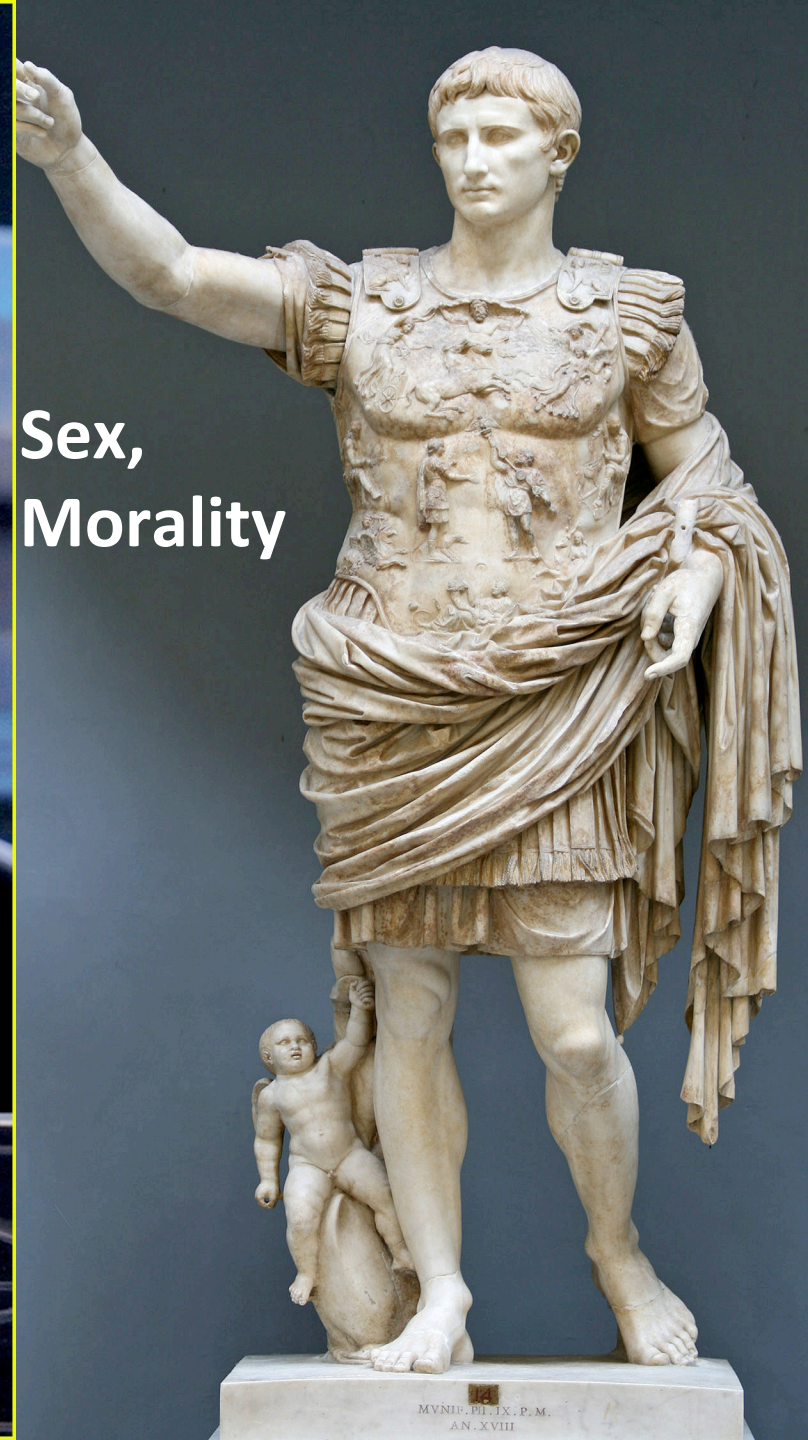




Food and Sex, Food and Morality

Arch 0770 Food and Drink
in Classical Antiquity

JUST
FRED



MVNI^o. PL. IX. P. M.
AN. XVIII

Thinkers of Roman/Early Christian period (300 CE on)

Pagan philosophers (Neo-Platonists, Stoics)

