

Pavia International Summer School of Indo-European Linguistics
 September 2015
 Karin W. Tikkanen

INTRODUCTION TO LATIN and FALISCAN

The Latin language began as a small dialect within the multicultural linguistic patch-work that was the early Apennine peninsula. Through the centuries, and due to decisive colonization and warfare, the Romans managed to subjugate first the entire peninsula. An important date in this conquest was the battle of the Etruscan city of Veii, in 396 BCE.

After the start of the First Punic War in 264 BCE the Romans ruled most of the Apennine peninsula, and at the end of the war they had begun their expansion also outside of the peninsula, with colonies on the island as well as in Spain. At the end of the Third Punic War the Romans conquered the Po valley, and by the time of the death of Caesar they ruled uninhibited over the entire Italia boot.



1. A brief history of Latin

Given its long history as the language of a political and social dominant power, Latin provides the reader with a benignly large corpus documenting different stages in the linguistic development over several centuries.

The history of the language can be divided into different periods, in relation to the history of the Roman-speaking community.

Archaic Latin

The earliest traces of the language, from the time of the introduction of writing in the 7th century down to the first appearance of literary texts in the mid-3rd century, are referred to as

Archaic Latin (ALat.). This corpus consists of the first written specimens of Latin, the earliest of which may be as old as from the late 8th century, the so-called **Fibula Praenestina** (CIL I² 3), a small, golden fibula reputedly discovered during the excavations of a tomb in Praeneste. Other early inscriptions from the 7th and 6th centuries originate from **Praeneste**, from **Caere** and **Gabii**, from **Lavinium** and from **Rome** itself. There are also excerpts from the Law of the Twelve Tables, a series of laws composed at some point in the mid-5th century. The original bronze tables are lost, and the text is transmitted in fragments in Roman authors.

Early Latin

The second phase in the history of Latin literacy is called **Early Latin (ELat.)**, and consists of **pre-classic texts of different length**. The oldest sample of a genuine Latin text of any length preserved in its original form, that is on its original inscriptional carrier, is the so-called *Senatus Consultum de Bacchanalibus* from 186, a decision of the senate in Rome aimed at the allied communities and prohibiting unregulated Bacchic worship.

Classical Latin

The literary language of the later Republic up until the end of the reign of Augustus is labelled **Classical Latin (CLat. or Lat.)**. This was the result of a conscious refinement of the earlier language, and consisted partly of choices among structures already present, partly of patterns inspired by Greek structures. Most of the content matter of the style derives from the works of the orator Marcus Tullius Cicero (106 – 43), who also became the standard for most of the other literary genres to follow. Syntactic innovations of the style include the elaboration of periodic sentence structure and in the participial and infinitival syntax, together with the formalization of the principles for prose composition and the use of subordinated clauses.

2. Archaic Latin orthography

The earliest Latin inscriptions are written in an alphabet that was derived from the southern Etruscan alphabet. Writing was mostly retrograde (from right to left), or the direction of moved from right to left to right again, across the surface (*boustrophedon*), just as in early Etrusca and Greek inscriptions.

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-------------------|-----|-----|-----|-------|------|
| <i>Archaic</i> | A | B | C | D | E | F | G | H | I | K | L | M | N | O | P | Q | R | S | T | V | X |
| <i>Classical</i> | A | B | C | D | E | F | G | H | I | K | L | M | N | O | P | Q | R | S | T | V | X |
| <i>Translit.</i> | a | b | c | d | e | f | g | h | i | k | l | m | n | o | p | q | r | s | t | u | x |
| <i>Phonetic</i> | [a] | [b] | [k] | [d] | [e] | [f] | [g] | [h] | [i,y] | [k] | [l] | [m] | [n] | [o] | [p] | [k ^w] | [r] | [s] | [t] | [u,w] | [ks] |

The history of the Latin alphabet

In the earliest **Etruscan** inscriptions the script is very similar to the **West Greek** alphabet. So-called “dead” letters were initially preserved, as signs used only in the enumeration of

