



Justin

Epitome of the Philippic History
of Pompeius Trogus

DELPHI  CLASSICS

Ancient Classics Series

The Epitome of

JUSTIN

(fl. c. 2nd century AD)



Contents

The Translation

Epitome of the Philippic History of Pompeius Trogus

The Latin Text

Contents of the Latin Text

The Dual Text

Dual Latin and English Text

The Biographies

Gnaeus Pompeius Trogus

Justin

The Delphi Classics Catalogue



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Version 1

The Epitome of

JUSTIN



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Epitome of the Philippic History of Pompeius Trogus by Justin



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The Translation



Ruins at Pella, northern Greece — the birthplace of Alexander the Great

Epitome of the Philippic History of Pompeius Trogus



Translated by John Selby Watson, 1886

Justin was a Latin historian that flourished in the Roman Empire during the second or early third century AD. Almost nothing is known of his personal history, as his name appears only in the title of his work. He must have lived after the Gallo-Roman historian Gnaeus Pompeius Trogus (fl. 1st century BC), whose work he excerpted. Also, Justin makes references to the Romans and Parthians having divided the world between themselves, which would have been anachronistic after the rise of the Sassanians in the third century. His Latin appears to be consistent with the style of the second century. The sole work assigned to his name is an *Epitome* of Trogus' expansive *Liber Historiarum Philippicarum* (Philippic Histories), a history of the kings of Macedon, which was compiled in the time of Augustus and is now lost. Justin's preface explains that he aimed to collect the most important and interesting passages of Trogus' text. Some of Trogus' original arguments (prologi) are preserved in various other authors, such as Pliny the Elder. Trogus' principal theme was the rise and history of the Macedonian Empire. Like his model, Justin also employs many digressions throughout, rendering the work more of an idiosyncratic anthology than a strict epitome.

The original work was intended to cover human history from its beginning until the time of the Caesars, with a special focus on Greece and her rulers, nations and peoples. Justin sought to remove the parts that "were neither attractive for the pleasure of reading", resulting in a work that is approximately one-sixth the length of Trogus' text. Despite its altered nature, Justin's work stands as an important piece of history, since it is a sole pre-Christian work of world history written in Latin and is also one of the few written sources on several notable Hellenistic figures.

The composition of the *Epitome* is complicated due to its nature, with some elements coming from Trogus and the rest from Justin, and determining whom a particular element belongs to is difficult due to the loss of the original text. It is composed in a blend of Latin and Late Latin, with the Latin being generally attributed to elements that Justin transcribed more directly from Trogus, and with the Late Latin occurring in sections that were more original. Some scholars have identified a connection between the metre and content with the earlier Tacitus. However, whether Tacitus influenced Trogus, or the reverse, is still a matter of much scholarly debate.

The *Epitome* is structured in the same manner as the original, being divided into forty-four books, with the addition of a preface. Each of these books focuses on an aspect of world and Grecian history, with a specific focus on the life and exploits of Alexander the Great, including his rise to power and the events transpiring after his death. The books that focus on Alexander are written in the Vulgate Tradition, and sourced through Trogus from the lost *History of Alexander* by Cleitarchus and as such they are considered inaccurate due to Cleitarchus' focus on entertainment over accuracy, compounded by Justin's own interest in the same.

