A comparative analysis of Jean Anouilh's L'Alouette, Charles Peguy's Jeanne d'Arc and Andre Obey's La Fenetre

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ABSTRACT

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A Comparative Analysis of Jean Anouilh's L'Alouette, Charles Péguy's Jeanne d'Arc and André Obey's La Fenêtre

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Although there have been numerous and varied treatments of Joan of Arc throughout the ages, there is to date no detailed, analytical study of Joan of Arc based on Jean Anouilh's L'Alouette, Charles Péguy's Jeanne d'Arc and André Obey's La Fenêtre. The objective of this comparative study is to show the relationships, similarities, and differences that exist in these representative works.

After an introductory chapter which includes a biographical sketch of Joan of Arc and a brief summary of the historical facts which occurred during her lifetime, Chapter Two presents a biographical sketch of the playwright, Jean Anouilh, emphasizing those forces and influences that helped to determine his philosophy. It also reveals his treatment of Joan in L'Alouette through theme and characterization.

Chapter Three examines the life and influences of Charles Péguy and his intensive interest in Joan of Arc. This examination reveals Péguy's extreme devotion to historical accuracy in his
Chapter Four presents Obey's biography, his influences, philosophy, ideas and attitudes. His one-act play *La Fenêtre* is analyzed, reflecting a unique treatment of Joan through the character *in absentia* technique. This chapter is followed by a conclusion which, while highlighting the similarities and differences evident among the three works with reference to character delineation, themes and influences, shows how each playwright has succeeded in creating a distinctly original drama about the Maid of Orleans.
A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF JEAN ANOUILH'S L'ALOUETTE, CHARLES PEGUY'S JEANNE D'ARC, AND ANDRE OBEY'S LA FENETRE

A THESIS
SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF ATLANTA UNIVERSITY
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FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF ARTS

BY
ROSE MARY WOODS

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The triumph and martyrdom of Joan of Arc left an imprint on the course of human history. This impression is also felt in the world of literature. Among the outstanding writers of Joan's own country who celebrated her conquests in drama are Jean Anouilh, Charles-Pierre Péguy, and André Obey. For a comparative analysis of their treatment of Joan of Arc, the following representative plays will be explored: Anouilh's _L'Alouette_, Péguy's _Jeanne d'Arc_, Obey's _La Fenêtre_.

As a basis for this comparative study, the historical events in which Joan of Arc was involved will be examined. She was concerned in episodes in the Hundred Years War, a series of spasmodic campaigns between the English and French. An English offensive led by Henry V began a new phase to this war. Charles VI, who was often considered senile and demented, was on the French throne at this time. The power of leadership in the French armies was given to his son, the Dauphin. Meanwhile Henry V of England was negotiating with Charles VI, and as a result, the Treaty of Troyes was concluded in 1420. This treaty declared Henry the true son, heir, and regent of France. The Dauphin's sister, Catherine, was given to Henry in marriage; hence, the two crowns were united. There was little accomplished for Henry V and Charles VI died in 1422.

The boy Henry VI was proclaimed king; however, until he was of age, his uncle, the Duke of Bedford, was appointed regent in France. A period of unrest caused by political repression and heavy taxation followed.
Although Bedford led an able administration on meager resources, much suffering and repression still remained.

The Dauphin had taken refuge in Berry and while he was there, he and his father, the Dauphin was recognized as Charles VII in the central and southern provinces. Conditions in the South were much better because the lands were rich, and they were remote from the war. Easy taxation yielded adequate revenue which was squandered by the ill-disciplined leaders. By this time, Charles himself was feeble and suffered a lack of confidence over serious doubts about his legitimacy. He, therefore, allowed himself to be dominated by others.

No decisive move in the war came between 1422 and 1428, but in October, 1428, an army laid siege to Orleans, and there was talk of surrender. During this period, Joan of Arc appeared on the scene at Chinon. In Vaucouleurs she eventually persuaded Beaudricourt, Squire of Vaucouleurs, to give her a letter to the king and an escort of six men-at-arms to accompany her. Her reputation had preceded her there, and she was permitted to see the king who had disguised himself in an attempt to deceive her. She was fitted with armor in Tours, and it was there that she found her sword behind the altar in the Church of Saint Catherine.

April 28, 1429, Joan of Arc's soldiers assembled at Blois and left for the march on Orleans. Among the soldiers to whom Joan became attached were La Hire, Xaintrailles, Bueil, and the young Duke of Alençon. She inspired her soldiers, and ten days later the siege was abandoned; the English were driven from Loire. With such success, Charles could not remain indifferent to Joan's wishes. He honored her request and consented to proceed to Reims at once. On July 17, 1429 the Coronation ceremony
took place. Thus, Joan's immediate mission was accomplished.

After September 8, when Joan was wounded in battle, her triumphs began to reverse themselves. Charles called the armies back South of the Loire and paid them off for the winter. Joan, however, decided to spend the winter lamely and unsuccessfully laying siege to La Charité near Nevers. In the spring she returned North to fight with the Armagnac captains whose bands were roving near the Marne. Joan soon fell into enemy hands. No effort was made to free her or to buy her back. She was taken to Rouen and imprisoned in the Vieux Château under English guards.

Joan was to be tried for sorcery before an ecclesiastical court, and the University of Paris was entrusted with finding ways to secure her legal condemnation. The trial opened in Rouen, February 21, 1431. Pierre Cauchon, Bishop of Beauvais, in whose diocese Joan had been captured, was by right president of the tribunal; the prosecutor was his friend and vicar-general, Jean d'Estivet. The tribunal sat in the Château under the eye of Warwick, the military governor, and of the Cardinal Bishop of Winchester, who had accompanied Henry VI from England. The preliminary questioning lasted until March 17, and the initial charge of sorcery was abandoned for one of heresy. Nothing was able to destroy Joan's serenity or make her renounce her mission, not even the threat of torture and the scaffold. Nevertheless, in a momentary weakness, after Joan was taken into the cemetary of Saint Ouen, there in the presence of the Cardinal Bishop of Winchester and others, Cauchon made three requests of her to renounce, and then he began to read out the condemnation which would deliver her to the secular power to be burned alive. Joan interrupted the reading, confessed, and abjured. After which she was sentenced to
prison. On May 28, she recovered herself, retracted, reaffirmed her faith in her voices and in her mission, and resumed her male attire. She was declared a relapsed heretic by the Church, and she was delivered to the English who had her burned at the stake on the Place du Vieux Marché.¹

There have been numerous, and varied treatments of Joan of Arc throughout the ages. It is therefore important that the biography of this village girl from Vosges, who was born about 1412; burned for heresy, witchcraft, and sorcery in 1431; and finally canonized in 1920, be related in this study. Joan of Arc, one sister, and three brothers were born to Jacques d'Arc and Isabelle Romée at Greux-Domremy. History does not record too much about her childhood, but it is noted that from the age of thirteen she heard the voices of Saint Michael, Saint Catherine, and Saint Margaret. During this period, France, to a large extent, was in the power of the English, who were in alliance with the Burgundians. In 1428 voices told Joan to find the king of France and help him reconquer his kingdom. Her military adventure lasted fifteen months. On May 23, 1430, she was captured by the Burgundians at Compiègne. The dates of her glorious exploits are the following:

March 6, 1429, Joan was at Chinon, where she saw the dauphin; March 28th, theologians examined her at Poitiers; April 22nd, she left Blois to march upon Orleans, which the English abandoned on May 8th; on June 10th, she left for Jargeau, freed Tours, Loches, Beaugency, Patay; arrived at Auxerre July 1st; entered Troyes July 10th; was present at the king's coronation at Rheims July 17th; took Soissons July 22nd; then successively Chateau-Thierry, Coulommiers, Crecy, Provins; made her entry into Saint-Denis August 26th;

was ennobled by the king December 29th.\(^1\)

Cauchon, Bishop of Beauvais, took her prisoner on July 14, 1430. For 10,000 gold francs she was delivered to the king by the duke of Burgundy. Then she was taken to Rouen where Cauchon along with forty priests, clerks, canons, and monks condemned her to the stake. About twenty-five years later, at the request of her mother and brothers, her trial was reviewed, and as a final result her beatification took place in 1909 and her canonization in 1920.

Writers, past and present, have treated and developed the theme, Joan of Arc, in verse and prose. For the sake of contrast in their treatment of her in drama, the plays of the two writers, George Bernard Shaw and Johann Christoph Friedrich von Schiller will be briefly criticized.

Some critics believed that Shaw reached the peak of his art in Saint Joan. It is stated that the only

\[...\text{ inharmonious note in the drama is the epilogue in which the trend it displays runs counter to the main trend of the drama as a whole. Its symbolic saint is at odds with the girl possessed of belief in her own righteousness and determined, in the manner of all dangerous fanatics, to press others into her own mould.}\]  \(^2\)

"Shaw's characters are the embodiment of intellectual concepts; his dramas are ceaseless dances of thoughts."\(^3\) This is true of Shaw's Saint Joan.

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3. Ibid., p. 632.
In this drama, he treats his characters in such a way that they may be considered "incorporations of spiritual things, the embodiments of faiths and beliefs, the human semblances of rationalizations."\(^1\)

That extraordinarily powerful tent scene, wherein the Bishop of Beauvais confronts Warwick, gains its stageworthiness ... from the skill through which Shaw makes two ideas assume the medieval garbs of laymen and ecclesiastic, take on material form, and confront each other. The Bishop's arguments are so clearly and so trenchantly expressed that it seems they are irrefutable.... But we have only to listen for a moment to another speaker to hear a sermon equally true and equally sincere. In the final scene of the play the idea that is Joan and the idea that is the Inquisitor are both presented with absolute assurance.\(^2\)

Because Shaw's characters are ideas, they invoke a distinct tone or atmosphere. *Saint Joan* ends with the burning of the heroine, but is not a tragedy; "our hearts are ... untouched, our writher unwrung."\(^3\) When Joan sits before the Inquisitor's court, it is not a girl who is being tried; it is an idea that is being examined.\(^4\) What characterizes Shaw's play in general is his frank endeavour simply to revivify the past or to use the historical method for the purpose of finding escape from the trammels of realism.\(^5\)

About his own drama, *Saint Joan*, Shaw says,

> It contains all that need be known about her; but as

\(^1\) Ibid., p. 633.

\(^2\) Ibid.

\(^3\) Ibid., p. 634.

\(^4\) Ibid.

