Ori Martin The roots of the future



to Oger Martin

Testi: Lucio Maninetti Fotografie: Francesco Lonati, Archivio Ori Martin e Basilio Rodella per le foto acree del 1995.

Progetto, realizzazione e servizio editoriale: Studio Ikon srl, Brescia Stampa: Tecnica & Grafica, Pontecchio Marconi (Bologna) Impianti: Selecolor. Modena

Ori Martin

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A CENTURY IN ONE BOOK: THE REASONS, THE GOALS

The future has an ancient heart. This literary metaphor, title of one of Carlo Levi's works written in the middle of the fifties, contains, with a happy expressive synthesis, the identity of the Ori Martin, an almost secular iron and steel industry, with solid roots in Brescia and projected into Europe.

In the interlacement between the fidelity to a style and the impetus towards innovation, between the historical memory and the courage to change, we can find the most authentic explanation of the resiliance and the growth of this firm, created in the S. Bartolomeo quarter by an old fashioned gentleman, born in Belgium but native of Brescia in his way of working and a cosmopolitan by inclination: Oger Martin.

The heiresses (Camille, Leontine and Yvonne), Oger Martin's successors in the leadership of the firm (Roberto de Miranda, Walter Magri and Guido Palazzi, initially, Elena Magri, Annamaria Magri, Franco Polotti and Uggero de Miranda, later) and the whole staff (coordinated by capable and authorative managers), all of these people contributed to the reinforcement of this particular family managed joint-stock company, with different roles but with the same tenacity and passion. We must not forget the important role played by other employees, who contributed with their work to the growth of the Ori Martin: Roberto Allegri, Tullia Bernardini, Albina Bresciani, Giovanni e Piero Corsini, Prospero Dalla Bona, Sandro Di Furia, Gianni Franzosi, Roberto Gavezzoli, Giovanni Irde, Gigi Magri, Luigi Gorla, Angelo Ongaro, Antonio Spinelli, Guido Uboldi, Giacomo Zola.

Regarding business management, the winning formula at the Ori Martin was and is the team work.

All the positive results and the exciting prospects now open, are as a result of each person's strong motivation, derived from the confidence of the company in its highly qualified co-workers and in their ability to work as part of a team by themselves and with all of the employees. All this in a doubly favourable context: on an objective level, because in the iron and steel industry the relationship between the man and the machine is more elastic than in other productive fields (the work is varied and the



worker can have some operative autonomy); on a subjective level, because the firm culture at Ori Martin is based on the full responsibility of the workers and on an open relationship, based on exchange and cooperation, with the owners and with the management.

This attitude and logic influenced the strategic choices and the daily behaviour which have characterized the life of Oger Martin in a century of industrial activity in Brescia. They will be reconstructed in the following pages, without hagiographic temptations and self-congratulatory tones This analysis will examine closely Oger Martin's personality and role, as he was the one who, founding the firm, marked it with a strong identity, which was maintained and enriched by his successors.

The goal of this publication is a simple one: not to waste a patrimony of the past and to look confidently to the future. It's the same spirit in which people work every day at Ori Martin.



THE INDUSTRIAL ROOTS OF A SUCCESSFUL EXPERIENCE





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The thread that runs through all the complex and fascinating industrial story of the Ori Martin has two starting points, thirty years apart.

The first one, at the beginning of the 20th century, is the birth of the mechanical firm later to be called Officine Riunite Italiane. The second one, in the middle of the thirties, is the beginning of the productive activity at the Ferretti and Martin.

From the interlacement of these two industrial entities originates, through a process of growth and transformation that has taken more than half a century and is still in progress, the present production plant of S. Bartolomeo, in the north part of Brescia.

A PREDICTABLE FUSION: THE EMBLEMATIC STORY OF THE OFFICINE RIUNITE ITALIANE

On October 27th 1902, in the study of the notary Venceslao Lombardi in Brescia, the Ing. G. Conti & C. was constituted as a limited partnership with 120,000 liras of nominal capital. The factory was in the S. Eustacchio area, the river Grande being its source of energy. The new firm (equipped with its own foundry) specializes in the production of hydraulic engines.

It grows quickly and absorbs, in a few years, an important firm located near Porta Milano: Ceschina & Busi, a leading firm in the field of machinery for "pasta" factories, founded in 1863 and managed for some time by Giovanni Conti.

On March 25th 1909, a new society, Officine Riunite Italiane, sees the light. It combines the experience of Ceschina & Busi and the dynamism of Conti. After the war, the firm diversifies its production, though still concentrating on machinery for "pasta" factories selling to foreign markets.

In the twenties the firm employs about 300 workers in a plant located between S. Carlo road and S. Eustacchio road, stretching over 80,000 square metres and apjoining a railway side-track connected with Borgo S. Giovanni station.

However, the difficulties caused by the international crisis of 1929



O. R. I.

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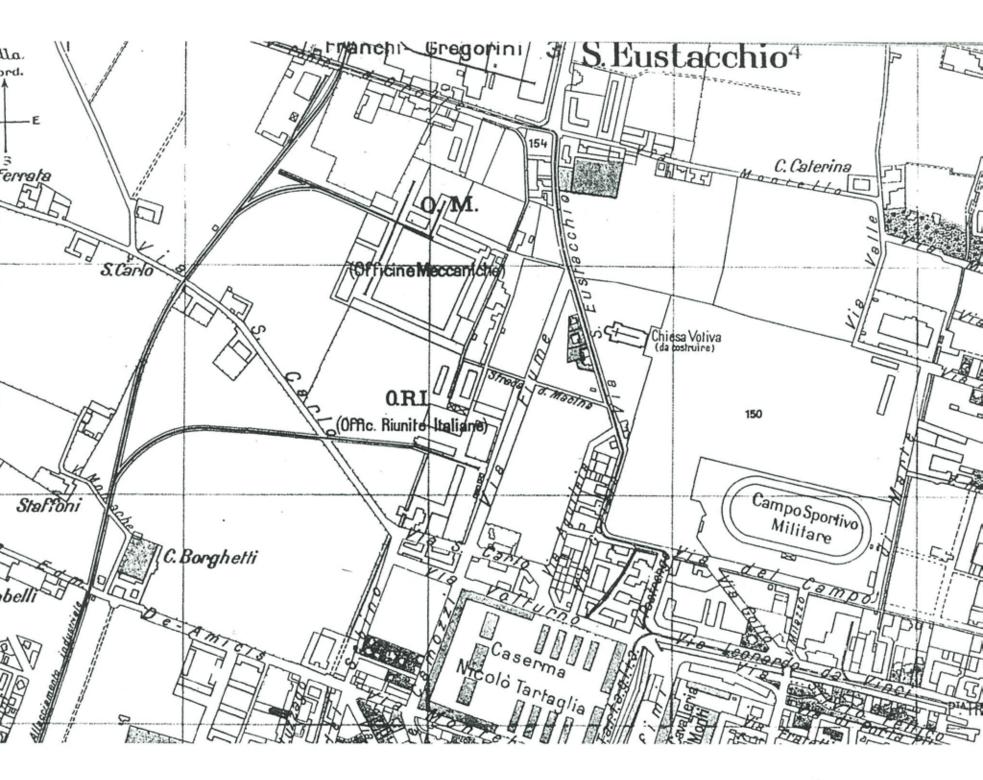
BRESCIA

STATUTO SOCIALE

AGGIORNATO ALLE DELIBERE DELL'ASSEMBLEA
DEL 19 AGOSTO 1939-XVII

GENNAIO 1940 - XVIII







also hit Officine Riunite Italiane. A tragic event cuts off the remaining hopes of a recovery: Guido Conti dies in a plane crash. Son of the founder, he was destined to take over in the leadership of the company and was in charge of the critical export department. It's the end: on December 29th 1930, the extraordinary assembly of the members resolves to liquidate one of the foremost mechanical firms with capital from Brescia.

The enforced inactivity lasts about nine years. During this period Giovanni Conti dies too. In the summer of 1939 another sudden twist, this time a positive one: the assembly of the members met on August 19th and decided to withdrawal from liquidation and to extend the life of the company until December 31st 1960.

In this way "O.R.I. (Officine Riunite Italiane), a direct continuation of the old firms Ing. G. Conti & C. and Ceschina Busi & C.", joint-stock company with a capital of 130,000 liras "that may be lifted up to 500,000 by a simple deliberation of the

council", returns to life, as it is written on the cover of the company charter, printed by the Vittoria Grafica in January 1940-XVIII.

A small but active mechanical firm located in Razziche road is the protagonist of the rebirth of the company: its leaders, Oger Martin and Lorenzo Ferretti, taking over ORI acquire a still distinctive trade mark and effect a judicious solid investment.

1933: THE FERRETTI
AND MARTIN SEES
THE LIGHT IN A FARM HOUSE
IN RAZZICHE ROAD

Lorenzo Ferretti is a clever businessman native of S. Zeno Naviglio, Oger Martin is a distinguished engineer originating from Belgium. They are both in the newly created economic circles, where the exigences of the sellers of metals and the needs of the builders balance out: they meet and they associate.

In 1933 they create Ferretti & Martin, a joint firm. At the beginning



it's a small firm: two water hammers and 15 workers. This is enough to activate a significant production of agricultural tools, made of iron originating from obsolete rails. The techniques and the instruments employed are spartan and so is the base: a rudimentary laboratory in a farm house, not far from the present plant of Ori Martin.

In 1936, three years later, there is an opportunity to double the equipment: the purchase of a hammer with a naphta furnace on sale not far from there, in Scuole road, along the river Grande, where an important part of the industrial history of the town has developed. In this way the production can diversify: a small rolling mill is built at the old plant, to process the iron prepared at the new one.

During the Second World War, while the production of hoes, picks and shovels goes on, the rolling mill is dismounted and put in a safe place near S. Rocchino. To a certain extent this is due to the fact that Oger Martin, being a Belgian, would rather not involve the firm in the war

production.

During this time the differences in mentality, management style and goals between Ferretti and Martin emerge.

This loss of harmony does not prevent them from concluding the last significant transation together: the sale, in two tranches between 1940 and 1942, of the lands and the sheds acquired at the time of their entrance into ORI. The buyer is OM.

OM needs extra production space new productive spaces to face the growing exigences of the buses and lorry market.

Once this financial chapter is closed, they each go their own way: Ferretti continues operating in the iron and steel field but he moves his activity to the area between the Valcamonica and the Bergamo plain. Martin keeps ORI, which until the end of the war goes on producing agricultural tools (from bucket handles to shovels), waiting for the post-war revival, also favoured by the relevant technological investments in the plant of Scuole road..





OGER MARTIN: A LEADER OF THE STEEL AND IRON INDUSTRY IN BRESCIA







From June 22nd 1962, the name Martin (which had disappeared after the initial association with Ferretti) was put back in the trade mark of the S. Bartolomeo firm, as a natural form of tribute to the memory of the founder on behalf of his heiresses.

Perhaps Oger Martin would not have completely liked the change in the formal name of the company created and moulded by himself from Officine Riunite Italiane to Ori Martin. He was actually an entrepreneur of the old school and venerated the understatement in the management, both at the factory and at home: a style still significant in company today.

From the Liège university to the exploration of markets in Brescia









Oger Martin, born on July 13th 1890 in Filôt (Liège) and son of two teachers, is a brilliant and ingenious student. He graduates, at a very young age in engineering at Liège university and immediately becomes a manager in a local factory that had a few branches in Italy, producing war and hunting weapons.

In 1911 he arrives in Brescia, with the intention of exploring new markets on behalf of the firm he works for.

In a short time he succeeds in making a name for himself in the entrepeneurial milieu of Brescia. In 1914 he is appointed technical manager of the local firm Filippo Tettoni, located in Fratelli Ugoni road, that specializes in the production of guns and machine guns and in the local marketing of foreign weapons: English, German and Belgian ones.

The work for Tettoni (which during the First World War carried out its activity in the buildings where in the middle of the twenties another weapons factory, Breda, will find its base and where is now "La Scuola Editrice"is located) continues throughout the war.

At the end of the war, Tettoni changes its production, shifting from the manufacture of weapons to that of chairs and wooden furniture.

Oger Martin - after getting married in 1919 to Giuseppina Guerra, an accountant at Tettoni - sets about another intense professional period before the turning point of 1933, marking the beginning of his own activity as an entrepreneur.

Martin enters the import-export society Jarach, whose head office is in Tartaglia road: an important commercial meeting point in the province of Brescia for German and French iron and steel industries.

In this new role of high level representative of European products on the banks of the river Mella, Martin is favoured for his knowledge of foreign languages, (primarly French, and then Italian, German and English) and for his mastery of the technological processes.

His major customers are various mechanical firms in the province of Brescia: the workshops near Odolo and Nave (buying semi-manufactured







products) and S. Eustacchio, ex Franchi-Gregorini (big purchaser of scrap-iron, later to be transformed into big cylinders).

It's during one of his explorations in the Brescia area that Martin meets Lorenzo Ferretti. Appreciating his will to create, his ability in marketing and his intuition for good opportunities, he decides to start a new phase -(the definitive, which will last for nearly 30 years until his death)- of an already intense professional career and becomes an entrepreneur.

A CATEGORICAL IMPERATIVE: BEING IMPORTANT WITHOUT APPEARING

The strange union between a simple man from Brescia and a resolute Belgian gentleman starts at the beginning of 1933 with the birth of Ferretti & Martin. During the Second World War, the activity of the factory concentrates on the production of tools for the agriculture and the building industry (the raw material sourced from disused rails).

Later the needs of the post-war reconstruction, mainly aimed at building houses and offices, will make the firm shift to the production of reinforcing steel bar for concrete, as it was already the case for many other factories in the Brescia area. On the other hand Ori Martin's experience, considering both the technological experiments and the human resources, has set a good example, acting as a stimulus to the spread of the steel industry in other areas of the district, such as the Nave and Odolo territory.

