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CATILINE'S CONSPIRACY,  
THE JUGURTHINE WAR, HISTORIES

GAIUS SALLUSTIUS CRISPUS, known as SALLUST, is thought to have been born in Amiternum, a town in the Sabine country north-east of Rome, in 86 BC and to have died in 35 BC. We know nothing of his early life. He must have been a quaestor before 52 BC, but when we first hear of him he is one of the unruly tribunes who attacked Cicero in 52. He was expelled from the Senate in 50. He sided with Caesar during the civil war. In the summer of 49 he was sent to aid C. Antonius, who was barricaded on Curicta in the Adriatic; he failed and Antonius was forced to surrender. In 47, as praetor, Sallust was sent to deal with a mutiny in Campania; he barely escaped with his own life. In 46 Caesar made him governor of 'New Africa'. He returned to Rome in 45 with vast wealth which he used to purchase a villa at Tivoli, a mansion in Rome, and the famous 'Gardens of Sallust' that became the property of later Roman emperors. He was tried for extortion, but was acquitted. After Caesar's assassination in 44, Sallust retired from public life and turned to the writing of history. His monographs on Catiline's conspiracy and the Jugurthine War survive complete, and he also began an annalistic history of the late Republic, starting in the year 78, the year Sulla died; he got as far as 67 before he himself died. In antiquity he was considered the greatest of Rome's historians. His style, difficult to read, broken and deceptive, and his perspective, satirical and sarcastic, had a profound influence on Tacitus, and was praised by Nietzsche.

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SALLUST

*Catiline's Conspiracy*  
*The Jugurthine War*  
*Histories*



*Translated with an Introduction and Notes by*

WILLIAM W. BATSTONE

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## ABBREVIATIONS

- C* *Catiline's Conspiracy*  
*J* *The Jugurthine War*  
*H* *The Histories*

References to other classical works are abbreviated according to *The Oxford Classical Dictionary* 3rd edn. (Oxford, 1996).

## INTRODUCTION

Sallust wrote near the end of a century of civil discord and civil war. His first monograph tells the story of Catiline's conspiracy (63 BC), an event that he considered 'especially memorable because of the unprecedented nature of the crime and the danger it caused' (C 4.3). In his second monograph, he takes up the history of the Jugurthine War, a period from 118 to 104 BC, 'first because it was great and brutal, with victories on both sides, and second because that was the first time there was any opposition to the aristocracy's abuse of power. This struggle confused all things, human and divine, and proceeded to such a pitch of madness that political partisanship had its end in civil war and the devastation of Italy' (J 5.1-2). His final work, the *Histories*, is unfinished and exists for us only in about 500 fragments, four orations, and two letters. In this he undertook to deal with the events between the Jugurthine War and Catiline's conspiracy. He did not, however, write about the Social Wars and Sulla's dictatorship (after the first instances of the 'madness' that resulted in civil war) but began with the year of Sulla's death (78 BC). He got as far as the year 67 before he died.

### *Historical Background*

In all these works, Sallust is concerned explicitly and implicitly with the political and moral decline of the Roman Republic, which he dates to the destruction of Carthage in 146 BC. Others saw different turning points. Livy ascribed the beginnings of luxury to 187, when Manlius Vulso's army returned from Asia. Polybius saw moral standards changing as early as 200, but placed the crisis of the late Republic after the battle of Pydna in 168, when Rome began to achieve world domination. But in Sallust's view the destruction of Carthage began a period of factionalism and luxury. As a result the Roman state 'gradually changed from the most lovely and best and became the worst and most depraved' (C 5.9).

Sallust does not ignore the many domestic conflicts that make up the history of the Republic. In fact, he says that civil disputes arose in

Rome from ‘a vice of human nature which, restless and indomitable, is always engaging in contests over liberty or glory or domination’ (*H* 1.7). But ‘the highest moral standards and the greatest harmony were displayed between the second and the last Punic war’ (*H* 1.11) because these contests were kept in check by *metus hostilis* (‘fear of an external enemy’) or more specifically *metus Punicus* (‘fear of Carthage’). Then, when the destruction of Carthage made it possible to pursue internal enmities and rivalries, ‘the aristocracy twisted their “dignity” and the people twisted their “liberty” towards their desires; every man acted on his own behalf, stealing, robbing, plundering. In this way all political life was torn apart between two parties, and the Republic, which had been our common ground, was mutilated’ (*J* 41.5).

Sallust was not original in this view. The importance of *metus hostilis* as the basis of internal cohesion and common interest had often been recognized in Rome. In fact, Scipio Nasica had cited it as a reason to oppose Cato’s demand that Carthage be destroyed. But Sallust saw the destruction of Carthage as pivotal because it created the conditions for both factionalism and luxury. ‘The young men were so corrupted by luxury and greed that it could be rightly said that men had been born who could neither hold on to their family wealth themselves nor allow others to’ (*H* 1.16). ‘Men who had easily endured hard work, dangers, uncertainty and adversity found that leisure and wealth, things desirable at other times, were a burden and the cause of misery. And so, at first, greed for money grew, then greed for power. These things were the root, so to speak, of all evils’ (*C* 10.2–3). It was the conjunction of wealth and factionalism, greed for money and greed for power, that made 146 BC pivotal. Later ancient writers were to follow Sallust’s view.

Modern historians, however, emphasize two institutions that played a central role in the decline of the late Republic: the tribunate and the Roman army. The tribunate was an old republican office going back to 494 BC. It was instituted to protect the rights of the plebeians against abuses of power by the patrician or aristocratic class (which is to say, the Senate). Eventually there were ten tribunes, elected by the plebeian assembly. Their person and body were considered sacrosanct, meaning that they could not be touched or coerced. Their power could be used to halt public business, to veto proposals and actions by other magistrates, to convene the Senate,



and to propose legislation directly to the people. By convention, the tribunes deferred to the Senate for legislative review. It was the Gracchi brothers who first used tribunician power (in 133 and again in 123–122) to deprive the Senate of its traditional control of legislative review, of fiscal policy, and even of foreign policy. Later the office was used by commanders to get land for their veterans and to secure commands that they desired or needed. While tribunes most frequently opposed the Senate's authority by appeal to the people, they could easily be bribed and were found promoting the factional interests of both *optimates* and *populares*.

This struggle between the *nobiles* or the *optimates* (members of the ruling aristocracy, senators with family names and histories to honour and live up to) and the *populares* (the 'supporters of the people') should not be thought of as a contest between the Senate and the plebs (Roman citizens without the privileges or power of the aristocracy), that is, between two parties or classes. Since 494 the tribunate had protected the plebs from aristocratic power and by the late Republic not only could plebeians be elected to any office, but it was required that one consul each year be a plebeian. This means that one could and did have plebeian magistrates and senators. The term *nobiles*, then, begins to refer to those who had gained power and wealth and controlled access to power by electoral success and collusion with others. These men were often members of old aristocratic families, but not necessarily. It was not a group with stability and lineage but whoever happened to be the dominant elite at any given time.

The conflict between *optimates* and *populares* was really a conflict among aristocrats themselves, a struggle between senators and magistrates for primacy or even domination. This distinction was not determined by the political agenda of the individuals, but by their base of power. The *optimates* sought support by appealing to the traditional power and privileges of the Senate and 'the powerful few'. The *populares* opposed the privileges or the abuses of power by the 'few' and did so by using the power of the tribunate, which is to say by claiming to protect the freedom of the people and the rights of the citizen voting assemblies. These bases of power entailed certain policies: *populares* tended to be interested in supplying grain to the urban poor and in agrarian laws that would supply land to veteran soldiers, while the *optimates* resisted any new power base, especially

that of a successful general like Marius or Caesar. They did what they could to control policy themselves. But it was not about policy; it was about power: 'To put the truth in a few words, after those times whoever stirred up the Republic with honourable claims, some as if they were defending the rights of the people, others to secure the authority of the Senate, pretending to work for the public good while they struggled for their own power. There was no restraint or measure to their efforts. Each side used their victories brutally' (C 38.3-4).

In the struggle for power, wealth played an important, if not determinate, role. Those who had money and land used the electoral process to protect it; those who did not have money used political institutions to acquire it. According to Sallust, wealth promoted both luxury and greed, avarice and sloth. It weakened the power, but not the arrogance, of old aristocratic families; it raised to prominence and pre-eminence men who had no investment in the traditional power base of the Senate. Elections could secure lucrative governorships and military commands, and military commands could secure money and political influence. At Rome, everything was for sale; such is the refrain of Sallust's *Jugurthine War*, and that included the especially disruptive powers of the tribunate.

For modern historians, the second important institution that made possible the century of civil wars was the Roman army, or rather the army reforms that were instituted by Marius during the Jugurthine War. Sallust does not show much interest in these reforms per se, but they changed the relationship of commander, Senate, and troops primarily by creating a professional army from the urban poor. This army would be loyal to their commander, not to the foreign policy decisions of the Senate. It was this kind of army that marched on Rome first following Sulla, then Lepidus, and later Caesar.

Sallust's interest, however, was not a modern interest in institutional structures. He was concerned with politics and factionalism, wealth and luxury. For Sallust, the failure of political institutions is to a large extent the moral failure of the men who operated within those institutions. His concern is with the arrogance and violence and the character of men who used and sought power. Similarly, his concern with money is not with the economic base and the creation of wealth, or the financial structure of the Roman electoral process, but with how money is used by individuals and how it affects, on the

one hand, the character of the men who have it or seek it and, on the other, the character of the state. For Sallust these elements are interactive. Thus, when he outlines Catiline's character (*de cuius moribus . . . C 4.5*), he finds Catiline's propensities exacerbated 'by the corrupt moral character of the state (*mores civitatis*), which was depraved because of two destructive and internally contradictory evils, extravagance and greed' (*C 5.8*). This leads to a parallel digression on the character of the state (*de moribus civitatis, C 5.9*).

### *Sallust's Life and Times*

Sallust's urgency about the fall of the Republic comes no doubt from the fact that he was born in the middle of the political 'earthquake' (*J 41.10*) that he writes about and he died before Augustus turned the Republic into a 'principate'. But he does not write as an eye-witness to the events of his histories: the Jugurthine War was over before he was born and he seems to have been away from Rome during Catiline's conspiracy. Nevertheless, the events of these years shaped his understanding of politics. St Jerome tells us that Sallust was born in Amiternum, a town in the Sabine country north-east of Rome, in 86 BC; the *Consularia Constantinopolitana* adds the birthday 1 October. This was the year of Marius' last consulship, though Marius had died in January. After the carnage and destruction of 87 which had eventually consolidated Cinna's position in Rome, Cinna now waited and feared the return of Sulla from the east. To understand the world Sallust was born into, we need to look back at the careers of Marius and Sulla.

Marius was the great Roman general who had defeated Jugurtha, defeated the Germans, and held the consulship six times (107, 104–100). Sulla had served with him during the Jugurthine War, and in fact claimed to be the man who actually brought Jugurtha into Roman hands. After considerable success in the Social Wars (91–88), in which Rome's Latin allies fought for citizenship or independence, Sulla was elected consul (88) and was given as his proconsular command the war against Mithridates, an eastern king intent on expanding his empire into Roman territory. Marius, now an old man, was jealous: he convinced a tribune, Sulpicius, to call a referendum on the command. There was fighting in the Forum; Sulla fled to his legions and appealed for their support. A military tribune

was sent to claim Sulla's army in Marius' name, but the soldiers stoned him to death. Sulla's officers deserted, but his men remained loyal. Sulla became the first general in the history of Rome to cross into the city with an army. As master of Rome, he now declared Sulpicius' laws invalid; Marius and Sulpicius were declared public enemies. Sulpicius was hunted down and killed. Marius escaped to Africa where many of his veterans were settled, while Sulla went to Asia to fight Mithridates. Already the forces of factionalism, the power of the tribunate, and the loyalties that Marius' military reforms encouraged were shaping events. And, of course, Sulla's command against Mithridates was a bid for power, glory, and wealth.

Before leaving for Asia in 88, however, Sulla allowed the consular elections to proceed. L. Cornelius Cinna, an enemy of Sulla, was elected; his colleague was Cn. Octavius, a loyal optimate. They quarrelled. Octavius drove Cinna from Rome; Cinna sought the aid of Marius and besieged Rome. By the autumn of 87 he had the upper hand: the city was starving, disease was rampant, and the Senate accepted terms of surrender. Marius let his retinue of soldiers and ex-slaves loot and murder. After five days of slaughter, even Cinna was disgusted. Marius and Cinna were declared consuls for 86. Such was the world into which Sallust was born.

Sallust would have been a toddler when Sulla returned to Rome. Sulla had been formally exiled and his laws repealed, but he still commanded a Roman army in the east. He landed at Brundisium in 83 where he was joined by men who would shape the course of the last years of the Republic: M. Licinius Crassus came from Spain; Metellus Pius arrived from Africa; Cn. Pompeius brought three private legions from Picenum. With the help of these armies, Sulla became ruler of Italy by the end of 82. For the first time in 120 years the Senate declared a man dictator, and there was an innovation: this republican office, which was traditionally limited to six months, was granted to Sulla without limit. Furthermore, all his actions were validated beforehand and were not subject to legislative or judicial review.

Sulla needed money for his veterans—at least twenty-three legions—and he wanted to eliminate all political opposition. At first men were murdered indiscriminately. Then proscription lists went up. Those whose names appeared on these lists were condemned without a trial. Anyone could kill them and claim a reward; their

property was auctioned off by the state; and their sons and grandsons were barred from seeking political office. We do not know how many were killed; one ancient source gives 9,000 as the figure. At this time, Pompey, Caesar's opponent in Caesar's civil war, was 24 years old. He acted with such cruelty in Sicily that he was called 'the young butcher'. He fancied himself another Alexander, and Sulla called him 'the Great', a name that stuck with him the rest of his life. Many benefited from Sulla's proscriptions, including both Crassus, who gained considerable wealth from them, and L. Sergius Catilina.

As dictator, Sulla's specific charge was 'to pass laws and reconstitute the state'. He began by filling up the ranks of a depleted Senate: of the traditional 300 senators, only about 150 lived. Sulla increased the number to 600, appointing friends and supporters from among the equestrian class. He modified the *cursus honorum*, or sequence of offices that a successful politician could hold. He required men to hold the quaestorship before standing for the praetorship, and to hold the praetorship before running for consul. He added age requirements for these offices: 30 for quaestor, 39 for praetor, and 42 for consul. And, to prevent another man's holding consecutive consulships as Marius had, or consecutive tribuneships as Gaius Gracchus had, he required a ten-year hiatus before repetition of the same office. Then, to break the power of the tribunes, he banned them from holding any other office in the future and limited their ability to initiate or promulgate legislation. The juries were taken from the *equites* (the 'equestrian' or mercantile class) and given to the senators. Grain distributions were abolished. Land was taken from communities that had opposed him and some 80,000 veterans were settled there.

While still holding the office of dictator, he was elected consul for 80—just eight years after his first consulship, making him the first man to violate his own rules. He refused election for 79, and instead resigned the dictatorship and went into retirement as a private citizen. He did not interfere in politics, even when the elections of 79 returned a man he opposed. He died in 78 at the age of 60. The 'Domination of Sulla' was a turning point in the history of Roman violence. Sallust himself would refuse to write of it, saying in *The Jugurthine War*, 'Before his victory in the civil war he was the most fortunate of all men, but his good fortune did not exceed his efforts.'

As for what he did afterwards, I do not know whether one should feel more shame or disgust in talking of it' (J 95.4).

During the next eight years, Pompey and Crassus consolidated their power. In 78 Pompey was sent to put down a revolt of farmers in Etruria; they were rebelling against the colonists Sulla had placed on their land. In 77 he was sent to Spain to deal with Sertorius, a supporter of Cinna, whose armies controlled most of Spain. It was not until 73 that Pompey began to gain the upper hand. But it was a war that promoted the military power upon which Pompey built his political power. No sooner was the war with Sertorius concluded than another crisis arose. A group of seventy-four slaves led by Spartacus escaped from a gladiatorial training school in Capua. They were joined by other runaway slaves and agricultural workers and soon numbered 70,000. In 72 the Senate sent the consuls against the slaves; both consuls were defeated. The Senate turned to Crassus, who had served with Sulla in 82. He was given four legions and raised six more. He drove Spartacus south, hoping to corner him in the toe of Italy, but, when Spartacus broke through his lines, the Senate summoned Pompey from Spain. Crassus defeated and killed Spartacus at Lucania; Pompey moving south met and killed about 5,000 fugitives who had fled northward. He then claimed responsibility for ending the war. Crassus was rightly resentful.

Pompey and Crassus had supported Sulla. Both desired to be the first among equals. Both claimed credit for defeating Spartacus. Both wanted the consulship for 70. And both, hoping for triumphs, kept their armies under arms near Rome. The Senate was duly intimidated: Pompey received his triumph and both Crassus and Pompey were elected to the consulship. Crassus was about 45; he had been praetor in 72. Pompey was 36 and had held none of the offices which Sulla's constitution made prerequisite to the consulship. They then proceeded to restore the powers of the tribunate that Sulla had curtailed; they revived the censorship and ended the senatorial monopoly of the law courts. Little was left of Sulla's reforms and reorganization of the state. Sallust would have been about 16 at this time.

Pompey was now identified with the *populares*. The *optimates* were suspicious of his intentions and powers. In 67, when Sallust would be turning 20, Rome decided to do something about the pirates that infested the Mediterranean, interfering with trade and even attacking

cities on the coast of Greece and Asia. An extraordinary command was proposed for Pompey: authority over the entire Mediterranean and the coastline up to fifty miles inland. The *optimates* opposed but the motion was carried. By midsummer the pirates were gone, and Pompey began a reorganization of Asia. Next, the tribune C. Manilius proposed that Pompey take over the Third War against Mithridates. The general in charge was Lucullus, a plebeian aristocrat, who was insulted that this 'new man' would replace him. He called Pompey a 'vulture', referring to the fact that he had already fed off Crassus' victory over Spartacus just as he was trying to feed off Lucullus' successes against Mithridates. Lucullus was essentially right. But he had trouble motivating his army; the war had stalled. It was Pompey's job to bring the war to its conclusion. He pursued Mithridates toward the Black Sea, and then headed toward Jerusalem. In 63 during the Judaean War he heard of the death of Mithridates. Meanwhile, Crassus had been at Rome taking care of his wealth, working with the tax-collectors, and supporting the career of Julius Caesar.

During this period Catiline stood for the consulship (64 BC); it was the same year that Cicero was also a candidate. Cicero and Antonius were elected. Then Catiline stood for the consulship again (63). In his bitterness at a second defeat, he turned to violence. It was said that Crassus helped Catiline; if he did, or when he stopped, we do not know. It is said that Crassus was behind anyone who could oppose Pompey's pre-eminence. And many men were afraid of what might happen when Pompey returned from the east with his armies. Sallust himself leaves the matter of Crassus' involvement undecided. Crassus' money, no doubt, affected many things behind the scenes. Sallust would have been 22, but it is noteworthy that his history of Catiline's conspiracy never relies on personal experience. Presumably he was not in Rome at the time, but we do not know what he was doing.

By the time Sallust was in his mid-twenties, Rome had survived the Catilinarian conspiracy but was facing another internal danger: the first triumvirate. Pompey had returned to Italy in 61. He was hoping for a triumph and a second consulship. In the campaigns from 65 to 62 he had annexed much of Asia, brought back to Rome incalculable tribute, imposed settlements that endured for centuries. Cato, a young conservative, persuaded the Senate to make Pompey choose between a triumph and the consulship. He chose a triumph. But then the Senate dragged its feet. The *optimates* were reluctant

to confirm his settlements in Asia. He wanted land for his veterans, but the Senate refused to act. Crassus, who had been cultivating his wealth and promoting the career of Julius Caesar, asked the Senate to adjust the terms for tax-collection in Asia. This would support the *equites*, whom Crassus himself supported. The Senate rejected his request. Finally, Caesar returned from Spain where as *propraetor* he had been governor. He too wanted a triumph for his military successes and he wanted to stand for the consulship. He too was forced to choose, but he chose the consulship.

Discontent with the Senate's obstructionism made for strange political bedfellows. Pompey and Crassus, though mistrustful of each other's ambitions, were drawn together by Julius Caesar into a political alliance. These three men, backed by armies that were loyal to them, by money and the interests of the *equites*, and by the support of the urban populace, imposed their will on the state and ignored the desires of the Senate. Caesar was consul in 59 and received the two Gauls as his *proconsular* province. Cato opposed Caesar during his consulship and after. Enmity grew. Cato opposed Caesar's agrarian laws; Caesar had Cato dragged out of the Forum while making a speech against him. Cato attempted to prevent Caesar's second five-year command in Gaul and was instrumental in creating impasses and in dividing the tenuous loyalties between Pompey and Caesar. For the Roman historian Pollio (a supporter of Caesar), the triumvirate was the beginning of Caesar's civil war.

It was during this period, from the first triumvirate to Caesar's civil war, that Sallust appears for the first time as a political figure. The year was 52; Sallust was 34 years old and *tribune of the plebs*. Cicero, the hero of the war with Catiline, had been exiled in 58 with the help of the *tribune P. Clodius*, but had returned to acclaim and relative unimportance. In 54 the triumvirate had been weakened by the death of Pompey's wife, who was Caesar's daughter. Then, in 53 Crassus died. Caesar suggested that Pompey marry his grand-niece. Pompey declined, and married Cornelia Metella, the daughter of one of Caesar's enemies. The triumvirate was over.

Political violence and obstructionism prevented elections in 53. On 6 December Clodius was killed by a gang of men led by Milo, a friend and ally of Cicero. Clodius was variously thought to have been an adherent of Caesar, an ally of Pompey, or an enemy of Pompey—he was, no doubt, an opportunist. When his body was



placed in the Senate house, crowds were incited by two tribunes to burn the building. Asconius tells us that Sallust was involved. Later in 52, when Cicero defended Milo, Pompey's armies surrounded the trial and so intimidated Cicero that he could barely speak. Two tribunes disrupted the trial, called Cicero a thief and a murderer. Cicero said that they were 'contemptible failures as men'.<sup>1</sup> One of them was Sallust.<sup>2</sup> After their term in office, the other tribunes involved in these incidents were prosecuted, but Sallust seems to have escaped unscathed. A commentary on Cicero's speeches tells us that Sallust settled his quarrel with Milo and Cicero.<sup>3</sup> In 50, however, we hear that he was removed from the Senate by Appius Claudius.<sup>4</sup> We do not know why.

