

compressing it into a narrow isthmus’): ‘entrambi esercitano sulla terra una forte spinta, fino a provocarvi una strozzatura.’

The commentary at the end is extensive, roughly 170 pages, and, although it draws heavily on the above-mentioned *Commentary* (1980) for Books 3 and 4, it brings into the discussion much that has been published in the intervening eighteen years. The presentation of the notes is, however, somewhat confusing. Lemmata in Latin pick up specific points (historical or textual), but are keyed not to the chapter and section but rather the *line number* in the text, each chapter having its own line-numbers in the left-hand margin; more general discussions are provided following the lemmata in Italian. Points for discussion marked by < in the right-hand margin of the translation are deemed essential to the understanding of the text (‘Il segno < ... indica la presenza, nel commento, di note indispensabili alla comprensione del testo ...’): for example, Ninus and Belus, the ‘Immortals’, the ‘cidaris’; religious and cultural practices are frequently ‘tagged’ in this way. The notes are dense, informative, generously seasoned with references to primary and modern works, and the same high standard of scholarship that characterizes Atkinson’s *Commentary* is present here despite the need for compression.

It is with no disrespect to Italian scholars or their language that we express our regrets that this work did not appear in English. This is an example of what Loeb texts ought to look like – though, in fairness, we might point to P.A. Brunt’s *Arrian*, which updates Robson’s translation and reprints A.G. Roos’ Teubner text, as something that compares in scope and scholarly depth.

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D. Wardle, *Valerius Maximus: Memorable Deeds and Sayings, Book 1*. Translated with Introduction and Commentary. Clarendon Ancient History Series. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998. Pp. ix + 301. £40.00.

Those familiar with the broad-ranging and judicious scholarship of David Wardle will not be disappointed by his commentary on Book 1 of Valerius Maximus. It consists of an Introduction, a Translation and the Commentary itself (on the English translation, not on the Latin text), a Bibliography and an Index.

The Introduction does not speculate on the person of Valerius Maximus:

sensibly W. simply details the few items of importance that may possibly relate to him. Similarly, caution obtains in not dating the work more precisely than to the Principate of Tiberius. The literary character and purpose of the work are discussed next. W. (p. 14) concludes that the *exempla* were collected primarily for use by students of declamation (the concluding stage of the Roman education of intending lawyers and politicians). The work is informed by a high moral purpose. Valerius' main sources were Livy, Cicero and Varro and, for the foreign *exempla*, Pompeius Trogus. The Introduction concludes with a brief discussion of Roman religion as featured by Valerius in Book 1, as well as its political manifestations. W. interestingly draws attention to the value of Val. Max. as an important source for religion in the early Empire.

The Translation, in good contemporary English, is clear and fluent. It only reads oddly where W. (deliberately) adheres closely to Valerius' sentence structures and style, but this is a useful reminder of the character of the original.

The Commentary itself is extremely detailed: it is not possible to point to any omissions. The phrases quoted from Val. Max. are fully explained in the light of modern scholarship. W. has consulted an enormous number of modern authors, far more than those listed in the Bibliography. More importantly, however, his main concern is always Valerius' actual words: questions of text, accuracy of translation and relation to sources (especially where the original has survived) are scrupulously dealt with.

What Val. Max. reveals about Roman religious phenomena receives punctilious attention. A major interest of W. is the (possible) political import of the 'religious' actions of the politically great who feature in the text. This, however, though a matter of major concern to the modern scholar, is perhaps overplayed. The issues are usually complex and can hardly be satisfactorily settled within the brief compass of a comment rarely longer than a sentence or two, even if reference is made to the modern literature on the point.

Furthermore, Val. Max. himself seems to have had a completely apolitical approach to the phenomena he is describing. To deduce his political attitude is very difficult. Presumably he wished to bring out the point that it was vital for the holder of office at Rome to operate with the support of the divine powers which the ancients believed provided the most important parameter for human action.

