

CHAPTER IV

READING JOAN OF ARC:

FROM HISTORY TO NEW HISTORICISM

A. JOAN OF ARC: A HISTORICAL READING

Joan of Arc who in French is addressed as Jeanne d'Arc was a peasant girl who, believed that she was acting under divine guidance led the French army in a momentous victory at Orleans that repulsed an English attempt to conquer France during the Hundred Years' War (The New Encyclopaedia Britannica 377).

Kathleen McGowan says that Saint Joan of Arc is honored by the people of France as one of their greatest heroines (112). In this case David Herlihy also said the same thing about her. In "Encyclopedia International" he wrote that Joan of Arc is a saint and heroine from France, an illiterate peasant girl who turned the tide of her country's fortunes in the Hundred Years' War (32).

Joan was born in 1412, the daughter of a tenant farmer, at Domremy, on the borders of the duchies of Bar and Lorraine. Kathleen McGowan, David Herlihy, and Vita Sackville-West claim that she was born on January 6, 1412.

Joan was a perfectly ordinary little peasant girl, accustomed to take the rough with the smooth, born to a countryside which suggested no violent contrast between reality as she lived it and reality as it might ideally be lived (Vita Sackville-West 47)

In her action of expelling the English and their Burgundian allies from the Valois kingdom of France, she felt herself to be guided by the "voices" of St. Michael, St.

Catherine, and St. Margaret (The New Encyclopaedia Britannica 377). “Compton’s Picture Encyclopedia” believes that Joan heard heavenly voices and saw visions – of St. Margaret and Catherine, and of the angel Michael, patron saint of soldiers (219). Kathleen McGowan also says that when Joan was about 13 years old she began to hear “voices,” which she later identified as those of St. Margaret and Catherine, and of Michael the Archangel (112). It is also said by David Herlihy in “Encyclopedia International” that in 1425, at the age of only 13, Joan was visited by “voices” who identified themselves as St. Michael, St. Catherine, and St. Margaret (32).

Vita Sackville-West also writes in her book based on Joan’s answer in the trial that for the first time it was Saint Michael who gave her the instruction to restore France and put on men’s clothes; and that she will be guided by her counsel:

“Jeanne you are destined to lead a different kind of life and to accomplish miraculous things, for you are she who has been chosen by the King of Heaven to restore the Kingdom of France, and to aid and protect King Charles, who has been driven from his domains. You shall put on masculine clothes; you shall bear arms and become the head of the army; all things shall be guided by your counsel.”
(67)

Night and day similar visions appeared to her, renewing and repeating their words. She kept her own counsel; to none, save to her priest, did she speak; and in this perplexity she continued for the space of five years.

A.1.Joan's Mission:

The crown of France at the time (in the 14th century) was in dispute between the dauphin Charles, son and heir of the Valois king, Charles VI, and the Lancastrian English king, Henry VI. Henry's armies were in alliance with those of Philip the Good, duke of Burgundy (whose father, John the Fearless, had been assassinated in 1419 by partisans of the Dauphin), and were occupying much of the northern part of the Kingdom. The apparent hopelessness of the Dauphin's cause at the end of 1427 was increased by the fact that, five years after his father's death, he still had not been crowned. Reims, the traditional place for the investiture of French kings, was well within the territory held by his enemies. As long as the Dauphin remained unconsecrated, the rightfulness of his claim to be king of France was open to challenge (The New Encyclopaedia Britannica 377).

Joan's village of Domremy was on the frontier between the France of the Anglo-Burgundians and that of the Dauphin. The villagers had already had to abandon their homes before the Burgundians threats. Being led by her voices, Joan traveled in 1428 from Domremy to Vaucouleurs, the nearest stronghold still loyal to the Dauphin, where she asked the captain of the garrison, Robert de Baudricourt, for permission to join the Dauphin. He did not take the 16-year-old girl and her visions seriously, and she returned home. Joan went to Vaucouleurs again in January 1429. This time her quiet firmness and piety gained her the respect of people; and the captain, persuaded that she was neither a witch nor feeble-minded, allowed her to go to the Dauphin at Chinon. She left Vaucouleurs about February 13, dressed in men's clothes and accompanied by six men-

at-arms. Crossing territory held by the enemy, and travelling for 11 days, she reach Chinon (The New Encyclopaedia Britannica 377).

A. 1.1. Meeting with the Dauphin:

Further more, it is said that Joan went at once to the castle occupied by the dauphin Charles. He was uncertain whether to receive her, and his counselors gave him conflicting advice; but two days later he granted her an audience (377). Charles had hidden himself among his courtiers; however it is well known that she was able to pick up the Dauphin out of the crowd of his courtiers, even though another man had been designated to her in the attempt to trick her as a test of her sincerity (Vita Sackville-West 82). It is said that the Dauphin attempted to deceive her by concealing himself among the crowd, less magnificently dressed than some of his lords (139).

It is said in "The New Encyclopaedia Britannica" that in her meeting with the Dauphin she told him that she wished to go to battle against the English and that she would gave him crowned at Reims (377). Certainly, she did not propose to set the crown upon his head with her own hands; her modesty and her respect to the Church would alike have precluded her from so arrogant a program. But she did intend to vanquish the enemy, and fully believed herself to be the pointed saviour (West 85).

On the Dauphin's orders she was immediately interrogated by the ecclesiastical authority in the presence of Jean, Duc d'Alencon, a relative of Charles, who showed himself well-disposed toward her (New Encyclopaedia Britannica 378). Further it describes that for three weeks she was further questioned at Poitiers by eminent theologians who were allied to the Dauphin's cause (378).

Still in "New Encyclopaedia Britannica" it is said that on March 22, 1429, she dictated letters of defiance to the English (378). This is the letter that she wrote to the King of England, taken from "Medieval Sourcebook":

JESUS, MARY

King of England, render account to the King of Heaven of your royal blood. Return the keys of all good cities which you have seized, to the Maid. She is sent by God to reclaim the royal blood, and is fully prepared to make peace, if you will give her satisfaction; that is, you must render justice, and pay back all that you have taken.

