

THE ASSOCIATION OF AMERICAN COLLEGE AND UNIVERSITY PROGRAMS IN ITALY

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THE HISTORY OF AACUPI

Introduction

The **Association of American College and University Programs in Italy** (AACUPI) today numbers some eighty member institutions. It is recognized, both by the Italian Government and by US and Canadian authorities in Italy, as a unified voice for American and Canadian educational institutions that operate programs of study for their students in Italy.

How did this Association come about, what has it accomplished, and what are its aims and plans for the future? These are the questions this brief history will try to answer.

The Origin of AACUPI

The Association of American College and University Programs in Italy was founded in June of 1978 in direct response to prompting by Dr. Richard Arndt, Cultural Attaché at the American Embassy in Rome, and by Prof. John D'Arms, Director of the American Academy in Rome. A grant from the International Communication Agency of the Embassy of the United States of America in Rome provided financial support to cover organizational expenses.

When the handful of programs from Florence and Rome that first contemplated joining together in a voluntary association assessed their situation, they were forced to recognize that American programs operating on Italian soil did so under highly unusual conditions, with implications and ramifications for both nations involved. It was generally recognized that the concept of a university conducting a program overseas (as distinguished from individual students studying abroad) was a relatively new one in the world. Before Americans invented the idea, the only historical precedents for overseas university programs were provided by imperial or colonial models, as in the University of Ceylon, which the British set up as part of their colonial responsibilities.

Universities Abroad: an Anomaly

From the very outset, it was clear that AACUPI should not try to impose the American educational model on other national educational systems. The new twist Americans have given to study abroad derives from a natural American curiosity, from a need for richer educational experience and exposure to other cultures so as to reduce our own provincialism. And American society is prosperous enough to afford such a luxury.

In fact, the US model of an academic presence abroad is a historical anomaly, one which seems to have set an example only for Canada. The fact that North American overseas education represents an exception rather than the rule conditioned AACUPI's formation right from the

beginning. And yet, Americans and Canadians believe that the extension of education overseas is a good thing, and they want it to endure. North Americans would, indeed, be pleased to see overseas educational extension adopted by other nations, and, in theory, most would make an effort to find ways to welcome similar programs in the US and Canada, if they were asked to do so.

In the Other's Shoes

As AACUPI's founders started their discussions, they tried to put themselves in the other nation's shoes. Yes, American and Canadian universities receive foreign students, more of them than in any other nations. But the North American academic and fiscal fabric would not tolerate any university program from another nation which came to set up a separately housed complex, with its own faculty, and dipped selectively into aspects of American life as it pleased. North Americans would be puzzled by such an entity and would worry about who these people were and why they were there. US and Canadian immigration authorities and the Internal Revenue offices would study the matter very closely. AACUPI recognized from the very beginning that this kind of foreign presence raises particularly acute problems in a highly centralized state like Italy. What is more, we were in the presence of a phenomenon which brought two cultures into contact, but lacking those rules or laws that would help that contact proceed smoothly.

AACUPI's Goals

Thus, AACUPI's first and foremost goal was to become a clearing-house for information and ways of thinking about the problem of inter-nation exchange of academic programs (beyond the individual level of student exchanges). At the time, it was thought that a research or self-study group could try to pool information, either by mail, by word of mouth, or by more formal means, such as conferences and seminars. From this information and research function of AACUPI, new programs could get comparative information; moreover, perhaps the total information contributed by all such associations would raise the level of inquiry to a truly international level, resulting in some kind of consensus regarding programs of this sort operating abroad.

An important secondary goal was to provide a defense: how might we best define and coordinate our needs so that the American and Canadian Embassies and Consulates in Italy could assist us effectively in matters regarding our status and administrative issues? The idea was that AACUPI would have to be in a position to produce better results than its individual members could acting alone. A related issue involved academic standards: American education has always felt responsible for maintaining its own standards, if only out of fear that, if the educational world did not do it, some external agency would. AACUPI's founders felt that a standards committee was essential to every aspect of American academic activities on Italian soil.

Another important secondary aim was to take the offensive by developing a rationale for receiving Federal as well as private funding to underwrite overseas education, since international studies in the domestic context are reasonably well financed, while similar studies abroad are not. Few, if any, academic programs in Italy or elsewhere exist without some form of subsidy, but no way has been found to channel new funds into the area of American and Canadian education abroad. At the time, it was felt that a Europe-wide group in which AACUPI participated would be of general benefit to its members.

