

RURAL RITES IN OVID'S *FASTI*

RITUALES RURALES EN LOS *FASTI* DE OVIDIO

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ABSTRACT

This paper analyzes the presentation of rural festivals in Ovid's *Fasti* using the concept of lived ancient religion and especially the idea of individual appropriation of religious norms, actions and beliefs. As a literary work, the *Fasti* draw on material from other Augustan poets and appropriate it to the composition of the work and especially to the context of the Roman festival calendar. In the case of the rural festivals that are presented in the *Fasti*, this appropriation can be seen for example in the treatment of the importance of peace for rural life. In

RESUMEN

Este estudio analiza la presentación de los festivales rurales en los *Fasti* de Ovidio aplicando el concepto de "lived ancient religion", especialmente la idea de apropiación individual de normas, acciones y creencias religiosas. Como obra literaria, los *Fasti* se inspiran en material de otros poetas augusteos y se apropian de él en favor de la composición literaria, particularmente dentro del contexto del calendario religioso romano. En el caso de los festivales rurales presentados en los *Fasti*, esta apropiación se observa, por ejemplo, en el tratamiento de la importancia

the *Fasti*, the idealized rural scenes are not an object of the speaker's desire as they are for example in Tibullus' elegies. Instead, the described peace is identified as the *Pax Augusta* and the speaker utters thanks to the emperor who makes it possible that the celebrating rustics can enjoy this peace. Thus, the rural festivals are connected to urban politics and to the urban festival calendar. In the *Fasti*, the rural and urban festival communities do not exist isolated from each other as they share the same conditions (the *Pax Augusta*) and emotions (joy and gratitude) and thus form an emotional community.

de la paz para la vida rural. En los *Fasti*, las escenas rurales idealizadas no son objeto de deseo por parte del narrador, al contrario de lo que sucede, por ejemplo, en las elegías de Tibulo. En su lugar, la paz descrita es identificada con la *Pax Augusta* y el autor expresa su gratitud hacia el emperador que hace posible que los campesinos participantes en los festivales puedan disfrutar de dicha paz. De esta manera, los festivales rurales se relacionan con las políticas urbanas y con el calendario festivo urbano. En los *Fasti*, las comunidades rurales y urbanas que celebran los festivales no están aisladas una de la otra, puesto que comparten las mismas circunstancias (la *Pax Augusta*) y las mismas emociones (alegría y gratitud) y forman así una comunidad emocional.

KEYWORDS

Emotional Communities; Lived Ancient Religion; Ovid's *Fasti*; *Pax Augusta*; Rural Festivals.

PALABRAS CLAVE

Comunidades emocionales; "Lived Ancient Religion"; *Fasti* de Ovidio; *Pax Augusta*; festivales rurales.

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IN HIS BOOK "ON ROMAN RELIGION", Jörg Rüpke explains the concept of *Lived Ancient Religion*, a term that has been inspired by Meredith McGuire, as "a framework within which we can address the whole range of religious practices and conceptions, not as sets of fixed rules or beliefs, but as a permanently changing field of individual actions, inceptive traditions, monumental examples, and incoherent assumptions".¹ The concept focuses on the individual appropriation of religion, that is on the reproduction, selection and transformation of different traditions, norms and options that are available to an individual or a group of people. Meredith McGuire has studied this process with regard to contemporary religion.² In her study, she found that the people she had interviewed did not accept a set of beliefs as recommended by the religious institution they belonged to (e.g. the Catholic Church) uncritically, but that they assessed individually which beliefs and actions they accepted and performed, regarded as less important or rejected. They also accepted beliefs from other religious systems and integrated them into their own personal lived religion.³

With regard to antiquity, it is not always easy to discern cases of lived religion or individual appropriation of norms and traditions. This is partly due to the limited amount of source material, but also to the nature of the sources. Official documents and literary texts are often studied as reflecting the "official" belief system and ritual actions, while deviant accounts of religious behavior are classified as "popular" re-

1. Rüpke, 2016, p. 5.

2. McGuire, 2008.

3. For discussions of individual vs. official religion and individual appropriation of official beliefs in antiquity cf. e.g. Beard, 1987; Feeney, 1998; Scheid, 2013.

ligion.⁴ In contrast to this view, Rüpke has shown convincingly that literary works and official documents can be valuable sources for the study of lived ancient religion. They do not only contribute to the framework of legitimate religious options (e.g. beliefs, rites and concepts of the supernatural) that can be appropriated by individuals, but they also reflect the creation of this framework in social interaction and the negotiation of the concepts and options that are accepted.⁵

In this paper, the focus will be on a literary work about the Roman festival calendar, Ovid's *Fasti*.⁶ In this work, Ovid describes Roman festivals from January to June. In most cases, the emphasis is on aitiologies and myths regarding the respective festivals, but also on the venerated gods with their typical attributes and properties. However, there are also passages in which the performance of certain rites and the celebration of the festivals themselves are described in more or less detail. It is these sections that are mainly studied in this paper.⁷

At this point, it is important to stress the *Fasti*'s status as a literary work. The discussed rituals and festivals have been selected by the author and are described by the speaker of the work, who presents himself as Ovid.⁸ In some cases, there are parallel sources that confirm certain aspects of Ovid's presentation, but for many festivals that are discussed in the *Fasti*, no or only few (and in most cases far less detailed) accounts from antiquity have survived. Therefore, it is not the aim of this paper to reconstruct the real religious experience of participants at the presented festivals. Especially for the rural rites that are considered in detail in this paper, it is unlikely

4. Cf. Rüpke, 2016, pp. 1-3 for a summary of these perspectives in research on ancient religion.

5. Rüpke, 2016 discusses several examples for these practices. With regard to Ovid's *Fasti*, he stresses the importance of the connected reader for our understanding of the religious concepts of the Roman elite at the time (pp. 80-96). Another example are the inscribed or painted festival calendars of Augustan and Tiberian time. Rüpke argues that these calendars did not possess a prescriptive function but rather attest the self-definition of the individual or community who built and read them as Roman and loyal to Augustus (pp. 114-120).

6. In this paper, the title *Fasti* is used in accordance with common practice. However, Rüpke, 1994, pp. 125-129 has shown convincingly that Ovid's *Fasti* were written as a commentary on the homonymous inscriptional calendars and that therefore the title *libri Fastorum* would be more precise.

7. For a more extensive treatment of the presentation of contemporary festivals in Ovid's *Fasti* cf. Hirt (forthcoming).

