

REVIEW

IL NAVIGATORE – VITA NOMADE DI CARLO CALOSI ***(THE NAVIGATOR – THE NOMADIC LIFE OF CARLO CALOSI)***

Il Navigatore - Vita nomade di Carlo Calosi (The Navigator – the nomadic life of Carlo Calosi) is the second in a series of books dedicated to figures in Finmeccanica's history who have played an important role in Italy's industrial and technological development.

The life of Carlo Calosi, who was born in 1905 at Intra, Lake Maggiore, followed an almost parallel path to the development of the Italian electronics industry. Calosi was one of the most brilliant Italian electrotechnical experts of his time, and it was partly thanks to his scientific contribution that the national radar industry grew so rapidly.

Calosi began a brilliant academic and professional career after graduating with honours in Naval and Mechanical Engineering from the Genoa Higher Institute of Engineering at 22. During the Second World War, he designed the best maritime torpedo available on the market for the Italian Navy: the SIC (Siluro Italiano Calosi) which was tested and subjected to various experiments at the Silurificio Regio at Fusano in Campania.

Contacted by the US authorities as part of a wide-ranging intelligence operation, Calosi left for the United States in 1944. After receiving explicit authorisation from the Italian government, he agreed to work with the Allies to render his own invention harmless. After the war he headed the US group Raytheon and started a longlasting collaboration with Harvard University and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

Returning to Italy, Calosi devoted himself to radar, creating an industry from the remains of the former Silurificio Regio, and in the 1950s and 1960s, mediating very skillfully between US efficiency and Italian inventiveness, he gave substantial impetus to the national radar industry. In 1950, he laid the foundations in Fusaro of the company Microlambda, which a year later had as its main shareholders the US company Raytheon and the public investment company Finmeccanica, created in 1948 by the IRI (Institute for Industrial Reconstruction).

In 1960 he helped to found Selenia, a company owned by Finmeccanica (40%), Raytheon (40%) and Edison (20%), and was its CEO for 10 years. Selenia developed and grew extremely rapidly and finally came under Finmeccanica's complete control after a series of changes to its capital structure. In 1990 it was merged with Aeritalia to create Alenia, and then broken up into separate units. Today, its best-known successor is SELEX Sistemi Integrati, which has returned to Fusaro and continues to promote the idea of continual innovation that guided Calosi.

The biography of Calosi not only recounts the story of his career but also shows his human side through the people who knew him, sharing experiences and taking part in projects with him. It emphasises his unfailing attention to the social and public role of his work as a director and a scientist, his deeply felt connection to his country, his versatility and his ability to move between different, and sometimes conflicting, areas of politics and society.

In 1990, Carlo Calosi was awarded honorary citizenship of the Municipality of Bacoli in Fusaro, where a street has been named after him.