SOME OBSERVATIONS ON THE TEXT OF VALERIUS
OF BIERZO[1]

Valerius of Bierzo was a Spanish monk and later abbot of a monastery who lived approximately during the first half of the seventh century in Northern Spain and is one of the principal authors for our knowledge of Visigothic Latin of the time. The majority of the works written by this Valerius concern hagiographic topics such as saints' lives, monastic rules of conduct, mystic visions, and a rather tedious account of Valerius' own trials and tribulations. He also mentions in a letter the journey of a certain Egeria to the Holy Land. This is the same Egeria whose description of her trip has become one of our most important sources for our knowledge of Vulgar Latin and which has been commented upon by Einar Löfstedt.

The principal manuscript for the constitution of the text of Valerius is ms. 10007 in the Bibliotheca Nationalis in Madrid from the year 902, and a manuscript from the tenth century (Carracedo) which has been lost, but from which stem several later manuscripts. A full enumeration of the manuscripts of Valerius will be found in the *Index Scriptorum Latinorum Medii Aevi Hispanorum* by M. C. Diaz y Diaz, p. 81 sqq.

I will limit myself in this paper to two works of Valerius, his *De Bonello Monacho* and *De Celeste Revelatione,* both of which concern visions or revelations experienced by two men and then told to Valerius who set them down in writing for later edification.[2]

The edition used for this paper is that of Ramon Fernandez Pousa, *San Valerio (Nuño Valerio) Obras: Edición Crítica con XIII Facsimiles,* Madrid 1942. There is also an older edition in Migne, *Patrologia Latina* vol. 87 which is of little value, however.

On p. 115, line 5 of Pousa's edition we read . . . *cuncta enarrabit (= enarravit) ad singula.* The same construction *ad singula* is also found on p. 119, line 12: . . . *quod eodem mihi ad singula referente cognobi (= cognovi).* Elsewhere Valerius uses the phrase *per singula* which is attested in Forcellini:

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2. I would venture to disagree with Pousa's remark in his introduction to his edition of Valerius where on p. 1 he describes Valerius as '. . . una de las más importantes figuras mundiales de la Edad Media Universal . . .', although I am not a literary historian. And considering the extremely tortuous and turgid style of Valerius in general, I would also venture to say that it is an exaggeration to say of Valerius p. XXXX in the introduction that '. . . estas revelaciones nos autorizan para reconocer en Valerio, como quiere Mendendez y Pelayo, uno de los más altos poetas de la España visigoda.' Whoever has read through the difficult verbiage of Valerius may certainly doubt these claims.

'*Per singula, adverbiorum more, est sigillatim,*' with instances quoted from the *Vulgate* with verbs *narrare* and *scribere*. This adverbial use of the preposition *ad* with an adjective is discussed in Leumann-Hofmann-Szantyr's *Lateinische Grammatik, zweiter Band*, p. 219: 'Im Spätlatein finden sich viele adverbiale Verbindungen mit *ad* wie *ad perfectum* Oros. hist. 7,24,2, *ad modicum . . . ad plenum* z.B. Vitae Patr. 3,195 . . .' And likewise in *Mittellateinisches Wörberbuch*, s.v. *ad* p. 153 top. VI c) *Ad cum adj. vel pron. (fere sensu adv.),* there are numerous instances of adjectives with *ad* used adverbially: *ad paululum, ad modicum, ad plenum, ad minus* (= Fr. *au moins*), *ad omnia*, etc. This however would be the first instance cited of *ad singula* used as *singillatim* in later Latin.

On p. 116, lines 15–16 we read as follows in Pousa's edition: . . . *quum in primo impetu descendissem sicut lapis dimissus in profundum, per inmensum spatium pede inherente* . . . The text is wrongly punctuated since *per inmensum spatium* describes and amplifies the phrase in profundum. The thought is taken from *Exodus* 15,5 where we read: *Abyssi operuerunt eos. Descenderunt in profundum quasi lapis.* The comma then should be removed and placed before the noun *pede*.

