10-1-1980

Ancient Roman and Modern American Food: A Comparative Sketch of Two Semiological Systems

Lowell Edmunds
Boston College

Follow this and additional works at: https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/ccr

Recommended Citation
Available at: https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/ccr/vol5/iss5/4

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the All Journals at BYU ScholarsArchive. It has been accepted for inclusion in Comparative Civilizations Review by an authorized editor of BYU ScholarsArchive. For more information, please contact scholarsarchive@byu.edu, ellen_amatangelo@byu.edu.
The Greeks were homosexuals and the Romans were gourmands. This paper is concerned partly with the second of these great peoples of classical antiquity, who are remembered in the popular imagination above all for their characteristic vices, and partly with contemporary America, which is popularly held to resemble ancient Rome in gluttony as in other aspects of decadence. I have, however, nothing to say about how much Romans ate and American eat. My comparative sketch, which was inspired by Barthes but has remained theoretically naive, is semiological. I view the individual items of Roman and American food as signs, and the entire Roman and American menus as systems to which the signs belong. These systems of course have their histories, but are here studied synchronically.

The questions that are obviously posed for the semiological approach to food are these: How do the separate items of food function as signs, how do they serve as a means of communication? How do these signs constitute a system? And what do they communicate? These questions must be asked separately about Roman and American food, and then the answers can be brought together in a comparison.

As for the Romans, the answer to the question of what their food communicates is relatively simple. Their food expressed first their relation to the old Roman frugality and moderation, the opposite of which was luxuria, and, second, what degree of refinement they had attained. The Roman felt obliged to entertain
his guests *eleganter*. These two main significances of Roman food, moderation and refinement, were in precarious balance, and it seems as if the former was always in danger of being out-weighed by the latter.

The standpoint of moderation is found in Juvenal. In Satire Eleven, having invited his friend Persicus to dinner, Juvenal sets out the menu for him. He then goes on to say: and this is the way the Roman Senate used to dine back in the days of Curius (Manius Curius Dentatus, the conqueror of Pyrrhus in 275 B.C.). Curius used to bring vegetables in his own hands from his own small garden, vegetables, Juvenal says (77-80), at which even a ditch-digger would turn up his nose today. How seriously should we take Juvenal when he talks about the simplicity of the dinner he means to serve Persicus? Isn’t this just the attitudinizing of the satirist? A way to heap scorn on the *luxuria* of his contemporaries, which he was so fond of castigating in all its forms? No, on the contrary, the food you offered had to express the old Roman moderation. Pliny the Younger, in one of his epistles, mentions having dinner with the emperor Trajan. Pliny wants to praise the dinner and says, “It was moderate, when you consider that it was the emperor”.

What imperial banquets were like is indicated by Plutarch, who remarks that each guest had his own wine steward. Presumably, Pliny could have found something of this sort to praise at Trajan’s banquet, but what was praiseworthy was moderation, not extravagance.

Since, for the Roman, his food expressed his relation to traditional Roman morality, he could not invite you to dinner without also telling you how simple the food would be. The student of Roman literature will think immediately of the so-called invitation-poems. There are examples from the pens of Catullus, Horace and Martial. In these poems, the poet characteristically takes the stance of what has been called “smart pov-erty”. He speaks humorously of the plain fare that is all
he can provide. Since this attitude is already found in Greek poetry, it might seem to be nothing but a literary attitude bearing no relation to the realities of Roman life. An invitation to dinner that occurs in the midst of the Banquet of Trimalchio in Petronius’ *Satyricon* shows that “smart poverty” is not merely literary. The narrator of the *Satyricon* attends this banquet with two of his friends. The other guests, like Trimalchio himself, are rich freedmen. One of these, who is outstanding for his materialism and his sadism and who speaks the worst Latin of any of the freedmen, invites one of the narrator’s companions to dinner. He says: “I know you’re an intellectual snob. Never mind. Someday I’ll get you to come over to my villa and have a look at my little place. We’ll find something to chew on, a chicken, some eggs. It’ll be nice, even if the bad weather ruined everything this year.” Anyway, we’ll find something to fill up on” (46.2). The two items of food mentioned by the freedman, namely, the chicken and the eggs, are enough to ally him with traditional Roman simplicity. In the satire already mentioned, Juvenal offers Persicus chicken and eggs, and we find the chicken also in one of the invitation-poems of Martial, where it is an aspect of “smart poverty” (10.48.17). When the vulgar freedman mentions chicken and eggs, there can be no question of literary allusion. Rather, he is following a convention that requires the host to speak deprecatingly of the food he will serve, and this convention rests on the requirement that Roman food be simple and frugal. It can be inferred from the freedman’s invitation in Petronius that the attitude of “smart poverty” in the invitation poems, no matter what its Greek literary antecedents, bears a direct relation to the realities of Roman life.