King of England, if you do not do these things, I am the commander of the military; and in whatever place I shall find your men in France, I will make them flee the country, whether they wish to or not; and if they will not obey, the Maid will have them all killed. She comes sent by the King of Heaven, body for body, to take you out of France, and the Maid promises and certifies to you that if you do not leave France she and her troops will raise a mighty outcry as has not been heard in France in a thousand years. And believe that the King of Heaven has sent her much power that you will not be able to harm her or her brave army.

To you, archers, noble companions in arms, and all people who are before Orleans, I say to you in God's name, go home to your own country, if you do not do so, beware of the Maid, and of the damages you will suffer. Do not attempt to remain, for you have no rights in France from God, the King of Heaven, and the Son of the Virgin Mary. It is Charles, the rightful heir, to whom God has given

France, who will shortly enter Paris in a grand company. If you do not believe the news written of God and the Maid, then in whatever place we may find you, we will soon see who has the better right, God or you.

William de la Pole, Count of Suffolk, Sir John Talbot, and Thomas, Lord Scales, lieutenants of the Duke of Bedford, who calls himself regent of the King of France for the King of England, make a response, if you wish to make peace over the city of Orleans! If you do not do so, you will always recall the damages which will attend you.

Duke of Bedford, who call yourself regent of France for the King of England, the Maid asks you not to make her destroy you. If you do not render her satisfaction, she and the French will perform the greatest feat ever done in the name of Christianity.

Done on the Tuesday of Holy Week (March 22, 1429). HEAR THE WORDS OF GOD AND THE MAID. (1-2)

More over the "New Encyclopaedia Britannica" explains that Joan returned to Chinon. At Tours, during April, the Dauphin provided her with a military household of several men; Jean d'Aulon become his squire, and she was joined by her brothers Jean and Pierre (378). The same thing is also described by West in "Saint Joan of Arc" (159-160). She had her standard painted with the image of Christ in Judgment and a banner made bearing the name of Jesus (New Encyclopaedia Britannica 378). She accepted her armour and the banners; the sword she declined, having ideas of her own. She knew

exactly which sword she wanted, and would have none other. They had to go and fetched it for her. They would find it, she said, buried in the ground behind the altar in the church of Saint Catherine at Fierbois (West 163/ New Encyclopaedia Britannica 378).

A. 1.2. Orleans and the Battle of Patay:

Troops numbering several hundred men were mustered at Blois, and on April 27 they set out for Orleans. The city, besieged since Oct. 12, 1428, was almost totally surrounded by a ring of English strongholds when Joan and one of the French commanders, La Hire, entered with supplies on April 29, she was told that action had to be deferred until further reinforcements could be brought in (New Encyclopaedia Britannica 378).

Further it explains that on the evening of May 4, when Joan was resting, she suddenly sprang up, apparently inspired that she had to go and attack the English. Having herself armed she hurried out to the east of the city toward an English fort where, indeed, an engagement of which she had not been told was taking place. Her arrival roused the French advanced and they took the fort (378).

Very early on May 7 the French advanced against the fort of Les Tourelles. Joan was wounded but quickly returned to fight, and it was thanks in part to her example that the French commanders maintained the attack until the English capitulated (378). Next day the English was seen to be retreating, but because it was Sunday, Joan refused any pursuit (378). This she did, to everyone's amazement, in a few short days from April 29 to May 8, 1429; she got her victory of Orleans (Encyclopedia International 32).

The French and English armies came face to face at Patay on June 18, 1429. Joan promised success to the French, saying that Charles would win a greater victory that day than any he had won so far (New Encyclopaedia Britannica 378). The victory was indeed complete; the English army was route and with it, finally, its reputation for invincibility (378).

A. 1.3. Coronation of the Dauphin:

According to the "New Encyclopaedia Britannica" instead of pressing home their advantage by a bold attack upon Paris, Joan and the French commanders turned back to rejoin the Dauphin, who was staying with La Tremoille at Sully-sur-Loire (378). Again Joan urged upon Charles to go on swiftly to Reims (378). The coronation at Reims was, to her, more urgent than even the reduction of Paris (West 224). He should no longer be the Dauphin, but the King. She had achieved wonders on his behalf: she had cleared the English out of Orleans (224). She was coming back to ask him to go and get himself crowned at Reims (225).

She and the Dauphin set out on march to Reims on June 29, 1429 (New Encyclopaedia Britannica 378). On Saturday, July 16, the royal army reached Reims, which opened its gates. The coronation took place on July 17, 1429 (378). The coronation represent the peak of Joan's triumph (West 251/New encyclopaedia Britannica 378).

The cathedral in which the Dauphin was being crowned was in its full glory, its foundation-stone laid in 1212 (West 247). The same day she wrote to the Duke of Burgundy, adjuring him to make peace with the King and to withdraw his garrisons from the royal fortresses (New Encyclopaedia Britannica 378).

As it continues further that Charles VII left Reims on July 20 and for a month the army paraded through Champagne and Ile-de-France. On August 2 the King decided on a retreat from Provins to the Loire, a move that implied abandoning any plan to attack Paris (378).

A. 1.4. Attack of Paris

Joan, however, was becoming more and more impatient, she thought it essential to take Paris. She and Alencon were at Saint-Denis on the northern outskirts of Paris on August 26, and the Parisians began to organize their defenses (New Encyclopaedia Britannica 378/ Vita Sackville-West 260). Charles arrived on September 7, and an attack was launched on September 8, directed between the gates of Saint-Honore and Saint Denis. The Parisians could be in no doubt of Joan's presence among besiegers; she stood forward on the earthworks, calling on them to surrender their city to the King of France. Wounded, she continued to encourage the soldiers until she had to abandon the attack. Though the next day she and Alencon sought to renew the assault, they were ordered by Charles's council to retreat (New Encyclopaedia Britannica 378/ West 260).

