

**Orosius and Justinus in one volume.
Post-Conquest books across the Channel.¹**

Lars Boje Mortensen

Although the widespread text of Orosius' *Historiae adversus paganos* made a nice medieval volume in itself, it sometimes obeyed the tendency of historiographical works to accompany each other.² My aim in the present paper is to offer some evidence about the partnership of Orosius and Justinus. I shall argue that this combination appears to have been a speciality of scriptoria in Brittany/Normandy and southern England in the period from around the Conquest up to the end of the twelfth century.

There are several types of evidence of original combination of texts, but, unfortunately, most of them must be treated with caution. The very clear-cut case of two texts copied onto the same codicological element and with a contemporary table of contents matching the present state of the manuscript, is the rare exception. Even two texts copied simultaneously in the same scriptorium on homogeneous elements, and now bound together, may have begun their existence and circulation as separate booklets.

It is therefore - *prima facie* - very comforting to find a contemporary poem (to be edited below) explicitly stating that in this very manuscript the reader will find two works: Orosius and Justinus. But when one discovers that the poem is found in some manuscripts containing only Orosius, caution seems to be called for again. Before giving an account of these problems, however, I would like to state shortly what the poem is like.

The metre of the 52 lines of poetry is the Leonine hexameter, rhymed at the caesura in the third foot and at the end. The rhyme is often just the vocalic assonance, e.g. *manus* pairs with *illud* (51). A few times even that is neglected (12, 46). This fashion of verse-making peaked in the eleventh century,³ and as the oldest textual witness can be dated to the same period, I do not think

1 I am grateful to Charles Burnett, Julia Crick, Karsten Friis-Jensen, Kurt Villads Jensen, and Birger Munk Olsen for checking various points for me.

2 Cf. Mortensen (forthcoming).

3 Klopsch (1972) 43.

we will go much wrong if we put the time of composition in the same century. As will be exemplified below the poet was not very deft.

The poem falls into two distinct parts: 1-18 deals with Orosius, 19-52 with Justinus. Basically, both parts summarize the contents of the work in question, but there are differences in sources and technique.

In the first part it is stated that the present book by Orosius gives a geographical account of the world and tells the story of salvation. The following historical turning-points are mentioned: the Creation, the Fall, the Flood, the series of wars and miseries up to the coming of Christ where all strife ended under the reign of a single Roman ruler, and the spread of Christianity up to the time of the emperor Honorius (called Honorus *metri causa*). This is indeed a useful summary of the *Historiae*. (However, two important points have been left out: the apologetic (or polemical) purpose of the work, and the parallelization of the Roman and Babylonian empires). The summary is based on Orosius' preface to Augustine, but I suspect that the ordinary accessus to Orosius (of which the nucleus derives from Gennadius' entry in his continuation of Jerome's *De viris illustribus*) also served as a source. I here give a simple transcription of a brief twelfth-century version for easy reference (from Paris BN lat. 4877, f.1ra - for which ms see more below):

Orosius presbiter hispani generis uir eloquentissimus et historiarum cognitor scripsit aduersus querulos christiani nominis, qui dicunt defectum romanę rei publicę Christi doctrina inuectum, libros septem in quibus, pene totius mundi calamitates et miserias et bellorum inquietudines replicans, ostendit magis christianę obseruantię esse, quod contra meritum suum res romana adhuc duret, et pace culturę dei pacatum retineat imperium. Sane in primo libro descripsit positionem orbis, Oceani intercisionem et Tanai limitibus intercisum situm locorum et nomina et numerum moresque gentium qualitates gentium initia bellorum et tirannidis exordia finitimorum sanguine dedicata. Hic est Orosius qui ab Augustino pro discenda anime ratione ad Ieronimum missus, rediens reliquias beati Stephani protomartiris tunc nuper inuentas primus intulit occidenti. Claruit extremo Honorii imperatoris tempore.

The geographical introduction takes the place of honour in the poem as well as in the accessus (sane in primo libro descripsit positionem orbis...), whereas Orosius' own preface mentions it in last place (I,1,15-17). Furthermore the name of the emperor surfaces in the accessus and in the poem, but not in Orosius' preface.

