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**Sabine Women.** The Rape of the Sabine Women is one of the myths about early Rome. Once \*Romulus had defeated Remus and established the city of Rome, the first citizens included his supporters, and also various bandits and fugitives, but women were needed. The Romans therefore invited the neighbouring Sabines with their families to a festival, and during the proceedings seized the wives and daughters. When the Sabines returned armed to take them back, the women themselves pleaded for reconciliation between their old and new families, and consequently a treaty was drawn up which allowed the Sabine leader, Titus Tatius, to rule jointly with Romulus. [Livy 1.10; Plutarch *Romulus*; Vergil *Aen* 8. 635]

**Sagittarius** ('archer'). *See* Constellation **29**.

**Salacia.** A Roman goddess of the sea, associated with Neptune and sometimes said to be his wife. She was identified with the Greek Tethys or Amphitrite. The Romans connected her name to the salt (*sal*) of the sea.

**Salamis** (Σαλαμίς). A daughter of the river Asopus and Metope, she gave her name to the island of Salamis off the west coast of Attica. She was abducted to the island by Poseidon and her son by him, Cychreus, became its first ruler. [Diodorus 4.72.4]

**Salius** (Σάλιος). A Greek who accompanied Aeneas to Italy, he was an Acarnanian in the *Aeneid*, an Arcadian or Samothracian in other sources. It was said that he invented the ritual dances of the Salii, an ancient college of priests at Rome. Its members wore an archaic form of military dress and used to beat their shields with their staves as they performed their intricate dances. [Plutarch *Numa* 13; Vergil *Aeneid* 5.298-9] *See* Mars.

**Salmoneus** (Σαλμωνεύς). A son of Aeolus and Enarete who left his native Thessaly to found the city of Salmone by the River Alpheus in Elis in the north-west Peloponnese. He married Alcidice, daughter of Aleus, who bore him a daughter, Tyro. A man of overweening presumption, he usurped the name of Zeus and ordered that sacrifices formerly offered to Zeus should be offered to himself instead. He even imitated the thunder of Zeus by dragging bronze kettles behind a chariot and horses, and imitated the god's lightning by brandishing flaming torches or hurling them into the sky. Zeus responded to his impiety by demonstrating the power of genuine thunder and lightning – he struck Salmoneus with a thunderbolt and destroyed his entire city, killing all its inhabitants with the sole exception of \*Tyro, who had opposed her father's impious actions. After the death of Salmoneus, Tyro was reared by her uncle Cretheus in Thessaly. According to Diodorus and other sources, Salmoneus had a second wife Sidero, who imprisoned and ill-treated her stepdaughter Tyro; but this can hardly be reconciled with the usual life-history of either Salmoneus or Tyro, and it seems likely that Sidero was the first wife of Tyro's uncle (and adoptive father) Cretheus. Vergil included Salmoneus amongst the sinners who suffered punishment in the Underworld. For a strange story of conflict between Salmoneus and Sisyphus, *see* Sisyphus. [Apollodorus 1.9.7; Diodorus 4.68.1-2; Hesiod fr 30; Hyginus 60, 61; Vergil *Aeneid* 6.585-94]

**Salmoxis** (Σάλμοξις). A Thracian god. According to Herodotus, the Getae of Thrace believed that they would never really die but would join Salmoxis at the end of their earthly life. Every five years, they would send a messenger to him to inform him of their wants. The envoy would be chosen by lot, and they would swing him into the air so that he fell on to the points of their spears if he was killed, they took it as a sign of their god's favour; but if he survived,

they assumed that he was of bad character and selected a worthier man to serve as their envoy. According to the Greeks of that area, however, Salmoxis was not a god but a Thracian who had served Pythagoras as a slave. After he was freed, he taught his fellow-countrymen that they would go to another place after their death where they would enjoy every blessing, and to persuade them of the truth of his doctrine, he constructed an underground chamber in secret and vanished into it, and then reappeared three years later. [Herodotus 4.93-5]

**Samon** (Σάμων). A son of Hermes by Rhene, a nymph of Mount Cyllene in Arcadia. According to one tradition Samothrace gained its name because it was close to Thrace and was first settled by Samon. He had travelled to the island with Dardanus, here regarded as a fellow-Arcadian. [Dionysius 1.61]

**Sanape** (Σανάπη). An Amazon who gave her name to Sinope on the southern shore of the Black Sea. She fled to the area when Heracles made war on the Amazons and married the local king. Because of her fondness for wine, she acquired the name of Sanape, which meant a drunkard in the Thracian dialect supposedly spoken by the Amazons. *See* Sinope. [schol Apollonius 2.946]

**Sangarius** (Σαγγάριος). The god of the River Sangarius, which flowed through the north-west of Asia Minor into the Black Sea. He was the father of Alpheus and of Nana, the mother of Attis; in some accounts, he was also the father of Hecuba, by Metope or by the nymph Eunoe or Evagora. [Apollodorus 3.12.5; schol Homer *Il* 16.78; Pausanias 7.17.5]

**Saon** (Σάων). **1.** Son of Acraephnion; a Boeotian who discovered the location of the oracle of \*Trophonius by following a swarm of bees until they disappeared into the ground. He was then instructed in the rites and procedures of the oracle by Trophonius himself. [Pausanias 9.40.1] **2.** Son of Zeus and a nymph, or of Hermes and Rhene. He united the people of Samothrace, who had previously lived in scattered communities, and laid down laws from them. [Diodorus 5.48]

**Sardus** (Σαρδῶ). The eponym of Sardinia. A son of Maceris, a figure who was identified with Heracles in North Africa, Sardus settled on the island with some Libyan followers. Since neither the newcomers nor the autochthonous inhabitants knew how to build a city, they lived in scattered settlements, sheltering in huts and caves. The island was later visited by Aristaeus, who introduced agricultural skills, and eventually settled by some Iberians led by Norax, who built the first city, Nora, and then by the sons of Thespius under the leadership of Iolaus. Some Trojans were also said to have settled there after the fall of Troy. [Pausanias 10.17.1-4]

**Saron** (Σάρων). The third of the mythical kings of Troezen. He was an enthusiastic hunter and one day, as he was chasing a deer, it leapt into an inlet and swam further and further from the shore. As he swam after it, Saron was drowned, and he was buried in a grove of Artemis by the sea-lake, which was named Lake Saronis after him. [Pausanias 2.30.7]

**Sarpedon** (Σαρπηδών). **1.** A son of Zeus and Europa, and the brother of \*Minos and Rhadamanthys. After the death of Asterion, king of Crete, who had married Europa and adopted her sons, Sarpedon fought with Minos for the throne and was driven into exile. Alternatively he and Minos both fell in love with \*Miletus, and Minos was so incensed when the boy favoured Sarpedon that he made war on his brother and expelled him. In any event, Sarpedon crossed over to Asia Minor; and when Cilix sought his support against the Lycians

in return for a share of the territory, he won a kingdom for himself in Lycia in the south-west. [Antoninus 30; Apollodorus 3.1.2; Herodotus 1.173] **2.** During the Trojan war the Lycians, who were important allies of the Trojans, were led by Sarpedon and Glaucus. In the *Iliad*, this Sarpedon is said to have been a son of Zeus by Laodamia, the daughter of Bellerophon; but he was also identified with the Cretan Sarpedon. To overcome the chronological difficulties raised by the identification, it was suggested that Sarpedon had been granted the privilege of living for three generations. Another explanation was that the Sarpedon at Troy was not the Cretan Sarpedon but his grandson, for the Cretan Sarpedon had a son Evander who married Laodamia and fathered Homer's Sarpedon. In the *Iliad*, Sarpedon was wounded in the thigh by Tlepolemus during the attack on the Greek camp, but recovered to play a prominent part in the attack on the wall around the ships. He was finally killed by Patroclus. As the moment of his death approached, his father Zeus wondered whether he should turn fate aside and snatch him from the battle, but abandoned the idea when Hera warned him that such an action might encourage the other gods to do the same for their favourites. She suggested instead that he should allow Sarpedon to die and then tell Hypnos (Sleep) and Thanatos (Death) to convey him to his native Lycia for burial; before his body was removed, Zeus asked Apollo to cleanse the blood from his body, anoint him with ambrosia and clothe him in immortal garments. [Apollodorus 3.1.2; Diodorus 5.79.3; Homer *Il* 2.876-7, 5.627-62, 6.196-9, 16.419-683 and passim]

