



# OUR MYTHICAL NATURE

**Conference Booklet**



# OUR MYTHICAL NATURE

University of Warsaw  
Faculty of "Artes Liberales"  
Centre for Studies on the Classical Tradition (OBTA)  
and the Cluster The Past for the Present

Conference Booklet

## **Our Mythical Nature** **The Classics and Environmental Issues** **in Children's and Young Adults' Culture**

International Conference  
Faculty of "Artes Liberales", University of Warsaw, September 29–30, 2021

ERC Consolidator Grant (681202)

Our Mythical Childhood...  
The Reception of Classical Antiquity  
in Children's and Young Adults' Culture  
in Response to Regional and Global Challenges

Online, 2021





***Our Mythical Nature: The Classics and Environmental Issues in Children's and Young Adults' Culture. Conference Booklet***

**September 29–30, 2021**

**Contact**

Katarzyna Marciniak, e-mail: [kamar@al.uw.edu.pl](mailto:kamar@al.uw.edu.pl) (Principal Investigator)

Centre for Studies on the Classical Tradition (OBTA) and the Cluster The Past for the Present  
Faculty of "Artes Liberales", University of Warsaw ul. Nowy Świat 69 00–046 Warsaw, Poland

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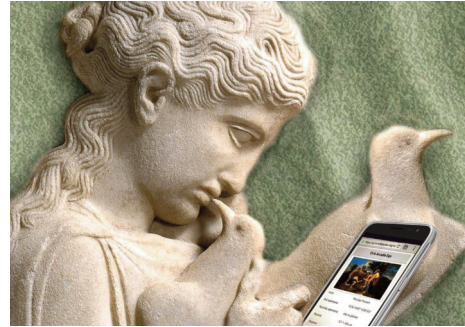




Zbigniew Karaszewski, *Homer online* (2021).

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Nature joined the ***Our Mythical Childhood*** programme already back in 2015, during the work on the application for the ERC Consolidator Grant. Or rather: Nature *officially* joined the programme then. For in fact she has always been an integral part of childhood – and of course in a *natural* way.

While reflecting on the ***Our Mythical Nature*** stage of the project, our focus was on environmental issues; on Nature as an escapist shelter and an untamed space, where *Et in Arcadia ego* reverberates strongly; on the motif of the “otherness”, on the individuals “not fitting” into a community, and on disabilities; on the meaning of landscapes; on the human being as a biologic entity; and on facing illnesses and natural disasters. We also intended to reconsider the paradoxical acculturation of children via Nature as a theme of works prepared by authors the world over for a young public. Then, right after we started our research for this stage, the climate crisis revealed itself in full force, thus making us look at our Arcadias from a new perspective.

We were to meet in Warsaw in May 2020 for a conference summarizing this stage of the project, one to be held under the banner *Our Mythical Nature: The Classics and Environmental Issues in Children's and Young Adults' Culture*. And then, right in the thick of all the logistics surrounding the event, in February that year the coronavirus pandemic broke out and yet another painful perspective manifested itself. The whole world is still facing this terrible challenge, so, like everybody else, we are trying to proceed as best as possible in the current circumstances, and in gratitude for the amazing efforts from many work groups, starting with healthcare professionals who give us the chance to carry on. Having adjusted to the new safety rules, the schools' endeavour *Naturae cognoscere causas* has been completed thanks to the exemplary engagement of the teachers and students participating in this venture (see p. 47). The same attitude has brought to fruition the Ecology edition of the video competition for elementary and high-school students (see p. 49). In the last days of September we are meeting online for the *Our Mythical Nature* conference, with "live" discussions open to everybody, and the lectures placed on our YouTube channel (<http://omc.obta.al.uw.edu.pl/our-mythical-nature-lectures>). This is not comparable to traditional meetings, of course, but when we look on the bright side of such a format, we see it provides equal opportunities for all those interested in the topic to participate and/or listen to the talks at any convenient time, from any part of the globe.

The experiences of the last years have also made us listen to Nature more attentively, as evidenced in the research results of the Our Mythical Community. Her voice is powerful and resonates over all the epochs, from Antiquity until our times. It is crucial to lend Nature our ears and live up to Her message that has long shaped the world and its masterpieces – those of human culture, too. As one of the Poets remarked – one indeed worthy of the capital P, like Homer, even if he originated not from Greece, but from distant Stratford-upon-Avon – then we will find "tongues in trees, books in the running brooks, / Sermons in stones, and good in everything". This I wish for all of us.

Katarzyna Marciniak



# Abstracts (in alphabetical order)

**Jerzy Axer**

Faculty of "Artes Liberales", University of Warsaw

axer@al.uw.edu.pl

## ***Reading from Genesis (3:1–24) for Animals***

Rudyard Kipling's story "How Fear Came" from *The Second Jungle Book* explicitly addresses the reader with knowledge of the Old Testament. While the tale of the relationship between Humankind and Nature in Genesis is unequivocally focused on people, the myth constructed by Kipling is not anthropocentric. Rather, it transforms the myth of the "Fall of Man" into a myth of the "Fall of Animal", and in this context assigns to humans the role of an instrument of Divine punishment. The traditional myth of the Lost Paradise is supplanted by the question of why animals suffer because of the sin of Adam and Eve, which in turn raises the question of what law can save the animal world from extinction and how such a law should be inscribed in the future human legislation.



## Rachel Bryant Davies

School of Languages, Linguistics and Film, Queen Mary University of London  
r.bryant-davies@qmul.ac.uk

### ***“The frailty of sublunary things”: Classical Myth, Pedagogical Media, and Moral Education in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries***

The natural world and classical mythology are closely interlinked with playful pedagogy. In addition to mythological stories which included aetiological explanations, Aesop’s *Fables* featured in a range of interactive media such as board games, jigsaw puzzles, collectible trade cards, and colouring books, while emblem books combined pictures (often of animals) with mythical stories and morals. Such educational books, which drew heavily on classical divinities and mythology, adapted earlier emblemata and bestiaries specifically “for the instruction of youth”, and became increasingly accessible and affordable through the nineteenth century.

“The frailty of sublunary things” suggests why Antiquity was perceived as so appropriate to moral education. This was the final chapter heading of a successful book of *Choice Emblems, Natural, Historical, Fabulous, Moral, and Divine,*



*for the Instruction of Youth*. Written by John Huddleston Wynne in 1772, it was successively reissued by leading 18th-century London-based children’s publishers, including E. Newbery, and 19<sup>th</sup>-century American publishers (eg. New York: James Oram, 1814; Philadelphia: Samuel Wood, 1815). Wynne combined fable and mythology, including aetiologies and details about classical divinities from pantheons, to provide moral guidance on a range of topics from the more expected categories,

such as “Filial Duty”, “Wisdom” or “Temperance”, to the perhaps more intriguing “Silence”, “Lost Reputation”, and the “Use of Time”. His conclusion – reflections on mortality, transience, and Christian judgement – was prompted by the emblem of ancient ruins.

Classical myth also played a major role in education about geography and the natural world, particularly the constellations: Wynne’s first publisher issued *Riley’s Celestial Playing Cards*, entitled *The Celestial Game*, which

re-used the emblem-book illustrations, “affording a Display of the Modern Astronomical System, and of the Heathen Mythology”. Meanwhile, the natural landscape and associated disasters (such as the eruption of Vesuvius and Etna) were a major feature of tour books and games, which present ancient myth and history through the lens of modern geography and politics.

Analysis of a range of children’s media demonstrates that the natural world, as seen in myths, fables, and the landscape, was frequently used to explore the relationship of humans both to the natural world and to human society: the emphasis was most often on Romantic ruins, political revolution, and mortality. I also examine the implications of the stated educational motivation of these individual genres. For example, Wynne’s *Celestial Game* was advertised as “of the greatest Utility in all Schools were [sic] the Classics are taught”, to promote familiarity with “ancient Fables [...] of the Greek and Latin poets”, but it was likely also used in home schoolrooms. Other media, such as Maria Hack’s *Geographical Panorama*, present classical ruins as representative of their landscapes, alongside and equivalent in symbolic power to, for example, polar bears and tigers. The presence of classical material in these diverse media conveys the extent to which mythology was embedded in everyday experience, often encountered inadvertently. Such examples therefore epitomize the vital role of ephemeral material in classical reception.

## Krishni Burns

Department of Classics and Mediterranean Studies,  
University of Illinois Chicago  
ksburns@uic.edu

### ***Mythical Skyscapes: Constellation Myths in Educational Picture Books***



This paper analyzes the ways that educational picture books about astronomy aimed at primary school children (ages 6–12) construct the night sky as a skyscape of didactic imagery that reinforces the reader’s connection to a global past. Constellation myth surveys tend to emphasize the interactions between constellations in both their text and illustrations. The tendency creates a skyscape of myth that is both cohesive and constant. The constancy of the stars become a link between the mythological past and the reader’s present. Those books that introduce myths from non-classical traditions emphasize the similarities in how non-classical myths and classical myths interpret the stellar patterns. As a result, these collections present a skyscape that transcends time and space, linking the reader’s transient experience of the night sky with a universal whole.



## Véronique Dasen

Faculty of Humanities, University of Fribourg / ERC Locus Ludi

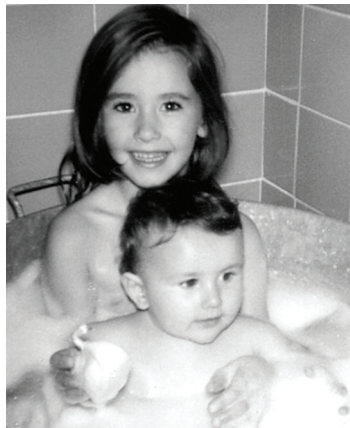
veronique.dasen@unifr.ch



### ***From Greek Amulets to Contemporary Jewellery:***

### ***The Secret Agency of Nature and Animals in the Life Cycle of Young Individuals***

Ancient Greek charms are composed of sets or cluster of amulets with regular elements reflecting symbolic relations between young individuals, girls and boys, and the natural world, plants and animals. This paper will deconstruct their metaphorical correspondances and reflect on similar connections to be found in contemporary jewellery relating to the life cycle of young individuals.



## Susan Deacy

School of Humanities, University of Roehampton

s.deacy@roehampton.ac.uk

### ***“Hercules [...] went out to a quiet place and sat, pondering” (Xenophon, Memorabilia 2.1.21): What Happened Here and Why It “Speaks” to Autistic Children***

Once, according to a story told by Socrates in Xenophon’s *Memorabilia*, Herakles reached a curious place at a crossroads where he sat, pondering which path – one of struggle or one of pleasure – to take in life. This paper explores how, via a focus on how nature – both in respect to the natural world and human nature – the episode can resonate with autistic children’s experiences including around entering new spaces, making choices and conceptualising causality. I discuss a set of lessons I have developed for the *Our Mythical Childhood* project, each focused around an aspect of the episode, each relating to a particular aspect of autistic children’s experiences, and each – like Hercules’s choice – connecting hard work and fun.



## Robin Diver

Department of Classics, Ancient History and Archaeology,  
University of Birmingham  
Robin.diver@hotmail.com

### ***The Problem of Animals and Rape: Children's Anthology Adaptations of the God Pan***

The presentation regards the problem of animals and rape in children's anthology adaptations of the myth of the god Pan. Such adaptations are supposedly able to teach the young readers some important moral lesson.



