

TWO FRAGMENTS OF SALLUST

I

Maurenbrecher¹⁾, following Kritz²⁾, interprets Sallust, *Hist.* 1. 26 M ("Nihil esse de re publica neque libertate populi Romani pactum") as referring to Cinna's renunciation of his oath to abide by Sulla's *acta* in 87 B. C.³⁾ I have discussed this alleged historical context previously⁴⁾, noting that Maurenbrecher's interpretation, while plausible, was by no means assured, and could not bear the weight of any argumentation dependent upon it. As I stated, "... I believe the proposal of a wide range of interpretations to be salutary, for even if the correct one is not found, at the very least that false assurance which almost inevitably attends a standard edition (like that of Maurenbrecher) may be avoided" (*op. cit.*, 546, n. 188).

With this point in mind, I wish to propose an alternative interpretation of 1. 26 M. The fragment, I suggest, refers to the Peace of Dardanus concluded by Sulla with Mithridates VI of Pontus in 85. First, although Sallust begins the main body of his *Historiae* with Sulla's death in 78, the point at which Sisenna apparently ended his history, he nevertheless provides an introductory survey of earlier history, with special attention to Sulla's character and career⁵⁾, within Book I, where this fragment is

1) B. Maurenbrecher, *C. Sallusti Crispi Historiarum Reliquiae*, Fasc. 2 (Leipzig, 1893; repr. Stuttgart, 1967), fr. 1.26 M.

2) F. Kritz, *C. Sallusti Crispi Catilina, Iugurtha, Historiarum Fragmenta* (Leipzig, 1856), fr. 1.24 K.

3) The three sources for the oath are Plut., *Sulla* 10.6-7; Dio 30-35, fr. 102.3; and Schol. Gronov. D, p. 286 Stangl.

4) "Studies on the Period of Cinna and Sulla," *AC* 45 (1976), 542-6.

5) Sall., *Hist.* 1.58-61 M (though 1.59 M - "Ut in ore gentibus agens" - says little and could refer to a number of persons). See St. August., *C. D.* 2.18 and 2.22. Cf. Kritz, *op. cit.* n. 2, p. 24; Sir R. Syme, *Sallust* (Berkeley/Los Angeles, 1964), 179-82 and 186; K. Bauhofer, *Die Komposition der Historien Sallusts* (Diss. Munich, 1935), 117-18; A. La Penna, *Sallustio e la rivoluzione Romana* (Milan, 1968), 248-9; F. Klingner, "Über die Einleitung der Historien Sallusts," *Hermes* 63 (1928), 180 and 187; É. Tiffou, *Essai sur la pensée morale de Salluste à la lumière de ses prologues* (Paris, 1974), 307 and 492-4; E. Koestermann, *C. Sallustius Crispus. Bellum Iugurthinum* (Heidelberg, 1971), p. 339. K. Büchner, *Sallust* (Heidelberg, 1960), 265, even refers to Sallust's "*Elogium*" of Sulla!

securely placed. Sall., *B.J.* 95. 2 (“Neque enim alio loco de Sullae rebus dictaturi sumus...”) most likely refers, in my judgment, to the *B.J.* alone; thus, the passage does *not* constitute an argument against Sallust’s having discussed Sulla at length in the *Historiae*⁶).

For one, such as Sallust, who hated the Sullan regime and its offspring Pompey, what better than a critical glance at the founder, Sulla himself⁷? The mordant criticism of Augustus by Tacitus, who was at the very least ambivalent toward the Principate, in his *Annales ab Excessu Divi Augusti* (1. 10), i. e., beginning with the death of the founder of the regime to be discussed, surely echoes, to some degree, Sallust’s treatment of Sulla in his *Historiae*⁸). Moreover, Mithridates was surely a major figure in the *Historiae*, one in whom the historian manifestly took an interest (note, e. g., *Mithridates’s Letter*, 4. 69 M).

