

# **The Jugurthine War Study Guide**

## **The Jugurthine War by Sallust**

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# Plot Summary

Sallust's book documents two important historical events in the Roman Empire, the Jugurthine War and the Conspiracy of Catiline. They occur at a time the Romans had acquired great comfort in their lives. Sallust describes this comfort as having a detrimental effect on Roman society with money more important than glory. In such an environment, the libertine, Lucius Catiline, rises to great prominence and almost causes the downfall of the Roman government. The African King, Jugurtha, takes advantage of corrupt Roman officials to rise, virtually unimpeded, to the position of King of the Roman province of Numidia.

In the first part of the book, Sallust details the Conspiracy of Catiline. Sallust tells the reader how the dictator Lucius Sylla has created an environment where the Romans hold material wealth more important than honor and virtue. Within this environment, the violent Catiline garners the support of the youth, the poor and even criminals, and runs for consul.

He sends his best men to nearby parts of Europe and garners more support by promising that if he gets into power, they will be freed of all their debts. This works well, but he ruins it somewhat by attempting the assassination of the new consul, Cicero. By this time, the senate realizes that Catiline is plotting the downfall of the government, but they cannot act, as they do not have enough proof.

After a confrontation with the senate, Catiline joins the army he has situated outside Rome and advances towards the city. This causes the Rome public to fear for their lives; finally the Senate realizes that they have to do something. They send the consul Antonio to lead an army towards the advancing Catiline, and the other consul Cicero stays in the city. Cicero organizes the capture of a number of Catiline's main men and takes them in front of the Senate. They all confess and uncover Catiline's plan to burn Rome; their confessions lose Catiline the public's support.

Meanwhile, Catiline hears that his friends have confessed and decides to turn back towards Gaul. Unfortunately, Quinton Metellus Celer second-guesses him, and Catiline finds himself surrounded by both Antonio and Celer's armies. Despite a significant disadvantage, Catiline knows he has no choice but to fight. After a brave display by his men, Catiline, on the verge of defeat, rushes to the front and the Romans slaughter him.

In the second part of the book, Sallust details the Jugurthine War. Jugurtha is a brave, African soldier adopted as a son by the Numidian King Micipsa. After Micipsa's death, the Numidian kingdom is divided between the three sons, Adherbal, Hiempsel and Jugurtha. Hiempsel, in particular, cannot accept Jugurtha as his brother and questions his father's decision in making Jugurtha joint heir to the throne. Jugurtha, however, has great ambitions, and he immediately succeeds in assassinating Hiempsel.

Adherbal sends warning signals to Rome, but Jugurtha has since discovered he can buy Roman support, and he already has a great many allies among the Roman nobles.



The Senate divides Numidia between the two brothers, but Jurgurtha gets the best deal and sets about invading his brother's half. Finally, Jugurtha tortures and kills Adherbal and takes control.

The Romans send in a number of consuls to resolve the situation, but Jurgurtha bribes them all and proceeds as before. It is not long before Memmuis makes the public aware of the corrupt nobility, and a tribune forces the Senate to send in the honorable Metullus. He sets about taking over Numidia and embarrassing Jurgurtha's army so much that Jurgurtha is on the run in his own country. At this point, Maruis takes over from Metullus and intensifies the assault on Jurgurtha. In reply, Jurgurtha elicits the support of King Bocchus, and they enjoy a number of successful attacks on Maruis' troops.

Eventually the Roman's overpower the Numidians and King Bocchus calls for talks. He says that he made a mistake in joining Jurgurtha, and he will now do anything to help the Romans. The Roman's decree that it was a bad error on Bocchus's part, but tell him he can make amends by helping them capture Jurgurtha. On agreement with the Romans, Bocchus organizes a meeting with Jurgurtha, which the Romans ambush. The Romans capture Jugurtha and take him back to Italy in chains.



# The Conspiriacy of Caitiline I-XII

## The Conspiriacy of Caitiline I-XII Summary and Analysis

Sallust starts by talking about the strengths of the mind and the body. He puts the virtues of the mind above that of the body, but he understands that war needs both—the mind for planning and the body for attacking. He says our ancestors built great empires based on intellect rather than brute strength; without an emphasis on mind, the government would be constantly changing and the people would be unhappy.

Sallust talks about the difficulty in writing a history book. He says it is a reader's inclination to think a writer is presenting a bias view, when actually the author is only censuring. He explains he was once in the army as a young man where he found a great number of power hungry people. He tells the reader that he fell into the power trap himself. He explains he became a writer once he had finished with public life, claiming he did not want to waste his life. Sallust moves on to mention the guilt and perils of the Conspiracy of Catiline. However, before he goes any further, he insists on explaining about the character of Catiline.

Sallust describes Lucius Catiline as a man born into a rich family. As a powerful man, he abused his power to the point of starving his constituency. Despite this, a corrupt society allowed Catiline to increase his power even further. Sallust adds that such depravity in a once-great society has inspired him to look closely at public morals.

He moves onto a short history of the development of Rome. Firstly, the Trojans and Aborigines, despite their differences, got together and built a powerful society. The world was jealous of their achievements, but the Romans repelled all attacks. Having secured their borders, they placed a government alongside their monarchy. Society developed quickly, but for some of the more powerful people of the nation, it was too quick. Sallust blames the monarchy's lust for power and their fear of the mind for changing the system.

During this change, Sallust explains the people developed taste for a Prince's valor. Men joined the army where they aimed to earn renown as a hero. At that time, money and power were more in the background. He states that the Romans do not have greater literature because their people did not want to record merits but wanted their own merits celebrated. The Roman society was morally sound, but more through natural inclination than any pressure placed on them from above. He claims Roman society rewarded good behavior and pardoned bad behavior.

However, Sallust presents this society as fragile, and when all the princes die in battle, people began to look more towards money and power. In the end, society morals disintegrated so much that the government was unsupportable.



The time was ripe for Lucius Sylla to move and take over the government. Sylla's take over was anything but friendly, and Sallust claims he committed all sorts of inhumane acts. The big difference between Sylla and the previous regime is that rather than instilling discipline in soldiers, he over indulged them, leading to an increasing amount of ill discipline. People desired money and luxury so much that they began to covet other people's goods, and society became a breeding ground for criminal activity.

Sallust begins by stating his preference of the mind over the body, a theme that runs throughout the book. One reason he is critical of Catilin is because Sallust thinks Catilin is a brute, who forces his opinion on others. For example, Sallust's short character study describes Catiline as having starved his contingency. Similarly, Catilin's passionate speeches are full of passion and bravado but with little of the brains Sallust suggests is required to become a great leader. In comparison, Sallust presents Catilin's nemesis, Cicero, as calm and intelligent. Cicero uncovers all Catilin's plans and, unlike his enemy, Cicero does not look to dictate, but discusses all his ideas with the senate. In Sallust's opinion, Catiline had no chance for victory.

