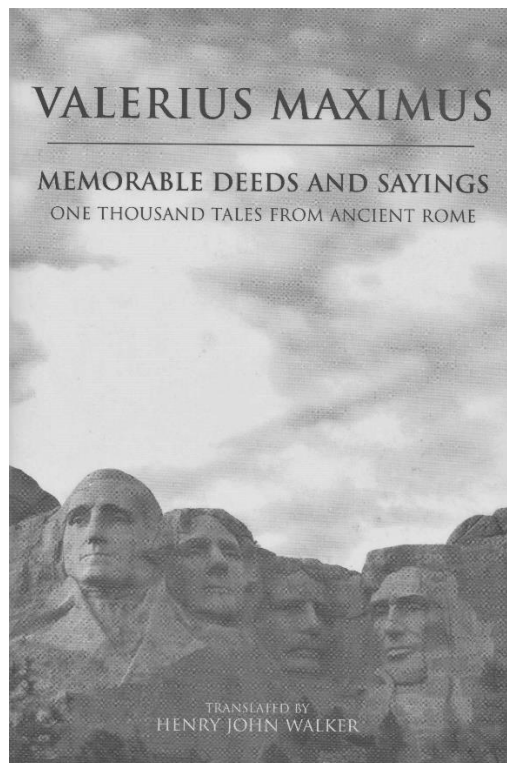


BELLARIA LIV



Some editions Valerius Maximus, very popular in the Middle Ages, from 1527-1726

Valerius Maximus IV



FACTORUM ET DICTORUM MEMORABILIVM LIBRI IX

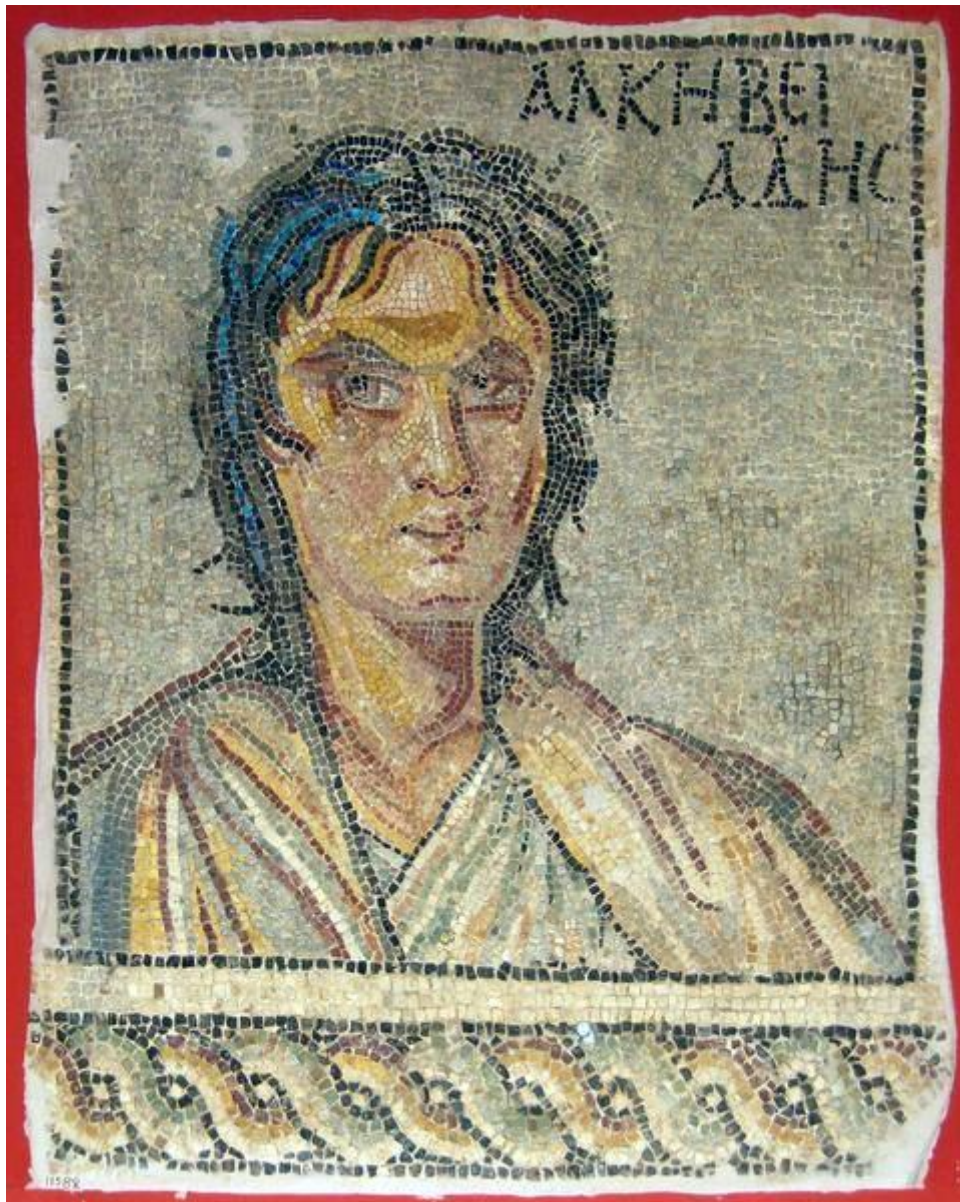
INNATE CHARACTERISTICS (FOREIGN STORIES)