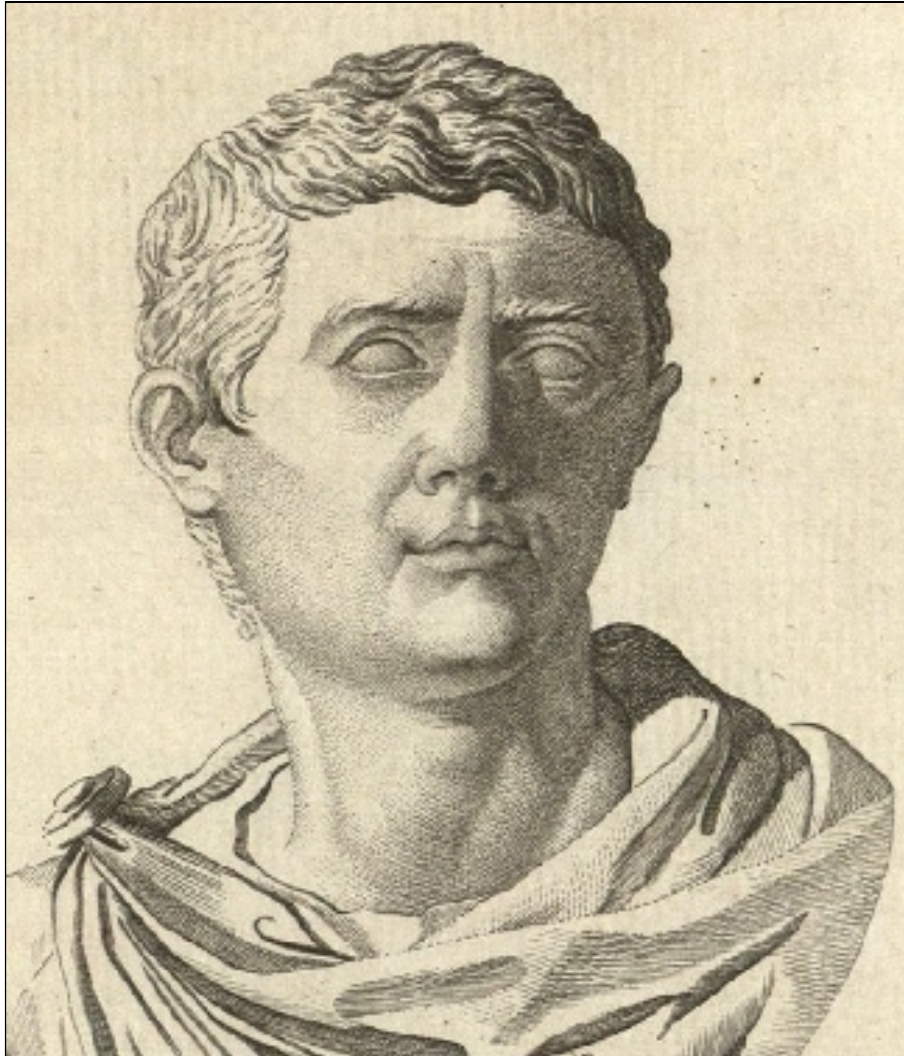
Trogus' theme was that of *imperium* — the right of the monarch to rule — tracing the passage from one king to another and one empire to another, while presenting rulers as being essential for the well-being of the state. Justin appears to focus his work more on the theme of moral learning. To achieve his objective, he takes the

expansive accounts of Trogus and modifies them, but in doing so has made himself an unreliable tertiary source of the depicted events and an unreliable representative of the now-lost secondary sources.

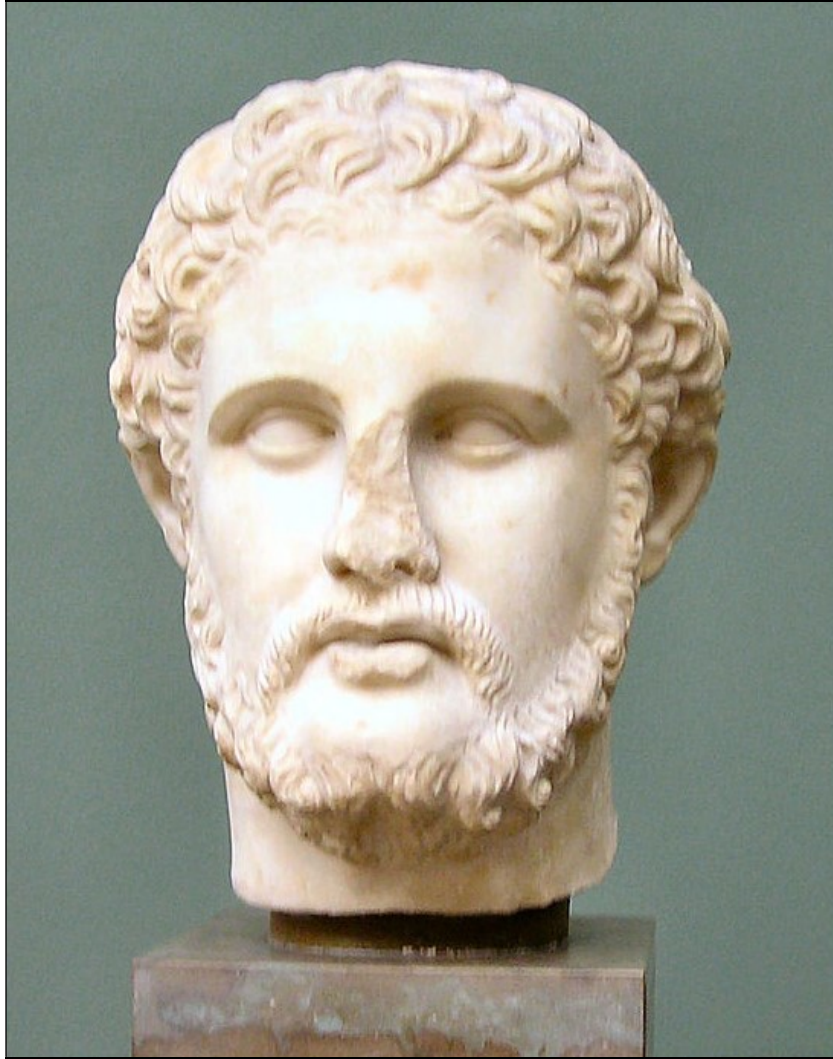
In spite of the little we know about this historian, Justin provides one of only five surviving major accounts of Alexander. In particular, the *Epitome* provides important insights into Alexander's father, Philip II, after whom the work was named. Unfortunately, the extent of these insights is minimised by Justin's limited interest in a comprehensive history. Trogus is believed to have gone into significant detail about Philip's conquests, but Justin simply states, "And so he established one kingdom and one people out of many clans and nations".

