

POMPONIUS LAETUS, EDITOR OF SALLUST:



corrector vel corruptor?

By Patricia J. Osmond with Robert W. Ulery, Jr.

Johann Ramminger, in his article “Pomponio Leto’s Nachleben: a phantom in need of research?”, observed that, although Pomponio had enjoyed an “outsized reputation” among his contemporaries, his published works were relatively few and his reception followed unexpected and often obscure directions. Our own essay focuses on the reception of only one work, Pomponio’s edition of Sallust’s opera (Rome, 1490), and questions that it raises concerning humanist and modern approaches to the editing of classical texts. It is thus a small contribution to the large task of tracing his fortuna (and sometimes sfortuna) through the centuries, but we are grateful to Johann, editor and webmaster of the Repertorium Pomponianum, for creating a forum in which research on Pomponio’s work and his circle of humanist friends can be shared by many new Pomponiani present and future.

Pomponio’s edition of Sallust’s *opera* (3 April 1490), printed in Rome by Eucharius Silber, ushered in what A. J. Valpy called the second age in the printing history of Sallust’s works (1490-1508): “Nomen habeat a Pomponio Laeto, qui et Sallustium recognovit et ex Codice Vaticano fragmenta aliaque eidem adjudicata protulit” (Let [the age] take its name from Pomponius Laetus, who both revised Sallust and published the fragments [of the Histories] and others judged to be his [i.e., Letters to Caesar] from the Vatican codex).¹ Indeed, well into the first quarter of the sixteenth century, until and even beyond the appearance of Aldo Pio Manuzio’s Venice edition of 1509, Pomponio’s edition remained widely read and respected. Although successive editors and printers claimed to make various improvements, the

¹ Valpy, “Recensus Editionum C. Crispi Sallustii”, Sallust 1820, 2:802-03. Pomponio’s edition of Sallust’s *Opera* (Rome, 1490) contains the *De coniuratione L. Sergi Catilinae*, *Liber de bello Iugurthino*. *Ex libris Historiarum [Orationes et epistolae excerptae]*, *Ad Caesarem senem de republica*, and *Ad C. Caesarem oratio de republica*, as well as [ps.-] M. Porcius Latro’s *Declamatio contra Catilinam* and Pomponio’s *C. Crispi Sallusti Vita*.

presence of Pomponio's dedicatory letter to his patron Agostino Maffei prefacing the texts provided readers with a 'proof' of provenance.

The many new or revised editions and reprints published between 1491 and 1528, listed in the Appendix to this article, attest to the success of Pomponio's recension, especially in Italy and France. Its popularity was in turn enhanced by the addition of other texts on the Catilinarian conspiracy, notably, Cicero's four *Orationes in Catilinam*, often accompanied by a fifth ps-Ciceronian oration, and by the two invectives, the *Oratio in Ciceronem* and the *Oratio in Sallustium*, attributed respectively to Sallust and Cicero. Many editions also contained the first printed commentaries on one or both of Sallust's two monographs, the *De coniuratione Catilinae* and *De bello Iugurthino*, by, or attributed to, the humanist scholars Laurentius Valla (attrib.), Johannes Chrysostomus Soldus, Omnibonus Leonicensis (attrib.), Jodocus Badius Ascensius, and Jacobus Crucius Bononiensis.

Most publishers and printers likely chose Pomponio's edition believing that his name would ensure good sales. The Brescian bookseller and publisher Antonio Moretto not only reproduced the 1490 Rome text, with occasional variations, in his 1491 Venice edition, but publicized his connection (real or fictitious) with Pomponio by substituting his own name for the latter's original publisher, Joannes Rhegiensis (Giovanni da Reggio), in Pomponio's preface.² Others, however, like the Flemish teacher and printer Jodocus Badius Ascensius (Josse Bade), expressed their genuine gratitude to Pomponio, especially for salvaging what he could from the lost *Historiae*. As Bade writes in the dedicatory epistle to his 1504 Paris edition: "multam tamen Pomponio Laeto, homini nimirum doctissimo, agere gratiam, quod eas [reliquias] ex invidiae oblivionis et incultae barbariei faucibus receperit".³ (I give many thanks, nevertheless, to Pomponius Laetus, an extraordinarily learned man, for rescuing these [remains] from the jaws of invidious oblivion and ignorant barbarism.) More than thirty years later the German philologist Johannes Rivius also complimented Pomponio in his preface *Studiosis*, in the 1539 Leipzig edition of his *Castigationes*, noting how carefully he had collated the manuscripts and emended the text:

Quam fuerint depravatae antehac historiae Sallustianae, vel illud inter alia esse indicio potest, quod tot egregii ac praestantes ingenio doctrinaque viri in tollendis harum mendis tantum operae collocarint.

² "Augustino Mafaeo Rerum Ro. Thesauro Pomponius Laetus", see Ramminger 2005. On the 1491 Venice edition of Sallust and Antonio Moretto (or Moretto), see Osmond and Sandal 2007.

³ On the Renaissance and early modern editions and commentaries on Sallust cited in this article see the entries in Osmond and Ulery 2003. In transcribing passages from the humanist texts we have retained the spelling but regularized the use of u/v and modernized punctuation.

Inter quos primas iure suo Pomponius Laetus obtinet, qui, conquisitis undique exemplaribus antiquis, Sallustium est emendare conatus, ut nihil ferme addendo (quemadmodum ipse inquit) sic non pauca detrahendo.⁴

How corrupted until now were Sallust's histories can be adduced *inter alia* even by the fact that so many distinguished and outstanding men of talent and learning have taken such great pains to remove their errors. Among them Pomponius Laetus justly obtains the highest place, who, after ancient exemplars were gathered from every direction, sought to emend Sallust by adding almost nothing (as he himself says), just as by removing not a few things.