Next, ponder the value to Sallust of such a reference. It not only serves to express the outrage felt at the agreement, originally even by Sulla’s own hard-bitten and self-centered *militēs* (Plut., *Sulla* 24. 7; cf. App., *Mith.* 55 and 60), but it provides a striking contrast with Sertorius’s later agreement with Mithridates⁹),

6) Cf. Koestermann, Comm. *ad Sall.*, *B.J.* 95. 2; and E. Pasoli, *Le Historiae e le Opere Minori di Sallustio*³ (Bologna, 1974; First Ed., 1965), pp. 228f. Even if the passage were interpreted as referring to a future work of Sallust, one could argue that the historian simply changed his plans, or made new ones. Parenthetically, it may be that Sallust’s earlier critical reference to country life, farming and hunting, after *retirement from public life* (*B. C.* 4. 1: “Igitur ubi animus ex multis miseris atque periculis requievit et mihi relicuam aetatem a re publica procul habendam decrevi, non fuit consilium socordia atque desidia bonum otium conterere, neque vero agrum colundo aut venando, servilibus officiis, intentum aetatem agere;...”), was, in part, a blow at Sulla, the political retiree *par excellence* of the Late Republic (cf. App., *B. C.* 1. 104. 488–90). Concerning Sall., *B. C.* 4. 1, see also B. R. Katz, “Sallust and Varro,” *Maia* 33 (1981), Section I and n. 19 (forthcoming).

7) Cf. R. V. Desrosiers, *The Reputation and Political Influence of Lucius Cornelius Sulla in the Roman Republic* (Diss. U. of N. C. at Chapel Hill, 1969), 99–113 and 124–5.

8) Syme, *Sallust*, 181, suggests that, like Augustus’s funeral, Sulla’s great funeral served as an occasion to berate the respective founding villain of the regime. Plausible.

9) P. O. Spann, *Quintus Sertorius: Citizen, Soldier, Exile* (Diss. U. of Texas at Austin, 1976), 154, aptly notes that Sertorius’s agreement was, in fact, “an alliance, ... of far less questionable character than, ... that sealed earlier between Sulla and Mithridates.” Cf. La Penna, *Sallustio*, 265–6. As I indicate in “Notes on Sertorius,” *RbM* (forthcoming), Spann, *op. cit.*, does well to eliminate Sertorius’s “treason” as an issue.

just the sort of ironic contrast which so appealed to Sallust. Indeed, one might well postulate such a reference if no trace of it remained. Moreover, we know that Sallust explicitly bewailed as a shameful precedent the license which Sulla had allowed his army in Asia for the purpose of solidifying its loyalty (Sall., *B. C.* 11. 5-8; cf. Plut., *Sulla* 25. 4-5; App., *Mith.* 61), a precedent which others had attributed to Manlius Vulso, a century earlier (Livy 39. 6, following annalistic tradition; cf. Pliny, *N. H.* 34. 14 = Piso, fr. 34, *HRR* I²). In another Sallustian investigation, I note the parallel drawn by Sallust, I believe, between Sertorius's pact with Mithridates (see n. 9, above) and Sextus Pompey's projected agreement with the Parthians (App., *B. C.* 5. 133. 550-4). One supporting argument for this thesis is the relevance to politics contemporary with the composition of Sallust's *Historiae*. Would not drawing a parallel between Sextus's plan and Sulla's actual treaty constitute an indictment (appealing to Sallust) of Roman aristocrats favoring Sextus, as their forebears had aided Sulla?

Observe that Sulla himself, not surprisingly, felt sufficiently defensive on the issue to highlight his personal interview with Mithridates to finalize the Dardanus pact in his mendacious *Memoirs*¹⁰); Sulla presented himself as adopting a very firm position – in words! This point is pertinent not only on general considerations (i. e., that Sallust, as an anti-Sullan, is apt to have stressed material detrimental to Sulla's reputation), but, in particular, because, characteristically, Sallust seems to have delighted in castigating Sulla on sensitive points¹¹).

10) Cf., e. g., D. Magic, *Roman Rule in Asia Minor* [henceforth, *RRAM*], I (Princeton, 1950), 230. As T. Reinach, *Mithridates Eupator: König von Pontos* (Leipzig, 1895; repr. Hildesheim, 1975), 198, observes, Sulla had already gone to the "Grenze der Nachgiebigkeit".

