

4 The 'two bodies' of the female sovereign: Awkward hierarchies in images of Empress Maria Theresia, Catherine the Great of Russia and their male consorts

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The relationship between ruler and consort, analysed in great depth in the rest of this book, became particularly complicated if the sovereign was a woman. In England this 'anomalous' case occurred for the first time in 1553 when Mary I ascended the throne. In order to prevent her husband Philip II of Spain from interfering with English politics, in 1554 Parliament issued the *Act declaring that the Regal Power of this Realm is in the Queen's Majesty as fully and absolutely as ever it was in any of her most noble Progenitors, Kings of this Realm*, thereby enabling Mary to 'use and enjoy the Crown and Sovereignty over her Dominions and Subjects' without the assistance of her male consort.¹

The idea that the queen held the same powers as a king was more fully developed during the reign of Mary's successor Elizabeth I. Shortly after Elizabeth's coronation in 1559 the future Bishop of London John Aylmer published a treatise in which he defended the queen 'agaynst the late blown Blaste, concerninge the Government of Women'.² His argument was based on the theory of the king's two bodies that had been current in England since the Middle Ages. According to this theory the person of the king consisted of a mortal 'body natural' and an immortal 'body politic'. During Elizabeth's reign the London lawyers referred to that view repeatedly, stating that 'the Body politic wipes away every Imperfection of the other Body, with which it is consolidated, and makes it to be another Degree than it should be if it were alone by itself'.³ In applying this theory to the queen, Aylmer suggested that the 'weakness' of the female 'body natural' was checked and outweighed by the inviolable power of Elizabeth's 'body politic'. The queen herself expressed a similar conviction: 'I am but one Bodye naturally Considered though by his permission [i.e. God's] a Bodye Politique to Gouverne'.⁴

The queen's 'body politic' was construed as a strong, masculine body. Elizabeth I famously said that 'I know I have the body but of a weak and feeble woman, but I have the heart and stomach of a king'.⁵ Marriage posed a threat to the queen's autonomy as it brought the traditional hierarchy of the sexes into play. John Aylmer was at pains to stress that marriage concerned only the queen's 'body natural' and concluded: 'she is subiecte to man, in that she is his wife, not

in that she is a woman'.⁶ Elizabeth drew the logical conclusion and remained unmarried, establishing a new cult of the 'Virgin Queen'.

Ernst H. Kantorowicz's seminal book on *The King's Two Bodies*, lately the subject of various critical revisions,⁷ has proved an important stimulus to contemporary gender studies. The present article focuses on the two most powerful women of the 18th century, Empress Maria Theresa and Catherine II of Russia. Although Austrian and Russian political theory did not make reference to the English concept of the two bodies, images of the two female rulers suggest that the problematical aspects of gendered hierarchies were clearly a central issue for both women. This essay will explore how Maria Theresa and Catherine II visualised their sovereignty in relation to their male 'consorts'. It will also be asked whether there is evidence that they construed a masculine 'body politic' for themselves.

Maria Theresa and the gender of sovereignty

As Emperor Charles VI did not have male heirs, in 1713 he issued the Pragmatic Sanction, an imperial decree in which he authorised his surviving daughters to inherit his titles above and beyond any contenders from within or outside the family. Nevertheless Maria Theresa, born in 1717, was not educated as a future sovereign. When she succeeded her father on his death in 1740, she regretted her lack of preparation.⁸ Charles had excluded Maria Theresa from the meetings of the state councils, inviting instead her husband Franz Stephan von Lothringen whom she had married in 1736.

