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The Founders of America: How Indians discovered the land, pioneered in it, and created great classical civilizations; how they were plunged into a Dark Age by invasion and conquest; and how they are now reviving. By Francis Jennings.

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Still, these faults are minor, considering the wealth of information the author provides. This is much more than a narrative of Cherokee or colonial history. It is a demographic, agricultural, political, gender-oriented ethnohistory revealing new ideas about the interrelationship of white and Cherokee society, and it is better than any previous work. This will be required reading for any serious student of Cherokee and colonial history.

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The Founders of America: How Indians discovered the land, pioneered in it, and created great classical civilizations; how they were plunged into a Dark Age by invasion and conquest; and how they are now reviving. By Francis Jennings. New York and London: W.W. Norton, 1993. 457 pages. \$27.50 cloth.

The occasion of the 500th anniversary of the Columbus "discoveries" has inspired many authors, in and out of academia, to write and edit books and articles that reexamine the exploits of Columbus and other explorers and/or evaluate the impact of Europe on the New World. Many of these publications are synthetic endeavors, although they may offer new insights and approaches, even revisionist theories and arguments. As the publisher notes of *Founders*, this volume belongs to this so-called encounter literature, but, although Columbus plays a pivotal role once Europe enters the scene (chapter 9), the timeframe of this book begins before Beringia. To be sure, its author is revisionist, argumentative, and critical of narrow interpretations; readers unfamiliar with Jennings the ethnohistorian, now director emeritus of the Newberry Library's Center for the History of the American Indian, should quickly recognize that he likes to provoke, to incite, to argue, but in a friendly, heuristic way. He is most willing to depart from traditional rhetoric, a viewpoint he shares with several other scholars also interested in "encounter" (e.g., Alfred Crosby). Even older volumes (e.g., William Macleod, *The American Indian Frontier* [1928]) precede Jennings's questioning approach to standard Indian-white history. Initially, he feared "ridicule at the mistakes inevitable upon going so far out of my snug specialty, but curiosity changed my mind" (p. 19). At times, of course, those fixed on the scientific method may contend that, with limited

evidence, one should not dare to advance new theories or arguments except with extreme caution. Jennings does forewarn readers that some evidence is lacking, yet he suggests that common sense often serves to draw inferences about facts, events, and places. His candor and orientation suggest that the volume is about more than people and places: it is also about how scholarship has fared.

Early on, Jennings contends that if America has a common history, it "should be the history of American Indians" (p. 15). He suggests that his book differs from others in at least three ways: (1) he avoids romantic fallacy, condemning the characterization of Indians as savages; (2) he asserts that Indians came as pioneers, coping with wilderness and transforming it into human habitats; and (3) he rejects the concept of race—the organizing theme is culture. He has chosen to write on many, many themes, events and places (e.g., Cahokia, the Covenant Chain, the Forty Years War, Frontiers in the Middle, the ways to Wounded Knee) in small, highly readable chapters (forty-seven in all), although, I am sure, he will be criticized for not developing his data and arguments more thoroughly. Some readers, myself included, may have wished for more on a given topic. If he seems to be writing for everyone, he has not lost sight of his academic moorings; however, one wonders if he expects his readers to be grounded in the study of Indians.

In reconstructing Indian ethnohistory, Jennings deals only with Meso-America in early chapters, partially to establish a base for discussing cultural diffusion into the area of the United States. For example, he connects Cahokia (which graces the book jacket) and the Toltecs of Mexico, who, he contends, as the Mississippians invaded and colonized the Mississippi Valley, introduced maize and pyramidal architecture. He also minimizes the treatment of Canada. Despite countless thematic discussions, the book does focus heavily on regional/tribal studies, with an emphasis on the Northeast, where Jennings is at home—Iroquoia, Huronia, the homelands of the Delaware, Shawnee; all other ethnogeographic regions receive some discussion. Many chapters deal with battles, wars, forts, alliances, trade, migrations, and leadership, but it is really Jennings's candid explications of events and his reading of the "record" that stimulate the reader. For example, he unravels and explains not just tribe-to-tribe or European power-to-power conflicts but alliances of tribe-and-colony against tribe-and-colony. He demonstrates how such alliances evolved, how tribes became

dependent on European allies, and how winning or losing affected them, as in conjunction with the American Revolution. A common theme considers the roles of synethnicity and race, the implications of post-Columbian mixed populations, and the relevance and parallels to later immigrant movements to this nation.

