

SALLUST'S VIEW OF HUMAN NATURE

GRAMMAR ASSUMED:

Deponent Verbs; Ablative
with Special Deponents

WHEELOCK: CHAPTER 34

The Roman historian Sallust, in the preface to his monograph on the Catilinarian conspiracy, outlines the faculties possessed by human beings that make them superior to beasts.

Omnēs hominēs¹ [quī cupiunt praestāre cēterīs animālibus summā opē] nīti dēbent, nē vītam silentiō trāseant velutī² pecora, quae nātūra finxit prōna atque ventrī oboedientia. Sed nostra omnis vīs in animō et corpore sita est; animī³ imperiō, corporis servitiō ūtimur; alterum nōbīs cum dīs, alterum cum bēluīs commūne est. Mihi rēctius vidētur glōriam quaerere ingenū quam vīrium opibus et, quoniam vīta ipsa quā fruimur brevis est, memoriā nōstrī quam maximē longam efficerē. Nam dīvitiārum et fōrmāe glōria⁴ flūxa atque fragilis est; virtūs clāra aeternaque habētur.

Sed multī mortālēs, dēditī ventrī atque somnō, indoctī incultūque vītam sicutī peregrīnantēs ēgērunt; quibus profectō contrā nātūram corpus voluptātī, anima onerī fuit. Eōrum ego vītam mortemque iūxtā aestimō quoniam dē⁵ utrāque silētur. Sed is dēmum mihi vīvere atque fruī animā vidētur, quī aliquō negōtiō intentus praeclārī facinoris aut artis bonae fāmam quaerit.

—adapted from Sallust, *War with Catiline* 1–2

¹ qui... opē is one relative clause ² from pecus ³ alterum... alterum = ~~one... the other~~
⁴ connected to 'commune' ⁵ from 'vis' (noun) ⁶ supply 'mihi rectius videtur' again
⁷ i.e. 'is known to be' ⁸ gen. of 'nos' ⁹ translate as 'deed'

VOCABULARY:

nītor, nīti, nīsus sum: to strive, make an effort

trāseō, -īre, -iī, -itus: to pass through

velutī (adverb): just as, just like

pecus, -oris, n.: cattle, herd

finxō, -ere, finxī, fictus: to form, fashion, make

prōnus, -a, -um: bent forward (i.e. not erect)

venter, -tris, m.: stomach, belly

oboediēns, -entis: obedient (+ dative)

situs, -a, -um: situated, placed, located

servitium, -iī, n.: service, servitude

alterum ... alterum: i.e. animus and corpus

bēlua, -ae, f.: beast

rēctus, -a, -um: straight, right, proper

quaerere ... et ... efficere: both infinitives depend on vidētur

ingenū ... vīrium: both genitives depend on opibus (ablative of means)

fruor, fruī, frūctus sum (+ ablative): to enjoy

quam maximē longam = quam longissimam

efficiō, -ere, -fēcī, -fectus: to bring about, achieve

fiūsus, -a, -um: flowing, changeable

fragilis, -e: fragile, perishable

aeternus, -a, -um: eternal, imperishable

dēditus, -a, -um: addicted to, given over to

indoctus, -a, -um: uneducated, ignorant

incultus, -a, -um: unsophisticated, not cultured

sicutī (adverb): just as, just like

peregrīnor (1): to travel around, sojourn

profectō (adverb): assuredly

voluptātī fuit: served as a source of pleasure (dative of purpose)

onus, -neris, n.: burden (onerī = dative of purpose)

iūxtā (adverb): near, close, i.e. similar

aestimō (1): to judge, estimate, consider

uterque, utraque, utrumque: each (of two), either one

silētur: it's kept silent, nothing's said

dēmum (adverb): at last, finally (at end of argument)

negōtium, -iī, n.: business, occupation

intentus, -a, -um: intent on (+ ablative)