However, Sallust's opinion is one sided, and though he readily admits this in the following chapter, such a claim of it being the fault of the censors does not ring true. Sallust seems to immensely dislike Catiline and presents nothing but Catiline's bad side. In fact, as a libertine Catiline is a menace to society, polluting innocent minds and harboring criminals. However, in general, the reader knows two things about Catiline; first, he was violent from his youth and starved his contingency, and second, he killed his son when his lover told him she could not marry someone who already had a child. It is fun to think these facts are true, but the reader cannot help thinking this is propaganda. Having said this, perhaps Sallust was right and the censors did prevent him from saying many things he wanted to say. For example, Sallust shows disgust at the Roman's coveting of goods and their lust for power, so Sallust must see something honorable in Cataline's claim that he will rid people of debt. Yet, he presents Cataline's promise, not necessarily as a fallacy, but as a ploy to get into power. This could be true, but Sallust could probably point similar accusations at either Cicero or Antonio. Strangely, he ignores anything about their background that could shed light on their characters.



# The Conspiracy of Catiline XIII-XXIV

## The Conspiracy of Catiline XIII-XXIV Summary and Analysis

Within this environment, Lucius Catiline began attracting libertines, the name Sallust describes people without principles. Sallust claims Catiline looked mostly to capture the minds and support of youngsters, buying them gifts and sending them mistresses. Sallust explains Catiline killed his son in order to marry a beautiful woman. Catiline then used all the young men he trained to take over the government.

Catiline and his followers plot the assassination of the consuls Lucius Cotta and Lucius Torquatus. After the assassination, he intends for his prodigy, Cneius Piso, to take over the two Spains; however, on his way into Spain, Piso is murdered. Sallust questions whether the Barbarians, who Piso most likely treated harshly, or the Spanish committed the act. Back in Rome, Catiline delivers a passionate speech to his men about liberty. The men ask why they should take up arms and what support Catiline can provide. He says he will end debt and the greed of the wealthy. He then mixes wine with human blood and passes it around the room to drink, sealing their agreement.

Quintus Curius is at the meeting, who is a man once held in high regard but who has become a criminal. However, he has a relationship with a high-society woman called Fulvia. One night he discloses information to her about Catiline's meeting, resulting in the public voting for another consul. In response, Catiline works even harder to gain support.

Sallust's history of Roman society and how society created an environment where someone of Catiline's temperament could flourish is short and concise. Again, he shows great respect for the intellect, saying that wise leaders who could recognize people as individuals and bring them together through a shared love of their nation, built the original Roman society. Sallust is repeating the theme of the mind (intellect) being above the body, which Sallust sees as a brutal, destructive force. Sallust tells the reader that as soon as the monarchy wanted back their power for no other reason than vanity, then society began to disintegrate. The prince's way of life promoted bravery and hero worship, and, though they managed to keep the enchantments of money and power in the background, such virtues were of a fragile nature. Once the Princes all died in battle, greed took over, and society started to destroy itself.

Considering Sallust has such a negative opinion of the Roman society Catiline grew up in, it is difficult for the reader to understand why he presents Catiline as such a brute. On one hand, the reader can see that Sallust thought there were ways to go about such things as revolution, but on the other, Sallust presents himself deeply troubled at the moral decline in Roman society. In the next part, Sallust shows this by the way Jugurtha so easily bribes members of the government, despite the fact what Jugurtha is doing is detrimental to the Romans. In many ways Catiline is also reacting against this moral



decline. His methods of getting criminals, youngsters and the poor on his side is akin to revolution, and something that Sallust, given his apparent view point, should show some begrudging respect.





# The Conspiracy of Catiline XXV-XXXVI

## The Conspiracy of Catiline XXV-XXXVI Summary and Analysis

Catiline thinks the best way forward is through war. He sends his best men to various parts of Europe with the view of burning Rome when the time is right. He tells his followers to carry weapons and be ready for battle at all times.

Catiline plans to assassinate the consular Cicero, but Curius does not like the idea and he tells Fulvia of the plans, which she passes on to higher sources. As a result, Cicero's guards turn the assassins away when they arrive. Meanwhile in Etruria, Manilius is getting the poor people of the region onto Catiline's side. Cicero knows that Manilius is gathering an army but cannot get enough intelligence of Manilius's exact plans. Cicero decides to go to the Senate, who tell him he must do everything in his power to prevent damage to the Commonwealth.

On The 27th of October, the Senate hears that Manilius has taken to the field. Rumors spread and the population of Rome, having never had war in their city, are fearful for their lives. At this stage, Catiline unexpectedly enters the Senate house, and everyone shows great hatred towards him. In reply, Catiline promises to burn them down.

Immediately, Catiline organizes to go to Manilius' army camp and bring back troops. Catiline sends letters to Rome to say that due to the accusation leveled at him, he has taken refuge in France. However, he is actually marching to see Manilius.

In the house of Senate, Quintus Catulus reads out a different letter from Catiline that asks Catulus to protect Catiline's wife. However, the government finally finds out what is really happening and they make Catiline an enemy of state, sending out Antonio and his troops.

Interestingly Sallust binds the theme of acting quickly with a sound political structure. In a dictatorship such of that of Sulla's and the government Catiline is trying to enforce, acting quickly does not work. For example, when Catiline visits the Senate and the other politicians treat Catiline badly, he immediately decides to join his army and march them into Rome. However, with one man seemingly controlling everything and not taking any advice from anyone, such spontaneity does not work and leaves his men unsure of what to do. For example, they plan to tempt Cicero to the city gates and kill him before they set fire to Rome. However, the men argue whether it is not better just to go to Cicero's house and kill him there and then. Yet, such promptness will not work because they do not have the system in place to continue if the immediate assassination of Cicero goes wrong. Sallust shows the fragility of Catiline's group when the Romans arrest some of the conspirators, and they immediately confess everything. In comparison, the Roman government is far more democratic. Sallust shows this with the

speeches, particularly at the end when Cato and Caesar's speeches present two points of view. Such arguing means that acting quickly works because they base it on reason.



# The Conspiracy of Catiline XXXVII-XLIX

## The Conspiracy of Catiline XXXVII-XLIX Summary and Analysis

Caitiline attempts to get the help of the Gauls, saying if they win, their country will be free of debt. Initially they agree, but after weighing it up, they decide to put the state first, so disclose their meeting with Caitiline to Rome. Sallust tells the reader of the conspirator's plans. They aim to entice Cicero to the city gate and then kill him and his followers. However, Cathegus thinks the best way forward is immediate action. Cathegus tells his fellow conspirators he will go down now to the solicitation Consul's house and kill him. Cicero asks the Allobroges (Gauls) to arrange a meeting with the conspirators. Cicero arranges for two men to wait under Milvian Bridge as the conspirator Volturcius walks back from the meeting. They arrest Volturcius as planned, and Cicero is overjoyed, taking the conspirators before the senate. The senate questions the conspirators and puts them into custody. Upon hearing news of Caitilin plotting to set fire to the city, the conspirators publicly switch their support to Cicero.

The senate arrests Lucius Tarquinius as he is taking news to Caitiline of Volturcius's capture. Catiline backs up what Volturcius said about burning the city, and he names Marcus Crassus as a conspirator. The statement shocks the senate, as he is a man of noble birth. They decide to have a vote on whether they think the statement is true or false, and the verdict comes out in Crassus' favor.

