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Babys (*Βαβύς*). Brother of the satyr *Marsyas, who also entered into a musical competition with Apollo. Babys however avoided the god's jealousy and anger since he played on only a single pipe (whereas his brother had the double flute), and showed no talent. Hence a proverb of practice making imperfect: 'Babys' playing gets worse'. [Athenaeus 624b; Plutarch *Proverbs* 2]

Bacchanalia. Quarterly festivals introduced into Rome from Etruria and south Italy in honour of Bacchus, but banned by the senate in 186 BC as licentious, disorderly, and a cover for criminal activity. [Livy 39.8-18 Ovid *Fasti* 3.713-90] *See* Dionysus.

Bacchants (*Βάκχαι*). Female followers of Bacchus who accompanied the god in his processions and in his travels through fields, woods and mountains. They were depicted as singing, playing flutes and tambourines, or dancing with their hair loose, and often in a state of hypnotic ecstasy. *See* Maenads.

Bacchus (*Βάκχος*). An alternative name for *Dionysus used by the Romans, who also called him Liber.

Baius (*Βαίιος*). Helmsman to Odysseus, not mentioned in Homer, but reported subsequently to have been shipwrecked off the coast of S. Italy and buried in Campania, at the site of the city named Baiae (modern Baia) in his honour. [Servius on Vergil *Aen* 3.441, 6.107; Strabo 1.2.18, 5.4.6]

Balius (*Βάλιος*). One of the pair of Achilles' immortal horses, a wedding gift from Poseidon to Peleus. *See* Xanthus.

Basilea (*Βασιλεία*). One of the Titans, married to Hyperion and mother of the sun (Helios) and the moon (*Selene). After her daughter committed suicide and was transformed into the moon, Basilea wandered the earth in grief, banging a tambourine and cymbals, until she vanished in a storm; the ensuing cult identified her with *Cybele. [Diodorus 3.57.]

Batea (*Βάτεια*). **1.** Daughter of Teucer, wife of *Dardanus, and so a progenitor of the Trojan race. [Diodorus 1.5.] **(I.) 2.** A Naiad, who was the mother, or possibly stepmother, of *Tyndareus through her association with Oebalus of Sparta. [Apollodorus 3.10.5]

Baton (*Βάτων*). The charioteer of *Amphiarus, taken into the earth with him when it was split open by Zeus' thunderbolt. [Apollodorus 3.6.8; Pausanias 5.17.8.]

Battus (*Βάττος*). **1.** Aristoteles, known as Battus ('stutterer') because of his speech defect, was a Lacedaemonian, descended from the Argonaut Euphemus, and brought up by his mother Phronime in Thera. In response to a request for a cure for his stammer, the oracle at Delphi sent him to found a colony in Libya. Battus was very reluctant, and it was only after a seven-year delay (which brought the divine punishment of a drought to Thera) and several false starts that he eventually founded Cyrene on the coast of Libya in 630 BC. He was there cured of his stammer when he met a lion in the neighbouring desert and in terror let out a loud, clear scream. The colony prospered, and was further enlarged by his son Arcesilaus and grandson Battus; subsequent confrontations with Egypt became part of Greek history. Various descendants of the royal house of Cyrene (including the father of Callimachus) were called

Battus after the founder. [Herodotus 4.155-60; Pausanias 3.14.3, 10.15.6-7; Pindar *Pyth* 4.5-8]
2. An old shepherd involved in the theft of Apollo's cattle by *Hermes. Battus was a witness to the theft, and was bribed by Hermes to keep silent about it; Hermes then returned in disguise and persuaded Battus with a further bribe to say where the cattle were. In disgust at his treachery, Hermes turned the heart of Battus into quartz – the ancient 'touchstone'. [Ovid *Met* 2.676-706]

Baubo (*Βαυβώ*). Wife of Dysaules, who raised a smile from the grieving Demeter at Eleusis. With *Iambe she persuaded Demeter to put aside her grief temporarily, and to eat and drink, by making her smile with some rough play in which she pretended to be in labour and to give birth to the young *Iacchus. The incident was said to be the source of the bawdy jokes among women which featured in their festival of the Thesmophoria. [Apollodorus 1.5.1; Suda *s.v.* Dysaules]

