

The Edinburgh Companion to

Sidonius Apollinaris

Edited by Gavin Kelly and Joop van Waarden



SIDONII VS. CONSTANTINO SVO SAUO:

Qui precipis dñe maior summa suadendi au-
toritate. sicut et in h. is que delibabuntur
consiliosissimus. ut si que luce paulo politiores
uaria occasione affuerunt. per eas causa. ubi
na. tenuit. et ceteris. omni...

THE EDINBURGH COMPANION TO
SIDONIUS APOLLINARIS

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JOOP VAN WAARDEN

EDINBURGH
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The Leverhulme Trust

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This book has its roots back in the first decade of the century. During the writing of his doctorate, a commentary on the block of eleven letters to bishops that stand at the start of Book 7 of Sidonius' letters, Joop van Waarden had built up links with a wide range of scholars, and founded a website that increasingly came to serve as an informal message board. It was his conviction that a comprehensive approach, one which treated both prose and poetry, crossed the disciplinary divide between literature and history, and added further disciplines, would bring benefits. He was able to organise an international workshop at Wassenaar in 2011 to consider such an approach thanks to the support of Hagit Amirav, Bas ter Haar Romeny, and Paul van Geest (and the Dutch Centre for Patristic Research generally), who successfully applied for a grant from the Netherlands Institute for Advanced Study in the Humanities and Social Sciences (NIAS).

The interdisciplinary approach appealed to Gavin Kelly, and van Waarden and he joined forces. Thus, the Wassenaar workshop, which led to van Waarden and Kelly, *New Approaches to Sidonius Apollinaris* (2013), was also the point at which the idea for the present *Companion* crystallised, as one of two strands of systematic work in the project 'Sidonius Apollinaris for the 21st Century' – the other being a series of commentaries.

A work like this is inherently complex, long in gestation, and dependent on many people and institutions. Having reached the moment of publication, we are extremely grateful to everybody who made this possible in the first place, and for the trust, the competence, the zest, and the patience with which they made the result surpass all our expectations.

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NOTE

Unless otherwise indicated, English translations in this volume are loosely based on Anderson's Loeb translation.

Spelling of proper names has been regularised to avoid confusion, in the face of contradictory manuscript evidence and varying conventions. Thus the Gallic senator who asked Sidonius to write a poem for his face-towel is everywhere Philomathius, and his daughter for whom Sidonius wrote an epitaph is Philomathia, in line with reference works even if the manuscript evidence for slightly different names, Filimatius and Filimatia, is strong. We made an exception for the neo-Platonist priest of Vienne who dedicated to Sidonius his book on the soul: some contributors call him Claudianus Mamertus, along with the manuscripts of his work and scholarly tradition, others Mamertus Claudianus, more in line with late antique onomastic norms. A similar compromise can be found on the title page: 'Sidonius Apollinaris' and 'Apollinaris Sidonius' both represent modern scholarly constructs more than late antique onomastic practice.

The poems in the letters are numbered continuously in accordance with Christiansen and Holland's 1993 *Concordantia in Sidonii Apollinaris carmina*:

| Christiansen and Holland | Found in letter | Subject |
|--------------------------|-----------------|---|
| 25 | 1.11.14 | An improvised quip |
| 26 | 2.8.3 | Epitaph for Philomathia |
| 27 | 2.10.4 | Epigram for Bishop Patiens' new church in Lyon |
| 28 | 3.12.5 | Epitaph for his grandfather |
| 29 | 4.8.5 | Inscription for Queen Ragnahilda's cup |
| 30 | 4.11.6 | Epitaph for Mamertus Claudianus |
| 31 | 4.18.5 | Epigram for bishop Perpetuus' new church of St Martin |
| 32 | 5.17.10 | Impromptu lines on a towel |
| 33 | 7.17.2 | Epitaph for the Abbot Abraham |
| 34 | 8.9.5 | For Lampridius |

| | | |
|----|--------|----------------------------------|
| 35 | 8.11.3 | Announcing a visit to Lampridius |
| 36 | 9.13.2 | For Tonantius |
| 37 | 9.13.5 | At dinner with Majorian |
| 38 | 9.14.6 | A palindrome |
| 39 | 9.14.6 | Its inverse |
| 40 | 9.15.1 | For Gelasius |
| 41 | 9.16.3 | For Firminus. Envoi. |

See also, in this volume, Chapter 3, section 3.4.

ABBREVIATIONS FOR BOOKS, SERIES, AND REFERENCE WORKS

For abbreviations of the titles of ancient literary works, see the Index Locorum.

AE = *L'Année épigraphique: Revue des publications épigraphiques relatives à l'antiquité romaine*, Paris, 1888–.

BHL = *Bibliotheca hagiographica latina antiquae et mediae aetatis*, 2 vols, *Subsidia Hagiographica* 6, Brussels, 1898–1900; *Supplementi editio altera auctior*, *Subsidia Hagiographica* 12 (1911); *Novum Supplementum* ed. H. Fros, *Subsidia Hagiographica* 70 (1986).

BNE = Biblioteca Nacional de España, Madrid.

BNP = Cancik, H., et al. (eds), *Brill's New Pauly*. English translation edited by C.F. Salazar and F.G. Gentry, <<https://referenceworks.brillonline.com/browse/brill-s-new-pauly>>.