The humanists who edited the early editions of the classics recognized the importance of returning to the manuscripts and exercising good judgment, but rarely indicated any criteria other than the antiquity of a codex for preferring a particular witness, and given the still rudimentary knowledge of palaeography, age itself could be difficult to assess.⁵ It is not surprising, therefore, that by the middle of the sixteenth century, especially north of the Alps, after the publication of new editions of Sallust's *opera* by Henricus Glareanus (Basel, 1538) and Rivius (Leipzig, 1539) based on a more rigorous selection and evaluation of old manuscripts, along with what were then deemed the better printed editions, reprints (or revised versions) of Pomponio's edition begin to taper off. By this time as well the first critical comments on Pomponio's editing begin to appear.

One passage in particular in Pomponio's 1490 edition of the *Catilina* raised a red flag:

Nam imperium facile his artibus retinetur quibus in initio partum est. Verum ubi pro labore desidia, pro continentia et aequitate libido invasere, fortuna simul immutatur cum moribus. Ita imperium semper ab optimo quoque ad minus bonum. (*Cat*, 2.5-6)

In fact, the last sentence in this passage had already been noticed earlier in the century. In the preface to his 1509 Venice edition of Sallust's *opera* Aldo Manuzio observed that he had emended the phrase that in other editions read "Ita imperium semper ab optimo quoque ad minus bonum transfertur" (*Cat*. 2.6) on the authority of two manuscripts brought to him from France by

⁴ Ioannes Rivius Studiosis, Rivius 1539. He also cites the editions of Philippus Beroaldus (not after 1478), Benedictus Philologus (1503), Aldus Manutius (1509), and Hieronymus Aleander (Paris, 1513).

⁵ On the humanists' efforts to improve the editing of classical texts during the early decades of printing and the importance of the *editio princeps* as the basis for collations and the development of standard recensions, see Monfasani 1988, especially 4-14, with further bibliography, including Grafton 1983 and Kenney 1974.

Joannes Lascaris and Iocundus Veronensis (Giovanni Giocondo). Although Aldo did not cite Pomponio specifically, it would have been clear to readers familiar with recent editions of the *Catilina* that he was referring to the latter's recension and to the particular reading that had been repeated in subsequent imprints.

Quae (inquis) exemplaria quae sint correcta et emendata, statim in principio de coniuratione Catilinae licet cognoscere. Nam quod fere in aliis legitur – “Nam imperium facile his artibus retinetur, quibus in initio partum est. Verum ubi pro labore desidia, pro continentia et aequitate libido atque superbia invasere, fortuna simul conmutatur cum moribus. Ita imperium semper ab optimo quoque ad minus bonum transfertur” [2.5-6] – in his sic habetur. “Ita imperium semper ad optimum quemque a minus bono transfertur”, quae vera est lectio. Est enim sensus. Imperium in initio virtute ab optimis partum, eadem virtute facile retinetur.⁶

These exemplars (you say) that would be correct and emended one can recognize immediately at the beginning of the Conspiracy of Catiline. For that which is clearly read in some – “For ruling power is easily retained by those qualities by which it was acquired in the first place. Truly, where in place of toil, sloth, in place of continence and equity, lust and pride have taken possession, one's fortune is completely altered at the same time as one's character. So ruling power is always transferred from the best persons to the worse” [2.5-6] – in these [i.e., Aldo's exemplars] is rendered thus: “So ruling power is always transferred to the best men from the worse”, which is the true reading. For this is the sense: a ruling power originally born from the best because of *virtus* is easily retained by the same *virtus*.

Aldo's correction was soon accepted by other scholars thanks to the rapid diffusion of his edition and subsequent reprints and Joachim Vadian(us)'s *Testimonium elimati codicis per Aldum, ex epistola eius praeliminari* prefacing his own emended edition of Aldo's *Sallust* (Vienna, 1511). In his *Castigationes* of 1539 Rivius as well – despite his generally favorable remarks about Pomponio's work (cited above), and without naming him directly – adamantly rejected his version of this passage.

In manuscriptis omnibus est “ad optimum quemque ab minus bono transfertur”. Quomodo et sensus ipse exposcere mihi videtur. Nam fortunam dicit simul cum moribus immutari, ostendens, videlicet,

⁶ Aldo Pius Manutius Bartholomaeo Liviano ... S. P. D., read in Sallustius Crispus 1742, “Dedications”.

imperia alio transferri propter vitia regnantium. Nec secus interpres, quisque is fuit, legisse atque intellexisse hunc locum videtur.⁷

All manuscripts have “[ruling power] is transferred to the best men from the worse”, in which way even the sense itself seems to me to demand. For he says that fortune changes simultaneously with character, showing, that is, that empires are transferred to another on account of the vices of those reigning. Nor does the scribe who interpreted this, whoever he was, seem to have read and understood otherwise this *locus*.

By the early 1600s criticism of this passage was escalating into a full-scale attack on Pomponio’s edition. The charges were brought by Janus Gruterus (Jan Gruter), professor of history and head of the Bibliotheca Palatina at Heidelberg, who consulted several of the fifteenth- and sixteenth-century printed editions, in addition to his Palatine manuscripts, in preparing his own edition of Sallust’s *opera* (Frankfurt, 1607). When it came to Pomponio, however, he had nothing at all good to say. What enraged him was the fact that Pomponio had departed from what he considered the unpolluted versions of earlier editions and that his error – indeed all his inept readings – had then been replicated by a host of other editors in the following decades.

Ita antiquitus cusi, ita membranae, uno suffragio omnes, adeo laudem nullam mereatur facinus Pomponii Laeti, a quo nobis primitus obvenit “imperium semper ab optimo quoque ad minus bonum transfertur”. Quod plurium deinde editiones invasit, tanquam auctoris legitimum. Nimirum quicquid ineptiarum saeculo superiori Sallustio invecum, id imputandum illi Laeto, discedenti a castioribus editionibus. Vicentina quidem anni 1475 [*sic*], Mediolanensis vero 1482.⁸

Like the very old printed editions, so the manuscripts are of one voice, so that Pomponius Laetus’s villainy deserves no praise, from whom for the first time “ruling power is always transferred from the best men to the worse” then invaded the editions of many, as if it were the legitimate authorial reading. Surely, whatever absurdity has been introduced into Sallust in the last century must be imputed to that Laetus, departing from more chaste editions, the 1475 Vicentina [*sic*], certainly, and the 1482 Milanese.

