Textual evidence: Roman reflections of realities

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2

TEXTUAL EVIDENCE

Roman reflections of realities

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Introduction

The textual sources on the topic of food and foodways in the ancient world are certainly abundant, and in many senses they are also rich and varied. There are literary sources: poetry in the shape of comedy, satire or epic; as well as prose – consider agricultural manuals, medical-philosophical treatises, 'Apicius' and Athenaeus. In addition to such literary texts, there are documentary (epigraphical and papyrological) sources. This discussion about the study of ancient food and foodways through textual sources will refer to both literary and documentary sources, except for the papyrological sources: these are extensively discussed elsewhere in this volume.[1]

Evaluation of the sources

Although the textual sources are plentiful in terms of quantity, they are both very revealing about a number of topics – and silent on others. They also have their inherent limitations. The ancient past is what has been – and the past cannot be *known* as such. All we have are the sources, which are always *reflections* of a past reality. Our interpretations of these reflections shape our vision of the past. Critical evaluation of the sources is key: three factors, then, come into play. First, the subjectivity of the author; second, the subjectivity of our interpretation of the sources; and third, the issue of representativity.

The first issue is the subjectivity of the author: we may think of a sliding scale – on the left side we find sources such as dental and bone remains, sources that the author had no intention of leaving. Moving towards the middle of the sliding scale, epigraphical sources emerge;[2] then literary sources such as ancient historiography; and furthest to the right genres such as comedy can be found, which intentionally and explicitly play with ideas about the historical context in which they are created.

For any of the textual sources discussed here, it holds that the author will have written his (usually not her) work with a particular aim; from a particular perspective; within a particular geographical and historical context; and within the context of his genre (the boundaries of which he might at the same time stretch). '[These] works belong to different cultural and social levels, they often form part of a rigidly defined literary genre, and are above all affected by the demands of the intended readership' (Gabba, 1983, 75). It follows that any textual source shows a particular reflection of a topic at a particular moment in a particular place in time.

Sources on food are based on the realities of a historical context, but are at the same time layered with perceptions, norms and values. Due to the great cultural importance of food and foodways the sources are perhaps even more normative than sources on other topics. Whether this is an issue or not, depends on the question that is being asked. When students of ancient food and foodways ask questions about perceptions, norms, symbols and values related to their topic, they will usually have at least some textual source materials to turn to in order to find possible answers. Take the important work *The Loaded Table*: its author studies Roman mentalities by investigating how food is represented in different literary genres – a perfectly viable and important approach: 'The literary medium need not be seen as an obstruction; indeed, the kinds of evasions and prejudices that seem to cloud it can be illuminating in themselves' (Gowers, 1993, 2). However, when other kinds of questions are raised – those that deal with the realities of food and foodways in the context of society – the textual (and especially the literary) sources should be used with caution.

The second issue is the subjectivity of our modern interpretation of the sources. We should be careful not to impose our own norms or morals on the ancient evidence. As historians, we try to understand the past in the best ways we can. It is, however, clear that our experiences of food differ from those in the ancient world in so many ways. As a result, we should take into account that we may have serious difficulty in considering issues related to everyday experiences of food shortages, autarky and so on.

The third issue is the representative character of the sources. It can be very hard to find supportive evidence for statements found in the literary sources because there might only be one source on an issue – ideally, there should be other sources confirming or disconfirming the first source. This brings attention to the wider issue of whether or not a source, or a group of sources, can be seen as representative. If questions deal with realities of food – for example, did the Romans eat seabass? – how may we define representativeness? Perhaps there are some literary sources attesting this, and in combination with archaeological remains it may be plausibly argued that seabass was eaten. But which segment of society ate this fish? And during which period of time did they do this? In other words: how much evidence do we need before we feel we know something definitive about Roman realities?

