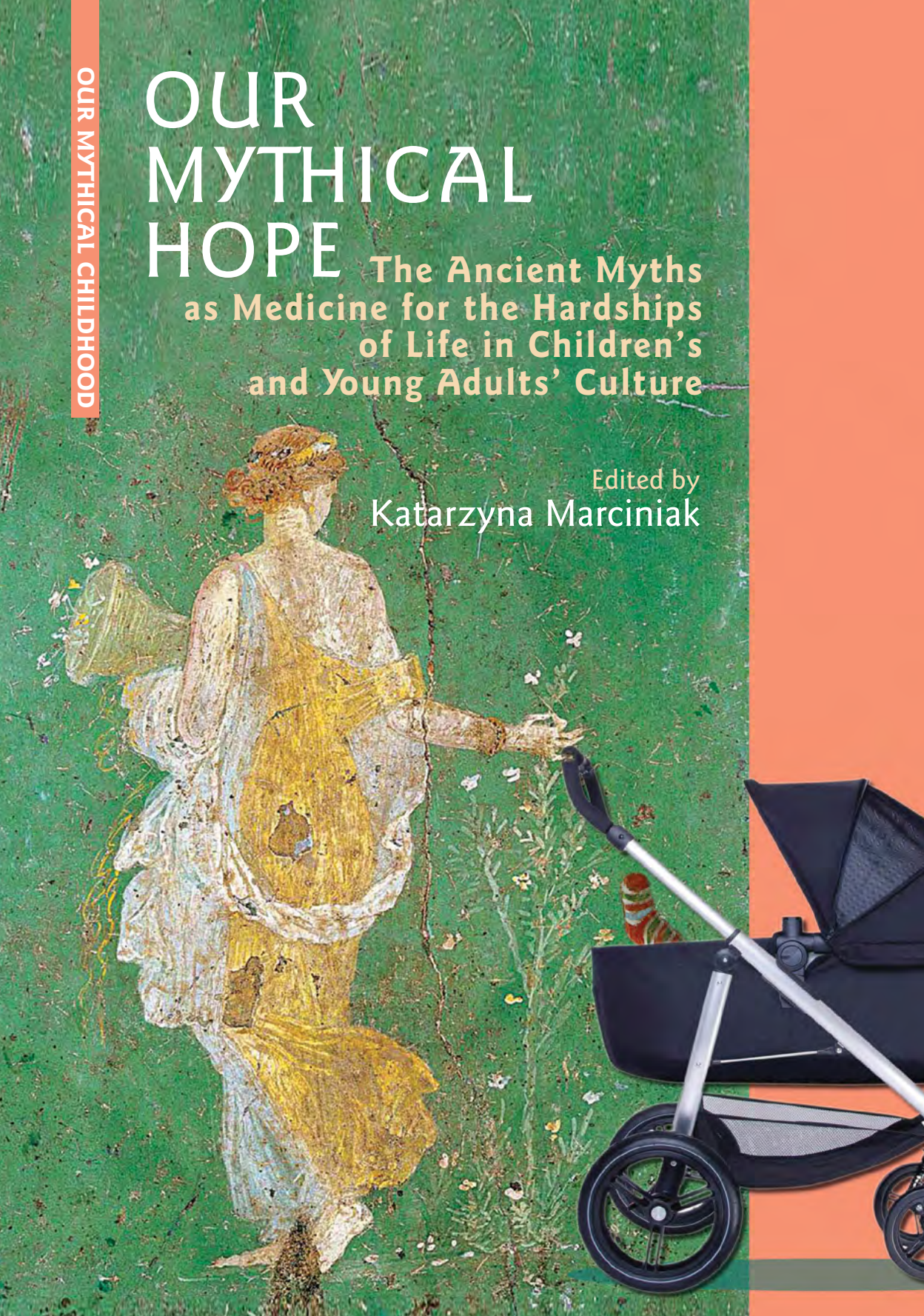
OUR MYTHICAL CHILDHOOD

OUR MYTHICAL HOPE

The Ancient Myths as Medicine for the Hardships of Life in Children's and Young Adults' Culture

Edited by
Katarzyna Marciniak



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Matylda Tracewska, *Our Mythical Childhood* (2013), artwork symbolizing the Programme.

