QUAESTIONES VALERIANAE

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For over a century there was only one usable text of Valerius Maximus, the Teubner edited by Kempf, but its deficiencies were obvious.\(^1\) The last three years have seen two significant advances in two new editions of Valerius, each of a distinct character: Briscoe's Teubner is conservative and based on a thorough investigation of manuscripts and a re-evaluation of the tradition, while Shackleton-Bailey's Loeb is far more adventurous, admitting conjectures where Briscoe resorts to the obelus.\(^2\) The respective work of these two scholars has laid the foundation for lesser minds to express disagreement or to propose other solutions to problems in Valerius' text. What follows is a first attempt at this.

1.1 ext. 1

cocaitis enim Locrensibus ex thesauro eius magnam illi pecuniwm dare, cum onustus nefaria praeda navigaret, vi subitac tempestatris tota cum classe vicinis deae litoribus inlus est.

(Briscoe)

Shackleton Bailey had objected to 'deae', on the grounds that there is no parallel for it meaning 'deae templo', and proposed either to omit the word

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or to emend to ‘aedii’, although in the Loeb he retains ‘deae’. This is certainly what Valerius wrote, and such bold expressions for the activities of divinities express powerfully his belief in the power of the gods on earth, which is the essential guarantee of the moral programme integral to his work.\textsuperscript{4} Crucial, however, for retaining the text of the manuscripts is the indirect tradition on Valerius, which, as far as I know, has not received adequate discussion or evaluation. In the eighth chapter of Book II of the \textit{Divinae Institutiones}, Lactantius clearly draws on the \textit{exempla} collected by Valerius in Book I: ‘nausfragium fecit, ac vicinis deae littoribus illius est, ut nihil, praeter eam pecuniam, incolumem reperiretur.’ This shows that ‘deae’ was in texts of Valerius used in the 3rd century AD.

1.7.8

\textit{Propioribus tamen, ut ita dicam, lineis Hateri Rufi equitis Romani somnium certo \textit{adventu adminotium} est.} (Briscoe)

In introducing the \textit{exemplum} of Haterius Rufus, who was killed by a gladiator the night after he dreamed he would so perish, Valerius makes a rare apology for the use of an expression: ‘propioribus tamen, ut ita dicam, lineis.’\textsuperscript{5} I am not convinced that the usual interpretation advanced for this is correct. Valerius’ French translators understand that the primary contrast being drawn here, as advertised by the comparative \textit{propioribus}, is between the interval between warning and death in the cases of Cassius of Parma and Haterius Rufus:\textsuperscript{6} the former enjoyed an indeterminate ‘parvulum admodum temporis’, whereas Haterius’ fate occurred the day after his dream. However, do the words ‘ut ita dicam’ qualify ‘propioribus’ or, as I think, ‘lineis’? Haterius’ dream depicts with far greater clarity than Cassius of Parma’s how he will die; and the whole stress of Valerius’ narrative is on the close relation between

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{enumerate}
\item D.R. Shackleton Bailey, “Textual notes on lesser Latin historians”, \textit{HSCP} 85 (1981) 158.
\item See C.J. Skidmore, \textit{Practical Ethics for Roman Gentlemen} (Exeter 1996) 53-82, esp. 63-68.
\item Cf. 2.7.7 and 5.3.2.
\end{enumerate}
\end{footnotesize}
the dream and what transpired. ‘Propioribus lineis’, then, should be translated rather as ‘with a closer delineation.’ Although it may be argued against this that it makes Valerius’ connection forced, in that Cassius’ dream did not predict the means of his death, the difficulty is less than that involved in understanding ‘linea’ of time.

Briscoe’s use of the obelus is pessimistic and Shackleton Bailey’s conjecture ‘somnus . . . admonitus’ is unnecessary. The latter perceived a difficulty in Valerius’ writing ‘his dream was admonished’ as opposed to ‘his sleep . . .’, but the expression in either case is somewhat forced, and typical of Valerius as he manufactures an introduction to an exemplum. All that is required to make sense is to change AL’s ‘adventu’ to ‘eventu’, as was done by the corrector of G.