Charles perhaps expected after his death that his son-in-law would wield actual power in affairs of state, with Maria Theresa simply the necessary heir that preserved the dynasty's unity. [...] Maria Theresa's actual assumption of power, her desire to rule and quick education in matters of international politics and domestic administration, as well as the ensuing process of defining herself as an active monarchical figure, should be understood as the assertive move it was.⁹

Her rule was contested from the start, as Frederick II of Prussia did not accept the Pragmatic Sanction and started the War of the Austrian Succession. In 1741 and 1743 Maria Theresa was solemnly invested with the crowns of Hungary and Bohemia, but the imperial crown remained as yet beyond her reach: in 1742 the Elector Karl Albrecht of Bavaria became Emperor Charles VII. However, Maria Theresa did not mean to give in. Shortly after her coronation in Prague in May 1743 she commissioned her state portrait in coronation robes, wearing the Bohemian crown. On the table beside her rest both the Hungarian and the imperial crown – a bold political statement that underlined her claim to the imperial title in the face of her adversaries.¹⁰

It is interesting to note that Maria Theresa was not crowned 'queen' of Hungary and Bohemia, but assumed the male title 'rex'.¹¹ After her coronation

in the Hungarian city of Pressburg (Bratislava) she was hailed 'Vivat Domina et Rex noster'.¹² Like a king she rode up the coronation hill and brandished the coronation sword – a symbolic demonstration that she would defend the country. This masculine image of the female sovereign was immortalised through various painted and printed representations.¹³ A medal struck in commemoration of the Hungarian ceremony shows Maria Theresia on horseback with her sword raised and the inscription 'Nec priscis regibus impar'.¹⁴ The motto asserted that Maria Theresia's capacities were equal to those of her male predecessors and, by alluding to the famous 'Nec pluribus impar' device of Louis XIV, the inscription suggested moreover that she was ready to take on France, one of her enemies at that time.¹⁵

In 1745 the Habsburg dynasty regained possession of the imperial crown. However, as a woman could not become emperor, Maria Theresia's husband Franz Stephan received the imperial title.¹⁶ It would have been possible for Maria Theresia to be crowned alongside her consort, but she declined this 'comedy', stating that she deemed her two 'masculine crowns' higher than the secondary honour offered to her at Frankfurt. Moreover she is reported to have said that she did not wish to 'change sex again for a coronation'.¹⁷

Although Maria Theresia was officially styled 'empress' ('*imperatrix*'), her relationship with the imperial crown remained fraught with difficulties. She was usually portrayed with the crowns of Hungary and Bohemia, sometimes also with the archducal hat, but since she had not been crowned with the imperial crown, the most important Habsburg prerogative could not figure in her state portraits.¹⁸ In order to bring the imperial crown into the picture, Maria Theresia's consort had to be included, too.

A large group portrait created by Martin van Meytens in 1754 assembles Maria Theresia's whole family, with the imperial couple forming a symmetrical frame for their numerous offspring (Figure 4.1). On a table behind Maria Theresia the Hungarian and Bohemian crowns are visible, while the imperial crown rests on a table in the left foreground, placed next to its rightful 'owner' Franz I. The gender roles of the ruling couple seem to be hinted at by the stage props: the fertile body of the empress is associated with a large vase that appears above her head, whereas the tall columns behind Franz highlight his masculinity. A harmonious cooperation of the sexes is implied by the grouping of the figures (daughters next to their father, sons surrounding the mother). The pairing of the two channelled columns on the left and the two tassels hanging in front of them are perhaps meant to allude to the imperial couple, the 'duality' at the head of the state.

The composition clearly focuses on Maria Theresia: the eye is attracted by the bright blue colour of her dress that matches the colour of the sky. The empress casts a strong shadow against her seat, with the light centring on her, whereas Franz is placed in a darker zone of the picture. As in reading a book, the gaze moves from left to right, making Maria Theresia the optical climax of the visual experience. Her prominent function is also underlined by her proximity to the heir apparent Joseph who stands by her side (rather than next to his father).



Figure 4.1 Martin van Meytens, *Emperor Franz I and Empress Maria Theresa with their Children* (1754), oil on canvas. © Vienna, Schönbrunn Palace.

Such Habsburg family groups were produced in several variants and gained wide currency through prints.¹⁹ Why did Maria Theresa favour images of this type? They certainly celebrated her fertility and thus the stability of the Habsburg dynasty, evoking her role as mother of the Austrian people.²⁰ Perhaps more importantly, however, they also made it possible to combine the insignia of Habsburg rule in one single image, re-uniting Maria Theresa with the imperial crown from which her female sex precluded her.

