

SALLUST AND THE GREEK HISTORICAL TRADITION

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Texts and intellectual traditions are considered "classic" when succeeding generations recognize their enduring value by using them to find inspiration and insight into contemporary affairs. The German word, *Nachleben*, carries, I believe more than merely the sense of "afterlife"; it suggests a sense of the transcending and enduring value of the "classics". Already in the Hellenistic world, Greek texts and authors of the 5th Century (and earlier) had come to enjoy such a status; indeed, Hellenistic scholars consciously used the tradition to shape, measure, and define their own achievements. The awareness of the "classic" has remained since then an abiding feature of civilization, and not just in the European tradition.

The Romans were both heirs and participants in this process. The roles of Cato and of Cicero in reworking the Greek classics into the Latin tradition are well known and need not be repeated here. The issue here is: How did the Roman historian Sallust use the Greek historical tradition to formulate his own analysis of Roman history? That is, in the context of *Nachleben*, how did one historian of the late Roman Republic adapt the Greek historical tradition to shape his own account of the history of the late Roman Republic? In terms of the number of references in the surviving texts, the problem may appear to be of secondary interest in the broader context of *Sallustiana*. True enough, but the uses of *res Graecae* are not only suggestive of an important aspect of Sallust's intellectual roots, but also yield insights into the perception of Greek historical culture at Rome in this formative period.

This theme has become an important one in recent scholarship, most notably by Paul Zanker and Erich Gruen.¹ The interests of the former and his German colleagues in art history and epigraphy, have centered around the Augustan period, while those of latter have focused on the 2nd century, BC. Neither one has, however, dealt with Sallust.

It needs to be stated clearly and unambiguously at the beginning: I am not arguing that the Greek influence on Sallust was defining or pervasive nor do I wish to intimate he believed that Greek culture, material or intellectual, led to the decline of the Republic. Sallust's sense of decline was very much influenced by Roman tradition, but this tradition involved a number of originally Hellenic historical ideas that had already been reworked to become part of the his *Weltanschauung*. On these issues Sallust himself (e.g., *BJ* 41 and 42) and modern scholars are not in doubt.² The questions here are: how does Sallust use the Greek cultural and historical tradition and how are both related to his own sense of Roman history and historiography?

In any discussion of how a Roman author makes use of Greek material, we must also address the concern that Roman writers did not consistently label "Greek" concepts and cultural material as Greek. Indeed, it is sometimes not clear whether Sallust distinguishes between *res alienae* and *res Graecae*. There are two issues. Does Sallust weigh material because it is "foreign"

¹ P. Zanker, *Power of Images*, Ann Arbor, 1988; E. Gruen, *Culture and National Identity*, Ithaca, 1992.

² Syme, *Sallust*, Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1964, esp. Ch.9; D. C. Earl, *The Political Thought of Sallust*, Cambridge, Ch. 1, 3 and 4. .

and judge it regardless of its Hellenic or (e.g.) its Punic origin?³ Alternatively, does he assume that the alien material is Hellenic unless otherwise specified?³ The latter appears to be the case. When Sallust refers to non-Greek cultural items, e.g., the African geography of Hiempsal (*BJ* 12) that he had translated for him (see below), he specifically notes the origin. Otherwise, the context usually suggests that the "alien" cultural artifacts are "Greek" and that his authorities (*auctores*) were known to or could be guessed at by his audience. Hence, though Sallust's debt to Thucydides (see below) was manifest to ancients (*aemulum Thucydidis Sallustium*, Vell. Pat., II 36.2) and modern alike (see below), the Greek historian is never mentioned by name.