The next we hear of Sallust is during 49 BC. In January of that year, Caesar had crossed the Rubicon—to defend his dignity and the rights of the tribunes, he said. Sallust commanded a Caesarian legion in Illyricum.<sup>5</sup> Scholars assume that Caesar appointed Sallust to a quaestorship at this time, thereby allowing him to re-enter the Senate, but there is no evidence for this. Caesar's legate, C. Antonius, was trapped by Pompey's generals on the island of Curicta; Sallust was asked to bring help but failed. Later, in 47, Sallust was sent to deal with Caesar's mutinous troops in Campania.<sup>6</sup> He barely escaped with his life. The troops marched on Rome and Caesar himself had to intervene. In Caesar's African campaign in 46, Sallust, now a praetor, was put in charge of supplies for the island of Cercina.<sup>7</sup> This time he had some success. As praetor, he would have regained his seat in the Senate (if not before). We next hear that Caesar appointed him governor of New Africa (Africa Nova). It is odd that Sallust would receive this commission: except for his handling of supplies at Cercina, he had failed at all the other tasks we know about. But a governorship provided opportunities.

Caesar brought his war against Pompey to an end with his victory at the battle of Pharsalus in 48. He pursued Pompey to Egypt, but Pompey was assassinated by old comrades while coming ashore. Caesar turned his attention to the remnants of Pompey's support. In 45 he returned to Rome. That was the year Sallust also returned

<sup>1</sup> *Mil.* 47.    <sup>2</sup> *Asc. Mil.*, p. 44.    <sup>3</sup> *Asc. Mil.*, p. 37C, 23–4.

<sup>4</sup> *Dio Cass.* 40. 63. 4.    <sup>5</sup> *Oros.* 6.15.8.

<sup>6</sup> *App. B. Civ.* 2.92; *Dio Cass.* 42.53.1–2.    <sup>7</sup> *B. Afr.* 8.3; 34.1; 34.3.

from Africa, where he had acquired great wealth. He was prosecuted for extortion but was acquitted. This is the last we hear of Sallust. In March of 44 Caesar was assassinated. Presumably Sallust retired from political life at about that time, at the age of 42. He went on to write *Catiline's Conspiracy*, *The Jugurthine War*, and the unfinished *Histories*. Out of his wealth, either he himself or his adoptive heir created the famous and luxurious Horti Sallustii, or Gardens of Sallust. Jerome tells us that Sallust died on 13 May 36 BC, in the fourth year before the battle of Actium.<sup>8</sup>

The few pieces of information that we have about Sallust's life have attracted elaboration and invention. This is the product of both the complex and tumultuous times in which he lived and the tone of his writings. The contrast between his conservative and moralistic posture and the apparent facts of his life—his wealth, his expulsion from the Senate, the charges of extortion, and his self-serving partisanship—led even in ancient times to stories and rumours of dubious value. It was said that he was caught in adultery with Milo's wife and, after paying some money, got off with a whipping.<sup>9</sup> He was mocked for his ambition and immorality, for a youth spent in dissipation, for the cultic sacrifice of young boys, for his lies and his failure in politics, and for his extravagance and sloth. He is accused of abusing his body to gain the money needed to satisfy his extravagant desires, and then when older abusing others as he had been abused.<sup>10</sup> There is little or no historical value in these accusations, which often seem modelled on his own description of Catiline, but they point to an interest in the apparent contradiction between his life and the moralistic tone of his writing.

This contradiction is also addressed by Sallust himself. In the preface to *Catiline's Conspiracy* he says,

as a young man I was at first attracted like many others to politics, and in politics I was thwarted by many obstacles. In place of shame, self-restraint, and virtue, arrogance thrived and graft and greed. My mind, unaccustomed to wicked ways, rejected these things. But I was young and did not know how to resist. Caught in the midst of such corruption, I too was

<sup>8</sup> This date, however, cannot be correct, since the battle of Actium took place on 2 September 31 BC.

<sup>9</sup> Gell. 17. 18.

<sup>10</sup> [Cicero], *Invective against Sallust*.

seized and corrupted by ambition. I rejected the wicked character of others, but nevertheless was troubled by the same craving for honour, and I fell victim to the same reputation and invidious attacks as the others. (C 3.3–5)

While noting the ‘wickedness’ that surrounded any young man in politics, he excuses both his actions and his reputation. Whatever one might think of the excuse, a lifetime lived between Sulla’s rule and Caesar’s assassination gave him his particular insights into factionalism and wealth, corruption and power.

### Catiline’s Conspiracy

Catiline was born in 108 BC to one of the oldest patrician families in Rome, the Sergii. The family had not produced a consul, however, since 380 BC. Catiline had hopes of restoring his family dignity and began a relatively successful military career. He served during the Social Wars with the father of Pompey the Great. During Sulla’s civil war he attained notoriety as a supporter of Sulla. Early in the 70s he was a legate. In 73 he was accused of committing adultery with the Vestal Virgin Fabia: he was acquitted with the help of the ex-consul Q. Lutatius Catulus (consul in 102). He seems to have held the praetorship in 68, after which he was governor of Africa.

When he returned to Rome in 66 he asked to stand for the consulship. He was blocked by L. Volcarius Tullus (consul in 66). We do not know why, but it may have been because charges of extortion were pending for his conduct as governor. When the consuls designate, P. Autronius and P. Sulla, were convicted of bribery, Sallust reports that a conspiracy was formed by Catiline and Autronius to kill the new consuls on 1 January 65 and take over the government. The plot was discovered and postponed to 5 February, but Catiline gave the signal too quickly and nothing happened. Modern scholars are sceptical about the existence of this earlier conspiracy.

For two years Catiline was quiet. He could not run for the consulship in 65 because he was under prosecution for extortion. But he was supported by many of the most important men in Rome and was acquitted through massive bribery (according to Cicero’s brother). In 64 he stood for election with five others, including M. Tullius Cicero and C. Antonius Hybrida. Just before the elections, Cicero

accused Catiline of plotting to murder several leading senators. Cicero and Antonius were elected.

In the summer of 63 Catiline stood for the consulship again. He ran on a platform of debt relief. Again, there were rumours of violence. Cicero showed up at the elections with a bodyguard and wearing a breastplate. Again Catiline was defeated. Most historians today believe that this was when Catiline decided on violence. He sent Manlius to Etruria to set up an armed camp. When rumours of rebellion and letters warning of a massacre arrived in Rome, the Senate passed its 'final decree'. Armed forces were sent out and attempts to capture Capua and Praeneste were foiled.

Catiline sent volunteers to kill Cicero in the early morning of 7 November. Cicero was warned and turned the assassins away. The next day he delivered his *First Catilinarian Speech*, a brilliant attack on and mockery of Catiline's aspirations and plans. This speech precipitated Catiline's departure from Rome to join Manlius in Etruria. Both Catiline and Manlius were declared public enemies. A week or so later word arrived that Catiline had joined Manlius. But it was not until early December that Cicero took decisive action.

Ambassadors from Gaul were in Rome seeking redress of grievances. They were convinced to join the conspiracy, but then betrayed it. An ambush at the Mulvian Bridge on the night of 2 December led to the capture of five leading conspirators. They were placed under house arrest and Cicero was honoured with an official vote of thanks. After some debate, the Senate voted to have the conspirators executed. Catiline's army met the Roman army under Antonius early in January 62 and was destroyed. Later in 62 the praetor, Cicero's brother Quintus, and his colleague M. Calpurnius Bibulus put down disturbances in southern Italy. In 61 C. Octavius was sent to crush refugees from the armies of Catiline and Spartacus around Thurii.

For his role in putting down Catiline's rebellion, Cicero was hailed as 'father of the fatherland'. His days of glory, however, were not to last long. In 60 his refusal to join the first triumvirate left him out in the cold. Soon after, in 58, the tribune P. Clodius passed a law threatening exile for anyone who killed a Roman citizen without trial. Cicero argued that the Catilinarians were no longer citizens but had become enemies once they took up arms against the state; he claimed that the Senate's 'final decree' absolved him of guilt. He hoped for

help from Pompey at least, but help was not forthcoming and he went into exile.

Why did Sallust choose to write about this event? It was already well documented in the published speeches of Cicero. As a result, it is inadequate and probably incorrect to think that Sallust wanted to portray Catiline as the epitome of evil. In fact, Sallust presents him as a mirror of his age. And he exercises restraint: stories of perversity that Cicero recounts on several occasions<sup>11</sup> Sallust says cannot be confirmed. He distrusts rumours of drinking human blood (*C* 22.3). Other stories, that Catiline murdered his first wife and married his own daughter,<sup>12</sup> he ignores. Sallust's Catiline is perverse (he murdered his own son, *C* 15), but if Sallust was out to demonize, he missed many good opportunities. In fact, he notes that Catiline 'was a man of great strength, both mental and physical', that 'his body could endure hunger, cold, sleep-deprivation beyond what one would believe' (*C* 5.1, 3). And he adds that Catiline was 'encouraged by the corrupt moral character of the state' (*C* 5.8). This combination of mental strength and twisted character, encouraged by a corrupt body politic, is Sallust's focus; not the demonization of a figure already vilified in the powerful and gaudy rhetoric of Cicero.

Sallust himself explains his choice in terms of the conspiracy: it was 'especially memorable because of the unprecedented nature of the crime and the danger it caused' (*C* 4.4). But what was unprecedented about Catiline's conspiracy? Sulla had marched on Rome with an army, twice, and ruled Rome with a murderous hand. His proscriptions had made many rich, including perhaps Catiline. Thousands had died, including half the Senate. Cinna and Marius had starved the city and slaughtered Sulla's supporters. Lepidus, too, had led an army against Rome. Sallust's claim might seem excessive. And yet there appear to have been unprecedented dangers.

First, there are the men involved. Sallust begins his narrative with a catalogue of conspirators (*C* 17): it includes senators and *equites*, a praetor, an ex-quaestor, one of the consular candidates in 64, and a tribune elect. Elsewhere we hear of Crassus' support and the belief that Caesar was involved. The plebs at first favoured war (*C* 48.1); and from the provinces the Allobroges were at first persuaded to join

<sup>11</sup> Cic. *Cat.* 2.8, 2.23; *Red. Sen.* 10; *Dom.* 62.

<sup>12</sup> Cic. *Cat.* 1.14; *Tog. Cand.* ap. ASC. 91C.24–6.

Catiline. 'Catiline gathered around him, like a bodyguard, crowds of vices and crimes' (C 14.1). But there was also uncertainty: no one knew all who were involved. At the beginning of November, the Senate offered rewards for information (C 30.6); in mid-November they offered immunity (C 36.2). No one came forward. Even Cicero was troubled by this uncertainty: he said he would not take action until he could eradicate the entire danger. But men of power and wealth easily hide their activities and purposes. Sallust illustrates the problem when he describes the Senate's response to the charge by a certain Tarquinius that Crassus was involved (C 48). Some did not believe it; others thought he was involved but were afraid of his power; many owed him money. Disbelief, fear and financial self-interest are added up: the Senate voted that he was not involved.

Second, there is the obscurity of Catiline's purpose. He says he wanted to restore his family dignity, to bring aid to those who, like him, had suffered at the hands of 'the powerful few'. Some think he wanted to solve his own financial problems, to fulfil a desire for power and domination, to satisfy his hatred for those who succeeded where he had failed. In June 64 (C 20) he speaks of wealth and glory; he recalls the spoils of war; then, he promises to act as consul. Manlius, his ally, says that they do not seek power or wealth; they want freedom from the cruelty of the praetor; they do not want to fight (C 33). Catiline writing to Catulus (C 35) speaks of injustice, loss of dignity and office, false suspicions and the cause of the poor. In his final speech to his troops (C 58), he says, 'We are fighting for our homeland, for freedom, for our lives.' One may say that this is just rhetoric, but the grievances that his programme of debt relief addressed were real and had popular support, and the abusive power of the few concerned others, including Caesar. And Catiline's diagnosis of power and corruption at Rome is oddly similar to Sallust's own view. We cannot tell where a real political programme ends and mere rhetoric begins.

Finally there is Cicero's view of the conspiracy's unique danger. Others had sought power in the state, had even displayed cruelty, but they had done so as magistrates, as tribunes and generals. Only Catiline had wanted to be consul without being elected, general without earning or even being given a command. Only Catiline wanted domination for the sake of destroying the state, not for the purpose of being powerful within the state. And this was a conspiracy that had seeped over the Alps to Gaul and Spain and Mauretania.

The danger of the conspiracy arose from its ambition to gain civil authority from the violence of civil war and from the impossibility of containing it or defining its goals beyond power and greed.

We can see what interested Sallust in these events by comparing his version of the narrative with what Cicero himself wanted. In 56, seven years after the conspiracy, Cicero asked L. Luceius, a Roman historian, to compose a monograph that covered the period from the beginning of the conspiracy to his return from exile: 'a single theme and a single persona'.<sup>13</sup> He recommends not only elaboration but exaggeration; he notes the treachery and grief, the opportunities for praise and blame: 'the risky and varied circumstances of real men, often superior men, contain wonder, suspense, joy, trouble, hope, fear; but if they arrive at a noteworthy end, the reader's soul is filled with a most delightful pleasure'.<sup>14</sup>

So far as we know, Cicero never got his monograph from Luceius, and critics and scholars have found it easy to laugh at his uneasy combination of self-importance and embarrassed neediness. However, his request puts Sallust's monograph in perspective. They share a sense that this conspiracy was in some sense equal to, if not more important than, the external wars with foreign enemies that occurred at the same time. They disagree about the focus on a single man. But this is not a matter of contempt: Sallust refers to the political reaction against Cicero as *invidia* (hateful envy) and to his election as a victory over that *invidia* (C 22.3; 23.5–24.1). He calls the *First Catilinarian Speech* 'brilliant' (C 31.6) and describes Cicero as 'our very fine consul' (C 43.1). This hardly adds up to contempt or disdain, but it is not the kind of praise Cicero wanted. The reason is that Sallust is not focused on a single person; he is exploring a traumatic event, one that entailed the actions, virtuous and vicious and obscure, of several men, and one that did not arrive at 'a noteworthy end'.

For Cicero, the story of heroism and closure ended with his own triumphant return from exile. Sallust, however, brings his narrative to a stop on the battlefield where Catiline is defeated and his army crushed. But the strong closure of victory and death is undermined by the continuing animosities of Roman politics. After the final battle, when Romans come onto the battlefield, they do so in order to plunder other Romans. They are glad to see the corpse of a political

<sup>13</sup> Cic. *Fam.* 5.12.2.      <sup>14</sup> *Ibid.* 5.12.5.

enemy, sad to see the corpse of a friend. The war is over but the body politic is still at war and the Republic is still divided by murderous enmities. The desire for power and money, the forces of factionalism and greed, are thriving in this scene, and they are the same forces that continued to thrive long after the 'noteworthy end' that Cicero imagined.

In fact, in Sallust's writing these forces are inherent in history itself. He says that men should not pass through life in silence, that glory and fame, the goal of human life, require all the resources of body and soul, and that mind should rule body. He says that the history of warfare proves this. When 'craving for domination' was considered a justification for war and 'the greatest glory was held to consist in the greatest military command (*imperium*)' (2.2), Cyrus in Persia and the Greek city-states, Athens and Sparta, showed the superiority of the mind. They won glory; they became the subjects of history: Herodotus wrote of Cyrus; Thucydides of Athens and Sparta. But the craving for domination and military command is the prerequisite.

Sallust goes on to say that political life would be more stable if kings and generals acted in peacetime as they did in war. The obvious problem with this paradigm is that men, especially Roman men, do act in peacetime just as they act in war: 'craving for domination' justified conflict in both the Forum and in Gaul; for both Pompey and Sulla the greatest military command (*imperium*) was the greatest glory. But the problem is deeper. If men should not pass through life in silence, if the goal of human life is to win fame, then Catiline is an example. His speeches and his actions inspire his men to impressive acts of military prowess. He won from history what all men should want, the memory of things done. And he was able to do this at least in part because he had remarkable physical and mental strength, his mind ruled his body with incredible rigour. It is, of course, an irony that Sallust's history is what rewards his crime. But, the process of history rewards 'manliness' (*virtus*), not virtue (another meaning of *virtus*).

Sallust, then, is telling a story about Roman virtue. The result is civil war, an image of Rome destroying herself, of Roman standards hostile to each other, of two armies, veterans remembering their former acts of bravery (*virtus*), the enemy showing incredible daring and mental toughness. This, then, is a story of virtue that does not



cohere, that is already at war with itself. The great image of this incoherence is Sallust's comparison of Caesar and Cato (C 54), two men of extraordinary virtue, enemies who will soon try to destroy each other. These men do not together have the whole of Roman virtue, because together these two men represent civil war. The problem is that there is no harmony, no larger virtue that pre-empts and directs the 'craving for domination' that created, governed and destroyed the Republic. This lack of *concordia* (harmony) clearly contradicts Cicero's claim to have created a 'harmony of all', but it nevertheless points to a basic agreement between Cicero and Sallust about what was needed.

In the end, Sallust's Roman reader might ask how he is to use history, especially this history, to prevent further decline, another act of civil war, Romans plundering Romans, or even the destruction of the Republic. The conservative platitudes of the preface do not help. By the time Sallust was writing *Catiline's Conspiracy*, he had himself lived through Caesar's civil war, Pompey's assassination and Caesar's, Cato's suicide and the slaughter of Cicero. There was no way that Sallust's preface could add up to an explanation of history, glory, and virtue. History was, like Rome herself, filled with 'craving for domination' and Catiline's conspiracy was a particularly twisted example, 'especially memorable because of the unprecedented nature of the crime and the danger it caused'.

### The Jugurthine War

During the Second Punic War (218–201 BC), the Numidian king Masinissa (Jugurtha's grandfather) allied himself with Rome, while Syphax, another Numidian king, was a Carthaginian ally. After the Roman victory Masinissa was given as his reward the entire territory of Numidia, a territory which now acted as a buffer to Carthaginian expansion on the east, west, and south. Masinissa died in 148, just after the beginning of the Third Punic War, and his son, Micipsa, succeeded him as ruler of Numidia. Upon Micipsa's death in 118, the territory was divided between his two sons, Adherbal and Hiempsal, and his adopted son, Jugurtha. Jugurtha, however, was ambitious and ruthless. First, he killed Hiempsal and forced Adherbal to flee. When Adherbal appealed to Rome, Rome responded without much urgency by sending Opimius (consul in 121) with a commission

of ten legates. The embassy divided Hiempsal's kingdom into two parts: the western part went to Jugurtha, the eastern to Hiempsal. The embassy effectively restored the Numidian territory to the division that had preceded the Second Punic War. Bribery was suspected, but foreign kings were expected to bring gifts to Rome, and Rome was reluctant to become involved in dynastic disputes. That changed when Jugurtha killed Roman and Italian traders at Cirta in 112.

After the conclusion of the Jugurthine War, Bocchus, the king of Mauretania, was given western Numidia, while Gauda, Jugurtha's half-brother, received the eastern half. The former had been persuaded by Sulla to betray Jugurtha; the latter had been persuaded by Marius to undermine Metellus' command. This arrangement again looked very much like the situation at the beginning of the war, when Opimius divided Numidia, giving the western kingdom to Jugurtha and the eastern kingdom to Adherbal. Clearly, Jugurtha's tactics were arrogant and irritating, but there was not much at stake. In other words, the outcome only stabilized Numidia, an old ally of Rome, in the same way it had been stabilized before. To be sure, a stable boundary between Numidia and Egypt was important, and the outcome restored Roman honour, but it did not increase Roman holdings or Roman wealth in any significant degree.

So why does Sallust write a history of this war? He himself gives two reasons: 'first because it was great and brutal, with victories on both sides, and second because that was the first time there was any opposition to the aristocracy's abuse of power' (*J* 5.1). The first reason seems to be a bit of self-advertising, especially when one thinks of other threats: the Cimbri and Teutones, Mithridates in the east, Sertorius in Spain, Spartacus in Italy, or even the Social Wars. But the war did drag on from, say, the massacre at Cirta (112 BC) until Jugurtha's capture (105). More important, however, is Sallust's political reason. In fact, he goes on to say, 'This struggle confused all things, human and divine, and proceeded to such a pitch of madness that political partisanship had its end in war and the devastation of Italy' (*J* 5.2).

But what does Sallust mean by saying that it was 'the first time there was any opposition to the aristocracy's abuse of power'? Sallust himself notes (*C* 33, *J* 31.6) that the plebs had seceded from the government: in 494 when they gained the tribunate, in 449 to protest

abuses of power, and in 287 when they gained the right to pass legislation at the plebeian assemblies. More recent were the struggles of the *optimates* against the Gracchi brothers, young aristocrats who found in the tribunate a way to circumvent senatorial power. In 133 Tiberius Gracchus had used the tribunate to begin a programme of land reform and to fund it with money bequeathed to the Roman people. His actions ignored the traditional senatorial control of fiscal and foreign affairs. When he sought a second term as tribune, the *optimates*, led by Scipio Nasica, killed him and about a hundred of his followers. They feared the power base he had developed and his actions both in opposing the Senate and in removing by plebiscite another tribune whom they had put up to oppose him.

In 122 the Senate, led by the consul Opimius, again used violence to meet the challenge of Gaius Gracchus, another tribune and Tiberius' brother. Sallust characterizes their struggle in terms of class interests: 'after they began to assert the freedom of the plebs and expose the crimes of the oligarchy, the aristocracy, which was guilty and therefore frightened, opposed their actions' (*J* 42.1). But it is clear that Sallust considers the Gracchi to be aristocrats: 'For as soon as men were found among the aristocracy who put true glory above unjust power, the state began to tremble and civil strife began to rise up like an earthquake' (*J* 41.1). Perhaps Sallust means that Marius was the first man without aristocratic credentials, the first 'new man', to succeed in opposing the Senate and then to ensure his prestige and power through six consulships.

