

Natives in Quebec literature

Petr Kylvoušek

Denys Delâge's *Le pays renversé. Amérindiens et Européens en Amérique du Nord-Est - 1600-1664* illustrates the devastating influence of European capital during Dutch, French, English and Swedish colonization.

- the European market disrupted the circuits of trade and exchange between tribes
- Christianity tore apart the unity of aboriginal communities, particularly among the Wendat (Huron) nation
- epidemics and inter-tribal conflicts due to the European presence considerably reduced the native population

- in half a century a vast territory, as far as the Mississippi and the Great Lakes, became depopulated, a civilizational space disintegrated
- this made it all the easier for European settlers to penetrate
- inequality and disparity were to Europe's advantage
- however, North-East America escaped the intensity of genocide and slavery experienced by other regions of the New World.

Several factors undoubtedly helped to moderate the situation

- the need for, and later the habit of, negotiated relations
- small number of settlers and merchants on the one hand, and climatic conditions on the other, hampered European superiority
- agricultural activities of the French settlers complemented the hunting and fishing activities of the Native tribes, as in the case of the Quebec region, where the French took the place of the extinct Stadacona Iroquoians in trade with the Innu and Algonquin
- in the 17th century, certain Amerindian tribes - Abenakis, remnants of the Huron-Wendat, but also Iroquois - settled as farmers near the settlers
- several activities brought Europeans and First Nations together and demanded collaboration, notably the fur trade, on a continental scale and for more than two centuries
- alliances, rivalries and wars - between the French, English, Dutch and their Amerindian partners or allies - were forged and broken around this trade. Trade and war entail the need for negotiation and a certain respect for others. It wasn't until the Anglo-American War of 1812-1814 and the Peace of Ghent that the importance of Native tribes as military and political allies came to an end.

Changes in the 19th century

- fur trade collapsed as continental hunting areas were exhausted
- European industry turned to Canadian timber and the territory's agricultural potential
- woods and soil occupied by the Amerindians became the focus of economic interests
- deterioration in the situation of the First Nations in the 19th century

- Although the **Indian Act of 1876** was designed, beside other things, to protect the cultural identity of the Amerindians, it also regulated segregation by establishing Indian reserves, where tribes were placed under the tutelage of the federal government and thus deprived of legal personhood.
- The Act also defined the rules governing Indian status, which was transmitted through paternal lineage only, and excluded those who settled for more than five years outside the reserve - in other words, a potential elite.

- In fact, its aim was a gradual assimilation, supported by the Indian Schools Act of 1894, which allowed Amerindian children to be placed in residential schools, far from their parents and tribal environment, in order to acculturate them.

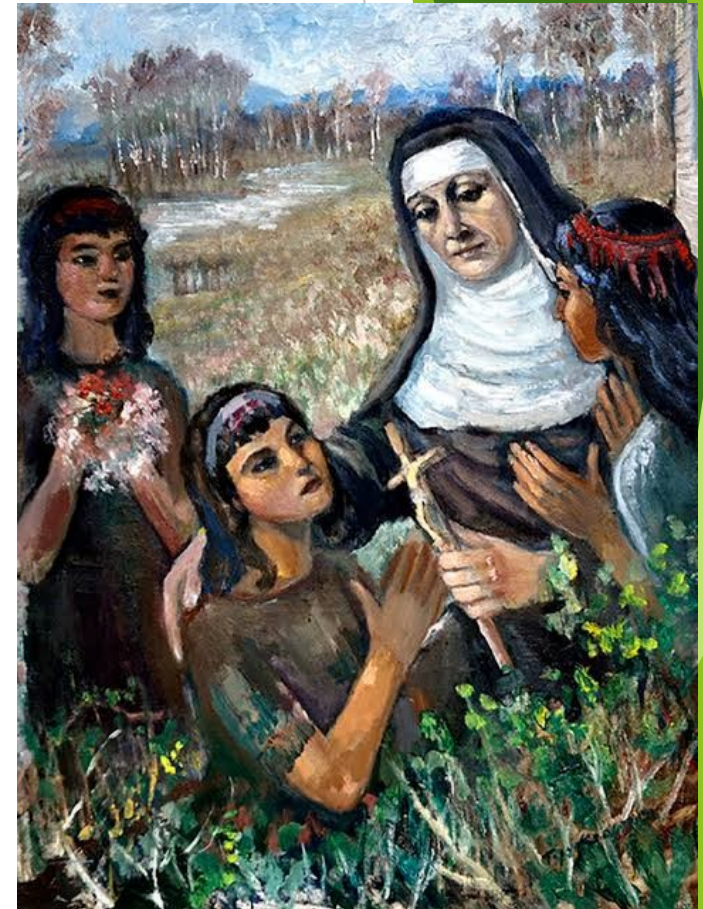
In New France and Canada, the coexistence of settlers and Amerindian ethnic groups was conditioned by the demographic factor.

When Samuel Champlain died on December 25, 1635, Quebec City had no more than 300 settlers. In 1660, the colony's French population was less than 3,000, a number that Colbert's efforts raised to nearly 10,000 by 1681.

Some tribes formed confederations - such as the Huron or Iroquois - numbering between 20 and 30,000 people. Iroquoian languages were spoken by almost 100,000 individuals. Several tribes - Micmac, Innu, Abenaki, Cree - shared the St. Lawrence valley, numbering 25,000. It was only at the end of the 17th century that the demographic balance shifted to the disadvantage of the natives, who numbered just 7,000 at the time of the Conquest, compared with 70,000 French-Canadians.

Marie de l'Incarnation, abbess of the ursulines, had to learn Innu, Algonquin, Wendat and Iroquois. In 1640, a year after her arrival, she commented on the situation: "*[...] this end of the world where one is wild all year round, if not when the ships have arrived that we take back our French language [...].*" By 1664, she had already noted that the number of Amerindians in her circle had dwindled to one-twentieth, and that French girls now outnumbered the young women welcomed to the convent.

However, it is estimated that as late as 1700, one out of every two colonists had had contact with the culture of an Amerindian tribe in his or her youth.



The situation in Canada in the 17th century was described in detail by the Récollets and Jesuits, who published their collective reports - *Relations* (1632-1673) - every year in Paris. Their descriptions of Native culture mixed contempt with admiration. The sense of superiority of the holders of Scripture - in the literal and religious sense - does not preclude high regard for a civilization based on orality and the culture of the spoken word. The Jesuit **Paul le Jeune** appreciated the rhetoric of the Amerindian chiefs - "*a rhetoric as fine and refined as could come from the escholle of Aristotle, or Cicero*". His colleague **Barthélémy Vimont** left an admiring account of the staging of an Iroquois messenger's oratorical performance.



