

ABSTRACTS

I. CONFERENCE PAPERS FROM “PORT-ROYAL DURING THE CATHOLIC REFORMATION (1602-1627)”

1. Introduction

Jean MESNARD

Introduction: The Council of Trent and the Reform at Port-Royal

To open the conference, it seems natural to refer to the Council of Trent. However, the Council has scarcely been tackled by historical studies devoted to religious life and spirituality. The influence of the Council of Trent seems to have been considerable around the time of the *journée du Guichet*. It is highly probable that Mère Angélique’s extensive reading during her years of doubt and searching provided her with a significant introduction to the main issues discussed at the time.

In addition to chapters dealing with the regular clergy, it is possible, by going into a more detailed analysis, to look for more general similarities between the directions of the Council, and those which were taking shape and developing at Port-Royal. Despite the discrepancies that exist between the two reforms, whether it be a question of the chronology, their impact or their objective importance, there are indisputable convergences of a theological, spiritual and ecclesial nature, as well as in the field of the history of mentalities.

2. The convent and its reformer

Jean LESAULNIER

Mère Angélique Arnauld’s first community

When the young Angélique Arnauld took possession of the abbey where she had been set up as abbess at the age of eleven, she found the house

in a poor state, with a small community of about twelve uneducated nuns, a routine convent life and a superficial spiritual life. Consequently, when she decided to introduce reform at her convent, she encountered much opposition from her family, her nuns and her order, and many obstacles and pitfalls, some of which originated in her own personality and her own inadequacies. The reform first required an inner conversion, necessary in order for her and her nuns to return to implementing the Rule of Saint Benedict. This was in keeping with those Cistercians who were the principal reformers of Cîteaux at the start of the 17th century and who accompanied her until Port-Royal's exit from the order in 1627. Unflagging and determined, she led her ever-expanding convent to a profound renewal, and made it into one of the beacons of the Catholic Reformation in France.

Anne-Claire VOLONGO

A Reformer's Memories: Angélique Arnauld in unpublished correspondence

Although Mère Angélique refused to formalise a method for reform until the end of her life, she never gave up handing down her experience to those who asked her for it. That part of Angélique Arnauld's correspondence has remained for the most part unpublished, in other words absent from the printed edition of 1742-1744. These letters are certainly of an unequal interest, but the repetitive character of certain recommendations by Mère Angélique brings to light the key points of her reform. In them, she insists on the issues: the vow of poverty, the return to a simple life, but also on the ways to carry out this reform: detaching from the secular world, choosing directors, avoiding pitfalls. Through this documentation appears the portrait of an abbess strengthened by her convictions, but also still aware of her difficulties and troubled by doubts.

F. Ellen WEAVER LAPORTE

*Two great Parisian convents: Port-Royal and Montmartre, and the
Catholique Reformation in France*

Although the reform of Montmartre was not as tragic as the reform at Port-Royal, marked by the famous *journée du Guichet*, the two monasteries were reformed in the same way : both reinstated the cloister, the plainchant of the Divine Office, the observance of silence, poverty and other aspects, in accordance with the Rule of Saint Benedict and also, for Port-Royal, with St. Bernard's *carta caritatis*. In spite of their age difference, the lives of abbesses Marie de Beauvilliers and Jacqueline Arnauld experienced similar paths.

3. Port-Royal within the reform movement

Thomas M. CARR

*Angélique Arnauld and the Generation of 1591 (Françoise de
Nérestang, Louise de Marillac and Antoinette Micolon)*

Angélique Arnauld belongs to a remarkable generation of dynamic reforming abbesses and foundresses of new orders. The article compares her career to those of three other women born around the same year of 1591: another Cistercian, Françoise de Nérestang, abbess of the Bénisson-Dieu, and for the active orders, Louise de Marillac, foundress of the Daughters of Charity and Antoinette Micolon, born in 1592, who established Ursuline houses in Auvergne. The article compares them on four points: their decision to enter religious life; their concept of this life; the role their family played in their careers; their relations with their spiritual directors.

Jean-Luc COUSINAT

Port-Royal and the early stages of the Strict Observance. Three of the movement's protagonists: Claude de Kersaliou, Étienne Maugier and Julien Warner.

Mère Angélique was linked with certain priests from the Strict Observance, which appeared around 1598-1599, until her break from the Order of Cistercians in 1627. Three monks and superiors of the Cistercian revival, all coming from local reform movements, assisted her officially in her reform projects: Claude de Kersaliou, instigator of the *journée du Guichet*, the controversial Étienne Maugier, and Julien Warnier, the secret founder. Even after leaving the order, the abbess of Port-Royal remained attached to the rigour that lay at the heart of the Cistercian reform.

Léon WUILLAUME, s.j.

