

### **Sex and Money: Juvenal 7.123**

After a list of the difficult labors and poor compensation of the professional orator, Juvenal adds that he must also pay for legal expertise:<sup>1</sup>

si contigit aureus unus,  
inde cadunt partes ex foedere pragmaticorum.

123 ex PAGLUArrou. : in  $\Phi$

If you come by one gold piece, some of that disappears according to the contract made with the solicitors.

This is only a serious financial burden if the *pragmatici* were numerous or their individual demands large, and the Latin is deplorably vague about that. I wonder if Juvenal wrote *partes sex foedere pragmaticorum*, not “some of that [gold piece]” but “six parts of that [gold piece]”. The S might easily have disappeared by haplography, and *sex* would be admirably specific.

Perhaps not sufficiently specific in itself. The problem is then: six parts out of how many? The usual meaning of *sex partes* or (I assume) *partes sex* in Latin would be ‘six parts out of seven’ ( $n / n+1$ ), which seems high, and cannot be a precise number: one *aureus* is twenty-five *denarii*, which is not divisible by seven, though twenty-one and a half is very close to six-sevenths of twenty-five (86% versus 85.71%). Then again, could six parts be six of the standard parts into which an *aureus* was divided, that is, six *denarii*? Having to pay out nearly a quarter of one’s gross would still be a significant burden, but I don’t know if there are parallels for this usage.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Text and translation are from Braund’s Loeb, apparatus criticus from Clausen’s Oxford Classical Text.

<sup>2</sup> Time to start looking for them? Perhaps one of my readers can save me the trouble.