

JUSTIN, TROGUS, AND THE *AETNA*

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IN AN ARTICLE ENTITLED "Vergil und Trogus," published more than a century ago in *Rheinisches Museum*,¹ Adolf Sonny convincingly demonstrated that Justin's so-called *Epitome of Pompeius Trogus* contains a large number of Virgilian reminiscences. Not all of Sonny's examples, it is true, are compelling. To take but two from the start of his list: his contention that *Artemisia . . . inter primos duces bellum acerrime ciebat* is Virgilian (Justin 2.12.24; cf. *Aen.* 1.541: *bella cient*; 9.766: *Martemque cientes*, etc.) will not stand close scrutiny because the expression is more likely to have derived from Livy (cf. 5.37.2: *hoste . . . bellum ciente*; 4.33.3: *proelium ciens*, etc.);² and *occupare transitum* (Justin 2.3.7) is unlikely to be an echo of *Aen.* 6.424 and 635 (*occupat Aeneas aditum*), since *occupare* is frequently used of military seizure (for example, *angustias occupare*, found in Caesar, Livy, and Curtius).³ Some of Sonny's examples, however, are patently valid, more valid, indeed, than he probably realized, because the use of the Latin PHI disk will now show us that some of them are in fact *confined* to Justin and Virgil. If an expression does not occur elsewhere, then—barring a hypothetical lost common source—it will have been taken from Virgil. So, for example, the expression "dowered with blood" (Justin 1.7.19: *uxor mariti sanguine dotata*) is paralleled only at *Aen.* 7.318: *sanguine Troiano et Rutulo dotabere, virgo*;⁴ the phrase *confectum curis* (Justin 11.13.1) only at *Aen.* 6.520: *me confectum curis somnoque gravatum*; and *prima mali labes* (Justin 17.1.5: *haec illi prima mali labes*) only at *Aen.* 2.97: *hinc mihi prima mali labes*. Sonny's thesis was subsequently taken up by F. R. D. Goodyear (1984a), who added appreciably to the earlier scholar's examples. Both believe that it was Trogus, a Vocontian Gaul, living in the Augustan period, author of a universal history entitled *The Philippic Histories*, who was influenced by Virgil, and that these Virgilian reminiscences appear in the epitome of Trogus made by Justin centuries later.⁵ Justin tells us in his preface that he has produced an "anthology" of Trogus (*velut florum corpusculum*), and so it is not surprising, these scholars argue, that the Virgilian echoes which appeared in the original work will, in places, be preserved intact in the abbreviated version. We shall return to this question at the conclusion.

¹ Sonny 1886.

² In fact, *ciere* is so common in this sense that one would be rash to posit any kind of literary influence.

³ Sonny 1886: 473. For *occupare*, cf. *TLL* 9.2.384.1–54.

⁴ The same idea is found at *Aen.* 7.423: *quaesitas sanguine dotes*, perhaps deriving from Aesch. *Agam.* 406.

⁵ On the dating of Trogus and Justin, see Yardley and Heckel 1997: 1–13, and the pertinent remarks of Alonso-Núñez 1998.

One work not considered by Sonny or Goodyear is the *Aetna*, which was generally attributed to Virgil in the ancient world, though the authenticity was questioned even then and few would accept it now.⁶ That there is some connection between the poem and Justin/Trogus seems clear from certain verbal similarities between the works, specifically between the *Aetna* and Justin 4.1, the description of Sicily, which is largely devoted to a description of Mt Aetna. The closest verbal parallel was noted by Goodyear in his commentary on the poem, but that scholar, whose work on Justin still lay in the future, refrained from any comment beyond the customary "cf." Vessereau, whose 1923 Budé edition contains a useful appendix entitled "Auctores et Imitatores," omits mention of the parallel altogether because he is interested only in poetic parallels; and so does Richter in his 1963 edition. The line in question is *Aetna* 436: *et lapis adiutat generandis ignibus aptus*. The expression *ignem* or *ignes generare* seems to occur in only one other place in Latin literature, and that is Justin 4.1.3, where we find exactly the same gerundival phrase, again in the dative case: *nec non et ignibus generandis . . . naturalis materia*. The similarity between the two is duly noted by *TLL* (6.2.1795.36–37 and 56–57), where the reader's attention is directed from the one example to the other (and where, one presumes, Goodyear found his parallel).