BSB-Ink = Bayerische Staatsbibliothek Inkunabelkatalog, <<https://inkunabeln.digitale-sammlungen.de/start.html>>.

CAG = *Carte archéologique de la Gaule*, Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres, <<http://www.aibl.fr/publications/collections/carte-archeologique-de-la-gaule/?lang=fr>>.

Catalogue général = *Bibliothèque Nationale: Catalogue général des manuscrits latins*, Paris, 1939–.

CC CM = *Corpus Christianorum. Continuatio mediaevalis*.

CC SL = *Corpus Christianorum. Series latina*.

CIL = Mommsen, T., et al. (eds), *Corpus inscriptionum latinarum*, Berlin, 1863–.

CLE = Bücheler, F. (ed.), *Carmina latina epigraphica*, 2 vols, Leipzig, 1895–7. *Supplement* edited by E. Lommatzsch, Leipzig, 1926 (repr. Amsterdam, 1972).

CLRE = Bagnall, R.S., Alan Cameron, S.A. Schwartz, and K.A. Worp, *Consuls of the Later Roman Empire*, Atlanta, 1987.

CPL = Dekkers, E. (1995) *Clavis patrum latinorum*, Turnhout.

CSEL = *Corpus scriptorum ecclesiasticorum latinorum*.

DAACL = Cabrol, F., et al., *Dictionnaire d'archéologie chrétienne et de liturgie*, Paris, 1907–53.

DMLBS = Latham, R.E., et al. (eds) (1975–2013) *Dictionary of Medieval Latin from British Sources*, 17 vols, London, <<http://www.dmlbs.ox.ac.uk/web/index.html>>.

Du Cange = Du Cange, C., et al., *Glossarium mediae et infimae latinitatis*, Niort, 1883–7 (1st edn Paris, 1678).

- FB = Pettegree, A., and M. Walsby, *French Books III & IV (FB): Books Published in France Before 1601 in Latin and Languages Other Than French*, Leiden, 2012.
- GLK = Keil, H. (ed.), *Grammatici latini*, 8 vols, Leipzig, 1855–80 (repr. Hildesheim, 1961).
- Godefroy = Godefroy, F., *Dictionnaire de l'ancienne langue française, et de tous ses dialectes du IXe au XV siècle*, Paris, 1881–1902.
- GW = *Gesamtkatalog der Wiegendrucke*, 10 vols to date, Leipzig 1925–, <<https://gesamtkatalogderwiegendrucke.de>>.
- Hirschfeld = Hirschfeld, O. (ed.), *Inscriptiones Galliae Narbonensis latinae*, Berlin, 1888.
- IDelos = Roussel, P., and M. Launey, *Inscriptions de Délos: Décrets postérieurs à 166 av. J.-C. (nos. 1497–1524). Dédicaces postérieures à 166 av. J.-C. (nos. 1525–2219)*, Paris, 1937.
- IGI = Guarnaschelli, T.M., and E. Valenziani, *Indice generale degli incunaboli delle biblioteche d'Italia*, 6 vols, Rome, 1943–81.
- ILCV = Diehl, E. (ed.), *Inscriptiones latinae christianae veteres*, 3 vols, Berlin, 1924–31 (repr. Berlin 1961; vol. 4 suppl. by J. Moreau and H.-I. Marrou, Berlin, 1967).
- ILS = Dessau, H., *Inscriptiones latinae selectae*, 3 vols, Berlin, 1892–1916.
- IRHT = Institut de recherche et d'histoire des textes, Paris.
- ISTC = *Incunabula Short Title Catalogue*, <<http://www.bl.uk/catalogues/istc>>.
- Itin. Ant. / Itin. Burd.* = Cuntz, O., and G. Wirth (ed.), *Itineraria Romana*, vol. 1. *Itineraria Antonini Augusti et Burdigalense*, Leipzig, 1929 (repr. Stuttgart, 1990).
- L&S = Lewis, C.T., and C. Short, *A Latin Dictionary*, rev. and enlarged, Oxford, 1979.
- Le Blant = Le Blant, E.-F. (ed.), *Inscriptions chrétiennes de la Gaule antérieures au VIIIe siècle*, 2 vols, Paris, 1856–65.
- LSA = *Last Statues of Antiquity*, <<http://laststatues.classics.ox.ac.uk>>. See also Smith and Ward-Perkins (2016).
- MGH = *Monumenta Germaniae Historica*, <<https://www.dmgh.de>>.
- MMBL = Ker, N.R., and A.J. Piper, *Medieval Manuscripts in British Libraries*, 5 vols, Oxford, 1969–2002.
- OGIS = Dittenberger, W., *Orientalis graeci inscriptiones selectae: Supplementum Sylloge inscriptionum graecarum*, 2 vols, Leipzig, 1903–5 (repr. Hildesheim, 1970).
- OLD = Glare, A. P., et al., *Oxford Latin Dictionary*, Oxford, 1968–82 (2nd edn 2012).
- PCBE 4 = *Prosopographie chrétienne du Bas-Empire*, vol. 4. See Pietri and Heijmans (2013).
- PECS = Stillwell, R. (ed.), *The Princeton Encyclopedia of Classical Sites*, Princeton, 1976.
- Peut./Miller* (1964) = *Tabula Peutingeriana*: Miller, K., *Itineraria Romana: Römische Reisewege an der Hand der Tabula Peutingeriana*, Rome, 1964.
- PL = Migne, J.-P. (1844–90) *Patrologiae cursus completus: Series latina*, 221 vols, Paris.
- PLRE 1, 2 = Jones, A.H.M., J.R. Martindale, and J. Morris (eds), *The Prosopography of the Later Roman Empire*, vol. 1 A.D. 260–395 (Cambridge, 1971); Martindale, J.R., (ed.), *The Prosopography of the Later Roman Empire*, vol. 2 A.D. 395–527 (Cambridge, 1980).
- RAC = Klauser, T., et al. (eds), *Reallexikon für Antike und Christentum*, Leipzig and Stuttgart, 1941–.
- RGA = Beck, H., et al. (eds), *Reallexikon der Germanischen Altertumskunde*, 37 vols, Berlin, 1972–2008.
- R.H. = Chevalier, U., *Repertorium hymnologicum: Catalogue des chants, hymnes, proses, séquences, tropes, en usage dans l'Église latine*, 5 vols, Louvain and Paris, 1894–1919.
- RICG = Marrou, H.-I., et al. (eds), *Recueil des inscriptions chrétiennes de la Gaule antérieures à la Renaissance carolingienne*, Paris, 1975–.

