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DOUBLING RELIGION IN THE AUGUSTAN AGE: SHAPING TIME FOR AN EMPIRE

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"Calendar" is a notoriously complex concept. It may denote a system of time reckoning, which could be judged in terms of scientific precision and astronomical adequacy. It denotes a constellation of festivals, expressing or teaching social identities. It denotes an administrative and political instrument, determining coordination of long distance exchanges within an empire as well as local rhythms. It denotes a graphic form of representing time – and so on. The Roman calendar of the late republican and early imperial Roman periods has figured prominently in most of these perspectives and the histories narrated on their bases.[1] The reason is that the "Julian reform" of 45 BCE and the shape of the calendar developed during the Augustan semi-century (44 BCE–14 CE) were of enormous and far-reaching consequences. Large parts of the world across many states, cultures, and religions use this calendar, its ridiculously differing lengths of months (28 to 31 days) and its funny names for the months, referring to second- and third-rank Roman deities (Ianus, Maia?) and giving numbers that are out of tune with their position in the year. November for instance is not the ninth month of the year, even if many languages developed from Latin or in contact with it make this etymology transparent and the inappropriateness of the name widely felt. Evidently, despite all these deficits, the revolutionary transformation of the Roman calendar in the first century BCE produced something suitable for an empire, if not a world. This observation is my starting point.

And yet, despite the revolutionary character, the steps taken and modifications implemented were achieved in a basically conservative society, which

[1] See e.g. the very different perspectives of Samuel 1972; York 1986; Samuel 1988; Aveni 1991; Rüpke 1995; Richards 1998; Rüpke 2001; Stern 2001; Rüpke 2006, 2011b; Stern 2012; Feeney 2007.

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was certainly not the most advanced in terms of astronomic competence at the time. The lasting impact of the political and military formation of the *Imperium Romanum* might help explain the long-term success – as well as account for the resistance in the form of counter-calendars.[2] It hardly accounts for the shape and the thoroughness of the short-term development. This paradox is the problem addressed in this chapter. In a careful analysis and reconstruction of the calendar reforms, I claim that the explanation of the paradox lies in a twofold contextualization of these reforms. First, in the late republican process of "rationalizing" religion[3] or even the creation of a "scientific" discourse on cultural practices, and second in the specifically Augustan[4] development of doubling religious, political, and certain other cultural practices in the form of transportable representations that could be communicated throughout the empire. Taken together, this enabled a massive though short-termed acceleration of religious change. Constructing time is a business that is as pervasive as it is precarious.

1 Caesar's Two Calendar Reforms

Gaius Iulius Caesar's revolution of the calendar of the city of Rome had two components, which were practically combined but neither logically nor institutionally dependent on each other: (1) the realignment of the traditional calendar with the seasons and (2) the improvement of this calendar to a length equal with the solar year.

The first component, the realignment of the civic calendar with the solar year, had to bring back spring festivals to spring or harvest festivals to autumn and the like. The instrument used was a series of "intercalations" through the latter part of the year 46 BCE.[5] After the ordinary intercalation during the end of February, two months of greater length were added between November and December. By the end of December, that year had reached the length of 445 days.[6] Although an astronomical norm was the driving force behind the determination of a new starting date for the next year (the first regular one), it evidently left no traces in the few contemporary references or the more extensive later accounts. Given the circumstances, an observation of the summer solstice with sufficient preparatory time before the actual intercalation might have been the

[2] See the ever broadening analyses of Stern 2001, 2002, 2012; Stern and Burnett 2014.
[3] On which see Rüpke 2012a.
[4] See in general features Galinsky 1996, 2007.
[5] Cicero, *Fam.* 6.14.2.
[6] Censorinus 20.8; Dio 43.26.1.

touchstone used for better aligning a correct winter solstice in the years to come and a corresponding (new style) January 1, 45 BCE. Adding two intercalatory months with an overall length of 67 days must have been a conscious decision.

