Sallust's Catiline: History Or Political Pamphlet?

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SALLUST'S CATILINE: HISTORY OR POLITICAL PAMPHLET?

by

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A Thesis Submitted to the Faculty of the Graduate School of Loyola University in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts

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1964
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Hic erit, ut perhibent doctorem corda virorum
primum Crispus Romana in historia.
Martial XIV. ccxi.

The greater Roman historians -- Caesar, Sallust, Livy, and Tacitus -- can be counted on the fingers of one hand. Yet these four men deserve to rank with the famous Greek historians Herodotus, Thucydides, and Polybius among the most important historians of antiquity. While each of them strove to give their readers full, unbiased accounts, many other factors have to be considered in reading their works, such as personality, temperament, and political opinion. For example, in reading the works of Tacitus we frequently notice the passionate distaste which he shows for the tyranny of the emperors. The critical reader cannot but wonder whether Tacitus' displeasure has notably prejudiced his narrative.

The question a reader might ask concerning Tacitus is the same question we wish to investigate in the case of Gaius Sallustius Crispus. More specifically, how can the De Conjuraciones Catilinae be so colored and still satisfy the canons of historical accuracy? Or must it be relegated to the ranks of a mere political pamphlet? We hope to establish in this thesis that the Catiline gives us sufficient reason to grant its author a legitimate place among the Roman historians.

Handbooks on Latin literature are frequently harsh in their treatment of
Sallust as an historian. For example, we read in H. J. Rose, "his first attempt at history was the monograph on the Conspiracy of Catiline. The facts were well enough known, and if they had not been, Sallust was not the man to throw new light on them by research." \(^1\)

A more moderate view is expressed by Paul Harvey: \(...\) "though his histories show a democratic bias, and he sometimes distorts the facts, he is on the whole impartial and can recognize merit in political adversaries and faults on his own side." \(^2\)

The present thesis proposes to investigate the De Conjurazione Catilinae in order to discover evidence relevant to the problem of historical accuracy in the monograph. We will act both as defense and prosecution, requiring Sallust to prove that he deserves to be considered a true historian.

PAST SCHOLARSHIP

Why should we do another study on a topic that has practically been exhausted by earlier authors? While investigating the problem we failed to discover any author who had attacked the historical accuracy of the Catiline by applying the norms of internal criticism. However, because the norms are insufficient in themselves to give a complete answer to the question, we shall also rely on studies that have been made by others. In this way we hope to arrive at an answer which in formulation will have considered evidence from

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all of the sources of historical criticism.

In the past Sallust's Catiline has been studied in a number of different ways. The two most popular methods of criticism can be called the "single aspect approach" and the "comparison method." The first selects one aspect of the monograph and subjects it to a thorough investigation. Such an approach would, for example, investigate the manner in which Sallust portrays the "character of Julius Caesar" and relate this topic to other known accounts of Caesar's life and character. The main limitation of this critical approach is its failure to present the entire content of the monograph, and thus the conclusions drawn are frequently not valid for more than this single aspect of the historical text.

The second method, the "comparison method," chooses individual facts and passages from the text and then compares them with similar facts from the parallel accounts of other authors, such as the speeches of Cicero. D. C. Earl points out the difficulties that such an approach creates for the critical historian:

Passages are chosen for their importance and then placed either beside . . . Sallust's judgments on the events described therein or . . . passages from earlier Greek and Roman writers. Then by a process of subtraction, Sallust's opinion, debt, or bias is calculated. Such a method, however, involves several difficulties. In the first place, the importance of the passages selected depends to a great extent on the subjective judgment of the individual

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3 Since we shall give a more complete description and explanation of the method of application of the norms of internal criticism in the next chapter, we will not devote any space to it in the present context. Basically, it is a method of historical criticism which selects evidence from the text; hence, "internal" refers to the actual text of the historian rather than to outside sources.
critic. Secondly, it tends to presuppose the existence of what it proposed to discover . . . . Even apart from these criticisms, it seems clear that a method which can lead to such different results can hardly be considered satisfactory. 4

Earl mentions that critics frequently arrive at differing results in their studies. Here we find, that in using the method of comparison, two men can select the same passages for scrutiny and yet arrive at different conclusions. 5

Mary Roman authors accepted Sallust as one of Rome's greatest historians. Much of the praise accorded to him was undoubtedly due to the Histories, his greatest work, extant today only in fragmentary form. Tacitus refers to Sallust as "rerum Romanarum florentissimus auctor." 6 Quintilian compares Sallust and Livy: "Livium a puere magis quam Sallustium; et hic major est auctor, ad quem tamen intelligendum prefectu opus sit." 7 Yet, we must still ask: would not the Catiline also influence the ancient authors in their judgment of Sallust's reputation as an historian?

In the Middle Ages and through the Renaissance Sallust's fame continued to


5For example, there are two studies which arrive at contrary conclusions on the role which Caesar played in the conspiracy of Catiline. E. T. Salmon, "Catiline, Crassus, and Caesar," American Journal of Philology, LVI (1935), 302-316; and Francis L. Jones, "Crassus, Caesar, and Catiline," Classical Weekly, XXIX (1936), 89-93. Salmon concludes that Caesar and Crassus definitely had a part in the conspiracy, while Jones judges Caesar innocent.

6Tacitus, Annales, III, xxx.

7Quintilian, Institutio Oratoria, II, v, 19.
spread. In an article on the *Histories* Herbert Bloch remarks:

..., for the other two treatises of Sallust were even more widely and enthusiastically read and imitated in the Middle Ages than they had been in the Roman Empire. Among non-Christian books in Latin prose none equals the Catiline in influence during the Middle Ages, none was more universally known.8

Sallust's historicity simply was not called into question. He served as the model for the city and state chronicles of Germany and France. And Renaissance schoolmen, such as Da Feltre, Porcia, and Vegio, considered him one of their favorite classical writers of Latin prose. Such men, steeped in knowledge of the classics, were mainly interested in Sallust's intriguing style; but historical criticism was included in their study.9 Their high respect for Sallust shows that they considered him more than a politically slanted pamphleteer.

How the scholars of the Middle Ages and the Renaissance reconciled the accounts of the conspiracy of Catiline given by Cicero and Sallust is a mystery which we have been unable to solve. However, in 1622 Eugenius Benius made the first serious attack against the historical accuracy of the Catiline when he set forth the thesis that Sallust was twisting the facts of the conspiracy to whitewash the reputation of Caesar and the democratic party at the expense of Cicero and the nobles. G. J. Vossius' defense of Sallust was


so successful that the question was not reopened again until the middle of the Nineteenth Century when the dam of opposition finally broke. 10

The first charge in the modern assault was led by Theodor Mommsen, the historian of Rome. Discussing literature written to protect the reputation of Caesar, he remarks in a footnote:

Such an apology is the Catilina of Sallust, which was published by the author, a notorious Caesarian, after the year 708, whether under the monarchy of Caesar or more probably under the triumvirate of his heirs; evidently as a treatise with a political drift, which endeavours to bring into credit the democratic party -- on which in fact the Roman monarchy was based -- and to clear Caesar's memory from the blackest stain that rested on it; and with the collateral object of whitewashing as far as possible the uncle of the triumvir Marcus Antonius (comp., e. g. c. 59 with Dio. XXXVII, 39). The Jugurtha of the same author is in exactly similar a way designed to partly expose the pitifulness of the oligarchic government, partly to glorify the Coryphaeus of the democracy, Gaius Marius. The circumstance that the adroit author keeps the apologetic and inculpatory character of these writings of his in the background, proves, not that they are not partisan treatises, but that they are good ones.11

Mommsen's attack is indeed ingenious. His last sentence leaves any future critic vulnerable to the claim that he is not astute enough to see the real meaning of the monographs and is being deceived exactly as Sallust planned.

10Because of the antiquity of these two treatises, the author has been unable to consult them directly for their arguments. However, an account of the contents of each, and of other intervening articles, is given briefly by Anton Leeman, "A Systematical Bibliography of Sallust, 1879-1950," Memosyne Bibliotheca Classica Batava, Supplementum Quartum, (Leiden: Brill, 1952), p. 23.

This perhaps explains why Mommsen's theory was long accepted without any serious opposition. What scholar would be willing to challenge such a renowned classical historian in so one-sided a battle?

The defenders of Sallust once again summoned their courage in the Nineteen Twenties and began to fight for his veracity. Earl surveys the situation:

The first voice to be raised in Germany against this view seems to have been that of O. Gebhardt in 1920, and he was followed in the next decade by J. Tolksdorff, W. A. Baehrens, H. Drexler, and E. Bolaffi. The anti-Mommsen-Schwarzs tendency found its classic exposition in the work of W. Schur, to whom Sallust appeared as a serious philosophical historian writing under the influence of Posidonius. The same general trend also appears in the work of H. Oppermann, who sees Sallust as a scholar with no contact with the real political problems of his time, and that of K. Latte, according to whom Sallust is neither politician nor yet historian, but an artist pure and simple.12

There is still a prejudicial wind blowing; but it is slowly clearing and there are signs that a more moderate stand is being advocated by classicists, especially in Europe. Earl himself is a good example of the new approach in Sallustian criticism. His book investigates the concept of virtus in Sallust's writings, and from the results attempts to make a judgment concerning the historicity of Sallust's works. His judgment, which follows the moderate interpretation, must be considered favorable to Sallust.13

Sallust in the Catiline cannot claim to be a perfect historian. But is he therefore to be considered the author of a mere political pamphlet? In the

12Earl, op. cit., p. 2.

present thesis we hope to show that the Catiline deserves to be recognized as a true historical monograph.

LIFE AND TIMES OF SALLUST

No historian, ancient or modern, can be accurately judged unless his entire historical perspective is taken into account. His life and times necessarily influence the character and the quality of his work.

The history of the half-century before the birth of Christ is known for the exploits of two important Romans, Julius Caesar, and his nephew and heir, Octavian Augustus. Caesar, a close friend and political mentor of Sallust, is especially known for his military successes in conquering Gaul and invading Britain during the years 58 to 54 B.C. While Caesar was busy subjugating the provincials, his supporters in Rome were in constant political skirmish with the Pompeians. Caesar returned to Italy, crossed the Rubicon, and was in complete command of the situation by 46 B.C. His power over the fortunes of Rome lasted until his assassination by men who hoped for a return of the republican form of government under the leadership of Brutus and Cassius. From the death of Caesar in 44 B.C. to the battle of Actium in 31 B.C., there was a long period of bloodshed and party strife. Octavian finally gained complete control of the Empire in 31 B.C., after having removed all of his competitors. Most of Sallust's life was lived during this turbulent period, and his close association with Caesar and the democratic faction made him a part of much of the political intrigue.

Sallust lived from 86 B.C. to 35 B.C. The facts of his life, however, are clouded since no biographical sketch is extant. The meagre information which we do possess is culled from his works, official Roman records, and a
vituperative essay entitled *An Invective against Sallust*. Although this essay was once considered to have come from the pen of Cicero, later critics assign it to some less important writer. However, these sources do enable us to arrive at some portrait of the man.

Sallust was born at Amiternum in the Sabine highlands; and while we can suppose from his elegant style that he had a good education, there is little recorded of his early childhood and adolescence. He tells us that as a young man he was drawn to the splendor and excitement of the Roman forum. While serving as a tribune in 52 B.C. he was one of the men responsible for stirring up the mob against Milo, the murderer of Clodius. Throughout his life, and especially during his term in the Senate, Sallust was a staunch supporter of Caesar and the democratic faction. His adherence to Caesar won him many enemies, and in 50 B.C. they succeeded in having his name struck from the rolls of the Senate. Although the official charge was immorality, the more probable reason was his active support of Caesar.

Two years after his expulsion from the Senate, in 48 B.C., Sallust can be found in command of one of Caesar's legions in Illyria. Despite Caesar's confidence, Sallust was not a great military genius, as we can see from his unsuccessful attempt to quell a mutiny of some soldiers in Campania a few years later. His star rose as Caesar grew more powerful. 

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15 *Sallust, Catiline*, III, i, to IV, ii.
Senate in 46 B.C., he was appointed governor of Africa with the title of proconsul. His African adventure enabled him to build up a substantial fortune, and on his return to Rome he was charged with extortion. Either he was acquitted or the trial was dropped, perhaps because of Caesar's intervention in his behalf. Nevertheless, his newly acquired fortune helped Sallust to build the famous Roman landmarks, the Horti Sallustiani, which later served as an imperial residence.

