

THE "AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL" WORKS OF VALERIUS OF BIERZO: THEIR STRUCTURE AND PURPOSE

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Of all the major literary figures of Visigothic Spain, Valerius is probably, at first sight, the oddest, certainly the least well understood, and the most unjustly vilified. Unlike the other principal writers of the period he has made no mark in contemporary records other than in his own works, which alone, for better or worse, can speak for him. This lack of note is not, however, to be taken as a sign of his unimportance or eccentricity, but is rather the result of historical accident over which he had no control, that of his dying within a decade or less of the destruction of the Visigothic kingdom in 711. He was thus denied the time needed for the full development of his posthumous reputation, and it is notable that other very late seventh century texts and writers suffered similarly: the canons of the last councils of Toledo are lost, and the bishops of that city fall unnaturally silent after the death of Julian in 680.

Valerius' stock has, though, been rising in recent years. From being characterised in 1922 as 'obscure but interesting', his standing has so far increased that his literary achievements have even been compared to those of Isidore, and the appearance of a major critical edition of his works is now imminent⁽¹⁾. Not only his own writings but also his activities as compiler and editor have commanded increased interest, and in particular his hagiographical collection has been subjected to more and more refined analysis since attention was drawn to it in the pioneering work of de Bruyne in 1920⁽²⁾. On the other hand, Valerius' works are still quaried by those who seek to prove that during its final decades the Visigothic kingdom in Spain was a rather rotten place in which to have been alive, or, more concretely, that they show evidence for 'a calamitous decline of law and order in the late seventh century' and that 'life in Galicia... was unpleasantly violent'⁽³⁾. Similarly, while respect for Valerius' literary undertakings may have grown, verdicts on his personality remain harsh. He has been called both 'childish' and 'duro e intransigente', whilst even Professor Díaz y Díaz, an otherwise sympathetic advocate of his merits, has spoken of him as being 'atacado de manía persecutoria'⁽⁴⁾.

Obviously, the source for both the use of Valerius as the unwitting provider of social comment and for the modern assessments of his character is that group of three related works in prose and two in verse that is generally, but

as will be shown somewhat misleadingly, called his 'autobiography'⁽⁵⁾. Historians, particularly of the Early Middle Ages for whom the limited availability of evidence is a permanent problem, are all too inclined to loot literary texts for nuggets of supposedly hard fact, extracting the jewels as it were and discarding the setting as dross. To do otherwise, and to approach a text via a study of literary conventions that may have imposed norms so rigid as to render it unreliable or unuseable as a reflector of social reality is to risk having to reduce yet further the stock of evidence open to the answering of certain types of question, notably of a social and economic kind. However, it is better to change the nature of the questions rather than to create unreal interpretations on the basis of misapplied evidence.

It is thus surprising to see how little concern seems to have been given to the subject of Valerius's intentions in the composition of his 'autobiographical' pieces, and to that of the precedents and conventions which may have moulded their form. This is all the more important when there exists a real danger of our familiarity with the contemporary genre of autobiography leading us to the unspoken assumption that something fundamentally similar could have existed in the seventh century. Thus, even so brief an enquiry as that essayed here is hardly in need of justification. Moreover, if in consequence of it these texts emerge as less of a chronicle of social reality, and Valerius himself seems a less angular and perhaps more sophisticated figure this is not to be counted as loss if it be in return for a truer perspective on his literary skills and didactic concerns.

As is well known, the manuscript transmission of Valerius's 'autobiographical' collection is very restricted⁽⁶⁾. Indeed in no more than one manuscript do all of the prose pieces appear together, but although this has resulted in a certain ambiguousness as to the contents of the collection, at least in respect of the verse sections, there are no good grounds for doubting the collegiality of the three prose components, whose titles may conveniently be abbreviated to *Ordo Querimoniae*, *Replicatio* and *Residuum*. All three are only found together in MS Madrid, Biblioteca Nacional 10.007 (T). The first two, but not the last feature in one of the manuscripts of the Portuguese Cistercian monastery of Alcobaça dated to the thirteenth century, now MS Lisbon Biblioteca Nacional Alcobaça 454 (A). A lost eleventh or twelfth century manuscript from the Bierzan house of Carracedo, now represented by a later copy MS Escorial &.III.8 (F), contained at least the opening sections of the *Ordo Querimoniae*, but if once it had included more of the collection this had been lost by the time the copy was made in 1591.

Of the possible verse companions to the three prose pieces, two of them are contained only in the Alcobaça manuscript; these are the *Epitameron Proprium Praefati Discriminis* and the *Epitameron Propriae Orationis*. The Madrid manuscript (T) provides the prose collection with no immediate verse satellites, no more than does the Escorial copy of the lost Carracedo codex. However, a thirteenth century manuscript, now in Salamanca (Salamanca, Universidad 2537, formerly Madrid, Palacio de Oriente 848 (O)), which was unearthed and subjected to exhaustive study by Professor Díaz y Díaz, contains the fullest collection of Valerius's verses⁽⁷⁾. On the basis of its acrostic and telestic code Professor Díaz y Díaz has related another poem found in this manuscript to the autobiographical collection, and at the same time he has detached the

Epitameron Propriae Orationis, suggesting instead a possible connection between it and another poem preserved in the Salamanca collection⁽⁸⁾. This it must be noted is in defiance of the unique relationship of the two verse texts in the Alcobaça manuscript⁽⁹⁾. There thus remains a problem as to whether the verse companions of the prose items in the autobiographical corpus should be the *Epitameron Proprium Praefati Discriminis* and the *Epitameron Propriae Orationis*, or the former without the latter but joined by the *Epitameron Propriae Necessitudinis* from the Salamanca codex. Fortunately, this is not a difficulty that requires resolving before the prose texts can be analysed, and indeed an enquiry into their structure and intent may help in the solution of the problem with the verses. Furthermore, as well as for the intrinsic interest and importance of such an investigation in its own right, it also has a bearing upon wider issues such as the manuscript transmission of Valerius' works as a whole and the vexed question of the existence or otherwise of recensions of his hagiographic compilation.

Both in categorizing the works and in justifying the use to which modern scholars have put them, the label of autobiography has been used rather freely. Indeed the term 'Autobiography' is probably an anachronism when applied to any work of literature in the Middle Ages⁽¹⁰⁾. Some books seem to come very near to it; the most obvious examples being the confessional writings of Augustine, and from a later period those of Guibert of Nogent, although the intention of narrating the details of their lives was secondary to both of these authors' purposes. The writings of Valerius, though, show no trace of this influence from Augustine and can not be classed as confessional, being cast neither as a soliloquy nor a monologue addressed to God, and, so far from being a meditation on personal sinfulness they can seem aggressively selfrighteous. Being written in the first person and employing as the narrative framework the author's own life, treated more or less chronologically, yet without confessional intentions, their most recent editor has not been able to deny Valerius's collection of five related pieces in prose and verse the title of autobiography⁽¹¹⁾. If this were justified they would probably together constitute the first clear example of such a literary form. However, original in structure and purpose as we shall find them to be, it is not exclusively in this way that they should be understood, and the application of such a label to them can and has raised false expectations as to the uses to which they may be put.