The presentation focuses on one topic that is uncomfortable in this context – the motif of sexual assault which is at the same time popular in Greek myths. How it can be adapted to the children's audience? – this is the question I will try to face, taking into consideration the image of Nature in the works for the youngest.

## Raimund Fichtel

Department of Greek and Latin Philology,  
Ludwig Maximilian University of Munich  
raimund.fichtel@klassphil.uni-muenchen.de

### ***The Venus Grotto of Ludwig II of Bavaria – The Childhood Dream of a Gentle Tiberius***

No monarch of the modern age embodies so much the childhood dream of realized fantasy and mythology as Ludwig II of Bavaria. In his buildings, far away from the government city of Munich, in the remote and picturesque alpine landscapes of Bavaria, “on mountain heights, surrounded by pure ether”, the monarch created his very personal “Disneyland” as a mythological counter-world to a “hated earthly world”. By doing so, he not only fulfilled a childhood dream but also has significantly



shaped the imaginations and fantasies of Bavarian children and thus of Bavarian identity as such.

His “lively” imagination, which he combines with a highly sensitive feeling for art, but at the same time his fear of people and aversion to prosaic reality prove him to a certain extent to be a modern representative of a Suetonian character profile, as can be found in his Tiberius and/or Nero, but in a non-violent and gentle version.

The fact that not only his character, but also his architecture and staging of nature are reminiscent of ancient motifs, will be demonstrated by his beloved Venus Grotto at Linderhof Palace, which Ludwig II had been longing for since his youth.

### Elizabeth Hale

School of Arts, University of New England

ehale@une.edu.au

### *Witi Ihimaera's Whale Rider and the Ulysses of the Pacific*

In 1986, the Māori novelist Witi Ihimaera was working in New York. His apartment overlooked the Hudson River, then very polluted. A whale made its way

into the river, to the astonishment of New Yorkers: “Some people thought the whale had lost its way. As for me, I was really overwhelmed with aroha, love: that whale had come to say hello. It had come through all that pango [polluted dark] stuff to tell me that although I was living on the other side of the world I was not forgotten. Filled with gratitude [...]

I wrote the novel, which takes place in New Zealand, on the other side of the world. Indeed, I was able to write the book at astonishing speed; that's what inspiration does to you” (Witi Ihimaera, “Author Notes”, *The Whale Rider*, Auckland: Penguin, 2003).

*Whale Rider* was published in 1987. It adapts the Māori myth of Paikea, the ancestor of the Ngati Porou people (of the East Coast of New Zealand's North Island), who came to New Zealand on the back of a whale, all the way from Hawaiki, the legendary first home of all Polynesian people. In *Whale Rider*, a girl named Paikea re-enacts the myth, saving whales from beaching themselves on the coast, and in doing so, breathing new life into her village.





Running through *Whale Rider* is a profound sense of *nostos* – that sense of the longing for home, for the way things used to be – that drives much meaningful literature – not least the *Odyssey* of Homer. And Paikea is the “Pacific version of Ulysses”, states Ihimaera, but where Ulysses used boats to cross the Mediterranean, Paikea rode the whale through the wild seas of the Southern Hemisphere. There’s much to consider in thinking about *Whale Rider* as a modern take on a Pacific Ulysses – the parallels between Classical and Pacific myths, the representation of animals and monsters of the sea, the representation of the hero as able to communicate with, and protect, the largest creatures of the sea. As a true modern hero, Paikea brings her community back into balance with nature.

### Edith Hall

Department of Classics, King’s College London  
edith.hall4@btinternet.com

### ***Muscular Christian Classicism: Nature, Race and (Anti-)Science in Charles Kingsley’s The Water Babies***

Kingsley’s classic novel for boys and youths is routinely interpreted as a polemic against the inhumane use of children in the chimney sweeping service

industry of mid-Victorian Britain. But a close reading, sensitive to its rich use of ancient Greek philosophical and literary sources, especially Homer, Plato, and Lucian, reveals that it is also a pastoralist lament for the effects of the industrial revolution on the environment and a satire on contemporary Natural Science. A particular target is the evolutionary ideas of Charles Darwin, and the challenges they presented to a virile “muscular” Christianity founded not only on a spiritual belief in the exceptional status of *Homo sapiens* but a eugenic obsession with the white Aryan “race”. Particularly important keys to untangling the ideological contradictions are Kingsley’s use of the myths of Prometheus and Atlantis, of the Greek sea-divinities, Nereids, and marine Erotes, the travelogues of the *Odyssey* and Lucian’s *True Histories*, and the assumption of links between the fairy-worlds of Celtic mythology and the numinous nature gods of Greece.



## Owen Hodkinson

Faculty of Arts, Humanities and Cultures, University of Leeds  
o.d.hodkinson@leeds.ac.uk

### ***Shaggy Dog Stories: Two Novels of Odysseys' Dog Argos***

This paper will examine two contemporary novelistic receptions of the *Odyssey* for older pre-teens and tweens, both narrated by Odysseus' loyal dog Argos. Ralph Hardy's *Argos: The Story of Odysseus as Told by his Loyal Dog* (2016, HarperCollins) and Philip W. Simpson's *Argos: Loyalty Has No Limits* (2016, Month9Books) share the same conceit, and therefore have identical problems to resolve in creating a successful narrative. Argos in the *Odyssey* is a minor character, absent for most of the action (both Odysseus' adventures away from Ithaca and most of the rest of the action as well), and famously dies



in Book 17, after a touching reunion with the returned Odysseus. Argos' knowledge of, and ability to narrate, the events of the *Odyssey* thus creates a challenge, and despite many similarities of concept, this challenge is dealt with in very different ways by the two novels' narrative techniques and focus.

## Markus Janka

Department of Greek and Latin Philology,  
Ludwig Maximilian University of Munich  
markus.janka@klassphil.uni-muenchen.de

### ***"Mens antiqua manet" – "The Mind of Old Remains"* *(Ovid, Metamorphoses 2.485): Humanized Animals* *in Ovid's Metamorphoses and Contemporary Children's* *and Young Adults' Literature***

One particularly thrilling aspect of the mythical nature as it is conceived and portrayed in proto-phantastic ancient epic poetry are creatures whose hybrid status is caused by the transformation of their bodies. In the *Odyssey*, comrades of the hero are



transformed into pigs under the spell of the deity and sorceress Circe: so, as Homer puts it, “that of pigs were their heads and their voices and their shape, but their mind remained intact as it were before” (Homer, *Odyssey* 10.239–240). This striking or even nightmarish ambiguity seems to have had, as I want to argue in this paper, a strong impact on the psychology of transformed human beings in Ovid’s *Metamorphoses*. From Homer Ovid borrowed the concept of an animal’s or tree’s mind as a transformed human one. For this phenomenon Ovid coined the formula *Mens antiqua manet* (*The mind of old remains*), which refers to Callisto, who was transformed into a bear by the jealous Juno. But Ovid’s idea of humanized animals and trees of that kind is nearly all-pervasive in his epic poem on permanent change, as examples like Daphne, Io, Actaeon, Galanthis, Myrrha, Macareus, and others show.

This paper follows the traces of Ovid’s “mythopoesis” of a nature thoroughly unstable and fond of ubiquitous “innovation”, cf. 8.189 *naturamque novat* (nature is invented anew by him), referring to the aviation pioneer Daedalus, temporarily transforming himself and his son into birds. I will study the facets of the hybrid psychology of humanized animals and trees in the *Metamorphoses* and their postmodernistic revival in the remarkably sophisticated adaptations *The Pig Scrolls*. By Gryllus the Pig (2004) and *The Pig Who Saved the World* (2006) by the English children’s author Paul Shipton (b. 1963).

## Katarzyna Jerzak

Institute of Modern Languages, Pomeranian University in Słupsk

kasiajerzak@gmail.com

### ***A Dead Bird and a Cenotaph: Echoes of Antiquity in Janusz Korczak’s King Matt on the Desert Island (1923) and Margaret Wise Brown’s The Dead Bird (1938)***

Almost every adult remembers burying a dead bird as a child. In my analysis of Janusz Korczak’s staging of exile and mourning in *King Matt on the Desert Island*, and in Margaret Wise Brown’s representation of mourning and ritual in her book *The Dead Bird*, I demonstrate how children’s literature traces the after-life of ancient forms, especially affectively charged ones (akin to Aby Warburg’s notion of *Pathosformeln*). In the background of my inquiry are the figures of Antiquity such as Antigone and Andromache. The cenotaph embodies the tension between the physical marker of death (the entombment of the dead bird) and the archaeology of affect (the mourning for the dead parents) while the topos of the dead bird echoes the notion of metamorphosis.





## Jan Kieniewicz

Faculty of "Artes Liberales", University of Warsaw

jotka@al.uw.edu.pl

### ***Mytho-picture: Combining Myth and Nature in the Patriotic Landscape***



I herein try to present the process once taking place between Poles deprived of their own state and the natural environment conceived with patriotic attachment. I describe the landscape as a process that connects creator with viewer, thus formulating the concept of the *mytho-picture* as a mind creation catalyzed by a literary work in conjunction with discovering the Motherland through experiencing the landscape in the real relationship between the Pole and the forest environment.

## Przemysław Kordos

Faculty of "Artes Liberales", University of Warsaw

pkordos@al.uw.edu.pl

### ***Low Fantasy, High Conscience: Ecology in Some Exomimetic Worlds***



J.R.R. Tolkien shaped fantasy into its modern form, along with the unambiguous attitude to nature and with rejecting – or ignoring – the idea of progress. Some contemporary authors challenged the convention's assumptions by targeting these key ideas. They moved their worlds forward, equipping them with technological advances and ecological disasters. I will have a look at three such authors whose works could be filed under the "low fantasy" subgenre: Kirill Eskov who openly defied Tolkien in his *The Last Ringbearer*, N.K. Jemisin, who in her award-winning *Broken Earth* saga created the planet that hates humans, and Joe Abercrombie who put his fantasy world (*The First Law* universe) through a fully-fledged industrial revolution, with its social as well as natural consequences. I will argue that such a movement distances fantasy from its fairy-tale/mythical origins while it brings this genre closer to other speculative fiction genres, where worlds and plots play a role of mental training grounds for various ideas from "our" reality.

## Karolina Anna Kulpa

Faculty of "Artes Liberales", University of Warsaw

k.kulpa@al.uw.edu.pl

### **Antiquity Flavours in the Literary Cuisine of Małgorzata Musierowicz**

Meals were one of the important aspects of the lives of the ancient Greek and Roman gods, heroes, and ordinary people. As Epicurus is believed to have said in the 3rd century before Christ: "The fountain and root of every good is the pleasure of the stomach: and all-wise rules, and all superfluous rules, are measured alike by this standard" (Athenaeus, *Deipnosophists*, 7.11, trans. via Perseus Project, ed. Henry G. Bohn). And the "Lucullan banquets" organized by a Roman politician and described by Plutarch (Plut., *Lucullus*, 40–41) became even proverbial. In myths, we can find information about ambrosia and nectar providing immortality and eternal youth to the gods, about a golden apple of the Eris, which became the *spiritus movens* of the Trojan War, and the fruits guarded by Hesperides, about the pomegranate seeds eaten by Persephone, or about a *cornucopia* created by Zeus from the horn of goat – Amalthea. In turn, the cookbook by Apicius, which has survived to contemporary times, shows how unusual, from our perspective, of course, could have been the meals of the richer social strata of Roman society. Exquisite meat dishes,

including a dish from ostrich and turnip, patina with pine nuts, fried artichokes, and carrots with garum are only a few of the recipes from this work from the 2nd century after Christ.