If Pomponio’s reputation as one of the most learned men of his age assured the initial success of his 1490 edition (and, as a result, Gruter implied, the

⁷ Rivius, *Castigationes in Sallustium, Liber I. In Catilinam, ad loc.* Rivius 1539.

⁸ Sallustius Crispus 1607 (ed. Gruterus), *ad loc.* The *Incunabula Short Title Catalogue* (ISTC) does not list any edition of Sallust printed at Vicenza in the 1470s.

spreading of falsehoods), it was now Gruter's reputation and the success of his 1607 edition of the monographs, which served as the *textus receptus* well into the following century, that marked the eclipse of Pomponio's fame as editor of Sallust. Gruter's charges were repeated in the prefaces or notes of such prominent editors as Antonius Thysius (1654), Joseph Wasse (Cambridge, 1710), and Sigebert Havercamp (Amsterdam, 1742). In the preface to the Reader of his 1710 edition of the *opera*, Wasse, after denouncing the manifold interpolations, omissions, and distortions that ignorant and careless *librarii* and *interpretes* had for centuries introduced into the text, deplored the fact that Pomponio had only made things worse. Moreover, from his time on, he adds, scholars were more intent on expounding and annotating the content of Sallust's histories or illustrating the rules of *ars historica* than purging the text.

Nec tamen his sordibus contentus Pomponius Laetus, castiores Sallustii editiones et ipse talis vir, ex Sanseverina familia, Vallae Discipulus, ulterius contaminasse fertur. Et ab illius temporibus ad nostram usque aetatem plures enarrare notasque Reales in eum conscribere quam purgare malebant. In hoc vulgo eminent Omnibonus, Zanchus, Bononiensis, Philologus; inter eos qui Historice & Politice rem agunt, Castilioneus, Repertus, Graswinckelius, Loccenius, et qui artem sensusque ad regulam scribendi exigit Paulus Benius, quorum labores hac in parte nos illaetabili atque ingrato onere sublevarunt.⁹

And not content, however, with this shabbiness Pomponius Laetus – himself such a [distinguished] man, from the Sanseverino family, disciple of Valla – is said to have further contaminated the purer editions of Sallust. And from his times to our age many have preferred to expound and annotate the factual matter rather than purge [the text]. In this crowd Omnibonus [Leonicensis], [Bartholomaeus] Zanchus, [Jacobus Crucius] Bononiensis, [Benedictus] Philologus stand out; among those who treat of history and politics, Castilioneus, Repertus, Graswinckelius, Loccenius, and he who demanded [that] skill and meaning be measured by the rules of writing, Paulus Benius, men whose labors have relieved us of an unpleasant and thankless burden.

⁹ Joseph Wasse, 'Lectori S. D. J. Wasse', Sallustius Crispus 1710, i-xv (ii). On Pomponio's origins Wasse is following the testimony of such authors as Pietro Marso, Michele Ferno, Marcantonio Sabellico, Giovanni Pontano, and Paolo Giovio who reported that he was born into the noble family of the Sanseverino (the illegitimate son of Giovanni, count of Marsico and baron of Sanseverino). See Osmond 2010b. On the use of *Reales*, see Ramminger 2003, s. v. "realis".

Only after the publication of the Aldine editions (1509, 1521), Wasse continues, and especially from the time of the pioneering work of Glareanus and Rivius, was the way opened to a new, critical recension of the text.¹⁰

One scholar, however, did come to Pomponio's defense: Gottlieb Cortius, who in the preface to his edition of Sallust's *opera* (Leipzig, 1724) made the important point – with which we would agree today – that the textual tradition before Pomponio was by no means as pure as Gruter and Wasse had proclaimed.

Consulit eamdem [editionem Venetam A. MCCCCLXX], ut persuasissimus, exactissimus Gruterus et, quod palam, additis etiam numeris 1470, profitetur V. Cl. Iosephus Wassius; sed, quod, pace tantorum virorum, dixerim remissiore cura. [Continues with examples of his errors.] Ceterum non est illa eius pretii, cuius vulgo principes editiones habentur; immo, si ex illa de omnibus iudicandum foret, aequo animo interitum omnium ferre possemus. *Quo magis admiratus sum ingenium doctissimorum virorum, qui quidquid in Sallustio contra vet. codicum fidem immutatum est, id Pomponii Laeti importunae diligentiae adscribunt. Nam vel ista Veneta docere poterit iam ante Laeti operam, plurima esse immutata, plurima infeliciter intrusa.*¹¹ (emphasis added)

The very exacting Gruter consulted the same edition [Venice, 1470], as we have been persuaded, and which the distinguished Joseph Wasse

¹⁰ The reactions of Gruter and Wasse recall Monfasani's remarks regarding a much earlier episode involving Niccolò Perotti: "Perotti apparently was the first to perceive, or, at least, the first to put in writing the perception that by its very existence the printed text became the standard recension of a work, driving out of circulation even superior manuscript recensions. To a certain extent, especially apropos many classical works, Perotti's fears were exaggerated in the short term. Renaissance humanists vigorously tried to improve each other's classical editions. Indeed, the text which occasioned Perotti's letter to Guarneri, Pliny's *Natural History*, soon became a notorious battleground for humanist philology. But for whole categories of writings Perotti's premonition proved all too true. The number of medieval and early Renaissance texts which still today are to be read in the *editio princeps* or in editions based on the *princeps* is legion. And even in the case of the classical texts to which the humanists gave most of their attention, the *princeps* or other early editions invariably exercised a substantial influence because humanists used these editions as the basis for their collations, and therefore, for better or worse, made them the standard texts". Monfasani 1988, 8.