Their titles, given in the manuscripts, might alone give pause for thought: *Ordo Querimoniae Praefatio Discriminis, Replicatio Sermonum a Prima Converseione*, and *Quod de Superioribus Querimoniis Residuum*. The emphasis on *Querimonia*, or complaint, is sufficient to show that no mere narrative of the author's life for its own sake is intended. Equally perplexing, if that had been the only or prime intention, would be the division of a chronologically continuous account into three separately titled and differently sized sections. Surprisingly, no attempt has been made to find an explanation for Valerius's peculiar entitlement of these texts and their apparently arbitrary sectionalizing of his account⁽¹²⁾. Similarly, the expectations raised by the approach to these works as strictly autobiographical have on occasion led to an obtuse literalness in the interpretation of Valerius's meaning that can again result in his being taken to task for supposed defects of character⁽¹³⁾.

To take an example, there is the way that Valerius depicts his principal opponents. The treatment of the priest Flainus in the *Ordo Querimoniae* is typical of Valerius's descriptions of his enemies, always presented as being tools of the Devil: '...quidam vir barbarus, valde lubricus et cunctis levitatibus occupatus'⁽¹⁴⁾. Like a later foe, Justus, Flainus is described as being black in visage: in Sister Consuelo Maria Aherne's English translation, 'He with his hideous skin came to that place (as it is written: a pitch-black face appears with its own darker skin as savage as the most ferocious beast)'⁽¹⁵⁾. The intemperate language and what may seem to be incipient racism fail to endear Valerius to his liberal-minded editor, and he is reprimanded by Sister Consuelo for his presumed lack of twentieth century virtues: 'His fear of Flaino and of Justo because they were black or perhaps swarthy, is in keeping with the general childishness of his character'⁽¹⁶⁾. She thus seems surprisingly ignorant of Athanasius's characterisation of the Devil as a negro in the *Vita Antonii*, an imagery also borrowed by the author of the *Vitas Patrum Emeritensium*⁽¹⁷⁾. From its inclusion in his hagiographical collection we know that Valerius possessed the *Life of Anthony* in its Latin translation⁽¹⁸⁾. This parallel alone might warn us against taking Valerius's descriptions as depictions of objective reality. The ascription of black colouring to Flainus and Justus is a way of externalizing the moral reality of their characters, and was not intended as a mere recording of the pigmentation of their skin. Such a delineation of a higher reality would be easily understood by the monastic audience for whom, in this as in all his other works, Valerius wrote⁽¹⁹⁾.

Equally comprehensible to such a readership would be Valerius's reactions to his patron Ricimer's attempts to have him ordained priest. This he ascribed to the instigation of the Devil, and Ricimer's subsequent death when the church collapsed on top of him a form of divine retribution⁽²⁰⁾. Such views may seem extreme, but before we hasten to an anachronistic condemnation, it is important to recall the strong tradition in monastic literature of the refusal of office and the regarding of the holding of such employment, even ecclesiastical, as a snare and a threat to the contemplative life and therefore to the individual's ultimate salvation⁽²¹⁾. Again, Valerius and his readers or auditors would have had before them in the translations of hagiographic and apophthegmatic works from the Eastern Mediterranean numerous examples of the ways in which the subjects of many of the Eastern *Vitae Patrum* resisted all unnecessary intrusion into their contemplative privacy. Exaggerated as Valerius' reactions may seem to us and largely unparalleled as they may be in literature composed in the West, they need to be seen in the context of the scheme of values of Late Antique monasticism, particularly in its Eastern forms.

Here again the apparently autobiographical character of Valerius's work only serves to make it more disconcerting to the modern reader, who expects to share a common thought-world with his author. To read, for example, of the Egyptian hermit Arsenius throwing stones at unwanted visitors may seem quaint or amusing, but a similar attitude expressed in Valerius's first person narration is the more violent and threatening for being presented in a one to one relationship with the reader, who is thus denied his normal role of detached observer of events described in the third person. As well as requiring us to look harder for the literary models and conventions that can help to explain

or justify those features of Valerius's account which we find difficult or disturbing, it is also important to realize just how firmly his work forces us to face the alienness of many of the thought-processes and values of Late Antique and Early Medieval men. Not everything can or should be rationalized.

In this sense one of the most demanding passages of the whole of the supposedly autobiographical narrative is that in which in his hermitage at Rufiana Valerius had a personal confrontation with the Devil, who had hitherto confined himself to working through human agents: 'When I had withdrawn to the little cell which... Fructuosus had prepared for himself, the envious enemy did not cease to thwart my determined purpose. For, entering with a great roar of fury, he used against me the many wicked and unceasing wiles of temptation. Finally sitting at my head, as I prayed or reclined, he breathed into my nostrils from his lowest entrails an unceasingly fetid and hot stench, intolerable and horrible. And when I had tolerated for a long time these things and the deceptions of other kinds of temptations, he, disturbed by the wrath of his insane fury, stirred up such thunder and such a terrifying noise of fearful quaking that it shattered the very rocks like salt and scattered them afar. And when I beheld the dwelling shaken from its very foundations falling upon me in the middle of the night, God alone witnessing it, I was deeply frightened, and confiding in the Lord I cried out saying "Withdraw most evil one. Why do you destroy my little dwelling place?" At this he immediately withdrew'⁽²²⁾. Once again a sympathetic understanding that does not resort to the vocabulary of clinical psychology begins with the realization that the depiction of temptations as externalized assaults by the diabolical powers is a standard feature of monastic literature in Late Antiquity from the *Life of Anthony* onwards. Indeed it was probably more than literary convention: what we would regard as purely internal stresses and contradictions within the personality were understood by Late Antique and Medieval man exclusively in terms of threats from outside of themselves on the part of demonic forces⁽²³⁾.

As has been mentioned, Valerius interpreted such human conflicts as his feuds with Flainus and Justus as being diabolically directed, and there is nothing illogical on the basis of such premises in his seeing natural disturbances, which were equally threatening to his life of contemplation, as likewise being initiated by the Devil. The passage just quoted gives some grounds for assuming that a part of it refers to something like an earthquake or tremor. For us it may be hard to understand how a motiveless accident of nature can be seen in so personal a way, and we may then too easily see Valerius as being egocentric to the point of mania. However, his theme of the working of diabolical malevolence through both human and natural agencies and directed particularly against those 'Athletes of Christ' the monks, closest by reason of their ascetic exertions to the chance of salvation, is a view of reality not peculiar to Valerius. It was shared by his mentors and peers in the monastic life of Late Antiquity.

In his encounters with the Devil and his perspectives on them, Valerius expressed nothing that St. Anthony would have found strange. Indeed some episodes described by Valerius are directly parallel to ones in the *Vita Antonii*. Thus, for example, common to both is an encounter with the Devil, described as a gigantic being towering up to the heavens, who blocks the hermit's egress

from his cell until put to flight by the sign of the cross⁽²⁴⁾. In general, though, Valerius's experiences as described by himself are not consciously modelled on those of Anthony in the sense of direct borrowing from or paralleling the *Vita Antonii*, a copy of which in Evagrius of Antioch's Latin version he certainly possessed. Rather they share a common thought-world, though it is conceivable that many of the images of black and towering devils that came into the minds of Valerius and his contemporaries stem directly from the popularity of Athanasius's masterpiece. This is probably more a question of *mentalités* rather than of purely literary borrowing.

