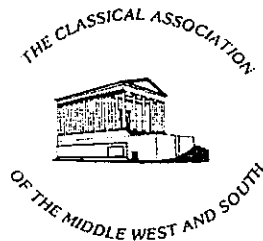


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THREE ORATORS AND A FLAWED ARGUMENT  
(HOR. SAT. 1.10.27-30)

*scilicet oblitus patriaeque patrisque Latini,  
cum Pedius causas exsudet Publicola atque  
Corvinus, patriis intermiscere petita  
verba foris malis, Canusini more bilinguis.*

In a much-discussed passage of his programmatic *Tenth Satire*, Horace rejects the use of Greek words in his Latin satires by pointing to contemporary Roman orators who were well-known champions of *Latinitas*, pure idiomatic Latin. The exact meaning of these lines, *Satires* 1.10. 27-30, has baffled readers since late antiquity. In particular, the precise name and identity of the orators Horace mentions have been the subject of an intense debate that started with the ancient scholiasts and is still in full swing. Is Horace speaking of a certain Pedius Publicola and Corvinus, or is he talking about Pedius and Publicola Corvinus? In this paper, I will show that Horace, first of all, does not list two, but three eminent orators of his time, Q. Pedius, M. Valerius Messalla Corvinus, and the hitherto overlooked L. Gellius Publicola, thereby adding to our scant information on two of the three. Secondly, the satirist's reference to Messalla Corvinus subtly hints that his entire argument against the use of Greek is seriously flawed.

The interpretation of the passage turns on the correct understanding of *atque*. Most commentators, including the ancient scholiasts, have read line 28 as a series of two names that are linked by the conjunction *atque*, Pedius Publicola and (Messalla) Corvinus.<sup>1</sup> This is problematic, however, because the *gentilicium* Pedius is nowhere else connected with the *cognomen* Publicola.<sup>2</sup>

Accordingly, some scholars, notably Münzer and most recently Fedeli, take *atque* as a postpositive *atque*, a not infrequent phenomenon in Latin poetry.<sup>3</sup> The two orators are not Pedius Publicola and Corvinus, they argue, but Pedius and Publicola

<sup>1</sup> Thus Porph. p. 282, 10-13 H.; Ps.Acro II, p. 109, 20-21 K.; Heindorf 1818: 213; Palmer 1883: 232; Kießling and Heinze 1959: 165; Fraenkel 1957: 135; Rudd 1966: 94; Brown 1993: 186; Freudenburg 1993: 167.

<sup>2</sup> See RE 19 (1938): 38-43 s.v. "Pedius 1-7" (F. Münzer *et al.*).

<sup>3</sup> Cf., for example, Hor. *Sat.* 1.5.4; 1.6.111.

Corvinus.<sup>4</sup> Here too, the problem is that the friend of Horace who is clearly meant by the name Corvinus, the famous orator M. Valerius Messalla Corvinus (cf. *Sat.* 1.6.42; 1.10.85), seems not to have used the cognomen Publicola as a part of his name.<sup>5</sup>

The only apparent exception occurs in a panegyric elegy, composed on the occasion of Messalla's triumph in 27 B.C.E., which has been preserved under Vergil's name. There, the unknown poet writes ([Verg.] *Catal.* 9. 39-40):

multa nec immeritis donavit (sc. Roma) praemia alumnis,  
praemia Messallis maxima Publicolis.

(Rome) bestowed many rewards upon her sons, who certainly deserved (them), (and) the greatest rewards on the Messallae Publicolae (or rather: men like Messalla Publicola).

These lines come immediately after an allusion to the expulsion of the last Roman king. A certain P. Valerius Messalla Publicola had played an important role in the overthrowing of the king, and he was rewarded with a consulship in the first year of the Roman republic. The verses serve to connect the contemporary triumphator Messalla with the fame of this mythical ancestor.<sup>6</sup> The poet's use of the plural *Messallis Publicolis* does not prove, however, that M. Valerius Messalla Corvinus himself ever took up the name Publicola.

