

'READING FOR THE MORAL' IN VALERIUS MAXIMUS: THE CASE OF *SEVERITAS*

Introduction

This paper sets out to contribute to our understanding of the way *exempla* functioned in Roman culture through a close study of ethics in our only major extant collection of *exempla* from ancient Rome, Valerius Maximus' *Facta et dicta memorabilia*. I develop what Matthew Roller in a recent article calls the 'discourse of exemplarity'¹ by demonstrating what Valerius Maximus can tell us about the dynamic process of reading and learning from *exempla* in ancient Rome, and also by suggesting that one role of *exempla* in Roman culture was to promote ethical deliberation within a tradition of 'controversial thinking'. The main part of the paper analyses Valerius' treatment of the theme of *seueritas* and his presentation of pertinent *exempla* (especially in chapters 2.7 and 6.3) in order to illustrate the claims about Valerius' work and about Roman *exempla* more generally that I shall outline in this introductory section. In summary my contention is that Valerius' arrangement of *exempla* in sequence under ethical categories is designed to tell Roman readers not simply what to think but *how* to think ethically, enabling Roman readers both to explore the scope of those moral categories and to develop their skills of moral reasoning.

To be sure, Valerius never states explicitly that this is his aim – indeed he says very little explicitly in his preface about the way he intends his work to be read beyond the fact that he has collected *documenta* from other authors to save the reader's effort (*praef.*). Elsewhere he merely describes the past as a source of inspiration and beneficial for contemporary morality (2.1.*praef.*; 4.1.11; 4.3.13; 5.3.ext. 4), to be imitated but also understood (4.6.*praef.*). Nevertheless, as I shall show, the work is full of exemplary motifs which implicitly guide the reader's engagement with the exemplary material: themes pertaining to the idea of reading and learning from *exempla*, for instance those of imitation, aspiration, relationships between past, present and future, ethical judgements and decision-making and the roles therein of context and contingency.

My contention is that the work is best understood within the context of the Roman practice of declamation in all its ethical and rhetorical aspects, and particularly of 'controversial thinking'. This central feature of rhetorical training, ethics and even epistemology at least from Cicero onwards, which flourished in the early empire when Valerius was composing his work, holds that ideas need opposition in order

to flourish. It emphasises the need to consider and to argue every side of a question before coming to judgement (if judgement can be reached at all) and the necessity of moral dilemma and ambiguity for the advancement of moral understanding. Its role in Roman education is clearly demonstrated by the widespread use of the declamatory exercises of *controversiae* and *suasoriae*, through which the Roman elite learned to pursue, articulate and evaluate every side of an issue (*multiplex ratio disputandi*).² Recent scholarship on Roman rhetoric and declamation has shown that such exercises should not be thought of as encouraging sophistry and empty rhetoric, but rather as a means both of acculturation and of moral education: rhetoric and ethics were closely entwined in Roman culture.³ Certainly, post-classical thinkers (including scholars of contemporary rhetoric and pedagogy) have described such a process of deliberating through arguing opposing sides and through meeting the challenges of contradiction as an extremely productive route to moral understanding.⁴

The *exemplum*, with its definitive, cut-and-dried moral directives, may seem at first glance an unlikely medium for controversial thinking. *Exempla* are more usually understood as historical narrative stripped bare of almost all historical context in order to make a specific moral point,⁵ leaving only the bare bones of the story and seeking to convey a moral message which is unequivocal. Within this reductive and prescriptive form, however, they also possess a range of related characteristics that fit them as much for ethical agility as for ethical rigidity, as a decade of exciting scholarship (primarily on post-classical traditions) in the disciplines of history, literary criticism and philosophy has demonstrated.⁶ *Exempla* are referential; that is, each *exemplum* must make reference

² The phrase *multiplex ratio disputandi* is used by Cicero of Socrates' dialectical methods (*Tusc. disp.* 5.11); Cicero drew on the tradition of Academic scepticism for which he had great admiration in order to urge Romans to submit their arguments to critical challenges to strengthen and to interweave Roman oratory and philosophy (e.g. *Cic. Tusc. disp.* 1.8; 2.3–9; 5.11; *De off.* 2.8; see also Cicero, *Academica*.) See further Mansfeld and Inwood (1997); Powell (1995). Similar ideas were articulated by Quintilian in his rhetorical handbook, in the generation following Valerius Maximus (e.g. *IO* 1.35). Such ideas were taken up eagerly by writers of the Renaissance and are still most fully discussed by scholars of the Renaissance and later rhetorical traditions: see Conley (1994) on Cicero 36–7 and Quintilian 39–40.

³ See especially Beard (1993) on declamation as Roman myth-making, Gunderson (2003) and Langlands (2006) ch. 5.

⁴ For Roman declamation as a model for contemporary 'critical' teaching see Friend (1999), Mendelson (1994) and now Mendelson (2002). See also Brown (1998) on teaching with contradiction in the Middle Ages, where opposition of contraries is not a barrier to understanding, but a 'hermeneutic irritant' that is in fact 'a condition of understanding and knowledge' (p. 3). Cf. Benhabib (1992) for a contemporary position arguing that there is a valuable place for contextually sensitive discourse ethics within a 'historically self-conscious universalism' (30).

⁵ On the process of converting historical material into exemplary material see Maslakov (1984). These days most scholars have surmounted the earlier anxiety about historical inaccuracy, since ideas such as those of Hayden White (in e.g. *Tropics of discourse* (1978)) have shown us that we can take seriously the rhetorical function of history as well as or instead of its factuality. John D. Lyons' idea that *exempla* 'correct' as opposed to 'distort' or 'manipulate' or 'misrepresent' the past is a pleasing concept to those who would defend them (Lyons (1989) 14–15).

⁶ A volume that combines the approaches of all three disciplines in its tripartite form is Gelley (1995); Lyons (1989) was a ground-breaking work on *exempla* in the early modern era; on Renaissance *exempla* see Hampton (1990); on modern philosophers such as Kant and Derrida see Harvey (2002).

I would like to thank Peter Wiseman and the journal's anonymous referees for critical and challenging comments on earlier drafts of this paper.

¹ Roller (2004).

to a narrative that exists outside the text, held in the collective memory.⁷ Since, as a result, the Roman reader is inevitably expected to bring some prior knowledge to bear on each individual citation of an exemplary story, such modern reading strategies as reader-response and reception theories have proved helpful in analysing exemplary textual dynamics.⁸ Exemplary stories are designed to be told again and again to different audiences and in different contexts and are open to recasting and reinterpretation,⁹ and there is consequently no final and definitive meaning of any narrative.¹⁰

In addition to being unstable in their relation to moral meaning over time, individual Roman *exempla* held in the Roman collective memory are very often morally complex in themselves: a single story can be told in such a way as to stimulate moral reflection.¹¹ However it is the effects of sequencing groups of related *exempla* that Valerius particularly exploits in his work. Valerius' arrangement of exemplary narratives within categories, far from making the meaning of those narratives ossify,¹² enables the challenging and exploration of the moral categories themselves through the strings of *exempla* which inevitably are both inadequate to embody fully the moral category they illustrate and (sometimes as a result) contradictory of one another. Through drawing attention to the range of material collected under category headings

⁷ On *exempla* as narratives held in the Roman collective memory see Gowing (2005) and Roller (2004) both with further bibliography.

⁸ Roman *exempla*, as Roller has shown (Roller 2004), demand at least two layers of reader (primary and secondary audiences) and expect that interpretation of exemplary material will differ from reader to reader. However 'pointed' an *exemplum* may seem, a reader is expected to play their part in creating the message.

⁹ On this aspect of Roman *exempla* see especially Chaplin (2000); Chaplin has provided some wonderful analyses of the way that exemplary narratives are deployed, redeployed and contested within Livy's history, demonstrating the malleability and dynamism of *exempla* in the Roman tradition. See also Roller (2004) on this phenomenon. Lyons calls these characteristics 'iterativity and multiplicity' (Lyons (1989) 8–15).

¹⁰ Granted, the form of the *exemplum* limits possibilities of interpretation of the narrative that is at its centre. Context, language and often explicit authorial comment direct the reader to a certain interpretation of the message to be drawn. Yet these very mechanisms of direction, together with the fact that Roman *exempla* were familiar and retold over and over again, acknowledge that no single telling of the narrative can be the final word on its meaning and that it is always expected to be put to further uses, very probably not those which the author envisages at the moment of writing. Such is the possibility opened up by the very fact that the *exemplum* has already adapted, or re-worked, or, to use Lyons' term, 'corrected' the historical record (see n. 5 above). As Roller says, 'secondary audiences have minds of their own' and are not bound to interpret the *exemplum* in the way that it has been set up by the 'primary audience' and the 'commemoration'. Lyons calls this feature of *exempla* 'undecidability': and what is more, 'like all inductive reasoning, the example does not exclude the possibility that future experience will fail to conform to the rule it implies' (Rendell (1992) 60).

¹¹ See below my discussion of the story of Horatius in Val. Max. 8.1. abs. 1. For recent scholarly discussion of other famous exemplary heroes highlighting their embodiment of multiple and conflicting ideas see Roller (2004) on Horatius Cocles, Stem (2007) on Romulus and Lowrie (1997) 225–65 on Regulus (although her argument is about the poetics of Horace's representation in this particular text, her analysis resonates for the figure of Regulus more generally).

¹² Contra Chaplin (2000) 171 'the advent of rhetorical schools and handbooks of exempla resulted in ossified meanings for individual figures and episodes' and Valerius 'treats his exempla as if they have definitive meanings' (making reference to Skidmore (1996) 68–73). Cf. Roller (2004) 51.

and the discrepancies within it, Valerius encourages the reader to appreciate moral complexity and to question and refine conceptual boundaries; this is a feature of Valerius' work which also emerges from my earlier discussion of his chapter 6.1 on *puclitia*.¹³ It will become clear in my discussion of *seueritas* that such complexity spills out of individual chapters and is also found in the intratextual relation between different parts of the work.