A. 2. Capture, Trial, and Execution:

A. 2.1. The Capture:

In "New Encyclopaedia Britannica" it is said that on her way back Joan heard that John of Luxembourg, the captain of Burgundian company, had laid siege to Compiègne. Hurrying on, she entered Compiègne under cover of darkness. The next afternoon, May 23, 1430, she led a sortie and twice repelled the Burgundians but was eventually

outflanked by English reinforcements and compelled to retreat. Remaining until the last to protect the rear guard while they crossed the Oise river, she was unhorsed and could not remount. She gave herself up and, with her brother Pierre and Jean d'Aulon, was taken to Mergny, where the Duke of Burgundy came to see her. Charles who was working toward a truce with the Duke made no attempt to save her (378).

A. 2.2. The Trial:

Beginning January 13, 1431, statements taken in Lorraine and elsewhere were read before the Bishop and his assessors; they were to provide the framework for Joan's interrogation (New Encyclopaedia Britannica 379). It continues further that before her judges on February 21 Joan asked for permission to attend mass beforehand, but it was refused on account of the gravity of the crimes with which she was charges (379). She was ordered to swear to tell the truth and did so swear, but she always refused to reveal the things she had said to Charles (378). As West translated from *Proces*, Vol I, p. 63 about her refusal: 'I am not telling you everything I know. I am more afraid of failing them, by saying something which might displease the voices, than of answer you' (330).

During the trial Joan said that she was still visited by her voices (West 331). Usually she heard it three times a day: once in the morning, once at the hour of vespers, and the third time in the evening, at the hour of Ave Maria (West 332). Further West continues that those voices are refer those three Saints: Saint Michael, Saint Catherine, and Saint Margaret. And they always visit her in the same shape that their heads very richly crowned (333).

These are the extracts from the trial:

Q: When did you last hear the voices speaking to you?

A: Yesterday and to-day.

Q: At what time did you hear it yesterday?

A: I heard it three times; once in the morning, once at the hour of vespers, and the third time in the evening, at the hour of the Ave Maria. Very often I hear it more frequently than I tell you. ... (331-332)

Q: How do you know that it is Saint

Margaret and Saint Catherine who talk to you?

A: I have told you enough before that they are Saint Catherine and Saint Margaret – believe me if you like.

Q: Do you always see them in the same clothes?

A: I always see them in the same shape, their heads very richly crowned. ... (333)

Q: What did Saint Michael look like when he appeared to you?

A: I did not see any crown, and I know nothing about his garment. (334)

A. 2.3. The Execution:

Apparently nothing further could be done. Joan was taken out of prison for the first time in four months on May 24, 1431 and conducted to the cemetery of the church of Saint-Ouen, where her sentence was to be read out (New Encyclopaedia Britannica 380). In this situation if she refused to sign a form of abjuration then the church would

abandon her to the secular power – that is, to the English (380). On her hesitation she gave her sign on it. Then the judges required her to return to her former prison (380).

The vice-inquisitor had ordered Joan to put on women's clothes, and she obeyed. But two or three days later, when the judges and others visited her and found her again in male attire, she said she had made the changes in her own free will, preferring men's clothes (New Encyclopaedia Britannica 380/ Saint Joan of Arc 372). They then pressed other questions, to which she answered that the voices of Saint Catherine and Saint Margaret had censured her "treason" in making an abjuration (West 372-3/ New Encyclopaedia Britannica 380). They further explains that these admissions were taken to signify relapse, and on May 29 the judges and 39 assessors agreed unanimously that she must be handed over the secular officials.

In the "New Encyclopaedia Britannica" it continues that the next morning on May 30, 1431, Joan received from Cauchon permission, unprecedented for a relapsed heretic, to make her confession and receive Communion (380). Accompanied by two Dominicans, she was then led to the Place du Vieux-Marche. There she endured one more sermon, and the sentence abandoning her to the secular arms was read out in the presence of her judges and a great crowd (New Encyclopaedia Britannica 380/ Saint Joan of Arc 377).

Further they continues to explain that the executioner seized her, led her to the stake, and lit a pyre. During this execution someone was holding up a crucifix for her to see and she kept calling a loud upon Saint Catherine, Saint Margaret, and Saint Michael. To the last she maintained that her voices were sent by God and had not deceived her (New Encyclopaedia Britannica 380/ West 378).

B. JOAN OF ARC: THE MOVIE

Joan of Arc was born in Domremy, France around 1412. She was the youngest daughter of a peasant farmer. At that time France was being overrun by the English. An internal war was being wage within France, with the region of Burgundy siding with the English. A deciding factor in war was who could control the city of Orleans, which sat strategically in the river bank of Loire. Only one thing could save France from its darkest period in history – a miracle.

When King Henry V of England and King Charles VI of France both died in 1422, the English declare Henry VI, a mere child, as king of both England and France. Charles VII of France had no intention of abandoning his kingdom and declared himself heir to the throne, but he could not be made king until he was crowned at Rheims – which at that time was under English occupation.

Meanwhile in Domremy, 13-year old Joan spends most of her childhood kneeling in prayer. She does not only like to confess daily but she also tells to the priest that she heard voices from the sky and has strange and startling vision.

One day after confessing to the priest, Joan felt very happy. She played in the field until she fell asleep. While she was sleeping a sword fell from the sky at the same time when there was wind, cloud, and bright light from the sky. She believed that the sword was given by God for her for some cause that she did not even know yet.

After playing in the fields, Joan ran home to find the English had invaded her town. As she hide in a cupboard, she witnessed English soldiers murdered and raped her 18-year-old sister. After this tragedy, Joan was send to live with he aunt and uncle in a

neighboring village, but Joan chose to run away from them to the church and held her own holy communion to be at one with Him.

B.1. Joan's Mission:

This movie does not explain further in detail about what happens next. But by May 1428, Joan no longer doubted that she had been bidden by God to aid the dauphin, and she took action. Actually, from the very beginning she was told that she was chosen by God to restore France and to give aid to the Dauphin Charles, who was to be the King of France but she never knew for sure about the mission. In order to do this, she had to wear men's clothing, bear arms, and lead the army.

B. 1.1. Meeting with the Dauphin:

Leaving the only home she had ever known behind she rode to Chinon to see Charles, the Dauphin. At first of course the King and his subject did not know what to think when word came from young Joan. Charles was very confused. He did not even know what to do; whether to trust her or not.

Aware of her professed visions, Charles arranged a trap for her. Charles order Jean D'Aulon, his finest archer, to pose as king.