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Edited by Katarzyna Marciniak

WYDAWNICTWA UNIWERSYTETU WARSZAWSKIEGO
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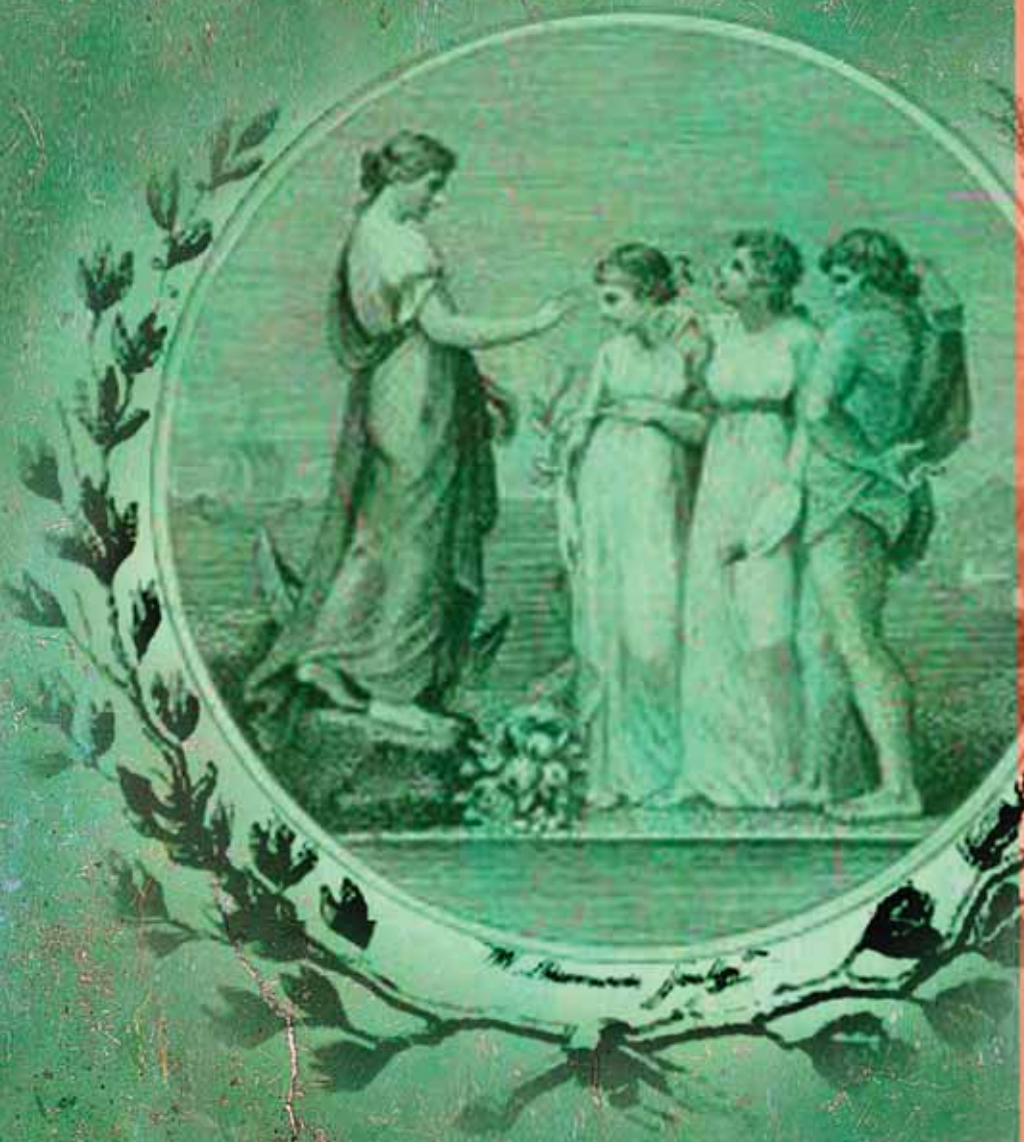

Marguerite Johnson

"FOR THE CHILDREN": CHILDREN'S COLUMNS IN AUSTRALIAN NEWSPAPERS DURING THE GREAT WAR – MYTHIC HOPE, OR MYTHIC INDOCTRINATION?

Since the colonization of Australia in 1788, there has been extensive importation of the ancient cultures of Greece and Rome via British and European traditions. Colonists, particularly those of the elite classes, read and promoted classical texts; privileged education that included Greek and Latin (initially almost exclusively for boys); admired neoclassical art and displayed copies of originals. The intentions behind this importation were varied, but common motivations included the desire to replicate the living conditions of well-heeled homes as well as public amenities such as libraries, museums, and gentlemen's clubs; the belief that the land and its peoples were without the markers of "civilization"; and the perceived instructional benefit of inspirational art and literature to assist in the interpretation of an alien country. As Simon Ryan has stated in his work on cartography, exploration, and the construction of Australia:

> The antipodality of Australia joins with its construction as a *tabula rasa* to produce the continent as an inverted, empty space desperately requiring rectification and occupation.[1]

With the arrival of the First Fleet at Botany Bay to establish the penal colony of New South Wales in 1788 – and even before, with the earlier explorations undertaken between 1606 and 1770 – the belief in the need for "rectification and occupation" of the blank map that was Australia began. Part of the construction

