

P

Pactolus (*Πακτωλός*). The son of Zeus and Leucothea and in one tradition the grandfather of Pelops. During the Mysteries of Aphrodite he raped his sister, without recognising who she was. In despair at the discovery he threw himself into the river which then took his name, and he was honoured as its eponymous river-god. This was the beautiful river in Lydia, also called Chrysorrhoas (i.e. 'flowing with gold'), in which *Midas was said to have washed away his golden touch. The myth explained the river's gold deposits, which contributed to the wealth of Croesus, the king of Lydia. [Apollonius 4.1300-2; Herodotus 3.101; Hyginus 191; Vergil *Aen* 10.142]

Paean (*Παιών*). In Homer he is a god of healing, who cured Hades when he was injured by an arrow of Heracles, and Ares when he was wounded by Diomedes. Later the name became one of the titles of *Asclepius and also a standard epithet of Apollo in his capacity as a god of healing. The word could also be transferred to a hymn in praise of Apollo. 'Io Paean' as an exclamation of joy was also used for other gods and as a war cry. [Homer *Il* 5.401, 900, *Od* 4.232; Ovid *Met* 15.535]

Paeon (*Παίων*) **1.** A son of *Endymion, king of Elis and the founder of the Paeonians, a people who lived in the country north-east of Macedonia. Endymion held a race between his three sons for the throne, which Epeius won. Paeon was so incensed at losing that he went as far away as possible to found his kingdom of Paeonia in northern Macedonia. [Pausanias 5.1.4]. **2.** A grandson of Nestor and son of Antilochus. Along with the other descendants of Neleus he was driven from the Peloponnese by the return of the *Heraclids; he eventually settled in Athens and was the founder of the Paeonid family. [Pausanias 2.18.8]

Palaemon (*Παλαίμων*, Latin Portunus) **1** A child god, born of Ino and Athamas, and originally called *Melicertes. His parents and stepmother Themisto were involved in a series of tragedies started by Hera's anger with the family over Ino's rearing of Dionysus; eventually Ino committed suicide by leaping from the cliffs near Megara into the sea, with her child Melicertes in her arms. The mother became the sea-goddess *Leucothea and the child the sea-god Palaemon. Palaemon's body was said to have been carried by dolphins to the Isthmus of Corinth, where Sisyphus built a temple and established a cult in his honour, and Palaemon became the patron of the Isthmian games. Leucothea and Palaemon, mother and child together, were protectors of those at sea, and guided sailors to safety during storms. [Apollodorus 3.4.3; Pausanias 1.44.8] **2.** An Argonaut, the son of Aetolus or Hephaestus who, like the god, was lame. He took his name from his wrestling skills. [Apollodorus 1.9.16; Apollonius 1.202]

Palamedes (*Παλαμήδης*). One of the sons of *Nauplius and Clymene, and the brother of Oeax and Nausimedon. He is not mentioned in the Homeric poems but nevertheless appeared to have been an important leader of the Greeks. As a boy he was taught by the centaur Chiron along with Achilles and Ajax, and grew to be highly intelligent. The discovery of the alphabet or at least the formation of some of the letters is attributed to him; in one narrative for example he creates the letter Y after watching the flight of a formation of cranes. He was also credited with the introduction of coinage, the calculation of the length of months based on the movement of the stars, in addition to the games of draughts, dice and five-stones. He was an ardent supporter of Menelaus and undertook an embassy to Troy to try to regain Helen. However it was to be his fast thinking that inadvertently brought about his downfall. While the Greek forces were being assembled to besiege Troy, *Odysseus feigned madness to avoid

joining the expedition, so when Menelaus and Palamedes arrived in Ithaca Odysseus was seen to be ploughing with an ass and a ox yoked together, and sowing salt. Palamedes tested his madness by placing Telemachus, Odysseus' young son, before the plough; Odysseus could not bring himself to harm his child so his ruse was exposed. Odysseus never forgave Palamedes and waited for his chance for revenge. Palamedes had a successful campaign at Troy with some notable diplomatic triumphs, raising the men's moral and attempting to avert plague and drought, but in the end Odysseus found his opportunity. He captured a Trojan and forced his prisoner to write a treasonable letter, ostensibly from Priam, the Trojan king, to Palamedes, while he also buried gold beneath Palamedes' tent. The letter was dropped in the camp and was read by Agamemnon, who accused Palamedes of betraying the Greeks for the gold, and sentenced him to be stoned to death. In another version Odysseus and Diomedes persuaded him to descend into a well and then buried him under rocks which they hurled upon him. He was avenged by his brother Nauplius, and Palamedes' death became proverbial for excessive revenge. [Apollodorus 2.1.5, *Ep* 3.7-8, 6.8; Hyginus 95; Ovid *Met* 13.36-62]

Pales. A Roman pastoral guardian spirit, without any particular mythology, worshipped in male or female form as protector of shepherds and flocks, and associated with the spring festival called 'Palilia' (or 'Parilia'). [Ovid *Fasti* 4.776; Varro *LL* 6.15].

Palici (*Παλικοί*). Twin deities from Sicily, the sons of Zeus and Thalia (or in some versions their mother is Aetna). When Thalia was carrying the twins she was afraid of the vengeance of Hera, and asked if she could be hidden in the ground; the later emergence of the twins into the light explained their name – Palikoi, 'Returners'. They were worshipped at a splendid altar by the famous sulphurous lake near Leontini, over which no birds flew because of the deadly fumes. The Palici validated oaths by an ordeal: the oath was written on a tablet and thrown into the lake – if the tablet floated the oath was true, but false if it sank; the gods were then thought to blind or strike down the perjurer. [Diodorus 11.89; Ovid *Met* 5.406; Vergil *Aen* 9.585]

Palinurus. The helmsman of Aeneas' ship on the journey from Troy. When the ship finally reached Italy Neptune required a human sacrifice in return for safe conduct for Aeneas to the Tiber's mouth. One night, when Palinurus was keeping watch as usual the god of sleep threw weariness over him and he fell overboard, still clutching the tiller. While he was on his journey through the Underworld, in Vergil's adaptation of Odysseus' meeting with Elpenor, Aeneas saw the shade of Palinurus on the banks of the Styx, unable to cross as he had not been buried. Aeneas listened to his story – of how he had swum for three days and nights to reach the coast only to be murdered by the natives. He begged Aeneas to perform the funeral rites so that his soul could rest. A tomb was raised to him on Cape Palinurus, which still bears his name. [Vergil *Aen* 3.202, 562, 5.12-34, 814-71, 6.337-83].

Palladium (*Παλλάδιον*). An ancient image which was revered at Troy, and intrinsic to the preservation of the city. The legends concerning it are many and varied, for after its removal from Troy many cities claimed to be possess it, giving divine protection to their citadels. The name *palladia* was said by the mythographer Pherecydes to refer to objects not made by human hands and which fell from heaven, and the Palladium held in Troy was just such an object. According to Apollodorus it was a small wooden statue of a girl, the equivalent of four feet in height, holding a spear aloft in the right hand and a distaff and spindle in the left. The myth of its origin was as follows: Athena was reared as a child by Triton along with his own daughter *Pallas. The children were exercising their battle skills when they quarrelled, and as Pallas was about to strike Athena Zeus, her father, stepped between them with the aegis;

Pallas was startled and failed to avoid Athena's parrying blow; she died immediately. Athena, in her grief, made a small image of her friend with the aegis on her chest and set it on Olympus next to the image of Zeus himself and there it was paid divine honours. *Electra, while vainly trying to avoid the attentions of Zeus, clung to the statue but Zeus threw it down from Olympus. The statue landed in front of the tent of Ilus who had just founded the city of Ilium (Troy) and had requested a sign from Zeus. The image fell into the temple of Athena which was being constructed at the time, and kept its place of honour there.

Towards the end of the Trojan War the seer Helenus was captured by the Greeks and told them, amongst other things that Troy would never fall while the Palladium remained within the city. The Greek heroes Odysseus and Diomedes stole into Troy under cover of darkness, and, with the assistance of Helen, removed the statue. After its theft the statue re-emerged in various places including Athens, and there it gave its name to one of the law courts. One tradition told of Diomedes taking it back to Argos, whereas Pausanias believes that it had been taken to Italy by Aeneas, and according to an ancient Roman tradition the statue which Aeneas rescued eventually was housed in the inner sanctum of the temple of Vesta at Rome. This, the Romans claimed, was the true Palladium, hidden during the sack of Troy and transported by Aeneas along with the Penates; Odysseus had stolen what was only a copy. [Apollodorus 3.12.3, *Ep* 5.10-13; Dionysius 68; Epic Cycle *Little Iliad* 1, p.511, *Sack of Ilium* 2, p.523 Ovid *Met* 13.337-81; Pausanias 1.28.8-9, 2.23.5; Vergil *Aen* 2.162-70] See Athena.

Pallas (*Παλλάς*). **1.** As a female, she was said to have been a playmate of *Athena, accidentally killed by the goddess. In her grief Athena added the name to her own and was honoured as Pallas Athena. See Palladium. **2.** Another explanation of the name was derived from a male giant called Pallas whom Athena killed in the battle with the *Giants, flayed him and used the skin to protect her own body. Those who did not accept Athena's strange birth from the head of Zeus said that this Pallas was her father; he had attempted to rape her, but she resisted and killed. [Apollodorus 1.6.2; Cicero *ND* 3.59] **3.** A different Pallas was the son of the Titan Crius and Eubia; he married Styx and fathered the four personifications that ensured Zeus' defeat of the Titans: Zelus ('striving'), Bia ('force'), Cratus ('strength') and Nike (victory). [Apollodorus 1.2.2; Hesiod *Theog* 375-88] **4.** A son of the second Pandion, king of Athens, brother to Aegeus, the father of *Theseus. The sons of Pallas (the Pallantids) disputed Theseus' claim to the throne. Half of them (fifty sons are reported) set an ambush for Theseus but they were betrayed and killed, and the second party fled. [Apollodorus 3.15.5; Plutarch *Theseus* 13] **5.** An Italian Pallas was the young son of *Evander, who joined Aeneas in the fighting against the Rutulians, went into battle against Aeneas' orders and caused havoc among the enemy until he was killed by their leader Turnus. Aeneas had to send the body back to the grieving father, and sent human sacrifices along with the funeral procession. It was the sight of the belt stripped from the body of Pallas and worn by Turnus that finally drove Aeneas to show no mercy to Turnus in the dramatic scene which closes the *Aeneid*. (Vergil *Aen* 8.104-25, 514-9, 9.27, 10.362 and *passim*, 11.59-90, 149-81; 12.941-59]

Pamphylus (*Πάμφυλος*). Son of Aegimius and husband of Orsobia, he was a descendant of Deucalion, and gave his name to Pamphylia in the Peloponnese. He died with his brother Dymas, fighting for the *Heraclids. [Apollodorus 2.8.3; Pindar *Pyth* 1.62-3]

Pan (*Πάν*). The name of this strange and uncanny god was the subject of much speculation in antiquity. It was related to tending flocks, but from early times there was play on the god's name, for *pan* means 'all' in Greek. So in the *Homeric Hymn to Pan* his name was interpreted as bringing cheer to all the gods, but later the universality referred to control of the whole

cosmos; he was also said to be responsible for groundless or 'panic' fear in individuals and in whole armies.

Pan originated in Arcadia, the area of the Peloponnese 'older than the moon', where, because of its isolation and mountain barriers, archaic forms of worship survived into historical times; his cult spread to Attica and the rest of the Greek world during the fifth century BC. In Arcadia primarily Pan was the god of shepherds and he protected their flocks and ensured their fertility. In appearance he was bi-form – half-man half-goat – with horns on his head, encircled with a pine wreath; his face was weather-beaten and strangely animalistic with a pointed bearded chin, and the lower half of his body was that of a male goat and often ithyphallic. His appearance reflected his powers, for he was strong and agile, able to move with great speed over mountainous terrain. Because of his 'goatish' half, his sexual appetites were extreme, the tales of his pursuit of maenads, nymphs and youths were proverbial, and he was a favourite character in the comic aspects of pastoral poetry. He was portrayed with the shepherds' pipes (or *syrinx*) and a *lagobolon*, a device for catching hares, for as well as protector of flocks Pan was the provider of good hunting for small game such as hares and birds. According to Theocritus youths would beat his statue with sticks after an unsuccessful hunt, presumably to inspire fertility in the hunted animals as well as in the flocks. In Rome he resembled and was sometimes identified with the god *Faunus.

The *Homeric Hymn* tells of Pan as the son of *Hermes and Dryope, but in other versions his parents are given as Hermes and *Penelope, Zeus and Callisto, Zeus and Hybris, Cronus and Rhea, Uranus and Ge or a shepherd named Crathis and a nanny-goat; Hermes however was most often assumed to be his father. As soon as Pan was born both his mother and nurse were frightened by his appearance, so Hermes wrapped the boy in a hare-skin and took him up to Olympus to be reared. The gods were delighted by his strangeness, especially Dionysus, and so he was named Pan because he had cheered them all. The strange tale of his mother being Penelope was, however, very persistent. In some non-Homeric accounts Penelope had, during Odysseus' absence, supposedly taken many lovers, in particular the leading suitor Antinous, and on her husband's return she was sent back in disgrace to her father; she settled in Mantinea where she lay with Hermes and gave birth to Pan. One version even told of Penelope coupling with all the suitors in turn, which resulted in the birth of Pan.

Myths concerning Pan are usually of an amorous nature, linked to his goat-nature and his role as protector of the fertility of the flocks. The most famous is his pursuit of the nymph *Syrinx, which started from near mount Lycaeus; she fled from him until she reached the banks of the river Ladon where she begged the naiads of the river to save her. When Pan reached out for her he found in his hands only reeds, from which a sweet sound issued; these he made them into the seven-reed pipes which he called 'syrinx' after her. The music Pan made with these pipes, which surpassed the beauty of bird-song and challenged the musical supremacy of Apollo, could often be heard in lonely places in the quiet time of the early afternoon, a time of danger for the unwary. Pan also loved the nymph *Echo but she rejected him and, in a lesser known version than that of her fading away through love for Narcissus, she was torn to pieces by shepherds who had been maddened by the god Pan. He also seduced *Selene, the moon-goddess, by promising her a white fleece, and successfully lured her into the Arcadian woods. Pan and his attendant satyrs, sometimes called Panes, often followed in the train of *Dionysus, and harassed the *Maenads as they roamed through the wild countryside.

Pan protected soldiers on duty in isolated rocky places but was also said to instil panic into armies by his shout. One myth in this context concerned the Athenian runner *Pheidippides who was sent to Sparta with a message for help against the Persians. On his return he claimed he had met the god on Mount Parthenium above Tegea; Pan had called him by name and had sent a message to the Athenians to enquire why they paid him no honours,

although he had assisted them in the past and would again in the future. The Athenians believed the message and built a shrine to Pan on the Acropolis and held an annual festival with torch races to him. The god was then said to have aided their forces at the battle of Marathon.

Although Pan appears as one of the younger gods, according to Herodotus he belonged to the ancient pantheon of Egypt, and it was from there that his cult spread throughout the Greek world. Plato introduces Pan into his dialogue *Phaedrus*, which is set outside Athens by the river Ilissus, and the strange powers of the rural setting are represented as disturbing Socrates' usual calm; the work ends in a famous prayer to Pan for inner harmony. The universality of the god had a special significance in the tale from Plutarch from the time of the emperor Tiberius which told of a sailor out at sea who heard a mysterious voice announcing that 'the great god Pan is dead'; this was taken to be a sign of the end of paganism and the rise of Christianity. [Apollodorus 1.4.1, *Ep* 7.38; Cicero *ND* 3.56; Herodotus 2.145, 6.105-6; *Hom Hymn* 19; Lucretius 4.580-89; Ovid *Met* 1.689-712, 11.146-179, 14.635-641; Pausanias 8.36.8, 42.2-3, 54.6-7, 10.23.7; Pindar *Fr* 95, Plato *Crat* 408b-d, *Laws* 815c, *Phaed* 263d, 279b; Plutarch *Mor* 419b-c; Theocritus 1.123-30, 7.106-8; Vergil *Geor* 1.17, 3.391-3]

Pandarus (*Πάνδαρος*). The godlike son of Lycaon, of the city of Zeleia in the Troad. He was sent as the leader of a contingent of Lycians to the aid of Priam, but he refused to take his horses and chariot with him on the expedition, from selfishness or perhaps fear that his horses would not have sufficient forage during the campaign. He was however an accomplished archer, having been taught by Apollo, and second only to Paris among the Trojans. During a period of truce between the armies, when Menelaus and Paris were engaged in single combat, Pandarus was deceived by Athena into firing an arrow at Menelaus; hostilities were then resumed. He later fought against Diomedes alongside Aeneas, but was killed, as a punishment, it was thought, for breaking the truce. [Homer *Il* 2.824-7, 4.85-140, 5.166-296; Hyginus 112; Vergil *Aen* 5.495-7]

Pandion (*Πανδίων*). Kings of Athens of the house of *Erichthonius. **1.** A son of Erichthonius and the naiad Praxithea, he married his mother's sister, Zeuxippe, and they had four children – twin sons Erechtheus and Butes and the ill-fated sisters Philomela and Procne. The king had given Procne in marriage to the Thracian king Tereus in exchange for military aid in his conflict with the Thebans of Labdacus. After the terrible fate of both daughters (*see* Philomela), Pandion was said to have died of grief. He was succeeded by Erechtheus whilst Butes was made priest of both Athena and Poseidon. It was during this Pandion's reign that Demeter and Dionysus were said to have come to Attica. [Apollodorus 3.14.6-15.1; Ovid *Met* 6.426-37, Pausanias 1.5.3-5] **2.** The eighth king of Attica, who inherited the throne of Athens from his father Cecrops, the second of that name. Pandion was driven from his kingdom by his cousins, and fled to Megara where he married Pylia, the daughter of the king; he later became ruler when the king killed his brother and had to flee the kingdom. Pandion died at Megara and his sons, Aegeus, Pallas and Lycus returned to Athens and drove out the usurpers, while his other son Nisus ruled in Megara. [Apollodorus 3.15.5-6]

Pandora (*Πανδώρα*). Pandora, the first woman, according to Hesiod was an exquisitely lovely maiden, given every appearance of beauty but also the 'sly manners and the morals of a bitch'. Pandora was created on the orders of Zeus as a punishment for the human race who had been the beneficiaries both of *Prometheus' theft of fire from Olympus and the establishment of a sacrificial ritual whereby the gods received the fat and bones from the animal, and humans the better part. Zeus instructed Hephaestus to fashion the girl from earth and to make her like a goddess – Athena clothed her, Aphrodite taught her the arts of love, the Graces adorned her

with jewels and the Hours with spring flowers, but Hermes gave her the ability to lie and to entrap men. Thus was the archetypal woman created. Hesiod, a thorough misogynist, explains how Prometheus' brother, *Epimetheus, accepted her as a gift from Zeus and made her his wife, although he had been warned by his brother to accept nothing from the god. Pandora brought with her a huge jar which she opened, releasing all the ills that plague the human race, and leaving only hope preserved within the jar. In a later version it was all the good things in life that were released from the jar, but they returned at once to Olympus, leaving the human race bereft. [Apollodorus 1.7.2; Hesiod *Theog* 570-612, *WD* 53-105, Pausanias 1.24.7]

Panopeus (*Πανοπέυς*) or **Phanoteus** (*Φανοτεύς*). He was the son of *Phocus and the eponymous hero of the Phocian village of Panopeus. After the murder of their father in Aegina, Panopeus settled with his twin brother Crisus in Phocis, even though the two brothers were enemies all their lives, fighting even in their mother's womb. Panopeus took part in the Calydonian boar hunt and aided Amphitryon in his war against the Taphians. His son *Epeius built the wooden horse and his daughter Aegle married Theseus. The feud between Panopeus and his brother continued through their descendants, including Orestes and Aegisthus. [Apollodorus 2.4.7; Pausanias 2.29.4; Sophocles *El* 45, 670]

Panthous (*Πάνθουος*). A Trojan elder and contemporary of *Priam. He was the father of Polydamas, Euphorbus, and Hyperenor by his wife Phrontis, and was said to have come from Delphi where he had been a priest of Apollo. After Troy had fallen to Heracles, Priam had sent an envoy to Delphi to consult the oracle, and Panthous returned with him to cement relations between the two states. In a darker version the Trojan envoy was *Antenor who raped Panthous in Delphi, and abducted him to Troy; there, as some compensation, Priam made him high-priest of Apollo. Panthous was killed during the final sack of Troy, despite his piety and service to Apollo. [Homer *Il* 3.146, 14.454-5; Vergil *Aen* 2.318-35, 429-30]

Parebius (*Παραίβιος*). A native of Thrace, he was unable to prosper regardless of his efforts. He consulted *Phineus, the neighbouring king of Thynia, on the cause of the failure, and was told that his father had destroyed a tree in which a *Hamadryad had lived; as she died the nymph cursed him and his family. Parebius was instructed to offer sacrifices to the nymph and so the curse was lifted and the family thrived. He was ever after grateful to Phineus and aided him in turn when his friend was attacked by the *Harpies. [Apollonius 2.456-89]

Parcae. The Roman equivalent of the Greek *Moirai or Fates. They were originally goddesses of childbirth but in time assumed all the attributes of their Greek counterparts. They are portrayed, like the Moirai, as three sisters spinning out the thread of each man's life and cutting it according to its allotted span. One sister had power over birth, another over marriage and the third over death. *See* Fates.

Paris (*Πάρις*), also known as **Alexander** (*Ἀλέξανδρος*). Son of *Priam, king of Troy and his queen, *Hecuba, and the famous cause of the *Trojan war. While pregnant Hecuba had a nightmare in which she gave birth to a burning torch which set fire to the palace and engulfed Troy in flames. Priam asked *Aesacus, who had been instructed in the interpretation of dreams by his grandfather Merops, to advise him; Aesacus replied that the child would bring about the destruction of Troy and should be killed. So, after its birth, the baby boy was given to a shepherd, Agelaus, to expose on Mount Ida, but during five days on the mountain the baby was suckled by a bear; when Agelaus returned to the scene he could not abandon the baby a second time but took him home and brought him up as his own, calling him Alexander, which perhaps means 'the protected' and refers to his survival, but is more likely a

title for 'protector', which was earned by the boy's excellent care of the shepherd's flocks. Paris grew into an outstandingly handsome and brave young man during his time in the country, and a day came when Priam sent his men to Agelaus to select the best bull in his herds as a prize in the yearly funeral games held for the supposedly long-dead prince. Paris decided to return to Troy to try and win back the bull which he had reared himself. He won most of the contests, even (unknowingly) against his own brothers, causing *Deiphobus to threaten him with death in disappointment at his defeat. Paris took sanctuary at the altar of Zeus in the palace courtyard where his sister, Cassandra, recognised him. He had by chance brought the clothes in which he had been abandoned, and these were recognised by his parents. Priam was delighted to have his son back and dismissed all Cassandra's prophecies of disaster. He was declared a prince of Troy and deserted the nymph *Oenone, daughter of the river-god Cebren, whom he had previously married, to claim his royal birthright.

But events were unfolding that were to alter Paris' life once more, and involve his new-found family and city. At the wedding of Peleus and Thetis the goddess *Eris ('strife'), who had not been invited to the feast, threw a golden apple onto the table before the assembled guests, inscribed 'to the fairest'. The three goddesses Aphrodite, Hera and Athena immediately claimed the prize, and Zeus appointed Paris, the most handsome of men, as adjudicator, and sent Hermes with the goddesses to Mount Ida where Paris was then still tending his flocks. The goddesses each attempted to bribe the young man to win him to her side – Athena offered him wisdom, Hera power and Aphrodite the love of the most beautiful woman in the world, *Helen of Sparta. The 'Judgment of Paris', the choice from the three ways of life, became proverbial, and a favourite subject in art; Paris favoured Aphrodite and was awarded the prize of Helen.

Paris immediately left for Sparta, ignoring the prophecies of disaster from Cassandra and his brother Helenus; he also disregarded Oenone, who had said that if he was ever hurt he was to fetch her from Mount Ida for only she would be able to cure his wounds. Paris (possibly accompanied by *Aeneas acting for his mother Aphrodite) was received in Sparta by Helen's brothers, the Dioscuri, and her husband *Menelaus who made them welcome. Menelaus however had to leave for Crete to attend the funeral of his grandfather Craterus and, during his absence, Helen was enchanted by the good looks of Paris and his oriental splendour, and left for Troy with him before her husband's return, abandoning her young daughter, Hermione. There were different accounts of their journey to Troy, in some the pair went via Phoenicia and Cyprus, in others the journey to Troy took only three days as Aphrodite sent favourable winds, and in a third version Helen went to Egypt and only a phantom Helen was fought over at Troy. But according to the *Iliad* Helen was treated kindly at Troy, especially by Priam and Hector, and (apart from a duel between Paris and Menelaus which Aphrodite stopped) there was little talk of handing her back.

