

A Bestiary of Monsters in Greek Mythology

Spyros Syropoulos

ARCHAEOPRESS ARCHAEOLOGY



ARCHAEOPRESS PUBLISHING LTD
Summertown Pavilion
18-24 Middle Way
Summertown
Oxford OX2 7LG

ISBN 978 1 78491 950 4
ISBN 978 1 78491 951 1 (e-Pdf)

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And since mythical narrations with monsters do not cause only pleasure, but they also cause fear, the use of both of these genres is useful both for children and for adults; for we offer the delightful myths to children in order to urge them towards good, the scary ones in order to avert them from evildoing.

Strabo, *Geographica* 1.2.8.20-24

Preface

This book takes its origin from material I have been using for many years during my *Greek Mythology* courses for the program *Paideia* (a collaboration between the University of the Aegean and the Center for Hellenic Studies Paideia at the University of Rhode Island) during the past eleven years. Students have always expressed special interest in the concept of monstrosity in Greek mythology and they were always keen on details about the sources of the stories. Questions about the monsters mentioned in myths came up during classes at the University of the Aegean, in the *Greek Philology* classes, and in the classes about *Ancient Greek Theater*, at the Open University. Often people wondered about the development of a story. Which was our oldest source? For how long have people been interested in the story? How has it changed over time? I tried to answer these questions, by referring to some examples borrowed from the countless stories about monsters found in myths. I am thankful to all of these students for their enthusiastic response to these stories.

The support of students, friends and colleagues who read the manuscript of this book at various stages was invaluable. I am much obliged to Ms Vicky Hatzipetrou, who read the whole manuscript many times while it was being written and saved me from various linguistic mistakes. The same goes to Anastasios Chamouzas and Stephanie Conley, Lander University Teaching Fellow, for carefully reading chapters 4 and 5 and making amendments and suggestions I am thankful also to my students Shelby Wood, Shauna Bailie Fletcher, Amber Ramirez, Carver Rapp and Ciara Barrick, for reading various parts of the manuscript. My good friends John Harding and Jonathan Leech took precious time of work and holidays to read parts of the book. Special thanks to my former student Anastasios Mavroudis (now Father Zacharias) for his meticulous reading and corrections. Finally, I am indebted to Prof. Mercedes Aguirre and Prof. Richard Buxton for their support over the years, and their willingness to read the whole manuscript so carefully, make amendments and suggestions that informed its final form. Thanks go as well to Marianna Nikolaou who read the final version of the manuscript and made the final corrections

Finally, I want to thank Daniel and Stelios, my sons, who understood why long hours had to be spent in the company of text-books piled on the floor around my desk and not with them. This book is dedicated to them.

Spyros Syropoulos

Abbreviations

The abbreviations of the academic journals used in this work follow the catalogue found in *L'Année philologique*, LXVII: année 1996, Paris 1998.

AAHG	Anzeiger für die Altertumswissenschaft, hrsg. von der Österreichischen Humanistischen Gesellschaft.
AAN	Atti della Academia di Scienze morali e politiche della Società nazionale di Scienze.
AC	L'Antiquité Classique
Aevum (Ant)	Aevum Antiquum
AJA	American Journal of Archaeology
AJPh	American Journal of Philology
BICS	Bulletin of the Institute of Classical Studies of the University of London
CJ	The Classical Journal
ClAnt	Classical Antiquity
CPh	Classical Philology
CQ	Classical Quarterly
CR	Classical Review
CW	The Classical World
GRBS	Greek, Roman, and Byzantine Studies
HSPH	Harvard Studies in Classical Philology
JHI	Journal of the History of Ideas
JHS	Journal of Hellenic Studies
JNES	Journal of Near Eastern Studies
LIMC	<i>Lexicon Iconographicum Mythologiae Classicae</i> , Artemis & Winkler Verlag (Zürich, München, Düsseldorf), Vol. IV: Eros (in Etruria) - Herakles (1988), Vol. V: Herakles - Kenchrias (1990).
PP	La Parola del Passato
QS	Quaderni di Storia
REG	Revue des Études Grecques
RhM	Rhenisches Museum
SCO	Studi Classici e Orientali
TAPhA	Transactions and Proceedings of the American Philological Association
WS	Wiener Studien
YCIS	Yale Classical Studies
ZPE	Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik

Introduction, by Richard Buxton

Monsters will always be with us. The most unpleasant one I ever met used to inhabit my nightmares when I was a boy and an adolescent. It lived in the small room at the foot of the stairs in my parents' house, where visitors used to leave their coats. The room contained some cupboards and a wooden chest. It was in that chest that the monster lived. By day the little room was insignificant; we rarely had occasion to go into it. But in my dreams, it was the lair from which the monster emerged, slowly climbing the stairs until it reached the bedroom in which I was sleeping. Unable to bear the apprehension, I would awake with a cry of terror just as it entered the room.