**Saturn.** An Italian god of agriculture (the Latin name connects with 'sowing', 'planting') who was assimilated to the Greek \*Cronus and took over much of his mythology, including that of devouring all his children except the youngest. It was however said that when Jupiter banished him from his throne after the defeat of the Titans, Saturn came to Latium in central Italy where he was welcomed by \*Janus who shared his throne with him. The people enjoyed such peace and happiness under Saturn's rule that this was thought of as a \*Golden age, similar to that described by Hesiod as characterising the golden race under Cronus. Saturn had temples on the Capitoline hill, and his festival (the Saturnalia) was held over several days in mid-December; the priest, contrary to the usual custom, did not cover his head during the ceremonies. The statue of Saturn, which was confused with Cronus/Kronos as Chronos meaning '(father) time', was of a bent and bearded old man carrying a scythe in his left hand with a snake biting its own tail, another symbol of time and its cycle. But it was also fettered, in memory of Saturn chained by his son; slaves therefore dedicated their chains to him, and during the festival the chains were taken from the statue and from slaves to celebrate a brief freedom. There was a general holiday, and this was assimilated into the Christian Christmas rejoicing as a joyous re-enactment of a past golden age. Saturn's Italian son was \*Picus. His planet, the 'star of Saturn', travelled on the outermost circuit, beneath that of the fixed stars and furthest from earth. [Cicero *ND* 2.63; Ovid *Fast* 4.197-206 *Met* 14.320; Vergil *Ecl* 4.6, *Georg* 2.538, *Aen* 6.794, 8.319, 357, 11.252]

**Satyrs** (Σάτυροι). Male followers of the god \*Dionysus, usually bi-form with the arms and torso of a man, a human head with two short horns and the lower half that of an ithyphallic goat with a bushy tail. They were usually depicted drinking, dancing or roaming riotously through the countryside chasing maenads and nymphs. After the performance of a trilogy of tragedies, as a means of relaxing the tension it was usual to stage a 'satyr-play' in which satyrs formed the chorus led by \*Silenus; the only one extant is the *Cyclops* by Euripides. [Horace 1.1.31, 2.19.4, Ovid *Fasti* 1.397; Pausanias 1.23.5-6] See Sileni.

**Saurus** (Σαῦρος). A mythical robber who gave his name to the ridge of Saurus on the Eleian-Arcadian frontier; he was killed by Heracles during his pursuit of the Erymanthian boar. The grave of Saurus and a temple of Heracles lay close together by the ridge. [Pausanias 6.21.3-4]

**Scaevola** (Mucius Scaevola). Soon after the establishment of the Republic Rome was besieged by the Etruscans. Mucius volunteered to kill their king Porsena, entered the enemy camp but killed the wrong man in error. Brought before the king and threatened with being burnt alive, he thrust his right hand into the hot coals of a brazier standing by, without flinching at the pain. Mucius, now called Scaevola, told Porsena that three hundred Romans as brave as himself were ready to attack him. Porsena so admired his courage that he let him go free, and, afraid of facing more like him, he sued for peace. [Livy 2.12-13; (Vergil) *Culex* 365]

**Scamander** (Σκάμανδρος). The largest river on the plain of Troy and its god. As was often the case with rivers, as prominent features in the natural landscape, Scamander appeared at the head of the local genealogies. Teucer, the first king of Troy, was his son and Callirhoe, the wife of Tros, his daughter. According to the *Iliad*, the Trojans sacrificed many bulls to Scamander and used to cast living horses into his streams. When Achilles defiled his waters by filling them with Trojan corpses and treated the river-god's protests with contempt, Scamander overflowed his banks, casting the bodies ashore and putting Achilles in danger of being drowned. He then enlisted Simois, the other great Trojan river, as his ally, and Achilles only escaped death because Hephaestus, at the request of Hera, forced Scamander to return to his course by setting fire to his banks. According to a later tradition, Troy would have been invulnerable if the horses of \*Rhesus had drunk from Scamander.

The river rose from two neighbouring springs, one ice-cold and one steaming hot. It was known to the gods as Xanthus (the Yellow River) because of the yellowish colour of its turbid waters, or because it stained the local livestock a brownish yellow. Some said that Paris had gained his yellow hair by bathing in it, and that Aphrodite washed her hair in it before the judgement of Paris.

According to a Hellenistic tale, Heracles was thirsty at the time of his attack on Troy and prayed to Zeus for water, and, when the god created a small spring for him by hurling a thunderbolt, the hero enlarged the area to turn it into the source of this large river. The story was based on a dubious etymology of Scamander as the excavation (*skamma*) of a man (*andros*). [Apollodorus 3.12.1-2; Aristotle 519a16; *Et Mag* s.v. Skamandros; Homer *Il* 20.73-4, 21.120-382, 22.147-52 and schol 21.1]

**Schedius** (Σχεδῖος). Son of Iphitus; he and his brother Epistrophius led the Phocians to Troy in forty ships. According to Homer, Hector killed him with a spear-throw while trying to hit Ajax, but some said that he survived until the end of the war, and that he and his brother travelled to the toe of Italy and founded Temessa there. [Homer *Il* 2.517-27, 17.303-11; schol. Lycophron 1067]

**Scheria** (Σχερῖα). The island of the Phaeacians, under the rule of \*Alcinous when it was visited by the Argonauts and Odysseus. In the *Odyssey*, it was said to lie in the remotest reaches of the sea, too far away to be visited by mortals from other lands except in extraordinary circumstances, but it was later identified with the island of Corcyra (Corfu) near the west coast of Greece. [Homer *Od* 5.34-5, 6.201-5 and *passim*]

**Sciron** (Σκίρων). According to the usual tradition, he was a bandit who preyed on travellers at the Scironian rocks in the Megaris to the west of Attica. At this point on the coast, a

precarious path ran along the side of a cliff which rose sheer from the sea, and it was said that Sciron used to force passing travellers to wash his feet, and then kicked them into the sea below where they were eaten by a giant turtle. He tried to inflict the same treatment on Theseus as the young hero was travelling from Troezen to Athens, but Theseus grasped him firmly by his feet and threw him down to his death. The local historians of Megara claimed, however, that Sciron was a man of admirable character who suppressed robbery, and that Theseus killed him at a later period in his life while capturing Eleusis from the Megarians; moreover he was married to a daughter of Cychreus and was thus related by marriage to the pious \*Aeacus, who would hardly have consented to an alliance with a rogue.

Some said that Sciron's encounter with Theseus led to the foundation of the Isthmian Games, for Sciron was a son of Canethus and Henioche, daughter of Pittheus, and so a relative of Theseus, who was also a grandson of Pittheus. When Theseus discovered this, he atoned for his murder of Sciron by founding the Isthmian games in his honour. According to a Megarian tradition reported by Pausanias, Sciron belonged to the Megarian royal line as a descendant of Lelex, king of Megara, and he married a daughter of Pandion, a king of Athens who had been exiled to Megara. When he became involved in a dispute over the succession with Nisus, son of Pandion, Aeacus (who was chosen as arbitrator) awarded the kingdom to Nisus and the military command to Sciron. In other accounts, Sciron was a son of Pelops, or of the god Poseidon, who often fathered violent sons. Ovid suggests that the Scironian cliffs were formed from the petrified bones of Sciron. [Apollodorus *Ep* 1.2-3; Bacchylides 17.24-5; Ovid *Met* 7.443-7; Pausanias 1.44.10-12; Plutarch *Thes* 10, 25]

**Scorpio.** See Constellation 28.

**Scylla** (Σκύλλα). **1.** A female monster, the daughter of Crataeis in the *Odyssey*, or of Phorbos or Phorcys and Hecate, or of Lamia or Echidna. She lived in a sea-cliff opposite the whirlpool Charybdis, and had twelve legs and six long necks with a fearsome head at the end of each with three rows of teeth. She yelped like a dog, and would reach out from the cave with her heads to search for dolphins and seals or to snatch passing sailors from their ships. On the advice of Circe, \*Odysseus sailed close to the cliff of Scylla to avoid the whirlpool of Charybdis, and he lost six of his men to the monster. The Argonauts were more fortunate because Hera asked Thetis and the Nereids to guide them past Scylla and the other dangers in the area. It was generally agreed by the Hellenistic period that Scylla and Charybdis were located in the Straits of Messina between Sicily and Italy. According to Lycophron, Heracles encountered Scylla there as he was passing by with the cattle of Geryon, and killed her when she tried to steal some of them; but her father Phorcys restored her to life by burning her flesh with fire-brands. Roman authors explained her monstrous form by a transformation story. She had once been a beautiful young nymph, but when the sea-god Glaucus fell in love with her, the jealous Circe poured a transforming potion into the water where she used to bathe (or Amphitrite did so because Scylla had slept with her husband Poseidon). In works of art she was usually depicted with a woman's upper body and head and a lower body formed from one or two fish or dragon tails, and often with the foreparts of one or more dogs springing from her hips. [Apollonius 4.825-31; Homer *Od* 12.73-110, 12.222-61; Lycophron 44-9 with schol; Ovid *Met* 13.900-14.74; (Vergil) *Ciris* 54-88] **2.** Daughter of \*Nisus, king of Megara. When \*Minos attacked Megara during his war with neighbouring Athens, she fell in love with him and killed her father to allow Minos to gain control of the city; an oracle had declared that the life of Nisus depended on a purple (or golden) hair on his head, and Scylla caused his death by pulling it out. In the *Ciris*, the fate of the land depended on the hair, and Eros caused Scylla to fall in love with Minos because she had offended Hera. According to Aeschylus, however, in the earliest surviving reference to the story, Minos prompted her action by