The Middle Road

As a result of the numerous discussions by AACUPI's founders, it was decided that the Association should negotiate a middle ground between a general approach and a very specific one. Everyone endorsed AACUPI's dual role: at the local level, it could be flexible enough to meet the needs of individual programs, while at the regional and national levels, it could be used to promote the general needs of all its members. Thus, for example, the specific approach would be used to plan shared lecture programs for all students in Rome, or in Florence, or art projects, say, or exchanges of students between cities for art study or other experiences. The general focus would make it possible for members to cooperate on a geographical basis, or even on the basis of subject matter. In any case, *ad hoc* cooperation was to be encouraged and enhanced.

The First AACUPI Constitution

So AACUPI was formed and given a *Constitution*, the Preamble of which read:

Desirous of enhancing and facilitating the international education interest of American university programs in Rome and Italy by cooperative effort; seeking to extend, protect and generally enrich their respective instructional programs and academic research activities by mutual assistance; seeking also to expand the scope of cooperative relationships between American programs and appropriate Italian counterpart institutions through educational and other cultural exchange; and being represented by authorized persons, the undersigned institutions are joining together in voluntary association.

The purposes described in the *Constitution* were to:

...include (but not be restricted to) the initiation and maintenance of regular communication among members and the sponsorship of such non-profit cooperative education policies, programs and collaborative activities as may be deemed beneficial for and by the membership; the Association may represent the collective interests of its members with American, Canadian, Italian or other official agencies as well as with non-member educational, cultural and philanthropic institutions or programs as may be deemed desirable by the majority of its members.

Early Activities

A gradual tightening of Italian bureaucratic control over the entire nation resulted in tighter control over the operation of our American and Canadian institutions. This control manifested itself with inspections of various US academic programs, first by the Social Security Agency (INPS), then by the Labor Office (Ufficio del Lavoro), and, finally and more seriously, by the Guardia di Finanza (equivalent to the IRS).

Now organized and ready to meet the challenges ahead, AACUPI began to tackle some of the most pressing issues facing its members.

Student Visas

The very first real challenge AACUPI met involved visas. In 1979, AACUPI lobbied for and succeeded in getting authorization for Italian consulates in the US to issue visas to American students enrolled in American programs in Italy, which had not been possible previously. Our students today still reap the benefits of this initiative.

Museum Passes

In 1983, AACUPI succeeded in obtaining authorization from the Ministero per i Beni Culturali e Ambientali, which oversees national museums and archaeological sites, to issue annual passes to its faculty and students, giving them free admission to all sites and museums maintained by the Ministry. The resulting financial savings to member institutions were incalculable. Unfortunately, in 1993 the Ministry revoked its decision. Negotiations to persuade the authorities to reinstate the museum pass are on-going.

At the same time, agreements were reached with the municipal authorities in Florence and Rome granting free admission at municipal museums and archaeological sites to the faculty and students of AACUPI programs. These agreements remain in effect.

Tax-exempt Status

From May through December of 1988, the Guardia di Finanza investigated fifteen American academic programs in Florence on the grounds that these programs were evading payment of IVA (Value Added Tax), as well as income tax. Heavy fines were levied on several programs. This circumstance, combined with the promise of further investigations and even heavier fines, caused great consternation both in Italy and at the home institutions in the US. The resulting pressure on local and national political authorities, together with the timely intervention of the US Ambassador to Italy, Maxwell Rabb, brought about the passage of a clause in the tax law passed by the Italian government on April 29, 1989, whereby tax-exempt status would be granted to all affiliates of foreign colleges or universities or institutions of higher learning that are non-profit entities in the US and Canada, provided that they are recognized as such by the Ministry of the University and Scientific Research.

Legal Status - the "Barile Bill"

As early as 1986, there had been discussion about the possibility of having a law passed by the Italian Parliament that would protect and regulate the very special nature of the American and Canadian academic programs in Italy. Member institutions were asked to help put together a definition of our status--a status that is, by the way, non-existent in Italy as far as academic institutions are concerned--and to suggest solutions. After much discussion, Prof. Paolo Barile, a noted expert in Florence on the Italian Constitution, was asked to draw up a bill to present to the Italian Parliament for passage. The fee for this endeavor was paid with AACUPI funds and additional monies solicited from member institutions. The proposed law was submitted to Parliament on July 5, 1988. Passage of the tax-exemption clause temporarily postponed efforts at promoting the "Barile Bill." But this was not to be the last word on this piece of legislation, as we will see later.

The "New" AACUPI

In order to coordinate applications for tax-exempt status to the Ministry of the University on behalf of AACUPI members, AACUPI itself had to become a legally-constituted association. This step was also required to protect AACUPI's Officers, who were handling funds used for association purposes. Thus, the "new" AACUPI was constituted during the summer of 1990, which also made it possible to open a bank account in AACUPI's name. This new status, however, necessarily generated any number of difficulties, among them the lack of familiarity with the Italian legal system and the need to keep financial records and issue legal communications in the Italian language, as well as the necessity of formally reconstituting the

membership. Coincidentally, the resolution of these difficulties has also given rise to new, significant benefits for the membership at large.

