morality\(^3\)), and perhaps that is why the uninspired composer of our poem failed to mention the subject's skill. There is a further possible interpretation, namely that Craton had passed his δοκύμασια, which, conducted by laymen, concerned moral character rather than skill\(^4\). The inscription, as Wilhelm noted, belongs to the second half of the second century after Christ.

The other error is the conflation of the name K. Φοντήος Μάξιμος in the Prytan to catalogues of Hesperia IV 1939, p. 48, No. 11 and XXXIII 1964, p. 224, No. 7 with K. Φοντήος Κοάτον here. They are presumably from the same family, but Maximus and Craton are certainly not identical.

Baltimore, Maryland

James H. Oliver

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PUBLILIIUS SYRUS AND SATYRICON 55. 5–6

"Rogo", inquit, "magister, quid putas inter Ciceronem et Publilium interesse? Ego alterum puto disertiorem /uisse, alterum bonestiorem. Quid enim bis melius dici potest?"

So Trimalchio introduces an alleged quotation of the mimographer Publiliius Syrus. The tendency has been to allow the “dramatic” function of the attribution to determine the question of its accuracy. The vast majority of scholars, supposing that the comparison of Cicero and the mimographer is foolish, have recognised that a faulty ascription adds still more material to the portrait of a bungling Trimalchio and have accordingly pronounced the verses spurious\(^1\). A pair of passages in the two Senecas, however, provides neglected evidence that the verses are of Publilian authorship and that the comparison has a distinguished precedent.

The elder Seneca is discussing a rhetorical \textit{vitium: quod ex captione unius verbi plura significantis nascitur} (Contr. 7. 3. [18]. 9). Cassius Severus defends Publilius against the charge that he is responsible for the \textit{vitium}. It is, he says, the fault of those who should imitate quae apud eum [sc. Publilium] melius essent dicta...; ut illum versum, quo aiebat num versum inventi non posse meliorem:

\(^4\) N. Lewis, „Exemption of Physicians from Liturgy“, BASP II 1965, 87–92.
tam dest avaro quod habet quam quod non habet

...and:

desunt luxuriae multa, avaritiae omnia (7. 3. [18]. 8).

Severus is said to have cited several more examples of Publilius’ versus disertissimi.

He adds that the color, which I should be tempted to classify as “pun”, passed from Pomponius to Laberius and Cicero, gives an example or examples now lost and reports the famous anecdote about Laberius’ punning rejoinder to Cicero (7.3. [18]. 9). It is important to note that the verses of Publilius quoted by Severus do not exemplify the quality under discussion; they merely typify his outstanding poetic merit. The verbal echoes of Seneca in Petronius, which probably derive from a tradition (see infra, but cf. E. Cizek, StudClas 10 [1968] 154) rather than from direct reference to Seneca, are too obvious to require emphasis.

It looks from Seneca as though Publilius was regularly associated with the color in discussions of rhetoric; both Muredius and Moschus single him out as the principal exponent (7.3. [18]. 8). Significantly, Trimalchio addresses his remarks to Agamemnon, the professor of rhetoric (magister; cf. 48.4–6).

We now have a precedent for what appears at first glance to be a ridiculous comparison. We still require a plausible context for the quoted verses. In the elder Seneca, it is significant that Severus quotes Publilian sententiae critical of luxuria, the theme of Trimalchio’s selection. Moreover, the younger Seneca offers clear evidence that mimes censured luxury:

\[ \text{In nunc et mimos multa mentiri ad exprobrandam luxuriam puta. Plura mehercules praetereunt quam fingunt (De Brev. Vit. 12. 8).} \]

Finally, it is possible that the censure was part of a staged, mimic cena (PLIN. HN 8. 209)².

We have established that literary theorists associated Cicero and Publilius and that the mimographer’s repertoire included the condemnation of luxuria, possibly within the context of a staged cena. It remains only to explain what “dramatic” function in the Satyricon Trimalchio’s discourse and citation have. I propose that the customary boomerang effect lies in the host’s failure to recognise that the censure applies to his own lauitiae. The episode provides more than a good example of characteristic Petronian humour; it preserves for us the longest continuous passage of the most praised of Roman mimographers.

Vancouver Gerald N. Sandy

²) See O. Skutsch, RE 23. 2 (1959), p. 1923. As he explains, the suggestion that one of Publilius’ mimes included a staged cena involves an emendation of the text of Pliny. Giancotti, p. 263, cites Laberius’ Ephesus as an example of the mimic condemnation of decadent luxury.