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COMMEMORATING THE SACK OF ROME (1527):

ANTIQUITY AND AUTHORITY IN RENAISSANCE POETIC CALENDARS

by Bobby Xinyue[1]

The reception of Ovid's *Fasti* during the European Renaissance has attracted increasing scholarly attention in recent years. Angela Fritsen (2015) has drawn our attention to the renewed interest in Ovid's poetic calendar amongst Italian humanists in the late fifteenth century. Focusing on the rival commentaries of Paolo Marsi (1482) and Antonio Costanzi (1489), Fritsen argues that the study of the *Fasti* not only enabled late-Quattrocento humanists who gathered around the Roman Academy of Pomponio Leto to develop their antiquarian expertise further, but also brought out a different side of Ovid – the *vates operosus* ('the industrious poet', cf. Ov., *Fast.* 1.101) – with whom many humanists identified themselves.[2] Around this time, Latin imitations of the *Fasti* also began to emerge in Italy in the form of the Christian calendar poem, which in its most basic form chronicled the feasts of the ecclesiastical year. At the time of writing, I count no fewer than nine Neo-Latin ecclesiastical *fasti* poems. They are, in chronological order, the *Fasti christianae religionis* of Ludovico Lazzarelli (*Vat.*

[2] Poliziano's lectures on the *Fasti*, given at the Florentine Studio of Lorenzo de' Medici in 1481–2, have been edited by Lo Monaco, 1991; and their influence on the humanist commentaries discussed by Fritsen, 2015: 43–4. For an overview of the reception of the *Fasti* in the European Renaissance, see Kilgour, 2014.

lat. 2853, c.1484);[3] the *Fasti christianae religionis* of Lorenzo Bonincontri (Rome, 1491);[4] the *De sacris diebus* of Battista Mantovano (Lyon, 1516);[5] the *Sacrorum fastorum libri duodecim* of Ambrogio 'Novidio' Fracco (Rome, 1547);[6] the *Fastorum libri duodecim* of Girolamo Chiaravacci (Milan, 1554);[7] the *Fastorum ecclesiae christianae libri duodecim* of Nathan Chytraeus (Hanau, 1594);[8] the *Diarium historicopoeticum* of Robert Moor (Oxford, 1595); the *Fasti sacri sive Epigrammata de sanctis* of Lodewijk Broomans (Brussels, 1646); and the *Fasti sacri sive Epigrammatum quibus sanctorum elogia per totius anni dies canuntur* of Hugues Vaillant (Paris, 1674). In addition, *c.*1520, Francesco Sperulo (perhaps an associate of Ludovico Lazzarelli) began a Christian *fasti* for Leo X;[9] and variations on the Neo-Latin *fasti* genre have been numerous.[10] John Miller (2003, 2015, 2018) has shown that the Christian *fasti*

[3] Edited by Bertolini, 1991, and discussed by Fritsen, 2000; 2015: 165–70; Corfiati, 2003; Miller, 2003: 178–84.

[4] See the long-ago but nevertheless informative study by Soldati, 1903.

[5] See Trümpy, 1979.

[6] See Miller, 2003: 176–9; 2015: 85–9; 2018: 240–4.

[7] See Miller, 2015: 89–93.

[8] See Schmidt, 1993; 1994: 894.

[9] See Gwynne, 2015, I: 31, 369; the dedication and the opening verses of this aborted project can be found in Gwynne, 2015, II: 620–1.

[10] There was, for example, the single book/month poem of Nikolaus Reusner (*Ianuarius, sive fastorum sacrorum et historicorum*, Strasbourg, 1584); the regional calendrical poems of Matthias Agricius (*Fastorum Trevirensium libri*, Trier, 1587) and Joseph Koller (*Fasti Austriae*, 1736, Vienna); and, most intriguingly, the supplement of Claude-Barthélemy Morisot (1649, Dijon), see Schmidt, 1994: 895–8; Xinyue, 2018. A prose *fasti* was composed by

on the whole sought to exemplify ancient pagan religion's displacement by the true faith of Christianity, though the extent to which a text engaged with, or distanced itself from, the Ovidian *Fasti* varied greatly from case to case.[11]

The present study aims to broaden and deepen our understanding of early modern *fasti* poems by examining a particularly neglected and yet fundamental aspect of this genre, namely its capacity to conceive of different narratives of time by commemorating the same event in varied ways. Throughout the *Fasti*, Ovid draws attention to the indeterminate and disputed origins of names, places, and religious practices, and frequently brings into contact conflicting interpretations of a single phenomenon or historical event. An example that immediately comes to mind is the disagreement between Urania, Polyhymnia, and Clio over the etymology of May in the prologue of *Fasti* 5, which is paralleled by the dispute at the start of *Fasti* 6 between Juno and Iuventas for the patronage of June.[12] Moreover, critics have also noted that the poem's propensity to challenge the meaning of a particular occasion not only facilitates a sustained examination of the relationship between the past and present of Rome, but also constitutes a kind of covert challenge to the re-organisation of the calendar by Augustus as an ideological

Rudolph Wirth, *Festa Christianorum* (Zurich, 1593). Vernacular *fasti* poems include Ascanio Grandi's Italian epic, *I Fasti sacri* (1635), and Sforza Pallavicino's unfinished *Fasti sacri* (1636). In addition, a number of antiquarian texts about ancient calendars were produced in the Cinquecento, see e.g. Nicolas Vignier's *Les Fastes des anciens Hebreux, Grecs et Romains* (Paris, 1588).

[11] Miller, 2003 surveys the genre, anticipated by Schmidt, 1994. Miller, 2015 examines how Christian *fasti* begin the year. Miller, 2018 looks at the reception of the proem of Ovid's *Fasti* 5 in the opening the fifth book of the calendrical poems of Lazzarelli, Fracco, and Chiaravacci.

[12] Barchiesi, 1991; Pasco-Pranger, 2006: 217–21.

tool.[13] Starting with Janus's duplicitous account of Rome's evolution from its archaic origin to the present age of Augustus (1.63–288),[14] the poet's subsequent aetiological remembrance of the *Lupercalia* in book 2 (267–452), the March Kalends in book 3 (167–398), the *Parilia* in book 4 (721–862), and the foundation of the Temple of Mars Ultor in book 5 (545–98) have been variously understood as episodes that commemorate events and festivals in such a way so as to critique Roman identity, Roman imperialism, and Roman history. [15] As a result, while

[13] Beard, 1987: 3, 7 observes that the Roman ritual calendar *together with* its exegetical texts, such as the *Fasti*, offered one important way of 'imaging' Roman history, and that Ovid's poem played a part in defining and delineating Roman identity. Wallace-Hadrill, 1987: 228–9 argues that Ovid's *Fasti* routinely problematised the legend of Romulus and other Roman myths which had a significant role in the Augustan religious discourse, and that subsequently Ovid's panegyric of Augustus in the *Fasti* could not have been straightforward, but rather double-edged, restless, and labile. Barchiesi, 1997 highlights a number of passages in the *Fasti* where Ovid's silence or emphasis invites the thoughtful reader to question the apparently loyal and optimistic message of the text. Newlands, 1995: 12 suggests that the *Fasti* is 'a work of art that offers an individual interpretation of *Romanitas* in the age of Augustus', and that through its 'manipulation of time' (from which derives the title of her book, *Playing with Time*), the poem 'invites questions about the manipulation of time for political ends'; see also Newlands, 2004–5: 251. The idea that the calendar is an instrument of power for Augustus is explored in depth by Feeney, 2007: 167–212.

