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The Worlds Where Campe Dwells

Introduction

The aim of this article is to review the ancient testimonies connected with the female monster Campe (Κάμπη), which was designed by Cronus, the greatest god of the pre-Olympic divine world, to serve as the guard of the Cyclopes and the Hekatoncheires (the hundred-armed giants) in the pit of Tartarus¹. She was described not only as a sea creature of enormous size, but also as a fantastic hybrid composed of several dangerous animals. According to the beliefs of the ancient Greeks, the monstrous Campe was to be found not only in the deepest layers of the underground world², but also in the waters of the immense Ocean³, as well as in some remote lands

¹ See Charles Russell Coulter, Patricia Turner, *Encyclopedia of Ancient Deities* (New York-London: Routledge, 2012), 115; Anna Ferrari, *Dizionario di mitologia greca e latina* (Milano: RCS Libri, 2018), 138; Hanna Furgo, *Boginie, dziewice, potworzyce. Leksykon kobiet w mitologii greckiej* (Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Lira, 2022), 350.

² Campe lived “in Hades”, according to Pierre Grimal, *A Concise Dictionary of Classical Mythology* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1990), 84, especially in Tartarus, cf. Andrzej Maria Kempniński, *Encyklopedia mitologii ludów indoeuropejskich* (Warszawa: Iskry, 2001), 220.

³ Lyc. *Alex.* 413–416. See especially Krzysztof Tomasz Witczak, “Potwór morski zwany Κάμπη” [A Marine Monster Called κάμπη], *Alcumena. Pismo interdyscyplinarne* no. 3/15 (2023), 55–69.

(like Libya⁴ or India⁵). My main purpose is to analyze critically all the mythological (fantastic or realist) accounts that treat of Campe, as well as to indicate, if possible, the various spheres of the imagination of the ancient Greeks (expressed not only by mythographers, but also by the unknown artists of classical antiquity).

Eumelus of Corinth, the epic poet who – according to Martin Lichtfield West⁶ – lived in the last decades of the 7th century BC and/or the first half of the 6th century BC, was probably the earliest Greek author to mention Campe by name⁷. The next writer was Epicharmus of Cos (6th/5th c. BC), *who* describes a large marine animal called κάμη in one of his works. Lycophron of Chalkis also describes bloodthirsty sea monsters living in the depths of the ocean. The terrifying monster called Campe is mentioned by some Greek mythographers, including Apollodorus (2nd century BC), Diodorus of Sicily (ca. 80–ca. 20 BC), and Nonnus of Panopolis (4th–5th century AD). Publius Ovidius Naso (43 BC–18 AD) also described Campe in one of his poems (*Fasti* III 793–808)⁸. Hesychius of Alexandria, the Greek lexicographer of the 5th–6th century AD, confirms the purely marine semantics in his concise gloss: κάμη· κῆτος παρὰ Ἐπιχάρμῳ⁹ “*kámḗ* – a sea monster [described] by Epicharmus”.

This essay describes how the ancient Greeks and Romans imagined the appearance of the mythical Campe and the worlds in which she lived.

⁴ Campe was “a fabulous animal in Libya [jakieś bajeczne zwierzę w Libii]”, see Zofia Abramowiczówna, ed., *Słownik grecko-polski*, vol. II (Warszawa: Państwowe Wydawnictwo Naukowe, 1960), 555. Other researchers believe that it was a marine monster, e.g. Pierre Chantraine, *Dictionnaire étymologique de la langue grecque. Histoire des mots*, vol. II (Paris: Éditions Klincksieck, 1970), 490: “monstre marin fabuleux en Libye”.

⁵ Campe was “a fabulous Indian monster”, according to Oktawiusz Jurewicz, *Słownik grecko-polski* (Truskaw: Global Scientific Foundation, 2021), 489, and Henry George Liddell, Robert Scott, *A Greek-English Lexicon* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996), 873, though the 1996 supplement of *GEL* dismisses the word “Indian” (p. 166). The same statement is to be found in other publications, cf. Gustav Eduard Benseler, *Wörterbuch der griechischen Eigennamen*, 3. Auflage (Braunschweig: Verlag von Friedrich Vieweg und Sohn, 1911), 613 (“ein indischer Ungeheuer”); Hjalmar Frisk, *Griechisches etymologisches Wörterbuch*, vol. I (Heidelberg, Carl Winter Universitätsverlag, 1960), 774 (“indisches Meerungeheuer”); Franco Montanari, *The Brill Dictionary of Ancient Greek* (Leiden-Boston: Brill, 2018) 1031 (“a fabulous monster of India”).

