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IMPRISONED PRINCESSES:  
*PRINCESS TARAKANOVA & THE REGENT TSAREVNA SOF'YA*

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The images of characters presented in nineteenth-century history painting reflect their historical reputations at the time of painting. In depicting women from earlier times, artists often projected on to them images of contemporary femininity and concepts of 'appropriate' feminine behaviour. However, even in the nineteenth century, some artists were prepared to resist pressure to make their works conform to sexual stereotyping, by attempting to portray their subjects more truthfully. An examination of Konstantin Flavitskii's *Princess Tarakanova* (1864) and Il'ya Repin's *The Regent Tsarevna Sof'ya Alekseevna, in the Year after her Imprisonment in the Novodevichii Convent, during the Execution of the Strel'tsy and the Torture of her Serving-Women, October 1698* (1879; both in the Tret'yakov Gallery, Moscow) demonstrates the contrast in approaches. Both these paintings depict imprisoned women, princesses - one spurious, one genuine. They might therefore be presumed to be vehicles for that familiar stereotype of feminine helplessness, the aristocratic damsel in distress. However, while Flavitskii's Academic painting conformed to this expectation, Repin's subverted it through the combination of historical research and artistic 'truth to nature' characteristic of history painting in the Society for Travelling Art Exhibitions (*Peredvizhniki*, Wanderers) in the 1870s.

Konstantin Flavitskii (1830-66) was noted for large-scale historical scenes such as *Christian Martyrs in the Colosseum* (1862, Russian Museum, St. Petersburg). *Princess Tarakanova* (fig. 1), painted in 1864, expressed the new emphasis upon psychological content within a melodramatic Romantic scenario. Its subject is a mixture of history and legend. Whoever the 'Princess' was, 'Tarakanova' was not her real name: it is an adjectival form derived from *tarakan* (cockroach), perhaps coined as an ironic nickname for the

imprisoned pretender.<sup>1</sup> In 1774, a woman claiming to be the daughter of Empress Elizaveta Petrovna was arrested in Italy by Count Aleksei Orlov, on Ekaterina II's orders. She was brought back to Russia in May 1775. She was attractive and cultured, but spoke no Russian and now denied her claim. She gave an inconsistent and far-fetched account of her previous travels. Already suffering lung hæmorrhages, she was imprisoned without trial in the Peter and Paul Fortress, where she died of tuberculosis on 4 December 1775.<sup>2</sup> However, a legend arose that she had drowned in her cell during a severe flood, although the flood in question did not take place until September 1777.<sup>3</sup> It was this version of the story which Flavitskii chose to depict, with the added dramatic touch of the rats climbing on to her bed. It is implied that, as the water rises, the frightened animals will cling to the Princess herself.

Flavitskii's *Princess Tarakanova* is unusual in that it is a single-figure composition. Academic history painting generally consisted of multiple-figure scenes, in which dramatic tension and interest were created by physical activity. The Princess is alone, except for the rats; she does not seem to move. The psychological and emotional emphases introduced into history painting by Hippolyte Delaroche in works such as *Cromwell gazing at the Body of Charles I* (1831, Musée des Beaux-Arts, Nîmes) are here essential to create drama. The ostensible subject is the Princess's reaction to her plight. Hence, Flavitskii gave considerable attention to her facial expression, as shown by a finely-detailed oil study in the Russian Museum (fig. 2).

Throughout the nineteenth-century, the Peter and Paul Fortress was still in use as a prison for political offenders, and it is possible that Flavitskii, a Herzenite liberal,<sup>4</sup> may have had this in mind when choosing the subject. In 1862, the influential philosopher Nikolai Chernyshevskii, a former disciple of Herzen, had been imprisoned there.<sup>5</sup> However, it is possible to overstate any direct contemporary political allusions in history painting: in the early 1860s, unlike the 1870s-80s, the *female* political prisoner was yet to make a profound impression. Princess Tarakanova, imprisoned without trial, may represent victims of the autocracy in a general sense. The truth of her identity and, therefore, of her crime was never

clearly established, and Flavitskii lacked the visual means to reveal her guilt or innocence. Instead, he showed her as a victim of injustice and (a point of contemporary relevance) of appalling prison conditions.

