

From Republic to Empire

8.1 Caesar's Calendar Reform¹

With Caesar, we enter a period that, in the *Fasti Antiates maiores*, produced the first extant calendar. More important still than the historical setting of this isolated wall-painting, however, is the character of the time as marking the prelude to the proliferation of *fasti* in the Augustan period. From this perspective, two questions demand our particular attention. What significance should be assigned to the technical reform that turned the 'Republican' (or 'Numan') into the 'Julian' calendar? And what place did the *fasti* occupy in the general consciousness, or rather, considering the nature of most of our sources, the consciousness of the elite?

Measured against its intended correspondence with the natural year, the Roman calendar was in considerable disarray in the 50s.² In this period when political discourse was becoming enormously more heated, and in different areas the use of religion as a political weapon had been carried to the extreme (the name P. Clodius comes to mind), increased recourse was no doubt also had to the device of prolonging office by intercalating, or by refraining from doing so. As was the case with other obstructive ploys used, however, no really fundamental criticism was expressed, even here: the aim was to master the tools on offer, not to abolish them.³ Of contemporary sources, it is only Cicero's draft constitution, in *De legibus*, that offers some mild criticism. Cicero as legislator would wish to oblige the *pontifices* to keep scrupulously to Numa's rules for intercalation.⁴ However, his

¹ Plin. *HN* 18.211–12; Suet. *Iul.* 40; Censorinus, *DN* 20.6–11; Dio Cass. 43.26; Macrobian. *Sat.* 1.14; MALITZ 1987.

² DRUMANN AND GROEBE 1906: 753–827; BEAUJEU 1976; BRIND'AMOUR 1983: 40; problematical: RADKE 1990 (see BRISCOE 1991 and RÜPKE 1992b).

³ MALITZ 1987: 106–7.

⁴ Cic. *Leg.* 2.29: *Quod <ad> tempus ut sacrificiorum libamenta serventur, fetusque pecorum quae dicta in lege sunt, diligenter habenda ratio intercalandi est ...*

intention at the level of sacral law was not to bind feast days to astronomical data, but to facilitate the detailed observance of the rules for sacrifices – animals of a particular age, precisely defined fruits (of the field) – by correlating the festal calendar with the seasons. Cicero did not have wholesale reform in mind; he wished to curb excesses in current practice.

Cicero's work reflects the situation in 52 BCE. With his suppression of the revolt of Vercingetorix in this year, Caesar had largely concluded his conquest of Gaul, thus, by the beginning of 49, establishing the basis for embarking upon civil war against Pompey and the majority of the Senate. With the victory at Pharsalus, and the assassination of Pompey in Egypt, the course of events was already largely decided. It is only at this point, after Caesar's return from the East⁵ in October 47, that we find evidence of his thoughts turning to reform. Fully intent on obtaining a third term as consul, Caesar made use of his control over the electoral assemblies to fill magisterial and priestly positions at his discretion, at the same time expanding their number, and, once again in Rome's history, attempting to come to grips with the debt problem.⁶

The sources are silent as to what political motivation underlay the reform, over and above considerations of technical and scientific advance⁷ in respect of the calendar. The circumstances under which the reform began, extensions of the administrative apparatus, and adjustments to the electoral rules, reveal the beginnings of a more comprehensive process. The regular proceedings that governed Caesar's own consular year, with its seasonally determined, calendar-based beginning in autumn, may have made him vividly aware of the urgent need for changes.

That we may interpret the reform as deriving from Caesar's person and intentions is demonstrated by the procedure adopted for it. The new calendar was developed by a commission appointed by Caesar, and, most importantly, made up of non-Roman experts;⁸ prominent among these was Sosigenes, who evidently had overall charge of reform proposals.⁹ There is no evidence for the participation of the pontifical college, entirely dominated by Caesar after the elections of 47 and 46,¹⁰ except for a *scriba* named M. Flavius who assisted Caesar, and in whom may once again be concealed a *pontifex minor*.¹¹ This would be yet another case of the prominent participation of *pontifices minores* in calendar-related affairs, based on their original function in the empirical determination of the Nones, but finding particular expression in their role in major reform projects, perhaps as a seal of quality for the eyes of the public. Cn. Flavius with his *fasti* would be the first instance, Cn. Terentius in 181 BCE with his discovery of the *libri Numae*

⁵ MALITZ 1987: 115, 112.