After Caesar's assassination in 44 B.C., Sallust decided to withdraw from the active political life of the forum. He was only about forty-two years old, but he retired to his Roman mansion to devote his time to writing his Histories and the two monographs. His first monograph, the De Conjurazione Catilinae, was published about 42 B.C. and the Jugurtha in 41 or 40 B.C. His masterpiece, the Histories, was finished sometime before he died in 35 B.C. Of these the Catiline and the Jugurtha are both entirely extant, but the Histories exist only in fragmentary form. Some older texts will include an Invective against Cicero among the writings of Sallust, but none of the modern authors are willing to grant that it is authentic.

Sallust's character is admittedly hard to appraise because of the lack of sufficient evidence. His writings appear to show signs of conceit and vanity.

The author of the Invective accuses him of every possible vice, but carries his charges to such an extreme that they were generally disregarded by scholars even before the turn of the century. Some of the charges against Sallust were probably true, however, since the decree of the Senate expelling him would have to bear some semblance of truth. The most recent studies tend to be more moderate in their appraisal of Sallust than the author of the Invective. As we learn more about the lives and characters of his contemporaries we begin to see Sallust as a man of his times, no better, no worse than other Romans. Walter Allen, Jr., writes: "the quality of Sallust's public life does not fall below the standard of his contemporaries." 

We do not intend to draw any conclusions at this point concerning the influence of Sallust's life and times on the Catiline. We have given these facts by way of introduction so that the reader will be enabled to recall them as he proceeds through the thesis.

THE CONSPIRACY

We need not devote too much time to the conspiracy of Catiline, since it is one of the most famous episodes in Roman history. Accounts of the plot are given by the Latin authors Sallust, Cicero, and Suetonius. Each of these


18Dr. Earl's book leaves this impression passing throughout, but especially in his introductory chapters.


20Sallust, De Conjuratione Catilinae; Cicero, Orationes in Catilinam, I - IV; and Suetonius, De Vita Caesarum, Divus Julius, XIV to XVII.
versions of the incident differs in some of the details presented. A fairly accurate account can be pieced together, however, by checking these accounts against other Roman records.

After being defeated for the consulate by Cicero, Lucius Sergius Catilina attempted to seize control of the government of Rome. Cicero successfully thwarted his plans, and the conspiracy was unable to attain its end. Catiline fled from Rome in 63 B.C., and was defeated and killed at a battle fought near Pistoria in 62 B.C. Crassus and Caesar were both mentioned in Rome as supporters of the conspiracy, but there seems to be no actual evidence which would implicate them.21

The conspiracy of Catiline brought Cicero to the public eye in a way which his previous work had not. His quick action undoubtedly saved the republic from falling under the sway of Catiline's faction. Though he obtained a decree of the Senate which imposed the death penalty on the conspirators, Cicero was later attacked and went into exile in 58 B.C. because of the charge that he had put Roman citizens to death without the right of appeal. Clodius, a bitter enemy of Cicero, engineered the attack with the apparent support of Caesar and Pompey, both of whom refused to intervene in favor of the orator.22


In the present thesis we propose to investigate the Catiline specifically to determine if Sallust gives a substantially accurate account of the conspiracy.
CHAPTER II

WORKING TOOLS

In the first chapter we have sketched most of the necessary background for our study of the Catiline. The object of the present chapter is to elucidate the terms and the tools which we shall be using in the thesis proper. Before we can begin an investigation into the historicity of the Catiline, we must decide what we mean by 1) history, 2) propaganda, and 3) the norms of internal criticism. We shall not attempt to give exhaustive definitions and explanations of these terms, but merely correct working definitions which will suffice for the purposes of the present study.

HISTORY

History is a word which each historian appears to modify in order to fit his own needs. The ancient world had one concept of the meaning of history, and the modern writer has another which slightly differs from that of his predecessor. We have chosen Gilbert J. Garraghan, S.J., to give us the definition of history in the modern context;¹ and Herodotus, Thucydides, and

¹Gilbert J. Garraghan, S.J., A Guide to Historical Method (New York: Fordham University Press, 1946). Homer C. Hackett writes of the book: "Father Garraghan's work is perhaps the most comprehensive treatise on historical method that has been attempted in the English language. His erudition is evident and the scope of research is impressive. . . . The volume as a whole can be read by seasoned historians with interest and benefit." American Historical Review, LII (1946), p. 764.
Tacitus to give us the ancient view. Once we have seen these two opinions, we shall attempt to reconcile the differences between them in order to arrive at a definition that we can apply to our criticism of the historicity of the Catiline.

In his work Fr. Garraghan sifts through the modern definitions of history and comes up with a theory which would be acceptable to most modern historians:

To sum up, history, the most inclusive and many sided of all the social sciences, may be defined as the science which first investigates and then records, in their causal relations and development, such past human activities as are a) definite in time and space, b) social in nature, and c) socially significant.\(^2\)

This definition contains four major assertions essential to an understanding of the modern definition of history.

History, according to the above definition, is a science, "the most inclusive and many sided of all the social sciences." Fr. Garraghan here underscores the attempt of all modern historians to refute the allegations that history tells stories and myths as well as actual facts. Modern historians make an effort to treat the facts in the same unbiased manner that the chemist or the biologist adopts in his laboratory. The goal for the author is complete and perfect objectivity. Improved methods of research and investigation have enabled the modern scholar to record the facts with a greater accuracy than his ancient counterpart would have considered possible.

The modern historian uses the scientific method, a necessary requirement

\(^2\)Garraghan, op. cit., p. 10.
in any modern scientific endeavor, by "first investigating and then recording" past human activities. Careful and complete investigation is one of the foremost traits of the twentieth-century historian. Documentary evidence, correspondence, written works, and personal interview have to be sorted and sifted to insure the objectivity of the resulting narrative. If the investigation is incomplete or inaccurate, then the entire work becomes questionable. Only when the historian finally approaches a problem with all of the facts at his fingertips can he begin to record the fruits of his long search.

Included in the process of investigation is the search into "causal relations and developments." History differs from other social sciences not only in the way in which it treats human events and activities, but also in its attempt to explain the causal beginnings of these events. This is the precise area in which a mediocre historian falls short of excellence. The truly competent historian can see causes and resulting effects behind the great and the trifling happenings of human activity. He gives us something more than a mere stenographic account of the facts; he goes behind and beyond them to discover why such events occurred.

To distinguish history from the other social sciences Fr. Garraghan limits its material object. History deals with human events; but they must be "a) definite in time and space, b) social in nature, and c) socially significant." Therefore, for the historian, the social consequences are more important than the personal results of a particular occurrence. Biography, for example, while it has a definite spot in literature, should not be classified as history unless the events and happenings which it describes are socially significant.
Modern history is a definite social science which applies the scientific method to its own particular object. It lays down certain norms by its very nature; but these norms of the modern historian cannot be applied to their ancient counterparts without some qualification. Yet, if today we still hope to call the work of the earlier writers history, then these authors must meet, at least to a minimum degree, certain historical criteria.

The earliest classical historian, of course, is Herodotus. His Histories are remarkable examples of ancient history and culture. He tells us of his method in writing the Histories:

Thus far all I have said is the outcome of my own sight and judgment and inquiry. Henceforth, I will record Egyptian chronicles, according to that which I have heard, adding thereto somewhat of what I myself have seen.3

Herodotus places emphasis on research and investigation, as do the modern historians. However, the ancients as a group were not always selective of the facts which they presented to the reader. Instead of making a judgment on the validity of an incident, Herodotus and many of his contemporaries often leave the choice up to their critical readers. Herodotus remarks: "for myself, my duty is to report all that is said; but I am not obliged to believe it all alike -- a remark which may be understood to apply to my whole history."4

Herodotus' view of history is easily seen to differ from that expressed by

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4Herodotus, op. cit., VIII, 152.
Fr. Garraghan.

Thucydides is usually considered the greatest of the ancient historians. He gives us his view of the purpose and object of history:

But as for the facts of the occurrences of the war, I have thought it my duty to give them, not as ascertained from any chance informant nor as seemed to me probable, but only after investigating with the greatest possible accuracy each detail, in the case both of the events in which I myself participated and of those regarding which I got my information from others. . . . but whoever shall wish to have a clear view of the events which have happened and of those which will some day, in all human probability, happen in the same or a similar way — for these to adjudge my history profitable will be enough for me.5

The work of Thucydides is well worth the time and the effort spent in reading it, and even the modern reader can appreciate the accurate account which he attempts to render. Thucydides follows the lead of Herodotus by investigating and searching into the events he describes, but he goes one step higher. His investigation leads him to attempt historical judgments concerning the causes of the events he is relating. He also selects episodes and events which he believes pertinent to his narrative. Thus he removes many of the contradictory elements found in the work of his predecessors. As an historian Thucydides is more skilled in the method of research and investigation than Herodotus and can therefore be judged a more developed and evolved historian than his forerunner.6

Thucydides illustrates another note in the ancient concept of history, the cyclic theory of history. He mentions that his history will be profitable


6Seyffert, op. cit., p. 636.
because of "what will some day, in all human probability, happen in the same or a similar way." Hence, one of the main purposes of the ancient historians was to enlighten the coming ages so that they might profit by avoiding the mistakes that had been made in the past.

Though the views of Herodotus and Thucydides give us an adequate notion of the ancient historian's purpose and function, we would also like to investigate the Roman viewpoint. Tacitus records his understanding of the duty of the historian: "quod praecipuum minus annalium recor ne virtutes sileantur utque pravis dictis factisque ex posteritate et infamia metus sit." Viewed in this fashion the ancient historian also becomes a custodian and teacher of customs and morals. History was considered not merely as an objective scientific record of the facts, but as very necessary for the preservation of the customs and morals of civilized life.

In general, then, the ancient historian's ideal was to relate the facts in a more or less accurate fashion. Although the concept of research and investigation is much stricter in modern times, the ancient author was no freer to invent or alter facts than his modern counterpart. While historical judgment was not a universal trait, Thucydides shows us that there was a place in the ancient world for an historian who could critically judge the material before him and select only what was pertinent to his work. Finally, the ancient historian frequently saw his purpose to be that of a teacher or preserver of customs and morals. These appear to be the major differences between the ancient and the modern conceptions of history.

7Tacitus, Annales, III, 65.
Basically, the two concepts of history are similar. The modern view is only an evolved specimen of the ancient. Both of the notions call for investigation and research; ideally both would expect accurate historical judgments. The point of greatest evolution seems to be the historian's idea of his place in society. While the ancient historian would frequently see himself in the role of a teacher, the modern would like to see every tendency to moralize removed from the written accounts of history. Our present day author would see this tendency to moralize and teach as a weakness which might permit the historian to become too subjective in his presentation of the facts.

As our working definition of history, therefore, we can use the definition offered by Fr. Garraghan. However, to make it applicable to the ancient historian we must insert the qualifications which we have discussed on the previous pages, i.e., less stringent norms of investigation and of historical judgment, and the tendency to view the historian as a teacher. With these qualifications the definition seems adequately to cover both ancient and modern concepts of history.

PROPAGANDA

The term propaganda is popularly used in the same sense we will be using it in the present study. There is, therefore, little need to develop it here. The new Webster's offers the following definition:

1) archaic: a group or movement organized for spreading a particular doctrine or system of principles.
2) dissemination of ideas, information, or rumors for the purpose of helping or injuring an institution, a cause, or a person.
3) a: doctrines, ideas, arguments, facts, or allegations spread by deliberate effort through any medium or communication in order to further one's cause or to damage an opposing cause.
   b: public action or display having the purpose or the affect
of furthering or hindering a cause. 8

The sense in which we wish to understand the term is best expressed in Webster's definition offered in 3 above. The definitions are all basically similar, but the third best describes propaganda as it would be used in a political pamphlet in disseminating an account of an episode which would follow the "party-line." In our study we will investigate what evidence there is for claiming that Sallust was writing more than mere political propaganda in the Catiline.

