Buonanno, Roberto
The stars of Galileo Galilei and the universal knowledge of Athanasius Kircher. Translated by Roberto Buonanno and Giuliana Giobbi. (English) Zbl 1286.85002

In this book the author traces the careers, discoveries and inventions of two renowned scientists, Athanasius Kircher and Galileo Galilei. One a German Jesuit, which was driven by the continuing Thirty Years’ War to the papal University of Avignon. From 1638 year he taught mathematics, physics, and oriental language at the Collegio Romano. The other, Galileo Galilei, a sincere man of faith whose relations with the Jesuits deteriorated badly. A. Kircher and G. Galilei had engaged with lenses, both in telescopes and in refractors, but their goals were completely different. G. Galilei wanted to realize an instrument in order to better investigate Nature, whereas Kircher only wanted to discover and observe the infinite effects which, through light, Nature can create.

The lives of Galilei and Kircher crossed each other in the summer of 1633 year. This book contains many opinions, second-hand information and assumptions about the relations between Galileo Galilei and Jesuits at Collegio Romano. It represents interest for scientists, students, and inquisitive readers.

Reviewer: Nina A. Solovaya (Bratislava)

MSC:
85-03 History of astronomy and astrophysics
01-02 Research exposition (monographs, survey articles) pertaining to history and biography
01A70 Biographies, obituaries, personalia, bibliographies
01A45 History of mathematics in the 17th century
85A04 General questions in astronomy and astrophysics

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Kircher, Athanasius

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