⁶ MEIER 1995: 414–20.

⁷ Thus MALITZ 1987: 111–12, 117.

⁸ Plut. *Caes.* 59.5; Dio 43.26.2.

⁹ See Plin. *HN* 18.211–12.

¹⁰ See RÜPKE 2008.

¹¹ RÜPKE 2008, no. 1655.

(rapidly condemned as undesirable and burned) the second, this time ill-famed,¹² and M. Flavius now the third. Implementation of the reform finally depended on an edict of the *dictator iterum* in the second half of 46;¹³ the Senate was fully informed, but did not participate in the decision-making process.¹⁴

A brief analysis of the reform's content will make it easier to understand its legal structure. From the technical/astronomical point of view, there were three aspects to the reform. Most significant in terms of its reception was the redefinition of the length of the natural year at 365.25 days, reflected in a 'civic', 365-day year, and four-yearly intercalation. Historically, this outcome had already been achieved by the Metonic cycle and comparable systems;¹⁵ in Rome too, an approximation of 366.25 days had already been obtained by the decemviral reform at the end of the fourth century BCE.

More importance therefore appears to attach to the second aspect already addressed, the implementation of the calculated year-length in a system that minimized the extent and frequency of intercalations. Instead of twenty-two intercalary days in a two-year cycle (or entire intercalary months every two or three years in the Greek world), Rome now introduced a calendar in which a single day had to be intercalated every four years, in an entirely regular pattern. This is the element that rendered the calendar, that is to say the intercalation process, immune from any political or financial exploitation and associated attempts at manipulation.¹⁶ This is the element that removed the thirteenth month from all written calendars of the time, thus changing their appearance markedly. And, finally, this is the element that much diminished the religious role of the *rex sacrorum*, the priest who implemented ritual intercalation.

The third aspect is of little import in comparison, although it may have persisted the most powerfully in the memories of Caesar's contemporaries. In order to bring the calendar dates into step with their analogues in nature (in which state they were then to remain),¹⁷ a great number of days had to be inserted: over and above the normal twenty-three day intercalation at the end of February, sixty-seven more days in all, distributed between a *mensis interkalaris prior* and *posterior*.¹⁸ If we compare this prodigious intervention with the task undertaken by the *lex Acilia*, to correct the then current discrepancy by gradual intercalations, it again becomes clear that the utmost possible elimination of intercalation, with all its

¹² RÜPKE 2008, no. 3222.

¹³ Macrob. *Sat.* 1.14.13.

¹⁴ MALITZ 1987: 115–16 with reference to Cass. Dio 43.26.1–27.1.

¹⁵ ZION WACHOLDER AND WEISBERG (1971: 240–1) show that both the Metonic and the contemporaneous Palestinian 19-year cycles originated in Mesopotamia. See also OPPENHEIM 1969: 125; GALIL 1991: 372. No systematic intercalation is attestable in Babylonia before the fourth century BCE; cf. SAMUEL 1972: 21.

¹⁶ Censorinus, *DN* 20.7.

¹⁷ MALITZ 1987: 123.

¹⁸ Censorinus, *DN* 20.8: *duos menses intercalarios dierum LXVII in mensem Novembrem et Decembrem interponeret, cum iam mense Februario dies III et XX intercalasset, faceretque eum annum dierum CCCCLV*. Cass. Dio 43.26.1; on the dating: Cic. *Fam.* 6.14.2.

uncertainties and irregularities (to quote Macrobius' impudent phrase the main characteristic of the Republican *anni confusionis*),¹⁹ was Caesar's central purpose.²⁰

These three steps enabled the calendar to be maintained in durable, constant and precise synchrony with the solar year; the linking of the 'civil' 25 March with the spring equinox was pivotal. In a civilization that had learned always to maintain the astronomical calendar as a second system, based on calculation, observation and parapegmata, and independent of the civil calendar, this led to a long-term cognitive reorientation. For the first time, astronomical events, and meteorological events in association, could be described on the basis of civil dates, something that Cicero had observed in 70 BCE as an alien phenomenon, characteristic of Sicily and the Greek world.²¹ That, according to the testimony of the weather calendar passed down by the elder Pliny (*HN* 18.207ff.), Caesar concerned himself with the dates of rising and setting of stars shows that he was aware of the gradual inception of a conceptual change. Although Caesar's immediate contemporary Cicero mockingly remarked that even the stars now moved to order,²² this very conceptual reversal, this naturalization of the calendar, may have been highly attractive. Ovid, in his commentary on the calendar, revels in the possibilities thus opened up.²³