It is a growth process involving radical innovations on the technological level and deep changes on the organisational one. This maturation is guided, with decision and discretion, by Oger Martin, who calls to the head of the company his son in law Roberto De Miranda (the husband of Camille, his first daughter born in 1920),to the board of directors from October 1942 to September 1946.

The following years also, as the next pages will show, the family world will mix, in various shapes and







forms,but the philosophy of the firm, still continuing with the original physiognomy of the firm created by Oger Martin.

Two documents are enough to characterize that identity.

The first one dates to April 1st 1950 and is signed by the notary Gerolamo Calini: it certifies that four women are the "sole members" of the joint-stock company Officine Riunite Italiane: Giuseppina Guerra Martin, Camille Martin De Miranda, Leontine Martin Magri, Yvonne Martin Palazzi (Oger Martin's wife and daughters). Although Martin heads the firm, he does not appear as the owner.

The second document comes from the clerk's office of the Court of Brescia. It certifies, on January 19th 1953, that "Mr. Oger Martin, son of the late Camille, has not held nominal offices in the joint-stock company O.R.I. Officine Riunite Italiane, located in Brescia, 21 via Scuole, S. Bartolomeo, during the years 1947 = 1948 = 1949 = 1950 = 1951 = 1952, having resigned from the office of Director in 1946" and

that "during this period he has in no way represented the company".

It is clear to see, from reading these two papers, that Oger Martin wants to be important without appearing and to have a management role without displaying the formal signs of power. Indeed he does not feel the need, neither psychological nor actual, to hold a "rank".

THE SECRET OF THE CHARISMA: GETTING AN OVERALL OUTLOOK WITHOUT NEGLECTING THE DETAILS

Oger Martin's inclination to a gentle leadership of the family firm (and probably of the family itself) is a sure sign of indisputable authorativeness, leading to an effective expansion of all the human resources available within the firm.

Referring to this, the accounts of Martin's closest co-workers illustrate an example: they entered the factory as young apprentices and left as people responsible for the key sectors of the production.







To everybody "Mr. Martin" is a charismatic man, with a strong personality in which human qualities meet the professional ones. Quoting briefly and at random: "he combined an overall outlook but with care for details", he was "very demanding but also very attentive to people" and so "he succeeded in obtaining everything with his kindness"; "he thought in a big way" but "he behaved cautiously", leaving a strong mark in the local industrial milieu, so that he is considered the "founder of the iron rod trade in Brescia".

This status of great father of the iron and steel industry, manifesting itself by being given the role of pioneer to his firm in the field of technological innovations in comparison to the other industries, is acknowledged in a recent and short text written by a journalist, Giorgio Bocca: "I know the families of the old metallurgists and of the self-made iron rods producers from Brescia, when Pasini was convinced that Odolo needed an electric furnace while the old Martin shook his head, when the "Coste of S. Eusebio", the

road which windingly reached Brescia, became known as "the iron road" to everyone ."

LIFE OUTSIDE THE FIRM, WITH THE SENSE OF THE FAMILY AND THE PASSION FOR THE COUNTRY

Like all first-class entrepreneurs,
Oger Martin was not a monodimensional man: the company held
the first place but his vitality did not
dry out inside the gates of Officine
Riunite Italiane.

To this European gentleman, who settled in Brescia without rejecting his Belgian nationality, "the sense of the family" was essential: a whole universe of relationships, affections and values, "to which he dedicated a great deal of his time", as his daughters recall.

Within the family too, Oger Martin exercised his authority in an intelligent and persuasive way, "without ever raising his voice" and taking part in the growth of his nephews with discreet lessons of daily life: always with a smile, in the light rooms or in the quiet garden of



their mansion in corso Cavour.

Martin's intellectual curiosity and his will to do exceeded the family/ company perimeter: together with his box at the Teatro Grande, we should remember his true passion for country life.

Martin used to go to his holiday house in Desenzano, on the hill of Capolaterra, occasionally on Sundays and for short periods during the summer. It was enough, however, to take care of the outstanding fruit tree plantations and

to look after his beehives - after, of course, having acquired the necessary knowledge attending courses in agricultural techniques and bee- keeping.

From details like these one can grasp Oger Martin's style, a style that has permeated the firm of which he was for 30 years the "deus ex machina": always try to do things properly, with passion and care, never being satisfied with what has already been achieved.



A NEW LIFE FOR THE ORI THANKS TO THE POST-WAR RECOVERY







The end of the Second World War and the beginning of the post-war reconstruction offer important opportunities for a renewal in different industrial fields on a national scale, and, among these, to the iron and steel industry. This is particularly true in Brescia, where there are mainly small and medium firms with electric furnaces, whose prodution cycle utilizes scrap- iron as raw material, instead of minerals.

The starting point of the recovery is of course the large availability of materials at a low cost: from the rails of the railways struck by the bombs during the air-raids to the "pig tails" of the military barbed-wire and to the remains of the war devices, mostly bombs.

For a clever entrepreneur such as Oger Martin, having had significant commercial experience, it is not difficult to buy war scrap-iron at a low cost .As far as the market for finished products are concerned, the reflourishing of economic activities guarantees a proliferation of potential targets. The crucial problem is therefore the ability of transposing, in

a short time and in a remuneratory manner, the best conditions of buying and selling on a production level That is, the ability to acquire the technologically most qualified machinery, satifying the requirements of those customers that are the most reliable and representative as far as the quantity and the continuity of their orders are concerned.

Following this line, in the first post-war period Martin began that "permanent revolution" typical of ORI in the field of technological innovation: a sort of continuous process based on radical changes and periodical adjustments, in the direction of a constant improvement of the working process and of an continuous enhancement of the product quality. It is a style which has characterized ORI's activity for half a century and still does today, not only within its particular field.

This is the reason why in the spring of 1946 a rolling mill is opened, destined for the production of reinforcing steel bar for concrete. It comprises of a single stand with 3







cylinders, in which the material previously prepared with the hammer is processed. This technological step ahead is apparently the last decision taken by Martin in his institutional quality (director) and in his operative quality (managing director and general director "de facto", two simultaneous offices not codified but exercised).

In a short time, on May 20th 1946, the resignation "for personal reasons", of the founder of the firm from the leadership becomes official. He is replaced by his son in law Roberto de Miranda, helped by his wife Camille Martin, Oger's eldest daughter.

FROM THE CHANGING
OF THE GUARD
TO THE FIRST ELECTRIC FURNACE

Martin's resignation must not be considered a formal estrangement from the company management. On the contrary, considering the frame of mind, the personality and the style of the founder of the new ORI, it should be considered a clear, far-sighted

choice, made in order to guarantee a non-traumatic changing of the guard to the company.

Leading in this way the passage from the first to the second generation, Martin succeeds in obtaining at least three positive results: he encourages his successor by giving him full responsibility for the management of the family firm; he assures his loyal employees of his wise choice, as he has made it freely; relinquishing any formal role, he avoids raising potential conflicts of competence by keeping for himself a role of external leadership, more connected with company policy than with day-to-day management.

After the changing of the guard, the main area to enbark on is the adaptation of the producton machinery to new and growing markets, most of all in the field of reinforcing steel bar for concrete, which is becoming the gold vein of the iron and steel industry in Brescia.

The company begins to face this prior question between 1947 and 1952, transforming the rolling mill







from one to three stands initially and then up to five later, a classic "open rolling train" of the Belgian type.

Martin makes use of the technical knowledge acquired in his country, mixing it with high temperatures processing of the steel typical of the Brescia area. In 1950 the decision to install the first electric arc furnace is taken. It is a 3 ton furnace and turns out bars of 25/30 kilos each.

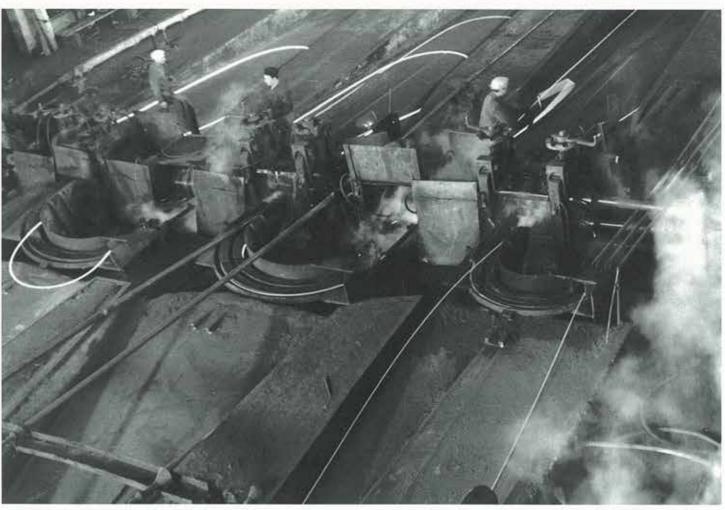
Consequently - as one can read in an historical and technical note written by ORI staff a quarter of a century later and published in 1974 in "La metallurgia italiana" - "the use of scrap iron, predominantly of war origin, such as pieces of ships and tanks, pig tails, etc., all patiently cut with an oxyhydrogen flame or with a hammer, that had been till then the main raw material for our rolling mill" was given up.

In the meantime, during the forties and the fifties, Oger Martin completes the delicate operation of succession along internal lines and the definition of a new organization chart at the top, always with a strong family mark: in fact Walter Magri

(husband of Leontine, Martin's second daughter) first and Guido Palazzi (husband of Yvonne, Martin's third daughter) later, enter the board of directors.

It is the perfect circle dreamed of by Martin to ensure a steady and balanced solution to the interlacement between the family and the company. Acthough a common responsibility of management, with a direct and daily working engagement in the company, will be taken on by the three Martin's sons in law only at the beginning of the sixties, they are fully part of the head of ORI, while the ownership is strongly controlled by Martin's wife and daughters. Using a synthetic image - not uncommon but effective - in those years ORI can be considered a family firm, with a female ownership and a male management and with its natural leader acting, in a totally informal way, as a sort of external director.







1952: ORI BECOMES A JOINT-STOCK COMPANY

The new structure of the head of the company is matched by a parallel transformation of the company. After a double increase in capital (from £ 130,000 to 1,000,000 in April 1950, from 1,000,000 to 10,000,000 two years later), from 1952 onwards "the company - as one can read in the short historical section of the file on the firm kept at the Register of the firms at the Chamber of Commerce in Brescia - began to be defined as a joint- stock company."

While the number of the firms acting as agents for ORI iron rod grows (the Metallurgica Piemontese in Turin, the Bertani in Mortara, the Camnasio in Brianza, the Pacifici in Rome, the Edilferro in Pescara, the Franzini in Reggio Emilia, the Inpres in Chieti and even one in Sardinia), ORI takes a further step ahead on the technological level: in 1956, in fact, a new large furnace is installed. It is machinery not produced in Italy but already successfully tried by a steel

and iron firm in Turin, Cravetto.

During the same period, from 1955 to 1957, a new modern rolling plant is installed and gradually activated under a new shed, where the rolling mill still is today.

This transformation requires the installation of a new heating furnace, working with natural gas (one of the first industrial utilizations of this energy source in the province of Brescia) and the setting up of a rolling train composed of a "rougher" and seven stands with "coiling" of the thread, an operation manually executed by workers called "serpentatori" ("coilers"). The wish to achieve the best and the need to compete with a many-sided and more and more pugnacious competition does not allow any rest in this non-stop technological race. This is the reason why in 1961, only 5 years after the previous transformation, a new steel plant is activated (its shed still contains the present one). The kernel of the change and the most substantial investment is a 35 tons furnace built by Tibb (Tecnomasio Italia Brown



Boveri): it is the largest electric furnace for iron and steel working produced at the time on a national scale.

OGER MARTIN'S DEATH: AN ERA ENDS, AN IDENTITY CONTINUES

1961 is a turning point but in a negative way in the business and human story of ORI: on June 10th Oger Martin, the sole and the instigator of the S. Bartolomeo production plant and of the relationships which form its structure, dies.

The ORI style avoids the rhetorical emphasis and the superficial dramatizations. The reactions to the death of the founder of the firm follow this rule, never written but always applied. It is a sorrow - and not only for the relatives - endured with moderate discretion, almost with reserve. However, Martin's death stimulates a searching of the memory and invites a deeper look into the life of the man who no longer lives, to find pieces of other

lives, that come to the mind in flashes or when looking at group photographs. So the crowded mosaic in which one can synthesize Martin's polyhedral figure gathers new tesserae, all precious: from the technical collaboration with a friend and a future competitor (that Antonini from Sarezzo for whom Martin designed in the thirties the sketch of a first rolling mill) to the intervention on the Credito Agrario Bresciano, in the end of the fifties, to avoid the chocking of another steel factory; from the pride of the self-financing (thanks to the continuous transformation of the profits into new investments) to the deep respect for his employees (as the secretaries recall, "first of all Martin wanted to have the wages prepared" and "at Christmas he paid in advance, so that the employees should not suffer from the increase in the prices due to the holidays"); from the stimulus to a true cooperation among the steel entrepreneurs (put into practice with experience of Sideral in S. Zeno, that grouped seven firms in Brescia in order to produce billets for all the



members) to the ability, recalled by many people, in mixing realism and imagination, in other words evaluating reality and then looking beyond the fixed limits.

With Martin's death, an era ends, but the identity of the company, defined by him during 30 years, does not dim. On the contrary, with the passing of time it becomes more and more definite, in a line of continuity and coherence, well symbolized by the changing of the company name: from June 22nd, "Officine Riunite Italiane (O.R.I.), s.p.a." becomes "O.R.I. - Martin, s.p.a."