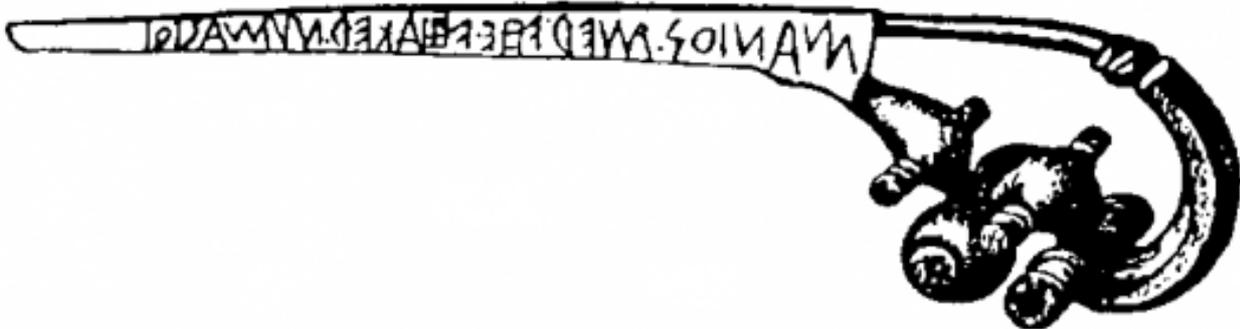
the letters of the alphabet, but never in any proper inscription. Etruscan apparently **lacked a distinction for voice**, and **dead letters** include the signs for the voiced labial and dental stops, i.e. and <D>, together with the letter <O> for the rounded back vowel.

These signs are all present in the earliest Etruscan *abecedaria*. From the beginning of the 6th century this was simplified to a more correct Etruscan sequence, leaving only those signs actually used in the epigraphy, and , <D>, <O> were lost.

The later southern and northern Etruscan alphabets differ in the number of signs used for writing velars. Southern inscriptions have three signs, used in specific phonological contexts: <C> before front vowels /i/ and /e/, <K> before /a/, and <Q> before any back sound. The alphabet of the northern regions only preserve the sign <K> for any velar sound.

Latin proper *abecedaria* continue the signs and <D>, but use <C> for /k/ as in Etruscan, and the more archaic Latin inscriptions also continue the Etruscan triad pattern of signs for velars. In the mid-3rd century a new sign <G> was created, by the addition of an extra stroke to the letter <C>.

A third innovative change of the Etruscan alphabet is the new sign for /f/. Towards the end of the 6th century, the writers of Etruscan started using the new sign <8> as a replacement for the earlier digraph <FH>. Latin instead simplified the digraph using the first element, <F>.



MANIOS MED FHE:FHAKED NUMASIOI (retrograde)

Manius me fecit Numerio

”Manius made me/had me made for Numerio”

The *Fibula Praenesta*, perhaps the oldest Latin inscription, if so apr. 675 BCE (CIL I² 3)¹

¹ For a discussion of the authenticity of the fibula, in connection with that of another questioned ”first”, the Kensington Rune Stone, see Karin Tikkanen (2011) The Consequences of Truth, in *Bulleting of the History of Archaeology* (<http://doi.org/10.5334/bha.22113>).

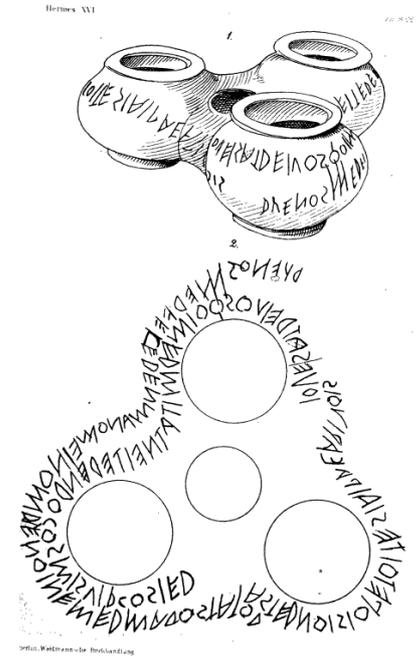
Some sample Latin texts (mainly Archaic)

Duenos inscription, c. 550 BCE. Rome

The *Duenos* inscriptions is a small three-partite vessel. The inscriptions encircles the entire vessel, and is most likely a curse preventing its theft by "an evil man".

Below is the transcription and one of many possible interpretations:

- the direct transcription
- direct transcription with possible macrons and word breaks
- a speculative interpretation and translation into Classical Latin
- an English translation of that transcription, interpretation and translation.



