Youth organizations such as the *collegia iuvenum* or *iuventutes* were a well-known phenomenon in the western part of the Roman Empire. The number of inscriptions attesting their existence or mentioning the celebration of youth games (*Iuvenalia*) has increased immensely since the beginning of the twentieth century. Nevertheless, the problem of their specific role in society has not come any closer to being solved. Maria Jaczynowska’s book on the topic, published in 1978, contained some good points, especially in rejecting previous theories (for instance: the *iuvenes* did not constitute a preliminary training-period for military recruits). Unfortunately, her book mainly proved that there was no progress to be made from collecting all the available evidence. Thirteen years later Pierre Ginestet published another book on the *iuvenes*, which in some respects must be considered as equally unsatisfactory: we still cannot establish what the role of the *iuvenes* in society was. The main justification for pessimism is that the literary data on the *iuvenes* are scanty and that the epigraphic evidence is hardly helpful. We receive some information on activities, on the gods that were worshipped, on thanks being offered to benefactors and on *iuvenes* as receivers of *sportulae*.

A uniform pattern of their functioning can, however, not be detected: the evidence hints at a considerable variety in ‘make-up’. First of all, it is not clear who exactly were its members: aristocrats or non-aristocrats or both. Reviewing the evidence for social background we are on very shallow ground indeed. Slaves and freedmen have been attested in numbers large enough to doubt whether membership was restricted only to the élite. There are not sufficient occasions where we are able to detect sons of the élite as ordinary members, although they seem to have numbered among the magistrates. In the latter cases it is often impossible to determine whether they had been members themselves. Secondly, the *iuvenes’* activities can be catalogued, but they leave us without any systematic pattern. In parts of the Empire (largely restricted to Italy itself, it has been claimed) the youth organized their own games called *Iuvenalia* or *lusus iuvenales*, for which they had been trained in gladiatorial fighting techniques and in hunting animals. The *iuventutes* in the provinces, especially in Africa and the north-western part of the Empire, engaged in paramilitary activities as a local militia.
Just like any other collegium or corpus, the iuvenes can be seen to have been active in religious dedications. Some of the names they bear have been derived from gods or goddesses. A wide spectrum of deities was worshipped with, so it has been claimed, noticeable differences between Italy and the provinces. The iuvenes of Mactar, on the other hand, built two horrea for the imperial annonae. A reference in Suetonius can be assumed to indicate that the iuvenes (apparently all over Italy) had a certain role to play in the cursus publicus (Suet. Aug. 49. 3). However, we do not know whether the latter two activities were undertaken by other youth organizations in the West. Information adduced from one source can only rarely be confirmed by evidence from another region, so that general conclusions seem to be hazardous.

The present study has three aims. Firstly, it wants to reconsider some of the epigraphic evidence that is being adduced and, secondly, to review the evidence for the activities of the iuvenes once again. Finally, it wants to point to an aspect of these organizations of young men which has not received the attention it deserves.

I

Both authors present an epigraphic register, but there are some noticeable differences between Jaczynowska's (224 numbers) and Ginestet's (252 numbers). The numerical difference cannot be ascribed to new finds alone, but mainly to a difference of opinion. Ginestet includes in his catalogue a number of texts which Jaczynowska either missed or chose to neglect because the link between the individual and his membership of the iuvenes could not be established with certainty. Some of the texts adduced by Ginestet must evidently be considered as weak evidence: when somebody is styled iuvenis it does not necessarily mean that the individual had been a member of an official collegium. On the whole, moreover, Ginestet is not very consistent in his compilation of the evidence.

Let us take two cities as an example: Lugdunum and Saturnia. Whereas Jaczynowska lists no inscription from Lugdunum, Ginestet quotes four, of which one is a reference taken from the bronze tablet containing Claudius' famous speech; no connection with a collegium can be established. The other three are just as doubtful. Valerius Honoratus who died at the age of twenty-three, is called iuvenis optimus by his mother and is declared to have been natione Troianensis (CIL 13, 2034). Varenius Lupus died at the age of twenty-one and is called iuvenis verecundissimus (CIL 13, 2037). No specification is given why these two should be seen as members of a collegium. The third example concerns a twenty-two year old optimus iuvenis (CIL 13, 2260). In his list of iuvenes from Saturnia (Etruria) Ginestet chose to include the funerary inscription of C. Didius Vitulus (AE 1977, 257), who died at the age of thirty-five and is called iuvenis
amantissimus\textsuperscript{6}, but chose to ignore two other ones mentioned in the same article by Saladino.\textsuperscript{7}

That same inconsistency (based on incorrect assumptions in the first place) can be detected on a number of other occasions. Why include \textit{AE} 1984, 1307 from Corfinium in the register (a \textit{iuvenis incomparabilis} who died at the age of thirty) and leave out \textit{AE} 1973, 231 from Castrum Novum (a \textit{iuvenis} who died at the age of twenty-eight)? Once again, why include \textit{AE} 1976, 412 from Alba Helviorum\textsuperscript{8} (mentioning a \textit{iuvenis innocens}) and leave out \textit{CIL} 13, 2949 from Sens mentioning a \textit{iuvenis integerrimus}? In short, no systematic approach can be detected in the compilation of the register.\textsuperscript{9} Consequently, some of Ginestet's texts have to be scrapped for lack of a convincing connection between the individual and membership of a youth organization.\textsuperscript{10}

\section*{II}

The youth organizations in the Latin West appear under different names, of which \textit{collegium iuvenum}, \textit{iuventus} or \textit{collegium iuventutis} are the most commonly used ones. Already forty years ago Ginestet argued that this difference in terminology reflects a difference in activities.\textsuperscript{11} The \textit{collegia iuvenum} can all be attested in the Italian peninsula (with the only exception coming from Vence: \textit{CIL} 12, 22), whereas the \textit{iuventutes} or \textit{collegia iuventutis} are to be found in the north-western provinces and in Roman Africa. Surely this is more than just chance.\textsuperscript{12} Ginestet is probably right in arguing that youth organizations had a more pronounced military or paramilitary outlook in the provinces. But did they function as such on a regular basis? We do not know — because only emergency cases, and very few at that, have been reported.

We hear about the military deployment of the provincial \textit{iuventus} for the first time during the revolt of Sacrovir in AD 21, when the latter distributed weapons to the \textit{iuventus} of Autun (Tac. \textit{Ann.} 3. 43). In the confused year of the four emperors, the military abilities of the youth were recognized by the candidates for the imperial purple. Vitellius recruited the \textit{iuventus} from Raetia, 'sueta armis et more militiae exercitata' (Tac. \textit{Hist.} 1. 19) and Vespasian likewise used the \textit{iuventus Noricorum} (Hist. 3. 5). Ginestet argues that the provincial \textit{iuventutes} continued to be used for two objectives: as a source of recruits for the legions and as a local militia,\textsuperscript{13} to be employed as additional troops in cases of emergency.\textsuperscript{14} Ginestet assumes a close relationship between the \textit{iuventus} and the army. His arguments can best be summarized in his own words:

\begin{quote}
Lorsque le service, théoriquement obligatoire dans les \textit{iuventutes} [outside Italy], est effectivement pratiqué, il s'impose, comme à Rome sous la République, à tous les jeunes hommes qui ont pris la toge virile, ou accompli selon le rite de leur peuple la cérémonie comparable d'affirmation
\end{quote}
The argument is very close to that of Rostovtzeff launched at the beginning of this century who argued that members of the collegia iuvenum were trained to be recruits for the Roman army, being under the impression that they must have been between fourteen and seventeen years old. Ginestet’s arguments add one important point of nuance: he is correct in arguing that Rostovtzeff’s theory that these youngsters must have been trained to hold commands cannot be substantiated because of lack of evidence. The whole passage just quoted is, however, riddled with unsubstantiated arguments. There is, first of all, no reason to assume that membership of either the collegia iuvenum or the iuventutes was obligatory for all young men between a certain age. Indeed the membership-lists that are extant (some are, admittedly, full of lacunae, but the one from Mactar [AE 1958, 172] is complete) seem to indicate that only a small number of youngsters actually joined up.