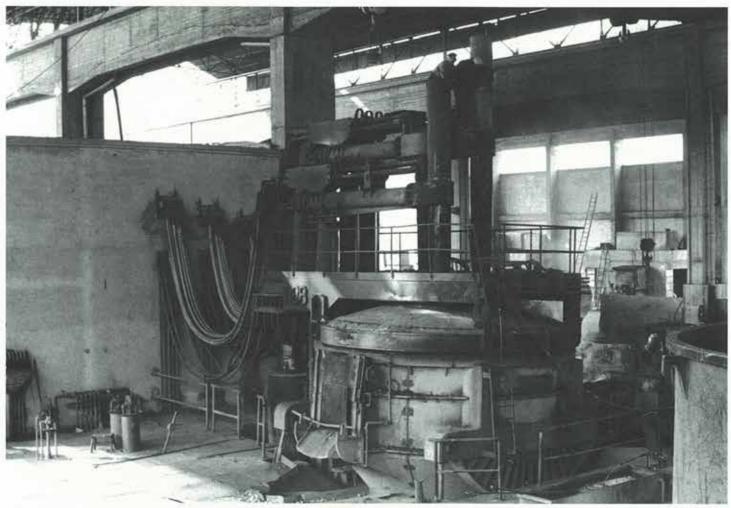




TECHNOLOGICAL INNOVATION AND GROWTH IN CENTRAL AND SOUTHERN ITALY



- The steel plant in 1963; the 35 tons furnace built by the TIBB.





During the period of the Italian economic boom in the sixties, Ori Martin marks its leadership on the home market and strengthens its financial power, reaching at its best a new important technological turning point.

As one can read in a note about the firm published on the 7/8 issue of the magazine "La metallurgia italiana" in August 1974, from 1963 to 1964 "the last phase of the transformation of the rolling mill began, in preparation for the production of high quality wire rod and also for the use of continuous casting".

A year before, on June 22nd 1962, the same assembly that decides to add the name Martin to the trade name of the firm, also increases the capital from 30,000,000 to 120,000,000 and then to 300,000,000 (on June 10th 1963), to 480,000,000 (on December 10th 1964) and at last to 720,000,000 (on June 19th 1995). The head of the company alters according to a scheme of family unity, represented by the collaboration of the three sons in law of the late Oger Martin.

In 1962, Roberto De Miranda's leadership of the board of directors is confirmed: he's flanked by Guido Palazzi and Walter Magri (who leaves his job as a dentist to become an industrial manager in the family firm). As result of an experimental management scheme, the top tier reorganizes sharing its tasks: De Miranda attending to the general organization and the sales, Palazzi to the technical aspects and Magri to the purchases.

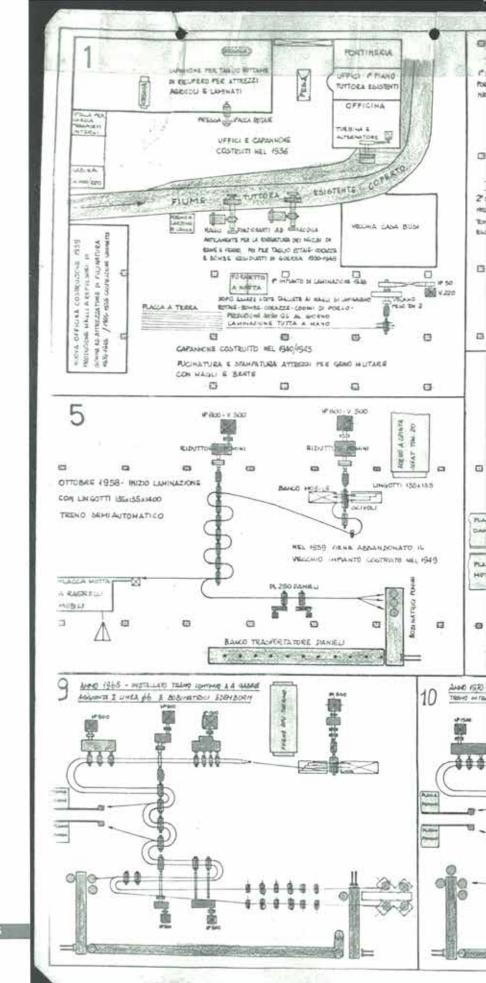
THE NEED FOR NEW PRODUCTS: THE EVOLUTION OF THE PLANTS

Strengthened by the new availability of capital and guaranteed by the intervention of the Mediocredito Regionale Lombardo, the management of ORI Martin determinedly sets off towards a critical technological turning point.

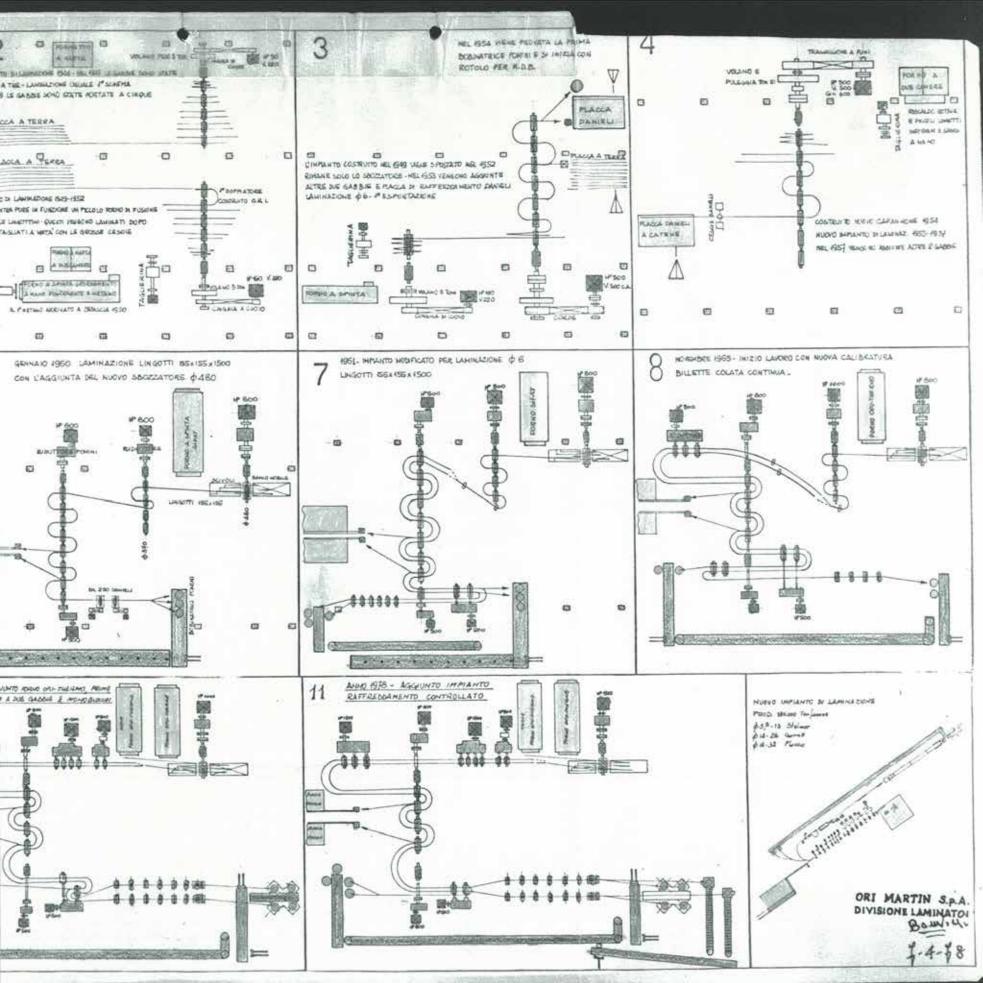
Building the new steel plant in 1961, ORI aims at living from the reinforcing steel bar for concrete market in order to produce quality wire rod. Wire rod is the basic material used in all types of cold

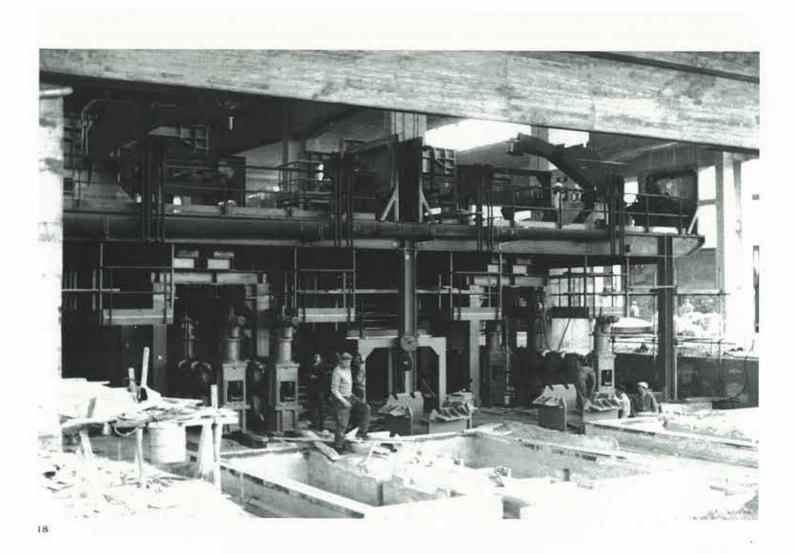


17 • The evolution of the rolling mill in a 1978 drawing by Mr. Bonvini, responsible for the plant.











working and is essential to many different products (safety-pins, bolts, wires, springs, etc). In order to achieve this goal, the rolling mill plants acquire a first line of rod train with loops controlled by sophisticated electriconc devices, machinery built by Pomini in Castellanza and used in Italy only in the factories producing quality wire rod such as Redaelli in Milan and Cogne in Aosta, the two most important steel factories in Italy.

The goal is a very ambitious one and it emphasises the limits of the ORI Martin steel plant, unable to produce billets derived from bars passed through the "blooming" train, typical of the biggest steel plants.

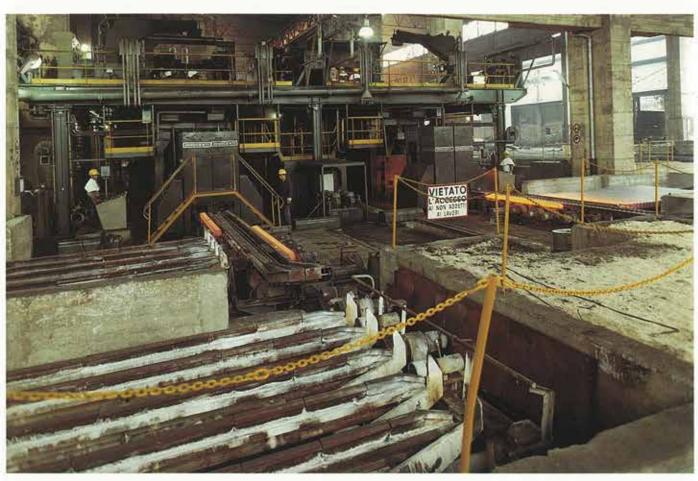
This is the background when the new casting process, the continuous casting, is introduced. This process, tried out for decades, is not yet a mature productive process, because of many difficulties in its application. In Italy there is a plant at Terni, but it's a vertical one and therefore needs very high sheds. In Switzerland, on the other hand, Concast was experimenting, with good results, a

curved continuous casting that can be installed within small plants. Looking for a site suitable for no longer experimental but capable to produce at full speed steel for high quality wire rod, the Swiss society meets ORI Martin: it is the beginning of a collaboration that will leave a mark.

In the meantime the production of reinforcing steel bar for concrete specializes in high controlled quality products, used in large engineering works, such as waterfronts, bridges and tunnels, in Italy and abroad.

To this effect, ORI designs its own new iron rod with better adherence and guaranteed resistance, complying with the U.S.A. standard Astm, since in Italy there are no definite regulations. The new product is called Brs 45. The S. Bartolomeo firm is among the first to launch it, together with other qualified producers such as Galtarossa in Verona and Rumi in Bergamo. Thanks to this experience, ORI is given the opportunity to obtain together with a few other Italian firms - the licence for the production







of iron rod reinforcing steel bar for concrete (Betonsthal) accepted by the German market and tested with systems of regular control by the laboratories of the universities in Germany, where the rules for the use of this steel in the civil works are very strict.

THE COURAGE OF THE TURNING POINT: CURVED CONTINUOUS CASTING

The true mark of ORI Martin's modernization is the introduction in 1965 of curved continuous casting in the plant, positively a vanguard productive investment on a national scale.

It is a technique which allows (as a scientific article published in the specialized magazine "Kleipzig Fachberichte" in October 1967 explains) "a substantial reduction in the height of the plant". The result is that "the special steel which at the beginning was cast only with vertical plants, is now cast with arc machines, without quality disadvantages of any kind". B.

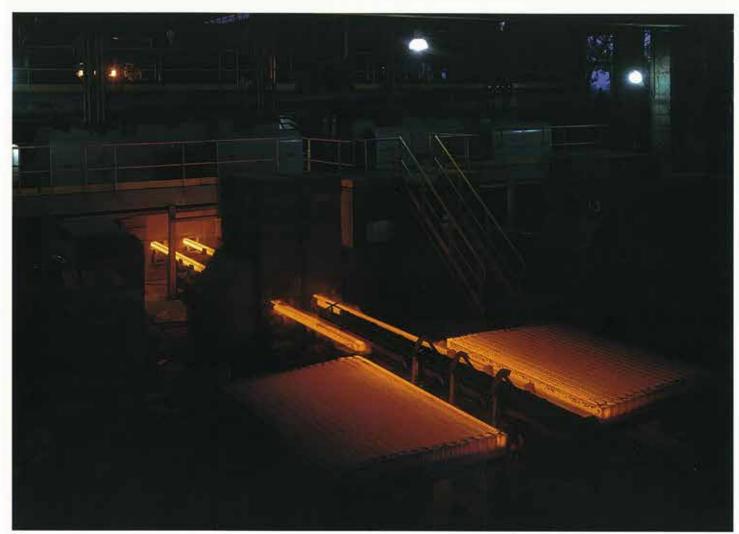
Tarmann and W. Poppmeier, authors of the article, think that the high level of the products is guaranteed by the fact that "for quality steel, in particular, the technique and the cooling process have been modified in comparison with vertical casting". The final datum is that by autumn 1967 all of the curved continuous casting plants in the world are turning at full speed, since the initial problems, mainly mechanical ones, "have been totally solved after a three years' trial period".