Roman food signifies, then, where the Roman stands in relation to traditional morality. At the same time, it signifies his degree of refinement. Cicero describes to his friend Atticus the banquet at which he entertained Caesar on Dec. 19, 45 B.C.: “His entourage . . . were
lavishly entertained in three other dining-rooms. The humbler freedmen and slaves had all they wanted—the smarter ones I entertained in style. In a word, I showed I knew how to live.''

Refinement means that one knows how to give the appropriate food to each sort of person, and especially how to entertain the smarter ones in style. In a diatribe against Piso, Cicero states: "His house contains nothing of taste (laetum), charm (elegans) or refinement (exquisitum). . . . There are no oysters or fish at his dinners, only an abundance of not very fresh meat".

But the presence of oysters and fish, the absence of which signified lack of refinement, could signify luxury: it was rumored of Didius Julianus that, on the first day of his reign, in order to show scorn for his predecessor, he held a luxurious banquet (luxuriosum convivium) of oysters, fattened birds and fish. Thus if you served oysters and fish you might lose in frugality whatever you gained in elegance. The dilemma was a real one, and Romans made strange attempts to escape it. Pliny attended a dinner at which the host served choice dishes to himself and a few friends, cheap dishes and scraps (vilia et minuta) to the rest of the company. The host thought that in so doing he could be both elegant and thrifty (i.e. properly Roman) at the same time, but, in Pliny's opinion, he only succeeded in becoming both mean and extravagant. Pliny warns his young correspondent not to be deceived by this luxury disguised as frugality (luxuria specie frugalitatis), by this bizarre alliance of luxury and meanness (istam luxuriae et sor-dium novam societatem).

If the very same items of food signified refinement (positive) and luxury (negative) or both frugality (positive) and meanness (negative), the question arises how any host could succeed in being both elegant and thrifty (laetus et diligens), to state the ideal in Pliny's terms. The answer is summed up in the line with which Juvenal begins his menu: "Now hear dishes not bought in any
market" (fercula nunc audi nullis ornata macellis) (64). He proceeds to list the food that has been sent to him in Rome from his farm in Tivoli—a nice fat kid, some wild asparagus, etc. In this way, Juvenal allies himself with the simplicity of the Roman freeholder, while at the same time he can boast of the excellence of the food. Similarly, Horace’s rustic philosopher, Ofellus, says that he has no need of fish sent from Rome (non piscibus urbe petitis)—a kid (like Juvenal’s) or a pullet is enough. Martial promises his guest cauliflower fresh from the garden, and other vegetables that his bailiff’s wife has brought him. His menus are reminiscent of the foods mentioned by the Elder Cato in De Agri Cultura. Most of the foods that Cato’s ideal rural housekeeper should have on hand turn up in Martial’s menus, and, like Cato, Martial serves ham and scraps. Again Petronius provides a comical perversion of the principle. Trimalchio boasts: “I don’t buy my wine. It and everything else that makes your mouth water grow on an estate of mine that I haven’t seen yet but I’ve heard that it stretches from Tarentum to Tarracina” (48.2). The distance between these two places was one hundred and fifty miles. Trimalchio’s is thus not the traditional farm, nor are his the “unbought feasts” on which the elegant host prides himself.