offering her necklaces of Cretan gold, apparently as a bribe (or possibly as a love-offering); then, when she accepted, Minos was shocked by Scylla's treachery and rejected her love. It was generally said that he tied her to the stern of his ship and dragged her through the water until she drowned; and that as a punishment, or through the pity of Amphitrite, she was transformed into a bird or in one account, a fish) of uncertain identification, the *ciris*; some added that she was pursued thereafter by her father in the form of a sea-eagle. According to Ovid, Scylla swam after the departing Minos and clung to his ship, but she was forced to let go when she was attacked by her newly transformed father; and she was then transformed as usual; in another version Minos ordered his crew to throw her overboard and she was washed ashore at Cape Scyllaion at the southern tip of the Argolid, where her corpse was torn apart by sea-birds. [Aeschylus *Choeph* 614-21; Apollodorus 3.15.8; Hyginus 198; Ovid *Met* 8.1-151; Pausanias 2.34.7; (Vergil) *Ciris passim*]

**Scyrius** (Σκύριος). Some said that \*Aegeus was not really a son of Pandion, king of Athens, but the son of a certain Scyrius who was passed off by Pandion as his own son. The sons of Pallas, another son of Pandion, offered this as a justification for their revolt against Aegeus. Scyrius was presumably the eponym of Scyros, an island of the Euboean coast; for Theseus, the son of Aegeus, went there after he was driven away from Athens, and it was said that his ancestry held property there. [Apollodorus 3.15.5; Plutarch *Thes* 13, 35]

**Scythes** (Σκύθης). While Heracles was travelling through Scythia with the cattle of Geryon, they were stolen by a viper-woman, a bi-form who had the head, arms and torso of a woman but the lower half of a snake. As a condition for their return, Heracles slept with her, and she bore three sons to him. When Heracles resumed his journey, he left a bow and a sword-belt with the viper-woman, and told her that any of their sons who was unable to draw the bow and put on the sword-belt in the proper way should be sent away. Only one of them, Scythius, could do so and he stayed in the land to become the founder of the Scythian royal line. Since then the Scythians used distinctive bows and sword-belts modelled on those left by Heracles. [Herodotus 4.9-10]

**Secular games** ('ludi saeculares'). These were games and sacrifices at a special festival in Rome celebrating the end of a 'saeculum' (a period of 100 or 110 years) and the beginning of another; the known dates for them were 348, 249 146 BC and those held by Augustus (by a manipulation of the calendar) in 17 AD; in 47 AD Claudius celebrated 800 years since Rome's founding. In the Republic the gods of the Underworld –Dis and Proserpina – were honoured but in the empire a variety of the 'di superi'. Augustus commissioned the poet Horace to compose a special hymn, 'Carmen Saeculare' for his celebrations; it was sung by 27 boys and 27 girls on the Palatine and then on the Capitol, and addressed Apollo, his patron god, in particular.

**Selemnus** (Σέλεμνος). A young shepherd of Argyra in north-west Achaëa. According to a local legend, a sea-nymph called Argyra fell in love with him and used to emerge from the sea to sleep with him; when she stopped visiting him after he began to lose his looks, he died of a broken heart. Aphrodite took pity on him and turned him into the Achaean river that bore his name, and, when he continued to yearn for Argyra even in his new form, the goddess caused him to lose all memory of her. Since then the waters of the Selemnus were thought to provide a cure for the pains of love by causing all who bathed in it to forget their passions. [Pausanias 7.23.1-2]

**Selene** (Σελήνη). Goddess of the Moon, daughter of the Titans Hyperion and Theia, and sister to Helios (the Sun) and Eos (Dawn); she travelled across the sky in a chariot drawn by two snow-white horses. There were early reports that Zeus fathered daughters by her – Pandia, of whom we know nothing beyond the fact that she was exceptionally beautiful, Nemea, the goddess of the Nemean games, and Herse (Dew), reflecting the popular belief that the moon is responsible for the heavy fall of dew that follows unclouded moonlit nights. Vergil's story that Pan won her favours by offering her a sheep was probably based on a Hellenistic tale in which he seems to have attracted her by wrapping himself in a sheepskin. There was a cave on Mount Lycaon in Arcadia where they were said to have slept together. Selene's most famous myth was that of her love for \*Endymion, whom she would visit as he slept in a cave on Mount Latmos in Caria. According to an Eleian tradition, she bore him fifty daughters and a son Naxos, who gave his name to the island of Naxos. It was sometimes said that she was the wife or daughter of Helios rather than his sister. [Alcman fr 39; Apollodorus 1.7.5; Apollonius 4.57-8 and schol; Hesiod *Theog* 371-4; *Homeric Hymn Selene* (32); Ovid *Fasti* 4.374; Pausanias 5.1.4; Pindar *Nem* 8.16; Vergil *Georg* 3.391-3 and schol]

**Selinus** (Σελινόυζς). Son of Poseidon; a king of Aegialus (later Achaea) in the north-west Peloponnese. When \*Ion, the grandson of Hellen, threatened to attack him, he offered him his only child, Helice, as a wife and adopted him as his successor, so introducing the period of Ionian rule in Achaea. [Pausanias 7.1.2]

**Semele** (Σεμέλη). Daughter of Cadmus, king of Thebes, and Harmonia; the mother of Dionysus. Zeus fell in love with her and used to make secret visits to her in her father's palace at Thebes. When Hera learned of it, the goddess assumed the form of her nurse, Beroe, and suggested that she should ask Zeus to come to her as he would come to his own wife, for she could then be sure that her lover really was Zeus, or she would then discover the full pleasure of intercourse with a god, or, by so doing, Zeus would demonstrate that he truly loved her. Although he knew what the consequences would be, Zeus was obliged to fulfil Semele's request because he had previously sworn an oath that he would grant her whatever she wanted. So he entered her bedchamber in a chariot to the accompaniment of thunder and lightning, and Semele was either killed by a thunderbolt or died of fright. Zeus snatched the six-month foetus from her womb and sewed him into his thigh. When the proper time for his birth arrived, Zeus untied the stitches and brought Dionysus to birth. Later, Dionysus recovered his mother from Hades and took her to Olympus to live with the other gods under the new name of Thyone. Death by lightning could itself be regarded as a form of apotheosis. Diodorus suggests that Zeus killed Semele before the birth of their child to contrive that it should be born from himself as well as having been fathered by himself and thus be immortal from birth. Semele's sisters aroused the anger of Dionysus by spreading the tale that Semele had claimed to have become pregnant by Zeus to conceal a love affair with a mortal; *see* Agave. The Thebans pointed out to visitors the ruins of Semele's bedchamber, which no mortal was allowed to enter.

The people of Brasiai, a coastal city in Laconia, had a tradition of their own about Semele. They claimed that she survived to give birth to her son at Thebes, and that, when Cadmus discovered her with a child, he packed both of them into a chest and threw it into the sea. It was washed ashore at Brasiai and Dionysus was brought up there; Semele however had died during the journey, and she was given an honourable burial by the local people. [Apollodorus 3.4.3, 5.3; Diodorus 4.2.2-3; 5.52.2; Hesiod *Theog* 940-2; Hyginus 179; Ovid *Met* 3.259-315; Pausanias 3.24.3-4, 9.12.3; Pindar *Ol* 2.22-7]

**Semnai** (Σεμναί). *See* Erinyes.

**Serestus.** A Trojan who accompanied Aeneas to Italy. He commanded one of the ships and helped to prepare the fleet for its secret departure from Carthage. In the absence of Aeneas, he and Mnestheus rallied the Trojans to repel Turnus from their camp by the Tiber, and he played a prominent part in the subsequent fighting and the final defeat of Turnus. [Vergil *Aen* 4.288-91, 9.171-5, 10.541, 125-49]

**Sergestus.** A Trojan who accompanied Aeneas to Italy. He was commander of the Centaurus, one of the ships that became separated from the main fleet on the way to Carthage. When the Trojans later had to leave Carthage and \*Dido, he helped to prepare the fleet for its secret departure. He ran his ship on to some rocks during the boat-race at the funeral games for Anchises and so was defeated by Mnestheus. [Vergil *Aen* 1.510-12, 4.288-91, 5.121-2, 5.183-224]

