

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We have been extraordinarily fortunate to be supported in our work by the inspirational Prof. Katarzyna Marciniak. She has been the Athena of our Odyssey. Her vision and drive have led her to draw together a global team of researchers in the *Our Mythical Childhood* project (funded by the European Research Council's Horizon 2020 programme): finding ever more creative ways to bring us together, and acquiring the funding to do so. With her Warsaw team (Dr Elżbieta Olechowska, Dr Hanna Paulouskaya, Dr Anna Mik, Dr Karolina Kulpa, Agnieszka Maciejewska, Dorota Rejter, Marta Pszczolińska, Angelina Gerus, Olga Strycharczyk, Magdalena Andersen, Maria Makarewicz, Ewa Balcerzyk-Atys), Katarzyna has provided ongoing support, encouragement and friendship, and we are very grateful.

In writing this book we have worked alongside the other teams in the *Our Mythical Childhood* project: in the United Kingdom, Prof. Susan Deacy, Dr Sonya Nevin, and Steve K. Simons, at the University of Roehampton; in Israel, Prof. Lisa Maurice and Dr Ayelet Peer, at Bar-Ilan University; and in Cameroon, Prof. Daniel A. Nkemleke, Prof. Divine Che Neba, and Prof. Eleanor A. Dasi at the University of Yaoundé 1 – all have contributed insights and ideas about how classical material makes its way into children's culture which have extended our frames of reference and challenged our modes of thinking.

In Australia, Prof. Marguerite Johnson (University of Newcastle) contributed to valuable early discussions which helped the book take shape. Dr Anne Rogerson and Dr Tamara Neal (University of Sydney) and Prof. Alastair Blanshard (University of Queensland) were supportive and kind listeners, and there are many others who have helped us think our way through our work. In Canada, Dr Sarah Winters and Dr Alice Petersen were a supportive cheer squad. In Germany, Dr Karoline Thaidigsmann (University of Heidelberg) was generous in her time and insights. We are extremely grateful for the precision and elegance of Marta Pszczolińska's assistance with the classical referencing of source texts, and Ewa Balcerzyk-Atys's editing skills. Elizabeth's colleagues and friends at the

University of New England, in particular Prof. Adrian Kiernander, Associate Prof. Jennifer McDonnell, Natalia Tobin, Dr Diana Barnes, Dr Jennifer Hamilton, and Dr Yvonne Griggs, were very supportive, giving of their time for conversations and brainstorming. Elizabeth is especially grateful for administrative support from Gill Willis, Elizabeth McClelland, Joy Kirby, Libby McGann, Kathryn Dougall, Dan Waqa, Mejbah Uddin, Jonathan Watson, Rachael Brooks and Nicholas Sanders, all of whom provided assistance at crucial moments. In Armidale, Kent Laverack provided kind and friendly support and encouragement. Elizabeth is also very grateful to the University of Otago's Classics Department for support in the form of a Visiting Senior Lectureship (2018–2022) and to the staff of the Internationale Jugendbibliothek in Munich, Germany, for expert assistance in early stages of the research.

Steve K. Simons's wonderful illustrations provide important guidance – a storybook version of the kinds of intersections between Classical Antiquity and childhood: we cannot thank him enough for encapsulating the concepts so brilliantly.

The *Odyssey* ends with Odysseus' return home to his family, and we would like to conclude by thanking our own families, without whose encouragement, support, and inspiration this work would not have been completed. So, our thanks and love go to Miriam's family: Rory Wood-Ingram, Leo Wood-Ingram, Milo Wood-Ingram, Audrey Wood-Ingram, Jill Wood-Ingram, Laura Brearley, and Dion Riverlea; and to Elizabeth's family: John and Beatrice Hale, Katharine Hale, John and Amy Hale, Lucas Hale, Juliet Hale, Harry Hale (and Cocoa, the Argos of this story). Just as Odysseus' story takes place against a background of cataclysmic events, we have written against a background of droughts, fires, floods, to say nothing of the pandemic that has changed our world. And we feel very fortunate that, unlike Odysseus, who seems to have lost all his sailors on his voyage, together we have stuck to our oars, rowing towards our own version of Ithaca, with our families alongside, and making many friends along the way.