Officers, Dues, and General Meetings

AACUPI's Officers consist of a President and a Secretary-Treasurer, elected to a two-year term by the membership, usually at the last General Meeting of the academic year. They are assisted by a Steering Committee and a number of *ad hoc* Project Coordinators. An up-to-date list of these individuals can be found at the end of this presentation. All work by the Officers and committee members is totally on a volunteer basis.

Annual membership dues are payable in US or Italian currency, beginning in June of each year, and are calculated using a basic flat fee, along with a formula taking into account the number of students in the program, the number of academic sessions held per year, and the ownership of property. Payment of annual dues entitles a member institution to attend all General Meetings and to receive all circulated information, as well as to participate in all Legal and Fiscal Affairs Meetings and to receive at least eight Newsletters in both English and Italian prepared by Borio, Borio and Fabbrucci each year. Legal and Fiscal Affairs Meetings are usually held in conjunction with the General Meetings.

Four General Meetings are held each academic year, usually on weekends. The first weekends in October, December, and February, and the third or fourth weekend in April have traditionally been convenient times for members to gather. Meeting venues rotate among Florence, Rome and other cities throughout Italy, with member institutions rotating as hosts for these events. The host institutions often have been able to arrange special cultural events to coincide with these General Meetings, making it possible to visit monuments that are otherwise inaccessible to individuals or individual programs.

Legal Services

In 1994, to confront some of the difficulties created by AACUPI's new legal status and to reduce individual program expenditures to obtain information precious to all member institutions from legal and fiscal consultation firms that were, in effect, competing with each other, the legal firm of Borio, Borio and Fabbrucci in Florence was contacted to serve as the Association's consultant in legal, financial and fiscal matters. Since that time, the firm has become expert in and offers services about non-standard private and confidential matters to member institutions, as well, at highly affordable rates.

Borio, Borio and Fabbrucci have also issued a series of Newsletters, in both Italian and English, containing information about the latest changes and interpretations in Italian law that affect member programs, thus making it possible for both the English-speaking and Italian-speaking administrators and professionals to keep abreast of the legal and fiscal requirements they all face. A list of the subjects covered in these Newsletters to date can be found at the end of this presentation. This service provided by Borio, Borio and Fabbrucci has made it possible to obtain highly professional Italian legal and fiscal advice, even for small programs which could not otherwise afford it, also resulting in considerable savings (as much as \$80,000.00 in some cases) in legal consultation fees on the part of many larger programs. By signaling potential fiscal and legal difficulties for the operation of our programs, the firm makes it possible to mobilize AACUPI's membership to take countermeasures before it is too late.

Workmen's Compensation - INAIL

Just when it seemed that some resolution of the fiscal situation of North American institutions in Italy was near, another related problem raised its head, again pointing to the clear need for AACUPI as a clearing house of information that would not otherwise be readily available to its members. In Florence, the local office of INAIL (Istituto Nazionale Per l'Assicurazione Contro Gli Infortuni Sul Lavoro), the national agency that insures workers against injuries sustained at the workplace, sent inspectors to several program offices, insisting that those programs were obliged to open INAIL accounts for all their students under a recently enacted law requiring Italian universities to open an INAIL account for everyone that uses computers owned by those institutions, including students, and threatening to levy heavy fines against those programs for their failure to comply.

AACUPI's Officers and legal consultants immediately requested a meeting with INAIL officials in Rome to clarify the matter. In fact, a provision in Italian law specifically excludes foreign citizens who are in Italy for study or professional training from the requirement to pay INAIL. The INAIL officials promised to issue a circular letter to all INAIL offices clarifying the matter, and AACUPI's Officers were quick to spread the word to member institutions so that local inspectors might be given the exact citation to justify their exemption from this requirement. The per capita fees charged were considerable, to say nothing of the administrative and accounting costs involved in doing the paper work.

Compliance with Codes

On October 1, 1994, Architect Rudolph Rooms presented a *Building Management Update*, both orally and in writing, to assist AACUPI members in assessing the technical responsibilities involved in specific situations in order to comply with the sundry laws, by-laws, codes, regulations (national, local, and European Union) of a technical nature. Sorting out codes for matters such as electrical installation, heating and ventilation systems, fire protection, waterworks, energy control, cooking and cleaning hygiene, etc., for which we are legally responsible and which are of great concern to our institutions, is a serious matter. Keeping faculty and student housing and classroom, office and library spaces in compliance with law-enforced regulations and providing proper certification for compliance is a continuous challenge in Italy, one that requires on-going vigilance. AACUPI assists its members as much as possible in these areas of concern.

