

Speaker 1 ([00:00](#)):

Welcome back to Adelaide Festival of Ideas and to like live well. The world has no shortage of radicals, whether religious or political, all confident about their right to express themselves, however they choose. But is the world actually a bit short of revolutionaries? Today's guest argues that if you take the life of Joan of Novaka, as an example, putting aside the various ways in which she's been cast as a hero and a mom, she's a very useful news as a true radical. Dr. Ali Alizadeh is a Melbourne writer, a fiction poetry non-fiction literary criticism. He's a lecturer in creative writing and literary studies at Monash. And his latest book is called the last days of gen Novaka. And that will be published next year. You argue that the contemporary individual is too caught up in the anxieties of identity to become a, a genuine agent of change the anxiety.

Dr. Ali Alizadeh ([01:08](#)):

Yeah. Yeah, definitely. Look, I was just before when people said they couldn't hear you, I was hoping that they hadn't heard that question. So because it is a very controversial questions, people, other speakers at writers events and so on have been now is that the term non platform, is that what it's called when people would disagree, but then, they just get up and leave because they've said things that along to do with identity that people don't like hearing, and someone is people who are kind of assuming these roles of activism and proclaimed to be on the left. Apparently I'm not sure if the left really is about being intolerant towards other points. People's points of view, especially around the question of identity and identity is a very modern phenomenon, is it is kind of it's of course, socially constructed such as gender identity or national identity.

Dr. Ali Alizadeh ([01:56](#)):

No one has a, no one has an Australian or French or Uranian gene. You know, it's something that we become later as we grow up. So national identity, gender identity, and so on, they're clearly sort of culturally constructed. But what worries me today is that in, on top of it, in order, I guess, to address some of the anxieties about our culturally and socially constructed, it is how artificial all of this is. We now are going to turning to the biological or some kind of a biological determinism to talk about racial identity and gender identity and even sexual identity and so on, or, or to do with ability or disability or age or whatever as do. It is completely positive in our bodies. Now that's, to me is a very dangerous direction to go, especially for those of us who want to be on the left to want to transform society and myself. I think that true revolution will have to be a Universalist phenomenon that brings us together. So to me, identity, the notion of identity has a whole range of philosophical problems and determinism, but ultimately it divides people. It doesn't result in solidarity and unity.

Speaker 1 ([03:06](#)):

How does Joan Edison the right direction? Well

Dr. Ali Alizadeh ([03:10](#)):

That's, that's a great thing. I think that Shea she, you know, I mean, I mean, her story had general Apollon of this story is quite well-known she's, she's owned his repeat it. Okay, great. I'd love to talk, talk about it. So we kind of, I mean, I'll just kind of, in terms of the context, she happens in the context of the the longest war in human history, the so-called hundred years war, which is not just a war between France and England, although that's how it's remembered primarily in M and M in an Anglophone country like Australia, because of the cultural significance of Shakespeare and co and Henry the fifth, the battle of Agincourt and so on, but it's actually longer than a hundred years. And it involves just about all

of Western Europe in some capacity. So for example, the Italian bankers, the burgeoning new bushwa centers in Italy are involved.

Dr. Ali Alizadeh ([04:01](#)):

They're betting money on the English. The Flemish, especially are involved the new sort of burgeoning mercantile, industrial and capitalist powers involved as well. It is a war that involves everybody and, and nation states as such, of course don't exist. There is no such a thing as a quote unquote, France. There is a kingdom of France, but that's a very loose amalgam of Dutchies at time, day, day, submit to the king at times they don't Jan herself is an important element in constructing the notes, the notion of the nation's state, which has yet to come. She is if you like a nationalist, but I would say that she's what we would call a civic nationalist, somebody who believes in the notion of a centralized sovereign power in order to protect the people, especially the peasantry from war pillage, Brigance, and the Dukes and the warring feudal powers.