Even if many ancient calendars were interested in being somehow in correspondence with the solar year for reasons of agricultural and other practicalities, the "new year days" of these calendars or their mechanism of verifying the correspondence of a precise astronomical event with a civic date varied widely. The determination of an exact point of correspondence between the civic and the solar year is an arbitrary decision. In Rome, the discourse on a basic conformity of the average civil year with the solar year had left traces from the early second century BCE onward. The *lex Acilia* of 191 BCE interfered with the practices of intercalation in an unknown manner but evidently led to reducing the gap between the civic and solar years, at least for a few decades.[7] By the 50s BCE, Cicero had asked for a "careful handling of the intercalation" to align the natural production of animals and fruits with the sequence of sacrifices.[8] Cicero added no further argument or indicator. The same holds true for Varro. Here, the treatment of the calendar in *On Latin Language*, Book 6, is relevant, a text probably composed around 47BCE, directly before the reform.[9] The natural year is defined as running from the winter solstice to summer and again to the winter solstice.[10] For the civil year, as far as the annual festivals of the gods are concerned, no relationship to this natural year is established. Nor is any equation with an astronomical event given for any of the festivals. Agricultural associations are not prominent either. In his Verrine orations of 70 BCE, Cicero judged any corrections of the calendar with reference to a fixed astronomical date a Greek practice.[11]

The strong impetus for the intercalation of 46 BCE, unusual as it is in many respects, must have come from such Greek sources, most probably also from Egyptian astronomers, who were credited with the technical background of the reformed length of the year elsewhere.[12] This is more than a technical

[7] Macrobius, *Sat.* 1.13.21; Warrior 1992; Rüpke 2011b: 68–69.
[8] Cicero, *Leg.* 2.29, referring back to 2.20.
[9] The dedication of the twenty-five books was announced to Cicero in 47 (Cicero, *Att.* 13.12.3) and realized in the latter's lifetime; the probable lack of a final revision (Ax 1995) would put the writing of an early book for a quick writer as Varro (not much) before that announcement.
[10] Varro, *Ling.* 6.8.
[11] Cicero, *Verr.* 2.2.129. Feeney 2007: 196–211 has thoroughly analyzed the lack of fixed points of reference and the total change in the period after the reform.
[12] See e.g. Dio 43.26.2, who names Alexandria.

detail. Unlike the ethnographic gaze of Cicero and the historiographical[13] and antiquarian approach of Varro, Caesar used a non-Roman order of knowledge to formulate binding norms. He naturalized, as it were, these foreign concepts by giving the ritual role necessary for implementing the correction to the time-honored figure of the *pontifex maximus,* who headed the priesthood responsible for intercalation, announcements regarding the calendar, and the determination of the position of movable festivals.

In contrast to the massive intervention of the first component, the second reform was rather cautious, as cautious as the far-ranging goal of producing a civil year of a length equal with the solar year would allow. Caesar was careful to tamper as little as possible with the religious structure of the calendar. This structure was interpreted as being built around the Ides, known to be the days of the full moon in ages past. To this purpose, the days in the first half of the month, starting from the Kalends, the first day of the month, were left untouched. Likewise, the distance from the Ides to the rituals of the second half remained unchanged. Where could those new days that were necessary to prolong the regular year from 355 to 365 days be placed – to reduce the length of the intercalatory period to the absolute minimum of one day every four years? The placement (and the marking of these "new" days as being added ones) in the *Fasti Praenestini* allows deciphering their rationale. These days were not simply added at the end of the months. They were rather placed in the tiny space between the last festival of a month and the last day of the month. Obviously, the very last day was interpreted as directly leading into the new month and the new Kalends, the latter of which would enable the sighting of the new crescent.[14] The cost widely felt was a change in the counting of all the days after the Ides, leading to some irritation.[15]

The most important element, and doubtlessly the primary aim of the reform, was reducing the length of the intercalatory period. The Roman calendar of the preceding centuries implied the intercalation of a whole "month," which replaced the last days of February and thus resulted in an addition of 22 or 23 days every second year.[16] As the history of the second and first centuries BCE demonstrated, this biannual intercalation was not felt as binding by the relevant authorities (who, at least from the previously

[13] See Rüpke 2014a.

[14] See Rüpke 2011b: 112–113.

[15] The extent of the long-term consequences has been exaggerated by a tradition of research represented e.g. by Radke 1990 or Feeney 2007: 156–160. Cf. e.g. the divided reaction of the population described in Macrobius, *Sat.* 1.10.2.

[16] The mechanism had been reconstructed by Michels 1967.

mentioned *lex Acilia* onward, were the pontiffs) and could not be relied on as a precise rhythm. Only a few years before the Julian reform, the popular politician Clodius had proposed a law on intercalation, the details of which are unknown to us. Given the enormous consequences in terms of office holding or payments of interests, the lack of any period of prior announcement of the substantial lengthening of the year through intercalation was a considerable nuisance. Caesar must have addressed this problem in his extraordinary intercalation, producing the only contemporary dating "before the intercalatory month(s)" in our sources: people must have been forewarned.[17]