It takes some time for ORI Martin to reach the total efficiency of the new plants: but the firm is proud of this goal, underlining its leadership among the Italian steel factories with regard to the application of the curved continuous casting, not in an episodic form, alternating with other techniques, but in a continuous and exclusive way in comparison with the previous working techniques.

At the time another company in Lombardy, Riva - created in 1954 in Caronno Pertusella, in the province of Varese - was experimenting with curved continuous casting. ORI



20 • Cooling plates for billets coming out of the continuous casting, 1967.





Martin and Riva choose different designers and builders for the creation and operation of the new plants (from the installation to the full speed production), but showing the same courage gambling on an innovation that has yet to be proved.

Riva chooses Danieli from Buttrio (Udine), as their supplier. Danieli had just begun its industrial activity in Brescia, in an area near the railway station, later to be occupied by Togni, while ORI Martin chooses a Swiss company, Concast.

Riva starts its new plants experimentally one year before ORI Martin (the first casting in Caronno was in June 1964, whilst in Brescia it was in September 1965), but ORI reaches full speed and complete utilization of the new machinery before Riva.

AVANGUARD INITIATIVE, INSPIRING ALL OF THE SMALL STEEL PLANTS

Apart from these aspects, and relating more to the history of the steel industry than to the competition

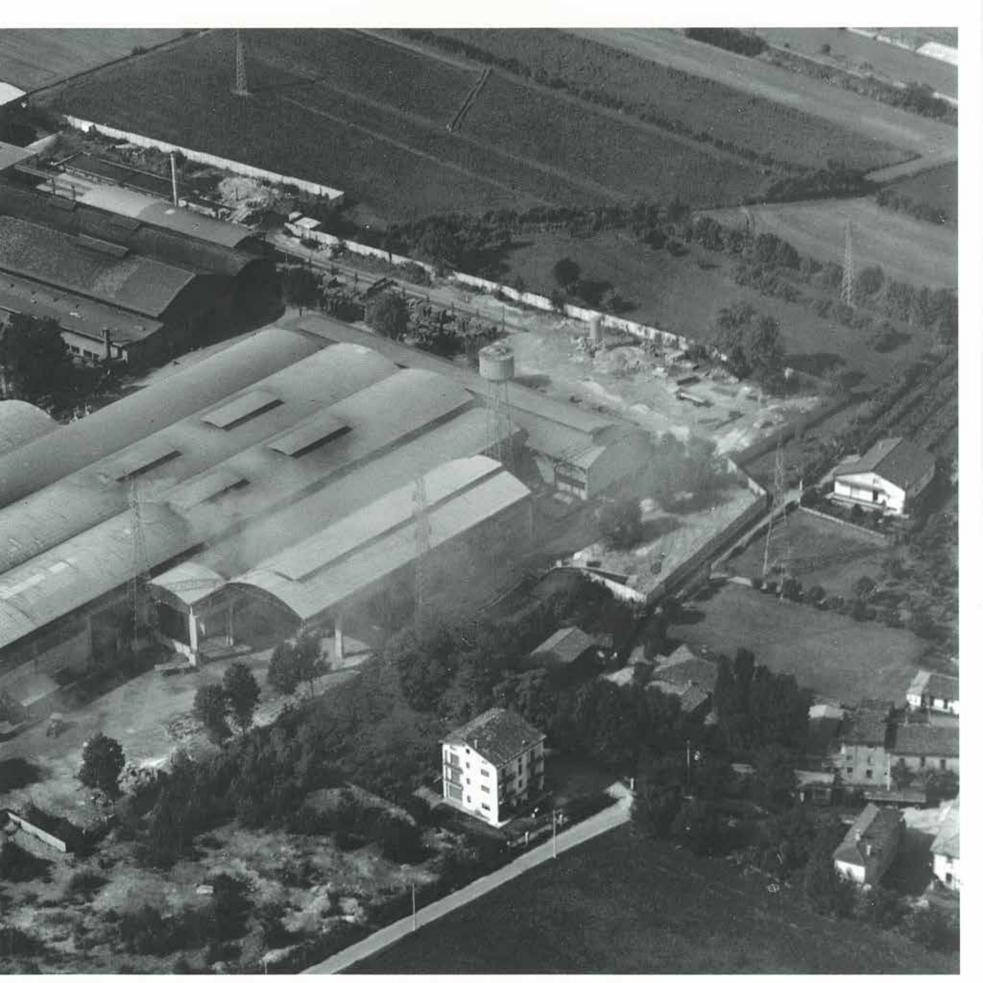
among firms in the same field, we have to consider a significant fact: the introduction of the curved continuous casting "clears the way to the development of small steel factories", as Margherita Balconi, a university teacher in Pavia, writes in an essay about the history of the steel in Italy, published by "Il Mulino" in 1991.

The proof of this declaration is the widesread application in Brescia of the new technology, by then guaranteed by ORI Martin tests. In a few years, about ten factories in Brescia and in its province install the curved continuous casting: in 1967 Stefana Fratelli and Fenotti & Comini in Nave, in 1968 Ilfo and Iro and Leali Luigi in Odolo, in 1969 Predalva in Piancamuno, in 1970 Valsabbia in Odolo, Sideral in S. Zeno Naviglio and, in the Brescia area, Alfa and Pietra and then Lucchini in Settimo Torinese.

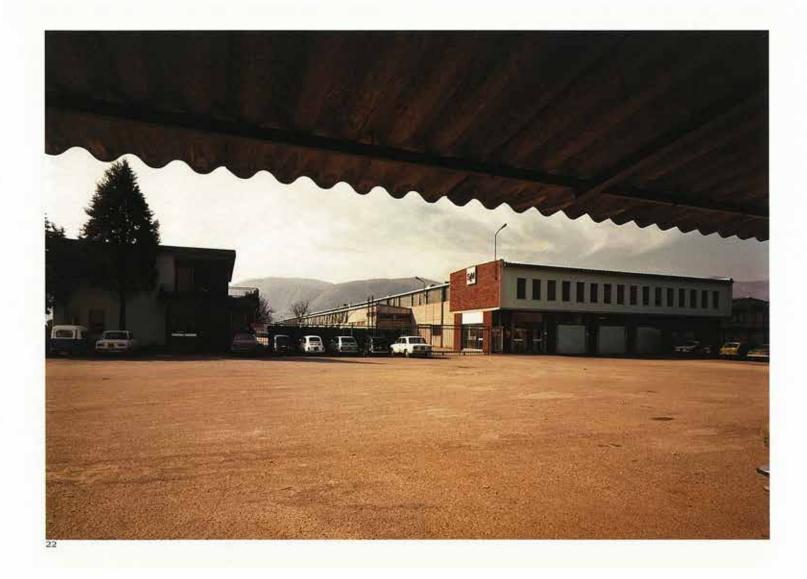
In the rest of Italy there are eighteen other companies that emulate ORI Martin and Riva, and among them are the two colossi of the private steel industry (Falck) and







- 21 Aerial view of the factory in Brescia, 1970. 22 The entrance of the factory SLM in Ceprano, 1972.





the state owned company (Italsider).

The origin of this phenomenon of widespread innovation is not an imitation effect: there are definite reasons connected with the productivity of the plants and the prosperity of the budgets.

F. T. Model, in a technical text published in January 1965 (Blast furnace and steel plant), explains that the advantages that can be obtained using this new working process are multifarious and not uninportant: "increase in casting speed, reduction in maintenance, growth in output, better quality of the cast material, the possibility of casting different types of steel, the automation of the plant, of manufacturing a large number of products".

In order to guarantee the technical quality of its products, already assured by the level of its plant and of its staff, together with the installation of curved continuous casting the ORI Martin potentiates the analysis laboratory, so that it can carry out more sophisticated checks.

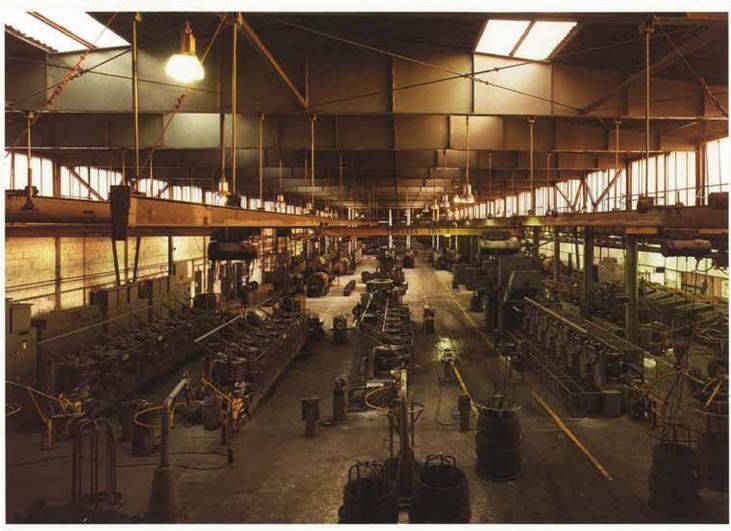
The key instrument of this enhanced power to inspect the products is the spectrometer, the first used by a steel industry in Brescia: it allows a deep examination of the composition of the steel through the simultaneous analysis of circa twenty chemical elements.

ADAPTATION OF THE MACHINERY AND SKILL OF THE WORKERS

The gamble of ORI Martin became a pilot experience and it influenced the minor steel industry based on the electric furnace. This multiplying effect is accurately underlined by Maria Teresa Balconi when she says that "all the small steel factories quickly realized the economic advantages connected with the new technology (increase in energy saving, improvement of the working environment and of productivity) and they soon adopted it, modifying the plants and harmonizing the production cycle of continuous casting with furnaces having a suitable capacity".

ORI Martin buys from Swiss Concast(a multinational society comprising of the German







Schloeman, the English British Steel Corp and the French Marine-Firminy) the machinery for curved continuous casting, in the version tried and tested in Austria and in Switzerland between 1957 and 1963, patented by an Italo-American technician, Irving Rossi.

However, what makes it possible to overcome all the technical and organizational problems occurring during the two years between the installation and the full exploitation of the new plants, is the knowledge of ORI together with its extraordinary human resources, both technical and personal.

The historical management group of ORI Martin, emphasising with pride the merits of a well trained team, has a right to say: "the continuous adaptation of the machinery to the variable production needs was only made possible by the employees skill".

CEPRANO: CONQUERING
THE MARKET
BETWEEN ROME AND NAPLES

In 1965 Ori Martin makes an important production choice opening a plant in the South of Italy. It is SLM (Siderurgica Latina Martin), based in Ceprano, near Frosinone, a drawing mill specializing in processing steels with a high content of carbonium.

The need to find new markets pushes ORI towards the South of Italy. The large area between Rome and Naples is chosen, where the demand for iron rod destined for the production of reinforced concrete is quite strong.

It is a positive period of expansion for the firm, a period that sees a doubling of its factories. Another production plant is created in Ceprano: so, besides SLM, Ori Martin Sud sees the light and starts with a rolling mill. This choice is ratified by the new board of directors that, a year before, on April 29th 1972, had accepted an outside professional, replacing Guido Palazzi (who had left the firm three years before to begin a new activity in Sicily with other people from Brescia, creating a steel mill in Megara in Catania).











This choice of doubling the plants in Ceprano requires careful preparation, which ends in 1977. The birth and the consolidation of the new firm are directly managed by Giuseppe Mazza, from Naples, Roberto De Miranda's nephew. Problems are resolved with the aid of the Mediocredito Lombardo however the most important help is gained from self-financing: a natural choice for ORI whenever the situation dectates.

The nominal capital is almost tripled in three different phases over a period of four years (with an increase from 720,000,000 to 1,2

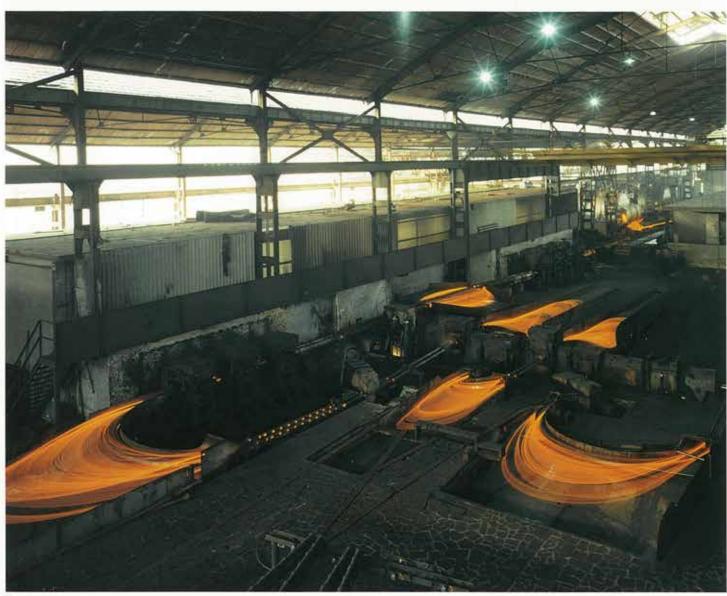
milliard, deliberated on August 2nd 1974, followed by an increase to 1,6 milliard on December 31st 1977 and then to 2 milliards on December 20th 1978).