**Servius Tullius.** The sixth king of Rome, and, as with many of the kings, legends about him were handed down and recorded by the historian Livy in the time of Augustus. For the strange story of the conception of Servius *see* Ocrisia. Brought up in the palace by a slave but under the patronage of the queen \*Tanaquil, a glorious future was predicted for the young Servius when, one night when he slept, a circle of flames wreathed his head. Although unknown, and possibly Etruscan, he became king through the continued help of Tanaquil, despite the opposition of the \*Tarquins and their patrician followers who saw him as an upstart interloper. But Servius' reign of forty-four years brought prosperity to the emerging city with triumph over its enemies and a firm foundation laid in its revised legal constitution. Servius was however unfortunate in his daughter \*Tullia; he had married her to a mild Tarquin called Arruns, and his other daughter to Arruns' harsh and ambitious brother Lucius. The elder Tullia and Lucius joined forces to murder their spouses, marry each other, and usurp the throne. When Servius, now an old man, protested Lucius threw him down the senate steps, had him murdered in the street and Tullia then drove her chariot triumphantly over her father's body. [Dionysius 4.1; Livy 1.39-48.9; Varro *LL* 5.61]

**Seven against Thebes** (*Ἑπτὰ ἐπὶ Θήβας*). The seven champions appointed by Adrastus, king of Argos, when he marched against Thebes to recover the throne for \*Polyneices. Each took a stand at one of the seven gates, and Eteocles, the commander of the siege, sent six captains to face them, and himself took the seventh gate against his brother Polyneices. The seven are generally given as: Adrastus, Amphiarus, Capaneus, Hippomedon, Parthenopaeus, Polyneices and Tydeus. *See* Theban Wars (1).

**Sibyl** (*Σίβυλλα*). A general term for a prophetess, comparable to the \*Pythia at Delphi. Varro lists ten Sibyls from different countries but the most famous was at Cumae in south Italy. She would be possessed by Apollo and then either speak her prophecies or write them on leaves. She did however write down in nine books a series of oracles relating to Roman history and religion and went to Rome to sell them to \*Tarquin Priscus. When he refused to pay her high price she burned three of them and asked the same price for the remainder; when this was refused she burned another three and Tarquin felt compelled to buy the surviving three for the price asked for the none. These three Sibylline books were deposited in the temple on the Capitol in the care of special priests and consulted in emergencies; they were however burnt with the destruction of the Capitol in 83 BC and when there was an attempt to reconstruct them various forgeries and interpolations were included.

There were two versions of the original Sibyl (Sibylla): in one she came from the Troad, the daughter of \*Dardanus and Neso, in the other she was the daughter of Zeus and \*Lamia,



and was born in Libya. The Cumaean Sibyl (sometimes named as \*Deiphobe) accompanied Aeneas on his visit to the Underworld and, according to Ovid, was a thousand years old. Apollo gave her long life, as many grains of sand as there were in a heap, but, when she refused to submit to him, he did not give her long-lasting youth, so that she became older and older and more and more wizened until she looked like a cicada, and had only her prophetic voice left to her. [Dionysius 4.62; Ovid *Met* 14.130-53; Varro (at Lactantius *DI* 1.6.8-12); Vergil *Ecl* 4.4, *Aen* 6.56-155 and *passim*]

**Sicelus** (Σικελός). The eponym of the Sicels and of Sicily. It was generally believed that the Sicels were early inhabitants of Italy who were driven down to the south and eventually to Sicily. Sicelus was a son of Italus who gave his name to his Ligurian people, who were expelled from their land by the Umbrians and Pelasgians. In another tradition he was an exile from Rome who took refuge with Morges, son of Italus, in his southern Italian kingdom; there the desire of Sicelus for a kingdom of his own led to the division of Morges' nation, and those who fell under the authority of Sicelus were known thereafter as the Sicels, and those who remained with Morges as the Morgetes. Again Sicelus may have been the king of Ausonian immigrants to Sicily who had been driven from Italy by the Iapygians. [Dionysius 1.12.3, 22.3-5, 73.4]

**Sicyon** (Σικυών). King and eponym of Sicyon in the north-east Peloponnese. It was generally believed that he was of Athenian descent, as a son of Erechtheus or his son Metion, or of Marathon (although some said that he was a son of Pelops). \*Laomedon, the previous king of Sicyon who had married an Athenian wife, summoned him from Attica to aid him in a war against the sons of Achaeus, and rewarded him for his help by giving him his daughter Zeuxippe as a wife and adopting him as his successor. [Pausanias 2.6.2-3]

**Side** (Σίδη). **1.** The first wife of Orion, she was cast into Hades by Hera because she claimed to rival the goddess in beauty. [Apollodorus 1.4.3] **2.** A maiden who killed herself on her mother's grave after her father, Ictinus, pressed her to have intercourse with him after the death of his wife. A pomegranate tree (*side*) rose up from her blood, and her father was turned into a kite (*iktinos*), a bird which avoids pomegranate trees. [Dionysius *Av* 1.7]

**Sileni** (Σιληνοί, Latin 'Fauni'). Male spirits of the countryside not easily distinguished from \*Satyrs. Apart from a passing reference to them in the *Homeric Hymn to Aphrodite*, which tells how they would mate with the mountain nymphs in the depths of lovely caves, there is no early literary evidence on the Sileni. In vase-paintings from the sixth century BC onwards, they were depicted as Satyr-like figures with horse's ears and tails, and either equine or human legs. They belonged to the retinue of Dionysus and devoted themselves to dancing and rustic music, heavy drinking, and the amorous pursuit of nymphs and maenads. The Sileni were often presented as more elderly than the Satyrs. *See* Fauns, Silenus.

**Silenus** (Σιληνός). The archetype, leader or even father of the Sileni. He had a reputation for wisdom despite his uncouth appearance; for the famous story of how he was captured and forced to reveal this wisdom, *see* Midas. He also provided Midas with an unexpected moral lesson when he granted him the power to turn all that he touched to gold. A bucolic variation on the former story can be found in Vergil's sixth *Eclogue*, in which two shepherds find Silenus asleep in a cave after a drinking session and bind him with his own wreaths, forcing him to win his release by singing to them about the origins of the universe and the mythical history of Greece. He was said to have been the tutor of the young Dionysus and of the musician Olympus. According to Pindar, he was raised at Malea (at the south-eastern tip of

the Peloponnese) and married Nais, the archetype of the Naiad nymphs. Nothing is recorded about his own birth apart from the suggestion in a late source that he was the son of Hermes or Pan by a nymph or that he was born from the blood that dripped from the severed genitals of Uranus.

Silenus played a significant role in Satyr-plays as the leader of choruses of Satyrs, as can be seen in the only surviving example, Euripides' *Cyclops*, and the extensive fragments of Sophocles' *Trackers*. In these burlesques, Silenus is a Falstaffian figure who could be introduced into almost any tale from traditional myth. In the above plays, he is a prisoner of the Cyclops Polyphemus when Odysseus arrives, and he leads a group of Satyrs in a search for the cattle of Apollo stolen by the infant Hermes. Similarly, he was introduced into the battle between the gods and the Giants, which offered ample scope for mock-heroics. He boasts in the *Cyclops* that he killed the Giant Enceladus while fighting at the side of Dionysus; and in a constellation myth he and his companions arrived mounted on asses, which threw the giants into a panic with their braying. [Apollodorus 2.5.4; Euripides *Cyclops*; Vergil *Ecl* 6 *passim*] See Constellation **24a**.

**Sillus** (Σίλλος). Son of Thrasymedes and grandson of Nestor; the father of Alcmaeon, the mythical ancestor of the great Athenian family of the Alcmaeonids. Sillus settled in Athens after he and the other descendants of Nestor were expelled from Pylos by the \*Heraclids. [Pausanias 2.18.7]

**Silvanus**. An Italian god of the countryside, of woodlands, fields and flocks, he was often identified with \*Faunus (the Roman Pan), although Vergil lists Silvanus and Pan as two different gods. He was sometimes said to be a son of \*Mars (and Mars even had a title 'Mars Silvanus') or, according to Vergil, of \*Picus. Livy tells a story of him at the time of the Tarquins in a battle between the Etruscans and the Romans. During the night a loud voice, presumed to be that of Silvanus, broke the silence to say that the Romans had won since their losses were one man less than that of the Etruscans. Next day there was not an Etruscan soldier to be seen and the Romans went back to their city victorious, with the spoils of battle. Silvanus was represented either, like Faunus and Pan, as a bi-form (half-human, half-goat) or as an old man with a branch of cypress in his hand. [Livy 2.7; Vergil *Ecl* 10.24-5, *Georg* 1.20, 494, *Aen* 8.600-1]

**Silvius**. The son of Aeneas and Lavinia, born posthumously to Aeneas after their marriage and the defeat of Turnus. Silvius reigned in Latium and then, when his step-brother \*Ascanius died without an heir, in Alba Longa. There he was the first of a dynasty of kings, all keeping the name of Silvius, that continued through more than 400 years until Numitor and the foundation of Rome. The genealogy is not however clear – according to Livy Silvius was the son of Ascanius, and in Dionysius Ascanius did have a son Iulus who disputed the succession with Silvius but did not have the support of the Latins. [Dionysius 1.70; Livy 1.3; Ovid *Fasti* 4.41-44, *Met* 609-12; Vergil *Aen* 6.698-700].