We can exclude the idea that Caesar was only interested in reducing the power of the pontiffs. He was the supreme pontiff and had started to fill the college with candidates of his choice.[18] The minor irregularities in intercalations after the reform demonstrate that the college retained the right to decide on intercalation: its members did not necessarily read the details of the astronomical arguments accompanying the change. By all probability, it was they who misinterpreted the norm to intercalate "in every fifth year," that is, after four years, as an imperative to make four years without any intercalation follow on each intercalation.[19]

Taking the whole range of administrative reforms into account, Caesar's new calendar was part of a larger project of reforms aimed at improving public finances and administration on a grand scale. Concerns with specificities of urban problems at Rome were as much a part of this as the enlargement of the number of magistrates serving throughout the empire.[20] Evidently, the calendar reform was planned against the background of an ever more "global" outreach of Roman activities.[21] Sacha Stern has convincingly placed it among similar processes in other empires to set up comprehensive frameworks of civic time, even if I would regard the translatability of local and supra-regional calendars rather than the predictability of calendars as concomitant to the formation of empires.[22] And yet, the Roman calendar had to undergo further changes before it could fulfill such functions.

[17] See Cicero, *Att.* 6.14.2.

[18] See Rüpke 2008: 130 = Rüpke 2005: 135.

[19] See Macrobius, *Sat.* 1.14.13–15; Rüpke 2011b: 116–117.

[20] Suetonius, *Jul.* 40–42; Dio 43.25–26; Suetonius gives the pride of place in his narrative to the calendar reform, Dio to the reform of the magistrates, finally adding the calendar reform to his naming of new maximum periods of office.

[21] Rüpke 1995: 371.

[22] Stern 2012: 223, paralleling the new calendar and Caesar's dictatorship. The permanent dictatorship lying at the bottom of Stern's argument is, however, a development of a slightly later period and Caesar's plans for a long absence on an expedition to the East. Stern rightly

These will be analyzed later, as the epistemological and communicative preconditions for such changes receive a closer look.

2 Calendar and Knowledge about the Calendar

As far as we can see, the written form of the Roman calendar, the *fasti*, was probably an invention of the late fourth century BCE. This type of calendar served as an instrument for rationalizing the political and especially the juridical use of time in the city of Rome. The main information given by the *fasti* from the early third century BCE onward was on the suitability of days for certain types of legal action and public assemblies.[23] Probably as a result of the initiative of Quintus Ennius, most likely the first annalistic historian, in the early 160s BCE, these *fasti* were reinterpreted as a grid for historical memory by way of introducing references to the founding of temples and consular lists.[24] Here, a discourse not only about political and historical identity but also about religious practices started. The introduction of deities into Rome and the foundation of annual festivals and temples were all noted in the calendar. This was not mere chronological documentation but rather a way of thinking historically about religion. A similar interest could also be seen in the contemporary translation into Latin of Euhemeros of Messene's *Sacred History* and its narratives about the genesis of gods from beneficial historical figures. Against this background, the new form of the calendar had a much wider significance. In that form, an incipient history of religion was produced.[25] The history of the Roman calendar system formed part of this argument. The calendar became self-reflexive.

Statements about origins are claims of an interested party rather than neutral "findings." A historical narrative is a critical appraisal of tradition and an indication of divergent positions and their growing explicitness. Thus, developments in the time of the Julian reform are relevant for our understanding of the degree of reflexivity of cultural and religious practices. Processes of explicit reflection on religion at Rome have been pointed out before.[26] For knowledge about the calendar (and for the moment I deliberately use this vague term), contemporaries would above all

stresses the absence of any evidence for Caesar's explicit intentions with regard to the empire (224).

[23] Rüpke 2011b: 44–67; Rüpke 2012a: 100–110.

[24] Rüpke 2012a: 152–171.

[25] Rüpke 2012b: 156.

[26] Rüpke 2012a.

participate in a discourse about "the year," *de anno*.[27] It is a discourse about the properties of the "natural year," about astronomical cycles and the measurement of time.[28] Treatises with this title, for instance by Suetonius writing at the beginning of the second century CE, have not been preserved, but most of our knowledge about Roman calendars comes from passages under this title, ranging from a section in Varro's *On Latin Language* (6.8–11) of the first century BCE through Censorinus's *On the Birthday* (18–21) of the early third century CE to Macrobius's dialogue *Saturnalia* (1.12–16, leading to a treatment of Sol/Apollo in 1.17) of the early fifth century CE. Inherently, this type of discourse had a comparative component: the "year of the Romans" was different from "the year of the Greeks" or Egyptians. This type of treatment also included the subdivisions of the year; "on months" was the main interest of Greek treatises, given the variety of names and types of months in the world of the Greek luni-solar year.

