Question au programme :

Les voyages du capitaine James Cook, 1768-1779

Sujet de leçon :

Discuss:

Savageness and civilization
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<th><strong>Sujet de leçon</strong></th>
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<td>Discuss the following statement:</td>
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[…] it was their very richness and ambiguity that makes the voyages so absorbing, even two hundred and fifty years later. The fact that the morality of cross-cultural contact was so much debated at the time – indeed, it was sometimes agonized over in voyage journals composed in the immediate aftermath of tense meetings or violence – accentuates the richness and the contemporary salience of these stories.

**Question au programme :**

Les voyages du capitaine James Cook, 1768-1779

**Sujet de leçon :**

Discuss the following theme:

Curiosity
**Question au programme :**

Les voyages du capitaine James Cook, 1768-1779

**Sujet de leçon :**

Discuss the following statement:

"From what I have said of the Natives of New-Holland they may appear to some to be the most wretched people upon Earth, but in reality they are far more happier than we Europeans; being wholly unacquainted not only with the superfluous but the necessary Conveniences so much sought after in Europe, they are happy in not knowing the use of them".

Question au programme :
Les voyages du capitaine James Cook, 1768-1779

Sujet de leçon :
Discuss:
Rules and power
In the afternoon we were agreeably surprised at the place where we were cutting Wood, with a Visit from some of the Natives, Eight men and a boy: they came out of the Woods to us without shewing the least mark of fear and with the greatest confidence imaginable, for none of them had any weapons, except one who had in his hand a stick about 2 feet long and pointed at one end. They were quite naked & wore no ornaments, except the large punctures or ridges raised on the skin, some in straight and others in curved lines, might be reckoned as such: they were of the common stature but rather slender; their skin was black and also their hair, which was as woolly as any Native of Guinea, but they were not distinguished by remarkable thick lips nor flat noses, on the contrary their features were far from disagreeable; they had pretty good eyes and their teeth were tolerable even but very dirty; most of them had their hair and beards anointed with red oinment and some had their faces painted with the same composition. They differ in many respects from the Inhabitants of the more northern parts of this Country, nor do they seem to be that miserable people Dampier mentions to have seen on the western coast. They received every thing we gave them without the least appearence of satisfaction; some bread was given them but as soon as they understood it was to eat, they either return’d it or threw it away without so much as tasting it; and the same by fish either dress’d or undressed, but birds they kept & gave us to understand they would eat them. I shew’d them two Pigs I had brought a shore to leave in the woods, the instant they saw them they seized [them] by the ears like a dog and were for carrying them off immediatily, with no other view as we could perceive but to kill them. As I wanted to know the use of the stick which one of them carried in his hand I made signs to them to shew me, and so far succeeded that one of them set up a mark at about 20 yards distance and threw at it, but did not seem to be a good marks man: Omai to shew them how much superior our weapons were to theirs, fired his musket at the Mark, on which they instantly ran into the woods not withstanding all we could do or say to prevent them: one of them was so frightened that he let drop an ax and two knives that were given him. From us they went to the Watering place where the Discoverys boat was taking in Water, the officer not knowing they had been with us nor what thier intent might be fired a musket in the air which sent them off as fast as their heels could carry them.

After they were gone I tooke the two Pigs a boar and a Sow, and carried them about a mile within the woods at the head of the bay and there left them by the side of a fresh Water brook. I did intend to have left also a young Bull & Cow, some sheep and Goats, and should have done it had I not been fully satisfied that the Natives would distroy them, as I am persuaide they will do the Pigs if ever they meet with them; but as this is an animal that soon becomes wild and is fond of the thickest part of the woods, there is a great probability of their escaping, whereas the other Cattle must have been left in an open place where it would have been impossible for them to remain concealed many days.
FRIDAY 17th. While Mr. Hicks was examining the opening we struggled hard with the flood some times gaining a little and at other times losing. At 2 o’Clock Mr. Hicks returned with a favourable account of the opening, it was immediately resolved to try to secure the Ship in it, narrow and dangerous as it was it seem’d to be the only means we had of saving her as well as our selves. A light breeze soon after sprung up at ENE which with the help of our boats and a flood tide we soon enter’d the opening and was hurried through in a short time by a rappid tide like a Mill race which kept us from driving against either side, tho the channel was not more than a quarter of a Mile broad, we had however two boats a head to direct us through, our depth of water in the Channel was from 30 to 7 fathom very erregular soundings and foul ground untill we had got quite within the Reef where we anchor’d in 19 fathom a Corally & Shelly bottom happy once more to encounter those shoals which but two days ago our utmost wishes were crowned by getting clear of, such are the Vicissitudes attending this kind of service and must always attend an unknown Navigation: Was it not for the pleasure which naturally results to a Man from being the first discoverer, even was it nothing more than sands and Shoals, this service would be insuportable especially in far distant parts, like this, short of Provisions and almost every other necessary. The world will hardly admit of an excuse for a man leaving a Coast unexplored he has once discover’d, if dangers are his excuse he is than charged with *Timorousness* and want of Perseverance and at once pronounced the unfitest man in the world to be employ’d as a discoverer; if on the other hand he boldly incounters all the dangers and obstacles he meets and is unfortunate enough not to succeed he is than charged with *Temerity* and want of conduct. The former of these aspersins cannot with Justice be laid to my charge and if I am fortunate enough to surmount all the dangers we may meet the latter will never be brought in question. I must own I have ingaged more among the Islands and shoals upon this coast than may be thought with prudence I ought to have done with a single Ship and every other thing considered, but if I had not we should not have been able to give any better account of the one half of it than if we had never seen it, that is we should not have been able to say whether it consisted of main land or Islands and as to its produce, we must have been totally ignorant of as being inseparable with the other.