But what about recruiting for the army? Charles-Picard convincingly demonstrated that none of the members of the iuvenes in Mactar in AD 88 can be traced in the army-lists of the third legion in Lambaesis. Ginestet refers to a praefectus iuventutis from Thuburnica, who had been a praefectus tironum in Mauretania (AE 1921, 21=IL Afr. 1, 473). The latter obviously points to recruitment of tirones — who were, of course, young men — but that the same person later held the position of praefectus iuventutis in a town in Numidia does not prove conclusively that the tirones must have been ex-members of a iuventus. It is much more likely that he had been a trainer of recruits in Mauretania and became a trainer of the iuventus once he had settled in Thuburnica after his honesta missio. In stating that he had been a praefectus tironum during his army service, he does not claim that he trained the iuventus of Mauretania (or that of Thuburnica) to become recruits. I do not deny here that members of the iuventus may occasionally have been recruited into the army, but I do not see any evidence to support the view that training for the army was one of the main aims of the iuventus. Even in the north-western parts of the Empire there is no established link between army recruitment and the iuventutes. Anyway, Ginestet refrains from any systematic investigation in this direction.

Altogether Ginestet highly overestimates the military or paramilitary deployment of the iuvenes. The evidence from the north-western provinces (Ginestet’s main focus) is of such a nature that he has inferred activities
of the *iuvenes* from inscriptions which do not mention any activity of note save for religious dedications.

III

It has been regarded for long as an established fact that the youth organizations had a prominently aristocratic character: the *iuvenes* constituted a ‘jeunesse dorée’ trained for municipal politics. Looking back upon the arguments adduced by scholars for nearly a century, this characterization was induced more by what was to be expected given the stratified structure of the Roman Empire or by a comparison with the Greek world than by an objective review of the evidence. A text from the *Digestae* by Callistratus (48. 19. 28. 3) put the French scholar Jacques on track to qualify the *iuvenes* as *humiliores*. In the case of minor crimes they will only be beaten with rods, but *iuvenes* who have frequently misbehaved during spectacles are to be exiled or put to death. These punishments cannot but imply that the *iuvenes* were not *honestiores* and are, therefore, ‘incompatible avec l’idée traditionelle d’un recrutement des *iuvenes* dans la jeunesse dorée des cités’. 

His view is confirmed by evidence from inscriptions where we see that freedmen play a prominent part in leading youth organizations. The freedman M. Silius Epaphroditus, for instance, was patron of the youth of Lucus Feroniae and was honoured by them for the building of an amphitheatre (*CIL* 11, 3938; *AE* 1962, 87). Jacques comments on this evidence: ‘on voit mal comment les fils des magistrats municipaux auraient pu participer à la vie des associations ou des affranchis étaient amenés à obtenir les responsabilités, et même à exercer le patronat’. Additionally, in inscriptions honouring patrons of multiple *collegia* the *iuvenes* are never accorded first rank. Likewise in *sportulae iuvenes* are listed after the municipal councillors and the *Augustales*. They were thus inferior in *dignitas* to freedmen, who, although engaged in the most prestigious cult in the Roman Empire, were not considered as *honestiores*. All the same, we do notice that members of the municipal élite were elected as magistrates of youth organizations, either before or after the start of their career. The logical conclusion, drawn by Jacques, is that the *iuvenes* were not an emanation of the élite, but that they may occasionally have been used as its instrument.

The existence of more than one youth organization in several cities, on the other hand, does point to a diversification, either on a local or on a social basis. In the case of Ostia we may be confident in distinguishing between aristocratic and non-aristocratic youth groups. In that city we come across three different youth groups. First of all, we find the *iuvenes cisiani*, attested at the end of the first century (*CIL* 14, 409) and to a somewhat later period we should date the establishment of the *iuvenes Traianenses* who dedicate an altar to Diana Tobens (*CIL* 14, 4). In two other texts mention
is made of the *iuvenes decurionum qui Ostiae ludunt* (CIL 14, 4148) and of the *iuvenes decurionum* (AE 1969–70, 87). In both inscriptions patrons of the youth have been honoured. Moreover, both individuals were patrons of the colony and of senatorial rank. Q. Asinius Marcellus was suffect consul in 97 and *praefectus urbis* in 114/5, whereas M. Acilius Egrilius Plarianus was the first of his family to achieve senatorial status at the end of the first century. The *iuvenes decurionum* in Ostia could very well have been an aristocratic group of young men, which implies that the other groups were non-aristocratic ones (otherwise the qualification *decurionum* would have been unnecessary).

In the case of Mogontiacum we find a *iuventus vici Apollinensis* (CIL 13, 6688), a *iuventus Vobergensis* (CIL 13, 6689), and a *collegium iuventutis Constatiensis* (CIL 13, 7424). Here we should rather think of youth organizations tied to a *vicus*, as Panciera argued for Rome,31 where we come across a *collegium iuvenum Racilianensium* (AE 1927, 145), perhaps to be connected with a *vicus Racilianus*.32 In another text mention is made of *iuvenes Oeciani*, referring to one of the *regiones* established by Augustus (CIL 6, 26). Sextus Vetulenus Lavicanus is said to have been appreciated by both the sixth and seventh region of the city of Rome (AE 1971, 44).

**IV**

After briefly glancing through the inscriptions collected by Jaczynowska and Ginestet we can only conclude that really valuable information is disappointingly scanty. On the basis of the previous discussion it would be rash to assume that we can reconstruct the role and activities of these associations. The inscriptions do not necessarily record the whole spectrum of activities undertaken by the *iuvenes*; the evidence we have only refers to the occasions when the obligation to erect an inscription on stone was felt.

We are even more helpless when we consider the ages of the members of youth organizations in the Roman world. As referred to earlier, Rostovtzeff took the *iuvenes* to have been between fourteen and seventeen years old, an argument which cannot be substantiated.33 Dieter Ladage recently argued that, since the magistrates of the *iuvenes* were not older than twenty-four or twenty-five, ordinary members must have been not older than twenty.34 His information is based on three (!) inscriptions: a twenty-three year old *sacerdos iuvenum* from Milan (CIL 5, 5894), a twenty-four year old *magister iuvenum* from Nursia (CIL 9, 4549) and a twenty-five year old *flamen iuventutis* from Cularo (Grenoble, but evidently referring to membership of the *iuvenes* in Vienne: CIL 12, 2245). The *praefecti iuventutis* were obviously much older, since most of them were former municipal magistrates.

What evidence for ages of members is actually available to us? In Ginestet’s register we were able to find twelve inscriptions with indications
of ages for ordinary members. Six of them, however, have to be considered as doubtful as no formal relationship with a youth organization can be established. Two other texts concern girls (CIL 6, 2177; 5, 5907) and another one a slave girl who was not a member (quae fuit corpore iuv(enum); CIL 9, 4696). That leaves us with one nineteen-year old from Aquae Sextiae (CIL 12, 533) and a sodalis iuvenum (an ordinary member) from Aricia who had already been married for thirty years, and so must have been at least in his fifties (AE 1912, 92). Sextus Vetulenus Lavicanus from Rome was honoured after his death at the age of forty-four by his coniuvenses (AE 1971, 44). Ginestet's paragraph on the age of the iuvenes is, therefore, understandably a short one. The main gist of it is that most of them must have been recruited after the donning of the man’s toga, but that they could stay on as long as they wanted to. In inscriptions where no link with a collegium or a iuventus can be established, iuvenis (see note 9) is used for people between the ages of sixteen and fifty. In view of this evidence it is hardly possible to compare the iuventus with twentieth-century groups of adolescents.

