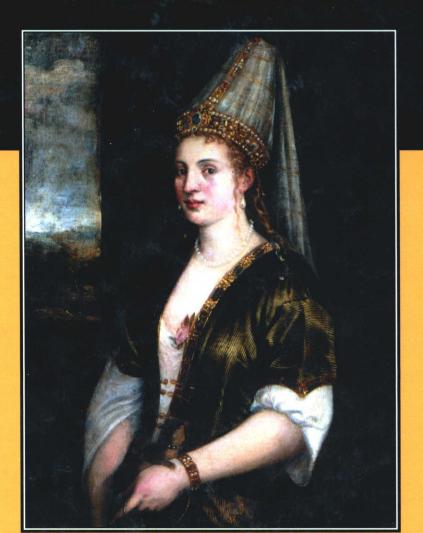


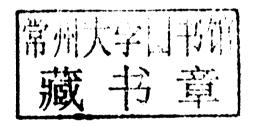
Roxolana in European Literature, History and Culture

Edited by GALINA I. YERMOLENKO



Roxolana in European Literature, History and Culture

Edited by GALINA I. YERMOLENKO DeSales University, USA



ASHGATE

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ROXOLANA IN EUROPEAN LITERATURE, HISTORY AND CULTURE

To my late mother

Tamara

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Galina Yermolenko Hellertown, PA August 2009

Note on Texts, Transliterations, and Spellings

Foreign Language Words and Passages

Short original foreign language words and passages follow their English translations and equivalents in the main text. Longer original foreign language passages are provided in the footnotes. Occasionally, for emphasis, foreign words or short phrases are used first; in such cases, their English translations are signaled by square brackets and single quotation marks.

Spellings

Archaic English and foreign language spellings are usually retained in quotations from old sources and their titles. Conventional English spellings of foreign words are used when available and where appropriate.

The collection uses several variants and spellings for the names of Roxolana and Suleiman, as well as other related Turkish figures (both historical and fictional). These variants have been in use for several centuries, and they occur in the various historical and literary texts discussed in this volume. The general "name" policy for this volume is to retain the versions and spellings used in the original texts, providing, in parentheses, their most common modern variants.¹

Transliterations

This volume follows modern Turkish orthography for words and names of Turkish, Arabic, or Persian origin. Several unfamiliar Turkish letters correspond to and are transliterated in Latin/English letters, according to the following:

```
c — as j in English (e.g., Cihangir – Jihangir)
ç — as ch in English (e.g., Çelebi – Chelebi)
ş — as sh in English (e.g., paşa – pasha)
İ, ı — as I, i in English (e.g., İbrahim – Ibrahim)
ö — as o in English (e.g., Özen – Ozen)
ü — as u in English (e.g., Hürrem – Hurrem)
```

For more specific comments on the early modern and modern versions and spellings of the names used in this volume, see Appendix 2.

Transliterations of Ukrainian and Russian bibliographic citations (in the footnotes to Chapters 1, 5, 6, and Bibliography) follow the Library of Congress (LC) system. In the main text of Chapters 1, 5, and 6, the LC conventions have been modified. In the reproductions of both Ukrainian and Russian personal names, the soft sign (b) is not transliterated (e.g., Sichynsky, Novosiltsov). Ukrainian initial n-, n-, n-appear as n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-, n-,

Ukrainian place names are spelled in both the main text and in transliterated bibliographic citations according to standardized Roman-letter correspondences to the Ukrainian language geographical names (e.g., Kyiv, Ivano-Frankivsk, Lviv).

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Introduction

Galina Yermolenko

Any study of the West's relations with the harem must be in large part a study of the imagination.¹

Roxolana, or Hurrem Sultan, the legendary wife of Suleiman I, the Magnificent (1520–1566), left a special trace in Europe's cultural memory. The impact of this Asian queen on the Western imagination is comparable only to that of Cleopatra. "The greatest empresse of the East," Richard Knolles wrote of her—rather high praise, considering the scathingly critical portrayal the venerated English historian gave the "wicked woman" in his famous *Generall Historie of the Turks* (1603). Most other historians were equally harsh to Roxolana, often portraying her as a witch and ruthless schemer whose tight grip over Suleiman, and her insidious harem intrigues, led to the decline of the Ottoman Empire.

Although Western historians have been struggling to define Roxolana's legacy for over four centuries, it is often overlooked that she was largely a creation of the European imagination. Due to the lack of historical records and hard evidence, most of what is known about this woman rests on a handful of secondhand contemporaneous accounts and subsequent reinterpretations and speculations by numerous historians, quasi historians, dramatists, and other men of letters who have shaped the Western discourse on Roxolana. Yet, despite the fictions written about this woman, her allure and impact on Europeans have not been critically explored to date.

The present collection is the first book-length critical study of the Roxolana figure in European history, culture, and imagination from the mid-sixteenth century to the present. Contributions to this collection examine cultural responses to Roxolana in both Western and Eastern Europe—namely, Italy, Spain, France, England, Germany, Turkey, Poland, and Ukraine. The collection attempts to account for Roxolana's unwavering appeal across the continent by probing into European attitudes and ideological biases in relation to the Ottoman Other and the Female Other.

Because most of what was written about Roxolana in Europe is based on several famous moments of her career at the Ottoman court, and because the essays and translations in the present collection refer to these famous stories in various ways,

Ruth Yeazell, *Harems of the Mind: Passages of Western Art and Literature* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2000), 1.