Paris was never in the first rank of warriors. As well as the aborted engagement with Menelaus which Paris was losing when Aphrodite whisked him away, Hector made him leave Helen's rooms to take part in a battle where however reluctantly he did acquit himself with honour, killing Menestheus, Euchenor and Deiocus and wounding Diomedes, Machaon and Eurypylus. Paris was an archer rather than a swordsman, and after the death of Hector it was he who killed *Achilles, with an arrow directed (under the guidance of Apollo) at the Greek's vulnerable heel. He had lured Achilles into an ambush in the temple of Apollo with a promise of the love of his sister, the Trojan princess *Polyxena, and there Paris shot him from behind the statue of the god.

In the final stages of the war Paris was wounded by an arrow from the bow of *Philoctetes which entered his groin. The wound would not heal so Paris sent for Oenone as she had once instructed, but she refused to help him since she was still grief-stricken at his preference for Helen. Oenone later regretted her action and rushed to his bedside but Paris had

already died; The nymph hanged herself in despair. [Apollodorus 3.12.5-6, *Ep* 3.1-8; Euripides *Andr* 274-308, *Helen* 22-30, *IA* 71-77; *Tr* 920-32; Homer *Il* 3.15-382, 6.312-364, 503-529, 7.347-364, 11.368-383, 15.341, 22.355-360 Epic Cycle *Little Iliad* 1, *Cypria* 1.9.10; Hyginus 91-2, 110; Ovid *Her* 5]

Parnassus (*Παρθνασσός*). The eponymous hero of Mount Parnassus in Phocis, on whose slopes lies *Delphi with its famous oracle. Parnassus was the son of the nymph Cleodora and Poseidon, and discovered the art of divination by observing the flight of birds. According to Pausanias he was the very first Delphic prophet, at the older oracle dedicated to Python before the shrine was taken over by Apollo. [Pausanias 10.6.1].

Parrhasius (*Παρράσιος*). One of the twin sons of either Lycaon or the nymph Phylonome and Ares. Along with his twin brother Lycastus he was abandoned at birth on the slopes of Mount Erymanthe; there they were suckled by a she-wolf until a shepherd, Tyliphus, found them and reared them as his own children. when adult they seized power in Arcadia; eventually Parrhasius' son Arcas succeeded to the throne, and it was from him that the name Arcadia arose. Plutarch tells the story as an obvious parallel to Romulus and Remus. [Plutarch *Par Stories* 314e]

Parthenopaeus (*Παρθενοπαῖος*). One of the *Seven against Thebe. In some versions he is given as son of Atalanta and Melanion from Arcadia (*or* of Meleager *or* of the god Ares), but as an Argive his parents are Talauus and Lysimache, and his brother is therefore *Adrastus. In the Arcadian version his name is said to reflect the long period when Atalanta preserved her virginity, and in the latter to his mother abandoning him as a baby so that she could still be thought a virgin. *Telephus, Auge's son by Heracles, was exposed nearby and the two, rescued by shepherds, grew up to be firm friends. Parthenopaeus went with Telephus on the expedition to Mysia against *Idas who was attacking that land, and it was here that he married the nymph Clymene and had a son Promachus, one of the *Epigoni. Atalanta warned Parthenopaeus not to go to Thebes, for he would die there, but he disregarded her pleas. Savage in spirit (belying his 'maiden' name) and with loud boasts, the man-eating Sphinx carved on his shield, he approached the Electra gate at Thebes; there he was killed by Periclymenus, a son of Poseidon, *or* by Asphodius *or* Amphidicus; according to Aeschylus his opponent was Actor. [Aeschylus *Septem* 530-50; Apollodorus 1.9.13, 3.6.3-6, 3.9.2; Hyginus 70-1, 99; Pausanias 9.18.6]

Parthenos (*Παρθένος*). The name of the maiden that became the constellation of the zodiac known by its Latin name 'Virgo'. She was said to be the daughter of Apollo and Chrysotherus who died when only a girl, and was set in the sky by her father. She was also known as the daughter of Zeus and Themis, and in this version is identified with Dike (Justice). who leaves the company of the human race in the moral breakdown of the Iron Age; in Vergil's fourth *Eclogue* it is her return which is expected to herald the advent of a new Golden Age. [Hyginus *Astr* 2.25; Vergil *Ecl* 4] *See* Virgo.

Pasiphae (*Πασιφάη*). The daughter of *Helios (the Sun-god) and Perseis who married Minos, king of Crete; their children were Catreus, Androgeus, Deucalion, Glaucus, Acacallis, Xenodice, and the famous daughters Ariadne and Phaedra. The most famous myth concerning Pasiphae is that of her strange coupling with a bull, and the subsequent birth of the *Minotaur. To prove that his claim to the kingship of Crete was approved by the gods Minos asked Poseidon to send him a bull from the sea as a sign of divine favour, and he would sacrifice the animal to the god. A superb white bull appeared in answer to the prayer, but instead of

offering it at the altar Minos let it run with his own herds. Poseidon in anger turned the bull wild and caused Pasiphae to fall desperately in love with the bull; her passion was satisfied after *Daedalus constructed an artificial heifer in which Pasiphae was concealed, and received the bull's semen. The resulting offspring was called Asterius, a bi-form with the head of a bull and torso of a man. He became known as the Minotaur (the 'Minos Bull'), and was imprisoned in a vast Labyrinth constructed by Daedalus. Other reasons given for Pasiphae's passion was that it was Aphrodite's revenge for not being given due honour, or for Helios' revelation of the goddess' infidelity with Ares. Pasiphae was sister of Circe and aunt to Medea, and, like them, a sorceress. In retaliation for Minos' many infidelities she put a curse on him which caused him to impregnate his lovers with poisonous serpents which killed them; he was eventually cured by Procris. Pasiphae was worshipped in Laconia as a moon goddess and also an oracular goddess at Thalamae.[Apollodorus 1.9.1, 3.2-4, 15.1; Pausanias 3.26.1]

Patroclus (Πάτροκλος). Patroclus and *Achilles formed an archetypal pairing of heroic warriors which many emulated, including the 'Companions' at Thebes, Alexander the Great and Hephaestion, and the emperor Hadrian and Antinous. Patroclus was the son of Menoetius and grandson of Aegina; his mother is given variously as Sthenele, daughter of Acastus, or Periopis, daughter of Pheres, or Polymela, daughter of Peleus. When a boy Patroclus had to leave his home in Locris after he accidentally killed Clitonymus during an argument over a game of knucklebones, so both he and his father took refuge at the court of their relative, Peleus king of Thessaly. There Patroclus was purified by the king and became the friend and companion of Peleus' son, Achilles. The two boys were taught together by Chiron and both became skilled healers. When Achilles had to go to Troy, Peleus sent Patroclus with him with instructions to give Achilles good counsel and act as a moderating influence on the more temperamental Achilles. Although Patroclus is usually understood to have been Achilles' lover, he is also listed as one of the suitors of Helen, and Achilles sleeps with *Briseis.

Patroclus was a warrior in his own right, even before the Trojan war; he was mentioned in all the epic cycles. He was a partner with Achilles on the raids on Scyros and in the capture of Lyrnessos, and also ransomed Achilles' prisoner *Lycaon. When he was wounded on an expedition with Diomedes Achilles bandaged Patroclus' wound in an incident that was a favourite subject of vase-paintings. The most famous representation of Patroclus is however in Homer's *Iliad* in the great feats of arms narrated on the battlefield as well as the homeliness of his friendship with Achilles in the domestic setting of his tent. Their close relationship is implicit in the details of the embassy to fetch Briseis at the beginning and of the second embassy in the ninth book – when Phoenix, Ajax and Odysseus come to Achilles' tent to persuade him to return to the fighting, they find Achilles singing and playing the lyre and Patroclus 'sitting over against him, alone in silence', and it is Patroclus who carries out Achilles' orders for the entertaining of their guests. Patroclus supported Achilles when he withdrew from battle and it was only when he went to *Nestor for news and realised that the Greeks were in difficulties and had withdrawn to the ships that he decided that action of some sort must be taken. While he was leaving Nestor's tent he was asked by Eurypylus to see to his wound – Patroclus cut the arrow from the thigh and bound it with a medicinal root.

When Patroclus returned to Achilles he asked for the loan of his armour, as Nestor had suggested, so that he could rally the Greeks and frighten the Trojans. Although Achilles compared Patroclus to a little girl crying and wanting to be picked up by its mother, he loaned him the armour but warned Patroclus only to fight before the ships and not to attempt to reach the walls of Troy, or a dreadful fate would befall him. But Patroclus disobeyed: he wreaked havoc amongst the Trojans including slaying the great *Sarpedon, and the battle was going so well for the Greeks that Patroclus forged forward and reached the walls of the city. Three times he did this and three times the army was beaten back for *Apollo was protecting the

Trojans. Patroclus finally challenged *Hector and managed to kill his charioteer Cebrión, but Apollo caused both his helmet and corselet to be knocked off and laid him open to a wound from Euphorbus; finally he was fatally wounded by Hector, and as Patroclus lay dying he prophesied Hector's own death at the hands of Achilles. The battle then raged around Patroclus' body with the Greeks trying to rescue it and Hector determined to despoil it. It was only when Achilles was told by Nestor of the death of his friend that in a terrible state of anguish he came out onto the battlefield unarmed and gave a mighty shout, causing the Trojans to flee. Achilles could not bear to be parted from his friend's body and he kept vigil over it in his tent. *Thetis anointed the corpse with ambrosia to preserve it from decomposition but it was only when the spirit of Patroclus appeared to Achilles pleading for funeral rites so that his soul could find release, that Achilles allowed it to be cremated. The funeral pyre was lavish with the sacrifice of twelve young Trojans and games were held in honour of Patroclus in which the Greek leaders competed. Patroclus' bones were later buried with those of Achilles. In one tradition Patroclus was said to have survived, together with Achilles and Helen, Ajax and Antilochus on the White Island in the mouth of the Danube. [Apollodorus 3.10.8, 13.8, *Ep* 4.6-7; Homer *Il* 1.337-47, 9.190-20, 11.599-848, 15.390-404, 16-24 *passim*, *Od* 24.79; Hyginus 97; Ovid *Met* 13.273; Pausanias 3.19.13, 24.10; Pindar *Ol* 9.70].

Pax (Greek *Εἰρήνη*). The personification of peace in the Roman world. After the period of civil war an altar was dedicated to her by Augustus; later the Emperor Vespasian built a temple in her honour in the Roman Forum, which was renamed the Forum of Peace; here writers would deposit copies of their works. She was portrayed carrying the horn of plenty (*cornucopia) and an olive branch. [Horace *Carm Saec* 56; Suetonius *Vesp* 9; Tibullus 1.10.45] *See* Eirene.

Pegasus (*Πήγασος*). A winged horse born with his twin Chrysaor from the severed neck of *Medusa, who was pregnant by Poseidon when she was beheaded by Perseus. His name was said to be derived from the Greek word for springs (*πηγαί*), and, according to Hesiod, the horse was born near the springs of Ocean in the far west, but in another version he was born of the earth when Medusa's blood seeped into it. Pegasus plays an important part of the story of *Bellerophon. The horse was given to him by *Athena, some say already broken to ride, others say she gave Bellerophon the invention of the bit which gave men control over the horse; Poseidon, too, is credited with the gift of Pegasus to Bellerophon. After Bellerophon's victory over the *Chimera he attempted to fly to Olympus but Zeus restrained him by sending a gadfly which stung Pegasus under the tail, so that he threw his rider. The horse then remained with Zeus who used him to thunder and lightning to him. He was also a favourite of the Muses on Mount Helicon. It was said that during a singing contest between the daughters of Pierus and the Muses the mountain itself swelled with pleasure and was about to reach the heavens; Poseidon ordered Pegasus to strike the mountain with his hoof to make it shrink, and from that spot the Hippocrene ('horse-spring') flowed. A spring at Troezen was also created in a similar fashion from a blow from his hoof. Pegasus eventually was transformed into a constellation, and a feather (*ταρσός*) which fell from the flat of his wing to earth gave the city of Tarsus its name. [Apollodorus 2.3.2, 4.2-3; Hesiod *Theog* 277-86, 325; Juvenal 3.118; Ovid *Met* 4.784-6; Pindar *Ol* 13.63-112; Strabo 8.6.21; Pausanias 2.3.5, 31.9, 9.31.3]

Peirene (*Πειρήνη*). Daughter of Oebalus, Achelous or Asopus. She bore two sons to Poseidon, Cenchrias and Laches, who gave their names to Cenchreai and Lecaion, the harbours of Corinth. When Cenchrias was accidentally killed by Artemis, Peirene wept for him so bitterly that she turned into the spring of Peirene at Corinth. [Pausanias 2.2.3, 3.3]

Peirithous (*Πειριθούος*). *See* Pirithous.

Peitho (*Πειθώ*, Latin 'Suada'). **1.** An allegorical figure usually found in the retinue of Aphrodite, she represents persuasion, for good ends but sometimes for ill, as when Aeschylus describes her at Paris' side when he abducts Helen, overcoming her sound Judgment. She is known as the daughter of Ate ('rash error'); later writers however stress her positive side, and make her the sister of Tyche ('chance') and Eunomia ('good order'), as well as a daughter of Prometheus. [Aeschylus *Ag* 385-6; Cicero *Sen* 50; Pausanias 1.22.3; Plutarch *Mor* 318a] **2.** A daughter of Oceanus and Tethys who married the first Argos.[Hesiod *Theog* 349]

Pelasgus (*Πελασγός*). The eponymous founder of the Pelasgians, one of the oldest tribes of the human race. The Pelasgi was said to occupy many areas of the Greek world but the two most important were Arcadia and Thessaly. Firstly in Arcadia one tradition made Pelasgus the son of Niobe and Zeus; he had a son Lycaon who was father to the fifty sons who founded the cities of Arcadia and to one daughter Callisto. Pelasgus was said to have been the first man to live in Arcadia and was therefore, according to Hesiod, autochthonous, 'born of the earth'. It was Pelasgus who taught the people to build shelters, wear sheepskin clothing and to eat acorns instead of roots and grasses, some of which were poisonous. He was also said to be an Argive king who gave asylum to Danaus and his daughters. Thessalian legend tells of another Pelasgus, the grandson of the former, who left the Peloponnese for Thessaly along with his two brothers, Achaeus and Phthius. They conquered and apportioned the land into three parts, but five generations later were in turn driven out by the Curetes and the Leleges. [Apollodorus 2.1.1, 3.8.1; Dionysius 1.11-17; Pausanias 1.14.2, 2.24.1, 8.1.4, 2.1]

Peleus (*Πηλεύς*). The son of Aeacus and Endeis, the daughter of Sciron, his chief claim to fame was as the father of *Achilles. Peleus was said to be either the half-brother or close friend of Telamon and he was also half-brother to Phocus who was born to his father by the Nereid, Psamathe. Peleus and Telamon were both jealous of Phocus' athletic prowess and Peleus killed him with a discus, although in one version the boys' mother encouraged the killing in revenge for Peleus' love for Psamathe. Aeacus banished both boys and Peleus fled to *Eurytion at Phthia in Thessaly; Eurytion purified him of his crime, gave him his daughter Antigone to wed with one third of his kingdom as dowry; Peleus had a daughter named Polydora from this union. Psamathe still wanted revenge for the death of her son and sent a wolf to destroy the flocks of the Phthians, but was persuaded to turn the animal into a stone statue by *Thetis. Peleus accompanied his father-in-law on the Calydonian boar hunt but unfortunately the javelin he aimed at the boar missed its mark and killed Eurytion. Once again he was forced into exile, this time to the court of Acastus, the son of Pelias, in Iolcus where he was purified. After the funeral games for Pelias Astydamia (or Hippolyte), the wife of Acastus became infatuated with Peleus and, when he rebuffed her, she sent a message to his wife Antigone that he was intending to marry Sterope, Acastus' daughter. This lie drove Antigone to suicide and she hanged herself. Astydamia also told her husband that Peleus had tried to seduce her; Acastus believed her, and consequently devised a death by some indirect means for Peleus as he could not kill someone whom he had purified. Acastus took Peleus out hunting on Mount Pelion and they had a competition to see who was the most successful hunter. During the hunt Peleus only took the tongues of his victims while the other hunters picked up their prey; when he was mocked for his lack of success he produced the tongues from his pouch and thus proved his prowess as a huntsman. Peleus fell into an exhausted sleep and Acastus left him on the mountain knowing it was a haunt of *Centaurus who would kill the unarmed man – Peleus' sword had been hidden beneath a heap of cow dung. When Peleus awoke he was attacked by the creatures as he was searching for his sword and he was

only saved by the intervention of *Chiron who also returned his weapon. Sometime later, after his marriage to *Thetis, Peleus took his revenge and captured Iolcus with the aid of *Jason and the *Dioscuri; he then killed Acastus and Astydamia and marched his army over her dismembered body.

Zeus and Poseidon had both courted Thetis but *Themis prophesied that the son born to her would be more powerful than its father. Prometheus also gave a similar warning – that Zeus would be supplanted by any son of his born of her. And Thetis herself declined the advances of Zeus through loyalty to *Hera who had brought her up; Zeus was angry at this rejection and decided to marry her to a mortal. Thetis at first refused but Pelias, advised by Chiron, knew that if he could keep hold of her during her many shape changes he would have her for his wife. Thetis, as with most sea divinities, had the ability to change shape at will and to escape Pelias she became fire, water, wind, a tree, a bird, a tiger, and a snake; Pelias never loosened his grip and she returned to her own form. They were married on Mount Pelion and the wedding was attended by all the gods; only *Eris ('discord') had not been invited, but she came nevertheless and threw onto the table a golden apple on which was written 'for the fairest'. Once the other goddesses had seen it they would not rest until it was given to one of them as the most beautiful; eventually Paris was asked to decide, and his decision became the cause of the Trojan War. (See Judgment of Paris.) Other quite remarkable and magical gifts were given by the other gods: a jewelled crown for the bride, an ash-wood spear from Chiron and, most famously, the pair of immortal horses, *Xanthus and Balius who later drew the chariot of Achilles. Thetis did not stay long with Peleus in Phthia; although there were in some accounts a number of children, but preferred her home in the sea with her father Nereus and attendant nymphs. Thetis was said to have tested their children for traces of their father's mortality by placing them in boiling water, they all perished except for Achilles whom Peleus rescued (or perhaps Achilles was the only child). The more usual version was that Thetis placed Achilles in the fire at night in similar fashion to *Demeter and *Demophon, and fed him ambrosia during the day, to make him immortal; Peleus stopped the practice and Thetis left him. Another myth told of Achilles being dipped in the river *Styx by his mother so that the only vulnerable part of his body was the heel by which she held him. The child was then given to Chiron to rear.

Perhaps in recognition of his own past history Peleus gave sanctuary to *Phoenix, who later became the tutor of Achilles, and to the youth *Patroclus, both exiles for murder. Thetis, with her gift of prophecy, knew that if her son went to Troy he was destined to die, and so she sent him to the court of Lycomedes in Scyros to live disguised as a girl. His identity was discovered by *Odysseus and the youth went to Troy where he was to meet his death. Peleus was then left unprotected in his advancing years and was exiled from Phthia by the sons of Acastus in revenge for the sacking of Iolcus. He went to the island of Cos where he met his grandson *Neoptolemus, who regained the kingdom and returned it to Peleus. In Euripides' *Andromache* Peleus acts as protector to Neoptolemus' Trojan slave-concubine Andromache when she was persecuted by his wife, *Hermione. At the end of his life Peleus was taken by Thetis to home beneath the sea and to become immortal. [Apollodorus 3.12.6-13.8; *Ep* 6.1; Apollonius 1.90-94; Diodorus 4.27; Euripides *IA* 700-7, 1036-47, *Andromache passim*; Homer *Il* 1.469, 7.125 9.432-484, 11.769-87; 18.87, 432-42; Hyginus 14; Ovid *Met* 7.476-8, 11.219-409, 12.233-88; Pausanias 2.29.9, 5.18.5; Pindar *Pyth* 3.87, 8.100, *Nem* 4.56]

Pelias (Πελλίας). One of the twin sons fathered on Tyro by Poseidon before her marriage. The children were exposed in the countryside where they were discovered by horse traders; one of the mares kicked the young Pelias, leaving a purplish-blue mark on his face from which he was named. When adult the twins rediscovered their mother, and their identity was confirmed when she recognised the basket in which they had been abandoned. They learned that Tyro

had been ill-treated by her stepmother *Sidero, and decided to take revenge. Sidero had taken refuge in the sanctuary of Hera, but Pelias killed her on the altar itself. He also then refused to pay due honour to Hera during the remainder of his life and it was the vengeance of the goddess which brought about his eventual death. Tyro had married her uncle, Cretheus, the king of Iolcos, and bore to him three sons, Aeson, Pheres and Amythaon. Pelias was determined to rule Iolcos and ousted his twin, Neleus, who settled in Messenia and founded Pylos. Aeson as the eldest legitimate child was the rightful ruler of Iolcos, but Pelias drove him out. Pheres also left home and founded a new settlement, Pherae, in Thessaly. Aeson's wife Alcimede had given birth to a child who was thought to have died, so Pelias expected that his own son, Acastus, would succeed him – his other children were daughters, Pisidice, Pelopia, Hippothoe and *Alcestis. Pelias became a powerful king in Iolcos and the only shadow was an enigmatic oracle from Delphi telling him to beware of a man with one sandal. In one version *Jason, having lost his sandal crossing a stream, appeared as a stranger while Pelias was sacrificing to Poseidon on the sea shore; in another Jason was summoned to the sacrifice by Pelias and was obviously living in Iolcos at the time. It became clear that Jason was Aeson's son who was thought to have died at birth; he had been hidden from Pelias until he was adult, being reared by the centaur *Chiron. The oracle to Pelias was therefore fulfilled when Jason arrived at Iolcos with one sandal, and he demanded the throne. Pelias promptly asked Jason what he would do if someone claimed his throne, and Jason replied that he would send him on a quest for the *Golden Fleece. It was said that Hera put this thought into his mind as part of her overall plan for the punishment of Pelias for the old sacrilege at her altar. The king then asked Jason to embark on the quest, thinking it would result in his death. Jason assembled the *Argonauts and left on his mission; during his absence Pelias forced Acastus to commit suicide (he chose to do so by drinking bull's blood) and also murdered Jason's young brother, Promachus. His mother Alcimede hanged herself in grief, cursing Pelias.

Jason returned to Iolcos after many adventures (*see* Argonauts) with the famous Golden Fleece, but also with the sorceress *Medea as his wife –her arrival was part of Hera's plan against Pelias. Medea told Pelias' daughters that she could perform a remarkable spell that would rejuvenate their ageing father; she verified her claim by chopping up an elderly ram and boiling the pieces in a cauldron with secret herbs and then producing a young ram lamb. Pelias' daughters did the same to their father with all good intentions, following Medea's instruction to the letter, but the spell was a ruse to remove Pelias, and the old man did not survive. The daughters all went into voluntary exile for their crime, except for Alcestis who had refused to harm her father. Acastus gathered up the bones of his father, buried them and then held magnificent funeral games in his honour; many heroes took part including the Dioscuri, Heracles, Bellerophon, Orpheus and Peleus. Jason and Medea were banished from the land of Iolcos for their crime, and went on to Corinth. [Apollodorus 1.9.8-10, 15-27, 3.9.2; Apollonius 1.1-17, 1304, 3.64, 75, 1135; Diodorus 4.50ff; Hesiod *Theog* 993-9; Homer *Od* 11.235-53; Hyginus 12-13, 24]

Pelion (*Πήλιον*). A pine-topped mountain in Thessaly which was the legendary home of the Centaurs; the famous *Chiron lived here and brought up many young heroes on its slopes. He presented to his pupil *Achilles the celebrated spear which no other man could wield and that had been cut from a tree on the mountain and was named Pelias. The Argo was built from the wood of Pelion pines, and its mention at the opening of Euripides' *Medea* became proverbial for starting a story in the distant past. *Otus and *Ephialtes planned to pile Mount Ossa on top of Pelion in their abortive attempt to climb up to the heavens and attack Zeus. [Euripides *Medea* 1-6; Homer *Il* 16.140-4; Ovid *Met* 1.155, 12.77; Vergil *Georg* 1.281]

Pelopia (Πελόπεια). A key figure in the complex relationships in the family of *Atreus. Pelopia was daughter of Thyestes, and, as a result of his incestuous rape of her, she gave birth to *Aegisthus. During her pregnancy she was married to *Atreus, her father's brother. She abandoned the child, but he was discovered by Atreus who brought him up. When Thyestes was finally caught and imprisoned by Atreus, he sent the young Aegisthus to perform the murder with the sword that Thyestes had given Pelopia. Thyestes recognised it and asked to see his daughter. When the sequence of events was discovered, Aegisthus killed Atreus and ruled Mycenae with Thyestes; Pelopia plunged the sword into her own heart. [Apollodorus *Ep* 2.14; Hyginus 87-8, 253; Ovid *Ibis* 359] See Atreus, Thyestes.