There is no denying that in the modern world, eating and preparing meals is also an important aspect of every human being's life. However, is it possible to combine cooking with education on the culture and history of ancient Greece and Rome? In my speech, I would like to prove that the answer to this question is: of course, it is.

An example of such a reception of Antiquity can be given by the works of Małgorzata Musierowicz, a writer, graphic designer, and, like me, a native Poznań citizen, who for over 40 years has been creating a series of humorous novels entitled *Jeżycjada* [*Jeżyciad*] (the title was created on the pattern of the name of one of Poznań districts – Jeżyce, in which the plot is set, and Homer's *Iliad*).

As the novelist herself admitted, Latin has been constantly present in her life, from an early age, so it is no wonder that the main characters of *Jeżyciad*, the Bo-rejkos, use this language in everyday life. Furthermore, the head of the family



and one of his four daughters are classical philologists. Ancient culture is also “present” in the meals prepared by Borejko, who named pancakes with cheese and apple dessert in honor of Aspasius of Milet and Hesperides. Musierowicz gives precise indications for the readers to reproduce these dishes, and at the same time, she brings closer a biography or a summary of the myth to which the name of the meal refers. Apart from the *Jeźyćiad* cycle, the author has also written several books with recipes (*Łasuch literacki* [Literary Glutton], 1995; *Na Gwiazdkę* [For Christmas], 2007; *Musierowicz dla zakochanych* [Musierowicz for Lovers], 2008), of which I would like to focus on *Całuski Pani Darling* [Mrs. Darling’s Kisses] (1995). This is not a typical cookbook for children (and adults of course), but rather a series of stories about various characters from children’s and young adult literature, including those mythological and historical ones from ancient Greece and Rome, discovered during primary school education. In the book, we will find recipes for desserts referring to *Five Children and It* by Edith Nesbit, *The Six Bullerby Children* by Astrid Lindgren, and *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* by Mark Twain, but also such dishes as a salad for Poseidon, soup of hero Heracles or lentils of Diogenes. The author does not try to reconstruct ancient recipes, but what is extremely interesting, she creates characters’ characteristics and tries to present them in this dish, for example, she recommends orange-honey-poppy seeds cookies “Hypnos” before bedtime, and the biscuits of Xanthippe, Socrates’ wife, are made of onions because they must be “spicy as the protagonist’s tongue and as burning as her thoughts” (ibidem).

The combination of ancient culture with typically Polish products in the form of recipes accessible to the reader results that Małgorzata Musierowicz’s works have an undoubted educational value and are a rather unusual example of the contemporary reception of Antiquity. That is why I invite you to take a trip to the author’s literary cuisine to get to know the mythological nature in its culinary aspect.

### Christian Laes

School of Arts, Languages and Cultures,  
University of Manchester  
christian.laes@manchester.ac.uk

### **Antiquity’s Childhood and Toys in Alfredo Bartoli’s “Filius ad Matrem Reversus” (1950)**

In the romantic and nostalgic Neo-Latin poetry of Giovanni Pascoli (1855–1912) the “poetics of the child” (*poetica del fanciullino*) have played a central role. The same applies to his successors, among whom Alfredo Bartoli (1872–1954)



stands out as a poet celebrating childhood *par excellence*. In this chapter, I analyze Bartoli's deeply touching "Filius ad Matrem Reversus", which was awarded *magna laus* in the Certamen Hoefftianum of 1950. In an environment torn by the calamities of warfare, this poem beautifully brings together thoughts on the nature of childhood, ancient imaginary of toys, play and the charm of children, with the contemporary experience of a mother prematurely losing her child and deploring her lonely condition at Christmas Eve.

### Helen Lovatt

Department of Classics and Archaeology, University of Nottingham  
helen.lovatt@nottingham.ac.uk

### *Bernard Evslin and the Clashing Rocks*



The Clashing Rocks are a central part of the myth of Jason and the Argonauts. They symbolise the importance of landscape in constructing narrative and shaping images of journeys through both space and time. This paper looks at the Argonaut retelling of Bernard Evslin, a well-known American writer for

children and young adults (*Jason and the Argonauts*, New York, 1986, ill. Bert Dodson) and explores his use of the Clashing Rocks to think about the relationship between myth and the natural world. Evslin's idiosyncratic retelling gives the Clashing Rocks not just movement but also sentience and agency. After Jason bravely tricks the rocks into smashing each other to pieces, a stray rock becomes his faithful follower. Evslin frequently blurs together different categories, such as divine and mortal, technology and the natural world, animal and human. What might initially seem like whimsical, if dark, plays on traditions of interpreting mythical nature, reveals complex and thought-provoking systems of imagery.

### Nick Lowe

Department of Classics, Royal Holloway, University of London  
n.lowe@rhul.ac.uk

### *What Is It Like to Be an Elephant?*

Simon Flynn has argued that animal stories allow young readers to explore the boundaries of the human, while simultaneously encoding adult human institutions which create differentiated categories of incomplete





personhood such as slavery, class, gender, and childhood itself. This tradition is usually if sometimes simplistically traced back to two interwoven strands in classical literature: the Aesopic tradition in which animals are possessed of fantastically anthropomorphic minds, and tales of metamorphosis from Homer to Apuleius in which human minds are trapped or dissolved in animal bodies. But attempts in myth to imagine animals' own consciousness and its differences from human cognition (as Thomas Nagel invited us to do for bats) are more limited and tend to be naturalistic rather than fantastic, as in the *Odyssey's* scenes of human interaction with canine minds.

Modern animal stories of Antiquity fill this gap by reframing the heroic canonicity of myth and history from the point of view of part-anthropomorphized beasts, where the *Odyssey* has been a prime text for such reframings: Sheila Murnaghan (2015) and Markus Janka (in this volume) have discussed Paul Shipton's satirical novelizations of Plutarch's *Gryllus* giving a pig's-eye view, and Owen Hodkinson in this volume two canine retellings. I want to extend this conversation to two of the strangest works of ancient-historical fiction: considering two novels for young readers narrating first-person animal perspectives on ancient warfare and empire: Ernest Moss's *Hannibal's Last Elephant* (1980), which recounts the Second Punic War from the perspective of Surus the war-elephant, and Katherine Roberts' *I Am the Great Horse* (2007), which tells Bucephalas' story of Alexander.

## Katarzyna Marciniak

Faculty of "Artes Liberales", University of Warsaw  
kamar@al.uw.edu.pl

### ***Geralt on Climate Strikes: Ancient Motifs and Ecology in Andrzej Sapkowski's Short-Stories of the Witcher Cycle***

In the December 1986 issue of the Polish cult magazine *Fantastyka*, readers met for the first time a protagonist who was said to have come "from the north, from Ropers Gate. He came on foot, leading his laden horse by the bridle". Soon he was to change not only the literary, but also the cultural landscape of Poland – and beyond. His name was Geralt, and he was a professional monster slayer – a witcher (*wiedźmin*), to use the neologism coined by his creator Andrzej Sapkowski. *Wiedźmin* is also the title of the short-story that gave Geralt his debut – one awarded third prize in *Fantastyka's* 1986 literary competition.

Today *The Witcher* universe is a transmedial phenomenon. Besides the books translated into



several languages, there are comics, games (including the bestselling video games that boosted Geralt's popularity worldwide), a Polish series, a Netflix series (its second season about to start), fan art, merchandise, etc. In this rich collection with each single object being a potential research subject, I wish to focus on ecological themes that had been crucial to Sapkowski's writing long before the state of Nature became a matter of general concern for societies worldwide and before the Cassandra warnings issued by the most committed activists and scientists began coming true ever more rapidly to culminate today.

I trace Sapkowski's references to Greek and Roman mythology in the two volumes of the Witcher short-stories. This is a rather atypical approach, because Classical Antiquity is usually dismissed in discussions on Sapkowski's *oeuvre*, with the focus being rather on Slavic, Celtic, and Germanic mythologies and the Arthurian legends as the major sources of his inspiration. In fact, one does not exclude the other. On the contrary, they work together through the talent of the writer, who also draws from the historical tradition and popular culture of the 1980s, and all this makes his fantasy world particularly rich and multidimensional. Moreover, his ecological message thereby becomes deeply poignant and resonant, especially in times as ours, when – as was the lot of Geralt and his mythical companions (a siren, dryads, and a silvanus) – “something ends, something begins” before our very eyes.

## Lisa Maurice

Department of Classical Studies, Bar-Ilan University

[lisa.maurice@biu.ac.il](mailto:lisa.maurice@biu.ac.il)

### *The God Pan in Children's Fiction and Culture*

From his classical roots, Pan developed in the Edwardian period into an important figure in the ideology of the idealisation of the rural landscape. Since this was the age in which children's literature really evolved, Pan also entered the pages of works for children. This presentation traces the alterations and developments in the portrayal of the god from the late nineteenth century until the second decade of the twenty-first, highlighting some trends that can be seen in the recent receptions of Pan for children.



## Anna Mik

Faculty of "Artes Liberales", University of Warsaw

anna.m.mik@gmail.com

### **Mythical Labyrinthine Nature in Jan Bajtlik's "Greek Myths and Mazes"**

A labyrinth is, as it was in classical mythology, a horrific, yet exciting space. In its walls, a heroine or a hero can find their salvation, as well as their worst nightmare. It was exactly the case of Harry Potter in *The Goblet of Fire*, where the prize of the tournament (the ultimate symbol of victory), placed in the centre of the maze, led the young wizard to his worst enemy and a death of his friend. As such, a labyrinth can serve as a metaphor on many different levels – also in the world of *Our Mythical Nature*.

In Jan Bajtlik's *Greek Myths and Mazes* (Pol. *Niś Ariadny*, 2018) a labyrinth is included in every story in the book. The reader is encouraged to enter the web full of stories known from the ancient world. One of the boards presents Aeaea, the magical island ruled by enchantress Kirke, visited by Odysseus on his way home to Ithaca. Regardless of presenting the actual story, Bajtlik uses this occasion to show the mythical nature of the island. The readers not only

enter the world of Antiquity, they also immerse in the mythical jungle, full of lively greenery and lions hidden in its shade. The labyrinthine play turns into a literary adventure thanks to which one can learn more than the actual mythology and its wild nature.

The presentation will focus on three layers of Bajtlik's story. First one would be the labyrinth as an applicable metaphor, which is inscribed in each board in *Greek Myths and Mazes*. Second would be the entangled story itself, told in a non-descriptive and non-linear way. Third and last one would be nature – how it is presented on Aeaea board as well as on other pages.

In conclusion, I will attempt to find a common ground for all three components of the book.