Plotinus, Porphyry

Christian writers

Origen

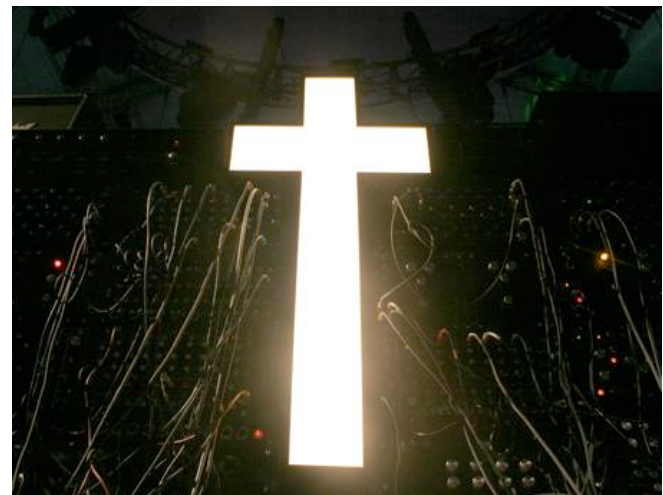


What is the 'good life'?

Union with 'The One'

Union with God

What 'chains' men to earth?



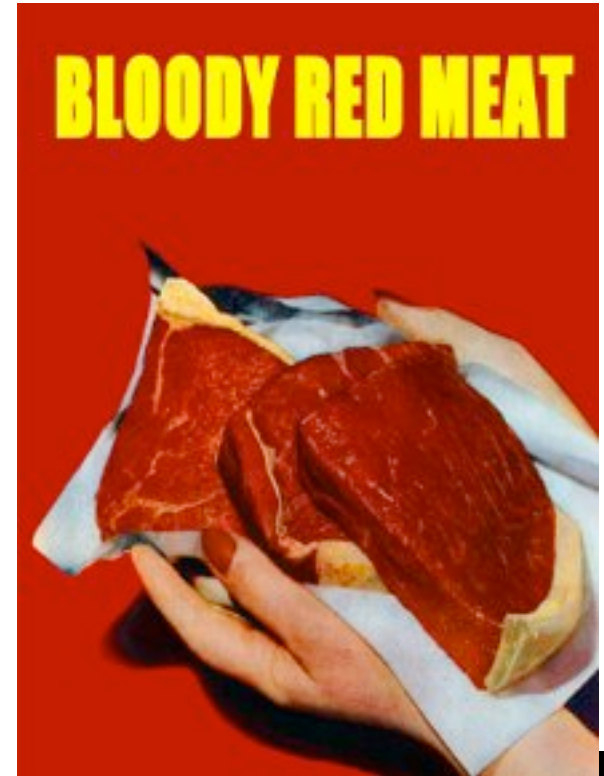
Sex as the chief problem?
No

Porphyry
(early enemy of Christianity)

***On Abstinence from Animal
Foods***

RED meat the REAL worry

**Evil, hostile spirits... at night, in bed
for pagans, manifest as burps,
'passing wind'**



Sex as the chief problem? Yes for Christians

Though a
'food foul' with
Adam and Eve



Evil, hostile spirits... at night, in bed
for Origen and other Christian thinkers
sexual fantasy (succubus)

Origen: performed self castration
(so he could tutor women)

Origen



Flee from sexual immorality. All other sins a man commits are outside his body, but he who sins sexually sins against his own body. Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; you were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your body.

