

Sarah Shortall, *Soldiers of God in a Secular World: Catholic Theology and Twentieth-Century French Politics*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2021. Pp. 352. Hb, \$49.95.

A number of us have been waiting years for this book's arrival. Sarah Shortall has mined rich holdings in the Archives française de la Compagnie de Jésus (<https://archives.jesuites.com>). The *fonds* (collections) for the French Jesuit province of Paris include the *Fonds C-Pa Documents historiques sur la Compagnie* dedicated to major historical events, including the Action Française, world wars, Algerian War, and expulsions during the anti-clerical campaigns. This latter includes the *Fonds Jersey* for the Maison Saint-Louis, i.e., the French Jesuit scholasticate in British exile on the English Channel island of Jersey. Shortall also consulted the *fonds* dedicated to individual figures: Henri Bouillard, Pierre Chaillet, Jean Daniélou, Henri de Lubac, Yves de Montcheuil, Henri Rondet, Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, and—perhaps most importantly—the *Fonds Gaston Fessard*. Shortall consulted numerous other archives as well, including the Centre d'Archives et d'Études Cardinal Henri de Lubac. (Of special note for the Dominican side of the story is Shortall's work in the Archives de la Province dominicaine de France, particularly the individual *fonds* for Marie-Dominique Chenu, Yves Congar, and Henri-Marie Féret.) For admirers of these twentieth-century giants, Shortall's book marks a milestone achievement.

Although much has been written about the *nouvelle théologie* movement in general and a number of this story's central figures individually (more so in French than in English), one of this monograph's principal strengths is its revelation of previously unpublished documents—including letters, memos, drafts, sermons, and conference papers. These objects abundantly manifest one of Shortall's underlying themes, i.e., the expansive yet intimate network of interpersonal connections—and most especially the central role of *friendship*. In the religious order communities, “the distinctive spirituality of the order and the *affective bonds forged* in the course of religious life are inseparable from intellectual production. The story of the Jesuits at the heart of this book demonstrates *the crucial role that friendship in particular can play in the development of ideas*” (11, emphasis added). In this keen attunement to friendship networks in intellectual history, Shortall's work finds fellow travelers in other recent publications, including Brenna Moore's *Kindred Spirits: Friendship and Resistance at the Edges of Modern Catholicism* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2021), Edward Baring's *Converts to the Real: Catholicism and the Making of Continental Philosophy* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2019),

and Piotr Kosicki's *Catholics on the Barricades: Poland, France, and "Revolution," 1891–1956* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2018). Shortall's work also echoes more broadly the recent historiographical turn toward the "history of emotions": for example, see the University of London's Centre for the History of the Emotions <https://projects.history.qmul.ac.uk/emotions/>; and *Changing Hearts: Performing Jesuit Emotions between Europe, Asia, and the Americas*, eds. Raphaële Garrod and Yasmin Haskell (Leiden: Brill, 2019).

Shortall's methodological approach also represents intellectual history's recent recovery (from an older largely ahistorical "history of ideas") that incorporates cultural historical methods (e.g., *Rethinking Modern European Intellectual History*, ed. Darrin M. McMahon and Samuel Moyn [New York: Oxford University Press, 2014]; *Global Intellectual History*, ed. Samuel Moyn and Andrew Sartori [New York: Columbia University Press, 2013]; and the "Intellectual History of the Modern Age" series at the University of Pennsylvania Press <https://www.pennpress.org/series/>). Shortall deploys her wealth of archival sources to construct thick descriptions of the cultural, economic, political, and social contexts in which to situate scholarly publications by and about the *nouvelle théologie* movement over the better part of the last century.

Throughout the work, Shortall keeps in mind two primary goals. First: she aims at integrating theology into intellectual history, two spheres commonly considered to be opposed, one "private" and the other "public." Although the "history of theology and modern European intellectual history have traditionally been told as separate stories," Shortall observes that "theologians made crucial contributions to modern philosophical developments from phenomenology and the philosophy of history to human rights and totalitarianism theory." (Compare again Baring, Kosicki, and Moore, as well as Samuel Moyn, *Christian Human Rights* [Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2015].) "A major goal of this book, then, is to show that the histories of modern theology and modern European thought are far more intertwined than previously imagined, and in doing so, to begin to *integrate theology into the canon of modern European intellectual history*" (10, emphasis added).