Gender roles at the Russian court

Sophie Friederike of Anhalt-Zerbst was born at Stettin in 1729. In 1744 she was called to the Russian court and converted to the orthodox faith, assuming the name 'Ekaterina Alekseevna'. In the following year Catherine married Peter of Holstein-Gottorf, the German-born heir to the Russian throne. However, it took more than 16 years before Peter finally succeeded his aunt Elizaveta Petrovna in December 1761. During these formative years Catherine educated herself through vigorous reading, observed the court and started to build her own 'party'. She convinced a significant number of Russian nobles that she was more dedicated to Russian interests than Peter and ultimately more qualified to govern. With the help of her supporters she seized power in the summer of 1762 and had Peter arrested. Shortly after, Peter was murdered in prison. Although Catherine seems not to have been involved personally in Peter's assassination, the elimination of her partner certainly helped to establish her dominion. She was determined to rule in her own right rather than limiting her role to that of a 'regent' during the minority of her son Paul (born in 1754). She reigned over Russia until her death in 1796, thwarting Paul's claims for more power.²¹

In order to maintain her independence, Catherine refused to remarry. Although an alliance with the Polish King Stanislas Poniatowski would have been politically advantageous, she remained single. Her unmarried status allowed her to control the men of her court through a system of favours – granted or refused – not unlike Elizabeth I of England, even though Catherine the Great would certainly not qualify as a 'Virgin Queen'.²²

The Russian court was already familiar with a single female ruler, as the unmarried Elizaveta Petrovna had governed Russia from 1741 until her death in 1761. Elizaveta, a daughter of Peter the Great (1672–1725), ascended the throne through a *coup d'état*. Richard Wortman has pointed out that she sought to re-enact the image of the sovereign as conqueror, thereby making Peter her supreme role model.²³ Consequently, portraits stressed her 'virile' qualities, such as showing her in masculine uniform on horseback.²⁴

From 1744 Catherine had been able to observe Elizaveta Petrovna's rule and thus it was only logical that she imitated such imagery. She commemorated her assumption of power through an equestrian portrait that presented her in the uniform of the Preobrazhenskii Regiment – an elite military unit founded by Peter the Great (Figure 4.2). Just as in the equestrian monuments of western European sovereigns, her masterly control of the horse signified authority and suggested metaphorically her command over the people of her realm.²⁵

Although Catherine had initially planned to erect an equestrian statue of herself, in 1766 she commissioned Etienne-Maurice Falconet and Marie-Anne Collot to create an equestrian portrait of Peter the Great.²⁶ When Falconet's project was exhibited at the Academy in St Petersburg in 1770, flattering parallels were drawn between Peter and Catherine who, in a well-orchestrated move of 1767, had been offered the title 'Catherine the Great'.²⁷ In order to stress her affinity with Peter, the equestrian monument finally unveiled in 1782 was graced



Figure 4.2 Virgilius Erichsen (Ericksen), *Equestrian Portrait of Catherine II*, after 1764. Oil on canvas. Inv. no. GE-1312. © The State Hermitage Museum, St. Petersburg. Photograph © The State Hermitage Museum. Photo by Yuri Molodkovetse.

with the inscription 'Petro primo / Catharina secunda'.²⁸ The sequence of 'primo' and 'secunda' suggested that Catherine was Peter's descendant and successor – even though she did not have any blood ties to him.

Over the years, Peter the Great became Catherine's ideal 'consort'. There are a number of portraits in which Catherine contemplates a bust of Peter (see Figure 4.3). This indicates that she felt the need to bolster her position through the authority of a man. Much like Maria Theresa who had coined a medal with the motto 'Nec priscis regibus impar', Catherine II of Russia wished to demonstrate

that she was equal to the powerful rulers of the past. At the same time she seems to have realised that a certain modesty befitted a female ruler more than arrogance. Although on her accession in 1762 she had claimed the title 'Catherina Magna' (see Figure 4.3), in 1767 she publicly refused its equivalent 'Catherine the Great'.²⁹ Similarly she decided to honour Peter rather than herself with an equestrian monument. All in all, she celebrated herself by celebrating a man whom she valued as her model. She acted as if she was Peter's widow, following the behavioural patterns of female regents after the death of their husband.³⁰