- TLL* = Vollmer, F., et al. (eds), *Thesaurus Linguae Latinae*, Leipzig and Munich, 1900–,
<<https://www.degruyter.com/view/db/tll?rskey=8yEUr2&result=2>>.
- Tobler–Lommatzsch = Tobler, A., rev. E. Lommatzsch, *Altfranzösisches Wörterbuch*, Berlin,
1925–.
- USTC* = *Universal Short Title Catalogue*, <<https://www.ustc.ac.uk>>.
- Villes* (1992) = *Villes et agglomérations urbaines antiques du Sud-Ouest de la Gaule: Histoire et archéologie*, Bordeaux, 1992.

MAP OF SIDONIUS' GAUL c. 380–c. 480



INTRODUCTION

Gavin Kelly and Joop van Waarden

LET US START by picturing Sidonius the teenager in Arles, watching his father, the highest civilian official in their native Gaul, preside at a new year ceremony for the inauguration of a Roman consul. As he beheld the splendid distinctions that seemed to be his birthright, he was too junior to be seated – just as he would later imagine the lesser river gods around Jupiter’s throne.¹ We glimpse him next at court a couple of years later, plying a relative with elaborate detail of the ruler’s appearance and daily routine – the natural place for a young Roman aristocrat, one might think, but for the fact that it was the court of the moustachioed Gothic chieftain (or should we say king?) who dominated the south of Roman Gaul.² Then Sidonius in his mid-twenties in Rome, applauded by the senate and honoured with a bronze statue in the Forum of Trajan for his verse panegyric of the emperor Avitus. If his familial relationship with the honorand, his wife’s father, accelerated his own honour, there was no need to emphasise the fact at the time, and later every reason not to mention it.³ For at our next snapshot, Sidonius, still not yet thirty, is positioning himself as the suppliant representative of his native city of Lyon to a wholly new emperor.⁴ Sidonius in his thirties, the cultured and leisured family man, gives room-by-room tours of his own and his friends’ elaborate country houses in elaborate prose and verse. But the seemingly endless summer will not last forever.⁵

Sidonius back in Rome and back to winning plaudits and honours. This time he is made prefect of the city – thanks to his pen, he claims.⁶ And suddenly a quite different Sidonius: the great noble is transformed without explanation into the bishop of a small town, and the poet disclaims his art. Neither he nor anybody else portrays his own appointment at Clermont, but we can perhaps see it through the prism of his sermon nominating the new bishop of Bourges and metropolitan of his own province: the senatorial family man proposes the appointment of a candidate in his own image.⁷ Sidonius the leader of his community as the Goths become firmly hostile; then furious at the betrayal of Roman power in Gaul by his fellow bishops.⁸ Sidonius the exile, kept awake at night by squalling and drunk Gothic women, as he muses how to persuade the king who now represents the only government to restore him to his

¹ *Ep.* 8.6.5, *Carm.* 7.40–4.

² *Ep.* 1.2.

³ *Carm.* 8.7–8, *Carm.* 41 (*Ep.* 9.16.3) 21–8. See van Waarden in this volume, ch. 1, sect. 4.1.3.

⁴ *Carm.* 3, 4, 5 (esp. 574–600); see *Carm.* 13 and *Ep.* 1.11 for his ongoing connection to Majorian.

⁵ *Ep.* 2.2, *Carm.* 22.

⁶ *Ep.* 1.5, 1.9 (esp. 8), *Carm.* 1–2.

⁷ *Ep.* 3.1 for the first mention of the episcopate; *Ep.* 7.5, 8, 9 for the election at Bourges. For Sidonius’ abandonment of poetry as bishop, see *Ep.* 9.12.2.

