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The True Story of Pocahontas: The Other Side of History. By Linwood "Little Bear" Custalow and Angela L. Daniel "Silver Star."

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The Jones-Stark-Vukelich translation of this first stanza reads:

As I am thinking
 When I find you
 My land
 Far in the west
 My land

The striking spareness of this contemporary translation communicates a sharp sense of groundedness in homelands and of lonesomeness in separation from familiar places. The striking differences between these poetic renditions make for an excellent case study in problems of translation and mediation, problems Parker handles tactfully and thoughtfully throughout his editing of the volume. Even more promising, I think, is the prospect of what it might mean, especially for Ojibwe language and literature scholars, to have access to a larger body of written Ojibwe-language poetry from the early nineteenth century and to be able to trace Ojibwe-language poetics across time.

Recent scholarship in American and American Indian literatures has concentrated on the shaping force of historical, political, and tribal contexts. Increasingly, there is also a renewed concern for matters of aesthetics and the imagination. This edition participates in this renewed emphasis on the aesthetic in literature. By focusing on Jane Johnston Schoolcraft as an author of what he calls “imaginative” literature, Parker suggests another way of recounting the multistranded histories of American Indian writing, a body of traditions that also includes literatures transmitted orally and writings dedicated to political circumstances. Parker compares Schoolcraft’s achievements to those of the pioneering American women poets Anne Bradstreet and Phillis Wheatley; a deeper assessment of how Schoolcraft’s poetic practices compared to her early-nineteenth-century influences and contemporaries would also have been helpful. By making available this significant body of writings by a nineteenth-century Native American woman writer, Parker recognizes Jane Johnston Schoolcraft as a significant figure in Native American literary history and an important forerunner to late-nineteenth-century authors Pauline Johnson/Tekahionwake (Mohawk, 1861–1913) and Sarah Winnemucca (Paiute, 1844–91).

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The True Story of Pocahontas: The Other Side of History. By Linwood “Little Bear” Custalow and Angela L. Daniel “Silver Star.” Golden, CO: Fulcrum Press, 2007. 138 pages. \$14.95 paper.

According to the authors, this account focuses on the history and culture of the Mattaponi tribe of Virginia, which they identify as one of the core tribes ruled by the paramount chief Powhatan in 1607, when the English founded the Jamestown colony. Dr. Custalow is the brother, son, nephew,

and grandson of Mattaponi chiefs (also a Phi Beta Kappa member and the first Virginia Indian to graduate with a medical degree), and Ms. Daniel is a PhD candidate in anthropology at the College of William and Mary. As they explain it, *The True Story of Pocahontas* outlines knowledge known to seventeenth-century Powhatan priests and shared with the Mattaponi. By being published during the quadricentennial year of Jamestown's founding, it raises an important question: How do various indigenous peoples in Virginia and around the world reclaim historical figures and events appropriated by majority cultures?

Over the last four hundred years, Pocahontas has become an American icon: the Native Mother of British America. Writers, artists, and historians portray her as an exotic New World princess who embraced English social and religious mores by choice rather than by force. Through her Christian conversion and marriage to John Rolfe, Pocahontas legitimized the Euro-American presence in North America and modeled how a "good Indian" should accept European expansion. In history books and in popular culture, the legendary Pocahontas has been reinforced and celebrated as an American origin myth.

Central to that myth is John Smith's relation in his *General Historie* (1624) that in December 1608, Pocahontas rescued him as a captive from the execution her father Powhatan decreed. Pocahontas's interactions with the English were interpreted from then on as a successful cultural indoctrination. Pocahontas was elevated to legendary status from a limited historical record composed of brief references by Smith, William Stratchey, Ralph Hamor, and other English observers. Many visual and literary interpretations of her have mirrored the dominant culture perspective during the past four centuries. A 2007 exhibit at the Virginia Historical Society entitled *Pocahontas: Her Life and Legend* (10 February through 24 June) examines four centuries of Pocahontas iconic images and representations ranging from paintings to novels, cartoons, and even movie posters.

In recent years, scholars have displayed considerable resistance to the pervasive popular culture imagery surrounding Pocahontas. They seek the substantive historical woman who holds a central place in Anglo-Virginian history and in her descendant communities. Coming from different disciplines, these scholars have used the concepts of gender relationships, power, and politics to compare Pocahontas with Sacagawea and other Native women in the American colonizing narrative.

Observance of the four hundredth anniversary of Jamestown's establishment has generated new attention on English-Powhatan relations. Camilla Townsend's 2004 biography *Pocahontas and the Powhatan Dilemma* and Helen C. Rountree's 2005 *Pocahontas, Powhatan, Opechancanough: Three Lives Changed by Jamestown* are two recent scholarly works that reconstruct the seventeenth-century world of Pocahontas from a broader bicultural perspective. Paula Gunn Allen (Laguna Pueblo/Métis) combined elements of American Indian oral history in her 2003 work *Pocahontas: Medicine Woman, Spy, Entrepreneur, Diplomat*.