De indole

Alcibiades

Introduction

Valerius is not known for his interest in strict historical accuracy. The idea that Pericles dreamed up the Peloponnesian war in order to divert any Athenian from enquiring into the expense incurred in building the Propylaea on the acropolis does not strike one as persuasive. Nevertheless, it serves Valerius' ethical purposes.



Spartan mosaic (1st-4th CAD)

3.1.ext.1 We must have something Greek now, so here is a story about the famous Alcibiades. I cannot tell whether his virtues or his vices did more damage to his country; he deceived his fellow citizens with his virtues and destroyed them with his vices. When Alcibiades was just a boy, he went to see his maternal uncle Pericles. He found Pericles sitting sadly on his own, and he asked Pericles why he seemed so troubled.

Pericles said that by authority of the state, he had built the Propylaea of Athena, which is the gateway to the citadel. He had spent a vast sum of money on

that work, and he could not figure out how he was going to explain his management. That is why he was so troubled. 'Well,' said Alcibiades, 'Why don't you figure out instead how you could avoid explaining it?'

So that most eminent and practical man, having failed to come up with a plan of his own, adopted the boy's plan. Pericles kept the Athenians occupied in a war with their neighbours, and they did not have the time to demand any explanations from him. But Athens should consider whether she should complain about Alcibiades or take pride in him, since to this very day she cannot make up her mind and decide whether she hates him or admires him.

3.1. ext.1 *et ut a Graecis aliquid, Alcibiades ille, cuius nescio utrum bona an uitia patriae perniciosiora fuerint--illis enim ciues suos decepit, his adflixit--, cum adhuc puer ad Periclen auunculum suum uenisset eumque secreto tristem sedentem uidisset, interrogauit quid ita tantam in uultu confusionem gereret.*

at illo dicente mandatu se ciuitatis propylaea Mineruae, quae sunt ianuae arcis, aedificasse, consumptaque in id opus ingenti pecunia, non inuenire quo pacto ministerii rationem redderet atque ideo conflictari, 'ergo' inquit 'quaere potius quemadmodum rationem non reddas'.

itaque uir amplissimus et prudentissimus suo consilio defectus puerili usus est atque id egit, ut Athenienses finitimo implicati bello rationibus exigendis non uacarent. sed uiderint Athenae utrum Alcibiadem lamententur an gloriantur, quoniam adhuc inter execrationem hominis et admirationem dubio mentis iudicio fluctuatur.

PEOPLE WHO HAD FAMOUS ANCESTORS BUT DEGENERATED *Qui a parentibus claris degenerauerunt*

3.5 Preface The second part of my undertaking follows, and it deals with the ancestral death masks of illustrious men that have been obscured, for I shall now tell of those who came down in the world from the splendour of their ancestors. These monsters came from noble families, but they wallowed in a disgusting mire of spineless vice.