⁶ Martin Lichtfield West, “Eumelos: A Corinthian Epic Cycle?,” *The Journal of Hellenic Studies* 122 (2002), 109–133.

⁷ Christos Tsagalis, *Early Greek Epic Fragments I: Antiquarian and Genealogical Epic* (Berlin-Boston: De Gruyter, 2017), 20–21, 47–48, 60.

⁸ Krzysztof Tomasz Witczak, “Mityczny potwór Kampe w *Fasti* Owidiusza” [The Mythical Monster Campe in Ovid’s *Fasti*], *Symbolae Philologorum Posnaniensium Graecae et Latinae* 33, no. 1 (2023), 451–465.

⁹ Ian Campbell Cunningham, ed., *Hesychii Alexandrini Lexicon*, vol. II (Berlin-Boston: De Gruyter, 2020), 516.

Campe as the underground guard of the Tartarus

The earliest reference to the mythical Campe comes from the epic poem *Titanomachy* (Τιτανομαχία) that was traditionally attributed to Eumelos of Corinth (fragment 6), who flourished at the end of the 7th century and the beginning of the 6th century BC. His poem is lost today, but Apollodorus of Athens, the well-known Greek mythographer, summarized its contents in his prose work *The Library* (Βιβλιοθήκη). Apollodorus, following Eumelos, reports the course of the ten-year war of Zeus with his father Cronos and the Titans for power over the universe (*Bibl.* I 2, 1), during which a mysterious beast called Κάμπη was killed. Here is his account in the English translation:

With them [i.e. his brothers and sisters] Zeus unleashes the war against Cronus and the Titans. When they had been fighting for ten years, Ge prophesied to Zeus that he would be victorious if he had those who had been consigned to Tartarus as his allies; so he killed their prison warder Campe (Worm¹⁰) and freed them. Then the Cyclopes gave thunder, lighting and the thunderbolt to Zeus, the cap of invisibility to Pluto, and the trident to Poseidon. Armed with this equipment they overcame the Titans, imprisoned them in Tartarus, and set the Hundred-Handers to be their warders. They themselves cast lots for government, and Zeus got power in heaven, Poseidon in the sea, and Pluto in the underworld” (slightly modified translation by M. L. West¹¹).

There is no doubt that Campe served as a female guard in the Pre-Olympian Tartarus by order of Cronus. She guarded the Cyclopes exiled

¹⁰ The basic meaning of the noun κάμπη is ‘larva; caterpillar’, also ‘silkworm’, cf. Montanari, *The Brill Dictionary*, 1031. The description of Campe by means of the semanteme ‘worm’ seems superfluous, though the Germanic languages also demonstrate the alternative meaning ‘snake’ for Proto-Germanic **wurmaz*.

¹¹ *Greek Epic Fragments from the Seventh to the Fifth Centuries BC*, trans. Martin Lichtfield West (Cambridge (MA)-London: Harvard University Press, 2003), 226 and 228 (Greek text), 227 and 229 (English translation). See also Tsagalis, *Early Greek Epic Fragments I*, pp. 20–21. The original Greek text runs as follows: μεθ’ ὧν Ζεὺς τὸν πρὸς Κρόνον καὶ Τιτάνας ἐξήνεγκε πόλεμον. μαχομένων δὲ αὐτῶν ἐνιαυτοὺς δέκα ἢ ἑπτὰ Διὶ ἔχρησε τὴν νίκην, τοὺς καταταρταρωθέντας ἂν ἔχη συμμάχους· ὁ δὲ τὴν φρουροῦσαν αὐτῶν τὰ δεσμὰ Κάμπην ἀποκτείνας ἔλυσε. καὶ Κύκλωπες τότε Διὶ μὲν διδόασι βροντὴν καὶ ἀστραπὴν καὶ κεραυνόν, Πλούτωνι δὲ κυνέην, Ποσειδῶνι δὲ τρίαναν· οἱ δὲ τούτοις ὀπλισθέντες κρατοῦσι Τιτάνων, καὶ καθείρξαντες αὐτοὺς ἐν τῷ Ταρτάρῳ τοὺς ἐκατόγχειρας κατέστησαν φύλακας. αὐτοὶ δὲ διακληροῦνται περὶ τῆς ἀρχῆς, καὶ λαχάνει Ζεὺς μὲν τὴν ἐν οὐρανῷ δυναστείαν, Ποσειδῶν δὲ τὴν ἐν θαλάσῃ, Πλούτων δὲ τὴν ἐν Ἄιδου.

