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*Jeanne d'Arc, motif de propagande de l'Affaire Dreyfus à la Deuxième Guerre
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Joan of Arc as Propaganda Motif from the Dreyfus Affair to the Second World War

Jeanne d'Arc, motif de propagande de l'Affaire Dreyfus à la Deuxième Guerre mondiale

Jennifer Kilgore

- 1 Burned at the stake for heresy in Rouen in 1431, with the execution ordered by Bishop Pierre Cauchon of Lisieux, it is possible to imagine that Joan's failure to completely liberate France from the English is somewhat responsible for bringing the University of Caen into existence: it was founded by the English King Henry VI, who had recently been crowned in Paris (1431), and was intended to be a sister institution to Oxford and Cambridge. A mere twenty-five years after Joan's death, Charles VII needed to prove his legitimacy by showing that the woman who led him to be crowned in Rheims in 1429 was not a heretic: the second trial in 1456 invalidated her condemnation in Rouen. Although the town of Orleans had never forgotten to celebrate its liberation on May 8th, with the passage of time the historical Joan became blurred, but was revived during the nineteenth century. Following the portrayal of Joan by Michelet (1841) and the publication of her trial by Quicherat in (1841-1849), there was renewed interest in the shepherdess turned warrior, leading to the call for her canonization within the Roman Catholic Church. After the Franco-Prussian War of 1870-71, Joan came to represent a hope for revenge of the wounded nation¹. As Robert Frank put it:

[...] there were different versions of Joan; two or three images, sometimes complementary, sometimes concurrent, prevailed: the Saint and the patriot always, the daughter of the people sometimes. The leftist republican and radical preferred the second and the third; the rightist favored the first while honoring the second².

This crescendo of interest in Joan in France and internationally eventually led to her official recognition as a Saint by the Roman Catholic Church in 1920.

- 2 From the outbreak of the Dreyfus Affair in 1895 to the beginning of World War II in 1939, Joan of Arc was a figure with many faces, and she played a number of different roles. For French Republicans, she was a patriot; for anti-Semites, she was a rallying point; she was an instigator for the defense of France during World War I; for the Church, she was a Saint who was finally canonized shortly after World War I ended. This paper will attempt to trace these different facets of the figure of Joan, showing how her different presences each evolved from the “Belle Époque”, through World War I, toward the Second World War.

Joan and Anti-Semitism

- 3 The long shadow of the Dreyfus Affair fell forward through the outbreak of World War II, in that when Albert Dreyfus died in 1935, once more people spoke about the events of his life. Furthermore, the anti-Semitism the Affair kindled was soon to be reworked into an intensified wave of Jewish persecution under the Vichy government. But even before the outbreak of the Affair, heinous usages of Joan were not lacking. With anti-Semitic fervor, Drumont described Joan as a baptized Aryan, an “*aryenne baptisée*” in *La Libre Parole*, May 30, 1894³. The roots of today’s “reactionary Joan” are to be found in the anti-Semitism that preceded and generated the Dreyfus Affair. Drumont’s *La France Juive* (1886) opened the flood gates of hate. Barrès and the Camelots du Roy regularly rallied around the statue of Joan of Arc by Fremiet, at the place des Pyramides (Rue de Rivoli)⁴. For the Camelots, Joan was seen as the Patron Saint of the lost monarchy, and their devotion to her was well known by the end of the Thalamas Affair in 1908-9 through to the outbreak of World War I⁵. Within the Church, the nationalist anti-Semitic cleric, Théodore Garnier made use of Joan, by calling for rallies around Fremiet’s statue in May in his daily paper that served as an organ for the *Union Nationale, Le Peuple Français*. He also took it upon himself to decorate the statues on the Boulevard Saint-Marcel and the Rue de la Chapelle with his supporters. While Garnier’s ability to gather crowds was no longer operable by 1899, Drumont’s influence was long lasting.
- 4 The figure of Joan was exploited by anti-Semites in Algeria as well, with Drumont drumming up the troops. The anti-Semitic rioting that broke out in Algiers and Oran during the Affair was carefully prepared: influenced by Drumont’s book *La France Juive*, which saw a ray of hope in Algeria’s anti-Semitism⁶ and reacting to the Crémieux decree of October 1870⁷, the anti-Jewish league of Algiers, which had been created in 1892, became very active. Max Régis came to the fore, leading the anti-Jewish league, and founding a newspaper in 1897, *L’Antijuif Algérien*, that published 20,000 daily copies after a mere six months. Disturbances occurred in Algiers and Oran following publication of Zola’s *J’accuse* on January 13th, 1898. From the 18th to the 25th, the violence in Algiers was intense: 158 Jewish shops were pillaged and two Jews died, after being attacked by rioters. Following those events, Régis suggested to Drumont that he should run for office. A campaign poster for the elections of May 8, 1898 featured Drumont’s name across a French flag, with the slogans “*Ralliement au Drapeau!!!*”, “*Vive l’armée!*”, “*Vive la République!*” and “*A Bas Les Juifs!*”⁸. He was elected *député* for Algiers in May 1898⁹. The anti-Semitic movement was at its maximum political influence when anti-Jewish lists won the 1900 local elections in Constantine, Oran, Mascara, Mustapha, Saint-Eugène and Algiers (Régis’s list).

