

WEEK THIRTEEN:
The Domestic Enemy – Catiline

Thursday: Catiline I: Sallust's *Bellum Catilinae*

For Thursday, we will read Sallust's *Bellum Catilinae* (*BC*), his account of the Catilinarian Conspiracy of 63 BCE. L. Sergius Catilina ("Catiline") was a Roman aristocrat who was defeated in multiple attempts for the consulship. He ultimately decides to take extreme and extraconstitutional measures to achieve power in Rome and begins to gather up friends and allies to support his cause. Through a number of informers, Cicero, one of the current Consuls, hears of the conspiracy and convinces the Senate to enact an extreme measure of its own: the *Senatus Consultum Ultimum* (*SCU*), which gives the Consul full powers to take any action necessary to defend the Roman state. Ultimately, Cicero will use the authority of the *SCU* to arrest, imprison, and eventually execute a number of Roman citizens without the full legal protections to which they were entitled as citizens. After Cicero thwarts Catiline's co-conspirators in the city, Catiline escapes to his assembled troops (mostly veterans of past wars that were spread throughout the Italian countryside) in northern Italy. His few remaining troops faced off against the army of Antonius Hybrida, the second Consul near Pistoria, where Catiline dies fighting bravely in the front lines of the battle.

Sallust's account of the conspiracy, like his *BJ*, is a monograph: a historical narrative covering one central event and its causes and effects. In several places he again takes the opportunity to comment on the state of affairs and the declining morality that he sees in Rome. A debate in the Senate that sets Caesar (the famous Gaius Julius Caesar himself!) and Cato ("the Younger," the great-grandson of the Cato we know from Livy and PW2) against each other to decide the fate of the captive citizens that are being held by Cicero under the authority of the *SCU*. Sallust uses the opportunity to provide a *synkrisis* (remember this from Plutarch—it is a "formal comparison") of the character of these two great figures from the end of the Roman Republic. Overall, Sallust's *BC* is one of the most famous and most beloved of all the works of the Roman historians.

Assignment:

- Sallust, *Bellum Catilinae* (= Batstone trans., pp. 10-47)
- OPTIONAL: the Introductions on Sallust and the *Bellum Catilinae* in our Batstone translation (pp. vii-xxxvii and 3-9)

Reading Questions:

- How does Sallust describe his reason for writing the *BC*?
- To what does Sallust attribute the rise of the Roman state and the decline of its morality?
- What does the portrait of Catiline remind you of? What might that mean for the characterization employed by Sallust for this Roman aristocrat?
- Why does Sallust suggest that the conspirators become involved with Catiline?
- How does Catiline describe the state of Rome and how does he convince the conspirators to become involved in his plan?
- How do Gaius Manlius and Catiline address Marcius Rex and Catulus, respectively, in their messages? How do they describe the conflict?

- What kind of language does Sallust use to describe the declining morality in Rome? What are its causes?
- How is Cicero portrayed throughout the *BC*? How is he able to get the clear proof he requires to capture and prosecute the Roman conspirators?
- How does Caesar describe the problems facing the Republic? How does Cato? Whose arguments do you find more persuasive? What would you recommend become of the prisoners?
- How does Catiline's final speech compare to the portrayal of him so far? Does it compare in its outlook to other things we have encountered this semester?
- How does Catiline die? What kind of death is it? What do Sallust's final descriptions in the text suggest about the state of affairs in Rome?

People, Terms, Events and Concepts, to know from Week Thirteen:

Gaius Sallustius Crispus (Sallust)

Bellum Catilinae

M. Tullius Cicero

L. Sergius Catilina (Catiline)

Portrait of Catiline

Early History of Rome (acc. to Sall.)

Corruption and Moral Decline

the "First Catilinarian Conspiracy"

Catiline's Speech

Sempronia

Consular Elections in 63 BCE

Senatus Consultum Ultimum (SCU)

Gaius Manlius

Q. Lutatius Catulus

Catiline's Letter to Catulus

Digression of Corruption in Rome

P. Cornelius Lentulus Sura

the Allobroges

Betrayal by the Allobroges

Senate's meeting in the Temple of Concord

Debate about the conspirators' fates

Speech of Caesar

Speech of Cato

Synkrisis of Caesar and Cato

Prisoners' Execution

Battle at Pistoria

Catiline's Final Speech