V

Altogether we can only be pessimistic about the results so far: we can only indicate what the iuvenes were not or what they did not do. Most information we receive is on the organization of Iuvenalia and participation in activities referring to the amphitheatre and theatre. The main objection Ginestet brings forth against Jaczynowska’s book is that the latter strongly believes that the lusus iuvenales or Iuvenalia were the iuvenes' primary occupation. Against this Ginestet argues (a) that mention of ludi is restricted to a small region around Rome, and (b) that the iuvenes themselves were not involved: ‘Ces jeux n’étaient plus qu’un spectacle donné en leur honneur et pour leur plaisir, et auquel ils ne participaient pas’ (187).

Most of the cities known to have staged ludi/ lusus/ Iuvenalia can indeed be found in the vicinity of Rome. The one exception, undisputed by Ginestet, comes from Aquae Sextiae (CIL 12, 533). To this list should now be added the inscription from Singilia Barba, in which mention is made of an ex-duovir who had organized ludos iu(v)enum in theatro (AE 1989, 420). According to Ginestet, Iuvenalia have not been attested for Africa and the north-western provinces of the Roman Empire, an argument, which, if true, would support his view of a noticeable difference between the collegia iuvenum mainly attested in Italy and the iuventutes or collegia iuventutis in the rest of the western provinces. References by Christian authors, however, pertaining to Roman Africa, prove that the iuvenes in that part of the Roman Empire were engaged in wild-beast hunts. Moreover, from Herodian’s account of the uprising in Thysdrus in AD 238 it becomes apparent that the iuvenes were associated with wild-beast hunts, jests and rhythmic
dances (7. 8. 5). Lepelley's article on the involvement of the *iuvenes* in the voluntary martyrship of the *circumcelliones* indicates that they were still active in the amphitheatre as late as the fourth century.\(^4\)

Indirect references to hunting from other provinces should also be taken into consideration. The inscription from Vence (*CIL* 12, 18), discussed by Pleket,\(^4\) makes the link between the *collegium*’s worship of Nemesis and hunting quite evident, in spite of Ginestet’s criticism.\(^4\) In the northwestern parts of the Roman Empire mention is being made of the *iuvences’* dedications to the Nymphs, Diana, Epona (the Celtic horse god) and Silvanus, which may, at least, indicate that their religious preference did not lie with the gods of the urbanized world. The *iuvences’* devotion to the cult of the imperial house does not impinge on that fact. To view the organizations of youth groups as stern supporters of the imperial government\(^4\) is to see too much in their dedications. Anyway, why is Diana, then, mentioned first in *CIL* 13, 6358 from Sumelocenna?

Ginestet’s second argument touches upon a more complicated problem: were the *iuvenes* actively participating in the ludi or were they only supporters? Two inscriptions mentioning professional trainers of the youth are obviously of the utmost importance. The one from Paestum (*AE* 1935, 27) mentions a *summarudis*, the other one from Spoletium (*ILS* 6635) refers to a *pinnirapus iuvenum*. The *summarudis*, it has been suggested, was a fencing-master, the technical term referring to a gladiator who had received his *honesta missio*. Quite possibly he also acted as a referee in the fencing-matches.\(^4\) Ginestet, while accepting that the *summarudis* was a trainer in fencing, argues that nothing in the inscription indicates that the *iuvenes* under his training performed in public.\(^4\) However, the reference in Dio Cassius (65. 15) that during youth games (*ἐν ταῖς τῶν νεανίσκων παικτικῖς*) Titus had been active in fights with blunted weapons in the amphitheatre of Reate would point in the opposite direction.\(^4\) The rather enigmatic lines in the inscription referring to a young man from Aquae Sextiae (*CIL* 12, 533) — *varis circumdatus armis* — may indicate that he had shown his skills in the use of different weapons, including fencing. On the tomb of a young man from Tegianum (*AE* 1927, 10 a) weapons were displayed and in the inscription he calls himself *princeps ludendo*. H. Galsterer confirmed Della Corte’s suggestion that the weapons displayed on his tomb were not those of a gladiator nor those of a legionary.\(^4\) The *campus* referred to in the text seems to be the local training ground of the *iuvenes* for their participation in the *Iuvenalitiae*.\(^4\) He showed his skills on the local *campus* — and not in the amphitheatre, simply because Tegianum was too small to have its own entertainment facilities — which need not necessarily imply only private exercises. As a matter of fact the title *princeps ludendo* undoubtedly refers to a competition; and a competition in the ancient world without an audience seems highly unlikely.
With regard to the *pinnirapus* from Spoletium Ginestet argues that this involved a more serious and dangerous occupation than the game of fencing, and therefore a most unlikely activity for amateurs to engage in. Elsewhere he refers to the fact that some gladiators were wearing a plume on their helmet. Taking away that plume from the opponent who was down on the ground is ‘symboliquement lui arracher la vie’ (142). In this short sentence Ginestet unwittingly provides the answer to the problem. *Pinnas rapere* was only a symbolic killing of the opponent; it did not involve any (intentional) bloodshed and was therefore a game suited to amateurs, such as the *iuvenes* (and like the equestrians and senators mentioned in the *senatus consultum Larinum*). In short, it was more a game of skill than a bloodsport.

When we come to discuss the participation in *venationes*, it is difficult to determine whether the activities of the *iuvenes* were similar to those of professional beast hunters. Did they run the same risks of being wounded, maimed or killed? The fact that they were amateurs and young seems to preclude any copying of the professional *venator*. Nevertheless, some of the evidence hints at wounds received in fighting animals. Dio Cassius’ reference to the consul Acilius Glabrio’s killing of a lion during Domitian’s *Iuvenalia* could be mistaken for a freak emperor’s whim. Herodian’s report on the *iuventus* of Thysdrus, however, definitely refers to the lances with which they fought in the *venationes* (7. 8. 5). Tertullian mentions the *morsus ferarum* which were considered to be *ornamenta* by the *iuventus*. (*De an. 58. 5*). Pulcher from Aquae Sextiae (*CIL* 12, 533), on the other hand, simply refers to *saepe feras lusi*, which Ville takes to mean *venatio ‘non sanglante’*. Unfortunately, though, the rest of the poem does not contain any conclusive indication that he had also been fighting animals.

A twenty-year old young man from Vienna in southern Gaul styles himself *bestiarius pereruditus* (*CIL* 13, 2548). That he was a member of the *iuvenes* and had been active in a *lusus iuvenalis* has been suggested by G. Ville. The existence of a *collegium iuvenum* in Vienna is well attested (see Ginestet nrs 190–8). The son of a *decurio* from Verona is called a *venator*, which can either indicate an ‘amateur de chasse’ or an ‘amateur appartenant aux iuvenes de l’aristocratie véroneise’.* A *sacerdos iuvenum* was already known from Verona (*CIL* 5, 3415). Three inscriptions refer to young men killed by bulls. As we know, the use of bulls in the arena was quite common, either for killing or for spectacular tricks. Apart from what can be termed inconclusive references to their youthful age (*iuvenilis amor* in *IL Alg.* 1, 3046 and *iuvenis* in *CIL* 8, 11914), nothing indicates that they had belonged to a *collegium iuvenum* or to a *iuventus*. One of them (*IL Alg.* 1, 3046), however, combined *venationes* and horse-races. As far as I can tell, no professional *venator* has been known to have doubled as an *auriga*. The young man is said to have died on the horns (*sum cor-
nuo laborus) and was subsequently buried on the grounds of the local riding school from which he derived his fame (nunc requiescunt reliquae trigari solo per quod fui notus). This explicit reference to a variety of activities have made us decide that he could not have been a professional. Additionally, a young man from Latinia (AE 1967, 83) refers to his horse-riding activities and to his fighting wild animals in the arena, although in this case one may also think of a venator on horseback. From this evidence we can draw up a tentative programme of the Iuvenalia: (A) fencing and other games of skill, (B) horse-racing, (C) wild-beast hunts. Two other activities which both belonged to the field of theatrical performances warrant a separate discussion.