## Sheila Murnaghan

Department of Classical Studies, University of Pennsylvania  
smurnagh@sas.upenn.edu

### ***The Secret Lives of Trees: Tales of Natural Transformation in Classical Myths for Children***

From the mid-19th century on, the retelling of classical myths for child audiences has been shaped by romantic conceptions of children as especially attuned to both the imagination and the natural world. Drawing especially on Antiquity's rich legacy of myths about the transformation of humans into plants and animals, adapters of ancient myths have presented their child readers with a transformed vision of their own surroundings, in which natural features are animated by unseen spirits and serve as ongoing testimony to mythical events; in this way, stories that derive from a distant and pagan culture are secularized and made familiar. In Nathaniel Hawthorne's pioneering *A Wonder Book* (1851), the modern children who are introduced to classical myths are simultaneously exploring an idyllic landscape in Western Massachusetts. Their story-teller connects the two when he suggests a mythical origin for the exceptional vividness of autumn leaves in New England: "old King Midas came to America and changed dusky autumn, such as it is in other coun-



tries, into the burnished beauty which it here puts on". Another episode of the Midas myth, the often-told story of how Midas' barber revealed the secret of his asses' ears to a river bank, locates myth in the landscape in a different way, as a marvelous circumstance repeatedly announced by rustling reeds.

This paper will trace the inscription of myth in the natural world in both the texts and the illustrations of children's myth books, with particular attention to the mythical origins of trees and especially the myth of Daphne's transformation into a laurel tree. In earlier versions of that myth, which are more overtly engaged with classical sources and high culture, the text tends to be closely influenced by Ovid's account in the *Metamorphoses* and the illustrations often look back to Bernini's famous sculpture. But more recent versions, by such authors as the D'Aulaires, Geraldine McCaughrean, and Lucy Coats, depart from Ovid to produce new, more child-oriented accounts of what it might mean for a girl to change into a tree: for example, an alternative to unwelcome adulthood (Coats) or a handful of splinters for a comically arrogant god (McCaughrean).

## Sonya Nevin

School of Humanities,

University of Roehampton / Panoply Vase Animation Project

sonya.nevin@roehampton.ac.uk

### *Imagining Africa: Classical Antiquity in the Brontë Juvenilia*

The Brontë children's world changed one afternoon when their father arrived home with a box of toy soldiers for his son, Branwell. The toys inspired an outburst of creative writing in which the soldiers were the daring protagonists. With their usual precociousness, the Brontë children depicted themselves as god-like *genii* controlling the toys' universe. They created a fictional world for the toy soldiers that would dominate their imaginative play and writing even into adulthood. It was a creative apprenticeship that would inform their ground-breaking adult work.

Cameroon and Nigeria form the setting of these tales of colonial life as imagined by Charlotte and Branwell Brontë. "Skies flame" in the "burning clime" of the juvenilia. The African landscape is at once exoticized and domesticated, while the classical serves characters as a source of self-expression and of do-

mination. The children's fictional kingdoms feature a great city splendid with neo-classical architecture, complex societies with a cast of memorable characters, and constant military struggles between the local Ashantee people, British colonialists, and their French rivals. This paper reflects research conducted for the *Our Mythical Survey* database. It will explore how these child writers drew on their growing knowledge of Classical Antiquity in their attempts to understand and respond to the real world around them.





**Daniel A. Nkemleke, Divine Che Neba, Eleanor A. Dasi**

Department of English ENS, University of Yaoundé 1

[nkemlekedan@yahoo.com](mailto:nkemlekedan@yahoo.com),

[nebankiwang@yahoo.com](mailto:nebankiwang@yahoo.com),

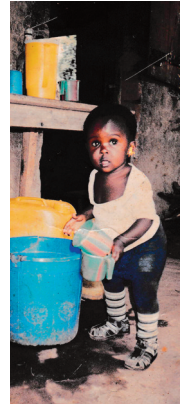
[wandasi5@yahoo.com](mailto:wandasi5@yahoo.com)

***Nature Dynamics: From Descriptive  
to Prescriptive Nature Images in Yaël Farber's Molora***



The representation of nature in world mythology has always been multifaceted, owing to its centrality in the governance of humanity. David Thoreau and Ralph Waldo Emerson, all disciples of nature, in their atomistic treatment of nature confirm that nature's law, with all its ramifications, supersedes all laws that man has attempted to create. Be it exaggerated or not, what is certain is that nature dictates the rhythm of life. Also, the environment where individuals live conditions their psychological state. Thus, the examination of the anatomy of such a phenomenon becomes a cause for concern within scholarly circles. From antiquity to the present, scholars have persistently used nature's reserve as sources of inspiration. These are indicators that

nature's role in the universe is prime, as it checks, models, provides, destroys, accommodates, conditions, formulates bases for belief systems, inspires, and constructs identities and philosophical thoughts. It is against this backdrop that Yaël Faber, like most nature inspirational models, adapts and constructs patterns of imageries in *Molora* to re-read Apartheid South Africa and invents an accommodating post-Apartheid South Africa against the background of classical mythology. Using the *Oresteian Trilogy*, an ancient Greek myth, as springboard, Faber in *Molora* exploits auditory, visual, tactile and gustatory imageries to depict the horrors and unnerving hopes of Apartheid and post-Apartheid South Africa respectively. These archetypal and timeless nature imageries used, bring into the limelight the relevance of a mythic past as panacea to cross cultural problems. On this note, the work explores nature from actual to symbolic perspectives through descriptive and prescriptive nature imageries. The exploration of these images exposes the psychological mindset and ripple effects of such a daunting and yet hopeful environment to children and young adults in South Africa in particular and humankind as a whole as depicted by Yaël Farber.



## Elżbieta Olechowska

Faculty of "Artes Liberales", University of Warsaw

elzbieta.olechowska@gmail.com

### ***Nothing Ancient Resonates with Children as Deeply as the Concept of an Animal Dæmon. Philip Pullman's Scenario for the Human-Animal Bond***



Philip Pullman called it "the best idea" he's "ever had". His cross-over readers probably agree. A grown-up philosophical idea embodied in a dynamically developing animal becomes in children's imagination a composite of guardian angel, the inner person, a voice of conscience, an invisible friend, someone who always understands. An entity invisible but so obviously real that it had to be given a material manifestation. Linking the spiritual with the animal reaches also to Classical Antiquity and needs to be explored on the level of Pullman's both trilogies, as the first focuses on the enchanting and affectionate and the second on sick, cruel and horrific.

## Beatrice Palmieri

Department of Classical Philology and Italian Studies, University of Bologna

/ Erasmus Programme at the Faculty of "Artes Liberales", University of Warsaw (Summer term 2019/20)

beatrice.palmieri@studio.unibo.it

### ***Gianni Rodari and the Myth of Atalanta: The Role of Nature in Knowledge of Culture***

The year 2020 marks the centenary of the birth of Gianni Rodari (1920–1980), who might be considered the most famous author for children's books of the 20th century in Italy. Writer, teacher, journalist, and pedagogist, he carried an entire generation step by step in the arduous, but wonderful, endeavour of growing up, and it is very likely that he will continue doing the same with the future generations thanks to his deathless works. Among his masterpieces, a particular one, *Atalanta*, with the illustration of Emanuele Luzzati, makes its way



as a reworking of the myth of the Arcadian heroine. Refused at birth by her father, King Iasus, for the mere fact of being a woman, Atalanta was suckled in the wilderness and grew up surrounded by nature.

In my presentation, I would like to focus on the gradual development towards maturity of this character, who with a curious and adventurous soul, modelled on the teachings of nature, faces the world of men, made of suffering, pain, but also joy, friendship and love, bringing to light the often conflicting relationship that exists between the world of Minerva, goddess of wisdom, and the world of Diana, goddess of wild nature and children. In this journey to discover the world and human being in all its facets, nature and myths intertwine and create the solid foundations of a story of growth and discovery, where the protagonist, Atalanta, carries the key of knowledge inscribed in her name: Atalanta means “equal in weight”, which, in light of this myth, can be read as an advice for the child who is inside each of us, that is to seek the right balance between nature and culture, animals and men, wilderness and wisdom. The main goal of this research is to find out why it is important, nowadays, to eagerly welcome the teachings of this myth, which Gianni Rodari and Emanuele Luzzati cleverly reinterpreted, and to what extent it can be useful for children in order to reflect on their relationship with nature, culture and beyond.

### **Hanna Paulouskaya**

Faculty of “Artes Liberales”, University of Warsaw  
hannapa@al.uw.edu.pl



### ***Constellations of Gods in Soviet Animation***

An easy way to put “gods” into “heavens” is to make them stars, planets and constellations. This approach was especially suitable for an atheistic culture such as Soviet Union culture. In my presentation I would like to talk about few animations made in the USSR that combine mythology and astronomy and to think about ways of interpreting ancient myths from this perspective.

### **Edoardo Pecchini**

Faculty of “Artes Liberales”, University of Warsaw  
edoardo.pecchini@gmail.com

### ***Promoting Mental Health through Classics: Odysseus***

The myth of Odysseus will be discussed in my presentation on the ground of selected psychological and pedagogical theories. I will analyze its occurrences in Greek and Latin classical literature as well as in contemporary cultures

especially in correlation with the figure of the god Hermes. I will reflect on the comparison between Achilles and Odysseus, on the processes of individual's maturation and autonomy. I will focus on the concept of Metis, on the *poly-tropos* hero and on possible applications of Odysseus myth in clinical and educational contexts, particularly as a setting for plays and activities about bullism.



## Ayelet Peer

Department of Classical Studies,  
Bar-Ilan University  
ayelet.peer@gmail.com

### ***Heroic Beasts: On Humans-Animals Relations in Lucy Coats' Beasts of Olympus Series***

In Greek mythology, animals are either predators or prey, docile or dangerous. Yet there is little reference to their well-being and existence beyond their effect on the human heroes or the various gods and goddesses. This paper examines the delicate relationship between mythological beasts and their half-mortal keeper, as it is presented in Lucy Coats' *Beasts of Olympus* series.



## Amanda Potter

Open University

amandapotter@caramanda.co.uk

### ***Save the Monster, Save the World: Living in Harmony with “Monsters” in Nausicaä of the Valley of the Wind (1984) and Princess Mononoke (1997)***

In this paper I aim to briefly discuss the potential for ancient monsters to protect, rather than harm the world, referring to the closing credits of the 2019 film *Godzilla: King of the Monsters*. I then move on to two critically acclaimed anime films, *Nausicaä of the Valley of the Wind* (1984) and *Princess Mononoke* (1997) written and directed by Hayao Miyazaki. The success of the first film led to the creation of the Japanese animation film studio, Studio Ghibli, while *Princess Mononoke* was the first animated film to win best picture in the Japan Academy prize.

Both of these anime films have been described as “epic”, and are set on worlds ravaged by warfare and human industry, where humans are pitted against animals and land has been destroyed. They also feature young female



protagonists, Princess Nausicaä and San, who find themselves in the middle of a war, with the power to stop the bloodshed and save their worlds. Nausicaä, inspired by her namesake from Homer's *Odyssey*, has an affinity with nature, and believes that man and the post-apocalyptic toxic jungle filled with mutant insects can co-exist peacefully. At the end of the anime she stops the human-induced stampede of misunderstood “monsters”, the

Ohmu, from destroying her kingdom, dying in the process, only to be resurrected by the Ohmu. San, a human girl raised by spirit wolves, is unable to accept the damage done to the environment by humans. She helps male hero Ashitaka to lift a debilitating curse, but is unable to live with him in the human town and returns to the forest.