8. The differentiation between a speaker or narrator and an author of a literary work has its roots in narratological approaches to literature and is now widely accepted. For the application of the concept to ancient literature in general and especially to Ovid's *Fasti* cf. e.g. Newlands, 1995, pp. 51-52; North, 1995, pp. 140-142 (with specific regard to Ovid's descriptions of festivals); Holzberg, 2006. For the self-presentation of the *Fasti*'s speaker as "Ovid" cf. most explicitly *Fast.* V 377-378 (in an address to Flora: *floreat ut toto carmen Nasonis in aevo, / sparge, precor, donis pectora nostra tuis*).

that they were ever performed in the described way by the rural population or that they were as strictly separated from urban cults as ancient literary works suggest.⁹ Instead, the respective passages show the influence of a literary tradition of describing idealized rural festivals that is especially prominent in Augustan times, as will be discussed below. Accordingly, the focus of this paper is on the imagined ceremonies as described in the *Fasti* and on their individuality in comparison to other accounts. The depictions of rural rites in the *Fasti* continue the literary tradition of Augustan time and especially of elegy, but they also modify it by selecting, rearranging and transforming certain elements to create a unique presentation of imagined rural piety in adaptation to the political situation in Rome.

A few preliminary remarks on the common idealization of rural life and piety are necessary, especially in the texts of Augustan times. Based on these remarks, one aspect of this idealization will be singled out and discussed in Ovid's rustic festivals, namely the importance of the community of the celebrants and the formation of emotional communities. There is often a focus on the emotional tone of a certain festival or a group of festivals in Ovid's *Fasti*. In the third section, the emotional tones of the rural festivals will be studied further. It will be shown that Ovid develops and transforms the emotions of his rustics in comparison to earlier elegy and explicitly includes contemporary political concepts like the *Pax Augusta*. Finally, attention will be drawn to the fact that Ovid's rural communities in the *Fasti* are not completely isolated from urban Rome, but are connected to the urban festivals and the urban emotional communities.

1. IDEALIZATION OF COUNTRY LIFE IN AUGUSTAN LITERATURE

In idealized presentations of rural life in Augustan literature,¹⁰ the countryside is often understood as a distinct space remote from and not connected to city life. Country life forms a contrast to life in Rome, as can be seen already in Varro's *De Re Rustica* (III 1, 1:

9. This is discussed in detail by North, 1995; cf. also Feeney, 1998, pp. 133-136 and Fantham, 2009, p. 5.

10. Due to the complexity of the different sentiments about rural life in Latin literature, only idealizing depictions of the countryside can be considered in this paper. The relevant ideas and passages were selected in view of the discussed festivals in Ovid's *Fasti*. The description of rural festivals in Augustan literature is deeply connected to the idealization of rural life, as simple piety is an important part of this idealization (see below). However, when it comes to the presentation of archaic rural peoples aside from festival descriptions, negative connotations of ancient rusticity can be found in the *Fasti*. Those passages draw on a tradition that connects *rusticitas* with a lack of urban elegance and education; cf. e.g. North, 1995, pp. 136-137 and Labate, 2010a, pp. 44-45 for examples. The contrast between the depiction of

Cum duae vitae traditae sint hominum, rustica et urbana, quidni, Pinni, dubium non est, quin hae non solum loco discretae sint, sed etiam tempore diversam originem habeant? Antiquior enim multo rustica, quod fuit tempus, cum rura colerent homines neque urbem haberent). The difference between urban and rural life is often perceived to consist in the simplicity of rural life, where people are supposed to be content with what they have, even if it is not much, while the city with her riches might lead to a life in luxury and greed. These negative sentiments about life in the city are expressed for example by Horatius, who claims at the end of ode III 1 (vv. 45-48) that he preferred his rural estate in the Sabine valley over the luxury and envy of the city.¹¹

In idealizing depictions, the rural population is often credited with high moral values, authentic piety and a peaceful communal life.¹² Evans draws attention to the fact that idealized descriptions reflect the desires of the societies that produce them.¹³ The Golden Age descriptions and idealized rural scenes of Augustan time serve as a surface onto which desires or ideals of the urban Roman society can be projected.¹⁴ Evans' observation that the ancient accounts do not agree completely regarding the objects of this desire is especially relevant for the present discussion. Rather, idealized narratives are open to individual appropriation: "The Golden Age and its associated soft primitivism are complex ideas, capable of bearing ominous meanings and open to appropriation".¹⁵

contemporary rural festivals and the archaic population of Rome in the *Fasti* has been studied in detail by Merli, 2018 and Labate, 2010a.

11. *Cur invidendis postibus et novo / sublime ritu moliar atrium? / cur valle permutem Sabina / divitias operosiores?* For further examples, cf. e.g. Verg., *Georg.* II 458-474 and Eigler, 2002, pp. 288-289.

12. This sentiment can be seen already in Cato, *Agr.* praef. 2: *Et virum bonum quom laudabant, ita laudabant: bonum agricolam bonumque colonum; amplissime laudari existimabatur qui ita laudabatur.* Cf. also e.g. Sacchi, 2002, pp. 241-247 and Eigler, 2002, pp. 292-293; discussion of Tib., II 5, 23-30.

13. Evans, 2003, pp. 285-287. Cf. for this idea with specific regard to ancient texts e.g. Kaster, 2005, p. 4: "Now, we can be pretty certain that these stories tell us less about some Edenic reality in the Roman past than they do about the values and yearnings of the story-tellers as they faced their grubby present".

14. Evans, 2003, pp. 299-304.

15. Evans, 2003, p. 299. It has to be noted that the Golden Age narrative and depictions of the earliest forms of agriculture are not completely identical, although both settings serve as models for an idealized rural life. There are generally two modes of looking at the development from primitive times to the modern age. The narrative of the different ages as it is represented e.g. by Hesiod in his works and days (vv. 109-200) is often called the "descending" or "pessimistic" view of the development of cultural techniques because in this theory, humans developed from a paradisiac Golden Age to the present over several stages of deterioration, especially with regard to the invention of weapons and increasing violence. In Hesiod, this model is not connected to agriculture, but the people of the Golden Age are said to live without any technological effort from the fruit that the earth produces without any toil (Hes., *Erg.* 117-118). Accordingly, Ovid introduces agriculture in his account of the ages in the Silver Age, as