With the rolling mill in Ceprano, which uses the steel produced in Brescia, ORI Martin succeeds in increasing its production, its workforce and its proceeds, maintaining a relevant portion of the reinforcing steel bar market, a market partially neglected in Brescia, where new working processes, aimed at a more diversified production and a better qualified market, are becoming more popular.



SPECIALIZATION: THE WINNING MOVE AGAINST THE CRISIS







If you risk a backwards fall, it is prefereble to go ahead, even at the cost of stumbling: ORI Martin faces the economic crisis of the steel market in the seventies bearing in mind this elementary assumption - often overlooked by other firms.

To overcome the crisis ORI takes a further step ahead in quality and reconverts its production, reducing the emphasis of the steel rod and at the same time gradually increasing that of quality steels. Consequently, shifts from the products for construction industry in Italy, to materials used in the automotive industry in Europe.

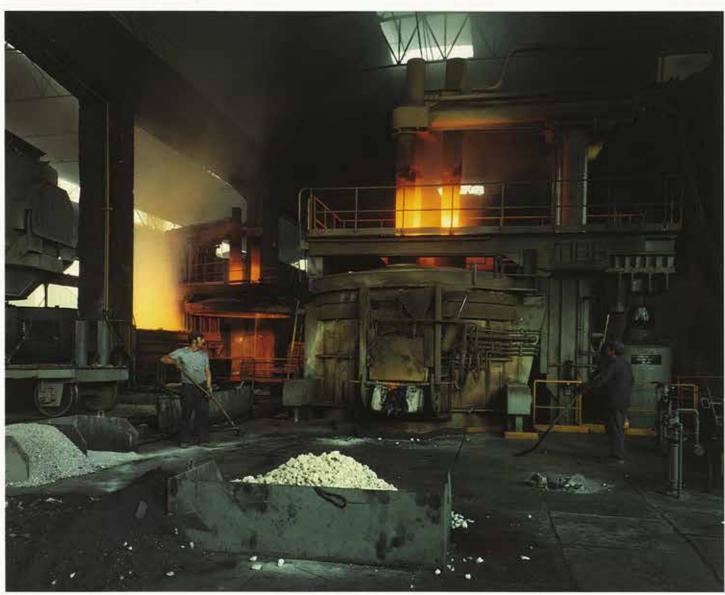
This is not, of course, a sudden and radical turn-about, but a gradual passage, that takes some time and is still in progress: but this is the direction of the development of the firm and has been traced out not by a series of turning points but by a concentration of daily choices, always based on the refinement of the technological processes and on the upgrading of the product range, in the firm belief that only definite specialization allows expansion into the most interesting parts of the

market.

THE THIRD GENERATION: UNITY OF AIMS AND SHARING OF THE TASKS

One of Oger Martin's leading ideas (coherently applied to the firm strategy) had always been: diversify in order to improve. It is a lesson his successors have followed, passing it on in their turn to the third generation: in particular to Elena Magri (Walter's first daughter) and Franco Polotti (Roberto De Miranda's son in low). Elena Magri began to work for the firm in 1976, looking after to the purchase of the raw materials as she still does nowadays; Franco Polotti started working for ORI Martin in 1982, attending to the search for new markets as he still does. We must also not forget Uggero De Miranda, Roberto's son, though he entered the firm later, at the start of the nineties: he devoted himself to the evolution of the production plants and to the question of the relationship between the factory and the environment.







In practice, the diversification in the long and critical phases between 1974 and 1985 is gradual and follows some critical phases.

Looking at the production processes, the main changes take place at the beginning of the following decade, with the opening of the new rolling mill and the "revamping" of the steel plant: but already in the beginning of the eighties, the curtailment imposed by the EEC induces the firm to choose the diversification as its goal for the future. This means that the machinery has to be modified without being changed, aiming at "trying particular articles" but limiting as much as possible the costs of the experiments.

From the point of view of the products put on the market, the capital datum is a constant improvement in the quality of the wire rod, which in 1980 equals in quantity the production of reinforced steel bar for concrete.

Producing more wire rod means more demanding customers grouped in two sectors that are both challenging and qualifying for a steel industry:: fastener producers and the automotive industry (Italian and foreign). For the former, ORI Martin produces material for screws, bolts and mechanical components of high precision, whilst for the automotive it produces sospension springs

Finally, we must mention the critical choices, on the level of financial investments, that ORI Martin makes - within a plan of partial reconversion - in Ceprano and in Brescia.

In Ceprano it completes the rolling mill train, commencing a new production (wire rod) in 1983.

In Brescia, at the end of 1984, it decides to install a new rolling mill for exclusive products: wire rod of middle or high quality. In both cases Danieli is entrusted with the design and the creation of the plants.

A DUAL FACED FIRM: FEMALE OWNERSHIP, MALE MANAGEMENT

On February 22nd 1982, probably in anticipation of these investments, the nominal capital is



doubled, from 2 to 4 milliards. This is just the beginning of a relentless sequence of consolidations of the firm's financial resources: on November 25th 1983, an increase to 6 milliards is deliberated, while the assembly held on May 15th 1984 brings the capital to 8 milliards. As a result, in about two years the capital has been quadrupled. The firm controls its own growth particularly via self-financing.

The last important fact in this period is that the two assemblies, in autumn 1983 and in spring 1984, confirm the dual faced character of the firm (female ownership, male management), an aspect already

obvious when Martin was the leader.

The record of the former shows that among the members there are 5 women (Camille and Leontine Martin, Elena and Annamaria Magri and Maria De Miranda).

Whilst the record of the second one, shows that the board of directors is wholly composed of men (two of them belong to the family, Roberto De Miranda and Walter Magri).

However this is a trend that will not last: when the third generation takes on the leadership of the firm, even these rules, which seemed destined to last forever, will change.



BEYOND THE PATERNALISM: TRADE UNIONS AND ASSOCIATIONS

From the agreed accounts of those who were leaders, with different roles, of the industrial history of ORI Martin, a diffused and shared idea emerges: the positive development of the firm would not have been possible without the atmosphere of active collaboration which has always characterised the climate within the firm from its beginning to nowadays. Two factors decisively contribute to the creation of this atmosphere. On the one hand, the deep involvement of the staff in all important choices and in their achievement(together with particular attention beeing paid to individual problems) and on the other hand, the attitude of the employees, which is one of personal availability exceeding the mere professional services: they always try to solve all the problems, considering them as matters to be solved together.

This frame of mind, however one wants to judge it, has become a type of common culture, an unobtrusive but precious richness, an actual resource for the firm, and has permeated the relationship between ORI Martin and the trade unions. In addition, other groups were created, still in activity today within the factory (from the local section of ANLA - National Association of Old Firm Workers - to the FAIO - ORI Integrative Assistance Fund).

As Martin's daughters say, referring foremost to their father but also to the management style later adopted by their husbands, in the firm you could breathe an atmosphere of "positive paternalism", created by a "charismatic manager" endowed with the "qualities of a leader".

Vittorio Foa, the long-time and brilliant former secretary of the CGIL and disenchanted observer of the economic and social history of the workers' movement, has analysed the industrial paternalism in a subtler and more articulate way.

In a short essay published in 1994, Foa says that the paternalism intends to be an intervention exceeding the usual work services and concerns the total human condition of the worker. In other words, it is "a mixture of collective provisions, regarding all the employees, and of privileged channels regarding the individual, for the worker wishing to personalize his relationship with the firm".



28 • Working at continuous casting, 1980,









For these reasons, the paternalism, that "in Italy and in other West countries" is also "a staff policy strictly tied to the plans of production and work reorganization", has to be considered in a double way, in some way contradictory but true "not only a unilateral pressure of the firm but a relationship, autonomously and freely chosen by some of the employees".

A comparative analysis of the trade unions' agreements stipulated in the last years shows that the ORI Martin can be considered a sort of "social laboratory for trial agreements based on advanced contents". This is a man made and effective picture - supported by many witnesses - and based on four key elements, typical of the ORI Martin: the economic solidity, the sensitivity to the human factor, the autonomy of the firm during the negotiations, the role and the symbolic value of the firm in town. The common denominator between the different agreements - "always reached keeping in mind the distinction of the roles but in a climate of real open-mindedness" - is the constant attention to three leading themes: the environment inside and outside the firm, the investments destined to increase the productivity and the work-force, and the creation of a net of collective services (from the canteen to the means of transport) for the employees.

Here are some details: the bus service making eight runs a day (from the railway and bus station to the factory, with stops in Garibaldi road and in front of the OM), which is the only bus service in the district of Brescia in the seventies but does not last because of the increasing number of private cars (the answer to this is the creation of a new car park in front of ORI Martin); in June 1983 it was agreed to give an advance of 70% on the gratuity, for expenses related to the house question (not only for the purchase, but also for the restructuring, according to an extensive interpretation of the national law 237, that had come into force the year before).

Beside the works council, an assistance association and the board of the employees operate autonomously inside the firm. The first one is called FAIO: ORI Integrative Assistance Fund. It was created at the beginning of the eighties and some of the employees are responsible for it. From the financial point of view, it exsists with an equal management: 50% of the contributions is paid by the firm, 50% by the workers. It



gives a practical assistance for oculistic or dental problems, with a total or partial refund of the expenses, according to the conditions and the fees defined in the statute.

The second one is the ANLA, National Association of the Old Firm Workers, also present in other firms in Brescia (the Beretta, in Gardone Valtrompia, and, in town, Ideal Standard and Ideal Clima, ATB and OM) and operating through a provincial committee with its base in Bassiche road Brescia.

It was created in 1983 at ORI Martin and it comprises of about 200 members (amongst whom are retired and working employees). To join it is necessary to have twenty years of uninterrupted service in the firm.

ANLA is economically supported by the subscriptions of the members and by a contribution paid annually by the firm.

It operates on two levels: outside the firm, it gives economic help to charitable institutions, with which some of the employees are involved; inside the firm it organizes two social meetings a year (in May, to give an award to all the employees who, by the previous December 31st, have reached, twenty or thirty years of service in the firm; and before Christmas, for a collective and auspicious toast).



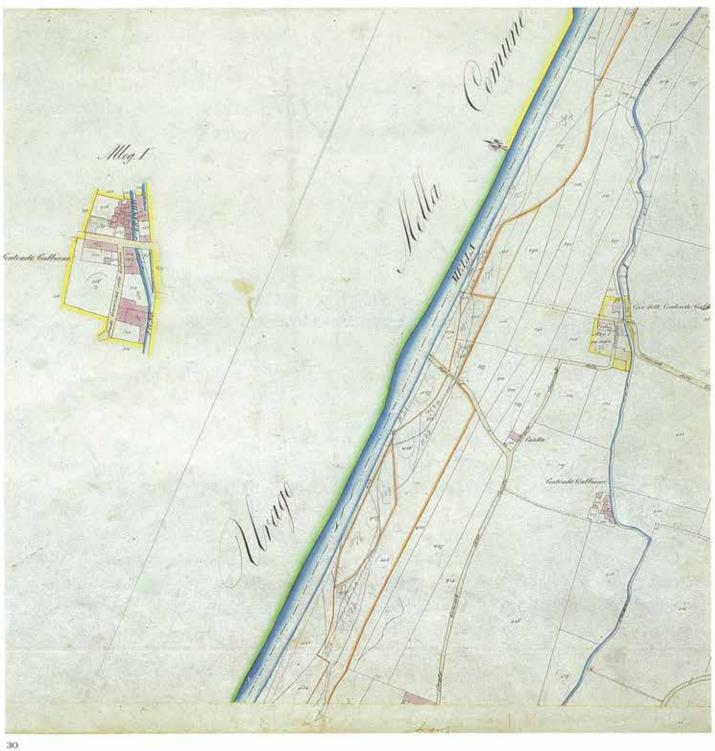
The following is a list of employers who were awared prizes for their active and costructive – at least twenty years of professional activity on various levels – in company ORI Martin. The prizes were given out during the annual meetings organized since may 1980 by the ANLA.

