Viktoryia Bartsevich, "Entry on: The Wooden Horse of Troy by John Malam, Peter Rutherford , David Salariya", peer-reviewed by Elżbieta Olechowska and Lisa Maurice. Our Mythical Childhood Survey (Warsaw: University of Warsaw, 2018). Link: http://omc.obta.al.uw.edu.pl/myth-survey/item/45. Entry version as of November 11, 2026.

John Malam , Peter Rutherford , David Salariya

The Wooden Horse of Troy

United Kingdom (2004)

TAGS: Achilles Achilles's Heel Aeacus Aeneas Agamemnon Aphrodite Apollo Apple of Discord Athena Briseis Chryseis Hector Hecuba Helen Hera Heracles Horses of Laomedon Judgement of Paris Laomedon Menelaus Odysseus / Ulysses Paris (Trojan Prince) Patroclus Philoctetes Priam Rome Sparta Tenedos Thersites Trojan Horse Trojan War Troy Zeus



Courtesy of The Salariya Book Company.

General information	
Title of the work	The Wooden Horse of Troy
Country of the First Edition	United Kingdom
Country/countries of popularity	Columbia, Poland, United Kingdom
Original Language	English
First Edition Date	2004
First Edition Details	John Malam, Peter Rutherford, ill., *The Wooden Horse of Troy* (Ancient Greek Myths). Brighton: Salariya Book Company Book House, 2004, 32 pp.
ISBN	1904642306
Genre	Illustrated works, Myths
Target Audience	Children
Author of the Entry	Viktoryia Bartsevich, University of Warsaw, v.bartsevich@student.uw.edu.pl
Peer-reviewer of the Entry	Elżbieta Olechowska, University of Warsaw, elzbieta.olechowska@gmail.com Lisa Maurice, Bar-Ilan University, mauril8@gmail.com

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Creators



John Malam , b. 1957
(Author)

John Malam was born in 1957 in Wolverhampton, in England. He studied at the University of Birmingham, after which he worked as an archaeologist at the Ironbridge Gorge Museum, Shropshire. John Malam is a British author for children, as well as an editor and reviewer. He specializes in books for children. He wrote *Ancient Greeks at a Glance*, *Exploring Ancient Egypt*, *The Ancient Greeks*, *Gods and Goddesses*, *Myths and Civilization of the Ancient Romans*, *Greek Town* and others.

Sources:

Official website (accessed: June 4, 2017).

Profile on Brief Biographies (accessed: June 4, 2017).

Bio prepared by Viktoryia Bartsevich, University of Warsaw, v.bartsevich@student.uw.edu.pl

Questionnaire

1. What drew you to writing/working with Classical Antiquity and what challenges did you face in selecting, representing, or adapting particular myths or stories?

When I began writing for children, publishers “matched” me to their projects and commissioned me to write on subjects they knew I was familiar with. It is for this reason that I have been asked to retell Classical myths, and write about ancient civilisations. In every case, the publisher has already decided what the subject will be, and they then brief me about the age range, word count, and number of pages

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in the book.

2. Why do you think classical / ancient myths, history, and literature continue to resonate with young audiences?

There is a requirement in the UK primary school curriculum (children aged 7—11) for them to learn about particular periods in history, eg Ancient Greece and Rome. As their myths are full of supernatural characters, heroes, and magical events, they can be retold in an exciting and appealing way for a modern audience.

3. Do you have a background in classical education (Latin or Greek at school or classes at the University?) What sources are you using? Scholarly work? Wikipedia? Are there any books that made an impact on you in this respect?

Yes – I have a degree in Ancient History & Archaeology. My sources are many and varied, and I have my own library of text books which I usually work from. I use some scholarly articles, but only occasionally, as my books don't need that level of research. I do use Wikipedia, but with caution, and like to cross-check information in verifiable sources.

4. Did you think about how Classical Antiquity would translate for young readers, esp. in (insert relevant country)?

A little. I became interested – fascinated – in antiquity (and prehistory) when I was a child, and read popular books about explorers and archaeologists finding "lost cities" or "buried treasure". I hope that some of my books might have inspired children to take an interest in the past.

5. How concerned were you with 'accuracy' or 'fidelity' to the original? (another way of saying that might be — that I think writers are often more 'faithful' to originals in adapting its spirit rather than being tied down at the level of detail — is this something you thought about?)

