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Chapter 2

The ager Faliscus and its inhabitants

As a prolegomenon to the discussion of the linguistic data in chapters 3-9, I present in this chapter a survey of the non-linguistic data relevant to the linguistic history of the ager Faliscus. This consists of brief descriptions of the ager Faliscus (§2.1), its inhabitants and their culture, regarded from the perspective of ethnic identity (§§2.2-3), and the history of the area (§§2.4-6). This is followed by an evaluation of the sociolinguistic data relevant to the preservation of Faliscan and its later disappearance (§2.7), and the general picture that can be drawn from the data presented in this chapter (§2.8).

2.1. The ager Faliscus

2.1.1. Extent. The geographical and political unit known in antiquity as the *ager Faliscus* (see map p.18) is located in what is today the *regione* Lazio, the southern part belonging to the *provincia* of Roma and the northern to that of Viterbo; archaeologically, the area resorts under the Soprintendenza Archeologica dell'Etruria Meridionale.⁶

In antiquity, the ager Faliscus was bordered on the east by the Tiber, which seems to have had no significant crossings between Lucus Feroniae at the southern end of the ager Capenas and the site near Grotta Porciosa in the north-eastern corner of the ager Faliscus (cf. Ward Perkins & Frederiksen 1957). The Tiber thus constituted a strong geographical as well as political and linguistic boundary with the area on the east bank. To the west, the borders of the ager Faliscus lay on the slopes of the Monti Sabatini in the southwest and the Monti Cimini in the northwest, which in antiquity were densely wooded. Livy's description (9.36.1, cf. also 10.24.5) of this *silva Cimina* at the end of the fourth century as “magis tum inuia atque horrenda quam nuper fuere Germanici saltus, nulli ad eam diem ne mercatorum quidem⁷ adita”, although obviously meant to add colour to his story, is confirmed by pollen analyses of samples from the beds of the Lago di Bracciano, the Lago di Monterosi, and the Lago di Vico, which indicate that the eastern slopes of the Monti Sabatini were covered by dense oak forests that remained largely undisturbed until the third and second century (see Potter 1976:6, 1979:96).

⁶ Archaeological guides to the area are De Lucia Brolli 1991a-b and Torelli 1985:25-48. A discussion of the area's history based on the archaeological material is Potter 1979.

⁷ That is, *foreign* merchants: the intrepid Fabius who crossed the forest in 310 to avoid the hostile ager Faliscus was protected not so much by his disguise and his fluent Etruscan as by the fact “quod abhorrebat ab fide quemquam externum Ciminius saltus intraturum” (Liv. 9.36.6).

The northern and southern borders of the ager Faliscus are harder to establish. Northwards, the ager Faliscus extended to the ager Hortanus to the northeast and the ager Vulcentanus to the northwest, the border probably running along the upper slopes of the Monti Cimini. To the southwest, the ager Faliscus bordered on the ager Veientanus. The most obvious natural boundary here is formed by the Monti Sabatini and the ridge connecting these with Monte Soratte (ancient Soracte), and this may well have been the original southern boundary of the ager Faliscus. During the fifth century, however, the political influence of Veii extended northward well beyond this range to include Sutrium and Nepete (modern Sutri and Nepi), and as these towns subsequently became colonies in the early fourth century (§2.5.2), they and their territories ceased to be part of the ager Faliscus at an early date. To the southeast, the ager Faliscus probably included Monte Soratte, which was ascribed to the Faliscans e.g. by Pliny (*NH* 7.2.19) and Porphyrio (*in Hor. Carm.* 1.9.1): the border with the ager Capenas must have run somewhere along its southern and south-eastern slopes. It is unclear whether the land between Monte Soratte and the Tiber belonged to the ager Capenas or the ager Faliscus: although modern authors tend to assign it to the ager Capenas, the fourth- and third-century inscriptions from the area to the east of Monte Soratte are virtually without exception Faliscan instead of (Capenate) Latin (see §17.2-6).

2.1.2. Towns. The main site of the ager Faliscus, at least from the sixth century onward, was the town called *Falerii* or *Φαλέριοι* by the ancient authors, identified since Cluverius (1647:544-5) with the site occupied by Civita Castellana, c.50 kilometres north of Rome.⁸ It was located at the point where a number of smaller streams flowing down from the Monti Sabatini joined the Treia, the main river of the ager Faliscus, and thus the natural centre of the area. The same name was used for the settlement founded by the Romans after the war of 241 as the new centre of the area, at the place known today as *Faleri*, or, in reference to the mediaeval abbey located within the Republican town walls, *S. Maria di Falleri*, c.4.5 km to the west of Civita Castellana. Modern usage therefore refers to the two towns as *Falerii Veteres* and *Falerii Novi* respectively.⁹

The ancient sources sometimes used other names for the two towns, a point discussed by Di Stefano Manzella (1977). *Falerii Veteres* is also referred to as *Φαλίσκοκ* (Steph. *Ethn.* 656.24-5 Meineke), *Φαλίσκον* (Str. 5.2.9, Diod. 14.96.5; *Faliscum* Avit. fr.2.2 *apud* Prisc. *CGL* 2.427.2 is a genitive plural = *Faliscorum*), or *Falisca* (Solin. 2.7), and *Falerii Novi* is also called *Φαλέριον* (Str. 5.2.9, Ptolem. 3.1.43 Cuntz, Steph. *Ethn.* 656.12-3 Meineke: Dionysius (1.21.1-2) uses this name for both *Falerii*'s).

⁸ For the older tradition that Civita Castellana was the location of Veii, probably inspired by the impressive site, see Moscati 1985b:45 n.1.

⁹ Short descriptions of these sites and references to the literature on their excavations are given in the introductions to chapters 13-14 (for *Falerii Veteres*) and 15 (for *Falerii Novi*).

The appellations “[colonia] Falisca quae cognominatur *Etruscorum*” (Plin. *NH* 3.5.51) and “colonia Iunonia quae appellatur *Faliscos* [sic]” (*Lib. Col.* 217.5) would seem to refer to Falerii Novi, but this view has been challenged: cf. §2.6.2. *Falisci*¹⁰ appears to be an alternative for *Falerii*: Ovid (*Am.* 3.13.1), too, used *Falisci* as a toponym when speaking of *pomiferis ... Faliscis*.¹¹ Strabo (5.2.9) and Plutarch (*Cam.* 2, 9-11, whence Polyae. 8.7.1) use the two ethnica to distinguish between the inhabitants of the town (the *Φαλέριοι*) and of the ager Faliscus as a whole (the *Φαλίσκοι*).

The variants sometimes refer to coexisting towns, providing an argument for a continued existence of Falerii Veteres after the war of 241 (cf. §2.6.2). Strabo (5.2.9) names both a *Φαλέριον* and a *Φαλίσκον*, which Di Stefano Manzella (1977:156) equated with Falerii Novi and Falerii Veteres respectively: similarly, Stephanus mentions both a *Φαλέριον* (*Ethn.* 656.12-3 Meineke) and a *Φαλίσκον* (*Ethn.* 656.24-5 Meineke), calling the latter an ἄποικος Ἀργείων, which identifies it as Falerii Veteres (cf. §2.4.1).

Other sources also name an *Aequum Faliscum* (Str. 5.2.9, *Tabula Peutingeriana*) or *Aequi Falisci* (Verg. *A.* 7.695, Sil. 8.489; in both these cases the name is used as an ethnicon, cf. above on *Falisci*). This place was apparently not identical with Falerii Novi, for the *Tabula Peutingeriana* shows the latter as *faleros*, located correctly at five miles beyond Nepete on the Via Amerina, and the former as *aequo falsico* [sic], unfortunately located erroneously to the east of the Tiber on a road to Spolegium that is itself located to the west of the Tiber. Strabo’s description (5.2.9) of Αἰκουνομφαλίσκον as ἐπὶ τῇ Φλαμινίᾳ ὁδῷ κείμενον μεταξὺ Ὀκρίκλων καὶ Ῥώμης can refer neither to Falerii Veteres nor to Falerii Novi (nor to the site at Grotta Porciosa, as Ward Perkins & Frederiksen (1957:189 n.53) suggested). If the town is identical with Falerii Veteres, it is unclear how the steep site could be called *aequus*: perhaps *aequus* is to be understood as ‘levelled’ (*aequus* or *aequatus solo*), referring to the destruction of the town in 241.¹²

The other town ascribed by the ancient sources to the ager Faliscus is *Fescennium* or *Φασκέννιον*: it is mentioned only as the place of origin of the ribald wedding songs known as *carmina Fescennina*, and cannot be located with certainty. It has been identified with Narce (first Barnabei 1894a:22), a major site of the southern ager Faliscus, whose decline after the sixth century would account for the lack of references. Habitation at Narce seems to have ceased after the war of 241, however, whereas

¹⁰ *Faliscos* is an accusative (perhaps from a map reference, cf. *faleros* v on the *Tabula Peutingeriana*), not a transcription of *Φαλίσκος*, as Di Stefano Manzella (1977:160) took it.

¹¹ Di Stefano Manzella (1977:152-4) furthermore adduced the very ambiguous instances Eutrop. 1.20.1-2 and 2.28, Amm. 23.5.20, and Serv. in Verg. *A.* 7.695. (The use of *Falisci* as a toponym may be due to the existence, in the onomasticon, of *Falerius* beside the toponym *Falerii*.)

¹² Cf. the *Aequimaesium* in Rome, thought to mark the site of the razed house of Sp. Maelius (Liv. 4.16, Dion. 12.4.6, Cic. *Dom.* 101, Var. *L.* 5.157, V. Max. 6.3.1). Servius’ explanation (in Verg. *A.* 7.695) of *aequus* as ‘just’ because the Faliscans were allegedly the source of the *ius fetiale*, although obviously spurious, represents an attempt to address the same problem.

Dionysius (1.21.1) speaks of *Φασκένιον* as an existing Roman town, and Pliny (*NH* 3.5.51) names *Fescennia* as a township of the Augustean *regio VII*. Others have identified Fescennium with the site near Grotta Porciosa (Dennis 1848:159-62), with Corchiano (Buglione 1887a:25-6), or with Rignano Flaminio (Taylor 1923:93-4). The various claims are discussed by Shotter (1976:33-4) and Colonna (1990), who both decide in favour of Narce (thus also *BarrAtl* (2007), map 142).

These are only the sites that are named by the ancient authors. The archaeological record shows a number of other sites, e.g. at Corchiano and Vignanello in the north-west, at Gallese and the Grotta Porciosa locality in the north-east, and around Monte Soratte, with a distinct linguistic interest of their own, especially in the period after 240, when Falerii Veteres disappeared as the centre of the area and the land itself was divided into a Faliscan and a Roman part (see §2.6.2). References to the literature on these sites are given in the sections where the inscriptions from these sites are discussed in chapters 16 and 17: see also the works mentioned in note 6 (p.19).

2.1.3. Roads and routes. The road-system of the ager Faliscus and its routes to the surrounding areas are well known thanks to the surveys conducted by the British School in the 1950s (see Ward Perkins & Frederiksen 1957, G. Jones 1962, and Quilici 1990).

As said in §2.1.1, the ager Faliscus was closed off on the east and west sides by strong natural boundaries, and major lines of communication in these directions were few. No ancient Tiber-crossings are known between Lucus Feroniae at the southern end of the ager Capenas and the site near Grotta Porciosa at the northern end of the ager Faliscus used by the Via Amerina (cf. Ward Perkins & Frederiksen 1957 *passim*). Apparently unlike the next crossing to the north, located *c.*10 km away near Orte, the crossing near the Grotta Porciosa site was connected, by way of the valley of the Nar, with the Sabine interior and Umbria. It therefore constituted an important connection between South Etruria and the interior, and may have seen extensive traffic not only of traders but also of transhumance farmers (cf. Skydsgaard 1974:23-8 and Potter 1979:37-41). Since from *c.*400 to 240 this crossing was the first one to the north of those controlled directly by Rome, it may have had strategic importance as well.