It is difficult to make a judgment on whether Sallust's viewpoint in this section is subjective or objective. His statement at the beginning about his work being censored immediately throws his following argument into confusion, but then he also states he is very worried about the state of Roman society and the corruption of its leaders. Again, in his introduction he says he experienced this first hand when he was in the army as a young man and observed the power hunger of the officers. Sallust then explains how this lust for power in the forces seeped into Roman society. The Conspiracy of Catiline takes place within the corrupt society Sallust describes, and the reader has the idea that there is a lot he does not say. From this point of view, the lack of information about the characters of Cicero and Antonio, for example, is purely for propaganda reasons. Sallust does not say anything because he has nothing good to say. Occasionally he leaves the readers to make up their own mind. For example, his lack of comment, good or bad, on Antonio's reasons for declaring his injury before the battle. It is likely Sallust hides his opinions in the speeches and, in particular, Cato's speech that persuades the Senate to execute the conspirators. Sallust shows great respect for Cato when he says, "When Cato had resumed his seat, all the senators of consular dignity, and a great part of the rest,[268] applauded his opinion, and extolled his firmness of mind to the skies." Cato's speech is very much on the lines of what Sallust mentions in the beginning. Cato implies that the government is full of corrupt, power hungry individuals, who promote their own wealth over the health of the state. He then argues for the execution of the



conspirators, but with an intelligent and balanced discourse that shows he bases his opinion on intelligence for the good of the country. He tells the senate that they must act promptly or suffer, highlighting another main theme of the book, acting upon events quickly.



# Conspiracy of Catiline L-LXI

## Conspiracy of Catiline L-LXI Summary and Analysis

Cicero arrests more men and takes them before the Senate, where they debate whether to execute them. The Senate applauds a long speech by Cato in favor of their execution. Finally, the accused men are taken down to the dungeon and strangled.

In the meantime, Caitilin approaches Rome with his army, and Antonio's army approaches Caitilin. However, when Caitilin hears about the executions, he heads back to Gaul. Quinton Metellus Celer guesses this will happen, and he takes some of his troops to block Caitilin's way. Soon, Caitilin's army find themselves surrounded on both the Rome and Gaul side. Caitilin has no choice but to go into battle, so he prepares his soldiers with a speech. Antonius cannot fight in battle and hands his command over to Marcus Petreius, who knows all the soldiers, motivating them by reminding them of their past heroics.

Battle commences and Petreius is surprised at the aggression in which Caitilin attacks. In response, Petreius changes his strategy, attacking Caitilin through the center, and then surprising him by attacking down the wings as well. Eventually he overpowers Caitilin's army. When Caitilin realizes he is about to be defeated, he charges to the front, and the Romans slaughter him.

At the end, Sallust presents Catiline in a more positive light, saying he fought bravely to the end, but even this accolade, Sallust peppers with propaganda and a little snobbery. In fact, he bases this statement around the fact that Catiline only starts fighting bravely when he remembers his noble origins. Throughout this first section, Sallust presents the nobility as generally wiser, and therefore above, their poorer contemporaries. Even Cataline's noble ally, Curius, sees the light and becomes an informer for the government. Sallust clearly has a penchant for class structure and expressing one's opinions in the correct manner. He shows great respect for Cato's speech at the end, which though it criticizes society's lust for money, including his fellow politicians, the speech persuades the Senate to execute the conspirators because they are trying to destroy a system that is fundamentally great.

In many ways, Sallust's recording of events reads more like a novel than an historical document. The book moves along quickly, progressing in short chapters; within the chapters, the writing is not the formal and detailed style a reader would expect from a modern history book. Instead, Sallust concentrates on the action, often presenting everything in very black and white. For example, the good guys such as Cicero are inherently good, while Catiline, of course, is completely bad. It is interesting that when Antonio pardons himself from fighting, Sallust passes no judgment on him. However, the reader knows at this point that if Catiline were to do same it would result in a lengthy character assassination. From that perspective, this is not a reliable depiction of the conspiracy. Sallust does include speeches from the characters, but the reader has to

wonder if he wrote these speeches to fit his point of view. For example, he replicates two speeches that Catiline delivers to motivate his men. These speeches are full of passion, but strangely, Catiline imparts little advice on battle tactics, backing Sallust's viewpoint that he lacked the wisdom to win.



# The Jugurthine War I-XII

## The Jugurthine War I-XII Summary and Analysis

Sallust talks about man's intellectual ability. He claims that too many men allow fate to control their lives and states the reason is that man is too obsessed with material items. Sallust states if man pursued worthy goals, he would govern his own fate. From this perspective, Sallust states that positions in public office that require intellectual ability are not desired because people are reaching powerful positions through unlawful means, rather than through merit. He continues to say a dictatorship could bring about the change needed in Roman society, but previous attempts have only brought bloodshed. After stating his concerns about the running of his country, he returns to the subject of the Jugurthine war.

Sallust states he is writing this book because of the great effect Jugurtha, King of the Numbians, had on the Roman society. As one of the first oppositions to the Roman nobility, Jugurtha threw Roman society into disarray, and war became the only option available to restore order. Before Sallust begins his narrative, he talks about the history behind the conflict. Originally, the Romans rewarded the Africa King Masinissa with cities and lands after his help in defeating Hannibal in the second Punic War. Masinissa handed over his power to Micipas, who had two children Adherbal and Hiempsel. Jugurtha was the son of his brother, but Micipas brought him up as if he were his own son.

As a young man, Jugurtha excels in all the disciplines the Africans hold to be important and attains popularity among his peers. This poses a problem for Micipas, who wants to hand over his kingdom to one of his two real sons, but feared retribution and even war if Jugurtha does not inherit some of his power. To overcome the problem, he sends the militarily ambitious Jugurtha to fight in the Numantine war, hoping he will perish. However, Jugurtha only excels, becoming more popular and making strong friendships with some prominent Romans.

As a highly-intelligent man, Jugurtha quickly sees that many Romans hold wealth above even their own country, and as such, they are quick to take bribes. The general, Publius Scipio, realizes Jugurtha is trying to obtain power through illegitimate means and warns Jugurtha that it will only lead to his ruin. Nevertheless, Scipio holds Jugurtha in high regard and writes a letter to Micipas detailing his brave exploits during the war. Micipas seeing the great honor Jugurtha has earned for his kingdom, adopts him as his son, immediately making him joint heir to his kingdom alongside Adherbal and Hiempsel. Not long after, Micipas takes ill. On his deathbed, he advises Adherbal and Hiempsel to learn from Jugurtha and treat him as their own brother; however, Jugurtha knows Micipas' words were insincere.

Soon after Micipas' death, a rift develops between Jugurtha and Hiempsal. Hiempsal looks upon Jugurtha as inferior because his mother was a concubine, and Hiempsal



refuses to accept Jurgurtha as his brother. Problems come to a head when Jurgurtha states that they should annul all of Micipas' acts in the last years of his life because he did not make them with a sound mind. Hiempsal replies that he agrees and that the annulments should stretch to Jurgutha's position as joint heir to the throne. Immediately, Jugurtha realizes he has to somehow cut Hiempsal off from power.