What can perhaps be characterized as 'political' comment in Val. Max. appears only in connection with Late Republican figures, Augustus and Tiberius. He is strident in his condemnation of Caesar's assassins, whom he regularly denounces as parricides. Indeed, Caesar is as much a 'god' as the

other deities who feature in the *Facta et Dicta*. (But Pompey the Great [interestingly dubbed ‘proto-emperor’ by W. (207)] is treated neutrally. The only criticism in Book 1 is that his politics were bad for the Republic: he should not have broken his *concordia* [8, 10] with Caesar). There is an interesting gradation of late Republican figures in 1.6.11-13: Crassus, discussed with sorrow rather than condemnation, Pompey and then the adored Caesar. Significantly Caesar’s and, in 1.7.1-2, Augustus’ political power is discussed in religious terms only.

Augustus and especially Tiberius receive extravagant praise (with heavy emphasis on their divinity) as upholders of the existing system. Val. Max. is obviously an enthusiastic supporter of the new imperial regime: it is his touchstone. Rome (as a territorial power) is accepted uncritically. Most of the religious *notabilia* described occur in ‘nostra ciuitas’, ‘our city’ (a regular phrase), which has a wide and ever-increasing imperium (e.g. 1.8.2): this is what Tiberius so fittingly heads. In fact, Valerius’ attitude to what moderns call the Roman Empire is instructive. His interest is almost entirely confined to Rome (sometimes embracing Italy) and abroad only features when a Roman office-holder is on duty there. Valerius’ Rome is the city and its citizens on active service across the sea. Even the inhabitants of provinces that have been under Roman control for over a century are still ‘externa’. What is Roman is a very close-knit society.

And now to demur. For all its comprehensiveness the commentary lacks a certain dimension. Valerius’ subject is Roman religion, something difficult for a modern to understand. But the section on it in the Introduction is extremely brief and the introductory notes to the various themes which Val. Max. handles (omens, dreams, etc.) are indeed concise. In spite of the full cross-referencing it is often difficult to find discussion on a particular point. In fact the religious and other technical terms could profitably have been placed in a separate Index Rerum, perhaps even with definitions.

There are unfortunate signs of haste, as the incomplete sentence ‘The second ... Dialis’ (87) or the apparently inconsequential ‘none of the Roman ... two’ (166). On p. 122 ‘MRR I. 322’ should probably read ‘ii. 326; 350; 367’. There are various typographical errors, as ‘exempla’ in the Preface, ‘oVer’ (113), Anfike (134), ‘Luatatia’ (147), Seyforth (for Seyfarth, 180), the *u* for *n* in ‘Lactautius’ (224) and ‘majiscule’ (224). Much remains unexplained, as the ‘Board of Two’: cf. Index s.v. (108), or Leonidas (214). Sometimes the explanation offered is too brief for the non-specialist, as the relevance of the ‘Triumvirate’ (unexplained) and M. Antonius (usually Antony in English) and the *Philippics* (162) to the portent being explicated, or the

(undescribed) ‘famous fate of Crassus’ head’ (205). Occasionally a term used in the translation strikes one as anachronistic or puzzling, such as ‘hat’ for ‘apex’ (1.1.5), the sacred peaked cap of a *flamen*, or ‘rod’ (1.8.11) for Romulus’ *lituus* or ritual staff (though explained) on p. 287. For ‘one of the eagles could scarcely be uprooted’ (1.6.11) surely ‘legionary standards’ or ‘standards with eagles on them’ is easier to understand. In 1.8.6 ‘uallaris corona’ is not ‘ditch-crown’ but ‘garland for scaling the rampart’ or ‘rampart crown’, but ‘plumes’ for ‘pinnis’ is correct: *pinna* must mean ‘feather’, a common adornment for helmets, rather than ‘wing’, toyed with on 258 (W. is right to query *OLD* here). Similarly W. is right to regard the use of *potentia* in 1.6.4 as not completely derogatory. It is notably qualified by the adjective ‘amplissima’, a positive enough word in political vocabulary, as the phrase ‘auctoritatem amplissimam’ applied to Pompey in 1.6.12 shows, and Valerius’ use of the standard ‘amplitudo’ for the Senate confirms (1.8.1).

