

Marquette University  
**e-Publications@Marquette**

---

History Faculty Research and Publications

History, Department of

---

1-1-1999

## Marquette, Jacques

John Donnelly

Marquette University, [john.p.donnelly@marquette.edu](mailto:john.p.donnelly@marquette.edu)

---

Published version. "Marquette, Jacques" in *American National Biography*. Eds. John A Garraty, and Mark C Carnes. New York: Oxford University Press, 1999, Vol. 14: 528-529. [Publisher Link](#) . © 2010 Oxford University Press. Used with permission.

talent came with his appointment as a professor of literature at the University of Puerto Rico in 1969.

Marqués's strong political ideals for the independence of Puerto Rico are best illustrated in his *Ensayos* (Essays, 1966). The volume includes pieces of literary criticism of contemporary Puerto Rican literature, with emphasis on sociological study of the role of the artist in a country dependent on American, and therefore foreign, aesthetics and political values. His theory of the "puertorriqueño dócil" (the docile Puerto Rican) incorporates a revision of Puerto Rican slave history; he points to that period (seldom discussed at the Puerto Rican national level) as pivotal to the understanding of traumatic conditions in modern Puerto Rico. This bold political position earned him both ardent followers and ardent detractors.

Marqués's most important contribution to Puerto Rican literature, however, is his powerful experimental theater. Influenced by classical trends such as Spanish Golden Age drama and contemporary American playwrights, his theater revitalizes Puerto Rican theater by bringing together aesthetics and ideology (usually a strong sociopolitical theme of interest to Puerto Ricans) by means of modern dramatic techniques of universal appeal. Such is the case of his masterpiece, *La carreta*. It presents a contemporary rural Puerto Rican family who have to migrate first to San Juan and later to New York City. In the process they face problems associated with industrialization and modernization. Their struggles are similar to those in other countries in development: ancient values clash with the newer ways of living in the big city and cause ruptures in cultural patterns. The changes are painful but ultimately necessary for the creation of a new society. For Marqués, however, in the specific case of Puerto Rico, the United States restricts the island in its handling of this new society, which Marqués characterizes as materialist and empty of national values.

An ardent nationalist, Marqués produced literature outstanding in its exploration of Puerto Rican themes. His work is not, however, merely a realistic reflection of characters of interest solely to Puerto Rican readers. In fact, it can be argued that Marqués's writing is closer to the highly experimental literature characteristic of Latin American writers of the 1960s and 1970s. He can also be considered a precursor in the use of more intimate themes such as issues of homosexuality. Marqués died in San Juan, Puerto Rico.

• For a biocritical overview of Marqués's narrative work, refer to Charles Pilditch, *René Marqués: A Study of His Fiction* (1976). Some major translations into English of Marqués's work are *The Oxcart* (1969), *The Fanlights* (1971), *The Docile Puerto Rican: Essays* (1976), and *The Look* (1983). An obituary is in the *New York Times*, 25 Mar. 1979.

RAFAEL OCASIO

**MARQUETTE, Jacques** (1 June 1637–18 May 1675), Jesuit Nicolas missionary and explorer, was born at Laon, France, the son of Nicolas Marquette, a municipi-

pal councillor, and Rose de la Salle. His family was of the minor nobility with a long history of military and governmental service. He began studies at the Jesuit college in Reims in 1646 and entered the Jesuits (Society of Jesus) at Nancy in 1654. His training as a Jesuit, which included philosophy and mathematics but little theology, was mainly at the University of Pont-à-Mousson. He taught between 1656 and 1664 at the Jesuit colleges at Auxerre, Reims, Charleville, Langres, and Pont-à-Mousson. In 1658 he petitioned the Jesuit general to be sent to the foreign missions. Immediately after his ordination to the priesthood at Toul in March 1666, his religious superiors assigned him to New France (Canada); he arrived at Quebec on 20 September.

One month later he was assigned to Trois Rivières to study the Algonquian language and the customs of Native Americans with the Jesuit Gabriel Druillettes. He was an apt pupil, learning to converse in six Indian dialects while working more than a year with Druillettes. After a brief return to Quebec, he set out from Montreal for the mission station at Sault Ste. Marie, where for a year and a half he worked as a missionary, mainly with the Chippewas. In August 1669 he was then assigned to a newer mission on the southwestern end of Lake Superior, the mission of the Holy Spirit at La Pointe, near today's Ashland, Wisconsin, where he tried to make converts among the Ottawas, Hurons, Potawatomi, Sioux, and others. He met members of the Illinois tribe, who told him about a great river that flowed southward. Fearing attacks by the Sioux against his mission at La Pointe, Marquette persuaded many of his converts to move to a new mission at Michilimackinac, Michigan, which he named Saint-Ignace.

In 1673 Marquette joined Louis Jolliet to search for and explore the great river now called the Mississippi. Leaving Michilimackinac, they shadowed the coast of Lake Michigan to modern-day Green Bay, Wisconsin, and then paddled up the Fox River to Portage, where they crossed over to the Wisconsin River, which took them down to the Mississippi near Prairie du Chien on 17 June. Marquette gave the river the name Rivière de la Conception. He, Jolliet, and five French and several Indian companions continued down the Mississippi until it joined with the Arkansas River. By then they were sure that it flowed into the Gulf of Mexico and not, as had been suspected, the Gulf of California. The expedition turned back, partly out of fear of meeting Spaniards, who might take them prisoner. During his voyage Marquette drew a map and kept careful notes in his diary about geography and Indian tribes they were seeing, believing that this information might be invaluable for later missionaries.