Like many of the best monsters, this one had no shape; or, if it did, I didn't know what its shape was. By contrast, many of the most modern monsters – those depicted in contemporary cinema – are evoked, through the use of the latest computer-generated graphics, in the most vivid and ultra-realistic detail. But of course everything changes. Just as the development of photography spurred artists into abandoning realistic representation in favour of new ways of envisioning the world – Impressionism, Expressionism, Surrealism – so it may be that the next generation of cinematic monsters will return to the shadows, remaining implicit and indistinct, creatures of a chiaroscuro underworld.

Every culture possesses its own *imaginaire*, within which monsters occupy an appropriate space. Academic study of these diverse monstrosities has progressed apace in recent decades, thanks for example to the work on 'monster theory' associated with J. J. Cohen. But alongside the theory there is room also for the painstaking setting-out of data, culture by culture, context by context, author by author. It is this latter field of endeavour to which the present work belongs.

Dr Syropoulos writes, not for the professional myth-specialist, but for readers in search of an engaging, lively and readable account of ancient Greek monsters. His style, unpretentious and often colloquial, would be at home in the classroom, where the ability to hold an audience's attention is at a premium. But Dr Syropoulos does not 'talk down' to his audience. His account of monster myths is brimful of detail, always attentive to the minute differences between the narratives of different authors. In an age where some students' first (or only) reaction to being asked a question about a myth is to Google the relevant mythological name and to reproduce the Wikipedia entry on it, it is all the more vital to have available alternative sources of information, in which a picture both more complicated and more faithful may be found.

I don't, though, want to create the impression that Dr Syropoulos' book consists of nothing but 'data'. Along the way he also makes some important general points

about monstrosity. For instance, he is quite right to stress that monstrosity and ugliness are two different things: the winged horse Pegasus is ‘monstrous’, but certainly not ugly. A monster is something which goes against a norm, rather than going against ‘nature’ (p.5). Another eminently sensible observation is the following: ‘Imagination is applied to create a world of transgression from the ordinary, which is coherent and immediate because it is formed with ordinary elements, only messed about, exaggerated or distorted’ (p.6). This is Lévi-Strauss’s idea of the myth-teller as *bricoleur*, combined with the idea that myths *refract* reality rather than *reflecting* it.

Monsters, I began by saying, will always be with us. As we walk through the unnerving forest of Greek monstrosity, Dr Syropoulos is a genial, reassuring and well-informed guide to have beside us.

Richard Buxton
February 2015

Introduction

Greek myths are enchanting. There is no denying the power of enchantment in stories that hover between the real and the fictitious, the plausible and the supernatural. Narrated, recorded, drawn, sculpted or even performed, the complex world of Greek mythology has survived for thousands of years and remains popular and contemporary in cultures other than the one that gave birth to it. To venture a convincing explanation regarding the reasons for this power of Greek myths is hard, because it would have to begin with the difficult subject of their nature.

As a matter of fact the degree of truthfulness of Greek myths is a question that posed problems even to Greeks in antiquity. 'Aristotle does not doubt the historicity of Theseus; he sees in him the founder of Athenian democracy (*Constitution of Athens* 41.2) and reduces to verisimilitude the myth of the Athenian children deported to Crete and delivered to the Minotaur (*Constitution of the Bottiaians*, cited by Plutarch, *Life of Theseus* 16.2) As for the Minotaur, more than four centuries before Pausanias the historian Philochorus also reduced him to verisimilitude; he claimed to have found a tradition (he does not specify whether it is oral or transcribed) among the Cretans according to which these children were not devoured by the Minotaur but were given as prizes to the victors in a gymnastics competition; this contest was won by a cruel and very vigorous man named Taurus (cited by Plutarch 16.1). Since this Taurus commanded the army of Minos, he was really the Taurus of Minos: Minotaur'.¹ The first substantially recorded doubts about the 'truth' of myths are found in the works of Hecataeus of Miletus (c. 550-476 BC). Hecataeus recognized that oral history is untrustworthy and that myth as oral tradition certainly cannot claim factuality.² This trend was called *pragmatism*. Similar trends were adopted by Hellenistic philosophers, especially Euhemerus (330-260 BC) who rationalized mythology as history and gave his name to this method of rationalizing.³

It is hard to say when Greeks stopped believing in their myths. How revered is the patron deity of theatre, the god Dionysus, when he appears as a ridiculous

¹ Veyne (1988) 133-134.

