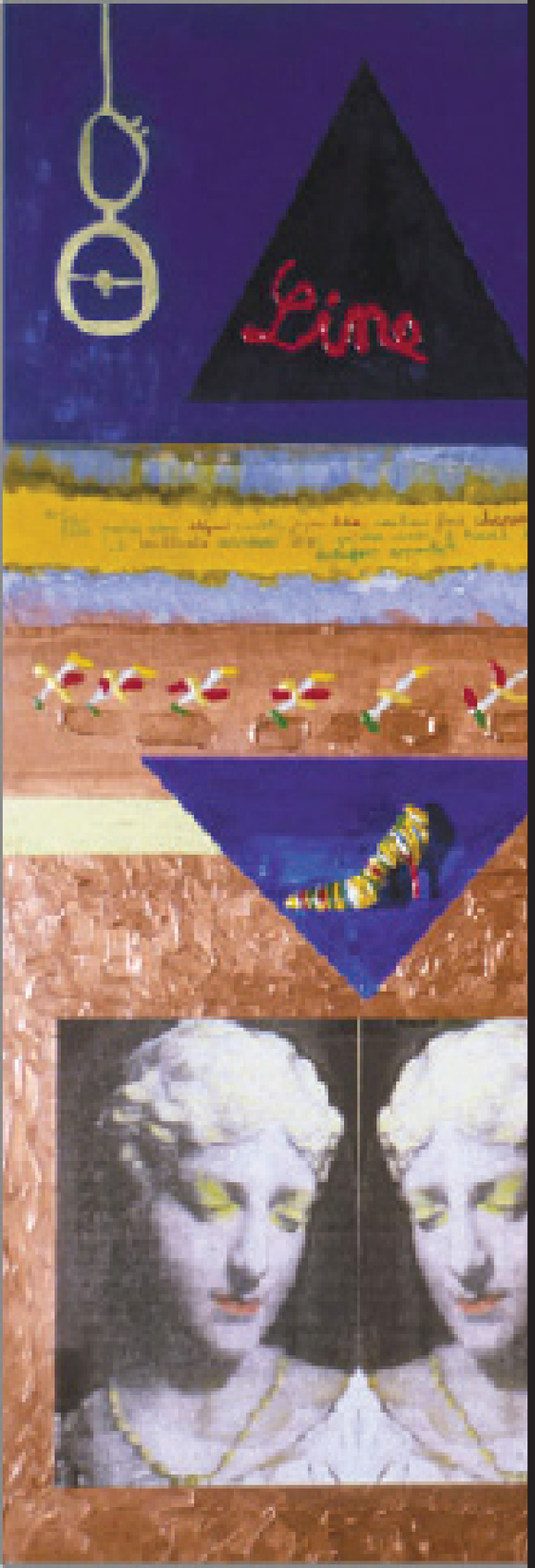


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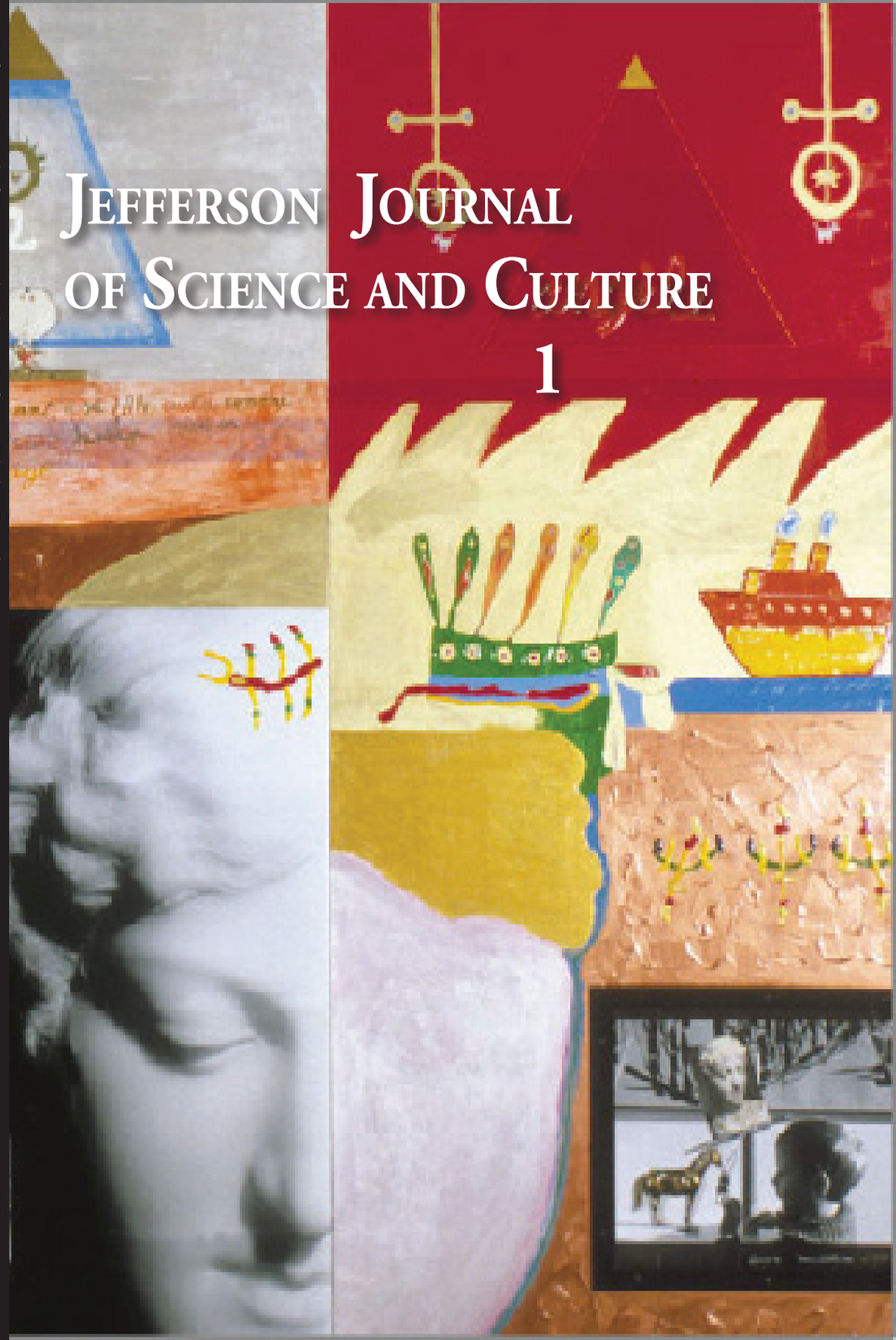

# Evangeline: American and Acadian Icon.

## Tribulations of a Cultural and National Metaphor

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In 1847, Henry Wadsworth Longfellow published his poem *Evangeline. A Tale of Acadia*.[1] At the time, Longfellow was still a professor of modern languages at Harvard, and he was not yet recognized as one of the most talented American poets of his time. The success of his poem *Evangeline*[2] was about to facilitate that recognition while giving birth to a new iconic American literary and cultural figure. Soon after the first text-only publication, the poem was edited again and illustrated with various engravings from more or less famous artists of the time such as Thomas and James Faed. In a few years, the poem became a best seller, carried along by the wave of Romantic nationalism and the Manifest Destiny rhetoric that had been developed in the early 1840s and that shaped the ante-bellum national discourses in the United States. Although the genetic process of creating a North American icon first began in New England, the Evangeline figure gained legitimacy and complexity when it reached a wider North American and European readership. Since the mid 19th Century, four anamorphous national groupings came to shape and (re)appropriate the icon; the ante-bellum and post-bellum United States, the Acadians from Canada, the Cadians[3] from Louisiana and more recently the Quebecois.