In this article I also develop a new idea, that Valerius is particularly concerned to help his readers become better people specifically by honing their skills of moral judgement and decision-making in the face of an ethically complicated universe full of competing priorities. By depicting moral dilemmas that even exemplary heroes struggle to resolve, juxtaposing contradictory *exempla*, presenting *exempla* as troubling, extreme or ambiguous, Valerius conveys how difficult it is to make ethical judgements, both in hindsight (as a reader of *exempla*) and at the moment of moral crisis (as an exemplary figure or moral agent).¹⁴ In soliciting the reader's moral reflection and checking the impulse to prejudge the moral message of any given *exemplum*, the work aims to contribute to the honing of the reader's deliberative and pragmatic ethical skills.

However, we should not look to Valerius for subtle discussion of moral issues. Often his role is that of the nimble devil's advocate, who overstates extreme positions or presents a loaded interpretation of a familiar *exemplum* in such a way as to invite his readers to counter his assertions or supplement his interpretation. Usually he provides, in addition, direction as to how this might be done and material (in the form of *exempla*) to do it; sometimes he relies on readers bringing to their reading well-known alternative versions (such as those of Livy) against which his should be read. Scholars have been understandably inclined to characterise Valerius' tone as 'stark moralising'.¹⁵ In what follows I hope to show that such starkness (which is an intrinsic feature of *exempla*) is often intended to be provocative and that much of the material in Valerius' work is in fact deliberately presented so as to give pause for thought, rather than to direct a reader immediately to one particular judgement. One-sidedness is part of a 'controversial' strategy designed to leave readers seeking more satisfactory answers for themselves.¹⁶

¹³ Langlands (2006) 138–91.

¹⁴ The close association between the hero as moral agent and the reader as moral agent which is effected at various points in the text (particularly where exemplary figures are described as imitating or learning from other exemplary material; see also on the preface to 6.3 below) helps to facilitate the reader's moral development through reading *exempla*.

¹⁵ Maslakov (1984) 464; Bloomer (1992) 153 citing Maslakov and describing 'stark moralism' as 'an impression Valerius strives to communicate'; and also Weileder (1998). Cf. Chaplin (2000) 52 'heavy-handed moralising'; Dowling (2006) 183 'reducing his anecdotes to streamlined moral lessons'.

¹⁶ The same is true of another apparently reductive ethical-rhetorical form found throughout Roman literature, the *sententia*. M. L. Clarke epitomises a conventional view of *sententiae*, writing of their 'superficial neatness and fundamental emptiness' (Clarke (1996) 95), but a medieval description of them as 'a seed waiting to grow' comes closer to appreciating their ethical potential. Rather than being empty, *sententiae* are in fact over-full in a way that parallels the 'excess of meaning' found in *exempla* (on which see Lyons (1989): both rhetorical forms grasp finality for an instant before rendering it up again to the reader's inevitable quibbles and questions (cf. Langlands (2006) 280 with further references).

In a recent compelling monograph about exemplarity and ethics in the works of Gower and Chaucer, J. Allan Mitchell counters the prevailing notion of *exempla* as fundamentally coercive and authoritarian, as having a 'manipulative socio-political function'. He sets out instead to recoup a certain ethical agency for medieval readers and to open up the possibility of the moral application of reading for the individual 'so as to return us to the moment of moral application with a heightened sense of what it could have meant for the individual moral cognition in the later medieval period'.¹⁷ It is from Mitchell's work that I have taken the phrase 'reading for the moral' which appears in the title of this article, and I too want to examine the way that 'the exemplary text preserves individual agency and autonomy' and argue similarly that Valerius' is not a prescriptive morality, but rather encourages a form of ethical pragmatism, making something of the rapid upheavals of history to open up space for ethical questioning and deliberation.

Nowadays the artistry in the composition and execution of Valerius Maximus' *Memorable deeds and words* is widely acknowledged.¹⁸ Dedicated to Tiberius and studded with praise for the Caesars and appreciation of the current peace and stability under the imperial regime, the work is usually read as a vehicle for Tiberian imperial ideology.¹⁹ The focus, in other words, of the recent scholarship has been on the work as articulation of imperial ideology, and its morality as a top-down, authoritarian communication of the virtues with which the emperor wishes to be associated. In particular Weileder's work traces in convincing detail the theme of Roman imperial expansion and power in the work, while Mueller explores religion as the guiding framework of human behaviour. *Religio* and *imperium* are indeed woven together in the preface as key features of the work and go some way towards structuring the process of moral interpretation for the reader, but they are accompanied by another important theme: the nurturing of virtue and the punishment of vice with reference to the past. To acknowledge the ideological framework within whose terms the work is produced and which it reproduces, and its close relation to imperial hegemony, should not require us to disregard the way the work solicits the engagement of its readers and invites them to 'read for the moral'.

¹⁷ Mitchell (2004): first citation, p. 15; subsequent p. 3.

¹⁸ See e.g. Bloomer (1992), Skidmore (1996), Weileder (1998), Mueller (2002), Thurn (2001), Cramer (2002) and Späth (2003).

¹⁹ See Wardle (1997) on the representation of Julius Caesar and esp. p. 326, where he notes that books 3–5 each begin with a virtue on which Tiberius particularly prided himself; cf. Levick (1999) 87–9, Weileder (1998), Bloomer (1992), Mueller (2002) and recently Dowling (2006) 181–4 on the representation of *clementia*; Milnor (2005) 196–9 on the Caesars represented as champions of the Roman family.

Seueritas and pause for thought

The concept of *seueritas* is explored in some depth in several places in the *Facta et dicta memorabilia* (especially chapters 2.7 'on military discipline', 5.8 'on the *seueritas* of fathers towards their children' and 6.3 'on *seueritas*'),²⁰ and it also impinges on Valerius' representation of many other qualities (including a network of ideas incorporating discipline and obedience, loyalty to country, chastity, dignity).²¹ The following discussion will argue that Valerius' presentation of his material on *seueritas* promotes examination not only of the scope and nature of the moral concept itself, but also of the processes of moral learning through reading *exempla* from a past era that is different from the reader's own present: issues of evaluation and moral judgement, of discrimination between forms of behaviour that look very similar, of recognition of the importance of context in evaluation of deed and in ethical decision-making – in other words, of the subtleties of ethics and moral reasoning.

Seueritas is generally recognised in modern scholarship and ancient literature as one of the most Roman of virtues, associated with the *mos maiorum* and a bedrock of Roman greatness. It is also traditionally and inescapably a challenging virtue which must be handled very carefully and with moderation.²² It forms part of a cluster of related concepts to do with the exercise of discipline and mercy (most memorably articulated in the following generation by Seneca the Younger in his *De clementia*).²³ *Seueritas* is special, though not unique in Valerius work, in relating closely to the emperor's role as a moral authority, as outlined by Valerius in his prefatory address to Tiberius, since it is associated with the exercise of *imperium* over others. It is also associated with other roles in Roman society in which an individual wields power, such as father or magistrate. It therefore represents a point of intersection between imperial ideology and personal ethics (though it is beyond the scope of this article to explore the relationship between the two).²⁴ It should be emphasised that the range of

²⁰ In addition to these chapters, *seueritas* is also mentioned at 1.pr.; 2.1.2; 2.2.6; 2.4.4; 2.6.1; 2.9.2–3 & 2.9.8; 3.5.2; 3.7.9; 3.8.2 & ext.5; 6.1.4; 6.1.6; 6.1.11; 6.5.3; 7.2.5; 7.7.7; 8.1.1.absol.; 8.1.6.absol.; 8.1.7.damn.; 8.15.4; 9.1.5.

²¹ *Pudicitia* in chapter 6.1 (and see discussion in Langlands (2006) 154–60); dignity in 6.3; discipline and obedience and loyalty to country in 2.7 and 6.3, on which see discussion below. Valerius' work demonstrates how ethical actions have never been and can never be performed in a pure and uncontaminated moral context where the right course of action is simple and obvious, and where the ramifications of decision-making are minimal.

²² See e.g. Dowling (2006) 25 on its ambivalence: 'both clemency and severity have their place in maintaining order; neither must be used to an extreme.'

²³ See Dowling (2006) with further bibliography; Griffin (1992) 156–8.

²⁴ Cf. Melissa Dowling's argument that at the time Valerius was writing the complementary concept of *clementia* not only had an important role to play in imperial self-representation and the negotiation of imperial power but was also emerging as a personal civilian virtue. Augustus had cultivated a reputation for judicious *seueritas* (Dowling (2006) 38, 49–53) but in later years was accused of excessive *seueritas*. For a different argument see Konstan (2005). See Dowling (2006) 169–89 for a discussion of the representation of *clementia* during the reign of Tiberius in coinage, the *senatus consultum de Pisone*, the Hoby cups, the altar voted to *clementia* in 28 CE, as well as in literary sources such as the works of Velleius Paterculus, Valerius Maximus and Phaedrus and declamation.

material contained in the *Facta et dicta memorabilia* is very great; it speaks at various times to slaves, women and children as moral subjects and the chapter themes go beyond individual virtues and vices. The ethical issues raised and the social relations touched on in the work are many more than those encompassed by Valerius' treatment of *seueritas* and its ethical scope is not representative of the breadth of Valerius' work.²⁵ The concept does, however, provide a convenient focus for an examination of exemplary motifs within the work.

The virtue of *seueritas* is balanced by the opposing virtues of mercy, pity and clemency (and also sometimes circumspection and caution),²⁶ while an excess of *seueritas* leads to vices such as cruelty and savagery.²⁷ Since *seueritas* is not an 'absolute' virtue, but falls along a continuum where it can on the one hand, when excessive, border on brutality and on the other hand often be usefully mitigated by mercy, a judgement about where an act falls along that continuum and what constitutes rightful action requires very careful discrimination. Judging when to be strict and when to be lenient is an important moral skill and the theme of *seueritas* is therefore usefully employed by Valerius, as we shall see, to highlight ethical issues of how to evaluate a situation when called upon to act. Further, as a virtue whose role is to control vice in other people, *seueritas* itself requires in its exercise moral judgement about the behaviour of others and it is therefore a paradigmatic virtue for those learning to evaluate behaviour.

