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Source: *The Journal of Roman Studies*, Vol. 10 (1920), pp. 29-36

Published by: [Society for the Promotion of Roman Studies](#)

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## THE SITE OF LUCUS FERONIAE.

By Miss L. R. TAYLOR.

Lucus Feroniae, the scene of a great yearly assemblage in honour of the goddess Feronia and subsequently the site of an Augustan colony which took the name of the ancient grove, lay somewhere in the territory of Capena in south-eastern Etruria. The region presents great topographical difficulties.<sup>1</sup> Except for Capena itself, which has been located with some degree of certainty on the hill of Civitucola, none of the ancient settlements, of which there are several in the city's extensive *ager*, has been definitely identified.<sup>2</sup> This paper has been written in the belief that a fresh consideration of the evidence for the goddess's shrine will aid in determining its location and will present material of value for its bearing on the history of Capena and the origin of Feronia's cult.

The grove of Feronia to which Cato's *lucus Capenatis* (*Orig.* frg. 30 Peter<sup>2</sup>) and Vergil's *lucosque Capenos* (*Aen.* vii, 697) probably refer is first definitely mentioned in a tradition preserved by Livy and Dionysios of Halicarnassus, according to which Roman and Sabine merchants quarrelled at a fair held at the goddess's shrine and thus provided Tullus Hostilius with a pretext for declaring war against the Sabines. Although there is no statement as to the location of the shrine, it is natural to assume from the context of the two passages<sup>3</sup> that it lay in Sabine rather than in Latin territory. The scene of the fair has accordingly been localized by various students of Roman Religion at Trebula Mutuesca on the Via Salaria where inscriptional evidence shows the existence of an important republican cult of Feronia.<sup>4</sup> But the complete lack of literary evidence for this shrine,

I am indebted to the American Academy in Rome for the opportunity to pursue, in Rome, as Fellow in Classical Archaeology, investigations, the results of which are partially embodied in this paper.

<sup>1</sup> The map of the region about Capena (fig. 2) was prepared by Mr. James H. Chillman, Fellow in Architecture of the American Academy in Rome.

<sup>2</sup> The identification of Capena, first suggested by Galletti, *Capena, Municipio dei Romani*, Rome, 1756, is made practically certain by the inscriptions of Capena found on the site and by the existence of an extensive necropolis. It has been seriously questioned only by De Rossi (*Ann. dell'Inst.* 1883,

pp. 253-284) who believed that the hill of Civitucola was the site of Lucus Feroniae. Against this view see Bormann's remarks, *C.I.L.* xi, p. 571.

<sup>3</sup> Livy i, 30; Dionysios iii, 32.

<sup>4</sup> *C.I.L.* ix, 4873-4875. Fabretti, *Inscr. Ant.* pp. 452-453 first suggested this view which has been accepted by Preller-Jordan, *Röm. Mythol.* i, p. 427; Steuding, s.v. Feronia in Roscher's *Lexicon*; J. A. Hild in Daremberg and Saglio, *Dict. des Ant.*; W. Warde Fowler in *Roman Festivals*, p. 253. Wissowa, however (*Religion und Kultus der Römer*<sup>2</sup>, p. 285, and s.v. Feronia, Pauly-Wissowa), accepts the identification with Lucus Feroniae.