What were the categories used by contemporary thinkers? In Marcus Terentius Varro's treatise on Latin language, information on the festivals and days of larger religious rituals follow under the heading of *vocabula dierum* (6.12–32), followed briefly by the "names of the months" (*mensium nomina,* 6.33–34). It is to this type of information that Macrobius assigns the activities of Caesar's "scribe" (probably a member of the pontiffs as *pontifex minor*) Marcus Flavius, who "drew a list of the single days," which made it possible to establish a stable structure of the months and the year.[29] In Varro's treatise on religion, the "Antiquities of divine things," a group of three books (8–10) was dedicated to holidays (*feriae*) and games (*ludi circenses* and *scaenicae*). In Varro (and this is confirmed by later treatments), there is a clear sense of the constructive character of such religious qualifications. Against the background of the natural character of the seasons *(naturale discrimen)*, the institutionalization of certain days is openly expressed, be it for religious or for social reasons (*dierum . . . qui deorum causa, tum qui hominum sunt instituti*).[30] One fragment of these books on festivals talks about the institution of *feriae*, "holidays," by "decree of the pontiffs."[31] This is a self-aware interpretation of all religious practices (not of the divine realm as such!) as historical human institutions.[32]

[27] For an exhaustive list, see Degrassi 1963, 1: xxv–xxvi; briefly Rüpke 1994: 128; Rüpke 1997: 201.
[28] See Elias 1988 for this metaphor; see also Zerubavel 1982.
[29] Macrobius, *Sat.* 1.14.2.
[30] Varro, *Ling.* 6.12.
[31] Varro, *Ant. rer. div.* fr. 78 Cardauns (Bk. 8).
[32] Rüpke 2014a.

Of course, Varro's interpretation is a historiographical claim rather than a historical finding. Romans of the republican period had been very reluctant to regulate the sphere of the divine by laws.[33] At the end of the republic, however, certain intellectuals not only claimed to know about religion (and other spheres of culture) and its origins, but also started to attempt to formulate religious norms on such a basis. Certainly, this type of antiquarian knowledge was of importance in Hellenistic Athens and in late-republican Rome. Mastery of knowledge of the past qualified for legitimatizing recent changes as a return to tradition.[34] Systematization produced new knowledge and inspired new, supposedly "forgotten," practice. Reflecting on the very character of historical change as "institutionalization"[35] offered even more space for conscious religious politics in general and calendar politics in particular. Such an epistemological climate could call for open reform rather than veiled change. Varro mused about the religion he would have installed if he had not felt obliged to the antiquity of the Roman people.[36] His contemporary, the philosopher and statesman Marcus Tullius Cicero, considered radically different options of public religion, even if, as a good skeptic, he withheld any final judgment.[37] Nevertheless, it required the personal union of a *pontifex maximus* and a *dictator* as well as the ruthlessness of a Gaius Iulius Caesar to pursue and realize a reform that would basically last for more than two millennia. And yet, the Julian calendar reform was the only precondition for the diffusion and longevity of this calendar. The calendar of January 1, 45 BCE was far from the "Julian calendar" of the Roman Empire and its globalized Gregorian variant.

3 Emptying the Calendar

Caesar's employment of Egyptian knowledge is a commonplace of later accounts.[38] Given his special relationship to Alexandria, Cleopatra, and Egypt, this must have been an element of boasting and propaganda for the new calendar rather than a result of ancient investigative journalism. Egypt was pointed out as the only society possessing a stable year.[39] In fact, the close assimilation of the year of 365 days of the Nile valley to the solar year had

[33] See the review of laws on priesthoods by Rüpke 2005: 1617–1650.
[34] Thus Wallace-Hadrill 2008: 239 (on the calendar, see 239–248); Rüpke 2012a: 172–185.
[35] Stressed by Cancik 2008: 28; see also Cancik 2006 on the spatial dimension of the argument.
[36] Varro, *Ant. rer. div.* fr. 12 Cardauns (Bk. 1).
[37] Cicero, *Nat. d.* 3.95.
[38] E.g., Marcobius, *Sat.* 1.16.39: *ab Aegyptiis disciplinis hausit.*
[39] E.g., Macrobius *Sat.* 1.12.2; cf. 1.14.3.

inspired other imperial formations.[40] The combination of such a year with a Roman technique of intercalation, which had not been related to the actual lunations and was now reduced to a single day, allowed for maximal correspondence with the solar year.[41]