The aspirations, the life-style in large measure and also the temptations of Anthony were shared by Valerius. Nor was he unusual in this. Although subject to increasing modification in the West, the ascetic traditions of the founding fathers of monasticism in Egypt and Palestine remained strong, especially in North Africa, Mediterranean Gaul and Spain⁽²⁵⁾. Egyptian apophthegmatic literature in Latin translation was highly popular, with two important collections being made in the Iberian peninsula by Martin of Braga and Paschasius of Dumio. Equally appreciated were the Egypt-derived writings of Cassian. The monks of Lérins identified themselves with the early fathers, and their rules were pseudonymously ascribed to them. Both some of the Lerinian and some of the genuine oriental rules were known in Spain⁽²⁶⁾. Likewise the desire to tap the tradition at its root remained strong even in the seventh century, and the monastic founder Fructuosus had to be prevented from migrating to the East or making a pilgrimage there by royal order⁽²⁷⁾.

This general context helps make sense not only of individual sections of these works of Valerius that have proved to be stumbling blocks for modern readers, however well intentioned, but also has a bearing on the wider issues of the structure and purpose of the collection as a whole. As has been stressed, it is their apparently autobiographical character that gives these works their greatest novelty, but also causes the most difficulty in our sympathetic understanding of them. Why were they written in the particular form that was chosen? The absence of a confessional character has already been noticed, and this excludes what must seem the most obvious literary antecedent. However, a text already referred to for its occasional parallels of episode and iconography, proves to have an even closer relationship when it comes to the question of form. Despite the similarities in points of narrative detail already alluded to, the fact that the *Vita Antonii* was written about Anthony by a third party would seem to rule it out as a model for the overall narrative form of Valerius's work. But this in fact is only a very superficial reservation, for contained within the *Life of Anthony* is an extensive section, embracing chapters 16 to 43, of autobiographical narrative by Anthony⁽²⁸⁾. This section of the text is also full of the diabolical encounters put within a chronological and biographical outline that is characteristic likewise of Valerius's collection. This and other shorter sections in the *Vita Antonii* in direct speech constitute monastic *Collationes* or 'Conferences'. The autobiographical narrative was intended to edify and instruct, and employed forms of speech and imagery shared by instructor and instructed alike.

It may be thought that in the case of the *Life of Anthony* these conferences were invented by Athanasius for inclusion in his book as a way of varying

the account, but it is also conceivable that they are genuine records of Anthony's teaching taken down verbatim, perhaps in short-hand. However, whether the 'autobiographical' sections be genuine or invented is irrelevant as far as the study of Valerius is concerned, in that he and other Early Medieval readers of the *Life* will have taken them at face value. Subsequent monastic literature, produced after the appearance of the innovatory *Life of Anthony*, which for one thing was exceedingly long, tended to be generically more specialised. *Vitae*, Conferences, and apophthegmatic teachings became formally distinct. Furthermore, the authors of such works generally presented themselves as the disciples or as the humble auditors of the words of the great monastic teachers, as is the case with Cassian in his *Collationes*. In that particular form a greater diversity of teachers became the rule, rather than concentration on the doctrine of one individual *abba*. Thus the *Life of Anthony* had no direct successor or emulator, but not the least of its influences may have been that exerted upon Valerius in the Bierzo some three centuries after its composition.

Are we then to regard the three prose texts in Valerius's autobiographical collection as *Collationes*? Certainly the autobiographical 'Conferences' contained within the *Life of Anthony* provide a model in structure and in purpose for Valerius's work, which, like the rest of his writings, was intended exclusively for monastic instruction. The manuscripts also indicate that the collection as a whole, or conceivably only the prose elements, was dedicated to Donadeus, also the recipient of the first of Valerius's three accounts of visions of Heaven and Hell⁽²⁹⁾. This Donadeus is not otherwise known, but it has been conjectured that he was either Abbot of Rufiana, the later San Pedro de Montes, or some form of spiritual leader of the hermits of the Bierzo⁽³⁰⁾. On the analogy of the *Vita Antonii*, it might be suggested that Valerius's three autobiographical 'Conferences' were solicited from him by Donadeus, not only for the spiritual teaching by way of example that they contained, but also with a view to the eventual composition of *Vita Valerii*. As Fructuosus' *Rule* for the monastery of Compludo makes plain, the reading of such *vitae* was a staple and daily part of the monks' routine⁽³¹⁾. The *Life of Fructuosus* had itself been composed in a Bierzan monastery, probably no more than a decade earlier than the time of Valerius's writing, i.e.c. 685/90. If it be argued that a *Vita Valerii*, modelled on the *Vita Antonii* had been envisaged, then the fall of the Visigothic kingdom within a few years of Valerius's death could have frustrated this purpose.

The experimental and innovatory character of previous Visigothic hagiography, that could embrace such diversity of form and purpose as those represented by the *Vita Desiderii*, the *Vitas Patrum Emeretensium*, and the *Vita Aemiliani*, might reinforce the acceptability of such an hypothesis. However, there are good grounds for regarding the five parts of Valerius's 'autobiographical' collection as pieces of a whole, intended by its author to stand in its own right. Moreover, that unity has a more complex and sophisticated structure than has hitherto been allowed. Even a superficial reading of the texts, as of other works of his own composition, shows the extensive use that Valerius made of metaphor. Most immediately noticeable is his employment of sea-journey and shipwreck imagery⁽³²⁾. In itself this is hardly original, in that these constituted favoured metaphors for the struggles of the monastic or ascetic life, and as such

are found in such standard works as *The Dialogues* of Gregory the Great, and also much earlier, as for instance in the Pelagian epistle *Honorificentiae Tuae* of the pseudo 'Sicilian Briton'⁽³³⁾. Valerius's use of such an element of the *koiné* of ascetic literature is scarcely surprising, though he does display a mastery of a technical nautical vocabulary unusual amongst the employers of such imagery⁽³⁴⁾. Further, his use of such metaphors is carefully and consistently handled to help give structure to the narrative. As in the case of his choice of language, with its surprising variety of prose rhythm, Valerius's literary structures are generally more subtle than he is often given credit for⁽³⁵⁾. Indeed comments on his language have often confined themselves to attempts to relate the extravagances of his style to the supposed decadence and decline of the late seventh century Visigothic kingdom!⁽³⁶⁾

Valerius's world was a closely integrated one. As has been illustrated, Nature was for him a medium through which the Devil could act, or, as in a case of horses that miraculously survived being thrown over a cliff, its rules and norms could be altered by the activity of the divine will⁽³⁷⁾. Light and darkness reflected the powers of good and evil. Christ was equated with the sun, as both *Sol* and *Oriens*, in several of Valerius's writings, and in general he is always described by means of an imagery of light and the use of such items of vocabulary pertaining to light as *fulgor* and *claritas*⁽³⁸⁾. This is in contrast to the *tenebras* of the *Saeculum*, and of course to the coalblack faces of such agents of evil as Flainus and Justus. Again this was an imagery long established in the Christian tradition both in literature and art, and may have been reflected elsewhere in Visigothic Spain in such things as the original decorative scheme of the monastic church of Sta. María de Quintanilla de las Viñas⁽³⁹⁾. But it is important to realise the way in which metaphor could be both literary convention and also an expression of the perceptions of a higher reality. The interplay of the forces of good and evil could both condition and cut across the workings of the natural world. Valerius's literary expression of this understanding must alert us to the need to see his 'autobiographical' works as more than pieces of mere *rapportage* and to understand what a careful craftsman in words he really was.