The *Epitome* also provides an account of Alexander's death, attributing its cause to his companion Antipater, who upon seeing the immoderation of Alexander, took it upon himself to poison him, with a drug so strong that it "could be conveyed in the hoof of a horse". This interpretation is disputed by most historians, who argue that it is a transference of the themes of Trogus, where immoderation was seen as an unfit attribute and a direct cause of the loss of *imperium*.

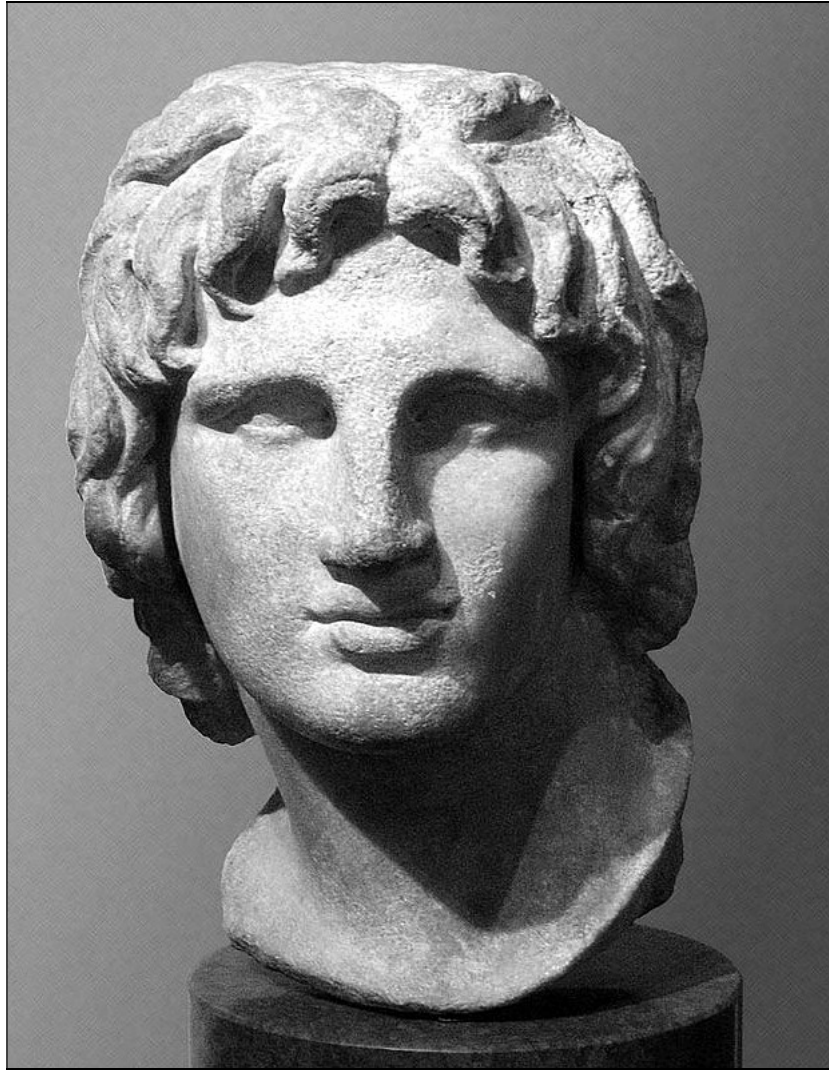
Justin's work was very popular during the period of its release, quickly overtaking Trogus' text to the extent that most of what we know about the original is from the *Epitome*. It continued to be popular in the Middle Ages, from which period over two hundred copies survive. This reputation was maintained throughout the Renaissance, with editions being among the earlier generations of printed books. However, it started to lose popularity in the nineteenth century, when its reliability was called into question, culminating in a large gap between English translations.