*Nausicaä* and *Princess Mononoke* are challenging texts for young viewers, which do not shy away from the violence that people do to each other as well as to their worlds. The films also question the roles of hero and monster, and whether humans can ever live in harmony with nature. Miyazaki has commented that he was writing a story about the complexity of the relationship



between humans and the environment: “It’s not bad people who are destroying forests. Hard working people have been doing it” (Dani Cavallaro, *The Anime Art of Hayao Miyazaki*, Jefferson, North Carolina and London: McFarland, 2006, 124). However, *Nausicaä* ends with a message of hope; the growth of a non-toxic tree. *Princess Mononoke* may end with Ashitaka and San living separate lives in the town and in the forest respectively, but Ashitaka promises to visit San in the forest and the humans commit to build a better town that can thrive alongside the forest.

### Marta Pszczolińska

Faculty of “Artes Liberales”, University of Warsaw  
m.pszczolinska@al.uw.edu.pl

### **Domestic Animals: Minimus the Mouse and Vibrissa the Cat as a Latin Learning Supporting Team in Minimus. Starting out in Latin Textbook**

As the early man domesticated animals, they were to accompany him and fulfil specific functions serving humanity: a dog would help with hunting

while an agile cat would catch any pests spoiling the food. Today animals such as a cat or a mouse can serve us in an entirely different way: they can be the bases of children’s entertainment like cartoons or comics. Such use of animals was deployed by the authors of the British textbook *Minimus. Starting out in Latin* in order to engage children in their curriculum. Minimus, a small mouse, and its likeable antagonist cat Vibrissa become an efficient incentive drawing children readers to learning Latin, which turns out not to be boring at all. The textbook is aimed at elementary level pupils aged 6–10 years old and contains the adventures of congenial “Latin” animals who introduce the language, culture and mythology through the graphic design of the lessons, drawings and comics. It has become an all-time bestseller – it lived to see its second part *Minimus Secundus. Moving on in Latin*, but also reached other countries outside of the United Kingdom. Meanwhile Minimus has become a symbol of fun and encouraging Latin education – “the mouse that made Latin cool”.



## Babette Puetz

School of Languages and Cultures,  
Victoria University of Wellington  
babette.puetz@vuw.ac.nz



### ***“No matter how dark the night, the sun always rises”: The AD 79 Vesuvius Eruption in Contemporary Children’s Literature***

The eruption of Mt Vesuvius (AD 79) and destruction of Pompeii has fascinated people ever since the discovery of the city’s remains and has been a popular topic in literature for over 250 years. It has been the topic of children’s literature since the 19th century, but especially in novels from recent decades, some of which treat the topic quite seriously, others humorously. This presentation focusses on the reception of the Vesuvius eruption in a selection of international children’s novels for older primary school and middle school aged children: Swiss author Jakob Streit’s *Milon und der Löwe* (1972), British-American Caroline Lawrence’s *The Pirates of Pompeii* (2001) and American writer Dan Gutman’s *Flashback Four: The Pompeii Disaster* (2018), as examples for the different ways in which children’s books from a number of countries deal with the topic, both in the 21st century and in the 1970s. Questions considered are: How close in detail is the description of the warning signs and the

actual eruption to ancient sources, in particular Pliny’s letters 6.16 and 6.20 and Cassius Dio 66.21–23? What else do readers of these novels find out about life in first century AD Italy? What is the tone, purpose and effect of the inclusion of this event in the narrative? Is it mainly a backdrop for the story, a dramatic ending to it or are the disaster and the learning opportunity it may offer to the young protagonists foregrounded? Is the eruption employed mostly for didactic purposes, entertainment or both?

## Miriam Riverlea

School of Arts, University of New England  
mrriverlea@gmail.com

### ***Bushfire, Myths and Mallacoota***

“Through the Charred Forest, over Hot Ash, Runs Dog, with a Bird Clamped in His Gig, Gentle Mouth.” The opening lines of Margaret Wild’s picture book *Fox* (2000) set the scene for a dark, disturbing story that takes place in the aftermath of a bushfire. Ron Brooks’ illustrations depict the ravaged Australian bush in stark black lines and a washed-out colour palette of reds and browns. The narrative features a trio of characters familiar from a fable of Aesop – a steadfast dog, blind in one eye, a wounded magpie with a burnt wing, and a dangerous, conniving fox. The book is an arresting portrayal

of the dynamics between them amid the shifting impulses of loyalty, longing and loneliness. Invested with complex human emotions, these three creatures struggle to survive in a harsh and inhospitable environment.

Ron Brooks spent his childhood in Mallacoota, a small, isolated coastal town in the south eastern corner of Australia. Mallacoota happens to be where I live too. On New Year's Eve, 2019, I sheltered at home with my family as a massive bushfire tore through along the coastline and smashed into our town, destroying more than one hundred houses and damaging many more. In the aftermath of this traumatic event, I feel compelled to bring together my personal experience with my academic research, to explore how *Fox* and other works of Australian children's literature tell stories of the impact of bushfire



on individuals, communities, and the natural environment. I will frame these narratives within the context of classical myths about fire, particularly in the legend of the Trojan War, highlighting its power as both a destructive and regenerative force.

## Deborah H. Roberts

Department of Classics, Haverford College  
droberts@haverford.edu

### *Natural Disaster, Social Change: Volcanic Eruptions in Children's Literature and the Story of Thera*

If we set aside the mythical flood that (in the Greek tradition as elsewhere in the Near East) restarts the human race, the natural disasters that loom largest in Greco-Roman Antiquity are two volcanic eruptions: Thera around 1600 BCE and Vesuvius in 79 CE. The story of the destruction of Pompeii has long played a prominent role in the European imagination; it isn't surprising that this eruption and its impact – which



offer a historical context suitable for everything from earnest tales of early Christianity to adventure stories, and have provided the kind of details of everyday life historical novelists treasure – should be featured in many books for children from the 19th century to the present day, with no end in sight. There are a number of stand-alone novels, including Emily Sarah Holt's *The Slave Girl of Pompeii* (1887) and Kathryn Lasky's *The Last Girls of Pompeii* (2007), and an episode set in Pompeii seems almost a required feature in any series for children set in the past, whether it involves mystery, time travel, comical diaries of daily life, or stories of survival. Historical novels dealing with the earlier and more cataclysmic eruption on Thera are less plentiful, but there have been two notable examples in the past 40 years: Mary Ray's *Song of Thunder* (1978) and Wendy Orr's *Swallow's Dance* (2018). In this paper, I focus on these two novels, which like much historical fiction for children are in part coming-of-age stories. In both of them, natural disaster – rather than simply providing the backdrop for the story or the occasion for action – creates the circumstances for significant social change and personal transformation; and in both, art and craft play a central and to some extent compensatory role.

## Krzysztof Rybak

Faculty of "Artes Liberales", University of Warsaw

km.rybak@uw.edu.pl

### ***Serving Ancient Nature in Informational Picturebooks: Natural Products and Their Consumption in Antiquity and Beyond***

The paper aims to analyze informational picturebooks by Polish authors or co-authors. I focus on three aspects of representing natural products: defamiliarization of phenomena unknown to the contemporary reader (*garum* and *cena*), connecting past and present with olives and grapes, and ancient roots of vegetarianism. In the conclusions, I stress the significance of the culinary heritage of ancient Greeks and Romans and its representation in contemporary informational picturebooks.

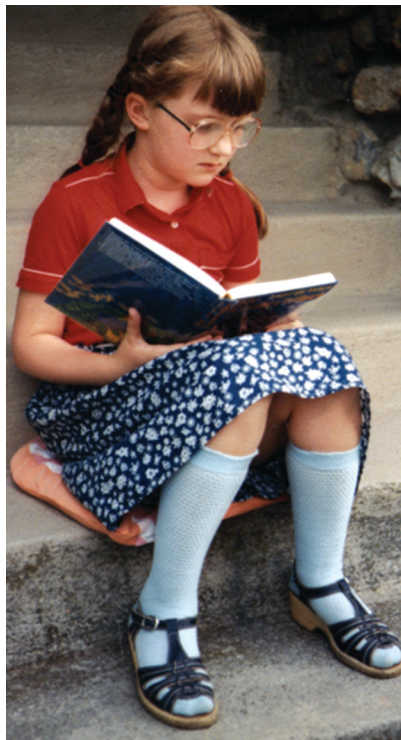


## Sonja Schreiner

Department of Classical Philology,  
Medieval and Neolatin Studies, University of Vienna  
sonja.schreiner@univie.ac.at

### **Witty Education: Environment and Nature as Atmospheric Background in Friedrich Wilhelm Zachariä's (1726–1777) Mock Heroic Poetry**

Analyzing the description, role, and meaning of nature in Friedrich Wilhelm Zachariä's (1726–1777) *Lagosiade*, *Hercynia*, and *Batrachomyomachie* means treating an aspect of three neglected texts of a long-forgotten author. Zachariä's *oeuvre* is a "playground" for learned exercises, because it is situated at the intersection of classical tradition and literary trends. As a witty and playful rococo writer, he ponders his texts between heritage and modernism. His (anti)heroes manage to overcome the tension created by this willful divergence and experience adventures in an environment, designed and constructed of ancient patterns, but adapted to contemporaneous standards. Zachariä's concept of nature is colourful and multifold: In the *Batrachomyomachie*, the habitat of the amphibia, which is dangerous for mammals, is the



starting point for the real meaning of the fragment. In the *Lagosiade*, we see nature through the animal's eyes. Zachariä switches the perspectives and presents a *locus amoenus*, where the male hare lives a life in peace and harmony without danger and offense, but then enters hostile surroundings, as natural topography hinders its flight and finally causes its death. In the *Hercynia*, we find a modern *katabasis* in local mines, a lament on the destruction of nature by war, and a portrait of the emotions caused by the impression nature has on the travelers' minds.



## Michael Stierstorfer

Gymnasium Kloster Schäftlarn

michael.stierstorfer@web.de

### ***The Reception of Atlantis in Current Children's Media as an (Un-)Natural Island***

During the last forty years the motif of Atlantis has never been so popular in media as it is nowadays. This study will provide clues to answer the question, why the setting of Atlantis is so widespread in contemporary literature and films for children. Moreover, it is to be demonstrated that Plato's version of Atlantis is the most important source for current adaptations. This is the case in prominent examples like Thomas Thiemeyer's novel *Chroniken der Weltensucher. Der Palast*



*des Poseidon* and the comic *Asterix and Obelix. All at Sea* by Goscinny and Uderzo or in the films *Ice Age* by Martino Steve and Mike Hurmeier, Disney's *Atlantis* by Gary Trousdale and Kirk Wise and *Aquaman* by James Wan. Finally trends in adapting the myth of Atlantis in recent children's

media are revealed. In this context it will be recognized, that in these adaptations the topos of saving the natural environment from destruction and collapse is particularly prominent. Apart from that the setting of Atlantis switches between an utopian and a dystopian world in order to stimulate the recipients' awareness of the necessity to protect the beauty of the submarine nature and wildlife.