[14] Hardie, 1991; Barchiesi, 1997: 229–37; Pasco-Pranger, 2006: 38–41.

[15] On the *Lupercalia* episode, see Harries, 1991 and Barchiesi, 1997: 144–52, whose studies foreground the episode's concern for aristocratic survival and rivalry in the age of Augustus. On the March Kalends, see Hinds, 1992a: 87–112; 1992b, esp. 117–31. On the *Parilia*, see

the *Fasti* appears to articulate the religious calendar and ideology of the Augustan principate,[16] Ovid's poem also renders problematic the apparent restoration of Roman 'tradition' under Augustus, thereby disrupting the regime's attempt to control of time and the past.

In this article, I suggest that a similar, and similarly politically charged, operation underpins a number of Renaissance *fasti*. Using these poems' remembrance of the Sack of Rome (1527) as a case study, I argue that the intractable and contestatory nature of the genre's commemorative function is mobilised by its early modern authors to reflect on the history and status of Rome, particularly the city's role as the *caput mundi* since antiquity. Three poems will be examined in sequence: the *Sacri fasti* of Ambrogio 'Novidio' Fracco (1546, Rome), the *Fasti ecclesiae christianae* of Nathan Chytraeus (books 1–6, 1578, Rostock; all 12 books, 1594, Hanau), and the *Diarium Historicopoeticum* of Robert Moor (1595, Oxford). This collection will enable me to demonstrate firstly that the genre's uptake and learned readings of Ovid's *Fasti* were not limited to Cinquecento Italy, but extended all the way to the Protestant North and Elizabethan England – a phenomenon insufficiently emphasised in current scholarship. But more importantly, it will be shown that, as calendrical poets used the commemoration of the Sack of Rome as a means to enter into a debate on how the past should be remembered, the genre of the *fasti* – and Ovid's poetic calendar in particular – became an important medium through which Renaissance humanists critiqued the nature of power at a time when political and ecclesiastical schisms hardened across Europe.

Beard, 1987; Hinds, 1992b: 144–5; Barchiesi, 1997: 159–64. On the Temple of Mars Ultor, see Newlands, 1995: 87–123.

[16] Herbert-Brown, 1994 goes so far as to suggest that the *Fasti* collaborated with official propaganda.

I. THE SACK OF ROME (1527): HISTORY AND LITERATURE

As the visual reminder of the *imperium* of classical Rome and the centre of Western Christendom, the significance of Renaissance Rome for humanist poets matched that of Augustan Rome for Ovid.[17] As a succession of popes in the early sixteenth century strove to rebuild the city to substantiate the papacy's claim to universal power and worked to enhance Rome's political and ecclesiastical sway, curial humanists augmented papal self-fashioning by dignifying Renaissance Rome with classical and Christian parallels, portraying it as the centre of culture and asserting that the papacy would soon initiate a new golden age.[18] This collaborative attempt to reinforce the prestigious status of Rome was violently interrupted in 1527, when an attack on the city by the Spanish and German troops of Charles V, the Holy Roman Emperor, produced a devastating effect on both the papacy and Roman humanist culture.[19] The Sack of Rome was a climactic event in the War of the League of Cognac fought

[17] Rome's status as the centre of Christianity in the West was confirmed in 1443, when Pope Eugenius IV returned the papacy to the Eternal City. On Renaissance Roman antiquarianism and the imaginary power of ancient Rome, see esp. Jacks, 1993.

[18] On the topos of the forthcoming golden age, see Gouwens, 1998: 2–3; Stinger, 1985: 296–9. On the development of Roman humanism under Julius II and Leo X, see Mitchell, 1973; O'Malley, 1979; D'Amico, 1983: 115–43; Stinger, 1985: 235–91; Rowland, 1986; De Caprio, 1987; Gwynne, 2015, I: 253–83.

[19] There is a wealth of secondary scholarship on the Sack of Rome, see esp. Hook, 1972; Partner, 1976: 29–33; Lenzi, 1978; Chastel, 1983; Miglio et al., 1986; Firpo, 1990; De Caprio, 1991; Tafuri, 1992: 223–53. Critics are divided on whether the Sack constituted a turning-point for Roman humanist culture. Earlier studies (Partner, 1976: 32–3; Prodi, 1982) tend to suggest that the Sack did not have a lasting or overly negative impact on the papacy's institutional

between Charles V and an alliance consisting of the Kingdom of France and Pope Clement VII amongst others.[20] Shortly before the Sack (March 1527), the pope had agreed to a truce with the imperialists against the wishes of his allies and had dismissed his mercenaries, thus leaving Rome poorly defended.[21] However, the imperial commander, Charles III the Duke of Bourbon, did not honour this truce and – with consent from the emperor – attacked Rome in the early hours of 6 May. Although Charles of Bourbon died early in the attack from a missile wound, his troops took the city under the cover of heavy fog and breached its defence by dawn.[22] The pope fled to Castel Sant'Angelo and remained imprisoned there until December when he escaped. The invading imperial army moved unimpeded through the city, assaulting and killing

power and its control over the city of Rome. However, Chastel (1983), De Caprio (1986; 1991: 41–7), and Gouwens (1998) argue – more persuasively, in my view – that the event had profound repercussions for the political and intellectual environment and the 'collective psyche' of Renaissance Rome, and that the relationship between pope, humanists, and artists (and its representation) had to be re-negotiated in the aftermath of the Sack. Others, such as D'Amico (1983: 109) and Stinger (1985: 11–13), while accepting the view that the Sack proved a critical moment for the Renaissance city, emphasise that Roman humanist culture had shown signs of decline prior to the 1520s.

[20] The other allied members were the Republic of Venice, the Kingdom of England, the Duchy of Milan, and the Republic of Florence. On the War of the League of Cognac, see Hook, 1972: 77–92; Lenzi, 1978: 69–79.

[21] The pact was struck following the arrival of the imperial viceroy, Lannoy, in Rome on 25 March. On this truce and Rome's defences, see Hook, 1972: 131–46; Chastel, 1983: 27–31.

