

## Stephano Torelli's "Coronation Portrait of Catherine II": Crowns as a Visual Formula of the Lands of the Russian Empire\*

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The "Coronation portrait of Catherine II" by Stephano Torelli introduces a new type of iconography of the Russian Empress in which she appears as a bearer of multiple (i. e. four) crowns. Whereas originally such a portrait type in European art served as a representation of the several titles of the ruler and correspondent lands joined in a personal union, it became a representation of the titles of Catherine II as the Russian Empress and tsarina of the conquered tsarstva of Kazan, Astrakhan and Siberia. The theme of titles and lands of the Empire had already developed in 18<sup>th</sup>-century Russia in other forms (allegorical figures, coats-of-arms) and visual media (decorative painting and sculpture). Circa 10 examples collected here for the first time are set side by side with their European counterparts. Three types of representations of native and conquered territories emerged in which the very choice of particular titles and the place of their symbolic representation in composition accentuated different aspects in the concept of the Russian Empire. But it was only with Torelli's "Coronation Portrait of Catherine II" that the symbolism of three crowns appeared in Russian portrait painting. Torelli previously worked for the Elector of Saxony and King of Poland, some of whose portraits incorporate two crowns. Another important factor seems to be the fact that such iconography gained special popularity with Catherine's senior peer Maria Theresia. Only the Habsburgs, the rulers of the Holy Roman Empire, with which a newly established Russian Empire aspired to rival, possessed more than three crowns. The importance attached to symbolism of multiple crowns by Catherine is illustrated by direct mentioning of it in her "Zapiski".

*Keywords:* Stephano Torelli, coronation portrait, Catherine II, representation of Emperor, crowns, 18<sup>th</sup>-century Russian art, Russian-European artistic links.

A coronation portrait manifesting the ascension to the throne is the first and principal statement in a visual political discourse of a ruler embodying his concept of power. Catherine II (1729–1796, ascended to the throne in 1762) had her likeness in coronation robes — namely a large Imperial crown made especially for her by Jérémie Pauzié, a silver dress emblazoned with the coat-of-arms of the Russian Empire, and an ermine-trimmed cloak — reflected in two portraits. One portrait was completed by Vigilius Eriksen

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(1722-1782), a Danish artist active in Russia from 1757 to 1772. The other is a piece by the Italian painter Stephano Torelli (1712-1780) (fig. 1), a pupil of Francesco Solimena, who worked in Bologna, Venice, in Dresden and in Lübeck. In 1762 Torelli arrived in Russia upon the invitation of the President of the Academy of Fine Arts Count Ivan Shuvalov.



*Fig. 1.* Stephano Torelli. Coronation Portrait of Catherine II. Between 1763 and 1766. Oil, canvas. 244 × 178. State Russian museum, Saint-Petersburg, inv. no. Ж-5808

In Eriksen's portrait<sup>1</sup> Catherine's weighty presence and powerful gestures with which she holds an orb and a scepter make her image a paragon of supreme elegant confidence. In Torelli's painting Catherine's posture is less formidable, but still majestic. Whereas in

<sup>1</sup> It is rather difficult to date it, the artist probably started working on it in 1762-1763. Now there are variants of the portrait in Davids Samling, Copenhagen (1778-1779); Art collection of Queen Elizabeth II of the United Kingdom; Stiftung Preussische Schlösser und Gärten, Berlin-Brandenburg [1, p.100, 102,

Eriksen's painting she appears in a restrained neoclassical interior, Torelli portrays her upon the background of sumptuous baroque curved columns entwined with gilded laurel garlands and crimson pilasters with rocaille adornments. Opulent surroundings feature three crowns of the old tsarstva of Kazan, Astrakhan and Siberia on the table in front of Catherine.

The commission to produce their own versions of a portrait of the same type, i. e. a coronation portrait, by two different artists may be interpreted as indicative of a zealous search for an iconic image combined with uncertainty as which of the two was more capable of achieving the task. Numerous copies of Eriksen's portrait were sent to London, Berlin and Copenhagen confirming that Catherine wanted to be represented to European courts in such a guise. This led Elizaveta Renne to the conclusion that Catherine, presumably, preferred Eriksen's coronation portrait over Torelli's [3, p. 14; 4, p. 150]. Catherine actually might have favored Eriksen's portrait due to the accent on her personality as well as for it being more neoclassical which should have demonstrated her advanced taste abroad. However, this observation, although reasonable, should not completely overshadow Torelli's work.

The fact that there are at least three copies of Torelli's portrait in museum collections in Russia speaks to its high esteem. The portrait in the collection of the State Russian Museum (oil, canvas, 244 × 178 cm, inv. no. Ж-5808) signed by Torelli, but not dated, entered the museum in 1918 from the Sinod [5, p. 163, no. 448]. The copy by Aleksei Antropov, signed and dated (1766), now also in the State Russian Museum (1766, oil, canvas, 241 × 176 cm, inv. no. Ж-5489), was acquired in 1918 also from the Sinod. [5, p. 48, no. 26]. There is another copy, neither signed nor dated, in the collection of the Hermitage (oil, canvas, 51 × 38 cm, inv. no. ЭРЖ-570) attributed to Antropov on the basis of analysis of stylistics and technological investigations (fig. 2). In 1941 it was transferred from the State Museum of Ethnography of the People of the USSR; previously, in 1924–1928, it was kept in Narkomat of International Trade; where it was before the revolution broke out remains unknown) [6, no. 6; 7, p. 54]. A rough copy signed by Antropov and dated 1795 is in the collection of the State Museum-Reserve Tsarskoe Selo (1795, oil, canvas, 200 × 250 cm, inv. no. ЕД-756-X) [8, p. 33, 96]. Several copies, especially made over a long period of time, are evidence of the portrait's popularity. Moreover, Tatiana Bušmina and Iulia Ivanova accentuate that this commission ensured Torelli's instant career advancement which would not have been possible had the portrait not been approved [9, p. 71; 10, p. 124].

The present paper aims at examining the political ideas behind the motive of three crowns of the “old tsarstva” — Kazan, Astrakhan and Siberia — represented in a portrait which has so far been almost completely ignored by scholars, though it is clearly important as a part of a certain “scenario of power” to put it to Richard S. Wortman's terms [11]. The goals of the article are as follows: 1) to find the source of portrait iconography of a ruler with multiple crowns in European art; 2) to trace the emergence of the idea of crowns of “old tsarstva” in Russian state symbolism during the 16<sup>th</sup>–17<sup>th</sup> century; 3) to trace symbolism of the lands of the Russian Empire in 18<sup>th</sup>-century art, including both the use of crowns and coats-of-arms in the ceremonies (Emperor funerals and coronations) and allegorical representations of tsarstva in painting upon the background of their earlier

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629]; Danish Royal Collection, Amalienborg; Krasnodar Regional Museum of Fine Arts of A. F. Kovalenko; National museum in Warsaw [2, c. 48, 49].



Fig. 2. Aleksei Antropov. A Copy after Stephano Torelli's "Coronation Portrait of Catherine II". Before 1766. Oil, canvas. 51×38. State Hermitage, Saint-Petersburg, inv. no. ЭРЖ-570

European counterparts; 4) to reveal the peculiar features of using the motive of crowns in Torelli's "Coronation Portrait of Catherine II".