to Tartarus and prevented them from escaping from the underground prison. Zeus, having killed this monster, freed the Cyclopes, as well as the Hekatoncheires, from slavery. Their involvement on the side of the Olympian gods allowed Zeus to defeat Cronus and the Titans.

Apollodorus' account does not allow us to clearly determine what Campe, who acted as a subterranean guardian, looked like. It appears unclear whether Apollodorus interpreted Campe as being a subterranean giant, or a great terrestrial beast, or an aquatic monster. The last possibility should be taken into account, since in Hades, in addition to the Styx, four other great underground rivers flowed: Acheron, Cocytos, the fiery river Phlegeton (also called Pyriphlegeton), and Lethe, the river of oblivion. At the centre of Hades was the huge Stygian Lake, along the shore of which the souls of the dead who did not have one obol to pay to Charon, the underground ferryman, had to wander to Hades. It took them a hundred years to walk along the edge of the Stygian body of water. It is possible that the ancient Greeks imagined Campe as a kind of cetus, i.e. a great aquatic creature swimming in the Stygian Lake and living in the underground rivers flowing into or out of it. The Cyclopes and the hundred-armed giants were unable to escape from Tartarus while the monstrous beast Campe stood guard, as the creature was extremely difficult to defeat in the waters of the underground.

It can be assumed that the prototype for the mythical character Campe (Κάμπη), appearing in the story about the ancient war of the Olympian gods with the Titans (as well as in the legend of Dionysus), was a sea creature called κάμπη, mentioned by Epicharmus of Cos (6th/5th c. BC) and Lycophron of Chalkis (3rd c. BC).

In his monumental epic work *Dionysiaka*, Nonnus of Panopolis (4th–5th c. AD) also touched upon the issue of Titanomachy, as well as the monstrous Campe. He dedicates a longer passage to a mythical monster called Κάμπη (D. XVIII 233–264). It is worth saying a few words about the content of the eighteenth book of *Dionysiaka* and the context in which the account of the monstrous beast Campe appears. The eighteenth book of Nonnus' history tells us how the divine hero Dionysus (Zeus' son), during his journey round the world, goes to Assyria and is hosted by King Staphylus (Zeus' great-grandson). During a lavish feast, Staphylus reminds Dionysus of the Titanomachy (D. XVIII 223–268). Staphylus' father

heard this story from his father Belus, the king of Assyria. According to the mythical legend, the angry Cronus threw ice spears (ἄγχα παχύνεντα) from the sky at his son, and Zeus, in turn, used fiery lightning, hotter than the sun's rays, to destroy them, in consequence releasing petrified water (line 234: λύων πετρούμενον ὕδωρ). Staphylus also mentions killing the high-headed Campe with a thunderbolt (lines 236–237: ὑψιμέδων Ζεὺς / Κάμπην ὑψικάρηνον ἀπηλοίησε κεραυνῶ “Zeus reigning in heaven / shattered the high-headed Campe with a thunderbolt”). It is obvious that Nonnus of Panopolis refers here to the standard myth previously told by Eumelos of Corinth and Apollodorus of Athens, though his account differs in several details. For example, Zeus has his thunderbolt and (according to Nonnus) kills Campe with it, whereas Apollodorus reports that Zeus received the thunderbolt (as well as the thunder and the lightning) from the Cyclopes only after killing Campe. Additionally, Nonnus provides a detailed description of Campe, which is completely absent in Apollodorus. He is convinced that Campe's shape was “crooked and diversified” (line 238: σκολιὸν πολύμορφον ὄλον δέμας). She had fifty fire-breathing heads and was composed of the bodies of many dangerous animals, including poisonous snakes, a lion, a goat, the Scylla and the Sphinx. According to Nonnus, Campe was therefore a kind of snake-like hybrid with black wings. After presenting the terrifying appearance of Campe as the “black-winged Tartarian maiden” (line 261: νύμφη Ταρταρική μελανόπτερος), King Staphylos ends his story by addressing the god Dionysus with these words: “But Zeus, your heavenly father, killed this beast and defeated the Cronian, serpent-shaped Enyo” (lines 263–264: ἀλλὰ τόσην κτάνε θήρα πατὴρ τεὸς αἰθέριος Ζεὺς, / καὶ Κρονίην νίκησεν ἐχιδνήεσσαν Ἐνυώ).