Baucis (*Βαυκίς*) and his husband **Philemon** (*Φιλήμων*). An elderly peasant couple in Phrygia who became a famous paradigm of the hospitality of the poor when they were the only ones to offer shelter and a meal to the disguised Jupiter and Mercury on their travels. As a reward the couple found their flagon of wine automatically replenished, and their hovel was transformed into a temple of marble and gold where the two subsequently served as priests, whereas their neighbours were flooded out as a punishment for the meanness shown to the gods. At their request Baucis and Philemon later died on the same day; they were changed into trees, the linden and the oak, with entwining branches, and were honoured with the words: 'those whom the gods love are gods themselves'. [Ovid *Met* 8.620-724]

Bellerophon (*Βελλεροφών*). Son of Glaucus and Eurymede and grandson of Sisyphus (although his parents are sometimes named as Poseidon and Eurynome). An ancient hero of Corinth, he fled to Argos after accidentally killing a relative Belleros, where *Proteus purified him and changed his name to Bellerophon from the original Hipponoos. The narrative is taken up in Homer by Bellerophon's grandson, also called Glaucus, in his exchange of family histories with *Diomedes. At Argos, Proteus' wife *Stheneboea (also called Anteia) fell in love with Bellerophon and, when he rejected her, in revenge she falsely accused him of rape (the 'Potiphar's wife' theme, cf. *Phaedra). Proteus therefore sent Bellerophon to Stheneboea's father, Iobates, king of Lycia, with tablets on which were inscribed 'signs' (obviously an early form of writing, and the only instance of it in Homer), indicating that Iobates should kill his guest. Instead Bellerophon was given a series of heroic tasks to perform: the first was to kill the tripartite monster Chimaera, the second to battle with the Solymians and the third to fight the Amazons. After his success on all three counts, Iobates arranged for an ambush of picked Lycian troops to attack him on his return home, but Bellerophon killed them all. Iobates finally recognised the young man's heroic qualities, gave him a share of his royal power and his daughter, Philonoe, in marriage, while the people presented him with their finest vineyards and arable land. Bellerophon had three children: Hippolochus, Isander, and a daughter Laodameia, who bore to Zeus the great hero *Sarpedon. Later, however, Bellerophon incurred the anger of the gods – he lost his daughter when Artemis shot her with her arrows, and Isander was killed in a skirmish with the Solmyans. Bellerophon ended his life grieving in solitude on the Aleian plain.

The Homeric narrative, as often, leaves out the miraculous part of the story – here the winged horse *Pegasus, which, in other accounts, helped him to complete his tasks, and was the reason for the gods' anger. According to Pindar, Bellerophon caught the horse in Acrocorinth with a magic bridle given to him in a dream by Athena when, on the advice of the soothsayer Polyidus, he slept by the altar of the goddess; she also gave him instructions to

sacrifice a bull to Poseidon the Horse-Tamer. Bellerophon found the bridle on awaking, made the sacrifice, tamed the horse and raised an altar to Athena Hippias. The horse flew Bellerophon to Lycia and helped him to complete his tasks. Sthenoboea hanged herself when she heard of his success. In the end Bellerophon tried to ride up to Olympus on Pegasus, which angered the god. Zeus sent a gadfly which stung Pegasus, causing him to throw his rider; Bellerophon fell into a thorn-bush and then spent the rest of his life as an outcast. The connection of Bellerophon with Pegasus, Athena Hippias and Poseidon brings together in the myth the early taming of horses and the beginnings of navigation. [Apollodorus 1.9.3, 2.3.1-2; Euripides *Sthenoboea*, *Bellerophon* frags A&P I, 79-91, 103-13; Hesiod *Theog* 325; Homer *Il* 6.155-211; Horace *Odes* 4.11.26-28; Hyginus 57; Pindar *Isth* 7.44-47, *Ol* 13.63-92]

Bellona. The Roman goddess of war, comparable to the Greek *Enyo, represented as armed with helmet, spear and torch. She was wife or sister of *Mars, with a temple to her at Rome on the Campus Martius, founded in 296 BC by Appius Claudius and destroyed by fire in 48 BC; traces of human sacrifice and possibly cannibalism have been found there. Apart from keeping company with Discordia and the Furies Bellona had no associated mythology or cult, but her temple was used to receive foreign dignitaries outside the city perimeter, and it contained the pillar over which a spear was hurled as a symbolic invasion of enemy territory and so a declaration of war. She is pictured on Aeneas' shield in *Aeneid* 8 wielding a blood-stained whip and causing havoc in the battle of Actium. [Vergil *Aen* 7.319, 8.703]