The questions remain of how the separate items of Roman food function as signs and how, taken together, they constitute a system of signs. As for the first of these questions, we have already had the example of the chicken and the eggs. What is notable in this example is that neither Juvenal nor Martial nor the freedman in Petronius says anything about how these foods will be prepared. They speak only of chicken and eggs. Likewise, in the rest of Juvenal’s menu in Satire Eleven and in all the invitation poems, mostly the raw ingredients of the meal are mentioned and only slight indications are given of the prepared dishes. For example, in
one of his invitation poems, Martial mentions "common Cappadocian lettuce, fat leeks, tunny fish covered with sliced eggs, hot green cauliflower served on a black platter, sausage on white pulse (or porridge), pale beans and red bacon" (5.78.4-10) as comprising the first course. One could say that the colors of food are more important here than the dishes, which for the most part are left unspecified.

Roman foods function, then, as signs mainly in their unprepared state. Paradoxically, Roman cookery was devoted to the obliteration of the simple foodstuff, and thus the semiological system and the experience of dining part company. The Romans did not like the natural taste of foods, and even regarded some fresh foods as poisonous, for example, apples.\textsuperscript{15} Their reaction was either to alter the taste or to denature the food. Alteration of taste was achieved by sauces. The most recent translators of Apicius comment: "the cookery-book shows that the Romans abhorred the taste of any meat, fish, or vegetables in its pure form. There is hardly a single recipe which does not add sauce to the main ingredient, \textit{a sauce which changes the original taste radically}".\textsuperscript{16} The most prevalent sauce was \textit{garum}, the Roman catsup or Worcestershire sauce. It was made of the salted entrails of fish, and was produced in factories for worldwide distribution.\textsuperscript{17}

But the original taste of food was still further altered, indeed utterly lost, when the food was denatured and converted into something new. Fundanius could not recognize the taste of the fowl, oysters, and fish that he was served by Nasidienus.\textsuperscript{18} While Nasidienus’ chef was content to denature only the taste of the food, Trimalchio’s could make "a fish from a sow’s womb, a pigeon from bacon, a dove from ham, or a chicken from pig’s knuckles",\textsuperscript{19} and Martial knew a chef who could make a whole banquet out of gourds.\textsuperscript{20} The ideal is stated by Apicius at the end of his recipe for patina of
anchovy without anchovy (*patina de apua sine apua*): "When you serve it at table, no one will know what he is eating".  

This denaturing of food could render edible what to us is inedible. For this reason, it has been suggested, the Romans were able to enjoy sow’s udders, bellies and wombs, boar’s testicles, and certain unidentifiable glandules. But the best example of the inedible made edible is Cleopatra’s pearl. Macrobius tells the anecdote:

His wife Cleopatra bet him that she could spend ten million sesterces on a single dinner. Antony was astounded, and accepted the bet without hesitation. . . . On the next day, Cleopatra had a dinner prepared which was, to be sure, splendid but not one to excite the wonder of Antony, since he could see that everything was of the usual cost. Then with a smile the queen asked for a saucer, into which she poured some sharp vinegar. In this, she quickly submerged a pearl taken from one of her ears, and, when it soon dissolved, as is the nature of this stone, she swallowed it. And although by this deed she won the bet, since the pearl was easily worth ten million sesterces, she would nevertheless have reached for the pearl in her other ear if Munatius Plancus, a most stern judge, had not ruled that Antony was the loser.  

A bizarre example, but Cleopatra’s reduction of the pearl to mucus is in keeping with the main tendency of Roman cookery.