- 5 As Birnbaum described it, Zola's "*J'accuse*" was a bomb that "sent shock waves through Paris and the provinces"¹⁰, although the mob violence of the Algerian reaction was not fully unleashed in metropolitan France. In Paris, students led anti-Jewish protests on January 14th with similar slogans, such as "*A bas le juif!*". On January 16, 1898, when the ceremony to honor the retirement of General Saussier, governor of Paris, broke up, crowds formed and again anti-Semitic shouts were heard. *La Libre Parole* reported on these events by exaggerating the numbers of people involved, and also by noting that "two thousand students, formed in front of the statue of Joan of Arc and, via the Rue Sainte-Anne, the Rue des Petits-Champs, and then the Rue Montmartre, attempted to reach the Rue de Bruxelles, where Zola lived, shouting 'Down with the Jews! Death to the Jews!'"¹¹.
- 6 Charles Maurras who had already written for Royalist papers like *Le Soleil* (in May 1895) and *Gazette de France* (from 1892 on) discovered his ideological stance through the Dreyfus Affair. His ties with his teacher-mentor Anatole France were severed when Anatole France supported Dreyfus, and Maurras also lost his contacts with the "Républicains"¹². But in 1899 he met Vaugeois and Pugo, whom he convinced to adhere to his ideas about Monarchy and with them he founded the Action Française (July 1899). Even after the papal condemnation of the Action Française in 1926, the parade for Joan on March 8, 1927 still contained a larger portion of people from that group than any other movement. Joan was a key figure for them: Maurras would publish *Méditation sur la politique de Jeanne d'Arc* in 1931, with the dedication: "*A l'association des jeunes filles royalistes [...] / au nom de l'Action Française reconnaissante / hommage très respectueux de l'auteur*"¹³.
- 7 Drumont, playing along with the writings of Henri Martin, gave Joan ethnic traits in a speech made to the public in 1904:
- C'est une Celte, Jeanne d'Arc, qui sauva la patrie. Vous connaissez mes idées [...] et vous savez de quel nom nous appelons l'ennemi qui a remplacé chez nous l'Anglais envahisseur du XVe siècle... Cet ennemi s'appelle pour nous le Juif et le franc-maçon.*
- 8 In 1904, Joan made the newspapers, when parents complained about professor Amédée Thalamas's criticism of her in class. That led to his transfer from Lycée Condorcet. The conflict between different versions of Joan was again publicly on display. Drumont and Rochefort criticized Thalamas in their extreme right newspapers. Thalamas would later be a target of the Camelots du Roi who were zealous street fighters from 1908 on. They violently interrupted his class at the Sorbonne, perhaps as early as December 1908, for having insulted Joan of Arc. The *Bryn Mawr Alumnae Quarterly* (3:1, April 1909, p. 1) described it thus:
- Towards the end of November, M. Thalamas, in his course on The Pedagogy of History, criticized Jeanne d'Arc with unnecessary bluntness. His aspersions on her sanctity offended the religious feeling of the Catholics, while his criticism of her virtue shocked the traditional loyalty of Frenchmen for 'le [sic] vierge de Domrémy'. Furthermore the Royalist students were triply angered, as Jeanne d'Arc stands as the emblem of their party (the Duc d'Orléans being their king)¹⁴.
- 9 The anti-dreyfusard Léon Daudet wrote during the Thalamas affair, in April 1909 (well after Dreyfus's rehabilitation): "Honoré Jeanne d'Arc, sous quelque forme que ce soit, à l'aide de couronnes, de drapeaux, de musique, d'acclamations, par un défilé, un discours, un bouquet, c'est insulter et menacer Dreyfus"¹⁵. It must have been a bit ironic for Dreyfus to find his oppressors rallying around Joan's statue, when for him she undoubtedly represented the real virtues of the Republic. His daughter's name was Jeanne.

- 10 Prior to World War I, those who supported Dreyfus in France and abroad continued to reflect on Joan and on the Affair in almost the same breath. As Marina Warner noted, “Both Joan and Dreyfus were innocent victims of political machinery that has no regard for [...] individual rights [...]”¹⁶. Anatole France’s biography, *Vie de Jeanne d’Arc* appeared in 1908, following closely on his own evaluation of the Dreyfus Affair, *Vers les Temps Meilleurs* which appeared the year that Dreyfus was rehabilitated (1906). Andrew Lang’s biography, *Maid of France* appeared in 1909. The waves of uses of Joan and France’s rampant anti-Semitism were not without echo within the English speaking world. Although he never seems to have mentioned Joan of Arc, T. S. Eliot, who attended Henri Bergson’s classes at the *Collège de France* in 1909, was drawn to the political philosophy of Charles Maurras and the *Action Française*. The influence of this movement on representations of Joan will be seen shortly.