Valerius' development of the theme of *seueritas* over the course of the whole nine volumes neatly encapsulates the attributes, strengths and limitations of the virtue as seen elsewhere in Latin sources. In the preface to the whole work, addressed to Tiberius, the emperor's control of vice is described as being practised *seuerissime*; *seueritas* is shown as characterising the virtue of the ancestors and is a bulwark against the enervating encroachment of *luxuria*,²⁸ it underpins both the military discipline which Valerius outlines as the key to Roman imperial greatness (especially in ch. 2.7; cf. 7.2.5) and the role of the censor (2.9; cf. 6.5.3), and guides justice in the courts²⁹ and the senate (2.7.15; 6.3.3; 6.3.7) and the role of the paterfamilias.³⁰ While superlative *seueritas* is a characteristic of virtuous men and institutions,³¹ it is several times made clear that there is such a thing as excessive severity and that this is frowned on (3.7.9,

6.1.6, 6.5.3). Even when *seueritas* is applauded, it is associated with unpleasantness, as the preface of chapter 6.3 describes:

The heart must arm itself with hardness when deeds of grim and horrifying *seueritas* are related, so that laying aside every gentler thought it is ready to listen to harsher matters.

armet se duritia pectus necesse est, dum horridae ac tristes seueritatis acta narrantur, ut omni mitiore cogitatione seposita rebus auditu asperis uacet.³²

And when Valerius reminds us that to exert *seueritas* explicitly requires the repression of other competing virtues such as *clementia* or *mansuetudo* (2.7.11, 8.1.6)³³ he raises the spectre of valid (and perhaps less unpalatable) alternative ways of acting in a given situation and hence of evaluating the action that was taken.

At 8.1.absol.1 Valerius tells the story of Horatius in such a way as to emphasise precisely this aspect of moral decision-making. Horatius is tried in the courts for the murder of his sister, whom he had struck down when he found her expressing what he felt was inappropriate grief at the death of her fiancé. Within its narrow scope, the passage sets out the consequences of there being more than one valid moral judgement about a situation. First Horatius has to make a judgement about the significance of his sister's behaviour and the response that it merited, then the community of Rome is required to evaluate that response and decide whether or not his lethal punishment of Horatia was justified. Horatius' murder trial dramatises the alternatives in the persons of the people and the king; the king prosecutes Horatius for murder, the appeal of the people leads to his acquittal. Posterity, and Horatius' subsequent reputation as an upholder of morality (cf. Valerius' rather different rendering of the same story at 6.3.6), supports the people's stance, yet the authorial voice also informs us that his action in killing Horatia might just as well have been judged *impius* as *seuerus*. In order to be moral one must act decisively in the face of competing moral imperatives and the decision may not always look like the right one to everybody at first, or even with hindsight. Even when one comes out firmly on one side rather than another – as the hero must in order to be able to act at all – the retelling of the story in this form, as the enactment of ethics in a judicial setting, alerts the reader to the complexities of coming to judgement.

²⁵ As I have shown for the case of *puccinia*, Langlands (2006) 138–91.

²⁶ See e.g. Val. Max. 5.8.5.

²⁷ And conversely 'when possessed to an extreme degree, clemency becomes a vice' (Dowling (2006) 279).

²⁸ 2.1.2, 2.2.6, 9.1.5, cf. 2.4.4 on *seueritas* tempering the licence of the mime, 2.6.1 of the Spartan community which is *proxima maiorum nostrorum grauitati* and 2.6.7 of the Massilians (also reverential of the past and close to Rome) banning mimes from the stage.

²⁹ See the rulings of the *praetor urbanus* on inheritance: 3.5.2; 7.7.7, 8.1.7.damn.; for excessive *seueritas* in the courts compare 3.7.9, 8.1.absol.6.

³⁰ Ch. 5.8 is devoted to this specific topic and see also 6.1.4, 6.1.6, 6.1.11, 2.7.6.

³¹ In the preface, *seuerissime* of the emperor's punishment of vice; *seuerissima* in 2.3.6; *seuerissimi* in 2.6.1 of the laws of Lyeurgus; *seuerissimi custodes* in 2.7.6; *viri seuerissimi* in 6.3.8, the kinsmen who strangle Licinia and Publicia without trial; in 8.15.4 *seuerissimus cursus* of Cato's life.

³² Key terms associated with *seueritas* are *tristis* (of severe *puccinia* in 2.1.5 and 6.1.4), *horridus* (2.2.5; cf. 2.1.5), *durus* (5.3.1), *atrox* (6.1.6); *asper* (5.8.pr.; 5.9.pr.; 7.2.6) and *acer* (2.6.7, 2.7.10). Meanwhile the *seuerissimus* lifestyle of Scipio Aemilianus was most emphatically not designed to please (8.15.4).

³³ Ch. 5.1 is devoted to the virtue of *clementia* and this provides an interesting comparison with those on *seueritas*, which will not, however, be pursued in detail here. Cf. also ch. 4.1 on *moderatio*. For one reading see Dowling (2006) 181–4.

This version of Horatius' story highlights the challenges of ethical decision-making within a single exemplary narrative;³⁴ Valerius also uses the macro-structure of his work – sequencing of chapters on related themes – to similar effect. In the sequence of chapters from 5.7 to 6.1, which in the work provide the prelude to 6.3 on *seueritas* itself, the issue of the competing virtues of leniency and strictness in the parental role is played out; this body of chapters poses strikingly the challenge of weighing plausible alternatives.³⁵ The chapters alternate contrasting responses to the misdemeanours of children, where both leniency and strictness are shown to be simultaneously praiseworthy and problematic and neither emerges as the absolutely preferred mode of behaviour.³⁶ Both virtues are at the same time praised and cast in a somewhat critical light. In addition, Valerius several times calls attention in this section of the work to the validity of positions contrary to those adopted by his exemplary heroes. In chapter 5.8 ('on the severity of fathers towards their children'), Torquatus had entirely fulfilled the requirements of virtue and circumstance by the act of condemning his son; he might have allowed himself to be swayed by his son's manifestation of *uerecundia* in taking his own life and might have joined in the mourning at his son's funeral without incurring any blame,³⁷ yet he preferred to carry on beyond the call of duty, imitating the severity of his famous ancestor, and remain at home and available to the public, fulfilling his civic duty (5.8.3). A. Fulvius, the fifth and final example of the series, kills his son rather than see him join the followers of Catiline, on which Valerius comments:

He would have been allowed, until the madness of civil war was over, to keep him shut away; but that deed would have been narrated about a cautious father, this one is handed down about a strict father.

licuit, donec belli ciuilibus rabies praeteriret, inclusum arcere: uerum illud cauti patris narraretur opus, hoc seueri refertur. (5.8.5)

The father in 6.1.4 could have given the freedman the benefit of the doubt, and linking 6.1.5 and 6.1.6 Valerius comments that he might have evaluated the former *exemplum* differently did it not appear in the context of the latter. All these men take a course of action which demonstrates extreme virtue, but they explicitly could have acted otherwise without incurring blame.³⁸

³⁴ Compare 4.1.3 or 2.8.2.

³⁵ I discuss these passages more extensively in Langlands (2006) esp. 154–7 and so in what follows will provide only a summary of my conclusions.

³⁶ As he moves into chapter 5.9 (on the contrary virtue of moderation towards children), Valerius redescibes the severity of 5.9 as *incitatum et asperam* – hasty and harsh. 5.8 ends with a suggestion that severity may sometimes overstep the boundaries of virtue. The tales of leniency in 5.7 may be more pleasant to read, but parental indulgence can have some disturbing consequences; see Langlands (2006) 156.

³⁷ *Peregerat tam Torquatus seueri et religiosi iudicis partes, satis factum erat rei publicae, habebat ultionem Macedonia, potuit tam uerecundo filii obitu patris inflecti rigor* (5.8.3).

³⁸ Cf. 5.5.4 or juxtapose 6.4.4 with ch. 4.7 on friendship.

This is a part of the work where the sequencing of chapters most clearly calls attention to the juxtaposition of contradictory ideas. While book 5 makes opposing virtues of both leniency and strictness in parents, it does not leave the reader with a set of guidelines for working out which is the more appropriate in a given situation. Evaluation of past action and of the right way to act in a given present are both shown to be fraught with difficulty, and by reading and thinking through such passages one exercises and refines one's appropriate ethical skills.

However, it is in the following analysis of individual chapters 2.7 and 6.3 and their presentation of sequences of *exempla* illustrating the quality of *seueritas* that we will really see Valerius pushing the reader towards close consideration of these issues, breaking down assumptions and urging critical engagement with familiar material. Here we will see that individual chapters with their farragoes of exemplary material present an important context for understanding how Valerius intends individual *exempla* to be interpreted. Particular attention will be given to the interplay of *exempla* and comment within individual chapters and how this stimulates the reader's examination of the concept of *seueritas*, although the relationship between chapters will also be considered.³⁹ Each chapter raises a different set of issues surrounding the concept: the emphasis of 2.7 (also found in 5.8 and 6.1) is on the agonising process of girding oneself, especially as father, to deploy the virtue, while 6.3 highlights the salutary and exemplary function of *seueritas*. This shift in emphasis is indicated in the preface to 6.3 (cited above) where the familiar hardening of the heart and laying aside of gentler tendencies is required not of the hero but of the chapter's reader so that we move to consider above all the consequences of *seueritas* upon those who witness it (as primary or secondary audiences).

i) Chapter 2.7 on military discipline

Book 2 of the *Facta et dicta memorabilia* is devoted to Roman institutions rooted in virtuous antiquity and the seventh chapter therein covers the subject of military discipline, in whose maintenance *seueritas* is shown to play a key role. This chapter immediately raises the issue of the relation between past and present⁴⁰ and is framed with a topsy-turvy chronology; it opens by highlighting the continued contemporary relevance of this ancestral virtue, preserved unharmed to this day, in safeguarding the peaceful status quo of Tiberian Rome and concludes by recalling its role in the dramatic establishment of this empire and its expansion from the humble hut of

³⁹ There can be no doubt that Valerius Maximus assumed that a reader would gain something by reading his work sequentially: for a succinct and cogent argument that the work is aimed primarily at the 'through-reader' see Morgan (2006) 264.

