

Article

## Charisma and Routine: Shaping the Memory of Brother Richard and Joan of Arc

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**Abstract:** The extraordinary life and fate of Joan of Arc are well known; so is her association with the prophetic preacher, Brother Richard, who predicted the Apocalypse. Less well explained is why contemporaries initially took such an interest in this association, and how and why it began to fade from official memory after Joan's death. Max Weber's concepts of "charisma" and "routinization" offer valuable tools to deal with these questions. Both Joan and Richard have earned the title "charismatic" but interest in the preacher has generally been secondary to interest in the Maid. A more rigorous adoption of Weber's meaning of charisma, however, helps to clarify what the relative importance of these figures was in the eyes of contemporaries. It also shifts attention to the significance of messianic prophecy in the years surrounding Joan's life, the anxieties it generated and the way it was dealt with. In this context, the processions and commemorative ceremonies organized by townspeople, churchmen and royalty during this period deserve further analysis. Seen as forces of "routine", these ceremonies assume a greater significance than they have usually been granted, as processes that managed the memory of charismatic phenomena.

**Keywords:** Weber; charisma; routine; medieval; processions; social memory

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### 1. Introduction

Early in April 1429, the grey friar Brother Richard arrived in Paris ([1], pp. 233–37). For a fortnight he preached almost every day for five hours at several locations to crowds of five or six thousand. His message was apocalyptic. He claimed to have returned recently from Jerusalem where Jews had told

him of the imminent birth of the Antichrist. Evidently he combined captivating oratory with a flair for dramatic technique. At the church of the Innocents, he preached from a high platform with his back to the charnel-houses, near the new mural depicting the *Danse Macabre* ([2], pp. 131–62.)<sup>1</sup> On St Mark's day, the people of Paris were so "moved and stirred up to devotion" that within a few hours, 100 fires were lit in order to burn every kind of "covetous" game (chess, cards, dice and balls) that caused anger and swearing. Then women burned all their fine headgear in public. Some burned mandrakes that they had kept hidden away having believed these would make them rich: Brother Richard spoke "severely against this folly" as nothing but "witchcraft and heresy". According to the Bourgeois of Paris (an anonymous clerk of the university of Paris, and probably a canon at Notre-Dame), no preacher in the previous century had so turned the people to piety. When he left Paris, everyone wept as bitterly as if they had been watching the burial of their dearest friends.

Brother Richard departed prophesying "the greatest wonders that had ever happened" for the year to come. As a messianic preacher calling for moral reform, judged by his audiences to be endowed with extraordinary powers, inspiring followers to change their lives, he undoubtedly fits Weber's ideal-type of "charismatic leader", the would-be agent of "a radical alteration of... structures of the 'world'." ([3], pp. 46–47, 53, 104, 151–52; [4], pp. 360–63). As Gary Dickson writes, this kind of charisma for Weber was essentially ephemeral ([5], p. 765; [3], p. 78; [4], p. 364); and in Brother Richard's case, as far as Parisians were concerned, it was fleeting indeed. Two months after he had left, he was held in so much contempt that the games he had forbidden were being played once more ([1], pp. 242–43). He disappears from the Bourgeois of Paris' account, almost from other sources, and is consequently neglected by modern historians. It is of course another figure, Joan of Arc, who draws the bulk of attention, and interest in Brother Richard is subservient to his association with her ([6], pp. 260–68; [7,8]; [9], pp. 362–63; [10], p. 234; [11], pp. 31–32). The Bourgeois of Paris passes directly from the preaching of Richard to the deeds of Joan: her part in the raising of the siege of Orléans therefore appears to be one of the "wonders" that Brother Richard foretold. To Joan's supporters, this extraordinary feat was miraculous; to her detractors it was the result of more satanic influences. It is no accident that the Bourgeois, incensed by Joan's assaults on Paris, introduces her into his account immediately after referring to the burning of mandrakes ([1], p. 237).

In recent historiography, Joan's extraordinariness has also earned her the epithet "charismatic" ([12], p. 29). Whether Weber's definition of charisma applies to Joan as well as it does to Brother Richard, is debatable. Weber does not appear to have envisaged charismatic leadership by females as typical: perhaps his definition does not deal sufficiently with gender and with the qualities that were considered extraordinary enough in women to permit them to be leaders of men. On the other hand, he does not preclude the possibility that women could manifest charismatic behaviour ([3], p. 104; [5], pp. 764 note 2, 770, 779–80); and his crucial emphasis on charisma as a matter of perception ([5], p. 766; [4], p. 359) is prompt enough to encourage further inquiry into the charismatic qualities that in any given period were deemed particular to women and to men, or appropriate for the one or the other.

This article, however, deals with gendered differences in charisma only in passing, and instead pursues lines of enquiry that are more central to Weberian analysis: the relationship between charisma

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<sup>1</sup> The mural depicting the Dance of Death, with all members of society being swept off to their doom, had been painted just five years before [2].

and the “routine” or the “ritualistic” ([3], pp. 60–61, 66–67, 74–75, 187–88, 262; [4], pp. 361–63). The prophet and the “representative of the priestly tradition” are set apart. The charisma of the prophet is different from the kind of charisma (*Amtscharisma*) possessed by the “technicians of the routine cults” ([3], pp. 66–67). Weber was more concerned with change than continuity, more with the kind of prophetic charisma that could overcome tradition than with the efforts of authorities to maintain it. But he recognized the power of forces that opposed “pneumatic” manifestations of charisma, and of suspicion raised among its enforcers towards individuals seeking grace by their own unaided means ([3], pp. 187–88). Evidence for such power is not hard to find in the treatment of Brother Richard, who was ejected from Paris at the orders of the theology faculty of the university, and imprisoned at Poitiers in March 1430. Like many other charismatic individuals, Richard was muzzled.