The following discussion of the Greek material in Sallust is in three parts. The first is a brief review of Sallust's use of Greek historians, notably Thucydides. The second focuses on the *exempla* Sallust introduces from Greek history. The third section addresses the problem of what Sallust made of being "learned" in Greek literature (*litteris Graecis doctissimus*). It is in these three areas that Greek cultural concepts are displayed in the works of the Roman historian

I. Intellectual Roots

The debt of Sallust to Greek historians especially Thucydides is readily apparent even to undergraduates reading the two authors in translation and has been discussed extensively in scholarly literature throughout this century.⁴ The classic examples are the reworking of the language on the sedition at Corcyra (Thuc. III 82-3) to form *BC* 10, and the parallels between the Mytilenean and Catilinarian debates.⁵ On this subject, Syme concludes: "Sallust exploits Thucydides in two ways. First, translation or adaptation of phrases. Second, and much more important, to produce an equivalence of manner and atmosphere."⁶ As the ground on this issue is so well trodden, and the space here so limited, I note my agreement with Syme's conclusion on this issue and move on to other issues. What is significant for this argument is that readers ancient and modern have recognized and studied the similarities and differences. As the examples are so obvious, there can be no question of the fact that Sallust deliberately constructed his narrative to reveal his debt to Thucydides, but to do so indirectly.

Because of the use of phrases, manner and atmosphere is patently obvious, there is also the temptation to assume that the two historians shared the same sense of causation.⁷ Here one must be extremely careful. There are certainly similarities, for example in the relationship between morality and politics, but there are also notable differences. Thucydides documents how catastrophic events of human (war, sedition) or natural (plague) origin may produce a decline from greatness (or even prosperity) that is material and moral. Sallust, on the other hand, finds that immoderate greatness (i.e., the removal of the *metus hostilis*, *BC* 10, *BJ* 41) led to the decline of virtue and inevitably to catastrophic events (sedition and civil war). That is, 'first principle' and 'conclusion' appear in the reverse order. In sum, the two historians employ very much the same terminology, but arrange the material in distinct ways. This brief summary does not do justice to the subject, but is intended rather to illustrate one way that Sallust could be inspired by Greek

³ On this issue in reference to Cato, Gruen, CNI 70. Although Gruen specifically mentions two items, a Babylonian coverlet and Punic pavement, the general assumption of his chapters 2 and 3 is that all such items (statues, paintings, collectibles) are of Greek origin or at least done in the Greek style.

⁴ On Grecisms in Sallustian style, P. Perochat, *Les modèles grecs de Salluste*, Paris, 1949; Syme, 264; on emulation of Thucydides, 51f., 117, 142. Th. Scanlon, *The Influence of Thucydides on Sallust*, Heidelberg, 1980.

⁵ Syme 246 with note 33. How words change their meaning, *boni, amicitia-factio* (Syme, 255). Connections already recognized by ancients, Perochat, 1ff. Scanlon, 99ff.

⁶ Sallust, 56

⁷ The literature on this subject is extensive, Scanlon, *Influence*, 31-48, with a full bibliography.

material without however following it too closely. In sum, Sallust's sense of historical causation was inspired by Thucydides, but cannot be construed as imitation.

Res Graecae were also available to Sallust through Roman historians who had already reworked the Greek tradition to make it more compatible to Roman expectations. It may appear odd to discuss Sallust's intellectual roots in the Greek tradition by looking at Cato the Elder. But, as Syme has noted, "Sallust writes according to the spirit and categories of the past, parading as a renovated Cato."⁸ No other Roman author, it might be argued, is as sharply focused his own *Romanitas* as is the 2nd Century Censor. For our purposes, Cato is significant because had already begun to rework the Latin tradition incorporating elements of Greek style and content into the emerging Latin historiographical tradition.⁹

Like Cato, Sallust was a sharp critic of luxurious habits and lax moral discipline (*BC* 5ff.), qualities associated with Greek life as the Romans perceived it.¹⁰ Moreover, both criticized lavish private building that was designed for personal gratification rather than for usefulness to the state. Although Sallust does not specifically mention Greek cultural items, the implications are that these structures were built "in the Greek style".¹¹

Neither historian appears to be hostile to Greek culture itself, but rather to the way cultural artifacts were used/abused by Romans of all ranks for private advantage (as Gruen argues is the case for Cato). For Sallust, the contrast is more between the actions of ancestors that led to the glory of the state, and those of his contemporaries who sought personal and private gain and thereby ruined the commonwealth.