Eighteenth century depiction of Gnaeus Pompeius Trogus



Philip II of Macedon, Alexander's father



Bust of a young Alexander the Great from the Hellenistic era, British Museum

CONTENTS

NOTE.

NOTICE OF THE LIFE AND WRITINGS OF JUSTIN.

PREFACE

BOOK 1

BOOK 2

BOOK 3

BOOK 4

BOOK 5

BOOK 6

BOOK 7

BOOK 8

BOOK 9

BOOK 10

BOOK 11

BOOK 12

BOOK 13

BOOK 14

BOOK 15

BOOK 16

BOOK 17

BOOK 18

BOOK 19

BOOK 20

BOOK 21

BOOK 22

BOOK 23

BOOK 24

BOOK 25

BOOK 26

BOOK 27

BOOK 28

BOOK 29

BOOK 30

BOOK 31

BOOK 32

BOOK 33

BOOK 34

BOOK 35

BOOK 36

BOOK 37

BOOK 38

BOOK 39

BOOK 40

BOOK 41

BOOK 42

BOOK 43

BOOK 44

PROLOGI OF POMPEIUS TROGUS



'Alexander fighting king Darius III of Persia', a mosaic dating from c. 100 BC, originally from the House of the Faun in Pompeii, now housed in the Naples National Archaeological Museum



Map of Alexander's Empire and his route

Justinus, Marcus

THE
HISTOR
OF
JUSTI

Taken out of the Four

BOOK

OF
TROGUS POM

CONTAININ

The Affairs of all Ages and Cou
Peace and War, from the beginning
until the Time of the Roman EM

With an Account of *JUSTIN*,
when he Flourished, from *G. J. Vof*

Title page of a 1688 edition of Justin's text

NOTE.



THIS VOLUME CONTAINS Versions of Justin, Cornelius Nepos, and Eutropius.

Justin has been translated from the text of Wetzel; Cornelius Nepos from that of Bos, as re-edited by Fischer; and Eutropius from that of Tszchucke.

Each of the authors has been rendered in a style as easy as was consistent with a faithful adherence to the sense.

Notes on points of history, and on peculiarities in the text, have been given wherever they seemed to be required. Remarks on the authors are prefixed, and a copious Index added

J. S. W.

NOTICE OF THE LIFE AND WRITINGS OF JUSTIN.



AS JUSTIN IS not properly an author, but an abridger, we shall first give our attention to the writer whom he abridged.

All that is certainly known of the personal history of Trogus Pompeius is, that he was a Roman by birth;¹ that his ancestors were of the Vocontii, a people of Italy; that his grandfather, Trogus Pompeius, was presented with the right of citizenship by Pompey during the war with Sertorius; that his uncle was an officer of cavalry under Pompey, in the war with Mithridates; and that his father served in the army under Julius Caesar, and was afterwards his private secretary.² Trogus himself must, therefore, have flourished under Augustus. The last event that he appears to have recorded is the restoration of the Roman standards by the Parthians.

He wrote a history in forty-four books, which he entitled *Historiae Philippicae*, because, as is supposed, his chief design in writing it was to relate the origin, progress, decline, and extinction of the Macedonian monarchy, and especially the achievements of Philip and his son. But he allowed himself, like Herodotus and other historians, to indulge in such large digressions and excursions, that it was regarded by many as a Universal History, and is represented, in some manuscripts, vi as containing *totius mundi origines et terrae situs*, a character to which it had no right.

The first six books comprised the period antecedent to Philip, in which an account was given of the Assyrians, Persians, Egyptians, Scythians, Athenians, and Lacedaemonians; the history of Macedonia was commenced in the seventh book, and continued, in combination with other matters, to the overthrow of Andriscus, the Pseudo-Philippus, in the thirty-third. The *prologi*, or arguments, which we have of all the books, similar to the epitomes of the lost books of Livy, were first published by Bongarsius.