Joan’s reputation within the Church and Sainthood

- 11 Close to the period that Charles Péguy began research about Joan at the library of the *École Normale* in Paris, using Michelet and Quicherat, off in the Carmelite convent in Lisieux, using Henri Wallon¹⁷, Thérèse wrote several short plays about Joan that were performed for the nuns’ recreation¹⁸. She herself played the heroine at least once on January 21, 1895, when she stood inside flames to act out Joan’s death¹⁹. Such popular fervor would have been a normal result of the process for canonization, but one may surmise that Thérèse’s feelings about Joan were unusual: apparently her idea of giving God a self-offering is linked to her view of Joan, at least such is the suggestion of the interpretative notes to her text in *Manuscrits Autobiographiques*: “*Je ne suis qu’une enfant, impuissante et faible, cependant c’est ma faiblesse même qui me donne l’audace de m’offrir en Victime à ton Amour, ô Jésus!*”²⁰.
- 12 The canonization process for Joan was begun by the conservative Bishop Dupanloup from Orleans (his first petition for canonization was in 1869) and encouraged in 1894 by Leo XIII’s declaration of Joan’s venerability²¹. Marina Warner suggested that the pope was motivated by the hope that “Joan could be used as a rallying point to reclaim French souls straying toward socialism and atheism” after the socialist advance in the elections of 1893²². Pius X, declared her Blessed in 1909.
- 13 Meanwhile, royalists within the French Church were also promoting a reactionary Joan that Le Pen and certain factions of French Catholicism still draw on today. In 1909, Bishop Ernest Jouin, the “*chanoine honoraire, curé de Saint Augustin*” published his long, *Jeanne d’Arc, mystère en cinq actes et dix-huit tableaux, avec prologue et épilogue, accompagné de notes critiques, orchestration de la partie musicale par A. Vivet*. The *chanoine* saw eye to eye with Drumont, thought that Joan would deliver France to the French, and one can only be rather grateful that his book is largely forgotten, since one of its declared aims was to get rid of Jews: “[...] *une pièce patriotique, comme celle de Jeanne d’Arc, peut sonner la charge pour ‘bouter dehors’ les ennemis du dedans, ou les envahisseurs, de quelque côté qu’ils franchissent nos frontières.*”²³ This was followed by the social agenda outlined by Bishop Henri Delassus in *La Mission posthume de Sainte Jeanne d’Arc et le règne social de Notre-Seigneur Jésus-Christ* (1912). Hardly less reactionary was the use made of Joan by the *Ligue des Femmes Françaises*, founded in Lyon in 1901, to promote the Church, and to influence the male vote. This group implemented an *image d’Epinal* with Clotilde, Geneviève and Joan as examples: “*Jeanne d’Arc, humble paysanne qui délivra la France du joug des Anglais*” in order to save

France from the influence of Masonry: “*Faites voter pour un candidat honnête votre mari, vos fils, vos frères et 35 millions de Français échapperont au joug de 25 000 francs-maçons et la France appartiendra aux Français*”²⁴.

Joan as People’s Patriot

- ¹⁴ The Third Republic gave pride of place to Joan as one of the founding heroes of the nation in school text-books, and Joan also had the honor of being the subject of the new Republic’s first commemorative monument when Emmanuel Frémiet’s equestrian statue was unveiled in the Place des Pyramides, February 19, 1874. According to Neil McWilliam, “the monument seemed to symbolize the renewal of a nation humbled in battle and divided by civil strife” and “served as a powerful call for unity and rededication”²⁵. The 1894 statue of Joan inaugurated in the Rue de la Chapelle, commemorated the place where she had celebrated mass. Joseph Fabre wanted to institute an annual celebration of Joan as a “*fête du patriotisme*” in 1884, but with the tensions mounting between Church and State, and the papal declaration “*Johanna nostra est*” in 1894, the idea was dropped²⁶. But Fabre did write in the *Figaro*, February 16, 1894: “*Mon rêve est que catholiques et libres penseurs, monarchistes et républicains, individualistes et socialistes, fraternisent dans le culte de Jeanne d’Arc*”²⁷. The Republican Joan was again on display in Rheims in 1896 when the statue by Paul Dubois of Joan on horseback with a raised sword, commemorating Joan’s part in the crowning of Charles VII, was inaugurated by Felix Faure. It had been financed with contributions from the French people, and was originally placed directly in front of the great doors to the cathedral, with its back to the church, suggesting Joan and the King riding victorious out from the coronation. Charles Péguy’s first dramatic portrait of Joan, written in 1897, was a play in three acts, and was probably influenced as much by his participation in street fights supporting Dreyfus during the Affair as by his intensive reading of Quicherat and Michelet. Péguy viewed support of Dreyfus as an act of patriotism.
- ¹⁵ Péguy reworked a part of his first drama about Joan into *Le Mystère de la Charité de Jeanne d’Arc* (1910), in which Joan is hardly a nationalist figure. Transcending national frontiers, she is preoccupied with the salvation of all, and is explicitly concerned about souls that could be condemned to hell. Published later the same year, *Notre Jeunesse*, recalls the entire period of the Affair, Dreyfus’s degradation of January 5, 1895, admiration for Bernard Lazare, the first person to publicly defend Dreyfus, and Péguy’s own personal involvement. When it appeared in the *Cahiers de la quinzaine* in July 1910, a number of subscribers abandoned the magazine. Jacques Prévotat maintains that Péguy’s position in the Affair was in binary opposition to Maurras’s stance²⁸. Such binary opposition to Maurras was just as true of his vision of Joan. Péguy is an interesting case: he navigates from the Joan of the Republic to the Joan of the Church, but maintaining her Republican character.
- ¹⁶ Jean-Pierre Albert noted that there could be no common hero of the revolution for the Church and the State under the Third Republic: the state remembered those that had guillotined the almost sainted martyred king. The Church longed for the lost Catholic monarchy that France once was. Yet, the Church and State eventually were brought together by the very Saints that both used to promote their own ideologies about what the nation should be²⁹. Michel Winock used the phrase “*Sainte de la patrie*” to describe Joan, because the two nouns reconciled Catholic and Republican France³⁰. This Republican

influence was felt across the ocean: in 1896, Mark Twain's fictional and admiring *Personal Recollections of Joan of Arc* by *The Sieur Louis de Conte* was published, and eight years later it was followed by an essay, "Saint Joan of Arc" (published in *Harper's Monthly* in December 1904). By 1913, interest for Joan in the US was great enough that the American Numismatic Society held an exhibit about Joan, in the effort to sponsor a statue of Joan in the City of New York. It was even suggested that a Joan of Arc day be celebrated in the US on January 6th³¹.