Most philologists suggest that Nonnus' description of Campe cannot be taken as credible, as it “is based upon that of Typhoeus in Hesiod, *Theog.* 820 ff.”¹² It is worth noting, however, that a hybrid sea-monster (with cetus's tail, lion's feet and paws, gigantic bird wings, and the toothed face of a beast of prey, as well as being equipped with a monstrous, fish- or serpent-like body girded by snakes), similar to Nonnus' notion of Campe, appears in Ancient Greek art as early as in the 6th century BC (see Fig. 1).

¹² The quotation repeats Rose's opinion expressed in the bilingual edition: Nonnos, *Dionysiaca*, trans. William Henry Denham Rouse, Mythological introduction and notes by Herbert Jennings Rose, and notes on text criticism by Levi Robert Lind, vol. II (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press - London: William Heinemann, 1940), 79.



Fig. 1. Hybrid sea-monster on a shield found in Olympia (first half of the sixth century BC). Photo by Dennis Jarvis (2005)

Source: Wikimedia Commons.

<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Greece-0633.jpg>.

Campe as a bull-snake monster imprisoned in Tartarus

A different version of the ancient myth is registered in the third book of Ovid's *Fasti* (lines 793–808). The Roman poet gives an aetiological explanation for the appearance of the star *Milvus* (i.e. Kite in English¹³) in the spring sky. Let us quote the Latin text, as well as the English translation.

Stella Lycaoniam vergit declinis ad Arcton
 Milvus: haec illa nocte videnda venit.

¹³ The Star Kite (Lat. *Milvus*) has not yet been identified. Ovid took its name from Caesar's commentary on the calendar he introduced, as evidenced by the testimony of Pliny the Elder (*NH* XVIII 237), see Ovid, *Fasti*, trans. Anne and Peter Wiseman (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 462. Frederick Kimpton, "The *Fasti*'s Celestial World and the Limitations of Astronomical Knowledge," *Classical Philology* 119, no. 1 (2014), 27, fn. 6, suggests that the Ovid's *Milvus* is a "fictitious" entity. His guess should be rejected in the light of Pliny's work based on Caesar's reliable study. Ovid, following Gaius Iulius Caesar, states that the star *Milvus* appears on March 18th. The problem of possible identification of the star in question is discussed more broadly in some studies devoted to astronomical issues in Ovid's *Fasti*, e.g. Robert Hannah, "Is it a Bird? Is it a Star? Ovid's Kite – and the First Swallow of Spring," *Latomus* 56, no. 2 (1997), 327–342; Matthew Fox, "Stars in the *Fasti*: Ideler (1825) and Ovid's Astronomy," *American Journal of Philology* 125, no. 1 (2004), 113–114.

Quid dederit volucris, si vis cognoscere, caelum,
 Saturnus regnis a Iove pulsus erat;
 Concitat iratus validos Titanas in arma
 Quaeque fuit fati debita temptat opem.
 Matre satus Terra, monstrum mirabile, taurus
 Parte sui serpens posteriore fuit.
 Hunc triplici muro lucis incluserat atris
 Parcarum monitu Styx violenta trium.
 Viscera qui tauri flammis adolenda dedisset,
 sors erat aeternos vincere posse deos.
 Immolat hunc Briareus facta ex adamante securi,
 et iam iam flammis exta daturus erat:
 Iuppiter alitibus rapere imperat: attulit illi
 milvus et meritis venit in astra suis¹⁴.