The Augustan elegists sometimes explicitly express such a desire for a simple, carefree life in the country. Thus, for example Tibullus imagines himself as a rustic in elegy I 1, 7-10 after he has expressed his rejection of warfare: *ipse seram teneras maturo tempore vites / rusticus et facili grandia poma manu: / nec spes destituat, sed frugum semper acervos / praebeat et pleno pinguis musta lacu*. The use of the subjunctive shows that these verses do not reflect a real situation, but a wish. The emphasis on a rich harvest is typical for idealized descriptions of country life in which there is no room for hunger and similar hardship.¹⁶

As can be seen from the quoted text from Varro, country life is not only seen as spatially separated from the city, but also as temporally different from an urban lifestyle in Augustan time. Rural life is imagined as the life of the ancestors, of a time in which the *mos maiorum* was intact, and it is assumed to be the only place where traditions of a simpler and better time have survived.¹⁷ Thus, for example Virgil discusses in *Georgics* II 458-474 that *Iustitia* had left her last traces in the country when she left earth (cf. e.g. vv. 473-474: *extrema per illos [scil. agricolos] / Iustitia excedens terris vestigia fecit*). In Augustan time, this narrative of an ideal rustic past that degenerated over time is modified in a crucial point: Augustus strives to restore the Golden Age or rather to introduce a new Golden Age, for example through the propagation of the *Pax Augusta* and through the restoration of ancient cults. Augustus constructs Rome's future as a reflection of a desired past. This connection of an idealized future

a reaction to the fact that the earth did not produce unlimited amounts of food without being worked anymore (Ov., *Met.* 114-125). On the other hand, the invention of agriculture can be seen as an improvement of the diet of primitive humans. In this view, Ceres typically replaces the acorn as the food of the primitive age with grain; cf. e.g. Verg., *Georg.* I 7-8. However, the two models are not as separate as it would seem at first glance. Already in Aratus, agriculture is part of the Golden Age (cf. Arat., 112-114). For the blending of the two models in Virgil's *Georgics* and Ovid's *Metamorphoses* cf. also Johnston, 1980, esp. pp. 41-89 and Labate, 2010b, pp. 138-152 respectively. In the *Fasti*, the invention of iron has two different aspects: On the one hand, it allows the invention of the plow and thus of agriculture, which is seen in a thoroughly positive light, but on the other hand, it also leads to the invention of weapons and war. The two sentiments are both expressed in the aretalogy of Ceres in *Fast.* IV 401-406: *prima Ceres homine ad meliora alimenta vocato / mutavit glandes utiliore cibo. / Illa iugo tauros collum praeberere coegit: / tum primum soles eruta vidit humus. / Aes erat in pretio, Chalybeia massa latebat: / eheu, perpetuo debuit illa tegi*. For the connection of peace and agriculture in the *Fasti* see below.

16. This is not in conflict with the wish for *paupertas* in Tib., I 1, 5. That the idealized farmer in literature and especially the speaker in elegy is *pauper* does not mean that he is suffering from poverty, but that he does not possess enough to be rich. The wish for a simple life in the country thus includes the wish for a good harvest, whereas profit is not important for the speaker.

17. Cf. Feeney, 1998, p. 133: "In many Roman authors this nostalgia for a lost religious simplicity and authenticity is located in the past; it may also be located off to the side in the present, when it is often displaced into the country".

with the past can be seen already in Virgil's fourth eclogue.¹⁸ The iconography of the time uses the same narrative, as can be seen for example in the depiction of a rural Golden Age on the *Ara Pacis*.¹⁹

In the following section, Ovid's presentation of rural festivals will be discussed against this background. A festival in the *Fasti* is considered as "rural" in this paper if it is set in the countryside. This does not imply that the festival was really celebrated by the rural population. In most cases, we do not have enough information about the rites to discern if and to what extent they were confined to the countryside.

2. EMOTIONAL COMMUNITIES IN THE *FASTI*'S RURAL FESTIVALS

In Ovid's *Fasti*, four contemporary festivals are presented as idealized rural scenes: The *Feriae Sementivae* (I 657-703), the *Terminalia* (II 639-684), the *Cerialia* (IV 393-416) and the *Parilia* (IV 721-782). The idealization of rustic life in these descriptions consists of several elements that can also be found in other Augustan accounts of rural rites, for example the preference of simple gifts to the gods over expensive and pompous sacrifice, the worship of old and partly aniconic deities and the importance of peace for a happy life. In this section, the focus will be on the presentation of the celebrants as peaceful and harmonious communities who perform the necessary rites together.

According to Chaniotis, it is a key function of rituals to create "emotional communities".²⁰ With this term he describes "a community of people who were expected to feel the same emotions (hope, fear, anger, affection, pride, etc.) in the worship of a deity. Such communities were founded on shared emotional experience".²¹ It will be argued that Ovid constructs the participants in his rural festivals as emotional communities who show a close connection both amongst each other and to the worshipped deities. The participants are also deeply connected to the Roman empire and the *Pax Augusta*, an aspect which will be discussed in the next section.

18. Cf. e.g. vv. 6-10: *iam redit et Virgo, redeunt Saturnia regna, / iam nova progenies caelo demittitur alto. / tu modo nascenti puero, quo ferrea primum / desinet ac toto surget gens aurea mundo, / casta fave Lucina: tuus iam regnat Apollo*; for Virgil's adaptation of the Golden Age myth cf. Johnston, 1980 and for the construction of the future as the return of an idealized past in Augustan time cf. Eigler, 1996 and 2002.

19. Cf. e.g. L'Orange, 1973b; Castriota, 1995, pp. 124-169; Evans, 2003, pp. 301-302; Zanker, 2009, pp. 177-188.

20. Chaniotis, 2011a.

21. Chaniotis, 2011b, p. 265.

2.1. THE *TERMINALIA* (*FAST. II 639-684*)

The *Terminalia* were a festival for the boundary stone, *Terminus*, which was worshipped as a god. The festival confirmed existing boundaries, for example between two fields, and preserved them through this yearly confirmation. Other sources also locate the cult of boundary stones mainly in the countryside, compare for example Festus: *Termino sacra faciebant, quod in eius tutela fines agrorum esse putabant. Denique Numa Pompilius statuit eum qui terminum exarasset, et ipsum et boves sacrum esse.*²² However, the cult was not exclusively rural, since a *Terminus*-stone was also worshipped in the temple of Jupiter on the Capitol in Rome.²³

Ovid describes the *Terminalia* in *Fast. II 639-684*. The entry begins with the date of the festival (February 23rd, vv. 639-640) and an invocation of its god (vv. 641-644).²⁴ Already in this invocation, the emphasis is on the fact that the *Terminalia* have to be celebrated jointly by two neighbors (vv. 643-644): *te duo diversa domini de parte coronant, / binaque serta tibi binaque liba ferunt*. The border that is symbolized by the worshipped boundary stone has to be confirmed and accepted by both sides in order for the ritual to be successful. It is thus impossible to celebrate the *Terminalia* alone.