⁸ *Ep.* 7.1, 6, 7.

property and his see.⁹ Sidonius putting the final touches to the letter collection that will be his monument, going through mouldering old copies and working through the winter, though the ink froze in his secretary's pen.¹⁰

Life and Persona

Sidonius Apollinaris (or to give the full name, Gaius Sollius Modestus Apollinaris Sidonius¹¹) was born in Lyon c. 430 and died in Clermont c. 485:¹² a lifespan that straddled the end of Roman power in Gaul, of which he is a vital eyewitness. As his impressive nomenclature suggests, he was of the highest nobility, the son, grandson, and great-grandson of prefects, who himself reached the prefecture before his surprising shift to the church. His career thus reflects and exemplifies a fundamental shift in the Roman elite as they sought to preserve their status amid constant change: from the *cursum* of offices that he was born to, to ecclesiastical leadership in a world without Roman officials, from villa to bishop's palace. But most authors who lived through what is traditionally called the fall of Rome – the process whereby the western empire was replaced by kingdoms led by the chieftains of their former auxiliary forces – did not create such unforgettable vignettes or capture the experience as if in a snapshot. Sidonius does just that, and does so beguilingly and memorably.

He is the author of surviving works in three separate Latin genres, which can all claim in their different ways to be characteristic of Late Antiquity: epic verse panegyric in the tradition of Claudian (fl. 395–404), occasional poetry for the Gallic aristocracy in the tradition above all of Statius (d. 95), and a literary letter collection in nine books for which his principal model is Pliny the Younger (c. 61/2–after 111). The persona projected by Sidonius, despite many differences from Pliny, resembles the latter in its display on the one hand of exquisite social poise and easy command, and on the other in the mastery of literary tradition that modern scholarship gives the Greek name *paideia*, which was an inseparable part of that poise. It is tempting to see Sidonius as emblematic of the end of Roman hegemony, a representative of his class and times. But wonderfully evocative figure though he is, and often our only source, there are grave problems with using his vivid picture of his own times as a straightforward way into understanding the end of Roman rule.

Complexity and Scholarship

Nothing about Sidonius is straightforward. In the matter of style, his readers have been aware of that fact from the very start (Ruricius of Limoges sighed at the difficulty of understanding his old friend's meaning in a letter to Sidonius' son Apollinaris¹³). Sidonius takes the artifice and taste for superficial glitter that is characteristic of late Latin verse and art prose to a level that seems extreme, replacing familiar vocabulary with unfamiliar, and privileging the metaphorical over the literal and the detail over the panorama.¹⁴ His meaning is often coded in

⁹ *Ep.* 8.3, also 8.9, 9.3, 4.10.

¹⁰ *Ep.* 9.16.2.

¹¹ See further van Waarden's ch. 1, p. 13, n. 1, in this volume.

¹² Such are the conventional dates, but see Kelly's ch. 3, sect. 5.1, in this volume for the possibility that Sidonius may have died considerably earlier.

¹³ Ruric. *Ep.* 2.26.2.

¹⁴ See in this volume, Wolff's ch. 12. The seminal study of the jewelled style is Roberts (1989).

allusion to earlier literature. All this means that, for modern readers, he must be a candidate for hardest major prose author in Classical Latin.

The genres in which he writes are also notably unstraightforward. Nobody ever expected verse panegyric to be an unbiased and unmediated account of events, of course, but it is perhaps only recently that scholars have appreciated the complexity of the letter as genre.¹⁵ The problems here are several, but perhaps the two most significant are, first, the complex dance of politesse that obscures exactly what has been happening and, second, whether the letters themselves or the carefully crafted letter collection should be seen as the primary unit. Can the historian safely treat the letters as a historian of a more recent age might treat, say, a dossier of letters preserved in an archive? Or might we be dealing with artefacts significantly changed or even composed at the time that the work was assembled?¹⁶

The biggest problem of all – and this is hardly a surprise – is that Sidonius' works, and especially the letter collection, are blatantly aimed at creating a composite portrait of the artist and some of his contemporaries. But what is portrayed is highly selective, and omissions are not always obvious in a way that they might be in a linear narrative.¹⁷ It has sometimes been suggested that Sidonius in his nostalgia tried to conceal the extent to which the traditional luxury of the Roman aristocrat was drifting away, for example describing villa life in a way that sits awkwardly with what can be inferred about contemporary realities from archaeology, or calling somebody who may have been only a personal secretary a 'bookseller' (*bybliopola*, *Ep.* 2.8.3, 5.15.1–2), conjuring up a scale of economic activity that belonged to the past.¹⁸

Sidonius has been remembered above all because, living during the last gasps of the western Roman Empire and forced to cope with all the material and personal troubles that came with it, he countered with a defence of Roman elite culture, and because he did so in a prose style of unrivalled ornateness, imitated but never equalled by the next generations as the sort of classical education Sidonius had received became rarer in Gaul, and eventually disappeared. It was above all for that style that later readers in entirely different circumstances, from the medieval period onwards, either admired or loathed him. There were outbursts of popularity in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, and in the early sixteenth century among the humanists of the Bolognese school. There has also been sustained local interest in the Auvergne and France more generally, resulting in superb exhibitions of scholarship like the commented editions by Savaron (1566–1622) and Sirmond (1559–1651).¹⁹

Landmarks in more recent scholarship include the first properly critical edition by Lütjohann (1887), and the texts with translation into English by Anderson (1936, 1965) and into French by Loyen (1960, 1970). Over the last half century, at the same time as interest in Late Antiquity in general has grown, Sidonius scholarship has also had a renaissance. It is in this period that the real complexity of his text has become clear. In the 1970s one might pick out the two foundational texts of modern literary studies of Sidonius: Franca Ela Consolino's article 'Codice retorico e manierismo stilistico nella poetica di Sidonio Apollinare' (1974) and Isabella Gualandri's book *Furtiva lectio: Studi su Sidonio Apollinare*

¹⁵ On letters as genre, see, e.g., Gibson (2012, 2013c) and Sogno et al. (2017a). See further in this volume Gibson's ch. 11.