## Robert A. Sucharski

Faculty of "Artes Liberales", University of Warsaw

sucharsk@al.uw.edu.pl



### ***Halina Rudnicka and Her Ancient Trilogy or on the Nature of the True Hero(ine)s***

Halina Rudnicka (née Hausman, 1909–1982), a Polish writer, pedagogue and publicist. Favored in the Communist Poland due to her left-wing views and ideologized writing (e.g. the story of Felix Dzierżyński) Rudnicka belonged to a group of writers whose books were mandatory school reading in the primary school. Author of 15 novels for children and young adults with the predominant motif of a hero(ine) of "revolutionary" battles, and struggles for

freedom and better tomorrow. Among her novels there are four the plot of which are set in the Antiquity. The most popular and in the same time the best known “Roman” novel *Uczniowie Spartakusa* [*Spartacus’ Disciples*] offers the young pupil a history of the Third Servile War [*The War of Spartacus*] in the eyes of a small Greek slave boy, Callias, while *Król Agis* [*Agis the King*], *Syn Heraklesa* [*Hercules’ Son*], and *Heros w okowach* [*The Hero Bound*] move the reader to Sparta and the eastern part of the Mediterranean in the 2nd half of the 3rd century BCE, to the days of Agis IV, Cleomenes III, and Agiatis and their attempts to restore Sparta’s greatness and save its independence.

### Katerina Volioti

School of Humanities, University of Roehampton  
katerina.volioti@roehampton.ac.uk

### ***A Post-humanist Perspective: Plants, Animals, and Things in Children’s Books about the Classical Past***

Post-humanism refers to a set of intellectual ideas that question the supremacy of humans over the natural environment and the material world (see, for

example, the work of philosopher Rosi Braidotti). In this paper, I draw from post-humanism to analyze the language and images of books in a best-selling series about the Classical past by Papadopoulos Publications, a publisher specializing in children’s literature in Greece. I examine how the text by Philippos Mandilaras and the illustrations by Natalia Kapatsoulia encourage children as young as four to think critically about how humans and human-like actors from Greek Antiquity (kings, generals, statesmen, as well as mythical gods, heroes and other creatures) interact with plants and animals. In the illustrations, perhaps more than in the text, there is a noted preponderance of diverse landscapes, plant species, and animals (wild and domesticated). I discuss the extent to which this preponderance can promote a post-anthropocentric approach to the Classical past (mythic, historic, artistic, archaeological, and scientific) and align these educational books, which are popular in Greece and internationally, with contemporary concerns about the climate crisis.



# European Research Council (ERC)



**European Research Council**

Established by the European Commission

**Supporting top researchers  
from anywhere in the world**

The **European Research Council (ERC)** is a public and independent body supporting excellence in science and scholarship. Its mission is to encourage the highest quality research in Europe through competitive funding and to support investigator-driven frontier research across all fields, on the basis of scientific excellence. The ERC was officially launched in 2007.

The idea for its establishing first came out of widespread discussions between European scientists, scholars, and research umbrella organisations at a time when no clear European mechanism to support basic research on a broad front existed. Ultimately, the ERC strives for making the European research base more prepared to respond to the needs of a knowledge-based society and provide Europe with the capabilities in frontier research necessary to meet global challenges. The ERC aims to:

- ◆ Support the best of the best in Europe across all fields of science, scholarship, and engineering;
- ◆ Promote wholly investigator-driven, or 'bottom-up' frontier research;
- ◆ Encourage the work of the established and next generation of independent top research leaders in Europe;
- ◆ Reward innovative proposals by placing emphasis on the quality of the idea rather than the research area;
- ◆ Raise the status and visibility of European frontier research and the very best researchers of today and tomorrow.

The ERC wishes to stimulate scientific excellence by funding the very best, creative researchers of any nationality and age, and supporting their innovative ideas. The ERC operates within the three main funding schemes: Starting, Consolidator, and Advanced Grants. The Consolidator Grants – available to researchers of any nationality with 7–12 years of experience since completion of PhD, a scientific track record showing great promise and an excellent research proposal – are designed to back up scholars who wish to establish or strengthen their independent and excellent research teams. The ERC supports the idea of citizen science and Open Access to research results.\*

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\* The above text about the ERC has been extracted from the materials available at <https://erc.europa.eu>. See also our previous booklets.

## Our Mythical Childhood... The Reception of Classical Antiquity in Children's and Young Adults' Culture in Response to Regional and Global Challenges



Matylda Tracewska,  
*Our Mythical Childhood*  
(2013).

The project regards the reception of Classical Antiquity in children's and young adults' culture. We consider the intersection between these two fields to be a vital space where the development of human identity takes place, both in previous epochs and in our times. Indeed, each of us has gone through the experience of childhood and many people have had contacts with Classical Antiquity as a cultural experience – transmitted as it is all over the globe and across the ages via education, through myriad interpersonal contacts, and today owing to the charm of global popular culture. Hence, the ancient tradition has built a familiar code of communication understandable in local and global contexts alike. Since 2016, owing to the frontier-research support by the **ERC Consolidator Grant (681202)**, we have been studying this phenomenon and its consequences for contemporary societies worldwide.\*

A major methodological innovation of the **Our Mythical Childhood** research, developed in the milieu of OBTA (Centre for Studies on the Classical Tradition), consists in the application of regional perspectives without the pejorative implication of regional as inferior. On the contrary, we recognize it as extremely valuable, for in this sense, Classical Reception Studies serve as a mirror of transformations around the globe. This vision is reflected also in the project's structure. We are an international team of scholars from the University of Warsaw (Poland) – the Host Institution, and from the Bar-Ilan University (Israel), the University of New England (Australia), the University of Roehampton (UK), and the University of Yaoundé 1 (Cameroon), with experts also from the United States, New Zealand and other European countries, like Austria, Germany, Greece, Italy, Slovenia, Switzerland, Russia, and the United Kingdom.

We believe deeply in citizen science and a broad collaboration with scholars as well as other members of the society. Thus, the dissemination aspect is very important to us. We lead several social media profiles and four scholarly blogs. Our aim is to contribute to establishing **a new holistic model for work in the Humanities** in international cooperation – a model on the frontiers of research, education, and culture: **Our Mythical Community**.

Katarzyna Marciniak

For more information visit our website – the source of the text above: [www.omc.obta.al.uw.edu.pl](http://www.omc.obta.al.uw.edu.pl)

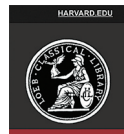
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\* We wish to acknowledge the support from the Loeb Classical Library Foundation (2012–2013) and the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation (2014–2017) for the first stages of the *Our Mythical Childhood* programme, along with the support from the “*Artes Liberales* Institute” Foundation.





# Cluster The Past for the Present



Unterstützt von / Supported by



Alexander von Humboldt  
Stiftung / Foundation



**The Cluster The Past for the Present – International Research and Educational Programme** is a joint endeavour of the Faculty of “Artes Liberales” of the University of Warsaw, Dipartimento di Storia Culture Civiltà and Dipartimento di Filologia Classica e Italianistica of the Università di Bologna, and Fakultät für Sprach- und Literaturwissenschaften of the Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität München, the Faculty of Education of the University of Cambridge, and the Faculty of Humanities, University of Fribourg.

Our aim is to make the full use of the potential of our years-long collaboration in the field of Reception Studies, *inter alia*, within the Harvard University Loeb Classical Library Foundation (2012–2013), Alexander von Humboldt Foundation Alumni Award for Innovative Networking Initiatives (2014–2017), and European Research Council Consolidator Grant (2016–2021) for the project *Our Mythical Childhood... The Reception of Classical Antiquity in Children's and Young Adults' Culture in Response to Regional and Global Challenges*. We focus in particular on:

- ◆ Developing academic projects for the benefit of society (“citizen science”), with a particular focus on the education of the youth – from kindergarten to high school;
- ◆ Disseminating and applying research results in cultural and artistic activities, also in cooperation with non-academic partners and institutions;
- ◆ Organizing workshops and projects involving students, early-stage researchers, and teachers.

## The main activities of the Cluster since its establishment in May 2017:

**October 2017** Munich: the international conference for teachers and educators *Verjüngte Antike trifft The Past for the Present: Griechisch-römische Mythologie und Historie in Kinder- und Jugendmedien der Gegenwartskultur*;

**December 2017** Warsaw: the seminar on *The Reception of the Myth of Sisyphus*;

**May 2018** Warsaw: the international workshops *The Present Meets the Past*, in the European Year of Cultural Heritage;

**June 2018** Bologna: the international conference *Figure dell'altro. Identità, alterità, stranierità*;

**October 2018** Munich: the international conference for teachers and educators *Digitale Bildung – zwischen Hype und Hybris*;

**December 2018** Warsaw: the seminar on *The Reception of Caesar in Children's and Young Adults' Culture* and the concert *Many Languages of Music* by Rafał Janiak from the Fryderyk Chopin University of Music;

**February–March 2019** Warsaw and Bologna: Homer Reading Sessions within the Festival Européen Latin Grec;

**October 2019** Munich: international conference *Mutatas dicere formas: Verjüngung der Antike durch Übersetzungen und Adaptionen im Kontakt der Kulturen*;

**December 2019** Warsaw: Ciceronian Congress *Cicero, Society, and the Idea of Artes Liberales* (with the Société Internationale des Amis de Cicéron, OBTA, and CLAS);

**February 2020** Cambridge: international conference *Mythology and Education: History and Practice*;

**July and October 2020** Munich: international online workshops and conference *HISTORMYTHOS: Intermediale, interkulturelle und diachrone Perspektiven der Antikenrezeption*.

A short presentation of the workshops *The Present Meets the Past* within the Cluster and the ERC Consolidator Grant *Our Mythical Childhood* (European Union's Horizon 2020 Research and Innovation Programme, grant agreement No 681202) in May 2018 at the Faculty of "Artes Liberales", can be watched at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2RizUWYMW0Q>. A reportage about the Cluster can be watched at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HfypV5PUMUc> (YouTube channel *Our Mythical Childhood*).

We wish to acknowledge the support from the "Artes Liberales Institute" Foundation in the organization of the Cluster's endeavours.

# Book Publications and Journal Special Issues 2020–2021

We are pleased to share the information about the most recent books and journal special issues published within the activities of the *Our Mythical Childhood* project and the Cluster: The Past for the Present:

**Giovanna Alvoni, Stefano Colangelo, Roberto Batisti, eds.,**

***Figure dell'altro. Identità, alterità, stranierità, Eikasmós:***

***Quaderni Bolognesi di Filologia Classica. Studi Online 3, Bologna:***

***Pàtron Editore, 2020, 481 pp.***

Open Access:

<https://www2.classics.unibo.it/eikasmos/>

[index.php?page=doc\\_pdf/studi\\_online/03\\_alvbatcol](https://www2.classics.unibo.it/eikasmos/index.php?page=doc_pdf/studi_online/03_alvbatcol)

The volume, financed within the framework of Bando dell'Alma Mater Studiorum Università di Bologna "Accordi di Cooperazione Internazionale con Istituzioni di Istruzione Superiore", disp. dirigenziale 434/2017, prot. 11875 del 03/02/2017, gathers the results of the international conference *Figure dell'altro. Stranierità – Foreignness – Fremdheit: La rappresentazione dello straniero nelle culture europee e mediterranee. Figures of the Other. Identity, Otherness, Foreignness*, organized at the University of Bologna in July 2018.



Sonja Schreiner, ed.,

*Kindgerechte "Arbeit am Mythos": Moderne Rezeptionsstrategien von der Adaption bis zur Rezeption,*  
Special Issue of *libri liberorum: Fachzeitschrift für Kinder- und Jugendliteraturforschung* 54-55, 2020, 196 pp.