The imperial crown and Catherine's rivalry with Maria Theresia

In 1721 the Russian Senate had offered Tsar Peter the title 'Emperor and Father of the Fatherland', which he gracefully accepted.³¹ As he aimed to make his new capital St Petersburg a 'fourth Rome', the title 'imperator' suited his ambitions very well. Historically, this address was justified in that the Tsars regarded themselves as heirs to the Byzantine empire. In 1472 Ivan III had married a niece of Constantine XI, the last Byzantine emperor. Ivan added the imperial eagle to his coat of arms, and Moscow became known as the 'third Rome'.³²

Following his extensive military conquests, Peter the Great wished to showcase his imperial grandeur. As he himself had been invested with the traditional 'Monomakh cap' of the Tsars in 1682, in 1724 he staged an elaborate coronation ceremony for his second wife (Empress Catherine I), displaying on this occasion a new imperial crown. It was modelled on the so-called 'Habsburgische Hauskrone', the 'personal' crown of the emperors from the house of Habsburg.³³

Catherine II went a step further and ordered an even more stunning crown for her coronation in 1762. Its peculiar form still resembled the 'Habsburgische Hauskrone', combining a circlet at its base with the two spherical halves of a mitre through which the crowning high arch passes. However, Catherine clearly sought to outshine her Habsburg rivals by a crown studded with some five thousand diamonds. The octagonal-shaped diamond at the front weighs about 57 carats, while the great spinel ruby on top has 398.72 carats.³⁴ The crown magnified Catherine's imperial status which was also proclaimed by the medals coined for her coronation, inscribed with the title 'imperatoriza'.³⁵

Numerous paintings depict Catherine with the new crown by her side. A print issued shortly after her accession shows her wearing the fancy headgear (Figure 4.3) – perhaps a conscious slight on Maria Theresia who called herself empress even though she had never been crowned with the imperial crown. As prints could circulate easily, they were ideally suited to transport propaganda messages. This particular image seems to have been conceived with a western audience in mind that would have recognised the Pantheon on the fictive medal. A book with the French title *De l'Education du Prince* is placed next to Catherine's son Paul, suggesting that he is being brought up according to the standards of western culture.³⁶ The Pantheon, one of the most impressive surviving examples of imperial architecture, represents Catherine's role as successor to the ancient Roman emperors – a claim she later supported by the classicising buildings of



Figure 4.3 Joseph Lante after Stefano Torelli, Catherine II and Paul Petrovich, 1762. Etching. © Moscow, State Historical Museum.

her 'fourth Rome'.³⁷ The inscription on the medal underlines her ambitions by addressing her as CATHERINA II MAGNA FELIX AUGUSTA, 'Catherine the Great, the Fortunate and the August'.

Although Maria Theresa had initially welcomed Catherine's advent to power, their relationship soon deteriorated, as Catherine refused to renew the longstanding military alliance between Austria and Russia. This was a decisive factor in turning the Seven Years War into a disaster for the house of Habsburg. From 1764 Catherine and Frederick the Great were allied in their bid to marginalise Austria. No wonder that, on a personal level, too, Catherine and Maria Theresa were sworn enemies.³⁸

While Russia's cultural relations with Prussia, France and Italy have been much studied, Austrian culture is not normally considered a model for Catherine's

court. Therefore it has hitherto escaped attention that Catherine the Great modelled some of her most significant representations on portraits of her Austrian rival.³⁹ This is particularly evident in the case of the two monumental state portraits to be discussed presently (Figures 4.4 and 4.5).

