

S E C T I O N I

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I. HISTORY AND SPECIAL EVENTS

INTRODUCTION

This first section serves as an introduction to the entire volume. It starts with a paper by Michael D. Papagiannis in which he provides a historical introduction to this subject. In it he reviews the development of ideas on the plurality of worlds from the ancient Greeks to present, and ends with the rapid progress that has occurred in the last 25 years that represent the experimental era of this very old problem.

This modern era was introduced with a pioneering paper to *NATURE* in 1959 by Giuseppe Cocconi and Philip Morrison. They both were at the time at Cornell, but now they are respectively at CERN and MIT. Professor Morrison has remained very active in this field having chaired many NASA workshops and committees on SETI. He was also the co-chairman, with Ed Purcell of Harvard, of the Local Organizing Committee of our Symposium. Since this first IAU Symposium of Commission 51 coincided with the 25th Anniversary of this historic paper, we decided to organize a special event at Boston's Museum of Science to honor Professor Morrison. This was indeed one of the highlights of the Symposium where after a fine reception Dr. Roger Nichols, the Director of the Museum, welcomed all the Symposium participants to the special lecture by Dr. Morrison. After his talk, we presented him with a plaque (Figure 2 at the beginning of this volume) which read:

ON THE 25TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE HISTORIC PAPER
BY G. COCCONI AND P. MORRISON
"SEARCHING FOR INTERSTELLAR COMMUNICATIONS"
IAU COMMISSION 51 - SEARCH FOR EXTRATERRESTRIAL LIFE
AWARDS THIS PLAQUE TO PROFESSOR PHILIP MORRISON
IN RECOGNITION
OF INSPIRING LEADERSHIP AND OUTSTANDING CONTRIBUTIONS
IAU SYMPOSIUM 112 - BOSTON USA - JUNE 1984.

The paper by Philip Morrison is essentially his talk at this special event. He recounts the difficulties they had in having this paper published in 1959 and in getting the radio searches started. He also looks into the future of the searches and advocates what he calls "Mixed Strategy", namely the experimental expression of different points of view. This point, by the way, was independently advocated by several other of the Symposium participants and probably was one of the most important new developments that came out from this Symposium.

The third paper was sent by Giuseppe Cocconi and was read at the Symposium by Philip Morrison. Cocconi recounts the difficulties this new field had to become accepted and says that the initial opposition to their paper in 1959 "was similar to that met by the pioneers of aviation: 'why disturb the angels?'" He concludes by discussing the difficulties met by practically all novel programs. He notes that it took 23 years from the time it was proposed to search for astronomical γ -ray sources until the first detection (Cygnus X-3), and concludes "If it took 23 years for such a simple idea to give fruit in a field where there are no Angels, should half a century be considered too much for SETI?"

Another of the special events of IAU Symposium 112 was the Symposium banquet in the Hall of Flags of Boston University, which was attended by more than 200 people. D. Arthur G. B. Metcalf, the Chairman of the Board of Trustees of Boston University and President of the Electronics Corporation of America, welcomed all the participants on behalf of the Boston University and President John R. Silber, who at the time was overseas and was not able to attend. His welcoming address is also included in this Section.

At the beginning of the banquet the Right Reverend Dr. Demetrios Trakatellis, Bishop of Vresthena, offered a most inspiring Invocation. He is the ranking auxiliary bishop of Athens, Greece, he holds Ph.D.'s from both Harvard University and the University of Athens, and he is now a visiting Professor of Theology at the Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology in Boston, and at the Harvard Divinity School. At the suggestion of many people who were inspired by his thoughtful and eloquent invocation, I asked him to write it up and is the closing contribution of the Section.

The banquet speaker was Carl Sagan, who is probably the most popular name of all living scientists. He was attending the meeting with his young wife and collaborator Ann Druyan, who was an inspirational force for his Cosmos Series and continues to be a driving force for his quest for world peace. At the end of his fine talk, we presented him with a silver Paul Revere bowl, a symbol of Boston, on which it was inscribed.

TO CARL SAGAN AND ANN DRUYAN
FOR THEIR GREAT EFFORTS TO PRESERVE THIS BEAUTIFUL BLUE PLANET
AND TO FOSTER AN EXCITING FUTURE FOR ALL HUMANKIND
IAU SYMPOSIUM 112 - BOSTON 1984

The final special event of the Symposium was a visit of participants to Project SENTINEL of Prof. Paul Horowitz at the Harvard-Smithsonian Oak Ridge Observatory, which is located about 40 miles (65 km) from Boston. Its 84ft radio antenna is now used on a 24 hour basis for SETI and represents one of two SETI dedicated facilities now in operation around the world. Project SENTINEL is supported by the Planetary Society, a private organization headed by Carl Sagan.

THE EDITOR