centro per la Ricerca Applicata ai*
154 *Problemi dell'Edilizia Residenziale)* is also established with the aim of investigating the urban, social,
155 economic, productive and technical issues of social housing. A fundamental contribution to the debate on
156 prefabrication is provided by Giuseppe Ciribini's studies on using the production and organisational methods
157 of industry in construction. Due to Ciribini's dense relationship network with French institutions, the IACPM,
158 in order to cope with the construction of social housing in a short timeframe, stipulates an agreement in 1962
159 with several building firms (including from Meregaglia, Sicop, Fintech, Sepi, Romagnoli) holding French
160 patents for heavy prefabrication. Already used for grands ensembles, these French heavy prefabrication systems
161 – such as Balency, Barets, Camos, Cognet, Fico, and Costamagna – are now being used for the construction
162 of the new housing districts in the Milanese suburbs [12].

163 Therefore, if research and practical applications are moving towards heavy prefabrication, in which France is
164 the most important reference point, the all-Italian experimentation of light prefabrication conducted by Zanuso
165 and FEAL appears to be counterintuitive and particularly innovative. In fact, the Milanese architect opts for a more
166 flexible building industrialisation that is compatible with the Italian small business and does not need overly
167 burdensome investments. Precisely in the Laveno Street Houses, one of the first experiments in Italy on
168 lightweight prefabrication in housing, we can see Zanuso's commitment to exploring «the margins granted to
169 expression in the adoption of a prefabricated structure», as well as «a tendency to bring the problems of design
170 back to the excessive dimension of technology» [13].

171 Zanuso is probably in charge of the two buildings at 6 Laveno Street in early 1960 (Fig. 4). In October of the
172 same year, an enquiry on industrialised construction, entitled *Investigation at FEAL*, is published in *Stile*
173 *Industria* magazine, with contributions by Gianni Varlonga, Giuseppe Ciribini and Marco Zanuso. In his
174 intervention, the Milanese architect credits FEAL with a courageous commitment to the problem of modular
175 coordination and building industrialisation. «The experience gained on each construction site, which usually
176 comes to be lost, has been gathered here – says Zanuso – in a wealth of experimental data such as are an
177 industrial complex can condense. Every rabbit, every seam, every joint has been tested, modified and led to a
178 point of perfection that is the only guarantee of a product» [14].

179



Fig. 4a-b-c. FEAL Houses complex views. Source: Fondo Marco Zanuso, Archivio del Moderno, Balerna

180 From documents kept in the Archives of the City of Milano, we learn that the developer and owner of the plot
181 at 6 Laveno Street is the Edilvar Cooperative, with engineer Fabio Fratti as president in charge (Fig. 5).
182

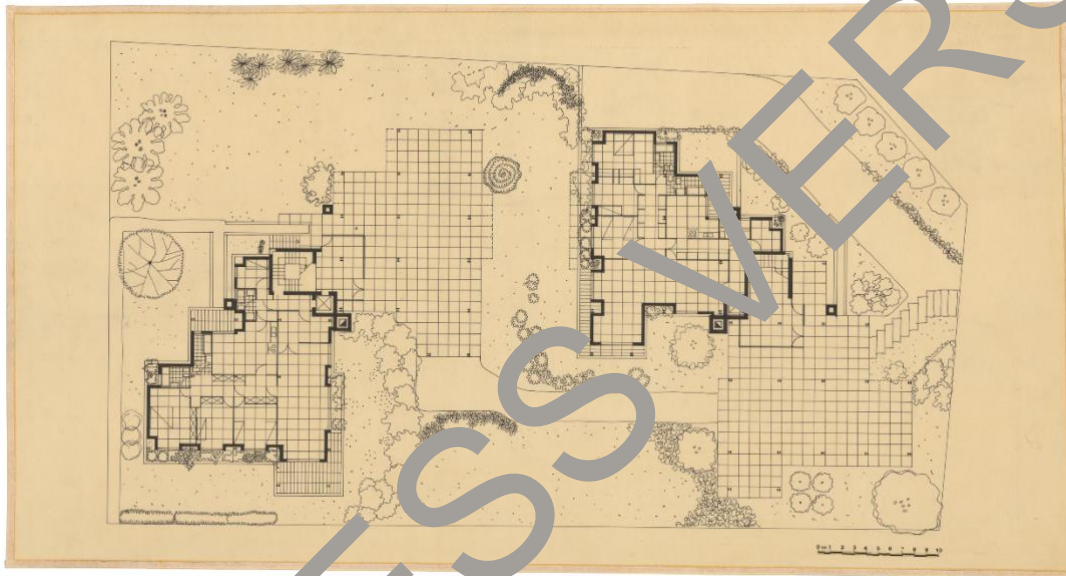


Fig. 5. FEAL Houses on Laveno Street floor plan. Source: Fondo Marco Zanuso, Archivio del Moderno, Balerna

