

1. Record Nr.	UNINA9910790053403321
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Titolo	Feminism, absolutism, and Jansenism : Louis XIV and the Port-Royal nuns // Daniella Kostroun
Pubbl/distr/stampa	Leiden : , : Cambridge University Press, , 2011
ISBN	1-139-03605-X 1-107-21983-3 1-283-12716-4 9786613127167 1-139-04151-7 0-511-97645-3 1-139-03837-0 1-139-04228-9 1-139-04491-5 1-139-04074-X
Descrizione fisica	1 online resource (xiii, 273 pages) : digital, PDF file(s)
Disciplina	273/.7
Soggetti	Cistercian nuns - France - History - 17th century Jansenists - France - History - 17th century Patriarchy - France - History - 17th century Feminism - France - History - 17th century Despotism - France - History - 17th century Religious absolutism - France - History - 17th century France Politics and government 1643-1715 France Religion 17th century
Lingua di pubblicazione	Inglese
Livello bibliografico	Monografia
Note generali	Title from publisher's bibliographic system (viewed on 05 Oct 2015).
Nota di bibliografia	Includes bibliographical references and index.
Nota di contenuto	Jansenism as a "woman problem" -- Controversy and reform at Port Royal -- Jansenism's political turn, 1652-1661 -- The limits to obedience, 1661-1664 -- A feminist response to absolutism, 1664-1669 -- The unsettled peace, 1669-1679 -- A royal victory, 1679-1709.

Sommario/riassunto

Feminism, Absolutism, and Jansenism chronicles seventy years of Jansenist conflict and its complex intersection with power struggles between gallican bishops, Parlementaires, the Crown and the Pope. Daniella Kostroun focuses on the nuns of Port-Royal-des-Champs, whose community was disbanded by Louis XIV in 1709 as a threat to the state. Paradoxically, it was the nuns' adherence to their strict religious rule and the ideal of pious, innocent and politically disinterested behavior that allowed them to challenge absolutism effectively. Adopting methods from cultural studies, feminism and the Cambridge School of political thought, Kostroun examines how these nuns placed gender at the heart of the Jansenist challenge to the patriarchal and religious foundations of absolutism; they responded to royal persecution with a feminist defense of women's spiritual and rational equality and of the autonomy of the individual subject, thereby offering a bold challenge to the patriarchal and religious foundations of absolutism.