Torelli's portrait has attracted the attention of researchers for quite some time. It is obviously Torelli's coronation portrait of Catherine that Jacob Stählin described as "a full-length portrait of Her Majesty of ravishing beauty" ("napisal voskhitel'no krasivo Ee imperatorskoe velichestvo v rost") [I, p. 87] as he began his report on the court career of the painter. Tatiana Bušmina (2003) apparently equates it also with a portrait which Stählin writes about: Torelli "nachal takzhe bol'shoi portret Ee velichestva imperatritsy v imperatorskom nariade na trone. Dlia napisaniia litsa Ee velichestvo neskol'ko raz pozirovala emu" ("work was begun on a large portrait of Her Majesty enthroned in her coronation robes. Her Majesty gave a number of sittings for work on the face"). In a footnote he adds: "V ianvare 1765 goda on predstavil etu kartinu gotovoi ko dvoru, zasluživ izriadnoe

odobrenie Ee imperatorskogo velichestva, kotoraiia podarila ee Senatu. Khudozhniku ona pozhalovala za nee 3 500 rublei” (“He presented this painting in January 1765 to the Court and gained considerable approval of Her Imperial Majesty who presented it to Senate. She rewarded the painter 3 500 rubles for it”) [I, p. 87]. Tat’ana Bušmina considers this portrait to be from the State Russian museum [II, p. 98, no. 380, 381] which entered the collection in 1918 from then Sinod (then it should have been transferred from Senate to the Sinod before the revolution at some point in time) [9, p. 71]. Erin McBurney (2014), without referring to any sources, mentions that the original was dispatched to the Sinod, while another copy was given to the Senate and remained there until 1918 (concerning this portrait she refers to Tatiana Bušmina, although the latter wrote about a portrait which once was in Senate, but in 1918 it was already located in the Sinod) [12, p. 15–6, 171–2]. Further evidence for identifying the portrait of Catherine finished in 1765 and presented to the Senate, the type of portrait from the Russian museum, is supported by Iurii Epatko (1999, 2017) [13, p. 87–8; 14, p. 32]. Only Evgeniia Petrova (1999) rightly observes that this should have been another large portrait [15, p. 42] whose whereabouts remain unknown today. The fact that the other portrait of Catherine in coronation robes mentioned by Stählin is described as “enthroned” supports this version. Furthermore, he starts by speaking about Torelli’s career with a full-length portrait of Catherine (“totchas on byl zaniat pri dvore” — “immediately was he busy at Court”) and mentions an “enthroned portrait” only after a long list of other works. To conclude, although both Torelli’s original and Antropov’s copy from the State Russian Museum were in the Sinod before the revolution, we do not know when they were dispatched there, either in the time of Catherine II or later.

Torelli’s original portrait from the Russian Museum is signed, but there is no date on the canvas<sup>2</sup>. Evgenia Petrova suggested that it was started not earlier than 1763 as there was a request from Moscow whether Torelli could paint portraits and Aleksandr Kokorinov’s answer was written on 6 January 1763. The researcher argues that the portrait was likely to have been painted that year [15, p. 42]. In any case, it was completed not later than 1766 as Aleksei Antropov’s dated copy of the portrait was created that year [5, no. 26, p. 48]. Tatiana Bušmina suggests that the commissioning of the portrait may have been a sort of surprise for the Empress prepared by Count Ivan Shuvalov, who was insecure of his position at the Academy after the change of power [9, p. 71]. However, this seems rather improbable taking into account the special request from Moscow.

All scholars enthusiastically praised the portrait<sup>3</sup>. Erikh Gollerbakh (1923) characterized Torelli as a “brilliant portraitist” (“blestiashchii portretist”) mentioning this portrait as one of the examples [17, p. 38]. Nikolai Vrangeli (1911) defined it as “witty in psychology and delightful in painterly qualities” (“ostroumen po psikhologii i chudesen po zhivopisi”), especially stressing its “languidly and tenderly melting transparent colours” (“tomno i nezumno taiushchie, prozrachnye kraski”) [III, p. 55]. The same thesis is pos-

<sup>2</sup> There is also a bust portrait of Catherine II by Torelli in the collection of the Hermitage which is considered to be a sketch for the portrait in the State Russian museum [13, p. 88; 14, p. 32]. However, there is an alternative hypothesis that this is replica, made meticulously by the author upon someone’s commission [6, p. 51]. The Catalogue of the State Russian museum mentions under question a full-length sketch of the portrait in Saratov State museum of A. N. Radischev [5, p. 163, no. 448] which, as Irina Il’ina proved, is in fact not Torelli’s, but obviously Vigilius Eriksen’s sketch for his coronation portrait of Catherine II [2].

<sup>3</sup> The only exception is Evgenii Pchelov’s opinion who characterizes the portrait as “lacking expression”. However, this remark is not supported by any attempt of analysis [16, p. 112].

tulated by Serge Ernst (1970) who points to the artist's talents of a keen observer and an "attentive psychologist" ("attento psicologo") and his flair for colours ("symphony in white supported by red and golden tints of the curtain in the background" — "che realizza una sinfonia in Bianca sostenuta dale tonalità rosse e oro della tenda che fa da sfondo") [18, p. 174]. Evgeniia Petrova and Iulia Ivanova completed a traditional stylistic analysis with detailed description of the technical and coloristic devices which permitted an artist to attain such effects [10; 15]. Tatiana Bušmina raised a question concerning the portrait's specific qualities of representing of a monarch: "the right tone of the portrait is created by the opulence of accessories and is not devoid of elegance and sophistication of performance together with majestic grandeur stressing the importance of the commemorated event" ("seppe trovare l'intonazione giusta, grazie alla magnificenza degli accessori, non priva di ele-ganza e finezza di esecuzione, unita alla sontuosa maestà della posa austera che sottolinea l'importanza dell'evento immortalato") [9, p. 71]. Irene Graziani in her fundamental monograph on Torelli accentuates the air of propitiousness so typical for Catherine which the artist instilled into the traditional scheme of the ceremonial portrait epitomizing absolute monarchy [19, p. 150]. The political ideas behind the portrait were further examined by Erin McBurney. In contrast with Vrangeli's and Ernst's assessment of the artist as a subtle psychologist, she argues, that the emphasis of the portrait is not on Catherine as an individual, but "on the abstract embodiment of unlimited wealth and the sheer scope of imperial power" which is attained by extraordinary richness and scale of the crown on her head (she instructed Pauzié to make her the largest crown in Europe) and her massive gown which "seemed metaphorically to represent the enormous scale of Russia itself" [12, p. 170].

Tatiana Bušmina, Irene Graziani and Erin McBurney in their attempts to politically interpret the portrait completely ignore the motif of the three crowns lying on the table — *shapki* of Kazan, Astrakhan and Siberia. Researchers only mention them in passing noting that they correspond to the title of the Empress [19, p. 290; 14, p. 32; 13, p. 88; 5, no. 448, p. 163]. Erin McBurney erroneously claims that the multiple crowns of Monomakh, Kazan and Siberia were present in Louis Caravaque's portraits of Catherine's immediate female predecessors Anna and Elizaveta, stressing the difference of the overall impression [12, p. 172–3]. In fact neither of Caravaque's portraits of Anna and Elizaveta (and other known portraits of the Empresses) do feature them. Marina Volkova in her dissertation on tsar regalia as symbols of power in 18<sup>th</sup>-century Russian culture was the first researcher who made an important observation that in Torelli's coronation portrait of Catherine II, the three crowns appear in a portrait of a Russian ruler for the first time. She contends that the depiction of old regalia corresponded to her title and was introduced to assimilate the Empress into the Russian tradition of power [20, p. 60–1].