⁴⁰ This is a key theme of Valerius' work and of his didactic method that I intend to examine elsewhere.

Romulus to its present grandeur.⁴¹ The two opening *exempla* describe the expulsion of luxury from army camps, by P. Cornelius Scipio in 134 BCE and Metellus in 109 BCE, in order to reinstate military discipline (2.7.1–2). These *exempla* straightaway complicate the preface's claim of military discipline 'preserved whole and untouched' (*sincerum et incolume seruatum*) through the years, by pinpointing not one but two occasions on which it had been allowed to dissipate and drastic action was needed to revitalise it.⁴² They send an edifying meta-exemplary message that lost moral strength is recoverable, by suggesting the possibility of moral revival through the timely application of *seueritas*. They also indicate that moral decline is not a peculiar attribute of Valerius' own present, but a prerequisite of any exemplary moment, whenever its present is located. Equally, any future can benefit from an individual's efforts to be virtuous, however dispiriting the lassitude of the times.

After this optimistic start, the rest of the chapter is structured as follows: first a weighty central section about men who were not afraid to punish their own family members (2.7.3–6) or men of high status (2.7.7–8) in order to support military discipline, then a collection of more disparate tales of punishment for desertion or failure to manifest the fighting spirit (2.7.9–14) rounded off with six examples where the Roman senate is the punisher (2.7.15a–f),⁴³ which also highlight the various beneficial effects such punishments can bring, and finally a mere pair of foreign *exempla*: the Carthaginian senate meting out punishment to generals and the saying of the Spartan commander Clearchus that soldiers should fear their own general more than the enemy (2.7.ext.1–2).

As is usual with Valerius' work, the twenty-four⁴⁴ *exempla* are interspersed with comments which provide interpretation of the narratives and explain the shape and progression of the chapter and the connections between individual *exempla*. In this case the comments make clear the centrality of the *exemplum* of T. Manlius Torquatus which, although it is not cited until 2.7.6 and then only briefly, makes its presence felt throughout the chapter and frames the reader's interpretation of the other stories found there. T. Manlius Torquatus executed his brave and victorious young son for responding to an enemy challenge to single combat without first consulting him.⁴⁵

⁴¹ *uenio nunc ad praecipuum decus et ad stabilimentum Romani imperii, salutari perseuerantia ad hoc tempus sincerum et incolume seruatum, militaris disciplinae tenacissimum uinculum, in cuius sunt ac tucla serenus tranquillisque beatae pacis status adquiescit* (2.7.pr.); *disciplina militaris acriter retenta principatum Italiae Romano imperio peperit, multarum urbium, magnorum regum, ualidissimarum gentium, regimen largita est, fauces Pontici sinus patefacit, alpium Taurique montis conuulsa claustra tradidit, ortumque e parua Romuli casa totius terrarum orbis fecit columen* (2.8.pr.).

⁴² *erecta et recreata uirtute* (2.7.1); *omnibus imperii neruis ad reuocandam pristinae disciplinae militiae conisus est* (2.7.2).

⁴³ The subdivisions 'a' to 'f' of section 2.7.15 are not found in Briscoe's Teubner edition, but correspond to those of Shackleton Bailey in the Loeb edition.

⁴⁴ The numbered sections do not correspond exactly to the individual *exempla*; sections 2.7.6, 2.7.14 and 2.7.15 each contain more than one *exemplum*; this mismatch is a common feature of the text we have.

⁴⁵ The *locus classicus* is Livy 8.7; other references can be found in Dion. Hal. 8.79.2; Cic. *Sulla* 32; *De fin.* 1.23; Sall. *Cat.* 52.30–1; Virg. *Aen.* 6.824–5. See also Oakley (1998) on Livy 8.7.

His deed is the paradigmatic *exemplum* of *seueritas* in Roman tradition and his name a byword for *disciplina* as well as *seueritas*.⁴⁶ Such virtue requires a man to muster the strength to carry out a deed which is difficult because it breaks other social codes (protection of one's family members, respect for the status of others etc.) and which has other negative repercussions (grief, family dishonour, public censure), in a situation where there are other options that might apparently be chosen without incurring blame. While ostensibly referring to other *exempla*, the comments that appear elsewhere in the chapter apply just as appropriately and perhaps more poignantly to that of Manlius, and thus provide a gradual build-up of anticipation before its actual citation and then a means of reflection upon it through the *exempla* that follow. So, after the opening pair of stories about the reintroduction of military discipline, Valerius introduces the third example:

Those men who did not hesitate to exact punishment and revenge for the harm of military discipline, by smashing their family bonds and bringing disgrace on their own family home, were also a benefit to military discipline.

bene etiam illi disciplinae militari adfuerunt qui necessitudinum perruptis uinculis ultionem uindictamque laesae sum ignominia domuum suarum exigere non dubitauerunt. (2.7.3)

While recalling Manlius' deed, these words in fact introduce that of P. Rupilius, who expelled his son-in-law from the province of Sicily because he had, through his negligence, lost the citadel of Tauromenium. Though each deed is related in a single concise sentence, nevertheless it is clear that Rupilius' deed differs from Manlius' in several significant ways; he punishes a son-in-law rather than a son, the punishment is exile from the province rather than execution and the punished crime involves military failure (loss of stronghold) rather than success (victory over the enemy in single combat). In every way Rupilius' act is less shocking and less impressive: the relation punished is not so close, his punishment is milder and the crime is more substantial and damaging in its effects.

A similar invitation to compare the examples in 2.7.3–5 comes at the end of 2.7.5 in what might look like a rhetorical question, were it not that we are already primed ('were I not urged on by greater examples ...', *nisi maioribus urgueretur*) to give it a definite answer:

What is more difficult to do than to inflict a disgraceful sending home on family ties and shared heritage, or to inflict shameful flogging on a shared name and ancient family connections, or to direct the censorial scowl towards brotherly love?⁴⁷

⁴⁶ For ancient references to the proverbial *Manliana imperia* see Livy 4.29.6; 8.7.21; 8.34.1; Cic. *De fin.* 2.32.105; Gellius 17.21.

⁴⁷ Note how in each case the recipient of the punishment is de-personified as the familial tie rather than the man himself.

Quid enim tam difficile factu quam copulatae societati generis et imaginum deformem in patriam reditum indicere, aut communioni nominis ac familiae ueteris propinquitatis serie cohaerenti uirgarum contumeliosa uerba adhibere, aut censorium supercilium aduersus fraternam caritatem destringere?

Well, we might answer, perhaps harder than the feats listed (sending one's son-in-law home in disgrace, flogging and demoting a blood relation, or expelling a brother from the senate) would be to hand over for execution one's own dear, brave son, fresh from triumph over the enemy in single combat.

The chapter reaches its climax in a lengthy and emotive passage where the detail of such deeds – the young son cherished from infancy, lovingly educated in letters and arms, pure, brave and devoted to father and country, beheaded as punishment for a noble act – is given to Postumius rather than to Torquatus (another deferral of the expected famous *exemplum*).⁴⁸ Perhaps I am unusually susceptible, but I find this passage emotionally hard to read – it may not be subtle, but it can still be effective – and any reader ambitious for virtue must surely ask themselves whether they could possibly find the strength to do the same if circumstances seemed to call upon them to do so. Indeed the horror of the *exemplum* demands that we wonder what circumstances could ever again justify such an act.⁴⁹ The ambivalence of these deeds is highlighted in Valerius' image of the double-headed axes streaming to double effect (public glory and private grief) with the generals' own blood (i.e. the blood of their sons). The idea that a spectator or reader might falter in their response to such a deed is readily acknowledged in the description of the personified Rome who receives the men *duplici uultu*, unsure whether to begin by congratulating or commiserating.

It will be seen that Valerius does not shy away from the impossibility of such severity. On the contrary, he draws attention to the ultraheroic properties of the feats of Postumius and Torquatus in a declaration of his own inability to do justice to their virtue in his prose:

Therefore I too, Postumius Tubertus and Manlius Torquatus, embrace you in my memory and narrative with a hesitant mind, because I realise that, overcome by the weight of praise that you have deserved, I shall reveal the inadequacy of my talents rather than represent your virtue as it should be.

igitur ego quoque haesitante animo uos, bellicarum rerum seuerissimi custodes, Postumi Tuberte et Manli Torquate, memoria ac relatione complector, quia animaduerto fore ut pondere laudis quam meruistis obrutus magis imbecillitatem ingenii mei detegam quam uestram uirtutem, sicut par est, repraesentem. (2.7.6)

Within the familiar rhetoric of sincere admiration, Valerius also hints at the impracticality of the *exemplum*. If it is hard even to *write* convincingly about them, how much harder must it be to emulate their deeds? It is tempting to see the men, and especially the hoary figure of Torquatus, less as a model for behaviour and more as a dramatic assertion of principle, intended to be bracing and inspirational, but not meant to be taken literally or imitated 'structurally' (in Roller's terminology).⁵⁰

However, in this chapter Valerius confronts the perennial problem of the moral gap between exemplary role model and humble reader; how can ordinary moral agents be expected to identify with, and emulate, extraordinary heroes? This problem is generated not only by the location of Roman *exempla* in an exemplary past unclouded by the vice and compromise of the 'present', but is also a feature of other eras and situations which do not have the same past/present dichotomy. Good examples are Christian sainthood, or contemporary role models such as Martin Luther King, Mother Teresa and Nelson Mandela – and I draw on studies of these in the discussion that follows – and there are also parallels with the Stoic conundrum of the distinction between the wise man and the ordinary flawed Stoic.⁵¹ The lives of such paragons of virtue look like very hard work for the mere ordinary mortal and we may understandably balk at the examples they set us. As Andrew Flescher, in his book on supererogation (that is, 'going beyond the call of duty') in contemporary morality, writes: 'To be guided by the literal meaning of heroic or saintly instruction, when heroes and saints enjoin us to walk with them, is possibly to open ourselves up to exploitation, exhaustion and perhaps permanent corporeal bankruptcy.'⁵² If one can hardly be expected to reproduce the acts of men such as Manlius Torquatus and Postumius Tubertus given one's weaker moral capacities or different circumstances, then such acts are supererogatory, beyond the call of duty – especially perhaps when repositioned against the lesser demands of a more indulgent age.⁵³

⁵⁰ Roller (2004) 23–4. Compare the 'violence' of Carthage in 2.7.ext.1, whose crucifixion of their generals for poor decision-making in war, *even when* they turn out to be successful (like the impetuous sons of 2.7.6), is described as making the Roman senate look mild. This practice raises again the issue of evaluation: who is to decide that a general's decision was wrong and *on what grounds*, given that its consequences are deemed irrelevant? In chapter 3.7, which I discuss elsewhere, Valerius explores the difficulties of using hindsight as an evaluative tool.