Joan as defender of the Allied Cause during World War I

- 17 Blaise Cendrars's poem *La Prose du Transsibérien et de la Petite Jehanne de France* appeared on the eve of World War I. An avant-garde work, it was "*le premier livre simultané,*" a poster poem, or "*poème affiche,*" that was 2 meters in length, illustrated by Sonia Delauney. The Joan of the poem, it turns out, was Cendrars's young mistress, but the title certainly played with the national hero Joan. Cendrars related the couple's trip across Russia by train. At one point the text says (with clear allusions to Dada):

*Jeanne Jeannette Ninette Nini ninon nichon
Mimi mamour ma poupoule mon Pérou
Dado dondon...*

- 18 Not intended as a portrait of the blessed Joan but as a non-conventional, non-Catholic work of art, it still reflects something about the overarching popularity of Joan of Arc, if only through its title³².
- 19 As the war began, Joan came to be associated with the cause to defeat the German invader. Given the fact that Joan's childhood home and some of her own military campaigns occurred on terrain that was fought over in World War I, it was probably inevitable that she would become a symbol of French Nationalism and of the allied cause. The use of her image in war propaganda was nothing at all new. She had already appeared as a symbol of the Catholic League during the wars of religion against Protestants in the 15th Century. So, when German bombs damaged the Rheims Cathedral, posters were produced as response, featuring Jeanne standing before the flaming cathedral, with the heading, "Joan of Arc to William at Rheims" ("*Jeanne d'Arc à Guillaume devant Reims*") and the caption:

*Point ne te suffisait, le meurtre des enfants,
Toi, le roi des bandits et celui des vandales
Devant les alliés, te voyant impuissant
Tu blasphèmes et détruis nos belles cathédrales.*

- 20 The slogan is admittedly somewhat jingoistic, but must have united the defeated military, the oppressed population, and the stout defenders of a Catholic Joan. In a session of the French parliament in December 1914, Maurice Barrès suggested a national holiday to honor Joan. To support the motion he wrote: "*Son culte est né avec la patrie envahie; elle est l'incarnation de la résistance contre l'étranger*". The law did not pass, but Barrès would repeat the proposal again after the war.
- 21 In 1915, Frank Sturgis composed a pacifistic folk song entitled "Joan of Arc, They're Calling You". The lyrics are as follows:

There's a tear in my eye for the soldier,
A woman's anguished face. The boy they cannot spare³³.

22 1916 found Joan at the movies, in the American silent film by Cecil B. De Mille, *Joan the Woman*, starring opera singer Geraldine Farrar as Joan, in which one sequence (often removed) shows the battlefields of World War I. In France, the publication of *Autour de Jeanne d'Arc* (1916), by Maurice Barrès, had an inscription on the cover: “*Au profit de la Fédération des mutilés de la guerre*”. In Britain also, Joan’s image was used to support the war effort. When the British entered the war, they expected to be home in time for Christmas, but this did not occur, and by the end of the war, with 880 000 British dead and 2 million men injured, with many crippled, the elated spirit of troops going off to battle had eroded into general societal depression. In such an atmosphere, a poster by Bert Thomas suggests: “Joan of Arc saved France, Women of Britain, Save your country, buy War Savings Certificates”. A similar poster appeared in the US, in 1918. William Haskell Coffin’s poster showed a Joan of Arc in Armour, sword raised, standing against a blue backdrop with a beam of light behind Joan’s face, so that the background looks a bit like the French flag, with the caption: “Joan of Arc Saved France [...] Women of America Save Your Country, Buy War Savings Stamps”.

23 In 1917, another version of “Joan of Arc They Are Calling You” was published in the US. It had the same title as Sturgis’s song from 1915, but different lyrics. There was also a translation of the English lyrics into French³⁴. The lyrics are explicit enough:

While you are sleeping, Your France is weeping,
Wake from your dreams, Maid of France.
Her heart is bleeding, Are you unheeding?
Come with the flame in your glance;
Through the Gates of heaven, with your sword in hand
Come your legions to command.

Alsace is sighing, Lorraine is crying,
Their mother, France, looks to you.
Her sons at Verdun; Bearing the burden,
Pray for your coming a-new;
At the Gates of Heaven, do they bar your way?
Souls that passed through yesterday.

24 The French translation by Liane Held Carrera is of interest in its difference:

*Oh! Pourquoi dormir, Vot' France soupir ;
Oh ! Réveillez-vous Fill' de France—
Quand elle vous appelle, Soyez lui fidèle,
Venez conduire nos lances
Des fonds du firmament, venez en courant,
Pour protéger vos enfants.*

There seems to be no second stanza in the French version, and rather than leading people to battle, Joan is protecting the children of the nation.