Notwithstanding the 445 days of the *annus confusionis ultimus*, 46 BCE, the process of recasting the year's shape was marked by the utmost prudence. The opportunity to subject Caesar's way of proceeding to precise scrutiny by means of a detailed reconstruction is all the more valuable in that such circumspection is more in keeping with our image of Caesar's heir than with our normal idea of the late Caesar himself.²⁴ The names of the months remained unaffected, and the calendar acquired no new *feriae*; such changes as were made in this regard belong to the two following years.²⁵ The time of year for carrying out intercalations remained unchanged.²⁶ The sources do not tell us what changes ensued to the function of the *rex sacrorum*.

The reduced length of the intercalary period meant that the annual deficit of ten days formerly covered by the *mensis interkalaris* had to be distributed between the remaining twelve months. We learn from the comprehensive reference in Macrobius that Caesar's guiding principle was the preservation of the internal monthly structure wherever possible, and that the considerable care he devoted to this task of redistribution was matched by the scrupulous way in which his

¹⁹ Macrobius, *Sat.* 1.14.3. Misunderstood by MALITZ 1987: 119 n. 81.

²⁰ See Censorinus, DN 20.8: *providens in futurum, ne iterum erraretur; nam intercalario mense sublato annum civilem ad solis cursum formavit.*

²¹ Cicero, *Verr.* 2.2.129; FEENEY 2007: 196.

²² Plutarch, *Caes.* 59.3; HOLLEMAN 1978.

²³ RÜPKE 1996; FEENEY 2007: 196–206; PFAFF-REYDELLET 2009; RÜPKE 2009b.

²⁴ In general, ZECCHINI 2001.

²⁵ See Ch. 6.2.

²⁶ Censorinus, DN 20.10. See RÜPKE 1995a: Ch. 6.1.

measures were observed.²⁷ The complex month of February was left entirely untouched, as were the four months of March, May, Quintilis, and October, which already had the maximum thirty-one days. The remaining months were lengthened by one or two days, inserted in each case immediately before the last day, so that the position of the Nones and Ides remained unchanged relative to the beginning of the month.

The additional days at the ends of these months, that is to say after all the month's feast days, resulted, for all dates after the Ides, in an increased interval until the next Kalends, calculated backwards from the Kalends. The fact that Caesar accepted this alteration shows that, in respect of the festivals of the second half of the month, the critical interval was seen to be the interval from the Ides, which by this means remained the same, and not the interval to the month's end. But the forward reckoning involved here appears to have been more than simply implicit.²⁸ The mode of insertion was explicitly chosen in such a way that the announcement of *feriae* remained unaffected.²⁹ The *indictio* referred to by Macrobius can relate only to the monthly announcement of festivals by the *rex sacrorum*: taken together with Varro's use of the present tense in describing this institution,³⁰ here is further, and until now overlooked testimony to its survival, at least beyond the end of the Republic. At the same time, a dissociation between the sacral and political/juridical calendars is indicated, extending even to the mode of counting, and showing the Ides of each month to have been the religious reference point for the entire month.³¹

The choice of character for the new days confirms the political and religious interpretation presented in earlier chapters. By categorizing these days as *dies fasti*, Caesar avoided extending the scope for political activity (statistically, characterization as *C(omitia)* would have been the norm), while feeling no particular necessity for deploying the further degree of restriction represented by *N(efas)*.³² Comparison of the pre-Julian parapegma with Augustan calendars essentially confirms the antiquarian narrative. There are clear differences only in three cases in which the daily character *EN* changes to *F* (on 16 October) or *NP* (on 15 and 17

²⁷ See Macrobius, *Sat.* 1.14.6–12.

²⁸ SUERBAUM (1980: 330) goes so far. See also Ch. 8.1.

