Political Terminology in Epistula ad Caesarem II

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In discussing the authenticity of *Epistula ad Caesarem senem de republica* II it is necessary to be clear on the terms of the problem. The style closely resembles that of Sallust's historical works; so closely, in fact, that it may be doubted whether Sallust had already by the dramatic date of this *Epistula* (51–49 B.C.) developed what was a self-conscious, mannered style even for history and, even if he had, whether he would have used it for a political pamphlet which professes an immediate practical purpose[2]. Even if this possibility is admitted as far as style in general goes, one would expect the political terminology to be precise for the contemporary public. That this last is an essential requirement there can be little doubt, if the *Epistula* is what it purports to be, a political pamphlet strictly contemporary and serious. If this requirement is not fulfilled, if, that is, the political vocabulary is used in an unrepublican way, then the conclusion is that *Ep.* II is not a contemporary pamphlet but a later literary exercise, imitated from Sallust by a writer not familiar with the political terminology of the late Republic.

Recently Professor Syme has shewn the difficulty of attributing to Sallust the use of *senatorius* as a noun in *homines nobiles cum paucis senatoriis* (11, 6). He also pointed to the apparent inclusion of Favonius as a *nobilis* (9, 4), which, if accepted, would be decisive against a Republican or even Augustan date[3]. But the interpretation is not certain[4]. The reading of Codex Vat. Lat. 3864, the sole MS of this work, is *reliqui de factione sunt inertissimi nobiles, in quibus sicut in titulo praeter bonum nomen nihil est additamenti. L. Postumii M. Favonii mihi videntur quasi magnae navis supervacuanea onera esse.* One cannot be quite sure that *L. Postumii M. Favonii* goes so closely with the preceding sentence as to demand their necessary identification as *nobiles*. The new sentence could go on to men like Postumius and Favonius as additional to the *inertissimi nobiles*, the two classes together making up the *reliqui de factione*. Orelli's emendation *nihil est. additamenta, L. Postumii M. Favonii* ... would take Favonius clearly out of the circle of *nobiles* and has certain arguments in its favour. It is the *lectio difficilior* and may be compared with the phrase at 11, 6: *homines nobiles cum paucis senatoriis, quos additamenta factionis habent*[5]. Even if this emendation is not accepted, and it is not absolutely

[1] The author wishes to thank Dr. A. H. McDonald for his help in the writing of this paper.

[2] Cf. K. Latte, JRS 27 (1937) 300; E. Fraenkel, JRS 41 (1951) 192ff.; R. Syme, Mus. Helv. 15 (1958) 49.

[3] Mus. Helv. 15 (1958) 53ff.

[4] Cf. W. Steidle, *Sallusts historische Monographien* (Historia Einzelschrift 3, 1958) 101; A. Rostagni, Riv. Fil. n. s. 36 (1958) 102f.; E. Malcovati, Athenaeum 36 (1958) 176f.

[5] Cf. V. Paladini, *C. Sallusti Crispi Epistulae ad Caesarem* (Rome 1952) 132f.

demanded, it is clear that in the state of the context the question of Favonius must remain open. The passage is not in itself a clear argument against authenticity.

But the expression is curiously vague for a man used to the Republican distinctions and we may go on to further instances of usage that argue against Sallust or a date contemporary with him.

With regard to Sallust's political terminology in his historical works, it is misleading to consider his prefaces as merely generalised and vague or as imported only to garnish the narrative. In fact, they are precise general statements of the intellectual justification of the political issue between the Optimates and Populares. This issue was personified by Marius and argued by later politicians before Sallust made a general definition. It arose in the second century B. C. and turned on the right to power in the state in terms of *virtus*. The Optimates' claim of inherited *virtus* and *nobilitas* was invalidated by their degeneracy under *ambitio* and *avaritia*, whereas the *novus homo* could shew true *virtus*, like the Optimates' ancestors, and this gave him the right to power, *dignitas* and *nobilitas*[6]. The question was defined by Sallust in terms of public virtue and position. But it was not basically his own. We find it already in Cicero and Sallust merely gave historical expression for his own purposes, which were not partisan, to what was a practical issue. The issue lay between those *nobiles* who, from the day of their birth, were assured of their position and the new men who aspired to make their way[7]. Briefly, Sallust's method was a redefinition of the old aristocratic concept of *virtus* which consisted in the service of the state and thereby the winning of *gloria* and was exclusive both as to the field to which it could be applied, the *respublica*, and also to the class which could aspire to it, the ruling aristocracy. Sallust's redefinition of this notion as the functioning of *ingenium* to achieve *egregia facinora*, and thus to win *gloria*, by the exercise of *bonae artes*, admits any class of men engaged in any activity. More particularly, it admits the *novus homo* in political life and this personal *virtus* gives rise to a personal, not inheritable, *nobilitas*[8]. This position is argued generally in the prologues and with particular reference to the Roman state in the digressions and forms the basis on which the whole of Sallust's historical work rests.

