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F. Ellen Weaver, *Mademoiselle de Joncoux: polémique janséniste à la veille de la bulle Unigenitus*. Paris: Les Éditions du Cerf, 2002. 358 pp. Appendices, bibliography, and index. 25.00 € (pb). ISBN 2-204-0701202.

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F. Ellen Weaver's meticulously researched study of Françoise-Marguerite de Joncoux uncovers the life of a key but elusive player in early eighteenth-century Jansenism. By focusing on the woman known to her cohorts as *l'Invisible*, Weaver sheds light on how the clandestine world of Jansenism fought to stay alive during its darkest hours. By the early 1680s, the Peace of the Church, the compromise reached by the Jansenists, Louis XIV, and Clement IX in 1669, was clearly over. In the aftermath of the Dutch Wars and the death of the duchesse de Longueville, Port-Royal-des-Champs's powerful protector, the Sun King stepped up his persecution of the Jansenists. Port-Royal was prohibited from accepting novices and boarders, and leading theologians, such as Antoine Arnauld, felt compelled to go into exile.

Within this exiled community, a new generation of polemicists nourished the Jansenist cause in an underground network whose members would lay the foundation for the more "militant" Jansenism of the mid-eighteenth century. As Catherine Maire's ground breaking work has shown, thanks to the efforts of these Jansenists, Port-Royal, despite its annihilation, continued to occupy a central position in Jansenism: a symbol of resistance against the enemies of *la vérité* in the conflicts surrounding *Unigenitus*.^[1] Weaver's biography of Mademoiselle de Joncoux dovetails with Maire's assertions by grounding the Jansenist polemic of this transitional period in its social and material context. Joncoux facilitated and contributed to the literary production and dissemination of critical polemical material and coordinated the final attempts to preserve Port-Royal. During her final years, she galvanized bishops and other potential allies in the resistance to *Unigenitus*.

In the first part of her study Weaver uses her extensive archival research to uncover the intricate connections of the Joncoux family to various noble and judicial houses. Her findings suggest how patron-client ties and marriage patterns may have helped foster a Jansenist community in late seventeenth-century Paris. Originally from Auvergne, Mademoiselle de Joncoux's father Jean de Joncoux (1633-1691) left the legal profession in 1663 to become the *intendant* for the duchesse de Chevreuse. The alliance with the notorious duchess and her son Louis-Charles d'Albert, the second duc de Luynes, enabled Joncoux to advance professionally. In 1676 he became the *commis* for the marquis de Seignelay, son of the minister Jean-Baptiste Colbert. Significantly, both the Luynes and Colbert families had strong ties to Port-Royal. As Weaver's exhaustive discussion of this complex clientage network suggests, the Joncoux family served as a link between Jansenist sympathizers of the sword nobility and those who belonged to the judicial and administrative world of the Joncouxs themselves.

In 1666 Jean de Joncoux cemented his place in the latter by marrying Geneviève Dodun, a member of a rising financial family. The couple had five daughters of whom Françoise-Marguerite, born in 1668, was the second. Of the five, only one would marry. Jean de Joncoux and Geneviève Dodun's eldest daughter Geneviève-Thérèse married Jean Chastellier, also a scion of a financial family. Weaver seeks to

demonstrate how the Joncoux evolved into a Jansenist family, similar to those described in Marie-José Michel's magisterial work on Jansenism and Paris.^[2] Mademoiselle de Joncoux's cousin Charles Gaspard II Dodun joined the ranks of the *noblesse de robe* and used his position to help his cousin in the struggle to save Port-Royal. Her niece, Geneviève-Marie Chastellier, married the Jansenist lawyer Antoine Le Mercier de Senlis and would maintain her aunt's contacts with well-known Jansenists after Joncoux's death in 1715. Unfortunately, Weaver's thorough reconstruction of these kinship and clientage connections does not provide any direct and clear evidence regarding the religious convictions of Jean de Joncoux or his family.