Longfellow consciously depicted a wide range of romantic themes and motives he wished to be universally appealing. The long decasyllabic epic poem of more than 1400 verses tells the fictional story of a young Acadian couple, "A Tale of Love in Acadie, home of the happy". The first

part of the poem takes place in 1755, in an Eden on Earth called Acadia. The protagonists, Evangeline and Gabriel, are about to get married. Unfortunately, on the day of their wedding, British soldiers separate the couple and deport the Acadians to the American colonies of the British Empire. In the second part of the poem, Evangeline decides to search for her lover instead of beginning a new life. She wanders for years across the British colonies, along the Mississippi river from the bayous of Louisiana to the forests of Michigan, but never finds Gabriel. She eventually becomes a nun in Philadelphia. One day, as she tends to the sick people in a hospital during an epidemic, she sees an old man on his deathbed. She recognizes Gabriel. They kiss, tell each other they are still in love with each other, and Gabriel dies. This scene ends the story, but is the prologue of another set of national and cultural narratives that would spread all over North America and beyond for more than 150 years.

Although these narratives are often easy to track, no broad transnational study of the national and cultural discourses has been led so far. The disciplinary and maybe more surprisingly the national strangleholds have prevented any analytical scholarship from addressing Evangeline as a broader literary, historical and cultural North American phenomenon. When scholars, mostly North American and European, have focused on Evangeline, they rarely explored the phenomenon beyond their discipline boundaries. These limitations appear quite logical when considering the earlier scholars of the late 19th and early 20th century, but they are more surprising when considering the current advocates of more recent and trendy interdisciplinary approaches. Linguistic aspects probably hindered such study, but the more profound reason has to be found in the dark corner of national, and sometimes nationalistic, interests and approaches of the scholarship. Nevertheless, this scholarship has produced sophisticated literary critiques of the poem, sometimes very detailed historical research and analysis of the numerous iterations of Evangeline in the popular and historical culture. This article aims to provide an encompassing approach and overview of the questionings and

concepts a new scholarship could bring together. By doing so, it relates to the issue of how the popular and scholarly audiences are shaping and representing the cultural and national boundaries when dealing with a transnational phenomenon.

Three main phases can be distinguished that led Evangeline to become a North American icon. During the first decades after the publication of the poem, the character took her first steps towards the American pantheon. Longfellow's literary choices and dedicated work gave to the text strong academic, artistic and popular appeal. Over time, the interaction between "Evangéline" and its socio-cultural and political milieu became more symbiotic. Gradually, the symbolically loaded character was transformed into an iconic figure. The "Evangeline" icon was infused into the North American national discourses, and the narrative in some cases evolved to attain the status of a creation myth. In that second phase, which encompasses the late 19th and first half of the 20th Century, "Evangéline" broke through its original literary, intellectual and national boundaries. First, it went beyond the realm of American national discourse and was reified by a variety of Acadian and French North American intellectuals, politicians and opinion makers. In the United States, it spread across the country to become both a popular and commercial cultural icon. The iconodulistic era lasted until the Second World War. After the Second World War, a more or less iconoclastic period began. Longfellow and "Evangeline" began to fade out in some discourses, to the advantage of more modern popular icons. On the other hand, new ideological and postcolonial discourses have revealed a set of contradictory representations. In Acadian Louisiana and Canada, these discourses illustrate the ontological struggle that inhabits any icon. On the one hand, "Evangeline" embodies a set of reifying symbols omnipresent in the discursive and real landscapes. On the other hand stands a kaleidoscope of moving values and heterogeneous individuals that strongly question the traditional representations "Evangeline" carries with her. The third phase will show how the cultural, political and

scholarly discourses fragmented the representations of "Evangéline" in the Acadian regions after the 1950s. This last period witnessed the creation of cultural representations in which iconodulism and iconoclasm were strongly intertwined.

## *Longfellow's Evangeline: A Tale of Acadie (1847) - Literary Genesis of an American Icon*

The terms of the rise of "Evangéline" as an icon spring directly from Longfellow's authorship process. The genesis period encompasses approximately the first twenty years after the poem's publication. Both the origins and the form of the text, the content of the narrative, and the context in which the poem was written and released drew upon the intrinsic power "Evangeline" eventually came to bear as an icon.

The origin of the story and the literary genre first owe themselves to a long filiation of epic poems. Epic stories pretending to come from a timeless oral tradition and transmission, gain wide legitimacy by freeing themselves from the boundaries of time and space. The hero's quest and challenges allow the narrative to unfold, and reveal the virtues and agency of the main characters and the people they encounter. As a metaphorical narrative of a country and a people, national epics have the power to display, anchor and reify the representations of a nation and a culture. Longfellow had heard the story by his friend, Nathaniel Hawthorne, who heard it himself from people he had visited in Nova Scotia. The story was about a young Acadian couple, separated during the so-called "Grand Dérangement" – which describes the "removal of the French"[4] from Acadia by the British in 1755. Longfellow wrote the poem about an historical tragedy that had almost completely sunk into oblivion. Not quite forgotten, the new "chosen people"—victims of the British Empire who had to find their place in a New World Promised Land—had been spread out all over North America, Europe and even

the Caribbean. Despite the odds, the Acadian people managed to survive while integrating into the American mainstream. Every detail of the paratextual narrative surrounding the creation of the text appears to be of fundamental importance. Every anecdote will feed a long-lasting scholarship that will aim to understand the deeper meanings of the text. In that sense, the epistemology of the genesis of the text itself is part of the more general narrative that contributed to the iconodulistic process.

Longfellow hesitated between several first names for his heroine[5], but his final choice would bring to the reader a new American Gospel, according to Longfellow. As a modern language professor who taught French among other languages, Longfellow knew the origin and possible connotations of his heroin's name. Longfellow chose "Evangeline"; a word of Greek origin very close to the French term "Evangile", which means "Gospel". Although Evangeline was not a common French first name—it became very common among the Acadians after the publication of the poem—Longfellow's choice was knowingly powerful. Thanks to her name, Evangeline was able to embody a whole range of religious and cultural imaginaries. Moreover, the poem was inclusive; it bridged a seemingly authentic French sounding name with the sacredness of a text that was as important to the Catholic Acadians as it was to the American Protestants. The structure of the poem itself directly refers to the Old and New Testaments, and delves into an even deeper pool of Greek and Western myths. Only the first part of the poem takes place exclusively in Acadia. Evangeline lives in Grand-Pré, the "land of the happy", which is described—if not explicitly—as an Eden. At the end of the first part, the villagers are gathered on the beach and separated by the British soldiers before they board their ships. Evangeline was separated from her husband and became an orphan when her father died in her arms on the beach. After the "Fall", the second part begins somewhere in the American British colonies. The reader finds Evangeline traveling with a priest on the Mississippi river, which at that time marked the western frontier of the explored New World. After she heard about Acadians who

settled in Louisiana, Evangeline decided to visit them. But while sailing South, Evangeline passed Gabriel on the river without noticing him. She eventually found her godfather, Basil, who had become a farmer next to the village of Saint-Martinville. He was living there "like a god on Olympus"[6] with a large group of Acadians who resettled in the "Eden of Louisiana".[7] Evangeline was offered a new life, but she refused to stop her wandering and asked for God's help to give her the strength to faithfully continue her journey. Basil offered to accompany her and they traveled north on the Mississippi river up to Michigan. The quest remained unsuccessful, and when she eventually grew old, Evangeline decided to become a nun in Philadelphia.

Just by considering its title, its form and the general narrative, *Evangeline* is meant to become a sacred text, a new National Gospel of the American Nation. Longfellow did not mainly intend to historicize the tragedy of the Acadian people; the poet told this story as a pretext to explore the American Promised Land. Evangeline wanders all over the thirteen colonies in search of her other-half, but she finds him in Philadelphia, birthplace of the nation.[8]

On the one hand, Longfellow looks for literary legitimacy by borrowing forms and themes from the past, and from religious or secular sacred text—as an old normative culture would do. In that sense, Longfellow's *Evangeline* can be said to be the result of an *atavistic* culture, a culture that bases its legitimacy on a genesis and uses the same narratives and axiological systems of references, as Glissant describes[9]. On the other hand, Longfellow is a Romantic American writer, and he aims to produce a genuine, American based and inspired, poetry and literature. This conscious choice makes him integrate a wide range of references and motifs that are specific to the American Romantic literary period: the aesthetic of the wild and grandiose American landscape, the discovery of a new territory, the concept of a moving frontier, the importance of moral, religious and familial values that are presented as being at the core of the new people settling in the New World. According to this second

set of choices, Longfellow's narrative also corresponds to a more *composite* culture, as Glissant describes the groups that are trying to create their own genesis out of the remnants of several atavistic cultures. On top of this already complex continuum and creolization process in which several narratives intermingle to create an original sign, Evangeline's creator introduced a new layer of literary meanings by incorporating his own imaginary. *Evangeline* becomes a distinct narrative with the power to relate to the readers of the cultures it borrows from, while still attracting a traditional readership by incorporating a set of recognizable literary codes.

