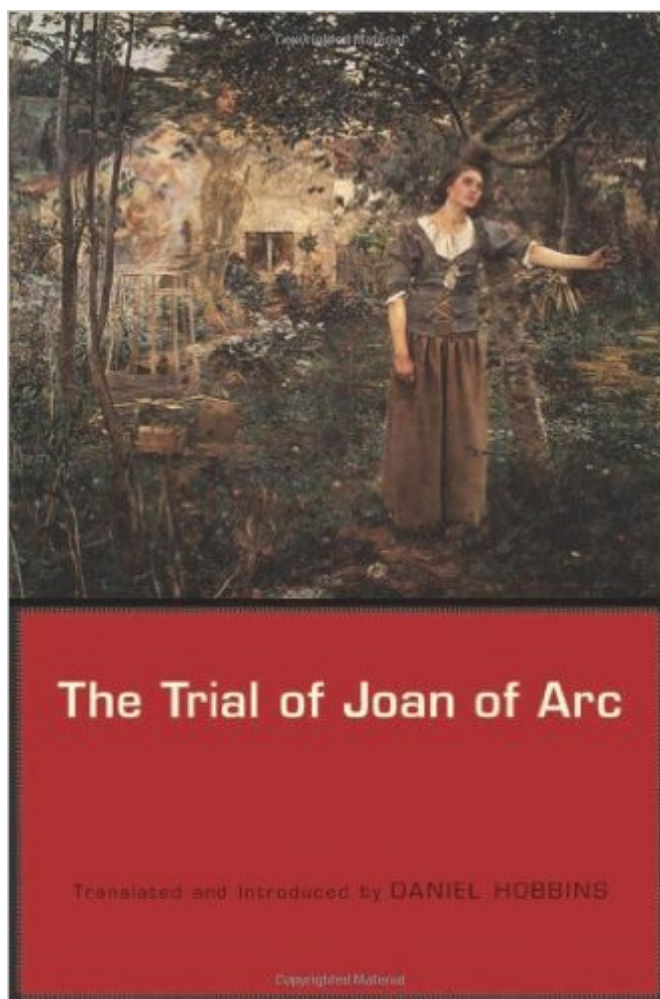


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The Trial Of Joan Of Arc



Synopsis

No account is more critical to our understanding of Joan of Arc than the contemporary record of her trial in 1431. Convened at Rouen and directed by bishop Pierre Cauchon, the trial culminated in Joan's public execution for heresy. The trial record, which sometimes preserves Joan's very words, unveils her life, character, visions, and motives in fascinating detail. Here is one of our richest sources for the life of a medieval woman. This new translation, the first in fifty years, is based on the full record of the trial proceedings in Latin. Recent scholarship dates this text to the year of the trial itself, thereby lending it a greater claim to authority than had traditionally been assumed.

Contemporary documents copied into the trial furnish a guide to political developments in Joan's career—from her capture to the attempts to control public opinion following her execution. Daniel Hobbins sets the trial in its legal and historical context. In exploring Joan's place in fifteenth-century society, he suggests that her claims to divine revelation conformed to a recognizable profile of holy women in her culture, yet Joan broke this mold by embracing a military lifestyle. By combining the roles of visionary and of military leader, Joan astonished contemporaries and still fascinates us today. Obscured by the passing of centuries and distorted by the lens of modern cinema, the story of the historical Joan of Arc comes vividly to life once again.

Book Information

Paperback: 272 pages

Publisher: Harvard University Press (April 30, 2007)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0674024052

ISBN-13: 978-0674024052

Product Dimensions: 5.5 x 0.8 x 8.2 inches

Shipping Weight: 11.2 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 3.5 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (6 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #295,057 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #24 in [Books > Christian Books &](#)

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Customer Reviews

Critics of this book simply miss the point. This is the best, virtually the only, complete transcript of the trial at which Joan was questioned. It is beside the point that there was a retrial under friendly auspices later. The drama is in the first trial, and the arguments against the accuracy of the record

have been wildly overstated. I do hope the translator will also do the second trial. It is less dramatic but a full portrait of Joan requires both.

These transcripts of the trial along with the author's commentary point out vividly the invidious trail of Joan of Arc. The English party both hated and feared her. They used the inquisition to condemn a political prisoner to death just to illegitimatze the King of France. Although Pierre Cauchon tried to disguise his animosity by presenting to the world a legally conducted trial, he violated every canon of a fair trial, and abused his office of Bishop. There is no credence in the author's supposition that the Bishop of Beauvais tried to save Joan from death by having her declared a repentive heretic thereby sentencing her to imprisonment. The evil bishop engineered her relapse for the sole purpose of putting her to death. Anyone interested in hearing Joan's own words and in reading a prime source of history will find this book facinating. It is not a book for those who like romantic history.

If you have endnotes in an Ebook you HAVE to have the number on the page link to the endnote itself. It is infuriating that something so simple was overlooked. Why? I had to buy this book for class. Not my choice. But if I'm going to spend the money the least I expect is a decent Ebook.

This is a wonderful translation of the trial documents well organized! It is extremely helpful to have the documents put in an order that is easy to read and understand.

Although this book's marketing material states that it is designed to counter the Hollywood version, the book instead ironically tries to justify the standard Hollywood claim that Bishop Cauchon was a sincere fellow operating under lawful procedures - in contradiction to the many historians, as this book itself admits, who have soundly and consistently debunked that idea. This book does not present any credible evidence to back up its claims, selectively quoting (or misquoting) testimony at the appeal while ignoring both the majority of the witness testimony at the latter trial and glossing over or excusing the well-documented illegalities of the original trial. There have been many other books which give a more substantive and accurate accounting of the Condemnation trial, including previous translations such as those by Scott and Barrett.

The basis for questioning the accuracy of Joan of Arc's condemnation trial transcript has not been its date of creation, but the myriad ways in which the trial was rigged. Joan of Arc was a famous

political prisoner. Her trial was funded by the government she had warred against and numerous court officials worked under compulsion, some even under death threats. Court clerks later testified under oath that portions of the official transcript were altered. This document did not stand the test of time. A quarter century later the verdict was overturned. While this remains an important historical source, it lacks the weight that court records normally carry. Serious scholars will prefer the Latin original. English translations are already available for free on the Internet. A new translation that makes suspect claims for the document's value is not what the English speaking public needs. I wish Professor Hobbins well and hope he follows up with a translation of Joan of Arc's retrial transcript. A complete and adequate version has never been readily available in English.

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