Moreover, did her father's associations have any direct impact on Mademoiselle de Joncoux's faith? What remains frustrating for the reader, and no doubt for the author, is the lack of sources explaining Mademoiselle de Joncoux's personal attraction to Jansenism and what inspired her to devote her life to *la vérité*. Although Weaver catalogues the various domiciles of the Joncoux family, she does not discuss the potential impact of growing up in Jansenist parishes, such as Saint-Sulpice, in which the Joncoux no doubt attended church. She hypothesizes that perhaps Joncoux's extensive education, which grounded her in Latin, philosophy, and the major works of Augustine, partially explains her intense involvement, as does her tutelage under Étienne Marmion, a colleague of the Jansenist theologian Jean-Baptiste d'Étemare (pp. 55-57). Whatever the inspiration, Joncoux's spiritual affiliations were in place by the time of her father's untimely death in 1691, which left her in a precarious financial position. Without any dowry, Joncoux found herself dependent on both her mother and her widowed brother-in-law Jean Chastellier. She could have remained one of the countless unmarried daughters, attending her mother and raising her deceased sister's children. But as Weaver rightly emphasizes, despite these familial obligations and poor health, Joncoux devoted her energy, education, and intelligence to the defense of Port-Royal and Jansenism.

By the 1690s, the center of the Jansenist movement was no longer Port-Royal but in the Dutch Republic where the theologian Pasquier Quesnel acted as leader. According to Weaver, "Mademoiselle de Joncoux's career began at the moment when Port-Royal's star was diminishing and Quesnel's was rising" (p. 105). Starting around 1693, Joncoux began acting as "secretary" for the group Weaver terms the *gens d'édition*, who carried on the intellectual tradition of the Port-Royal *solitaires* in the Low Countries and in France. Over the next twenty years, she maintained correspondences with prominent Jansenists such as Quesnel, Ernest Ruth d'Ans, and Nicolas Petitpied. Her voluminous letters reveal how indispensable she was to their fight. Joncoux collected documents and books, acted as a liaison in the publication process between the Netherlands and France, and assisted in financial transactions.

These activities represented "a guerilla combat of an army in retreat," whose clandestine tactics often involved the use of code names and references, such as the term "china" which probably denoted the collection of documents published in the *Histoire du cas de conscience* (1705-1711) (pp. 169, 180). In Paris, Joncoux hosted gatherings that included theologians such as Jacques-Joseph Duguet, Jean Louail, and Jacques Fouillou. By acting in this capacity, she followed in the footsteps of her mentor Angélique Crespin de Vivier, vicomtesse de Fontpertuis, who had served as Antoine Arnauld's liaison with France after his exile in 1679.^[3] In general, Joncoux was part of a coterie of Jansenist women who gathered and copied the papers pertaining to Port-Royal that would help preserve the convent's memory in later decades.

However, Mademoiselle de Joncoux was more than a female go-between in this Jansenist underground. She contributed her own intellectual abilities to the polemical warfare waged between Jansenists and their opponents. Joncoux collaborated with Jacques Fouillou and Jean Louail on the *Histoire abrégée du jansénisme* (1697) and eight years later with Quesnel, as well as Fouillou and Louail, in the production of the eight-volume *Histoire du cas de conscience*. According to Weaver, the apex of Joncoux's literary career was the editing and translation back into French of Pierre Nicole's Latin version of *Les Provinciales* known as the "Wendrock." While Louail assisted Joncoux in the actual translation, her editing and

notes throughout the text attested to her intellectual acumen. Joncoux carefully preserved her anonymity in these endeavors so that even friends such as Jean-Joseph Duguet and Quesnel were initially unaware of the editor's identity. What remains unclear is whether this decision was the result of personal modesty or a necessity for a female author, questions that Weaver could have addressed in a discussion of the larger world of seventeenth-century female writers.

Mademoiselle de Joncoux fully came into her own in the last years of Port-Royal before its destruction in 1711. When in 1705 the pope issued *Vineam Domini* condemning Jansenist doctrine, Louis XIV and the Archbishop of Paris, Louis-Antoine de Noailles, were determined that the nuns of Port-Royal would accept the bull without equivocation or face extinction. But the nuns continued to resist and were treated by the crown and papacy as pariahs. Between 1707 and 1709, Joncoux resembled "a general running courageously toward defeat" as she enlisted the loyal friends of Port-Royal in the fight for the abbey's survival (p. 210). Her lieutenants and allies included the marquise de Vieuxbourg, Suzanne-Françoise Issali, and men from the legal world, such as her cousin Charles Gaspard II Dodun. Through this network, Joncoux established contacts who apprised her of the crown's next move and assisted her in the desperate attempts to sustain the convent financially.