Not only does the poem and its heroin seem to have an immemorial oral origin, inscribed in the European and Christian inheritance of sacred texts; they also bring together the details of real historical events and places tainted with the fertile imagination of their author. The events of 1755 really happened: Evangline's home village of Grand-Pré truly exists, as did the Acadians who resettled in the existing village of Saint-Martinville, Louisiana. The letter written by the Colonel Winslow ordering the expulsion of the Acadians is an archived document and the men of the village might have been gathered in the church to listen to the order. On the other hand, Evangeline's family name—Bellefontaine—is not Acadian, nor is Gabriel's name—Lajeunesse. Evangeline never existed, and the story of a woman who wandered in the British colonies looking for her husband was never documented. However many families had been separated during the "Great Upheaval" and stories had been told among the Acadians about these tragic events. The description of the main characters, their attitude and personalities are also strong projections of Longfellow's Protestant and New England culture. While Evangeline kept her Catholic faith, she also strongly reflects the 19th Century ideal of the puritan Victorian woman; a married virgin who speaks rarely and then only to address God, a beautiful woman who is strong enough to survive on the Frontier, a subaltern who is always subjected to men's guidance, a woman whose mother is absent and

whose only personal decision is to remain faithful to her husband and God's will.[10] Reality and fiction mingle throughout the poem, as well as an imagination of a tragic or glorious past and social values from the present. By thus constructing the poem, Longfellow has created a large spectrum of dense linguistic and cultural meanings that would be used as arguments or despised depending on the interpretation and intentions of the readers.

In addition to its literary value and rich system of reference, "Evangeline" hypoicon also benefited from a particularly favorable political and cultural context. We already addressed the National Romanticism context, reflecting the will of the American elite to create its own national literature. Longfellow was also a writer from the New England elite who was concerned with creating a unique imaginary construction that would bring the nation together. When Longfellow was writing the poem, the young nation was facing internal and external threats. The Mexican-American War (1846-1848) was still ongoing in the South, while border tensions with Canada were rising in the Northwest (1846). Inside the country, the geographic frontier was still being pushed forward and looking back at its first development was a way to reaffirm its importance in the national imagination. More problematic on a very concrete level, the tensions were growing between the industrialized abolitionist North and the agricultural proslavery South. The nation was at stake and needed a new set of discourses that could bring it together again. Longfellow, through his poem, was directly referring to the imaginary of the creation of the country, when a people became united in order to free itself from the British Empire. Although no reference is made to these events in the poem, the period is the same and Philadelphia is the place where Evangeline meets Gabriel again—the "good word" is brought to the city "Penn the apostle"[11] founded, and in this melting pot dies an old people as a new one rises. From a more aesthetic point of view, while describing the landscape Evangeline crossed, Longfellow also recreates a homogeneous geographical entity by putting the original

States back together. *Evangeline* offers to the reader a literary mapping of the new American colonies. The flow of the "Beautiful River" is a tangible and unbreakable link between the Northern and Southern States. It is only after sailing the Mississippi River from the North to the South and the South to the North that Evangeline finds her way to Philadelphia: "There from the troubled sea had Evangeline landed, an exile, / Finding among the children of Penn a home and a country".[12] The concentric spiral, beginning in the far-away Acadia, eventually leads the strong and virtuous newcomer, orphaned by her parents and her country, to the symbolic center and birthplace of the nation.

Very soon after the first publication, Evangeline was visually represented in paintings and engravings, completing the first step of the iconodulistic process. These early illustrations would shape the recurrent iconic representations of the late 19th Century. In this early period following the publication, Evangeline is most of the time either represented alone or accompanied by one of the men who was in charge of her: her father, her husband, the priest and her father-in-law. When appearing alone, she is either represented like a French maid with or without a white Norman head covering, or as a nun alone or bending above the dying Gabriel. She always seems to be sad, imploring or posing with a dream-like gaze. When represented in a book as an illustration of the poem, the engravings are often accompanied by a comment extracted from the poem, which describes the context or some Evangeline's virtues.

Evangeline's avatars in literature, operas, movies and other commercial products often have the same characteristics. In some cases, Evangeline will be displayed very differently, but the authors and artists intend to convey a set of values and virtues that were specific to Longfellow's vision while becoming themselves iconic figures. Stowe's Little Eva—an abbreviation of Evangeline— in *Uncle Tom's* Cabin (1851) is a perfect example of a literary intertextual character directly influenced by Longfellow. Longfellow's abolitionist vision was clearly presented in the poem when he describes—and praises—a humanistic representation


Evangeline pictured as a nun: "Sorrow and Silence are Strong – Silent Endurance is God-like".[13]

Evangeline painted by Thomas Faed in the early 1850s and engraved by his brother James Faed, 1863. One of the most famous and copied representation of Evangeline. This painting was later used as a logo or printed on postcards. [14]

of the Acadians. It is particularly obvious when Longfellow describes the choices Evangeline made to stay in Philadelphia: "And her ear was pleased with the Thee and Thou of the Quakers, / For it recalled the past, the old Acadian country, / Where all men were equal, and all were brothers and sisters".[15] Little Evangeline carries with her the virtues of her literary genitor, and she plays a key role in Stowe's abolitionist rhetoric. When Eva and Tom first met, they were on the boat going south to Louisiana on the Mississippi river. Tom had been sold to a slave merchant, and Eva was going back home. When the girl fell in the river, Tom dove in without hesitation to save her. Once saved, Eva insisted that her father buy him. They became friends and Eva always insisted that her dad free Tom. When compared to Evangeline, a major difference stands up: Little Eva thinks by herself, she has ideas of her own and she expresses them. Little Eva represents the possibility of finding some pure humanistic goodness in the planter's class. She is the innocent and simple voice of a planter's child saved by a slave who does not understand the logic of slavery and

wants to end it. The young girl is the proof that racial prejudices are socially constructed and that it is possible to overcome them. One of the most famous and recurring illustrations of Little Eva represents the little blond girl standing next to Tom or seating on his laps or next to him while one of them reads the Bible. "Little Eva reading the Bible to Uncle Tom in the arbor"[16] is one of the six engravings illustrating the first edition of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* published in 1852.


This image would be striking in a proslavery South: a planter's child considering a slave as an equal, and the two protagonists hand in hand, united in the reading of a common sacred text. This very romantic picture also tells the (White) reader that the Black Slave is equal as a "human", but he still has to be educated and civilized; a mission a little girl seems to be able to accomplish by herself. While Stowe used one of the themes and some characteristics of the main character introduced by Longfellow in his poem, she developed her own meaning and iconography. This image represents a united people gathered around a set of sacred values in which they all believe. Little Eva in contrast with Uncle Tom seems to present a dichotomy of representations of the South and the slavery system, but in reality, Stowe represents two visions, using the image of an innocent but clever little girl who bears the moral virtues the adults of the planter class have lost or prefer to ignore. If the palimpsest will have an even

longer literary fate in the American literature than Longfellow's poem, it will also contribute to the transmission of "Evangeline's" icon in the discourse.