In his historical works, Sallust's use of terms is precise. For instance, in the general context of the Roman tradition of *virtus* the plural form, *virtutes*, could be ambiguous. Sallust avoids it, preferring the distinct terms *egregia facinora* and

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[6] Cf. Marius' *contio*, *B. J.* 85 *passim*, esp. 4. 15. 17. 29. 30. 37. 38. While the exact formulation is no doubt anachronistic, it probably represents Marius' general propaganda line, cf. Cicero, *Pro Sex. Rosc. Am.* 16. 136.

[7] Cf. Cicero *Pro Sest.* 136; *Pro Mur.* 17; *In Pis.* 2f.; *De Leg. Agr.* II 3. 100; *In Verr.* II iii 7; iv 81; v. 180f.; *Ep. ad Hirt.* fr. 3 (Purser); Q. Cicero *Comm. Pet.* 7; Asconius p. 23 (Clark).

[8] The most extreme expression is in Marius' *contio*, *B.J.* 85. The whole subject of the Republican tradition of *virtus* and its relation to Sallust is discussed in detail in the author's dissertation *The Political Thought of Sallust* (Cambridge 1957).

bonae artes[9]. One would expect a similar precision in a political document. In fact, *Ep.* II is vague where the historical work is not, which points to a writer who had lost the precise political understanding of the words.

In *Ep.* II 7, where the author urges the removal of *studium pecuniae*, there occurs in the reading of the sole MS the following: *sed ubi gloria honorem magis in dies virtutem opulentia vincit, animus ad voluptatem a vero deficit. quippe gloria industria alitur, ubi eam dempseris ipsa per se virtus amara atque aspera est.* The difficulty here is that in the first sentence *gloria* clearly has a bad sense, corresponding to *opulentia*, whereas in the sentence immediately following it has equally clearly a good sense. Consequently, Kurfess in his Teubner text (ed. 3, 1950) allows an easy corruption in a single MS by dittography of the *m* from *magis* and adopts an emendation by Edmar which gives *sed ubi gloria honore* ... Edmar[10] notes that in the MS reading *gloria* = *iactatio, ostentatio*, in opposition to *honorem*, and that this meaning is never found in the *Epistulae* or in the *corpus Sallustianum*. He then quotes a number of passages to shew that where *gloria* and *honos* occur together they are usually complementary. What Edmar does not discuss is the meaning and syntax which result from the emendation. In the first place the asyndeton *gloria honore* is difficult and exceedingly rare. There are no similar examples in the *Epistulae* and the examples collected by Edmar (134f.) are in no way parallel. Then, the position of *magis in dies* becomes very odd. As to meaning, "by means of", "through" *gloria* and *honos* give no sort of sense. "In the field of" gives an acceptable meaning but is difficult and harsh. Indeed, it may be doubted whether the emendation can stand in terms of Latinity. Certainly, it seems highly unlikely that Sallust, and it is in his mature style that *Ep.* II professes to be written, would have composed a sentence of such stylistic and syntactical harshness. The acceptance of such difficulty in an emendation presupposes complete certainty that *Ep.* II is authentic and such certainty is not yet possible. On the other hand, the MS reading gives both acceptable syntax and style with a chiasmic arrangement of *gloria honorem* and *virtutem opulentia*. The difficulty is the meaning of *gloria*. In the Republican political vocabulary *gloria* is by definition a good thing[11] associated with public *virtus* and instances of *gloria* in a bad sense in Republican or Augustan writers are very rare. Where it does occur it is in writing not specifically for political purposes and anyhow is usually qualified by the adjective *falsa* or supported by a complementary word such as *ostentatio* or *exsultatio*[12]. In strict political writing or without such qualification or support *gloria* in a definitely bad

[9] Cicero uses *virtutes* for the Sallustian *bonae artes* such as *fides, pudor, constantia* etc., e.g. *In Cat.* II 25. On the other hand, from the time of Plautus *virtutes* could stand for *egregia facinora*, e.g. *Asinaria* 558f.; *Miles* 9ff. 31f. 57. 620. 1027. 1042.

