

Empire by Collaboration: Indians, Colonists, and Governments in Colonial Illinois Country

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influence British imperial policy in the aftermath of the French defeat in the 1760s. Although the book's final chapter carries the story forward into the nineteenth century and Odawa persistence in Michigan, the strength of the book rests in the earlier chapters. *Masters of Empire* is a strong contribution to an already rich field of study.

Empire by Collaboration: Indians, Colonists, and Governments in Colonial Illinois Country, by Robert Michael Morrissey. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2015. x, 326 pp. Illustrations, maps, tables, notes, index. \$45.00 hardcover.

Reviewer Stephen Warren is associate professor of history at the University of Iowa. He is the author of *The Worlds the Shawnees Made: Migrations and Violence in Early America* (2014).

Collaboration, continuity, entrepreneurialism, and partnership: these are the watchwords that guide Robert Morrissey's important new book, *Empire by Collaboration*. The Illinois country has been studied by some of the most important historians of early America working today, including Richard White, Susan Sleeper-Smith, Tracy Leavelle, Brett Rushforth, and Kathleen DuVal. Morrissey showcases his command of this abundant historiography while, at the same time, offering the most comprehensive analysis of the Illinois country in the eighteenth century to date.

At least initially, Morrissey understands the Illinois country through the lens of the *longue durée*. That perspective on the past enables Morrissey to describe the Illinois Confederacy as continuously adaptive. Previous histories ascribe declension and decline to the indigenous peoples of the Illinois River valley. On the eve of contact, the Illinois moved westward onto the Prairie Peninsula, where they became full participants in a new bison economy. The protein-rich bounty enabled them to concentrate their settlements into the thousands. In the last decades of the seventeenth century, Grand Village of the Kaskaskia became a large multiethnic village, and the Illinois became a formidable military power.

Illinois women lost power as their people's economy shifted to long-distance expeditions for bison and slaves. The shift from seasonal migrations and intensive agriculture to slaving and hunting concentrated power in the hands of Illinois men, who began to see polygamy and slavery as the means to process the vast amounts of bison they killed throughout the year. The Illinois soon became merchants and middle men in a vast trading system based on collaborative partnerships rather than imperial directives.

The bulk of *Empire by Collaboration* follows from 1698, when the Illinois abandoned the Grand Village of the Kaskaskia and migrated southward to the American Bottom region along the confluence of the Illinois and Mississippi Rivers. That new village, Kaskaskia, was as coalescent and inclusive as Grand Village. Its residents sent slaves, wheat, and furs to the new French colony in Louisiana and beyond, into the French Atlantic. At Kaskaskia, however, Frenchmen played an even more important role in the colony than they had at Grand Village.

Morrissey persuasively blends qualitative evidence and digital history methods in this segment of the book. For example, he uses the documentary record of the marriage between Marie Rouensa and Michel Accault along with social network analysis to illustrate the extent and depth of this interconnected community. This is a subtle argument in which the possibility for what Richard White once described as “creative misunderstandings” becomes less and less likely as godparenthood, intermarriage, and trade fully integrate Native and non-Native Kaskaskians into a shared, vernacular culture. As Morrissey writes, “The texture of contact in Illinois country was no dense weave.” Rather, “a number of distinct patches” were held together by “certain threads” (130). The French empire became particularly threadbare in the Illinois country, and the Creole community that lived there pragmatically resisted metropolitan mandates.

Between 1754 and 1760, French officials reconstructed Fort des Chartres in an attempt to showcase military power in a place where local control was customary. Not surprisingly, the fort’s grandeur did not intimidate either the French or their Native allies. From 1746, when French authorities banned further imports of slaves to Illinois, to earlier disastrous campaigns against the Chickasaws in the 1730s, local residents became familiar with a regime that was often out of step with their own collaborative impulses.

In Morrissey’s telling, both French colonizers and their Illinois allies consciously chose to forge a colony built on compromises between the center and the periphery of empire. Successive generations of French administrators tried to engineer Frenchification in Illinois. Nevertheless, interracial marriages, Catholic sacraments, and a Creole economy remained. The slave trade continued after both French farmers and Illinois warriors refused to end the practice. Jesuit priests continued to baptize the Illinois, comfortable with the uniquely syncretic religious beliefs developing in Illinois villages such as Kaskaskia and Cahokia. Such vernacular innovations became routine elements of the Illinois country.

Some questions remain regarding the extent of both French and Illinois collaboration. Some scholars might disagree with Morrissey's characterization of Jesuit acceptance of Illinois syncretism. Archaeologists might quibble with Morrissey's grouping of the Danner Phase within the Fort Ancient cultural system. Nevertheless, few will doubt Morrissey's meticulous research or his ability to craft a new argument amid such a crowded historical field.

Great Lakes Creoles: A French-Indian Community on the Northern Borderlands, Prairie Du Chien, 1750–1860, by Lucy Eldersveld Murphy. Studies in North American Indian History. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2014. xvi, 313 pp. Maps, tables, graphs, illustrations, notes, index. \$34.99 paperback.

Reviewer Robert Michael Morrissey is assistant professor of history at the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign. He is the author of *Empire by Collaboration: Indians, Colonists, and Governments in Colonial Illinois Country* (2015).

Founded as a fur trade center on the edge of the French and British empires, Prairie du Chien was one of the many multicultural communities that resulted from the meeting of French traders and Native peoples of the western Great Lakes in the eighteenth century. In this remarkable book, Lucy Eldersveld Murphy follows this community through its nineteenth-century transformations in the face of American settler colonialism. Murphy highlights the agency of the local Creole population as it negotiated new political subjectivity, cultural transformations, and new social practices under the American government. The central premise of the book is that while Creole *habitants* were challenged in this process, many of them preserved land, autonomy, and a distinctive culture, resisting the fate of other incorporated populations—such as the Canadian Métis and Mestizos of the American Southwest—who were marginalized as racialized outsiders in the process of settler colonialism.

In key ways, this book covers the same ground as another recent book, Bethel Saler's prize-winning *The Settlers' Empire* (2015), exploring the ways newly subject populations interacted with and responded to the American state-building project in present-day Wisconsin. What distinguishes Murphy's book is its approach; as a community study, *Great Lakes Creoles* focuses on the ground and from the *habitants'* own perspective. That allows Murphy not only to view large-scale historical transformations from a single place, but also to follow the experiences of several well-documented key families. Beautifully written, the book is both enlightening and entertaining, marrying settler colonialist