Another point emerges when one turns to the second part of the poem. This is based very closely on Justinus' preface - in fact so close that it even

repeats the form of the first person: "I, who did this extract from Trogus, am called Justinus..." (44ff.). This rather awkward shift in person also signals, I think, that for the first part the poet actually worked primarily from the *accessus* (cast in the third person) and only added some points from Orosius' preface. As for Justinus, there seems to have been no standard medieval introduction,⁴ but then his preface was much shorter and less complicated to rephrase than Orosius' longwinded address to Augustine. All the major points made in Justinus' prologue are found in the poem as well, often word by word as far as the metre allowed. One alteration is bold: Justinus sets out to explain that even men of consular rank wrote history; his *consularis* is not suitable for a hexameter, and - out of nothing, it seems - comes the poem's *popularis*! Another surprising deviation is the poet's statement that Pompeius Trogus' original work was poetic rather than prosaic (28-29 - for possible explanations see below).

The poem is transmitted in five manuscripts (more information below):

B = Bern 160 (11 ex.)

L = London Burney 329 (15)

O = Oxford New College 151 (12)

P = Paris BN lat. 4877 (12/13)

V = Leiden Vossius F. 18 (12 med.) (only vss. 1-9, 48-51)

Of these the Oxford and London mss are signalled by Walther,⁵ and transcriptions have been given from the two defective ones (Bern and Leiden) by Hagen and Haverkamp.⁶ But since the Leiden ms only transmits a few lines, and approximately half of the poem is illegible in the Bern ms, I find it appropriate to collect the evidence and to give the first readable edition.

When one compares what is discernible in *B* with the rest of the tradition, it is obvious that we are dealing with two different versions of the poem. *B* offers some alternative verses (full information is to be found in the apparatus), and in general they seem to remedy some of the metrical errors

4 Cf. Munk Olsen I:538-39 ("Accessoires").

5 Walther (1959) No. 13427 on p. 691.

6 Hagen (1877) 147-48 & Haverkamp (1738) Praefatio (unpaginated).

or awkward phrasings in the version represented by *LOP* (*V* is not available for any of the variant verses). In verse 12 *LOP* has *bella sopita docent pacem per secula sparsam* where the first syllable of *sopita* is, wrongly, supposed to be short; furthermore, the rhyme on *docent* and *sparsam* takes some imagination on part of the reader. Both of these mistakes are put right in *B*'s *bella docent pacem sparsam sopita per orbem*. Nor do the following three verses (13-15) read very well in *LOP*, especially the absolute ablative in 14 (*quod Domino munus tribuente supremo*) is hard to construe with the context. This, again, has been ameliorated in the *B* text (see apparatus; in both versions the subject for the following verbs *cucurrit* (15) and *resoluit* (18) must be the initial *codex* (2)). A similar case can be made for verse 24 where *P* reads the metrically impossible *Pompeius Trogus uir omni dogmate plenus*, *O* adds a supralinear *et* after *uir* (repeated by *L*), which saves the metre, but serves no purpose in the clause. In the *B* version we find the better *Pompeius Trogus uir morum dogmate clarus*. Other prosodical peculiarities (*luculenter* in 2 & 42, *Romanorum* in 21) in *LOP(V)* cannot be checked in *B*. In one instance (35) *B* gives a metrically faulty line, *creditur Alcidae meritis par Trogus esse*, where *LOP* make no mistake: *Hercules hic Trogus bene cernitur esse secundus*. Despite the missing syllable before or after *par* it could be argued that the *B* version represents an attempt to sophisticate the *LOP* text, in as much as *Alcidae* is developed from *Hercules* and not vice versa (compare Justinus' preface § 2: *nonne nobis Pompeius Herculeia audacia orbem terrarum adgressus videri debet*).

These observations indicate that *B* - in spite of its age - was not the source of any of the other copies. The most plausible model of transmission, I think, is to assume a lost (eleventh-century) ancestor of the *LOP* text, from which the author of the *B* text was working, and from which *LOP(V)* derive. Another possibility, of course, is to postulate a third version from which the two existing ones were produced.

As regards the passages of *B* which are legible and identical to the *LOP* text, a few significant variants distribute the mss in two groups: *LO* and *BPV* (*LO/BP(V)*: *defessas/defensas* (18), *et/ac* (40), *dicere/discere* (49)). *P* in turn has a number of its own mistakes (*P/(B)OL*: *om./et* (24), *cautus/captus* (25), *siue/seu* (bis 26), *cui/qui* (36)). Apart from such basic observations, it would not be safe to embark on a stemma: the variants are few, and there is no telling how many drafts and copies of a one-page text like this have been lost.