Such an explanation is correct, but insufficient. Out of the full title of Catherine<sup>4</sup> apart from the title of the Empress of Russia signified by the big Imperial crown on her head

<sup>4</sup> "Bozhieiu pospeshestvuiushcheiu milostiiu My, Ekaterina II, Imperatritsa i Samoderzhitsa Vserossiiskaia, Moskovskaia, Kievskaia, Vladimirskaia, Novgorodskaia, Tsaritsa Kazanskaia, Tsaritsa Astrakhanskaia, Tsaritsa Sibirskaia, Gosudarynia Pskovskaia, i Velikaia Kniaginia Smolenskaia, Kniaginia Estliandskaia, Lifliandskaia, Korel'skaia, Tverskaia, Iugorskaia, Permskaia, Viatskaia, Bolgarskaia i inykh Gosudarynia, i Velikaia Kniaginia Novagoroda, Nizovskiiia zemli, Chernigovskaia, Riazanskaia, Rostovskaia, Iaroslavskaia, Beloozerskaia, Udorskaia, Obdorskaia, Kondiiskaia i vseia Severnyiia strany Povelitel'nitsa i Gosudarynia, Iverskiia zemli, Kartalinskikh i Gruzinskikh Tsarei i Kabardinskiia zemli, Cherkasskikh" i Gorskikh Kniazei, i inykh naslednaia Gosudarynia i Obladatel'nitsa" [IV, p. 6–7, no. 11.590].

only three other titles embodied in three corresponding crowns are chosen<sup>5</sup>. What exactly are these crowns?

At far left we can see a part of the shapka Kazanskaia to commemorate victory over Kazan in 1552. 17<sup>th</sup>-century inventories of the Treasury feature the “shapka of Kazan tsar Simeon” — the last ruler of Kazan who was brought to Moscow, baptized under the name Simeon and began his service to the Moscow tsar. It is first mentioned under such a name in the inventory of Bol’shoi Gosudarev nariad dating from 1642, the portion which was created before November 1626 [22, p.64]. According to one 19<sup>th</sup>-century version, the shapka was made in Kazan and brought as a military trophy. According to the other, more credible one, it was crafted in Moscow on the order of Ivan IV [23, p. 34].

To the right of the Kazan crown in the portrait is the so-called “Astrakhanskaia shapka” commemorating the conquest of Astrakhan in 1554–1556. Between the Astrakhanskaia and Kazanskaia crowns is the so-called “Sibirskaia shapka” celebrating Russia’s annexation of this land. The “Astrakhanskaia shapka” and the “Sibirskaia shapka” depicted were in fact made in Moscow Kremlin’s workshop in 1627 and 1684 respectively [V; 24, p.91]. As Aleksandr Lavrentiev has recently proved these crowns were not the originals created in commemoration of the territorial acquisitions of Russia. The original “Astrakhanskaia shapka” was made at the request of Ivan IV in England, while the original “Sibirskaia shapka” was commissioned by Boris Godunov from the court jewelers of Rudolph II in Prague. However, they both disappeared from the Treasury during the Time of Troubles [25, p. 93, 98, 108]. In fact the crowns depicted in Torelli’s portrait when being created had nothing to do with commemorating the Russian conquest; the names “Astrakhanskaia” and “Sibirskaia” were attached to them much later, i. e. in the 18<sup>th</sup> century.

In the 16<sup>th</sup> century when the seizure actually took place and the territory of the Empire as well as spheres of Imperial policy, both inner and international, were already being formed, it was still explicated using the terms of votchinnaia epoch, i. e. as an annexation of what were original Russian territories, or in discourse of chelobit’e, i. e. as a reaction to petitions from Russian salt miners for defense against Tatar raids. This enabled Aleksandr Filiushkin to define this period as “neonatal Empire” [26, p.378–9, 398]. The crowns of Kazan and Astrakhan did exist as signs of power of previously independent states, but as an integral group it appears that they did not play a role in state symbolism.

As an integral group of symbols, the three crowns first appeared in the 17<sup>th</sup> century. It was in this period that new explanations for intensive territorial growth emerged. With the annexation of the South of Russia (“Pole”), Ukraine and the ultimate annexation of Siberia, instead of a feudal monarchy a modern monarchy appeared which constructed a hierarchy of ethnic identities. A combination of three crowns appeared in the Russian coat-of-arms, sporadically already in the early 17<sup>th</sup> century in the seal of Lzhedmitrii I, 1604, and in the armory of Mikhail Fedorovich of 1616. The official explanation for the state seal with the three crowns over the double-headed eagle was first made in 1625 in the Okruzhnaia gramota of Mikhail Fedorovich to voevoda Ivan Ivanovich Baklanovskii in Turinskii ostrog and connects the emergence of the third crown in the center with the title of “samoderzhets”. The central crown was of a different form, bigger, and was depicted soaring over the eagle, while the other two smaller crowns were on the eagles’ heads. In the 1630s a member of the Holstein embassy Adam Olearii, for the first time, interpreted the

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<sup>5</sup> The title “tsar of Siberia” is likely to have emerged by analogy with “tsar of Kazan” and “tsar of Astrakhan” as rulers of Siberia in medieval Russia (Rus’) were usually called “kniazia” [21, p. 49–50].

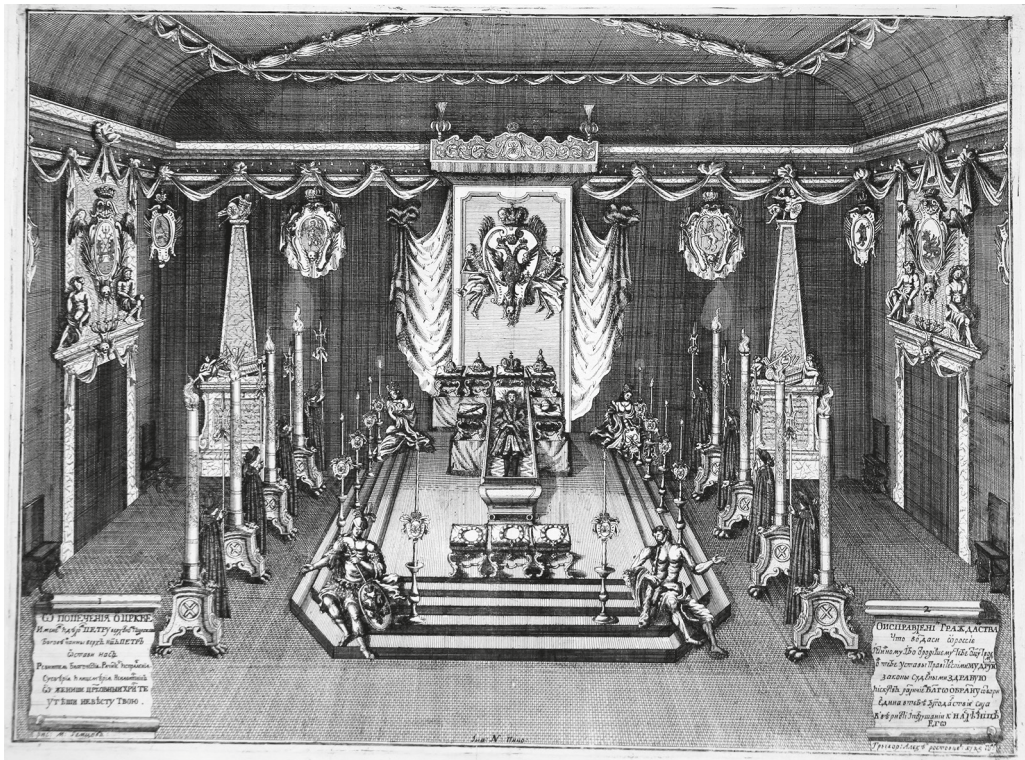


Fig. 3. Aleksei Rostovtsev. “Castrum Doloris” of Peter I in the Winter Palace. 1725. Etching, engraving. Archive of Saint-Petersburg Institute of History of Russian Academy of Science, Saint-Petersburg. Stock 238 (Collection of N. P. Likhachev), Inventory 2, Binding 253, Record 12, Sheet 1