VI

J.-P. Morel was the first scholar to draw attention to two phenomena which seem to be closely related: reports on the Roman Republican iuventus' involvement in the development of Roman theatre and the inclusion of professional pantomimes as honorary members of the iuvenes in the imperial period.60 Livy (7. 2) and Valerius Maximus (2. 4. 4) indicate that the plague of 364 BC called for the introduction of dancers from Etruria.61 When sacred dancing was subsequently changed into a form of art, the youth distanced themselves from it and reverted to the old practice of the burlesque.62 During the Republican period the iuventus acted as an age group in two fields of society: ritual ceremonies and war. Morel indicates that during ceremonies they enjoyed a particular licence of speech: ‘La iuventus jouissait lors des cérémonies et dans l’accomplissement des rites d’une grande liberté de gestes et propos. Tout porte à croire que cette licence était tolérée officiellement, dans la mesure où le burlesque est pour les peuples primitifs un des éléments du sacré’.63 In 386 BC, when the Romans wanted to transfer the allegiance of the goddess of Veii, Juno, to their own city through the process of evocatio, they chose a group of young men: ‘cum quidam, seu spirito divino tactus seu iuvenali ioco, “visne Romam ire, Juno?” dixisset, adnuisse ceteri deam conclamaverunt’ (Liv. 5. 22. 4–6). In triumphs soldiers sang obscene songs mocking their general (Suet. Iul. 49. 4; Dio Cass. 43. 20), while the latter was receiving special honours marking him out as an exceptional individual close to the gods (but nonetheless mortal). In another context Servius (ad Georg. 2. 387) states: ‘necesse est pro ratione sacrorum aliqua est turpia, quibus populo risus movere’.

Particularly interesting in this respect is Livy’s remark that the Republican youth showed a strong preference for fabulae Atellanae: ‘iuventus . . ., ipsa inter se, more antiquo, ridicula intexta versibus iactitare coepit; quae exodia postea appellata, consertaque fabellis potissimum Atellanis sunt’ (7. 2. 11). If we look at the characters figuring in the Atellanae it becomes
clear that juvenes (or for that matter adolescents) do not play a major part in these; the people who are being ridiculed were old lascivious males vying with their young sons for a young female or mean fathers jealously guarding their money against their sons’ spendthrift behaviour. Was this a ritualized performance to come to terms with the generation gap as Morel suggests?

Some phenomena in the ancient world actually suggest that Morel may be right. The famous proverb ‘sexagenarii de ponte’ points to a certain disrespectful attitude towards old age. In the early imperial period the exact meaning and origin of the expression had been lost. In the Fasti Ovid is usually taken to have mixed up an ancient ritual related to the Argei with the political implication of barring people over sixty from voting in the elections. The pons would then refer to the bridge of voters leading up to the Saepta. The latter explanation, however, seems to me to be unconvincing for reasons of a practical nature. Is it possible in a world without birth certificates and ID’s to distinguish between a fifty year-old man and one of sixty? The expression might be related to politics, but, on the suggestion of J.-P. Néraudau, may originally have been conceived by a writer of farces. That would have been a clever pun on both the tensions between young and old and on the specific role of the bridge in mockery. Sexagenarii would then have to be taken generically to mean ‘old men’. The context of a ‘charivari’ is therefore a much more likely possibility. People may not have been necessarily mocked in order to take revenge for social tensions between the generations, but perhaps because old people were an obvious target for mockery.

Although inscriptions do not indicate that the municipal youth in the imperial period was still engaged in farcical upheaval, there is one literary reference that seems to offer some insights. In AD 238 the general disagreement with Maximinus’s financial policies forced the municipal elite of Thysdrus to take the initiative in replacing the emperor with their own candidate, the elderly governor of Africa Proconsularis, Gordian. As their armed wing they recruited the local iuventus. After having been informed about the uprising in Africa, Maximinus, in a speech to his soldiers, speaks condescendingly of the army with which Gordian has surrounded himself (Herodian 7. 8. 5): ποία φέροντες ὀπλα, παρ’ οίς οὐδέν πλήν δωρατῶν οίς πρὸς θηρία μονομαχοῦσι; τὰ πολεμικὰ αὐτοῖς γυμνάσιοι χοροὶ καὶ σκώμματα καὶ ρυθμοί. The ‘skommata’ referred to here may well be the same as the farces, which had been the favourite occupation of the Republican iuventus. The ‘rhythmoi’ can be no other thing than mimes and/or pantomimes. It is clear that in the imperial period dances must be seen as mimes: ‘item pyrrichas quasdem e numero epheborum, quibus post editam operam diplomata civitatis Romanae singulis optulit. Inter pyrricharum taurus Pasiphaam ligneo iuvenae simulacro abditam iniit, ut
multi spectantium crediderunt; Icarus primo statim conatu iuxta cubiculum eius [Nero's] decidit ipsumque cruore respersit' (Suet. Nero 12). The *pyrrichium* used to be a military dance, but here it has obviously been transformed into an enactment of mythological stories with an emphasis on stories with a sexual content, in this case performed by youths from the East.

Whether the youth in Rome itself was still active in stage productions in the imperial period cannot be claimed with certainty. That would seem to be most unlikely given the domination of lower-class foreigners in this profession, and the derision felt by Roman moralists for people appearing on stage in a professional capacity. Nevertheless, some positive evidence on the attractions of the stage can be adduced. Under Tiberius, it is reported by Suetonius, some young members of the upper classes voluntarily incurred degradation from their ranks in order to appear on stage or in the arena (*Tib.* 35. 2). When the emperor shared their enthusiasm for acting, the youngsters felt even fewer inhibitions. In 59 Nero opened his imperial schools where members of the upper classes were trained in among other things musical choruses. They devoted themselves to practising any talent they possessed (*Dio Cass.* 61. 19. 23). No age restriction was employed, but it seems that youngsters in particular were attracted to perform. During the Neronia of 60 young aristocrats trained in these very schools competed together with professionals. Several, older, senators also appeared on stage, apparently of their own free will. Calpurnius Piso, the conspirator against Nero in 65, was considered hardly any better than Nero (by the people in Rome), because he sang in tragedies (*Tac. Ann.* 15. 65). Outside Rome public opinion may have been more tolerant anyway. One of the accusations levelled against Thrasea Paetus was that he had refused to perform on stage during the *Iuvenalia* (in 59), but had participated in games held in Patavium by singing in tragic costume (*Tac. Ann.* 16. 21. 1–2).

In other instances we see two pantomimes, imperial favourites of Commodus and Caracalla respectively, being made honorary members of the *iuvenes* of Lanuvium (*CIL* 14, 2113) and Milan (*IRT* 606). The latter pantomime refers to himself as *Romae adolescentium productorum condiscipulo*, which should be translated as 'who was co-pupil of those adolescents produced at a spectacle in Rome'. Quite possibly that happened during the *ludi saeculares* of AD 204. The pantomimes' inclusion as honorary members of the *iuventus*, although basically the result of the whims of emperors who had a strong reputation for public performance themselves, does show the *iuventus*’ affinities with this kind of farcical humour. That one of the favourite occupations of the youth of Thysdrus was jesting (see above) indicates the strong tradition of mockery associated with the Roman *iuventus* from the fourth century BC onwards.
The two main monographs on the youth organizations in the Roman West, while basically using the same source material, come to different conclusions. Jaczynowska lays emphasis on their involvement in festivals and games and raises doubts about a regular military deployment of the youth. Ginestet sees a clear distinction between the *iuventus*’ paramilitary character in the militarized frontier-provinces and the non-military activities of the *iuvenes*.