The version printed here is the *LOP* text: to my mind it is the original, and in any case it is the only one fully transmitted. In the edition I have standardized the spelling. The apparatus is positive, and also gives some information on matters of orthography. Capitalization is kept at the beginning of verses, and names have been capitalized in all cases for the convenience of the modern reader (though with some manuscript support). A similar procedure holds true of full stops and commas. Apart from the sigla listed above

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| <i>H</i> | indicates Hagen's reading of <i>B</i> . |
| \\ | include text written above the line |
| <<>> | include text supposed to have filled a physical lacuna |
| | indicate illegible letters |

- Orbis terrarum metasque situsque locorum *B* *Ira OPV* 1ra *L* 1r
 Computat hic sancti codex luculenter Orosii.
 Mundum post factum formatum post protoplastum
 Eius et excidium tangit pro crimine factum,
 5 Terram diluuiio super omnem uindice fuso,
 Archa seruatis diuino munere paucis.
 Hinc mala bella neces conflictus prelia lites
 Probra simultates incestus iurgia fraudes
 Errorum secte patricidia furta rapine *O* 1rb
 10 Necnon uindicte iusto sub iudice facte,
 Donec in aduentus miserentis tempore Iesu
 Bella sopita docent pacem per secula sparsam,
 Romano imperio mundum dominante sub uno
 Principe - quod Domino munus tribuente supremo.
 15 Dogmatis hinc Christi per tempora cuncta cucurrit
 Princeps eximius donec regnaret Honorus.
 Sic sescentenis multis uel milibus annis
 Aut plus defessas equitando resoluit habenas.
 Huic simili calamo narrantis tristia libro
 20 Pompeii clarus Trogi liber associatur.
 Namque Romanorum cum multi facta priorum *P* 1rb
 Narrassent Grecis sermonibus et peregrinis,
 Sanguinis excelsi complures ac popularis,

- Pompeius Trogus uir et omni dogmate plenus,
 25 Forte rei captus dulcedine nescio cuius,
 Seu nouitas operis seu res seu gloria laudis
 Ingens seu placuit sibi copia materialis
 Nescio, sed plane quecunque geruntur in orbe
 Prompsit carminibus, que digna referre uidentur.
 30 Nostraque cum Grecis uel Greca patere Latinis
 Possent, non passus res sic fore sed nimis ausus
 Aggreditur ualde rem magnam difficilemque.
 Et cum res grauis hec soleat scriptoribus esse,
 Ut gestas regum res dicant seu populorum
 35 Hercules hic Trogus bene cernitur esse secundus,
 Qui tam mira suis manifestat gesta libellis. *L 1v*
 Dicit enim quicquid geritur per climata mundi, *B Irb*
 Oppida rura refert, populosas tangit et urbes,
 Gentis adhuc mores memorat simul et nationes;
 40 Prorsus nil remanet quin scriptit et manifestet,
 Et que tam multi scriptores particulatim
 Dixerunt, simul hic luculenter in ordine pandit.
 Quattuor et denis quater sua dogmata libris
 Scripsit, et ex illis ea que potiora putauit
 45 Mixtim Iustinus decerpsi nomine dictus. *O 2ra*
 Unde simul quoddam feci breuiando uolumen,
 Ut, qui non nosset simul et qui Greca nouisset, *V 1rb*
 Cerneret hic oculis quo posset uterque doceri.
 Quod tibi transmisi, non ut mea discere possis
 50 Dogmata, sed fieret uerax ut iudice temet:
 Emula namque manus sic rodere desinet illud,
 Eius si iudex fautor quoque diceris esse.

3 protoplastum BP prothoplastum LOV. 10 Necnon BPO Hec non L. 11 iesu BPO ihesu L. 12-15 ut editi LOP (excepto versu 14: supremo PO suphremo L) Bella docent pacem sparsam sopita per orbem / Qua sibi subiectis cunctis gentibus orbis / Roma sub Augusto gaudebat rege modesto / Dogma dehinc Christi per tempora cuncta cucurrit B. 14 supremo PO suphremo L. 17 sescentenis OP sexcentenis L. 18 defessas OL defensas BP. 20 Pompeii BPO Pompei L. 22 et LBPO ex H. 24 et omni L \et/ omni O omni P morum B. plenus LOP clarus B. 25 captus OL cautus P 26 seu...seu...seu L seu...seu...seu ex seu...siue...siue correctum B (ut uidetur) HO seu...siue...siue P. 28 quecunque OL quecumque P. 34 populorum LPB populo<<rum>> O.

35 Hercules hic Trogius bene cernitur esse secundus *LOP* (*O*: sec<<undus>>) creditur Alcidae meritis par Trogius esse *B*. 36 Qui *BOL* Cui *P*. 37 climata *BP* clymata *OL*. 38 oppida *OL* opida *BP*. 40 et *OL* ac *BP*. 41-45 ut editi *LOP* (excepto versu 42: liculenter *L* luculenter *PO*) Que edita particulatim / Haec simul hic pandit ueraciter ac seriatim / F..... scripsit dogmata libris / I..... ea sum decerpere nisus / Que potiorasi (*H*: sui) lectoribus esse putavi *B*. 47 nosset *BPL* nosse *O*. 47 nouisset *BL* nouisse *OP*. 48 posset *BPLV* posse *O*. 49 discere *BPV* dicere *OL*. 50-51 Versus in *P* transpositi, ordo autem restitutus signis in margine appositis a & b.