Belus (*Βήλος*). Twin to *Agenor and son of Poseidon by *Libya. He stayed in his mother's territory where he married Anchinoe, a daughter of the Nile, and fathered in his turn the twins Danaus and Aegyptus. From him were descended the royal houses of Argos and Egypt, and through Agenor he was connected with Phoenicia. The father of *Dido had the same name, and through this ancestry she claimed common cause with Aeneas and the Trojans. 'Belus' is derived from the Phoenician title 'Baal', meaning 'lord'. [Aeschylus *Suppl* 319; Apollodorus 2.1.4; Pausanias 4.23.10, 7.21.13; Vergil *Aen* 1.618-23]

Bendis (*Βενδής*). A Thracian moon goddess whose worship spread to Lemnos and then to the Piraeus in Attica. She was identified with Artemis and so also with Hecate and Persephone. Most famously her festival rites on the Piraeus, which included a torchlight procession on horseback, set the scene for the opening of Plato's *Republic*. [Plato *Rep* 327a]

Bia. (*Βία* – 'violent force') and his brother Cratus ('strength') were sons of the Titan Pallas and the river Styx. As a reward for their mother's allegiance, they were adopted by Zeus as his attendants. With their siblings Zelus ('striving') and Nike ('victory') they were obvious allegories for the explanation of the supremacy of Zeus over the Titans. Bia is represented as a particularly unpleasant and ruthless henchman of Hephaestus in the binding of *Prometheus. [Aeschylus *PV* 1-88; Apollodorus 1.2.4; Hesiod *Theog* 383-98]

Bias (*Βίας*). Bias and his brother Melampus emigrated with their father Amythaon from Thessaly to Pylos in Messenia. There Bias fell in love with Pero, the daughter of Neleus, king of Pylos, and Nestor's sister; the bride-price required for the marriage was the cattle of Phylacus, which Melampus won for his brother. Bias was the father of Talaus, Areius (an Argonaut) and Laodocus, who was involved with the children of his elder brother in the war of the Seven against Thebes; by his second wife, Iphianassa, daughter of Proteus, king of Argos, he fathered Anaxibia, the future wife of *Pelias of Iolcos. The river Bias in Messenia was said to have been named after him. [Apollodorus 1.9.11-13; Herodotus 9.34; Pausanias 2.18.4, 4.34.4] (**B.**) See Melampus.

Biton (*Βίτων*). One of the two brothers who died in their sleep as the greatest favour granted mortals for their service to their mother. *See* Cleobis.

Bona Dea. The famous anonymous Roman goddess of fertility and healing (and so represented with cornucopia and snake), who was associated with *Faunus as daughter, sister or wife. Her sanctuary was at the foot of the Aventine, and health-giving herbs grew in its garden. The women of Rome annually celebrated her mysteries (those of the 'Good Goddess') at the house of the wife of the chief magistrate. The proceedings took place at night in early December, involving vines, flowers and wine (which was called 'milk'). Entrance was forbidden to males, and the participation in the festivities in 62 BC of the notorious Clodius disguised as a woman caused a scandal; since the rites were held in Caesar's house that year, he divorced his wife Pompeia on the grounds that 'Caesar's wife must be above suspicion'. [Ovid *Fasti* 5.148-58, Plutarch *Caesar* 9]

Bootes (*Βούττης*). *See* Constellation 4.