The evidence to the contrary, in fact, is overwhelming. Messalla's name appears in a number of inscriptions, and it is quoted numerous times by contemporary and later authors.<sup>7</sup> Wherever these sources list Messalla's full name, it always takes the form M. Valerius Messalla Corvinus, as, for example, in CIL 6.1375, 6.2039, 9.4191, and Cass. Dio ind. 50.<sup>8</sup> Our sources also attest that Messalla had adopted the *agnomen* Corvinus by 43 B.C.E. at the latest (Cic. *ad Brut.* 1.12.1). In addition, the *Fasti Amiternini* (CIL 9.4191, from the

<sup>4</sup> Thus Fritzsche 1875: 218; Rohden and Dessau 1898: 20 nr. 147 (= Rohden); Münzer 1938: 40; Wiseman 1974: 123; Fedeli 1993: 516.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. Rohden and Dessau 1898: 363-64; Kießling and Heinze 1959: 165; Hanslik 1955: 131, ll. 23-25; Westendorp Boerma 1963: 21.

<sup>6</sup> An anonymous referee of *The Classical Journal* makes the interesting observation that 27 B.C.E., the year of Messalla Corvinus' triumph, was also the first year of Augustus' "Restored Republic". By giving the contemporary triumphator Messalla the *cognomen* of his ancestor Messalla Publicola, the unknown poet of the 9<sup>th</sup> elegy created a suggestive parallel to another first year of the Republic, the one in which Messalla Publicola served as one of Rome's first consuls. While Horace, in theory, could have done the same, the parallel, as the referee also mentions, would have made far less sense in 35 B.C.E., when the first book of Horace's *Satires* was published, and in the context of *Sat.* 1.10.

<sup>7</sup> Listed by Rohden and Dessau 1898: 363 nr. 90. See also the testimonia and fragments regarding Messalla's work as an orator in Malcovati 1979: 529-534.

<sup>8</sup> Cass. Dio ind. 51 offers the same names in a slightly different order.

Tiberian period) record his name as M. Valerius Messalla Corvinus in an entry that refers to the years 31 B.C.E. There is, thus, no indication in our sources that Messalla Corvinus himself ever used Publicola as part of his name, neither at the time of the publication of Horace's first book of *Satires* (35 B.C.E.) nor at any other time.<sup>9</sup>

There is, however, one contemporary who is often referred to simply as Publicola. This is the politician L. Gellius Publicola,<sup>10</sup> who seems to have been, if we can trust Livy (*Ep.* 122) and Cassius Dio (47.24.5), a brother of Messalla Corvinus.<sup>11</sup> Horace clearly refers to him a couple of lines further down in our *Tenth Satire* where the poet counts Messalla and his brother among the addressees of his satiric poetry (*te, Messalla, tuo cum fratre, Sat.* 1.10.85).<sup>12</sup> *Publicola / atque Corvinus* in *Sat.* 1.10.28-29 points to the same pair of brothers.

T.P. Wiseman is the only scholar who in recent times has seriously considered the possibility that Horace could speak of three, not two men in our passage. He felt, however, compelled to reject this interpretation out of hand on the grounds that "the Latin is against this."<sup>13</sup> Yet Leumann, Hofmann, and Szantyr would disagree with him on this point. According to their standard *Lateinische*

<sup>9</sup> It has been suggested to me that Messalla could, in theory, have adopted the name Publicola for a short time in the thirties, only to drop it again almost immediately afterwards. This seems highly unlikely. It is true that it was a practice of the time to revive older family *cognomina*. M. Valerius Messalla Corvinus himself, for example, appropriated the *agnomen* of a M. Valerius Maximus who was consul three times, in 312, 289, and 286 B.C.E., cf. Skidmore 1996: 116. Yet despite a relative wealth of sources concerning Messalla, there is simply no evidence that the orator himself ever experimented with the *agnomen* Publicola.

<sup>10</sup> Cf., for example, Liv. *Ep.* 122 (*Publicolam*), Vell. Pat. 2.85.2 (*Publicolae*), Plut. *Ant.* 65.1 and 66.2 (Ποπλικόλας). Once, Dio also refers to him as Γέλλιος Ποπλικόλας (47.24.3).

<sup>11</sup> Since L. Gellius Publicola was a son of L. Gellius (cos. 72 B.C.E.), it is generally assumed that he was only Messalla's half-brother (their mother must have had two husbands, the elder Gellius and Messalla's father, M. Valerius Messalla, cos. 61 or 53 B.C.E.), cf. Münzer 1912: 1004, ll. 20-26 and see the family tree in Wiseman 1974: 128. Badian 1988: 8 n. 11 has suggested a better explanation for the fact that Gellius is called Messalla's brother and bears a *cognomen* that is more commonly associated with the Valerii. Badian speculates that L. Gellius Publicola was in fact Messalla's brother by birth and only later adopted by the older L. Gellius.