Closely related is Shortall's second primary goal: the explication and demonstration of theology's use in creating a "counter-politics." Especially by recovering ancient "patristic" imagery for a renewed vision, she argues, de Lubac's circle enabled the church's political role to be reconstructed as a critical one. In the wake of France's Act of Separation (1905) and the traumatic experience of forced exile to foreign shores, both Dominicans and Jesuits needed to create a new identity and role within secularized public life. More to the point,

theology gave the de Lubac circle a defining identity in “counter-politics”—i.e., “a means to access the political obliquely; it gave them language with which to intervene in political questions even as they claimed to remain at arm’s length from politics” (8, emphasis added). The clearest example of this “oblique” approach came during the Nazi Occupation of France (1940–44) in the Second World War when “de Lubac, Chaillet, and Fessard launched the clandestine resistance journal *Témoignage chrétien* [Christian Witness],” the leading voice of the “spiritual resistance” to Nazism. By “encoding their resistance message in the language of theology” to circumvent wartime censorship, they “used the resources of ecclesiology, eschatology, and theological anthropology to fashion a response to the dominant political questions that exercised their world” (8, 9).

This wartime example sharply focuses on the distinctiveness of Shortall’s historiographical intervention. The story of the *Témoignage chrétien* Jesuits is not unknown: see for example James Bernauer, *Jesuit Kaddish: Jesuits, Jews and Holocaust Remembrance* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2020); “*The Tragic Couple*”: *Encounters Between Jews and Jesuits*, eds. James Bernauer and Robert A. Maryks (Leiden: Brill, 2014); and Henri de Lubac, *Christian Resistance to Anti-Semitism: Memories from 1940–1944*, trans. Elizabeth Englund (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1990), French original 1988. The resistance story—a heroic story—has been told before.

However, Shortall’s distinctiveness lies in the four-year episode’s contextualization within the expansive trajectory both preceding and following, as well as its rooting in theological sources beneath the surface. The intimate friendships between the resistance Jesuits did not suddenly form in the Occupation cauldron when they found themselves together at the Fourvière-Lyon scholasticate in the southern Vichy “Free Zone.” Rather, the deep affective bonds that would sustain through peril and fear stretched back almost two decades since their British exile days as scholastics in Jersey. It was there that their youthful impatience with their elders’ manualist neo-Scholasticism first triggered the urge to develop a religious response more adequate to contemporary challenges. Twenty years later, then, in the midst of a second global cataclysm, their “new theology” provided a language that could be deployed as a “counter-politics.” Far from being apolitical, it staked out a decisively political stance of “spiritual resistance” to fascism and antisemitism. After the Liberation of August 1944, the movement would suffer internal divisions and ecclesiastical condemnation before its eventual rehabilitation. Thanks to Shortall’s *longue durée* trajectory of causes and effects, the apparently familiar four-year episode recovers a fresh unfamiliarity, embedded in multiple layers of nuance, complexity, and intelligibility. All that is old seems new again. So too do Henri

de Lubac's heartrending tributes in later life to Yves de Montcheuil, his fallen confrère executed by Germans in the Occupation's final days.

Shortall has structured the book in a straightforward chronological fashion. Part I: Separation (1880–1939) sets the stage. In Chapter 1, "Exile Catholicism," Shortall recounts the crucial traumatic experiences (both foreign exile and world war) whose effects would reverberate for decades. "It is to the friendships and shared experiences of this group that we must look to understand the intellectual origins of the *nouvelle théologie*. Their story testifies to the important but often overlooked role that affective bonds play in the history of ideas. It also shows how the anticlerical campaign in France unwittingly created the conditions for a renaissance in French Catholic thought" (20). Chapter 2, "From Royalism to the Mystical Body of Christ," shows how the centuries-old throne-altar (and, later, state-church) union—newly defunct thanks to both the republican Act of Separation (1905) as well as the papal condemnation of the monarchical and protofascist Action Française (1926)—could be reconfigured by a primitivist-modernist refashioning of ancient imagery. The nineteenth-century Catholic struggle against liberal democracy was largely finished. The twentieth-century postwar menace was totalitarianism, exemplified in Russia's Bolshevik Revolution (1917) and Mussolini's successful Fascist March on Rome (1922).

Part II: Resistance (1940–1944) recounts the Occupation story of the resistance group—longstanding friendships from Jersey now drawing on those affective bonds to meet previously unimaginable new challenges. Chapter 3, "Fighting Nazism with the 'Weapons of the Spirit,'" argues that "in the context of the war, theology became a powerful political weapon precisely because it appeared to be apolitical." Chapter 4, "The Theoretical Foundations of the Spiritual Resistance," delves beneath the deceptively simple prose style of the *Témoignage chrétien* publications. Their form had followed function: rhetorical appeals to persuade the populace. Shortall's innovation is the elucidation of the subterranean intellectual resources undergirding those surface appeals, an interweaving of intellectual and cultural objects. De Lubac's circle deftly "deployed the resources of theology to carve out an ideological space that was both antifascist and antiliberal"—the oblique approach of a counter-politics (15).