The same applies to the westward route from the ager Faliscus to coastal South Etruria through the ‘Sutri Gap’, the saddle between the mountains surrounding the Lago di Bracciano and those surrounding the Lago di Vico. After the fall of Veii in the early fourth century, this was the southernmost route through Etruria not under Roman control, and the Romans were quick to secure it by establishing colonies at Sutrium and Nepete some years later (§2.5.2). The strategic importance of Sutrium and Nepete as gateways to Etruria is reflected by the frequent mention, in Livy’s description of the wars of the fourth and third centuries, of skirmishes for the possession of these towns (see §2.5.2), especially Sutrium, which commanded the road that in the middle of the second century would become the Via Cassia.

To these routes to the east and west must be added the connection to the north and south formed by the Tiber. Especially during the *floruit* of Veii in the sixth and fifth centuries, when, together with Capena, Veii may have dominated its lower course all the way down to the river Anio (the modern Aniene), a sizeable amount of traffic must have passed up and down the Tiber valley (see Baglione 1986). This is reflected by the antiquity of the Via Tiberina, which followed the west bank for practically the whole length of the ager Capenas, having been traced even to the north of Fiano Romano (G. Jones 1962:201). The ager Faliscus was therefore located on the crossroads of two arteries between coastal South Etruria and the interior, which may explain its independence to some extent.

The overland routes through the ager Faliscus to the north and south were largely dictated by the nature of the soil. The streams flowing down from the Monti Sabatini and the Monti Cimini to the Tiber eroded the soft tuff of the ager Faliscus into deep, narrow gorges with often nearly perpendicular sides. With heights of *c.* 70 m around Civita Castellana and *c.* 100 m near Narce, these make a daunting obstacle to the traveller on foot or on horseback, as can still be glimpsed from Dennis's accounts (1848:115-62) of his travels in the area. Such roads as there are tend to follow the ridges between the gorges, descending only at points where both the gorge and the stream can conveniently be crossed. In the northern ager Faliscus virtually every stream runs from the mountains in the west to the Tiber in the east, constituting a severe impediment for any route to the north. This problem was partly solved by the construction of impressive bridges (cf. Ward Perkins & Frederiksen 1957:97-101, 144-9), and there were roads from Falerii Veteres to Corchiano and Horta, and to the site at Grotta Porciosa; another road may have linked the site of Falerii Novi to Corchiano (cf. Ward Perkins & Frederiksen 1957:185 fig.29). In the southern half of the ager Faliscus, most of the streams run northeast, flowing into the Treia near Civita Castellana: accordingly, here the ridgeways tended to run southwest-northeast, converging at the site of Falerii Veteres, which thus constituted the natural centre of the area.

The ager Faliscus was therefore best accessible from the south, and had one main route each to the east, the west, and the north. This is reflected by the way in which the road-system was restructured by the Romans in the century following their expansion into the ager Faliscus after 240 (see Ward Perkins & Frederiksen 1957:187-93, Potter 1979:101-9). The Via Amerina, the first stretch of which, from Rome to Nepete, may already have been constructed when Nepete became a colony in the early fourth century (§2.5.2), was continued to Falerii Novi, which was thus firmly linked to Rome. From there, it followed the line of the earlier Faliscan road through the northern ager Faliscus to Horta, where it crossed the Tiber and continued to Ameria.¹³ A second road, the Via

¹³ According to Radke (1964:220-1), the Via Amerina thus took over the function of an earlier road to Horta leading northeast from Forum Claudii through Sutrium. No trace of such a road has been found: its presumed route would have taken it straight through the *silva Cimina*.

Flaminia, was constructed in 220: this entered the ager Faliscus near Rignano Flaminio, and continued almost directly north to the Tiber crossing near the Grotta Porciosa site, having been joined several kilometers to the south by a road branching off from the Via Amerina at Falerii Novi. Crossing the Tiber, it led to Oriculum, and thence through the valley of the Nar to Umbria. The Via Flaminia thus bypassed both Capena and Falerii Veteres, and appears to have been built for long-distance traffic to Umbria and beyond, being of minor importance for the connections between the ager Faliscus and Rome. The same is true of the third road in the area, the Via Cassia, constructed in 154, which branched off from the Via Amerina north of the Baccano crater to take a north-westerly course along the lines of existing roads to Sutrium and through the ‘Sutri Gap’ without entering the ager Faliscus proper. In the Roman road-system, the ager Faliscus thus no longer stood on the crossroads of north-south and east-west routes, but constituted a kind of ‘junction station’ on several long- and middle-distance routes leading north from Rome.

2.2. The inhabitants of the ager Faliscus as an ἴδιον ἔθνος

2.2.1. A distinct people. As described in the preceding sections, the ager Faliscus constituted a fairly well-defined geopolitical unit that was perceived as belonging to Etruria (thus Strab. 5.2.9, Plin. *NH* 3.5.51, Ptolem. 3.1.43 Cuntz, Serv. *in* Verg. *A.* 7.607, Steph. *Ethn.* 656.12-3 Meineke). The inhabitants of this area, called *Falisci* or *Φαλίσκοι*, could therefore be classed as a *populus Etruriae* (Liv. 5.8.5) or a *ciuitas Tusciae* (Serv. *in* Verg. *A.* 7.607). Yet they were regarded as in some respects different from other Etrurian communities, as is expressed by Strabo’s remark (5.2.9), ἔνιοι δ’οὐ Τυρρηνοὺς φασὶ τοὺς Φαλέριους, ἀλλὰ Φαλίσκους, ἴδιον ἔθνος· τινὲς δὲ καὶ τοὺς Φαλίσκους πάλιν ἰδιόγλωσσον: ‘Some say that the inhabitants of Falerii are not Etruscans, but Faliscans, a distinct people; and some, too, that the Faliscans are a *polis* with a distinct tongue.’ As noted (§1.5), the context of the remark shows that Strabo is speaking in a *relative* sense, ‘different with regard to the other *poleis* of the area’ (cf. Camporeale 1991:213). Diodorus (14.96.5), too, spoke of Falerii as a town τοῦ Φαλίσκων ἔθνους, and Dionysius (1.21.1-2) ascribed features of Faliscan culture to a Pelasgian background (cf. §2.4.1). Coupled to the linguistic differences with the surrounding areas that can be observed from the epigraphic material, these statements have often led to the opinion that the inhabitants of the ager Faliscus were in some sense ‘different’.

In *what* sense the inhabitants of the ager Faliscus differed from their neighbours is a very difficult question to answer. This is due in part to the fact that labels like ‘Faliscan’, ‘Etruscan’, or ‘Latin’ are used by different authors for such different entities as e.g. linguistic, political, or cultural units, which may overlap, but do not necessarily coincide (§1.4.1), and are often very hard to separate: partly, too, the difficulties derive

from the vague genealogical terms in which cultural or linguistic relationships tended and sometimes still tend to be expressed. Even Pulgram (1958:252-3) used the term “blood brothers” to refer to the linguistic unity of the ager Faliscus with Rome; Alföldi (1963:191) classed the Faliscans with the Capenates and Fidenates as “branches of the same Latin stock”, while Ward Perkins (1970:427) called them “an independent branch of the same Urnfield peoples as the Villanovans and the Latins”. Such statements are based wholly on connections that are irrelevant to, say, an assessment of the political relationship between the inhabitants of the ager Faliscus and the Romans in the third century, unless these connections were perceived, and perceived as *relevant*, by the Faliscans and the Romans themselves.

2.2.2. The Faliscans as an ethnos. In my view, for the purposes of this study the identity of the Faliscans is best approached by regarding it as an *ethnic* identity, in the sense in which this term has come to be used in social anthropology and thence in sociolinguistics and archaeology. To quote a general but useful definition of this term:¹⁴

“этнос ... может быть определен как исторически сложившаяся на определенной территории устойчивая совокупность людей, обладающих общими относительно стабильными особенностями языка и культуры, а также сознанием своего единства и отличия от других подобных образований (самосознанием), фиксированным в самоназвании (этнониме).” (Bromley & Kozlov 1975:11)

“Ethnos ... can be defined as a firm aggregate of people, historically established on a given territory, possessing in common relatively stable particularities of language and culture, and also recognizing their unity and difference from other similar formations (self-awareness) and expressing this in a self-appointed name (ethnonym).” (translation from Dragadze 1980:162)

Such a definition is applicable to the inhabitants of the ager Faliscus in so far as they were ‘historically established’ on the ager Faliscus without major invasions or migrations in the historical period or the centuries closely preceding it (cf. §2.4.1), and as having ‘relatively stable particularities of language’ and perhaps even ‘relatively stable particularities of culture’ (see §2.3).

With regard to the ethnonym, the inhabitants of the ager Faliscus do not seem to have had a real ‘national’ name in the order of *Etrusci*, *Sabini*, or *Latini*, i.e., a name that referred to a people or an area, but were named *Falisci* or *Φαλίσκοι* after their main city. However, this name is formed with the suffix that is distinctive of Italic ethnonyms (e.g. Latin *Etrusci*, *Osci*, and Umbrian *turskum*, *iapuzkum* *TI* Ib.17). The only instance of the use of this ethnonym by the Faliscans themselves is *falesce · quei · in · sardinia ·*

¹⁴ Although this definition is now much less recent than when I started working on this book, it is by no means outdated: recent authors on ethnic identity in ancient Italy (e.g. Bradley 1997, Cornell 1997, Dench 1997, 2007) tend to refer to the criteria used by Smith (1986, 1991), which are almost exactly the same, although nowhere expressed as concisely as in this quotation.

sunt, in a late second-century Latin inscription from Falerii Novi (Lat 218), where it is used for Faliscans that no longer lived in the ager Faliscus: exactly as expected, since there is no need to use the ethnicon within the group itself except where it is necessary to contrast members of one's own group with those of other groups. The same is true for the possible occurrence of the Faliscan ethnonym in the Etruscan inscription *[mi a]uyileś feluskeś tuśnuta[pa]panalaś Vn 1.1* (see §2.4.2).

It should also be pointed out that ethnicity may depend on different features at different times, and that the recognition of certain features as forming part of ethnic identity is strengthened by conflict or competition. The point that ethnicity is thus a relative rather than an absolute concept is of some importance for the study of the ager Faliscus, for it changes the search for features that were specifically and uniquely 'Faliscan' to a search for features in which the ager Faliscus could *regard itself* as different from the surrounding areas. Thus, the Faliscans may have regarded their language as distinctive in defining their ethnic identity with regard to the Etruscans, while on the other hand they may have regarded their traditional political alliances as distinctive with regard to the Latins.

Ethnicity then consists not in certain features of the culture of a group *per se*, but in the way these features are *perceived as relevant* to the identity of the group by its members or by those in contact with them. It could be argued that in applying this concept to the ager Faliscus, the problem of establishing a 'Faliscan identity' is confused rather than solved, for there is no way of knowing what constituted distinctive 'Faliscan' features in the eyes of the Faliscans themselves or of their neighbours. Yet I think it is worthwhile to describe the inhabitants of the ager Faliscus in the terms of ethnicity: the concept of ethnicity at least provides a framework within which observable differences between the culture of the ager Faliscus and the surrounding areas can be evaluated for their relevance to a 'Faliscan identity', even if the points where the Faliscans in our view differed most from their neighbours may not at all have been those the Faliscans themselves or their neighbours perceived as relevant.¹⁵

The difficulties of establishing what features did or did not play a role in ethnic identity are great, especially when the material from which these features must be derived is almost entirely archaeological. In the case of material objects, especially those of daily use, it is very hard to establish what role they played in the perception of ethnic identity: if they were associated with ethnic identity at all, this is often not because they were produced to be the bearers of such an identity, but because they had this role thrust upon them according to the historical context in which they were used, and so assumed a symbolic value that was independent of their intended practical use.

¹⁵ The following studies on ethnic identity in the ancient world I have found especially useful: Cornell 1997 (on early Rome), Gnade 2002 (on the Volscians at Satricum), Roymans 2004 (on the Batavians), Dench 2005 (on Rome), and Terrenato 2007 (on social change in South Etruria).

