

**BETWEEN FACT AND MYTH:
POCAHONTAS IN THE DISNEY FILMS**

Sava Stamenković

St. Cyril and St. Methodius University of Veliko Tarnovo

In 1995 Walt Disney Animation Studios produced an animated film that remains the most popular artistic creation about Pocahontas. The creators of the film tried to strike a balance between historical truth, political correctness and profit, but as is often the case in the industry, profit won out. Much of what we know about Pocahontas' life has been omitted or “creatively altered,” such as her age. The 1998 sequel, “Pocahontas II: Journey to a New World,” was a failed attempt to correct some of these mistakes. We analyse the elements of these films in which Disney drew on the facts of the life of Matoaka, the daughter of the Powhatan paramount chief, on the myth about her, and on Native American mythology. We also look at the songs, the eco-critical awareness of the screenwriters and the didactic side of the films, all of which have been praised by the critics.

Key words: Pocahontas, Walt Disney Animation, “Pocahontas” (1995), “Pocahontas II: Journey to a New World” (1998), animated film

The well-known story of the Indian princess who fell in love with the colonist John Smith and sided with the “civilised” settlers has been around for a long time, but gained particular momentum at the time of the American War of Independence. The new American nation made the story of Pocahontas one of its founding myths¹. The story of the Indian princess,

¹ The myth of Pocahontas is enormously important, as evidenced by the fact that she is often referred to as the founding mother of the USA (Cornier 2015). During the history of the American state, which was largely racist, Pocahontas had a privileged status. She is the only woman shown in the US Capitol Rotunda. From the white supremacist Walter Placker's idea of a pure white race and the classification of everyone who has even a drop of “non-white” blood as coloured – only the heirs of Pocahontas were exempted (Hermann 2017), and many rich families claimed to be descended from Thomas Rolfe, the son of Pocahontas.

also called the Child of the Forest, who sided with the settlers, the colonists, was interpreted as the approval that both the Indians and nature gave to the white colonists to take over America. Her love and marriage to an Englishman was interpreted as the creation of a new nation. This myth was reinforced by the theatre, but also by early silent films.

Of course, little of the myth is historically accurate. What we do know is that Pocahontas certainly did not have a romantic relationship with John Smith. She was somewhere between 9 and 12 years old when she met him. There are six moments in Pocahontas' life that are either invented or at least changed in the myth. These are: 1. saving the life of Captain John Smith (which was most likely part of the ritual); 2. saving the colonists in Virginia from starvation (we don't know if this was Pocahontas' idea and if she was even involved); 3. Pocahontas being kidnapped by the colonists (usually omitted in popular stories); 4. Conversion to Christianity (we don't know if it was free will or brainwashing); 5. Marriage to John Rolfe (which is a historical fact, but it's not clear if it was love or a political agreement); 6. Journey to England and death (different interpretations).

It should also be added that the book *The True Story of Pocahontas: The Other Side of History* by Linwood "Little Bear" Custalow and Angela "Silver Star" Daniel (2017) gives a perspective of the oral history of the Native Americans. According to them, Pocahontas had a husband, Kocoum, and a son before she was abducted. Furthermore, in the book *The True Story of Pocahontas: The Other Side of History*, published in 2017², they claim that Pocahontas was raped during her captivity in the colony and then forced to convert to Christianity, that the marriage to Rolf was a political move, and that Pocahontas was actually poisoned while in England.

In 1995, to mark the 400th anniversary of the birth of Pocahontas, the Disney Company decided to make an animated film about her. The bigger reason for this production was probably the fact that the 1991 animated film *Beauty and the Beast* won two Oscars and was even nominated for Best Picture – it was believed that an animated film about Pocahontas would do the same, if not better.

Jeffrey Katzenberg, the most influential person in the Disney company at the time, demanded that the film be made as an emotional love story, considering that a story based on the sort of Romeo and Juliet plot

² It should be added that some authors claim that this book is not entirely based on Native American oral history, i.e., that it consists mainly of Custalow's and Daniel's opinions and speculations (see, for example, Miller 2018).

would attract the most audiences. Philip LaZebnik, Carl Binder and Susannah Grant were chosen as the screenwriters, most of whom had previously written for television. Mike Gabriel, who worked as an animator and writer at the Disney studio from 1981 to 1990, made his directorial debut in 1990 with the commercially successful animated film *The Rescuers Down Under*. As his co-director, Disney brought in the experienced Eric Goldberg, who had worked for the company as an animator and director since 1973. Pocahontas was also conceived as a (partly) musical film, so Alan Menken, who had composed for Broadway was hired to write the music. The lyrics were also written by the award-winning Stephen Schwartz. Music played a major role in what has been called the Disney Renaissance (1989-1999), in which the Disney studio returned to making commercially and artistically successful animated musical adaptations of well-known stories.