Joncoux was also an important liaison between the outside world and the abbey, acting as Port-Royal's "lawyer." Weaver pays special attention to the extraordinary relationship between Mademoiselle de Joncoux and the last abbess of Port-Royal, Claude-Louise Du Mesnil de Courtiaux, who received what amounted to legal counsel from her indefatigable correspondent. Weaver devotes considerable space to Joncoux's letter to the abbess recounting her two visits with the Archbishop of Paris, during which she not only disputed theology with the prelate but argued for the right of women to be involved in church affairs. After the nuns' removal from Port-Royal, it was Mademoiselle de Joncoux who was instrumental in saving many of the convent's important documents and thus preserving its memory.

In the final years of her life Joncoux threw herself into the fight against *Unigenitus*. "She entered into battle and took arms--her pen--to encourage, indeed to advise, the bishops who opposed the bull" (p. 275). Her three main correspondents, the bishops of Châlons-sur-Marne, Montpellier, and Senez, were receptive to Joncoux's arguments about the threat *Unigenitus* represented to episcopal authority and the need for a council of the French Church. Even then, Joncoux remained the "Invisible;" Jean Soanen, bishop of Senez, sought to discover the identity of the correspondent whose advice he valued. As Weaver twice reminds us, Joncoux exemplified Jacqueline Pascal's observation that when "'bishops have the courage of women, women must have the courage of bishops'" (pp. 278, 302). However, Mademoiselle de Joncoux's militant activities were cut short by illness and her sudden death on 27 September 1715.

Weaver's biography of this extraordinary woman contributes to our understanding of the workings of the "underground" Jansenist movement and the role of women within Jansenist circles. Françoise-Marguerite de Joncoux's life demonstrates how religious convictions enabled educated women of the early modern period to carve out an intellectual and, indeed, political sphere of activity. Weaver also uncovers the voices of other Jansenist writers, male and female, who were desperate and determined to fight their battles and to gain public support. At times, however, these voices tend to overwhelm the reader because they often appear in the form of lengthy excerpts that are sometimes more than two pages long. Weaver's excellent research would have been strengthened with more attention to the larger historical and scholarly ramifications of her findings. For example, the biography of Joncoux reveals the importance of women in Jansenism and the Catholic Reformation. But to what extent did the dominance of women affect the movement itself? How did the influence of women gender Jansenist polemics? [4] Questions such as these are raised in Dale Van Kley's preface which makes the broader implications of this study more explicit. Despite these shortcomings, Ellen Weaver's biography of Françoise Marguerite de Joncoux is an invaluable addition to the history of Jansenism and to the history of early modern feminine piety and literary activity.

NOTES

[1] Catherine Maire, *De la cause de Dieu à la cause de la nation: le jansénisme au XVIIIe siècle* (Paris: Gallimard, 1998), 182-204.

[2] Marie-José Michel, *Jansénisme et Paris, 1640-1730* (Paris: Klincksieck, 2000), 377-386. See also William Ritchey Newton, *Sociologie de la communauté de Port-Royal. Histoire, économie* (Paris: Klincksieck, 1999).

[3] F. Ellen Weaver, *Madame de Fontpertuis: une dévote janséniste, amie et gérante d'Antoine Arnauld et de Port-Royal* (Paris: Klincksieck, 1998).

[4] On the place of gender in seventeenth-century Jansenism and French Catholicism, see Daniella J. Kostroun, "Undermining Obedience: The Case of the Port-Royal Nuns, 1690-1708" (PhD diss, Duke University, 2000); Linda Timmermans, *L'Accès des femmes à la culture (1598-1715)* (Paris: Honoré Champion, 1993). For a discussion of gender in eighteenth-century Jansenist polemics, see Mita Choudhury, *School of Virtue, School of Vice: Convents and Nuns in French Thought and Culture, 1730-1794* (Cornell University Press, forthcoming, 2004).

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