25 On April 21, 1918, *Le Pèlerin* printed an image of Joan standing between the four generals, Pétain, Foch, Pershing, and Douglas Haig, with her sword pointing at a military map that the others are holding. The caption is “*Un Conseil de Guerre qui donne confiance, ‘La stratégie de Jeanne d'Arc n'est jamais en défaut’ (Général Canonge)*”³⁵. So, Joan ended the war by being on the side of the “victory”.

Joan in the Aftermath of World War I

- 26 France and Britain jointly honored their dead with official ceremonies. The 11th of November 1920, the unknown British soldier was transported to Westminster Abbey and the Cenotaph was unveiled by King George V. France's unknown soldier was placed under the *Arc de Triomphe*. The name and image of Joan continued to be a rallying point for the people of France during the days following the war. She alone could be used by all parties to lend dignity to the traumatic circumstances the population had to face during reconstruction. On March 16, 1920 a commemoration ceremony for the resister Louise de Bettignies of Lille, paid homage by calling her the "*Jeanne d'Arc du Nord*" and posthumously awarding her the *croix de la légion d'honneur* and the *croix de guerre*³⁶. Another way to measure Joan's influence in the aftermath of the war is to consider her presence at memorial sites. The Memorial to the battles of the Marne at Dormans (51) features a chapel, and a crypt. On the chapel's stained glass window Christ greets a soldier who represents all of those who perished during the war. The soldier is led to Christ by Joan of Arc and Saint Michael³⁷.
- 27 In Versailles, a Church originally planned to honor Joan with the express intention of keeping Versailles from succumbing to German occupation, as Bishop Gibier of Versailles stated on August 31, 1914³⁸, was brought into being, with a temporary chapel opened in 1919. By then, the idea had evolved so that the Church would be a commemorative monument to those who died in the war, a factor which helped advance its construction. The first stone was laid on May 30, 1923, the crypt, used for remembering the war dead was consecrated in 1924, and finally the completed Church was blessed in 1926³⁹.
- 28 As president of the *Ligue des patriotes* after the war, Barrès again called for a national holiday to honor Joan. This time his words would be convincing enough to have the project passed [...] His argument is interesting for the way it highlights different positions on Joan:
- Chacun de nous peut personnifier en elle son idéal. Etes-vous catholique? C'est une martyre et une Sainte que l'Eglise vient de mettre sur les autels. Etes-vous royaliste? C'est l'héroïne qui a fait consacrer le fils de Saint Louis par le sacrement gallican de Reims [...] Pour les Républicains, c'est l'enfant du peuple qui dépasse en magnanimité toutes les grandeurs établies [...] Enfin les socialistes ne peuvent oublier qu'elle disait: « J'ai été envoyée pour la consolation des pauvres et des malheureux ».
- 29 The project was accepted on June 24 1920, a short month after canonization finally happened. During this period also, Abel Gance's anti-war film, with the title recalling the Dreyfus Affair, "*J'accuse*" (1919), was produced (Gance reworked the film in 1937, featuring a horde of resurrected World War I soldiers from Douaumont to block the beginnings of another war).
- 30 George Bernard Shaw's *Saint Joan* was first performed at the Garrick Theatre in New York on December 28, 1923⁴⁰. The play made ironic allusions to World War I, when a soldier from the 15th Century says, "Fifteen years' service in the French wars. Hell was a treat after that"⁴¹. Shaw's Joan, as he wrote in the introduction to the 1924 publication, was "a born boss" who knew how to "coax" and "hustle"⁴². Shaw's awareness of propaganda uses of Joan is also evident, especially when he discusses Voltaire's *La Pucelle*: "Samuel Butler

believed the *Iliad* to be a burlesque of Greek jingoism and Greek religion, written by a hostage or a slave; and *La Pucelle* makes Butler's theory almost convincing"⁴³.

- 31 Along the same socialist or politically left-wing party lines, Bertolt Brecht's *Saint Joan of the Stockyards* (1929, *Die heilige Johanna der Schlachthöfe*) portrayed the meat packing plants of Chicago. However, the art of acting also worked for the political right: Falconnetti as Joan in *The Passion of Joan of Arc* (1928) (whether or not Carl Dreyer intended it) became an icon for royalist groups. Lesser known, and not as prone to be used by the royalist movement, was *La merveilleuse vie de Jeanne d'Arc* by Marco De Gastyne, filmed at Pierrefonds, and released May 12th, 1929. In France, the 8th of May 1929 was the 500th anniversary of the Liberation of Orleans, and on that occasion French president Gaston Doumergue publicly attended a mass, a rare occurrence since the separation of Church and State in 1905.

Joan and the ideologies of the 1930s

- 32 While at first glance, the Dreyfus Affair may have seemed like an event of the distant past in the 1930s, the death of Dreyfus in 1935 triggered several publications. On July 13 and 14, 1935, in *L'Action Française*, articles appeared in which Dreyfusism was denounced. Some major anti-Dreyfusards such as Maurras and Drumont, were still writing about Joan. Hilaire Belloc's Joan is one that probably would have pleased both, and, since he spoke French fluently, perhaps Belloc was familiar with Maurras and Drumont⁴⁴. They certainly had political affinities. By the time Belloc got around to writing a biography of Joan, he had already written a number of books, including biographies on *Danton*, *Robespierre*, *Marie Antoinette*, *Cromwell* (1927) and histories such as *The French Revolution*, *History of England*, *The Path to Rome*. His desire was to replace the Parliamentary system with a populist monarchy. He enthusiastically supported Mussolini. Belloc's portrait of Joan was translated into French the same year that it appeared in English, by Marguerite Faguer with a preface by Henri Massis. Massis who criticized Andrew Lang's biography of Joan for eliminating the supernatural ("*tout élément merveilleux*") and for crediting Anatole France's Joan⁴⁵, was quite enthusiastic about Belloc's book, which returned to the historical facts in response to Shaw's portrait of a rebelling individualist, "*une sorte d'héroïne protestante avant l'heure*"⁴⁶. Furthermore, Belloc's position was pleasingly anti-German:

