

Henry de Montherlant
La Reine morte



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C'est pendant la guerre, avec la création de La Reine morte, que Montherlant, célèbre depuis une vingtaine d'années déjà pour ses romans et ses essais, se fait connaître sur la scène française. Persuadé que la tragédie est l'une des clefs pour déchiffrer l'énigme des agissements humains et des rapports entre les êtres, Montherlant ressuscite avec La Reine morte la grande tragédie, mêlant conflits politiques et affrontements familiaux, dressant pour l'éternité dans une lutte à mort le fils contre le père. On connaît l'argument : un roi, très malade, fait tuer la femme, Dona Inès, que son fils Don Pedro a épousée secrètement. Il meurt devant le cadavre de «la reine morte».

La Reine morte Details

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From Reader Review La Reine morte for online ebook

Alejandro Teruel says

The story of Inés de Castro, like that of Don Juan, has inspired many romances and plays. Inés de Castro was a historical figure from the 14th Century, a lesser noblewoman who became Pedro, the crown prince's lover and after his wife died, his spouse in spite of the King's opposition. She was eventually assassinated in a court intrigue.

Montherlant makes Inés Pedro's secret first wife, turns Pedro into a man unable to break free of his paralyzing love-hate relationship with his father and centers the play on the seventy year old, cynical, lucid, monstrous but still powerful King (Ferrante in the play, Alphonse IV, in reality), who rules according to clearly machiavellian dicta and winds up destroying, physically or psychologically, all who approach him, save for the Infante of Navarre, one of the most extraordinary, clear-eyed and unsentimental female characters to turn up in drama.

The play moves, audibly and remorselessly forwards in time to an almost clockwork logic of tragedy and reminds one by turns of Racine's *Phèdre* and Schiller's *Don Carlos*. Ferrante is a Lear who decides to reign until he drops dead, securely bolstered on his throne by his inordinate pride and cruelty masked by a hypocritical concern for the state.

A play well worth reading and watching, if staged with the author's suggested cuts.

Antoine Vazquez says

J'ai eu du mal à rentrer dans cette histoire. Tellement que j'ai du mal à me souvenir de l'intrigue et des éléments de l'histoire. Les livres touchant et mêlant politique et tragédie ont toujours été difficile pour moi. Celui fait un véritable mélange des deux. Ce n'est pas ma tasse de thé...

Morgane Zambrelli says

Lu dans le cadre de mon cours "littérature et savoirs aux XIX et XXème siècles" de deuxième année de master. Pièce (et auteur) que je ne connaissais pas, j'ai assez apprécié ma lecture, qui va de paire avec celle d'Hernani !

Lise says

I always read more than one book at the same time.

This one fascinated me because of its title which is about the story of the unfortunate Ines de Castro who fell in love with Don Pedro The Cruel, future ruler of Portugal. She was the natural child of a low-born nobleman from Spain who came to Portugal and was noticed by Don Pedro who fell so madly in love with her, he

secretly married her. When Don Ferrante, Pedro's father found out about the marriage and the fact Ines was with child, he flew in a big rage since he had planned on cementing an alliance with Spain by marrying Pedro to the Infanta of Navarre and had Ines executed.

Those who read about Portugal's history know that Pedro upon becoming king had Ines' corpse exhumed and forced everybody in Portugal to kiss her skeletal hand and pay homage to her as Portugal's queen. Pedro took the title of cruel after her death as he had sincerely loved her. He had buried again in a crypt with all the honors to a queen and had a monument made upon her sepulcher. It is said that upon his own death, he was also buried at her side.

This is one of the most tragic love stories taking place I believe in ancient times.

De Montherland wrote a play on the subject and this is the play I'm now reading.

De Montherland has some inaccuracies in his play. First of all, Ines' murder is more subtle than that. Ferrante from what I read of the actual story never actually met Ines and so would not have come to like her and to still decide to have her killed and then die right after she dies.