Given the pervasiveness of such opinions in our sources, there is no reason to believe that Cato and Sallust were the only Latin authors of the late Republic to make these connections and conclusions. Elements of Hellenism, both positive and negative, had already been absorbed and reworked even by those who had a reputation for skepticism. Sallust then worked in a tradition, one that combined a reworked alien (Hellenic) tradition with *Romanitas*; one flexible enough to allow for a more profound intellectual understanding of events. Cato was clearly central to this transformation; he was moreover crucial for the historian Sallust because he provided the model for adapting Greek concepts to support the moral tradition of Rome.

Though Sallust does not mention Greek authors by name, he was familiar with many of the central ideas and concepts of Greek historical and political culture. Besides Thucydides, Sallust (it has been suggested) was influenced by Isocrates, Plato, Xenophon, and others.¹² It is, however, not clear that Sallust had studied these authors and knew their works directly and intimately. Indeed, the use of material suggests rather that the historian was relying on what had become intellectual commonplaces in the late Republic.¹³ Indeed, most of the references, for example to philosophical notions, reflect basic, but not detailed, knowledge of such venerable ideas as the sovereignty of the mind over the body and the primacy of intellectual pursuits.

⁸ Sallust, 242.

⁹ *CNI*, c. 2, note p. 80: "Indeed, Cato did not "repress Greek culture, but [sought to] employ it as a means to mark off the distinctiveness of Roman culture."

¹⁰ Gruen, 54ff. 84ff. "The infiltration of Greek art, as our sources present it, meant luxury, softness and a compromise of Roman traditional values", with references to especially to Polyb. 9, 10.1-12; Livy 25, 40.1. On this subject, see below.

¹¹ BC 12-13 (usually thought to be a reference to Lucullus' villa at Baiae, but perhaps not only to this estate, Gruen 54.

¹² Perrochat, chs. 3, 4, 5 and 5, respectively.

¹³ Syme 241, with bibliography and further references.

Where does this leave us? Syme (*ad loc.*) considers the question to be of subordinate value, suggesting that much of this information on philosophy as well as geography derived from the Stoics in general, from Panaetius, and from the elusive polymath Posidonius.¹⁴

It is not at all clear that Sallust was directly familiar with the writings of Posidonius; indeed he may have used secondary compilations. Note, for example, that Sallust refers to the African geography of Hiempsal: "I give it [the account of the geography of Africa] as translated to me from the Punic books said to have been written by king Hiempsal... (*quamquam ab ea fama quae plerosque optinet divorsum est, tamen uti ex libris Punicis, qui regis Hiempsalis dicebantur, interpretatum nobis est... ceterum fides* [of this account] *eius rei penes auctores erit*, BJ 17). Syme, noting errors common to Sallust and Strabo, argues that both may be drawing on Posidonius directly or indirectly.¹⁵ Even so, and what Syme never explains, why is Sallust ready to cite as an authority a relatively obscure Punic chieftain rather than the leading Greek authority of his time? Thematic needs might provide a sufficient explanation for the choice, but perhaps Sallust is not so much avoiding the mention of Greek authorities, presumably his readers will know who the *auctores* were, as much as attempting to gain credibility by citing an alternate source. What this passage does illustrate is that "alien" material (not just in Greek) was available and could be used effectively. Nonetheless, the reference is unusual both because an authority is mentioned by name and because he (in this case Hiempsal) is not Greek. In sum, the reasonable conclusion to draw from this pattern is that Sallust believed that his readers would know who his Greek *auctores* were. That is, Sallust had a literate public in mind, one that was familiar with the identities and ideas of Greek intellectuals.¹⁶

Though the identity of the *auctores* is not stated, Sallust was very clear and emphatic about the role of historians in generating civic virtue by preserving the memory of glorious and ignominious deeds. BC 3 and 7, and BJ 4 outline the difficulty of the task and claim for the historians a value and virtue equal to that of statesmen. Again, such sentiments were well established in the Greek historical tradition from Herodotus on.¹⁷

In sum, the theme of the monograph is an episode in Roman history, but the historian makes use of Hellenic concepts and language that had already become deeply incorporated into the Latin tradition. Both the writer and the reader expected allusions to the "classics"; to do otherwise would have left his history without a recognizable structure.