Charles: ...if she can find me? – That's a brilliant idea! If she's really been send by God she'll discover the trap, and if she's an assassin she'll kill the wrong man!

(16)

Charles: Why not you – Jean D’Aulon? The only man who’s poorer than I am, and so the only man I can trust. Dignified, honorable, wise ... what more could we ask for a king? (17)

Joan arrives at the castle and she could recognize that Jean D’Aulon was not the dauphin. She tried to find the dauphin by herself among the crowd of the people and she impressed Charles by calling him on his bluff, and secured a private meeting with him.

Joan: I can see you are a good man, but you’re not the Dauphin. ...

Joan: My gentle Dauphin, I bring you good news.

Joan: It is a message from the King of Heaven. For you – and you only. (19)

During the private meeting Joan told the dauphin about all her visions. She said that she was a messenger and she had a message to deliver.

Joan: He said that I have to save France from her enemies and give her back to God, and He told me that I – Jeanne – will lead you to the altar at Rheims to be crowned King of France. (22-23)

Charles agreed to Joan’s request to provide her with an army to achieve victory against the English and secure the city of Rheims so that they could do his coronation. Though many felt that Joan was at best a harmless hysteric and at worst a threat not only to the king’s throne but to his life, they also detected in her magical quality and a persuasive attitude that could not be discouraged or resisted. In this case Charles and the others wanted to check all the truth about her especially in her virginity because it was something they could examine.

Charles: ... but – maybe for the first time in my life I – I don't know why – but I feel I have to trust her ... (25)

Tremouille: Wait .. she claims to be a virgin .. Well that's something we can examine – be absolutely certain about. (28)

At Poitiers university she passed her virginity examination. And as the result she is declared as a virgin.

Hag: There is no sign of corruption or violation. She is intact. (38)

Still at Poitiers university some inquisitors asked her about the truth of her visions. After a long examination then they agreed to believe in her.

B.1.2. Orleans:

Joan arrived at the battlefield dressed in white armour and carrying her personalized banner. This makes an impression on both armies, who are not used to seeing a woman in combat.

Dunois: Joan, you have to understand – it's not easy for us – I mean for our pride – to suddenly be usurped by a – well, with all do respect, by a ... girl. (38)

Knowing that people could not respect her just because she was a woman then she decided to cut of her hair so that she would look like a man.

Joan: So what if I 'm a girl ...? You need to look like a man to drive out the English? Fine ... let's look like a man! (39)

In the trenches with her countrymen, Joan won a victory for the French, who were rejuvenated by their inspirational new leader. But the battle was not over yet – Joan insisted on pressing further and rallying the troops once more to dissolve the English occupation of Orleans.

However in this movie it seems that Joan does not always act in the name of the King of Heaven. Sometimes she just even mentions her own self

Joan: This morning God gave us our first victory, but that was nothing compared to what He is ready to give us now. I know you are tired and hungry, but I swear to you in the name of the King of Heaven that even if these English were hanging from the clouds by their fingertips, we shall tear them down before nightfall ...! Now, my brave soldiers ... let those who love me ... follow me! (45-46)

Despite a valiant effort, they were exhausted and lost hope when Joan was shot in the chest by an arrow. The French retreated and tended to Joan's wound. And by miracle Joan was saved from her bad wound. However while Joan was unconscious she saw her sister Catherine murdered by the English soldier. And after that she heard that her sister asked her to revenge for her death.

Catherine: Joan ... Joan ... please help me ... Revenge Joan ... revenge... (48)

The French continued to win battles against the weakening English, but young Joan soon felt a strong sense of remorse as she viewed the carnage. She felt that it was so horrible to kill so many people just for a great victory like that.

Joan: You call this ... glory? All this ... this blood ... this smell of ...

Joan: It's not possible ...

Joan: No ... not like this ... (60)

She had not even recover from her shock that she had to face another battle.

Overwhelmed by the gravity of the slaughter, Joan approached the English and offered them a chance to retreat.

Joan: Go home .. Go now, in peace. If you don't go now, you will be buried in this field. I've seen enough blood for today, but if you want more, I can't stop you. I can only warn you that it will be your blood, not ours. (64)

Miraculously, the English retreat. It is surprising victory that allows Charles to proceed to Rheims for his coronation.

**La Hire: By God and all the saints ... now that's what I call a bloody miracle!
(64)**

B.1.3. Coronation of the Dauphin:

Charles's coronation only took three days of preparation and Charles seemed not satisfy with the condition. It seemed that everything was not proper.

Charles: Ah, Joan ... come here ...! This whole coronation idea of yours is a fiasco ... nothing is ready. (68)

Before the coronation began, the Bishop found out that the holy oil of Clovis was gone and Yolande D'Aragnon, Charles' mother in law, replaced the holy oil with oil lamp.

Bishop: ... - this is no ordinary oil - this is miraculous ... this oil was brought from heaven by a white dove to crown King Clovis in this ... very .. cathedral ...

Bishop: W - w - What are you doing?!

Yolande: Performing a miracle. (68)

B.1.4. Attack of Paris:

Once Charles was crowned king, he was wholly satisfied. Joan however, was not, and she continued to fight on. She wanted to continue fighting until Paris was on the French's hand.

Her troops – which numbered in the hundreds instead of thousands because Charles took back all the army that he gave Joan – were tired and hungry. Giles de Rais told her that Charles had abandoned her, that he did not even want the war anymore and that they should not be there and not even Joan herself.

Giles: Joan ... that is not ten thousand reinforcements – that is one hundred very loyal but very tired soldiers.

Giles: ... Don't you understand? He doesn't want this war anymore ... he had his crow now, that's all he ever wanted.

Giles: ... We have nothing to do here ... none of us ... not even you. You should go home Joan. (71)

Aulon also informed her that not only had Charles given up to the war, but he had been planning to betray Joan should anything happen to her. Reiterating her devotion to God, Joan felt obligated and determined to continue fight until her voices sent her a message otherwise. Unluckily, her voices had never visited her again since the coronation.

Aulon: Joan ... the king has ordered us not to ride with you anymore. (73)

Aulon: What do your voices say?