[22] The death of Charles of Bourbon and the fortuitous fog are two common themes found in numerous literary accounts of the Sack; see De Caprio, 1986: 41–2.

citizens and clergymen, pillaging, and violating sacred spaces and objects – much of which was recorded in the eyewitness accounts of the humanists Pietro Alcionio (1487–*c*.1528) and Paolo Giovio (1483–1552).[23] The horror and traumatic effect of the Sack almost immediately found expression in vernacular poetry. As De Caprio (1986: 43–6) shows, the verse compositions of Pietro Aretino and Eustachio Celebrino, as well as anonymous laments (such as the *Lamento di Roma* and *Romae Lamentatio*),[24] depicted the Sack as a crucial moment for the future of Renaissance Rome by juxtaposing the city's present ruin with the glory of classical and early Christian Rome. These texts variously presented the city's near destruction as a providential order aimed at regenerating Rome through suffering or a form of punishment of the vices of the City and the Church (De Caprio, 1986: 42). Moreover, De Caprio (1986: 38–9, 48–50) notes that the authors of these poetic texts frequently evoked the destruction of Troy, Carthage, and Jerusalem in their retelling of the Sack, not only as a means to highlight the existential danger that Rome faced, but also to hint at the threat of elimination which every great civilisation must face. Both the urgent reflection on Rome's past and future, and the interplay between classical and Christian discourses, were also central features in the Latin texts produced by Roman humanists in response to the Sack. Kenneth Gouwens (1998: 6) argues that the works of Pietro Alcionio, Pietro Corsi, Jacopo Sadoleto, and Pierio Valeriano – who recalled the Sack in oratory, hexameter poetry, epistles, and dialogues, respectively – exemplify 'the variety of ways that the catastrophe prompted [curial humanists] to reconsider

[23] Both Alcionio and Giovio sought refuge in the Castel Sant'Angelo along with their patron, Clement VII; see Tucker, 2003: 153–4. On Francesco Guicciardini's treatment of the Sack in the *Consolatoria* (1527) and *Storia d'Italia* (1537–40), see De Caprio, 1991: 297–357.

[24] These and other anonymous laments are collected and edited by Medin and Frati (1969) and Romei (2018).

the role of papal Rome as cultural arbiter as well as their own identities as members of a localized community of scholars with common professional interests.' In particular, Gouwens (1998: 71–2, 91–2) observes a tendency amongst curial humanists to situate the 'golden age' of Renaissance Rome in the past rather than in the imminent future. This ideological shift, Gouwens (1998: 29) argues, not only reflects how the Sack of Rome has brought about a sense of cultural discontinuity and an awareness of the precarious situation of papal Rome, which tempered any optimism for the city's renewal; but also underlines the fragmentation of the humanist consensus, which, prior to the Sack, had so energetically sought to articulate the political and cultural *imperium* of Renaissance Rome. As we shall see, this body of literary discourse and the widespread humanist reflection on the status of Rome, which the studies of De Caprio (1986) and Gouwens (1986) have well brought out, also play a central role in calendrical poetry's commemoration of the event.

II. AMBROGIO 'NOVIDIO' FRACCO, *SACRI FASTI*

The Sack of Rome is a constant theme in the poetry of Ambrogio 'Novidio' Fracco (*c*.1480–*c*.1547?), a native of the nearby Lazio town of Ferentino, who appears to have lived through this turbulent time.[25] Fracco dedicated a 570-verse poem, *Consolatio ad Romam*, to Cardinal Ennio Filonardi in 1538, and produced five books of elegies, known as the *De adversis* (1538), in which he narrated in the first-person the horrors and sufferings he had to endure as Rome fell to the imperialists.[26] While Fracco's poetic lament and 'autobiographical' elegies about the

[25] The poet's nickname, Novidio (*novus Ovidius*), underlines his Ovidian aspirations.

[26] On Fracco's life and works, see Pignatti, 1997: 566–7. Both the *Consolatio ad Romam* and the *De adversis* are found in Biblioteca Corsiniana Codex 1327, which also contains his Latin epistles written in the style of Ovid's *Heroides*.

Sack of Rome appear to follow the established themes and characteristics of their genres,[27] the poet's commemoration of the event in his later calendrical poem sets itself apart through sustained dialogue with both ancient Ovidian and curial humanist poetic discourses. Dedicated to Pope Paul III (even though the poet himself appears to have no affiliation with the curial circle), Fracco's *Sacri fasti* recalls the event on its day – 6 May – and refers to the Sack as the 'Direptio urbis' and a 'Dies ater' for Rome.[28] In Ovid's *Fasti*, this day receives no more than a couplet on the visibility of Scorpio in the night sky.[29] In the Christian *fasti* written before the Sack, poets such as Ludovico Lazzarelli and Battista Mantovano on this day tell the story of Saint John before the Latin Gate, which celebrates John the Evangelist's survival of martyrdom in Rome under the Emperor Domitian, when he was thrown into a cauldron of boiling oil and emerged from it unharmed.[30] Fracco's *Sacri fasti* is the first calendrical poem to relegate the

[27] Fracco's self-representation in these elegies is highly stylised and cannot be assumed to be reliably autobiographical. Catracchia, 1980 accurately describes the content of a number of elegies: they echo the stock themes found in other narrative poems and verse laments about the Sack, themes such as the killing of sons in the presence of their fathers, the abduction of women and nuns, and the desecration of churches and tombs; see also De Caprio, 1986: 38.

[28] These two Latin expressions appear in Fracco's outline (*Digestio*) of the poem, which precedes the poem. The heading 'Direptio urbis' appears again in the main text on 53r.

[29] Ov. *Fast.* 5.417–8: *Scorpios in caelo, cum cras lucescere Nonas / dicimus, a media parte notandus erit.* ('The Scorpion will be visible from its middle in the sky, when we say that tomorrow the Nones will dawn.')

[30] See Lazzarelli, *Fasti christianae religionis*, book 6, 437–64 (Bertolini's edition); Mantovano, *De sacris diebus*, entry under 'De S. Ioanne ante Portam Lati.'. Tert., *De praescr. haeret.* 36,

Christian feast day to the background, noting poignantly that the ecclesiastical holiday is now overshadowed by the Sack of Rome (*nomen cui porta Latina est, | ille suo festo numina laesa gemit*, 'he, after whom the Porta Latina is named, laments over his hurt divinity on his festive day', 54v). Fracco's forty-eight-verse narrative attains its force through a sustained, two-pronged dialogue with Ovid's version of the Gallic Siege of Rome (390 BC) as told in book 6 of the *Fasti* (6.351–74) – which is itself a reworking of Livy's account of the same event in *Ab Urbe Condita* 5.39–42 – and the 'Fall of Troy' in book 2 of Virgil's *Aeneid*. An early indication of the bifold Virgilio-Ovidian influence can be seen in the way Fracco introduces his episode: *qua licet, et fas est, moneo Romane caveto* ('on this day it is allowed and indeed right for me to warn: be mindful, Roman', 53v).31 Six lines later, the humanist poet again infuses Ovidian and Virgilian material in his retrospective assessment of the Sack as apparently unavoidable misfortune: *scilicet instabat non evitabile tempus: | ferreque non poterant impia fata moram* ('of course, the inescapable time was pressing upon us: impious fates could not tolerate any delay', 54r). This time, the corresponding classical expressions are to be found in *Fasti* 6, where the Roman god Mars complains to Jupiter of the 'fortune of disaster' that is the Gallic Siege (cf. *scilicet ignotum est quae sit fortuna malorum*, Ov., *Fast.* 6.355); and in *Aeneid* 2, where Panthus (a priest of Apollo chancing upon Aeneas during the fall of the city) speaks

records the location of the event as 'before the Latin Gate', where subsequently a church (Basilica di San Giovanni a Porta Latina) is built to honour the miracle's occurrence.