Since both authors are describing a volcano, it is only to be expected that words such as *ignis*, *incendium*, *ventus*, *vapor* etc. will occur in both. But there are resemblances too close and persistent to be explained only by similarity of subject matter. So, in the line of the *Aetna* preceding that cited above, we have *sulphure non solum nec obesa bitumine terra est*, which is close to Justin 4.1.3: *stratum sulphure et bitumine*. The verb *suffocare*, found nowhere else in Virgil or the *Virgilian Appendix*, occurs at *Aetna* 320 and Justin 4.1.15 (and this is also the only occurrence of the verb in Justin), on both occasions of the compression of air (*Aetna* 320: *pugnantis <ventos> suffocat iter*; Justin 4.1.15: *suffocatum <spiritum>*). The expression *angustis faucibus* (Justin 4.1.3) occurs at *Aetna* 168 (recurring in *Ciris* 463; in the nominative, cf. *Aen.* 11.525: *angustae . . . fauces*); for *ignibus . . . nutriendis* (Justin 4.1.3), cf. *Aetna* 280: *quid nutriat ignes*,⁷ cf. also 414: *incendia nutrit*; 439: *flammas . . . nutrit*; 387: *nutriat Aetnam*. Justin 4.1.5 refers to the *Aetnae montis . . . incendium*, paralleled at *Aetna* 212: *incendia montis*. The wrestling metaphor of the wind in Justin 4.1.4: *spiritu cum igne in terra interiore luctante* finds a parallel in *Aetna* 375: *luctamine ab imo*.⁸ The verb *eructare*, which occurs in Justin only at 4.1.4: *nunc vaporem, nunc fumum eructet*, also occurs at *Aetna* 394 (the "original" probably being *Aen.* 3.576–577, also of Mt Aetna: *evolsa viscera montis / erigit eructans*). For *per spiramenta cavernarum ventus incubuit*

⁶On the question of the date and authorship of the work, see Vessereau 1923: xiii–xxii (who inclined still towards Virgilian authorship); Richter 1963: 1–6; Goodyear 1965: 56–59; Richmond 1981: 1130–31.

⁷*ignes nutrire* is also found in Ovid (*Rem.* 607; *Met.* 6.492–493, 8.641–643) and Statius (*Theb.* 2.739).

⁸There is a textual problem, but *luctamine* looks to be right; see Goodyear 1965 on *Aetna* 375–377.

(Justin 4.1.6), cf. *Aetna* 134–135: *si libera ventis / spiramenta latent*; for *vicini . . . ignes* (Justin 4.1.11), cf. *Aetna* 459: *vicina incendia*; for *fremitem ferventis aestus* (Justin 4.1.10), cf. *Aetna* 3: *raucos . . . aestus*. Finally, to return to the sentence of Justin from which we started—*nec non et ignibus generandis nutriendisque soli ipsius naturalis materia* (4.1.3)—the idea and expression here is also close to *Aetna* 388: *materia appositumque igni genus utile terrae*. It is true that Seneca (*Ep.* 79.4) refers to the topic of Mt Aetna as a *solemnem omnibus poetis locum*, and we cannot rule out the possibility that some of the vocabulary above is the common stock of Aetna-descriptions,⁹ but the sheer number and the closeness of the examples here adduced point to a direct relationship between Justin 4.1 and the *Aetna*. If Sonny and Goodyear are correct in seeing Virgilian echoes in Justin/Trogus as deriving from Trogus, and if (as seems reasonable) we include in “Virgilian echoes” echoes of those works falsely attributed to Virgil in the ancient world (i.e., all the works of the *Appendix Virgiliana*), then this would have important consequences for the dating of the *Aetna*. For the poem is these days usually dated to the “Silver Age” (but before A.D. 79, on the *ex silentio* argument that the author does not mention Vesuvius).¹⁰ Now, if these echoes of the *Aetna* are attributable to Pompeius Trogus and not his “epitomator” Justin, then the poem must be brought back to the Augustan age, to about the turn of the era.¹¹