Joan: It's been weeks since they spoke to me. Since the coronation ... no signs ... nothing. (74)

B.2. Capture, Trial, and Execution:

B.2.1. The Capture:

Against everyone's better judgement, Joan moved on to Compiègne for a battle in which she was quickly captured by the Burgundians, a group of mercenaries fighting for the English. Sold to her enemies, because her king – Charles VII – refused to pay her ransom, although some captains and villagers had collected some money for her.

She woke up in a prison cell with her conscience, who came to her in a form of mysterious, hooded man. This man said that he was the one who always came on Joan's vision. Joan refused him and calls him as a demon. He defeated Joan's confidence and asked questions that made her question the validity of her visions.

Joan: Who ... who are you ...?

Man: I am that I am. ... You don't like my face? ... Maybe you prefer this one
[his face melts into the little boy, sitting on a throne in the middle of the wood]

Man: Too young maybe? How about this? [The boy becomes the young man she saw in the forest]

Man: Better, no ...? But incomplete. [suddenly his face is flooded with blood, like the image of the man she saw during the battle of Orleans]

Joan: Get thee behind me. Satan! ...

Man: HOW CAN YOU BEGIN TO IMAGINE THAT GOD THE CREATOR OF HEAVEN AND EARTH, THE SOURCE OF ALL LIFE, COULD POSSIBLY NEED – YOU?

YOU THINK GOD ISN'T BIG ENOUGH TO DELIVER HIS OWN MESSAGE? (81-82)

B.2.2. The Trial:

Accused of heresy and sorcery, and with no one coming to rescue her, the trial to prove Joan is a witch begins. She is questioned repeatedly about her visions and her faith in the Catholic church.

D'Estivet: you told us about the appearance of this ... voice. What exactly did you see? Part of it ... or all of it? ...

Joan: I'm more interested in what he says, not what he looks like.

D'Estivet: But if the devil were to take on the physical appearance of a saint or an angel ... or a man ... how would you recognize him? By what he said? ... (104)

Jean le Maistre: who told you to wear men's clothes?

Joan: The clothes are not important

Jean le Maistre: You also cut your hair short like a man, and in the Bible it clearly states that it is an abomination for a woman to pretend to be a man! It proves your desire to deceive ...

Joan: I was just ... more convenient as I was among soldiers

Jean le Maistre: So you think you did well to cut your hair and dress as a man?

Joan: I ... submit to Our Lord.

Jean le Maistre: But will you submit to the decision of the Church?

Joan: it seems to me that the Church and our lord are one and the same. Why must you complicate what is so simple? ... (105)

Beaupere: Is it true that you launched an attack on Paris?

Joan: I tried to.

Beaupere: It was on Sunday, wasn't it?

Joan: I don't remember. Maybe.

Beaupere: Do you think it was a good idea to launch an attack on a holy day? (107)

Between court sessions, Joan had conversations with her Conscience, who criticized Joan's faith in Him and her naivete. This devastates Joan, and she appears to lose hope in anything worth living for.

Man: God asked you to do something?

Joan: Yes ... lots of things!

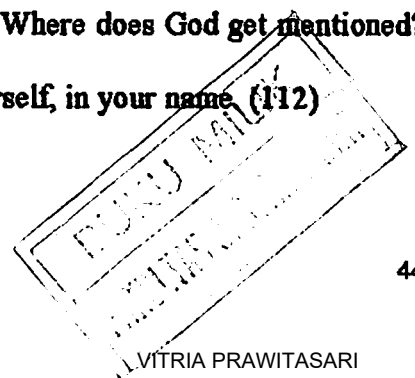
Man: You mean God said, "I need you, Joan?"

Joan: No, but ... He sent me so many signs! ...

Man: true – every event has an infinite number of causes – but why pick one rather than another? There are many ways a sword might find itself in a field ... (99-100)

Joan: ... We fought and kill in His name ... the King of Heaven!

Man: "Let all those who love me follow me" ... Where does God get mentioned? ... Come on Joan, be honest. You fought for yourself, in your name (112)



She feels so lonely because she never see her visions again since the coronation and not even during her trial. She just keeps seeing the Conscience whom she believes as a demon.

Joan: ... oh God, don't cut yourself like this ... I don't know what I meant to say or not to say anymore ... oh God, I'm so lost ... don't abandon me like everyone else ... please, I beg of you ... at least say you can hear me ...! Tell me you hear me ...! Why won't you answer me? Please I beg of you – ANSWER ME! (98)

B.2.3. The Execution:

Near the end of her trial, Joan was told that she had to either renounce her past deeds and swear to never carry arms or wear men's clothing again, or she would be burned to death. She agreed to do so if Cauchon agreed to hear her confession. Cauchon promised her the confession and Joan gave her sign to the form of abjuration that Cauchon gave her. Then she was sentenced to a life in prison. Back in her prison she could have a clear thought about her decision and what her Conscience had told her. He said that by giving her sign to the abjuration form meant that she was the one who abandoned God by agreeing that her visions were just her illusions and that they were not real. And she felt very worry about it and hoped as if she could take her abjuration form back.

Chatillon: Joan, we once again admonish, beg and exhort you to cast out and recant your erroneous beliefs, and return into the way of truth by submitting yourself to the authority of our Mother Holy Church by signing this recantation.

Joan looks at the parchment in confusion

Joan: If the church wants me to say that my visions are evil, then I don't believe in this church and I submit myself to the judgement of God! ...

Joan: ... I want to be confessed.

Cauchon: Sign this, and I will confess you myself if you want.

Then she give her signature.

Man: you know what you just signed, Joan? You just signed away my existence ... For you I'm a lie, an illusion. ... You see? In the end, you were the one who abandon me ...

Joan: No ... Please ... may I have it back ...

Cauchon: You have nothing to regret. (124-125)

The English was not satisfied with the decision and sent some men to abuse Joan and forced her to change her clothes with men's clothes that they brought. But the next morning the Cauchon was told that her men's clothes came from no where. She did it with her magic. Cauchon considered it as Joan unwilling repentance. Now considered a 'relapsed heretic,' Joan's decision means certain death. Before Cauchon left her prison cell she begged him to hear her confession. According to her although Cauchon save her from by forcing her to sign the abjuration form but it was not her body that she wanted to

be save but it was her soul that she wants to save. But Cauchon refused to hear her confession.