Fathers Suffren et Binet: two Jesuit directors linked to the reform of Port-Royal

In the first years of the reform at Port-Royal, a number of Jesuits appear as preachers, confessors and spiritual directors, notably Fathers Jean Suffren, confessor to Queen Marie de Médicis, and Étienne Binet, friend of François de Sales. Both held Mère Angélique in high esteem, and despite some reservations about the choice and value of ascetic actions, they encouraged her reform and maintained cordial, even friendly relations with her and several nuns. From 1626 onwards, under the pressure of events, secular priests – oratoriens to begin with, were from then on preferred and given priority at Port-Royal. The Jesuits had no reasons to continue their activities there.

4. Reform and spiritual life

Éva Madeleine MARTIN

The Song of Angels

Numerous accounts testify to the high quality of singing at Port-Royal and result from a combination of several factors: environmental and individual, Cistercian, Salesian, and Tridentine. However, at the start of the 17th century, the decline of plainchant was still frequent in women's monasteries despite recommendations drawn up in 1563 by the Council of Trent, which recommended a renewal of vocal education with the establishment of seminars where singing lessons would accompany grammar lessons.

According to Port-Royal nuns, Agnès Arnauld was the central figure of singing at the abbey. Through her preference for the liturgy, she linked up with Bérulle's teachings in their mystical implications. Singing at Port-Royal was probably never strictly codified. However, scores held at the Sainte-Geneviève library, dating from the second half of the 17th century, point to numerous aspects of traditional plainchant preserved there.

Simon ICARD

The Reform of Port-Royal: a return to the spirit of St. Bernard

The Port-Royal *Constitutions* present Mère Angélique Arnauld's reform as a return to "the spirit of Saint Bernard." Now, neither the *Constitutions* nor the accounts of the reform written in the 1650s really allow an understanding of the Cistercian tradition with which Port-Royal was in line, in other words, the way in which the heritage of the founding fathers was handed down in the early decades of the 17th century. The original correspondences of the early directors – Capuchins, Feuillants and Cistercians of the future Strict Observance – suggest taking a step back, faced with the myth of a reform born of only Mère Angélique's conversion and led against the Order of Cistercians. They also throw new light on the practice of prayer at the beginning of the

reform. St. Bernard appears as a model here, and his authority turned out to be decisive when Port-Royal left the Order of Cistercians.

5. Accounts of the reform and the construction of a myth

Agnès COUSSON

Narrating the Reform: from history to myth

In 1652, as part of the remembrance process on Mère Angélique Arnauld begun at Port-Royal, Angélique de Saint-Jean Arnauld d'Andilly, her niece and a nun in the community, began a long account that she did not finish until 1673. In it, she narrates the abbess's youth and the way in which she introduced the reform at Port-Royal, and then Maubuisson. This paper intends to show how Angélique de Saint-Jean uses biography, and the functions that she ascribes to it. The study will firstly examine the portrait of Mère Angélique, composed according to the rules of legendary accounts, and the presentation of her reform. It will then bring to light the links between the narrative of the past, formation of group identity and protection of the community.

Julie FINNERTY

Continuity and Rupture: Angélique de Saint-Jean confronted with her aunt's legacy

This article looks at the image of Mère Angélique and her reform in the Port-Royal of her niece, Mère Angélique de Saint-Jean, notably through the latter's letters and conferences. While Angélique de Saint-Jean was abbess of Port-Royal, from 1678-1684, she insisted on the implementation of the rules established by her aunt. However, this fidelity to the reform of 1609 was not without consequences. In her desire to be able to continue Mère Angélique's reform freely, her niece entered into conflict with the royal and religious powers of her time. This paper examines the context of this break, and the way

in which Angélique de Saint-Jean defended her aunt's reform, and ultimately Port-Royal.

Guy BASSET

The Reform of Port-Royal in the Nécrologe

The *Nécrologe*, with the exception of a preface, catalogues of abbesses and confessors, and a late ode about the destruction of Port-Royal, only consists of obituaries. Evidence of the reform must be sought in the obituaries themselves. The reform is not seen as a revolution but as falling within a history which goes back to the very founding of the abbey in 1204. Through the descriptions of the nuns and close friends of the convent, we can understand the support and opposition that the reform could have provoked within the abbey itself, but we can also envisage its impact on other institutions.