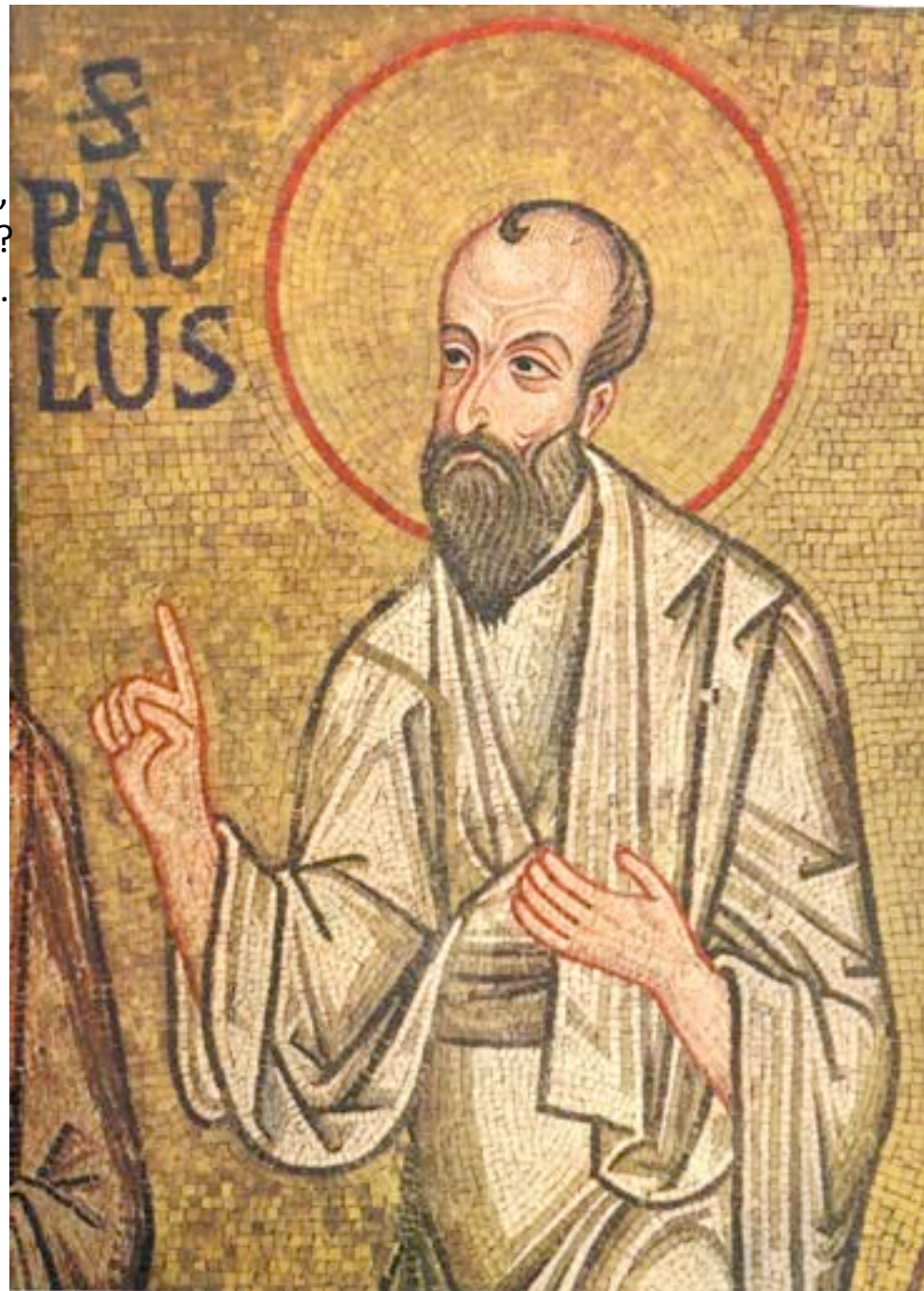
1 Corinthians 6.19-20

Now concerning the things whereof ye wrote to me: It is good for a man not to touch a woman.