The True Story of Pocahontas presents an interpretation that on some points agrees with, and in others departs from, other historical narratives and chronologies to date. It traces Pocahontas's life from her birth circa 1596 to her

death in March 1617 and offers underlying motivations for her actions and those of her father, the paramount chief Powhatan. Custalow and Daniel's book examines key people, places, and events of Jamestown history within a much different context of traditional customs and beliefs. For example, although popular culture has promoted a more romantic view, in 1607 Pocahontas was a young Powhatan girl probably between ten and eleven years old. As such, she did not direct diplomacy with the colonists but reflected the mores of her position in Powhatan society.

One factor the authors consider crucial is Powhatan's love for his daughter Pocahontas. They maintain that it was heightened when her mother, whom the authors identify as a member of the Mattaponi tribe, died while giving birth to her. We know that Powhatan's interactions with the Virginia colonists as the paramount chief of more than thirty tribes and some fourteen thousand people were crucial to the outcome of both cultures' survival. Custalow and Daniel maintain that Powhatan was concerned for Pocahontas's safety among the English, especially after the young wife and mother was abducted by Captain Samuel Argall and held hostage for bargaining power. Part of *The True Story of Pocahontas* is that the English killed Pocahontas's first husband Kocoum during the kidnapping attempt, but their son survived to adulthood among his people. According to this account, Pocahontas confided to her eldest sister that she was sexually abused by the English after her kidnapping and became pregnant. If so, keeping Pocahontas at the outlying settlement of Henrico was intended to hide the pregnancy. According to English documentation, Pocahontas was taken captive in April 1613 while visiting the Patawomack tribe on the Potomac River. After her abduction, she was taken to the English settlement of Henrico and converted to the Anglican faith. As the baptized Christian Rebecca, Pocahontas married John Rolfe in April 1614 and had a son named Thomas within the next two years. This son's birthplace and birth date are unknown; however, Custalow and Daniel indicate that the marriage obscured Thomas's lineage as the illegitimate son of Sir Thomas Dale, colonial governor of Virginia. Seen in this context, Pocahontas's actions take on a far different significance from interpretations to date in academia and popular culture. Her acceptance of a new role as Rebecca Rolfe was equated by the English to the biblical Rebekah's acceptance of her husband Isaac's land and people.

Historians have traced Pocahontas's fatal illness to a crucial lack of immunity in the unhealthy environment of England. Germ-borne diseases caused New World indigenous peoples to sicken and die from European contact on both sides of the Atlantic. In contrast, this account maintains that Pocahontas was poisoned to stop her from warning the Powhatan on her return to Virginia, having discovered that colonial authorities schemed to destroy them. English reports related that she died at Gravesend, England, having been taken off the ship intended for her voyage to her homeland. On March 21, 1617, Pocahontas was buried under the chancel at St. George's Church in Gravesend. Custalow and Daniel tell us that Mattachanna and her husband Uttamattamakin (a Powhatan priest of high status and advisor to Powhatan) had traveled to England in 1616 with Pocahontas and returned

safely to Virginia to relate what they had heard and seen. Her father Powhatan died circa 1618; although the able ruler Opechancanough led the Powhatan paramount chiefdom, English expansion foretold its dissolution.

A postmodern message resonates from *The True Story of Pocahontas*: There are many sides to history, and some contest much of the colonial Virginia saga schoolchildren have grown up with. This narrative exemplifies how specific alternative histories reside in different cultures and can produce much different portraits of historical figures, particularly of Powhatan and “the nonpareil of Virginia,” as John Smith described Pocahontas. *The True Story of Pocahontas*’s readers may find themselves reexamining one of America’s most beloved origin myths. This book’s publication is another step toward understanding the American saga from multiple perspectives.

A taking back of history—and possibly of Pocahontas—is in process as part of the 2007 commemoration of America’s first permanent English settlement, its long-lasting effect on indigenous peoples in America, and their contributions to our nation. Virginia Indian descendants look at the scholarly primary sources through indigenous eyes as indigenous knowledge. As more of them share their views of history in 2007 and beyond, the resulting cultural dialogues will enrich us all.

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Violence over the Land: Indians and Empires in the Early American West. By Ned Blackhawk. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2006. 384 pages. \$35.00 cloth.

Ned Blackhawk explores the themes of colonialism and imperialism in *Violence over the Land: Indians and Empires in the Early American West*. He focuses on the Great Basin that encompasses northern New Mexico and Arizona, Nevada and Utah, western Wyoming and Colorado, eastern California, and southern Oregon and Idaho, concentrating on the Utes but also examining the strategies of Paiutes, Shoshones, and others. The book is essentially divided into two parts. The first four chapters focus on the Ute Indians and their relationship with the Spanish to the south from first contact through the 1840s. The last three chapters focus on the relationship between Basin Indians and the expanding United States from Lewis and Clark through the end of the nineteenth century.

Blackhawk’s purpose is “historicizing colonialism” through the lens of violence (3). The first encounters between the Spanish and the Utes were violent, the Utes visited that violence on others as they adapted to Spanish intrusion, and the violence continued when the United States entered the picture. Perhaps the frontier experience was a “self-democratizing” one, but Blackhawk argues that this violence was “equally foundational . . . to the American experience” (9). One factor of Great Basin power dynamics that comes up again and again is the acquisition of the horse. Those who adopted horses fared much