² According to Shotwell (1939, p. 172-3) it was Hecataeus' visits to Egypt that influenced his skepticism, since they proved feeble his claim that he was a descendant of a god through sixteen generations. The priests showed him a number of statues in the temple, each one of them dedicated by a temple priest of each past generation. These generations amounted to 345. Thus, the gods of 16 generations before Hecataeus could not have existed. Cf. Bury (1958) 14, 48.

³ For example, Euhemerus argued that Zeus was a king who died in Crete, thus giving birth to stories that connected him with the island. Cf. Spyridakis (1968) 337-340.

coward in Aristophanes' *Frogs*? Is he the same Dionysus whose epiphany in the *Bacchae* of Euripides proves his divinity beyond any doubt and in the most ruthless manner? What about the Trojan War? As a paradigm of past bravery, it is mentioned in many an Athenian public oration or diplomatic speech, but did the Athenians actually believe in Scylla and Charybdis, or the man-eating Cyclops Polyphemus? It seems that these old stories are so deeply embedded in the cultural consciousness of the Greeks that no one needs to scrutinize them. They are just there; and the essence of these myths is that they represent a collective memory of a non-temporal, non-chronological past, which is not doubted and thus bears the validity of history. In his book *Did the Greeks Believe in their Myths*, Paul Veyne (1988) wrote that 'imagination is a faculty, but in the Kantian sense of the word. It is transcendental; it creates our world instead of providing the leavening or being the demon. However – and this would make any Kantian worthy of the name faint with horror – this transcendence is historical; for cultures succeed one another, and each one is different. Men do not find the truth; they create it, as they create their history. And the two in turn offer a good return'.⁴

Mythology is about many things. There are always many ways to interpret what Kirk (1975)⁵ defined as *traditional stories* – stressing in this concentrated definition the *tradition*, which is the most imposing medium and power that preserves and perpetuates these *stories*, the origin of which is lost in time. Even if they are not written in a canonical book, traditions have the weight and effect of legislation. They are observed, obeyed and respected without this meaning that one ought necessarily to believe in them. Many traditions contemporary to the 5th c. B.C., for example, were explained via myths – such as the tradition of sacrifice, arranged by

⁴Veyne (1988) xii.

⁵Kirk, Geoffrey, *The Nature of Greek Myths*, 1975. Besides this wonderful book, the reader may find a vast collection of many influential works on the interpretation of myths. To name but a few: Buxton, Richard, G.A., *Imaginary Greece*, Cambridge 1994; Cameron, Alan, *Greek Mythography in the Roman World*, OUP USA 2004; Doniger, Wendy, *The Implied Spider. Politics and Theology in Myth*, Columbia University Press, 2011; Dowden, Ken, *The Uses of Greek Mythology*, Routledge, London 1992, 2005 (second edition); Gantz, T., *Early Greek Myth: A Guide to Literary and Artistic Sources*, Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996; Guthrie, W. K. C., *The Greeks and their Gods*, Beacon Press, Boston 2001, first edition in 1950; Versnel, H. S., *Inconsistencies in Greek and Roman Religion: Transition and Reversal in Myth and Ritual* (*Studies in Greek and Roman Religion*, v. 6) Brill, 1993; Woodard, Roger (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Greek Mythology*, Cambridge 2007; Καρακάντζα, Ε. Δ., *Αρχαίοι Ελληνικοί Μύθοι. Ο θεωρητικός λόγος του 20ου αιώνα για τη φύση και την ερμηνεία τους*, Μεταίχμιο 2004.

the creator of mankind, Prometheus, as a medium of communication between the world of gods and the world of mortals.⁶

The world also needed an explanation. How was it created? How did the order of gods and other deities come into existence? Mythology comes to the aid of the pre-scientific mind and offers plausible and often amusing explanations about origins. The eruption of the universe out of Chaos, the creation of beings out of two opposites, the Sky and the Earth, is described in various *cosmogonies* and *theogonies* around the 8th c. B.C by many different poets.

