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## A NOTE ON JUVENAL 11,156: *PVPILLARES TESTICVLI*

RAMÓN GUTIÉRREZ GONZÁLEZ

In the eleventh satire Juvenal describes to his friend Persicus what the young and unfashionable slave, who is a serving-boy at the dinner that the poet is going to offer to his friend, does *not* do:

*nec pupillares defert in balnea raucus  
testiculos, nec vellendas iam praebuit alas,  
crassa nec opposito pavidus tegit inguina guto* (11,156–8).

The main exegetical problem of this three verses is the meaning of the adjective *pupillaris* as it is applied to the *testiculi* (or, more correctly, what is implied by this *iunctura*). *Pupillaris*, as derived from *pupillus*, should mean 'related to a ward'. Readers in late Antiquity (as presupposed by the explanation of the Scholiast, see below) understood *pupillaris* as a synonym of *puerilis*, 'childish'. But it is not easy to see how these 'childish testicles' can be present in a *raucus* boy<sup>1</sup> whose *alae* are in need of depilation and who, ashamed in the baths, tries to cover, with the help of a flask, his *crassa inguina*.

Juvenal's Scholiast tried to find a solution for this contradiction, looking for a characteristic of the *pupilli*, which could distinguish them from the common *pueri* in the field of the sexual behavior. He writes:

*NE<C> PVPILLARES: id est, quales habent hi, qui patres non habent, scilicet tumentes in licentia pueritiae* (Schol. Juv. 11,156, p. 191 Wessner).

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<sup>1</sup> That is, a boy whose voice has broken. Here *raucus* has nothing to do with castration, *pace* G. Viansino (Decimo Giunio Giovenale, *Satire*, Milano, 1990, p. 438), nor in the passages which he quotes as parallels: Apul. *met.* 8,26,2 *fracta e<t> rauca et effeminata voce clamores absonos intollunt* (sc. cinaedi) and Iuv. 6,515 *cui rauca cohors, cui tympana cedunt*, where *raucus* means 'rough, noisy'.

This interpretation is endorsed by E. Courtney, who quotes the following passage of Seneca's *De ira* in order to support the explanation of the Scholiast: *pupillisque quo plus licet, corruptior animus est* (*Dial.* 4,21,6).<sup>2</sup>

Nor was the expression *pupillares testiculi* clear to the scribes of the Middle Ages. Some of them tried to emend the passage by writing *pugillaris*, a reading introduced by the second hand of the manuscripts *P* (Montepessulanus Pithoeanus Bibl. Med. H 125, ninth or tenth Century) and *U* (Vaticanus Urbinas 661, eleventh Century), and which later penetrated in the vulgate of the text of Juvenal, tempting also some scholars (e.g., Labriolle and Villeneuve).<sup>3</sup> This reading, nevertheless, can be rejected for stemmatical and metrical reasons: if *pūgillaris* (the required scansion for Juv. 11,156) is a derivation from *pūgillus*, the first syllable should be short.<sup>4</sup> In any case, it is clear that the scribe who conjectured this reading took his cue from *crassa inguina* of v. 157, and intended to convey that the testicles of the slave-boy were as big as a fist, or that they could fill a fist.<sup>5</sup>

Bücheler gave a very different explanation to *pupillaris*, asserting that it implies that the master of the slave-boy took care of the testicles as a jealous tutor does his ward, that is, he did not allow them to grow, in order to maintain the youth's boyishness.<sup>6</sup> More radical still was Weidner, who quoted Juv.

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<sup>2</sup> E. Courtney, *A commentary on the Satires of Juvenal*, London, 1980, p. 509. A similar interpretation was held by former editors and commentators of Juvenal, for instance J. E. B. Mayor (*Thirteen Satires of Juvenal* [London, 1900], II, p. 209), who quotes too the following words of Salvian (*Gub.* 6,52): *cumque etiam pupillis prodigis soleat subvenire paupertas, simulque ut destiterint esse divites, desinant quoque esse vitiosi, nos tantum novum genus pupillorum ac perditorum sumus, in quibus opulentia esse desiit, sed nequitia perdurat.*

<sup>3</sup> P. de Labriolle – F. Villeneuve, *Juvenal. Satires*, Paris, Les Belles Lettres, 1931<sup>2</sup>, p. 146.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. L. Friedländer, *D. Junii Juvenalis saturarum libri V, mit erklärenden Anmerkungen*, Leipzig, 1895, p. 505.

<sup>5</sup> That was the traditional explanation of the old lexicographers, who only knew the reading of the vulgate for Juv. 6.156: cf., e.g., E. Forcellini, *Lexicon totius Latinitatis*, Padova, 1771, III, p. 611 s.v. 'pugillares' *in fine*: "Juvenal. Sat. 11 v. 156: *Nec pugillares defert in balnea raucus testiculos*, h. e., grandiores et pugnum implentes". A similar explanation is to be found in Facciolati, *Septem linguarum Calepinus*, Padova, 1731, II, p. 235 s.v. 'pugillaris'.