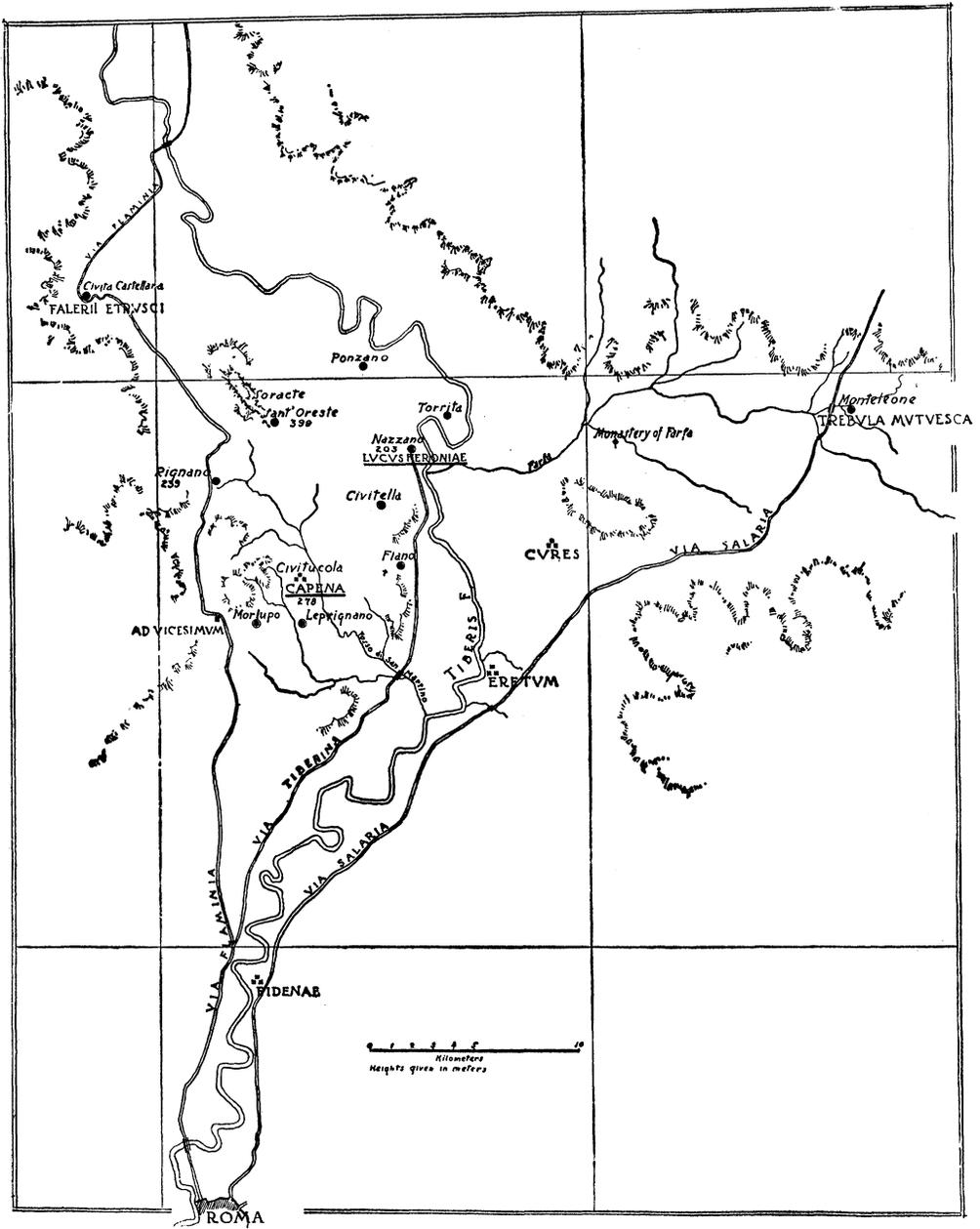


FIG. 2. MAP OF CAPENA AND ITS SURROUNDINGS (p. 29).

which stands in contrast to the numerous references to the grove of Feronia in the territory of Capena, has caused recent students of epigraphy and geography unanimously to assign this early festival to Lucus Feroniae near Soracte where Strabo (v, 2, 9) mentions a gathering held every year in honour of Feronia (πανήγυρις)<sup>1</sup> in his day and Livy (xxvi, 11, 8) says that the neighbouring people offered the first fruits of the season to the goddess. The great yearly fairs attended by merchants, farmers, and artisans at the shrine are described by Dionysios as ἀγορὰι . . . λαμπρόταται τῶν ἐν ἄλλοις τισὶ τόποις τῆς Ἰταλίας ἀγομένων. The goddess's temple was plundered of its great treasure of gold and silver by Hannibal on his withdrawal from Latium in 211, the Carthaginian soldiers in fear of retribution from the goddess leaving behind an abundant *stips* of *aes rude*.<sup>2</sup> In the following year, and again in 196, it was the scene of *prodigia* that were reported to Rome.<sup>3</sup>