¹¹ Sallustius Crispus (ed. Cortius) 1724. Glareanus had made a similar statement, criticizing even Aldo's editing, in the preface to his 1538 edition of Sallust: "Aldus Manutius Venetus ante aliquot annos editionem exhibuit, ut tum putabant satis emandatam, laudandam certe si ad prioris seculi exemplaria edita conferatur. Verum si penitius introspexeris, Dii boni, quantum illic reperias errorum". (Aldus Manutius of Venice produced an edition some years before that was then thought sufficiently emended: to be praised, certainly, if it is compared to the exemplars of the preceding century. However, if you look into it more closely, good gods, how many errors you find there.)

openly affirms, adding even the number [of the year], but, I would say, *pace* such great men, rather negligently. [Continues with examples of his errors.] But that edition is not of the same value as first editions are commonly held to be; in fact, if judgment had to be made on all of them from that one (alone), we would be able to bear the destruction of all of them with equanimity. *All the more have I wondered at the inclination of the most learned men who ascribe to the misguided diligence of Pomponius Laetus whatever in Sallust has been changed against the authority of the old codices. For even that Venice edition will be able to teach that already before Laetus's work very many things were changed, very many unhappily interpolated.* (emphasis added)

Furthermore, even if Pomponio's recension of the two monographs had its faults, he deserved credit, Cortius insists, for publishing the set of speeches and letters from the *Historiae* and the two *Epistulae ad Caesarem*, which, he says, preserved more of Sallust's true style – if only because the tradition was not as contaminated as that of the monographs, subject as the latter had been to constant revision, and too (in what one might call a “back-handed compliment”) because Pomponio himself had evidently failed to understand the complexities of Sallust's writing.

Nos certe Pomponio, cuius importunitatis in Catilina et Iugurtha Sallustii patrociniū haud suscipio, plurimum debemus, quod ex codice Vaticano Orationes illas, quae sunt in Fragmentis et reliqua opuscula Sallustio adiudicata in lucem cum reliquis emiserit. [Continues with a list of editions containing the fragments which he has consulted, including (in addition to Pomponio's 1490 edition) those of 1493, [before 1493], 1500, and 1499.] *Has quatuor editiones Venetas non sine magno fructu consulimus ad exornandum et poliendum tabulas illas, quae ex tristissimo Sallustii Historiarum naufragio, salvae evaserunt. Obscura pleraque erant et depravatissima in recentioribus editionibus, non alia de causa, quam quod Pomponius perpetuo fere puram putam Sallustii manum expresserat. Eam nunc demum revocavimus, illustravimus, et pro certo adfirmare possumus, qui genium Sallustii, emendatissimum genus dicendi, praegnantem brevitatem propius nosse cupit, illum prius Orationes illas, quam integra duo Crispi opera legere debere. Hae enim cum non toties librariis obnoxiae fuerint quam Catilina et Iugurtha, non tam foede corrupte per Pomponium ad nos pervenerunt. Hunc tamen, credo, magis, quod non intelligeret omnia, fideliter lectiones exemplaris sui repraesentasse, quam quod consilio praeclare ita meruisset, contra in reliquis male feriati homines intelligendo fecerunt, ut nihil intelligerent, et nos posterī infinito labore sordes illas eluere debeamus.* (emphasis added)

We certainly owe a great deal to Pomponius, the defense of whose unsuitability in Sallust's Catiline and Jugurtha I do not at all undertake,

because from the Vatican codex he published those Orations which are in the fragments along with the other little works judged to be by Sallust. [Continues with a list of editions containing the fragments which he has consulted, including (in addition to Pomponio's 1490 edition) those of 1493, [before 1493], 1500, and 1499.] These four Venetian editions we have consulted, not without great benefit, in order to arrange and polish those planks which have escaped safe from the very sad shipwreck of Sallust's Histories. Many things were obscure and very corrupted in more recent editions, for no other reason than because Pomponius had always expressed the genuine hand of Sallust. This we have now at last recalled, have illustrated, and can affirm for certain that whoever desires to know more closely the genius of Sallust, the most correct way of speaking, the pregnant brevity, should read those Orations before the two complete works of Crispus. *For these (Orations), since they were not so often subjected to scribes as were the Catiline and Jugurtha, have come down to us through Pomponius not so foully corrupt. This man, however, I believe, faithfully represented the readings of his exemplar more because he did not understand everything than because he so plainly deserved to do so by careful consideration;* on the other hand, men, idling away their time by exercising their intelligence on the rest demonstrated their lack of intelligence, and we of a later day must with infinite labor clean up those messes. (emphasis added)

But what would Pomponio himself say in his defense, and what in fact *did* he say? As Marianne Pade has pointed out, his dedicatory letter to Agostino Maffei prefacing his 1490 edition explains the difficulties in which he was working, especially the poor condition of the text, corrupted by scribes no longer conversant with the elegancies of Latin style, the venality of printers, more intent on profit than the quality of their work, and his own reservations about publishing his work (especially, we can infer, after the recent unauthorized printing in Mantua of his commentary on Virgil, which he vigorously disowned).¹² In undertaking the work, he was thus conscious of the need to proceed cautiously, following – in the best humanist tradition – the example of an ancient *grammaticus* and relying on *veteres codices* and *vetera testimonia*. Borrowing the words of Valerius Probus, cited by Suetonius (*De gram.*, 24), he summed up his editorial approach:

M. Valerius Probus unice vetustatis amator cum animaduertisset veteres negligi et gloria fraudari, contracta multa exemplaria emendare, distinguere et annotare curavit in eoque se plurimum exercendo laudem

¹² Pade 2011b, 110-111. Johannes Cuspinianus denounces the venality and unscrupulousness of publishers and printers in his letter to Vadianus prefacing his edition of Florus (Vienna, 1511).

non exiguam est adsecutus. Ego tanti viri exemplo, impar licet doctrina et ingenii dotibus, id ipsum aliqua ex parte facere conatus sum eademque via ingressus et tanta undique asperitate confusus vix tuto pedem figere et e sylva egredi potui.¹³

M. Valerius Probus, rare lover of antiquity, when he had observed that the ancients were being neglected and defrauded of glory, took care to emend, punctuate, and annotate many exemplars that he had collected, and by a great deal of practice in this area gained considerable praise. I, by the example of such a man, though not on a par in learning or talent, have tried to do this very thing in some fashion and, having entered upon the same road and confused by the roughness on all sides, was scarcely able to keep my footing and emerge from the wood.