He seems to have taken his materials from the Greek historians.³ His title appears to have been suggested by the *Philippica* of Theopompus, a voluminous work, of which Stephanus *de Urbibus*⁴ cites the fifty-seventh book.

Whatever speeches he inserted were in the oblique form, for he blamed Livy and Sallust for giving long direct speeches in their histories.⁵ He is praised by Justin for his eloquence; *vir priscae eloquentiae*;⁶ and Vopiscus⁷ ranks his style with those of Sallust, Livy, and Tacitus.

A treatise of Trogus, *de Animalibus*, is mentioned by Charisius,⁸ and Trogus is quoted as an authority by Pliny in several passages of his Natural History; and this Trogus is generally supposed to be the same as Trogus the historian.

A writer named Trogus is also twice cited by Priscian, in his fifth and sixth books, but whether he is the Trogus of Justin, is uncertain.

The epitome that Justin made of the large work of Trogus, has often been supposed the cause that the original was lost.

Who or what JUSTIN was, we are left in ignorance; we know not even what name he had besides Justinus, for though one manuscript entitles him Justinus Frontinus, and another M. Junianus Justinus, the other manuscripts give him only one name.

From the words *Imperator Antonine*, which occur in the preface in the editions of Aldus and others, he has been often said to have lived in the reign of that emperor; but those words are now generally thought to have been interpolated by some, who, like Isidore and Jornandes, confounded him with Justin Martyr.⁹ From an expression in

the eighth book, where Greece is said to be *etiam nunc et viribus et dignitate orbis terrarum princeps*, it has been conjectured that he flourished under the Eastern emperors; but such conjecture is groundless, for the words merely refer to the period of which the author is writing, and may be, indeed, not Justin's, but Trogus's.

His style, however, in which occur the words *adunare*, *impossibilis*, *praesumptio*, *opinio* for "report," and other words and phrases of inferior Latinity, show that he must have lived some considerable time after the Augustan age. Such phraseology could not have been found in the pages of Trogus. But Justin could not have been later than the beginning of the fifth century, as he is mentioned by St. Jerome.¹⁰

That he was not a Christian, is proved, as Vossius remarks, by the ignorance which he manifests of the Jewish Scriptures;¹¹ for he could not, assuredly, have copied Trogus's vagaries without bestowing some correction upon them. He has been censured for not making a more regular abridgment of his author's work, but without justice; for he intended only to extract or abbreviate such portions as he thought more likely than others to please the general reader.

His composition is animated, and in general correct, but not of the highest order of merit. His peculiarities of phraseology are carefully specified by Wetzel in his *prolegomena*, though he has omitted to remark his constant use of the conjunction *quasi* in his narratives and descriptions.

It is observed by Dr. Robertson,¹² that "we cannot rely on Justin's evidence, unless when it is confirmed by the testimony of other ancient authors. " The remark ought rather to be transferred to Trogus, whom Justin seems faithfully to have followed, and who seems, indeed, to have been a writer of sufficient credulity, as his account of Habis, in his forty-fourth book, may serve to show. But there is no historian, as Vopiscus¹³ says, that does not tell something false, and Livy, Sallust, Tacitus, and Trogus, alike exhibit passages not proof against strict examination.

The best editions of Justin are those of Bongarsius, Paris, 1581; of Graevius, Lugd. Bat. , 1683, which has been several times reprinted; of Hearne, Oxon, 1703; of Gronovius, Lugd. Bat. 1719, 1760; of Fischer, Lips. 1757; and of Wetzel, Lipa. 1806, reprinted in Lemaire's *Bibliothèque Classique*, 1823.

The oldest English Version is that of Arthur Goldinge, 1564, and the next that of Robert Codrington, 1654, both of whom had but an imperfect knowledge of the language of their author. There have since appeared translations by Thomas Brown, 1712; by Nicolas Bayley, 1732; by Clarke, 1732; and by Turnbull, 1746, the last being the most readable performance, but not always faithful to the sense.

ENDNOTES.

¹ Just. xliiii. 1.

² Just. xliiii. *fin.*

³ See Heeren de Trog. Pomp. Fontibus et Auctoritate, prefixed to Frotscher's edition.

⁴ In Messape/ai.

⁵ Just. xxviii. 3.

⁶ Just. Pref.

⁷ Life of Probus.

⁸ I p. 79

² See the note on that passage of the Preface.

¹⁰ Prooem. in Daniel.

¹¹ Just. xxxvi. 1, 2.

¹² Disquisition on Anc. India, note 12.

¹³ Life of Aurelian, *prope init.*

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