NORMS OF INTERNAL CRITICISM

The "norms of internal criticism" discussed in this section are perhaps the most important tool we have in our study. By applying these to the Catiline we hope to obtain sufficient evidence to make a judgment concerning its historicity. While the norms in themselves do not offer a complete view of the historian's work, they enable us to arrive at evidence which is unattainable for the critic from other methods of historical criticism. In order to make a judgment which will stand up before all objections, we shall have to supplement these norms with evidence from other studies that criticize the Catiline according to differing methods of historical investigation.

These norms are set forth in Archivum Historicum Romanum in a very clear and concise fashion. Although the author, W. Rollo, does not elaborate on their meaning to any great extent, he does show the pertinent questions which

should be answered in the application of each norm to any historical text. He states them:

On setting out to estimate the historical value of any given author, the modern historian will group his enquiries under the following headings:

1) The interpretation of the author's meaning.
2) The general credibility and value of any given author as an authority.
3) The critical consideration of particular statements.
4) The organization of isolated facts into generalizations. 9

He then appends a short description of some of the questions to be answered. Instead of quoting him at length, however, we will give a brief explanation of each of the norms.

1) **Interpretation** implies that we have a grasp of the author's style and language sufficient to enable us to judge his use of words, phrases, and statements. This will permit us to interpret sections of his writings either literally or in view of the literary devices he employs. Implied and hidden meaning also enters the picture. These problems must be considered in interpreting the Catiline.

Historical context and the life of the author must also be considered in criticizing the monograph. The introduction to this thesis has reviewed the life and times of Sallust, providing in some measure the background necessary to interpret the Catiline.

2) **General credibility and value** are not determined by internal evidence alone, but must be supplemented by the evidence offered by other studies which

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apply external tests to the Catiline. Here we must consider the motives which might have led Sallust to alter the account because of political bias, his chances of successfully propagating a false version of the conspiracy, and the judgment of his contemporaries and later ages concerning his veracity.

3) Critical interpretation of particular statements examines the opportunities which Sallust had to obtain evidence for his judgments. Did he go to eye-witnesses? Did he make use of public documents and records? Was it necessary for him to state his sources, or was the public aware of the basic facts of the conspiracy?

4) The organization of generalizations offers one of the most important areas of criticism for any historian, ancient or modern. Does Sallust provide sufficient evidence to show that his generalizations are valid? Do other sources give us information which Sallust neglects that might lead to contradictory judgments?

These, therefore, are the norms which we shall attempt to employ in our investigation of the Catiline.
CHAPTER III

VARYING OPINIONS

In the first two chapters we were introduced to Sallust, to the problem of the Catiline, and to the approach which we intend to follow in our investigation of this problem. We have frequently mentioned that it is necessary to supplement our study with information and evidence from other articles and essays in order to assure a correct evaluation of the historicity of the Catiline. The purpose of the present chapter is to serve as a depository for this "external" evidence. We shall attempt to summarize the varying opinions and to give representative quotations from some of these studies. The purpose is not to defend or attack the view expressed, but merely to illustrate the positions which others have held.

SALLUST - REPUTATION AS AN HISTORIAN

Favorable Opinions:

One of the best studies on historical writing is the two-volume masterpiece of James Westfall Thompson, former Ehrmann Professor of European History at the University of California. His book, A History of Historical Writings, devotes two paragraphs to Sallust, the second of which presents the author's criticism of the literary merit and the historical work of Sallust:

Sallust is the author of two remarkable works, the Conspiracy of Catiline and the Jugurthine War, and is also known to have written a Roman History which has not been preserved. The first is a valuable corrective to Cicero's four invectives against Catiline, but has the defect of being a pamphlet of special pleading in favor
of the notorious conspirator, for whom, however, something may be said in extenuation of his conduct. Roman politics were in an evil case and every man was fishing in troubled waters. On the other hand the Jugurthine War is matchless history. Before Sallust there had been annalists, chroniclers, compilers, but Sallust was the first great Roman historian. He adorned impartiality and historical accuracy with an unexcelled power of dramatic narration. His narrative is a series of word pictures drawn with infinite literary art. His pen portraits are like etchings. The interest never flags, though at times he may seem too declamatory, too rhetorical to a modern reader. But these were the universal literary qualities of the age.\(^1\)

We note that Thompson criticizes the Catiline and calls it a pamphlet. However, he is lavish in his general praise of Sallust's historical worth and literary merit. In general he portrays Sallust as a genuine historian and one of the finest in Rome, certainly high above those who wrote in earlier periods.

P. Boyance offers us another highly complimentary view of Sallust. In an article, "Problèmes d'Histoire Littéraire," contributed to a collection of studies in honor of J. Marouzeau, he discusses the way in which the various literary manuals and handbooks treat some of the classical authors. Speaking of the need for more accurate investigation on the part of editors and writers of such books, he remarks:

> Elles ont, en particulier, conduit à analyser de plus près les prologues, a situer plus exactement l'auteur au point de vue moral, littéraire et politique; et de ce travail, il est sorti un autre Salluste que l'ambitieux cynique et aigri, le cesarien et démocratique partisan de nos manuels de littérature, un Salluste aux vues plus hautes et, je crois, un Salluste plus vrai.\(^2\)

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Boyance seems to be more concerned with Sallust's character than with his historical accuracy, but he implies that the authors of the literary handbooks have treated him with unnecessary roughness. As we have already noted, most of these authors consider him an excellent literary artist, but a second-rate historian.

Finally, James Shotwell states the case for those who support the reputation of Sallust:

If, therefore, there is something inherently weak about the work of Sallust, why is it held in such high regard? For, not only have we the praise of one most competent to pass judgment in Rome, Tacitus himself, but modern critics are agreed that Sallust stands head and shoulders above his predecessors, and remains with Livy and Tacitus, one of the three really great Latin historians. The reason is mainly that he applied to Rome the standards of Thucydides and Polybius, whom he took as his masters; and, cutting adrift, honestly tried to tell the truth.³

Unfavorable Opinions:

We have already quoted the most famous attack, that of Theodor Mommsen, in the first chapter. In a similar vein the Cambridge Ancient History reports:

... two extant works by Sallust which though in form historical monographs, partake largely of the character of pamphlets. These are the Bellum Catilinae and the Bellum Jugurthum. The first was probably inspired by the publication in 42 B.C., from among Cicero's papers of a pamphlet de consiliis, in which Caesar was declared to have been the true originator of the Catilinarian conspiracy. Sallust seeks to refute an allegation that was probably false partly by an appeal to the attitude of Cicero at the time, partly by an alternative and far more elaborate falsification in which Catiline was made a great revolutionary, the result of the moral breakdown induced by the bad government of the nobles.⁴


⁴S. A. Cook, et alii, eds., op. cit., p. 889.
This attack on the historicity of Sallust is typical of many, and as such needs no further comment.

The same aspect of the Catiline is criticized by W. Rollo, who writes:

Sallust, for instance, was more of a political pamphleteer than a historian, to judge by the works which have reached us from his hand: in these he uses all his skill as a writer and rhetorician to enforce a very one-sided picture of contemporary Roman nobility.5

The criticism of the nobility is not as blunt in the Catiline as it is in the Jugurtha. While relating the story of the Roman war that was fought against the African king, Jugurtha, Sallust places the blame for the early Roman reverses on the ineptness of the government, which was under the control of the Roman nobility. He also attempts to show that Jugurtha was able to slow down the process of Roman intervention through some bribes to well placed Roman nobles who were investigating the charges against him:

Sed ubi Romam legati venere et ex praecepta regis hospitibus alissque quorum ea tempestate in senatu auctoritas pollebat magna munera misere, tanta commutatio incessit, ut ex maxima invidia in gratiam et favorem nobilitatis Jugurtha veniret.6

There are other sections in which Sallust makes the same charge.7 In the Catiline, however, Sallust places the actual blame on the times and the moral situation in Rome, and thus only by indirection on the nobles.

Most of the remaining critics follow the same line of attack as Mommsen

5Rollo, op. cit., p. 6.
7Ibid., V, i, and XXII.
or one of the men we have already quoted. Perhaps the more balanced view is
the one which sees the good as well as the bad in Sallust’s works.

Moderate Opinions:

Paul Harvey in his short article on Sallust gives us one of the most
moderate assessments of the historian. He writes: “though his histories show
a democratic bias and he sometimes distorts facts, he is on the whole impartial
and can recognize merit in political adversaries and faults on his own
side.” Such a criticism allows for both the inaccuracies and the virtues
which Sallust exhibits as an historian.

Another somewhat similar opinion is offered by Ronald Syme in his
monumental study of Tacitus. Professor Syme in discussing bias and equity
writes of Sallust:

Sallust is peculiarly vulnerable. He had been a partisan of
Caesar; and it has been claimed that his first monograph is no
better than a political pamphlet, cunningly contrived to disculpate
Caesar from suspicion of any share in Catilinarian designs. An
extreme opinion. What partiality Sallust’s Bellum Catilinæ
shows for Caesar is not outrageous. The balanced confrontation
between Caesar and Cato is candid and admirable. Perhaps Cato
comes off best; and although Sallust could not fail to admire
Caesar, he could not fully approve of him either.

Sallust’s treatment of Cicero is also in question. The
Senate had passed the ultimate decree, and the Senate by debate
and vote decided the fate of the conspirators. The role and
importance of the Consul could be variously estimated. Sallust
has done him less than justice. Sallust certainly felt a deep
antipathy.9

8 Paul Harvey, op. cit., pp. 380-381.

9 Ronald Syme, Tacitus (2 volumes; Oxford, England: Clarendon Press,
1958), I, 203.
Syme's view places us in the perspective of the Catiline, points out the glaring faults, and praises the admirable insights of the author. This also provides us a better viewpoint from which to present the results of critical investigation into other aspects of the Catiline.

CAESAR AND CICERO

The main problem with regard to Cicero in the Catiline is summed up in Syme's remark: "Sallust has done him [Cicero] less than justice." This is the most frequent of the charges made against Sallust in various history texts and literary handbooks. Usually the critics claim that Cicero deserved a larger role in the unfolding and thwarting of the conspiracy. One of his most grievous errors in the mind of some authors is Sallust's failure to record the speeches of Cicero against Catiline. Shotwell replies to this criticism:

Like Thucydides, he polished and repolished his phrases; and the speeches he introduced, even when he had the text before him, were rewritten in keeping with the rest of the work. Fortunately one orator, Cicero, saved him the trouble of so doing with his particular orations by rewriting and polishing them for posterity himself.10

Indeed the part played by Cicero in the account of Sallust is small; but the actions of the consul were much better known than those of the others involved in the conspiracy, and Cicero was especially careful to publish an account of his affairs and actions through his collected speeches. One might

10Shotwell, op. cit., p. 24. This view likens Sallust to Thucydides, although Sallust never says that he is giving his own account of the speeches and not exactly what the speaker said, as the Greek author did.
wonder if Sallust can honestly be criticized for this omission of Cicero's role in the struggle against the conspirators.

Turning to Caesar, we can see in the Catiline that Sallust is careful to paint a favorable picture of his friend. Even if one agrees with Syme that Cato ranks ahead of Caesar when Sallust compares the two, no one can claim that Caesar has been slighted in any way. Rather the monograph is most frequently criticized for being overly laudatory of Caesar -- a claim made by those who consider the Catiline to be a mere political pamphlet pleading for the democratic cause. Since most of the commentators quoted in this chapter have had something to say on the relationship of Caesar to the Catiline, it will suffice to present one quotation which highlights the controversy over Caesar's role. D. C. Earl writes of the dispute:

From the time of Mommsen this monograph has been considered a political pamphlet designed to exculpate Caesar and even C. Antonius, Cicero's colleague and uncle of M. Antonius the triumvir, from the suspicion of complicity in the conspiracy. It has not been widely observed that Mommsen's thesis retains its validity only if it can be shown that Caesar was definitely known to have been implicated. If certain knowledge did not exist, but merely suspicion and rumor, then this can prove nothing as to Sallust's motives. He could simply be recording the truth without ulterior motive, even in his rejection of such rumors as false. It might still be true that one of his motives was to allay these rumors, but this could not be argued from the facts of his narrative.11

Earl sees the problem clearly and later points out that we have very little actual evidence against Caesar. Sallust, thus, appears to be telling the story of the conspiracy accurately in not implicating Caesar, a point we shall investigate in more detail in the following sections of this study.