Pelops (Πέλωψ). The son of *Tantalus and either Dione or Euryanassa (whose father was a river-god near Troy). Pelops left his homeland of Lydia because of the war between his father and *Ilus, and travelled to Greece, where his exotic retinue brought eastern influences to the country. Tantalus had murdered his son when a child, and served him to the assembled gods as a meal, either to test their wisdom or, since there was famine in the land, his son was the only sacrificial victim available. The gods all refused to eat with the exception of Demeter who was distraught at the loss of her daughter, *Persephone, and ate some of the shoulder before she realised what she was doing. The gods restored Pelops to life and Demeter gave him a new shoulder of ivory. The young man grew to be so beautiful that Poseidon took him up to Olympus as his lover, but Pelops was sent then back to earth in disgrace because his father had persuaded him to steal ambrosia from the gods. Poseidon remained fond of the youth and gave him a chariot with winged horses that could even cross the ocean.

Pelops had heard of the famed beauty of *Hippodameia the daughter of Oenomaus, king of Pisa in Elis; he was determined to win her hand and the land of Elis as her dowry. Oenomaus either had an incestuous love for his daughter or had been warned by an oracle that his son-in-law would kill him so he was determined that no-one should win her hand. Many men had tried before and all of them had been killed by him in the bride-trial: each contender had to take Hippodameia in his chariot and flee as far as the Isthmus of Corinth; Oenomaus would pursue them in his chariot and, if he caught up with them, kill the suitor. As Oenomaus had arms and horses given him by Ares he had killed every suitor so far, twelve in most counts, and nailed their heads to his house. When the handsome Pelops arrived in Pisa Hippodameia fell in love with him and asked for assistance from her father's charioteer, *Myrtilus (a son of Hermes) in a plan to defeat her father. Myrtilus agreed either because he was in love with Hippodameia himself and wanted to please her or because he was bribed by Pelops who offered him half the kingdom and one night with his bride. Myrtilus sabotaged Oenomaus' chariot by substituting a wax lynch-pin for one of bronze. During the frantic pursuit the wheel came off the king's chariot and Oenomaus was entangled in the reins and dragged to his death, or, in another version, Pelops turned back and killed the helpless king who cursed Myrtilus with his dying breath and prayed that Pelops would kill him too.

Pelops inherited the throne of Pisa with his wife and became the dominant power in the area, renaming the peninsula the Peloponnesus ('isle of Pelops'). Myrtilus had not forgotten the promise made to him by Pelops, but the king had no intention of keeping it; instead he murdered the charioteer by throwing him into the sea (but the locale and the detail vary greatly). The sea south of Attica was known as the sea of Myrto, so it was said that, as the magical horses drew Pelops' chariot over the waves, he pushed Myrtilus into the sea; according to Pausanias he was pushed overboard from a boat off the coast of Elis. The most widespread version however was that Myrtilus attempted to rape Hippodameia when Pelops went to get some water for his wife. The charioteer was then thrown from the nearby cliffs, cursing the house of Pelops as he fell. The king went to the river of Ocean in the far west to be purified of this crime by *Hephaestus, and, to avert the anger of Myrtilus' father, he

founded the worship of Hermes in Arcadia; but the curse was never lifted and it affected the subsequent generations of the family.

Pelops and Hippodameia had many famous children – *Atreus, *Thyestes, *Pittheus and *Chrysippus and the daughters *Astydamia and Hippothoe. Many cities, including Epidaurus, Sicyon and Troezen, claimed one of Pelops' descendants as their founding hero, and he was said to have been the first founder of the Olympic games which were revived by his descendant *Heracles. Pelops raised a mound in memory of Myrtilus alongside the race course and it was his ghost who was said to scare the horses at this spot. There was no record of Pelops' death but a shrine was dedicated to him at Olympia by Heracles. During the siege of Troy it was prophesied by *Helenus that possession of the bones of Pelops were a prerequisite for victory, along with other conditions. The Eleans would only send a shoulder-blade, but it was lost on the return journey and only found years later by a fisherman whose family then became guardians of the bone in Elis. [Apollodorus 2.4.5; *Ep* 2.3-9; Diodorus 4.74; Epic Cycle *Cypria* 11.4; Euripides *IT* 387ff; Homer *Il* 2.104-5; Hyginus 82-3; Pausanias 1.41.5, 2.5.7, 6.5, 14.4, 3.22.4, 5.13.1; Pindar *Ol* 1.25ff; Thucydides 1.9]

Penates. Gods of the storeroom (*penus*), which in early times was situated in the centre of the house; thus they came to represent the guardians of the household. They were associated with *Vesta as protector of the hearth and the *Lar (guardian god of the home), honoured at mealtimes and family festivals. The Roman state also had its own Penates known as the *penates publici*, which were small figures of youths said to have been brought by *Aeneas from Troy and kept in the temple of Vesta. The figures were anonymous and had no mythology of their own. [Cicero *ND* 2.68; Vergil *Aen* 2.293, 3.12].

Peneius (*Πηνειός*). A river god, son of Ocean and Tethys, whose eponymous stream flowed through the Vale of Tempe in Thessaly, a site famed for its beauty. He was the father of Stilbe, Hypseus and Andreus by the water nymph Creusa, of Iphis and of Menippe, and, in later myth, of Cyrene and also of *Daphne, to whom she prayed for help from the pursuing Apollo. Peneius was also said to be the founder of the race of *Lapiths in Thessaly. [Homer *Il* 2.751-64; Ovid *Met* 1.544-7, 568-82]

Peneleus (*Πηνελέως*). The son of Hippalcimus and Aterope, and, along with his cousin Leitus, one of the *Argonauts. The young men were also suitors of Helen and thus obliged come to aid Menelaus in the expedition to Troy – Peneleus brought a Boeotian contingent of fifty ships. At Troy where he killed Ilioneus and Lycon, and was himself killed by Eurypylus. [Apollodorus 3.10.8, Homer *Il* 2.494, 14.486-507, 16.335-341; Pausanias 9.5.14-15].

Penelope (*Πηνελόπη*). 'Flawless Penelope' was married to *Odysseus, and the archetype of the faithful wife, who resisted all offers of marriage during her husband's long absence. She was the child of Icarius, niece to Tyndareus and first cousin of both Clytemnestra and Helen. The main source of her myth is the *Odyssey*, and here her faithfulness is constantly compared with the infidelity of both her cousins. There is less certainty about the identity of her mother; in some sources she is Periboea, a naiad; in others she is called Dorodoche, Polycaste or Asterodia. She married Odysseus when, in a recurring *motif*, Odysseus defeated the girl's father in a contest, here a foot-race. Penelope showed her great love for her husband immediately, for when her father asked the couple to stay in Sparta she refused her father's pleas but veiled her face, indicating her wish to leave for Ithaca, her husband's home, – and so she often appears in the *Odyssey*, veiled, modest yet determined. They had a son, Telemachus, and, because of his happy home life, Odysseus was reluctant to keep his suitor's oath to Tyndareus and accompany Agamemnon and Menelaus to Troy in pursuit of Helen. Odysseus

pretended to be mad and went ploughing, but it was only when Palamedes son placed the baby Telemachus before the plough and in danger of being injured that Odysseus gave up the pretence and reluctantly left for Troy.

Penelope was left in charge of Odysseus' estate which prospered until Telemachus neared manhood and Odysseus had been absent for many years. Various noblemen now pressed the still beautiful Penelope to marry them and the suitors took up residence in Odysseus' palace, feasting, carousing and wasting his resources until she accepted one of them. She kept them at bay for three years by saying she would choose a husband when she had finished weaving a shroud for her father-in-law Laertes, but each night she unravelled what she had woven during the day. One of her maids told the suitors about her deception and they then insisted that she finish the shroud and make a decision. At this point, after an absence of nearly twenty years, Odysseus returned home from the Trojan war and his subsequent wanderings, and, after a period of disguise as a beggar, with Athena's help he killed all the suitors. Throughout this time Penelope constantly reaffirmed her love for Odysseus, her steadfastness and, even when she thought her husband dead, declared that she loved only him. When he revealed himself to her she was wary, and as cunning as he – telling Eurycleia to bring his bed outside and make it up there, when it was immovable. Odysseus passed her testing of him and they were finally brought together.

This is the end of Penelope's story in the *Odyssey* but in other sources there are some rather strange variants. One was that she had in fact been unfaithful with all 129 suitors and as a result gave birth to the god *Pan; another that Odysseus had cast her out after her infidelities and she made her way to Mantinea where she bore Pan to *Hermes. A tomb was raised in her honour there. In another variant Odysseus had another son by Penelope called Poliporthes. When Odysseus was killed by his son by Circe, *Telegonus, whom he had never met), the young man took his father's body back to Circe's isle, accompanied by Penelope and Telemachus. There Telegonus married Penelope and Telemachus married Circe. These later tales contradict the general view of Penelope as the virtuous, faithful wife and are generally discounted. [Apollodorus 3.10.6-8, *Ep* 3.7, 7.26-38; Cicero *ND* 3.53; Homer *Od* books 1-4, 16-19, 21-24 *passim*; Hyginus 126-7; Ovid *Her* I; Pausanias 3.20.10-11] *See* Odysseus.

Penia (*Πενία*). An allegorical figure representing poverty. The only myth of her is narrated in Plato's *Symposium* where the priestess Diotima tells Socrates that, during the birth-festival of Aphrodite, Penia, a mortal, seduced Poros (the god of 'resource') and bore him a son, *Eros. Eros therefore is a *daemon*, a spirit intermediate between mortal and immortal, with characteristics from both parents. [Plato *Symp* 203b-e]

Penthesilea (*Πενθεσίλεια*). Queen of the *Amazons, daughter of Ares and Otrere, had accidentally killed her sister Hippolyte, and, in exchange for purification by Priam, became one of his strongest allies after the death of Hector. With her band of Amazon warriors she killed many Greeks in battle including Machaon and Podarces, but died by the hand of Achilles in single combat with him. Achilles fell in love with her just as he was striking the fatal blow, and cradled the dying Amazon in his arms; the moment was immortalised in a sculpture on the throne of Zeus at Olympia, and in Dido's temple to Juno. Achilles was mocked by Thersites for his tenderness, and Achilles killed him with a single blow. A late version accuses Achilles of necrophilia with her corpse. Penthesilea is above all 'bellatrix', the romantic warrior maiden, riding to battle with one breast bared, and Ovid points up the common contrast between her and the submissive house-bound stereotype. [Apollodorus *Ep* 5.1-2; Hyginus 112; Ovid *Her* 21.118-20; Pausanias 5.11.6, 10.31.8-9; Vergil *Aen* 1.490-93]

Pentheus (Πενθεύς). The grandson of Cadmus, he became king of Thebes on Cadmus' abdication. His mother *Agave, Cadmus' daughter, was sister to Semele, mother of the god Dionysus, whom she bore to Zeus. Agave and her sisters had refused to believe the divine visitation and jealously spread the rumour that Dionysus was the son of a mortal lover. Dionysus returned to Greece from Asia (along with the spread of his cult) and came to Thebes in disguise to take revenge on his mother's sisters. Cadmus and the seer Teiresias accepted the new deity but Pentheus refused to admit the new god and his ritual. When the women of Thebes were swept up in the new cult and left the city for Mount Cithaeron dressed as *Maenads to celebrate the mysteries of the god, Pentheus was determined to re-establish control over his people. He tried to imprison Dionysus, the god miraculously escaped, but even so Pentheus was still unable or unwilling to accept his power. Dionysus then brought him into a kind of hypnotic trance whereby the king's innate weaknesses were exposed – under the influence of Dionysus Pentheus dressed in the clothes of a maenad and followed the women to the mountain where he could spy on their supposedly immoral behaviour. There he climbed a tree for a better vantage point but was seen by the Maenads, who were now in the frenzied possession of the god. With the god's strength within them, his mother Agave and her sisters and companions uprooted the tree and, mistaking him for a wild animal, tore him limb from limb. Agave carried his head back to Thebes, thinking it was that of a young lion; only then, under the gentle therapy of Cadmus, did the frenzy of the god leave her. The story was well-known in antiquity (and had a celebrated performance in Parthia in which the real head of the defeated Roman general Crassus was used). The figure of Pentheus, who refused to recognise the irrational side to human nature and brought destruction on himself through pride and obstinacy was a frequently used *motif*. [Apollodorus 3.5.2; Euripides *Bacchae passim*; Ovid *Met* 3.513-733]

Perdix (Πέρδιξ – the name is both masculine and feminine). The son of the sister (also called Perdix) of the famous craftsman Daedalus; alternatively he was known as *Talus. As the boy grew he outshone his uncle in inventiveness and skill, being credited with the invention of the saw after cutting through thin metal with a snake's jaw-bone, or after observing the structure of the backbone of a fish. He was also said to have invented the compass and the potter's wheel. Jealous of the young man, Daedalus threw him from the Athenian Acropolis, and Perdix the mother hanged herself in grief. Daedalus was found guilty of the murder and went into exile in Crete where he served *Minos. As Perdix fell from the Acropolis, Athena is said to have transformed him into a partridge (*perdix*) – a quick-witted bird who stays near the ground and nests in hedges rather than trees. As this bird Perdix triumphantly attended the funeral of *Icarus, Daedalus' son, who had also died from a fall. [Apollodorus 3.15.9; Ovid *Met* 8.243-59]

Pergamus (Πέργαμος). The youngest son of Neoptolemus and Andromache. On the death of his stepfather, Helenus, his older brother inherited the kingdom of Epirus. Pergamus therefore left for Asia. He killed the king of Teuthrania in single combat and then renamed the city Pergamum. [Pausanias 1.11.2]

Periboea (Περίβοια). The name of many heroines in Greek mythology. The best known are: **1.** The wife of Polybus, king of Corinth, who adopted Oedipus. [Apollodorus 3.5.7] **2.** 'Fairest of women', a daughter of King Eurymedon who lay with Poseidon and gave birth to Nausithous, the first king of Phaeacia. [Homer *Od* 7.56-9] **3.** The mother of Ajax and wife of Telamon who earlier had been sent to Crete with Theseus as part of the tribute to Minos. [Apollodorus 3.12.7] (M.) **4.** The daughter of Hipponous, she married *Oeneus the king of Calydon. He won her as a prize of war or she was sent to him to be executed by her father when he realised

she was pregnant, or Oeneus was her seducer. Whatever the case, Oeneus, who had recently lost his wife and son, took pity on her and married her; the son was Tydeus [Apollodorus 1.8.4-5]

Periclymene (*Περικλυμένη*). The daughter of Minyas, she married Pheres and had four children by him, the most notable being *Admetus. With Pheres she refused to give her life for her son, despite her old age. [Euripides *Alc* 650-72]

Periclymenus (*Περικλύμενος*) **1.** The son of Poseidon and Chloris and grandson of the Theban seer Tiresias. When the city was attacked by the *Seven against Thebes he helped to defend it and killed Parthenopaeus during the battle. He also pursued *Amphiarus and would have destroyed him had not Zeus caused the earth to swallow up Amphiarus and his chariot. [Apollodorus 3.6.8, Euripides *Phoen* 1156-60] **2.** The oldest of the twelve sons of Neleus, king of Pylos, and one of the *Argonauts. From his grandfather Poseidon, along with great strength, he had inherited the ability to assume any shape he wished, a common power for sea deities. When Heracles attacked Pylos, Periclymenus fought him in many guises, including a bee and an eagle; Heracles, warned by Athena, was able to recognise the danger and shot the bird. [Apollodorus 1.9.9,16; Apollonius 1.156-60; Homer *Od* 11.286; Ovid *Met* 12.556-572]

Perieres (*Περιήρης*) A king of Messenia who was asked by the people of Andania to take the throne on the death of Polycaon. His genealogy is rather confused: he was said to be the son of Aeolus and Enarete of the race of Deucalion, or to be the son of Cynortas and so belonged to the race of Lacedaemon – the variant may have arisen from Spartan attempts to establish its own royal line. Perieres married Gorgophone, the daughter of Perseus, and by her had two sons, Aphareus and Leucippus; in some versions he is also the father of Tyndareus and Icarius and so the ancestor of the Tyndarids, including both Helen and Penelope. [Apollodorus 1.9.5.3, 3.10.4, Pausanias 2.21.7, 4.2.2-4]

Perigune (*Περιγούνη*). The daughter of *Sinis, the Isthmian outlaw who was killed by Theseus on his journey to Athens. She hid in a bed of wild asparagus, but Theseus found her and lay with her there; the resulting child was Melanippus. Later Theseus gave Perigune as wife to Deioneus, the son of Eurytus in Oechalia. Melanippus in time was the father of Ioxus, who colonised Caria. [Plutarch *Thes* 8]

Perimede (*Περιμήδη*). The daughter of Oeneus and the wife of Phoenix, founding king of Phoenicia. According to Pausanias their daughter was *Europa, but this is disputed; another daughter was Astypalaea. [Pausanias 7.4.1]

Periphas (*Περίφας*). **1.** A king of Thessaly in the country of the Lapiths; his wife Astyagia bore him eight sons, including the father of Ixion. [Diodorus 4.69] **2.** An early king of Attica, known for his devotion to the god Apollo, which aroused the jealousy of Zeus. Zeus was about to destroy his house with a thunderbolt but Apollo intervened on behalf of Periphas; Zeus therefore transformed Periphas into an eagle, which became his own symbolic bird, and his wife into a hawk. [Antoninus 6; Ovid *Met* 7.399]

Periphetes (*Περιφήτης*). The son of Hephaestus and Anticleia, he was one of the bandits who was slain by *Theseus on the road from Troezen to Athens. He was lame and used a bronze crutch both for support and to attack his victims. Theseus took over the instrument as his own, in imitation of Heracles' club. [Apollodorus 3.16.1; Pausanias 2.1.4; Plutarch *Thes* 8]

Peristera (Περιστέρα). Aphrodite and Eros once decided to compete with one another in a flower-gathering contest; but although Eros was able to gather the flowers more rapidly by darting around on his wings, Aphrodite won the contest because the nymph Peristera came to her aid. The angry Eros transformed Peristera into a dove (περιστέρα), and for that reason doves come under the protection of Aphrodite. [Vat Myth 1.175]

Pero (Πηρώ). The child of Neleus, king of Pylos, and Chloris, a daughter among twelve sons. Pero was famed for her beauty and had many suitors. Her father was reluctant to lose her, and so demanded as an almost impossible condition for her bride-price the flocks (or cattle) of Iphiclus from Thessaly. *Bias, aided by his brother Melampus, brought back the animals, and so married Pero. They had many children including Areius, Leodokos and Talaus, the father of Adrastus, but their mother was later abandoned by Bias. [Apollonius 1.118-21; Apollodorus 1.9.11-12; Homer *Od* 11.287]

Perse (Πέρση), also known as **Perseis** (Περσηΐς). One of the many Oceanids, daughters of Oceanus and Tethys; she married Helios and had famous children by him – Circe, Pasiphae, Aetes and Perses. [Apollodorus 1.9.1; Hesiod *Theog* 956-7; Homer *Od* 10.135-9]

Persephone (Περσεφόνη, Latin Proserpina). The daughter of *Demeter and Zeus or in a minor tradition of Zeus and Styx, the nymph of the river of Hades. As well as the daughter of Demeter Persephone was also known by the title Kore (maiden). In an Orphic myth Demeter changed into a snake to escape Zeus, he did likewise and the snakes entwined in an indissoluble knot; from this union Persephone was born. In an Arcadian myth Demeter transformed herself into a mare to escape Poseidon, Zeus' brother, who then changed into a stallion; from this union was born the horse Areion and a daughter who was known as Despoina (the mistress), her real name known only to the initiated but identified with Persephone.

The *Homeric Hymn to Demeter* was the earliest version of the myth of the girl and her goddess-mother, and it changed little throughout antiquity. Persephone was said to have been picking flowers in the company of other girls in the plain of Nysa (or near Etna in Sicily) and was attracted by a particularly beautiful narcissus sent to trap her; when she reached for it the earth opened and Hades, the lord of the Underworld, charged out driving his chariot, and abducted the girl; the earth then closed over them. Demeter searched the world over for her daughter and, when she was told by Helios what had happened, she withdrew fertility from the fields bringing famine to the human race. Zeus was forced to agree to her request for Persephone's return, but he had connived with the abduction, thinking that this was a suitable match for Hades, his brother and a king in his own right; so a condition was attached – she could only return if she had not eaten during her captivity. Unfortunately she had eaten part of a pomegranate, so Zeus agreed that Persephone would stay with Hades for one third of the year; her return then coincides with the burgeoning of the earth. Persephone is clearly an embodiment of a figure of fertility similar to *Adonis or *Dionysus, of the renewal of life after a time of infertility. This period was specifically mentioned as the winter in the *Homeric Hymn* with Persephone's return in the spring but the period of infertility in Greece is the summer when the ground is parched so perhaps Persephone represents the seed-corn kept in underground storage pits throughout the summer ready to be sown in the autumn. This would also correspond with the great autumn festival of Demeter which involved the return of Kore; *see* Eleusinian Mysteries.