As Michael Yonan has pointed out, 'the issue of exactly how Maria Theresia related to divine authority as a sovereign ruler, particularly if her husband held the higher title of emperor, remained a pressing question'.⁴⁰ Consequently, he interpreted Martin van Meytens' portrait of the empress of c.1750 as an answer to that question (Figure 4.4). In this painting Maria Theresia stands, slightly turned to the left, between a table with her insignia and a pyramidal monument. Her right hand rests on the Hungarian sceptre, while on the cushion in front of her the Hungarian and Bohemian crowns are visible, with the imperial crown being conspicuously absent. The monument behind the empress features a medallion with symbols of monarchical rule: the Eye of God looks down on a sword and cornucopia resting on an altar. While sword and cornucopia stand for war and peace, the religious setting evokes the idea that God determines the fate of Austria. In Yonan's view this device alludes to the *pietas austriaca*, the 'centuries-old dynastic belief [...] that God had selected the Habsburgs for rule over their peers because of their exceptional piety'.⁴¹

Yonan's argument can be further supported by focusing on the Hungarian crown which Meytens placed in the foreground of his work. According to traditional belief the first Hungarian King, Stephen I, received this crown from Pope Sylvester II in the year 1000 or 1001.⁴² As Stephen was canonised in 1083, the crown had a doubly sacred value: It was given by God's substitute on earth to a king who had turned into a saint. By drawing attention to the Hungarian crown with which she had been rightfully invested, Maria Theresia suggested her special bond with divinity. In conjunction with the religious imagery on the pyramidal monument this signified that God himself legitimised and empowered Maria Theresia's rule. The empress was therefore able to demonstrate her sovereignty without recourse to her husband and the imperial crown.

Meytens's portrait was created long before Catherine became empress of Russia. At the height of her power, however, shortly before her rival's death, Catherine chose to emulate this particular image. In Rokotov's portrait she assumed the same position, facing left towards a table with her insignia (Figure 4.5).⁴³ While the imperial crown is necessarily absent from Maria Theresia's image, Catherine displayed in its place her own, diamond-studded version of the 'Habsburgische Hauskrone', thus outshining the house of Austria and highlighting the fact that she had received her imperial dignity through a proper coronation.

Rokotov's portrait has been discussed briefly in various exhibition catalogues without, however, addressing its relationship to Meytens's work.⁴⁴ In Meytens's portrait Maria Theresia wears a very feminine pink lace dress, a gift from the Flemish provinces.⁴⁵ Catherine, on the contrary, appears majestic with her ermine cloak and the two military orders on her chest. Her dress is embroidered with laurel leaves. A laurel wreath on her head completes the 'masculine' look and refers to her recent military conquests.⁴⁶ Just as her crown tops that of Maria



Figure 4.4 Martin van Meytens, State Portrait of Empress Maria Theresia, ca. 1750. Oil on canvas. © Vienna, Schönbrunn Palace Kultur- und Betriebsges.m.b.H. Photo by Edgar Knaack Gemäldegalerie KHM.

... that
... man who is commonly called Catherine' ... while she had styled herself
CATHERINA MAGNA in the feminine form (Figure 4.3), shortly after her death in



Figure 4.5 Fjodor Stepanowich Rokotov, State Portrait of Empress Catherine II, ca. 1776–1780. Oil on canvas. © Moscow, State Historical Museum.

Theresia, her dress speaks of victory and expansion. In this context it may not be coincidental that Catherine is framed by two large columns. Paired columns with the motto 'Plus ultra' formed the famous device of Emperor Charles V, alluding to his large realm which was constantly expanding ('plus ultra').⁴⁷ Both the setting and the dress may, therefore, be understood as subtle allusions to the changed balance of power after the Seven Years War: at least in Rokotov's painting Russia has taken over the position once held by the Habsburg emperors.

Above the imperial crown a bust of Peter the Great appears in a niche, reminding the viewer of the first Russian ruler who had called himself 'imperator' (a term echoed by Catherine's own title 'imperatriza'). The bust is surmounted by an inscription in Russian that translates as 'Complete what has been begun'.⁴⁸ Thus the text presents Catherine as Peter's successor who carries on and fulfils his mission. This is also implied by the two military orders she wears: the order of St Andrew, founded by Peter, and the order of St George, founded by herself.⁴⁹

In Rokotov's state portrait Catherine defines her position in relation to her male role model whom she emulates, continuing his policy of eclipsing the western empire. The laurel wreath indicates that Catherine followed in Peter's military footsteps and triumphed like an ancient emperor, while her imperial crown outshines the 'Habsburgische Hauskrone' crown and alludes to the coronation which Maria Theresia never had. The painting therefore points out that Catherine's claim to be the rightful heir to the Roman emperors is twice as justified as Maria Theresia's.