Later, in a manuscript note on *Cat.* 5.4 in his personally annotated copy of the 1490 edition, BAV, Stamp. Ross. 441, Pomponio also cites Probus's words in Aulus Gellius as his authority for retaining *loquentia* rather than keeping the more common term *eloquentia*.

M. Valerius Probus, referente Aulo Gellio [I.15.18], brevi antequam vita decederet Sallustianum illud sic legere cepit et sic a Sallustio affirmavit "satis loquentiae. sapientiae parum". Quod loquentia novatori verborum Sallustio maxime congrueret. Eloquentia cum insipientia minime conveniret.

Caecilius Plinius Li^o Epistularum V [V.20.5] "Itaque Iulius Candidus non invenuste solet dicere aliud esse eloquentiam, aliud loquentiam".¹⁴

M. Valerius Probus, as Aulus Gellius reports [I.15.18], a short time before he died began to read in this way that sallustianism, "satis loquentiae sapientiae parum" [a sufficiency of ready speech but of wisdom little] and affirmed that Sallust had left it that way, because *loquentia* was eminently suited to an inventor of new words; *eloquentia* would not in the least be compatible with lack of wisdom.

Caecilius Plinius in *Epistles* bk V: And so Julius Candidus is accustomed to say, not inelegantly, that one thing is eloquence, another loquacity.

Although Rivius, Gruter, and Wasse did not refer to Pomponio in their (almost identical) annotations on this passage, it is interesting that they agreed with the choice of *loquentia*, citing the same sources, Gellius and Pliny, while

¹³ Ottob. lat. 2989, f. 1r. (cited in Pade 2011b, 110. For a transcription of the dedicatory letter, based on Pomponio's edition of 1490, see Ramminger 2007. On Agostino Maffei see Osmond 2008.

¹⁴ BAV, Stamp. Ross. 441, fol. VIIIv.

acknowledging that most of the earlier printed editions and manuscripts they had seen had *eloquentia*.¹⁵

Which manuscripts of the *Catilina* and *Jugurtha* Pomponio was collating, we cannot say. None of those seen thus far in the collection of the Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana contain the incriminating (or, for Pomponio, the exculpatory) version at *Cat.* 2.6 that he had presumably followed. But the manuscript annotations in several copies of his 1490 printed edition, including his own, indicate that he was prepared to emend the text as other witnesses came to his attention. The editing of classical authors, we know, was very much an ongoing, and intensely competitive, activity, constantly open to revision, and often a collective endeavor as well, the product of multiple contributions. There is evidence of such work in progress in Pomponio's continuing revision of texts and rewriting of notes, whether he was working on Sallust or other authors such as Claudian, Lucretius, Martial, Silius Italicus, Varro, or Virgil, often in collaboration (or rivalry) with his humanist friends and fellow (or former) teachers.¹⁶ As Johann Ramminger points out in his entry on Perotti in the *Repertorium Pomponianum*:

Perotti collaborated with Leto on several projects, e.g. the commentary on Martial written by Leto for the young Fabio Mazzatosta (with notes in the hand of Perotti, now British Library, King's 32...) [and] a commentary on Statius' *Silvae* by Perotti (Vat. lat. 6835)... Leto is also credited with encouraging the commentary on Martial, which was to become the *Cornu copiae*.¹⁷

But let us look at the marginal annotations on *Cat.* 2.5-6, which in the printed text (as cited above) reads:

Nam imperium facile his artibus retinetur quibus in initio partum est.
Verum ubi pro labore desidia, pro continentia et aequitate libido

¹⁵ In modern editions the accepted reading is *eloquentia*. However, the reading *loquentia* in Valerius Probus is cited by Kurfess 1957 and Reynolds 1991 in the apparatus criticus of their editions of the *Catilina* and by McGushin 1977 in his commentary

¹⁶ "In recent years scholarship on Pomponio Leto has shown how his annotations of classical authors frequently remained a work in progress and would be adapted to his readers or audience," Pade 2011b, 109. Collaboration, of course, could also turn into substantial borrowing (authorized or unauthorized) of material, including whole sets of annotations, as Giuliano Mori has shown in the case of the "De historia", Mori 2021.

¹⁷ Ramminger 2005, rev. 2008, citing Perotti on his contacts and collaboration with Pomponio. See also the publications cited in the bibliographies of Accame 2008 and the *Repertorium Pomponianum*, including those of Daniela Gionta on Claudianus, Helen Dixon on Lucretius, Marianne Pade on Martial and Statius, Johann Ramminger on Martial and Statius, Paola Farenga, Giuliano Mori, Patricia Osmond, Rasmus Gottschalck, and Robert W. Ulery, on Sallust, Frances Muecke on Silius Italicus, Maria Accame Lanzillotta on Varro, and Giancarlo Abbamonte, Fabio Stok, and Nicola Lanzarone on Virgil, each with further bibliography.

invasere, fortuna simul immutatur cum moribus. Ita imperium semper ab optimo quoque ad minus bonum.