3.5 praef. *sequitur duplicis promissi pars ad opertis inlustrum uirorum imaginibus reddenda, quoniam quidem sunt referendi qui ab earum splendore degenerauerunt, taeterrimis ignauiae ac nequitiae sordibus inbuta nobilia portenta.*

Introduction

When it came to famous families, the Scipios, starting with Africanus who took on Hannibal, were for Valerius the most famous of all. So Scipio's son Lucius, ignominiously captured by pirates in 192 BC and only released without ransom by Antiochus III of Syria, was a sad blot on the family escutcheon. Further, his name got him elected praetor in 174 BC, an office from which he was shortly expelled. Note the reference to his dirty toga: the outward appearance signalled the inner man.

Lucius Cornelius Scipio



King Antiochus III

What could be more monstrous than Scipio, the son of Africanus? He was born into such a glorious household but allowed himself to be captured by a tiny group of King Antiochus' soldiers. He had the two splendid titles of his father and uncle before him. His father had already won his title by defeating Africa, and his uncle was well on the way to acquiring his title, since he had reconquered most of Asia (i). It would therefore have been better for the son of Africanus to take his own life than to give up his hands to be chained, beg for his life, and receive it as a favour from his enemy. But Scipio Asiaticus was soon to defeat that enemy and lead him home in a triumph that would gladden the eyes of gods and men.

(i) Scipio Africanus received the title Africanus after defeating Carthage in 201 B.C.; his brother, Scipio Asiaticus, received the title Asiaticus in 189 B.C. after defeating Antiochus the Great of Syria in 190 B.C.

3.5.1 quid enim monstro similis quam superioris Africani filius Scipio, qui in tanta domestica gloria ortus a paruulo admodum regis Antiochi praesidio capi sustinuit, cum ei uoluntaria morte absumi satius fuerit quam inter duo fulgentissima cognomina patris et patruī, altero [maiori] oppressa Africa iam parto, altero maiore ex parte recuperata Asia surgere incipiente, manus uinciendas hosti tradere eiusque beneficio precarium spiritum obtinere, de quo mox L. Scipio speciosissimum deorum hominumque oculis subiecturus erat triumphum.



Roman tog(a)s

3.5.1 The same son of Africanus was a candidate for the praetorship, but when he went to the Campus Martius, he looked disgraceful with his white toga covered in dirt stains (i). If his father's scribe, Cicereius, had not used his influence to help him out, it seems unlikely that the son of Africanus would ever have won this public office from the people (ii).

What is the difference between losing an election and bringing the praetorship home in this way? His relatives felt that he was degrading the praetorship, so they made sure that he would not dare to set up court or give judgment. They even took his ring off his finger, because it had a cameo of Africanus on it. Good gods, how did you allow such darkness to emerge from such lightning? (iii).

(i) Elections took place in the Campus Martius ('Plain of Mars'), a large field between the city walls and the river Tiber.

(ii) With the help of Gaius Cicereius, Lucius Cornelius Scipio became a praetor in 174 B.C. (see 415,3). Gaius Cicereius himself became a praetor in 173 B.C.

(iii) The censors for 174 B.C. expelled Lucius from the Senate. Africanus was known as the lightning bolt of Zeus.

3.5.1 *idem praeturae petitor candidam togam adeo turpitudinis maculis obsolefactam in campum detulit, ut, nisi gratia Cicerei, qui patris eius scriba fuerat, adiutus esset, honorem a populo impetraturus non uideretur.*

quamquam quid interfuit utrum repulsam an sic adeptam praeturam domum referret? quam cum propinqui ab eo pollui animaduverterent, id egerunt, ne aut sellam ponere aut ius dicere auderet, insuperque e manu eius anulum, in quo caput Africani sculptum erat, detraxerunt. dii boni, quas tenebras e quo fulmine nasci passi estis!

Quintus Fabius Maximus



Quintus Fabius Maximus Allobrogicus

3.5.2 Quintus Fabius Maximus Allobrogicus was renowned as a citizen and a general (i), but what a spoiled, decadent life his son Quintus Fabius Maximus led! Even if we ignore all his other vices, we can still fully expose his disgraceful character by the following story. The city praetor, Quintus Pompeius, decreed that he should not be allowed to inherit his father's property (ii). Throughout the entire city, nobody could be found to condemn that decree.

People were angry at the idea that the son would waste all that money on his vices, since it should have been used to advance the splendour of the Fabius family. His father had been too kind in making him his heir, so the state was strict in depriving him of his inheritance.