(“The star moving down and sinking towards the Lycaonian Bear is the Kite; on that night this becomes visible. If you want to find out what gave the bird a place in heaven, Saturn had been driven from his kingdom by Jupiter. Angry, he stirs up the mighty Titans to arms, and puts to the test the help that was owed by the Fates. There was a bull born of Mother Earth, an amazing monster, in its hind parts a snake. At the warning of three Parcae, violent Styx had shut this creature up with a triple wall, in black woods. There was an oracle that he who had given the bull’s entrails to be burned by the flames would be able to conquer the eternal gods. Briareus sacrifices it with an axe made from adamant and was even now on the point of throwing the entrails to the flames. Jupiter orders the birds to snatch them; the kite brought them to him and came to the stars as its reward”; translated into English by Anne and Peter Wiseman¹⁵).

Ovid describes an amazing monster (line 799: *monstrum mirabile*), born of the Mother Earth (line 799: *Matre satus Terra*), which was imprisoned in Tartarus during the Titanomachy. The monster is depicted as having the upper body of a bull and the tail of a serpent in place of hind legs (lines 799–800: *taurus parte sui serpens posteriore fuit*)¹⁶. The Roman poet does not

¹⁴ Publius Ovidius Naso, *Fastorum libri sex*, ed. Ernest Henry Alton, Donald Ernest Wilson Wormell, Edward Courtney, (Monachi et Lipsiae: K. G. Saur, 2005), 79–80; Publio Ovidio Nasone, *I Fasti*, trans. Luca Canali (Milano: RCS Libri, 2001), 272–274.

¹⁵ Ovid, *Fasti*, trans. A. & P. Wiseman, 203 (cited with some minor modifications).

¹⁶ See Paul Murgatroyd, *Mythical and Legendary Narrative in Ovid’s Fasti* (Leiden-Boston: Brill, 2005), 103. It is worth emphasizing that numerous researchers have expressed the opinion that Ovid described Campe in the third book of *Fasti*, cf. Grimal, *A Concise Dictionary*, 84; Kempniński, *Encyklopedia*, 220; Furgo, *Boginie*, 350. On the other hand, the identification of Ovid’s bull-snake monster with the serpent-shaped Campe is not unanimously accepted

mention the Greek or Latinized name of the mythical creature in his *Fasti*, but introduces the acrostic CAMPH (Κάμπη) exactly where he describes the underground monster (Ov., *Fast.* III 797–801). Unfortunately, the Ovidian acrostic in question is preserved in the corrupted form CQMPH in most medieval manuscripts. It is necessary to suggest that the ancient editor who prepared the final version of the six books of the *Fasti* after Ovid's death (18 AD), failed to notice the Ovidian acrostic and introduced his own improvement in line 798 (*quaeque* instead of *atque* or the like)¹⁷. Ovid bases his description of the fantastic monster on a performance he probably saw in Rome (see Fig. 2).



Fig. 2. A sea nymph riding on a bull-snake monster (2nd half of the 2nd century BC). Photo by Bibi Saint-Pol.

Source: Wikimedia Commons. https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Sea_thiasos_Nereis_Glyptothek_Munich_239_front_n1.jpg

Other elements of Ovid's account also differ significantly from the above-mentioned descriptions from Apollodorus and Nonnus. The legendary female beast is not the guardian of the Cyclopes and the hundred-armed giants, but she is herself imprisoned behind a triple wall (*triplici muro*) in

in the literature, see e.g. Ovid, *Fasti*, Books 3, ed. Stephen John Heyworth (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019), 245–249. Björkeson suspects that Ovid presented Typhon as a bull-snake monster, cf. Ovidius, *Fasti*, trans. Ingvar Björkeson (Stockholm: Natur & Kultur, 2017), 355.

