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**Fabius Cunctator** ('Fabius the Delayer'). A famous Roman general of the Second Punic War (218-212 BC) who held out in a defensive war against Hannibal, avoiding a direct encounter, and allowing him to ravage the countryside. The Romans became impatient with the strategy, broke with it, and were ignominiously defeated by Hannibal at the battle of Cannae. So the delaying policy was successfully resumed and became proverbial. [Ennius *Ann* 370; Livy 30.2.9; Vergil *Aen* 6.846]

**Fabula.** The word means 'story' and also 'drama' (when used with a defining adjective); it is understood generally as the Roman equivalent of the Greek *μύθος*, i.e. 'myth'.

**Fama.** The Roman personification of both fame and rumour. She is represented by Horace as winged, bearing aloft a man of distinction and ensuring the survival of his high reputation even after death. Vergil's description of Fama, however, copied and elaborated by later authors, is of an evil creature bent on mischief-making. The last child of Earth, she moved swiftly on foot, but was also winged, a strange bird-like creature with a watchful eye and a garrulous tongue under every feather. She was responsible for rumours that were a mixture of deceptive truth and harmful lies, and in particular spread scandal throughout Africa about the liaison of \*Dido with Aeneas, which contributed to the queen's eventual suicide. Ovid gives Fama an elaborate house between earth, sky and sea, full of echoing whispers. [Horace *Odes* 2.2.7; Ovid *Met* 12.39-63; Vergil *Aen* 4.173-97]

**Fames.** Hunger personified, the Roman version of the masculine Greek noun *λιμός*, represented by Hesiod as a child of Night. In Vergil she is one of the personifications of human ills, 'evil-persuading', who have their habitation at the entrance to Hades, whereas Ovid locates her in the remote barren wastelands of Scythia and gives a detailed description of her skeletal appearance. [Ovid *Met* 8.783-882; Vergil *Aen* 6.276] *See* Erysichthon.

**Fates.** Used as the plural of \*Fatum, for spoken or written prophecies which might be written by the \*Sibyl on leaves, carved on stone, or inscribed on papyrus and unrolled to reveal the future. The word also indicated what the gods said or decreed ('fata deum') regarding the cosmos and human life within it, decisions often regarded as cruel and irreversible. As personifications Fates took over the mythology of the three Greek sisters responsible for an individual's destiny, the \*Moirae, and were also known as \*Parcae, the birth-goddesses. A line of three female statues positioned at the edge of the open Comitium on the side of the old Rostra were known as Tria Fata (the Three Fates), perhaps erected as appropriate overseers of the voting assemblies held there. [Catullus 64.305-80; Hyginus 171; Ovid *Met* 15.805-15; Plato *Laws* 960c; Vergil *Aen* 1.239, 262, 2.54, 257, 3.395, 4.440, 651, 6.376, 12.676, 726] *See* Moirae.

**Fatum.** The semi-personification of the utterance or prophecy of a god, especially of Jupiter, relating usually to the life-span of an individual person or to the end of that life. More generally the term could cover the destiny of an individual or a race, and by transference to a cosmic 'fate' or world-controlling divinity, later identified with the Stoic Providence, responsible for the inevitable processes of natural law. Later Latin had a masculine personification Fatus and a feminine Fata from the neuter 'fatum'. [Cicero *Div* 1.125, 3.44, *De Fato passim*; Vergil *Aen* 1.2, 4.519, 696, 6.713, 8.334, 9.643, 10.501]

**Fauna.** Related to \*Faunus as sister and wife, and sometimes identified with the anonymous \*Bona Dea. She bore a son to Faunus, or according to some sources, to Hercules on his visit to Italy; the child was named \*Latinus, the future founder of Latium. In a variant of this, the wife of Faunus and mother of Latinus was the nymph Marica. [Varro *LL* 7.36; Vergil *Aen* 7.47]

**Fauns** (Fauni). Companions of Faunus, shaggy bi-forms that were part-men and part-goat, bald-headed and bearded, with short horns and pointed ears, a man's face and torso, bow legs, goat hooves and sometimes a horse's tail, comparable in appearance and character to the Greek \*Satyrs. They were fond of pipes and dancing, and were famous for their sexual aggressiveness and love of wine (as in the statues of the Dancing Faun from Pompeii, and the Barberini Faun in a drunken sleep). [Vergil *Georg* 1.10]