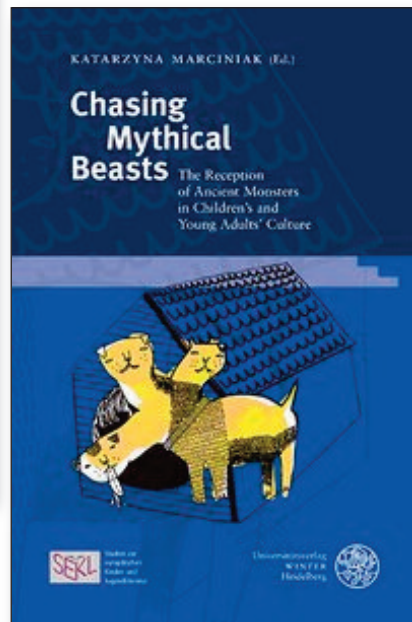
Open Access: <https://phaidra.univie.ac.at/view/o:1167947>

Katarzyna Marciniak, ed.,

*Chasing Mythical Beasts: The Reception of Ancient Monsters in Children's and Young Adults' Culture,*  
in the series "Studien zur europäischen Kinder- und Jugendliteratur / Studies in European Children's and Young Adult Literature" 8, Heidelberg: Universitätsverlag Winter, 2020, 623 pp.

Open Access will be available since October 2021:

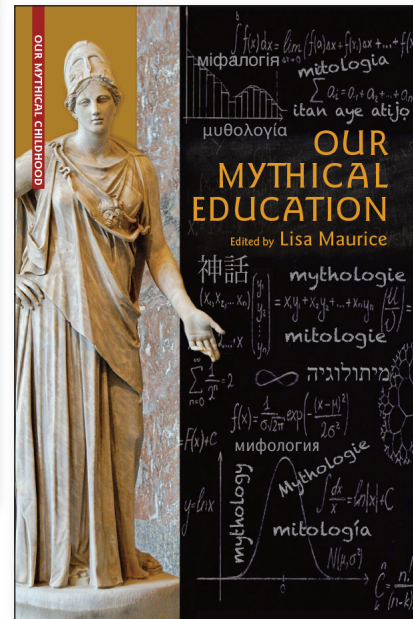
[https://www.winter-verlag.de/en/detail/978-3-8253-6995-8/Marciniak\\_Ed\\_Chasing\\_Mythical\\_Beasts/](https://www.winter-verlag.de/en/detail/978-3-8253-6995-8/Marciniak_Ed_Chasing_Mythical_Beasts/)



Open Access:  
<https://www.ojs.unito.it/index.php/COL/issue/view/486>

We wish to acknowledge the kind help from Prof. Ermanno Malaspina, the Executive Director of the Journal, in the publication of this special issue.

Open Access:  
<https://www.wuw.pl/product-eng-14887-Our-Mythical-Education-The-Reception-of-Classical-Myth-Worldwide-in-Formal-Education-1900-2020-PDF.html>



**A mythical surprise –**

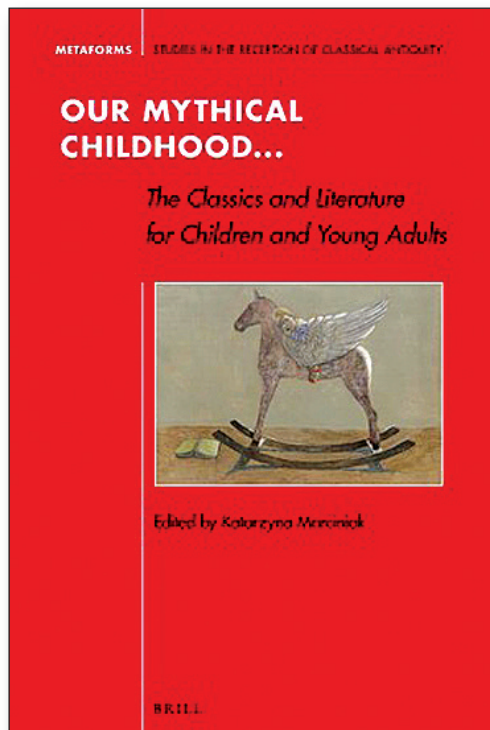
the 2016 OMC volume has been  
granted Open Access:

**Katarzyna Marciniak, ed.,**

*Our Mythical Childhood... The Classics  
and Literature for Children and Young  
Adults*, in the series "Metaforms. Studies  
in the Reception of Classical Antiquity" 8,  
Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2016, 526 pp.

Open Access: <https://brill.com/view/title/32883>

**More publications coming soon!**





## Schools' Endeavour *Naturae cognoscere causas*

We are most pleased to be able to continue our close collaboration with schools, initiated in the school year 2012/2013, even in the difficult times of the pandemic. These new circumstances have influenced the format of our work – we still cannot meet in person during the *Our Mythical Nature* conference, yet, they have no negative impact on the results. The amazing works by the students from three schools in Poland (see below) are a vivid testimony to the young people and their teachers' engagement both in research and in a dialogue with Nature, because it is Her – Nature – the heroine of the endeavour *Naturae cognoscere causas*. In the current stage the participants in the project took up the particularly demanding challenge to face the environmental issues, so vital for our world.

University of Warsaw, Faculty of "Artes Liberales"  
Centre for Studies on the Classical Tradition (OBTa)  
and the Cluster The Past for the Present

Schools Endeavour  
Educational Materials

"Strumienie" High School in Józefów  
Bartłomiej Nowodworski I High School in Kraków  
Mikołaj Rej XI High School in Warsaw



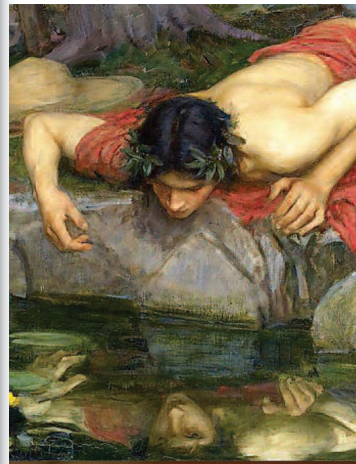
*Naturae  
cognoscere causas...*

Our Mythical Nature  
The Classics and Environmental Issues  
in Children's and Young Adults' Culture  
Warsaw 2021

ERC Consolidator Grant (681202)  
Our Mythical Childhood...  
The Reception of Classical Antiquity  
in Children's and Young Adults' Culture  
in Response to Regional and Global Challenges



Booklet with the students' works (in print).  
Cover design by Zbigniew Karaszewski.



### **“Strumienie” High School in Józefów**

with the students guided by Barbara Strycharczyk, teacher of Latin and Ancient Culture and Coordinator of the Schools' Endeavour, together with the collaborating “Strumienie” teachers: Agata Płotczyk – Polish; Anna Łukomska – Maths; Hazel Pearson – English; Maria Skibińska – French; Agnieszka Żukowska – Spanish

### **Bartłomiej Nowodworski I High School in Kraków**

with the students guided by Janusz Ryba, teacher of Latin and Ancient Culture  
Assistant Professor at the Jagiellonian University

### **Mikołaj Rej XI High School in Warsaw**

with the students guided by Anna Wojciechowska, teacher of Latin and Ancient Culture

The students chose and elaborated on such themes as the motif of Arcadia, measurement as a guarantee of Beauty, Nature in Virgil's *Georgics*, Nature in King Jan III Sobieski's Wilanów Palace, the garden as a world and the world as a garden, bees in ancient literature, the Four Elements, Nature deities in Greek and Slavic mythology, the role of Nature in ancient divination, etc. They also prepared some pieces of mythology-inspired creative writing that express a deep understanding of the crucial role of Nature, especially today, when the difficult experiences and the effects of the climate crisis show us Her importance in our lives particularly clearly.

The materials will be presented in a booklet – at the moment in preparation for print. Meanwhile, here you can see Mirosław Kaźmierczak's short reportage on the schools' endeavour: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zniUgoBRK7k>.

Thanking the school headmasters, the teachers, the students and their parents or tutors, let us repeat with hope Rej High School's motto, originating from the *Thebaid* of Statius: “Cheer up! / Have courage!” – in Latin: **Macte animo!**



## Find the Force!

In March 2020 we started publishing various educational and popularizing materials to try to answer, at least to a small extent, the needs manifesting themselves in the situation of the pandemic that limited the mobility and placed new challenges before education. We believe that Classical Antiquity may offer some help in this respect: can teach us, move, and entertain – in accordance with the ancient maxim *docere, movere, delectare*. We named this initiative **Find the Force!** and we hope to support the efforts of the educators and of the parents and tutors who are searching for ideas on how to spend time together across the generations and in a creative way, with the Classics as a source of uplifting power. For more see the website: <http://omc.obta.al.uw.edu.pl/find-the-force>. Below we present briefly some tasks within the initiative, as well as our other actions involving wider circles of the society.

### Olympus Ready-to-Wear

A game prepared by **Alessia Borriello** and **Ludovica Lusvardi** (phot.). Alessia is a student from the Department of Classical Philology and Italian Studies at the University of Bologna and in Winter term of 2019/20 accomplished her Erasmus Plus stay at the Faculty of "Artes Liberales" at the University of Warsaw and participated in the *Our Mythical Childhood* project. Ludovica is a graduate from Fashion Design at Politecnico of Milan and continues her training at the Theatrical Tailoring at Accademia della Scala. For more see: <http://omc.obta.al.uw.edu.pl/ready-to-wear>.



Zbigniew Karaszewski, *Find the Force!* (2020).



See <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=76LZWwhl5Q0>.

## Paint (and Sing) Your Own Antiquity!

The materials prepared by **Sonya Nevin** and **Steve K. Simons** (phot., see also e.g. <http://omc.obta.al.uw.edu.pl/iris>) on the base of their amazing animations of the Greek vases (<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCIqmQWyywSyx0qZE-lRdLGg>) and a set dedicated to the Muses prepared by **Zbigniew Karaszewski** (<http://omc.obta.al.uw.edu.pl/paint-the-muses>) inspire and encourage the audience to learn about Classical Mythology in a creative way.

In 2021 Sonya and Steve prepared also a truly mythical surprise – Sappho's poem about the wedding of Hector and Andromache has been reconstructed with the help from the eminent expert in ancient Greek music **Prof. Armand D'Angour** and performed by the amazing Greek artist **Aliki Markantonatou**. You can listen the poem via YouTube channel and learn more about its reconstruction here: <http://panoplyclassicsandanimation.blogspot.com/2021/05/a-panoply-interview-with-aliki.html>.



Steve K. Simons and Sonya Nevin.



Temperance, age 7, Ireland.



Sappho: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QFkcmrH4XAg>.

Panoply logo.

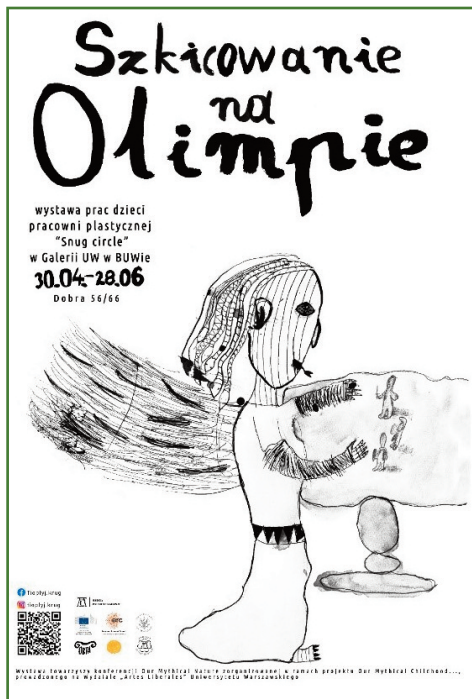


Oktawia, age 5, Poland.