AACUPI Initiatives

Over the years, AACUPI has developed a series of programs and projects to serve the interests of its membership and respond to the context in which its members work and live. Some of these initiatives are of an on-going nature, while others respond to particular needs or situations. The list of these programs shows the breadth and range of the initiatives that are possible with a structure such as AACUPI.

Orientation Services for New Directors

On October 2 and 3, 1993, AACUPI organized in Florence a weekend orientation for new administrators of member institutions. Friday afternoon, experienced directors gave a presentation on student services that included information on dealing with the Questura and *permessi di soggiorno*, on housing issues, on travel within Italy and throughout Europe, on health problems and the stresses of foreign study, and on social life. Saturday morning's session covered legal and fiscal terminology and dealings with faculty and staff, including hiring procedures, salaries, honoraria and benefits, citing pertinent legislation and case studies.

A history of AACUPI, its goals and purposes, was also presented. This initiative was so successful from every point of view that it has become an annual event (1993–Cortona, 1994–Rome, 1995–Florence, 1996–Rome, 1997–Florence, 1998–Rome, 1999–Florence, 2000–Florence, 2001–Rome), usually held the first weekend in October, in conjunction with the first General Meeting of the academic year. On-going information packets containing current, updated information are distributed to the membership-at-large each year.

The AACUPI Prize

Over the years, many Italian and American political, cultural, and academic figures have worked diligently to help AACUPI attain its goals. It was felt that some recognition of this contribution was due, so in 1993 the AACUPI Prize was initiated. On April 3, 1993, AACUPI honored **Valdo Spini**, Minister of the Environment, by awarding him the first “Premio AACUPI 1993 - AACUPI Prize 1993” for his continued support of AACUPI member institutions. To date, the AACUPI Prize has been given to the following distinguished individuals:

Warren Obluck, US Minister Counselor, for 1994;

Paolo Blasi, Magnifico Rettore dell’Università degli Studi di Firenze, for 1995;

Biancamaria Tedeschini-Lalli, Magnifico Rettore dell’Università degli Studi di Roma III, for 1996;

Massimo Cacciari and Mario Messinis, Mayor of Venice and Superintendent of La Fenice, respectively, for 1997;

Valdo Spini Member of Parliament and Chair of the Defense Committee of the Chamber of Deputies, for 1998;

Cipriana Scelba, Executive Director Emeritus of the Fulbright Commission for Cultural Exchange Between Italy and the United States, for 1999;

Furio Colombo, Member of the Italian Parliament and distinguished journalist, for 2000.

The 1993 award ceremony, held at Georgetown University’s beautiful Villa Le Balze in Fiesole, was an occasion for the North American and Italian academic communities to come together to celebrate reciprocal cultural exchange on every level. The 1994 prize was awarded during a weekend of meetings hosted by the Rockefeller Foundation’s Study and Conference Center at Bellagio on Lake Como. In 1995, the AACUPI Prize was presented at a dinner and dance in the elegant Ballroom of Palazzo Calcagnini-Aresi (1876-77), the US Consulate in Florence. The Sarah Lawrence College Florence Program provided the venue for the 1996 Award, and in 1997 the AACUPI Prize was awarded at Wake Forest University in Venice, and at the beautiful Palazzo Grassi in conjunction with AACUPI’s presentation to the Mayor of Venice of a substantial donation for the rebuilding of La Fenice, funds which were raised exclusively through the La Fenice Benefit Concert held in February of 1996. In 1998, the historic Villa Corsi Salviati, then home of the University of Michigan-University of Wisconsin Academic Year Program in Sesto Fiorentino, witnessed the awarding, for the second time, of the AACUPI Prize, to Valdo Spini, for his unceasing support of AACUPI initiatives and his untiring assistance to us in time of need. The very central and newly remodeled Palazzo dei Cartelloni, home to Bowling Green State University in Florence, hosted AACUPI for the Prize in 1999, to Cipriana Scelba who dedicated over fifty years of her life to international education and educational exchange between Italy and the United States. The last Prize was awarded on October 5, 2000, to the prominent intellectual Furio Colombo at a reception and dance hosted by the Consul General in Florence, Hilarion Martinez, in the elegant ballroom of Palazzo Calcagnini-Aresi on the Lungarno.

