

CHEMICAL HERITAGE FOUNDATION

CLAUDIO TODESCHINI

Transcript of an Interview  
Conducted by

W. Boyd Rayward

at

International Atomic Energy Agency  
Vienna, Austria

on

13 June 2000

(With Subsequent Corrections and Additions)

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Chemical Heritage Foundation  
Oral History Program  
315 Chestnut Street  
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19106



## CLAUDIO TODESCHINI

1937 Born in Tripoli, Libya, on 14 August

### Education

1959 B.S., civil engineering, University of Cape Town  
1961 DIC [Diploma of Imperial College], Imperial College, University of London  
1962 M.S., theoretical and applied mechanics, University of Illinois  
1967 Ph.D., theoretical and applied mechanics, University of Illinois

### Professional Experience

1966-1969 University of Maryland  
Professor, Theoretical and Applied Mechanics

1967-1969 Massachusetts Institute of Technology  
Part-time Researcher, Theoretical and Applied Mechanics

1967-1969 U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of Standards  
Part-time Researcher, Information Systems on Pneumatic Tires

1969-1976 International Atomic Energy Agency  
Subject Specialist, Engineering and Mechanics

1976-1981 International Nuclear Information System [INIS] Thesaurus Specialist

1981-1992 Head, INIS Subject Control Unit

1992-1996 Systems Analyst

1996-1999 Head, INIS Section

### Honors

1991 Distinguished Service Award, International Atomic Energy Agency

## ABSTRACT

Claudio Todeschini was born in Tripoli, Libya, and spent his childhood in Italy and South Africa. He received his first degree in civil engineering from the University of Capetown, South Africa. He began his graduate studies on concrete shell structures at the Imperial College, University of London. Todeschini received his DIC [Diploma of Imperial College] in 1961, and then went to the United States and became a Ph.D. research assistant at the University of Illinois at Champaign-Urbana. He finished his Ph.D. work on thin-shell structures at the University of Illinois in 1967. Then, Todeschini accepted a professorship at the University of Maryland in 1966, and a year later, he added to his workload by becoming a part-time researcher at Massachusetts Institute of Technology and the U.S. Department of Commerce. While working on an information system for the Department of Commerce, Todeschini gained a strong interest in information storage and retrieval, and terminological relationships. In 1969, he joined the International Atomic Energy Agency [IAEA] and began working on the INIS [International Nuclear Information System] information system. His involvement with the INIS project began with terminology work in Luxembourg, where he adapted and developed terminology from the pre-existing EURATOM information system. In fact, Todeschini focused on terminology throughout most of his career at the IAEA, which he discusses throughout the interview. Todeschini also discusses the INIS's decentralized input system, and the incorporation of abstracts into that system. He details how the INIS has been available in each member state, and how for profit organizations are able to host access for the system. In conclusion, Todeschini discusses the various heads of the INIS system and describes his most important personal contributions to the system.

## INTERVIEWER

W. Boyd Rayward is a research professor in the Graduate School of Library and Information Science at the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign. He turned to librarianship after graduating in English literature from the University of Sydney. He received his Ph.D. from the Graduate Library School at the University of Chicago in 1973. He has held positions in the University of Chicago (where he became Dean of the Graduate Library School). He served as Professor and Head of the School of Information Library and Archive Studies and Dean of the University's Faculty of Professional Studies at the University of New South Wales in Sydney where he is now professor emeritus. He has published two books related to Paul Otlet, Belgian documentalist and internationalist, and a great many articles on history of national and international schemes for the organization and dissemination of information.

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- 4      Early Work on Information Systems  
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