crowns of the coat-of-arms as the tsarstva of Russia, Kazan and Astrakhan although they are not depictions of historical insignia, but their symbolic representations. In the coat-of-arms of 1667 all the crowns are unified and soaring over the eagle. The official explanation offered in “O titule tsarskom i o gosudarstvennoi pečati” (“On the Tsar’s Title and State Seal”) defines them as symbols of Kazanskoe, Astrakhanskoe and Sibirskoe “glorious kingdoms” (“slanvye tsarstva”) [27, p. 73–4]. Later, neither the forms nor the nature of the crowns remained constant [28].

The demand for an embodiment of Russia’s rule over vast annexed lands, including three conquered non-Russian lands of high status — tsarstva, — reached its peak after Peter I was presented the title of the Emperor by the Senate and the Sinod in 1721. This resulted in a rivalry with the Holy Roman Empire and a borrowing of specific forms of visualizing titles for the Emperor of Russia as a ruler of multiple lands. One of the most articulate of them were certainly crowns as symbols of power. The crowns of Astrakhan and Siberia were absent from Russia. However, the demand for embodiment of power over several lands was so urgent that they were “reinvented” or “recreated”. They first appeared in “Castrum Doloris”, arranged after the death of Peter I and conveyed in Aleksei Rostovtsev’s engraving after Mikhail Zemtsov’s drawing (1725) [29, p. 28] (fig. 3). Above the head of the Emperor, four crowns were presented — the Imperial crown and the three crowns symbolizing the tsarstva of Kazan, Astrakhan and Siberia. Iulia Bykova substantiated, on



the basis of archival materials, that as there were no Astrakhan and Siberian crowns at disposal, the crown of Mikhail Fedorovich was used instead as well as the “shapka pervogo nariada” (“diamond crown”) of Peter Alekseevich which were displayed by the original Kazan shapka and Imperial crown [30, p. 86]. Since Peter’s time the three old crowns epitomizing Kazan, Astrakhan and Siberia together with the new Imperial crown were used in all funerals for the emperor [31, p. 98, 110–1, 140, 155]. At the funerals of Peter II for the role of Kazan crown a diamond crown of Peter I was selected, for the Astrakhan crown — the diamond crown of Ioann Alekseevich, for the Siberian crown — the crown of Mikhail Fedorovich. At the funerals of Anna Ioannovna the crown of Kazan was the crown traditionally bearing such a name, for the Astrakhan crown the crown of Mikhail Fedorovich stood symbolically, for the Siberian crown the “shapka tret’ego nariada altabasnaia” was used. The same set of crowns was employed at the funerals of Elizaveta and reflected in the inventory of the Oruzheinaia palata in 1776–1778 and since that time the names of the corresponding old tsarstva were attached to them [30, p. 86]. By the order of Catherine II, a catalogue of items from the Treasury, based on inventory of 1745, was made. In the list the descriptions of the three crowns were complemented with commentaries which define them as relics of annexation for the three respective states [30, p. 91].

With the development of symbolism of crowns in the coat-of-arms since the 17<sup>th</sup> century, the use of shapki in funeral ceremonies of Emperors in the 18<sup>th</sup> century was not the only way of embodying the idea of annexation of the tsarstva. Since the reign of Peter I, this principal idea starts to be represented in allegorical form. Samples of such representations have not yet been collected together as visualization of the Imperial idea. The first sample is from Catherine I coronation ceremony. Miasnitskie triumphal’nye vorota constructed in 1724 were decorated among other paintings with the following depiction: “Chetyre gosudarstva, Moskovskoe, Kazanskoe, Astrakhanskoe, Siberskoe, s svoimi gerby, prinosiashchiia k imiani Eia Imperator’skogo Velichestva, derzhimomu angelami, chertezh ili kartu geograficheskuiu, na kotoroi izobrazheny zemli Rossiiskogo gosudarstva, nadpisanie: ‘Se dostoianie tvoe’” (“Four states, Moskovskoe, Kazanskoe, Astrakhanske, Sibirskoe, with its coats-of-arms, brought to the name of Her Imperial Majesty, hold by angels, a plan or a geographical map, on which the lands of the Russian state are depicted, an inscription: This is your possession”) [VI, p. 231].

“Emblems and symbols for the Triumphal gates for the coronation of his Imperial Majesty Peter II” compiled by Feophan Prokopovich featured “multiple crowns of the Russian Empire’ with an inscription ‘Mens sufficit una’ (i. e. one Emperor dominating many)” (“‘Korony mnogiiia Russkiiia imperii’. Nadpisanie: ‘Mens sufficit una’. /To est, edin imperator dovleet mnogim/”) without specification as to which states were symbolized by the crowns [VII, p. 241].

In the time of Anna Ioannovna, the idea is illustrated by Louis Caravaque’s plafond of the Big hall of her Winter Palace which was decorated in 1732–1733, soon after her ascension to the throne, and is known by Karl Reinhold Berk’s description in “Putevye zametki o Rossii”: “A subject in the center of the ceiling is the ascension of Her Majesty to the throne. Religion and Virtue introduce Her to Russia who, kneeling, is welcoming her and handing her the crown. The clergy and the tsarstva of Kazan, Astrakhan and Siberia, as well as the numerous kalmyk and tartar people recognizing the rule of Russia, are standing alongside, expressing their joy” [VIII, p. 143; IX, p. 164; 27, p. 42–3; I, p. 45]. If this sample marks the beginning of Anna’s rule, another one is connected with its end — her death. At the funeral

ceremony the tsarstva were presented not only in the form of crowns, but also as allegorical figures. The Academy of Science, planning to publish the description of the funerals, demanded from Pechal'naia komissia drawings of certain items made for the decoration of funeral room and procession. The list of 25 objects was concluded with “four statues which represented tsarstva” (“chetyre statui, kotoryia predstaviali tsarstva”). The creation of drawings was entrusted to Louis Caravaque and carried out in June 1741 [X, p. 101].