Boreads (*Βορέαδαι*) Children or descendants of Boreas, the north wind, and Oreithyia – especially the twins Calais and Zetes, who were two of the *Argonauts, and the grandsons, Plexippus and Pandion, born of *Phineus and Cleopatra. [Apollodorus 3.15.3; Apollonius 2.288-96; Diodorus 4.44.1-2]

Boreas (*Βορέας*). The north wind personified, as son of Astraeus ('starry sky') and *Eos ('dawn'), and brother to *Notus and *Zephyrus; he represented the cold winds blowing down from Thrace, his reputed homeland, which start up across Greece in the early morning. He tended to be portrayed as a physically strong elderly man with a beard, and sometimes winged. He was related to the Athenian foundation myth through his pursuit of *Oreithyia, the daughter of Erechtheus the first king of Athens. When his suit was denied he carried off the girl in a black cloud while she was dancing by the river Ilissus and swept her back to Thrace. During the Persian wars when Xerxes' fleet was approaching the Athenians prayed to Boreas, and part of the Persian fleet was destroyed in a gale. In gratitude the Athenians built a temple to him by the Ilissus, near the setting for Plato's *Phaedrus*, in which Socrates is asked if he believes the myth. Boreas was also thought to have saved the inhabitants of Megalopolis in Arcadia from a Spartan attack, and so had a cult in the town. The sons of Boreas, *Calais and Zetes, sailed with the Argonauts, but Heracles quarrelled with them and killed them both on the island of Tenos; two pillars were set up on their grave which swayed when the north wind blew on them. As well as his children by Oreithyia, Boreas is said to have transformed himself into a stallion and fathered twelve foals on the mares of Erichthonius, son of Dardanus of Troy. The offspring had their father's speed, and could run so lightly that they did not harm the ears of wheat on land or ripples in the sea, a description which was applied by Vergil to the Italian huntress Camilla. [Apollodorus 3.15.1-2; Apollonius 1.211-23; Hesiod *Theog* 379, *WD* 505-18; Homer *Il* 20.226-9; Ovid *Met* 6.682-721; Plato *Phaedrus* 229b-c; Pausanias 1.19.5, 5.19.1; Vergil *Aen* 7.808-11] *See* Winds.

Botres (*Βότρης*). Son of the Theban Eumelus, who was struck by his father with a firebrand for spoiling an offering to Apollo and unfortunately died. Out of compassion for the grieving parents, the god changed Botres into the brightly-coloured bee-eater bird - *merops apiaster*. [Antoninus 18]

Bouphagus (*Βουφάγος*). A rather obscure Arcadian hero, son of Iapetus and Thronax. He and his wife Promne cared for the wounded *Iphicles (the mortal twin brother of Heracles) and

buried him when he died. Boupagus himself is said to have made a sexual assault on Artemis near Mount Pholoe, and to have been immediately shot by the goddess with her arrows. Boupagus gave his name (which means 'ox-eater') to one of the tributaries of the river Alpheus which marked the boundary of Megalopolis with Heraia. [Pausanias 8.14.9, 27.17]

Branchus (*Βράγχος*). Born near Delphi, he was given his name (which means 'sore-throat') from a dream his mother had, in which she swallowed the setting sun and brought it out again through her belly. When he grew to be a shepherd boy Branchus was loved by Apollo, who gave him the power of divination and established him as the founder of his temple in Didymas, south of Miletus in Asia Minor. Branchus was the ancestor of the Branchides, a family of priests who administered the temple and the oracle, which became nearly as famous as that of Delphi. During the Persian wars the Branchides handed over the temple treasure to Xerxes, and fled to the remote settlement of Bactriana in Afghanistan. Their descendants were later punished for their treachery by Alexander, who settled some of his own men in the colony; to this day there is a Greek-speaking community there, supposedly directly descended from these early settlers. [Strabo 9.3.9, 14.1.5]

Briareus (*Βριάρεως*). Briareus, also called Aegaeon, was the most important of the three *'Hundred-handers', the primitive monsters born of sky and earth (Uranus and Gaia) at the beginning of the world. When Uranus imprisoned them in Tartarus they were rescued by Zeus; during the battle with the Titans, *Thetis, the future mother of Achilles, persuaded Briareus to desert his father's cause and fight with Zeus, and the support of these powerful allies was the turning-point in the battle which Zeus eventually won. It was this favour that Thetis asked Zeus to repay at the beginning of the *Iliad* by supporting Achilles over Agamemnon in the quarrel between the two. Zeus also rewarded Briareus with his daughter Cymapola. When the patronage of Corinth was disputed by *Helios (the sun-god) and Poseidon, Briareus was invited to arbitrate – he gave the citadel to Helios, and the surrounding territory of the isthmus to Poseidon. Vergil puts him with the Hydra and other monsters at the entrance to the underworld. [Hesiod *Theog* 815-19; Homer *Il* 1.401-06; Ovid *Fasti* 3.805-08; Pausanias 2.1.6, 4.6; Vergil *Aen* 6.287]

