

The work of italian solar energy pioneer Giovanni Francia (1911-1980)

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ABSTRACT

In technical and scientific literature, Giovanni Francia is known above all for his pioneering work, starting in the late 1950s, on honeycomb structures and on linear and point focus reflector systems.

The purpose of this paper is to serve as a reminder of his work in solar energy, and to call attention to his lesser-known activities, also in other fields, such as motor vehicles.

In the solar energy field, many of the theoretical analyses and technical solutions that brought Francia moments of

international celebrity were later forgotten. Eventually, though, they proved to be again topical and to have great practical potential.

Other studies and research by Francia – little known because they were published only in French or Italian, or not published at all – give us a picture of Francia not only as a painstaking scientist, but also as a revolutionary thinker in addressing questions of a general nature, as in his 1971 “Project for a Solar City: Hypothesis for an Urban Structure,” or his 1974 essay on “The Sun and the Limits of Energy on Earth.”

In allegato il testo integrale.

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