'Body natural' and 'body politic'

When Peter the Great crowned his second wife Catherine in 1724, he explained this transgression of Russian Orthodox norms by stating that during the Northern War she had 'acted as a man and not a woman'.⁵⁰ According to Wortman, 'the classical Western concept of fundamental identity of the sexes', described by Thomas Laqueur, here enters Russian imagery. Queen Elizabeth of England used this concept 'to play the alluring but inaccessible virgin queen and warrior prince', and Catherine I and her female successors would affect a similar duality'.⁵¹

As the present chapter has demonstrated, Maria Theresia and Catherine II embodied both male and female gender roles. However, it would be too simplistic to state that their 'body natural' was female, while their 'body politic' was construed as masculine. On the contrary, there were instances in which the 'body natural' claimed 'masculine' liberties, while the 'body politic' had a feminine shape. Thus the final section of this chapter will discuss the relationship between gender roles and strategies of imperial self-representation.

Since it seemed 'natural' to early modern minds to associate sovereignty with masculinity, Maria Theresia's Hungarian subjects insisted that she be crowned 'king' rather than 'queen'. When Catherine II put on military uniform (Figure 4.2), she tried to look just like a man. Accordingly, Voltaire spoke of 'that great man who is commonly called Catherine'.⁵² While she had styled herself CATHERINA MAGNA in the feminine form (Figure 4.3), shortly after her death in

1796 Charles Joseph de Ligne eulogised her as 'Catherine le Grand', consciously using a masculine address.⁵³

Such outright negations of a female ruler's sex remained, however, exceptional. Catherine II stressed both her male and her female qualities in a print addressed to a western audience in 1789: The image shows her in a rather masculine attire, with three military orders affixed to her chest, while the inscription below praises the Empress as 'conqueror', 'law-giver', 'woman worthy to be loved' and 'great man' (Figure 4.6).⁵⁴ Quite common were androgynous images that equipped the recognisably female body with masculine attributes: for instance Catherine with helmet and cuirass as Minerva, Maria Theresia brandishing a sword, Catherine with a laurel wreath as victor. Such imagery sought to show that despite her female physique the sovereign possessed the same strength, valour and power as a male king – 'nec prisca regibus impar', as Maria Theresia put it.⁵⁵

It is interesting to note that Catherine's portrait with a laurel wreath exists in two versions with different heads. The original version by Alexander Roslin was obviously too realistic; the sitter commented that she looked 'like a Swedish cook'.⁵⁶ Thus she commissioned Fjodor Rokotov to create a copy with a new head (Figure 4.5). A comparison between both versions is highly instructive: The second one does not look 'prettier' or 'more masculine', but certainly more majestic. This episode goes to show that the body natural had to be idealised in order to become the appropriate female 'body politic'.

For her coronation Catherine II clothed herself in a dress decorated with the Russian heraldic eagle,⁵⁷ thereby suggesting that her female body became the personification of the Russian state. Just as Peter the Great had styled his relationship with Russia a love match,⁵⁸ Catherine, too, emphasised the love of her people.⁵⁹ Although her body natural remained unmarried, her body politic – construed as feminine – was ideally married to Peter the Great and thus to the Russian tradition.

Both Maria Theresia and Catherine II were addressed as 'mothers' of their people, which presupposed again a feminine body politic.⁶⁰ When Maria Theresia tried to convince the Hungarian magnates to help her in the War of the Austrian Succession, she is reported to have shown them her crying baby son Joseph in order to move the male audience. In this instance, Maria Theresia's body natural became her body politic as she turned her motherhood into a political argument in support of her claim to the preservation and protection of her dynasty.⁶¹

After the death of Franz Stephan in 1765, Maria Theresia wore widow's weeds for the rest of her life and was consequently always portrayed in black. Such images privileged her body natural over her body politic: Rather than representing the power and glory of her state (through sumptuous robes and precious jewels), she chose to stress her personal loss as a woman.