⁵¹ On the Stoic conundrum see Inwood (2005) esp. 100–1 with further references.

⁵² Flescher (2003) 8.

⁵³ The issue of whether his own age can be held to such exacting standards as earlier eras and the implications of this question are raised and explored by Valerius at 2.9.4–5 (in relation to *seueritas*) and also the end of 4.4 (on *frugality*) and 8.2.4 (*uerecundia*); I shall explore this subject elsewhere.

⁴⁸ For an analysis of this passage focusing on the use of religious imagery see Mueller (2002) 144–5.

⁴⁹ Cf. the straightforward description of the same act at 6.9.1: 'he struck down with an axe his victorious son, because he had engaged in single combat with the enemy against his orders', *filium uictorem, quod aduersus imperium suum cum hoste manum conseruerat, secure percussit*, where it is listed as one of the glorious deeds of his adulthood. At 9.3.4, however, which foregrounds the anger of the masses at the father's deed, the son is described as 'punished too harshly', *nimis aspere punitus*.

On one reading, then, the exceptional deeds of the hero can be seen merely as 'well-intended hyperbole'⁵⁴ designed to inspire the reader to head in the general direction of virtue, without placing on him excessive moral demands and without actually expecting him to reach the level of his model. However, Flescher's analysis of the idea of supererogation shows convincingly that such a weak understanding of how exemplary figures and their deeds exhort their readers or audience to moral aspiration is neither a necessary nor an adequate way of understanding the moral role of the heroic or saintly figure. Outstanding *exempla*, despite their distance from the ordinary person, do provide direct 'instructions for virtuous living.'⁵⁵ His argument is that by appearing to ask the reader to go beyond the call of duty, supererogatory acts compel one to reassess one's very idea of what duty is and of what can and should be demanded of one if one is to aspire to virtue. The category of supererogatory is a 'moving goalpost', so that heroic acts appear more or less difficult to achieve to different people and, more pertinently, to the same individual over time as he or she undergoes moral development, responding to the challenges posed by such acts of heroes and modifying his or her own behaviour and personal expectations accordingly. As Flescher puts it, supererogation is useful because, in pointing out acts that are currently, but perhaps only for the time being, beyond us, it 'awakens us to shortcomings in our character' which we are then in a position to address.⁵⁶

I would like to argue that we can see the dynamics of Flescher's 'moving goalpost' version of supererogation at work in Valerius Maximus 2.7, where the saints are represented by Postumius and Torquatus, but the material in the rest of the chapter offers the 'ordinary' reader ways of fruitfully (cf. the 'happier and more fruitful examples', *uberioribus et felicioribus exemplis* that ends the chapter at 2.7.ext.2) applying their stories to his own life. As they are presented within this chapter at least, these exemplary heroes are not another species; while their deeds are here described in terms of the most extreme virtue, Valerius' highly emotionally charged and empathy-evoking description of the contexts of their deeds reminds us that these men are not so different from 'ourselves' – real men with feelings, real fathers, experiencing genuine love for their sons and profound horror and grief at the actions to which uncompromising virtue drives them (Postumius cannot bear to look on the results of his decision). Valerius' representation combines the highest possible manifestation of virtue to which one might aspire, with tangible and approachable humanity.⁵⁷ This emotional and distressing aspect of morality in Valerius is related to the rhetorical context in which emotional arousal of an audience is an important feature of the

⁵⁴ Flescher (2003) 8.

⁵⁵ Flescher (2003) 8.

⁵⁶ Flescher (2003) 20.

⁵⁷ This is a particular strategy of this section and one might compare citations elsewhere in Valerius such as 6.9.1 and 9.3.5 where little is made of Torquatus' humanity (see n. 49 above). Cf. Torquatus' representation in Livy, book 4.29, where the suggestion is made that tradition knows him for savagery, cruelty and excessive use of *imperium*.

effect that the writer or author has upon the reader or audience; it sets Valerius' moral approach somewhat apart from the rational clear-headedness found in formal philosophical writings.

Moreover, the fact that 2.6.7 presents the stories to us as a very similar pair where Torquatus was able almost to replicate the deed of Postumius in his own suggests, at least, that the act *was* not and perhaps therefore *is* not unrepeatable.⁵⁸ Their deeds should not be dismissed as being beyond ordinary moral agents and irrelevant to contemporary concerns. In fact, the theme of successful emulation runs through the chapter; the opening pair of *exempla*, both telling of the expulsion of luxury from the camps, are very similar to one another and Valerius underlines this by managing the link between them thus: *eius sectam Metellus secutus* ('Metellus followed in his [Scipio's] wake', 2.7.2). As noted above, these stories both demonstrate the possibility of recreating ancient virtue in a degenerate present and this connecting phrase underlines the fact that following a previous example can be an ideal medium for such recreation. Again, in 2.7.15 the senate's action in refusing to confirm for L. Marcius the status that he has appropriated for himself is described as being prompted by the memory of another deed of the senate in a previous generation, which, in turn, is related as the following *exemplum*:

for it came to their minds how their ancestors had employed spirited severity in the Tarentine War ...

succurrebat enim illis quam animosa seueritate Tarentino bello maiores eorum
usi fuissent. (2.7.15b)

In this case the actual deeds themselves are not very alike and imitation is of the spirit of the earlier example rather than the letter.⁵⁹ However there is another resonance to this latter passage, since the substance of the senate's punishment (humiliating and demoting the captured men and exposing them to further danger through banishment from within military defences or even shelter) is, on the other hand, structurally very similar to that inflicted by L. Calpurnius Piso and described earlier at 2.7.9. Although no explicit exemplary link is drawn between the two, we may fairly be expected to make the connection, since the former has only recently been cited, and this further echo suggests that a single *exemplum* can be imitated in multiple ways and provide different forms of inspiration.

Despite this theme of successful imitation, for some readers the undiluted virtue of Postumius and Torquatus may nonetheless prove too strong a draught and in the rest of the chapter we find instead watered-down acts which might be easier for those of

⁵⁸ In Valerius' formulation the subtle distinction between the two tales is in the phrases *non tuo iussu, sed sua sponte* ('not on your orders but of his own accord') and *te ignaro* ('without your knowledge').

⁵⁹ Roller's 'categorical' as opposed to 'structural' imitation, see n. 50 above.

weaker constitution to stomach (at least at first, as they enter upon the path of virtue). Just as the preceding *exempla* in 2.7.3–5 do not match up to the ancient paradigm of Manlius, so too those that follow fall away from its pinnacle, as is made clear by the connecting phrase that links 2.7.6 with the story of Cincinnatus in 2.7.7: *age, quanto spiritu putamus ...?* ('So, how great shall we consider the spirit ...?') Once against an answer lurks behind this rhetorical question, prompted by the memory of the freshly cited Manlius: 'well, not *that* great actually, by comparison.' Admittedly Cincinnatus dares to deprive a consul of his consulship, but the punishment is less than death and Minucius, his victim, has merited the punishment by manifesting a form of vice: failure to fight with courage, a lack of *uerecundia*, harming military glory. And so the pattern continues: in every *exemplum* in the chapter the harshness of the hero's action is mitigated in some way or another, by the relative gravity of the crime punished (in the later examples usually actual desertion)⁶⁰ or the relative mildness of punishment (which is even remitted altogether in the case of 2.7.8).⁶¹ Meanwhile, Valerius' comments on *exempla* throughout the rest of the chapter continue to evoke the central tales of Postumius and Torquatus and to invite both comparison and contrast of these with the actual stories on which the comments reflect within the text. Valerius' suggestion that the merited yet shameful loss of Roman blood is too distressing to pursue further (2.7.12) reminds us of Postumius' inability to look upon the outcome of his own act (2.6.6),⁶² his claim that 'neither virtue nor success nor nobility' (*neque uirtute ... neque successu neque nobilitate*, 2.7.8) affects the decision of the strict and that 'nothing was more deserving than military discipline' (*nullum meritum ualentius militari disciplina fuit*, 2.7.15) remind us that their courage and victories and trophies were not enough to save the sons of Postumius and Manlius Torquatus from their fates. Furthermore, Valerius' stated hesitance to evaluate the deeds of outstanding heroes reprises his claim of *aporia* of 2.7.6 'If, however, it is permitted humbly to assess the acts of the most outstanding men without being charged with insolence' (*si tamen acta excellentissimorum uirorum humiliter aestimare sine insolentiae reprehensione permittitur*, 2.7.13), but seems oddly out of place here, where it describes the execution

⁶⁰ *neglegentia* (2.7.3); *eius culpa* that camp is nearly captured (2.7.4); *iniussu* (2.7.5); *non sua uirtus, uerecundiae non fuerat, laesa gloria militaris* (2.7.7); *aduersus imperium* (2.7.8); *ignominiae, tradidisset, cupiditas uitae* (2.7.9); *depulsas* (2.7.10); *transfugerant* (2.7.11); *fugitiuos and perfidos* (2.7.12); *transfugas* (2.7.13); the punished are captives, *deseruerant*, have *enerues animos* (2.7.15).

⁶¹ The section certainly ends with the remission of punishment, even though earlier we might be forgiven for believing that the flogging is actually taking place, so vivid is the description: 'Rullianus with his clothes torn and his body exposed offered himself to be lacerated by the lictors' blows', *Rullianus ... scissa ueste spoliatoque corpore lictorum se uerberibus lacerandum praebuit*. The punishment of Rullianus is clearly remitted in Livy's more extensive version of the event (Livy 8.29–35). For humiliation rather than execution see also 2.7.9, 2.7.15.