II. Sallust and Greek History

Sallust refers to several events in Greek history. It is, however, an odd collection of episodes, one that does not fit any obvious pattern beyond that of *exempla*. Some events appear in his narrative sections and others in the speeches. The episodes fall into two categories: events in Greek history in which Rome plays no role and events in which Rome is a major player.

At the beginning of the BC (ch 2), Sallust refers to two events related by Greek historians and connected with the foundation of empires: Cyrus and the foundation of Persia as an imperial

¹⁴Syme, 153, 242, and especially the skepticism about his importance expressed at 244 n. 27.

¹⁵Op. cit. "...even if they were written in Punic, would probably owe more to Greek science than to authentic native tradition." Sallust also mentions that Lepcis still followed *legum cultusque pleraque Sidonica*, BJ 78, but does provide details, suggesting that he may not have had knowledge of the laws and customs beyond the fact that the Sidonian tradition was still viable.

¹⁶ Sallust does show an interest in geographical information, note, for example, HIST ii, 1-3. To judge from the limited information surviving, there was nothing distinctive about it. Patrick McGushin, *Sallust: The Histories*, Oxford, 1992, lists other sources that either drew on Sallust or on a source common to all accounts.

¹⁷ McGushin, *C. Sallustius Crispus: Bellum Catilinae. A Commentary*, Leiden, 1978, ad loc., provides a summary of the literature on this subject.

power and how the Athenians and Lacedaemonians established their hegemonies. The selections themselves are odd: The choice of Cyrus, a non-Greek, and perhaps pointedly not of Alexander and the empire of Macedonia, begs for comment. Moreover, the two Greek empires established by Athens and Sparta respectively were neither enduring and nor particularly admirable when compared to Rome's sense of its own achievement.¹⁸ How is this selection to be explained? Perrochat has argued that Sallust looked to Greek authors like Xenophon and Plato primarily for philosophical concepts and not for historical narrative.¹⁹ In this case the resemblance in language is strong, but in the context here with Sparta and Athens, seems to point equally well to Xenophon's *Cyropaedia* and its thinly disguised allusions to an idealized Spartan constitution.²⁰ Perhaps we have here a theme so widely repeated that it required no particular explication. Sallust may not be reflecting on Greek history, but rather using a well-known metaphor from the Greek literary corpus to make his case. Regardless of the sources, the argument of is clear: To accomplish something great, and here the establishment of empire must be reckoned as a significant achievement, the power of the mind (*ingenium*) must be brought to bear. The function of the selection is to allow the author the opportunity to universalize his conclusions by referring to historical events outside Roman history.

Other references to events in Greek history are to be found in the speech of Caesar in the BC 51.²¹ "The Lacedaemonians, after they had conquered the Athenians, appointed thirty men to govern their state. These men began at first by putting to death without a trial the most wicked and generally hated citizens, what greatly pleased the people, who declared that it was well done. But afterwards their license gradually increased, and the tyrants slew good and bad alike at pleasure and intimidated the rest. Thus the nation was reduced to slavery and had to pay a heavy penalty for its foolish rejoicing." This example is richer in detail than the reference to Cyrus discussed above, an observation that may suggest that the story and metaphor were not as well known to his audience. Indeed, scholars like Earl and McGushin have argued that Sallust appears to have followed Caesar's original speech to some degree.²² The juxtaposition of the speeches of Cato and Caesar reminds one of the Mytilenean debate in Thucydides III; nonetheless, Caesar draws instead on an episode that is not Thucydidean at all,²³ but a well known *topos* in post Peloponnesian war prose.²⁴ This discrepancy suggests that Sallust "sets the stage" in a Thucydidean manner, but still allows Caesar the core of his argument.²⁵ As the rest of the speech was particularly concerned to demonstrate the dangers of execution without trial, this story fits the occasion very well. One would like to know why Caesar/Sallust felt it useful to

¹⁸ Scanlon, 51f., expresses no concern about this problem.