Sallust's two reasons for writing about the Jugurthine War present two sides to the conflict: one, a contest that takes place in the strange country of Africa with its shifting sands, ambiguous boundaries, treacherous landscape, and Jugurtha; and another contest that takes place in Rome with its duplicities, power struggles, and treacherous allegiances. Rome and Roman politics can, of course, be read as a place with shifting sands, ambiguous boundaries, treacherous landscapes . . . and a considerable amount of guerrilla warfare. It is at least worth noting that, while the war did little to change the African political landscape, it did set in motion, at least according to Sallust, the internal power struggles that would change for ever the Roman political landscape.

*The Jugurthine War* is a story of corrupted virtue, an education in treachery on both sides. 'When Jugurtha first reached manhood,

he was strong in body, handsome to look at, but above all powerful in his intellectual talents. He did not allow himself to be corrupted by extravagance or idleness' (*J* 6.1). But he was corrupted, first by his own desire for honour and power. When insulted by Hiempsal, he began to plot murder. Then he was infected by the corruption of Rome, where partisan interests pre-empted the common good and everything was for sale (*J* 9, 20, 28, 31.25, 35). He learned to play the Roman game of bribery.

On the other side, the Roman contest is carried on by three major players. The first is Metellus, a representative of the old aristocracy at Rome, 'a great and wise man', according to Sallust. In the past fifteen years, seven members of his family had been consul. After the fall of Cirta (112), when he inherits the Senate's failed and lackadaisical war effort, he restores traditional discipline in the Roman army, even at the cost of delaying the war (*J* 44); he undoes the apathy and laziness he finds among Albinus' men (*J* 45). He learns to use Jugurtha's methods against him: promising peace but preparing war (*J* 48), using the treachery of friends and promises of wealth (*J* 61). And finally he marches to Thala (*J* 75–6) for a surprising and stunning victory. Metellus brings to the war both the strengths of ancestral discipline and, like Jugurtha, an ability to learn treachery from the enemy.

But Metellus would not brook the success of a 'new man' like Marius. And Marius is mentioned as soon as Metellus enters the narrative (*J* 46.7). In fact, throughout Metellus' successes Marius is usually there: behind the front line at the river Muthul (*J* 50), leading half the army to Zama (*J* 55.6); routing Jugurtha at Sicca (*J* 56.6). At Zama, Metellus in tears begs him to save the Roman army (*J* 58–60). Like Jugurtha, Marius had been a young man of great promise and ability: 'he was hard-working, honest, had great knowledge of the military; his spirit was prodigious in war but moderate at home; he was not a victim of lust or wealth, all he really longed for was glory' (*J* 63.2). Like Jugurtha, he served with Scipio Numantinus in Spain and won the praise and admiration of Scipio. He wanted to be consul, but, like Jugurtha, he was provoked to treachery by an insult. But he too had learned from the Numidians. He persuaded Gauda (another man insulted by Metellus) with promises of empire and security to begin a letter-writing campaign. Soon, Marius was elected consul and Metellus was replaced.

Metellus' participation in the war ends with a stalemate at Cirta (J 83.3), the very place where the war began (J 23, 26) and where it will end (J 104). In 107 he returns to Rome (J 88). Marius takes up the war and sets his sights on taking Capsa, that is, on equalling Metellus' achievement at Thala (J 89.6). He succeeds brilliantly and thereafter 'Every poorly planned action was treated as a sign of courage' (J 92.2). Soon he undertakes a risky attack on a well-protected mountain fortress. Luck brings success, but this is the very moment that L. Cornelius Sulla arrives as Marius' quaestor (J 95), 'Sulla Felix', Sulla the Lucky, the man who will drive Marius from Rome.

Sulla's role in *The Jugurthine War* is not nearly as large or as impressive as that of Marius or Metellus, but one cannot mention his name without recalling his presence in the history of the late Republic. Sallust's history of the beginnings of factionalism already extends beyond the boundaries of *The Jugurthine War*: 'As for what he did afterwards, I do not know whether one should feel more shame or disgust in talking of it' (J 95.4).

After the fall of Capsa and the Numidian stronghold, Marius sets off toward his winter quarters (J 100). On the way to Cirta, he defeats Jugurtha and Bocchus in two engagements. Bocchus decides to negotiate, and Marius sends Sulla. What follows is a competition in bribery: Jugurtha bribes Bocchus' friends (J 102.15); Sulla's generosity persuades Bocchus' legates: 'And so the barbarians came to believe that the Roman reputation for avarice was false and that Sulla was, given his munificence, a friend. Clearly, at that time many men did not understand the purpose of largesse' (J 103.5). The war ends with a charade of diplomacy: Aspar spying on Dabar for Jugurtha; Sulla pretending to talk openly with Dabar about Bocchus; Sulla having a secret meeting with Dabar; and Bocchus pretending to negotiate while making up his mind whom to betray. As luck would have it, Bocchus decides to betray Jugurtha, not Sulla. Marius returns to Rome for his second consulship. 'On 1 January the consul had a glorious triumph. At that time the hopes and resources of the state were in his hands' (J 114.3-4).

Sallust uses his preface, as he did in *Catiline's Conspiracy*, to give this story a moral context. He isolates general points about human nature and action which not only have a particular relevance to the story that he is going to tell, but which seem to be contradicted by that very

story. This contradiction is a problem in Sallust studies: it has led to a general refusal to take Sallust's prefaces seriously. Quintilian in the second century AD had already concluded that Sallust's prefaces have nothing to do with what follows. Modern scholars follow suit, and treat the moral philosophy on its own terms without relating Sallust's argument to his narratives. A few, however, see the relationship as pointed, polemical, and ultimately satirical.

In the preface to *The Jugurthine War* Sallust claims that the soul is the leader and ruler of life, that the soul has all the resources it needs for fame and success, and that it does not need the help of chance (*J* 1.1–5). Men make a mistake, Sallust says, when they blame misfortune for their own failings. But this austere faith in self-determination is defeated by the narrative. First, the conflict between Marius and Metellus came to a head when 'Marius was by chance offering sacrificial animals to gods at Utica. The soothsayer told him that . . . he should test his fortune as often as possible; all would turn out well' (*J* 63.1). Now, whether we focus on the encouragement which happened 'by chance' or the efforts Marius should make to 'test his fortune', it is hard to get chance and fortune out of the equation. Second, after taking Capsa, when Marius' risky attempt to capture a mountain stronghold near the river Muluccha only ends well because a Ligurian hunting for snails found a way up the mountain, Sallust says, 'In this way Marius' recklessness was amended by chance, and in place of blame he found glory' (*J* 94.7). Third, at the end of the monograph, while Sulla is waiting for Jugurtha, he does not know that Bocchus is trying to decide whether to betray Jugurtha to Sulla or Sulla to Jugurtha. When Bocchus finally decides to betray Jugurtha, it is not clear how this depends upon Sulla's 'virtuous ways' or how 'Sulla the Lucky' controls what happens rather than is controlled by it. 'Before his victory in the civil war he was the most fortunate of all men' (*J* 95.4). And finally, if we ask what gave Metellus the upper hand against Jugurtha, or Marius against Metellus, or Sulla against Jugurtha, we find in place of manly virtue treachery and largesse.

One may believe in the urgency of Sallust's moral agenda without believing that Sallust thinks the world actually works that way. The conflict between a conservative notion of virtue, action, and 'the memory of things done' (history) and the reality of fame and power (history) is a stubborn conflict within Sallust's work, as important as the explicit conflict between *optimates* and *populares*.

*Sallustian History*

Sallust says that it was not his intention, upon leaving public life, to indulge in hunting and agriculture, servile pastimes. His disdain is surprising: hunting had the recommendation of no less a man than Scipio Aemilianus, the general who brought the Third Punic War to an end by sacking and destroying Carthage, and agriculture was praised by both Cato the Censor and Cicero. But perhaps that was the point: Sallust was an outsider, a 'new man' from Amiternum, not a member of the Roman aristocracy. He did not want an easy aristocratic retirement. And, if we are to trust his words, he wanted to do something both glorious and useful. One can serve the Republic in action and in words, he said; one could win glory by writing about what others had accomplished (C 3.1–2).

*Subject and Purpose*

Sallust's personal reasons for turning to history may be easy enough to understand: he had failed in politics, which had become dangerous, and history, by virtue of its inherent difficulties, was another path to fame and glory (C 3.1–2). But we should not assume that history for him was an academic discipline that privileged disinterested objectivity. He is on occasion concerned about evidence, but, when he speaks of the difficulties of his profession, he says that deeds must be equalled by words, and praise and blame must be persuasive (C 3.2). This means that it is a mistake to consider Sallust's history as 'analytical' in any modern sense. For Roman writers and readers, history was a branch, not of knowledge, but of rhetoric. It was the memory of things done. And its purpose was ultimately praise and blame.

But the rhetorical nature of this enterprise should not lead one to think that it must be small-minded and political in the pejorative sense. Partisan and mean-spirited attacks are just what Sallust opposes. Our modern world does not endorse a form of history that is self-consciously rhetorical, and the rhetorical tracts that we are familiar with fall mainly into the category of political pamphlets. But Sallust's world was different, and his putative partisanship, whether it is construed as loyalty or enmity with individuals or with political alliances, cannot be proved. He praises an aristocrat like Metellus (J 45) and is explicit about the shame and disgust he feels for Sulla (J 95). He recounts the partisan roles of tribunes: Memmius

against Jugurtha and against the Senate's handling of the war (*J* 31) and Baebius, who protected Jugurtha and the Senate (*J* 34). He condemns the ruling oligarchy (*C* 39, 41; *J* 80), and has the aristocratic villain Catiline repeat the very terms of his own condemnation (*C* 20, 58) and both are recalled by the irresponsible and inflammatory rhetoric of tribunes (*J* 30.3, 31.19–20, 37.1).

If we try to account for both sides of this picture, there is no better place to begin than with Sallust's own words when he steps back to look at both sides: 'At that time there were many in our army, both "new men" and old aristocracy, who thought wealth preferable to virtue and honour; they were politically factious at home, powerful among the allies, more famous than honourable' (*J* 8.1). 'To put the truth in a few words, political agitators used honourable explanations: "defending the people's rights" or "securing the authority of the Senate", and they pretended to work for the public good while they struggled for their own power. There was no restraint or measure to their efforts. Each side used their victories brutally' (*C* 38.3–4).

It is in this context that one can and should appreciate Sallust's concern with the rhetorical problems of history. The first problem is to make the words equal to the events. This is not a technical matter of representation or of naming. Sallust does not mean that it is hard to find the right word for, say, manly virtue. He is concerned with the problem that words change things and deeds: they magnify or diminish; they give the confusing and the obscure an apparent stability, while the actions themselves are rich with contradictions and subterranean forces. When Sallust has the villain Catiline say that he knows the virtue of his men, is that just cynical rhetoric? It turns out to be true: his men do display both fidelity to the cause and military prowess. But how can a wicked cause display virtue? And if it does, should we call it virtue? And when Catiline's men die displaying the manly virtue that made Rome great, the problem is not just words. Sallust struggles to achieve some equivalence to and with the confusions, contradictions and intractable impasses of what he saw happening.

Then there was the problem of persuasion: 'many will think that what you castigate as offences are mentioned because of hatred and envy; but, when you speak of the great virtue and glory of good men, what each one thinks is easy for himself to do, he accepts with equanimity; what goes beyond that—he construes like fictions made



up for lies' (C 3.2). Sallust is concerned that his history could be dismissed for three reasons: as partisanship, as unconvincing, or as lies. This means that he wants his readers to feel the pressure of his praise and blame. He does not write history to explain away the events of the past, to put them in some apparently objective, unemotional, even-handed prose. He expects and provokes his readers to care about the processes by which the Roman state 'gradually changed from the most lovely and best and became the worst and most depraved' (C 5.9).

### *Sallust's Style*

Sallust's monographs have been called epoch-making, not for their historical accuracy or detail, but for their achievement as literature, creating a new style and manner, and putting Latin historiography in competition with Greek historiography. Sallust's style opposed both the balanced parallelisms and ornamented periods of Cicero and the clear, elegant prose of Caesar. Quintilian, who considered Sallust the greatest Roman historian, found his style to be brief, abrupt (or broken), and deceptive. He said that it was not well understood when read aloud; 'perhaps he deceives less the leisurely reader, but he flies past the listener, and does not wait for repetition'. Seneca comments on his truncated clauses, distorted word order and obscure brevity. In all of this, Sallust emulates the great Greek historian Thucydides: dense, brief, pressing. In fact, the elder Seneca says that brevity was Thucydides' special virtue, but that Sallust was superior in this and defeated the great historian in his own camp.<sup>15</sup>

Sallust's brevity depends upon inconcinnity (lack of parallelism), broken phrases, ellipses, and parataxis (unconnected lists without subordination). To describe the end of a battle he uses a paratactic sequence of infinitives (here translated as participles):

Finally, the enemy was now routed everywhere. Then a horrible sight on the open plains: pursuing, fleeing, falling, being captured; horses and men afflicted, and many, wounded but not able to flee or to stay still, now struggling up and immediately collapsing back; finally, everything, wherever you looked, strewn with weapons,

<sup>15</sup> Quint. *Inst.* 10.1.101, 4.2.45; Sen. *Ep.* 114.17; Quint. *Inst.* 10.1.73; Sen. *Controv.*

armour, corpses, and between them the ground drenched with blood.  
(*J* 101.12)

To describe Catiline's character a list of traits is given:

L. Catiline, born in a noble family, was of great strength of mind and body but of character wicked and perverse. . . . His body tolerant of hunger, cold, wakefulness beyond what anyone would believe. His mind daring, crafty, versatile, simulator and dissembler of whatever he wanted, greedy for others', lavish of his own, burning in his passions; sufficient eloquence, wisdom little. His vast mind was always desiring the immoderate, the incredible, the too lofty.  
(*C* 5.1–5)

(My translations here attempt to emphasize Sallust's verbal techniques and the strangeness of some of his effects; they are not the same as the translations offered in the text, which attempt to be more accessible.)

Sallust also aims at effects in diction that imitate Thucydides' austerity and majesty. Thucydides had adopted and manipulated the resources of a well-developed poetic idiom. To produce a similar result in Latin prose, Sallust turned to archaism. And his contemporaries noticed: Asinius Pollio (a military man and also a historian) described his style as 'mired with an excessive affection for archaic words'. Quintilian records an epigram that calls Sallust 'a great thief of the words of ancient Cato'. It is said that he had an assistant, Ateius Praetextatus Philologus, who collected archaic words and figures of speech for him.<sup>16</sup> In fact, he adopted the language as well as the tone of Cato the Censor, the great-grandfather of the younger Cato, the austere 'new man' who demanded that 'Carthage must be destroyed'. Ironic, of course, since for Sallust the destruction of Carthage was the beginning of Roman decline (*C* 10).

Archaism appears in Sallust's vocabulary and pronunciation, syntax, and sentence structure. He often prefers antique and majestic words (e.g. *mortales*, 'mortals', for *homines*, 'humans'; *opulentia*, 'opulence', for *opes*, 'wealth'). Some common words are used with a sense different from their usual meaning (*tempestas*, which can mean 'storm', is used for the more common *tempus*, meaning 'time'). He tends to use archaic endings for abstract nouns (something like

<sup>16</sup> Suet. *Gram.* 10, Quint. *Inst.* 8.3.29.

'beatitude' instead of 'blessedness'), and he expands the use of the substantive adjective in place of abstract nouns (as in 'the good' or 'the lofty'). He shows a preference for simple verbs like 'do', 'make', and 'have' in new phrases and he enjoys archaic-sounding alliterative phrases ('the glory of wealth and beauty is *fluid and fragile*', *fluxa atque fragilis*, C 1.4). In Latin, nouns are declined in cases with differing endings, some of which had changed their pronunciation over the years. Thus, at a time when most Romans would have said 'omnes', Sallust begins *Catiline's Conspiracy* with 'omneis' and when the term for 'greatest' was generally pronounced 'maximus', Sallust wrote 'maxumus'.

The effect of these archaisms is to produce a prose that is austere and unfamiliar. This effect is complemented by Sallust's invention of new terms (noted by Valerius Probus<sup>17</sup>) and his use of bold metaphors and similes (noted by Ateius Philologus)<sup>18</sup>: 'Such was the force of the disease [i.e., treasonous self-interest and fear] that like a plague had invaded the minds of many citizens' (C 36.5); 'the state began to tremble and civil strife began to rise up like an earthquake' (J 41.10). He also enjoyed changing the order of idiomatic phrases: 'land and sea' becomes 'seas and lands', 'consul designate' becomes 'the designated consuls'.

The moralistic and conservative austerity of Sallust's archaisms and the edginess of his broken phrases and ellipses, his innovations and metaphors are often intensified by a penchant for antithesis, or rather what sounds antithetical. He opposes body and soul in the preface to *Catiline's Conspiracy* as he tries to secure both a practical and a moral orientation toward action. The clarity of the antithesis is belied by the facts of history and even by the virtues of Catiline. He opposes the oligarchy (the aristocracy, the nobles, the few) to the plebs (the crowd), the *optimates* to the *populares*, as their impassioned oppositions dissolve the structure of republican governance. He opposes the strengths and virtues of two extraordinary men, Cato and Caesar, as they debate the future of the Catilinarians. He opposes the doing of deeds to the speaker and writer of deeds in terms of fame and service to the state.

Finally, we come to Sallust's sentence structure. For the most part he avoids the balanced and ornamented periods of Cicero. But even

<sup>17</sup> Gell. I.15.18.

<sup>18</sup> Suet. *Gram.* 10.

in antiquity his style was noted both for its structure and for the effort he put into it. He could produce the typical historical period, one that gathers the context of an event into subordinate clauses: 'Vulturcius at first encouraged the others and with his sword defended himself from the crowd; then, when he was deserted by his legates, having first made many demands to Pomptinus concerning his own safety, because Pomptinus knew him, finally, timid and uncertain of his life, just like an enemy, he handed himself over to the praetors' (C 45.4; the translation here reflects Sallust's periodicity but differs from the text). But Sallust could also, and more typically, write an awkward but powerful sentence: 'And in fact, to set out the truth in a few words, after that time whoever agitated the Republic with honourable slogans, one part as if they were defending the rights of the people, some in order that the Senate's authority be greatest, pretending the public good they struggled every man for his own power' (C 38.3; the translation in the text has been altered to reflect Sallust's style). Here, agitation and 'honourable slogans', pretence ('as if') and real purpose ('in order that'), inconcinnity ('one part . . . some . . .'), and ellipsis ('pretending the public good' for 'pretending to defend the public good') gather together in the simple but cynical conclusion, 'every man for his own power'.

### *Sallust's Achievement*

Sallust's life was troubled personally and politically. He did not succeed at politics or at warfare; he faced criminal charges, was removed from the Senate, and finally retired. He saw the madness of the late Republic, when civil strife rose like an earthquake, and his state, the loveliest and best, became the worst and most vicious. But out of those experiences he forged a broken, abrupt and deceptive style that was the perfect vehicle for his moral urgency, his bitter condemnation, and his satirical cynicism. Nietzsche praises, as many have, his 'compact' and 'severe' style, 'with as much substance as possible'. But there was more than style at work—or, rather, style is more than just style. The monumental history that Sallust alludes to when he refers to the waxen images of aristocratic ancestors is not the history Sallust writes. The totalizing certainty of the conservative morality he gives voice to in his prefaces is not supported by the history he writes. His history is nowhere a story of greatness; it is

nowhere inspiring or comforting. This might align Sallust with Foucault's satirical historian, the one who knows that all heroes have feet of clay, except that in Sallust it is not the hero who is exposed; it is the criminal who dies ferocious, mindful of his dignity, displaying all the Roman manliness of Rome's glorious past. Virtue, a word that is so impossible to translate, is the issue that will not go away. Nietzsche again: he shows 'a cold malice for all "beautiful words" and "beautiful sentiments".'

The anger and grief of Sallust's narrative, the cynicism and despair of his conceptual framework, and the power of his style had an immediate effect. One hears Sallust's voice in Horace's *Epodes*: 'Rome herself is collapsing under [with, from] her own strength.'<sup>19</sup> In this epode Syme finds allusions to Sallust's Sertorius (*H* 1.100 ff.) and the Allobroges (*C* 40). On the shield in Virgil's *Aeneid* one finds Catiline suffering and Cato giving laws. Sallust and Livy were proclaimed 'equals rather than similar'. But it was Sallust who influenced L. Arruntius (consul in 22) when he wrote his history of the First Punic War. Martial considered Sallust 'number one in Roman history', and Quintilian said he was the greater historian, although he should be kept from young boys because understanding him required maturity.<sup>20</sup> He remained influential throughout antiquity: admired by Augustine and Macrobius, quoted by grammarians and commentators. Later, in 'What I Learned from the Ancients' Nietzsche would say that Sallust awakened in him his own sense of style. But, perhaps most important was his influence on Rome's third great historian, Tacitus. He adopted (and some think improved) Sallust's manner and perspective. Thereafter, Sallust was imitated and studied throughout late antiquity and the Renaissance. His own writings, his 'memory of things done', finally became the written image that enkindled the flame of emulation in orators, philosophers, and politicians.

<sup>19</sup> Hor. *Epod.* 16.2, 39.

<sup>20</sup> Mart. 14.199.2; Quint. *Inst.* 2.5.19.

## NOTE ON THE TRANSLATION

There are probably about as many views of translation as there are translators, and for good reason. Not only does each language divide the world in different ways, but each author and translator uses the resources of his or her language, its sounds and rhythms as well as its vocabulary and syntax, in ways that cannot be duplicated in different sounds, vocabulary, rhythm, and syntax. Translation is one of the arts of compromise, and as such may seem to be now a form of betrayal, now an act of love.

Many of the features of Sallust's style outlined in the Introduction do not survive well in translation. This is partly because of our expectation that translations should be accessible and clear, and partly because similar techniques have different effects in different languages. If we find an English translation that is filled with awkward word order, the syntax is disturbed, but word order in Latin does not typically determine syntax. Sallust's awkward word order achieves different effects: the unexpected, the edgy.

