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Father Maillard at a Micmac Feast, 1758 Father Maillard: It is neither gaming nor debauchery that disables them from the payment of their debts, but their vanity, which is excessive, in the presents of peltry they make to other savages, who come either in quality of envoys from one country to another, or as friends and relations upon a visit to one another. Then it is, that a village is sure to exhaust itself in presents; it being a standing rule with them, on the arrival of such persons, to bring out everything that they have acquired, during the winter and spring season, in order to give the best and most advantageous idea of themselves. Then it is chiefly they make feasts, which sometimes last several days; of the manner of which I should perhaps spare you the description, if the ceremony that attends them did not include the strongest attestation of the great stress they lay on hunting; the excellence wherein they commonly take for their text in their panegyrics on these occasions, and consequently enters, for a great deal, into the idea you are to conceive of the life and manners of the savages in these parts. The first thing I am to observe to you is, that one of the greatest dainties, and with which they crown their entertainments, is the flesh of dogs. For it is not till the envoys, friends, or relations, are on the point of departure, that, on the eve of that day, they make a considerable slaughter of dogs, - which they flea, draw, and with no other dressing, put whole into the kettle; from which they take them half boiled, and carved into as many pieces as there are guests to eat of them in the cabin of him who gives the treat. But everyone, before entering the cabin, takes care to bring with him his Ocrakin, or bowl, made of bark of birch-tree, either polygonal shaped, or quite round; and this is practised at all their entertainments\*. These pieces of dog's flesh are accompanied with a small Ocrakin full of the oil or fat of seal, or of elk's grease, if this feast is given at the melting time of the snow. Every one has his own dish before him, in which he sops his flesh before he eats it. If the fat be hard, he cuts a small piece of it to every piece of flesh he puts into his mouth, which serves as bread with us. RMNTING: Micmac Indians, 19th century anonymous, The National Gallery of Canada