One is often left wondering precisely to whom the work is addressed. The Clarendon Ancient History Series, to which it belongs, is aimed at ‘scholars, graduate students and advanced undergraduates’ (flyleaf, p. ii). The first group is very well served, but it is difficult to appreciate the full riches of the commentary without constant reference to the Latin text: it is in fact clear that W. is often thinking of it rather than the translation. A disservice has been done to him by not including it: it would not have greatly added to the length of the book. Furthermore, the enormous range of secondary literature quoted by W. means that one can only properly read the Commentary in a very well-stocked library. More frequent summarizing of what is in the secondary literature would have been an advantage. As far as the non-specialist readership is concerned, greater concession would have been kind. ‘World Religions’, including ancient religions, is a popular subject today and laymen will find much of profit in the work. But they will be baffled by the ‘in’ character of much of the commentary, the use of untranslated Latin terms, technical expressions used as a shorthand by classicists but mystifying to others, and words like *ludic* (70), *extispicy* (79 – without reference back to ‘entrails inspected’ on 78), and *gentilicial* (105), which are only slight Anglicizations of the Latin, – or special senses of terms like *voter* (78), normally a person acting politically, or *incubation* (139) – hatching eggs in modern English. It would have been helpful to give standard references for inscriptions: for example, that quoted from Alan Hall’s article (253) is AE 1977, 816. Diacritical signs appear in English words in the translation, but remain unexplained.

W. is especially good on contemporary aspects of the Rome of Valerius

Maximus that have left traces in the *Facta et Dicta*. Two aspects are of special interest, Valerius' attitude to Tiberius and to the imperial cult. W. tends to use somewhat pejorative and dismissive language of the first, such as his 'abject humility' (1). This seems too harsh. The Romans of the early Empire were having to invent a new political vocabulary. Tacitus (*Ann.* 1.12) censured top senators for getting it wrong. How entwined the person of the emperor was becoming with the 'state' is shown by the ultra-respectful language of the *Senatus consultum de Cn. Pisone* (cf. lines 12-15; the inclusion of Tiberius' female relatives in the document; the equestrian order expressing its perturbation of mind and 'dolor' by frequent 'acclamations' [lines 151-154] and the legionaries loyal to the 'domus Augusta' because they know that the safety of 'our empire' is placed in it: they should support only commanders who cultivate the 'nomen Caesarum' with the most faithful 'pietate' [lines 159-166]). The second point is this 'pietas' overflowing into the 'imperial cult'. One would have wished for greater differentiation on 'the worship of the emperor' than W. provides: Val. Max. is often close to the late Augustan poets in this area. Did it also differ from social class to class, only 'restrained' at senatorial level? But more can be expected from W. in this respect, as his article in *CPh* 92 (1997) 323-45 shows.

What is one to make of Val. Max. after having read his Book 1 with the assistance of W.? His flat reporting of remarkable religious phenomena (often embellished with rhetorical flourishes for which the modern reader has little sympathy) recalls the Roman penchant for detailed information such as is found in the *Strategems* of Frontinus (a senator and an important provincial governor, but also probably originally of equestrian status) or in the *Natural History* of Pliny the Elder (an equestrian who served as an army officer but was then promoted to the imperial financial bureaux). Pliny addressed his main work to the emperor's son. The best parallel, however, is of course Velleius Paterculus (although he wrote 'history', not just disjointed items of interest). Before being adlected to the senate he was an equestrian officer. His loyalty to Tiberius was deep and, again, the way in which he expressed it has been condemned by many moderns. In fact Velleius' attitude is sometimes apparent even in the brief inscriptions recording equestrian officers of the early Principate.¹ These were men of substance, ambitious to succeed in the army and imperial service. Their loyalty to Tiberius, consolidator of the new order that gave them opportunity, is easily understandable. Keen to advance,

¹ Cf. D.B. Saddington, "'Honouring" Tiberius on inscriptions, and in Valerius Maximus – A Note,' above pp. 166-72.

they were probably ready to read a military handbook such as Frontinus' and even perhaps, too, to profit from broadening their culture and learning the best Roman *mores*. Offering ethical and cultural advice is of course currently unpalatable. Not so under Tiberius. Augustus himself liked moralistic literature (Suet. *Aug.* 89.2: he would only allow his name to be used in serious literature – 89.3). One can easily imagine Val. Max. serving such an audience, and perhaps even arising from that milieu. But this is speculation, as W.'s Introduction astringently and correctly makes clear.

In a sense Dr. Wardle's work may be said to be in danger of falling between two stools, but this is due to the framework in which he had to operate. But for the reader prepared to persevere on its terms the rewards are indeed rich: a wealth of information is placed at his fingertips with exemplary economy and clarity. This will long remain the standard work on Valerius Maximus Book 1.

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