Roberto De Miranda	49	Faustino Zanotti	34	Isidoro Roversi	30
Angelo Bonvini	45	Egidio Alberti	33	Giuseppe Tamussi	30
Pierino Braga	43	Roberto Allegri	33	Angelo Venturelli	30
Valentino Bovegno	41	Ezio Bettoni	33	Luciano Vezzoli	30
Fedele Rubagotti	41	Albina Bresciani	33	Clemente Zanelli	30
Giovanni Trivella	39	Gian Battista Cavalli	33	Bortolo Bosetti	29
Carlo Angeli	37	Enrico Del Bono	33	Guido Silvestri	29
Girolamo Dotti	37	Raffaella Dessi	33	Arrigo Tameni	29
Giuseppe Moggia	37	Giovanni Maffeis	33	Mario Zanella	29
Andrea Ongari	37	Giuseppe Maggiori	33	Mario Benzoni	28
Andrea De Giacomi	36	Carlo Mattanza	33	Giuseppe Massardi	28
Faustino De Lorenzi	36	Vittorio Pelizzari	33	Romeo Mazzelli	28
Angelo Dorosini	36	Gian Carlo Silvestri	33	Davide Pasquali	28
Saverio Fantoni	36	Olivo Stefana	33	Giovanni Poli	28
Gian Carlo Lazzari	36	Gian Paolo Cornali	32	Giovanni Bresciani	27
Pietro Manessi	36	Giovanni Corsini	32	Arnaldo Buffoli	27
Angelo Mazzioli	36	Vittorio Dossi	32	Sergio Carlenzoli	27
Franco Moreschi	36	Ermenegildo Giudici	32	Elvio Codenotti	27
Tullia Bernardini	35	Mario Andreoli	31	Tommaso Fioravanti	27
Giuseppe Bianchi	35	Aldo Clerici	31	Guido Gallina	27
Antonio Bosio	35	Angelo Cominelli	31	Gian Franco Marini	27
Carlo Cominardi	35	Giuseppe Faustini	31	Pietro Tetoldini	27
Mario Montanari	35	Cesarino Mattanza	31	Gian Luigi Tira	27
Faustino Rivetti	35	Angelo Ongaro	31	Attilio Abeni	26
Francesco Bosio	34	Angela Pesenti	31	Rossana Abrami	26
Pietro Corsini	34	Vittorio Verità	31	Carlo Buffoli	26
Walter Magri	34	Faustino Vignetti	31	Giuseppe Cominelli	26
Giuseppe Rivetti	34	Claudio Bergomi	30	Alfredo Comini	26
Michele Rubagotti	34	Angelo Malzanini	30	Luciano Cucchi	26
Guido Uboldi	34	Francesco Morelli	30	Domenico Davide	26



Francesco Del Bono	26	Gian Paolo Paolucci	24	Federico Pasotti	22
Pietro Del Bono	26	Ermanno Pitozzi	24	Faustino Salogni	22
Angelo Franchini	26	Umberto Ragnoli	24	Raffaele Savoldi	22
Felice Gerardini	26	Ferruccio Rivetta	24	Agostino Spinelli	22
Franco Gozio	26	Aldo Tinti	24	Luciano Tomasini	22
Roberto Luzzana	26	Bernardo Boldini	23	Enrico Venturini	22
Giuseppe Pezzotti	26	Claudio Bosio	23	Franco Zanardelli	22
Natale Pizzi	26	Umberto Busio	23	Luigi Bonardi	21
Alessandro Ronchi	26	Giovanni Clerici	23	Giuseppe Bonera	21
Luigi Toselli	26	Giulio Coccoli	23	Giovanni Bonometti	21
Vincenzo Barzani	25	Giovanni Cucchi	23	Giuseppe Bosio	21
Aristide Bettoni	25	Pierino Ferrari	23	Mario Bosio	21
Giovanni Boffelli	25	Roberto Gavezzoli	23	Francesco Castelli	21
Vittorio Bonardi	25	Carlo Gozio	23	Luigi Del Bono	21
Giacomo Cavagnoli	25	Gian Franco Mimelli	23	Elia Lombardi	21
Giuseppe Demetti	25	Giovanni Pinelli	23	Eugenio Mafessoli	21
Angelo Fostini	25	Luigi Ragnoli	23	Natale Mattanza	21
Dario Fugini	25	Pierino Spinelli	23	Paolo Milini	21
Luigi Gorla	25	Erminio Tinti	23	Mario Panza	21
Fausto Gregorio	25	Giuseppe Venturelli	23	Pietro Pederzani	21
Sergio Messa	25	Mario Voltolini	23	Giacomo Ronchi	21
Francesco Moretti	25	Costantino Zanazza	23	Ignazio Scotti	21
Cesare Morteo	25	Pietro Zanoni	23	Angiolino Spagnoli	21
Enrico Quaini	25	Giuseppe Agosti	22	Rizzardo Tecchioli	21
Davide Ronchi	25	Gian Pietro Ba	22	G. Battista Venturini	21
Antonio Spinelli	25	Tiziano Bregoli	22	Angelo Vittorielli	21
Gian Franco Troncatti	25	Enrico Busio	22	Lilian Zanella	21
Battista Vittorielli	25	Orazio Corraro	22	Pierino Bellagente	20
Giuseppe Andreoli	24	Roberto Faustini	22	Giovambattista Comba	20
Piero Bettinzoli	24	Luigi Ferrari	22	Prospero Dalla Bona	20
Renato Bosio	24	Virgilio Fornari	22	Battista Franchini	20
Carlo Botti	24	Francesco Franchini	22	Giuseppe Losio	20
Fausto Coccoli	24	Amelio Frassine	22	Aurelio Luigi Magri	20
Giovanni Cristini	24	Adelio Gatti	22	Armanno Musatti	20
Andrea Del Bono	24	Flavia Legori	22	Vincenzo Pitozzi	20
Alessandro Di Furia	24	Roberto Leonardi	22	Mario Salvi	20
G. Rosa Franzosi	24	Fausto Marini	22	Mario Tomasini	20
Anna Milanesi	24	Giulio Mattanza	22	Giovanni Zaniboni	20
Domenico Nigretti	24	Fausto Mingardi	22	Giacomo Zola	20







THE STEEL PRODUCTION AT THE GABBIANE: A POSSIBLE COHABITATION

What is the status nowadays for a production plant situated in a town? This question, more and more urgent today as we approach the 21st century, involves also ORI Martin for its historical position and for its bond with the quarter of S. Bartolomeo and with the contiguous old suburb of the Gabbiane. The coexistence of industrial activities in inhabited areas has now affected the daily life of the industrial suburbs for more than two centuries, in the countries with an advanced economy. In the northern area of Brescia, where ORI Martin has operated for years, this problem presents some specific features which require further investigation.

The story is a long one. It begins in the 15th century, according to the first consultable papers. In 1427 a lazaret managed by the municipality was already operating in the area, but, as Franco Robecchi writes in a short historical text about the quarter, published in a supplement to the magazine AB, it is in the following centuries that "S. Bartolomeo becomes known as a noisy and smoky country spot where, among mulberries and fields, hammers beat with violent and hollow sounds and wooden gears creak and furnaces flash".

Some significant traces of these old industrial plants are still to be found today, for example a hydraulic hammer at the Gabbiane, along the river Grande. Towards the middle of the 19th century the tanneries and the mills were pre-eminent in the surroundings.

At the end of the century the productive characterization of this area is evident, as it results from the "Guida alpina alla provincia di Brescia" published by the local section of the CAI in 1889: "In S. Bartolomeo (...) there are a lot of tanning factories , factories for silk twisting, fan manufacturing and corn milling.

These plants are supplied with the waters of the Mella, through the irrigation ditches Celato and Bova and the river Grande".

A large part of the historical process of industrialization of the town has developed along the upper river Grande - a derivation of the Mella, realized in the 14th century together with the contiguous channels Bova and Celato. In 1928 these waters still



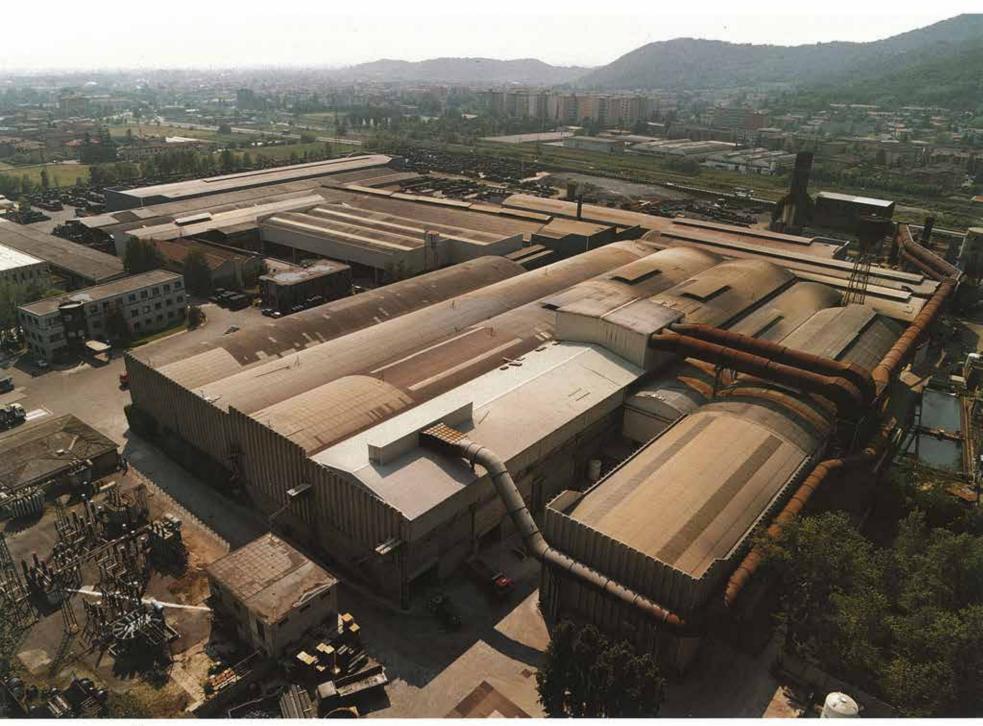


supplied energy to about 30 factories.

Among the most prominent firms operating in different periods in the area, besides Ori, there are Cooperativa Pellattieri and Palazzoli (still operating), the S. Eustacchio ex Franchi Gregorini, OM (now Iveco) and, along the inferior river Grande, Metallurgica Bresciana ex Tempini (which was later transformed into SMI before, then LMI and now Europa Metalli).

This is the reason why Robecchi, a scholar specialized in the urbanistic history of Brescia, thinks that "the area of S. Bartolomeo can be considered the forerunner and one of the irradiation nuclei of the great phase of the industrialization in Brescia." In this context, in 1936, Ferretti & Martin (later ORI Martin) widens its activity moving from Razziche road to Scuole road and buys a 19th century hammer. It is an industrial choice that joins the will to grow and change to a pre-existent industrial inclination of







the area, following a natural and coherent productive continuity.

In twenty five years everything changes: between 1950 and 1960 many popular blocks are built in the north west area of S. Bartolomeo, away from the factories, while at the Gabbiane the inhabitants diminish (today they are about 50) and the productive activities disappear.

It is during this time the contiguous steel plant, ORI Martin, located between Razziche andGabbiane road, grows in importance.

This fact raises the question of the balance between the productive needs and the demand for a liveable environment.

During the period between the early fifties and the late sixties there is however no protest against the presence of the plant. It is the period of reconstruction and then of the economic boom: the ecologic question is not yet considered to be an important one. In 1971, simultaneously with the enforcement of the anti-pollution law, ORI sets up a "downtake filter" (a type of gigantic vacuum cleaner, designed to reduce the smoke of the electric furnaces) replacing the previous, less efficient "wet washing" equipment (a sort of gigantic shower, destined to wash and pull down the smokes' particles).

Towards the middle of the seventies the firm has to solve the problem of water. Every steel plant is a great consumer of water, necessary for the cooling of the plants; Ori is situated along the Mella, in an area quite rich in water and with a lot of drifts; thanks to three great capacity wells, the firm succeeds in collecting the water it needs from the water-bearing strata; but in the following years the quantity of water needed for the cooling rises significantly, consequently Ori decides to set up a plant water.recycling plant.

"Without the recycling of the water - they say at the firm - we would dry up the aqueduct of Brescia. On the contrary, thanks to the recycling plants, we can reduce the drawing of water at about one million of cubic metres a year, instead of the thirty that would be necessary otherwise".

It is from 1985 to 1986 that the main difficulties appear. They are connected with the atmospheric and noise pollution, as a consequence of the enforcement of strict rules and of the appearance of the first signs of discomfort among the inhabitants of the



area.

The response of the firm is the use of the "dog house", a moving insulating structure used to keep the furnace closed (like a barking dog in its house) when it is operating. The "dog house" can be opened to fill the furnace with scrap iron.

It is one of the first "dog houses" in Italy, but it does not solve the problem completely: there are still noises during some phases of the work and emissions of smoke whilst stoking the furnace.

In 1991 a regional resolution fixes the ways of enforcement, in Lombardy, of the new national laws regarding emissions into the atmosphere. ORI Martin decides to put into effect instructions coming from the "Pirellone", adopting a project (brought into effect from 1992 to 1994) of further alteration of the anti-smoke and anti-noise equipment and assigning nearly half of the investments of the triennium to it.

This project requires the rebuilding of all the "downtake filters", in order to potentiate their capacity; and the "dog house" is replaced by an "elephant house", a type of soundproof covering with opening gates, enclosing the whole furnace plant. The work of modifying the equipments ends in August 1994, observing the terms of December 31st (later postponed by the regional Council until the end of 1996).

This is the contribution given by the Ori Martin to a correct and positive relationship between the productive needs and the demand for a liveable environment: a contribution that will also be given in the future.



New Challenges in the 21st century Europe







From the industrial suburbs in Brescia in the beginning of the 20th century to the 21st century Europe as a domestic market: this is the direction that the ORI Martin has taken during the last decade and it is the strategic horizon within which it intends to move in the next one.

The second half of the eighties opens with an important innovation in the management: on June 14th 1985, Elena Magri and Franco Polotti enter the board of directors (followed by Annamaria Magri in 1986 and by Uggero De Miranda in 1990). Elena Magri, 39, and Franco Polotti, 31, become managing directors: she devotes herself to the purchases, while he devotes himself to the sales.

They both have little time for training, since 6 months later the first important challenge is there: 1986 marks the beginning of the tests for the new rolling mill, the starting of which is financially supported by an increase of the nominal capital, from 8 to 12 milliards, deliberated on July 16th of the same year.

The rolling mill, built by the

Danieli, speeds up the productive reconversion, already in progress. Designed and built to produce wire rod, the equipment presents two essential features: it allows the increase in weight of the coils from 400 to 1500 kilos and to aim at more and more sophisticated products, of middle or high quality. In addition, it guarantees a greater speed and less yield loss This new equipment marks the first important steps of that intense technical renewal, begun in 1986, that will deeply change the face of ORI Martin.