With the possible exception of an inscription now at Nepi said by Fulvio Orsini to have been found *sub Soracte monte*, no dedications to the goddess have been discovered in the region.<sup>4</sup> There was probably no independent municipal organization at the grove until the early empire when Augustus carried out Caesar's plan<sup>5</sup> of establishing there a colony of veterans. The name of the colony<sup>6</sup>—colonia Iulia Felix Lucoferonensis—is found in the only inscription that gives evidence of the municipal organization of the town (*C.I.L.* xi, 3938) M(arco) Silio Epaphrodito patrono seviro Aug(ustalium) magistro iuvenum iterum iuvenes Lucoferonenses patrono ob merita quod amphithe[a]tru[m] col(oniae) Iul(iae) Felici(s) Lucofer(onensis) s(ua) p(ecunia) f(ecit) dedicavitque. L(ocus) d(atus) d(ecreto) d(ecurionum). H(onore) c(ontentus) i(mpensam) r(emisit). In military inscriptions Lucus Feroniae is recorded as the native city of a veteran and of a member of the fire corps at Ostia.<sup>7</sup>

There are in the supposed territory of Capena three commanding sites besides Civitucola at which discoveries of inscriptions and

<sup>1</sup> Strabo here erroneously attributes to Feronia's cult ceremonies that belonged to Apollo Soranus on Soracte.

<sup>2</sup> Livy xxvi, 11, 8–9: inde ad lucum Feroniae pergit ire, templum ea tempestate inclutum divitiis; Capenates aliique qui acolae eius erant primitias frugum eo donaque alia pro copia portantes multo auro argenteoque id exornatum habebant; iis omnibus donis tum spoliatum templum, aeris acervi cum rudera milites religione inducti iacerent post protectionem Hannibalis magni inventi. On this passage is based Silius Italicus's account, *Punica*, xiii, 83–91.

<sup>3</sup> Livy xxvii, 4, 14; xxxiii, 26, 8.

<sup>4</sup> *C.I.L.* xi, 3199. The fact that in the slightly earlier collections of Accursius and Smetius this inscription is quoted with no indication that it was not found at Nepi causes one to doubt whether Orsini may not have been led to make his statement

through his knowledge of the existence of Feronia's shrine near Soracte.

<sup>5</sup> Such a plan on Caesar's part is probable from Cicero, *ad Fam.* ix, 17, 2.

<sup>6</sup> The mention of Lucus Feroniae as a colony in Pliny's list of Augustan communities (*N.H.* iii, 51) shows that Augustus had some share in establishing the colony either as *triumvir* or as sole ruler. The title Iulia that the colony had (*C.I.L.* xi, 3938, cf. *Notizie degli Scavi*, 1911, p. 450) is further support for its foundation by Augustus. Cf. also Ptolemyiii, 1, 43; *Gromatici veteres*, ed. Lachmann, p. 46, 17; p. 47, 19; p. 256, 19. Strabo's reference (v, 2, 9) to Φερωνία πόλις shows that there was an independent community at the grove in his day.

<sup>7</sup> *C.I.L.* vi, 2584, which shows that the tribe of Lucus Feroniae was the Voltinia; *Notizie degli Scavi*, 1911, p. 450.

archaeological remains indicate settlements of considerable importance—Sant'Oreste on a ridge adjoining Soracte, Rignano, situated also on a ridge at the twenty-sixth milestone of the Via Flaminia, and Nazzano on a hill overlooking the Tiber and the Sabine country. The discovery at or near Sant'Oreste of two imperial inscriptions referring to the municipality of Capena (*C.I.L.* xi, 3932, 3935) and of a third naming that city's tribe, the Stellatina (*C.I.L.* xi, 3959), suggests that there existed here a *vicus* incorporated with Capena, perhaps the home of the *vicani* of *C.I.L.* xi, 3936.<sup>1</sup> Unless, as is unlikely, Lucus Feroniae is to be sought in a new site, the quest seems then to be limited to the two places Nazzano and Rignano, of which Lanciani,<sup>2</sup> Bormann,<sup>3</sup> and Kiepert<sup>4</sup> prefer the former and Nissen<sup>5</sup> and Solari<sup>6</sup> the latter.<sup>7</sup>