Of course, the more an object is or becomes linked to non-material purposes, such as religious or magic ritual, the more easily it may acquire this added symbolic value. The same is true of objects used in contexts where such identity plays a crucial role or is contrasted with other identities, such as distinctive armour or weaponry. Yet as this value is not normally an inherent feature of the object itself, data relevant to ethnic identity cannot normally be derived from individual objects unless the context in which and the purpose, symbolic or otherwise, to which the object was used can be interpreted as having relevance to this ethnic identity.

Further difficulties with regard to establishing the ethnic identity of the Faliscans are of course the fact that the historical sources on the Faliscans are all written by ‘outsiders’ writing from a Roman perspective that may have influenced or even biased these authors (cf. §2.7.1*b-c*), and the fact that these authors usually wrote several centuries after the events on which they report took place.

2.3. What constituted a ‘Faliscan identity’?

2.3.1. Faliscan material culture. The problems in the interpretation of material culture mentioned in the preceding section are unfortunately very acute in the case of the Faliscans. Thus Cato (*Agr.* 4.1, 14.1) mentions a *praesepe Faliscum*, but this type of cattle-stall does not appear to have been limited to the ager Faliscus alone, and in any case will hardly have been a major feature of Faliscan identity. On the other hand, a possibly significant feature may have been the distinctive weaponry described by Dionysius (τῶν ὅπλων τῶν πολεμιστηρίων κόσμος, ἄσπιδες Ἀργολικαὶ καὶ δόρατα, 1.21.1), as such apparel may very well have had symbolic value for the combatants: it could in fact come under the heading of ‘material expressly created to be the bearer of ethnic identity’. Unfortunately, Dionysius’ account leaves it unclear how specifically Faliscan these weapons were, and the remark may simply have been made to draw attention to the alleged Faliscan connection with Argos (cf. §2.4.1 and §2.3.4).

In general, archaeological sources show that the material culture of the ager Faliscus did not differ greatly from the remainder of South Etruria. In the earlier periods the area seems to have known some more or less distinctive styles of pottery (see e.g. Baglione 1986), and also in later periods the Faliscan workshops can be identified by their own styles (see e.g. Adembri 1985, 1990, Schippa 1980). In contexts of competition or conflict such as the successive emergence of Veientan and Roman power in South Etruria, even daily objects may have had a role in stressing or expressing who presented themselves, or were regarded, as Faliscan, Etruscan, or Latin. There is, unfortunately, no way of knowing this with any amount of certainty, since the context of their use is on the whole not specific enough (as opposed to e.g. the material from Satricum on which Gnade’s (2002) study of ethnic identity is based).

More relevant to Faliscan identity may have been the material culture related to burial rites and religious cults, for these present several distinctive features. Thus, Faliscan *tombe a pozzo* were often provided with a *loculus*, a custom for which parallels are known only from Veii (Baglione 1986:129), while the seventh-century *tomba a fossa* 24/XLII of the La Penna necropolis at Civita Castellana furnishes an instance of a tree-trunk burial with impasto discs or ‘shields’, which has parallels only at Veii and in Latium (cf. Baglione 1986:136-9). The use of the rock-cut tombs that today form such a conspicuous feature of the landscape also seems to have been more or less confined to the agri Faliscus and Capenas. The custom was continued at Capena, Sutrium, and Nepete after these towns became colonies in the early fourth century, as well as at Falerii Novi, and may well have been regarded as a distinctive Faliscan feature by the neighbouring areas. For the inhabitants of the ager Faliscus this type of burial may have been due in part to the nature of the terrain and the availability of existing tombs rather than to feelings of ethnic identity, but family tradition must have played an important role, and such a tradition is a potent feature in defining one’s identity. With regard to cultic objects, there are the testimonies of Dionysius (1.21.2) and Ovid (*Am.* 3.13), who both described the paraphernalia of the cult of Juno, but they appear to have been more interested in noting similarities with the cult of Hera at Argos. There are indications that the cult itself may have played a part in Faliscan ethnic identity: see §2.3.4.

Somewhere between material and non-material culture lie Faliscan literacy and literature. The Faliscan alphabet was developed independently at a very early date (see §11.2.1), and although there are no ancient sources to mention it, this alphabet will have made written Faliscan clearly distinguishable from documents in the Latin or Etruscan alphabet. Whether there existed any kind of Faliscan literature is unknown. The *carmina Fescennina* were ascribed to a Faliscan origin (cf. §2.1.2), and so, perhaps, was the *metrum Faliscum* (𐌂𐌆𐌆 𐌂𐌆𐌆 𐌂𐌆𐌆 𐌂𐌆), although Terentianus Maurus (*CGL* 6.385.1992) and apparently also Servius (*CGL* 4.465.5) ascribed this to an unidentified Serenus. The Faliscans were also credited with several supplements to the *Lex XII Tabularum* (Serv. in Verg. *A.* 7.695). Neither the *carmina* nor the *leges* of the Faliscans need necessarily have been committed to writing, however, and the existence of the infamous Faliscan schoolmaster (see §2.5.1) is evidence of literacy rather than of literature.

2.3.2. Faliscan society. Close to nothing is known of the structure of Faliscan society. The inscriptions furnish only familial appellations like *pater* (only in the theonym [*die*]s *pater* MF 62) and *mater*, *filius* and *filia*, and *uxor* (for attestations see §6.2.55, 45, 24-25). The inheritance of the gentilicium through the male line and the use of patronymic rather than metronymic filiations show that in these aspects at least Faliscan society was patriarchal, and thus did not differ in this respect from the societies of the surrounding areas, except perhaps from the Etruscan, where metronymic filiations are found.

On the subject of the names themselves, much has been made of gentilicia (see §7.1.1, §7.10.3), but what is largely disregarded is that the ager Faliscus shows several praenomina that were unique to the ager Faliscus or exceedingly rare elsewhere (§7.7.2, §7.10.4-5). Examples of this are *Volta* and *Iuna*: *Volta* and *Iuna* are all the more surprising since they are *male* praenomina in *-a*, a category absent from the Latin or indeed the Italic onomasticon. *Gaius* and *Gaia*, although well-known elsewhere, occur in the ager Faliscus with a far greater frequency than anywhere else. It is unclear in how far any of this was relevant for feelings of ethnic identity, but someone called *Iuna* may, when in Rome, have been immediately recognizable as a Faliscan, in which case the name could be part of an ethnic identification: see §2.3.4 for a possible local significance of this name.

A point which to my knowledge has never been raised is how Faliscan society was stratified. Etruscan and Latin society seem to have differed in this respect especially where the status of slaves and freedmen was concerned (see Heurgon 1961:74-94, W.V. Harris 1971:114-29, and Rix 1994 *passim*), and the point could therefore provide an interesting insight into the nature of the Faliscans' status as a distinct cultural unit within Etruria. Unfortunately, there are no data to show whether the position of the Faliscan slaves resembled that of the Latin *serui* or that of the Etruscan servile class, which consisted at least partly of freeborn men, described by Dionysius (9.5.4) as *πενέσται* 'serfs, bondsmen'. It is remarkable, but probably not significant, that Zonaras (8.18.1, from Cassius Dio) uses τὸ δουλεῖον rather than τοὺς δούλους or τοὺς οἰκέτας to describe the slaves of the Faliscans.

Neither is it clear whether the status of the Faliscan freedman was more like that of the Latin *libertus* or that of the Etruscan *lautni*.¹⁶ Falerii Veteres has yielded two Middle Faliscan sepulchral inscriptions apparently naming *libertae*. The first, MF 41, names a *ljoifirta* called *louria*, who was interred in the same *loculus* as the apparently freeborn *fasies* : *c[ai]sia*, but the implications of this are unclear. A Late Faliscan sepulchral inscription from Falerii Novi, LF 221, gives a second instance, a *loferta* called *uipia* : *zertenea*, the mother of the *homo nouus* Marcius Acarcelinius. Other instances are *ἡ [:] ἡρία λο[?---]|l[e]a : cs : f* MF 155 and *[---]*i : u[o]ltiai lo* MF 165.

There are, however, also two instances of a double gentilicium in Middle Faliscan *uel[]uisni · olna* MF 82 and Middle or Late Faliscan *m · tito · tulio · uoltilio · hescuna* MLF 346, which appears to have been a typical designation of the Etruscan freedman (Rix 1965:376-8, 1994:97-111): see also §7.6. This could imply that Faliscan society resembled that of the Etruscan communities at least in this respect.

¹⁶ In South Etruria, *lautni* only occurs in Ta 1.182: as it is very frequent elsewhere, especially in the ager Saenensis, at Perugia, and at Clusium, this may not be coincidental. Rix (1994:107), however, thinks otherwise.

2.3.3. Faliscan magistracies. We are likewise badly informed on the structure of the Faliscan magistracies. The literary sources name no Faliscan magistracies except the political priesthood of the *fetiales* described by Servius (*in Verg. A.* 7.695), and apparently by Dionysius (*ἱεροὶ τινες ἄνδρες ἄνοπλοι πρὸ τῶν ἄλλων ἰόντες σπονδοφόροι*, 1.21.1). *Fetiales* are also mentioned for several Latin towns, and were as such not distinctive of the ager Faliscus. (Servius' reference to *Aequi Falisci* as the place of origin of the Roman *fetiales* is a fabrication to explain the word *aequus* in this toponym, cf. §2.1.2.) The inscriptions likewise provide few data on Faliscan magistracies. Roadside inscriptions that probably name the magistrates responsible for the building and the maintenance of these roads (MLF **206**, **207**, **210**, LtF **205**, **290**, Lat **291**, perhaps also MLF/Etr **356-357?**) give only names, not magistracies.

The only magistrates named in the Middle Faliscan inscriptions are the *efiles* (MF **113-117**), whose functions may at least partly have corresponded to those of the Roman *aediles* (Vetter 1953:292-3, Combet Farnoux 1980:137-42), and the *rex*. Note that G. Giacomelli (1963:243, 1978:521, 530) has suggested that *efiles* is a *calque* on Latin *aediles*, a suggestion adopted e.g. by Rix (1994:96 n.36). It is noteworthy that both these offices bear Latin names and by and large correspond to offices known from Latin towns, while there is no mention of Etruscan magistracies at all (I do not adopt Vetter's reading *m]arq* in MF **91**).

The *rex* is the only office found both at Falerii Veteres (MF **90**, and perhaps MF **91**) and at Falerii Novi (LF **249** and LtF **231**, cf. fig.2.1). He probably had a sacral function, like the Roman *rex sacrorum*. The fact that the *rex* occurs in *cursus* may suggest that the office of the Faliscan *rex*, unlike that of the Roman *rex sacrorum*, was not permanent: its place at the end of the *cursus* may not be due to rank, but to the fact that it was not part of the normal Roman *cursus*. Perhaps the *rex* performed a periodically returning sacral function that required some equivalent of *imperium*, like the Roman *dictator clavi figundi causa*.¹⁷

The inscriptions from Falerii Novi mention other magistracies (cf. fig.2.1), all reflecting the Roman organization of the town: it cannot be ascertained if comparable magistracies existed in the area in the period before 240, and by what names they were known. Two public inscriptions mention two collegiate *pret[ores* (LF **213**), and a *pretod* acting on behalf of a (presumably local) senate, *de | zenatuo · sententiad* (LF/LtF **214**). The *cursus honorum* of the sepulchral inscriptions name the *quaestor* (LF **242-243**, **245**, **247**, Lat **237-238**, **219**), the *praetor*¹⁸ (LF **242-243**, **247-248**, Lat **240**), the *duouiri* (LF **243**, **247-249**, Lat **237**, **240**), and the *ensor* (LtF **231-232**).

¹⁷ The *rex* could, for instance, have played a role in the *ἱερὸς γάμος* that according to Taylor (1923:65) may have constituted a feature of the Faliscan cult of Juno.

¹⁸ As the *praetor* occurs here in *cursus honorum*, it is unlikely that it is a Latin rendering of a local supreme magistracy such as the Etruscan *zilaθ*: a point worth making, as even in the early Empire *praetor* could still be used to render Gallic *vergobret* (cf. Roymans 2004:64).