Line 1:

- IOVESATDEIVOSQOIMEDMITATNEITEDEDOCOSMISVIRCOSIED**
- iouesāt deivos qoi mēd mitāt, nei tēd endō cosmis vircō siēd
- Iurat deos qui me mittit, ni in te (= erga te) comis virgo sit
- The person who sends me prays to the gods, lest the girl be not kind towards thee

Line 2:

- ASTEDNOISIOPETOITESIAIPAKARIVOIS**
- as(t) tēd noisi o(p)petoit esiāi pākā riuois
- at te (...) paca rivis
- without thee (...) calm with [these] rivers

Line 3:

- DVENOSMEDFECEDENMANOMEINOMDVENOINEMEDMALOSTATOD**
- duenos mēd fēced en mānōm einom duenōi nē mēd malo(s) statōd
- Bonus me fecit in manum einom bono, ne me malus (tollito, clepito)
- A good man made me in his own?? hands for a good man, in case an evil man take me.

Scipionum elogia et sepulcrum Scipionum. c.270 onwards. Rome.

The Tomb of the Scipios was the tomb of the patrician Scipio family during the Roman Republic, beginning in the early 3rd century BCE down to the early 1st century CE.

CIL I² 6-7: *Lucius Cornelius Scipio Barbatus*, consul in 298.

CORNELIVS·LVCIVS SCIPIO·BARBATVS
GNAIVOD·PATRE·PROGNATVS FORTIS·VIR·SAPIENSQVE
QVOIVS·FORMA·VIRTUTEI PARIVMA·FVIT
CONSOL CENSOR·AIDILIS QVEI·FVIT·APVD·VOS
TAVRASIA·CISAVNA SAMNIO·CEPIT
SVBIGIT·OMNE·LOVCANAM OPSIDESQVE·ABDOVCIT



CIL I² 8-9: *L. Cornelius Scipio, son of Barbatus*. Born c. 300, consul in 259 during the First Punic War

L·CORNELIO·L·F·SCIPIO / AIDILES·COSOL·CESOR
HONC·OINO·PLOIRVME CONSENTIONT·R[OMANE]
DVONORO·OPTVMO FVISE·VIRO
LVCION·SCIPIONE·FILIOS·BARBATI
CONSOL·CENSOR·AIDILIS HIC·FVET·A[PVD VOS]
HEC·CEPIT·CORSICA ALERIAQUE·VRBE
DEDET·TEMPESTATEBVS AIDE·MERETO [D.]

CORNELIO L F SCIPIO
AIDILES·COSOL·CESOR

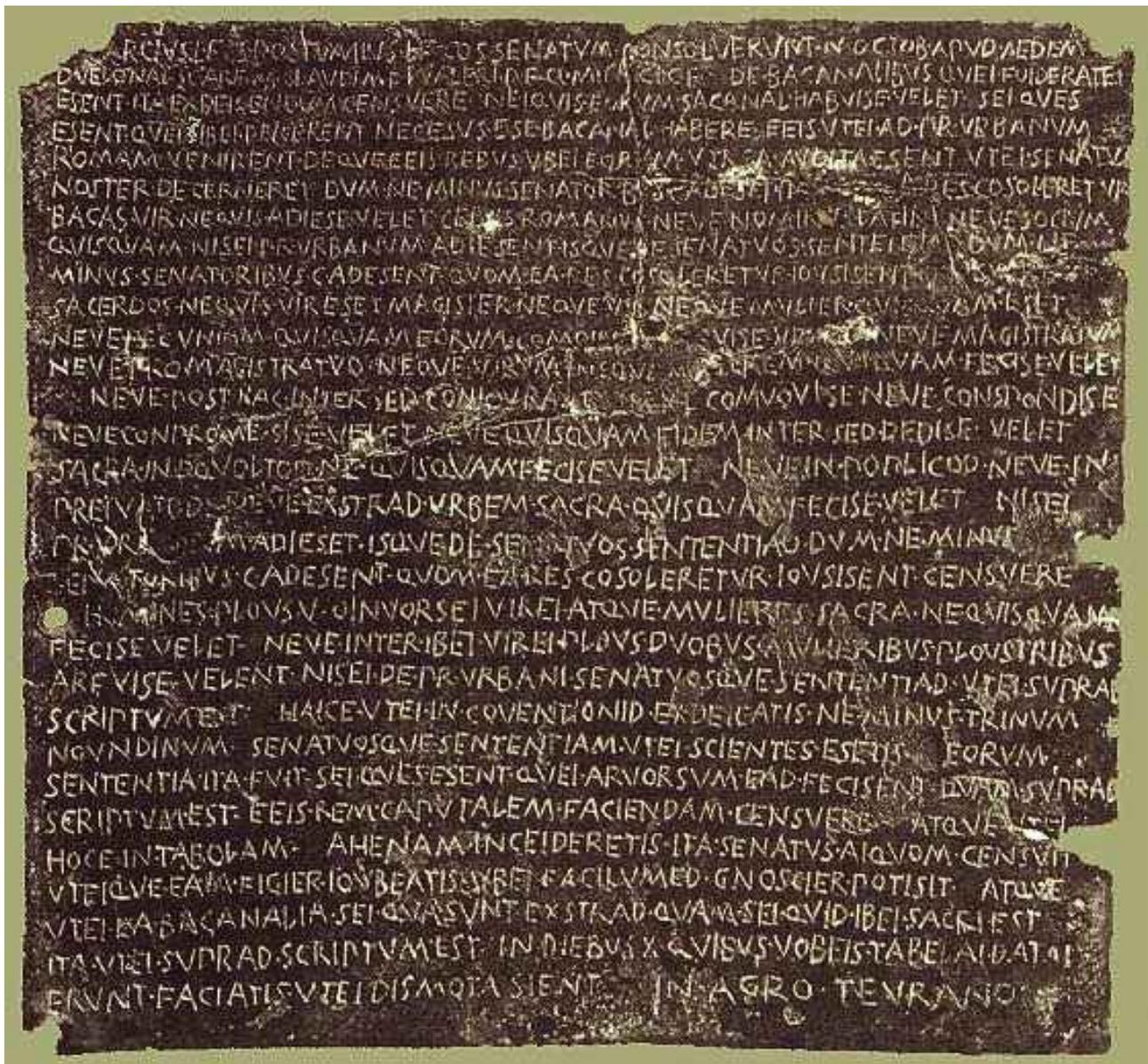
HONC·OINO·PL·VIRVME·CO·SENTIONT·R
DVONORO·OPTVMO·FVISE·VIRO
LVCION·SCIPIONE·FILIOS·BARBATI
CONSOL·CENSOR·AIDILIS·HIC·FVET·A
HEC·CEPIT·CORSICA·ALERIAQUE·VRBE
DEDET·TEMPESTATEBVS·AIDE·MERETO