However long Persephone was said to spend with her mother there was no reference to this in her mythology. She was consistently represented as the dread queen of the Underworld, where she was as powerful as Hades. It was she who had dominion over the

spirits of the dead from the time of Homer onwards, and was an essential feature in any journey to the underworld; for example she allowed the return to the world of *Alcestis and she agreed to the release of *Eurydice. She features in the myths of Heracles when he descended to the underworld to take *Cerberus and in those of Theseus when he and *Pirithous try to kidnap her. She also appears in the myths of *Psyche and *Adonis; he is similar to her in that he too had to spend some time in Hades, alternating with time on earth. Persephone was given the infant Adonis to hide by *Aphrodite who had hidden him in a chest; Persephone could not resist peeping and when she saw the wonderful boy she would not be parted from him. Zeus was forced to arbitrate in the ensuing quarrel between the two goddesses and he decided the boy should spend one third of the year with Persephone, one third with Aphrodite and one third by himself. The youth decided to spend his third with Aphrodite as well, but he was killed shortly afterwards and so joined Persephone in the end. The goddess was known in Rome as Proserpina, and took over the mythology, with *Ceres as her mother. [Apollodorus 1.3.1, 5.1, 2.5.12, 3.14.4; Hesiod *Theog* 767-774, 912-5; Homer *Il* 9.457, 568, *Od* 10.492-5, 510, 11.213-8, 225-7, 632-5; *Homeric Hymn* 2 *passim*; Hyginus 146; Ovid *Fast* 4.417-618; *Met* 5.393-571; Pausanias 8.37.9]

Perses (*Πέρσης*). **1.** A son of the Titans Crius and Eurybia, he married Asteria and was the father of Hecate. [Hesiod *Theog* 375-7, 409-11]. **2.** The son of Perseus and Andromeda, he was born before their return to Greece and succeeded, as the eldest son, to his grandfather Cepheus' kingdom, and was thus claimed as the founder of the Persian royal line.[Apollodorus 2.4.5.] **3.** A son of Helius and Perse, brother to Aeetes, Pasiphae and Circe. He became king of Colchis by deposing Aeetes after the Argonauts had left the city. He was murdered either by Medea or by Medus, her son by Aegeus. [Apollodorus 1.9.28]

Perseus (*Περσεύς*). One of the sons of Zeus; his mother was *Danae, the only daughter of Acrisius the king of Argos. Since Acrisius did not have any sons he had consulted an oracle; he was told that Danae would have a son providing him with a male heir, but that the boy would kill him. To avoid this fate Acrisius built an underground chamber of bronze in which he imprisoned his daughter and her nurse. The girl however became pregnant; in one version by her uncle Proetus but most commonly it was said that the father of the child was Zeus, who had transformed himself into a shower of gold pouring through the roof into Danae's lap. She gave birth to the child, Perseus, but kept his birth secret for several months until one day her father heard the boy's cries; a later version put his age at three or four. Acrisius refused to believe that Danae had been seduced by Zeus, but threw his daughter and her son into the sea in a wooden chest and killed the nurse. The chest floated to the island of Seriphos where it was retrieved by a fisherman called Dictys who gave them shelter and reared the young Perseus. Dictys' brother, Polydectes, was the ruler of the island and for many years he had been in love with Danae, but she did not return his passion. When Perseus was grown he was able to protect his mother, so the king had to devise a plan to take Perseus far away from the island. He asked all his nobles to a meal where he proclaimed his intention of attempting to raise a bride-price for Hippodameia the daughter of Oinomaus. He requested that they should provide with a horse each; Perseus, either because he could not afford such a valuable gift or because he was relieved that his mother was no longer the object of Polydectes' attentions, offered instead to bring him the head of the Gorgon. The king took him at his word and instructed him to leave immediately. Perseus was now left with the problem of obtaining the head of *Medusa. Athena and Hermes appeared with detailed instructions on how to accomplish the task: he was first to visit the three Graiae, the daughters of Phorcys and sisters to the Gorgons. Their names were Enyo, Pephredo and Deino and they were grey-haired old women and had been born as such; between them they had only one eye and a single tooth

which they shared in turn. They knew the location of some nymphs who would assist Perseus in his quest. To force them to reveal the whereabouts of the nymphs Perseus stole the eye and would only return it in exchange for the information. He found his way to the nymphs who gave him magical objects that would help him to defeat the Gorgons: winged sandals, the cap of Hades which gave invisibility to the wearer, and the *kibisis*, a sort of shoulder-bag; Hermes also gave him a sickle of adamant and Perseus wore his own bronze shield. Thus armed he flew off to the stream of Ocean to find the Gorgons. Only one of the Gorgons, Medusa, was mortal, the others, Stheon and Euryale, were not and therefore could not be targeted by Perseus. They had heads with scaly serpents coiled about them, tusks like boars, hands of bronze, golden wings and the ability to turn all who looked at them to stone. Perseus waited for them to fall asleep and, using his highly polished shield as a mirror, assisted by Athena he decapitated Medusa with a single stroke. From her body sprang the winged horse *Pegasus and the giant Chrysaor which had been sired on her by Poseidon. Perseus put the head into the bag and fled; the remaining Gorgons pursued him but were unable to see his path, and he escaped with his prize. It was said that Athena invented the flute so that she could imitate the mourning sounds of the Gorgon Euryale as she lamented the death of her sister. *See Pegasus.*

On his journey home Perseus alighted at the court of Cepheus which was located either in Ethiopia or in Syria. Here he came upon *Andromeda who was chained to a rock awaiting her sacrifice to a sea-monster. Her mother Cassiopeia had claimed she was more beautiful than the Nereids and they were so enraged that they persuaded Poseidon to send devastating floods and a sea-monster to ravage the land. Cepheus was in the process of offering his daughter to the monster to save the land as instructed by the oracle of Ammon when Perseus appeared, fell in love with the beautiful princess and told her father he would save her and kill the monster in exchange for her hand in marriage. Perseus killed the creature easily with the aid of his cap of invisibility and his sword of adamant, and married Andromeda. However Cepheus' brother Phineus had been promised the hand of Andromeda; he and his followers attacked Perseus, but he turned them to stone with the head of the Gorgon. Various embellishments appear as the story was handed down; Ovid told of drops of blood from the Gorgon's head seeping through the bag and landing in the Libyan deserts, each turning into a poisonous snake when it reached the sand; he also told how coral, once soft, was turned to rock by the severed head. Perseus also used the Gorgon's head to turn the giant Atlas into the mountain in north Africa.

Perseus and his wife returned to Seriphos where they found his mother taking sanctuary at the altars of the gods to defend herself from assault by Polydectes. Perseus went immediately to the king's palace and turned the assembled company to stone; he then made Dictys king in his brothers' place. He returned the cap, sandals and bag to Hermes who gave them back to the Nymphs but the Gorgon's head he presented to Athena who placed it on her aegis (the goatskin protection on her chest) or on her shield, where it inflicted terror on all her enemies. Perseus, Andromeda and his mother Danae then left Seriphos for their homeland of Argos to make peace with Acrisius, but when he heard of their intention Acrisius fled to Larissa for he had not forgotten that he was destined to die at the hands of Perseus. At Larissa the king Teutamides was holding funeral games for his father in which Perseus was competing, Acrisius was a spectator in the crowd when a discus thrown by Perseus went off course and killed him. The old man was buried outside the walls of Larissa and worshipped as a hero. Perseus, as rightful heir, felt unable to claim the throne of one he had killed even by accident so he exchanged kingdoms with his cousin *Megapenthes who thus became king of Argos and Perseus took the throne of Tiryns. It was Perseus who founded the neighbouring city of Mycenae and their descendants ruled there. Perseus and Andromeda had a son *Perses who remained as heir to the kingdom of Cepheus and was said to have been the founder of the Persian nation.

In Roman myth Perseus and his mother were said to have been washed up on the shores of Latium. There Danae married the king Pilumnus and they founded the city of Ardea and *Turnus was listed amongst their descendants. [Apollodorus 2.4.1-5; Aristophanes *Thes*; schol Apollonius 4.1091, 1515; Euripides *Andromeda* (frs); Hesiod *Theog* 276-85; Homer *Il* 14.319; Hyginus 63, 151; Ovid *Met* 4.606-804; Pindar *Pyth* 10 29-48;12 9; *Aen* 7.372, 410, 8.345 with Servius; Simonides] See Constellation **14-17**.

Peteus (*Πετρώς*). Son of Elatus and father of *Menestheus in the royal line of Arcadia. [Apollodorus 3.10.8]

Phaea (*Φαῖα*). Known as the Sow of Crommyon (a city between the isthmus of Corinth and Megara), Phaea was a monster killed by *Theseus when he was clearing the land route to Athens. Her name Phaea derived from the woman who reared it, a descendant of Echidna and Typhon. [Apollodorus *Ep* 1.1, Plutarch *Thes* 9]

Phaeacians (*Φαίακες*). The inhabitants of the mythical land of Scheria, sometimes known as Drepane and in classical times identified with Corcyra (Corfu), although in Homer it is situated far from familiar settlements and known sea routes. The land was on the border between myth and reality, with fabulous orchards, a luxurious palace of bronze and gold, and a complex of shipyards. The Homeric gods still visited the island and feasted with the Phaeacians, who were famous for their fine banquets and hospitality. The men were famed for their prowess as sailors and had an almost telepathic bond with their ships, which would navigate unerringly and unaided to their destination. The original home of the Phaeacians was in Hyperia, according to Homer, but they were forced to leave it because of the aggression of their neighbours, the Cyclopes, and came to their new home under the leadership of their king Nausithous. In a tradition preserved by Apollodorus they were autochthonous to Scheria and had originated from drops of blood from the sickle used to castrate Uranus, which was said to be buried on the island of Drepane (the name means 'sickle'). Nausithous' son Alcinous and his wife Arete welcomed both *Jason and *Odysseus. After their flight from Colchis with the Golden Fleece Jason and Medea took shelter at Scheria; and there their marriage was consummated. When Odysseus was found destitute on the shore by the princess *Nausicaa, she persuaded her parents to offer him shelter, and it was to the queen that he told the long story of his wanderings. The Phaeacians entertained Odysseus lavishly, held games in his honour, and gave him a well-stocked ship to return him home to Ithaca. But Poseidon had long been angry with the Phaeacians for encroaching on his territory, and he was also harassing Odysseus for the blinding of his son Polyphemus, so he took his revenge. On the advice of Zeus, Poseidon turned into stone the ship which had brought Odysseus to Ithaca just as it entered the port of Phaeacia on the return, and the god was then going to hide the city behind a great encircling mountain; the last reference in the *Odyssey* to the Phaeacians is to a people trying to avert further disaster by sacrifice. The outcome is unknown and later references add nothing further to their story. [Apollonius 4.982-92; Homer *Od* books 6-8 *passim*, 13.125-87; Ovid *Met* 13.713-19]

Phaeax (*Φαίαξ*) **1**. The son of Poseidon and the nymph Cercyra, and an eponymous hero of the *Phaeacians. [Diodorus 4.72] **2**. The pilot of Theseus' ship on the journey from Athens to Crete. [Plutarch *Thes* 17]

Phaedra (*Φαίδρα*). The daughter of Minos, ruler of Crete, and his queen, Pasiphae, and sister of Ariadne. After the death of her father she was given to *Theseus in marriage as part of a political settlement between Athens and Crete, regardless of Theseus' abandonment of

Ariadne. Theseus had previously married the Amazon queen Hippolyte (also known as Antiope), who was killed in the Amazon invasion of Attica; he had by her a son *Hippolytus, who was sent to Troezen to be brought up by his grandmother Aethra. Phaedra lived in Athens with Theseus at the beginning of their marriage and bore him two children, Acamus and Demophon. After Theseus had killed the sons of Pallas he returned to Troezen for purification and then left Phaedra there; she immediately fell passionately in love with her stepson, Hippolytus. In Euripides' version of the myth she was an innocent victim of the machinations of Aphrodite, because the goddess wished to punish Hippolytus for scorning her and following Artemis. Phaedra pined with her secret and unrequited love, and was only persuaded by her nurse to divulge it when she was near to death. Hippolytus, obsessively virginal, rejected his stepmother with horror; Phaedra, to cover her guilt and protect her children, hanged herself and left a note accusing Hippolytus of rape. Theseus on his return called on his father Poseidon to punish Hippolytus, and in answer to the rash prayer the god sent a monstrous bull from the sea on to the shore in the path of Hippolytus' chariot. The horses took fright and bolted in terror, dragging their master to his death. Seneca gives another version in which Phaedra's guilt is much more self-evident and due to her own will; she commits suicide after the death of Hippolytus. [Apollodorus *Ep* 1.17; Euripides *Hippolytus*; Ovid *Met* 15.497-529; Seneca *Phaedra*]

Phaethon (*Φαέθων*). **1.** Ovid narrates the story of the ill-fated son of *Helios in graphic detail. Phaethon was the son of Clymene, daughter of Oceanus, who had married the Egyptian king Merops. When Phaethon reached manhood he discovered his true father was *Helios, the sun-god, and requested a favour from the god as proof of parentage. Helios, in his joy at meeting his son, agreed, and Phaethon asked to drive his father's chariot for a day on the sun's path through the heavens. The god begged him to change his mind, but, in the tradition of the destructive promise, was forced to keep to his word. The fiery horses of the sun were led out and handed over into the charge of the youth, who too late realised the power and might of the steeds. Helios gave him detailed instructions concerning the course he should run and how to control the horses, but once he left the earth to climb the steep vault of the sky Phaethon lost his nerve; the horses, sensing his powerlessness, ran amok, and, as the fierce creatures in the zodiac added to the panic, the chariot went out of control. The horses careered wildly, first flying upward and scorching the heavens, leaving a scar (the Milky Way), then dipping down near the earth and scorching the land, burning black the skin of the *Ethiopians. Earth herself appealed to Zeus to save her; he responded by blasting Phaethon from the chariot with a thunderbolt, and the boy fell in flames into the river Eridanus. There his sisters, the *Heliades, wept ceaselessly for him on the river banks until they were transformed into poplars, their tears becoming drops of amber. Both Aeschylus and Euripides wrote tragedies (no longer extant) on the theme; the philosophers interpreted the myth as an allegory of a periodic scorching of the earth in the summer of the planetary cycle of the Great Year. [Hyginus 152, 154; Lucretius 5. 396-420; Ovid *Met* 1.750-2.380; Plato *Tim* 22c-d] **2.** A second Phaethon is a son of Eos and Cephalus, carried off by Aphrodite as a boy and made a guardian of her shrine; he was an ancestor of *Adonis. [Apollodorus 3.14.4., Hesiod *Theog* 986-92]

Phalces (*Φάλκης*). A son of Temenus, king of Argos, and so one of the Heraclids. He killed his father with the help of his brothers as they were being replaced in their father's favour by Deiphontes, the husband of their sister Hynetho. Later, in attempting to kidnap Hynetho and persuade her to leave her husband, Phalces dragged her from her chariot and accidentally killed her. Phalces finally shared the throne of Sicyon with another Heraclid, Lacedades, and his son Rhegnidas conquered Phlius and ruled as king. [Pausanias 2.6.7, 11.2, 13.1, 28.3, 38.1; Strabo 8.8.5] *See* Deiphontes.

Phalerus (Φάληρος). An Athenian who founded the port of Phaleron, near the city. He was the only son of Alcon, who nevertheless allowed him to leave and join the *Argonauts 'to shine among brave heroes'. [Apollonius 1.95-100]

Phanes (Φάνης). In Orphic cosmology the first-born of the gods, who was hatched from an egg. Phanes was a bi-sexual deity with golden wings, four eyes and the ability to assume animal shape. It was also an epithet of Eros in his primeval aspect of the creative force.

Pharos (Φάρος). The pilot of the ship that returned Helen and Menelaus to Sparta after the Trojan War. They were blown off-course to the Nile delta where Pharos died from a snake-bite on the island that now bears his name; it was the site of the famous lighthouse, one of the seven wonders of the world. [Stephanus *s.v.*]

Phasis (Φᾶσις). The god of the river Phasis in Colchis, son of Helios the sun-god and of the Oceanid Ocyrrhoe whom he murdered when he found her with a lover. The *Furies pursued him until he leapt into the river Arcturus, which then became the Phasis. It was here that the Argonauts entered Colchis; the saying 'sailing to the Phasis' became proverbial for any dangerous voyage. [Apollonius 2.401, 1261-2; Hesiod *Theog* 340; Plutarch *Fluv* 5.1]

Phegeus (Φηγεύς). The founder and ruler of the city of Phegeia in Arcadia. Son of Inachus and brother of Phronius, he offered sanctuary to *Alcmaeon after his matricide, and also gave him his own daughter Arsinoe in marriage. But Alcmaeon deserted his bride and then tried to retrieve her dowry; for this Phegeus ordered his sons, Pronous and Agenor, (or Temenus and Axion according to Pausanias), to kill Alcmaeon. The vendetta continued, and Phlegeus in turn was killed by the sons of Alcmaeon by Callirhoe. [Apollodorus 3.7.5; Pausanias 6.17.6, 8.24.2ff]

Pheidippus (Φειδίππος). A son of Thessalus and grandson of Heracles, he is listed as one of Helen's suitors and brought a contingent of thirty ships to Troy. He was one of the Greek soldiers in the *Trojan Horse, and after the war he settled eventually in Cyprus. [Apollodorus *Ep* 6.15-16; Diodorus 5.54; Homer *Il* 2.676-80]

Pheidippides (Φειδιππίδης). The famous long-distance runner. In 490 BC he was taking a message to Sparta from Athens to ask for reinforcements at the forthcoming battle of Marathon. On the way he reported meeting the god *Pan who asked why the Athenians did not pay him proper honours. So the Athenians subsequently dedicated a shrine to Pan and established an annual festival in the god's honour, which included torch races and sacrifices. Pheidippides ran the distance from Athens to Sparta (about 150 miles) leaving one day and arriving the next – it took a runner 22 hours in 1983. Pheidippides may also have been the messenger who took the news of the victory at Marathon back to Athens and then collapsed. A long-distance race has been called a 'marathon' from the connection with Pheidippides and the battle ever since. [Herodotus 6.106]

Phemonoe (Φημονόη). A daughter of Apollo and the first prophetess at Delphi; she initiated the delivery of the oracle in hexameter verse, and was said to be the author of the famous Delphic maxim 'know thyself'. [Pausanias 10.5.7, 6.7, 12.10]

Phereclus (Φέρεκλος). The son of Harmodias, a Trojan, and a famous shipwright; Paris abducted Helen in one of his vessels. Phereclus was killed in the war by the Greek Meriones with a spear thrust through his buttock and bladder. [Apollodorus *Ep* 3.3; Homer *Il* 5.59-68]

Pheres (Φέρης) **1.** A son of Cretheus and Tyro and the eponymous founder of the Thracian city of Pheres. He was perhaps most famously known for his refusal to die in place of his son *Admetus, on the grounds that parents give their children life but should not be expected to die for them. Pheres had other children, Idomene, Lycurgus and a daughter Periopsis. [Apollodorus 1.9.11ff, 3.10.4, 13.8; Euripides *Alc* 614ff; Homer *Od* 11.259] **(B.) 2.** One of the two sons of Medea and Jason who was murdered by his mother. [Apollodorus 1.9.28]

Philammon (Φιλάμμων). Philammon's mother is named variously as Philonis, Chrysothemis or Chione. In Ovid's tale Chione was the daughter of Daedalus, and during the course of one day she was raped by both Apollo and Hermes. Twin boys were born, Philammon and Autolycus, one to each father. Philammon was Apollo's son and grew to be extremely handsome. He was a poet and cithara player, and was credited with the invention of the girls' choirs, certain forms of poetry and the foundation of the Demeter mysteries at Lerna. He was loved by the nymph Argiope, who bore him a son Thamyras, but he abandoned them both and they fled to Chalcidice. Philammon died leading the forces of Argos against the Phlegians who were attacking Delphi. [Pausanias 2.37.2-3, 4.33.3, 9.36.2; Ovid *Met* 11.301-17]

Philandrus (Φιλανδρος). In the shrine of *Delphi there was a bronze statue of a goat suckling the infants Philandrus and Phylacides. The statue was dedicated by the citizens of Elyros in Crete, who said the children were the sons of Apollo and the Cretan nymph Acacallis. [Pausanias 10.16.5]

Philemon (Φιλήμων). *See* Baucis.

Philoctetes (Φιλοκτήτης). The son of Poeas, king of the Malians and Demonassa (or Methane); he was given the great bow of Heracles when he agreed to set fire to Heracles' funeral pyre, or, according to some sources he had inherited the bow from his father who had received it from Heracles. He was one of the suitors of Helen and so with them led a contingent to Troy – he brought seven ships and fifty archers from his home in Thessaly. Ill-luck dogged his journey to Troy, for while he was observing the rites at the shrine of Chryse he was bitten by a water-snake. (This happened on Tenedos or Lemnos or on the tiny islet named Chryse near Lemnos, mentioned by Pausanias, which subsequently sank into the sea.) In most early sources it was thought that the bite was not deserved but a complete accident. Later authors, however, try to find more logical explanations for the bite. It was suggested that he was bitten by a sacred snake while he was cleaning the altar or that Hera sent the snake because he had aided Heracles. One quite different version of the cause of the wound was that Heracles wished no one to know where his remains were located and Philoctetes swore an oath to keep this secret; the other Achaeans pressed him to tell them and he stamped the ground with his foot to indicate the spot, hoping to avoid actually having to break his oath. But he was punished, for on his journey to Troy, one of the arrows fell from its quiver and caused the wound on the self-same foot that had revealed the secret. Philoctetes' wound festered and gave such an unbearable stench that his fellow Greeks, under the command of Agamemnon and *Odysseus, abandoned him on the island of Lemnos; also his constant cries of pain were said to be impinging on the ability of the rest of the fleet to observe religious ritual. Lemnos at that time was uninhabited, rocky and infertile; the only way in which Philoctetes survived was by killing birds with the bow of Heracles. His wound continued to fester and he spent a hard nine years in this cruel exile. Sophocles' portrayal of him is a moving one, of a man *in extremis*, driven to the edge of humanity in his enforced exclusion and constant pain.

After nine years had passed the Greek army was still encamped at the walls of Troy with no sign of an end to the conflict. A prophecy was given either by Calchas or, in most versions, by the son of Priam, *Helenus (who had been captured by the Greeks), that Troy would not fall until Philoctetes and his bow together with Neoptolemus the son of Achilles were brought to Troy.

Odysseus was sent to fetch Philoctetes from Lemnos with the aid of Neoptolemus or Diomedes, either by force or guile. In Sophocles' play Neoptolemus agrees to try and trick the exile into returning but his truthfulness and the empathy he feels for this alienated creature overturn all Odysseus' plans and the young man offers to take Philoctetes back to his home instead of to Troy and the hated Greeks who had abandoned him on Lemnos. The situation was only resolved by the appearance of Heracles in his divine form who gave instructions for Philoctetes to go to Troy because of the bond of friendship between the two. On his arrival at Troy Philoctetes was cured of his wound by the sons of Asclepius, either Podalirius or Machaon; he was put into a deep sleep by Apollo and then the rotting flesh was cut away and the wound cleansed with herbs. He was then credited with the slaying of Paris, usually with the bow but there was one mention of single combat with bows in which Paris was shot three times. Philoctetes was one of the few survivors of the Trojan war to return home safely. He was then credited with founding several cities in southern Italy including Macalla where he dedicated the arrows of Heracles to Apollo. He died assisting the Rhodians, who were also colonising the same area, in a battle with the native inhabitants. [Apollodorus 3.10.8, 12.6, *Ep* 3.14, 27, 5.8, 6.15; Diodorus 4.38; Homer *Il* 2.716-25, *Od* 3.190, 8.219-20; Epic Cycle *Cypria* 1 p 495, *Little Iliad* 1 p 511, 12 p 517; Hyginus 97, 102; Ovid *Met* 9.229, 13.45-55, 313-5; Pausanias 8.33.4, 10.27.1; Pindar *Pyth* 1.53-5; Vergil *Aen* 3.402; Sophocles *Philoctetes*; Strabo 6.1.3]

Philoetius (Φιλοίτιος). The cowherd of Odysseus on Ithaca. He, along with *Eumaeus, the swine herd, remained faithful to his master during the long absence, and disapproved of the behaviour of Penelope's suitors. He gave hospitality to the disguised Odysseus on his return to Ithaca and helped him to overthrow the intruders in the palace. When the suitors were vanquished he was given the task of killing Melanthius, the treacherous goatherd. He was the epitome of the trusty servant and poor but hospitable host. [Homer *Od* 20.185-239, 21.188-244, 388-93, 22.170-202]

Philolaus (Φιλόλαος). *See* Nephalion.