\(^5\) Ibid., p. 733.
it is for stage use I have had to condense into three and a half hours a series of events which in their historical happening were spread over four times as many months; for the theatre imposes unities of time and place from which Nature in her boundless wastefulness is free. Therefore the reader must not suppose that Joan really put Robert de Beaudricourt in her pocket in fifteen minutes, nor that her excommunication, recantation, relapse, and death at the stake were a matter of half an hour or so. Neither do I claim more for my dramatization of Joan's contemporaries than that some of them are probably slightly more like the originals than those imaginary portraits of all the Popes from Saint Peter onward through the Dark Ages which are still gravely exhibited in the Uffizi in Florence.¹

When comparing the dramas of Shaw and Anouilh, Brooke Atkinson in a review in the Times gives high praise to Shaw. He states that

Anouilh's reasoned speculation has little of Shaw's intellectual passion. For Shaw was a political philosopher bent on condemning the errors and malice of institutions. Monsieur Anouilh's drama is more like an intellectual reverie.²

Shaw made this observation in his criticism of Schiller's treatment of Joan:

... we find Die Jungfrau von Orleans drowned in a witch's caldron of raging romance. Schiller's Joan has not a single point of contact with the real Joan, nor indeed with any mortal woman that ever walked this earth. There is really nothing to be said of his play but that it is not about Joan at all, and can hardly be said to pretend to be; for he makes her die on the battlefield, finding her burning unbearable. Before Schiller came Voltaire, who burlesqued Homer in a mock epic called La Pucelle. It is the fashion to dismiss this with virtuous indignation as an obscene libel; and I certainly cannot defend it against the charge of extravagant


indecorum. But its purpose was not to depict Joan, but to kill with ridicule everything that Voltaire righteously hated in the institutions and fashions of his own day. He made Joan ridiculous but not contemptible nor unchaste.\footnote{Shaw, \textit{Seven Plays}, p. 769.}

Chapter One, an introduction, presents a brief summary of the history of fifteenth-century France which may relate to the life and times of Joan of Arc. Joan's life story, including a detailed listing of the principal dates of her glorious career, is related. This chapter also explores, to a limited degree, such writers as Shaw and Schiller and their contrasting treatments of the subject, Joan of Arc. Chapter Two develops Anouilh's treatment of Joan of Arc. It begins with a biographical sketch of his life which reveals his attitudes and philosophy. Chapter Three analyzes Péguy's \textit{Jeanne d'Arc} written in 1897. This study also reflects his wide interest on this subject. Finally, Chapter Four reviews Obey's treatment of Joan of Arc as it is developed in his drama, \textit{La Fenêtre}. 
CHAPTER II

ANOUILH’S L’ALOUETTE

Anouilh has often been considered the most typical French dramatist of twentieth-century France. However, he has revealed little about his life which is not directly involved with his writings. "Anouilh's plays give us a truer picture of his life than can be gained from factual data." Writing to Hubert Gignoux, Anouilh said:

I have no biography and I'm very glad of it. I was born in Bordeaux on June 23, 1910. I came to Paris when I was young and attended the Colbert Primary School and later Chaptal College. A year and a half at Law Faculty in Paris and then two years in an advertising firm where I learned to be ingenious and exact, lessons that for me took the place of literature.

Anouilh was raised during World War I, and he knew poverty in his childhood. When he was eight years old, his mother, a pianist, was hired by a director cousin to play in the theater orchestra of the Casino in Bordeaux. A durable impression was made on the young Anouilh from his early contact with the theater. "Anouilh has written that he learned by heart the songs and the situations of the plays he saw." Thus his

1 Falb, World Dramatists, p. 11.
3 Ibid.
5 Falb, World Dramatists, p. 8.
creativity as a dramatist had its beginning. According to Falb, Anouilh himself claims: "The basis of my theater is there. You can find in it the comic and the trivial, the heavy and the young male lead. I have remained at the level of the theater of my childhood."\(^1\)

From his father Anouilh acquired an appreciation of craft, a respect for work carefully done. Anouilh's father was not a dramatist; he was a tailor. Nevertheless, it was he who taught his son "the feeling of a professional conscience and the nobility it gives a man." Anouilh has explained: "I write plays because that is all that I know how to do, and I write them the way my father used to cut his suits."\(^2\)

When he was sixteen, he wrote his first long unpublished play. Three years later at age nineteen he wrote Mandarine, the earliest play to be produced.\(^3\) In 1932 Anouilh, at age twenty-two, decided to support himself exclusively by writing for the theater. Since then almost all aspects of his life seem to be completely involved with the stage; life and art, the world outside the playhouse and the world inside have meshed. For him they are one and the same. The frequently repeated anecdote about the young Anouilh and his first wife, the actress Monelle Valentin, living in an apartment furnished with parts of the set for Jean Giraudoux's Siegfried, which Jouvet had lent the young couple, offers an apt symbol for the intensity of this commitment. After his divorce from his first wife,

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\(^1\) Playback, quoted in Lewis W. Falb, World Dramatists, p. 8.


\(^3\) Jean Anouilh, quoted in Pronko, The World of Jean Anouilh, p. xix.
Anouilh again married an actress, Charlotte Chardon. Indeed, all the women in his life, including his daughters, are involved with the theater. Catherine has had success as an actress, while Nicole has worked with her father on the adaptations of several plays and has directed one of his recent works, *Monsieur Barnett*.¹ "At twenty-six, Anouilh is of the age of bold creation, of sacrifices enthusiastically accepted, an age when one doesn't hesitate to choose a mission over happiness, even if that mission may be imaginary."²

Many critics seem to agree with Popkin when he states that Anouilh is a romantic idealist whose idealism plagues him. Anouilh yearns for purity, nobility, moral courage, and glory, but he discerns "little more than pettiness, chicanery, deception and vice. Life riles him because it isn't consistent; he abhors the bulk of humanity because it professes virtues it doesn't practice."³

Although the known playwrights, producers, directors, and other people of the theatrical world who influenced Anouilh were not too numerous, those close to him left traceable impressions on his works. Jacques Copeau, the father of the modern rediscovery in France set out to "retheatralize the theater" from the bare stage of the Vieux-Colombier and to prepare the way

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Copeau's disciples, Louis Jouvet and Charles Dullin, together with the Pitoëffs, went on to transform and dominate the whole fabric of the French theatre world for well over a generation, popularizing such starkly theatricalist playwrights as Giraudoux, Crommelynck, and Pirandello, the works of whom were to make a vital and indelible impression on young Anouilh. Anouilh's disciples, Louis Jouvet and Charles Dullin, together with the Pitoëffs, went on to transform and dominate the whole fabric of the French theatre world for well over a generation, popularizing such starkly theatricalist playwrights as Giraudoux, Crommelynck, and Pirandello, the works of whom were to make a vital and indelible impression on young Anouilh.2

Louis Jouvet, an important producer-director in Paris, was introduced to Anouilh by Georges Neveux, a playwright and fellow copywriter.3 Anouilh, for a short while, became secretary to Jouvet, the actor-manager. This opportunity enabled the dramatist to make contact with the professional theater.4 Anouilh and Jouvet were different in many ways. Jouvet was older and more used to practical problems and the world. On the contrary, Anouilh was "very pure at thirty" and unwilling to compromise those things which were important to him. The two were at "opposite poles of theatrical technique." Jouvet was famous for his "elaborate productions, for his elegance and taste," while Anouilh favored the "sparse stagings of the Pitoëffs." When Anouilh showed Jouvet his work, Jouvet gave him little encouragement.5 Nevertheless, a play, Siegfried by Giraudoux produced and directed by Jouvet, "revealed to Anouilh his vocation: It taught him that

2 Ibid.
3 Falb, World Dramatists, p. 9.
5 Falb, World Dramatists, p. 9.
one could have in the theater an artificial and poetic language which stands
or remains truer than stenographic conversation."\textsuperscript{1} Giraudoux's influence
was considerable and decisive.\textsuperscript{2}

His formative years as a young theatre-goer were spent
in the Paris of the late nineteen twenties, and among the
influences he has acknowledged from these years are those
of Giraudoux and Pirandello. It is clearly to the 'vieux
sorcier siciliera' that he can now be seen to owe the
clearest debt, even if from this point of view his earliest
plays in the naturalist manner give the impression of a
'false start.' Unaffected by the surrealism of his youth,
he has been equally little influenced by trends in post-war
drama. Though the outlook of many of his characters may
resemble the despairing nihilism that we associate with the
philosophy of the Absurd, the means of expression are
totally different. Dialogue and characters, however idio-
syncratic, have a traditional, logical coherence, and are
rooted in a rationalistic attitude towards the world and
man's place in it.\textsuperscript{3}

For some years Anouilh found it difficult to get his plays accepted.
Later he took one of his plays, \textit{Le Voyageur sans bagage}, to George Pitoëff.
Jouvet never forgave Anouilh for this.\textsuperscript{4} In any event, Pitoëff presented
only two of Anouilh's works, \textit{Le Voyageur sans bagage} and \textit{La Sauvage}. The
young playwright was deeply influenced by the simplicity and purity of
Pitoëff's approach. Anouilh still feels "filial gratitude" toward the

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{1} LaGarde and Michard, \textit{XX Siècle} (Canada: Centre Educatif and Culturel
\item \textsuperscript{2} Thomas and Lee, eds., \textit{L'Alouette}, p. 37.
\item \textsuperscript{3} W. D. Howarth, "Jean Anouilh," in \textit{Forces in Modern French Drama}, ed.
\item \textsuperscript{4} Falb, \textit{World Dramatists}, p. 9.
\end{itemize}
"only true genius" he met in his life.\textsuperscript{1} Pitoëff's style became Anouilh's ideal. Everything in Pitoëff's productions was stripped to the essentials; his was a theater in which the play of mind was prime interest. The productions by Georges Pitoëff brought Anouilh success and led to his meeting with the producer, André Barsoc, with whom he worked at the Théâtre de l'Atelier. They had a "long, intimate, and mutually beneficial" association during the war and immediately following it.\textsuperscript{2}

A study of Anouilh's themes provides some insight into the philosophy of the dramatist. Among his most general themes are to be found impurity of happiness, friendship-love, sincerity, the race of the rich and the race of the poor, honor, absurd duty, acceptance of death, and the pseudo hero.\textsuperscript{3}

Pronko acknowledges that the development of Anouilh's themes makes it possible to divide his plays into several periods based on similarities. The plays of the first period entitled "Man Against His Past" include "Pièces Noires." These plays explore the "plight of man" trying to escape from his past. Sometimes man succeeds, but more often than not, he fails.\textsuperscript{4}

Anouilh deals with systems of ethical values:

He shows us the behaviour of men and women in a social context, not the struggles of Man in the grip of fate. His heroes do not share an identical moral code: the essence of their 'heroism' rather consists in their attempt to be true to an ideal, to defend the integrity of their personality against the corruptions, the compromises and

\textsuperscript{1} Paris-Match, quoted in Lewis W. Falb, World Dramatists, p. 9.
\textsuperscript{2} Ibid., p. 10.
\textsuperscript{3} Fazia, Jean Anouilh, pp. 29-45.
\textsuperscript{4} Pronko, The World of Jean Anouilh, p. 4.
hypocrisy of the world they lived in.\textsuperscript{1}

The attitude of the central characters of "Pièces Noires" are twofold. The attitude of one group is "governed by an ideal system of values, arbitrary and subjective, intolerant and intransigent, which leads them to reject happiness, hope and even life itself, if these are only to be had by means of compromise."\textsuperscript{2}

A familiar pattern of Anouilh's tragedy (or Pièce Noire) is along the following lines. Intense happiness in love is experienced by two characters, who in their absorption with each other seem to cut themselves off from ordinary material existence and to inhabit an idealized dream world of their own creation. But the past weighs upon them with its load of corruption, destroying the ideal, and death or separation must result.\textsuperscript{3}

The second attitude is to be exemplified in the realists. They accept life as it is.

'Black' and 'new black plays' are pessimistic, bitter and permeated with gloom; they display Anouilh's lack of faith in humanity and its institutions. His pessimism stems from the realization that neither so-called joys and comforts of life reserved for the 'happy-few' nor the invitations to unsavory adventures extended to all men, leads to happiness. Anouilh views sincerity as impracticable in a world which seeks either to use honesty as stratagem or to destroy it. Anouilh is deeply concerned with this idea of multiplicity and mutability of human personality and with the realization that man can't be reduced to a unity that will afford him inner peace and contentment.\textsuperscript{4}

\begin{enumerate}
\item Howarth, "Jean Anouilh," in \textit{Forces in Modern French Drama}, p. 86.
\item Ibid.
\item Thomas and Lee, eds., \textit{L'Alouette}, p. 24.
\item Fazia, \textit{Jean Anouilh}, p. 29.
\end{enumerate}
The plays concerned with the refusal of reality of the second period "lay more stress upon the author's fundamental ideas than had his previous plays."¹ In these "Pièces Roses," the obstacle created by the past is found to be less significant, and happiness in the world of fantasy can ensue.² The real world, as Anouilh sees it, is materialistic. It is a world in which there are only "haves and have-nots." In this world social and economic distinction are of the utmost importance, and an individual can seldom move from one social or financial group to another without serious results.³ Nevertheless, one or more of the protagonists in these dramas often escape, to some degree at least, from the past and also from the present. However, "their only means of escape is flight into a world of fancy created in each instance by the characters involved or made possible by the circumstances."⁴ In these "Pièces Roses" Anouilh is not trying to assure us that one can successfully escape from reality for any length of time, nor is he saying that man cannot escape. For the dreams in which the characters lose themselves are not valid answers to the problems experienced or confronted with in the "Pièces Noires."⁵

If the characters of "Pièces Roses" are unheroic in their compromise with happiness and their refusal to accept


³ The Alienated Hero in Modern French Drama, quoted in Popkin, A Library of Literary Criticism, Vol. I., p. 34.


⁵ Ibid.
life as it is, they at least possess the noble desire for purity of life that dares to be what it is without excuses. But they are satisfied with a happiness that Anouilh later satirizes as illusory and unworthwhile.1

On the eve of World War II these escapist comedies were immensely popular, and Anouilh found himself branded a spinner of fantasy—"a pink fantasy riddled with the black strands of despair."2

In the plays of the first and second periods, "Anouilh's heroes gave some semblance of meaning to life by making it the means through which they realized themselves, by their very refusal of it."3 In the plays of the third period, "The Compromise with life," the outlook seems more pessimistic. There is "no hole in the fabric of an absurd universe through which to bring in some meaning."4 Hence, these plays are ironically entitled "Pièces Brillantes." It is suggested by Pronko that the only brilliance in these plays is the

... superficial one given by the witty dialogue, the colorful or gaudy costumes, and the hollow histrionics of the frivolous characters who take the stage; but beneath this superficial brightness we feel the grating disillusion that is fundamental to Anouilh.5

During this period Anouilh appears to be more interested in the mediocre people. He suggests that these people have accepted life as it exists.

1 Ibid., p. 17.
2 Harvey, Anouilh: A Study in Theatrics, p. viii.
4 Ibid.
5 Ibid., p. 41.
There is a distinct difference between the life of the "lower race" and that of the "heroic race." These brilliant plays do not contrast those who accept life with those who refuse; they, however, "oppose the innocent and sincere" to the wicked and cruel. As a result, a deep feeling of despair or pessimism arises. "This pessimistic attitude constitutes a profound criticism of the adult characters who have lost the purity of childhood."1

Although Anouilh's view of life and man's place in the universe have remained essentially the same, the later plays clarify and elaborate many ideas presented in his early plays. There is

... a shift in focus but no fundamental change in thirty years. He has developed what we might call a personal mythology, composed of characters, situations and language peculiar to his world and which reflect his view of life.2

L'Alouette, written and directed by Anouilh, was staged at the Théâtre Montparnasse-Gaston Baty, October 14, 1953. Unlike the other plays written during the third period, L'Alouette shows us the unconquered heroine who remains true to herself. This play, which tells the story of Joan of Arc, is grouped among the "Pièces Costumées." Although his main source for the play was Michelet's Histoire de France, Anouilh's treatment of Joan is modified, yet not unreasonable. In L'Alouette there is a deliberate mixture of pretense or fancy and reality. By comparison, Michelet's record states that Joan's father, a "rude et honnête paysan jurait que si sa fille s'en allait avec les gens de guerre, il la noierait plutôt de ses propres mains."3

1 Ibid.
2 Ibid., p. 3.
3 Histoire de France, quoted in Thomas and Lee, eds., L'Alouette, p. 11.
In a similar manner the father in *L'Alouette* says: "... je la noie, ta fille dans la Meuse, tu entends? de mes propres mains."¹ And again he exclaims to Joan, "... et je te noierai de mes propres mains comme une sale chatte en chaleur que tu es!"² In Michelet's record, it is noted that Joan's family sought to marry her in the district, hoping to deflect her from her purpose; Joan, in order to escape their authority, sought the protection of an uncle who arranged her visit to Beaudricourt. This is reiterated in *L'Alouette* in the words of her father:

... au lieu d'aider ton père et ta mère et de te marier avec le garçon sérieux qu'ils t'auront choisi? Hé bien! ton prétendu saint Michel,...³

Beaudricourt's reception of Joan is reasonably portrayed by Anouilh. He, like Michelet, records that Beaudricourt told Joan that she would be sent back to her father, but public pressure and the fact that she had warned him of a French reverse at Orleans before the official news reached him finally persuaded him to oblige her. Beaudricourt receives Joan:

Tu es tout au bord de ma patience. Je peux aussi bien te faire fouetter pour avoir forcé ma porte et te renvoyer chez toi sans rien du tout que des marques sur les fesses.⁴

The court scenes at Chinon, and Charles susceptibility to feminine influence are likely in Anouilh's treatment of Joan.

¹ Jean Anouilh, *L'Alouette*, La Table Ronde, p. 43.
² Ibid., p. 35.
³ Ibid.
⁴ Ibid., p. 56.
On the other hand, it may be noted that Richemont, not La Tremouille, was constable during this period of time. The secret concerning Charles' legitimacy, which was thought to have had a deep psychological effect on him, is discussed openly by Joan in the assembly. Only Joan's recipe for courage is given to Charles in an imagined interview. "Tu dis: 'Bon, j'ai peur. Mais c'est mon affaire; ça ne regarde personne. Continuons.' Et tu continues."¹ In Michelet's history, Joan's horse and armour for the journey to Chinon were supplied by the people of Vaucouleurs; Beaudricourt provided only her sword.² In L'Alouette, Beaudricourt gives her a horse and clothes after a bet on a race between them. "Tu lui fais donner une culotte et tu nous amènes deux chevaux. Nous allons faire un petit temps de galop tous les deux."³ Joan's military successes do not form an episode in themselves and are only slightly mentioned.

Warwick makes use of the symbol of '... la petite alouette chantant dans le ciel de France' and then with admirable dramatic terseness extends the metaphor to Joan's capture: 'Allez! La petite alouette est prise. Le piège de Compiègne s'est refermé.'⁴ Anouilh in L'Alouette restates this in words spoken by Warwick: "Allez! La petite alouette est prise. Le piège de Compiègne s'est refermé."⁵

¹ Ibid., p. 124.
² Histoire de France, quoted in Thomas and Lee, eds., L'Alouette, p. 11.
³ Jean Anouilh, L'Alouette, p. 72.
⁵ Jean Anouilh, L'Alouette, pp. 132-3.
The Coronation does not form a scene in itself, but it is consigned to the end of the play to form a final tableau. In *L'Alouette*:

**Beaudricourt:** On n'a pas joué le sacre! On avait dit qu'on jouerait tout! Jeanne a droit à jouer le sacre, c'est dans son histoire.

**Charles:** J'étais sûr qu'on oublierait mon sacre! On n'y pense jamais à mon sacre. Il m'a pourtant coûté assez cher.

**Warwick:** Le sacre, maintenant! C'est d'un mauvais goût! Ma présence à cette cérémonie serait indécente, Monseigneur, je m'éclipse.¹

Of Joan's fighting companions only La Hire, a character representative of all the rest who followed her and whose comradeship she shared, is given a role in the play.

Even so, his portrait seems a likely one: Michelet relates how the 'vieus brigands armagnacs' underwent the experience of conversion as a result of Joan's presence. The Gascon La Hire dared no longer swear in her company though she did retract enough to allow him to swear 'par son bâton.' La Hire's prayer before battle perhaps shows that Anouilh has set his character in its authentic key: 'Sire Dieu, je te prie de faire pour La Hire ce que La Hire ferait pour toi, si tu étais capitaine et si La Hire était Dieu.'²

*L'Alouette* is often considered Anouilh's most experimental dramatization of history. This drama fundamentally tells the story of the trial of Joan of Arc including her meeting with the Dauphin and her execution. Numerous people who have "touched" Joan's life in some way are represented. Anouilh characterizes these people in such a way that each one takes the center of the stage at some time to relive his scenes with the heroine. It is through this characterization that Anouilh's treatment of Joan is revealed.

¹ Ibid., p. 226.

Thus, each of the main characters who perform in the climactic scenes of Joan's life, as she appears before the judges before she is condemned, will be analyzed.

The structure of the play, like Joan's life, is written as a continuous narrative. Yet, it is suggested by Thomas and Lee that even though the play is not divided into acts, it naturally falls into two parts. Part I includes a prologue in which the political tone is created by Cauchon and Warwick. A series of scenes follows: scene one examines Joan's character, the issue of sorcery, and the mystery of the "Voices;" scene two reveals Joan's discussion with Beaudricourt; scene three explains the political situation on the Valois side, the character of Charles, and the function of La Tremouille and the Archbishop; scene four, which concludes part one, shows Joan at the Court of Chinon, Joan and Charles, and the Discomfiture of La Tremouille and the Archbishop.

Unlike Part I, Part II does not fall into scenes. It consists of several link passages "which move the action from one stage of the play to the other." Five stages are set: on the first stage the examination begins; it continues with the Inquisitor's questions on the second; on the third stage Joan is made to abjure; on the fourth stage she recovers; on the fifth stage the play ends with the "glorification of Joan."

... Indeed, Joan herself narrates some of the scenes. But such an approach to events can't deal with the more serious and agonizing side of her story, a side that at times completely transcends Joan's limited understanding. For these moments Anouilh shifts both the angle of her vision and his structural approach, and he creates a debate, a device he already used successfully in Antigone. In addition, Anouilh places, somewhat on the sidelines in...

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in the early scenes of the play, two critical observers, Cauchon and Warwick, who are able to comment directly and pertinently on the events. They are especially effective at those moments when the naïve simplifications threaten to dominate the play.¹

Warwick, the representative of the English forces, helps to move the drama along. He is considered a "skeptical materialist" who cannot understand Joan's decision. However, he does not wish her death; he prefers her disavowal. His reason is twofold: he is concerned about Joan, and he wishes to avoid a scandal. In L'Alouette Anouilh restates Warwick's feeling about Joan's execution.

Je le disais à Cauchon, je suis très heureux que vous ayez coupé au bûcher. Ma sympathie personnelle pour vous, mise à part-on souffre horriblement, vous savez, et c'est toujours inutile la souffrance, et inélegant-je crois que nous avons tous intérêt à vous avoir évité le martyre.²

Cauchon, the Bishop of Beauvais, determines the point at which to start the account of Joan's life. "Il y a toute l'histoire à jouer. Domremy, les Voix, Vaucouleurs, Chinon, le Sacre ..."³ Again Cauchon states: "Elle a toute sa vie à jouer avant. Sa courte vie."⁴ Cauchon seems to be sympathetic and understanding. Yet he is able to break Joan's will and influence her to abjure. He apparently feels that a man in his position must act reasonably and within the political practices of the time. Hence, he pleads with Joan.

¹ Falb, World Dramatists, p. 103.
³ Ibid., p. 10.
⁴ Ibid., p. 11.
Ne t'enferme pas dans ton orgueil, Jeanne. Tu comprends bien que ni en tant qu'hommes ni en tant que prêtres, nous n'avons aucune raison valable de croire à l'origine divine de ta mission. Toi seule as une raison d'y croire-poussée sans doute par le démon qui veut te perdre—et, bien entendu, dans la mesure où cela leur a été utile, ceux qui se sont servis de toi. Encore que les plus intelligents d'entre eux, leur attitude devant ta capture et leur désaveu formel le prouvent, n'y aient jamais cru. Personne ne croit plus à toi, Jeanne, hormis le menu peuple, qui croit tout, qui en croira une autre demain.¹

The Inquisitor, whose role is very important, questions Joan about the nature of her vision and about the state of her soul. The inquisitor is

... merely a mouthpiece of Anouilh's intention to make the overall theological harshness and cruelty. He speaks for the world against the hero and he knows exactly what he is after: the total destruction of the hero, because l'amour de l'homme is inconsistent with l'amour de Dieu.²

His objective is to protect the Church, at any cost, even if it means destroying individuals like Joan. He thinks of Joan as one of the

... 'insolent race,' which forever says 'no,' (that she) is both more dangerous and more difficult to conquer than any devil; such behavior is contagious and must be destroyed. No matter what the price, man's spirit must be broken; he must be forced to say yes; he must be forced to bend to the authority of the Church.³

L'Alouette states in the words of the Inquisitor:

Pour ce qui est de ce que j'ai fait, je ne m'en dédirai jamais!... Les entendez-vous les mots, qu'ils ont tous dit sur les bûchers, les échafauds, au fond des chambres de torture, chaque fois que nous avons pu nous saisir

1
Ibid., p. 140.

2
Thomas and Lee, eds., L'Alouette, p. 31.

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d'eux? Les mots qu'ils rediront encore dans les siècles, avec la même impudence, car la chasse à l'homme ne sera jamais fermée ... Si puissants que nous devenions un jour, sous une forme ou sous une autre, si lourde que se fasse l'Idée sur le monde, si dures, si précises, si subtiles que soient son organisation et sa police; il y aura toujours un homme à chasser ... quelque échappé, qu'on prendra enfin, qu'on tuera et qui humiliera encore une fois l'Idée au comble de sa puissance, simplement parce qu'il dira non sans baisser les yeux. L'insolente race!  

An interesting but pathetic character in L'Alouette is Charles, the Dauphin. In contrast to Joan, he is depicted as weak and cowardly. He lacks the concept of "an honor to be defended unto death" which is one of Anouilh's recurring themes.  

... Charles is shown in three stages: as le roi de Bourges-indolent, limp and undecided; momentarily jerked out of this (stage) and elated as a result of Joan's arrival at Chinon; and then fallen back into his former state of mind, once the Coronation is over and Joan away.  

After Joan teaches Charles how to have faith and courage, his fears gradually vanish for a while, and he is able to call forth enough courage to name Joan to command the royal army over the objection of the Archbishop and La Trémouille. Even though Joan accomplishes her mission to relieve Orleans and crown Charles, there is no gratitude shown. The effect of success on him is exemplified when he disavows Joan and also when he visits her in prison.  

Joan, the heroine of L'Alouette, is referred to by Warwick as  

... cette petite alouette chantant dans le ciel de  

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1 Jean Anouilh, L'Alouette, p. 176.  
2 Fazia, Jean Anouilh, p. 37.  
France, au dessus de la tête de leurs fantassins ...
Personnellement, Monseigneur, j'aime beaucoup la France.
C'est pourquoi je ne me consolerais jamais, si nous la
perdions. Ces deux notes claires, ce chant joyeux et
absurde d'une petite alouette immobile dans le soleil
pendant qu'on lui tire dessus,...

This is truly an appropriate metaphor for Anouilh's heroine. First of all,
when she is approached by her parents, she is able to accept physical and
emotional abuse in an humble but serene manner. Though abandoned by her
parents, she knows that she must go to the aid of France and accomplish
the crowning of the Dauphin at Reims as the "Voices" had commanded. This
clever peasant girl with common sense and wit persuades Beaudricourt to
supply her needs for the journey. Her meeting with the Dauphin, her trial,
and her execution follow. It is through these scenes that Anouilh's treat-
ment of Joan is truly seen. After Joan was captured at Compiègne and
deserted by Charles and after "her Voices" had been silent, she faced the
trial, her most difficult moment, alone. Here Cauchon tries to convince
Joan that the argument for the Church is logical, but she insists that
"Cognez dur, c'est votre droit. Moi, mon droit est de continuer à croire
et de vous dire non." Nevertheless, she submits to Cauchon's plea and
agrees to sign the abjuration confession, but

To preserve the true image of herself as the Joan who
agreed to shape the history of France, she repudiates her
confession. With absolute assurance she tells Warwick she
wants neither a lifetime in prison, nor even a pardon.
Joan of Arc can not age, can not marry, can not grow fat.
Comfort and ease, purchased at the cost of compromise, do
not interest her. Although she is addressing Warwick, her

1
Jean Anouilh, L'Alouette, p. 132.

2
Ibid., p. 139.
words are primarily meant for herself. When man is alone, she says, totally alone, it is then that he finds his true grandeur, for then God shows the greatest confidence in him, allowing him to discover his proper nature, completely and forever.¹

Then she exclaims with assurance to herself and everyone else: "Je vous rends Jeanne! Pareille à elle et pour toujours."² With this declaration the play ends with these most appropriate words expressed by Charles:

La vraie fin de l'histoire de Jeanne, la vraie fin qui n'en finira plus, celle qu'on se redira toujours, quand on aura oublié ou confondu tous nos noms, ce n'est pas dans sa misère de bête traquée à Rouen, c'est l'alouette en plein ciel, c'est Jeanne à Reims dans toute sa gloire ... La vraie fin de l'histoire de Jeanne est joyeuse. Jeanne d'Arc, c'est une histoire qui finit bien!³

² Jean Anouilh, L'Alouette, p. 216.
³ Ibid., p. 227.
CHAPTER III

PEGUY'S JEANNE D'ARC

Charles-Pierre Péguy was born in the suburb of Orleans in 1873, and he died in 1914 at the Battle of Marne. Péguy grew up in a country which was still hurting from the humiliation of defeat in the 1870-71 war with Prussia. He referred to his generation as a "sacrificed generation" because... it had to live after the defeat, and he thought that its behavior as well as its thinking were not unconnected with that disaster on the battlefield. Instead of living in an 'epoch' when great things were happening, they had to be content with belonging to a 'period,' a time devoid of ideas and any sense of purpose.¹

Nevertheless, as suggested by Maxwell Adereth, Péguy had several encounters with reality which helped to shape his life: The Ecole Normale, the Dreyfus Affair and its aftermath, patriotism, faith and love. Through these encounters Péguy was molded into a man of decision. His first lessons given to him by the priest and his schoolmaster were of much value. These lessons had a common element which was reinforced by his home background:

Vice will be punished and virtue rewarded; work is sacred and earning one's living is the greatest moral principle of all. In spite of their different beliefs both priest and master were a part of this world, a world which Péguy liked to call the world of Ancient France.²

From this principle emerged the honesty which was fundamental to Péguy's


thinking all through life. This early training may account for his being treated as a "traditionalist and a revolutionary, a reactionary and a progressive or even as an amalgam of the two."¹ In spite of his "peasant background," Péguy's scholastic aptitude was noted early by the head of the primary school, and he secured a full municipal scholarship for Péguy to attend the Lycée d'Orléans. In 1891 Péguy received his French baccalaureate; then he entered the Lycée Lakanal. It was during this year that a decision was made to cease to practice the Catholic religion, to which he returned seventeen years later. During this period he also encountered what he considered to be the essence of modern France: success at examinations.² He felt that state grants awarded on examination results represented a complete reversal of social and moral values. In 1892 Péguy passed the written entrance examinations required to enter the École Normale Supérieure, but he failed the orals and lost the scholarship. This academic failure was the first of several. However, he later gained entrance to the École Normale and eventually received his bachelor's degree in science.³ It was again his decision to interrupt his studies at the École Normale to apply for, and take a year's leave of absence from his studies to return to Orleans to work on Jeanne d'Arc, a project which he had begun about two years earlier. Prior to this, Péguy had become somewhat suspicious of the system of grants and the existence of total economic want:


² Jussem-Wilson, Péguy, p. 9.

We discovered, in the Parisian slum district of the Butte-aux-Cailles where he distributed meagre rations of bread and soup, the existence not of poverty—poverty could be a moral salvation—but of total economic want and its inevitable corroding moral effects. Humanity in this earthly Hell had not only somehow missed state welfare, but was denied the most sacred act of living: work.¹

Since the young Socialist Party denounced the economic evil tolerated by a wealthy bourgeois society, Péguy ardently joined the party. It was in this spirit that he decided to turn to socialism. The poverty of his childhood and his hatred of injustice had already convinced him that something must be done in the economic and social sphere.² He helped to organize a chapter of the Socialist Party and in 1897 he published his first article on the Socialist economist, Leon Walras.³ This work marks the beginning of his literary career. He published five articles in the Revue Socialisme, a kind of blueprint of the future Socialist State in which he predicted that the "administration of things" would replace the "government of men" and the means of production would become collective property. Péguy stressed that the purpose of a "harmonious" organization of material life was to insure the full and free development of spiritual life.⁴ His wife and family concurred with his decision to use her modest inheritance to venture into or found a Socialist bookstore which eventually proved to be unsuccessful. Péguy, to his dismay, soon became disenchanted with the

¹ Jussem-Wilson, Charles Péguy, p. 9.

² Adereth, Commitment in Modern French Literature, p. 60.

³ Aubyn, Péguy, p. 17.

⁴ Adereth, Commitment in Modern French Literature, p. 60.
Socialist Party because the people with whom he was associated felt that it was more important to publish "prefabricated and rigidly controlled political propaganda" than to express a multiplicity of free views. Meanwhile the Socialist Party had refused him the right to publish uncensored material, and he reluctantly left the organization. This did not shake his faith in socialism, but it did encourage his leaving the Socialist Party. Later he founded his own review Les Cahiers de la Quinzaine because he was concerned with the value of a periodical dedicated to truth. Péguy used the Cahiers as a militant platform where free men would tell the truth as they saw it, without fear of offending any party or church. To this ideal, the Cahiers remained faithful until he died.¹

As was previously stated, Péguy was a man of decision. He was "... one of the few who had the courage to break with the past, with the Socialists and the Catholics, the Left and the Right."²

Out of his fourth encounter with reality—Faith, grew a moral revolution in which there was a return to the traditional moral values of Catholicism; it began as a criticism of the Socialist Party and ended as a criticism of the Catholic Party.³

In 1908 while recovering from a serious illness, Péguy revealed his return to the Catholic faith to his friend Joseph Lotte. He did not speak of his return as conversion; he described it as "approfondissement," a

¹ Ibid., p. 64.
² Dru, Charles Péguy, p. 10.
³ Ibid., p. 112.
deepering of his mind.\textsuperscript{1} This again marks a decisive moment. This revelation did not mean that Péguy returned to the Church but it did occasion much anguish for both Péguy and his family who remained staunch Socialists.\textsuperscript{2} The "religious rift" in the Péguy household was not healed until after Péguy's death with the conversion of Madame Péguy and their children.\textsuperscript{3} Péguy felt that the path which led him back to Christianity was the path of freedom; for him, "it is the complete man, the pagan soul, which is free, and in that freedom, open to grace."\textsuperscript{4}

Péguy's last encounter, though not the least, was with love. Around 1908 Péguy fell in love with a young Jewish girl. During this period of his life his marriage was quite unhappy. He was being bitterly reproached by his wife for having made a financial failure of the Cahiers. He realized that a match between the girl and him was impossible, and he encouraged her to marry someone else.\textsuperscript{5} By 1910 Péguy's deep passion for the girl, Blanche Raphael, was causing him great agony. She was married and Péguy remained faithful to his wife and family. This decision, like all his decisions was "total and final; and the completeness of his sacrifice gave him back

\textsuperscript{1} Adereth, Commitment in Modern French Literature, p. 68.

\textsuperscript{2} Aubyn, Péguy, p. 21.

\textsuperscript{3} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{4} Adereth, Commitment in Modern French Literature, p. 78.

\textsuperscript{5} Ibid., p. 74.
his freedom; le bonheur was less than l'honneur.\(^1\)

Although the number of influences on Péguy were not overwhelming, they were, however, varied and of great importance in the formation of his philosophy. Among these influences were Pascal, Corneille and Bergson: "C'est Pascal qui, le premier, a enseigné à Péguy la nécessité de tenir en bride la raison, de la contenir dans les bornes de son domaine."\(^2\) In addition, "Pascal a donc conduit Péguy à tenter l'expérience d'une philosophie libéatrice solidement étayée sur une saine psychologie."\(^3\) Thus,

"Le cœur sent qu'il y a trois dimensions dans l'espace, que les nombres sont infinis ... C'est le cœur qui sent Dieu et non la raison; voilà ce que c'est que la Foi: Dieu sensible au cœur, non à la raison." Sur le plan strictement moral, la leçon la plus claire que Pascal a enseignée à Péguy est qu'il n'y a pas de séparation possible entre la foi et la vie.\(^4\)

This Pascal-Péguy association resulted in "L'impératif pascalien (qui) restera pour Péguy un impératif de découverte et d'orientation ..."\(^5\)

Corneille may be considered Péguy's ideal because he expressed the traditional equilibrium between human nature and grace on which a genuine freedom ultimately rests.\(^6\) Therefore Quoniam agrees with Corneille:

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1 Dru, Charles Péguy, pp. 109-110.


3 Ibid., p. 119.

4 Ibid., pp. 119-20.

5 Ibid., p. 120.

6 Dru, Charles Péguy, p. 114.
... Péguy opte pour une grandeur vécue; il veut pratiquer l'imitation de la grandeur au sens sacré du terme et non une vaine copie, ce qui signifie la volonté d'en réaliser l'incarnation dans la mesure de ses forces.¹

From his association with Corneille, Péguy develops "un impératif cornélien" (qui) "se grave en trois mots qui expriment sa physionomie militante: respect, fidélité, honneur."² Thus:

A l'école de Corneille, Péguy sait que l'irrespect est avilissant, et il relève toutes les marques de l'irrespect dont se couvre 'le monde moderne.' L'œuvre entière de Péguy est une dénonciation de l'irrespect.³

During the Corneille-Péguy association,

... Péguy apprend à connaître le prix des vertus héroïques de l'Honnête Homme' et le sens d'une fidélité qui accepte librement tous les sacrifices jusqu'au sacrifice suprême.⁴

Péguy was an early admirer of Bergson. He accepted his philosophy as a spiritual liberation because it delivers one from habit, and it stresses the importance of the present.

A Bergson, Péguy doit d'avoir pu grouper en une synthèse vivante bien des idées éparses que l'expérience lui avait données sur la notion de conscience. Bergson lui a appris, en effet, ce qu'était biologiquement une conscience et quelles conditions étaient nécessaires à son équilibre harmonieux dans la liberté d'exercice.⁵

According to Adereth,

¹ Quoniam, La Pensée de Péguy, p. 121.
² Ibid.
³ Ibid.
⁴ Ibid., p. 122.
⁵ Ibid., p. 125.
Péguy's enthusiastic acceptance of the Bergsonian 'present,' which he describes, 'not as the morrow of yesterday,' but as 'the eve of tomorrow,' as a challenge to action, serves as a reminder that his denunciation of the 'modern' world does not imply a romantic longing for the past. Certainly, he was fond of the ancient virtues of honour and fidelity, but he wanted them to become inspiring ideals for the men of his time.1

Thus, "Toute conscience est mémoire, conservation et accumulation du passé dans le présent."2 From the Péguy-Bergson affiliation, "... Péguy atteint ce 'moi profond,' si éloigné de certains 'engagements' confus qu'ont tenté d'accréder des philosophies plus récentes."3 In addition, "Péguy a trouvé dans Bergson un univers moral qui coïncide en tout point avec l'univers de la vie et a les mêmes racines profondes."4 Therefore Péguy adopted "La pensée bergsonienne" (qui) a donc permis à Péguy de trouver les soubassements philosophiques de son action et de fixer la clé de voûte de son éthique."5 Péguy also obtained the essential ideas of a revolution from Bergson:

"Elle s'écrit avec des idées simples: elle n'a rien d'un système compliqué à mettre en application. Cette révolution bergsonienne s'est marquée sur un double plan, celui de la méthode et celui de la métaphysique. Elle a essentiellement consisté à arrêter toute la descente, à remonter toute l'habitude organique et mentale."6

1 Adereth, Commitment in Modern French Literature, p. 78.
2 Quoniam, La Pensée de Péguy, p. 125.
3 Ibid.
4 Ibid., p. 126
5 Ibid.
6 Ibid., p. 127.
There was among the main influences on Péguy one other which though mentioned last, may, in fact, be the most important. Joan was Péguy's patron.

... It is Joan who gives his life and work their unity ... She is the real influence in his life, the inspiration of his fidélité, the centre of the 'invisible parish,' the invisible Church which moved 'secretly within him.' All the external influences which played about him in those early years, Sorel and Bergson and Michelet, the influence of his friends, of his opponents, are extraneous by comparison with the mysterious link he contracted as a young man, the strength of which he could not realize till it had borne fruit ... Joan was his patron saint in the true sense, who led him to God.¹

Popkin notes that Péguy born in Orleans as was Joan, was struck down on the front during the Battle of Marne; and in between "he never stopped fighting with weapons from study and nature."²

From the very beginning, Péguy marched under the banner of the Maid of Orleans. So well did he march that one may wonder whether his own troops were not part of 'survival mission' spoken of by St. Joan's biographers—the mission begun by the stake at Rouen and far from ended by the expulsion of foreigners from France after the Battle of Castillon ... Péguy's indignation against those responsible for burning Joan of Arc is refreshing to me. I think I can see St. Joan's sword of Fierbois gleaming again in Péguy's hand ...³

It is believed that through Joan's life Péguy came to understand his own life. "In her mission he discovered the relations between 'la mystique and la politique,' and in her faith the relation between 'le salut temporel

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¹ Dru, Péguy, p. 72.


³ Ibid.
Péguy's treatment of Saint Joan in his various works was an enthusiastic undertaking. In his second year of study in 1895, he suddenly packed his bags and went home to Orleans to write about Joan of Arc. He declared that this would be a story... altogether more serious than his history teachers' 'exteriorations of sensations ... and objectivations of mental states.' And, contrary to all their methods, he found that no amount of documentation— and his was extensive and thorough—could recapture the spirit of an age or psychology of a character. The chronicler reporting lived experiences, the artist through intuitive understanding or aesthetic experience, were better equipped to do so than the historian who restricted himself to objective analysis of documents.2

His interest in Joan of Arc was intense because she was a simple peasant girl who had "shaken her countrymen out of their cowardice."3 She symbolized courage and feeling for the suffering of others, the qualities of his own commitment. He was always interested in her and in his last years she became his model in all things.

The first Jeanne d'Arc written in 1897 served as a type of embryo version from which the other three mysteries grew:

The first Joan of Arc... is like a tree without blossoms, a totally barren tree. The Mystery of the Charity of Joan of Arc is the tree with all its branches, with all its boughs, with all its leaves, with all its blossoms. In Péguy's plan The Mystery of the Charity of Joan of Arc and The Porch of the Mystery of the Second

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1 Dru, Péguy, p. 73.

2 Jusset-Wilson, Péguy, p. 13.

3 Adereth, Commitment in Modern French Literature, p. 61.
Virtue were meant to be only the initial developments in a series in which Joan of Arc would all be taken up again and expanded until the death of the heroine.1

The three mysteries, including Mystère des saints Innocents, give the sequence of Péguy's return to Catholicism, the sequence of the coming grace. "He had always believed, but he had not always hoped, and it was hope that transfigured his natural fidelity into supernatural faith that brought his faith fully alive."2 These mysteries are variations on a single theme: the mysteries of the faith, hope and charity, and the life of grace.

The three mysteries form a triptych. The publication in 1910 of the Mystère de la charité de Jeanne d'Arc, the Christian Joan,

... gave rise to a lively battle in the politically committed and politically divided intellectual world which found it difficult to envisage that one could be both a defender of Dreyfus and of Joan. The Christian shepherdess from Lorraine, uniting the country in the name of its ancient traditions, and the Jew from Alsace, dividing the country in the name of the declaration of human rights, had become powerful symbols of two French traditions which bitterly opposed each other. The critical battle fought around Péguy's Joan is a fascinating document in the history of this crisis.3

Le mystère de la charité de Jeanne d'Arc does not go back on any of the statements uttered in the first Joan of 1897. The central problem of this play remains the same. It is the problem of how to fight evil and how to

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2
Dru, Péguy, p. 78.

3
Revue d'histoire littéraire de la France quoted in Jussem-Wilson, Péguy, p. 58.
interpret damnation. However, Joan speaks of her faith in terms which would have been impossible when Péguy thought he was an atheist. Yet, in this play, he does not claim to solve the problem. He does, however, allow Madame Gervaise to have a much bigger role and to reveal the traditional view that Hell is a mystery which belongs to God, but still this does not convince Joan. She argues with God and wonders "how his saints allow him to behave in this way." Finally she says that God Himself must be unhappy at the thought of eternal torments. Then she learns from Hauviette that the tide has begun to turn against the invaders of France. She regains all her courage and understands that she must have faith in God's mercy as she concentrates on her earthly duties. Péguy's theme of absence is found in this mystery. Joan realizes that in order to eliminate the present suffering, it will be necessary to add to that suffering.

... In the face of this necessity she feels herself very much present in the world, but because of her destiny, the world is absent but to her. It is no longer she who is absent but others ... She finally resolves her dilemma: her reason for being and for dying will be charity, the sacrifice of herself to the evil she must do for the good of others. She will be able to save others from eternal absence through her own absence. The sacrifice of self will give reason to the unreasonable and put an end to the absence of others.

The next play, Le porche du mystère de la deuxième vertu, is a continuation of the Joan mystery, and Péguy dedicated it to the greatest of

1 Adereth, *Commitment in Modern French Literature*, p. 69.


3 Ibid.
all virtues, hope.\textsuperscript{1} In this play sleep becomes another kind of absence. It is treated as a temporary absence "which repairs and restores the absence that is a gift from God."\textsuperscript{2} In the \textit{Porche du mystère de la deuxième vertu} and \textit{Le mystère des saints Innocents} the main debate is time.

Time here is not an inevitable de-creation; there is no aging and hardening but a creative evolution in which man affirms his being through acts of being.\textsuperscript{3}

\textit{Le mystère des saints Innocents} continues the same theme, hope. \textit{Le porche de la deuxième vertu} states:

Faith ... looks as though it were everything, and hope looks as though it were almost nothing. Faith is the oak tree, and hope is only the bud on the branch. But the bud is the sign of life, the promise of the future breaking out of the past, le nouveau réel and le jaillissement.\textsuperscript{4}

The theme of hope dominates these mysteries. It is out of despair itself that Péguy builds up his confidence and his faith, and not by denying the tragedy of life. Of the three virtues, faith, hope and charity, hope is the highest, for without it, the other two would be "nothing but graveyard."\textsuperscript{5}

These plays did not conclude Péguy's study of Joan for she was the inspiration of much of the poetry he wrote during the last six years of his life.

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\textsuperscript{1} Adereth, \textit{Commitment in Modern French Literature}, p. 76.

\textsuperscript{2} Aubyn, \textit{Péguy}, p. 124.

\textsuperscript{3} Jussem-Wilson, \textit{Péguy}, pp. 86-87.

\textsuperscript{4} Dru, \textit{Péguy}, p. 77.

\textsuperscript{5} Adereth, \textit{Commitment in Modern French Literature}, p. 76.
Péguy's treatment of his first Joan or Jeanne d'Arc written in 1897 is used in this comparative study. Although one may find parallels in Péguy's treatment of Joan with that of Anouilh's, there are distinct differences. Péguy's Jeanne d'Arc is not a historical work. He is more interested in the spirit of his heroine and in making her message relevant to modern times.¹

The first Joan of Arc is a dramatic trilogy: At Domremy, The Battles, At Rouen. Each of these three plays is itself divided into several parts, and each part is divided into several acts; each of these acts is not simply a "tableau," or scene, but an act in the full sense of the word. This dramatic trilogy is written in prose with lyrical monologues. It is often referred to as the Socialist Joan in order to distinguish it from the Christian Joan of 1910. The device of dramatic pause is brought into play during the crisis in each part of the trilogy. Whenever Joan prays, there is a shift from prose to verse. Throughout the drama, Péguy "re-incarnates" in a dramatic way "human souls grappling with the mysteries of grace and liberty."²

The first play, Domremy, describes Joan's childhood and tells how deeply sad she is because of the misery around her. Domremy is historically largely inauthentic because little is known about Joan's childhood.

Psychologically and spiritually, it is the most intense and perhaps the most moving of the three plays. It is also the most lyrical and the least dramatic.

¹ Ibid., p. 62.

² Péguy: témoin du temporel chrétien quoted in Popkin, A Library of Literary Criticism, p. 179, Vol. II.
This language is free both from picturesque archaisms and modern slang. Unlike Anouilh's Joan, for example, who expresses herself in modern and sophisticated slang, Péguy's heroine is linguistically earthy and her language could be the popular language of any age, but she is never slangy and quite unsophisticated.

Linguistic simplicity, however, does not limit the range of her thoughts and vision. Dealing with complex and abstract concepts in a concrete and unintellectualized idiom will be a feature of Péguy's writing.¹

The theme of absence is initiated in this first play. Near the end, Joan says goodbye to her family and home in the name of the Meuse River and in so doing speaks of a kind of absence.

Joan expresses here that 'strange love of absence' according to which, although she is still physically in Lorraine, she is spiritually in Orleans.... Although the actual moment of departure is at hand, her heart has already experienced the pain of absence from people and places. But it is a 'love of absence' since her heart and soul yearn to be absent here in order to be present there. Absent she will love her Domremy and her Meuse even more, but young as she is, her heart has already learned how to love those who are absent and far away. This is the 'strange love of absence' which must be a part of Joan's character if she is to fulfill her destiny.²

From Les Batailles, Péguy has left out many episodes recalled by history and usually treated by other playwrights including Anouilh: the interview with Beaudricourt, Joan's arrival at court, the test recognition of Charles, the coronation at Reims. Les Batailles moves rapidly; much of the action occurs off stage. On stage

Péguy lets soldiers, merchants, servants, governors, politicians, theologians, a student, and a housewife appear and talk about themselves and about Joan. Attention is focused on three significant stages in Joan's

¹ Jussem-Wilson, Péguy, p. 18.

² Aubyn, Péguy, p. 121.
brief life: her success at Orleans, the failure to liberate Paris and the last desperate campaign planned from her retreat on the Loire.1

There are fewer soliloquies. Joan is seldom alone with God. In Act IV after the failure of the assault on Paris, she attempts several times to pray: "Il ne peut savoir ce que mon âme est lasse. Lasse de la bataille et lasse du conseil."2 And again: "Mon Dieu, pardonnez-moi si j'ai l'âme lasse. Mais mon âme se lasse à rester seule, aussi."3 And finally:

O mon Dieu faudra-t-il que je sois toute seule?
Faut-il qu'ils fassent tous leur partance de moi?
Que leur partance à tous me laisse toute seule?4

She is interrupted, however, by one of her lieutenants each time. This part of the trilogy ends as Joan goes forth on the raid that will result in her capture.

Rouen is the sequel to Joan's defeat. The central episode of Rouen treats the interrogation of Joan.

Péguy has closely followed historical sources, textually transcribing some of the well-known questions and replies. But there are eloquent omissions and stresses. His Joan was not to be condemned by politicians, fanatics or neurotics. Nor even by the Church. But by the doctors of the Church.5

The theme of absence is treated at the end of Rouen. Joan must now say

1 Jussem-Wilson, Péguy, pp. 18-19.
3 Ibid.
4 Ibid.
5 Jussem-Wilson, Péguy, pp. 21-22.
farewell to all people and places and life itself. Hence death will be absence. "It is no longer the world which is absent to one but one who is absent from the world." Joan now sees the necessity of dying, but she is not yet ready to die without a reason.

To examine Péguy's treatment of Joan, it is convenient to follow the same procedure used in studying Anouilh's treatment of her in Chapter Two. Therefore, an examination of characterization will follow.

Joan and her friend Hauviette symbolize the opposing forces of devotion to duty and egotistic timidity. Hauviette has a type of quiet courage which she uses to make the best of a harsh life. This peasant girl lives through war and the peace of defeat with the "unheroic and serene lucidity which sees things as they are, accepts them without asking too many questions, and gets on with the formidable business of simple living." Fundamentally, she feels that man should pray and accept God's will. "She looks upon the ever recurring cycles of the seasons as proof of God's intention that life should go on."


1
Aubyn, Péguy, p. 123.

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3
Jussem-Wilson, Péguy, p. 16.

4
Ibid., p. 15.

5
Ibid.
Mure. Eh bien! après tout ce temps-là, tous les ans, à l'automne, les bons laboureurs, ton père, le mien, les pères de nos amies, toujours les mêmes, laborent avec le même soin les mêmes terres, les terres de là-haut, et les ensemencent.¹

Madame Gervaise is a compassionate young nun who is versed in theology, but she has no more understanding of Joan than Hauviette.² She reproves Joan for her despair over the loss and damnation of souls and the destruction of Christendom.³ Madame Gervaise has no adequate remedy for the evil and suffering; when Joan questions her about these evils, she declares,

Jésus a prêché; Jésus a prié; Jésus a souffert. Nous devons l'imiter dans toute la mesure de nos forces. Oh! nous ne pouvons pas prêcher divinement; nous ne pouvons pas prier divinement; et nous n'aurons jamais la souffrance infinie.⁴

Brother Vincent Claudet, unlike the theologians, is able to accept reality and understand intuitively. As Joan is questioned he interrupts proclaiming:

... je ne sais discuter le cas; mais il ne faut pas en savoir si long; il suffit de regarder; il suffit d'avoir vu madame Jeanne, il suffit de la voir une seule fois pour voir que c'est une sainte.⁵

After Joan's failure to enter Paris, Brother Claudet tries to persuade her that her mission is completed since she has successfully crowned the king,

¹ Charles Péguy, Jeanne d'Arc, Domremy, part 1, act 1.
² Jussem-Wilson, Péguy, p. 16.
³ Dru, Péguy, p. 74.
⁴ Charles Péguy, Jeanne d'Arc, Domremy, part 1, act 2.
⁵ Ibid., Les Batailles, part 2, act 3.
but Joan does not compromise. Her full purpose is to drive the English from France.

Thomas de Coucelles, one of the chief interrogators, is an eminent theologian. At the trial he is very gentle, but he tries to convince Joan that there is no evidence of divine election, and her victories cannot be considered miraculous since they were followed by defeats. Father Mathieu Bourat had already objected to the importance of Joan's defeat which the learned assessors had used in their arguments. He argued that defeat was "not necessarily the distinguishing mark of the damned, no more than victory is that of the blessed."1 Through this discussion

Péguy seems to express his contempt for the yardstick of success. He already had, and it was to develop with the years, a veritable mystique of failure; as if failure, in the artificiality of modern times, constituted a guarantee of purity.2

When Joan is in her cell, Bourat seems to represent her spirit on the stage. He echoes her concept of duty,

Les hommes sont ce qu'ils sont, mon maître, et font ce qu'ils font: cela ne regarde pas. Ce qui nous regarde, nous, c'est seulement ce que nous devons faire, nous.3

He continues the argument by saying that if Joan has sinned against God, she must be punished by the Church. This is their duty; but if she is guiltless, the Church must not persecute her. "Unlike Joan, he does not

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1 Jussem-Wilson, Péguy, p. 21.

2 Ibid.

3 Charles Péguy, Jeanne d'Arc, Rouen, part 1, act 1.
stand and fight for this principle; like Pilate, he merely washes his hands.\(^1\)

When Joan enters the first play, *Domremy*, she is consumed by an embittered anguish, haunted by the vision of the hungry and the damned, and rebelling against the concept of Hell.... The real problem ... is the existence of war.\(^2\)

She will not tolerate the "peace of defeat."\(^3\) She feels that freedom must be earned; it cannot be enjoyed as a gift. "The victim's own strength alone must justly punish the aggressor."\(^4\)

In *Les Batailles*, Joan's confidence has no limits because "God has instructed her."\(^5\) When asked whether she wishes to participate in a council of war, she answers,

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Mais puisque je le sais, moi, messire, tout ce qu'il faut faire. Mais c'est que je ne veux pas, messire, que l'on discute ce que je dis. Monseur de Gaucourt, il ne s'agit pas de moi: Je n'ai rien a commander, moi, qui soit de moi. Je n'ai pas de commandement qui soit à moi. Mais je viens de Celui qui a commandement sur tout le monde; et celui qui me dit ce que Dieu m'ordonne, c'est un bien ancien chef de guerre, puisqu'il menait l'armée céleste à l'assaut des maudits.\(^6\)
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All goes well with Joan as long as she is victorious, but

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2 Jussem-Wilson, *Péguy*, p. 16.

3 Ibid.


5 Ibid., p. 58.

... before the battle of Paris, where her fortunes turn, the theologians—by all odds the villains of the piece—begin to whisper of witchcraft and heresy. In the field, discipline begins to deteriorate. The soldiers resume the habit of looting as the novelty of her inspiration wears off. Gilles de Rais scoffs at her love of peace; booty is what the soldier seeks not pacification.¹

Joan answers these charges:

_Le jour où j'essaierais de les réparer, messire, ce serait ce jour-là que j'aurais tort, et je renie d'avance, à present que j'ai raison, les réparations que je ferais._ Voici ce que je dis, et je le pense vraiment jusqu'au bout: _'S'il fallait, pour sauver la France, prononcer les paroles que monsieur de Rais a prononcées devant moi,... j'aimerais mieux ... que la France ne fût pas sauvée.'²

Finally, at Rouen, the "saintly shepherd girl," Péguy's symbol of human perfectability and perfection, is now the object of a battle between the forces of good and evil among her judges.³ Although Péguy's treatment of Joan was mainly focused on the "spirit of his heroine" as was recognized earlier by Adereth, after carefully examining this trilogy, it is easy to agree with Hans Schmitt that

_The Jeanne d'Arc of Péguy is a strange and arresting document. Form and content, structure and message mirror the spiritual ferment, the reconciling harmonies and the disconcerting confusion of the times during which it was written. The observant reader senses that the mixture of humanitarianism and chauvinistic militancy, of conservatism and rebellion, faith and reason, the seemingly contradictory emphasis on both spiritual and material_
salvation stamp it as a major historical monument. This historical significance exceeds its literary virtues.\footnote{Ibid., p. 66.}
CHAPTER IV

OBEY'S LA FENETRE

André Obey, like Anouilh and Péguy, was a contemporary twentieth-century French dramatist. His many talents can be noted in his ability as an actor-manager, playwright, adaptor, director, and musician. He has created about thirty original plays; in addition,

... he has written many adaptations, including two from Shakespeare, Richard III and Henry IV; Maria, a play-within-a-play based on Faulkner's short story 'Mistral'; an Oedipus Tyrannus from Sophocles; an adaptation of the Oresteia written at the request of Barrault who played the role of Orestes; an immensely successful French version of Tennessee Williams' Cat On a Hot Tin Roof; a stage play based on the television script of Twelve Angry Men.1

Obey directed the dramatic and literary programs of Radio-diffusion Française after World War II, then for two years he directed Comédie-Française. Obey's contributions to the literary world extend over a period of fifty years of his productive life; however, unlike Anouilh and Péguy, it seems that little source material is available. Aside from the one primary source, the play itself which was translated by Judith Suther and Earle Clowney, this chapter depends largely on the research done by an ardent admirer of Obey, Dr. Earle D. Clowney.

Of Spanish and Flemish parentage, Obey was born May 8, 1892, in Douai, France. Obey himself married Jeanne Moreau-Dupuy in 1919, and a year later

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his only child Nicole was born. In his early years, his many interests included music and sports. He was active in track events, especially foot-races, and his interest as a sports enthusiast continued throughout his long literary life. Obey died in 1975.

Obey experienced a first realization and appreciation of literature and the theatre while he attended the lycée in Douai. In 1910 he received the baccalaureate. After completing studies at the lycée of Douai, Obey attended the University of Lille from 1910 to 1913, earning his licence ès lettres and a licence en droit.

He entered the military service in 1913 where he served in the infantry. While serving there, he was wounded and later sent to the hospital in Limoges. After his recovery, he remained there as a male nurse until 1919. During this period of time, he wrote about the war. These "souvenirs de guerre" were published in the Revue de Paris. Because of the success of these memoirs, Obey launched the beginning of his literary career in Paris. He continued his writing as a columnist, and literary and sports critic from 1922 to 1927. In addition, he wrote articles of a personal nature for the Impartial Français. It seems that the latter literary experience materialized into his writing prose fiction. Le Joueur de Triangle, an autobiographical novel written in 1928, earned him the

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2 Ibid., p. 17.
3 Ibid.
4 Ibid., p. 18.
award, Prix Théophraste Renaudot given annually to the writer who does outstanding work in the novel or short story.¹ For his excellence in music, he was awarded first prize in piano from the Conservatoire de Musique in Douai. Music was not only one of his many talents but also one of his special interests which he once considered as a career. Apparently, his final decision to become a dramatist was not without influence.

His earliest encouragement may be traced to his father, who was rather widely read and had a deep respect for literature.

Je crois que c'est mon père, mort quand j'avais onze ans, qui m'a incliné, dès l'enfance, vers la carrière des Lettres. Il avait, le cher homme, un respect religieux pour la littérature. C'était un étrange petit artisan, mais qui lisait, avec lenteur et délices, les livres d'Anatole France et, chose bizarre, de Zola. Quand il avait, le soir venant, terminé sa dure besogne de chaque jour, il se lavait soigneusement, s'asseyait dans un vieux fauteuil et se mettait à lire. Et quand c'était très beau, il me lisait la phrase à haute voix. C'est grâce à lui et contre la volonté de ma mère que j'ai fait du latin et, quoiqu'il fut déjà mort depuis deux ans, du grec.²

During Obey's early years, he was introduced to the masters of literature, and the plays of Molière were among his favorites. After reading Shakespeare's plays, he was affected deeply. Like Péguy, who had an urge to visit the home of Joan of Arc before writing about her, Obey visited the birth place of Shakespeare, Stratford-on-Avon.³

Obey met Jacques Copeau, the father of the modern rediscovery of the

¹ Ibid., p. 19.
² Ibid., p. 16.
³ Ibid.
French theatre, in 1922. Like Anouilh, Obey was impressed with Copeau's idea of using the bare stage of Le Vieux Colombier and concluded that he would "write for the stage- not just for any stage but for the stage in the grand tradition."¹ A direct effect of Copeau's teaching was best seen in the productions of the Compagnie des Quinze which performed plays by André Obey, Jean Giono, and Armand Salacrou.² Not only was Copeau's influence revealed in stage setting, but

... respect for Copeau is also seen in the themes dealt with by Obey. He admits that there were several plays he avoided writing simply because Copeau disapproved. Moreover, Copeau, for as long as he lived, was always the first to read a finished manuscript of Obey's. He must have felt he was not yet at the end of his apprenticeship.³

After Copeau retired in 1924, many of those who believed in and followed the principles of the theater in which he was involved continued as his disciples. Among them we find Louis Jouvet, Charles Dullin, and Georges Pitoëff. The latter is remembered for his influence on Anouilh, especially his Le voyageur sans bagage.⁴

Obey reveals glimpses of his philosophy through the treatment of his themes: desire to change existing conditions, desire to maintain existing conditions, desire to reject or escape existing conditions. His concept of love, parental love, the family, and man's compassion for man also reveal

¹ Ibid., p. 21.
⁴ Ibid., pp. 3-5.
his attitude toward life, especially during the period in which he lived. Because Obey, Anouilh, and Péguy wrote about and lived during the same period and because they shared common experiences, naturally such themes as war, patriotism, parent-child relationship, good and evil, suicide, quest for meaning in life, pacifism and hatred of war would be of common concern to them.

Of major importance to this study was their common interest in fifteenth-century Joan of Arc. On this subject Obey wrote the drama, *La Fenêtre*. It is a one-act play in which the action is uninterrupted to prevent the loss of mood and tone in the play. The effectiveness of Obey's one-act dramas depends on their uninterrupted progression.1

The setting of *La Fenêtre* is in Rouen, France, in a single upstairs room overlooking the Rouen market. Although Obey uses this close setting to stress the "closeness of the family that witnesses the martyrdom of Jeanne d'Arc,... he is also presenting the impact of this tragedy on the family unit. In nearly all the plays where Obey's characters have strong family ties, it seems that he uses a very limited stage environment."2

This play is an example of Obey's use of characters in absentia. Joan does not appear in the play, but her presence and her suffering are felt "because her execution is lived vicariously" by another character, Catherine.3

Minor characters reveal essential information about the major ones.

1 Ibid., p. 111.

2 Ibid., p. 121.

3 Ibid., p. 135.
This way is effective for a number of reasons, for it gives information about two characters at the same time, showing the relationship between the principal and subordinate figures.  

Many of Obey's favorite symbols appear in *La Fenêtre*. The snake image is introduced by François when he exclaims, "Oh! Il fait comme un serpent ... un serpent jaune, qui rampe!..." Catherine continues,  

> Ah! mon Dieu, le feu gagne! Il se coule partout ... un serpent, oui, c'est ça, un hideux serpent jaune, qui se glisse sous les bûches, s'enroule autour des troncs et siffle, siffle!... C'est une chose affreuse!"  

There is an analogy relating Joan's death to the crucifixion of Christ. Catherine cries out in anguish as she watches Joan tied to the stake,  

> Ses pieds ne se poseront jamais plus sur la terre ... Voilà, elle est toute seule ... Mon Dieu, faites quelque chose!... toute seule, suspendue ... suspendue par ses ailes ... comme une colombe clouée cruellement sur un arbre ... Qu'elle s'envole, oh! s'envole!..."

Another symbol is used  

> ... just before Jeanne dies. Someone /Gilles/ yells that the cross has fallen among the flames and is no longer visible, an indication that man by committing crimes of this sort, alienates himself from God by losing sight of the redeeming love of Christ, Symbolized by the

1  
Ibid., p. 142.

2  

3  
Ibid., p. 102.

4  
Ibid., pp. 98-100.
It is Catherine who loses sight of the cross and asks,

Je vois une mer de fer ... Je respire du feu ... La croix!... Où est la croix?... La croix, comme une source, sur ma bouche brûlée!2

Obey's treatment of characters in La Fenêtre may be studied on two levels: on stage and off stage. In this drama the subordinate figures, including Thibaut and his family, are found on stage viewing the happenings below in the courtyard. The principal characters, including Joan of Arc and all the others taking an actual part in her execution, as well as the onlookers, are off stage. Although the principal characters are revealed through the actors on stage, Obey's treatment of them will be analyzed.