The Moscow triumphal gates of 1742 dedicated to the coronation of Elizaveta Petrovna were decorated with 3 paintings associated with the concept of the Russian Empire's multiplicity of lands. One of the painting's descriptions clearly mentions 4 tsarstva and replicates the description of a similar painting made for the triumphal gates in honour of Catherine I's coronation [XI, p. 254]. The other two descriptions do not specify which tsarstva were represented: 1) the plafonds inside the gates conveyed Divine Providence with a tablet that had Her Imperial Majesty's name inscribed on it as well as announcing her reign. Beneath this inscription, there is Russia with her “tsarstviia and kniazheniia” (“Vnutr' vorot: V plafone izobrazhen promysl Bozhii v litse tomu prilichnomu s nebesi na oblakakh sniskhodiashchii, i na persekh svoikh derzhashchii skrizhal', na kotoroi imia Ela Imperatorskogo Velichestva pod koronoiu napisano, pod'emlia pokryvalo ob'iavliaet, chem znamenetsia Bozhie opredelenie o tsarstvovanii Ela Imperatorskogo Velichestva, vnizuzhe Rossiia s tsarstviiami i kniazheniiami svoimi v litsakh prilichnykh pokraniaut-sia...”) [XI, p. 252]; 2) “Coats-of-arms of all the provinces in a golden ring tied with bows of different colors, with olive branches, in the middle is an inscription: “Today Forget We our Sorrows”” (“Gerby vsekh provintsii v kol'tse zlatom priviazannye bantami i lentami raznykh tsvetov, s maslichnymi zelenymi vet'viami, v srednezh onykh nadpisanie: Dnes' zabykhom pechali nasha”) [XI, p. 254]. Four “copper” figures of the tsarstva were present in an abundant allegorical decoration of Elizaveta's “Pechal'nai zal” (Castrum Doloris). Following her death, they were placed at the corners of her coffin [32, p. 110].

Thus, crowns symbolizing the lands of the Russian Empire and corresponding to the titles of its ruler were always present at the funeral ceremony of Russian Emperors and Empresses. Allegorical figures personifying tsarstva were used not only at the Emperor's funerals, but also in ceiling paintings and triumphal arches signifying the ascension to the throne. However, the very crowns symbolizing tsarstva were never used during coronation ceremonies in Uspenskii cathedral. The lands of the Russian Empire were visualized by the heraldic depiction on the canopy over the tsar's place there. There was the double-headed eagle with the coat-of-arms of Moscow<sup>6</sup> on his breast surrounded by the six coats-of-arms of “subject states” — Kiev, Vladimir, Novgorod, Kazan, Astrakhan and Siberia (“‘v okrug' shesti podvlastnyh Gosudarstv Gerby. A imjanno: Kievskoi, Vladimerskoi, Novgorodskoi, Kazanskoi, Astrahanskoi, i Sibirskoi”) [XII, p. 2; XIII, p. 4; XIV, p. 31<sup>7</sup>; XV, p. 45<sup>8</sup>]. The same coat-of-arms were presented on shields in funeral procession of Peter the Great. Feofan Prokopovich explained their meaning in the following way:

<sup>6</sup> The image in the center of a canopy is characterized as “coat-of-arms of Moscow” in descriptions of coronations of Anna Ioannovna, Elizaveta Petrovna and Catherine II. In description of coronation of Catherine I it is defined “St. George” which is in fact coat-of-arms of Moscow.

<sup>7</sup> In this case the coats-of-arms around the coat-of-arms of the Russian Empire — double-headed eagle with the coat-of-arms of Moscow on its breast — are called coats-of-arms of “the six first provinces of this Empire” (“gerby shesti pervykh” sei imperii provintsei”).

<sup>8</sup> In this case the lands are called “six kniazhestva and tsarstva of the Russian Empire” (“shesti Rossiiskoi imperii kniazhestv i tsarstv”).

“On three of them were (coats-of-arms) of conquered states: Siberia, Astrakhan, Kazan; on the others four coat-of-arms of the cities glorified by the state residence” (“Na trekh iz nikh byli troikh tsarstv zavoevannykh: Sibirskogo, Astrakhanskogo, Kazanskogo gerby; na prochikh zhe chetyrekh gerby gorodov, gosudarstvennoiu rezidentsieiu proslavlennyykh: Novagrada, Vladimira, Kieva i Moskvu”) [33, p. 323].

Torelli's coronation portrait of Catherine the Great marks the first time that the symbolism of the three crowns, which developed in Russian ceremonial culture of the 18<sup>th</sup> century in other forms, is used in easel portrait. We can safely assume that the idea of a portrait was certainly approved by the Empress if not proposed by herself. The direct mentioning of symbolism of multiple crowns is contained in her “Zapiski” (“Mémoires”). She recalls an episode from her childhood when a monk from the House of Mengden who was able to tell fortune by face heard her mother lavishing praise onto princess Marianna of Braunschweig-Bevern and predicting her crown. Catherine writes: “...he said that sees not a single crown in the features of this princess, but at least three crowns sees on my face. Events proved this prophecy came true” (“...il lui dit, qu'il n'en voyoit aucune dans la physionomie de cette princesse, mais qu'il voyoit au moins trois couronnes sur mon front. L'évènement a verifié cette prédiction”) [XVI, p. 13].

As Iulia Bykova noted, in funeral ceremonies the idea of crowns, symbolizing conquered lands, was undoubtedly borrowed from Western Europe. Likewise, in portraiture prepared iconographic patterns did exist. The very situation when one monarch was at the head of more than one land was not an exception in Europe. A Russian ambassador in Vienna Ludwig Lanchinskii (Ludwik Kazimierz Łączyński) describing why some of the ministers there were against validation of Peter's new title noted that had it been accepted, other kings who had several kingdoms would have search for the same and the distinction of the Emperor would have disappear [34, p. 424]. As Charlotte Backerra contends, “in early modern Europe, the union of realms, — kingdoms or principalities linked by the rule of one monarch — was a common phenomenon” which has attracted much scholarly attention especially since 1980s [35]. European monarchs who ruled several lands had themselves represented as bearers of multiple crowns, still, normally not in oil portraits, but in other media, such as painted or engraved allegorical compositions. These are not direct sources for Torelli's portrait, but are close typological counterparts to the above-mentioned allegorical representations of lands of the Russian Empire.

Such examples in the iconography of Henry who was King of Navarre as Henry III from 1572 and King of France as Henry IV from 1589 revealing his imperial aspirations were examined by Corrado Vivanti. The emblem most frequently recurring in triumphal arches for the “entry” of Henry and his wife Maria de' Medici to Avignon in 1600 especially appreciated by the king who seems to have had a medal coined with this representation is a sword and scepter against Hercules' club, the scepter is topped with the royal crown, the sword — with the pontifical tiara. The motto is “Dou protegit unus”, i. e. “One king alone protects the two kingdoms of France and Navarre [36, p. 187]. In another composition prepared for the previous “entry” of the king into Lyon in 1595 France and Navarre are depicted as two columns, between them is Victory standing on a trophy with an inscription “Non ultra” signifying that the reconquest of the two ancestral kingdoms was Henry's ultimate goal. Finally, the print distributed after the consecration at Charters in which Henry IV is called Gallic Hercules shows him under the arch supported with columns topped with crowns, on one side of Henry is a female personification of France,

on the other is Navarre [36, p. 188]. The symbolism of the two kingdoms was further developed in art in the time of his son and successor Louis XIII who appears in an official oil portrait by Simon Vouet with two female figures embodying Navarre and France at his feet (c. 1636–1638, Musée du Louvre, Paris, 163 x 154 cm, inv. no. 8506) [37, p. 77, no. 157].

