

and I guess that most of them are designed with just a quote or a citation, in Portuguese of course, or as in the pack for Che Guevara, with photos. Even in Portugal, they may be difficult to find.

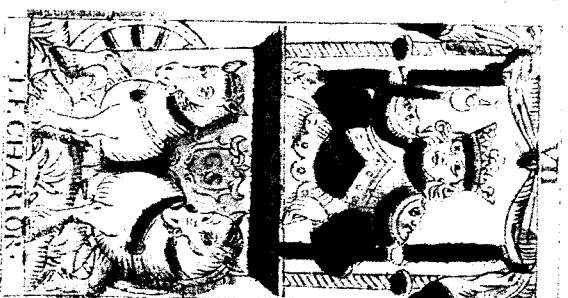
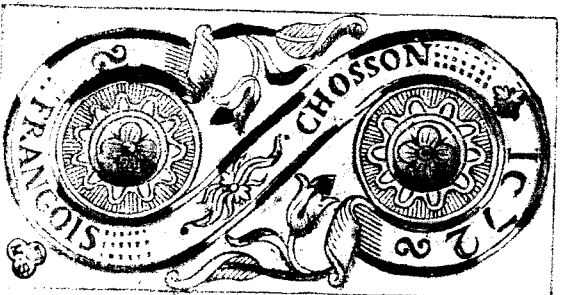
(Reviewed by Christian de Ryck)

Tarot de Marseille François Chosson 1736

A 'Tarot de Marseille' pack, made by François Chosson, a cardmaker from Marseilles, is housed by the Museum Blumenstein Solothurn, or Soleure, in Switzerland. Stuart Kaplan was the first to show some cards in the second volume of his *Encyclopedia of Tarot* (New York, 1986, p. 312). Unfortunately, not only the printing was poor, but the photos were somewhat blurred. However, something could not be escaped: the two of Coins shows a strange date, which one may read as "1c72". This date is obviously in error, since it makes no sense to read 1672: François Chosson is not known before 1734 (D'Allemagne) and 1736, when he registered a wrapper. He is recorded until 1756 (though not as late as 1762). There are no cardmakers by this name before him, whereas his son Guillaume Chosson was active from 1773 to 1809. Lastly the Chosson tarot is a typical 'Type II' 'Tarot de Marseille', a variation that is not attested before 1700 (more on this in a forthcoming article).

Yves Reynaud, to whom we owe a facsimile edition of the Madenie 1709 Tarot (also kept in Switzerland, also a 'Type II' — so it seems Reynaud specialises in 'Type II' 'TdMs' from Swiss museums...), has just released a nice facsimile edition of the Chosson tarot. This proved to be an excellent idea. Now we can look at the cards carefully, and enjoy them. It then becomes evident that the woodcutter is a skilled one — faces are well drawn, hair curls are well rendered, bodies are proportionate, hands are nicely done; he is also good at spelling — surprisingly his captions are all correctly

spelled, and the letters are carefully cut, even with downstrokes and upstrokes! His initials GS, also well formed, can be seen on trump VII and the two of Cups. Although François Chosson claimed to be "cartier et graveur" on his wrapper (appropriately provided with the facsimile pack) for "CATESFINES" (sic), he is obviously not the woodcutter of the tarot which bears his name. He certainly bought the



woodblocks from a previous owner and changed the name to his. Therefore this tarot was probably made before François Chosson started his business in 1734. Who was his first designer remains a mystery.

Tarot de Marseille François Chosson 1736 (sic) from Tarot de Marseille Heritage (tarot-de-marseille-heritage.com/english/catalogue_chosson1736.html). Price (p&P included) €38.00. A good investment. (Reviewed by Thierry Depaulis.)