¹⁷ Witczak, *Mityczny potwór Kampe*, 460–463.

the Stygian dungeons (i.e. in Tartarus). She was killed not by the sky-god Zeus, but by his opponent Briareus, one of the Titans, because (according of Parcae's prophecy) burning the entrails of the "bull-snake" monster was to ensure victory for one of the fighting sides during the Titanomachy. The giant Briareus wanted to ensure victory for Cronus and the Titans, but Zeus outsmarted him by sending kites that grabbed the monster's entrails and carried them to Cronus' youngest son. In this way, Zeus, having burned the entrails of the fantastic bull-serpent hybrid, fulfilled the prophecy of the three Parcae and soon afterwards won the long war with Cronus and the Titans. He then rewarded the heroic birds by placing a star in the sky called *Milvus*.

Campe as a sea monster

The marine animal κάμη appeared for the first time in one of the literary works of Epicharmus of Cos (fr. 194). His original description is lost, but Hesychius of Alexandria gives a convincing account in the following gloss: κάμη. κήτος παρὰ Ἐπιχάρμῳ¹⁸ "kámpē – a sea monster [attested] in Epicharmus." The Greek noun κήτος (hence the Latin *cetus*) denotes 'sea monster; mythological beast'¹⁹. It refers to whales, dolphins, seals, and other large marine mammals, as well as to large sharks and great fishes like the tuna, thus the appellative κάμη denotes 'a sea monster'.

The aquatic and monstrous nature of κάμη is compellingly confirmed by Lycophron of Chalkis in his work *Alexandra* (lines 413–416). The Greek text, accompanied by an English translation, runs as follows:

πολλῶν γὰρ ἐν σπλάγχνοισι τυμβευθήσεται / βρωθεὶς πολυστοίχοισι καμπέων
 γνάθοις / νήριθος ἐσμός· οἱ δ' ἐπὶ ξένης ξένοι, / παῶν ἔρημοι δεξιῶσονται τάφου
 "For in the maws of many sea-monsters shall be entombed the countless
 swarm devoured by their jaws with many rows of teeth; while others,
 strangers in a strange land, bereft of relatives, shall receive their graves"
 (translated by A. W. Mair)²⁰.

¹⁸ Ian Campbell Cunningham, ed., *Hesychii Alexandrini Lexicon*, vol. II (Berlin–Boston: de Gruyter, 2020), 516.

¹⁹ James Diggle, ed., *The Cambridge Greek Lexicon* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2021), 802. See also Liddell, Scott, *A Greek-English Lexicon*, 873; Bartłomiej Grzegorz Sala, *Bestie i potwory mitologii greckiej* (Olszanica: Bosz Szymanik i Wspólnicy, 2018), 70; Montanari, *The Brill Dictionary*, 1031.

²⁰ Callimachus, *Hymns and Epigrams*, Lycophron, trans. Alexander William Mair, Aratus, trans. Gilbert Robinson Mair (Cambridge, MA–London: Harvard University Press, 1989), 354 (Greek text) & 355 (English translation).

The lyrical subject who uttered the above words is the Trojan princess Cassandra, the daughter of Priam, endowed with outstanding prophetic abilities, although due to the perversity of the Olympian gods, condemned to suffer her prophecies being forever disbelieved. In the quoted passage, Cassandra talks about people dying in the depths of the sea or in foreign lands. In her prophecy, an innumerable swarm of people (νήριθος ἔσμός) will be buried (τυμβευθήσεται) in the entrails (ἐν σπλάγχνοισι) of sea-monsters (gen. pl. καμπέων)²¹. The Hellenistic poet Lycophron of Chalkis, following Epicharmus, uses a relatively rare appellative for ‘large marine animal.’ There are many representations of sea monsters with sharp teeth in Greek, Oriental-Hellenistic, Etruscan and Roman art (see e.g. Fig. 3).



Fig. 3. A sea nymph riding on a sea monster, probably Campe (1st century BC).
Photo by Ismoon (2021).

Source: Wikimedia Commons. [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Palette_with_Sea_Nymph_\(Nereid\)_Riding_on_a_Sea_monster._Gandhara._A.I._Chicago.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Palette_with_Sea_Nymph_(Nereid)_Riding_on_a_Sea_monster._Gandhara._A.I._Chicago.jpg).