Yet suppression was not the only means by which prophetic charisma was controlled. Weber’s analysis encourages enquiry into other processes that might be at work. His notion of “routinization” is particularly valuable in this context. By this, Weber principally meant a process through which the enthusiasm generated by the prophet and his followers might be channelled into the foundation of a community or religious order, give way to the “forces of everyday routine”, and thus lose its radical character ([3], pp. 60–61; [4], pp. 363–73, esp. p. 370). His analysis of this process (in *The Theory of Social and Economic Organization*) focused on the motives of followers that might lead to the “traditionalizing” of charismatic authority ([4], pp. 364–66); but his discussion of two “sharply” opposing types of authority, the “traditional” and “bureaucratic” ([4], p. 361), sets up the possibility that the process was also one forced on followers by those who opposed their aims. In *The Sociology of Religion*, Weber implies that a priesthood could appropriate the ideas of prophetic movements: “it might compromise with the new policy, surpass its doctrines, or conquer it” ([3], pp. 66–67). It is therefore worth extending the notion of “routinization” to include the responses that authorities made to the charismatic, in this case to the troublesome Brother Richard and Joan of Arc. In particular, the sermons preached by churchmen and processions performed by lay and ecclesiastical authorities during this period, may be usefully understood as responses that in certain circumstances managed “prophetic charisma”.

The disturbances created by Richard and Joan did not end with their passing. Authorities that dealt with their activities when they were alive, had also to deal with memory of them after their death. This article will therefore touch on the final question raised by Gary Dickson in his article on “Charisma: Medieval and Modern,” that is the extent to which prophetic charisma might outlive its perceived possessor ([5], p. 781). The afterlife of charisma is also about its memory, and the processes by which it was managed. These processes may also be framed as a type of “routinization”. Sermon and procession dealt with disturbing events and individuals in the short term; over time the repetition of processions, and commemoration in chronicles and further ceremonies, served to shape and contain their memory. The fixing of social memory is perhaps most strongly secured by institutionalized commemoration ([13], pp. x, 14–15, 92–96, 127–37, 157–58). Joan of Arc was burnt as an idolator and heretic, but Valois rehabilitation of her name eventually guaranteed a hallowed place for her in the consciousness of a nation. But the process of remembering is also a process of forgetting. Uncomfortable aspects of Joan’s activities were removed from later official accounts. Meanwhile Brother Richard all but vanished from documented record. Commemorating the Maid and dispatching the preacher to oblivion may be interpreted as part of the same process of “routinization”.

The value of Weber's ideal-types and concepts to the historian is not that they provide models to apply rigidly to the past, but that they offer frameworks for research, or apertures through which the past might be viewed in new or revealing ways.<sup>2</sup> "Charisma" and "routinization" are lenses for viewing the familiar events surrounding Joan of Arc from a fresh perspective. One of the incidental effects of this view is to bring Brother Richard back into sharper focus in terms of his significance to contemporaries.

## 2. The Charisma of Brother Richard and Joan of Arc

"Preaching unfolds its power most strongly", wrote Weber, "in periods of prophetic excitation" ([3], p. 75). The early fifteenth century was a period when messianic expectations were particularly high. The threat of social revolt, that had been so dangerous to authority in the 1380s, remained a fear in the minds of ruling groups. The Hussite rebellion seemed in the 1420s to present the worst combination of social and religious upheaval. The Papal Schism had been deeply troubling to ecclesiastical authority, and its effects continued long after the Schism was healed in 1417. Joan of Arc herself was made aware of both Hussite threat and the Schism ([11], pp. 122–23; [15], V, pp. 156–59). Treatises on the sick state of the church continued to urge reform at the highest levels, but anxieties about the urgency of reform penetrated lower down the social hierarchy. Brother Richard was one in a succession of preachers who had excited fears that the devil or the Antichrist was loose in the world. Vincent Ferrer (d.1419) had for a time preached support for the Avignon pope, and mesmerized crowds in northern France by the apocalyptic tenor of his sermons ([8]; [16], pp. 317–18). In northern Italy, Bernadino of Siena (d.1444) was the most renowned of several preachers (from the Franciscan observance) who urged moral and social reform among townsmen [17].

Such preachers drew ambivalent responses from their audiences. On the one hand, in some towns they could enjoy the temporary support of municipal authorities, who might draft the moralizing tone of their sermons into civic legislation ([18], pp. 54–55; [17]; [14], pp. 103–05). On the other hand, their apocalyptic predictions were treated more warily. Even Bernadino of Siena, who was to be canonized in 1450 with unusual speed after his death, had initially been denounced (by Dominicans) for his encouragement of the cult of the Name of Jesus: its messianic undertones were deemed satanic. This denunciation was partly the result of rivalry between mendicant orders, but it also reflects a wider uncertainty among churchmen regarding what or who was truly holy. The appearance of holiness could easily mask the presence of evil; and in a climate of heightened fervour, detecting the differences between the two had become more urgent and difficult.<sup>3</sup>

Prophetic excitation ran high in war-torn France.<sup>4</sup> In the late 1420s, the Bourgeois of Paris recorded events that might easily have been interpreted as signs of an approaching Apocalypse: the corrupt air

<sup>2</sup> D'Avray terms Weber's ideal-type as a "simplified schema" that Weber invites us "to try ... for size in empirical investigation," and to alter "if it does not fit" ([14], pp. 17–18).

<sup>3</sup> For Vincent Ferrer's own sermon on the dangers of demonic enchanters like Simon Magus, see [19], pp. 53–54. For Jean Gerson's tract on the discernment of spirits, see [20].