The description of the celebration begins after the invocation of the god in v. II 645. Vv. 645-654 describe the preparations for the sacrifice that are conducted by the whole family:

<i>ara fit: huc ignem curto fert rustica testo</i>	645
<i>sumptum de tepidis ipsa colona focis.</i>	
<i>ligna senex minuit concisaque construit arte,</i>	
<i>et solida ramos figere pugnat humo;</i>	
<i>tum sicco primas inritat cortice flammas;</i>	
<i>stat puer et manibus lata canistra tenet.</i>	650
<i>inde ubi ter fruges medios immisit in ignes,</i>	
<i>porrigit incisos filia parva favos.</i>	
<i>vina tenent alii: libantur singula flammis;</i>	
<i>spectant, et linguis candida turba favet.</i>	
<i>spargitur et caeso communis Terminus agno,</i>	655
<i>nec queritur lactans cum sibi porca datur.</i>	
<i>conveniunt celebrantque dapes vicinia simplex</i>	
<i>et cantant laudes, Termine sancte, tuas</i>	

22. Festus p. 505 Lindsay.

23. The story that this stone already existed before the construction of the temple and remained on the Capitol when it was built is attested in Liv., I 55 and Ov., *Fast. II 667-672*.

24. The date is confirmed by the inscriptional calendars (cf. Degraffi, 1963, p. 414).

The farmer's wife brings fire from the hearth of the farm while an old man is stacking wood for the sacrificial fire. Next, there are some preliminary bloodless sacrifices: A boy burns some fruit and a little girl pours honey into the flames.²⁵ "Others" (*alii*, v. 653) add wine. They are probably the neighbors who join the described family in v. 654 to form a *candida turba*, the community who celebrates together.²⁶

In these verses, Ovid constructs an ideal family who prepares the festival together and without quarrel. The family members are not named, but consist of typical persons in most families: There is a man, a woman and two children.²⁷ There are similar family scenes in Tibullus' work, and there they are also connected to rural life in general and especially to rural festivals. In elegy II 5, Tibullus imagines a prosperous year for the rustics who have just received a favorable omen. In this context, he describes a rural family at a festival (vv. 91-94): *et fetus matrona dabit, natusque parenti / oscula compressis auribus eripiet, / nec taedebit avum parvo ad-vigilare nepoti / balbaque cum puero dicere verba senem*. In elegy I 10, 23-24, in a passage on the speaker's longing for a simple past, there is, as in Ovid's text, a little girl who sacrifices honey: *atque aliquis voti compos liba ipse ferebat / postque comes purum filia parva favum*. The presentation of a happy family at a festival can thus be traced back to Tibullus, where it is deeply connected to the longing for a simple but carefree rural life. In contrast to this, the peaceful celebration of the *Terminalia* is presented as a contemporary reality in the *Fasti*.²⁸

The community of the celebrants is further emphasized in *Fast.* II 655-658. The topic of these verses is the animal sacrifice and the following sacrificial meal that is shared by the whole neighborhood. V. 655 contains the expression *communis terminus*: The neighbors share a common border, but they also join in the worship of the same god. This expression is surrounded by the theme of small, but pious gifts that are dear to rural gods (vv. 655-656): *Terminus* should be honored with a lamb, but he is content with a piglet, too.²⁹ Both motives, the community of the rural neigh-

25. The two children are probably the farmer's son and daughter. The *senex* may be the farmer himself or his father, i.e. the children's grandfather. For the discussion, cf. Miller, 1991, p. 120 with n. 37 and Robinson, 2011, p. 417. The exact relationship of the family members is irrelevant for this paper. The passage clearly focuses on an idealized family in this scene. For parallels (especially in Tibullus) see below.

26. The adjective *candida* underlines the festive mood of the celebration, as white was the common color for festivals; cf. n. 45.

27. On the identity of these persons, see n. 18.

28. See below for the presentation of other festivals as a contemporary reality in Ovid, esp. n. 38. Cf. also Merli, 2018, p. 412, n. 18 for further parallels for family scenes in Augustan poetry.

29. This motif is more explicitly expressed in the entry on the *Cerialia* (*Fast.* IV 412): *parva bonae Cereri, sint modo casta, placent*. Cf. Labate, 2010b, p. 186 for a more detailed discussion of the modesty

borhood and the people's simple but honest character, are combined in v. 657: *conveniunt celebrantque dapes vicinia simplex*. The community is united in the joyful and peaceful celebration of the god. The farmer's family and neighbors have developed into an "emotional community" for the duration of the festival.

2.2. THE *FERIAE SEMENTIVAE* (*FAST. I 657-704*)

The *Feriae Sementivae* are described by Ovid in *Fast.* I 657-704. They were a movable agricultural festival and took place in winter.³⁰ Ovid's presentation of the festival mainly consists of exhortations to celebrate and to cease all labor on the festive day:

state coronati plenum ad praesepe, iuveni:
cum tepido vestrum vere redibit opus.
rusticus emeritum palo suspendat aratrum: 665
omne reformidat frigore volnus humus.
vilice, da requiem terrae semente peracta;
da requiem, terram qui coluere, viris.
pagus agat festum: pagum lustrate, coloni,
et date paganis annua liba focus. 670
placentur frugum matres, Tellusque Ceresque,
farre suo gravidae visceribusque suis:
officium commune Ceres et Terra tuentur;
haec praebet causam frugibus, illa locum.

These exhortations are directed to the rural population and do not contain detailed prescriptions for rites or other actions, but rather develop the "emotional tone" of the festival as a holy day that should be celebrated with joy and respect.³¹ The addresses to the celebrants vary and consist of several denominations for the rustics. The farmers are called *rusticus* (v. 665) and *coloni* (v. 669). Moreover, the speaker differentiates between the manager of the farm (*vilicus*; v. 667) and the farm workers (*viri*; v. 668). Vv. 669-670 conclude with an address to the whole village (*pagus*). This variation creates the impression of a certain unity of the different people in this pas-

of the described farmers at the *Terminalia*.