11) Note Sall., *B. J.* 95. 3 ("... de uxore potuit [Sulla] honestius consuli"); and Plut., *Sulla* 6. 22 ("τὴν μὲντοι Μετέλλαν ἐν πᾶσι θεραπεύων διετέλεσεν, ..."). Cf. Sall., *Hist.* 1. 60-61 M. Admittedly, the historian does not specify that Metella was the wife in question. T. F. Carney, "The Death of Sulla," *Acta Classica* 4 (1961), 64-77, suggests a psychological explanation of Sulla's high regard for Metella: her overlooking Sulla's venereal disease. In "Caesar Strabo's Struggle for the Consulship – and More," *RhM* 120 (1977), 45 ff., I discussed the great political significance of the marriage. The strong possibility that Sallust's *Historiae* is a source for the tales of Pompey's adultery and consequent neglect of the public interest (Plut., *Pompey* 2. 5) provides an analogous case, for Pompey was proud of his record as a husband (in later life, at least, deservedly).

Moreover, the historian Rutilius Rufus, in the east himself and surely no admirer of Sulla (although old Rutilius *may* have mediated for Sulla with the vehement Cinnan Fimbria [App., *Mith.* 60], he later refused to return to Rome at Sulla's invitation¹²), is likely to have discussed the Dardanus pact. Sallust, in turn, probably consulted the history of Rutilius, whose personality he would have found congenial in its moralistic malice¹³). Similarly, the fact that Rutilius had suffered an unquestionable injustice would also have appealed to Sallust because of the latter's inclination, in my judgment, to view his own political failure as due, at least in part, to the fault of others. Note that Sallust's admirer Tacitus (*Agr.* 1. 3) maintained the *fides* of Rutilius's autobiography, which, Badian has asserted, may have been "identical" with his history (the latter in Greek)¹⁴). As a

12) Cic., *Balb.* 28; Val. Max. 6. 4. 4; Sen., *Ep.* 24. 4, *Benef.* 6. 37. 2; Quint., *Inst.* 11. 1. 12f.; Dio 28. 95. 4. Cf. Nep., *Att.* 4. 2: Atticus's refusal to return with Sulla. E. Badian, "Review of Broughton: *MRR Supplement*," *Gn* 33 (1961), 492f., follows H(arold) Bennett, *Cinna and His Times...* (Diss. U. of Chicago, Menasha, Wis., 1923), 56 and n. 99, in rejecting the identification of Appian's "Rutilius" with P. Rutilius Rufus.

13) Cf. E. Badian, "The Early Historians," in *Latin Historians*, Ed. T. A. Dorey (N. Y., 1966), 24-6. Badian's persuasive assertion that "There probably never was any ultimate detailed source other than the *Commentarii* [i. e., Sulla's *Memoirs*] for the Eastern War..." ("Waiting for Sulla," in *Studies in Greek and Roman History* [Oxford, 1964], 210, repr. from *JRS*, 1962) does *not* contradict my argument, for the Treaty of Dardanus was scarcely a mere detail. Granted that we are not sure that Rutilius dealt with the "Eastern War" (though see Plut., *Pomp.* 37. 4!); still, would not the old man, having seen the Mithridatic massacres, followed by Sulla's betrayal of genuine Roman interests (for personal/political reasons), not to mention his squeezing of the provincials, have made a point of treating the topic? Far from reticent in the nineties B. C., Rutilius scarcely mellowed with age! Note that old Rutilius definitely outlived Sulla (Cic., *N. D.* 3. 32. 80), a pertinent point in estimating Rutilius's presentation of Sulla's activities in the east. Also note that Rutilius had been a friend of the annalist Fannius, whom Sallust is known to have praised (see Katz, "Sallust and Varro," *Maia* 33 [1981], Section II and n. 40, forthcoming). Furthermore, Desrosiers, *The Reputation ... of Sulla*, 119-21, argues that Archias, in his historical epic on Lucullus's campaign against Mithridates, would have recalled Sulla's achievements; cf. "Mithridaticum vero bellum, ... totum ab hoc [i. e., Archias] expressum est..." (Cic., *Pro Archia* 21). Archias, however, would presumably have been favorable to Sulla. The same was probably the case for Sisenna, Sallust's criticism of whom (*B. J.* 95. 2) may well, in part, have been prompted by his predecessor's treatment of Sulla in the east.

14) Badian, in *Latin Historians*, 24. Cf. R. M. Ogilvie and Sir I. Richmond, Comm. *ad Tac.*, *Agr.* 1. 3.

final point concerning Rutilius, that historian was related to Caesar by both blood and marriage, and may have influenced the literary style of Sallust's *imperator*¹⁵).