The film begins provocatively, almost ironically. The sailors on the ship preparing to leave for the “New World” sing a song about the gold and freedom that await them, but ironically add twice that they are not really sure, so they have been told (Gabriel, Goldberg 1995: 00:00:24). This jovial tone is somewhat spoiled by a song about the bravery of Captain John Smith, who joins the sailors. He showed courage, of course, in fighting the natives of the New World. Other sailors would follow his example: “We’ll kill ourselves an injun / Or maybe two or three / We’re stalwart men and bold / of the Virginia Company” (00:05:07). Although this can be justified by the desire to achieve authenticity in the language and to show attitudes towards the natives at the time, and to reinforce the image of the later transformation of John Smith, who believes he was wrong, it has been forgotten that the primary audience for the film is children. Similar are the songs sung in preparation for the battle with the natives, and Cornel Pewewardy (1996) notes that songs about “savages” and “dirty little heathens” lead to “Indian children coming home in tears.”

He also criticises the fact that some characters from American Indian folklore, such as Grandmother Willow, Meeko and Flit in the Disney film, are turned into animals and thus marginalised. Pewewardy (1996) is probably referring to the fact that they (Meeko and Flit) do not speak in the film, as they can in the folktales, i.e., they have been deprived of that opportunity. In North American Indian mythology, the raccoon is a trickster. It manages to trick other animals, usually just to get more food. “Raccoon’s grandmother hits him in the face with a fire poker after she discovers he has eaten all of her stored acorns, thus explaining the origin of the markings on his masked face.” (Bastian, Mitchel 2004: 155) Meeko is

literally like this, he is never full. Although its significance is downplayed, it does reflect folklore to some extent, and is a great source of humour in the film. It should also be noted that Meeko is the first to approach and accept John Smith – precisely because of the food. Flit is a hummingbird, a bird known to many tribes from the story of how people got tobacco, the sacred plant used to communicate with the spirit world, for healing, to cement peace agreements between tribes, to appease the spirit of a slain bear (Nagle 2015: 31). One witch doctor was able to bring tobacco from the area carefully guarded by the little spirits by transforming into a hummingbird and carrying some tobacco in his beak. In other legends, it is not the medicine man but the hummingbird itself that is worshipped as a healer. It passes through the flock of geese that protect the tobacco and brings the top of the plant with the seeds to the people so that they can continue to grow it themselves (Lynch, Roberts 2010: 51, 52). Fleet is suspicious of Smith until almost the end of the film and tries to physically separate him from Pocahontas – only to be stopped by Meeko, of course.

On the other hand, Grandma Willow can speak. And the actress Linda Hunt was perfectly chosen to “play” her, i.e., to give her a voice. It is a very old tree that has a face and serves as a spiritual advisor to the young Pocahontas. Willow is a very important tree in Native American beliefs. Among some tribes, the Sun Dance, the most important religious rite, was also called the Willow Dance. The willow was also very important in everyday life – baskets were made from it, as well as a type of house, paint was made from it, and most often the bark and root were used for healing (Moerman 1998: 501-509). Some tribes believe that all trees are sacred because they contain ancestral spirits that can be spoken to – the sound of the branches in the wind is actually their voice (Lynch, Roberts 2010: 116). And indeed, Grandmother Willow can be a female ancestor, especially since she says she also counselled Pocahontas’ mother. An interesting matriarchal line is created through her, which is certainly a positive thing in the film. In the beliefs of many peoples, especially Indo-Germanic ones, the willow is associated with the ancient goddesses (Walker 1988: 474), so perhaps she should really be seen here as a symbol of the feminine principle.

It is said that the producers only accepted this character when they saw in the animation how she trips animals with her branches, etc., i.e., when they saw that she is also a source of humour. Many elements from native folklore can probably be attributed to the historian and member of the Powhatan tribe, Shirley “Little Dove” Custalow-McGowan, with whom the film crew consulted several times and even went to Virginia to meet.