1.7 ext. 3

In relating the famous story of the poet Simonides, who was saved from shipwreck by listening to the warning given him in a dream by the ghost of a man whom he had buried, Valerius writes:

memor autem beneficii elegantissimo carmine < . . > aeternitati consecravit, melius illi et diuturnius in animis hominum sepulchrum constituens quam in desertis et ignotis harenis struxerat. (Briscoe)

If ‘memor’ is read, ‘consecravit’ is generally thought to require an object, hence a lacuna is posited. Various supplements have been proposed, most recently ‘mortuum’ by Watt,9 but ‘auctorem’, the suggestion of Gertz (approved by Kempf in his apparatus criticus), is preferable. Watt’s ‘mortuum’ has nothing to recommend it on palaeographical grounds and is

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7 The 17th century paraphrase-cum-translation by Samuel Speed (London 1678) offers: ‘But the dream of Aterius Rufus, a Roman knight, was more plainly hinted to him.’ Better is the Italian version by R. Faranda, Valerio Maximo (Turin 1971): ‘adombrata, invece, da un sogno, per così dire, più vicino alla realtà fu la fine del cavaliere Aterio Rufo.’ I followed this in my translation, Valerius Maximus: Memorable Deeds and Sayings Book I (Oxford 1998), and so does Shackleton Bailey (note 2) and (note 3) 159.
8 Shackleton Bailey (note 3) 159.
far too plain for Valerius in rhetorical mode. Gertz’s ‘auctorem’ at leasts
permits the suggestion of a scribal error from the adjacent ‘aeternitati’,
presumably in a miniscule manuscript. ‘Auctorem aeternitati’ also possesses
assonance. Neatest of all, however, is the suggestion of Gudius: ‘memor<iam>
autem ...’, which creates a phrase with parallels and eliminates the need for
any lacuna later in the sentence.¹⁰ Shackleton Bailey prints this in his text,
but his translation, ‘mindful of the service, he consecrated the dead man to
immortality by a most elegant poem’, translates Briscoe’s text. As no problem
was perceived by the scribes and editors of Valerius before Stephanus in
1544, perhaps the most conservative approach, which involves
understanding ‘beneficium’ as the object of ‘consecravit’ and positing no
lacuna, is defensible.

1.7 ext. 4

verum dum acri studio interficiendi suem omnes sunt intenti,
pertinax casus imminentis violentiae lanceam petendae ferae
gratia emissam in eum detorsit. (Briscoe)

In Shackleton Bailey’s approach, there appears to be similar indecision as
in the previous example: the text includes Madvig’s emendation of AL’s
‘violentiae’ to ‘violentia’, but the translation, ‘pertinacious fate in its impending
violence …’ appears to follow the unemended text. This collocation of words,
however it is construed, is a typical example of Valerius’ highfion, overblown
language. The text of AL, both as it stands and with Madvig’s emendation,
makes sense, but slightly in favour of ‘violentia’ is the way in which two
rounded and parallel sense units would be created in which noun-participle
and noun-adjective pairs surround adjectival phrases dependent on them.

1.8 ext. 18

Here Valerius sums up the contents of 1.8 ext. 12-17 and justifies their
inclusion in his chapter on miracles on the grounds that no rational explanation
can be provided for them:

¹⁰ Accepted by Combès, one of the very few emendations of the text printed in this very
quapropter haec potissimum aut in liberis potentissimorum regum aut in rege clarissimo aut in vate ingenii florentis aut in viris eruditissimis aut in homine sortis ignotae <...>, ne ipsa quidem, omnis bona malaeque materiae secunda artifex, rationem rerum natura reddiderit. (Briscoe, Kempf)

In the extant manuscripts a verb is missing from the indirect question. It can be construed in two ways: Shackleton Bailey\textsuperscript{11} understands ‘natura’ as the subject and ‘haec’ as an accusative after, for example, ‘luserit’ or ‘fecerit’. The former, which he prints in the Loeb, is preferable in that it picks up Valerius’ introductory description of the freaks of nature as ‘ludibria naturae’ (1.8 ext. 12), although an accusative after the verb used in this sense is not found elsewhere before Martial. In the older views, ‘haec’ was taken as a neuter nominative plural and so a plural verb was supplemented. Kempf’s \textit{apparatus criticus} includes Madvig’s ‘evenerint’.\textsuperscript{12} However, Valerius uses ‘evenire’ only in an impersonal construction, hence ‘fiant’ would seem preferable.

\textsuperscript{11} Shackleton Bailey (note 3) 159.
\textsuperscript{12} J.N. Madvig, \textit{Adversaria Critica}, Vol. 2 (Leipzig 1873) 331.
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