Philomela (Φιλομήλα). One of the daughters of Pandion, king of Athens, whose story Ovid relates at length, and in gory detail. Philomela's sister *Procne was given in marriage to *Tereus, the king of Thrace, in exchange for his assistance in the war between Athens and Thebes, and they had a son Itys. Procne pined for her family and persuaded her husband to return to Athens and bring Philomela back with him to visit her sister in Thrace. Pandion agreed, and entrusted his daughter into the keeping of Tereus as to a father. But Tereus became obsessed with Philomela from the moment he saw her and on his return to Thrace he raped her and then imprisoned her in a lonely fortress; crueller still, he cut out her tongue to prevent her informing anyone of his continued violence towards her. He then told his wife Procne that her sister was dead. Philomela however managed to weave her tale into a tapestry and smuggled it to Procne, who helped her escape from prison disguised as a maenad. The sisters then planned a terrible revenge: they murdered the young boy Itys, cooked him and served the son as meat to his father. When Tereus realised what had happened he tried to kill the sisters but during the pursuit the gods changed the girls into birds. Philomela became a swallow and Procne a nightingale (although in some versions the metamorphoses are

reversed, for *philomela* is the Greek for 'nightingale'). Tereus also was transformed into a bird, the hoopoe. [Apollodorus 3.14.8; Hyginus 45; Ovid *Met* 6.426-674; Pausanias 1.41.8, 10.4.8]

Philomelus (*Φιλόμηλος*). A son of Demeter and Iasion and brother of Plutus. Unlike his brother he was not wealthy and lived a simple life as a farmer. He invented the two-oxen cart, which so pleased his mother that she placed him in the sky as the constellation 'Oxherd'. [Hyginus *Astr* 2.4] *See* Constellation 4

Philonoe (*Φιλονόη*). The daughter of Iobates, king of Lycia. She married *Bellerophon after he successfully completed all the difficult tasks requested by her father. The couple ruled Lycia after her father's death and had three children – Isander, Hippolochus and Laodamia. [Apollodorus 1.9.3, 2.3.1-2, 3.1.1]

Philotes (*Φιλότης*). One of the grim daughters of Nyx (night), who produced them from herself without intercourse. She is sometimes translated as 'affection' but here is more the personification of destructive sex; her sisters were Apate ('deceit') Geras ('old age') and Eris ('strife'). [Hesiod *Theog* 224]

Philyra (*Φιλύρα*). Daughter of Oceanus and Tethys, Philyra lived on an island in the Black Sea which took her name. When *Cronus was looking for his infant son Zeus to destroy him, he came upon her home and raped her. In one version she turned into a mare to escape him, and he then turned into a stallion; in another his wife Rhea came upon them and he turned into a stallion to escape her wrath. Philyra fled to Pelasgia to give birth to her child on Mount Pelion; the child turned out to be bi-form with a human upper torso but the lower body and four legs of a horse. She called the centaur *Chiron, and lived with him in a cave. There she later helped him to rear many famous heroes, including Asclepius, Jason and Achilles. Hyginus has an alternative myth to explain her name – that she was so ashamed of her offspring that she asked Zeus to change her species, and was transformed into the 'tilia', the lime or linden tree. [Apollonius 2.1231-1241; Hesiod *Theog* 1001-1002; Hyginus 138; Pindar *Pyth* 3.1-7, 4.103, 6.22, *Nem* 3.43-6]

Phineus (*Φινεύς*). **1.** The king of Salmydessus in Thrace, he was said to be the son of Agenor and thus brother to Cadmus and Europa. There were many variants to his story which involve blindness and revenge. In one account he was struck blind by Zeus for using his famed powers of prophecy to reveal the future to those who consulted him. According to another version he exchanged his powers of sight for those of prophecy. In the most famous version of his tale he was afflicted by the Harpies, whom Helios, the sun-god, had sent to plague him for rejecting the powers of light. The harpies, bi-forms with a woman's face on a vulture's body, carried off his food before Phineus could eat it and any that remained was ruined and vile-smelling, so that Phineus became emaciated and isolated. When the Argonauts landed to ask about the route to the Golden Fleece, Phineus agreed to help in exchange for being freed from the Harpies. Calais and Zetes, the winged sons of Boreas, drove them off and pursued them until the creatures took refuge in a Cretan cave where they remained. Phineus mapped out the Argonauts' route to Colchis and gave instructions on avoiding various hazards such as the *Clashing Rocks. A different version attributes two marriages to Phineus: his first wife was Cleopatra, daughter of Boreas, by whom he had two sons Plexippus and Pandion; his second was Idaeia, daughter of Dardanus. Idaeia accused her stepsons of rape, and in his rage Phineus blinded them; so when the Argonauts arrived Calais and Zetes, the brothers of Cleopatra, either blinded or killed Phineus in revenge [Apollodorus 1.9.21, 3.15.2; Apollonius

1.211-20, 2.178-489; Pausanias 3.18.15, 5.117.11] **2.** Another Phineus was the uncle of Andromeda and battled with *Perseus for her hand; he was turned to stone when Perseus displayed *Medusa's head to him during a battle. Later mythographers try to merge the two characters but there appears to be evidence for two separate individuals. [Apollodorus 2.1.4, 2.4.3; Ovid *Met* 5.12-235]

Phix (Φίξ). According to Hesiod Phix was the name of the *Sphinx, the child of either Hydra or Echidna and Orthos. [Hesiod *Theog* 326]

Phlegethon (Φλεγέθων). One of the rivers of the Underworld which converged with the Cocytus to become the Acheron; its etymology suggests that it was a river of fire. [Homer *Od* 10.513; Vergil *Aen* 6.265]

Phlegyas (Φλεγύας). The son of Ares and Dotis and the eponymous founder of the Phlegians. He became ruler of Orchomenus on the death of Eteocles and founded a new city, Phlegya, where he gathered the most warlike of the Greeks. His daughter *Coronis was raped by Apollo and subsequently killed by him for infidelity, and his son Ixion suffered like him in the Underworld. Phlegyas was said to have set fire to Apollo's temple in Delphi in retaliation for Apollo's murder of Coronis and for this impiety to have been imprisoned for ever in Hades, uttering dreadful warnings against impiety. His life had ended when he was killed in battle by Nycteus and Lycus of Thebes. [Apollodorus 3.5.5; Pausanias 9.36.1-4; Pindar *Nem* 3.86; Vergil *Aen* 6.618-20]

Phlias (Φλίας). An affluent son of Dionysus and Araethyrea, from the river Asopus. He was one of the *Argonauts and founded the Peloponnesian city of Phlius, and was also included in the lists of the kings of Sicyon. He married Chthonophyle, and his son was Androdamas. [Apollonius 1.115-8; Pausanias 2.6.6, 7.6, 12.6]

Phobus (Φόβος). The child of Ares and Aphrodite, and the personification of fear and flight in battle; he could make even the most valiant run away. Together with his brother Diemos ('terror') and Eris ('discord'), he went with his man-slaying father to cause havoc on the battlefield. [Hesiod *Theog* 933-936; Homer *Il* 4.440-3, 13.298-303]

Phocus (Φῶκος). There appear to be two individuals of this name, who are often confused in the foundation myths of the Phocians since both Corinth and Aegina claimed connections with them. The area was of major importance as the site of Delphi. **1.** The son of Aeacus, the first king of Aegina, and of the Nereid Psamathe (who had changed herself into a seal to avoid Aeacus). Phocus was killed by his step-brothers Peleus and Telamon because of the jealousy of his stepmother Endeis or their own envy at Phocus' reputation as an athlete; the brothers were then exiled by their father. Phocus had three sons – Panopeus, Crisus and Naubolus – who emigrated to Parnassus, to the city of Phocis, which their father was said to have founded earlier. [Hesiod *Theog* 1004-5; Apollodorus 3.12.6; Pausanias 2.29.2, 7.3.10, 10.30.4] **(M.) 2.** A son of Poseidon or descendant of Poseidon, Phocus left Corinth for the land around Mount Parnassus and renamed it for himself. While he was travelling he came upon Antiope who had been driven mad by Dionysus. He cured her of her affliction and married her; their sons extended the area of Phocis under their control. Phocus and Antiope had a joint tomb at Tithorea. [Pausanias 2.4.3, 9.17.5-6, 10.1.1]

Phoebe (Φοίβη). **1.** A Titan, daughter of Uranus and Gaia, she was the mother of Leto and Asteria by her brother Coeus, and also, according to Hesiod, the goddess Hecate. Phoebe is

sometimes said to have founded the oracle at Delphi when Themis was there, and later to have given it to Leto's child, Apollo. This accounts for Apollo's title 'Phoebus Apollo', which also associated him with the bright sun, as his sister Artemis was known as Phoebe, and linked to the moon. [Hesiod *Theog* 136, 404-12; Apollodorus 1.2.2] **2.** One of the daughters of Leucippus who, with her sister Hilaera, was abducted on her wedding day by the *Dioscuri. [Apollodorus 3.11.2; Hyginus 80]

Phoenix (*Φοίνιξ*). **1.** The eponymous founder of Phoenicia; he was the son of Agenor and brother to Cadmus and Europa. When his sister was abducted the brothers were sent to find her; but eventually Phoenix grew tired of the search and settled in Sidon; he gave his name to the surrounding land. [Apollodorus 3.1.1] **2.** The son of Amyntor, king of Ormenium in Boeotia. He was persuaded by his jealous mother to seduce one of his father's concubines; when his father discovered this crime he either blinded his son or exiled him. Phoenix took refuge with *Peleus, who persuaded the centaur Chiron to cure his blindness, and Peleus then made him king of the Dolopians. Phoenix in his youth had been a formidable warrior and had taken part in the *Calydonian boar hunt, so Peleus entrusted the care of his son Achilles to him after the youth had completed his education at the hands of Chiron. Later Phoenix went to Scyrus and persuaded Achilles to go to Troy; although now an old man, he accompanied Achilles as his counsellor and the voice of moderation, especially in the quarrel with Agamemnon. Agamemnon chose him, with Odysseus and Ajax, to take part in the embassy appointed to persuade Achilles to rejoin the fighting; the embassy was a failure, but Achilles treated his old tutor with great courtesy, and gave him the hospitality of his tent. Phoenix was there to comfort Achilles at the death of Patroclus, and, when Achilles himself was killed, Phoenix went with Odysseus to bring Achilles' son Neoptolemus to Troy. After the fall of Troy Phoenix started back with Neoptolemus but died on the journey in Thrace. [Apollodorus 3.13.8; *Ep* 4.3, 6.12; Homer *Il* 9.168-661, 16.196, 17.553-66] **3.** In a completely different context the Phoenix was the famed mythical bird from Egypt which renewed its own life. It was like an eagle, with red and gold plumage. Every 500 years it made a nest-like pyre, which was set on fire, and from the ashes a new bird arose. The *motif* of suffering, death and resurrection involved in the story was popular both for Christians and pagan mystery literature. The phoenix is mentioned in Hesiod [*Chiron* fr 3, p.73, from Plutarch 415c] but the main source is a Latin elegiac poem of 170 lines attributed to Lactantius, the Christian writer of the third century AD.

Pholus (*Φόλος*). A Centaur who features in the fourth *Labour of Heracles, the killing of the *Erymanthian Boar. He differed from the other Centaurs in that he was an offspring of Silenus and a Nymph of the ash trees, not a child of Ixion. When Heracles visited him on his way to seek out the boar he was given generous hospitality; the centaur roasted Heracles' meat but ate his own portion raw. The guest requested wine but was told the only jar available belonged to all the Centaurs in common and Pholus was wary of opening it without permission. Heracles persuaded him to do so but shortly afterward the cave was attacked by the angry Centaurs attracted by the smell. They were put to flight by Heracles and took refuge with *Chiron. One of the arrows used by Heracles in the skirmish pierced Chiron's knee by accident and so brought about his end. Meanwhile Pholus had pulled one of Heracles' arrows from another centaur's body but it slipped from his hand, fell on his foot and killed him instantly. Heracles buried him and went on to kill the wild boar. [Apollodorus 2.5.4].

Phorbas (*Φόρβας*). **1.** A Thessalian, descended from the Lapiths, he emigrated to Cnidus (or Rhodes) with his brother Periergus. Phorbas then settled in Ialysus and his brother in Camirus. In a Peloponnesian version of his life Phorbas emigrated to Olenus in Elis where he

allied himself with the king Alector against Pelops and married Alector's sister, Hyrmine. [Apollodorus 2.5.5; Diodorus 4.69; Pausanias 5.1.11, 7.26.12] **2.** The son of Argos and father of Triopas, with Messene as his daughter or granddaughter. [Pausanias 2.16.1, 4.1.1] **3.** A brigand, living in Panope in Phocis who would challenge travellers on the road to Delphi to wrestle with him. Apollo appeared to him as a young child and the god vanquished him. [Homer *Il* 23.660 schol, Ovid *Met* 11.413-4] **4.** The hero who instructed Theseus in chariot-driving and established the art of wrestling. [Pausanias 1.39.3]

Phorcys (*Φόρκυς*). A god of the sea, son of Gaia and Pontus, and involved in some of the early genealogies. He mated with his sister Ceto, who gave birth to the three Phorcides (also known as the *Graiae). Phorcys was also said to be the father of the sea-monster Scylla by Hecate, and in some versions of both Echidna and the Hesperides. [Apollodorus 1.2.6; Apollonius 4.828; Hesiod *Theog* 270, 333-6]

Phormion (*Φορμίων*). Phormion appears in a story preserved only in Pausanias. He was a Spartan who lived in the house once owned by Tyndareus, and was once visited by the Dioscuri, disguised as two travellers from Cyrene. They asked to sleep in the room which had been theirs as children. Phormion opened his whole house except for that one room which now belonged to his young virgin daughter. The following morning the daughter and guests had vanished, leaving in the room a picture of the Dioscuri and a sprig of the aromatic herb, silphion, which grows in Cyrene. [Pausanias 3.16.2-3]

Phoroneus (*Φορωνεύς*). The son of the river-god Inachus and a nymph, Melia, and according to Plato, the first human being. Like Prometheus, he was said to have taught the human race the use of fire as well as the rudiments of city life. When Poseidon and Hera were competing for control of the Peloponnese he was the adjudicator and decided in Hera's favour, and he subsequently introduced her cult into the area. His wife was named as Peitho, Cerdo or Teledice, and his children were variously listed, but included Niobe, Apis and Car, the first king of Megara. [Apollodorus 2.1.1,3.1.1; Pausanias 2.15.5,2.19.5; Plato *Tim* 22a]

Phrixus (*Φρίξος*). The son of Athamas and Nephele and brother of *Helle. Their father's second wife persuaded him to sacrifice the two children to Zeus to avert famine, but as the children were dragged to the altar Nephele arrived with a golden ram which had been sent by Hermes. The ram took the children on its back and flew away from Boeotia eastward over land and sea; when they were over the stretch of water which separates Europe from Asia Helle grew tired and fell into the sea which now bears her name – the Hellespont. Phrixus continued his journey until he arrived at Colchis which was ruled by Aetes; there he landed and married the king's daughter Chalciope. The ram was sacrificed to Zeus and its fleece hung in the temple precinct where it became known as the *Golden Fleece and the object of Jason's famous quest. Phrixus had four sons by Chalciope – Argos, Melas, Phrontis and Cytisoros. [Apollodorus 1.9.1,1.9.16,1.9.21; Apollonius 2.1140-49; Herodotus 7.197; Pausanias 9.43.5] **(Ci.)**

Phthia (*Φθία*). **1.** One of the ill-fated daughters of *Niobe. [Apollodorus 3.5.6] **2.** The mistress of Amyntor who falsely accused his son *Phoenix of seduction. [Apollodorus 3.13.8]

Phylacus (*Φύλακος*). The eponymous hero and founder of the city of Phylace. He was the father of Iphiclus and Alcimede, the mother of Jason by Clymene. The most famous myth concerning him was that of his son's impotence: apparently Phylacus had been castrating

sheep and the boy when young had taken fright at the sight of the bloody knife; the child had hidden the weapon by driving it deep into an oak tree. When Iphiclus was adult his problem was explained to the seer *Melampus, who cured it by recovering the knife from the tree, and making Iphiclus drink a potion brewed from its rust. Phycus repaid Melampus with a herd of his famous cattle. [Apollodorus 1.9.4, 1.9.12]

Phylas (*Φύλας*). A king of Ephyra in Aetolia, who was killed by Heracles in the war with the Calydonians. Phylas' daughter Astyoche was raped and carried off as plunder by Heracles; she bore him a son called Tlepolemus. [Apollodorus 2.7.6]

Phyleus (*Φυλείς*). The eldest son of *Augeias, king of Elis. After Heracles had cleaned out his father's stables Phyleus disputed the reward to be made to him and was sent into exile in Dulichium. There he abducted Timandra, a daughter of Tyndareus, who had been driven mad by Aphrodite for neglecting her rituals. Timandra was content to leave her husband Echemus, and lived with Phyleus by whom she had a son called Meges and a daughter Eurydamia. Heracles restored the throne of Elis to Phyleus but preferred Dulichium, leaving Elis to his brothers. [Apollodorus 2.5.5; Pausanias 5.1.10,5.3.1].

Phyllis (*Φυλλίς*). She was the daughter of a king of Thrace who was named variously as Ciasus, Lycurgus or Phyleus. The girl fell deeply in love with one of the sons of Theseus, either Acamus or, more frequently, *Demophon. The young prince had been returning from Troy but was shipwrecked on the Thracian coast. He was given great hospitality by Phyllis and her father but longed to see his home in Athens again. However he promised to return to his love within a set time, and as a token of her undying love Phyllis gave him a casket with instructions never to open it. When the day for his return had passed and he had not appeared Phyllis went down to the shore nine times (in remembrance of her desperate longing the place was named Ennea Hodoi, 'Nine Roads'), and, when she realised that he was not returning, she hanged herself. She was transformed there into a leafless almond tree. The prince did return, and when he clasped the tree in grief it grew green. In another version Demophon was unfaithful and married a girl in Crete on the day Phyllis died. He opened the casket, and was immediately cursed, for when he mounted his horse it took fright and bolted, throwing its rider onto his own sword. The story of Phyllis explained the etymology of the Greek word for leaf which had previously been 'petala' but afterwards was changed to 'phylla'. [Apollodorus *Ep* 6.16; Hyginus 59; Ovid *Her* 2, *Ars Am* 3.57]

Picus. A Roman god of the woodland who was either changed into a green woodpecker or the bird was one of his attributes. He was said to have been one of the ancient kings of Latium, perhaps a son of Saturn, and to have been the father of Faunus and grandfather of Latinus. In Ovid's version he is portrayed as a handsome youth who was changed into a woodpecker by Circe when he refused to become her lover, due to his devotion to his wife Canens; she wasted away after his death. [Ovid *Met* 14.310-434; Vergil *Aen* 7.48, 187-192]

Pierides (*Πιερίδες*). These were the nine sisters, daughters of Pierus from the area of Pieria in Thrace. They had beautiful singing voices and challenged the Muses in Mount Helicon to a contest. They lost the contest inevitably, and for their pride the Muses changed them into birds. Their names are listed as Colymbas, Iynx, Cenchrus, Cissa, Chloris, Acalanthis, Nessa, Pipo and Dracontis, the first five of which are known types of bird, although Ovid says that they were all transformed into magpies. Pausanias however gives them identical names to the Muses and attributes the children of the Muses, Orpheus for example, to them, since the

Muses were traditionally virgin daughters of Mnemosyne. [Antoninus *Met* 9; Cicero *ND* 3.54; Ovid *Met* 5.662-78; Pausanias 9.29.4]

Pierus (*Πιέρως*) **1.** The eponymous hero of Pieria, he was responsible for the introduction of the cult of the Muses into the area. He was also said to be the father of *Linus and so grandfather of Orpheus. *See* Pierides. [Ovid *Met* 5.302]. **2.** The son of Magnes and Meliboea. Aphrodite inflamed the muse Clio with a passion for him after she scoffed at the goddess' obsession with Adonis. In some versions Clio did have a son, the beautiful *Hyacinthus. [Apollodorus 1.3.3]

Pillars of Heracles (*Ἡράκλειοι στῆλαι*). The ancient name for the Straits of Gibraltar, the furthest limits of Heracles' travels. Two promontories mark the entrance from the Mediterranean to the Atlantic, situated at Gibraltar (Calpe) and Morocco (Jebel Musa). They may have been joined originally and Heracles was said to have separated them to allow an exit from the Mediterranean into the Atlantic sea. The Atlantic itself derived its name from the Titan Atlas, who held the sky high above the earth at the Straits of Gibraltar, with one foot in Africa and one in Europe. *See* Atlas.

Pilumnus. A Roman deity who protected new-born babies along with two other goddesses, Intercidonia and Deverra. The three were personifications of the ritual undertaken to protect the child from the malevolent spirit of the wild, Sylvanus. Intercidonia represented the axe to fell trees, Deverra the broom to sweep the threshing floor and Pilumnus the pestle to grind the corn – symbols of the power of civilisation over that of the wild. [Augustine *Civ Dei* 6.9]

Pindus (*Πίνδος*). A son of Macedon and grandson of Lycaon. While out hunting he was said to have met a gigantic snake which did not harm him, and in gratitude Pindus always took it an offering from the spoils of the hunt. The two formed such a strong relationship that when Pindus was murdered by his three jealous brothers the serpent killed them in vengeance and guarded the body of his dead friend until his parents came to take it for burial. [Aelian *NA* 10.40; Tzetzes *Chil* 4.338]

Pirithous (*Πειριθούς*). In the early versions Pirithous is a typical Homeric hero, and it is only in later sources that he is integrated into the *Theseus cycle and becomes the inseparable friend and comrade in arms of the Athenian king. He was said by some to be the son of Zeus and Dia, but his father was more commonly given as Ixion. This accounted for the invitation of the centaurs, his half-brothers, to his wedding to *Hippodameia, the daughter of Adrastus. He participated in the Calydonian boar hunt, and he is praised in the *Iliad* as a notable warrior. At his marriage to Hippodameia, the centaurs became intoxicated and attempted to rape the bride and abduct the other women. In the ensuing battle many of Pirithous' people, the *Lapiths, were killed along with most of the Centaurs. This battle, which was graphically described by Ovid, formed a favourite theme for sculptural decoration in the classical world. Pirithous and Hippodameia had one son, *Polypoetes.

It was his friendship with Theseus that led to Pirithous' other exploits. The two met while Pirithous was raiding the young king's flocks; Pirithous had heard of Theseus' fame and wanted to provoke him into a confrontation, but as soon as they saw each other they became fast friends. They both decided that, as their fathers were gods (Poseidon of Theseus and possibly Zeus of Pirithous), they should each have a wife who was the child of Zeus (Pirithous having abandoned Hippodameia when he started associating with Theseus), so they decided to kidnap Helen to be the wife of one of them. She was still a child, about twelve years old, when the two men abducted her from the temple of Artemis while she was dancing in a chorus. They decided to draw lots for Helen and the winner would assist the loser to

abduct Persephone from the Underworld. Theseus won Helen but as she was too young for marriage he left her in the safekeeping of his mother Aethra in Aphidna and the two men left for their expedition to Hades; during their absence, however, Helen was rescued by her brothers the Dioscuri at the head of a Spartan army. When Theseus and Pirithous arrived in the Underworld they were hospitably received by Hades, who invited them to sit and join in the feast; but the invitation was a trick, and they were held fast to their chairs, unable to move. When *Heracles descended on his Labour to capture the *Cerberus he was able to release Theseus but when he tried to free Pirithous the very earth shook; Heracles realised that the gods did not want him to be freed and so he was forced to remain bound to his chair for ever. According to Pausanias' account, the adventure took place in the court of a king named Haedoneus who had a wife Persephone and a daughter Kore. The two men intended to abduct both women but arrived in the guise of suitors for the girl. They were told that whoever vanquished her fierce dog Cerberus would win her hand, but in fact the king guessed their plan; Pirithous was devoured by the dog and Theseus imprisoned until Heracles asked for his release. [Apollodorus 1.8.2, 2.5.12, 3.10.8, *Ep* 1.21; Apollonius 1.101-3; Diodorus 4.70.3; Homer *Il* 1.263-5, *Od* 11.631; Pausanias 1.2.1, 17.4, 18.4, 30.4, 2.22.6, 5.10.8; Plutarch *Theseus* 30-31] *See* Theseus.

Pisces. Constellation of the zodiac which, in one version, represents Aphrodite and Eros, who were transformed into fishes when they leaped into the river Euphrates to avoid the monster Typhon. [Hyginus *Astr* 2.30] *See* Constellation 32.

Piscis Austrinus ('southern fish'). *See* Constellations 46, 32.

Pisidice (*Πεισιδίκη*). There are two very similar myths both concerning *Achilles and an ill-fated girl by this name. **1.** She was the daughter of the king of a Lesbian city, Methymna. When Achilles was laying siege to the city the princess saw him from the walls and fell in love with him. She proposed that she would open the gates of the city to him if he would marry her; the offer was accepted but once the city had fallen Achilles had her stoned to death for her treachery. **2.** While Achilles was besieging the city of Monenia in the Troad, again a girl named Pisidice threw him a note telling him not to abandon the siege as the inhabitants were on the point of surrender due to lack of water. He was able to capture the city without losing a single soldier, but the fate of the girl is unrecorded. [Apollodorus 1.9.10; Hyginus 24; Parthenius 21]

Pisistratus (*Πεισίστρατος*). The youngest son of Nestor who accompanied Telemachus on his journey across the Peloponnese from Pylos to Sparta. The sixth century Athenian tyrant of the same name was said to be his descendant. [Apollodorus 1.9.9; Homer *Od* 3 *passim*; Pausanias 4.3.1]

Pistor. An unusual epithet for *Jupiter. When the Gauls were besieging the Roman Capitol, Jupiter appeared to the defenders in a dream telling them to throw out their most precious possession. As they were running short of food they baked their remaining flour into loaves and threw them at the Gauls. The enemy, despairing of blockading such a well provisioned city, abandoned their siege. The Romans built an altar to Jupiter Pistor in gratitude. [Ovid *Fasti* 6.350-94]

Pisus (*Πῖσος*). **1.** A son of *Perieres who founded the city of Pisa in Elis and who held the ancient 'not the Olympic Games' (*anolympiades*) in Arcadia. [Pausanias 6.22.2] **2.** Another of

the same name, son of Apollo and a Celtic king, was the founder of Pisa in Italy. [Vergil *Aen* 10.179 with Servius]

Pitane (Πιτάνη). The daughter of the river-god Eurotas, she bore Poseidon a daughter, *Evadne. The child was either exposed at birth by her mother and found and reared by Aepytus, or Pitane herself gave the child to him to rear. The Spartan city of Pitane was named after her. [Hyginus 175; Pindar *Ol* 6.28-56]

Pittheus (Πιτθεύς). A son of Pelops and Hippodameia and brother to Atreus and Thyestes. During the expansion of the family throughout the Peloponnese he settled in the south-eastern Argolid along with his brother Troezen and ruled the city of Hyperia jointly with its existing king. On his brother's death the city was renamed after him. Pittheus was known for his wisdom and his ability to interpret oracles correctly. The most famous instance of this was when *Aegeus, the king of Athens, arrived in Troezen after receiving advice from the oracle at Delphi on his childlessness – he had been instructed not to untie his wine skin until he reached Athens, so Aegeus had travelled to Troezen to see if Pittheus could explain the obscure advice. Pittheus understood what was meant and, to advance his own family, he encouraged Aegeus to drink a great deal and persuaded him to sleep with his daughter Aethra. The resulting child was Theseus who was reared to manhood at his grandfather's court and was said to have been taught all the arts of government and leadership there. Theseus' son Hippolytus by the Amazon Antiope was also sent to Troezen to benefit from his grandfather's wisdom. [Apollodorus 3.15.7, *Ep* 2.10, Euripides *Medea* 680ff, *Heracles* 107ff; Pausanias 1.22.2, 2.30.8, 31.6; Plutarch *Thes* 4.34] See Theseus.