11 Earl, op. cit., p. 83.
The question of the prominence given to Caesar over Cicero is one for which there is no easy solution. Unless new information is uncovered, the problem will remain a subject of contention. Cicero assigns himself the most important part in his speeches; Sallust accords Caesar the prime role; and most of the other ancient authors follow the lead of one or the other. We do not hope to solve the problem in this thesis, but we shall attempt to shed some light on it.

CHRONOLOGY

One of the weakest points in Sallust’s version of the conspiracy of Catiline is chronology. Sallust begins the conspiracy a year earlier than it is known to have started. We are able to place the actual date of the beginning from documents, records, and the speeches of Cicero delivered while he was a consul. This has been established by Ernest Hardy, who finds fault with Sallust’s position of episodes and with his general chronological placing of events. Although he finds these problems with Sallust’s chronology, Hardy is willing to grant that Sallust’s account of the conspiracy is substantially correct.

TREATMENT OF CATILINE

Another highly controverted point in the Catiline is the treatment which Sallust gives to the main figure, Lucius Sergius Catilina. Actually what kind

of a man was Catiline? Cicero makes him out to be a rogue or an anarchist in the Orationes in Catilinam. Sallust paints a very dark picture of his character, but depicts him as a revolutionary who is also a victim of his times. S. L. Mohler writes of Catiline: "Catiline was a reformer, not a radical, as we shall see when we examine what little we can glean from the writings of his bitter antagonist about his platform and his supporters."13 Mohler goes on to defend Catiline as the farsighted social reformer which Rome so badly needed. Contrary to Mohler's opinion Paul Harvey writes: "dissolute, but capable, ruined in reputation as well as in purse, he saw his only chance in revolution, for which he gained supporters among other desperate men."14 This is also the opinion expressed by Tenny Frank when relating the account of the conspiracy.15 Thus modern critics are as divided on the subject of Catiline's character as were the ancients.

CONCLUSION

In this chapter we have attempted to provide some of the necessary evidence from external historical criticism which may be used to supplement the investigation to follow in the next few chapters. We can now proceed to investigate the Catiline from the viewpoint of internal criticism, with a view to judging its historicity.


14Harvey, op. cit., p. 93.

CHAPTER IV

INTERPRETATION

The present chapter moves us into the central section of our investigation. In this and the next chapters we shall apply the norms of internal criticism to the Catiline, in hope that we may obtain sufficient evidence to correlate our conclusions and make some judgment concerning the monograph's historical accuracy.

Interpretation of the author's meaning, the first of the norms of internal criticism, requires an understanding of Sallust's style and an ability to distinguish the sections in which he uses irony or implied meaning from those sections where he would wish to be taken literally. It is also necessary to know the pertinent historical context and the sources of information which Sallust had at his disposal. With a knowledge of these elements we shall finally be equipped to make our decision.

Our first objective will be to answer the question of interpretation relative to an over-all, complete view of the Catiline. Subsequently, we shall examine individual episodes and character sketches. We hope thereby more deeply to penetrate: first, the account of the first conspiracy of Catiline; then, the character of the arch-conspirator, Catiline himself; and finally, the role which Sallust assigns to Cicero. In this manner a better understanding of how the Catiline should be interpreted and of the whole question of its historicity may, we trust, be achieved.
CATILINE, THE MONOGRAPH

From all that Sallust says of his purpose, it is evident that he claims to write history. He remarks early in the introduction or prologue:

Ac mihi quidem, tametsi haud quaquam par gloria sequitur scriptorem et auctorem rerum, tamen inprimis ardum videtur res gestas scribere: primum, quod facta dictis exaequanda sunt; dehinc, quia plerique, quae delicta reprehenderis, malivolentia et invidia dicta putant; ubi de magna virtute atque gloria bonorum memores, quae sibi quisque facilia factu putat, aequo animo accepit, supra ea veluti ficta pro falsis ducet.1

Sallust seems to intend that the account which follows be considered history:

"ardum videtur res gestas scribere." Yet, despite his attestation, some critics seem to begin with the presupposition that Sallust must not be considered an historian. Since this is the very point which is under investigation, however, it would be foolish to begin with the assumption that we are not studying history. We must enter our search with an open mind, permitting the evidence to prove Sallust innocent or guilty. John Rolfe remarks on this point:

There seems to be no very good reason why we should not accept this statement at face value, but it is rather common in the criticism of the Latin writers to search for motives other than those professed by the authors themselves. . . . Critics of that school maintain that Sallust's real purpose was to clear his friend Caesar of complicity in the plot. . . . It seems hardly likely that twenty years after the event, and a year or more after Caesar's death and apotheosis, Sallust found it necessary to defend the reputation of his deified friend.2

1Sallust, Catiline, III, ii.

Sallust certainly realized that his version of the conspiracy would not be accepted with open arms by all of the Romans who might read it. When he outlines in the paragraph quoted above why it is "arduum res gestas scribere," he seems to have his own Catiline in mind. This section surely sounds like a retort to his critics, especially those who accuse him of exaggeration and alteration of the facts.

The objection is immediately raised that his statement is only a clever ruse which covers his true intent in writing the monograph. Such an objection is valid, however, only if it can be proven that the Catiline is substantially inaccurate in its presentation of the conspiracy. The word if takes on great importance in such a controversy. First, one must prove the Catiline incorrect or at least that Sallust has committed some grievous errors in his presentation. In other words, only on the basis of proven substantial error is it plausible to assert that Sallust's statement, as quoted above, is a clever ruse. A critic judging an author should not begin with the presupposition that the author is constantly trying to deceive his readers.

Another point to consider in critically reading the Catiline is that the main actor, Lucius Sergius Catilina, was not too long deceased. The events of 64 and 63 B.C. were still considered as recent history by most of the Romans of 42 B.C., when Sallust published his monograph. As an astute Roman (a point even his critics seem to concede) Sallust could not have failed to realize that to falsify the story substantially would expose Caesar to the ridicule of a populace already well-acquainted with the major events of the conspiracy from the speeches of Cicero and the records of the senate. Even though Cicero had died in official disgrace, there were many of his friends
and partisans living who would not hesitate to point out the facts, using the official records to prove the truth. If Sallust tried to contradict these records, and thus left his monograph susceptible to proof of its inaccuracy, how can Mommsen and his fellow critics claim that he is a cunning political writer who is expert at deceiving others? The conditions which made substantial deception unlikely are well stated by Kurt von Frits:

In consequence of the special character of the book trade in antiquity they [ancient authors] could not hope that their books or pamphlets would be read by large sections of the population. They necessarily had to address themselves to a highly selected group of readers who had not only a very good education but who had also spent most of their lives in politics in one way or another, and hence had not only a rather good recollection of the political events which had occurred during their lifetime but also a solid knowledge at least of the most important.

These conditions would discourage any hope that Sallust might have had to deceive his readers.

Again, despite the fact that records existed which could prove Sallust false, we know of no critic in antiquity who attempted to refute his version of the conspiracy. It seems unlikely that such would be the case if his account had been substantially false. On the other hand, we have seen that Sallust is highly praised as a historian by both Tacitus and Martial. This favors the presumption that his works reflect the facts substantially as they were known to his contemporaries.


Granted that in a free society a thoroughly false account of the conspiracy could not hope to gain readers, it may be objected that the Roman world in which Sallust worked was controlled by a strict governmental censorship which was favorable to Caesar. In answer we may reply that censorship, no matter how effective, cannot obliterate known events from the minds of men. Any Roman citizen over thirty years of age would have had knowledge of the events of the conspiracy. An attempt to overthrow the government, especially one as nearly successful as that of Catiline, could not be thwarted without publicity. Indeed, Cicero in his speeches, the Orationes in Catilinam, made clear to all the impending danger. The trial and debate concerning the punishment of the conspirators was carried out in the open Senate. A substantially false account could never hope to win over the minds of men, no matter how much censorship and pressure the government might bring to bear.

Then, there is also the historical fact that the Catiline has come down to us through the ages. Scholars in general abhor pamphlets which are mere propaganda despite their magnificence of style. Lies well told are not usually the subject of literary study; on the contrary, we find frequently that the truth, no matter how poorly expressed by the author, is preserved through the ages. Tradition, therefore, tends to favor a judgment which would proclaim the historicity of the Catiline.

On the other hand, there are many factors which work against considering the Catiline to be a true historical monograph. The contrast between Sallust's treatment of the common people and the nobles, for example, is an aspect of the essay which seems to be out of historical balance. Sallust was a member of the popular party, and we must expect his work to look at the
conspiracy from his partisan standpoint. But his background and personal political opinions give him no right to falsify, in any manner, the truth of the events. Sallust is quick to place the blame for the conspiracy on the nobles; for example, he makes sure the reader realizes that Catiline is of noble stock: "Lucius Catilina, nobili genere nature." His character sketch of Catiline and the conspirators can well be interpreted as a cutting indictment of the degenerate morals of the Roman nobility. If he is unable to charge the conspiracy directly to the nobles, Sallust seems to imply that the government of the nobles is alone responsible for the sad state of contemporary affairs in Rome. He writes:

Sed postquam luxu atque desidia civitas corrupta est, rursus res publica magnitudine sua imperatorum atque magistratum vitia sustentabat ac, sicuti esset effeta pariendo, multis tempestatibus haud sane quisquam Romae virtute magnus fuit.6

Political bias seems to have entered into his account of the conspiracy, since there is no other way to account for his total omission of the work done by various members of the Senatorial nobility in bringing an end to the threat of the conspirators. This failure, along with his glorification of the part played by his friend Caesar, is one of the most weighty pieces of evidence against the historicity of the Catiline.

The total chronology of the Catiline is another objection against the historical accuracy of the monograph. If Sallust deliberately falsifies the chronological order of the events, is he not also capable of altering other

5Sallust, Catiline, v. 1.
6Ibid., LIII, 5.
sections and aspects of the account? When the paragraphs of the Catiline are interpreted in a strictly literal fashion, the events of the conspiracy begin in 64 B.C. and stretch into 63 B.C. However, records indicate that the actual conspiracy of Catiline could not have begun until the early months of 63 B.C. Frequently Sallust's supporters plead that he is merely altering the dates to fit the dramatic flow of his narrative. But, if we wish to consider Sallust as an historian, we cannot excuse the liberty he takes with the facts, even if it does improve the flow of his account. The lack of accurate chronology must definitely be counted against Sallust when we are discussing the question of his historical accuracy.

ACCOUNT OF THE FIRST CONSPIRACY

Sallust introduces his account of the first conspiracy of Catiline immediately after he has given us a character sketch of his subject. He begins his version by stating his intent in narrating this earlier plot against the government: "sed antea item conjuravere pauci contra rem publicam, in quibus Catilina, de qua quam verissime potero dicam." There are two points to be made here: first, Sallust uses this account to show that Catiline has taken part in plots before; the conspiracy recorded in the main sections of

7Sallust, Catiline, XVII, 1.


9Sallust, op. cit., XVIII and XIX.

10Sallust, Catiline, XVIII, 1. Sallust begins this section as if it were a short interjection distinct from the remainder of the account of the conspiracy, although he does it to give his reader some notion of the times.
the Catiline is not completely new to him. Secondly, Sallust once more claims that what follows is the truth insofar as he is able to give it.

The section closes in a similar vein: "Neceam rem in medio relinquamus. De superiore conjuratione satis dictum." Sallust can be interpreted as completing his account because he does not have sufficient evidence to say more with assurance. He has made his point and he finishes his story without ending it. Is his promise to tell the truth merely a cloak over his malice? Does he stop because the evidence is incomplete or because it becomes embarrassing to Caesar? If we consider the account to be deliberately false or misleading, we must have more grounds for our accusation than the mere fact that we consider Sallust to be politically biased and partial to the democratic faction. Let us investigate the account in more detail.

First, what about the characters who appear in Sallust's version of the first conspiracy? Three men are awarded starring roles: Catiline himself, Cnaeus Piso, and Autronius; while Publius Sulla enters as a minor actor. Autronius and Sulla, the consuls-elect, are arraigned and convicted of bribery in the election. Catiline is also in trouble with the courts, having been charged with extortion, and he is thereby prohibited from running in the election. Sallust thus implies that all of the principal characters in the first conspiracy are eager for vengeance against the government. Piso alone seems legally free from shame, but Sallust gives us an account of his character which shows that he would also be willing to participate in the conspiracy. He writes: "adulescens nobilis, summae audacis, egens, facticosus, quem ad

\[11\] Ibid., XIX, 5-6.
perturbandum rem publicam inopia atque mali mores stimulabat," in describing his character. Once again we can note that Sallust remarks that Piso is of the nobility. These men, then, are the only actors who enter into the account.