In his personal copy, BAV, Rossiano 441, Pomponio supplies the missing verb *transfertur* (in the left margin), then adds a longer note (inserted vertically along the right, inner margin): “vel, a pessimo quoque ad optimum quenque transfertur”. In the elegant presentation copy for his patron, Agostino Maffei, BAV, ms Ottobonianus lat. 2989, written by the German scribe Giacomo Aurelio Questenberg, the same passage is also glossed, but more accurately, reproducing Sallust’s word order: “alias. ita imperium semper ad optimum quenque á minus bono transfertur”. As Pade has demonstrated, not only is the text of the presentation copy more generally correct than the printed version, but the glosses attest to Pomponio’s efforts to tailor his notes to the interests and uses of his reader, highlighting those aspects of Sallust’s language and style that his scholarly patron would appreciate – and which could also invite an interesting discussion on this particular passage in the poem.¹⁸

The considerable number of annotated incunables that include the same or similar gloss reveal, in turn, the efforts made within Pomponio’s circle to preserve and circulate his textual revisions, along with his (chiefly historical and antiquarian) commentary on the two monographs.¹⁹ The Pierpont Morgan Library exemplar (51414.2) could be described as a ‘fair copy’ of Pomponio’s autograph, carefully written and in places ‘copy-edited’ by someone working directly from the original, again supplying the words missing in the 1490 edition at *Cat.* 2.5, “atque superbia”, and at the end of 2.6 the verb *transfertur*, while adding: “Vel a pessimo quoque ad optimum quemque”.²⁰ In the King’s College, University of Cambridge copy, XV.3.3, which belonged to Aulo Giano Parrasio and Antonio Seripando, Parrasio simply reversed the prepositions *ab* and *ad* and altered the terminations of *optimo* and *bono* to read *ad optimum* and *ab minus bono*.²¹

Whether or not Pomponio intended to publish his annotations on the *Catilina* and *Jugurtha*, he was certainly aware of the problem in this passage and ready to address it by acknowledging the alternative reading. Unfortunately for his reputation, however, later editors, with the exception of

¹⁸ Pade 2011b, 112-15.

¹⁹ See Farenga 2003, Osmond 2003 and 2005, 2007, 2010a and 2011, and Ulery 2003. To the copies cited in these articles, we can now add BAV IV.974, on which see Mori 2021.

²⁰ Morgan Library copy PML 51414.2 (ChL 682H), sig.aiv^v, as transcribed by Robert Ulery. See Osmond 2011, 103. This variant, with the same wording, appears in Angelo Maria Peverati’s edition of the *Annotationes* (Peverati 1731), 36.

²¹ A similar correction is found in the copy of the 1490 edition, Rome, Biblioteca Casanatense, Inc. 524 and in an older edition (Rome, 1482) with (later) manuscript notes citing Pomponio, London, British Library IA.18813.

Angelo Maria Peverati, knew only the printed edition and Peverati himself, when he published in 1731 the annotations he had discovered in a copy of the 1490 incunable in the Biblioteca Mauritania of Mantua, attributed them not to Pomponio but to Turcius Rufius Apronianus Asterius whose name appears in the subscription to the Medici Virgil, the text of which had been transcribed on a leaf bound, along with other annotated leaves, with the printed text.²²

Today, the names of Pomponio and other humanist editors rarely appear in critical editions of Sallust's works in either the prefaces or apparatus criticus.²³ And when they occasionally do, the choice of a particular reference often seems to be rather casual, recording a word or phrase in the text or in a manuscript note that perhaps happened to come to the editor's attention. In fact, the words of E. J. Kenney regarding the first editions produced by Renaissance printers, namely that "the average classical text first saw print in a state that represented what one might call a more or less random dip into the stream of tradition", could also apply to our modern approach to humanist editions.²⁴ Moreover, as Howard Jones observed in the preface to his *Printing the Classical Text*, the task that modern editors have set for themselves has not been to examine "the critical value of the earliest printed editions" or place them in "the history of the classical text" but rather "to document the survival and transmission of the works of the classical Latin authors with references to those witnesses which enable the scholar to establish the text, and to this end printed versions, with few exceptions, have nothing to contribute".²⁵

But here as well – in addition, that is, to considering Pomponio's work in the context of humanist scholarship – we may be able to reassess his role in the history of Sallust's text, recovering in this way a (small) part of what has

²² Peverati 1731, ad loc. See Mori 2021. The copy seen by Peverati has not yet been identified. On the subscription in BAV, Stamp. Ross. 441, see Buonocore 2012. It is copied on the verso of a leaf pasted onto the sexternion bound with the printed text. For a codicological analysis of the Rossiano incunable see Farenga 2003.

²³ Maurenbrecher mentions Pomponio only once in the apparatus to the speeches/letter: on III.48 (*oratio Maeri* docendique] docendumque ex Pomponii Laeti *coniectura* Kritz. Reynolds cites him only in the Praefatio, xix, in reference to his 1490 edition containing the orations and letters from the *Historiae*. Ramsey, vol. I, lxi, mentions Laetus's edition of the *Ep. ad Caesarem*, stating that manuscripts of the fifteenth century have no independent value as they were copied from various early printed editions such as those of Leto (Rome, 1490); he cites Reynolds 1991, 349-50. In vol. II he cites readings of Laetus only on I.49.20 *audeas*] *audeat Laetus*, and III.15.6 *ipsi*] *Laetus*; *ipsis* V.

²⁴ As Kenney continues: "and in that state it was, as it were, 'frozen' by the new medium", becoming the *lectio recepta* and basis of subsequent critical study". Kenney 1974, ch. 1, I3, I8-I9, 23-26 (cited in Monfasani 1988, 9).

²⁵ Jones 2004, vii-viii.

been called “the lost Renaissance” or, more specifically in terms of textual traditions, “esegesi dimenticate”.²⁶ Arguably, any attempt to collate Pomponio’s entire text with more than five centuries of new recensions would be an impossible task. What could be useful, however, on a reduced scale, is a careful collation of problematic passages in Sallust’s *opera*, in order to see which, if any, of the now approved readings or principal variants can in fact be traced back not only to *editores veteres* in general but to Pomponio in particular. As Antonio La Penna commented in the Prolegomena to the first volume (Bk I) of the *Historiarum fragmenta*, co-edited with Rodolfo Funari:

Nei medesimi apparati critici, la formula generica *editores vetustiores* (*edd. vet.*) si riferisce per lo più, a scopo di cautela, a correzioni o congetture che compaiono nelle più antiche edizioni delle *orationes et epistulae*, in particolare in quelle stampate fra il Quattro e il Cinquecento. In molti casi, infatti, non risulta con sicurezza a chi si possano attribuire i singoli interventi testuali, spesso ripetuti nelle diverse edizioni (su questa difficoltà si veda anche, e.g., la nota introduttiva alla sezione ‘Composite Editions’ in *Catalogus VIII*, 220). Ad ogni modo, ben s’intenda, tale formula presuppone soltanto una scelta di *editores vetustiores*; non implica una *recensio* né completa né sistematica. Una buona parte dei dati raccolti sotto questa formula è stata tratta da alcune fra le edizioni più antiche che si sono ritenute di speciale rilievo: in particolare, e.g., da quelle a cura di Pomponio LETO (vd. Bibliografia: LAETUS), di Aldo MANUZIO jun. (vd. Bibliografia: MANUTIUS; edizione in cui si considerano ricomprese anche le precedenti edizioni a cura del medesimo, ossia quelle di Venezia, 1563, e di Roma, 1563/64), di Ludwig CARRION (vd. Bibliografia: CARRIO; negli apparati critici, qualche volta menzionato anche distintamente).

In conclusion, we thus offer a few examples, taken from the collations of passages in the speeches and letters of the *Historiae*, which we are preparing at Funari’s suggestion, that illustrate Pomponio’s efforts to improve the text, in respect to the readings in the Vatican manuscript and to a reading in context.

[Maur. = Maurenbrecher 1967; LP-F = La Penna-Funari 2015 (Bk I); L = Laetus’s edition of Rome 1490; V = ms. Vat. lat. 3864; R = ed. Rome 1475; M = ed. Mantua 1475; see Appendix for 16th c. eds. indicated by editors’ names]

First appearances in L of readings adopted by later editions:

²⁶ Celenza 2004 and 2014 and Santini and Stok 2008.

Oratio Lepidi (I 55 M)

(20) sed uostra socordia, qua raptum ire licet et quam audeat tam uideri felicem] Maur.; audeas V R, audias M; audeat L (followed by all the 16th c. eds., and adopted by Maur.); the modern editions (Teubner, OCT, Loeb, De Gruyter) read ‘audeas’;

Oratio Philippi (I 77 Maur.)

(3) uos mussantes et retractantes uerbis et uatum carminibus] carminis V, carminibus L, already in R according to OCT and Teubner [it is abbreviated carīb9], carnibus M; the reading in L is followed by all the later editions;
(9) neu patiamini licentiam scelerum quasi rabiem ad integros contactu procedere] contactu V R L, followed by Fidelis, Putsch, Gruter; contractu M, om. Aldus, Asulanus, Aldus Jr., Ricc., Carrio, Coler;
(15) infidus] invidus L and Aldus Jr.; LP-F cite *Carrio*;
per fidem] V R M, perfidia L, followed by most of the 16th c. editions but not the modern ones; LP-F cite *edd.vet. Carrio*;

Oratio Cottae (II 47 Maur.)

Two small spelling changes:

(2) in his] in hiis R M, corrected by L and all later eds.;
(13) aduorsa] V R M, aduersa L Maur., L followed by Fidelis, Aldus, Riccobonus; but aduorsa/advorsa kept by other 16th c. eds., OCT, Teubner, Loeb;

Epistula Pompei (II 98 Maur.)

(6) vobis] L [anticipated in ms. Aurelianensis 192], followed by all later eds., nobis V R M;
(8) animadvertatis] V L [Aurel.], followed by Fidelis, Aldus, Asulanus, Riccobonus, Aldus Jr.,
animadvertitis R M, animaduortatis/-vortatis Carrio, Putschius, Gruter, OCT, Teubner, Loeb;
here Laetus apparently corrected the earlier editions by restoring the V reading;

Oratio Macri (III 48 Maur.)

(3) quantoque tutius factio noxiorum agat] tutius L, correcting tu tuis R M;
(4) aduersa] L Maur., followed by Fidelis, Aldus, Asulanus, Aldus Jr., Riccobonus; aduorsa V? R M Carrio, Coler, Putschius, Gruter, OCT, Teubner, Loeb;

- (6) quia uobismet ipsi] ipsis V R M, Ursinus in Notis, Ciacconius in Notis, ipsi L and modern eds. (cited in app. crit. by Ramsey in Loeb), vosmetipsi 16th c. eds. (nosmetipsi Aldus Jr.);
- (8) socordesque] L, followed by Carrio, Coler, Gruter and modern eds.; secordesque R M and other 16th c. eds.;
- (13) quiessetis] L, followed by all 16th c. and modern eds. (quiescetis Fidelis); qui essetis R M; word-division corrected, perhaps from V;
- (23) Pompeium . . . malle principem uolentibus uobis esse] vobis L, followed by all other 16th c. and modern eds.; nobis R M; correction perhaps from V;
- (28) illi retinuerint quam uos repetiueritis] retinuerint L, followed by Fidelis, Aldus, Asulanus, Carrio, Coler, Putschius, Gruter; retinuerunt R M Aldus Jr., Riccobonus; correction perhaps from V but easily deduced from following verb.

The number of readings that persist in later editions – whether or not they drew upon Pomponio’s own recension – reaffirm Pomponio’s judgment. Those that are preserved, even if not attributed to Pomponio, in the texts and variant readings of modern editions of the *Historiae*, give evidence of a consensus on significant passages that, we can say, begins to evolve from the time of Pomponio’s own edition.

These results are but part of a work in progress, as Pomponio and the members of his *sodalitas* considered their own. But we hope that contemporary and future *Pomponiani* may continue the work, whether on Sallust or other classical authors, in our *Repertorium Pomponianum*.

Appendix: Editions and reprints of Pomponio Leto's 1490 Rome edition of Sallust's *Opera*²⁷

1491.5, Venetiis: arte et ingenio Philippi Pincii de Caneto. The *opera* of Sallust (ed. Pomponius Laetus) with the *Commentarii* of Laurentius Valla on the *Catilina*. HC 14222 ISTC is00076000.

Contents as in 1491.5:

1492.6, Venetiis: per Nicolaum de Ferraris de Pralormo. HC 14224.

1492.7, Venetiis: per magistrum Theodorum de Regazonibus de Asula. HC(+Add)R 14223 ISTC is00077000.