Let me now return to the problems concerning combinations of historiographical texts. When and where did Orosius and Justinus begin to accompany each other in medieval manuscripts, and why were they coupled?

I know of six manuscripts which have the full texts of both authors:⁷

Bern 160 This ms. (=B above) consists of two homogeneous and contemporary elements: ff.1-86 containing Orosius and 87-158 Justinus (mutilated at the end). The quires have a contemporary and continuous numbering from "I" to "XX". The date of production has been put to the end of the eleventh century, and it has been located to Normandy or Brittany.⁸ Folio I - on which the poem is found - has been sown into the first quire, but the script and layout are contemporary. Whether or not the poem was composed for this particular volume (and it probably was not, if it is indeed a secondary version), all this still amounts to substantial evidence of a combination of the two texts remounting to the stage of production, and - in fact - the earliest one we know.

Leiden Vossius F. 18 (=V) A very mutilated ms. Many leaves have been cut out partly or entirely. The two texts are in the same order as in *B*, but on one codicological element only: Justinus begins in the middle of a quire (73vb) with two linking hexameters, which alludes to the poem: Presbiteri sacri codex hic finit Orosii / In Trogi sequitur Iustini epitoma libellis. On palaeographic grounds De Meyier judges the ms to be English and from

⁷ I thus exclude Oxford Arch. Seld. B. 16, a manuscript compiled and partly copied by William of Malmesbury in 1129. It contains the entire Orosius, but only a small excerpt from Justinus (in addition to many other works). The collection was copied in the 15th century (Oxford Balliol College 125). See Thomson (1987) 92-93 & passim, Munk Olsen I:374, and Mortensen (forthcoming). Another remarkable twelfth-century collection of historiographical texts, Vatican Pal. lat. 927 written in Verona 1181, contains excerpts from both authors (cf. Munk Olsen I:550).

⁸ I rely on Munk Olsen I:539 who gives further references.

the middle of the twelfth century.⁹ The book belonged (in the twelfth century?) to the Benedictine abbey of St. John the Baptist in Colchester (Essex, founded 1096), and is not unlikely to have been produced there.¹⁰ Again the evidence for "original" combination is clear, and thus the introductory poem fits well. According to Rühl the *V*- and *B*-texts of Justinus are very closely related.¹¹

Cambridge Clare College Kk.4.5 Another English ms, this time from the beginning of the twelfth century, and perhaps written at the Benedictine cathedral, Christchurch in Canterbury.¹² Again Orosius (f.1-45) precedes Justinus (f.46-61), in this case on two homogeneous and contemporary elements.¹³ The first leaf has been lost, but to judge from the present starting-point of the Orosius text, there was hardly any space for the poem (though perhaps for a short version of the prose accessus). Here an original combination of Orosius and Justinus is probable, but a later joining of the two contemporary booklets is not out of the question.

Paris BN lat. 4874 A French ms from the second half of the twelfth century.¹⁴ Orosius occupies the first element (f.1-64 with (later?) quire signatures "I-VIII"), and Justinus the second (f.65-122, sign. "I-VII"). They may have been produced as separate books, but are homogeneous and contemporary.

Antwerpen Musaeum Plantin-Muretus lat. 38 A fourteenth-century historiographical collection containing, apart from Orosius and Justinus, Valerius Maximus, Vegetius and Frontinus.

Leiden B.P.L. 80 A fifteenth-century ms holding on to the twelfth-century ordering: Orosius first, then Justinus.

Let us combine this evidence with those items that contain the poem, but only one of the texts:

9 De Meyier (1973) 38-40. Cf. Munk Olsen I: 544.

10 Ker (1964) 63; cf. Munk Olsen III,1:80.

11 Rühl (1872) 65.

12 Suggested by James, but rejected by Ker (1964) 39 (cf. Munk Olsen I:540 & III,1:65).

13 F. 62 - an excerpt from Vegetius - is a slightly later addition.

14 Munk Olsen I:546.

London Burney 329 From the fifteenth century. Contains the poem, Justinus and some imperial lives.

