

# Minimum Documentation Fiche

composed by regional working party of LOMBARDIA, Italy

## 0.1 Picture of building



depicted item: Bocconi University, the entrance portico

source: photo Andrea Costa,

date: june, 2014

## 1. Identity of building

### 1.1 current name of building

“Luigi Bocconi” University

### 1.2 variant or former name

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### 1.3 number & name of the street

25, via Roberto Sarfatti

#### **1.4 town**

Milano

#### **1.5 province/state**

Lombardia

#### **1.6 zip code**

20136

#### **1.7 country**

Italy

#### **1.8 national grid reference**

45°44'84.1"N 9°18'99.67"E

#### **1.9 classification/typology**

Education

#### **1.10 protection status & date**

The east front is inside the landscape protected area of Ravizza Park (Regional Decree January, 27, 2010)

### **2 History of building**

#### **2.1 original brief/purpose**

The complex was built to house the "Luigi Bocconi" University, established in Milan in 1902

#### **2.2 dates**

Commission 1936, completion 1941

#### **2.3 architectural and other designers**

Giuseppe Pagano and Giangiacomo Predaval

#### **2.4 other associated with building**

Leone Lodi, Arturo Martini (sculptures)  
Technical Office of Comune di Milano (first project)  
Vittore Ceretti (general refurbishment)

#### **2.5 significant alterations with dates**

The building received three different additions in 1956, 1980 and especially in 1988 to respond to the increasing number of students. The Institutes wing was raised by one floor as expected by Pagano's project. Wooden windows were generally replaced by aluminium frames. Most of original furniture is missed.

#### **2.6 current use**

Education

## **2.7 current condition**

Medium

## **3. Description**

### **3.1 general description**

The "Bocconi university" is a cross shaped complex that designs a squared block of approximately 100x100 m. The layout, probably inspired by Gropius Bauhaus in Dessau, is drawn according to functionalist principles of open building. Each part plays a different role: main entrance, offices, research, classrooms, lecture hall, which receive their own geometry from their function. The entire project is led by an extensive use of proportions that controls either the plan, either the fronts. The entrance is located in the south side under a high portico, at the base of the office building, the higher and the most symbolic one, that features a golden ratio composition of four terraced rows. The central building turns into an "L" form, housing the Institutes at the west side and the lecture hall, at the opposite, disclosed by a sequence of vertical windows. The northern wing, aligned to the entrance, but shifted towards east, contains the main classrooms, well-lighted by glassblock windows. Pagano carefully designed also the interiors, with a wonderful marble stairway, and all furnitures, most of them unfortunately missed, as well as most of the fine decorations - mosaics, paintings, bas-reliefs - made by renowned artists (among them Adolfo Wildt, Adriano Spilimbergo, Nino Strada). The building still preserve Leone Lodi's sculptures under the portico and two ceramic lions moulded by Arturo Martini in the entrance hall.

### **3.2 construction**

The main structures is based on reinforced concrete pillars and mixed concrete-bricks floors. Perimetral walls are made by bricks; all the façades are covered by rectangular tiles of "litoceramica" (klinker) of 6x12 cm . The main entrance portico and the front bases are clad by plates of stone from Finale Ligure. The stairway is made by two kind of marble: veined white and bardiglio (grey).

### **3.3 context**

The complex faces Ravizza park, in the southern-east of Milano, and forms the first block of a wider University Campus which includes buildings later designed by other renowned architects like Giovanni Muzio, Ignazio and Jacopo Gardella, Vittore Ceretti, Grafton.

## **4. Evaluation**

### **4.1 technical**

Pagano's work demonstrates the possibilities of an open building typology to solve the functional and symbolic demands of a modern university. The klinker tiles cladding brings forward a solution wider used during Fifties in Milano architecture.

### **4.2 social**

Originally designed to host 1.000 students, the building is still in use as head office of a wider campus of about 13.000 students. The Bocconi University plays a relevant role for the economic, social and cultural life of Milano.

### **4.3 cultural & aesthetic**

The Bocconi University is a sort of "manifesto" of the architectural research that Giuseppe Pagano had been promoting on Casabella's pages since he had taken the direction in 1931. The first courtyard scheme designed by the Municipality Technical Office was turned by Pagano and Predaval into an open building composition based on dialectic between solids and empties, full accordance between forms and functions, ornament less and pure geometric façades. The traditional urban block was broken and enabled to have a different relation to the city.

#### **4.4 historical**

This building shows the opposition of modern architecture's lesson to the rhetoric of Fascist regime applied to public works at the end of Thirties. Despite the diffused withdrawal of many Italian architects to classical principles (symmetry, arches, columns, monumentalism), Pagano still believes in a different way to design buildings, close to the samples published on the pages of Casabella during his direction (since 1931 to 1943). The Bocconi University reveals also the complex question of architectural "continuity" between the time before and after the world war II.

#### **4.5 general assessment**

The Bocconi University is a "symbolic work of Italian Functionalism" that "reassumes the intentions of a research which aimed at expressive clarity, distinct geometry, total correspondence between form, function and language, indentifying new solutions between building and city" (Brunetti, 1997)

### **5. Documentation**

#### **5.1 principal references**

VARIOUS AUTHORS, 'La nuova dell'Università Commerciale Luigi Bocconi', Costruzioni-Casabella, Italy, n. 170-171, february-march 1942 (monographic number)

'L'Università Commerciale "Luigi Bocconi" a Milano', Edilizia Moderna, Italy, nn. 37-39, april-december 1942, pp. 2-11

'Uffici della nuova Bocconi', Domus, Italy, n. 170, pp. 52-59

LEVI-MONTALCINI Gino e Paola, 'Saggio critico sull'Università Bocconi', Costruzioni-Casabella, Italy, n. 195-198, december 1946, pp. 36-39

BOTTONI, Piero, Antologia di Edifici moderni in Milano, Milano, Editoriale Domus, 1954, pp. 175-180

GRANDI Maurizio, PRACCHI Attilio, 'Milano Guida all'Architettura Moderna', Bologna; Zanichelli; 1980

Comune di Milano, Facoltà di Architettura del Politecnico di Milano, 'Guide di architettura Milano', Torino; Umberto Allemandi & C.; 1990; ISBN 8842202584; p. 242

VARIOUS AUTHORS, Giuseppe Pagano architettura tra guerre e polemiche, Firenze; Alinea; 1991; pp. 51-63

BRUNETTI Federico, Giuseppe Pagano l'Università Bocconi di Milano, Firenze; Alinea; 1997; ISBN 8881251213;

GRAMIGNA, Giuliana, MAZZA, Sergio, Milano. Un secolo di architettura milanese dal Cordusio alla Bicocca, Milano; Hoepli; 2001; ISBN 8820329131; p. 196

#### **5.2 visual material attached**

01\_Bocconi\_Entrance portico

02\_Bocconi\_South front

03\_Bocconi\_Detail West front

04\_Bocconi\_Detail exterior lecture hall

05\_Bocconi\_Stairway

Photos by Andrea Costa, June 2014

#### **5.3 rapporteur/date**

Andrea Costa, June 2014

**6. Fiche report examination by ISC/R**

name of examining ISC member: date of examination:

approval:

working party/ref. n°: NAI ref. n°:

comments: