# JEANNE D'ARC ON THE 1870S MUSICAL STAGE:

# JULES BARBIER AND CHARLES GOUNOD'S MELODRAMA

# AND AUGUSTE MERMET'S OPERA

by

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Title: Jeanne d'Arc on the 1870s Musical Stage: Jules Barbier and Charles Gounod's Melodrama and Auguste Mermet's Opera

The purpose of this study is to examine the presentation of Joan of Arc's life in two lyric works, Jules Barbier and Charles Gounod's *Jeanne d'Arc* (1873) and Auguste Mermet's *Jeanne d'Arc* (1876), that premiered in Paris following the upheaval of the Franco-Prussian War and Paris Commune. Relying on Parisian journals of the day, I follow two trends: some critics called for a historically-informed presentation of Joan's life and others appealed to retain certain supernatural elements, specifically the Fairy Tree and the Voices, of Joan's story. In addition to these trends, I consider an article printed shortly before the premiere of Mermet's opera and discuss the political and religious implications of the final scene (Charles VII Coronation in Reims or Joan's execution in Rouen) in these two stage works.

After an introductory chapter and a chapter tracing the geneses of the melodrama and the opera, the remaining chapters each deal specifically with one of the three above-mentioned lines of inquiry as they relate to Joan of Arc's story. Chapter III discusses historical characters (Charles, duc d'Orléans, King René, and Agnès Sorel), historical music (minuet and *Vexilla regis*), and music believed to have been sung in the presence of

Joan of Arc (*Veni Creator Spiritus* and *Orate pro ea*). Chapter IV addresses the continuing presence of legendary, supernatural elements—specifically the Fairy Tree and the Voices—and how these elements have changed in nineteenth-century stage works about Joan. In Chapter V, the difficulty of adapting Joan's life on the stage is examined. A closer look reveals that differing views existed during the 1870s as to exactly what her mission entailed. The two works reflect the changing attitudes on this topic.

As a whole, this dissertation offers an examination of two rarely discussed stage works that reveal the political, religious, and musical climate surrounding the figure of Joan of Arc in the 1870s.

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In memory of my father
Bernard Hurley

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# CHAPTER I

# INTRODUCTION

This study will examine the presentation of Joan of Arc's life in two lyric works that premiered in Paris during the 1870s. This decade witnessed great upheaval and national defeat, including the losses of Alsace and of a large part of Lorraine, the home province of Joan, as the spoils of the Franco-Prussian War. In this atmosphere, the figure of Joan of Arc emerged as a heroine for the French people. Although scholars have placed more importance on her image in French culture from the 1890s through her canonization in 1920, due to her cult following by that time, one should not overlook the years immediately following the war. Both Jules Barbier and Charles Gounod's melodrama, *Jeanne d'Arc*, and Auguste Mermet's opera, *Jeanne d'Arc* were written in 1869, but not performed on the stage until after the war in 1874 and 1876 respectively. An examination of these works and their reception reveals the differing ways in which she was viewed in the post-war years.

Throughout the nineteenth century, Joan of Arc figured in literature, history, the arts, religion, politics, and society. One of the most influential literary works of that time was Friedrich Schiller's *Die Jungfrau von Orleans*, an 1801 play with fictional additions—that is, additions that went beyond the historical record as it was known at the time. Both Giuseppe Verdi's 1845 opera, *Giovanna d'Arco*, and Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky's 1881 opera, *Orleanskaja deva*, borrowed a great deal from Schiller's fiction including Joan being accused of witchcraft by her father. Such fictional changes were not favored by the French public—a point of contention that appears in reviews of

the Parisian premiere of *Giovanna d'Arco*.[1] Public interest in the Maid's history was piqued in the 1840s by the publication of Jules Michelet's history of her life[2] as well as Jules Quicherat's publication of the 1431 interrogation trial records and 1456 rehabilitation trial records.[3] Artwork depicting scenes from Joan's life, such as Paul Delaroche's 1824 painting depicting Joan's interrogation with Cardinal Winchester and Jean-Bastien LePage's 1879 painting of Joan hearing her voices in her parents' garden appeared throughout the century.[4] Her position in the Catholic Church was raised to the highest level when Monsignor Félix Dupanloup, Bishop of Orléans, petitioned Rome in 1869 to consider her for sainthood, an act which led to her beatification in 1909 and her canonization in 1920. By the end of the century, the Maid's popularity had risen to such heights in politics and French society that a national holiday was announced in 1894 and her name could be found on a variety of different products such as beauty aids, soap, and beer.[5]

[1] Maurice Gray, "Giovanna d'Arco: Opéra en quatre actes, poëme imité de Schiller, par M. Temistocle Solera, musique de Verdi," *La Revue et gazette musicale*, April 5, 1868. Paris premiere on March 28, 1868.

[2] Jules Michelet, "Jeanne d'Arc," *Histoire de France*, vol. 5 (Paris: Lacroix, 1841). For this study, I will refer to the English translation: Jules Michelet, *Jeanne d'Arc*, trans. Albert Guérard (Binghamton, NY: Vail-Ballou Press, Inc., 1957).

[3] Jules Quicherat, *Procès de condamnation et de réhabilitation de Jeanne d'Arc, dite La Pucelle, publiés pour la première fois d'après les manuscrits de la Bibliothèque royale, suivis de tous les documents historiques qu'on a pu réunir, et accompagnés de notes et d'éclaircissements*, 5 vols. (Paris: Jules Renouard, 1841–49). For this study, I will refer to the English translations: W.S. Scott, trans., *The Trial of Joan of Arc: Being a verbatim report of the proceedings from the Orleans Manuscript* (Westport, CT: Associated Booksellers, 1956) and Régine Pernoud, *The Retrial of Joan of Arc: The Evidence at the Trial for her Rehabilitation 1450–1456*, trans. J.M. Cohen (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1955).

[4] Nora M. Heimann, *Joan of Arc in French Art and Culture (1700–1855): From Satire to Sanctity* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate Publishing Company, 2005).

[5] Michel Winock, "Joan of Arc," in Vol. III of *Realms of Memory: The Construction of the French Past*, ed. Pierre Nora, trans. Arthur Goldhammer (New York: Columbia University Press, 1992), 442.

Michelet's history and Quicherat's trial records play an important role in this study because they influenced the French public's attitude toward the Maid and her story. These publications also had an impact on Barbier-Gounod's melodrama and Mermet's opera, as well as the critical reviews of these works.[6] Michelet's history, which presents Joan as a daughter of the people who dies for her country, was successful in promoting an image of Joan that resonated with a post-revolutionary France. According to the historian Nadia Margolis in 2003, Michelet's biography had a long-lasting effect on future Joan of Arc works:

> For not since Joan's own time would the historian as national mythmaker play such a vital role in French politics and culture. His 'Jeanne d'Arc' of 1841 would spawn virtually all of Joan's future political and artistic reincarnations […] In promulgating his Republican-nationalistic, mystical-pantheistic image of Joan from 1829 onward, Michelet rallied his readers to her cause as no biographer had ever done before, surpassing the stereotypical nineteenth-century romantic approach to the Middle Ages.[7]

Michelet may have been successful in rallying the French public to Joan's cause, but it was Quicherat whose archival research provided primary source evidence of Joan's story. His publication (1841–1849) of the interrogation and rehabilitation trials with additional historical documents in five volumes was the first authoritative edition of the trials. His volumes allowed access to the earliest surviving records from Joan's life and spurred future biographies. In reviews of the melodrama and opera, the critics point out any divergences between the libretto and the historical record as it was understood at the

[6] From this point on, I will refer to the collaborative effort of Barbier and Gounod as "Barbier-Gounod."

[7] Nadia Margolis, "Rewriting the Right: High Priests, Heroes and Hooligans in the Portrayal of Joan of Arc (1824–1945)," in *Joan of Arc: A Saint for All Reasons*, ed. Dominique Goy-Blanquet (Burlington, VT: Ashgate Publishing Company, 2003), 59–60.

time. The availability of Quicherat's edition as well as the availability of histories based on his research allowed for this kind of critique.

Aside from being mentioned as works that Tchaikovsky drew from in his opera, relatively little scholarship has been devoted to Barbier-Gounod's melodrama and Mermet's opera. One of the earliest discussions of both of these French works was published in Henri-Alexandre Wallon's 1876 illustrated biography of *Jeanne d'Arc,* in which a chapter is devoted to Joan in music.[8] Mermet's opera had not been performed at the time of publication, so the author was limited to discussing a musical excerpt: Jeanne and the Voices from the end of Act I. Both works, too, are included in an 1894 catalog By Emile Huet of Joan-related music, but his descriptions are very brief, including not much more than their performance dates and their success or failure.[9]

For most of the twentieth century, the two works remained largely neglected by musicologists. In his 1971 monograph, Ingvald Raknem devoted a chapter to Jules Barbier's play, but did not discuss Gounod's music at all.[10] In 1990, the music theorist Henry Zajaczkowski discussed Mermet's opera and its influence on Tchaikovsky's music in *Orleanskaja deva*.[11] More recently, Jann Pasler has tapped into the cultural significance of Barbier-Gounod's collaboration and Mermet's opera for the French Third

[8] Henri-Alexandre Wallon, *Jeanne d'Arc: Edition illustré d'apres les monuments de l'art depuis le quinzième siècle jusqu'à nos jours* (Paris: Firmin-Didot, 1876).

[9] Emile Huet, *Jeanne d'Arc et la musique: Bibliographie musicale*, 2nd ed. (Orléans: Herluison, 1909). Reprint from University Michigan Library collection.

[10] Ingvald Raknem, *Joan of Arc in History, Legend, and Literature* (Oslo: Universitetsforlaget, 1971).

[11] Henry Zajaczkowski, "The Missing Piece of the Jigsaw Puzzle," *The Musical Times* 131, no. 1767 (May, 1990): 238–242. He believes that Tchaikovsky had obtained not a libretto, but the score of Mermet's opera. Zajaczkowski compares the music of the minstrels with the music of the jesters and finds similarities.

Republic, but has reserved a more in-depth examination for her future publication.[12] The French cultural historian Julie Déramond has explored the importance of Jeanne d'Arc to Gounod in her article "Jeanne d'Arc, héroïne de Gounod," comparing his collaboration with Barbier to his later *Messe de Jeanne d'Arc* from 1887.[13] The most recent research on Barbier-Gounod's *Jeanne d'Arc* comes from the historian Venita Datta, who investigates Sarah Bernhardt's portrayal of the heroine in the 1890 revival production of the work as well as in Emile Moreau's 1909 play, *Le Procès de Jeanne d'Arc*.[14] Datta centers her study during the height of Joan's popularity and argues that Bernhardt's portrayal of the Maid unified her audience members of both the political left and right. Although Datta concentrates on the figure of Joan during the *fin de siècle*, she does briefly mention the influence of Michelet on promoting the Maid as a political symbol as well as Joan as a symbol of *revanche* in the years after the Franco-Prussian War.[15]

The main primary source documents consulted for this dissertation are Parisian journals of the 1870s, including *Le Figaro*, *L'Illustration*, *Journal des débats*, *Le Ménestrel*, *Le Monde illustré*, *La Presse*, *La Revue et gazette musicale*, *La Revue des deux mondes*, *Le Temps*, and *L'Univers illustré*. In consulting these journals, I have noticed two major trends in regard to the two *Jeanne d'Arc* works under discussion in this dissertation. First, the critics reproached the work if it did not adhere to the currently

[12] Jann Pasler, *Composing the Citizen: Music as Public Utility in Third Republic France* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2009).

[13] Julie Déramond, "Jeanne d'Arc, héroïne de Gounod," *Le Porche*, Association des Amis de Jeanne d'Arc et de Charles Péguy (August 2008): 41–52. Her dissertation, *Jeanne d'Arc en Accords Parfaits: Musiques Johanniques en France entrée 1800 et 1939*, for the doctorat in contemporary history à l'Université Toulouse II Le Mirail (UTM) has not been made available.

[14] Venita Datta, *Heroes and Legends of Fin-de-Siècle France* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011).

[15] Ibid., 145–146.

available historical research about Joan of Arc. As mentioned above, fabricated changes to her story were not favorably received in Paris. Second, at the same time, there were critics who wanted to retain certain supernatural elements, specifically the Fairy Tree and the Voices, of the Maid's story. Moreover, an article printed before the premiere of Mermet's opera stood out from the rest for its concern over how to end the opera—at the coronation or at the stake. After a chapter dedicated to a narrative recounting of the works' inceptions, pre-premiere rehearsals, and first performances (Chapter II), the subsequent chapters of this dissertation examine how the stage works reflect these two trends and this article.

Chapter III considers the different ways that Barbier, Gounod, and Mermet evoked an earlier time in their works. Medieval figures, text, and music all were used to recall the time period. In some cases, the composers wrote music which they infused with what they imagined to be medieval characteristics. In other cases, they made use of certain music (i.e., the chants *Veni creator* and *Orate pro ea*) believed to have been sung during events of Joan's life. The movement toward a more scientific study of France's history led critics to desire a more historically-informed portrayal of Joan of Arc's life on the stage. Quicherat's publication of her interrogation and rehabilitation trial records along with other contemporary writings from eyewitnesses gave the French public access to Joan's life story for the first time. Equipped with this knowledge, the French critics would not accept what they perceived as fictionalization of Joan's story.

Chapter IV takes a close look at two varying takes on Joan's legend: the Fairy Tree and the Voices. What we find on the 1870s stage is a change in Joan's relationship with these two seemingly magical entities that is greatly influenced by Michelet's

biography, *Jeanne d'Arc*. Barbier-Gounod's melodrama mentions the tree, but its presence is downplayed. It is a remnant of the legend that is included, but no longer integral to the story. In Mermet's opera, however, he uses recorded descriptions of what occurred under the tree during Joan's life and attempts to recreate the atmosphere of early fifteenth-century Domrémy. Like the Fairy Tree, which in earlier stage works of Schiller and Verdi had been presented as a place for evil spirits, the Voices lose any sort of dark supernatural quality in Barbier-Gounod's and Mermet's works. Joan is not presented as a madwoman or a witch as in earlier works.[16] Instead, the Voices act as her guide and direct her to complete her mission. Both Michelet and *La Revue des deux mondes* attribute Joan's Voices as a result of the time in which she lived and the sufferings that she incurred. As Michelet wrote, "Who did not have visions in the Middle Ages?"[17] Writing off Joan's Voices as simply a by-product of living in the Middle Ages removes any blemish of insanity or religious fanaticism. The Fairy Tree and the Voices, presented earlier in the nineteenth century as negative supernatural parts of Joan's story, are represented in a positive light in these two French works premiered in the 1870s. This change from negative to positive helped pave the way for Joan of Arc's rise in fame as a national heroine and a religious icon.

Chapter V examines the mission of Joan of Arc and how it is presented on the stage. Adapting the story of Joan of Arc to the stage is not an easy task, as Mermet discovered. One must decide whether to end at the coronation or the stake. This decision reveals more than a poet's whim: Ending at the coronation of Charles VII reflects the

[16] Sarah Hibberd, "Magnetism, Muteness, Magic: Spectacle and the Parisian Lyric Stage c1830" (PhD diss., University of Southampton, 1998), 70. During the July Monarchy, Joan was presented as "a madwoman, a religious fanatic, and a witch" on the stage.

[17] Jules Michelet, *Jeanne d'Arc*, 4.

older royalist, Catholic opinion that Joan's mission ended with the coronation and that she went against the will of God by continuing to fight. Ending at the burning stake in Rouen reflects the republican view that she died trying to liberate her country. By 1876, however, the Catholic view was changing. Newly discovered historical documents indicated that Joan's mission did not end with the coronation of Charles VII—a finding which caused French Catholics to reconsider their earlier position. The final acts of the melodrama and the opera reflect these differing views regarding the Maid's mission, showing that the 1870s was a time period when these ideas were not as clearly defined as they would become by the *fin de siècle*.

Although Joan of Arc may not have achieved cult status until later in the century, this earlier decade of the 1870s should not be glossed over. By examining these two stage works and their critical reception, I find that there were several different opinions on how Joan should be presented on the stage at this time. Moreover, I discover that the melodrama and the opera reflect the prevailing attitudes of the day. The purpose of this study, therefore, is to validate the importance of Barbier-Gounod's melodrama and Mermet's opera as cultural works that reveal the differing views of Joan of Arc during the 1870s.

# CHAPTER II

# THE GENESES OF

# BARBIER-GOUNOD'S MELODRAMA AND MERMET'S OPERA

This chapter follows the geneses of Barbier-Gounod's melodrama and Mermet's opera through the lens of reporting Parisian newspapers, which offered information about the two works from inception through performance run. Piecing together these announcements and reviews provides a narrative that reveals the anticipation of the Parisian public leading up to the premieres as well as the success, or lack of success, achieved by the productions.

## Barbier-Gounod's *Jeanne d'Arc*

In the preface to his published play of 1869, Barbier wrote that no Parisian theater showed any interest in his drama and that he was left to publish it unperformed.[18] It was Jacques Offenbach, after assuming the directorship of the Théâtre de la Gaîté in 1873, who agreed to produce the work. Barbier contacted Gounod to compose incidental music. (Prior to this work, the two men had collaborated on *Le médecin malgré lui* (1857), *Faust* (1858), *Philémon et Baucis* (1860), *La Reine de Saba* (1862), *Mireille* (1864), and *Roméo et Juliette* (1867).)

[18]Jules Barbier, *Jeanne Darc: Drame en Cinq Actes* (1869; repr., La Vergne, TN: Kessinger Publishing, 2011), II. Barbier's original play uses the surname Darc without the apostrophe.

Gounod had moved to England with his family in September 1870 to escape the destruction and hardships of the war.[19] By 1873, his family had returned to France, but he remained on the other side of the channel, staying at Tavistock House in London with William and Georgina Weldon. During this time, he composed several vocal works, chorus works, and the opera *Polyeucte*. He did not return to Paris for the rehearsals or premiere of *Jeanne d'Arc*. In his stead, Georgina Weldon attended the rehearsals and gave him reports on the progress.[20] According to Charles Darcours of *Le Figaro,* Gounod did not hear his own work on the French stage until January 1875, when it was reprised.[21] The composer had also been scheduled to conduct a performance of *Jeanne d'Arc* as a cantata at the Birmingham Music Festival in 1874, but he had returned to France, breaking his contract with the festival. Despite Gounod's absence, the Birmingham performance had gone on as planned, but received lukewarm reviews mostly because it had not started until ten o'clock in the evening. By midnight, it had been decided to shorten the performance by ending before the final scene at the stake.[22]

In the months before the Paris premiere of *Jeanne d'Arc*, *La Revue et gazette musicale de Paris* followed preparations of the work beginning with an announcement on 13 April 1873:

> Mr. Offenbach has just received *Jeanne d'Arc*, a grand drama in verse by Mr. Jules Barbier for next winter's performance at the Théâtre de la Gaîté.

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[19] Charles Gounod, *Charles Gounod: Autobiographical Reminiscences with Family Letters and Notes on Music*, trans. W. Hely Hutchinson (London: William Heinemann, 1898), 173–176.

[20] J. G. Prod'homme, Charles Gounod and Theodore Baker, "Miscellaneous Letters," *The Musical Quarterly* 4, no. 4 (October 1918): 630–653.

[21] Charles Darcours, "Courrier des Théâtres," *Le Figaro*, January 21, 1875. At the end of this performance, Gounod praised the interpretation of his work and thanked all of the participants

[22] "Gounod's Jeanne d'Arc," *The Musical World*, February 7, 1874.

> The work includes an important musical part, which has been appointed to Mr. Charles Gounod. The score is composed of twelve choruses, two marches: *la Marche de sacre* and a *Marche funèbre*, two ballades, a song, and a divertissement.[23]

By May, Offenbach had received two completed acts from Gounod, and then on 10 August, the completed score was described:

> The score is composed of fourteen pieces: 1) Orchestral Introduction; 2) Chorus of the Peasants; 3) Scene of the Voices; 4) Romance of Charles d'Orléans; 5) Religious Song; 6) Menuet; 7) Chorus of the Knights; 8) Chorus and Round of Soldiers and Prostitutes; 9) Prayer (*Veni Creator*); 10) Chorus of the Women's Dialogue; 11) Coronation March and Chorus; 12) Chorus of the Soldiers and Duet of the Saints; 13) Funeral March; 14) Scene of the Stake. --- The role of the heroine is assigned to Miss Lia Félix.[24]

Rehearsals started a week later on 17 August at the Théâtre de la Gaîté. Two weeks later, *La Revue* noted that Gounod wanted to employ the pyrophone, a new instrument invented by Frédéric Kastner, to accompany the singing of the Voices that speak to Joan.[25] The instrument relied on flames to create a mysterious sonority. However, Kastner was not able to complete and install a pyrophone in the theater in time.[26]

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[23] "Nouvelles des Théâtres Lyriques," *La Revue et gazette musicale de Paris*, April 13, 1873. "M. Offenbach vient de recevoir, pour le représenter l'hiver prochain au théâtre de la Gaîté, un grand drame en vers de M. Jules Barbier, *Jeanne d'Arc*. Cette oeuvre comporte une partie musicale importante, dont s'est chargé M. Charles Gounod. La partition se composera de douze choeurs, deux marches: *la Marche de sacre* et une *Marche funèbre*, deux ballades, une chanson et un divertissement."

[24] "Nouvelles des Théâtres Lyriques," *La Revue et gazette musicale de Paris*, August 10, 1873. "La partition est composée de quatorze morceaux: 1) Introduction d'orchestre; 2) Choeur des paysans; 3) Scène des voix; 4) Romance de Charles d'Orléans; 5) Chant religieux; 6) Menuet; 7) Choeur des chevaliers; 8) Choeur et ronde des soldats et des ribaudes ; 9) Prière (*Veni Creator*); 10) Choeur des femmes dialogue; 11) Marche et choeur du sacre; 12) Choeur des soldats et duo des saintes; 13) Marche funèbre; 14) Scène du bûcher. --- Le rôle de l'héroïne est confié à Mlle Lia Félix."

[25] *La Revue et gazette musicale de Paris*, August 31, 1873. "Il est question, pour la *Jeanne d'Arc* de M. Gounod, de l'emploi du pyrophone, le nouvel instrument de M. Frédéric Kastner, dont nous avons parlé à plusieurs reprises. Le compositeur aurait songé à la mystérieuse sonorité des flames chantantes pour accompagner les voix qui parlaient à Jeanne dans la solitude."

[26] *La Revue et gazette musicale de Paris*, November 16, 1873. "On se rapelle qu'il a été question du pyrophone pour l'accompagnement des voix célestes dans *Jeanne d'Arc*, au théâtre de la Gaîté. M. Gounod avait demandé un de ces instruments à l'inventeur, M. Frédéric Kastner; mais il a été impossible de le

The work premiered on 8 November 1873. The critics praised characteristics of Gounod's *Jeanne d'Arc* that honored French medieval history and legend. Auguste Vitu compared it to a medieval mystery play. Benedict called it French Vespers of the terrible years 1429–31. Adolphe Jullien and Vitu both recognized that Barbier blended history with legend in his drama. Vitu believed that it was impossible to separate legend from history; however, the critic condemned the use of anachronisms, notably the presence of King René, who was not yet king, and Agnès Sorel, who would have been too young to have been the dauphin's mistress at that time.

Some critics, however, found fault with Gounod's score. *La Revue des deux mondes*, for example, claimed that the composer was looking for applause from the public boulevards.[27] Jullien of *La Revue et gazette musicale* criticized Gounod for being derivative and not growing as a composer, a complaint that the critic would bring up again when discussing Gounod's *Roméo et Juliette*.[28] Jullien also noted that the inserted *Marche funèbre* lacked "grande couleur," but he did add that the ballet of the *ribaudes* was very original.[29] In addition to his critique of Gounod's music, Jullien included a short section about the work's genre—melodrama. He lamented, "In France, the music of dramas has almost always been entrusted to musicians of an inferior quality, and this

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terminer et de l'installer en temps utile. Les flames chantantes, si ingénieusement dirigées et combinées par le jeune savant, devront donc attendre une autre occasion pour faire leur début dans le monde musical."

[27] *La Revue des deux mondes*, February 1, 1874.

[28] Adolphe Jullien, *Musiciens d'aujourd-hui* (Paris: Librairie de l'art, 1892), 132. Steven Huebner provides a translation in *The Operas of Charles Gounod* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990), 252. "There is hardly a piece in *Roméo* where the refined ear does not detect some reminiscence of the older work [i.e. *Faust*]."

[29] Adolphe Jullien, "*Jeanne d'Arc*, drame en cinq actes et sept tableaux," *La Revue et gazette musicale*, November 16, 1873. "Ribaudes" are the female camp followers. During the ballet, two pieces were inserted that do not appear in the published piano score: a *danse bohémienne* from *La Nonne sanglante* and the *Marche funèbre d'une marionette*.

neglect is probably not unrelated to the unfortunate meaning that the word melodrama has taken in our language."[30] Contrary to Jullien's opinion, the list of French composers of incidental music in melodrama during the Third Republic is notable: Charles Gounod, Georges Bizet, Camille Saint-Saëns, Jules Massenet, Gabriel Fauré, and Claude Debussy.[31] The genre may not have had the same prestige as opera, as Jullien's pejorative remarks suggest, but it was prevalent in French theaters during this period.

The success of the 1873 production of Barbier-Gounod's *Jeanne d'Arc* has long been unclear. Some scholars claim that it was not very successful and others say that it did very well.[32] If one compares it to the 1890 revival with Sarah Bernhardt in the lead role, then, indeed, this 1873 run did not achieve the same popularity. However, newspaper articles describing the profits earned, as well as some articles written later in the show's run, indicate that the 1873 production was successful. For example, by the end

[30] Ibid. "En France, la musique des drames a, presque toujours, été confiée à des musicians d'ordre inférieur, et cette négligence n'est sans doute pas étrangère à la fâcheuse acception qu'a prise dans notre langue le mot mélodrame."

[31] Peter Lamothe, "Theater Music in France, 1864–1914," (PhD diss., University of North Carolina, 2008), 1, https://cdr.lib.unc.edu/indexablecontent?id=uuid:54c8c3a8-84a7-4a53-a8f2-f849a13fa88f&ds=DATA_FILE. The musicologist Peter Lamothe lists approximately 347 incidental scores premiered or given revivals between 1864 and 1914 and compares that number with the 158 operas that were produced in France, Belgium, and Monaco during the same time period.

[32] Katharine Ellis, *Music Criticism in Nineteenth-Century France: La Revue et Gazette musicale de Paris* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 202. Ellis describes the work as a "ruinous production." However, her opinion may be biased by Adolphe Jullien's review. Nora M. Heimann, *Joan of Arc in French Art and Culture (1700–1855): From Satire to Sanctity* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate Publishing Company, 2005), 60. Heimann describes the work as a "hugely popular 1873 revival as an opera by Charles Gounod." It is difficult to believe Heimann's statement, however, because the 1873 production was neither a revival nor an opera. In her defense, she cites as her main source Ingvald Raknem's 1971 research, which is vague in its discussion and could be interpreted in different ways. Venita Datta, *Heroes and Legends of Fin-de-Siècle France* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 150. Datta relies on the journalist Jean de Nivelle and his article, "La Patrie" in *Le Soleil*, January 7, 1890. She describes the production as a "modest success" and that "compared with the current revival [with Sarah Bernhardt], the original production of 1873 had elicited little attention." Emile Huet, *Jeanne d'Arc et la musique: Bibliographie musicale*, 2nd ed. (Orléans: Herluison, 1909), 149. Reprint from University Michigan Library collection. Huet states that both the 1873 and 1890 productions were successful: "La pièce eut chaque fois un grand et loyal succès."

of November, *Le Ménestrel* announced that *Jeanne d'Arc* was one of three successful stage productions of that month:

> The receipts for the month of November promise marvelous figures, and this includes the three big successes in progress. *Jeanne d'Arc* exceeds 6 and 7,000 francs, and last Sunday took in 8,300 francs, *l'Oncle Sam* exceeds 5,000 francs et *la Quenouille* makes 4,000.[33]

A few days later, "un monsieur de l'orchestre" of *Le Figaro* itemized the salaries of everyone involved in the production of *Jeanne d'Arc* from musicians to machinists.[34] He also included the prices of costumes and accessories. His article specified the number of people in the chorus, which totaled 150 men, 50 women, and 25 children. The corps de ballet was composed of 40 dancers. From his description, one can discern that this production was costly.

*Le Ménestrel* recognized the quality of the production and applauded Offenbach in his decision to stage the work when the other richly subsidized theaters would not:

> This great epic success honors him so much as an impresario we must congratulate him for it yet again. What a richly subsidized theater would not have dared to try, the unpretentious Théâtre de la Gaîté has produced, showing us once again that in France *impossible* is but an empty word. The *Jeanne d'Arc* of the Arts-et-Métiers square defies the splendors of the Opéra, and the choruses, like Mr. Albert Vizentini's orchestra, can compete with the best elements of our lyric theaters.[35]

---

[33] *Le Ménestrel*, November 23, 1873. "Les recettes du mois de novembre promettent des chiffres merveilleux, et cela se comprend avec les trois grands succès en cours. *Jeanne d'Arc* dépasse 6 et 7,000 francs, et fait dimanche dernier une recette de 8,300 francs, *l'Oncle Sam* dépasse 5,000 francs et *la Quenouille* fait 4,000."

[34] "La Soirée Théâtrale," *Le Figaro*, December 2, 1873.

[35] *Le Ménestrel*, December 7, 1873. "Ce grand succès épique l'honore tant comme impresario qu'on ne saurait manquer cette occasion de l'en féliciter derechef. Ce qu'un théâtre richement subventionné n'eût osé tenter, le simple théâtre de la Gaîté l'a réalisé, nous prouvant une fois de plus qu'en France l'*impossible* n'est qu'un vain mot. La *Jeanne d'Arc* du square des Arts-et-Métiers défie les splendeurs de l'Opéra, et les choeurs, comme l'orchestre de M. Albert Vizentini, peuvent rivaliser avec les meilleurs éléments de nos théâtres lyriques." The Théâtre de la Gaîté was located across from the Arts-et-Métiers square.

The article ends by saying that the work is a success that rehabilitates the Paris theaters and offers something to a public that was growing tired of operettas. It has been suggested that Offenbach decided to stage the work to "revive audiences who felt 'guilty' about having overly indulged in the operettas of the Second Empire."[36] Another possibility is that Offenbach did so for patriotic reasons. Although he had been born in Cologne, he had lived in Paris since 1833 and had become a French citizen. Staging *Jeanne d'Arc* was a way to show his patriotism.[37]

The production continued to run until 1 February 1874 and was followed by Offenbach's *Orpheus in the Underworld*. In that time, *Jeanne d'Arc* was performed thirty times and made a total of 210,617 francs.[38] In December 1873, Benedict wrote an addendum to his review of the premiere. He felt that he, like many of his colleagues, had rushed into judging the score without having heard it enough. The singers and orchestra members seemed unsure of the music during the first performances of the work, which may have added to negative criticisms. However, Benedict observed that any hesitance in playing or singing had ceased by the later performances.[39]

[36] Venita Datta, *Heroes and Legends,* 149.

[37] Jann Pasler, *Composing the Citizen: Music as Public Utility in Third Republic France* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2009), 252.

[38] J. -G. Prod'homme et A. Dandelot, *Gounod (1818–1893) sa vie et ses oeuvres* (Paris: Librairie Ch. Delagrave, 1911), 150.

[39] Benedict, *Le Figaro*, December 2, 1873.

## Mermet's *Jeanne d'Arc*

One of the earliest mentions of Mermet's *Jeanne d'Arc* appeared on 15 October 1872 when *La Revue des deux mondes* called upon the administration of the Paris Opéra to consider producing Mermet's *Jeanne d'Arc*:

> Let's admit that the administration has qualms and is wavering between Mr. Membrée's *l'Esclave*, Mr. Reyer's *Sigurd* and Mr. Mermet's *Jeanne d'Arc*. However, such a dilemma cannot keep going on. It is even possible that, for reasons unknown to us, none of these works is selected in the end. Could it be true then that in the eyes of the reason of State the subject of *Jeanne d'Arc* would currently be a mistake? 'France's best soul, the one in which France was reborn, Joan of Arc, found her first inspiration in the Lorraine borderlands, in the mysterious glade where stood the thousand-year-old fairy tree, the eloquent tree who spoke of the motherland.' The heroine of whom Mr. Michelet speaks in these terms would be in disgrace. If this is the case, then let's herald the re-creation of some masterpiece of the past.[40]

The article is referring to the nation's defeat in the war and the need for a heroine such as Joan of Arc to inspire the French public. The administration must have agreed that the time was right for a historical opera based on the life of Joan of Arc. On 19 January 1873, Olivier Halanzier, director of the Opéra, announced that Mermet's work would be performed at the end of the year. However, that was not to be. A series of unfortunate events would occur before the opera's premiere on 5 April 1876.

[40] Ange-Henri Blaze, *Revue des deux mondes*, October 15, 1872. "Admettons que l'administration ait des scrupules, qu'entre l'*Esclave* de M. Membrée, le *Sigurd* de M. Reyer et la *Jeanne d'Arc* de M. Mermet son coeur balance; un tel cas de conscience ne saurait pourtant se prolonger. Il se peut même que, par des motifs ignorés de nous, pas un de ces ouvrages ne soit finalement adopté. Serait-ce donc vrai qu'aux yeux de la raison d'état le sujet de *Jeanne d'Arc* aurait tort à l'heure où nous sommes? 'La meilleure âme de la France, celle en qui renaquit la France, Jeanne d'Arc, prit sa première inspiration aux marches lorraines, dans la mystérieuse clairière où se dressait, vieux de mille ans, l'arbre des fées, arbre éloquent et qui parla de la patrie.' L'héroïne dont M. Michelet parle en ces termes serait en disgrâce; s'il en est ainsi, qu'on annonce la mise à l'étude de quelque chef d'oeuvre du passé."

One week before *Jeanne d'Arc*'s premiere, *Le Figaro* printed a large article by Ivan de Woestyne entitled, "Histoire d'un Opéra, *Jeanne d'Arc*."[41] This article could be viewed as simply a publicity piece meant to generate interest for the opera, for, indeed, it does contain some far-fetched stories. However, it also includes a great deal of information on the opera's genesis. The following passage is an abridged version of the article.

De Woestyne begins his story with a colorful description of Mermet travelling to La Celle-Saint-Cloud where he began to write the libretto, which took a total of two years to write. The libretto being completed, he then turned to the music which took two more years to complete. De Woestyne claims that Mermet conceived the first six songs of the opera while walking under the tall trees of the forest of Saint-Germain. Then, after returning to Paris, he wrote the music for the orgy scene after a night of drinking with Gustave Doré and Théophile Gautier. From the article, we can glean that the composition took Mermet four years to complete and was ready to be presented to the director of the Opéra in 1869.

The next four years were to be devastating for France and particularly unfortunate for Mermet's opera. When Emile Perrin, director of the Opéra until 1870, met with Mermet and heard the work in December 1869, he decided to begin rehearsals as soon as possible. Marie Caroline Miolon-Carvalho, Jean-Baptiste Faure and Monsieur David were cast first, followed by Gabrielle Krauss in the role of Jeanne d'Arc. The progress of the opera seemed to be moving along well until war broke out, causing the engaged performers to break commitments and scatter.

[41] Ivan de Woestyne, "Histoire d'un opéra, *Jeanne d'Arc*," *Le Figaro*, March 31, 1876.

Mermet would have to wait until July 1873 for rehearsals to resume. By this time, Olivier Halanzier had replaced Perrin as director, and he presented Mermet with the following casting assignments:

Jeanne d'Arc, Mlle Devriès
Agnès Sorel, Mlle Fouquet
Le roi, Faure
Richard, Gaillard
Gaston de Metz, Achard, who recently returned to the Opéra-Comique
Another role existed in the play, and now it has gone, that of Isabeau de Bavière, it had been assigned to Mlle Leavington.[42]

However, on the 19 October, the opera house burned down, following a performance of *Le Prophète* and on the eve of the one hundredth performance of *Hamlet*. The sets and costumes for *Jeanne d'Arc* were destroyed in the fire. Fortunately, the score was saved from the flames by Pierre Gaillard, who had just come from hearing Krauss in *Le Trouvère*. He and a Monsieur Croharé rescued all of the music except for one song. They brought the score to Mermet at two o'clock in the morning. The composer was stunned and later thanked Gaillard with the following quatrain:

> With the hauberk and the mesh,
> Gaillard, by dint of the stake
> Bashed through door and wall
> In order to save Jeanne from the stake.[43]

The opera would have to wait until a new opera house was built before being performed. However, when rehearsals began again in 1875, Mermet's tribulations were not over.

On 17 January 1875, Mermet met with Gabrielle Krauss, who had been once again engaged to play the role of Jeanne d'Arc, for dinner. The meeting went well, but on

[42] Ibid. As in the original assignments, the baritone Faure was once again appointed to play the role of Charles VII.

[43] Ibid., "Portant le haubert et la maille, Gaillard, à force de bûcher, A défoncé porte et muraille, Pour sauver Jeanne du bûcher." Pierre Gaillard later would become director of the Opéra in 1884.

cab ride home, the rain began to fall heavily. Upon exiting the cab, Mermet was struggling to open his umbrella and accidentally left the score in the cab. Despite all of his efforts, he was unable to locate the manuscript. Therefore, he had to rewrite it from memory. By the time of the opera's premiere in 1876, the ill-starred Mermet reportedly expected some new misfortune to befall him.[44]

By April 1876, the public had waited several years to see Mermet's opera, and a great deal of excitement and interest revolved around the premiere. The final appointed roles were as follows:

> Jeanne d'Arc, Krauss
> Agnès Sorel, Daram
> Le roi, Faure
> Gaston de Metz, Salomon
> Richard, Gaillard (the one who saved the score from the opera house fire)
> Ambroise de Loré, capitaina, Gaspard
> Une astrologue, Caron
> Un sergent de bandes, Bataille
> Le Bar de Bue, Galli
> Trois truands Auguez, Sapin, Auguez, Gresse[45]

The composer had achieved such success with his earlier opera *Roland à Roncevaux* (1864) that Napoléon III had awarded the Legion of Honor to him.[46] Because of this earlier success along with the series of delays that plagued his recent opera's premiere, his long awaited premiere on 5 April 1876 received significant publicity. For example, Henri-Alexandre Wallon's illustrated *Jeanne d'Arc* from 1876 included a short description of the eagerly awaited opera with an excerpt of music from the first meeting

[44] Ibid.

[45] Ibid.

[46] *Le Figaro*, April 10, 1876.

between Jeanne and the Voices.[47] And Mermet clearly had garnered celebrity status when on 8 April 1876, three days after the premiere, his image appeared on the cover of *Le Monde illustré*, which would be the equivalent of being on the cover of an issue of *Time* or *Life* magazine.

[47] Henri-Alexandre Wallon, *Jeanne d'Arc: Edition illustré d'apres les monuments de l'art depuis le quinzième siècle jusqu'à nos jours* (Paris: Firmin-Didot, 1876), 515–522.

**Figure 2.1.** Auguste Mermet, *Le Monde illustré*, April 8, 1876.

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Not only was the public eager to hear Mermet's opera, they also were excited about the new opera house. Mermet's opera was the first to be premiered in the newly-built Palais Garnier, so many gathered to see the new building and its elegant interiors.

Unfortunately, however, the critics were not kind in their reviews. *Le Figaro* made a joke about the opera and the new opera house.

> That was how, thanks to the new Opéra's *Jeanne d'Arc,* Montrouge was able to make some good earnings. Every time that they put on Mermet's work, Montrouge is sure to collect three times as much money as usual.
>
> A husband, who routinely splits his evenings between the Opéra, where he takes his legitimate wife, and the Athénée, where he comes to watch his mistress, explains it to me this way:
>
> --- You see, he tells me, after a foreigner or a visitor from the provinces has heard one act of *Jeanne d'Arc*, he is subject to a splitting headache and a pressing need to sleep. So what does he do? … He goes to the Athénée while *Jeanne d'Arc* is being performed and, in order to admire the foyer and the grand staircase of the new Opéra, … he returns there during the intermissions.[48]

The Athénée to which the critic refers is the Théâtre de l'Athénée-Comique, which was located near the Opéra and directed by the comic actor Louis Emile Hesnard, who was known by the single name of "Montrouge." During the run of *Jeanne d'Arc,* the Athénée was presenting *De bric et de broc*, a revue in four acts and ten tableaux by Louis-

[48] *Le Figaro*, May 17, 1876. "C'est ainsi que grâce à la Jeanne d'Arc du Nouvel-Opéra, Montrouge a pu réaliser un certain nombre de recettes agréables. Toutes les fois que l'on joue l'œuvre de Mermet, Montrouge est sûr d'encaisser trois fois plus d'argent qu'à l'ordinaire.

Un mari qui partage ordinairement ses soirées entre l'Opéra, où il conduit sa femme légitime, et l'Athénée, où il vient voir jouer l'autre, m'explique ainsi le fait.

--- Vous comprenez, me dit-il; quand un étranger ou un provincial a entendu un acte de Jeanne d'Arc, il éprouve un violent mal de tête et un pressant besoin de dormir. Alors que fait-il? ... Il va à l'Athénée pendant que l'on joue *Jeanne d'Arc* et afin d'admirer le foyer et l'escalier du Nouvel-Opéra ... il y revient pendant les entr'actes."

François Clairville and Armand Liorat.[49] *Les Annales du Théâtre et de la Musique* summed up the revue thus, "For the bourgeois audience, it's an amusing and fanciful revue, and for the regular Opéra crowd, a pleasant 'girly show.'"[50] This description fits well with the joke about the opera-goer who attends the Opéra with his wife and goes to the Athénée to watch his mistress.

Another review of Mermet's opera comes from the author Henry James, who was living in Paris as a foreign correspondent for the *New York Tribune*. His description of the opera, though somewhat sympathetic toward Mermet, was overall unfavorable:

> Among the exhibitions, I take it, may be ranked Mr. Mermet's new opera, *Jeanne d'Arc*, which, after being kept back for many years and a great deal talked about, has at last been produced. It was in rehearsal at the time of the destruction by fire of the old Opera house, and the composer's score was one of the very few objects snatched from the flames. Thus providentially rescued, it would seem that Mr. Mermet's work had been reserved for a brilliant destiny. It has found one to a certain extent in being put upon the stage at the new Opera with extraordinary splendor, and rendered by Faure and Mlle Krauss with exemplary zeal; but here its good fortune stops. It has made no advance in the public favor; it is pronounced hopelessly dull and tame. Even to an auditor to whom musical things are fathomless mysteries, and who, if he fails to appreciate good music, finds in general a compensation in not suffering from bad, the ponderosity of *Jeanne d'Arc* seemed the other night sufficiently palpable. There is only one voice to proclaim it, and Mr. Mermet must wish his work had been left to the charity of the flames—they would have been kinder than the critics.
>
> The opera is played to full houses, however, thanks to the splendor of the spectacle and to the affluence of strangers who desire to see the house on any terms. The *mise en scène* is indeed superb, and more perfect than anything of the same sort that I have ever seen. There is in particular a certain representation of the gardens of the castle of Blois, with the long mass of the château foreshortened in the sunshine above them, and the

[49] Louis-François Clairville went by the single name, "Clairville."

[50] Edouard Noël and Edmond Stoullig, *Les Annales du Théâtre: Deuxième Année, 1876* (Paris: G. Charpentier, 1877), 688–689. "C'est pour le public bourgeois une amusante revue fantaisiste, et pour les habitués de l'Opéra une agréable 'pièce à femmes.'"

> goodly Loire country receding in the distance beyond the winding, shining rivers, and beneath a vast, bright summer sky, which reaches the highest ideal of scene painting. There is also a ballet of *ribaudes*—camp maidens and female vagabonds—which is the perfection of the expensive picturesque.[51]

James' letter, while including his own opinion, neatly summarizes the critics' reviews of Mermet's opera. The most common criticism was the lack of interesting music. The opera was praised for the singing of the *Veni Creator*, the scenery of the Loire valley, the ballet, and Krauss's performance as Joan of Arc. Jullien in *La Revue et gazette musicale* admired the costumes which were designed by Emmanuel Frémiet, the sculptor known for his statue of Joan of Arc riding into battle with her standard in hand.[52] The opera ran for fifteen performances, with the last performance on 27 November 1876.[53]

Had the opera house not burned down, both Barbier-Gounod's melodrama and Mermet's opera would have premiered in the fall of 1873, just two years after the war had ended. At that time, the topic of Joan of Arc was an especially pertinent and poignant one to the Parisian public, who had experienced the struggles and tragedies of the war and Paris Commune. As the theater critic Auguste Vitu expressed, "Alas, the disasters of recent times have made the story of Joan, *la bonne Lorraine*, only too contemporary."[54] The announcements and reviews of the two stage works, as discussed in this chapter,

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[51] Henry James, *Parisian Sketches: Letters to the New York Tribune 1875–1876*, ed. Leon Edel and Ilse Dusoir Lind (New York: New York University Press, 1957), 133–134. Letter dated 13 May 1876.

[52] Adolphe Jullien, *La Revue et gazette musicale de Paris*, April 9, 1876.

[53] Stéphane Wolff, *L'Opéra au Palais Garnier (1875–1962)* (Paris: Deposé au journal L'Entracte, 1962), 125.

[54] Auguste Vitu, "Premières representations: Gaîté. Jeanne d'Arc," *Le Figaro*, November 11, 1873. "Hélas! les désastres des temps présents n'ont rendu que trop d'actualité aux exploits de 'Jehanne, la bonne Lorraine.'"

indicated the public's anticipation to attend their performances and to witness the life of Joan of Arc as presented on the stage.

# CHAPTER III

# HISTORICAL CHARACTERS, HISTORICAL MUSIC, AND JOAN OF ARC'S MUSIC

The nineteenth century saw an unprecedented surge of interest in history. What began as a romanticized view of the past, represented by the works of Sir Walter Scott, developed into a movement toward what was considered a more scientific study of historical documents and artifacts. Nineteenth-century historians looked to the Middle Ages as the dawn of a nation's history. Countries with a rich medieval history, such as France, sought to claim the time period as their own in order to assert greatness over others.[55] In particular, the years following the Franco-Prussian War and leading into the *fin de siècle* boasted a strong wave of all things medieval in French culture. [56] This trend permeated the arts, resulting in stage works such as Barbier-Gounod's melodrama and Mermet's opera about the life of Joan of Arc.

A comparison of pre- and post-war articles in the Parisian journal *La Revue des deux mondes* offers insight into the French public's increasing fascination with the past, as demonstrated by the historian Elizabeth Emery.[57] Prior to the war, articles published in the journal included a preface stating that the information in the article might be too pedantic or obscure for the reader. However, post-war articles by Numa Denis Fustel de

[55] Stefan Böhmer, "The Invention of European National Tradition," *The Oxford History of Historical Writing: 1800–1945*. Stuart Macintyre, Juan Maiguashca, and Attila Pòk, eds. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 32.

[56] Elizabeth Emery and Laura Morowitz, *Consuming the Past: The Medieval revival in fin-de-siècle France* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate Publishing Company, 2003), 6.

[57] Elizabeth Emery, "The 'Truth' About the Middle Ages: *La Revue des deux mondes* and Late Nineteenth-Century French Medievalism," in *Medievalism and the Quest for the "Real" Middle Ages*, ed. Claire A. Simmons (London: Frank Cass and Co. Ltd., 2001), 99–114.

Coulanges and Ludovic (Louis) Vitet assumed that readers would be interested in history. Emery writes, "Fustel and Vitet had argued that it was crucial to publicize the 'truth' about medieval history in order to rebuild national strength, and their insistence upon reaching out to the public through *La Revue des deux mondes* put them in contact with a huge audience."[58] This so-called quest for 'truth' implies that historians were attempting to examine historical documents objectively. A greater value was placed on the earliest records available when writing a history. For example, in the case of Joan of Arc, Quicherat's archival discoveries were highly valued and used by other historians for their own writings. These publications provided the French public, and the French critics too, with several resources on Joan's life.

This increase of interest in French history, along with the increase in historical publications about Joan of Arc, influenced the critics' reception of stage works about the Maid. For example, earlier stage works based on Joan's life, such as Schiller's *Die Jungfrau von Orleans* and Verdi's *Giovanna d'Arco*, included fictional changes to the story that were not acceptable on the 1870s Parisian stage. The critic Johannes Weber compared both Barbier-Gounod's melodrama and Mermet's opera with Friedrich Schiller's highly fictionalized drama, saying that at least the French works do not take such liberties with the story—that is, the French composers would not be allowed by their public to do so.[59] Indeed, reviews of the melodrama and the opera indicate a public who

[58] Ibid., 108.

[59] Johannes Weber, "Jeanne d'Arc," *Le Temps*, April 18, 1876.

preferred a more historically-informed presentation of Joan's life on the stage than the earlier dramas, such as Schiller's, had offered.[60]

In this chapter, I discuss the different ways in which Barbier-Gounod and Mermet carry out a more historically-informed presentation of Joan's story. In some cases, the poet and composers use text and music that were written during the Middle Ages and available to the French public in the nineteenth century. At other times, they rely on their imaginations to compose something new that evokes an earlier time. I focus upon first, the presentation of historical characters (Charles, duc d'Orléans, King René, and Agnès Sorel), second the use of historical music (minuet, *Vexilla regis*), and finally music associated particularly with Joan of Arc (*Veni Creator Spiritus*, *Orate pro ea*) in order to study how the poet and composers accomplish their tasks. The final category of Joan's music refers to existing eye-witness testimonies that attest that two plainchants were sung at key moments of her life: *Veni Creator Spiritus* before the battle of Orléans and *Orate pro ea* before her execution in Rouen.[61] Both the melodrama and the opera include a version of *Veni Creator Spiritus*, but only Gounod weaves *Orate pro ea* into his score for the final scene in Rouen.

## Searching for Medieval Music in Nineteenth-Century France

Before delving into the musical examples, I should provide some background as to the status of French medieval scholarship at the time these works premiered. The quest for medieval music in the nineteenth century was manifested in government-sponsored

[60] I am using the term "historically informed" to describe a presentation that relies on existing historical documents in place of creating an entirely new fiction.

[61] These testimonies appear in the trial records and were published by Jules Quicherat (1841).

research, education-related performance, and church-related performance. I shall consider each of these in turn.

Government-sponsored research aimed at discovering long lost music of the French people, specifically chansons.[62] For example, efforts sponsored by the *Comité de la langue, de l'histoire, et des arts de la France* led to the discovery of the fifteenth-century Laborde Chansonnier and later the Dijon manuscript.[63] Another government organization responsible for uncovering France's past was the *Societé de l'histoire de France*, which supported Quicherat's publication of Joan of Arc's trial records.[64]

Education-related performance was promoted by the newly-founded early music schools, including Alexandre-Étienne Choron's *Institution royale de musique classique et religieuse* (1818) and later Louis Niedermeyer's *Ecole de musique religieuse classique* (1853). During the 1890s, the *Schola cantorum de Paris* opened its doors, reviving interest in Palestrina's music among others.[65] The public was also educated through historical concerts that promoted early music, such as the ones offered by François-Joseph Fétis and François Delsarte.

Church-related performance included the revival of Gregorian chant for the Roman-rite liturgy. In the 1830s, Dom Prosper Guéranger founded the Abbey at

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[62] Jane Alden, *Songs, Scribes, and Society: The History and Reception of the Loire Valley Chansonniers* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010), 14. Alden describes popular songs as songs of the indigenous people that nineteenth-century French scholars and government officials believed would aid in constructing a national identity.

[63] Ibid.

[64] Sarah Hibberd, *French Grand Opera and the Historical Imagination* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 14–15.

[65] Catrena Flint deMedicis, "The Schola Cantorum, Early Music and French Political Culture, from 1894–1914" (PhD diss., McGill University, 2007), http://digitool.library.mcgill.ca/R/?func=dbin-jump full&object_id=102800&local_base=GEN01-MCG02.

Solesmes where he undertook the restoration of monastic life according to the Rule of Saint Benedict. The Solesmes monks attempted a reconstruction of Gregorian chant, resulting in the *Paléographie Musicale* (1889). By 1903, Rome recognized the Solesmes chant as authoritative and a Vatican edition was commissioned the following year.

The revival of sacred music and specifically chant starting in the 1830s has been well documented by Katherine Bergeron's study on the Benedictine monks of Solesmes.[66] What seems to have been less studied, however, is the standard fare of Catholic churches in France during the century. Although a thorough examination of music for the nineteenth-century Catholic liturgy in France is beyond the scope of the present study, a brief look at the music provided in these liturgies can offer a background on how Gounod's use of sacred music would have related to the sacred music as heard in Catholic churches of the day.

Starting in the seventeenth century, France had developed its own liturgy distinct from the Roman rite: the so-called Neo-Gallican rite.[67] When the Concordat of 1801 restored public worship after its abolishment during the French Revolution, a decision had to be made whether to continue the Neo-Gallican rite or restore the Roman rite. While some Catholic churches did return to the Roman rite, many retained the other until the middle of the century.

[66] Katherine Bergeron, *Decadent Enchantments: The Revival of Gregorian Chant at Solesmes* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998).

[67] Theodore Karp, *An Introduction to the Post-Tridentine Mass Proper, Part 1: Text* (Middleton, WI: American Institute of Musicology, 2005), 215.

The publications of known Neo-Gallican Graduals have been traced by Theodore Karp, who has noted the substantial number of surviving Graduals from the nineteenth century, specifically the date range of 1826–1850:

> From 1725–50, we have twelve potential Graduals; from 1751–75, there are eight; from 1776–1800, there are nine; from 1801–25, there are six; and from 1826–50, there are no fewer than seventeen. The numbers for each of these periods do not vary greatly until we reach the last, which is much greater than any of the preceding. Even if we allow for the loss of material, activity seems to be markedly greater from 1826–50 than any other period, and then there is an abrupt end after 1846.[68]

Karp's observations support the argument that France's changeover from Neo-Gallican to Roman rite was a slow process. Indeed, the chapter of Notre-Dame in Paris did not adopt the Roman rite until 1855—the same year that the choir of Saint Sulpice was organized to sing ecclesiastical music proper to the Roman rite.[69] In 1874, it became mandatory for all of the churches in Paris to use the Roman rite. The last diocese to change over was Orléans in the following year.

Karp also points out that the Neo-Gallican chants cannot be viewed as coming from one monolithic source because of variants. The Graduals include both Gregorian chant and newly composed chant, indicating that a mix of new and old was used in the liturgy. There is still much to learn about the music for the Neo-Gallican rite, as Karp recognizes when he calls for more research in this area. In any case, the rite did have a lasting influence on French sacred music. For example, the *Pie Jesu*, most commonly

[68] Ibid., 233–234.

[69] James E. Frazier, *Maurice Duruflé: The Man and His Music* (Rochester: University of Rochester Press, 2007), 145.

recognized as being sung in Gabriel Fauré's *Requiem Mass*, comes from the Neo-Gallican tradition.[70]

Between the slowly fading chant from the Neo-Gallican rite and the rise of reformed chant for the Roman rite, it is difficult to pin down the standard fare of music used in Catholic churches in nineteenth-century France.[71] On one hand there were parishes resistant to adopting the Roman rite and wanting to maintain their French traditions. On the other hand, there were reformers, such as Dom Guéranger, who wanted to establish a unified chant tradition and return to the Roman rite. In both cases, we can discern a strong connection between the Catholic Church in France and plainchant.

In fact, this relationship between France and plainchant reveals itself in organ music of the second half of the nineteenth century. As Orpha Orchse writes, "In general the trend was to link organ music more closely to Gregorian chant through use of church modes and chant melodies."[72] The organist Jacques Lemmens was an early proponent of the use of chant melodies in organ music as Joseph d'Ortigue wrote in 1861:

> M. Lemmens has chiefly viewed the organ in its relationship to the Catholic Church. His most impressive fugues are written … on plainchant motives. He recommends basing preludes and versets on the themes of the hymns and chants that they precede and follow.[73]

[70] Karen Cooksey, "Fauré's Requiem Re-Examined: A Study of the Work's Genesis, Influences, and Influence" (DMA thesis, University of Southern California, May 2009), 102.

[71] Erick Arenas, "A Historical Study of Charles Gounod's Messe Solennelle de Sainte-Cécile" (Master's thesis, University of Oregon, 2004), 36. Any mass setting through the 1860s would likely have been used in the Neo-Gallican rite.

[72] Orpha Orchse, *Organists and Organ Playing in Nineteenth-Century France and Belgium* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1994), 138.

[73] Ibid., 138–139.

Lemmens' interest in using plainchant motives inspired his students, including Alexandre Guilmant, who wrote in 1891:

> In the alternating pieces it is necessary for the organist to play the Gregorian melody or, at least, versets based on these themes. I think that there are very interesting things to be written in the polyphonic style with these old tonalities and on such beautiful chants as these. *The German organists have composed pieces on the melodies of chorales, forming a particularly rich organ literature; shouldn't we do likewise with our Catholic melodies?*[74]

Guilmant's comparison of the relationship between German organ music and chorales to the relationship between French organ music and plainchant reinforces the idea of France's close association with plainchant. Indeed, the phrase, "our Catholic melodies," seems to imply France's ownership of this sacred music.

Gounod, himself an experienced organist and church musician, was proficient in sacred French music of his time. He also had spent three years in Rome where he regularly attended Mass at the Sistine Chapel and was deeply moved by the music of Palestrina.[75] On his return, he took the position of organist and chapel master at the *Séminaire des Missions Etrangères* church, where he was employed for four and a half years.[76] His compositions include twenty-one masses with the first being composed when

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[74] Ibid., 139. Italics are mine.

[75] Charles François Gounod, *Memoirs of an Artist: An Autobiography*, trans. Annette Crocker (Chicago: Rand, McNally, and Company, 1895), 94–97. "And to begin with, in the matter of religious music, there was hardly more than a single place where one could go satisfactorily and profitably, and that place was the Sistine Chapel at the Vatican. What went on in the other churches was enough to make one shudder! Outside of the Sistine Chapel, and the one called the chapel of the canons in St. Peters, the music was not even good-for-nothing; it was execrable. […] I went, usually, on Sunday to hear High Mass at the Sistine Chapel, frequently accompanied by my friend Hébert. […] The music of Palestrina seems to be a translation in song of the vast poem of Michael Angelo, and I am inclined to think that these two masters explain and illustrate each other in the same light, the spectator developing the listener, and reciprocally, so that, finally, one is tempted to ask if the Sistine Chapel—painting and music—is not the product of one and the same inspiration."

[76] Gounod, *Memoirs*, 166.

the composer was twenty-one and the last being a Requiem, his final work.[77] Gounod's expertise in sacred music and his fondness for plainchant, then, must be borne in mind when one considers his incorporation of plainchant into the score of *Jeanne d'Arc*.

## Historical Characters

In the *Jeanne d'Arc* melodrama and opera under discussion, three historical figures from French history come to the fore: Charles, duc d'Orléans (1394–1465), Agnès Sorel (1422–1450), and King René (1409–1480). These figures bring a medieval flavor to these works, but they do so in different ways. The Duc d'Orléans' poetry is used in Barbier's drama. The character of Agnès Sorel as mistress to Charles VII appears on stage in both works and is especially prominent in the second act of Mermet's opera. King René also is mentioned in both works, but does not appear on stage. He looms larger in Mermet's opera in which minstrels are sent from the king's court as entertainment.

Although these characters are from the Middle Ages, their presence in the melodrama and opera was not always welcomed by the critics. The Duc d'Orléans was certainly a contemporary of Joan of Arc and was being held prisoner in England when Joan raised the siege at Orléans, so critics did not question the subtle reference to his imprisonment abroad in Barbier-Gounod's second act. However, Agnès Sorel was still a young girl during Joan's lifetime, so some did not approve of her appearance as Charles VII's mistress. Critics also noted the incongruity of mentioning King René, who did not become king of Naples until later in the 1430s.

[77] Arenas, "Historical Study," 2.

In Henri-Alexandre Wallon's 1876 illustrated publication of *Jeanne d'Arc*, Gustave Chouquet expressed his disapproval of the meeting between Agnès Sorel and Jeanne d'Arc:

> Therefore we ask to conclude this musical review with a wish: that henceforth playwrights listen to the voice of history and refrain from putting Agnès Sorel and Jeanne d'Arc together face to face. We are aware that in doing so the playwrights will deny themselves a convenient contrast. However, *nothing is beautiful but the true,* and the purpose of art is precisely to present the most common of subjects in a novel way. The more creative the poets and composers who provide our theaters with national dramas are, while being strictly respectful of historical truth, the more they will deserve critical acclaim and general admiration.[78]

Chouquet's recommendation for poets and composers reflects the changing attitude toward history that was becoming prevalent in the 1870s. As Emery has argued, historians were trying to approach history from a more objective stance. The historians described this position as searching for the 'truth,' and Chouquet, likewise, uses the same logic in his prescription for writing a historical drama. Moreover, Chouquet assures his readers that poets and composers who are 'respectful of historical truth' will succeed in their theatrical endeavors.

Nevertheless, Mermet like Barbier before him did contradict the known historical records. That is in Mermet's opera, Charles VII is not married, Agnès Sorel is his

[78] Gustave Chouquet, "Jeanne d'Arc et la musique," in *Jeanne d'Arc: Edition illustré d'apres les monuments de l'art depuis le quinzième siècle jusqu'à nos jours*, ed. Henri-Alexandre Wallon (Paris: Firmin-Didot, 1876), 62. "Aussi demandons-nous à terminer cette revue musicale en formulant un voeu: que désormais les auteurs dramatiques écoutent la voix de l'histoire et renoncent à mettre Agnès Sorel et Jeanne d'Arc en présence. Ils se priveront par là d'un contraste commode, nous ne l'ignorons pas; mais *rien n'est beau que le vrai*, et l'art consiste précisément à présenter, d'une facon nouvelle, le sujet le plus connu. Plus les poètes et les musiciens qui dotent notre théatre de drames nationaux se montreront originaux en respectant la stricte vérité historique, plus ils auront droit aux éloges de la critique et à l'admiration générale."

mistress, and the minstrels come from the court of King René. In reality, Charles VII was married, Agnès Sorel would have been too young at this time to be his mistress, and René of Anjou did not become King of Naples and Jerusalem until several years after this scene is set to take place. Similar anachronisms occurred in Barbier-Gounod's *Jeanne d'Arc* as the critic Auguste Vitu notes:

> I am not dwelling on an insignificant anachronism, which, precisely because it is unnecessary, must absolutely be rectified. Either I didn't hear properly, or the second act mentions the troubadours who adorned the court of the good King René. The truth is the good King René was about the same age as Jeanne d'Arc and did not become king until long after the Maid's death.
>
> What seems less forgivable to me is to have brought together Jeanne d'Arc and Agnès Sorel, who certainly never met each other. Jeanne d'Arc perished at the stake in 1431 while that same year or the following year Agnès Sorel made her debut at the court. In crediting equally the saint and the mistress for the impetus that brought Charles VII back to his duty to France, Mr. Jules Barbier taints the purity of memories that must be respected, and decreases on this crucial point the moral value of his work, otherwise so respectable and so nobly inspired.[79]

Vitu not only describes the inaccuracies, but he also stresses the effect that they have on the work as a whole. More specifically, the *moral value* of the work, according to Vitu, is threatened because of these changes to historical records.

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[79] Auguste Vitu, *Le Figaro*, November 11, 1873. "Je ne m'arrête pas à un anachronisme sans importance, et qui, précisément parce qu'il est inutile, doit être absolument corrigé. Ou j'ai mal entendu, ou il est question au deuxième acte des troubadours qui ornaient la cour du bon roi René. Mais le bon roi René avait à peu près l'âge de Jeanne d'Arc et ne devint roi que longtemps après la mort de la Pucelle.

Ce qui me paraît moins pardonnable, c'est d'avoir mis en présence Jeanne d'Arc et Agnès Sorel, qui certainement ne se rencontrèrent jamais. Jeanne d'Arc avait péri sur le bûcher en 1431, lorsque, cette même année ou l'année d'après Agnès Sorel fut présentée à la cour. M. Jules Barbier, en partageant entre la sainte et la maîtresse l'influence qui ramène Charles VII à ses devoirs envers la France, altère la pureté de souvenirs qu'il convient de respecter, et diminue, sur ce point capital, la valeur morale de son œuvre, d'ailleurs si estimable et si noblement inspirée."

In the 1890 revival of Barbier-Gounod's *Jeanne d'Arc*, the name of Agnès Sorel is changed to Iseult—a likely response to the criticism.

*Charles, duc d'Orléans*

Charles, duc d'Orléans is not directly named in Barbier-Gounod's *Jeanne d'Arc*, when Agnès Sorel speaks of the duke—a prisoner living in exile. Yet, one of his poems, a ballade to be exact, is set to music at the beginning of Act II. This use of a ballade was noticed by the music critic Johannes Weber, who was knowledgable on this medieval poetic form.

Indeed, just days before the premiere of Barbier-Gounod's *Jeanne d'Arc*, Weber had reviewed a newly published collection of ballades by Thomas de Banville. In the review, he had reminded the reader that the ballade is "une des formes de poeme les plus essentiellement françaises" and had elaborated on the poetic form and the quality of the ballades presented in the volume.[80] When Weber reviewed *Jeanne d'Arc* in the 18 November issue of *Le Temps*, he was thus well armed to review Gounod's "Ballade of the Prisoner":

> In the second act, we find at first a nice women's chorus and a ballade that Ms. Perret delivers limply and coldly; I did not understand a word of it. It is a ballade in the original meaning of the name, as I explained in my last column. The two verses each have ten lines, made of three rhymes which are the same for both verses as well as the refrain. The text, expressing a love complaint, is written in old style; the music also has retrospective tendencies; I believe that it would be successful if well sung.[81]

[80] Johannes Weber, "Trente-six ballades joyeuses," *Le Temps*, November 4, 1873.

[81] Johannes Weber, "Jeanne d'Arc," *Le Temps*, November 18, 1873. "Au deuxième acte nous trouvons d'abord un agréable chœur de femmes et une ballade que Mlle Perret débite mollement et froidement; je n'en avais pas compris un mot. C'est une ballade dans le sens primitif de cette dénomination, ainsi que je l'ai expliqué dans mon dernier feuilleton. Les deux couplets ont chacun dix vers, faits sur trois rimes qui sont les mêmes pour les deux couplets aussi bien que le refrain. Le texte, exprimant une plainte amoureuse, est écrit en vieux style; la musique aussi a des tendances rétrospectives; je crois qu'elle aurait du succès si elle était bien chantée."

From Weber's writings, we learn that he considered the medieval ballade a truly French form that Barbier-Gounod's "Ballade of the Prisoner" follows. Moreover, Weber recognized that the text is written in "old style" and that the music has "retrospective tendencies."

A closer look at the text shows that it is taken directly from Ballade 40 by Charles, duc d'Orléans, who after being captured at the Battle of Agincourt in 1415, spent twenty-five years away from his country as a prisoner in England. The poetic form and fifteenth-century text sets this ballade apart from other ballades found in nineteenth-century opera. As Weber acknowledges, the "Ballade of the Prisoner" is a ballade in the *original* meaning of the name. The typical type of ballade found in nineteenth-century operas was an "inserted storytelling song, a song in repeated verses" as described by Carolyn Abbate.[82] The minstrel Rimbaud's ballade in Meyerbeer's *Robert le Diable* is an example of this later type of ballade.[83] The "Ballade of the Prisoner," then, stands out from other nineteenth-century ballades because of its use of fifteenth-century poetry.

Like Weber, Adolphe Jullien, critic for *La Revue et gazette musicale*, noted the "style archaïque" (archaic style) of the ballade in his review. The critic did not specify if it is the text or the music that evokes an archaic style. However, he added that the refrain was a twin sister of Mephistopheles' serenade from *Faust*.[84] He also criticized Gounod's music as being simple and derivative of the composer's earlier works, so it is not surprising that the critic made this comparison to Mephistopheles' serenade. Yet, I

[82] Carolyn Abbate, *Unsung Voices: Opera and Musical Narrative in the Nineteenth Century* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991), 69.

[83] Ibid. Other names given to this type of musical narrative are "Romanze, "Lied," and "canzone."

[84] Adolphe Jullien, "*Jeanne d'Arc*, drame en cinq actes et sept tableaux," *La Revue et gazette musicale*, November 16, 1873.

believe that this comparison can tell us something other than simply that Gounod was being derivative. It is possible that the composer meant for this music to evoke a type of serenade from the medieval period (the singer in both songs pretends to accompany himself on the guitar).

An inspection of both text and music is required to demonstrate how the ballade recalls France's medieval past. The ballade is sung at the beginning of Act II, Scene 1, which takes place in Agnès Sorel's room in the palace at Chinon. While the women of the court attend to Agnès, the court page named Loys strums on his guitar. After a 21-measure introduction, the chorus of women beckons to Loys:

| | |
|---|---|
| Beau page, voulez vous nous dire | Handsome page, would you like to tell us |
| La ballade du prisonnier? | The ballade of the prisoner? |
| Cette ballade que soupire | This ballade sighed by |
| Celui qui ne peut oublier? | The one who cannot forget? |
| Celui qui de son doux servage | The one who, from his sweet serfdom, |
| Chante les plaisirs effacés? | Sings of faded pleasures? |
| Faut-il vous en prier, faut-il vous en prier, | Must one beg you, must one beg you, |
| Beau page? | Handsome page? |
| Hélas! Et n'est-ce pas assez? | Alas! And is this not enough? |
| Hélas! Et n'est-ce pas assez? | Alas! And is this not enough? |

Loys replies in a recitative style, "Qui de nous ne connaît ces vers mouillés de larmes/ Dont le soupir lointain se mêle au bruit des armes!" (Who among us does not know these verses full of tears/ Whose distant sigh mingles with the sound of arms!) He then begins to sing to the accompaniment of his guitar.[85] Gounod sets the first and third stanza of the duke's ballade with an alteration in the third stanza to include part of the original *envoy*.[86] In addition to omitting the second stanza, Barbier and Gounod switch the line, "Ainsi sur seul sans nul plaisir" with "Prisonnier suis, d'amour martyr" in order to finish the verse.

[85] Jules Barbier and Charles Gounod, *Jeanne d'Arc: Drame en Cinq Actes en Vers avec Choeurs* (Paris: Michel Lévy Frères, 1874), 38.

[86] The envoy is the concluding stanza (four lines) of a ballade.

LOYS
Fortune, veuillez-moi laisser
En paix une fois, je vous prie;
Trop longuement, sans vous lasser,
Avez eu sur moi seigneurie!
De mes pleurs faites raillerie,
Et jamais ne voulez ouïr
Les maux que m'avez fait souffrir!
Bien des ans sont déjà passés!
Dois-je toujours ainsi languir?
Hélas! Et n'est-ce pas assez?

LE CHOEUR
Hélas! Et n'est-ce pas assez?

**[2nd stanza of original ballade is omitted]**

LOYS
Tous maux suis content de porter,
Hors un seul qui trop fort m'ennuie,
C'est qu'il me faut si loin rester
De celle que j'ai pour amie!
Dès long-temps en sa compagnie
Laissai mon coeur et mon désir;
Vers moi ne veulent revenir;
D'elle ne sont jamais lassés;
Prisonnier suis, d'amour martyr!
Hélas! Et n'est-ce pas assez?

LE CHOEUR
Hélas! Et n'est-ce pas assez?

LOYS
Fortune, please let me be
In peace once, I pray to you;
Too long, without your tiring,
Have you been my lord!
You make mockery of my tears,
And you never wish to hear
Of the pain you have made me suffer!
Many years have already passed!
Must I continually languish in this way?
Alas! And is not that enough?

LE CHOEUR
Alas! And is not that enough?

**[2nd stanza of original ballade is omitted]**

LOYS
I am content with bearing all burdens Except one,
which is too heavy for me; This [i.e. one burden] is
that I must remain far from the one who holds my
love.
Because a long time ago I left my heart and my
desire in her company; back to me they [i.e. heart
and desire] do not wish to return,
Of her they are never tired.
Prisoner am I, a martyr of love!
Alas! And is not that enough?

LE CHOEUR
Alas! And is not that enough?

After Loys and the chorus finish their song, Agnès remarks on the duke's unfortunate situation and worries about the dauphin's fate:

Pauvre duc!… prisonnier par delà le détroit
Loin d'en être affaibli, son amour s'en accroît;
Et volant vers sa dame, et pleurant sa patrie,
Sa ballade pour lui passé la mer et prie!

(*Se levant*)
Ah! Puisse Dieu, clément à mon seigneur et roi,
Ne pas le séparer de la France … et de moi!
Mais que vais-je penser? Pour suivre ce que j'aime
Ne braverais-je pas les fers et la mort même?
Hélas! Un seul peril ménace notre amour,
La reine! … Parle-t-on de son prochain retour?

Poor Duke! ... prisoner across the Strait
Far from being weakened, his love increases;
And flying to his lady, and mourning his homeland,
His ballade for him passes the sea and prays!

(*Rising*)
Ah! May God, merciful to my lord and king,
Not separate him from France... and me!
But what shall I think? To follow what I love
Would I not brave the irons and even death?
Alas! One sole peril threatens our love,
The Queen! Does one speak of his approaching return?

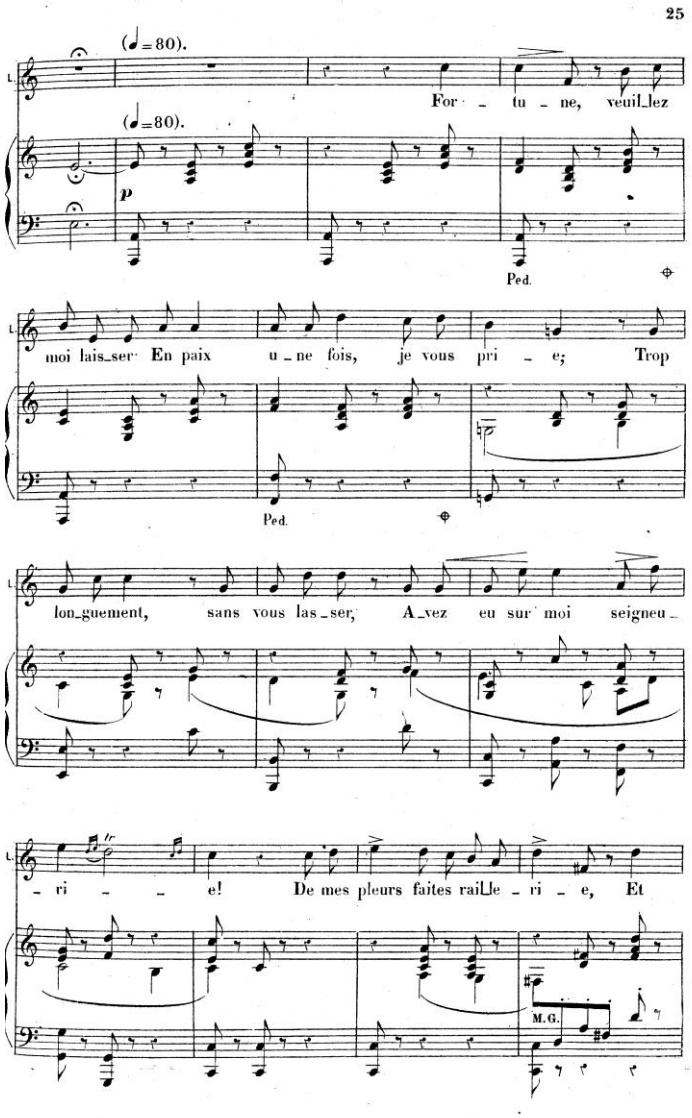
The inclusion of one of the duke's ballade texts serves two purposes. First, it lends authenticity.[87] The verses of this particular ballade (No. 40) convey the duke's sadness over his imprisonment, which in real life did separate him from his country. This subject matter sets the overall mood for the second act during which Jeanne will present herself to the dauphin with the hope of relieving Orléans (the duke's city). Second, the ballade brings another historical figure, the Duc d'Orléans, into the play. Although he does not appear on stage, the page Loys sings his ballade. Afterward, Agnès speaks of the duke's imprisonment and divulges her own fears that the dauphin may have to leave the country and her, if things do not improve for the French in the war with England.

Gounod's music was criticized by Adolphe Jullien for being reminiscent of Mephistopheles' serenade from *Faust*. However, similarities of this ballade to the serenade are only general. Both are in triple meter and modulate from a minor to a major key. There are no direct musical quotes from one to the other, though they do both repeat one note in the chorus (E and D in the chorus of the ballade and D for the word "ah" in the serenade). (**Example 3.1.** System 7/Measures 3 and 4, System 8/Measures 2 and 3; **Example 3.2.** System 6/Measures 2 and 3) The lightly plucked, guitar-simulating accompaniment in both pieces also adds to the likeness between the songs. Loys, like Mephistopheles, appears to accompany himself on the guitar while he sings. But, in short, I do not find that Gounod was copying his older work. Rather, in both works, he was using certain tools such as mode, meter, and accompaniment for the specific purpose of evoking an earlier style of music. Both songs are meant to be love songs from the medieval period, so Gounod sets them similarly. In his review, Jullien did not elaborate

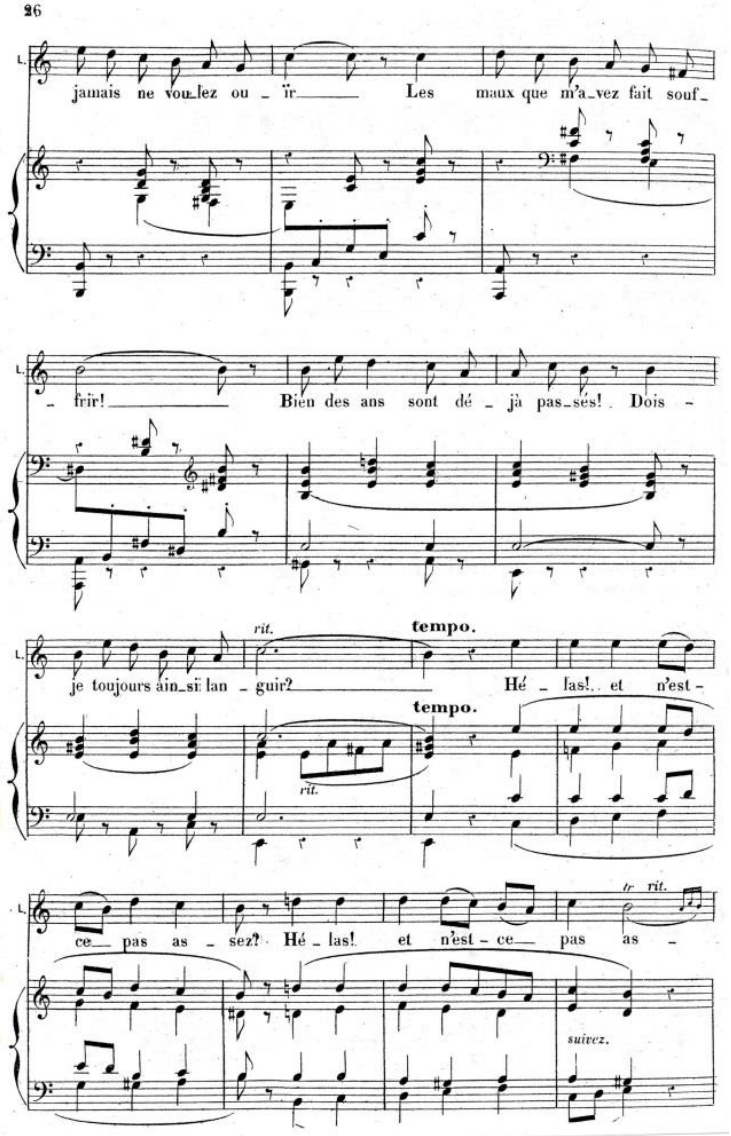
[87] Barbier could have written an entirely original poem; yet, with the increase of interest in the Duc d'Orléans' writings—nine books that included two collections of his poems were published in the 1840s—access to his poetry would have been fairly easy.

on the similarities between the two songs; however, it is most likely that he recognized the musical characteristics mentioned above and used this observation to support his belief that Gounod was recycling old material, while failing to recognize that the composer was following the same formula for the same purpose to present a song that evoked the Middle Ages.

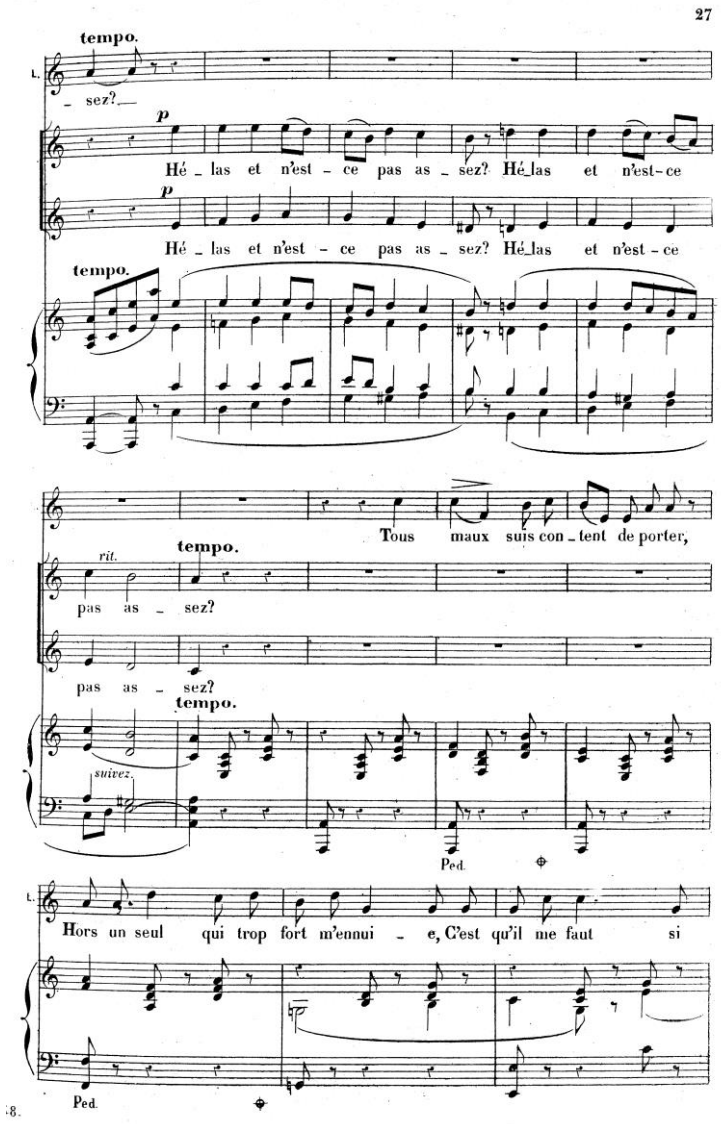
**Example 3.1.** Barbier-Gounod, *Jeanne d'Arc*, Act II, No. 4 Choeur et Ballade, pp. 25–27.



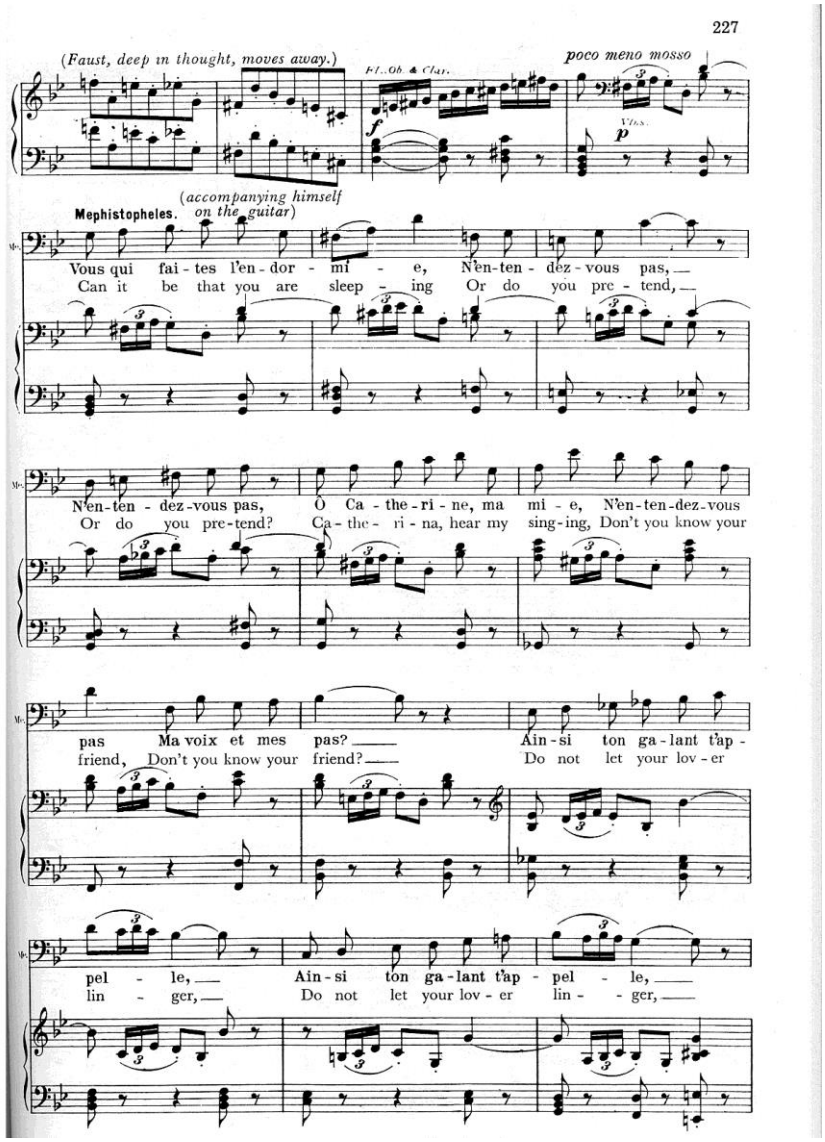
**Example 3.1.** continued



**Example 3.1.** continued

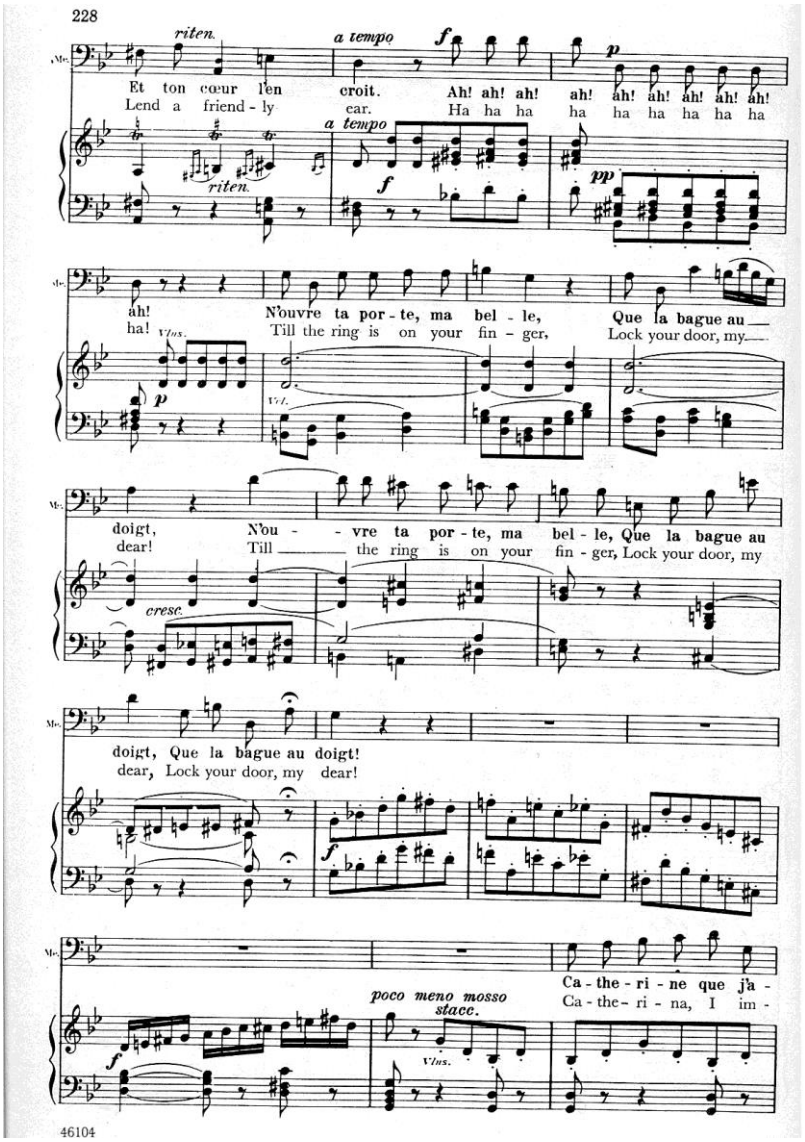


**Example 3.2.** Charles Gounod, *Faust*, Act III, No. 15, Mephistopheles' Serenade, pp. 227–228.[88]




[88] Charles Gounod, Michel Carre, and Jules Barbier, *Faust: Opera in Four Acts*, trans. Ruth and Thomas Martin (New York: Schirmer, 1966), 227–228.

**Example 3.2.** continued




*King René's Minstrels*

In Mermet's Act II, King René's minstrels are sent to the court at Chinon to entertain the dauphin. Their presence on stage, holding their lyres while they sing, recalls the trouvères of the Middle Ages. In addition to referencing an earlier time period, the minstrels also serve a purpose dramatically: the text of their chorus foretells the arrival of Jeanne at the court.

The scene of the minstrels unfolds thus: Agnès Sorel and the dauphin are enjoying each other's company and escaping the problems of the country in the gardens at Chinon, when they are interrupted by a page who announces the arrival of burghers from Orléans. Charles VII replies, "Contre moi tout conspire; à demain la bergère, A demain les bourgeois! A demain! A demain!" (Everything conspires against me; until tomorrow, the shepherdess. Until tomorrow, the bourgeois! See you tomorrow! See you tomorrow!) However, the page ignores the remarks and adds that the merry minstrels have arrived and in the name of King René they ask to be seen. The announcement is followed by a 26-measure introduction primarily on a G7 harmony to prepare for the minstrels' chorus in C major. This introduction allows for more members of the court to enter, for Charles VII and Agnès to take their seats, and for the minstrels to appear on stage with harps in hand. When all are in place, the minstrels sing:

Intro – Common time, C Major
Allegretto – 5 parts, 12/8 C Major

MENESTRELS
(12/8)
Gais ménestrels, Aux accords de la lyre,
Chantons, Chantons louange à toi, gentil Dauphin.
Le roi René par nos voix vient te dire
De prendre espoir dans le secours divin.

(9/8)
Tenors
A peu de temps, en songe ou rêverie, Il vit venir,
Chevauchant dans le ciel, Grands escadrons, en grand'chevalerie
Guidés vers toi par l'archange Michel.

(12/8)
MENESTRELS
Gais ménestrels, Aux accords de la lyre,
Chantons, Chantons louange à toi, gentil Dauphin.
Le roi René par nos voix vient te dire
De prendre espoir, de prendre espoir dans le secours, le secours divin.
Chantons, chantons louange à toi, gentil Dauphin!

MINSTRELS
(12/8)
Gay minstrels, to the chords of the lyre,
Let us sing, Sing praise to thee, gentle dauphin.
King René by our voices comes to say to you
Take hope in divine help.

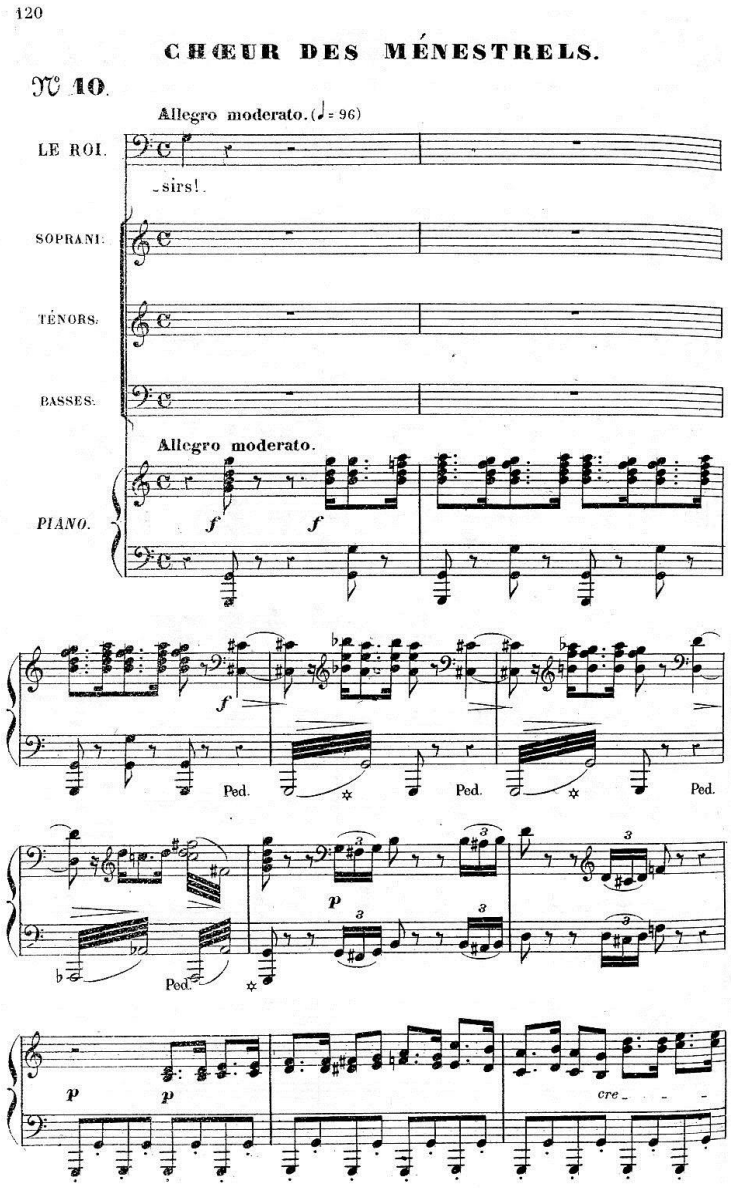
(9/8)
Tenors
In a short time, in a dream or reverie, he saw coming, Riding in the sky, Great squadrons in great chivalry
Guided to you by the archangel Michael.

(12/8)
MINSTRELS
Gay minstrels, to the chords of the lyre,
Let us sing, Sing praise to thee, gentle dauphin.
King René by our voices comes to say to you
Take hope, take hope in the help, divine help.
Sing, sing praise to thee, gentle dauphin!

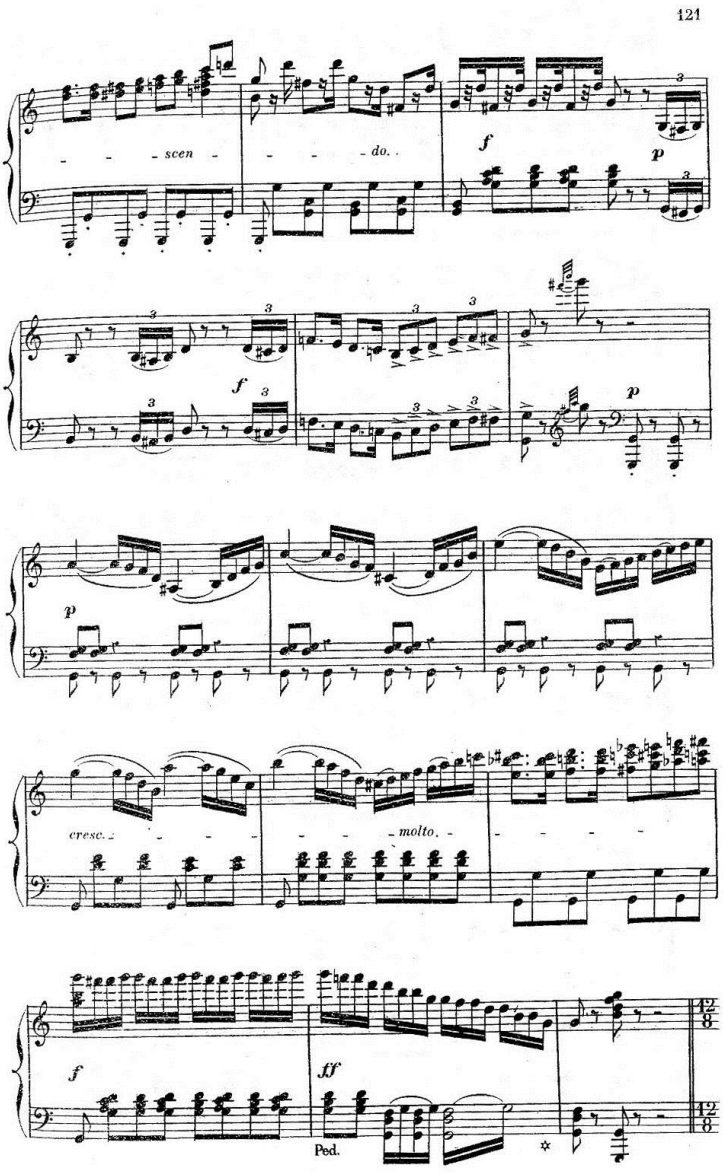
The minstrels' song foretells the arrival of Joan at court and her success in Orléans as aided by divine succor. The harp figures prominently, both visually—since the minstrels actually carry their instruments on the stage—and textually with the phrase "to the chords of the lyre." (**Figure 3.1.)** This instrument is intended to recall the trouvères of the past, as is the reference to King René. The music for the minstrels, however, does not convey anything medieval. Mermet composed a frivolous, music hall style chorus number in C major, mostly in 12/8 meter. Instead of recalling an earlier time, the music merely conveys merriment. The minstrels' chorus does include a less lively interlude—a tenors' solo during which the meter changes to 9/8 and the key moves to A minor. (**Example 3.3.** System 14.) The text also changes at this time to describe a dream of the Archangel Michael arriving in the sky with a squadron. This mysterious passage describing a premonition lasts only seven measures and then returns to the refrain. Certain textual phrases, such as "aux accord de la lyre" and "le roi René," and the physical prominence of the lyres (**Figure 3.1**) evoke the Middle Ages, but the music of the chorus does not. (**See Example 3.3.**)

**Figure 3.1.** Mermet, *Jeanne d'Arc*, Act II, Chinon. Published in *Le Monde illustré*, April 8, 1876, pp. 232–233. Illustration by Edmond Morin. Agnès Sorel sings accompanied by minstrels as the dauphin looks on.

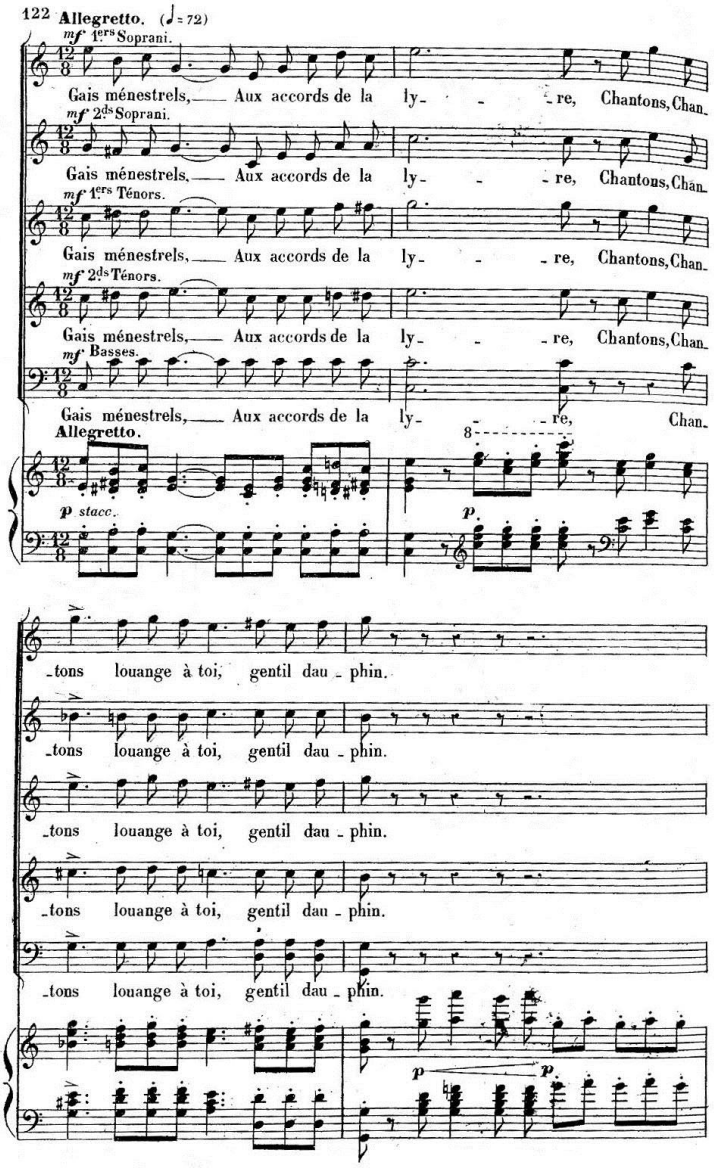
**Example 3.3.** Mermet, *Jeanne d'Arc*, Act II, No. 10, Choeur des Ménestrels, pp. 120–122.



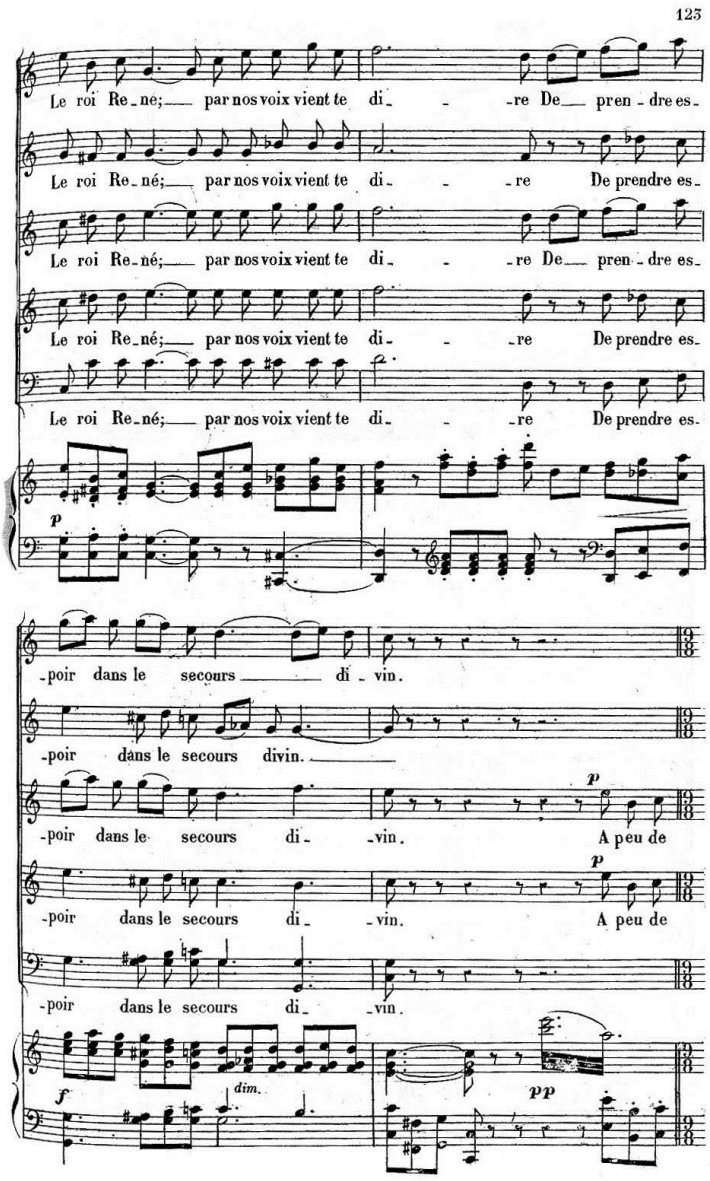
**Example 3.3.** continued.



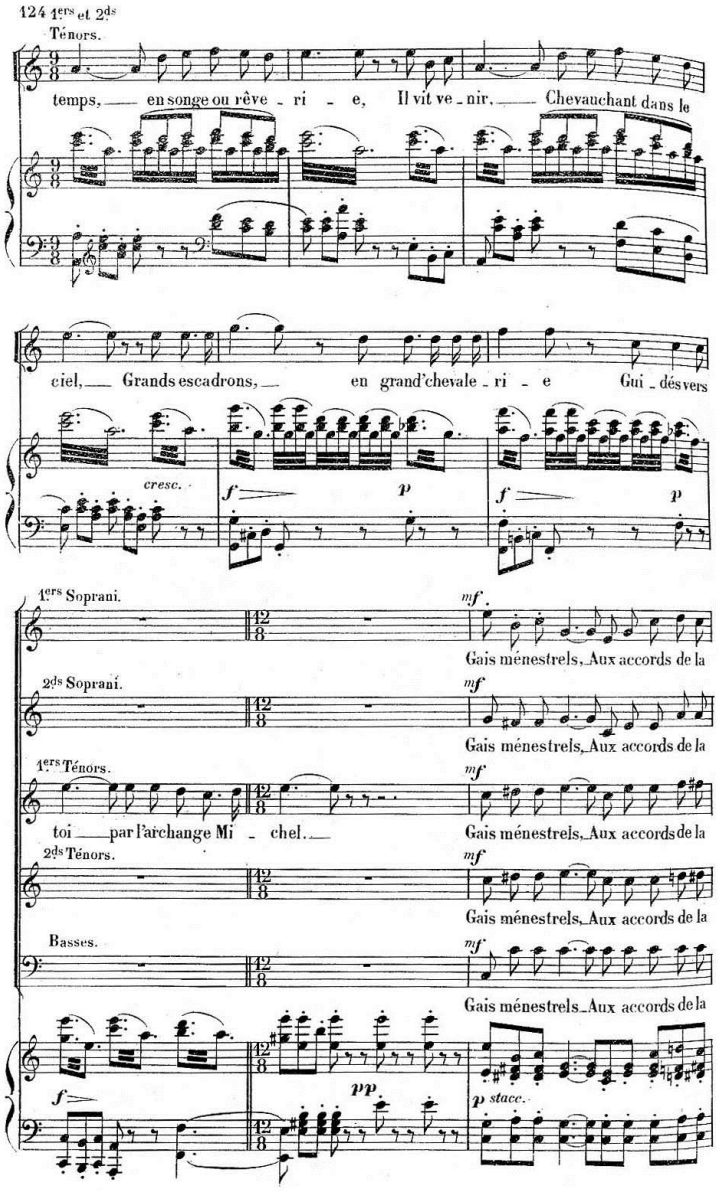
**Example 3.3.** continued



**Example 3.3.** continued.



**Example 3.3.** continued.



*Agnès Sorel*

Although the character of Agnès Sorel appears in both Barbier-Gounod's melodrama and Mermet's opera, only the opera offers her a substantial vocal part. In the second act, she receives her own air and song with the chorus of minstrels. She first addresses the minstrels with this air:

AGNÈS
Vous qui, dans ces jours de souffrance,
Portez la joie et l'espérance,
Dieu vous garde,
Dieu vous garde, heureux ménestrels!
Par vos refrains d'amour,
Aux pieds de vos tourelles,
Vous éveillez le coeur des nobles jouvencelles;
Vous chantez les exploits dans vos vers immortels,
Portez, gais ménestrels, portez nos voeux,
Portez nos voeux et nos souhaits!
Loin de vous, souvent, je répète
Le chant des filles du hameau,
Dansent, au son de la musette
Sur les pelouses du château.

AGNES
You who, in these days of suffering,
Bring joy and hope,
God bless you,
God bless you, happy minstrels!
Through your refrains about love,
At the foot of your turrets,
You awaken the hearts of noble maidens;
You sing about your exploits in your immortal
verses. Take, gay minstrels, take back with you
Take back with you our good wishes and desires!
Far from you, often I repeat
The song of the girls of the hamlet,
Who dance to the sound of the bagpipe
On the lawns of the castle.

This passage acts as a dramatic link between the minstrels' chorus and Agnes' own song. As in the the minstrels'chorus, the music does not overtly indicate an earlier time. The text, however, mentions minstrels, turrets, castles, noble maidens, and "the song of the girls of the hamlet who dance to the sound of the bagpipe [*la musette*]." The musette was not a medieval instrument, but was developed later in the seventeenth century. However, the instrument did have pastoral connotations, so it fits well in this context. The air segues into Agnes' "Chant du lutin:"

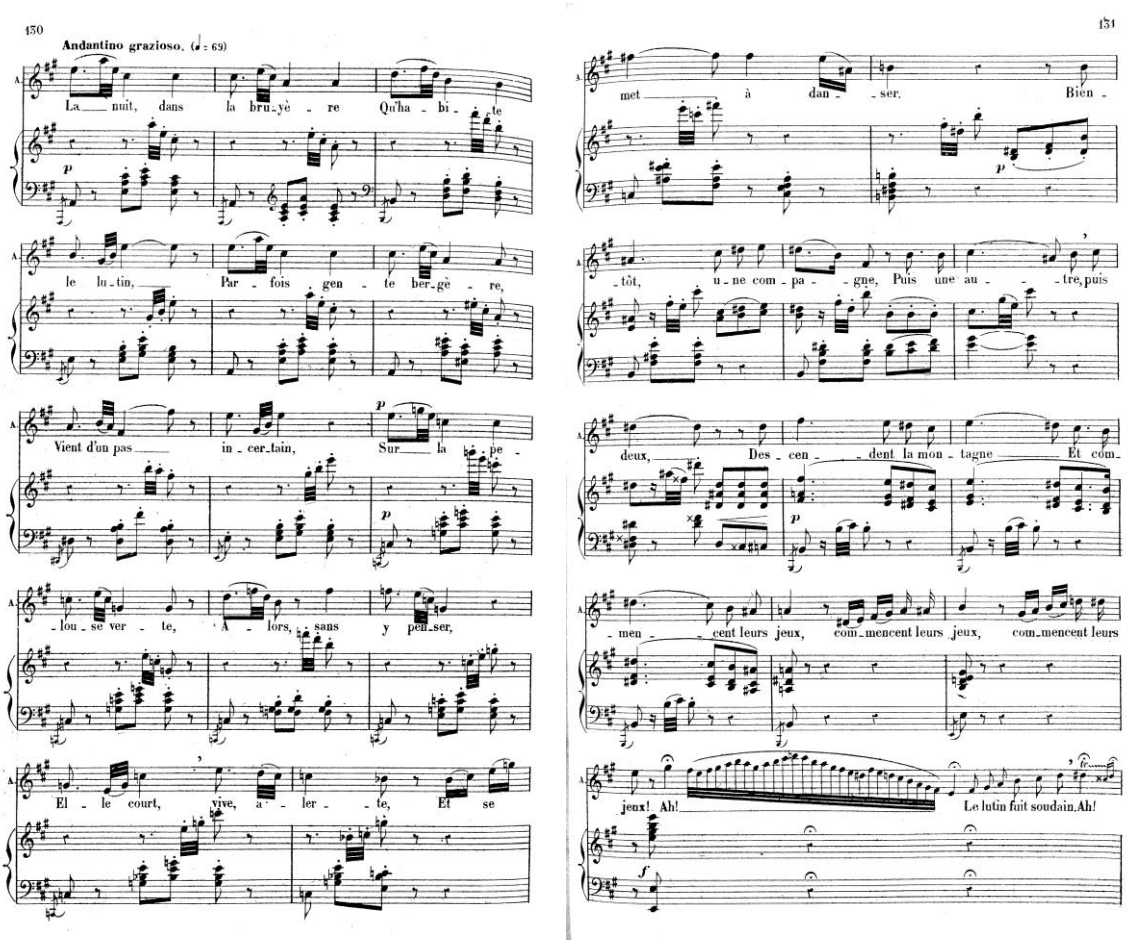
(Andante grazioso – 3/4, A Major)
La nuit, dans la bruyère
Qu'habite le lutin,
Parfois gente bergère,
Vient d'un pas incertain,
Sur la pelouse si verte,
Alors, sans y penser,
Elle court, vive, alerte, Et se met à danser.
Bientôt, une compagne,

At night, in the heather
Inhabited by the sprite,
At times shepherd folk,
Arrive with an uncertain step,
On the green lawn,
Then, without thinking,
They run, lively, alert, and start dancing.
Soon, a companion

| | |
|---|---|
| Puis une autre, puis deux,<br>Descendent la montagne<br>Et commencent leurs jeux, commencement leurs jeux, commencement leurs jeux! Ah!<br>Le lutin fuit soudain, Ah! | Then another, then two,<br>Come down from the mountain<br>And begin their games, begin their games, begin their games! Ah!<br>The sprite suddenly flees, Ah! |

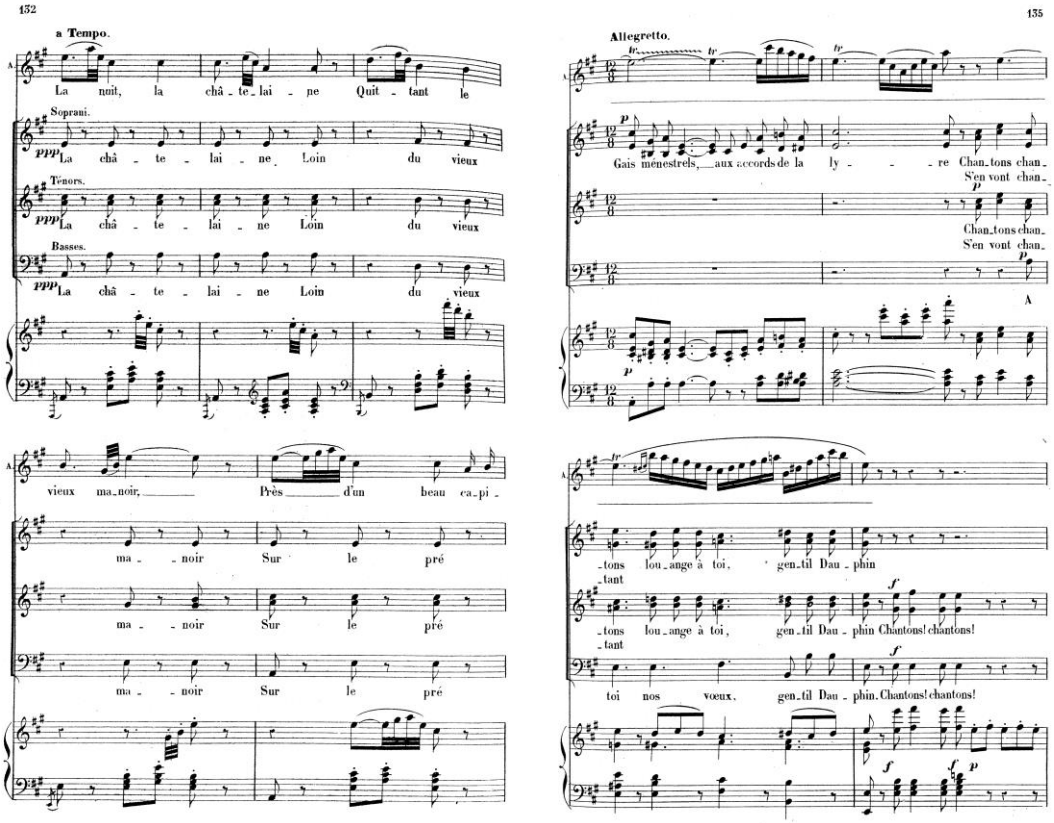
The song can be divided into three sections. The opening twenty-six measures are for Agnès alone with a light accompaniment that pulses the triple meter while also echoing some of her own phrases. (**Example 3.4.**)

**Example 3.4.** Mermet, *Jeanne d'Arc*, Act II, No. 11, Air avec Choeur, pp. 130–131.



On her "Ah!" immediately following "commencement leurs jeux," she bursts into a fast scalar run that reaches to the third D natural above middle C. The second passage has Agnès continue with the same motivic unity over the chorus of minstrels singing homophonically, *pianissimo possible* (***ppp***). (**See Example 3.4.a**)

**Example 3.4.a.** Mermet, *Jeanne d'Arc*, Act II, No. 11, Air avec Choeur, pp. 132 and 135.




The final passage is marked *Allegretto* and returns to the original chorus of the minstrels, but this time, Agnès is performing vocal pyrotechnics above them. (**Example 3.4.a.**, p.135) Clearly this song is a showcase piece for the soprano. The text conveys a romantic view of the Middle Ages by depicting the mysterious arrival and disappearance of a *lutin*. (**See Text and Translation below.**)

| | |
|---|---|
| AGNÈS | AGNÈS |
| La nuit, la châtelaine | At night, the lady |
| Quittant le vieux manoir, | Leaving the old manor, |
| Près d'un beau capitaine | Near a handsome captain |
| Sur l'herbe vient s'asseoir! | Sits on the grass! |
| Et l'on dit | And they say |
| Que la nuit, Un esprit Fait ce bruit; | At night, a sprite makes this noise; |
| Qu'au matin | In the morning |
| Ah! | Ah! |
| Fuit le lutin | Flees the sprite |
| Et puis rien, plus rien. Rien…. | And then nothing, nothing. Nothing .... |
| Ah! | Ah! |
| | |
| Ah! | Ah! |
| Le lutin | Sprite |
| Fuit soudain. | Suddenly flees. |
| Au matin le lutin, le lutin fuit soudain | In the morning the sprite |
| Ah! | Suddenly flees |
| Au matin Le lutin fuit soudain, et puis | Ah, in the morning the sprite, suddenly flees, |
| …rien… | and then ... nothing ... |
| Ah! L'esprit fuit soudain. | Oh! The spirit flees suddenly. |
| | |
| CHOEUR | CHORUS |
| La châtelaine | The lady |
| Loin de vieux manoir | Far from the old manor |
| Sur le pré la nuit | In the meadow at night |
| Viendra s'asseoir | Will sit |
| Puis au matin | Then in the morning |
| Plus rien, non, plus rien, rien. | Nothing more, no, nothing more, nothing. |
| | |
| Gais ménestrels aux accords de la lyre. | Gay minstrels to the chords of the lyre. |
| Chantons chantons louange à toi, gentil | Let us sing, let us sing praise to you, gentle |
| Dauphin. Chantons! Chantons! | Dauphin. Let us sing! Let us sing! |
| | |
| Le roi René | King René |
| Vient de dire | Has just said |
| De prendre espoir dans le secours, | To take hope in the relief, |
| dans le secours, le secours divin. | in the relief, the divine relief. |
| Chantons, chantons louange à toi. | Let us sing, let us sing praise to you. |
| | |
| Tous nos voeux sont pour toi, pour toi, | All our wishes are for you, for you, |
| Oui, pour toi! | Yes, for you! |

Throughout this scene, the dauphin and Agnès Sorel lead the entertainment on stage.[89] These two key characters portray the court at Chinon as a place of refuge from the problems of the country and of the war. For example, the dauphin immerses himself

[89] Weber, *Le Temps*. "Dans la fête que donne Charles VII, les ménestrels ne sont qu'en seconde ligne c'est le roi et Agnès qui se chargent d'amuser la société."

in the celebration that takes place out of doors in his gardens instead of leading his country. Moreover, instead of meeting with Jeanne immediately, he declares that he will postpone the appointment until a later date. One can view this description of the dauphin as shirking his duties in favor of a life of leisure in the country as a reference to the failures of the French monarchy in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Although the figure of Agnès Sorel is from the medieval past, the aristocracy that she represents would have been a recent memory for the French public.

To conclude, Charles, duc d'Orléans, King René, and Agnès Sorel are figures from France's past that are used in different ways to recall the country's history in the melodrama and the opera. In Barbier-Gounod's melodrama, the ballade of Duc d'Orléans is representative of the nineteenth-century historians' quest for 'truth' in history. It can be seen as something that Chouquet would have endorsed. In Mermet's opera, the prominence of Agnès Sorel and King René's minstrels likewise refers to the Middle Ages. However, their presence also represents the aristocracy as well as an era in which the monarchy ruled France and ultimately failed to govern well.

## Historical Music

### *Minuet*

A minuet performed during a stage work set in the Middle Ages may come across as anachronistic—the dance developed as a courtly dance in the seventeenth century.[90] However, both Gounod and Mermet include a minuet for the entrance of members of the

[90] Meredith Ellis Little, "Minuet," *Grove Music Online*. http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com.libproxy.uoregon.edu/subscriber/article/grove/music/1875. Michael Praetorius discusses the minuet in his *Terpsichore* and the earliest surviving choreography for the dance dates to the 1680s

medieval court at Chinon. Although not a reference to the Middle Ages specifically, the minuet does recall an earlier time, and in this case, it refers directly to the French monarchy. By the 1660s, the minuet was danced at the court of Louis XIV.[91] Although used in baroque suites, sonatas, and symphonies, the minuet saw a much more limited usage in the nineteenth century. The association of this dance with courtly life has been described by the Liszt scholar Keith Johns thus:

> Eighteenth-century composers drew upon a number of dance topics. Of these only the minuet (or scherzo) survived into the nineteenth century in symphonic and chamber works. Even in Haydn's day, however, the minuet was associated 'with the elegant world of court and salon' (and, consequently, with artificiality instead of naturalness).[92]

Johns continues this passage to describe Liszt's use of a minuet in his symphonic poem *Tasso, lamento e trionfo* (1849) to recall the court of Ferrara in the sixteenth century. Like Gounod, Liszt is using an older dance form to signify royalty as well to bring to mind an earlier time.[93]

Would the 1870s Parisian public have recognized the minuet as signifying the French monarchy? Fortunately, Ernest Reyer, critic for *Journal des débats*, discussed Gounod's use of the minuet and applauds Gounod's selection:

> The entrance of the court of King Charles VII takes place accompanied by a minuet with retrospective pace. And it had to be so, unless Mr. Gounod had written something entirely different from a minuet, which he would have known better not to do, a tiny little minuet, for that matter, with no more than sixteen measures in length. 'Do you recall, my daughter,' said Madame de Sévigné, 'the

[91] Ibid.

[92] Keith T. Johns, *The Symphonic Poems of Franz Liszt* (Stuyvesant, NY: Pendragon Press, 1997), 39.

[93] Lisa C. Arkin and Marian Smith, "National Dance in the Romantic Ballet," in *Rethinking the Sylph*, ed. Lynn Garafola (Hanover: Wesleyan University Press, 1997), 42, 49. Moreover, on the French stage, the association of the minuet with France can be found in nineteenth-century ballets.

> minuet which you danced so well, and closed in such excellent time, when the other creatures were not at the end of theirs till the next day?'[94]

Reyer here quotes Madame de Sevigné's letter of 1675 to her daughter Madame de Grignon, who had made her court debut in the *Royal Ballet des Arts* and danced with Louis XIV.[95] She was noted for her grace and beauty and her mother "could never—as long as she lived—behold a well-danced minuet without comparing the grace and skill of the dancer to that of her daughter, invariably in her daughter's favor."[96] Reyer's remark supports the use of a minuet during the assembly of the court onstage. Although the minuet did not exist in the fifteenth century, it could easily have triggered two things in the minds of its nineteenth-century audience: an earlier time and courtly life.

Both Gounod's and Mermet's minuets are brief, lasting only sixteen and seventeen measures respectively. Barbier-Gounod's score indicates that the music should be played "à la manière des anciens menuets."[97] (**Example 3.5.**) Mermet's score states that the music is in "Tempo di minuetto."[98] (**Example 3.6.**) Gounod's minuet is written with repeats that allow the music to continue until all of the characters are on stage. Mermet does not plan for that, but this could be due to the fact that only a few members

[94] Ernest Reyer, "Revue Musicale, L'Opéra. Théâtre de la Gaité," *Journal des débats*, November 14, 1873. "L'entrée de la cour du roi Charles VII se fait sur un menuet d'une allure rétrospective. Et il en devait être ainsi, à moins que M. Gounod n'eût écrit tout autre chose qu'un menuet, ce dont il se serait bien gardé, un tout petit menuet d'ailleurs et qui n'a pas plus de seize mesures. "Vous souvient-il, ma fille, dit Mme de Sévigné, de ce menuet que vous dansiez si bien, et vous arriviez si heureusement, et des autres créatures qui n'arrivaient que le lendemain?" Translation based on Madame de Sévigné, *The Letters of Madame de Sévigné to Her Daughter and Friends*, trans. Mrs. Sarah J. Hale (Boston: Roberts Bros., 1878), 142.

[95] Marie de Rabutin-Chantal Sévigné, *Lettres de Mme de Sévigné: précédées d'une notice sur sa vie et du traité sur le style épistolaire de Madame de Sévigné* (Paris: Didot, 1856), 321. Dated December 1, 1675.

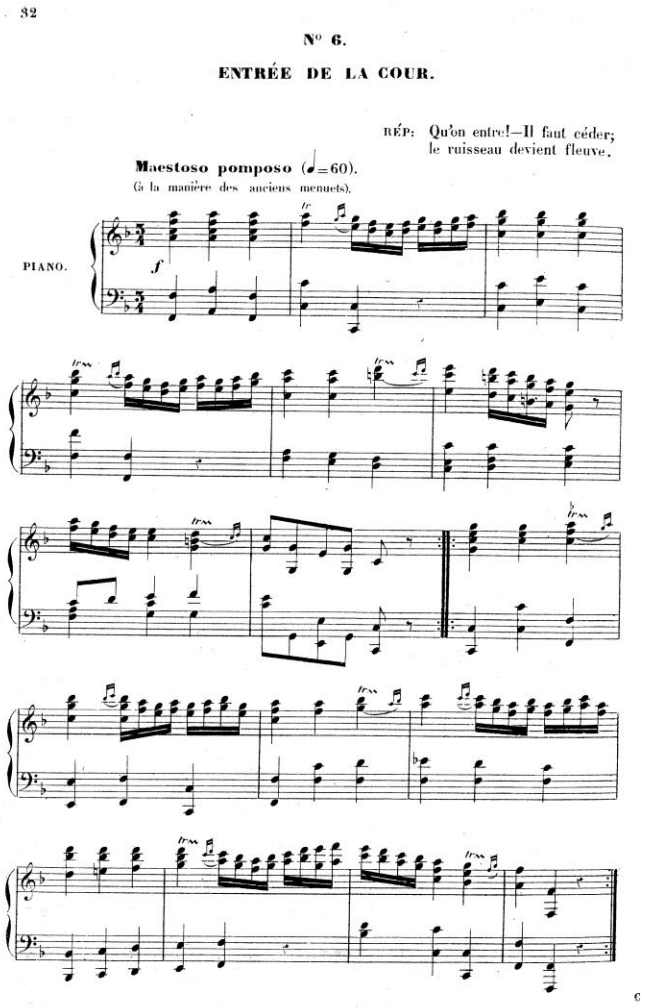
[96] Frances Mossiker, *Madame de Sévigné: A Life and Letters* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1983), 53.

[97] Jules Barbier and Charles Gounod, *Jeanne d'Arc: Drame en 5 Actes et en Vers* (Paris : E. Gérard, 1873), 32.

[98] Auguste Mermet, *Jeanne d'Arc: Opéra en quatre actes* (Paris: Choudens Père et Fils), 113.

of court are entering the scene in his opera.[99] His minuet acts more like an instrumental introduction for the dauphin's solo.

**Example 3.5.** Barbier-Gounod, *Jeanne d'Arc*, Act II, No. 6, Entrée De La Cour, p. 32.

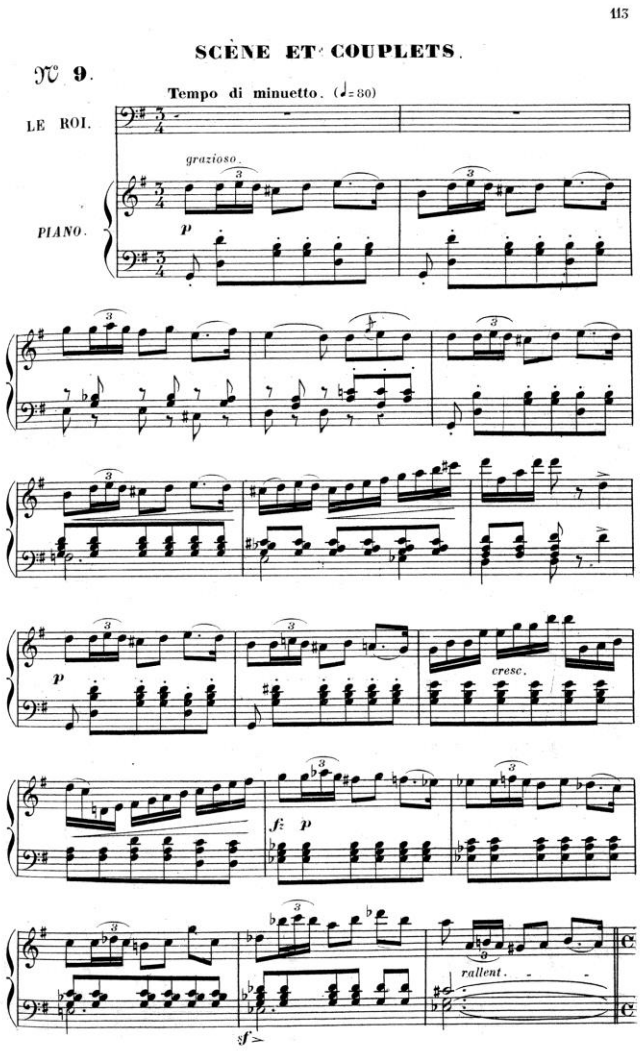



Mermet's minuet lacks the regalness of Gounod's dance. Instead of grand chords, Mermet uses a light, eighth-note repeating rhythm to set the tone for Charles VII's

[99] Auguste Mermet, *Jeanne d'Arc: Opéra en quatre actes et six tableaux* (Paris: Tresse, 1876), 22.

couplets of love. This 17-measure minuet also serves as musical accompaniment for the entrance of members of the court. (**Example 3.6.**)

**Example 3.6.** Mermet, *Jeanne d'Arc*, Act II, No. 9, Scène et Couplets, p. 113.




*Vexilla regis*

Gounod's use of the hymn *Vexilla regis* as a processional hymn in the melodrama *Jeanne d'Arc* was a logical choice. The hymn has a long history as a religious processional antiphon beginning in the sixth century. By the mid-nineteenth century,

hymnologists such as John Mason Neale regarded *Vexilla regis* as a "world-famous hymn, one of the grandest in the treasury of the Latin Church."[100] Moreover, Gounod seemed to have had a particular fondness for the hymn; he set it as a motet in 1873 and used it in his oratorio *La Rédemption* in 1882.

The hymn *Vexilla regis* can be traced to the year 569 when Venantius Fortunatus of Poitiers wrote it along with the well-known *Pange lingua … Crux fidelis* for the arrival of a relic of the True Cross to the convent at Poitiers. Both hymns were adopted into the liturgy for Holy Week, the final week of Lent leading up to Easter. According to tradition, *Vexilla regis* was meant to be sung during the procession on Good Friday. Its use as a Lenten antiphon fits well with its place within the melodrama *Jeanne d'Arc*. In the stage work, *Vexilla regis* is heard just before Jeanne meets the dauphin at the court in Chinon—a meeting, which, according to the history books, occurred during the Lenten season of 1429. Also, the hymn has a connection to recorded processions that took place during the siege of Orléans. On 3 May 1429, the Feast of the Finding of the Holy Cross, a great procession made its way through the city "with Joan the Maid and other military commanders present."[101] Could these historical connections have played a part in Gounod's selection? One can only speculate, but it does seem that the hymn's longstanding connection to processions, to Lent, to the Holy Cross, and to Joan make it a very good candidate for its use in the melodrama.

[100] John Mason Neale, *Mediæval Hymns and Sequences*, 3rd ed. (London: Joseph Masters and Son, 1867), 6–8.

[101] Régine Pernoud and Marie Véronique Clin, *Joan of Arc: Her Story*, trans. Jeremy duQuesnay Adams (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1999), 43

A point to consider is the significance that religious processions would have had for the Parisian public in 1873. After the war, the Catholic Church in France called for "reviving religious traditions associated with the past—especially the medieval past," resulting in an increase in pilgrimages (as can be found in Catholic journals of the day).[102] The war may have been a humiliation for republicans, but to many Catholics, it was seen as divine justice.[103] According to this logic, France's *raison d'être* was to fight for and defend the Catholic Church—a position which the country had held since the Middle Ages. However, at the outbreak of the Franco-Prussian War, Napoléon III removed his troops from Rome, leaving the Pope vulnerable to invasion by the Italian army.[104] Some Catholics believed that France needed to pay for this transgression, and as Elizabeth Emery and Laura Morowitz have argued, pilgrimages were one way of redeeming the country.[105] The increased interest in pilgrimages spurred the establishment of the *Conseil Général des Pèlerinages*, an association that led pilgrimages in France, Rome, and the Holy Land. The first edition of their weekly bulletin *Le Pèlerin* (*The Pilgrim*) appeared on 12 July 1873, four months before the premiere of Barbier-Gounod's *Jeanne d'Arc*, and described the religious fervor that was spreading among Catholics:

> For the last year, France has witnessed one of the most heartening spectacles for Christian souls. After the greatest disasters our country has ever experienced, we are finding that a single thought has suddenly emerged from the nation's heart.

[102] Emery and Morowitz, *Consuming the Past*, 143–144. *Le Pèlerin* is one such journal which began in 1873.

[103] Ibid., 143.

[104] Raffaele de Cesare, *The Last Days of Papal Rome, 1850–1870*, trans. Helen Zimmern (London: Archibald Constable and Co., 1909), 440. "The Roman question was the stone tied to Napoleon's feet—that dragged him into the abyss. He never forgot, even in August 1870, a month before Sedan, that he was a sovereign of a Catholic country, that he had been made Emperor, and was supported by the votes of the Conservatives and the influence of the clergy; and that it was his supreme duty not to abandon the Pontiff."

[105] Emery and Morowitz, *Consuming the Past*, 143.

> Catholic France, brought back to penitence by unhappiness, has spontaneously turned toward She whom Christians call by the name of *Mother of Mercy* and *Refuge of Sinners* […] Never, since the time of the Crusades and Joan of Arc, have we seen such a movement and a movement so brilliant, so courageous of the Christian faith.[106]

To be sure, the description of the Catholic revival in *Le Pèlerin* is enthusiastic, attempting to encourage the reader to grow closer to the faith *and* take part in one of their pilgrimages. In 1873, the *Conseil Général des Pèlerinages* led their first tours of Rome and Lourdes. The newspaper *Le Pèlerin* with its religious illustrations often depicting medieval figures or scenes was a popular Catholic alternative to the secular *L'Illustration* or *Le Monde illustré*.[107]

As stated earlier, *Vexilla regis* was a well-known hymn from the Latin church. The hymnologist Neale was not alone in his opinion. It later appeared in Charles Nott's *The Seven Great Hymns of the Mediaeval Church* in 1902.[108] The hymn was also used by composers, including Franz Liszt in his two piano solos *Vexilla Regis Prodeunt* (1864) and *Via Crucis* (1879). And Gounod used the hymn in his oratorio *La Rédemption* and in his motet *Vexilla regis* (SATB, organ).

A comparison between the *Vexilla regis* of *Jeanne d'Arc* and the *Vexilla regis* of *La Rédemption* supports the use of the hymn to evoke the Middle Ages in the melodrama.

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[106] Ibid, 145. Translation based on that by Thérèse Hurley. Original French from an article by Father A. Tilloy in the inaugural issue of *Le Pèlerin* (July 12, 1873), pp. 3–8. "La France assiste depuis un an à un spectacle des plus consolants pour les âmes chrétiennes. Il s'est trouvé qu'après les plus grands désastres dont notre pays ait jamais été éprouvé, une même pensée est sortie tout à coup du sein de la nation. La France catholique, ramenée à la penitence par le malheur, s'est tournée spontanément vers Celle que les chrétiens invoquent sous le nom de la *Mère de miséricorde* et de *Refuge des pécheurs* […] Jamais, depuis le temps des croisades et de Jeanne d'Arc, on ne vit une telle manifestation, et une manifestation aussi éclatante, aussi courageuse de la foi chrétienne."

[107] Ibid., 146.

[108] Charles C. Nott, ed. *The Seven Great Hymn of the Mediaeval Church* (New York: Edwin S. Gorham, 1902).

In *Jeanne d'Arc*, the text consists of the first verse sung in Latin and the music is written primarily in half notes, recalling the musical style of Gregorian chant. Moreover, Gounod maintains the mode of the chant by not raising the seventh degree. (**See Example 3.7.** System 4/Measure 3, System 5/Measure 3, Final System/Measure 2) The hymn is also performed *a capella* and sung by a chorus in unison at the octave. Barbier did not specify this particular chant in his 1869 play or in his 1873 libretto, but he did state that while Charles VII is conversing with Agnès Sorel, Madame de Thouars, and La Hire, "One hears a religious chant outside."[109] The scene unfolds as follows:

| | |
|---|---|
| LE ROI | THE KING |
| Écoute! … on promène la croix<br>Par la ville, en priant Dieu pour le sang des rois! | Listen! ... they process with the cross<br>Through the city, praying to God for the blood of kings! |
| (*De Thouars, Agnès, et La Hire remontent vers la fenêtre, à gauche.*<br>*Agnès s'agenouille; de Thouars s'incline;*<br>*La Hire, derrière eux et les bras croisés. Regarde passer la procession. – Le roi, seul sur le devant de la scène et les mains jointes, reprend à demi-voix*:) | (*De Thouars, Agnès, and La Hire go back to the window to the left.*<br>*Agnès kneels, Thouars bows;*<br>*La Hire, behind them, arms crossed. He watches the procession. – The king, alone at the front of the stage with clasped hands, resumes in a low voice*:) |
| Sire Dieu! De mon front détourne ta colère!<br>Seul tu lis dans mon coeur! que ta grace l'éclaire! | Lord God! Turn your anger away from my brow!<br>Only you read into my heart! May your grace enlighten it! |
| Si je ne suis pas l'héritier légitime,<br>Si mon trône est le fruit du parjure et du crime,<br>Sire Dieu, qu'il te plaise, en ta grande bonté,<br>Me conserver la vie avec la liberté! … | If I am not the rightful heir,<br>If my throne is the result of perjury and crime,<br>Lord God, may it please you, in your great goodness, to preserve my life with liberty! |
| (*Le chant religieux se perd dans l'éloignement – Agnès se relève – Loys parait à la porte du fond*.) | (*The religious chant gets lost in the distance – Agnès rises – Loys appears at the back door*.) |

Although Barbier may not have specified *Vexilla regis* in his play and libretto, the lines for The King, "Listen! ... they process with the cross through the city, praying to God for the blood of kings!" work well with the text of the hymn:

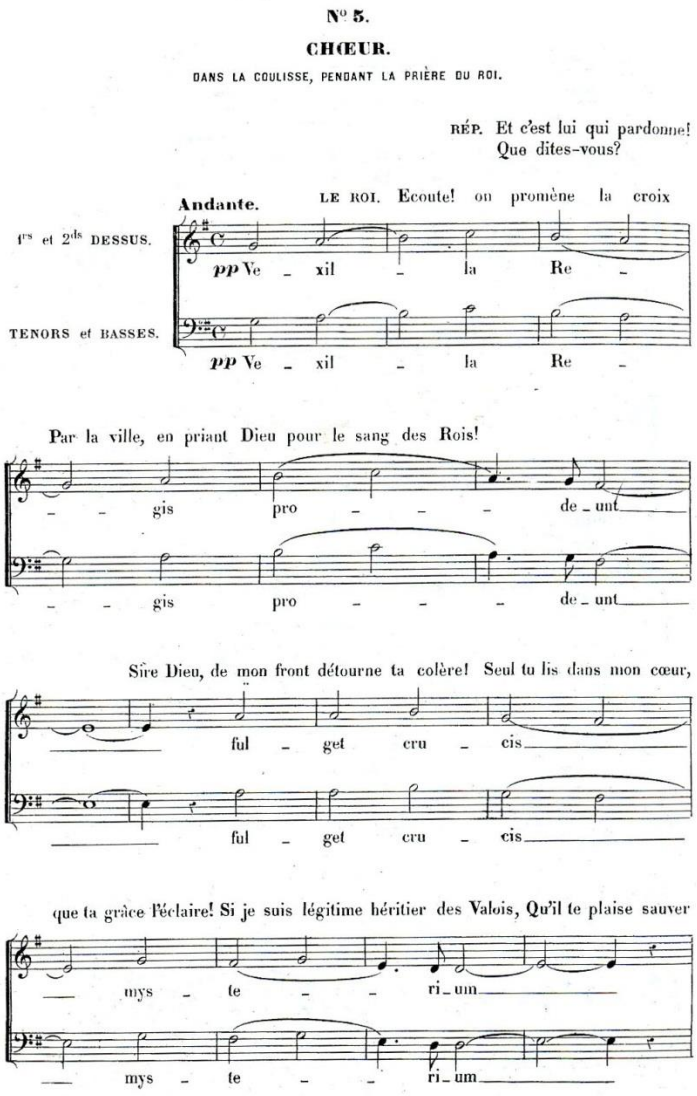
[109] Barbier, *Jeanne d'Arc*, 52. "On entend un chant religieux au dehors."

| | |
|---|---|
| *Vexilla regis prodeunt,*<br>*fulget crucis mysterium,*<br>*quo carne carnis conditor*<br>*suspensus est patibulo.* | The banners of the king appear;<br>The mystery of the cross shines forth;<br>Where the Creator of the flesh, in the flesh,<br>By the cross-bar [of the crucifying cross] is hung.[110] |

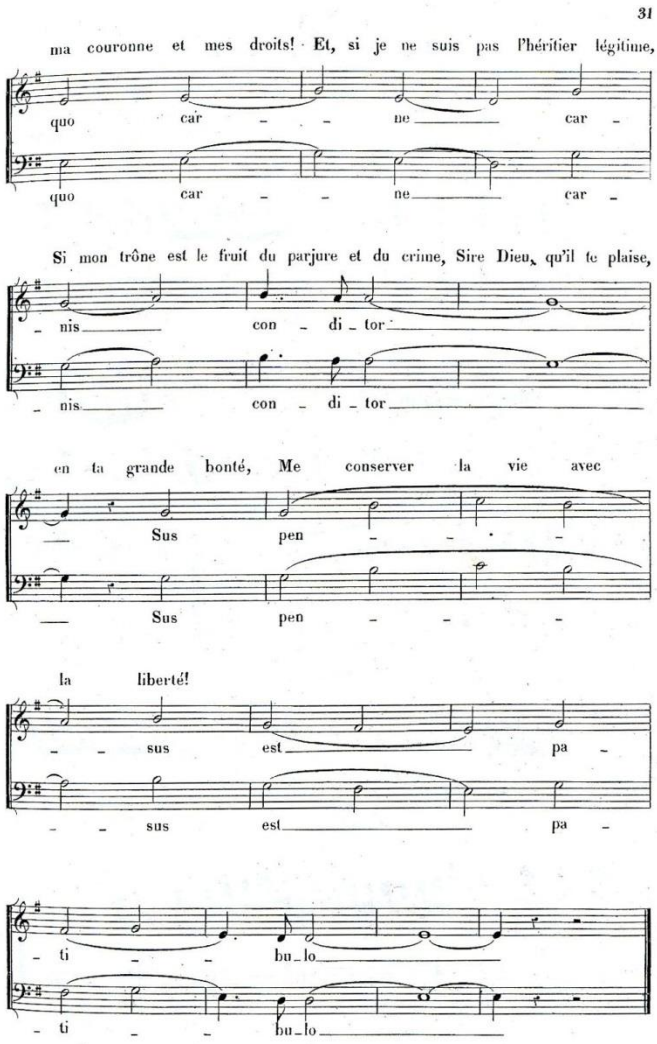
The hymn's text, "The banners of the king appear," could refer to Charles VII. Moreover, the people process with a cross, and the hymn refers directly to the mystery of the cross. According to the 1873 score, the chorus is instructed specifically to sing this first stanza of *Vexilla regis* in the wings during the dauphin's prayer to God that if he is not the rightful heir to the throne, may God at least preserve his life with liberty. (**See Example 3.7.**) During his petition, the chant is heard offstage, creating an overall effect of religious solemnity of the Middle Ages.

[110] Barbier and Gounod, *Jeanne d'Arc*, 30–31.

**Example 3.7.** Barbier-Gounod, *Jeanne d'Arc*, Act III, No. 5, Choeur, pp. 30–31.



**Example 3.7.** continued.




Although Gounod's oratorio *La Rédemption* was not premiered until 1882 at the Birmingham Festival, he had finished the March to Calvary over twelve years earlier while staying in Rome.[111] The libretto was written in French and then translated by

[111] Howard E. Smither, *The History of the Oratorio: The Oratorio in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2000), 587. After consulting Gounod's correspondence during these years, Smither suggests the winter of 1868–69 over the composer's statement that it was the winter of 1867–1868 in the vocal score. See Charles Gounod, *The Redemption: A Sacred*

Reverend John Troutbeck for the Birmingham performances and for publication. The work begins with a Prologue depicting Creation, the Fall, and the Promise of a Redeemer. Three sections, Calvary, From the Resurrection to the Ascension, and The Pentecost complete the composition. The March to Calvary begins with an instrumental march, followed by the lamentation of the women set to the melody of the hymn *Vexilla regis*. (**Example 3.8.**) After a return to the march and a brief passage during which Jesus tells the women not to weep for him, but instead to weep for themselves and for their children, the hymn melody closes the section. In this final statement, the hymn setting and the instrumental march merge together to symbolize in Gounod's words, "the continuous union of the themes signifying the duration of both persecution and compassion throughout the ages of the world."[112] (**Example 3.9.**)

Unlike the use of *Vexilla regis* in *Jeanne d'Arc*, the setting of the hymn for the March to Calvary is in the vernacular and is accompanied by orchestra and organ. The hymn melody is used as a *cantus firmus* situated above the accompaniment in whole notes. Although the vocal line maintains a lowered seventh as in the *Jeanne d'Arc* version, the accompaniment occasionally uses a raised seventh degree. The overall result is a vocal line which maintains its modal integrity, but an accompaniment that remains tonal. In short, the *Vexilla regis* in *Jeanne d'Arc* attempts to be a traditional medieval plainchant in order to convey a religious procession. The *Vexilla regis* in *La Rédemption* is an adaptation and embellishment of this hymn. A similar comparison can be found to

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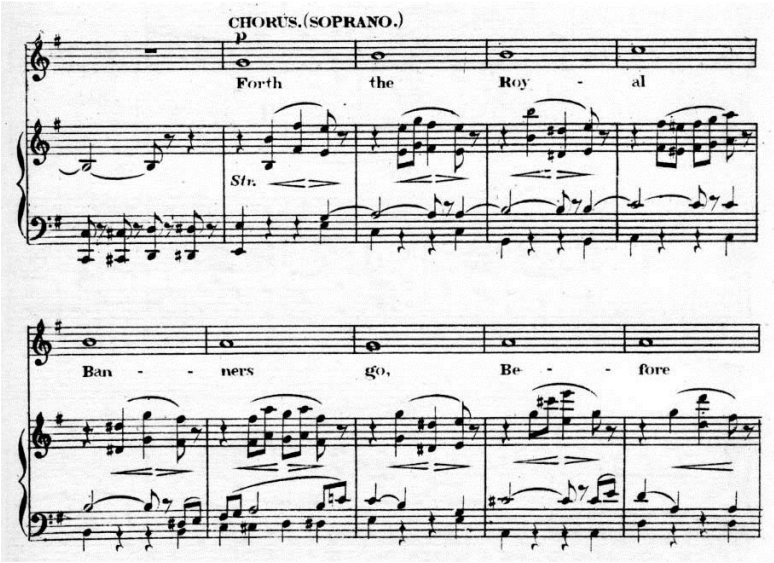
*Trilogy*, trans. Rev. J Troutbeck (New York: White Smith and Company, [n.d.]). Reprint from Novello's publication.

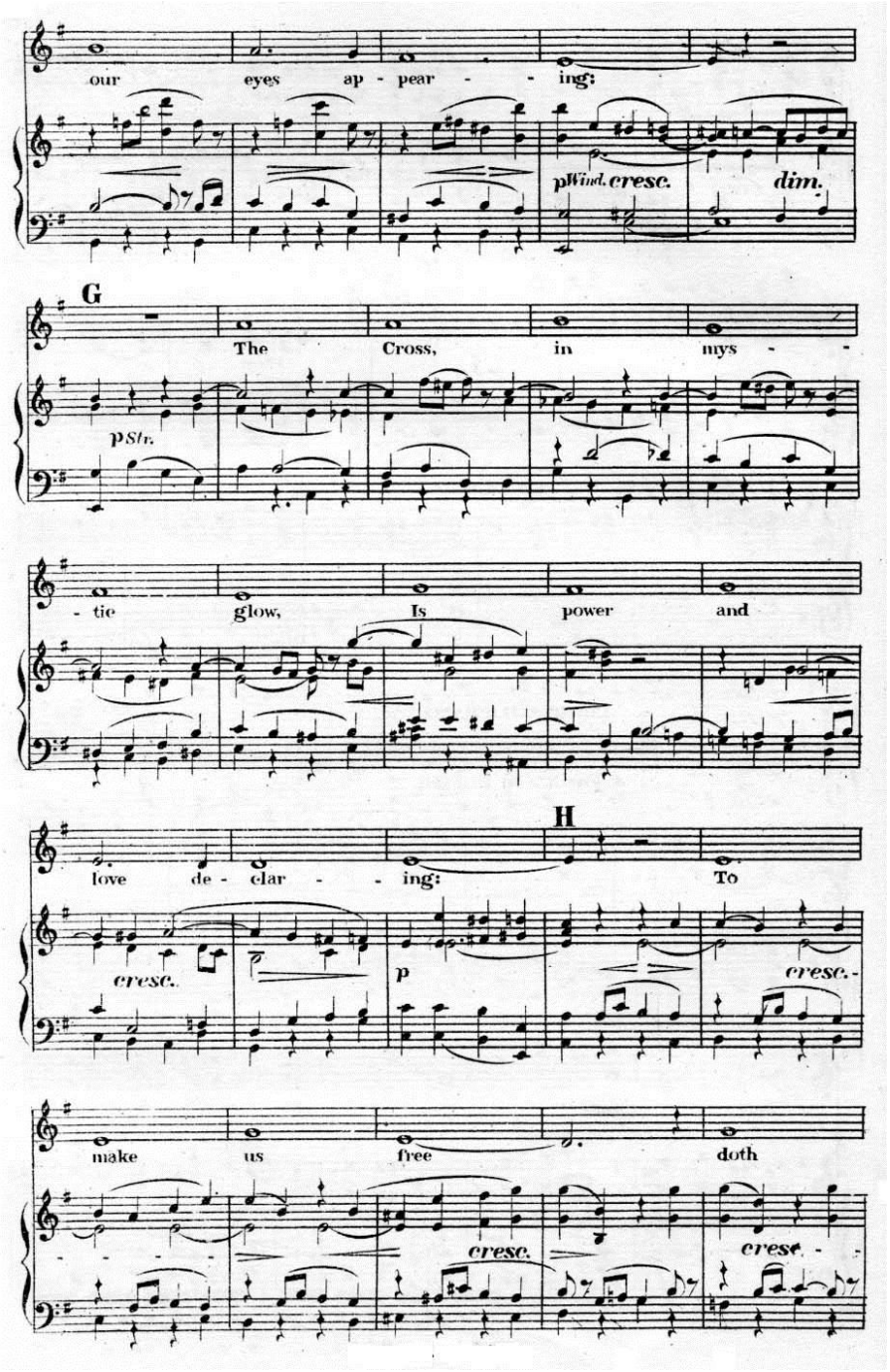
[112] Gounod, *The Redemption*, vi.

what French organists were being prescribed to do with Gregorian chants—using the chant melody as a *cantus firmus* and improvising on it.

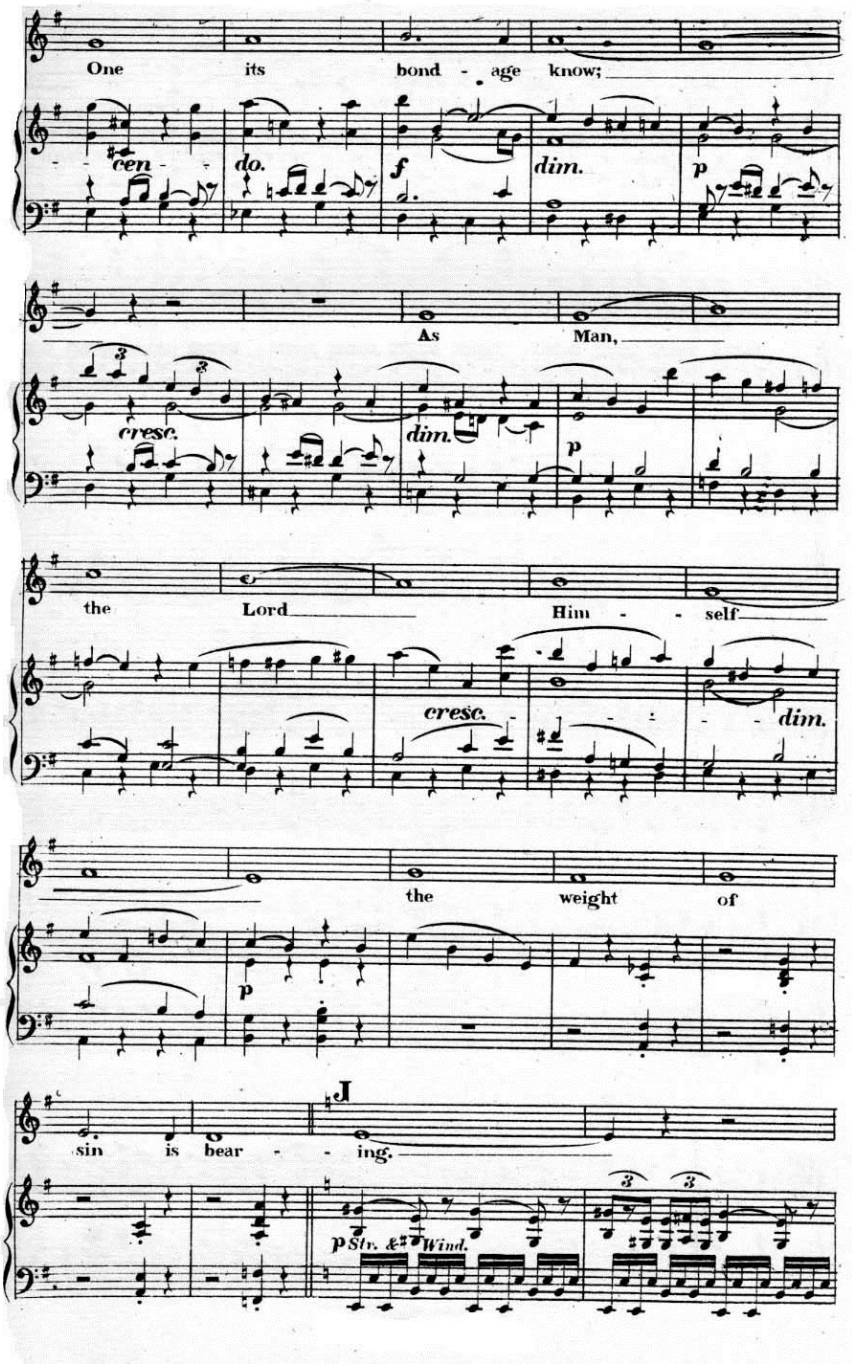
**Example 3.8.** Gounod, *The Redemption*, March to Calvary, Soprano only, pp. 17–19.



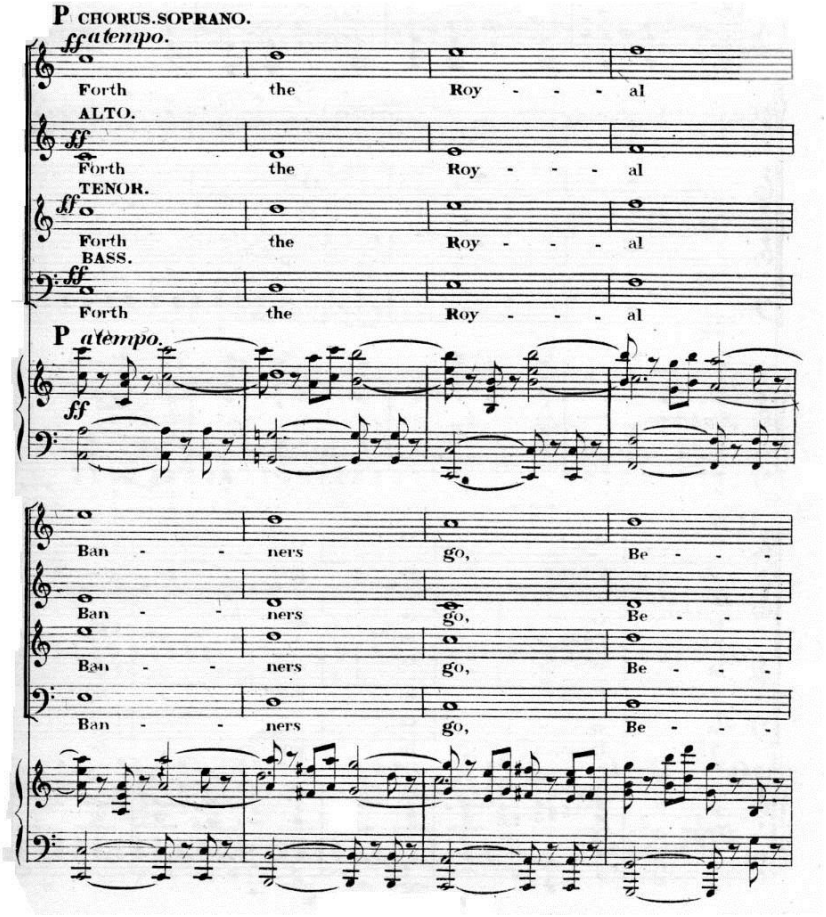
**Example 3.8.** continued.



**Example 3.8.** continued.



**Example 3.9.** Gounod, *The Redemption*, The March to Calvary, Full Chorus, p. 27.




Nothing in the surviving records suggests that *Vexilla regis* was necessarily sung in Joan's presence. However, the chant is a logical choice as a processional antiphon for this scene in Gounod's melodrama. By including *Vexilla regis*, Gounod appeals to the critics' wish for a more historically-informed presentation of the Middle Ages on stage. The use of a processional antiphon would also recall the resurgence of Catholic pilgrimages after the Franco-Prussian War.

## Joan of Arc's Music

### *Veni Creator Spiritus*

The Pentecost hymn *Veni Creator Spiritus* was considered one of the seven great hymns of the Church in the nineteenth century, but its medieval history, its connection to the Hundred Years War, and specifically its association to Joan of Arc's life, makes it especially pertinent to this study.[113] Anne Walters Robertson notes that the hymn has connections to both the English and the French.[114] In England, the hymn can be traced back to an eleventh-century Anglo-Saxon hymnal.[115] Later the hymn appeared in a book of thirteenth-century polyphony, two fourteenth-century poems, and even the coronation ceremony starting in the fourteenth century. Moreover, John Dunstaple set the hymn as an isorhythmic motet. On the French side, the hymn was included in the records of the Synod of Reims in 1049, was documented in a fourteenth-century psalter/hymnal, and was paraphrased by Machaut in his Motet 21.[116] In fact, Robertson points out how the fifth verse of *Veni Creator Spiritus* is especially relevant to Machaut's concern over the English invaders during the Hundred Years' War:

| | |
|---|---|
| Hostem repellas longius | May You repel the enemy from afar |
| Pacemque dones protinus; | And give you peace constantly; |
| Ductore sic te praevio | With You as leader along the way |
| Vitemus omne noxium. | May we escape all harm.[117] |

[113] Nott, *The Seven Great Hymns*, 134–137. Nott attributes the text to Charlemagne.

[114] Anne Walters Robertson, *Guillaume de Machaut and Reims* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 201.

[115] Inge B. MilFull, *The Hymns of the Anglo-Saxon Church: A Study and Edition of the 'Durham Hymnal'* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 274.

[116] Robertson, *Guillaume de Machaut*, 201.

[117] Ibid.

However, what sets this hymn apart from others is that testimony exists of its being sung by Joan of Arc and her soldiers before they went into battle at Orléans. This is the pertinent passage in the rehabilitation trial records, quoting her confessor Jean Pasquerel:

> When Joan departed from Blois to go to Orléans she had all the priests assembled around this standard, and the priests marched in front of the army. When they had assembled they left in the Sologne direction, singing the *Veni Creator Spiritus* and many other anthems, and they camped that night in the fields and did the same on the night following.[118]

This portion of Joan's story lends itself well to the musical theater, and in both works, the hymn is sung immediately before Jeanne leads the soldiers into battle at Orléans.

The similarities between Barbier-Gounod's and Mermet's *Veni Creator Spiritus* are very few—both are sung in French and include the phrase "*Viens, Veni Creator!*"[119] However, the differences are many and become apparent when reading reviews of the performances.

Some of Mermet's critics deemed his version of *Veni Creator* a success. For example, Henri Heugel from *Le Ménestrel* opined, "The finale of *Veni Creator*, by Mademoiselle Krauss, with choir, is the centerpiece of the third act."[120] And the critic from *La Revue des deux mondes* expressed his admiration, "As for the *Veni Creator*, sung first by Jeanne, then taken to plainchant by the soldiers and priests, in my opinion is the

[118] Régine Pernoud, *The Retrial of Joan of Arc*, trans. J. M. Cohen (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1955), 163.

[119] See full texts and translations of Barbier-Gounod's and Mermet's versions of *Veni Creator Spiritus* in appendix.

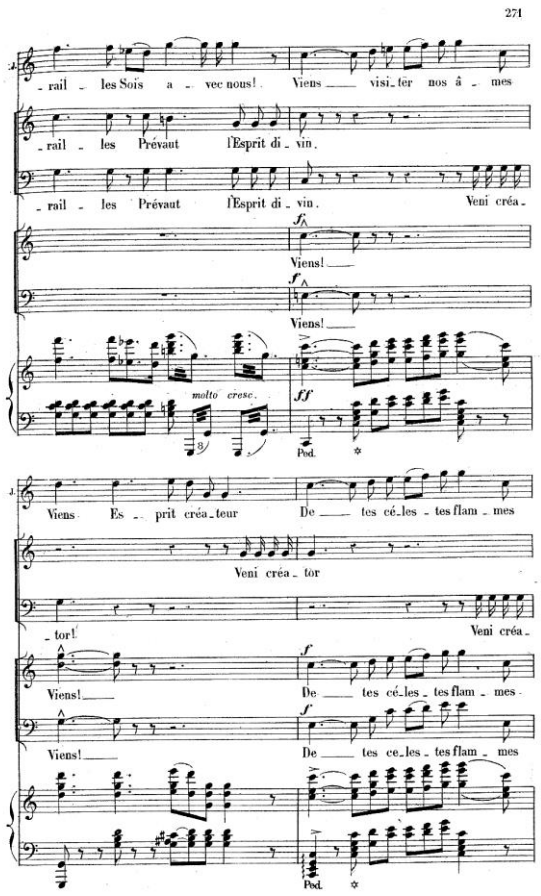
[120] H. Moreno (Henri Heugel), "Jeanne d'Arc," *Le Ménestrel*, April 9, 1876. "Le finale de *Veni Creator*, par Mademoiselle Krauss, avec choeur, est la pièce de résistance de ce troisième acte."

high point of the work, and what I would call the crowning of the edifice."[121] From the latter review, we not only find praise of Mermet's achievement, but also a description of how the hymn was performed: sung first by Jeanne and then taken to plainchant by the soldiers and priests.

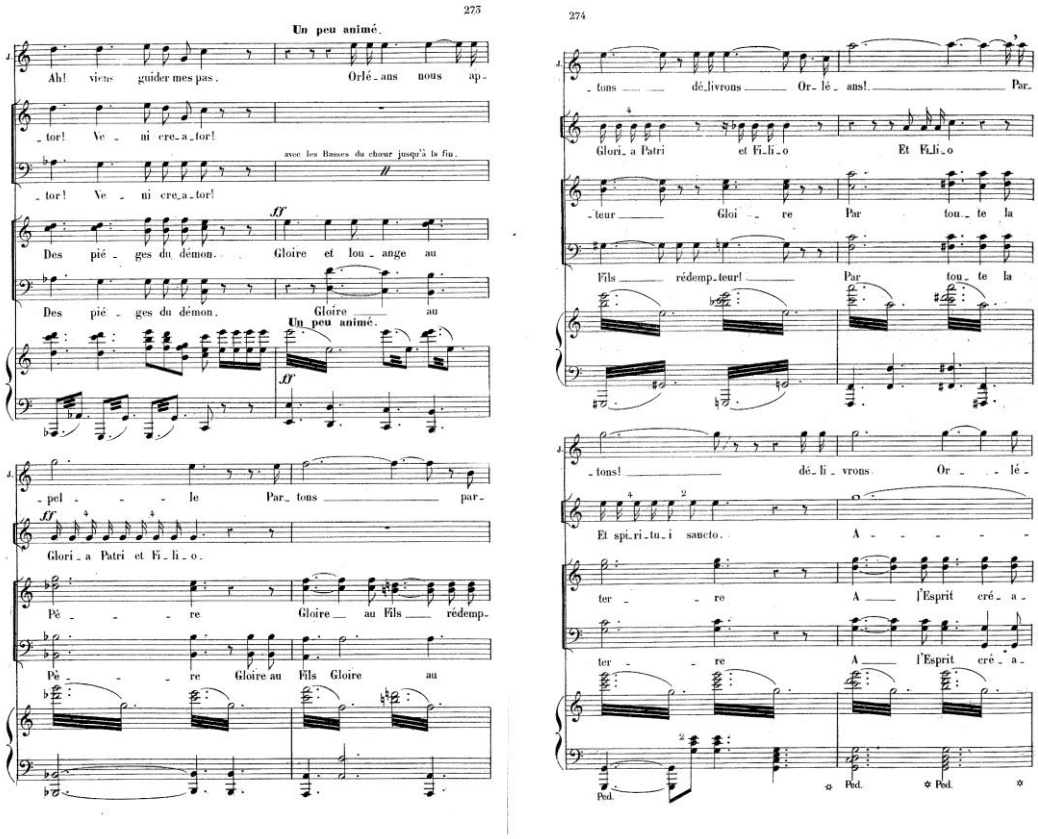
Turning to the score to see how this is achieved, one notices immediately that Mermet's version of the hymn is in French. But when the first two stanzas of the hymn are repeated, the soldiers and priests interject with the Latin "Veni, Creator!" using a reciting tone. (**Example 3.10.**) After this exclamation is repeated eight times, the hymn concludes with the "Gloria Patri" ("Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit. Amen.") This doxology in Latin is found in the tenor voice, while the remaining men's voices sing a French translation. At this time, Jeanne's soprano voice rises above the soldiers and priests, asking the Holy Spirit to guide her steps and deliver Orléans. (**Example 3.11.**)

[121] "Jeanne d'Arc," *La Revue des deux mondes*, May 1, 1876. "Quant au *Veni Creator*, chanté d'abord par Jeanne, puis repris à pleine voix par les soldats et les prêtres, c'est à mon sens le morceau capital de l'oeuvre, et ce que j'appellerais le couronnement de l'édifice."

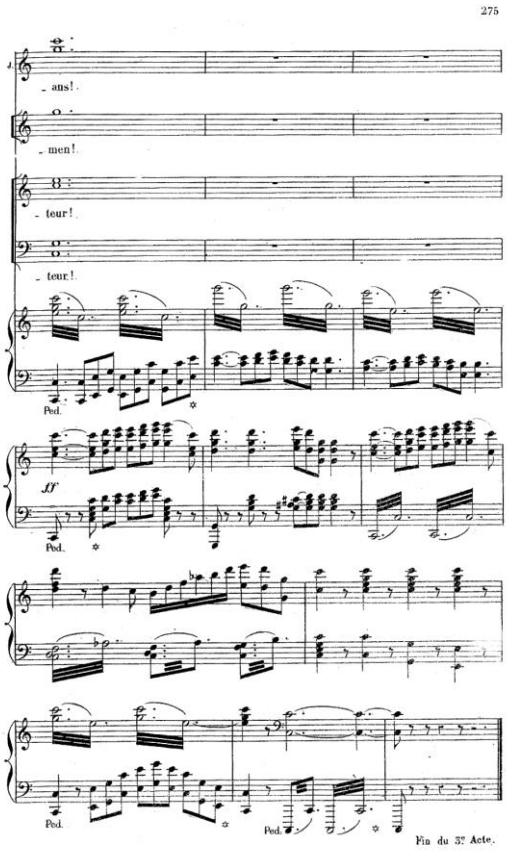
**Example 3.10.** Mermet, *Jeanne d'Arc*, Act III, No. 22, Final, p. 271.



**Example 3.11.** Mermet, *Jeanne d'Arc*, Act III, No. 22, Final, Ending, pp. 273–275.



**Example 3.11.** continued.




It would seem that Gounod also would include Latin in his version of the hymn, but he does not. The hymn remains in French throughout. Weber's review of Barbier-Gounod's version of *Veni Creator* describes how the hymn was sung:

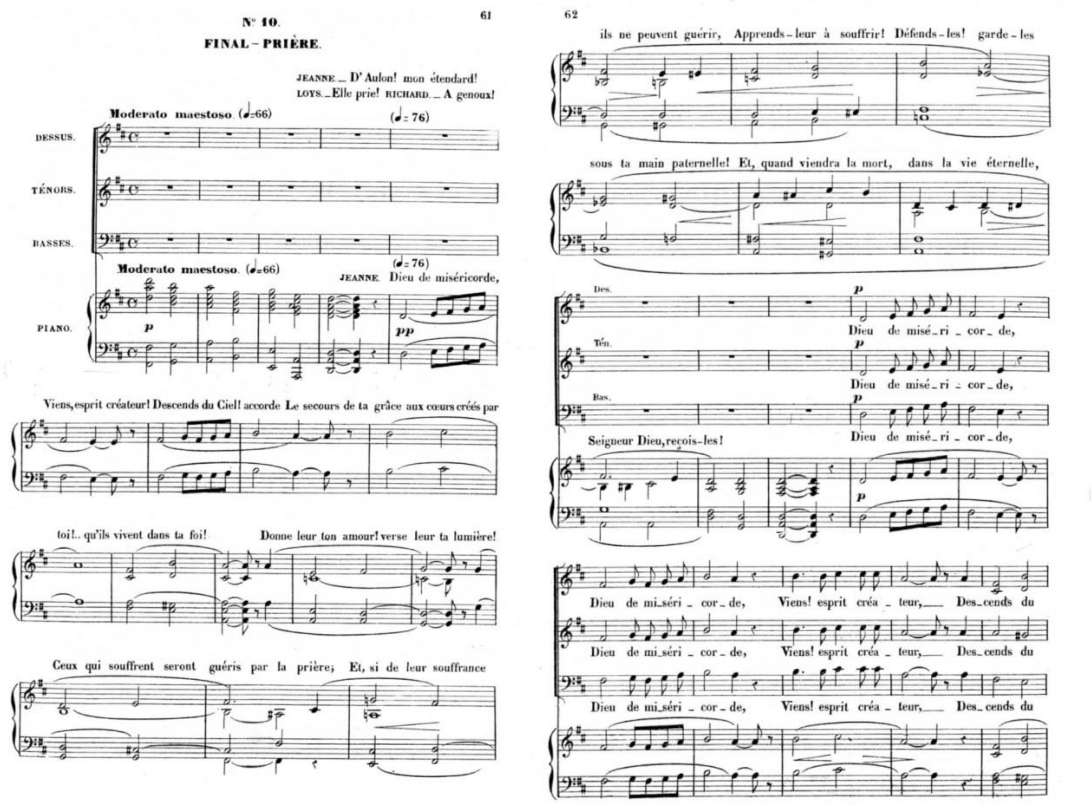
> Before going to attack the English, Jeanne, along with the soldiers, starts praying. She says her prayer, without singing, over the prelude of the chorus; then the soldiers imitate her in song.[122]

In the melodrama, the character of Jeanne does not sing, which limits her participation in this hymn. Instead, the orchestra plays softly underneath her petition to the Holy Spirit.

(**Example 3.12.**)

[122] Johannes Weber, *Le Temps*, November 18, 1873. "Avant d'aller attaquer les Anglais, Jeanne avec les soldats se met en prière; elle dit son oraison, sans chanter, sur le prélude du chœur; puis les soldats l'imitent en chantant."

**Example 3.12.** Barbier-Gounod, Act III, No 10, Final – Prière, pp. 61–62.




As seen in the excerpt above, Barbier-Gounod's version opens with a simple harmonic progression in D major in the style of a religious hymn as played on an organ. As Jeanne begins to pray, Gounod's hymn melody begins, first at the octave and then in four-part harmony. After the prayer, the soldiers begin to sing Jeanne's prayer. The overall effect of this hymn on the audience was underwhelming as reported by Weber:

> Here some listeners would have wished for a brilliant piece in the style of the finale of the third act of *Le Prophète*. The comparison is ill-conceived, first because this finale, when closely examined, is not one of Meyerbeer's best inspirations, and then because it wasn't Mr. Gounod's role to correct Mr. Barbier's piece. Joan of Arc's power and boldness are rooted in her great piety. Psychologically and historically, this point of view does not seem correct to me, but it is Mr. Barbier's. What can be said with fairness is that instead of a soft and smooth chorus, we would have preferred accents full of fervor and grandeur, of

> the kind that people who have a strong hope to prevail out of divine protection in an undertaking they had initially not wanted to attempt, out of human prudence, must utter.[123]

According to Weber, some listeners would have preferred a more rousing, inspirational chorus to lead the soldiers into battle. That being said, the critic defended Gounod's music. The composer, of course, was writing music for Barbier's text—the prayer can be found at the end of Act III in his original 1869 play. Mermet, on the other hand, was both librettist and composer for his opera, allowing him more freedom than Gounod.

Both these versions of *Veni Creator Spiritus* reference the Latin hymn that had been recorded as sung by Joan and her fellow soldiers before they raised the siege at Orléans. However, neither version sets the hymn as plainchant. Mermet does attempt to give his version a medieval quality by inserting "*Veni Creator!*" and the *Gloria Patri* doxology using a reciting tone. Gounod, perhaps restricted by Barbier's control as Weber suggested, did not include any Latin text in this hymn. He would, however, include the Latin chant *Orate pro ea* during the final scene of the melodrama.

### *Orate pro ea*

The intercession *Orate pro ea* ("Pray for her") is part of the Litany of the Saints customarily recited when a soul is departing and was documented having been sung

[123] Ibid., " Quelques auditeurs auraient voulu ici un morceau brillant dans le genre du finale du troisième acte du Prophète. La comparaison est mal choisie, d'abord parce que ce finale, examiné de près, n'est pas une des meilleures inspirations de Meyerbeer, ensuite parce que M. Gounod n'avait pas à corriger la pièce de M. Barbier. Jeanne d'Arc n'a de puissance et d'audace qu'à force de dévotion psychologiquement et historiquement, ce point de vue ne me semble pas exact, mais c'est celui de M. Barbier. Ce qu'on peut dire avec justice, c'est qu'à la place d'un chœur doux et onctueux, on aurait désiré des accents pleins de ferveur et de grandeur, comme, doivent en proférer des gens ayant le ferme espoir de triompher par la protection divine dans une entreprise que, par prudence humaine, ils n'avaient d'abord pas voulu tenter."

during Joan's final hours in Rouen. According to the rehabilitation trial records and recounted in Michelet's account, Maître Jean de Lenozolles, Priest of the Order of Saint Pierre Celestin, was in Rouen during Joan's trial and execution. In his testimony, he explained his presence in Rouen and why his master was distraught at the outcome of the trial:

> At the time when Jeanne was at Rouen, I was in the service of Maitre Guillaume Erard, with whom I came from Burgundy. After we had arrived, I heard talk of this Trial; but of what was done therein I know nothing, for I left Rouen and went to Caen, and stayed there until the feast of Pentecost. At this feast I returned to Rouen to meet my master, who told me that he had a heavy task-to preach a sermon for this Jeanne, which much displeased him. He said he would he were in Flanders: this business disturbed him much.

Maître Jean continued with a description of the procession of the Holy Eucharist to Joan:

> I saw Jeanne at the second sermon; and in the morning before the sermon I saw the Body of Christ carried to the said Jeanne with much solemnity, and the singing of Litanies and intercession "Orate pro ea," and with a great multitude of candles; but who decided or ordered this, I know not. I was not present at the reception, but I afterwards heard it said that she received it with great devotion and abundance of tears.[124]

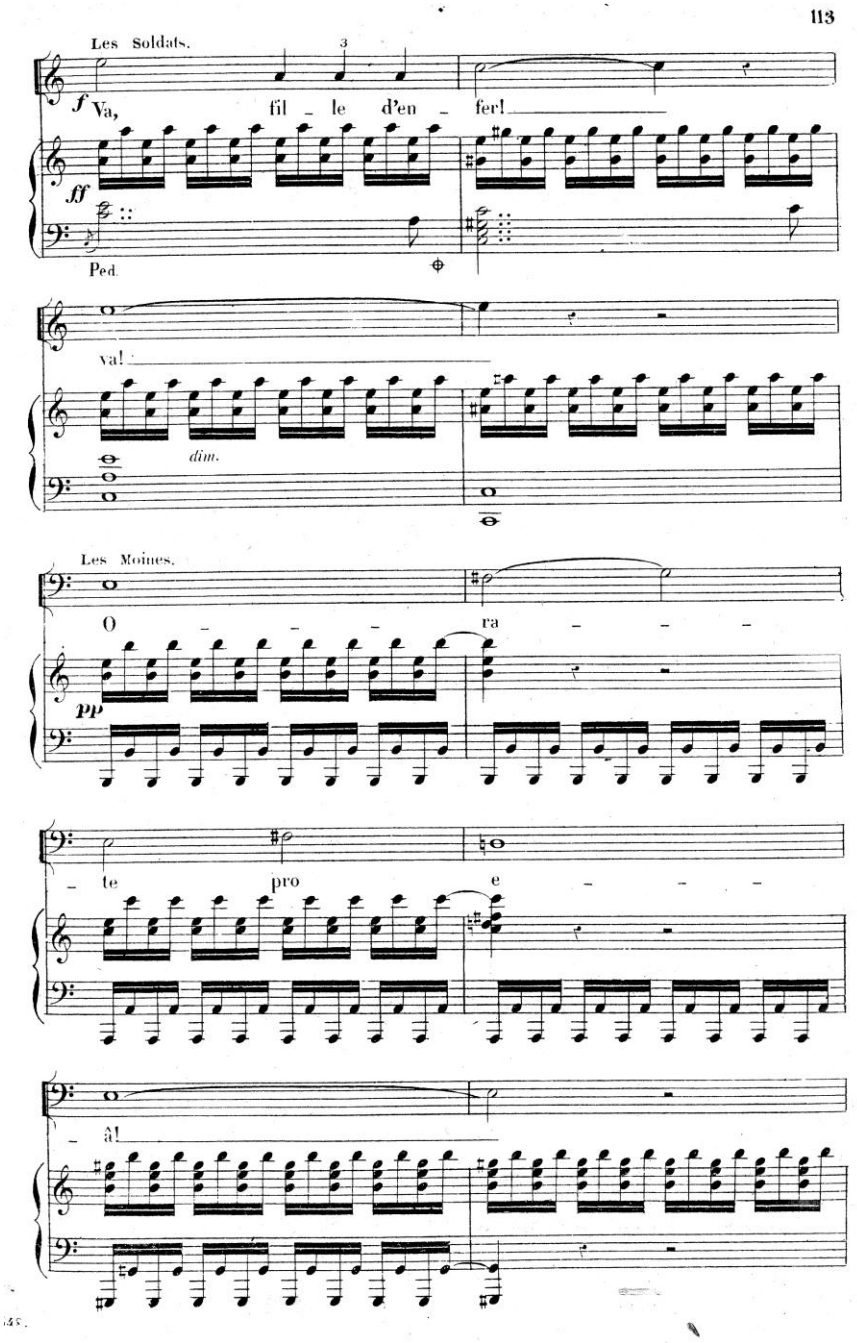
According to Maître Jean, Joan, despite her excommunication from the Church, was allowed to receive the sacrament of Holy Communion for the last time. His recollection of the singing of *Orate pro ea* supports Gounod's use of the chant at the end of his melodrama.

The *Orate pro ea* is sung during the Marche Funèbre, which opens the second tableau of Act V. After the announcement of Joan's arrival, the clarinet and bassoon play a simple nine-measure melody at the octave in C minor and Joan appears on stage making her way to the scaffold. This melody leads into the monks' chant of "Orate pro

[124] T. Douglas Murray, trans., *The Trial of Nullification or Rehabilitation*, (New York: McClure, Phillips and Co.), 290–291.

ea," which maintains a lowered seventh. (**See Example 3.13.** System 4/Measure 2) As in *Vexilla regis*, Gounod leaves the modal character of the chant intact. The monks recite the chant four times over the course of the procession on stage. After the march ends, the monks remain silent until Joan's death scene, during which they recite one more "Orate pro ea" immediately before her reception into heaven. At this point in the score, the key has moved to what at first seems to be E minor, but ends on an E major chord. (**See Example 3.13.** System 5/Measure 2) With that raising of the chant key up a major third from C minor to E major, Gounod uses modulation to indicate transcendence and a connection with the heavens, a musical association made when the Voices first visit Joan in Act I. Although Gounod ends the drama on E major, he keeps the final recitation of *Orate pro ea* with a lowered seventh degree. As in the chant *Vexilla regis*, the music for *Orate pro ea* consists of long note values, simulating chant. Gounod's seven-note modal phrase adequately serves the purpose of evoking an earlier time. And even though the other characters sing in a major key with a raised seventh, the monks remain in their modal sphere.

**Example 3.13.** Barbier-Gounod, *Jeanne d'Arc*, Act V, No. 16, Final, p. 113.




Barbier did not include monks reciting "Orate pro ea" in his 1869 play, so it would seem that Gounod may have exercised some influence on this part of the melodrama. The fact that this chant was believed to have been sung before Joan's death in 1431 would have helped to justify its use. In any case, this use of plainchant in the

final scene was noticed by the critics. Ernest Reyer from *Journal des débats*, discussed Gounod's masterful orchestration for this final scene in his review, but he also included a short statement about the chant:

> We generally found that the funeral march of *Jeanne d'Arc* sounded like that of *La Juive*. There is indeed a certain similarity between the first measures of one and the other as performed by bassoons and clarinets in octave, but that's all, and that's not much. A few notes of plainchant add to the solemnity and melancholy of this piece, the instrumentation of which is most remarkable. Moreover, we know with what a steady hand, with what variety of nuances, and with what profound mastering of combinations Mr. Gounod handles the orchestra.[125]

Reyer mentioned the mood that the plainchant brought to the scene, but Johannes Weber from *Le Temps* described how the monks' chant fit into the rest of the funeral march. He noted a "vague tonality of plainchant," which most likely refers to the lowered seventh used in the chant:

> From the moment when Jeanne's torment was staged, it was essential, without prolonging it more than was necessary, and despite its horrible and infamous character, to draw from it a terrifying effect, which made it the climax of the drama. Such appears to have been Mr. Gounod's intention. Following a short scene announcing Jeanne's arrival, the funeral march begins, of which the main components are as follows: a pattern in the vague tonality of plainchant (kindly exempt me from providing a more precise scientific description); a phrase in the same key, recited in unison by the monks (this being the only vocal part); a motive in E-flat major; and the melody of the female saints, which has already been reprised in the coronation march.[126]

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[125] Ernest Reyer, *Journal des débats*, November 14, 1873. "On a trouvé généralement que la marche funèbre de *Jeanne d'Arc* ressemblait à celle de *La Juive*. Il y a en effet quelque analogie entre les premières mesures de l'une et de l'autre exécutées par des bassons et des clarinettes à l'octave, mais c'est tout, et c'est peu. Quelques notes de plain-chant ajoutent au caractère solennel et lugubre de ce morceau, dont l'instrumentation est des plus remarquables. On sait d'ailleurs avec quelle sûreté de main, avec quelles variétés de nuances, avec quelle science profonde des combinaisons M. Gounod manie l'orchestre."

[126] Johannes Weber, *Le Temps*, November 18, 1873. "Du moment où l'on mettait en scène le supplice de Jeanne, malgré son caractère horrible et infâme, il fallait, sans le prolonger plus qu'il n'est nécessaire, en tirer un effet terrifiant qui en fit le point culminant du drame. Telle paraît avoir été la pensée de M. Gounod. Après une courte scène pour annoncer l'arrivée de Jeanne, commence la marche funèbre dont voici les principaux éléments: un motif dans la tonalité vague du plain-chant (on me dispensera de donner une indication scientifique plus précise), une phrase dans la même tonalité, dite à l'unisson par les moines (c'est

Clearly, from Gounod's setting of Barbier's *Veni Creator Spiritus* as well as of his setting of *Orate pro ea* and even *Vexilla regis,* it would appear that he approached sacred music in Latin differently than sacred music in the vernacular. In *Jeanne d'Arc*, the Latin-texted chants are always modal, but the vernacular, paraphrased hymn *Veni Creator Spiritus* is tonal with instrumental accompaniment. This may reflect Gounod's own experience accompanying choir.

Gounod had also been a boy soprano under the music director Hippolyte Monpou, who had studied at Alexandre-Étienne Choron's music school, the *Institution royale de musique classique et religieuse,* mentioned earlier in this chapter for its teaching of early music.[127] Choron had advocated for the revival of Gregorian chant as early as 1811 when he wrote his *Considérations sur la necessité de rétablir le chant de l'Eglise de Rome dans toutes les églises de l'Empire français*.[128] The school was later revived and renamed the *Ecole de Musique Religieuse Classique* by Louis Niedermeyer, who published a manual on how to accompany chant in 1857 with a second edition in 1878.[129] His manual deserves to be mentioned here, since it advocates the need to maintain the modal quality of chant when accompanying on the organ. This idea was new at the middle of the century, but soon took hold and became widely accepted in France by the *fin de siècle*.

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la seule partie vocale), un motif en mi bémol majeur, et la mélodie des saintes, qui a été reprise déjà dans la marche du sacre."

[127] Gounod, *Memoirs*, 38. Gounod blames Monpou's imprudence for the loss of his voice.

[128] Peter Hiley, *Western Plainchant: A Handbook* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993), 622.

[129] Louis Niedermeyer and Joseph d'Ortigue, *Traité théorique et pratique de l'accompagnement du plain-chant* (Paris, E. Repos, 1857).

## Conclusion

Without the increase of interest in history, particularly medieval history, during the nineteenth century, Barbier-Gounod's melodrama and Mermet's opera would most likely never have been produced. Yet, the French public's fervor, especially after the Franco-Prussian War, to raise patriotic spirit by celebrating the country's rich medieval history sparked an interest in presenting Joan's life on the stage. The two stage works under discussion use historical characters and historical music as well as music believed to have been sung in Joan's presence to evoke the French Middle Ages.

The publication of histories about Joan informed the French public and critics of certain details of her life as found in historical documents, such as her trial records. These details informed the public, so that anachronistically placing King René and Agnès Sorel was not acceptable. The incorporation of Charles, duc d'Orléans and his ballade, however, adheres to Joan's time period—he was imprisoned in England, during which time he wrote Ballade 40. One type of music that both composers used was a minuet during the court scene in Chinon. Indeed, the genre seems anachronistic, but as the critic Reyer observed, the dance recalled the monarchy and an earlier time. Its use as processional music for the court recalled the earlier regime.

In general, it appears that Mermet relies primarily on text to recall an imagined Middle Ages of minstrels, lyres, King René, and Agnès Sorel. And on the other hand, Gounod includes authentic fifteenth-century text and plainchant to create Joan's medieval world on the stage. Mermet does include Latin interjections of "Veni Creator" and "Gloria patri" during his *Veni Creator Spiritus*. He does not attempt to follow the

traditional *Veni Creator Spiritus* hymn melody when doing this, but instead uses a reciting tone. In doing so, Mermet seems to be tipping his hat to historical knowledge at that time—that is the understanding that Joan and her troops sang *Veni Creator Spiritus* before raising the siege at Orléans.

Why did Gounod not set *Veni Creator Spiritus* as plainchant? He had already worked the processional *Vexilla regis* into Act II and *Orate pro ea*—the other chant believed to have been sung during Joan's life—into the final execution scene. In this case, we can recall the critic Johannes Weber's observation that Gounod, as incidental music composer, had the main role of setting Barbier's text to music. To paraphrase Weber: Because Barbier had already arranged the text for that scene with a pious prayer invoking the Holy Spirit, Gounod did not have the freedom to make changes.

The effect of Gounod's 'medieval music' was not lost on the critics of the time. His use of plainchant caused the critic Benedict in *Le Figaro* to compare attending Gounod's *Jeanne d'Arc* to attending Vespers:

> Except for a few pieces, the character of the incidental music that Charles Gounod wrote for the drama in verse performed at the Gaîté is essentially religious. Awakening sacred or profane voices around the chaste heroine of Domrémy, the musician derived, as it were, his inspiration from a fixed idea, the idea of the salvation of France which fills up Jeanne's great soul. […] I heard around me those who will not listen and will not allow others to listen say: "But Gounod makes us attend Vespers!" – Yes, indeed, the *French Vespers* of the terrible years 1429, 1430, and 1431.[130]

[130] Benedict, *Le Figaro*, November 11, 1873. "Le caractère de la musique écrite par Charles Gounod sur les marges du drame en vers représenté à la Gaîté, sauf un petit nombre de morceaux, est essentiellement religieux. Eveillant des voix sacrées ou profanes autour de la chaste héroïne de Dom-Rémy, le musicien a fait pivoter en quelque sorte son inspiration sur une idée fixe, l'idée du salut de la France qui remplit la grande âme de Jeanne. […] J'ai entendu dire autour de moi par ceux qui n'écoutent et ne permettent point aux autres d'écouter: ' Mais Gounod nous fait assister aux Vêpres!' – oui aux *Vêpres françaises* des terribles années 1429, 30 et 31..."

In the same issue of *Le Figaro*, literary critic Auguste Vitu compared *Jeanne d'Arc* to a medieval mystery play:

> This set purpose, ordered, for that matter, by the triple alliance of poetry, music and decorative painting, draws Mr. Jules Barbier's work towards a type of composition now quite forgotten. I am referring to the mystery plays that delighted France during the entire Middle Ages and until the reign of Henry III. The exploits of the Maid form the subject of the *Mystère du siège d'Orléans*, which was performed in the very city of Orléans prior to 1440, with expenses paid for by the renowned marshal of Raiz. As early as 1839, Mr. Paul Lacroix had reported the existence, among the manuscripts held at the Vatican, of this venerable manuscript of our ancient literature, published since by Mr. Guessard and Mr. de Certain. Mr. Jules Barbier must have drawn inspiration from it, in addition to an encounter.[131]

From these two reviews, we can discern that Barbier-Gounod's work recalled the Middle Ages, but more than that, we can see that the work specifically highlighted French associations to medieval history. The critics compared the work to "French Vespers" and medieval mysteries that were "the delight of France."

Indeed, Charles, duc d'Orléans' "Ballade of the Prisoner," Latin hymn *Vexilla regis*, *Veni Creator Spiritus*, and *Orate pro ea*—all of these relate in one way or another to French history. Their use in these works indicates a move toward a historically-informed presentation of Joan's life on the stage, and it amplifies the feeling of national patriotism that swept the country in the years after the war. Although this chapter focuses on the trend of history and how it affected these stage works, the next chapter will

[131] Auguste Vitu, *Le Figaro*, November 11, 1873. "Ce parti pris, que commandait d'ailleurs la triple alliance de la poésie, de la musique et de la peinture décorative, rapproche l'œuvre de M. Jules Barbier d'un genre de composition aujourd'hui bien oublié, je veux parler des mystères, qui firent les délices de la France pendant tout le moyen âge et jusqu'au règne de Henri III. Les exploits de la Pucelle forment le sujet du *Mystère du siège d'Orléans* qui fut joué à Orléans même, aux frais du fameux maréchal de Raiz, antérieurement à 1440. Dès 1839, M. Paul Lacroix avait signalé l'existence, parmi les manuscrits du Vatican, de ce vénérable manuscrit de notre antique littérature, publié depuis par MM. Guessard et de Certain. M. Jules Barbier a dû s'en inspirer en plus d'une rencontre."

examine how certain legendary characteristics of Joan's life remained in the stage works despite the call for a more scientific study of history.

# CHAPTER IV

## LEGEND: THE FAIRY TREE AND THE VOICES

The life story of Joan of Arc: Was it viewed as a history or as a legend? Or a history *and* a legend? Although some critics desired a more "scientific" approach to the study of Joan of Arc's life and its depiction on the stage, as discussed in the previous chapter, others argued that her life story also fell under the category of legend. Auguste Vitu, the critic from *Le Figaro* wrote of Barbier and Gounod's *Jeanne d'Arc*, "One wonders, reading the life of Joan of Arc, if it is a history or a legend. Do not wonder; it is a legend and it is history."[132] And Ernest Reyer from *Journal des débats* commented, "The history and the legend (it is not very easy to separate them) hold an equal place in the poem," when describing Mermet's opera.[133]

Separating legend from history—that is, adhering to events believed actually to have occurred—seems to be most untenable for composers when depicting Joan's early years in the village of Domrémy.[134] For by the mid-1800s, her association with the Fairy Tree and the Voices was embedded into the story of her childhood. Indeed, the critic Jules LeMaître sums up this Joan of the village well when reminiscing about a dramatic performance (involving a "big white horse [that] went round and round on the track") in

[132] Auguste Vitu, "Jeanne d'Arc," *Le Figaro*, November 11, 1873. "On doute, en lisant la vie de Jeanne d'Arc, si c'est une histoire ou une légende. Ne doutez pas; c'est une légende et c'est de l'histoire."

[133] Ernest Reyer, "Jeanne d'Arc," *Journal des débats*, April 9, 1876. "L'histoire et la légende (il n'est pas très facile de les séparer) tiennent une place égale dans le poëme."

[134] Joan's story on the stage is presented often with five main settings: Domrémy, Chinon, Orléans, Reims, and Rouen.

which he himself participated at the age of three or four years old: "she was first of all, the shepherdess who heard *the Voices beneath the Fairies' Tree*."[135]

In this chapter, I will examine the presentation of the Fairy Tree and of the Voices in Barbier-Gounod's melodrama and in Mermet's opera. By doing so, I will identify ways in which the figure of Joan of Arc was in a state of transition in the 1870s. Although the Fairy Tree and the Voices had become essential parts of the Domrémy scene on stage by that time, the importance and use of these two elements underwent a change from the earlier stage productions by Schiller and Verdi. In the two works under investigation, I notice a trend to downplay the mysterious and darker side of the Fairy Tree and the Voices. In the melodrama, the Fairy Tree is simply not essential to the storyline, and in the opera, the opening scene is centered on the young girls of Domrémy singing around the tree. Likewise, the fact that Joan hears voices does not imply that she is a madwoman or a witch as earlier dramas had done. In the melodrama, the Voices are a beatific vision of Saint Margaret and Saint Catherine that Joan and the audience share. In the opera, the Voices act as invisible guides, directing Joan to raise the siege at Orléans and to lead Charles VII to his coronation at Reims.[136]

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[135] Jules LeMaître, *Theatrical Impressions*, trans. Frederic Whyte (Port Washington, NY: Kennikat Press, 1924), 14. LeMaître was born in 1853, so this performance would have occurred around 1857. Italics are my own.

[136] My research is indebted to Sarah Hibberd's work on Joan of Arc and somnambulism on the 1820s stage as well as her study of Jules Michelet's influence on opera during the July Monarchy. See Sarah Hibberd, "Magnetism, Muteness, Magic: *Spectacle* and the Parisian Lyric Stage c1830" (PhD diss., University of Southampton, 1998), "Marianne: Mystic or Madwoman? Representations of Jeanne d'Arc on the Parisian Stage in the 1820s," in *Medievalism and the Quest for the "Real" Middle Ages*, ed. Clare A. Simmons (London: Frank Cass and Company, Limited, 2001), and *French Grand Opera and the Historical Imagination* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009). Tony James' monograph, *Dream, Creativity, and Madness in Nineteenth-Century France* also plays an important role in helping to situate Joan of Arc's Voices within recent scientific studies of dreams and visions in the 1870s. See Tony James, *Dream, Creativity and Madness in Nineteenth-Century France* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995).

Newspaper illustrations play an important role in this chapter. After the premieres of Barbier-Gounod's *Jeanne d'Arc* and Mermet's *Jeanne d'Arc,* the illustrated French newspapers *L'Illustration*, *Le Monde illustré*, and *L'Univers illustré* published reviews of the performances and included illustrations of the different settings and characters. (**See Appendix.**) For Barbier and Gounod's work, Joan is shown with Saint Margaret and Saint Catherine. (**See Figure 4.1.**) For Mermet's opera, Joan is shown under the Fairy Tree. (**See Figure 4.2.**) How accurately did these illustrations depict the stage productions? According to the very first issue of *L'Illustration*, special attention to accurate detail would be given to the theater:

> Let us immediately consider the theatre; here our intention, instead of simply analyzing the plays, is to depict them. Actors' costumes, groups and stage designs in the principal scenes, ballets, dancers, everything belonging to that art where the pleasure of the eyes hold such an important place; [Théâtre-] Français, Opéras, Cirque-Olympique, small theatres, everything from everywhere will be reflected in our reviews, which we will try to illustrate so perfectly that the theatres, if it were possible, would be forced to criticize us, claiming that we are competing with them by giving our readers real *shows in an armchair*.[137]

Although H. Robert Cohen in *Les Gravures musicales dans L'Illustration* advocates the use of these illustrations as an aid to music historians, he adds that not all musical details will be completely accurate:

> One must keep in mind that *L'Illustration* was a newsmagazine—in terms of present-day comparisons perhaps a cross between *L'Express* or *Time Magazine* and *Paris-Match* or *Life Magazine*. And the primary function of *L'Illustration*, like its present-day counterparts, was to chronicle the news, both visually and textually. This does not mean, however, that every musical element was accurately presented. […] However, when an aspect of the musical life of the period is the principal subject or an important

[137] "Préface," *L'Illustration*, September 1, 1843. Translation by H. Robert Cohen in *Les Gravures musicales dans l'Illustration 1843–1899* (Québec: Les Presses de l'Université Laval, 1983), I, lxii. Cohen's use of italics.

> element of an engraving, considerable effort to depict it accurately appears to be the rule.[138]

Thus, the engraving for the scenes and costumes of stage works should provide a useful aid for a musicological study, and in particular, this chapter.

**Figure 4.1.** Barbier-Gounod, *Jeanne d'Arc*, Act I, Domrémy. Inset from composite illustration published in *Le Monde illustré*, November 29, 1873. Edmond Morin, illustrator. This inset shows the final scene of Act I during which Saint Margaret and Saint Catherine appear to Jeanne at her home in Domrémy.


[138] H. Robert Cohen, *Les Gravures musicales dans L'Illustration 1843–1899* (Québec: Les Presses de l'Université Laval, 1983), I, lxiii.

**Figure 4.2.** Mermet, *Jeanne d'Arc*, Act I, Domrémy. Inset from composite illustration published in *Le Monde illustré*, April 8, 1876. Edmond Morin, illustrator. This image most likely depicts the end of Act I when Jeanne hears her Voices. The tree is the main focus of the scene.


## The Fairy Tree

The presence of a grove of trees or one specific tree in stage works based on Joan of Arc's life comes from her perceived relationship with the *bois chesnu* and *l'arbre des fées*. The *bois chesnu* can be traced to Merlin's prophecy that "from an oak grove a maid will be sent to remedy certain ills through her curing art," as Geoffrey of Monmouth

wrote in the twelfth century.[139] In 1429, Christine de Pizan connected Joan to this prophecy in her *Ditié de Jehanne d'Arc*.[140] Two years later when Joan was questioned about the *l'arbre des fées*, she answered that "when she came before the king [Charles VII], many people asked whether in her country there was not a wood called the *bois chesnu*, for there was a prophecy saying that from the *bois chesnu* should come a maiden who would perform marvelous acts; but she put no faith in it."[141]

The topic of *l'arbre des fées*, sometimes called the Ladies' Tree, arose during both the interrogation and rehabilitation trials. The condemnatory sentence in 1431 read: "Joan said that she had often heard voices near a tree known as the 'Fairies' Tree.'"[142] This statement insinuated that some history of sorcery was behind Joan's voices.[143] Later in 1456, in order to clear up any such allegations, the apostolic commission for the rehabilitation trial interviewed Domrémy villagers who had known Joan as a child. Eleven testimonies that refer to the Fairies' Tree were recorded at this time and later translated by Jules Quicherat and published in the 1840s.[144]

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[139] Karen Sullivan, *The Interrogation of Joan of Arc* (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1999), 11. Quote from Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Historia regum Britanniae* (ca. 1136).

[140] Christine de Pizan, *Ditié de Jehanne d'Arc*, ed. Angus J. Kennedy and Kenneth Varty (Oxford: Society for the Study of Medieval Languages and Literature, 1977). Poem is dated 31 July 1429.

[141] W. S. Scott, *The Trial of Joan of Arc: Being the verbatim report of the proceedings from the Orleans Manuscript* (Westport, CT: Associated Booksellers, 1956), 76. From the Preparatory Interrogation, Third Session, 24 February 1431.

[142] Régine Pernoud, *The Retrial of Joan of Arc: The Evidence at the Trial for Her Rehabilitation 1450-1456*, trans. J. M. Cohen (New York: Harcourt. Brace and Company, 1955), 62–63.

[143] Ibid., 63.

[144] Ibid., 259. The questions put to the Domrémy villagers were: "What did the popular report say of that tree which is called the 'Ladies' Tree'? Were girls in the habit of gathering there to dance? And what of this fountain that is near the tree? Did Joan go there with the other girls, and for what reasons and when did she go?"

When Jules Michelet writes about Joan's early life in his history, he includes the oak grove and the fairy tree, placing them within the idea of Joan as a legend. He states, "Born in the shadow of the church, lulled by the canticle of the bells, fed on legends, she was a legend herself, swift and pure, from her birth to her death. She was a living legend."[145] He continues:

> From the door of her father's house she could see the old grove of 'The Oaks.' That wood was the haunt of fairies; they loved above all a fountain near a huge beech tree which was called 'the tree of the Fairies,' or 'of the *Ladies*.' Little children came there to hang wreaths and to sing. Those ancient 'Ladies,' once mistresses of the forest, were no longer permitted, it was said, to foregather by the fountain; they had been banished thence because of their sins. The Church, however, was constantly on her guard against the old divinities of the place; the priest, to keep them away, came once a year to say mass at the fountain. Joan was born in that atmosphere of legend, of folklike dreamings.[146]

Michelet's description is steeped in legend. He writes about the fairies as if they had haunted the oak grove in the-not-too distant past and then explains that mass was said at the fountain in order to keep the old spirits away. Michelet's depiction of the oak grove and fairy tree is mentioned in Barbier's melodrama, but it is Mermet who brings this description to life in his opera.

Before delving into the Fairy Tree aspect of the two works, I would like first to provide background information on what may be best described as the "arboreal effect" in nineteenth-century opera and especially in relation to Joan of Arc's story.

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[145] Jules Michelet, *Joan of Arc*, trans. Albert Guérard (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 1957), 9.

[146] Ibid., 10.

## Nineteenth-Century Influences and Romantic Conventions

The supernatural appeal of the forest was well understood by the creators of nineteenth-century opera, as the art historian and opera scenery specialist Mercedes Viale Ferrero observes:

> … the forest represents the image of primeval nature. In scenery conventions of opera, the forest was thus the chosen venue for dramatic events that proposed a return to ancestral roots, to the forgotten ways and neglected traditions of a particular people…in the nineteenth century nature was invested with sacred values, with divine inspiration (as in *Norma* [1831]).[147]

The druidic priestesses performing pagan rites in a sacred grove in Vincenzo Bellini's opera *Norma* is one example of the forest in opera. Another is fairy oak trees in Jules Massenet's *Cendrillon* (1899). The second tableau of Act III occurs at the fairies' oak where Lucette (Cendrillon) and Prince Charmant are drawn together by the fairies and fall asleep in each other's arms.

*Norma* and *Cendrillon*, then, impart two different sides of the Fairy Tree as it relates to Joan of Arc. The first (*Norma*) relates to the type of "old religion," specifically witchcraft, of which the clerics had hoped to convict Joan in the interrogation trial. The second (*Cendrillon*) is more in line with the way the villagers of Domrémy spoke about the fairy tree—a meeting place for young people and a place that fairies may have frequented.

These two types of tree representations in opera occur in the stage works based on Joan's life. For example, Friedrich Schiller incorporates the association of trees with witchcraft in his *Die Jungfrau von Orleans* (1801). In his play, Schiller takes a great deal of liberty with the story and adds incidents, entirely fictional, to heighten the drama. One

[147] Mercedes Viale Ferrero, "Stage and Set," in *Opera on Stage*, ed. Lorenzo Bianconi and Giorgio Pestelli (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001), plates 23–25.

of these additions concerns Joan's father, who is called Thibaut in the play, and his accusation that his daughter consorted with the Devil beneath the Fairy Tree.

> I've watched her sit and think for hours on end, under the Druid's tree, which Christian souls will never go near – the place is eerie, some spirit of evil has lived beneath that tree since heathen times – the old ones in the village tell terrifying tales about the tree: how you can often catch the sound of voices, strange and uncanny, coming from its dark branches: once I was passing myself, at nightfall, and saw this ghostly woman sitting there, stretching a withered hand out of her cloak, as if to say "Come here!": you may be sure I quickened my step and offered up a prayer.[148]

Raimond, Joan's suitor, quickly defends her and says that it is the holy shrine that brings her there and not the Devil. However, Thibaut does not believe him, and later at the coronation of Charles VII, publicly states that she is not a messenger of God:

> What? Her a saint, and sent by God! It was dreamed up in an unholy place, under a magic tree, where evil spirits have kept their Sabbath from time immemorial. That's where she bartered her immortal soul to the enemy of Mankind, if he would give her the glory of some passing earthly fame.[149]

In this way, Schiller replaces the accusations of the clergy during Joan's interrogation trial with an accusation made by her own father. The tree is considered magic and a place of evil spirits.

This fictional alteration finds its way into Temistocle Solera and Giuseppe Verdi's opera, *Giovanna d'Arco*. In a letter to Giovanni Ricordi, Solera insisted that his *Giovanna d'Arco* is "a completely new Italian drama; I wished only, as in Schiller, to introduce Giovanna's father as her accuser."[150] Indeed, Solera does have Joan's father,

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[148] Friedrich Schiller, *Five Plays: The Robbers, Passion and Politics, Don Carlos, Mary Stuart, Joan of Arc*, trans. Robert David MacDonald (London: Oberon Books, 1998), 623.

[149] Ibid., 712–713.

[150] Alberto Rizzuti, "Introduction," in *Giovanna d'Arco: dramma lirico (in four acts)*, Giuseppe Verdi, Temistocle Solera, Alberto Rizzuti and Friedrich Schiller (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008), xiv. Letter dated September 1844.

called Giacomo, accuse her of making a pact with the Devil in the forest. The mystique of the forest is intensified when it appears in a vision to the dauphin, referred to as Carlo in this opera. In the first scene, Carlo claims to have:

> Beheld a divine vision, beneath an oak I seemed to sadly lay my head; a painted statue of the Virgin shone in the depths of the forest… from it came the command: *Rise, O King, set down your helmet and sword at the foot of this image*.[151]

The villagers tell the king that there is a forest close by that fits his description, but that it is a "hideous forest" and "a place of horror. Death lurks there."[152] He asks for more information and they reply:

> When the plaintive bells greet the dying day, and the star of love, the moon, slowly sails through the silent air, in the horrible forest the storm ever rages; amid horror of thunder and lightning there the demons assemble, there with wizards and witches, they make pacts and covens, and with poisonous potions assuage sins…Woe if a man is caught unawares at their evil revels! No more will he see the light of day if he does not yield to the devil.[153]

Despite this terrifying description, the king decides that he must follow his vision and go to the forest. The next scene is described as:

> A forest. On the right, a high rock surmounted by a shrine to the Virgin, whose interior is dimly lit by a lamp. On the left, an oak tree occupies the foreground and beneath it there is a stone seat. In the background, a cave. – The sky is dark and stormy. Nearby a bell tolls, summoning the faithful to prayer for the dead.[154]

In *Giovanna d'Arco*, then, the forest is more than something to be talked about; it seems to be a character with its own identity that appears in visions and frightens people.

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[151] Giuseppe Verdi, *Giovanna d'Arco*, with Montserrat Caballé, Placido Domingo, Sherrill Milnes, the Ambrosian Opera Chorus, and the London Symphony Orchestra, conducted by James Levine, EMI Classics, CDMB 63226, 1973, compact disc. Libretto translation by Johanna Mayr, 32.

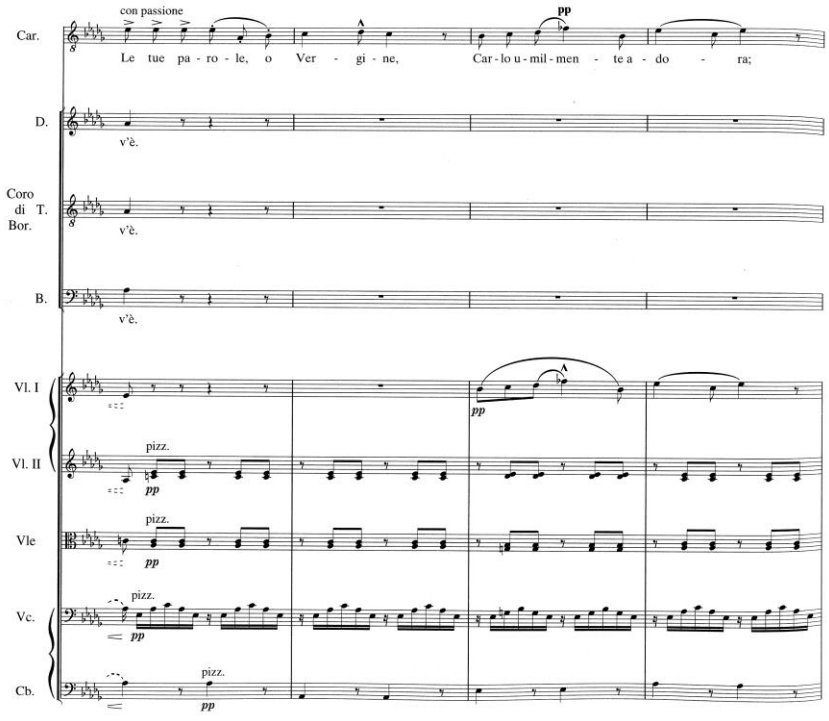
[152] Ibid., 33.

[153] Ibid., 34.

[154] Ibid., 35.

That Carlo's vision is pure is reinforced by the musically beautiful cavatina "Sotto una quercia parvemi" ("Beneath an oak")—an enchanting andantino in 6/8 meter and D-flat Major. While the strings support with pizzicato chords, the tenor soars above to an A flat for the words "Elmo deponi e brando" ("Set down your helmet and sword") (mm. 67–69). At this point, he has decided to stop fighting and give up his pursuit for the crown. He feels that the Virgin Mary is telling him very sweetly to lay down his arms. When he continues with "Le tue parole, o Vergine" ("Your words, O Virgin"), the cello begins to play ascending and descending arpeggios similar to a harp accompaniment and further accentuating the divinity of the vision (mm. 73–91). (**Example 4.1.**)

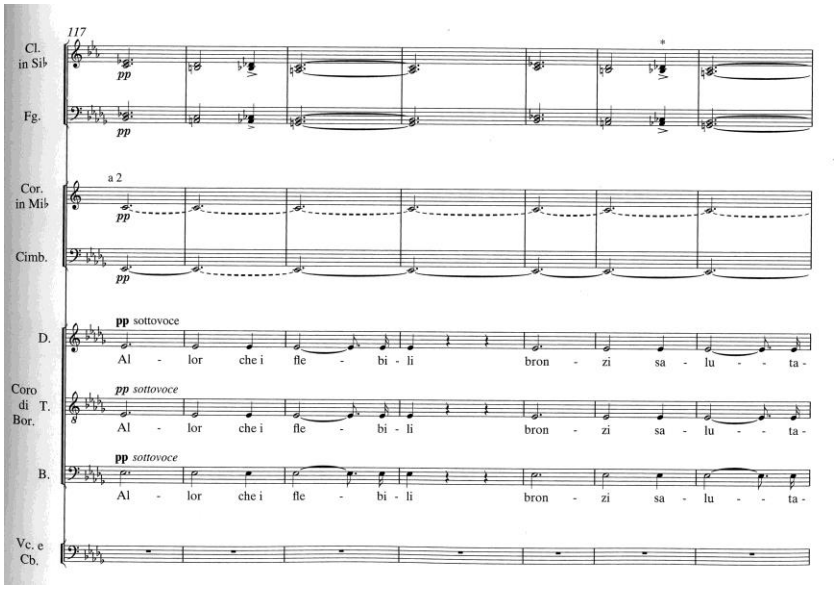
**Example 4.1.** Verdi, *Giovanna d'Arco*, Act I, No. 3, Scena, Cavatina Carlo, p. 74. [155]




[155] Giuseppe Verdi, Temistocle Solera, Alberto Rizzuti, and Friedrich Schiller, *Giovanna d'Arco: dramma lirico (in four acts)* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008), 74.

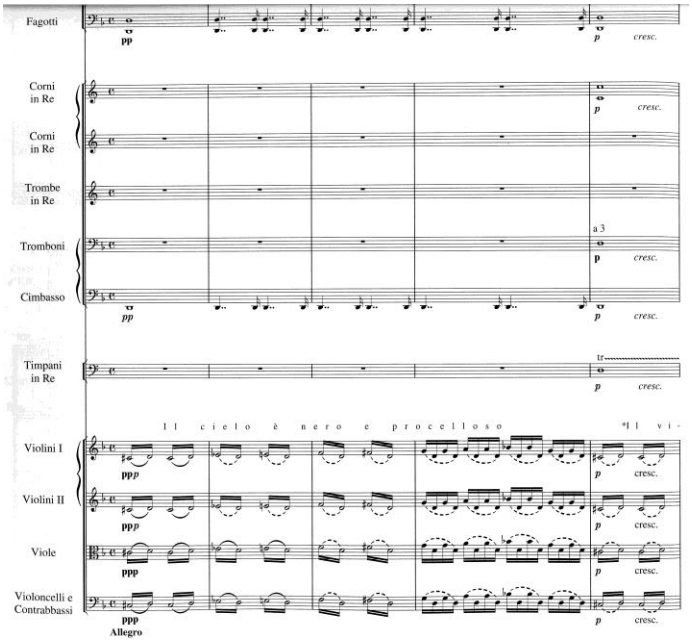
Carlo's vision of the forest is contrasted with the forest as described by the villagers. As they begin to sing, "Allor che i flebili bronzi" ("When the plaintive bells"), Verdi takes the listener to an entirely different and frightening place. The chorus chants *sotto voce* and *pianissimo* on E flat bringing to mind the type of muted whispers of incantations that might occur in a forest of supernatural force (m. 117). (**See Example 4.2.**) The horns sustain a low E flat while the bassoons and clarinets accompany the chant with a chromatic, descending phrase in thirds (mm. 117–129). This intensifies until the chorus reaches the word "d'amor," at which time a modulation to C minor sets up the next phrase, "Nell'orribile foresta" ("In the horrible forest"). In order to create the musically frightening storms and evil revelry of the forest, Verdi's setting wildly fluctuates from *pianissimo sotto voce* to *forte* for the singers. These outbursts from the chorus are punctuated by ascending thirty-second note phrases in the winds accentuating the raging storm of the forest. A second dramatic shift in the chorus occurs when they warn, "Guai se inconscio al reo festino uom sorprendere si fa!" ("Woe if a man is caught unawares at their evil revels"). Here, the key modulates to C major, but maintains chromatic passing and neighbor tones, thus retaining the ominous mood already established.

**Example 4.2.** Verdi, *Giovanna d'Arco*, Act I, Scena, Cavatina Carlo, mm. 117–123, p. 83.




After Carlo's cabaletta, at which juncture he states he is no longer king, the scene ends with him leaving for the forest as a D-flat/C tremolo sounds in the strings. The tremolo carries through to the next scene at the forest with the strings now playing a half step higher with the new key moved to D minor. (**See Example 4.3.)** Bells chime in the background as described in the stage directions. The string tremolo is doubled by the woodwinds, which intersperse quick, descending, sixteenth-note phrases reminiscent of the previous scene, thereby suggesting the raging weather of the forest if at a distance. This persistent tremolo, with its occasional woodwind flutter of a descending figure, firmly places the scene in the forest as perceived earlier by the villagers. When Carlo arrives in the forest, the chromatic tremolo is heard again, and he shivers in fear. Instead of finding the beauty of his vision, he faces the terrifying forest as described by the villagers in the previous scene.

**Example 4.3.** Verdi, *Giovanna d'Arco*, Act I, No. 4, Scena Giacomo, p. 120.




Although no evil activities are depicted visually in Verdi's forest, they are suggested sonically through tremolos, fast chromatic ascending and descending phrases in the woodwinds, and minor keys. The music at once articulates the fears of the villagers and upholds their view of its malevolence. The audience is left to imagine the horrible spells and incantations that are believed to be associated with the forest and the pacts that Giacomo believes his daughter has made with the Devil.

The forest as a place of witchcraft plays a prominent role in both Schiller's play and Verdi's opera; however, when examining Barbier's melodrama and Mermet's opera, we encounter a different type of forest.

## The Fairy Tree in Barbier-Gounod's *Jeanne d'Arc*

In Barbier-Gounod's *Jeanne d'Arc*, the *bois chesnu* and *l'arbre des fées* are mentioned, but do not play a major role in the plot. Jeanne's father, called Jacques in this melodrama as in historical records, speaks of them in the second scene during which he tells his wife Isabelle about Jeanne's recent behavior:

| | |
|---|---|
| Dès longtemps je l'observe, et je lis dans ses yeux | For a long time, I have been observing her, and I read in her eyes |
| Quelque chose d'étrange et de mystérieux: | Something strange and mysterious: |
| Elle n'a point l'humeur des filles de son âge; | She has not the spirit of girls her age |
| Elle s'isole et fuit les danses du village; | She isolates herself and shuns the village dances; |
| On dirait que son âme, à l'heure du réveil, | One would say that her soul, at the hour of waking, |
| Avec les yeux ouverts, garde encore son sommeil; | With eyes open, still retains her sleep; |
| Le seul bruit des combats l'attire et la domine; | Only the sound of fighting attracts and dominates her; |
| Aux récits qu'on en fait son regard s'illumine; | To the stories that one makes up illuminates her gaze; |
| Elle s'exalte alors, et, comme un vieux routier, | She exalts herself then, and like an old road, |
| Il semble qu'elle aborde un terrain familier; | It seems that she approaches familiar ground; |
| Est-ce raison? Voit-on battre ainsi la campagne | Is this right? Do we see Catherine her sister, |
| Catherine sa soeur, Mengette sa compagne? | Mengette her companion rave like that? |
| A force d'y rêver, le soupçon m'est venu | By the strength of a dream, the suspicion came to me |
| Que les mauvais esprits ont dans le bois chesnu | That the evil spirits in the hoary wood |
| Jeté sur elle un sort, quand à l'arbre des fées | Have cast a spell on her, when to the fairy tree |
| Nos filles vont porter leurs rustiques trophées. | Our daughters will bear their rustic trophies. [156] |

Her mother disagrees strongly (reminiscent of Raimond in Schiller's play) saying that their daughter has never been anything but good and virtuous. Jacques then agrees and says that he wishes only for his girl to marry and suggests the suitor Thibaut as a good match. This suggestion of a suitor follows Michelet's history of the heroine:

> Her family, in its opposition, tried to tempt her away from her call. They assayed to get her married, in the hope that she would in this wise be reconciled with saner ideas. A young man in the village claimed that, when she was a child, she had promised to marry him; and as she denied it, he had her summoned before the ecclesiastical judge of Toul.[157]

[156] Jules Barbier and Charles Gounod, *Jeanne d'Arc: Drame en Cinq Actes en Vers avec Choeurs* (Paris: Michel Lévy Frères, 1874), 7–8.

[157] Michelet, *Jeanne d'Arc*, 13–14.

Thibaut appears in the next scene and plays the part of the rejected suitor. Barbier does not imply that Jeanne had agreed to marry him. Instead, Thibaut simply represents the adoring lover who knows that his love will never be requited. As quickly as the *bois chesnu* and *l'arbre des fées* are mentioned, they seem to be forgotten. The plotline turns to focus on Thibaut, and the topic of fairies and trees is not pursued.

When examining Gounod's score, Barbier's libretto, and illustrated newspapers, one finds that the *bois chesnu* and *l'arbre des fées* are not depicted in the music or in the stage setting. Instead of emphasizing Joan's association with the oak grove, forest, or tree, Barbier and Gounod place importance on Joan's experience with her Voices, a topic that will be addressed further in the second part of this chapter.

### The Fairy Tree in Mermet's *Jeanne d'Arc*

Unlike Barbier, who downplays the role of the Fairy Tree, Mermet places the Fairy Tree as the centerpiece of his first scene. Instead of being a dark and mysterious location as in Schiller's and Verdi's works, Mermet's Fairy Tree, as demonstrated in the opening chorus sung by young girls ("Choeur de jeunes filles"), recalls Joan's childhood in Domrémy. The critic Ernest Reyer described the opening girls' chorus thus:

> As the curtain rises, we see the village square of Domrémy; on the right, a fountain shaded by a large oak tree called l'*Arbre des fées* (which still existed in 1628); on the left, the house of Jeanne d'Arc; up-stage, the church. Girls hang wreaths on the branches of the oak and sing a chorus in the style of fabliau:
> *Par une nuit tiède et sereine,*
> *Un chevalier, d'amour féru,*
> *Surprit la fée à la fontaine,*
> *Et nul, depuis, ne l'a revu*.[158]

[158] Ernest Reyer, "Jeanne d'Arc,"*Journal des débats,* April 9, 1876. "Au lever du rideau, on voit la place du village de Domrémy; à droite, une fontaine ombragée par un grand chêne appelé l'*Arbre des fées* (qui

Not only does this image evoke Joan's childhood in Domrémy, but it also includes many of the details in Michelet's description of the village in his biography of Joan. As mentioned earlier, his version of Domrémy included Joan's house, the fountain, and the tree of the fairies, where children would hang wreaths and sing. Michelet described this scene as "the atmosphere of legend, of folklike dreamings."[159] It would seem that Mermet in his opening chorus was emulating Michelet.

A closer examination of the text as found in the opera's libretto reveals a story of a *chevalier* and a *fée*:

| | |
|---|---|
| Verse 1: | Verse 1: |
| Sous tes rameaux, antique chêne, | Under your branches, ancient oak, |
| Au temps jadis, devers minuit, | In former times, around midnight. |
| Pour se baigner dans la fontaine, | To bathe in the fountain, |
| Une fée accourait sans bruit. | A fairy ran quietly. |
| | |
| Refrain: | Refrain: |
| Arbre des Dames, Arbre des Dames | Ladies' Tree, Ladies' Tree |
| Dévoile-nous | Reveal to us |
| Secrets des âmes, | Secrets of souls, |
| Pensers si doux… | Thoughts so sweet. |
| Arbre des Dames. | Ladies' Tree, |
| Protège-nous, protège-nous! | Protect us, protect us! |
| | |
| Verse 2: | Verse 2: |
| Par une nuit tiède et sereine, | On a night warm and serene, |
| Un chevalier, d'amour féru, | A knight smitten with love |
| Surprit la fée à la fontaine, | Surprised the fairy at the fountain. |
| Et nul, depuis ne l'a revu. | And no one since has seen him. |

existait encore en 1628); à gauche, la maison de Jeanne d'Arc; au fond, l'église. Des jeunes filles suspendent des couronnes aux branches du chêne et chantent un choeur en style de fabliau: *Par une nuit tiède et sereine, Un chevalier, d'amour féru, Surprit la fée à la fontaine, Et nul depuis, ne l'a revu.*" Mary Jane Stearns Schenck, *The Fabliaux: Tales of Wit and Deception* (Philadelphia: John Benjamins Publishing Company, 1987), 7. The term fabliau was used to describe a broad range of French medieval poetry until it was defined specifically in the six-volume publication of *Recueil général et complet des fabliaux des XIIIe et XIVe siècles* by Anatole de Montaiglon and Gaston Raynaud between 1872 and 1890. In this work, Montaiglon described a fabliau as a short humorous narrative of a real or possible adventure.

[159] Michelet, *Joan of Arc*, 9.

| | |
|---|---|
| Refrain: | Refrain: |
| Arbre des Dames, Arbre des Dames | Ladies' Tree, Ladies' Tree |
| Dévoile-nous | Reveal to us |
| Secrets des âmes, | Secrets of souls, |
| Pensers si doux. | Thoughts so sweet. |
| Arbre des Dames, | Ladies' Tree, |
| Protège-nous! | Protect us![160] |

Although Mermet's lyrics for the chorus are original, the story of the *chevalier* and the *fée* alludes to a romance described by one of Joan's godmothers in the rehabilitation trial records:

> About the tree that is called the Ladies' Tree, they do say that once upon a time a gentleman called Pierre Granier, knight and lord of Bourlemont, used to meet a lady called Fée under the tree and they used to walk together there. I have heard that read out of a romance.[161]

Her testimony continues with details about annual visits to the tree by the young people of the village:

> The young men and girls of the village go there every year, on *Laetare* Sunday, which they call Fountains Sunday, for a walk; and they eat and dance and go to the *Fountain aux Raines* to drink. But I do not remember whether Joan the Maid ever went under the tree. And I never heard that she had a bad reputation because of that tree.[162]

Another one of Joan's godmothers added:

> The tree is called the Ladies' Tree, and I have been there sometimes, with the gentlemen and their ladies of the village, to stroll under the tree, because it is a fine tree. It is beside the main road that goes to Neufchâteau; and I have heard tell that in the olden days ladies that cast spells, who are called *fairies* in French, used to go under that tree. But because of their sins, as they say, they do not go there now. The young men and girls of Domremy go under that tree too, on *Laetare Jerusalem* Sunday, which is called Fountains Sunday, and in spring, and Joan used to go with them. And there they sing and dance rounds and eat their food,

[160] Auguste Mermet, *Jeanne d'Arc, Opéra en quatre actes et six tableaux* (Paris: Tresse, 1876), 1–2.

[161] Régine Pernoud, ed. *The Retrial of Joan of Arc: The Evidence at the Trial for her Rehabilitation 1450-1456*, trans. J. M. Cohen. (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1955), 68. Testimony given by Jeannette, the widow of Tiercelin de Viteau, aged sixty.

[162] Ibid., 68–69.

> and on the way back they go to the *Fontaine aux Raines* and drink at that fountain. And when the vicar carries the Cross through the fields, on the vigil of the Ascension, he goes under the tree too, and he recites the Gospel, and I have seen him do it. And that is all I know about it.[163]

By referring to this tale from Lorraine, Mermet is presenting the Fairy Tree in a more positive light than in earlier productions, such as in Schiller's and Verdi's works. He also attempts to recreate the annual fifteenth-century Domrémy festivities as described in the trial testimonies and Michelet's biography of Joan by having the chorus sung by girls as they hang wreaths on the tree.

The association between this chorus and specifically the region of Lorraine is strengthened when one looks at the picture of the stage setting of Domrémy as found in *L'Illustration*. (**Figure 4.3.**) On the left side of the image, a group of girls in regional Lorraine costume is standing and observing Joan's interaction with Gaston and his fellow knights. *Le Monde illustré* (**Figure 4.4.**) does not provide the details of the girls' dress in its depiction of the scene, but *L'Illustration* does show the white hat and shawl found in the Lorraine traditional dress.

[163] Ibid., 67–68. Testimony of one of Joan's godmothers, Béatrice, the widow of d'Estelin, a farmer of Domrémy, aged eighty.

**Figure 4.3.** Mermet, *Jeanne d'Arc*, Act I, Domrémy. Insert from composite illustration published in *L'Illustration*, April 15, 1876. Joan encounters Gaston, a knight. Her father, Jacques, stands to her left. The young girls stand behind him in traditional costumes.

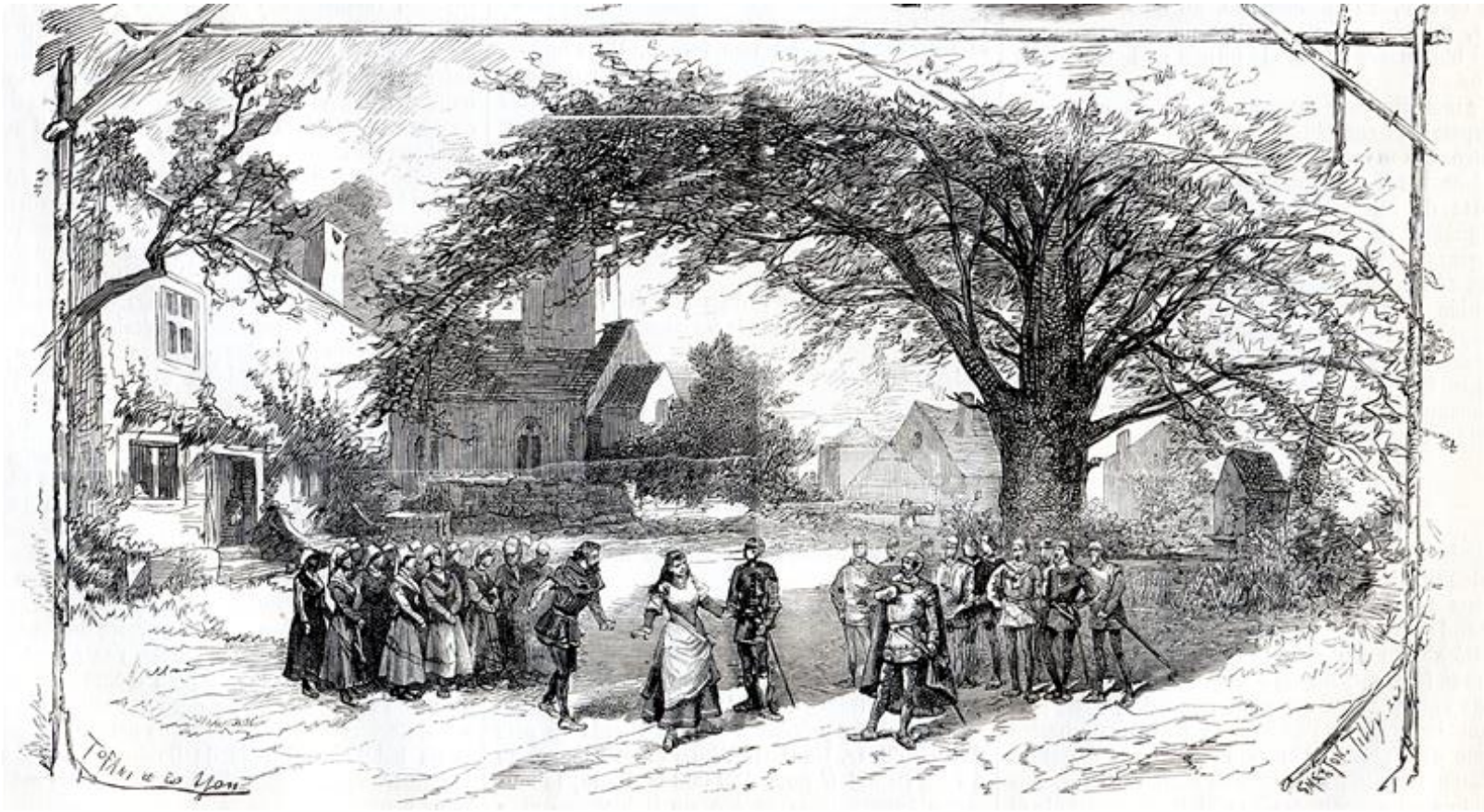
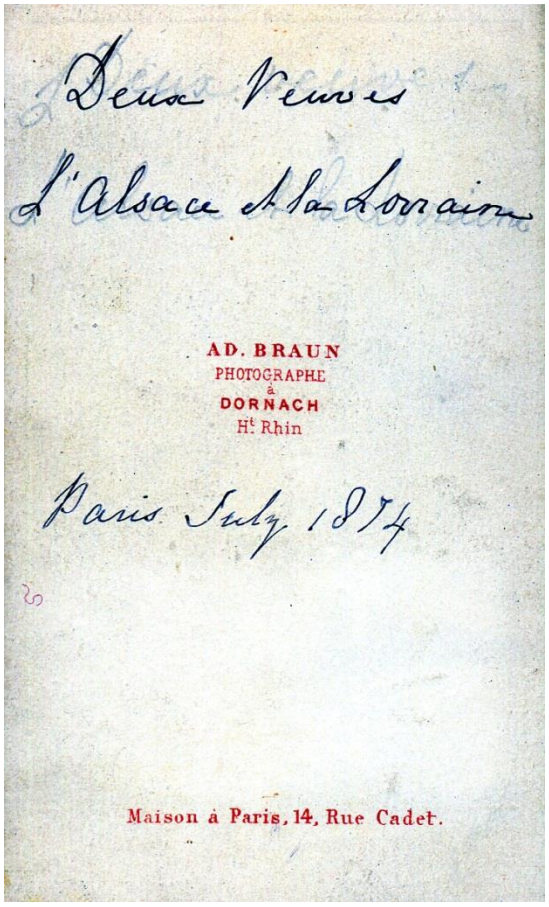


**Figure 4.4.** Mermet, *Jeanne d'Arc*, Act I, Domrémy. Insert from composite illustration published in *L'Univers illustré*, April 8, 1876. The costumes worn by the girls are not as detailed as in *L'Illustration*.


The symbol of girls in regional costumes to represent the provinces of Alsace and Lorraine became commonplace—for example, a series of photos by Adolphe Braun. (**See Figure 4.5.**) The art historian Julia Ballerini describes the photographs as "Intended to illustrate the sorrow felt by the provinces at being torn from France, the images were immensely popular, appearing on dishes, posters, flags, and other objects, and can still be

found on tourist items in Alsace."[164] According to Ballerini then, this image of the girls in traditional Lorraine costumes in Mermet's opera would likewise bring to mind the loss of the provinces after the war.

**Figure 4.5.** Deux Veuves, L'Alsace et La Lorraine, Paris July 1874. (Two Widows, Alsace and Lorraine). Carte-de-visite by Adolphe Braun (ca. 1871–1874). Lorraine is on the left and Alsace is on the right. Deux Veuves, L'Alsace et La Lorraine is written in pen over pencil. Paris July 1874 is written in pen that appears to be the same ink as the other text. Note: July is written in English and not French. I purchased this CDV from an art dealer in London, so perhaps it was purchased originally as a souvenir.

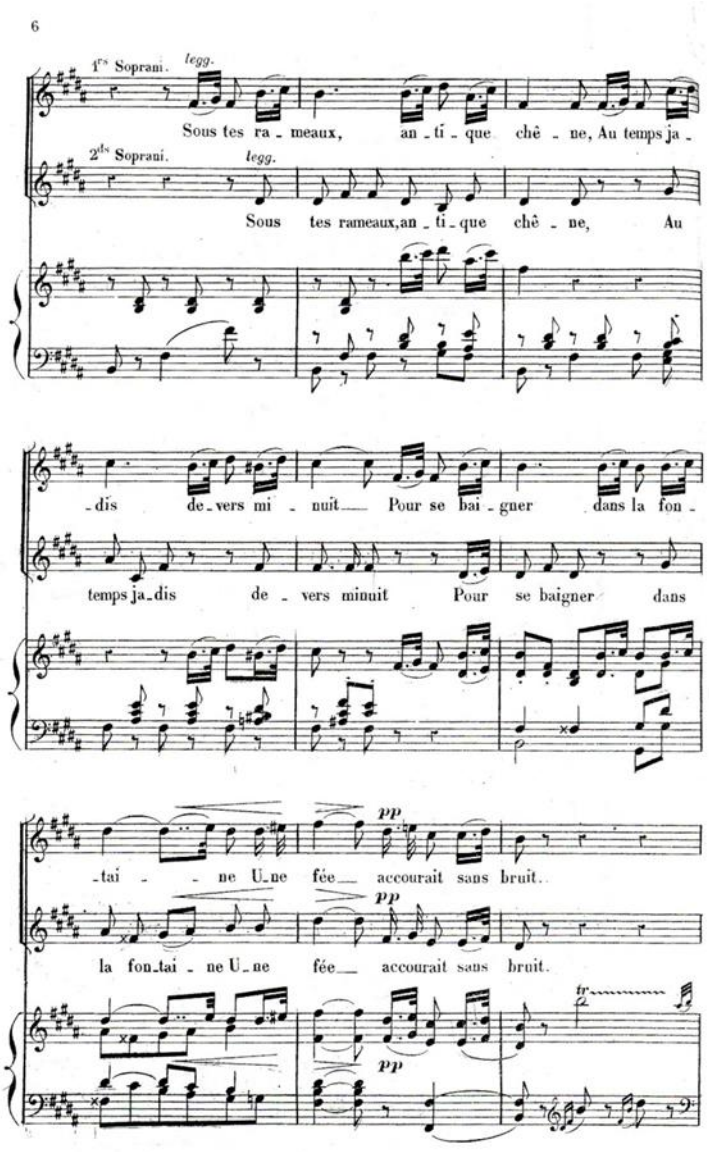

[164] Julia Ballerini, "Young Women in Old Clothes: The Politics of Adolphe Braun's Personification of Alsace and Lorraine," *Nineteenth-Century Art Worldwide: A Journal of Nineteenth-Century Visual Culture* 1, no. 1 (2002): [n.p.], http://www.19thc-artworldwide.org/index.php/spring02/191-young-women-in-old-clothes-the-politics-of-adolphe-brauns-personifications-of-alsace-and-lorraine.

One might think that the music for the girls' chorus would likewise reflect the region of Lorraine. However, a comparison of the music for the "Choeur de jeunes filles" with an earlier chorus ("Choeur de femmes" from *Roland à Roncevaux*) by Mermet reveals no attempt to evoke a country's regional music. The music for the "Choeur de jeunes filles" is in B major and 3/4 meter. The harmony does not deviate from common practice, moving from tonic to dominant with nonchord passing tones and neighbor tones. The sound of an F-sharp to G-sharp trill over the dominant harmony at the end of phrases signifies the fairy mentioned in the text. (**Example 4.4.** System 3/Measure 3) The "Choeur de femmes" that opens Act II of *Roland à Roncevaux* is similar to the "Choeur de jeunes filles" in key, meter, harmony, and melody. (**Example 4.5.**) Note the neighbor tones of E-sharp and C-double-sharp in the first measure of the second system that resolve to the tonic. The passing tones of D-natural and E-sharp resolving to the tonic in the second measure of the first system of "Choeur de jeunes filles" create a similar sonority. Mermet also includes a short ornament (**Example 4.5.** Measures 4, 5, and 7) that fills the break in the text, taking on the same role as that of the trill in the "Choeur de jeunes filles."

The "Choeur de femmes" does exhibit some differences from the "Choeur de jeunes filles. For example, the music does not stay in B major throughout, but instead modulates to G minor for a brief five measures. A more striking difference between the two choruses comes to the surface when one learns of the characters singing the chorus. Instead of girls from Lorraine, the women in *Roland à Roncevaux* are Moorish slaves. The similarities shared by the choruses indicate Mermet's compositional preferences for how to write a chorus for female voices. He could have composed the chorus in a

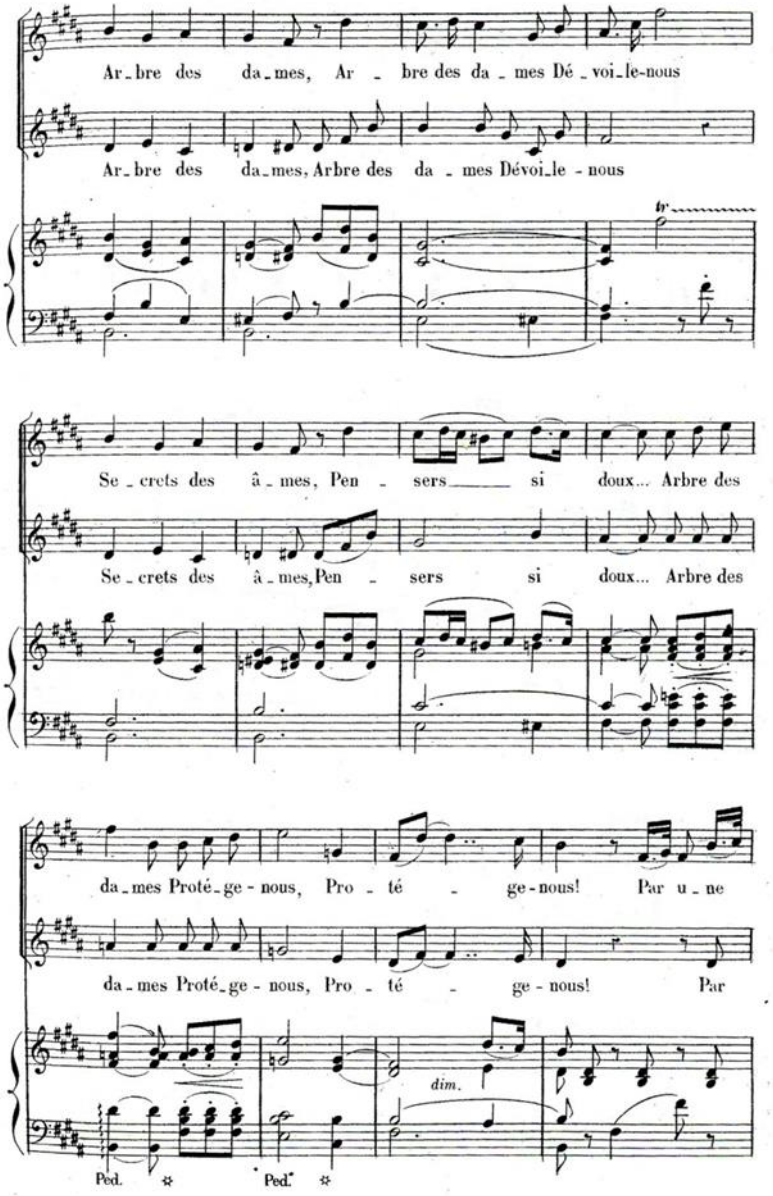
different key, such as the Phrygian–dominant key to create a more exotic soundscape for the Moorish slaves, but instead the composer adheres to a type of formula for women's choruses.[165]

**Example 4.4.** Mermet, *Jeanne d'Arc*, Act I, No. 1 Choeur de jeunes filles, pp. 6–7.

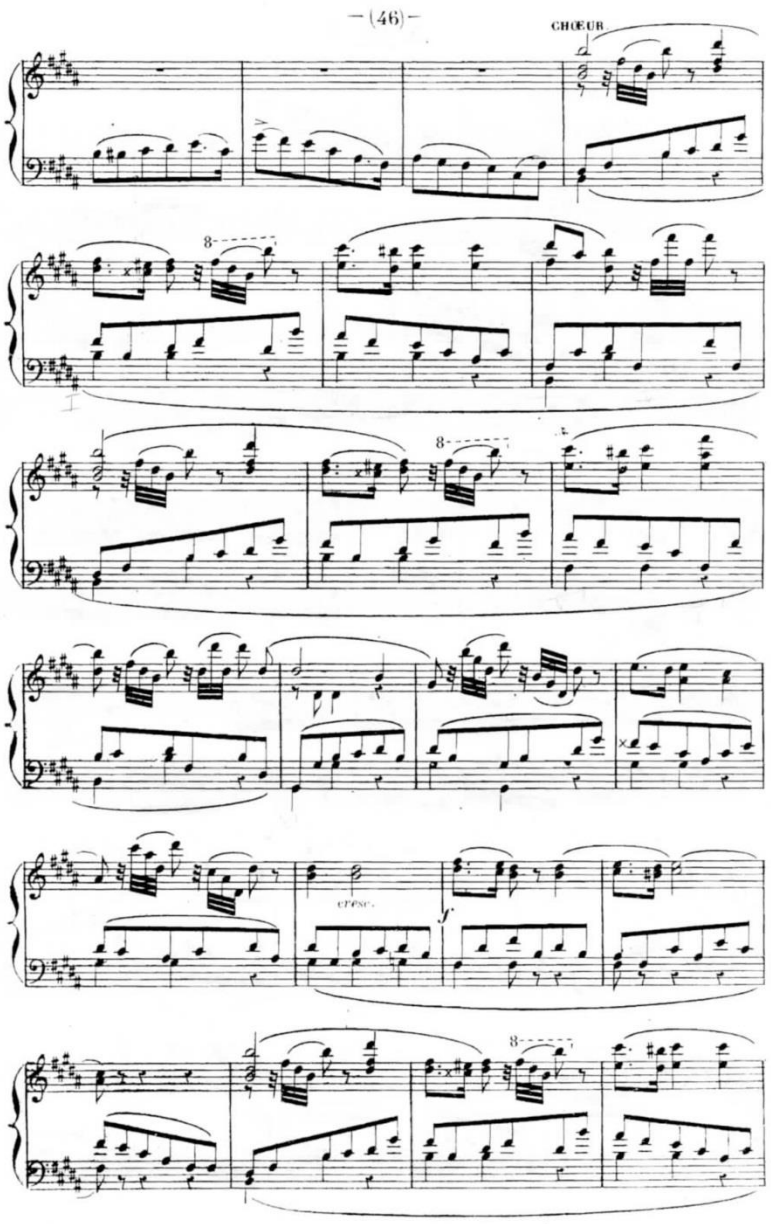



[165] Mermet reserves the Phrygian-dominant key for "Final," the battle scene of Act IV. The melody is reminiscent of Camille Saint-Saën's Bacchanale from *Samson et Dalila* (1877).

**Example 4.4.** continued.



**Example 4.5.** Mermet, *Roland à Roncevaux*, Act II, No. 6 Chœur de femmes, p. 46.[166]




Mermet's "Choeur de jeunes filles" made an impression on Tchaikovsky who borrowed the idea for the opening scene of his *Orleanskaya deva*. His version differs

[166] Auguste Mermet, *Roland à Roncevaux* (Paris: Choudens, [n.d.]), 46.

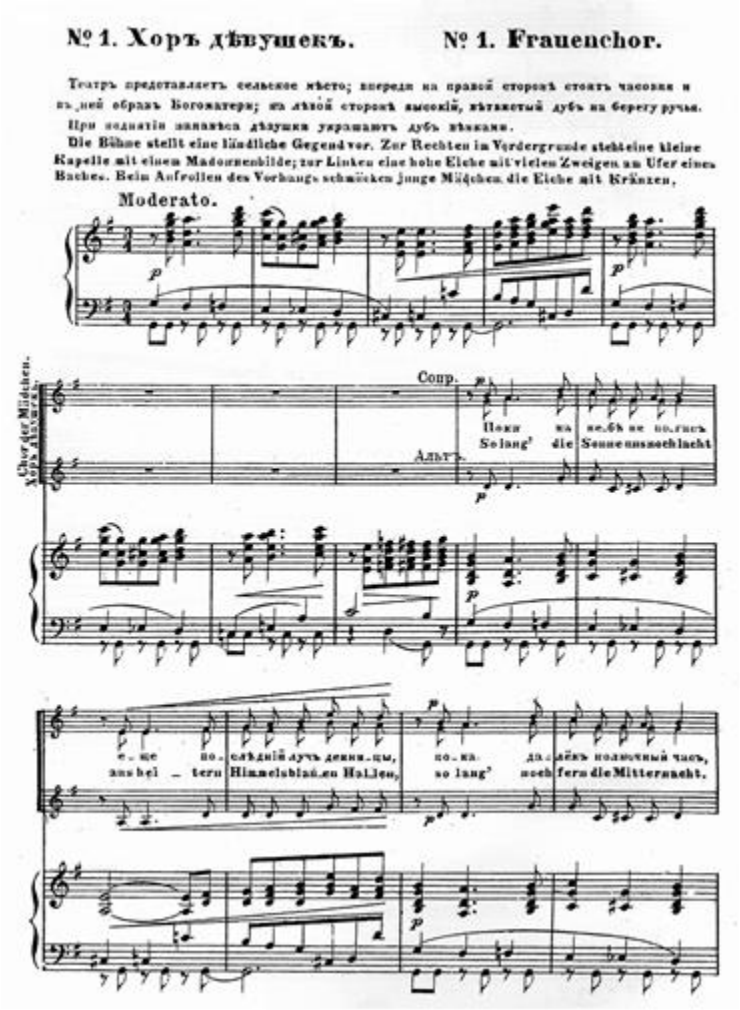
from Mermet's in two major ways: the text refers to a haunted forest and the music reflects Russian women's folksong. In Tchaikovsky's opera, the girls' chorus sings:

> Let us all gather here,
> whilst daylight is with us.
> Whilst the midnight hour
> has yet to come,
> let us all happily gather!
>
> We are sheltered here
> by the leafy branches
> of this ancient oak tree,
> we are sheltered here
> by the leafy branches
> of this ancient oak tree!
>
> Let us gather here … *etc.*
>
> But when the midnight hour is upon us,
> this place is haunted by weird creatures,
> a fairies' chorus will be heard,
> and ghosts will gently float about.[167]

Because Tchaikovsky uses Schiller's plot in which Joan is denounced as a sorceress by her father, he needs to convey the forest as a place of potential witchcraft. Therefore, his depiction of a haunted forest is not surprising. However, the music that accompanies the text reflects the Russian women's folksong style. (**See Example 4.6.**)

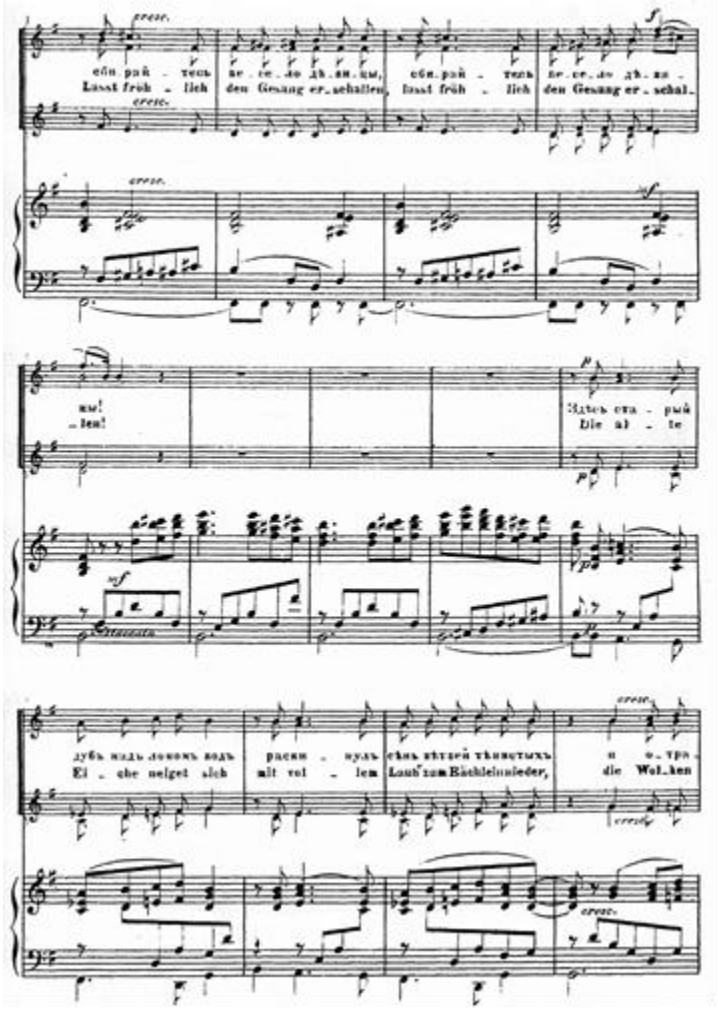
[167] Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky, *The Maid of Orleans: Opera in Four Acts*, trans. Myron Morris (New York: New York Opera Orchestra, 1990), 7.

**Example 4.6.** Tchaikovsky, *Orleanskaya deva*, Act I, No. 1, Girls' Chorus, pp. 16–17.[168]




[168] Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky, *The Maid of Orleans* (Repr., Boston: Elibron Classics, 2007), 16–17.

**Example 4.6.** continued.



In 1879, while Tchaikovsky was composing his opera, Julius Melgounoff published his first book of Russian folksongs. The book described the theoretical principles behind Russian folk music and created a sensation in the musical and ethnomusical societies in Russia and the Europe. Lineff describes the characteristic Russian singing style thus:

> It is evident that each voice is reproducing the same melody with harmonic variations, and, if sung separately, the individuality of the song can be recognized by the most inexperienced hearer. J. Melgounoff noticed when analysing the singing of large peasant choirs, that almost each singer joins the choir with a

> somewhat modified melody, not two singing alike, but always improvising some new variation of the same melody; hence that wonderful harmonic fullness which is characteristic of Russian peasant singing.[169]

The vocal parts of the girls' chorus reflect this singing style. Although Tchaikovsky writes for two main groups of sopranos and altos, the vocal parts often break into three-part or occasionally four-part harmony. Take, for example, soprano part in Example 4.6. Often the sopranos are singing in unison. However, when the part divides into two separate lines, it creates the effect of two female groups singing variations as in the traditional Russian folksong singing style.

To conclude: In the nineteenth century, the Fairy Tree or some sort of forest had become part of the setting for depicting Joan's childhood in Domrémy on the stage. Earlier works such as Schiller's play and Verdi's opera had depicted the tree as a location for witchcraft. Barbier-Gounod's melodrama mentioned the tree, but does not elaborate on it. However, Mermet's setting of the Fairy Tree with young girls in traditional Lorraine dress changed the perception of the tree from a negative part of Joan's story to a positive setting of her youth in Domrémy. Yet, Mermet's music did not reflect any specific regional characteristics, but rather indicated his own compositional practices for writing a women's chorus. Tchaikovsky, influenced by Mermet's Fairy Tree scene, seized the opportunity to compose his chorus in the vocal style of a folksong. The Russian composer, however, did not look to a French folksong to achieve this end, but rather attempted to simulate the sound of a Russian women's chorus.

[169] Eugénie Lineff, *Russian folk-songs as sung by the people, and peasant wedding ceremonies customary in northern and central Russia* (Chicago: C.F. Summy, 1893), 56–57.

## The Voices

What is the truth behind Joan's voices and visions? According to the Joan of Arc scholar Nadia Margolis, this was one of the all-consuming questions posed about the Maid during the nineteenth century, attracting the fascination of the French public.[170] Throughout the nineteenth century, scholars offered different explanations that were reflected in stage productions about the Maid as Tony James has summarized: "In 1825 Joan of Arc was held to be subject to somnambulism and ecstasy, in the 1830s she suffered from hallucinations; in the 1890s she was hysterical."[171] Sarah Hibberd adds that during the Restoration years, she was presented on stage as "a madwoman, a religious fanatic, and a witch."[172] In the early 1860s, some publications claimed that her visions had a physiological basis: Alexandre Brierre de Boismont's *De l'hallucination historique, ou étude médico-psychologique sur les voix et les révélations de Jeanne d'Arc* (1861) and Dr. Bertrand de Saint-Germain's *La Psychologie morbide dans ses rapports avec la philosophie de l'histoire* (1860) are two such examples.[173] De Boismont explained Joan's visions as a physiological disorder due to the transition from adolescence to adulthood, and De Saint-Germain argued that they were due to Joan's lack of certain "attributes and senses of a woman."[174] On the Catholic front, Henri-Alexandre Wallon in his biography of the Maid, *Jeanne d'Arc* (first edition, 1860), asserted that the

[170] Nadia Margolis, "Rewriting the Right, 1824–1945," *Joan of Arc: A Saint for All Reasons*, ed. Dominique Goy-Blanquet, (Burlington, VT: Ashgate Publishing Company, 2003), 68.

[171] James, *Dream, Creativity and Madness in Nineteenth-Century France*, 8.

[172] Hibberd, "Magnetism, Muteness, Magic," 70.

[173] Michel Winock, "Joan of Arc," in Vol. 3 of *Realms of Memory*, ed. Pierre Nora, trans. Arthur Goldhammer, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1998), 452–453.

[174] Ibid., 453.

Voices came from heaven. And on the republican side, Pierre Larousse asserted in his *Grand Dictionnaire du XIXe siècle* (1870) that "Jeanne Darc" did not have visions. Instead, her motivation stemmed from "an exalted sense of patriotism."[175]

Others ascribed Joan's experiences with visions as part of living during the Middle Ages. For example, as we have seen, Michelet wrote, "Who did not have visions in the Middle Ages? Even in this earthy fifteenth century, excessive sufferings led to a strange exaltation."[176] A similar sentiment was expressed in the review of Mermet's opera in *La Revue des deux mondes*:

> Faith prevailing everywhere, ever increasing, intensified by the horrors of the time: Black Death, massacres, invasions and calamities of all kinds. At these times, the human plant grows to tremendous proportions. In the good as in the bad, its abilities increase tenfold, reverie becomes ecstasy, and a mysterious fluid flows. Depending on the individual's predispositions, this fluid will develop in him the *delirium tremens* of politics or that raving lunatic state which causes mental visions and hallucinations. Joan of Arc is indeed a child of the century: a system with an extraordinary nervous susceptibility and a vibrant and easily excitable imagination predispose her to her vocation. She believes in it and before long forces the others to believe in her.[177]

Michelet's and the reviewer's explanations put forth this idea that the extreme hardship and stress of living during the Middle Ages caused people to have visions.

So where do the two works under study fall among all of these explanations? Both avoid portraying Joan as a madwoman or a witch. This is in contrast to the works

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[175] Ibid., 457. Larousse uses the non-aristocratic form of her name that was becoming popular. In fact, in Barbier's original play of *Jeanne d'Arc*, he uses this form.

[176] Michelet, *Jeanne d'Arc*, 4.

[177] "Revue musicale," *Revue des deux mondes*, May 1, 1876. "La foi régnant partout, de plus en plus accrue, exaltée par les horreurs du temps: peste noire, massacres, invasions et fléaux de toute espèce. A ces époques la plante humaine grandit à des proportions formidables, dans le bien comme dans le mal ses facultés se décuplent, la rêverie devient extase, un fluide mystérieux circule qui, selon les prédispositions de l'individu, va développer chez lui le *delirium tremens* de la politique ou tel état convulsionnaire se traduisant par les visions et l'hallucination. Jeanne d'Arc est bien l'enfant du siècle: un système d'une susceptibilité nerveuse extraordinaire, une imagination inflammable et vibrante, la prédisposent à sa vocation; elle y croit et bientôt force les autres à croire en elle."

mentioned by Sarah Hibberd as well as Verdi's *Giovanna d'Arco*, in which Joan is torn between an invisible chorus of angels and demons. Then later, she is accused by her father of witchcraft during the coronation scene at Reims. Instead, in the melodrama, the Voices offer comfort to Joan and in the opera, they guide her through her mission. Both works seem to be keeping with Michelet's idea that Joan was a product of the Middle Ages—a time of visions. But the approach and importance of the Voices varies in these two works, and this difference can be found in the illustrated newspapers. Just as the illustrations of the Domrémy scene in Mermet's opera depicted the Fairy Tree, illustrations of the Domrémy scene in the melodrama depict Saint Margaret and Saint Catherine. Before I examine the two examples in detail, I would like to provide a brief history of the Voices.

## Historical Background

Throughout Joan of Arc's interrogation trial, the clerics were persistent in questioning Joan about the Voices. Initially, she did not call them by name but said:

> … from the age of thirteen, she received revelation from Our Lord by a voice which taught her how to behave. And the first time she was greatly afraid. And she said that the voice came that time at noon, on a summer's day, a fast day, when she was in her father's garden, and that the voice came on her right side, in the direction of the church. And she said that the voice was hardly ever without a light, which was always in the direction of the voice. She said further that, after she heard it three times, she knew it was the voice of an angel.[178]

However, by the fourth session of questioning, she admitted to have permission from Our Lord to name the Voices as Saint Catherine and Saint Margaret, and that she knew it was they because they told her their names. She added that she also received counsel from

[178] Scott, *The Trial of Joan of Arc*, 67.

Saint Michael the Archangel, and that it was he who had appeared to her first when she was thirteen.[179] She added that during this appearance, angels surrounded him. Throughout the trial, Joan was asked to describe the saints and angels in more detail, and it is from these descriptions that we gain a better idea of exactly what she saw. This may have been of particular interest to the people doing the staging.

According to Joan's answers, several characteristics become apparent. Always accompanied by a light, they brought her great comfort (so much so that she would weep when they departed). They would appear to her in different locations and often when bells were chiming as at Compline or Matins.[180] Sometimes they would wake her from her sleep and at other times they would come after she had prayed for them. The Voices called her, "Jeanne the Pucelle, Daughter of God."[181] While in conference with the dauphin at Chinon, Joan declared that her voices had encouraged her by saying, "Daughter of God, go, go, go; I will be your aid, go."[182] As far as appearance, Saint Catherine and Saint Margaret were adorned with beautiful crowns and Saint Michael appeared in the "shape of a very true and upright man."[183]

The questions at the condemnation trial gave Joan the opportunity to describe her voices in fairly good detail, but at the same time, these questions trapped her into naming

[179] Joan also admitted to seeing the Saint Gabriel the Archangel, but he does not appear as often in the trial records as the other three voices.

[180] Anne Llewellyn Barstow, *Joan of Arc: Heretic, Mystic, Shaman* (Lewiston, NY: The Edwin Mellon Press, 1986), 26.

[181] Scott, *The Trial of Joan of Arc*, 105.

[182] Vita Sackville-West, *Saint Joan of Arc* (New York: Grove Press, 1936), 202. "Fille de Dieu, va, va, va; je seray en ton aide, va." From Jules Quicherat, *Procès de Condemnation et de Réhabilitation de Jeanne d'Arc, dite la Pucelle, publiés pour la première fois d'après les manuscrits de la Bibliothèque royale*, vol. 4 (Paris: Jules Renouard, 1841), 168–169.

[183] Scott, *The Trial of Joan of Arc*, 121.

physical attributes that the clerics considered more concrete than ethereal. For example, she said that she had embraced the saints, and when asked whether they smelled pleasant, she replied, "Assuredly they did so."[184] Then she was asked whether she felt any warmth when touching them, and she answered that "she could not embrace them without feeling and touching them."[185] By cornering her with such questions, Joan's evaluators caused her to portray the voices as having earthly, as opposed to heavenly, characteristics. In their view, with such corporeal attributes, the voices could not have been sent by God, but rather by the Devil.[186] These solicited details were brought up against her in the charges at the end of her interrogations.

The historian Anne Llewellyn Barstow alerts us to the unusualness of Joan's voices in that they did not include the Blessed Virgin Mary, who, by all accounts medieval and recent, seems to be the "most popular spectral visitor."[187] What would be the significance of these particular saints to Joan at this time? To begin, Saint Michael, the archangel portrayed in armor and ready for battle, seems a natural counsel to the warrior maid. In 1419, after the fall of the abbey of St. Denis (named for the patron saint of France), Charles had the image of Saint Michael painted on his soldiers' standards. Also, the monastery Mont-Saint-Michel had resisted attack and remained true to Charles despite its vulnerable location in the north of France where it was surrounded by English and Burgundian invaders. In Lorraine and Champagne, the cult of Saint Michael was

[184] Ibid., 127.

[185] Ibid., 127.

[186] Marina Warner, *Joan of Arc: The Image of Female Heroism* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000), 128.

[187] Barstow, *Joan of Arc*, 28.

growing, and, in fact, he was the patron saint of the Barrois, the region that includes Joan's village of Domrémy.[188]

By the early fifteenth century, the cults of Saint Margaret and Saint Catherine were flourishing. A statue of Saint Margaret still stands at the church in Domrémy, and Saint Catherine was the patron saint of the church in nearby Maxey-sur-Meuse. Moreover, Catherine was the name of Joan's sister who had died, and the name given to the child that Joan had helped deliver when she left home for France.[189] Both of these saints were included as part of the Fourteen Holy Helpers who could be called upon for specific purposes. For example, Saint Margaret was summoned during pregnancy to intercede for the safe delivery of a child. Saint Catherine, usually pictured with a wheel, is the patron of wheelwrights, philosophers, and students.[190]

> The Voices gave Joan very specific messages that can be summed up as follows:
>
> > Following Michael's initial admonition that she must go to France, they told her to wear men's clothes, that her sword would be found at Fierbois, that she would be wounded at Orléans, that Catherine de La Rochelle was a fraud, that Joan would be captured, would suffer, but would escape. They promised her that Baudricourt would give her an escort, that the king would recognize her at Chinon, that she would raise the siege of Orléans, and that the king would regain his kingdom. . . They threatened that if she revealed their secrets to anyone without their permission, they would leave her. And they assured her that she would go to Paradise.[191]

Furthermore, Joan declared that everything good she had done had been advised to her by the Voices, and when asked if she was in a state of mortal sin, she responded, "she could

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[188] Warner, *Joan of Arc*, 132. Domrémy was a border village partly in Barrois and partly in France. See Vita Sackville-West, *Joan of Arc*, 23–24.

[189] Ibid., 132–133.

[190] Ibid., 133.

[191] Barstow, *Joan of Arc*, 29.

not be, for how else would her voices continue to come to her?"[192] The trial records indicate that Joan did hear external voices. For example, she complains that the jail was sometimes so loud that she had trouble hearing her voices, and once she could not tell if the voice had said "Falstaff" or "Fort St. Loup."[193]

## The Voices in Barbier-Gounod's *Jeanne d'Arc*

In the *Journal des débats*, Ernest Reyer describes the end of Act I when the Voices first appear in Barbier-Gounod's melodrama:

> At the end of the act, the voices are heard: chorus and verses that mingle with Jeanne's monologue. The sounds of the organ are cleverly combined with those of the orchestra, in which muted violins and mysterious notes of the horns dominate. The sopranos and tenors respond with a phrase of two bars: "Jesus, Maria," to each of the four stanzas sung in thirds by the voices of the female saints. The persistence of this interval is a desired effect by the composer, and not, as one might think, poor harmony.[194]

This final scene benefits greatly from the addition of Gounod's music and allows for Saint Margaret and Saint Catherine to appear on stage and call Joan to her mission. When comparing Barbier's published, but never performed, play of 1869 with the 1873 melodrama, one notices that the role of the Voices is increased a great deal. In the original play, the Voices are heard off-stage at the end of the first and final acts. They are

[192] Ibid., 29.

[193] Ibid., 26 and Warner, *Joan of Arc*, 131.

[194] Ernest Reyer, *Journal des débats*, November 14, 1873. "A la fin de l'acte, les *voix* se font entendre: choeur et strophes auxquels se mêle le monologue de Jeanne. Les sonorités de l'orgue son très habilement combinées avec celles de l'orchestre, où dominent les violons en sourdine et quelques notes mystérieuses de cor. Les sopranos et les tenors répondent par une phrase de deux mesures: *Jesus, Maria*, à chacune des quatre strophes chantées à la tierce par les voix des saintes. La persistance de cet intervalle est un effet voulu par le compositeur, et non point, comme on pourrait le croire, une pauvreté harmonique."

not seen and they are not identified in the play by anything other than "ses voix."[195] In the later melodrama, Saint Margaret and Saint Catherine appear on stage, visible to Jeanne and to the audience, during Act I and Act V. I believe that Gounod was responsible for creating a larger role for the Voices in the melodrama.

We first learn about the Voices when Jeanne speaks of them to Thibaut, her suitor. She explains that one evening while she was praying, a heavenly light shone down and Saint Michael, Saint Margaret, and Saint Catherine appeared. She continues, "The voice of God himself pealed from the skies, 'Jeanne, on the opening day of Lent arise, Go to the King! None else but thou alone can vict'ry bring, - I choose thee for mine own, Go child of Heaven!'"[196] This text is spoken without any musical accompaniment, so we must wait until the end of Act I to hear the music associated with these voices.

First, she hears the church bells, so she kneels to pray. Gounod incorporates the sound of the bells into his score as background to Jeanne's prayer. While she prays, a ray of moonlight becomes brighter through her window. The Voices call her, "Jeanne!" They tell her that God has spoken to her, but she has not listened to his call. Jeanne pleads with them to let her stay at home with her father. Then, Saint Margaret and Saint Catherine appear in the moonlight. They tell her that God has chosen her and she must do his bidding. In the background the chorus of angels is heard, "Jésus! Jésus Maria!" The scene continues:

[195] Jules Barbier, *Jeanne d'Arc: Drame en Cinq Actes*.1869. (Repr., LaVergne, TN: Kessinger Publishing, 2011), 34–35.

[196] Jules Barbier, *Jeanne d'Arc*, trans. Frederic Lyster (New York: F. Rullman, 1891), 6.

| | |
|---|---|
| Les Deux Saintes<br>L'épreuve est amère!<br>A ton village dis adieu!<br>Tu fuiras ton père et ta mère<br>Pour suivre le Seigneur ton Dieu!.. | The Two Saints<br>The trial is bitter!<br>Say goodbye to your village!<br>You will shun your father and your mother<br>To follow the Lord your God! |
| Jeanne<br>Demain! demain! encore un jour!.. | Jeanne<br>Tomorrow! Tomorrow! One more day! |
| Les Deux Saintes<br>Dieu t'a choisie!<br>Va, pauvre âme d'effroi saisie!<br>Va, fille de Dieu! .. va! | The Two Saints<br>God has chosen you!<br>Go, poor soul seized with fright!<br>Go, daughter of God! Go! |
| Le Choeur<br>Jésus! Jésus Maria! | The Choir<br>Jesus! Jesus Maria! |
| Jeanne, avec une exaltation croissante.<br>Dieu le veut! .. Pardonnez, mon père, à votre Jeanne! ..<br>A vous désobéir c'est Dieu qui me condamne! | Jeanne, with increasing excitement.<br>God wills it! .. My father, forgive your Jeanne! ..<br>To disobey you, it is God who condemns me! |
| Le Deux Saintes et Le Choeur<br>Va! Je serai vers toi! .. va, fille de Dieu! .. va! | The Two Saints and the Choir<br>Go! I will be with you! .. Go, daughter of God! .. Go! |
| (Jeanne, enveloppée du rayon lumineux, recule avec une sorte d'épouvante jusqu'à la porte du fond. Elle jette un adieu désespéré vers la chambre de son père et semble prête à s'éloigner. — La toile tombe.) | (Jeanne, enveloped in a shaft of light, steps back in an afflicted manner to the door in the back [upstage]. She sends a desperate goodbye towards her father's room and seems prepared to go away. — The curtain falls.)[197] |

These are voices that neither torment her nor are they choruses of good and evil struggling to win her soul. These are the saints, like the ones described in the trial records, who beckon her to leave her home, crown her king, and save her country from foreign occupation.

The accompanying music for the Voices consists of sustained harmonies and tremolos, but most noticeable is Gounod's use of key to heighten the drama. Initially the bell chimes are heard in octaves in the key of C major, perhaps relating to the simplicity

[197] Barbier, *Jeanne d'Arc*, 35–36.

of Jeanne's life before she leaves her family. Yet, when she prays about her uncertainty to do God's bidding, Gounod includes subtle dissonances to convey her inner turmoil. The key then gradually modulates from C major to E major in twenty measures as Jeanne hears the Voices calling her name. When the moonlight illuminates the stage to reveal Saint Margaret and Saint Catherine, they begin to sing in parallel thirds in the key of E major, a key of "full delight."[198] Yet, the key modulates to A major at a very specific point when the saints refer to God:

> Your Lord reveals himself to you!
> This is the voice of God, who calls you!
> Go, daughter of God! Go![199]

And then modulates to F-sharp minor when referring to parting:

> The trial is bitter!
> Say goodbye to your village!
> You will shun your father and your mother
> To follow the Lord your God![200]

Throughout this scene, Jeanne tries to resist the Voices and begs them for one more day. However, the Voices are unmoved by her pleas and continue to beckon her, returning to the key of E major. Finally, Jeanne consents to do "God's will." Just as she agrees and says, "Je le vois! Je l'entends!" the music recognizes her communion with

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[198] Rita Steblin, *A History of Key Characteristics in the 18th and Early 19th Centuries* (Ann Arbor: UMI Research Press, 1983), 123. Note the parallel thirds that Reyer mentioned in his review as not being a "poor harmony," but rather the composer's choice. See also Clair Rowden, *Republican Morality and Catholic Tradition in the Opera: Massenet's Hérodiade and Thaïs* (Weinsberg: Lucie Galland, 2004), 121. Rowden refers to Schubart in her discussion of Jules Massenet's opera *Hérodiade*. According to Christian Friedrich Daniel Schubart's *Ideen zu einer Aesthetik der Tonkunst* (1804), the key of A major is used to convey "trust in God" and "the hope of seeing one's beloved again when parting": an appropriate key to use to help persuade Jeanne to leave her home. The key of F-sharp minor is referred to as a "gloomy" key conveying Jeanne's own sorrow and reluctance to leave her family.

[199] Barbier and Gounod, *Jeanne d'Arc*, 16. "Ton Seigneur à toi se révèle; C'est la voix de Dieu qui t'appelle; Va! Va! fille de Dieu, va!"

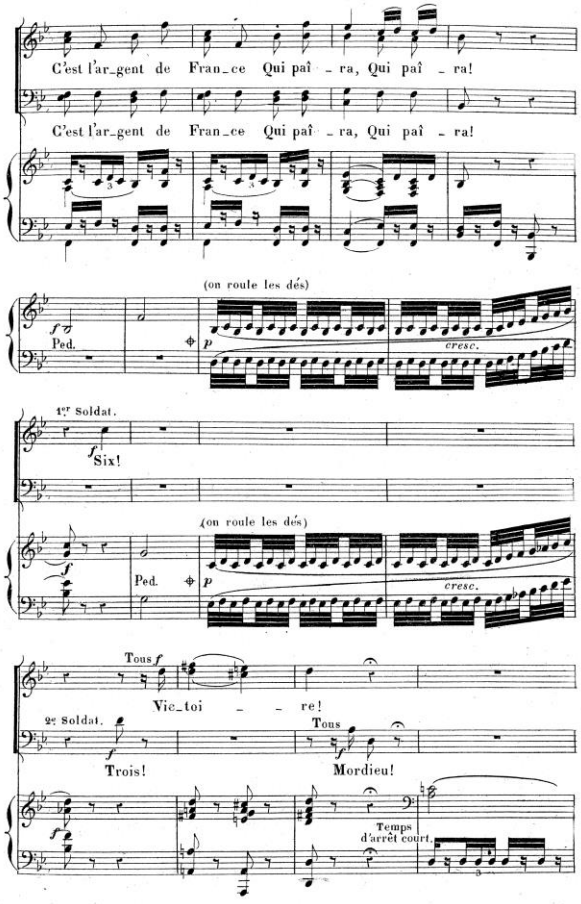
[200] Ibid., 17. "L'épreuve est amère ! A ton village dis adieu! Tu fuiras ton père et ta mère, Pour suivre le Seigneur ton Dieu!"

God by moving to a G-sharp major chord. By modulating from C major to E major, Gounod had already moved the scene from earth (no sharps or flats) to the heavens (four sharps). His move to a G-sharp chord, which acts as the dominant to C minor, musically portrays Jeanne's divine experience. By modulating up by major thirds, he is ascending to the far reaches of musical keys on the sharp side.[201] This climax on the G-sharp major chord acts as the ultimate destination for Jeanne. The music then finds its way back to E major through C minor. The choir of angels continues to punctuate the scene with shouts of, "Jésus Maria!" as the saints tell Jeanne to "Va! Fille de Dieu! Va!" This musical encounter, a G-sharp major chord, between Jeanne and God will occur again in the final scene when she enters the heavens.

The Voices return at the beginning of Act V (Premier Tableau, La Prison) inside Jeanne's prison cell. The scene opens with the soldiers throwing dice and gambling, "J'ai bonne espérance" in a lively *allegretto*, 2/4 meter, and B-flat major. (**Example 4.7.**)

[201] Matthew Bribitzer-Stull, "The Ab-C-E Complex: The Origin and Function of Chromatic Major Third Collections in Nineteenth-Century Music," *Music Theory Spectrum* 28, no. 2 (Autumn, 2006): 167–190. Bribitzer-Stull explains the prominence of major third key relationships in the nineteenth century and how such modulations were used for expressive means. He also discusses how E Major and A-Flat Major marked the edges of "acceptable intonation on unequally-tempered instruments." See page 172.

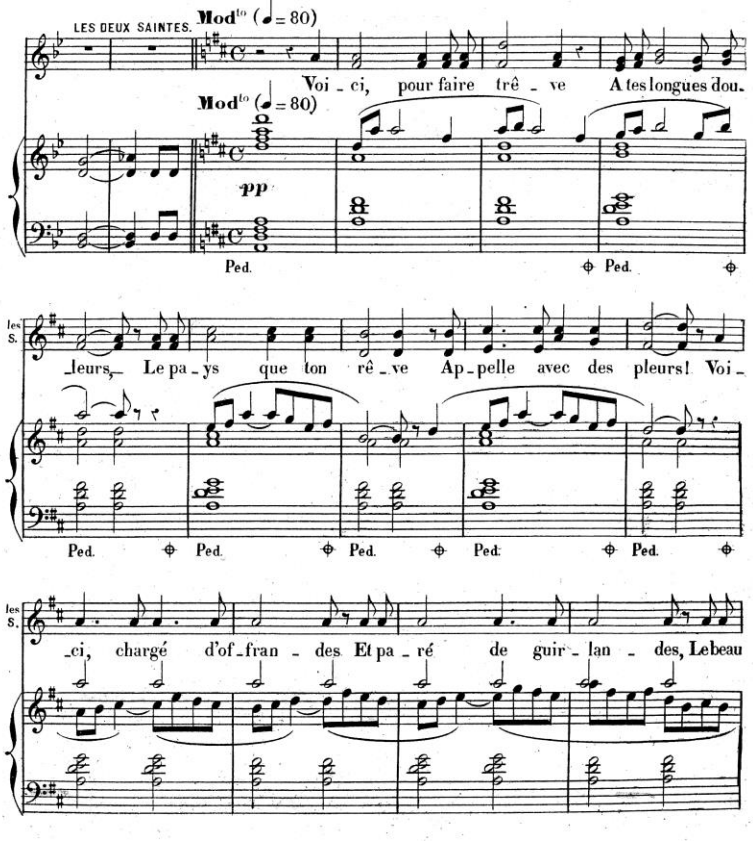
**Example 4.7.** Barbier-Gounod, *Jeanne d'Arc*, Act V, Premier Tableau, La Prison, p. 87.




Jeanne continues to sleep while Saint Margaret and Saint Catherine appear, telling her not to despair, but to take courage, and they will support her. Again Gounod uses different keys to highlight the activities of this scene. When the saints sing their first words of comfort, they are in E-flat major. However, the music returns to the soldiers' revelry and B-flat major. When the saints resume their words of consolation, the key moves up a major third to D major. Not only does Gounod intensify the emotion of the scene with a sudden key change, but he also incorporates the theme of Domrémy into the saints' song. This theme is heard in the Introduction and is now used to add poignancy by recalling the Joan's home in Domrémy. The saints sing of the garlands and flowers of May and how

the country calls to Jeanne in tears. The libretto describes a vision of boys and girls with garlands. (**Example 4.8.)**

**Example 4.8.** Barbier-Gounod, *Jeanne d'Arc*, Act V, Premier Tableau, La Prison, p. 91. Domrémy Theme is in upper melody line of accompaniment.




This scene, one of the most emotionally stirring of the entire production, was not included in the original Barbier play but was created specifically for the collaborative version with music. The contrast between the soldiers gambling and Jeanne asleep with saints watching over her is very striking, and Gounod is able to capture the contrast in his music by moving between the two activities, the lively *allegretto* in 2/4 meter and the slower *moderato* in common time. Reyer noted the effectiveness of the scene: "The

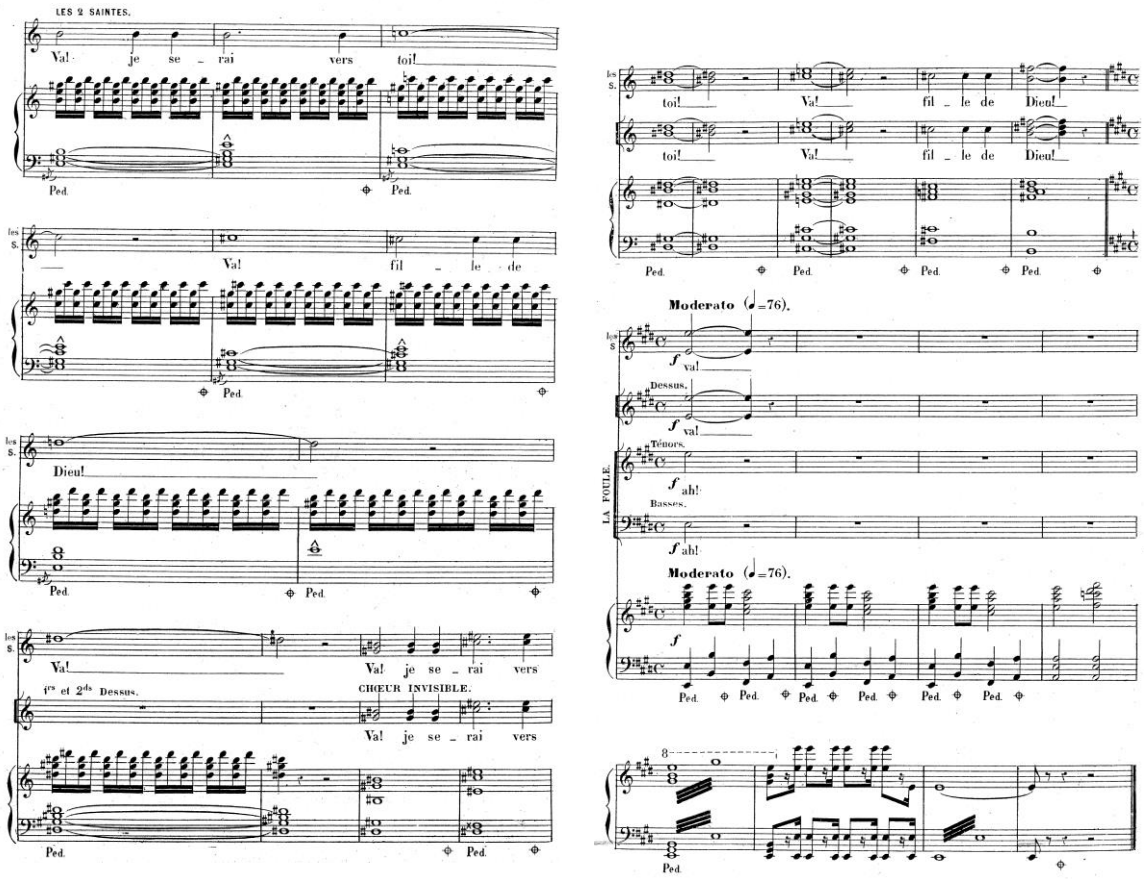
ecstatic vision of the girl and the drinking song of the men at arms provide a striking contrast very skillfully rendered by the composer."[202]

The final scene is described thus: "The pyre is lit, the flame rises, invisible voices singing in the wings, and the virgin warrior, her eyes fixed on the cross presented by Brother Martin, sees the palm of martyrdom and all the joys of paradise."[203] The choir of angels beckons her, "Jeanne!" As the flames leap higher, Jeanne declares, "Ah! Paradise opens! Back cowardly fears!" over a B major chord, which makes one think it will act as a dominant modulating to E major, but instead it moves to E minor. Jeanne then proclaims, "I understand now the promise of the saints! This is God who delivers me! Jésus Maria!" over a G major seventh chord which modulates to C major just as the angels sing, "Jésus Maria!" Saint Margaret and Saint Catherine, sing in the wings, "Go, I am with you! Go, Daughter of God!" over the progression that we heard in Act I. They begin in E major move to the G-sharp major chord and then back to ending in E major, indicating Jeanne's final communion with God. (**Example 4.9.**)

[202] Reyer, *Journal des débats*. "La vision extatique de la jeune fille et la chanson à boire des hommes d'armes offrent un contraste saisissant et très habilement rendu par le compositeur."

[203] Ibid. "Le bûcher s'allume, la flamme monte, les voix invisibles chantent dans la coulisse, et la vierge guerrière, les yeux fixés sur la croix que lui présente le Frère Martin, entrevoit les palmes du martyre et toutes les joies du paradis."

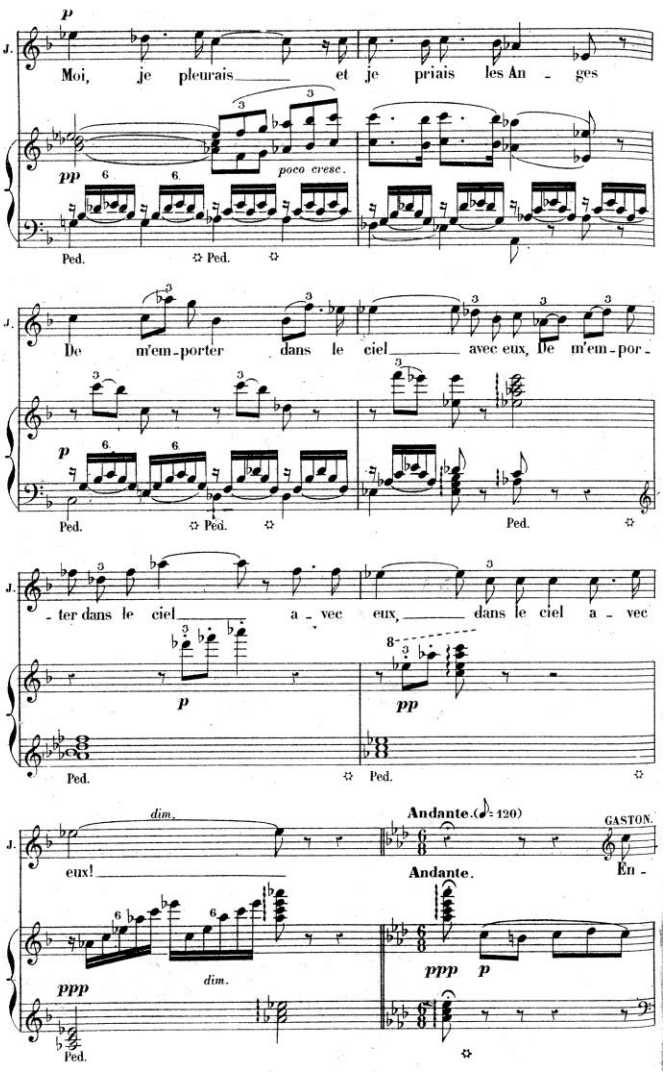
**Example 4.9.** Barbier-Gounod, *Jeanne d'Arc*, Act V, No. 16, Final, pp. 114–115.




The modulation from C major to E major occurs one more time in the melodrama—when Jeanne tells Charles VII about his "secret." In order to convince him of the importance of her mission, she tells Charles about a prayer that he had made to God: He had asked God to preserve his rights to the throne if he was truly legitimate. However, if he was not the legitimate heir, then he asked God to preserve his life with freedom ("la liberté"). Jeanne does not sing, but rather speaks this prayer aloud to Charles. While she speaks, the music moves *pianissimo* through a chord progression modulating from C major and ending in E major by the time she says, "la liberté!"

(**Example 4.10.**) By doing so, Gounod reinforces this relationship between the C major to E major chord progression and divine intervention.

**Example 4.10.** Barbier-Gounod, *Jeanne d'Arc*, Act II, No. 7, Mélodrame, p. 33.




The music excerpts discussed above demonstrate the great deal of attention that Gounod paid to the music of Saint Margaret and Saint Catherine. By having them sing and appear on stage so that they appear to the audience as well as to Jeanne, Gounod reinforces the Catholic belief that the historical Joan of Arc did hear and see them. The

Voices were not merely voices in her head as other stage works portray them. Gounod's saints are divine guides sent by God to assist Jeanne in her mission.

### The Voices in Mermet's *Jeanne d'Arc*

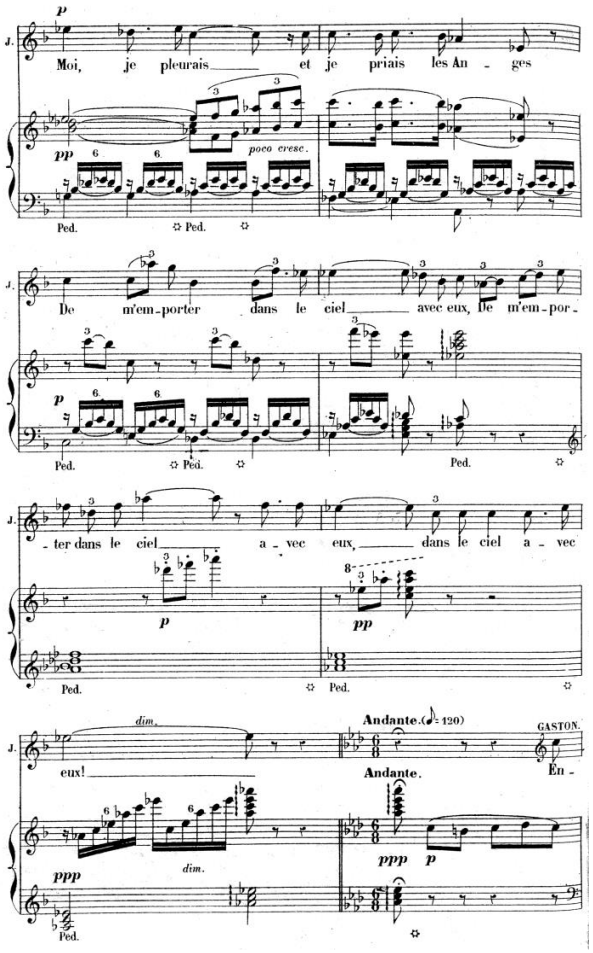
Mermet's treatment of the Voices differs from Barbier and Gounod's melodrama in two ways. First, in Mermet's *Jeanne d'Arc*, the Voices are heard, but the producers of these voices (singers) are never seen by the audience. Although Jeanne identifies her voices as Saint Margaret, Saint Catherine, and the Archangel Michael, Mermet does not include vocal parts for these characters. Instead, he simply utilizes an offstage chorus of angels to represent the divine beings. Similar to Barbier's melodrama, the Voices are introduced by Jeanne in Act I. In this opera, Jeanne tells Gaston, a knight who is in love with her, that Saint Margaret, Saint Catherine, and the Archangel Michael appeared to her on a summer's day when she was out in the garden in the shadow of the church. When they appeared, the *Angelus* was ringing and the garden was illuminated. She explains that they beckoned her to go to the dauphin. Moreover, she adds that God wills her to do this, and she must obey.

The second difference between the melodrama and the opera is a result of the difference in genres—Mermet's opera does not have any text unaccompanied by some sort of music. Barbier-Gounod's melodrama, naturally, consists mostly of unaccompanied text. Jeanne's description of the Voices in Act I of both works provides an excellent example of this difference. In the melodrama, Jeanne informs her suitor Thibaut that she has heard Voices—and there is no musical accompaniment. However, in

the opera, there is musical accompaniment as Jeanne informs Gaston, the soldier who falls in love with her, about the Voices.

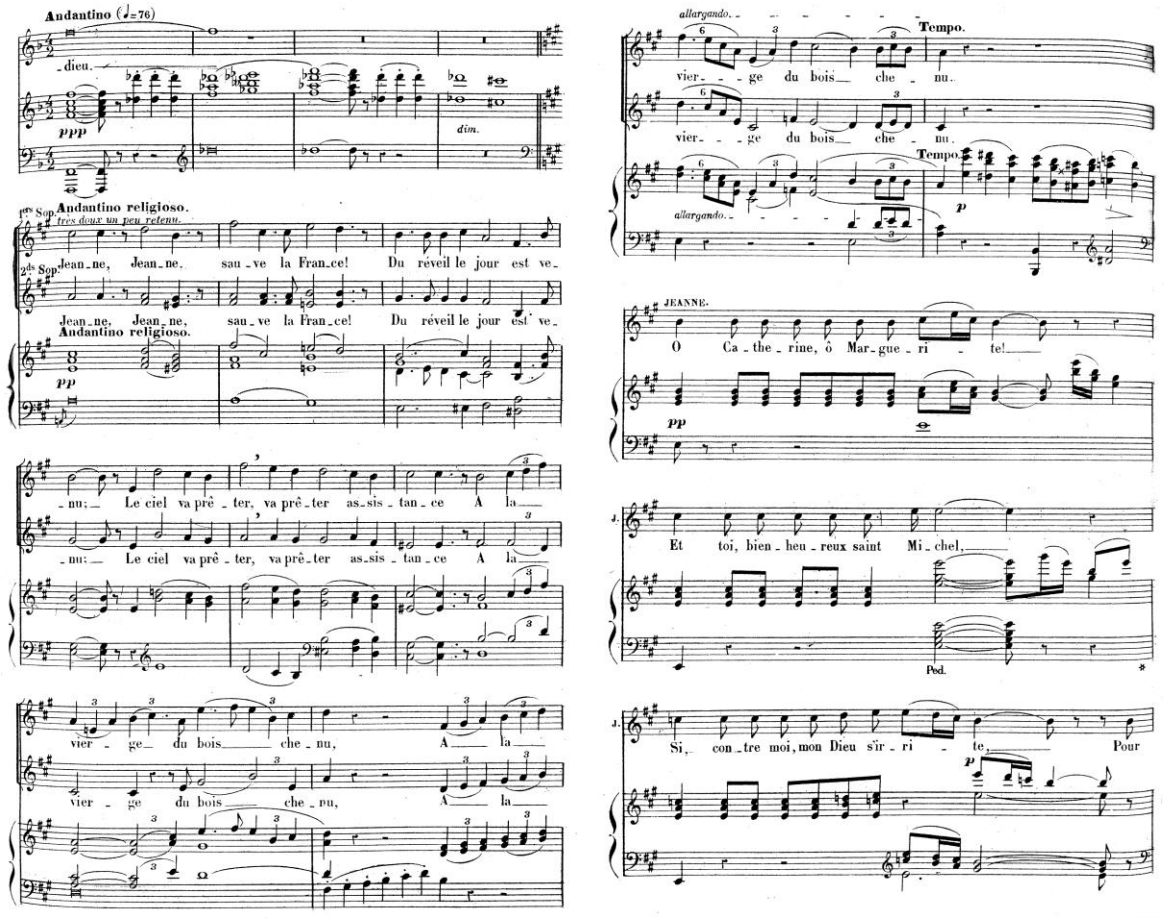
When Jeanne describes the Voices to Gaston in Mermet's opera, the music fluctuates primarily between F major and A major—reinforcing the use of major-third key relationships for expressive purposes, as mentioned earlier in respect to Gounod's music for the Voices. When Jeanne relays her interaction with the Voices, she begins in F major, common time, *adagio*. Mermet simulates the sounds of birds singing with trills. When she talks about the saints appearing, the music modulates to A major with tremolos. The texture changes to an arpeggiated accompaniment in F major when Jeanne conveys what the saints informed her. When the saints refer to the "poor dauphin," the music moves into F minor and then modulates to A-flat major as Jeanne begs the saints to take her with them to Heaven. Her sense of longing is represented musically by a B-flat half diminished chord moving back to the tonic of A-flat. (**Example 4.11.**).

**Example 4.11.** Mermet, *Jeanne d'Arc*, Act 1, No. 5, Duo, p. 62.




The Voices are heard for the first time in the next scene, No. 6, Air et Choeur d'Anges, when Jeanne is praying alone. She expresses her fear of parting, as the scene opens in F minor, common time, Maestoso. Then, Joan begins to sing the air (F major, 3/4 meter) in which she describes her village and her reluctance to leave. Suddenly, a choir of angels (sopranos singing off stage) answer her call in A major. The angels' music consists mostly of two-part harmony with an occasional breaking into three parts. (**See Example 4.12.**)

**Example 4.12.** Mermet, *Jeanne d'Arc*, Act I, No. 6, Air et Choeur d'Anges, pp. 75–76.



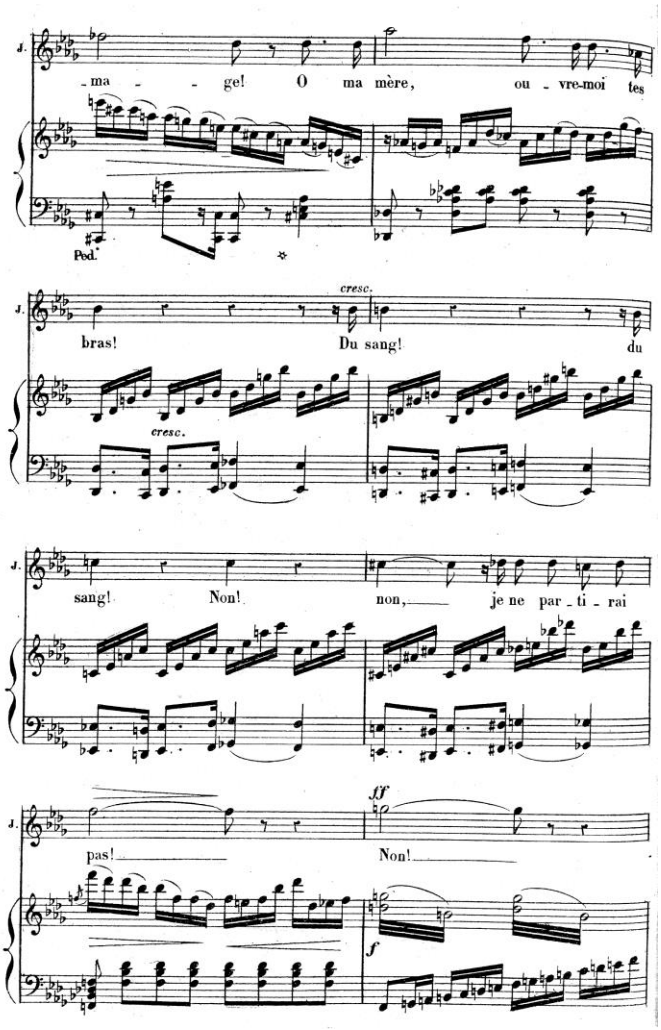

In this passage, the Voices call Jeanne, "the virgin of the *bois chesnu*," (recalling the prophecy of Merlin) and tell her that the day has arrived for her to leave. Jeanne prays to Saint Margaret, Saint Catherine, and Saint Michael to intercede for her if she has made God irritable. When she asks for this intercession, the music modulates to the remote key of C-sharp major. However, the angels do not heed her and instead tell her that the day has arrived for her to save France. Once more, Jeanne asks for their pity and exclaims that she is afraid of the blood and carnage that await her. The music changes to an *allegro*

*deciso* in B-flat minor and suddenly the chromatic Fate Theme is heard in the lower register of the orchestra. (**See Example 4.13.**) Jeanne pleads again, "No, I cannot leave!" Yet, the angels return for a third time in their key of A major to persuade her of her mission to save France.[204] The Fate Theme is heard again as Jeanne exclaims, "Fatal premonition!" Finally, she acquiesces to the angels' command and responds, "I will go!" over a simple authentic cadence in F major. Unlike Gounod's music, which culminates in a harmonic climax as Jeanne is joined with God, Mermet has Jeanne simply give in as if she is worn out from all of her pleading with the angels. In doing so, Mermet accentuates the human frailty of Jeanne. Although she had spoken to Gaston with bravura about her mission, she is deeply troubled by the magnitude of what is being asked of her. Moreover, in Mermet's depiction, Jeanne is aware because of her fatal premonition that she very well may die during her mission. This Fate Theme will return when she has another premonition of her death at the end of the opera.

[204] The angels beckoning her three times could reflect the three times that Joan was visited by Saint Michael before she recognized who he was.

**Example 4.13.** Mermet, *Jeanne d'Arc*, Act I, No. 6, Air et Choeur d'Anges, p. 80.

Fate Theme in Bass Clef →




The chorus of angels returns for a final time in Act IV (No. 24 Scène, Choeur d'Anges et Symphonie). Jeanne has just learned of Gaston's death and prays to God for his salvation. She exclaims, "He is dead for France!" The angels' music begins in A major, 4/2 meter, and they tell her that she must go to Reims for the coronation. Although they counsel her as to what she needs to do next, they do not console her, as the saints in Barbier-Gounod's melodrama did. Mermet's chorus of angels acts solely as a guide for Jeanne to help her fulfill her mission.

When compared with the Voices in Barbier-Gounod's melodrama, the Voices in Mermet's opera seem more impersonal in their relationship with Jeanne. Unlike Barbier-Gounod's Voices, Mermet's Voices do not appear on stage, and he does not distinguish the saints from the choir of angels in the score. Moreover, his Voices only direct Jeanne as to what to do next throughout her mission. Barbier-Gounod's Voices, on the other hand, not only guide the Maid, but they also console her, as in the prison scene. Yet, both stage works present the Voices as divine messengers who summon Jeanne to her mission.

## Conclusion

Some newspaper critics called for a more historically-informed presentation of Joan of Arc's life on the musical stage. Yet at the same time, other critics observed that certain legendary elements, for example the Fairy Tree and the Voices, had been woven into history's tapestry and could not be extracted easily. By the 1870s, these elements were being presented in new ways on the stage: 1) The Fairy Tree, earlier associated with darkness and sorcery, emerged as a centerpiece in an innocuous setting evoking Joan's childhood in Domrémy in Mermet's opera and 2) The Voices, previously presented as signs of Joan's madness, became comforters embodied in the forms of Saint Catherine and Saint Margaret in Barbier-Gounod's melodrama. The illustrated papers of the time show how the different works highlighted the Fairy Tree and the Voices in different ways: Mermet's Domrémy scene contains a large tree in the middle of the set and Barbier-Gounod's Domrémy scene depicts the saints visiting the Maid.[205] Although the works seem to focus on one element over the other, they both include the Fairy Tree and

[205] *The Illustrated American*, March 1, 1890, 32. Illustrations of the Domrémy scene carried over into the 1890s when newspapers once again focused on the visitation of the saints in Sarah Bernhardt's revival of the melodrama.

the Voices in some way. Barbier-Gounod's melodrama does include a small reference to the Fairy Tree and Mermet's opera does include the Voices, although they are not visible. Therefore, these works show that the Fairy Tree and the Voices were embedded firmly into Joan of Arc's story, but by the 1870s, they were freed from any negative associations.

# CHAPTER V

# JOAN'S MISSION

> *Who is this Joan of Arc?*
> *... Why did she come into the world?*[206]
> Ivan de Woestyne, "L'Histoire d'un Opéra" (1876)

According to the French journalist Ivan de Woestyne in 1876, Mermet asked himself those very two questions when faced with the task of adapting Joan of Arc's life story for the stage. Initially, the poet-composer decided against the subject of the Maid, and instead wrote his successful historical opera *Roland à Roncevaux* (1864). Mermet struggled with the two-part nature of Joan's story. De Woestyne explains:

> In a piece, whatever it is, you need one body, one only, and the epic of Joan of Arc has two. It can be represented by a wasp—that is to say, an animal with two parts separated by an unnoticeable waist. The two bodies of history are, on one side, the glorious part of Joan's life, and the other side, her death; or, to even better separate them, the French part ending with the coronation and the English part which leads to the stake.[207]

The challenge is meeting the two parts in a single work. In order to accomplish this task, Mermet had to determine the purpose of Joan's mission. De Woestyne's article provides the answer:

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[206] Ivan de Woestyne, "L'Histoire d'un Opéra," *Le Figaro*, March 31, 1876. Qu'est-ce que Jeanne d'Arc?… Pourquoi est-elle venue au monde." This article appeared a few days before the premiere of Mermet's opera. Taking up half of the front page of the newspaper, the article follows the history of the opera's genesis.

[207] Ibid. "A une pièce, quelle qu'elle soit, il faut un corps, un seul, et l'épopée de Jeanne d'Arc en a deux. Elle peut se représenter par une guêpe c'est-à-dire un animal à deux parties complètement séparées par une taille inappréciable. Les deux corps de l'histoire sont d'un côté la partie glorieuse de la vie de Jeanne, et de l'autre sa mort; ou, pour mieux les séparer encore, la partie française se terminant au sacre et la partie anglaise qui aboutit au bûcher."

> She said it herself, as reported by the chronicles: her mission was to chase the English away and to crown Charles VII. This duty accomplished, her mission is finished and her history should stop at the cathedral of Reims.
>
> After that, if one burns her or hangs her is of little importance: her death, no more than her old age could do anything for the king or for France.
>
> And it is so true that, even at the court, her halo faded as soon as the English were defeated, her presence became a nuisance, and there is evidence that learning of her death, many people, including the father of Louis XI, have said: good riddance.[208]

Thus, Mermet ends his opera with the coronation of Charles VII and a triumphant Joan of Arc. However, De Woestyne adds that the French public would not allow for an ending without Joan's death at the stake. To please the public says De Woestyne, Mermet inserts a vision of her death in the form of a painting during the coronation scene.

De Woestyne's comments on the fate of the Maid include "her halo fades" and "her presence becomes a nuisance." This attitude reflects the long prevailing, royalist, Catholic narrative that Joan's mission ended with the coronation and the restoration of the French monarchy. The nineteenth century saw a change in this opinion with the rise of the republican view: Joan was a daughter of the people, who led a crusade to drive out the English, but was betrayed by Charles VII and his counselors and sentenced to death by the Church. A new Catholic opinion, influenced by recently rediscovered historical documents, emerged, a narrative that redefined Joan's mission: Her mission did not end

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[208] Ibid. "Elle le dit elle-même, ainsi que le rapportent les chroniques: sa mission était de chasser l'Anglais et de sacrer Charles VII. Ce devoir accompli, sa mission est finie et son histoire devrait s'arrêter à la cathédrale de Reims.

Après cela, qu'on la brûle ou qu'on la pende, peu importe: son trépas, pas plus que sa vieillesse, ne pouvait plus rien ni pour le Roi ni pour la France.

Et c'est tellement vrai que, à la cour même, son auréole pâlit aussitôt l'Anglais vaincu; sa présence devint une gêne, et tout porte à croire qu'en apprenant sa mort, beaucoup de gens, y compris le père de Louis XI, se sont dit: bon débarras."

with the coronation, but continued until her death as a martyr. The German historian Gerd Krumeich provides a detailed explanation of the redefining of Joan's mission by nineteenth-century scholars, placing most of the responsibility on the shoulders of two men: Monsignor Félix Dupanloup and Henri-Alexandre Wallon.[209]

In this chapter, I argue that Barbier-Gounod's melodrama and Mermet's opera include elements of these changing views concerning the Maid's mission. These works were written and premiered at the same time as the new Catholic view was spreading through France. By applying Krumeich's findings to the musical works at hand, I will demonstrate how this music reflects the differing attitudes. The royalist, Catholic point of view did not cease to be overnight, as DeWoestyne's 1876 article demonstrates. Rather, there was a time period when opinions were in flux, and this is the time period that these music works represent. Although the changing view of Joan of Arc has been discussed in the field of history by Krumeich, it has yet to be studied in the field of music history. My intent is to show that these two stage works are examples of a time in history when opinions about Joan of Arc were in the process of changing.

## Changing Views

The royalist, Catholic view had a longstanding tradition in the Panégyrique of Orléans and in early histories of France. The Panégyrique of Orléans, a sermon that was heard during the annual Joan of Arc celebration at Sainte-Clothilde Church beginning in the early seventeenth century, promoted the belief "that the Maid's mission ended with the coronation, and that her continued struggle for liberation, counter to God's explicit

[209] Gerd Krumeich, *Jeanne d'Arc in der Geschichte* (Sigmaringen: Jan Thorbecke Verlag, 1989).

will, led directly to her death at the stake."[210] The histories by Étienne Pasquier in the sixteenth century and Mézeray in the seventeenth century also supported this view.[211] In agreement with the historians and the panegyrists at the annual celebrations in Orléans, Mézeray believed that Joan tempted providence by continuing to fight after the coronation.

The belief was promoted in the nineteenth century by monarchist supporters such as Jean Nicolas Loriquet, a Jesuit priest who wrote several school textbooks during the Bourbon Restoration. By 1852, the views expressed in his books were considered so extremely royalist that they were banned from public schools. (And according to Krumeich, the 1847 edition of Loriquet's *Histoire de France* is not much different from his 1816 edition.)[212] The following series of questions and answers about Joan and Charles VII exemplifies Loriquet's pro-royalist stance.

| | |
|---|---|
| D(emande): Quel nom donne-t-on à Charles VII? | Q(uestion): What nickname is Charles VII given? |
| R(éponse): Celui de Victorieux, parce qu'il chassa tous les Anglois de la France. | A(nswer): The Victorious, because he drove all of the English out of France. |
| D: Qu'est-il arrive de particulier pendant son régime? | Q: What particular event happened during his reign? |
| R: Le siège d'Orléans par les Anglois. | A: The siege of Orléans by the English. |
| D: Comment le fit-on lever? | Q: How was it lifted? |
| R: Par le moyen de Jeanne d'Arc, connue sous le nom la Pucelle d'Orléans. Elle étoit fille d'un laboureur de Lorraine et étoit agée de dix-huit à vingt ans. | A: By way of Joan of Arc, known as the Maid of Orléans. She was the daughter of a farm laborer of Lorraine and was age eighteen to twenty years old. |
| D: Qui lui inspira ce généreux dessein? | Q: Who inspired her with this generous purpose? |

[210] Gerd Krumeich, "Joan of Arc between right and left," *Nationhood and Nationalism in France: From Boulangism to the Great War 1889*–1918, ed. Robert Tombs (London: Routledge, 1991), 67.

[211] Ibid.

[212] Krumeich, *Jeanne d'Arc*, 115.

| | |
|---|---|
| R: Dieu même, qui par inspiration, lui ordonna de faire lever le siège d'Orléans et faire sacrer le Roi à Reims. | A: God Himself, who through inspiration, ordered her to have the siege of Orléans lifted and to have the King crowned at Rheims. |
| D: Exécuta-t-elle l'un et l'autre? | Q: Did she act upon the one and the other orders? |
| R: Oui, et avec beaucoup de courage; mais ensuite ayant voulu pousser ses conquêtes plus loin qu'il ne lui avoit été inspire, elle fut prise à Compiègne et livrée aux Anglois qui la menèrent à Rouen et l'accusèrent comme magicienne. Mais sans pouvoir rien verifier contr'elle, ils la livrèrent au bras séculier … | A: Yes, and with much courage. However, after deciding to push her conquests further than she had been inspired, she was captured in Compiègne and handed over to the English, who brought her to Rouen and accused her of being a sorceress. Even though they couldn't prove anything against her, they delivered her to the secular arm …[213] |

This series of questions and answers shows how thoroughly the royalist, Catholic belief was perpetuated in some schools. Although Loriquet's books could no longer be found in public schools after 1852, histories of France that contained the royalist, Catholic view could still be found until the 1870s.[214]

On the other hand, from the 1820s onward, republican historians, including Augustin Thierry, Jules Michelet, and Henri Martin to name a few, portrayed Joan as a daughter of the people whose belief and visions could be explained as her own intelligence or good judgment.[215] According to this narrative, she was betrayed by the monarchy which prevented her from continuing her mission to liberate France. Thus, it was the monarchy's fault that she was captured and burned. As Théophile Lavallée wrote in his *Histoire des Français* (1838):

> A poor peasant girl whom he [Charles VII] scarcely thought of as he lay in the arms of a courtesan, and whom he let burn without even a care! The people sacrificed themselves for the ungrateful and disdainful monarchy.[216]

[213] François-Alphonse Aulard, "Emules et prédecesseurs du Père Loriquet. Les manuels d'histoire depuis le XVIe siècle," *La Révolution française* 77 (1924): 23.

[214] Krumeich, "Joan of Arc between right and left," 66–67.

[215] Ibid., 63–64.

[216] Ibid. Translated from Théophile Lavallée, *Histoire des Français*, vol. 2 (Paris: Paulin & Hetzel, 1838), 151.

Instead of blaming Joan for causing her own demise, the left-wing supporters claimed that the monarchy had failed her, just as they had failed the French people in the eighteenth century. Two documents—one rediscovered and the other one discovered for the first time by Jules Quicherat—provided the historical evidence needed to support the republican convictions.

The first piece of evidence, Joan's *Lettre aux Anglais*, had been known to historians since her interrogation trial, but it was not until the early nineteenth century that it became noteworthy. In this letter, Joan declares, "I have been sent here by God, the King of heaven, to drive you out of all France, body for body."[217] The letter gives first account proof that Joan felt she was directed by God to liberate France from the invaders. In addition to the rediscovery of Joan's letter, Quicherat had discovered the chronicle of Perceval de Cagny, who was the squire of Joan's comrade-in-arms, the Duc d'Alençon.[218] In his chronicle, Perceval describes the Maid's life after the coronation from her failed attack on Paris and then her capture at Compiègne. He recalls how she urged the king and his advisors to continue to fight, but instead they attempted to negotiate a truce with the Duke of Burgundy.[219] This chronicle gave credence to the republican opinion that the monarchy had betrayed Joan.[220]

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[217] Craig Taylor, trans. and ed., *Joan of Arc: La Pucelle* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2006), 75.

[218] Perceval de Cagny, *Chroniques de Perceval de Cagny* (Paris: Librairie Renouard, 1902).

[219] Krumeich, "Joan of Arc between right and left," 65.

[220] Ibid., 65. A parallel could be made with the betrayal of the pre- and anti- revolutionary monarchs. Influenced by this research, the republican historian Henri Martin relied heavily on Quicherat's discoveries in his work, *Jeanne Darc* from 1857 as well as much later in his *Histoire de France* from 1883.

By the 1840s, two opposing opinions regarding Joan's mission prevailed in France: 1) the royalist, Catholic view that her mission ended at the coronation and that she caused her own capture and death by continuing to fight and 2) the republican view that Joan was a national heroine who urged the king and his advisors to continue to fight to liberate France from Burgundy and England.[221] However, the Catholic view began to change in the 1850s. This new development was propelled by two figures, Henri-Alexandre Wallon and Monsignor Félix Dupanloup, Bishop of Orléans.

Wallon was influential as a historian, professor, and politician in the mid-through-late nineteenth-century France. He is called "Father of the Republic" due to his proposal that the new government have a president that would be elected every seven years and then eligible for re-election.[222] The Assembly accepted his proposal in 1875. He then served as *Ministre de l'Instruction Publique, des Cultes et des Beaux-Arts* (Minister of Public Instruction, Worship, and Fine Arts) until his retirement in May 1876. His books range from histories of slavery and the French Revolution to hagiographies on Saint Louis and Joan of Arc as well as his *La Vie de Notre Seigneur Jésus*. His two-volume work on the life of Joan of Arc was first published in 1860 and saw five editions, including a luxuriously illustrated version in 1876.

Wallon was a republican and Catholic, and perhaps his personal convictions influenced his conclusions about the Maid. In his history of Joan's life, he relies on her Letter to the English as well as Perceval de Cagny's chronicle to support the belief that her mission did not end at the coronation. He devotes an entire chapter to explaining her

[221] Ibid., 67.

[222] Adolphe Robert, Edgar Bourloton, and Gaston Cougny, "Henri-Alexandre Wallon," *Dictionnaire des Parlementaires Français, Comprenant tous les Membres des Assemblées françaises et tous les Ministres français, Depuis le 1er Mai 1789 jusqu'au 1er Mai 1889* (Paris: Bourloton, 1891), 555–556.

mission and discussing the extant historical records.[223] He posits from the available records that there were four parts to Joan's mission: To chase out the English, to consecrate and crown the king, to deliver the Duke of Orléans, and raise the siege made by the English at Orléans.[224] Wallon adds that Joan insisted on the two points of liberating Orléans and bringing the dauphin to Reims. Therefore, those parts of her mission are better documented than others. Wallon concludes his book as follows:

> Jeanne has been in her entire life, a saint, and she died a martyr: martyr of the noblest causes which one can give her life, martyrdom of her patriotism, her modesty and her faith in the One who sent her to save France![225]

Relying on historical documents to support his claim, Wallon reveals a Joan of Arc that is a daughter of the people *and* a daughter of God. In his analysis, she was not disobedient nor did she cause her own capture and death. Wallon uses historical evidence to argue that the monarchy was at fault. Moreover, he declares Joan as a saint, a martyr, and one who died for France and her God.

Wallon's illustrated edition of 1876 is decorated with color reproductions of artwork from as early as the fifteenth century depicting the life of the Maid. With gilt edging and the image of Christ and two angels on Joan's banner, the book itself resembles a Holy Bible more than a historical biography. (**See Figure 5.1.**) In February 1876, *The Month and Catholic Review* (a London-based Catholic journal) reviewed this edition. The review provides insight into the Catholic feeling toward Joan of Arc and her possible canonization at the time.

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[223] Henri-Alexandre Wallon, *Jeanne d'Arc* (Paris: Librairie Hachette, 1875), 255–267.

[224] Ibid., 267.

[225] Ibid., 379. "Jeanne a été par toute sa vie, une sainte, et par sa mort, une martyre: martyre des plus nobles causes auxquelles on puisse donner sa vie, martyre de son amour de la patrie, de sa pudeur et de sa foi en Celui qui l'envoya pour sauver la France!"

> It is hardly possible to write even these few lines concerning the history of Joan of Arc without giving a thought to the question which is now being mooted as to her canonization. That question must be left to the judgment of the Church, and we may feel sure that, should she ever raise the holy Maid to her altars, it will not be merely for the sake of consecrating the national feeling which would fain adorn the shrine of the deliverer of France from English rule, by way of protest and to present a rallying point against the aggressions of Germany. Joan's character is intensely beautiful, even by a merely natural beauty, and no theory as to her career can be thought reasonable which does not consider it as providential and divinely arranged.[226]

The reviewer likens her capture and death to Christ's death on the Cross.[227]

> *It seems to end in failure and disgrace; but it is the failure of the Cross, a failure, perhaps, necessary, in the eyes of heaven, to secure the supernatural gifts of grace with which she had been endowed from being withered by human success.* It is possible, as many have thought, that the Maid's true mission ended with the consecration of the King at Rheims, and that her career after that was a mistake. She certainly seems to have made slips in conduct and in tongue, during her time of torture, which dated from her being taken prisoner almost without interruption to her execution. These are enough to make plausible the theory as to the termination of her mission which we have just mentioned. It is quite another thing to say that they are enough to cast a slur either upon her heroism or her sanctity, or to make her death an atom the less a true martyrdom. Canonized or not, Joan of Arc will always remain one of the purest and noblest images in the historical annals of France.[228]

The reviewer maintains that Joan's mission may have ended with the coronation, but he does not commit to that older view. He does recognize that Joan made mistakes during her imprisonment. Yet, he says that her death should be viewed as a true martyrdom. This review supports Krumeich's theory that Catholic opinions were influenced by Wallon's

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[226] Henry James Coleridge, ed., "Jeanne d'Arc," *The Month and Catholic Review* 26, no. 1 (January–April 1876): 254. This review is listed under the month of February.

[227] A very moving depiction of the trial and death of Joan of Arc told in the style of Christ's Passion can be found in Carl Theodore Dreyer's 1928 silent film, *La Passion de Jeanne d'Arc*.

[228] Coleridge, "Jeanne d'Arc," 254. Italics are my own.

book, but people did not change their views immediately. This movement toward a new Catholic version of Joan was gradual.

**Figure 5.1.** Cover of Henri-Alexandre Wallon's illustrated *Jeanne d'Arc*.

The other key figure promoting this new view is Monsignor Dupanloup, who became bishop of Orléans in 1849. His increasing interest in Joan led him to petition Rome in 1869 to consider her for sainthood. Wallon was Dupanloup's historical advisor on the life of the Maid. Dupanloup's view can be summarized as follows:

> Joan was certainly a daughter of the people, inspired by God for the good of France. The ungrateful king and the clerics of the time (unlike the official church) might indeed have caused her death; but her 'mission' was not over—she should still be the guide of an eternal France.[229]

This new view opened up the possibility for Joan to be considered for sainthood. No longer was she viewed as going against the monarchy and God's will in continuing to fight for France after the coronation. It was not her fault that she was captured. Instead, Dupanloup asserts that Charles VII and his advisors were at fault for not attempting to save her.

In July 1874, the "Process of the Ordinary" began for the beatification and canonization of Joan of Arc at Orléans. Two years later, Dupanloup carried the records of this preliminary inquiry to Rome. These findings relied heavily on Quicherat's research, citing volume and page number, to support Joan's candidacy. By 10 April 1876, Dupanloup was in Rome to make the case for Joan, Wallon's illustrated biography had been published, and Mermet's opera was playing at the Opéra. All of these events are mentioned in a brief news article regarding a tapestry exhibit depicting scenes from Joan's life (**See Figure 5.2.**):

> We have had the opportunity to see at the gallery of our learned artist, Mr. Albert Grand, restorer of Mr. le duc d'Aumale's gallery and of Sully's study, *7 panels of tapestry* from Louis XIII's beautiful era, depicting subjects of topical relevance. I am talking about the principal events of the life of Joan of Arc, one of which, the *Coronation of Charles VII*, was just reproduced by chromolithographic engraving

[229] Krumeich, "Joan of Arc between right and left," 68.

in Mr. Wallon's magnificent work, edited by F. Didot. We wish to bring these splendid tapestries to the special attention of connoisseurs at this particular time as Monsignor Dupanloup, Archbishop of Orléans, pursues the canonization of our great heroine in Rome, and, in the very latest news, as Mermet's work is being performed at the grand Opéra.[230]

**Figure 5.2.** *The Coronation of Charles VII,* Seventeenth-century tapestry reproduced by chromolithographic engraving in Wallon's illustrated *Jeanne d'Arc*.


[230] "Tapisseries Louis XIII," *Le Figaro*, April 10, 1876. "Nous avons été appelé à voir chez notre savant artiste, *M. Albert grand*, le restaurateur de la galerie de M. le duc d'Aumale et du cabinet de Sully, *7 panneaux en tapisserie* de la belle époque Louis XIII, représentant des sujets d'une actualité flagrante. Ce sont les principaux épisodes de la vie de Jeanne d'Arc, dont un le *Sacre de Charles VII*, vient d'être reproduit par la gravure chromolithographique dans le magnifique ouvrage de M. Wallon, édité par F. Didot. Nous appelons tout spécialement l'attention de MM. les amateurs sur ces splendides tapisseries, au moment où Mgr. Dupanloup, l'archevêque d'Orléans, poursuit à Rome la Canonisation de notre grande héroïne, et comme actualité dernière, la représentation de l'oeuvre de Mermet au grand Opéra."

In sum, Barbier-Gounod's melodrama and Mermet's opera were written at a time when different views regarding the Maid's mission were circulating in France. Republicans, who blamed the monarchy for allowing Joan's death, believed that her mission was to push all of France's invaders out of the country. They saw her as a martyr for her country, since she was captured and executed. The royalist Catholics believed that Joan's mission ended with the coronation of Charles VII—the restoration of the French monarchy. However, the new Catholic opinion, influenced by the latest historical evidence that Joan's mission did not end with the coronation, was becoming more prevalent.[231] The opera's and the melodrama's final scenes reflect these views. Mermet's opera ends with the coronation in Reims, following the more royalist, Catholic platform. However, Mermet inserts a vision of her death scene to accommodate the republican and newer Catholic preference for ending Joan's story at the stake. Barbier-Gounod's melodrama ends with Joan's execution in Rouen, following the republican platform. However, Gounod's use of sacred music gives the final scene a decidedly Catholic tone. This converging of republican and Catholic fits well with the newer Catholic view. A closer examination of the final scenes will reveal how the two works exhibit these views.

[231] Later in the 1890s, the new Catholic opinion would oveshadow the older royalist, Catholic stance, resulting once again in two polarized camps of thought: Republican and Catholic. Both sides agreed that Joan's mission was to push invaders out of the country; the difference lay in what kind of country it was—to republicans, it was the republic and to Catholics, it was Catholic France.

## The Final Scenes

*The Final Scenes in Mermet's Jeanne d'Arc*

Mermet places great importance on the coronation scene and gives several indications that Jeanne's mission ends there. At the end of the Premier Tableau of Act IV, the Voices summon Jeanne to go to Reims:

| | |
|---|---|
| Choeur des Anges, au déhors | Choir of Angels, outside |
| Jeanne! Jeanne, sauve la France! | Jeanne! Jeanne, save France! |
| Orléans délivré par toi, | Orléans was delivered by you, |
| Du sacre le saint jour s'avance; | The holy day of the coronation advances; |
| A Reims fais couronner ton roi. | At Reims, crown your king. |
| | |
| Jeanne | Jeanne |
| A Reims, archange, guide-moi! | To Reims, archangel, guide me! |
| Par la terre de sang trempée, | By the blood-soaked earth, |
| A fureur de pointe d'épée, | To the rage of the sword's point, |
| Menons sacrer le roi. | Lead to crown the king.[232] |

This passage is the last time the Voices are heard in the opera. After announcing that Jeanne has completed half of her mission by liberating Orléans, they beckon her to take the king to Reims. Since the coronation marks the end of Jeanne's mission, the Voices are no longer needed. After Jeanne agrees to leave for Reims, the scene is transformed into the cathedral:

> The stage is covered with clouds, through which appears the portal of the cathedral of Reims; then to the sound of bells, trumpets, drums and organs, the setting transforms and represents the interior of the nave, with the main altar at the end.[233]

Mermet's music complements the scene change with ascending and descending arpeggios accompanying a soaring melody. (**Example 5.1.** Systems 3–5)

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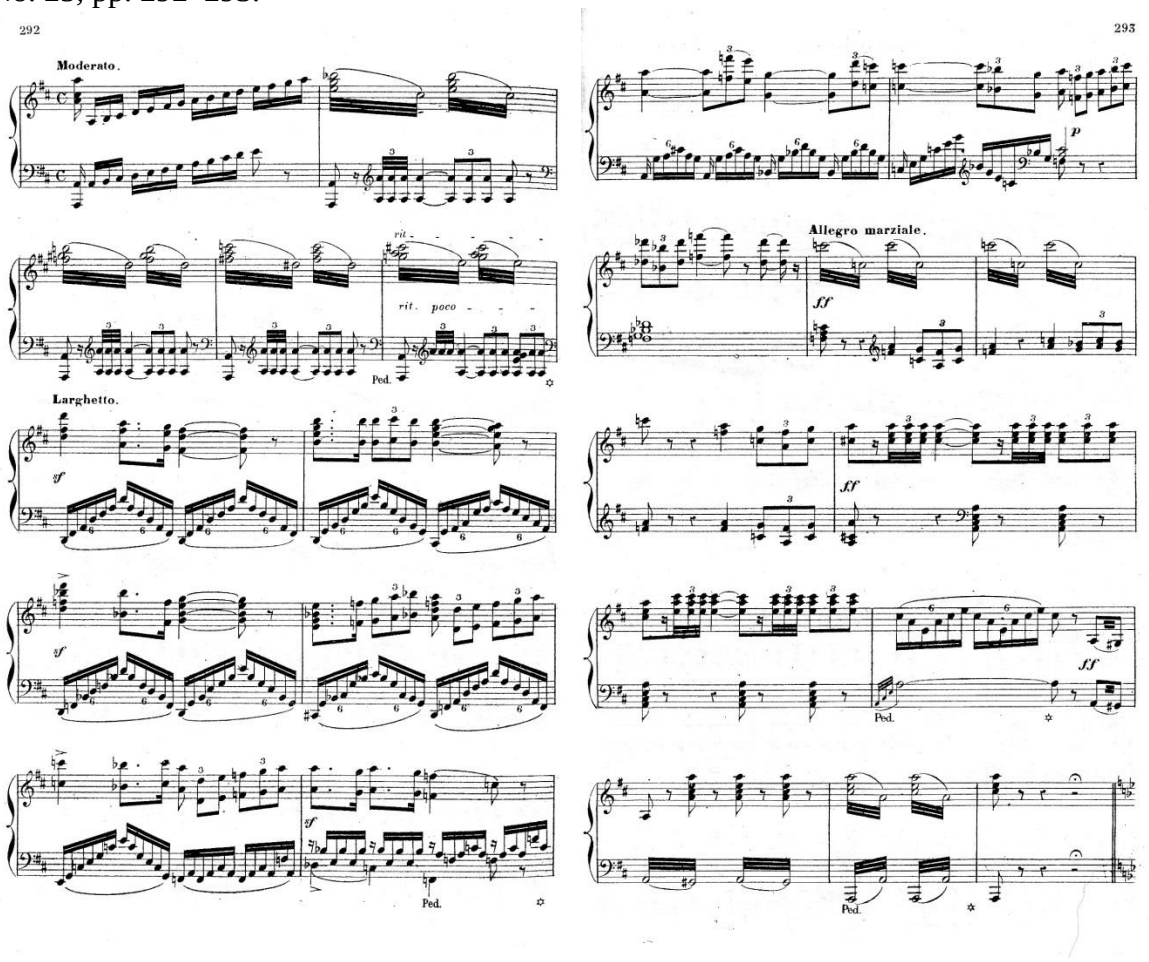
[232] Auguste Mermet, *Jeanne d'Arc, Opéra en quatre actes et six tableaux* (Paris: Tresse, 1876), 55.

[233] Ibid. Stage direction: "La scène se couvre de nuages, desquels se dégage le portail de la cathédrale de Reims; puis, au son des cloches, des trompettes, des tambours et des orgues, le décor se transforme et représente l'intérieur de la grande nef, avec le maître-autel au fond."