Similarly, if Sallust creates a resonance between all his repetitions of *virtus* (meaning 'manliness', 'courage', 'virtue', 'determination', and 'ability') we simply cannot create the same effect in English by finding some single word that will always translate *virtus*. There are two reasons for this: first, no English word has this range of meanings, and to make some word do that work distorts English where the Latin is not distorted; second, we have and use different terms for these instances of Roman *virtus* and we cannot pretend that we do not. English simply divides up the world differently, and it has a vocabulary many times that of Latin. So to translate any Latin word with the same English word regardless of context is to emphasize Sallust's resonance, his repetitions, the way he struggles with a concept. But such a translation also sacrifices the very concept that Sallust struggles with. Of course one can say that translation at this level always sacrifices something. It is an art of compromise.

Here, the primary goal set for the translation has been to make Sallust's intensity, energy, and 'cold malice' accessible. When Sallust is jagged, I have tried to find or create a jaggedness in the English—not the same jaggedness, because that seems to me futile, if

not misleading, but something that feels out of joint. When Sallust is archaic, I have rarely been able to duplicate the effect. What would it mean for my version of Sallust's Cato to sound at times like the King James Bible, at times like the United States Constitution? Something would be gained, but something would be lost or distorted as well. When his word order is misleading, broken, and deceptive, I have generally hoped that the narrative and his moral logic (which can also be broken and deceptive) will be enough to alert the reader to the fact that something is wrong. It has always been a judgement call and I have especially tried not to allow any mannerism or norm of translation to pre-empt the overall effect of a passage. A couple of areas in which those judgement calls are particularly important are discussed below.

**Vocabulary.** Latin vocabulary is limited: smaller than Greek, much smaller than English. This means that Latin words not only divide the world differently from English words, but they often have more 'meanings' than their English counterparts and overlap with other terms in different ways. A common example would be the word mentioned above, *virtus*, which is the origin of the English word 'virtue' and derived from the Latin term *vir*, 'man' (as in 'virility'). The term refers to those qualities which are 'manly': courage and bravery, strength and persistence, excellence or ability in general; by extension, the term also refers to moral virtue, even the kind of virtue a Roman would find in a wife or a woman. We find it in Sallust's preface to *Catiline's Conspiracy*, where he speaks of 'the mind's *virtus*' as superior to 'the body's strength', and again in Catiline's speeches where he says that he knows his men's *virtus* and that they should rather die through *virtus* than live in disgrace. In the first instance, 'mental excellence' seems adequate, although it obscures the need for moral excellence. But that is precisely the problem, for it is just this moral component that is lacking throughout *Catiline's Conspiracy*, perhaps most poignantly at the end, when Catiline's army dies fighting with 'mental toughness' and the veterans fight 'remembering their long-established virtue'. On the other hand, 'mental virtue' sounds rather medieval and is not particularly clear. Similarly, when Catiline says that his men's *virtus* encourages him (C 58.21), he means primarily 'courage' and tenacity. Better to die through courage than live in disgrace. But this precision obscures the further point that Catiline

is using the language of moral virtue in a vicious cause. Throughout Catiline's speech I have translated *virtus* as 'manly virtues' because I thought the reference to 'virtue' was important, but neither this translation nor a more precise translation, like 'courage', allows Catiline's words to echo with Sallust's moral concerns in the preface. As should be clear, I do not think that there is a wholly adequate solution to these problems. In the main, I have tried to reflect the meaning in context without losing the larger meaning that comes from Sallust's repetitive style.

Another example would be *ambitio*, the word from which we derive 'ambition'. The word literally means 'going about', for example, going about the Forum canvassing for votes, and so it has a common and specific meaning: to solicit or canvass for votes. Since one needs to be pleasing and flattering when soliciting votes, the term comes to mean 'flattery', 'ingratiation'. Sallust uses the term or its cognates seventeen times, and, given the explicitly political concerns of his histories, these echoes should be important. But these repetitions cannot be rendered by the same word into English: Sallust says that his youth was corrupted by *ambitio* (C 3.4); that *ambitio* compels men to be liars (C 10.5); when things began to go downhill, it was *ambitio* rather than 'avarice' that worked men's souls, and *ambitio* was a vice closer to a *virtus* (C 11.1); that Metellus held a moderate course between *ambitio* and savagery (J 45.1); and that, when Marius appealed to his soldiers' sense of shame rather than punish them, many said this was done through *ambitio* (J 100.5). I have not been able to find any term in English that captures the self-serving, determined, fawning, and potentially duplicitous nature of Latin *ambitio* and at the same time can simply mean 'to canvass for votes'.

In fact, many of the terms that Sallust uses to refer to the powerful forces at work in the Roman Republic are words that have wide application. The Latin term *ingenium* may refer to 'innate qualities', 'character', 'intelligence', 'mind', 'talent', or 'genius'. *Anima* may be 'life principle' or 'soul' and *animus* may be 'soul', or 'self', or 'mind'. A crime is a *facinus*, but the word can also mean simply a 'deed', and, when Sallust has Catiline encourage his men to a 'very great and most beautiful *facinus*' (C 20.3), the irony is obvious but untranslatable. The interplay of these words and concepts is rich and is further enhanced by the fact that political rhetoric, especially when scrutinized later as



‘a period of crisis and decline’, perverts or co-opts the usual meaning of terms (see *C* 52.11 and note). Thus, the vicious Catiline speaks of *virtus* and ‘good faith’, of liberty and fatherland; and Cato turns ‘compassion’ into a crime, ‘liberality’ into murder, and ‘generosity’ into bribery. Much of this eludes any translator.

**Sentence structure.** Sallust’s brevity and speed were mentioned earlier. This is often achieved by paratactic lists, a series of infinitives, a set of parallel phrases or clauses. Whenever possible, I have tried to keep the paratactic nature of these lists, modifying them as necessary; for instance, English prefers participles for listing actions, while Latin uses the infinitive. But Latin has other resources for moving ideas along with great speed and point, resources that are possible but often awkward in English.

These resources include participles which can stand for clauses, appositions which can make identifying statements within a sentence, word order which can bring one part of a modification or even a single word into the kind of prominence that would require an entire sentence in English. Since Latin word order does not mark syntactic relationships, it is free to mark many other aspects of communication: predication, emphasis, ironic juxtaposition, surprise. The result of these resources is that the complex and periodic sentence structure that all Romans used cannot be reproduced in English without writing some sort of ‘translationese’. And to produce translationese would be a misrepresentation of Sallust’s powerful native idiom.

Ultimately, a translation cannot substitute for the original. The difficulties and pleasures of Sallust’s style can only be fully enjoyed (if that is the right word) by a direct confrontation (if that is the right word) with the Latin text. There, readers will find much more repetition than here, especially of terms that emphasize moral qualities, terms that are frequently glossed as ‘virtue’, ‘ambition’, ‘crime’, ‘greed’, ‘pride’, ‘talent’, ‘intellect’, ‘character’. They will also find an idiom that is restless, broken, filled with ellipsis and innovation at the same time as it indulges in archaism and subordination. If something of Sallust’s urgency and austerity, his moral intensity, and his satiric malice comes through the English of this translation, and if that encourages a few to grapple with the original, then my own labour will have been rewarded.

*The Text*

The Latin text is that established by L. D. Reynolds, Oxford Classical Texts (Oxford, 1991). The few readings that deviate from Reynolds are listed below. The paragraph numbers in the margins are also those of the OCT.

	<i>This translation</i>	<i>Reynolds</i>
	<i>Catiline's Conspiracy:</i>	
19.2	putabant: etiam tum	putabant et iam tum
22.2	idque eo fecisse quo	[atque eo dicitare fecisse] quo
25.2	Graecis et Latinis	Graecis [et] Latinis
43.1	agrum Aefulanum	agrum #faesulanum#
53.5	magnitudine sua effeta parente	magnitudine sui #effeta parentum#
59.3	quemque [armatum]	quemque armatum
	<i>The Jugurthine War:</i>	
15.5	polluta licentia	#polluta# licentia
113.3	vultu colore motu corporis	vultu [corporis] <et oculis>
	<i>The Histories:</i>	
1. 11	[. . .].	<causaque . . . non amor iustitiae, sed stante Carthagine metus pacis infidae fuit>
1.77.17	intellegat	intellegat
2.47	plebes abalienata fuerat	#plevis avalia funera#
3.48.20	iniuria	iniuriae
4.69.17	pesti	peste

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## A CHRONOLOGY OF THE LATE REPUBLIC

All dates are BC.

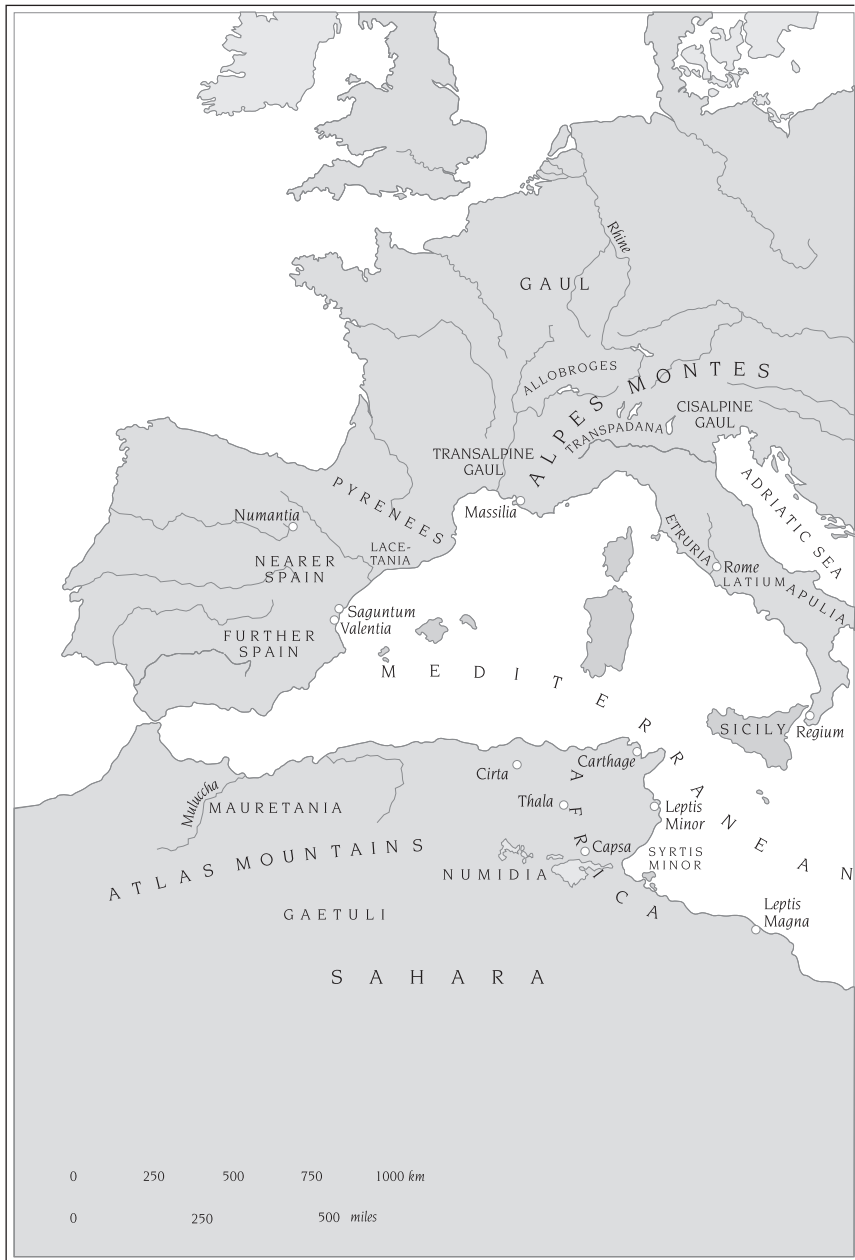
- 157 Birth of C. Marius.
- 146 End of Third Punic War; destruction of Carthage.
- 138 Birth of L. Cornelius Sulla.
- 133 T. Gracchus tribune of the plebs; death of T. Gracchus; destruction of Numantia by Scipio; Jugurtha and Marius with Scipio in Spain.
- 123 C. Gracchus tribune of the plebs (to 122).
- 122 Senate's 'final decree'; death of C. Gracchus.
- 120 Birth of M. Aemilius Lepidus.
- 115 Birth of M. Licinius Crassus.
- 112 Jugurtha takes Cirta.
- 111 L. Calpurnius Bestia consul. Jugurthine War begins.
- 109 Q. Caecilius Metellus consul.
- 108 Birth of L. Sergius Catilina (Catiline).
- 107 Marius consul for the first time; Sulla quaestor.
- 106 Birth of Cn. Pompeius (Pompey); birth of M. Tullius Cicero.
- 105 P. Rutilius Rufus consul; Jugurthine War ends; battle of Arausio (against the Cimbri).
- 104 Marius consul for the second time; his triumph brings Jugurtha to Rome; death of Jugurtha.
- 103 Marius consul for the third time; L. Saturninus tribune of the plebs.
- 102 Marius consul for the fourth time.
- 101 Marius consul for the fifth time; defeat of the Cimbri.
- 100 Marius consul for the sixth time; birth of C. Julius Caesar; L. Saturninus tribune of the plebs; Senate's 'final decree'; death of Saturninus.
- 97 Sulla praetor.
- 95 Birth of M. Porcius Cato.
- 93 Birth of P. Clodius Pulcher.
- 91 Social Wars (to 87).
- 88 Sulla consul for the first time.
- 88 First Mithridatic War (to 86).

- 87 Cinna consul for the first time.
- 86 Marius consul for the seventh time; death of Marius; L. Cornelius Cinna consul for the second time; birth of C. Sallustius Crispus (Sallust).
- 85 Cinna consul for the third time.
- 84 Cinna consul for the fourth time; death of Cinna.
- 83 Second Mithridatic War (to 81).
- 82 Sulla dictator (to 81).
- 81 War with Sertorius (to 72).
- 80 Sulla consul for the second time.
- 78 M. Aemilius Lepidus and Q. Lutatius Catulus consuls; death of Sulla.
- 77 Lepidus revolt; Senate's 'final decree'; death of Lepidus.
- 77 Pompey in Spain (to 71).
- 74 Third Mithridatic War (to 65).
- 70 Pompey consul for the first time; Crassus consul for the first time.
- 67 Pompey's extraordinary command against pirates.
- 66 'First Catilinarian conspiracy'.
- 66 Pompey in east (to 62).
- 63 Cicero consul; birth of C. Julius Caesar Octavianus (the future emperor Augustus); Catiline's conspiracy; Senate's 'final decree'.
- 62 Death of Catiline.
- 60 First triumvirate.
- 59 Caesar consul for the first time.
- 58 Clodius tribune of the plebs; Cicero in exile (to 57).
- 56 Triumvirate renewed at Luca; Caesar's proconsular command extended.
- 55 Pompey consul for the second time; Crassus consul for the second time.
- 53 Death of Crassus.
- 52 Pompey consul for the third time; trial of Milo; death of Clodius; Sallust tribune of the plebs.
- 50 Sallust expelled from the Senate.
- 49 Caesar crosses the Rubicon: civil war begins; Senate's 'final decree'.
- 48 Caesar consul for the second time; battle of Pharsalus; death of Pompey; Caesar dictator.

- 46 Caesar consul for the third time; death of Cato; Sallust praetor, then governor of Africa.
- 45 Caesar consul for the fourth time; Sallust charged with extortion.
- 44 Caesar consul for the fifth time, dictator *perpetuus*; death of Caesar.
- 43 Second triumvirate (Antony, Lepidus, Octavian); death of Cicero.
- 42 Battle of Philippi; Sallust probably begins his career as a historian.
- 36 Death of Sallust.



# MAPS

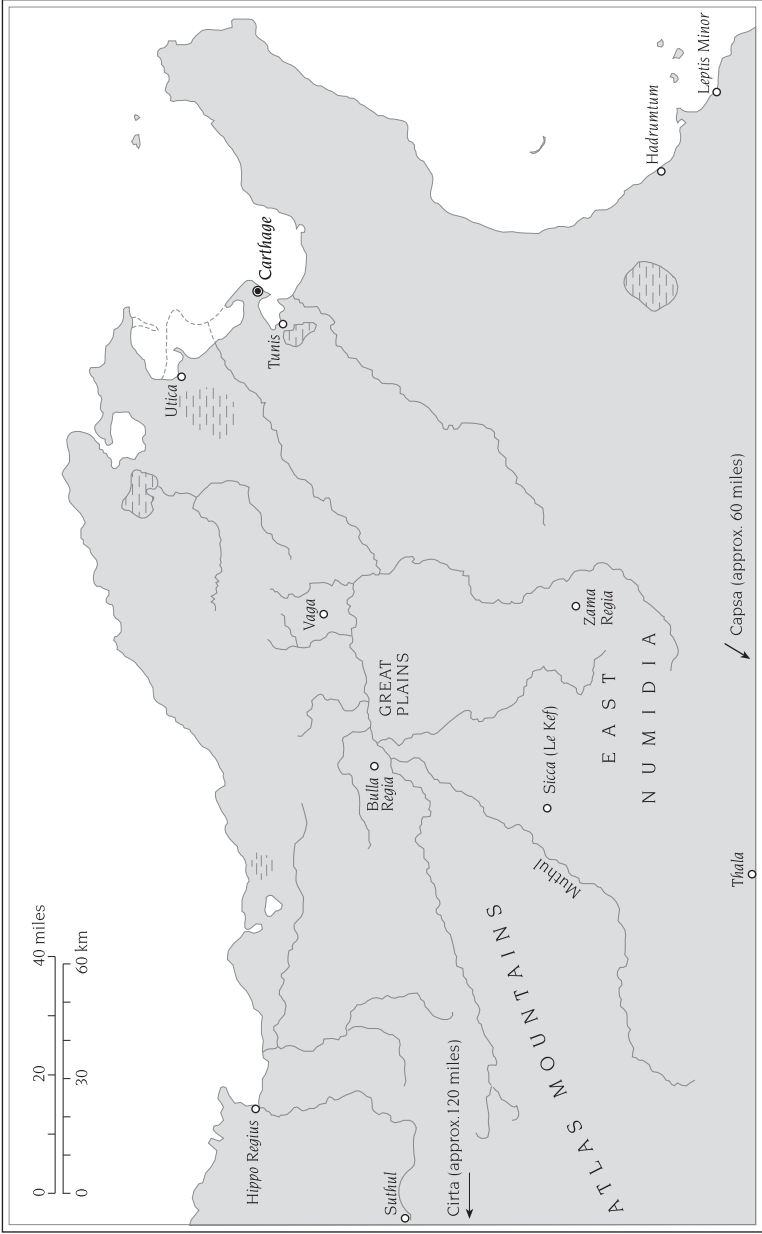


MAP 1. The Mediterranean world in the first century.





MAP 2. Italy at the time of Catiline's conspiracy.



MAP 3. Africa at the time of the Jugurthine War.



CATILINE'S CONSPIRACY,  
THE JUGURTHINE WAR,  
HISTORIES





# CATILINE'S CONSPIRACY

## INTRODUCTION

### *Summary and Outline*

The structure of *Catiline's Conspiracy* is anything but clear. Scholars even disagree about where the preface ends. Sallust begins with a philosophical brief on the purpose of human life (to win fame and glory) as the natural functioning of history, virtue and success (1–2). He then adds history itself as a field in which one may win glory (3), an unusual choice for a Roman. This leads to a defence of his own life and present choice of career (3–4). The preface might end here and the body begin with his portrait of Catiline ('I will, therefore, give an account of Catiline's conspiracy . . .', 4.3–5.8), except that the circumstances of Catiline's success requires a digression on Rome's growth and subsequent moral decline (5.8–13.5). Some scholars take this to be the end of the preface, but Sallust complicates neat divisions by returning to a general portrait of Catiline and his associates (14–16). At ch. 17 we seem to begin the narrative proper: 'Therefore, about 1 June . . .', but this is interrupted for another background narrative, the so-called 'first Catilinarian conspiracy' (18–19). Sallust then returns to the June meeting and Catiline's speech to his followers (20). By the time this speech is over we are well into Sallust's narrative, but one cannot say exactly where that narrative began. In fact, the concerns of Catiline's speech continue after he concludes with his further promises of consular power, booty, and armies (21). This scene ends with rumours that the followers drank blood together (22). The story of Curius' over-confidence and Fulvia's revelations (23) follow, all of which leads to the election of Cicero and Antonius: 'Therefore, when the elections were held, M. Tullius and C. Antonius were declared consuls' (24.1).

The meeting in June 64 and Catiline's speech create some dissonances that are worth noting. First, the men Catiline gathers together are not insignificant malcontents. They represent all orders of Roman society. This catalogue of villains at the beginning of Sallust's narrative is itself an emblem of the depth and breadth of

the problems in Rome that Catiline both represents and preys upon. Second, Catiline's language recycles Sallust's concerns in the preface with virtue, body and soul, talent, money, power, and other moral–political qualities. The speech seems to challenge the reader to separate the true critique of Roman factionalism from the slogans of demagoguery. But the separation will not be simple: sometimes villains really have suffered wrongs and sometimes real wrongs lead to demagoguery. Finally, Catiline's strategy is simultaneously a military strategy and a political strategy. This may either reflect Sallust's own recognition of the contradictory nature of Catiline's project at this point, or it is an element of Catiline's unprecedented danger and crime: he was not using military power to claim the consulship as the reward of his success or aiming at the consulship for the opportunities of a proconsular command. He was seeking the consulship precisely for the purpose of having an army to enforce his political agenda.

The election of Cicero and Antonius causes Catiline to renew his efforts, both as a revolutionary and as a candidate (24). Sallust begins anew describing Catiline's followers; he adds a portrait of Sempronia (25) and describes the traps Catiline tried to lay for Cicero during Cicero's consulship in 63 (26). Cicero, informed of Catiline's plans, again by Fulvia, asked that the election be postponed in order to investigate rumours of violence. The Senate was convened. Catiline refused to cooperate and uttered some veiled threats. The elections were held, probably within a few days. Cicero appeared in the Campus Martius with a bodyguard and wearing a breastplate. He claimed later that Catiline and his followers were planning to assassinate him. If so, his measures prevented them from acting. In any event, his display seems to have ensured Catiline's defeat.