Dr. Ali Alizadeh ([04:54](#)):

How does she happen? Excellent question. I think for one thing I would say mean everything we know about her seems so unlikely and unusual that there are a number of conspiracy theories and there are pretty intriguing. You know, I think you have some interest in them. Conspiracy theories in general, they're trying to rationalize, but at the same time, they're completely off the mark. So one of them is that she's actually the bastard daughter of the Royal house of France, that she's actually the sister of the king that she will like to proclaim and that she doesn't get burnt at the stake anyway, you know, so another woman gets burned in her place. She goes on to get married and have children. It's, it's pretty, it's pretty crazy, but you know, you can kind of see that they say, look how this could this absolutely unluckily event happen. Well, of course there are parallels

Speaker 1 ([05:38](#)):

With Jesus who, as we all know, got married and ended up living in India,

Dr. Ali Alizadeh ([05:43](#)):

India, is it okay? Yep. Yep. I mean, who knows where maybe, maybe John ended up in Australia somehow? Yeah.

Speaker 1 ([05:52](#)):

Well, that's the conspiracy theory. What yours

Dr. Ali Alizadeh ([05:57](#)):

Theory is actually that the basic accounts are correct that she is she is a peasant woman. Who's born in a village of Donka MI possibly in 14, 12, probably not necessarily in the underneath of the Tiffany, which is what the tradition tells us. I think that's too good to be true for her to have been on the board and that sort of important day of the Christian calendar. She is that the village itself is on the border between two Dutchies, the Duchy of Lohan and the Duchy of bah political affinity is with the, with the French Royal house fallow up because that's what have villages. However, if within the village, there are people who support the other side, which is the Duchy of burgundy and this who the English are allowed with. She is an ordinary girl who her family are they're tenant farmers.

Dr. Ali Alizadeh ([06:44](#)):

They're free farmers that is decided not surfs anymore. Serfdom has been abolished in France, but it's that despite, but they're never the less don't own the land they work on. They have their own, their own house, but they have to work on the land of the Dukes. So the Dukes in return, let them keep some of their product, but that, but extract bulk of it as a form of kind of exploitation. And that's how the Nobles live. They live off the work of others and that hasn't changed. That's still the case today. So little by little, I'm going to tease out the similarities within her time and them, but clearly the fact that overwhelming majority of people work for others is there is a kind of some that hasn't changed from late middle ages to today. She we know that something happens to her when she's around 13, she hears the so-called voices.

Dr. Ali Alizadeh ([07:27](#)):

When we can talk more about that if a lighter, but that's over the next fourth, three or four years, she gets compelled by her voices to leave her village, to basically run away from home and, and to, to go and see the captain of a nearby fortress Caldwell about the bully COF and convinces him to send her to meet the king, who is the French king, who is now being besieged and is about to be toppled by the English and the bigger Indians. And when she arrives there, she is wearing the clothes of a man she's disguised as a man for the journey, but she hangs onto her a masculine outfit and she repeats to the to the, to the king of the French, the Charlotte sisters. I've heard voices, I'm here to expel the English, end the war, and explicitly end the great misery of France. It bleach Cinderella. So I think so, but there's our transformation element there. I mean, you absolutely, it's so similar in a way that we have this sort of peasant girl who becomes a night for a period and has to put on special outfits. And there's a supernatural element in Columbus.

Speaker 1 ([08:37](#)):

Here. We are sitting in the 21st century when the army is the mighty army in the west is still very reluctant to allow women into the ranks little in, into, into senior roles. And one of the gobs making aspects of this is a young woman becomes a well the heavy. Yeah. Yeah.

Dr. Ali Alizadeh ([08:58](#)):

It's amazing. I mean, this is the sort of I guess the answer to the question about how does she break with identity? I mean, she, she breaks with that in a strong way. We're saying that, yes, she had no points denies. The fact that she's biologically a woman, the title should food chooses for herself is Slappy you, which doesn't really have an equivalent in English, but maybe the mate is one, but a young made a young Virgin. So it's very, very feminine or you can only be a female yourself, but at the same time she is sort of blocking or breaking with her identity as a woman through her, through her clothes that she wears through this title. I mean, Pacelle is not, you know, a woman who doesn't become a woman, a woman who doesn't, you know, get married and have children, which was what women did in late middle ages. Primarily on this, there were nuns

