**Joan of Arc: A Singular Life**

**January 23, 2018**

**“The Human Joan”**

***Saint Joan*** by George Bernard Shaw

**Context of the Play**

The time

Emerging ideas about drama: Stage directions; “Problem Plays;” Paradox

**Our approach**

Characters, situation, arguments

Selections and points (*Please feel free to ask us to focus on other lines and other lines of inquiry.)*

*Pace: We can slow down if it seems wise.*

**Characters via stage directions:** Robert (61); Joan (62); Poly (64); Archbishop (72); Bluebeard (and La Hire (73); Dauphin (74); Dunois (89); then Cauchon (97); Warwick (95), who mostly define themselves.

**Scene I** (Vaucouleurs)

* What is Joan like in this scene?
* What are the main ideas? What is her impact?

**Scene II** (Chinon)

* What is Joan like in this scene?
* What are the main ideas? What is her impact?

**Scene III** (Orleans)

* What is Joan like in this scene? Dunois? Their relationship?
* What are the main ideas?
* How closely is Shaw aligning with history (via documents in Pernoud)?
  + Joan’s letters to the English?
  + Idea re faith and miracles
  + English response (in Middle English)

**Scene IV** (Warwick’s Tent after battle)

* Note Joan is personally absent, but spoken of by others
* What is Warwick’s perspective? Cauchon’s? Stogumber’s?
* What is the impact of this conversation?

**Scene V** (Cathedral after coronation)

* What is Joan like in this scene? Has she changed? Does she change?
* What is the overall direction of this scene?
* What is her overall impact at scene’s end?

**Scene VI** (Trial and burning)

* What is Joan like in this scene? Does she change?
* What are the main ideas on trial?
* Why does Joan yield? Recant (or “relapse?”)

**Epilogue**

What is Joan like in this controversial scene? Is she credible given what has gone on before?

What are the other characters like? Are they credible?

**Preface** (3-8)

What are Shaw’s ideas about genius and saint? Do you agree?

What are your ideas about Joan of Arc at this point?

Think about the depiction of Joan of Arc; the arguments of the play; the impact of the play (on you).

Consider: To what extent is Shaw inspired by the figure of Joan of Arc? And to what extent is Shaw using the figure of Joan of Arc to make a point? What external elements are relevant?

For next Week:

*The Lark* by Jean Anouilh

*Joan of Arc* by Pernoud, from “Orleans” (81-3; 85-7; 90-3; 101)

Optional: View *The Lark* [*https://archive.org/details/HallmarkHallofFameTheLark*](https://archive.org/details/HallmarkHallofFameTheLark)

Review depictions of Joan of Arc in art at <http://www.susannedumbleton.com>