Thus it is reasonable to expect that the overall form of this collection of texts should be capable of being explained. The parallels with the *Vita Antonii*, although helping to elucidate the inspiration behind it, do not make sense of the peculiar choice of form of three separate, brief and rather eccentrically entitled prose pieces with attendant verses. It was suggested by Fray Justo Pérez de Urbel that Valerius may have been influenced in his composition of these texts by the now lost work of Ildefonsus, whose title, recorded in Julian's *Elogium*, was the *Liber Prosopopoeia Imbecillitatis Propriae*⁽⁴⁰⁾. This would obviously be inadequate as an explanation for the overall form of Valerius's work, and with its meaning of 'the Personification of my own Inadequacy' Ildefonsus's book sounds as if it pertained to the confessional genre, perhaps cast in monologue or even dialogue form⁽⁴¹⁾. Structurally no parallels to Valerius's conception can be found, and we are forced to rely upon internal indications alone for an assessment of his intent. The titles of the works provide the key.

That of the first of the prose texts, the *Ordo Querimoniae*, was translated by its only English-speaking editor as 'Account of my griefs', which is loose but permissible⁽⁴²⁾. However, *querimonia* can take on a more specific signifi-

cance in one particular context, and that is in legal usage⁽⁴³⁾. It was a term used for a statement of grievance at the commencement of an action, made by the plaintiff against the defendant. Although this usage does not appear in Roman law texts of the imperial period, it came to be applied technically in Italy at least by the time of the promulgation of Liutprand's Laws⁽⁴⁴⁾. In Spain the term does not appear in the *Forum Iudicum* but by the ninth century was in use to refer to the formal statements of complaint made at the outset of a legal dispute⁽⁴⁵⁾. As a non-technical term for an account of grievances made in a legal context its employment goes back to Cicero⁽⁴⁶⁾. Now in itself this is not a strong enough body of evidence to require us to read this exact significance into Valerius's use of the word. It can not be shown to have been applied in this way in Visigothic Spain, though that is an argument *ex silentio*, and the *Forum Iudicum* does not make it clear what expression might have been employed for such a statement of complaint.

What, though, might make us more receptive to the idea are the titles of the other prose pieces in Valerius's collection. *Replicatio*, unlike *Querimonia*, has a well-established position in Roman legal terminology, and the subject of *Replicationes* was addressed in the fourteenth Title of Book Four of Justinian's *Institutes*⁽⁴⁷⁾. Both the procedure there described and the word for it are considerably older than Justinian's time, in that they feature in the *Institutes* of Gaius, as well as elsewhere amongst the writings of jurists cited in the *Digest*⁽⁴⁸⁾. Briefly expressed, after the initial statement of grievance made by the plaintiff, the defendant could prevent the action thus initiated from being pursued by presenting the judge with an *Exceptio*, a statement showing for one of a range of technical reasons why his opponent's charge was invalid or was being improperly pursued. If the *Exceptio* was technically correct then the proceedings were stopped. However, the Roman jurists felt that this could on occasion prove unduly prejudicial to the rights of the plaintiff, and a further stage in the action was developed whereby the latter could undo the effects of the defendant's *Exceptio* by the presentation of further argument. This was called the *Replicatio*⁽⁴⁹⁾. As it is put in the *Institutes* of Justinian: "Interdum evenit, ut exceptio, quae prima facie iusta videatur, inique noceat. quod cum accidit, alia allegatione opus est adiuvandi actoris gratia, quae replicatio vocatur, quia per eam replicatur atque resolvitur vis exceptionis"⁽⁵⁰⁾. Now one of the most common of the ripostes that a defendant might make to a plaintiff's opening charge was the *Exceptio Litis Residuae* by which he could base his claim to have the action dropped on the grounds that a residue of matters relevant to the central complaint were not being brought forward by his opponent at the hearing. In other words if a claim could be subdivided it was necessary for the plaintiff to ensure that all parts of it were heard at the one time. Failure to do so left the way open for the presentation of this *Exceptio* and the action being lost⁽⁵¹⁾.

Thus, allowing the extension of the possible legal metaphor from the title of the first of Valerius's texts, the *Ordo Querimoniarum*, we have there the initial statement of complaint. This is followed after the presentation of a hypothetical *Exceptio* by his, the plaintiff's, *Replicatio*. Finally, to be certain that all charges are brought at the same time and in full, so as to avoid his opponent escaping on a technicality, there comes the *Residuum*, to ensure as it were that

there should be no *Exceptio Rei Residuae*. So far, perhaps, it may be allowed to have worked. But where is the defendant? We do not have to seek far. Throughout the three texts one figure has appeared continuously in counterpoise to that of Valerius, sometimes working through agents but on occasion appearing openly and in person. It is the Devil. This is the *invidus inimicus*, the *furens inimicus*, the *saeuissimus inimicus*, the *infestus et pessimus inimicus*, the *saeuissimus aduersarius* of Valerius's accusations, whose *invidia* and *aemulatio* is at the root of all of Valerius's difficulties⁽⁵²⁾. These texts then are Valerius's *In Diabolum*. In view of the constant role of the diabolic powers as the overt enemies of the monks throughout the whole range of early ascetic literature, Valerius's stance both has a clear logic of its own, and should not be interpreted as evidence of peculiar personal obsessions. Similarly, the violence of his tone in his recriminations against his opponent is put into a different perspective when seen thus in the light of Roman forensic traditions. A high level of both rhetoric and abuse was expected in legal declamation, and once again it would be culpable to mistake this for a manifestation of personality⁽⁵³⁾. In modern judgements on Valerius the mask has been mistaken for the man.

The theme of judgement in the context of a legal combat is also brought out in the verse texts that accompany the prose works. To take first the one poem that is generally accepted as forming a part of the collection, the *Epitameron Proprium Praefati Discriminis*, this will be found to contain reference to the *seuus inimicus* of the prose texts. However, the theme is somewhat different in that Valerius is here appealing to God: 'Justissime iudex qui iudicas terram et possides coelestia regna' seeking to have the 'chirographa diabolicae cautionis aduersum me conscripta' destroyed. Here the central item is Valerius's supposed hand-written bond, the *chirographa cautionis*, that puts him legally in the Devil's power. At the same time he appeals to the divine judge for pardon:

"Ira furosis suspensa mitis meorum tribue piaculorum veniam
Omnibus meis abstersis flagitiis electorum tuorum pius concede consortia"⁽⁵⁴⁾.