ESSAIS DE M. DE MONTA.

l'autre, d'un mélange si vniuersel, qu'elles effacét, & ne retou-
uent plus la couture qui les à iointes. Si on me presse de dire
pourquoy ie l'aymois, ie sens que cela ne se peut exprimer. Il y
à ce semblé au delà de tout mô discours, & de ce que i'en puis
dire, ne sçay qu'elle force diuine & fatale mediatrice de cette
vnion. Ce n'est pas vne particuliere consideration, ny deux,
ny trois, ny quatre, ny mille : c'est ie ne sçay quelle quinte es-
sence de tout ce mellange, qui ayant faisi toute ma volonté,
l'amena se plonger & se perdre dans la sienne. Je dis perdre à
la verité, ne luy reseruant rien qui luy fut propre, ny qui fut
sien. Quand Lælius en presence des Cōsuls Romains, lesquels
apres la condamnation de Tiberius Gracchus, pour suiuyoyét
tous ceux, qui auoyent esté de son intelligéce, vint à s'enque-
rir de Caius Blossius (qui estoit le principal de ses amis) cōbien
il eut voulu faire pour luy, & qu'il eut respondu, toutes cho-
ses. Comment toutes choses, suiuit-il, & quoy sil t'eut com-
mandé de mettre le feu en nos temples? Il ne me l'eut iamais
commandé, replica Blossius. Mais sil l'eut fait? adiouta Lælius:
I'y eusse obey, respondit-il. S'il estoit si parfaitement amy de
Gracchus, comme disent les histoires, il n'auoit que faire d'of-
fenser les consuls par cette derniere & hardie confession. Et
ne se deuoit départir de l'assurance qu'il auoit de la volonté
de Gracchus, de laquelle il se pouuoit respondre, come de
sienne. Mais toute fois ceux, qui accusent cette responce cor-
me seditieuse, n'entendent pas bien ce mystere, & ne prest-
posent pas comme il est, qu'il tenoit la volonté de Gracchus
en sa manche, & par puissance & par connoissance. Et qu'a
sa responce ne sonne nō plus que feroit la miéne, à qui s'eq-
roit à moy de cette façon: Si vostre volonté vous commā-
de tuer vostre fille, la tueriez vous? & que ie l'accordasse
cela ne porte aucū tesmoignage de consentemēt à ce faire
ce que ie ne suis point en doute de ma voloté, & tout au

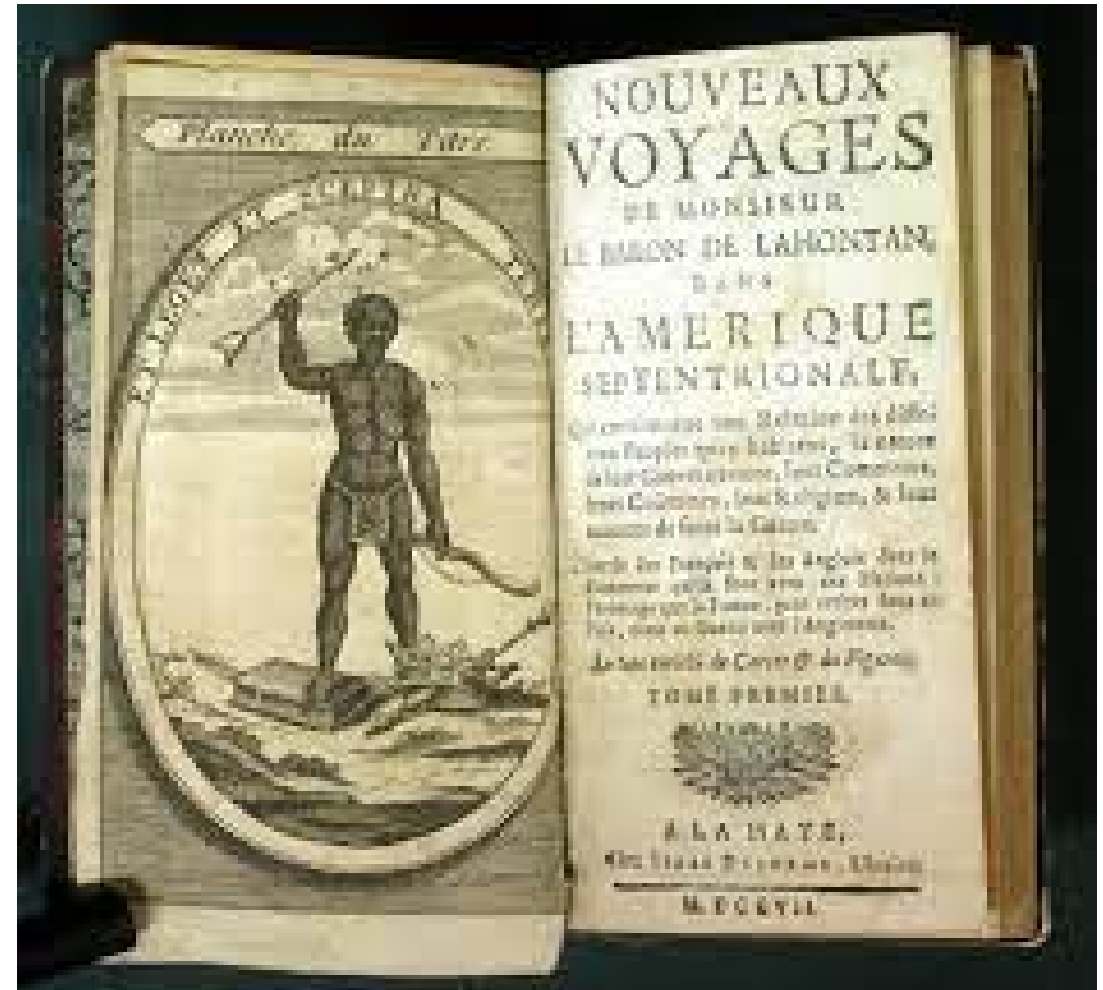
- Ambivalence characterizing the image of Native
- The Good or Noble Savage, who lives far from corruption in the bosom of Nature, is contrasted with the Barbarian, the Cannibal who must be civilized. This ambivalence reflects certain imperatives of European identity thinking. Either the need to assert superiority prevails, in which case the image of the other emerges as negative, or the other serves as a mirror to question and even cast doubt on one's own civilizational values.