Jennings, of course, is concerned with methodology. To back up his own broad observations and even broader conclusions, he offers probing questions about scientific verification absent archeology or documented history. Jennings tasks archeology as he explores the utility of linguistics in reconstructing the diffusion of cultures, critically noting that "the diggers [archeologists] focus so tightly on their own sites and regions that they pay little attention to what is happening among others of their own kind. Naturally, such narrowness precludes systematic synthesis even as it encourages flights of fancy that sometimes propagate 'universal' laws of history" (p. 94). In his reviews of archeology, linguistics, and history, he rejects the theories of James Mooney, Alfred Kroeber, or Frederick J. Turner; of Kroeber he contends, "My inclination, after observing the great North American trading networks of pre-Columbian times, is toward absolute rejection of Mooney-Kroeber, and especially of Kroeber's monumentally egotistic braying" (p. 88). He also boldly rejects the alleged contributions of such folk heroes as Andrew Jackson and Benjamin Harrison and attempts to clarify the real contributions of Indian leaders such as Tecumseh and Handsome Lake. The facts and events of dispossession and land claims, which run through many chapters, are better developed in the eastern half of the country and with reference to the Five Civilized tribes. Despite numerous discussions that consider the dichotomous roles of the states and the federal government and deal with native territoriality, sovereignty, and nations, his later chapters on more recent events and policies are unfortunately thin, as if he recognizes their need yet is neither comfortable with the largely legal and policy issues nor wants to detract from his greater emphasis on earlier ethnohistory. He is, however, supportive of the contention that land is critical to the survival of Indianness.

One is struck by the sweep of this volume; it is intimidating yet welcome to find so much Indian, Indian-Indian, and Indian-white ethnohistory (as well as geography!) under one cover. The volume contains dozens of illustrations—drawings and paintings, for example, by George Catlin and Karl Bodmer; photographs as of ruins, artifacts, Indian leaders, native housing; and there are eight

maps—of routes of migration, colonization, aboriginal trade, empires, and current reservations. Several maps are incomplete and the print is much too small but not significantly flawed for the purposes here. (By the way, readers who purchase the volume from other than the publisher should ask about the erratum for the notes section.)

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Gift of Power: The Life and Teachings of a Lakota Medicine Man. By Archie Fire Lane Deer and Richard Erdoes. Santa Fe, NM: Bear & Company Publishing, 1992. 280 pages. \$21.95 cloth.

For many years, those interested in Native American culture—specifically Lakota culture—have found *Lame Deer, Seeker of Visions* a text they can visit time and again, each time discovering a new idea or anecdote that makes such returns worthwhile. Such returns also indicate the demand for like books that can provide insights into both men and their milieus. A new and, in many ways, related book, *Gift of Power: Life and Teachings of a Lakota Medicine Man*, goes a long way toward meeting these demands, for not only does *Gift of Power* cover many of the same topics as *Lame Deer* but it also is written by the only two people who can provide the appropriate continuity of vision and experience: Archie Fire Lane Deer and Richard Erdoes. Archie Fire Lane Deer is a full-blood Sioux, a lecturer on Sioux religion and culture. He is also the son of John Fire Lane Deer, who, of course, co-authored *Lame Deer* with Erdoes. Erdoes has authored or co-authored other fine books on Native American culture, such as *Lakota Woman*. Archie Fire Lane Deer and Richard Erdoes bring separate but related experiences that enable these two men to write an outstanding book. In some ways, *Gift of Power* parallels *Lame Deer* (genealogy and subject matter); in other ways, it transcends *Lame Deer*. Specifically, *Gift of Power* moves beyond *Lame Deer* by situating Lakota belief and ritual in both a personal and a contemporary cultural framework; it offers one man's explanation of traditional and contemporary iterations of Lakota belief and ritual.

Like *Lame Deer*, *Gift of Power* is, first and foremost, a story about a man's life; it is an autobiography of a Lakota *wichasha wakan*.