The steel making department is significantly modified too, both in the configuration of the plants and in their use. The cooling plate is changed, so that every billet can cool separately, and at the same time the refinement outside the furnace (ladle furnace) - allows the preparation of steels with chemical analysis and properties perfectly complying with the needs of each individual customer (this plant will be created the following year) - the verticalization of the products is also introduced







In 1987 the company installed the first two furnaces for the annealing of the coils plus the first drawing machinery to produce bars for springs and stems for shock absorbers. This is the first step toward a more integrated production.

These products, destined for use in the automative industry, have led to the introduction of a system of "quality warranty" to obtain consistency of the production cycle and a prompt indication of any imperfections, with a rapid selection of materials and quick corrective actions within the productive cycle. In this way the goods can be offered without problems to the most demanding customers: in particular, companies operating in the automotive industry.

In 1988 the rolling mill is strengthened with new machinery allowing the production of wire up to a diameter of 42 mm.

The most important changes, however, take place in 1989 with a big investment in the steel plant. The goals are mainly two: an improvement of the product quality, to be achieved through a "rebuilding" of the continuous casting with innovations enabling ORI Martin to obtain perfect products, and an increase in quantity, to be reached through important changes in the electrik arc furnace.

The specialization in the production of suspension springs allows ORI to purchase (in two phases: in 1992 the 51% and later the remaining 49%) the whole share capital of another small but very qualified company: the Nuova Acciaiotecnica in Monasterolo di Sivigliano, in the province of Cuneo, whose working process mainly concentrates on peeling and grinding of bars.

At the end of 1993 a further diversification of the rolling plants takes place, created due to the need of produce not only coils but also quality steel rolled bars. In September 1994 a peeling machine is installed in Brescia, to guarantee the manufacture of products without surface defects

In this way, the iron and steel industry founded by Oger Martin







succeeds in making its way in the narrow field of quality products destined for specialized utilisation such as the production of fasteners and suspension springs for automotive industrie, not only in Italy but also in Europe, facing the competition of the large French and German firms (Usinor, Krupps, Tyssen).

100 METRES OF WIRE ROD A SECOND: A PACE RACE

All the relevant technological transformations carried out by ORI Martin during the last decade represent the "will to come out of the shell" expressed by a medium sized family firm operating in Brescia, always tempted to compete with the big industries, of family origin too, operating in Milan.

Respecting the tradition of ORI Martin, the aim is to give an identity to the products, trying to find different features for the traditional products or to create new products. This has led the firm to avoid the dangerous temptation of

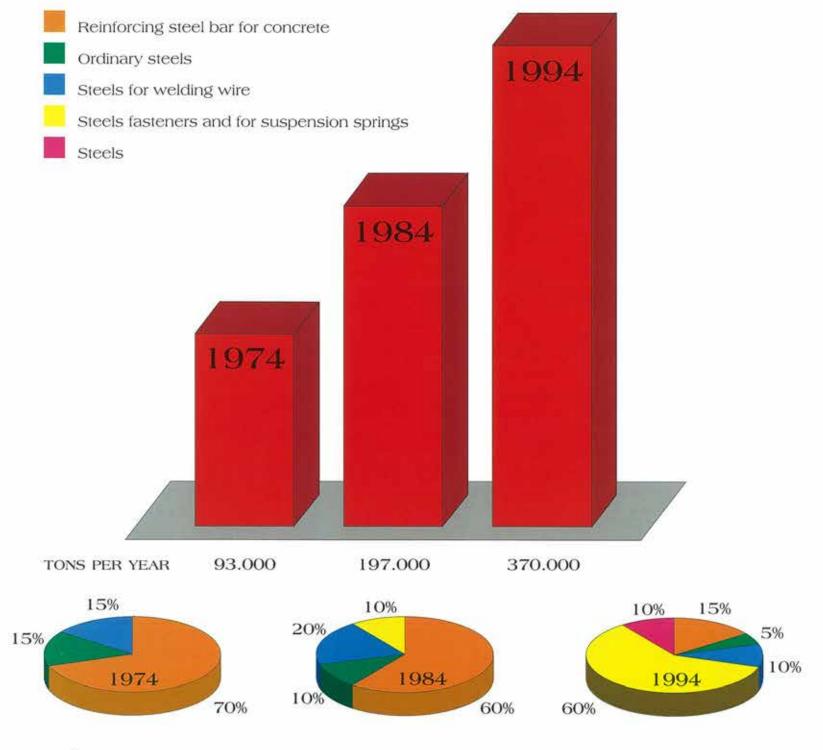
transforming itself into a monomanufacturing firm, projected only a singular market, and to become a leader, in Italy and in Europe, in various productive fields such as the quality and the special steels. That is to say, an important reference point in those fields which not so long ago were apanage of the large industrial groups (Redaelli, Teksid, Acciaierie di Bolzano, Ilva).

Moreover, from the point of view of the machinery and the plants, all the most advanced technologies experimented in the sixties, improved in the seventies and transformed in the eighties and nineties (electric furnace, continuous casting, rolling mill train up to the recent heat treatment and cold working departments) have increased production speed so that the firms can take the maximum advantage out of the machinery and cut john on costs.

With a rolling mill bringing out wire rod at a speed of 100 metres a second, the speeds are becoming similar to those of some car races: 360 kilometres an hour. The new



QUALITATIVE AND QUANTITATIVE EVOLUTION OF ORI MARTIN GROUP PRODUCTION IN THE LAST 20 YEARS





frontier for the nineties is already clearly defined combinig, thanks to an ever increasingly strict quality control, the speed of the production, the widening of the range and the quality of the products.

Howevr the strategic goal is even more ambitious: to become a steel industry able to sell not only products but also services, by covering, in specialized fields, those functions which exceed the mere working processes in the steel plant and in the rolling mill.

To use a metaphor, ORI Martin would like to combine, in the steel field, the quality levels of a boutique with the wide range of a supermarket, this without losing its original identity even if today ORI Martin is a group articulated in 5 productive units (the factory in Brescia, the rolling mill and the SLM drawing plant in Ceprano and Nuova Acciaiotecnica in Savigliano and the new plant which is being built in Cologne) and achieves, in accordance with the estimates of the 1995 budget, very significant dimensions and results (a yearly

production of 400,000 tons of finished product, proceeds of more than 350 milliards and 450 employees).

The future has already begun, within the offices and in the workshops where the red circle, the trade mark of ORI Martin, stands out: the new plants in Cologne represent the strategic completion of the continuous process of technological refinement. The echoes of a glamorous past resound when you hear people saying that "there has to be time for human relationships". This is typical of a family firm which has built the foundation of its success and the roots of a new development, on the sharing of tasks and on a collaboration open to all its members.