Above all, however, *Princess Tarakanova* embodies the stereotype of the passive beautiful victim, whose vulnerability is intended to inspire male spectators with chivalric feelings and a little vicarious sadism.<sup>6</sup> In the nineteenth century, the most extreme examples of this are the chained nudes, from Ingres' *Ruggero and Angelica* (1819, Louvre) to Hiram Powers' 1843 marble *The Greek Slave* (1843, copies at Newark Museum, NJ, and Yale University) and John Bell's bronze *Andromeda*, which were exhibited in the 1851 Great Exhibition. Such images - including *Princess Tarakanova* - are erotically charged.

Tarakanova stands not on the small but sturdy and higher table, which the rats appear to be unable to climb, but on her bed, the sheepskin cover of which is turned back to show a tactile-looking fleece. In nineteenth-century art, unmade beds and female figures appear almost exclusively in a sexual context, from Dante Gabriel Rossetti's *The Annunciation* (1850, Tate Gallery, London) to Edouard Manet's *Olympia* (1863, Jeu de Paume, Paris), and from Gustave Courbet's lesbian *Sleepers* (1866, Petit Palais, Paris) to the explicitly heterosexual *Rolla* by Henri Gervex (1878, Musée des Beaux-Arts, Bordeaux). The disarray of Tarakanova's costume also suggests the same voyeurism to which much Salon painting appealed. Her bodice is partly unfastened - perhaps implying that she has had to dress hastily - and exposes much of her breasts and shoulders, emphasising their smooth pallor. Although Flavitskii may simply have been reflecting the fashion of his own time, the 1860s, it is worth noting that, according to James Laver, in the eighteenth century "no respectable woman ever appeared... with the point of the shoulder exposed".<sup>7</sup> Tarakanova's unbound hair, in the nineteenth century a sign of sexual availability,<sup>8</sup> and unlaced dress may be meant to signal that she is, in some sense, a 'loose woman'. Indeed, another uncorroborated legend alleged that she had borne an illegitimate child to Aleksei Orlov during her imprisonment.<sup>9</sup> Also, Tarakanova's facial expression is more suggestive of erotic

languor than the desperation and panic more natural to her plight. Her head is tilted backwards, her eyelids are lowered, and her lips parted as she swoons against her cell wall. The result is not dissimilar to Rossetti's *Beata Beatrix* (1864-70, Tate Gallery), with its necrophiliac yearning: the doomed woman is rendered desirable.

As already mentioned, the historical Tarakanova was terminally ill, and her personality does not emerge strongly from the surviving accounts, but any actual weakness of health or character does not account for the extreme passivity of Flavitskii's depiction of her. One can see a similar process at work in depictions of other, more capable women in nineteenth-century history painting. Delaroche, in both *The Execution of Lady Jane Gray* (1834, National Gallery, London) and *Jeanne d'Arc in Prison* (c. 1843, Wallace Collection, London), also treated his imprisoned heroines as helpless victims.<sup>10</sup> Lady Jane Gray is depicted blindfolded, being guided by men to the block, "to which...she resolutely made her own way"<sup>11</sup> in reality. Jeanne d'Arc, doe-eyed and child-like,<sup>12</sup> shrinks back against the wall, hands clasped in prayer, before her menacing inquisitor. It is as if audiences had to be reassured that, despite their less conventional qualities (Jane Gray's erudition, Jeanne's military prowess), in crises both young women reverted to expected modes of feminine behaviour. However, neither of these images emphasises the heroine's rôle as a sexual object as *Princess Tarakanova* does.

Repin's painting *The Regent Tsarevna Sofya* (fig. 3), reinterprets, and presents as a significant individual in her own right, a woman previously condemned and marginalised.