31 Fracco alludes to both Ovid's petition to speak in the *Fasti*'s prologue, *si licet et fas est* ('if it is right and lawful', Ov., *Fast.* 1.25), and Anchises's famous injunction to Aeneas in the Underworld, *Romane memento* ('remember, Roman', Verg., *Aen.* 6.851). Feeney, 1992 reads the original Ovidian expression as reflecting the suppression of the freedom of speech under the Augustan Principate.

apocalyptically of the 'coming of the final day and the unavoidable time of Troy' (*venit summa dies et ineluctabile tempus | Dardaniae*, Verg., *Aen.* 2.324–5). By retrospectively framing the Sack of Rome as an inevitable disaster that has a number ancient precursors, Fracco strips the event of its historical contingency and transforms it into the culmination of an epoch – a defining moment in the long history of Rome from its Trojan origin. Furthermore, as the *Sacri fasti* commemorates the Sack in the way that Virgil remembers the Fall of Troy and Ovid the Siege of Rome – or in other words, as how an Augustan poet recounts something that happened several centuries ago – Fracco archaises the Sack of Rome (even though he himself had lived through it), and marks a temporal disjuncture that sets the post-Sack Rome well away from its former self, firmly separating 'then' from 'now'.

By conflating the Ovidian 'Gallic Siege' and the Virgilian 'Fall of Troy' in his depiction of the Sack of Rome, Fracco also elevates the historical significance of the Sack, characterising it as an event that nearly put an end to Rome as a civilising force. For example, following the simile comparing the invading imperial troops to the spreading of wildfire and floodwater (*qualis in arentes diffunditur ignis aristas | auctus et hibernis Thybris oberrat aquis*, 'just as fire spreads through dried corn and the Tiber swirls about increased by wintry waters', 54r), which is a close imitation of the same twofold simile used by Virgil to describe the Greek invasion of Troy (*Aen.* 2.304–6),[32] we find in Fracco's poem a conspicuous polysyndetic list

[32] Verg., *Aen.* 2. 304–6: *in segetem veluti cum flamma furentibus Austris | incidit*, *aut rapidus montano flumine torrens | sternit agros* ('just as when fire falls on a cornfield while south winds are raging, or the rushing torrent from a mountain stream lays low the fields'). The image of Tiber's flooding also echoes Hor., *Carm.* 1.2.13–16: the flood in Horace's poem is used to highlight the breakdown of relationship between the gods and the Romans – an idea that finds a parallel here in Fracco's poem: *qua licet, et fas est, moneo Romane caveto: | sensit enim*

intensifying the destructive violence of the imperial troops inside the Renaissance city: *per fora, perque domos, per templa, per atria* ('through piazzas, homes, churches, halls', 54r). This list, comprising architectural vocabulary that could denote both pagan and Christian structures, not only reproduces the chilling effect of the same trope at *Aeneid* 2.363–6, where it is employed to highlight the carnage happening across Troy (*urbs antiqua ruit multos dominata per annos; | plurima perque vias sternuntur inertia passim | corpora perque domos et religiosa deorum | limina*, 'the ancient city falls, for many years it reigned supreme; in heaps lifeless corpses lie scattered amid the streets, amid the homes and hallowed portals of the gods'); but also draws an important parallel between Renaissance Rome and the crumbling *urbs antiqua* (2.363) in Virgil's epic, thereby reframing the Sack of Rome as a form of cultural destruction and the collapse of an ancient civilising power. A few lines later, Fracco turns his allusive gaze to Ovid, and reworks a poignant passage of the *Fasti* into his own depiction of the Roman citizens' sufferings:

> *vidimus hinc nostros subiisse opprobria patres*
>
> *perque aras sacros occubuisse senes.*
>
> Then we saw our forefathers had undergone heinous things, and
>
> sacred elders had fallen to their deaths at the altars.

This couplet is clearly modelled on Ovid's description of the death of elder Roman patricians during the Gauls' invasion of the city (Ov., *Fast.* 6.363–4): [33]

iratos tunc sibi Roma deos ('on this day it is allowed and indeed right for me to warn: Be mindful, Roman; for back then Rome felt the anger of the gods', 53v).

[33] Supporting evidence of Fracco's close intertextual engagement with Ov. *Fast.* 6.351–69 is not lacking. For example: (i) Fracco 54r *vox erat adveniunt: cinguntur moenia signis | turba fit: in longa est obsidione timor* ('a voice arose "They are arriving"; the walls are surrounded

> *vidimus ornatos aerata per atria picta*
>
> *veste triumphales occubuisse senes;*
>
> We have seen old men, dressed in embroidered robes of triumph,
>
> murdered in their bronze-clad halls.

The Ovidian passage itself alludes to a memorable episode in Livy (5.41), where the elderly senators put on the triumphal dress of their youth and, resolved to die in dignity, waited for the Gauls who, although initially impressed by their courage, eventually slaughtered them all.[34] The image of the Ovidian and Livian *senes* donning the apparel of past victories emphasises not only their diminishing strength, but also how far Rome has fallen from a conquering power to a collapsing state at the mercy of the Gauls. By evoking this episode, Fracco hints at the idea that the best days of Rome were in the distant past and that the city was far from the civilising

by standards; a mob is forming; there is fear in a long siege') ~ Ov., *Fast.* 6.351–2 *cincta Capitolia Gallis ... fecerat obsidio iam diuturna famem* ('The Capitol was surrounded by Gauls … the long siege had already caused a famine'). (ii) Fracco 54r *quid lustrare iuvat?* ('what help was it to pray?') ~ Ov., *Fast.* 6.366 *putant aliquos scilicet esse deos* ('apparently they think that some gods exist'), 6.639 *nil opis in cura scirent superesse deorum* ('they would know that no help remains in worshipping the gods'); on the Ovidian inversion of the *neglegentia deorum* trope to *neglegentia rerum humanarum*, see Littlewood, 2006: 118–19. (iii) Fracco 54v *vidimus (infandum) divum sacraria ferri* ('We have seen – how unspeakable! – the shrines of saints robbed') ~ Ov., *Fast.* 6.365–6 *vidimus Iliacae transferri pignora Vestae | sede* ('We have seen the pledges of Ilian Vesta removed from their proper seat'), referring to removal of the Vestal *sacra* to Caere to preserve the Roman state, cf. Livy 5.40.10.

