

Stoyle is certainly aware of just how hard it is to make any definitive connection between the polemics about Boy and the witchcraft craze at the end of the Civil War. Insofar as it comes to witchcraft, this book is suggestive more than anything else, but Stoyle's research is as impeccable as it is exhaustive. All of which makes this an important book for anyone interested in the power of early modern print culture, the English Civil War, and witchcraft, to say nothing of those devotees of Prince Rupert and his famous dog.

Galina Yermolenko, ed. *Roxolana in European Literature, History and Culture*. Burlington, VT: Ashgate Press, 2010; pp. xvi + 318. \$114.95 cloth. Review by BINDU MALIECKAL, SAINT ANSELM COLLEGE.

In the popular imagination, the Ottoman harem, or any harem for that matter, is depicted as an exotic and orientalized realm where women are beautiful, mysterious, and experts in the art of seduction. Fortunately, recent scholarship has not succumbed to such objectification, especially since the 1993 publication of Leslie Pierce's groundbreaking *The Imperial Harem: Women and Sovereignty in the Ottoman Empire*, in which Pierce painstakingly pieces together the impressive lives of Ottoman women within and beyond the seraglio. Far from being voiceless victims, Ottoman women were indeed, as eighteenth-century Englishwoman Mary Wortley Montagu pronounced, during her travels in Turkey, "the only free people in the empire." As Pierce elucidates in her book, if an Ottoman woman gained the Sultan's favor and bore his successor, she could become the "valide sultan," a position of great authority and influence in the harem and at court. During the early modern period, a series of successive valide sultans, by virtue of not being native Turks, seemed predisposed to forging Ottoman relations with the West. These women included Hurrem (also called Roxelana or Roxolana), wife of Suleyman I (r.1520-1566); Nurbanu, wife of Selim II (r.1566-1574); and Safiye, valide sultan of Murad III (r.1574-1595). Of these three women, Hurrem in particular captured the European imagination and is mentioned in numerous texts, although, arguably, Nurbanu and Safiye's interventions led to more

significant benefits for the Ottomans as well as Europeans. Nurbanu was responsible for Venice's special access at the Ottoman court (she herself being either a Venetian or Cypriot), and Safiye carried on a personal correspondence with England's Queen Elizabeth I, at one point sending Elizabeth a Turkish dress and image of herself, with Elizabeth requesting cosmetics in exchange. Bernadette Andrea's 2007 monograph, *Women and Islam in Early Modern English Literature*, is an excellent follow-up to Pierce in its development of the Anglo-Ottoman relationship, especially in terms of women's agency.

Hurrem may have not been as involved in diplomacy as Nurbanu and Safiye, but she was certainly politically astute—for instance, she was thought to have masterminded the death of Suleyman's oldest son Mustapha to make way for her own offspring—not to mention that Hurrem was an inspiration for writers of both fiction and non-fiction, these writers having heard news of Hurrem's manipulations, Suleyman's partiality towards her, and the seeming incongruity of a "white," Christian-born woman's elite presence in the lands of the "infidel" Turk. *Roxolana in European Literature, History and Culture*, edited by Galina Yermolenko, is much-needed and much-appreciated, since, given Hurrem's stature in European discourses, the book bestows Hurrem with the attention she deserves and does so in a complete way, presenting various perspectives on Roxolana: the volume contains scholarly essays, primary texts, illustrations, detailed appendices, and an extensive bibliography. Students in university-level courses that focus on the representation of the Ottomans and gender politics in the early modern world will find *Roxolana in European Literature, History and Culture* very useful and even necessary for future research and analysis of the figure of Roxolana.

Indeed, Yermolenko positions her subject as "Roxolana" versus "Hurrem," the former moniker indicative of the stories that mythologize her ("Roxolana" suggests her apparent red hair and supposedly "Ruthenian" background) versus the reality that defines her through the latter name, granted upon entrance into the Ottoman harem and complementing her conversion to Islam. As the contributions to the collection prove, Roxolana was a preoccupation of early modern to modern authors, her form appearing in diverse genres (drama, his-

tory, opera) and multiple languages (Spanish, French, Italian, Latin, German, Ukrainian). Part I of *Roxolana in European Literature, History and Culture* consists of “Critical Essays” by Galina Yermolenko, Claire Jowitt, Judy Hayden, Beate Allert, Oleksander Halenko, Maryna Romanets, and Özlem Ögüt Yazıcıoğlu. Historical overview and literary analysis from English, German, Ukrainian, and Turkish approaches are covered. The interdisciplinarity of the essays taken as a whole allow for a comprehensive view of Roxolana because she was not simply an Ottoman phenomenon. Her reputation extended beyond the Golden Horn and the Black Sea and well into Christian Europe. Each essay is impressive in its source material and argument. Part II of the collection, titled “Translations,” includes excerpts of Lope de Vega’s *The Holy League* (1603), Gonzalo de Illescas’s *The Second Part of the Pontifical and Catholic History* (1606), Jean Desmares’s *Roxelana* (1643), Gotthold Ephraim Lessing’s *Giangir; or the Rejected Throne* (1748), and Denys Sichynsky’s *Roksoliana; Historical Opera in Three Acts with a Prologue* (1911). One of the most valuable aspects of *Roxolana in European Literature, History and Culture* is its inclusion of these works, translated into English, most for the first time, as well as the helpful “Plot Summaries” of these and other relevant texts that may be found in Appendix I.

One last note of praise for *Roxolana in European Literature, History and Culture*: the volume includes a number of telling illustrations relevant to Roxolana. While Theodore de Bry’s engraving, *Rossa Solymani Vxor*, and its reproduction in Richard Knolles’ *Generall Historie of the Turkes* (1603) are well-known to early modernists who specialize in English narratives about the Ottomans, the image, when viewed alongside the other illustrations offered in *Roxolana in European Literature, History and Culture*, indicates an essential shift in Roxolana’s historical significance with the emergence of new, some might say post-colonial, states in the wake of the fragmentation of the former USSR. *Roksolana*, by an anonymous, late eighteenth-century/early nineteenth-century Ukrainian painter, and two twentieth-century works—*Roxolana is Coming Home*, a bronze sculpture by Roman Romanovych (which stands in Rohatyn, Ukraine); and *Roksolana*, by Volodymyr Kostyrko—are examples of the Roxolana-fever that

has gripped present-day Ukraine or as Yermolenko notes, “Roxolana’s name is connected with the fate of Ukraine, because it offers redemption of the tragic past” While similar processes of reclamation are playing out elsewhere—consider fourteenth-century conqueror Timur’s elevation to “father of the nation” in Uzbekistan (with accompanying bronze statue in Tashkent)—Roxolana’s popularity differs in that it has never waned, even as Roxolana’s renown evolves from Ottoman sultana to Ukrainian ideal.