<sup>4</sup> Monstrelet was to recall the fulminations of another disciple of Vincent Ferrer, the friar Thomas Connecte, against the luxurious living of the inhabitants of Valenciennes and those of other towns in Northern France in 1428 ([21], IV, p. 305). Other sources suggest that Thomas' preaching was more messianic than Monstrelet reports ([22], pp. 229–30).

causing illness and hacking coughs that disturbed the preaching of sermons; the plague of caterpillars devouring vines, almonds and walnuts; and in June 1429 outside Paris the birth of Siamese twins who attracted 10,000 Parisians out of the city to gawp at them ([1], pp. 222–24, 238–39). In August 1431, shortly after the burning of Joan of Arc, citizens were acutely agitated by the appearance of a batch of bread that, despite being made with excellent flour, emerged from the oven with the colour of cinders. To some this was a miracle, since the bread was baked on the Assumption; but to others it presaged something dreadful ([1], p. 273). In this climate of excited anxiety, preachers of dubious reputations preyed on receptive audiences. Twelve “penitents” who preached in Paris in 1427 had all the outward marks of holiness: a blessing from the pope and an appearance of poverty. According to the Bourgeois, however, they had sorceresses among them, caused trouble in marriages, and by magic arts or the devil’s help made money flow out of other people’s purses into their own ([1], p. 220). In 1446 a young preacher came to Paris, whose talents in medicine, law, theology, painting and fighting were so astonishing, that it seemed to many that he might be the Antichrist himself ([1], pp. 381–82).

Brother Richard’s preaching was also variously regarded. At Orléans he won prolonged support: in 1430 he preached for twenty-three days in Lent, and enjoyed the hospitality of a local family. Like Bernadino of Siena he appears to have distributed medallions marked with the Name of Jesus ([23], pp. 234, 236, 238, 242, 246). But a letter from the town of Châlons to Rheims in July 1429 had already identified him as a sorcerer ([15], IV, p. 288). His moment of favour in Paris was brief, according to the Bourgeois, partly because he was soon discovered to be in the enemy camp, with the Valois army that besieged Paris in September 1429—and in the company of Joan of Arc ([1], pp. 242–43). According to the *greffier* of La Rochelle, Brother Richard had also prepared the way for Joan’s arrival at Troyes, on the road to Rheims for the crowning of the dauphin Charles. Richard went out of the town gates to kneel before her, and then ceaselessly preached in streets and public places until he had persuaded all the inhabitants to open their doors to Joan and the rightful king. Her arrival was an apocalyptic moment: Brother Richard preached that she had penetrated the secrets of God known only by the greatest of saints in paradise ([24], pp. 336–37).<sup>5</sup>

Joan was also perceived as possessing extraordinary powers in the earliest accounts of her deeds. The anonymous cordelier friar wrote (c.1432) that rumours of her miracles reached as far as Rome; people of towns disobedient to the dauphin were “transformed and overcome, and had no power to defend themselves against her” ([25], p. 73). This power was acknowledged by her opponents, although to the duke of Bedford in 1434, her ability to “drain the courage of her foes” was the result of sorcery and her discipleship of the “fiend” ([15], V, p. 136). Chastellain, echoing Joan’s interrogators at Rouen, considered that the French people had wanted to make her their idol ([15], IV, p. 442). An ambivalence was shown towards Joan as it was towards charismatic preachers, an ambivalence made sharper in her case because of the troublesome way she appeared to cross gender boundaries. To the Bourgeois of Paris, she was the “accursed maid” whose very gender was in doubt: “what it was, God

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<sup>5</sup> Jean de Chatillon, lord of Troissy, had also apparently attributed the king’s entry into Troyes to the influence of Brother Richard ([15], IV, p. 296).

only knows” ([1], p. 244).<sup>6</sup> The difficulty felt by theologians of distinguishing the holy from the unholy was particularly taxing when it came to visionary women. In her trial at Rouen, the judges asked Joan about her knowledge of mandrakes; and only a few years later she appeared in Johannes Nider’s *Formicarius* (1437) as an example of the devil-worshipping witch who had begun to terrorize the imaginations of clerics [26].

The similarities between Joan and other extraordinary women in this period have been well explored. Vauchez drew attention to the disproportionate number of female visionaries and prophets who appeared during the Schism, some of whom achieved access to papal, episcopal and, like Joan of Arc, royal households. Kings of France had frequently bent an ear to the words of male and female visionaries [27,28]. Yet there were significant ways in which visionary females were distinguished from their male counterparts. By her frequent requests for communion, Joan shared in a kind of piety—an intense devotion to the Eucharist—that was particular to women mystics ([29], pp. 12–13, 17). On the other hand, female visionaries were excluded from the role of preaching.<sup>7</sup> While male prophets could hold large crowds captive by their sermons in public spaces, female visionaries spoke indoors before influential but restricted audiences. Their message to popes or kings might touch on the apocalyptic, but they rarely appear to have predicted the imminent arrival of the Antichrist, as some male preachers did with such profligacy ([31], pp. 61–95; [28], pp. 277–81; [10], p. 228). Women might be permitted to “teach”, possibly in public as St Katherine of Alexandria had done (and whom Joan claimed to have seen in her visions), but even this was a role model that could not be adopted by women with ease.<sup>8</sup> The extraordinary qualities in visionary women that most impressed male and clerical admirers did not usually involve their powers of speech. Colette de Corbie, whom Joan of Arc possibly met, was noted for her visions in ecstatic trances—during which she was completely unable to speak ([6], p. 288; [33], pp. 51–62, 74–94; [10], p. 229; [12], p. 38; [34], pp. 188–92).

There are hints of the messianic in the letters that Joan of Arc apparently wrote. She refers to the possibility of a crusade to recover the Holy Land. Her reference to the name of Jesus (that appeared also on her banners), may represent an undercurrent of messianic expectation that was associated with Bernadino of Siena’s cult of the Name ([15], V, pp. 126–27). Yet these are hints only, and carry none of the overt message of reform and apocalypticism that characterized the sermons of Bernadino—or those of Brother Richard. The Bourgeois of Paris wrote that she claimed to foretell the future ([1], p. 237), but her prophecies, though divinely inspired according to her supporters, were apparently limited to the restoration of the Valois monarchy ([15], I, pp. 221–22). Although “extraordinary”, she is not the agent of structural change in the sense that Weber meant. Exclusion from the role of preaching, as perhaps Weber implies, tended towards the exclusion of women from the role of reforming agent.