Little mention is made of Charles. However, we do get a glimpse of him through the words of Catherine as she watches Joan being tied to the stake. She cries out in desperation,

Le roi de France? Un homme qui lui doit tout, tout, de la tête aux pieds, de sa couronne d'or à ses éperons de fer, qu'est-ce qu'il fait le roi de France? Il joue aux cartes?... à Bourges?3

This character is portrayed by Obey as the same weak and cowardly Charles, who shows no gratitude. In a simple childlike manner Catherine also questions the voices.

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2 "La Fenêtre," p. 103.

3 Ibid., p. 97.
... Et ses saints? et ses saints? Michel et Marguerite, et Catherine, ma patronne, qui étaient si bavards dans le ciel de Lorraine, la Normandie leur donne une extinction de voix?... Et Dieu?  

The loyalty of La Hire, as well as that of all the other soldiers with whom Joan fought, is attacked. The simplicity of Catherine's wisdom cannot comprehend their resistance to come forward and help Joan whose comradeship they once shared.

Il y a là trois cents, même pas, deux cents Godons, et nous sommes dix mille. Si ces dix mille faisaient un pas, un seul pas en avant, les deux cents Godons seraient noyés, d'un seul coup, submergés!... Mais personne ne bouge. Tout le monde la regarde souffrir, tout le monde la regarde mourir, enchâinée à ce poteau comme une bête féroce. Tout le monde trouve ça normal, tout le monde trouve ça bien!... Mais qu'est-ce qui se passe; dites?... qu'est-ce qui se passe? Est-ce le monde à l'envers?... Je ne sais pas... ses soldats ... ceux d'Orléans, de Reims, les soldats des beaux jours. Où sont-ils? Qu'est-ce qu'ils font?... Et ses vieux compagnons, La Hire, Dunois, les autres, qu'est-ce qu'ils font, eux aussi?  

The Children are very minor characters. "An interesting point arises with Obey's depiction of children, for the child figure is almost non-existent in his plays." He depicts the children as curious, inquiring, with normal emotions of fear and false courage.

Thibaut in La Fenêtre is

Obviously a patriot in every sense of the word, he is appalled by the attitude of the French towards the English and thinks it disgraceful that his compatriots are allowing the execution of Jeanne d'Arc to take place. When he

1 Ibid.  
2 Ibid., p. 96.  
summons the family to his room to witness the spectacle, he is no doubt hoping that this horrible image will show at one and the same time the patriotism of Jeanne and the cruelty of the English. Thibaut hopes this ugly crime will give rise to nationalism, but this awakening of unity is exterior to the play.1

The theme, a desire for change, is treated here. It seems that Obey is emphasizing the need for patriotism and nationalism, and he "hints at the unity which the martyrdom of Jeanne will create."2

Momentarily Grandfather is even willing to sacrifice himself for France. He declares, "Je m'en fiche, qu'ils me brûlent! Qu'ils me brûlent avec elle!... Je ne trouverai jamais meilleure façon de mourir."3

There is a sharp contrast between Thibaut's patriotism and the lack of it as revealed in the character of his neighbors, especially Audouin. He disavows any knowledge of the execution of Joan which is about to take place. His reason for coming to Rouen is to sell a cow on market day.

Thibaut also serves as a contrast to all the other characters. Although he is blind physically, he sees the "significance of Jeanne's death much more clearly than the other characters who are in a world of mental darkness."4 When the end comes, he says quietly,

Elle est morte.... mais qui sait tout ce qui vient de naître?... Tout ce que ce bûcher, qui s'éteint honnêtement, allumera dans le monde de grandeur et de

1 Ibid., p. 69.
2 Ibid., p. 70.
3 "La Fenêtre," p. 69.
gloire?¹

He explains the shame of the whole act in his discussion of good and evil:

Je vais te dire une chose ... une chose que j'ai mis toute ma vie à trouver ... Pour les grands, pour les riches, pour les ... politiques, il n'y a ni bien ni mal. Tu me suis? Ils sont au-dessus de ça. Mais pour les petites gens dont nous sommes, mon gars, un crime, c'est un crime.²

Joan is an example of Obey's treatment of a heroine facing death unafraid. Although she is kept off stage, Obey characterizes Joan in such a manner that her physical, mental, and moral values are explicit.

Few of Obey's characters--none of the main ones fear death. As a matter of fact, they welcome it as either an end to life, the beginning of a vast and interminable peace, or the gateway to a world of eternal beauty. Even in his anti-war plays, where horrible deaths are described, his characters face death unafraid.³

By comparing Joan with Catherine, the Mother is able to give Grandfather a physical description of the tall and pretty nineteen-year-old, dark-haired Joan, who prefers to wear men's clothes. Each character who refers to Joan, adds to one's understanding of her. It is really the comments of Grandfather Thibaut that reveal her true character and worth.

The presence and suffering of Joan are felt through Catherine. As we observe what Catherine does, what emotions she feels, what she says, and what she says about Joan, we are provided with all the information necessary

¹ "La Fenêtre," p. 106.
² Ibid., p. 112.
to analyze Joan's character. Note Catherine's revealing dramatization of Joan's pain when her end approaches. The characters, Joan and Catherine, merge into one.

Ne me touchez pas! Je ne suis plus ici, je suis là-bas, avec elle. Je suis en elle ... Jeanne, je suis en toi. Je sens tout ce que tu sens. Tout ce que tu souffres, je le souffre ... Ah! Seigneur, le feu monte. La flamme, voici la flamme! ... Dieu, quelle chaleur atroce! Quel inhuman désert de chaleur et de lumière! Comme si on m'avait jetée au coeur du soleil ... Le sang bout dans mes veines. Ma peau craque. Mes yeux sèchent ... Ah! La voilà sur moi. Mes cheveux s'enflamment. Je flambe!¹

Then she cries out inhumanly, "Jésus!"² She continues in a tender voice as she falls to the floor, "Mais mon âme ... mon âme ... est comme un petit champ de neige toute fraîche."³ In these last words it seems that Catherine might have found that hope which she so desperately sought during the drama.

¹ "La Fenêtre," pp. 102, 104-5.

² André Obey, Three More Plays, p. 119.

³ "La Fenêtre," p. 105.
CONCLUSION

An examination of Anouilh, Péguy, and Obey's treatment of Joan of Arc shows that there are similarities as well as differences. An analysis of Anouilh's L'Alouette, Péguy's Jeanne d'Arc, and Obey's La Fenêtre reveals that all three dramatists were concerned with either some or all of the episodes set against the background of fifteenth-century Joan of Arc's life at Domremy, the battles against the English, her trial and execution at Rouen. Although there were no falsifications of the tone or the historical facts, modifications were sometimes made for dramatic reasons. In the first place, their biographies show that similarities may even be traced in the contemporary lives of the three dramatists who had, in some instances, the same influences, direct or indirect. Further study reveals that their treatment of Joan of Arc is mainly developed through theme and characterization.

From a contemporary study of the three plays of these twentieth-century dramatists: Anouilh, Péguy, Obey, the following conclusions are drawn:

1. The main source used by Anouilh and Péguy is Michelet's Histoire de France. Of the three dramatists, it was Péguy, however, who did the most extensive research on the subject, Joan of Arc.

2. All three plays are characterized by originality: a mixture of pretense and reality is skillfully employed by Anouilh; Péguy effectively treated the spirit of his heroine; Obey displayed creativity in his handling of the martyrdom of Joan of Arc by use of the characters in absentia, developing off stage the heroine of
3. There is a marked variation in the play structure used by each of the dramatists: Anouilh's play is written as a continuous narrative which naturally falls into two distinct parts, Péguy's drama is a dramatic trilogy with each of the three plays itself divided into several acts, Obey uses a close setting and limited stage environment employing the on stage and off stage technique in a short one-act play.

4. Language and other devices are employed skillfully; yet, variations occur in their styles. Anouilh's Joan expresses herself in modern slang. The debate is a device successfully used by Anouilh. Péguy uses prose with lyrical verse monologues. The device, dramatic pause, is used. When his Joan prays, there is a shift from prose to verse. Péguy's heroine is linguistically earthy and her language could be the popular language of any age. It is free from picturesque archaism and modern slang. Dealing with complex and abstract concepts in a concrete and unintellectualized idiom is found to be a feature of Péguy's writings. The language used by Obey is poetic and, like Anouilh, he often uses figures of speech including the metaphor and simile. A generous use of symbols, as well as his ability to evoke images, is found.

5. Similarities found in the works of these playwrights can be traced to common influences. Both Anouilh and Obey were impressed with the theatrical style of Jacques Copeau. They were deeply influenced by the simplicity and purity of Pitoëff's approach to theatrics. Pitoëff's style became Anouilh's ideal. Respect for
Copeau is also seen in the themes dealt with by Obey. Obey may be considered a disciple of Copeau. Péguy's ideal is Corneille. He expressed the traditional equilibrium between human nature and grace on which genuine freedom ultimately rests. Péguy follows Pascal's teaching to hold reason in check. Péguy is an admirer of Bergson and his philosophy which delivers one from habit and stresses the importance of the present. Of the twentieth-century dramatists who wrote about Joan of Arc, Péguy was most greatly influenced by her life. Joan was his patron saint. From a study of Joan's life he was able to understand his own.

6. Anouilh, Péguy, and Obey use similar general themes: good and evil, friendship and love, existence of war, a desire to change existing conditions, a desire to escape existing conditions, a quest for meaning in life, patriotism, man's compassion for man, absurd duty, hope, parent-child relationship, absence, acceptance of death, honor. In L'Alouette Anouilh explores the themes acceptance of death, good and evil, honor, absurd duty, and hatred of war in a way which makes him unquestionably a master playwright. Traces of the same themes developed by Anouilh are found in Péguy's first Joan. In addition, Péguy explores the themes of politics and religion, socialism and nationalism, freedom and tradition. The problem of good versus evil, hatred of war, patriotism, desire and need for change is with Obey as much as with the other writers, Anouilh and Péguy.

7. Characterizations of Joan, though not identical, reveal parallels in the plays of each of the three dramatists: Anouilh's L'Alouette
reflects an uncompromising heroine who remains true to herself, a clever peasant girl who has agreed to shape the history of France. Péguy's socialist Joan is characterized as a symbol of human perfectability who will not tolerate the peace of defeat. She believes that freedom must be earned; it cannot be enjoyed as a gift. Obey's Joan, like Anouilh and Péguy's heroines, faces death courageously and unafraid.

In conclusion, one may safely say there are similarities and parallels found in Anouilh, Péguy and Obey's treatment of Joan of Arc. Yet, each playwright through his ability to extend his personal vision by exploring themes and characterizations has written a unique drama on the martyred Joan of Arc.
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