¹⁹ 57 (where the passage is compared to Plato, *Menex.* 239e, and 84-86.

²⁰ Perrochat, Ch. 5, notes the many instances in which Sallust relies on the *Cyropaedia*, including, BJ 10 =Cyr. VIII, 7, 13-14; BC 58 and Cyr. III, 3, 44; also how the work was used by contemporaries of Sallust.

²¹ Thomas Scanlon reviews the internal and external roots of this speech in *Spes frustra: A Reading of Sallust*, Heidelberg, 1987, 30ff.

²² D. C. Earl, *The Political Thought of Sallust*, Cambridge, 1961, 96; McGushin, ad loc. Also, Syme 73, 111-2 more cautiously.

²³ On the Thucydidean model for the speeches, Perrochat, 21f., Patrick McGushin, *C. Sallustius Crispus: Bellum Catilinae - A Commentary*, Leiden, 1977, ad loc., is more cautious suggesting other possibilities.

²⁴ Cf., Xen. *Hell.* II, 3.2ff. A useful collection of sources on the Thirty Tyrants may be found by searching the Perseus database under that title.

²⁵ McGushin, *Commentary*, 239-240, with further references ancient and modern.

draw on a rather unfamiliar episode in Athenian history.²⁶ Perhaps the very fact that it was "alien" (and not Roman) allowed the speaker more room to maneuver around a sensitive subject.

Later in the same speech, Caesar makes yet another reference to Greek history at *BC* 51.38-9: "In sum, whatever they (ancestors) found suitable among allies or enemies, they adopted at home with the greatest enthusiasm, preferring to imitate rather than to envy the successful. But in that same time, following the usage of Greece, they applied the scourge to citizens and inflicted the supreme penalty upon those found guilty. Afterwards, when the state reached maturity (*res publica adolevit*) and because of its large population, factions prevailed; when the blameless began to be oppressed and other wrongs of that kind were perpetrated: Then they devised the Porcian law and other laws which allowed the condemned to alternative of exile." As in the first case, we are back in early constitutional history and the reference is unspecific, comparable in this respect to the description of the empire building of Cyrus. Nonetheless, the context and the argument must have been well known to the audience. Indeed, McGushin notes frequent references in Greek writers to the trait mentioned here: Rome might have imitated such atrocities in her early years, but as a maturing state she put aside such tendencies and attained a higher level of civilization. Though there is no explicit condemnation of Greek influence, Caesar/Sallust clearly believed that Rome had transcended (at least in this area) the need for imitation.

It is also in Caesar's speech that we have one of the very few references to the interaction of Romans and Greeks. At *BC* 51.5, Caesar explains that "In the Macedonian war, which we waged with King Perseus, the great and glorious community of the Rhodians, which owed its growth to the support of the Roman people, was unfaithful to us and hostile. But after the war was over and the question of the Rhodians was under discussion, our ancestors let them go unpunished for fear that someone might say that the wealth of the Rhodians, rather than resentment for the wrong they had done, had led to the declaration of war." One would like to know here how closely Sallust is following Caesar here. There is wonderful irony here: The reference to the treatment of the Rhodians was a theme of one of the speeches of Cato the Elder (ORF 95a and b), an argument that pointedly anticipates the next reported speech in the debate, namely the one Cato the Younger will make in *BC* 52. Though the reference may be to an event in Greco-Roman history, Sallust (and Caesar) appear to be using it not so much to draw conclusions from understanding the past, but to contrast the positions of the two leading speakers in the debate.²⁷

Though Sallust does not use *exempla* from Greek history with anything approaching the frequency of the use of style and concept, he clearly assumes that his readers were familiar with the major works in the Hellenic historical tradition. Moreover, though not quite so explicit, is the assumption that a work of Roman history gains credibility as a serious historical work by employing the devices of the Greek tradition. It is not clear that Sallust's audience expected such references, but the author's mixture of episodes and stylistic subtleties is deliberate and suggestive.

