

An Introduction to the English Translation

Professor Paolo Budinich is a legendary institution-builder. At 90+, he sees his work as unfinished. What keeps him forever young and engaged is his vision that is unconstrained by thoughts of a life time, or two. This book, which documents Paolo's accomplishments, is the English version of the Italian biography, "Buongiorno Prof. Budinich", authored by Pietro Greco, in collaboration with Federica Manzoli, and published by Bompiani. I should say a few words about the genesis of the translation.

When the biography was planned by ICTP, SISSA and the University of Trieste to mark Paolo's 90th birthday, it was decided that it would be brought out in Italian under SISSA's umbrella and that ICTP would produce its English translation. The translation was not to be a commercial venture but a means for making Paolo's work known to the non-Italian scientific community connected to ICTP: after all, ICTP was Paolo's love and life for many years. We engaged Mr. John McGinty, a professional translator, to render into English the original provided to us in August 2006. The Italian version appeared in January of 2007. As we were preparing this book, we noticed occasional discrepancies between the original and the translation. They arise from the fact that the text provided to us and the Italian printed version are slightly different, about which we were unaware until now. Further, Paolo took the occasion to correct a few errors in the description of his science in chapters 2 and 3 of the original. Nevertheless, the translation projects the flavor of the original and of Paolo's remarkable life. We have produced the translation as an internal ICTP publication, to be made available at a nominal cost to anyone wishing to possess it: the cost mostly indicates my sentiment that nothing should be entirely free.

May I use the occasion to say a few words about Paolo and ICTP? Salam had the vision for ICTP, but its creation in

Trieste and the shape it has taken since has a lot to do with Paolo. Salam thought of ICTP as the home for scientists from the South while Paolo had in mind, at least initially, the Centre as a means for securing better cooperation with Eastern and Central Europe as well as North Africa. On hindsight, it appears that the two of them worked in perfect unison. Paolo often says that we have combated terrorism and brought dignity to poor nations through this means, but this sentiment is too lofty to suit a realist like me: I am content to think that ICTP and its sister institutions in Trieste have contributed uniquely to scientific capacity building in developing countries. Many people in Trieste (and elsewhere) work hard towards this goal and deserve various shares of praise, but there is no question that Paolo has been at the core. Italian Governments of all shades of political philosophy have supported the adventure. Paolo often says that the total investment has been less than a few percent of the annual Italian defense budget, but the commitment is nevertheless non-trivial; those of us who are custodians of this enterprise have a high responsibility to make sure that the generous wishes of the Italians, expressed through this support, are fulfilled without politics or personal agenda. I, for one, have always kept this in mind and look forward to receiving the advice and guidance of Paolo Budinich for years to come.

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