Speaker 1 ([09:49](#)):

A hundred years war. We now live in an era of history wars when the various narratives are bitterly contested. And we all know of examples in Australia. I have a feeling that she's also contested that various sides of politics claimer as their own

Dr. Ali Alizadeh ([10:08](#)):

Oh, big time, big time. I mean, in France, definitely. But so interestingly, she's kind of intro into Australia as well. You know, there's a big statue of her outside of the Melbourne state library, which has always struck me as curious and I found out recently that it's actually was a controversial decision to have made in early 20th century to put his statue there because at the time France was still sort of seen as an enemy of the British empire, but luckily for everyone, the great war happened and they joined forces. So the French became good, but it was kind of controversial, I think, in France itself. I mean, she has gone from basically, so she's, you know, after her amazing sort of a military campaign, she's arrested by the, by the Indians and the English is charged with heresy. They eventually managed to found her guilty of heresy.

Dr. Ali Alizadeh ([10:54](#)):

They burned her for about 20 years. She's a, non-person nobody wants to touch her. It's kind of the charge of heresy back then is a very serious charge, perhaps a bit like terrorism or pedophilia today, once you're stuck with it, you you're tainted. So the king has to stage an elaborate trial of rehabilitation. 20 years later, around 20 years later, when the Griff kicked English out and Hawaiian the capital of Normandy, which is where John was burnt, has been recaptured by the French. They have the rich have a retrial. They bring people from a childhood. The soldiers have fought with her, the judges who sent us to death. It's a massive source of information about it. That's, that's, that's why, that's the reason we know so much about her are these testimonies of people in the trial of rehabilitation and they sort of rehabilitated approved that, no, she was not a heretic this little by little.

Dr. Ali Alizadeh ([11:43](#)):

She becomes a sort of a saintly figure that justifies the French rulers divine, right to rule because she's a Christian, even though she's burnt by the church and she gives the king, the sort of an aura of, of sanctity until the French revolution, the French revolutionaries are very split about her because they're absolutely against clergy and monarchy, but she's a peasant warrior. So how do you reconcile that during the French revolution, the first wave of French revolutionaries de de Christianized, the burnt Christianized as the burn, her relics, the completely say she's a Relic of a monarchy. We don't want to have anything to do with her early, early 19th century, especially starting in June mashallah, who was a Republican reclaims her. And he says, look, look at the, look at the documents. What we find in there is not a royalist, but we find a brave ordinary peasant girl, a hero of the people who fights for what she really believes in. And that sort of takes it back to the left, but that constant station between left and right, especially the far right today in France, that, you know, proto fascists of the pharmacy. Now they've reclaimed her, the pan, you know, not in the pan, always carries her flag everywhere. She goes.

Speaker 1 ([12:51](#)):

Yeah, there are many phone writers and a couple of filmmakers at least to embrace them. You mentioned elsewhere the Mary Mary Gordon biography marina, Warner's very good studying German buck. There was the dry film and more recently an American director of star gene C Berg in the role on, of course I'm forgetting George Bernard Shaw. Yes. Yes. But they all use it for different purposes.

Dr. Ali Alizadeh ([13:22](#)):

Definitely. I mean, I really love Bernard Shaw and that's sort of early 20th century. And I think that's that's has something in common with the car Drea movie where they sort of see her as as an naive, but innocent Christian woman who is being tormented and bullied and ultimately murdered by a patriarchal clergy. And they both kind of have dispute, but that's happened precisely at the time where she was

canonized. So the far-right in France finally managed to convince the Vatican. I think there might be bribery, bribery involved. I'm not sure two, two signed her to canonize her. And when she's made, assigned to have this response from people from the left luck, Bernard Shaw and dryer, who say actually she was a victim of the church.

Speaker 1 ([14:04](#)):

My our guest is Ali elders Melbourne rod for fiction poetry. Non-Fiction literary criticism as a writer. What about the quality of a prose? That was an understatement?