183 In April 1961, the Municipality and the Cooperative sign an agreement to sell the land: two residential units are
184 to be built within two years, and the apartments must be assigned only to members. Among others, Giovanni
185 Varlonga, Fabio Fratti, and Marco Zanuso himself, who will move his studio there. As early as the first draft
186 project, drawn up between January and February 1961, the twin buildings are set rotated 90° to each other, with
187 access from the short side of Laveno Street. The buildings' perimeter is very jagged, and the two apartments on
188 each floor, distributed by a concrete staircase, are arranged on staggered levels (Fig. 6).



Fig. 6. Vico Magistretti, Residential, office and cinema building at 3 San Gregorio Street, Milano (1957-1959). Source: Facecity scrool 2012. Photo ©Pino Musi

189 The VAR-M3 system on a 90 cm module, triple the basic 30 cm module, is used in construction. The load-

190 bearing structure is made of steel HEB 180 pillars and main beams made of two NP 240 C-profiles, to which
191 secondary beams (double-T NP 80 profiles) are welded. The edge beams are bolted to the main beams, and on
192 them, the curtain wall uprights (IPE 100 profiles) are fixed with galvanized steel plates, which support the
193 brackets for mounting facade panels. The floors are assembled on the ground, with reusable aluminium
194 formwork set up between the secondary beams for slab casting, then lifted with a crane along the steel columns
195 used as a guide, and finally bolted in place [15]. Fabio Fratti specifies that in Zanuso's project, the windows on
196 the façade are up-and-down, while those on the loggias are two-sash sliding. Windowsills and light alloy frames
197 are fixed to the uprights by special aluminium fittings [16]. The interior walls are realized with modular panels,
198 consisting of two steel plate surfaces stiffened by metal profiles on the inside and finished with baked-on paint.
199 The suspended ceilings are of the *Soundvar* type, also produced by FEAL, with 15 cm wide aluminium slats
200 suspended from galvanised sheet metal rails.

201 The VAR-M3 system is creatively used by Zanuso, who succeeds in the extreme compositional flexibility of
202 prefabricated modules by adopting standard elements. In the project report, the architect himself recalls how he
203 concentrated «on the modularity of the concave and convex corner joints» [17]. The layout of the uprights on
204 the façade follows, with some exceptions, the 90 cm module, while the structure grid of the pillars fits a module
205 of 30 cm. The pillars are offset to the 90 cm grid, allowing Zanuso compositional freedom to respond to the
206 different functional needs of the floor plan. The structure's geometry appears at the portico level, where the
207 columns are free and form a main span of 6 m and a side span of 4 m with intercolumniations varying from
208 4.2 to 3.6 m. The different modularity between columns and envelope produces two different geometric layouts
209 that create unexpected variations that are totally surprising in a prefabricated building based on a strictly
210 modular approach. Besides technical and constructive experimentation, the Laveno Street buildings also reveal
211 particular care in the use of materials and design of the details, characterized by the vertical rhythm of uprights
212 and openings. The main modification that Zanuso introduces in the VAR-M3 system concerns the prefabricated
213 panel, 6 cm thick, composed of polyurethane insulation enclosed inside by a steel sheet and outside by an
214 aluminium one.

215 The Milanese architect thinks of transforming a conventional curtain wall into a particularly textured wall face:
216 he adds a natural stone slab (*piperino* grey trachyte) to the standard panel, with a glass wool cavity in between.
217 The solution proposed by Zanuso thus blends lightweight prefabrication technological innovation with a close
218 reference to the Milanese building tradition.