THE AGER FALISCUS AND ITS INHABITANTS

	<i>quaestor</i>	<i>praetor</i>	<i>duouir</i>	<i>ensor</i>	<i>rex</i>
MF 90 ^a					<i>rex</i>
MF 91 ^a					<i>rex</i> ?
LF 213 ^b		<i>pret[ores]</i>			
LF 214 ^b		<i>pretod</i>			
LF 242	<i>cuestod · pi</i>	<i>pretod · pis</i>			
LF 243 ^c	<i>cues[tor]</i>	<i>p[reto]r</i>	<i>duum]uiru</i>		
LF 245	<i>c]ues[tor]</i>				
LF 247	<i>cue[stor]</i>	<i>pret[or]</i>	<i>duum]uiru</i>		
LF 248		<i>pre]tor · ii</i>	<i>duu]muru</i>		
LF 249			<i>duu]muru</i>		<i>re[x]</i>
LtF 231				<i>cen]so</i>	<i>rex</i>
LtF 232	-----	-----	-----	<i>cen]sor</i> <i>censo</i>	-----
LtF 233	<i>[---]or (quaest]or? praet]or? cens]or?)^d</i>				
Lat 237	<i>bis · q</i>		<i>duo-uir</i>		
Lat 238	<i>q · ii^e</i>				
Lat 240		<i>prae[tor]</i>	<i>duum]uir</i>		
Lat 219 ^a	<i>q</i>				

^a) From Falerii Veteres; all other inscriptions are from Falerii Novi. ^b) Public inscription; all others are sepulchral. ^c) The text has the *honores* in decreasing order. ^d) As *[---]or* stands at the end of the inscription, perhaps *cens]or*, but *ux]or* is also possible. ^e) Doubtful reading, although *q* is certain.

Fig.2.1. Honores in the inscriptions from Falerii Veteres and Falerii Novi.

2.3.4. Faliscan religion. There are more sources, both literary and epigraphic, on aspects of Faliscan religion, and these data could well be relevant to describing Faliscan ethnic identity, as a distinct religion is quite often the focus of any form of group-identity. A survey of the material is given by Taylor (1923:60-93) and, more briefly, in *Sant* (1985), *passim*. I briefly discuss here the cults that can be traced to Falerii Veteres or Republican Falerii Novi.

The major cult of Falerii Veteres seems to have been that of **Juno**: Ovid in fact coined the word *Iunonicolae* to provide the Faliscans with a suitable epithet (*Fast.* 6.49), and the whole point about the mythical founding of Falerii by the Argives may well have originated from the fact that Argos was famous for its cult of Hera. The temple of Juno has been identified with the temple in Contrada Celle at Civita Castellana (see §14.1.4 and *Sant* pp.110-3); the cult, which may have included a consort *pater Curris* (Tert. *Apol.* 24), was thought to have derived from the cult of Hera at Argos (Dion. 1.21.2, Ovid. *Fast.* 6.45-9). Worship at the Celle temple continued after 241, and the temple was in fact completely restructured in the second century BCE (cf. Potter 1979:100, Moscati 1985b:70-1). Both Dionysius (1.21.2) and Ovid (*Am.* 3.13) describe the cult as existing in their own day, although it is unclear whether this was a continuation of the original rites. Local worship appears to have persisted for a long time, witness the much later attestations of a *pontifex sacrarius Iunonis Curritis* in *CIL* XI.3100 and 3125. The Roman cult of Juno Curritis is thought to have originated from an *euocatio* of the Faliscan deity in 241 (Taylor 1923:68).¹⁹

This cult of Juno may very well have played a part in the ethnic identity of the Faliscans, for several reasons. On the one hand, not only do the sources treat it as an almost emblematic feature of Faliscan culture, even using it to give a context to other features of Faliscan culture such as descent, foundation-myth, and weaponry, but the cult was also the subject of an *euocatio*, a ritual aimed at least partly at removing the deity at the very core of the enemy's religion. On the other hand, the worship of Juno at Falerii Veteres continued after the fall of Falerii in 241: whatever else was destroyed of the Faliscan culture or even of Falerii Veteres itself, people kept coming to the old temple, which, as said, was restructured in the second century BCE. The cult as described by Dionysius (1.21.2) and Ovid (*Am.* 3.13) either still continued the ancient cult in some way, or the cult as it was remembered in the time of these authors had been considered important enough to be worthy of a revival. In such a context, the popularity of the Faliscan man's name *Iuna* (§7.7.1.29), even if etymologically unconnected with *Iuno*, may well have been due to a *perceived* etymological connection between the two.

¹⁹ The only evidence for this seems to be that Juno as worshipped at Falerii was sometimes also referred to as *Curritis*. Ogilvie (1965:674) pointed to Ovid. *Fast.* 3.843, but that text refers to the *euocatio* not of Juno but of Minerva.

Another famous cult ascribed to the Faliscans is that of the worship by the *Hirpi Sorani* on Mount Soracte:

“Soractis mons est Hirpinorum²⁰ in Flaminia conlocatus. in hoc autem monte cum aliquando Diti patri sacrum persolueretur (nam diis manibus consecratus est) subito uenientes lupi exta de igni rapuerunt. quos cum diu pastores sequerentur, delati sunt ad quandam speluncam, halitum ex se pestiferum emittentem, adeo ut iuxta stantes necaret: et exinde est orta pestilentia, quia fuerant lupos secuti. de qua responsum est, posse eam sedari, si lupos imitentur, id est raptu uiuerent. quod postquam factum est, dicti sunt ipsi populi *Hirpi Sorani*: nam lupi Sabinorum lingua uocantur *hirpi*. *Sorani* uero a Dite: nam Ditis pater *Soranus* uocatur: quasi *lupi Ditis patris*” (Servius, *in Verg. A.* 11.785);

“haut procul urbe Roma in Faliscorum agro familiae sunt perpaucae quae uocantur *Hirpi*; hae sacrificio annuo quod fit apud montem Soractem Apollini super ambustam ligni struem ambulantes non aduruntur, et ob id perpetuo senatus consulto militiae omniumque aliorum munerum uacationem habent” (Pliny, *NH* 7.2.19).

Other sources are Vergil (*A.* 11.785-9), Silius (5.175-81), Servius (*in Verg. A.* 11.787), and Solinus (2.26, echoing Pliny). There are no epigraphic attestations of this cult: the word *sorex* read in LtF **231-232** is often interpreted as the name of the Soractean priesthood, but even if it is indeed a priestly title and not (as I think it is) a ghostword, the *sorex* need not have been connected with the worship on Mount Soracte (cf. Macurdy 1921 and Peruzzi 1963b). The name *Hirpi Sorani* is usually regarded as the cultic epithet of a small group of *gentes* performing a hereditary ritual, but it recalls such totemic tribal names as *Hirpini*, derived, like *Hirpi*, from *hirpus*, and *Picentes*, derived from *picus*, and Servius’ account is not incompatible with an explanation of the *Hirpi Sorani* as a small group of immigrants from the Sabellic-speaking area on the other side of the Tiber: see §2.5.2 and §9.3.

With the exception of Servius (*in Verg. A.* 11.785), all sources (including Serv. *in Verg. A.* 11.787!) link the *Hirpi Sorani* to the worship of *Apollo*. Taylor (1923:83-91) explains this at some length through the assumption of a confusion of Apollo Lycaeus and Mars; others have doubted the whole idea of the worship of Apollo on Soracte (*REA* s.v. *Hirpi Sorani*). There is epigraphic evidence for a cult of Apollo at the Tempio Maggiore on Colle di Vignale, however, the oldest cultic centre of Falerii Veteres (see §14.1.2 and *Sant* pp.85-6), already for the Early Faliscan period, in the dedication *apolonos* EF **10** (c.500-475, apparently the oldest mention of the deity in an Italic language); from Falerii Veteres, too, is the inscription *apolo* LF **65** (300-250). Falerii Novi has yielded a dedication [*· · u*]mprius · *c · f* | *aburcus · q · | [a]polinei · dat* Lat **219** (c.120-50).

²⁰ The confusion with the *Hirpini* (if it is indeed a confusion) may be due not only to the similarity in name, but also to the fact that the poisonous fumes described here were also a recognized feature of the Hirpinian temple of Mefitis at Ampsanctus (Cic. *Div.* 1.36.79, Plin. *NH* 2.95.208).

The sixth- or seventh-century ‘Ceres-inscription’ (EF 1) contains the earliest epigraphic attestation of *Ceres* in the phrase *ceres : far *[0-2]e[1-3]tom : *[3-5]uff[1-4]ui[...].m : *[3-4]*ad* and, many centuries later, a place *ad Cereris* near Falerii Novi is mentioned in *CIL* XI.3083 (cf. Taylor 1923:76-7).

The Ceres-inscription was thought also to contain references to Liber, but the readings *l[o]ufir*, *louffir*, *louff[i]r* and the interpretation of *euios* as *Εὔιος* that gave rise to this idea are now largely abandoned (see §12.2). There is certainly no evidence for seventh-century “important orientalisising inscriptions that document the spread of the cult of Dionysus among the town’s aristocrats” (*ArchFal* p.15). Faliscans are mentioned in connection with the Bacchanalia-upheaval (Liv. 39.17.6), but there are no indications that Bacchic worship was present much earlier at Falerii Veteres, as Peruzzi (1964a:158-9, 1964b) suggested.

A deity attested thus far only at Falerii Veteres is *Mercus* or *Titus Mercus* known from the dedications *titoi | mercui | efiles* MF 113-117, *titoi : mercui* MF 118-122, *mercui* MF 123-126 (texts reconstructed from multiple examples), found in the temple ‘ai Sassi Caduti’ (see §14.1.3 and *Sant* p.113). This Titus Mercus may have had similarities with Roman Mercury, and possibly with the Oscan deity *Mercus* known from the dedication *mirikui* Cm 24: this is discussed extensively by Combet Farnoux (1980:113-69).

Attested only for Falerii Novi are the worship of Mars, implied by the occurrence of a *mensis Martius* in the Faliscan *fasti* (Ovid. *Fast.* 3.87-90) and by the Faliscan *sors* inscribed *Mauors telum suum concutit* (Liv. 22.1.11, Plut. *Fab. Max.* 2.3; cf. Taylor 1923:78-9). Ovid (*Fast.* 3.89) furthermore informs us that the *mensis Martius* was the fifth month among the Faliscans. The worship of the Capitoline Triad, is attested for Falerii Novi by the second-century Latin dedication *[di]jouei · iunonei · mineruai* Lat 213, although there is no ground to assume that the triad itself originated at Falerii (thus Girard 1989). The Roman cults of Minerva Capta (Ovid *Fast.* 3.843-4; cf. Girard 1989) and of Ianus Quadrifrons (Serv. *in Verg. A.* 7.607, Macrob. *Sat.* 1.9.13) are mentioned in the sources as having been brought to Rome from Falerii, apparently after the war of 241 (“perdomitis ... Faliscis” Ovid, “captis Faleriis” Servius). Worship of Minerva at Falerii Novi is attested in the public dedication to Minerva *de | zenatuo · sententiad* LF/Lat 214.

Beside these cults, there are epigraphic attestations of the *haruspex* (LtF 231-232): as said, the *rex* (MF 90-91, LF 249, and LtF 231), too, may have had a sacral function (§2.3.3). The sources also ascribe the priesthood of the *fetiales* (Serv. *in Verg. A.* 7.695, see §2.3.3) to a Faliscan origin and mention two Faliscan festivals, the *Struppearia* (“in quo coronati ambulant,” Fest. 410.12-5L, see §6.6.6) and the *decimatrus* (Fest. 306.4-6L, see §6.6.2): the latter has parallels in Latin festivals like the *quinquatrus*, *sexatrus*, and *septimatrus*.

The names of most of the Faliscan gods of cult (Ceres, Titus Mercurus, Ianus, Mars, and probably Minerva), priesthoods, and festivals are therefore Italic: only Juno seems to have been of Etruscan origin (see *REA* s.v.). Mythological scenes on gems and mirrors found in the ager Faliscus bear Etruscan legends (cf. e.g. the Etruscan inscriptions Etr **XXV**, **XXVII**, **XXVIII**, **XXXI**, **XXXIII**, **XLI**, and **L**), but most of these may have been imports from other areas (with the probable exception of Etr **L**): the sole instance of a Faliscan legend is the Middle Faliscan inscription *canumedē [die]s pater cupi<d>o menerua* MF **62**.