Exactly the same topic dominates the *Epitameron Propriae Orationis*:

"Vera trinitas, deus alme, exaudi peccatorem indignum ad te clamentem
Accipe precem flebiliter confitentis et dona veniam delinquenti", and
Recti itineris tramitem sic gradiar insons ut a coelorum regno non
efficiar exul,

Imminente itaque iudicii die tuum indemnis intuar tribunal"⁽⁵⁵⁾.

On the other hand such imagery is quite foreign to the *Epitameron Propriae Necessitudinis*. For the reason of the internal logic and cohesion of the collection as a whole it would thus seem preferable to see the first two and not the third of these poems as being associated with the prose texts in the 'autobiographical' corpus. Their preservation in this context by the Alcobaça manuscript would also seem to lend weighty support, hardly to be gainsaid by the acrostic reference to Donadeus in the *Epitameron Propriae Necessitudinis*⁽⁵⁶⁾. As has been mentioned, Donadeus also features as dedicatee of at least one item in the hagiographic collection.

Throughout this particular group of works Valerius displays a surprising and insistent knowledge of legal terminology. Some is used metaphorically, as

in the titling of the individual works, but on occasion technical phrases, such as the use of '*obsequium impendere*' in the context of those who brought provisions to his hermitage near Castro Pedroso, can appear in his text in such a way as to suggest that he was employing them in their correct secular sense⁽⁵⁷⁾. It is not necessary thereby for us to make of him a lawyer in his early life: his knowledge of keels and bilges would then also require us to have him as a sailor. However, it may indicate that young men of his social standing continued in Visigothic Spain to receive something of the legal education that their Late Roman equivalents would have enjoyed. (As I hope that I have demonstrated elsewhere) this would not have been totally incompatible with the workings of the law under the rules of the *Forum Iudicum*. In this group of related works, whose structuring was conditioned solely by the demands of the controlling metaphor, for otherwise what need was there for a separate *Replicatio* let alone *Residuum*?, Valerius may have given us some hint of that *vana disciplina* from which as young man he sought refuge in his flight into the monastic life⁽⁵⁸⁾.

From their own internal chronological indications, which suggest that their author was in his sixties at the time of writing, it is clear that these 'autobiographical' works, if we may still so call them, were composed late on in Valerius's career, and this is likely to have been in the period c. 695-700. A.D.⁽⁵⁹⁾. There is, moreover, a distinct possibility that the third of the prose works, the *Residuum*, was left unfinished at his death. This is not only by far the briefest of the three, but it also suffers from both an abrupt endign and an extraordinary transition in its subject matter in its final phase. Like the two preceding pieces, this work commences with a narrative of episodes from Valerius's life, in particular with an account of difficulties that he encountered at the hands of a certain Firminus, often thought to be a leader amongst the monks of Rufiana, but who is more likely to have been a member of the local lay community⁽⁶⁰⁾. However, this episode is brought to no conclusion at all and the personal account breaks off suddenly to be followed by a short concluding section that consists of a retelling of two stories concerning the late fourth-early fifth century Egyptian hermit Arsenius.

The American editor of these texts, Sister Consuelo Aherne, recognised the extraordinary inconsequentiality of this transition, but merely suggested that 'An account of the life of St. Arsenius is added from another source either by Valerio or by the copyist⁽⁶¹⁾. This is somewhat conservative. The ultimate source of the two stories, which in the *Residuum* are combined to make a single point or moral, is easy enough to find. It is a Latin text of *Apophthegmata Patrum*, well enough known in Visigothic Spain in the translations made by Martin of Braga and Paschasius of Dumio. In the collection compiled by the latter both of these stories appear in their original form⁽⁶²⁾. From this it is possible to see that not only have these stories, originally quite separate, been detached from their context and appended as an irrelevant rump to the autobiographical fragment in the *Residuum*, but also in both cases the episodes have been so modified that their original significance has been lost. Thus in the first of them in the version given in the *Residuum* Arsenius refuses to meet Bishop Theophilus of Alexandria on the grounds that if he does so then he will have to make himself accessible to all future visitors⁽⁶³⁾. In the Greek original and in Paschasius's Latin version, however, Arsenius agrees to see the bishop, me-

rely pointing out the consequences of his so doing. It is the second story in the *Residuum* a Roman lady visits Arsenius despite his prohibition, but is rewarded for her persistence by words of spiritual comfort⁽⁶⁴⁾. The two episodes are then linked by a concluding comment on how a hermit who had turned away a bishop yet was willing to receive a woman 'per Domini voluntate'. In the original versions, on the other hand, Arsenius was exceedingly annoyed with the lady and made a point of refusing her plea that he keep her in remembrance. Bishop Theophilus subsequently assures her though that the hermit will certainly pray for her soul.

Although the brevity of the text would make it hard to prove the matter conclusively, I am inclined to suspect that this ideosyncratic reworking of the two originally separate apophthegmatic stories was a product of the hand of Valerius. Whilst none of his more outré items of vocabulary appear in it, the style is not at variance with that of his own works. Furthermore, the author succeeds in weaving Valerius's favourite theme of the Day of Judgement into his summing up of the significance of the two intertwined tales, and the implied lack of respect for or even hostility towards ecclesiastical authority is not uncharacteristic of Valerius, who, like Arsenius in the story, regarded bishops in particular as a threat to his life of contemplation⁽⁶⁵⁾. However, allowing that Valerius was the author of this bizarre recasting of the Arsenius stories is not the same as admitting that he intended both the break in the first person narrative and the abrupt transition in subject matter and purpose that would be implied by accepting this to be his deliberately chosen conclusion to the *Residuum* and therefore to the whole corpus.

However harsh, though unjustified, previous judgements on Valerius may have been, no one has yet accused him of being a literary bungler. As has been seen the prose works of the 'autobiographical' collection are carefully sculpted throughout in terms of language, imagery and structure. So irrelevant and so lame a conclusion as that provided by the Arsenius pastiche can hardly have been a part of Valerius's purpose. It is both notable and regrettable in this context that the *Residuum* is only preserved in MS Madrid, Biblioteca Nacional 10,007 (T), as we can not know if this aberrant conclusion would have been common to the whole tradition⁽⁶⁶⁾. It is perhaps significant, though, that the Alcobça Manuscript, otherwise containing the full collection, just omits the *Residuum*. It had therefore either been cut out of that line of transmission at an earlier stage, or the scribe of this manuscript disdained to copy it because of the brevity and nonsensical nature of its content. At all events the truncated and patched character of the *Residuum*, as opposed to the internal consistency in theme and imagery that is to be found in the other two prose works of the collection, gives reasonable grounds for suspicion that this final section of the corpus was never completed or was abandoned by Valerius. Even if he himself were the author of the Arsenius pastiche, by no stretch of the imagination could we imagine that he intended it to be placed where it is now to be found. We must, therefore, postulate the existence of some form of editor, or literary executor as it were, who rounded off the work in this unsatisfactory way, perhaps thereby also hoping to have found a home for the orphaned Arsenius fragment.