This discrepancy in evaluation is easy to understand. Jaczynowska and Ginestet have attempted to ‘decipher’ the main purpose of Roman youth groups from a patchy and incomplete corpus. Evidence on early modern youth groups comes from their own statutes, chroniclers’ writings, police reports and judicial records. Such a variety of sources is lacking for the Roman world, which makes a search for general aims, purposes and activities far more difficult, if not impossible. Our information on Roman youth organizations is mainly of an epigraphic nature. The inscriptions were erected for a specific occasion: to express gratitude to a patron, the receiving of a share in *sportulae*, a dedication to a god or goddess, the building of *horrea*. The inscriptions, however, do not necessarily cover all the activities undertaken by a specific youth organization. If we take our epigraphic evidence at face value we have to conclude that religious worship was their main activity, since dedications far outnumber references to other ‘activities’. But was it? Surely that would be a simplistic conclusion forced on us by the evidence. We have to be aware of the fact that certain activities, like disturbing the order or engaging in rape, are not likely to be recorded in public inscriptions, although youth groups may have been involved in them. Furthermore, by comparing the *iuvenes* with other *collegia* we may surmise that other concepts, such as participating in activities together, celebrating communal meals and solidarity through membership were important values. All these items are lacking for the *iuvenes*, but are we allowed to conclude that they were not important to them?

We are on more solid ground when we conclude that their role in society was not a prominent one, at best fairly marginal. In inscriptions the *iuvenes* are never singled out as an important group in society. Their involvement in politics as a group was negligible. The only occasion when they showed their influence was in AD 238 during the uprising at Thysdrus against Maximinus. Whatever their motivations may have been during that period of upheaval, their activity did not bear a revolutionary stamp.

In spite of all the restrictions presented by the source material, however, I am still of the opinion that a study of the *iuvenes* as a separate group in society is a valid one. J.-P. Morel’s verdict: ‘It is, in my opinion, an example of a subject that, considering its real importance, has excessively detracted
the historians of Rome from researching more fundamental problems is unduly harsh. Thus far a successful study of the *iuvences* has been hindered by the assumption that youth organizations had a preparatory function: either for the army or for the municipal élite. It has been only on rare occasions that evidence for youth organizations has been applied to the wider scope of Roman society. What function did the age group of youth have in the society of the Empire? What was the relationship between the generations? In order to give our topic a broader basis three aspects may provide interesting points of departure: (1) youth and sexuality, (2) the distrust of youth’s behaviour by the older generation, (3) youth and festivals.

Young men came of age by ritually laying down the children’s toga (*toga praetexta*) and by donning the adult dress (*toga virilis*). This was usually done between the age of fourteen and eighteen. From the moment he was wearing the *toga virilis* the young man displayed all the physical signs of adulthood, but he was an adult with certain limitations. He was physically and sexually mature, but marriage and an entrance into ‘big’ politics still eluded him. Roman marriage patterns adhered to the Mediterranean type, where men married in their late twenties with wives at least five years their junior. In the meantime youngsters had to content themselves with prostitutes, courtisans and slaves to satisfy their sexual hunger. Given the importance attached to the status of the head of a household, unmarried youngsters had no fixed place in society. If wealthy, they might live in their own residence, separated from the family’s *domus*, but only when they married and had children could they call themselves head of a household. They might show great promise, they might even occasionally fulfil these promises at an early age, but they could also fall prey to the temptations of life by overspending and by irresponsible acts. For this reason, youngsters were distrusted by the older generation, unless, of course, they could mould themselves completely after an older role-model. Seneca’s advice—‘Cherish some man of high character, and keep him before your eyes all the time’ (*Ep.* 11. 8) — reflects some of the ‘wishful thinking’ of the older generation. Admittedly, some youngsters will have followed his advice. From the examples from Roman literature one will suffice here:

Work, cares and distractions — all are interrupted, cut short, and driven out of my mind, for the death of Junius Avitus has been a terrible blow. He had assumed the broad stripe of the senator in my house and had my support when standing for office, and such moreover was his affectionate regard for me that he took me for his moral guide and mentor. This is rare in the young people of today, few of whom will yield to age or authority as being their superior. They are born with knowledge and understanding of everything; they show neither respect nor desire to imitate, and set their own standards (*Plin.* *Ep.* 8. 23. 1–3).
Avitus died while already having been elected to the aedileship. Pliny here is not talking of an adolescent, but of someone whom we would consider to be a mature adult. In this description the difference in age evaporates behind the deliberate similarities in character between the young and the old man. This may have been an ideal (and sometimes idealized) mimicking of personalities which was only rarely achieved in real life.

By being in between the dependence of childhood and the total independence of adulthood, youth was an ambiguous period of life. A different reality speaks of a law to protect youngsters up to the age of twenty-five from creditors: youth was not trusted to handle its own financial affairs. The same distrust was felt in politics, made explicit in Maecenas’ speech to the emperor Augustus (Dio Cass. 52. 26. 1). The best they could hope for was to receive praise when they modelled themselves on a member of the older generation. If they did not do so and turned away from that role model they were castigated. The conclusion must surely be that youth was only a marginal force in Roman imperial society, compared to the mature heads of household who directed politics, economics and religion.

I would like to suggest that the importance of the iuvenes has to be sought in this marginality. The collegia iuvenum were not established to train young people for any role in society. The iuvenes were not trained to be recruits for the army and they were not trained to become municipal magistrates. Youth organizations were just entertainment clubs, where people of like age and mind could do military exercises, hunt or enjoy athletic contests. The iuvenes were useful safety-valve societies which we also encounter in early modern Europe. If there really was tension between the generations in Roman society (and many texts prove that there was) without actually generating a conflict between young and old, the iuvenes were able to find an outlet for this in their legitimate involvement in mockery during festivals. It is only their ambiguous position in society that can explain their role in jestes and charivaris. In conclusion, if we want to evaluate the role of the iuvenes in Roman imperial society we have to take these observations into consideration. This is a thing Jaczynowska and Ginestet due to their minimalist approach have failed to do.

Addendum

After the completion of the manuscript, W.J. Slater’s study on the Pantomime Riots (Classical Antiquity 13 [1994] 120–44) appeared. In his article he emphasizes the bonds between Roman knights and pantomimes. These bonds were strong, he claims, because ‘some knights, at least, were themselves pantomimes’ (131). I agree with most of his conclusions with regard to the involvement of the upper classes in the theatre (in spite of Tacitus’ and Seneca’s condemnation, there was much enthusiasm for performing). However, he tends to underestimate the Roman tendency to
distinguish between amateurs and professionals. Slater refers to Cicero’s appreciation for dancing movements (as useful for the orator) and, in one case, for young men playing ball (135), but note Att. 16. 5 where he is rather condescending towards Greek competitions and appreciates the low level of attendance when they are held. Is that difference in evaluation not due to the traditional dichotomy between amateurs enjoying otium and professionals appearing on the stage?

Relevant to my article, furthermore, is Slater’s argument on skiamachia, which I interpreted as ‘demonstration fights with blunted weapons’ (see note 46), as shadow fighting in armour and with real weapons. He refers to Posid. ap. Athen. 4. 154a, describing Celts. Dio Cass. 65. 15. 2 requires that both opponents wear armour and use weapons (δπλες). Slater claims that skiamachia usually denotes shadow boxing or -wrestling (references in his note 79), and implies that the dancing movements (at least in the Greek world) received most of the attention (133, n. 79), but is that to the point in this case? It is far more likely that the Romans came up with their own version of skiamachia, placing more emphasis on gladiatorial skills (certainly so in the case of Dio Cass. 65. 15. 2) than on the dancing movements. Titus’ love for gladiatorial fights was well known (cf. Suet. Tit. 8. 2: ‘studium armaturae Thraecum’). The exhibition of young men in arms during Ianuvalia, including Titus’ performance in such games in Reate, must have been to show the audience that they had mastered several techniques usually displayed by gladiators. In the end, what is the difference between my ‘demonstration fights with blunted weapons’ and Slater’s ‘pseudo-gladiatorial activity with arma lusoria’? (Slater, note 79)?