The conspiracy finally turns to outright violence after the elections of 63. Catiline sends Manlius to Etruria to enlist an army (27.1). Sallust relates (out of order; see below) a secret meeting at the house of Laeca, after which two *equites* go to Cicero's house and attempt to kill him (28). News that Manlius was gathering an army in Etruria (ch. 29), which caused the Senate to issue its 'final decree' on 21 October), was followed by news of an uprising in Etruria on 27 October (30), which caused omens and panic at Rome. Catiline was then accused of violence (31, probably on 1 or 2 November), after which, according

to Sallust, Catiline appeared in the Senate on 8 November, where he was attacked by Cicero in the *First Catilinarian*. According to Sallust, Catiline left the Senate threatening a general demolition (31.9). (According to Cicero, however, this particular remark was made, not to Cicero, but to Cato, in July 63 when Cato threatened him with prosecution.) The narrative moves from a secret meeting to rumours to uprisings to fear and panic ending with Catiline storming out of the Senate house on his way to Manlius' camp.

Sallust then reports two letters, both of which complicate any clear notion of the conspiracy. First, C. Manlius writes to Marcius Rex (consul in 68): we are not seeking power or money, he says; we want freedom from debt and from the abuses of the praetor (33). The grievances of this letter are in many ways justified, and are even mentioned elsewhere by Cicero himself. Its inclusion serves to blur the boundaries between a merely vicious and self-serving desire for power and money, and the legitimate grievances that allowed such revolutionary actions to thrive. Next, Catiline writes to Catulus (consul in 78), the ex-consul who had helped in his defence against adultery charges (35). Here, Catiline complains about injuries and insults, the state of his 'dignity' (*dignitas*), his customary avowal of the cause of the wretched, and his own financial solvency. Without what we know of the conspiracy, he seems a sympathetic figure.

After another digression, on the state of Roman society (36–9), Sallust focuses on the negotiations with the Allobroges (39–49). They were a Celtic tribe that had come to Rome to seek debt relief from the Senate. Their appearance not only brings about the exposure of many conspirators at Rome, but it also demonstrates the extent to which real problems of power and money lay behind Catiline's conspiracy. In the first place, this mismanagement of external affairs made possible further allies for Catiline's revolutionary project. Not only that, but when the Allobroges decided to expose the conspirators to the Senate, they still did not get any relief for their grievances. They revolted in 62. Second, when the Senate met in the Temple of Harmony (*Concordia*) to examine the captured conspirators, a certain Tarquinius reported that Crassus was involved. Sallust does not say whether the accusation was true or not. Fear and money are more important than the truth, and the Senate decides instead to investigate why Tarquinius 'lied'. The narrative devolves into

rumours and suspicions, first about the role of Crassus, then about Cicero's purpose, and finally about the patriotism of Caesar. This passage ends with some Roman *equites* drawing their swords on Caesar as he leaves the Temple of Harmony.

In the next section, the Senate debates the fate of the conspirators. Here, in place of the harmony (*concordia*) that made Rome great, we find two irreconcilable responses to the problem. Caesar presents a moderate view: passion can mislead, he says, and history is filled with examples that warn us of the dangers of setting bad precedents. He echoes and recalls the speeches of Cato's great-grandfather. Then Cato speaks: we cannot wait for these criminals to act; that will be the death of us. Besides, Rome was made great by examples of severe discipline; fathers even killed their own sons for disobedience. Among other things, these two men are arguing about how one uses history: do we learn from disasters like Sulla or from the discipline of Torquatus? About how we take care of the future: do we avoid bad precedents or do we protect our present condition? About what is ultimately at stake: the virtue of our own actions or the dangerous intentions of others' actions? This section ends with the famous comparison of Caesar and Cato. Both exhibit *virtus* but in different ways. It is important to note that these men do not have two halves of a complete virtue, as if we would arrive at harmony by putting together their moral characteristics. Their characteristics, like the men themselves, are already at war. What is lacking is some greater principle (harmony, Republic, common good) that would direct and orient their strengths. And this is not just an ideological war. Being out to destroy each other these two men eventually did destroy the Republic.

The final section (55–61), after a brief account of the execution of the conspirators in Rome (55), turns to the military conflict with Catiline's army. As far from the end of the monograph as Catiline's first speech is from the beginning, we hear Catiline speak for the last time. From this moment to the end Sallust not only seems to emphasize the extraordinary virtues that Catiline placed at the service of his criminal scheme, the Roman toughness and daring of his army, and Catiline's memory of his own dignity, but he draws a less than flattering picture of the Roman general who was sent to meet Catiline. Antonius (consul in 63) had a sore foot, it turns out.

Perhaps it was gout: we know he was a heavy drinker. So he passes command to his legate, Petreius. Petreius, of course, wins, but the model commander's speech is given to Catiline as is the final description of Roman valour.

### *Historical Veracity*

Sallust reports that before the conspiracy of 63 there was 'an earlier conspiracy' in 66–65 (18–19). Cicero refers to this conspiracy in his speech as a candidate in 64 and his First Speech against Catiline. But the facts do not add up and modern historians remain sceptical. For instance, if Catiline conspired to kill the incoming consuls in 65, why would Torquatus (an alleged victim) defend Catiline at his extortion trial? Why would Cicero consider defending Catiline, and then in 64 consider an alliance with Catiline against another candidate, Antonius? And what new information made clear the extent of Catiline's guilt just before the elections in 64? Furthermore, Catiline wanted to stand for the consulship in 66; he did stand for the consulship in 64 and in 63. It seems unreasonable and incoherent to believe that he was seeking to overthrow the government at the same time he was seeking electoral office, and that he continued to do this for two or three years.

If we conclude, as most historians do, that Catiline decided to take violent action after his defeat at the elections during the summer of 63, then the meeting in June 64 (17–22) is also either a fiction or an event displaced from 63.

There is one other distortion in Sallust's chronology: Sallust reports the meeting of the conspirators on 6/7 November at the house of M. Laeca (27.2) and the failed assassination attempt against Cicero on 7 November (28.1–3). He follows this with Manlius' activity in Etruria, which refers to the period from mid-July to mid-October (28.4). These actions resulted in the Senate's 'final decree' on 21 October (29.2). Manlius' revolt (30.1) began on 27 October; it was reported in Rome on 1 November (30). In Sallust, the terror and confusion in Rome caused by Manlius' revolt leads to Cicero's *First Catilinarian* (31.6), when in fact it was the assassination attempt that preceded the speech. There seems to be no agenda in this chronological displacement.

## CHRONOLOGY OF THE CONSPIRACY

*Italics* mark events reported by Sallust but generally disputed by modern scholarship.

- 68 L. Sergius Catilina praetor.
- 67 Catiline governor of Africa.
- 66 C. Manlius tribune of the plebs; M. Tullius Cicero praetor. Catiline returns from Africa; not allowed to stand for consulship. L. Vargunteius convicted of electoral fraud.
- 66 Summer: election of Sulla and Autronius as consuls. Autumn: conviction of Sulla and Autronius for bribery; Autronius attempts to disrupt the court; election of Cotta and Torquatus. 29 December: trial of Manlius before the praetor Cicero; mob demonstrations, postponement.
- 65 1 January: '*first conspiracy*': *plot to kill the consuls: Catiline, Sulla, Autronius, Piso, Vargunteius*. Manlius' trial continued; gangs disrupt trial; Catiline and Piso implicated. Piso sent to Spain. Catiline tried for extortion; the consul Torquatus speaks in his defence.
- 64 Piso killed by Spaniards.
- 64 June: *Catiline's meeting with conspirators, and speech*. Electoral candidates (according to Asconius): Catiline, Antonius, Cicero, Longinus, Sulpicius, Cornificius, and Licinius; Antonius and Cicero win. Catiline tried for violence during the 'Domination of Sulla'.
- 63 Cicero and Antonius consuls. Summer: Catiline's threats; election postponed. July: elections held; Catiline defeated. Manlius gathers forces in Etruria. 20 October: Crassus and others pass letters to Cicero warning of attacks. 21 October: Senate's 'final decree'. 27 October: Manlius begins revolt in Etruria. 28 October: planned massacre in Rome. P. Sestius, quaestor, sent to secure Capua. 1 November: attempt to seize Praeneste foiled; military commanders dispatched. Catiline indicted for violence. 6/7 November: meeting at house of Laeca. 8 November: Cicero's *First Catilinarian Speech*. 8/9 November: Catiline leaves Rome. 9 November: Cicero's *Second Catilinarian Speech*. Mid-November: Catiline and Manlius declared public enemies. Lentulus recruits the Allobroges; disturbances put down in Gaul, Picenum, and Apulia. Late November: Catiline leaves camp in Faesuli. 2/3 December: ambush at Mulvian Bridge: arrest of the Allobroges and Volturcius. 3 December: Senate meeting in the Temple of Concord; Cicero's *Third Catilinarian Speech*. 4 December: debate about conspirators; Cicero's *Fourth Catilinarian Speech*; five

- conspirators executed. 10 December: Bestia's planned attack on Cicero as signal for attacks in Rome. 15 December: news reaches Catiline; desertions. 25 December: Catiline prevented from leaving Etruria. 29 December: tribunes Bestia and Nepos prevent Cicero from addressing the Roman people.
- 62 3 January: Nepos attempts to recall Pompey to put down Catiline; Senate's 'final decree'. Early January: Catiline and his army destroyed near Pistoria. Mid-January: Catiline's head brought to Rome. Spring: Q. Cicero and M. Bibulus, praetors, put down last uprisings in central and southern Italy.

## CATILINE'S CONSPIRACY

1 I. All human beings who want to be superior to the other animals  
ought to struggle with every resource not to be like cattle passing  
2 and obey their stomachs, but all our strength is situated in our mind  
as well as our body: we use the mind more for control, the body for  
servitude; the one we have in common with the gods, the other with  
3 the beasts. And so I think it more upright to seek glory with our inner  
resources than with our physical strength and, since life is itself brief,  
4 to make the memory of our lives as long as possible. I say this because  
the glory of wealth and physical beauty is fluid and fragile; but virtue  
is held brilliant and eternal.\*

5 For a long time, however, there was a dispute among mortals as to  
whether physical force or mental excellence was most responsible for  
6 success in military affairs. The reason: you require both a plan before  
7 you begin and timely action when you have made a plan. Thus, each  
element, insufficient in itself, needs the help of the other. [2.] And so  
1 it was that at the beginning kings—this being the first name for polit-  
ical command on earth—pursued their goals in different ways, some  
using their intellect, others using physical resources. Besides, at that  
time humans passed their lives without being covetous; each person was  
2 happy enough with what he had. But afterwards, when Cyrus\* in Asia,  
and the Lacedaemonians and Athenians\* in Greece began to subjugate  
cities and nations, when craving for domination began to be considered  
a justification for war, and the greatest glory was held to consist in the  
greatest military command, then, finally, it was discovered through  
danger and trouble that in war the intellect had the most potent power.

3 But if the mental excellence of kings and commanders were valued  
as much in peacetime as it is in war, there would be more justice  
and stability in human affairs; you would not see everything either  
4 moving helter-skelter nor changing and confused. For, political com-  
mand is easily retained by the same means that created it in the first  
5 place. But when sloth supplants hard work, and in place of restraint  
and equity lust and pride march in, then fortune changes along with  
6 character. Consequently, command is always being transferred to the  
best individuals from the less good.



All that men accomplish in farming, sailing, and building is 7  
obedient to the law of virtue.\* But many mortals are devoted to their 8  
bellies and to sleep; without learning and without culture they pass  
through life like tourists. Their bodies are for pleasure, their soul\*  
a burden, and I say that is contrary to nature. I consider their life  
and their death equally meaningless, since no one has anything to say 9  
about either. But what is more, that man alone seems to me to live  
and enjoy the breath of life\* who is focused on some undertaking and  
seeks fame for an illustrious deed or for good character.

Still, there is a great diversity in the world, and nature shows  
different people different paths. [3.] It is a beautiful thing to serve 1  
the Republic with good deeds; but to speak well\* is also not without  
importance. One can achieve brilliance either in peacetime or in war.  
And many win the praise of others, both those who act and those who 2  
write up their actions. As for me, although the glory that comes to  
the writer is not equal to the glory that comes to the author of deeds,  
still it seems especially difficult to write history: First of all, deeds  
must find an equivalence in words.\* Then, there are readers: many  
will think that what you castigate as offences are mentioned because  
of hatred and envy; but, when you speak of the great virtue and  
glory of good men, what each one thinks is easy for himself to do,  
he accepts with equanimity; what goes beyond that he construes like  
fictions made up for lies.

But in my own case, as a young man I was at first attracted like many 3  
others to politics, and in politics I was thwarted by many obstacles.  
In place of shame, self-restraint, and virtue, arrogance thrived and  
graft and greed. My mind, unaccustomed to wicked ways, rejected 4  
these things. But I was young and did not know how to resist. Caught 5  
in the midst of such corruption, I too was seized and corrupted by  
ambition. I rejected the wicked character of others, but nevertheless  
was troubled by the same craving for honour, and I fell victim to the  
same reputation and invidious attacks as the others.

4. Consequently, when my mind found peace after a multitude of 1  
miseries and dangers,\* I decided to pass what remained of my life far  
from the public world. But, it was not my plan to waste the benefits 2  
of leisure in idleness and indolence, nor to pass my time engaged in  
the slavish occupations\* of farming or hunting. Rather, I decided to  
return to the very study from which my failed ambition had diverted  
me at the beginning: to write out the history of the Roman people,

selecting the parts that seemed worthy of memory. I was encouraged all the more to do this because my mind was free from political hopes, fears, and partisanship. I will, therefore, give an account of Catiline's conspiracy in a few words and as accurately as I can. I consider this event especially memorable because of the unprecedented nature of the crime and the danger it caused. But, first, before I begin my narrative, a few things must be said about that man's character.

5. L. Catiline was born in an aristocratic family.\* He was a man of great strength, both mental and physical, but his nature was wicked and perverse. From early adulthood on, he took pleasure in civil wars, murders, plunder, and political discord, and this was where he exercised his youth. His body could endure hunger, cold, sleep-deprivation beyond what one would believe; his mind was arrogant, clever, unstable. He could pretend or dissemble whatever he liked. He coveted others' property but was profligate with his own; he burned with passionate desires. He had some eloquence, but little wisdom. His mind was vast, always longing for the extravagant, the unbelievable, the things beyond his reach. After the 'Domination of Sulla'\* he was overcome by an extraordinarily powerful desire to seize control of the state. He did not care at all about how he attained his goal as long as he got a 'realm'\* for himself. Daily he grew more agitated. His family's poverty and his own guilty conscience made his spirit violent, and both of these problems were exacerbated by the practices I have mentioned above. He was further encouraged by the corrupt moral character of the state, which was depraved because of two destructive and internally contradictory evils, extravagance and greed.

Since there has been an occasion to call to mind the moral character of the state, my subject seems of itself to suggest that I should go further back in time and briefly discuss the institutions of our ancestors, both at home and in the military, and to set forth how they governed the Republic, how great a state they left us, and how it gradually changed from the most lovely and best and became the worst and most depraved.

6. The city of Rome, as I understand it,\* was founded and controlled at first by Trojans. They had no fixed home and were wandering about with Aeneas as their leader. They founded the city together with the Aborigines,\* a wild race of men, without law, without political institutions, free and unrestrained. These peoples, though they

were of different races, dissimilar languages, living each in a different way, after they came together within a single city's walls, it is incredible to relate how easily they coalesced: in so short a time did a disparate and wandering crowd because of internal harmony become a state.\* But after their community increased in citizens, morality, 3 and territory and began to seem quite wealthy and quite powerful, envy was born from their prosperity, as is usually the case among mortals. Therefore, neighbouring kings and peoples\* began to test 4 them in war. Of their friends, only a few came to their aid, the rest were shaken by fear and avoided danger. But the Romans kept their 5 focus at home and in the field: they hurried about, made preparations, urged each other on, went to meet the enemy, and with their weapons protected their freedom, their fatherland, and their parents. Afterwards, when courageous virtue had driven off danger, they brought aid to their allies and friends; they established alliances more by conferring kindnesses than by receiving them. Their political power 6 was based on law; its name was monarchy. Men were chosen to give advice to the state, men whose bodies were weak with age, but whose minds were strong in wisdom. These men were called 'Fathers',\* either because of their age or from the similarity of their care. At 7 first this regal power served to preserve freedom and to increase the commonwealth; but, after it turned into arrogance\* and domination,\* the Romans changed their custom and created for themselves annual offices\* and two executive officers:\* they thought that restricting political licence in this way would prevent men's minds from becoming arrogant.

7. But that was the time when individuals began to elevate themselves and to display their native ability more readily. The reason 1 is that kings are always more suspicious of good men than wicked men and they fear the virtue they do not have. But once liberty was 2 attained, it is incredible to recount how great the state became in a short time. So strong was the desire for glory that came over them. Now for the first time the young men, as soon as they could endure 3 battle, entered camps and began to learn the hard work of a military life; they had passionate desires, but those desires were for splendid 4 armour and warhorses, not for prostitutes and parties. And so for men like this no hard labour was unfamiliar, no place was harsh or 5 difficult, no armed enemy brought fear: their manly virtue had dominated everything. But competitions for glory were among them the 6

toughest competitions. Each man was in a hurry to strike the enemy, to climb a wall, to be noticed doing such deeds. They thought that this was true wealth; this meant a good reputation and great nobility. They were greedy for praise, but with money they were generous: they wanted glory that was huge, wealth that was honourable. I could mention the places where the Roman people with a small band routed the enemy's greatest armies, the cities fortified by nature that they seized, were this not to take us too far from our project.

8. Still, it is my experience that Fortune governs everything; she exalts and obscures according to her pleasure, not according to the truth. Athenian history, in my estimation, was quite grand and magnificent, but still it was a little less grand than people say. It is because writers of great talent flourished there\* that the deeds of the Athenians are celebrated as if they were the greatest. And so, the virtue of those who acted is held to be as great as has been the ability of brilliant talents to glorify it in words. The Roman people, on the other hand, never had those resources, because their most thoughtful men were most engaged in public business. No one used their intellectual talents independent of their body, and the best men preferred action to words. They preferred that their activities be praised by others rather than that they themselves tell another's story.

9. And so at home and in the military good moral character was cultivated; maximum harmony, avarice was minimal. Justice and goodness was strong among those men not because of the law more than because of their nature. They engaged in quarrels, disputes, competition with the enemy, but among citizens the contest was over manly virtue. In their offerings to the gods, they were lavish; at home they were sparing; with friends they were trustworthy. They cared for the constitution and themselves in two ways: they were fearless in war, and, when peace arrived, they were fair. I take the following as the greatest proof of what I say: first, in war disciplinary action\* was more often taken against those who attacked the enemy without orders and against those who withdrew too slowly when recalled from the battle than against those who abandoned the standards or dared to give ground when beaten back; second, in peacetime they exercised political power more often with kindness than with fear and, when they received an injury, they preferred forgiveness to prosecution.

10. But, when hard work and just action had increased the Republic, when great kings were defeated in war, uncivilized nations and vast

peoples subdued by force, when Carthage,\* the rival to Roman power, had been eradicated, when all the sea and all the lands were accessible, Fortune began to grow cruel and confuse everything. Men who had easily endured hard work, dangers, uncertainty and adversity found that leisure and wealth, things desirable at other times, were a burden and the cause of misery. And so, at first, greed for money grew, then greed for power. These things were the root, so to speak, of all evils. For avarice undermined trust, goodness, and other noble qualities, and in their place taught pride and cruelty, taught men to neglect the gods and to put a price on everything. Ambition forced many men to become liars, to hide one thing in their heart and have something else ready on their tongue, to value friendship and enmity according to convenience, not substance, and to put up a good face rather than have a good heart. At first, these things grew gradually, they were punished occasionally; afterwards, when this contagion invaded like a plague, the state changed, and political power which had been most just and best became cruel and intolerable.

II. At first, however, more than avarice it was ambition that worked the souls of men, which, although a vice is nearer a virtue. For both the good man and the worthless man desire for themselves glory, honour, power. But the former labours on the true path, while the latter, having no honourable abilities, competes using treachery and deception. Avarice entails a zeal for money, which no wise man covets; it is dripping, so to speak, with dangerous poisons and makes the manly body and soul effeminate; it is boundless and insatiable, and is not diminished by wealth or poverty. But after L. Sulla took control of the Republic\* and from good beginnings created a disastrous outcome, everyone began to steal and rob. One man wanted a house, another fields; they did disgusting and cruel things to their fellow citizens. In addition to this, L. Sulla had let his army, the one he had led in Asia, live contrary to the custom of our ancestors in luxury and excessive licence.\* He did this to make them faithful to his cause. The charming and voluptuous locales easily softened the ferocious spirits of the soldiers when there was no work to do. There for the first time the army of the Roman people grew accustomed to making love, drinking, admiring statues, painted tables, and embossed vases, stealing public and private possessions, plundering temples, polluting all things sacred and profane. And so those soldiers, after they attained victory, left nothing for the defeated. Success, to be sure, can

try the souls of wise men; those of corrupt character were much less able to temper their victory.

1     **12.** After wealth began to be considered an honour, and after glory,  
political authority, and power followed in its wake, manly virtue began  
to lose its lustre, poverty was considered a disgrace, innocence was taken  
2 for malevolence.\* And so, as a result of our wealth, extravagance and  
greed with arrogance assaulted our youth: they raped and devoured;  
they considered their own possessions worthless and desired the pos-  
sessions of others; decency and chastity, things human and divine alike,  
3 they held nothing of value or moderation. When you consider our  
homes and villas built to the size of cities, it is worthwhile to visit the  
temples of the gods which our ancestors made. They were very devout  
4 men. But they adorned shrines to the gods with their piety, their own  
homes with glory, and they did not steal from the vanquished anything  
5 beyond their freedom to do harm. But today's men, the most worthless  
of human beings, do the opposite; in the most criminal way they take  
from our allies everything which the bravest men had left when they  
were victorious: it is as if the ability to do injustice is what magisterial  
power really means.