Another case is the iconography of kings of England and Scotland since the son of Mary Stuart James became both the king James VI of Scotland and James I of England. From his reign dates Renold Elstrack's engraved frontispiece to Edward Grimstone's "The Estates, Empires & Principalities of the World" (1615, Royal Collection, engraving, 29.0 × 18.1 cm /sheet of paper/, inv. no. RCIN 601414) [XVII] in which the crown of England placed over a rose and the crown of Scotland over a thistle are depicted on columns on both sides, at the same level, stressing their equal value. A similar idea was expressed in the time of his successor Charles I in an engraving "L'ordre maniere et sceance de sa maieste britannique avec les seigneurs spirituelz et temporelz dans le hault parlement" (c. 1630–1650, Royal Collection, engraving, 26.9 × 35.8 cm /sheet of paper/, inv. no. RCIN 601916) [XVIII]. In Peter Paul Rubens's painted allegory "The Union of the Crowns of England and Scotland" (c. 1632–1634, oil, canvas, 762 × 549 cm, inv. no. RCIN 408417, fig. 4) [XIX], England and Scotland are personified as female figures in front of James I. The female figure, soaring in the air is Britannia in the guise of Minerva, who holds joined crowns of the two nations united under the Stuart dynasty, over a naked child, symbolizing the newly born union between his northern and southern kingdoms. In the time of Charles II, alongside with the crowns of England and Scotland in representations appear the crown of Ireland. All three crowns are identical and signify equally important positions in the following engravings: Peter Stent's Charles II with the Royal Oak (c. 1660, engraving, 29.4 × 21.8 cm /sheet of paper/, inv. no. RCIN 602671; c. 1730–1770s, engraving, 28.6 × 21.4 cm /sheet of paper/, inv. no. RCIN 602672) [XX; XXI]; "Carol' Secund: DG Mag Bri: Fra: et Hib: Rex" (c. 1660–1685, engraving, 13.5 × 7.7 cm /sheet of paper/, inv. no. RCIN 602442) [XXII]; "Charles II" (c. 1660–1685, engraving, 12.0 × 8.8 cm /sheet of paper/, inv. no. RCIN 602489) [XXIII]. In exile the Stuarts, demonstrating their rights for the thrones of England, Scotland and Ireland, continued to use the same symbols. It is in Agostino Masucci's "Solemnisation of the Marriage of James III and Maria Clementina Sobieska" (about 1735, oil, canvas, 243.50 × 342.00 cm, Scottish National Portrait gallery, inv. no. PG 2415, fig. 5) [XXIV; 38, p. 85] that the depiction of the three crowns, in relation to the Stuarts, appears for the first time in painting. The destruction of Jacobite hopes in 1744, after the project was terminated of the great invasion of Charles Edward, First Born and Pretender, was also rendered with the use of the symbolism of three crowns. In Gabriel Bodenehr's mezzotint, based on the original by Domenica Dupra (fig. 6), the events are interpreted as a folly of human ambition. The portrait of the prince is accompanied with allegorical figures of Hope and Father Time. The three crowns are encompassed in bubbles (symbol of vanitas) blown by a cupid and bursting in the air (Scottish National Portrait gallery, inv. no. SP IV 123.7).

Visualization of monarch's power over two sovereign countries became actual in British history once again as soon as the Hannoverians ascended to the British throne. In engraved portraits of George I and George II it was presented either by symmetrically depicted crowns (Gabriel Uhlich, "Portrait of Geroge I", c. 1714–1741, engraving, 15.9 × 10.5 cm /sheet of paper/, inv. no. RCIN 603696 [XXV], Christoph Weigel, "Portrait of George I", c. 1714–1727, mezzotint, 37.2 × 25.8 cm /sheet of paper/, inv. no. RCIN 603703 [XXVI]), or coats-of-arms (Johann Georg Mentzel, "Portrait of Geroge I",



*Fig. 4.* Sir Peter Paul Rubens and studio. The Union of the Crowns of England and Scotland. c. 1632–1634. Oil, canvas. 762 × 549. Royal Collection Trust / © Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II 2020. RCIN 408417. Accessed January 21, 2020. <http://www.rct.uk/collection/408417>

c. 1714–1727, engraving, 11.5 × 16.3 cm /sheet of paper/, inv. no. RCIN 603763 [XXVII]), or both (“Portrait of George II”, c. 1727–1760, engraving, 11.3 × 15.5 cm /sheet of paper/, inv. no. RCIN 603844 [XXVIII]).

Of special interest is iconography of Elector of Saxony Frederick Augustus I who was also a King of Poland and Grand Duke of Lithuania under the name August II (Strong) and his son Elector of Saxony Frederick Augustus II who was simultaneously King of Poland and Grand Duke of Lithuania August III. The type of visualization of monarch’s power over two countries in the form of their female personifications in crowns and with correspondent coats-of-arms can be exemplified by J.G.Mentzel’s engraving in which they are flanking a portrait of August II (1721, engraving, etching, Muzeum Narodowe



Fig. 5. Agostino Masucci, *The Solemnisation of the Marriage of James III and Maria Clementina Sobieska*. c. 1735. Oil, canvas. 243.50 × 342.00. National Galleries of Scotland, Edinburgh, inv. no. PG 2415. Purchased 1977 with assistance from the Art Fund, the Pilgrim Trust and private donors



Fig. 6. Gabriel Bodenehrs after Domenica Dupra. *Portrait of Charles Edward Stuart*. Mezzotint. 44.0 × 31.2. Royal Collection Trust / © Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II 2020. RCIN 603615. Accessed January 21, 2020. [www.rct.uk/collection/603615](http://www.rct.uk/collection/603615)



Fig. 7. Silvestre, Louis, de. Portrait of August III of Poland (August II of Sachsen). 1733. Oil, canvas. 205 × 90. Stadtgeschichtliches Museum Leipzig, inv. no. Fürstenbild Nr. 26

w Krakowie, inv. no. III-ryc.-30345 [XXIX]) and a medal minted to commemorate pacification of Sejm of 1736 and glorify August III in which the two countries are shaking hands (plaster cast of the medal from the reign of Augustus III, 2<sup>nd</sup> half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Muzeum Narodowe w Krakowie, inv. no. IX-MP-249/70 [XXX]). The symbolism of the two crowns in the time of August II entered the art both in the medium of portrait engraving (“Portrait of Friderikus Augustus”, c. 1696, engraving, etching, Muzeum Narodowe w Krakowie, III-ryc.-30543 [XXXI]) and oil portrait (“Portrait of August II” by Louis de Silvestre, 1718, Gemäldegalerie Alte Meister, Dresden, inv. no. Gal.-Nr. 3943 [XXXII], “Portrait of Christiane Eberhardine, Spouse of August II”, c. 1720, Gemäldegalerie Alte Meister, Dresden, Gal.-Nr. 3948). Oil portraits with two crowns gained special popularity under his successor (“Portrait of August III” by Louis de Silvestre, c. 1737, Muzeum Narodowe w Krakowie, Pałac Biskupa Erazma Ciołka [XXXIII]; “Portrait of August III” by Louis de Silvestre, 1733, Stadtgeschichtliches Museum, Leipzig, inv. no. Fürstenbild Nr. 26, fig. 7; “Portrait of Maria Josepha, Spouse of August III” by Louis de Silvestre, 1737, Gemäldegalerie Alte Meister, Dresden, Gal.-Nr. 3954, a copy after it in Stadtgeschichtliches Museum Leipzig, oil, canvas. 158 × 120, inv. no. XXVII/169, fig. 8).