Hilaire Belloc s'élève avec raison contre les tenants du germanisme historique qui ne veulent à l'Angleterre que des origines saxonnes et barbares. Il s'est inlassablement appliqué à montrer en elle au contraire, une seconde Gaule, plus tôt séparée du tronc, mais assez nourrie de sève latine pour en garder l'empreinte à travers les âges. Aux yeux de cet Anglais catholique, Jeanne n'est donc pas le signe de ce qui divise les deux peuples, mais de ce qui peut les unir ; et il a écrit sa vie avec la même piété qu'il eût mise à écrire celle de Saint Thomas de Cantorbéry, dans un même sentiment profond d'appartenance. L'auteur de l'Europe et la foi apporte ainsi son témoignage aux idées qui lui sont chères : il montre, par son exemple, ce que peut la communion des âmes dans une même foi et ce qui en résulte pour la compréhension universelle⁴⁷.

Ultimately, for Massis, the Christian Joan as Belloc presented her was more viable than other recent portraits because Belloc was a Catholic, and as such could see Joan from the inside. Joan would be the Saint to restore Europe to her golden age of medieval Catholic monarchies⁴⁸. Indeed, Belloc's *Joan of Arc* begins:

Five hundred years ago, and more, there was in France an old mad King whose wife was a German harlot, mocking him. All in his realm was distracted; for when kingship is weak the powerful oppress and destroy⁴⁹.

- 33 He uses biblical language to emphasize Joan's chosen-ness: she is presented in similar fashion to the child Jesus of the Gospels:

While these evils were happening, James d'Arc and his wife Isabel of Domrémy in the Marches of Lorraine, had born to them on thye Epiphany, in the year of Our Lord fourteen hundred and twelf, a girl child whom they called Joan on the day when she was baptized into the Church of God⁵⁰.

- 34 The book is written in a simple, almost child-like style, and the choice of archaic vocabulary or grammatical structure is deliberate, expressing nostalgia for the Middle Ages, with expressions like: "She bade no farewells [...]"; "[...] he did grievously ill to keep her back"; "Baudricourt suffered her to put on a man's dress"; "On the morrow"; "Orleans I shall relieve"; "She has come hither by orders of the King of Heaven to redeem the Blood Royal"⁵¹. This nostalgia also comes across in declarations such as: "For the men of those days were not as men now are, blind to the things beyond the world, but knew well the strength of God and His Saints and also of the Prince of Darkness"⁵². Belloc's Catholicism may be drawing also on the sacred heart movement. The final sentence is: "So they threw into the river the ashes of that Maiden, and her heart, which the fire had not consumed"⁵³.

- 35 If Belloc's Joan was a rather traditional, reactionary portrait, Vita Sackville-West's *Joan of Arc* (1936) would put things quite differently, with Joan as a proto-feminist. This was not the first use of Joan as a symbol for the liberation of woman, the American suffragist Sarah Moore Grimké had already translated a biography of Joan (published in Boston in 1876)⁵⁴. Yet, Sackville-West's Joan was her very own work, and coming between the wars, at a time when women were forced to replace men on-the-job, it can be seen as a landmark in feminist interpretations of Joan.

- 36 The year 1937 brought a second round of Maurras on Joan, when his *Jeanne d'Arc, Louis XIV, Napoléon* was published by Flammarion. But in 1938, a different vision of Joan, using a poem by Paul Claudel and music by Arthur Honneger was communicated in *Jeanne d'Arc au bûcher* (first performance in Basle), in which the consummation of Joan's sacrifice saved France, so that Joan also could become a metaphor of France's martyrdom during World War I⁵⁵.

- 37 As the 1930s closed, the cycles of interpretation of Joan kept turning: her many conflicting images were used by differing parties, and would be used again, during wartime, by the Vichy régime as well as by members of resistance organizations, but that goes beyond the scope of this article. If the roots of the nazi genocide of Jews can be found in the anti-Semitism surrounding the Dreyfus Affair, as Drumont's newspaper *Libre Parole* so deftly states on the front page of the Sunday, May 15, 1938 issue ("De fait, Hitler est venu bien après Drumont... [et] l'Antisémitisme ne saurait donc être un terme synonyme d'hitlérien"), one might also suppose that the roots of Vichy's Joan could be found with Edouard Drumont, Charles Maurras, and even Hilaire Belloc in translation, as well as in some of the Joan propaganda used during World War I. Posters attest to that fact: there is one with Joan in chains standing over churches in flames (representing Rouen), with the slogan: "Les assassins reviennent toujours... sur les lieux de leur crime"⁵⁶. But a better conclusion might be the idea that Propagandists always come back to the strong symbol,

and Joan of Arc is one of the strongest symbols available to the French people and the rest of humanity.