If the provenience of the inscription *C.I.L.* xi, 3938, which is the only local record of Lucus Feroniae, could be ascertained, we should have a more satisfactory indication for the site of the colony than has hitherto been secured. Now certain facts assist in determining the region where the inscription is likely to have been found. It is preserved not on the stone but in a copy found in a manuscript of the end of the eleventh century, *Codex Vaticanus Latinus* 6808 which contains the Rule of the Sabine monastery Farfa. The inscription occurs on folio 113 at the end of the Rule. It seems to be simply a space filler before a mass of letters, documents, etc., dating in the latter part of the eleventh century. There is no word as to its origin, but it was presumably in the monastery of Farfa at the time. It so happens that the famous collection of documents known as the *Regesta* of Farfa shows that in the eleventh century Farfa had numerous holdings along the right bank of the Tiber from Fiano to Ponzano. Nazzano itself is mentioned five times in documents dating from 1010 to 1080 as the site of property acquired by the monastery,<sup>8</sup> and the church of S. Antimo just above the town, where most of the ancient remains have been found, is referred to in a fifth document of 1028.<sup>9</sup> The property of the monastery apparently did not extend as far as the Flaminian Way. The lack of mention of Rignano in this exhaustive series of documents means that Farfa had no holdings there at the period. The monastery's property

<sup>1</sup> Cf. the *vicani* of the *vicus Martis Tudertium* who, though dwelling nine miles from Tuder, were nevertheless regular citizens of the community: *C.I.L.* xi, 4742-4765.

<sup>2</sup> The identification with Nazzano was first proposed by Lanciani, *Bull. dell'Inst.* 1870, pp. 26-32.

<sup>3</sup> Bormann, *C.I.L.* xi, p. 571.

<sup>4</sup> Kiepert, *Formae Orbis Antiqui*, pl. xx, with text.

<sup>5</sup> Nissen, *Italische Landeskunde*, ii, 1, pp. 369-370.

<sup>6</sup> Solari, *Topografia storica dell'Etruria*, i, pp. 133 ff. Cf. however, the *Appendice* containing the

*Bibliografia* of the same work, p. 78, where the identification with Nazzano is accepted.

<sup>7</sup> Tomassetti, *Campagna Romana* iii, p. 279, goes back to the opinion of Dennis, *Cities and Cemeteries of Etruria*<sup>3</sup>, i, pp. 128 ff. and places the shrine at Sant'Oreste.

<sup>8</sup> *Il Regesto di Farfa compilato da Gregorio di Catino*, edited by Giorgi and Balzani, published by the *Reale Società Romana di Storia Patria*, vol. i-v, 1879-1914. For Nazzano compare vol. iv, p. 19, 164, 326; v, 55; vol. iii, p. 302, where the name is written Mazanus.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.* iv, p. 43. *Furcam quae venit a sancto Antimo.*

at Nazzano is undoubtedly a more probable site than Rignano for the provenience of the inscription.

There is little to be said against the identification of Nazzano as the site of the colony. As an examination of the two sites shows, Nazzano fits Strabo's statement that the shrine lay *ὑπὸ τῷ Σωράκτῳ ὄρει*, for the mountain dominates it hardly less than it does Rignano, which lies nearer Soracte. Silius's allusion to the brook Capenas which flows through the region has won supporters for Rignano as the shrine (xiii. 83-85) :

itur in agros  
dives ubi ante omnis colitur Feronia luco  
et sacer umectat fluvialia rura Capenas.

