



Ca' Foscari University of Venice

PROJECT ACRONYM AND TITLE: TIDES - A Long Way to a New Cosmology: Theories of Tides in Pre-Modern Thought

FUNDING PROGRAMME: HORIZON EUROPE

CALL: HORIZON-MSCA-2021-PF-01 (MSCA Postdoctoral Fellowships 2021)

KEYWORDS: *History of ideas, intellectual history, history of science, techniques and technologies*

HOST DEPARTMENT: Department of Philosophy and Cultural Heritage

SCIENTIFIC RESPONSIBLE: Pietro Daniel Omodeo

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Project total costs

€ 188.590,08

Overall funding assigned to UNIVE

€ 188.590,08

ABSTRACT:

This project offers the first comprehensive study of pre-modern engagement with the relatively neglected yet highly problematic natural phenomenon of tides. It argues that the flow and ebb effect was an essential component of cosmological discussions in pre-modern Europe and attracted the attention of all major scholars whom we currently associate with the so-called Scientific Revolution. The competition amongst prominent thinkers involved in the study of astronomy and mathematics left its mark on a considerable number of works on tides, while the contesting solutions were believed to constitute a valid argument in favor of the respective cosmological theories. This also implies that the issue of determining the flow and ebb of water formed part of a larger discourse that went beyond strict mathematization of natural knowledge and reflected, on a more general level, a peculiar understanding of the cosmos and all it contains. Furthermore, the project makes an addition to a field of study that has been burgeoning in past years considering the current climate crisis. Several studies have recently devoted attention to pre-modern reflections on nature, especially with regard to various types of calamities. Despite not being considered a disaster because of their recurring and predictable character, tides were nonetheless seen as potentially devastating if not controlled and properly understood. Although inevitably put in relation with a discourse of the Flood, tidal accounts were largely devoid of metaphysical features, instead seeking out plausible mechanistic interpretations of the motion of water. At the same time, contrary to what has been suggested in scholarship, establishing the origin of tides was never regarded as a mere physico-mathematical exercise, but generally presented a matter of environmental concern. Thus, this project provides a synthetic account of pre-modern discourses of tides in their cosmological and environmental dimensions.

Planned Start date

01/07/2023

Planned End date

30/06/2025

PARTNERSHIP

1. Ca' Foscari University of Venice	Italy	Beneficiary
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