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To my Editor interested

Letter of Recommendation

I suggest translating the Italian book "A Caccia di E.T. La ricerca di vita e intelligenza nello spazio" (Seeking for E.T. The search for life and intelligence in the universe) by Mario Menichella published in 2002 by Edizioni Avverbi pp. 1-340.

Prof. Margherita Hack, an internationally well-known astronomer, wrote the Preface.

I want to justify the translation of the book by the following arguments.

Bioastronomy, the search for life elsewhere in the Universe, is a topic still lacking an observational datum, but of extreme interest both for the scientist and for any thinking individual. The book is a welcome addition to the literature on a subject that is currently attracting a very heavy research interest, and which covers a topic that is sure to explode in the 21st century.

Illustrating in a more direct way the positive aspects of the book: approaches the problems of existence of life and intelligence in the universe in a "balanced" way, without an "a priori" attitude. The clear-cut agenda is a definite strength of the book. It makes a distinction not only between elementary life and intelligent civilization, but also between carbon-based and non carbon-based life, between "physical life" and life based on different, non chemical, basals, between technological and non technological civilizations etc. The arguments are organized in a very rational way at all levels. What is new and convincing is the way in which the topic is structured.

The book has some very original parts also, e.g. a possible generalization of the famous Drake equation to other galaxies. The author is articulate, witty and authoritative and has the intellectual breadth to cover this enormous range of subjects. He has taken his readers stimulating them in the process to think about one of the truly big problems of this century. The text always clearly differentiates what we know with reasonable confidence from current fact and wild speculation. The author is not afraid to give his own perspective on the most thought-provoking questions and argues correctly that the solution of this fundamental and universal problem can only be "experimental".

The UFO faces on the cover as well as the first part of the title can be misleading, because the book has a very rational and scientific approach to the topic.

This book is an excellent choice of reading material for someone newly entering the field who wants to be made aware of all of its elements. It is also intended for those who wish to dig into the subject.

Prof. Dr. Iván Almásy

Member of the International Academy of Astronautics
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