What is the role which should be assigned to Caesar in the first conspiracy? What about Crassus? Suetonius gives a different version of the conspiracy which implicates Caesar and Crassus. But Sallust never mentions them in connection with the members of the plot. Some are tempted to join them to the attempt on the government because of their active opposition to the nobles actually in power. Working on the assumption that Caesar and Crassus would like to control the government, it is easy to infer that any attempt to overthrow the existing rulers would have to include these two leaders of the popular opposition. Sallust's omission of their names may be interpreted as an attempt to protect them from the guilt connected with the first conspiracy.

The Cambridge Ancient History, however, comes to the defense of both Caesar and Crassus. The authors fail to find any basis to suggest that Caesar was involved in the conspiracy. Crassus is also exonerated, although he managed to make "political hay" of the results of the plot. Both

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12 Sallust, Catiline, XVIII, 4.
13 Suetonius, Divus Julius, IX
15 Cook, op. cit., p. 488.
16 Ibid., p. 482.
Such an introduction to Catiline leads us to become his enemies from the very start.

Catiline's friends and associates are no better, and perhaps worse than he is himself. If a man can be known by the company he keeps, Catiline has little or no good reputation:

Nam quicumque inpudicus, adulter, ganeo, manu, ventre, pene, bona patria laceraverat, quique alienum as grande conflaverat quo flagitium aut facinus redimeret, praeterea omnes undique parricidae, sacrilegi, convicti judiciis aut pro factis judicium timentes, ad hoc quos manus atque lingua perjurio aut sanguine civili alebat, postremo omnes quos flagitium, egestas, conscius animus exagitabat, ei Catilinae proximi familiaresque erant.... Scio fuisse nonnullus qui ita existimarent juventuten, quae domum Catilinae frequentatbat, parum honeste pudicitiam habuisse; sed ex aliis rebus magis quam quod cuiquam id conpertum foret haec fama valebat.20

If we consider only this character sketch given in the introduction, there is no one in the group who would lend any respectability to the conspiracy. Later we are surprised to learn that the Roman senators were willing to take these men into personal custody. Can the picture painted in the early sections of the Catiline be interpreted as Sallust's characterization of all the forces of evil which exist in Rome -- a caricature of the conspirators? This seems to be a valid interpretation of the way in which Sallust portrays Catiline and his associates in the introduction. While Catiline probably had some of the traits Sallust mentions, one can hardly believe that this single man is so evil. Especially doubtful is the fact that Sallust would try to really convince the Romans that all of the conspirators were depraved and evil men without an ounce of good in them. His character sketch

20 Ibid., XIV, 2, 3, 7.
must, it seems, be interpreted as a caricature of the conspirators.

When the reader moves through the account of the conspiracy he finds that Catiline takes on a new life; no longer is he a completely depraved person, as the black and white picture of the prologue fades into various shades of gray. For example, Sallust reports a letter which Catiline is purported to have sent to Quintus Catulus. In the letter Catiline explains to Catulus some of the reasons he had for entering into the conspiracy. He writes:

_Injuriis contumeliosisque concitatus, quod fructu laboris industriaeque meae privatus statum dignitatis non obtinebam, publicam miserorum causam pro mea consuetudine suscepi; non quia aes alienum meis nominibus ex possessionibus solvere posses — et alienis nominibus liberalitas Orestillae suis filiaeque copias persolveret — sed quod non dignos homines honores honestatos videbam, meque falsa suspicione alienatum esse sentiebam. Hoc nomine satis honestas pro meo casu spes relicuæ dignitatis conservanda sum acutus._21

These are the causes of the conspiracy as Catiline sees them. It is hard to believe that Sallust would have quoted the letter unless he believed that there was some truth to Catiline's charges. The letter also closes with a touching plea that Catulus watch over his wife, which proves at least that Catiline cared for someone.

Sallust also shows that Catiline is a man who could inspire and lead men. From the account of the final battle Catiline's own courage is also evident:

_Catilina postquam fusas copias sequæ cum paucis relicuæ videt, memor generis atque pristinae suæ dignitatis, in confortissimœ hostis incurrit ibique pugnans confoditur. . . . Catilinae vero longè a suis inter hostium cadavera repertus est, paululum_

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_21_ Sallust, _Catiline_, XXXV, 3-4.
etiam spirans ferociamque animi, quam habuerat vivus, in volu
retinens.22

Any Roman could be proud of such a death. Catiline was a Roman; and despite
the fact that he was a traitor fighting against the legal government of his
country, Sallust must record that he died as a true Roman. Catiline's men
also put up a great battle, fighting to the last man. Catiline must have been
something more than the scoundrel we saw in the introduction.

Therefore, Catiline in the narrative takes on the dimensions of a real
person. He remains basically depraved and villainous, but his good traits are
also evident. This is perhaps the truer picture of the real Catiline.

John C. Rolfe gives his opinion of Sallust's description of Catiline. He
remarks:

As to the justice of the extant accounts of this notorious
conspiracy there have been differences of opinion, and some have
tried to whitewash Catiline's character and represent him as a
sincere advocate of reform. It is true that his portrait is
painted by Cicero in very dark colours, but Cicero has little good
to say of the Gracchi and other genuine reformers; his point of
view is that of the aristocratic party and his devotion to that
party is the enthusiastic loyalty of a newlymade member. In
Sallust's equally unfavorable account we may feel more confidence,
since he seems always to be more fair in his estimates of character,
even that of adherents of a political faith opposed to his own.23

Thus Rolfe would select the portrait painted by Sallust over the one given by
Cicero in the Oratones in Catilinam. We agree with Rolfe that the Catiline

22Ibid., LX, 7; LXI, 4.

illustrated in the narrative is probably the true Catiline, but we also feel that it is necessary to interpret the Catiline depicted in the introduction as an attempt to caricature the evident lack of morality in Roman public life.

ROLE OF CICERO

The role which Cicero played in the conspiracy of Catiline is hard to determine. As the consul, the chief executive of the Roman government, Cicero was largely responsible for uncovering and averting the threatened destruction to the Republic. Yet if Cicero played so important a part in thwarting the coup d'etat of Catiline, why does Sallust give him such a modest role in his account of the conspiracy? There would seem to be valid grounds here for asserting that Sallust wrote the Catiline as a political propaganda pamphlet.

Cicero necessarily took part in the action against Catiline. And Sallust, while he does not go into detail concerning Cicero's actions, does mention his part in uncovering the plot. He writes:

Ea cum Ciceroni nuntiarentur, ancipiti malo permotus, quod neque urbesm ab insidias privato consilio longus tueri poterat neque exercitus Manli quantus aut quo consilio foret satis contemptum habeat, rem ad senatum reft, jam antea volgi rumoribus exagitament.24

Cicero called the Senate together and gave them the evidence he had obtained concerning the conspiracy. Sallust, therefore, admits that Cicero is responsible for calling the plot to official attention.

Sallust also records the fact that Cicero responded to Catiline after the latter rose in the Senate to proclaim his innocence. Catiline protested that

24 Sallust, Catiline, XXIX, 1.
the measures which were being suggested were not needed against him. Sallust records the interchange:

Postremo, dissimulandi causa aut sui expurgandi, sicubi jurgio lacessitus foret, in senatum venit. Tum M. Tullius consul, sive praesentiam ejus timens, sive ira commotus, orationem habuit. Luculentam atque utilem rei publicae, quam postea scriptam edidit.25

This was probably the first oration against Catiline delivered on November 6, 63 B.C. It is well to note that Sallust, while he perhaps has slighted Cicero by not giving his speeches in detail, does state that the speech was "luculentam atque utilem rei publicae." The phrase "utilem rei publicae" need not have been inserted by the author unless he really wished to pay a compliment to the orator. He, Sallust, also excuses his own failure to give the speeches in full by letting his reader know there was no need for him to publish the speeches since their author had already published them himself.

There are two facts which could supply the motivation for Sallust's treatment of Cicero. First, Cicero was acting in the line of duty. As consul he was required to bring the evidence of the conspiracy before the Senate and to take the measures he felt necessary for the protection of the state. Any Roman consul would be expected to do the same if a plot arose during his term in office. Insofar as Cicero may have been more courageous or done more than duty demanded of him, Sallust is definitely at fault for not mentioning his deeds. But such a mistake may be a matter of judgment, not necessarily an attempt to alter the facts.

Secondly, Sallust knew that Cicero had already published his account of the conspiracy in the Orationes in Catilinam. Perhaps Sallust envisioned his

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25 Ibid., XXXI, 5-6.
version as a necessary corrective to the orations of Cicero. These speeches laud the accomplishment of the orator in bringing the conspiracy to a close, but hardly mention any of the other men who helped to end the conspiracy.

Sallust attempts also to exonerate Cicero from the charge of trying to implicate Caesar in the conspiracy. He writes:

> Alii Tarquinium a Cicerone immissum aiebant ne Crassus more suo suscepto malorum patrocinio, rem publicam conturbaret. Ipsum Crassum ego postea praedicantem audivi tantam illam contumeliam alibi a Cicerone impositam. Sed isdem temporibus Q. Catulus et C. Piso neque precibus neque gratia neque pretio Ciceronem impellere potuere uti per Allobroges aut alium indicem C. Caesar falso nominaretur.

While accusing Cicero indirectly of attempting to implicate Crassus in the conspiracy, Sallust points out that neither precibus, gratia, nor pretio could persuade the orator to point the finger at Caesar. Apart from a desire for historical objectivity, there is no need for Sallust to defend Cicero.

Although Sallust could have given Cicero a more prominent place in his narrative, we cannot assert that he totally forgets the great man. The fault may be one of emphasis, not a deliberate attempt to slight Cicero. There is no compelling reason to say that Sallust is purposely attempting to discredit and belittle the achievements of the Pater Patræ. T. R. S. Broughton comes to a similar conclusion:

> To sum up, this analysis of Sallust's attitude shows that he was essentially fair to Cicero, although influenced at one point by the growth of the legend of Cato, but the covert way in which he

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26Sallust, Catiline, XLVIII, 8-9; XLIX, 1.
gives the consul his due may indicate that he wrote under the second triumvirate. 27

Therefore, there seems to be little valid reason to criticize Sallust for the role he assigns to Cicero.

CONCLUSIONS

In this chapter we have attempted to show from the text that Sallust has given us a substantially correct account of the conspiracy. It follows from the first norm of internal criticism that Sallust's sole purpose cannot be political propaganda.

The main fault with the Catiline is its defective chronology. While attempts have been made to excuse this blemish by appealing to the dramatic nature of the monograph, it must be noted that, as an historian, Sallust has no right to alter any of the events which he is relating. Paul Perrochat uses this apology:

Sallust n'est pas l'historien objectif, simple, précis, tel que l'exige la science moderne, mais passionné, amateur du pittoresque et du dramatique, il sait admirablement faire vivre ses personnages, dont il pénètre profondément la psychologie, et entrainant son lecteur loin de la réalité présente, il le plonge dans l'atmosphère de l'action. 28

Sallust is a dramatic artist as Perrochat claims, but in the light of internal evidence, parallel documents from contemporaneous sources, and his introduction of facts which would not tend to support partisan views, it is not equitable to


deny him the role of historian in the ancient sense. It is only possible to say that he failed, perhaps, to fulfil perfectly the more modern ideal in every sense.
CHAPTER V

CREDIBILITY AND VALUE

In the previous chapter we investigated the way in which Sallust's Catiline should be interpreted. Now we wish to move to the second and third norms of internal criticism, the critical consideration of particular facts and the general credibility and value of Sallust as an author. We shall deal with the two at once, since they touch many of the same points. Once again our procedure will be to turn first to the general picture of the Catiline and then to particular aspects.

The second norm of internal criticism, the general credibility and value of the author, necessarily involves the comparison with other accounts and with the events of Sallust's life. It is an effort to judge how external factors might color the author's version of the conspiracy. We shall also attempt to determine the sources of the account and the possibility Sallust might have had to give the public a false account.