Lindsey Hughes has explained the reasons for Sofya's neglect:

...authors who wrote about Peter in the wake of his...reforms took full advantage of the vivid juxtaposition of the dark and barbaric era of Peter's childhood with the age of good sense and enlightenment apparently inaugurated by the great man. Sofiya was a suitably dramatic symbol of the 'old ways', especially as she had apparently so narrowly failed to stifle a great genius.<sup>13</sup>

Repin's depiction implies a more thorough appraisal of this historical period. It continued the questioning of the Petr cult in Russian Academic history painting, begun by Nikolai Ge's

*Petr I interrogates Tsarevich Aleksei Petrovich at Peterhof* (1871, Tret'yakov Gallery).<sup>14</sup> It is all the more striking because the protagonist is a woman - which, it can be argued, in itself undermined the earlier use of Sof'ya as a "symbol of the 'old ways'".

Sof'ya's assumption of power as Regent for her disabled brother, Ivan V, and her half-brother Petr I, a minor, was remarkable in itself. In seventeenth-century Muscovite society: "The higher the social position of a family, the more rigorously were its women shielded from public view. Women of the tsar's family were particularly restricted."<sup>15</sup> Although Petr has been credited with freeing aristocratic ladies from seclusion, Sof'ya and her sisters had already set an example of female involvement in public life. Her regency (1682-9) laid the foundations for the expansion of Russia's relations with the West with a series of treaties establishing Russia's borders.<sup>16</sup> After the revocation of the Edict of Nantes in 1685, Huguenots were encouraged to come to Moscow, with promise of employment and freedom of worship - a right shared also by Catholics in the Foreign Suburb.<sup>17</sup> There were many cultural developments, including the flowering of 'Moscow Baroque' architecture under the Regent's personal patronage, and the founding of the first institution for higher education in Russia.<sup>18</sup> It is acknowledged that Sof'ya's reign made possible the accession of five female rulers before Pavel I's reintroduction of male primogeniture at the end of the eighteenth century.<sup>19</sup>

Sof'ya had seldom been depicted in history paintings before Repin's *The Regent Tsarevna Sof'ya*. The religious debate between the Orthodox clergy and the Old Believers on 5 July 1682 was a popular subject in early nineteenth century history painting. Sof'ya had been a participant, boldly defending her late father, Tsar Aleksei, and brother Fedor III against allegations of heresy. Nevertheless, paintings of the event often omitted Sof'ya and the other women: Petr and Ivan, neither of whom had been present, were included instead, creating a dual falsification of history. Nikolai Sinyavskii's *Petr the Great's Courage* (literally, and significantly, 'manliness', or 'manly courage' - *muzhestvo*), a naïve work engraved by Nikolai Sokolov (1805, State Historical Museum, Moscow), and copied in oils by Ivan

Karmanov (1847, Russian Museum), shows ten-year-old Petr as the only member of the royal family at the debate. The image of young Petr's 'manly courage' is created at the expense of his sisters and of historical truth. In Dorothy Atkinson's words, "A popular saying proclaimed that 'A maiden seen is copper, but the unseen girl is gold'. In seventeenth-century Russia, copper was debased currency".<sup>20</sup> By making Sofya and her kinswomen invisible, early nineteenth-century artists were returning them to their traditional place in society. The removal of Sofya from a scene which demonstrated her fierce opposition to the Old Believers also reflected the false image of her as an opponent of all reform, the complete opposite of the enlightened Petr.

The political threat which Sofya posed to Petr I was directly related to their relationship as half-sister and half-brother. As Nikolai Karamzin wrote:

in respect of her mind and intellectual qualities she was worthy of the name of sister of *Peter the Great*; but blinded by ambition, she aspired to rule alone and reign alone, thus placing the historian under the sad obligation of being her accuser.<sup>21</sup>

The historian is accusing her of being an 'unnatural', disloyal sister to Petr, yet Petr himself is rarely accused of behaving unnaturally, despite persecuting and killing his son and forcibly confining his wife and half-sisters in convents. Sofya is often charged with excessive ambition. Foy de la Neuville (or his editor) claimed: "Without ever having read Machiavelli, she has a natural command of all his maxims, and especially this, that there is...no crime which may not be committed when ruling is at stake".<sup>22</sup> Sofya's failure to conform to a submissive ideal of feminine and sisterly behaviour, by the standards of her own or later times, provided the unwritten subtext of these assessments.<sup>23</sup>