[10] B. Edmar, *Studien zu den Epistulae ad Caesarem senem de Re Publica* (Lund 1931) 99ff.

[11] E.g. Cicero *Pro Sest.* 139; *Phil.* I 29; *Tusc. Disp.* III 2, 3. It early acquired this significance, cf. Ennius *Scen.* fr. 7–9 (Vahlen); Plautus, *Stichus* 281; *Tri.* 273. 456.

[12] With *ostentatio, Rhet. ad Herenn.* IV 51. 64; Cicero *Pro Rab. Post.* 38; *Pro Cluent.* 11. With *exsultatio, Bell. Afr.* 31, 10 cf. *Bell. Hisp.* 14, 3. Apart from Cicero these authors are not so strict as Sallust.

sense is found exceedingly seldom at this period[13]. Here such a use without qualification, when *gloria* in a good sense immediately follows, is scarcely to be attributed to Sallust. But after the establishment of the Principate the term quickly lost its connotation in strict reference to public life. In general writing from the time of the elder Pliny onwards *gloria* in a bad sense is found more and more frequently[14]. We should have to be very sure of authenticity before accepting *honore* with its harshness.

Paladini, on the other hand, attempts to save both the MS reading and, apparently, Sallustian authorship by arguing that Sallust does use *gloria* in a bad sense, or, at least, one different from the usual[15]. He quotes *B. J.* 41, 2: *neque gloriae neque dominationis certamen inter civis erat*, but does not adduce the passage which gives the key to the proper interpretation, *Hist.* I 7 M: *certamina libertatis aut gloriae aut dominationis*, where such *certamina* are recorded as a fact about the *humanum ingenium*. Nor is there, as Paladini asserts, a contradiction between *B. J.* 41, 2 and *B. C.* 7, 6: *sed gloriae maxumum certamen inter ipsos erat*. This sentence must be considered in its context. The *gloriae certamen* is not within the Roman state but in the field, each citizen vying against the enemy to win *imperium* for Rome and *gloria* for himself. Within the citizen body itself there was no such *certamen* but *concordia maxuma. Iurgia discordiae simultates* were reserved for the enemy[16]. There is no contradiction. Rather the two passages in their contexts give the same idea from different stand-points. *Gloria* for Sallust is in itself a good thing. But it may be pursued by right or wrong methods, either *virtutis via* or *per ambitionem*. Both the *bonus* and the *ignavos* aim at *gloriam honorem imperium*; it is the different ways they achieve their common object that distinguish them[17]. Thus, such expressions as *gloriae avidus*, *gloriae cupidus* are in themselves neutral. The desire for *gloria* is praiseworthy, indeed it is mankind's proper function[18]. But its value and significance is determined by the methods used to achieve it or the achievements for which it is claimed. While *gloria* is good and must be pursued, it must be pursued in a proper way. One is not justified, for instance, in destroying the *respublica* by *discordia* in order to attain *gloria*, which is what Sallust means by *certamina gloriae*. Nor must it be claimed for unworthy achievements. The highest form of *gloria* is the commission of *egregia facinora* in the service of the state. But as Sallust's concept of *virtus* is inclusive, being based on *ingenium*, so *gloria* may be won by any of the *negotia quae ingenio exercentur*[19]. But, improperly, it might also be claimed for other things such as wealth or physical beauty, but the

