

A CRUX IN JUVENAL (6.195)*

ABSTRACT

This article deals with a well-known crux in Juvenal (6.195). Previous conjectures are discussed before a new emendation is proposed.

Keywords: Juvenal; textual criticism; conjectures; Latin hexameter poetry; satire; intertextuality

Hoc sermone pauent, hoc iram, gaudia, curas,
hoc cuncta effundunt animi secreta. quid ultra?
concumbunt Graece. dones tamen ista puellis,
tunc etiam, quam sextus et octogensimus annus
pulsat, adhuc Graece? non est hic sermo pudicus
in uetula. quotiens lascium interuenit illud
ζῶῃ καὶ ψυχῇ, modo sub lodice **relictis**
uteris in turba. quod enim non excitet inguen
uox blanda et nequam? digitos habet. ut tamen omnes
subsident pinnae, dicas haec mollius Haemo
quamquam et Carphophoro, facies tua computat annos. (Iuv. 6.189–99)

Juvenal mocks women, especially older women, who think that speaking Greek makes them more attractive; therefore, they use Greek terms of endearment. I have given the text according to Clausen's OCT of Persius and Juvenal.¹ At line 195 the reading *relictis*, transmitted by the manuscripts, is barely tolerable. If, as most scholars do,² we interpret *modo sub lodice relictis* to mean 'things lately left beneath the blanket', the phrase *modo . . . in turba* is nonsensical, because, as Housman saw, saying 'you use in public things lately left beneath the blanket' is no more logical than saying 'you play on the playground with the ball lately left at home'.³ Housman proposed *ferendis* ('you use in public things [*sc.* words] that are only endurable beneath the blanket'), a conjecture that he regarded as certain⁴ and placed in the text. With this conjecture *modo* means 'only', not 'lately', and the *uetula*, who is about to turn eighty-six, 'propterea inducitur quia iam nec Graece concumbit nec Latine, ut eius in ore impudica uideantur uocabula quae puellis

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¹ W.V. Clausen (ed.), *A. Persi Flacci et D. Iunii Iuuenalis Saturae* (Oxford, 1959 [1992²]).

² See most recently two Italian translations, B. Santorelli (ed.), *Giovenale: Satire* (Milan, 2011), 79: 'usi in pubblico parole appena lasciate sotto le lenzuola', and G. Dimatteo (ed.), *Giovenale: Satire* (Santarcangelo di Romagna, 2023), 117: 'usi, in mezzo alla gente, parole appena lasciate sotto le lenzuola.' See also the still valuable commentary by L. Friedländer (ed.), *D. Iunii Iuuenalis Saturarum libri V* (Berlin, 1895), 305–6: 'so oft solche griechische Ausdrücke in deiner Rede vorkommen, brauchst du Worte, die du vor Kurzem (beim Aufstehen von einer Schäferstunde) unter der Bettdecke (wo allein sie zulässig sind) zurückgelassen hast, unter Leuten.'

³ Cf. A.E. Housman (ed.), *D. Iunii Iuuenalis Saturae* (London, 1905 [1931²]), 43, who remarks that 'uerba lasciuia, quibus quis in turba utitur, ea sub lodice relictia non sunt, sed in medium elata.'

⁴ Housman (n. 3), xxx.

ueneri habilibus forsitan condonari possint'.⁵ Housman compared Mart. 10.68.5–8 κύριέ μου, μέλι μου, ψυχή μου *congeris usque*, | *pro pudor! Hersiliae ciuis et Egeriae*. | *lectulus has uoces, nec lectulus audiat omnis*, | *sed quem lasciuo strauit amica uiro*.⁶

Three objections may be levelled at Housman's conjecture:

1. As pointed out by Watt and Delz,⁷ if we set 6.195 aside, *modo* means *nuper* in seventeen of the other eighteen passages in which it occurs in Juvenal; Juvenal's only instance of this word in the sense of *solum* is at 2.135 *liceat modo uiuere*, in which *modo* is postpositive, as is normal in Latin when it is used as an exclusive particle.⁸
2. Despite the ingenuity displayed by Housman in his attempt to explain the alleged corruption of *ferendis* to *relictis* (*ferendis* turns into *ferelictis*, because *n* is taken for *li* and *d* for *ct*; *ferelictis* is then miscorrected to *relictis*), his palaeographical justification is unconvincing. As Watt rightly remarked,⁹ a more plausible emendation of *relictis* would be not a gerundive but another perfect participle.
3. If we accept *ferendis*, Juvenal's text sounds strangely indulgent towards the lascivious habit of using Greek for erotic endearments,¹⁰ a habit that was associated with prostitutes (cf. Mart. 10.68). True, at line 191 Juvenal writes *dones ... ista puellis* ('you may allow such things in young girls', that is, 'one might perhaps forgive the fact that young girls use Greek on every occasion, *concubitus* included'), but the premise from which he starts is that Hellenomaniac *matronae* are unbearable and nauseating, regardless of their age (184–7 *quaedam parua quidem, sed non toleranda maritis*. | *nam quid rancidius quam quod se non putat ulla* | *formosam nisi quae de Tusca Graecula facta est*, | *de Sulmonensi mera Cecropis?*). It is therefore clear, in my opinion, that, when Juvenal says *dones ... ista puellis*,¹¹ he is not making any concession to a habit he considers intolerable but is merely employing a rhetorical trick to emphasize that elderly women who affect titillating Grecisms are more insufferable than young girls who behave in the same way. The context gives no hint that Juvenal regarded Greek terms of endearment as 'things which are tolerable under the blanket' (*sub lodice ferenda*).

⁵ Housman (n. 3), 43.

⁶ Housman's diagnosis is approved by E. Courtney, *A Commentary on the Satires of Juvenal* (London, 1980 [Berkeley, 2013²]), note ad loc. ('*relictis* is clearly corrupt, as Housman saw. Lascivious words used *in turba* are not "left under the blanket"; they are inexcusably *impudica* because they come from an octogenarian who is past intercourse either in Greek or Latin; and *anim* 196 is senseless as the text stands. *Ferendis* does not carry full conviction but is certainly on the right lines. *Modo* will now mean "only", not "lately"'). Housman's conjecture is accepted by Lorenz in his recent Tusculum edition of Juvenal (S. Lorenz [ed.], *Juvenal: Satiren/Saturae* [Berlin and Boston, 2017]).

⁷ Cf. W.S. Watt, 'Notes on Juvenal', *Eikasmos* 7 (1996), 283–9, at 284–5; J. Delz, 'Bemerkungen zu Juvenal', *MH* 55 (1998), 120–7, at 123–4.

⁸ Cf. TLL 8.1298.3–4 s.v. *modus*; H. Pinkster, *The Oxford Latin Syntax: Volume 2: The Complex Sentence and Discourse* (Oxford, 2021), 875.

⁹ Cf. W.S. Watt, 'Notes on Juvenal', *Hermes* 130 (2002), 299–305, at 300.

¹⁰ The point is made by F. Bellandi (ed.), *Giovenale: Contro le donne (Satira VI)* (Venice, 1995), who in his note ad loc. (133) observes: 'Housman propose *ferendis* (che introdurrebbe opportunamente il tipico tema giovenaliano dell'"intollerabilità" del vizio, cf. 184), ma in questo caso, dando a *modo* il senso di *tantum* ("soltanto"), si avrebbe un satirico stranamente indulgente con questi costumi lussuriosi che ammetterebbe, sia pure a denti stretti, per l'intimità.'

¹¹ In the light of line 184 (*maritis*), here *puellis* can only mean 'young brides' (cf. TLL 10.2.2508.50–69 s.v. *puella*). It is unclear whether the person addressed in *dones* (191) is the *ueterula* or Postumus (the addressee of the sixth satire) or the reader. The resolution of this issue would be irrelevant for our purposes.

The same three objections may be raised to Nisbet's *loquendis* ('you use in public expressions that should be spoken only under the blanket'),¹² the second and the third to Watt's *pudendis* ('you use in public words which but lately were considered shameful in private'),¹³ the first and the third to Delz's *receptis* ('you use in public words which are only admissible under the blanket').¹⁴