Joan: It's not my body I want to save. It's my soul.

Joan: I ask only one thing ... to hear me in a confession ...

Cauchon: I – I can't Joan ... I can't hear your confession ... I'm sorry. (128)

Then after she was left alone, her Conscience appeared with a softer expression than before. And he offered her to hear her confessions and gave his bless to her. Now she felt so released from her heavy burden. She was not afraid of the fire anymore. She believed that it would purify her.

Man: Do you really want to confess, Joan? ... I'm listening.

Joan: I have committed sins my lord – so many sins. As a child, the only way I could help my people was to pray. So I prayed to God and His saints. I prayed more and more, and gave God all my love ... but isn't it said that God helps them who help themselves? So I helped myself ... and I saw signs ... the ones I wanted to see – and I fought, out of revenge and despair. Yes I was proud – stubborn – selfish – and cruel ... I was all the things that human believe they are allowed to be when they're fighting for a cause.

Man: You think you are ready now?

Joan: Yes, my lord.

Man: Ego te absolvo, in nomine Patris, et Filii, et Spiritus Sancti, Amen. (128-129)

According to the script of the movie there is something happen after she confessed. Jean D'Aulon came to see her at her prison dressed as one of the guards. He tells her that he and other captains such as Giles de Rais, La Hire and Dunois had arranged a plan to rescue her. They just waited for a sign from him, Jean. But Jeanne refused to be rescued because she said that she was already free now. She demanded Jean to leave and cancel the mission. Because of her force toward him; then Jean obeyed her. But before leaving he gave Joan a such deep kiss on her lips. It is Joan's first and last kiss in her entire life.

Aulon: We must hurry – I took care of the guard, but others are coming!

Joan: My gentle Captain ... I'm staying

Aulon: No, you must come, Joan – we need you – so much has happened since you left ... You can't stay – they'll burn you!

Joan: I'm not afraid of the fire anymore. It will purify me ...

Aulon: Joan, you can't leave us like this!

Joan: You must go. (129-131)

She said it gently but urgently. Aulon took Joan's face in his hands and kissed her on the lips. A full kiss, the only one and the last one, one which Joan neither encouraged nor resisted. With tears welling, Aulon tear himself from her sight and disappeared.

That day on May 30, 1431, she was burned at the stake in the marketplace at Rouen.

C. JOAN OF ARC: A NEW HISTORICAL READING

From the writer's explanation above it can give some prove that Luc Besson wants to show Joan differently from the historical perspective. In this condition the writer prefers to see Luc Besson as a new historicist who wants to interpret the character of Joan from different angle.

In the writer's opinion Luc Besson wants to translate the people's opinion about Joan of Arc into his movie The Messenger: The Story of Joan of Arc. There is no doubt that Joan of Arc is one of the most captivating figures in history. Some people can believe in her but most people can not. And that is what happens to the people in this era.

In his movie Luc Besson wants to create his movie chronologically the same as the history but he also makes some differences according to the situation today. Luc Besson does not even mention about the appearance of the three Saints: Saint Michael, Saint Margaret, and Saint Catherine. Presumably it is because it is difficult for people today are hard to believe such visions. In the people's opinion nowadays, according to Ronald F. Maxwell in his essay entitled "The Messenger," if someone claims to hear voices are sometimes thought to be delusional or schizophrenic (4). Then he continues that at the very last, the sound of bells ringing in one's ears can be diagnosed as tinnitus.

A delusion is a false belief, held despite evidence to the contrary, and one which is not explicable in the term of educational or cultural background. It is held with a complete conviction and cannot be shaken by argument. The later is called overvalued ideas. Primary delusions are those that appear to have arisen suddenly and fully formed while secondary delusions can be seen as derived from hallucinations or other psychotic.

The contents of the delusion may have diagnostic significance, for instant delusions of guilt are associated with depression (The Encyclopedic Dictionary of Psychology 142).

Schizophrenic is a person who suffer from schizophrenia. Schizophrenia is a mental illness, in which there is a fundamental disturbance of the personality characterized by disturbances of thinking, motivation and mood together with delusions and hallucinations, and also thought disorder as well as disturbance in mood and behaviour, but in which cognition is normal. The peak incidence is in early adult life and approximately one per cent of adult suffer from it at sometimes of their lives (The Encyclopedic Dictionary of Psychology 545).

Furthermore, tinnitus is the hearing of sounds within a person's head. In a subjective tinnitus the sound is heard only by the individual. Tinnitus may develop suddenly or slowly, over several hours or days; it may be present constantly or intermittently; it may be unilateral, bilateral, or central in localization. The sound may be heard as loud or soft and may be high or low in pitch. The temporal pattern of the auditory experience may be pulsatile with the heartbeat, steady, clicking, or blowing with respiration (Concise Encyclopedia of Psychology 78).

While Julian Jayne suggests in Maxwell's essay that the origin of the brain's left and right lobes as separate entities in a life-long conversation which seemingly appears through out the movie: the conversation between Joan and her conscience.

It is true that the modern Catholic scholars accept her visions as being revelation from God, while skeptics tend to believe that they are the result of neurosis, hysteria, or mental illness.

C. 1. JOAN'S CHARACTERIZATION:

Accordingly the writer believes that it gives a strong influence toward Luc Besson's interpretation toward the character of Joan in his movie. He prefers to visualize Joan as a human or normal woman rather than as a Saint because that is what people assume about Joan right now. In "the Production Notes" Faye Dunaway also gives her opinion about this movie, The Messenger: The Story of Joan of Arc, that it tries to unravel, understand and interpret what was going on then, in the light of today (10).