This subtext was made explicit when Sofya's 'wickedness' was defined in sexual terms. The hero of Ivan Lazhechnikov's 1833 novel, *The Last Recruit* is alleged to be Sofya's illegitimate son,<sup>24</sup> while in 1834, in his novel, *The Mysterious Monk*, Rafail Zotov portrayed Sofya making advances towards several married men, including her maternal uncle,<sup>25</sup> thus combining allegations of incest and adultery. None of this is substantiated. In her study of

female leaders and their historical images, Antonia Fraser has noted the frequency of sexual innuendo about powerful women by (predominantly male) commentators.<sup>26</sup> A woman who asserted herself in an ‘unfeminine’ manner in public life was often depicted as ‘immoral’ - i.e. sexually voracious - in private.<sup>27</sup> The rumours about Sofya were rooted in this assumption, based on her public rôle as the first woman to exercise political power in Russia, and on patriarchal definitions of ‘appropriate’ feminine behaviour. Ironically, from the little that is known of her private life, the alternative stereotype of the female ruler as a woman set apart by virginity may be closer to reality.<sup>28</sup> Interestingly, the beginning of the historical reassessment of Sofya, following the relaxation of censorship in the late 1850s, also coincided with the emergence of the ‘Woman Question’ in Russia. Female emancipation “surfaced...in tandem with the question of serf emancipation, only after Russia’s defeat in the Crimean War in 1856”.<sup>29</sup>

Repin’s Sofya was later criticised by fellow-artist Vasilii Surikov because she lacked the beauty he believed appropriate to the tragic heroine of a history painting. Showing a study of a high-cheekboned Moldovan girl to Maksimilian Voloshin, he said,

This is how Tsarevna Sofya ought to be, not at all like Repin’s. Would the *Strel'tsy* [Musketeers] have come out [in revolt] for such a podgy besom? A beauty like this could have roused them just by raising her eyebrows...<sup>30</sup>

Yet Repin’s Sofya remained close to the unglamorised image presented in her contemporary portraits. Despite some degree of stylisation, these show a consistent image of a plump young woman with a grave expression, as in the version in the Russian Museum, St. Petersburg (fig. 4). Repin had had access to a slender, more girlish alleged portrait of Sofya, the ‘Versailles’ type,<sup>31</sup> but it is probably a depiction of her sister-in-law, Marfa Apraksina, second wife of Fedor III.<sup>32</sup> He may have realised this, or else did not regard it as appropriate to his concept of Sofya’s character. Written descriptions of Sofya are contradictory, ranging from de la Neuville’s *Relation curieuse et nouvelle de Moscovie*, 1698:

Her mind and great ability bear no relation to the deformity of her person, as she is immensely fat, with a head as big as a bushel, hairs on her face and tumours on her legs... But in the same degree that her stature is broad, short

and coarse, her mind is shrewd, unprejudiced and full of policy<sup>33</sup>  
- frequently quoted but of questionable authenticity<sup>34</sup> - to claims by the Hanoverian-British diplomat Friedrich Christian Weber and by Captain John Perry that she was beautiful.<sup>35</sup> However, these extreme views may be partly reconciled if one recalls that Weber and Perry, neither of whom had seen Sofya, obtained their impressions from Russians, who judged female beauty by a different æsthetic to that of Westerners: “A lean woman [the Russians] account unwholesome, therefore they who are inclined to leanness, give themselves over to all manner of Epicurism, on purpose to fatten themselves... like swine designed to make bacon.”<sup>36</sup>

