The Latin dialect of the Ager Faliscus : 150 years of scholarship
Bakkum, G.C.L.M.

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Preface

In the spring of 1987, it was decided that Faliscan would become the subject of my research as Assistent in Opleiding, mainly for the simple reasons that Faliscan was a subject that could be treated within the range of a Ph.D. research and that no major work on it had appeared for some time – for 24 years, to be precise. At first, I was only too glad too agree with the phrase of my predecessor Gabriella Giacomelli that “Faliscan is not an attractive language”: only after some time I discovered that I regarded Faliscan neither as unattractive, nor as a language. It took me several years as well as repeated visits to the epigraphic material in Rome, the Vatican, and Viterbo, to elaborate why this was so.

Little did I suspect then that the untimely death of my own socia kara would lead to a period of twelve years during which work on the project would cease completely and everyone but myself assumed that it would never be resumed, let alone finished. Indeed, when the work was at long last resumed in the autumn of 2007, part of it survived only as a print-out and as files on some old 5.25” floppy discs that were retrieved only with some difficulty. Neither did I suspect that when the work finally was finished, still no major work on Faliscan had appeared in the meantime – for 45 years, the span of my own lifetime.

Now, 21 years after its beginning, the work is completed: the time it took Ulysses to marry Penelope and beget Telemachus, fight the war at Troy, and return home through many adventures – always wishing, but hardly expecting, to see the day of his homecoming. And, like Ulysses’ companions, many of mine have not lived to see that welcome end: I name only my dearly beloved girlfriend and companion drs G.A. van Camerijk (†1994), my esteemed teachers, prof. dr A.M. Bolkestein of the Universiteit van Amsterdam (†2001), prof. dr S.L. Slings of the Vrije Universiteit, Amsterdam (†2004), prof. em. dr C.J. Ruijgh of the Universiteit van Amsterdam (†2004), and my mother, C.C.M. Bakkum-Spaan (†2006).

If this research has finally been brought to a conclusion, this is the result of other minds and hands as well as mine. I wish to thank them here for all their help and assistance:

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Any errors that this work contains are of course entirely my own.

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