A further item of evidence, albeit weak, is a passage within Chapter Three of Exsuperantius's late imperial *opusculum*: "Hoc Syllae ubi nuntiatum est, Murenam legatum suum provinciae Valerianisque praefecit militibus quos infidos bellis existimabat esse civilibus...". Admittedly, Exsuperantius confuses the facts of the period horrendously. Nevertheless, he did depend upon Sallust, exclusively¹⁶). Thus, his mention of Murena and the Valerians' unreliability for civil wars *suggests* that Sallust did discuss these topics, though not necessarily in Book I where fr. 1. 26M is securely placed (cf. *Hist.* 2. 78 M)¹⁷).

As for the wording of the fragment, was not Sulla in 85 officially a "*hostis*"¹⁸)? Who was he to bind the state? Was not the right to make peace (as war) a major element of *libertas p. R.*? By concluding such an agreement, was not Sulla trampling upon *libertatem p. R.*? Further, did not the Treaty provide Sulla personally with military aid (for the – at the time – potential Civil War), rather than aid the *Res Publica*¹⁹)? What is more, Mithridates apparently did not even fulfill all his treaty obligations (App., *Mith.* 64), while the entire wretched Second Mithridatic War, courtesy of the *Sullanus* Murena, was in part the consequence of Sulla's earlier (mis)behavior (see n. 19, above).

In fact, one might plausibly argue that, just as Thucydides emphasized that there was only *one* Peloponnesian War, lasting intermittently from 431 to 404, so the Roman Thucydides Sallust judged that the successive Mithridatic Wars were all episodes in *one* essential struggle (St. August., *C. D.* 5. 22: "Bellum

15) S. Halpern, *Caesar and the Aurelii Cottae* (Diss. U. of Penn., 1964), 22, 25–8.

16) *Teuffel's History of Roman Literature*. II. Rev. by L. Schwabe. Trans. from the Fifth German Ed. by G. C. W. Warr (London, 1890; repr. 1900), p. 437; C. Bursian, preface to his 1868 Ed. of Exsuperantius, pp. VI f.

17) W. Schur, *Sallust als Historiker* (Stuttgart, 1934), 215, notes that Exsuperantius drew upon the first three books of the *Historiae*.

18) Cf. the powerful account of Badian, "Waiting for Sulla," in his *Studies*, 206 ff. I focus on the "*hostis*" issue because I believe that such an interpretation of the fragment is most probable.

19) See Memnon 25; Gran. Licin. pp. 26 f. Fl.; Plut., *Sulla* 22; App., *Mith.* 54–8; Florus 1. 40; Livy, *Per.* 83; Vell. 2. 23. 6; and *Vir. Ill.* 76. Cf. Magie, *RRAM*, I, 226–31, with notes in Vol. II; and T. Liebmann-Frankfort, *La frontière orientale dans la politique...* (Brussels, 1969), 184–5, 202–4, 321.

Punicum primum per viginti et tres annos peractum est; bellum Mithridaticum quadraginta.”; App., *Syr.* 48), a struggle which *could*—and, by implication at least, *should*—have been ended decisively by Sulla himself, or by his lieutenant Lucullus at Pitane, except for the placing of domestic (i. e., personal) political considerations ahead of national interest²⁰). Recall that Sulla even celebrated a triumph over Mithridates (*MRR* 2. 74), an event deserving Sallust’s most ironic treatment (cf. n. 20, above). This is doubly the case for the triumph granted to Murena (*MRR* 2. 77).

As for the potential counter-argument that the fragment denies an agreement “*de*” not “*pro*” *re publica*, first, does not this wording (as well as “*e*” *re publica*) apply to *any* agreement concluded by a *privatus* (much less a *hostis*)? Granted that, from Sulla’s viewpoint, the *pactum* at Dardanus was *de r. p.* and did not infringe the *libertas p. R.*; nevertheless, Sallust or a speaker (Murena?) is apt to have seen things differently. Indeed, App., *Mith.* 64. 269 presents Murena as denying the validity of the pact, based on the absence of a signed, written agreement²¹), in a context within which our fragment would fit very comfortably (cf. *Mith.* 70. 297).