Repin seems to have taken an artistic liberty in depicting Sofya in secular dress, with her hair unshorn, because she apparently took her vows around 21 October 1698,<sup>37</sup> a week *before* the execution of two hundred and thirty *Strel'tsy* outside the Convent. Showing Sofya dressed as a Tsarevna was perhaps a deliberate way of focussing attention on her fall from power. The young nun provides both a contrast to Sofya and an image of her future, perhaps inspired by Evdokiya Rostopchina's poem *The Nun* (1843), in which Sofya, here characterised as “a passionate woman of the world... dedicated forcibly to God”,<sup>38</sup> tells her story to a younger companion. The nun's extreme youth suggests that, like Sofya, she is not a voluntary member of the community. Alternatively, she may be intended to be a spy, commanded to keep an eye on Sofya after the arrest of her servants. Through the window the silhouette of a hanging *Strelets* is visible. His bowed head and greenish face, fragmented by glazing bars, create a sense of horror through suggestion, rather than by explicit detail. As an eyewitness, Johann Georg Korb, wrote:

...three ringleaders of this perilous mutiny, who presented a petition inviting Sophia to take the helm of the State, were hanged over against the walls of the said monastery, close to the window of Sophia's room, and he that hangs in the middle holds a paper, folded like a petition, tied in his dead hands; perhaps in order that remorse for the past may gnaw Sophia with perpetual grief.<sup>39</sup>

Superficially, the painting presents an ambiguous image of Sofya. On the one hand, the facts of her situation, as given in the title, present her as a focus for sympathy: a once-powerful woman incarcerated in a convent, while her supporters are hanged or tortured. On the other hand, her formidable appearance could equally be seen as the embodiment of male fears of the emasculating, dominant woman.<sup>40</sup> Repin's Sofya is neither a *femme fatale* nor a passive victim/object. Unlike the heroine of *Princess Tarakanova*, she is neither beautiful nor pathetic. Her expression suggests emotion suppressed, an attempt to maintain dignity at least, perhaps, while there is a witness present. Her pallor contrasts with her burning, red-rimmed eyes, as if she has already been weeping in anger and frustration. She is static, but she is not calm. Her direct, staring gaze aggressively confronts the spectator; it does not appeal for help. As Gill Saunders has written, with reference to Manet's *Olympia*, "Staring is a male prerogative, a strategy for dominating women, controlling and subscribing their actions".<sup>41</sup> Sofya challenges the spectator to dare to pity her. In this respect, it may be argued that she brings to the image of women in history painting the forthright defiance of passivity which *Olympia* brought to the female nude.

Repin's personal links with the movement for female emancipation suggest that the portrayal was intended to be sympathetic. Through his friendship with her brother, the critic Vladimir Stasov, Repin was acquainted with Nadezhda Stasova, a major figure in the Sunday School movement, and in the campaign for women's higher education. In 1876, after eight years of petitioning the authorities, she registered eight hundred students for the first Advanced Women's Courses in St. Petersburg.<sup>42</sup> In 1874, she had been godmother to Repin's daughter Nadezhda.<sup>43</sup> Repin drew and painted her portrait several times.<sup>44</sup> Repin's chief models for *The Regent Tsarevna Sofya* were progressive, talented women, suggesting that he saw Sofya as a precursor of the modern emancipated woman. Elena Blaraberg-Apreleva (1846-1923), a novelist who wrote under a masculine pseudonym as 'E. I. Ardov', sat for a bust-length study of Sofya in 1878. In the later stages of the work, the model was Valentina Serova (1846-1924), pianist, music critic and composer, whom Repin described as

“a little figure of Oriental type”,<sup>45</sup> with “much boldness and scorn in her gaze and manners”.<sup>46</sup> Repin also painted emancipated women in contemporary settings, e.g. *In the Laboratory* (1881, private collection, St. Petersburg), painted for Dr. Yuliya Yakhontova, which shows a female medical student dissecting a cadaver. Repin’s first version of the political prisoner’s return, *They Did Not Expect Him* (1884), was *They Did Not Expect Her* (1883; both Tret’yakov Gallery), conveying the contrast between a radical woman and her conventional sisters.