The technical perfection of a year of 365¼ days instead of the Egyptian practice of a year of 365 days (and radically different from it insofar as it included intercalation) engendered a further element of the reformed calendar – that is, the integration of dating practices according to heliacal risings and settings. In other words, Roman *fasti*, the civic calendar, could be combined or read in a synopsis with lists of activities dated by astronomical events. These lists were called *parapegmata* based on the use of movable nails to mark days on such objects.[42] The integration must have been intentional, given Caesar's personal interest in astronomy testified by his lost treatise "On stars," probably written in the 40s BCE. The reform act in itself seems to have involved the presentation of this or some similar treatise on the whole matter, a text (or a source for the text) used by Pliny the Elder in the eighteenth book of *Natural History* about a century later.[43]

The inclusion of the *parapegma* tradition necessarily points to a reflection on the use of calendars in the countryside. Pliny the Elder was writing in the third quarter of the first century CE and trying to give advice for Italy. Being aware of the dependency of such dates of risings and settings on the geographical latitude (apart from local impediments to sight), Pliny opts above all for Caesarean dates to establish an Italian formula.[44] Pliny's explicit reasoning suggests that this reflection was not part of Caesar's text or at least of his public presentation of the data. The many dates in the ensuing tradition that proved misleading for Italian locations point in the same direction. If this interpretation is valid, Caesar did not only aim at the Italian countryside but rather integrated a truly global element into the calendar. He thereby freely added Alexandrian data to a Roman calendar, a place more than ten degrees to the north.

[40] See Stern 2012: 224.

[41] Macrobius, *Sat.* 1.14.3.

[42] Feeney 2007: 198–201. On the genre and the technical implications, see Rehm 1941, 1949; Eriksson 1956; Wenskus 1990; Lehoux 2007; see also Ben-Dov 2014 and Leitz 1995.

[43] See Pliny the Elder, *Nat.* 18 and the *index auctorum* for the same book. The description is given by the tenth-century *Commentarium Bernense* on Lucanus (10.187), which, however, frequently contains valuable ancient material. In this case, it concurs with the description of Caesar's extensive communication with the Senate, described by Dio immediately after his description of the calendar reform (Dio 43.27.1). Cf. Macrobius, *Sat.* 1.16.39.

[44] Pliny the Elder, *Nat.* 18.214: *haec* erit *Italiae ratio*.

The success and importance of this element of the reform are demonstrated by its reception long before Pliny. Cicero polemicized against a dictator who extends his commands to the movements of the stars.[45] Ovid, in his late Augustan commentary on the Roman calendar regularly inserts references to risings or settings of constellations, even if he remains reluctant to develop longer narratives on them.[46] Even before, *fasti* inscribed on stone started to show astronomical references, for instance the *Fasti Venusini* noted the solstice for June 26.[47]

The concentration on *fasti* is, however, misleading (and has misled me in earlier analyses). The epigraphic form was an urban one and spread only slowly, with serious modifications, which we are not able to trace, as they were hardly ever realized in the form of lasting inscriptions.[48] The more relevant developments must have taken place in the form of manuscripts, rolls, and codices, preserved only in the classicizing forms of late ancient didactic collections.[49] The reaction of groups in Gaul in the form of the creation of the counter-calendar of Coligny[50] demonstrates *e negativo* the spread and presence of certain structural elements of the *fasti*. The calendar of the city of Rome had been stripped of its urban shape and had become the framework for the reform and recreation of local calendars all over the empire.[51]

4 *Feriae quod eo die*: Refilling for an Empire

We do not know which material form the Julian calendars took in many cities, particularly in Western Europe and North Africa. We can only make surmises about the local festivals present in such documents. But we know about one element that must have been present – festivals of the emperor. The most detailed document is a law from the Flavian township of Irni in the center of the Hispania Baetica, probably documenting a law from Domitian's time:

[45] Plutarch, *Caes.* 59.3.
[46] See Rüpke 1996.
[47] *Inscr. It.* 13.2.59.
[48] One of the tantalizing exceptions are the so-called *Fasti Guidizzolenses*; see Rüpke 1995: 160–164. A possible earlier step are the very fragmentary *Fasti Sorrinenses minores*, ibid. 145–148.
[49] See ibid., 90–94 and 151–160 on the Chronograph of 354 and the text collection of Polemius Silvius in Gaul. For the Chronograph, see also Salzman 1990; Wischmeyer 2002; and Burgess 2012.
[50] See Stern, Chapter 3, in this volume.
[51] See the analyses of Stern 2012.