## Sketching on Olympus

On 29th April the exhibition "**Sketching on Olympus**" was inaugurated at the University of Warsaw Gallery in the UW Library (BUW) – at this point we wish to thank Dr Tomasz Strączek, the Head of the UW Gallery for his hospitality. The exhibition, conceptualized by Hanna Paulouskaya, responded to the ideas within the **Our Mythical Nature** stage and presented works by children from Belarus and Ukraine (13 children aged between 5 and 15 years old), currently living in Warsaw, on Greek mythology and more. These drawings were created during classes in an art studio for children "Цёплы круг" (The Warm Circle) founded in September 2020 by two Belarusian artists from Minsk, graduates of the Belarusian Academy of Fine Arts: Tatiana Karpachova and Liza Mikhadziuk.



Poster of the exhibition.



Michał Racewicz and his artwork.



Władysława Racewicz and her artwork.

For more about the exhibition see here:

<https://ourmythicalchildhoodblog.wordpress.com/2021/06/05/sketches-from-olympus-in-the-university-of-warsaw-gallery-eng-pl-by/>.

## Antiquity-Camera-Action! Ecology Edition

We organized the third edition of the video competition **"Antiquity-Camera-Action!"** for elementary and high school students with the main theme **Ecology**. We are pleased to announce that the Jury decided to award the 1st prize to the group **"Bogowie z Zana"** from the 1st Tomasz Zan High School with Bilingual Branches in Wschowa for the movie **"You want to change the world – start with yourself"**, with the team's tutor Tomasz Wojnarowski.

The 2nd prize was awarded to the **"Akcja Animacja"** group from the Social School Complex of the Social Educational Society in Szczecinek for the film **"Eco-myths"**, with the team's tutor Jolanta Sierpińska. The 3rd prize – to the group **"O.K. stuDio"** from the Krzysztof Kamil Baczyński High School in Nowa Sól for the film **"(Un)divine fault"** directed by Olivia Kościuszko, tutored by Iwona Paszkowska, and a special award was given to Akcja Animacja (Juniors) group from the Social School Complex of the Social Educational Society in Szczecinek for the film **"Eco-gods"**, with the team's tutor Jolanta Sierpińska. The award ceremony and workshops took place on 27–28 April 2021. The participants had the opportunity to learn about movies, theatre, and ecology under the care of the eminent experts and artists: Dr Agnieszka Korytkowska, the Head of the Jury Krzysztof Korwin-Piotrowski, Dr Michał Oleszczyk, and Dr Maria Wiśniewska with the Laboratory Leadership – Green Artes. We enjoyed this meeting very much and we are grateful for the participants for their time! If you wish to read more and watch the movies, see here:

<https://ourmythicalchildhoodblog.wordpress.com/2021/06/22/antiquity-camera-action-the-results-of-the-movie-competition-3rd-edition-ecology/>.



Screenshot from the winning movie.



The Athena statue and the diploma, phot. Tomasz Wojnarowski.



## ACCLAIM: Autism Connecting with CLAssically-Inspired Mythology Network

The year 2021 brought also the development of the research on the role of ancient myths in the work with autistic children. Susan Deacy organized on 24 May the first **ACCLAIM Network online event**, bringing together a range of speakers from a variety of backgrounds and various areas of expertise from across the world to discuss autism and mythology in children's education. The important initiatives took place also under the Israeli wing, managed by Lisa Maurice in collaboration with Ayelet Peer. For more see: <http://www.omc.obta.al.uw.edu.pl/acclaim>.

ACCLAIM: Autism Connecting with CLAssically-Inspired Mythology Network

### The first ACCLAIM Network online event



Poster by Zbigniew Karaszewski.



## Myths from Cameroon

On 11 July 2021, Heliana Onomo from the Cameroonian wing of the project managed by Daniel A. Nkemleke, partnered with some non-profit organizations and prepared a **day of health and fun** at the Foundation Fact Orphanage in Essos, Yaoundé. The aim of the event was to teach children about proper hygiene and entertain them with Cameroonian oral stories (incl. three myths from the Our Mythical Childhood database) via a colouring book, specially designed for this purpose. There were also the dentist and doctor consultations. Finally, a storytelling session took place – it was held by Emmanuel Matateyou who is the author of many children's books and professor of oral literature at École Normale Supérieure. As Heliana recalls, "working on this event was an inspiring and heartwarming experience". More information and Heliana's full post (here only short fragments have been used) will be published soon on the OMC blog:

<https://ourmythicalchildhoodblog.wordpress.com/>.



Phot by Heliana Onomo.

## Links

ERC Website <https://erc.europa.eu/>

Cordis Website [http://cordis.europa.eu/project/rcn/205179\\_en.html](http://cordis.europa.eu/project/rcn/205179_en.html)

ERC's Information on the Project <https://erc.europa.eu/projects-figures/stories/linking-classical-antiquity-and-modern-youth-culture>

UW's Information on the Project [www.en.uw.edu.pl/11th-erc-grant/](http://www.en.uw.edu.pl/11th-erc-grant/)

UW's Clip on the Projekt [www.youtube.com/watch?v=sWMX5NuDRrU](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sWMX5NuDRrU)

University of Warsaw [www.en.uw.edu.pl](http://www.en.uw.edu.pl)

Bar-Ilan Univeristy <https://www1.biu.ac.il/indexE.php>

University of New England [www.une.edu.au](http://www.une.edu.au)

University of Roehampton [www.roehampton.ac.uk](http://www.roehampton.ac.uk)

University of Yaoundé 1 [www.uy1.uninet.cm](http://www.uy1.uninet.cm)

YouTube [www.youtube.com/channel/UC6zvu9EXsl0gK5rSvgnQseQ](http://www.youtube.com/channel/UC6zvu9EXsl0gK5rSvgnQseQ)

Facebook [www.facebook.com/OurMythicalChildhood](http://www.facebook.com/OurMythicalChildhood)

Twitter [www.twitter.com/OMChildhood](http://www.twitter.com/OMChildhood)

Instagram [www.instagram.com/OMChildhood](http://www.instagram.com/OMChildhood)

Our Mythical Childhood Survey <http://www.omc.obta.al.uw.edu.pl/myth-survey>

Antipodean Odyssey <https://antipodeanodyssey.wordpress.com>

Mythology and Autism <http://myth-autism.blogspot.com>

Our Mythical Childhood Blog <https://ourmythicalchildhoodblog.wordpress.com/>

Panoply Vase Animation Project <http://www.panoply.org.uk>

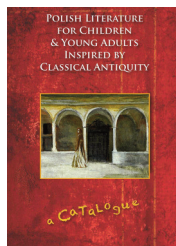
Faculty of “Artes Liberales” [www.old.al.uw.edu.pl/eng.php](http://www.old.al.uw.edu.pl/eng.php)  
Centre for Studies on the Classical Tradition (OBTA) [www.obta.al.uw.edu.pl/en/index](http://www.obta.al.uw.edu.pl/en/index)  
Cultural Studies – Mediterranean Civilization [www.cs.al.uw.edu.pl](http://www.cs.al.uw.edu.pl)  
Modern Greek Philology [www.psh.al.uw.edu.pl](http://www.psh.al.uw.edu.pl)  
Collegium Artes Liberales [www.clas.al.uw.edu.pl](http://www.clas.al.uw.edu.pl)  
Anthropozoology [www.az.uw.edu.pl](http://www.az.uw.edu.pl)

Cluster The Past for the Present <http://www.cluster.obta.al.uw.edu.pl/>  
Department of Classical Philology and Italian Studies, University of Bologna <http://www.ficlit.unibo.it/it>  
Department of History and Cultures, University of Bologna <http://www.disci.unibo.it/it>  
Faculty of Education, University of Cambridge <https://www.educ.cam.ac.uk/>  
Faculty of Humanities, University of Fribourg <https://www.unifr.ch/lettres/fr/>  
Faculty of Languages and Literatures, Ludwig Maximilian University of Munich <http://www.fak13.lmu.de>

Alexander von Humboldt Foundation [www.humboldt-foundation.de/web/home.html](http://www.humboldt-foundation.de/web/home.html)  
“Artes Liberales Institute” Foundation [www.ial.org.pl](http://www.ial.org.pl)  
Loeb Classical Library Foundation [www.lclf.harvard.edu](http://www.lclf.harvard.edu)  
Our Mythical Childhood... The Classics and Children’s Literature between East and West (Loeb Project, 2012–2013, archive website)  
[www.omc.al.uw.edu.pl](http://www.omc.al.uw.edu.pl)  
Chasing Mythical Beasts... (Humboldt Project, 2014–2017, archive website) [www.mythicalbeasts.obta.al.uw.edu.pl](http://www.mythicalbeasts.obta.al.uw.edu.pl)

Mikołaj Rej XI High School in Warsaw [www.rej.edu.pl](http://www.rej.edu.pl)  
Mikołaj Rej XI Classical Profile [www.facebook.com/jubileusz-klasyklasycznej/](https://www.facebook.com/jubileusz-klasyklasycznej/)  
“Strumienie” High School in Józefów [www.strumienie.sternik.edu.pl](http://www.strumienie.sternik.edu.pl)  
Bartłomiej Nowodworski I High School in Cracow <http://www.nowodworek.krakow.pl/>

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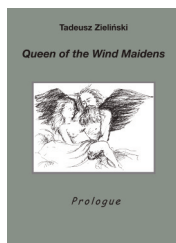


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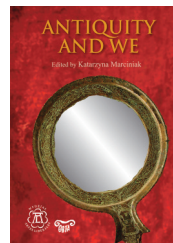


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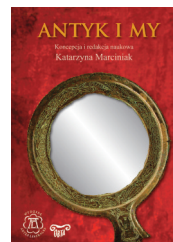


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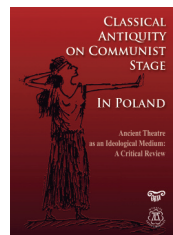
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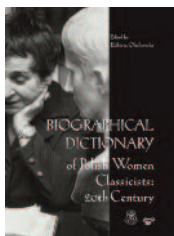
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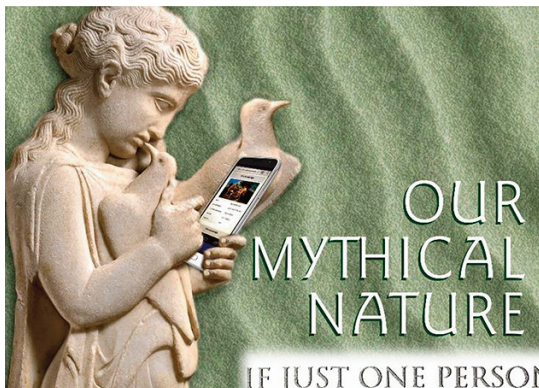
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on a new mythical adventure!**





IF JUST ONE PERSON BELIEVES IN YOU  
DEEP ENOUGH AND STRONG ENOUGH...