Part II: Renewal (1945–1965) surveys the postwar-Cold War era through the conclusion of the Second Vatican Council (in December 1965). Chapter 5, "The Postwar Catholic Engagement with the Left," analyzes the internal divisions that followed after the crisis had passed. A split opened between those who were open to forces of the left and those who preferred to engage new philosophical movements. The title of Chapter 6, "The Drama of Atheist Humanism

and the Politics of History,” pays homage to one of de Lubac’s most important works, published as the war’s end approached: *Le drame de l’humanisme athée* (Paris: Éditions Spes, 1944). Shortall traces how “Jesuits incorporated the insights of existentialism and Hegelianism to develop a vision of human nature and history that could serve as a counterpoint to both Marxism and liberalism” (15).

Especially notable is the figure of Gaston Fessard, the Jesuit Hegelian whose archival *fonds* play such an important role in this book’s primary source base. Regrettably, Fessard is relatively unknown in the Anglophone world. These pages recover his important legacy as a Christian-Marxist interlocutor, including his involvement with Alexandre Kojève’s 1935–39 Parisian lectures reading Hegel’s *Phenomenology* via Marx and Heidegger (also recounted in Baring’s *Converts to the Real*). Fortuitously, in just this past year (2022), Fessard’s 1956 landmark—*The Dialectic of the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius of Loyola*—has finally been published in an English critical edition, translated and edited by James Colbert and the late Oliva Blanchette (Leiden: Brill, 2022). (One might also hope for a reprint of Édouard Pousset’s *Life in Faith and Freedom: An Essay Presenting Gaston Fessard’s Analysis of the Dialectic of the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius*, trans. Eugene L. Donahue [St. Louis, MO: Institute of Jesuit Sources, 1980], original French, 1972.) Both Fessard and de Lubac firmly resisted—or perhaps more accurately, outright denied—the possibility of resolving oppositions, paradoxes, and social conflicts in historical time. To the frustration of many today, their position was inherited and internalized by the young Jorge Bergoglio, the current Pope Francis—a Fessardian moment.

Finally, Chapter 7, “The Death and Resurrection of the *Nouvelle Théologie*,” recounts the painful 1950s decade of condemnation followed by the astonishing reversal and rehabilitation of the “new theology”—its roots extending back to 1920s exile—in service of the council. Profound disagreements about the relationship between the church and the “modern world” have not only persisted but grown more bitter over the past half-century. Thanks to Shortall’s theoretical framing, these disputes might now be seen as an almost inevitable consequence of the fundamental “neither right nor left” character of “counter-politics.” An epilogue explores the appropriately paradoxical afterlife of this “counter-politics,” both in liberation theology and radical orthodoxy. Despite differences, they witness as one to religion’s persistent staying power—even in a secular world.

Shortall’s long-awaited book exceeds expectations. On both the micro- and macro-levels—archival research and overarching narrative—the work marks an inflection point in the study of these twentieth-century Jesuit intellectuals

(and their Dominican counterparts). It deftly deploys recent methodological trends, and it persuasively demonstrates how theology and intellectual history—reputedly occupying opposed “private” and “public” spheres—can mutually inform and enhance. Small wonder that it won both the 2021 Giuseppe Alberigo Junior Scholar Award from the European Academy of Religion and the 2020–21 Laurence Wylie Prize in French Cultural Studies at New York University. Shortall’s long-awaited work will remain a touchstone for years to come.

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DOI:10.1163/22141332-10020009-08

Klaus Schatz, *Geschichte der Österreichischen Provinz der Gesellschaft Jesu (1938–1983)*. Geschichte der deutschen Jesuiten, 7. Münster: Aschaffendorff Verlag, 2022, Pp. 597. Hb, €78.00.

Some academics enjoy their well-deserved retirement after leaving active service while others rise to new heights of unencumbered research activities after this decisive date. Klaus Schatz, S.J. (b.1938) undoubtedly belongs to the latter. After already rich scholarly productivity, as a seventy-five-year-old man he published in 2013 five extensive volumes on the history of the German Jesuits (1813–1983) [see the *JJS* review at <https://doi.org/10.1163/22141332-00201005>], to which he added in 2017 a further one on the history of his Swiss confrères (1947–83) [see the *JJS* review at <https://doi.org/10.1163/22141332-00601012-04>]. After a detour to the Jesuits in Sweden (1879–2001) in 2019, he devoted himself in 2022—one almost wants to write “finally”—to the Jesuits in Austria intentionally excluded from the volumes on Germany for reasons explained in their introduction. In 1983, it had seemed too extensive and complex to him, yes, as it were, like a duplication of the effort, to include the Austrian Jesuits province. Or, did a widespread reluctance of German historians to discuss topics concerning their neighbor country in the southeast—often lamented by their Austrian colleagues (*Austriaca non leguntur*)—also play a role?

One cannot accuse Schatz of making the task easy. In this volume written in German, he covers the time frame in approximately six hundred pages, slightly more than he devotes to the parallel volume for Germany (1945–83), admittedly a shorter chronological period but also wider geographically, and