2.4. The early history of the ager Faliscus

2.4.1. Mythical origins. With the exception of Justin (20.1.13), who referred to it as a Chalcidian colony, all ancient sources regarded Falerii as an Argive settlement (Cato *apud* Plin. *NH* 3.5.51, Dion. 1.21.1, Steph. *Ethm.* 626.23-4 Meineke) founded by Halaesus (Ovid. *Fast.* 4.73-4, *Am.* 3.13.32, Serv. *in* Verg. *A.* 7.695, Solin. 2.7): a discussion of these sources may be found in Camporeale 1991. The attribution of Italian towns to Greek or Trojan founders is of course commonplace, especially at the periphery of Etruscan influence (see Alföldi 1963:228-38): the connection with Argos will have been made because of the identification of the Faliscan cult of Juno with that of Hera at Argos (Dion. 1.21.2, Ovid. *Am.* 3.13; cf. §2.3.4).

2.4.2. The history of the ager Faliscus until the fifth century BCE. The earliest history of the ager Faliscus can only be inferred from the archaeological evidence. The main surveys of this are Barnabei 1894a (but see §1.4.5) and Holland 1925, and, based on new evidence, Potter 1976, 1979:52-92, Baglione 1987, and Petitti 1990.

Nowhere is there any indication or recollection of Faliscan having been *brought* to the area in some way in the centuries immediately preceding its first attestations: whether Faliscan is viewed as a separate language or as a Latin dialect, it was the indigenous language in the area in the sense that it was present there *before* Etruscan. If Faliscan is a dialect of Latin, therefore, the ager Faliscus and Capenas in all probability originally have formed a part of a Latin-speaking area to the *north* of the Tiber that disappeared (or became Etruscanized in a linguistic sense) with the spread of Etruscan civilization and language from the coastal centres. Etruscan largely, but perhaps not wholly, replaced Latin throughout South Etruria – except for the ager Faliscus and the ager Capenas. I think that the assumption of such a ‘north bank’ Latin-speaking area (and thus a continuous Latin-speaking area that ranged from Latium adiectum in the south to the ager Faliscus in the north) is not a very difficult one: note e.g. the early Latin ‘Vendia-inscription’ **479**†, dating from the late seventh (or early sixth) century (cf. Cristofani 1993:25-7).

The Etruscan language and culture certainly entered the ager Faliscus, and Narce, its southernmost major site at the time, became a wholly Etruscan town. Yet they did not spread rapidly enough or in a sufficient degree to replace the existing language and culture entirely, perhaps because of the lack of communication with major Etruscan centres such as Tarquinii and Caere. Significantly, the ager Faliscus was at this time culturally independent enough from both Etruria and Latium to have developed an alphabet of its own (§11.2.1-2). The contrast between Etruscan Narce and Faliscan Falerii appears already in the earliest epigraphic material: of the 19 or 20 early Etruscan inscriptions from the ager Faliscus, 18 are from Narce and the south-western ager Faliscus (Etr I-XV and XVIII-XX: Etr XXIX is from Corchiano, while EF/Etr 5, from Falerii, is either Etruscan or Early Faliscan), while all certainly Early Faliscan inscriptions (EF 1-4 and 6-10) are from Falerii.

An early attestation of the Faliscan ethnonym has been read by Poccetti (1997) in the seventh-century inscription from Vetulonia, [*mi a]ūyileš feluskeš tušnuta[*a pa*]]*panalaš* Vn 1.1. He convincingly interprets *feluskeš* as an Etruscan rendering of *Faliscus*, pointing also to fourth-century *veluske* (probably a name) in an inscription published by Colonna (1995). (To these could perhaps be added early fifth century [*m*]i *larisa feleşkenas am**[?---]* AS 1.40.) If *feluskeš* is indeed ‘Faliscan’, this has some very interesting consequences. The form is clearly an Italic, probably Latin, ethnonym, and its use here by a Faliscan living ‘abroad’ would imply that the ethnonym was already used by the Faliscans themselves, and that they were therefore already identifiable as a distinct group. But if Narce was the original main site of the area and Falerii succeeded it as such only during the fifth century, as is usually assumed, why was the ethnonym of the area derived from the name of Falerii already in the seventh? This must mean that Falerii was for some reason regarded as the most important site even before or during the *floruit* of Narce. I do not find it hard to envisage the older autochthonous centre that gave its name to the area as being on its way to being eclipsed by an emerging competitor whose success was due to its better connections with the Etruscanized area to the south, and possibly the support of Veii.*

A more dubious early source for Faliscan history has been seen in one of the frescoes of the late fourth-century François Tomb at Vulci. The scene depicted may refer to events of c.500, as some of its figures also appear in the story of the expulsion of the Etruscan kings from Rome. It shows local heroes killing foes designated with ethnonyms like *rumaχ* ‘Roman’, *sveamaχ* ‘Sovanian’, and *velznaχ* ‘Volsinian’: one is labelled *venθicaυ[...]p[sa]χs* Vc 7.30, and Heurgon (1961:66) suggested that this *p[sa]χs* should be interpreted as ‘Faliscan’. Some scholars hesitatingly adopted this interpretation (e.g. Alföldi 1963:66, Torelli 1966:1212, Scullard 1967:122-3), but there is no evidence for it, as Di Stefano Manzella (1977:162) has shown.²¹

²¹ The word has also been taken as the ethnonym of Salpinum (e.g. Pareti 1952:310, Accame in Alföldi 1963:222 n.1, Baffioni 1967:157 n.144).

The early authors on Faliscan stressed the importance of alleged early Sabine invasions (§1.5; still Pallottino 1987:105), and although there seems to be no evidence for the large-scale invasions which they presupposed, there may well have been small-scale immigrations from the Sabellic-speaking areas. Perhaps the *Hirpi Sorani* (cf. §2.3.4) were one such group (thus already Taylor 1923:90): although usually regarded as hereditary priests, the sources, especially Servius (*in Verg. A.* 11.785), seem to indicate that they may have been a tribal group (*populi* in Servius' account) of Sabellic origin that migrated to the area around Mount Soracte guided by their totemic animal²² and preserved an identity, including an ethnonym, until Roman times. In the Faliscan onomasticon, there are several gentilicia that are of Sabellic origin (§7.8.2), and there are linguistic traces, too, of the presence of speakers of Sabellic languages in the area (§9.3), especially in inscriptions from the ager Capenas.

During the late sixth and early fifth century the most important development is the growth and the expansion of Veii as the major Etruscan centre of the Lower Tiber basin. To the east, Capena, probably already a cultural or economic dependency, now became a political dependency as well. During the fifth century, however, Faliscan Falerii eclipsed Etruscan Narce as the central site of the ager Faliscus, perhaps because of its more central location with regard to the trade routes through the South Etruria (cf. §2.2.3), whose importance steadily increased with the emergence of Veii as the dominant centre to the south (cf. Baglione 1987).

The vacuum arising from the decline of Narce was filled by the extension of Veientan power into the area that may well have been the south-western ager Faliscus, beyond the range between the Monti Sabatini and Mount Soracte (§2.1.1), where Veii either reinforced or founded Sutrium and Nepete, thus controlling the western access route to the ager Faliscus through the 'Sutri Gap'. The effects of this 'second Etruscan wave' into the agri Faliscus and Capenas, however, were to be short-lived, and quickly to be superseded by the expansion of Rome into South Etruria, which would change the situation completely.

2.5. Falerii, Veii, and Rome in the fifth and fourth centuries BCE

2.5.1. The Fidenate wars and the siege of Veii. The history of the ager Faliscus from the late fifth to the middle of the third century is documented by the much later historical sources, especially Livy. Diverse as they are, these present a consistent picture of a Falerii doggedly resisting the gradual extension of Rome's influence in South Etruria. It should of course be stressed that such sources can only be used with

²² Such treks are reported for the Picentes (Str. 5.4.1, Paul. *Fest.* 235.16-7L) and the Hirpini (Str. 5.4.12, Paul. *Fest.* 93.25-6L): to the latter Servius (*in Verg. A.* 11.785, 11.787) assigned both Mount Soracte and the ritual performed there by the *Hirpi Sorani*.

an adequate amount of critical sense, especially where the earlier periods are concerned, but this does not mean that they are altogether useless: although individual events may be questioned, the main trends and events are clear, and often supported by archaeological evidence. A useful survey of the historical material is provided by Shotter 1976: cf. also Cornell 1986, 1991, and Gnade 2002:136-9 for discussions on the relative merits of historical and archaeological evidence. In the discussion in this and the following sections, I follow Livy's account as the primary source.

The earliest events in Roman-Faliscan relationships to be recorded are the late fifth-century wars over Fidenae. Due probably to the uncertainty about the date of the duel between A. Cornelius Cossus and Lars Tolumnius (cf. Ogilvie 1965:563-4), famed as the second occasion on which a Roman commander brought home the *spolia opima*, the sources are confused: Livy's account (4.17-34) probably contains repetitions, Diodorus (12.80.6-8) mentions only the second of the two wars described by Livy, and Florus (*Epit.* 1.6/12.9) telescopes the wars into the siege of Veii.

In Livy's account, Fidenae defects to Veii in 438 and their joint armies cross into Roman territory in 437 (4.17.1-11). There they are joined by the Faliscans, whose eagerness to go home makes the king of Veii, Lars Tolumnius, decide for the battle in which he is killed (4.17.11-18.8). The Romans then conduct punitive expeditions into the agri Veientanus and Faliscus in 436 (4.21.1-2). When the Romans threaten Fidenae in 435 (4.21.6-22.6), the Faliscans are unwilling to participate in a new war (4.21.8), although it later appears that they took part in the battle at Nomentum (4.32.3). After the fall of Fidenae, Veii and Falerii in vain seek help from the Etruscan League at Fanum Voltumnae in 434 and 432 (4.23.4-24.2, 25.7-8).

In 427 war erupts again, with the Veientes and Fidenates making forays into Roman land (4.30.5-6) until Fidenae is defeated in 426 (4.30.5-34.7). It is unclear whether the Faliscans participated in this second war. Frontinus' (*Str.* 2.8.3) reference to a campaign against the Faliscans by T. Quinctius Capitolinus during his consulate in 446 is usually regarded as an erroneous reference to his famous campaign against the Volscians in that year. However, it could be a recollection of an otherwise unknown campaign against the Faliscans by T. Quinctius Cincinnatus Poenus when he was *tribunus militum consulari potestate* in 426: like T. Quinctius Capitolinus, he inflicted a defeat upon the Volscians during his consulate, in 431 (4.31.1-34.7).²³

Falerii and Capena next appear as the only allies of Veii during the siege of 402-395, being credited by Livy with the not unjustified fear that "quia proximi regione erant, deuctis Veii bello quoque Romano se proximos fore" (5.8.5). Sending relief forces in 402 and 399 (5.8.4-12 and 5.13.9-13, perhaps a repetition), and asking

²³ The campaign by the dictator Q. Servilius Priscus (in 418, cf. *REA* s.v. *Servilius* 75) mentioned by Frontinus (*Str.* 2.8.8) on the other hand may in fact have been the campaign against the Aequians described by Livy (4.47.1-7).

for help from the Etruscan League at Fanum Voltumnae in 397 (5.17.6-10), they become involved in the war, which is carried to their own lands from 401 onwards (5.10.2, 5.12.5, 5.14.7, 5.16.2). M. Furius Camillus, before taking command of the siege of Veii in 396, considers the threat posed by Falerii and Capena serious enough to deal with these towns first, breaking the resistance of Capena in 395 and granting the city a *foedus* (5.19.7-8, 5.24.3; cf. W.V. Harris 1971:89).