Notes

1. The number of cities where iuvenes have been attested is increasing slowly, cf. AE 1989, 420 from Singilia Barba (Baetica), where a municipal magistrate is said to have organized ludos iu(v)enum in theatro. The inscription is dated to AD 109. How dangerous it is to base an argument on an assumed lack of epigraphic evidence is shown by a remark in D. Ladage, ‘Collegia iuvenum — Ausbildung einer municipalen Elite?’, Chiron 9 (1979) 343: Ladage makes a link between the development of collegia in general and youth organizations. Since he signals only one organization from Spain, he argues: ‘Dort, wo es [the phenomenon of collegia] anscheinend wenig verbreitet war, existierten auch kaum iuvenes-Organisationen. So findet sich z. B. in Spanien nur ein einziger Beleg’. At the moment we know of at least 5 different youth-groups in Spain, and there is no reason to assume that there were not more. Cf. Sábino Perea Yebenes, ‘Asociaciones de Jóvenes e Hispania. Notas a propósito de un libro reciente’, Géron 10 (1992) 295-305, who cautiously argues against viewing youth groups in Hispania as local militias.


4. See *AE* 1935, 27 from Paestum where the *iuvenes* honour a *summarius*, a gladiator released from 'active service', and *ILS* 6635 from Spoleto in which a *pamnus summarius* is honoured. For an explanation of the latter terminology see Juv. 3. 158. It is to be noted that in the senatus consultum from Larinum senators and equestrians are prohibited from *pamnus referre*. The text is edited and commented upon by B. Levick, 'The Senatus Consulturn from Larinum', *JRS* 73 (1983) 97–115.

5. Note that there is a small mistake in Ginestet's register, where he lists the young man as a twelve-year old (nr. 205, p. 256). Allmer/Dissard, *Inscriptons antiques*, nr. 139 mentions another *iuvenis optimus*, but in this case no age is given.

6. Admittedly, Ginestet remarks that certainty about his being a member of a *collegium* cannot be established (comm. ad locum, nr. 159, p. 246: 'Pourquoi et comment est-il *iuvenis*?'), but if the case is dubious (to say the least) why include him in the register? The argument on p. 76 does not convince me. Ginestet is hardly to be trusted when he tells his readers that there are only 8 'cas isoles' that are dubious (76). What about *CIL* 11, 1791 (Volaterrae); *AE* 1978, 633 (Carnuntum) and the three inscriptions from Lugdunum quoted above? The latter are not isolated cases, but in order to strengthen his argument Ginestet draws upon the fact that there are three of them, although in themselves they do not contain any link with a *iuvenis*.

7. V. Saladino, '1 Didii di Saturnii', *Athenaeum* 55 (1977) 322–29. The two inscriptions are *AE* 1990, 96 and *CIL* 11, 2650, both discussed by Saladino on p. 326. Both texts mention municipal magistrates who are called *iuvenis optimus* et *amantissimus*. These inscriptions have not been included in *L'Année Epigraphique* of 1979. Ginestet evidently missed these texts because he has not read Saladino's article.

8. Ginestet's argument on p. 77 that he was a *decursio*, which reflects the involvement of the *iuvenes* in politics that we see in the election programmata from Pompeii ('le rôle électoral du terme *iuvenis* est attesté') is not convincing.

9. On Ginestet's assumption that *iuvenis* per se indicates a member of a *collegium* the following inscriptions should also have been included in his register: *CIL* 6, 9609 (Rome); *CIL* 5, 1192 (Aquileia); *CIL* 5, 3189 (Vicetia); *BE* 8, 372 (Putoëi); *CIL* 9, 2228 (Teselia); *CIL* 9, 2839 (Volscini); *CIL* 9, 3948 (Alba Fucens); *CIL* 9, 5412 (Firmum Picenam); *CIL* 11, 915 (Mutinana); *AE* 1957, 3 (Tarraco); *CIL* 12, 2611 (Genava); *CIL* 12, 3502 (Nemansus); *CIL* 8, 9065, 9077, 9084, 9142 and 20758 (Auzia); *CIL* 8, 646 (Mactar); *CIL* 8, 726 (El-khima); *CIL* 8, 1027 (Carthago); *CIL* 8, 9680 (Cartenza); *CIL* 8, 11340 (Suétula); *CIL* 8, 21564 (Choros Breucorum); *CIL* 8, 22971 (Hadrumetum); *CIL* 8, 26596 (Targuia); *Inscriptions latines de l'Algerie*, 1837 (Thuburcis numidarum); *Inscriptions latines de l'Algérie*, 2221 and 2245 (Madaurus). This list does not aim to be complete.

10. A study of *iuvenis* in inscriptions may perhaps shed some light on the value of the term in commemorative texts. My guess is that it was a honourable reference to the vitality and strength of the deceased, whatever his age.


12. Here Ginestet is taking issue with Jaczynowska who argued that the terminological differences have been given undue importance (p. 15 and note 27). Ginestet also argues that Jaczynowska's focus has been too much on the *collegium iuvenum*, thereby
ignoring the *iuventutes*.

13. Ginestet (above note 3) 164: ‘Pendant longtemps les *iuventutes* des provinces jouèrent le double rôle qu’avaient joué la *iuventus* de Rome au début de la République, puis celle des municipalités voisins restés fidèles pendant les guerres puniques: source de recrutement en légionnaires (et non spécialement en cadres) et troupes suppletives’. As far as the deployment of a local militia is concerned most scholars refer to AE 1928, 28 from Saldae, where six *iuvenes* (but not a *collegium* or a *iuventus*) are said to have pushed back a group of marauding Moors.

14. Ginestet (above note 3) 164–6. Ginestet also refers to activities connected with military purposes, although the record is not impressive, such as road building in the Aquileian region (pp. 165 and 200–3); the building of a storage room in Beda Vicus (*CIL* 13, 4131); the erection of granaries in Mactar (*AE* 1958, 172) and the building of *portam murum* in Carnuntum (*AE* 1936, 132).

15. Ginestet (above note 3) 129.


17. Ginestet (above note 3) 163: ‘Le fait doit être considéré comme non établi’.

18. Ginestet (above note 3) 123 argues that membership was obligatory, but that some aristocratic youngsters were released from this obligation, which consequently created problems of recruitment and opened up an avenue for non-aristocratic youngsters to join up.


21. Ginestet (above note 3) 165.

22. A specialist scholar such as R.W. Davies, ‘Joining the Roman Army’, in David Breeze/Valerie A. Maxfield (eds.) *Service in the Roman Army*, New York 1989, 3–31 does not discuss the possibility of a preliminary training in the *iuventus* before joining the Roman army.

23. There is only one inscription, mentioned by Ginestet, referring to a young man (*iuvenis*) being in the army: *AE* 1978, 633 from Carnuntum. The inscription reads as follows: ‘L. Roscius L. f. Publ./m. leg. XV Apol./st. III, an. XXII. T. Lucrecius fra. de suo pos./H. s. e. iu(venis) f. /... f.’. According to Ginestet this is one of the rare instances of a *iuvenis* in the army (p. 262). He does not seem to realize that this identification clashes with his earlier argument on p. 129 where he argued that, being once recruited into the army, the *iuvenis* had to leave the *iuventus*. A combination of membership of a youth organization and full-time employment in the army seems to be out of the question.

24. Rostovtzeff (above note 16) 90 took the *iuventes* for ‘die Blüte der municipalen Jugend’.


27. Jacques (above note 26) 220.


29. Cf. Peter Garnsey, Social Status and Legal Privilege in the Roman Empire, Oxford 1970, 262/3. Ginestet’s suggestion (above note 3) 125 that in these listings personal rank was ignored in favour of function (first come the political representatives of the city, then the religious caretakers and after them the military wing) is ingenious, but, nevertheless, does not tally with the fact that personal rank (or, rather, group rank) and not function decided the order in which the sportulae were to be divided and what amount each group received.