30. The purpose of the festival, the usual time for its celebration and its connection to the winter sowing are disputed. For the opinion that it took place shortly after the winter sowing in December, cf. e.g. Delatte, 1936, pp. 387-388 and Miller, 1991, p. 171, n. 16; for the dating of the festival into January cf. e.g. Bayet, 1950, pp. 174-176 and Le Bonniec, 1958, p. 58.

31. The term "emotional tone" is taken from Rüpke, 2016, pp. 90-92, who gives several examples, including the *Feriae Sementivae*.

sage. The addresses vary, but they denote similar occupations that are all in the sphere of farming. The different farmers and workers of vv. 665-668 all seem to be part of the *pagus* in vv. 669-670. In this distich, the emphasis is on the *pagus* as a community and no individuals are singled out.³² Thus, the description shifts from the denomination of single persons or smaller groups to an overview of the whole celebrating community. The celebrants act together and worship the same goddesses, Ceres and Tellus, who have a common task as well: *officium commune Ceres et Terra tuentur* (v. 673).

The emphasis on the community of celebrants in the description of the *Feriae Sementivae* is thus similar to the construction of an emotional community of the *Terminalia* section, but it adds another aspect: Not only humans are part of the community of the *Feriae Sementivae*, but also animals and even the land are addressed directly. The prescriptions open with a direction to the bulls not to work on the festive day (v. I 663). The first imperative to a human follows in v. 667 (*vilice*). Thus, the bulls, like their human masters, are presented as important participants of the festival. They seem to prepare for the festival and to enjoy the festive atmosphere together with the humans. It is even implied that the land has feelings, too: It backs away from the plough as if it were injured by agricultural work (*reformidat [...] volnus*, v. 666). In addition, it needs rest like a human being and through the parallel construction of vv. 667-668, this need is equated to the farm workers' need for rest. Even the plough is attributed with the adjective *emeritum* (v. 665) which could imply that it has "earned" its rest by its good work in the previous season.³³ Thus, humans, animals, and the land unite in Ovid's presentation of the *Feriae Sementivae* to form a community that celebrates the festival in idealized harmony.

The emotional community of the rustics, their animals and the land is especially remarkable in comparison to the closely related festival scene in Tib., II 1 (esp. vv. 1-8).³⁴ In Tib., II 1, the celebrating farmers also celebrate the festival together, as is evident already in the first distich: *quisquis ades, faveas: fruges lustramus et agros, / ritus ut a prisco traditus exstat avo*. However, there are two relevant differences for the present discussion: First, Tibullus' speaker is part of the festival community (note the use of the first person e.g. in the quoted distich).³⁵ Moreover, he introduces personal emotions at several points in the elegy that are not shared by the celebrating far-

32. Note also the repetition of different forms of *pagus* in this distich.

33. Cf. Green, 2004a, p. 308.

34. For a comparison of the two passages cf. especially Miller, 1991, pp. 110-118 and Merli, 2018, pp. 410-415.

35. That Ovid's speaker is not part of the festival community is expressed in *Fast.*, I 695, where he prays for the rustics, not with them (*haec ego pro vobis, haec vos optate coloni*).

mers.³⁶ Second, there are no imperatives addressed to the farm animals: Instead, the animals and the plough are presented as objects of the humans' actions.³⁷ Thus, Ovid adapts Tibullus' text to his calendar poem, reducing the importance of the speaker and extending the community of the participants.

3. PEACE AND THE *PAX AUGUSTA* IN THE *FASTI*'S RURAL FESTIVALS

Peace is a central component of idealized rural scenes, not only in Ovid. The absence of war is often connected to the prosperity of agricultural work since farmers do not have to leave their land as soldiers when there is peace.³⁸ Peace is also a characteristic of the Golden Age: In that time, humans did not know any metals and accordingly they could not produce any weapons.³⁹ This idea is also expressed in the *Fasti*, for example in the aretology of Ceres (*Fast.* IV 393-406) in the entry regarding the *Cerialia*. The speaker proclaims the following sentences about the mythical pre-cultural age he is talking about (*Fast.* IV 405-406): *aes erat in pretio, Chalybeia massa latebat: / eheu, perpetuo debuit illa tegi!* He wishes that iron (expressed as *Chalybeia massa*) had never been discovered and connects this wish to the importance of peace for Ceres and her festival. Immediately after the quoted verses, he continues with instructions for the festival of Ceres (IV 407-408: *pace Ceres laeta est; et vos orate, coloni, / perpetuam pacem pacificumque deum*). Thus, the speaker does not continue to describe the horrors of weapons but turns to the importance of peace for agriculture instead.⁴⁰ The joy about peace is the dominant emotion in Ovid's description of Ceres' festival. The addressed farmers shall pray for peace and for Augustus who is called "the lea-

36. This is especially clear in two cases: First, there is an invocation of Messalla, for whom the rustics shall pray in vv. 31-36, but who shall especially help the speaker (v. 35: *huc ades aspiroque mihi*). Second, amatory motives are introduced at the end of the elegy (vv. 67-90). At this point, there is a separation between the emotions of the speaker who fears Amor's power (esp. v. 70: *ei mihi, quam doctas nunc habet ille [scil. Cupido] manus!*) and the celebrating rustics (esp. v. 83: *vos celebrem cantate deum*). Discussions of Tib., II 1 are numerous, cf. e.g. Pöstgens, 1940; Pascal, 1988; Bremmer, 1993.

37. Cf. e.g. Tib., II 1, 5-7 (*Luce sacra requiescat humus, requiescat arator / et grave suspenso vomere cesset opus. / Solvite vincla iugis [...]*).

38. This connection can be seen for example in Virgil's *Georgics* (II 459-460: *quibus [agricolis] ipsa procul discordibus armis / fundit humo facilem victum iustissima tellus*) and in Tib., I 10.