The IRPET Study

In March of 1993, IRPET - Istituto Regionale per la Programmazione Economica della Toscana - commissioned and carried out, with the assistance of AACUPI, a report on the presence of our academic programs in Tuscany: "Il Turismo con Finalità di Studio Accademico in Toscana." In brief, the results of this study showed that American students, in only 23 programs, spent a total of some 300,000 days studying in Tuscany in 1991-1992, with a direct expenditure of 40-42 billion Italian liras and an indirect expenditure of roughly the same amount. The study has been invaluable in demonstrating the importance of our programs as a component in the Tuscan economy, and AACUPI hopes that a similar study can be done soon for the Lazio Region to demonstrate the economic impact of the programs located in Rome.

An IRPET 2000 Study comprehensive of programs throughout all of Italy was commissioned by AACUPI with financial support by the Fondazione Carlo Marchi on the occasion of the symposium "Educating in Italy" (October 5-8, 2000). The results are illustrated in Volume III of this publication.

AACUPI Surveys

Over the years, in an effort to come to a better mutual understanding of the composition and complexion of the American and Canadian programs operating in Italy, AACUPI has invited its members to respond to a series of questionnaires to survey various topics. Participation is strictly voluntary, and the results are anonymous and shared only among those programs that responded to a given questionnaire. Member institutions have found these surveys an invaluable tool for assessing their relative positions in such pressing matters as faculty and staff pay scales, fee structures, student housing costs, and the like.

The AACUPI Balls

The first AACUPI Benefit Ball was held on September 29, 1995, in Florence, in the Ballroom of the United States Consulate at Palazzo Calcagnini-Aresi, at the generous invitation of Sue Patterson, the US Consul General in Florence. The administration, faculty, staff and friends of AACUPI member institutions enjoyed a fine dinner and an evening of dancing. One half of the funds raised from this initiative were combined with remaining IFAP funds to subsidize a scholarship for an Italian university student to attend the home campus of one of the member institutions located in Florence. The remaining funds were used to cover the costs involved in promoting the Crypta Balbi Competition.

On September 27, 1996, an AACUPI Benefit Dinner-Dance was held in Rome in Villa Taverna, the home of the US Ambassador to Italy, Reginald Bartholomew, and his lovely wife, Rose-Anne. Administrators, faculty, staff and guests of member institutions, together with AACUPI's guests from Italy's cultural and political world, had an opportunity to tour the Villa Taverna, considered one of the most beautiful US ambassadorial residences in the world, and its famous Renaissance gardens, spending a memorable evening together.

The most recent ball was held during the international symposium in Florence "Educating in Paradise", at the home of the Consul General, Hilarion Martinez, on October 5, 2000, the Palazzo Calcagnini-Aresi, to welcome guests and participants in the symposium.

The AACUPI Handbook 1995

In November, 1995, AACUPI published the **AACUPI Handbook 1995: Political and Economic Life in Today's Italy** for use by member institutions for their students and staff and also made it available at cost to other entities operating in Italy. We realize that initial enthusiasm and euphoria on the part of the newly arrived visitor to "sunny Italy" can quickly turn to bewilderment as the newcomer is gradually overwhelmed by the sundry facets of Italian society that are easily misunderstood or, even, totally incomprehensible. Italy is a country that, besides boasting over 2,500 years of recorded history and culture, can readily seem to many, after the first novelty has worn off, to have failed to grasp many of the basics of modern society. This impression, strongly held by some and, often, even more strongly reinforced visit after visit, is unfortunate, to say the least.

Italy is as unique as it is complicated, and the fusion of these two traits has led many visitors to characterize Italy and the Italians in a superficial and simplistic fashion that is both incorrect and unfair. Of course, much has been written and said about this country that describes it in an in-depth and fair manner, but too often criticism with reference to Italy is the result of stereotyping and a lack of factual information.

The AACUPI **Handbook 1995** is an attempt to provide the student, the scholar, the businessperson, the journalist, and public servants in international organizations, and even the casual visitor, who come to Italy for the first time with the tools needed, from the very beginning, to examine Italy and many of her paradoxes from a position of open-minded critical thought, bolstered by an up-to-date, even if basic, understanding of present-day political and economic events. Given the nature of the tools presented, **Handbook 1995** cannot be either complete or correct, if for no other reason than that a text about the political, economic and social reality of Italy today is quickly dated and rendered even obsolete by daily events, given the fast-changing pace of Italy's systems.

The authors, Lawrence Gray, William Howard, and Portia Prebys (all of whom donated their time and expertise to AACUPI for this initiative), do not seek to inculcate "the truth" about Italy and Italians into the readership of **Handbook 1995**, but, rather, to encourage the newcomer to go forth and explore and decipher what has intrigued and mystified literally millions of travelers, for millennia, about Italy and her people.