These unsuccessful attempts at emendation were all based on Housman's assumption that *modo sub lodice relictis* | *uteris in turba* can only mean 'you use in public things lately left beneath the blanket'. However, another, more promising, interpretation seems possible: 'you use in public things that you have lately stopped employing beneath the blanket', that is, 'you use in public Greek terms of endearment that you have recently ceased to employ in the bedroom'.¹⁵ The next two sentences (196–9 *quod enim ... computat annos*) would explain why the *uetula* has stopped using Greek locutions such as ζῶν καὶ ψυχῇ under the covers: she is too old and no longer has sexual partners to talk to there. With *relictis* thus interpreted, the passage has nearly the sense that, according to Housman, is required by the context; one detail, however, is incongruous. If the *uetula* who is about to turn eighty-six has stopped using Greek endearments *sub lodice* because of old age, she should have done so not 'lately' (*modo*) but a long time ago. An ironic use of *modo*, which in other contexts cannot be ruled out,¹⁶ in this passage would be as inappropriate as an ironic use of 'recently' in a sentence such as 'you, a sixty-year-old lady, have recently finished high school and use teenage slang'. Of course, there could be an ironic aspect in saying that only 'recently' the *uetula* has achieved the understanding that titillating Grecisms are not appropriate *sub lodice*. But this explanation of *modo sub lodice relictis* would create more difficulties than it would solve: with the transmitted text so interpreted, the behaviour of the *uetula* would in fact be inconsistent (an old woman who has realized that Greek endearments are inappropriate under the blanket should a fortiori perceive that they are even less appropriate when used in public), and such inconsistency would not make satirical sense in Juvenal's context; on the contrary, it would weaken the force of the vituperation, because Juvenal would be implicitly saying that the silly *uetula* has 'recently' come to her senses, albeit partially. Emendation is therefore necessary. Leo, who understood the passage as meaning 'uetula Graece loquens amatoria inserit ut alliciat uiros, deserta scilicet', proposed the substitution of *mihi* for *modo*.¹⁷ The conjecture is palaeographically neat (*m*ⁱ, the ancient *nota* for *mihi*, can easily

¹² R.G.M. Nisbet, 'Notes on the text and interpretation of Juvenal', in N.M. Horsfall (ed.), *Vir bonus discendi peritus: Essays in Honour of Otto Skutsch* (London, 1988), 86–110, at 96–7 (= R.G.M. Nisbet, *Collected Papers on Latin Literature* [Oxford, 1995], 227–60, at 241–2, 433–4). Nisbet prefers his own *loquendis* to Housman's *ferendis* because 'as *loquendis* suggests words more specifically than Housman's *ferendis* ... it combines more easily with *uteris* (*uerbis uti* is a common locution)'. *loquendis* was placed in the text by Willis in his Teubner edition of Juvenal (J. Willis [ed.], *D. Iunii Iuvenalis Saturae sedecim* [Stuttgart and Leipzig, 1997]) and by Morton Braund in her Loeb of Juvenal and Persius (S. Morton Braund [ed.], *Juvenal and Persius* [Cambridge, MA and London, 2004]); it is also accepted by L. Watson and P. Watson (edd.), *Juvenal: Satire 6* (Cambridge, 2014), 64 and 136.

¹³ Watt (n. 7), 284–5. Both *pudendis* and Nisbet's *loquendis* are more radical alterations of the transmitted *relictis* than Housman's *ferendis*.

¹⁴ Delz *apud* Watt (n. 9), 300.

¹⁵ *relictis* would have here the same sense as in the lemma of Gell. *NA* 11.7 *uerbis antiquissimis relictisque iam et desitis minime utendum*. Cf. *TLL* 11.2.950.44–68 s.v. *relinquo*.

¹⁶ See, for instance, the ironic sense of *tam cito* in Mart. 9.29.1–2 *saecula Nestoreae permensa, Philaeni, senectae* | *rapta es ad infernas tam cito Ditis aquas*?

¹⁷ O. Jahn, F. Bücheler and F. Leo (edd.), *A. Persii Flacci, D. Iunii Iuvenalis, Sulpiciae Saturae* (Berlin, 1910⁴), 135. Leo's conjecture was derided, but not refuted with philological arguments, by Housman (n. 3) in the Preface to his second edition of Juvenal (xlvi).

turn into *m^o*, the ancient *nota* for *modo*),¹⁸ but it is also far from felicitous: as a ‘*dativus ethicus*’, *mihi* would be an otiose filler whether in the main clause (*interuenit illud* | ζωή καὶ ψυχῇ, *mihi sub lodice* ...) or in the relative clause (*interuenit illud* | ζωή καὶ ψυχῇ *mihi, sub lodice* ...); moreover, in both cases the *ordo uerborum* would be anomalous, because the ‘*dativus ethicus*’ normally occurs in second position in its clause.¹⁹ If taken with the main clause and construed with *relictis* as a dative of agent or of person benefited, *mihi* would be absurd. If it were a ‘*dativus termini*’ governed by *interuenit*, it would be inept: *interuenit* ... *mihi* would then have to mean *mihi superuenit ex improviso* (‘whenever that naughty ζωή καὶ ψυχῇ unexpectedly reaches my ear, you are using in public words that you have ceased to employ in the bedroom’),²⁰ but to emphasize that the *uetula* often uses lascivious Greek words when the poet is around would be irrelevant and even misleading in this context, since for the poet, evidently, the indecent behaviour of the old woman is objectionable in general, regardless of whether her lustful words reach his ear.²¹ Note also that from a metrical point of view a syntactical break after *mihi* would be abnormal, since in the Latin hexameter a diaeresis after the third foot very rarely coincides with a pause in the sense.²²