39. Cf. e.g. Ov., *Met.* I 94-102; Arat., 105-132; Verg., *Aen.* VIII 324-327.

40. It is noteworthy that the *Cerialia* are presented as a celebration of farmers, *coloni*, in *Fast.*, IV 407. Although the *Cerialia* as a festival for Ceres and the growth of the grain were rural in origin, in Ovid's time they were celebrated with games in Rome that lasted several days (April 12th-19th). Cf. Degrassi, 1963, pp. 439 for a summary of the inscriptional attestations of these *ludi* and Le Bonniec, 1958, pp. 108-140 for a detailed account of the festival with a focus on its rural origins.

der who brings peace" (*pacificus dux*). By connecting the mythical peace before the invention of weapons to the peace that is celebrated at the *Cerialia*, the Golden Age is connected to the *Pax Augusta*. Augustus is hailed for the restoration of peace which is not a mythical ideal anymore, but a contemporary reality not only for the city of Rome, but also for the farmers who celebrate the *Cerialia*.⁴¹

Ovid thus constructs the *Cerialia* as a festival that shows the influence of the emperor on a countryside that is deeply connected to the city of Rome and that relies on Augustus and the *Pax Augusta* to flourish. This is a significant difference between Ovid's presentation and the rural scenes in other Augustan poets that are mainly objects of the speaker's desire.⁴² In those other poems, rural life serves as an imagined alternative to the riches and worries of city life. The country is presented as a place out of time and space and exists largely isolated from any cities or other local points of reference.⁴³ Only in rare cases is the idealized country connected to or even dependent on the city. An example can be found in Virgil's first eclogue, where Augustus guarantees Tityrus's peaceful life on his own piece of land. Here, the farmers' dependency on urban political decisions is expressed in even stronger terms than in Ovid's *Fasti* and is not confined to praising the positive effects of the *Pax Augusta*: In contrast to Tityrus, Meliboeus has to bear the negative consequences of his dependency on urban politics as he is driven off his land.

The speaker of the descriptions of rural festivals in the *Fasti* does not focus on his own desire for peace, nor does he present the described agricultural communities as part of a long lost Golden Age. Instead, the celebrating rustics form emotional communities that feel the joy about an existing peace that is a result of Augustus' reign and thus a reality for both the rustics and the speaker. The descri-

41. It has to be noted that there are no other sources that connect the *Cerialia* with the *Pax Augusta*. Ovid constructs the festival as rural and celebrating Augustan Peace in spite of the urban character of the festival in his own time. However, *Pax* and *Ceres* are frequently connected in Augustan time because peace is seen as a prerequisite for the prosperity of agriculture (cf. e.g. L'Orange, 1973b, pp. 267-271; Spaeth, 1996, pp. 67-69 and pp. 125-151 for the possible identification of the central figure on the *Ara Pacis* with *Ceres*; Castriota, 1995, pp. 70-73 on the affinities of the central figure on the *Ara Pacis* with *Ceres* while preferring to identify the depicted goddess with *Pax*).

42. See above on the *Terminalia* and cf. also Laage, 1956, especially pp. 169-173, who does not distinguish between the speaker and the author of a text. Laage remarks that Ovid's amatory elegy does not show the same desire for peace as earlier works e.g. by Tibullus, Virgil and Horace but seems to regard peace as a contemporary reality instead. See also n. 38.

43. Cf. in general Evans, 2003, pp. 292-300 and for discussions of single authors e.g. Leach, 1980, pp. 61-69 on Tibullus, pp. 56-57 on landscape paintings and Feeney, 1998, pp. 121-123 on Tibullus. North, 1995, demonstrates that the isolation of specifically "rural" religion is a literary fiction.

bed communities are not isolated and timeless, but located in Augustan time and they celebrate festivals of the contemporary Roman calendar. It is noteworthy that the shift in the description of peace from an object of desire to an idealized contemporary reality coincides with the different generations of Augustan poets: In contrast to the works of Tibullus, Propertius and Virgil, Ovid composed the *Fasti* decades after the civil war had ended.

The idea that peace is not confined to the Golden Age, but a defining characteristic of Augustus' reign is made explicit in an appendix to the entry regarding the *Feriae Sementivae* (*Fast.*, I 697-704).⁴⁴ As in the section on the *Cerialia*, this passage connects peace and agriculture, but it does not idealize the past or rejoice about its restoration. On the contrary, *Fast.* I 697-704 begins with the following words: *bella diu tenuere viros: erat aptior ensis / vomere* (vv. 697-698). The past is here defined as shaken by war. However, this state has been overcome by the *domus Augusta* (vv. 701-702; Germanicus is addressed): *gratia dis domuique tuae: religata catenis / iam pridem vestro sub pede bella iacent*. In this section, the present does not repeat a lost ideal state, but it exclusively improves the past that is presented as characterized by warfare. The emotional tone of the passage reflects this construction of the *Pax Augusta*: The speaker expresses joy about the peace that the farmers are enjoying, but also gratefulness towards the emperor (*gratia*, v. 701). Thus, urban politics intrude into rural life in this passage, too. What is more, the presentation of the scene gives the impression that the idealized life of the rustics as well as the rural celebration of the *Feriae Sementivae* (*Fast.* I 657-696) are only possible because of the protecting influence of Rome and its emperor. The *Pax Augusta* is presented as a *conditio sine qua non* for the celebration of the festival. Accordingly, an explicit expression of the importance of peace for agriculture in which the goddesses *Pax* and *Ceres* are connected closes the passage (vv. 703-704): *sub iuga bos veniat, sub terras semen aratas: / Pax Cererem nutrit, Pacis alumna Ceres*.⁴⁵

44. See above for a detailed account of the presentation of this festival's celebrating community.

45. Merli, 2018, p. 415 draws attention to Tib., I 10, where a similar sentiment can be found, especially in vv. 45-52 and in vv. 67-68. While vv. 45-52 describe the importance of peace for agriculture in a general way, the last distich expresses a desire for peace: *at nobis, Pax alma, veni spicamque teneto, / perfluat et pomis candidus ante sinus*. That *Pax* is not imagined to be present yet is also apparent from a verse earlier in the poem where the speaker mourns that he has to go to war (v. 13: *nunc ad bella trahor*; note the *nunc* that refers to the speaker's own time in contrast to the past that was described before). The expression of a desire for peace is absent in Ovid's account of the *Pax Augusta* that is portrayed as a contemporary reality.

4. THE CONNECTION OF RURAL AND URBAN EMOTIONAL COMMUNITIES IN THE *FASTI*

4.1 THE *PAX AUGUSTA* IN THE DESCRIPTION OF URBAN FESTIVALS

The *Pax Augusta* is not only relevant to the rural population in the *Fasti*, but also to the urban community and is discussed by Ovid on the occasion of urban festivals, too. In this context, the importance and success of the *Pax Augusta* are not so much expressed by direct rejoicing about peace as by statements about the size of the empire and the superiority of Rome over her enemies. Peace is here not defined as the absence of war, but as security in an empire that shows power and strength, also through military conquests. This is especially true for the presentation of the *natalis* of the *Ara Pacis* itself (*Fast.* I 709-722). The description begins with a hymn to *Pax* who is – already in the opening invocation – addressed as “*Pax of Actium*” (*Fast.* I 711-712: *frondibus Actiacis comptos redimita capillos, / Pax, ades [...]*). She is further asked to warrant the security of the Roman empire by ensuring its size as well as the respect, but also the fear of all peoples.⁴⁶ The *Pax Augusta* that is celebrated on the *natalis* of her altar is thus defined as peace and security within a strong empire that has the power to subdue all enemies.