The existence of these three issues does not mean textual sources should not be used for the study of historical realities of food and foodways: each source should be treasured and interpreted to the fullest and to our best abilities as historians. At the same time it should not be used to construct more of an ancient historical context than can be plausibly deducted. Every source has to do with a reality about which we are eager to find out more, but we should not get carried away and jump to conclusions that might not be as 'hard' as they seem – in terms of subjectivity; interpretation; or representative character of the source.

All in all, it is necessary to consider in which ways sources reflect the perceptions, norms and values of its subjective author. Ideas about these issues will have consequences for the ways the source can be used by a subjective historian. It is one of the core tasks of any student of the ancient world to consider each textual source in the context of connections between reflections of realities and possible historical realities.

Genres and their pitfalls

This chapter discusses the contributions, biases and shortcomings of each genre of textual evidence we may use for the study of Roman food and foodways – and suggest how we may approach a variety of sources.

Poetry and fictional prose

Many sources in this category briefly refer to food – we may think of Ovid's aphrodisiacs (Ov., *Ars Am.* II.12) – and others deal with it more extensively. I will restrict myself to the latter category here: one example is the *Moretum*. In this poem, assigned to Virgil,[3] a poor farmer bakes his bread and decides to make a soft cheese paste/salad by adding ingredients such as garlic to his soft cheese:

> The [garlic] bulb, saved with the
> leaves, he dips in water, and drops into the mortar's hollow circle.
> Thereon he sprinkles grains of salt, adds cheese hardened with
> consuming salt, and heaps on top the herbs he has collected; with
> his left hand he wedges the mortar between his shaggy thighs,
> while his right first crushes with a pestle the fragrant garlic, then
> grinds all evenly in a juicy mixture.[4]

After eating his bread and this *moretum*, he is ready to face another day in the fields. Which conclusions might we draw? Should we see the way this farmer prepares his bread and *moretum* as realistic? Was this food daily fare for farmers? Or does the author aim to show us something about the poor and how they lived, using the preparation of food as a metaphor? Fortunately, there are other sources on this topic but this is not always the case.[5]

Roman satire touches upon many topics related to food: Wilkins distinguishes nostalgia, rural purity, gluttony, hierarchies, and ideas about the elite (Wilkins and Hill, 2006, 268). Food – which food was eaten as well as how it was eaten – was a prime way of distinguishing between various groups and classes in a society. Petronius' *Satyricon* 26–78 is a prime example of such satire. The freedman Trimalchio misbehaves: but how? Which topics are problematized? What does this say about norms and values, and what about realities? The same questions may be asked from the 'dinner-invitation poems' by the likes of Martial and Juvenal: which issues are satirized here?

> If the thought of a gloomy dinner at home depresses you, Toranius, you can go hungry with me. If it's your habit to take a snack beforehand, you won't lack for cheap Cappadocian lettuces and smelly leeks, chopped tunny will lurk in halves of egg. A green cabbage-sprout fresh from the chilly garden will be served on a black plate for your oily fingers to handle, and a sausage lying on snow-white porridge and pale beans with ruddy bacon. If you wish for the bounties of dessert, you will be offered withering grapes and pears that bear the name of Syrian and chestnuts roasted in a slow fire, produce of cultured Naples.[6]

While this category is an extremely useful group of sources for the study of attitudes towards food and foodways, it leaves us guessing on many other topics.

'Non-fictional prose'

