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Fire and water on the Seine : the Venetian ambassador's fireworks party

If Louis XIV was baroque Europe's « roi du feu », « la reine des eaux » was undoubtedly the Republic of Venice. Venice had a long history of self-promotion through the iconography of water. This showed her mastery of the problematic water-bound civic environment, her 'marriage' with the sea, and her vast maritime empire, the *Stato da Mar*. However, in the seventeenth century, Venetian dominance of the water was increasingly challenged by other nations, including France. At the same time, Venetian territories in the *Stato da Mar* began to fall to the Ottoman Turks, and she had to seek allies among the great European monarchies.

This paper will analyse this uneasy conjunction of French and Venetian power, as symbolised in a fireworks display given in Paris in 1649 by the Venetian Ambassador. This fire and water pageant took place on the Seine, '*au pont des Tuileries*', and celebrated the successful Venetian defence of Candia against Turkish attack in 1649. Fireworks illuminated a naval victory, which referenced and mixed French and Venetian iconography, fire and water. The paper will analyse contemporary pamphlet accounts of the fireworks display, comparing it to previous Franco-Venetian displays to ask how ideas about fire and water had developed, but also how public reception of this iconography had changed. Indeed, was this effort by the Venetians to promote their power on the Seine a subject of French mockery?

Philippa WOODCOCK's principal research interests are in Franco-Italian interchange, including her PhD (London, 2006) on the patronage of the French governors of Valois Milan, 1499-1522. She currently researches the mistreatment of French travellers in the Venetian *Stato da Mar*. She is an Associate Fellow in Renaissance History at Oxford Brookes and Warwick Universities. She is also a lecturer in English at the CNAM, Paris. Her recent publications include: 'Huguenot and non-Conformist networks in Stuart Suffolk', in Vivienne Larminie ed. *Huguenot Networks*, Routledge, 2017. 'Queenly Poverty; the Justified Impoverishment of Elizabeth Woodville and Catherine of Aragon', *Arts et Savoirs/LISAA*, William Dow ed., (2016). 'Patrician and Episcopal rivalry for the Milanese parish church: San Nazaro in Brolo during French and Spanish rule' in Andrew Spicer ed., *The Parish Church*, Ashgate, 2016. 'Living like a king: the Milanese entourage of Odet de Foix, vicomte de Lautrec', *The Royal Studies Journal*, December 2015, vol.2:2. E. Angus and P. Woodcock, *The Fashion Encyclopaedia: a visual resource for terms, techniques and styles*, Barron's, 2015.