The Benefit Concert for La Fenice

When La Fenice Theater in Venice was destroyed by fire in 1996, the world of music and culture was horrified. Offers of assistance for its reconstruction were quick to arrive, and AACUPI, too, felt called upon to do its part. So, on February 14, 1997, AACUPI organized a benefit concert to provide aid for the rebuilding of La Fenice. The concert was held in the Sala Riaria of the Palazzo della Cancelleria in Rome. Annette Meriweather, soprano, and Richard Trythall, pianist, performed Spirituals and music by "Jelly Roll" Morton and George Gershwin. The initiative met with an enthusiastic response, also attracting some foundation support to make its contribution to the reconstruction effort truly a significant one.

Works in Progress

The Crypta Balbi Project

In February, 1993, under the supervision of the Soprintendenza Archeologica di Roma (the Archaeological Superintendency of Rome), AACUPI announced that it intended to submit a

proposal regarding the future use as well as design strategies for a unique site in the center of the city of Rome, the Crypta Balbi. The area of the Crypta Balbi presents significant traces and archaeological remains of the Roman Theater of Balbo, a consistent portion of the medieval fabric of the city of Rome, as well as Renaissance and Baroque buildings.

To this end, AACUPI organized an international architectural competition, open to students of the architectural schools and university programs that are members of AACUPI, whose purpose was to propose architectural designs for new facilities to be used by AACUPI and its members in the area of the Crypta Balbi. The competition offered students the possibility of working within one of the most interesting excavations of the ancient city. One of the very few large open sites in the historic center city, this area challenges the competitors to integrate aspects of archaeology, urban design, building restoration and architectural design. The competition sought to:

- ⇒ define a strategy for intervention within the Crypta Balbi, proposing a new layer of inhabitation in connection with the archaeological context;
- ⇒ propose a *space for exchange* among members of the North American academic community, as well as *for interaction* with the Italian one;
- ⇒ stimulate the regeneration of the surrounding urban fabric.

The competition provided AACUPI with 102 design entries giving appropriate approaches to the creation of new facilities and the adapted use of the Crypta Balbi in the center of Rome. It is hoped that this initiative will set a precedent for collaboration among Italian and foreign institutions, thus benefiting the city.

The Competition Winners were selected by a distinguished jury, consisting of:

Maria Letizia Conforto, Soprintendenza Archeologica di Roma;
Antonio Simbolotti, Ufficio Speciale Interventi Centro Storico di Roma;
Alessandro Anselmi, Facoltà di Architettura, Università degli Studi di Roma “La Sapienza”;
Mario Manieri-Elia, Ufficio Speciale Interventi Centro Storico di Roma;
Francesco Moschini, Professore di Storia dell’ Architettura, Politecnico di Bari;
Warren Obluck, United States Cultural Attaché in Rome;
Marc Cousineau, Canadian Cultural Attaché in Rome;
Portia Prebys, President of AACUPI.

The results of the competition, announced in March, 1994, were:

1st Prize: **Gerry Smith**, Pennsylvania State University;
 2nd Prize: **Erika H. Zekos**, Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute;
 3rd Prize: **Gregory G. Merges**, Pennsylvania State University.

In September-October, 1994, all the entries submitted to the competition were put on exhibit at the Canadian Academic Centre in Italy at Palazzo Cardelli in Rome, and the prizes were awarded at the opening of the exhibition.

In March, 1995, the Crypta Balbi Committee (Cinzia Abbate-Gardner, Heidi Flores, Lorenzo Pignatti, and Portia Prebys), along with Ove Arup and Partners (England), Flacsol (Germany),

ENEL (Italy), and Eurosolare, Società AGIP (Italy), made a formal application entitled *A Design Methodology for the Urban Re-Qualification of Abandoned Archaeological and Historical Sites* to the Directorate-General for Energy of the European Commission for funding. The application was one of the finalists in this Europe-wide competition, which, unfortunately, the European Commission canceled in the spring of 1996. Funding for this project is still being sought.

The New “Barile Bill”

The reintroduced Barile Bill was first included in the so-called “Decreto Legge Milleproroghe” of April 29, 1994, and was confirmed by the Government in a series of Decree-Laws until April of 1995. Since Parliament never ratified any of those Decree-Laws, the provisions of the Barile Bill were theoretically in force but not really applicable during that period.

Meanwhile, in 1994, a specific Bill (N° 1788) was presented to the Chamber of Deputies by then Minister Giuliano Ferrara; this Bill included the same provisions as the Barile Bill. From that point on, all efforts were concentrated on gaining approval for Bill N° 1788.

