

A goddess for runaway slaves? Feronia and her worshippers.

- 1) Serv. *Ad Aen.* 7.799-800 and 8.564: *Circa hunc tractum Campaniae colebatur puer Iuppiter, qui Anxurus dicebatur, quasi ἄνευ ξυροῦ, id est sine novacula, quia barbam numquam rasisset, et Iuno virgo, quae Feronia dicebatur. est autem fons in Campania iuxta Terracinam, quae aliquando Anxur est dicta. [...] Nam cum aliquando huius fontis lucus fortuito arsisset incendio et vellent incolae exinde transferre simulacra deorum, subito reviruit. [...]* “Around that part of Campania, Jupiter is worshipped in the guise of a young boy, who is called Anxur, almost as the Greek ἄνευ ξυροῦ, which is without a razor, because he never cut his beard, and Juno in the guise of a young girl, who is called Feronia. There is a spring in Campania, close to Terracina, which is sometimes called Anxur. [...] And when the grove of this spring burnt all of a sudden and the locals wanted to move the divine statues, it immediately turned green again.
- 2) Serv. *Ad Aen.* 8.564: *Haec (sc. Feronia) etiam libertorum dea est, in cuius templo raso capite pilleum accipiebant. Cuius rei etiam Plautus in Amphitryone facit mentionem “quod utinam ille faxit Iuppiter, ut raso capite portem pilleum” (Am. 461-462). In huius templo Tarracinae sedile lapideum fuit, in quo hic versus incisus erat “bene meriti servi sedeant, surgant liberi”. Quam Varro Libertatem deam dicit, Feroniam quasi Fidoniam.* “Feronia is also the protector of freedmen, because they obtained the manumission hat in her temple, having cut their hair. Plautus’ *Amphitruo* (461-2) makes reference to this: “If only Jupiter did this one day, so I’d wear the hat with a shaved head”. In that temple in Terracina there is a stone throne, on which this line is carved: “let well deserving slaves sit and get up as free individuals”. And Varro calls her the goddess of Freedom, Feronia almost Fidonia.”
- 3) *CIL* 1.2867: *Pesco, Sal(via) / Plaria, T(iti) l(iberta), / Fero(niae) don(o) // [Q]uod a[f luc(o)] / dedet libe(n)s / m(erente) mer'i`to.* “Salvia Plaria, the freedwoman of Titus, willingly gave this gift at the grove as an offering to Feonia well deserving”

- 4) *CIL* 1.2869a: *M() T() V(ibius) Genucilio(s) Sen() l(ibertus) / Feron'iae' dedit*. “M() T() Vibius Genucilios, freedman of Sen(), gave it to Feronia.”
- 5) *CIL* 1.2869c: *[3]rcius L(ucii?) l(ibertus) / [Fer]on' i'ae / [3] M [3]*. “()arcius, freedman of Lucius(?), gave it to Feronia.”
- 6) *CIL* 1.1832: *Sex(tus) Audienus, C(ai) l(ibertus), / Feroniae / d(edit) l(ibens) m(erito)*. “Sextus Audienus, freedman of Gaius, gave it to Feronia willingly as deserved.”
- 7) *CIL* 6.146: *Hedone, / M(arci) Crassi ancilla, / Feroniae v(otum) s(olvit) l(ibens), m(erito)*. “Hedone, the slave woman of Marcus Crassus, fulfilled a vow to Feronia willingly, as deserved.”
- 8) *CIL* 9.3199: *Hermeros, / Ti(beri) Claudi Ca'e'saris Aug(usti) / Germanici, ser(vus) / Theamidianus ab marmorib(us) / magister / Feroniae aras quinque / d(e) s(uo) d(onum) d(edit)*. “Hermeros Theamidianus, the slave of Tiberius Claudius Caesar Augustus Germanicus, overseer of the marbles, chief (of a local priesthood for Feronia?), donated with his own money five altars as a gift for Feronia”.
- 9) Livy 1, 8: *(Sc. Romulus) locum qui nunc saeptus descendentibus inter duos lucos est asylum aperit. Eo ex finitimis populis turba omnis sine discrimine, liber an servus esset, avida novarum rerum perfugit*. “In the place which is now enclosed, between the two groves, going up the hill, Romulus opened a sanctuary. There fled a large group from diverse neighboring peoples, without difference between slave or free, eager for new opportunities”.

### Bibliography

- Di Fazio, *Feronia: spazi e tempi di una dea dell'Italia centrale antica* (2013).
- C. Ferrante, “Una brocca di bronzo con dedica a Numisius Martius”, *Cahiers du Centre Gustave-Glotz* 19 (2008).
- R. Bloch - G. Foti “Nouvelles dédicaces archaïques à la déesse Feronia”, *Revue de Philologie, de Littérature et Histoire anciennes* 27 (1953).
- M. Torelli, “Feronia et Lucus Feroniae in due iscrizioni”, *Archaeologia Classica*, 25-26 (1973-1974).