Hiempsal moves in with Jurgurtha's old servant. This presents Jurgurtha with the ideal opportunity to assassinate his adopted brother, so he obtains Hiempsal's palace keys and sends his men to kill him. The men succeed in their mission and bring Hiempsal's head back to Jurgurtha.

Again, Sallust starts with the theme of intelligence. He places intelligence above all else and claims the people in Roman society have become lazy, allowing themselves to be controlled by fate rather than controlling themselves. This immediately sets the tone for the remainder of the section. Sallust is not claiming the people are stupid, but that they have become too lazy to think. For example, the nobility have reached such a high position in society that they feel untouchable and no longer need to prove themselves to stay in power. The only way they have of showing their status is through the purchase of material items. In such an environment, a man such as Jurgurtha, who Sallust represents as intelligent and brave, can come in and buy the nobles' support. In this section, Jurgurtha easily buys the nobles' support and he is initially free to do as he pleases. Later on, the reader sees that the corruption blinds the nobles' so much that Jurgurtha's brother Adherbal's pleas to stop Jurgurtha's violence is met with indifference within the Senate. However, as Sallust suggests in his introduction, there were some positives to come out of the war. Roman society had been corrupt for many years, and the Jugurthine War uncovers this dishonesty and brings about a change in government.





# The Jugurthine War XIII-XXIV

## The Jugurthine War XIII-XXIV Summary and Analysis

As fear spreads throughout Africa, the people divide themselves between Adherbal and Jurgurtha. The majority support Adherbal, but the more warlike support Jurgurtha. With the Roman's support, Jurgurtha is able to build a powerful army and take over a portion of Numidia. Adherbal builds a bigger army, but even then, he is no match to his brother's more naturally aggressive men. Jurgurtha forces Adherbal to flee to Rome. Jurgurtha reacts by sending men into Rome to bribe his old friends and make new ones. The bribery works well, and the corrupt Romans build his popularity and ensure his safety.

Adherbal delivers a speech to the Senate asking for their help to defeat Jurgurtha, but many of the men present are already on Jurgurtha's side and tell Adherbal that his brother, Hiempsel, was a violent man and for that reason he was killed. Adherbal does receive support from some of the government's more honorable members, but his speech has divided the Senate. Nevertheless, the senate decrees to divide Numidia up between Jurgurtha and Adherbal. In reply, Jurgurtha increases his bribes, resulting in him getting the better deal.

From here, Sallust gives the reader a historical account of Africa. He states Europeans see Africa as part of Europe, only water dividing the two continents. The first tribes on the European African border were the Libyans and Getulians, tribes Sallust describes as uncivilized and barbaric. Their way of life changed when the Persians moved into Getulian, intermarrying the natives and forming Numidia. They moved into Libya, and the two tribes became part of the same nation. The Phoenicians were the next race to move into Numidia, and they founded many cities such as Hippo, which became very powerful. At the time of the Jugurthine war, Numidia was under Roman rule.

Sallust returns to Jurgurtha. He says once the Romans divided Numidia between the two brothers, they returned to Italy. However, Jurgurtha is confident he can win Rome over with money and gifts again, so provokes Adherbal into a war. He sets fire to houses and loots villages in Adherbal's territory. Adherbal, though, is afraid of defeat and sends his ambassadors to iron out their differences. This has little effect, and Jurgurtha increases the violence against Adherbal's people. Adherbal realizes he has no choice but to engage in battle, and he advances an army towards Jurgurtha just outside the town of Cirta. Jurgurtha yet again overpowers Adherbal and Adherbal and his remaining soldiers escape into Cirta, where they find help from some Romans. Jurgurtha finds out Adherbal had sent ambassadors to Rome before the commencement of the battle, so Jurgurtha attempts to get to Adherbal before the ambassadors arrive in Rome. He does not manage it, and word comes from the Senate to stop the fighting immediately.

Roman representatives visit Jurgurtha, and he tells them he does not intend to dishonor the Senate. He says he will stop his war on Adherbal immediately. The representatives



do not get a chance to speak to Adherbal as Jurgurtha has trapped him in Cirta. Once the Rome representatives leave, Jurgurtha intensifies his attack on the town. The situation is becoming increasingly impossible for Adherbal, who has little chance of getting out of Cirta alive. Finally, he manages to deliver a message to Rome telling them of his predicament.

One of the most interesting aspects of the section is Jurgurtha's rise to power. Unlike Catiline in the previous section, Sallust shows great admiration for the African King. He presents him as heroic, popular and above all very intelligent. Jurgurtha initially fights alongside the Romans, earning their admiration, while at the same time learning how they go about doing things. Eventually Jurgurtha decides he can buy any Roman official, and he is not far from wrong. However, the reader has to question why Sallust represents him in such a positive way and if it again only serves to emphasize the nobility's own lack of thought. In fact, by doing so, Sallust pardons Jurgurtha's actions, which include killing his brothers and, of course, garnering support by unethical means. It seems that compared to Catiline's conspiracy, Jurgurtha's tactics ended up bringing change that Sallust himself wanted and for that he is grateful.



# Jugurthine War XXV-XXXVI

## Jugurthine War XXV-XXXVI Summary and Analysis

The Senate sends Marcus Scaurus to talk to Jurgurtha. Scaurus is a prominent member of the Senate, and his presence in Numidia calms Jurgurtha; however, it has little effect on Jurgurtha's ambitions. Scaurus goes back to Rome where the Senate sends a message to Adherbal to resign Cirta and begin talks with Jurgurtha. They tell Jurgurtha that no harm should come to Adherbal, but Jurgurtha tortures him to death and massacres the inhabitants of the town that includes Italians.

Such is the power of Jurgurtha's money on the Roman nobility that they virtually ignore his brutality. It is not until Memmuis, a man with little trust of the nobles, stirs up the general public with claims of corruption within the government, that the Senate is forced to act. They send Calpurnius into Numidia with an army in an attempt to take over the country. However, Jurgurtha again resorts to bribery and again it works. By the time, Calpurnius returns to Rome he has apparently restored peace.

It was not long before rumors spread about Calpurnius' conduct in Numidia. Again, Memmuis is the instigator, and here Sallust includes a speech he makes to the people. He says that the government is corrupt but the people should not get violent. Memmuis sends Lucius Cassius to bring Jurgurtha back to Rome. Jurgurtha goes with Cassius peacefully, and Cassius takes him in front of Memmuis. Memmuis tells Jurgurtha he must tell the people the extent of the Roman government's corruption or face the consequences. Unfortunately, Caius Baebius, whom Jurgurtha has bribed in the past, persuades Jurgurtha to hold his tongue.