This has some bearing on questions to do with the manuscript transmission of Valerius's works; not so much that of the 'autobiographical' collection,

which is reasonably straight-forward, as that of the hagiographic compilation. In Dom de Bruyne's article in the *Revue Bénédictine* in 1920 it was first recognised that this corpus of *vitae*, homiletic extracts and monastic anecdotes which Valerius compiled for didactic purposes, enjoys a manuscript transmission that enables us to divide the codices into at least two distinct classes⁽⁶⁷⁾. Attempts to expand on this classification and to defend a view that there were almost as many different copilations or recensions as there were manuscripts were affectively disposed of by Professor Díaz y Ddiaz in a study in 1951, and he was able to elicit the shape of the original collection in so doing⁽⁶⁸⁾. At the same time this investigation seemed able to give especial authority to one of de Bruyne's two classes of manuscripts.

The principal representatives of this class are MSS Madrid B.N. 10,007 (T), Alcobaça 454 (A) and, via its later copies, the lost Carracedo codez. The immediate coincidence of this list with that of the manuscripts that contain all or part of the texts of the autobiographical collection can hardly be a matter of chance. Professor Díaz y Díaz has demonstrated that whilst a close relationship can be shown to have existed between the Alcobaça and Carracedo manuscripts, their line diverged from the parent stem above the branch leading to MS B. N. 10,007 (T)⁽⁶⁹⁾. Thus the Alcobaça and Carracedo manuscripts do not contain the autobiographical collection just because it was in T. The two collections, the hagiographic and the 'autobiographical' therefore were circulating together before the year 902, the date in which in all probability MS T was written, and there are indeed no grounds for doubting the cohabitation of the two from an early point in their existence. This could mean that the 'autobiographical' corpus was first copied into the archetype of the class of manuscripts now represented by T, A, and the copies of the lost Carracedo codex.

Obviously, it may be objected that all sorts of other extaneous items became added to and indeed intermingled with the core of Valerius's hagiographic compilation in the manuscripts that we now possess⁽⁷⁰⁾. Could the linkage with the 'autobiographical' collection, whilst having to take place before 902, have occurred at a point sufficiently subsequent to Valerius's lifetime for us not to have to draw the otherwise inescapable conclusion; which is that it is the other class of manuscripts containing the hagiographic compilation, and which is not associated with the posthumously edited 'autobiographical' collection, which represents best the original state of that compilation, and which should therefore be accorded priority. The earliest representative now extant of this class, MS Madrid Biblioteca Nacional 494, if not as precisely dateable as T, is but little younger than its rival, probably having been written in the middle of the tenth century⁽⁷¹⁾.

There exist other grounds for doubting the autohoritative status of that class of manuscripts principally represented by T. Some, previously recognised, such as the curious repetition of the preface to Rufinus's translation of the *Historia Monachorum in Aegypto*, are not in themselves of sufficient wight to justify such a reassessment⁽⁷²⁾. However, there exists a further difficulty that has hitherto gone unrecognised, which concerns the three visions of Heaven and Hell, and more particularly the first one of them, which is rather obliquely entitled *Dicta Beati Valeri ad Beatum Donadeum Scripta*. This can not have been its original title, as the attribution of the epithet *Beatus* to its author clearly

shows. But there is more of a problem to it than that. The work as it now stands commences in a surprising way, and that is with a conjunction: 'et'. Indeed the whole opening sentence presupposes continuity from a preceding discussion:

“Et ut de his duabus retributionibus sepe dictis manifestius pateat...”⁽⁷³⁾. What are those 'often referred to' *retributiones* that Valerius now proposes to illustrate? Such a beginning, presupposing an immediately related prior discussion, could only make sense if it were following on from the subject matter of the work immediately preceding it in the collection. However, according to the view that T and its affiliates contain the authoritative form of the hagiographic corpus, and on the basis of the ordering of the contents of the collection worked out by Professor Díaz y Díaz in 1951, the text immediately preceding the *Dicta Valeri* is the *Epistola Beatissime Egerie Laude Conscripta*, Valerius's reworking of the *Peregrinatio Egeriae*⁽⁷⁴⁾. This text makes no reference whatsoever to the 'two rewards', the celestial and the infernal, that form the exclusive subject matter of the *Dicta Valeri*. There is no point of logical consequence from the one work to the next in this particular ordering of the two pieces. This is equally true if it be argued, as it recently has been, that this placing of the *Epistola* within the body of the hagiographic compilation represents an early interpolation and is alien to Valerius's own intentions⁽⁷⁵⁾. The removal of the *Epistola* puts the *De Exultatione Diaboli in Ruina Monachorum*, one of Valerius's numerous excerpts from earlier texts, in the position of being the immediate predecessor to the *Dicta Valeri* in the compilation. Like the *Epistola*, this is also entirely lacking in any continuity of purpose or content to the subject matter of the *Dicta*. On the other hand, in the manuscripts that form the alternative, or Riojan-Castillian, class of those that transmit the hagiographic compilation of Valerius there exists unanimity in the placing of the *De Vana Saeculi Sapientia* not only in the corpus but also at the point immediately preceding the *Dicta Valeri*⁽⁷⁶⁾. This arrangement, which has the authority of two tenth and one eleventh century manuscripts for it, also makes perfect sense of the otherwise inexplicable beginning of the latter work. The *De Vana Saeculi Sapientia*, a form of homiletic treatise, is devoted exclusively to the theme of judgement, the alternative attitudes towards the lure of the *Saeculum*, and the two contrasting rewards of celestial bliss or infernal damnation⁽⁷⁷⁾. Brief depictions of the forms that the latter two will take are herein provided, and it is this, though in greater detail, that constitutes the subject matter of the three vision stories, of which the *Dicta Valeri* contains the first, and which in this chain of transmission followed the *De Vana Saeculi Sapientia*. Thus the juxtaposition of the *De Vana Saeculi Sapientia* and the *Dicta* makes perfect sense of the conjunctive opening of the latter and of its stated intention of illustrating a theme just discussed. Therefore the ordering of the contents of the hagiographic collection in the manuscripts of the alternative class, containing MSS Madrid, Real Academia de la Historia *Aemilianensis* XIII, and Biblioteca Nacional 494 and 822, makes sense: that of the other class, despite the presumed authority of T, does not.

That this erroneous ordering of the contents was not the result of scribal error at a later stage in the transmission of this class of manuscripts but was rather a feature fundamental to it is suggested not only by the occurrence of

this flaw in all of the manuscripts of this class, but is also an implication of Professor Díaz y Díaz's excellent reconstruction of the original order of contents in the archetype of T and its fellows, on the basis of the vestiges of a system of numbering that he found in the Madrid manuscript (T) itself⁽⁷⁸⁾. His analysis of that ordering is perfectly logical, and even allows for the more recent revision of the removal of the *Epistola Egerie* from the ranks of the corpus, but its relationship to Valerius's original intentions is entirely dependant upon the wight of authority given to this particular class of manuscripts. However, as has been suggested here, it is the other class that contains the correct order of contents. Thus it looks as if T and its associates share both a subsequent revision of Valerius's original and sensible scheme for his hagiographic collection and also the indications of a botched editorial conclusion to the 'autobiographical' corpus. In general the impression must be strong that T and its companions contain a posthumous recension. Such a view also fits the evidence of the geographical distribution fo the manuscripts of the two classes. Those previously regarded as having priority and which include T in their number are found to be associated exclusively with centres in Western León, Galicia and Portugal, whilst the codices of the alternative class originated in Riojan and Castillian monasteries, notably San Millán, Silos and Arlanza⁽⁷⁹⁾. That the scribes of these latter manuscripts did not include any of the parts of the 'autobiographical' collection would suggest that they were ignorant of it and that unlike those of the other class their exemplars lacked these texts. In practice no evidence can be found of any knowledge of the 'autobiographical' corpus beyond the North-West of the peninsula. It thus seems likely that the archetype of the authoritative Riojan-Castillian class of manuscripts left its original home in the Bierzo either before the composition of the 'autobiographical' collection or at the latest before the confection of the posthumous recension. That it had made its way to a Visigothic monastic centre in the Rioja prior to the Arab conquest of 711 would seem to be a reasonable conjecture.