30. Jacques (above note 26) 224. He attempts to prove this argument in the case of the uprising of the iuvenes at Thysdrus. This theory is definitely more convincing than Ginestet’s suggestion (above note 3) 126 of a mixed membership of aristocrats and non-aristocrats (‘le recrutement des iuvenes engloberait donc l’ensemble des iuvenes dans la cité, quel que soit leur rang social’), which goes against everything we know of the workings of Roman social structure. Finally, both Jacques (223) and Ginestet (128) emphasize that the blossom of the municipal élite is the group we encounter least of all in our evidence.


32. See Panciera (above note 31) 761.

33. This erroneous assumption is still adhered to: see for instance E. Eyben, Restless Youth in Ancient Rome, London 1993, 113, who argues that it can safely (my italics!) be assumed that members of collegia iuvenum were of upper-class extraction and between 15 and 20 years old. In a footnote he refers without comment to Pleket, Jaczynowska and Ginestet as if their views would support his hypothesis. In fact, they all argue for a lack of statutory upper age limits and claim that in age the iuvenes cover the age group of both ephebes and neoi.

34. D. Ladage (above note 1) 326–7.


36. I have tried to argue the unfeasibility of such a comparison in Ancient Youth. The Ambiguity of Youth and the Absence of Adolescence in Greco-Roman Society, Amsterdam 1991, pp. 101–16.

37. Ostia, Tusculum, Anagnia, Velitrae, Amiternum, Reate, Ameria, Carsulae, Spoletium, Lucus Feroniae; see Table V in Ginestet (above note 3) 296.

38. Ginestet (above note 3) 103.

39. Tert., De an. 58, 5: ‘morsus ferarum ornamenta sunt iuventutis’. Cf. St. Cyprian, ad Don. 7, where he indicates that iuvenes engaged in beast-hunts participated for reasons of sport and not for money.


42. Ginestet (above note 3) 153 argues as follows: ‘M. Pleket a voulu déduire du fait que Némésis était en particulier révérée par des gladiateurs que l’on célébrait des jeux dans cette ville. Némésis était avant tout déesse de la vengeance, puis de la chasse, et c’est aller bien loin des sources que d’aboutir à une telle conclusion sur la seule base de cette dénomination’. In his article, however, Pleket did not focus on gladiators, but on one of the main occupations, and an important way of being introduced into adult life at that, of young men all over the Greco-Roman world.

43. Thus Ginestet (above note 3) 173–5.

44. Cf. G. Ville, La giadiature en Occident des origines à la mort de Domitien, Rome 1981, p. 218: ‘(...') je croirai volontiers que ce personnage était l’arbitre des skionachies de leurs iuvenalia'. The possibility of a fencing-master is discounted by Ville, who argues that the language of the text reminds us of a ‘bienfaiteur’ rather than of an ‘employé’. According to Louis Robert, Les gladiateurs dans l’Orient grec, Paris 1940, p. 263 the summarudis was a exemplary gladiator, who had been declared a free man and acted as an ‘arbitre de combats’. The possibility of a combination of the two activities is argued by Louis Robert, ‘Une vision de Perpétue martyre’, OMS 5, pp. 806 and 825–6. An, as yet, unpublished inscription from Lucus Feroniae mentions a summaru(la) iuvenum, cf. Gian Luca Gregori, Epigrafia anfiteatrale dell’ Occidente Romano, II, ad nr. 36.

45. Ginestet (above note 3) 153: ‘l’escrime peut fort bien n’être qu’un sport pratiqué en privé’.

46. G. Ville (above note 44) 216, note 99 indicates that Dio Cassius reports this event as occurring in the year AD 75, ‘c’est-à-dire à un moment où Titus n’était plus un iuvenis’. If Titus was still in his thirties, however, he could be called iuvenis without any embarrassment. In inscriptions iuvenis is used for people aged fifty, and the younger Gordian, although of middle age, is also called iuvenis.


48. Cf. Della Corte (above note 47) 260. H. Devijver and F. van Wonterghem (‘Neue Belege zum ‘Campus’ der römischen Städte in Italien und im Westen’, ZPE 60 [1985] 148 argue that the campus in the cities of the Latin West was a copy (‘Nachbildung’) of the Campus Martius and had the same function as the palaestra in the Greek Hellenistic cities. Furthermore, they see [157] the campus as the training ground for the local iuventus and for the leading members of the municipal élite who aspired to a military career in the militiae equestres. In their view [153] the term campus seems to have had only a non-military, municipal connotation.

49. Ginestet (above note 3) 155: ‘Nous connaissons enfin celle du prælinarius, qui ne s’explique que si les jeunes gens dont il s’occupe pratiquent un combat avec simulacre de mise à mort, c’est-à-dire un combat de gladiateurs et non un escrime'; cf. p. 142: ‘... mais on ne pouvait demander à des jeunes gens pratiquant les jeux de l’aire à titre de divertissement de risquer leur vie à chaque combat’.

50. See B. Levick (above note 4) 102.

51. See B. Levick (above note 4) 102. In the senatus consultum from Larinum the wording is as follows: ‘aut ut pinnas gladiatorum raperet aut rudem tollere aliove quod eius rei simile mai[istraret] etc. (I. 10). Levick concludes that raperet suggests snatching in action, referring to Lucilius 122 as quoted by the scholiast: ‘cum septem incolumnis pinnis redit ac recepit se'. Redem tollere (‘to get the foil of someone’).
is here used in contrast with the earlier *sepugnaret* (‘fight to the death’). According to Levick the entire clause in line 10 refers to the legislators providing for amateurs who thought that they could escape the ban if they took part only in contests not intended to be to the death, or in preliminary training bouts.

52. G. Ville (above note 44) 217, note 100.

53. It is quite problematic how to interpret the reference to his being a *comes ursarius*. Was he a trainer of bears, or did he go out into the wild countryside to hunt them?

54. G. Ville (above note 44) 268. The text actually has *vestarius* which Ville emends to *bestiarius*, which seems to be correct. On the other hand, I detect nothing in the inscription which could warrant Ville’s conclusion that he was an aristocrat.

55. Cf. G. Ville (above note 44) 268, note 89.


57. Cf. Gilbert Picard, ‘La villa du taureau à Silin en Tripolitaine’, *CRAI* 1985, pp. 227-241. For the bull in African mosaics see now also J.M. Blazquez Martinez, G. Lopez Monteagudo, M.L. Neira Gimenez and M.P. Nicolas Pedraz, ‘Pavimentos africanos con espectaculos de toros. Estudio comparativo a proposito del mosaico de Silin (Tripolitania)’, *Ant. Afr.* 25 (1990) 155-205. Bulls were used not only in fights, but also in other spectacular sports: the so-called taurokathapsia, where riders (especially Thessalians) jumped from horses onto the bull’s neck to bring the animal to its knees. Caesar was the first to introduce this spectacle in Rome (Pliny the Elder, *HN* 8. 182) and it was staged by Claudius (Suet. *Claud.* 21) and Nero (Dio Cass. 61. 9. 1). For *desultores* staged by Caligula see *AE* 1983, 95. For the Greek evidence see L. Robert, ‘Deux épigrammes de Philippe de Thessalonique’, *OMS* 7, pp. 507-31.


59. Horse-races for the youth were organized by Julius Caesar (Suet. *Jul.* 39. 2: ‘Circensiibus spatio circi ab utraque parte producto et in gyrum euripo addito quadrigas bigasque et equos desultorios agitaverunt nobilissimi juvenes’) and by Augustus (Suet. *Aug.* 43. 2: ‘in circi aurigas cumoresque et confectores ferarum, et normunquam ex nobilissima iuventute, produxit’). Other evidence is provided by an inscription in which Sextus Veturilus Lavicanus from Rome who was a former *auriga* is honoured by his *coniuvenes* (*AE* 1971, 44).