CIL I² 10: *P. Cornelius Scipio* (aug. 180)

QVEI·APICEINSIGNE·DIAL[]AMINIS·GESISTEI
 MORS·PERFE[]TVA·VT·ESSENT·OMNIA
 BREVIA·HONOS·FAMA·VIRTVS·QVE
 GLORIA·ATQVE·INGENIVM·QVIBVSSEI
 IN·LONGA·LICV[]SET·TIBEVTER·VITA
 FACILE·FACTEI[]SVPERASES·GLORIAM
 MAIORVM·QVA·RE·LVBENS·TE·INGREMIV
 SCIPIO·RECIP[]T·TERRA·PVBLI
 PROGNAVTV·PVBLIO·CORNELI

Senatus consultum de Bacchanalibus, 186 BCE. Triolo.

The *senatus consultum de Bacchanalibus* ("senatorial decree concerning the Bacchanalia") is an important Early Latin inscription. The content is a decree from the senate prohibiting the celebration of the Bacchanalia throughout all Italy, except in certain special cases which must be approved specifically by the Senate.



The Bacchanalia cult was held to be a threat to the security of the state, and investigators were appointed, with rewards offered to informants. Legal processes were also put in place and the Senate began the official suppression of the cult throughout Italy. According to Livy, many committed suicide to avoid indictment. After the conspiracy had been quelled the Bacchanalia still survived in southern Italy.

