



Contribution ID: 33

Type: **not specified**

## **“Una di telescopi, di lettere e di stelle in movimento”: The Comet Dispute between Cassini, Viviani and Riccioli**

*Thursday 11 September 2025 17:15 (25 minutes)*

The 17th century was an interesting time in which marvelous discoveries were made, even at the cost of broken friendships among scientists. One peculiar aspect was the astronomical dispute over comets that occurred within astronomical circles. The 1660s marked the passage of a comet that many astronomers saw and studied, but only Cassini proposed an explanation that sparked a massive debate in the academic world and caused a rift in the Bolognese Academy. Many opposed Cassini, such as Riccioli, while others, like Viviani and Malvasia, supported Cassini's work. This paper aims to reconstruct the comet dispute to understand how an extensive exchange of letters and real-time observational experiences shaped the dispute and influenced astronomical studies at the time, paving the way for new and exciting studies in astronomy and cosmology that ultimately led the Cassini-Huygens spacecraft to the edge of the universe.

**Author:** BERCIGLI, Erika (Università degli Studi di Bologna)

**Presenter:** BERCIGLI, Erika (Università degli Studi di Bologna)

**Session Classification:** Gian Domenico Cassini: 400 anni dalla nascita / Gian Domenico Cassini: 400 Years After his Birth