[1] Simon Ryan, "Inscribing the Emptiness: Cartography, Exploration and the Construction of Australia", in Chris Tiffin and Alan Lawson, eds., *De-Scribing Empire: Post-Colonialism and Textuality*, London: Routledge, 1994, 116.

of the new nation was a determined programme of classicizing a no man's land of nothingness. Among the books and pamphlets on board the First Fleet, for example, was Adam Ferguson's classically inspired *An Essay on the History of Civil Society*[2] and François Fénelon's *The Adventures of Telemachus, the Son of Ulysses*.[3] Captain Watkin Tench, a member of the First Fleet, could quote Milton's *Paradise Lost* from memory as well as Shakespeare and the Latin and Greek Classics, and may have carried such canonical works with him. Prior to the voyage of the First Fleet, and extant in one of Sydney Parkinson's sketchbooks, is a list of reading material he presumably carried onboard the *Endeavour*. Included in the list are: the *Iliad*, the *Odyssey*, the poems of Virgil, and Ovid's *Metamorphoses*.[4]

In the earliest accounts of New South Wales, its Aboriginal peoples, landscapes, flora and fauna, there were consistent classical overtones – from quotations of Greek and Latin authors, to mythical comparisons, to theories of race, and reliance on ancient philosophies to communicate and interpret the colonization process. On the title page of *The Voyage of Governor Phillip to Botany Bay*,[5] there are three allegorical figures – Hope, Art, and Peace – cast in Grecian style, with a fourth figure, Labour, reminiscent of the Farnese Hercules (see Fig. 1). From the same publication is the engraving entitled *Natives of Botany Bay* – whose figures are reminiscent of Greek sculptural style, but bear little resemblance to the true physicality of the local peoples.[6]

From 1778, through the course of the long nineteenth century, the classical hold on Australia continued in multifarious forms, unabated. Part of this continuation was the result of the embedding of an imported classical curriculum in Australian schools, predominantly in elite single-sex grammar schools, from

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[2] Adam Ferguson, *An Essay on the History of Civil Society*, ed. Fania Oz-Salzberger, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995 (ed. pr. 1767).

[3] François de Salignac de La Mothe Fénelon, *The Adventures of Telemachus, the Son of Ulysses*, ed. O.M. Brack, Jr., introd. and notes by Leslie A. Chilton, trans. Tobias Smollett, Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 1997; originally published as *Les aventures de Télémaque fils d'Ulysse* (La Haye: Adrian Moetjens, 1699).

[4] Parkinson's artistic records of the *Endeavour*'s explorations reference classical art, as well as the warrior codes and related tenets of classical works, such as the *Iliad*; see Rüdiger Joppien and Bernard Smith, *The Art of Captain Cook's Voyages*, vol. 1: *The Voyage of the* Endeavour *1768–1771*, Melbourne: Oxford University Press and Australian Academy of the Humanities, 1985. For a copy of the extract from Parkinson's journal, see ibidem, 52, Plate 48 (Sydney Parkinson, Mem[orandu]m of Books. BL Add. MS 9345, f.74^{v}).

[5] Arthur Phillip, *The Voyage of Governor Phillip to Botany Bay: With an Account of the Establishment of the Colonies of Port Jackson & Norfolk Island*, London: John Stockdale, 1789.

[6] See Marguerite Johnson, "Indigeneity and Classical Reception in *The Voyage of Governor Phillip to Botany Bay*", *Classical Receptions Journal* 6.3 (2014), 402–425.

Figure 1: Labour and Hope, Art, and Peace, title page of Arthur Phillip, *The Voyage of Governor Phillip to Botany Bay*, London: John Stockdale, 1790 (ed. pr. 1789), via Google Books.

the time of their establishment in the 1800s. For children of poor, working-class and lower-middle-class families, access to this curriculum came in the form of retellings of myths and legends, history lessons, and – outside the school environment – children's pages and columns in newspapers and magazines.

1.

Children's pages and columns have been common in the West since the nineteenth century.[7] The first children's magazine is thought to have been the French publication *L'ami des enfants*, first published in January 1782. In England, it was most likely *The Juvenile Magazine*, published for one year only in 1788. The *Children's Magazine*, beginning in 1789, was the first of hundreds of such

[7] See Rachel Bryant Davies's chapter in this volume, "'This Is the Modern Horse of Troy': The Trojan Horse as Nineteenth-Century Children's Entertainment and Educational Analogy", 89–127.

publications in the United States. Unfortunately, however, like *The Juvenile Magazine*, its lifespan was short, lasting only four months. During the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, the most popular American magazines were *Youth's Companion* (1827–1929), *Our Young Folks* (1865–1873), *St. Nicholas* (1873–1949), and *Harper's Young People* (1879–1899).