Dr. Ali Alizadeh ([14:17](#)):

Well, this was really quite a question. I'll look, I mean, I mean, she's not, she's, she's she's a silent and strong type. I would say. I think she's a woman of few words. She'd been, she assumes the role as a soldier in NYCHA. She really takes to it. She's a, she's a very tough kind of person. She doesn't like to express herself in words, when people force her to speak about her voices, for example, she gets very irate. It's very personal. She doesn't want to talk about it. The few things she does say to reflect the sort of figurative and allegorical way of speaking at the time. So for example, about the, or seeing an angel or receiving a sign, it could be that she's speaking figuratively. I don't really think personally that she actually heard voices. I don't think her ear drums, reverberated. You know, there's a lot of question of what her voice is, where my, my view is that they were the voices in her head. For sure. She really believed in them. I'm confident. She saw the anxious. She was a very devout Christian. These are real things to her. And

Speaker 1 ([15:18](#)):

Of course these days we tend to retrospectively diagnose many saints and their voices as being sketch of forensics. But you detect new zone of mental health, not

Dr. Ali Alizadeh ([15:30](#)):

At all, not at all. I mean, I mean, that's, I have no bias against mental illnesses at all, but when we look at Vanzant VOC, the John does, especially when she arrives in the historical sane, you know, she's a lot at first, she was just a flag bearer for the army. She's just this young, you know spiritual woman, who's supposed to inspire the soldiers to go and die for God, basically. But when she arrives in the battlefield, she changes her mind. She says, no, I want to lead this soldier. She probably sees her pathetic that the generals of the French army are, and they are completely being routed by the English. And she says, well, why don't you do this differently? And she throws herself into the battle from then on what she leads the French army. She, her strategies, the way she conducts herself are completely 100% rational and extremely intelligent. I would go as far as saying she some sort of a military genius, which might seem counterintuitive, you know, how could this 18 year old girl be a military genius, but she proves herself in that way. She completely turns the course of the a hundred years war. She rats the English time and time. And again,

Speaker 1 ([16:32](#)):

No polled ever cited as he is. He did he embrace it?

Dr. Ali Alizadeh ([16:37](#)):

The was a misogynist. He could not have had anything to do. Unfortunate. I mean, he, he rehabilitated Napoleon after the French revolution rehabilitates her, but for his, for his own purposes, he's more interested in her image as a military stick figure head and a patriotic woman.

Speaker 1 ([16:54](#)):

I'm now going to invite the audience to to pose questions or raise arguments. And the microphone is right there in the middle and please use the opportunity and whilst you do so let's go back to the starting point. Why do you think that she is such an important figure for in the, in the 21st century revolutionary context?

Dr. Ali Alizadeh ([17:20](#)):

Yeah. I mean, she's, she's amazing. Everything I've said kind of makes sure that makes it clear. It's just so rare and heroine light's medieval context, but for us today, I think, I just feel like we are so incapacitated by our fears, by our anxieties, by our ideological constraints and somebody who will bravely say I've heard voices and I believe in their truth and I'm prepared to fight and sacrifice myself for them. And I'm prepared break with my identity. I'm not going to sort of like, you know dwell on how victimized I am. I'm actually going to take the enemy to fight to the enemy and I'm going to embrace a universal cause I'm going to fight for everyone. I think the universality of John, which comes from Christian universality is something we can all learn from a lot of us on the left. Now think all, no universalism is bad. There are particular wrists. You know, we all believe in small little things pockets of resistance, nausea onset. This is a war we fight for everybody. And along the way, I should keep saying she even arrested big enemy, Juco Bergen. She says, look, if you stop fighting us, you can join me. We can all come together. All she wants is a lasting peace in her own words and an end to the misery of France. She fights for everybody.

Speaker 1 ([18:36](#)):

So she's not in perfection. She's under unification.

Dr. Ali Alizadeh ([18:39](#)):

Absolutely. Absolutely.