[34] For further discussion of this passage of Livy, see Ogilvie, 1965: 725–6; Levene, 1993: 195–7.

force it once was. For this poet at least, papal Rome prior to the Sack was not so much a 'golden age', but rather was already heading towards its fall – an idea which echoes the language of inevitable misfortune at the episode's beginning (cf. *non evitabile tempus … impia fata*).[35] Therefore, in contrast to the humanist writing produced immediately after the Sack, which sought to portray it as an event that prematurely ended the 'gold age' of Renaissance Rome, Fracco takes an entirely different view: through learned reformulations of Ovidian and Virgilian narratives, the poet of the *Sacri fasti* retells the Sack of Rome as the day that brought about the collapse of a decaying order, a moment that highlighted the unarrested decline of the city's cultural and political *imperium*.

Yet above all, Fracco's dialogue with classical texts also enables to poet to suggest that the Sack did not destroy Rome completely, and that the city was already undergoing a revival. As is well known, Virgil's *Aeneid* tells the foundation of Rome by the survivors of Troy. Ovid's version of the Gallic Siege forms part of the *Fasti*'s narrative on the *Vestalia* (Ov., *Fast.* 6.249–468), a major festival on the Augustan calendar honouring Vesta, the goddess of the hearth and the permanently burning sacred fire of Rome. In the *Ab Urbe Condita*, following the Siege of Rome and the eventual defeat of the Gauls by Camillus, Livy recounts Camillus' speech persuading his fellow Romans to stay in the city and not to migrate to Veii (5.51–4); and this passage of Livy concludes with a eulogy of the site of Rome (5.54.4–7) in which the city is described as *caput rerum summamque imperii* ('the head and supreme sovereign power of the world', 5.54.7). Just as ancient Rome rose after the fall of Troy, and just as the Roman Republic did not abandon its seat of power after the last Gallic Siege but instead restored the city and turned it into the *caput mundi*, so the intertextual programme of Fracco's 'Sack of Rome'

[35] The parallel positions occupied by *patres* and *senes* intensify the couplet's backward glance and further reinforce the sense of decline.

allows the humanist to highlight the survival of papal Rome, the permanence of its power, and the cyclicality of history. The near demise of Renaissance Rome thus also becomes, in Fracco's poetic calendar, the day that marked the beginning of the city's rebirth. Indeed, the next day in the *Sacri fasti* (7 May) tells of the solemnities to be observed in honour of peace (*Quae sequitur, superos placida pro pace salutat*, 'The day that follows greets the heavenly ones on behalf of gentle peace', 54v); and here Fracco dramatizes the priest's prayer on this occasion and enacts the revival of Rome through the imagery of the city's sacred fire (54v):

> *da precor hanc [sc. pacem] patribus, plebi, populoque Quirini,*
>
> *et face[36] concordes, pacificosque duces.*
>
> *talia dicebat, laevum tonat aethere caelum:*
>
> *ite, ait: a dicto splenduit igne focus.*
>
> 'I pray that you give [peace] to our patricians, the common people, and the Roman citizens; and make our leaders united and peaceful.' As he was uttering this, the sky thundered on the left, and 'Go!' he says; as he speaks the hearth lights up with fire.

The appearance of *patres* and people in unison, along with the hope for the *concordia* and reconciliation among 'leaders' (*duces*), underlines an optimism for the renewal in Fracco's depiction of Roman life after the Sack.[37] Furthermore, by emulating the typically Ovidian

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[36] *face* here is a variant of *fac*.

[37] In addition, the present prayer for the *patres* and the 'people of Quirinus' (*populoque Quirini*) recalls similar expressions in Ov., *Fast.* 1.69 *dexter ades patribusque tuis populoque Quirini* ('come propitious to your senators and to the people of Quirinus'), and *Met.* 15.572 *seu laetum est, patriae laetum populoque Quirini* ('if it be fortunate, let the good fortune befall my country and the people of Quirinus').

formula of reciting prayers, and by re-integrating classical expressions and imagery (such as the favourable thunder and the Vestal fire) into a new prayer for universal peace, Fracco's poem effectively initiates the renewal of Rome and performs the survival of its cultural legacy as soon as it has concluded the remembrance of Rome's most perilous hour.

Importantly, Fracco's *Sacri fasti* was conceived at a time when the papacy was not only attempting to renegotiate its political position in relation to Charles V, but also reasserting its authority in light of the spread of Protestantism. A decade before the Sack of Rome, when Luther and his followers exposed the corruption of the Roman church and contested its theology, the movement directly called into question the rights and claims of the papacy. Seen against this background, the devastating assault on the city in 1527 only reinforced the impression that Rome was a spent force. Three years after the Sack, when Pope Clement once again allied with Charles and officially crowned him Holy Roman Emperor in Bologna, the hope for Rome's revival appeared to lie with Charles: even Giles of Viterbo, head of the Augustinian order and confidant of popes from Julius II to Clement VII, looked to the emperor as the leader who would help usher in a new age.[38] It was not until Pope Paul III, Clement's successor and the dedicatee of Fracco's poem, pursued a programme of rebuilding the city and convoked the Council of Trent in 1545, which marked the beginning of the Counter-Reformation (just two years before the publication of Fracco's *Sacri fasti*), that the papacy and the city of Rome were finally at a point where the restoration of their political, ecclesiastical, and cultural sway looked possible.

Against this background, as I bring Fracco's 'Sack of Rome' and its Virgilio-Ovidian texture back into discussion, I would suggest, firstly, that the poem's remembrance of the event as a turning-point for papal Rome – a day that brought to an end the city's decline as a civilising

[38] Gouwens, 1998: 169.

17

power and rekindled its revival – renders explicit the papacy's departure from its problematic past on the one hand, and Rome's self-reassertion as the centre of a new era of Western Christendom on the other. Secondly, as learned discourse in Europe increasingly contested the validity of the claims of the Roman Church and gradually veered away from the classicising humanism that gave expression to papal ideology, Fracco's explicit *aemulatio* of the poetry of Virgil and Ovid – particularly his urgent dialogues with ancient discourses on the birth and survival of Rome – may be seen as an attempt to re-establish the authority of classical texts as the source of 'universal truths' about Roman power. In doing so, moreover, Fracco presents his *Sacri fasti* as the inheritor of a literary culture that attested to the full force of Roman political *imperium*. Just as Virgil's *Aeneid* and Ovid's *Fasti* embodied, respectively, the irresistible rise of Augustan Rome and the centripetal force that Augustus exerted on Roman religion, Fracco – by highlighting the Virgilian and Ovidian characteristics of his own poem – thus frames his *Sacri fasti* as a cultural expression of the undeniable authority of the Roman regime of his day, the Papal See, and reinstates the political and religious power of Rome through the very form and textual fabric of his poem.