However, Custalow-McGowan herself was dissatisfied with the collaboration, and she said that even before the release of the film. Her main complaint was that Pocahontas was so much older in the film than she was when she met Smith and that the romance between the two was being made up. The only answer she got from the producers was that “a romance would make more money” (Rochman 1995). After the release of the film, she said that she regretted being involved in the project at all, but also concluded conciliatorily: “They have maintained the respect of my people, but they have lost the story of Pocahontas. She was a child who bridged the gap between the two cultures.” (Macaulay 2021)

When it comes to the matriarchal line, it paradoxically makes Pocahontas somewhat less of a bridge between the two cultures. If Grandmother Willow is Pocahontas’ great-great-great-grandmother, where is her mother? The writers decided that Pocahontas’ mother died. But Pocahontas’ father, the chief, often talks about his wife and how wise she was. She was an important figure in the tribe, a sort of adviser to the chief. She does not appear as a ghost (that was the screenwriters’ first idea, but was later discarded), but as the wind. At key moments, when the characters or the plot need to be “pushed” in a certain direction, the wind is there. The chief himself, Powhatan, says: “But she is still with us. Whenever the wind moves through the trees, I feel her presence.” (00:46:06) The wind and the advice of Grandma Willow (“Husquequenatora³ / You will understand / Listen with your heart / You will understand / Let it break upon you / like a wave upon the sand” – 00:17:27) help Pocahontas to understand her prophetic dream, but also to understand and to begin to speak the language of John Smith, i.e., English. This is a double-edged sword. On the one hand, it elevates Pocahontas (she can communicate with spirits, she can overcome the limitations of human language), but at the same time, it removes her important historical role – that of translator. Nevertheless, she teaches Smith some of the Algonquian words.

Pocahontas’ dream and prophecy are also of significance and need to be analysed here. Pocahontas dreams of an arrow that turns on its axis and then suddenly stops. It is later revealed that it is (literally) Smith’s compass, but the meaning of the dream is that the spirits in the wind are

³ Six expressions from the Algonquian language appear in Pocahontas: E-wee-ne-tu: “Peace”, Cheskchamay: “My brothers” or “My friends” (in the chief’s address to his people), Wingapo: “Hello”, Ana: “Goodbye” (when Pocahontas teaches Smith native greetings), Mattaquenatorath: “I don’t understand”, Husquequenatora: “You will understand” (in conversation between Pocahontas and Grandmother Willow) – Kimochi 2023.

saying that something is coming, and that it is in the form of “strange clouds”. Immediately afterwards, Pocahontas climbs the reef and does indeed see strange, huge clouds – a large British ship with white sails. This is a really good way to show the surprise of the natives when they see something like this⁴. They had canoes, not ships, especially not that big. The framework itself is well thought out and drawn. The ship looms over the forest, almost as if to swallow it up, and forest looked huge in Pocahontas’ world just a moment before. It is as if the ship is larger than it, larger than nature, as if this heralds the arrival of “civilisation” which will attack that nature. The dark tones of the drawings also contribute to this. Even though the sails are white and the birds are flying around the ship, and even though it’s daylight, somehow this shot has a darker tone.



Image 1. Arrival of the British ship (00:18:11)

Another excellent part is when Pocahontas and Smith meet. They meet, in the sense of physically seeing each other, on the river, under the waterfall. They are both standing on their own rock – the symbolism is that they are two islands, two cultures, two ways of thinking. At the same time, she is standing proudly, free, her hair blowing in the wind, and he is under

⁴ Terrence Malick does something similar in *The New World*, his 2005 film about Pocahontas. It is much more complex, of course (it is undoubtedly the best film made about Pocahontas), but you have to wonder if he got the idea from this film.

a metal helmet, holding a rifle in his hands, which he had just pointed at her.

He takes the first step by approaching her, which again is clear symbolism. Pocahontas falls in love with the stranger, but she is also disappointed by him, right from the start, when he begins to explain to her how his people can “civilise” hers. Then it becomes her task to actually civilise him, to encourage him to put himself in the position of the natives, to see the advantages of their way of life and to return to nature. The ecological moment in the film is very significant, and it is combined with the issue of race and cultural relations in the film’s central song, “Colours of the Wind”. This long song in a way sums up the film, it contains all its ideas. Pocahontas begins by reversing the roles of the “savage” and the “civilised man”, and then goes on to explain the position of the “civilised” colonisers, with particular reference to their relationship with the land:



Image 2. The first encounter between Pocahontas and John Smith
(00:31:10)

You think you own
whatever land you land on
The earth is just
a dead thing you can claim
But I know every rock
and tree and creature
Has a life, has a spirit, has a name (00:39:56)

Two different concepts of the land are at odds here. The colonisers saw it as free for the taking because it was wild and the people who lived on it were uncivilised, while the Native Americans, as Paula Hartz explains, did not understand the concept of owning the land: “To them the land they lived on, like the air they breathed, was a blessing from the Great Spirit. It was a living spirit. Who could own Mother Earth? The idea sounded as foolish as owning the rain or the sunshine. Only after they were driven off their ancestral lands by ever-increasing numbers of immigrants did the idea sink in that the newcomers meant to take the land and keep it.” (2009: 102)

The song then talks about the selfishness of the white man, both in relation to nature and to other races and species (“You think the only people who are people / Are the people who look and think like you” – 00:40:15,538), followed by a (rhetorical) question: “Can you sing with all the voices of the mountain? / Can you paint with all the colours of the wind?” – 00:40:42).

The verses that follow are about the need for man to understand that he/she does not rule nature, but that he/she is only a part of it, part which only functions when it is connected to other parts: “The rainstorm and the river are my brothers / The heron and the otter are my friends / And we are all connected to each other / In a circle, in a hoop, that never ends” (00:41:23).

The song ends with the assertion that two cultures, two races, are and must be equal, united in their relationship to nature and their position in nature:

For whether we are white or copper-skinned
We need to sing with all the voices of the mountain
We need to paint with all the colours of the wind (00:41:41)

While the film’s environmental message is undeniable, it is not without its flaws. For example, David Whitley, in his ecocritical study of Disney cartoons, notes that the Powhatan tribe is almost portrayed as a pacifist, agricultural tribe, which is far from the truth. Smith tries to kill the bear and Pocahontas stops him, even though the Algonquians, the group to which her tribe belonged, were known to hunt bears. In Whitley’s view, this idealisation leads to trivialisation. He notes that the environmental message was poorly conveyed, both in the drawing and in the direction:

No attempt is made to shade images of animals in with elements of natural history that would gesture towards their autonomous existence. The heron and the otter may be signalled representatively in the song as Pocahontas's 'friends', but the Indian princess's movements and gaze do not suggest any active interest in them. The otters function like fashion accessories, designed to set off and complement the grace and sleekness of the romantic heroine's own body, while the eagles, whose eyes reflect Pocahontas and Smith in a striking image signifying the interconnectedness of all life, fly off their upraised arms as though the couple were a pair of feudal falconers. Everywhere in Pocahontas there is a gap between words and the images that are designed to embody them. (Whitley 2012: 86, 87)

The film kept Pocahontas' throw over Smith to save him from the death penalty. In this context, Angela Aleiss concludes that Pocahontas is a stereotype, the way white America imagines an Indian woman: "Her offer of sacrifice, her curvaceous figure and her virginal stature have come to symbolize America's Indian heroine... Trapped within a patriarchal definition, Hollywood's Indian women are rarely shown as having anything more important in life than their male relationships." And Pauline Turner Strong talks about the sexualisation of Pocahontas and writes about "the exotic, sensual, copyrighted Pocahontas as the mascot for a feminine, earthy, conciliatory New Age spirituality" (1995: 415). Whitley claims that Pocahontas remained in the role of a kind of mediator, and Turner Strong believes that the film removed her from the circle of cultural mediators such as Malinche, Sacajawea and Sarah Winnemucca (1996: 413), leaving her in the role of a kind of teacher.

The plot is simplified, probably because the film is primarily intended for children. Rolfe does not appear in this film and (as in the 1953 film *Captain John Smith and Pocahontas*) Pocahontas and Smith part as Pocahontas decides to stay in America to ensure peace. The film ends with a scene of her watching from a cliff over the sea as the ship takes the wounded Smith back to Britain. Her decision not to go with Smith to England reflects her attachment to her people, her country, but also to the peace that she is the guarantor of, so this should be highlighted as a positive aspect of the film.