²⁶ That the example does not fit well has been observed by others, e.g., McGushin, *Commentary* 252. On women as *doctae*, Th. Habinek, Roman Women's Useless Knowledge, *The Politics of Latin Literature*, Princeton, 1998, ch. 6. The Sallustian reference is not mentioned, the article focuses rather on the ambiguity of the word in Latin poets.

²⁷ On Cato's famous Rhodian speech, Liv. 45.25, also Syme, 106. On the role reversal in this set of speeches, Syme, 112: Caesar defends *mos maiorum* and legality, Cato "brushes it [legality] aside as a dangerous sophistry".

III. *litteris Graecis doctissimus*

Aside from these events chosen from Greek history, there are a number of other elements of Greek material and intellectual culture that appear again and again in the Sallust's works. One of the most frequently repeated notions is that of being learned in Greek (and sometimes also Latin) literature. Indeed, the references are revealing about attitudes toward high culture.

The most striking statements about Greek literary culture are found in the *BJ*, where learnedness in Greek literature is used to contrast Marius and Sulla. In describing the life of Marius before his consulate, the historian pointedly compares the general's preference for military life (*stipendia facundia*) to pursuit of Greek rhetoric (*Graeca facundia*) and urban manners (*munditia urbanae*, *BJ* 63.3). Similar sentiments, in case the reader had missed the point, are provided twenty chapters later where Marius notes in his speech (85.32): "Nor have I studied Greek letters. I did not greatly care to become acquainted with them, since they had not taught their teachers virtue. (*neque litteras Graecas didici; parum placebet eas discere, quippe quae ad virtutem doctoribus nihil profuerant*). What was implicit in 63, is now explicit. The high moral tone of at least some elements in Greek literature had not produced a corps of learned men who could act in accordance with the values they had learned and taught. This sentiment, perhaps since the age of Cato the Elder, had become a *topos* in Roman literature.

It is then striking, though hardly a surprise, that when the special villain of the monographs (*BC* 5.6; 11. 4), Sulla, is introduced in the *BJ*, he is described as: *litteris Graecis et Latinis iuxta atque doctissime eruditus* (*BJ* 95). Equally striking is the other reference to such learning, namely the description of Sempronia: *satis fortunata fuit; litteris Graecis et Latinis docta, psallere et saltare elegantius, quam necesse est probae* (*BC* 25). What does Sallust want to suggest about being *doctissimus* in Greek and Latin literature? Is such study morally corrupting? The interpretation of the passages is not easy. Even Syme expresses "curiosity and disquiet" about the function of the digression on Sempronia.²⁸

The solution, I believe, is not to be sought in an explanation that involves Sallust's rejection of Greek culture, but rather must be sought in the words of Marius quoted above: *neque litteras Graecas didici; parum placebet eas discere, quippe quae ad virtutem doctoribus nihil profuerant*. Being learned in Greek literature is no guarantee that one will lead a virtuous life. It was indeed the learned Sulla who corrupts his army.

"Besides all this, Lucius Sulla, in order to secure the loyalty of the army which he led into Asia, had allowed it a luxury and license foreign to the manners of our forefathers; and in the intervals of leisure those charming and voluptuous lands had easily demoralized the warlike spirit of his soldiers. There is was that an army of the Roman peoples first learned to indulge in women and drink; to admire statues, paintings and chased vases, to steal them from private houses and public places, to pillage shrines, and to desecrate everything, both sacred and profane. *Huc accedebat quod L. Sulla exercitum quem in Asia ductaverat, quo sibi fidum faceret, contra morem maiorum luxuriose nimisque liberaliter habuerat. Loca amoena, voluptaria facile in otio ferocis militum animos molliverant. Ibi primum insuevit exercitus populi romani amare, potare; signa, tabulas pictas, vasa caelata mirari; ea privatim et publice rapere, delubra spoliare, sacra profanaque omnia polluere* (*BC* 11).

²⁸ Sallust, 69; 133f. esp. notes 56-8

The tragedy then is that the learned Sulla should have known better; for this reason, his tragedy is even more profound. So, too with Sempronia, her learnedness had not provided any incentive to a virtuous life.