III. NATHAN CHYTRAEUS, *FASTI ECCLESIAE CHRISTIANAE*

In contrast to Fracco's *Sacri fasti*, later calendrical poems from outside Italy sought to define the 'Sack of Rome' as the day that marked the end of the city's status as the *caput mundi*. The *Fasti ecclesiae christianae* of Nathan Chytraeus (1543–1598), who was a theologian and professor of Latin at the University of Rostock, represented the first Christian *fasti* from the Protestant North. Emerging in stages, the first book of Chytraeus' hexameter poem appeared in 1573; five more books were added to the first by 1578; and the entire twelve-book poem was published in 1594. Unlike other calendrical poems, Chytraeus's *Fasti* situates the remembrance of the fall of the Renaissance city not on its 'conventional' date, 6 May, but rather on 21 April, the day of the ancient festival of the *Parilia* – Rome's birthday (*Bisdenae*

Aprilis luci lux proxima Romae | urbi orbis dominae immensi natalis habetur. | … nunc illa ruinis | foeda iacet, 'The twenty-first dawn of April is regarded as the birthday of the great city of Rome, mistress of the world … Now she lies foul in ruins', Chytraeus, 1594: 195).[39] This salient choice to commemorate the city's fall on its *dies natalis*, as if Rome had already completed a lifecycle, points to Chytraeus' overall strategy to represent Rome as a moribund, if not already ossified, political institution – an entity that, though once great, now belonged irrevocably to the past.[40] In Fracco's *Sacri fasti*, in relating the city's *dies natalis*, the Italian poet emphasises the longevity of Rome and its status as the *caput mundi* (42v): his episode opens with the announcement *Cras aderunt priscum tibi Roma Palilia festum* ('Tomorrow the ancient festival of the *Palilia* will come to you, Rome'),[41] and closes with the claim that Rome will reign peacefully over lands and peoples as the head of the world (*pace sacroque suo fiat caput ante quod armis: | gentibus et terras omnibus una regat*, 'and with sacred peace (for before it was with arms) may she become the head: may she alone reign over the lands of every

[39] The Latin text is cited in the form in which it appears in the first complete twelve-book edition of Chytraeus' poem, printed in 1594; I use the original pagination of this edition.

[40] Note later the comparison of Rome to a barely breathing corpse (Chytraeus, 1594: 195): *nunc sine honore iacet, licet ipsa cadavera tantae | molis adhuc spirare minas irasque putentur. | sed frustra* ('Now she lies without honour; it may be that the very corpses of such a great mass are still thought to be breathing threats and anger – but in vain'). On the humanist metaphor of Rome as a to-be-resurrected corpse, see Greene, 1982: 41.

[41] The variation in the name of the festival, *Palilia* or *Parilia*, already exists in antiquity. The festival is celebrated in honour of Pales, the tutelary divinity of the shepherds; but some ancient sources refer to it as the *Parilia*, deriving etymologically from *pario*, on account of the sacrifices made on that day *pro partu pecoris* ('for the birth of the herd'), cf. Varro, *Ling*. 6.15.

people').42 For Fracco, papal Rome inherits and extends the status of classical Rome; and that is why his *Sacri fasti* celebrates the *Parilia* as the rebirth of Rome as a better, Christian entity heralded by the trio of Peter, Paul and Christ (42v):43

> *texerat ante novo formosus ovilia ramo*
>
> *Romulus, et frater, pastor uterque tuus.*
>
> *hi tibi ne desint: praecinget ovilia sertis*
>
> *ensifer, et frater, pastor uterque, tuus.*
>
> *tertius his iunctus pater est: pascentis ab alto*
>
> *qui sibi commissi ius gregae omnis habet.*
>
> *his igitur ducibus tibi Roma renasceris*

Before, fair Romulus and his brother, both shepherds of yours, had covered the sheepfold with fresh bough. May they not desert you: the sword-bearer and his shepherd brother each will surround the sheepfold with garlands. Joined to them in third is the Father: from above he rules

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42 On the treatment of the Parilia in Lazzarelli's *Fasti christianae religionis*, see Fritsen, 2000: 130–1; 2015: 160–6. She notes that while Ovid had invoked 21 April as the birthday of Rome, humanists affiliated with the Roman Academy of Pomponio Leto revised the date to 20 April in order to make the modern Parilia celebration coincide with the feast day of the three Christian martyrs, Victor, Fortunatus, and Genesius, because when the Roman Academy was reinstated under papal control in 1479, it needed a religious overtone.

43 On Fracco's competitive engagement with Ovid's *Fasti* (e.g. the Christian trio trumping the pagan twins), which often intersects with the poet's Christianising reinterpretation of the pagan calendar, see Miller, 2003: 177–8; 2015: 85–8, esp. 87 ('[a] blend of close structural imitation and theological correction of Ovid').

every pasturing flock entrusted to him. Under their guidance, Rome, you

will be born again.

By contrast, Chytraeus's *Fasti* pointedly challenges the notion of the rebirth of Christian Rome. On the day of the *Parilia*, the German poet writes that, as he once stood atop the Gianicolo during his travels, all he could see was a city in ruins (Chytraeus, 1594: 195):

> *hanc ego Ianiculi cum celsa ex arce viderem*
>
> *deformem et laceram, dixi, qui singula mecum*
>
> *lustrabat, socio: impositas en collibus arces,*
>
> *en, monimenta olim claris decorata triumphis,*
>
> *ut iaceant, propriis vix agnoscenda ruinis!*
>
> *haec Roma est, Dea terrarum, magno aemula caelo,*
>
> *quae titulis aeterna olim soloque tremenda*
>
> *nomine, praesenti populis pro numine culta est.*[44]

[44] This anecdote is composed in a highly literary style. Firstly, it imitates the autopsy-formula frequently seen in Ovid's *Fasti* and elsewhere in ancient and early modern antiquarian literature. Secondly, it shows signs of being mediated through Aeneas' tour of the future site of Rome in *Aeneid* 8; indeed, Chytraeus' later description of Rome as *cadavera tantae molis* evokes Virgil's depiction of Cacus (cf. *magna se mole ferebat*, 8.199; *informe cadaver*, 8.264). However, Chytraeus' anecdote may well have some basis in reality. Sometime after April 1565, Chytraeus travelled through western and southern Europe for more than a year. He arrived in Rome on the evening of 9 September 1566 (the date is given by Chytraeus himself in the *Hodoeporica sive itineraria*, see below; Bastiaensen, 1994: 37–8 discusses the Italian leg of Chytraeus' journey). Later, the poet also travelled to Denmark, Frankfurt an der Oder, and in 1590 to Danzig. One product of these trips was the publication of his travelogues in Latin verse,

> When I saw the city deformed and mutilated from the high citadel of the Ianiculum,
>
> I said to a friend who surveyed with me: 'Behold the citadels imposed on the hills!
>
> Behold the monuments when they would once lie decorated with famous triumphs,
>
> [now] hardly recognisable from their own ruins! This is Rome, the goddess of the
>
> world, rival of great heaven, who was once Eternal with renown and feared just for
>
> her name alone, revered by today's people for her divine majesty.