1 Corinthians 7:1

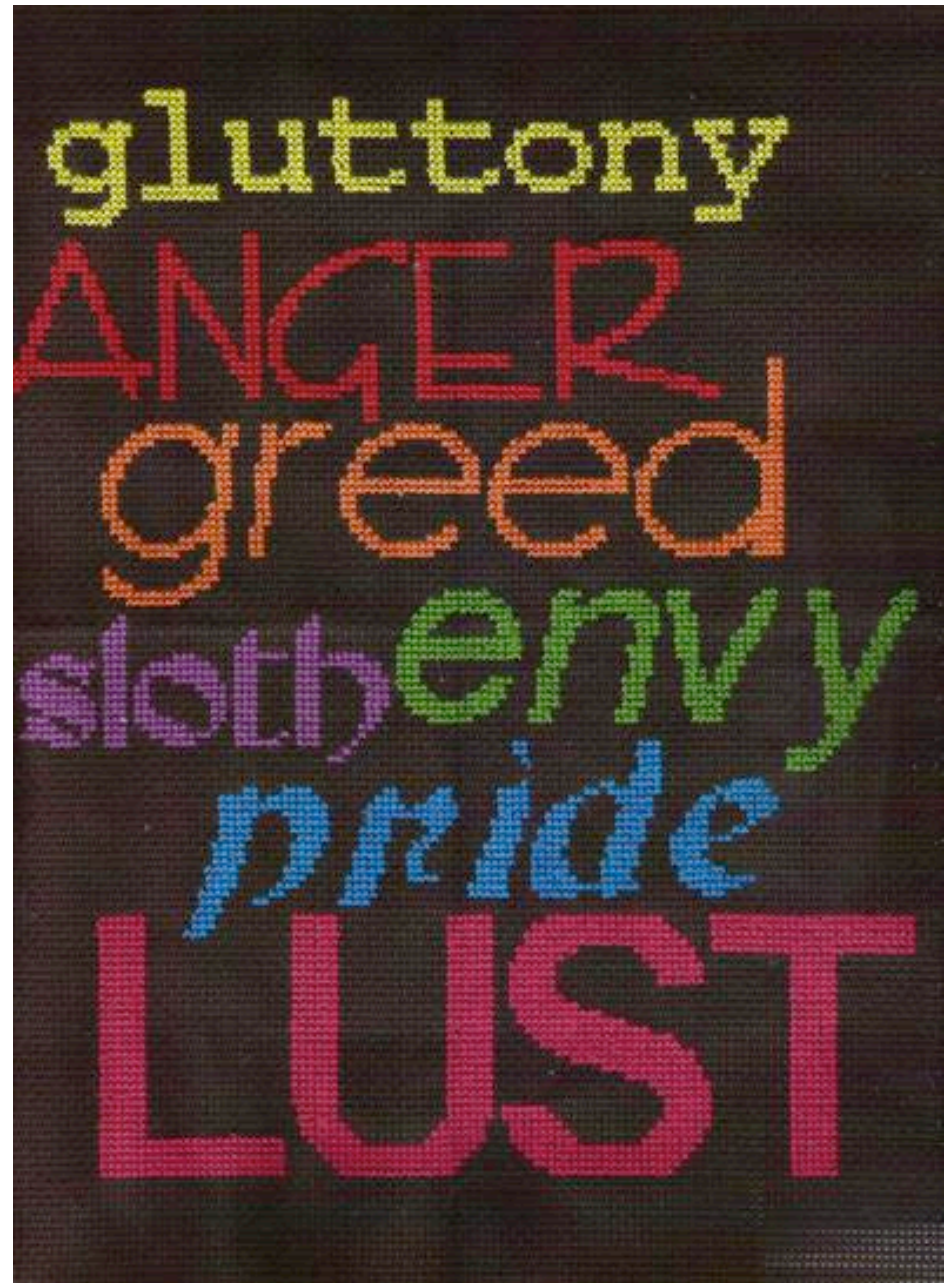
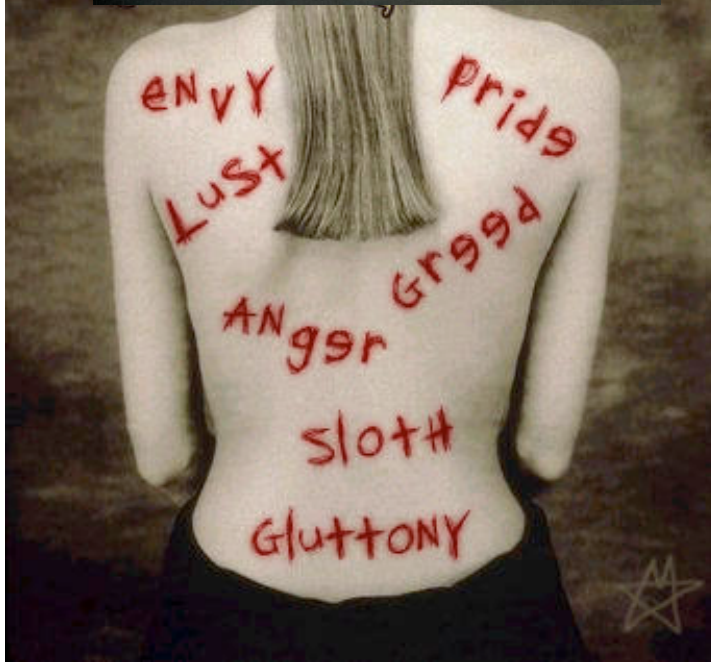
And now these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love.

1 Corinthians 13.13



The 7 deadly sins

- | | |
|-------------|----------|
| 1. Lust | 5. Wrath |
| 2. Gluttony | 6. Envy |
| 3. Greed | 7. Pride |
| 4. Sloth | |



Seven Deadly Sins

Lust/fornication paired with
gluttony/greed



#PHOTO: Riot policemen arrest a far-right protester in Paris on the sidelines of demos against gay marriage law
pic.twitter.com/qbjZXqQz43