Again, I maintain that the wording *de libertate p. R.* need not relate only to *domestic* political arrangements (as with Cinna). No, an agreement which *infringed* the people’s *libertas* inevitably concerned it as well (or, if invalid, could be denied to have concerned it). Also, contrary to the view apparently held by Maurenbrecher, it is most likely that Cinna’s “agreement” had been a formal one, in accordance with a legal requirement²²).

20) Plut., *Luc.* 3; Livy, *Per.* 83; Vell. 2. 24. 1; Oros. 6. 2. 10 (explicit); App., *Mith.* 52; Flor. 1. 40. 11–14; “Et debellatum foret, nisi de Mithridate triumphare cito quam vero maluisset... Mithridates tantum repulsus.”; *Vir.* III. 76. 5: “Sylla eum [i. e., Mithridates] potuit capere, nisi adversum Marium festinans qualemcumque pacem componere maluisset.”

21) See L. Raditsa, “Mithridates’ View of the Peace of Dardanus in Sallust’s *Letter of Mithridates*,” *Helikon* 9–10 (1969–70), 632–5; and T. Liebmann–Frankfort, “Du traité de l’Èbre à la paix de Dardanos. Variations romaines sur le respect dû à la parole donnée,” *Latomus* 30 (1971), 594f. The *SC de Stratonicensibus* (R. K. Sherck, *Roman Documents from the Greek East*... [Baltimore, 1969], No. 18, lns. 118 ff.) also demonstrates that Sulla’s *acta* had not all reached fruition as late as 81 B. C.

22) Cf. Katz, *AC*, 1976, 542–6. In fairness, one might claim that, historical facts aside, Sallust (himself or one of his characters, contrary to what the author himself believed) presented Cinna’s oath as personal, informal.

In short, a counter-argument based on phraseology appears to me *invalid*, and certainly not impregnable.²³⁾

To summarize, this new interpretation of *Hist.* 1. 26 M as referring to Sulla's Peace of Dardanus with Mithridates VI in 85 appears plausible, indeed *more* so than that of Maurenbrecher (actually of Kritz).

II

The very brief fragment *Hist.* 1, 29 M ("Libertatis insueti") need not refer, as Maurenbrecher believes, to slaves running wild at Cinna's summons to freedom during the siege of Rome in 87²⁴⁾. The two words may plausibly refer to the Cappadocians and Paphlagonians, who, when granted their "freedom" by Rome in 96, unexpectedly rejected it!²⁵⁾ They seemed to prefer

23) Similarly, it does not appear that Sallust's use of *pactum* or its cognates elsewhere would support pertinent argumentation. One might argue that the fragment refers to the bargain struck by Sulla in 88 inside Marius's house: Sulla withdrew his *iustitium* barring legislative activity and was allowed to retain his consulship, unlike his colleague Pompeius Rufus (E. Badian, *Lucius Sulla: The Deadly Reformer*, in *Essays on Roman Culture. The Todd Memorial Lectures* [Toronto, 1976; original ed., Sydney, 1969], 46-7). This interpretation does focus upon domestic events, Sulla and Marius in particular. On the other hand, it is very doubtful that Sallust was even aware of the bargain argued by Badian, while the non-involvement of Mithridates also, I believe, makes for a weaker case.

24) Cf. La Penna, *Sallustio*, 255, n. 53 ("Resta incerto..."); and *idem*, "Per la ricostruzione delle 'Historiae' di Sallustio," *SIFC* 35 (1963), 22-3 ("non sono impossibili altri riferimenti, per es. popolazioni barbariche abituate ad un regime despotic,..." [23]).

25) See Magie, *RRAM*, I, 202-5, with accompanying notes in Vol. II, for an extended discussion (see also below). Key ancient sources are Justin 38. 2. 3-8 ("Sed Cappadoces munus libertatis abnuentes negant vivere gentem sine rege posse. Itaque rex illis a senatu Ariobarzanes statuitur." [8]); and Strabo 12. 2. 11. While these two passages focus on Cappadocian rejection of "freedom", Magie argues that the Paphlagonians simply retained their Bithynian king. Hence, in a sense, the point of the fragment pertains to both realms. Cf. E. Badian, "Sulla's Cilician Command," in *Studies* (from *Athenaeum*, 1959), 162ff., with citation of sources, for Sulla's personal involvement; and now, A. N. Sherwin-White, "Ariobarzanes, Mithridates, and Sulla," *CQ* 27 (1977), 173-83. Precise chronology and details are beyond the bounds of the present study. Note also App., *Mith.* 57 (Phrygia declared free). On the general theme of the Romans' declaring a nation to be "free", cf. S. I. Oost, "Cato Uticensis and the Annexation of Cyprus," *CP* 50 (1955), 99 and n. 17 (on p. 110). Reinach, *Mithridates*, 93, observes that the Cappadocian nobility felt that "freedom" was merely a first step toward Roman annexation. All the more grist for the Sallustian mill.