There were other contemporary political resonances in *The Regent Tsarevna Sofya* apart from an expression of growing interest in female emancipation. At the ‘Trial of the Moscow Women’, which opened in St. Petersburg in March 1877, six women were sentenced to hard labour for political agitation among factory workers.<sup>47</sup> They had already been in prison for nearly two years before the trial, which was conducted under Senate supervision, without a jury. Their case inspired writings by Ivan Turgenev and Nikolai Nekrasov,<sup>48</sup> both of whom Repin knew. In February 1878, Vera Zasulich was tried for shooting Governor Trepov of St. Petersburg. *The Regent Tsarevna Sofya* does not contain any direct allusion to these events, but it was painted in a context of awareness of strong-minded women being imprisoned for taking an active rôle in political activity. In this respect it prefigures Repin’s *A Female Revolutionary awaiting Execution (In Solitary Confinement)* (early 1880s, private collection, Czech Republic), first exhibited in December 1896 under the less politically-explicit title *Anguish*.<sup>49</sup> However, *A Female Revolutionary* is a bleaker work, reflecting the pessimistic mood which followed the assassination of Aleksandr II and the execution of the regicides who included a woman, Sofya Perovskaya - in 1881.

Repin also expressed his opinion of the cultural legacies of Sofya and Petr I in a letter to Stasov. It is worth quoting at length for the light which it sheds upon the politics of the painting:

...before Petr, our ancestors were not foolish (I’m studying this period now), they were learning from foreigners, they borrowed many things also, but freely; they chose gifted people from there, and these people treated them

with respect and tried to do what was required of them, and constructed excellent things, such as they had never created in Europe. With Petr, it was altogether different: every untalented, semi-literate German soldier fancied himself a great civiliser, an enlightener of Russian ignorance. They began to build every kind of ugliness and introduce them everywhere as being the most ideal forms; but the main thing is that the foreign bureaucrat wanted to build a second fatherland here. And sheer disorder ensued with the life of the people despised, dragged through the mud... Foreign lords and Russian bond-slaves, and every Russian bureaucrat was already trying to appear like a foreigner, or else he would not be a master. How much of this exists still to this day!<sup>50</sup>

This was the nearest Repin seems to have come to an open declaration of antipathy to Petr's regime, and of sympathy with pre-Petrine Russia and by implication with Sofya and the regency. The contrast drawn between Petr and his predecessors in their approaches towards Westernisation is strongly reminiscent of writings by the early Slavophile writer Konstantin Aksakov,<sup>51</sup> which Repin may have read. Aksakov, however, did not make explicit the parallels with the contemporary situation, perhaps because of Nikolai I's censors; whereas Repin was writing in a more liberal period and in a private letter.

The contrast between *Princess Tarakanova* and *The Regent Tsarevna Sofya* stems in part from differences between the historical characters depicted. It also reflects the changes in attitudes towards women in Russia from the late 1850s into the 1870s.<sup>52</sup> While *Princess Tarakanova* provided an image of passive femininity and sexual availability, Repin's depiction of Sofya demonstrated that it was possible to portray honestly a historical heroine who was not beautiful and who did not conform to a traditional feminine rôle in her society. Despite Sofya's actual defeat - she died, still confined in the convent in 1704, aged forty-six - Repin's portrayal of her reached out to and, through his models, incorporated the experiences of progressive women of his own time, before the period of reaction reflected in *A Female Revolutionary*. Perhaps it may be regarded, then, as an image of a continuing struggle, in terms of both cultural and sexual politics.

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## NOTES:

<sup>1</sup>John T. Alexander, *Catherine the Great: Life and Legend* (New York & Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989), p. 182, suggests that it may be a corruption of Daraganova, the name of a real noblewoman, but this misses the obvious, blackly humorous word-play, and as he admits, there is no evidence to associate Sof'ya Daraganova with the prisoner.

<sup>2</sup>See *ibid.*, pp. 180-2, and Robert Payne, *The Fortress* (London: W. H. Allen, 1967), p. 17.

<sup>3</sup>See Alexander, p. 182.

<sup>4</sup>A. G. Vereshchagina, *Istoricheskaya Kartina v Russkom Iskusstve. Shestidesyatye gody XIX veka* (Moscow: Iskusstvo, 1990), pp. 115-119.

<sup>5</sup>He was arrested in 1862 and held there until his banishment to Siberia in 1864; see Payne, p. 126.