Returning, the explorers took a shorter route, up the Illinois River; they reached Lake Michigan at modern-day Chicago, then returned to the mission at the top of Green Bay, where Marquette continued his missionary work. While Jolliet was returning to report on the expedition at Quebec, his canoe overturned and

his papers and records were lost. The accident gave greater importance to Marquette's diary.

Marquette tried to found a new mission of the Immaculate Conception, his third, at today's Utica, Illinois, in response to a promise to the Illinois Indians he had made when he stayed briefly at their large village there during his return with Jolliet, but his health was already failing. He and two other Frenchmen were the first white men to dwell at modern Chicago when they were forced to winter there (Dec.–Mar. 1674–1675) before returning to St. Ignace. The three then traveled up the eastern shore of Lake Michigan, but Marquette's health broke completely, and he died at modern Ludington, Michigan.

The expedition of Marquette and Jolliet not only informed Europeans about the unknown Mississippi heartland of North America, it also opened the way to later missionaries and to French colonization from Minnesota to Louisiana, which included a string of towns down the Mississippi from LaCrosse to New Orleans that still bear French names. A city in Michigan and a Jesuit university in Milwaukee are named after Marquette, and his statue stands in the Hall of Fame in Washington, D.C.

• Important archival materials on Marquette are at the Archives of the Archdiocese of Quebec and at the Collège Sainte-Marie in Montreal. The best modern biography is Joseph P. Donnelly, *Jacques Marquette, S.J., 1637–1675* (1968). More popular are Agnes Repplier, *Père Marquette, Priest, Pioneer, and Adventurer* (1929), and Raphael Hamilton, *Father Marquette* (1970). Hamilton has also studied Marquette's papers, *Marquette's Explorations: The Narratives Re-examined* (1970); these are printed in John G. Shea, *History and Exploration of the Mississippi Valley, with the Original Narratives of Marquette, Allouez, Membré, Hennepin and Anataste Donya* (1903). An eccentric study of Marquette is Francis Borgia Steck, *Marquette Legends*, ed. August Reyling (1960); Steck, for instance, argues that Marquette was not a priest.

JOHN PATRICK DONNELLY

**MARQUIS, Albert Nelson** (10 Jan. 1855–21 Dec. 1943), editor and publisher, was born on a farm in Brown County, Ohio, the son of Cyrenus G. Marquis and Elizabeth Redmon. His mother died in 1861; his father, in 1866. Marquis then went to live in nearby Hamersville with his maternal grandparents, who ran a general store and post office. He went to Brown County schools. When he was about sixteen, he and his younger brother ran away from their harsh grandfather to Kansas City, but when they soon heard that he was fatally ill, they returned home and ran the store themselves. They also collected tolls from people traveling along the private family road.

On turning twenty-one, Marquis moved to Cincinnati, where he sold books and established an advertising and publishing firm, which he called A. N. Marquis & Company. In 1884 he liquidated and moved to Chicago, where he established his company under its old name, resumed the publication of books, and traveled around the country seeking manuscripts. Also in 1884 he published the first Chicago business directo-

ry. Titled *Marquis' Hand-Book of Chicago: A Complete History, Reference Book and Guide to the City*, it was an enormous success and led to his issuance in the next fifteen years of similar directories of other big American cities. He later sold rights to his Chicago directory to the R. R. Donnelly Company. One of the most successful of Marquis's other publications was *The Animals of the World: Brehm's Life of Animals . . .* (1895), translated from the German of Alfred E. Brehm's *Thierleben* and with more than 500 excellent illustrations. Another success was an art portfolio of current stage celebrities, with brief biographies. In these works Marquis was aided by John William Leonard, who also edited publications by Marquis concerning the Klondike, Cincinnati, and Pittsburgh.

Marquis had already published special editions of city newspapers featuring biographies of civic, commercial, political, and cultural leaders; around 1894 he hit upon the idea of compiling a biographical directory of eminent Americans in all fields. An example was soon provided for him by the 1897 British *Who's Who*. Marquis developed the strategy of sending questionnaires to distinguished Americans and using their replies as the basis for brief and accurate sketches. His first volume in this venture was *Who's Who in America* (1899). It was a great success. New editions were published in 1901, 1904, and 1906, all edited by Leonard. Marquis himself edited the fifth and later volumes, and Leonard dropped out of sight around 1906. It is conjectured that the two men had political differences.

Marquis was always the one who decided which notables should be included and which excluded. Though availing himself of much good advice, he alone made the final choice of Americans important enough in the arts, the armed forces, education, government and politics, religion, and the sciences to merit inclusion. Significantly newsworthy persons also were considered. When a given questionnaire was completed and returned, a sketch was written and set in type; a proof was then sent to the biographee for correction and signed approval. No entry was published unless approval was obtained from the biographee. Although Leonard put himself in the first four volumes, Marquis, who was always modest and self-effacing, did not include himself until the seventh volume of *Who's Who* (1912–1913). Socially and politically conservative, Marquis rigorously avoided sports figures (on the grounds that physical prowess was not a reason for inclusion) and persons with any kind of political or criminal taint. Excluded also were divorced persons and men and women significant only because of illustrious ancestry. If an included subject should later be convicted of a crime, that person was dropped from subsequent volumes. For example, Albert Bacon Fall, President Warren G. Harding's secretary of the interior (1921–1923), was dropped after he was imprisoned in 1931–1932 for bribe-taking in connection with the Teapot Dome Scandal; and Richard Whitney, president of the New York Stock Exchange (1930–1935), was dropped after he was jailed in 1938 for embezzlement. Marquis never excluded