Pitys (Πίτυς). She was a nymph who was loved by *Pan. She fled in terror from him and was changed into a pine-tree; Pan thereafter wore wreaths of pine about his brow. In a different version both Boreas (the god of the north wind) and Pan were in love with Pitys but she chose Pan; in a jealous rage Boreas threw her from a cliff and Earth transformed her into a pine-tree. It is the sound of her weeping that one hears when the north wind blows through the pines. [Nonnus 2.108, 118, 42.259; Propertius 1.18.19-20]

Planctae (Πλαγκταί). Odysseus was told by Circe that he had a choice of two routes after sailing past the Sirens, either to travel by way of the Planctae ('Wandering Rocks') or through the strait between Scylla and Charybdis. Since Circe warned him that no ship had ever escaped after passing amongst the Planctae with the sole exception of the *Argo*, which had been helped through by Hera, Odysseus kept well clear of them after seeing and hearing them from a distance. Although it is impossible to visualise them from the description in the *Odyssey*, they were said to be dangerous because they crated massive waves and issued blasts of fire. The early tradition on the Planctae has otherwise been lost along with early Argonautic epic. Authors from Pindar and the tragedians onwards often refer to comparable danger encountered by the Argonauts, the *Symplegades or 'Clashing Rocks', but these are described rather differently, for here ships would be destroyed by the rocks themselves as they clashed together rather than by the waves and fire created by them, and volcanic activity is never mentioned in connection with them. The Argonauts met with them, moreover, on the outward journey when approaching the Black Sea, whilst it was generally assumed by the classical period that the Planctae, like Scylla and Charybdis, lay in the west by southern Italy. Accordingly, when Apollonius wrote his Hellenistic epic on the Argonauts, he included both the Symplegades and the Planctae as separate dangers encountered by the Argonauts on their outward and return journeys. [Apollonius 2.549-602, 4.922-63; Homer *Od* 12.55-73, 201-21; 23.326-8; Pindar *Pyth* 4.207-10]

Planets (*Πλανήται*). The five planets had the names of gods, usually known by their Latin names. According to the system devised by Eudoxus in Plato's Academy the planets moved on homocentric spheres around the fixed earth. The system was elegant but crude, in that it did not adequately account for the retrograde movements but, for reasons connected with theology rather than science, it maintained its popularity. The planets recognised, from the earth outwards to the circle of the fixed stars, were the moon, sun, Mercury (Hermes), Venus (Aphrodite), Mars (Ares), Jupiter (Zeus) and Saturn (Cronus). As the planets moved on their circuits they were thought to make music (the 'harmony of the spheres'), with the higher notes made by the fastest moving, and the lower notes by those closer to the earth. (Aristotle *De Caelo* 290b, Cicero *Rep* 617b-c; Plato *Rep* 617b-c]

Pleiades (*Πλειάδες*). The daughters of Atlas and *Pleione. For the various explanations of their transformation into the star group known as the 'seven sisters' see Constellation **22a**.

Pleione (*Πλειόνη*). A daughter of Oceanus and Tethys and mother of the *Pleiades. She, as well as her daughters, may have been changed into a star when *Orion fell in love with her. [Apollodorus 3.10.1; Hyginus 192, 248, Ovid *Fast* 5.83, *Met* 2.743]

Pleisthenes (*Πλεισθένης*). He was a member of the family of Atreus but his precise position in that complex genealogy is not clear. He was most often said to be a son of Pelops and brother to Atreus and Thyestes, but was also listed as a son of Atreus, or sometimes father of Agamemnon. Complex explanations were given to try and rationalise these discrepancies – for example that Pleisthenes was the father of Agamemnon and Menelaus but died young, so that his children were given to Atreus to rear. [Apollodorus 3.2.1-2, *Ep* 2.10]

Pleuron (*Πλευρών*). The eponymous hero of the city of Pleuron in Aetolia. He was the brother of Calydon and husband of Xanthippe by whom he had seven children; his most famous descendant was *Leda. [Apollodorus 1.7.7; Pausanias 3.13.8]

Pluto (*Πλουτώ*). **1.** A daughter of Cronus (or possibly Himantes), she was one of the minor consorts of Zeus, and bore him the infamous *Tantalus. [Hyginus 155; Pausanias 2.23.3] **2.** Also in the masculine as an epithet of *Hades, used by the Romans to indicate the wealth that comes from the earth itself. The title was probably used in preference to his name to avert misfortune. The Romans merged his worship with their own god of the underworld, *Dis Pater; this name 'dis' (from 'dives') also means wealth. (Pausanias 1.38.5; Vergil *Aen* 7.327]

Plutus (*Πλοῦτος*). The personification of the wealth which comes from the earth. He was born to the goddess *Demeter after she had lain with Iasion in a thrice ploughed field and was represented as a young man or as a child carrying the *cornucopia. He had a shrine at Eleusis and played a part in the ritual mysteries of Demeter; he was also an important part of the iconography of the cult. Plutus was a central character in the comedy of that name by Aristophanes, in which he was portrayed as blind because he gave wealth to good and evil alike. [Aristophanes *Plut*; Diodorus 5.77; Hesiod *Theog* 969-73; *Hom Hymn* 2.489]

Podarces (*Ποδάργης*). The younger son of Iphiclus, he took over the Phylacian contingent at Troy after the death of his brother. He was killed by the Amazon Penthesilea. [Apollodorus 1.9.12; Homer *Il* 2.704,13. 693]

Podarge (Ποδάργη). One of the *Harpies, she gave birth to *Xanthus and Balius, the immortal horses of Achilles, after being impregnated by Zephyr, the west wind. She was also said to have mated with Phlogaius and Harpagus, the horses either of Diomedes or the Dioscuri. [Homer *Il* 16.150]

Poeas (Ποίας). The son of Thaumacus, a Malian king, he took part in the expedition of the Argonauts and was said to have killed the brazen giant *Talus by shooting an arrow into his heel, the only vulnerable spot. He married Demonassa (or Methone), and their son was *Philoctetes. When Heracles wanted his own funeral pyre to be lit, Poeas, who was on Mount Ossa at the time, assisted him. Heracles gave him his great bow in return, and it was eventually inherited by Philoctetes. More commonly, however, it was said to be Philoctetes himself who helped Heracles in his final moments and received the bow directly from him. The bow was essential for the fall of Troy. [Apollodorus 1.19.6, 9.26, 2.7.7, Homer *Od* 3.190] *See* Philoctetes.

Poine (Ποινή, Latin Poena). The personification of vengeance or punishment, and connected with the *Furies. There was one myth in which she was represented as a specific monster sent by Apollo to Argos to avenge the death of his child by Psamathe. Poine started to snatch the Argive children from their mothers until she was killed by Crotopus, Psamathe's father. A second plague was sent on the city, which did not abate until Crotopus had erected a temple to Apollo. [Pausanias 1.43.7-8; Val Flaccus 1.796]

Polites (Πολίτης). The last surviving son of Priam and Hecuba. He was killed after the collapse of Troy by *Neoptolemus, Achilles' son, at the very altar of the palace in view of his aged father. He was shown as a competent warrior in the *Iliad*, aiding Troilus when he was being attacked by Achilles and saving his wounded brother Deiphobus; Iris took his shape when delivering a message to Hector. [Apollodorus 3.12.5, Homer *Il* 2.786-95, 13.533, 15.339, 24.250; Vergil *Aen* 2.526-32]

Pollux. *See* Dioscuri.

Polybotes (Πολυβώτης). He was one of the Giants who fought against the Olympians. After their defeat he was pursued by Poseidon to Cos where the god broke off part of the island called Nisyros (now a small island off Cos) and threw it down on him. [Apollodorus 1.6.2, Pausanias 1.2.4]

Polybus (Πόλυβος). **1.** The king of Corinth married to Merope (or Periboea). She brought up Oedipus after he had been exposed on Mount Cithaeron by his parents. [Apollodorus 3.5.7; Sophocles *Oedipus* 774-5, 939-72] **2.** A king of Sicyon who married his daughter to Talaus the king of Argos. Their son Adrastus was removed from the throne by his brother and succeeded Polybus in Sicyon. [Pausanias 2.6.6].

Polycaeon (Πολυκάων). The younger son of the first Spartan king *Lelex. He realised he would have to find his own kingdom so he annexed the neighbouring territory, naming it Messenia after his wife, Messene, the daughter of the king of Argos, and established there the capital city of Andania. [Pausanias 3.1.1, 4.1.1-2]

Polycaste (Πολυκάστη). One of the daughters of Nestor; she bathed and anointed Telemachus when he arrived after the journey from Ithaca to Pylos. She later married him and they had a son Persepolis. [Apollodorus 1.9.9; Eustathius 1796.39; Homer *Od* 3.464-9]

Polyctor (*Πολύκτωρ*). He was a hero who created the cold sweet-running spring that provided the people of Ithaca with their water. [Homer *Od* 17.207]

Polydamna (*Πολυδάμνα*). An Egyptian queen, wife of *Thon, she protected Helen from his amorous advances by hiding her on the isle of Pharos in the Nile delta and giving her certain herbs to protect her from the bites of the innumerable serpents on the island. [Homer *Od* 4.228 with schol]

Polydamas (*Πολυδάμας*). A Trojan and the son of Panthous and Phrontis, he was born on the same night as Hector and became his companion and friend. He was especially noted for his sound advice, which Hector sometimes ignored. It was he who advised the Trojans to attack the Achaean camp and, after the death of Patroclus, to retreat within the walls to avoid the wrath of Achilles. Hector refused this counsel but later regretted it, and his shame over the rout caused him to face Achilles in single combat. Polydamas also advised the Trojans to return Helen after Hector's death, a gesture which would have brought the war to an end. He was a notable warrior in his own right, killing Mecistius and Otus during the fighting. [Homer *Il* 12.60-90, 12.195-250, 14.449-463, 18.249-315, 22.98-103]

Polydectes (*Πολυδέκτης*). He and his brother Dictys were the sons of Magnes and grandsons of Aeolus. They settled on the island of Seraphos where Polydectes became king. When Danae and her son *Perseus were washed up on the shores of the island they took refuge with Dictys. Polydectes became obsessed with Danae as soon as he saw her, and decided to remove Perseus as her protector, sending him to find the Gorgon's head. During Perseus' quest both Danae and Dictys were forced to take sanctuary at the altar of the gods to escape Polydectes' threats of violence. On Perseus' return Polydectes and his entire court were turned to stone when Perseus turned on them the head of Medusa. [Apollodorus 1.9.6, 2.4.1-4; Ovid *Met* 5.242-249]

Polydeuces (*Πολυδέυκης*, Latin 'Pollux'). *See* Dioscuri.

Polydora (*Πολυδώρα*). The daughter of Peleus and Antigone, daughter of Eurytion. Polydora gave birth to a son, Menestheus, by the river-god Spercheius, and then married Borus, son of Perieres. [Apollodorus 3.13.1; Homer *Il* 16.175-8]

Polydorus (*Πολύδωρος*) **1.** The son of Cadmus and Harmonia of Thebes. His wife was Nycteis by whom he had a son, Labdacus, the grandfather of Oedipus. [Apollodorus 3.5.5, Pausanias 9.5.3-4] **2.** The youngest son of Priam and Hecuba (*or* Laothoe, according to Homer). The boy was sent from the battle by his father due to his youth, but Polydorus thought his speed in athletics would protect him; he pursued Achilles but was killed by him. However, the more common tradition is that the boy was sent from Troy to Thrace to the court of *Polymestor, Priam's son-in-law, for protection. Priam also sent enough gold with the boy to provide for him if Troy were to fall. When eventually Troy was sacked Polymestor murdered the boy for the gold, and threw his body into the sea. It was later washed up on the coast of the Troad, where it was found by Hecuba as she was performing the funeral ritual for her daughter, Polyxena, who had just been sacrificed on the tomb of Achilles. In Euripides' version Hecuba goes to Thrace as the slave of Odysseus, and there she discovers the grave of her son and avenges herself by blinding Polymestor and killing his two sons. In the *Aeneid* we hear of Aeneas landing on the Thracian coast looking for a new home after the fall of Troy; the crew cut some cornel and dogwood from an unmarked grave and realise that the branches are

bleeding. The voice of Polydorus calls out, telling them that the mound was his grave and the shrubs had grown from the javelins which killed him in the murder arranged by Polymestor. Aeneas makes proper and fitting offerings so that the boy's spirit can rest, and then leaves the ill-omened land. In a later Roman version the story was given a fresh twist in that it was not Polydorus who was murdered but Deipylus, the son of his sister Ilione, who was killed by mistake in his place, since the boys were of identical age and similar appearance. Ilione did not tell Polydorus, and he was an adult when he discovered the truth on a visit to Delphi. The oracle told him how his city had been destroyed, his father was dead and his mother enslaved. Polydorus rushed back to Thrace and consulted with Ilione. She told him the truth, and Polydorus then blinded and killed Polymestor. [Euripides *Hecuba*, Homer *Il* 20.407-18, 21.84-8; Hyginus 109, Ovid *Met* 13.429-575, Vergil *Aen* 3.19-68]

Polyidus (*Πολύειδος*). A descendant of Melampus and famous as seer and sage. He had two sons, Euchenor and Clitus, and he foresaw that Euchenor could either die at home of illness in Corinth or in battle at Troy – his son chose death in battle and was killed by Paris. It was Polyidus who advised Bellerophon to go to the spring at Priene and tame Pegasus. In particular he was responsible for the revival of *Glaucus, the young son of Minos who had drowned in honey. Minos had gathered together all the wisest men; only Polyidus solved the riddle of the three colours of cow and so it was expected that he would restore the boy. Minos therefore imprisoned Polyidus with the corpse. The seer was in despair until he saw a snake enter the room. He killed it but then a second snake entered and then left, returning with a herb which brought the first snake to life again. Polydus used the same herb on Glaucus and so restored him. [Apollodorus 3.3.1; Homer *Il* 13.663-72; Pausanias 1.43.5]

Polymede or **Alcimede** (*Ἀλκιμέδη*). The daughter of Autolycus who married Aeson and was the mother of *Jason. She hanged herself when her husband was murdered by Pelias; her second son Promachus was also killed by Pelias to exterminate the line of Aeson. Jason survived and avenged his family's death. [Apollodorus 1.9.16, 1.9.27]

Polymela (*Πολυμήλη*). One of the daughters of *Aeolus, the god of the winds, who became the lover of Odysseus during his stay with her father. She was distraught at Odysseus' departure, but her brother Dioreas comforted her, and Aeolus allowed him to marry his sister. [Parthenius 2]

Polymestor (*Πολυμήτωρ*) or **Polymnestor** (*Πολυμνήτωρ*). The king of Thrace, married to Ilione, the daughter of Priam, who murdered Polydorus and later suffered the vengeance of Hecuba. *See* Hecuba, Polydorus.

Polytmnia (*Πολύμνια*) or **Polyhymnia** (*Πολυῦμνια*). One of the nine *Muses, she was patron of sacred music, choral dance and mime.

Polyneices (*Πολυνείκης*) or **Polynices**. One of the two ill-fated sons of Oedipus and Jocasta, and brother to *Eteocles, Antigone, Ismene (although in the version of the myth where Oedipus continued to rule in Thebes after the death of Jocasta, Polyneices was said to be the son of Oedipus' second wife, Eurygania). After Jocasta's suicide and the downfall of Oedipus the brothers showed no respect for their blinded father: it was said that they seated him at the ancestral silver table of Cadmus although he was no longer king, that they served him an inferior cut of the sacrificial animal, and even that they imprisoned him so that he could not receive his due honours. In response Oedipus laid a curse on his sons, foretelling that they would never be at peace and would die at each other's hands. According to Sophocles Oedipus

cursed Polyneices at Colonus for his ingratitude when Polyneices, on learning that the place where the old man died would be blessed by the gods and prosper, tried to persuade Oedipus to return with him.

After the death of Oedipus and the regency of *Creon, it was agreed that the brothers would rule Thebes in alternate years. Eteocles took the first year and Polyneices went to Argos. He arrived at the palace of Adrastus during a storm at the same time as *Tydeus, and the two immediately started to fight each other; Adrastus separated them, and, when he saw the devices on their shields – a boar for Polyneices and a lion for Tydeus – he married them to his daughters in accordance with an oracle, giving Argeia to Polyneices and Deipyle to Tydeus. At the end of his year Eteocles refused to give up the throne of Thebes to his brother, and Adrastus was ready to help his son-in-law win back his inheritance, and so began the expedition of the *Seven against Thebes. Adrastus was warned by the seer Amphiaraus that the expedition was doomed, but Polyneices used the *Necklace of Harmonia (which he had brought with him from Thebes) to bribe Amphiaraus' wife Eriphyle to persuade her husband, and, as Amphiaraus was under an oath to accept the advice of his wife, he reluctantly agreed to join the expedition. It failed completely, the Argive army was destroyed except for Adrastus, and Polyneices and Eteocles met and killed each other at the seventh gate of Thebes. Polyneices, as a traitor who had brought an army against his own city, was refused burial by Creon, but the edict was defied by Antigone; Antigone risked death to give her brother a token burial, and eventually Creon buried Polyneices with due honour. Polyneices' son *Thersander was one of the Epigoni who invaded Thebes a second time to avenge the deaths of their fathers. [Aeschylus *Septem*; Apollodorus 3.5.8-6.7; *Ep* 3.17; Athenaeus 465; Euripides *Phoen*; Hesiod *WD* 162; Homer *Il* 4.377; Hyginus 67-72; Sophocles *Antigone*; *Oedipus at Colonus*] (**B, H.**) See Antigone, Epigoni, Theban Wars.

Polyphemus (Πολύφημος). The most famous portrayal of this one-eyed giant is that of Homer in the ninth book of the *Odyssey*. Polyphemus was the son of Poseidon and the sea-nymph Thoosa, and one of the Cyclopes; he lived on an isolated island beyond the land of the Lotus-Eaters, which Vergil later identified with Sicily. The Cyclopes lived separately and apart, forming no society, having no laws, and with no respect for strangers or the sanctity of the guest protected by Zeus. They had fire, grain and grapes, but only rudimentary farming techniques; they ate their meat raw and were unable to make good quality wine. Polyphemus was of huge stature – Odysseus compares him to a rugged mountain peak – and he lived in a cave alone with his sheep. Many years before the arrival of *Odysseus, the prophet Telemus had foreseen that Polyphemus would lose his one eye to a man named Odysseus. When Odysseus landed on the island of the Cyclopes he went to find out who lived there, and whether he could claim hospitality in return for his guest- gift of particularly powerful vintage wine. Odysseus and twelve companions found a cave stocked with cheese, and waited there for the owner's return. When Polyphemus arrived he immediately seized two of the companions, smashed their heads against the wall and devoured them greedily. He then imprisoned the sailors in his cave by pushing a great boulder into its entrance. After another day of this treatment Odysseus devised a plan: he plied the Cyclops with the good wine until he fell into a drunken stupor, then he sharpened an olive staff, hardened it in the fire and with the help of his men he thrust the red-hot point into Polyphemus' eye, blinding him and leaving him in great agony. Despite his pain Polyphemus let his flocks out as usual the next day, rolling back the boulder, and Odysseus and his men escaped by hanging underneath the bellies of the well-fed sheep, unnoticed by the blind giant's hands as he felt along their backs. Odysseus had said that his name was 'Nobody', so when Polyphemus shouted that Nobody was torturing him the other Cyclopes did not respond. It was only when Odysseus had fled to his ship and was leaving the island that he revealed his real name in a final taunt. Although

Polyphemus could not reach him, he complained to his father Poseidon, who harassed Odysseus for a further ten years because of the injury to his son. A later tale tells of the unrequited love of Polyphemus for the sea nymph *Galatea. She hated him but loved Acis, the son of Faunus. Polyphemus found them together and crushed Acis with a vast rock; this increased Galatea's hatred for Polyphemus, but Acis was transformed into a river god by her prayers. [Homer *Od* 9 *passim*; Ovid *Met* 13.738-897; Theocritus 1; Vergil *Aen* 3.612-81]

Polyphonte (*Πολυφόντη*). The daughter of the Thracian Hipponous and Thrassa, a daughter of Ares, she scorned Aphrodite and preferred to live her life as a virgin-huntress, dedicated to the goddess Artemis. In revenge Aphrodite inflicted her with a passion for a bear, and the girl coupled with the creature. Artemis then punished her for her loss of virginity by unleashing wild animals against her. Polyphonte took refuge in her father's house and there gave birth to twins, Agrius ('wild man') and Orius ('mountain dweller'). The children grew to have great physical power and a contempt for civilisation and the rights of hospitality, dragging travellers into their den and killing them. Zeus sent Hermes to punish them with mutilation, but Ares intervened and they were changed into birds – a vulture and a bird of prey – while their mother became a bird of the forest, perhaps a woodpecker. [Antoninus 21]

Polyphontes (*Πολυφόντης*). **1.** He commanded the fifty Thebans in the ambush of Tydeus at the time of the expedition of the *Seven against Thebes, and died in the battle. [Homer *Il* 4.395] **2.** One of the Heraclids, he murdered Cresphontes of Messene and then seized his wife Merope and the kingdom. He was later killed by Aepytus, the son of the usurped king. [Apollodorus 2.8.5, Hyginus 137]

Polypoetes (*Πολυποίτης*). Son of Pirithous and Hippodameia, daughter of Butes, he was born on the day of his father's battle against the Centaurs, and was a formidable warrior, described by Homer as 'stubborn in battle'. With his friend Leonteus, son of Coronus, he had been a suitor of Helen, and so had been bound by oath to bring a contingent of ships to Troy to bring her back to Menelaus. Polypoetes fought fiercely at Troy and joined in the defence of the Greek ships as well as being one of the warriors in the Trojan horse. After the war he and Leonteus accompanied Calchas the seer on their way back to Greece as far as Colophon where Calchas died. [Apollodorus 3.10.8, *Ep* 3.14,6.2; Homer *Il* 2.738-47, 12.126-95, 23.836-849]

Polyxena (*Πολυξένη*) The youngest daughter of Priam and Hecuba, Polyxena was sacrificed on the tomb of Achilles at the end of the Trojan war to appease his ghost and ensure fair winds homewards much as another virgin princess, Iphigeneia, had been sacrificed at the beginning for winds to start the expedition. Polyxena is not mentioned in Homer but features in the later epic cycle concerning Achilles, and also in Euripides' Trojan tragedies. In these sources she was loved by Achilles, who had either seen her as she accompanied *Troilus to the fountain where he was killed by Achilles, or when she went with Priam and Andromache to reclaim Hector's body from Achilles. In one account Achilles met his own death when he secretly met Priam in the sanctuary of Thymbrean Apollo to discuss his offer of defection from the Greek cause in exchange for the hand of Polyxena, but Paris was hidden behind the statue of the god and shot Achilles in the heel with his arrow; with his dying breath Achilles asked for Polyxena to be offered to him after the fall of Troy. It was sometimes said that Polyxena reciprocated Achilles' feelings and committed suicide on his tomb so that they might be together in death. Alternatively, in one early myth, it was assumed that Polyxena was wounded by *Odysseus during the sack of Troy and later died of her wounds; she was then buried by Achilles' son *Neoptolemus. The more usual version however was that Polyxena was offered as a sacrifice to appease the spirit of Achilles by Neoptolemus: only

when her blood was shed on his tomb as his share of the spoils of Troy would Achilles be satisfied and the Greeks be able to return. Euripides represents Polyxena as the ideal 'noble virgin' who went voluntarily to her death, offering her life for her people, not flinching from the knife, gathering her clothes around her modestly as she fell, and earning the admiration even of those who killed her. The death of Polyxena, her last daughter, along with the murder of her youngest son *Polydorus, was the final blow to Hecuba and resulted in the old queen's dementia and transformation. [Apollodorus 3.12.5, *Ep* 5.23; Euripides *Hecuba*, *Trojan Women*; *Sack of Troy* 1; Hyginus 110; Lycophron *Alex* 323-4; Ovid *Met* 13.439-540; Philostratus 4.16; Seneca *Troades* 938-48]