<sup>12</sup> Only Hanslik 1955: 133, ll. 1-3 identifies this brother as M. Valerius Messalla Potitus (cos. 29 B.C.E.), on the grounds that L. Gellius Publicola, in contrast to Horace's other addressees, was not a writer himself.

<sup>13</sup> Wiseman 1974: 123. Before him, Karl Nipperdey, in a University of Jena Program from 1857, also interpreted our passage as talking about three, not two orators, cf. Nipperdey 1877: 494-95. He failed, however, to name any parallels for the use of *atque* except for Hor. *Sat.* 1.5.4, where *atque* clearly is postpositive (*ibid.*, 482-83). In 1872, based on the erroneous reading of an Acropolis inscription, Nipperdey even dissociated himself from his earlier identification of Publicola with L. Gellius Publicola (Nipperdey 1877: 539-40). Hermann Dessau opted either to take Publicola separately, with Nipperdey's earlier publication, or to connect it with Pedius, cf. Rohden and Dessau 1898: 364.

*Grammatik*, *atque* can introduce the last member of a longer, otherwise asyndetic list.<sup>14</sup> This usage is especially common in Archaic Latin, but the *Thesaurus linguae Latinae* article *atque* cites numerous later examples as well.<sup>15</sup>

Most examples occur in Roman comedy. Plautus writes, for example, *advenio ex Seleucia, Macedonia, Asia, atque Arabia* (*Trin.* 845); *me, te, atque hos omnes* (*Cur.* 74); and *ubi tibi sit lepide victibus, vino, atque unguentis* (*Bac.* 1131). Terence similarly offers *vestem, aurum, atque ancillas* (*Hau.* 893). An example from tragedy can be found in a fragment from the *Alcmeo* of Ennius, which contains the series, *morbo, exilio, atque inopia* (*scen.* 22 Vahlen<sup>3</sup> = fr. 14 Jocelyn).

The historian Sallust imitates many features of Archaic Latin. Accordingly, his writings contain numerous asyndetic lists whose last element is introduced by *atque*. A small sample may suffice: *Omnis homines ... ab odio, amicitia, ira, atque misericordia vacuos esse decet* (*Cat.* 51.1); *armis, cadaveribus, cruore, atque luctu omnia conpleri* (*Cat.* 51.9); *facies ... varia, incerta, foeda, atque miserabilis* (*Jug.* 51.1); *virtus, gloria, atque alia optanda* (*Jug.* 64.1).<sup>16</sup>

Once in a while, the same use of *atque* can be observed in purely classical prose writers too. In a letter to Cato, for instance, Cicero writes, *mores, instituta, atque vitam* (*Fam.* 15.4.14), and in his *Gallie War*, Caesar has, *Eburones, Nervii, Aduatuci, atque horum socii et clientes* (*Gal.* 5.39.3). The usage is not limited to prose, though. Examples from classical poetry include Lucretius, who writes, *odor, fumus, vapor, atque aliae res* (*Lucr.* 4.90), and even Horace himself. In one of his *Epistles*, Horace chooses *atque* to introduce an asyndetic list that only differs from the parallels mentioned above in that the last member of the list consists of two elements, the emotions *libido* and *ira*, which are connected by *et*: *seditione, dolis, scelere, atque libidine et ira* (*Epist.* 2.2.15).<sup>17</sup>

The fact that the verb, *exsudet* (28), is in the singular does not create a problem either. In connection with groups of several subjects, Kühner and Stegmann remark: "If a verb (or a part of it) is

<sup>14</sup> Leumann, Hofmann, and Szantyr 1997: 478. Cf. also Kühner and Stegmann 1982: 2.32.

<sup>15</sup> Cf. Klotz 1900-1906: 1055-58. Unfortunately, Klotz does not separate this particular usage of *atque* from those in which *atque* appears together with other conjunctions, such as *-que* or *et*.