The process that led Evangeline to become an icon tells the story of the birth and rise of the American national and cultural discourse, how it was first influenced by a set of outside national and sacred texts, how the first American authors combined these influences with what they believed to be a genuine American influence. It also demonstrates how the newly born national literature first positively reflected and congratulated itself and was then recognized by the more established national literatures in Europe. This is the time of the "legitimating process" during which the "new" literature explores external theoretical and formal norms, while using the resources of its milieu—themes and motifs, but also readership—to express its uniqueness. The text quickly reached some key readers—elite members, others writers, artists, merchants—who were touched by the writing. As Stowe did, the readers began to appropriate the text, the character and the values they read in them, and they reinvested them in their own narratives, for their own purpose. They followed some of Longfellow's lead; when he wrote his text out of a story he heard, using artifice—sacredness, long lasting and transcultural symbols—he borrowed from antecedent narratives (epics, the Bible, history books). The spiral of new meaning Longfellow initiated led to the rise and spread of new clusters of narratives that infused many areas of the national and cultural discourses in North America, bringing it to the threshold of becoming an icon.

## *Spread of the Iconic Figure in the North American Popular Discourse and Culture (late 19th Century to the mid 20th Century)*

If *Evangeline* did not directly influence the American Renaissance movement, such was not the case for the Acadian Renaissance that independently blossomed at the same time in Louisiana and in the Maritime Provinces of Canada. In both cases, "Evangeline" was the cause of the discourse's ignition. The numerous translations or literary palimpsests widely participated in spreading the images and literary representations of Evangeline in the United States, in Canada and Europe. At the same time, in the United States, the iconic figure was still growing, keeping its apparatus of romanticism while giving away its nationalistic connotations. The never-ending controversies about the historical veracity of the facts presented in the poem contributed to the long lasting interest of the scholars. Slowly, Evangeline permeated all cultural discourses, from the elitist operas and early bourgeois tourism, to the popular commercial culture, becoming a brand name to sell pepper sauce or cigarettes. The arrival of cinema as a mass media propelled Evangeline to the forefront of the popular North American culture. Only just before and during the Second world War did "Evangeline" gradually disappear from the US Frontlines, while still keeping a predoma predominant position.

In Louisiana and northeastern Canada, the Acadian populations had been culturally, economically and politically dormant for almost a century when the poem *Evangeline* suddenly shed light on their existence. Both the Acadians from Canada and the Cadians from Louisiana understood the use they could make of Longfellow's literary rehistoricization. Although many subsequent writers will forget it, Longfellow was an American poet who was writing about his own reality. He did not aim to write about and for the Acadians from "the South" or "the North". The Acadians and above all their new narrative of a modern creation myth gained a broad recognition from the large readership Longfellow acquired after he published his text. Recognition was not the

only gift the Acadians received from Longfellow; the poem also revealed them as one of the founding people of the New World. *Evangeline*, as a genuine and genetic text seemed to be a ready-made narrative for a New Acadia that would be born after a tragic and painful parturition in 1755. The story of the Acadians was the story of the discovery of America as "Acadie," the first lasting European colony established in North America (1604), before Jamestown (1607) and Quebec (1608). The poem was therefore giving a new historical birth to a country that no longer existed, neither on maps—the British changed the name into Nova Scotia—nor in the collective memory. In the North, the Canadian Confederation (1867) had kept alive French Canada in a Province that would become Quebec, but nothing was mentioned about the Acadians who were spread out in the eastern provinces of Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island and New Foundland. The Acadians who escaped the expulsion and managed to return, survived in small communities which settled again on poor lands they appropriated—the good lands they previously owned had been colonized by new British migrants. In Louisiana, the Acadians had either mingled with the white Creole planter group, or they had become small farmers or fisherman in the Atchafalaya region, on the eastern shore of the Mississippi. In both regions, a small elite had appeared that was not using its Acadian background to gain more power or recognition. But Evangeline was about to profoundly change that situation.

In the 1880s, two Acadian Renaissance movements emerged and used Evangeline as a foil to gain legitimacy and political recognition. In 1881, the first National Acadian Convention in Memramcook gave to the Canadian Acadians a national day, and later a flag and a national anthem. In 1887 the newspaper *L'Evangéline* was founded in Nova Scotia and served for almost a century as the main medium of education and propaganda to bond and inform the Acadian communities spread across the Maritime Provinces[17]. The Acadian elite never meant to claim independence or autonomy. They intensively used the text *Evangeline*

and Evangeline's virtues to guide them in their relationship with the British colonial power--patience, consistency, respect of the social and religious traditions and the hierarchy. One scene of the poem reflects the attitude of the Acadian elite and catholic clergy until the mid 20th Century. At the end of the first part of the poem, when all the men of Grand-Pré are gathered in the church to listen to the order of expulsion, some of them wanted to rebel. But Father Felician, the catholic priest of the community strongly regains control of his followers:

> "What is this that ye do, my children? what madness has seized you?
> Have you so soon forgotten all lessons of love and forgiveness?
> This is the house of the Prince of Peace, and would you profane it
> Thus with violent deeds and hearts overflowing with hatred?
> Lo! where the crucified Christ from His cross is gazing upon you!
> See! in those sorrowful eyes what meekness and holy compassion!
> Hark! how those lips still repeat the prayer, 'O Father, forgive them!'
> Let us repeat that prayer in the hour when the wicked assail us,
> Let us repeat it now, and say, 'O Father, forgive them!'"
> Few were his words of rebuke, but deep in the hearts of his people
> Sank they, and sobs of contrition succeeded that passionate outbreak".[18]

This image of the priest taming the rebellion as well as Evangeline's virtues of acceptance, resilience and pure faith shaped the collective memory and the Acadian identity. The representation of a people accepting its fate led to a widespread self-victimization that would be strongly criticized a century later.

Even if the original text was never modified, the numerous editions and paratexts sometimes fundamentally changed the meaning of the poem. The inclusion of pictures representing more or less tragic moments of the story also created their own meaning and impact on the reader. This basic epistemological statement is even truer when we

consider the translations. Each translation depends on the translator's agenda and the context in which the "literary treason" is perpetrated. These factors will determine the translator's ethics and his or her understanding of what respecting the author's work and spirit means. Pamphile Lemay's work is a case in point that illustrates the complex influences that exist between the translators, their readership—including Longfellow—and the context in which they write. The Quebecois priest, poet and author Pamphile Lemay fought all his life for the survival of French Canada under British rule. In 1865, he published a first translation of the poem in French. Lemay was satisfied by his translation and he received a letter from Longfellow that he published in the second translation he made in 1870. Longfellow also seemed satisfied by Lemay's work except for one major detail; he made Evangeline die at the end of the poem. As Longfellow was displeased, Lemay wrote a second version, which respects Longfellow's ending.

This second French version, for which Lemay received Longfellow's thanks, became a widespread and influential text. It is the most commonly French translation used and still presently sold. The story could be merely anecdotal if some differences did not have deeper national and ideological meanings. The title and the spelling of the heroine's name, first, are more than a mere detail. The translation created a *différance* in the word it self; "Evangeline" became "Evangéline". The differentiation process gave birth to a new "Evangéline" who became closer to the French readers of Canada and more exotic to the English readers. The temporalization was also directly affected as Evangeline, a fictional character of the past, invested the present by rehistoricizing and redefining the Acadians. The death of Evangeline also has its importance. Longfellow's argument is that Evangeline could find, in the United States, a place where she could feel home again. Lemay, a Canadian citizen and Quebecois writer, spins the meaning by making Evangeline's new life impossible after Gabriel died. If he resuscitates Evangeline to please the American poet, Lemay's second translation still shows several meaningful discrepancies. A quick

comparative reading of the chapter describing the arrival of Evangeline in Louisiana reveals a few of the many examples that appear across the poem. When Basil welcomes Evangeline in Louisiana he is more than pleased by his new home: "Welcome once more to a home, that is better perchance than the old one!"[19] Lemay's Basil has a quite different reaction and instead of praising his new country, the blacksmith is still remembering his beautiful Acadia: "Je vous le dis encor, soyez les bienvenus! / L'âme du forgeron ne s'est pas refroidie. / Il se souvient toujours de sa belle Acadie."[20] Later, while Longfellow only describes the new life of the "small Acadian planters" in Louisiana, Lemay changes the meaning by adding that they finally found a place to live away from their "odious persecutors". This reference to the British is directly related to the Canadian context of tensions between the British colonizers and the French colonized, which is particularly strong in the 1860—the Confederation was created in 1867 as a way to prevent a Civil War. On the other hand, Longfellow's poem is more concerned by the great new life the Acadians found in America and how they mingled with the diverse population that was already there. A last example illustrates Longfellow's emphasis on showing people from different origins, "[...] who before were as strangers, / Meeting in exile, became straightway as friends to each other, / Drawn by the gentle bond of a common country together."[21] In Lemay's version, no mention is given of the American "melting pot" or the new "country" that harbors the scattered people.