The third norm, the critical consideration of particular statements, concerns itself with these same details insofar as they apply to particular episodes and sections of the Catiline. Basically, it covers the same evidence as the second norm, but with a different orientation. The similarity between the two norms enables us to combine their investigation and application in the same chapter of the thesis.
Sallust does not consider it necessary to cite authorities. The situation
is alleviated somewhat, perhaps, by the fact that few early historians felt
obliged to name the sources consulted in the course of investigation. As the
Oxford Classical Dictionary remarks in the article on Livy (who, by the way,
frequently tells us where his stories or events originate): "in accordance
with contemporary historiographical practice, Livy does not cite his
authorities, except in cases of dispute or doubt."¹ Sallust, antedating Livy,
offers a better instance of general practice. While we can decry his failure
to cite his sources, it is difficult to complain about a point of historical
method which the Roman historians did not consider of paramount importance.²

Sallust's practice in these matters should not prejudice the reader any
more than Cicero's methods. Why is the modern frequently willing to overlook
a critical lacuna in Cicero's personally edited works, yet emphasize the same
omission in Sallust's writings? Sallust, no doubt, could have been an eye-
 witnessing to many of the episodes which he relates in the Catiline; if not, eye-
 witnesses and other written records were at hand in Rome. Until we have
proven that he has a political bias we should be willing to accept his version
of the conspiracy at least for what it is, the view of one man. We accept, in
similar fashion, the memoirs of famous men as true pictures of their times.
While these men do not claim to be scientific historians, to regard their

¹Sallust, Catiline, XIX, 5.

²Ibid., XXI, 3-4. Both this and the previous section can be interpreted
as illustrating Sallust's desire to remain within the limits of the known truth.
writings as mere propaganda on an a priori basis would be to do them an injustice.

Sallust, moreover, does make an obvious effort to be critical in his choice of evidence. We have already mentioned that in his account of the first conspiracy he can be interpreted as cutting the narration when he feels there is insufficient evidence. We find a similar objectivity in an adjacent passage where he writes:

Nonnulli ficta et haec et multa praestera existumabant ab eis qui Ciceronis invidiam, quae postea orta est, leniri credebat atrocitate sceleris eorum qui poenas dederant. Nobis ea res pro magnitudine parum comperta est.

Sallust, therefore, defers a judgment because the available evidence is insufficient. The examples imply the presence of a trait. And such a trait is specifically that of the critical historian.

We may ask again: Does Sallust select only that evidence which is favorable to Caesar and detrimental to Cicero? Or we may in equally pointed fashion query: Is Cicero given little space because he is a member of the Senatorial nobility? The answers to these questions would seem to be negative. Even if we feel we must answer affirmatively, to accuse Sallust of deliberately altering the evidence is another question entirely.

THE DECISION OF THE SENATE

Sallust carefully gives his readers a view of the deliberations of the

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3Sallust, Catiline, XIX, 5.

4Ibid., XXII, 3-4. Both this and the previous section can be interpreted as illustrating Sallust's desire to remain within the limits of the known truth.
Senate relative to the conspiracy. He begins by pointing out that Cicero, the consul, received the evidence and fulfilled his duty as the state's chief officer by relaying it to the Senate. While the actual debate over the fate of the conspirators, the measure to be taken to prevent future trouble in Rome, and the military expedition to attack Catiline's army are mentioned only in general terms, the speeches of Caesar and Cato are polished and conveyed in detail. However, no other speeches are given in the Catiline, although Sallust mentions that others in the Senate gave their opinions. He closes his account:

Postquam Cato adsedit, consulares omnes itemque senatus magna pars sententiam ejus laudant, virutemque animi ad caelum ferunt; alii alios increpantes timidos vocant. Cato clarus atque magnus habetur; senati decretum sicut ille censuerat.

The Senate has given its decision; now all that remains is for the consul to carry out its decree. Cicero, the consul, executes the order for the death of the conspirators as soon as it is convenient. The case is closed; the conspiracy in Rome is ended. The military defeat of Catiline and his army alone remains. Rome has once again triumphed over her enemies.

This short narration of the Senate debate and decision seems straightforward enough, yet never once does Sallust tell us the actual source of his

5Sallust, Catiline, XLVI; L, 1-4.
6Ibid., L; LI; LII.
7Ibid., LIII, 1.
8Ibid., LV.
information. He may have witnessed it himself. Or he may have received his account from someone who was present. Or he could have researched through the records of the senate. He does not mention it, but the people of his own day would have had these various sources to check his version. Today we are left to surmise on the basis of the little information which we have. And there is no evidence to force us to conclude that Sallust's account of the Senate proceedings is not substantially correct.

In narrating the debates we presume that Sallust would favor the opinion of Caesar and the democratic party. Remarkably, however, we discover that the speech of Caesar as recorded in the monograph is neutralized by the oration of Cato which follows it. Caesar pleads for life in chains, while Cato speaks for the death sentence. Cicero's view is not mentioned, but probably his view would be similar to that of Cato who has been chosen by Sallust to give the opinion of the Senatorial nobility. The nobles, under the leadership of Cato, desired the death sentence for the conspirators to insure the state against further revolutionary attempts. It is indeed difficult to determine exactly which view Sallust approves. The way in which he describes the death of the conspirators leads the reader to interpret Sallust as being in full agreement with the decree of the Senate. He gives a brief account of their demise:

In eum locum (Tullianum) postquam demissus est Lentulus, vindices rerum capitalium, quibus praeceptum erat, laqueo gulae fregere. Ita ille patricius ex gente clarissima Corneliorum, qui consulare imperium Romae habuerat, dignum moribus factisque suis exitium vitae invenit. De Cethego, Statilio, Gabino, Caepario eodem modo supplicium sumptum est.9

9Sallust, Catiline, LV, 6.
Sallust's attitude might be phrased: "the senate had decreed and who is to think otherwise."

The author's account of the decision and the deliberations which were carried on prior thereto appear to be accurate. Even though he might have given more prominence to Cicero, Cato's speech adequately presents the opinion of the Senatorial nobility and keeps the narrative from becoming one-sided. While we have not stressed the question of political bias, it is now seen to be most improbable as a substantial factor in Sallust's account. We must, accordingly, enter our vote in favor of his objectivity in this instance.

CAESAR AND CATO

In the preceding section we mentioned the conflicting views of Cato and Caesar relative to what is really a fitting punishment for the conspirators and all like them in the future. In the Catiline, immediately following the account of their speeches, Sallust devotes an entire paragraph to a comparison of the character of Caesar and Cato. This section is frequently selected as an example of the undue praise which Sallust gives Caesar. Because of its importance we shall examine it more closely:

Igitur eis genus, aetas, eloquentia, prope aequalia fuere; magnitudo animi par, item gloria, sed alia alii. Caesar beneficiis ac munificentia magnus habebatur, integritate vitae Cato. Ille mansuetudine et misericordia clarus factus, huic severitas dignitatem addiderat. Caesar dando, sublevando, ignoscendo, Cato nihil largiundo gloriam adeptus est. In altero miseris perfugium erat, in altero malis pernicies. Ilius facilitas, hujus constantia laudabatur. Postremo Caesar in animum inducerat laborare, vigilare, negotiis amicorum intentus sua neglegere, nihil denegere quod dono dignum esset; sibi magnum imperium, exercitum, bellum novum exceptabat ubi virtus extimescere posset. At Catoni studium modestias, decoris, sed maxime severitatis erat. Non virtute, cum modesto pudore, innocentia abstinentia certabat. Esse quam videri bonus malebat; ita
Sallust compares and contrasts the two men in one of the finest paragraphs found in the entire monograph. He captures the highlights of both careers and plays them off one against the other to make them stand out in bold relief.

The picture of both men is indeed flattering. Caesar has all of the qualities which the world looks for in a great leader and statesman. Cato is depicted as the epitome of all those pristine Roman virtues which were disappearing in his time. The final sentence of the paragraph, which Sallust borrows from Aeschylus, is glowing praise indeed. Reading the comparison we admire the characters of both men. Yet, critics find fault with Sallust here also. Sallust is cunning, they say; he made the reader respect Caesar by comparing him with the great Cato; Caesar does not deserve the honor of the comparison.

All seem to agree that Cato is deserving of the praise which Sallust pays him. He was, after all, one of the foremost Romans of his day, steeped in the typically Roman virtues. While we do not deny that Cato was worthy of the praise Sallust grants him, we also feel that Caesar has a right to the honor paid to him. History has shown Caesar to be one of the greatest Romans, a soldier and a statesman. Perhaps, the record of Caesar at the time of Catiline's conspiracy was not as great as that of Cato. But we must remember

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10 Sallust, Catiline, LIV.

11 Aeschylus, Seven Against Thebes, 592. ὧν ἰδίως Ἰοκήν ἱστος, ἐκάλει Ἐθέλει.

that Sallust was writing the *Catiline* from an historical vantage point. He was recording the character of the man who had conquered Gaul and ruled Rome. Was not this Caesar deserving of the honor paid to him? How can we claim that Sallust was excessive in his praise when modern historians eulogize Caesar?

There are some authors who feel that Caesar himself suffers as a result of his comparison with Cato. Such critics claim that far from heaping praise on Caesar, Sallust is actually adding to the image of Cato. P. A. Brunt remarks in his review of Earl's book: "Certainly, as Earl contends, it was no part of his purpose to exculpate Caesar; like Shur, Earl shows that in the celebrated comparison Cato is the winner." However, it is our opinion that the monograph gives considerable praise to Caesar, and that he suffers in no way from his comparison with Cato.

Perhaps Sallust was giving a true picture of Caesar in his comparison of Caesar and Cato. Let us read through the characterization of Caesar by Paul Harvey for a modern judgment of his character and career:

Pharsalus had made him an autocrat and he had used his power to re-establish order, to restore the economic situation, to extend the franchise of the provincials, to regulate taxation, and to reform the calendar. He had other projects, such as that of codifying the law and establishing a public library. His measures showed breadth of view and were conceived on a popular basis, but were carried out with a contempt of republican institutions which was in part the cause of his assassination. But Rome had outgrown her ancient constitution, and his murder was a foolish crime, as Dante judged when he placed Brutus and Cassius in the lowest circle of the Inferno (Canto XXXIV). For Caesar combined pre-eminently the

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qualities of statesmanship and generalship, discernment, determination, promptitude, and clemency.\textsuperscript{14}

We can hardly read this without thinking of similar statements which Sallust makes in the \textit{Catiline}. Yet one is considered to be an accurate historical report, the other a piece of Caesarian political propaganda.

Though Sallust does not list sources when he makes his comparison between Caesar and Cato, it is difficult to take exception to his opinion. He knew Caesar, worked with him, and was his friend and associate. Sallust's judgment of his friend is likely to be a bit optimistic; but he would not lie, when to do so would result in ridicule for his friend. Though from the standpoint of historical method we might desire further verification of his characterization of Caesar, the view Sallust presents does not preclude the historical accuracy of the monograph.

CHRONOLOGY

We have already touched on the problem of the chronology of the \textit{Catiline} in the previous chapter. Now we shall examine it more in detail. For this purpose we shall take the actual chronological occurrence of the events of the conspiracy determined by modern research and compare its verified dates with the dates given in the \textit{Catiline}. The matter of correct dating appears as a definite weak point in Sallust's monograph. Favorable, as well as unfavorable, critics agree that he has changed the dates of the episodes in the conspiracy.\textsuperscript{15}

The only explanation offered is that he desires to make the narrative more

\textsuperscript{14}Harvey, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 85.

\textsuperscript{15}Cary, \textit{et. alii.}, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 789.
dramatic. But if, as Sallust seems to claim, the Catiline is history, factual accuracy is necessary.

We have referred to Hardy's concession that Sallust's account of the conspiracy is substantially correct. We must focus on the discrepancies between his account and actual chronology in the second conspiracy, which began after the defeat of Catiline in the consular election. Catiline saw that his only hope, if he wished to gain complete control of the government, was to overthrow the legal rulers. Therefore, the beginning of this conspiracy can be set sometime after the consular elections of 63 B.C. Cicero's first speech of his Orationes in Catilinam was delivered subsequently in the Senate on November 8, 63 B.C. While the conspirators living in Rome were quickly collected together and finally put to death, Catiline and his army were not defeated until January of 63 B.C. in a battle fought near Pistoria. Catiline himself was killed in the fight when he bravely advanced as his troops were losing the day. All in all, the conspiracy lasted only a few months during the year 63 B.C., although the stage had been set much earlier by the first conspiracy.