On p. 117, line 7 we read as follows: *Et dum me parum peranimarem* . . . The event described here is Bonellus' account of his descent into Hell and of his stopping a second time to rest during the course of his travel. Although the use of *per-* composita verbs in Valerius is extensive and indeed characteristic of his style, yet here I think that *per* has been separated from the temporal adverb *parumper* and by the carelessness of a scribe later re-attached to the simple verb *animarem*. I can find no instances in Lewis and Short or Forcellini for the use of *parum* instead of *parumper*.[3] On p. 116, line 18 Valerius writes: *Et dum ibidem paululum reanimarem, facta est vox dicentis* . . . Here the use of the adverb *paulum* on the previous page gives support to my conjecture for *parumper* and this reading gives much better sense for the context in Valerius' narration.

On p. 118, line 4 we read: . . . *perduxerunt me inferius iuxta illum marem* (= *mare*) *ignem*. Here *ignem* should be corrected to *igneum*. Compare the phrase p. 117, line 19 *inundans piceus maris* (= *piceum mare*.) A similar mistake is found p. 159, line 5 where Pousa prints *saxum locum* with manuscript T instead of *saxeum locum* which is a necessary change. Most probably the false spelling (or simplification to the noun forms) arose from a scribe's error in interpreting and copying the text.

On p. 118, lines 15–16 the text is as follows: *ipsum summe* (= *sume*) *initium quem usque in finem sine disperationis discrimine libere perducas ad perfectionem*. Here the adverb *libere* is used with the same sense as *libenter*. In *Thesaurus Linguae Latinae* there is a notice made on the use of *libere* for

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3. Einar Löfstedt has listed several examples of *parumper = parum*, however, in his book *Vermischte Studien* p. 98 with particular reference to Gregory of Tours and Bonnet's remarks about his usage.

libenter, but the author of the article in *Thesaurus* has indicated his uncertainty about this usage by placing a question mark before the entry, Vol. VII,2 Fasc. IX p. 1289, line 82. Reference is made to a discussion of the use of *liberius* for *libentius* in Einar Löfstedt's *Vermischte Studien zur lateinischen Sprachkunde und Syntax* p. 104 sqq. Both of the examples in *Thesaurus* for the use of *libere* for *libenter* are taken from examples adduced by Löfstedt in his book. One is from a poem by Venantius Fortunatus, Carm. VIII 3, 107:

> *pectora liberius penetrat sibi cognita soli,*
> *et quo nemo fuit, laetior intrat iter.*

The other example is from Merovingian times, from the *Vita Romani* 8 in MGH., Mer. III, p. 135, 35: *pater tamen Lupicius in Lauconno... pecularius ac liberius versabatur.*

Löfstedt says then on p. 105: 'Für die Zeit des ausgehenden Altertums und des beginnenden Mittelalters ist also *libere = libenter* (besonders, wie es scheint, *liberius = libentius*) durchaus anzuerkennen.' This example then from Valerius would be the first example cited of *libere = libenter* that has been found to support Löfstedt's observation concerning the positive degree of the adjective. The context of this passage from Valerius supports this meaning for *libere = libenter* since Valerius is advising the monk Bonellus to take the initiative, so to speak, for his life as a recluse and ascetic, and then follow it through *willingly* (this gives the best sense here) to its completion.

On p. 119, line 10 the text reads ... *quendam puerulum, lapidum in structura peritum* ... I propose to emend the text to *instructura peritum*, thus resolving the difficulty of the construction of *peritus* with the preposition *in* and the ablative case which is, as Forcellini states, s.v. *peritus*: '*Peritus in aliqua re qui dixerit, inveni adhuc neminem* ...' The noun *instructura* is listed in *Thesaurus* and examples are cited from *Itala* III Reg. 7,15; II Macc. 2,29 (where the Vulgate reads *structura*); Eph. 2,21 (where the Vulgate reads *aedificatio*) and also Isidorus *Orig.* 19,18,1: *instructuram autem perietum ad normam fieri et ad perpendiculum respondere oportet.* (The text of Lindsay's edition erroneously prints *instructura*).

Finally on p. 120, line 5 the adjective *examnis* should of course be printed *exanimis: quum autem, inquid, grave egritudine oppressus iacerem examinis* ...

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