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28

RETWEETS

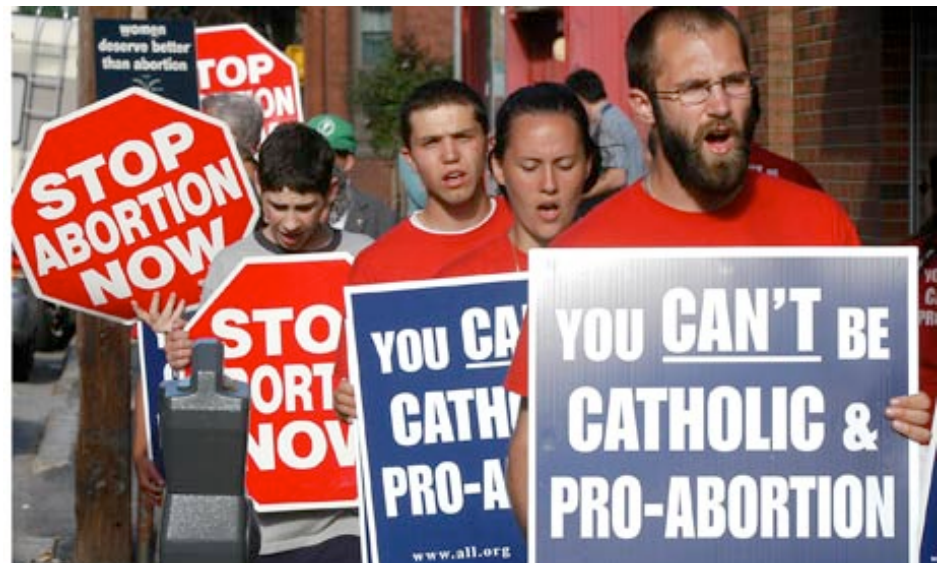
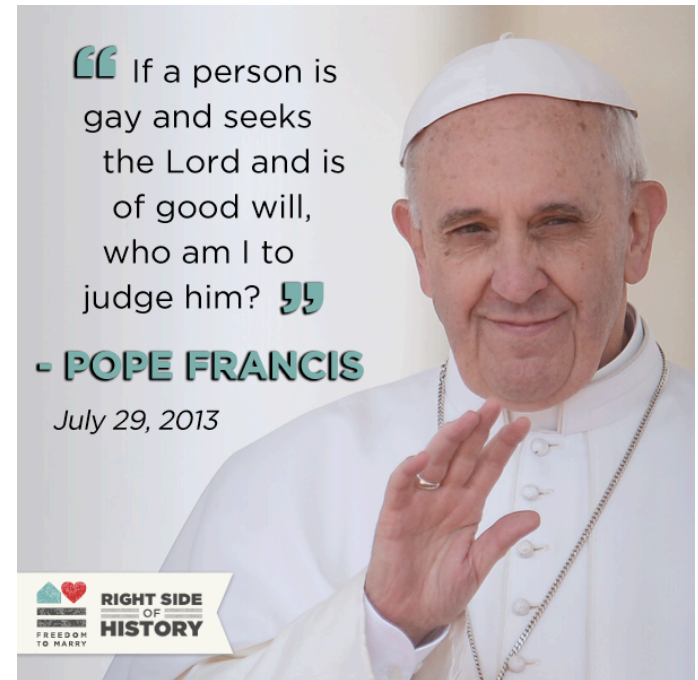
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FAVORITES



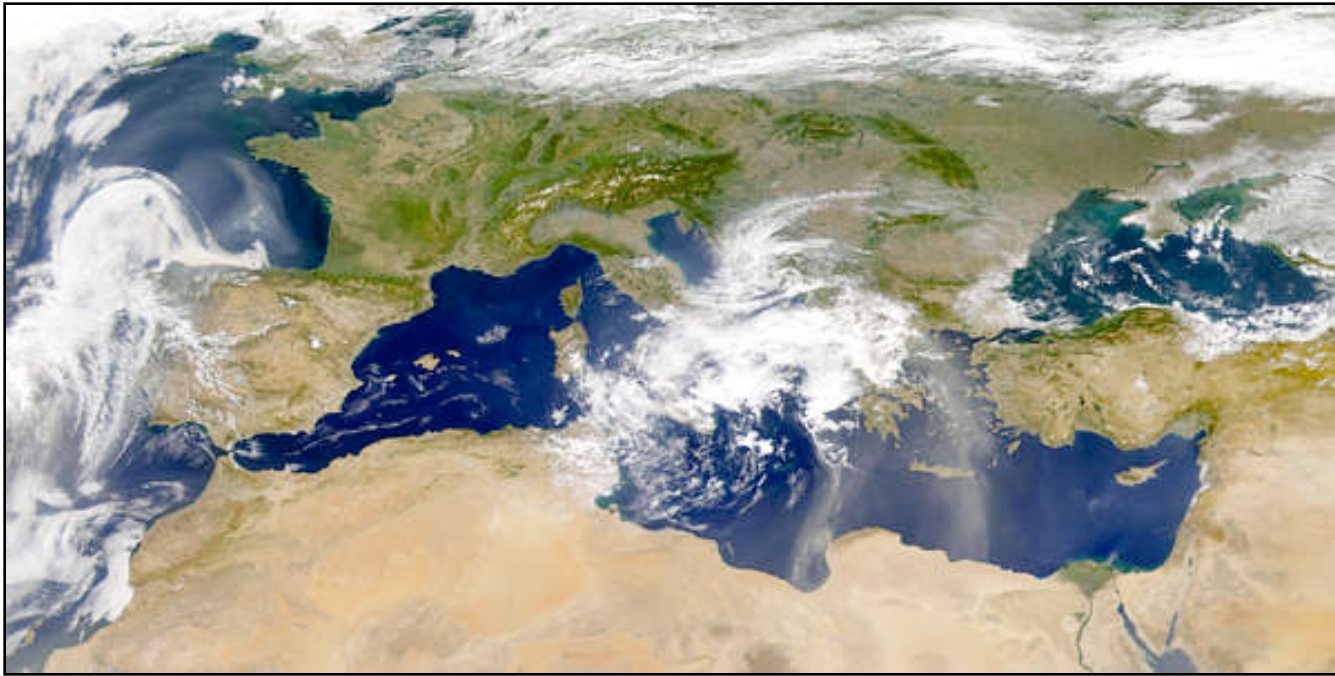
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Flag media