²⁹ Macrobius, *Sat.* 1.14.8–9: *quintanas tamen habent nonas, et ab idibus illis sequentes kalendae in undevicesimum revertuntur, quia Caesar quos addidit dies neque ante nonas neque ante idus inserere voluit, ne nonarum aut iduum religionem, quae stato erat die, novella comperendinatione corrumpere.* (9) *sed nec post idus mox voluit inserere, ne feriarum quarumque violaretur indictio, sed peractis cuiusque mensis feriis locum diebus advenis fecit.* See also 1.15.8: *quia peractis totius mensis feriis dies suos rei divinae cautus inseruit.* Corresponding factually to Censorinus, DN 20.9: *Eosque dies extremis partibus mensum adposuit, ne scilicet religiones sui cuiusque mensis a loco summoventur.*

³⁰ Varro, *Ling.* 6.13.

³¹ Thus I cannot accept Feeney's treatment of the 'anniversary', and his interpretation of the handling of birthdays after the reform (2007: 148–60).

³² Macrobius, *Sat.* 1.14.12: *Nam ideo novos dies circa finem cuiusque mensis inseruit, ubi finem omnium quae in mense erant reperit feriarum, adiectosque omnes a se dies fastos notavit, ut maiorem daret actionibus libertatem, et non solum nullum nefastum sed nec comitalem quemquam de adiectis diebus instituit, ne ambitionem magistratuum augetet adiectio.*

December, i.e. the Consualia and the Saturnalia), while the Opalia (19 December) are marked *N* (pre-Julian) and *NP* (Augustan). All four distinct cases represent changes that can have been motivated only by changed sacral evaluations of the days in question: the notation in the calendar follows developments; it does not determine them, if we set aside Flavius' treatment of the *nundinae*, which was soon corrected by the *lex Hortensia*.

This can be shown more precisely, at least for the two December dates. The calendar does not itself undertake re-evaluations: it very belatedly takes account of religious developments and changes in pontifical conceptions. Caesar uses major changes and necessary innovations caused by factors external to his project, in order to carry out an overdue *aggiornamento* of religious practice.³³ In the case of the Saturnalia, developments that raised their status as a festival at the end of the third century are mentioned explicitly in the sources.³⁴ In the context of this multi-day festival, comprising the two previous and two subsequent days, the two other feast days, in a certain manner doublets of the Consualia and Opiconsivia on 21 and 25 August (or Sextilis), appear also to have been promoted to actual *feriae* status in the course of the enhanced Saturnalia celebrations. In contrast, the sacrifice on 16 October, the day following the October Ides, with their ancient rituals of the *ludi Capitolini* and the *October equus*,³⁵ may have undergone a process of devaluation.

The great care Caesar took in respect of existing religious institutions when he was actually configuring the reform invites comparison with the French Revolutionary Calendar.³⁶ The calendar promulgated on 24 October 1793 – from then on 3 Brumaire of year 2 of the Republic – broke with the traditional Gregorian calendar at every possible point: beginning with the names of the months,³⁷ continuing with their length (twelve to thirty days), and the names of the days and seasons, and extending to a decimal system for subdividing the day into ten decimal hours of one hundred decimal minutes. Despite certain simplifications in the lengths of months, compensated for, on the Egyptian pattern, with five epagomenic days at the end of the year, no chronographic advance was achieved over the old calendar.³⁸ The break itself formed part of the purpose that the calendar's ahistoric, but natural, rational, and secular image should serve as a symbol and model for the new society that was to be created.³⁹

More than the new elements of the national cult,⁴⁰ in France it was the gradually evolved rules governing the *décadi*, designed as a replacement for Sunday, that

³³ Against WISSOWA 1923: 381–2 and MICHELS 1967: 186. I follow DEGRASSI 1963: 334.

³⁴ Festus, *Gloss. Lat.* 432.9–11 L; Macrob. *Sat.* 1.7.24; cf. Varro *ap.* Macrob. *Sat.* 1.8.1.; Liv. 2.21.2; 22.1.19–20.

³⁵ RÜPKE 2009a.

³⁶ MEINZER 1992.

³⁷ NADJO 1991.

³⁸ MEINZER 1992: 40–2.

³⁹ ZERUBAVEL 1977; BACZKO 1984; MEINZER 1988: 25; OZOUF 1975, 1976, and BAXMANN 1989.