Briseis (*Βρισηΐς*). **1.** Daughter of Brises, priest at Lyrnessa in Asia Minor. After Achilles had sacked the city and killed her husband, parents, and three brothers, Briseis was given to him as his prize. The action of the *Iliad* begins with Agamemnon being forced to give up his own slave-prize to avert the plague sent by Apollo; Agamemnon in turn sent Odysseus to Achilles with orders to bring back Briseis as a replacement – the incident which provoked the Wrath of Achilles and set in train the subsequent events. She was eventually returned to him after the death of Patroclus, the only part of the recompense which Agamemnon had offered him that Achilles accepted. Despite Achilles' treatment of her family there was affection between the two, graphically represented in the sadness of their parting by the painter of the famous fresco in the House of the Tragic Poet at Pompeii. [Homer *Il* 1.181-7. 318-48, 2.688-94 19.246-302; Ovid *Her* 3; Q Smyrn 3.551-76] **2.** *Chryseis (Cressida) the daughter of Calchas was also known as Briseis.

Britomartis (*Βριτόμαρτις*). A nymph from Gortyna in Crete, daughter of Zeus and Carme, the type of virgin huntress who lived in the wild, ran with the hounds, and was a favourite of *Artemis. She was loved by *Minos, the king of Crete, and was said to have been pursued by him through the Cretan countryside, trying to hide from him in woods and marsh-reeds; finally, after nine months, she jumped in desperation from a cliff into the sea. But she was also said to have come from Phoenicia, as a granddaughter of Phoenix, and to have travelled

from there to Argos and Cephallenia, and then on to Crete. In one version of her attempted suicide she was saved from the sea through the intervention of Artemis by fishermen's nets and deified as Dictynna (from *diktyon* – 'net', but the title was also explained by her invention of nets for fishing and possibly hunting); the name was also given to the hill from which she jumped. In another version a sailor conveyed her to Aegina where he attempted to rape her but again Artemis intervened and she escaped into the woods; Britomartis was subsequently honoured in Aegina as Aphaea ('unseen'; the temple to her is still standing). As often, a follower is to be understood as another aspect or a local variant of the deity and here Artemis-Britomartis is a composite figure for Laphria in Cephallenia, Dictynna in Crete, Aphaea in Aegina, Artemis Issoria in Sparta, with connections with Hecate and the moon. [Callimachus *Hymns* 3.191-200; Diodorus 5.76.3-4; Euripides *IT* 126-36; Pausanias 2.30.3, 3.14.2]

Brontes (*Βρόντης*). With his brothers Steropes ('lightning') and Arges ('brightness'), Brontes, as the personification of thunder, was born of sky and earth (Uranus and Gaia) early in the formation of the world. The three brothers were called the *Cyclopes because they each had one round eye set in the forehead. They lived in the caverns at the base of the volcanic Mount Etna where they worked at the smithy. Artemis as a girl visited them, approached Brontes in particular, and asked the brothers to make a silver bow for her. But they incurred Apollo's anger because they had forged the thunderbolt with which Zeus struck down Apollo's son *Asclepius. [Callimachus *Hymns* 3. 47-79; Hesiod *Theog* 139-46; Vergil *Aen* 8.425]

Bronze Age. In Hesiod's list 'bronze' was the adjective for the third race of men born on earth, after the golden and silver. Unlike the other metals, bronze in this account was not metaphorical. The men, terrifying, violent and physically strong, were actually said to have armour and tools made of bronze, and to live in bronze houses. These anonymous warriors destroyed each other in their love of fighting, and after them came the glorious race of heroes, which was followed by the degeneration shown in the present iron race. Hesiod suggests that the bronze people were born from ash-trees (*Meliae), but this note, as well as the more exotic details, are omitted in Ovid's adaptation of the passage. He lists four 'ages' – gold, silver, bronze and iron, and describes the bronze age men merely as ruthless and more eager to fight, but not yet impious. [Hesiod *WD* 142-55, Ovid *Met* 1.125-27]