(i) Quintus Fabius Maximus Allobrogicus (cos, 121 B.C.) defeated the Allobroges (in south-ern France). As a result, Provence was added to the Roman Empire.

(ii) Quintus Pompeius Rufus (cos, 88 B.C.) was the city praetor in 91 B.C. The city praetor was responsible for cases between two Roman citizens.

3.5.2 *age Q. Fabi Maximi Allobrogici et ciuis et imperatoris clarissimi filius Q. Fabius Maximus quam perditam luxuria uitam egit! cuius ut cetera flagitia oblitterentur, tamen abunde illo dedecore mores nudari possunt, quod ei Q. Pompeius praetor urbanus paternis bonis interdixit, neque in tanta ciuitate qui illud decretum reprehenderet inuentus est.*

dolenter enim homines ferebant pecuniam, quae Fabiae gentis splendori seruire debebat, flagitiis dissici. ergo quem nimia patris indulgentia heredem reliquerat, publica seueritas exheredauit.

Publius Clodius Pulcher

Introduction

Here is the Clodius of the street-gangs, who disguised himself as a woman to intrude on the rites of the Bona Dea and was responsible for exiling Cicero. His wife Fulvia, the first non-mythical woman to feature on coins, later married Marc Antony. Valerius does not mention that, in whatever disgusting circumstances Clodius' son died, he was in fact praetor and augur, and his daughter Claudia became the first wife of the future emperor Augustus.



Fulvia c. 41-40 BC

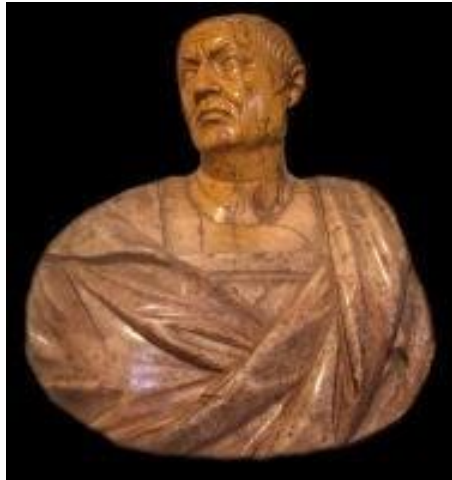
3.5.3 Clodius Pulcher had the favour of the plebs, but this tough man became infatuated with Fulvia (i) and his military glory came under a woman's command. Their son, Pulcher, apart from the fact that he had been spineless and effete in his youth, was notorious because of his mad love for a prostitute of the lowest kind. An embarrassing kind of death put an end to his life. He greedily wolfed down a pork belly and sacrificed his life to his base, disgusting lack of self-control.

(i) The Latin actually says 'his dagger stuck to Fulvia's dress'. Hm.

3.5.3 *possedit fauorem plebis Clodius Pulcher adhaerensque Fulviae stolae pugio militare decus muliebri imperio subiectum habuit. quorum filius Pulcher,*

praeterquam quod eneruem et frigidam iuuentam egit, perdito etiam amore uulgatissimae meretricis infamis fuit mortisque erubescendo genere consumptus est: auide enim abdomine deuorato foedae ac sordidae intemperantiae spiritum reddidit.

Hortensius Corbio



Cicero's oratorical rival Quintus Hortensius (cos. 69 BC)

3.5.4 In a truly great generation of talented and distinguished citizens, Quintus Hortensius reached the highest level of influence and eloquence. His grandson Hortensius Corbio led a life that was more abject and obscene than that of any prostitute. In the end, he prostituted his tongue to satisfy the lust of all the male comers in the brothel as vigilantly as his grandfather had used his tongue to defend the civil rights of his fellow citizens in the Forum.

3.5.4 nam Q. quidem Hortensij, qui in maximo et ingeniosorum ciuium et amplissimorum prouentu summum auctoritatis atque eloquentiae gradum obtinuit, nepos Hortensius Corbio omnibus scortis abiectiorem et obsceniorem uitam exegit, ad ultimumque lingua eius tam libidini cunctorum inter lupanaria prostitit quam aui pro salute ciuium in foro excubuerat.

WILLS THAT WERE RESCINDED

De testamentis quae rescissa sunt

7.7. Praeface Let us now devote some time to the business with which people take special care, since it is the last of their actions. Let us discuss wills that were made legally but then rescinded, wills that could have properly been rescinded but were upheld, and wills that transferred the honour of an inheritance to people different from the ones who were expecting it. I shall go through them in the order I have set out above.