**Faunus.** An ancient Italian rural god of prophecy and fertility, patron of flocks and herds, Faunus was easily assimilated to the Greek god \*Pan, especially because of his connection (or even identification) with \*Evander who migrated from Arcadia in Greece (the home of Pan) to Italy, and settled at the site of the future Rome on the Palatine hill. The father of Faunus was \*Picus and his grandfather \*Saturn, and like them he was thought to be an early Latin king who was later regarded as a god. His festival in early December was celebrated by peasants throughout the countryside, but the ancient Roman festival of the \*Lupercalia in mid-February is also connected with him as the Roman Pan figure, responsible for the fertility of the fields and protecting the herds from wolves, as well as causing nightmares. According to Vergil Faunus as *fatidicus* 'fate-speaking' had an incubation oracle in a vague location in Latium, involving a wood and a sulphur spring, where his priest claimed to see mysterious images, hear strange voices, and converse with gods and the spirits of the dead; Ovid gives an account of Numa, the early king of Rome, consulting him. [Horace *Odes* 1.4.11, 17.2, 2.17.28, 3.18 *passim*; Ovid *Fasti* 2.424, 4.652-66; Vergil *Aen* 7.45-91, 8.314]

**Faustulus.** His name is perhaps a variation of \*Faunus, but Faustulus is individualised as the herdsman who found the twins \*Romulus and Remus being suckled by a wolf and brought them home to his wife Acca Larentia to be nursed. In another version he intervened when the servants of \*Amulius were about to expose the twin boys. The mythology is further complicated with the introduction of another set of twins also saved from exposure by Faustulus, brother to Faustulus, and herdsman to \*Numitor on the Aventine hill. Later both brothers were killed in the fighting between Romulus and Remus. Faustulus was buried in the forum; his hut on the Palatine ('tugurium Faustuli') was claimed to have survived into the Republic. [Ovid *Fasti* 3.55-7; Livy 1.4; Plutarch *Romulus* 3, 10]

**Favonius.** The Roman name for the west wind, which the Greeks called \*Zephyr.

**Febris.** As her name implies Febris was a Roman goddess associated with fever, common in the low-lying damp and unhealthy slum areas of Rome. She had no mythology, but her evil influence was placated at three temples in Rome, including one on the Esquiline Hill which was a burial ground for the poor. [Cicero *Leg* 2.28. *ND* 3.63; Pliny *NH* 2.5.16]

**Februa.** The public ceremony of purification and expiation held on 15 February, which gave its name to the month, also called \*Lupercalia. The epithet 'Februus' was given to Lupercus (also called \*Faunus, the Roman \*Pan) who presided at the festival, and 'Februalis' to Juno, goddess of marriage and fertility, who was also honoured then. [Ovid *Fasti* 5.423; Varro *LL* 6.13]

**Felicitas.** The Roman goddess of good luck, prosperity and happiness. The Epicurean Lucullus built a temple to her in the second century BC, and Julius Caesar planned another, which was erected after his death in the Forum Romanum; Sulla called himself *Felix* after the goddess, because of the amazing good luck which he enjoyed through his life. [Pliny *NH* 35.136]

**Feralia.** The day on the Roman calendar (21 February) for the public commemoration of the dead that marked the end of the \*Parentalia; the word is derived from *fero* 'carry', either for the 'carrying out' of the dead in funeral processions or, on this day, for taking food to the tombs at the outskirts of the city for consumption by the departed, the \*Di Manes. [Ovid *Fasti* 2.569; Varro *LL* 6.13]

**Feronia.** An ancient Italian deity, perhaps of Sabine origin, whose name may be interpreted as 'flower-bearing'. She was sometimes identified with Proserpina, and also with Juno Virgo. Flowers and the first fruits of the season were offered to her in her sanctuary at the foot of Mount Soracte near the Latin town of Anxur, which became famous for the phenomenon, known in other cultures, of the attendant priests walking barefoot over live coals. Her temple at Terracina, also in central Italy, was a centre for the emancipation of slaves, who sat down on a stone in the centre as slaves and rose as free men, and were given the felt cap (*pileus*) as a token of their emancipation. [Horace *Sat* 1.5.24; Livy 22.1, 26.11; Vergil *Aen* 7.800, 8.564]