⁶² Although it also sounds very like the kind of veiled reference to the unspeakable horrors of civil war such as we find often in Valerius (which he draws our attention to only to shy away from, or shies away from only to draw our attention to), as does the description of the acts of 2.7.6 as *strage filiorum* at the end of 2.7.7. For some thoughts on Valerius' depiction of the civil war era more generally see Bloomer (1992) 53–4, 157–62, 175–84, 193; Gowing (2005) 49–62; Milnor (2005) 196–238.

of non-Roman deserters from the army by throwing them to wild animals in the arena.

Not only might the virtue of the *exempla* following those of 2.7.6 be easier to steel oneself to achieve and less morally demanding, but the chapter also begins to build up an increased sense of the pay-off of acts of *seueritas*, in suggestions about its social utility. Its primary role in this chapter, of course, is in the strengthening of military discipline (*ad firmandam disciplinam militarem*, 2.7.12; *pro militari more obtinendo defendendoque*, 2.7.15a; *pro militari disciplina seueritate excubuerit*, 2.7.15f), but its effects carry beyond this. 2.7.9 describes how through L. Calpurnius Piso's humiliation and demotion of C. Titius and his men 'a great disgrace to the country was avenged' (*magnum profecto dedecus patriae ... uindicatum est*). Next Q. Metellus drives his exhausted soldiers on to accomplish what previously seemed impossible and to overcome their human weakness, when they are forced back to attack the post from which they have just been routed by the enemy. His intention is to 'punish them through exposure to danger' (*manifesto periculo puniret*), but 'overwhelmed by this severity' (*qua seueritate compressi*) the soldiers recapture the post and Valerius comments that they have overcome not only the terrain and the enemy, but human weakness itself (2.7.10). Next the brutal act of Q. Fabius Maximus in severing the hands of deserters is a powerful deterrent for other would-be deserters: 'they were a warning to prevent others from daring the same deed' (*ne idem committere auderent documento fuerunt*, 2.7.11). L. Paullus sends deserting allies to be trampled to death by elephants and this action is described more generically as 'a most useful example' (*utilissimo exemplo*, 2.7.14); in other words it has a didactic effect on those who seek models of military discipline, as Valerius explains in his closing comment on the section:

For military discipline requires a harsh and decisive kind of punishment, since strength lies in weapons; when these wander from the right path they must be destroyed lest they should destroy. (2.7.14)

The reverberations of such actions beyond their own immediate context is highlighted by the case of 2.7.15d, where the senate's very punishment of the legions who allowed him to die becomes a most glorious and everlasting monument both to the heroic death of L. Petillius and to its vindication. Viewed from such a long perspective, it appears that moral decisions to act are not to be taken bearing in mind only the requirements of the moment, but with a view to their impact on posterity, asking: what message does an action convey? what principles does it embody? how will it be of benefit to posterity? The awareness inculcated by these passages of the added impact of virtuous deeds (not to mention reward in the form of post-mortem glory) provides further encouragement to pursue virtue.

However, on Flescher's model of continued moral development through reassessment of expectations of duty, the further readers advance ethically the more they will become accustomed to the bitter taste of *seueritas* and they will no longer

find the harsher examples as unpalatable as they once did. Indeed, for these readers it is the insistent compromise of the lesser tales which will seem distasteful,⁶³ and they will strive to outflank the inferior heroes of these tales and move to close the gap between themselves and the frontrunners Postumius and Torquatus. Valerius suggests in this chapter that *seueritas* can help to overcome human weakness and that *exempla* can be applied in different ways depending on the current moral status of the reader and can even, when grouped together, provide a kind of moral ladder that can eventually take the moral agent all the way up to the highest rung of heroic virtue. By surrounding the *exemplum* of Manlius with other *exempla* that bear some formal relation to it, yet do not attain the same heady, undiluted purity of virtue, this chapter offers to the reader ways of closing the gap between themselves and the ancestral paragons.

In addition to suggestions of how aspiration might be fostered and imitation of ancient models be encouraged, and to the exploration of the various roles of past and present, Valerius makes use of composition with multiple examples to juxtapose material whose proximity will press the reader to worry about how decisions are made, how to evaluate actions and how to recognise virtue. The variation between the *exempla*, which is highlighted by the comparisons drawn between them and the contamination of *seueritas* with other less praiseworthy qualities (cruelty, savagery, revenge, anger – all of which appear elsewhere in the work as vices)⁶⁴ show the difficulty of evaluating deeds, discerning virtue and thus re-enacting virtues in future actions. Through such scrutiny of exemplary processes, the reader is intended to achieve a more thorough examination of the ethical principles and precepts at stake in every action, which in turn should better equip the reader for making future decisions in his own life. Whether we can ever come to a definitive answer that produces a rule by which we can then go on to live, or whether we continue constantly to refine our ethical sensitivities through ongoing scrutiny,⁶⁵ Valerius makes it plain again and again, in his provision of troubling alternatives, that it is at least well worth asking ourselves the questions. Why was this the right action to take? Was it the right action? How can we use the past as lessons for the future? How can we translate the actions of others, often in very different circumstances, into guidelines for our own behaviour?

ii) Chapter 6.3 *de seueritate*

The preface to 6.3 sets out the emphasis of this chapter, which is on further development of an aspect of *seueritas* found in chapter 2.7 – its combination of horrifying harshness and utility. In this chapter *seueritas* will be enacted within the civic rather than the military sphere and Valerius highlights in his preface its role as 'useful defences of the law' (*utilia quidem legum munimenta*). As we shall see, this characterisation is rendered somewhat problematic as the chapter progresses by the distinctly extra-legal aspects of some of the cited punishments, which viewed solely in their own context might be seen as unmerited and overly harsh and sometimes as explicitly bypassing the usual state mechanisms of justice by pre-empting trial⁶⁶ or even by pre-empting the crime itself.⁶⁷ Nevertheless in their wider social and didactic context, which the chapter brings to the fore, these acts have important moral effect. The Roman section of the chapter falls into three clearly signposted thematic parts: a) seven stories about the Roman state's punishment of affronts to liberty (6.3.1–2); b) five stories about punishment of affronts to status and discipline (6.3.3–5); c) eight instances of the punishment of women for the purpose of maintaining obedience and chastity (6.3.6–12).⁶⁸ Three brief examples follow from Sparta, Athens and Persia to make up the external part of the chapter (6.3.ext.1–3), but their coherence is not immediately apparent and indeed the foreign *exempla* recapitulate in three jolting steps the pattern of the Roman *exempla*: from mild censorship by the state, through state punishment of citizens in order to preserve liberty, to the last stomach-churning and unnecessary act of a cruel man, which nevertheless, as the chapter closes by reminding us, serves a valuable didactic purpose.

The didactic function of tales of *seueritas* and the benefits carried far beyond their immediate context are drummed into us by the dominating presence of physical monuments in the opening sections of the chapter. Each of the first three examples of *seueritas*, enacting the state's punishment of attempts to acquire excessive power, ends with a description of a contemporary building which is still in Valerius' own day a medium for the commemoration of the deed narrated in the *exemplum*.⁶⁹ In Valerius' day the temple of Moneta on the Capitol marks the spot where Manlius' house once stood and is a physical reminder of his disgrace, handed down to eternal memory, and of the law passed as a consequence that no patrician should live on the citadel or on the Capitol.⁷⁰ Meanwhile the temple of Tellus, built over the site of the destruction of Sp.

⁶³ Not the strong-minded harshness of *seueritas*, but the points where the virtue spills over into less savoury aspects such as violence, cruelty, savagery, unbridled emotion, anger, transgression of ancestral custom: see note below.

⁶⁴ *ne inulta* (2.7.7); *inuidia* (2.7.15) and *neque ... refrinari potuit* (2.7.8) where it sounds as if *seueritas* is out of control. See also the theme of revenge and anger in ch. 6.3, discussed below. As usual, this language directs us to cross-reference elsewhere in the work to complicate the picture; anger and hatred appear as vices as the subject of 9.3. However, no more than virtues are ever unproblematically good, are vices straightforwardly bad in this work, and ch. 9.3 itself provokes further reflection on the qualities. Compare too the praise of Quinctius Crispinus in 5.1.3: *cuius mansuetudinem potentissimi adfectus, ira atque gloria, quater non potuerunt*.

⁶⁵ Perhaps in Ciceronian terms whether our goal is to establish definitive *certa* or provisional *probabilia* (*Acad.* 2.7, 2.65–6, *De off.* 2.7–8, *Tusc. disp.* 1.8); on this see Glueker (1995).

⁶⁶ 6.3.8, 6.8.9.

⁶⁷ 6.3.3b, 6.3.6, 6.3.11, 6.3.12.

⁶⁸ Once more, there are more *exempla* than there are numbered sections, see n. 44 above. The clear signposts between the three Roman parts of the chapter are the similarly balanced phrases of transition between the first and second and then the second and third themes: *libertatis adhuc custos et uindex seueritas, sed pro dignitate etiam ac pro disciplina aequae grauis* (6.3.3); *sic se in uiris puniendis seueritas exercuit, sed ne in feminis quidem supplicio adficiendis seignoriem egit ...* (6.3.6).

⁶⁹ See Roller (2004) 5, 10–23 on commemoration as a key element of exemplary discourse.

⁷⁰ *Huius supplicio aeternae memoriae nota inserta est: propter illum enim lege sanciri placuit ne quis patricius in arce aut Capitolio habitaret, quia domum eo loci habuerat ubi nunc aedem Monetae uidemus* (6.3.1a).

Cassius and of his house, is now a 'monument to religious severity',⁷¹ while the site of the destroyed house of Sp. Maelius is commemorated with the name *Aequimelium* in order to teach future generations about justice.⁷² Thus, Valerius concludes, by reducing their former homes to ruins, the ancients demonstrated their hatred for all enemies of liberty,⁷³ but to maintain the lesson the community needs to construct in their place positive monuments and, as the latter example makes clear, the sites need to be clearly labelled so that posterity can read the message of these ruins correctly.