> Item *(rubrica)*. The days *(diebus)* on which matters may not be brought before the court, and the days on which decisions may not be given for the third day. – Whoever delivers justice in the municipium must ensure that no iudex or arbiter, or the recuperatores, makes legal argument in a private matter, nor must he give decisions for the third day, on such days as are already or will in the future be festivals, including those regarded as being held in honour of the imperial house (*quos dies propter venerationem domus Augustae festos feriarumve numero esse haberique o[p]ortet oportebit*), or on days on which games are held by the decuriones or the conscripti, or on which a banquet or distribution of food to the citizens is held, or a dinner is given at the expense of the citizens for the decuriones or conscripti, or on days when an assembly of the municipium takes place, or on such days as are decided under the terms of this law to be days on which no court decisions may be handed down owing to the grain or wine harvest, unless the iudex or arbiter or the recuperatores and those whose case is to be heard wish unanimously that it be heard at that time, and it is not a day that is a festival or regarded as such, or a day set aside for venerating the imperial house. No iudex, arbiter, or recuperator may give a decision in a private case on the days determined here, or decide a case, or give consideration to a verdict or opinion on those days, unless the iudex or arbiter or the recuperatores and those whose case is to be heard wish unanimously that it be heard at that time, and it is not a day that is a festival or regarded as such, or a day set aside for venerating the imperial house. Whatever is undertaken in breach of these dispositions cannot be recognized as legal and valid.[52]

It is the imperial festivals that are declared imperative for this place of Latin law – and probably in like manner throughout the empire. The terminology is imprecise. The term *feriae*, which had been the technical term for "holidays," implying restrictions in legal and some types of agricultural business, was modified and in the long run supplanted by the term *dies festus*. The latter had lost some of those associations, which the term *feriae* implied, but which were valid only for institutions of the city of Rome (and its surroundings). Outside of the precise context of the *fasti, feriae* became a loose term for a sequence of days without public business, particularly related to periods of harvesting.

In the urban tradition of the Republican period, *feriae* had been narrowly defined as the temporal property of a god. The analogy of spatial property is not explicit in ancient texts, but it helps to understand the problems of

[52] *Lex Irnit.* 10 C 25–51, probably chap. 92 of the original law. The text repeats formulations of chap. 90 (10 B 26–41). English translation based on González 1986: 198, quoted from Rüpke 2014b: 127.

boundary marking – it was better to avoid the succession of two *feriae* dedicated to different gods by an intermittent day – as a means of making the property relation visible by means of bans on practices on both "areas."[53] Evidently, the festive days referred to in the Law of Irni do not presuppose that all members of the imperial family are already consecrated, that is, declared gods. Again, it was the context of the late republic that started a process, totally reshaping the appearance of the Roman *fasti* as well as the Roman "calendar" as an imperial framework.[54]

A careful analysis of the extant epigraphic *fasti* in general and the well-preserved *Fasti fratrum Arvalium* in particular allows a reconstruction of a development of formulas and concepts that were carefully preserved in their wording. The *feriae* defined in Caesar's lifetime and for a short time afterward (42 BCE) were *feriae C. Caesaris honoris causa,* "holidays on behalf of the honor of Gaius Caesar." For instance, on August 2 for the victory of Munda in 45 BCE we read: "Holidays on behalf of the honor of Gaius Caesar after the defeat of Hispania citerior and because he had totally defeated the king Pharnax in Pontus."[55]

Technically, these *feriae* were not dedicated to Caesar as a deified being; otherwise, they would have been expressed by a plain dative construct, such as in the formula *feriae*. The concept of holidays *honoris causa* is taken from the ritual of *supplicationes*, an opening of all urban temples organized as a ritual of thanksgiving after victories.[56] Such gratitude is directed to the gods, as the wording betrays: *ut dis immortalibus habeatur honos,* "in order that the immortal gods should receive honor." At the same time, the thanksgiving to the gods is "in the name of the commander" (*nomine imperatoris*). It is he and the importance of his victory that is indicated and acknowledged by the length of the ritual, reaching from the traditional event of one day to events of two, three, eventually even twenty or fifty days.[57]

In the middle of the first century BCE, *honos* still refers to the theological principle, the divine addressee. For the calendar, a form of words was found that specified Caesar as the addressee of undoubtedly godlike honors, while circumventing the full deification implied by the dative locution *feriae alicui*. Even the classification of Caesar's birthday (*dies natalis*) as *feriae* in 42 BCE did

[53] See Rüpke 1995: 492–515.

[54] The following is fully developed in Rüpke 2011b: 126–130, extensively used here.

[55] *Inscr. It.* 13.2.31 (–35 for the following entries). *[Feriae C. Caesa]ris h(onoris) c(ausa) Hisp(ania) [citerior]e devicta [et quod in P]onto regem [Pharnace]m dev[i]cit,* Degrassi integrates here: *ex s(enatus) c(onsulto)*.

