

# She-Who-Must-Not-Be-Named, or a Note about the Soviet Dissident Bacronym “Sofia Vlas’evna”\*

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**Abstract:** *This article examines the history of the bacronym “Sofia Vlas’evna,” which was used by dissidents in the USSR as an ironic personification of the Soviet regime (sovetskaia vlast’). The article presents the hypothesis that this bacronym emerged in spoken language during the period of Khrushchev’s Thaw. It traces the bacronym’s political, literary, and cultural connotations, and explores its connection to the image of the Motherland-Mother. The article examines two symmetrical gaps in the Soviet/Russian visual symbolic repertoire: the lack of an established visual form of representing the Soviet regime in Soviet propaganda imagery; and the absence of the image of Liberty in the Russian and Soviet traditions of visual discourse.*

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