Politics is another concept associated with mythology. The way that these traditional narratives were extensively used to serve specific political needs is often confirmed by tangible sources, such as the Chronicle of Lindos or the Parian Marble. These are sources that rely on local mythical history, in order to explain contemporary politics.⁷ Greek historiography abounds in examples of references to myth for political purposes. Herodotus (5.79-80) describes the episode of a Theban mission to the island of Aegina, requesting an alliance against the Athenians, basing their claim on common ancestry, since, according to myth, Thebes and Aegina were both daughters of the river Asopus. Again in Herodotus, the argument of both Athenians and Tegeans over who will lead the prestigious left of the army is based on the mythical past of each city (Herodotus, I, 26-28). Beginning with their first founder, ancient cities constituted genealogies which were usually attributed and dedicated to a god, or a hero, or an offspring of a mixed marriage with a mortal. The etiological myths revealed and narrated the foundation of the city. Thus, serving the need of the community for a specific and distinct political identity, as well as, providing each city with a means for its own personality. The founder would be a moral person, a member with full rights in this first community of the city. In this sense, the etiological myth is a political ideology, while the mythical credentials of the city were used as assurance of its dynamic relations with other cities.

During an interview with one of the most influential modern scholars on Greek myth, Joseph Campbell, Tom Collins asked him about the purposes of myth. Campbell answered:

⁶Let us remember that a myth (from the Greek mythos) was not perceived as imaginary or false, as most of us would use the word today. Ken Dowden draws attention to Homer, *Iliad* 6. 381-2, where a servant replies to Hector's questions about his wife's whereabouts: 'Hector, since you really tell me to mytheisthai the truth'. 'The woman proceeds to give an account, as asked – this is her mythos, a worked out string of ideas expressed in sentences'. Dowden (2005) 3.

⁷Cf. Jacoby (1949) esp. pp. 147ff and 213ff. For myths used politically in tragedy see Carter (2007) 90-142.

‘There are four of them. One’s mystical. One’s cosmological: the whole universe as we now understand it becomes, as it were, a revelation of the mystery dimension. The third is sociological, taking care of the society that exists. But we don’t know what this society is, it’s changed so fast. Good God! In the past 40 years there have been such transformations in mores that it’s impossible to talk about them. Finally, there’s the pedagogical one of guiding an individual through the inevitables of a lifetime. But even that’s become impossible because we don’t know what the inevitables of a lifetime are any more. They change from moment to moment.

Formerly, there were only a limited number of careers open to a male, and for the female it was normal to be a mother or a nun or something like that. Now, the panorama of possibilities and possible lives and how they change from decade to decade has made it impossible to mythologize. The individual is just going in raw. It’s like open field running in football – there are no rules. You have to watch everything all the way down the line. All you can learn is what your own inward life is, and try to stay loyal to that.’⁸

Approached from so many different angles mythology is definitely multi-prismatic and it plays different roles in different circumstances. Religious or cosmological, political or entertaining, these stories explain aspects of the world that cannot easily be rationalized, or they are too prominent to be left without being put to good –political – use.

The complex world of these myths, which is often chaotic, disorderly and unsystematically recorded in conflicting versions from time to time and place to place, saves a special place for one of the Greek’s most celebrated values: balance. There’s no Sky without Earth. There’s no Olympus without the Underworld. It’s all about balance. Greek myths abound in images of beauty and perfection: charming gods, attractive goddesses, and handsome heroes, all of them standards of flawlessness, physical and spiritual. However, the ancient Greeks were not fond of absolutes. No god or hero is shown without blemishes in character and ethics and even amongst them some are far from perfect, like Hephaestus, who is ugly and lame. Another element that dominates Greek mythology is the idea of balance. Good and evil, light and darkness, hubris and punishment. What could not be missing from this world is the image of reversed beauty: monstrosity.⁹ The aim

⁸ ‘Mythic Reflections. Thoughts on myth, spirit and our times’. An interview with Joseph Campbell, by Tom Collins. One of the articles in *The New Story* (IC#12). Winter 1985/86, p. 52. Copyright (c)1986, 1997 by Context Institute

⁹ The only extant collection of essays focusing exclusively on monstrosity remains the work of Farkas, A. E., Harper, P. O. & Harrison, E. B. (eds.), *Monsters and Demons in the Ancient and Medieval Worlds: Papers Presented in Honour of Edith Porada*, Mainz am Rhein, von Zabern, 1987.

of this book is to explore the realm of the imaginary world of Greek mythology and present the reader with a categorization of monstrosity, referring to some of the most noted examples in each category.