Some writers, in minority contexts, appropriated the icon to create autofictions in order to promote their own infra-national identities. This is the case in post-bellum Louisiana and during the early years of the Canadian Federation, when the country was still building its national discourse and imaginary. Felix de Voorhies, a Cadian judge from Louisiana, also used Longfellow's iconic figure to retell the history of his group and gain some recognition for his community. Playing on the extensive historical and critical scholarship that was intending to isolate the real historical facts from the purely imaginary ones, Voorhies

wrote an historical autofiction that was supposed to be the "true story of Evangeline".[22] Also claiming that he had an "Evangeline" in his family, he argued that her real name was Emmeline Labiche, that she never left Saint-Martinville in Louisiana and waited under an oak tree for her lover to come back. One day he returned but he had married another woman. When she knew, Emmeline died of sadness. She was supposed to be buried in the small cemetery, next to the church of Saint-Martinville, close to the oak tree.

This new story became so well-know in the Acadian country of Louisiana that she gradually replaced Longfellow's story and became a myth of its own. A park still exists in Saint-Martinville where the visitors can sit under the (fourth) Evangeline Oak. Official historical signs were added; they were still telling the story Voorhies wrote, but implied it was Longfellow's original story. The new story that was supposed to reflect the real historical facts eventually came to replace, in discourse, the original story Longfellow wrote. For decades, Acadians from Louisiana have believed this story to be true. Following the apparition of this new "Evangelinian" rhizome, the brand name "Evangeline" was used in Louisiana to sell a wide range of products[23]; sodas, playing cards, bread, cigarettes, tourist guides with photos.[24] Two railroad companies organized tourist tours to the two emblematic and recognizable locations where Evangeline had lived: Grand-Pré and Saint-Martinville. In the 1890, the Dominion Atlantic Railway had bought some land next to Grand-Pré and offered trips from Boston to visit the "Land of Evangeline" where a church had been rebuilt and later a statue of Evangeline was installed (1920) on what became one of the first Canadian national Park. The Southern Pacific Lines organized the same tourist industry in the "Evangeline Country" of Louisiana, and Saint-Martinville became the center of a new cult and pilgrimage.

Evangeline's Statue (1920) in front of the reconstitution of the church of Grand-Pré, Nova Scotia.


Tourist Guide published by the Dominion Atlantic Railway (1890) to visit the "Land of Evangeline." [25]

In the schools, from the late 19th Century to the mid 20th Century, *Evangeline* was part of the English literary programs in Canada and the United States, and several generations of children had to learn a few verses and know the tragic story of the "Acadian Maiden". The North American audience, since its childhood, was told a reifying vision of the Acadians. As a result, it took decades to the post World War Acadian generation to deconstruct these representations.

Another stage of the collective national and cultural memories was reached when the movie industry arrived and ended the story. Because the cinema could reach a larger illiterate public, the commercial and popular interest for "Evangeline" increased, especially after the First World War. The new mass medium greatly contributed to spread out the image of Evangeline in North America while offering a real person to embody the character. *Evangeline* appeared to appeal to the North American

moviemakers. The first Canadian feature film produced in 1913 was showing Evangeline's story and offered a powerful way to integrate the American icon in the Canadian Pantheon. In 1919, William Fox made another movie he filmed in Grand-Pré. The movie was lost, but some pictures were used to illustrate a heteroclite edition of the poem that was also accompanied by a prose version of the story.[26] If the literature first influenced the cinema, which put on the screen some of the major myths of the time, the influence and hybridization quickly went both ways. As it is the case for the Fox's film, the literature even partly saved the iconography of the movie.

The most achieved example of the permeability and interpenetration of the different discourses and medias is probably Carewe's movie *Evangeline* (1929). The movie was a large production staring Dolores Del Rio, an already known Hollywood icon. A book was published to accompany the silent black and white film[27] and the production of the movie had a strong direct impact in Louisiana. This was due to the movie being shot in Saint-Martinville, and also because Dolores Del Rio offered to be the model for a statue of Evangeline that was installed close to the Evangeline Oak, next to the church cemetery, where Voorhies' "real Evangeline" was supposed to be buried. The movie was a huge success and largely contributed to spread the knowledge of Evangeline's existence to a large—and not only literate—North American audience. The iconography and cultural representations of Evangeline also changed as the movie allowed to show a wider variety of moving pictures. The embodied Evangeline is "alive", moving, sometimes sad, sometimes smiling. The everyday presence of "Evangeline" through objects and official names—parks, streets, even two villages in Louisiana and New Brunswick—made it part of the daily life reality. By the beginning of the 1930s, the icon was concretely incarnated.

Dolores del Rio posing as a happy Evangeline in Carewe's Evangeline[28]


Poster of Carewe's movie Evangeline (1929) staring Dolores del Rio.

Evangeline statue in St Martinville, Louisiana. Dolores del Rio offered to be the model for the statue (1929).

This whole new set of discourses, the popularization and representation of different stories, had a direct social and cultural impact on the Acadian communities and folklore. Evangeline's story became so famous that Evangeline beauty contests were organized, women and girls would dress as Evangeline and men and boys as Gabriel during the Carnivals or the Acadian national day. Acadians from Louisiana, Canada and the rest of the United States discovered or became more aware of their Acadian heritage and began to organize pilgrimages to the new concrete "places of memory". These spaces of identification such as Grand-Pré in Nova Scotia and the Evangeline Oak in Louisiana have been patrimonialized and came to occupy a central place in the national discourse of these minorities. If Acadia as a country had been erased from the maps after 1755, *Evangeline* as a new literary sacred text—and "Evangeline's" numerous avatars—had not only contributed to historicize the imagined country again, but they put Acadia back on the maps. The Acadian elite who first used Evangeline as a pretext to promote their political and national ideas could not really control the discourse anymore. Nonetheless, "Evangeline" was still part of the political—and

even diplomatic—discourses and reality. In 1933, the poet and French Ambassador Paul Claudel gave an official speech under the Evangeline Oak in Saint-Martinsville. "Evangeline ambassadors" traveled back and forth by train between Canada and the United States.[29]

The exponential expansion of Evangeline in the discourse seemed to be endless, but the economical and political events that hit the North American societies—the 1929 Crisis and the arrival of the Second World War—had deep socio-cultural repercussions. Carewe's movie appears to be, in that sense, the highest peak of "Evangeline's" presence and influence in the popular culture of the United States. From that moment on, "Evangeline's" occurrences faded in the discourse, Longfellow was less read and *Evangeline* slowly disappeared as a mandatory book from the school programs.