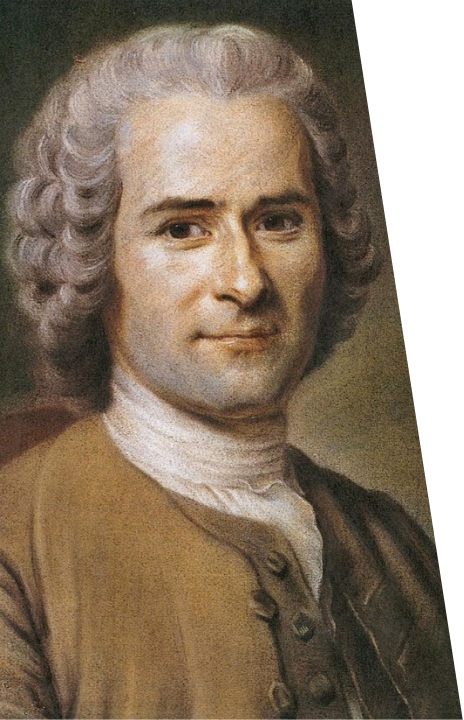
► **Louis-Armand de Lom d'Arce, baron de Lahontan (1666 - ?1715)**

► *Nouveaux Voyages de Mr. baron de Lahontan dans l'Amérique septentrionale (1703)*

► 10 reprints up to 1741, translations into English, German, Dutch and Italian

► Adario





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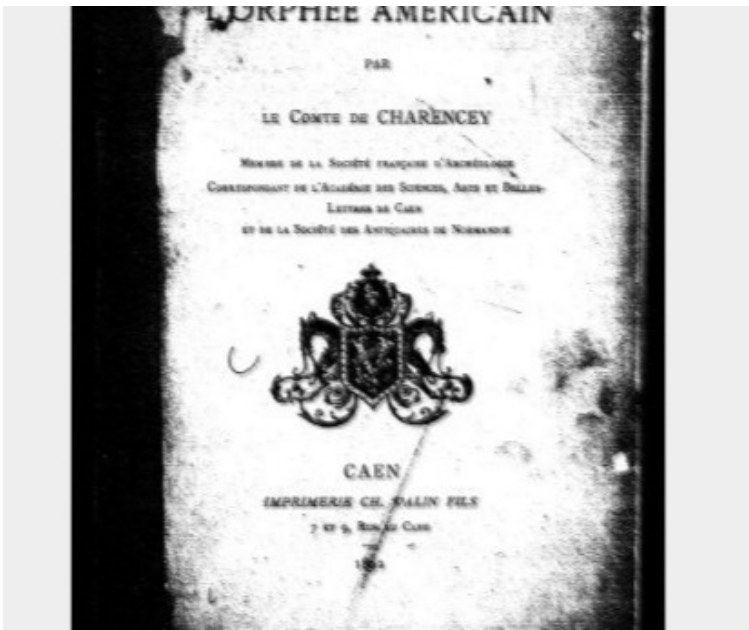
C. LÉVI-STRAUSS
de l'Académie française

*Avec 38 illustrations et une carte dans le texte
et 63 photographies de l'auteur hors texte
et un index*



PLON

- ▶ Lahontan introduces the **idea of the good savage and natural life**, modulated by the rationalist scepticism and relativism of the Age of Enlightenment. Lahontan's interest in the other and the concept of the state of nature revives certain aspects of earlier theological reflection.
- ▶ The discovery of the New World raised the question of the **religion of savages**, in particular whether their religion is part of biblical history and whether savages are concerned with **Original Sin and the Fall**. Assuming that the Indians are **outside universal history**, i.e. below Good and Evil, and not concerned by the Fall, they are approaching the state of nature: hence the idea that will be followed up by **Jean-Jacques Rousseau**.



► The opposite hypothesis would mean that Indians share the universal religious sentiment, however distorted, and that it is therefore possible to discover rudiments of the true faith and points in common with European culture. For this reason, some Jesuits paid attention to mythological representations and stories. In his *Relation*, Jean de Brébeuf describes the Huron ritual of the Feast of the Dead, and notes the story of the soul's journey to the land of death, which bears some resemblance to the myth of Orpheus. This approach was taken up again in the 18th century by another Jesuit, Joseph-François Lafitau (*Moeurs des sauvages américains*, 1724), considered the founder of ethnology.

Autenticating Native characters

- Marc Lescarbot : *Théâtre de Neptune* (1606)
- Jesuit theatre in the 17th century
- Antoine Gérin-Lajoie: *Le Jeune Latour* (1844; Garakonthié, Wampun)
- Louis-Honoré Fréchette: *Papineau* (1880; sauvage Michel)
- Jacques Ferron: *Les Grands Soleils* (1958; Sauvageau) et *La Tête du roi* (1963; Taque)
- « Orphée Indien »: Jacques Ferron dans *Le Ciel de Québec* (1969) et Leonard Cohen dans *Beautiful Losers* (1966).



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► The *Théâtre de Neptune*, an imitation of royal entries, stages the homage paid by Neptune, his Tritons and the inhabitants of the New World to vice-governor Poutrincourt on his return from expedition, distributes 78 verses out of 238 between four characters representing the savages. The text contains five Micmac lexemes.

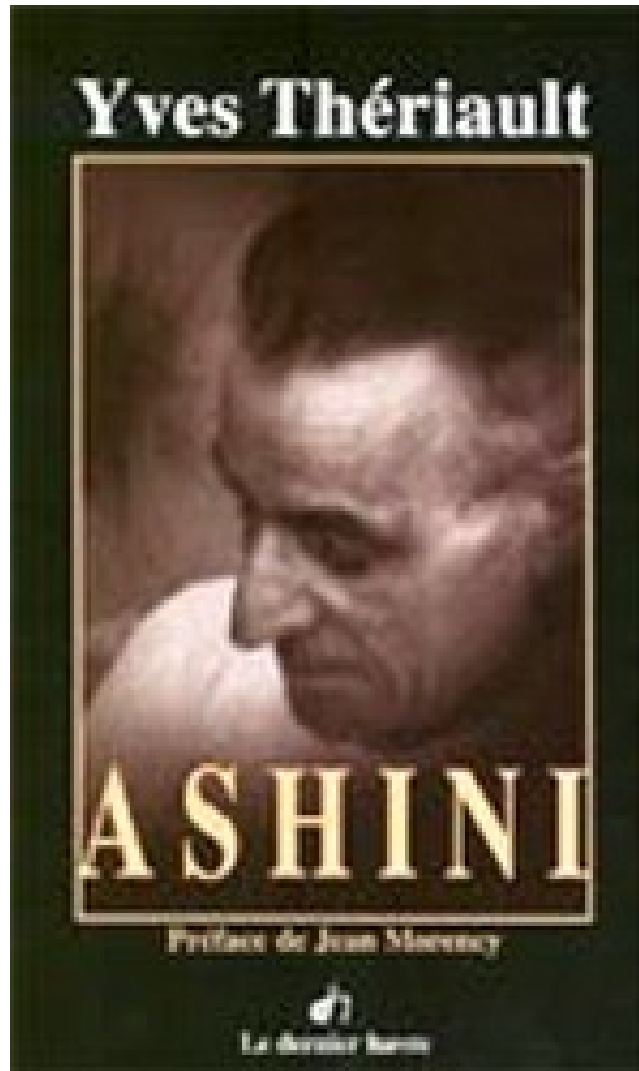
As for the **Jesuit plays**, it is attested that the roles of the Huron savage, the Huron prisoner, the Algonquin, the Nez-Percé and the Northern stranger were played by young schoolchildren who learned to recite the lines in native languages. From the outset, the inclusion of the other is linked to instrumentalization. Its image is constructed in such a way as to satisfy the values attributed to it. Words that don't belong to him are put into his mouth as his own, and in his language. Such an inclusion of the imaginary Amerindian means, at the same time, the exclusion of the real Amerindian.