Yet the “charisma” attributed to individuals, as Weber emphasizes, lay ultimately in the eye of the beholder, and eyes that beheld Joan saw a strong association between her and the male prophet. In the

<sup>6</sup> The Bourgeois also refers to doubt about Joan’s gender at her burning: she was apparently pulled from the flames “et fut veue de tout le peuple et tous les secrez quie pevent estre ou doynet [estre] en femme, pour oster les doubttes du peuple” ([1], p. 269). Chastellain considered Joan to be “passant nature de femme” ([15], IV, p. 446).

<sup>7</sup> Though for limited and exceptional occasions when women were invited to preach, see for instance [30].

<sup>8</sup> Another extraordinary and loquacious visionary, Margery Kempe (in *The Book of Margery Kempe* c.1438), who also had visions of St Katherine, is flatly informed by the Mayor of Leicester that this saint “ar ye not lyche” ([32], p. 113).

earliest reports of her deeds, particularly in hostile sources, her connection with Brother Richard is perceived as close. The duke of Bedford on 7 August 1429 wrote to the dauphin Charles, demanding that he produce for correction both Joan “the deformed woman” and Richard, the “apostate seditious mendicant friar” ([15], I, p. 382).<sup>9</sup> The Bourgeois of Paris thought Joan to have been in Richard’s thrall. A sermon preached in Paris by the Dominican inquisitor, Jean Graverent, on 9 August 1431, after the burning of Joan, claimed that there were three other women captured with her: all of them had been under the direction of Brother Richard, their confessor ([1], p. 271). This claim may simply reflect an assumption that Joan as a woman would not have been acting alone. Certainly, Joan’s own testimony suggests greater distance between herself and the preacher: she had never seen him before her arrival at Troyes (in July 1429) and could not remember if he had entered the town with her. Asked if Brother Richard had given a sermon after her arrival—which according to the *greffier* of La Rochelle had been so influential—she said she did not know ([15], I, pp. 99–100, 102, 291). But the facts about the relationship between Joan and Richard, whatever these were, are less significant than perceptions of it. The need felt by inquisitors to question Joan so closely about Brother Richard reveals that an association with him was considered damning and disturbing. There were therefore many reasons to regard Joan as extraordinary, but what made her dangerous—and thus “charismatic” - in the eyes of her detractors was her connection with prophets who predicted apocalyptic change.

### 3. Responses to Charisma

The connection between Brother Richard and Joan of Arc, the one strengthening the charisma of the other, suggests another potential quality of charisma itself: that it could be passed on from one individual to another, and therefore survive the death of the individual who possessed it. Weber located charisma chiefly in the emotional excitement that individuals inspired: by implication it was unlikely to outlive its generator. Yet he did hint at the possibility of a charismatic afterlife.<sup>10</sup> The “pneumatic” qualities of a prophetic preacher were unpredictable, and they could continue “without and beyond him as the object of a cult” ([3], p. 78). Unlike Bernadino of Siena, Brother Richard failed to inspire long-term disciples, and Joan of Arc (at least initially) did not generate a holy cult. Yet among their opponents there were fears—a perception at least—that they had the potential to do both.

Preachers could evidently draw over themselves the mantle of other prophets whose powers had already been acknowledged. In his last sermon to the Parisians, Brother Richard called on the authority both of “his master” Vincent Ferrer, and of Bernadino, “one of the greatest preachers in the world”, to strengthen his prediction of great “wonders” to come ([1], pp. 235–36). Of Joan, the Bourgeois records rumours among the people that she had been “martyred” ([1], p. 354). Besides burning her body, her

<sup>9</sup> In his report of the siege of Compiègne where Joan was captured, Chastellain was to impute a connection between Joan and another villainous cordelier, Noiroufle—“a tall black man with the face of a murderer” who “seemed” to be a man of the church ([35], II, p. 53; [36], pp. 551–52).

<sup>10</sup> The possibility arises partly because of the derivative link that Weber makes between his concept of “charisma” and similar notions found in other cultures. Weber defined “charisma” as a “term for extraordinary powers that have been designated by such special terms as ‘mana’...” ([3], p. 1). In Polynesian cultures, the term “mana” has a more fluid quality that might well be expected to pass between individuals and to survive the death of its individual possessor. I am grateful to Dr Peter Meihana for illuminating clarification of this point.

executioners took every precaution to ensure that her ashes would not serve any posthumous purpose—least of all the focus of a saintly cult, the possibility which is not even entertained. “The remains of her body were thrown in bags into the river”, writes the anonymous cordelier, “so that she could never be used or employed for sorcery or any other evil” ([25], p. 83).<sup>11</sup> The Bourgeois of Paris also mentions the “fear of enchantments” that her ashes might have been used for, but he recalled this fact in 1440—when the threat of a resurrected Maid had suddenly arisen. “A lot was heard about the Maid nowadays” because another woman claiming to be Joan had been honourably welcomed in Orléans, and was believed to be the Maid by the people of Paris. Some thought Joan had escaped the flames because of her “sanctity” ([1], p. 354).

A sermon was preached in Paris denouncing the imposter, just as one had been preached about Joan after her burning ([1], pp. 354–55). A perception certainly existed that there were ways in which the dangerous influence of one individual might reach beyond the grave—charisma outliving its possessor. The possibility therefore also explains the response to Joan and her alias. The reactionary sermons were intended to puncture what Weber called the “pneumatic” potential of charisma. They formed part of the responses of ecclesiastical authorities to threats of prophecy and sedition, and were meant to be different in kind from the sermons of a Brother Richard. They may be usefully conceptualized in Weberian terms, as the tools of “technicians” rather than of prophets, the products of “routine” rather than “charisma”.