Food and Morality





Growth of Rome, of empire

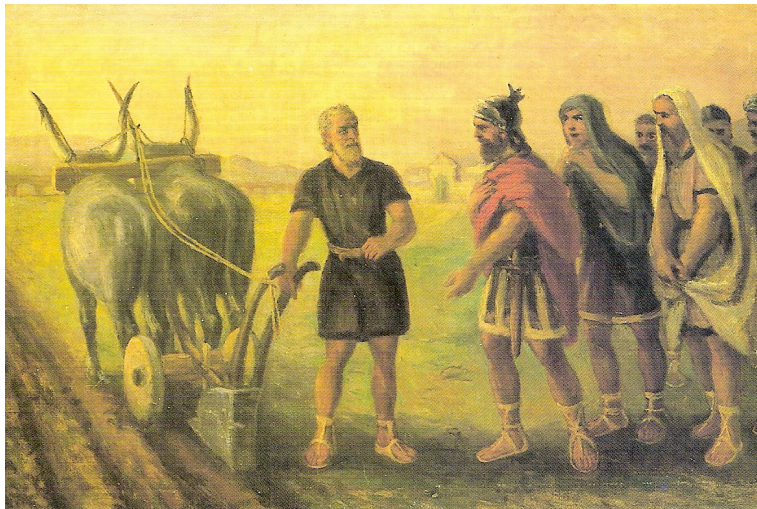




Past/Present



‘Old Rome’ Romulus Cincinnatus



Simple
Rustic
Virtuous
Tough
Turnips

Puls (cereal porridge), legumes

Past/Present

- ‘New Rome’
 - Vast
 - Global
 - Cosmopolitan
 - Expansive
 - Luxurious
(*luxuria* =
excess,
extravagance)

Songbirds
Pheasant
Oysters
Lobster
Shellfish
Venison
Wild boar
Peacock



Change in amounts:

Increase in numbers of courses (two to seven!)

Desert (*secundae mensae*) originally rare, now routine

Several kinds of wine at one meal



Inflation in rarity of foodstuffs and thus extravagance of meals:

Ability to import food long distances, the harder to get the more valuable, the more high status

Things once 'caput mensae' now just gustatio

Rise of gourmet tastes; gastronomy

Recipes, cookbooks

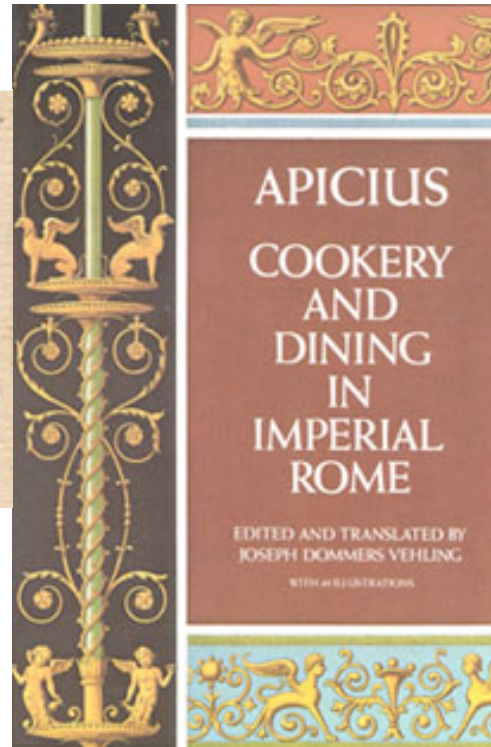
Apicius (title by which a collection of recipes is known, named for a Roman gourmand)



Conditura rosarum.