In the competition between oral culture and writing, it is the authority and fixation of the text that prevails over orality. Added to this is the authority of colonial power over the colonized

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Jacques Ferron has proposed another way of including the Amerindian - métissage. However, Ferron's awareness of a composite, plural identity does not imply the possibility of giving the other his or her voice, of establishing him or her, in his or her own right, in a subjectal position.



► Yves Thériault systematically envisaged the Native identity. Several of his many novels and stories build their plots by confronting different civilizational and inter-ethnic conditions. The author frequently exploits Inuit and Amerindian themes. The best-known is certainly the Inuit trilogy *Agaguk, roman esquimau* (1958), *Tayaout, fils d'Agaguk* (1969) and *Agoak, l'héritage d'Agaguk* (1975).

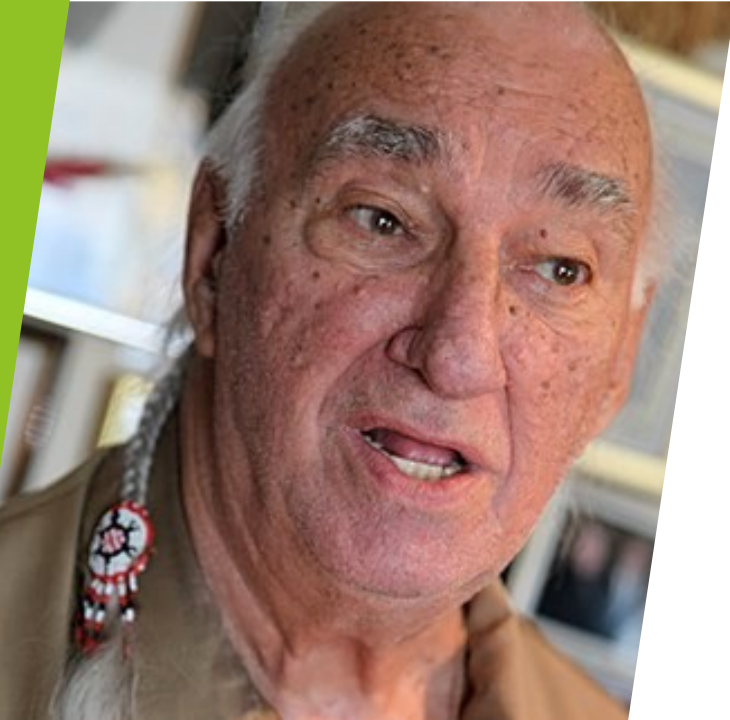
► *Ashini* (1960) is one of the first major texts in French-Canadian literature to attempt a change of perspective by imagining the point of view of the other, the Non-Québécois. Could this be the result of the Innu ancestry mentioned in the author's biographies? In any case, this fact must be seen in the broader context of the exploration of otherness, a constant in Theriaultian inspiration.

The character-narrator – Ashini is an old Innu hunter - the world is narrated and seen through his eyes, and the axiology is structured on the basis of his value judgments. Of course, the paradox of this narrative orchestration is worth noting. Ashini is written in French, for a French-Canadian audience. In other words, the other expresses himself not in Innu-aimun, but in a language that is not his own, but which, from his point of view, is precisely that of the other. Yet, through the artifice of writing, it must nonetheless appear strange and foreign, like a different kind of French - Innu-aimun in French. Thériault's stylistic subterfuge consists in accentuating the illusion of orality. The text is composed of short, juxtaposed sequences, interspersed with blank spaces between paragraphs. The syntax is simple, paratactic. Dislocations ("that one, I knew his name"), anaphoric or epiphoric repetitions and ellipses underline the spoken character.

Ashini (Innu for "rock") has no family left: his two sons and wife are dead, his daughter has left for the city. So he decides to devote his life to his people. He wants to negotiate with the Great White Chief of Ottawa to obtain a territory that would be a country where his people could regain an independent, free life. No matter how many messages Ashini sends, written in his own blood on birch bark, the Grand Chief from Ottawa doesn't come up at the meeting place. He has lost face in Ashini's eyes and, to humiliate him and force him to act, he commits suicide. The sacrifice is pointless, as the Innus in the reservation don't react. Seen from the outside, following the shift in focus, the sacrifice is devalued: ***"Ashini, Montagnais, 63 years old, commits suicide in a moment of insanity"***.

Ashini's identity seems to correspond to the spirit of the Quiet Revolution period, which simultaneously accentuates defensive and emancipatory national models, while paving the way for the gradual integration of the other's difference into a new conception of Quebecitude.