**Fides.** The Roman virtue of 'good faith', which covered trustworthiness, fidelity and honesty, personified as a goddess. She was represented as a white-haired old lady, older than Jupiter himself, wearing an olive wreath, and holding the fruits of the harvest. She had a temple on the Capitoline, supposedly founded by the daughter of \*Iulus, near to those for Jupiter and Victoria. Her great age, and her proximity to Jupiter (who was also known as Divus Fidus), guaranteed the foundation of the social order and the integrity of subsequent legal transactions. Treaties which Rome signed with allies and others were under her protection as Fides Publica Populi Romani ('public faith of the Roman people'). [Cicero *Off* 3.104, *ND* 2.61, 3.47; Vergil *Aen* 1.292, Horace *Odes* 1.35.21]

**Flora.** An ancient Italian deity of flowers, gracefully depicted as light-footed, dressed in pale blue and yellow and gathering a bouquet in a famous wall-painting from Pompeii. She had her own priest (*flamen floralis*) and a temple near the Circus Maximus. Her festival, the Floralia, reached its climax on the first day of May, a direct ancestor of cheerful (and uninhibited) May-day celebrations. One myth depicted her as the golden-hearted prostitute who left her wealth to the Roman people on condition that they celebrated her birthday annually. Ovid's version has her pursued by \*Zephyr, the west wind (on the model of \*Boreas and Oreithyia) who, at their wedding, gave her the power to breathe into being the flowers of garden and countryside. In another legend Flora made Juno pregnant with \*Mars by giving her a fertility flower to touch. [Ovid *Fasti* 5.183-378; Pliny *NH* 18.286; Varro *LL* 5.74, 7.45; Velleius 1.4] *See* Chloris.

**Fortuna.** The goddess of chance and good fortune, equivalent to the Greek \*Tyche. The name and meaning are related to the noun 'fors', and the two were combined in the personification of Fors Fortuna, to whom a temple was dedicated by the Tiber outside the city; people flocked there on her festival on 24 June, a public holiday. There were other temples to Fortuna at Rome (two supposedly built by the early king Servius Tullius, who was said to have been her lover), and the most famous, with an oracle, at Praeneste (Palestrina); this temple was extended and elaborated by Sulla in acknowledgement of his good fortune or \*felicitas. A

variety of epithets signified the power of Fortuna in various roles – Publica and Privata, Redux (for a safe return), and, as invoked particularly by women, Fortuna Virginiensis (on marriage), Primigenia (companion from birth) and Virilis (sexual attraction). She is usually portrayed as blind, often cruel, dressed in rich clothing, with a \*cornucopia and ship's rudder, or with a wheel (the 'wheel of fortune'), which she was thought to bring good and bad luck in turn as it revolves. [Horace *Sat* 2.2.126, 8.61; Ovid *Fasti* 4.145-52, 6.569; Plutarch *Fort Rom* 316b; Varro *LL* 6.13]

**Fortunatae Insulae** (or Fortunatorum Insulae). The Roman \*Isles of the Blessed, located traditionally in the Western Ocean, but suggested by Pliny to be the Canary Isles. [Pliny *NH* 4.22.36, 6.22.37]

**Furies** (Furiae). Specifically the three goddesses of vengeance – Allecto, Megaera and Tisiphone – but sometimes they were taken to be a larger anonymous group, easily assimilated to the Greek *Ἐρινύες*, with their home in Hades. In Roman literature the Furies avenge murder of kin in this world, hounding the criminal until madness sets in, and after death continuing the punishment. Vergil has vivid descriptions of Tisiphone driving sinners over the drawbridge into the tower of Tartarus, and of Allecto sent by Juno to generate a mad lust for war in the Italian hero Turnus. Furies, like Erinyes, were depicted as wild, implacable and terrifying, with fiery eyes, snakes in their hair, and brandishing smoking torches or whips. Lucretius interpreted them as allegories for stings of conscience. [Cicero *ND* 3.46, *Verr* 2.3; Lucretius 3.1011-23; Ovid *Met* 10.349-51; Vergil *Aen* 3.331, 6.570-2, 7.415-66] See Dirae, Erinyes.

**Furina** or **Furrina**. An obscure ancient Roman rural deity whose very name was known to few at the end of the Republic; it may have a connection with \*Furies. She did, however, have her own cult and priest (*flamen*), and a festival, the Furinalia, which was celebrated in her honour on July 25. Her sanctuary was on the slopes of the Janiculum beyond the Tiber, and became famous as the scene of the death of the revolutionary, C. Gracchus, in 121 BC. [Cicero *ND* 3.46; Plutarch *C. Gracc.*17; Varro *LL* 6.19]