⁴⁰ LEFEBVRE 1957: 364; MEINZER 1992: 54–7.

were to show how deep the intervention meant to penetrate.⁴¹ But it was on this very point, which had the most enormous impact of all on the rhythm of life, that the reform came to grief, on the land in particular, and despite isolated but considerable successes;⁴² it was precisely in the contrast experienced after the abolition of the Revolutionary Calendar that the old weekly rhythm acquired a power it had never had before.⁴³

The symbolic overkill that underlay the failure of the French Revolutionary Calendar⁴⁴ teaches us how properly to evaluate the success of the calendar reform that founded our own calendar down to the utmost detail. Just as had occurred in Cn. Flavius' project, substantial measures were taken, while at the same time the greatest possible effort was made to preserve the calendar's outward appearance. Even this achievement, however, would not have been possible without the enormous institutional changes of the late fourth century, and Caesar's revolutionary dictatorship.

Against the background of the dates uncovered by our examination of the content of the reform, we can now turn again to the authority by whose function Caesar set it in train. The list prepared by Caesar's *pontifex minor* shows that, for his changes to the characters of days, the dictator may have called pontifical opinions in aid; we do not know of any formal resolutions, just a series of concrete, individual decisions, year upon year. All the other changes were unproblematic from a sacral point of view: only the length of the intercalary month and the shape and length of the final part of the month were subject to changes. Thus the time-frame affected was either non-existent in terms of civil and sacral law,⁴⁵ or a space free of festivals: no religious authority was called for here.

Only the realization of the intercalation programme presented problems. How was the *rex sacrorum* to be obliged to cooperate? This barrier too was relatively easy to overcome. It was in principle possible to force a priest to carry out sacral functions, either by means of new institutions – quite a common expedient – or, in individual cases, by legal pressure. That it required a resolution of the people to bring the *pontifex maximus* Cn. Cornelius Scipio Barbatus to participate in the dedication of the Temple of Concordia in 304 BCE may have been unusual,⁴⁶ but it was not illegitimate. The *lex Acilia* had prolonged the intercalation procedure by the involvement of the *pontifices*, but, just as it was possible then to charge the *pontifices* in general with management of the process, so it was possible now to call upon them by the statutory means of the *edictum* to have the *rex sacrorum* perform an intercalation every four years. The fact that Caesar himself held the office of *pontifex maximus* may have made the reform more acceptable: the placatory

⁴¹ MATHIEZ 1904; AULARD 1927: 152–5; SYDENHAM 1974: 39, 154; MEINZER 1992.

⁴² MEINZER 1988: 27–59, 1992: 77ff.

⁴³ MEINZER 1988: 60, 1992: 150–6.

⁴⁴ ZERUBAVEL 1977.

⁴⁵ See RÜPKE 1995a: Ch. 6.1.

⁴⁶ Liv. 9.46.6.

The practical problems go back to a juncture at which Caesar could nevertheless have acted primarily as *pontifex maximus*, and not as dictator. This did not concern the calendar reform, but its preparation by the extreme prolongation of the year 46: a necessary element, but one that must be distinguished from the actual recasting of the calendar.⁴⁹ The insertion of two additional intercalary months after the regular intercalation in February⁵⁰ took place between November and December.⁵¹ There was no precedent for such an action, and its practical implementation had to be carefully considered. As with regular intercalations, even after the reform, it could not be announced in writing, but had to be promulgated in a concrete situation, by word of mouth. To remind ourselves of the regular February intercalation: it was tied to an appearance of the *rex sacrorum* and to a particular day, the Regifugium, that could be reinterpreted without difficulty. The year offered no second such opportunity, but analogous occasions could be sought.

When did the intercalation occur? Censorinus' words, *in mensem Novembrem et Decembrem interponeret*, in avoiding the word *inter*, tell us that the point chosen for intercalation did not lie precisely between the months: if it had, it would have entailed an alteration to the character of the following December Kalends. The additional days in the reform calendar give a clue to the point of time actually chosen. As *dies fasti* among the usual, ancient *dies comitiales* at the end of the month, they are easy to identify; Macrobius lists them individually, and Verrius Flaccus in his *Fasti Praenestini* highlights these days with legends such as *hunc diem divus Caesar addidit*.⁵² They are usually the second to last, sometimes third to last day of the month; only in April, where the *ludi Florae* stretch from 28 April onwards, past the end of the month and into May, is the fifth to last day added. Evidently, even where no concrete ritual link existed with the following Kalends, the intention was to avoid displacing the old *dies pridie kalendas* (it was, perhaps, on the evening of this day that the *pontifex minor* set off to make his observation of the new moon, the result of which was announced the next morning, on the Kalends). It follows that appropriate points for an intercalation in November/December of 46 BCE would have been 29 November and 29 December, both days being free of their own cult events.