**Example 5.1.** Mermet. *Jeanne d'Arc*, Transformation Music, Act IV, Premier Tableau, No. 25, pp. 292–293.




This music segues into the coronation march as the lords, peers of the realm, noble ladies, pages, mace-bearers, men in arms, bishops, grand prior, canons and children's choir process into the cathedral.[234]

The procession of members of the court and the clergy is followed by "Cantique de Salomon," sung by a chorus of young girls. The first three lines of the song's text is an adaptation of the Biblical verse from the Song of Solomon, The Regal State of the

[234] Ernest Reyer, "Théâtre de l'Opéra: *Jeanne d'Arc*, opera en quarter actes et six tableaux, paroles et musique de M. Mermet," *Journal des débats,* April 9, 1876.

Bridegroom: "What is this coming up from the desert, Like a column of smoke, Laden with myrrh and frankincense, And with the perfume of every exotic dust?"[235] After these lines, Mermet's text diverges from the Scripture passage:

| | |
|---|---|
| Quelle est cette haleine embaumée | What is the balmy breath |
| Qui s'élève au sein du desert? | Which rises in the desert? |
| De la myrrhe est-ce la fumée? | Of myrrh is this the smoke? |
| De la harpe est-ce le concert? | Of the harp is this the concert? |
| De nos vierges c'est la plus belle; | Of our virgins this is the most beautiful; |
| C'est la gloire de nos cités. | This is the glory of our cities. |
| Tout Bonheur nous advient par elle; | All happiness comes to us through her; |
| Un ange marche à ses côtés. | An angel walks by her side.[236] |

The first three lines of text for "Cantique de Salomon" reflect the anointing of Charles VII as king, but the last four lines refer to Jeanne d'Arc. She is called the most beautiful of virgins and the glory of cities. "An angel walks by her side" could refer to the Archangel Michael. The coronation scene continues with the oath of the king over the Holy Gospels.

| | |
|---|---|
| <u>Le Roi, étendant la main</u> | <u>The King, extending his hand</u> |
| A la face de Dieu, du people et de l'Eglise, | Before God, the people and the Church |
| Près d'être ordonné roi, je viens prêter serment; | About to be ordained king, I come to swear; |
| Empêcher, en tous lieux, rapine et convoitise; | To prevent, in all places, plundering and greed; |
| Punir ou pardonner, quand le devoir commande; | To punish or forgive when duty commands; |
| Maintenir notre France intacte et sans souillure; | To keep our France intact and undefiled; |
| Garder la foi chrétienne exempte d'imposture; | To keep the Christian faith exempt of imposture; |
| Faire observer justice et foi du jugement; | To enforce justice and faith of the judgment [day]; |
| Afin que nous le rende un Dieu juste et clément. | So that a just and merciful God rewards us.[237] |

[235] "Regal State of the Bridegroom," Song of Solomon, 3:6, *New American Bible* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1987), 697.

[236] Mermet, *Jeanne d'Arc*, 56.

[237] Ibid., 56–57.

The archbishop places the crown on Charles VII while the chorus of onlookers sings, "Noël! Noël!" In the middle of this splendor, Jeanne approaches the king, kneels, and bids him:

| | |
|---|---|
| Une grâce, ô mon roi, Jeanne vous en supplie!<br>Orléans délivrée,<br>Et dans Reims Charles sept sacré,<br>Ma tâche est accomplie.<br>Du Seigneur, à présent, est fait le bon plaisir;<br>Rendez-moi mon village et me laissez partir. | One favor, O my King, Jeanne begs you!<br>Orléans freed,<br>And in Reims Charles VII crowned,<br>My task is complete.<br>At present, God's will has been fulfilled;<br>Give me back my village and let me go.[238] |

Here, Mermet clearly puts forth the idea that Jeanne's mission ends with the coronation, for she herself states that her task is done. When the king questions her further, she adds that she no longer hears her voices. The next and final passage of the opera speaks directly to the French patriots in the audience, drawing a parallel between the invaders of 1430s, the English, and the invaders of the 1870s, the Prussians:

| | |
|---|---|
| <u>Le Roi</u><br>L'ennemi foule encore le sol de notre France,<br>Ange sauveur, notre espérance.<br>Non, non, tu ne partiras pas!<br>[Jeanne est très-émue, des femmes, des enfants viennent s'agenouiller devant elle.] | <u>The King</u><br>The enemy again tramples the soil of our France, Angel Savior, our hope,<br>No! No! You will not go!<br>[Jeanne is very emotional, women, children come to kneel before her.] |
| <u>Choeur</u><br>Poursuis l'oeuvre de délivrance!<br>O toi, notre seule espérance,<br>Ange sauveur, ne nous délaisse pas! | <u>Chorus</u><br>Pursue the work of deliverance<br>O thou, our only hope,<br>Angel savior, do not abandon us! |
| <u>Jeanne, faisant un violent effort sur elle-même</u><br>Que ta volonté s'accomplisse,<br>Mon Dieu, dispose de mon sort! | <u>Jeanne, making a violent effort to control herself</u><br>Thy will be done!<br>My God, have my fate![239] |

[238] Ibid., 57

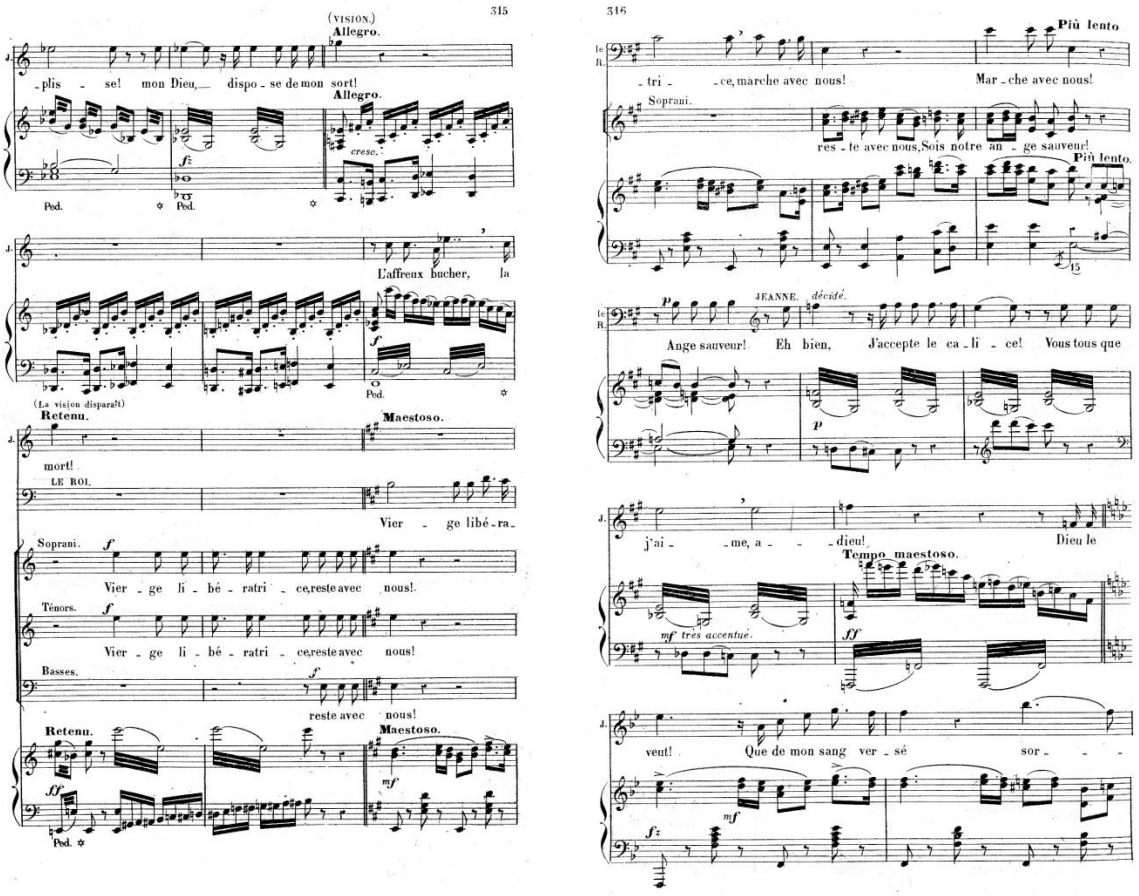
[239] Ibid., 58.

Suddenly, the back of the theater opens to reveal a vision of the stake in flames. Jeanne seeing the vision exclaims, "The horrible pyre! Death!" The image disappears, and the chorus, unaware of Jeanne's fate, cries, "Virgin Liberator! Stay with us!" Jeanne, fully aware of her impending death, answers, "Ah well, I accept the chalice! I love you all, farewell! God wills it! That my blood is shed for deliverance! My life is to France and my soul is to God! Glory to God!" Meanwhile the chorus continues to praise Jeanne calling, "Jeanne, save France! Hosannah! Glory to God!"[240]

In this passage, the role of the Voices has been replaced by the role of the people of France asking Jeanne to free the country of all invaders. The use of the Fate Theme (as mentioned in Chapter III) supports this theory. In Act I when Jeanne was frightened about leaving Domrémy, the Fate Theme was heard. Jeanne's voices calmed her, singing in perfect thirds in the key of A major. When the Fate Theme is heard during the final scene, it is followed by a modulation to A major with the people of France singing in perfect thirds. (**Example 5.2.**) The crowd has replaced the voices in their beckoning of Jeanne. Just as the Maid answered the call of her voices, she now answers the call of the people of France.

[240] Ibid., 58.

**Example 5.2.** Mermet, *Jeanne d'Arc*, Act IV, No. 28, Final, pp. 315–316.




The critics responded favorably to the lavish sets and costumes during the coronation scene. The critic Ernest Reyer called the spectacle "impressive" and the scenery "superb."[241] Henri Heugel, under the pen name H. Moreno, described the scene as follows:

> We find Faure [Charles VII] in splendid royal costume in the cathedral of Rheims, at the coronation ceremony. Here the stage setting is beyond anything one can imagine and becomes a personal triumph for Mr. Halanzier. Never before has such a procession passed before the dazzled eyes of the spectators of the l'Opéra.[242]

[241] Reyer, "Théâtre de l'Opéra."

[242] H. Moreno, "La Jeanne d'Arc de M. Mermet," *Le Ménestrel*, April 9, 1876. "Nous retrouvons Faure en splendide costume royal dans la cathédrale de Reims, à la cérémonie du sacre. Ici la mise en scène dépasse

However, the vision of the burning stake was not effective in Reyer's eyes:

> There is truly nothing fantastic, nothing startling in this apparition in full light, in this childish game of two stained glass windows which part to reveal a small allegorical painting and then close immediately. Here, the talent of the machinist or the art of the decorator was at fault, and I mention it regretfully.[243]

De Woestyne wrote that Mermet inserted the vision of the Jeanne's death to please the French public, and it does seem to be awkwardly inserted into the scene. The image is so briefly displayed that the audience cannot be moved emotionally by it. The music accompanying the vision, the Fate Theme, is also short lived.

Mermet's final scene reflects both royalist and republican ideas surfacing at the time. Certain facts clearly follow the royalist platform: 1) Jeanne's Voices and Jeanne state that her mission included the raising of the siege at Orléans and bringing Charles VII to Reims, 2) Jeanne does not hear her Voices again once her mission is accomplished, and 3) the opera ends at the coronation. Moreover, Mermet's opera presents the monarchy in a positive light with his grand procession and Charles VII's oath. However, certain characteristics reveal a republican attitude such as: 1) Jeanne requests to return home and Charles VII asks her to continue to fight, 2) The people of France take on the role of the Voices, 3) Jeanne agrees to die as a martyr for her country.

Mermet's opera cannot be classified as strictly republican or strictly royalist. The different characteristics show that the work is a mixture of the two, and it also shows that the 1870s was a time of changing views on Joan's mission.

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tout ce que l'on peut imaginer et devient un triomphe personnel pour M. Halanzier. Jamais encore pareil cortège n'avait défilé devant les yeux éblouis des spectateurs de l'Opéra."

[243] Reyer, "Théâtre de l'Opéra." "Il n'y a vraiment rien de fantastique, rien de saisissant dans cette apparition en pleine lumière, dans ce jeu puéril de deux vitraux qui s'écartent pour laisser voir un petit tableau allégorique et se refermer aussitôt. Ici, le talent du machiniste ou l'art du décorateur a été mis en faute, et je le signale à regret."

*The Final Scenes in Barbier-Gounod's Jeanne d'Arc*

The coronation scene in Barbier-Gounod's melodrama consists primarily of dialogue between Jeanne and Charles VII. Music is heard only at the beginning of the scene, a march for the procession of the members of court and clergy, and then at the closing of the scene, a chorus singing, "Noël! Noël!" The dialogue of the scene takes place outside the cathedral doors immediately before the ceremony begins. Charles VII approaches Jeanne, and she kneels on one knee saying:

| Jeanne | Jeanne |
|---|---|
| Sire, l'ordre de Dieu, qui vers vous m'a conduit, | Sire, the order of God, who led me to you, |
| Etait de secourir ceux d'Orléans; ensuite, | Was to help those of Orléans; then |
| De vous mener à Reims, pour vous faire sacrer, | Lead you to Rheims, for you to be crowned, |
| Afin de relever le trône et de montrer | To the end of restoring the throne and of showing |
| Qu'à vous seul appartient le royaume de France! | That to you alone belongs the kingdom of France! |
| Je l'ai fait!—Maintenant toute mon espérance | I have done that!—Now all my hope |
| Est que le gentil roi me laisse retourner | Is that the kind king let me return |
| Vivre avec mes parents, qui veulent m'emmener! | To live with my parents, who want to take me![244] |

Similar to the dialogue between the king and Jeanne in Mermet's opera, this passage supports the idea that Jeanne's mission was to liberate Orléans and lead the king to Reims. In response to her request to return home, the king asks her a series of questions regarding her mission:

| Le Roi | King |
|---|---|
| Le prestige | The prestige |
| D'un nom qui frappe seul l'ennemi de vertige! | Of a name that, alone, strikes the enemy with bewilderment! |
| As-tu donc oublié que tu nous a promis | So have you forgotten that you promised us |
| De repousser chez eux nos derniers ennemis? | To push back home our last enemies? |

[244] Jules Barbier and Charles Gounod, *Jeanne d'Arc: Drame en Cinq Actes en Vers avec Chœurs* (Paris, Michel Lévy Frères, 1874), 146.

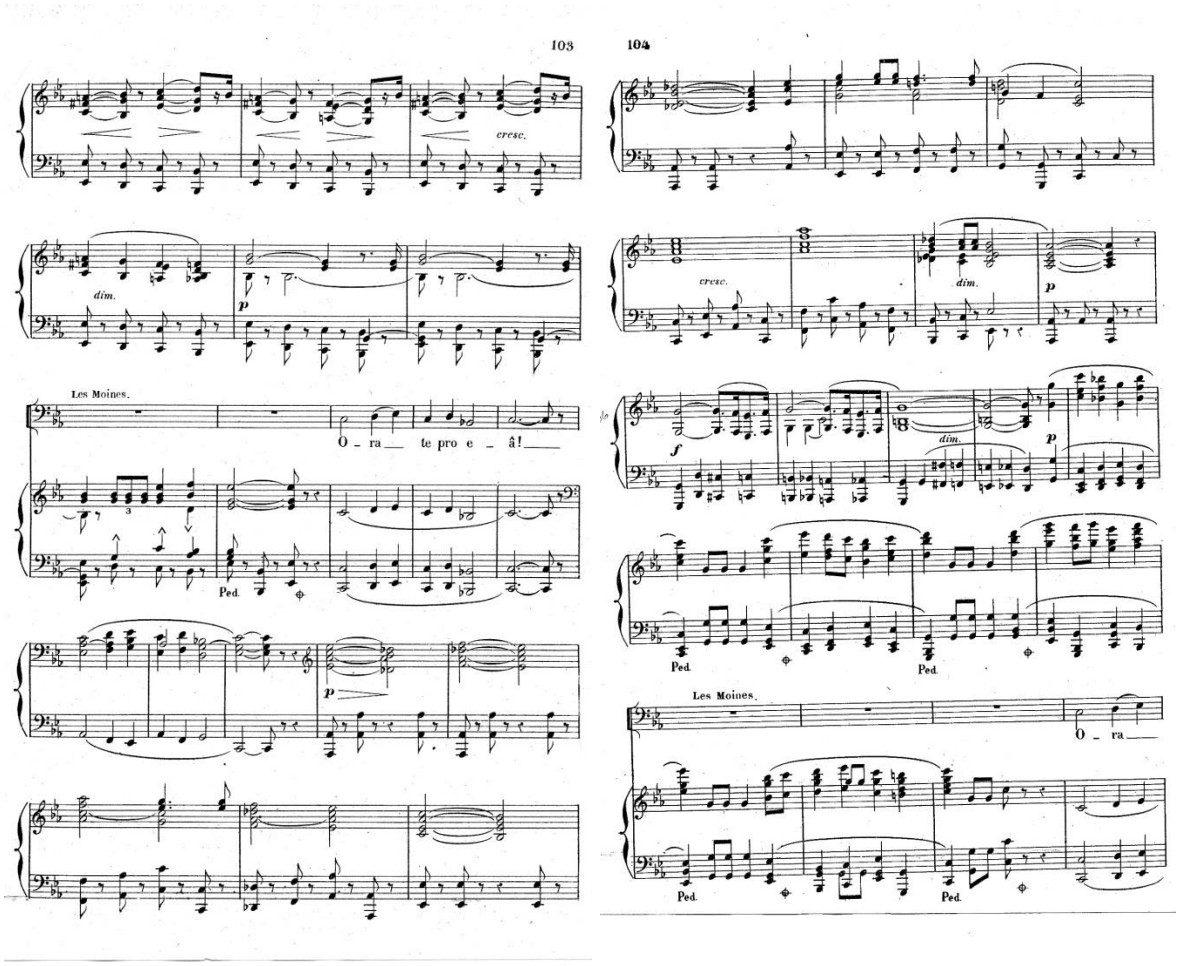
| | |
|---|---|
| Jeanne<br>C'est vrai! | Jeanne<br>It's true! |
| Le Roi<br>De ne jamais déserter ta bannière,<br>Qu'elle n'eût à la France indiqué sa frontière? | King<br>Your banner never to betray<br>Even if it marked France's border? |
| Jeanne<br>C'est vrai. | Jeanne<br>It's true. |
| Le Roi<br>Tout est sauvé! Ta fuite perdrait tout!<br>Décide! … | King<br>Everything is saved! Your flight would lose all!<br>Make up your mind! ... |
| Jeanne, jetant un regard désolé vers sa famille<br>Hélas! … il faut que j'aille jusqu'au bout! | Jeanne, casting a distressed glance towards her family<br>Alas! … I must go the whole way![245] |

In this section, we find a notable difference between the melodrama's and the opera's versions of Joan's mission. In the melodrama, unlike the opera, her mission does not end with the coronation. The passage above clearly shows that she had promised to rid France of her invaders. Moreover, in the final act, the Voices return to comfort her in prison and at her execution in Rouen. Therefore, unlike in Mermet's opera, Jeanne continues to receive divine support after the coronation.

Gounod's lack of music in the coronation scene is balanced by a great deal of music for the final scene in Rouen. The deuxième tableau of Act V opens with No. 14, the Marche Funèbre in C minor. The solemnity of the march is punctuated by the chorus of monks chanting, "Orate pro ea!" ["Pray for her!"]. This chant is followed by the melody associated with Jeanne's Voices. (**Example 5.3.** System 4/Measure 4 – System 7/Measure 4)

[245] Ibid., 147.

**Example 5.3.** Barbier-Gounod, *Jeanne d'Arc*, Act V, No. 16, Final, pp. 103–104.




Even though Saints Catherine and Margaret are not visible in this final scene, their presence is made known through this melody. The march ends in C major, which sets up the Mélodrame in G minor. Over the chord progression from G minor to G major of the Mélodrame, Jean d'Estivet, one of the trial prosecutors, reads her sentence:

| | |
|---|---|
| Au nom du Dieu clément, et comme c'est raison | In the name of the merciful God, and as is reason |
| De préserver le corps chrétien de tout poison, | To preserve the Christian body of any poison, |
| Toi Jeanne, par devant tes juges légitimes, | You Jeanne, before your legitimate judges, |
| Pour schisme, idolâtrie et beaucoup d'autres crimes, | For schism, idolatry, and many other crimes, |

| | |
|---|---|
| Admise à pénitence, et, malgré ton serment, | Admitted to penitence, and in spite of your oath, |
| Ô douleur! Retombée en ton aveuglement, | O sorrow! Fallen in your blindness, |
| Nous t'avons déclarée hérétique et parjure, | We have declared you a heretic and a perjurer, |
| Et, de même qu'un membre atteint de pourriture | And, as a member suffering from leprosy |
| Est arraché du corps, nous t'arrachons ainsi, | Is torn from the body, we abandon you, |
| Du pouvoir séculier implorant la merci, | We implore the mercy of the secular power, |
| Et le priant pour toi d'adoucir sa sentence, | And pray to soften its judgment for you, |
| Si tu peux être encore admise à pénitence. […] | To permit the sacrament of penance be administered to you. […] |
| Vade in pace! | Go in peace![246] |

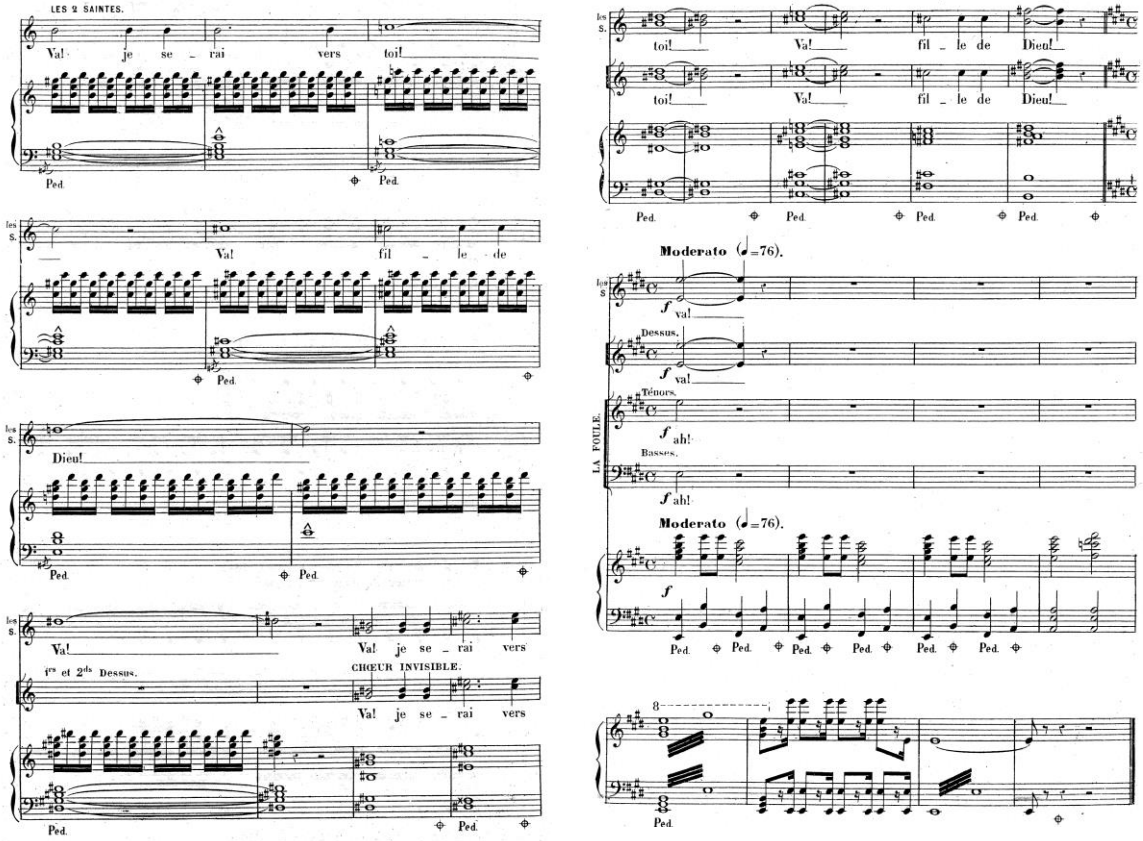
In his text, Barbier includes extracts from the sentence as found in the interrogation trial records. This is an example of the poet's use of historical data that was available through Quicherat's publication.

The music for No. 16, Final allows for on-stage and off-stage singing. Saint Catherine and Saint Margaret can be heard beckoning Jeanne to enter the heavens. An invisible chorus of angels also is heard. On the stage, Jeanne is at the stake with two soldiers, a chorus of villagers, and a chorus of monks responding to her execution in different ways. The monks resume their "Orate pro ea!" from the Marche Funèbre. The soldiers call Jeanne a "sorcière," but the chorus of villagers interject "martyr" in retaliation. The invisible chorus summons Jeanne using the melody associated with the saints. The saints are heard at the end of the scene when they cry to Jeanne, "Go! I will be with you! Go! Daughter of God! ["Va! Je serai vers toi! Va! Fille de Dieu!"] (**Example 5.4.**) The invisible chorus joins the saints in their entreaty. Just as the celestial voices had called Jeanne to her mission on earth, they now greet her in Heaven. Although the scene

[246] Barbier and Gounod, *Jeanne d'Arc*, 184–185.

opens in the key of B major, the ending is heard in E major: the same key used when the Voices summoned Jeanne to save France. Gounod's return to this key along with the return of the Voices brings a sense of closure to the opera. Jeanne remained true to her voices, and they returned to bring her divine glory.

**Example 5.4.** Barbier-Gounod, *Jeanne d'Arc*, Act V, No. 16, Final, pp. 114–115.




Barbier-Gounod's melodrama portrays Jeanne d'Arc as a martyr for her country and for her God. Barbier's original play from 1869 was an example of the republican version of the Jeanne d'Arc story. It was even published under the title "Jeanne Darc" without the "d'A" that signified nobility. Barbier included the republican view of her

mission, which included liberating France from invaders. Gounod's music, on the other hand, gives the melodrama a decidedly religious tone. He is responsible for the role of the Voices as comforter in the Rouen scenes as well as the role of the monks. Barbier's play does not include monks at all. Not only does Gounod include the monks, but he works their chant "Orate pro ea" into the scene. This mixture of republican and Catholic views blends to reflect Wallon's conviction of Joan's mission. By the end of the melodrama, it is clear to the audience that Jeanne died as a martyr for her country and for her God. The composite illustration by Edmond Morin for *Le Monde illustré* depicts Jeanne as a martyr. (**See Appendix B**, p. 185) The drawing shows Jeanne's death at the stake, her reception into the heavens with Saint Margaret, Saint Catherine, and the angels present, and transformation into an immortal martyr that continues to protect the French people. Note the star above her head and her sword lowered to protect the old man, woman, and children.

## Conclusion

By the 1870s, several views regarding the purpose of Joan's mission were being offered. The republican view that Joan's mission continued through to her death gained credence through the latest historical discoveries of Quicherat. These discoveries and the failure of the French monarchy weakened the royalist, Catholic view. And it was Wallon's publications along with Dupanloup's movement for Joan of Arc's beatification and canonization that created a new version of the Maid which separated itself from the royalist opinion that Joan's purpose was to restore the French monarchy. For Catholics

who followed Wallon and Dupanloup, Joan of Arc's mission was to restore a Catholic France.

In his opera, Mermet follows along the lines of the royalist stance that the mission ended with the coronation. The coronation scene is presented as a grand affair with several musical numbers, such as the king's oath over the Holy Gospels. Although Mermet inserts the vision of Joan's death as a painting at the end of the scene, this treatment was not viewed as effective or convincing by the critics. Moreover, the role of the Voices in the opera also reflects the royalist, Catholic opinion that Joan went against divine advice when she continued to fight after the coronation. In Mermet's opera, the Voices's final instruction was for Joan to lead the dauphin to Reims for the coronation. Therefore, in its entirety, the opera seems to be predominantly of a royalist, Catholic sentiment with a quick alteration of the ending to satisfy the public.

Barbier-Gounod's melodrama reflects the belief that Joan's mission does not end with the coronation but continues while she attempts to free France from her enemies. Unlike the coronation in Mermet's opera, the coronation scene in the melodrama is not presented; instead the anointing takes place offstage. Moreover, only the processional march and the coronation chorus of "Noël! Noël!" make up the music for the coronation. Instead of placing emphasis on the coronation, the melodrama focuses on Joan's imprisonment and execution. In addition, Saint Margaret and Saint Catherine continue to comfort the Maid throughout her time in prison and during her execution. In short, the Voices do not leave Joan after the coronation, but continue to provide divine counsel. This mixture of Barbier's republican sentiments with Gounod's Catholicism falls in line with Wallon's view of the Maid's mission.

In sum, these works reflect differing opinions about Joan of Arc's mission that were present at the time of their premieres. They show that during the 1870s, the purpose of Joan of Arc's mission was not as polarized as it had been in the earlier 1800s when the two main platforms were republican and older royalist, Catholic or as it became in the 1890s. For by the *fin de siècle*, the newer Catholic stance as promoted by Wallon and Dupanloup replaced the older royalist platform as the predominant belief among French Catholics, so there were once again two main opinions about the Maid's mission: republican and Catholic.

# CHAPTER VI

# CONCLUSION

In the wake of the Franco-Prussian War, Joan of Arc emerged as a figure for the French public to rally behind. Although the cult of Joan did not reach its peak until later in the century, the 1870s should not be overlooked as an important time in Joan's development as a heroine for the French republic and as a saint for the Catholic Church. Barbier-Gounod's melodrama and Mermet's opera are cultural products of their time that reflect public opinions about the Maid's story. I have aimed to bring these opinions to light by examining the critical reception of these works and by analyzing the text and music of their scores. In doing so, I hope to have clarified the critics' observations.

Chapter II introduces the history of the critical reception of these works from inception through performances. The announcements and reviews reveal an eagerly awaiting public whose expectations are high for these works. The delay in performing Mermet's opera only fuels the public's desire to see the long-awaited opera by the composer who had such a successful run with his earlier opera, *Roland à Roncevaux*. Although Barbier-Gounod's melodrama does well at the box office, Mermet's opera receives only fifteen performances. The greater attraction for the public appears to be attending the newly built Palais Garnier. Although both Barbier-Gounod's melodrama and Mermet's opera have been overlooked by musicologists for many years, they are not without value. I hope to have demonstrated through my narrative based on newspaper articles that the works were both well documented events in 1870s Paris that provide useful background information on how Joan of Arc was being perceived at this time.

Chapter III examines the effects of nineteenth-century national history writing on the two works. Historical publications, for example Quicherat's *Procès,* opened the door for the public to become more knowledgable about Joan's life. In this climate, heavily fictionalized versions of the Maid's life, such as Verdi's *Giovanna d'Arco*, were deemed unacceptable by the Parisian critics. Barbier-Gounod's melodrama and Mermet's opera did not escape the critics' reprimands for their own inaccuracies in telling Joan's story. However, both works make attempts to evoke the French Middle Ages through text and music that the critics recognized. This chapter further explores what the poet and composers did to create medieval music for the nineteenth-century stage. In some cases, the composer can write original music as both Mermet and Gounod do. Yet, they do so in different ways. Gounod relies on his training as a church organist in incorporating modal plainchant and organ-style hymn accompaniment in his music. Mermet relies on the text to convey the Middle Ages. The use of *Veni Creator Spiritus* in both works and *Orate pro ea* in the melodrama supports the trend of presenting a more historically-informed version of Joan's life on stage, since historical records attest to the singing of both chants during seminal events in her life.

Chapter IV considers the impact of Joan's legend on the two stage works. Some critics called for a more historically-based approach when presenting Joan's life on stage. Yet, others recognized that it was difficult, if not impossible, to separate history from legend. The Fairy Tree and the Voices had become embedded into the story of Joan's youth in Domrémy and could not be easily removed. However, the melodrama and the opera reveal something new in their presentation of these elements. Any type of negative association has been removed from the tree and the saints. The tree does not represent

any malevolent force nor do the saints represent Joan's possible madness. This change in presenting the Fairy Tree and the Voices in a positive light reflects the movements underway in the 1870s to promote Joan as national heroine and as a Catholic saint. In both roles, Joan must be free of any blemish. The tree is no longer seen as a place of witchcraft, but as a place where children sing and dance. The Voices do not represent hysteria or insanity, but represent her patriotic fervor, as promoted by republicans, or her religious devotion, as promoted by Catholics.

Finally, in Chapter V, the difficulty of setting Joan of Arc's story for the stage is examined from the perspective of the critic Ivan de Woestyne. His study of Mermet's struggle with this problem leads to questioning the purpose of Joan's mission. Upon a closer look, political and religious beliefs begin to surface. For the most part, Mermet's opera adheres to the older royalist, Catholic view that Joan's mission ended with the coronation of Charles VII, but the addition of the fate vision at the end of the coronation reflects the increasingly popular opinion that Joan's mission continued past this point. Without any existing manuscript, one can only speculate as to whether the fate scene was in the original score of 1869.

Barbier's melodrama supports the republican belief that her mission was to chase all of the invaders out of France, and therefore, her mission lasted until her death at the stake. If Barbier had presented his drama as a play without music, the production would without doubt reflect solely the republican view. However, Gounod's religious-infused music along with his development of the role of Saint Margaret and Saint Catherine during the prison and execution scenes opens up another possibility. The new Catholic view allowed for a merging with the republican belief that Joan's mission did not end

with the coronation, but continued as she fought and then died for her country and her God. The melodrama with Gounod's music can also be viewed in this light.

My intent in bringing Barbier-Gounod's melodrama and Mermet's opera into musical discourse is, on one hand, to better illuminate how Joan of Arc was being perceived in the years immediately following the Franco-Prussian War—a period of time that not only deserves, but requires a closer examination before looking ahead to the more frequently discussed cult of Joan in the 1890s. On the other hand, I hope to have demonstrated that musical works such as these two are worth studying. Their value lies not in the genius of the musical composition, but rather in the way they represent the changing society in which they were created. Studying the scores alone would not provide much information in this respect, but the scores along with their critical reception allows for a richer reading and a deeper appreciation.

# APPENDIX A

# TIMELINE AND PLOT

**Timeline**

1801 – Publication of Friedrich Schiller's drama *Die Jungfrau von Orleans*.

1841 – Publication of Michelet's 'Jeanne d'Arc' in his *Histoire de France*. (rev. 1853, 1863, 1873)

1841–49 – Quicherat's *Procès de condamnation et de réhabilitation de Jeanne d'Arc* (5 vols.)

1845 – Temistocle Solera and Giuseppe Verdi's opera, *Giovanna d'Arco* premieres at La Scala.

1860 – First Publication of Henri-Alexandre Wallon's history of Joan of Arc's life, *Jeanne d'Arc*.

1864 – Premiere of Mermet's opera *Roland à Ronceveaux* at Paris Opera.

1868 – Paris premiere of Verdi's *Giovanna d'Arco* at the Théâtre Italien.

1869 – Monsignor Félix Dupanloup petitions Rome for Joan of Arc's canonization.

Barbier writes his play *Jeanne d'Arc*. Mermet composes his opera *Jeanne d'Arc*. Theaters are not interested in Barbier's play. However, Emile Perrin, director of the Paris Opera decides to stage Mermet's opera.

1870 – Franco-Prussian War begins. Napoleon III is captured and his government falls (End of the French Second Republic). The new controlling government (French Third Republic) continues to fight.
Mermet's opera is not performed.

1871 – Siege of Paris ends in January. German Empire is established. Paris Commune controls city until forces repress them in May. Franco-Prussian War ends. Frankfurt Treaty results in France's loss of Alsace and a large part of Lorraine to Prussia.

1873 – Barbier and Gounod's melodrama and Mermet's opera are both expected to be performed in the fall.

The melodrama premieres at Théâtre de la Gaïté on November 8, 1873. It runs until February 1, 1874 being performed a total of 30 times and grossing 210,617 francs.

On October 19th, the Paris Opera house burns down destroying sets and costumes for Mermet's *Jeanne d'Arc*. The score is saved. Mermet's opera is not performed.

1874 – Process of the Ordinary, the preliminary inquiry for Joan of Arc's canonization, begins in Orléans.

1875 – Mermet meets with the singer Gabrielle Krauss to review his opera score. He accidentally leaves score in a cab and unable to locate it. He then has to rewrite score from memory.

1876 – Mermet's opera is the first premiere at the newly built Palais Garnier on April 8, 1876. The opera runs for 15 performances with the last on November 27, 1876.

Dupanloup takes the records from the Process of the Ordinary to Rome.

Publication of Wallon's illustrated edition of his *Jeanne d'Arc*.

1881 – Premiere of Pyotr Tchaikovsky's opera *Orleanskaya deva* at the Mariinsky Theater.

1890 – Sarah Bernhardt's revival of Barbier-Gounod's melodrama at the Théâtre de la Porte-Saint-Martin.

## Barbier-Gounod's *Jeanne d'Arc* (1873)

ACT I: Domrémy: the cottage of Jacques d'Arc
After the d'Arc family has finished supper, a group of refugees travels by their home. Jeanne convinces her father to allow the travelers to spend the night. They tell Jeanne and her family of the horrors they have seen ("Nous fuyons la Patrie"). She listens closely to their tale. Later that evening, Jacques tells his wife Isabelle that he is worried about Jeanne and hopes she will marry soon. He approves of her suitor Thibaut. However, when Thibaut asks for Jeanne's hand, she refuses. She explains her divine mission to him. Afterward, Jeanne fights off an enemy English soldier (Mélodrame). The act ends with Saint Margaret and Saint Catherine calling Jeanne to save France, and she accepts (Final–Les Voix).

ACT II: Chinon: the apartment of Agnès Sorel
Mesdames Gaucourt and Treves arrange Agnès's hair. The ladies of the court are also present and ask Loyes, the page, to sing the song of the prisoner ("Beau Page, voulez vous nous dire") Later the dauphin enters and a procession can be heard outside ("Vexilla regis prodeunt"). The dauphin says a prayer that if he is not the rightful heir to the throne, then for God to take the crown, but leave him his liberty. Jeanne arrives at the castle but is met by Agnès who tried to prevent her from seeing the dauphin. The Maid is undaunted and manages an audience. She recognizes the dauphin despite an attempt at tricking her and proves that she is sent by God when she repeats the prayer that Charles had recited earlier (Mélodrame). The act ends in a rousing patriotic chorus ("Dieu le veut! Dieu le veut!").

ACT III: Orléans
The scene opens with the French soldiers and their female followers making merry singing "Demain la bataille." Jeanne, greatly disappointed in the soldiers' behavior, dismisses the women. She announces that her soldiers will be Christian men. The act ends with a prayer before battle ("Dieu de miséricorde, Viens! Esprit créateur").

ACT IV: Reims
*Premier Tableau: a shaded terrace overlooking the city and the cathedral.*
*To the left is a bench. To the right, descending steps that lead to a chapel.*
The people of France sing the praises of Jeanne and what she has done for France ("Sans verser le sang elle prend les villes!"). Jeanne stands as a sponsor for an unwell child who soon recovers after the baptism. The Maid encounters Agnès who has been banished from court. Then, Jeanne's family arrives for the coronation.

*Deuxième Tableau: the front doors of the cathedral.*
Deeply moved by having her family present, Jeanne hopes to return to Domrémy with them. However, the newly crowned king reminds the Maid of her promise to rid France of invaders, so she agrees to continue fighting. The act ends with Jeanne bidding farewell to her family and marching off to battle. The people of France sing "Noël! Noël!"

ACT V: Rouen
*Premier Tableau: a prison at night.*
The scene begins with the soldiers drinking and gambling ("J'ai bonne epsérnace, Mon dégagnera"). While Jeanne is sleeping, Saint Catherine and Saint Margaret appear to comfort her. Their theme ("Jeanne! Jeanne!") interrupts the soldiers' carousing. By the end of the section, both the saints' music and the soldiers' have intertwined. Jeanne is caught wearing men's clothes after she had promised to no longer do so. She is sent to the secular authorities as a relapsed heretic. Before she leaves for her execution, Warwick, the governor of Rouen, attempts to ravish Jeanne. She fights him and is saved when Brother Martin and two monks arrive.

*Deuxième Tableau: the marketplace; scaffolds and a pile of faggots and a stack at back; the assessors take their positions on the scaffold; the executioner seated on the faggots; a crowd of men, but no women, fills the scene; a funeral march is heard. Monks process onto stage singing "Orate pro ea."*
Jeanne is burned at the stake while a chorus of monks, soldiers, and the people of France watch on ("Le Feu! Le Feu!").

## Mermet's *Jeanne d'Arc* (1876)

ACT I: Domrémy
Young maidens sing and dance around the Ladies' Tree (Fairy Tree). Jeanne's father Jacques remarks about the state of France and the war. Gaston de Metz and a troop of soldiers arrive and speak of the war. Refugees fleeing from the enemy enter the scene. Jeanne sings that a woman lost France, but a virgin will save it ("O mon pays"). Gaston is struck by Jeanne's beauty and purity. However, he learns from her that she has been sent on a mission from God to save France from the English. He agrees to take her to meet Robert de Baudricourt at Vaucouleurs to ask for an escort to see the dauphin. The act ends with the Voices calling Jeanne to her mission. She is afraid of what waits her (musically represented by the Fate Theme), but they reassure her and she agrees to leave her home.

ACT II: Chinon, the castle garden
The dauphin and Agnès Sorel enjoy each other's company and try to forget about the problems of the war. Minstrels arrive from King René to entertain the court ("Gais ménestrels"). Much of the act contains entertainment at the court. When Jeanne arrives at the castle, she convinces the dauphin of her mission by revealing his prayer. The court sings her praises ("Salut! Salut! Vierge Libératrice!").

ACT III
*Premier Tableau: camp of the French in Blois by moonlight.*
Agnès visits the camp to find Gaston in love with Jeanne ("Elle est pure, elle est chaste et belle"). Agnès soon learns that the Maid is unaware of his feelings and is only concerned with her mission.

*Deuxième Tableau: camp of the French during the day.*
The soldiers and women followers make merry singing, "Amis faisons ripaille." An Armagnac soldier named Richard plots against Jeanne. Meanwhile, dancing ensues at the camp. Jeanne enters the scene dismayed at the behavior of the soldiers. She sends the women away and scolds the men. They must prepare for battle to relieve Orléans, so the maid leads them in prayer ("Viens, visiter nos àmes").

ACT IV
*Premier Tableau: on the walls of Orléans*
Richard brings English archers to attack, but Gaston warns the French and is killed trying to save Jeanne. When she learns of his death, her voices are heard telling her to go to Reims for the coronation.

*Deuxième Tableau: inside Reims Cathedral*
The dauphin receives the sacred anointing and is crowned king of France. Jeanne asks if she can return home, since her mission is complete. The king and people of France beg her to stay and defend her country. After a vision of her death at the stake, she agrees to accept her fate and die for France. The opera ends with her marching to battle.

# APPENDIX B

## COMPOSITE ILLUSTRATIONS

Barbier-Gounod, *Jeanne d'Arc*, composite illustration published in *Le Monde illustré*, November 29, 1873. Edmond Morin, illustrator.


THÉATRE. — *JEANNE D'ARC*, drame en vers de M. J. Barbier, avec musique de Gounod, représenté au théâtre de la Gaîté. — (Dessin de M. Edmond Morin.)

Mermet, *Jeanne d'Arc*, composite illustration published in *Le Monde illustré*, April 8, 1876, Edmond Morin, illustrator.

Mermet, *Jeanne d'Arc*, composite illustration published in *L'Univers illustré*, April 8, 1876, Auguste Trichon, illustrator.


THEATRE NATIONAL DE L'OPERA. — *JEANNE D'ARC*, opéra en quatre actes et six tableaux; poëme et musique de M. A. MERMET.

1. Le village de Domrémy. — 2. Le parc du château de Chinon. — 3. La forêt de Blois et la tente de Jeanne d'Arc. — 4. Les rives de la Loire. — 5. Sous les murs d'Orléans. 6. Le sacre dans la cathédrale de Reims. — Voir la Chronique.

Mermet, *Jeanne d'Arc*, upper half of composite illustration published in *L'Illustration*, April 15, 1876, Oswaldo Tofani, Emile Tilly, illustrators.

Mermet, *Jeanne d'Arc*, lower half of composite illustration published in *L'Illustration*, April 15, 1876, Oswaldo Tofani, Emile Tilly, illustrators.

# APPENDIX C

## *VENI CREATOR SPIRITUS* TEXTS

*Veni Creator Spiritus* from Auguste Mermet's *Jeanne d'Arc*.
Text and Translation:

| | |
|---|---|
| Viens visiter nos âmes, | Come visit our souls, |
| Viens, Esprit créateur, | Come, creator Spirit, |
| De tes célestes flammes | With your heavenly flames |
| Viens remplir notre coeur! | Come fill our hearts! |
| | |
| Prête à notre faiblesse | Lend to our weakness |
| L'appui de ton saint nom. | The support of your holy name. |
| Préserve-nous sans cesse, | Protect us always, |
| Des pièges du démon. | From the snares of the devil. |
| | |
| O fontaine de vie, | O fountain of life, |
| Saint amour, feu sacré, | Holy love, sacred fire, |
| A ta sources bénie | With your blessed spring |
| Mon coeur s'est enivré! | My heart has become intoxicated! |
| | |
| C'est toi qui des batailles | It is you who of the battles |
| Viens régler le destin; | Come set the fate; |
| Contre tours et murailles | Against towers and walls |
| Prévaut l'Esprit divin. | The divine Spirit prevails. |
| | |
| Gloire et louange au Père! | Glory and praise to the Father! |
| Gloire au Fils rédempteur! | Glory to the Son, redeemer! |
| Et, par toute la terre, | And through the whole earth, |
| A l'Esprit créateur! | To the creator Spirit![247] |

[247] Auguste Mermet, *Jeanne d'Arc, Opéra en quatre actes et six tableaux* (Paris: Tresse, 1876), 50.

*Veni Creator Spiritus* from Jules Barbier and Charles Gounod's *Jeanne d'Arc*.
Text and translation:

| | |
|---|---|
| Dieu de miséricorde,<br>Viens, esprit créateur!... Descends du ciel!... accorde<br>Le secours de ta grâce aux coeurs créés par toi!<br>Qu'ils vivent dans ta foi! | God of mercy,<br>Come creator Spirit! ... Descend from the Heaven! ... extend<br>The relief of your grace to the hearts created by you!<br>Let them live in your faith! |
| Donne-leur ton amour! Verse-leur ta lumière!<br>Ceux qui souffrent seront guéris par la prière! | Give them your love! Pour them your light!<br>Those who suffer will be healed through prayer! |
| Et, si de leur souffrance ils ne peuvent guérir,<br>Apprends-leur à souffrir. | And, if of their suffering they cannot heal,<br>Teach them how to suffer. |
| Défends-les! Gardes-les sous ta main paternelle!<br>Et, quand viendra la mort, dans la vie éternelle,<br>Seigneur Dieu, reçois-les! | Defend them! Guard them under your fatherly hand!<br>And when death comes, in the eternal life,<br>Lord God, receive them![248] |

After her prayer, Jeanne stands, raises her standard, and announces, "Now the English are all yours!" and all respond, "To the English!"[249]

[248] Jules Barbier and Charles Gounod, *Jeanne d'Arc: Drame en cinq actes en vers avec chœurs* (Paris: Michel Lévy Frères, 1874), 114–115. "Très simplement et à demi-voix."

[249] Ibid., 116. "Maintenant les Anglais sont à vous!" "Aux Anglais!"

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