In many respects, the response of authorities to Joan or Richard could simply be presented as the reaction of ritualized religion to the charismatic, as if the two were polar opposites. To her enemies, Joan represented the antithesis of divine order, and the sermons preached against her reasserted the order that the church wished to affirm. Just before her death at Rouen, on 30 May a sermon was preached in her presence decrying her destructive and diabolic influence on France and Christendom ([1], pp. 266–67). This day was the eve of Corpus Christi: her iniquitous behaviour was put in starker light when denounced on a feast day that stood officially for unity in Christ and liberation from the devil’s thralldom ([37], pp. 215–32). Doubtless, it was a sermon preached in measured tones, without the flamboyance of a Brother Richard: churchmen at the council of Nantes in 1431, perhaps with current messianic prophets in mind, had decreed that preaching needed to be performed “with reverence and humility” and not with “horrible outcries and wild waving of hands” ([18], p. 329).

Moreover, the “routinizing” character of the sermon preached against Joan was strengthened by the context in which it was given: it was held during a “general” procession, when relics were carried to petition God for his grace. The sermon preached against her in Paris shortly after her death was also given as part of a similar procession. Frequently repeated, and drawn from an amalgam of venerable liturgical rites,<sup>12</sup> these processions seem the quintessence of “traditionalized” religion. It appears that more of them were being launched in northern Europe by the fifteenth century than ever before: relic-carrying processions to petition for God’s grace are well attested in many dioceses by the eleventh century, but a growing frequency in their use, especially in major towns, seems to have

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<sup>11</sup> Weber discussed “charisma” primarily as a quality that pertained to individuals, but he lets slip the possibility that it might adhere to objects: [3], p. 1.

<sup>12</sup> Among the liturgical precedents were the processions required on Sundays, the carrying of relics on feast days, and the litanies of Rogation ([38], pp. 27–49; [39]).

occurred from the end of the fourteenth century, in the context of ecclesiastical, social and political crisis.<sup>13</sup> Urban audiences had begun to grow familiar with them. In Paris, the crises surrounding the monarchy especially after 1392, caused an increasing number of processions to be launched, often at the request of the royal court or parlement, during which sermons were preached and a large variety of relics was carried and stational churches used [40]. In the 1420s processions became even more frequent. The meteorological conditions in 1428 that seemed so portentous to the Bourgeois of Paris were countered with several processions ([44], II, pp. 278–79, 282–83, 285). The threats to Paris that continued after Joan of Arc’s death also drew relics and processors from churches. At the end of 1436 when there were “murmurs and bad talk” among the people, it was decided to call general processions, according to the *greffier* of the Paris parlement ([44], III, p. 181). The Bourgeois testified that the most “solemn procession for 100 years” was conducted to give thanks for the grace God had bestowed on Paris for its recovery by Charles VII ([1], p. 320). Processions were still frequent in the 1440s until the English were finally vanquished: in 1441, while Charles VII was besieging Pontoise, “not a day went by ... without a procession, made either by the university, religious orders or the parishes” ([1], p. 361).

The launching of processions, patterned on venerable precedent, was the ordered reaction to crises or their aftermath. By the mid-fourteenth century, it had also become one of the responses of authorities to religious phenomena that arose outside officially accepted norms. Late medieval churchmen had been faced with many manifestations of unregulated and spontaneous piety that seemed to threaten sacramental order. The apocalyptic message of the flagellants who assembled in many towns in the wake of the Black Death was rarely welcomed by clergymen.<sup>14</sup> Supplicatory processions with the correct liturgical procedures was the favoured response, and in places where royal and episcopal authority was particularly strong (in France, at least within the heartland of Valois power), flagellants were repulsed and more orderly processions against plague were called for ([46]; [47], II, pp. 111–12; III, p. 14). Flagellant “excess” had also been managed in other ways. At Tournai the fervour of flagellants who gathered in the city square in August 1349 and announced the Apocalypse, brought out contradictory responses: some condemned them, others approved, and for a time citizens gave up swearing and gaming (like the Parisians were to do in 1429 under Brother Richard’s direction). The cathedral dean and chapter in Tournai called for processions to counter the more extravagant piety of the flagellants. In 1350, the town government prohibited further flagellant displays ([48], pp. 348–49, 354–59). Outbreaks of flagellant “excess” were less frequent by the end of the fourteenth century,<sup>15</sup> but were still considered threatening enough to require theological rebuttal. Jean Gerson, besides being indefatigable in his efforts to heal the Schism, urge pastoral reform, and deal with spiritual discernment, was also moved to write a tract against self-flagellation (c.1417). The practices of flagellants were unauthorized, and their prediction of the apocalypse unhelpful. It was, in Gerson’s opinion, better to prepare for one’s own individual death with appropriate sacramental rites than await the arrival of the Antichrist ([50], X, pp. 40–49; [7], p. 63).

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<sup>13</sup> Systematic study of the incidence of general processions across a wide selection of towns remains to be done, but for strong indications of a common pattern, see evidence from Paris, Orléans, several German towns, and Bruges in Flanders ([40]; [41], pp. 388–90; [42], pp. 281–328; [38], pp. 31–32, 40, 87–99, 235–46; [43], pp. 76–79).

<sup>14</sup> Mass penitential flagellation was not new, having broken out in 1260 largely in north Italian cities [45], but its scale was greater after the Black Death.

<sup>15</sup> For an outbreak of more sedate flagellation in 1399, see [49].