¹⁶ See in this volume Kelly's ch. 3 and Gibson's ch. 11.

¹⁷ For an impression, see in this volume van Waarden's ch. 1.

¹⁸ Harries (1994), 131–2, Santelia (2000).

¹⁹ On receptions, see in this volume part VI, chs 20–4.

²⁰ Important literary studies since include Condorelli (2008), Hernández Lobato (2012a), and Onorato (2016a), though the real scholarly explosion has been in articles.

(1979).²⁰ Dating to the same decade are the first prosopographical articles on Sidonius' Gaul by Ralph Mathisen, a vein which has remained rich to this day. Historical studies on late antique Gaul have also bloomed, with new interpretations of the development of the barbarian kingdoms.²¹ The most vital work on Sidonius by a historian, meanwhile, is the study by Jill Harries, *Sidonius Apollinaris and the Fall of Rome* (1994). The crucial insight reached in this period, present both in 'literary' scholarship and in historical works such as that of Harries, concerns the allusive nature of Sidonius' writings, which takes the dialogue of late antique literature with its classical past to an intensity not reached before. Sidonius' works can only properly be understood if read in constant interaction with the whole of Roman literature. This insight is a vital prerequisite to using his work as a guide to the history and culture of his times, and, equally importantly, for enjoying his poetry and prose as the layered and rich texts they are.

The Present Work

The impetus for the present work came from our conviction as editors that, after half a century of scholarly advances, and with more scholars than ever devoting their attention to Sidonius and his times, it was time to take a holistic view. Much excellent scholarship has covered discrete problems, and light has repeatedly been cast on individual passages, letters, or poems. Broader advances have been made in particular areas, especially literary and intertextual studies. As editors we felt it was time for a less fragmented view, for an approach that brought together several relevant disciplines rather than looking exclusively from a literary or historical angle. And of course, such an approach would also have the advantage of highlighting areas where scholarly attention had been lacking.

The birth of the Sidonius project has been described above in the Acknowledgements, where we thankfully mentioned all those involved. The name of the 'Sidonius Apollinaris for the 21st Century' project was first bestowed, and its comprehensive and interdisciplinary approach first explored, in the Wassenaar workshop in 2011 (resulting in the volume *New Approaches to Sidonius Apollinaris*). The project took shape in the larger conference at Edinburgh in 2014, where the two strands of the project were laid out: creating a *Companion* volume to assess the upshot of Sidonius studies so far and to point out new directions, and stimulating the publication of commentaries on the oeuvre as a whole (including four volumes belonging to the project itself). In 2011, commentaries were restricted to two and a half books of letters: (Köhler (1995) on Book 1, Amherdt (2001) on Book 4, and van Waarden (2010) on Book 7 letters 1–11) and some of the shorter poems (Ravenna (1990) on *Carm.* 14–15, Delhey (1993) on *Carm.* 22, and Santelia (2002a) on *Carm.* 24). While not all of the ambitious possibilities raised have been realised eight years on, another book and a half of the letters have been covered (Book 3 by Giannotti (2016) and the second half of Book 7 by van Waarden (2016a), the latter as part of the project), as well as more of the shorter poems: Santelia (2012) on *Carm.* 16 and Filosini (2014b) on *Carm.* 10–11. Moreover, at the time of writing a further three commentaries on Sidonius are nearing publication in association with the project, while others, happily, are being undertaken independently, including several doctoral theses.²² The

²¹ Drinkwater and Elton (1992), Goffart (1980, 2006), Kulikowski (2000), Pohl (2002), Halsall (2007), Delaplace (2015).

²² For details, see the Sidonius website, <<https://sidonapol.org/saxxi>>.

proportion of Sidonius' text that is covered by fundamental commentary is thus rapidly growing, and this will clearly be a considerable benefit. And although it is intended to stand by itself, we hope that this book – the first strand of 'Sidonius Apollinaris for the 21st Century' – will be a useful supplement and resource for these forthcoming commentaries, saving them from duplication of material and offering solutions to many problems.²³