After the fall of Veii, he tries the same tactics against the Faliscans in 394, which results in an unsuccessful siege (5.26.3-10). The deadlock is broken by a Faliscan schoolmaster delivering the sons of the Faliscan nobility as hostages to the Romans, an offer from which Camillus indignantly refuses to profit, whereupon the Faliscans, moved by his noble gesture of returning the boys unharmed, immediately offer unconditional surrender (5.27): a story-with-a-moral that apparently enjoyed great popularity, if this can be judged from the number of sources in which it appears (Dion. 13.1-2, Plut. *Cam.* 9-11, V. Max. 6.5.1, Fron. *Str.* 4.4.1, Polyæn. *Strat.* 8.1.7, Flor. *Epit.* 1.6/12.5-6, Avit. fr.2 *apud* Prisc. *CGL* 2.427.1-6, Eutrop. 1.20, Hier. *Ep.* 57.3, Oros. 3.3.4, and Zonar. 7.22, from Cassius Dio).

It is possible that Falerii did *not* escape capture, however. According to Diodorus, the Romans took the town by storm in 392 (14.96.5) but concluded a peace in the next year (14.98.5); Livy twice (5.43.7, 6.7.4) makes Camillus refer to the *capture* of Falerii, and the main cause of his soldiers' later discontent is his refusal to let them sack the town, which hardly understandable if Falerii was surrendered and not taken. The *euocatio* of Minerva, Janus Quadrifrons, and perhaps of Juno Curritis, usually placed at the conclusion of the war of 241, could then have taken place at this date, repeating the *euocatio* of Juno Regina from Veii in 396 (Liv. 5.21).

2.5.2. The wars of the fourth and early third century BCE. While Rome is trying to regain its control over the Latin league after the Gallic siege, the cities of Etruria revolt in 389 (Liv. 6.2.2). The main bones of contention are Sutrium and Nepete, controlling the route through South Etruria (§2.2.3): “loca opposita Etruriae et uelut claustra inde portaeque” (Liv. 6.9.4). After some Etruscan successes, the Romans regain control (Liv. 6.3.1-10) and establish themselves by grants of citizenship to ‘faithful’ Veientes, Capenates, and Faliscans in 388 (Liv. 6.4.4; cf. Harris 1971:192-9). War is continued in 387 under the leadership of Tarquinii (Liv. 6.4.8-11): in the confused fighting, again centred on Sutrium and Nepete (Liv. 6.9.3-4, 6.9.7-10.6), the Romans come off best. They secure the area by founding colonies at Sutrium, Nepete, and Capena shortly afterwards (the exact dates are debated).

Tarquinii, together with Falerii, again takes advantage of the situation by overrunning South Etruria in 358 (Liv. 7.12.5-6) or 354-353 BC (Diod. 16.31.7) as far as the *salinae* near the mouth of the Tiber in 356 (Liv. 7.17.6-9) or 353-352 (Diod. 16.36.4). For Falerii this may have meant regaining control over Sutrium and Nepete,

although the former is the Roman base camp again in 357 (Liv. 7.16.7-8). The next years see a number of indecisive skirmishes and one pitched battle, decided in favour of the Romans (Liv. 7.17.2-5, Fron. *Str.* 2.4.18). In 351 hostilities are concluded with forty-year *indutiae* (Liv. 7.22.5-6), which in 342 are replaced by a *foedus* (Liv. 7.38.1), perhaps, as Shotter (1972:32) suggested, one similar to the one granted to Caere in 353 (Liv. 7.20.8). An epigraphic record of this war is preserved in the first century CE (!) Latin eulogium of the Tarquinian praetor, A. Spurrina (see Torelli 1975:67-92), which mentions the Faliscans in an unfortunately fragmentary passage (*falis[c---]* is legible, but nothing of the context remains).

For the years around 300, there is again only Livy's account. The Faliscans, although not mentioned, will certainly have been present when Sutrium was besieged by "omnes Etruriae populi praeter Arretinos" (Liv. 9.32.1-12) in 311, and the story (Liv. 9.36) of Fabius' journey through the *silva Cimina* (apparently to cross the Tiber near Horta or the Grotta Porciosa site) to cement an alliance with the Umbrians, shows that normal travel through the ager Faliscus was temporarily too dangerous. After this, the Faliscans kept quiet for some time, so that on the campaign against Volaterrae in 298, the Roman baggage train could be left at Falerii "modico praesidio" (Liv. 10.12.7). The Faliscans are absent, too, from Livy's account of the war of 295: writing of the events of 293, he states that the Faliscans "per multos annos in amicitia fuerant" (10.45.6).²⁴ The Romans are sufficiently wary of them, however, to post a guard over the ager Faliscus in 295 (Liv. 10.26.15), probably to prevent a capture of Sutrium that would have cut their supply lines. Not surprisingly, at the outbreak of the war of 293, it is the report of Faliscan participation that spurs the Romans into action (Liv. 10.45.6): the Faliscans are quickly cowed into submission by Sp. Carvilius Ruga's capture of an unidentified *Troilum* and five *castella*, and are granted *indutiae annuae* (Liv. 10.46.10-15). Archaeological sources show that around this date the route through the 'Sutri Gap' began to be opened and enlarged, and the area surrounding Sutrium and Nepete to be brought under culture (Potter 1979:96-7), indicating that the Romans were firmly establishing themselves in the area.

The Faliscans appear in the sources "not as great instigators of action ... but as ready to support those in the front line" (Shotter 1974:29), allying themselves first with Veii and later with Tarquinii, and taking advantage of every opportunity to subvert the growing Roman influence in South Etruria. In view of their consistent record of 'bad behaviour', the relative clemency with which the Romans treated this dubious ally, located in such a strategic position on the routes to both Etruria and Umbria, is remarkable: they are in fact often treated far better than the situation seems

²⁴ I can see no way of reconciling this with Frontinus' mention (*Str.* 2.5.9) of a stratagem by Cn. Fulvius (in 295?), "cum in finibus nostris exercitus Faliscorum longe nostro maior castra posuisset".

to justify. The clement treatment of the Faliscans after their surrender to Camillus as described by Livy almost seems to symbolize their relationship with the Romans.²⁵

2.6. The war of 241 BCE and its consequences

2.6.1. The war of 241 BCE. In the consulate of A. Manlius Torquatus Atticus and Q. Lutatius Cerco, i.e., in the consular year 241-240 BCE, the Faliscans became involved in a new war against Rome that would mark the end of the ager Faliscus as an independent political unit. Two interesting discussions of this war and its consequences are Loreto 1989 and Di Stefano Manzella 1990.

The date of 241-240 appears in Polybius (1.65.2), Livy (*Per.* 20), Valerius Maximus (6.5.1), Eutropius (2.28), and Zonaras (8.18.1, from Cassius Dio), and is epigraphically confirmed by the *Fasti Triumphales* (AUC ƉXII), which mention the triumphs *de · falisceis* granted to both consuls on the first and the fourth of March 240, and by the inscription on a South Etrurian cuirass published by J.-L. Zimmermann (1986), *q · lutatio · c · f · a · manlio · c · f · | consolibus · faleries · capto ·*. Only Orosius (4.11.10) places the war slightly later, in 238.

The surprising fact that the Faliscans seemingly waited until the end of the Punic War instead of taking advantage of it is often ascribed to the expiration of the hundred-year *foedus* concluded in 342 or of the *indutiae* granted in 293, curiously making the date of a revolt dependent on a treaty imposed by the oppressor. Salmon (1969:65) suggested that the Faliscans felt threatened by the colonization of Spoletium in 241, but there appears to be no reason why they should, and the only source to mention both events together, [Liv.] *Per.* 20, presents them in the reverse order: “Falisci cum rebellassent, sexto die perdomiti in deditionem uenerunt. Spoletium colonia deducta est.” It is much more plausible that 241 was not the year when the Faliscans started their revolt, but the year when the Romans were free to take action against them (Loreto 1989:720-1, Di Stefano Manzella 1990:342). The conflict may have started much earlier: its occasion and cause are unknown, although both a refusal to provide troops for the Punic War and problems in the renewal of the *foedus* of 342 have been suggested (Loreto 1989:726-7).

The sources describe the war as a six-day campaign ([Liv.] *Per.* 20, Eutrop. 2.28; *ἐν ὀλίγαις ἡμέραις*, Polyb. 1.65.2) with two pitched battles (Zonar. 8.18.1, from Cassius Dio) that cost the lives of 15,000 Faliscans (Eutrop. 2.28, Oros. 4.11.10),

²⁵ *AntiFal* (p.18) describes these wars as “bitter struggles against expansionism of Rome, whose fury against Falerii, which vied with Rome’s ceramic producers for ever more distant markets, was no doubt largely due to serious trade rivalry.” There appear to be few signs of ‘Roman fury’, however, and I doubt whether Rome would go to war over pottery markets at a time when it was land and possessions that marked the status of a town or individual.

whereupon Falerii was surrendered ([Liv.] *Per.* 20, V. Max. 6.5.1). Both consuls were granted a triumph (*Fast. Triumph.* AUC ƉXII), which lends some credibility to the astonishing number of casualties for an army of such a small area, because of the requirement of 5,000 enemy casualties to apply for a triumph (Di Stefano Manzella 1990:342, cf. V. Max. 2.8.1: see, however §2.7.1*e*). The Faliscans had to hand over *τὰ τε ὄπλα αὐτῶν καὶ τὸν ἵππον καὶ τὰ ἐπιπλα καὶ τὸ δουλεῖον καὶ τὸ ἥμισυ τῆς χώρας* (Zonar. 8.18.1, from Cassius Dio), which sounds as if Rome was making a nasty example of Falerii (“aduersus quam saeuire cupiens populus Romanus,” V. Max. 6.5.1), perhaps as a warning to other unreliable allies.

Loreto (1989:730-3) rightly concludes that the war must have had a symbolic value to the Romans that far exceeded its actual importance (witness the double triumph for such a minor campaign): after the Punic War, they needed a quick and decisive victory to re-establish themselves at home and abroad.

2.6.2. The division of the territory and the founding of Falerii Novi. The sources report that as a consequence of the war of 241, half of the Faliscan territory was forcibly ceded to the Romans: “[Μάλλιος Τορκουάτος] τὸ ἥμισυ τῆς χώρας ἀφείλετο” (Zonar. 8.18.1, from Cassius Dio), “agro ... ex medietate sublato” (Eutrop. 2.28). According to Loreto (1989:723), the ceding of half the territory was not in itself extremely severe, since the usual sanction was one-third: the same sanction had in fact been imposed on Caere in 273.

The ceded area would obviously have been centred on the new Falerii and extended westward to Sutrium and Nepete, so that the territories of Veii, Capena, Sutrium, Nepete, and Falerii Novi now constituted one continuous stretch of land under Roman control. Di Stefano Manzella (1990:345) suggests that the ceded territory extended eastward to the Tiber to include the fertile tablelands north of the Rio Maggiore and the Treia, and cut what remained of the ager Faliscus in half. This is indeed very plausible: it seems in fact extremely likely that the Roman area extended north-eastward towards Gallese and the Grotta Porciosa site, placing the Romans in direct control of the strategically located Tiber crossing that gave access to the Sabine interior and Umbria (note the colonization of Spoletium in 241, which in [Liv.] *Per.* 20 (quoted in §2.6.1) directly follows the Faliscan war), and which in 220 would be used for the Via Flaminia.

The town of Falerii itself was destroyed and a new Roman Falerii was built c.4.5 km to the west, in the middle of a section of flat tablelands. This was done probably somewhere between 240 and 220, when the Via Amerina was extended northward from Nepete; the same is implied by Zonaras, who explicitly places the demolition of the old town and the founding of the new town as ‘later’ than the war itself: ὕστερον δ’ ἢ μὲν ἀρχαία πόλις εἰς ὄρος ἐρυμνὸν ἰδρυμένη κατεσκάφη, ἑτέρα δ’ ἀκοδομήθη εὐέφοδος (8.18.1, from Cassius Dio).