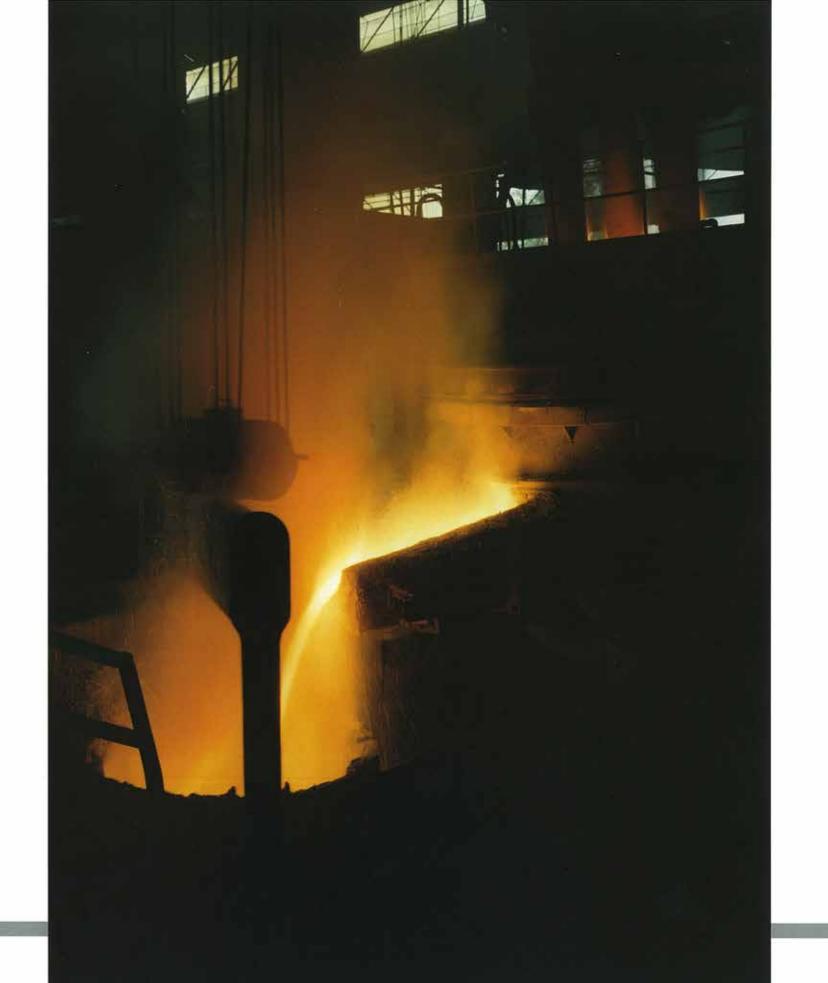






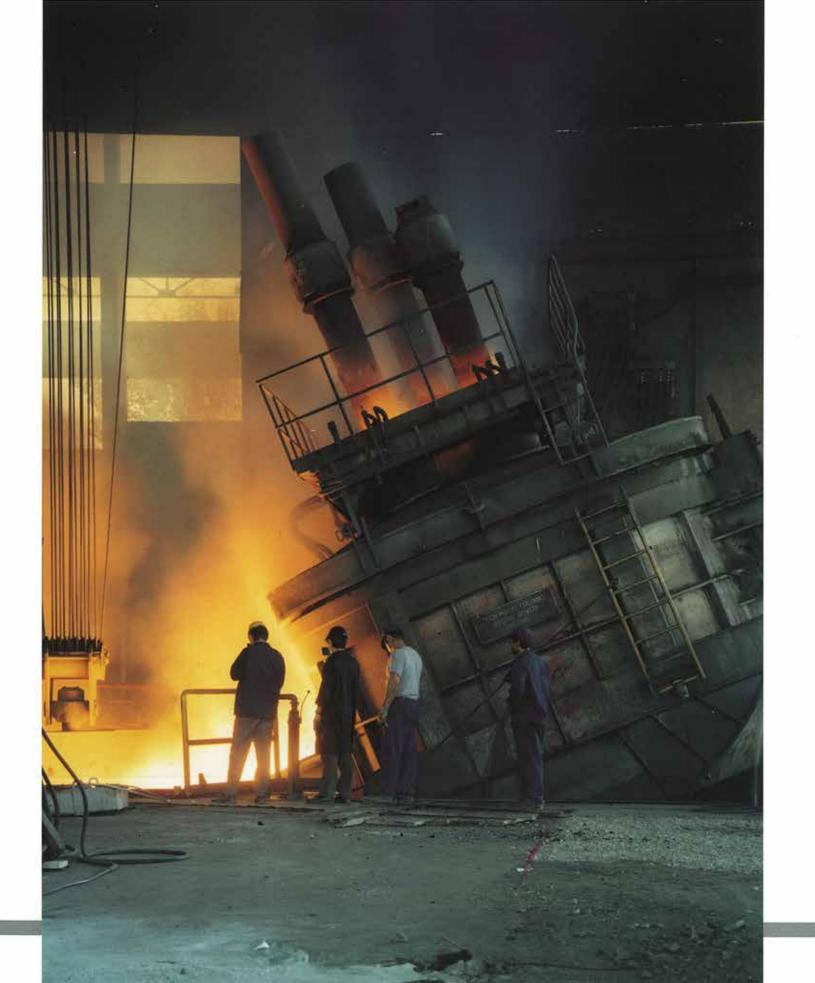
















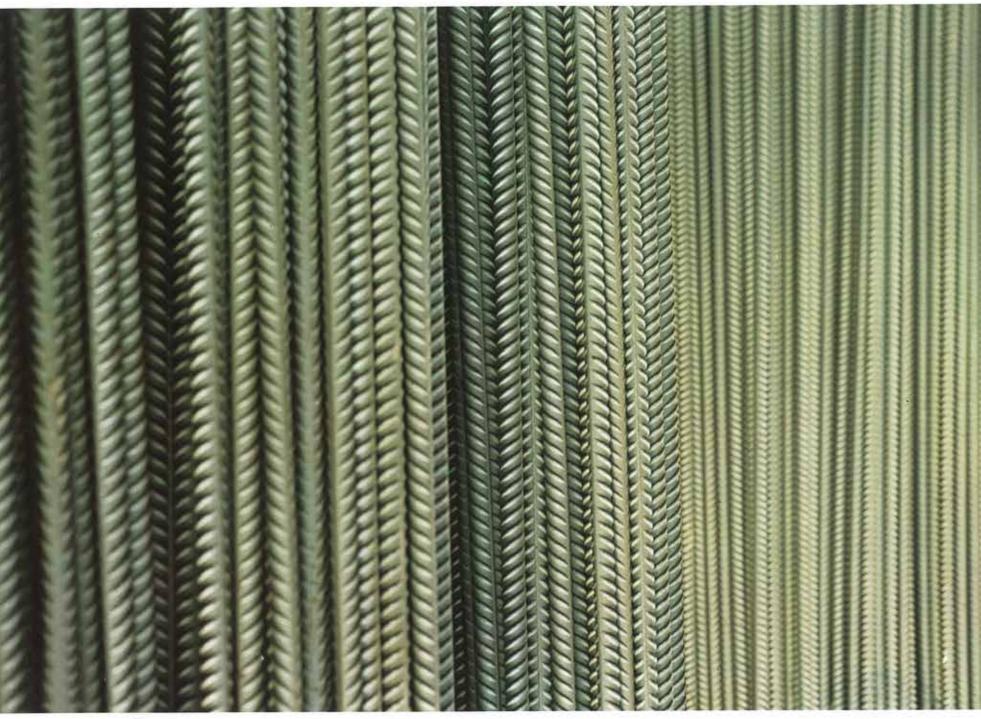




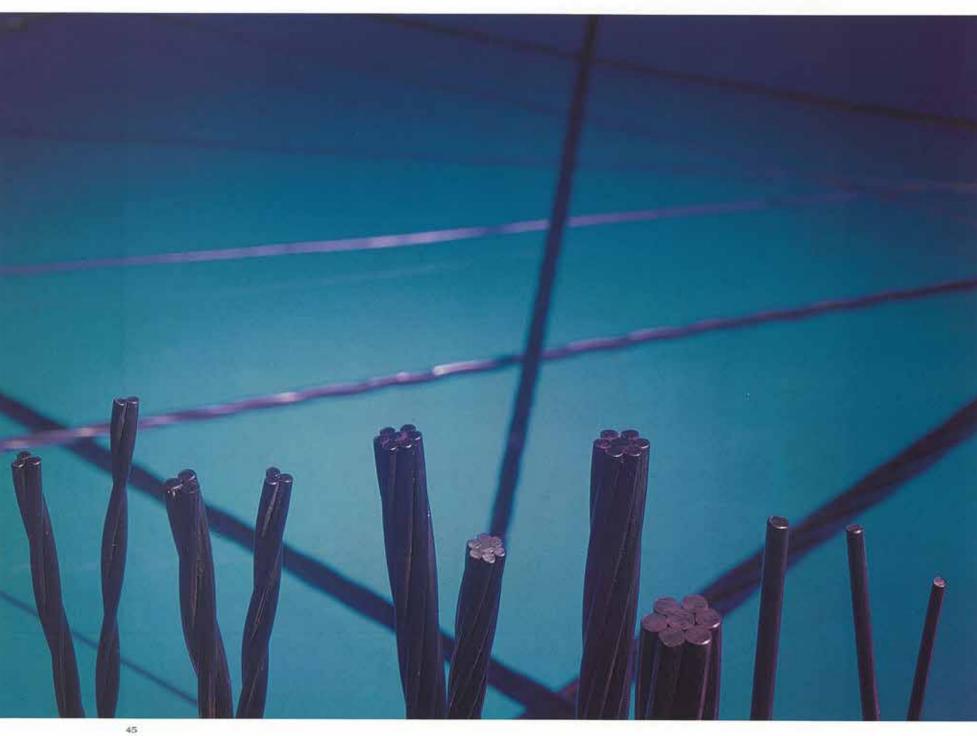






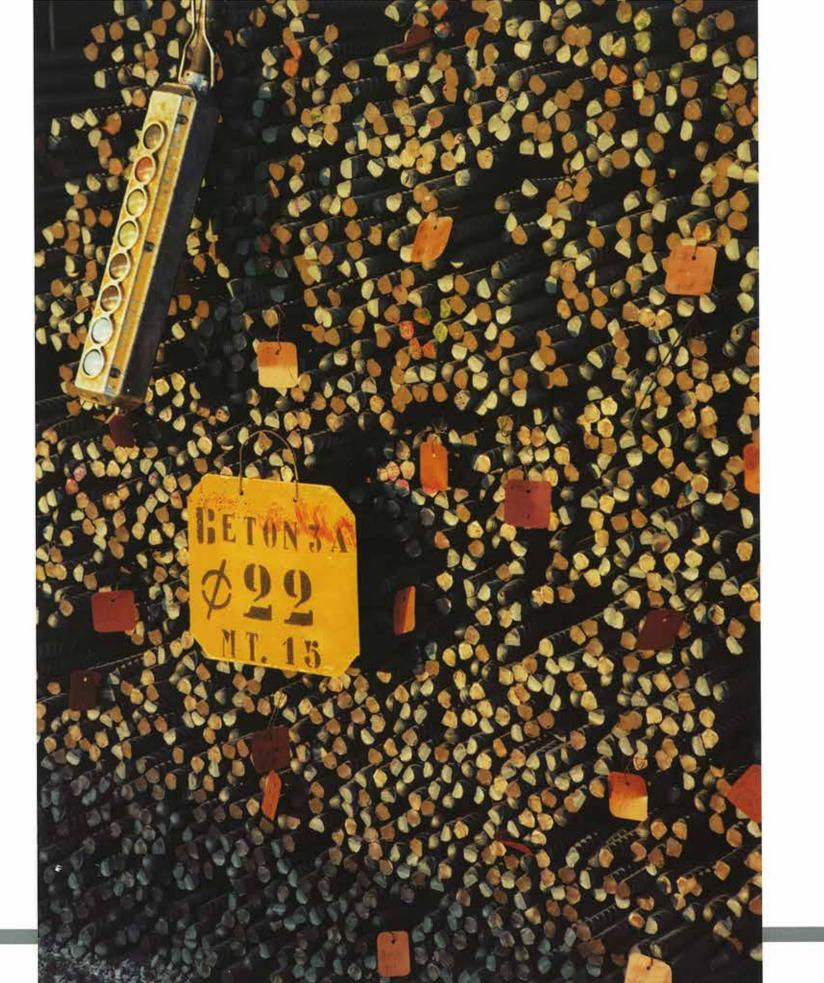


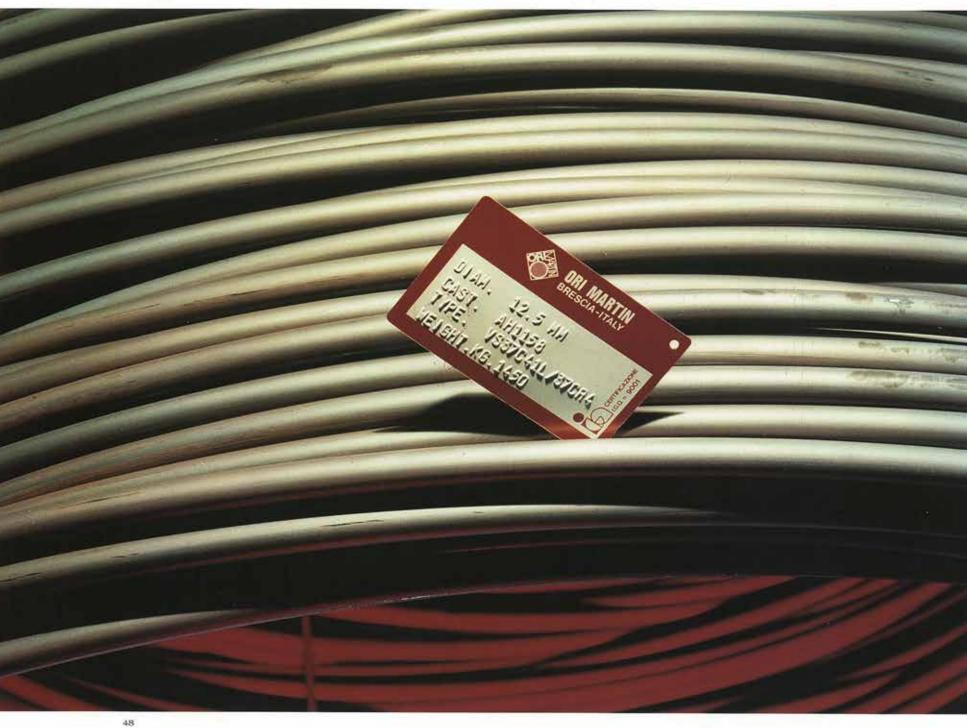














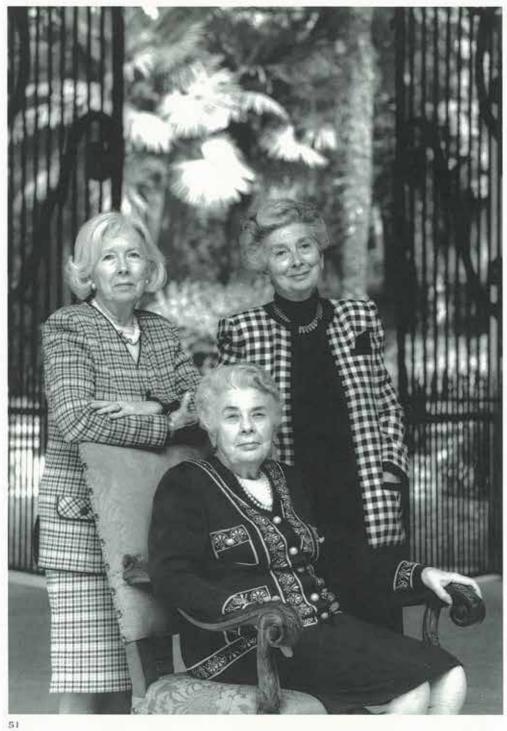




























Essential chronology

- 1902 Ing. G. Conti & C. is created
- 1909 Ing G. Conti & C. takes over Ceschina & Busi and becomes Officine Riunite Italiane
- 1930 Officine Riunite Italiane company liquidates
- 1933 in Razziche road Ferretti & Martin is created
- 1936 purchase of the hammer in Scuole road
- 1939 revocation of the liquidation; the trade name, the plants and the immovables of ORI are bought by Ferretti & Martin
- 1940 Ferretti and Martin sells to OM the lands and the sheds of ORI in Fiume road
- 1941 Lorenzo Ferretti leaves the company: Oger Martin becomes the sole owner of ORI
- 1945 after the war, the activity at ORI starts again
- 1946 a new rolling mill is installed; Roberto De Miranda, Martin's son in law, enters the firm
- 1950 the first electric furnace starts its activity
- 1952 ORI becomes a joint-stock company
- 1961 Oger Martin dies
- 1962 ORI becomes ORI Martin; Walter Magri, another Martin's son in law, helps Roberto De Miranda in the management of the firm
- 1965 at the plant of S. Bartolomeo the first curved continuous casting starts its activity; in Ceprano,
 near Frosinone, SLM (Siderurgica Latina Martin) starts its activity
- 1966 Giuseppina Guerra, Martin's wife, dies
- 1973 in Ceprano ORI Martin Sud is created
- 1976 Elena Magri, Walter's daughter, the first representative of the third generation, starts working in the firm
- 1980 the FAIO (ORI Integrative Assistance Fund) begins to operate
- 1982 Franco Polotti, Roberto De Miranda son in law, starts working in the firm



- 1983 ORI Martin department of ANLA (National Association Old Firm Workers) is created
- 1985 Elena Magri and Franco Polotti become managing directors: it is the second changing of the guard in the leadership of the firm
- 1986 the new rolling mill for wire rod starts its activity
- 1987 the new annealing furnaces and a plant for drawing are installed
- 1988 two commercial companies are opened in the heart of Europe: ORI Martin Deutschland in Mona
 co and, in 1990, ORI Martin France, in Longeville les Metz
- 1989 the modernization of the steel plant continues, with interventions on the continuous casting and the furnace
- 1990 Uggero De Miranda, Roberto's son, begins working for the firm completing the team of the third generation
- ORI buys 51% of the share capital of Nuova Acciaiotecnica, a firm in Monasterolo di Savigliano, in the province of Cuneo
- 1993 the plant for the production of bars is installed within the rolling mill
- 1994 the three years' project of ecologic investments is concluded, respecting the terms of maturity of the law



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Since the consultation was aimed at the verification and the integration of some data provided by oral accounts, on which the previous pages are essentially based, the arbitrariety of the selection and the incompleteness of the quoted works are taken for granted.

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A note on the method

Thanks and responsibilities

This text is the result of the comparison between archives' documents and oral sources, with a prevalence of the protagonists' witnessing compared to the "official literature" (records, letters, programs and projects, memoranda and notes). In particular, most of the information in the foregoing pages derives from a series of conversations (that took place from December 1994 to April 1995) with various authoritative interlocutors, showing different degrees of connection with the industrial experiences of ORI Martin.

This is the chronological scheme of the conversations and the interviews:

December 6th 1994: Roberto de Miranda and Angelo Bonvini (at ORI from 1936, responsible for the rolling mill until 1986)

December 15th 1994: Roberto De Miranda and Walter Magri

December 15th 1994 and January 10th 1995: Tommaso Fioravanti (responsible for the staff until 1988)

January 24th 1995: Leontine Martin Magri and Camille Martin De Miranda

March 1st and 9th 1995: Elena Magri, Franco Polotti, Giovanni Zaniboni (at Ori from 1952, responsible for the equipments)

March 14th 1995: Uggero De Miranda

March 23rd 1995: Albina Bresciani, Roberto De Miranda, Walter Magri; Ernesto Lombardi, technical director from 1986 (with a guided tour of the plants in Brescia and of their productive cycle)

March 28th 1995: Isa Merigo (secretary of the direction until 1943)

March 30th 1995: Piero Bettinzoli (at Ori from 1971, responsible for the products' quality and the cold working departments)

April 4th 1995: Mario Salvi (technical director until 1986)

April 5th 1995: Giovanni Corsini (at Ori since 1936, responsible for the storehouse until 1969); Elena



Magri; Franco Polotti

April 6th. 1995 Albina Bresciani (secretary of the direction until) Tullia Bernardini (in charge of the accounting department until 1985).

The compilation of this book would not have been possible without the co-operation and extreme kindness of the above-mentioned people and of all of the staff at ORI Martin.

Thankyou to everyone. If there are any detectable gaps this is of course attributable only to those who carried out the work in compiling the book, from the project stage through to the actual printing. A special thankyou must be extended to Annamaria Magri, from the company and Studio Ikon, for her tenacity and patience, mingled with an intelligent passion in coordinating the various phases of this complex and fascinating research into the roots upon which the future of ORI Martin rests.