The first tale contains its own deterrent from bad behaviour in the negative *exemplum* of M. Manlius. The avenging personification of Liberty brands his monarchical aspirations an imitation of the very enemy whom he had previously driven from Rome: 'after you had begun to imitate them, you became one of the Senones' (*postquam imitari coepisti, unus factus es ex Senonibus*, 6.3.1a). It is not merely the pursuit of excessive power that is punished, but imitation of the wrong exemplary models, which can lead to personal transformation; the imitative process is echoed in *inde ... unde ...* of the opening line.⁷⁴ In 6.3.1d the deterrent effect is spelled out: the punishment of the Gracchi and their families and associates is enacted 'so that no man should wish to be a friend to the enemies of the state' (*ne quis rei publicae inimicis amicus esse uellet*, 6.3.1d). In the intervening sections dealing with obedience and public authority the functions of *seueritas* are left implicit, but the benefits of the punishment of women are once again stated explicitly: in these cases *seueritas* can heal national disgrace (*deformitas seueritate supplicii emendata est*)⁷⁵ and bring praise to the community (6.3.7). Meanwhile the bludgeoning to death of Egnatius Mecennius' wife is a 'most excellent *exemplum*' (*optimo exemplo*), which will deter women from venturing onto the slippery slope of alcohol consumption (6.3.9). Valerius ends the thematic section (and the Roman examples) by confirming the efficacy of such deterrents: 'therefore, while once upon a time women used to heed such tales, their minds were free from sin' (*ergo, dum sic olim feminis occurritur, mens earum a delictis aberat*, 6.3.12), combined with an implicit warning about (and contrast with) the situation in his own day.

Seueritas, then, is brutal but effective and the chapter highlights the social and exemplary usefulness both of the exercise of *seueritas* and (more poignantly for a collection of *exempla*) of retelling tales of *seueritas*. At the same time the chapter also addresses head on the possibility that the situation is more complicated than this and that the brutality can itself raise questions. Three of the four thematic sections that I have identified within the chapter (defence of liberty, protection of civic order,

foreign examples)⁷⁶ end with an *exemplum* whose excess looks problematic and which investigates the limits of *seueritas* as a virtue. In the seventh and final in the series of *exempla* about the defence of liberty (6.3.2) Mucius burns alive nine of his fellow tribunes of the plebs, an act of excess which marks a shift from the decorous tone of the previous examples. Valerius describes this act of one man against nine others as an act of daring (*ausus est*) which one would expect even a whole board of tribunes to shudder at.⁷⁷

More explicitly, in the fifth and final of the next series of *exempla*, Domitius' act in crucifying a shepherd who presented him with a boar of tremendous size is flagged up as a genuinely controversial act teetering on the brink between vice and virtue. The story begins with the presentation of the marvellous prize to the Sicilian praetor as a deferential act recognising his status in the province and which one would, under normal circumstances, expect to be well received and perhaps rewarded.⁷⁸ This narrative expectation renders the 'reward' that the unfortunate shepherd does receive all the more terrible: he is crucified, suffering a painful and degrading death. The punishment is inflicted because Domitius is particularly 'tenacious of purpose'; in order to combat bandits in the region, all hunting weapons have been declared illegal and the shepherd is thus in breach of Roman laws. Valerius imagines a critic who queries whether this deed falls neatly into the category of *seueritas* and claims that this particular *exemplum*, troublingly, straddles the divide: 'someone might say that this should be placed on the borderline between severity and savagery' (*hoc aliquis in fine seueritatis et saeuitiae ponendum dixerit*, 6.3.5). Using a geographical metaphor that is close to the heart of a work that regularly talks in geographical terms, we find the idea of the boundary (*finis*) that delineates the scope of each quality and the notion that a virtue might border on a vice. The passage next concedes the validity of both sides of the debate, in terms that recall those describing the techniques of *controuersiae* and argumentative skills: 'the argument can be turned either way' (*disputatione enim utroque flecti potest*). Then, in his own voice, Valerius directs the argument decisively: 'but reason of public command does not allow us to consider the praetor too harsh' (*ceterum ratio publici imperii praetorem nimis asperum existimari non patitur*). This brief passage incorporates both the reduction and narrow direction of interpretation by the author and the acknowledgement of the flexibility of *exempla* and their submissiveness to argument. Although he comes down definitely on one side of the dispute – concluding that the punishment was not too harsh since it was justified by the need to uphold magisterial authority – Valerius does nevertheless mark out space

⁷¹ *In solo autem aedem Telluris fecit, itaque quod prius domicilium impotentis uiri fuerat, nunc religiosae seueritatis monumentum est* (6.3.1b).

⁷² *Area uero domus eius, quo iustitia supplicii notior ad posteros perueniret, Aequimeli appellationem traxit* (6.3.1c).

⁷³ *Quantum ergo odii aduersus hostes libertatis insitum animis antiqui haberent parietum ac tectorum in quibus uersati fuerant ruinis testabantur* (6.3.1c).

⁷⁴ *M. Manlius, unde Gallos depulerat, inde ipse praecipitatus est* ('M. Manlius was himself thrown from the very spot from which he had driven off the Gauls', 6.3.1).

⁷⁵ Compare with the effect of *seueritas* at 2.7.9, discussed above.

⁷⁶ The fourth being 'punishment of women', which is slightly different.

⁷⁷ The opening line of the passage is not extant, but it ends in the word *credidit* ('he believed'), suggesting a lack of authorial support for Mucius' position, although we cannot be sure what that is! Shackleton Bailey translates Briscoe's reconstruction *ad loc.* as: 'Tribune of the Plebs P. Mucius too believed that he had the same licence as the senate and the people', which would make it the legitimacy of Mucius' act about which Valerius was sceptical.

⁷⁸ The topos is found, for example, in Juv. 4 and Hdt. 1.42 (in both cases the prize is a fish).

for alternative positions, stating that the borders of the virtue can be disputed in and through this case.

Finally the chapter is brought to a close with the sensational example of Cambyses, which epitomises *seueritas*' troubling combination of horror and didactic utility:

Now Cambyses was of unusual severity; he flayed the skin from the body of a dishonest judge and covered with it a chair on which he ordered the man's son to sit when he was passing judgement. However a man who was both a tyrant and a barbarian saw to it, with this atrocious and imaginative punishment of a judge, that subsequently no judge could be corrupted.

Iam Cambyses inusitatae seueritatis, qui mali cuiusdam iudicis e corpore pellem detractam sellae intendi in eaque filium eius iudicaturum considerare iussit, ceterum et rex et barbarus atroci ac noua poena iudicis ne quis postea corrumpi iudex posset prouidit. (6.3.ext.3)

Flaying a man and then using his skin to cover the seat on which his own son will sit in his official role as judge is obviously repellent and the act, as Valerius says, of a tyrant and a barbarian; yet its effect by contrast⁷⁹ is most praiseworthy – to rule out judicial corruption. This is the culmination of a pattern found throughout the chapter, where the broader social benefits outweigh, or at least are weighed against, the awfulness of an individual act. The chapter comes down strongly on the side of *seueritas*, with full acknowledgement of the unpleasant choices that both judging and performing it will demand. Nevertheless the punishment meted out by Cambyses is imaginative and unique (*noua*) and his identity as a barbarian king removes him far from the context of the patriotic Roman; perhaps his extreme act helps to establish the boundaries of acceptability. Certainly, it can hardly be held up in all its detail as a practical model of how to apply *seueritas* in other circumstances. This final *exemplum*, which lingers in the mind, ends the chapter by once again raising the unresolved question of how a reader may reproduce *seueritas* appropriately in the context of his own life.⁸⁰ We have seen that *seueritas* is a virtue that requires one to make judgements about the behaviour of others and that it can have, in this respect, a kind of meta-exemplary resonance. The judicial setting of this last example rings out the bell loud and clear: the original act of punishment is inflicted on a man who misuses his role as judge and judges ill, the man who has to sit on his father's skin is warned by this pre-emptive punishment that his own judgement must be pure and uncorrupted, and the whole story stands as a warning about proper judgement to all those who come after.

⁷⁹ The *ceterum* may mark this contrast.

⁸⁰ I would argue that Valerius' deployment of *exempla* and the questions, such as this, that he raises, work to break down the distinction between syntagmatic and paradigmatic function, but the argument must be pursued elsewhere.

So Valerius does not state outright that *seueritas* is an important and praiseworthy virtue, that nevertheless requires moderation and can border troublingly on vice in many aspects. He does not claim outright that one needs fine judgement to discriminate between *seueritas* and cruelty, or between *seueritas* and unbridled anger; that one needs to weigh carefully the long-term benefits of exercising *seueritas* against the pain it exacts in the short term; that we need to work hard to understand the continuing relevance of examples from other eras and other cultures and not be daunted by changing circumstance, yet still bear in mind that different contexts demand different ethical responses. Nor do his cited *exempla* merely demonstrate or illustrate such claims. What he achieves through the shape and detail of chapters 2.7 and 6.3 is the generation of problems, knots, dilemmas, conflict and troubling questions that between them map out untidily the debates surrounding these ideas, on which the reader's deliberative and ethical faculties may feed if they are so inclined. The effect, which I suggest is deliberate, is not to provide clear guidelines about how one should behave, but consistently to needle the reader into exploring further the ramifications of ethical positions. While chapter 6.3 (especially at 6.3.6 and in its conclusion) suggests that definitive ethical positions can be reached and therefore correct moral decisions can be taken, nonetheless the text continually places obstacles to reaching such conclusions in the reader's path. Hard work needs to be done by those who would fully grasp the rights and wrongs of moral reasoning; the highest level of understanding will be reached when ideas are refined and developed through encountering opposition.