Rosatium sic facies: Folia rosarum, albo imi folij prius
forcipe sublato inferis, quas ut sutiles facias, in uino quam Album ungues
plurimas infundes, sic, ut septem diebus in uino macren- uocant.
tur. Post septimum diem rosas de uino tollito, & alias su-
tiles recenteis similiter immittas, ut per dies septem infu-
sa quiescant. Deinde rosas similiter eximito, & uino in
quo maduerunt, colato: atq; ubi ad bibendum uti uolueris,
addito melle, Rosatum conficies. Sanè custodito, ut rosam
à rore siccam & optimam macerandam mittas.

Recipe for rose wine



Meal as a spectacle:

Entertainments involving food presentation

Weighing the food

Petronius, *Cena Trimalchionis* (*Trimalchio's Feast*), complete with a rabbit with wings (Pegasus), and other entertainments

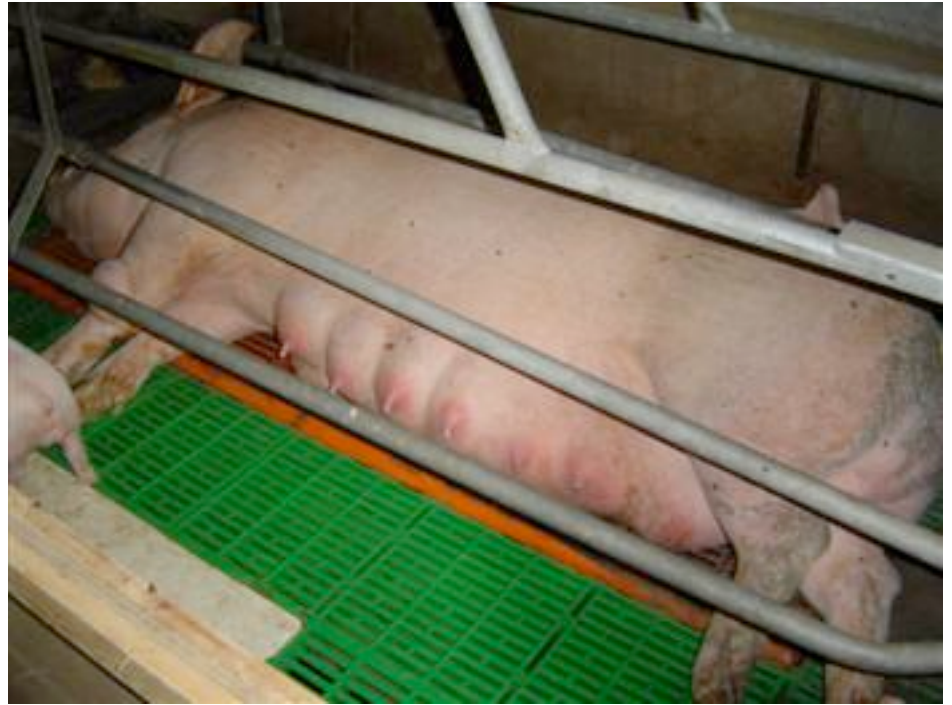


Modern version of 'Trimalchio's Feast', cf. *Great Gatsby*)





Modern French practice now banned



Sumptuary laws legislated (over and over) to curtail conspicuous consumption

Songbirds, sows udders...

Critical authors:

Catullus, Horace, Juvenal,
Martial, Pliny,
Seneca (and more)

Comparisons, of old and new

Men's bodies were still sound and strong; their food was light and not spoiled by art and luxury, whereas when they began to seek dishes out for the sake of removing but of rousing the appetite, and devised countless sauces to whet their gluttony – then what before was nourishment to a hungry man became a burden to the full stomach (Seneca, *Epistles* 95.15)



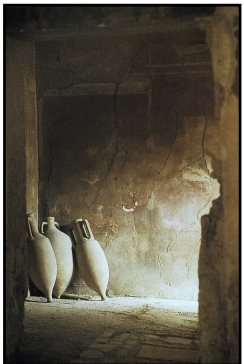
**Dormice,
Bred in specially-designed
Jars
Eaten as appetizers,
or as desserts, dipped in
honey and poppy seeds,**

"Stuff the mice with minced pork, mouse meat from all parts of the mouse ground with pepper, pine kernels, laser, and garum. Sew the mouse up and put on a tile on the stove. Or roast in a portable oven."



