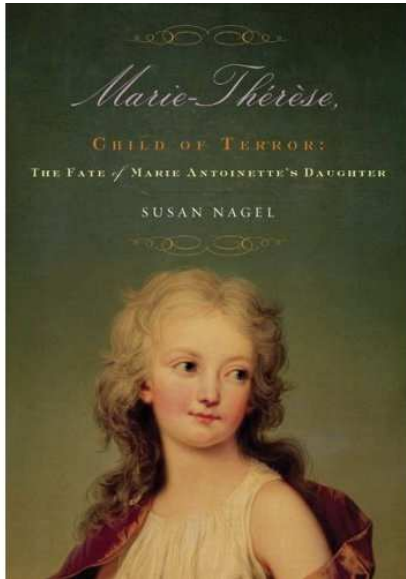


BOOK RECOMMENDATION

Identity of the Dark Countess once more critically investigated Prof. Susan Nagel (USA) publish biography about Madame Royale



The assertion, the Dark Countess of Hildburghausen could have been the princess Marie Thérèse Charlotte of France (called Madame Royale), was lately criticized over and over again. The „Mitteldeutscher Rundfunk - MDR“, a German broadcasting company, for example, summarized in the documentation „The exchanged princess. The Dark Countess of Hildburghausen“ (first broadcasting on the MDR television on the 28/10/2007): „*Marie Thérèse of France was not the Dark Countess definitely*“.

Recently a new biography was published in the USA, which investigates the so-called theory of substitution around Madame Royale once more. The author Susan Nagel is a professor at the Marymount Manhattan College in New York City and deals there with the role of the women in the age of the romanticism. After several years of research, especially in the USA and France, she has presented a detailed representation of the life of the princess. The comprehensive English book with 448 pages and the title „*Marie-Thérèse, Child of Terror. The Fate of Marie Antoinette's Daughter*“ was published by the publishing house Bloomsbury in New York.

The book deals at first with the official biography of Madame Royale, while her birth and childhood in Versailles are described, her experiences during the French revolution with her more than three years arrest in the Temple and, in the end, the departure to her relatives to Austria in 1795. Afterwards a representation follows of her exile in Vienna, Mitau and England as well as her return to France with her uncle Louis XVIII after the fall of Napoleon. In the end, it is entered on her new exile after the revolution in July 1830 as well as her death in the Austrian village Frohsdorf in 1851.

In addition, Prof. Nagel deals with the rumors around a personal exchange of the princess. This proves, on the one hand, that the so-called theory of substitution is also known in the USA. On the other hand it becomes clear that the story around the Dark Countess of Hildburghausen is no pure fiction and serious scientists argue seriously with it.

At first it was tried to carry out a DNA analysis. A strand of hair of Madame Royale which was taken from her about 1830 should be investigated for DNA to compare these with the DNA of persons related to the royal family. Nevertheless, on this occasion turned out that the hair contained no usable DNA sequences after so long time. Farther investigations were not possible.

To check nevertheless how plausible the theory is, the author has carried out a comparison of the handwritings of Madame Royale. In contrast to previous investigations of this kind she used

excluding handwritings which accrued short time before or after the assumed exchange of the princess in December 1795. Among them are documents which were unknown up to now.

At the base of the used handwritings she comes to the result that the written signs of the autographs of 1794 and December 1795 are identically with those of September 1796 and April 1804, what speaks against a personal exchange. To sum up, Prof. Nagel draws the following result: *The Dark Countess of Hildburghausen may well have been a Bourbon, she was not, however, Madame Royale.*

Susan Nagel (2008):

Marie-Thérèse, Child of Terror. The Fate of Marie Antoinette's Daughter.

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448 pages

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Further information on the internet

- Comments on the book: www.susannagelwritesabout.blogspot.com
- Interview with Susan Nagel: <http://teattrianon.blogspot.com/2008/03/interview-with-susan-nagel-about-marie.html>