The usual interpretation of Zonaras' words is that Falerii Veteres was destroyed and its inhabitants resettled *en bloc* to a less defensible site, like the inhabitants of Volsinii in 265 (Zonar. 8.7.4-8), but this is an over-simplification. The continued use of some of the temples of Falerii Veteres attested by Dionysius (1.21.1-2) and Ovid (*Am.*3.13) has long been confirmed by archaeological findings (see Potter 1979: 99-101, Andr n 1940:88). Continued habitation at the site of the old town is implied by the toponomastical data (cf. §2.1.2), although the archaeological evidence for it is slight, consisting mainly of a few Republican burials (see Moscati 1985b:70-1).²⁶

Di Stefano Manzella (1990:349-50) also rightly questions the idea that the population of Falerii Novi consisted simply of transferred inhabitants of Falerii Veteres. It seems indeed unlikely that the Romans would deport their enemies to a less defensible site only to provide this with walls that are still among the best preserved works of Republican military architecture, and much more plausible that many or most of its inhabitants were Roman or Latin immigrants (like the craftsman *t · fourios · * [· Jf* in Lat 216?). As Falerii Novi was the administrative and military centre of a newly-occupied territory, its administration must have been pro-Roman, and will have included few members of the ruling class of Falerii Veteres: Di Stefano Manzella (1990:349-50) suggests that it may have comprised Faliscan families whose loyalty to Rome in 389 had been rewarded with the citizenship (§2.5.2).

A related point is the legal status of Falerii Novi. It is usually assumed that the town was at first either a *ciuitas foederata* or a *municipium sine suffragio*, as it was during the first centuries CE (cf. *CIL* XI.3083, 3103, 3112, 3116, 3121, 3125, 3127, 3147, and 3155a,1). The *honores* in the *cursus honorum* from Falerii Novi (§2.3.3) also point to municipal rather than to colonial status, as M. Mancini (2002:38-40) points out. At some time during its history, however, the town must have been a *colonia*, since in *CIL* XI.3089 and 3094 the emperor Gallienus is honoured as *redintegrator coloniae Faliscorum*.²⁷ It is apparently this earlier colony that is referred to by Pliny (*NH* 3.5.51) and the *Liber Colonialium* (217.5). Since these statements are difficult to reconcile with the epigraphic evidence for a *municipium*, there is a tendency to disregard them altogether.

Di Stefano Manzella (1990) suggested that Falerii Novi was in fact a (Latin) colony already from its foundation in or shortly after 241, becoming a *municipium* after the Social War. Colonial status is indeed more in accordance with the strategic importance of the area, as well as with the amount of trouble taken by the Romans to

²⁶ The few sepulchral inscriptions from Falerii Veteres in the Latin alphabet (LfF 140, 171-174) may belong to such post-241 burials.

²⁷ The restoration of colonial status was a piece of propaganda by which Gallienus, whose maternal ancestors were Egnatii from Falerii, attempted to draw attention to his patrician forebears (De Blois 1976:134). This second *colonia Faliscorum* is mentioned in *CIL* XI.3089-94.

restructure its settlement and road-structure (§2.1.3). A complicating factor is that Falerii Novi belonged to the *tribus Horatia* (cf. *CIL* XI.3100, 3112, 3123, 3125, 3136, 3930 (?), 7494, and the inscription quoted in note 268), not to one of the South Etrurian *tribus* created in the fourth century for Veii, Capena, Sutrium, and Nepete (the *Arnen-sis*, *Sabatina*, *Stellatina*, and *Tromentina*).²⁸ The *colonia* mentioned by Pliny and the *Liber Coloniarum* is explained by Di Stefano Manzella (1990:366-7) as being not a *colonia* in the legal sense, but a land-allotment to veterans of the triumvirs at Falerii Veteres, administered from Falerii Novi.

2.6.3. The ager Faliscus after 241. The loss of a very large number of men of fighting age, the surrender of τὸ δουλεῖον, the ceding of half the territory, the replacement of its main site by a new settlement probably populated at least partly by immigrants, and the subsequent construction of the Roman roads, must greatly have changed life in the ager Faliscus. This change is very visible in the abrupt change in the area's settlement pattern described by Potter (1979:98-101). Falerii Veteres was at best reduced to an insignificant township and replaced as the main centre by the new Roman Falerii.

Of the other centres, Narce and Corchiano ceased to exist shortly after 241; Vignanello, perhaps located in the part of the ager Faliscus that was not ceded to the Romans, disappeared in the second century, while the site at Grotta Porciosa may have survived as a Roman settlement. The main type of settlement now became clusters of farmsteads, many of which new foundations, their Faliscan predecessors having been abandoned in the mid-third century. All this appears to reflect a (perhaps deliberate) attempt at fragmenting and ruralizing the area. The major routes from the area, although following the lines of pre-existing ones, differ from these in the kind of traffic they serve, opening up the area to long-distance traffic while at the same time depriving it of its function as a crossroad (§2.1.3).

All this cannot have been accomplished without a major uprooting of Faliscan society, whereby traditional loyalties were disrupted and pro-Roman families, and even *homines noui* like Marcius Acarcelinius, the 'fatherless' son of a freedwoman (LF 221-223) came to the forefront (cf. Terrenato 2007 for a discussion of such social changes). Such an uprooting, both economical and social, cannot have been without far-reaching consequences for the (linguistic) identity of the inhabitants of the area.

The new Falerii showed no signs of independence, and does not seem to have differed from the average Roman provincial town. The sources only refer to it as the location of one of the many *omina* portending Flaminius' defeat in 216 (Liv. 22.1.11, Plut. *Fab. Max.* 2, Oros. 4.15.1), as the birthplace of one of the ringleaders in the Baccha-

²⁸ Di Stefano Manzella (1990:349) points to the fact that after the Social War the *Horatia* was also the *tribus* of Spolegium, which was colonized in 241.

naliam-upheaval in 187-186 (Liv. 39.17.6), and as the birthplace of two brothers who served under Varro in Spain (*R.* 3.16.10-11). Cicero still names Falerii as a possible place for land grants (*Leg. agr.* 2.25.66), although the town is later described as populous by Strabo (5.2.9). Its main economical resource now seems to have been the rearing of sheep and cattle, the latter the source of the *uentres Falisci* (Var. *L.* 5.22.111, Mart. 4.46.8, Stat. *Silv.* 4.9.35). Already Cato (*Agr.* 4.1, 14.1) had referred to the *praesepe Faliscum*; Ovid mentions the Faliscan sheep (*Epist.* 4.8.41) and bulls (*Am.* 3.13.14=*Fast.* 1.84=*Epist.* 4.4.32), whose famed whiteness was ascribed by Pliny (*NH* 2.106.230) to the properties of the local water. Other sources mention the growing of flax and the linen-industry (Grat. 40, Sil. 4.223). All in all, the picture painted by the sources is that of a rather somnolent rural tranquillity.

2.7. Sociolinguistic factors influencing language preservation or loss

In §§2.3-4 I described a number of factors that may have played a role in Faliscan ethnic identity. The feelings of identity of a group speaking a specific language or dialect can be a powerful or even decisive influence in the preservation of that language or dialect, but other sociolinguistic factors must be taken into account. The difficulties in applying these to the situation in the ager Faliscus are great, and the influence of each individual factor can only be estimated in a very general way. I present here several that can to some extent be assessed.

(a) Economic status. Although it is impossible to establish how wealthy the average Faliscan was at any given period, something may be said about the area as a whole. During much of the period of its independence, the ager Faliscus may well have been considered wealthy (“*ciuitas Italiae opulenta quondam fuit,*” Eutrop. 2.28): the area was well situated with regard to trade routes, possessed fertile land, especially for pasture, and was traversed by transhumance routes (§2.1.1-3). In fact, I think it very likely that the area’s economy was a major factor in keeping it independent, especially during the earlier periods. Falerii started building monumental temples like the one at Contrada Celle in the fifth century (*Sant* pp.110-3), fourth- and third-century exports of Faliscan pottery material have been found throughout the adjacent areas, and there may have been exports of a less durable nature such as cattle and linen (cf. §2.6.3). After the war of 241, this must have changed, as the Romans now controlled the main routes to and from the area and created new roads for long-distance traffic and trade (§2.1.3). During the division of the area into a Roman and a Faliscan part, from shortly after the war of 241 until the implementation of the *lex Iulia* at the end of the Social War (90-89), trade with Roman or Latin citizens may have been restricted by the *ius commercii*, depending on the status of both areas (§2.6.2-3).

(b) Social status. This is a point on which the sources are silent, and perhaps their silence is eloquent enough: other towns or peoples were not deemed worth the effort of serious comment at a time when Roman historiography was still finding its own ground. Indirect data may be glimpsed from Roman literature. Dench (2005:300-1) points to the caricatures and stereotypes of Italic and Latin rustics that may be found in Roman literature from the Roman comedy of the second century onward: the emerging importance of the City was apparently strengthened in its identity by facetious references to those dwelling outside it or not conversant with its *mores*. However well the Faliscans may have thought of themselves, and whatever status they may have had among the city-states of Etruria (cf. e.g. their repeated appeals to the councils of the Etruscan councils at Fanum Voltumnae mentioned in §2.5.1), there are no indications that they were held in any kind of regard at Rome.

(c) Language status. What status the language or dialect has can be approached from two directions: the status it had within the group itself and the status it had among the ‘outsiders’. Unfortunately, there are simply no sources on the status of Faliscan either among the Faliscans or among the outsiders: the latter are silent to the extent that there are not even contemporary Roman sources to remark on the fact that the Faliscans spoke a different language or dialect in any way.²⁹

Dench’s (2005:298-361) excellent treatment of language as a factor in Roman ethnic identity understandably starts from the first century BCE, when authors such as Caesar and Cicero were establishing what was ‘good’ Latin and by and large decided that this was the Latin of the Roman upper class. In this period, the mention of ‘rustic’ Latin begins to make its appearance, *rustici* and *antiqui* often being treated side by side by authors on language: well might the rustic still speak as of old, but in the City, men moved with the times. Earlier authors had made jokes and puns based on the other Italic languages, e.g. Lucilius’ *primum Pacilius thesorophylax pater abzet* 581M (where *abzet* ‘has died’ = Paelignian *afded* Pg 9) but there are no more examples of this from the first century BCE onward: Roman Latin now became *de rigueur*, as appears from the remarks on the apparently well-remembered rural speech of Augustus (Suet. *Aug.* 87-8).

(d) Functional distribution of the language involved. A language or dialect can stay alive much longer if it has specific functions within the community that speaks it, especially if these functions are connected to other possible rallying points for ethnic identification such as religion (cf. e.g. the survival of Hebrew in the Diaspora). Unfortunately, I can find no trace of an institution where Faliscan played a part, apart, perhaps, from ritual: from the customs in Rome (especially the *instauratio*) and the way in which the Umbrian rituals of the *Tabulae Iguinae* are presented, it could be

²⁹ The earliest author who remarks upon the Latin of Falerii is Varro (*L* 5.162, see §6.6.1).

expected that the precise wording of rituals was important in the ager Faliscus as well, and its autochthonous cults may have retained prayers recited in Faliscan while the written and spoken language of the area became successively more like Roman Latin. Although there is no evidence for this, it is worth noting that the last 'Faliscan' inscription, or, perhaps rather 'inscription trying to appear Faliscan' (LF/Lat 214) is a public dedication and may perhaps reflect an older wording of the same text. Other institutions appear to be lacking: there are no indications that Faliscan played any role in the *carmina Fescennina*, for instance.