The Capenas, which from its name may be supposed to have passed near the town, is probably to be identified with the Fosso di San Martino (or Gramiccia) which flows past Civitucola and rises in a spring just below the church of S. Abbondio, the supposed site of the shrine at Rignano. But Silius in this passage is evidently giving a general description of the *ager Capenas* rather than a specific account of the shrine of Feronia. Great weight has attached to Nissen's argument in favour of Rignano that, situated as it was on the Via Flaminia, a road that probably represents an old line of communication, it would have been a more accessible site than Nazzano for the great celebration held every year at the goddess's sanctuary. But from Livy's account of Hannibal's visit to the shrine it is clear that the grove was then approached by other means than the newly constructed Flaminia. If, as Livy believes, Hannibal turned aside from the Via Salaria to go to Lucus Feroniae *ad flumen Tutiam sex milia passuum ab urbe*,<sup>1</sup> that is, near Fidenae where there was a much-used ancient ford, he might have taken either the Flaminia or the road along the right bank of the Tiber later called the Tiberina. But Caelius's form of the tradition which Livy quotes, whether or not it is true for Hannibal, indicates another possible approach to the grove (xxvi, 11, 10) : Caelius Romam euntem ab Ereto devertisse eo Hannibalem tradit iterque eius ab Reate Cutiliisque et ab Amiterno orditur. Caelius then believed that Hannibal on his way toward Rome turned off the Salaria at Eretum<sup>2</sup> to plunder the temple of Feronia. Since the Salaria south of Eretum follows close along the Tiber, Hannibal must have crossed the river either at Eretum or north of there. From such a position Nazzano was certainly more accessible than Rignano. In later times at least Nazzano had good lines of communication—the Tiber,<sup>3</sup> the Via

<sup>1</sup> On the identification of this stream see Nissen *op. cit.* ii, 2,606.

<sup>2</sup> On the site of Eretum see Ashby, *Papers of the British School in Rome*, iii, 1906, pp. 27 ff. and accompanying map; Persichetti, *Röm. Mitth.* 1909, p. 127.

<sup>3</sup> The Tiber could easily have been forded at a number of points, as for instance at the mouth of the Farfa. The existence of a ford near Eretum is indicated by Dionysios iii, 59. For the importance of the Tiber basin as an early line of communication, see below.

Tiberina and another road that united it with Capena and the station *ad vicesimum* on the Via Flaminia.<sup>1</sup>

The discoveries on the spot make the identification of Nazzano with Lucus Feroniae still more probable. Along the ancient road north of the town were found the remains of a necropolis in which the earliest burials date, like the oldest tombs of Civitucola, from the eighth century and show a close resemblance in the objects discovered to those in the necropolis of Capena.<sup>2</sup> At Nazzano, chiefly in the vicinity of the church of S. Antimo which occupies the highest point of the site, were found 44 inscriptions,<sup>3</sup> among which may be noted a record of *decuriones* and *seviri* which indicates an independent municipal organization on the site,<sup>4</sup> documents attesting the worship of Diana, Magna Mater, and Bona Dea,<sup>5</sup> dedications to Septimius Severus and other third-century emperors.<sup>6</sup> Near the church was excavated in 1868 a round temple about twenty metres in diameter. Unfortunately no archaeologist was present at the excavation and no satisfactory description of it exists.<sup>7</sup> From it probably came some if not all of the ancient columns of S. Antimo. With the available evidence for other cults on the site it is of course by no means certain that the temple was dedicated to Feronia.

The discoveries at Rignano are less favourable for the identification of Lucus Feroniae. The shaft, trench, and chamber tombs there dating from the eighth century to Roman times show material that has closer analogies with the necropolis of Falerii than with that of Capena. Particularly significant for the relation with the former city is the discovery of tiles inscribed in Faliscan dialect with names that occur in Faliscan inscriptions.<sup>8</sup> At and near Rignano were found 28 pagan and 48 Christian inscriptions, the latter of which come from the cemetery of Theodora.<sup>9</sup> There is no record of an independent municipal organization. Seven of the

<sup>1</sup> *Notizie degli Scavi*, 1878, p. 260; 1879, p. 112; 1880, p. 378.

<sup>2</sup> Stefani, *Notizie degli Scavi*, 1911, pp. 433-442. The finds from Nazzano are in the same room of the Museo di Villa Giulia with the objects from Civitucola and the similarity of the tomb furniture is readily apparent. Most striking are the boat-shaped *fibulae* and those with large semicircular arcs (*ad arco ingrossato*) which frequently have bronze rings inserted in the pins. See Della Seta, *Museo di Villa Giulia*, p. 355. It is noteworthy that neither at Nazzano nor at Civitucola are there finds from the Villanova period.