But is it reasonable to assume that Virgilian influence on the *Epitome* necessarily means Virgilian influence on Trogus, and not on Justin? It is true that Servius indicates that Trogus knew Virgil when, commenting on *Aen.* 6.782, he says: *de hoc autem loco et Trogus et Probus quaerunt*; but a historian discussing an item in a poet—where and how he did this can only be guessed at¹²—is a far cry from a historian including phrases from that poet in his narrative. And it is quite clear that Justin—whether he lived in the second, third, or even fourth centuries—would also know Virgil. It is evident from the work itself, and from what Justin says in his preface, that he is a man who benefitted from a rhetorical education,¹³ and Virgil must have been part of that. It is simply a question of which author is more likely to have used him. Sonny assumes it is Trogus, adopting the still-orthodox view that Justin’s work is merely a collage of the Augustan historian—Justin is a “florilegium,” a *florum corpusculum*, with very little added by the “epitomator” himself. Goodyear holds to the same view, bolstering his argument with vituperation of Justin as a historian: “He (Justin) seems to have contributed little, except his blunders and a scattering of synonyms, from the language of his own day, which he substituted consciously or unconsciously

⁹ On which see Goodyear 1984b, esp. 346–356.

¹⁰ Above, n. 6.

¹¹ The latest datable reference in the *Philippic Histories* is the return of the Parthian hostages in 10 B.C. On Trogus’ dating, see above, n. 5.

¹² Perhaps, as has been argued, the beginning of Book 43 (on the early history of Rome)—but we cannot even be sure that Servius is referring to the *Philippic Histories*!

¹³ The fullest treatment of Justin and rhetoric remains, as far as I am aware, Sorn 1902.

for Trogus' words. He had neither the time nor the desire nor the ability to rewrite the historian he so much admired If this view is right, it looks unlikely that Justin, to any appreciable extent, sought to improve on Trogus by suffusing his excerpts with a mass of Virgilian tints."¹⁴ This is not the place to discuss Justin's intentions in composing the *Epitome*; suffice it to say that an argument can be made for the *Epitome* as an autonomous work, heavily based on Trogus certainly but not merely a collection of Trogan passages carelessly stitched together.¹⁵ More important is the fact that the work contains numerous echoes of post-Augustan, and therefore post-Trojan, authors, and these have to be attributed to the "epitomator." To cite just a few examples of expressions confined to Justin and Lucan and/or Statius: Justin 9.7.8: *stimulis irarum*, cf. Lucan 2.324: *irarum movit stimulos*, Stat. *Theb.* 10.75: *irarum stimulis*; Justin 11.13.2: *somni parcior*, cf. Lucan 9.590: *somni parcissimus ipse est*; Justin 6.7.4: *effetae aetatis*, cf. Stat. *Theb.* 6.252: *quos effeta domi . . . reliquerat aetas*; Justin 12.7.9: *sacros . . . ululatus*, cf. Stat. *Theb.* 9.434: *sacris ululatibus* (in both instances used of Bacchic revels). An author who "suffuses" his work with "tints" from Lucan and Statius can surely be expected to use "Virgilian tints" as well.

One final point. A Virgilian reminiscence overlooked by both Sonny and Goodyear is to be found the twelfth chapter of Justin's second book. The context is Themistocles' attempt to detach the Ionian contingent from the Persian fleet after the defeat at Thermopylae. According to Justin, who seems to be close to the account of Herodotus (8.22) at this point (which is not to say that Trogus did not follow an intermediary), the Athenian leader writes messages to the Ionians on rocks which they will pass in their ships. Justin gives us the text in direct speech. It occupies ten lines of Seel's Teubner text and begins: *quae vos, Iones, dementia tenet? quod facinus agitis?* (2.12.3) This is rather different from the Herodotean original, which runs as follows:

ἄνδρες Ἴωνες, οὐ ποιεῖτε δίκαια ἐπὶ τοὺς πατέρας στρατευόμενοι καὶ τὴν Ἑλλάδα καταδουλούμενοι. ἀλλὰ μάλιστα μὲν πρὸς ἡμέων γίνεσθε· εἰ δὲ ὑμῖν ἐστὶ τοῦτο μὴ δυνατόν ποιῆσαι, ὑμεῖς δὲ ἔτι καὶ νῦν ἐκ τοῦ μέσου ἡμῖν ἔξεσθε καὶ αὐτοὶ καὶ τῶν Καρῶν δέεσθε τὰ αὐτὰ ὑμῖν ποιεῖν· εἰ δὲ μηδέτερον τούτων οἶόν τε γίνεσθαι, ἀλλ' ὑπ' ἀναγκαίης μέζονος κατέζευχθε ἢ ὥστε ἀπίστασθαι, ὑμεῖς δὲ ἐν τῷ ἔργῳ, ἐπεὶ συμμίσγωμεν, ἐθελοκακέετε, μεμνημένοι ὅτι ἀπ' ἡμέων γεγόνετε καὶ ὅτι ἀρχήθεν ἡ ἔχθρη πρὸς τὸν βάρβαρον ἀπ' ὑμέων ἡμῖν γέγονε.

The expression *quae vos dementia tenet*, which finds no parallel in Herodotus, seems to be an echo of Corydon's lament in Virgil *Ecl.* 2.69: *a, Corydon, Corydon, quae te dementia cepit?* or of Silenus' song in *Ecl.* 6.47: *a virgo infelix, quae te dementia cepit?* or perhaps of Ascanius' rebuke to the Trojans at *Aen.* 9.601: *quae vos dementia adegit?* One or other or all three of these in turn influenced Ovid (*Met.* 13.225–226: *quae vos dementia / concitat?*) and Seneca (*Quaest. Nat.* 5.18.5:

¹⁴ Goodyear 1984a: 21 (= 1992: 236). See also his remarks in Goodyear 1984b: n. 14.

¹⁵ See especially Jal 1987; Yardley and Heckel 1997: 15–19.

quae nos dementia exagitat?), and while one of these latter may have been the influence on Justin a Virgilian echo is much more likely. But in the Trogan original or in Justin? In this case the former seems highly unlikely. In Book 38, just before he cites in its entirety the speech of Mithridates to his troops, Justin tells us something about Trogus' historiographical method; the historian criticised Livy and Sallust, he says, because they "transgressed the proper bounds of historiography by inserting into their work orations in direct speech"¹⁶—Trogus preferred indirect speech. This explains the inordinate amount of *oratio obliqua* in Justin. The writing on the rocks is not exactly the same as a speech in the mouth of a historical character, but it is similar, in that Trogus obviously had no transcription of the message made by a contemporary historian. It is perhaps comparable to messages and letters that appear in the Epitome—all of which are reported in indirect speech (for example, the message of Harpagus to Cyrus at 1.5.8–9 [direct speech in Herodotus 1.124]; of Themistocles to Xerxes at 2.12.19–20 [direct speech in Herodotus 8.75]; the messages that passed between Alexander and Darius at 11.12.4–15, etc.). Surely in this case we would be justified in seeing the message as the composition of Justin, not only because of the *oratio recta* but also because it is very difficult to attribute an incredible 10-line message on rock to a reputable historian! Justin, sacrificing historical verisimilitude for rhetorical flourish, expands and dramatises a more sober account that he found in Trogus, and appeals to his readership with a recognisable echo from an author known to all. Indeed, if Sonny is right in seeing a Virgilian echo in 2.12.4: *an ideo moenia vestra condidimus*,¹⁷ we have two such echoes in a ten-line message.¹⁸

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¹⁶Justin 38.3.11: *quoniam in Livio et in Sallustio reprehendit, quod contiones directas pro sua oratione operi suo inserendo historiae modum excesserint*.

¹⁷Sonny 1886: 473. For *moenia condere* = "found a city," cf. *Aen.* 1.276–277; 7.145; 11.323; 12.361. Though likely to be a Virgilian echo, the expression (which seems unparalleled in prose) does also occur in Ovid (six times), Propertius (once), Lucan (once), and Silius Italicus (once).

¹⁸I wish to thank my friend John (J. N.) Grant and the journal's anonymous referees for their criticism of this paper, and the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada for a grant which facilitated the research.

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