The original foodstuff must either be altered or denatured beyond recognition. Another, playful form of this tendency is demonstrated by Trimalchio, who is fond of hiding one food inside another—pastry eggs contain cooked birds, a roast hog contains sausage and blood pudding. Roman cookery thus expresses what Hegel understood as most fundamental in the Roman outlook: "Everything presents itself to the Romans as mysterious and double. They saw in the object first itself and then also that which lay hidden in it. Their whole history is caught in this double view". In the
double view of food, the simple foodstuff—the object itself—is the signifier with respect to moderation and elegance, while that which lies hidden in the food, for example, the poisonous juice of fresh apples—must be smothered, released, or somehow destroyed.

It might seem that under these conditions the semiological system of food could hardly be maintained. The signs would have insufficient integrity and would be too little in presence. This system did not function, however, in a completely independent fashion, i.e. solely in terms of foodstuffs. The system was elaborated and reinforced by several aspects of the dinner (*cena*), the setting in which the food was served and eaten. The utensils must be simple; so must the furniture. The slaves who serve the dinner are not to be expensive imports from Phrygia and Lycia who pluck their arm-pits but modest boys from the Roman countryside. The entertainment that accompanies or follows the dinner must also be moderate—the recitation of poetry or drama, music, or good conversation. There should be no dancing girls from Cadiz. Roman foods function as signs, then, within the larger context of the *cena*.

The final question about Roman food concerns the system of signs. How do the individual items of food constitute a system? As might be expected, the system is based on oppositions between items. There is in general an opposition between vegetables and meat. Horace invites his friend to a dinner consisting of nothing but vegetables served on a modest platter. Juvenal would have us believe that in the days of old Curius the Romans never ate meat except on the occasion of sacrifices and on birthdays, for which they saved a flitch of bacon. The basis of this opposition is probably cost. Vegetables were cheaper than meat, then as now. When we find one particular item contrasted with another, it is usually in terms of cost. Juvenal says: don’t long for a mullet when your purse can only afford a gudgeon
(gobio: 37), a cheaper fish. Pliny chides a friend for breaking a dinner engagement: “I had ready individual lettuces, three snails apiece, two eggs apiece, barley-water with sweetened wine and snow [which Romans used instead of ice]. . . . olives, beets, gourds, onions, and a thousand other things no less elegant. . . . But you preferred oysters, sows’ wombs and sea urchins at someone else’s house”. 32 Pliny’s menu consists almost entirely of vegetables. His friend prefers to dine on the more expensive sea food and sows’ wombs. 33

Another significant opposition is between grains and legumes, on the one hand, and meat and seafoods on the other. In the pauper’s menu already quoted from Martial, the opposition is implicit: the only meats are sausage and bacon; the sausage rests on porridge (Latin puls). The last-named dish is basically boiled grain and is what the Romans ate before they became acquainted with bread. It typifies the rough early Roman cuisine. Therefore, it can also be contrasted with bread and pastry. Juvenal says that he is not the sort of person who openly calls for puls and then whispers to his slave to bring cheesecake (58-9). As for legumes, again there is an implicit contrast in Martial between meat or sea-food and various cheap beans and peas. The pauper’s menu includes chick peas and lupine34 and “the working man’s bean”. 35

The various Roman sumptuary laws36 suggest that the opposition between meat and fish, on the one hand, and “whatever grows in the earth, on the vine, or on a tree”, on the other, is fundamental. It has been pointed out that these laws, as regards enforcement and economics, were quite impractical; 37 but they make sense as expressions of, and attempts to reinforce, the semiological system I have adumbrated. Furthermore, the response of Roman cookery was typical. Those who wished to observe the letter and evade the spirit of Caesar’s sumptuary law served only the permissible “things born of the earth”—mushrooms and greens—
but seasoned them in such a way, says Cicero, that nothing could have been more delicious. The result, however, for Cicero was severe diarrhea.\textsuperscript{38}

To sum up the Roman semiology of food, the signifying unit is the individual foodstuff regarded as unprepared; the units group themselves in oppositions based mainly on cost; and the system as a whole allows the host or the diner to show where he stands in relation to traditional Roman moderation and how stylish he is. Although the Romans went in for extremely complicated preparation of food, the semiology of their food seems to have been reinforced not by cookery but by the mode of service and by other circumstances of dining, especially the entertainment. The Roman dinner was for several centuries a remarkably stable institution and thus a stable basis for the semiological system I have sketched.