[56] For a general treatment, see Rüpke 1990: 215–217; Naiden 2006; cf. Février 2009.

[57] Rüpke 1990: 216.

not address him as *divus Iulius*, but, once again – by the testimony of the *fasti Amiterni* – as *C. Caesar.*[58]

After the defeat of Sextus Pompeius, new measures were taken in 36 BCE to honor him by the declaration of special *feriae.*[59] However, either the Senate or Caesar's heir *C. Iulius divi Iuli filius Caesar* shrank from directly adopting the Caesarean model. The theological conceit now chosen for September 3 – *feriae et supplicationes ad omnia pulvinaria, q(uod) e(o) d(ie) Caesar August(us) in Sicilia vicit*,[60] according to the *Fasti fratrum Arvalium* – rested on the same conceptual link to the *supplicationes* already mentioned.[61] As such *supplicationes* were addressed to all "immortal gods," the *feriae* implicitly took part in this definition. Against this indeterminate background, the actual, personal reference of the occasion for celebration was brought all the more clearly to the fore.

Although the formula for September 3 is maintained in later *fasti* (those from Amiternum in particular), the experimental form subsequently petered out. The formula used for the celebration of the victory at Actium on September 2, probably in 30 BCE, is the one that later became the norm: *Feriae Imp. Caesaris h(onoris) c(ausa), quod eo die vicit Actium.*[62] The four letters *ex s(enatus) c(onsulto)* – "*feriae* by decision of the Senate" – were added as a correction in superscript over the beginning of *Imp.* Dio reports that the *feriae* decision had been arrived at on the day the news of the victory arrived; this would be a further analogy for the institution of the *supplicatio.*[63] The theological reference, which had been standard for "normal" holidays fell entirely out of use, the resulting gap being filled by the entirely different expression *ex senatus consulto*: procedural legitimization took the place of indications of a divine proprietor. Thus, the problematic concept of *feriae* of "all" the gods, suggested by the formula used in 36 BCE, was also set aside.[64]

[58] Dio 47.18.5–6; *Inscr. It.* 13.2.189.

[59] See also Fraschetti 1990: 91–93.

[60] "Holidays and thanksgiving at all 'cushions' (*pars pro toto* for temples) because on that day Caesar Augustus has won in Sicilia."

[61] See *Inscr. It.* 13.2.33 (*fasti fratrum Arvalium* 3. 9.).

[62] Cf. ibid., August 1, *feriae* since 30 BCE: *F(eriae) ex s(enatus) c(onsulto), [q(uod) e(o) d(ie) Imp. Caesar rem pu]blic(am) tristiss(imo) p[e]riculo [libera]vit,* "Holiday decreed by the Senate, because on that day Imperator Caesar had liberated the Republic from most severe danger." Or September 23, *feriae* since 30 BCE: *F(eriae) ex s(enatus) c(onsulto), q(uod) e(o) d(ie) Imp. Caesar Aug(ustus) pont(ifex) ma[x(imus)] natus est,* "the Imperator Caesar Augustus, supreme pontiff, was born."

[63] See Degrassi 1963: 505; Dio 51.19.1–2.

[64] The *ex senatus consulto*, the reference to the Senate's decision, is absent from the *fasti Amiterni* for Caesar's *dies natalis*, celebrated on July 12, from Caesar's victories in Spain in 49 and over

It is for these very *feriae* of September 2 that we find in the *fasti* in the Arvals' sanctuary a peculiar hybrid formula, where the words *ex senatus consulto* were subsequently added to *honoris causa*. Considering not only the doubts that had led to the search for another solution as early as 36 BCE but also the "normal" form provided on August 1 for the *feriae* of 30 BCE, there is probably no need to interpret this as intimating that Augustus or like-minded individuals at first decided in favor of the old *honos* formula, and so to assume that the correction was added later, perhaps in 27 BCE. At the time when this calendar, perhaps the earliest monumental marble calendar at Rome, was created, Caesarean entries were still in the clear majority,[65] so it is not surprising that the stonemason spontaneously adopted the *honoris causa* formula; but, as a grave material error (and a serious embarrassment), this had to be corrected: the festivals associated with Octavian and Augustus were – in official parlance – held not "in his honor," but merely "because he accomplished this or that on this day."[66]