Speaker 3 ([18:42](#)):

Hi Ali, my name's Evie. When I was in my thirties, I think I had first heard the story of Joan of arc was doing a course. I can't remember what it was about. And the teacher was a Catholic priest in any way he sort of was talking about it and I've always kind of like, I dunno, just kind of bonded with the story and it inspired me. That's why I came to the top, but he talked a lot about the tutor about the rage and anger, because like I'm not a history buff, so, but I know that things are not right. And she, she throw her a lot of, and you know, all the things that were happening in her countries. So it was the rage who talked about, which I kind of understand. Do you think it's the same? That was one of the things that moved to other than like being called to it. I guess in the religious way that a lot of saints had visions and had callings and you know, not just hearing voices, but other things choice. So I kind of get that, but it's more about the, that being one of the motivating factors to make her sort of take action. Absolutely.

Dr. Ali Alizadeh ([19:55](#)):

I mean, I mean, totally. I mean, this is a, this is a horrific war, a hundred years war, you know, in Norman during the war, the population declined by a third. A third of the population died in one English, Sage of

the city of Warren alone. 40,000 out of the 60,000 inhabitants of the city died. I mean, this is an absolutely brutal war. You might even want to call it a bit genocidal, but I don't use that time. So of course, if you're a peasant woman during this period, and you know how many peasants are at the mercy of pillages and Raiders anyway, but if you're a young woman, you are particularly victimized. Absolutely. You're going to have a lot of rage and anger just before she leaves her village. A number of things happen. One of them is that her village is attacked by the enemy camp and is burnt.

Dr. Ali Alizadeh ([20:38](#)):

The village church in particular is destroyed. This is a site that she was very fond of. So she would have been outraged about that. She was being forced to marry. Her parents had arranged a marriage for her. She sings, she rejects it and she goes and stands in front of a judge. And she says, no, I'd refuse to marry this person. My parents have chosen for me. And at the same time she meets another woman. We don't know what your batter I've have speculated a lot about hug. A woman called was the red head. And anyway, these things happen simultaneously. And after that, she leaves the village to gunfight. I think something happens at that time. And this is when the voices start telling her that, look, we don't just want you to be chased and virtuous. We want you to go and change the world as, so something happens that I think rage and anger definitely is a part of it, but I think there's also courage and the belief that, that you have encountered truth and you're prepared to fight for it and die for it. Two bets for the betterment of mankind. And that's really important, the last part, because she's not just fighting for her community. And so on that, that really makes all the difference for me because that's, that's what gives it the restlessness. Yeah.

Speaker 1 ([21:50](#)):

Quite a lot of transformational figures in the latter part of the 20th century come rushing to mind. Do any of them, do any of them have parallels to Joan of arc? I'm thinking, say of Mandela?

Dr. Ali Alizadeh ([22:07](#)):

Possibly, possibly. I mean, one of the things about

Speaker 1 ([22:09](#)):

Her flying fish, Zuora or infection.

Dr. Ali Alizadeh ([22:12](#)):

Absolutely. No, in that, in that sense, definitely. Yes, definitely. I mean, the thing is that she ultimately, during her own lifetime fails, you know, after amazing victories, she fails to bring all the factions together. She goes to Paris, which is under an angular Burgundian control, but she was repelled. They basically say, no, you are a heretic. The English genuinely believes she's a witch. You know, they're not just being ideological. They really think she's a witch. How else could a woman have defeated the mightiest army in Western Europe? So the, she must be a, which is a threat to their masculinity and so on as well. So she couldn't succeed during her own lifetime to be a unifying figure. But I think in terms of contemporary figures, I, you know, I'm really sorry. I don't remember her name, but this is a Kurdish fighter from the women's brigade in the Peshmerga is, and you know, her story, I just saw a few weeks ago and it really saddened me.

Dr. Ali Alizadeh ([23:04](#)):



She was 19, she was 19. She personally she's, she was a sniper. She killed many of these ISIS fighters and few weeks ago, the ISIS quarter and beheaded her. And I just thought that, wow, this is, this is the sorts of parallels that I really like. They are, you know, they, they sort of correspond, I think today in France, Marion Lacan is trying to say, I am the new John dark and that's, that's an absolute false suit. I think that, that, that took that Kurdish girl is much more. And I'm sorry, I don't remember her name if, if somebody does the Western media is referring to as the Angelina Jolie of least resistance, which is utterly humiliating to reduce her to her, you know, a feminine beauty, but think, yeah. That's yeah. And there are

Speaker 1 ([23:47](#)):

No connections, of course, with the Gandian tradition

Dr. Ali Alizadeh ([23:51](#)):

Gandy, I would say probably not. If we understand Gandy as nonviolence, as some kind of a pacifist sort of hippie thing there's been new theorizing about non-violence by say how it Cagle and, and I think that it has actually nonviolent was quite violent in its own way, but, but John is definitely a warrior. I mean, she is not she's not afraid to lose her her own life, but she will take lives along the way.