Turning now to the modern-day United States, I begin with the question of how separate items of food function as signs. It seems to me that, in this respect, American food is the opposite of ancient Roman. The unprepared item of food usually lacks any significance; it only gains significance in virtue of its preparation or application. What Barthes wrote of modern France is equally true of modern America: “There is perhaps no unprepared food item that signifies anything in itself, except for a few deluxe items such as salmon, caviar, truffles, and so on, whose preparation is less important than their absolute cost”.\textsuperscript{39} Take, for example, a piece of lettuce. It makes all the difference whether this lettuce appears in a tuna fish sandwich or in a salad or as the underliner of a molded aspic, Lettuce by itself means nothing. We cannot say, as Pliny could, “Come to my house and I’ll give you lettuce”. Since it is only the prepared or applied item of food that has significance, the same item can in principle occupy very different and even contradictory positions in the system constituted by American food. Thus the excellence of
the foodstuff is its adaptability to the widest variety of uses. Hillcrest Foods, Inc. of Somerville, Massachusetts prints this notice on the wrapping-plastic of its boneless chicken breasts: “Carefully selected for gourmet and ‘fast and easy’ menu planning, including cutlets, Chicken Kiev, stuffed breasts, hors d’oeuvres, ethnic meals and other exciting dishes”.

The American system is of course far more complex than the Roman. Whereas the Roman system was based on two fundamental oppositions, which were so pervasive that one of them was honored, willy nilly, even by the degenerate freedman in Petronius, the American system consists of several oppositions. Furthermore, these oppositions can be divided into two kinds: in some of the oppositions food expresses a static relation of the consumer to a class, a style, an outlook or the like; in other oppositions, food expresses a dynamic or kinetic relation to the world.

There are five oppositions that express static relations, and in all of them what I call “standard American” food is opposed to some other kind of food. By “standard American” I mean the typical trans-American menu. It has already been defined by the market research for the food that is sold cost to coast. The TV dinner is a convenient example. Its bland, minimally enhanced meat or poultry, potatotes and vegetables are standard American. A large percentage of everything sold in supermarkets is also standard American—the canned goods, the frozen vegetables, the ready-to-serve mashed potatoes, the instant rice, the ready-mix cakes and cookies, the spray cans of “non-dairy” whipped cream. The semiological system of American food consists, in the first place, of five oppositions involving standard American.

The first is standard American as opposed to foreign or ethnic food with the exception of French cuisine. French cuisine occupies a special place in the system because it is considered the best, the highest cuisine.
But American standard can be opposed to the many other foreign and ethnic foods—Chinese, Italian, Greek and the rest.

The second opposition is between standard American and French haute cuisine, which now includes nouvelle cuisine. Nouvelle cuisine is in some ways radically unlike traditional haute cuisine, but, from the present perspective, it can be grouped with its French parent. In this second opposition, all other foreign and ethnic foods can be grouped with standard American. French cuisine is the noble opposite of all of them.

The third opposition is between standard American and "health" food or "natural" food. "Health" food is raw and unprepared or at least relatively unprepared. Wheat, for example, is ground by stone and not by harsher and more destructive steel. Health food is also, at least in principle, organically grown, that is, without chemical fertilizers.

The fourth opposition is between standard American and regional American. Many regional foods are almost proverbial for their places of origin—Vermont maple syrup, Florida key lime pie, the Mexican-American foods of the Southwest, and so forth.

The fifth and final static opposition is between standard American and ceremonial food. Certain foods are traditionally eaten mainly on national and religious holidays. Thanksgiving turkey is a good example. Many Americans always eat turkey on Thanksgiving Day, rarely at other times of the year. If, to save money, they now eat it more often, they eat it with cranberry sauce only on Thanksgiving Day, so that the cranberry sauce is the ceremonial food.