And how was it carried out? My hypothesis is that, on the last day of November, the *rex sacrorum* appeared in the Comitium and announced that day as *ante diem VI kalendae interkalares priores*. The number evoked associations with the Regifugium in February; the practice of announcing *kalendae interkalares* not for the moment of intercalation, but for a subsequent day, was not only age-old, but also had good precedents in the Republican calendar in years in which twenty-three days were added. At the same time, this manner of announcing the date

⁴⁹ It was so perceived at the time: while Censorinus (20.8) and Macrobius (1.14.2–3) cover the intercalation of two additional months before going on to describe the reform, the opposite is the case in Suetonius (*Iul.* 40.2).

⁵⁰ See the assessment of the sources in BEAUJEU 1976: 24.

⁵¹ Censorinus, DN 20.8.

⁵² Macrobius, *Sat.* 1.14.9; *Inscr. It.* 13.2.117. 131. On the following see Ch. 3.2.

solved the problem of the length of the period to be intercalated. After the five-day 'prelude', it only remained for the two intercalary months to be inaugurated on the Kalends by a *pontifex minor* stationed in the Curia Calabra, using the formula *septies te kalo, Iuno Covella*; in this way, the two months of thirty-one days each, amounting overall to an intercalated period of sixty-seven days, could be promulgated in a way that did not offend ritual, and at the same time was technically unambiguous: there is a one-to-one correspondence between *nonae septimanae* and months of thirty-one days in the Julian Calendar. The rules required that the thirty-first day of the *mensis interkalaris posterior* was followed by the last day of November, redefined at the outset; December could then run its normal course.

Where does this reconstruction take us? It is an attempt to find a solution to a problem to do with astronomy and the calendar, in the context of given principles of sacral law and ritual procedures. Fortunately, the hypothesis has explanatory potential; otherwise, the effort would be of no avail.

Knowing that intercalation took place in November or December, one wonders whether the *Fasti Praenestini*, which takes such careful note of the added days, might not also contain some clue in respect of the exceptional intercalation that prepared the reform. We do in fact have residual traces of such a clue. To the left of the extant entry for 31 December, we can discern at the right-hand edge of the column for November, the rest of which has been lost, an entry that, based on the normal structure of the *fasti*, must relate to 30 November (Julian), or 29 November (pre-Julian). Still discernible is only the close of the first, evidently long, line, which ends with [—] COS, thus with a date.⁵³ Unfortunately, 30 November survives only in the rather sparsely annotated *Fasti Maffeiani*, where the still pre-Julian note *C* indicates no peculiarities.⁵⁴ No literary or other epigraphic sources exist that might allow us to assign what was nevertheless an important event to this date.⁵⁵ Reconstruction of the intercalation process, with the aid of Censorinus' text, provides the basis for integrating this textual remnant: [*Hoc die II menses interk(alares) dierum LXVII interkalat(i) sunt C. Caesare III M. Aemilio*] *co(n)s(ulibus)*.

A second positive result concerns our understanding of a singular date in a letter from Cicero to Q. Ligarius, written immediately after a supplicatory visit to Caesar *a. d. V. K. interkalaris priores*.⁵⁶ Such dates before the intercalary Kalends never occur elsewhere in contemporary accounts: they could not, as intercalation was announced on the previous day (*pridie*) at the earliest.⁵⁷ The fact that Cicero can already speak of *kalendae interkalaris priores* here reinforces the epigraphic evidence that the entire block of time was inserted at one time.

Thirdly, we are provided with an answer to our initial question as to the functions under whose authority Caesar undertook the reform. The position from

⁵³ *Inscr. It.* 13.2.135; illustration: 138.

⁵⁴ *Inscr. It.* 13.2.82; *Fasti Antiates maiores*: *Inscr. It.* 13.2.23.

⁵⁵ DEGRASSI 1963: 533: 'Quam ad rem adnotatio pertinuerit, non liquet.'

⁵⁶ *Cic. Fam.* 6.14.2.