Faulkner's late published short story *Evangeline:a story* (1931)[30] is symptomatic of this new era during which the cultural meaning of the icon spun. Although the story is entitled *Evangeline*, no character in the short story is ever called by that name. The short story is thematically very rich and combines overlapping visions of the ante and post-bellum South. Two friends talk about an old haunted house that was the plantation of some wealthy ante-bellum planters who fought with the Confederacy. The two narrators talk about the secrets of the Sutpen family. Henry Sutpen had killed his best friend and brother-in-law, Charles Bon, after the two young men had safely returned home from the Civil War. Charles had married Judith Sutpen against Henry's will, because Henry knew a dark secret Charles had brought back from the time they were students at New Orleans. Henry disappeared after the assassination and no one knew about the secret. The two narrators decide to have a look at the house and finally discover some of its secret. The "ghost" in the house was Henry Sutpen who had become a very old man and had been hiding in the old plantation since the murder. Henry was only surviving thanks to the help of a previous slave, Raby, who was the only person to have stayed. The freed slave was also carrying and hiding another secret; Raby

was Henry's half-sister. At the end of the story, the narrators assist in the burning of the plantation and the death of Henry. In the ashes, they discover a little box with a photo and message that had probably been written by the mother of the child Charles had had in New Orleans. In the labyrinth of the narrative, the reader can deduce that Henry might not only have killed his friend and brother-in-law because he had been previously married, but because the never-named woman in question was herself of mixed-blood. Faulkner brings together in a dense, obscure and mysterious narrative what he considers to be the maledictions of the South—the slavery, the shameful hidden mixed-blood children born after the rape of their slave mothers by the masters, the hypocritical, puritan ,aristocratic values of the planters' culture, the decline and Fall of the Babylonian South. By telling a short story that also brings together different levels of narration and different periods of time—the narrators tell in the present time a metaphorical story of the history of the South and eventually meet the ghosts from the past—Faulkner implies that despite the defeat, the South is still haunted by its history. The mise-en-abîme seems even deeper when considering the notes Faulkner wrote about the writing of the short story. He explains that he wrote the poem after a night he spent in an inn where Longfellow had slept and that he could feel Longfellow's ghost haunting the place. The short story—and by extension "Evangeline"—seem to become a Faulknerian metonymy. Longfellow is reduced to Evangeline, Evangeline is the ghost of a story that seem to embody the sin and the malediction of the South. Faulkner could not publish this short story, but he gave it a more interesting fate. Faulkner appropriated Longfellow's heroine and inscribed her in another dimension of the American literary, national and collective memory. The unpublished short story served as a base for Faulkner's novel *Absalom, Absalom!* (1936) in which Evangeline also never appears.[31]

The game Faulkner plays with the reader by giving such a loaded title without ever talking about Evangeline in the text is an interesting metaphor of «Evangeline» as a long-lasting collective memory icon.

Although it tended to fade out in the 1930s, its symbolic power was still so present that new literary clusters still sprang up from it. Contrary to the general audience who considered Evangeline as a light and romantic figure, Faulkner seemed to represent it as a metaphorical memorial stain, a heavy and invasive iconic figure of the collective memory. If it did not seem to be that problematic in the United States, this was not exactly the case in the Acadian countries. In response to this memorial and cultural invasion, an iconoclastic movement emerged after the 1950s. Its contributors used the same arguments that fueled the imaginary of the iconodulistic period.

## *From Iconodulism to Iconoclasm: the Fall of "Evangeline"?*

If the first period can be define as the one on the literary and symbolic foundations of the iconodule process (1850s-1870s); the second period interpreted as the one of the rise and rhizomatic expansion of the icon through several national and cultural discourses (1870s-1950s); the epistemological process of the most recent phase does not seem that straightforward, oscillating between intellectual iconoclasm and popular praise. This last period concerns essentially the representations of "Evangeline" in the Acadian milieus and is far from being a homogeneous process.

On the 15th of August 1955, the *L'Evangéline* newspaper publishes a special issue of the 200th anniversary of the Grand Derangement in the Acadian Maritime Provinces. Evangeline appears everywhere and clearly symbolizes the historical event. Small businesses, English or Acadian, include representations of Evangeline in their adds; articles describes the travel of the Evangeline Queen coming from Louisiana. In the streets of Moncton, in New Brunswick, a parade displays allegorical and thematic floats. One of them, entitled "Evangeline in search of Gabriel" seems to perfectly replicate Faed's famous painting: Evangeline is seating next

to a cross, in a cemetery. Seated at his feet, several little girls dressed in Evangeline costumes. In Grand-Pré, next to the Statue of Evangeline, a bust of Longfellow is unveiled in the presence of officials from Canada, Quebec, the United States and the Queen of England. Longfellow's character is officially used to represent the Acadian history and identity during a short period of time also called the Second Acadian Renaissance. "Evangeline" was at the center of an international event that was gathering the free nations that united against the Nazis and were resisting communism.

But the grace period did not last, and the first iconoclast discourses appeared in the late 1960s. During that decade, a few major events prepared the way for the contestation by introducing new Marxist trends, a culturalist approach of the societies and the rise of pro-minority discourses. For the first time, an Acadian became prime minister of New Brunswick, the Acadian Université de Moncton was founded in 1964 and the first generation of graduates began to be involved in the public space. Outside "Acadia", the Front de Libération du Québec—the pro-independence Quebec party—was promoting a set of revolutionary ideas and rhetoric that deeply influenced the new Acadian elite. Contrary to the old nationalist elite who protected the federalist consensus that emerged in the late 1800s after the first Acadian Renaissance movement, the new Marxist intellectuals educated at the Université de Moncton began to fight the post-colonial system. They claimed more justice for the Acadian and French speaking communities, more political and linguistic recognition, a specific education system in French and new laws to protect their language and culture against assimilation. A "cultural revolution" was also on its way with scholars and writers who began to criticize the old nationalist system, often using "Evangeline" as a target and counter-rhetoric.

The Acadian writer Antonine Maillet was the one who more specifically attacked "Evangeline" and what she called the *évangélinisme*. According to her, the old doctrine that consisted of placing "Evangeline"

at the core of any cultural and national discourse was not only alienating the Acadians from their history, but was also totally disconnected from the modern Acadian reality. Maillet was the one who created the Acadian national literature in the 1960 and 1970. During that period, she wrote plays, novels, humoristic historical guides, autofictions, children's books. All of Maillet's narratives had a few common points: they were trying to give a new definition of (northern) "Acadia", and they all made direct or indirect iconoclastic and critical references to "Evangeline". Each piece of writing attacked the icon on one or more levels: she was the emanation of an American poet who knew nothing about Acadia as he never visited it. Longfellow alienated the Acadians from their history by writing a poem that does not correspond to the historical reality. Fighting the different forms of "Evangeline" was also a way to fight what was considered a cultural and memorial colonialism initiated by Longfellow. In the poem, the Acadians were presented as victims who never resisted but instead accepted their fate. This statement was true in the 1960-1970s as the Acadians were still discriminated in Canada because of their language and religion. They were subaltern citizens who had little, if not no, control over the political and economic system that was in the hand of the "English"—the Acadians calling themselves the "French". The discrimination was so strong and the lower economical and subaltern status made the French Canadian sometimes consider themselves as the "White niggers of America".[32] Moreover, according to Maillet, the portrait of the virgin Evangeline was in total opposition with the profile of the Acadian woman. Maillet's feminist reaction led to the creation of a large literary gallery of strong feminine figures.

It took Maillet more than ten years to complete her anti-Evangeline literary quest. It began with the famous monologues of *La Sagouine* (1971) that were first read on the Canadian national radio. For the first time an author was using Acadian French—inherited from 16th Century Rabelaisian French--on the radio and in a book, creating another common medium of reaching the scattered Acadian population. *L'Evangéline* was

not anymore the only means to foster an Acadian imagined community. Some people fought that use of a "broken French", but others acclaimed Maillet's courage to talk to the people with the language of the people. La Sagouine was always speaking in Acadian French whereas Evangeline spoke little and never in French Acadian. The uneducated and humorous woman was supposed to be inspired by a real person Maillet met in the poor rural Acadian coast of New Brunswick. With a lot of humor and popular common sense, the old and quite ugly woman commented on the difficult life she had while never complaining. She commented on the Acadian political elite who never helped the poor while using them for political reason; she commented on the priests who only cared about the people who could pay their tithe to enter the church. Maillet traveled all over Canada and to Europe to promote the new character. In the letter to the editor some readers enthusiastically acclaimed their new heroine: "Evangeline is dead. Vive la Sagouine!"[33] La Sagouine, and the character became so famous that in 1992, a theme park was created next to Maillet's birthplace, where La Sagouine was supposed to live. This literary based theme park aimed to counterbalance Grand-Pré and Saint-Martinville as a new «place of memory». Maillet's plays are played to an Acadian and international audience who learns to know about Acadia from another perspective than the official national and intellectual discourse.