**Simois** (Σιμόεις). The god of the greatest Trojan river after the Scamander. The Simois flowed from Mount Ida and united with the Scamander in the plain below. In the *Iliad*, Simois caused ambrosia to spring forth to provide food for the divine horses from Hera's chariot, and his assistance was later sought by \*Scamander, who asked him to raise a flood-wave against Achilles. He appeared in the Trojan genealogies as the father of Astyoche, the wife of Erichthonius and mother of Tros, and of Hieromneme, the wife of Assaracus and great-grandmother of Aeneas. [Apollodorus 3.12.2; Homer *Il* 5.773-7, 21.305-15]

**Sinis** (Σίνις). A son of Poseidon, or of Polypemon and Sylea, who preyed on travellers at the southern entrance to the Gulf of Corinth; he was also known as Pityocamptes (the Pine-bender). He used to force passers-by to help him to bend a pine-tree to the ground, and then suddenly let go so that they were thrown into the air and killed, or he would bend two trees to the ground and bind one of the victim's arms to each so that he was torn apart when the trees were released. When the young \*Theseus encountered him during his journey from Troezen to Athens, he killed him by turning his own trick against him. Theseus then slept with his daughter Perigune, who was said to have been the hero's first lover. [Apollodorus 3.16.2; Bacchylides 17.19-22; Hyginus 38; Pausanias 2.1.4, 4.59.3; Plutarch *Thes* 8]

**Sinon** (Σίνων). A companion of Odysseus; and according to a late tradition he was the son of Aesimus, a maternal uncle of Odysseus and so related to the hero. Sinon made a vital contribution to the deception that led to the fall of Troy. In early epic, he remained behind when the main force of the Greeks pretended to sail home; he stole into Troy after the wooden horse had been dragged into the city and lit a fire-signal at midnight to recall the Greek fleet, or a beacon outside the city on the tomb of Achilles. In later times it was felt that some more elaborate deception was needed to account for the Trojans bringing the horse into their city, and Sinon's role was extended correspondingly. According to the *Aeneid*, he was left behind with his arms bound so that the Trojans would be certain to capture him, and when he was brought in front of Priam, he alleged that Odysseus had planned to have him sacrificed. After gaining the confidence of the Trojan king, he claimed that the Greeks had constructed the wooden horse to atone for the theft of the Palladium, and that they had deliberately made it too large to pass through the gates because the Trojans were destined to gain mastery over Greece if it ever entered the city; if they damaged it, they themselves would be destroyed. The Trojans (except for \*Laocoon) believed Sinon and dragged the horse into the city; during the night, Sinon watched out for a fire-signal from the returning fleet and then opened up the horse to allow the Greek warriors to emerge. In subsequent Greek epics, his role in the deception of the Trojans is equally direct although the story is developed rather differently. According to Quintus of Smyrna, for instance, he won the confidence of the Trojans by refusing to speak until they had tortured him and cut off his ears and nose. [Apollodorus *Ep* 5.15, 5.19; schol Lycophron 344; Epic Cycle *Sack of Ilium*; Q Smyrn 12.243-258, 12.360-422 and *passim*; Vergil *Aeneid* 2.57-198]

**Sinope** (Σινώπη). A daughter of Asopus and Metope who gave her name to the Greek city of Sinope on the north coast of Asia Minor. Apollo abducted her to the site of the city, and she bore him a son, Syrus. Alternatively, according to Apollonius, Zeus took her there and tried to win her affections by offering to grant her whatever she most desired. The crafty maiden replied that she desired to remain a virgin; she later deceived Apollo and Halys, a local river-god, in a similar way. Her head appeared on the coins of Sinope, which became a wealthy city because of its strategic position at the end of the eastern trade-routes. *See* Sanape. [Apollonius 2.946-53 with schol; Diodorus 4.72.2]

**Sirens** (Σειρήνες). Female beings who lured passing sailors to destruction with their beautiful singing. In the *Odyssey* there were two Sirens who lived on an island lying between Circe's island and Scylla and Charybdis. They sat in a flowery meadow surrounded by the mouldering remains of their victims. On Circe's advice, Odysseus plugged the ears of his comrades with wax before they sailed past, and had himself tied to the mast so that he could listen to their song in safety. The Sirens told him that they knew all about the Trojan war and everything else that comes to pass on the earth.

Although Homer offered no description of the Sirens, they were generally portrayed in vase-paintings from the sixth century onwards as creatures like \*Harpies with the bodies of bird of prey and women's heads. In later times, however, they were also depicted as beings who were almost completely human in form. In most literary sources they were three in number. Although there were many conflicting traditions on the matter, their names were often said to be Peisinoe, Aglaope (or Aglaophone) and Thelxiepeia, and they lived on the island of Anthemoessa ('Flowery Island'). They were daughters of \*Phorcys, a noted progenitor of monsters, or of Achelous by Sterope or one of the Muses, or, according to Lucian, they were born from the drops of blood that fell on the ground when Heracles broke off one of the horns of Achelous. Apollodorus claimed that only one of them sang while the others played the flute and lyre.

When the Argonauts encountered the Sirens after their visit to Circe, they were able to pass by in safety because Orpheus, who could rival them as a singer, was a member of the crew. He sang a counter-melody which outcharmed the songs of the Sirens or simply drowned them out. One of the Argonauts, Butes, jumped overboard nevertheless and tried to swim towards the Sirens, and would have met his death if Aphrodite had not snatched him away. It seems that the Sirens did not attack their victims, but simply allowed them to waste away as they sat entranced by the spell of their singing.

According to a tradition which first appears in Hellenistic sources, the Sirens were fated to die if anyone who heard their singing passed by unharmed, and they threw themselves into the sea after Odysseus had passed, or else they were transformed into cliffs after Orpheus had sailed by, or after they had been defeated by the Muses a singing contest. According to Pausanias, Hera persuaded them to compete with the Muses, who plucked off their feathers after defeating them to make crowns for themselves. In a local tradition, three dead Sirens were washed ashore on the west coast of Italy, Parthenope at Naples, Leucosia at Cape Posidium near Paestum, and Liguria further south at Terina. The Neapolitans used to offer sacrifices and libations to Parthenope at her grave by the shore. It was said that her cult was founded at the order of an oracle by an Athenian general called Diotimus, who sacrificed to her and established annual torch-races in her honour.

In some later sources, it was suggested that the Sirens first acquired their monstrous form as the result of a transformation. They were originally young maidens who had been companions of \*Persephone, and Demeter transformed them because they had failed to save her daughter from being abducted by Hades. In Ovid's version, they searched throughout the world for the lost Persephone, and when they were unable to find her, they prayed to the gods to be provided with wings so that they could search the seas also; so the gods changed them into bird-like creatures, leaving their heads and voices untransformed because they were such beautiful singers. Alternatively Aphrodite transformed them because they wanted to retain their virginity and treated her with contempt. [Apollodorus 1.3.4, 7.10, 9.25, *Ep* 7.18-19; Apollonius 4.891-921; Homer *Od* 12.39-54, 12.166-200; Hyginus 141; Ovid *Met* 5.552-63; Pausanias 9.34.2]

**Siris** (Σῆρις). The first wife of \*Metapontus, otherwise known as Theano or Autolyte. Metapontus founded two cities on the Gulf of Tarentum, Metapontium and Siris, and named them after himself and his wife. Siris was later killed by the sons of Melanippe, who became the second wife of Metapontus; *see* Melanippe. It was also said that the city of Siris was named after a daughter of Morges of the same name. [Athenaeus 523d]

**Sirius** (Σείριος). *See* Constellation **36a**.

**Sisyphus** (Σίσυφος). The son of Aeolus and Enarete and the founder of Ephyra, which was identified with Corinth, Sisyphus was famous for his cunning and ingenuity. When Autolycus, who was his match in cunning, kept stealing his cattle, Sisyphus was sure that Autolycus was responsible because his cattle were increasing in number as his own, but he was unable to prove it because Autolycus was able to transform the appearance of the stolen beasts. So Sisyphus marked the hooves of his cattle with his name or with the inscription 'Autolycus stole me', and, after Autolycus had been thieving as usual, Sisyphus visited him and soon identified the lost cattle by inspecting their hooves. Some said that he took advantage of his stay with Autolycus to seduce his daughter Anticleia, and that he was thus the true father of the wily Odysseus. It was generally agreed that the Isthmian games, which were held near Corinth, were founded by Sisyphus in honour of \*Melicertes.