1     **13.** Why should I bother to mention things which no one can believe  
except those who have seen them: mountains dug up by private men,  
2 seas paved over?\* To these men wealth seems to be a toy: what they  
could have used honourably, they were quick to abuse shamefully.  
3 But that is not all: other excesses advanced as well, a passion for  
promiscuous sex, for gluttony. Men accepted the woman's role, women  
put their chastity up for sale, all the land and sea was scoured for  
the sake of feeding; they slept before the body wanted sleep; without  
waiting for hunger or thirst, for cold or weariness, they self-indulgently  
4 anticipated all these things. These desires incited the young men to  
5 criminal actions when the family wealth was gone. A soul imbued  
with wicked tendencies does not easily do without what it craves. And  
so they became in every way all the more inordinately addicted to  
acquisition and expenditure.

1     **14.** In such a great and corrupt city, Catiline gathered around him,  
like a bodyguard, crowds of vices and crimes; it was most easy to  
2 do. His companions and friends were those who had wrecked their  
patrimony with their hand, stomach, penis; any who had enkindled  
an enormous personal debt in order to purchase immunity from  
3 his perversions and crimes; in addition, all murderers and infidels

anywhere, convicted in court or fearing prosecution for their deeds; furthermore, those who lived by hand and tongue off perjury and the blood of citizens; and, finally, all who were stirred by perversity, poverty, and guilty conscience. If anyone still innocent of guilt  
4 fell into friendship with him, daily experience and temptations easily rendered that man equal and similar to the rest. But Catiline especially  
5 sought out intimacy with young men: their minds were still malleable and pliable and easily snared by his treachery. As each man's passion  
6 burned in accordance with his age, so Catiline responded: to some he offered whores, for others he purchased dogs and horses; in short, he spared neither expense nor his own modesty, provided he could  
7 make them dependent on him and faithful to him. I know that there were some people who concluded that the young men who frequented  
Catiline's home did not handle their chastity very honourably, but people said this more for other reasons\* than because there was any  
evidence of it.

15. Already as a young man Catiline had engaged in much unspeak- 1  
able debauchery with a virgin from a good family,\* with a Vestal  
priestess,\* and other things of this type which are contrary to divine  
and natural law. Finally, he fell in love with Aurelia Orestilla.\* No 2  
good man praised anything about her except her figure. She hesitated to marry Catiline, fearing a full-grown stepson. Because of this  
it is believed to be certain that Catiline made his home ready for his  
criminal nuptials\* by killing his son. In fact, this event seems to me 3  
to have been the primary reason that he hastened his conspiracy. For 4  
his soul, stained with guilt and hated by gods and men, could not find  
peace either in waking or in sleeping. Thus, his conscience irritated 5  
and devastated his mind. And so his face was pallid, his eyes bloody,  
his gait now quick, now slow; in short, there was madness in his face  
and features.

16. The young men whom—as we said above—he had lured, 1  
learned from him many wicked types of criminal behaviour. From 2  
them he supplied false witnesses and signatories; their credit, wealth,  
trials were considered insignificant. After he had destroyed their  
reputation and their moral sense, he made other greater demands. If 3  
the present circumstances did not provide any reason for crime, he  
nevertheless asked them to trap and slaughter the innocent as well as  
the guilty.\* One assumes he preferred to be gratuitously wicked and  
cruel lest their hands or hearts grow listless through inactivity.

4 These were the friends and allies Catiline trusted. Furthermore,  
 debt was rampant throughout the whole world, and most of Sulla's  
 soldiers, having squandered their own property, were thinking about  
 plunder and their former victories and hoping for civil war. And so  
 5 Catiline formed a plan for overthrowing the government. In Italy  
 there was no army; Cn. Pompey\* was waging war at the ends of the  
 earth. Catiline himself was seeking the consulship\* and had great  
 hopes. The Senate, clearly, had no pressing business: everything was  
 safe and peaceful. But this was exactly what suited Catiline.

1 17. Therefore, about 1 June,\* when L. Caesar and C. Figulus were  
 consuls,\* he first summoned certain individuals; he encouraged some,  
 others he sounded out, he pointed to his own resources, the state's lack  
 2 of preparation, and the great rewards of a conspiracy. When he had  
 gathered the information that he wanted, he called together everyone  
 who suffered from extraordinary need or possessed unusual daring.  
 3 The senators\* he convened were: P. Lentulus Sura,\* P. Autronius,\*  
 L. Cassius Longinus,\* C. Cethegus,\* P. and Ser. Sulla, sons of  
 Servius,\* L. Vargunteius,\* Q. Annius,\* M. Porcius Laeca,\* L. Bestia,\*  
 4 and Q. Curius\*; and from the equestrian order:\* M. Fulvius Nobilior,  
 L. Statilius, P. Gabinius Capito, and C. Cornelius; in addition there  
 were many from the colonies and townships who were aristocrats  
 5 at home.\* There were also many aristocrats who participated more  
 secretly in his plan; they were encouraged more by hope of power  
 6 than by poverty or any necessity. But in general it was the young  
 men who favoured Catiline's goals, especially the aristocratic youth:  
 they had the resources to live at ease either lavishly or elegantly,  
 7 but they preferred uncertainty to certainty, war over peace. At the  
 time, there were also those who believed that M. Licinius Crassus\*  
 was not unaware of Catiline's plans: that, because his enemy Pompey  
 was in charge of a great army,\* he was willing to let anyone's resources  
 increase in opposition to Pompey's power; and that he firmly believed  
 he would easily become the leader among the conspirators if the  
 conspiracy succeeded.

1 18. Earlier, however, a few men likewise conspired\* against the  
 2 state and Catiline was among them. I will speak as accurately as  
 I can\* about this. When L. Tullus\* and M. Lepidus\* were consuls,  
 P. Autronius and P. Sulla,\* the consuls elect, were arraigned under  
 3 bribery laws and fined.\* A little later, Catiline was prevented from  
 seeking the consulship because he was a defendant on charges of



extortion and was not able to submit his petition before the legal deadline.\* At the same time, there was a young aristocrat, Cn. Piso,\* 4 full of daring, lacking resources, interested in violence, who was moved by poverty and wicked character to attack the government. Piso 5 shared his plan with Catiline and Autronius, who joined him around 5 December.\* They were prepared to kill the consuls,\* L. Cotta and L. Torquatus, on the Capitoline Hill on 1 January,\* to seize the fasces, and to send Piso with an army to take possession of the two Spanish provinces.\* The plot was discovered and they postponed their murder- 6 derous plan to 5 February.\* This time they were plotting the death 7 not only of the consuls but of many senators. And on that day, if 8 Catiline standing in front of the Senate house had not given his allies the signal too soon,\* the most wicked act since the founding of Rome would have been accomplished. Because armed men had not yet fully assembled, the plan fell apart.

19. Afterwards, Piso was sent to Nearer Spain as a quaestor with 1 praetorian powers.\* Crassus helped in this because he knew that Piso 2 was a bitter enemy of Pompey.\* Nor was the Senate unwilling to give him the province: this was because they wanted this repugnant man as far from the state as possible, and at the same time because many good men were thinking he could provide some protection: even then 3 Pompey's power was a source of fear. But this Piso, as he was marching through the province, was killed by the Spanish cavalry under 4 his command. There are some who claim that the barbarians were unable to endure his unjust, haughty, and cruel exercise of power; 5 others, however, say that those horsemen, old and faithful clients of Pompey,\* attacked Piso on Pompey's orders; further, they point out that the Spaniards had never before perpetrated any such crime,\* but had endured many savage acts of power. We will leave this matter undecided. Enough has been said about the earlier conspiracy.

20. When Catiline saw gathered together the men I have just 1 mentioned,\* although he had often discussed many things with them as individuals, still he believed it was important to address them as a group and encourage them. He withdrew to an inner room of the house and there, with all witnesses far removed, he delivered a speech like this:

'If your manly virtue and loyalty were not already known to 2 me, this opportunity would have arrived in vain; our high hopes and political dominance would be frustrated while within our reach.

Nor would I rely upon men of weak and fickle character and grasp  
3 at uncertainties instead of what is certain. But because I have found  
you to be brave and faithful to me in many difficult circumstances,  
therefore my heart dares to attempt a very great and beautiful action,  
also because I understand that you and I agree about what is good  
4 and bad. Indeed, this is unshakable friendship: to want and to reject  
the same things.

5 'You have all already heard individually what I have been consid-  
6 ering. But, daily my heart grows more passionate as I think about the  
7 terms of our future life, if we do not lay claim to freedom. For after  
the Republic handed over justice and authority to a powerful few, it  
is to these men that kings and rulers always bring tribute, to them  
peoples and nations pay taxes. All the rest of us, hard-working good  
men, aristocrats and plebeians, we are a common crowd, without  
favour and without prestige. We are dependent upon those who would  
8 be afraid of us if the Republic meant anything. And so all influence,  
power, honour, and wealth lie in their hands or where they want it;  
we are left with dangers, electoral defeats, litigation, and poverty.  
9 How much longer are we still going to put up with this,\* I ask you,  
O bravest men? Isn't it better to die with manly courage than to live  
wretched and dishonoured, the playthings of other men's arrogance,  
and, then, with disgrace to lose our lives?

10 'But in fact, and I swear by the faith of gods and men, victory  
really is in our hands. We are young and vigorous, our spirit is valiant;  
they, on the other hand, are utterly decrepit, the result of money and  
years. All we need do is start, the outcome will take care of itself.  
11 Indeed, what mortal with a manly heart can endure it! They squander  
their superior wealth in building upon the seas and levelling the  
mountains,\* while we don't even have family possessions sufficient  
for the necessities. While they connect one home to another or more,  
12 we have no place for our family shrine. They buy paintings, statues,  
reliefs; they destroy what they just bought and build something else;  
they plunder and waste their money any way they can; still, their  
13 extreme desires cannot overcome their wealth. But for us there is  
poverty at home, debts everywhere; our circumstances are bad, our  
hopes are worse. What do we have left but our miserable breath?

14 'So, why don't you wake up? The things you have often hoped for,  
liberty, and then wealth, honour, and glory are right before your eyes.  
15 All these Fortune has made the prizes of victory. The circumstances,

the time, the dangers, poverty, the magnificent spoils of war, these offer more encouragement than my words. Use me as your general or 16  
as a foot soldier; I will aid you with mind and body. When I am your 17  
consul, this is what I hope to help you accomplish—unless my mind  
is deceived and you are more ready to be slaves than to be rulers.'

21. The men who listened to Catiline were rich in troubles but had 1  
neither resources nor any good hope. Although they thought that the  
disruption of the status quo was a great reward in itself, still, after  
they had listened, they demanded that he lay out the terms of the war,  
what rewards their weapons would be seeking, what resources or hope  
they could have and where. Then Catiline promised clean slates,\* 2  
proscription of the wealthy,\* priesthoods, plunder, everything else  
that war and the caprice of victors can offer. Furthermore, he said 3  
that Piso\* was in Nearer Spain, P. Sittius Nucerinus\* was with an army  
in Mauretania, and they were aware of his plans; that C. Antonius,\*  
a family friend broken by poverty, was seeking the consulship and  
he expected him to be his colleague; and that he as consul would set  
things in motion with Antonius. In addition, he attacked and maligned 4  
all good citizens, he named and praised individually his followers,  
reminding one of his poverty, another of his desires, most of their  
danger and ignominy, and many of Sulla's victory, which had brought  
them booty. After he saw that their hearts were eager, he urged them 5  
to take care of his election, and he dismissed the gathering.

22. There were at that time some who said that after his speech, 1  
when he wanted to bind those privy to his crime with an oath, he passed  
around a bowl that had in it human blood mixed with wine, that then, 2  
when all had tasted the blood and sworn a solemn oath, just as is the  
custom in holy rites, he disclosed his plan, and that he did this to create  
a common bond that would make them more faithful to each other,  
each one being conscious of the other's guilt. Some were of the opinion 3  
that these and many other things were invented by men who thought  
that, if they exaggerated the atrocity of the crimes of those whom Cicero  
punished, they could mitigate the hatred that later rose up against him.\*  
Considering its importance, we have too little information.

23. Now one of the members of the conspiracy was Q. Curius. He 1  
was not born in obscurity, but he was shrouded in shame and crimes,  
a man whom the censors had removed from the Senate\* for his dis-  
graceful actions. This man was as fickle as he was reckless; he did not 2  
keep silent about what he heard or conceal his own crimes; he did

3 not care a whit about what he said or what he did. Fulvia,\* an aristocratic woman, had been his partner in promiscuity for some time, but he was no longer in her favour, because his limited resources had made him less generous. Suddenly he began to swagger and promise oceans and mountains, and to threaten her occasionally with his sword if she did not yield to him. Ultimately, he became much more  
 4 ferocious than had been his custom. But when Fulvia discovered the cause of Curius' abusiveness, she did not keep secret such a danger to the Republic. Hiding the name of her informant, she told many the  
 5 details she had heard about Catiline's conspiracy. It was this event that made men particularly eager to entrust the consulship to Cicero.\*  
 6 In fact, before this the aristocracy was in general seething with jealousy; they thought that the consulship was polluted if a 'new man',\* regardless of how outstanding, should attain it. But when danger was at hand, jealousy and pride took second place.

1     **24.** Consequently, when the elections were held, M. Tullius\* and C. Antonius were declared consuls. At first this event shook the  
 2 confidence of the members of the conspiracy. And yet Catiline's madness did not diminish; rather he grew more agitated daily:\* arms were placed throughout Italy in strategic places, money was borrowed in his own name or that of his friends and was taken to Faesulae to a certain Manlius,\* who afterwards was the first to begin fighting.  
 3 It is said that he enlisted on his side at that time many men of every class, and even some women. These were women who covered their enormous expenses by selling their bodies; afterwards, when age limited their income but not their extravagant desires, they contracted  
 4 huge debts. Through them Catiline believed that he could bring the urban slaves\* to his side, set fire to the city, and either get their husbands to join his cause or get them killed.

1     **25.** Now among these women was Sempronia,\* a woman who had  
 2 committed many crimes with the arrogance of a man. She was fortunate enough in her birth and her figure, also in her husband and children, learned in Greek and Latin literature, lyre-playing and dancing more pleasingly than a proper woman should. She knew many other things that were the accoutrements of luxury, but there  
 3 was nothing she liked less than propriety and restraint. You could not tell whether she cared less about her money or her reputation. Her sexual appetite was such that she more often took the initiative with men than they with her. Before this conspiracy, she had  
 4

often betrayed faith, defaulted on loans, been accessory to murder. Her expenses and her lack of resources headed her toward disaster. Nevertheless, her abilities were not despicable: she could write 5 verses, make a joke, converse modestly, or tenderly, or raucously; she possessed many pleasant characteristics and much charm.

26. Although Catiline had made his preparations, he still sought 1 the consulship for the following year.\* He was hoping that, if he was consul designate, he could use Antonius\* as he wished. In the meantime he was not idle, but laid traps for Cicero in every way possible. But, Cicero had sufficient guile and cunning to avoid them. 2 At the beginning of his consulship, he made many promises through Fulvia to Q. Curius, whom I mentioned above, and got him to betray Catiline's plans to him. In addition, he reached an agreement about 4 provinces\* with his colleague Antonius and so prevailed upon him not to oppose the Republic. Secretly, he kept around himself a 5 bodyguard of friends and clients. The election day came.\* Catiline succeeded neither in his campaign nor in the plots that he had laid for the consuls in the Campus Martius. Then, since his covert attempts had resulted in exasperation and disgrace, he decided to make war and to let nothing stand in his way.

27. Therefore he sent C. Manlius to Faesulae\* and the adjacent 1 parts of Etruria, a certain Septimius of Camerinum\* to the Picene district, C. Julius\* to Apulia, and others elsewhere, wherever he thought they would be useful to him. Meanwhile in Rome he was 2 working on many things at the same time: he set traps for the consuls, planned arson, posted armed men in strategic places; he himself was armed and ordered others to do likewise, he urged them to be always alert and ready; he had hurried about day and night, he did not rest, and did not weary of sleeplessness or toil. Finally, when his 3 many activities produced no result, he called on M. Porcius Laeca\* to convene again the leaders of the conspiracy in the dead of night.\* And 4 there, after he had complained at length about their ineffectiveness, he told them that he had readied a body of men to take up arms and had already sent Manlius ahead to join them, that he had sent others to various strategic places to begin the fighting; and that he himself was eager to get to his army, if he could first do away with Cicero: that man, he said, was a significant obstacle to his plans.

28. And so, although the others were terrified and hesitant, 1 C. Cornelius, a Roman *eques*, promised his help. L. Vargunteius,\*

a senator, agreed to go with him. They would go to Cicero's house a little later that night as if to make a ceremonial visit;\* they would take with them armed men and without warning they would stab him  
2 unprepared in his own house. When Curius heard the extent of the danger that hung over the consul, he quickly told Cicero through  
3 Fulvia of the treachery that was under way. And so those men were turned away from the door and the great crime they had undertaken was frustrated.

4 Meanwhile in Etruria Manlius was stirring up a populace that was eager for revolution because of their poverty and the pain of injustice: during the domination of Sulla they had lost all their fields and property.\* Furthermore, Manlius solicited robbers of any kind. There were a great number in that region; some came from Sulla's colonists, men who had nothing left from all their plunder because of their appetite and extravagance.\*

1 29. When these events were reported to Cicero, he was deeply disturbed by the twofold danger: he was no longer able through private efforts to protect the city from these plots, and he did not have clear information about the size of Manlius' army or his intentions. He brought the matter, already the subject of excited rumours among  
2 the people, before the Senate.\* And so the Senate passed a decree, the one which is customary in times of deadly peril: Let the consuls prevent any damage to the Republic.\* This is the greatest power  
3 which the Senate by Roman custom grants to a magistrate: power to raise an army, wage war, coerce allies and citizens in any way necessary, to exercise complete authority and jurisdiction at home and in the military. Otherwise, without an order of the people, the consul has no right to any of these actions.\*

1 30. After a few days, L. Saenius,\* a senator, read in the Senate a letter which he said had been brought to him from Faesulae. The letter said that C. Manlius had taken up arms with a large number  
2 of men on 27 October. At the same time, some men announced portents and prodigies—a common occurrence at such times—others told of meetings, the movement of arms, slave insurrections in Capua  
3 and Apulia.\* Consequently, Q. Marcius Rex\* was sent to Faesulae by senatorial decree, Q. Metellus Creticus\* to Apulia and neighbouring  
4 places—both of these men were in command of armies outside the city walls where they had been prevented from celebrating triumphs by the malice of a few men who habitually put everything up for sale

whether honourable or dishonourable. The praetors, Q. Pompeius 5  
 Rufus and Q. Metellus Celer,\* were sent to Capua and the Picene  
 district respectively, and they were given authority to raise an army 6  
 according to the circumstances and the danger. In addition to this, a  
 reward was decreed, if anyone had any information about the conspir- 6  
 acy against the state: for a slave, freedom and a hundred *sestertia*; for  
 a free man, impunity and two hundred *sestertia*.\* They also decreed 7  
 that gladiatorial troops\* should be distributed throughout Capua and  
 other towns in accordance with the resources of each place; at Rome,  
 watches were to be posted throughout the city and the minor magis-  
 trates\* were to be in charge of them.

31. These events terrified the citizens and changed the appear- 1  
 ance of the city. In place of the great joy and abandon which years  
 of peace had produced, suddenly gloom overcame all. People hur- 2  
 ried, trembled, trusted little in any place or person; they were neither  
 waging war nor enjoying peace; each measured the danger in accord- 3  
 ance with his own anxiety. In addition, fear of war, unfamiliar to the  
 women because of the greatness of the Republic, overwhelmed them:  
 they beat their breasts, raised their hands to the heavens in suppli- 6  
 cation, wailed over their little children; they questioned everything,  
 trembled at every rumour, grabbed everything they could, and set-  
 ting aside pride and pleasure they despaired of themselves and their  
 country.

Defences were readied against Catiline. He was arraigned by 4  
 L. Paulus under the *lex Plautia*.\* But his cruel spirit was not moved to  
 change his plans. Finally, he came into the Senate, either to dissemble 5  
 his intentions or to clear his name as if he had been challenged in some  
 private quarrel. At that time M. Tullius the consul, either because 6  
 he was afraid of Catiline's presence or because he was carried away by  
 anger, delivered a speech that was brilliant and useful to the Republic,  
 a speech which he later wrote down and published.\* But when he sat 7  
 down, Catiline, who was prepared to dissemble everything, began to  
 speak with downcast eyes and suppliant voice. He asked the senators  
 not to form any hasty opinions about him: he was born into a very  
 great family and had lived since adolescence in such a way that he had  
 nothing but good prospects. He was a patrician, he said; he himself  
 and his ancestors had performed a great many services for the Roman  
 plebs. They should not think that he needed to destroy the Republic,  
 when M. Tullius, a rental resident citizen of the city of Rome,\* said

8 he was going to save it. When he tried to add other insults to this,  
 everyone shouted him down; they called him an enemy and a par-  
 9 ricide. Then he became enraged and said, 'I'm trapped and I'm being  
 pushed over the edge by my enemies: I'll extinguish my inferno with  
 a general demolition.'<sup>\*</sup>

1 32. He then rushed from the Senate chamber and went home.  
 There he thought over many things: his plots against the consul were  
 not making progress and the city was protected from arson by watch-  
 men. He concluded that the best thing to do was to increase his army  
 and to gather many provisions for war before Roman legions could  
 be enlisted, and so he set off with a few men in the dead of night to  
 2 Manlius' camp. But first, he gave orders to Cethegus and Lentulus  
 and others whose recklessness he knew was prepared for action. He  
 told them to strengthen the resources of their faction in whatever way  
 they could, to implement the plots against the consul, to arrange for  
 slaughter, arson, and other acts of war; as for himself, he said that he  
 would soon be at the city's gates with a large army.