Véronique ALEMANY

The Literary Fortune of the Journée du Guichet

In this article, the author deals with writing, both at face value and below the surface, about the famous episode known as the *journée du Guichet* which, on 25 September 1609, marked the beginning of the reform of Port-Royal abbey. From Mère Angélique Arnauld's condensed, non-factual testimony, and the memories reported by her counterparts, her niece, Mère Angélique de Saint-Jean, put together an inaugural account of this day that contributed to the emerging myth of the history of Port-Royal. The eighteenth-century memorialists retained this hagiographical concern and conformed to the dramatic accounts of the previous century. The latter remains the documentary source of literary transcription that Sainte-Beuve made of it, combining romantic narrative, psychological analysis, and literary criticism. More than a century and a half passed before the *journée du Guichet* was integrated by writers – exclusively women – into two monographs on the

abbess-reformer in a psychoanalytical essay on her behaviour as an abused and imprisoned woman, and next, in passing, in a novel. Although it was a major event in the Port-Royal reform, the *Guichet* episode didn't get the literary treatment that it deserved and has not yet found its place in "the redeployment of the evocation of Port-Royal" in the final thirty years of the twentieth century. Why is this?

6. Conclusions

Emmanuel BURY

Conclusions. The Catholic Reformation at Port-Royal: from myth to history

The 17th century marks, maybe even more than the previous century, the difficult turning point for modernity in the fields of theology, spirituality and ecclesiology, as if the brutal ruptures of the 16th century called from then on for reorganisation, for constructive renewal of which the council of Trent had given a broad outline. Reading the contributions to the present volume, we become aware that the singularity of the course undertaken and the complex psychology of an exceptional woman led to a profound reform of spirituality and religious ideas.

The works gathered here allow an understanding of the reform of Port-Royal within the more general framework of the Catholic Reformation, and a better grasp of the vision of Port-Royal before the arrival of Jansenism. Situating this reform within the large horizon of aspirations towards a new spirituality allows us not to reduce the convent to Jansenism only and to give it back the place that it merits in the Catholic renewal of the early 17th century.

II. SUPPLEMENTS TO THE CONFERENCE

Bertrand MARCEAU

A Visit to Port-Royal in 1604

On 17 December 1604, the Abbot General of Cîteaux, Nicolas Boucherat, wrote an account of his visit to the abbey of Port-Royal des Champs. On the margins of this conference, it seemed useful to produce a new edition of this account, which is one of the rare contemporary descriptions of Port-Royal before the reform. Indeed this detailed text allows us to become more acquainted with the situation of the abbey, and it seems worth comparing it with other sources.

SŒURS DE LA GRÂCE-DIEU

Uniting three Cistercian communities.

The Cistercian community which resided at the abbey of Grâce-Dieu from 1927 is the continuation of the community of Port-Royal de Paris after the 1665 separation. In order to cope with a cruel shortage of vocations, the nuns decided to unite with the abbeys of Belval and Igny. The new community took the name of Notre-Dame du Val d'Igny and has settled in Igny, in the diocese of Reims.

III. VARIA

Yuka MOCHIZUKI

The literary birth of De La Fréquente Communion

Written by Antoine Arnauld under the auspices of Saint-Cyran and with the help of several *Messieurs de Port-Royal*, *De La Fréquente Communion* is the archetype of future literary activities of Port-Royal, such as the preparation of the *Provinciales* and the translation of the Bible. A historical and stylistic

analysis as well as the consultation of correspondences has led to a better understanding of the different stages of this collective work, and also to crediting Antoine Arnauld with the authorship of the preface, a question which has been the object of numerous debates.

Philippe MOULIS

A guardian angel, demons and Jansenist priests in the diocese of Boulogne-sur-Mer: the possession of Offrethun (1717-1718)

The departmental archives of Pas-de-Calais have preserved a disconcerting document. In 1718, seven priests gave statements before a notary concerning a demonic possession. The events took place in Boulonnais, more precisely in the parishes of Offrethun, Doudeauville and Marquise. The affair took on an unusual dimension in the context of opposition to the *Unigenitus* bull, and may be seen as an attempt to legitimise the appeal when it is pointed out that these seven priests were all Jansenists.

Dominique FABRE

Charles-Jacques Saillant, doctor and priest (1747-1814)

Ordained a priest aged fifty, after being a doctor, Charles-Jacques Saillant was an influential protagonist in the reorganisation of the *Église constitutionnelle* as the Revolution drew to a close. Determined in his actions, moderate in his writings, he illustrated, through his debates with other members of the Jansenist “party,” the splinterings and reconstructions of, depending on the subject, the circle of influence of those who claimed to represent what it is customary to call the *École de Port-Royal*.

Bernard GAZIER et Philippe LUEZ

*War of the fables? The biography of Philippe and Jean-Baptiste de
Champaigne by Augustin Gazier*

Recently brought into question in an article published on the occasion of the Champaigne exhibition at the *Musée de Lille*, the biography of Philippe and Jean-Baptiste de Champaigne by Augustin Gazier deserves to be replaced in the context of its writing. Indeed it reveals a perspective of the two artists, which was until then unrecognized and virtually unexamined. Augustin Gazier is known for his scrupulousness in relation to his sources, which he listed and exploited consistently. Rather than judging his supposed motives, we must give him credit for writing the first summary of the existing knowledge at that time, and notably for including the debates on Belgian historiography.