Two considerations support this argument. First, the two men of distinctive virtue in the BC, Cato and Caesar, were men who might also be described *as litteris Graecis doctissimi*. It is however, notable that Sallust does not feel he has to introduce this fact. Why not? Because, Sallust intimates, their virtue did not depend on learnedness.

Romans had not surpassed the Greeks in eloquence or the Gauls in glory: *...facundia Graecos, gloria belli Gallos ante Romanos fuisse. Ac mihi multa agetant constabat paucorum civium egregiam virtutem cuncta patravisse eoque factum uti divitias paupertas, multitudinem paucitas superaret* (BC 53.3-4). To Sallust the two dominant personalities of the age were Caesar and Cato. They were, he continues (BC 54) equals in eloquence, age, *magnitudo animi*, and glory. There were important differences: *mansuetudine, misericordia, severitas*, etc. It was however the more traditional Roman virtues that lent the two distinction: *constantia, labor, innocentia*, etc. In sum, learnedness was a critical aspect of a political personality; Marius indeeds must explain away his lack of it. The possession of such learning was only one element in the pursuit of the Roman ideal of virtue, and certainly no guarantee of excellence.

What then was the value of knowing Greek history and culture? Sallust himself may have been skeptical of its relationship to virtue, but he does not reject its value to the pursuit of his new career as an historian. We have already discussed however briefly that Sallust did not hesitate to demonstrate his learnedness in Greek literature both subtly and openly. Indeed, it is reasonable to believe that anyone claiming to write Roman history had to establish his credibility with his audience by references to the "classics". Characteristically, he nowhere formally acknowledges this expectation.²⁹ Characteristically, too, he does feel some obligation to acknowledge more openly other sources. Note that he claims that he had "learned" much at least of Roman history: *Sed mihi multa legenti multa audienti quae populus Romanus domi militiaeque, mari atque terra, praecleara facinora fecit* (BC 53.2).

To complete the circle let us return to the consideration of Greek material and artistic culture. On three occasions Sallust writes about the pursuit of Greek material culture. We have already looked at BC 11, where Sallust excoriates Sulla for contributing to the moral decline of Rome by allowing his soldiers to strip Greece of its artistic treasures. The same theme with the same force appears also in the speech of Catiline BC 20.12, when the latter argues that no man with a manly spirit (*virile ingenium*) is able to tolerate a situation in which he, impoverished, witness how his oppressors *tabulas, signa toreumata emunt*; acquire paintings, statues, chased vessels. Cato, in his speech, gives much the same message (52.5) "nay, in the name of the immortal gods I call upon you, who have always valued your houses, villas, statues, and paintings more highly than your country (*semper domos, villas, signa, tabulas vestras plurisquam rem publicam fecistis*). Like Cato, Sallust does not appear to be condemning such artifacts so much as the abuse thereof at the public expense. That is, the rewards of victory ought not to find their way into private hands. *...eas divitias, eam bonam famam magnamque nobilitatem putabant. Laudis avidi, pecuniae liberales; gloriam ingentem, divitias honestas volebant* (BC 7). A sentiment that finds more development in BC 10, where the link is made more formally between the growth of private wealth and the decline of public morality: *namque avaritia fidem, probitatem ceterasque artis bonas subvortit*. It would be most

²⁹ Livy, in contrast, does refer to Polybius, e.g., at 30. 45. Tacitus, however, mentions only Roman annalists.

interesting to know how Sallust judged the theater complex of Pompey: The latter had clearly gained enormous private wealth, but was using at least some of it for the public welfare.

In sum, Sallust's perception of Greek material culture does not differ from his perception of intellectual culture. Philosophy, history, art all have a value when put to the service of the commonwealth. Being learned in these subjects is, however, no guarantee of civic or private virtue. On the other hand, to be a credible historian and to affect the practice of virtue particularly among the elite, the historian must have and demonstrate a command of Greek history and historiography. This is the role that Sallust wished to play.

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