

## Doubt, Paranoia, *Perfidia*: Ethnicity and Leadership in Sallust

This paper reassesses the significance of the hesitation, doubt, and paranoia displayed by Jugurtha throughout Sallust's *Bellum Iugurthinum* (*BJ* 25.6-7, 32.5, 35.3, 38, 46.1, 46.8, 62.8, 72.2, 74.1, 75, 76.1, 80.1, 107.6). Although the *ingenium mobile* (fickleness: e.g. *BJ* 46, 66.2, 88.6) and *perfidia* (treachery: *BJ* 61.3, 61.5, 91.7) Jugurtha exhibits clearly relate to a broader discourse in the *BJ* promoting traditional ethnographic stereotypes about Africans (cf. Gruen 2011), flashes of *Romanitas* makes Jugurtha a multivalent figure who confounds traditional categories, in the process forcing readers to reconsider what distinguishes Roman from barbarian.

In Jugurtha one easily finds the model of a fickle, violent foreign tyrant. Kraus 1999 outlines Jugurtha's character along such lines: he bribes, murders, and creates disorder through delay and rapid motion. Moreover he is increasingly subject to doubt and paranoia brought on by defeat and betrayal. This descent into paranoia and guilty conscience (*BJ* 32.5, 62.8) might suggest a negative judgment on the king (cf. Koster 2015; Krebs 2008), and indeed paranoia and madness are prominent – and consistently negative – motifs in several areas (e.g. oratorical invective (Cf. Cic. *In Pis.* 99), curse tablets (Adams 1992, Gager 1992: 175-200)), tragedy (Kubiak 1989: 239)).

Moreover a comparison with Bocchus' behavior encourages a negative judgment of Jugurtha. The Mauretanian prince also constantly hesitates and changes his mind, and Sallust openly questions Bocchus' *fides* (*BJ* 108.3, 113.1). Lacking true redeeming qualities, Bocchus' behavior seems to confirm the traditional stereotypes of African *ingenium mobile* and *perfidia* used throughout the *BJ*.

Jugurtha may share these qualities with Bocchus, but Jugurtha's role is more complicated than is sometimes assumed (e.g. Kraus 239-45). Indeed, recent scholarship on ethnography and

the “Other” emphasizes the fluidity of ethnic identities (Skinner 2012), and the tendency of ethnographic accounts to call upon varying modes of ethnographic explanation “to suit their immediate needs” describes Sallust’s practice well (Woolf 2011: 54). Like Catiline, Marius, Sertorius, Pompey, and others, Jugurtha displays positive potential compounded with negative elements. Jugurtha plays the foreign enemy leader, violent and deceitful, but his upbringing and at times his behavior reflect a certain *Romanitas*. His service at Numantia echoes early Roman youths (*Catiline* 7.4, 6, 8.5), and Sallust ascribes *virtus* to him numerous times up through his service there under Scipio. Moreover by being both *proelio strenuus* and *bonus consilio* (*BJ* 7.5.27), Jugurtha fulfills Sallust’s own ideal of the *bonus imperator* (*Catiline* 1.5-7; *BJ* 51.5, 52.1) – a title hard to come by in the *BJ* and never long retained even by Romans (*BJ* 63.6 (Marius); 64.1 (Metellus); 82; 95.4 (Sulla)).

Thus, while Jugurtha reinforces traditional stereotypes about barbarian difference and (moral) inferiority, Sallust is just as concerned to use ethnographic discourse to question Roman self-fashioning. Indeed, Sallust’s treatment of Jugurtha is only one part of a larger project of challenging Roman exceptionalism spanning the *Catiline*, *Jugurtha*, and *Histories*. While this paper can barely hope to scratch the surface of this wider project, a few key passages suggest a promising line of future enquiry. For Sallust, the first dissensions among Romans occurred *vitio humani ingeni* (“by an innate fault of the human spirit”, *Hist.* 1.7M); Romans were thus never free from vices or discord, but had them *iam inde a principio* (“already from the beginning”, *Hist.* 1.11M). The presence of *virtus* and *concordia* was consequently only conditional, and abandoned them after Carthage fell (*Hist.* 1.11, 12, 16M). Parallel characterization of early Romans in the *Catiline* and early Africans at *BJ* 17-19 further alerts readers of the *BJ* that Roman character is subject to the same faults as other nations, and the conduct of Romans

throughout the *BJ* bears this out (Scanlon 1988). Such evidence from across Sallust's *corpus* may help uncover how Sallust challenges Roman claims to be innately more virtuous than non-Romans, or essentially different morally.

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