Sisyphus even outwitted death for a time at least. He was faced with an early death because he had angered Zeus by informing the river-god Asopus that Zeus had abducted his daughter Aegina. for Asopus had bribed him to betray the secret by promising to provide a source of water on the Corinthian acropolis. Zeus responded by despatching Thanatos (Death) to Corinth to drag Sisyphus down to the Underworld, but Sisyphus ambushed Thanatos and tied him up, which meant that nobody else could die until Ares finally released him. Before departing to Hades with Thanatos, Sisyphus told his wife not to perform the proper funeral rites, and, when he arrived below, he complained of this to Hades (or Persephone), who allowed him to make a visit to the upper world to reproach his wife for this neglect of her duties; but when he reached Corinth, he remained there until the end of his natural life. He was punished for this subterfuge ever afterwards in Hades by having to roll a huge boulder up a hill, only to have it roll back again just as he reached the summit. Although this posthumous punishment is described in the *Odyssey*, no explanation is offered for it; in some late sources, he is said to have suffered it because he had betrayed the secrets of the gods to mortals, or because of his dishonourable behaviour when he was ruler of Corinth. According to a strange tale recorded by Hyginus, Sisyphus and his brother \*Salmoneus hated one another, and he learned from Apollo that, if he had children by his brother's daughter Tyro, they would kill Salmoneus. So he had two sons by her, but when Tyro heard of the prophecy, she killed them both. According to Eumelus, a Corinthian epic poet, Corinth was originally granted to Aeetes by his father Helios (the Sun), and was later ruled by his daughter \*Medea, who handed it over to Sisyphus. He married Merope, daughter of Atlas, who bore him a son Glaucus, later to become the father of Bellerophon by Eurymede; Sisyphus had tried unsuccessfully to obtain \*Mestra as a wife for Glaucus. Lucretius interpreted Sisyphus' unending task of pushing a stone up a hill only to see it roll back again as an allegory for the futility of political ambition. [Apollodorus 1.9.3; Homer *Il* 6.152-5, *Od* 11.593-600; Hyginus 60, 201; Lucretius 3; Pausanias 2.1.3, 5.1; Pherecydes fr 119]

**Sleep.** See Hypnos (Ἵπνος), Somnus.

**Smyrna** (Σμύρνα). See Myrrha.

**Sol** (Greek Ἥλιος). The Sun, whose cult at Rome was more important than that of its counterpart in Greece. It was said that the cult of Sol and Luna (the Moon) was introduced to Rome by Titus Tatius, the city's second king. Although the native rite was of early origin, the cult of Sol Invictus was introduced from the east in imperial times, and it was in this form that Sol became the chief god of the Roman state under Elagabalus in the third century AD and later under Aurelian. [Dio 79.11; Dionysius Halicarnassus 2.50.3]

**Solois** (Σολόεις). A young Athenian who accompanied \*Theseus to the land of the Amazons. During the return voyage he fell in love with \*Antiope, an Amazon who had been abducted by Theseus; a friend approached her on his behalf but she refused to have anything to do with him, although she kept the matter secret from Theseus. In despair, Solois drowned himself in a river in Bithynia in the north-west corner of Asia Minor. When Theseus learned of his death and of how it had come about, he was greatly distressed, and he remembered that he had once received an oracle at Delphi which had told him to found a city at the spot if he should ever be stricken by grief in a foreign land. So he founded the city of Pythopolis next to the river in which the young man had drowned, and named the river itself after him, and he installed the two brothers of Solois, together with another Athenian, as the lawgivers and chief magistrates of the city. [Plutarch *Thes* 26]

**Somnus** (Greek ὕπνος). The Roman god of sleep who, according to Ovid, had a thousand sons, who were little more than frail dreams; the most important was Morpheus, who could change his shape to any dream appearance. Somnus lived in a cave in the far west, its deep silence broken only by the lapping of the water of the river \*Lethe. There the god rested 'in languorous repose' on a high couch, infecting his visitors with his own drowsiness. His appearance in the *Aeneid* is to ensure that the one life is paid to Neptune in return for a safe passage to the Tiber; the victim is Aeneas' helmsman \*Palinurus who refuses to succumb to Somnus during the night watch, until the god sprinkles him with the water of Lethe and throws him overboard. (Ovid *Met* 11.592-632; Vergil *Aen* 5.838-63)

**Sparta** (Σπάρτη). Daughter of Eurotas and great-granddaughter of Lelex, the earth-born first king of Laconia. She married Lacedaemon, an Atlantid, and, when he succeeded to the throne after the death of her father (who left no male heir), he named the land after himself and founded its main city in the name of his wife. [Apollodorus 3.10.3; Pausanias 3.1.1-2]

**Sparti** (Σπαρτοί). Soon after his arrival at the site of Thebes, \*Cadmus slew a dragon which had been guarding a spring there and had killed some of his men when they had tried to draw water from it. At the order of Ares (or Athena), Cadmus sowed the dragon's teeth in the earth and many armed men, known as the Sparti or 'Sown Men', sprang up from them. In fear, Cadmus hurled stones at them, and, assuming that they were being pelted by one another, they fought amongst themselves until only five were left. Cadmus accepted these five as citizens of his newly-founded city, and it was said that the military caste at Thebes was formed from their descendants. Their names were Echion, Oudaeus, Chthonius, Hyperenor and Pelorus. In other accounts, Ares sowed the teeth, or Cadmus sowed them at the bidding of Ares, and only five Sparti sprang up, leaving no occasion for the battle. This story from the Theban foundation myth was assimilated to the myth of the \*golden fleece, for it was said that Ares and Athena, or Athena alone, held back half of the teeth and gave them to Aeetes, who demanded that Jason should sow them as one of the conditions for gaining the fleece. On the advice of Medea, Jason threw stones at them from a concealed position and then attacked them as they were fighting amongst themselves. In this case, none of the Sparti survived. [Apollodorus 1.9.23, 3.4.1; Apollonius 3.1176-90, 1354-98 and schol 1179, 1186; Euripides *Heracles* 4-7, 242-3, *Phoenissae* 638-75; schol Homer *Il* 2.494; Ovid *Met* 3.95-130]

**Sperchius** (Σπερχειός). A river in southern Thessaly and its god. Before the Trojan war, Peleus vowed that his son Achilles would cut off his hair and sacrifice fifty unblemished rams to the river god if he returned home safely (but he did not). Sperchius fathered a son, Menestheus, by Achilles' sister Polydora; and in some accounts Dryops, the eponymous ancestor of the

Dryopians, an important race in Thessaly, was also their son. [Antoninus 32; Homer *Il* 17.173-6, 23.140-51]

**Sphaerus** (Σφαῖρος). According to the Troezenian tradition, Sphaerus (rather than Cillus) was the charioteer of Pelops; and he gave his name to Sphaeria, a small island off the Troezenian coast where \*Aethra was seduced by Poseidon and conceived Theseus. Athena arranged the meeting by sending Aethra a message in a dream telling her to cross over to the island to make offerings to Sphaerus. [Pausanias 2.33.1, 5.10.7]

**Sphinx** (Σφίγξ). A monster which plagued Thebes while \*Creon was ruling the city after the death of Laius. Sphinx had a lion's body, a woman's head, and wings. In early epic, she carried off many young men and eventually the king's son, Haemon, which finally prompted Creon to offer the kingdom and the widow of Laius to the man who could rid Thebes of the monster. Although the surviving evidence is sparse, it seems that the Sphinx simply abducted its young victims, without posing a riddle as she did in later accounts; and this is confirmed by the evidence from vase-paintings. And so, in the earliest tradition, Oedipus would have resorted to force to rid the city of her.

The Sphinx's riddle is recorded in some verses which may have come from the *Thebais* of Antimachus, an epic dating from the fifth century BC, or perhaps from a tragedy. She asked the Thebans to identify a being which is two-footed upon the earth and four-footed and three-footed, and has only a single voice (i.e. is one and the same being), and which alone of all beings on earth or in the air or sea changes its form; and which progresses most feebly when it moves along supported on the most limbs. None of the Thebans could answer her riddle and many were devoured by her, until Oedipus, who came to Thebes either by chance or to seek the reward offered by Creon, finally explained that the riddle refers to man, who first crawls, then walks, and finally leans on a stick in old age. When her secret was revealed, the Sphinx hurled herself from a rock or from the Theban acropolis; or she allowed Oedipus to kill her. It was often said that she had stationed herself on Mount Phikion west of Thebes, and, according to the mythographer Asclepiades, the Thebans gathered together in their assembly each day to seek the answer to her riddle; when they failed, as they always did, she seized one of the citizens at random.