Recipes and agricultural information

The most important sources of this genre are Cato's *De agri cultura* (second century BC), Varro's *De re rustica* (first century BC), Columella's *De re rustica* (first century AD), and Palladius' *Opus* *agriculturae* (fourth/fifth century AD) – but Pliny the Elder's *Historia Naturalis* should not be overlooked. The first four are agricultural manuals for the wealthy farmer, and contain a wealth of information. For our purposes it is most important to focus on recipes and the information on the production of foodstuffs that these texts provide. Although we call these sources 'manuals', they are certainly no dry or technical descriptive texts. The use of rhetorical strategies should not be downplayed. For example, Varro's biting wit and humor have certainly received attention (Cardauns, 2001, 25–29) and the work has been described as a 'philosophical and satirical dialogue' with an intellectual and political agenda – and not only as the technical treatise that it has often been considered to be (Nelsestuen, 2015, 2–8). Cato, Columella and Palladius, too, should be considered as authors who put a personal stamp on their work. It has been argued that there are three ways to 'read' these 'manuals': as nonfictional treatises about the theory and practice of agriculture; as literary works; and as moralistic works about self-representation of the elite within Roman society (Diederich, 2007, 2). A fourth may be added: that of agriculture in the context on views on Roman expansion (Spanier, 2010).

Pliny the Elder as well provides recipes and other agricultural information – especially in books 17 and 18, but also on related topics such as botany, zoology, and pharmacology – in his encyclopaedic *Historia naturalis*. Pliny cites many sources and is a critical author, but it is still hard for us to evaluate how far his information is correct.[7]

'Apicius'

Apicius' *De re coquinaria* is the only 'cookery book' we have from antiquity, although recipes may also be found in sources such as Cato and Columella, as discussed above. The questions regarding who has written this 'cookery book', when, and for whom have all been problematized in the literature – and these questions are a clue to its reliability. The source as we know it is normally dated to the fourth century AD and was named after a famous gourmet (Apicius) from the first century.[8] Its genesis was probably a dynamic process: 'a late compilation of a number of different works which combine medical interests, rare food, and adaptation of cheap foods to make equivalents of expensive foods' (Wilkins and Hill, 2006, 208). The following fragments give an idea of what to expect from this text:

> I Peeled cucumbers. Serve with *liquamen* or *oenogarum*: you will find this makes them more tender, and they will not cause flatulence or heaviness.
>
> II Peeled cucumbers, another method. Stew with boiled brains, cumin and a little honey, celery seed, *liquamen*, and oil. Bind with eggs, sprinkle with pepper, and serve.
>
> III Cucumbers, another method. Dressing for salad: pepper, pennyroyal, honey or *passum*, *liquamen*, and vinegar. Sometimes asafoetida is added.[9]

A cookery book is certainly no objective source – consider the values, norms and expectations of the cookery books on our own shelves. Apicius should certainly not be taken at face value: the 'recipes', discussed one by one in ten books, were not just a systematic and factual exploration of the Roman kitchen (although some recipes can be found in other sources, too[10]). So, what does Apicius convey about what Romans ate?

There are two ways of answering this question: first, to see Apicius as a source that people used to cook from (a manual), and second, as a normative source that was not used in practice (and is aspirational) (Wilkins and Hill, 2006, 246). Those arguing the first say that the cookery book was perhaps aimed at cooks working in elite households (the extensive use of spices and exotic ingredients points to this, although at the same time some recipes are very simple!). The books were in Vulgar Latin and contained many Greek loan words,[11] so there is certainly a possibility that cooks without much literacy would use them. If so, did they use these recipes in a literal sense, or should they be seen as blueprints used for inspiration? The fact that most recipes are very vague in terms of quantities of the ingredients should not be forgotten here. This would, at the same time, render the cookery book useless to the untrained.

Those arguing for the second option, of 'Apicius' as a normative source, take a different approach: 'It is deeply unlikely until recently that the cook could read [. . .]. The books on food and cookery that have survived from the period [. . .] are aimed at those at the eating end of the proceedings rather than those at the cooking end' (Wilkins and Hill, 2006, 245). They argue that perhaps 'Apicius' was not used at all in practice: was its possession a mark of status for rich Romans? This leads us to consider the following option: are the recipes not at all objective or meant to be used in practice, but normative in the sense that they show which culinary expectations or wishes rich Romans had, or should have had?

Although these questions cannot be definitively answered, the recipes should, most probably, not be used to illustrate consumption in the Roman world outside the world of the elite. Even then, it should be questioned how far they reflect the real or ideal table of the elite.