In this case the writer will give some people, especially the cast's opinions toward the character of Joan. As said by Milla Jovovich in "The Production Notes" that she, Joan, is a woman with a mission. Joan is inspired and she really starts a movements. She, Joan, starts her own revolution (6). "It was a story I never believed in. It is very strange to play her because I never took it seriously. There is not a person there. It is just an icon. It is a phrase, an adjective. Everything except a human being," Jovovich continues (9). Although she has her own opinion toward Joan but Jovovich says, "I thing if I met her I would probably just give her a big hug. She is a little girl who went through a lot" (11). "She was very much her own woman," says Faye Dunaway. "She was very strong and she was very active. She was not acted upon, which is cliché of the time," she continues (9). While Karyo is a bit skeptical of Joan's dialogue with God. "She is full of faith, she believes in miracle," says Karyo. But he believes in facts, in strategy and in logic. And he considers that Joan's experiences are illogical at all (9).

Further Karyo admits, "She is a girl. For our pride as soldiers, it is a little bit awkward. But she shows a lot of strength and faith. Even though I think she is using weird strategies, I am amazed and fascinated by the will of this person," (9). Dustin

Hoffman says that he does not even know where Joan's voices come from; whether the voices come from God or from her. "We meet people like that in life, once in a while. We meet someone that we do not only trust, but they give us their energy. They care about us more than they care about themselves. She must have communicated that," Hoffman continues (10).

Regardless of her source of motivation, most cast agree that Joan makes a tremendous impact on history. "The French have just beaten, just little piece left, just hanging on," says Hoffman. "When Joan comes, suddenly things change. Twenty years after they killed Joan, France wins. Fifty or sixty years after that, they are so strong to invade Italy. And Joan started it all," he continues (10).

In the writer's opinion The Messenger: The Story of Joan of Arc is an attempt in fabricating a feminist Joan, one who carries the torch of woman kind into man's world. The film wants to portray Joan as a warrior, which is in welcome contrast to the sometimes limited legitimized historical view of Joan as simply a pious victim. The film also portrays Joan as a screaming, hysterical, frenzied, petulant, angry and weepy female. Joan in the movie also shows her disappointment toward her king, Charles, who does not pay for her ransom. She can not accept her capture and all her condition at that time as God's will because He has chosen a way for her. All of those characterizations appear normally in a human being not in the appearance of a Saint. The Messenger: The Story of Joan of Arc is the polar opposite of the legitimized historical Joan, who surrendered her ego to what she herself saw as a higher calling.

Near the end of the of the film Dustin Hoffman appears as her visions and voices, ostensibly as her conscience, his mission being to debunk the mythology of Joan's sacred

visions. Accordingly Luc Besson tries to give some proves to his audience, that Joan is not a Saint but merely just a woman in conflicts, with the appearance of the conscience as other human being, there is always dialogue between ego and the conscience. As the writer describes before that the character of the conscience for Joan is her talking to herself which strongly evidences that she is in conflict. A conflict in her inner self, about the truth of her visions. In her prison cell, the conscience always gives her questions related to her faith to God. He always gives Joan some circumstantial evidences that can bring Joan into confusion whether to believe her visions or not. Then it is followed by a laborious sequence where the miraculous appearance of Joan's sword in her youth is recalled and explained by some circumstantial evidences that can give other explanation about the origin of the sword. The conscience also tells her that it is only Joan's own will to have a sword which comes from the sky or in other words it is a sword from heaven. He continues on Joan's own opinion toward her mission to restore France. Whether it is possible if God, the creator of heavenly creatures, earth, sky, and everything, needs a help from a peasant girl like Joan. The screenwriter and the director, Luc Besson, also cannot understand Joan's missions, as it is discussed before. It seems that Besson's intention to put an historical straw man just so he can tear the limited view of Joan.

In keeping with all the other historical infidelities of this movie, there is no sword in the field, and the legitimized Joan never claims that her sword falls down to her from heaven.

Besides Luc Besson also gives other prove that her actions comes from her inner self. In the movie it is presented that when Joan was just a little girl she witnessed the murder and the rape of her sister, Catherine, by the English soldier. It gives a reason that

her strength and power come from her hatred and anger toward the English soldier. Thus there are no sacred visions that guide her to take some actions.

The point, however, is not that this or that miracle occur or does not occur. The "miracle" is Joan herself, a seventeen-year-old girl, a peasant girl from the fringes of the kingdom who manages to build up the trust and support of a nation and play an important role in expelling a foreign invaders.

C. 2. DIFFERENCES IN READING HISTORY AND THE MOVIE:

Joan of Arc either in the historical perspective or in the movie is described as a simply peasant girl who hears voices and sees visions. And both of those voices and visions are believed to inspire her to take some action in restore the Kingdom of France. However there are differences in detail of those voices and visions.

Joan, in the legitimized history, seems to be more concerned and aware about her duty. From the very beginning of her youth she has realized about whose visions she always sees. She knows that it is Saint Michael's that first comes to her and then followed by Saint Margaret and Saint Catherine. All her action is totally directed by those three counsels. She can always give good explanation of her action in doing her duty such as the reason of her clothes and the exact place of her sword. It is believed that she has no other personal cause of her actions.

While in the movie, although it describes about those voices that she hears and the visions that she sees but apparently those voices and visions are not clear enough to expose the messages. The movie does not even mention the existence of those saints: Saint Michael, Saint Margaret, and Saint Catherine. Joan herself is also confused with

her own belief. Once she believes that her voices and visions come from God but at the end she believes that it is just herself.

The movie seems want to give us other possibility for the cause of Joan's action. In this case Luc Besson provides those evidences. He exposes in his movie that Joan has a strong cause to take revenge to the English. In the beginning of the movie Joan witnessed the murder and the rape of her sister Catherine by the English army.

It is not only the cause of Joan's cause of action which is described differently in this movie but it seems everything in Joan's live has a fortunate relation such as how she found a sword besides her in the field. She, in the movie, considers the sword as the sign from God.

We have to realize that it is simpler for people in Joan's era to understand her action because people at that time still strongly believed supernatural power as such. There are only two possibilities for people like Joan. If she is not a saint or God's messenger then she must be a witch. It is just as simple as that. While people nowadays have difficulties to accept whether she is a saint or a witch. Because they are having a different way of thinking now. The choices are not simply as a saint or a witch only; but they can give proves that voices and visions appear to Joan are sign of a mental illness.