7.7.praef. uacemus nunc negotio, quod actorum hominis et praecipuae curae et ultimi est temporis, consideremusque quae testamenta aut rescissa sunt legitime facta aut, cum merito rescindi possent, rata manserunt, quaeue ad alios quam qui expectabant honorem hereditatis transtulerunt. atque ita, ut ea ordine quo proposui exequar.

The soldier wrongly thought dead

7.7.1 A young man was serving as a soldier, and his father received a false notification from the army about the son's death. The father appointed other heirs and died afterward. After the young man had completed his military service, he headed home. Because of his father's mistake and the insolence of the new owners, he found himself locked out of his home: what could have been more shameless than those men?

The young man had devoted the best years of his youth to the Republic, he had endured great hardship and many dangers, he could show the scars he had received from exposing his body to the enemy: but they were demanding that they should continue to possess his ancestral home, though they were useless burdens to the city.

So as soon as he had put down his weapons, he was forced to fight a civilian battle in the Forum. And it was a bitter one: he argued before the centumvirate court for his father's property against these unscrupulous heirs. But he came out on top in the verdict of every jury, and furthermore he won every juryman's vote.

7.7.1 militantis cuiusdam pater, cum de morte filii falsum e castris nuntium accepisset, qui erat falsus, aliis heredibus scriptis decessit. peractis deinde stipendiis adulescens domum petiit: errore patris, inpudentia alienorum domum sibi clausam reperit: quid enim illis inuerecundius?

florem iuuentae pro re publica absumpserat, maximos labores ac plurima pericula tolerauerat, aduerso corpore exceptas ostendebat cicatrices, et postulabant ut auitos eius lares otiosa ipsi urbi onera possiderent.

itaque depositis armis coactus est in foro togatam ingredi militiam: acerbe: cum inprobissimis enim heredibus de paternis bonis apud centumuiros contendit: omnibusque non solum consiliis sed etiam sententiis superior discessit.

KINDNESS AND COMPASSION

De humanitate et clementia

5.1 Preface What more suitable companions could I provide for generosity than kindness and compassion, since they aim at the same kind of glory? The first of these is shown to those who are poor, the second to circumstances, the third to those whose luck has turned against them. And though you would not know which to praise the most, it seems to me that the one that derives its name from an actual god must surpass the others in our approval.

5.1 praef. liberalitati quas aptiores comites quam humanitatem et clementiam dederim, quoniam idem genus laudis expetunt? quarum prima inopia, proxima occasione, tertia ancipiti fortuna praestatur, cumque nescias quam maxime probes, eius tamen commendatio praecurrere uidetur, cui nomen ex ipso homine quaesitum est.

King Pyrrhus

Introduction

It is worth pointing that, whatever prejudices Romans might have had, automatic animus against those of different ethnicity or skin colour was not one of them. Indeed, they could recognise nobility even in enemies, as Valerius indicates here.



Zeus (left – wonderful beard!), Dione (right) – coin of King Pyrrhus

5.1. ext. 3 (i) King Pyrrhus was equally gentle in spirit. He had heard that some people had been speaking very disrespectfully about him at a banquet in Tarentum (ii). He summoned the people who had taken part and he asked them whether they had said the things that had reached his ears. Then one of them said, 'The things that have been reported to you were only a game and a joke compared with the things that we would have said about you if the wine hadn't run out.'

His excuse for their drunken behaviour was so witty and his truthful confession was so open that the king's anger changed to laughter. By his compassion and self-restraint, he ensured that the people of Tarentum thanked him when they were sober and blessed him when they were drunk.

(i) *ext = externi*, i.e. foreign examples.

(ii) King Pyrrhus of Epirus came to help Tarentum (on the south coast of Italy) fight against the Romans from 280 to 275 B.C.