The main antagonist here is the greedy governor Ratcliffe. The film was praised for showing at least some of the reality back then, e.g., that most of the English settlers only wanted gold and quick money, and that their leaders wanted to exterminate the natives. However, there have been

objections to the character of Governor Ratcliffe. Namely, some believe that the Disney studio, in its desire to please Native Americans (which it obviously failed to do), attacked another vulnerable group – gay people. Sean Griffin claims that “various Native American characters were given dignity and complexity while the villainous Governor Ratcliffe was a foppish gay stereotype (wearing pink outfits with ribbons in his hair) with hardly any personality whatsoever” (2000: 210). In the same vein, the choice of Mel Gibson as the voice of John Smith was criticised because of his public homophobic and other problematic outbursts. On the other hand, it was praised that Pocahontas and Powhatan were voiced by Native American actors: Irene Bedard and Russell Means. To illustrate how this film received both serious criticism and praise, we will add the fact that the voices of Pocahontas and Powhatan were also received negatively – mainly because the singing parts were taken over by white actors/singers.

The Disney studio was not very happy with how *Pocahontas* was received, especially by the critics, and so the sequel, released in 1998 (it had been in production since 1996), used far fewer Disney animators and less money. In the end, it was decided not to release the film in cinemas, but to go straight to DVD. The screenplay was written by the lesser-known Allen Estrin, Cindy Marcus and Flip Kobler, and directed by Tom Ellery and Bradley Raymond. Ellery would go on to direct only episodes of some series, and Raymond would go on to make another Disney sequel, *The Hunchback of Notre Dame II*, 2002, which was also sent straight to video stores. Critics noted that it was “strictly a B-team effort – the character movements are less fluid, the backgrounds less detailed and the colors far less vibrant” (Leydon 1998).

Pocahontas and Powhatan are again voiced by Native American actors Irene Bedard and Russell Means. In the role of John Smith, Mel Gibson was replaced by his younger brother, Donal Gibson, and John Rolfe was voiced by Billy Zane. Linda Hunt reprised the role of Grandmother Willow, who doesn't really have a function in this film, except perhaps to tie the two films together. Of Pocahontas' companions, Meeko and Flint are still around, and they are joined by a small dog that has escaped from Governor Ratcliffe.

If the first film deviated from history for the sake of romance, this was continued here. A stronger adventure plot has also been added. In Britain, Governor Ratcliffe, who was deposed, arrested and sent back by the colonists in the first film, has managed to convince the king that he was right and that Captain John Smith was a traitor. Fleeing from the soldiers sent to arrest him, Smith falls from a high tower into the Thames and is

pronounced dead. The news reaches Pocahontas⁵. In order to prevent the great war that the King is preparing against the Native Americans, Pocahontas must travel to England with the King's new envoy, John Rolfe. There she will have to deal with strange customs, Ratcliffe's tricks, but also with the "resurrected" John Smith, and with him the necessity to choose between two Johns...

Of course, Pocahontas once again manages to avoid war, and the film ends with her choosing John Rolfe and returning to Virginia. Needless to say, there is no mention of her death on the ship we see taking them back to America. As the historian of the Powhatan tribe said, this could be a nice story, if only the main heroine didn't have the name Pocahontas (Rochman 1995). However, even those who did not object to the portrayal of Pocahontas' life in this way found the film "too bland and formulaic" (Leydon 1998).

Although the story of this film is weaker, it is not without interesting parts and solutions. The question of women's rights is raised. If in the first film Pocahontas taught John Smith to accept other races and cultures and to respect nature, here she teaches John Rolfe to respect women. Indeed, the king's emissary, who has now arrived in a much larger colony (as the opening scenes show), is taken aback by the fact that a woman has so much influence in the tribe. At first, he thinks that Pocahontas is the (male) chief and brings the horse as a gift for "him". When Pocahontas shows Rolfe that men and women are equal, he begins to develop feelings for her.

Pocahontas is at a crossroads at the beginning of the film. She does not know what to do now that Smith is dead. This is where the song (and the songs are one of the few elements of the film that have received any kind of praise) "Where Do I Go From Here?" comes in handy. It emphasises that Pocahontas has not forgotten those who are no longer with her, but that she is aware that she has started a new stage in her life. The road ahead is unclear: "But where do I go from here? / So many voices ringing in my ear / Which is the voice / That I was meant to hear?" (Ellery, Raymond 1998: 00:08:05).