Oxford New College 151 In my (non-specialist) view, an English twelfth-century ms. It contains the poem and Orosius (f.1-99); the last leaf (99) is a later insert and gives a thirteenth-century copy of (what was presumably) the last worn page.¹⁵ The Justinus-part of the poem, then, was probably copied "by mistake", because Justinus never followed Orosius in this ms.

Paris BN lat. 4877 Dated by the catalogue to the thirteenth century, but I suspect that it is rather from around the turn of century (12/13). Delisle has traced its provenance to the then important scriptorium of the abbey of Savigny in Normandy.¹⁶ It contains the poem and Orosius, but there is no trace of Justinus.

The two groups taken together reveal a clear preponderance of southern English and northern French mss from the period ca 1070-1200. The results are perhaps most conveniently shown in the table below. It is made from the point of view of Orosius, i.e. all the texts listed below contain either Orosius and the poem, or Orosius and Justinus. It is also noted whether the prose accessus to Orosius of the type printed above is included.

| manuscript | date | provenance | access. | poem | Just. |
|------------------|-----------------|-----------------------|---------|------|-------|
| Bern 160 | 11 ex | Normandy/Brittany | X | X | X |
| Leiden Voss F.18 | 12 med | England (Colchester?) | X | X | X |
| Oxford NC 151 | 12 | England | X | X | - |
| Paris BN 4877 | 12/13 | Savigny (Normandy) | X | X | - |
| Cambridge Kk.4.5 | 12 in | England (Canterbury?) | ? | - | X |
| Paris BN 4874 | 12 ² | France | - | - | X |

This combined evidence of the whereabouts of the poem and/or both texts in question offers good support, I think, for my initial claim, viz. that the joining of Orosius and Justinus was not something done randomly here and there, but

15 Ff. 100-146 is a later element (Petrus Comestor).

16 Delisle (1868) 529.

rather represents a specific circulation of texts on both sides of the English Channel in the period after the Conquest. In other words this is just one more instance of an obvious and already well-known traffic of (Benedictine) scribes and books.

Why did Orosius and Justinus fit each other? Obviously some degree of mindless reproduction ought not to be disregarded: a new institution, e.g., wanted some basic texts, and had them copied out *in toto* from the mother institution. At some point however - and no doubt more than once - scribes or scholars must have decided to get the two texts into the same format, and into the same volume.

The poem actually attempts to establish some connection (19-20): *Huic simili calamo narrantis tristia libro / Pompeii clarus Trogi liber associatur*; i.e. "to this book (Orosius) is joined Pompeius Trogus' famous book, where he - in a similar style - tells of sad events". The opinion that Trogus' book is written in the same style as Orosius' does not tally very well with the statement (29) that Trogus' work was poetic, but again I think an explanation can be found in the poet's rashness: either he is not serious about the *carmina* or he is in fact talking about Justinus (i.e. the work he knows!) being similar in style (and genre?) to Orosius.¹⁷ The last point at least holds true: both works are composed in an ornate, but not heavy prose, and both belong to the genre of narrative world history. (The similarity between them is mainly due to Orosius' extensive use of Justinus in the first third of the *Historiae*.) The other statement - that sad events characterize both books - is also true, though particularly so from an Orosian point of view. Justinus' stories of warfare and strife in the Mediterranean and the East could indeed be read to further the claim that the world was more evil before than after the advent of Christianity. That point is elaborated in the *accessus* to Orosius as well as in the poem.

Another less ideological and more practical reason for having the two books in one volume may also have played a part, though it is not specifically stated by our poet. In the preface Justinus mentions Trogus' (and his own)

17 Yet another interpretation would be that *carmen* is a poetic expression for "(ancient) story". None of the standard dictionaries supports this, but a probable parallel is found in the end of the twelfth century, where Dares' prose work on the Fall of Troy is described similarly: "Scribens ista Dares, qui claro carmine clares". Cf. Stohlmann (1968) 205, where another explanation is given. More than two instances will of course be needed to establish this use of *carmen*, but in both these cases it would offer a much more economical explanation.

desire to make Greek history available in Latin (repeated in the poem vss. 30 & 47); although Orosius treats of Greek and eastern history, he does so rather cursorily and concentrates his efforts on Roman history (approximately the last two thirds of the *Historiae*). In a combined volume the medieval scholar would have - so to speak - a Roman world history and a Greek world history, or, as we would put it, a comprehensive "history of the ancient world". It cannot be entirely ruled out that this combination existed already in Late Antiquity or in the Carolingian period, but the surviving evidence suggests that it was devised in the beginning of the Twelfth-century Renaissance. In any event it does mirror a great interest in ancient history befitting that period. The regions on both sides of the Channel, moreover, were very close to the French centres of the new wave of studies.

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