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Foreword from the Associate Editor

Recently, I read a novel, *L'anomalia* [*The Anomaly*] (Figure 1), edited by a major Italian publisher and authored by a colleague of mine, Massimiliano Pieraccini (University of Florence). The book can be defined as a "scientific thriller." It obviously deals with a murder and an investigation, but all the rest is absolutely "scientific." During a conference in Erice, Sicily (Figure 2), a scientist has a sudden illness and dies. Shortly before, he had declared that he was dealing with the Catt's electromagnetic "anomaly." This is the beginning of a spy story where the science and its paradoxes are the protagonists. The book has been a bestseller in Italy and is under translation for the foreign market.

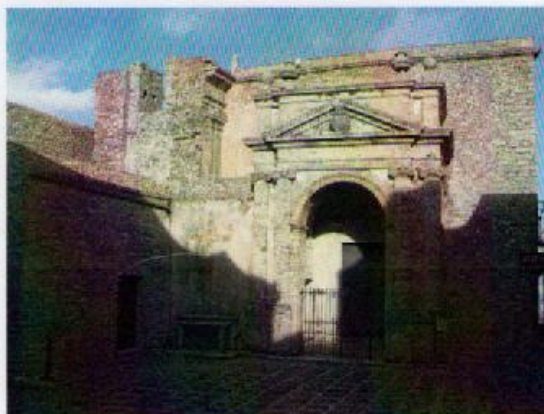


Figure 2. Erice in Sicily, Italy. The church and monastery of San Domenico, now the Patrick M. S. Blackett Institute, with the Paul A. M. Dirac Lecture Hall of the Ettore Majorana Foundation and Centre for Scientific Culture (<http://www.cesem.infn.it/>). This is a preeminent international physics institution that has hosted many conferences and seminars from Nobel Prizes [from Wikipedia].

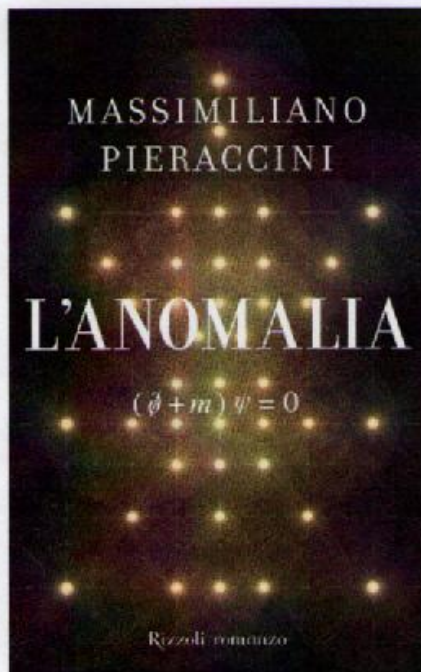


Figure 1. The cover of the book by M. Pieraccini, *The Anomaly* (Milan, Italy, Rizzoli, 2011, pp. 342).

I happened to be intrigued by Catt's "anomaly," which Pieraccini used as a narrative device. A quick search on the Internet led almost exclusively to Ivor Catt's Web site, <http://www.ivorcatt.org/>, where his ideas are published; his journal papers were not easily available. The replies he had to his questions from academicians and scientists are reported only on his own site.

Since the "anomaly" deals with fundamental electromagnetics, and since Catt is that kind of unconventional researcher, moving outside of academia and structured research, which was indeed quite common in the past – especially in the 18th and 19th centuries – I thought that the matter could also be of interest to the IEEE Antennas and Propagation Society community. I asked Massimiliano Pieraccini and Stefano Selleri, who have already contributed several times to this column, if they would further investigate this "anomaly."