The magazines featured original stories, poems, and illustrations, as well as historical and human interest entries, some of which were based on classical themes. In the November 1873 issue of *St. Nicholas*, for example, there is a classically inspired riddle (47) and a story entitled "Hermann, the Defender of Germany" – a historical tale of "a young German prince […] taken captive and carried to Rome […] [i]n the time of the Emperor Augustus" (22).

When these pages and columns became part of newspapers, material from children's magazines was often reprinted in them. In 1876 in *The Queenslander*, there were stories called "Myths about the Stars", which were imported entries by English anthropologist and folklorist Edward Clodd (1840–1930).[8] And an entry the following year,[9] "The Heroes, or, Greek Fairy Tales", takes the form of an excerpt from the "Preface" of Charles Kingsley's 1856 anthology, *The Heroes, or, Greek Fairy Tales for My Children*. Here there is distinct moralizing; for example, the excerpt from Kingsley's "Preface" mingles biblical references and Christian morality with his myths:

> But these Greeks, as St. Paul told them, forgot what God had taught them, and though they were God's offspring, worshipped idols of wood and stone, and fell at last into sin and shame, and then, of course, into cowardice and slavery, till they perished out of that beautiful land which God had given them for so many years. (10)

But there is also, importantly, an emphasis on the educational and moral benefits of Greek myths for children, as Kingsley goes on to write:

> [N]ext to these old Romances, which were written in the Christian middle age, there are no fairy tales like those old Greek ones, for beauty, and wisdom, and truth, and for making children love noble deeds, and trust in God to help them through. (10)

[8] See, e.g., Clodd's entry in "Children's Corner" entitled "Childhood of the World: Part II.XXI. Myths about Stars", *The Queenslander*, 8 January 1876. This is a particularly interesting entry in its use of comparative mythologies that situate the Greek myths of the stars within a broader cultural context.

[9] "Children's Corner: The Heroes, or, Greek Fairy Tales", *The Queenslander*, 10 November 1877. Please note the abbreviated title as printed in the column.

Columns featuring Greek myths also mingled education with stories. On 26 November 1909, for example, the "Children's Column" from the South Australian newspaper the *Kapunda Herald* published an entry on flying machines beginning with the story of Daedalus and ending with information on mono-planes.[10]

The moral, Christian, and educational undertones of these retellings allowed the inclusion of what may now be defined as more mature issues in children's pages and columns in Australia. This was in keeping with the tenor of similar columns elsewhere that began to incorporate editorials and articles on world events, rather than focusing on past ones. These took the form of a history lesson told as a story (as in the example of "Hermann, the Defender of Germany"). These news topics were usually covered in a gentle, light style that reflected an editorial approach of informative but non-threatening edification.

2.

The case study here is from the column "For the Children", published in the *Australian Christian Commonwealth* on 25 September 1914. This was a weekly newspaper from South Australia, first published in 1901, with its title reflecting the federation of the Australian colonies into one nation that year. Methodist ministers edited the paper, which included sermons, snippets of general news, church events, obituaries, and advertisements. There was also a weekly "Sunday School" page that comprised lessons for children, the inaugural edition of which featured a section entitled "For Young Readers".[11] A "Children's Corner" was introduced in the 8 February 1901 edition and concentrated on matter-of-fact instructions and advice. The title of the column changed once more (in the same month) to "Young People's Corner" and then reverted to "Children's Corner" in April 1901.[12] Further changes were made as the editors may have

[10] Children's Friend, "Children's Column", *Kapunda Herald*, 26 November 1909, 2. The *Kapunda Herald*'s "Children's Column" was particularly successful, partly because its editor, "Children's Friend", collaborated with some ninety schools to promote contributions and competitions.

[11] In the inaugural edition of 4 January 1901, the section called "For Young Readers" was comprised of the story "The Angel of the New Year" (5). In the 18 January 1901 issue, "For Young Readers" printed a sermon called "Habit" (7). In the other two January editions of 1901, the segment was not included, although there were entries for children, including a lengthy essay on etiquette, morality, and general Christian values entitled "A Word to Young People" in a column called "Respect for the Hedge", based on Ecclesiastes 10:8 (11 January 1901, 19), and the essay "For the Boys: How to be Strong" (25 January 1901, 11).

[12] The first "Children's Corner" was brief, with an article on "Helping" (14). Tips on mathematical fractions comprised the entry on 15 February 1901 (11), while the 22 February 1901 edition (7),

sought the right tenor for the young readers or, more likely, adopted the title that accompanied each syndicated piece, and in the same month of the same year, the column "For Young Men" appeared (with an amended title – "For Our Boys" – on 3 May 1901). "Children's Corner" returned on 10 May 1901, but vanished again, replaced with a focus on adolescent girls and young women in two columns in the 17 May 1901 edition (12), returning in June of the same year.