219 The VAR-M3 system's modularity hence characterises the two buildings, but at the same time, their image is
220 not monotonous but instead is articulated in depth and height by the protruding volumes and voids of the
221 balconies. Similar research on façade composition with prefabricated panels and expressive interpretation of
222 the curtain wall can also be found in some contemporary works by Vico Magistretti. In the first case, reference
223 can be made to the building designed by Magistretti at 3 San Gregorio Street in Milano (1957-1959), where the
224 façade is marked by irregularly spaced pillars, clad in granite and rotated by 45°, and by a prefabricated concrete
225 panel cladding with a characteristic burgundy-coloured grit finish (Fig. 6). As in the buildings at Laveno Street,
226 the laying of the panels is irregular, while the particular colour solution is a successful reference to the brick
227 wall of the nearby Lazzaretto. Additionally, in this project by Magistretti, it is interesting to note the vertical
228 shape of the opening, which is likewise taken up in Zanuso's apartment complex. The use of such proportions
229 is not an insignificant detail: these openings clearly differ from the typical rationalist window as seen in Milano
230 in some buildings [18]. The windows at San Gregorio Street and those at Laveno Street find references in other
231 buildings, such as *Casa al Parco* (1948) by Ignazio Gardella and Caccia Dominioni's house in Piazza
232 Sant'Ambrogio (1949). However, the most direct reference is to Milano's historical and popular housing, often
233 characterized by full-height windows with metal parapets and wooden shutters. Nevertheless, in their buildings,
234 Magistretti and Zanuso focus on another opening type, smaller in width, which creates a more articulated and
235 wavy composition. The shape is still rectangular, but the small size and very stretched proportions make these
236 openings look like cuts engraved in the wall that recall Lucio Fontana's canvas with vertical slashes. In the
237 Laveno Street building, these *arrow slits* emphasised by the proximity of the aluminium uprights, produce a

238 particularly marked and original caesura, breaking the curtain wall's regularity. As far as the expressive
239 interpretation of the curtain wall is concerned, an emblematic example is the building in Corso Europa (1955-
240 1957), also designed by Magistretti, where the façade is punctuated by pillars, uprights and a vertical ribbon
241 window (Fig. 8). The graphic layout of the openings is carefully studied, using construction solutions already
242 on the market and employing standard window frames. Magistretti designed a module, repeated six times in
243 each bay, with the glazed part in the shape of an asymmetric T (the two sidebands are of different widths) and
244 two low areas at the sides in polished white granite slabs. The façade's dynamism, resulting from the vertical
245 glazed bands and pillars, and the juxtaposition of various-sized windows in Corso Europa recall the vertical
246 rhythmic scansion and window modules of the Laveno Street building. Although with different outcomes, these
247 two projects belong to a broader line of research on the curtain wall topic, mainly experimented by Milanese
248 architects [19]. However, the façades of Magistretti and Zanuso's buildings do not replicate the usual and
249 anonymous curtain wall model widespread in other countries; they arise from specific experiments and a
250 particular project reinterpretation. Both examples are representative of an *Italian-style curtain wall*, as defined
251 by Sergio Poretti, where the international language of the glass and metal façade «is subjected to such a minute
252 reworking that it eventually turns into local dialect, enriching the variegated range of intonations of Italian
253 modernisms» [20] Indeed, although Magistretti and Zanuso use prefabricated elements, their buildings do not
254 result from a simple assembly but are characterized by a distinctive composition and expressiveness in the facade
255 design.



Fig. 8. Fulvio Magistretti, Office building at 22 Corso Europa, Milano (1955-1957). Source: Fulvio Irace, Vanni Anselmi, *Architettura* (1999). Vico Magistretti Architetto e designer, *Electa*. Photo ©Gabriele Basilico