A type of oil portrait with multiple crowns in the 18<sup>th</sup> century gained special popularity with Maria Theresia who had her likeness perpetuated in a large number of such portraits, although the very type was used by the Habsburgs already before (for example, the “Portrait of Emperor Karl VI wearing the Robes of the Order of Golden Fleece” by follower of Johann Gottfried Auerbach, c. 1730, oil, canvas, Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna, inv. no. 2140, fig. 9). Depending on the purpose of the commission of the portrait either all crowns are depicted (Hat of the Archduke of Austria, Hungarian crown of St. Stephan, Bohemian Crown of Saint Wenceslas, Otto I’s Imperial Crown or Rudolf II’s Crown) or just some of them, emphasizing a certain aspect of Maria Theresia’s power. Michael Yonan claims that some early portraits “privilege a single ethnic identity, but over time this type of image lost favor to those that represented the empress as the bearer of multiple crowns” [39, p.33]. For instance, in Martin von Meytens’s (?) “Portrait of Maria Theresia in Bohemian Coronation dress” (Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna, inv. no. 2590, another variant of the portrait: fig. 10. Maria Theresia as Queen of Bohemia. Oil, canvas. Bundeskanzleramt, Vienna / Andy Wenzel) [40, p. 81] Maria Theresia wears a Bohemian crown, to emphasize her as the ruler of Bohemia, on the table there is a Hungarian crown and behind it there is the Hat of the Archduke of Austria and the Imperial crown of Otto I. In Martin van Meytens’s portrait



Fig. 8. Silvestre, Louis, de (after). Portrait of Maria Josepha, Spouse of August III of Poland (August II of Sachsen). After 1737. Oil, canvas. 158 × 120. Stadtgeschichtliches Museum Leipzig, inv. no. XXVII/169

from the National Gallery of Ljubljana, Maria Theresa is depicted with her hand resting on three crowns — those of Archduke of Austria, Queen of Bohemia and Hungary (National gallery of Slovenia, Ljubljana, oil, canvas, 280 × 184,5 cm) [41, p.37–8; XXX–IV]. The combination of the crowns of Bohemia, Hungary and Rudolf II can be seen in Versailles portrait of Maria Theresa as a Widow (Austrian Master of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, Versailles) [41, p.299]. Finally, four crowns — Hat of Archduke of Austria, crowns of Bohemia and Hungary and Rudolph II's crown are present in Martin van Meytens's portraits from Deutsches Historisches Museum, Berlin (c. 1745, oil, canvas, 229 × 146 cm) [XXXV] and Martin van Meytens' "Maria Theresa in a Pink Lace Dress" (c. 1750–1755, oil, canvas, Kunsthistorisches museum, Vienna, Schloss Schönbrunn, fig. 11) [42, p. 19] to name just a few examples.

The mere existence of these portraits privileging certain land — different in various cases — is evidence that were all perceived actually autonomic at least to some extent. Al-





*Fig. 9. Johann Gottfried Auerbach. Portrait of Emperor Karl VI. in the Dress of the Order of the Golden Fleece. c. 1730. Oil, canvas. Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna, inv. no. GG 2140*

though the title of the Emperor is higher than that of a king, the Imperial crown is not given overt predominance in either Maria Theresa's portraits or Auerbach's portrait of her father Karl VI. In this particular type of iconography the artists emphasize the idea of multiplicity of titles and avoided a too straightforward visual expression of the title of the Holy Roman Emperor dominating over others. This reflected a complicated political organization in which the Kingdom of Hungary, while outside the Holy Roman Empire, was ruled by the Habsburg monarch and the Empire was not a part of the Habsburg Monarchy, although for almost 400 years the head of the House of Habsburg was also Holy Roman Emperor. Most



*Fig. 10. Martin van Meytens the Younger. Maria Theresia as Queen of Bohemia. Oil, canvas. Bundeskanzleramt, Vienna / Andy Wenzel*

accurately, the message expressed in such portraits can be formulated as following: not an individual crown, but a conglomerate of crowns provide power over the Empire.

The abovementioned examples demonstrate that visualization of power over two states either in form of allegorical figures or crowns emerged normally in such a type of composite monarchy as a personal union (when the only connection between the principalities is the ruler [35]) or at early stages of the existence of real union (“a union based on common laws and institutions but where the lands ruled were not yet considered one territory in legal terms” [35]) as, for instance, in case of Simon Vouet’ “Portrait of Louis XIII”



*Fig. 11. Martin van Meytens the Younger. Maria Theresa in a Pink Dress. c. 1750–1755. Oil, canvas. Kunsthistorisches museum, Vienna, Schloss Schönbrunn, inv. no. GG 8762*

which was painted after transformation of private union of France and Navarre into real one in 1620. It seems to be only in the 18<sup>th</sup> century when oil portrait was becoming a preeminent form of representation of a ruler and only with the Habsburgs and rulers of Saxony and Poland that the idea of power over several lands became expressed in the most laconic and visually powerful form — that of an oil portrait with several crowns. Portraits of Polish and Saxonian rulers certainly must have been familiar to Torelli, who worked at the court of August III of Poland (Frederick August II of Saxony) in Dresden before his arrival to Russia, and could have been familiar to Catherine, especially taking into account her proximity with Stanislaw August Poniatowski in the years preceding her ascension to the throne. By the time of Catherine's coronation, such a large number of portraits of Maria Theresa with multiple crowns were created that we can safely assume they were

known to Catherine and Torelli. Their immense popularity appears an important factor which contributed to the emergence of the motive of three crowns in Torelli's portrait of Catherine II. Only the Habsburgs, the most powerful European rulers, possessed more than three crowns, including that of the Holy Roman Emperor. And having four crowns introduced into her coronation portrait, Catherine II entered into competition with them.

Although the Holy Roman Empire provided an important model for the court of its young rival Russian Empire, its influence on Russian art has for a long time been overlooked. In recent years Christina Strunck contributed to the examination of this theme with analysis of some noteworthy iconographic parallels in representation of Catherine and Maria Theresia [43; 44], while Michael Yonan concentrated on the case of interrelationship of Pompeo Batoni's "Portrait of the Holy Roman Emperor Joseph II and Grand Duke Leopold of Tuscany in Rome" (1769? Kunsthistorisches museum, Vienna; full-length version — 1770, formerly Schönbrunn Palace, Vienna, destroyed 1945) and Johann Baptist Lampi's "Portrait of Grand Dukes Alexander and Constantine" (1795, State Hermitage, Saint-Petersburg) [39, p. 188]. However, correlation of Torelli's portraits of Catherine and portraits of Habsburg's rulers in which they are depicted with crowns epitomizing multiple titles has so far eluded researchers.

The differences in the portraits are the most important. Maria Theresia was portrayed in Hungarian and in Bohemian crowns, but never in Otto I's crown. The title of the Emperor could belong only to a man and the title of Empress was granted to Maria Theresia automatically after the coronation of her husband Franz Stephan von Lothringen in Frankfurt. She, however, rejected to be crowned as his wife obviously not willing to play a minor part in Imperial coronation after being proclaimed "female *king*" of Hungary or Bohemia. This made inclusion of the main privilege of the Habsburgs — Otto I crown — into her portraits, even if it was not on her head, but on the table, rather problematic [44, p. 66]. It normally appears in her double portraits with her husband and corresponds rather to him than to her while she is associated with crowns of Austria, Hungary and Bohemia, illustrating a sort of "coregency", even if this was just a convenient myth (for instance, Peter Kobler's "Portrait of Maria Theresia and Franz Stephan von Lothringen", 1746, Stift St. Florian" [39, p. 31; 44, p. 66]). Or Otto I's crown appears in Maria Theresia's portrait in Bohemian Coronation dress (1743, Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna, inv. no. 2590) [40, p. 81] stressing her claim to the Imperial title [44, p. 65] and painted before the coronation of her husband. In the case of Catherine II there is an Imperial crown on her head, like it was in portraits of her immediate predecessors Anna and Elizaveta, depicting that she is a crowned ruler of the Empire, which was certainly not unimportant in a sort of personal competition of Catherine with her most powerful female contemporary. The crowns of the lands annexed to Russia are placed before her.