Throughout 1901, the *Australian Christian Commonwealth* changed the titles of its columns for children, but the content or themes remained constant: a focus on Christian morality and lifestyle for young people cast in stories and sermon-like instruction. In the 5 July 1901 issue, a syndicated advice column appeared that was directly addressed to children and penned by "Old Jonathan". The column, "Children's Corner", became regular and extended to including letters from readers to Old Jonathan.[13] On 18 April 1902, Old Jonathan was joined by "Thelma", who wrote a syndicated column for girls. By 1902, the "Children's Corner" was a regular feature, as were the columns for boys and girls.

On 20 February 1903, Old Jonathan makes a marked departure from overtly Christian tales and retellings of biblical narratives and tells the myth of Pandora. "Pandora's Box" is retold in a relatively faithful style until a decidedly Christian moral is attached to the end of the myth:

> This quaint old fable teaches us that whatever of sorrow or trouble may afflict our hearts there will remain the unifying spirit of hope [...]. Sin has left an awful train of sorrow and misery, but Hope speaks of "The Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world". (4)

The Christian interpretation of the myth continues at some length and includes a depiction of the personification of Elpis as "the beautiful Angel of Hope".

Old Jonathan authored the column until mid-1903; thereafter there are other contributors until the arrival of "Uncle Ben" (Rev. Brian Wibberley, from Monota in South Australia), who announced (15 April 1904) that the newspaper was seeking children's contributions for the column (7). Uncle Ben added a distinctly Australian tenor to the column as well as a directly personal interaction with the young readers. His last column was on 25 March 1910, after which it was taken over by "Old Boy" and renamed "Young People's Page".[14] The new

which replaced "Children's Corner" with "Young People's Corner", warned of the perils of boys smoking. Such segments were not, however, consistently included in the early phase of the newspaper.

[13] See 11 October 1901, 14. The column "For the Boys" also reappeared on 25 October 1901, 11.

[14] Uncle Ben's goodbye letter was printed on 1 April 1910, 14.

column did not last for more than a year, and then was replaced by small poems printed under the heading of "For the Children", although the separate columns for boys and girls continued.

3.

Over the next few years, the column was comprised of various syndicated essays, stories, and poems until 3 April 1914, when it was taken over by "Waratah" (the name of a native Australian shrub) and was simply named "The Children". The following week, Waratah's feature became known as "For the Children". The column was a conversational, letter-style communication that included stories, advice, and letters. In contrast to Uncle Ben, Waratah was more focused on storytelling in the form of traditional tales retold rather than on updates by its author and his liking for contemporary anecdotes of moral virtue. Waratah's approach to the column was also markedly different to the previous contributors in terms of the inclusion of Greek myths and historical adages repurposed for children. Until then, the column avoided the topic, except for the tale of Pandora, retold on 20 February 1903 by Old Jonathan (discussed above), and another story entitled "The Fairies and the Furies", printed during the editorial hiatus following the departure of Old Boy and without any authorial attribution on 25 March 1904. In this story, the goddess Athena is portrayed as a fairy and the Furies are sprites. Additionally, the girls-only column, "Talks with Our Girls", included one Greek myth, namely, the story of Narcissus (9 October 1908), which the editor, Thelma, described as one that "teaches a splendid lesson" (3). Under the editorship of Waratah, several Greek stories are told, beginning with the tale of "Alexander and the Horse" (1 May 1914); followed by Aesop's fable "The Hare and the Tortoise" (29 May 1914); a story featuring Neptune (26 June 1914); and another on Atalanta (18 September 1914). Waratah's column was made more unusual by its inclusion of references to and stories from other cultures.[15]

Waratah first mentions the Great War on 14 August 1914, and spends part of the entry explaining the reasons for it (16).[16] This was in keeping with the national and international nature of the newspaper in terms of its coverage

[15] See, e.g., "Buddha's Advice" (1 May 1914, 16) and "Tales from Japan" (26 June 1914, 16).

[16] In this first entry on the Great War, Waratah is somewhat ambivalent and there is a sense of resignation that it must be fought. In short, it is hardly an enthusiastic endorsement. A more patriotic stance is evident in the column on 21 August 1914, and in the entry for 28 August 1914, 16, Waratah asks young readers to donate to the Red Cross or the Patriotic Fund on Wattle Day

of secular events, including the Great War. The 1916 Conscription Referendum in Australia, for example, received attention with arguments in favour of it, and laments when it was unsuccessful.[17] As the Great War progressed, Waratah continued to discuss it in the column, urging young readers to support the cause, particularly the Australian forces. This patriotism was combined with the stories selected for inclusion, as illustrated in the page dated 25 September 1914, in which Waratah retells two Greek myths, namely, the stories of Persephone and Iphigeneia,[18] which are framed by an editorial that directs the children in how to "read" the stories:

> My dear Girls and Boys –
> Last week we talked about a story told by the ancient peoples called Greeks.[19] That story, you remember, was about a Greek father who thought so little of his daughter that he "exposed" her, or put her out on the hillside to die. I am sorry to say that the Greeks often did that. Yet there are many stories that have come down to us from them of fathers and mothers who loved their children as much as your parents love you. (10)

Waratah introduces the narrative by contextualizing it as a "story", which I would suggest is a carefully chosen word as the term "myth" had connotations of so-called pagan beliefs contrary to the Christian faith. This would reflect, then, the tendency to cast the myths of the Ancient Greeks and Romans in the same genre as fairy tales, which may have been regarded by Christians as less damaging to young minds. In a column by Waratah on 4 February 1916, the term "mythology" is defined as "stories which are not really true. But they generally teach us something […]. Although, of course, we know that they are not really true, yet we like to hear and know them" (10).

The reference to the story of exposure, followed by the statement that "the Greeks often did that", differentiates the "pagan" culture of the ancient Mediterranean from the safe Christian morality of twentieth-century Australia – an example of the "framing" that directed children in how to "read" these stories. There is an uneasy confusion between myth and reality in this handling

(celebrated on 1 September each year, Wattle Day takes its name from the Australian native shrub and marks the first day of spring).

[17] The 1916 and 1917 conscription referendums were a divisive historical "moment" in Australia. The two referendums, in October 1916 and December 1917, both resulted in votes against conscription.

[18] Original spelling.

[19] The story referenced is the tale of Atalanta.

of myths of exposure with Waratah classifying them as stories on the one hand, yet extracting some form of historical reality about Greek culture on the other.

The tale of Persephone is introduced as an example of intense parental love, particularly maternal love. The narrative is relatively faithful to the basic plot of the original myth with an expected softening of the elements of violence. It is followed by a second retelling, the myth of Iphigeneia, introduced as "another story of a Greek maid" (16). Besides the gender of its protagonist, the role of parents is used to link the second story to the first: "Her father was not so fond of her as Persephone's mother was of her" (16). This second story is marked as a heroic tale by the opening description of the protagonist as "ready to die for the sake of other people" (16).

In the unfolding of the story, there is a passage on the Greeks' anger at Artemis' refusal to let the fleet sail until she received amends for Agamemnon's slaying of her stag:

> "That is unjust," said some. "It was our king, and not the rest of us who did the deed. Why should we all suffer for it?"
> "Ah," replied the goddess, "we have often to suffer for other people just as we can sometimes make amends for others." (16)

This version of the myth of Iphigeneia is the Taurian salvation myth, more suitable for children than its alternative, but with an ending characterized by pathos in this retelling: "Poor girl!" said the Greeks. "For our sakes she has lost father, mother, home, and country" (16). This element of pathos intentionally leads readers to the heavy-handed moral of the story, which immediately follows:

> You know, children, things like this often happen in our own times, or in times which we know we have a true history of, and not only in "myths" or stories like these, which we know are not true. You all know the story of Joan of Arc, the shepherdess who, for the sake of her country, died. (16)

The reference to Joan of Arc emphasizes a common strategy in propaganda writing, namely, the inclusion of an exemplary character or individual, and the related strategy of the heroization process.[20] This has already been seen in the treatment of Demeter as the exemplary mother in the myth of Persephone

[20] See Raoul Girardet, *Mythes et mythologies politiques*, Paris: Seuil, 1990, 71. Girardet discusses the literary process evident in the propagandist use of myth and fairy tale that occurs when the original story is linked to reality to rarefy or perfect the real situation by raising it to a fantastical status.

as outlined by Waratah. Such use of myth to communicate a particular message depends on the successful establishment of a link between the subject and the target audience, regularly achieved in relation to children through the youthful age of the protagonist in the given story.

From Iphigeneia to Joan of Arc, the author moves to the Australian troops about to leave for war:

> Did you go to town on Monday to see the troops? Those brave men you saw marching so gladly are willingly going into what may be the most dreadful times, and even face death itself willingly that you and I may live under the Union Jack. (16)

The message is stressed by the print layout with the words "Living under the Union Jack" in bold, each word in upper case and the phrase occupying one line. It is followed by a concluding message:

> I do not suppose you have thought much about it. There is such a lot else to think about, isn't there? Marbles, and dolls, and school, and homework, and all kinds of things. (16)

For children about to experience fear and loss, rationing and deprivation, the linking of these stories of extreme sacrifice by young protagonists to their everyday preoccupations created a framework of understanding and aligned them with a more adult perspective.[21]

In Australia, a member of the British Commonwealth, the national support of the Great War was instilled in school children at all levels of their education. They participated in various patriotic activities, including knitting "trench comforts", such as socks for the soldiers and raising money to contribute to the funding of the war effort. Children also took part in organized recreation in which they wore patriotic outfits, as part of the fundraising cause. The activities were conducted under the auspices of the Australian Children's Patriotic Fund, which produced publications for schools, such as reports on activities, complete with balance sheets, coverage of events, and photographs.[22] The Fund's zealous

[21] Themes of war and related topics were not confined to the *Australian Christian Commonwealth*. The *West Coast Recorder* began a "Young Crusaders" column in November 1914, which lasted until 1917; see "SA Newspapers: Children's Columns", SA Memory, http://www.samemory.sa.gov.au/site/page.cfm?u=1470&startRow=1 (accessed 25 July 2019).