Chytraeus' thirty-two verse description of Roman ruins does not provide any sort of detailed account of the military attack on Rome, but instead focuses on the historical *causa* of the city's fall. In the leadup to his (rather formulaic) description of the dilapidated state of Rome,[45] the poet contextualises it by asserting that Rome's present ruin (cf. *nunc illa ruinis | foeda iacet*) can be traced back to the city's ancient sins: *etiam proprio et maiorum sanguine foeda* ('made foul even by the ancestors' own blood'); following this, Chytraeus recounts, amongst other things, the fratricide of Romulus near the newly-established city-walls (*Romulus ipse novos fraterno sanguine muros | polluit*, 'Romulus himself polluted the new walls with his brother's

[45] The dilapidation of Rome, particularly the contrast between the city's present and past, is a popular Renaissance literary motif: see De Caprio, 1986: 43–4; 1991: 51–105.

blood'),[46] a story which Ovid also tells in his account of the *Parilia* in *Fasti* 4. This Ovidian episode, particularly its portrayal of Romulus, has been widely understood by scholars as a central locus of the poem's critique of Augustus' rise to power, and a contestation of the Augustan narrative of the Roman past (especially the civil wars of the 30s BC), as Ovid reinscribes internecine conflict into the city's foundation-myth and problematises the Roman calendar in such way so as to undermine its reinvention by Augustus as an ideological instrument for influencing public perception.[47] By evoking this moment from ancient Roman history (and its Ovidian representation) in his commemoration of Rome's *dies natalis ruinaeque*, Chytraeus not only suggests that the city has been on an interminable trajectory of conflict and decline ever since its inception, but also presents his interpretation of the *causa* of the 'Sack of Rome' as another contestatory act that challenges the basis of Rome's claim to hegemony and the city's status as a unifying authority. Indeed, Chytraeus's *Fasti* sets itself apart from the other representatives of the genre by celebrating throughout the achievements of Protestant reformers such as Luther and Melanchthon, and the deeds of Holy Roman Emperors, including and especially Charles V, for whom the poet composes an effusive eulogy

[46] Later in the same passage, Chytraeus (1594: 195) claims that infighting has contributed to Rome's downfall: *externus nam postquam defuit hostis, | viribus ipsa suis in se crudeliter uti | coepit, ut hosti aditus etiam quandoque paterent.* ('When there was no foreign enemy, she began to use her own strengths cruelly against herself, so that access for the enemy would be available at any time.')

[47] See Barchiesi, 1997: 159–64; Newlands, 1995: 68–9. In addition, Feeney, 1992 argues that, in choosing to write about the Roman calendar, which was being manipulated and transformed by Augustus, Ovid engages with issues central to the construction of authority and power.

on the emperor's birthday (24 February).[48] Set within this framework, Chytraeus' depiction of the *ruina Romae*, I would suggest, constitutes part of the poem's overall programme of conceiving a different narrative of the ecclesiastical year, one that seeks to decentre papal Rome from the Christian notion of time and recalibrate the very relationship between calendar and the Roman Church, time and authority.[49]

IV. ROBERT MOOR, *DIARIUM HISTORICOPOETICUM*

Echoes of Chytraeus's *ruina Romae* can be found in the *Diarium Historicopoeticum* (1595) of Robert Moor (1568–1640), a hexameter poem linking astrological myths to historical and political events, with clear allusions to Ovid's *Fasti* as well as to Manilius right from its opening lines (which are addressed to Janus).[50] Recalling the 'Sack of Rome' on its proper date, 6 May, Moor's twenty-one verse passage makes explicit the connection between the attack on the city in 1527 and Rome's relinquishing of her status as the *caput mundi*, as the poet identifies this day (in the margin of his text) as a *dies ater Romanis* and remembers it as the anniversary of the city's dramatic fall from glory (Moor, 1595: 46): *toti quondam contermina mundo | Roma caput pedibus calcandum praebuit* ('once the boundary of the whole world, Rome held out her

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[48] On the Protestant character of Chytraeus' poem, see also Schmidt, 1993.

[49] Indeed, by concluding his account of the *ruina Romae* with the punning claim *fastusque superbi desiit* ('and [Rome's] proud haughtiness has ceased'), whereby the meaning of *fastūs* here as 'arrogance' contends with the word's more frequent usage as 'festival' or 'calendar', Chytraeus underlines the extent to which the assertion of authority and the organisation of time are intertwined.

[50] Moul, 2017: 188. Moor's poem is dedicated to Sir John Wolley, the Latin Secretary of Elizabeth I.

head to be trampled underfoot').[51] While the imagery and the contrastive comparison of Rome's past and present evoke similar expressions in Chytraeus' *Fasti*,[52] Moor goes much further than Chytraeus by unambiguously portraying the Sack as the beginning of a better era and, most importantly, an achievement for anti-papal forces. Moor (1595: 45) begins his account by claiming: 'although accursed in the Latin calendar, [this day] is a harbinger of auspicious omen' (*fastis quamvis damnata Latinis*, | *ominis est fausti … praenuncia*). He then goes on to praise Charles of Bourbon, the commander of the imperial troops,[53] for daring to challenge the power of the pope (Moor, 1595: 46): *ausus | praesulis horrisonas Romani spernere bullas, | et male munitam cruce conculcare tiaram* ('he dared to spurn the rattling papal bulls of the Roman prelate and trample the crown, ill-protected by the Cross'). The episode concludes with Moor claiming that even the author of the *Historiae sui temporis* (1552), the curial historian Paolo Giovio, could not deny Charles' glory (Moor, 1595: 46):

> *promeruit, quam qui cupiebat carpere, laudem,*
>
> *non poterat livor, quamvis patronus adesset*
>
> *invidiae nimium Iovius mendacibus usus*

[51] Both the Latin text and the pagination are taken from the 1595 edition of Moor's poem.

[52] Moor (1595: 46) praises Chytraeus' peripatetic work later in his poem (cf. *Nathan Chytraeus in itineribus Europaeis*), though it cannot be ascertained whether he has read Chytraeus' *Fasti*. Unlike Chytraeus, Moor is not thought to have travelled to Rome or Italy prior to when he wrote the *Diarium*.

[53] Moor, 1595: 45–6: *Carolus … ad maiora vocavit | nominis auspicio molimina, sanguinis alti | Burbonium, cuius virtutibus invia tellus | nequa foret*. ('Charles … on the auspices of his name from the royal lineage of the Bourbons, by whose virtues no land is insurmountable, called for greater undertakings.')

Historiis, dum pontificis stabilire Latini

nititur invisum caelo terrisque papatum:

acceptum referens diis tutelaribus urbis,

inguina quod periit traiectus dextera glande,

cum bene debuerit victor cecidisse videri,

ut cuius nequiit laus laudibus amplior addi.