The prayer to *Pax* in *Fast.* I 709-718 has been subject to much discussion because of its focus on military conquests which is unusual in comparable Greek eulogies of Peace.⁴⁷ It has even been interpreted as a sign of an alleged subversiveness in the speaker’s praise of Augustus and his *Pax*, especially by Steven Green.⁴⁸ However, it has to be noted that in antiquity, peace was not necessarily understood as the complete absence of war. The *Pax Augusta* was celebrated as the absence of civil war or other violent conflicts within the empire, especially after the time of the civil war. It could also include the notion of Roman strength and military power that kept foreign enemies at bay.⁴⁹ Thus, depictions of military success and peaceful scenes of abundance coexisted even in official imagery. Evans cites the *Ara Pacis*, with her representations of a rural Golden Age, as an example for the official coexistence and combination of the two concepts: “[...] the altar was originally situated in close proximity

46. Cf. especially vv. 717-718: *horreat Aeneadas et primus et ultimus orbis: / siqua parum Romam terra timebat, amet.*

47. Cf. Green, 2004a, p. 322.

48. Cf. esp. Green, 2004b, pp. 234-236.

49. Both aspects are mentioned by Laage, 1956, pp. 169-173, who discusses them in different authors’ concepts of peace. Cf. also Hardwick, 2000, pp. 338-344; Schmitzer, 2004, pp. 15-16; Zanker, 2009, p. 179.

to monuments celebrating Augustan victory (the obelisk) and the imperial dynasty (Augustus's mausoleum)⁵⁰. It is thus impossible to attribute the contradictions that are inherent in the concept of the *Pax Augusta* solely to Ovid.

4.2 THE PEOPLE OF ROME AS AN EMOTIONAL COMMUNITY. THE KALENDS OF JANUARY (*FAST. I 63-88*)

Praise of the size of the empire is already mentioned in the first description of a festival in the *Fasti*, the New Year's festival on the Kalends of January (*Fast. I 63-88*). In the introduction to this entry, the speaker invokes Janus and asks him to aid the Roman people and its rulers. The *domus Augusta* is praised especially for the peace and security it brought (I 67-68: *dexter ades ducibus, quorum segura labore / otia terra ferax, otia pontus habet*). The idea that Rome surpasses all other countries is taken up at the very end of the entry. There, the speaker imagines what the assembled festival community might look like from Jupiter's perspective (I 85-86): *Iuppiter arce sua totum cum spectet in orbem, / nil nisi Romanum quod tueatur habet*. The urban festival community is presented as a unity in this distich and described as *Romanum*.⁵¹ But the visual impression is also important for the recognition of this unity (*spectet, tueatur*). Already in vv. 79-80, the festival community had been defined as a visually perceivable unit of people that are all clad in white: *vestibus intactis Tarpeias itur in arces, / et populus festo concolor ipse suo est*. The white color moreover expresses the festive mood of the celebrants,⁵² an emotion that is stressed also by other means in the passage, especially in its beginning (vv. 71-74):

*prospera lux oritur: linguis animisque favete;
nunc dicenda bona sunt bona verba die.
lite vacent aures, insanaque protinus absint
iurgia: differ opus, livida turba, tuum.*

50. Evans, 2003, pp. 301-302. The coexistence of the celebration of peace and military success can even be seen in the imagery of the *Ara Pacis* itself: Schmitzer, 2004, pp. 15-16 points to the representation of Roma who is sitting on conquered weapons; cf. also Merli, 2018, pp. 415-416 for a discussion of the visual elements on the monument that Ovid refers to in the *Fasti*. For the depiction of an agricultural Golden Age on the *Ara Pacis*, cf. n. 15.

51. Cf. also Labate, 2010b, pp. 158-159.

52. White was the usual color to be worn at a festival. For the interpretation that it expressed the festive mood of the celebrants, cf. Radke, 1936, pp. 63-64.

These verses consist of excited exclamations by the speaker who describes the appropriate emotional tone of the festival. The New Year's festival is a day of new beginnings and therefore supposed to be particularly happy. The speaking of *bona verba* and the absence of quarrels are good omens on a day which is called *laeta* in v. 87.⁵³ Thus, the festival community is not only marked as a unity by its visual appearance, but also by its joyous mood in its celebration of Rome's power and stability. Like the rural population in the rural festivals, the people of Rome forms an emotional community in the celebration of the New Year. In the following section, it will be shown that the two communities are not strictly separated in the *Fasti*, but that they share points of contact in their celebration of the same festivals that are part of the Roman calendar.

4.3 THE *TERMINALIA* REVISITED. URBAN AND RURAL COMMUNITIES IN A SINGLE FESTIVAL

The rural community that celebrates Ovid's *Terminalia* has been discussed above, but the entry is also special for another reason: The passage on the *Terminalia* combines mention of a rural and an urban festival community within the same festival. The rustics that are described in the first part of the entry sing a hymn in the course of the celebration (*Fast.* II 659-678). However, this hymn leaves the concerns of a rural community as it proceeds and turns to the story of *Terminus* on the Capitol who could not be moved when the temple for *Iuppiter Optimus Maximus* was built.⁵⁴ This story is not about rural boundary markers any more, but about the central *Terminus*-stone that is venerated in the state cult. After the hymn, the speaker leaves the rustic setting and describes a sacrifice at the sixth milestone outside of Rome that was probably part of the state cult (*Fast.* II 679-682).⁵⁵ It is noteworthy that none of these stones, neither the one on the Capitol nor the milestone at which the sacrifice is performed, are boundary stones in the sense that they mark a frontier. In Ovid's time, the borders of the Roman empire are significantly larger and cannot be found inside

53. For the importance of good omens on New Year's Day (in general and especially in Ovid's presentation) cf. e.g. Müller, 1909, pp. 473-481 and Miller, 1991, p. 59.

54. *Fast.* II 667-670: *quid, nova cum fierent Capitolia? nempe deorum / cuncta Iovi cessit turba locumque dedit; / Terminus, ut veteres memorant, inventus in aede / restitit et magno cum Iove templa tenet.* Cf. also Liv., I 55 for this story.