I now came to a fix’d resolution to keep the Main land on board in our rout to the norward let the consequence be what it will, indeed now it was not adviseable to go without the reef, for by it we might be carried so far from the Coast as not to be able to determine whether or no New Guinea joins to or makes a part of this land. This doubtfull point I had from my first coming upon the Coast determined if possible to clear up, but as I had lately experienced the ilconveniency of a boat under repair I intend to lay fast with the Ship tomorrow to have the Pinnace repaired and as I had no employ’ for the other boats I sent them all out in the morning to the reef to get such refreshments as they could find.
SATURDAY 28th. At 4 o’Clock in the morning I sent Lieut’ Pickersgill with the Cutter as far as Attahourou to endeavour to procure Hogs and a little after Sunrise I had a nother Viset from Otoo he brought me more cloth, a Pig, a large fish and some fruit. The Queen who was with him and some of his attendance came aboard, but he and others went to the Adventure with the like present to Captain Furneaux, it was not long before he left the Adventure and came with Captain Furneaux on board the Resolution when I made him a hansome return for the present he brought me and dress’d the Queen out as well as I could, she, the King’s brother and one or two more appear’d covered before him to day. When Otoo came aboard [Ereti] and one or two of his friends were siting in the Cabbin covered, the moment they saw the King enter they undress’d themselves in great haste, that is they put off their ahows and clothes from of their Shoulders, seeing I took notice of it they said it was because the Arree was present, and this was all the respect they paid him for they never rose from their seats or paid him any other obeisence. When the King thought proper to depart I carried him again to Oparre in my Boat and entertained him with the Bag-pipes of which musick he was very fond, and dancing by the Seamen; he in return ordered some of his people to dance also which dancing consisted chiefly in strange contortions of the Body, there were some of them that could however immitate the Seamen tollerable well both in Country dances and Horn pipes. While I was here I had a present of cloth from Toutaha’s Mother, this good old Lady could not look upon me without shedding tears, tho she was more composed to day than before. When I took leave the chief told me he shou’d viset me tomorrow but that I must come to him. In the evening Mr Pickersgill return’d empty but with a promise of some in a few days.

SUNDAY 29th. After breakfast I took a trip to Oparre in my Boat accomp’d by Capt’n Furneaux and some of the Officers to viset Otoo as he had requested, we made him up a present of such things as he had not seen before, one article was a large Broad sword at the very sight of which he was so intimidated that I had enough to do to perswaid him to have it buckled upon [him] where it remaind but a short time before he asked permission to take it off and send it away, after which we were conducted to the Theatre where we were entertain’d with a Dramatick Heava or Play in which were both Dancing and Comedy, the performers were five Men and one Women, which was the Queen, the Musick consisted of three Drums only, it lasted about an hour and a half or two hours and upon the whole was well conducted; it was not possible for us to find out the meaning of the Play, some parts of it seem’d to [be] adapted to the present time as my name was mentioned several times, other parts were certainly wholy unconnected with us. It apparently differed in nothing, at least the manner of acting, from those we saw at Ulietea in my last Voyage, the dancing dress of the Queen was more elegant than any I saw there by being set off or decorated with long [tasles] made of feathers hanging down from the waste.
That the New Zealanders are Canibals can now no longer be doubted, the account I gave of it in my former Voyage was partly founded on circumstances and was, as I afterwards found, discredited by many people. I have often been asked, after relating all the circumstance, if I had actually seen them eat human flesh my self, such a question was sufficient to convince me that they either disbelieved all I had said or formed a very different opinion from it, few considers what a savage man is in his original state and even after he is in some degree civilized; the New Zealanders are certainly in a state of civilization, their behaviour to us has been Manly and Mild, shewing always a readiness to oblige us; they have some arts among them which they execute with great judgement and unwearied patience; they are far less addicted to thieving than the other Islanders and are I believe strictly honest among themselves. This custom of eating their enemies slain in battle (for I firmly believe they eat the flesh of no others) has undoubtedly been handed down to them from the earliest times and we know that it is not an easy matter to break a nation of its ancient customs let them be ever so inhuman and savage, especially if that nation is void of all religious principles as I believe the new zealanders in general are and like them without any settled form of government; as they become more united they will of consequence have fewer Enemies and become more civilized and then and not till then this custom may be forgot, at present they seem to have but little idea of treating other men as they themselves would wish to be treated, but treat them as they think they should be treated under the same circumstances. If I remember right one of the arguments they made use on against Tupia who frequently expostulated with them against this custom, was that there could be no harm in killing and eating the man who would do the same by you if it was in his power, for said they ‘can there be any harm in eating our Enemies whom we have killed in battle, would not those very enemies have done the same to us?’ I have often seen them listen to Tupia with great attention, but I never found that his arguments had any weight with them or that they ever once owned that this custom was wrong and when [Oediddee] shewed his resentment against them they only laughed at him, indeed it could not be supposed that they would pay much attention to a youth like him. I must here observe that [Oediddee] soon learnt to converse with these people tolerable well as I am perswaided he would have done with those of Amsterdam had he been the same time with them.

WEDNESDAY 24th. At 4 o’Clock in the Morning we unmoored with an intent to put to Sea, but the wind being Northerly or NE without and blew in strong puffs into the Cove so that we were obliged to lay fast. While we were unmooring, some of our old friends the Natives came to take their leave of us and after wards took all their effects into their Canoes and left the Cove, but the party which had been out on the late expedition remained, these some of the gentlemen visited and found the heart still remaining on the Canoe and the bowels and lungs lying on the beach, but the flesh they believed was all devoured.