<sup>16</sup> In the *Bellum Catilinae*, all asyndetic lists with *atque* consist of four elements, as implied by McGushin 1977: 14. In his other works, however, Sallust also uses similar lists of three elements, *genere, fama, atque copia* (*Jug.* 14.7); *audacia, scelere, atque superbia* (*Jug.* 14.11); *avaritiam, inperitiam, atque superbiam* (*Jug.* 85.45); *insomniis exercitus, furibundus atque amens* (*Rep.* 2.12.6).

<sup>17</sup> Cf. the example from Caesar I have given, in which the last member of the list is itself divided into two synonyms connected by *et*.

inserted after the first subject, it always refers to this alone."<sup>18</sup> Therefore, nothing in the Latin prevents us from interpreting the list of names in *Sat.* 1.10.28-29 as a list that contains three, not two members, Q. Pedius, L. Gellius Publicola, and M. Valerius Messalla Corvinus.

This insight is not insignificant. First of all, it removes longstanding prosopographical confusion by clarifying that there is no need to explain the otherwise un- or insufficiently documented combinations of the name Publicola with either Pedius or Corvinus.

Secondly, once we understand our passage correctly, it adds some interesting information about two major figures of the period about whom we know relatively little. We are only pretty well informed about M. Valerius Messalla Corvinus (ca. 64 B.C.E. - before 8 C.E.).<sup>19</sup> The patron of poets like Tibullus, Sulpicia, and Ovid, he was considered to be one of the best speakers of his time<sup>20</sup> and a notorious stickler for pure Latin. Seneca the Elder, for example, called him *Latini utique sermonis observator diligentissimus* (*Contr.* 2.4.8).

Regarding Messalla's cousin Pedius or his brother Publicola, however, our evidence is much more restricted. Pedius is probably identical with the Q. Pedius who served as quaestor urbanus in 41 B.C.E.;<sup>21</sup> his mother was Messalla's sister or half-sister.<sup>22</sup> He may also be the glib orator in Persius' *First Satire* who counters the charges against him with "trim antitheses" and "clever figures" (*Pers.* 1.85-87, tr. Rudd).<sup>23</sup> L. Gellius Publicola (cos. 36 B.C.E., the year before the publication of *Satires I*) is known primarily as a soldier and politician. *Satires* 1.10.27-30 now show us that both Pedius and Publicola must have enjoyed a certain reputation as orators with a preference for pure Latin. In the case of Publicola, this is our first

<sup>18</sup> Kühner and Stegmann 1982: 1.46 (my transl.). Similarly Leumann, Hofmann, and Szantyr 1997: 433.

<sup>19</sup> For the debate over the exact dates of Messalla's birth and death see, e.g., Syme 1978: 123-24; *id.*, 1986: 201 and 217-26. The most detailed information about Messalla's life and work is offered by Hanslik 1955: 131-57; Valvo 1983: 1663-1680; and Syme 1986: 200-216.

<sup>20</sup> The scant fragments of Messalla's speeches and the testimonia, including praise by Cicero, Seneca the Elder, Quintilian, and Tacitus, are gathered in Malcovati 1979: 529-534.

<sup>21</sup> *CIL* 6.358 (= *ILS* 3102); Broughton 1968: 372.

<sup>22</sup> Pliny, *Nat.* 35.21 mentions that the grandmother of the mute grandson of Q. Pedius (cos. 43 B.C.E.) was a member of the family of Messalla who seems to have served as his guardian. See also Münzer 1938: 40, ll. 62-63; Hanslik 1955: 133, ll. 25-31; Neudling 1955: 75.

<sup>23</sup> Kießel 1990: 223-25 prefers to identify this Pedius with Pedius Blaesus, a contemporary of Persius who was convicted in a trial *de repetundis* in 59 C.E. Kießel himself, however, concedes that numerous scholars reject his interpretation because of chronological difficulties.

and only evidence for his probably extensive experience in the Roman courts.

Another not unimportant detail that has been overlooked in the discussions of our passage so far is the fact that the satirist's entire argument is severely flawed. In particular, it has not been noticed that the reference to Messalla both supports and subverts the satirist's point against Greek in poetry.

The poet starts by rejecting an interlocutor's claim that the satires of his predecessor Lucilius are both a great achievement and sound "sweeter" because he mixes Latin with Greek words (*Sat.* 1.10.20-21). In refutation, Horace points to our three orators as known defenders of pure Latin and suggests that such a linguistic blend would be just as inappropriate in his poetry as it is in court speeches. Then, in a comic adaptation of Callimachus' dream from the prologue of his *Aitia* (fr. 1.21-30) that turns the Greek Apollo into the Roman Quirinus, he claims that divine command prevents him from writing any Greek poetry at all (*Sat.* 1.10.31-35).