3 While this was going on in Rome, C. Manlius sent some of his men  
 as legates to Marcius Rex with the following request:

1 33. 'General, we call upon men and gods as our witnesses: we have  
 not taken up arms against our country and we intend no danger to  
 others. Instead, our purpose is to keep our own bodies free from  
 harm. We are humiliated, impoverished by the violence and cruelty  
 of the moneylenders; most of us have lost our fatherland, but all have  
 lost fame and fortune. None of us has been allowed to enjoy legal pro-  
 tections according to ancestral custom,<sup>\*</sup> none has retained his per-  
 sonal freedom once he lost his patrimony: such has been the savage  
 2 indifference of the moneylenders and the urban praetor.<sup>\*</sup> Often your  
 ancestors pitied the common people of Rome, and by their decrees  
 made resources available to the resourceless.<sup>\*</sup> Most recently, within  
 our own lifetime,<sup>\*</sup> good respectable men were willing to let silver  
 3 be paid in bronze because of the magnitude of the debt. Often the  
 common people themselves, spurred on by the desire to dominate or  
 by the arrogance of the magistrates, took up arms and seceded from  
 4 the senatorial fathers.<sup>\*</sup> But it is not political power or wealth that we  
 seek, things which are the cause of all wars and struggles among mor-  
 tals; rather, it is freedom, which no respectable man gives up except  
 5 with his life. We beg you and the Senate, think about the suffering  
 of the citizens, restore the protection of law which the inequity of



the praetor has stolen; and do not force us to ask how we can get the greatest vengeance from the loss of our blood.'

34. Q. Marcius responded to this, saying that, if they wanted to make any petition to the Senate, they should put down their arms and set off for Rome as suppliants. The Senate and the Roman people had always shown such compassion and pity that no one had ever sought their help in vain.\*

Catiline, on the other hand, while on the road sent letters to several ex-consuls, also to all the most respectable men: he said that he was cornered by false charges; that he was yielding to fortune since he could not counteract his enemies' faction; that he was going into exile at Marseilles,\* not because he was guilty of any great crime, but so that the Republic could be at peace and that an insurrection might not arise from his personal struggle. Q. Catulus\* read a very different letter in the Senate, one that had been brought to him in Catiline's name. The following is a copy of that letter:

35. L. Catiline to Q. Catulus. Your loyalty is extraordinary, I know this by experience,\* and in my many great difficulties I have been grateful for it. It gives me confidence in my commission to you. For this reason, I have decided not to defend my new course of action,\* but offer instead an explanation, and not from any sense of guilt, but one that I swear you can recognize as true. I have been provoked by injustice and insult, deprived of the benefits of my labour and efforts; I have not attained the dignified status I deserve,\* and so in accordance with my inclination I have publicly taken up the cause of the poor.\* It is not because I didn't have enough to pay off my own debts from my own possessions—Orestilla would have generously used hers and her daughter's resources to pay even the debts counter-signed by others—but because I kept seeing men of no worth\* honoured with honourable offices and was aware that I was myself rejected by false suspicions. On this account, I have pursued hopes of preserving what is left of my dignity. And those hopes are honourable enough given my circumstances. Though I would like to write much more, I have heard that violence against me is under way. Now, I commend Orestilla to you and your loyalty. Defend her from injury, I ask in the name of your children. Take care.

36. Nevertheless, Catiline himself stayed a few days with C. Flaminius\* near Arretium\* to supply weapons to an area already restless. He then hurried to join Manlius' camp with the fasces and other signs of military authority.\* When these events were known at

Rome, the Senate decreed that Catiline and Manlius were enemies of the state.\* They set a day before which most of the army could lay down their weapons without harm; the exceptions were those who  
3 had already been convicted for capital offences. Furthermore, they decided that the consuls should hold a draft, that Antonius should hurry to pursue Catiline with an army, that Cicero should be the city's protection.

4 At that time, it seems to me, the empire of the Roman people was in an especially deplorable state. Everything from the rising sun to the setting sun was dominated by and obedient to Roman arms; and at home there was abundant peace and wealth, things that humans consider most important. But nevertheless there were citizens who with unwavering hearts were intent on destroying themselves and  
5 their state. Indeed, in spite of two decrees that were passed by the Senate,\* no one from that great multitude of men was induced to expose the conspiracy and no one at all left the camp of Catiline. Such was the force of the disease that like a plague had invaded the minds of many citizens.

1 37. This disaffection was not confined to those who were involved in the plot: in general all the plebs were eager for revolution and  
2 approved of Catiline's intentions. Indeed, they were seeming to do this in their particular way: for it is always the case in a community  
3 that the poor despise respectable men, they exalt the disreputable, they hate tradition and call for innovation; they are eager to change everything because they despise their own circumstances; they feed on turmoil and rebellion, and they do not care, since poverty does not  
4 cost much and cannot lose much. But the urban plebs\* were reckless for many reasons. First of all, there were those who excelled in dishonour and derision; likewise others, who had disgracefully lost their family money; finally, all the felons and fugitives who had been  
5 exiled from their homes: these flowed into Rome as if into a sewer.  
6 Second, there were many who remembered Sulla's victory. They saw that some common soldiers had become senators,\* others so wealthy that they passed their time surrounded by kingly feasts and culture. Everyone expected for himself the same kind of outcome from  
7 victory, if it should come to war. Next, the young men, who used to alleviate their poverty with the rewards of hard work in the fields, were attracted by private and public doles and preferred urban leisure  
8 to thankless labour. Our public disorder nourished these and all

the others. And so it is not surprising that men with no money, bad character, extravagant hopes considered the future of the Republic no more important than their own future. Further, those whose parents had been proscribed during Sulla's victory, who had lost their wealth and found their freedom diminished,\* were looking forward to the outcome of war with the same expectations. In addition to this, whoever was not affiliated with the senatorial party preferred public chaos to their own diminished power. This in fact was the evil\* that had returned to the state after many years.

38. The reason was that tribunician power had been restored during the consulship of Pompey and Crassus.\* Thereafter, certain young men, whose youth and heart were implacable, attained that high position; they began to arouse the common people by attacking the Senate; then, they fanned the flames with public gifts and promises. In this way, they became famous and powerful. Against them most of the aristocracy struggled using every resource: for the Senate's sake, so it seemed, but really for their own aggrandizement. To put the truth in a few words, after those times whoever stirred up the Republic with honourable claims, some as if they were defending the rights of the people, others in order to secure the authority of the Senate, pretending to work for the public good, they struggled for their own power. There was no restraint or measure to their efforts. Each side used their victories brutally.

39. Afterwards, when Cn. Pompey was sent to fight the pirates and Mithridates,\* the plebs' resources were diminished, the few increased their power. They held the magistracies, the provinces, and everything else. They were themselves secure, flourishing; they lived without fear; they terrified others with criminal prosecutions so as to have more peaceful dealings with the plebs while holding office. But as soon as political uncertainty created hope for change, the old struggle roused their courage. In fact, if Catiline's first battle had been a victory or a draw, I am sure that great slaughter and disaster would have overwhelmed the state; and those who attained the victory would not have been allowed to use it very long before, exhausted and weary, they would have lost their freedom and authority to someone more powerful.\* But, even as it was, there were many outside the conspiracy who went to join Catiline when things began to happen. Among these was Fulvius,\* the son of a senator. While on his way to Catiline, he was dragged back to Rome; his father ordered him killed.

6 Meanwhile Lentulus was at Rome carrying out Catiline's orders. By himself or through others, he solicited anyone whose character or fortune he thought made them well disposed to revolution, and not only citizens, but men of any type that would be useful in war.

1 40. Accordingly, he gave a certain P. Umbrenus\* the job of seeking out the Allobrogian ambassadors\* and urging them, if he could, to a war alliance. He was thinking that they were oppressed by debt both public and private, and, since the Gallic people were warlike by  
2 nature, they could be easily enticed to join such a plan. Umbrenus had business dealings in Gaul; he was well known to many of their political leaders and they to him. Thus, without delay, as soon as he saw the ambassadors in the Forum, he asked a few questions about the condition of their country and, as if sympathizing with their misfortune, he began to enquire how they expected their troubles to end.  
3 He saw that they complained about the greed of the magistrates, they blamed the Senate because there was no help from that quarter, and they expected that death would be the cure for their miseries. Then he said, 'But I can offer a plan that will let you escape such troubles,  
4 if only you are willing to be men.' When he said this, the Allobroges became very hopeful and asked Umbrenus to take pity on them: nothing, they said, was so hard or so difficult that they would not be very eager to do it, provided that they could rid their state of debt.  
5 He led them to the house of D. Brutus,\* which was near the Forum and, because of Sempronia—for Brutus was away from Rome at the  
6 time—not inappropriate to his plan. Furthermore, he summoned Gabinius\* in order to lend moral authority to his words. In Gabinius' presence he disclosed the conspiracy, and named their allies, and many other men of each class who were not involved, just to give the ambassadors more courage. Then they promised to help\* and he sent them home.

1 41. The Allobroges, however, were for a long time unsure what  
2 to do. On the one hand, there was debt, desire for war, and, as they hoped for victory, great rewards; but on the other side, there were the Senate's greater resources, a safe plan, and certain rewards\* in the place  
3 of uncertain hopes. As they thought about these things, it was finally  
4 the good fortune of the Republic that gained the upper hand. And so they revealed everything that they knew to Q. Fabius Sanga,\* a man  
5 whose patronage had been very useful to their country. When Cicero heard of the plans through Sanga, he ordered the ambassadors to

show an enthusiastic interest in the conspiracy, to approach others, to make fine promises, and to attempt to make the guilty as unmistakable as possible.

42. At about this same time, there were disturbances in Cisalpine and Transalpine Gaul, and also in the Picene and Bruttian territory and in Apulia. The reason for this was that those whom Catiline had sent ahead did not plan well and were like madmen trying to do everything at the same time. Meetings at night, movements of offensive and defensive weapons, haste and agitation; they rendered everything more full of fear than of danger. Q. Metellus Celer, the praetor, brought many to trial in accordance with the Senate's decree and put many of them in chains. C. Murena\* did the same thing in Cisalpine Gaul, where he was in charge of the province as legate.

43. At Rome, Lentulus and the other leaders of the conspiracy got together what seemed to them a great force and they decided that when Catiline reached the field of Aefula\* L. Bestia, the tribune of the plebs, would hold a public address. He would denounce Cicero's actions and try to make people angry with our very fine consul for a most dreadful war. Taking this as their signal, the rest of the conspirators on the next night would execute their individual tasks.\* These tasks, it is said, were distributed in the following way: Statilius and Gabinius with a large company of men would simultaneously set fire to twelve important places in the city. The confusion caused by this would create easier access to the consul and others against whom treachery was afoot. Cethegus would besiege Cicero's door and attack him. Others would attack other victims; the sons of certain families, most of whom were aristocrats, would kill their parents. Then, when everyone was stunned by murder and arson, they would break through to Catiline.

While disclosing these plans and decisions, Cethegus kept complaining about the faint-hearted allies: he said that their hesitancy and procrastination had wasted great opportunities; that there was a need for action, not planning; that, though the rest cowered, he would himself attack the Senate house, if only a few would help. He was by nature ferocious, passionate, ready to act; he thought the greatest advantage was in speed.

44. Now the Allobroges following Cicero's orders met the rest of the conspirators through the help of Gabinius. They demanded a signed oath from Lentulus, Cethegus, Statilius, and also from

Cassius, to take to their countrymen. Otherwise, they said, they could not easily induce them to join in such a dangerous business.

2 The others gave the oath without suspecting anything, but Cassius, who promised to meet with them soon, left the city a little before  
3 the ambassadors did. Lentulus sent with the ambassadors a certain T. Volturcius\* of Croton so that the Allobroges by giving and receiving pledges of loyalty could confirm their allegiance with Catiline before  
4 they reached home. He himself gave Volturcius a letter for Catiline, a copy of which\* is written below:

5 'You will know who I am from the one I have sent to you. Please understand the danger you are in and remember that you are a man.  
6 Consider what your plans require. Seek aid from everyone, even the lowest.' In addition to this, he added a verbal message: Why did he reject slaves when he had been declared an enemy by the Senate? He reported that in the city all orders had been followed. He himself should not hesitate to advance closer.

1 **45.** When these matters were taken care of and the night for their departure was established, Cicero learned of everything through the ambassadors and commanded the praetors, L. Valerius Flaccus and C. Pomptinus,\* to ambush the Allobrogian entourage at the Mulvian Bridge\* and to arrest them. He disclosed to them the purpose of their mission, but let them decide the details as the situation required.  
2 Being military men, they quietly put guards in place, and lay in wait  
3 at the bridge as ordered. After the legates arrived with Volturcius and both sides began to shout simultaneously, the Gauls quickly understood the situation and without delay handed themselves over  
4 to the praetor. Volturcius at first encouraged the others and defended himself against the band of men with his sword; then, when he was deserted by his legates, first, he earnestly begged Pomptinus, who knew him, to save his life, and, afterwards, frightened and despairing of life, he handed himself over to the praetors as if to the enemy.

1 **46.** When it was over,\* everything was quickly reported by messengers to the consul. Great concern and great joy came over him  
2 simultaneously. He was happy knowing that the conspiracy had been exposed and the state rescued from danger; on the other hand, he was troubled, unsure what should be done when such important citizens had been caught in the commission of very great crimes. He believed that penalty for them would mean trouble for him; impunity for them  
3 would be the destruction of the Republic. Therefore, he stiffened his

resolve\* and summoned Lentulus, Cethegus, Statilius, Gabinius, and also Caeparius of Terracina,\* who was getting ready to go to Apulia to stir up a slave revolt. The rest came without delay, but Caeparius, who had already left home a little earlier, heard that the conspiracy had been exposed and he fled from the city. The consul himself led Lentulus into the Senate, holding him by the hand because he was a praetor. He ordered the rest to come with their guards to the Temple of Harmony.\* There, he summoned the Senate,\* and, when a great crowd of senators had gathered, he introduced Volturcius with the ambassadors. He ordered the praetor Flaccus to bring to the same place the box with the letters he had received from the ambassadors.

47. Volturcius was questioned about the journey, the letter, and finally what his plan was and why. At first he made up some things and concealed his knowledge of the conspiracy. Afterwards, when he was granted immunity and told to speak, he disclosed everything as it had happened and declared that he had been enrolled as an ally by Gabinius and Caeparius a few days earlier, but that he knew nothing more than the ambassadors, except that he used to hear from Gabinius that P. Autronius, Ser. Sulla, L. Vargunteius, and many others were in the conspiracy. The Gauls made the same confession and in addition to the letter refuted Lentulus' dissembled ignorance with the things he used to say: that according to the Sibylline books,\* three Cornelii\* would rule in Rome; that already there had been Cinna and Sulla; that he was fated to be the third master; and, moreover, that this was the twentieth year since the burning of the Capitol,\* a year which because of frequent prodigies the soothsayers had said would be bloody with civil war. And so, after the letters were read, when all had acknowledged their own seals, the Senate decreed that Lentulus should resign his position, likewise the others, and that they should be held in 'free custody'.\* Accordingly, Lentulus was handed over to P. Lentulus Spinther, aedile at the time, Cethegus to Q. Cornificius,\* Statilius to C. Caesar,\* Gabinius to M. Crassus, and Caeparius, who had just been arrested during his attempted escape, to Cn. Terentius,\* the senator.

48. Meanwhile, when the conspiracy was revealed the plebs who at first had wanted revolution and eagerly favoured war, changed their mind and cursed Catiline's plans. They extolled Cicero to the sky. They were joyful and happy, as if rescued from slavery. They thought that other crimes of war would lead more to booty than to

losses, but that arson was cruel and excessive, a complete disaster for them, because all their resources consisted in what they used for daily needs and their bodily covering.

3 The next day a certain L. Tarquinius\* was brought before the  
Senate. It was said that he was setting out to Catiline when he was  
4 arrested and brought back. When he declared that he would give  
evidence about the conspiracy if he were granted immunity, the consul  
ordered him to tell what he knew. He gave roughly the same information  
as Volturcius about the preparations for arson, the slaughter of respectable  
men, the enemy's movements. In addition, he said he had been sent by M.  
Crassus to tell Catiline not to be frightened by the capture of Lentulus  
and Cethegus and the other members of the conspiracy, but to hurry all  
the more quickly to the city, so that he could more easily snatch them  
5 from danger and rebuild the courage  
of the rest. But, when Tarquinius named Crassus, an aristocrat, a  
very wealthy man and a man of unsurpassable power, some thought  
the claim was unbelievable; others, though they thought it true, still  
saw that under such circumstances such a powerful man was to be  
placated rather than irritated; the majority were privately in debt to  
Crassus. Consequently, all shouted that the informer was a liar and  
6 they demanded a vote on the matter. Cicero called the question and  
the Senate as a body decreed that Tarquinius' evidence was deemed  
false and that he should be held in prison and not allowed any further  
liberty unless he indicated who had advised him to lie about such  
7 an important matter.\* There were at that time some who thought  
that the allegation had been devised by P. Autronius so that, when  
Crassus was named, by mere association his power would protect  
8 the others from danger; others were saying that Tarquinius had been  
set up by Cicero to prevent Crassus from supporting the wicked and  
9 throwing the state into turmoil in his usual fashion. Later, I heard  
Crassus himself claiming that this extraordinary slander had been  
imposed on him by Cicero.

1 **49.** At the same time, however, Q. Catulus and C. Piso\* were unable  
to force Cicero either by money or influence to get C. Caesar falsely  
2 implicated by the Allobroges or some other witness. Their motivation  
was the bitter hatred they had for Caesar: Piso because he had been  
attacked in his extortion trial for the illegal 'punishment' of a certain  
Transpadane;\* Catulus was furious that he, a man of advanced  
age and great accomplishments, as a candidate for the priesthood, had



been defeated by Caesar who was just a young man.\* Moreover, they 3  
 thought the time was right: Caesar was deeply in debt from his personal  
 generosity, which was extraordinary, and his public largesse 4  
 which was exceptional. But when they could not force the consul  
 to such an action, they went about canvassing men individually,  
 circulating falsehoods, things that they said they had heard from  
 Volturcius or the Allobroges. This caused such hostility to flare up  
 against Caesar that some Roman *equites*, who were posted as an armed  
 guard around the Temple of Harmony, threatened Caesar with their  
 swords as he left the Senate. They did this to display more clearly 5  
 their commitment to the Republic, compelled either by the gravity  
 of the danger or by their own inconstant impulsiveness.

50. While this was going on in the Senate, and they were decid- 1  
 ing on rewards for the Allobrogian ambassadors and for Volturcius,  
 since their information had proved true, some of Lentulus' freed-  
 men and a few of his clients were going to different places in the city  
 urging the craftsmen and slaves to rescue him; others were looking  
 for gang-leaders, men who were accustomed to torment the state for 2  
 a price. Cethegus, however, sent messengers to his slaves and freed-  
 men, men he had selected and trained; he begged them to be bold,  
 to band together and with their weapons break through to him. The 3  
 consul, when he heard of these plans, deployed armed guards as time  
 and occasion required. He convened the Senate,\* and formally asked  
 them what to do about the men held in custody. Just a short time  
 earlier the entire Senate had judged that these men were traitors.  
 D. Junius Silanus,\* the consul designate, was first asked his opinion\* 4  
 about those held in custody, and also about L. Cassius, P. Furius,\*  
 P. Umbrenus, and Quintus Annius, if they should be captured. He  
 said that they must pay the penalty.\* Later he was moved by C. Caesar's  
 speech and said he would support the proposal of Ti. Nero\* to hold  
 a referendum after the number of guards had been increased. But  
 when it came to Caesar's turn, he was asked his opinion by the consul 5  
 and he spoke as follows:

51. 'All human beings who debate\* on matters of uncertainty, con- 1  
 sult fathers,\* ought to be free from hatred, enmity, anger, and pity.  
 The mind cannot easily see the truth when those emotions get in 2  
 the way, and no one has ever been simultaneously governed by the  
 demands of his desire and by practical considerations. Wherever you 3  
 apply your intelligence, it prevails; but, if passion takes over, it becomes

- 4 master and the mind is powerless. I can recount many examples, conscript fathers, of bad decisions made by kings and peoples under the influence of anger or pity. But I prefer to speak of decisions made correctly and orderly by our ancestors when they resisted their hearts' 5 desires. In the Macedonian War\* which we waged with King Perses, the great and opulent state of Rhodes, which had benefited from Roman wealth, treacherously turned against us. But, after the war was over and we took up the matter of the Rhodians' actions, our ancestors let them go unpunished,\* lest anyone say that we had started 6 the war more for money than from injury.\* Likewise in all the Punic Wars,\* though the Carthaginians had often committed many horrible crimes\* both in peace and under truces, our ancestors never reciprocated\* when they had the opportunity: they preferred to ask what was 7 worthy of them, not what they could justifiably do. You, likewise, must use the same prudential wisdom, conscript fathers. The crime of P. Lentulus and the others should not have more weight with you than your own dignity, and you should not consider your anger more 8 important than your reputation. For, if the penalty can be found that their deeds deserve, I could approve of an unprecedented course.\* But, if the enormity of their crime exceeds our ingenuity,\* then I say we must use the penalties already established by law.\*
- 9 'Most of those who have given their opinions before me have lamented with great eloquence and grandeur the misfortunes of the Republic. They have listed the savage acts of war, the afflictions of the conquered: the rape of girls and boys; children torn from the arms of their parents; matrons yielding to whatever the conqueror desired; shrines and homes plundered; slaughter, arson; in short, everything 10 filled with weapons, corpses, blood, and grief. But, by the immortal gods, what is the purpose of those speeches? Is it to make you oppose the conspiracy? Do you suppose that a speech will energize someone who is not moved by the enormity and cruelty of the facts? 11 Not true: no mortal thinks his own injuries are small; for many they seem greater than is fair. But not everyone has the same freedom of 12 action, conscript fathers. If the humble who have a life in obscurity become enraged and commit an offence, few know; their fame and their wealth are the same. But the actions of those who are endowed with great power and who live exalted lives are known by all mankind. 13 And so, in the greatest good fortune there is the least licence; neither zealous partiality nor hatred is appropriate, but least of all rage.

What is called anger in others, is named arrogance and cruelty in the 14  
powerful. And so this is my assessment, conscript fathers: no tor- 15  
ture is equal to the crimes they have committed. But generally men  
remember the most recent events, and even in the case of execrable  
men, if the punishment is unusually severe, they forget the crimes  
and talk about the punishment.

