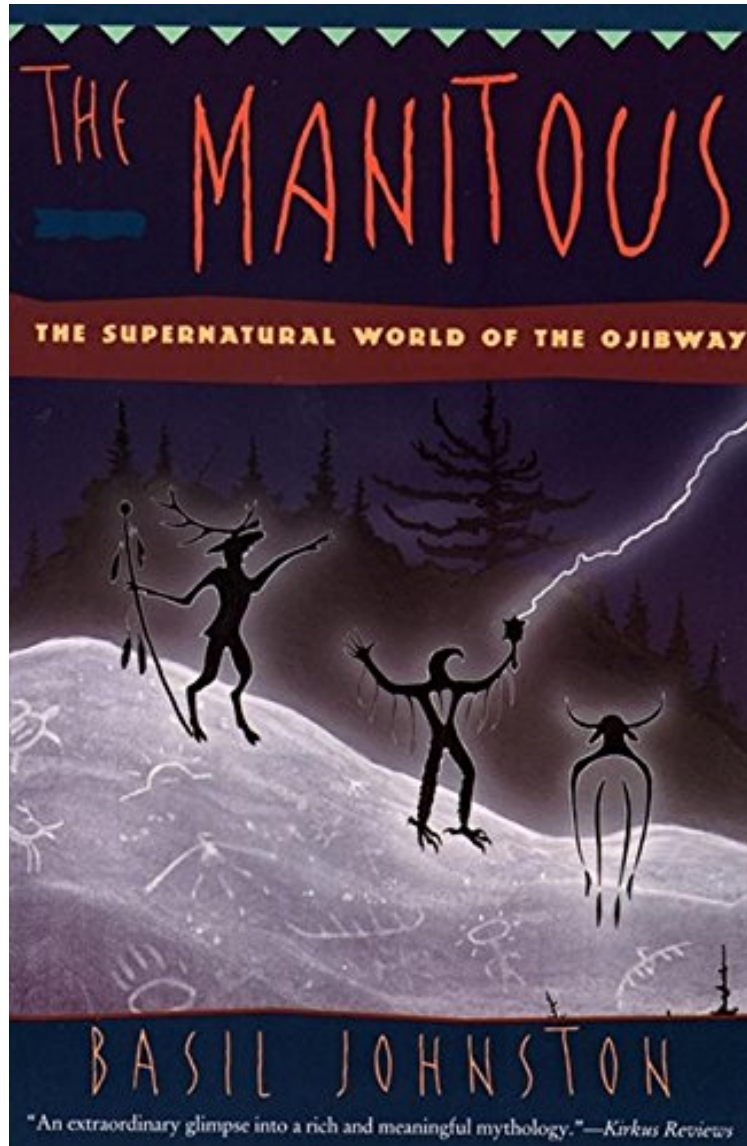


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The Manitous: Supernatural World of the Ojibway, The

Basil Johnston

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Basil Johnston : The Manitous: Supernatural World of the Ojibway, The before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Manitous: Supernatural World of the Ojibway, The:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Thank You Basil Johnston!!! By Cheryl Savageau This is a necessary

reading if you are interested in Anishnaabe (Ojibway, Chippewa) culture and survival. Johnston tells us what Manitous are, how they've been mis-perceived and suppressed by Euro-Americans, and the importance of the stories to the survival of the Anishnaabe nation. He gives a chapter to each of the major manitous, telling their stories on the page, so they are available for those not hearing them on winter nights, or at gatherings. I am Abenaki, and so related to the Anishnaabe, with similar stories and way of being in the world. I have re-read this book every time I teach *Love Medicine*, *Tracks* or other book by Louise Erdrich. Wliwni.0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Vividly tells the Story of the Ojibway PeoplesBy PWThis book is spell-binding. It captures the lore of native Americans in the form of nuanced fables. Most vividly it describes the blessed lack of hierarchy in the relationships between man/woman/animal - possibly too between man and Manitou (spirit). Equality and respect describe how the Ojibway culture works. Towards the end of the book there is a story about the white man's betrayal of the native Americans - describing how an oppressive hierarchy dehumanizes the English settlers enabling them to turn against their Indian hosts in a most brutal fashion. You see the Anglo culture from the vantage point of an outsider.0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Expansive and Thought-ProvokingBy Dean A StrangJohnston assembles stories from the oral traditions of his people, in a scholarly but very accessible way. He wisely draws on several sources for most, if not all, of the stories, which necessarily are mutable because they come down to us orally in the main. The book gives a valuable glimpse of a rich culture parallel to, but little recognized by, the culture dominant in North America for the last two centuries or so. In a broad way, the flood stories and some of the other themes remind readers again of the near universality of many human myths and efforts to explain the physical world around us, and to reconcile ourselves with it.

These are the stories of the manitous--the spirits who inhabit the supernatural world of the Ojibway (the Native American tribe of the Great Lakes and central Canada region). Harvested by an eminent expert from an ancient oral tradition, these sacred stories introduce wily tricksters, fearsome giants, timorous tree spirits, seductive maidens, and wise grandmothers. Here, a coward masquerading as a hero becomes one; a powerful warrior is riled and routed by a younger sibling with a gift for dancing and disguises; and the ever-hungry evil weendigos--evil manitous--haunt the land. In spellbinding and hypnotic fashion, the creation and flood legends are told, and the origin stories of corn, spruce, and tobacco are revealed. Comic, erotic, dramatic, and tragic, these engrossing tales are a window into the heart of an ancient culture, an important contribution to Native American literature, and a fascinating source of spiritual guidance for the many followers of New Age mysticism.

From Library JournalIn this latest effort, Ojibway scholar and writer Johnston continues his fine series of writings about his people (*Ojibway Tales*, Univ. of Nebraska Pr., 1993) and his experiences (*Indian School Days*, Univ. of Toronto Pr., 1988). Manitous are spiritual beings who have aided the Ojibway people since the world was created. Working roughly chronologically according to when the various manitous appeared in Ojibway history, Johnston begins with the creators, then follows the exploits of the half-human, half-manitou spiritual helpers of the Ojibway people. Each helper was the originator of a key aspect of Ojibway culture, such as strength, dancing, and music. Other categories of manitous prey upon evil-doing humans who disrespect the natural world. While his book is readable in the manner of mythology, giving a glimpse of these important beings, Johnston warns that this is only a sampling of their activities. A preface and introduction put these stories in historical and cultural context, and a detailed glossary is handy to keep the many manitous straight. Recommended for public libraries.?Lisa A. Mitten, Univ. of Pittsburgh Lib.Copyright 1995 Reed Business Information, Inc.From BooklistEthnologist Johnston bridges several worlds in this book that is both exemplary original scholarship and a delightfully, even charmingly written set of stories that, although written for adults, can be appreciated by those of any age, for, based in oral tradition, they read as if they have voices. From his own cultural heritage, that of the Ojibway (who are called, by themselves, Anishiaubae, and by later American settlers, Chippewa), Johnston has gathered scores of tales of manitous, the spirits that are both elemental forces and divinities. In these pages we encounter Kitchi-Manitou, the genderless divine force, and Muzu-Kummik-Quae, the earth-mother, as well as the fearsome cannibal Weendigo. Many of their stories are recorded here for the first time, which by itself makes this a valuable addition to collections of Native American spirituality. Meanwhile, the wit and ease with which Johnston writes make it a good selection for general reading collections, too. Patricia Monaghan "An extraordinary glimpse into a rich and meaningful mythology."--Kirkus s"