62. Liv. 7. 2. 11: ‘postquam lege hac fabularum a risu ac soluto ioco res avocabatur, iuventus histrionibus fabelarum iactu relictio, ipsa inter se, more antiquo, ridicula integesta versibus iactitare coepit; quae exodia postea appellata, consertaque fabellis potissimum Atellanis sunt’. Cf. Val Max. 2. 4. 4: ‘verum, ut est mos hominum
parvula initia pertinaci studio prosequendi, venerabilibus erga deos verbis iuventus rudi atque incomposito motu corporum gestus adiecit, eaque res ludium ex Etruria arcessendi causam dedit'. The fact that Livy relates the youth's attitude to dancing and Val. Max. to the use of carmina does not impinge on the fact that the mix of the sacred and the burlesque is closely connected with the iuventus, cf. J.-P. Morel, 'La iuventus et les origines du théâtre romain', REL 47 (1963) 216–7.


66. Ovid. Fast. 5. 621 ff. (esp. 625: ‘cum Saturia terra vocata est’, which could, of course, merely imply in the good old days or long ago). In lines 633–5 Ovid has the following to say about the practice: ‘Pars putat, ut ferrent iuvenes suffragia soli, pontibus infirmos praecipitasse senes. Corpora post decies senos qui credidit annos missa neci, sceleris crimine damnat avos’. Ovid relates that instead of humans men of straw were thrown into the water (631). The whole passage is muddled, although there seems to be a trace of the old practice that young men threw old men into the river. Cf. also Lact. Div. Inst. 1. 21. 6, basing himself on Varro; Lact. Ep. ad Pent. 23. 2.

67. Lily Ross Taylor, Roman Voting Assemblies. From the Hannibalic War to the Dictatorship of Caesar, Michigan 1990, p. 92: ‘I am inclined to accept this meaning of sexagenarii de ponte, for we can imagine such a claim from iuniores worn out from long service of war (... )’. In a footnote she adds that it does not mean that voters over sixty were disfranchised, but that their rights to vote were challenged.

68. J.P. Néraudau, ‘Sexagenarii de ponte: réflexions sur la genèse d’un proverbe’, REL 56 (1978) 159–74. Cf. also A. Guarino, ‘Depontani Senes’, AAN 90 (1979) 535–9. On the ritual killing of sixty year-olds in the ancient world see G. Dumézil, ‘Quelques cas anciens de ‘liquidation des vieillards’: histoire et survivances’, in Mélanges F. de Visscher III, Brussels 1950, pp. 447–455. We can recognize charivaresque rituals in Catullus 17, where the bridge in Verona figures prominently. Cf. most recently U. Carratello, ‘Le donne veronesi di Catullo’, Giornale Italiano di Filologia 44 (1992) 183–203. Throwing people into the water from bridges was one of the favourite forms of humiliation practised by the emperor Caligula (Suet. Calig. 20; Calig. 32. 1 and Claud. 9. 2). Note also the references to the bridge and mockery in Greek society quoted by J.P. Néraudau in la jeunesse dans la littérature et les institutions de la Rome républicaine, Paris 1975, pp. 318–320. Emperors who had been unpopular were either threatened with being plunged into the Tiber or were in effect thrown into the river after their death as a form of disgraceful punishment. After the death of Tiberius people shouted ‘Tiberium in Tiberim’ (Suet. Tib. 75. 1). In other cases it was either the public sewer or the Tiber, see Suet. Vit. 17. 2 and HA Elag. 17. Punishment is also an issue in an anecdote relating to Augustus and the tutor and attendants of his son Gaius who had been committing acts of arrogance in the provinces (Suet. Aug. 67. 2). In an amusing anecdote Claudius became so vexed and irritated by the orator Julius Gallicus, who
was pleading a case, that he ordered him to be thrown into the Tiber. When a man who had been left in the lurch by the same Gallicus approached Domitius Afer for assistance the latter replied: 'And who told you that I am a better swimmer than he?'

Dio Cass. 61. 33. 8.

70. Cicero in his defence of Plancius refers to a legitimate gang-rape by young men of a ballet-girl during a festival in Atina (Planc. 20). Tacitus (Hist. 4. 45. 1–2) gives a very clear-cut example of a charivari. In Siena the senator Manlius Patrunius was confronted by an angry mob. A mock funeral was celebrated and insults and abuse were hurled at the senate as a whole. Unfortunately Tacitus is rather vague about the reasons for this behaviour. He indicates that the city's magistrates (iussu magistratuum) were somehow involved, but he does not tell us what triggered it. For comparison see the mock funeral banquet organized by the emperor Domitian, where the guests, equestrians and senators, were scared out of their wits (Dio Cass. 67. 9).

Several emperors, furthermore, went to the more obscure parts of Rome to beat people up at night, or to strip them off their clothes: Caligula (Suet. Calig. 11), Nero (Suet. Nero 26; Tac. Ann. 13. 25), Otho (Suet. Otho 2), Vitellius (Dio Cass. 61. 8. 1), Verus (HA 4. 6) and Commodus (HA 3. 7). Note that these were all emperors who received a bad press from historiographers. Apparently this characteristic was part and parcel of the repertoire to identify a tyrant, traits of whom were already revealed in early youth, but compare Apuleius Met. 2, 18: 'vesana factio nobilissimorum iuvenum' who disturb the peace at night and leave many dead bodies behind.

71. During the burning of the city of Cremona in AD 69 old men and women, who had no value as loot, were dragged off to raise a laugh ('in ludibrium trahebant'; Tac. Hist. 1. 33. 1). Cf. also the vicious attacks on Claudius' deformities in Sen. Apoc. 5 and 8.

72. In Vienna (France) we find a mosaic alluding to the scaenici asiatici, 'actors of Asiaticus', undoubtedly referring to D. Velleius Asaticus, the first Roman senator to come from that city. The mosaic represents Hercules killing the Nemean lion, eight nude athletes and eight theatrical masks. The related inscription runs as follows: 'scaenici/ asiatici/mi ei et/ qui in eo/dem cui poresunt/ vivesi sine f/ceunt'. Cf. M. le Glay, 'Hercule et la iuventus viennoise. À propos de la mosaique des athletes vainqueurs', BSAF 1382, pp. 63–5. Do we have a reference here to Hercules as the divine buffoon, as he is portrayed for instance in Seneca's Apocolocyntosis? The emperor Claudius called Asaticus palaestricum prodigium (CIL 13, 1668), which makes it rather likely that at least part of the iuventus in Vienna was occasionally engaged in acting and in athletics. By sheer luck we are informed about a discussion in the emperor Trajan's consilium about the demoralizing influence of athletics on the people in Vienna. The local authorities, Pliny is happy to report, have already taken steps to stop the contests (Plin. Ep. 4. 22. 1 ff.). It is to be noted, furthermore, that by 1500 in Paris the youth organization, called Enfants-sans-souci, headed by a Mère Sotte ('a Mother Fool', but represented by a male), was a semi-professional group of actors. Somewhat later, in the middle of the sixteenth century, their role had been taken over by a Confrérie des Sots ('Association of Fools'). Cf. Natalie Zemon Davis, 'The Reasons of Misrule', in idem Society and Culture in Early Modern France, Stanford 1975, p. 111 and note 59.

74. For the status of the actor see most recently Michèle Ducos, 'La condition des acteurs à Rome. Données juridiques et sociales', in Jürgen Blänsdorf (above note 61) 19–35.


76. J.-P. Morel (above note 60) 530.

77. For the collegia see most recently Frank M. Ausbüttel, Untersuchungen zu den Vereinen im Westen des römischen Reiches, Kallmünz 1982, who deliberately excludes the collegia iunvenum from his study (p. 14). The best introduction is still J.P. Waltzing, Étude historique sur les corporations professionnelles chez les romains, four volumes, Louvain 1895–1900. The topic is definitely in need of a modern sociological study.

78. Cf. Ginestet (above note 4) 179.

79. Quoted by E. Eyben (above note 33) 114.

**Acta Classica**

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