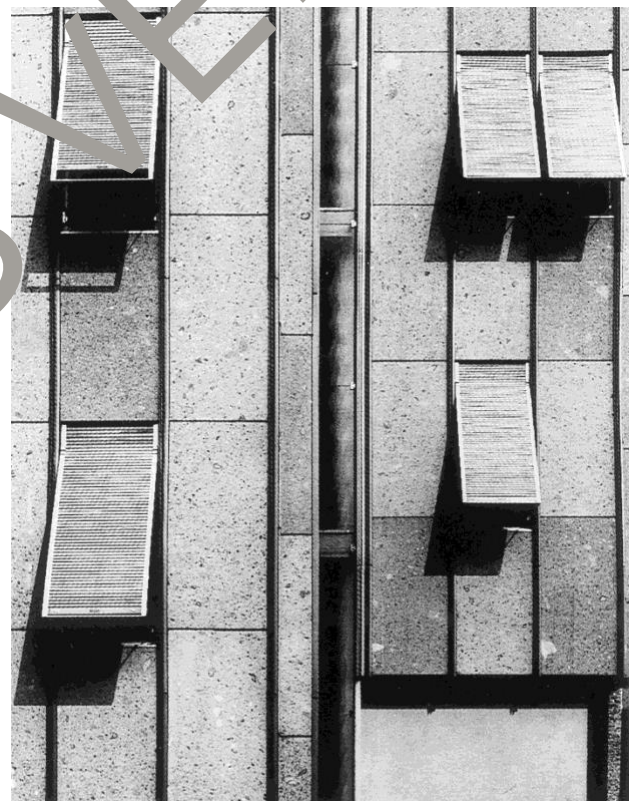


Fig. 9. FEAL Houses detail facade. Source: Fondo Marco Zanuso, *Archivio del Moderno*, Balerna

257 These considerations provide a better understanding of the original construction experiment carried out by
258 Zanuso in the Laveno Street complex: the modern lightweight prefabrication technique is combined with the
259 Milanese building tradition and historical reminiscences about parapets design of the terraces and balconies,
260 which, resembling battlements, allude to the debate on environmental pre-existences arising around the Velasca

261 Tower (Fig. 9). Despite the success of the FEAL Houses project, published in several magazines and awarded
 262 the prestigious national *IN/ARCH* prize for Lombardy region in 1966, Zanuso does not hide his regret for an
 263 interesting experiment that should have been continued «above all to explore the opportunity offered by the
 264 modular approach in the use of natural materials and dry assembly techniques» [21].

265 4. Conclusions

266 All efforts led by Zanuso and other architects, primarily Enrico Mandolesi, to promote lightweight
 267 prefabrication in housing were unfortunately unsuccessful. In the mid-1970s, due to the economic crisis,
 268 hypotheses about building industrialisation remain confined to a narrowly defined horizon. The use of steel by
 269 industrialised methods gradually decline even in those fields in which it has found wide use while within
 270 industry, experimentation returns to the technological aspects, focusing on research and the use of new
 271 materials.

272 This epilogue does not detract from Zanuso's research on lightweight prefabrication, which, though isolated -
 273 represents an important milestone in the history of twentieth-century Italian construction.

274 5. Acknowledgments

275 This essay is related to the research on the Marco Zanuso Fund, directed by Annalisa Viati Navone and Christian
 276 Sumi at the Archivio del Moderno, Balerna.

277 6. Funding

278 This research received no specific grant from funding agencies in the public, commercial, or not-for-profit
 279 sectors.

280 7. References

- 281 [1] Poretti S (1997) La costruzione. In: *Dal Caffè. Storia dell'architettura italiana. Il secondo Novecento*. Electa, Milano,
 282 p 285.
- 283 [2] Giannetti I (2016) The design of a system. Industrialized schools in Italy (1960-1975). *TEMA* Vol. 2, 1: 134-144.
 284 <https://doi.org/10.17410/tema.v2i1.88>
- 285 [3] Chessa P, Zanuso M (1946) I materiali. *DOMUS* 206: 31-33; now published with the title La casa prefabbricata. In:
 286 Zanuso M, Grignolo R (2013). *Scritti sulle tecniche di produzione e di progetto*, Silvana Editoriale - Mendrisio
 287 Academy Press, Cinisello Balsamo, p. 98
- 288 [4] Chessa P, Zanuso M (1946) I materiali. *DOMUS* 207: 17-19; now published with the title La casa prefabbricata. In:
 289 Zanuso M, Grignolo R (2013). *Scritti sulle tecniche di produzione e di progetto*, cit., p. 99
- 290 [5] Zanuso M (1953) Intervento al Convegno del progresso edile (Milano, 17-18 aprile e Napoli, 27 giugno 1953). In:
 291 *Atti dei Convegni del progresso edile indetti dall'“AGERE” (Associazione generale per l'edilizia)*, Roma; now
 292 published with the title *Lo studio dei modelli industriali e la produzione di serie*. In: Marco Zanuso, Roberta Grignolo
 293 (a cura di). *Scritti sulle tecniche di produzione e di progetto*, cit., pp. 115-125 (cit. p. 124)
- 294 [6] The travel notes include sketches of the building systems adopted in some of the English schools built in those years,
 295 including the Templewood School in Welwyn Garden City (1948-1950) (Cf. AdM, Fondo Marco Zanuso, MZ Via S
 296 1).
- 297 [7] The punt system is a simple, modular structural scheme, consisting of pillars, main beams and punts, elements with
 298 which the roof is constructed, alternating with simple closure panels.
- 299 [8] Zanuso M (1954) Il “Punt System”. *CASABELLA-CONTINUITÀ* 200: 44. In: Zanuso M, Grignolo R (2013). *Scritti*
 300 *sulle tecniche di produzione e di progetto*, cit., p. 129
- 301 [9] Zanuso M (s.d.) *Relazione di progetto sulle case in via Laveno*, manuscript (AdM, Fondo Marco Zanuso, MZ Con S
 302 225)
- 303 [10] In the municipality's deeds, it is pointed out that the publicly owned building area is granted «for the construction of