Medical-philosophical writings

Diet was an important aspect of ancient medicine because food could bring balance to, or disturb, the humors. Other foods served as drugs (Grant, 2000, 6–7). Consequently, Galen – the second-century doctor and philosopher – addressed food in a number of different ways and in different contexts in the course of his vast intellectual output, among others in his *On the Powers of Food*. Of course, Galen's writings are known to have been polemic and have certainly been written from his particular philosophical point.[12] Still, evaluations of his work for the study of food are generally positive. In Galen's work, 'medicine and food are combined with an observant eye for sociological details. There are few writings from the Roman world who allow us such a window on everyday life.'[13]

When speaking about norms and food, the works of Seneca are more explicit examples of how food is seen through a particular philosophical lens: that of Stoicism. Seneca abhorred luxury, also in terms of food, because he perceived it as decidedly un-Roman and as unrestrained behavior. However, more can be said: Seneca uses 'culinary description [. . .] [as] another "dialect" in his language of moral exposition and a penetrating means of exemplifying and exposing human irrationality, moral weakness, and philosophical shortcomings' (Richardson-Hay, 2009, 75). He tells us about the first-century gourmet Apicius (after whom the collection of recipes is presumably named) who, according to Seneca, led a life full of greed and desire – poisoning himself by means of food and drink:

> After he had squandered a hundred million sesterces upon his kitchen, after he had drunk up at every one of his revels the equivalent of the many largesses of the emperors and the huge revenue of the Capitol, then for the first time, when overwhelmed with debt and actually forced, he began to examine his accounts.[14]

When he had considered his financial situation, Seneca adds, Apicius committed suicide by means of actual poison. Food, in Seneca, 'is code for moral purpose, ethical perception, interpretation, rational capability, and personal fortitude' (Richardson-Hay, 2009, 96). Seneca is a fantastic source for those who wish to study these issues through the lens of food – but those who wish to study food practices should not take this source at face value.

'Symposium literature'

Although there are other texts from Roman times, such as Plutarch's *Dinner of the Seven Wise Men*, that could serve as examples of symposium literature ('Literature which purported to record what happened at specific symposia, real or imaginary': Mossman, 1997, 120), here we focus on Athenaeus as an illustration of the genre. The sophist Athenaeus' *Deipnosophistae* is an extremely valuable literary source for Roman perceptions of the study of food and foodways in classical and Roman Greece. The elite received special attention. In the 15 known books, probably written at the end of the second century AD (although this has been subject of debate), many subjects related to the history of food and foodways are discussed by the banqueters who have gathered for their banquet in the city of Rome:

> In response to such people we should note that drinking-styles vary by city, as Critias establishes in his *Constitution of the Spartans* (88 B 33 D–K), in the following passage: Chians and Thasians (drink) from left to right, from large cups; Athenians (drink) from left to right, from small cups; and Thessalians propose toasts with large vessels to anyone they want. The Spartans, however, drink from individual cups, and the slave who pours the wine (replaces) whatever they drink.[15]

The context of the banquet is fictionalized: a number of known philosophers, rhetoricians, and so on are mentioned by name and other names are hinted at (Bowie, 'Athenaeus [3]', Brill's New Pauly). Apart from the past, the banqueters also reflect on topics from their own present, for example, where reflections on luxury and austerity are concerned (Braund, 2000, 12; Wilkins, 2000, 37). The discussions cite, and refer to, existing sources from the Graeco-Roman world, especially from Greek comedy (which we would often not know in other ways). However, it should be noted that it has been argued that Athenaeus may have misrepresented and misquoted citations: 'taking liberties with his texts, even by our standards being a little bit naughty with them'.[16]

Athenaeus' greater aim is not to provide information about food. Rather it is to write a work that 'reflects the Platonic model' of symposiastic literature and reflects programmatic elements: 'the testing of the present against the past; competitive testing of memory as a pastime at the symposium; the consumption of drink or food once the verbal achievement is complete'; and gluttony (Wilkins, 2000, 25).[17] A. Lukinovich summarizes as follows: 'Athenaeus' true passion is not the banquet itself, but everything having to do with the theme of "the banquet" in literature and in conversation' (Lukinovich, 1990, 265).