The ceremonial response to apocalyptic piety may thus be characterized as the “technicians of routine cults” asserting themselves over the “charismatic”. Yet it is worth recalling that Weber did not see the one as entirely oppositional to the other. His ideal-types are not watertight categories: Weber allows seepage between them. Just as charisma could potentially outlive its individual possessor, so it could pass to the agent of official religion. Weber considered priests to hold a distinct kind of “charisma of office” ([3], p. 66), but in the performance of office, the priest could also possess some of the charisma that adhered to the prophet: “pastoral care”—and thus the preaching this involved—“stands as midway between charismatic distribution of grace and instruction” ([3], pp. 75, 161–62). The priesthood might also appropriate the ideas of prophetic movements ([3], pp. 66–67). Weber would not have agreed with Edward Shils’ view that prophetic charisma could reside within institutionalized religion and the “tremendous power” it might wield ([51], esp. p. 266; [5], p. 766). Breakthroughs were unlikely to be achieved by institutions. But Weber might have conceded that an attenuated form of charisma could transfer itself to the ritualized arrangements of organized religion.<sup>16</sup> It is in this light that the function of supplicatory processions can be usefully viewed.

On some occasions, the deployment of processions was not so much about the suppression of excessive fervour, than about its containment and appropriation. Despite the more rigid nature of their format, the processions could share in characteristics that marked out flagellant piety and messianic preaching. At Tournai in 1349, the annual procession of Our Lady on the feast day of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross (14 September), absorbed the penitential zeal of the flagellants, who processed along routes that were customary for the occasion ([48], pp. 354–59). Moreover, general processions differed from annually fixed processions or those that were required for Sundays or other feast days of obligation: they were called *ad hoc*, when the moment required, their scale determined by particular need. If they did not permit penitential excess, they required of their participants and audience a response that was more than formal. Tears might fill the eyes of processors. Clément de Fauquembergue, the usually laconic clerk of the Paris parlement, waxes approvingly on the “great devotion” of villagers, processing near Paris in 1428 to ward off the dire effects of the weather, who elicited such “compassion” from their spectators that “hardly anyone could watch them without tears” ([44], II, pp. 278–79). Processors might be touched by the miraculous. In April 1436, to give thanks for the entry of the royal army into Paris, the relics of two of the city’s patron saints, Geneviève and Marcel, were processed: despite the miserable weather, the sodden, barefoot and exhausted processors were spared illness, in the Bourgeois’ opinion, “by miracle” ([1], p. 321). Processors who followed correct procedures might yet brush with the prophetic. The Bourgeois had already discerned a divine hand at work in the “most solemn procession” called two days previously. The offertory for the holy mass for this day, he noted, spoke of praises to be given to God every year on this day: it was just as if this were a “prophecy” ([1], p. 320).

#### 4. Charisma Routinized: The Shaping of Memory

Ceremonies like general processions were intended in the short term to draw out and harness the potential in “prophetic charisma” rather than suppress it altogether. In the long term, the charismatic—

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<sup>16</sup> For Shils’ interpretation of the possibility of an attenuated and dispersed charisma, based on a reading of Weber, see [51], pp. 133–34, 157.

or rather memory of it—had also to be managed. The perception that the aura of an extraordinary individual might survive the grave made this more necessary. How the extraordinary was commemorated is therefore a theme that may also be framed as an aspect of the relationship between routine and charisma. *Ad hoc* general processions dealt with the immediate impact of extraordinary phenomena; annual and commemorative processions served to shape their memory. The divinely-worked relief of Paris, according to the Bourgeois, needed to be remembered annually. This was unproblematic: it did not need not to be attributed to the efforts of a single, extraordinary individual. The relief of Orléans, however, and the part played in it by Joan of Arc, required more careful handling. Valois caution in dealing with the Maid is well known: silence from the royal court after her capture and burning was eventually replaced by public rehabilitation of her name, at the Nullification trial in 1456, and her posthumous passage, on the back of Valois propaganda, to the status of patriotic hero and saviour of France ([11], pp. 39–46). How Joan was absorbed into civic, ecclesiastical and royal traditions, applying Weber's notion of the routine, reveals a little more about the priorities of those who shaped her memory.

Within Orléans, an annual procession to commemorate the siege began immediately. The town accounts were already recording celebration of the siege in 1431, and in 1435 the town paid for commemorative masses for the anniversary of Joan's death ([15], V, pp. 308–09). Thereafter, however, the accounts record annual payments to celebrate events on 8 May but without reference to Joan ([41], pp. 394–95). It may well be that Joan was already being fêted in other ways. In 1435 the first references appear to the staging of a play (*mistère*), which in 1439 (if not before) was being performed during the procession ([15], V, p. 309; [41], pp. 392–95).<sup>17</sup> The text of *Le mystere du siege d'Orleans* gives full attention to Joan's heroism, but it belongs to the later fifteenth century, and probably does not reflect the play's earliest form ([52], pp. 213–21; [53], p. 16). The town accounts of the 1430s hint that other figures besides Joan were considered to merit more attention in commemoration of the siege. In 1435, they refer to the procession to the Tourelles (where the English had made their final stand). This procession carried reliquaries of the three main patron saints of the town: those of Aignan, Mamert and Euverte. These were all former bishops of ancient pedigree, and their relics had long been used for supplicatory purposes. As in Paris, an increasing number of general processions had been called in Orléans during the first three decades of the fifteenth century. Several of them reflected anxiety about the wider problems of a divided Christendom, petitioning for the unity of the Church. Others had responded to more local events. In 1427, the relics of the same three saints were processed to ask God's grace for the defence of Orléans ([41], pp. 388–90). The commemorative procession of the same relics in 1435 was an expression of gratitude for the part these saints had played in the rescue of the town: it marks the beginnings of a process whereby memory of the siege, and of Joan of Arc's place in it, was absorbed into a municipal tradition of links with the sacred.