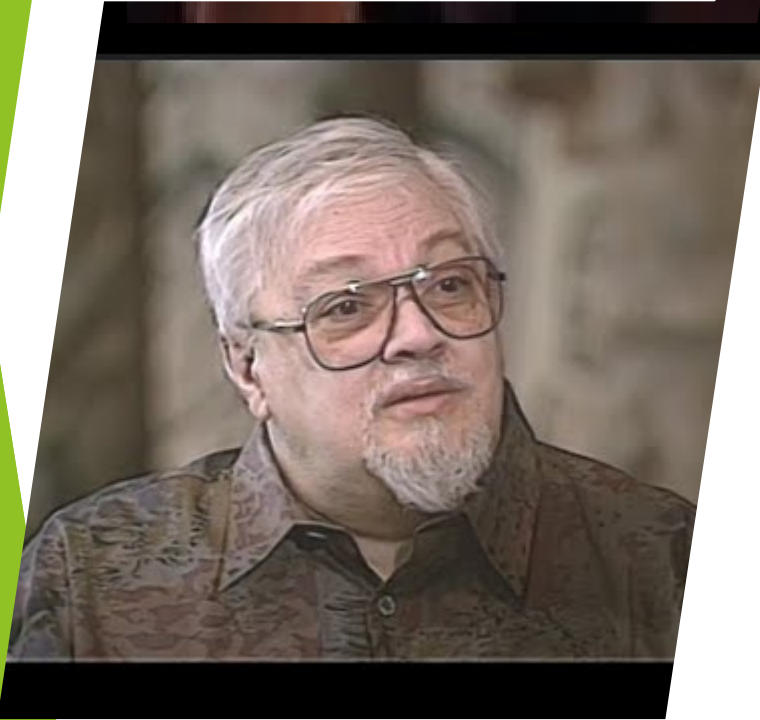
In the 1970s and 1980s, the situation shifted in favor of greater sensitivity to otherness, including that of the First Nations. **Marie-Renée Charest's** play *Meurtre sur la rivière Moisie* (1986), whose plot was inspired by a news article - the death of two young Amerindians - aroused such emotion that the police were ordered to reopen the investigation of their racist crime. A number of Quebec authors work on Amerindian themes, drawing on myths and tales. **Marc Doré**, for example, rewrote *Kamikwahushit* (1977) for the stage, an Amerindian tale that bears witness to a curious syncretism with the European fairy tale.



- ▶ The 1970s also saw the emergence of authors of Native origin. Unlike non-Natives, they had the advantage of being able to present their point of view on identity directly, without going through the detour of making oneself aware of the other.
- ▶ **Magela (Max) One-Onti Gros-Louis (1931-2020)**, boxer and chief of the Wendat village of Wendake-Ancienne-Lorette, who recorded his autobiographical story *Le Premier des Hurons* (1971) in collaboration with Marcel Bellier.
- ▶ Innu writer **An Antane Kapeshe (1926-2004)** wrote her memoirs first in Innu-Aimun, before completing them with the French version *Eukuan nin matshimanitu innu-iskueu/Je suis une maudite sauvagesse* (1976). She recounted the myths and tales of her people in *Qu'as-tu fait de mon pays?* (1979).



- ▶ The identity issue is implicated in the historiographic and ethnographic work of Huron-Wendat **Georges Emery Sioui**:. *Pour une autohistoire amérindienne. Essai sur les fondements d'une morale amérindienne* (1989) consists in the change of perspective: historical facts are considered from the Amerindian point of view. *Wendats. Une civilisation méconnue* (1994).

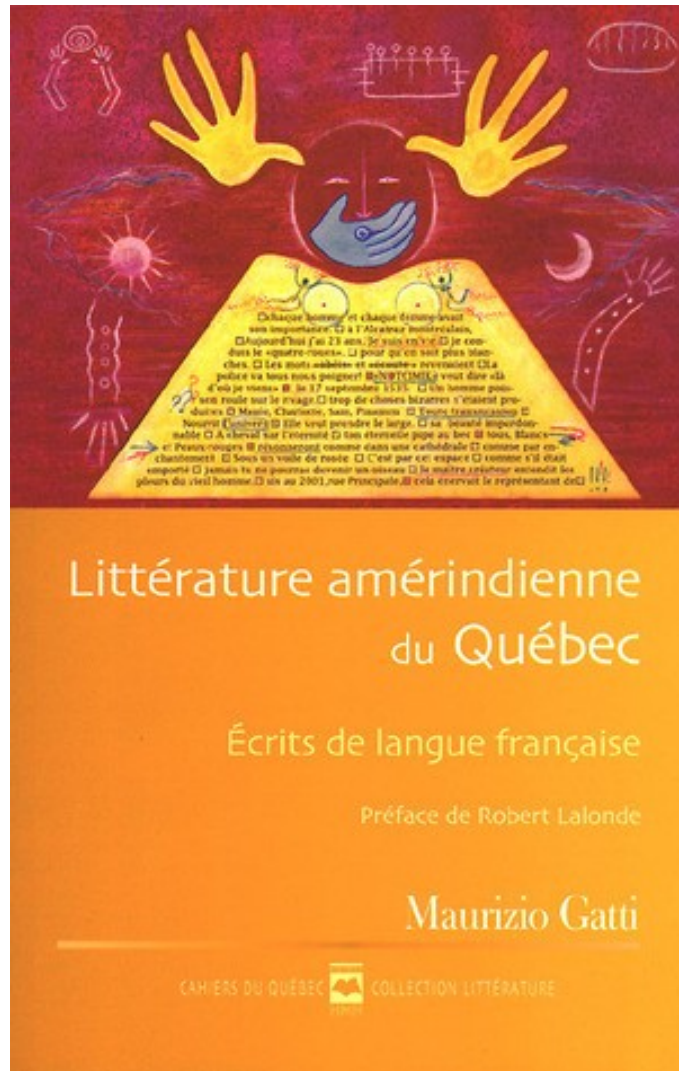


- ▶ Bernard Assiniwi's work is varied. After collecting and presenting Algonquin myths, tales and fables in *Anish-Nah-Bé* et *Sagana* (1971 and 1972), he became a historian with *Histoire des Indiens du Haut et du Bas Canada* (1974), a novelist with *L'Odawa Pontiac. L'Amour et la guerre* (1994) and *Saga des Béothuks* (1997), and playwright with *Il n'y a plus d'Indiens* (1983).



► In theater, the international breakthrough of the Ondinnok company, founded in 1985 by Yves Sioui Durand, author of ritual mythological dramas *Le Porteur des peines du monde* (1985), *Aiskenandahate. Le voyage au pays des morts* (1988), *Iwouskéa et Tawiskaron* (1999), a historical-mythological transpositions *La Conquête de Mexico* (1991) and *Kmùkamch l'Asieindien* (2002).

► Yves Sioui Durand's art is syncretic: it contaminates myth and history, ritual Amerindian theater with the European dramatic tradition; the mix of languages (Mohawk, Innu, Nahuatl, French, English, Spanish) indicates his broad conception of Amerindianness. According to the playwright, it's not so much a question of *"reconstituting ancient Amerindian ritual theater as reinventing it in a contemporary form"*. His experimentation is part of the contemporary Quebec theater movement, as demonstrated by his reworking of Shakespeare's *Hamlet - Le Malécite* (2004; in collaboration with Jean-Frédéric Messier).