Now let us turn to the account of the conspiracy as Sallust portrays it. According to his version, the conspiracy began near the first of June in the year 64 B.C. He writes: "igitur circiter kalendas Junias, L. Caesare et C. Figulo consulibus, primo hortari alios, alios temptare; opes suas inparatam rem

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16 Refer to Chapter Three, Varying Opinions, "Chronology," especially pages 27 and 28.

17 The events and dates of the conspiracy are available in any standard Roman history. See especially, Cook, et. alii., op. cit., pp. 479-505.
This dating of the conspiracy of Catiline for June of 64 B.C., as can be determined from the dates of the consuls mentioned, does not agree at all with other facts which place the beginning of the plot no earlier than the initial months of 63 B.C. As a result of this addition of at least six months, we find that the events of the conspiracy are drawn out over the entire year of 63 B.C. and into January of 62 B.C. when Catiline was killed. Such alteration of the correct dates throws the entire perspective of the Catiline out of proportion. And this is truly an inexcusable fault in Sallust's account. To say that he is trying to make his narrative more dramatic is really insufficient; alteration of the chronology in this fashion falsifies the account.

However, we must add that the alteration of the chronology does not seem to have colored the pertinent facts. All the reader need do is telescope the events into a space of about six to eight months, and he has a substantially correct version of the conspiracy. The change of dates cannot be ascribed to political bias, since the prolongation is of no benefit either to Caesar or the democratic faction. Dramatic effect seems to be the sole motivation behind the alteration of the facts. Defective chronology remains, therefore, a definite historical fault.

CONCLUSIONS

A number of conclusions can be drawn from the application of the second and third norms of internal criticism to the Catiline. First, we have seen

18 Sallust, Catiline, XVII, 1.
that Sallust does not cite sources, which he might have consulted in his investigations. While this is a fault in the eyes of the modern historical critic, there was little precedent for citing sources in his tradition. There are, however, a few places where it seems that Sallust has made a critical choice of his material.¹⁹

There is also a good argument for the Sallustian account of the conspiracy from the fact that the main outline of the plot was known to the general public of Rome. Sallust's reputation was noteworthy and the Catiline might reasonably be expected to have marred this reputation if it were not in accord with the facts.

While his comparison of the characters of Caesar and Cato appears to give correct sketches of each man, the chronology which he follows in relating the conspiracy leaves much to be desired. Chronology when critically considered is the weakest point in the entire monograph.

Relative to the question of political bias which Sallust allegedly manifests in the Catiline, the evidence offered in this chapter shows that the case against him is superficial. While he sometimes favors the democratic faction over the Senatorial nobility, there is no proof that his opinion has led to alter his account. Hugh Last remarks:

Propagandist, of course, he has very often been called; but with what justice depends on the meaning given to the term. Certainly he had definite views on politics; these views undoubtedly influenced his choice of subjects; and in writing he did not always seek to conceal his convictions. But there is no ground for calling him a

¹⁹ Refer to Chapter Five, Credibility and Value, "The Over-All View," especially pages 47 (citations from Catiline XIX and XXII) and 48 (selection of speeches of Caesar and Cato).
propagandist, if a propagandist is one who tries to make others believe what he himself knows to be false.20

Sallust is a man of his times who espouses definite political views. But this is not to say that he altered the facts of his account.

The second and third norms, therefore, show Sallust to be an historian rather than a mere political propagandist; but they also point out one weakness in historical accuracy.

CHAPTER VI

GENERALIZATIONS

In the preceding chapters we applied the first norms of internal criticism to the Catiline. Now we come to an application of the fourth and final norm, the organization of isolated facts into generalizations.

We have illustrated specific sections of the Catiline and subjected them to investigation. In the present chapter we wish to examine the judgments and generalizations which Sallust makes. This is the area of historical criticism in which we are able to tell the truly great historian from the merely competent one. If Sallust is to be considered an historian, we must examine the historical judgments and generalizations of his work to determine his historical accuracy.

In applying this norm we are, in a very basic sense, looking at the process of judgment. We select a generalization of the author and then review the evidence he gives for making his decision. Finally, we compare his judgment with evidence from extrinsic sources. To some extent this has been our procedure in the past few chapters, but our approach has, in a sense, been defensive and negative. Its purpose has been to clear away many misapprehensions and suppositions based upon faulty premises. Now we shall attempt to measure the monograph more positively against the canon of generalizations and its criteria. In accord with the norm we will first investigate the so-called moral generalizations of Sallust; secondly, the character of Catiline and his
position as a true revolutionary; and finally, the role which Caesar played in the conspiracy. In this way we shall cover all of the main judgments or generalizations of the monograph.

**MORAL JUDGMENTS**

In our discussion of the ancient concept of history we mentioned that one of the functions of an ancient historian was to warn and teach so that posterity could avoid the errors of previous generations.¹ Sallust seems to adhere to the ancient ideal in his composition of the *Catiline*. The introduction or prologue of the monograph is especially indicative of his tendency. Moreover, its moral judgments and generalizations are also illustrated in the accounts of the various episodes in the conspiracy. If the prologue can be interpreted as giving the reader the moral theme of the work, it becomes a vital part of the entire monograph. This is the interpretation which is offered by Michel Rambaud:

Ainsi, les omissions, les intentions, les digressions et les irrégularités apparentes de l'œuvre de Salluste trouvent leur raison d'être si on les considère du point de vue défini par les prologues. Rappelant de distance les principales idées philosophiques des prologues, le récit les enrichit d'exemples et les illustre. Ils se complètent mutuellement, et l'on ne saurait dire qu'il ne manquerait rien aux monographies si l'on en ôtait les prologues.²

The prologue of the *Catiline* thus becomes an integral part of the account, setting forth two generalizations or philosophical ideas of a moral nature

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which are subsequently exemplified in the body of the essay.

Moral Judgment Number One:

**High Public Morality Leads to Good Government.**

Sallust illustrates this moral judgment by showing that while high standards of public morality lead to sound government, when the standard drops, the country become ripe for revolution and anarchy. He expands the thesis, pointing out Rome's earlier glories in the days when the country was full of virtuous men and the government was incorrupt:

*Igitur domi militaeque boni mores colebantur; concordia maxima, minima avaritia erat. Jus bonumque apud eos non legibus magis quam natura valebat. Jurgia, discordiae, simulaties cum hostibus exercebant, cives cum civibus de virtute certabant. In suppliciis deorum magnifice, domi parce, in amicos fideles erant. Duoibus his artibus, audacia in bello, ubi pax evenerat asseitate, seque remque publicam curabant.*

Such was life in the "good old days" of youthful Rome. However, the Romans soon became wealthy. They found that once riches are tasted, the appetite becomes insatiable. Wealth and power spring from ambition and loyalty, but these are soon turned to avarice and lust:

*Sed primo ambitio quam avaritia animos hominum exercebat; quod tamen vitium propius virtutem erat. Nam gloriam, honorem, imperium bonus et ignavos seque sibi exoptant; sed ille vera vita nititur, huic quia bona ars desunt, dolis atque falcis contendit. Avaritia pecuniae studium habet, quam nemo sapiens concupivit; ea, quasi venenis malis imbus, corpus animunqu virilem effeminat; semper infinita, insatisibilis est, neque copia neque inopia minuitur.*

First, private citizens become desirous of more wealth and power; then, the

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3Sallust, Catiline, IX, 1-3.
4Sallust, Catiline, XI, 1-3.
national government becomes corrupt and overbearing. This is the way in which Sallust illustrates the first moral judgment in the prologue.

The evidence which Sallust advances to prove his judgment correct is sufficient. First, he gives a short account of the history of Rome from the earliest times to the conspiracy, pointing out the pristine fervor of the early Romans and the corresponding good government which went hand in hand with it. He then proceeds to contrast this with the present state of public morality. To prove his generalization correct, he points to this condition as fostering Catiline's conspiracy. Of course, one might object that this was only one cause of the conspiracy, and that thus it should not be introduced as evidence in support of the generalization. Sallust might agree, but could claim that this was a major remote cause of the plot.

Roman politics were in a sad state at the time of the plot. No man had control, and the factions were always in evidence. Morals had reached an all-time low throughout the city. Turmoil and strive had reigned until Caesar returned from Gaul and crossed into Italy to set the state in order a few years earlier. Sallust's generalization about the Roman government seems well substantiated.

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5 For an appraisal of the Roman political scene see: Lily Ross Taylor, Party Politics in the Age of Caesar (Sather Classical Lectures, Volume XXII; Berkeley: University of California Press, 1949).

6 Cook, et alii., op. cit., entire volume substantiates Sallust.
Sallust judges that the education and moral upbringing are tremendously influential in determining the character of a man. He educes Catiline and his supporters as cases in point. After characterizing the times, Sallust shows how the actions of the conspirators substantiate his thesis.

Critics again select this section frequently to show Sallust's political bias against the nobles.7 Perhaps Sallust viewing the situation from his position as a partisan of Caesar and a member of the democratic faction does exaggerate his description of the vices of the wealthy. But his own paragraph of explanation for the actions of the conspirators is at hand:

Nem quid ea memorem quae nisi eis qui videre nemini credibilium sunt, a privatis compluribus subvorsos montis, maria constrata esse? Quibus mihi videntur ludibrio fuisset divitiae; quippe quas honeste habere licebat abuti per turpitudinem properabant. Sed lubido stupri, gnaesae ceterisque cultus non minor incesserat: viri muliebria pati, mulieres pudicitiam in protudo haberet; vescendi causa terra marique omnia exquirere, dormire prius quam somni cupidum esset, non famem aut sitim, neque lassitudinem oppresserit, sed ea omnium luxu antecapere. Haec juventutem ubi familiares opes defecerunt, ad facinora incendebant. Animus inbutus malis artibus haud facile lubidinibus carebat; eo profusius omnibus modis quaeestui atque sumptui deditus erat.8

If this was the state of Roman morality, few students of history or psychology would consider the generalization incorrect.

Sallust attempts to show that Catiline is the only product which can

8Sallust, Catiline, XIII.
normally be expected from such a background. Catiline and his fellow
conspirators certainly provide ample evidence to make such a judgment. There is
no reason to consider his judgment false, either from the evidence which he
educes from Roman history or from the theories which are propounded by modern
psychologists.

CATILINE AS A REVOLUTIONARY

One of the major assertions Sallust makes in the course of the Catiline is
that Lucius Sergius Catiline is a true revolutionary. There are two views of
Catiline besides the view which we feel is Sallust's own opinion.

First, one can consider Catiline to be a true social reformer, who seeks
to change the social structure of the Roman state and to do away with the ills
which plague the populace. S. L. Mohler opts for this description of
Catiline's character:

Catiline's political career was ended, the career of a brilliant man
who saw the social ills of his people and made a sincere effort to
remedy them. Whether he was a self deluded visionary or a broad
minded statesman we can hardly judge from the evidence supplied by
his enemies.9

The evidence in favor of Catiline is slim, and we are obliged to conclude that
this opinion of him is overly optimistic. None of the historical accounts
which we have of his character give a complimentary view of his life and
actions.

The second view pictures Catiline as a total anarchist. Although Cicero
never states it in these words, this is the portrait he implies in his

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9S. L. Mohler, "Sentina Rei Publicae: Campaign Issues, 63 B.C."
Classical Weekly, XXIX (1936), 84.
Oratiores in Catilinam. This opinion goes beyond what evidence we have from modern historical research, and is also rejected for being too harsh on Catiline's character. 

The correct view seems to place Catiline somewhere in between these two extremes. We have chosen to describe this as the picture of the true revolutionary. Catiline seems to have some valid reasons for desiring a change in government. First, he attempts to make a change through the legal method of election to public office. When he finds his plans thwarted by the victory of his opponent, he feels that he must resort to violence. Only then does he begin the intrigue which leads to the second conspiracy.

Catiline first tried to gain control of the government by means of legal succession to the consulate through election. In this election he probably had the backing and support of Caesar and Crassus. These two leaders of the popular democratic faction would have been quite willing to mastermind a change in Roman policy. Catiline undoubtedly thought he could also count on their support during the conspiracy; but as shrewd politicians they realized that the plot could never succeed, and they denied their assistance. Faced with their refusal, Catiline was forced to proceed alone. Since he had exhausted all other means at his disposal, only force remained. This is the case for most revolutionaries; the anarchist wants violence and strife for its own sake, the revolutionary uses it to gain control of the government to make the changes he desires. The facts which we have discovered in Sallust's account

sustain the contention that Catiline should be considered a revolutionary in the sense mentioned above. He does not deserve to be called a social reformer, however, nor an anarchist.