The idea of voices will be repeated at the end of the film, in the conversation with the king, which is not a bad solution to wrap up the story. Pocahontas is prevented from speaking to the king several times, but when she finally succeeds, she tells the king to whom she, and John Smith, and Rolfe, and Ratcliffe are speaking: "There are many voices around you,

⁵ In reality, according to Smith's diary, he himself asked that little Pocahontas be told that he was dead.

but you must listen to your own voice.” (00:59:23) When the king asks her why she insists on speaking when there are so many people around her who doubt her, she will simply answer him: “Because I speak the truth.” (00:59:34) And indeed, in this film, Pocahontas presents herself as both a brave diplomat and a wise counsellor, i.e., her father’s prediction (from the first film) that she should succeed her mother in the important role she played in the tribe seems to be fully realised here.

The bear motif is also repeated here. In the first film, Pocahontas prevented Smith from killing the bear by showing him her cubs, and here Ratcliffe used the bear to provoke a reaction from Pocahontas. For the king’s party (the only occasion when Pocahontas can get to the king), he organised an act where they torture a tied-up bear. Pocahontas stands up to free the bear, and when the king orders her to stop this “savage behaviour”, she replies: “Your behaviour is savage. You and your people are the barbarians!” (00:48:40) The consequence, of course, is imprisonment. The bear is one of the most popular figures in American Indian legends (Gill, Sullivan 1992: 28). One of the Native American rituals was the Bear Dance, which was primarily conducted by medicine men. Besides healing and power, bear also symbolises protection, wisdom, insight and introspection (Lake-Thom 1997). And indeed, in a way, the event with the bear eventually leads to the king (and even more so the queen) recognising the wisdom of Pocahontas and reversing his decision to go to war. The bear is also a source of humour, as at the end of the film it becomes the pet of Rolf’s London housekeeper and her new husband – the Powhatan holy man Uttamatomakkin, or Uti, who has been assigned by Powhatan to accompany Pocahontas on this journey and to count (using the famous stick, i.e. by making a notch in it) how many white people there really are in Britain.

It is also interesting that John Smith changes here, i.e., he is not so positive a character anymore. He made no attempt to let Pocahontas know he was alive, and at the end of the film we see him surrounded by female fans. This scene may be a reference to the real, historical Smith, who is nowadays seen as a braggart and adventurer. Both Johns are at the end rewarded by the king – Smith gets a ship to sail and discover new worlds, Rolf a position as an advisor to the king. The Smith-Pocahontas-Rolf love triangle breaks up when Smith accepts the king’s proposal and Rolf refuses it. Although Rolf’s explanation is rather pathetic (“Pocahontas: What about your duty to the king? Rolf: I have a duty to honour what is in my heart, Pocahontas! – 01:07:13”), it clearly shows that he is devoted to Pocahontas, perhaps to a future family and a peaceful life, while Smith is a

restless man, always on the lookout for new adventures. Between emotions and reason, Pocahontas chooses latter. Between her land and people and adventures in unknown lands, she chooses the former. Director Terrence Malick will develop such a love triangle and a similar denouement in his 2005 film.

The film ends with a song sung by Rolf and Pocahontas (Billy Zane and, as in the first film, Judy Kuhn) about the bridge between two worlds:

Like two eagles soar as one
Upon the river of the wind
With the promise of forever
We will take the past and learn how to begin
And we'll build a bridge of love
Between two worlds (01:08:09)

The song is well thought out, especially the wind motif which links it to the first film, but here the music fails a little. It is just not as catchy and memorable, so the song from the beginning – “Where Do I Go From Here” – somehow asserts itself as the better and main song of the film.

Music, as we have already mentioned, is very important in Disney films, and it did not disappoint in these two films. Unfortunately, as we have shown, this is not the case with the accurate (or at least realistic) depiction of important historical figures and themes. Although there are positive aspects to be highlighted, both technically (good drawing and animation) and in terms of content (use of Native American mythology, a somewhat well-executed environmental and feminist message), these two films did not give a true picture of Pocahontas and her significance in American and world history. Nevertheless, they brought this historical figure into the limelight, and this can be a good incentive for viewers, especially younger ones, to find out more about her.

REFERENCES

- Aleiss 1995:** Aleiss, A. “Maidens of Hollywood: ‘Pocahontas’ is the pure expression of filmmakers’ fantasies about Indian women.” 24 June, 1995. *Los Angeles Times*. <<https://www.latimes.com/archives/la-xpm-1995-06-24-me-16519-story.html>> (15.09.2023)
- Bastian, Mitchell 2004:** Bastian, D.E. and Judy K.M. *Handbook of Native American Mythology*. Santa Barbara: ABC Clio, 2004.