'I am quite certain that D. Silanus, a brave and energetic man, said 16  
what he said with the state's interests in mind, and that in a matter  
of such importance he shows neither favour nor malice: I know his  
character and his composure. But it seems to me his proposal is not 17  
so much cruel—what could be cruel against such men?—as it is alien  
to our Republic. I am sure that either fear or injustice has forced you, 18  
Silanus, a consul designate, to propose an unprecedented punish-  
ment. As for fear, there is not much to say, especially since we have 19  
so many guards under arms thanks to the diligence of our consul, a  
most distinguished man. But concerning the penalty I can speak to 20  
the point: in times of grief and affliction death is not a torture but a  
release from misery.\* It puts an end to all mortal woes; and beyond  
that neither anxiety nor joy has any place. But why, in the name of 21  
the immortal gods, didn't you add to your proposal that they should  
first be whipped? Is it because the *lex Porcia*\* forbids it? But there 22  
are other laws\* that similarly forbid taking the life of a condemned  
citizen; they allow exile. Or, is it because flogging is worse than death? 23  
But what punishment could be too harsh for men convicted of such  
a crime? On the other hand, if flogging is less severe than death, why 24  
fear the law that forbids the lesser punishment, when you neglect the  
law that forbids the harsher punishment?

'But, one might say, who will criticize any decree against the 25  
assassins of the Republic? I'll tell you: time, events, fortune, whose  
pleasure governs the world. Whatever happens to those men, they 26  
have earned it; but you, conscript fathers, think about the example  
you are setting for others. Every bad precedent arose from a good 27  
case. But when power slips into the hands of those who don't under-  
stand it or those less well intentioned, then that new precedent is no  
longer appropriately applied to those who deserve it but inappropri- 28  
ately to those who don't. The Lacedaemonians, after they conquered  
the Athenians,\* imposed the rule of thirty men. At first, they began 29  
to put to death without trial all the most wicked and those whom  
everyone hated. The populace was delighted and they said it was

30 the right thing to do. Afterwards, as their licence to act gradually  
increased, they began to kill at will good and bad men alike; the rest  
31 they frightened and terrified. Thus, the citizen body was reduced to  
slavery and paid a heavy penalty for their foolish delight.

32 'In our own memory, when Sulla ordered the strangulation of  
Damasippus\* and others like him who flourished to the detriment of the  
state, who did not praise his actions? People were saying they deserved  
it, that he killed criminals and insurgents, men who had threatened the  
33 government with seditious revolt. But this action was the beginning of  
a great slaughter. For whenever someone coveted another man's home  
or villa, or eventually even his dishes or clothes, he would try to get the  
34 man proscribed. And soon after those who were delighted at the death  
of Damasippus were themselves being dragged away and there was no  
35 end of carnage until Sulla had glutted all his followers with riches.  
Now, I don't fear these consequences from M. Tullius nor do I fear  
them at this time, but in a great city there are many different tempera-  
36 ments. It is possible that at some other time, when another man is consul  
and also has an army at his disposal, a lie will be taken for the truth.  
When this precedent allows the consul by the decree of the Senate to  
draw his sword, who will stop or restrain him?

37 'Our ancestors, conscript fathers, were never lacking in intelli-  
gence or daring, but neither did their pride prevent them from adopt-  
ing foreign institutions, provided that they were good institutions.  
38 They took our offensive and defensive military weapons from the  
Samnites;\* most of the symbols of civil authority from the Etruscans.\*  
They were very eager, in short, to adopt at home whatever seemed  
to work among our allies or our enemies: they would rather copy  
39 what was good than envy it. But at the same time they imitated the  
Greek custom\* of flogging citizens and executing condemned men.  
40 After the Republic reached maturity and, because of its size, factions  
prevailed, innocent men were convicted, and other similar abuses  
began to happen. Then, the *lex Porcia* and other laws were passed,  
41 laws that allowed exile for the condemned. This, I think, is an espe-  
cially good reason, conscript fathers, not to adopt a new policy.  
42 I am sure that the virtue and wisdom\* of those men who created such  
a great empire from small resources was greater than ours, who have  
difficulty holding on to what was honourably produced.

43 'And so, is it my opinion that these men should be dismissed  
and Catiline's army allowed to increase? Not at all. This is my

proposal: their money should be confiscated; they should be held in chains in those towns that have the most resources. Thereafter, there should be no consultation about them before the Senate or referendum presented to the people.\* If anyone tries to change this arrangement, it is the Senate's judgement that he will be acting against the interests of the state and against the safety of all.'

52. When Caesar finished speaking, the other senators\* expressed aloud their varied approval of one or another proposal. But when M. Porcius Cato\* was asked his opinion, he spoke as follows:

'When I consider the facts and the danger we are in, conscript fathers, I'm of a very different mind from when I think of the proposals some have made. They seem to me to be discoursing on the punishment of men who have attempted war against their own fatherland, parents, altars, and hearths; but the facts admonish us to take precautions for the future against these men rather than debate what to do to them. Other crimes can be prosecuted after they are committed; but, if you do not act to prevent this crime, when it does occur, justice will be something you plead for but don't get. When a city is captured nothing is left for the defeated,\* by the immortal gods. But I call on you, you who have always valued your homes, villas, statues, and paintings more than the Republic. If you want to keep those possessions, whatever they are that you embrace, if you want to find leisure for your pleasures, then, wake up at last and take control of the state. We are not talking about taxes and the complaints of our allies; your freedom and our life are at risk.

'I have often spoken\* at length before this body, conscript fathers, often I have complained about the extravagance and greed\* of our citizens, and for this reason I have made many enemies. I am the kind of man who could never indulge in himself even the intention to do wrong, and so it was not easy for me to condone the appetite and the misconduct of others. But you paid little attention to what I said, and still the Republic was strong; our prosperity supported your dereliction. But now we are not asking whether we should live with or without a moral compass, or about the size or magnificence of the empire of the Roman people, but whether this which is ours, however it seems to you, will remain ours or will belong together with our own persons to the enemy.

'At this point does anyone bring up "compassion" and "mercy"? Long ago we lost the true names for things:\* squandering the property

of another is called “largesse”; daring to do wicked things is called  
12 “courage”. And so the Republic is at the edge. By all means let them  
be “liberal” with the wealth of our allies, since that’s how our morals  
are; let them be “compassionate” with thieves who take our treasure;  
but do not let them be “generous” with our blood and, while they  
spare a few criminals, destroy all the truly good men.

13 ‘A little while ago before this body Caesar spoke eloquently and well  
about life and death, regarding, I believe, the traditional view of the  
afterlife as false: that bad people take a path different from that of good  
people, and that they inhabit places foul, hideous, revolting, and full of  
14 fears. And so he proposed that their money be confiscated, that they  
themselves be held under guard in the townships, fearing, I assume,  
that, if they were in Rome, members of the conspiracy or some hired  
15 mob would use violence to set them free—as if the wicked and the  
criminal were only in Rome and not throughout Italy, or as if their  
recklessness would be less effective where there were fewer resources  
16 to oppose it. And so, if Caesar fears the danger those men present, his  
policy is futile. On the other hand, if he alone is not afraid when every-  
one else is so very afraid, it is all the more incumbent on me to be afraid  
17 for you and for me. And so when you decide about P. Lentulus and the  
others, know for certain that at the same time you are deciding about  
18 Catiline’s army and about all the conspirators. The more vigorously  
you act, the weaker will be their courage; if they see you hesitate only a  
little, immediately they will be upon us and they will be ferocious.

19 ‘Do not believe that our ancestors made a small Republic great  
20 with military weapons. If that were the case, we would now be in  
possession of the most beautiful of all states: we have more allies and  
21 citizens than they did, more military weapons and horses. No, other  
things made them great, things which we do not have at all: disciplined  
energy at home, a just empire abroad, a mind free in deliberation,  
22 limited neither by guilt nor craving.\* In place of these qualities, we  
have extravagance and greed, public poverty and private wealth. We  
praise affluence, we pursue idleness. We make no distinction between  
23 good and bad men; ambition usurps all the rewards of virtue. And no  
wonder: when each man of you takes counsel separately for himself,  
when at home you are slaves to bodily pleasures and here you are  
slaves to money and influence, this is why the Republic, abandoned  
by you, has been attacked.

‘But I let these things go. There is a conspiracy, the most noble 24  
citizens have conspired to burn down the fatherland; the Gauls have  
been provoked to war, the Gauls, Rome’s most bitter enemy;\* the  
enemy leader stands over our head with an army. Do you still hesi- 25  
tate and wonder what you should do with an enemy that has been  
captured within the city walls? Oh, let’s pity them, I say—they have 26  
gone astray, young men led by ambition—and let’s send them off  
with their weapons! No, don’t let your compassion and mercy turn, if 27  
they take arms, into misery. Of course (you say) the situation itself is  
difficult but you are not afraid of it. Not true; you do fear it and fear 28  
it most of all. But it is your inability to act and your effeminate heart  
that makes you hesitate, everyone waiting for someone else, trusting,  
of course, in the gods who have often saved this Republic in times of  
great danger. But it is not with prayers and womanly entreaties that 29  
we earn the help of the gods; it is by being watchful, taking action,  
making good policy, that all things succeed. When you have handed  
yourself over to apathy and lethargy, it would be an empty gesture to  
call upon the gods; they are angry and hostile.

‘Among our forefathers, during the Gallic War A. Manlius Torquatus\* 30  
ordered his own son killed because he attacked the enemy without  
orders. That extraordinary young man paid the penalty for unre- 31  
strained courage by his death; you are dealing with the most cruel  
murderers, and yet you hesitate about what you should decide? Of  
course, their prior life mitigates their crime. Yes, spare Lentulus’ 32  
eminence, if the man himself ever spared his own sense of decency, if  
he spared his reputation, if he spared any god or man. Cethegus is a 33  
young man; forgive him, if he has not twice made war on his country.  
Why should I talk of Gabinius, Statilius, and Caeparius? They would 34  
not have made these plans for the Republic, if anything were of value  
to them. Finally, conscript fathers, if there were any room for error, 35  
by god I would be happy to let you be chastised by experience itself,  
since you hold my words in contempt. But we are hemmed in on all  
sides. Catiline and his army are at our throats; others are within the  
walls and the enemy is in the heart of Rome. We can neither make  
any plans nor have any discussion of policy in secret. Therefore, speed  
is all the more necessary.

‘And so this is my opinion: whereas the Republic is in very great 36  
danger because of the wicked plans of its most criminal citizens, and

whereas they have been convicted by the evidence of T. Volturcius and the Allobrogian legates and have confessed that they have planned slaughter, arson, and other hideous and cruel deeds against their fellow citizens and their country, the punishment for capital crimes that is inflicted upon those caught red-handed\* must in the manner of our ancestors be inflicted upon those who have confessed.'

1 53. After Cato sat down, all the ex-consuls and a great number of senators approved his proposal; they praised to the skies his strength of mind, they scolded each other and called one another timid. Cato was considered a brilliant and a great man. The Senate's decree accorded with his recommendation.\*

2 But, for my part, as I read and heard about the many things that the Roman people have done, the brilliant deeds they accomplished at home and in the military, on sea and on land, it happened to become my passionate desire to work out what especially supported such accom-  
3 plements. I was aware that a small band had often fought against great enemy armies; I knew that despite meagre resources they had waged war with opulent kings; in addition I knew that they had often endured the violence of Fortune, that the Greeks were superior in  
4 eloquence and the Gauls in military glory. And as I considered many possibilities, it became apparent that everything we accomplished was due to the extraordinary abilities of a few citizens. This was the reason that our ancestors' poverty overcame wealth, that a few overcame many.  
5 But after the state had been corrupted by luxury and self-indulgence, the Republic still could support the vices of its generals and magistrates because of its sheer size, and, just as when a woman is worn out by childbirth, for a long time at Rome there was hardly anyone great in  
6 manly virtue. Still, in my memory there were two men of extraordinary virtue, but different character, M. Cato and C. Caesar. And since my discussion has brought them forward, it is not my intention to pass them by without saying something to reveal the nature and character of each, to the extent that my talents allow.

1 54. And so I turn to them. They were nearly equal in birth, age, and eloquence; their greatness of soul was similar, likewise their glory;  
2 but in other respects they were different. Caesar was considered great for his benevolence and generosity; Cato for integrity of life. The former was made famous by his compassion and mercy; intolerance  
3 added to the latter's stature. They both attained glory: Caesar by giving, helping, forgiving; Cato by not bribing.\* In one there was



refuge for the wretched, in the other death for the wicked. Caesar's 4  
easy disposition was praised, Cato's steadfastness. Finally, Caesar's  
heartfelt purpose was to work hard, to be vigilant, to neglect his own  
interests while being devoted to his friends', and to deny nothing  
that was proper to give; for himself he longed for a great command,  
an army, a new war in which his excellence could shine. But Cato's 5  
drive was for self-restraint, propriety, moral absolutism. He did not 6  
compete with the wealthy in wealth or with the partisans in partisan-  
ship; he competed with the fervent in virtue, with the restrained in  
moderation, with the blameless in abstinence; he preferred to be good  
than to seem good; and so, the less he sought renown, the more it  
followed him.

55. After the Senate supported Cato's recommendation, as I men- 1  
tioned above, the consul thought it best to take precautions for the  
coming night and to prevent any new developments during that  
time. He asked three men\* to make the necessary preparations for  
the execution. Guards were deployed and he himself led Lentulus 2  
to prison. For the rest, praetors were responsible. In the prison, 3  
when you have gone up a little to the left, there is a place called  
the Tullianum\* which is a depression of about twelve feet into the  
ground. Walls protect it on all sides and above there is a dome made 4  
with stone arches, but squalor, murk, and stench make it hideous  
and terrible to behold. After Lentulus was sent down into this place, 5  
the executioners strangled him with a rope as ordered. Thus that 6  
man, an aristocrat from the glorious family of the Cornelii, a man who  
had held consular power at Rome, found an end that suited his char-  
acter and his actions. Cethegus, Statilius, Gabinius, and Caeparius  
were executed in the same way.

56. While this was happening at Rome, Catiline formed two 1  
legions\* from all the forces he had himself brought together and those  
that Manlius held. He filled out his cohorts according to the number  
of soldiers he had. At first he had no more than two thousand men.  
Then, as volunteers or allies came into camp, he distributed them 2  
equally, and in a short time he filled the legions with their quota.  
Only about one-quarter of the entire army, however, had military 3  
weapons; the rest were armed as chance would have it with hunting-  
spears and lances, some were carrying sharpened sticks.

But after Antonius began to approach\* with his army, Catiline 4  
marched through the mountains, moving his camp now toward

Rome, now toward Gaul, and not allowing the enemy any opportunity to fight. He was hoping soon to have a great number of forces, if his  
5 allies at Rome could accomplish their tasks. Meanwhile, he refused to enlist the slaves who had at first come to him in great numbers. He relied on the resources of the conspiracy, thinking that it was incompatible with his plans to appear to make common cause between fugitive slaves and citizens.

1 57. Things changed when news arrived in the camp that the conspiracy at Rome had been exposed, that Lentulus, Cethegus, and the rest, whom I mentioned above, had paid the penalty. Then most of those who had been enticed to war by the hope of plunder or an interest in revolution slipped away. Catiline led the rest through difficult mountains\* on forced marches into the area around Pistoria. His plan was to flee unseen down footpaths into Transalpine Gaul.\*  
2 But Q. Metellus Celer was on watch in the Picene field\* with three legions; from the difficulty of the situation he guessed that Catiline  
3 would do just what we said he did above. And so, when he learned from deserters where they were going, he quickly moved his camp and took a position in the foothills where that man was to descend  
4 in haste into Gaul. Furthermore, Antonius was not far away either, since he, with a great army, was following on more level ground the  
5 light-armed men in flight. But when Catiline saw that his path was cut off by the mountains and the enemy forces, that things had turned against him in Rome, and that there was no hope either in flight or for assistance, he thought it was best in such circumstances to try the fortunes of war. He decided to engage Antonius first. And so he called an assembly and delivered a speech like this:

1 58. 'I know for a fact, soldiers, that words cannot create manly virtue and that a general's speech does not make an indolent army  
2 energetic or a frightened army brave. Whatever daring has been put in each man's heart by nature and training, that's what he will show in war. It is futile to exhort a man who is not stirred by glory or danger.  
3 Fear in his soul blocks the ears. Still, I have summoned you to remind you of a few things and at the same time to disclose the reason for my strategy.

4 'I'm quite sure that you know, soldiers, what a disaster Lentulus'\* lack of courage and his indolence has brought on us and on himself, and how I was not able to set off for Gaul while waiting for reinforce-  
5 ments from Rome. Now, you know as well as I do what difficulties we

are in. There are two enemy armies, one from Rome, the other from 6  
Gaul, which block our way. Our lack of food and other supplies does  
not allow us to remain here any longer, even if we really wanted to.  
Wherever you choose to go, you must open a path with your sword. 7  
And so I warn you to have a brave and ready heart, and, when you 8  
enter the battle, to remember that in the strength of your right hand  
you carry your wealth, honour, and glory, and even your freedom and  
your fatherland. If we win, there will be safety everywhere: resources 9  
will abound, towns and colonies will open their doors. But if we are 10  
afraid and yield, everything will turn against us. No place or friend  
will protect the man who doesn't protect himself with his sword.

'And you must keep this in mind as well: the need that presses 11  
on us is not the same as what weighs on them. We are fighting for  
our homeland, for freedom, for our lives; theirs is an inane struggle  
for the power of a few. And so, it is all the more necessary that you 12  
attack with reckless courage, remembering the manly virtue you have  
displayed before. We could have spent our lives in exile and in utter 13  
shame; some of you, having lost your property, could have waited  
at Rome for the help of strangers. But you have decided to follow 14  
this course because to real men those alternatives seem hideous and  
intolerable. If you want to get free of these things, you will need reck- 15  
less courage: only the victor gets peace in return for war. To turn the 16  
arms which protect your body away from the enemy and hope to find  
safety in flight, that is utter madness. In battle the danger is always 17  
the greatest for those who are most afraid. Reckless courage is like a  
defensive wall.

'When I think of your abilities, soldiers, and weigh what you have 18  
already done, I have great hopes for victory. Your courage, your age, 19  
your manly virtue encourage me, as does necessity, which can make  
even the timid brave. For the enemy is large in numbers, but the 20  
narrow passes prevent them from surrounding us. Still, if Fortune 21  
is jealous of your manly virtue, do not lose your life without taking  
vengeance. Do not be captured and slaughtered like cattle; rather,  
fight like men, and leave for your enemy a victory filled with blood  
and grief!

59. When he said these things, he hesitated briefly, ordered the 1  
bugle call, lined up his men in battle order and led them into the plain.  
He then removed all the horses; in this way, with all the soldiers fa-  
cing the same danger, their courage would be greater. He was himself

on foot and drew up his army to suit the place and his resources.

2 There was a plain between the mountains on the left and the sharp  
3 standards of the rest of the army more closely together in reserve. From  
those in reserve, he moved all the centurions and the recalled veterans,  
also all the best common soldiers to the front of the formation. He put  
C. Manlius in charge of the right side, a man from Faesulae\* in charge  
of the left. He himself took his position with freedmen and colonists\*  
near the eagle that they said C. Marius\* had kept in his army during  
the Cimbrian war.

4 On the other side, C. Antonius, who had a sore foot, had handed  
his army over to his legate, M. Petreius,\* because he could not enter  
5 the battle. Petreius placed the veteran cohorts that he had enlisted  
to resist the insurgency\* in the front, behind them he put the rest  
of the army in reserve. He himself rode about on horseback, address-  
ing each soldier by name, encouraging him, asking him to remember  
that he was fighting against unarmed bandits for his homeland, his  
6 children, his altars, and his hearth. He had been a military man for  
more than thirty years as tribune, prefect, legate, or praetor, and had  
served with great distinction in the army. For this reason he person-  
ally knew most of the men and their acts of bravery. He enkindled the  
soldiers' courage by mentioning these things.

1 **60.** But, when everything was sorted out and with a bugle Petreius  
gave the signal, he ordered the cohorts to advance slowly. The enemy  
2 army did the same. When they were close enough for the light-armed  
troops to begin the fight, there was a great shout. They clash with  
hostile standards.\* They hurl their javelins; they fight with swords.  
3 The veterans, remembering their long-established virtue, press on  
fiercely fighting hand to hand; those who resist are unafraid. With  
4 great violence they struggle. Meanwhile Catiline with his light troops  
is moving around the front line of the battle: giving aid to those  
in trouble, sending in fresh troops for those wounded, overseeing  
everything, himself often fighting, often killing the enemy. He was  
performing at the same time the duties of the energetic soldier and  
5 the good general. When Petreius, to his surprise, sees Catiline exert-  
ing himself with great force, he leads his praetorian cohort\* into the  
middle of the enemy's line; he throws them into confusion and he  
kills them wherever they resist. Then, he attacks the rest on each  
6 flank. Manlius and the Faesulanian are among the first to die fighting.

Catiline sees his troops routed, himself left with a few men; then, thinking of his family name and his long-established dignity, he charges into the thick of the enemy and there, fighting, is impaled.

61. But only when the battle was over could you truly measure the daring and the mental toughness of Catiline's army. For nearly every man's body, now dead, covered the very place where living he had stood fighting. A few from the middle of the line had been scattered by the praetorian cohort and had fallen apart from the rest, but everyone had taken wounds in the chest when they fell. Catiline, in fact, was found far from his own men amidst the corpses of the enemy. He was still breathing a little and maintained on his face that ferocious courage he had had while living. To summarize: not a single native-born citizen from all his army was captured either in battle or in flight; that is the degree to which no one spared his own life or the life of his enemy.

Still, the army of the Roman people did not attain a joyful or bloodless victory. The most energetic fighters had either been killed in the battle or had returned gravely wounded. Furthermore, many came from the camp to visit the field or to plunder; when they rolled over the enemy corpses they discovered now a friend, now a guest or a relative; likewise, there were those who recognized political opponents. And so through the entire army men were moved in different ways to joy, sorrow, grief, and happiness.