All in all, the *Deipnosophistae* should be seen as a literary work in the context of the Second Sophistic – full of wit and play – based on learned research. Attitudes toward consumption – and especially among the elite – are clearly reflected, but how far these were widely shared is unknown.[18]

Epigraphic

Although epigraphic sources differ from the literary sources discussed above in many ways, this does not necessarily mean they are free from normative thinking or implicit aims. This is usually referred to as 'epigraphic bias' (Bodel, 2001, 46–48): 'All that is clear is that each and every public inscription is the result of a deliberate choice, whether motivated by the need to proclaim rules or privileges in permanent form or to give equally permanent expression to the highly competitive value-systems of most ancient communities' (Millar, 1983, 135). As with literary sources, it is unclear how representative the – public and private – epigraphical sources are. After all, inscriptions too are a product of a particular time and place. However, quantitative research may help to answer such questions: Louis Robert's 'mettre en série' aids us here. According to Robert, one piece of epigraphic evidence is not enough. Instead, as many sources as possible should be collected – they should be analyzed as a series or corpus. While doing so, patterns of distribution and diachronic changes should be taken into account.

One category of our epigraphic sources related to food is public inscriptions concerned with communal dining. The inscriptions on public dining show that a benefactor (whether emperor, or a citizen from one of the different *ordines* in a particular city, or someone else altogether) has the means to provide food or a feast. Also, we may gain an insight into which groups were important in a particular city, or it becomes clear that the benefactor favors the group for a different reason. One inscription may illustrate this point:

> The most devoted sisters of Caesia Sabina, the daughter of Cn. Caesius Athictus, erected this statue. She alone of all the women gave a feast to the mothers of the *centumviri* and to their sisters and daughters and to municipal women of every rank. And on the days of the games and of the feast of her own husband, she offered a bath with free oil.[19]

A woman functions as public benefactor here, and provides especially for other women of the city: although women were usually not invited, this inscription explicitly invites women of all ranks to a special public meal. But what does this mean? 'Are these banquets, then, to be understood as occasions similarly marked by limited social interaction among classes of women, [. . .] or did such gatherings represent a genuine opportunity for female solidarity [. . .]?' (Donahue, 2004a, 115) Why was the inscription written – and how did it increase the status of the woman, her husband or the family more generally?

Other epigraphic sources important for the study of food are varied: think of Diocletian's price edict (301 AD) in which maximum prices of – among others – a great many foodstuffs were imposed;[20] or epigraphic sources about the management of imperial estates, revealing the juridical structures in which agriculture took place (Lo Cascio, 2007, 642–643). 'Inscribed *instrumentum*' is another category, and extremely important for the study of the ancient economy, including those aspects related to food. Amphorae take an important place: a number of different kinds of inscriptions were produced during production, transportation and distribution of amphorae. Amphorae stamps, for example those on the terracotta in Monte Testaccio, reveal where the container was made – and as a consequence, trade patterns and the size of the economy.[21] Dipinti on amphorae may reveal the quality of contents, the place of production or the people involved in production – especially when they are studied together, as a corpus. Some examples from Roman Britain are: '(Property) of Attius Secundus, tribune: a jar of three modii';[22] 'Flavoured sauce of fish-tails, matured for the larder. . .';[23] and 'Falernian (wine from the vineyard of) Lollius'.[24]

Towards a fruitful study of food

After this critical discussion of the different genres, which has essentially deconstructed ideas about their objectivity, it has become time to ask the following constructive question: how might we move on towards a fruitful study of – real and ideal – food and foodways in the Roman world?