⁵⁷ Such dates could of course be formulated retrospectively: see *Cic. Quinct.* 79 from 81 BCE.

which Caesar is most likely to have been able to obtain, or perhaps compel, the cooperation of the *rex sacrorum*⁵⁸ and a *pontifex minor* in our reconstructed intercalation is that of *pontifex maximus*. It is precisely for this step, which merely prepared the way for the reform, that Censorinus describes Caesar as *pontifex maximus*; only for the actual reform, not for this preliminary stage, does Macrobius use the expression *edictum*, which refers to the dictator as instigator of the new calendar. Finally, it is for this same preliminary stage that Macrobius attests to the employment of the *scriba*, probably the *pontifex minor* M. Flavius. Caesar defined and inaugurated the Julian Year as dictator. It was Caesar the *pontifex maximus* who ensured that the pre-Julian 1 January 45 could be used as the Julian 1 January.

Once implemented, the calendar was used without discernible enthusiasm, but also without any real resistance. The population may have coped with the two preparative intercalary months in the habitual fashion, by treating them *pro momento temporis*:⁵⁹ we know of no problems arising. Caesar was able to make good use of the additional time in his third consulate for reforms, and to prepare the Spanish campaign. On the other hand, difficulties were experienced in the second half of the lengthened months in the matter of fixed dates, that is to say birthdays. The established principle in sacral law, that the position of feast days was not tied to the vernacular 'date', that is to say the interval to the following Kalends, but to the interval from the preceding Ides, came up against the weight attached in the private realm to that same vernacular dating system.

The Saturnalia gave rise to more such irritations. Noted in the pre-Julian calendar *a. d. XIV. Kal. Ian.*, they now appeared, still five days after the Ides, *a. d. XVI. Kal. Ian.* In Macrobius' words: 'with the result that, since the exact date was not commonly known – some observing the addition which Caesar had made to the calendar [thus on the new, but correct date] and others following the old usage [thus two days too late] – the festival came to be regarded as lasting for more days than one'.⁶⁰ Macrobius himself goes on to concede that the historical perspective is false insofar that the Saturnalia were already celebrated over several days: but this in itself confirms the authenticity of the reported popular misunderstanding.

As already remarked, the same problem affected private occasions; here, however, the 'sacral conversion', that is to say keeping a constant interval from the Ides, was only an option, not a real obligation. While it was observed by some, others – even among the elite, as demonstrated by the instance of Livia – remained with the old 'date'; Augustus appears to have used this ambivalence to justify a two-day celebration.⁶¹

⁵⁸ Probably L. Claudius (RÜPKE 2008: no. 1160).

⁵⁹ Scaevola, *Dig.* 50.16.98.

⁶⁰ Macrobius, *Sat.* 1.10.2; see also BERGMANN 1984: 13.

⁶¹ SUERBAUM 1980. On Livia 336, on Augustus 334–5 with reference to Suet. *Aug.* 57.1. It is possible – and Suerbaum's examples suggest this – that actual proximity to the Ides was more likely to suggest such a conversion than a position shortly before the Kalends. Against RADKE 1990 see RÜPKE 1992b and RADKE 1991; cf. FEENEY 2007: 148–60.

The instance of the Saturnalia proves instructive in quite another direction. The celebration over several days cannot hide the fact that, on the calendar, only one day is marked SAT, only one day observed by the priests as *feriae Saturni* and *dies natalis* of his temple. Wherever a new edition of the *Fasti anni Iuliani* was available, there could be no error. This allows us three conclusions: one, the calendar, as a written medium, played no role for the mass of the population; two, the central rituals of the festival gave no impulse worthy of note, or any guiding authority, for general private celebration; three, it is, finally, remarkable that no comparable debate is attested for any other festival. In view of the fragmentary nature of the tradition, such an *argumentum e silentio* has no great value, but it may at least serve heuristically as an indication that only a small number of the *feriae* listed in the calendar had the status of a popular festival, with the consequences shown here.

We must, finally, inquire into the currency of the Julian Calendar beyond Rome itself.⁶² In the case of Italy, our inquiry is at least partially satisfied by the examples of *fasti* found throughout the territory, although with a concentration in Latium; Sicily remains problematic.⁶³ It must, however, not be forgotten that a mass of detailed information about alternative Latin and Italic calendars, either still in use or only recently fallen into disuse, was available to Late Republican and Early Imperial-Period antiquarians;⁶⁴ both the Iguvine Tables and the Agram mummy wrappings, which attest to independent Umbrian and Etruscan calendars, may also be no earlier than the century of the Julian reform. The improved ease of use of the Julian Calendar now for the first time made the method of intercalation practised in the city of Rome attractive for the needs of localities beyond Rome; combined with the civil wars and associated social upheavals, and the accelerated integration of the Italian elite instigated by Caesar and Octavian, this factor may have had a positive effect on the calendar's spread. On the other hand, centrally directed exportation of the calendar is nowhere discernible.