The senate elicits the services of Massiva, a noble Numidian living in Rome. Jurgurtha tries to bribe more Romans, but now they are either feeling too guilty or not willing to take the risk. Jurgurtha tells his faithful friend, Bomilcar, to kill Massiva. Bomilcar succeeds, but he murders him with too much haste and the Romans arrest Bomilcar. The Senate forces a confession from Bomilcar, but Jurgurtha, fearing repercussions if Bomilcar dies, manages to persuade the Romans to send him back to Numidia. Soon after, the Roman's send Jurgurtha back to Numidia and the war is renewed. The consul Lucius Annius marches an army into Suthul, a town difficult to besiege, which is full of Jurgurtha's treasures. Cleverly, Jurgurtha pretends he wants to surrender, luring Annius out of Suthul and into some of the more remote parts of Numidia. He then persuades Annius' officers to leave their post at a given signal, and Jurgurtha surrounds Annius' camp. Jurgurtha tell Annius he must leave Numidia, and completely overpowered by Jurgurtha's army, he has no choice but to obey. The Senate meets Annius' decision with disgust in Rome, and they send Albius into Numidia. Back in Rome, an investigation begins into the corruption among the nobles.



# Jugurthine War XXXVII-XLIX

## Jugurthine War XXXVII-XLIX Summary and Analysis

The people vote Quintin Metellus into consul and the Senate hand him the Numidian province. Sallust describes him as an honorable man, who Jurgurtha has no chance to persuade with the lure of gold. Jurgurtha quickly hears of Metellus's strong character and offers his surrender; however, Metellus is too wise to trust him. He marches into Numidia and finds everything very peaceful and submissive. Still distrustful of Jurgurtha, he sends scouts to scour the whole country. Jurgurtha continues to offer peace, but Metellus ignores his pleas. Finally, Jurgurtha organizes his army and begins to advance on Metellus.

Jurgurtha motivates his troops by saying they have conquered the Romans before and they will do it again. He says they are at an advantage because they know the land. They then wait to ambush Metellus. Metellus sees the Numidians hiding, but he cannot be sure who they are. Nevertheless, he has words with his troops and they advance carefully. When Jurgurtha is sure Metellus is past his first line, he attacks him from all sides, throwing the Romans into complete confusion. Finally, Metellus manages to gather back his troop and properly organize them again. Eventually the Romans win the battle, and the two sides renew their troops for further attacks. Metellus attempts to provoke Jurgurtha by looting his richest towns and cities and killing the inhabitants.

Rome shows their pleasure with Metellus, and the praise spurs him on. He advances towards Zama with the idea of taking over the city, but Jurgurtha hears of Metellus' plans and sends in his most reliable soldiers to fortify the city. Metellus arrives at the city's edge and begins to attack. Metellus realizes his efforts are in vain, and that Jurgurtha is content on just ambushing his army rather than partaking in battle, so he retreats from Zama and rests his soldiers.

Sallust is working from a biased perspective. He himself was a prominent member of the tribune of the people that uncovered the corruption, so he must have a certain obligation to present them in a positive light. He certainly paints a decadent picture of the Roman nobility. For example, when the Senate sends the consul Lucius Bestia Calpurnius into Numidia, Jurgurtha buys his support with hardly a question asked. Sallust then presents the Roman army as ill-disciplined brutes. They buy everything instead of making it and live a luxurious life that is not conducive to being men of war. Such negative representations serve to highlight what a greater impact the People's Tribune had, and from this perspective, they were the saviors of the people. When they vote in Metellus as consul, he changes everything around, inserting honor back into the army and rejecting any bribes. However, Metellus is also a nobleman, and it is no surprise, that though Sallust credits him with changing the army's mentality, it is the plebeian Marius, who wins the war. In fact, Sallust eventually sows Metellus in a negative light when he objects to someone of Marius' standing rising to the powerful position of consul.

However, Metellus' arrogance in turn highlights the public's generous and forgiving spirit when despite his views, he returns to a hero's welcome.



# Jugurthine War L-LXI

## Jugurthine War L-LXI Summary and Analysis

Metullus bribes Bohumilcar to bring him Jurgurtha. In return, Metullus tells him he will pardon him for murdering Massiva. Bohumilcar agrees and talks Jurgurtha into surrendering. Metullus tells Jurgurtha to hand over all his arms and elephants before he sends over his men to discuss peace. When the men leave, Jurgurtha has a change of mind realizing the Romans are likely to either execute him or take him into slavery. He decides to renew his fight.

Marius has ambitions to become a consul, but Metullus scuppers his plans, leading to the two of them falling out. Marius goes to see Gauda. Gauda is a Numidian, who is heir to the Numidian throne after Jurgurtha. Metullus has insulted Gauda by refusing to recognize him as a Prince, and Marius is keen to take advantage of the grudge, telling Gauda he will become king if he helps him.

Meanwhile Jurgurtha is building an army. He takes back towns and villages and persuades the people of Vacca to invite the Romans under false pretense and then proceeds to slaughter them. However, Metullus hears of the slaughter and takes back the city.

The Roman public hears about the argument between Metullus and Marius. With the nobility no longer respected, they all back Marius and campaign to elect him as consul.

Jurgurtha flees from Thala when Metullus moves in. Short on arms and men Jurgurtha talks with King Bocchus, inflaming his hatred of the Romans. Together they build an army and decide to march into Cirta, the place where Metullus leaves the Roman's baggage and prisoners. Back in Rome, the people elect Marius as consul and hand him control of Numidia. He builds an army and sets forth to Africa. The two Africans hearing of Marius' progress flee into the more isolated areas of the country. Metullus returns to Rome.

Marius continues to march relentlessly into Numidia, and Bocchus declares his intention to make friends with Rome. However, Marius continues to besiege cities with such regularity, the Numidians think of him as inhuman. Eventually, Jurgurtha and Bocchus join forces and surprise Marius and his troops as they retire for their winter camp. The attack puts Marius into trouble, but he retreats to the hills, where he finds an advantageous position. The African kings pull back their troops. During the night, Marius orders his troops to be silent, while the barbarians participate in their traditional all-night celebrations. When the Barbarians fall asleep, Marius attacks. The resulting battle is more of a slaughter, and Sallust states that more of Jurgurtha's soldiers die here than in any of the proper battles.



The Romans continue to march back to their winter quarters, but then Maruis gets news from his scouts that Jurgurtha is advancing upon the Romans on all four sides. When Jurgurtha reaches Maruis, he finds the Romans are ready waiting for him. Nevertheless, the barbarians fight bravely until finally the Romans defeat them on all four sides.

Bocchus calls a meeting with Maruis, who sends Sylla in his place. Bocchus offers his submission and asks if he can come to Rome to meet with the Senate. Rome grants permission and they decide Bocchus was lead astray by Jurgurtha. Bocchus then arranges a meeting with Jurgurtha. Romans ambush the meeting and take Jurgurtha back to Italy in chains.

Like so many of the important people in his book, Sallust only shows Jurgurtha's character in terms of what serves Sallust's point of view best. However, he leaves many questions unanswered. For example, what exactly are Jurgurtha's motives behind first starting the war and then continuing, when he has no chance of winning. Sallust sheds little light on those issues. He does claim that Jurgurtha feared the Romans would execute him if he gave in, but this does not answer the first question. It seems strange to represent Jurgurtha as an honorable man and then suggest that his motives behind his violence were nothing more than a lust for power, control and war. It is difficult for the reader to accept that there was not a political agenda, but then perhaps that is what Sallust is trying to hide. In his short history of Africa, he represents the inhabitants as uncivilized barbarians. Consequently, the various Asian and European empires that took over parts of Africa, civilized the country and in general only had a positive effect. With Numidia now a province of Rome, Sallust is intent on showing that it was a peaceful arrangement, negating the idea that Jurgurtha aimed to start a revolution. From Sallust's perspective, the Jurgurthine war was more akin to a civil war between the nobility and the people, and Jurgurtha was an excuse for the takeover.