The Chamber of Deputy’s *Commissione Cultura* was assigned to discuss and approve the Bill. Unfortunately, this Commission did not fully understand the importance and real content of the Barile Bill’s provisions, so it approved the bulk of the provisions, but it deleted the essential paragraph regarding the independent nature of the employment relationship between the foreign universities in Italy and their faculty.

The amended Bill was passed on to the Senate, where it was renumbered to S2136. The Senate’s *Commissione Cultura* had been granted decisive authority so that its approval of the text without amendment would have meant the final approval of the Bill. Consequently, AACUPI and the US and Canadian diplomatic authorities in Italy made enormous efforts to have the canceled paragraph reintroduced, given its key importance for all foreign programs in Italy. In the end, it was the Minister of the University himself, Giorgio Salvini, who proposed an amendment which would have reintroduced the eliminated provision.

Unfortunately, in the Spring of 1996, the Italian Parliament was dissolved before this Bill could be approved; the resulting General Elections changed the complexion of Parliament, and efforts were begun to find a sponsor to reintroduce the provisions of the Barile Bill when the new Parliament started its legislative activity. The Honorable Valdo Spini, long a supporter and friend of AACUPI and its aims, put his considerable prestige and influence behind this Bill, which was, once more, introduced before the Parliament for its approval. In this form, it would give final and suitable legal status to our programs. The proposed text follows:

Provisions Regarding the Affiliation in Italy of Universities or Institutes of Higher Learning at the University Level:

- 1) The provisions of the present Article shall apply to those affiliations in Italy of Universities or Institutes of Higher Learning at the university level that are headquartered in the territory of foreign States and are legally recognized there as non-profit entities, provided that:

- a) their purpose and activity consists in decentralized study in Italy of subjects that are part of the instructional or research programs of their respective Universities or Institutes of Higher Learning;
 - b) instruction is given only to students who are enrolled in the respective Universities or Institutes of Higher Learning.
- 2) The affiliations, before beginning their activity in Italy, shall send to the Ministry of the University and Scientific and Technological Research, to the Ministry of the Interior, and to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, a copy of the Legal Act with which the decision was made to establish a seat in Italy, a copy of the Charter and of any other documentation, notarized by the Italian diplomatic or consular office in whose territorial jurisdictions they lie, that may be used to prove the possession of the requirements established under Paragraph 1.
 - 3) The activity of the affiliations shall be considered authorized if the Ministry of the University and Scientific and Technological Research does not adopt any other provisions within ninety days of the receipt of the communication provided under Paragraph 2.
 - 4) The authorization shall determine the applicability of the exemptions established in Article 34, Paragraph 8-bis, of Decree-Law N° 69 of 2 March 1989, converted, with changes, by Law N° 154 of 27 April 1989.
 - 5) The contracts made between the Universities and Institutes of Higher Learning mentioned in Paragraph 1 and the teaching staff destined for their affiliations in Italy do not create an obligation to pay “dipendenti” Social Security taxes for their subordinate employees, provided that:
 - a) there is an expressed desire by both parties to exclude any hierarchical and disciplinary power on the part of the Institutions;
 - b) the instructor has full academic autonomy;
 - c) the working hours are pre-established by mutual consent;
 - d) the duration set for the contract corresponds to the end of instructional activity;
 - e) a global sum is set as compensation for the whole of the agreed-upon services;
 - f) the instructor retains the freedom to carry out other activities for third parties.

The Barile Law passed on January 14, 1999, and is fully described in other sections of this presentation. Please consult the Table of Contents for specific references.

The Orto Botanico Project

On March 14, 1997, after months of negotiations between AACUPI, the Magnifico Rettore Giorgio Tecce of the University of Rome “La Sapienza” and President Susanna Agnelli of the “Friends of the Botanical Garden” Association, the representatives of those entities signed an agreement undertaking the restoration of an important monument of Rome which has fallen into a sad state of disrepair, the “Scala d’acqua - Nicchione” planned and created by Ferdinando Fuga in 1741-44 as an axis of the garden of Palazzo Corsini, now incorporated in the Botanical Garden maintained by the University of Rome “La Sapienza”.

This project was conceived, from the outset, as an educational opportunity for North American and Italian university students to gain important “hands-on” experience in the architectural and artistic problems involved in the restoration of historically significant works. It also provides the basis, in the words of the agreement, for “a ‘space for the exchange’ of ideas, cultures and North American and Italian academic programs.” The project calls for North American

students from AACUPI member institutions and Italian students from the University of Rome “La Sapienza” to work together, under the supervision of professional architects and archaeologists, with the aim of recuperating this important part of the architectural and artistic heritage of Rome.