55. The sixth milestone might symbolize the ancient boundary of Rome (Barchiesi, 1997, pp. 432-433). Its exact location is unknown. Ovid mentions the *via Laurentina* which is not known from other sources. Cf. e.g. Bömer, 1958, II, p. 129 and Robinson, 2011, p. 433.

or around the city of Rome anymore. It is not *Terminus'* task anymore to ensure that the boundaries of the empire remain unchanged, but to guarantee the size and the stability of the Roman empire. This idea is expressed explicitly in the closing distich of the entry on the *Terminalia* (*Fast.* II 683-684): *gentibus est aliis tellus data limite certo: / Romanae spatium est Urbis et orbis idem.*

At this point, Robinson argues that some readers might regard the verses on the *Terminalia* as subversive.⁵⁶ There might be a potential conflict between a festival that is supposed to ensure that borders do not shift and the idea of an empire that constantly expands its borders by military conquest. However, Barchiesi has shown convincingly that pride in the size of the empire does not have to come into conflict with the respect for *Terminus*: Both emotions result from the perceived continuity and stability of the empire.⁵⁷ Moreover, the two concepts were also linked in official iconography, as Pollini shows for two series of *denarii* which can be dated to the years shortly before the beginning of Augustus' reign.⁵⁸ Both series show Octavian's head on top of a *Terminus*-stone and one of them shows him sitting with a *victoriola* in his hand on the reverse.⁵⁹

In the entry on the *Terminalia*, rural and urban festival communities merge at the end. The confined rural ritual from the beginning of the entry is transferred to the state cult and expanded to include the whole *imperium Romanum*. The urban celebration that is centered on Rome's power might seem far away from the simple rural ritual that confirms the boundaries between two fields at first glance, but Ovid constructs both celebrations as interrelated and even dependent on each other: *Terminus* is presented as an originally rural god who has been included into the urban cult, but without the preservation of the empire's borders by the state – with Rome as its center –, the idealized world of the farmers would be threatened by war. Both festival communities are united through a common emotion, joy about peace and about the

56. Robinson, 2011, pp. 413 and 430-431. See above for similar discussions regarding Ovid's presentation of the *Ara Pacis*.

57. Barchiesi, 1997, pp. 215-216.

58. Pollini, 1990, pp. 348-349. Pollini, 1990, p. 348 dates the coins to the years 29-27 BCE; Zanker, 2009, p. 64 assumes that they were minted before 31 BCE.

59. Pollini cites several historians who identify the god to whom the emperor's head is attached as *Terminus*, *Veiovis-Terminus* or *Iuppiter-Terminus*; cf. e.g. Albert, 1981, pp. 147-149 and Bömer, 1958, II, p. 130 for the interpretation as *Iuppiter-Terminus*. An image of both *denarii* can be found in Kraft, 1969, tab. 1, 9-10; cf. also his interpretation of the god as *Iuppiter-Terminus* on pp. 207-210. Pollini, 1990, p. 349 gives the following interpretation of the coins: "The *Terminus* form, which served as a boundary marker, most likely commemorates here Octavian's divine mandate to increase the boundaries of empire. This task he accomplished through his victories [...]"

possibility to lead a safe and carefree life in an empire that ensures their safety. Thus, they form an emotional community.

5. CONCLUSIONS

The concept of lived ancient religion acknowledges that Roman religion was not a set of strictly defined rites and beliefs, but that it rather offered a framework with different options and possibilities that could be individually appropriated to different contexts and situations. This did not only happen in practiced cult, but also in literary texts with religious topics. The literary discourse shows variation between the different authors and the appropriation of common themes and scenes to individual contexts and works. This discourse about (real or imagined) religious practices has been studied in the case of the presentation of rural rites in Ovid's *Fasti*.

As in other Augustan poets, rural scenes in the *Fasti* tend to be idealized descriptions of imagined rustic piety. It has been stressed that the farmers celebrate as peaceful festival communities that are attributed with the same emotions and thus represent emotional communities. In the case of the *Terminalia*, Ovid chooses an idealized family scene, whereas in the case of the *Feriae Sementivae* he constructs a community which is shared by humans, animals and even the land.

The importance of peace for the prosperity of agricultural life is a common topic in Augustan literature. However, Ovid transforms and adapts this motif in a unique way. In the *Fasti*, the presented rural festival communities are not remote from the city in both time and space, but are connected to Rome and enjoy the *Pax Augusta*, not a long lost peace of a Golden Age. Ovid thus blends the idealized peace of the Golden Age discourse with the contemporary *Pax Augusta*. The *Cerialia* have been shown to construct the *Pax Augusta* as a restoration of the Golden Age, while the *Feriae Sementivae* celebrate the contemporary peace as a progress compared to the wars of former times.

Moreover, the rural festivals and their emotional communities are closely connected to the festivals and the community of Rome in the *Fasti*. The urban population celebrates the *Pax Augusta*, too, but this is not expressed through the peaceful harmony of an agricultural age but through the joy about Rome's size and stability. The empire's power and the security it guarantees through its military strength are important features of this form of the *Pax Augusta*.

As for the example of the *Terminalia*, it has been argued that those urban emotional communities and concepts of peace do not stay unconnected to the scenes of rural piety that are presented in the case of the rural festivals. In contrast to other poems in which rural vignettes remain largely isolated from Rome and are not loca-

ted spatially nor temporally, the *Fasti*'s rural festivals are connected both to Roman places and people (as e.g. the inclusion of *Terminus* on the Capitol in the rural *Terminalia* or the veneration of Augustus by farmers at the *Cerialia* show) and especially to Roman time: They are not only dated repeatedly to the reign of Augustus, but they also form an integral part of the Roman festival calendar. Rural and urban communities follow the same calendar, they worship the same emperor and they both profit from the *Pax Augusta*. In the entry on the *Terminalia*, the two festival communities are especially close to and dependent on each other, as the rural and the urban rites merge and the celebrants form one emotional community.

With the decision to write a poem about the Roman festival calendar, Ovid has created a unique work: Every entry is integrated into the series of festivals given by the calendar, not only regarding the sequence, but also with respect to topic and presentation. Consequently, Ovid has adapted the accounts of his rural festivals to this challenge and has created scenes of rural piety that retain their typical rural atmosphere while they are at the same time deeply connected to and integrated into the framework of the (urban) festival calendar. They are as unique as the work itself.

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