By the end of the reign of the first Augustus – admittedly a long period – the Senate had voted on around thirty new *feriae*. The long wording of new entries did determine the appearance of the calendar. The clear layout of columns of numbers and letters and the ample space between the columns of the months were sprinkled by heaps of small letters, all pointing out some detail of imperial genealogy, emperors' biographies, or their achievements. The monarchy took shape even beyond reading distance. Discounting the Ides, which were traditional holidays (usually given to Iuppiter on account of his relationship to the bright sky of the full moon), imperial festivals started to outnumber the old festive dates even in the city of Rome. For reception throughout the empire, the latter could easily be filtered away. For the urban connoisseur, even those were tinged with the Principate. Restoration of temples was frequently combined with a change in the dedication day noted in the *fasti*.[67]

5 Epilogue

For the development reconstructed here, the poetic commentary on the Roman *fasti* composed by Ovid for the first six months around 4 CE and

Pharnaces in 47, both celebrated on August 2, and from his victory at Pharsalus on August 9 (*Inscr. It.* 13.2.189–191); the *fasti Verulani* list Caesar's capture of Alexandria on March 27 with the short version (*Inscr. It.* 13.2.169).

[65] Degrassi 1963: 369.

[66] Against Fraschetti 1988.

[67] See Rüpke 2011b: 124.

partly revised in exile for dedication to Germanicus after the death of Augustus in 14 CE offers a good test case. No doubt, this is a comment on an Augustan, that is, imperial, copy of the *fasti*. The ritual and architectural activities on the Roman ground were represented in the ever more popular form of such *fasti*, populating not only individuals' lives but also public or associations' architectural space in luxurious creations of inscriptions or wall paintings. If this is a doubling of religion, Ovid's *Libri fastorum* was a reflection of that, a tripling of religious, of calendrical, and in particular of those imperial practices that created the center and hence the space of an empire.[68] The two consecutive dedications in the beginnings of Books 1 and 2 unanimously stress the massive presence of imperial personage, altars, "domestic festivals" (Book 1) or names, and "labels" (Book 2).

The role of the deified Iulius is limited in Ovid's poem, as has frequently been noted. Given his entanglement in the civil wars, out of which the Augustan monarchy grew, such praise was not fully justified. For the development of the Roman calendar, however, Caesar's absence is even more interesting. His presence as a reformer of the calendar is nearly negligible. This is far from self-evident. In his report on the reform early in the second century CE, Suetonius did not use the concept of "year" (*annus*), but had Caesar "correct the calendar" (*fastos correxit*).[69] In 238 CE, Censorinus stated that the reformed "year" is remembered down to his own day as "Julian years" (*Iuliani [scil. anni]*).[70] Ovid's contemporary Verrius Flaccus noted details of the reform in his monumental copy displayed at Praeneste, the so-called *Fasti Praenestini*, which integrated *fasti* and a commentary on *fasti* down to details of the length of the year (on February 23 or 24, the day of intercalation) and of the precise days being added by Caesar (e.g., on April 26).[71]

Ovid avoids every occasion for offering information on the new calendar. The Julian reform is lacking from the short introductory history of the calendar at the beginning of his Book 1 (1.27–44). He neither mentions days added by Caesar (e.g., at the end of January) nor comments on the mechanism of intercalation (the *bisextilis*) on the "sixth day before the Kalends of March." The only reference given is at the end of the lengthy introduction to the month of March. After the second mention of the

[68] Rüpke 2011a.
[69] Suetonius, *Jul.* 40.1.
[70] Censorinus 20.11.
[71] See *Inscr. It.* 13.2.119 (February) and 131 (April).

addition of two months by Numa before the original start of the year in March, Caesar is acknowledged as an astronomer and credited with the improved length of the year, given as 365 and a fifth (!) of a day. This is hardly a mere misunderstanding,[72] but rather it is a discrediting account of Augustus's predecessor, praised for his astronomical knowledge immediately before.[73] Changes in the calendar are credited to power and merit, not mere knowledge. Change is legitimized by tradition rather than research. In the Golden Age of Augustus, the role of antiquarianism and historiography was changing. Veiled change had replaced open reform as exemplified by the hotly debated Julian one again. The emperor was a first, a *princeps*, not a monarch. But such niceties and details were part of an urban discourse on time. Time in the empire developed more quickly as the many instances of "Julianification," as Sacha Stern called it, show, rendering local calendars accountable in Julian terms.

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[72] Thus e.g. Bömer 1957: 16.

[73] Ovid, *Fast.* 3.155–166. *Iuncta* in part of the manuscripts (3.164) must be regarded as an attempt at rescuing Ovid; *quinta* is *lectio difficilior*, ascertained by *lustrum*, a five-year period, in the following line.

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