Only Ruth Scodel seems to have noticed that the satirist's first argument, in which he compares apples to pears, the standards of oratory to those of poetry, "is not a strong one" because the "conclusion does not necessarily follow."<sup>24</sup> Similarly, there is a clear logical leap from the occasional use of Greek in a Latin verse to the writing of entirely Greek poems even though the satirist acts as if there was no difference at all.<sup>25</sup> Moreover, if there were indeed no difference, then Messalla would not be the best person to appeal to for support. Messalla insisted on pure Latin in his prose, but he had no qualms about writing Greek poetry himself. As contemporary readers will have known, Messalla composed both bucolic poetry in the style of Theocritus and amatory elegies in Greek,<sup>26</sup> despite the fact that he, just like Horace, was *natus mare citra*.

Similarly ironic and self-contradictory arguments can be found elsewhere in Horace's Satires. In *Satires* 1.4, for example, Horace ironically denies his *Satires* the status of poetry,<sup>27</sup> in a comic move to declare himself exempt from the hatred many people, as he has claimed earlier, feel toward poets (cf. *omnes hi metuunt versus, odere poetas*, 1.4.33). At the same time, however, the verses in which Horace advances this argument showcase the satirist's poetic craft in such a way that it is obvious that we are meant to consider Horace's

<sup>24</sup> Scodel 1987: 201.

<sup>25</sup> Fraenkel 1957: 130 remarks: "At l. 31 the discussion takes a somewhat unexpected turn."

<sup>26</sup> Cf. [Verg.] *Catal.* 9.13-22 and 59-63.

<sup>27</sup> Among the relatively few modern readers who have realized that the satirist's claims in *Sat.* 1.4.38-62 cannot be taken at face value are Freudenburg 1993: 119-128 and Oberhelman and Armstrong 1995: 239-44.

*Satires* not prose, but poetry.<sup>28</sup> In *Satires* 2.1.12-15, Horace claims, in a ploy typical for poetic *recusationes*,<sup>29</sup> that he is unable to write epic poetry, only to illustrate what he means by epic poetry with a couple of beautiful epic verses.<sup>30</sup> And in *Satires* 1.10 itself, to give a final example, Horace pretends that he only playfully dabbles in poetry (*haec ego ludo*, 37), but he lists himself among the premier poets of contemporary Rome (40-49), and he expects that men of the most exacting literary standards, including Messalla and his brother Gellius Publicola, will enjoy what he has written (81-90).<sup>31</sup>

In conclusion, it appears that in *Satire* 1.10 Horace deliberately crafted a flawed argument against the use of Greek in satire. In fact, while Horace did indeed limit his use of Greek words in comparison to Lucilius, he felt free to use them wherever they were poetically effective.<sup>32</sup> The self-contradictory reference to Messalla may be intended as a clue for his contemporary readers that the satirist is only speaking tongue-in-cheek.<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>28</sup> The intricate word order of lines 1.4.58-59, for example, artfully reflects the meaning of the sentence: *quod prius ordine verbum est, / posterius facies, praeponeus ultima primis* (cf. Oberhelman and Armstrong 1995: 243; Knorr 2004: 129 n. 150). In addition, both comic playwrights and satirists are clearly labeled poets at the beginning and the end of *Sat.* 1.4, despite all doubts about their status expressed within the poem, cf. Oberhelman and Armstrong 1995, 239.

<sup>29</sup> Cf. Davis 1991: 29.

<sup>30</sup> Cf. Oberhelman and Armstrong 1995: 234 n. 4.

<sup>31</sup> Cf. Knorr 2004: 159-61.

<sup>32</sup> As has been noted before, non-naturalized Greek words appear occasionally in Horace's *Satires*, e.g., *pharmacopolae* (2.1), *hybrida* (1.7.1), *epos* (1.10.43), *cheragra* (2.7.15), and *phimum* (2.7.17). Cf. Brown 1993: 186 and the extensive discussion in Rudd 1966: 111-114.

<sup>33</sup> I would like to thank my wife, Kristen Klay, my colleague, Mary Bachvarova, and two anonymous referees for their helpful comments and encouragement.

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