As for the study of ideal food and foodways: the sources are rich for those interested in images and norms and values related to food, of course taking into account that every source should still be approached in a critical manner.

As for the study of the reality of food and foodways: the answer can only be that textual and other sources – which will here be conveniently referred to as 'archaeological' sources – should be discussed in combination and as complementary. Two important methodological issues arise. First, what has been called 'epistemic independence' between archaeological and textual evidence cannot be assumed: 'they may support one another, but evidence from the textual record is not necessarily independent, in the relevant epistemic sense, from evidence from the material record' (Kosso, 1995, 178). Different independent kinds of sources may point toward the same conclusions: for example, finds of fish bones, textual sources, and human bone analysis may all point toward the idea that fish was eaten. If we are sure that the different sources were produced independently (and have not influenced one another) the conclusions gain in strength (Alberione Dos Reis, 2005, 49–50). The second methodological point is that a careful balance in terms of optimism must be maintained. On the one hand, we should take care not to fall victim to the so-called 'positivist fallacy' where we connect textual sources to archaeological ones, producing 'fallible connections'.[25]

When combining the sources, a fruitful approach may be to change the order in which we examine them.[26] Although many ancient historians and classicists first think of texts, why not start with the archaeological sources and only then look at textual sources to correct or confirm these? Of course, archaeological sources are not exempt from critical evaluation. However, so many of these sources have become – and are still becoming – available (or are re-investigated with the aid of new techniques) that this may be the right time to change our outlook. We may answer questions about Roman realities by starting our analysis with visual; material; archaeobotanical; zooarchaeological; and dental and bone evidence – and then turn to the textual sources.

Notes

1 See Clarysse, this volume.

2 Although sometimes overlooked in discussions of textual sources, these documentary sources should be treated with caution as much as literary texts – and be evaluated critically: Millar, 1983, 98.

3 However, the author was perhaps Ausonius: 'we meet with many an echo of Virgil, but nothing that is stamped as Virgilian.' Fairclough and Goold, 2000, 371, 379. Cf. the commentary by Laudani, 2004, 9–45.

4 Verg. *Moretum* 94–100: servatum gramine bulbum | tinguit aqua lapidisque cavum demittit in orbem. | his salis inspergit micas, sale durus adeso | caseus adicitur, lectas super ingerit herbas, | et laeva testam saetosa sub inguina fulcit, | dextera pistillo primum fragrantia mollit | alia, tum pariter mixto terit omnia suco. Edition and translation: Fairclough and Goold (Loeb Classical Library).

5 Ov. *Fast.* 4.367; Colum. *Rust.* 12.57. These should, however, also be critically evaluated.

6 Mart. *Epigrams* V.78.1–15. si tristi domicenio laboras, | Torani, potes esurire mecum. | non deerunt tibi, si soles προπίνειν, | viles Cappadocae gravesque porri, | divisis cybium latebit ovis. | ponetur digitis tenendus unctis | nigra coliculus virens patella, | algentem modo qui reliquit hortum, | et pultem niveam premens botellus, | et pallens faba cum rubente lardo. | mensae munera si voles secundae, | marcentes tibi porrigentur uvae | et nomen pira quae ferunt Syrorum, | et quas docta Neapolis creavit | lento castaneae vapore tostae [. . .]. Edition and translation: D.R. Shackleton Bailey (Loeb Classical Library).

7 Dalby, 2003: s.v. 'Pliny "the Elder" '.

8 Attestations to, and discussion of, the identity of M. Gavius Apicius: Bode, 1999, 6–20; but see also Lindsay, 1997, 148–153; and 144–148 of the same article for a discussion about the genesis of the work.