[22] See, e.g., Adelaide L. Miethke, ed., *Patriotic Work in Our Schools: 1915–1917. A Report on the South Australian Children's Patriotic Fund*, Adelaide: Rigby Publishers, [1918].

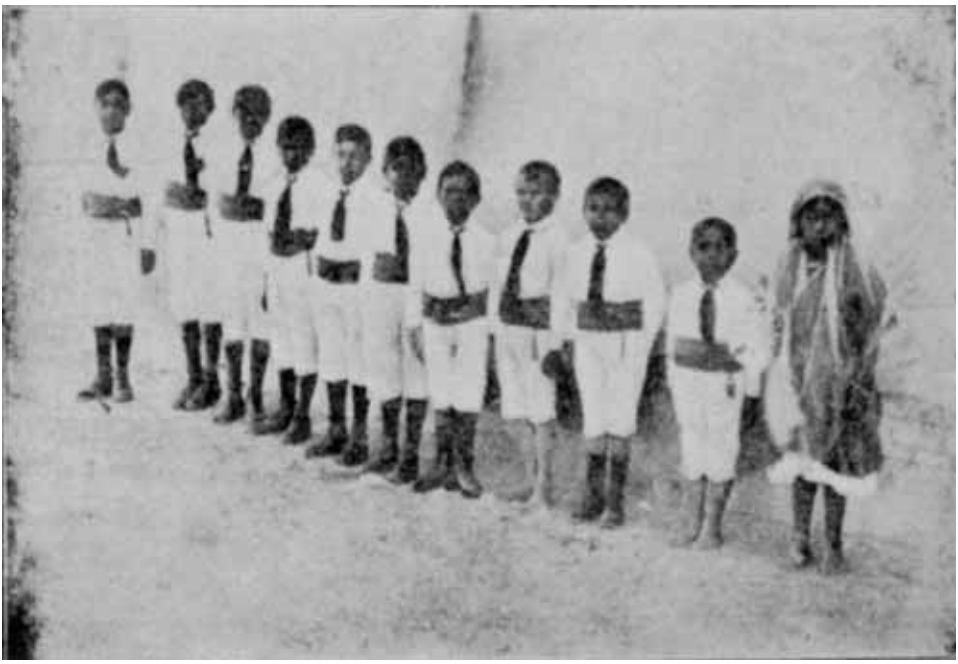

Figure 2: "Point Pearce (Aboriginal Station). Item in School Patriotic Concert", from Adelaide L. Miethke, ed., *Patriotic Work in Our Schools: 1915–1917. A Report on the South Australian Children's Patriotic Fund,* Adelaide: Rigby Publishers, [1918], 24. Author's personal collection. Image digitized by Katherine Johnson (5 December 2017). Used with permission.

dedication to the war effort even extended to mission stations such as the one in Port Pearce, run by the Church of England on the Country of the Narungga people in South Australia. Unable to claim their own land "as their own" and, like all Indigenous Australians and Torres Strait Islanders, not recognized as citizens until 1967,[23] their children were still called upon to contribute to the war effort (see Figs. 2 and 3).

How do we contextualize these mythic retellings within a Great War framework? Did the stories, particularly the myth of Iphigeneia, provide hope or indoctrination? The myth was clearly chosen for its appropriateness as a form of propaganda, and its presentation is certainly couched in the language of such. It was part of the burgeoning genre of juvenile war literature, which was characterized

[23] It was on 27 May 1967 that 90.77% of Australians were formally recorded as having voted "yes" in a constitutional referendum to award citizenship and to improve the lives of Australia's First Nation Peoples. The term "Country" denotes Australian Aboriginal territories, encompassing all elements of landscape, and also customs or lore, as well as people (past, present, and future).