# Characters

## Lucius Catiline

Catiline is a politician and the force behind the Catiline conspiracy. Sallust explains Catiline was born into a powerful family, but quickly developed a penchant for violence and oppression. For example, Sallust claims Catiline starved his contingency. However, Sallust claims he came to prominence because Roman society at that time was corrupt and many powerful individual were taking bribes.

Once Catiline gains enough power, he immediately entices the younger generation, poor people and criminals to join his side, presenting himself as a libertine. In accordance, he gives them wealth, power, women, immunity and a promise of a future free of debt. Particularly important is his promise of freeing society of its debt. At that time, with consumerism replacing what Sallust suggests were honorable values, many people were in debt to the Roman government, including neighboring countries such as Gaul.

Catiline builds up enough support to run for consul, but the government uncovers his plot to assassinate the other two consuls and ruin their reputations. However, Catiline is a determined spirit and decides the only way he can rise to power is by defeating the government. He increases his recruitment policy and builds up an army, scattering his best in neighboring European countries with a plan to burn Rome.

However, Sallust presents Catiline as a man of brute force rather than intelligence. Consequently, the government constantly foils his plans. Eventually Catiline realizes action is his strength, so he leaves Rome to join his army on the borders of Italy, and they march towards the city with the intention of destroying it. Meanwhile, the government captures some of Catiline's fellow conspirators and forces their confessions. Hearing the government has foiled his plans again, he turns back towards Gaul. The government predicted this would happen and block off Catiline's retreat. Catiline delivers a powerful speech to his men and leads them into battle. Unfortunately, Antonio's men overpower Catiline's ill-equipped army and defeat him. However, the fact that Caitlin could lead such an ill-equipped army into war, motivating them to fight with great spirit and then charging to the front himself to fight, shows a man of strong character, who believed what he was doing was right.

## Jurgurtha

Jurgurtha is an illegitimate child, his father being an African prince and his mother a concubine. His Uncle and King of Numidia, Micipsa takes him in and raises him as if he were his own son. All through his youth, Jurgurtha's bravery wins him many admirers. However, he presents Micipsa with a major problem. His popularity is so great that it would be difficult not to hand over his kingdom to him without causing anger among the





Numidian public, yet at the same time, not only has he two other sons, but Jurgurtha's background is not fit for ruling a nation. Micipsa decides to send Jurgurtha into battle alongside the Romans, hoping he will perish. Instead, Jurgurtha excels and wins many admirers among the Romans, so much so, that he leaves Micipsa no choice, but to adopt him as a son and therefore making him joint heir to the throne. Soon afterwards, Micipsa dies.

From this moment, Jurgurtha shows his ruthless streak. First, he bribes the Roman nobility. Second, he assassinates Hiempsal, when he questions his legitimacy to the throne. Adherbal complains to the Romans of Jurgurtha's intentions, but he has bribed so many members of the Senate that his brutal actions go unpunished. Jurgurtha kills Adherbal, sends the other nobility fleeing to Rome and becomes the sole sovereign of Numidia.

The Romans send in various consuls to talk to Jurgurtha, but he either wins them over with bribes or pretends to agree with them before continuing as before. It is only when the public finds out about the Roman's corruption that Jurgurtha's luck changes for the worse. The honorable Metullus moves into the country and sets about gaining back control of the area. At this point, Jurgurtha knows he is likely to be defeated but continues to fight because he knows his capture will result in either execution or slavery. Garnering the support of King Bucchus and a loving Numidian public, he puts up one last stand, but ironically falls to his own method of bribery when the Romans persuade Bucchus to collaborate with them.

## **Cicero**

Cicero is Catiline's main enemy. The Roman's elect him as a consular in preference to Catiline. Consequently, Catiline attempts to assassinate him, but the government foils his plans. Cicero then organizes the capture of Volturcius as he makes his way back from a meeting with the Gauls. Cicero takes Volturcius in front of the Senate, and they force a confession from him. From his confession, they discover Catiline's plans to march into Rome and destroy the city. While Antonio marches out to confront Catiline, the senate asks Cicero to stay in Rome and protect the city. His leadership is a major factor in Catiline's defeat.

## **Marcus Porcius Cato**

Cato's worthy speech in front of the senate leads to the execution of the conspirators.

## **Manilus**

Manilus is the leader of Catiline's army. Later on, Catiline orders Manilus to march his army into Rome.



## Antonio

Antonio, along with Cicero, is one of the two Roman consuls in power when Catiline is defeated. The Senate orders Antonio to leave Rome with an army and to advance on Catiline. However, when it comes to the battle, Antonio claims he is too sick to fight, and he hands his command to Petreius.

## Quintus Curius

Curius is originally one of Catiline's conspirators. However, he disagrees with Catiline's decision to burn Rome and ends up becoming an informer.

## Volturcius

Cicero's men capture Volturcius on his way back from meeting the Gauls and force a confession from him. His confession is one of the main reasons Catiline's army does not make it back to Rome. In the end, the Romans execute him.

## Marcus Petreius

Antonio hands over his command to Petreius when he claims he is too ill to fight. Petreius shows great leadership in motivating his men and the tactics he employs to eventually defeat the enemy.

## Lucius Sylla

Sallust blames Lucius Sylla's dictatorship for the breakdown of morals in Roman society, allowing for a person like Lucius Catiline to come to prominence.

## Hiempsal

He is the son of Micipsa and joint heir to his kingdom. Jurgurtha assassinates Hiempsal, when Hiempsal questions Jurgurtha's right to the throne.

## Adherbal

Adherbal is another son of Micipsas and joint heir to his kingdom. He spends his time warning the Roman government of Jurgurtha's intentions, but finds himself only speaking to corrupt officials bribed by Jurgurtha. He gains large support within Numidia against Jurgurtha, and the Roman government split the nation between him and his adopted brother. Unfortunately, Jurgurtha's supporters are far more warlike and quickly have



Adherbal and his army on the run. Eventually Jurgurtha tortures Adherbal and kills him. His death partly leads to a change in the Roman government.

## **Micipsa**

Micipsa is King of Numidia. He adopts Jurgurtha as his son after his exploits in the Roman army. His death leads to three sons arguing over their right to his kingdom.

## **Lucius Bestia Calpurnius**

The Roman government sends the consul Calpurnius to resolve problems in Numidia, but Jurgurtha buys his support. However, the public uncovers Calpurnius's dishonorable ways and demands a change in government policy.

## **Caius Memmius**

Memmius' dislike of the Roman nobles leads him to uncovering the corruption in the Roman government.

## **Quintus Metellus**

Metellus becomes consul after Memmius' revelations. Sallust describes him as incorruptible and his relentless pursuit of Jurgurtha sets up the Roman victory. One of the reasons he is so successful is that he reintroduces passion and discipline into a previously-corrupt and idle Roman army. He tries to block Maruis' ascent as consul for the reason that he is not a noble, but public opinion is against him.