<sup>6</sup>Roy Strong, *And when did you last see your father?: The Victorian Painter and British History* (London: Thames & Hudson, 1978), pp. 122 & 133-4, for other examples of this in nineteenth-century Western history painting.

<sup>7</sup>James Laver, *Modesty in Dress* (London: Heinemann, 1969), p. 39.

<sup>8</sup>Jan Marsh, *Pre-Raphaelite Women* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1987), p. 48.

<sup>9</sup>Alexander, p. 182.

<sup>10</sup>See Strong, pp. 45, 133-4, & 154, on how strong female characters were manipulated by artists to conform to nineteenth-century ideals of femininity.

<sup>11</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 122.

<sup>12</sup>See Marina Warner, *Joan of Arc: The Image of Female Heroism* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1981), pp. 261-3, on other child-like images of Jeanne.

<sup>13</sup>Lindsey Hughes, "Sofiya Alekseyevna and the Moscow Rebellion of 1682", in *Slavonic and East European Review*, 63, no. 4, p. 521.

<sup>14</sup>See Marianne McLeod Gilchrist, *Images of the Petrine Era in Russian History Painting* (doctoral thesis, University of St. Andrews, 1993), esp. Chapters 4 and 5, pp. 138-230.

<sup>15</sup>Dorothy Atkinson, "Society and the Sexes in the Russian Past", in *Women in Russia*, ed. by D. Atkinson, A. Dallin, & G. W. Lapidus (Hassocks: Harvester Press 1978), p. 17.

<sup>16</sup>Lindsey Hughes, *Sophia, Regent of Russia, 1657-1704: Ambitious and Daring above her Sex* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1990), p. 192.

<sup>17</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 125 & 209.

<sup>18</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 97, and Chapter 7, "Culture", pp. 134-178, for further details.

<sup>19</sup>Robert K. Massie, *Peter the Great: His Life and World* (New York: Knopf, 1980), p. 107.

<sup>20</sup>Atkinson, p. 17.

<sup>21</sup>Quoted by Hughes in *Sophia, Regent of Russia*, p. 268.

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<sup>22</sup>Foy de la Neuville, *Relation curieuse et nouvelle de Moscovie*, published edition only, not in original MS; quoted by Hughes in *ibid.*, p. 265.

<sup>23</sup>Interestingly, Ekaterina II had favoured a limited rehabilitation of Sofya as a precedent for herself (Hughes, *ibid.*, p. 268). However, Pavel I's reintroduction of male primogeniture and his son Nikolai I's cult of Petr countered this.

<sup>24</sup>See Xenia Gasiorowska, *The Image of Peter the Great in Russian Fiction* (Madison and London: University of Wisconsin Press, 1979), p. 187

<sup>25</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 43.

<sup>26</sup>Antonia Fraser, *Boadicea's Chariot: The Warrior Queens* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1988), pp. 11-12.

<sup>27</sup>A modern popular biography of Petr has even accused Sofya of promiscuous relations with numerous army officers - without any evidence; see Henri Troyat, *Peter the Great* (London: Hamilton, 1987), p. 11.

<sup>28</sup>Fraser, pp. 11-12; Hughes, *Sophia, Regent of Russia*, p. 142, describing an allegorical portrait, also pp. 227-9, 274-5 .

<sup>29</sup>Atkinson, p. 28.

<sup>30</sup>M. A. Voloshin, *Vasilii Ivanovich Surikov* (Leningrad: Khudozhnik RSFSR, 1985), p. 192. The heroine of Surikov's *A Tsarevna's Visit to a Convent* (1912, Tret'yakov Gallery), may reflect his vision of Sofya.

<sup>31</sup>Letter dated 11 December 1878, in I. E. Repin and V. V. Stasov, *Perepiska 1871-1906*, 3 vols. (Moscow and Leningrad: Iskusstvo 1948-50), II, p. 40.