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NOTES

1. Robert Frank, *Collaboration and Resistance, Images of Life in Vichy France 1940-1944*, tr. Lory Frankel, NY: Harry N. Abrams, 2000, 213.
2. *Ibid.*, 213.
3. Drumont's article was entitled "Les dernières fêtes de Jeanne d'Arc" (*La Libre Parole*, May 30, 1894), quoted by Neil McWilliam, "Conflicting Manifestations: Parisian Commemoration of Joan of Arc and Etienne Dolet in the Early Third Republic", *French Historical Studies* 27.2, Spring 2004, note 27.
4. Fremiet's first statue of Joan, placed on the site where she was wounded, was erected in 1872, and was replaced with a revised version in 1899. (Information gleaned from the Bryn Mawr web pages on Joan, <<http://www.brynmawr.edu/Library/exhibits/jehanne/sculpture.html#fremiet>>, consulted October 2006). A photo of a crowd of Camelots around the statue of Joan can be found in Laurent Gervereau and Christophe Prochasson (eds.), *L'Affaire Dreyfus et le tournant du siècle (1894-1910)*, Paris : Musée d'histoire contemporaine-BDIC, 1994, 42.
5. McWilliam *op. cit.*, 403.
6. This point was made by Stevan Uran, "La Réception de l'Affaire en Algérie", in Michel Drouin (ed.), *L'Affaire Dreyfus, Dictionnaire*, Paris: Flammarion, 2006, 522.
7. The "Décret Crémieux" gave all Algerian Jews French nationality.
8. This poster is visible in *L'Affaire Dreyfus et le tournant du siècle (1894-1910)*, Paris: Musée d'histoire contemporaine-BDIC, 1994, 85.
9. Stevan Uran, "La Réception de l'Affaire en Algérie" in Michel Drouin (ed.), *op. cit.*, 525.
10. Pierre Birnbaum, *The Anti-Semitic Moment: A Tour of France in 1898* [2002], tr. Jane Marie Todd, London: Hill and Wang, 2003, 9.
11. Qtd. in Birnbaum, *Ibid.*, 12.
12. Jacques Prévotat, "Charles Maurras (1868-1952)", in Michel Drouin (ed.), *op. cit.*, 234.
13. Charles Maurras, *Méditation sur la politique de Jeanne d'Arc*, Paris: Ducros et Colas; Editions du Cadran, 1931. (During the Spanish Civil War, when anti-communist sentiment was high, the Carmélites in Lisieux fought for the rehabilitation of the *Action Française*, and obtained it in 1939).
14. The first page of *The Bryn Mawr Alumnae Quarterly* 3:1 (April 1909) was displayed on-line at <<http://www.brynmawr.edu/library/exhibits/jehanne/riots.html>>, consulted in October 2006.

15. Qtd. in McWilliam, 404. “To honor Joan of Arc, in any manner, using crowns, flags, music, or chant, in a parade, in a speech, with a bouquet, is to insult Dreyfus”.
16. Marina Warner, *Joan of Arc, The Image of Female Heroism* [1981], Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000, 260.
17. Juri Higacki, “L’Enfance spirituelle chez Péguy et Thérèse de Lisieux”, *L’Amitié Charles Péguy* 80 (Oct.-Dec. 1997) 194.
18. Thérèse de Lisieux, *Œuvres Complètes*, Paris : Cerf, 1992, contains two plays “La Mission de Jeanne d’Arc,” 775-800, “Jeanne d’Arc accomplissant sa Mission,” 819-862, as well as two poems (also found in *54 Poésies de Thérèse, numérotation nouvelle*, 1971, numbers 4 and 50), one is called “A Jeanne d’Arc”, 743. Other pertinent documents can be found in *Visage de Thérèse de Lisieux* (1961), n°11-15 and in the photo album by Pierre Descouvremont et Helmuth Nils Loose, *Thérèse de Lisieux* (Cerf, 1991), 212, 215, 219-223.
19. Sainte Thérèse de l’Enfant-Jésus et de la Sainte Face, *Manuscrits Autobiographiques, Edition critique du Centenaire*, edited by Sœur Cécile de l’Immaculée and Jacques Lonchamp, Paris: Cerf/Desclée de Brouwer, 2005, note 49r°, 155.
20. Sainte Thérèse de l’Enfant-Jésus et de la Sainte Face, *op. cit.*, note 3v°, 35 and 300.
21. Michel Winock’s article on Joan of Arc in Pierre Nora (ed.), *Lieux de Mémoire*, notes that during the 19th Century, Joan’s image was used by both sides in the catholic vs. Anticlerical struggles, with demonstrative examples.
22. Warner, *op. cit.*, 264.
23. Quotation found on a website, where this book is apparently for sale, 15 October 2006: <http://editions.saint-remi.chez-alice.fr/jeanne_d_arc_mistere.htm>.
24. The image is reproduced in *L’Affaire Dreyfus et le tournant du siècle (1894-1910)*, Paris: Musée d’histoire contemporaine-BDIC, 1994, 175.
25. Neil McWilliam, “Conflicting Manifestations: Parisian Commemoration of Joan of Arc and Etienne Dolet in the Early Third Republic,” *French Historical Studies* 27.2 (Spring 2004) 386-7.
26. *Ibid.*, 393.
27. Qtd. in McWilliam, 393. From Fabre, *Les Bourreaux de Jeanne d’Arc et de sa fête nationale* (Paris, 1915) 221.
28. Jacques Prévotat, “Charles Maurras (1868-1952)”, in Michel Drouin (ed.), *op. cit.*, 240.
29. Jean-Pierre Albert, “Saintes et héroïnes de France, Entre l’Eglise et la République”, *Terrain* 30 (March, 1998).
30. “[...]’sainte de la patrie’ — les deux substantives réconcilient la France catholique et la France républicaine”, Michel Winock, “Jeanne d’Arc”, in Pierre Nora (ed.), *Les Lieux de Mémoire* [1984-1992], Paris: Quarto/Gallimard, 1997, 4428.
31. The catalogue for the exhibit can be found at the BNF. *Joan of Arc, Loan Exhibition Catalogue, Paintings, Pictures, Medals, Coins, Statuary, Books, Porcelains, Manuscripts, Curios, etc.*, (Exhibition of the American Numismatic Society Building, January 6th-February 8th, 1913).
32. The work was reproduced on the cover of Vassiliki Kolocotroni, Jane Goldman and Olga Taxidou (eds.), *Modernism, An Anthology of Sources and Documents*, Edinburgh: Edinburgh UP, 1998.
33. Lyrics found October 2006, <<http://sniff.numachi.com/pages/tiJOANARC.html>>.
34. Alfred Bryan & Willie Weston with music by Jack Wells, “Joan of Arc They Are Calling You”, French Version by Liane Held Carrera, New York: Waterson-Berlin & Snyder Music Publishers, 1917.
35. Reproduced in Laurent Bonnet and Louis-Marie Blanchard, *En chemin avec Jeanne d’Arc*, Rennes : Ouest France, 2004, 120.
36. Involved in intelligence gathering in the region of Lille during the war, Louise de Bettignies was captured by German forces and died in captivity. Her body was brought back to France on February 21, 1920, and the commemoration ceremony organized for her on March 16, 1920.