Other conjectures hardly deserve mention: the deletion of lines 195–6 *quod enim ... nequam* by Guyet²³ and the deletion of lines 195–8 *modo ... pinnae* by Knoche²⁴ clumsily amputate the text and destroy its intertextual connection with Mart. 6.23.²⁵ Even less attractive is the violent alteration of the *paradosis* proposed by Heinrich (*toties lascium interseris* for the transmitted *quotiens lascium interuenit* at line 194; deletion of lines 193–4 *Graece ... uetula* and of lines 195–6 *modo ... turba*).²⁶ The attempt at emendation by Francken (*quotiens lascium interuenit illud* | ζωή καὶ ψυχῇ, *modo sub lodice relictis* | *u<er>teris in turba*) is grotesquely contrary to the required sense.²⁷

¹⁸ See W.M. Lindsay, *Notae Latinae* (Cambridge, 1915), 123, 129.

¹⁹ Cf. H. Pinkster, *The Oxford Latin Syntax: Volume 1: The Simple Clause* (Oxford, 2015), 931–2.

²⁰ Cf. TLL 7.1.2299.73–2300.44 s.v. *interuenio*. In the transmitted text (or with *mihi* used as a ‘*dativus ethicus*’) *interuenit* necessarily means ‘pops up’: cf. TLL 7.1.2298.40–5; OLD s.v. 4.

²¹ Leo (n. 17) does not clarify what syntactic function he assigns to *mihi*.

²² See S.E. Winbolt, *Latin Hexameter Verse: An Aid to Composition* (London, 1903), 37–40; H. Drexler, ‘Hexameterstudien V’, *Emerita* 21 (1953), 163–76, at 164–5; H. Drexler, *Einführung in die römische Metrik* (Darmstadt, 1967), 105; H.H. Huxley, ‘Significant diaeresis in Vergil and other hexameter poets’, *Vergilius* 33 (1987), 23–8, at 25–6. In Juvenal’s sixth satire the third foot ends with a pyrrhic word twenty-nine times (7; 29; 51; 77; 80; 110; 132; 138; 187; 211; 213; 237; 238; 284; 338; 339; O 16; 413; 423; 432; 445; 454; 460; 524; 581; 614; 646; 648; 655; some of these lines have been suspected, more or less justifiably, of being spurious; see the apparatus of Willis [n. 12]), but only in line 77 (*aut Glaphyrus fiat pater Ambrosiusque choraules*) does a strong pause at the diaeresis before the fourth foot split the hexameter in the middle; an equally exceptional line from the second satire (110 *hic nullus uerbis pudor aut reuerentia mensae*) is cited by Huxley (this note).

²³ J. Willis, ‘The conjectures of Guyet in the text of Juvenal’, *Antichthon* 30 (1996), 49–57, at 51; see also Willis (n. 12), 67.

²⁴ U. Knoche (ed.), *D. Iunius Iuuenalis: Saturae* (Munich, 1950), 46.

²⁵ *stare iubes semper nostrum tibi, Lesbia, penem: | crede mihi, non est mentula quod digitus. | tu licet et manibus blandis et uocibus instes, | te contra facies imperiosa tua est* (in Martial’s context *digitus* does not have the same function as *digitos* in Juvenal’s; none the less, the occurrence of the noun in both passages is significant *per se* and strengthens the hypothesis of an intertextual connection between them). Other epigrams by Martial that have similarities with our passage are 11.29, to which we will return, and 12.97, in addition to the aforementioned 10.68. For the wide influence of Martial on Juvenal, see especially R.E. Colton, *Juvenal’s Use of Martial’s Epigrams. A Study of Literary Influence* (Amsterdam, 1991).

²⁶ C.F. Heinrich (ed.), *D. Iunii Iuuenalis Satirae*, 2 vols. (Bonn, 1839), 2.238.