Broteas (*Βροτέας*). Son of Tantalus and Euryanassa, and brother to Pelops and Niobe. He is said to have set up the first sanctuary to the Great Mother (*Cybele) on the rock of Koddinos in Magnesia, and carved her oldest image. He was a famous hunter who defied Artemis; in revenge she drove him mad so that he burned himself alive, thinking he was immune to flames. A scholiast on Ovid's version, however, attributes Broteas' suicide to shame at his ugliness. [Apollodorus *Ep* 2.2; Pausanias 3.22.4]

Bunus (*Βούνος*). Son of Hermes and Alcidameia. Born and brought up in Corinth, he became regent when *Aeetes, the rightful king, emigrated to Colchis. Bunus built a temple on the Acrocorinth to Hera during his reign, which accounted for her title Hera Bunaea; it was in this temple that atonement was made for Medea's murdered children. [Pausanias 2.4.7; schol Euripides *Medea* 1378]

Busiris (*Βούσιρις*). Son of Poseidon and Lysianessa, he was a king of Egypt with a reputation for cruelty. To end a prolonged drought, and on a seer's advice, he set up an altar on which he sacrificed a stranger annually. One year the stranger happened to be *Herakles, who was caught and brought to the altar as a victim; Herakles escaped however, and killed Busiris, his son and the spectators. [Apollodorus 2.5.11; Diodorus 4.18.1, 27.3; Herodotus 2.45; Isocrates

Busiris; Ovid *Met* 9.182-3; Vergil *Georg* 3.5; three fragments extant of Euripides satyr play *Busiris*]

Butes (*Βούτης*). **1.** Son of *Pandion, king of Athens, and twin brother of *Erechtheus, whose daughter Chthonie he married. After Pandion's death he became a priest of Athena and Poseidon, and on his own death was given heroic honours in the Erechtheum. [Aeschines 2.147; Apollodorus 3.15.1; Pausanias 1.26.5; Plutarch *Lives* 10. 841] **(K.) 2.** An Argonaut, possibly to be identified with the former, but given the parentage of Teleon and Zeuxippe. He was said to have abandoned ship when he was seduced by the *Sirens on the return journey, but was then rescued by Aphrodite and taken to Sicily where he founded Lilybaeum, and gave Aphrodite a son *Eryx. [Apollodorus 1.9.25; Apollonius 4.912-18; Diodorus 4.83; Vergil *Aen* 5.371-74] **3.** Son of *Boreas, Butes was exiled from Thrace after plotting against his half-brother Lycurgus. He went to Naxos where he took to piracy, and on one occasion raped a Bacchant Coronis, nurse to Dionysus. In retaliation he was punished with madness by the god, jumped into a well and drowned. [Diodorus 5.50.4-5] *See* Bootes, Constellation **4.**

Buzyges (*Βουζύγης*). A hero of Attica, sometimes identified with *Triptolemus. As his name indicates, he is credited with the invention of the yoke. His harnessing of oxen to the plough is part of the mythical tradition of human progress, in which animals are tamed and their strength used for the service of humans. [Pliny *NH* 7.199]

Byblis (*Βυβλίς*). Daughter of *Miletus, who went from Crete to Asia Minor, where he founded his eponymous city on the Ionian coast, and of Tragasia (also known as Eidothea or Cyane), a native of Caria. Byblis fell in love with her twin brother *Caunus, and, after a struggle, eventually declared her passion in a long letter inscribed on a wax tablets (which would make her one of the first literate women of Greece). Caunus fled from her in horror, but she pursued him, through Asia Minor, until she fell exhausted; consumed by her tears of grief she was changed into a fountain. She also gave her name to the Carian city Byblis and also Byblos in Phoenicia. [Antoninus 30; Ovid *Met* 9.446-665; Parthenius 11]

Byzas (*Βύζας*). Son of Poseidon and Ceroessa, the daughter of Zeus and Io, and eponymous founder of Byzantium, at the strategic position, near his birthplace, on the Bosphorus between Europe and Asia. The city is said to have been fortified by his father Poseidon and Athena. The city immediately came under attack, first by Haemus of Thrace who was defeated by Byzas, and whose troops were chased back to Thrace, then by Odryses of Scythia, who retreated when Byzas' wife Phidalia threw snakes into the enemy camp, and then by Strombus, Phidalia's brother-in-law, whom she also outwitted. [Diodorus 4.49.1 Stephanus *s.v.* Byzantion]