Beyond Italy, the calendar of the city of Rome continued to be definitive for central administrative purposes and for the military: the *Feriale Duranum* proves this, at least for the beginning of the third century CE.⁶⁵ In this role, it acquired the function of a standard calendar, called upon to synchronize the various calendars that continued in existence; comparative tables, known as *hemerologia*, existed to serve such purposes of conversion.⁶⁶ If the standard calendar ensured that the lengths of local months and years were adjusted to Roman values (often preserving ancient names and/or counting practices), thus making it possible to achieve a consistent equivalence over the years, as in the case of the calendar for

⁶² See Rüpke 2007b; cf. FEENEY 2007: 209–11.

⁶³ For the *Fasti Tauromenitani* see RÜPKE 1995a: 133–8.

⁶⁴ SCHOLZ 1990.

⁶⁵ Despite rightly pointing to the hypothetical character of the underlying arguments, REEVES (2004) fails to justify her own claim of a civic festival list with a local bias.

⁶⁶ KUBITSCHKE 1915.

the province of Asia, introduced in 9 BCE, in the Greek East the outcome was a very high degree of regulation.⁶⁷ In general, the pre-Julian patchwork of calendars actually remained in existence.⁶⁸ In the Latin West, on the basis of dated inscriptions and the list of dates from Numidian Theveste,⁶⁹ we can assume that the Julian calendar of the city of Rome had a wide distribution. Both the Gaulish calendar from Coligny⁷⁰ and the Imperial-Period conversion from a solar to a lunisolar Jewish calendar⁷¹ demonstrate *ex negativo*, by dissociation, the oppressive dominance of the Julian system.

8.2 The Calendar as Collective Memory

It remains the case that we know of only one *fasti* specimen that can be identified with certainty as Republican: the example from Antium. This hardly constitutes a meaningful body of evidence. With the Julian reform, older specimens had become obsolete; in many instances, owners may have destroyed wall-paintings and papyrus-roll calendars, anticipating the ravages of time. In order to move beyond the outcomes of our analysis of Fulvius' *fasti*, therefore, and to be able to define more precisely the social setting of the *fasti* in the Late Republic, we remain dependent on literary testimony. Of this there is little; but, of the few sources available to us, two passages from Cicero assign the *fasti* a central role in Rome's collective memory.

Among the attacks Cicero makes in his second *Philippica* against M. Antonius, he also speaks about the offer of the diadem to Caesar during the Lupercalia of 44 BCE, and stresses what a scandal it is that he, Antonius, who put the diadem on Caesar's head, still lives, while the death of the man who set it aside again meets with general approval. He continues:

And, moreover, he [*scil.* Caesar] caused it to be recorded in the annals (*in fastis*), under the head of Lupercalia (*ad Lupercalia*), 'That Marcus Antonius, the consul, by command of the people, had offered the kingdom to Caius Caesar, perpetual dictator; and that Caesar had refused to accept it.'⁷²

What *fasti*, or parts of *fasti*, may these have been? The inscriptions provide no answer; neither among the historical notes in the consul lists nor in extant calendar

⁶⁷ LAFFI 1967; DESSAU 1900; an example from Bithynia: REA 1992; for the Severan Period: EHRHARDT 1984.

⁶⁸ See e.g. BISCHOFF 1884, 1919; SAMUEL 1972: 174–87; GRZYBEK 1990.

⁶⁹ HERZ 1975 and *CIL* 8.1859.

⁷⁰ MONARD 1999.

⁷¹ STERN 2001.

⁷² *Cic. Phil.* 2.87. See also *Vell. Pat.* 2.56.4; *Dio Cass.* 44.11; *App. B Civ.* 2.109. HOHL 1942; WEINSTOCK 1971: 331–40; GESCHE 1976: 158–61; FRASCHETTI 1985; JEHNE 1987: 316–18; cf. MEYER 1922: 527–8. Translation of Cicero: C. D. Yonge, ed., from the Perseus Project.