5.1.ext.3 *aeque mitis animus Pyrrhi regis. audierat quodam in conuiuio Tarentinorum parum honoratum de se sermonem habitum: accersitos qui ei interfuerant percontabatur an ea, quae ad aures ipsius peruenerant, dixissent. tum ex his unus, 'nisi' inquit 'uinum nos defecisset, ista, quae tibi relata sunt, prae eis, quae de te locuturi eramus, lusus ac iocus fuissent'.*

tam urbana crapulae excusatio tamque simplex ueritatis confessio iram regis conuertit in risum. qua quidem clementia et moderatione adsecutus est ut et sobrii sibi Tarentini gratias agerent et ebrii bene precarentur.

Hannibal



Hannibal

5.1. ext.6 Since I have mentioned our most bitter enemy, I shall end the section at hand with Hannibal's acts of kindness toward the Roman nation. Aemilius Paullus (i) had been killed at Cannae, and Hannibal searched out his body and, insofar as he could, did not allow it to lie there unburied.

When Tiberius Gracchus was caught in an ambush by the Lucanians, Hannibal arranged a funeral for him with the greatest honours, and he handed his bones over to our soldiers to bring them back to our homeland (ii).

Marcus Marcellus was killed in the territory of Bruttium while he was spying on the arrangements of the Carthaginians with more eagerness than common sense. Hannibal honoured him with a proper funeral, presented the body with a Carthaginian cloak and a laurel crown, and put it on a pyre (iii).

(i) The consul, Lucius Aemilius Paullus, died at Cannae in 216 B.C. Hannibal ranged up and down Italy from 218-203 BC before being summoned back to Carthage to defend it against Scipio Africanus.

(ii) Tiberius Sempronius Gracchus (cos, 215 B.C.) died in Lucania (southern Italy) in 212 B.C.

(iii) Marcus Claudius Marcellus (cos, 222 B.C.) died in Bruttium (southern Italy) in 208 B.C.

5.1. ext.6 *facta mentione acerrimi hostis mansuetudinis eius operibus, quam Romano nomini praestitit, locum, qui inter manus est, finiam: Hannibal enim Aemilii Paulli apud Cannas trucidati quaesitum corpus, quantum in ipso fuit, inhumatum iacere passus non est.*

Hannibal Ti. Gracchum Lucanorum circumuentum insidiis cum summo honore sepulturae mandauit et ossa eius in patriam portanda militibus nostris tradidit.

Hannibal M. Marcellum in agro Bruttio, dum conatus Poenorum cupidius quam consideratius speculatur, interemptum legitimo funere extulit punicoque sagulo et corona donatum aurea rogo inposuit.



Possibly Hannibal, and (certainly) elephant

5.1.ext.6 So the sweetness of kind behaviour even penetrates the savage hearts of barbarians, softens the grim and cruel eyes of enemies, and curbs the insolent pride of victory. It is not hard and difficult for kindness to find a quiet path between enemy weapons, between drawn swords clashing against each other. Kindness overcomes anger, conquers hatred, and mingles enemy blood with tears for the enemy.

It even led Hannibal to speak admirable words when he decided what funeral honours should be paid to Roman leaders. In fact, the funerals of Paullus and Gracchus and Marcellus brought him even more glory than his victories over them, since he had deceived them with Carthaginian guile but honoured them with Roman gentleness.

But you brave and loyal spirits, you did not get a funeral you would be ashamed of: it might have been more desirable to have died in your country, but it was even more splendid to die for your country; and if you lost the glory of a proper funeral through bad luck, you won it back through your courage.

5.1.ext.6 *ergo humanitatis dulcedo etiam in efferata barbarorum ingenia penetrat toruosque et truces hostium mollit oculos ac uictoriae insolentissimos spiritus flectit. nec illi arduum ac difficile est inter arma contraria, inter dstrictos conminus mucrones placidum iter reperire. uincit iram, prosternit odium hostilemque sanguinem hostilibus lacrimis miscet.*

quae etiam Hannibalis admirabilem uocem pro funeribus Romanorum ducum arbitria stautentis expressit. quin aliquanto ei plus gloriae Paullus et Gracchus et Marcellus sepulti quam oppressi attulerunt, si quidem illos Punico astu decepit, Romana mansuetudine honorauit.

*uos quoque, fortes ac piaie umbrae, non paenitendas sortitae estis exequias:
nam ut optabilius in patria, ita speciosius pro patria conlapsae supremi officii decus
infelicitate amissum uirtute recuperastis.*

Next week: Moderation, generosity, justice, loyalty of wives to husbands, innocent or guilty, electoral defeats.