Speaker 1 ([24:18](#)):

I found some writing ability, which I would share with the audience quote, I find it fascinating that some of the least memorable literary to pictures of Joan have been offered by some of the world's best known writers. She actually volunteered Schiller, mark Twain, and many, an acclaimed writer as failed to produce a version of the famous woman's life that has stood the test of time. And he reminded me of something that I completely forgotten. Thomas nearly 1974, novel blood red, just rose is one of the Booker prize winners leashed. No, no.

Dr. Ali Alizadeh ([24:56](#)):

It's out of prince now, which is unusual considering the famous subject matter of the famous author. I think John is too complex. I mean, everything I've said as you know, this is my, the way result of 20 years of research and thinking to even get to the point where when I can describe a bit her personality, she's, she's very complex, but I think she's been the mercy of so many ideological. You know, misappropriations that if you like to choose, John has become, become really obscure. Shakespeare's account is because very partisan, of course, he's writing dinner Renaissance, the English still thinks she's a witch, but it is so bad that Shakespeare scholars say that he probably didn't write it, or he probably didn't write the underwrite half of it, your turn. I

Speaker 4 ([25:44](#)):

Am not a historian or a philosopher. However, I do know in contemporary times that women's contributions are often over written, like take Wikipedia, for example it's mostly written by men and there's a huge feminist push to actually put the contributions of women in there. I assume that the rest of history is actually the same. And there were a lot of feminist scholars in the seventies and eighties who started to dig up the women who did contribute to fields. And then that, you know, as feminism became a dirty word, it's sort of it sort of died down or there, well, a dirty word in some circles, I should say. If Joan had been a boy, would anyone have thought it was miraculous? Really? I guess I, you know, I guess I'm watching game of Thrones all the time and all the women are leaders and you know, it's fantastic, but I'm sure that women's place in public life is not as, as small or insignificant as we would



think today. I'm sure that it's more a case of women being written out of history because that hasn't been women's role to record themselves.

Dr. Ali Alizadeh ([27:01](#)):

Yeah. Thanks. Great question. I mean, I think among the historians of this period of French history, the role of women definitely has not been written out. This is the mainstream historical view that at this period, the two most powerful people in France are women is Isabella Bavaria and, and and Yolanda Anjou. So there certainly have been John's being a woman is absolutely central, absolutely central, particularly in raising men to fight for her. I mean, there is an element there, especially in the actual battles that she she's a dare devil she's she throws herself in harm's way, she's wounded repeatedly. And when her soldiers see that she's braver than them she's getting hurt, she's about to be killed by the English. They throw themselves into battle and she she's. So definitely her agenda is a very major part of this story. And, and at that period, there were a lot of very powerful women in, in France. None of them fighting hand to hand combat, I should say, though. Yeah.

Speaker 1 ([27:56](#)):

You concede the chores version of Jones, probably the most enduring literary interpretation. He sort of reclaims of a humanism does.

Dr. Ali Alizadeh ([28:06](#)):

Yes. Yeah, absolutely. And you know, that's, that to me is a very convincing way to present her. I mean, I think she's a religious person. She was deeply religious herself. Her, her the most painful experience, well, one of the most painful experiences she has during a very long imprisonment, which results in her being burnt at the stake is that she is not allowed to see a confessor and she's not allowed to receive the Eucharist. And that really breaks her heart just before her death tube to press go out of the way to make it happen. And they finally, you know have received communion before she's burned. So she's she's, I don't so she's certainly in herself, not an atheist Baldo. There was no ICSM back at that time, but nevertheless, the stories, the fact that she is so much in contradiction with, with the values and teachings of the church at that time, specially her cross dressing, that was absolutely scandalous. That that's the thing. Ultimately, they got her for, they couldn't prove that her voices were satanic. They couldn't prove that she was a heretic. They could improve that she was blaspheming or committing, you know, they found

Speaker 1 ([29:13](#)):

Her guilty of a crust, other fashion cry.