In the present book, we aim to cover Sidonius from a broad range of disciplinary approaches. The book opens with part I on 'Sidonius' Life, the Characters in his Work, and its Dating'. Sorting out Sidonius' life and the chronology of his letters and poems, and identifying his characters and tracing their story, have been of interest to readers since at least the seventeenth century. Since at least the late nineteenth century, indeed, chronological reconstruction and systematic prosopographical investigation have been the underpinning approaches to late Roman studies.²⁴ The three chapters of part I look at three ways of pinning down the fundamentals: reconstructing Sidonius' own life and career, placing his letters and poems chronologically within Sidonius' life, and identifying and drawing connections between the individuals named within the works. These three approaches are of course mutually reinforcing, since Sidonius' works are the main source for the life and the careers of his characters, which may sometimes be the key to dating his poems or letters. In the case of Sidonius, this approach faces the methodological challenge that he himself is the main source: by contrast, for example, attempts to date the letters of the fourth-century aristocrat Symmachus benefit from a great deal more external information about his addressees than exists for Sidonius. So while these approaches are essential, there will be limitations to the certainty that can be derived from them. The first chapter ('Sidonius' Biography in Photo Negative') by Joop van Waarden considers the problems of trying to write a biography of a figure like Sidonius, who is both the principal source for his own life and notably selective about what he tells us of himself. Simply reading between the lines is dangerous without constantly assessing whether an omission is fortuitous or deliberate, and if the latter, what role is played by genre (politeness), literature (allusions), or any pragmatic reasons Sidonius may have had. This chapter concludes with a summary of the main periods and events of Sidonius' life. In the next chapter ('Sidonius' People'), Ralph Mathisen offers a catalogue of all individuals from Sidonius' own times and the preceding century and a half who are mentioned in the letters. It is hoped that this prosopography will be a useful tool for future researchers. In a wide-ranging introduction Mathisen reflects on what a prosopography can and cannot tell us, and takes some first steps in considering the possibilities of social network analysis. An appendix provides a list of geographical names in Sidonius' works. In the third chapter ('Dating the Works of Sidonius'), Gavin Kelly looks at a problem that has interested Sidonian scholars for centuries: establishing an overall and relative chronology for the poems and letters. In neither collection is date of composition the primary structuring factor (indeed the three panegyrics appear in reverse chronological order). Kelly is keen to push the possibilities of chronological reconstruction as far as they can go

²³ Other important and influential recent conferences include those at Clermont-Ferrand in 2009 and 2010, which resulted in the wide-ranging proceedings *Présence de Sidoine Apollinaire* edited by Poignault and Stoehr-Monjou (2014), Bari in 2017 ('Prospettive sidoniane'), Basel in 2018 ('Muse und Muße bei Sidonius Apollinaris'), and Messina in 2018 ('Lo specchio del modello').

²⁴ The fundamental works are Otto Seeck's *Regesten* (1919), an analysis of the movements of emperors and the dating of laws, and the *Prosopography of the Later Roman Empire* or *PLRE* (3 vols, 1971–90), which is a distant descendant of a plan originally conceived by Mommsen. J.R. Martindale's second volume of *PLRE* (1980), covering the years 395 to 527 and thus relevant to Sidonius, is widely considered to be a great improvement on the first volume of 1971.

(he suggests, for example, that the last two books of letters may in fact have been completed by 21 August 479, the date given for Sidonius' death in a newly discovered version of the epitaph). But Kelly is also at pains to emphasise the fundamental problem that date of composition and dramatic date need not be the same, especially in the letters, and that there may be no exact date that can be assigned.

Part II of our work turns to Sidonius in the context of the history of his age ('Sidonius in his Political, Social, and Religious Context'). Though he remains a vital source for the fifth century – and, as illustrated above, an attractively quotable one – it would be fair to say that Sidonius has a less prominent place in historical discussion than would have been the case, say, fifty or a hundred years ago: this is above all because the paradigm of the violent decline and fall of Roman power has been challenged by an argument for a more gradual and complex transformation. At the same time, scholarship has relied less on taking elite Roman sources at face value, especially in stereotypical accounts of the so-called barbarians; and instead relied on a nuanced and complex interpretation of a wider range of evidence including archaeology. If one takes as an example a recent general history, Guy Halsall's *Barbarian Migrations and the Roman West*, what is so surprising is how little Sidonius one sees. Whether one accepts the views of scholars like Halsall or values modified reassertions of the traditional view by the likes of Heather, such scepticism is healthy.²⁵

Part II begins with Michael Kulikowski's chapter 4 ('Sidonius' Political World'), which explores the proposition that Sidonius was born into a world that had ceased to exist by the time of his death. Presenting a broad survey of the political history of the fifth century in Gaul and the West, Kulikowski strives to understand Sidonius' perspective and why it might not be representative. The next two chapters are a diptych by Sigrid Mratschek. In chapter 5 ('Sidonius' Social World'), she surveys the actors and processes of Gallic society that Sidonius experienced, covering topics such as aristocratic leisure culture, epistolographic networks, ritual and religion, the patron and his messengers, and the barbarians in contemporary perception. Then in chapter 6 ('Creating Culture and Presenting the Self in Sidonius'), exploring Sidonius' literary persona and its inextricable links with his social performance, Mratschek offers a fresh reading of the social functions and the coded aesthetic of Sidonius' letter-writing. Mratschek sees Sidonius' relationship with his principal model, Pliny the Younger, as central to his project of creating identity from the past and promoting cultural revival, while deploying a wealth of literary, persuasive, and aesthetic means to reach his goal. In chapter 7 ('Sidonius and Religion'), Lisa Bailey corrects the tendency to take Sidonius' role as a bishop less than seriously. The view of himself which Sidonius left to the world coalesced when he was a bishop, so he cannot be properly understood without understanding his episcopal role and his self-awareness of his clerical status. The sections of this chapter cover Sidonius as a bishop, his knowledge and use of Scripture, asceticism, and the language of sin.