## **Maruis**

Maruis is a highly successful general in Metellus' army. He comes to prominence when he successfully runs for consul, taking over from Metellus. His popular leadership is the final factor in the Rome finally defeating Jurgurtha.

## **King Bucchos**

He is King of the Moors. Bucchos forms an alliance with Jurgurtha towards the end of the war, but the Romans win him over. Bucchos organizes a meeting with Jurgurtha at the Roman's request. The Romans ambush the meeting and arrest Jurgurtha.



## **Objects/Places**

### **The Senate**

Where the Rome government make all their decisions.

### **Gaul**

Caitiline tries to cross over to Gaul when hears his plans have been uncovered.

### **Rome**

The consuls and senate are situated in Rome and Caitiline's plan is to burn Rome down.

### **The Dungeon**

Cicero executes the conspirators in the dungeon.

### **Milvian Bridge**

The tide turns for Circero when he captures Volturcius under the Milvian Bridge

### **Pistoria**

This is where Caitilin and Petreius engage in battle.

### **Rome**

The capital city of the Roman empire.

### **Numidia**

The Roman's North African province.

### **Hiempsel's house**

Jugurtha kills his adopted Hiempsel while he is asleep in his own house.

## **Cirta**

Jugurtha defeats Adherbal in Cirta



# Themes

## Corruption

Sallust describes corruption as destroying Roman society. He blames it on an increasingly materialistic society, who value money over glory. Sallust claims the Roman's lives become so luxurious that their attitudes become complacent—particularly within the nobility who control the country. In the Conspiracy of Catiline, society is morally corrupt. The discipline that was in place, starting with the Roman army and seeping into society, has disappeared and in its place are individuals all looking to live for the moment. As everybody is looking after himself or herself, a man such as Catalina, described by Sallust as a violent libertine, can rise to great prominence. However, one reason Catiline almost succeeds in taking over Rome is that he is fully aware of how to take advantage of a corrupt society. Sallust describes Catiline gathering the support of youngsters, criminals and poor people. He sends the youngsters gifts and women, promising immunity to the criminals and a debt-free society to the people. The result is they all love him, and if it were not for his extreme methods, he probably would have risen to consul. However, another reason for his downfall is corruption within in his own supporters. First, Quintus Curius turns informer and warns the government of an assassination attempt; secondly the Gauls worry about the Roman's wrath if they join Catiline so they help the Romans set up a trap, and finally some of Catiline's men confess all too easily to Catiline's plans in front of the Senate. Such lack of loyalty leads to the Romans surrounding Catiline's army, and Catiline with no choice but to fight a losing battle.

In the Jurgurthine War, the corruption is even more obvious. Jurgurtha rises to power through bribing the nobility. Jurgurtha continuously commits violent acts against the Roman province, assassinating one brother and declaring war on another. The second brother Adherbal escapes to Rome to ask for assistance but finds himself in front of a people who Jurgurtha has bribed. Even when they send the previously-honest consul Calpurnius to sort out the matter, Jurgurtha again just sends gifts and his plans proceeds as before. Finally, the public becomes aware of the corruption, turn on the nobles and elect the honorable Metullus as consul. Metullus moves into Numidia rejecting all bribes and rejuvenates an ill-disciplined army. By putting the country and its people before themselves, the Romans easily defeat Jurgurtha.

## Intelligence

Sallust shows great respect for intelligence, and both sections begin with this theme. He states that all great empires are built on intelligence rather than brute power. Sallust does not completely disregard brute strength, but suggests empires need to use it with discipline and a sound mind. He says the Romans built their Empire on such a foundation and as a result, people lived happy and disciplined lives, practicing religion and showing a great respect for their government. However, Sallust suggests that all



these virtues began from the top and worked their way down. As soon as the nobility began to switch the emphasis on the mind to general vanity, then society began to disintegrate. Even the Roman army, the pride of the people, became ill disciplined and open to corruption.

Sallust suggests Catiline's emphasis on passion was his major downfall. Catiline manages to gather a lot of support through promising to free the people of debt, but he does not build a foundation in which to succeed. In comparison, the Roman government have a number of different voices in the Senate who do not always agree, but they talk with reason and can often override any judgment based purely on emotion. In the end the government foils all Catiline's plans, but rather than rethinking either his ideas or the ability of his men, he jumps from one plan to another. All the government have to do is to wait for a mistake.

In the Jurgurthine War, Sallust does not define intelligence so black and white. He presents all the characters as intelligent, but they are too comfortable in their idleness to want to think. All the nobility wants is to maintain enough power so they can continue to enjoy a good life. The only way they can do this is through money, and the only way they can get money to support their idleness is through corruption. The intelligent and motivated Jurgurtha fully takes advantage of the situation, winning over some of Rome's most illustrious nobles through bribery. Only the intelligence and honesty of Caius Memmius, who uncovers the corruption, turns everything back around.

This also proves Sallust's point that brute strength can work as long as intelligence is its defining force. Sallust does not paint Metellus or Maruis as very intelligent, but rather they are relentless in their pursuit of Jurgurtha and behind the solid ideas of Memmius's call to stop corruption, such brute strength works.

## The Military

Sallust shows the importance of an organized, trained and disciplined military with strong leadership. Both Catiline and Jurgurtha's major downfall is that they do not have the military strength to cope with the Romans. Their men are mostly ill equipped, men they have gathered from the populous. As a group, they are brave, but they severely lack training and structure. Consequently, both Catiline and Jurgurtha have to adopt underhanded methods. Catiline attempts to assassinate the consuls and burn down Rome, while Jurgurtha ambushes the Romans until they force him into to battle. At one point, Jurgurtha knows the Romans are going to defeat him, and he only continues because his alternative is capture and execution.

The Roman army's strength is so important that Sallust suggests its corruption has major repercussions on society. In the Conspiracy of Catiline, Sallust suggests people once looked up to the army and the methods they used—an army designed to promote glory and honor, principles which seeped into the morals of society. Yet as people began to lust after power and money, the army became a good way of achieving both goals, first through becoming a hero and then through bribery. In the Jurgurtha war, the Roman



army loses all interest in fighting when Jurgurtha makes their lives as comfortable as possible. Sallust describes them as buying everything rather than making it themselves, and in general living for themselves rather than each other. The honorable Metullus takes over the Numidian province and goes about restoring the army's discipline. He insists they make their own food, introduces punishment for bad behavior and in general organizes a fighting unit strong in mind and spirit. With this approach, the Roman's easily win the war.





# Style

## Perspective

Sallust had been an important figure in Roman life. He had been one of the leaders of the tribune of the people and showed great support for Caesar. In return, Caesar handed him the position of Governor of Africa Nova. Eventually Sallust retired from public life to concentrate on his writing.

It is interesting that at the beginning of the Conspiracy of Catiline, Sallust states that as a young man in the army, he took bribes and was very interested in power. Both the Jurgurthine War and the Conspiracy of Catiline detail the corruption of Roman society of that time and particularly with the military and nobility.