<sup>3</sup> *C.I.L.* xi, 3859, 3861, 3866, 3867-3870, 3871, 3874-3876, 3879-3880, 3883a, 3910-3913, 3922-3929, 3937, 3947-3949, 3951, 3953, 3966, 3986, 3988, 3991, 3997, 4001, 4005, 4008, 4019-4020, 4022-4023. The inscription *C.I.L.* xi, 4000, recorded as existing in a house belonging to the Principe del Drago at Nazzano, really comes from the neighbourhood of Forum Novum across the Tiber. It is identical with *C.I.L.* ix, 4834, which is said to have been stolen.

<sup>4</sup> *C.I.L.* xi, 3871, dated in 199 A.D.

<sup>5</sup> *C.I.L.* xi, 3859, 3861, 3866. To the cult of Bona Dea seem also to belong 3867-3870. The curious name *Sepernas* occurring in these inscriptions has been thought to refer to a *pagus* or *vicus* and has given rise to the suggestion that Nazzano was called *vicus Sepernatium*. Cf. De Rossi, l.c.

<sup>6</sup> *C.I.L.* xi, 3874-3876.

<sup>7</sup> Lanciani, l.c.; Altmann, *Die italischen Rundbauten*, p. 43.

<sup>8</sup> *C.I.Etr.* 8429-8448. On the excavations at Rignano see Gabrici, *Notizie degli Scavi*, 1912, pp. 75-81; Giglioli, *ibid.* 1914, pp. 265-281. Cf. especially the latter's comments p. 265 on the boundary between the territories of Capena and Falerii and on the impossibility of locating Lucus Feroniae at Rignano.

<sup>9</sup> *C.I.L.* xi, 3860, 3872, 3884; 3886-3887, 3891-3892, 3894, 3930-3931, 3943, 3954, 3957, 3962-3963, 3980-3981, 3983-3984, 3993, 3995, 4002, 4006, 4010, 4012, 4014, 4018, 4021. The inscriptions 4028-4075 are from the Christian cemetery of Theodora.

pagan inscriptions were set up by imperial officers of various classes who may have been stationed on the Flaminia. Among the others may be mentioned a record of a *IIIIvir quinquennalis* of Falerii found two miles south of Rignano (*C.I.L.* xi, 3930) and an archaic inscription of a *magister* who may belong to a *pagus* or *vicus* (*C.I.L.* xi, 3931). Beneath a portion of the church of S. Abbondio are the substructures and part of the walls of a temple constructed of large tufa blocks. It is possible that Rignano either belonged to the territory of Falerii which is known to have included Soracte or that it was the site of an independent community, Fescennium for instance. This town where the Fescennine verses originated is known to have been somewhere in the vicinity of Falerii and to have still existed under the Empire.<sup>1</sup> Although there is no definite means of identification, Rignano has in its favour over Corchiano and the other sites that have been proposed for Fescennium the fact that it was continuously inhabited from Etruscan to Roman times.<sup>2</sup>

Nazzano with its commanding view of Soracte and its surroundings and of the Sabine country across the Tiber was a good location for a cult centre of Sabines and Latins. The Capenates, like the Faliscans, must from their dialect have belonged to the Latin race.<sup>3</sup> At the same time the Sabine name *Hirpi* given to the devotees of Apollo Soranus on Mount Soracte indicates that there was some Sabine infiltration in the region.<sup>4</sup> On the other hand the cemeteries of Civitucola and Nazzano show a conspicuous lack of characteristically Etruscan material. In the seventh and early sixth century, to be sure, when Etruscan power had its widest extent, Capena's tombs like the cemeteries of Latium<sup>5</sup> give evidence of abundant importations of Corinthian ware that must have been due to Etruscan trade, but during the late sixth and fifth centuries in Capena as in Latium there is a conspicuous lack of Attic black and red figured ware, the most important material that the Etruscans were importing in that period. Even bucchero and the fabrics of neighbouring Falerii are none too frequent in the graves of Capena. The discoveries of the region have their closest analogies not in Etruria but in the cemeteries of Picenum, Umbria, and Latium.<sup>6</sup> In spite of the evidence that

<sup>1</sup> *Aeneid* vii, 695; Festus-Paulus, p. 76 L; Porphyrio on Horace, *Ep.* ii, 1, 145; Pliny, *N.H.* iii, 52; Dionysios, i, 21.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Buglione di Monale, *Röm. Mitth.* ii, 1887, pp. 21-36; Gamurrini, *Rend. dei Lincei*, iii, 1894, pp. 145-149.