monarchy to *libertas*. "Strange people!", the Romans thought. Once again, Sulla, as governor of "Cilicia", was on the scene, directly involved²⁶). In addition, the peculiarity of the event in Roman eyes may well have attracted our historian's attention. We know not only that Sallust discussed Cappadocia and Phrygia in Book II (2. 84 M)²⁷), but also that the historian loved to focus on the bizarre, the *incredibile*²⁸).

Moreover, the "freedom" had come about because of aggression by Mithridates, aggression which constituted disobedience of Marius's famous *mot* to the king when visiting the east several years earlier (Plut., *Marius* 31. 4-5). Hence, it was not an obscure, uninteresting detail of eastern history, but a paradoxical occurrence involving Sulla and Mithridates (and, less directly, Marius), an event inextricably bound up with the background to the First Mithridatic War.

Who can be *confident* what the two words involve? Nevertheless, they may well refer to this incident, which, after all, would offer Sallust an excellent opportunity for reflections on the relativity of the meaning of *libertas*, a favorite Thucydidean pastime of the historian. Furthermore, let us note *Hist.* 2. 39 M ("Genus armis ferox et *servitii insolitum*" [italics added]), in reference to the *Dalmatas*, it seems; Sallust, as so often, characterizes an entire people, in this case as the very opposite of the Cappadocians (I argue). The fact that in 1. 29 M a plural, instead of *genus* in the singular, is used, though worthy of mention, does not, in my view, constitute a viable argument against my proposed interpretation. Sallust may have been referring to the envoys or magnates in Cappadocia²⁹). Two words can be pressed only so far.

Moreover, Sallust, in the *Epistula Mithridatis*, has the Pontic king refer to the Romans' "morem... omnia regna subvortundi" (4. 69. 15; cf. 4. 69. 17 M)³⁰). The Letter even contains the observation that "pauci libertatem, pars magna iustos dominos volunt" (4. 69. 18 M)³¹) Clearly, this assertion

26) Livy, *Per.* 70. Cf. Justin 38. 3. 3; Plut., *Sulla* 5; and App., *Mith.* 10.

27) Cf. Tiffou, *Essai*, 503.

28) La Penna, *Sallustio*, 350, stresses this point concerning uncommon individuals; cf. p. 304.

29) Cf. Magie, *RRAM*, I, 205.

30) Cf. L. F. Raditsa, *A Historical Commentary to Sallust's 'Letter of Mithridates'* (Diss. Columbia, 1969), 221.

31) Note that Sir R. Syme, *The Roman Revolution* (Oxford, 1939; corr. repr., 1952), 518 and n. 5, believes that this is the sentiment of Sallust

constitutes a striking parallel to the attitude of the Cappadocians and Paphlagonians. Also, note *Hist.* 5. 3 M (of unspecified book): “Adeo illis ingenita est sanctitas regii nominis”. This fragment *could* belong in Book I, alongside 1. 29 M, according to my proposed interpretation. Finally, recall the *mot* of Sallust’ exemplar Cato the Censor, that “This creature, a king, is by nature carnivorous” (Plut., *Cato Maior* 8. 12, with other anti-monarchical declaration). In short, Cato had discussed the institution of monarchy.

Confessedly, the totality of these arguments concerning this brief fragment cannot be thoroughly convincing, but is it not most suggestive³²?

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himself, “... not invalidated by the fact that it occurs in the letter of an oriental despot”. Cf. *idem*, *Tacitus* (Oxford, 1958), 527; and Raditsa, *op. cit.* n. 30, 265-74.

32) I am grateful to Profs. M. Gwyn Morgan of the University of Texas and Victor Castellani of the University of Denver for helpful criticism.