When Pedro had Ines' body paraded around for everybody in Portugal to pay homage to her, she had been in the grave for some time as he paraded a skeleton with a crown and rich robes, not a fresh corpse.

It was like De Montherland wanted to soften the story somewhat, romanticize it. You should only check it out if you like De Montherland's writing style.

Gaëlle-Anne says

Je ne suis pas grande amatrice de théâtre donc cette pièce ne fait pas exception. J'aime néanmoins l'humour noir et l'écriture démodée de Montherlant.

Czarny Pies says

La reine morte raconte l'histoire d'un prince qui provoque la colère de son père sans avoir le courage de lui tenir tête. Le prince refuse un mariage qui offre des très forts avantages pour le royaume. Il épouse la femme qu'il aime secrètement. Elle devient enceinte. Le roi décide de la supprimer. Le prince prend connaissance des intentions meutrières de son père mais il ne fait rien pour sauver son épouse. Il pleure lachement sur son corps quand le rideau tombe.

L'auteur n'est pas tellement contre les mariages d'amour. Il s'en veut surtout aux lâches qui mettent des personnes en péril mais qui ne font rien pour les défendre.

Parce que le français d'Henri de Montherlant est très limpide et le texte est aussi court, La reine morte est souvent enseigné dans les cours de littérature française pour les anglophones. C'est un choix tout à fait admirable.

Sophie says

1hour after reading

this book is like a succesful Oscar Wilde, with all the bling trimmed away to leave a pure, cutting prose. The characters are fantastic, powerful like Balzacian characters without the cynicism, if a morality play had been the picture of a fire this would be the fire!

Gabriel Vugon says

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Realini says

La Reine Morte by Henri de Montherlant

Excellent masterpiece... marriage made in heaven between a fabulous text and the Übermensch of an actor – 10 out of 10

I have been spoiled in the past few days with Housekeeping and now The Dead Queen and an amazing king played by the best actor in the world- George Constantin.

Ferrante is the king of Portugal and he wants Prince Pedro, his son, to marry the infanta of Navarre, for reasons of state.

And we proceed with a classic conflict between duty and love.

Prince Pedro loves Ines de Castro, but this is not what the king wants and he is very upset to learn that his son had refused the infanta.

In the first part of this great drama, king Ferrante is willing to compromise and even appears to be a reasonable man.

When he meets Ines, he is taken by her beauty and refinement.

The king says to Prince Pedro:

- Marry the woman you must and have an affair with whoever you want

Not in these words, but I would say with that message.

Advisers to the king maintain that Ines should be killed, to make way for the necessary marriage that would boost the power of Portugal.

But king Ferrante delves into psychology and shows both understanding and a merciful side, at least to begin with.

- What is the secret you hide, why do you want to kill a young woman

Unhappy with this thirst for blood, the king is annoyed by the sycophants who kneel all the time and show too much humility.

Things are complicated by the revelation that Prince Pedro and Ines have married in secret, at a time when marriages were difficult to break apart.

The pope has to pronounce an annulment and the focus is on obtaining this exemption and the prince to agree.

The pressure falls on Dona Ines, who is asked by the king to convince the man she loves to give her up. Gradually, the king shows more of his darker side, after giving the impression that he will protect the innocent.

We are dealing with a very complex and interesting leading role that I see at the very center of the play. King Ferrante is by far more important and intriguing than all the rest put together, but this is in large part the contribution of the fantastic actor.

I guess that about 10 % or more of my notes on the plays that I listen to refer to this giant of the stage. If in the first place the king affirmed that he will not give orders to have Dona Ines killed, things change. Prince Pedro does not want to give up and the health of the king is deteriorating and with it his patience. There are some very cruel stances that he takes, speaking of babies being thrown to the pigs and such like monstrosities.

To his confidant he shouts-

- They will take your heart out and you will see it before you die!!

This was an extraordinary marriage made in heaven between a fabulous text and the Übermensch of an actor

Raya ???? says

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M a r i e says

Mon pauvre petit cœur...

Ce livre fera sûrement partie de mes livres préférés de 2017 !

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