<sup>6</sup> Bücheler *apud* L. Friedländer, *ibid.*: "*pupillares*: wie Mündel behandelte, vom Herrn unter Tutel gehaltene' (d. h. *circumscripti*), die man klein gehalten und nicht hat wachsen lassen (in Gegensatz zu 6, 372), um die Mannbarkeit hinzuhalten, welche durch die *pili* 157 u. s. w. der *formosus puer* verdibt, ein anderes Raffinement, als *crassa inguina* 158 andeuten, jenes eine für eine Dame, dies für einen Herrn wie in S. 9 passendere Badebegleitung", and then he quotes Galenus (XII p. 206 K.), who asserts that the *cos Nauxia* is able to stop the growth of the testicles.

6,371–3 in order to argue for castration.<sup>7</sup> But what does this sort of mutilation have to do with wards?

The clue to understanding this passage is to take *pupillaris* as *iocose dictum*, as a funny pun of the satirist; that is, to maintain the oxymoron, not to destroy it with explanations more or less *ad hoc*. Such a solution also offers a more satisfying exegesis from the literary point of view, enriching the text with an amusing legal reference. Who were the *pupilli*? This question is answered by the *Institutions* of Gaius, dealing with a well known controversy between two schools of lawyers, the Sabiniani and the Proculiani, who held different opinions about determining the end of tuition. Gaius writes:

*masculi autem cum puberes esse coeperint tutela liberantur. Puberem autem Sabinus quidem et Cassius ceterique nostri praeceptores eum esse putant, qui habitu corporis pubertatem ostendit, id est eum qui generare potest; sed in his qui pubescere non possunt, quales sunt spadones, eam aetatem esse spectandam, cuius aetatis puberes fiunt; sed diversae scholae auctores annis putant pubertatem aestimandam, id est eum puberem esse aestimant, qui XIV annos explevit. (Inst. 1,196).<sup>8</sup>*

(The first school mentioned by Gaius was the one of the Sabiniani; the latter, the one of the Proculiani.) For the Romans, as we can see, the chief means of the liberation from tuition was not the age, but the physical development of the ward, the *habitus corporis* (that is, the reproductive maturity), which, of course, implied the presence of the pubic hair. Consequently, *pupillaris testiculi* in the neighborhood of *raucus*, *vellendae alae*, and *crassa inguina* can only refer to the fact that the testicles have been d e p i l a t e d . I therefore translate:

"already with a broken voice, he does not bring to the baths the testicles of a ward, nor does he offer armpits that need to be plucked, nor does he fearfully cover his thick groin with a flask".

This explanation is quite simple, and the joke would have been clear enough to ancient, if not to modern, readers.

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<sup>7</sup> A. Weidner, *D. Junii Juvenalis Saturae*, erklärt von A. W., Leipzig 1873, p. 249: "vielmehr ist an die Aufsicht und Pflege zu denken, welche 6,371 angedeutet ist" (Juv. 6,371–3 *ergo expectatos ac iussos crescere primum / testiculos, postquam coeperunt esse bilibres, / tonsoris tantum damno rapit Heliodorus*).

<sup>8</sup> Cf. Ulp. *Reg.* 11,28. *Fest.* p. 296 L. s. v. 'pubes'.

### Appendix: an emendation to Löfstedt's *Commentum Bernense*.

A medieval commentary present in two swiss manuscripts (Bern, Burger-Bibliothek A 61 and 666), published by B. Löfstedt (*Vier Juvenal-Kommentare aus dem 12. Jh.*, Amsterdam, 1995, p. 369–489) contains the following scholion to our passage (p. 447):

*NEC PVGILLARES: Raucitatem tantum removet hic, id est quibus pugnus potest impleri, quasi diceret: non sunt mulierum stupratores.*

There is something odd in this text. I think that we might have here two glosses, one for the whole v. 156 (*raucitatem tantum removet hic*), in which the scholiast points out that the negation *nec* affects only the adjective *raucus*; and a second one (*id est – stupratores*), in which he explains the meaning of *pugillares*. The Scholiast seems to state, in contrast to the former interpretation of this adjective, that the testicles are so little that *both* can fill a fist; that is, that the slave-boy has not reached sexual maturity (cf. *non sunt mulierum stupratores*). Therefore print:

*NEC PVGILLARES <— RAVCVS>: Raucitatem tantum removet hic.  
<PVGILLARES> id est quibus pugnus potest impleri, quasi diceret: non sunt mulierum stupratores.*

*Thesaurus Linguae Latinae – Munich*