Later on, a play entitled *Evangéline Deusse*—Evangeline the Second—portrayed another woman very similar to La Sagouine who had to migrate to Montreal. Maillet herself made that choice and was often accused of betraying her people by not living in Acadia. In the play, she addresses the issue of Acadian and (trans)national identities. Evangeline Deusse is not like the first; she makes her own decisions about how and where she lives, but she never gives up her Acadian identity, whether or not she lives on "Acadian land". Longfellow's *Evangeline* had put Acadia back on the map without setting any boundary; Evangeline Deusse argues that the identity boundaries depend on each individual who can claim to be Acadian wherever he or she wants. Finally, the epic novel *Pélagie-la-*

*charette*—for which Maillet received the most prestigious French literary prize "Goncourt" in 1979—is considered by the author the last step of her anti-Evangeline iconoclastic fight. Pélagie is a strong woman who had been deported to Georgia in 1755. After having tried to survive in a country that never became her new home, she decided to go back to Acadia. She put all her possessions on a cart with her children and while traveling back, she met small groups of Acadians who joined her. She died when she arrived after a very long journey, but she brought back with her a new generation of Acadians who resisted and chose to go back to their historical country. With Pélagie, Maillet wrote an ultimate iconoclastic indictment that apparently ended the process of appropriation by giving a new heroine to the Acadians of northern Acadia.

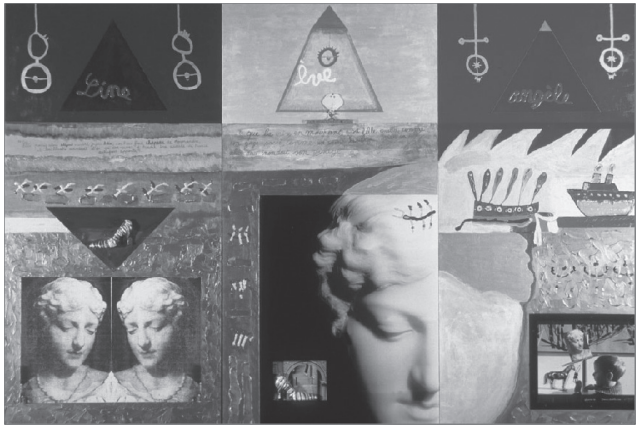
As a symptom of the ideological and social changes, the only daily Acadian newspaper in French, *L'Evangéline*, which was the main traditional elite's medium of propaganda, closed in 1982.[34] In southern Acadia, the social and linguistic situation was different and the internal political tensions did not exist in Louisiana. The Cadians first considered themselves as American and had no political expectations. If some intellectuals and scholars fought to preserve the language and the folklore, Evangeline was not used to make any political. Nevertheless, a few intellectual scholars and writers also worked to deconstruct the Evangeline icon. The historian Carl Brasseaux[35] published *In search of Evangeline: birth and evolution of the Evangeline myth* with the main purpose to analyze the creation of what he considered a myth and expose it to the Cadian readership. In his writing, the author and University of Lafayette scholar Barry Ancelet tried to uproot "Evangeline" from the Cadian culture and folklore and to replace it by more "genuine and authentic traditions" such as the Cajun Mardi Gras. Despite his efforts, Saint-Martinville has still remained a major tourist place, and Evangeline has continued to inspire many artists and music bands in the South.[36]

The strong iconoclastic period that mostly took place in New Brunswick until the mid 1980s seamed to indicate that Evangeline

was disappearing. Nevertheless the popular culture had not forgotten Evangeline and Michel Conte's *Evangéline* (1971) was still a very famous song in the 1990s. Two major events reconciled the intellectual elite with "Evangeline" in the 1990s; the first World Acadian Congress (1994)—which reunites the Acadians every four years in some Acadian symbolic place—and the 150th anniversary of the publication of Longfellow's poem in 1997. Each World Acadian Congress is a sort of transnational popular mass during which families separated for 250 years meet again, conferences, concerts and cultural events take place for a few weeks, and parades are organized during which Evangeline is often represented. The most recent Congress happened in the Acadian Peninsula, New Brunswick in 2009. In this rural region, people proclaimed their Acadian heritage by posting signs with their family names on their properties and by decorated their houses with the blue—with a yellow star—white and red colors of the Acadian flag. In the village "Evangeline" and other surrounding villages, the tourists could see human size dolls representing Evangeline and Gabriel decorating the gardens. As a souvenir, the visitors could buy small reproductions of the Grand-Pré statue of Evangeline or tee shirts with reproducing Faed's painting. During the *tintamarre*—a gathering during which people make as much noise as possible in the streets on the Acadian national day—men, women and girls dressed as Evangeline were marching the streets singing Acadian songs.

"Evangeline" provoked again the artistic, intellectual[37] and scholarly[38] discourse. *In the Shadow of Evangeline*[39] is the more elaborate and ambiguous artistic project that had been launched by the Université de Moncton to create an Acadian collection of visual art. The project began in 1997 and lasted until 2003. Every three years, three Acadian artists were asked to create a painting on the theme "Eve, Angèle, Line". The name of the project and the theme reflect explicitly the wish to recognize the presence and influence of "Evangeline" in the Acadian imaginary while deconstructing it. Francis Coutellier's painting *Line* (1997) is an interesting painting which integrates the different dimensions of

"Evangeline", balancing between iconodulism and iconoclasm. The painting displays some collages of the poem *Evangeline*. One of the most famous busts of Evangeline appears several times, mirroring itself, painted or mingled with another part of the painting. Each of these busts represents as many different facets, palimpsests, representations of the initially unique character.




Francis Coutelllier, Line, 1997. Acrylic, photographs and objects on wood. 2.4 x 3.7 metres (8 x 12 ft.)[40]

This new intrinsic plurality is clearly represented by the three French first names «Line», «Eve» and «Angèle» placed in a random order, as if the character had become schizophrenic. It underscores the postmodern approach of the individual who does not fully identify himself to a homogeneous social and cultural norm. Yet the contemporary Acadians share a set of common traits, and «Evangeline» as an abstraction, myth or metaphor is still strongly present to embody these features along with a series of visual symbols: the Acadian and national identity appears in the colors of the Acadian flag, the painted shoes that according to Coutellier represent the American origin of the poem, the Arc of Triumph that symbolizes the French origins of the character. When the project *In the Shadow of Evangeline* was fully displayed in 2004 to commemorate the 400th anniversary of the foundation of Acadia, people's minds seemed

to be eased.

During the last sixty years, "Evangeline's" tribulations have strongly agitated the Acadian milieu that was trying to redefine its identity and collective memory. Although the festivities of 1955 seemed to have kept "Evangeline" at the center of the national and cultural Acadian rhetoric, major changes came very soon. Members of the new generation of intellectuals, artists and scholars began to question the political and cultural meanings of "Evangeline" and launched in the mid-1960s a strong iconoclastic attack that lasted for twenty years. In a second phase, when this neo-nationalist generation stopped its serious fight, it began to look back at "Evangeline" with a less passionate approach and recognized the importance of the icon in the constitution of a specific Acadian identity and memory. Since the first World Acadian Congress of 1994 and the 150th anniversary of the publication of *Evangeline* in 1997, the scholars and intellectuals engaged "Evangeline" in a more deconstructive and playful way. Among the Acadian people, "Evangeline" always kept a special place and punctually came back on the front scene through a popular song or during the popular celebrations. More recently, the arrival of the internet had a huge impact on the discourse and the iconic meaning spun again as "Evangeline" became easily available and became the object of numerous interpretations on a large variety of supports. In 2008, during the celebrations of the 400th anniversary of the foundation of Quebec, "Evangeline" was integrated in a big public show narrating the history of Quebec. The neo-Quebecois national discourse incorporated "Evangeline", recognizing the special place of the Acadians imaginary in the creation of the French Canada. After being at the heart of an intense struggle between the iconodule and iconoclast trends, "Evangeline" was rehabilitated again in the 2000s and integrated in the transnational rhetoric of the Canadian minorities.

Longfellow's *Evangeline* addressed a need to create a displaced and metonymic narrative that would tell the story of the American nation and its need of unity to resist both internal and external threats. As the

narrative inspired other writers, artists and intellectuals, the iconography and palimpsests also addressed more directly a wider range of ante-bellum issues. While "Evangeline" was becoming more than a literary phenomenon, being translated and visually represented, sub-national and minority groups appropriated the icon in the late 19th Century.