Various explanations were offered for her presence at Thebes: she was sent by Hera because the Thebans had never punished \*Laius for his abduction of Chrysippus, or Ares had sent her because he was still angry that Cadmus had killed his dragon, or Dionysus had, presumably because he had been rejected by Pentheus. The winged lion with a woman's head was a familiar decorative motif of near eastern origin long before it was imagined that the Theban monster had this shape. The Egyptian Sphinx, which provided the original model for monsters of this type, was male. [Aeschylus *Sept* 771-7; Apollodorus 3.5.8; Diodorus 4.64.3-4; Euripides *Phoen* 45-9, 806-11, 1019-42 and schol 45, 50, 1031, 1750, 1760]

**Staphylus** (Στάφυλος). **1.** A son of Ariadne and Dionysus (or Theseus) who lived on the coast of Asia Minor opposite Rhodes. He married Chrysothemis, who bore him three daughters – \*Rhoeo, Molpadia and Parthenos. While his daughters were watching over his wine, they fell asleep and some pigs smashed the wine-jar; in fear of their father's temper, they threw themselves into the sea, but Apollo rescued them and established them in cities nearby. Staphylus was numbered amongst the \*Argonauts. He was sometimes credited with another daughter, Hemithea, who bore a son to \*Lyrcus. [Diodorus 5.62; Plutarch *Thes* 20] **2.** A herdsman of \*Oeneus who told his master that one of his goats behaved in a friskier manner after eating from an unfamiliar fruit. Oeneus made a new drink by pressing juice from the fruits, and served some to Dionysus. The god taught him how to cultivate vines and declared

that the drink (wine, *oinos*) should be named after him, and the fruit (bunches of grapes, *staphyloi*) after Staphylus. [Probus on *Georgic* 1.9]

**Stentor** (Στέντωρ). In a passage in the *Iliad*, Hera is said to have stood and shouted in the likeness of Stentor, a man with a voice of bronze who could shout as loudly as fifty other men. His Stentorian voice became proverbial. It was generally assumed in later times that he must have been a herald, and some said that he was a Thracian who met his death when he was defeated by Hermes, the herald of the gods, in a shouting contest. [Homer *Il* 5.784-6 and schol]

**Sterope** (Στερόπη). **1.** Daughter of Atlas and Pleione she was one of the \*Pleiades. An ancestor of the Pelopids, either as the wife of Oenomaus or as his mother by Ares. [Apollodorus 3.10.1; Eratosthenes 23] **2.** Daughter of Cepheus, king of Tegea in Arcadia. Before her father and brothers set off to help Heracles in his war against \*Hippocoon, the hero gave her a lock of the Gorgon's hair in a bronze jar to protect Tegea, telling her that anyone who attacked would be turned to stone if she exposed the lock of hair from the ramparts. [Apollodorus 2.7.3] **3.** Daughter of Acastus, king of Iolcus, and \*Astydamia. By alleging that Peleus was planning to marry Sterope, Astydamia caused his wife Antigone to commit suicide; *see* Astydamia. [Apollodorus 3.13.3]

**Stheneboea** (Σθενέβοια). Daughter of Iobates, king of Lycia, and the wife of Proetus, an Argive king. When Proetus was expelled from Argos by his brother Acrisius and looked for refuge at the court of Iobates in Asia Minor, Iobates offered Stheneboea to him as wife and then helped to restore him to his own land. Stheneboea then lived with him at Tiryns, and bore him three daughters, Lysippe, Iphinoe and Lysianassa, and a son Megapenthes. She conceived a passion for \*Bellerophon when he came to Proetus to be purified for a murder, but he rejected her advances and she then in turn (in the Potiphar's wife motif) claimed to her husband that he had tried to rape her. Proetus responded by sending Bellerophon to Iobates with a message that he should be put to death, but he survived. (In the account of this tale in the *Iliad*, the wife of Proteus is called Anteia.) Some said that Stheneboea killed herself when she heard that Bellerophon had proved his innocence, or that Iobates had offered him one of her sisters as a wife. In a lost play by Euripides, Bellerophon returned to Argos to seek revenge. He pretended that he was after all in love with Stheneboea and persuaded her to climb on to Pegasus with him; he then pushed her off as they were flying over the sea near Melos. [Apollodorus 2.2.1, 2.3.1; schol Aristophanes *Frogs* 1043; Homer *Il* 6.160-70; Hyginus 57]

**Sthenelus** (Σθένελος). **1.** Son of Perseus and Andromeda, and the father of Eurystheus. When his brother Electryon, the successor of Perseus as king of Mycenae, was killed by \*Amphitryon, Sthenelus expelled Amphitryon and established himself as the ruler of Mycenae and Tiryns, and he invited Atreus and Thyestes to rule the Argive city of Midea as his subordinates. Although Zeus intended that Heracles, his son by the wife of Amphitryon, should rule Argos in the next generation, Hera tricked him to ensure that Eurystheus, the son and successor of Sthenelus, secured that position; *see* Heracles and Eurystheus. According to Hyginus, Sthenelus was killed by Hyllus, son of Heracles. [Apollodorus 2.4.5-6; Homer *Il* 19.95-104; Hyginus 244] **2.** Son of Capaneus and Evadne. As the son of one of the Argive champions who were killed during the Theban war, Sthenelus took part in the second unsuccessful expedition against Thebes as one of the seven \*Epigoni. A close friend of Diomedes, king of Argos, he accompanied him to Troy as one of the Argive leaders and fought at his side as his charioteer. In a memorable passage in the *Iliad*, he argued against



Agamemnon's allegation that the Greeks at Troy were worse men than their fathers by pointing out that he and his fellow Epigoni, who belonged to the same generation as the warriors at Troy, had succeeded in their expedition against Thebes after their fathers had failed. During the division of the spoils at the end of the war, Sthenelus was given the statue of Zeus that had stood in the courtyard of Priam's palace; this was identified with a statue in the shrine of Athena at Larissa in Argos. According to Hyginus, Sthenelus helped Diomedes to restore \*Oeneus to his throne in Calydon after the Trojan war, but others claimed that Alcmaeon gave him the assistance before the war. [Apollodorus 3.7.2; Homer *Il* 2.559-64, 4.365-410; Hyginus 175; Pausanias 2.24.5] **3.** Son of Actor, from Thessaly; an ally of Heracles during his campaign in the land of the Amazons. He was struck by an arrow and died during the return voyage in Paphlagonia on the southern shore of the Black Sea. He was buried on the beach, but Persephone later allowed his soul to rise up from the grave to watch the Argonauts sailing by, and, on the advice of the seer Mopsus, the Argonauts stopped to propitiate him with libations and sacrifices. [Apollonius 2.911-29] **4.** Son of Androgeos and a grandson of Minos. During his voyage to the land of the Amazons, Heracles took Sthenelus and his brother on board to replace two crewmen who had been killed there by some of the sons of Minos, and, on the return voyage, he installed them as rulers of Thasos, which was then inhabited by Thracians. [Apollodorus 2.5.9; schol Apollonius 1.41; Diodorus 4.69.1]

**Stilbe** (Στίλβη). **1.** Daughter of Peneius, a Thessalian river-god, and the nymph Creusa. She bore Lapithes, the eponym of the Lapiths to Apollo, and, in one tradition, Centaurus also (although he is usually said to have been the son of Ixion and Nephele). [Diodorus 4.69.1; schol Homer *Il* 1.266] **3.** Daughter of Heosphorus; Autolycus was her son by Hermes. [schol Homer *Il* 10.266]

**Striges.** In Roman folklore, female demons of bird-like form who would slip into houses by night and suck the blood of children, often causing their death. [Ovid *Fasti* 6.131-62]

**Strophades** (Στροφάδες). Two small islands to the west of the Peloponnese facing Messenia. As the \*Boreads were pursuing the Harpies, they overtook them above these islands and would have killed them if Iris had not intervened. In return for her oath that the Harpies would stop tormenting Phineus, the Boreads allowed them to return to their den in Crete, and, because the Boreads had turned back there, the islands were known thenceforth as the Strophades, instead of the Planctae (Floating Islands). According to Apollodorus (who wrongly identifies the Strophades with the Echinadian Islands further north) they gained their name because one of the Harpies turned in her flight and fell from the sky in exhaustion, or, according to others, because the Boreads turned back there and prayed to Zeus to seize the Harpies. [Apollodorus 1.9.21; Apollonius 2.282-97]