Comparisons, of old and new

- Greek wine was so prized that one would serve just one cup each at a dinner. ‘As a boy’, Varro tells us, ‘Lucullus never attended at banquet at his father’s house at which more than a single cup of Greek wine was served. Well, on his own return from service in Asia Minor, Lucullus distributed more than a hundred thousand jars of Greek wine as gifts!’ Caesar, at his triumphal dinner as dictator, provided an amphora of Falernian and a small jar of Chian to each table; but at the feast in his third consulship it was Falernian, Chian, Lesbian, Mamertine. That was the first time, apparently, that four kinds of wine were served’ (Pliny, *Epistles* 18)



Monte Testaccio
'Mountain of
Potsherds'



Lucullus, Roman general (1st cent. BC)

Cherries, apricots...

Lucullan = lavish, luxurious, gourmet



Consequences of ‘big eating’ ?

Too fat to get on horse: ‘his body had swollen and spilled over in such an excessive manner...’

(Gellius 6.22.4 on Cato’s punishment of a knight)



‘How can such a body be useful to the state, when everything between the gullet and the groin is given over to the stomach?’ (Plutarch, *Cato Maior* 9.5)



Vomiting and purging...

‘they eat to vomit and vomit to eat’ (Seneca)

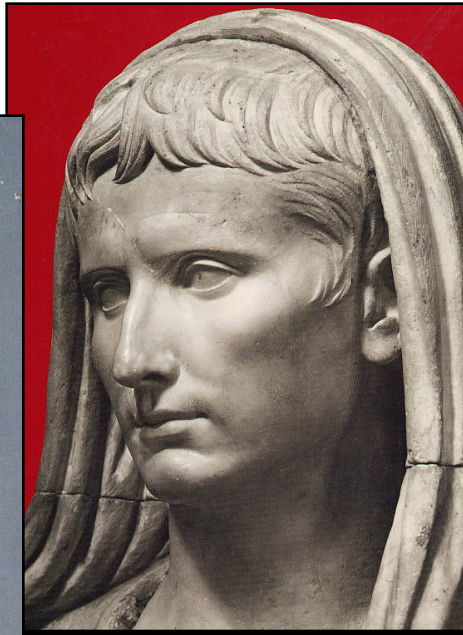


Mark Antony vomiting
in the Roman forum



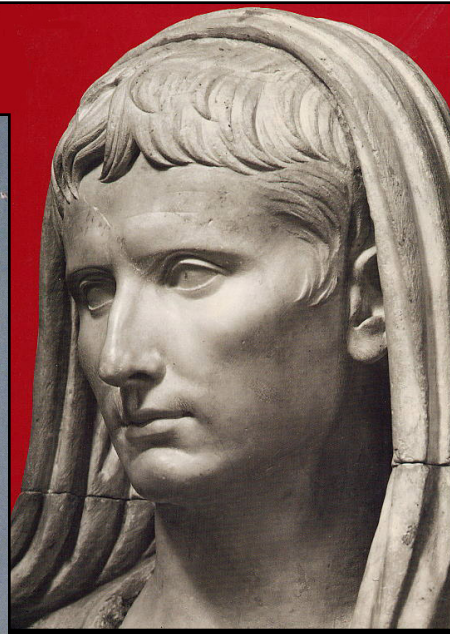
Roman dilemmas, choices

- **Modesty vs. luxuria**
- **Simplicity vs. gastronomy**
- **Frugality vs. gluttony**
- **Antique virtue vs. present decadence**
- **Puls and turnips vs. songbirds, peacocks, dormice**



Suetonius, *Lives of the Caesars*

Augustus (27 BC- AD 14) vs. Vitellius (AD 69)



He ate sparingly... and commonly used a plain diet.

He was particularly fond of coarse bread, small fishes, new cheese of cow's milk, and green figs...

Augustus: 'I ate a little bread and some small dates, in my carriage... In returning home from the palace in my litter, I ate an ounce of bread and a few raisins.'

From this great indifference about his diet, he sometimes supped by himself, before his company began, or after they had finished, and would not touch a morsel at table with his guests...

Vitellius

.. always made three meals a day and sometimes four...

Suetonius,
Life of Vitellius



Shield
of
Minerva

'eating the world...'