The account of the siege produced around 1452 (itself based on earlier local accounts [52], p. 210) was also intended to establish official commemoration of the event. It appears in a manuscript before a transcription of the indulgences granted by Cardinal d'Estouteville for celebrating the day of liberation ([23], pp. 141–55; [15], V, pp. 299–301; [11], pp. 354–56). The letters of indulgence make

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<sup>17</sup> Jean Thibault emphasises the way in which the annual procession came to be amalgamated with celebration of the release from captivity in 1440 of Charles, duke of Orléans ([41], pp. 394–401).

no reference to Joan, and the account itself does not dwell exclusively on her exploits. She is introduced, part way through the account, as a sign of the “mercy of God”; in the space of a few lines, she is quickly ushered into the presence of the dauphin Charles and saddled up for battle ([23], p. 145). Her arrival at Orléans is marveled at, but her military deeds in the early days of May 1429 are recounted alongside those of others; eventually on 8 May, with other lords, she forces the English to leave the field. Her final act, in the company of churchmen (singing beautiful hymns), is to tell everyone to go to mass. Then the bishop of Orléans, with the agreement of the citizens ordered a great procession which was to bring out reliquaries from churches, particularly those of St Aignan and St Euverte, the “guardians of the town”—because “it was rumoured” that at the time of the siege, these two prelates had been seen walking around the walls of the town. The account ends with a plea for participation in this procession “with great devotion”, and with a warning that points—from a Weberian perspective—to the socially normative role of such ceremony: abandoning these “saintly and devout processions”, it is asserted, “would cause great strife” ([23], pp. 152–54).

The account also presents Orléans and its siege within the wider context of the kingdom of France. The siege shows the town as a *bonne ville*, loyal to the crown. “For such loyal service,” the townsmen “were and remain in the good grace of the king who has maintained their privileges” ([23], p. 154). Memory of local victories was being absorbed into a wider pattern of commemoration ([54], pp. 137–35). At the same time, royal memory of these events was also being constructed. The Nullification trial, ending in 1456, uncovered further sources of divine aid behind Valois success at Orléans. The royally approved witnesses at the trial were less inclined to acknowledge the role played by local saints. The count of Dunois’ testimony has Joan before Orléans promising the help of the King of Heaven, which would come not from her but from the prayers of Sts Louis and Charlemagne. Joan herself had a vision of these royal saints praying for the safety of king and city ([15], III, pp. 5–6).

Royal endorsement of Joan officially began with the Nullification trial. But assimilation of her memory into Valois history had required some filtering of detail about her life. Testimony at the trial rendered her unusual deeds less susceptible to criticism. Besides the gloss put on her wearing of men’s clothing, her piety and chastity were placed beyond question. Justification of her acts made some concession to the imperatives of inward revelation [55], but particular stress was placed on Joan’s faith in the sacraments (in ways that Jean Gerson would doubtless have applauded). The reaction of witnesses towards her proves less emotive in retrospect than it had been in earlier (and especially hostile) accounts. At her original trial in 1431, Joan was condemned as an idolator who had encouraged idolatry by allowing townspeople to kiss her hands and feet—though according to her own testimony she had allowed people to do this as little as she could ([15], I, p. 102). At the Nullification trial, much less is reported about the manner in which she was received into towns, and one witness declared that Joan had been heard berating those who had kissed her like an idol ([15], IV, p. 84). The effect of such testimony was to make Joan a less extraordinary figure and more suitable for official commemoration. The sentence of Nullification on 7 July 1456 was followed by another general procession and a public sermon that called for the erection of a cross “in her perpetual memory” ([15], IV, p. 361).

The imprimatur of royal approval allowed greater scope to be given to Joan's exploits in later and more localised accounts.<sup>18</sup> The chronicle written in 1467 (*Le petit traite par maniere de chronique*) ([23], pp. 1–131) places the siege of Orléans within the wider story of Charles VII's march to Rheims, but does dwell in detail on Joan's military successes. Final victory at Orléans, however, was attributed to the miraculous intervention of the former bishops of the town and to the devotional behaviour of its citizens. The assault on the Tourelles was made "at the request of St Aignan and St Euverte": an eye-witness attested that for him and for the Englishmen inside the Tourelles, it seemed that the attack was made by "an astonishing number of people, as if the whole world was assembled there". For this all the clergy and people of Orléans "very devoutly" sang *Te Deum laudamus* and had all the city bells rung to thank God and the two saint-confessors for this divine comfort ([23], p. 88). Victory was therefore assured when Joan of Arc sallied forth the following day. On 9 and 10 May "very fine and solemn processions" were held by everyone in the town who visited churches with "great devotion" ([23], p. 92).

The text for the *Mistere du siege d'Orleans* must be set in the context of the celebratory nostalgia that was generated around the victorious Charles VII in the later fifteenth century ([56], p. 274; [54], pp. 137–51; [53], p. 16). Joan is certainly central to the drama of the play: it is her unique links with saintly intercessors that bring help to Orléans and Charles. But her heroic actions are enclosed within a narrative commemorating events that showed divine favour to town and king. Her first appearance, half way through the play, follows Charles' own prayers to heaven for help. St Aignan and St Euverte intercede with God to send protection for the town, though they are now ably assisted by St Michael whose support of the royal cause had long been acknowledged ([53], fos. 167r–77r; [54], pp. 152–60). The two local saints duly appear on the ramparts on Ascension day to rally the citizens. On the Sunday following final victory Joan herself urges commemoration of the event: "Si faictes memoire a toujours / de ceste belle delivrance" ([53], fos. 361v–62r). Upon her last return to Orléans at the end of the play, the liturgical nature of this commemoration is made clearer: she urges the citizens not once but three times to "faire processions" in praise of God and the Virgin Mary ([53], fos. 508v–9r).

Memory of Joan was shaped to suit official civic, ecclesiastical and royal needs. Uncomfortable aspects of her extraordinary acts were tidied away, and commemoration of her aligned with more conventional patterns of devotional behaviour. Her attachment to sacrament and liturgy was repeatedly emphasized. "Routine" superseded "charisma"—and so it was that Joan's associations with the "charismatic" prophet were quietly forgotten. Memory of her links with Brother Richard was made to fade. Despite his popularity at Orléans during Lent of 1430, Richard is accorded no mention in the account of the siege c.1452, nor in the many folios of the *mistere*. At the Nullification trial, he appears only to be discounted as insignificant. One witness saw him acting as Joan's confessor before the town of Senlis ([15], II, p. 450). More than one witness report on her associations not with itinerant preachers but with mendicants securely stationed in the friaries of the towns she visited ([15], IV, pp. 14, 101, 104).