²¹ Note that the genitive plural καμπέων can represent not only a non-contracted declensional form of the basic noun κάμπη (feminine *ā*-stem), but also of an alternative variant κάμπος (neuter *es*-stem). The first possibility seems to be more convincing, cf. Witczak, “Potwór morski,” 62–65.

The Libyan Campe described by Diodorus of Sicily

The Greek historian and mythographer Diodorus of Sicily (ca. 80–20 BC) mentions a fantastic creature named Κάμπη, killed by the divine hero Dionysus (who later became one of the Olympian gods) at the request of the ancient Libyans. The relevant passage (Diod., *Bibl.* III 72, 2–3) is limited to a few short sentences:

Dionysus, then, set out with his army, and after passing through a great extent of waterless land, no small portion of which was desert and infested with wild beasts, he encamped beside a city of Libya named Zabirna. Near this city an earth-born monster called Campê, which was destroying many of the natives, was slain by him, whereby he won great fame among the natives for valour. Over the monster which he had killed he also erected an enormous mound, wishing to leave behind him an immortal memorial of his personal bravery, and this mound remained until comparatively recent times (Τὸν δ' οὖν Διόνυσσον ἀναζεύξαντα μετὰ τῆς δυνάμεως, καὶ διελθόντα πολλὴν μὲν ἄνδρον χώραν, οὐκ ὀλίγην δ' ἔρημον καὶ θηριώδη, καταστρατοπεδεῦσαι περὶ πόλιν Λιβυκὴν τὴν ὀνομαζομένην Ζάβιρναν. πρὸς δὲ ταύτῃ γηγενὲς ὑπάρχον θηρίον καὶ πολλοὺς ἀναλίσκον τῶν ἐγχωρίων, τὴν ὀνομαζομένην Κάμπην, ἀνελεῖν καὶ μεγάλης τυχεῖν δόξης ἐπ' ἀνδρείαα παρὰ τοῖς ἐγχωρίοις. ποιῆσαι δ' αὐτὸν καὶ χῶμα παμμέγεθες ἐπὶ τῷ φονευθέντι θηρίῳ, βουλόμενον ἀθάνατον ἀπολιπεῖν ὑπόμνημα τῆς ἰδίας ἀρετῆς, τὸ καὶ διαμείναν μέχρι τῶν νεωτέρων χρόνων)²².

Dionysus killed Campe during his mythical journey through the desert lands located between the Libyan Nysa and the Egyptian oasis of Siwa. The Libyan town of Zabirna (Gk. Ζάβιρνα), near which Campe was staying, has no fixed location²³. Elsewhere, I am seeking to prove that the ancient name Zabirna refers to the Berber tribe of Zuwarians that live in the modern city of Zuwarah (a harbour in modern Libya) and the surrounding area. Diodorus informs us that Campe was born from the Earth (gr. γηγενές) and had devoured an unspecified number of Libyans. A huge mound (χῶμα παμμέγεθες) built near the city of Zabirna was supposed to hide the remains

²² Diodorus of Sicily, in twelve volumes, trans. Charles Henry Oldfather, vol. II (London: William Heinemann – Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1961), 322 (Greek text) and 333 (English translation).

²³ Iris Sulimani, *Diodorus: Mythistory and the Pagan Mission. Historiography and Culture-heroes in the First Pentad of the Bibliothek* (Leiden-Boston: Brill, 2011), 168 (“an unknown Libyan city named Zabirna”).

or bones of the monster once it had been killed. Diodorus' paradoxographic account does not allow us to determine what environment the mythical Campe inhabited. Was this monster an aquatic or terrestrial animal? Was Campe (in the imagination of the ancient Greeks) an amphibious creature that inhabited both environments? Did it also, like the legendary winged dragon, control the air space? There is no clear answer to all these questions in Diodorus' work.