The above historical judgment is one which is highly controverted. Not only are there various views of the character of Catiline, but there are also differing ways of interpreting Sallust's estimate in the Catiline.\textsuperscript{11} It is our contention that Sallust holds the middle view we have just described. To sustain this allegation we shall examine some texts from the monograph itself.

First, the sketch of Catiline which is given in the prologue should be interpreted as we discussed earlier in the thesis.\textsuperscript{12} This picture is quite black, but the portrait which is painted in the body of the monograph is much more life-like.\textsuperscript{13}

Secondly, while he often pictures Catiline as a man who "\textit{iam primum adulescens multa nefanda suprema fecerat,}" Sallust is not always this harsh in his treatment of Catiline.\textsuperscript{14} For example, when he speaks of some of the atrocities which the conspirators were said to have performed to induce secrecy at their meetings, he writes: "\textit{nonnulli facta et haec et multa praeeterea existimabant ab eis qui Ciceronis invidia, quae postea orta est, leniri credebant atrocitate scalaris eorum qui poenas dederant.}\textsuperscript{15} Such a statement need not be recorded if the author actually believed that the

\textsuperscript{11}Rolfe, "A Friend of Caesar's," University Lectures. Rolfe seems to equate the views of Sallust and Cicero on Catiline.

\textsuperscript{12}Chapter IV, Interpretation, "The Character of Catiline.

\textsuperscript{13}Sallust, \textit{Catiline}, XXV, LVIII, and LIX-LXI.

\textsuperscript{14}Ibid., XV, 1.

\textsuperscript{15}Sallust, \textit{Catiline}, XXII, 3.
conspirators were guilty of these atrocities.

Thirdly, Sallust shows the loyalty of the conspirators to Catiline. This loyalty perdured despite the attempts of the Senate to win them away from the plot. Sallust remarks: "Namque duobus senati decretis ex tanta multitudine neque praemio inductus conjurationem patefacerat neque ex castris Catilinae quisquam omnium discesserat;" and, being at a complete loss to explain such loyalty to a traitor, he adds "tanta vis morbi ac veluti tabes plerosque civium animos invaserat."\(^\text{16}\)

Walter Allen, Jr., in examining the case for and against Catiline, writes of Sallust's estimate: "as it is, Sallust does not praise him, but says only enough to let the careful reader discover that Catiline was not entirely base."\(^\text{17}\) This opinion seems to agree with our conclusions in this section.

From these and other passages in which Sallust speaks of Catiline, we judge that Sallust sees the conspirator as a man who, although a traitor to his country, has enough good qualities to make him more than a mere anarchist, if not quite enough to make him a true social reformer.

**CAESAR AND THE CONSPIRACY**

The most frequent accusation made against the historical accuracy of the Catiline is its failure to implicate Caesar in the conspiracy of Catiline. We have seen how this charge is brought up again and again by the critics of Sallust from the time of Mommsen to the present. The charge is not usually

\(^{\text{16}}\)Ibid., XXXVI, 5.

made directly; rather it is described as excessive political bias in favor of Caesar and the democratic faction. D. C. Earl recognized this and remarked: "it has not been widely observed that Mommsen's thesis retains its validity only if it can be shown that Caesar was definitely known to have been implicated." 18

Sallust never mentions in his relation of the first or second conspiracy that Caesar could have been one of the conspirators. Caesar enters the scene as one of the speakers in the Senate debate over the punishment of the conspirators after they have been apprehended. Caesar's enemies try to implicate him in the conspiracy, but he calls on Cicero who comes to his aid. 19

Caesar is mentioned in the Catiline as one of the principal speakers during the course of the debate in the senate. Sallust provides a version of his speech which suggested the penalty of life in chains for the conspirators. 20 Cato, in his response to Caesar, treats his suggestion as too lenient. However, Caesar's leniency is hardly evidence that he was associated with the conspirators. And since Sallust offers nothing further on the point we must judge that he exonerates Caesar from all implication in the conspiracy.

Modern historians are also inclined to the view that Caesar should not be implicated in the conspiracy. We read in the Cambridge Ancient History: "though in later years Cicero roundly incriminated Caesar, it is practically

18 Earl, op. cit., p. 83.

19 Sallust, Catiline, XLVIII, 8-9, XLIX, 1. See also Chapter IV, Interpretation, "The Role of Cicero," in the present study.

20 Sallust, Catiline, LI.
Certain that he never possessed any valid evidence against him. This statement is particularly interesting in view of the fact that Sallust records how Cicero refused to incriminate Caesar at an earlier date when others urged him to do so.

CONCLUSIONS

In the present chapter we have attempted to show that Sallust's generalizations or historical judgments are correct. He includes in the text itself sufficient evidence for his judgments, and these judgments are not contradicted by evidence available through the research of modern historians.

First, we selected the moral judgments which Sallust makes and illustrated their validity. We pointed out that Sallust's prologue should be interpreted as an integral part of the monograph, giving us the moral ideas he illustrates through the episodes of the Catiline.

Secondly, we investigated the judgment that Catiline must be considered a true revolutionary, not a social reformer or a total anarchist. Our investigation centered around citations from the text of the Catiline which illustrate this interpretation.

Finally, we found that Sallust does not implicate Caesar in the conspiracy to overthrow the government of Rome. The evidence which modern historical criticism has uncovered substantiates this judgment of Sallust, despite the

21 Cook, et alii., eds., p. 503.

22 Sallust, Catiline, XLVIII, 8-9; XLIX, 1. See also Chapter IV, Interpretation, "The Role of Cicero"; and F. Jones, "Crassus, Caesar and Catiline," Classical Weekly, XXIX (1936), 89-93.
attempts of Caesar's critics to give him a role in the conspiracy.

Therefore, the generalizations or judgments which Sallust makes in the course of the Catilina are both sound and attested to by modern historians. According to the fourth norm, then, Sallust merits a place among the greater Roman historians.
CHAPTER VII

HISTORY OR PROPAGANDA?

We have now come to the end of our study of the Catiline of Sallust according to the norms of internal criticism. All that remains is to collect our conclusions and make a judgment. We will gather our conclusions under the various norms; then, we shall bring in the external evidence which we have for each section. Such a procedure will give us sufficient evidence for our judgment on the historical accuracy of Sallust's Catiline.

INTERPRETATION

While applying the norm of interpretation to the Catiline we discussed the way in which the reader is to consider the monograph. We implied that, for the most part, the reader should interpret the Catiline literally. The one major exception to the literal interpretation was the section in the prologue where Sallust gives character sketches of Catiline and the other conspirators. In this section Sallust personifies all of the evils and vices detested by the Romans. He moderates his view of Catiline as he proceeds through the narrative, so that in reality he proffers two differing pictures. The evidence indicates that the second portrait, the one given in the narrative proper, is the real Catiline; the first is merely a caricature.

We found that Sallust claims he is writing history. Because of general public knowledge of the conspiracy he could not expect to delude the Roman populace with a falsification. This public knowledge is one of the main reasons
why it is necessary to interpret his account literally.

Sallust seems to be moved by a feeling of party loyalty in his choice of events. While his political feeling did not cause him to alter the evidence, it did color his view in relating the account of the conspiracy. Partisanship leads him to highlight the conflict between the nobiles and the populares, for example, and to place the blame on the nobiles for the present state of Roman affairs.

Sallust's chronology is definitely at fault. This is the one criticism which is sustained by other accounts and records of the conspiracy. He seems here to forget his attestation that he is going to write history and lose himself in the attempt to make his narrative more dramatically effective.

His account of the first conspiracy and his portrayal of the character of Catiline are substantially accurate from the evidence which modern historical research has been able to discover, although the role he assigns to Cicero is correct but out of proportion. Sallust fails to accord Cicero the prominence which he deserved, but this failure is one of omission.

Our general conclusion from the first norm is that Sallust, despite his failures and omissions, would be considered a true historian. The Catiline is not mere political propaganda, though it undoubtedly had great political value for the democratic party. Sallust, while he may not rank as one of the world's best historians, deserves to be judged an historian according to the evidence of the first norm.

**CREDIBILITY AND VALUE**

In our investigation of the credibility and value of the author we found that he cites none of the sources he consulted in writing the Catiline. While
this is a serious fault for a modern historian, the ancient historians did not consider it a necessary practice. However, we did find sections in the actual text of the monograph where Sallust appears to show some critical sense. In these paragraphs he mentions his lack of sufficient evidence or that the account which he follows is mere hearsay. It is an easy inference that Sallust did have some of the critical spirit which the modern historian considers so necessary.

Sallust's account of the debate in the senate and his attitude regarding the final official decision in that body appear accurate. He could, of course, have given more prominence to the role of Cicero; but Cicero had assured himself of lasting renown by polishing and then publishing his own speeches. The episode seems clear of political propaganda for the democratic party, though the omission of a more prominent role for Cicero might be interpreted as a case of indirect propaganda for the popular cause.

The speeches of Cato and Caesar and the comparison which Sallust makes of the two men is one of the most interesting sections of the Catiline. The comparison appears to be accurate, especially if we recall that Sallust is looking back almost twenty years and can recall the achievements of Caesar's entire life. Sallust's praise of Caesar is hardly greater than that of many modern critics; therefore, to accuse him of Caesarian propaganda is to accuse them -- an impossible supposition.

The second and third norms show that Sallust made a definite effort to give the facts of the conspiracy with historical accuracy. His major fault remains his inaccurate chronology, but the other aspects seem substantially accurate. Once more we find that Sallust should be considered an historian
rather than the author of a political propaganda pamphlet.

GENERALIZATIONS

Historical judgments or generalizations are the measure of a good historian. In our investigation into the generalizations of the Catiline, we found that Sallust gives ample evidence within his text for the judgments he makes and that these judgments are substantiated by the discoveries of modern historical criticism.

Sallust makes two moral judgments in the Catiline which stand out from the others: first, "High public morality leads to good government"; and second, "Environment influences men." These two are explained in the prologue and exemplified in the body of the Catiline. Modern history and psychology would agree with the judgments that Sallust has made in this instance.

Two other major judgments which Sallust implies in the course of the Catiline are: Catiline's character is that of a true revolutionary and not an anarchist or a social reformer; and second, Caesar is in no way implicated in the conspiracy. Both of these historical judgments seem valid from the evidence offered in the monograph itself and from the evidence which modern historians have been able to gather. There will always be some dispute on these points; but, for the present, Sallust's judgment seems correct.

Sallust then must be considered as an historian who makes accurate historical judgments or generalizations in the Catiline.

HISTORY - NOT A PAMPHLET

We have come to the conclusion of our investigation of the Catiline of Sallust according to the norms of internal criticism. To obtain information we examined: first, the Catiline as a whole; secondly, particular sections of
the Catiline; then, checked and compared these with the results of other studies in Sallustian criticism; and finally, set Sallust's account against the version offered in modern texts. We have done all of this to determine if Sallust should be considered the author of an historical monograph or a political propaganda pamphlet. It is our conclusion that the evidence we have collected enables us to regard the Catiline as a true historical monograph.

We are not claiming that the Catiline is perfect history or that Sallust is the last word in historical accuracy, but we do claim that the Catiline is much more than a pamphlet of political propaganda. Sallust is not a great historian; he has many faults and shortcomings. But he is an historian.

Sallust is an historian, though he is not uninfluenced by his own political opinions and convictions; these, however, did not lead him to falsify the account of the conspiracy, even if they did color his relation to some extent. He has faults, but they remain faults and not clumsy attempts to alter the truth to benefit his party. No other judgment can be made concerning the historicity of the Catiline than to say it is an historical monograph which relates the events of the conspiracy of Catiline.
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APPROVAL SHEET

The thesis submitted by Robert H. Schmidt, S.J. has been read and approved by three members of the Department of Classical Languages.

The final copies have been examined by the director of the thesis and the signature which appears below verifies the fact that any necessary changes have been incorporated, and that the thesis is now given final approval with reference to content, form, and mechanical accuracy.

The thesis is therefore accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts.

June 8, 1964

Date

Signature of Adviser