More information available on website <<http://www.cheminsdememoire.gouv.fr/page/affichegh.php?idLang=fr&idGH=341>>, consulted October 2, 2006.

37. Description and photo can be found at <<http://www.cheminsdememoire.gouv.fr/page/affichegh.php?idLang=de&idLieu=1536>>, consulted October 2, 2006.

38. “[...] *d’élever dans cette ville une église paroissiale en l’honneur de la Bienheureuse Jeanne d’Arc, si la Bienheureuse par sa puissante intercession préservait la ville de Versailles des horreurs du siège et des malheurs de l’occupation*” said Bishop Gibier, as quoted from the church’s website, consulted October 2, 2006 : <<http://stejeannedarc-versailles-78.cef.fr/historique.htm>>.

39. *Ibidem*.

40. Born in Dublin 1856, Shaw went to London in 1876 and became a committed socialist in 1882, joining the Fabian Society in 1884. His play *Saint Joan* was performed in 1923.

41. George Bernard Shaw, *Saint Joan* [1924], Baltimore, Maryland: Penguin Books, 1952, 152.

42. *Ibid.*, 22.

43. *Ibid.*, 24.

44. Hilaire Belloc (1870-1953), was a prolific writer. His father Louis Belloc was French, and he was born near Paris. After his father’s death, his British mother moved the family to London, where he attended the Oratory School in Edgbaston, Warwickshire, run by John Henry Cardinal Newman. In Paris in 1887, he attended the Collège Stanislas for only a term before returning to London. From 1891-93 he served in the French Artillery before completing his education at Balliol College, Oxford (where he met Chesterton). He became a British citizen in 1902. Debates concerning “Distributism” in *The New Age* (circa 1909-1911) motivated George Bernard Shaw to provide the nickname “Chesterbelloc” as a reaction to their positions. Belloc wrote *The Party System* with Chesterton (published in 1911), recording his disillusionment with party politics, following his four years serving as Liberal MP for Salford. Much of the above information was gleaned from Brown University’s website, “The Modernist Journals Project” consulted October 2006: <<http://dl.lib.brown.edu:8080/exist/mjp/plookup.xq?id=BellocHilaire>>.

45. Hilaire Belloc, *Jeanne d’Arc*, tr. Marguerite Faguer, preface by Henri Massis, Paris: Frimin-Didot, 1930, xvii.

46. *Ibid.*, xxi-xxii.

47. *Ibid.*, xi.

48. *Ibid.*, xxi-xxii.

49. Hilaire Belloc, *Joan of Arc* [Boston: Little, Brown, and Company, 1930], Kessinger Reprint, Montana: Kessinger Publishing, n.d., 11.

50. *Ibid.*, 19.

51. *Ibid.*, Examples from pages 26, 27, 28-9, 30, 46, 58.

52. *Ibid.*, 42.

53. *Ibid.*, 128.

54. Sarah Moore Grimké, *Joan of Arc: A Biography*, Boston, 1876 from Warner, *op. cit.*, 163.

55. Warner, *op. cit.*, 270.

56. Reproduced in Laurent Bonnet and Louis-Marie Blanchard, *En chemin avec Jeanne d’Arc*, Rennes: Ouest France, 2004, 121.

ABSTRACTS

Cet article vise à explorer les manières dont Jeanne d'Arc a été utilisée, au gré des événements et des époques, pour véhiculer des idées fortes et fédératrices. Plusieurs groupes tiennent Jeanne pour la leur : pendant l'Affaire Dreyfus, son image semble inspirer l'antisémitisme ; pour l'Église, elle est Sainte ; pour les Républicains français, elle est patriote ; pendant la guerre, elle motive la défense de la France.

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