Besson seems to give some proves of Joan's mental illness, more specific, schizophrenia, in which Joan seems to lost her self-control after her sister death. At first she felt guilty for she was the cause of her sister death and the she began to deny God's decision toward her sister.

Priest: I heard about your sister, and I ... understand your pain ...

Joan: Why did she has to die?

Priest: Only God knows the answer to that.

Joan: I know Jesus says to love your enemies but I can't – I just want the English to burn in hell for ever and ever!

Priest: I realize your anger, Joan, but we must learn to forgive, it's hard, but revenge will never bring about peace.

Joan: Then what will? And what will bring her back? And why did she have to die in the first place instead of me? Why didn't He takes my life instead of hers? It was my fault – I was late – she gave me her hiding place! (9-10)

Because of those causes above it can give reason about her voices and visions. People nowadays prefer to consider that Joan is suffering from schizophrenia and having delusions. In "Encyclopedia of Psychology" it is described that the typical course of the schizophrenia illness begins with an acute episode, usually in adolescence (age 13 to 17) – it is the same age of Joan at that time (344). It further explains that it also requires the presence of at least one of the following during the active phase of illness such as:

1. Bizarre delusions which appear as Joan's visions.
2. Auditory hallucinations which appear as the voices.
3. Somatic, grandiose, religious, nihilistic or other delusions without persecutory or jealous content.

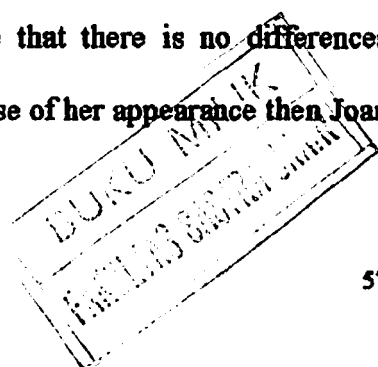
According to the psychobiological theory, delusions are the results of anomalous perceptual experience. Delusions develop in response to changes in perception that demand explanation by the individual. Thus, delusions inform the patient about why things are happening, and the relief provided by these explanation fosters their perpetuation (Concise Encyclopedia of Psychology 240).

In this case the explanation of Joan's visions is that they appear because Joan is looking for the answer for the death of her sister as the writer described before. By believing that she hears God's voices and that He gives her duty to do then she can manage herself for not regretting her sister's death. At least she finds out a reason why she is still alive while her sister is death because of her.

Further the movie describes that Joan is arranging a meeting with the Dauphin. In this meeting there is no differences between the legitimized history and the movie. The differences seem to occur at her preparation before she goes to Orleans. In the historical texts it is said that Joan had to ask someone to find for her sword in some place that she said it was told by Saint Catherine to her. While in the movie she already had her own sword in which she obtained it from the field when she was about 13 years old. It seems that the movie wants to show its audience that what happened to Joan at that time is just a coincident. And that there is no visions from God as Joan always believed.

The movie is continued to Joan's arrival at the battlefield dressed in white armour. Her appearance gives an impression to the people. However although she has dressed like a man but the other soldiers, especially the captains, cannot fully accept her in the battlefield. It is because she is just a girl. It looks like that because she is a girl than she has no right to be with other men in the battlefield and that their pride cannot accept the situation that they are guided by a girl with no experiences in arranging an attack, while they are more professional in the subject. Battlefield is a place for men and a girl is not supposed to be there.

In this movie Besson tries to show his audience that there is no differences between men and women. If they cannot accept Joan because of her appearance then Joan



will make herself look like a man by cutting her hair since long hair was too strong a sexual provocation for the army men. Although now she has a man's look but actually she is still a woman. And she can prove to other that she can do what they can do and even better. She is able to give victory for France, and bring Charles to his coronation.

In the writer's opinion this movie, The Messenger: The Story of Joan of Arc, is totally a new study of women's heroic history, especially Joan of Arc. In the historical perspective, Joan simply obey what God order her to do while in this movie Joan reacts toward the people's opinion toward her. And create her own changes. She demands her equality to men.

Later when she is betrayed by Charles and captured by the Burgundians we can see strong differences in Joan reaction. In the legitimized history, Joan – who is believed as a saint – seems to have a vision before her capture. That is why she can easily accept it as a God's will and there is no regret of it. While the movie seems to describe Joan's reaction toward the capture simply like other people reaction if the are betrayed rather than as a saint's reaction. She feels that everyone has abandoned her: her king, and also God. She begins to loose hope and get confused with her own thought.

At the end of her trial, it seems that Luc Besson want to put back his movie on the track of the historical version. He ends his movie with Joan's feeling of freedom. She can accept his sentence to death in a very peace and beautiful way, as the legitimized history version. However still there are differences between the movie and the legitimized history. Like other American's movie, it contains love story between characters. In this movie it is showed with Jean's feeling and attitude toward Joan.

Seemingly Joan shares the feeling since she neither encourages nor resists Jean's kiss at the last moment of her life.

According to the writer, Joan of Arc in this movie is an ordinary human being, a woman, and a heroine. The writer claims Joan as an ordinary human being because Joan has feelings too; anger toward something – the death of her sister Catherine, the refusal of herself in the battlefield, Charles's betrayal toward of loyalty; she also feels hatred toward the English for a reason – the murder and the rape of her sister, and also her feeling of confusion – about good and bad, right and wrong.

Joan is also a simple woman who has no strength to encourage nor to resist a man's – Jean's – kiss. It seems that although she demands her equality still she cannot deny when romance comes to her life.

However she is still considered as a great heroine. She has her courage to fight for what she believes, and even though she is far from being perfect – she is just an ordinary human being – she is able to carry out her fight in her own way. Her soldiers believe in her lead and that makes her succeed in bringing her country into glory. In this case she shows strength of a woman in men's world although she has to pay it with her own life.

At last the writer wants to add that she has the same opinion with Luc Besson. She cannot accept Joan's action as a saint's action. In this case the writer cannot accept Joan as a saint. Let give a comparison like this: mother Theresa and Joan of Arc are both considered as Saint but their action are totally very different. Mother Theresa's sainthood is so kind, loving, and caring other people while according to the writer Joan of Arc's is so bloody.

CHAPTER V

Conclusion