► Maurizio Gatti, in *Être écrivain amérindien au Québec* (2006), aptly sums up the key questions facing all Amerindian writers and their identity. What is Native literature? Who can or should be considered an Native writer? What constitutes the Native tradition? In what language should we write? No answer is satisfactory or definitive. Indeed, neither ethnic origin nor physical appearance is a reliable defining criterion, since interbreeding is sometimes so extensive that certain ethnic groups - such as the Huron-Wendat - are physically indistinguishable from the surrounding population.

- Many authors, such as **Robert Lalonde** - half Mohawk, half French-Canadian - don't see Amerindian descent as a reason to consider themselves Amerindian writers, even if their Amerindian experience is present in their work. The mixed-race origin is the reason why some others - **Bernard Assiniwi** or **Michel Noël** - are not recognized by Native communities.
- Exclusion also affects certain intellectuals of Native origin who did not accept living on reserves and who, now urbanized, reconcile their Amerindian identity with modernity. The very notion of Amerindianness is an abstraction that covers enormous differences in lifestyle, language and interests.
- The Wendat, farmers, craftsmen and traders settled around Quebec City, have very little in common with the Cree tribes, some of whom are still attached to their tundra hunting ways.
- The linguistic situation is no less complex. It's not just a question of choosing between French/English and one of the Amerindian languages, but also of communication between the Amerindian communities themselves, and between Amerindians and non-Amerindians. Communication and cummunicability have an impact on the book market and publishing.

Huron-Wendat **Jean Sioui**:

I had a beautiful tree in front of my house

I meditated in the shade of its branches
a sudden strong wind blew it down

I missed it for a long time

Today I remember
I remember it
looking at the new shoots
right where he was
My people are the same
I know they will survive
(I had a beautiful tree)

In these times
we are given
artificial rights under reserve

In our time
we possessed
natural rights without reserve
(In those days)

Myra Cree: My Dreamed country

My dreamed country begins, obviously,
the day after a final referendum,
once the "verdict rendi
as the ineffable Jean Chrétien puts it.



Autonomy is achieved,
we have our own Parliament,
there are now three visions of this country.
In Quebec, we're buddy-buddy with the French-speaking
community
who have taken up the study of Aboriginal languages.
Our reserves, about which we used to say so much,
have become summer camps
and our chiefs, equally divided between men and women
equally divided between men and women.
In Kanesatake, where I live,
there's birch and pine for everyone.
The golf course is gone
and everyone, white and redskin (I dream in color)
can enjoy this enchanting site as they once did.

Our young people no longer drink or take drugs,
school enrolment has taken a prodigious leap forward.
Everything is going so well in our families
(there's no longer any trace of violence)
that the Quebec Native Women's Association
has become a literary circle.
Simone de Beauvoir's *Second Sex*
has just been translated into Mohawk;
Elizabeth Badinter's *XY of masculine identity*,
should be translated into Montagnais for the *Salon du livre*
to be held in Kanawake,
and Duras's *L'Amant*, in Inuktitut (that's going to defrost in the
igloos).
[...] I pinch myself to believe it, probably too hard,
because that's when I woke up.
With my best wishes,
that next year,
if we are not more,
we may be less.

► Wendat Éléonore Sioui



In a glass
Of white wine
Put two or three drops
Of Indian blood
Add an ounce of pollution
Brew European style
And you've got a second-class blend
Then ferment the elixir residue
Which will give you a third-class
Whose dilution becomes
Native American
Contaminated in its authenticity.
*Make big plans, aim high in hope and work
Do not make little plan as it gives no magic stir*
(Autochtonicity)

Diom Romeo Saganash:

My only guide tonight
The spirits dancing in the boreal sky
And the subdued light of the full moon.
Ni-wanshin, ni-madoune
I'm lost, I'm crying.
Tèou-higan kiè ni-bètèn
I've always heard echoes of drums crying out
These echoes that chase me
Come from the north, from the forest,
Nouchimich,
my father's homeland.
Other rhythms and melodies reach me
From elsewhere
And draw me too
To the east, to the other side of the endless sea, to
my destiny
My mother's homeland.
I am mixed, I am half-breed
I weep.

Are we doomed,
We people of red and white blood
To wander?
Neither pale nor copper-faced
I am heir to cultures thousands of years old
At the same time
Hundred-year-old problems.
[...] "Dandè è touté-in?
Jè gon wè ji-madouin?"
Where are you going?
Why are you crying? Moush ni-mayim-goun
Majish ni-shingadi-goun
Wèn-ni, Mahiganou? Wèn-ni Bèj-witamou.
My screaming sisters call me Majish
The ugly one
My Quebecois sisters accuse me
De blanche manquée
Tell me, Mahiganou, who am I?
Because I don't like myself.

[...] No, you're not half of one and half of the other
You're one AND the other
A white woman with a screaming soul
A Crie with a white soul
You decide what to do with it." (Mahiganou)



► Michel Jean (1960 Alma)

► Michel Jean hails from the Mashteuiatsh community in the Saguenay/Lac-Saint-Jean region of Quebec. An anchor, host, investigative reporter and writer, he holds a master's degree in history from the Université du Québec à Montréal and has been working in journalism since 1985.

► A radio host and journalist in Sorel and Abitibi-Témiscamingue, Michel Jean has also worked as a parliamentary reporter at the Legislative Assembly for Radio-Canada Television in Regina, Saskatchewan, and as a journalist for Radio-Canada in Toronto, Montreal and Quebec City.

His experience as a reporter inspired his first book, *Envoyé spécial* (2008), as well as some of his other novels. His Innu origins are explored in *Elle et nous* (2012), through the story of her grandmother Jeannette Siméon. In *Le vent en parle encore* (2013), the author deals with residential schools and raises awareness of Aboriginal issues. His novel *Kukum* (2019) won the Prix littéraire France-Québec in 2020 and was a finalist for the Prix Jacques-Lacarrière. In October 2021, he published his eighth novel, *Tiohtiá:ke*, which tackles the issue of urban Aboriginal homelessness.

Active on the literary scene, he co-edited the short story collection *Pourquoi cours-tu comme ça?* (2014). He is also the editor of *Amun* (Stanké, 2016), which features ten First Nations authors and will be republished in France, as well as *Wapke* (2021).



► Naomi Fontaine (1987 Uashat)

► Born in an Innu community near Sept-Îles, Naomi Fontaine is a French teacher who graduated at Université Laval in Quebec City. During her studies, her talent for writing was noticed by François Bon, a professor of creative writing, who encouraged her to put her voice forward.