[13] The only clear cases seem to be Cicero *De Harusp. Resp.* 17; Horace *Epist.* I 18, 23 cf. Caesar *B. C.* III 79, 6; cf. Plautus *Miles* 22; Ovid *Fasti* I 308.
[14] E.g. Pliny *N H* III 42; X 43, cf. 44. 180; XVIII 37; Quint. *Inst. Orat.* XI 1, 18; Pliny *Epist.* VI 8, 6; cf. Lucan IV 376; Seneca *Epist.* XCIV 65; Silius III 122; Stat. *Theb.* VI 43.
[15] Paladini *op. cit.* 121ff.
[16] *B.C.* 7, 4ff.; 9, 1f.
[17] E.g. *B.J.* 1, 3;
[18] *B.C.* 1, 1–4; *B.J.* 1.
[19] Cf. *B.C.* 2, 7, 9; *B.J.* 4

gloria which attaches to such things is evanescent and therefore inferior to the *gloria* which is founded on *virtus* and is eternal[20]. This is very different from using *gloria* without qualification to equal *iactatio* or *ostentatio.*

On this point the issue is clear. The MS reading and Sallustian authorship can hardly coexist and emendation involves such difficulty that it is not to be accepted without definite proof of authenticity.

This does not exhaust the evidence of this passage. *Ubi eam (gloriam) dempseris, ipsa per se virtus amara atque aspera est* is not Sallustian. For Sallust *virtus* consists precisely in winning *gloria* by the use of *ingenium* to commit *egregia facinora.* Nor, more important, is this use of *virtus* in a strictly political context even Republican. Sallust is one of the last representatives of the living Republican tradition which, as far back as we can trace it, insists on the basic association of *gloria* with *virtus.* Certain passages of Ennius and Plautus allow us to see that at the beginning of the second century B.C. political *virtus* meant the pursuit of *gloria* in the service of the state[21]. The same connection appears in Polybius' story of the young Scipio Aemilianus[22]. The service of the *respublica* was the only field for a noble's talents, the only source of *gloria* and only success in it is *virtus.* Throughout the definitions and redefinitions provoked by the political struggles of the first century B.C. the fundamental association of the two concepts is preserved, even insisted on, by Optimates and Populares alike and reflected in Cicero and Sallust[23]. Wider usages exist, but in strict political contexts the usage is remarkably precise. In the Republican political tradition *virtus* without *gloria* would not merely be *amara atque aspera*; it would not exist at all, for political *virtus* consists exactly in the pursuit and achievement of *gloria.* Yet we are supposedly dealing with a Republican political pamphlet[24].

Nor is this all. Two sentences later we read *ergo in primis auctoritatem pecuniae demito* (7, 10). On this both Edmar and Paladini compare 7, 3: *si studium pecuniae aut sustuleris* and 8, 5: *si pecuniae decus ademeris,* without further comment[25]. But, while *studium* and *decus* are here unexceptional, *auctoritas pecuniae* is unique in Republican political literature, if *Ep.* II is to be considered Republican. During the Republic *auctoritas* preserved almost without exception its connection with *auctor,* being used both of public officers and bodies, such as the *respublica* itself, the senate, magistrates, generals and priests, and also of the gods and private in-

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[20] *B.C.* 1, 4; *B.J.* 2, 2.

[21] E.g. Plautus *Tri.* 642ff.; *Stich.* 280ff.; *Curc.* 284ff.; Ennius *Ann.* fr. 378–9; 360–2 (*Remains of Old Latin,* Loeb Series, I). On this tradition generally see R. E. Smith, *The Aristocratic Epoch in Latin Literature* (Sydney 1947).

[22] Polyb. XXXI 23.

[23] E.g. Cicero *In Pis.* 57; *De Off.* I 121; *De Orat.* II 342ff.; *Pro Marc.* 26; *Pro Sest.* 86. 89. 93. 143; *Tusc. Disp.* III 2, 3; Sallust *B.C.* 1, 4; *B.J.* 2, 2–3; *B.C.* 1, 3; *B.J.* 1, 3; *B.C.* 11, 1–2. The strength of this tradition is clearly seen in Sallust's obvious difficulty and embarrassment in claiming history as a proper field for *gloria* and *virtus, B.C.* 3, 1–2; *B.J.* 4.

[24] It looks like a philosophical tag, but a Republican political writer would not have imported it into this context.