Figure 3: "A Band of Loyal Workers from Point Pearce Mission Station", from Adelaide L. Miethke, ed., *Patriotic Work in Our Schools: 1915–1917. A Report on the South Australian Children's Patriotic Fund*, Adelaide: Rigby Publishers, [1918], 25. Author's personal collection. Image digitized by Katherine Johnson (5 December 2017). Used with permission.

by its hybridity: the theme of war integrated into established literary forms from ABC books to adventure stories and mythic retellings. The consistent return to ideas of sacrifice and suffering all testify to propaganda. The image of Iphigeneia therefore functions as a symbolic role model for Australian children, inspiring them to put their nation, king, and God before themselves. The Greeks proclaiming "It was our king, and not the rest of us who did the deed. Why should we all suffer for it?" (16) links the tale to the debate raging over Australia's involvement in the Great War, for there were many Australians who declared this conflict to be a European fight. Waratah's page provides a pro-war rejoinder for the young readers. The placement of a large advertisement for an imperial war map on the same page as the children's column further augments this reading.

But it could also be argued that "For the Children" aimed to educate its young readers within the moral and cultural specificities of Australian society in the early part of the twentieth century. The retelling of the myth of Iphigeneia may also be interpreted as an allegorical response to the first month of the Great War presented to children as a means of contextualizing it, placing the events of 1914 within a broader European history of heroism and self-sacrifice. This specific theme, the Australasian involvement in a war that was predicted

to be partly fought on Turkish soil, ultimately became a national metanarrative in the form of the Anzac (Australian and New Zealand Army Corps) legend, which would commemorate and glorify the Australian and New Zealand soldiers who fought at Gallipoli in 1915 within the mythical context of the Greeks at Troy.

This reading of hope, however, is not entirely separate from propaganda, the two being inextricably tied. Iphigeneia and Joan of Arc – adolescent heroines who encourage children to do something for their new nation, now at war. Both remind children that they have the moral capacity to be brave and heroic, while the myth of Persephone and Demeter foreshadows what is to come – suffering and sacrifice. Such powerful mythic messages of hope may therefore be a means of fortifying children during this time of crisis – an interpretation supported by Waratah's aforementioned question:

> Did you go to town on Monday to see the troops? Those brave men you saw marching so gladly are willingly going into what may be the most dreadful times, and even face death itself willingly that you and I may live under the Union Jack. (16)

The rhetorical response creates a powerful visual and emotional snapshot of the men and youths who were, no doubt, the fathers and brothers of the young readers.

* * *

The complexity of heroizing a national response to war with its inherent qualities of both mythic hope and nation-building is encapsulated in these apparently simple stories for children. They speak to children, but they also speak of a fourteen-year-old nation on the brink of a war for which their disparate history had not prepared them. Faced with the beginning of a cataclysm, writers, poets, and artists drew on traditional models of expression, such as Greek mythology, to try to define what was about to happen and what was in fact happening on the streets of Adelaide, South Australia, as the men left for the first of many overseas placements.[24]

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[24] For research on the 1915 Anzac Campaign at Gallipoli and the Trojan War, see Sarah Midford, "Constructing the 'Australian *Iliad*': Ancient Heroes and Anzac Diggers in the Dardanelles", *Melbourne Historical Journal* 39.2 (2011), 59–79; Sarah Midford, Ian McGibbon, C.J. Mackie, and Reyhan Körpe, "The Gallipoli Campaign: From History to Legend", in Antonio Sagona, Mithat Atabay, C.J. Mackie, Ian McGibbon, and Richard Reid, eds., *Anzac Battlefield: A Gallipoli Landscape of War and Memory*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016, 24–35.

The book is to be recommended for academics as well as graduate and post-graduate students working on the reception of Classical Antiquity and its transformations around the world.

David Movrin, University of Ljubljana
From the editorial review

Our Mythical Hope is the latest collection of articles by scholars participating in an ongoing collaboration to ensure that the beauty and profundity of Classical myth remain known, and (hopefully) remain part of our modern culture. The size of this compendium, the sweep of subjects considered, the involvement of leading experts from around the world, all testify to how important and extensive this initiative has become over the last decade. The project's continued commitment to engage all ages, especially the young, and to extend its outreach beyond the Academy merely, makes it a leading model for how research retains its relevance.

Mark O'Connor, Boston College
From the editorial review

Classical Antiquity is a particularly important field in terms of "Hope studies" [...]. For centuries, the ancient tradition, and classical mythology in particular, has been a common reference point for whole hosts of creators of culture, across many parts of the world, and with the new media and globalization only increasing its impact. Thus, in our research at this stage, we have decided to study how the authors of literary and audiovisual texts for youth make use of the ancient myths to support their young protagonists (and readers or viewers) in crucial moments of their existence, on their road into adulthood, and in those dark hours when it seems that life is about to shatter and fade away. However, if Hope is summoned in time, the crisis can be overcome and the protagonist grows stronger, with a powerful uplifting message for the public. [...] Owing to this, we get a chance to remain true to our ideas, to keep faith in our dreams, and, when the decisive moment comes, to choose not hatred but love, not darkness but light.

Katarzyna Marciniak, University of Warsaw
From the introductory chapter

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