- Custalow, Daniel 2017:** Custalow, Linwood “Little Bear” and Angela Daniel “Silver Star”. *The True Story of Pocahontas: The Other Side of History*. Golden: Fulcrum Publishing, 2017.
- Cornier 2015:** Cornier, E. The Founding Mothers of America. Women’s Federation for World Peace USA. March 23, 2015. <<https://www.wfwp.us/news-articles/national/native-american-women-leaders-who-birthered-america>> (14.07.2023)
- Ellery, Raymond 1998:** Ellery, T. and B. Raymond. *Pocahontas II: Journey to a New World*. Burbank: Walt Disney Home Video. 1998.
- Gabriel, Goldberg 1995:** Gabriel, M. and E. Goldberg. *Pocahontas*. Burbank: Walt Disney Pictures. 1995.
- Gill, Sullivan 1992:** Gill, S. and Irene S. *Dictionary of Native American Mythology*. Santa Barbara: ABC Clio. 1992.
- Griffin 2000:** Griffin, S. *Tinker Belles and Evil Queens: The Walt Disney Company from the Inside Out*. New York: New York University Press, 2000.
- Hartz 2009:** Hartz, Paula. *World Religions: Native American religions*. Chelsea: Chelsea House Publishing. 2009.
- Hermann 2017:** Hermann, M. *Pocahontas: Beyond the Myth*. Falls Church: The Biscuit Factory, 2017.
- Kimochi 2021:** Kimochi, Aitai. “Powhatan/Algonquian words used in Pocahontas.” *AitaiKuji Blog*. <<https://aitaikimochi.tumblr.com/post/21562296511>> (06.08.2023)
- Lake-Thom 1997:** Lake-Thom, B. *Spirits of the Earth: A Guide to Native American Nature Symbols, Stories and Ceremonies*. New York: A Plume Book, 1997. E-book.
- Leydon 1998:** Leydon, J. “Reviews: Pocahontas II: Journey to a New World.” *Variety*, Aug 31, 1998. <<https://variety.com/1998/film/reviews/pocahontas-ii-journey-to-a-new-world-1200454543/>> (10.09.2023)
- Lynch, Roberts 2010:** Lynch, P.A. and J. Roberts. *Native American Mythology, A to Z*. Second edition. Chelsea: Chelsea House Publishing, 2010.
- Macaulay 2021:** Macaulay, D. “Historian Custalow-McGowan spent her life sharing story of and advocating for Mattaponi.” *Daily Press*, October 11, 2021. <<https://www.dailypress.com/2021/10/11/historian-custalow-mcgowan-spent-her-life-sharing-story-of-and-advocating-for-mattaponi/>> (30.06.2023)
- Malick 2005:** Malick, T. *The New World*. Los Angeles: First Foot Films. 2005.

- Miller 2018:** Miller, K. "Meeting in the Middle: Myth-making in The True Story of Pocahontas: The Other Side of History." <<https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/229094619.pdf>> (06.09.2023)
- Moerman 1998:** Moerman, D.E. *Native American Ethnobotany*. Portland: Timber Press, 1998.
- Nagle 2015:** Nagle, J. *Gods and Goddesses of Mythology: Native American Spirit Beings*. London: Britannica Educational Publishing. 2015.
- Pewewardy 1996:** Pewewardy, Cornel. "The Pocahontas Paradox: A Cautionary Tale for Educators." *Journal of Navajo Education*, Fall/Winter 1996/97. <<http://www.hanksville.org/storytellers/pewe/writing/Pocahontas.html>> (18.08.2023)
- Rochman 1995:** Rochman, B. "Disney Loose with Facts about Pocahontas." *The Spokesman Review*. April 24, 1995. <<https://www.spokesman.com/stories/1995/apr/24/disney-loose-with-facts-about-pocahontas/>> (07.09.2023)
- Turner Strong 1996:** Turner Strong, Pauline. "Animated Indians: Critique and Contradiction in Commodified Children's Culture." *Cultural Anthropology*, Vol. 11, No. 3 (Aug., 1996), pp. 405-424.
- Walker 1988:** Walker, Barbara G. *The Woman's Dictionary of Symbols and Sacred Objects*. San Francisco: Harper One, 1988.
- Whitley 2012:** Whitley, D. *The Idea of Nature in Disney Animation: From Snow White to WALL-E*. Farnham: AshGate. 2012.

