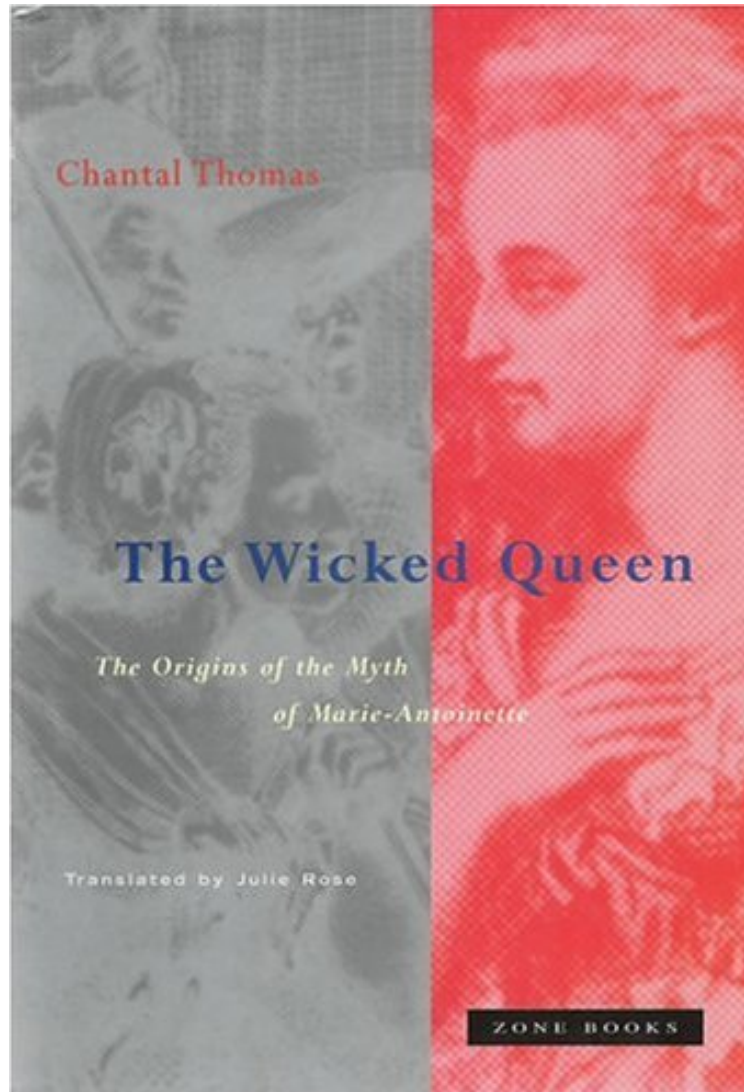


(Ebook pdf) The Wicked Queen: The Origins of the Myth of Marie-Antoinette

The Wicked Queen: The Origins of the Myth of Marie-Antoinette

Chantal Thomas

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Chantal Thomas : The Wicked Queen: The Origins of the Myth of Marie-Antoinette before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Wicked Queen: The Origins of the Myth of Marie-Antoinette:

16 of 19 people found the following review helpful. Excellent workBy Marsha McAllisterI am a college student majoring in History and I thank Chantal Thomas for writing this excellent work. I first ran across her name when researching the propaganda against Marie Antoinette (I wrote my thesis on this during the semester). I have found her to be the authority, at the present time, on the pamphlets, propaganda, etc. written against MA. If you are interested in

reading about this, I strongly recommend this book. She includes copies of the actual pamphlets written and they are truly fascinating. One can see the fervor of the Paris mob on the pages of these vile, xrated pieces. If you love French history or women's history, buy this book today!

6 of 6 people found the following review helpful. From saint to sinner, la the press

By M. Mason "The Wicked Queen" by Chantal Thomas is a thoughtful, well-researched book that explores the role of the queen in France, as well as how -- through the power of the propaganda hate machine -- the public image of Marie Antoinette was morphed from the sweet, fresh-faced Dauphine that the people adored upon her arrival in France; to the sexually deviant, murderous queen they accused her of being as the revolution took hold. As a bonus, in the back of the book are a handful of the original pamphlets of the day, fully translated into English. These are quite interesting, as I've always wanted to read some of the unedited, infamous pieces of propaganda (some of which are often referenced in various biographies of Marie Antoinette). One can almost feel the sadistic glee infused into the writing, which was specifically crafted to tap into the public's rage and despair over the prevailing social order, using one woman as a scape-goat for all evils. As such, the pamphlets' content is quite crude and blunt . . . so if you're not keen on reading the disgusting specifics of the accusations hurled at the queen, you may easily skip that section of the book. (It's pretty much a separate entity, buried behind Author's Notes, etc.) All in all, if you're interested in the origins of the generally accepted -- and mostly false -- pop-culture image of Marie Antoinette (as the unsympathetic tart who flippantly proclaims "Let them eat cake!") . . . I definitely recommend this book for an informative read.