Doubtless the *Ordo Querimoniae* and the other elements of that group of texts which may conveniently be labelled Valerius's 'autobiographical' collection have not yet given up all of their secrets. But it may be hoped that what has been suggested here might inculcate a greater feeling of respect for them and for their author. Valerius here produced a related set of works that were both personal and highly original, although drawing upon themes, models and images that were part of the common currency of the ascetic traditions of Late Antiquity. It was the work of his old age, and may have been left unfinished at his death, the approach of which must have been a spur to its composition. Although its basic subject matter may be safely so described, too literal an approach to the autobiographical character of it has led to its complex formal construction and the influences on it being overlooked and neglected. Perhaps greater care needs to be taken in the treating of it as a revelation of personality, which may be found in the motives that underlay its composition but will not result from a simplistic approach to its subject matter. Valerius the man might have to remain hidden behind Valerius the author, but we can at least see him as a more subtle, complex and intelligent writer. That so far we seem so signally to have failed to appreciate his achievement is more our loss than it is his⁽⁸⁰⁾.

1. M. R. James, 'Learning and Literature till the Death of Bede' in *Cambridge Medieval History* vol. III (Cambridge, 1922), p. 494; M.C. Díaz y Díaz, 'Sobre la compilación hagiográfica de Valerio del Bierzo', *Hispania Sacra* IV (1951), p. 22; the forthcoming edition by Professor Díaz y Díaz is referred to in *Bivium: Homenaje a Manuel Cecilio Díaz y Díaz* (Madrid, 1983), p. 15.
2. D. de Bruyne, 'L' heritage littéraire de l'abbé Saint Valère', *Revue Bénédictine* XXXII (1920), pp. 1-10.
3. T.A. Thompson, *The Goths in Spain* (Oxford, 1969), pp. 318-319.
4. T. González García in *Historia de la Iglesia en España* vol. I (Madrid, 1979), p. 661; M.C. Díaz y Díaz, 'La cultura de la España visigoda del siglo VII', *Settimane di Studi sull'Altomedioevo...di Spoleto* (Spoleto, 1958), reprinted in *idem*, *De Isidoro al siglo XI* (Barcelona, 1976), p. 47.
5. Edited in R. Fernández Pousa, *San Valerio, Obras* (Madrid, 1942), pp. 158-194, and in C.M. Aherne, *Valerio of Bierzo, an Ascetic of the Late Visigothic Period* (Washington D.C., 1949), pp. 69-159 (including facing English translation).
6. Aherne, *Valerio*, pp. 11-13.
7. M.C. Díaz y Díaz, 'Un nuevo códice de Valerio del Bierzo', *Hispania Sacra* IV (1951), pp. 133-146.
8. *Idem*, 'El corpus poético de la herencia literaria de Valerio del Bierzo', in his *Anecdota Wisigothica* I (Salamanca, 1958), especially pp. 92-94.
9. Aherne, *Valerio*, p.13; *Biblioteca Nacional de Lisboa: Inventario dos códices alcobacenses* V (1932), pp. 424-426.
10. See G. Misch, *Geschichte der Autobiographie* Vol. II. 2 (Frankfurt-am-Main, 1976), pp. 317-355 for Valerius.
11. Aherne, *Valerio*, p. 11.
12. *Ibid.* pp. 15-16, 62-63.
13. See Note 4 above.
14. Aherne, *Valerio*, pp. 73-75: *Ordo Querimoniae* 2.
15. *Ibid.*, p. 74.
16. *Ibid.*, p. 175, note 83.
17. *Vita Antonii* ch. 6, *Patrologia Graeca* vol. XXVI (Paris, 1857) c. 849; *Vitas Patrum Emeretnesium*, ed. J. N. Garvin (Washington D. C., 1946), IV. ix. 7, p. 184; the imagery is also to be found in some of the New Testament Apocrypha, e.g. *The Acts of Peter* XXII, *The Acts of Andrew* XXII, *The Syriac Acts of Philip*; *The Apocryphal New Testament*, trans. M.R. James (Oxford, 1924), pp. 323, 345, 451.
18. Díaz y Díaz, 'Sobre la compilación': no. 5 in his ordering: see now also *idem*, 'La compilación hagiográfica de Valerio del Bierzo en un manuscrito leonés' in his *Códices visogóticos en la monarquía leonesa* (León, 1984), pp. 115-147.
19. P. Rousseau, *Ascetics, Authority and the Church in the Age of Jerome and Cassian* (Oxford, 1978), especially pp. 27, 94-95.
20. *Ordo Querimoniae* 5, ed. Aherne, *Valerio*, pp. 80-85.
21. J. Béranger, 'Le refus de pouvoir. Recherches su l'aspect idéologique du principat', *Museum Helveticum* V (1948), pp. 178-196.
22. *Ordo Querimoniae* 7, ed. Aherne, *Valerio*, pp. 96, 98.
23. P. Brown, *The World of Late Antiquity* (London, 1971), pp. 53-56; *idem*, *The Making of Late Antiquity* (Cambridge, Mass., 1978), pp. 1-26.
24. *Replicatio* 5, ed. Aherne, *Valerio*, p. 127; *Vita Antonii* ch. 41, *P.G.* XXVI, c. 904; some parallels might be drawn with the *Vita martini* of Sulpicius Severus, but in general the differences of conception and outlook are too great to make such comparisons valuable; indeed, although it is clear that he knew the same author's *Dialogues*, there is no evidence that proves that Valerius ever read Sulpicius's *Vita Martini*.
25. Rousseau, *Ascetics, Authority and the Church*, especially Section 5 on Cassian.
26. *Les Règles des Saints Pérez* vols I and II, ed. A. de Vogüé (Paris: *Sources Chrétiennes* 297-298, 1982).
27. *Vita Fructuosi* XVII, ed. M.C. Díaz y Díaz, *La Vida de San Fructuoso de Braga* (Braga, 1974), pp. 110-112.
28. *Vita Antonii* chs. 16-43, *P.G.* XXVI, cc. 867-908.
29. Aherne, *Valerio*, p. 69.
30. *Ibid.* p. 162, note 1.
31. *Regula Sancti Fructuosi* ch. 6, ed. J. Campos, *Santos Padres Españoles*, vol. II (Madrid, 1971), pp. 146-147.
32. e. g. *Ordo Querimoniae* 4,6,7, ed. Aherne, *Valerio*, pp. 79, 87 and 89, 95, 97.