- 304 social and affordable housing» to be assigned to the members of the Edilvar cooperative.
- 305 [11] Zanuso M (1959) Relazione di Zanuso al Consiglio comunale. ATTI DEL COLLEGIO REGIONALE LOMBARDO
- 306 DEGLI ARCHITETTI 3: 22-30; cf. also the documentation of Zanuso's activities as a councillor in the municipality
- 307 of Milano (AdM, Fondo Marco Zanuso, MZ Pol S 1-2, MZ Pol S 3/1-2)
- 308 [12] Barazzetta G (2016) Profili e problemi della prefabbricazione italiana. ARCHIVIO STORICO AMMA, LE
- 309 CULTURE DELLA TECNICA 27: 23-36; Schiaffonati F (2014) Il contesto culturale e la nascita della disciplina. In:
- 310 AA.VV. La cultura tecnologica nella scuola milanese, Maggioli Editore, Santarcangelo di Romagna, pp. 17-31.
- 311 [13] Grandi M, Pracchi A (1998) Milano. Guida all'architettura moderna, Zanichelli, Bologna, p. 308
- 312 [14] Corsini C, Wiskemann G (1960) Interviste nell'industria: indagine alla FEAL. Per una edilizia industrializzata. STILE
- 313 INDUSTRIA 28: 28-35
- 314 [15] Information is from the project report kept in the Archives of the Municipality of Milano and the FEAL VAR M3
- 315 catalog, Var M3: sistema coordinato di edilizia industrializzata, n.d. [Published after 1975].
- 316 [16] Fratti F (1966) I tamponamenti esterni degli edifici. PREFABBRICARE 1: 25-32 [Laveno facade details drawings].
- 317 In the paper, Fratti reviews a number of buildings constructed using the Var/M3 system: the Laveno houses, a group
- 318 of schools in Genoa designed by Dasso and Bruzzone, the land registry offices in Freiburg, Germany.
- 319 [17] Zanuso M (s.d.) Relazione di progetto sulle case in via Laveno, manuscript (AdM, Fondo Marco Zanuso, MZ Con S
- 320 225)
- 321 [18] Among the many examples are Casa Rustici (1935) by Terragni, where the reinforced concrete frame enlarges the
- 322 holes horizontally; the Palazzo Montecatini by Gio Ponti (1936); the famous apartment block by Asnago and Vender
- 323 at Albricci Street (1939-1942/1953-1956), where windows keep the vertical aspect but with a less slender proportions,
- 324 often emphasised by the vertical bipartition of the window frame; or the Case Albergo by Luigi Moretti (1950), with
- 325 still horizontal holes.
- 326 [19] Interestingly, the appeal of curtain wall development in Italy came precisely from the world of industrial design.
- 327 Some issues of the magazine Stile Industria at the end of the 1950s published extensive reports on the spread of the
- 328 curtain wall in other countries, also delving into technical aspects and propagating Italian examples mainly by
- 329 Milanese architect-designers (Cf. Rosselli A (1958) Le facciate continue: un episodio di disegno industriale
- 330 nell'architettura. STILE INDUSTRIA 15:1-7; S.n. (1960) Facciate continue a Milano. STILE INDUSTRIA 26-
- 331 27:42-50; Corsini C, Wiskemann G (1961) Interviste nell'industria. Per una nuova espressione architettonica. STILE
- 332 INDUSTRIA 32:41-48).
- 333 [20] Poretti S (2011) Curtain wall all'italiana. In: AA.VV. La costruzione dell'architettura: temi e opere del dopoguerra
- 334 italiano, Gangemi Editore, Roma, pp. 38-41.
- 335 [21] Zanuso M (s.d.) Relazione di progetto sulle case in via Laveno, manuscript (AdM, Fondo Marco Zanuso, MZ Con S
- 336 225)