Catherine II lived her widowhood in an entirely different manner. After the assassination of Peter III she had numerous lovers, claiming for herself liberties that were normally granted only to male rulers. Apart from the personal gratification she derived from this 'masculine' lifestyle, her promiscuous behaviour had



Figure 4.6 James Walker after Alexej Petrovich Shebanov, Catherine the Great, 1789. Aquatint. © Moscow, State Historical Museum.

• T.....H Verfoeninge ofte de Q.....N..... van H.....Y naect uytgeschud •



*Mit een oprechte hand en Snyver hert verdel ik de roef onder
U.C. maar voor myn onkosten en zorge + de lage landen*

*Is een bekeningh al te wyghig maar siende dat wy alle
maal vrienden zyn. ik sal niets meer begeren.*

28 + De lage landen moet restaan worden voor de Oostwykse Nederlanden.

Figure 4.7 Anonymous artist, *The Undressing*, ca. 1742. Engraving. © Budapest, Magyar Nemzeti Múzeum.

a political function, too, as she controlled the various factions at court through her body natural.

Political caricatures exposed the female body of both sovereigns in order to ridicule their government. For instance, during the War of the Austrian Succession Maria Theresia figured as an ancient Venus being stripped of her garments (Figure 4.7).⁶² The vulnerability of her body natural signified the weakness of her 'dismembered' state. Catherine II, on the contrary, was often portrayed in an aggressive role. Isaac Cruikshank referred to the current metaphor 'mother of her state' and satirised Catherine's rule by alluding to the Massacre of the Innocents.⁶³ An anonymous French caricature branded Catherine's political ambitions as scandalous by representing them as an act of highly indecent female behaviour (Figure 4.8).⁶⁴ Thus the 'body politic' was attacked via the 'body natural'.

This last print, produced in France, points to the fear of the powerful female body that pervaded French society at the time. Such fears centred on Queen Marie Antoinette, one of Empress Maria Theresia's daughters. Marie Antoinette's 'lascivious' behaviour was perceived as a threat to the political order in France. Consequently the revolutionaries wished to distance themselves from the 'corrupt'



Figure 4.8 Anonymous French artist, 'L'Enjambée imperiale', after 1791. Coloured aquatint © Moscow, State Historical Museum.

system by construing an entirely masculine concept of the state. The beheading of Marie Antoinette was therefore a highly symbolic act that sought to contain the dangers of 'the Queen's two bodies'.⁶⁵