<sup>32</sup>D. A. Rovinskii, *Podrobnyi Slovar' Russkikh Gravirovannykh Portretov, izdanie s 700 fototipnymi*, 4 vols., paginated in continuous columns (St. Petersburg: Imperatorskaya Akademiya Nauk, 1886-9), col. 1945, item no. 13, for comments on the 'Versailles' *Sofya*. It is compared with the *Tsaritsa Marfa Matveevna* listed in *Katalog Istoricheskoi Vystavki Portretov Lits XVI-XVIIIvv ustroennoi Obshchestvom Pooshchreniya Khudozhnikov*, ed. by P. N. Petrov, (St. Petersburg: Obshchestvo Pooshchreniya Khudozhnikov, 1870), p. 17, as item no. 48. The Russian Museum's copy of this portrait of Marfa also bears out this comparison.

<sup>33</sup>Quoted by Eugene Schuyler in *Peter the Great, Emperor of Russia: A Study of Historical Biography*, 2 vols. (London: Sampson Low, Marston, Searle, & Rivington, 1884), I, p. 208.

<sup>34</sup>Hughes, *Sophia, Regent of Russia*, p. 265.

<sup>35</sup>[Friedrich Christian Weber], *The Present State of Russia*, 2 vols. (London: Taylor, Innys and Osborn, 1723), I, p. 138, and John Perry, *The State of Russia, Under the Present Czar* (London: Benjamin Tooke, 1716), p. 143.

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<sup>36</sup>Samuel Collins, *The Present State of Russia* (London: J. Winter, for D. Newman, 1671), Ch. XV, quoted by Virginia Cowles in *The Romanovs* (London: Collins, 1971), p. 11. Dr. Collins served as physician to Tsar Aleksei Mikhailovich.

<sup>37</sup>According to the inscription on her tomb, which states that at her death, aged forty-six, on 3 July 1704, she had been a nun for 5 years, 8 months, and 12 days. See Hughes, *Sophia, Regent of Russia*, p. 310, n. 41.

<sup>38</sup>Quoted by Hughes in *ibid.*, p. 242.

<sup>39</sup>[Johann Georg Korb], *Diary of an Austrian Secretary of Legation at the Court of Czar Peter the Great*, trans. and ed. by the Count MacDonnell, 2 vols. (London: Bradbury & Evans, 1863), I, p. 194.

<sup>40</sup>Similarly, as Atkinson, p. 9, observed of the *Polyanitsy*, the warrior heroines of folk tradition: “These are clearly positive heroines, but there are times when admiration of them seems tinged with masculine uneasiness”.

<sup>41</sup>Gill Saunders, *The Nude: A New Perspective* (New York and London: Harper & Row, 1989), p. 25.

<sup>42</sup>Cathy Porter, *Fathers and Daughters: Russian Women in Revolution* (London: Virago, 1976), p. 111.

<sup>43</sup>I. S. Zil’bershtein, *Khudozhestvennoe Nasledstvo. Repin*, 2 vols. (Moscow and Leningrad: Iskusstvo, 1948), I, p. 181.

<sup>44</sup>Portrait (1883, I. I. Brodskii Museum-flat, St. Petersburg), drawing *Nadezhda Stasova Embroidering* (Russian Museum), *The Ovation for Nadezhda Stasova* (1889, Institute of Literature of the Academy of Sciences, St. Petersburg).

<sup>45</sup>I. E. Repin, “Valentin Aleksandrovich Serov”, in *Dalekoe Blizkoe* (Leningrad: Khudozhnik RSFSR, 1982 ed.), p. 350.

<sup>46</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>47</sup>Porter, pp. 148-55.

<sup>48</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 153, for descriptions of Turgenev’s prose poem, *At the Threshold*, and Nekrasov’s poem, *The Trial of the Fifty*.

<sup>49</sup>Zil’bershtein, vol. I, p. 176.

<sup>50</sup>Letter dated 18 December 1878, in Repin and Stasov, *Perepiska*, II, p. 42.

<sup>51</sup>Quoted by Nicholas V. Riasanovsky in *Russia and the West in the Teaching of the Slavophiles: A Study of Romantic Ideology* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1952), p. 80.

<sup>52</sup>Atkinson, p. 28.