<sup>3</sup> See the most recent publication of the inscriptions of Capena, Herbig, *C.I.Etr.* ii, 8449-8547; Lommatsch, *C.I.L.* i<sup>2</sup>, 476, 1-10.

<sup>4</sup> Servius on *Aen.* xi, 785; Paulus-Festus, p. 93 L. Cf. Strabo vi, 4, 12. The evidences of Sabine influence in this region which led Niebuhr to maintain that the Faliscans were a Sabellic people have often been exaggerated. It is improbable for instance that Juno Curritis, the chief divinity of Falerii, was a Sabine goddess. The charac-

teristic Sabine names ending in *-iedius*, *-edius* and *-idius* are almost totally absent in the district. Cf. Schulten, *Klio*, ii, 1902, pp. 167-193; 440-465; iii, 1903, 235-267.

<sup>5</sup> Pinza, *Bull. Com.* 1912, pp. 15-102; see Frank's recent survey, *Economic History of Rome*, 1920, chap. ii, and iii.

<sup>6</sup> Cf. Paribeni's admirable study of the necropolis of Capena, *Mon. An.* xvi, 1906, col. 277-490, especially col. 489, where the objects that suggest relations with other Italic sites are listed. Resemblances between the finds of Capena and other places in Latium (cf. for instance the *fibulae* in which large bronze rings are inserted) may readily be observed in the Museo Kircheriano. Cf. also Della Seta, *Museo di Villa Giulia*, pp. 321-356.

Capena at the end of the fifth century was acting politically with the Etruscan league (Livy v, 8–24) it would seem that the Etruscans retained no such hold there as they had at the neighbouring Falerii. Capena's trade relations seem to have been chiefly with Italic peoples who could be reached through the Tiber basin, the importance of which as an early line of communication is constantly becoming more evident.<sup>1</sup> The fair in Feronia's grove may well have served as a gathering place for the interchange of wares among these peoples.<sup>2</sup>

If, as the literary tradition and the archaeological discoveries indicate, this the greatest shrine of Feronia is to be associated not with the Etruscans but with the Italic race, there is reason to doubt the view, generally accepted by students of religion since Schulze's<sup>3</sup> remarkable book appeared, that Feronia took her name from an Etruscan *gens*. The lack of cult centres of the goddess in Etruria and the evidence for Feronia's worship in Picenum, Umbria, Sabinum, and the Volscian country, including early cults at Pisaurum, Amiternum, Trebula Mutuesca, and Terracina, give further support to the belief that the goddess was, if not necessarily Sabine, as Varro asserts,<sup>4</sup> certainly Italic in origin.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Paribeni, l.c. col. 489; Pinza, l.c. pp. 58–59.

<sup>2</sup> This suggestion was made by Paribeni, l.c. col. 490.

<sup>3</sup> Schulze, *Zur Geschichte der lateinischen Eigennamen*, p. 165. Cf. Herbig, *C.I.Etr.* ii, p. 3, who notes that the Etruscan name *ferē* which Schulze posited has actually been found in an inscription of the *ager Faliscus* (8399).

<sup>4</sup> Varro, *L.L.* v, 74. The Sabine origin of the goddess, which one would hesitate to accept on Varro's authority, is favoured by the early cults

at Trebula Mutuesca and at Amiternum and by the fact that the *nomen Fercnius* occurs chiefly among Sabellic peoples. It is found in two inscriptions from Sabinum, one from the Vestini, five from Picenum, two from Aquileia (where there was an important cult of Feronia), one from Rome, and on a brick stamp from Naples. It does not occur either in Etruria or in greater Latium.

<sup>5</sup> On the cult of Feronia see Wissowa, s.v. Pauly-Wissowa, and *Religion und Kultus der Römer*<sup>2</sup>, pp. 285 f.