I call these five oppositions static for the reason that, through them, food expresses an allegiance, even if it is only an occasional or temporary allegiance, to an order of things, a style, an outlook that is felt to be unchanging. But the semiological system of American food also incorporates a second kind of opposition, dynamic or
kinetic, in which food shows not what the consumer feels to be the divisions of the world but how the consumer is acting in the world, how he conquers it or defends himself against it, how he relaxes in the midst of his exertions, or how he seeks recreation in play. There are four of these oppositions.

The first opposition is between junk food and serious food. Junk food is quick, easy, playful, and, in general, not serious. The opposite of junk food is serious food, which is of two sorts, the nutritiously serious, which builds health, and the artistically serious, which takes time and effort to prepare. Junk food is probably also cheaper, serious food more expensive. I observe in passing that, once the opposition is stated in these terms, it becomes clear why it is impossible to make a list of junk foods. Junk food is whatever the individual consumer happens to find quick, easy, and playful, and therefore there will be few universal junk foods. Perhaps only potato chips and candy bars could claim universal recognition as junk foods.

The second opposition is between freedom and constraint. Food expresses two sorts of constraint. One is the constraint imposed upon himself by the dieter, who must eat less food and must eat non-fattening food. There are of course other specialized diets, for example salt-free or sugar-free, prescribed for particular disorders. The second sort of constraint is based on the sense that much American food is not just unhelpful or neutral from the point of view of nutrition but downright harmful. There are cholesterol, carcinogens, unpredictable hormones, pesticides such as DDT, nitrates, BHT, PCB’s, and deadly artificial colorings. Food may thus express a defensive stance, as the consumer tries to avoid everything that may be harmful. Jane Brody, in her column, “Personal Health”, in The New York Times, wrote about the hazards of “hidden fat” in foods, and advised: “If the product has nutrition information listed on the label, multiply the number of grams...
of fat in a serving by nine, then divide this total by the number of calories per serving. If you then multiply by 100, this will give you the percent of fat calories in the product.”

The third opposition is between activity and exertion, on the one hand, and relaxation on the other. Certain items of food express an aggressive stance toward the world. High-energy foods show that you are bent on conquest or some form of self-manifestation. Other foods signify relaxation, for example, ice-cream.

The opposition between masculine and feminine foods can be considered a sub-category of the third opposition. The male traditionally received the “lion’s share”, but times have changed. Pearl G. Aldrich, quoted in Ms., says: “It really bugs me to be relentlessly served sauce-covered ‘feminine’ food and sweet drinks while the ‘masculine’ steak, roast chicken, or broiled fish is place before the man regardless of who orders what”. Since women now engage in the same activities as men, they justly demand the same food as men. But from the scientific point of view, the difference between female and male dietary requirements means that women must have special food to enable them to compete with men. Thus Kellogg’s Smart Start is introduced as a “high-iron cereal specially designed for women”, for the reason that “eating smart is different for a woman than it is for a man”.

The fourth opposition is between conviviality and solitude. A roast of beef, a pot of stew, a large bowl of salad—these all signify that company is expected. The sandwich, on the other hand, is a food of solitude.

These, then, are the dynamic or kinetic oppositions of the American system. There is undoubtedly at least one other set of oppositions that functions conjointly with either or both of the first two. These are such oppositions as sweet/salt, sweet/dry, sweet/crisp, soft/crunchy, smooth/coarse, light/heavy, bland or unseasoned/hot or seasoned, fried/baked and the like.
But enough of the semiological system of American food has already been exposed to permit some comparisons with the Roman system. The Roman is, first of all, much simpler, and food always had an ethical significance. Although the Roman may denature his food, he cannot destroy this ethical significance. The American is also prone to denature food, but it is the denatured form that carries all the significance. Food is in the first instance nothing but raw material. The American system consists, then, of a great many signifiers, the Roman of only a few.