Part III turns to 'Sidonius' Work in its Literary Context', and in its four chapters first provides a general survey of Sidonius' engagement with earlier literature and then covers the three genres of his works. In chapter 8, 'Sidonius' Intertextuality', Isabella Gualandri seeks to analyse systematically the multitude of information about Sidonius' intertextual relationships now at our disposal, by distinguishing the various mechanisms of allusion and illustrating how they work, across prose and poetic oeuvres that are equally sophisticated in their allusion. In chapter 9 ('Sidonius' Panegyrics'), Annick Stoehr-Monjou places Sidonius' panegyrics in the

²⁵ Heather (2005), Halsall (2007); for selected further reading see n. 21 above.

wider context of their genre; she highlights their aim of building consensus, their exploitation of Claudian's innovative combination of panegyric with epic to get across their political message, and the role of historical examples within them. In chapter 10 ('Sidonius' Shorter Poems'), Franca Ela Consolino examines Sidonius' approach to literary genres within the *Carmina minora* (9–24) and the poems within the letters; she explores whether and to what extent his poetry proves to be innovative, both by creating new literary forms and by offering original solutions within the canonical genres. In the final chapter of this part (chapter 11, 'Sidonius' Correspondence'), Roy Gibson places Sidonius' letters within the practice and theory of ancient letter-writing. In a second section, the author weighs the pros and cons of his innovative take on Sidonius' correspondence, which he considers as an artistically crafted whole, influenced in its structure by the letter collections of Pliny and Symmachus.²⁶

Part IV ('Sidonius' Language and Style') looks at a variety of linguistic approaches to Sidonius' writings. Linguistics specialists have so far paid relatively little attention to Sidonius' work, as is generally the case with classicising literary works of the period: when late antique texts are approached by linguists, the choice tends to fall on sub-literary texts which show deviations from classical syntax and vocabulary.²⁷ This is a lost opportunity, as Sidonius was seen even by the standards of late Latin art prose as carrying an exhibitionist and sometimes obscure style to extremes. Rodie Risselada's chapter in *New Approaches* (2013) was the first of its sort, exploring the use of particles and the means of textual coherence. In chapter 12 ('Sidonius' Vocabulary, Syntax, and Style'), Étienne Wolff shows how stylistic exuberance and inventiveness combine with essentially classical syntax to create the highly mannered style for which Sidonius was notorious. Then in chapter 13 ('"You" and "I" in Sidonius' Correspondence'), Joop van Waarden looks at a striking linguistic feature of Sidonius' work, the use of both singular and plural forms of the first and second persons of the verb. This is not (or not yet) the formal/informal distinction of the second person in Romance languages – for the same addressee can be addressed in multiple ways, and the writer is himself characterised alternately by singular and plural – but is explained rather in terms of a subjective, authorial choice to negotiate the relationship with the addressee, in terms of closeness and distance. In chapter 14, 'Metrics in Sidonius', Silvia Condorelli reviews Sidonius' practice of metre, an area in which he was happy to display his technical skill and expertise across many metres. In chapter 15, 'Prose Rhythm in Sidonius', Joop van Waarden and Gavin Kelly treat the much less studied topic of Sidonius' use of prose rhythm at clause endings. Sidonius, like most later Latin prose authors, uses a system between the classical metrical patterns and the accentual *cursus* of the Middle Ages, but with his own idiosyncrasies. This chapter explores where this idiosyncrasy might be found in an attempt to overcome the limitations of the more general system of Hall and Oberhelman.

In part V of the work ('The Manuscript Tradition and the History of Scholarship') we turn to some areas that have not received systematic study. The critical edition by Lütjohann in the *Monumenta Germaniae Historica* (1887) is a monument of critical scholarship based on wide study and collation of manuscripts, but was prepared for publication after its original author's death by Friedrich Leo and is in important senses not complete. Nonetheless, it is the basis for the various twentieth-century texts of Sidonius, including the most commonly cited edition, Loyen's Budé. Franz Dolveck's assessment of the manuscripts (chapter 16, 'The Manuscript Tradition of Sidonius') is thus the first comprehensive attempt to study the manuscript

²⁶ See Gibson (2011, 2013a, 2013b).