1493.1, Mediolani: arte et ingenio Ulderici Scinzenzeler. HC 14225 ISTC is00077500.

1493.8, Venetiis: per Ioannem de Cereto de Tridino. HC 14226 ISTC is00078000.

[c.1493], Venetiis: per Bernardinum Benalium. HC 14221 ISTC is00079000.

1494.11, Taurini: per Nicolaum de Benedictis et Iacobinum Suigum. HC 142 ISTC is0008000018.

Imprints similar to 1491.5: [c.1495] Lyons (Copinger 5223; ISTC is00082350), 1496 Lyons (HC 14227; ISTC is00082500), 1496 Venice (HC 14231), [c.1497] Lyons (ISTC is00082700).

1495.1, Brixiae: opera et diligentia Bernardini Misinti Ticinensis, impensa vero Angeli et Jacobi Britan[n]icorum. The *opera* of Sallust (ed. Laetus, rev. Johannes Britan[n]icus), with the *Commentarii* of Laurentius Valla on the *Catilina* and the *Expositio* of Johannes Chrysostomus Soldus on the *Iugurtha*. HC 14230 ISTC is00082000.

[ca. 1496-97, Venetiis: Christophorus de Pensis.] HC 14229 [after 14 Nov. 1495] ISTC is00082300.

Contents as in 1495.1:

[ca. 1497-99, Venetiis: Christophorus de Pensis.] HC 14228 [after 14 Nov. 1495] ISTC is00084000.

1497.1 [or 1498.1], Parrhisiis: opera et diligentia magistri Andree Bocard. Impensa vero Iohannis Alexandri et Iohannis Petit. HC 14232.

Imprint similar to 1495.1: 1510 Milan (Schweiger 2.869; Valpy 2.809).

²⁷ The list is abridged from that published in Osmond and Ulery 2003, 220-225, The note we added at the time remains valid today: "The texts in the Sallustian corpus were continually emended by editors and correctors at the time of printing; thus it has not been possible in all cases to identify the specific editor(s) or to distinguish between second (or later) impressions and new or revised editions. Moreover, although every effort has been made to ascertain the contents of each imprint, either directly or by consulting the principal catalogues and bibliographical works, the present list of composite editions remains a partial and provisional guide, subject to additions and corrections".

1500.7, Venetiis: opera et impensa . . . Ioannis Tacuini de Tridino. The *opera* of Sallust (ed. Pomponius Laetus, rev. Johannes Britannicus) with the *Commentarii* of L. Valla and of Omnibonus on the *Catilina* and the *Expositio* of Soldus on the *Iugurtha*. (Other contents as in 1495.1 above.) HC 14233 ISTC is00085000.

Contents as in 1500.7

1502.7, Venetiis: opera et impensa . . . Ioannis Tacuini de Tridino. Schweiger 2.867.

Imprints similar to 1500.7: 1506 Venice: NUC.

1504, Parrhisiis: Iehan Petit [title page]; Finis reliquiarum C. Crispi Salustii et plusculorum fragmentorum . . . corrasorum et ab Ascensio . . . explicatorum et ab eodem diligenti accuratione coimpressorum [colophon]. The *opera* of Sallust (ed. Pomponius Laetus and rev. Johannes Britannicus; further rev. Jodocus Badius Ascensius) with the *Familiaris explanatio* (or *interpretatio*) of Badius. Ph. Renouard, *Josse Badius Ascensius* 3.227-28; Schweiger 2.867-68.

Contents as in 1504:

1506, Lugduni: a Johanne de Vingle. Schweiger 2.868; Renouard, *Badius* 3.229-30.

1508, Parrhisiis: per Joannem Barbier pro Joanne Parvo. Schweiger 2.868; Renouard, *Badius* 3.230.

1509, Lugduni: per Claudium d'Avost alias de Troys. Schweiger 2.868; Renouard, *Badius* 3.231-32.

1511, [Lugduni]: per Jacobum Mareschal. Schweiger 2.869; Renouard, *Badius* 3.232-33.

Imprints similar to 1504: 1513 Venice (Schweiger 2.869; Renouard, *Badius* 3.234), 1513 Lyons (Schweiger 2.869; Renouard, *Badius* 3.233-34; NUC), 1514 Lyons (Schweiger 2.869; Renouard, *Badius* 3.235-36).

1513, Venetiis: per Bernardinum de Vianis de Lexona. The *opera* of Sallust (ed. Pomponius Laetus; rev. Johannes Britannicus; rev. Jodocus Badius Ascensius) with the *Familiaris explanatio* of Badius on all texts, the *Commentarii* of L. Valla and of Omnibonus on the *Catilina*, and the *Expositio* of Soldus on the *Iugurtha*. (Other contents as above.) Schweiger 2.869-70; Ph. Renouard, *Badius* 3.235.

Contents as in 1513:

1514, Venetiis (Venice): opera et impensa . . . Ioannis Tacuini de Tridino. Schweiger 2.870. Imprints similar to 1513: 1521 Venice (Schweiger

2.871; Renouard, *Badius* 3.237-38), 1534 Venice, 1539 Venice (Schweiger 2.872), 1541 Venice.

1517, Lugduni: per Joannem de Jonvelle. The *opera* of Sallust with the *Familiaris explanatio* of Jodocus Badius Ascensius and the *Annotationes* of Jacobus Crucius Bononiensis on the *Catilina* and *Iugurtha*. (Other contents as in 1513 above.) Renouard, *Badius* 3.236.

Contents as in 1517:

1519, Lugduni: per Ioannem Marion. Schweiger 2.870; Renouard, *Badius* 3.237. 1523, Lugduni: per Antonium Blanchard. Schweiger 2.871; Renouard, *Badius* 3.238-39.

1526, Lugduni (Lyons): per Jacobum Myt. Schweiger 2.872; Renouard, *Badius* 3.239-40.

1528, Lugduni (Lyons): impressus per Joannem Cleyn. Renouard, *Badius* 3.240.

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