Within the vast complexity of the American system, one and the same foodstuff, like Hillcrest Foods’ boneless chicken breasts, may turn up anywhere, depending upon its preparation. The individual is therefore, unlike the Roman with whom Pliny dined or the freedman in Petronius, unconstrained by the system; he manipulates it almost at will as a means of self-expression. Even highly standardized, widely distributed foods can be made to serve this end. They can, for example, be brought into unique combinations. Pat Nixon’s Continental Salad consisted of canned beets, canned grapefruit juice, and Jell-O. Individuality of self-expression is further refined by the third set of oppositions just mentioned (sweet/salty, etc.), even to the point of solipsism. Ruth Reichl, writing in Ms., says of eating a potato chip: “The resonance goes directly into the bones of the inner ear, where it becomes a very private little explosion of sound. Crunch is the perfect sound for the ‘Me’ decade”.

To the extent that the individual American foodstuff, the signifier, becomes less important than what is signified, food can be abstracted even from eating and becomes attitude, gesture, situation, activity. As an American, I no longer eat food; I pursue my diet, or I fulfill my need for energy and strength in order to accomplish my goal—and here food alone would be insufficient and I would need vitamin and mineral supple-
ments in the form of pills—or I adopt vegetarianism, which shows my solidarity with a religious or political outlook. The possibilities of exploiting food as a form of activity are coextensive with the vagaries of individuality.

To conclude, the comparison of ancient Roman and modern American decadence is, of course, a common one, and Roman decadence is, in the popular mind, especially associated with the extravagant luxury of Roman dining. It is certain that the Romans did go to extremes in this as in other areas. But we should remember that the gastronomic luxury of the Romans was not a floundering, uncontrolled decadence. Food remained for the Romans an ever-present sign of one’s relation to traditional Roman morality and an index of one’s refinement. For us, on the other hand, although food is still a semiotic system, this system is so complex, its signifiers, i.e. food itself, so debased, that it usually communicates in slang, argot, mumbo-jumbo, or cacophony.48

Boston College

Notes

3Quaest, conv. 7.712A. Cited by Sherwin-White on Pliny loc. cit.
6Reading Cholodniak’s disparpallavit. See Smith, p. 121.
9Scriptores Historiae Augustae *Did. Iul.* 3.8.
10Pliny *Ep.* 2.8.
11Hor. *Sat.* 2.2.120.
12Mart. 5.78.7-8, 10.48.7-8.
15Juv. 11.75-6.
18Hor. *Sat.* 2.8.27-30.
19Petr. 70.2
20Mart. 11.31.
21Apic. 4.12.2.
22Marquardt-Mau, *op. cit.* (n. 17), Part 1, p. 329.
24Petr. 33.49.
27Juv. 11.147-61.
28Hor. *Epist.* 1.5.11; Mart. 5.78.25-8, 10.48.21-4, 11.52.16-18; Juv. 11.162-82; Pliny *Ep.* 1.15, 3.12.
30*Epist.* 1.5.2: nec modica cenare times holus omne patella.
31Juv. 11.83-5.
32Pliny *Ep.* 1.15.2-3.
33Wombs were even more expensive than udders: Jacques André, *L’Alimentation et la cuisine à Rome* (Paris 1961), p. 141.
36 Surveys of these laws in Aulus Gellius Noctes Atticae 2.24 and Macrobius Sat. 3.17.
37 Balsdon, op. cit. (n. 8 above), p. 39.
38 Cic. ad Fam. 7.26.2.
41 Ms., Feb. 1980, p. 44.
42 Woman's Day, June 10, 1980, p. 29.
43 On this opposition, see Barthes, op. cit. (n. 1 above), pp. 169-70.
47 Barthes, op. cit. (n. 1 above), pp. 172-3.
48 An earlier version of this paper was read at the 1980 Meeting of the International Society for the Comparative Study of Civilizations, Syracuse University, May 24, 1980, Colloquium XXV (Food Drink, and Table Manners). I am grateful to Edmund Leites, the chairman of this colloquium, to my fellow-speaker, William E. Naff, to K. Kaori Kitao and others for useful comments.