The differences between Diodorus' story and the Titanomachy, described by Eumelos, Apollodorus, and Nonnus, are significant, though all of the mythical stories feature a dangerous creature named Campe. According to Diodorus of Sicily, Campe was an Earth-born animal, living in the desert areas of Libya and terrorizing the tribe of Zabirna, who were unable to defeat her. Only the semi-divine hero Dionysus (later accepted as an Olympian god by most Hellenic tribes) killed the female monster, freeing the natives from their constant fear of her. In the place where Campe was defeated, specifically on her corpse, the local population, out of gratitude to Dionysus, built a huge mound (χώμα παμμέγεθες). It is sometimes assumed that Diodorus' passage remains evidence of the discovery of bones of prehistoric animals in ancient times²⁴. According to this ingenious interpretation, Campe represents a purely Greek fiction created on the basis of finding the fossils of extinct giant animals (like dinosaurs or mammoths) in antiquity. In other words, the huge mound near the Libyan city of Zabirna, which must have contained (as it seems) paleontological findings, indicates, in fact, "an unknown prehistoric world" in which Campe once lived.

Where did Campe dwell? Summary and conclusions

The mythical Campe (Κάμπη), mentioned or described by some Greek writers (e.g. Eumelos of Corinth, Apollodorus of Athens, Nonnus of Panopolis), appears to represent a giant female monster existing in the deepest levels of the underworld. She was made by Cronus to be the guardian of the Cyclopes and the Hundred Handers in Tartarus. Zeus killed her to free the imprisoned giants and win the ten-year war with Cronus and the Titans. Nonnus is convinced that Campe was a hybrid creature composed

²⁴ Adrienne Mayor, *The First Fossil Hunters. Dinosaurs, Mammoths, and Myth in Greek and Roman Times* (Princeton-Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2011), 150, 263.

of the bodies of a lion, a goat, the Scylla, the Sphinx, and poisonous snakes. She had fifty fire-breathing heads, as well as black wings. She lives (or lived) in Tartarus. Publius Ovidius Naso presents a similar version, according to which Campe, imagined as a hybrid (bull-snake) monster, lived during the reign of Cronus as a prisoner in Tartarus behind a triple wall. In other words, she is commonly treated as an inhabitant of the underworld.

The ancient Greeks believed that there were giant sea monsters, called κάμπαι, living in the depths of the ocean. Lycophron of Chalkis informs us that these marine animals have sharp teeth and devour people. The aquatic and monstrous nature of κάμπη is confirmed by Epicharm of Cos and Hesychius of Alexandria.

Diodorus of Sicily indicates a female monster called Campe, living near the Libyan city of Zahirna (now Zuwarah) and devouring the helpless natives. She was killed by the divine hero Dionysus during his journey from Nysa to Siwa through the Libyan desert. The Greek mythographer does not explain whether she was a terrestrial beast or an aquatic one. Both possibilities are theoretically possible.

What is the horizon of the place where Campe dwells? She seems to live not only in the lower layers of the underworld and the depths of the ocean, but also in some desert and remote lands. Moreover, the mythical Campe has black wings (according to Nonnus), that could have allowed her to fly freely in the air.

There is an additional horizon where Campe could dwell. Adrienne Mayor has her own hypothesis, according to which Campe should be treated as a trace of a paleontological legend created by the ancient Greeks based on the fossil bones of some extinct giant animals. Her interesting interpretation indicates “a lost prehistoric world” in which the mythical Campe once lived.

Krzysztof Tomasz Witczak

The Worlds Where Campe Dwells

The article discusses several problems related to the mythical female beast Campe (Κάμπη), described by Greek and Roman mythographers. According to Apollodorus of Athens, Ovid, and Nonnus of Panopolis, Campe inhabited the deepest levels of the underworld. Epicharm of Cos, Lycophron of Chalkis, and Hesychius of Alexandria claim that she is a real sea monster living in the depths of the ocean. On the other hand, Diodorus of Sicily locates her in the desert areas of Libya. It is possible that Campe could fly, because (according to Nonnus) she had black wings. There is also a “timeless” horizon where Campe could dwell. Adrienne Mayor suggests Campe can be treated as a trace of a paleontological myth created by the ancient Greeks on the basis of the finds of gigantic fossil bones. Her ingenious hypothesis refers to the prehistoric world where the mythical Campe once lived.

Keywords: fantastic animals, Greek myths, Hades, remote lands, sea depths, sea monsters, Tartarus.

Słowa kluczowe: fantastyczne zwierzęta, greckie mity, Hades, odległe krainy, morskie głębiny, potwory morskie, Tartar.