1 [Q] MARCIUS L F S POSTUMIUS L F COS SENATUM CONSOLUERUNT N OCTOB APUD
AEDEM
2 DUELONAI SC ARF M CLAUDI M F L VALERI P F Q MINUCI C F DE BACANALIBUS QUEI
FOIDERATEI
3 ESENT ITA EXDEICENDUM CENSUERE NEIQUIS EORUM BACANAL HABUISE VELET SEI
QUES
4 ESENT QUEI SIBEI DEICERENT NECESUS ESE BACANAL HABERE EEIS UTEI AD PR
URBANUM
5 ROMAM VENIRENT DEQUE EEIS REBUS UBEI EORUM VER[B]A AUDITA ESENT UTEI
SENATUS
6 NOSTER DECERNERET DUM NE MINUS SENATOR[I]BUS C ADESENT [QUOM E]A RES
COSOLORETUR
7 BACAS VIR NEQUIS ADIESE VELET CEIVIS ROMANUS NEVE NOMINUS LATINI NEVE
SOCIUM
8 QUISQUAM NISEI PR URBANUM ADIESENT ISQUE [D]E SENATUOS SENTENTIAD DUM
NE
9 MINUS SENATORIBUS C ADESENT QUOM EA RES COSOLERETUR IOUSISENT
CE[N]SUERE
10 SACERDOS NEQUIS VIR ESET MAGISTER NEQUE VIR NEQUE MULIER QUISQUAM ESET
11 NEVE PECUNIAM QUISQUAM EORUM COMOINE[M H]ABUISE VE[L]ET NEVE
MAGISTRATUM
12 NEVE PRO MAGISTRATUD NEQUE VIRUM [NEQUE MUL]IEREM QUISQUAM FECISE
VELET
13 NEVE POST HAC INTER SED CONIOURA[SE NEV]E COMVOVISE NEVE CONSPONDISE
14 NEVE CONPROMESISE VELET NEVE QUISQUAM FIDEM INTER SED DEDISE VELET
15 SACRA IN OQVOLTOD NE QUISQUAM FECISE VELET NEVE IN POPLICOD NEVE IN
16 PREIVATOD NEVE EXSTRAD URBEM SACRA QUISQUAM FECISE VELET NISEI
17 PR URBANUM ADIESET ISQUE DE SENATUOS SENTENTIAD DUM NE MINUS
18 SENATORIBUS C ADESENT QUOM EA RES COSOLERETUR IOUSISENT CENSUERE
19 HOMINES PLOUS V OINVORSEI VIREI ATQUE MULIERES SACRA NE QUISQUAM
20 FECISE VELET NEVE INTER IBEI VIREI PLOUS DUOBUS MULIERIBUS PLOUS TRIBUS
21 ARFUISE VELENT NISEI DE PR URBANI SENATUOSQUE SENTENTIAD UTEI SUPRAD
22 SCRIPTUM EST HAICE UTEI IN COVENTIONID EXDEICATIS NE MINUS TRINUM
23 NOUNDINUM SENATUOSQUE SENTENTIAM UTEI SCIENTES ESETIS EORUM
24 SENTENTIA ITA FUT SEI QUES ESENT QUEI ARVORSUM EAD FECISENT QUAM SUPRAD
25 SCRIPTUM EST EEIS REM CAPUTALEM FACIENDAM CENSUERE ATQUE UTEI
26 HOCE IN TABOLAM AHENAM INCEIDERETIS ITA SENATUS AIQUOM CENSUIT
27 UTEIQUE EAM FIGIER IOUBEATIS UBI FACILUMED GNOSCIER POTISIT ATQUE
28 UTEI EA BACANALIA SEI QUA SUNT EXSTRAD QUAM SEI QUID IBEI SACRI EST
29 ITA UTEI SUPRAD SCRIPTUM EST IN DIEBUS X QUIBUS VOBELAI DATAI
30 ERUNT FACIATIS UTEI DISMOTA SIENT IN AGRO TEURANO

Translation*

"Quintus Marcius the son of Lucius, and Spurius Postumius, consulted the senate on the nones of October (7th), at the temple of the Bellonae. Marcus Claudius, son of Marcus, Lucius Valerius, son of Publius, and Quintus Minucius, son of Gaius, were the committee for drawing up the report.

Regarding the Bacchanalia it was resolved to give the following directions to those who are in alliance with us.

Any one of them is to possess a place where the festivals of Bacchus are celebrated: if there are any who claim that it is necessary for them to have such a place, they are to come to Rome to the urban praetor, and the senate is to decide on those matters, when their claims have been heard, provided that not less than 100 senators are present when the affair is discussed. No woman is to be a Bacchantian, neither a Roman citizen, nor one of the Latin name, nor any of our allies unless they come to the praetor urbanus, and she in accordance with the opinion of the senate expressed when not less than 100 senators are present at the discussion, shall have given leave. Carried.

No man is to be a priest; no one, either man or woman, is to be an officer (to manage the temporal affairs of the organization); nor is anyone of them to have charge of a common treasury; no one shall appoint either man or woman to be master or to act as master; henceforth they shall not form conspiracies among themselves, stir up any disorder, make mutual promises or agreements, or interchange pledges; no one shall observe the sacred rites either in public or private or outside the city, unless he comes to the praetor urbanus, and he, in accordance with the opinion of the senate, expressed when no less than 100 senators are present at the discussion, shall have given leave. Carried.

No one in a company of more than five persons altogether, men and women, shall observe the sacred rites, nor in that company shall there be present more than 2 men or 3 women, unless in accordance with the opinion of the praetor urbanus and the senate as written above.