²⁷ C.M. Francken, ‘Ad Iuuenalem’, *Mnemosyne* 21 (1893), 202–10, at 204–5. He explains it as follows: ‘*uetula, frustra conata sub lodice explere lubidinem, sub noctem (tanquam Iulia ista minor) in publicum egreditur, ubi in turba blanda uerba susurrat ad amatorem capiendum. Non alia tam impudens*

The best conjecture suggested so far is another proposal by Delz, *peractis* (“‘du gebrauchst in der Öffentlichkeit Ausdrücke, die du kürzlich noch unter der Decke beim *concupitus* verwendet hast”. Handlung und begleitende Äusserungen wären in *peractis* ebenso verkürzend zusammengefasst wie in *concumbunt Graece*”).²⁸ Delz observes that, *pace* Housman, Juvenal’s passage is probably intended to deride not elderly women who no longer have a sexual life but *uetulae* who are (or seek to be) sexually active, such as those evoked at Juv. 1.37–41, who make gigolos rich.²⁹ I think that Delz’s suggestion is on the right lines, but I am not convinced by *peractis*, which, with all due respect to Delz, cannot mean ‘Ausdrücke, die du ... verwendet hast’, but rather (*contra mentem poetae*) ‘actions you have performed’. I suggest *relatis* (‘uttered’),³⁰ which fits the context better (cf. 198 *dicas haec mollius* ...) and is palaeographically closer to the transmitted reading (for the very easy corruption of *relatis* to *relictis* cf. Manil. 5.1 *relatis LM : relictis G*). I would also put a colon after *uetula* (194), because *quotiens* ... *turba* (194–6), in my opinion, explains *non est hic sermo pudicus* | *in uetula* (193–4). In summary, I think that we should read and punctuate lines 193–6 as follows:

non est hic sermo pudicus
in uetula: quotiens lascivium interuenit illud
ζωή καὶ ψυχὴ, modo sub lodice relatis
uteris in turba.

This language is shameless and disgusting³¹ in an old woman: whenever that naughty ζωή καὶ ψυχὴ pops out, you are using in public words that you have lately uttered under the blanket.

The sense of lines 193–9 thus restored is that Greek endearments are shameless and disgusting when they come from a *uetula*, because they reveal her repulsive appetite for sex; in fact, when she uses lascivious expressions such as ζωή καὶ ψυχὴ in public, one senses that she is lustful and has lately uttered them in the bedroom to arouse her partner, because (196 *enim*) alluring Greek words are a powerful tool of seduction;³² however (197 *tamen*), she is too old and ugly, so, to her disappointment, they are ineffective both *sub lodice* and *in turba*, where she employs Greek sweet words when looking for new partners. Left unsaid is that, like other old women in Latin invective,³³ she can only pay for sex.

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est: quotiens in turba constipata, ubi distingui non potest, prohibente etiam crepusculo, unde uox ueniat, blanda illa uerba audimus, te **uerti** in uicinia scimus’. It is clear, however, that Juvenal is not conjuring up a scenario in which those who heard the expression ζωή καὶ ψυχὴ can only speculate on the identity and age of the woman who uttered it, but he is describing a situation in which the *uetula*, who is about to turn eighty-six, uses lascivious Greek words in full view.

²⁸ Delz (n. 7), 123–4.

²⁹ Delz (n. 7), 124 compares Hor. *Epod.* 8 and Mart. 11.29; see also *Priap.* 12 and 57. On the stock character of the libidinous *uetula* in ancient literature, see L.C. Watson, *A Commentary on Horace’s Epodes* (Oxford, 2003), 288–93.

³⁰ On *refero* in the sense of ‘utter’, ‘render (a sound)’, cf. Verg. *Aen.* 5.409 *tum senior talis referebat pectore uoces*; Val. Fl. 6.496 (*Hecate*) *has imo referebat pectore uoces* (in Juvenal’s passage in line 197 we find *uox*); Val. Max 8.7 ext.1 *Demosthenes* ... *cum inter initia iuuentae artis, quam adfectabat, primam litteram dicere non posset, oris sui uitium tanto studio expugnauit, ut ea a nullo expressius referretur* and the passages listed in *TLL* 11.2.628.25–36; see also *OLD* s.v. *refero* 13d.

³¹ Both ‘shameless’ and ‘disgusting’ are possible meanings of *non pudicus* (= *impudicus*; cf. *OLD* s.v. *impudicus*, 1–3), which at line 193 seem to coalesce.

³² One of the anonymous readers points out that Juvenal’s idea that sexy language *digitos habet* possibly owes something to Pers. 1.19–21, which itself may be drawing on Catull. 16.9–11.

³³ Cf. 1.37–41; *Priap.* 57; Mart. 11.29.