



Maria NEKLYUDOVA

Russian Presidential Academy of National Economy and Public Administration

Beneath the ‘Grande Mer du Louvre’, or the mixing of metaphors in politico-allegorical space

In Gabriel Guéret’s *La Carte de la Cour* (1663) the rivers of Knowledge and Desire lead to the shores of the ‘Grande Mer du Louvre’ beyond which rises ‘ce Soleil qui produit tous nos beau jours’. This reference to Louis XIV should not divert our attention from an uncommon occurrence when the actual toponym (le Louvre) is coupled with unlikely designation (the sea). Even though in this particular form it exists only in Guéret’s work, it is not a simple whimsy but a collision of two metaphors, the one which likens the king’s court to the sea (and was quite common at the end of the 16th – beginning of the 17th century) and the other that uses the name of the Sun king’s residence as the general denomination of the court (with the stress on light, warmth, and other ‘sunny’ qualities).

The question which I would like to address is why this two lines of political and metaphorical thinking intertwine with each other? The nautical imagery has both literary and emblematic roots, and is deeply connected to the question of government (the ship of state, etc.). At the same time it has no less important ties with some set descriptions of emotion (the sea of love, or to be precise, love as the sea). Both topic come together in the so-called ‘menosprecio de corte’, a spiritual (and often spirited) rejection of courtly vanities. But in the apologetic mode (as in Guéret’s text) the idea of instability has to be neutralized, and therefore the sea is firmly attached to the land, creating a contrast between the treacherous watery depth and the life-giving light of the Sun.

Maria NEKLYUDOVA (Ph.D. in Comparative Lit., UCLA 1999), Professor at the Department of Cultural and Social Communication Studies, The School of Public Policy (RANEPA), Moscow, Russia. Her publications in English and in Russian include “Pythagorean Mysteries of Otranto: Horace Walpole and ‘Secret Histories’”. *The Real Life of Pierre Delalande. Studies in Russian and Comparative Literature*. Part 2. Stanford, 2007 (Stanford Slavic Studies, vol. 34). P.700-712. “Historian’s Uncertainties: Investigation of Truth in Antoine Varillas’Œuvre”. *Concordia Discors*. Choix de communications présentées lors du 41e congrès annuel de la North American Society for Seventeenth-Century French Literature. New York University, 20-23 mai 2009. Édité par Benoît Bolduc et Henriette Goldwyn. Tübingen : Narr Verlag, 2011. T.I. P.167-175. (Biblio 17, vol.194). *Iskusstvo chastnoj zhizni: Vek Liudovika XIV [The Art of Private Life: The Age of Louis XIV]*. Moscow, 2008. « Ja dvor zovu snranoj... » : rodoslovnaja odnoj metafory [« La cour est un pays... » : Genealogy of a Metaphor]. Moscow, 2014.