The charisma of a Brother Richard was a little too dangerous to be recalled with comfort. Like others of his ilk, he could be welcomed into towns. But municipal authorities preferred more organized

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<sup>18</sup> Vicky Hamblin argues that the greater role given Joan in these accounts was also the result of concession to "public opinion" and approval of the Maid: [52], pp. 220–21.

access to divine grace: in the same year (1430) that the town council of Orléans funded Brother Richard to preach, it paid for eight sermons from other local mendicants and for twelve processions ([23], pp. 233–54). Other secular authorities might heed prophetic warnings, but would not listen equably for long to predictions of imminent apocalypse—and its inevitable leveling of all social hierarchy. Brother Richard may have been a fervent supporter of the Valois cause, but kings preferred to recall preachers whose prophecies had predicted the resurrection of the monarchy rather than birth of the Antichrist.<sup>19</sup> Churchmen might still listen to those who claimed direct links with saintly and divine figures, but with mounting suspicion ([57], pp. 297–303). By the time of the Nullification trial in 1456, Joan’s own associations with the prophetic were made to take on a more acceptable form. Reports of Brother Richard’s prediction of “wonders” to come and his announcement of the divine secrets to which Joan was privy, are replaced in favour of prophecies from more suitable sources. At the trial, Jean Barbin, royal advocate in the parlement in Paris, recollected that Master Jean Erault, one of Joan’s interrogators at Rouen, had “firmly believed” that Joan’s advent had been prophesied by Marie Robine. Marie had appeared before the pope at Avignon, where she had lived as a recluse, and later at the French royal court in 1398, in order to reveal her visions about the ending of the Papal Schism. Jean Barbin does not report the more calamitous revelations that Marie, after her departure from court, claimed would befall France for failure to heal the Schism, but instead recalls a prediction that escapes all mention in her known revelations—that a “puella” would come to deliver the kingdom from the enemy ([15], III, pp. 83–84; [28], pp. 280–82). With a little finessing, Marie Robine was a safer source of prophecy for Joan’s arrival than Brother Richard.

## 5. Conclusions

Joan of Arc will always command more attention than Brother Richard. Her life was more remarkable, her death more appalling, and thus more productive of debate. On the one hand, her eventual canonization in 1920 (as a virgin rather than martyr), and her role as patriotic hero in two world wars, represent the final apotheosis of Valois restoration of her name. On the other hand, modern interest in the history of gender has served to sharpen interest in her fate and other aspects of its significance ([11], pp. 46–59). For Dyan Elliot, the patriarchal treatment of her visions and those of other females, notwithstanding the Nullification trial, represents a negative shift in attitudes to women: “[t]he lost possibility of Joan’s ... spirituality coincides with the first stages of a more pervasive effacement of Europe’s faith in positive female spirituality” ([57], p. 296). If so, it is ironic that memory of Joan, and prodigious production of controversy about her, has tended simultaneously to efface the memory of a male prophet whose immediate impact was more alarming to those in authority. Weber’s concepts of “charisma” and “routinization” serve to reconstitute the significance of Brother Richard in the eyes of his contemporaries. They also serve to draw attention to the forces that sought to contain his influence. The processes that shaped the fate of Joan of Arc, in life and in the half

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<sup>19</sup> One example of a mendicant visionary who fared better in royal memory is the hermit Jean de Gand (who was eventually interred in the Dominican friary at Troyes in 1439). He had appeared before the dauphin Charles in 1421 (after a fruitless appeal to Henry V) and promised the eventual success of Valois arms against the English. In 1482 Louis XI petitioned for his canonization, following a pilgrimage to his shrine and cure from apoplexy ([58]; [59], pp. 22–34).

century after her death, especially in ceremony and other forms of commemoration, were equally influential on the fate of Brother Richard. Joan was more controversial because she crossed accepted gender roles. But Richard was more “charismatic”, in Weber’s sense of the term, and therefore more dangerous. Memory of his life had to be dealt with differently. The controversial nature of Joan’s behaviour generated debate but ultimately the consequences of it did not have to be viewed as a reversal of social order. She could be discussed, interrogated and, with varying degrees of misogyny, mounted on pedestal or consigned to pyre. Brother Richard’s apocalyptic message had been altogether more threatening. It may have seemed less so with the passage of time: after all, the Antichrist declined to appear in 1429. Yet there was no room for memory of the friar’s preaching following the re-establishment of Valois power in France. Richard’s charisma was to be granted no afterlife: his influence was best forgotten, at least by those who wished Joan’s memory to be detached from any hint of eschatology and social upheaval.

Brother Richard was not quite erased from all chronicles associated with the Valois cause. Some even permit him a prophetic voice, but significantly one that softens his charismatic impact. In *Le petit traite* (1467), he appears briefly in the account of the siege of Troyes in late June 1429 at a time of crisis for the royal army: soldiers were suffering from hunger, and would have died but for a sudden abundance of fresh beans. These had been planted in the previous year at the urging of Brother Richard, “who from Advent to Christmas and before had preached in many places in the *pays* of France”. He had preached “other things in his sermon”. What these were, the chronicler chooses not to say, and instead restricts himself to just one of Brother Richard’s utterances: “Sow, good people, sow beans aplenty, for this will bring good things soon” ([23], pp. 109–10).<sup>20</sup> A prescient and valuable warning no doubt, but a shade less momentous than prediction of the Apocalypse.

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<sup>20</sup> The story of Richard’s “marvellous” production of beans is also told in the chronicle attributed to Guillaume Cousinot ([60], p. 315).

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