

Roman Wolves, Worries, and Wasting Disease

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1. Ovid *Fasti* 2.413-414
*venit ad expositos, mirum, lupa feta gemellos:
quis credat pueris non nocuisse feram?*
2. Suetonius *De Poet.* (Virg.)
*Cum Georgica scriberet, traditur cotidie meditato
mane plurimos versus dictare solitus ac per totum
diem retractando ad paucissimos redigere, non
absurde carmen se more ursae parere dicens et
lambendo demum effingere.*
(Cf. Quint. *Inst.* 2.4.5-6; Soranus *Gyn.* 2.12, 2.15;
Plut. *Mor.* 288c; 685e)
3. Plutarch *Quaest. Rom.* 102
ἔβδομαῖος γὰρ ἀπολύεται τοῖς πλείστοις: ἕως
δ' ἀπολυθῆ, φυτῶ μᾶλλον ἢ ζῳῶ προσέοικε
τὸ νήπιον.
4. Horace *Ars Poetica* 340
neu pransae Lamiae vivum puerum extrahat alvo
5. Ovid *Fast.* 6.137-140
*carpere dicuntur lactentia viscera rostris
et plenum poto sanguine guttur habent.
est illis strigibus nomen...*
6. Envy and its associations
Plut. *Mor.* 681e πεφαρμαγμένα βέλη
7. Abel 1881: 188-190, #34
*Lapis Galactites: ...amplius etiam adversus invidiam
et fascinum resistit; qui eum portat, numquam
fascinabitur....sed infantibus pueris aptus congruit,
et non permittit eos macerari, si quando intimidaverit
si quando intimidaverit eos horrida mulier.*
8. Effects of milk:
Milk as the most nourishing food: Varro *Rust.* 2.11.1
Milk as antidotes to poisons: Plin. *HN* 28.158-162
Milk for firming erections: Plin. *HN* 26.96
9. Hor. *Sat.* 1.8.1, 1.8.46-47
*olim truncus eram ficulnus, inutile lignum...
nam displosa sonat quantum vesica, papedi
diffissa nate ficus; at illae currere in urbem.*
10. Porphyrio *ap.* Hor. *Epod.* 8.18
*fascinum pro virile parte posuit, quoniam
prae fascinanandis rebus haec membri difformitas
aponi solet...*
(cf. Varro *LL* 7.97; Plut. *Mor.* 681F; Aug *Civ. D.* 6.9)
11. Mangling ways of wolves: e.g. Ov. *Ibis* 150; Livy 27.37.3, 32.29.2; Petr. 62

A wolf who had recently whelped happened upon the exposed twins: / who would believe that the wild animal did not harm the boys?

When he was writing the *Georgics*, he is said to have had the habit of recording the many verses he'd thought of in the morning and spending the rest of the day editing them down to just a few, saying quite aptly that he was licking his poem into shape in the manner of a she-bear [her cub].

[The umbilical cord] usually falls off on the seventh day; until it's gone, the newborn resembles a plant more than it does an animal.

don't pull a live boy out of the belly of a Lamia who has had lunch

They are said to tear at the guts of infants with their beaks, and fill their throats with blood. They are called "screech-owls"...

Verg. *Ecl.* 1.11 *Non equidem invideo; miror magis...*

"Galactite": it's even more resistant to envy and the evil eye; the one who carries it will never fall prey... It is particularly good for baby boys, and it does not allow them to waste away if ever the "horrible woman" threatens them.

Contrast with wine: Plut. *Quaest. Rom.* 57 (cf. Varro *Rust.* 2.11.5)
Fig "milk" as rennet: Varro *Rust.* 2.11.4

Once I was a fig stump, useless wood...
I farted with a sound like a burst bladder, a fig tree with split butt cheeks; they ran city-ward.

He writes "fascinum" to mean the male member, since the deformity of this body part is normally placed next to things which might arouse envy.

12. Prophylactic and medical uses of wolf parts
 Wolves' teeth: Plin. *HN* 28.257; cf. Abel 1881: 178 #18
 Wolf fat on door posts *ne quid mali medicamenti inferretur*, Plin. *HN* 28.142
 Wolf muzzles on gates *veneficiis...resistere*, Plin. *HN* 28.257
 Wolf flesh for parturient mother so useful *ut etiam contra inlatas noxias valeat*, Plin. *HN* 28.247-248

13. Columella *Agr.* 7.12.5
satis est severos esse nec blandos, ut nonnumquam etiam conservos iratius intueantur, semper excandescant in externos...
 cf. 7.12.13

It is enough that they be grim and not fawning, such that sometimes they even look upon their fellow dogs with some hostility, and always blaze up against outsiders...

14. Envious Telchines protect Zeus:
 See Diod. *Sic.* 5.55-56; Strabo 10.3.7, 11, 19; 14.2.7

Fathers cast evil eye on own children: Plut. *Mor.* 682a-f
 Metal workers and *fascinum*: Pollux 7.108

15. 4th C CE, Isurium Brigantum, Aldborough



https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/a/a2/Mosaic_depicting_the_She-wolf_with_Romulus_and_Remus%2C_from_Aldborough%2C_about_300-400_AD%2C_Leeds_City_Museum_%2816025914306%29.jpg

16. "Hercules" didrachm 265 BCE



http://www.dartmouth.edu/~art2artifact/gilsdorf/img/sym04_lg.png

17. Ovid *Fasti* 2.418
figit lingua corpora bina sua
 cf. Verg. *Aen.* 8.634, Sil. Ital. *Pun.* 5.144

She shapes the twin bodies with her tongue...

18. Spitting at an infant: e.g., Plin. *HN* 28.39
 Coating newborn in noxious liquids: Soranus *Gyn.* 2.12-13

19. [Plin.] *De Medicina* 3.33
Antidotum contra venena. Antidotum Mithridaticum laudant medici eiusdemque compositiones diversas afferunt...

Antidote for poison. Doctors praise Mithridates' antidote and report different mixtures of it...

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