Polyxenus (*Πολύξενος*) **1.** King of Elis, son of Agasthenes and grandson of Augeias, he was one of Helen's suitors and led a contingent of ten ships to Troy. He later had a son, Amphimachus, called after his friend of that name who had died at Troy. [Apollodorus 3.10.8; Homer *Il* 2.623-4; Pausanias 5.3.4] **2.** Another king of Elis who sheltered the oxen which the Taphian pirates had stolen from *Electryon and who later *Amphitryon to buy them back. [Apollodorus 2.4.6]

Polyxo (*Πολυξώ*). The wife of Tlepolemus, a son of Heracles and ruler of Rhodes who had been a suitor of Helen, and so obliged by oath to join the expedition to Troy, where he was killed. Polyxo inaugurated funeral games at Rhodes for her husband (in which the victors won wreaths of white poplar) and continued as regent while her son was a child. When Helen was exiled from Sparta after Menelaus' death according to Pausanias, she fled to Rhodes expecting sanctuary since Polyxo and Tlepolemus were originally from Argos. But Polyxo wanted revenge for her husband's death, so she sent her serving women dressed as Erinyes to attack Helen when she was bathing – they seized her and hanged her from a tree. This explains the sanctuary in Rhodes to Helen Dendris ('Helen of the Tree'). [Pausanias 3.19.9-10]

Pomona. A Roman nymph who presided over gardens and orchards, usually represented with flowers and fruit, and holding a pruning-knife. She had no interest in Venus, but shut herself in her garden, tending the plants and trees that grew there. Her suitors included Silvanus and Priapus, but she rejected them all until *Vertumnus used his powers of shape-shifting to appear to her in many forms; finally he disguised himself as an old woman who gained the nymph's confidence, praised Vertumnus and advised her to accept his offer. The girl still declined but when Vertumnus then appeared in his own shape she succumbed to his beauty and agreed to be his wife. Pomona had her own priest, the Flamen Pomonalis to oversee her cult in the Pomonal, a sacred grove outside Rome on the road to Ostia. [Ovid *Met* 14.623-771; Varro *LL* 7]

Pontus (*Πόντος*). A personification of the sea, Pontus has no real mythology and appears as little more than the ancestor of various deities and monsters connected with the sea. He was born spontaneously from *Gaia (a way of expressing the original separation of earth and water), and then mated with her to produce the sea-gods *Nereus and *Phorcys as well as Eurybia, Thaumias and the sea monster Ceto. [Hesiod *Theog* 131-2; 233-239]

Porphyryon (*Πορφυρίων*). One of the *Giants, he was the strongest of those who fought against the gods. During the battle Zeus filled the giant with lust for Hera and, as he was assaulting her, Zeus retaliated with his thunderbolt, supported by Heracles and his arrows. Pindar names him as king of the giants but in his version Porphyryon was killed by the bow of Apollo. [Apollodorus 1.6.1-2; Pindar *Pyth* 8.12-17]

Porthaon (Πορθάων). A figure who appears in the genealogy of the royal line of Aetolia as ancestor to Diomedes and Meleager. He was king of Calydon and married Euryte by whom he had several children including Agrius, Melas and Oeneus, and there was also Laocoon, whose mother was a slave-girl. [Apollodorus 1.7.10; Apollonius 1.190-3; Homer *Il* 14.115-8]

Portunus. A sea-deity of the Romans, 'father Portunus', he was originally a god of gates and entrances, but later regarded more as a patron of harbours ('porta' and 'portus', 'gate' and 'harbour' are etymologically close). He was identified with the Greek sea god *Palaemon and his mother, Mater Matuta, with Palaemon's mother Ino. He had a priest, a festival in August (called Portunalia) and a temple by the Aemilian bridge at the 'port of Tiber'. [Hyginus 2; Ovid *Fasti* 6.546-7; Vergil *Aen* 5.241]

Poros (Πόρος). The personification of resourcefulness, he was the son of Metis. He was seduced by a mortal, Penia (poverty), and fathered *Eros (love). The myth is related by *Diotima in Plato's *Symposium*, to show that Eros is not a god but a *daimon*, an intermediary between mortal and immortal. [Plato *Symp* 203b-e]

Poseidon (Ποσειδών). The son of Cronus and Rhea, he was originally said to have been the elder brother of Zeus but as Zeus' power became more absolute his status was relegated to that of a younger brother. His realm was deemed to be that of the sea but he was also god of the earthquake, of fresh water in the form of springs and lakes, of vegetation, and of the horse. He was widely worshipped in all these capacities within the Greek world.

The usual myth of his birth was that, along with his siblings Hades, Hestia, Hera and Demeter, he was swallowed by his father at birth and was later rescued when Zeus overpowered him. In Arcadia there was a myth that told of him being put into a pen of lambs by his mother who told Cronus that she had given birth to a foal which he duly swallowed just as he later swallowed a stone instead of Zeus. He was given to Telchines and Capheira, the daughter of Oceanus to rear on the island of Rhodes. He later fell in love with Halia, the sister of Telchines. and by her had six sons and a daughter Rhode after whom the island was named.

The three brothers Zeus, Hades and Poseidon drew lots to divide creation between them; Zeus gained the heavens, Hades the Underworld and Poseidon the sea. All three shared the earth and Olympus, but Zeus was soon acknowledged as supreme. Poseidon did once attempt to shake off this domination, when with the help of Hera and Athena they united against Zeus. They did manage to bind him but he was freed by the aid of Thetis who called up Briareus, the leader of the Hundred-Handers from Tartarus. The status quo seemed to have been established and Poseidon kept within his own domains. He had a home on Olympus but also had a palace beneath the sea at Aegae, off the northern coast of the Peloponnese. Here he dwelt with his wife *Amphitrite, a daughter of Oceanus, who bore him Triton and some say Rhode although the latter was disputed. Poseidon always seemed to stand in the shadow of Zeus. His children were not the positive forces that those of Zeus often were and he often appeared to be second best in his contests for power. In mythology the latter were important to the status of the gods in order to obtain the most prestigious sites for their worship. Poseidon vied with Helios for Corinth. The dispute was decided by Briareus, who settled Acrocorinth on Helios and the isthmus on Poseidon. In Argos Poseidon and Hera quarrelled over dominance; the dispute was adjudicated by three river-gods Inachus, Cephisus and Asterion. When they decided in favour of Hera, Poseidon dried up the rivers and caused Argos to be flooded. He only relented when he seduced a daughter of Danaus, Amynone, and in gratitude revealed the springs of Lerna to her. This myth was also used to explain why the rivers of Argos run dry in summer. In the city of Troezen, Zeus decided Poseidon should share its patronage with Athena. The most famous dispute was that with Athena over Attica.

This was decided either by a panel of Olympians, Zeus alone or the ancient kings of Attica. Poseidon struck the Athenian Acropolis with his trident causing a salt water spring to appear (in Roman sources this became the gift of the horse) while Athena gave Attica the olive, which provide both food and light. Athena was judged the winner and once more Poseidon sent a flood into Attica. Although Athena became the patroness of Athens, Poseidon was also worshipped on the Acropolis and many noble Athenian families claimed descent from the god. He was similarly bested by Zeus in Aegina, Dionysus at Naxos and Poseidon was said to share the original shrine at Delphi with Ge.

He had many children, most of whom seemed to share his rather unpredictable and somewhat uncivilised nature. By Thoosa he was father of *Polyphemus, the Cyclopes who was blinded by Odysseus and so suffered the god's enmity. Poseidon mated with the Gorgon *Medusa, who as she was decapitated by *Perseus gave birth from her neck to the winged horse, *Pegasus and the giant, *Chrysaor. By Amythone he had *Nauplius and by *Iphimedia the Aloadae, *Otus and *Ephialtes who dared to take on the gods themselves. Others of his children were the robber *Sciron and *Cercyon; the king of the cannibalistic *Laestrygonians, Lamus and *Orion, who was given the power to walk through the sea by Poseidon, were also his sons. His sons by Halia were stopped from raping their mother by Poseidon and imprisoned underground. The giant he produced by Ge, Antaeus, was killed by Heracles.

Pothos (*Πόθος*). The personification of desire and longing, he appears as one of Aphrodite's aides along with Eros and *Himerus and was said to be a son of the goddess. [Aeschylus *Supp* 1040]

Prax (*Πράξ*). A descendant of Neoptolemus and Pergamus, he returned to the Peloponnese from Illyria and, in the area named after him, he built a sanctuary to Achilles. [Pausanias 3.20.8]

Praxithea (*Πραξιθέα*). The name was used for several individuals in the early foundation myths of Athens, and it is difficult to separate them completely. **1.** The wife of *Erechtheus, she was either the daughter of the river-god Cephissus or his grand-daughter. She agreed to sacrifice her daughters to ensure Athens' victory in battle. [Apollodorus 3.15.1; Euripides *Erechtheus* fr 18.94-8] **2.** A nymph who became wife to Erichthonius and mother to *Pandion. [Apollodorus 3.14.6] **3.** The nurse to Demophon, son of Celeus and Metanira of Eleusis. [Apollodorus 1.5.1-2]

Presbon (*Πρέσβων*). The son of Phrixus and Iophassa, he returned from Colchis to Orchomenus to claim the kingdom of his grandfather Athamas. He married Buzyges and they had a son, *Clymenus (2); their grandson Erginus was the last of the line. [Pausanias 9.34.8, 37.1-2]

Preugenes (*Πρευγένης*). The son of Agenor, he moved from the valley of the Eurotas on the arrival of the Dorians (taking a Spartan statue with him) and settled in Achaia with his own two sons Patreus and Atherion; there he founded the city of Patras. Pausanias locates his tomb in front of Athena's sanctuary there, and adds that Preugenes received annual sacrifice at the tomb as having the status of divine hero. [Pausanias 3.2.1, 7.6.2, 20.4-5]

Priam (*Πριάμος*). King of Troy during the *Trojan War. Priam's childhood is not mentioned in Homer but the later mythographers provided a colourful version. Priam was said to be the youngest son of Laomedon and the daughter of the river-god Scamander, who was variously named as Strymo, Placia or Leucippe. When Heracles sacked Troy he took Priam, who was still a child, and his sister Hesione captive. Heracles gave Hesione to his friend Telamon to be

his wife and asked the bride what she would like for a gift; she asked for the restoration of her brother Podarces (as he was originally named), and so he was redeemed, and took the name Priam which means 'ransomed' or 'bought'. Heracles later gave him the kingdom of Troy since he was the last son of Laomedon; Priam extended it during his reign and made it the most wealthy and powerful along the seaboard. His first wife was Arisbe, the daughter of Merops, by whom he had a son Aeacus, but he later gave Arisbe to his ally Hyrtacus and took as his second wife *Hecuba, the daughter of the river-god Sangarius. He met her when he was fighting the Amazons on the banks of the Sangarius in their territory, and as a result of this alliance the Amazons under Penthesilea came to the aid of the Trojans during the Trojan War. Priam's children by Hecuba were numerous, and included the two eldest sons *Hector and *Paris, the daughters Creusa, Laodice, Polyxena and Cassandra and then the younger sons Deiphobus, Helenus, Pammon, Polites, Antiphus, Hipponous, Polydorus and Troilus. (For Priam's attempts to expose Paris at birth and so avoid the consequences of the Trojan War, *see* Paris.) Priam was credited with fifty sons in total, having, in addition to those by Hecuba, illegitimate offspring named as Melanippus, Gorgythion, Philaemon, Hippothous, Glaucus, Agathon, Chersidamas, Evagoras, Hippodamus, Mestor, Atas, Doryclus, Lycaon, Dryops, Bias, Chromius, Astygonus, Telestas, Evander, Cebrion, Mylius, Archemachus, Laodocus, Echephron, Idomeneus, Hyperion, Ascanius, Democoon, Aretus, Deiopites, Clonius, Echemmon, Hyperochus, Aegeoneus, Lysithous, Polymedon, Antiphon, Dius, and Axion.

Priam welcomed Paris back into the family when the boy came of age, returned anonymously to the palace and was recognised by Cassandra. The first responsibility Paris was given was to restore Priam's sister Hesione to Troy after her enforced marriage to Telamon, and for this reason he went Greece, to Sparta, where Aphrodite awarded him the prize of Helen, Menelaus' wife. Paris then returned with Helen (instead of Hesione); Priam accepted her into his city, and thus countenanced the first move in the war between the Greeks and Troy.

Priam was an elderly man when the war began, and so was unable to take part in the battle; he left the fighting and the decisions to his eldest son Hector. He did offer to return Helen to the Greeks when the embassy of *Odysseus and Menelaus came to request her but he was dissuaded by Paris; Homer shows Priam at ease with Helen, treating her almost as a daughter, and not blaming her for the war. The siege of Troy lasted for ten years, and Priam saw the majority of his sons slain in battle. After ten years fighting, the death of Hector was the greatest blow to the Trojan cause and Priam was forced to humble himself to reclaim Hector's abused body from his killer, Achilles. The gods respected Priam's piety and asked Thetis to persuade Achilles to ransom the body. Achilles paid due deference to Priam's age and rank and listened to Priam's moving plea for the restoration of his son; he granted his wish and allowed time for funeral rites to be performed. When the city finally fell Priam wished to don his armour as in the past and put up a last defence but he was persuaded by Hecuba to take sanctuary at the altar of Zeus. There he saw Neoptolemus kill the young Polites, who was also trying to reach the altar, and, when Priam attempted to intervene, Neoptolemus dragged him from the altar and murdered him also, leaving his body unburied on the shore. Priam was seen as an archetypal tragic figure, passing from long years of great prosperity to loss of children and city and a dishonourable end in old age. [Apollodorus 2.6.4, 3.12.5, *Ep* 5.1, 5.21; Euripides *Hecuba*, *Trojan Women*; Homer *Il* 3.146-313, 7.345-379, 20.237, 22.408-430, 24 *passim*; Hyginus 89-91, 101, 105-6; Pausanias 2.24.3, 4.17.4, 10.27.2; Vergil *Aen* 2.507-58] (I.)

Priapus (*Πρίαπος*). The son of *Aphrodite and of Dionysus from Lampsacus on the Hellespont, Priapus was the protector of gardens, vineyards, bees, sheep and goats, but especially of orchards. He was represented as a red-faced, satyr-like figure, often in the

retinue of Dionysus, and distinguished by an obscenely large erect phallus, a symbol of the fertility he would bring; he also warded off the evil-eye, and protected gardens and plants from birds and any harmful spells. He was often shown with a club to ward off thieves, and a scythe to prune trees, and was sometimes crowned with rocket leaves, a plant sacred to him because of its aphrodisiac qualities. Priapus had strong Oriental connections, honoured throughout Asia Minor, and said to be the personification of Osiris' virility and to have been deified by Isis. His cult did not spread to Greece until Hellenistic times, and he was later popular in Rome where small tablets containing obscene poems would be suspended from his image's phallus.

According to another myth of his birth, Priapus was the son of Zeus and Aphrodite; Hera, enraged as usual by her husband's infidelity, touched Aphrodite's womb when she was pregnant so that the child was born with monstrous genitals. Aphrodite, fearing ridicule, exposed the child on a mountain where he was rescued and reared by shepherds, who founded a cult celebrating his virility. In another similar version Adonis was said to be the father of Priapus.

There is little mythology associated with Priapus except for stories explaining his connection with the ass, an obvious companion for Priapus because of its phallic prowess. During a celebration with the retinue of Dionysus Priapus was attempting to seduce the sleeping nymph Lotis when, at the crucial moment, she was awakened by the braying of Silenus' ass and Priapus was obliged to stop in embarrassment. In Rome the myth was changed so that the goddess Vesta was the victim; again the girl was awakened by the sound of the ass and thus an ass was sacrificed to Priapus but was garlanded with flowers on the festival of Vesta. In both cases a connection with the constellation of Asses and Manger was made. [Diodorus 4.6; Hyginus 160; Ovid *Fasti* 1.401-2, 6.319-48; *Met* 9.347-8; Pausanias 9.31.2; Stephanus *s.v.* Lampsacos] See Constellation **24a, 2**.

Priapus (*Πρίαπος*). One of the *Argonauts, he was a son of Caeneus and the brother of Phocus, who went with him on the expedition. [Hyginus 14]

Procles (*Προκλής*). The son of Aristodemus the Heraclid and Argia, he had a twin brother *Eurysthenes with whom he constantly quarrelled. The boys lost their father at an early age and were made the wards of Theras. During the return of the *Heraclids to the Peloponnese they were allotted Sparta along with their guardian. Procles was the ancestor of *Lycurgus, the legendary founder of the Spartan code of law. [Pausanias 3.1.5-9; Plutarch *Lycurgus* 4]

Procne (*Πρόκνη*). The daughter of Pandion and sister to Philomela, she married Tereus and had a son Itys. For the tragic story of the family, see Philomela.

Procris (*Πρόκρις*). Daughter of Erechtheus, king of Athens, and Praxithea, she married Cephalus the son of Deion. In Apollodorus' account the two lived happily for a while, but Cephalus had a jealous nature. Procris was seduced by Pteleon (perhaps acting on the instructions of Cephalus to test her with the bribe of a golden crown), and to escape her husband's wrath she fled to *Minos. But the Cretan king also fell in love with her, but he had been cursed by his wife Pasiphae for his many infidelities, so that whenever Minos had intercourse with another woman he would discharge serpents or scorpions into her. Procris wanted two of the king's most valued possessions, the dog *Laelaps from whom no prey could escape and a javelin that always found its mark, so she prepared a counter spell for Minos of a herb obtained from Circe which cured his affliction and thus enabled her to survive the sexual encounter and obtain the magical gifts. (In Antoninus the cure for his affliction is more prosaic – a goat's bladder which was used as a condom.) Procris later

returned to Athens where she was reunited with her husband, and she gave him the dog and the spear as tokens of her love. She used to go hunting with her husband, for she also was an accomplished huntress, but on one occasion when he mistook her in the distance for a wild animal, he aimed the unerring javelin and killed her. He was sentenced to exile for his crime by the Areopagus.

The version in Apollodorus represents Procris as a faithful wife who was given the hound and spear by Artemis. On the goddess's instructions Procris disguised herself as a boy and challenged her husband to a contest at the hunt; when she defeated him Cephalus offered to buy the wonderful gifts at any price but Procris decided to test her husband and would only relinquish them if the king slept with her. When the 'boy' undressed it was immediately clear that this was his wife and the couple stayed together until her accidental death. According to Ovid the dawn-goddess Eos loved Cephalus, and when he scorned her, she made him suspicious of Procris. He disguised himself as a suitor from abroad and eventually broke down her resistance. When Procris discovered the trick she fled, but again was reconciled. Then she in turn became jealous and spied on Cephalus when he went hunting, and so it was that she was pierced by the javelin. [Antoninus 41; Apollodorus 1.9.4, 3.15.1; Hyginus 189; Ovid *Met* 7.694-862; Pausanias 10.29.6]

Procrustes (*Προκρούστης*). Also known as Damastes or Polypemon, Procrustes was a bandit who lived by the river Cephissus on the road from Eleusis to Athens. He had two beds, one small, one large and he would offer hospitality to travellers passing by. The small bed he gave to tall men, cutting off their extremities to make it fit; small men would be stretched until they were the same size as the large bed. He was killed by *Theseus as he cleared the land-route from Troezen to Athens of the hazards along the way. [Apollodorus *Ep* 1.4; Hyginus 38; Pausanias 1.38.5]

Proetides (*Προειτίδες*). The two daughters of *Proetus, king of Tiryns, called Lyssipe and Iphianeira (but the names vary, and sometimes a third girl, Iphinoe, is added). They were afflicted with madness by Hera either for stealing gold from her statue or for boasting that they were more beautiful than the goddess. They ran riot through the Peloponnese, in some versions in the guise of heifers but more often as humans possessed. Because their behaviour was so similar to that of the Bacchantes some said that they had been touched by the madness of Dionysus. *Melampus, a prophet and healer, offered to cure the sisters in exchange for a third of their father's kingdom but Proetus found the price too high and refused. The girls then grew worse and the madness spread to the other women who deserted their homes and children and ran wild. Proetus now realised the gravity of the situation and agreed to forfeit one third of Argos but Melampus now demanded two thirds, the increased land to be given to his brother Bias; Proetus in desperation agreed. Melampus gathered all the young men in the kingdom and drove the women down from the mountains and wild places. During this manic pursuit Iphinoe perished but the remaining two were successfully healed by Melampus; since it was impossible to approach the girls he threw the healing herbs into a spring from which they drank; the water also made whoever drank it allergic to wine. Proetus later gave the sisters in marriage to Bias and Melampus. [Apollodorus 2.2.2; Herodotus 9.34; Ovid *Met* 15.325-8]

Proetus (*Προῖτος*). He and *Acrisius were the twin sons of Abas, king of Argos, and Aglaea. The twins quarrelled continually even in their mother's womb, and when they were adult they fought over the inheritance of Argos. Proetus was accused of the seduction of *Danae, Acrisius' daughter (although she claimed that Zeus was responsible), and he was exiled to Lycia where he took refuge at the court of Iobates and married his daughter *Stheneboea.

Iobates provided Proetus with an army so that he could return to Argos. Proetus fought with his brother in single combat until a draw was declared and the kingdom was shared equally between them, with Acrisius remaining in Argos and Proetus establishing himself at Tiryns, which he reinforced with the help of the Cyclopes, who, it was said, rebuilt the walls with the huge stones which are still visible. Proetus had three daughters by Stheneboea – Lysippe, Iphinoe and Iphianassa – and a son Megapenthes.

When *Bellerophon came to Tiryns seeking sanctuary Stheneboea fell in love with him but, as he did not return her passion, she falsely denounced him as a rapist to her husband. Proetus, being unable to kill a suppliant, sent him to the court of Iobates with a sealed letter giving instructions for the bearer to be killed. When Bellerophon survived this attempt on his life, carried out the tasks set by Iobates and in fact married her sister Philonoe, Stheneboea killed herself in chagrin.

In order to cure his daughters of their madness (*see* Proetides) Proetus had to relinquish two-thirds of his kingdom and he later exchanged the throne of Tiryns with *Perseus for that of Argos, for Perseus had accidentally killed his grandfather Acrisius and did not want to claim his own kingdom. In Ovid there is a different version in which Proetus was besieging Acrisius in Argos when Perseus came back home and turned Proetus to stone by showing him the Gorgon's head. Proetus' son Megapenthes avenged his father by eventually causing the death of Perseus. [Apollodorus 2.2.1-4.1; Hesiod fr 129.12;; Ovid *Met* 5.236-42; Pausanias 2.25.7]

Promachus (*Πρόμαχος*). A youth from Crete who loved another young man, Leucocamas. But the love was not reciprocated and Leucocamas set his admirer many tasks to complete and subjected him to ridicule. After one particularly difficult task which involved obtaining a helmet Promachus handed the prize to another young man in front of Leucocamas, who in despair killed himself upon his sword. [Conon 16]

Prometheus (*Προμηθεύς*). Prometheus, known for his cunning, his craftsmanship, his prophetic wisdom and his friendship to humanity, was the son of the Titan Iapetus and Clymene, an Oceanid (although Themis and Asia are also named as his mother). His brothers were *Atlas, *Epimetheus and *Menoetius – all four sons of Iapetus were antagonistic to Zeus, but Prometheus posed the greatest threat. Hesiod gives the first and most detailed account of his mythology. At Mecone Prometheus devised a scheme whereby humans could keep the best part of the sacrificial animal: he wrapped the bones of the carcass in the glistening fat and the good meat in the unattractive innards; he asked Zeus to choose which portion he would like and Zeus chose the bones covered in fat. Originally Zeus may well have been deceived, although Hesiod denies this, but the story is an excellent example of an aetiological myth explaining the sacrificial ritual of the Greeks, whereby the fat was burned for the gods and the meat kept for human consumption. In Hesiod's account Zeus was then so angered by the insult that he refused to allow the human race to have fire, but again Prometheus defied him by secreting fire from Hephaestus' forge inside a hollow fennel stalk and taking it from heaven down to earth. Zeus punished men by asking Hephaestus to create the first woman, *Pandora, and the goddesses to adorn her as a 'beautiful bad thing' to be sent to earth. Zeus gave her to Epimetheus to be his wife, even though Prometheus had warned his brother never to accept a gift from Zeus; Epimetheus paid no heed, and so Pandora released all its hardships on the human race through her insatiable curiosity. Zeus punished Prometheus for the theft of fire by binding him to a crag in the Caucasus with metal restraints; the detail was added later of an eagle (or vulture) coming daily to feed on his liver which was renewed through the night.