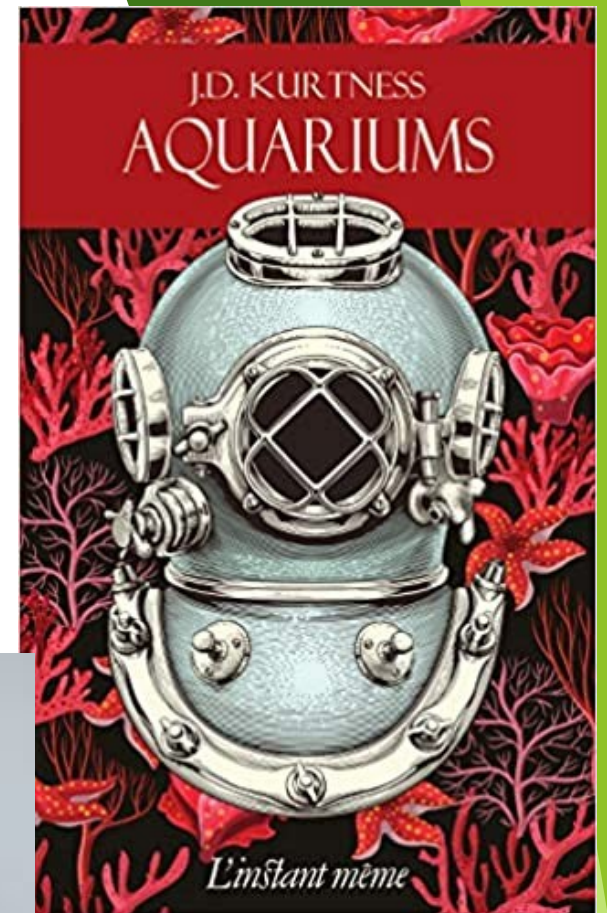
► She then began entering creative writing competitions, including the Canadian Aboriginal Writing and Art Competition, and writing texts that would give rise to her work *Kuessipan* (2011). She then pursued her literary career as part of the Première ovation program at the Institut canadien de Québec, under the mentorship of Jean Désy, a physician and friend of Innu intellectuals.

It was then that she returned to Uashat and began her career teaching teenagers in her community. Her second novel, *Manikanetish* (2017), was inspired by this. In 2019, she publishes *Shuni : ce que tu dois savoir*, a message to her white friend explaining the issues of exclusion that the Innu feel and that majority society fails to see.

Naomi Fontaine seeks to deconstruct stereotypes of Innu communities by giving an important place, through her writing, to their power and their history.

Julie D. Kurtness (Chicoutimi 1981)

J.D Kurtness is the daughter of a Québécoise mother and an Innu father from Mashteuiatsh. In 2017, she published her first novel, *De vengeance*, for which she won the Voix Autochtones award in the "Pre-eminent book in prose by an emerging Aboriginal writer" category, the Découverte award from the Salon du livre du Saguenay-Lac-Saint-Jean and the Coup de cœur award from Les amis du polar. *De vengeance* follows a female serial killer who takes on all "the violent, the thieves, the polluters, the profiteers and the hypocrites". This first book is recognized for its "corrosive humor" and "rare punch". His second novel, *Aquariums*, "a polyphonic anticipation novel whose plot revolves around a nasty, destructive virus", will be published in 2019. He is a finalist for the Voix autochtones awards in the "Preeminent Book in Prose" category.



Her short story "*Les saucisses*" appeared in the collection Wapke, edited by Michel Jean. In 2022, she published the novella *Bienvenue, Alyson* with Editions Hannenorak, in 2023 a dystopic *La Vallée de l'Étrange* (*The Uncanny Valley*).

Natasha Kanapé Fontaine (1991 Baie-Comeau)

She grew up with her grandparents in Pessamit and had to move to Baie-Comeau with her parents at the age of 4-5. This was a great challenge for Natasha, as when she arrived in kindergarten she spoke only Innu-aimun. However, as a teenager around the age of 16, she became aware that she spoke only French at school and at home. Even noticing that her parents spoke French to each other, the young teenager at the time decided, out of a sense of urgency about her identity, to reconnect with her roots through art, among other means. It was **Richard Desjardins'** documentary, *Le peuple invisible*, that sounded the alarm. It was through art that she was able to release and express the anger she felt about her identity.



Natasha Kanapé Fontaine is a great activist for aboriginal rights, and campaigns against the discrimination and racism she herself has experienced in her schooling and personal life. She is also a representative of the **pan-Canadian Idle No More aboriginal movement**, with whom she has had the opportunity to travel throughout Quebec, Canada and other parts of the world as a poet-slammer and lecturer: *"The message she carries is that of the meeting of peoples and cultures, of respect, exchange and dialogue, in the name of dignity and humanity"*. Its aim is to bring people of different origins together, and to create a dialogue that will enable greater openness to differences and the cultivation of respect. She offers a voice to the voiceless through her various public appearances, but also through her poetry. One of these is her poem *Cri*, included in her collection *N'entre pas dans mon âme avec tes chaussures* (2012). This collection is followed by others: *Manifeste Assi* (2014), *Bleuets et abricots* (2016) and *Nanimissuat Île-tonnerre* (2018). She is also a novelist: *Nauetakuan: un silence pour un bruit* (2021) traces the quest for identity of the narrator, an academic and urban intellectual who goes back to the mythical sources of her community to come to terms with the rifts in history that have struck her family.

Cooperation between Native and non-Native Quebec authors

Laure Morali: *Aimititau ! Parlons-nous !* (2008)

Jean Désy et Rita Mestokosho: *Uashtessiu / Lumière d'automne* (2010)

Joséphine Bacon et José Acquelin: *Nous sommes tous des sauvages* (2011)