Moral decision-making is beset by conflicting forces and constraints, and Valerius highlights alternative judgements and alternative responses to situations as a way of showing that ethical judgement is not a straightforward matter and often involves making difficult choices. The places where he does this explicitly may plausibly be taken to prime the reader for seeking alternatives and contrary positions even (perhaps especially) in those other places in his work where the text is at its most provocatively emphatic. Even when contradictory material is not found spelled out in the text, it may very well still be there, lurking in the unspoken Roman tradition.⁸¹ *Exempla* can be evoked and deployed without even so much as a mention (through allusion to a detail or an object or a family name or to similarity with a story that is being told),⁸² and unspoken narratives and versions of exemplary stories side-shadow those that make it onto the page (although we can never be sure of exactly what would lurk in those shadows for any individual reader other than ourselves). These provide an invisible resource available to Roman readers when it comes to challenging the version set out by Valerius and one of which, I would argue, the reader is expected without question to avail himself.⁸³

⁸¹ Cf. Livy's reference to an alternative and less favourable tradition about Torquatus at 4.29; see n. 57 above.

⁸² As we see in the case of Manlius Torquatus who is a shadowy presence throughout chs. 2.7, 5.8 and 6.3 and helps structure the reader's responses to all the other *exempla* that are cited within these chapters.

⁸³ This aspect of Roman communal memory and of its interpretative implications for the modern scholar raises questions that I intend to address elsewhere.

Valerius draws a close identification between the ethically engaged reader and the exemplary heroes themselves in terms of the similar capabilities required in what they do: performing a moral deed and evaluating a moral deed. As the preface to chapter 6.3 suggests, reading about *seueritas* can be an experience that parallels the experience of the heroes of *seueritas* themselves, in that both require a hardening of the heart and a laying aside of gentler tendencies. This identification between those who have performed moral deeds and those who now read about them sets up the idea of the reader's need to commit to rigorous engagement with the material and is a recurrent theme of the work. Both heroes and readers need skills of ethical judgement, the ability to weigh up conflicting ideas, to arrive at the satisfactory resolution of contradiction in a given moment of crisis so that decisive action can be taken, rather than in order to solve for good and all an abstract ethical dilemma. This identification in turn helps to close the exemplary loop, since the skills learnt in reading *exempla* can be applied to practical moral decision-making in the context of the reader's own life; the skills inculcated by Valerius' work are pragmatic and adaptable to use among the shifting sands of life's various demands and history's changing circumstances.

General conclusion

Valerius Maximus does not seek to pin down definitively the moral meaning of essentially unstable exemplary narratives by attaching them to specific moral categories and then giving the reader unequivocal directions about how they should be interpreted. Rather he exploits the instability of *exempla* in the service of his ethical and didactic aims, so that his compilation is often deliberately contradictory and provocative. This befits a work written within an educational, rhetorical and ethical system where skills such as arguing opposing sides of a question and casuistry were taught and prized. To recognise the sophistication of the text is not necessarily to endow its author with astonishing prowess; he is an author working intelligently, even passionately, within a living Roman tradition. Situating the text within this Roman context makes sense of the fact that by stringing together *exempla* under certain moral categories, the *Facta et dicta memorabilia* opens up, rather than closes down, possibilities for ethical debate, with the aim of encouraging moral circumspection and refining ethical sensibilities. Valerius' choice, presentation and organisation of his material works to open up interpretative possibilities – by suggesting plausible alternatives to the exemplary acts with which Romans are familiar or alternative judgements on those acts and highlighting contradictory messages between *exempla* and within concepts – in order to get readers thinking about the ramifications of coming down on one side or another and to encourage them to delay ultimate conclusions about right and wrong.

The *Facta et dicta memorabilia* highlights a provocative and controversial element that I would argue is inherent (though often latent) in the Roman exemplary tradition more generally. In emphasising this element and showing how Valerius' work enacts a

'controversial' mode of ethical engagement with *exempla*, I hope to have enhanced our understanding of Roman exemplary ethics, showing that they should be understood as emerging from a particular ethical and rhetorical context which promotes dialectical and controversial approaches to morality. For Romans learning through *exempla* need not (and perhaps can never) entail the passive acceptance of authoritative moral lessons and the straightforward imitation of models. Rather it solicits active engagement with contradictory material on which the ethical agent must impose his judgement after careful deliberation and consideration of how heroes of the exemplary past have made their decisions about how to act.⁸⁴ I have shown that groupings of *exempla* or exemplary references (common in Roman culture, from the parade of heroes in the *Aeneid* to private collections of busts in the villas of the wealthy) lend themselves particularly to such a didactic mode.

Returning to the *Facta et dicta memorabilia*, the lessons for the modern scholar must be that one should not take Valerius' claims and moralising statements at face value; that one should read *exempla* against one another for full effect; that one should understand the work as having something to say not only about imperial ideology but also about the parameters and mechanisms of contemporary ethical issues and debates which do not necessarily prejudge the outcome of debates or provide clear answers. Far from being an incoherent collection of fragments of often inaccurate history reduced to heavy-handed platitudes, the work functions as a coherent whole to present a wealth of deliberative possibilities in the ethico-rhetorical sphere.

UNIVERSITY OF EXETER

REBECCA LANGLANDS

⁸⁴ Cf. Mitchell (2004). In the useful terms of Michel de Certeau (1984) readers are intended to be as much 'users' as 'consumers' of Valerius' material; de Certeau's distinction between 'strategies' and 'tactics' informs Catherine Sanok's readings of medieval exemplary lives of the saints, which have some parallels with Roman *exempla*. She sees them 'not simply as a prescriptive mode of reading but as an encouragement to historical reflection' (Sanok (2007) author's blurb on cover, cf. ix and 20).

WORKS CITED

- Beard, M. (1993) 'Looking (harder) for Roman myth: Dumézil, declamation and the problems of definition', in F. Graf (ed.) *Mythos in mythenloser Gesellschaft: Das Paradigma Roms*, Stuttgart and Leipzig, 44–64.
- Benhabib, S. (1992) *Situating the self*, New York.
- Bloomer, W. M. (1992) *Valerius Maximus and the rhetoric of the new nobility*, London.
- Brown, C. (1998) *Contrary things: exegesis, dialectic and poetics of didacticism*, Stanford.
- Chaplin, J. (2000) *Livy's exemplary history*, Oxford.
- Clarke, M. L. (1996) *Rhetoric at Rome: a rhetorical survey* (2nd edn.), London.
- Conley, T. (1994) *Rhetoric in the European tradition*, Chicago.
- Cramer, R. (2002) review of Weileder (1998), *Gymnasium* 109, 72–3.
- de Certeau, M. (1984) *The practice of everyday life*, Berkeley.
- Dowling, M. (2006) *Clemency and cruelty in the Roman world*, Michigan.
- Flescher, A. M. (2003) *Heroes, saints, and ordinary morality*, Georgetown.
- Friend, C. (1999) 'Pirates, seducers, wronged heirs, poison cups, cruel husbands, and other calamities: the Roman school declamations and critical pedagogy', *Rhetoric Review* 17, 300–20.
- Gelley, A. (ed.) (1995) *Unruly examples: on the rhetoric of exemplarity*, Stanford.
- Glucker, J. (1995) 'Probabile, veri simile, and related terms', in J. G. F. Powell (ed.) (1995), 115–43.
- Gowing, A. M. (2005) *Empire and memory: the representation of the Roman republic in imperial culture*, Cambridge.
- Griffin, M. (1992) *Seneca: a philosopher in politics*, Oxford.
- Gundersen, E. (2003) *Declamation, paternity and Roman identity: authority and the rhetorical self*, Cambridge.
- Hampton, T. (1990) *Writing from history: the rhetoric of exemplarity in Renaissance literature*, Ithaca.
- Harvey, I. (2002) *Labyrinths of exemplarity: at the limits of deconstruction*, New York.
- Inwood, B. (2005) 'Rules and reasoning in Stoic ethics', in his *Reading Seneca: Stoic philosophy at Rome*, Oxford, 95–131.
- Konstan, D. (2005) 'Clemency as a virtue', *CP* 100, 337–46.
- Langlands, R. (2006) *Sexual morality in ancient Rome*, Cambridge.
- Levick, B. (1999) *Tiberius the politician*, London.
- Lowrie, M. (1997) *Horace's narrative odes*, Oxford.
- Lyons, J. D. (1989) *Exemplum: the rhetoric of example in early modern France and Italy*, Princeton.
- Mansfeld, J. and Inwood, B. (eds.) (1997) *Assent and argument: studies in Cicero's Academic books*, Leiden.
- Maslakov, G. (1984) 'Valerius Maximus and Roman historiography: a study of the *exempla* tradition', *Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt* 2.32.1, 437–96.
- Mendelson, M. (1994) 'Declamation, context, and controversiality', *Rhetoric Review* 13, 92–107.
- (2002) *Many sides: a Protagorean approach to the theory, practice, and pedagogy of argument*, Dordrecht.
- Milnor, K. (2005) *Gender, domesticity, and the age of Augustus: inventing private life*, Oxford Studies in Classical Literature and Gender Theory, Oxford.
- Mitchell, J. A. (2004) *Ethics and exemplary narratives in Chaucer and Gower*, Woodbridge.
- Morgan, T. (2006) *Popular morality in the early Roman empire*, Cambridge.
- Mueller, H.-F. (2002) *Roman religion in Valerius Maximus*, London.
- Oakley, S. P. (1998) *A commentary on Livy books 6–10, vol. 2: books 7–8*, Oxford.
- Powell, J. G. F. (ed.) (1995) *Cicero the philosopher*, Oxford.
- Rendell, S. (1992) 'Examples, counterexamples', *Comparative Literature* 44, 59–67.
- Roller, M. B. (2004) 'Exemplarity in Roman culture: the cases of Horatius Cocles and Cloelia', *CP* 99, 1–56.
- Sanok, C. (2007) *Her life historical*, Pennsylvania.
- Skidmore, C. J. (1996) *Practical ethics for Roman gentlemen. The work of Valerius Maximus*, Exeter.
- Späth, T. (2003) review of Weileder (1998), *Gnomon* 75, 460–2.
- Stem, R. (2007) 'Exemplary lessons of Livy's Romulus', *TAPA* 137, 435–71.
- Thum, N. (2001) 'Der Aufbau der Exempelasammlung des Valerius Maximus', *Hermes* 129, 79–94.
- Wardle, D. (1997) 'The sainted Julius', *CP* 92, 323–45.
- Weileder, A. (1998) *Valerius Maximus. Spiegel kaiserlicher Selbstdarstellung*, Munich.