Monstrosity should not be confused with ugliness. Although in modern thought the meaning of the word is associated with the abominable or the hideous, it is not the same with the mythical traditions of the Greeks. Monstrous is whatever does not resemble the usual, the common form. It is not about the unnatural. After all, what is *natural*? Natural is what is usual or common in different places and different times. One ought to be cautious of the use of such terms when one deals with Greek mythology. Even the Greeks are careful when categorizing monstrosity; in most cases they are aware of the fact that many of the Greek monsters, at least, are children of Gaea or other gods and goddesses, the same gods and goddesses who bore men and women. This makes *monsters* part of the physical world, just as men and women are part of this world, and as such they are part of the stories of men throughout the centuries.

Genealogy may be one of the revealing characteristics of monstrosity. ‘Monsters are nearly always the product of a liaison which is itself abnormal. Centaurs are the offspring of a union between the rash Ixion, would-be lover of Hera, and a cloud fabricated by Zeus. When the father of the gods shed his seed on the ground while asleep, the result was a monstrous creature called Agdistis, endowed with both male and female genitals.¹⁰ Not surprisingly, unions between monsters generate that which is abnormal: Echidna and Typhon had a most remarkable brood, including the Hydra and Kerberos.¹¹ Such logic is a function of the fact that a major feature of the symbolism of mythological genealogies is the expression of relationship’.¹²

I mentioned beauty as the least useful factor to define monstrosity. Beauty is not only in the eye of the beholder, but it is a value that transcends familiar forms. A man can recognize beauty in other members of his own species, but he can also define a deer, or a cat, or a horse as *beautiful*. Beauty is, thus, the epitome of idealized characteristics of each specific form at the utmost level. Subsequently, the absence of the perfect or idealized characteristics – usually socially and culturally implanted as standards of recognition – constitutes monstrosity. If beauty is the culmination of idealized standards, monstrosity is the ultimate deviation from these standards. Even this does not suffice to define monstrosity for the Greeks, who love to prove how permeable limits and definitions are in general. For example, the beautiful winged horse, Pegasus, is as much a monster (he is, after

¹⁰ Pausanias, 7.17.5.

¹¹ Hesiod, Theogony, 306ff.

¹² Buxton (1996) 207.

all, born of the decapitated Medusa, alongside with the Giant Chrysaor), as the next 'ugly' creature, let us say the one-eyed Cyclops Polyphemus in the *Odyssey*. It does not matter whether you have an extra pair of wings or one eye less than usual. If your form transgresses the standards of its kind, then you are a monster. As Richard Buxton put it, 'a monster is chaotic, conforming to no existing class. As the case of the benevolent Centaur Cheiron shows, monsters are not necessarily characterized by the savage violence of a Minotaur or a Medusa. But a monster is always by definition an outsider'.¹³

If one observes all the monsters of Greek imagination closely, one concludes that there is not one single monster that does not bear at least one singular recognizable characteristic, which refers to some real form in nature. The human mind is not able to invent something that is not a derivative of human experience. Thus, a centaur may be monstrous, but he is half *man*; an animal can be monstrous, just because it is bigger than usual or it has some unusual characteristic (like the lion of Nemea with the arrow-proof hide); a ghost or a daemon can be monstrous, because it is full of unnatural characteristics, but it *looks* like a man or a woman in form. In order to create monsters, Greek mythology can combine forms, or distort forms but it cannot invent forms. Imagination is applied to create a world of transgression from the ordinary, which is coherent and immediate because it is formed with ordinary elements, only messed about, exaggerated or distorted.

To present the reader with a complete collection of all monsters of Greek mythology would be impossible. Over twenty seven monsters make an appearance in this book and the list is far from complete. Rather, the aim of this book is to present the audience with a categorization of monstrosity and the presentation of the most prominent creatures within each category. Thus, the creatures that enrich Greek myths and traditions from the opposite side of beauty and perfection are divided into five chapters: *Humanoid Monsters*, *Serpentine Creatures*, *Partly human*, *Monstrous Animals* and *Ghosts and Daemons*. Emphasis will be given to the views that come from antiquity, taking into account modern scholarship on these categories. The reader should be presented with a round, coherent narrative about each one of these creatures, using sources from different periods of history, by indicating the chronological difference of these sources, so that the evolution of the myth can be traced at least up to a point of its most recent chronological version.

In passages written or translated by others, I have maintained the grammar and spelling chosen by the original author(s). Otherwise, I have opted for the popular name: Hercules instead of Herakles, or Athene instead of Athenā, for example.