Catherine II was, of course, never crowned as "tsaritsa Kazanskaia", or "tsaritsa Astrakhanskaia", or "tsaritsa Sibirskaia", though such titles were included in her full title, contrary to Maria Theresia who was in fact crowned as a "king" of Hungary and "king" of Bohemia. Unlike in portraits of Maria Theresia, the crowns in the portrait of Catherine II are not signs of actual sovereignty of the lands but rather only their former high rank, thus they are functioning only as signifiers of extraordinary might of The Russian Empress.

The number and position of crowns raises questions. In "Castrum Doloris" of Peter I there were four crowns — those of Kazan, Astrakhan, Siberia and the Russian Empire. The latter was distinguished from the rest by its position in a row by the head of the Emperor.

However, the crown of the Moscow tsarstvo is not present<sup>9</sup>. Still, its very absence makes us think that it is the crown of Moscow tsarstvo which is substituted by the Imperial crown, thus visualizing Russia's special place as an initial land of the Russian Empire to which the rest, conquered ones, were later added. Such a sort of paralipsis is made even more eloquent by fact that the only coronation (Imperial) actually took place in Moscow unlike in case of the Habsburgs who had separate coronations. Since the death of Peter I such a group of crowns was established as a symbolic formula for the Emperor's titles and Empire at funerals. The same distinction of Moscow is obvious in the composition of coats-of-arms on the canopy over the throne in Uspenskii cathedral during coronation when the coat-of-arms of Moscow was marked by its central position, while native Kiev, Vladimir, Novgorod, and conquered Kazan, Astrakhan, Siberia were placed around it thus being equalized as "subject lands". The allegorical representations of the lands of the Russian Empire on triumphal arches featured alongside Kazan, Astrakhan and Siberia, a figure embodying the Moscow tsarstvo. As there are no depictions of them at our disposal, it is impossible to say whether it was somehow distinguished from the rest or not. Thus, there are three combinations of symbolic representations which visualize Russian Empire and each was expressed in a certain media: 1) the one, including Kazan, Astrakhan, Siberia and the Moscow tsarstvo, which seems to equalize native Moscow and conquered lands (allegorical figures in painting and sculpture); 2) the one, distinguishing Moscow and equalizing native Kiev, Vladimir, Novgorod and conquered Kazan, Astrakhan, Siberia (heraldry); 3) the one, consisting of Kazan, Astrakhan, Siberia and the Russian Empire, which still seems to differentiate the Moscow tsarstvo by its very absence signifying implicitly its role as a native land and a predecessor of the Russian Empire (crowns as relics in funerals). Coexistence of three variations evinces that differences in visual description were rather accents than fatal contradictions. Torelli adopted for his portrait the third type, evidently because it was the one involving crowns.

The Oxford English dictionary defines "Empire" as "an expanse territory (unity of several independent states in particular) under rule of Emperor or supreme sovereign; unity of subject territories ruled by the state sovereign". Seimur Becker clarifying this definition stresses that the Empire "can constitute from either 1) subject territories under the auspices of a particular ruler and none of the territories has control over the rest, or 2) state-metropolis with territories subject to it. He maintains that the Romanov's Empire as well as the Habsburg Empire belonged to the first type" [46, p.69, 71]. He continues that in both cases a ruler belonged to the dynasty rooted in one of the territories under his scepter, but insists that such a situation had nothing in common with the rule of the state over subject territories. Such a formulation is indisputable in relation to Habsburg

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<sup>9</sup> The crown of Monomachus was never used in Emperor's funerals, though since coronation of Ivan Groznyi in 1547 who was the first Russian ruler to be crowned as a tsar all Russian tsars up to of Ivan Alekseevich in 1682 were crowned with it. Presumably presented to Ivan Kalita by the khan of Golden Horde, in the 15<sup>th</sup> century it started to be associated with a gift of Byzantine Emperor Constantine IX Monomachus which he, according to the legend, gave to his relative Kievan *kniaz'* Vladimir Monomachus [45, p. 58; XXXVI]. For Peter I who was crowned together with his brother Ivan a special Shapka Monomakha vtorogo nariada was made [XXXVII]. According to Erin McBurney shapka of Monomachus appears later in Iogann Baptist Lampi's sketch of a portrait of Catherine II with Saturn and Clio (no later than 1793, State Russian museum, Saint-Petersburg [5, no. 227, repr.; 12, p.378]). However, an object which is taken by Erin McBurney for shapka of Monomachus is extremely loosely painted and it is difficult to deduce whether it is a crown, or an orb or something else.

Empire. In the case with the Russian Empire such a definition, certainly better founded than the second one, however, requires additional commentary. These nuances are evident in a visual discourse and in Torelli's "Coronation portrait of Catherine II" in particular.

Especially revealing are Russian copies of the portrait transforming the motive of the crowns<sup>10</sup>. In the original by Torelli, a European-minded artist, the Empress stands in front of the table, her hand with a scepter is tranquilly resting downward. Crowns are one of the details (though significant) in the profusion of a baroque interior. Only a small part of the crown of Kazan is shown, the rest is hidden by the edge of the canvas. As Erin McBurney pointed out, the exceeding luxury of accessories and the very mass of Empress's skirt with heavy folds epitomize the vast expanse and abundance of the Empire. The crowns function as signifies which meaning can be deciphered not only on a textual level (the symbol is the very object depicted and its meaning is decoded in its name, i. e. "crown of Kazan", "crown of Astrakhan", "crown of Siberia"), but also on a purely artistic level. Rich and vibrant golden color of the old crowns is associated with the old tradition of power into which Catherine wanted to insert herself. The noble and restrained silverish tints of the Empress's European gown, as well as a different European form of the Imperial crown on her head, make her stand out, while golden flashes of double-headed eagles emblazoned on her dress and red ruby of her crown restore her link with the surroundings on an artistic level. Red ruby of the new Imperial crown corresponds to red stones of the old crowns and is echoed in draperies, cushion and pilasters. Catherine appears as a European sovereign perfectly fitted into the historical Russian succession.

In Aleksei Antropov's copies there does not appear to be a trace left of the masterfully structured composition, in which the disposition of objects, rhythmic pattern and color-scheme transmit the idea of unity. The skirt of the Empress's dress is not filling the foreground anymore, but is rigidly outlined. Sharp colors do not create a carefully elaborated and meaningful palette. The prominence is given to the motif of crowns. The table with them is moved towards the front edge of the canvas, much more visible and, therefore, accentuated. The excessive attention to the important details is a specific feature of many works of 18<sup>th</sup>-century Russian art with its uneven development and archaisms rooted in "parsuna" traditions of representation. Unlike in Torelli's original, the Empress holds a scepter in a powerful and protective gesture, so that it forms a sharp diagonal over crowns, visualizing the metaphor "under scepter" and in combination with Imperial crown on her head marking the subject position of the conquered lands presented, their high status (as they are presented by crowns), special position of Russia as a native land (by the very absence of the crown of Moscovia) and exceedingly high status of both Catherine as a bearer of multiple crowns and the Russian Empire.

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