Groups of Acadian descent from Canada and Louisiana used the icon as a foil to tell their own national narrative. "Evangeline" offered them a set of ready-made unifying representations and was used for more than a century as a new creation myth. It replaced the first genesis of the founding of Acadia (1604) by a metonymic figure who survived the Fall of the Great Upheaval (1755). Acadian elites, promoted the icon as an image in which the Acadian people could recognize itself. The identification process was made easier as the iconodulistic representations of "Evangéline" were already known and legitimized by the gaze of more established nations.

With the patrimonialization process that followed in the late 19th and early 20th Century, Evangeline was strongly objectified and became a commercial brand and a popular cultural product.

The post war Marxist rhetoric of postcolonial alienation, and the corollary discourse about the affirmation of cultural minorities brought back Evangeline at the core of the national debates. New intellectual elites appropriated Evangeline by deconstructing its representations. The iconoclastic process did not erase Evangeline from the discourse but profoundly changed her meaning. Instead of being at the forefront of the Acadian national rhetoric, Evangeline recently became a French-Canadian national figure newly appropriated by officials during national celebrations or by anonymous users on the internet. Initially designed by Longfellow as a unifying narrative to bring together a nation, *Evangeline* eventually evolved in a kaleidoscope of intertwined iconodulistic and iconoclastic discourses that presented a fertile ground for plurality.

## Footnotes

1. The quotations from the poem come from the 1893 edition: Henry

Wadsworth Longfellow, *Evangeline* (New York : Maynard, Marrill & Co, 1893).

2. Three distinctions are going to be made: *Evangeline* as a text, Evangeline as a character or concrete figure, and "Evangeline" as an abstract concept. Each of these distinctions refers to a plural system of reference.

3. The term is a deformation or the term Acadians and refers to the Acadians who settled in Louisiana. The term "Cajun" is the English equivalent of "Cadian". C.A. Brasseaux, *Acadian to Cajun: Transformation of a People, 1803-1877* (Jackson: University of Mississippi Press, 1992).

4. Thomas C. Haliburton, *An Historical and Statistical Account of Nova Scotia*, Vol. 1 (Halifax: Joseph Howe, 1829), vii.

5. In his diary, Longfellow wrote in 1845 : « I know not what name to give it – not my new baby, but my new poem. Shall it be Gabrielle, or Celestine, or Evangeline ? ». Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, *The poetical works of Henry Wadsworth Longfellow* (Boston, New York: Houghton, Mifflin and Company, 1886), 8.

6. Longfellow, *Evangeline*, p.82.

7. Longfellow, *Evangeline*, p.75.

8. Although there is no precise way to know when Evangeline arrived in Philadelphia, we can estimate she was there at the time the United States gained independence. We know she arrived in the British colonies in 1755 where she wandered for a very long time. We can also deduce that the epidemic during which Evangeline finds Gabriel is the one that happened in Philadelphia in 1793.

9. Edouard Glissant, *Le Discours antillais* (Paris: Seuil, 1981), 36

10. «Patience and abnegation of self, and devotion to others, / This was the lesson a life of trial and sorrow had taught her. / So was her love diffused, but, like to some odorous spices, / Suffered no waste nor loss, though filling the air with aroma. / Other hope had she none, nor wish in life, but to follow / Meekly, with reverent steps, the sacred feet of her Saviour.» Longfellow, *Evangeline*,103.

11. Longfellow, *Evangeline*, p101.

12. Longfellow, *Evangeline*, p.101. End of the fifth and last chapter of the second part of the poem.

13. Uncaptioned illustration for Part II, Section V, of *Evangeline, A Tale of Acadie*, by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow; engraving on wood from a design by Jane E. Benham (Boston: Ticknor, Reed, and Fields, 1850). Clifton Waller Barrett Collection, University of Virginia.

14. Centre d'Etudes Acadiennes archives, Université de Moncton, New Brunswick, Canada.

15. Longfellow, *Evangeline*, 102.

16. One of the six fullpage illustrations by Hammatt Billings for the first edition of Harriet Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin* (Boston: John P. Jewett and Company, 1852), 63.

17. Gérard Beaulieu, (dir.). *L'Évangéline 1887-1982. Entre l'élite et le peuple* (Moncton: Chaire d'études acadiennes, Université de Moncton, 1997).

18. Longfellow, *Evangeline*, 51.

19. Longfellow, *Evangeline*, 84.

20. Pamphile Lemay, trans., *Evangeline* (Halifax: Nimbus Publishing, 1951), 101.

21. Longfellow, *Evangeline*, 85.

22. Felix Voorhies, *Acadian reminiscences : with the true story of Evangeline* (New Iberia, La.: F. J. Dauterive, 1907).

23. Barbara Le Blanc, *Postcards from Acadie: Grand-Pré, Evangeline and Acadian Identity* (Kentville: Gaspereau Press, 2003).

24. A. L. Hardy, *The Evangeline Land. Made famous by the expulsion of the Acadian farmers by the British Government on account of their fidelity to their French King, and afterward immortalized by Longfellow, an American Poet.* (Grand Rapids: The James Bayne Company. Late 19th Century, early 1900).

24. Images from the Centre d'Etudes Acadiennes archives, Université de Moncton, New Brunswick, Canada.

25. Henry W. Longfellow, *Evangeline. A Romance of Acadia*. With Introduction and prose version by Caroline S. Bailey. Illustrated with scenes from the moving picture produced by William Fox featuring Miriam Cooper (Springfield, Mass: Milton Bradley Company, 1922).

26. Finis Fox, *The Romance of Evangeline*. Dolores Del Rio, Edition of the

Edwin Carewe Production. Including the Original Poem *Evangeline A Tale of Acadie* By Henry W. Lonfellow. (New York: A.L. Burt Company, 1929).

27. Fox, *Evangeline. A Romance of Acadia*, 93. Image from the Centre d'Etudes Acadiennes archives, Université de Moncton, New Brunswick, Canada.

28. Carl A. Brasseaux, *In search of Evangeline: birth and evolution of the Evangeline myth* (Thibodeau: Blue Heron Press, 1988).

29. William Faulkner, "Evangeline : a story ", in *Atlantic Monthly* (Boston : Atlantic Monthly Company, Vol. 244, No. 5, November 1979), 67-80.

30. William Faulkner, *Absalom, Absalom!* (New York: Vintage, 1990 [1936]).

31. Pierre Vallières, *White Niggers of America: The Precocious Autobiography of a Quebec Terrorist*, trans. by Joan Pinkham, (Monthly Review Press, 1971 [1967]).

32. *La Presse*, 14th of October 1972, C. 4: «Evangeline est morte. Vive la Sagouine!».

33. Marc Johnson, *Les stratégies de l'acadianité. Analyse socio-historique du rôle de la presse dans la formation de l'identité acadienne* (Thèse de doctorat, Université de Bordeaux II, 1991).

34. Brasseaux, *In search of Evangeline...* (Thibodeau: Blue Heron Press, 1988).

35. The Band, Chad Brock, Los Lobos, Emmylou Harris, Matthew Sweet among many.

36. Ginette Pellerin, *Evangeline's Quest* [videorecording] (National Board of Canada, 53min40s, 1996).

38. Robert Viau, *Les visages d'Évangeline : du poème au mythe* (Québec, Éditions MNH, 1998).

39. Introduction of the project in the official flyer printed by the Universite de Moncton : «Evangeline . . . no other word, no other myth, has been more often used, exploited, worked, re-used, re-exploited, re-worked in our community during more than 150 years. Celebrated, idealized, glorified, but also more and more often questioned, criticized and denounced, the poem by American Henry Wadsworth Longfellow is, beyond a doubt, a premise for the creative work of Acadian artists; whether the artwork inspired by this theme

serves to consecrate or contradict the myth.» Excerpt from an article by Pénélope Cormier, "Évangéline décomposée," in *L'Accent Acadien*, (Moncton: *L'Acadie Nouvelle*, week of July 11 to 17, 2003, p. 6).

40. This large painting is currently displayed in Art Department building of the Université de Moncton. Centre d'Etudes Acadiennes archives, Université de Moncton, New Brunswick, Canada.

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