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I try my best to be as accurate to the original source as possible – I feel this is important, and is my duty as a non-fiction writer. A fiction writer would be more likely to adapt the source material, and change it for their needs. Wherever I present a "fact", I want to be able to verify it with source material.

6. Are you planning any further forays into classical material?

I hope so! But, this will only happen if a publisher approaches me and commissions me to write for them.

Prepared by Viktoryia Bartsevich, University of Warsaw, v.bartsevich@student.uw.edu.pl



Peter Rutherford (Author, Illustrator)

Peter Rutherford was born in Ipswich, Suffolk. He studied Illustration and Film Animation at the Ipswich Art School and graduated with distinction. He went on to work as Art Director for several London publishing agencies. Much of his early career was as a freelance illustrator working for the advertising industry. He then had an opportunity to write some children's books for all ages. He writes and illustrates books for children and young adults, e. g. *Dino Boulder Ball* and *Terry Takes Off* written by Jonathan Emmett, *The Twelve Labors of Hercules* written by James Evelyn Ford.

Source:

Bio based on Author's website (accessed: June 4, 2017).

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Bio prepared by Viktoryia Bartsevich, University of Warsaw, v.bartsevich@student.uw.edu.pl



David Salariya , b. 1954
(Illustrator)

David Salariya was born in 1954 in Dundee, Scotland. He is the founder of Salariya Book Company. David Salariya is an illustrator. His first illustration was done for *Reader's Digest*.

Source:

Interview at the creativeinterviews.com (accessed: April 17, 2018).

Interview at the childrensillustrators.com (accessed: April 17, 2018).

Bio prepared by Elżbieta Olechowska, University of Warsaw, elzbieta.olechowska@gmail.com and Viktoryia Bartsevich, University of Warsaw, v.bartsevich@student.uw.edu.pl

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Additional information

Translation

Polish: *Mity starożytnej Grecji: Koń Trojański*, trans. Janusz Ochab, Warszawa: Firma Księgarska Jacek i Krzysztof Olesiejuk Inwestycje, 2005.

Spanish: *Mitos Griegos: El caballo de Troya*, trans. María Clara González, Bogotá: Panamericana Editorial, 2006.

Summary

The book presents a variant of the myth of Troy. The story of the building of the city walls by Poseidon, Apollo, and Aeacus is followed by the story of the judgment of Paris and its consequences, direct: the reward for giving the first place to Aphrodite, and indirect: the Trojan War. The author describes the fight between the Trojans and the Greeks, the secret help of the gods, the disputes between the warriors in each of the camps (e. g. Agamemnon's quarrel with Achilles, Ajax vs. Hector, the misunderstanding between Thersites and Odysseus, and many others). And the rest of the story: the death of Achilles, Paris, the devious plot of Odysseus, the fall of Troy. We also learn about the future fate of the heroes - Helen betrays the Trojans and returns to Menelaus; Agamemnon is murdered by his wife Clytemnestra; after Menelaus dies, Apollo makes Helen a goddess. Finally, the Trojans who survived the city's destruction are given a new mission, namely the founding of Rome.

Analysis

Like every book in the series "Ancient Greek Myths," *The Wooden Horse of Troy* is very well composed. While authored by different people, the texts are all written in an accessible way; the illustrations are colorful and complete the text. The myth of the Trojan War and the wooden horse are told in the traditional Homeric version. Drastic or negative aspects are not terrifying or depressing; the monsters are not horrible but presented as different creatures. The publication ends with a glossary that explains, to the young reader, the various characters connected to the myth. The book also contains an index of names. The book is a retelling for children of well-known stories from the Iliad and the *Odyssey* and has didactic value.

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Classical, Mythological, Traditional Motifs, Characters, and Concepts	Achilles Achilles's Heel Aeacus Aeneas Agamemnon Aphrodite Apollo Apple of Discord Athena Briseis Chryseis Hector Hecuba Helen Hera Heracles Horses of Laomedon Judgement of Paris Laomedon Menelaus Odysseus / Ulysses Paris (Trojan Prince) Patroclus Philoctetes Priam Rome Sparta Tenedos Thersites Trojan Horse Trojan War Troy Zeus
Other Motifs, Figures, and Concepts Relevant for Children and Youth Culture	Adventure Death Judgement Love Relationships Religious beliefs Truth and lies War

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