9 Apicius III.VI (76–78). I Cucumeres rasos: sive ex liquamine, sive ex oenogaro: sine ructu et gravitudine teneriores sentries. II Aliter cucumeres rasos: elixabis cum cerebellis elixis, cumino et melle modico, [[vel]] apii semine, liquamine et oleo. Ovis obligabis, piper asparges et inferes. III Aliter cucumeres: piper, puleium, mel vel passum, liquamen et acetum. Interdum et silfi accredit. Edition and translation: Flower and Rosenbaum, 1958.

10 E.g., Bode compares Apicius I.6 to Palladius 11.14.9.

11 Dalby, 2003: s.v. 'Apicius'.

12 Cf. the various articles in Gill et al., 2009; and Hankinson, 2008.

13 Grant, 2000, 12. See also Wilkins, 2003, 361, 371–373; Nutton, 1996, 361–363 on an evaluation of the sources Galen uses, as well as his own contribution.

14 Sen. *Ad Helv*. 10.9. Cum sestertium milliens in culinam coniecisset, cum tot congiaria principum et ingens Capitolii vectigal singulis comi-sationibus exsorpsisset, aere alieno oppressus rationes suas tunc primum coactus inspexit. Edition and translation: J.W. Basore (Loeb Classical Library).

15 Ath. *Deipnosophistae* 11.462.e–f. Πρὸς οὓς λεκτέον ὅτι τρόποι εἰσὶ πόσεων κατὰ πόλεις ἴδιοι, ὡς Κριτίας παρίστησιν ἐν τῇ Λακεδαιμονίων Πολιτείᾳ διὰ τούτων· ὁ μὲν Χῖος καὶ Θάσιος ἐκ μεγάλων κυλίκων ἐπιδέξια, ὁ δ᾽ Ἀττικὸς ἐκ μικρῶν fἐπιδέξια, ὁ δὲ Θετταλικὸς | ἐκπώματα προπίνει ὅτῳ ἂν βούλωνται μεγάλα. Λακεδαιμόνιοι δὲ τὴν παρ᾽ αὑτῷ ἕκαστος πίνει, ὁ δὲ παῖς ὁ οἰνοχόος ὅσον ἂν ἀποπίῃ. Translation and edition: S. Douglas Olson (Loeb Classical Library).

16 Pelling, 2000, 188. Cf. Wilkins and Hill, 1996, 429–438.

17 Cf. König, 2012, 90–120.

18 Braund and Wilkins, 2000, 39. On Athenaeus as a literary work see, however, also Jacob, 2013; Paulas, 2012, 403–439.

19 From Veii, second or third century, *CIL* 11.3811=*ILS* 6583. Caesiae Sabinae | Cn. Caesi Athicti. | Haec sola omnium | feminarum | matribus (centum) vir(orum) et | sororibus et filiab(us) | et omnis ordinis | mulieribus minicipib(us) | epulum dedit, diebusq(ue) | ludorum et epuli | viri sui balneum | cum oleo gratuito |dedit, | sorores pissimae. Edition and translation: Donahue, 2004a, 114.

20 There are other attestations of fixing of prices, see: Noethlichs, 'Edictum [3] Edictum Diocletiani' (visited 12 March 2016). On price-fixing more generally, see also Holleran, this volume.

21 Pucci, 2001, 145–147. For Monte Testaccio see Blázquez et al., 1994–2013.

22 Atti Secundi tr(ibuni) | lagunu(m) m(odiorum) iii. RIB 2492.7, in Collingwood and Wright, 1994, 3–4.

23 Possibly: cod(ae) ting(tae) ve(tus) | penuar(ium) [. . .] OL. RIB 2492.11, in Collingwood and Wright, 1994, 5–6.

24 Fal(ernum) (Lollianum). RIB 2492.18, in Collingwood and Wright, 1994, 7.

25 Small, 1995, 4. The term 'positivist fallacy' that Small refers to is borrowed from Anthony Snodgrass.

26 However, both kinds of evidence should be seen as equally important. On archaeology as text, and text as archaeology see the two very methodologically insightful papers by Dyson, 1995, 25–44; and Hedrick, 1995, 45–88.