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Nota di bibliografia	Includes bibliographical references and index.
Nota di contenuto	A moon or not? A century of confusion -- From climax to anticlimax -- Contemporary analysis and criticism -- A spurious but persistent satellite -- Closure: the discussion of the 1880's -- Conclusion, and a note on the satellites of Uranus.
Sommario/riassunto	This book details the history of one of astronomy’s many spurious objects, the satellite of Venus. First spotted in 1645, the non-existing moon was observed more than a dozen times until the late eighteenth century. Although few astronomers believed in the existence of the moon after about 1770, it continued to attract attention for at least another century. However, it has largely disappeared from the history of astronomy, and the rich historical sources have never been exploited. By telling the story of the enigmatic satellite in its proper historical context it is demonstrated that it was much more than a mere curiosity in the annals of astronomy – Frederick II of Prussia was familiar with it, and so was Bonnet, Kant and Voltaire. The satellite of Venus belongs to the same category as other fictitious celestial bodies (such as the planet Vulcan), yet it had its own life and fascinating

historical trajectory. By following this trajectory, the history of planetary astronomy is addressed in a novel way.