Dr. Ali Alizadeh ([29:17](#)):

Then she became very fashionable him and short hair in 20th century, as a hairstyle is inspired by her.

Speaker 1 ([29:23](#)):

Yes. From the passion of Joan to the fashion.

Dr. Ali Alizadeh ([29:27](#)):

Sorry,

Speaker 1 ([29:28](#)):

Don't have to use the microphone. And I wish you would say we've got time for one more question.

Dr. Ali Alizadeh ([29:32](#)):

One of the things that I thought about as you were speaking was that there were two books that the German soldiers were given in world war. One was the Bible and the other was would you believe natures thus spake, their assumed Zarathustra. And I guess as I was listening what you were saying, I was reflecting on the question of who do we want as heroes? You certainly can't think of any, I certainly can't think of anything more, any one more from another planet than Joan of arc. She's such an extraordinary woman. And so of course, someone who's well made to become a hero and to capture our imagination. But I wonder whether that's necessarily going to be such a great thing in politics as a source of political inspiration, I can certainly see the ways that she is, but it's such an explosive such an explosive icon of political action.

Dr. Ali Alizadeh ([30:45](#)):

Scrambles me scrambles my mind. No, that's a really good question. I guess, I guess something I'm saying is that it's not her politics as such. We should be inspire getting inspired by. I mean, there, there are politics of another stage in history, you know, she was in favor of centralized monarchical governments and so on for very specific reasons to do our time. So I'm not saying they should inspire us our authoritarianism of any kind for example or, or royalism. I mean, I mean, there, there's still a faction of royalists in France after 220 years, they still want to risk resident monarchy that they cling onto her obstinately. So I'm not saying we should well use the slash abuser for those reasons, but a thing. It is the form of her action. It is her personality. It is her subjectivity. It is the fact that she does universalize her own particularities say, or she breaks with limitations of identity to fight for humanity. Those are the things that I think are very inspiring. And I think that there could certainly break asset up out of the deadlock of having to vote for one scumbag versus another scumbag. I, I really do think that if we feel as, as individuals, as subjects empowered to take, to go and want to change the world to want to end the misery of our world, that's that I think is a much better thing than having to choose between Trump and Clinton, to be honest.

Speaker 5 ([32:08](#)):

Hello. my name is Alistair. My question is we've talked or you've just talked about all these great authors and writers. Who've written books about Joan of arc and you yourself has now written a book about Jennifer arts. My question is what are you hoping to tell people in in the 21st century about Joan of Arc and when did you first come into contact with her and what inspired you to write something? Like, are you, yeah, I mean, look I, I

Dr. Ali Alizadeh ([32:31](#)):

It's a weird question for any writer to ask you why and other one, why add one of them is less for the mentioned, is my absolutely sort of sort of arrogant view that nobody else has got it, right. Maybe with the exception of Bernard Shaw and I'm going to get it right. So that's, that's one, this is, she's a genuine aesthetic poetic challenge. You know, she's like a really definitely difficult piece of piano music that to prove that you're really great. Can you play this piece by, I don't know, Rachmaninoff or whatever. So as a writer, she is a genuine challenge to see if you can get the facts of her life, right. And still construct a character and all of it to be believable and even sympathetic. That's really hard. So that's what I've really

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tried to do. But I mean, I, I have a really deep personal connection when I was a child who was influenced by her image. And I think that's what it's about.

Speaker 1 ([33:19](#)):

Check out your, the, the results next year when, when you finally appears. Thank you. Thank you, Ali. Ali is a Melbourne writer, a fiction poetry non-fiction and literary criticism currently electorate in creative writing and literary studies at Monash, a pleasure and a privilege. Thank you. Thank you.