In later versions Prometheus himself created the human race from clay, which he brought to life by touching the figures with fire, and the evil-smelling clay quarries in the Peloponnese were pointed out as the source of his material. Prometheus was meant to pass his creations to Zeus for inspection but one young man, whom he called Phaethon, was so beautiful that the craftsman protected him from the god's well-known fondness for handsome boys by keeping him for himself – another reason for incurring Zeus' enmity. Prometheus was also seen as the founder of the human race in that it was his son *Deucalion who, with Pyrrha, repopulated the earth after the flood. Plato tells a different version of the Prometheus myth through the sophist Protagoras in a speech defending democracy. In this humans and animals were already created and Prometheus was to allocate skills to them. The foolish Epimetheus asks for the task, and uses up all the available means of survival on animals (such as size, speed, sharp senses) and has nothing left for humans, so Prometheus gives them fire as the beginning of technology. But this is not enough for survival, and Zeus then sends Hermes with the political virtues of justice (*δίκη*) and sense of honour (*αἰδώς*) to be given to all to allow survival within a structured society. The Athenians honoured Prometheus annually with a relay race in which torches were kept alight and handed on from one runner to the next.

In *Prometheus Bound*, the tragedy attributed to Aeschylus, Prometheus gave to the human race all the arts and skills necessary for intellectual development as well as physical survival. The Titan, chained to his rock, tells the chorus that he restrained Zeus from destroying the human race, and then taught people, who were 'like babes in the beginning, living in the dark corners of caves', how to build houses, tame animals, understand the seasons and the calendar, plant the fields, dig for metals, cure their illnesses, foretell the future and sail the sea – only himself Prometheus cannot save. (He also tells *Io of her future wanderings and the final end to her sufferings in Libya.) He was loyal to Zeus in that he had told him to release the Cyclopes and obtain the thunderbolt, thus ensuring victory in the Gigantomachy, but he knows a secret that will destroy Zeus, and refuses to reveal it.

The fate of Prometheus was problematic. It would seem that Zeus was prepared to bargain for the secret (for which *see* Thetis) with the promise of Prometheus' release. However the myth of his redemption by Heracles became far more popular. Hesiod tells of Heracles shooting the eagle that was tormenting Prometheus but not freeing the Titan, but Heracles was later credited by Aeschylus and elsewhere with liberating Prometheus completely, and Zeus allowed this as contributing to the glorious reputation of his son (but Prometheus continued to wear a ring as a symbolic token in the shape of his bonds). In exchange, or in gratitude for his kindness, Prometheus advises Heracles on dealing with Atlas and securing for his eleventh *Labour the apples of the Hesperides. Another version was that Prometheus exchanged immortality with the wounded Chiron. The centaur was in extreme pain from his poisoned wound but, being immortal, was unable to die. Prometheus agreed to take on Chiron's immortality and Chiron was willing to die in accordance with Zeus' decree that if a god would take on his sufferings and go down to Hades Prometheus would be freed. both willingly made sacrifices and Zeus was placated. [Aeschylus *PV*; Apollodorus 1.2.3, 1.7.1-2, 2.5.4, 3.13.5; Hesiod *Theog* 507-616, *WD* 47-105; Hyginus 54, 144, *Astr* 2.6, 15.,42; Ovid *Met* 1.82-5; Pausanias 1.30.2, 2.19.5, 8; Plato *Protagoras* 321c]

Pronax (*Πρῶναξ*). One of the sons of Talaos and grandson of Bias, he was the brother of Adrastus and one of the *Epigoni in the expedition against Thebes. He was killed by Amphiaraus during a revolt at Argos and the Nemean games were said to have been first held at his funeral. [Apollodorus 1.9.13; Pindar *Nem* 9.13 with schol]

Propetides. These were young girls who had denied the divinity of *Venus, and to punish them the goddess inflicted them with insatiable sexual appetites. They became the first

prostitutes and as they stopped blushing and grew hardened to their trade they finally turned into flint. [Ovid *Met* 10.220-46]

Proserpina. The Roman goddess of the Underworld who was merged with the Greek deity Persephone; her cult was adopted by the state in 249 BC along with that of Dis Pater as Hades. She may previously have been a country deity of the spring but she immediately attracted all the myths and attributes of Persephone, with *Ceres at the Roman version of her mother Demeter. [Cicero *ND* 3.53, 83; Hyginus 146; Ovid *Met* 5.391-550; Vergil *Aen* 4.698-9, 6.241, 402 *Georg* 4.487] See Persephone.

Prosymna (*Πρόσυμνα*). One of the three daughters of the river god Asterion, together with her sisters Euboea and Acraia she was the nurse of Hera. She gave her name to the land near the city of Mycenae where the sanctuary of Hera was situated. [Pausanias 2.17.1]

Protesilaus (*Πρωτεσίλαος*). Son of Iphicles (or Actor) and Astyoche he had been a suitor of Helen but when the call came for the suitors to join the expedition to Troy he had just married Laodamia and had not yet had his first wedding night. He brought forty ships from his home in Phylace and was the first to leap onto Trojan soil. There was a prophecy that the first Greek to land at Troy would be the first to be killed, but Protesilaus did not hold back, and, after attacking some Trojans, he was immediately killed by Hector. Protesilaus was buried in a sanctuary in the Thracian Chersonese, planted by nymphs with elm-trees; the sanctuary was robbed in historical times by a Persian officer from Xerxes' army. For Laodamia's great grief and the temporary resurrection of her husband, see Laodamia. [Apollodorus 3.10.8, *Ep* 28-30; Epic Cycle *Cypria* 1, 17; Herodotus 7.33, 9.116-20; Hesiod *Cat* 36; Homer *Il* 2.695-705; Hyginus 103-4; Ovid *Her* 13; Pliny *NH* 16.88]

Proteus (*Πρωτεύς*). He was known as the old man of the sea and was often said to be a son of Poseidon but he appears to be an older sea-deity whose identity changed; the character also developed into a quasi-human Egyptian king. In Homer he shepherds the seal-herds of the sea, and in common with many gods of the sea, he was both prophet and shape-shifter. *Menelaus and Helen were stranded on the island of Pharos, near to the Nile delta on their way home from Troy; they had stopped in Egypt where they were given great hospitality but, on leaving the delta, the ship became becalmed off the island and they were beginning to despair of ever reaching Sparta again. The sea-goddess Idothea, who was Proteus' daughter, took pity on Menelaus and told him how to persuade her father to help. She suggested that he should hide himself with two of his men under some seal hides, putting ambrosia in their noses to disguise the dreadful smell; Proteus would come ashore to count his flocks and then sleep in the quiet of the afternoon. Menelaus was then to hold him and not relinquish his grip whatever happened. All this happened, and Proteus transformed into a lion, a snake, a leopard, a boar, water and a tree but finally submitted and gave Menelaus the information he wanted. He explained how they were to leave the island and also reported on other heroes returning from the Trojan War, including Odysseus and Agamemnon. A similar version of Proteus' transformations was told by Vergil when *Aristaeus asked why his bees had died.

The figure of Proteus appears as a king of Egypt, who ruled there when *Paris and Helen were driven off course by a storm on their way to Troy; Paris was sent on his journey but Helen was kept in Egypt. The Greeks, thinking that Helen was in Troy and ignoring all the Trojans' denials, carried on with the war, and it was only with the defeat of Troy that they accepted that Helen had been in Egypt the whole time. Proteus returned her to Menelaus as her rightful husband. A variant on this was the version that makes Proteus king of Pharos who was married to the Nereid Psamathe; when Helen arrived in Egypt he kept her there safely

and sent Paris on to Troy with a phantom Helen. In Euripides' version Proteus had honourably cared for Helen but on his death his son *Theoclymenus attempts to force her to marry him; it was only the timely return of Menelaus which saved her. [Homer *Od* 4.363-570; Euripides *Helen* 4-11, 44-48, 1165-8; Herodotus 2.112-121; Vergil *Georg* 4.386-529].

Protogenia (*Πρωτογένεια*). The daughter of Deucalion and Pyrrha, the survivors of the flood, and so she was the first-born of the new generation. She had two sons by Zeus, bore Aethlios, the father of Endymion, and Opus. [Apollodorus 1.7.2; Pindar *Ol* 9.41]

Psamathe (*Ψαμάθη*). A Nereid, she bore a son named Phocus to the king of Aegina, Aeacus. As a sea deity she was a shape-shifter and changed herself into a seal to avoid Aeacus but she could not escape and had to submit to the rape. Her son was killed by his half-brothers *Peleus and Telamon and in revenge Psamathe sent a fearsome wolf to harass the cattle of Peleus in his exile in Thessaly; her sister Thetis who was to be the wife of Peleus persuaded her to stop the slaughter and Psamathe changed the wolf into stone. She later was said to have married Proteus as king of Egypt and she gave him two children, Theoclymenus and *Theonoe. [Apollodorus 1.2.7, 3.12.6; Euripides *Helen* 6ff, 413; Hesiod *Theog* 260, 1004; Ovid *Met* 11.346-406; Pindar *Nem* 5.13] (**M.**)

Psyche (*Ψυχή*). She was the heroine of Apuleius' allegorical tale, the *Metamorphoses*, known also as *The Golden Ass*. The story has a central place in the novel, the quest of Psyche corresponding to that of the hero, Lucius, and is probably to be interpreted as the eventual triumph of the soul over earthly trials. Psyche was the youngest of three daughters of a king, and the most beautiful; she was so lovely that people had begun to worship her in place of the goddess Venus but no one would agree to wed her. In despair the king consulted the oracle of Apollo at Miletus, which told him to array his daughter for marriage and to leave her on top of a mountain, where a monster would come and possess her. The goddess Venus was so jealous of Psyche that she persuaded her son *Cupid to make the girl fall in love with some hideous man without riches or position, but when Cupid saw her he fell in love with her himself. Abandoned on the mountain top Psyche was terrified but she was lifted up by a gentle wind and placed carefully on the valley floor, where the exhausted girl fell asleep. On awakening she discovered that she was in a wonderful jewelled palace with invisible servants who were expecting her and cared for her diligently. When, after a rich banquet, she retired to bed she felt another presence in the darkened room, which at first frightened, then soothed her, then gave great pleasure; she realised that this was the monstrous husband of the oracle. He did not seem so terrifying and for three nights he lay with her; on the fourth he explained to her that she must never try to look at him or she would lose him for ever. This enchanted existence continued for some time; Psyche was waited on by the invisible servants by day and by night her lover would come to her, but she began to be lonely and to miss her family so she begged her husband to let her see her sisters once more. He warned her that this would result in disaster as her sisters were evil and would try to make her find out his identity, but he could not dissuade her; eventually he agreed that the sisters could also come down to the valley and see her new home.

The sisters were wafted down from the rock, where they were mourning the demise of Psyche, and the three were reunited in the valley below. The sisters were impressed with her new-found wealth and returned home consumed by jealousy. That night, as Psyche lay with her unseen lover, he told her she was pregnant and that the child would be born a god; he also warned her of her sisters' jealous plans but Psyche insisted on seeing them once again. On their next visit they filled the girl with worry, telling her that her monstrous husband would eat her when she was heavily pregnant and persuaded her to look at him in secret as he lay

sleeping and to kill him with a knife before he awoke. Psyche did as she was bid but when she lit the lamp she saw, not a monster but a handsome winged youth – Cupid, the god of love. She was so amazed that she let a drop of oil from the lamp spill on the sleeping figure which woke him, and, on discovering Psyche's treachery, he flew away, leaving the girl distraught and now deeply in love with him, for she had scratched herself on one of his arrows. Psyche was left to wander the land looking for her lost love and in due course arrived in turn at the cities where her sisters lived. Each sister on hearing of Psyche's misfortune decided to return to the mountain top and offer themselves to Cupid, but they were dashed to pieces on the rocks below when no gentle wind came to carry them.

Cupid had returned to his mother's house on Olympus to nurse his wounds and, when she realised that he had fallen in love with Psyche, she was furious and sent out her messengers to discover Psyche. The girl meanwhile had been refused sanctuary by Ceres and Juno and decided she to face Venus in the goddess's house. Venus had no pity for the pregnant girl and had her servants beat her; she then set Psyche some seemingly impossible tasks which the girl was able to complete: the first was to separate a heap of mixed grain, and in this Psyche was helped by an army of ants; the second was to obtain a hank of wool from a flock of golden sheep who killed humans, and here she was advised by a reed to wait until they slept in the afternoon and then to gather their wool from the thorns; the third was to bring some of the headwaters of the Styx which flowed from an inaccessible gorge, and then an eagle came to her aid; the fourth was to descend to Hades and to ask *Persephone for some of her beauty. Psyche thought she was being sent to her death and could face the test no longer; she ascended a tower to kill herself but the tower advised her on how to travel to the Underworld and survive. Following his instructions she paid the ferryman and crossed the Styx and, bribing the guard-dog Cerberus, she entered Persephone's palace where she refused offers of food (which would have obliged her to remain) and made her request. The queen granted her wish and filled the box she had brought with some of her beauty. When Psyche returned to the daylight she could not refrain from peeping into the box and from it came a death-like slumber. Cupid saw her and blew away the slumber; he then asked permission from Jupiter to marry Psyche, which was granted, and Venus was forced to accept the situation. The couple were married and in due course Psyche gave birth to a daughter, Volupta ('pleasure'). The story, although found only in Apuleius, has many *motifs* of fairy-tale and folk-tale: the good youngest sister with the two older, unpleasant siblings; the cruel mother-in-law; the splendid palace and servants with an unknown master; the impossible tasks; the magic box with its unknown contents, and the final reconciliation. [Apuleius *The Golden Ass* 4.28-6.24]

Pterelaus (*Πτερέλαος*). The son of Taphius, the ruler of the Taphian islands; Taphius' parents were Hippothoe, the granddaughter of Perseus, and the god Poseidon. As a favour to Taphius Poseidon granted the child Pterelaus immortality by planting a single golden hair on his head – as long as the hair remained intact no harm would come to him. When Pterelaus' sons in turn were adult, they decided to lay claim to the kingdom of Mycenae, to which they thought they were entitled through their ancestral link with Perseus, and they attacked the country which was then ruled by Electryon. The venture failed but they did succeed in driving off many of the flocks of Mycenae and, during the ensuing fighting, both Electryon and Pterelaus lost all their sons except for one each. Electryon died before an expedition of revenge to Taphos could be organised but *Amphitryon and his allies later decided to sack the Taphian islands. It was impossible for Amphitryon to take the city as it was invulnerable for as long as Pterelaus lived, but his daughter Comaetho, who knew of her father's secret, had fallen in love with Amphitryon; she plucked out the magic hair and both her father and her city were destroyed. Her love too was doomed to failure for Amphitryon had her executed for treason. The story is a double of that of Nisus, Scylla and Minos. [Apollodorus 2.4.5, 7]

Pygmalion (*Πυγμαλίων*). A king of Cyprus who, according to Apollodorus, had a daughter named Metharme who married Cinyras from Cilicia and then founded the city of Paphos. But it is the story as told by Ovid that is far more familiar. Pygmalion had been horrified by the amoral behaviour of women and for many years had lived alone. He sculpted a statue of a woman of most marvellous beauty and fell in love with her perfection. He caressed the figure, brought it gifts as one would to a real lover and, during a festival in honour of Aphrodite, he prayed that he would be able to marry a girl identical to the statue. When he returned home he kissed his perfect creation and she seemed warm to the touch, he caressed her and she responded; soon it was clear that the goddess had answered his prayers and his beloved had come to life. They were married and had a daughter named Paphos. This was the name of the city where the famous shrine to Aphrodite was situated. (The name Galatea for the creation of Pygmalion is a modern addition to the tale.) [Apollodorus 3.14.3; Ovid *Met* 10. 243-96]

Pygmies (*Πυγμαῖοι*). The pygmies were traditionally hostile to the cranes, and the origin of the hostility was attributed to a pygmy woman called Oenoe. Although very beautiful, Oenoe was exceptionally arrogant and failed to honour Artemis and Hera. When she gave birth to a son, Mopsus, the other pygmies brought her gifts, but Hera punished her for neglecting her cult by transforming her into a crane. Still anxious to see her son despite her change of form, Oenoe haunted the homes of her former neighbours and refused to go away until the pygmies took up weapons and chased her away. In other accounts, she is named as Gerana ('Crane') and her fellow-pygmies were said to have worshipped her as if she were a goddess. [Aelian *NA* 12.59; Antoninus 16; Athenaeus 393e; Homer *Il* 3.3-7]

Pylades (*Πυλάδης*). The son of Strophius and Anaxibia, Agamemnon's sister, and so the cousin and later the close friend of *Orestes. They were brought up together at the palace of Strophius where Orestes had been sent for safety when his mother, Clytemnestra took Aegisthus for her lover and murdered his father Agamemnon. Pylades accompanied Orestes on all his adventures and often strengthened his resolve at a crucial moment. Pylades was at Orestes' side during the killing of Clytemnestra and accompanied him on his journey to Tauris where Orestes was reunited with his sister Iphigeneia. He married Orestes' other sister, *Electra and had two children by her – Medon and Strophius. [Aeschylus *Choeph* 900; Euripides *Orestes*, *Electra*, *IT.*; Hyginus 121-2; Pausanias 1.22.6, 2.16.7, 2.29.9; Sophocles *Electra*]

Pylaemenes (*Πυλαιμένης*). A Paphlagonian, he was the son of Bilsates who went to the aid of the Trojans along with his son Harpalion. He was killed by either Menelaus or Achilles. He was a renowned warrior and in the *Iliad* was described as the equal of Ares. The poet of the *Iliad* has been criticised for recounting Pylaemenes' death in book five, and then describing him weeping at his own son's death in book nineteen. [Apollodorus *Ep* 3.35; Homer *Il* 2.851, 5.576, 13.658; Hyginus 113]

Pyramus (*Πύραμος*). The earlier version of this tragic tale of Pyramus and his lover *Thisbe told how the two lovers slept together prior to their wedding resulting in Thisbe's pregnancy. In her grief she killed herself but the gods, not wishing to separate them, transformed Pyramus into the river of that name in Cilicia and Thisbe into a spring which flowed into the river. The most well known story of these lovers is of course that in Ovid and it was this source that Shakespeare borrowed for *A Midsummer Nights Dream*. The tragedy was set in Babylon, the two lovers were not allowed even to speak to one another because of the enmity of their parents. The only way that they could communicate was through a chink in the

adjoining wall between their houses. They grew increasingly desperate and decided to run away together. The plan they made was to meet outside the city walls at the tomb of Ninus once darkness had fallen. Thisbe arrived first at the tomb which was overshadowed by a huge mulberry tree, heavy with ripe berries and nearby a clear springs. As Thisbe waited a lioness arrived to drink, her jaws still bloody from the kill. The girl fled in panic but dropped her scarf which the lioness picked up and tore, leaving bloodstains on the tattered scraps. When Pyramus found the remains of the scarf he thought Thisbe was dead; he hung the scarf on the tree and ran himself through with his sword, blaming himself for sending her there alone. His blood changed the colour of the mulberries from white to the colour of his blood. Thisbe returned from her hiding place to find her lover breathing his last; she would not leave him even in death and she too fell on the sword and died. The ashes of the lovers were buried in the same urn by their parents. [Ovid *Met* 4.165]

Pyrene (*Πυρήνη*). The daughter of king Bebryx who ruled over the Narbonne area which Heracles travelled through on his way to capture the cattle of Geryon for his tenth *Labour. When Heracles stayed at the king's court he became drunk and raped Pyrene. She later gave birth to a serpent, and in her distress fled into the mountains where she was torn apart by wild animals. Heracles did find and bury her on his return, and gave her name to the surrounding mountains as her memorial. [Pliny *NH* 3.3.8; Silius Italicus 3, 420-30].

Pyreneus (*Πυρηνεύς*). A Thracian who had conquered the land of Phocis; he met the *Muses whilst they were travelling to their temple and asked them to accept his hospitality due to heavy rain. However when the weather cleared he refused to allow the goddesses to leave; they flew up into the sky to escape him. He tried to follow by leaping from his highest tower but he fell onto some rocks which resulted in his death. [Ovid *Met* 5.274-92]

Pyrgo (*Πυργώ*). **1.** The wife of Alcaeus, king of Megara; she was put aside so that he could marry Evechme. [Pausanias 1.43.4] **2.** The nurse of Priam's children who accompanied *Aeneas from Troy. It was she, under the influence of Juno who instructed the Trojans to burn their ships when they sojourned in Sicily and those who were weary of travel remained there whilst Aeneas and his followers left for Italy. [Vergil *Aen* 5.645-54]

Pyrias (*Πυρίας*). A boatman from Ithaca who was famous for his humanity. He rescued from slavery an old man who had been captured and sold by pirates; he had also been robbed of some pots of pitch which Pyrias returned to their owner. In gratitude the old man gave the pots to Pyrias and beneath the pitch was hidden gold. Pyrias offered the sacrifice of a bull to the old man and looked after him in his own home until the man's death. A proverb grew from this incident: 'Pyrias is the only man to have sacrificed a bull to a benefactor'. [Plutarch *Quaest Gr* 34.298c].

Pyriphlegethon (*Πυριφλεγέθων*). See Phlegethon.

Pyrrha (*Πύρρα*). The daughter of Epimetheus and Pandora, she was the first born mortal woman. She married Deucalion and together they survived the devastating flood which destroyed the world. After the flood which left the couple afloat in a chest grounded on top of Parnassus, Zeus offered them whatever they wished and they both asked for the company of other humans. The god told them to throw stones on to the earth, those that Pyrrha threw became women and those thrown by Deucalion became men. She had two children by Deucalion, Hellen and Amphictyon. [Apollodorus 1.7.2; Hyginus 153; Pindar *OI* 9.43] (A.)

Pyrrhus (*Πύρρος*). *See* Neoptolemus.

Pythaeus (*Πυθαεύς*). A son of Apollo who came from *Delphi to Argos and founded a temple there dedicated to Apollo Pythian. [Pausanias 2.24.1, 35.2]

Pythia (*Πυθία*). The title of the priestess of Apollo at his shrine of *Delphi. It was she that gave the oracular statements under the inspiration of the god that were interpreted by the priests into hexameter verse. She was named after the dragon Python, who was the earliest deity to inhabit the shrine. Originally the priestess was a young virgin from the locality but later older women also performed this function; it seems that the volume of work at the shrine made it necessary to have more than one Pythia at a time. The Pythia were described as sitting on a bronze tripod over a chasm from which issued some sort of inspirational vapours; however no such fissure has been discovered during excavations. Other sources stated that she obtained her trance-like state through chewing laurel leaves which were sacred to Apollo. The questions were put to her via priests after the suppliant had made an offering and the priests interpreted the Pythia's random answers into ambiguous verse. *See* Sibyl.

Python (*Πύθων*). A huge serpent or dragon who was the original occupant of the oracular shrine at *Delphi. The shrine was originally the home of Ge who prophesied at the site, some said in conjunction with Poseidon. When Apollo decided to take the sanctuary himself he found the serpent near to the spring and killed it with his arrows. Some sources state that Apollo's destruction of the serpent corresponds to the absorption of the oracle of Ge by Apollo, as the snake was one of her sacred creatures. The body of the reptile was buried beneath the *omphalos at the temple of Delphi, and Apollo founded the Pythian games in its honour. Hyginus tells of a prophecy that the python would die at the hands of a son of Leto so Hera, as the creature's protectress, forbade Leto to give birth in any sunlit place. Poseidon arranged for her to be transported to the isle of Ortygia, which was submerged under a huge wave, and there she bore Apollo and Artemis; Apollo travelled to Delphi killed the snake within three days of his birth. [*Hom Hymn* 3. 370-4; Hyginus 140; Ovid *Met* 1.438-47; Pausanias 10.6.5].