The order in which the monsters of each category are presented in each chapter is alphabetical. Creatures described by writers from different historical periods and

¹³ Buxton (1996) 205.

different literary sources (i.e. epic, historiography, drama) appear in one category; the reader will easily trace the sources which are sometimes singular (i.e. some of the most fabulous creatures are described by Aelian only once), or have survived only in the works of later writers (i.e. the works of Ctesias, or of Aristaeas)¹⁴.

This brings me to the issue of chronological limits. To borrow the wording of Richard Buxton, 'the earliest examples of mythological narrative to which I refer are from the eighth century B.C., to which Homer and Hesiod may reasonably be dated. Deciding how further back in time to go is more difficult. The poets Oppian and Nonnos are recognizably composing in the same tradition as their predecessors of a thousand years earlier; and Pausanias' writing in the second century AD, is the richest single literary source for Greek ritual and many of its accompanying stories. I shall frequently refer to this later material, but it cannot be denied that the world had greatly changed by the time Pausanias decided to present the Greeks themselves as an object of curiosity'.¹⁵

This kind of curiosity culminated in a unique genre called *Bestiary*. A bestiary or *bestiarium vocabulum* is a kind of illustrated encyclopedia of various unusual entities, from animals and birds to rocks. A moral lesson is usually added to each description. The oldest collection of this kind is dated back to the second c. A.D., a Greek text by an unknown Alexandrian author.¹⁶ It is entitled *Physiologus* and it was translated into Latin around 700 A.D. and then into many other European and Middle-Eastern languages. The Phoenix, which is reborn from its own ashes, and the Pelican, which feeds her young with her own blood are two examples of the entries that became popularized as ecclesiastical symbols.

Popularization is not exactly the aim of this book; it certainly addresses not the expert, but people who are already – and, who aren't remotely – familiar with Greek Mythology. The non-specialist will enjoy the coherent account of the myth's evolution and appreciate the changes and additions to the given myth over the years; more demanding readers will benefit from the reference to sources, ancient and modern, that will guide them further in the exploration of these accounts.

Finally, the aim of the book is not to decipher these myths. It is true that some monsters can be more plausibly explained than others. The nine-headed Hydra of Lerna, with its foul breath and toxic, poisonous blood, definitely stands for the swamps of that area – swamps that were a place of illnesses and death; people had tried to convert these swamps into good, arable land, so much needed for the agricultural Mycenaean economy. Even Hercules himself started a similar task

¹⁴ Bolton (1962); Sulmirsk (1970).

¹⁵ Buxton (1996) 6.

¹⁶ White (1954/60). Scott (1998) 430ff, suggested a later date, around the end of the 3rd c. A.D. or even the beginning of the 4th c. A.D.

that was completed half way through the 19th century: a task so much needed to boost the agricultural economy of an impoverished Greece that had just gained its independence from the Ottoman Empire. As for the Cyclops, I am ready to accept that the myth was born when an early farmer unearthed a massive elephant skull with his plough.¹⁷ A look at a massive rib-cage and a skull with one single hole at the place where the eyes should have been, sufficed to create stories about monstrous creatures. This single hole, which is the opening for the elephant's trunk, gave birth to the Cyclopes. One may accept such explanations and be fascinated by them. However, the aim of this book is to show how fascinating the imaginary world of these monsters is. It is not a world different from that of our ancestors. These monsters shared the adventures of ancient gods, heroes and ordinary people of Greece; therefore they will not be decoded, deciphered or explained. They deserve to be presented simply as part of this unique past of Greece, which makes it so appealing to most of us today. After all, as I often say to my students regarding Greek Mythology, *if it's not fun, it's not functional*.

Spyros Syropoulos

¹⁷ Skeletons of dwarf elephants (around 1,5-2,3 meters) were found on Greek islands (Crete, Cyclades, Dodecanese). Cf. Symeonides, N. K.; et al. (2001). 'New data on Palaeoloxodon chaniensis (Vamos cave, Chania, Crete)'. In Cavarretta, Giuseppe (ed.), *The World of Elephants - International Congress, Rome 2001*, Rome 2001, 510-513; Theodorou, G., *The dwarf elephants of the Charkadio cave on the island of Tilos (Dodekanese, Greece)*. PhD Thesis Athens University, 1983. Also, the mammoth with the longest tusks in the world is found outside the northern Greek city of Ptolemais. They are 3,5 meters long, weighing 6 tons and they were discovered by Prof. Evagelia Tsoukala from the Aristotelian University of Thessaloniki.