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Notes

- 1 Valerius 2002, 60, 62.
- 2 Aylmer was referring to John Knox's *First Blast Against the Monstrous Regiment of Women* (1558): cfr. Valerius 2002, 203–204.
- 3 Kantorowicz 1957, 11.
- 4 Quoted in Valerius 2002, 207.
- 5 Schulte 2002, 12.
- 6 Valerius 2002, 207.
- 7 See Weil 2002; Marin 2005, 7–27; Marek 2009; Pfisterer 2011.
- 8 Schulte 2002, 19.
- 9 Yonan 2011, 20.
- 10 The portrait is reproduced in Yonan 2011, 25, without reference to the significance of the imperial crown in this particular context. On the political background see Wandruszka 1980, Scott 1980 and Wunderlich 2000.
- 11 Holčík 1988, 7; Yonan 2011, 29.
- 12 Holčík 1988, 44.
- 13 *Maria Theresia als Königin von Ungarn* 1980, cat. nos 21, 25; Matsche 2011, 245.
- 14 Holčík 1988, 38.
- 15 On the device of Louis XIV see Ziegler 2010, 21–28.
- 16 Scott 1980, 47.
- 17 Schulte 2002, 19; Yonan 2011, 30.
- 18 The imperial crown and the archducal hat are illustrated in Leithe-Jasper and Distelberger 1982, 6, 11; for the Hungarian crown see Holčík 1988, 8–10; for the Bohemian crown: Yonan 2011, 25.
- 19 Yonan 2011, 39–40; Matsche 2011, figs 12–14; Telesko 2012, fig. 11.
- 20 Heindl 2011.
- 21 Wortmann 1995, 86–111; Donnert 1998, 58–78, Rybakov 2007, 122–131. On Paul's role in Russian politics see McGrew 1992.
- 22 Valerius 2002, 287–302.
- 23 Wortman 1995, 82, 93.
- 24 Pietsch 2005.
- 25 Cfr. Erben 1996; Tipton 1997, 75; Hunecke 2008; *Catherine la Grande* 2005, 47, 271; Schippan 2012, 102.
- 26 Tipton 1997, 75–76; Schenker 2003.
- 27 Scharf 1997, 192–93; Rybakov 2007, 139; Schippan 2012, 112–113.
- 28 Schenker 2003, 290–293; Rybakov 2007, 121.
- 29 Scharf 1997, 192.
- 30 Ilg 2015.
- 31 Wortman 1995, 46, 63; Schippan 2012, 110.
- 32 On the 'third Rome' see Korn 1969, 76, 79; on the 'fourth Rome' see Tarassowa 2003.
- 33 Wortman 1995, 44, 66–75. Illustrations of these crowns can be found in Leithe-Jasper and Distelberger 1982, 24; *La France et la Russie* 1986, 406; Matwejew 2003, 41.
- 34 Wills 1968, 245.
- 35 *La France et la Russie* 1986, 411–12.

- 36 *Katharina die Große* 1997, 134, cat. no. 67.
- 37 See Francioli and Tedeschi 2003.
- 38 Scott 1980, 50–52; Donnert 1998, 228; Wunderlich 2000, 168, 182, 206.
- 39 For more examples of Catherine's artistic rivalry with Maria Theresia see Strunck 2015.
- 40 Yonan 2011, 34.
- 41 Yonan 2011, 38.
- 42 Holčík 1988, 7; *Maria Theresia als Königin von Ungarn*, 169.
- 43 The date of Rokotov's painting is given as '1775–1780' in *Katharina die Große* 1997, 288, and *Russen und Deutsche* 2012, 173. However, its prototype was a portrait created by Alexander Roslin in 1776: *Caterina di Russia* 1998, 21.
- 44 Markina 1997, 64; Tipton 1997, 76; *Katharina die Große* 1997, 288; *Caterina di Russia* 1998, 30; *Russen und Deutsche* 2012, 172–73.
- 45 Yonan 2011, 34.
- 46 On Catherine's military campaigns, see e.g. *Katharina die Große* 1997, 176–210 Donnert 1998, 140–151.
- 47 Rosenthal 1971.
- 48 *Russen und Deutsche* 2012, 173.
- 49 *Katharina die Große* 1997, 288.
- 50 Wortman 1995, 66–67.
- 51 Wortman 1995, 67.
- 52 Wunderlich 2000, 208.
- 53 Scharf 1997, 176; Schippan 2012, 100–101.
- 54 'Cet heureux conquérant, profond législateur, / Femme aimable, grand homme.' According to the inscription on the print, it was issued on 1 May 1789 in St Petersburg and London. See *Katharina die Große* 1997, 194, 203.
- 55 See above note 14. On portraits of the two sovereigns with masculine attributes see Strunck 2015.
- 56 Markina 1997, 64; *Caterina la Grande* 1998, 21–22 with illustration.
- 57 *Katharina die Große* 1997, 122–124, cat. no. 41.
- 58 Matwejew 2003.
- 59 Scharf 1997, 192–93.
- 60 Scharf 1997, 192; Heindl 2011; Schippan 2012, 114.
- 61 Schulte 2002, 20.
- 62 *Maria Theresia und ihre Zeit* 1980, 96–99, cat. no. 13.06.
- 63 *Katharina die Große* 1997, 200–202, 205, cat. no. 268.
- 64 *Katharina die Große* 1997, 177, 202, cat. no. 269.
- 65 Vinken 2003.