33. *Dialogues* I. prologue 5, ed. A de Vogüé, *Grégoire le Grand, Dialogues* vol. II (Paris: *Sources Chrétiennes* 260, 1979), pp. 12, 14.
34. e.g. “velut in pelago fretinavis natantis sub tegmine carinae”, *Ordo Querimoniae* 4, ed. Aherne, *Valerio*, p. 79; for another example of unusual vocabulary note from the same chapter the phrase ‘lautomiae castra’ —slave camps— on which see Aherne, *Valerio*, p. 172, note 55.
35. Aherne, *Valerio*, pp. 34-39, 40, 52-53.
36. J. Pérez de Urbel, *Los Monjes españoles en la edad media* (2nd. ed. Madrid, 1945, 2 vols.), vol. I, p. 452.
37. *Ordo Querimoniae* 9, ed. Aherne, *Valerio*, p. 105.
38. *De Vana Saeculi Sapientia* 2 and 3, ed. Fernández Pousa, *San Valerio*, pp. 146 and 147; cf. *Ordo Querimoniae* 4, ed. Aherne, *Valerio*, p. 79.
39. S.A. Ordax and J.-A. Abásolo Alvarez, *La Ermita de Santa Maria, Quintanilla de las Viñas (Burgos)* (Burgos, 1982), pp. 32-38.
40. Pérez de Urbel, *Los Monjes*, vol. I, p. 451.
41. *Prosopopoeia*: see Isidore, *Etymologiae* II. XIII. 1, ed. W.N. Lindsay, *Isidori Hispalensis Episcopi, Etymologiarum sive Originum Libri XX* (Oxford, 1911, 2 vols.), vol. I, unpaginated.
42. Aherne, *Valerio*, p. 68.
43. J. Niermeyer, *Mediae Latinitatis Lexicon Minus* (Leiden, 1976), pp. 877-878.
44. e.g. R. Cessi, *Documenti relativi all storia di Venezia anteriore al mille* (Padua, 1940, 2 vols.), vol. I, p. 43: doc. 27.
45. e. g. Madrid, Archivo Historico Nacional, Sección de Clero, Carpeta 1325A, doc. 9; A.H.N., Sección de Códices, Códice 1197B fol. 384v; Biblioteca Nacional, MS 18387, fol 276r.
46. M. Tullius Cicero, *Verrines*, II. iii.57, ed. L.H.G. Greenwood (Loeb Library, 1953), p. 160.
47. *Imperatoris Iustiniani Institutionum* IV, ed. J.B. Moyle (Oxford, 5 th ed. 1912), IV.14, pp. 601-602.
48. *Gai Institutionum Commentarii Quattuor*, ed. J. Baviera (Florence, 1968): *Fontes Iuris Romani Anteiusiniani, pars altera: Auctores*, IV. 126, p. 179; for *Digest* references see *Iustiniani Institutiones*, ed. Moyle, p. 601, note 1.
49. W. W. Buckland, *A Text-Book of Roman Law* (Cambridge, 3rd ed. revised by P. Stein, 1963), pp. 653-657.
50. *Institutiones*, ed. Moyle, p. 601.
51. Buckland, *Roman Law*, p. 654; Gaius, *Institutiones* IV. 56, 122, ed. Baviera, pp. 163, 178.
52. Aherne, *Valerio*, p. 166, note 20.
53. M.L. Clarke, *Rhetoric at Rome* (London, revised, ed., 1966), pp. 57, 76, 92-93.
54. Ed. Aherne, *Valerio*, p. 111.
55. *Ibid.*, p. 113.
56. M. C. Díaz y Díaz, *Anecdota Wisigotica* I, pp. 105-106; the title, like that of the *Dicta Valeri*, could be a later addition.
57. *Ordo Querimoniae* 2, ed. Aherne, *Valerio*, p. 73; see also pp. 167-8, note 27.
58. *Ordo Querimoniae* 1, ed. Aherne, *Valerio*, p. 69.
59. Aherne, *Valerio*, pp. 33-34; for more precision on Bishop Isidore of Astorga see L. García Moreno, *Prosopografía del reino visigodo de Toledo* (Salamanca, 1974), no. 392, p. 155. This episode is omitted in MS T.
60. Aherne, *Valerio*, p. 22 and pp. 182-183, note 27.
61. *Ibid.*, p. 22.
62. J. G. Freire, ed. *A Versao latina por Pascasio de Dume dos Apophthegmata Patrum* (Coimbra, 1971, 2 vols) XXI. 1 and XCIII, 9, vol. I, pp. 183-185, 320.
63. *Residuum* 2, ed. Aherne, *Valerio*, p. 157.
64. *Residuum* 3, ed. Aherne, *Valerio*, p. 159.
65. See Valerius's account of Isidoro of Astorga in *Ordo Querimoniae* 7, ed. Aherne, *Valerio*, p. 99.
66. MS T, fols. 262r - 263v.
67. de Bryne, ‘L’ heritage littéraire’, pp. 1-10.
68. M. C. Díaz y Díaz, ‘Sobre la compilación’, pp. 3—25.
69. *Ibid.*
70. Fernández Pousa, *San Valerio*, pp. 9-18 ofr a listing of the contents of MS T.
71. A. Millares Carlo, *Contribución al corpus de códices visigóticos* (Madrid, 1931), pp. 46-79 provides a detailed analysis of the contents and the palaeography of MS Madrid, Biblioteca Nacional 494, but for a more recent consideration and revised dating see Díaz y Díaz, *Códices visigóticos*, pp. 415-421.
72. Z. García Villada, ‘Las Obras de San Valerio, monje del Bierzo’, *Estudios Eclesiásticos* I (1922), pp. 252-256.

73. Fernández Pousa, *San Valerio*, p. 110.
74. *Ibid.*, pp. 102-109; new ed. in M.C. Díaz y Díaz, *La lettre de Valerius du Bierzo sur la bienheureuse Egérie* in P. Maraval, ed. *Egérie, Journal de Voyage* (Paris: *Sources Chrétiennes* 296, 1982), pp. 336-348; P. Devos 'Une nouvelle Egérie', *Analecta Bollandiana* CI (1983), pp. 67-70 gives a diplomatic edition of the text from the Paris MS, Bibliothèque Nationales n.a.l. 2178, a detached portion of MS Madrid B.N. 822.
75. Díaz y Díaz, *Códices visigóticos*, pp. 145-146, note 125.
76. Fernández Pousa, *San Valerio*, pp. 23, 30-31, 33, for ordering of contents.
77. *Ibid.*, pp. 145-157.
78. Díaz y Díaz, 'Sobre la compilación ha-
 giográfica; both the original article of 1951 and the revised discussion of the order of contents in *Códices visigóticos*, pp. 127-148.
79. For the Riojan MSS see M.C. Díaz y Díaz, *Libros y librerías en la Rioja altomedieval* (Logroño, 1979), pp. 133-140, and for the Castillian ones idem, *Códices visigóticos*, pp. 415-421, 422-425, also pp. 117-148 for T and its relatives.
80. In the discussion following this paper, amongst other valuable comments, it was suggested by Professor Rouche that these works of Valerius should also be seen as constituting a form of spiritual guide for hermits.