However not only did Sallust experience, and even partake in the corruption, as a plebeian and member of the tribune of the people, he had a dislike of nobility. He shows this bias in both sections, presenting the nobility as decadent people willing to put themselves before their country. In the Jurgurtha war, he details the tribune of the people's power over the state. They have so much control that they vote in someone other than a noble into consul. Sallust paints Metullus in a bad light when Sallust shows how badly Metullus reacted to Maruis' rise to power, but Sallust shows the people are forgiving when Metullus returns to a hero's welcome.

Yet, despite this view, Sallust understands the importance of the nobility and that Roman society can only run smoothly when people act in an honorable manner. The coming together of the Senate, comprised of mostly nobles, in the Conspiracy of Catiline is a major factor in the Roman's victory. Similarly, the nobleman Metullus enforces the old-fashioned virtues of discipline into his idle army and turns them into proud, brave soldiers.

In general, both sections are less about the events and more about the downslide of morals in Roman society. Sallust constantly promotes intelligence over brute strength. In the Conspiracy of Catiline, Sallust claims Sylla's brutal dictatorship opened the way for violent people such as Catiline and suppressed intelligence. In Sallust's view, both the Jurgurtha War and the Conspiracy of Catiline would not have occurred if the government was stable.

## Tone

In terms of presenting society, and in particular the Roman nobility, as corrupt, Sallust's tone is completely subjective. He really seems upset about where Roman society is going, while he looks back into the past with longing. In Sallust's opinion, the Romans originally built their Empire around intelligence, and people judged success through how well they honored their country. However, the country has become too powerful and the



people too complacent. Sallust claims that people now judge success on how beautiful they are and the number of goods they own.

Sometimes this tone is so prevalent that Sallust forgets to go into the real reasons for the wars. Instead, he concentrates on painting the characters in a way that supports his opinion. For example, Sallust never gives a reason for Jurgurtha wanting control of Numidia. The reader is left to presume it is nothing more than a lust for power and war, yet, at the same time, Sallust originally paints him as a honorable and brave figure. No doubt this puts the nobility's corruption more into the light, but surely there were political reasons for Jurgurtha's continued fighting; otherwise, how else would he be so popular with his people.

In this regard, both of Sallust's documents come across as propaganda. He never criticizes the Roman's political policy and, in fact, fully supports it. Catiline, in Sallust's opinion, is a violent libertine interested only in creating an oppressive dictatorship. In the Jurgurthine War, Sallust never mentions why and how Numidia came into the Roman's power and whether it is a good thing for either the Numidians or the Roman people. Perhaps doing so would hand Jurgurtha a motive for his actions and in turn directly question the Roman occupation.

## Structure

Sallust starts both books by setting out a plan for his argument. This shows how he has divided the chapters. For example, the first five chapters of the Conspiracy of Catiline cover the introduction, and the next five chapters follows the virtues of Ancient Rome. The chapters tend to be very short, three paragraphs at the most, unless there is a speech, which usually fills two or three pages. The more a section continues, the less Sallust looks at it from a historical perspective, and the chapters become shorter and more action based. As such, the stories move along quickly and read more like a novel than an historical document. Sometimes Sallust places a speech in the text from a Roman, for example Julius Caesar. This tends to work to get Sallust's view across and add credence to the battle scenes. However, in general, Sallust sets out the course of the book and his own view from the very beginning, and then within this perspective, he tells the story.



## Quotes

"All our power is situate in the mind and in the body.Of the mind we rather employ the government;of the body the service."

Conspiracy of Catiline. Ch. I

"Will you not, then, awake to action? Behold that liberty, that liberty for which you have so often wished, with wealth, honor, and glory, are set before your eyes."

Conspiracy of Catiline. Ch. XX

"In Rome, at the same time, Lentulus, in pursuance of Catiline's directions, was endeavoring to gain over, by his own agency or that of others, all whom he thought adapted, either by principles or circumstances, to promote an insurrection; and not citizens only, but every description of men who could be of any service in war."

Conspiracy of Catiline. Ch. XXXIX

"We have luxury and avarice; public distress, and private superfluity; we extol wealth, and yield to indolence; no distinction is made between good men and bad; and ambition usurps the honors due to virtue. Nor is this wonderful; since you study each his individual interest, and since at home you are slaves to pleasure, and here to money or favor; and hence it happens that an attack is made on the defenseless state"

Conspiracy of Catiline. Ch. LII

"Riding round among his troops, and addressing his men by name, he encouraged them, and bade them remember that they were to fight against unarmed marauders, in defense of their country, their children, their temples, and their homes.Being a military man, and having served with great reputation, for more than thirty years, as tribune, praefect, lieutenant, or praetor, he knew most of the soldiers and their honorable actions, and, by calling these to their remembrance, roused the spirits of the men."

Conspiracy of Catiline. Ch. LXI

"Catiline, when he saw his army routed, and himself left with but few supporters, remembering his birth and former dignity, rushed into the thickest of the enemy, where he was slain, fighting to the last."

Conspiracy of Catiline. Ch. LX

"Mankind unreasonably complain of their nature, that, being weak and short-lived, it is governed by chance rather than intellectual power; for, on the contrary, you will find, upon reflection, that there is nothing more noble or excellent, and that to nature is wanting rather



human industry than ability or time."  
Jugurthine War. Ch. 1

"But his plans proving slow in operation, and his angry feelings remaining unabated, he resolved to execute his purpose by any means whatsoever."  
Jugurthine War. Ch. XI

"But who are these that have thus taken the government into their hands? Men of the most abandoned character, of blood-stained hands, of insatiable avarice, of enormous guilt, and of matchless pride; men by whom integrity, reputation, public spirit[113], and indeed every thing, whether honorable or dishonorable, is converted to a means of gain."  
Jugurthine War. Ch. XXXI

"The noble birth of Metellus, which had previously been a motive for paying him honor, had now become a cause of unpopularity; while the obscurity of Marius's origin had procured him favor. In regard to both, however, party feeling had more influence than the good or bad qualities of either."  
Jugurthine War LXXII

"After having spoken to this effect, Marius, when he found that the minds of the populace were excited, immediately freighted vessels with provisions, pay, arms, and other necessaries, and ordered Aulus Manlius, his lieutenant-general, to set sail with them."  
Jugurthine War. Ch. LXXXVI

"With respect to your republic, whose interests you are sent to guard, hear briefly what I have to say. I have neither made war upon the Roman people, nor desired that it should be made; I have merely defended my territories with arms against an armed force."  
Jugurthine War. Ch. CX



## Topics for Discussion

Is Sallust's dislike of the nobility as prevalent in the Conspiracy of Catiline as it is in the Jurgurthine War?

How much of Sallust's book do you think is propaganda?

Does Sallust substitute depth of thought for entertainment?

Do you think Sallust's negative opinion of Catiline is for political reasons or personal reasons?

Why does Sallust emphasize the importance of the Roman army?

For what reason does Sallust include speeches?

Why does Sallust only write character studies of Catiline and Jurgurtha?

What parallels can be drawn between Roman society and contemporary society?

Sallust presents an argument, but do you think he presents a solution?

How important is Sallust's claim that his work was censored? What parts of the book do you think were censored?