7 of 16 people found the following review helpful. An amateurish account

By Johny Bottom This book was a disappointment. I ... was very interested. I am a 'fan' of Marie Antoinette and have been fascinated with her life since reading Castelot's biography of her. This book however, though it has some interesting pamphlets of historical interest, is more like a scrapbook. The writing is poor and has no direction. The pamphlets reproduced in the book are mostly pornographic lyrics and droll poetry of the Queen. The worst of which is Marie Antoinette riding an erected penis as if it were an ostrich. If you want to learn about the Queen, her children, or the French Revolution, this is not the book to find it in. If you are very familiar with the Queen's life, this may offer you a little insight as to the people's attitude at the time, but that's it. I read it once, and it has been on the shelf since. For a truly amazing book about Marie Antoinette, I suggest 'The Fatal Friendship'.

In *The Wicked Queen*, Chantal Thomas presents the history of the mythification of one of the most infamous queens in all history, whose execution still fascinates us today. Almost as soon as Marie-Antoinette, archduchess of Austria, was brought to France as the bride of Louis XVI in 1771, she was smothered in images. In a monarchy increasingly under assault, the charm and horror of her feminine body and her political power as a foreign intruder turned Marie-Antoinette into an alien other. Marie-Antoinette's mythification, argues Thomas, must be interpreted as the misogynist demonization of women's power and authority in revolutionary France. In a series of pamphlets written from the 1770s until her death in 1793, Marie-Antoinette is portrayed as a spendthrift, a libertine, an orgiastic lesbian, and a poisoner and infant murderess. In her analyses of these pamphlets, seven of which appear here in translation for the first time, Thomas reconstructs how the mounting hallucinatory and libelous discourse culminated in the inevitable destruction of what had become the counterrevolutionary symbol par excellence. *The Wicked Queen* exposes the elaborate process by which the myth of Marie-Antoinette emerged as a crucial element in the successful staging of the French Revolution.

From *Library Journal* Ignore the subtitle at your peril! This is strictly a study of the portrayal of Marie-Antoinette in contemporary propaganda pamphlets, particularly those emphasizing her supposed sexual proclivities. This unique approach produces some thought-provoking points. Whether the subject warrants a book-length study is, however, questionable. Thomas, the author of two studies of libertinage published in France, argues that these pamphlets do not reflect the reality of the queen's conduct. This is self-evident in our sophisticated age and was probably fairly apparent even in the 18th century. The book is filled out with digressions, a useful chronology of Marie-Antoinette's life, an annotated cast of characters, and reprints of seven of the pamphlets. The tone is uneven, mixing obscure sociological jargon with the crudest street language. Recommended only for the largest academic or research libraries collecting in French history or propaganda.

A Jean E.S. Storrs, Enoch Pratt Free Lib., Baltimore Copyright 1999 Reed Business Information, Inc.

From *Booklist* Revolutionary agitation is always most effective when outrage can be concentrated on an individual or one class of people. Our Declaration of Independence demonized George III, though the colonists' real dispute was with a faction of Parliament. As a foreigner with a knack for putting her foot in her mouth, French queen Marie-Antoinette was an inviting target for agitators. Thomas, who has specialized in examining the mass culture of eighteenth-century France, does not attempt to find the "real" Marie-Antoinette. Rather, her target is the queen's detractors, who carried on a campaign of vilification and distortion, primarily via pamphlets, which contributed substantially to the undermining of the monarchy. The campaign began soon after Marie-Antoinette's arrival in France and continued with increasing intensity until her execution. She was variously accused of nymphomania, lesbianism, incest, and insensitive frivolity. This is an unusual and interesting examination of a primitive but quite effective effort at mass political indoctrination. Jay Freeman "Thomas offers a brilliant and provocative analysis of the techniques of

scurrilous pamphleteering and shows how every aspect of Marie-Antoinette's... became fodder for the pornographic imagination." - Lynn Hunt