²⁷ A classic and a recent example respectively would be Löfstedt (1936) and Adams (2016).

tradition since Lütjohann. Dolveck's detailed reassessment of the relationship of the manuscripts will radically simplify the work of the next editor, by enabling many choices to be made on a stemmatic basis, and his catalogue of all complete manuscripts and a selection of partial ones, 116 items in all, will also prove an invaluable tool.²⁸ The two following chapters, by Luciana Furbetta and Silvia Condorelli, provide the most detailed single account hitherto of the history of scholarship on Sidonius from the first printed edition to the present. Furbetta (chapter 17, 'Sidonius Scholarship: Fifteenth to Nineteenth Centuries') treats above all the history of editing and commentary, from their beginnings down to the end of the nineteenth century, giving valuable details on a number of important but unstudied contributions;²⁹ meanwhile Condorelli (chapter 18, 'Sidonius Scholarship: Twentieth to Twenty-First Centuries') provides a comprehensive descriptive bibliography of scholarship since 1900, organised thematically.³⁰ Part V is closed by chapter 19 on 'Translating Sidonius', by Roger Green, who is himself working on a translation of Sidonius for the Liverpool University Press's *Translated Texts for Historians* series. Green presents the translators and translations in chronological order, while developing some suggestions on the ideal translation.³¹

The final part VI ('Readers of Sidonius from Antiquity to the Present') contains contributions to the history of the different receptions of Sidonius, from his contemporaries to the twenty-first century. Sidonius is one of the defining figures of Late Antiquity, but he was certainly not such a figure in his own times. Not that he didn't have his admirers, his followers, his hagiographers even: one thinks of Ruricius of Limoges, Avitus of Vienne, Ennodius of Pavia, Gregory of Tours. Yet they are the exceptions to whom he is dear because of family ties, stylistic fascination, class interests, or local religious veneration. But for their mentions of him and, above all, his own sustained attempt at self-promotion, there is a deafening silence. Largely out of touch with the changing times, he was as pitiful a failure in politics as he paradoxically stands out as a grandiose monument of cultural conservatism, eclipsing all others in the hindsight of later ages. As distance grows, and mundane interests fade, in the completely different worlds of the Middle Ages and Modernity, his image comes to be cherished or neglected, according to whether subsequent eras were inclined to appropriate the period for their own purposes; these reactions have ranged from admiration of his style to identification with his resistance to the collapse of the Roman Empire.

In chapter 20, 'Sidonius' Earliest Reception and Distribution', Ralph Mathisen presents some case studies of the earliest circulation in Gaul after Sidonius' death, with a central role for the intriguing codex Sangallensis 190. With her chapter 21, 'Glossing Sidonius in the Middle Ages', Tina Chronopoulos breaks new ground investigating the medieval glosses on Sidonius' work, aiming to define the appeal he had to medieval readers (of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries in particular) for providing useful letter templates, for being a superb stylist and verbal treasure trove, and for his evocative descriptions and historical knowledge. Marginal glosses in a range of manuscripts are an important instrument for gauging his influence. The glosses in London BL MS Royal 4 B. iv. are then discussed as a case study. Jesús

²⁸ We aim to keep updated links to online digitised manuscripts at the Sidonius website, <sidonapol.org/manuscripts>.

²⁹ We aim to keep updated links to online digitised versions of early editions at the Sidonius website, <sidonapol.org/editions>.

³⁰ Condorelli previously authored a narrower survey of Sidonian scholarship (2003a). An exhaustive bibliography, which we intend to keep updated, can be found on the Sidonius website, <sidonapol.org>.

³¹ An overview of translations is provided by the Sidonius website, <sidonapol.org/translations>.

Hernández Lobato, in chapter 22, 'Sidonius in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance', follows suit with a study that takes us from the Middle Ages to the Renaissance, outlining the cultural and historical transformations which ultimately steered Sidonius outside the mainstream. The chapter ranges from Sidonius' 'Golden Age' in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, via the emergence of humanism in the fourteenth, to the revival of late antique literature in the fifteenth. The battle among humanists for a literary standard was fought between the 'classical' Ciceronians on one side and the 'late antique' Bolognese school of Beroaldo and Pio on the other: the latter were defeated.³² In chapter 23, 'Sidonius Reception: Sixteenth to Nineteenth Centuries', Joop van Waarden enters little-trodden terrain, providing examples of Sidonius reception in early modern and modern France, Germany, and Great Britain as a contribution towards a better understanding of the altered place of Sidonius, and Late Antiquity in general, in the intellectual universe of Modernity. Filomena Giannotti continues in this vein in chapter 24, 'Sidonius Reception: Late Nineteenth to Twenty-First Centuries', in which she charts how a significant number of authors were drawn to rewrite and repurpose Sidonius' life story and multifaceted personality from a literary perspective. Starting from late-nineteenth-century decadentism, this chapter throws light on the interwar period, on Auvergnat regionalism, and on contemporary French and British novels, ending with popular fiction mourning 'the final sparks of the Roman Empire'.

In an Epilogue, we look back at the volume and discuss areas for development and for future study. Subjects for particular discussion are the editing of Sidonius; the potential of a comprehensive commentary for linguistic and philological study across the oeuvre; the impact of approaches to the text from other disciplines including art history and archaeology; and the benefits of widening the methodological horizon of Sidonius studies.

Sidonius has left us an extraordinarily multifaceted self-portrait and a unique outlook on his times, as pleasurable as it is biased. The aim of the scholars who have collaborated on this book is to share both the enjoyment of his work and the need to interrogate it properly, and we hope that others will be helped and inspired in the tricky task of exploring Sidonius and his age.³³

³² See previously Hernández Lobato (2014c).

³³ There is much that is debatable and likely to remain so about Sidonius and his age, and our contributors at times disagree with each other on both major and minor issues. As editors we have encouraged our authors to consider alternative viewpoints, and when disagreements remain, we have aimed to ensure that divergent interpretations are cross-referenced.