He [= Charles, Duke of Bourbon] deserved the praise, which envy coveted but was unable to seize, even though the advocate Giovio stoked ill-will by means of his all too mendacious *Histories*, as he strove to stabilise the papacy of the Latin pontiff – hated in heaven and on earth. He reported that Charles got his [just] reception from the tutelary gods of the city, because he died from being shot in the right groin by a bullet, when he should well and truly have been seen to fall as a victor, so that no further praise could be added to his glory.

Moor's quotation of Giovio's *Historiae* is highly misleading, because in Giovio's account of the Sack of Rome, the Italian historian presents the death of Charles as a sacrifice demanded by divine powers for the price of imperial victory (Giovio, *Historiae* 24: 16):

Haec enim sine multis lachrymis, neque referri, neque audiri possunt; ita ut sacro sancta civitas Deos penitus aversos a salute sua existimare potuerit; nisi Dii tutelares urbis quanquam ad inane solacium praeclaro suo ultore numine, perfidiosi atque immanissimi latronis hostiam in ipso captae urbis limine mactavissent. Cecidit nanque Borbonius dum scalam funesta manu moenibus admovet, per inguen dextri femoris glande traiectus, ne dirae victoriae suae compos tanto sacrilegio laetaretur.

> These events cannot be recounted or heard without great lamentation. It was such
> that the holy city really could have thought that the gods have turned away from
> prayers for salvation, had the tutelary gods of the city, with their famously vengeful
> divine power, not made a sacrificial victim of him, the most perfidious and cruellest
> plunderer, on the very threshold of the captured city – although it amounted to a
> hollow consolation. For Bourbon was killed while scaling the city-walls with his
> murderous hands, pierced through the groin of his right thigh by a bullet, so that the
> leader of this terrible victory could not take joy from so heinous a sacrilege.

Moor clearly draws on Giovio's idea that divine forces took Charles' life, but the English poet reinterprets it as something worthy of praise (cf. *ut cuius nequit laus laudibus amplior addi*), thereby turning Charles' military assault on Rome into an act of martyrdom.

Moor's radical revision of the Sack – transforming it into religious warfare and celebrating it as the anniversary of anti-papal insurgence – gains even more force in light of the English poet's apparent familiarity with Fracco's *Sacri fasti*. In his *Ad lectorem*, Moor writes: *Quod si tibi non exoriatur ad diem praestitutum sidus aliquod, certe quidem ortum est P. Ovid. Nasoni, Claudio Ptolemeo, Ambrosio Novidio Ferrinati* ('But if some star does not rise for you [the reader] on the prescribed date, it certainly did for P. Ovidius Naso, Claudius Ptolemy, and Ambrose Novidio of Ferentino'). Moor's account of the Sack, then, may well have been conceived in full knowledge of Fracco's narrative: in this case, Moor's remembrance of the event as an auspicious day for anti-papal forces pointedly inverts Fracco's representation of the Sack as a fated turning-point for papal Rome. But even without assuming such an intertextual engagement, it remains clear that Moor's retelling of the Sack is deeply rooted in the religious schism of his time. The Elizabethan repression of Catholics regained momentum in the early 1590s, just as the Wars of Religions in France (1562–1598) were nearing their end (or at least a pause) with the conversion of the Protestant king, Henry IV (the first French

monarch from the House of Bourbon), to Catholicism in 1593.[54] By infusing his poetic commemoration of the Sack of Rome with conspicuous anti-papal rhetoric and generous praise of Charles of Bourbon, Moor brings about the fall of Rome with his poetry in a way that the monarchs of England and France could not with their politics. But more than that, by suggesting that the day of the Sack was an 'auspicious omen' (*ominis ... fausti*), Moor appropriates the discourse of fate – which had been mobilised to highlight Roman *imperium* since antiquity – for the rival of Rome; and in doing so, the English poet reframes the rise of Protestantism as irrefutable destiny.

IV. CONCLUSIONS

Based on the study above, I offer in conclusion three observations concerning the politics, the poetics, and the intellectual significance of Renaissance *fasti* poems, which I hope will invigorate further research on this topic.

Firstly, the different versions of the 'Sack of Rome' in the works of Fracco, Chytraeus, and Moor not only attest to the profound and wide-reaching impact of this event on humanist perceptions of the political, ecclesiastical, and cultural sway of Rome, but also demonstrate that these calendrical poems, like their Ovidian predecessor, are deeply concerned with how the interpretation and commemoration of the past intersect with the discourse of power. Through their varied evocations of the Sack, the calendrical poets, from Italy, the Protestant North, and England respectively, make sustained and competitive attempts to (re)define the

[54] On the persecution of Catholics under Elizabeth I and her change of policy since 1582, see Haigh, 1998: 40–3. Henry's conversion to Catholicism took place on 25 July 1593, which was seen as an act of betrayal by the French Huguenots and his former ally Elizabeth I, who provided military assistance to Henry in the Wars of Religions between 1589–1592; see further discussions by Wolfe, 1993; Greengrass, 1995: 98–100; Knecht, 2010: 78–81.

meaning of that momentous day, through which they give expression to, or contest, the ideology of papal Rome and its control of events on the Christian calendar.

Secondly, what distinguishes a calendrical poem's evocation of the 'Sack of Rome' (or indeed of any past event) from other kinds of literary recollections is that the form of the *fasti* – a versified (narration of the) calendar – combines mimetic *re*presentation with the reconstitution of a commemorative system, which enables the event's depiction to become *bona fide* cultural history immediately. Put differently, when a *fasti* poem recounts an event, it simultaneously integrates the event into a new organisation of annual liturgies, rituals, and ceremonies; as such, the event is reframed within a different ecosystem of memory and embedded into a new version of time and the past. The fact that the 'Sack of Rome' can be remembered on different days (6 May or 21 April), and can be endowed with contrary symbolisms by calendrical poets across Europe, attests to the genre's growing status during the Renaissance as a means by which humanists questioned and debated convention, authority, and history.

Finally, since calendrical poems self-consciously and competitively engage in the reorganisation and embodiment of different commemorative systems, we may therefore see this body of texts as a key constituent, and cultural performance of, the broader European debate about 'time' in the second half of the sixteenth century, which culminated in the calendar reform by Pope Gregory XIII in 1582. Indeed, as each Renaissance *fasti* interrogated and intervened in the interpretation of the calendar, it may be said that these texts underlined a change in the perception of Ovid's *Fasti* during the sixteenth-century – from an antiquarian text on Roman religion, to a kind of cultural technology that enabled its practitioners to discuss who had authority to organise time. By bringing out this aspect of Ovid's *Fasti* through their creative engagement with the classical poem, it may be said that the humanists of the

Cinquecento anticipated modern readings of Ovid's *Fasti* as a thoroughgoing attempt by the Augustan poet to critique the relationship between time and authority.

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