To date, this project has lain dormant due to bureaucratic complications within the University of Rome “La Sapienza”.

Exhibition and Catalog “14 Architecture Schools”

On the occasion of the Association of Collegiate Schools of Architecture (ACSA) International Conference held in Rome from May 29-June 2, 1999, AACUPI and a number of its member institutions sponsored the “14 Architecture Schools” exhibition and catalog which offered to the participants of the conference and to the general public a synthetic picture of the didactic activities in Italy of some representative North American architecture programs.

International Seminar on Architectural Design

The International Seminar on Architectural Design “Continuities and Discontinuities” took place at the Mattatoio in Testaccio in the Pirani and Sabatini Lecture Rooms of the University of Rome III from February 22-March 2, 2001, with the full cooperation and collaboration of the Department of Architecture of Rome III, AACUPI and six architecture programs, members of AACUPI: Cornell University, Iowa State University, Pennsylvania State University, Pratt Institute, University of Arkansas, University of Miami. This initiative permitted forty-eight American students and forty-eight Italian students to participate together in lectures, workshops and juries conducted by twenty-two prominent and highly experienced American and Italian architects and professors of architecture, among whom were Robert Venturi and Denise Scott Brown who came to Rome specifically for this project. The real intellectual exchange that occurred between the students and professors was the kind of cultural interaction all of us have aimed at for many years. We hope this seminar can be repeated in future years. AACUPI’s participation was supported by a generous grant from the U. S. government through the Public Affairs Office of the United States Embassy in Italy.

Into the Future

As we have seen, there is ample evidence that working together has brought tangible results in the past. This is due, in large part, to the self-less contributions of time and effort on the part of the Officers, Committee Members and Project Coordinators over the years who have dedicated themselves to working for AACUPI’s welfare without any kind of financial remuneration.

The problems that will face AACUPI in the future are many. Legal and administrative problems will continue to plague AACUPI members just as they plague our Italian counterparts. As Italy’s relationship with the rest of Europe undergoes transformations, our formal and informal relationship to the European Union as Americans and Canadians must be defined and redefined at every level. To this end, AACUPI has become an Associate Member of AAICU, the Association of American International Colleges and Universities, which unites American-style institutions of higher learning that are fully accredited by US regional accrediting associations and that operate in the European and Middle-Eastern regions. The members of AAICU have looked upon AACUPI’s accomplishments with great interest, and American educational programs operating in Greece are currently studying the possibility of establishing a similar association in that country. To that end, they have enlisted the help of AACUPI’s President to advise them.

AACUPI will continue to serve as a clearing-house for information from many sources and to initiate activities of general benefit to members. It cannot, however, do more than give suggestions and indications regarding the many options and responses required by multi-faceted questions. Indeed, how could AACUPI possibly formulate a single, unified response to such issues when not even Italian entities are able to do so? Or how could AACUPI (and its Officers) be held responsible for providing information that, in many areas, simply can never be considered right or wrong, black or white?

Future Possibilities

Much has been done, and much remains to be done. Is there not a challenge for the future in dealing directly with concerns regarding the number and quality of students in our programs, and in seeking and obtaining subsidies for these students? The quality and quantity of our student bodies must be sustained and improved, hopefully through recognition of the work that all AACUPI members are doing in Italy. Would it not be easier for a single, unified entity to search for grant money from private and public sources for use by all member institutions? The Crypta Balbi Project has demonstrated that both public and private agencies do respond to a concerted approach.

Another possible future line of action would be to seek support for the teaching staffs of our programs. Many of us cannot afford a large, full-time faculty. To fill in existing gaps or to enrich what we now offer, it is worth considering looking for funds to support, for example, two or more full-time professors annually whose services would be shared by AACUPI members.

Could we not share the sponsorship of a lecture series or a “mini-course” in our various localities? Given the fact that many institutions cannot afford to maintain extensive libraries, would it not be worth discussing the possibility of a central catalogue of individual program libraries, which house collections that have been carefully geared to individual study needs. The list of possibilities is endless, as is the list of jobs to be done.

Who will face these challenges?

All of us are acutely aware that challenges of this sort take time, and no one of us has a great deal of time left over at the end of the day. Certainly, the specific and general focuses inherent to our approach to problems is on our side; our flexible organization at the local level has given rise to undertakings like the AACUPI Balls and the La Fenice Benefit Concert, while AACUPI’s promotional work at the regional and national levels has sought to create good-will and understanding with initiatives like the AACUPI Prize and the IRPET Study. If the past is any indication, surely AACUPI and its members will rise to the occasion and work together to guarantee our future on Italian soil.