Louis Hamelin prefaces Natasha Kanapé Fontaine, the latter prefaces Jean Bédard

Éric Plamondon (*Taqawan*) - Alanis O'Bomsawin

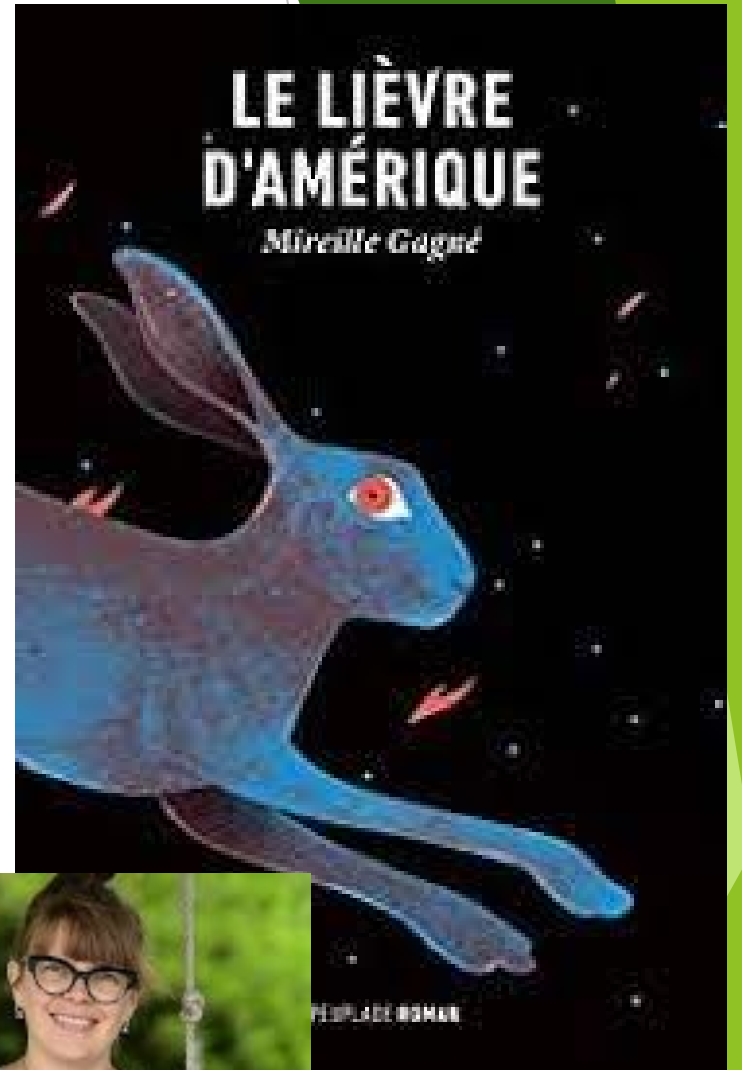
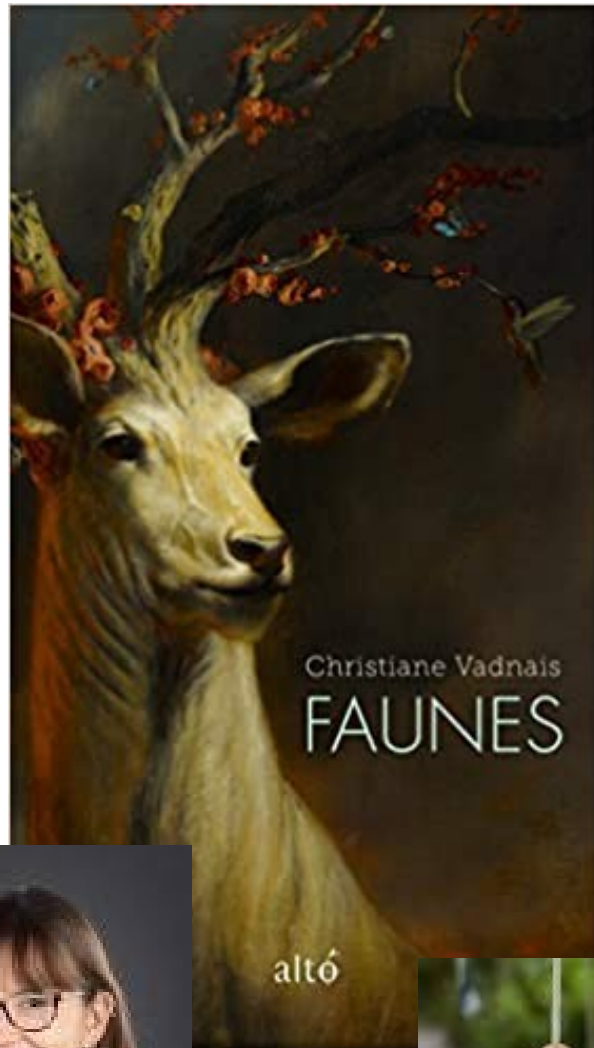
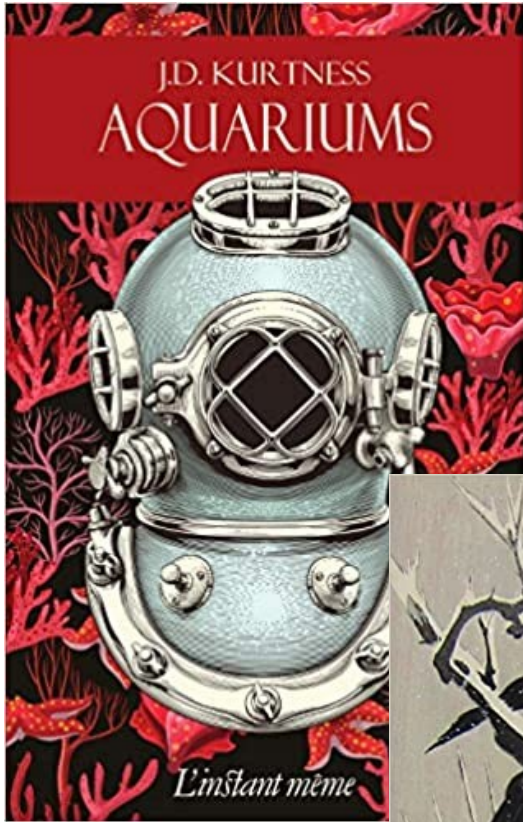
« Indiens blanc »

Pierre Esprit Radisson, Nicolas Jérémie

La faim nous força à tuer nos prisonniers, qui étaient une charge en mangeant notre nourriture, par manque de laquelle nous mangeâmes leur chair. Ainsi par ce moyen, nous fûmes libérés de ce tracas. (Fraïssé, 2008 : 49)

Lorsqu'ils sont tout à fait pressés par la faim, le père et la mère tuent leurs enfants pour les manger ; ensuite le plus fort des deux mangent l'autre ; ce qui arrive fort souvent. J'en ai vu un qui, après avoir dévoré sa femme et les enfants qu'il avait, disait n'avoir été attendri qu'au dernier qu'il avait mangé, parce qu'il l'aimait plus que les autres, et qu'en ouvrant la tête pour en manger la cervelle, il s'était senti touché du naturel qu'un père doit avoir pour ses enfants, et qu'il n'avait pas eu la force de lui casser les os pour en sucer la moëlle. (Jérémie, 1994 : 231-232)





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