**Strophius** (Στροφίος). **1.** Son of Crisus and Antiplatia, and the husband of Anaxibia or Astyoche, a sister of Agamemnon. After the murder of Agamemnon, the young Orestes was secretly conveyed to Strophius in his kingdom of Phocis in central Greece. Orestes was reared at his court and became a close friend of his son \*Pylades. [Hyginus 117; Pausanias 2.29.4; Pindar *Pyth* 11.34-7] **2.** The son of Pylades by Electra, sister of Orestes. [Pausanias 2.16.5]

**Stymphalus** (Στύμφαλος). Son of Elatus and Laodice, and a grandson of Arcas, he was an Arcadian king who gave his name to the city of Stymphalus and the neighbouring spring and lake (which was famous for its association with the Stymphalian birds, the fourth \*labour of Heracles). When Pelops was unable to conquer his kingdom, he pretended to make friends

with Stymphalus and then killed and dismembered him. This crime caused Greece to be struck by infertility; *see* Aeacus. [Apollodorus 3.12.6; Pausanias 8.4.4-6]

**Styx** (Στύξ). A river of the Underworld and its goddess. According to Hesiod, Styx was the eldest daughter of Oceanus and Tethys; she married Pallas, a son of the Titan Crius, and bore him a series of children who were little more than personifications: Zelus (Emulation), Nike (Victory), Cratus (Might) and Bia (Force). When Zeus asked for the help of the other gods in his struggle against the Titans, Styx, at the bidding of her father, brought him her children, who represented victory itself and the forces necessary for its achievement. Zeus rewarded her by declaring that her children would remain with him forever (i.e. become his own attributes) and that the solemn oaths of the gods would be sworn by her waters. So ever afterwards, whenever there were serious disputes between the gods and one of them spoke falsely, Zeus would send Iris to her to fetch some of the ice-cold water of Styx in a golden jug; if any god was perjured while swearing by her, he or she would sink into a comatose state for a year and would then be excluded from the councils and feasts of the gods for nine years. In the Homeric epics, Hera and Calypso swear oaths by the Styx; and such oaths are also mentioned in the Homeric Hymns, and later in the Argonautic epic, in which \*Iris swears to the Boreads that the Harpies will stop their persecution of Phineus. In these cases, it is sufficient for the deity to appeal to Styx without any of her water being actually present.

In the earliest tradition the Styx (rather than the \*Acheron as later) was considered to be the river that separated the world of the living from that of the dead. The idea that a god who perjured himself would suffer a form of temporary death was probably suggested by the Styx's status as the river that marked this boundary. Conversely, the idea arose that the waters of the Styx might raise a mortal beyond the boundaries of mortality. Thus in some Latin sources, \*Thetis is said to have dipped \*Achilles into the Styx in the hope of making him immortal. Hesiod describes the Styx as a branch of the encircling Ocean, saying that a tenth of the Ocean's water flows down a steep and lofty cliff to form the subterranean river; at Nonacris in Arcadia there was a river like this known as the Styx which plunged six hundred feet down a sheer cliff-face. Although knowledge of it may have affected the development of the mythical tradition, it seems more likely that the name of the Arcadian river was suggested by Hesiod's account of the Underworld river. The waters of the Arcadian Styx were reputed to be deadly and to have the power to dissolve almost everything thrown into it, including glass, pottery and gold. There was a story that Alexander the Great was poisoned by some of its water which was sent to Asia in a horse's hoof (the only substance unaffected by it). The personified Styx was sometimes credited with other children besides those mentioned by Hesiod. \*Ascalaphus was a son of Styx or Acheron, and some said that Styx bore Persephone, another figure associated with the Underworld, to Zeus, and the monstrous Echidna to a certain Peiras.

**Sun.** *See* Helios (Ἥλιος), Sol.

**Sybaris** (Σύβαρις). A monster, also known as Lamia, who lived at the foot of Mount Parnassus in central Greece and used to venture out each day to snatch livestock and human beings from the surrounding countryside. When the Delphic oracle revealed that the local people would be rid of her if they exposed a young man by her cave, a certain Alcyoneus was chosen by lot from the citizens to suffer this fate. But as he was being led to his death a young nobleman called Eurybates saw him and fell in love with him. Asking that he should be taken to the cave in place of Alcyoneus, Eurybates crept inside, seized Sybaris and threw her down the rocks outside. She disappeared, and, at the place where she fell, a spring appeared which was known as Sybaris from then onwards. [Antoninus 8]

**Sychaeus** (Συχαῖος). A rich Phoenician landowner who became the husband of Dido. The marriage was a happy one, but Dido's evil brother Pygmalion, who wanted the riches of Sychaeus, killed him at a sacrifice. Although Pygmalion tried to conceal this from Dido, Sychaeus disclosed his fate to her in a dream and urged her to flee, and, to finance her journey, he revealed the burial-place of his store of gold and silver. When she founded Carthage, Dido built a marble chapel in his honour at his palace and remained faithful to his memory until she embarked on her tragic love affair with Aeneas. After Aeneas had deserted her, she thought that she heard her husband calling to her from his chapel during the night. She committed suicide on the same night and was reunited with Sychaeus in the Underworld. [Vergil *Aen* 1.343-64, 4.20, 552, 6.474]

**Syleus** (Συλεύς). A villain killed by Heracles during his servitude to Omphale. Syleus forced passing strangers to work in his vineyard; but Heracles killed him with his own hoe along with his daughter Xenodoce, and burned his vines to their roots. In a comic version by Euripides, Heracles was sold to Syleus (presumably as an alternative to Omphale) but his self-willed behaviour and massive appetite threatened to bring ruin to his unfortunate master. In a version by Conon, Syleus was one of a pair of brothers fathered by Poseidon, one good and one bad. The good brother Dicaeus (the Just) welcomed Heracles after he had killed the violent Syleus. While staying with Dicaeus, Heracles fell in love with Xenodoce, who was being reared by her uncle, and married her; but subsequently, he stayed away from her for so long that she died of a broken heart. [Apollodorus 2.6.3; Conon 17; Diodorus 4.31.7]

**Syme** (Σύμη). Daughter of Ialysus, the eponym of Ialysos in Rhodes, and Dotis. She was abducted by a Boeotian, Glaucus, son of Anthedon, who took her as his wife and settled with her on a small island off the Carian coast, naming it Syme in her honour. Alternatively the first settler of the island was Chthonius, a son of Poseidon by a Syme of uncertain identity, and he named it after his mother. [Athenaeus 296bc; Diodorus 5.53.1]

**Symplegades** (Συμπληγάδες). The Argonauts had to pass through these 'Clashing Rocks' at the northern end of the Bosphorus to enter the Black Sea. When they crashed together, they would crush anything that was caught between them. On the advice of Phineus the Argonauts released a dove as they approached them, and when it passed through safely losing only its tail feathers, they rowed through as quickly as possible aided by Athena; their ship was merely grazed at the stern as the rocks crashed together. It had been decreed by the gods that they should remain immobile once a ship had passed through. Most authors distinguished them from the \*Planctae. [Apollonius 2.317-40, 2.549-618; Pindar *Pyth* 4.207-111]

**Syrinx** (Σύριγξ). An Arcadian Hamadryad nymph. Although she was much desired by the Satyrs and other local deities, she modelled herself on Artemis and lived as a virgin huntress. Indeed, she could have been mistaken for Artemis if she had carried a golden bow like the goddess rather than one made of horn. One day, Pan caught sight of her and pursued her to the River Ladon, where she halted and prayed to the river-nymphs to transform her; but when Pan thought that he had finally caught her, he found that he was clasping a handful of reeds. Hearing the wind sighing plaintively in the reeds, he cut some of them in unequal lengths and fastened them together with some wax to make the first pan-pipes (or *syrinx*).

In the pastoral romance of Longus, Syrinx was merely a human goatherd who liked to play with the nymphs and to sing, and there is no suggestion of any transformation. After she had disappeared into the swamp, Pan cut away the reeds in anger, and then, when he was unable to find her, he tied together stalks of unequal length as a symbol of their unequal love and so invented the *syrinx*.

A similar story was set in Ephesus to explain the origin of a local virginity test. Syrinx sank into the marsh and reed grew up in place of her; after Pan had invented the *syrinx*, he placed it in a neighbouring cave. When a girl who claimed to be a virgin was shut up in this cave, a *syrinx* would be heard if she were telling the truth, and she would emerge crowned with pine, But if she were lying, laments would be heard and she would never be seen again. [Achilles Tatius 8.6; Longus 2.34; Ovid *Met* 1.689-712]

**Syrus** (Σύρος). The eponym of the Syrians. Sinope bore Syrus to Apollo after he had abducted her to the site of Sinope on the north coast of Asia Minor. Alternatively he was a son of Agenor along with Cilix and Phoenix, who gave their names to Cilicia and Phoenicia on either side of Syria. [Diodorus 4.72.2]