(e) Population size. The number of speakers of Faliscan is the one factor where some quantification can be done, if only to illustrate the difficulties and the overly large number of *a priori* assumptions involved. The population of the ager Faliscus can never have been very great, and may be estimated to some extent from calculations based on land-use such as the ones applied by Ámpolo (1980) to early Latium. The overall size of the area, depending on where the borders were situated, was no more than 400-500 km² at the very most. Even today a sizeable part of the terrain (e.g. the river-gorges) is unusable for agriculture: in antiquity, this part must have been larger, given the amount of woodland on the ranges to the north and west (§2.1.1). Part of the usable land was used for the rearing of cattle and sheep (cf., for a later period, Ov. *Epist.* 4.8.41, *Am.* 3.13.14=*Fast.* 1.84=*Epist.* 4.4.32, Plin. *NH* 2.106.230) rather than for food-crops: in all, the arable land cannot have exceeded 30,000 ha, which would have fed 45,000 people at the very best. For the inhabitants to be considered wealthy, however, the true number of inhabitants must have been much lower, probably in the order of 20,000-22,500, at any given period, if not lower than that.³⁰

A very much higher number, however, is implied by the size of the Faliscan army in the war of 241, where the sources (Eutrop. 2.28, Oros. 4.11.10) give the number of Faliscan casualties as 15,000. This number may of course be overstated, but in view of the quite extraordinary double triumph awarded for this victory, it cannot have been much lower than 10,000, unless there had been a gross relaxation of the legal requirement of 5,000 enemy casualties for a triumph (V. Max. 2.8.1). Even if the number of casualties was *c.* 10,000, the army itself must have been 15,000-20,000 strong or more, and as it would have included most freeborn men in the age range of 18-45, this would point to a very much higher number of inhabitants than the one arrived at above, perhaps even 75,000-80,000. I find this very hard to accept: either the Faliscan army had been bolstered up with troops from other areas, or both consuls were given a triumph on just *one* total of 5,000 enemy casualties.

³⁰ Ámpolo (1980:28-9) reached much lower estimates for Latin towns of comparable size: (1) Rome (seventh and sixth centuries): area 435 km², est. 18,000 inhabitants; (2) Tibur: area 351 km², est. 15,000 inhabitants; (3) Praeneste: area 262.5 km², est. 10,000-12,000 inhabitants.

A related point is the number of non-Faliscans that moved into the area after the war and the division of the territory. Falerii Novi may have housed a few thousand inhabitants, perhaps,³¹ but it can only be guessed at how many people were given allotments in the rural area that was now Roman. Apparently there was still land to spare at the time of Cicero (*Leg. agr.* 2.25.66), and Di Stefano Manzella (1990:366-7) assumed that it was used for a land-grant to veterans of the triumvirs: this, however, was several (civil) wars after the time Faliscan had ceased to exist.

(f) Distribution of the speakers. As said above (§2.1.1-2), the ager Faliscus was a well-defined area with clear natural boundaries, with a major sites at Falerii and originally at Narce as well, and a number of smaller towns e.g. in the north at Corchiano, Vignanello, Grotta Porciosa, and in the south-east, e.g. at Rignano Flaminio. This changes abruptly after the war of 241: Falerii Veteres is reduced to insignificance and at worst depopulated, several of the smaller sites disappear, and the area becomes ‘ruralized’, perhaps on purpose: Roman Falerii Novi now emerges as the one dominant centre, and it may be presumed that this town had a largely or predominantly Latin-speaking population (§2.6.2). Half of the land becomes Roman property, with speakers of Latin settling among the speakers of Faliscan: the Roman area may even have cut the Faliscan area in two. This change in habitation pattern must have had severe consequences for the distribution of the speakers of Faliscan.

(g) Family and intermarriage. If what we know about the role of the family in Rome is applicable to the ager Faliscus, the family or clan must have been one of the most important social networks.³² In the ager Faliscus the coherence of the family structure is in a sense underlined even further by the use of the family tombs (§2.3.1). Although it is hard to tell if family traditions included keeping to the old ways in matters of language too, there are signs of family mannerisms like the spelling *p* in the name *Umpricius* in a Latin inscription from Falerii Novi (Lat 219). Related to the subject of family is that of intermarriage. The heterogeneous origins of the gentilicia found in the Faliscan texts show that Faliscan-speaking families probably intermarried with Etruscan-, Sabellic- or Latin-speaking ones, but these data cannot be taken at face value, let alone quantified (cf. §7.10.3). During the period when the ager Faliscus was divided into a Roman and a Faliscan part, from shortly after the war of 241 until the implementation of the *lex Iulia* at the end of the Social War, marriage with Roman or Latin citizens may have been restricted by the *ius conubii*.

³¹ Cristofani’s (1984:30-1) estimates of the populations of a number of Etruscan cities are based on the size of these towns’ urban area: according to these calculations, the inhabitants of Falerii Novi (c.38 ha) may have numbered slightly over 6,000.

³² Terrenato (2007:13) in fact claims that “clan mentality in many cases came before civic loyalty and ethnic identity.” This may well be correct, but in the absence of data on the subject from the ager Faliscus I cannot pursue this further.

2.8. Linguistic evaluation: Faliscan and its neighbours

2.8.1. Faliscan and Etruscan. As said in §2.4.2, I regard Faliscan and Capenate as the remains of a Latin once spoken throughout South Etruria, but which was replaced by Etruscan, except in the ager Faliscus and Capenas. It is surprising that a relatively small area like the ager Faliscus was able to preserve its linguistic independence, and as this autonomy was clearly not based on great military might or superior resources, it can only be explained by geographical position. Until the opening of the ‘Sutri Gap’ in the late fourth century, the *silva Cimina* must have formed a considerable barrier and may have significantly slowed the eastward spread of Etruscan influence from the great Etruscan centres of coastal South Etruria to the area.³³ From the south, the ager Faliscus was easily accessible, but here there were no major Etruscan centres until the emergence of Veii. Yet the physical barrier of the *silva Cimina* cannot by itself have proved insurmountable, and can in any case have had no real influence on the preservation of Latin in the ager Capenas. At least as important, therefore, must have been the strategic position with regard to the trade routes along the Tiber and to the interior. The economic importance of these routes may have been responsible not only for the area’s independence, but may also have been a factor in the eventual ascendancy of the centrally placed Falerii.

In view of the rise and expansion of Veii in the sixth and fifth centuries, it remains to be seen whether the ager Faliscus could eventually have preserved its independent identity. Veii, located on the doorstep of the ager Faliscus and Capenas, became a dominant neighbour, not only economically and culturally, but also politically, and by the late fifth century had swallowed Capena and was encroaching on the ager Faliscus, founding or taking over Sutrium and Nepete. Yet even the cultural or political usurpation by Veii of the major southern site of the area, at Narce, did not lead to a Faliscan submission to Veii. Cultural identity may have played a part here, for the epigraphic material shows that Narce was Etruscan and Falerii was Faliscan at least as far as the language was concerned. I find it hard to imagine that the rise of Veii, partly at the cost of the ager Faliscus, would *not* have been accompanied by some form of friction or conflict in the sixth and fifth centuries, a conflict that took place beyond the reach or the interest of the Roman and Greek historians. These depict Falerii as the Romans encountered it, an ally of Veii in the wars of the late fifth and early fourth centuries. At that time both towns were forced to cooperate against Rome to protect their areas and trade-routes through the Tiber valley, and self-interest may have overcome any lingering disagreements.

³³ By then, Etruscan influence had long since reached the Tiber valley to the north of the ager Faliscus. It is an interesting fact that Sutrium, although located on the ‘Sutri Gap’, appears to have been founded and controlled from the south rather than from the west.

Veii was then removed from the board by Rome, with the effect of making the ager Faliscus into something of an ‘independent agent’ within South Etruria. For some reason the Romans chose to preserve the political independence of the ager Faliscus instead of settling it like the lands of Veii and its dependencies, and they continued to do so in spite of frequent Faliscan revolts, perhaps because subduing the area would have cost more trouble than occasionally defeating its probably not overly large military might. The ager Faliscus thus found itself in a more or less precariously independent position on the border between the Roman and the Etruscan spheres. Although politically its alliance with the Etruscan states continued, economically the area probably still depended largely on the now Roman south; culturally, it had been Etruscan to a large extent, but linguistically, the ager Faliscus had been brought back into the orbit of the Latin-speaking community.

2.8.2. Faliscan and the Sabellic languages. There most certainly were contacts with the Sabellic area: the Tiber crossings near Lucus Feroniae at the south end of the ager Capenas and near the Grotta Porciosa site at the north-eastern end of the ager Faliscus, which connected South Etruria with the Sabine- and Umbrian-speaking interior must have been important to traffic. Although reference to incursions has often been made, these appear to have been on a fairly small scale and appear to concern the ager Capenas more than the ager Faliscus. Most of the contacts were probably in the form of trade and transhumance farming. Although Sabellic epigraphic and linguistic features occur in several inscriptions (mostly from the ager Capenas, but MLF/Cap 474* is purportedly from Falerii Novi), these are probably phenomena of interference rather than of borrowing: extensive linguistic influence from Sabellic languages is certainly absent, however intensive the contacts between the speakers of Faliscan and Sabellic languages may have been. For a further discussion, see §9.3.

2.8.3. Faliscan and Latin. The inhabitants of the ager Faliscus must have been in fairly frequent contact with Latium from the early days on, as is shown not only by the cultural peculiarities that the areas shared, but also by what is known of the trade routes along the Tiber and the areas they served. How these contacts were affected by the emergence of Narce and Veii is difficult to assess, especially where the linguistic side is concerned. It is noteworthy that a major morphological change like the replacement of the second-declension genitive singular ending *-osio* by *-i*, which must have taken place during the *floruit* of Veii, affected both Latium and the ager Faliscus (cf. §4.4).

Then, in the early fourth century, Veii was destroyed, and its dependencies Capena, Sutrium, and Nepete passed into Roman hands, the latter two now linked to Rome by the first stage of the Via Amerina. Although this must again have brought the inhabitants of the ager Faliscus into more frequent contact with speakers of Latin

as spoken in Latium (cf. §9.4.1), it did not result in a spread of this variant of Latin to the ager Faliscus, which together with its lively political autonomy preserved its cultural and linguistic independence while the ager Capenas became Latinized (§9.4.3). Yet in spite of the ager Faliscus adhering to its own form of Latin, important morphological changes that took place during this period again seem to have affected both Latium and the ager Faliscus, namely the replacement of the first-declension genitive singular ending *-as* by *-ai* (§4.2.2) and the replacement of the third singular perfect ending *-ed* by *-et* (§5.2.2e).

The outcome of the war of 241 must have changed this situation drastically. The historical and archaeological evidence points to a decline in population, and perhaps to a dispersion of the remaining speakers of Faliscan over farmsteads and townships that were insignificant in comparison to the new Roman centre of the area. Immigrants from Rome and Latium, and probably also from the Roman colonies at Capena, Sutrium, and Nepete, came to this new Falerii and to other parts of the area, taking out allotments and settling among the native population. New roads opened up what had been a fairly closed-off territory to traffic on a larger scale and over much greater distances than before. The ager Faliscus, which until the end of the First Punic War had been an autonomous force of local significance within the network of the city-states of South Etruria, now became an insignificant part of a rapidly expanding world of which Rome was at the centre.

All these factors would have been conducive to a speedy adaptation of Faliscan to mainstream Latin, while there seem to have been few factors that would have been an inspiration to the preservation of Faliscan. If Falerii Novi was a colony, contacts with the inhabitants of the remainder of the area may to some extent have been restricted by the regulations of the *ius commercii* and the *ius conubii*, but these can hardly have exercised any crucial influence. Traditions of family may have played some role in the preservation of Faliscan, but these must have been offset by the social uprooting following the war. Traditions of religion, too, may have played a role, but even though the cult of Juno may have been important to the Faliscan ethnic identity, religion was apparently not powerful enough to preserve its dialect.

With the loss of its political independence, the area lost an important possible rallying-point for the preservation of its cultural or linguistic identity. The Roman roads, which bypassed the native centres, took away its strategic position and commercial role, and even the name of the town after which the whole area was called had been usurped by the new Roman centre. Under these circumstances, the local dialect, too, was bound to disappear, especially as it does not appear to have had any specific status or function that could have ensured its survival: Faliscan does not appear to have been associated with the *carmina Fescennina*, or to have played a role in the cults that continued at Falerii Veteres, or to have been used for long in the administration of the new town (§9.4.1).

CHAPTER 2

Faliscan seems to have disappeared from the written record during the first half of the second century, both in the Roman-controlled and in the 'independent' part, fated to dwindle into an obscurity of twenty centuries. Whatever non-standard linguistic features the area preserved after that date were now just part of a local variant of what now became 'rustic Latin', 'Falerian' rather than 'Faliscan' – *sic rure loquuntur*.