[25] Edmar *op. cit.* 101; Paladini *op. cit.* 126.

dividuals. By an easy transference it also attaches to the means by which these *auctores* expressed their *auctoritas*, laws, edicts, speech etc.[26]. Outside this usage it is found exceedingly rarely. TLL gives but two examples from the Republic: a) an easy metaphorical usage from Varro *R. R.* II 5, 3: *bos in pecuaria maxima debet esse auctoritate.* b) Cicero, *De Imp. Cn. Pomp.* 1: *cum antea per aetatem nondum huius auctoritatem loci attingere auderem*, where the *locus* is a meeting of the Roman people and the use of *auctoritas* thus not far removed from its common use of laws, edicts and so on. The first author widely to ascribe *auctoritas* to inanimate objects in a way at all resembling that of the present passage seems to have been Vitruvius, who employs it of buildings to denote some such idea as "impressiveness"[27]. This is suggestive, for Vitruvius' style is notoriously peculiar and he himself apologises for it[28]. He wrote, in fact, a "common" or "vulgar" style which admitted a much looser usage than is found in the "literary" style of Cicero, Caesar or Sallust and which runs through to Apuleius, whose language that of Vitruvius so much resembles[29]. Apart from him, it is not until the elder Pliny that we meet a frequent use of a meaning and construction directly comparable to that of the present passage[30]. It seems difficult to apologise for *auctoritas pecuniae* here as a bold and cynical metaphor. Such an explanation is not justified by usage for Sallust or any other Republican political writer. Indeed, the whole direction of Republican usage seems to tell against it. Nor does the author of *Ep.* II anywhere suggest himself capable of such a bold innovation, rather the reverse. It might be a loose colloquial usage, which is also not Sallustian and scarcely to be admitted in a Republican political context, or an anachronism on the part of an author writing when the strict usage of Republican political terms had been lost.

In view of Sallust's careful use of terminology, which he shares with other Republican political writers, there seems reason to doubt whether the passages discussed can be by Sallust, especially since they occur in a serious political pamphlet. At first sight the usage of *gloria* and *auctoritas* would seem to point to a date of composition after the middle of the first century A.D., by which time the Republican political vocabulary had lost its original precision[31]. But if *Ep.* II was composed as a rhetorical exercise, the usage was looser earlier and vagueness woud have come in sooner. The points discussed would be examples of ordinary, colloquial language used by someone who was unaware of Sallust's preciseness in political terminology, although thoroughly familiar with his style. Close adherence to the Sallustian style together with the taking over of many complete phrases from the *Bella* and

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[26] See TLL s. v. *auctoritas*, 1213–34.
[27] Vitruvius I *praef.* 2; III 3, 6 and 9; 5, 10; VI 8, 9; VIII *praef.* 17.
[28] I 1, 18.
[29] Cf. L. Sontheimer, *Vitruvius und seine Zeit* (Diss. Tübingen 1908); W. Dietrich, *Quaestionum Vitruvianarum specimen* (Diss. Leipzig 1906).
[30] Pliny *N.H.* I 22. 25. 31. 33; VIII 170; IX 61; XIV 69; XXVII 85; XXIX 138 etc.
[31] Cf. the evidence of non-political vocabulary, H. Jordan, *De suasoriis quae ad Caesarem senem de Republica inscribuntur commentatio* (Berlin 1868) 23 ff.

Historiae[32] would, of course, much reduce the liability to such mistakes. It is suggestive that *auctoritas pecuniae* seems to be used as a variant of the permissible *studium pecuniae* and *decus pecuniae*, which is just the way that such an author would be most likely to betray himself.

In conclusion it may perhaps be mentioned that careful scrutiny of *Ep.* I has failed to disclose any similar anachronisms or ambiguities. This would seem to point to a different author who was either more careful or who wrote at an earlier date when the Republican political tradition still retained its force. That I was written earlier than II would be confirmed if Last's argument that II imitates I were accepted[33]. In this case the presumption would arise that the author of II believed I to be by Sallust himself. The positions of the two *Epistulae* in the MS is one of the many as yet unexplained puzzles about these works. But the existence of a genuine or supposedly genuine Sallustian *Epistula ad Caesarem senem de Republica* would explain both a later imitation and the preservation of this imitation in the Sallustian *corpus* in the position in which it is found, following its model although it professes to be earlier in date.

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[32] Cf. A. Dihle, Mus. Helv. 11 (1954) 126ff.; R. Syme Mus. Helv. 15 (1958) 50.
[33] H. Last, C. Q. 17 (1923) 152.