See that you declare it in the assembly (contio) for not less than three market days; that you may know the opinion of the senate this was their judgment: if there are any who have acted contrary to what was written above, they have decided that a proceeding for a capital offense should be instituted against them; the senate has justly decreed that you should inscribe this on a brazen tablet, and that you should order it to be placed where it can be easiest read; see to it that the revelries of Bacchus, if there be any, except in case there be concerned in the matter something sacred, as was written above, be disbanded within ten days after this letter shall be delivered to you.

In the Teuranian field.”

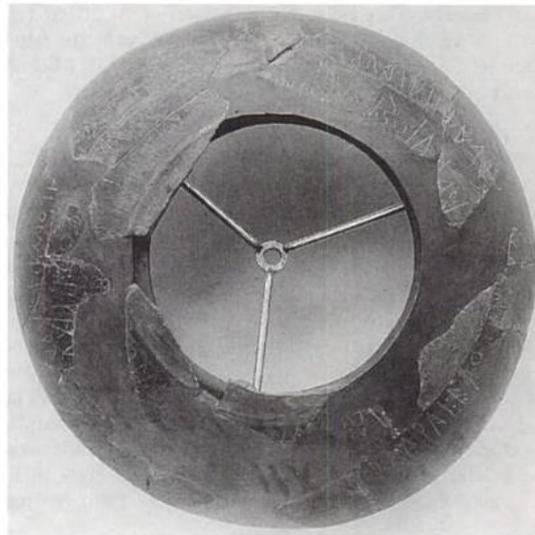
*Translation: Nina E. Westin in: Thatcher, Oliver Joseph, ed. (1901). *The ideas that have influenced civilization, in the original documents. Volume III: The Roman World*. Roberts-Manchester Publishing Co. pp. 76–77.

FALISCAN

The Faliscans inhabited the area to the north of Rome, with the chief settlement at Falerii Veteres (mod. Civit  Castellana). Inscriptions date from the 7th down to the 2nd century, and the corpus is small, numbering around 300 texts, mostly short or fragmentary.

There are several important similarities between Latin and Faliscan, and the two are often categorized as members of the same language group, Latino- Faliscan. Faliscan is also considered a dialect of Latin.

Similarities include both phonological and morphological forms, for example a medial *-f-* from voiced aspirates, e.g. Fal. *CAREFO* vs. Lat. *carebo* (< **bh*), and ‘‘rustic’’ Lat. *rufus* vs. Lat. *ruber* (< **dh*); the loss of word-final *-t* > *-d*, e.g. Fal. *CUPA* ‘‘lies’’ (Lat. *cubat*) and Lat. *dede* (Lat. *dedit*); and a feminine dative singular in *-a*, e.g. Fal. *MENERVA*, Lat. *MATUTA*.



CIE 8079; Vetter (1953: 279–283, no. 241); G. Giacomelli (1963: 41, revised 1978: 525–530); Pisani (1964: 347–349, no. 151); Pulgram (1978: 163–164, L 2); Morandi (1982: 54–56). Text follows G. Giacomelli (1978: 525–526).

**Ceresfar[.]e[.]tom : l[-]uf[-]ui[no]m : p[ore]kadeuios :
mamaz[e]xtosmedf[if]iqod :**

Latin *Cerēs far, Ēvius vīnum porrigat. Mama et Sextus mē finxērunt.*

‘May Ceres provide grain, and Evius wine. Mama and Sextus made me.’

Discussion: *Ceres* is a goddess representing the generative power of nature; *far[.]e[.]tom* if properly restored as *farmentom* means ‘grain’, in a morphological construction analogous to Lat. *frumentum* ‘grain’, though Watkins (1994) has proposed an emendation to the reading of *far[.]e[.]tom* as *far me[l]atom* ‘black bread’; *uinom* equals Lat. *vīnum* ‘wine’, with inherited *o* in the accusative; *p[ore]kad* is equivalent to Lat. *porrigat* ‘let X provide’; Watkins (1994) interprets *p[ore]kad* as *[pa]rad* ‘begot’, an unlikely reading; *med* reflects archaic *-d* in the accusative; and *fifiqod* is most likely the reduplicated plural perfect of *fig-*, with *q* written before the back vowel *o*: cf. *eqo* for *ego* ‘I’. For the ending of *fifiqod*, **fifiqond* is expected, but the *n* is lost before a consonant. The singular of this form is the attested *fifiked*.