

halls of an unprecedented scale in an early modernist-Beaux hybrid style between colonial Georgian and Gothic. Mayer shows how the campus embraced a research-oriented focus during the latter half of the twentieth century, as architects decided upon a central campus plan with a pedestrian center, a vehicular periphery, and an overall sense of order by incorporating modern infrastructural solutions into its architecture.

Mayer skillfully weaves the intricate history of the University of Michigan's architectural transformations into the broad cultural changes of United States history. By utilizing over one hundred figures, Mayer presents a visually appealing mix of narratives and images to convey the evolving character of the campus. However, although sweeping in visual scope, Mayer confines his discourse to a select group of university administrators and architects, neglecting other voices inside the university. He never fully integrates architectural culture into the university's academic climate, focusing instead on infrastructural demand. Additionally, the absence of footnoted citations and a reliance on secondary sources makes referencing difficult. Nevertheless, the detailed narrative and visual data alone will set Mayer's work apart as a valuable encyclopedic volume.

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Michael A. McDonnell, *Masters of Empire: Great Lakes Indians and the Making of America*. New York: Hill and Wang, 2015 Pp. 416. Illustrations. Index. Notes. Cloth: \$35.00.

In *Masters of Empire*, Michael McDonnell reframes the narrative of French, English, and Anishinaabe encounters from first contact to the American Revolution. McDonnell describes a powerful Anishinaabe confederacy, centered at Michilimackinac, as the dominant player manipulating peripheral colonial powers for their own economic and political interests during a formative period in colonial America. He challenges authors like Richard White whose seminal work, *The Middle Ground*, characterizes tribes in the Western Great Lakes in the seventeenth century as needy refugees fleeing Iroquois expansion who required 'imported imperial glue' to reconstruct themselves. McDonnell, instead, notes the "profound strategic and commercial importance of the straits of Michilimackinac" which contributed to Anishinaabe power during this

period (p. 6). With the exception of a few small military and trade forts, which stood only at the invitation of the Anishinaabeg, the region was never successfully invaded or settled prior to 1800, in contrast to the Iroquois, Shawnee, Cherokee, Creek, and other nations who also contended with the same colonial powers. The famous European explorers of the region, far from breaking new ground, were there at the invitation of, and often dependent upon, the Indigenous people they traveled with and among. But McDonnell goes further, not only suggesting that the Anishinaabeg were their own power center or “empire” whose skillful politics mastered and kept at bay successive colonial powers but that the Anishinaabeg centrally shaped early America for both Native and non-Native residents through their manipulation of events at critical turning points in colonial history and determined continental boundaries between and amongst Native, European, American, and Canadian peoples. For McDonnell, the Anishinaabe history of the Great Lakes and the expansion of their land base, called Anishinaabewaki, was as formative to colonial and early US history as the history of Virginia and New England.

To tell this story, McDonnell digs deep into French and English primary sources and skillfully recovers a strong and consistent Native voice from correspondence and official records steeped in Eurocentrism. His study is informed by the work of scholars such as Michael Witgen and Heidi Bohaker who have demonstrated the central role kinship and fictive kin networks played politically in the Anishinaabe world, and which in turn made women significant social and political agents in this story. Yet his arguments are at times too steeped in western assumptions of economic relationships and ignore the gift exchange systems that reinforced Anishinaabe kinship systems. Examination of McDonnell’s endnotes also reveal important exceptions to his argument that perhaps should have found their way into the main text. That said, *Masters of Empire* provides—via a thoroughly accessible read for students, scholars, and the general public—an important reinterpretation of colonial authority and Anishinaabe political agency during this period. I look forward to the work of future scholars who will fine tune these pivotal moments by placing them more fully into an Anishinaabe cultural context.

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