The Fall of the Roman Empire Revisited: Sidonius Apollinaris and His Crisis of Identity

By Eric J. Goldberg

Scholars of Late Antiquity (the period roughly from A.D. 300-600) have long labored under the shadow of two monumental works: Edward Gibbon's _Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire_ (1787) and M. I. Rostovtzeff's _Social and Economic History of the Roman Empire_ (1926). Though Gibbon, an intellectual of the Enlightenment, and Rostovtzeff, a Russian Marxist, approached their topic from very different viewpoints, they both agreed that the "transformation" of Western civilization from the Roman Empire to the Middle Ages was a story of decline and decay. While Gibbon favored a moral and cultural explanation, Rostovtzeff not surprisingly emphasized economic and social factors. The last generation of scholars, however, has begun to revise this earlier scholarship. With the publication of A. H. M. Jones's _The Later Roman Empire, 284-602. A Social, Economic and Administrative Survey_ (1964) and Peter Brown's _The World of Late Antiquity_ (1971), historians of Late Antiquity began to argue for continuity, transformation, and achievement where Gibbon and Rostovtzeff found only decline and decay.

Yet the problem of how to gauge the momentous political, social, and cultural changes in Late Antiquity remains. One of the most exciting new approaches to this question was recently outlined by Ian Wood in the inaugural article in the collection entitled _Fifth-century Gaul: a crisis of identity?_[1] Ian Wood discusses the problems and limitations when working with the historical sources from the fifth century, traditionally seen as the pivotal era for the "fall" of the western Roman Empire. Wood argues that, because of the thin, sporadic, and often contradictory nature of the surviving written records from this period, scholars should give up pursuing the chimera of a positivist chronological narrative of fifth-century history. He rightly cautions that the works of such authors as Salvian and Avitus are "not mere reflections of reality" but rather "literary constructs." As such, Wood suggests that historians take a different approach to fifth-century Gaul by attempting to understand end of the western empire "from the standpoint of shifting perceptions of identity." By emphasizing the point of view of fifth-century authors rather than the events they record, "the question of continuity or calamity becomes an issue of the mobilization of culture to deal with a changing world."

With this useful methodology, we can achieve a new understanding of the single most important surviving author from fifth-century Gaul, Sidonius Apollinaris.[2] In the twenty-four surviving panegyrics and nine books of letters of C. Sollius Apollinaris Sidonius, bishop of Clermont between c.469 and c.485, we have a rare window into how a Catholic Gallo-Roman aristocrat, man of letters, politician, and churchman came to terms with the "fall" of the Roman Empire. Sidonius published his works in two very different periods in the history of fifth-century Gaul.[3] He published his panegyrics and first book of letters before he became bishop in 469, while the Visigoths were still loyal _foederati_ (federates) of the Roman imperial government. Sidonius did not publish the last eight books of his letters until after 476, by which time the Goths had conquered Gaul, and the western Roman imperial

government had collapsed. By publishing these "memoirs," Sidonius endeavored to explain and justify his actions to his fellow Gallo-Romans.4 One can therefore compare Sidonius's writings published before 469 and after 476 to uncover how Sidonius came to redefine and refashion his identity during a period of momentous political, social, and cultural change.

Scholars have heretofore failed to appreciate the importance of a chronological approach to Sidonius's publications. Rather, there has been a tendency to view Sidonius's works as the product of an unchanging, monolithic personality. Sidonius's biographer, C. E. Stevens, wrote of his subject: "He was a faithful observer of his age.... He was an honest man.... [W]e see not the development of a character, but a collection of formal pictures illustrating the manners of the fifth century. Around Sidonius moves the circle of his universe; it is a varied universe, but he stands at rest in the midst of it."5 By approaching Sidonius's works with a sensitivity to chronology, however, one discovers that Sidonius was in fact a dynamic and evolving personality who experienced and came to terms with a "crisis of identity" between 469 and 476. This identity crisis forced Sidonius to redefine what it meant to be a patriotic Gallo-Roman in his later publications.

To understand Sidonius's world, one must appreciate the christological disputes between orthodox Catholics and Arian Christians (the latter of whom denied the divinity of Christ) that had divided the Roman Empire for over a century. The history of the relationship between Catholics and Arians in Gaul in Late Antiquity followed a decidedly different course from that of the eastern half of the Empire and northern Italy. Beginning in the 380s, Emperor Theodosius at Constantinople passed a series of decrees which imposed upon all people in the empire a strict adherence to the Nicene formulation of the Catholic faith. These actions were the first efforts of the eastern imperial court to present a united front against Arianism and other heresies.6 In northern Italy, Ambrose likewise led the campaign for Nicene orthodoxy, and in 386 he successfully silenced the Arian opposition.7

The situation in Gaul, however, was quite different. Between 406 and 418, large-scale Germanic migrations and political usurpations severed Gaul from western imperial authority in northern Italy.8 Owing to this drastic contraction of centralized authority, as well as the settlement on Gallic soil of tens of thousands of Germans (most of whom were Arian Christians), imperial efforts to counter Arianism were ineffectual in Gaul. As a result of this absence of central imperial and ecclesiastical authority, the endeavors of Gallo-Roman Catholics to address the issue of Arianism in the fifth century were largely uncoordinated and piece-meal. Thus, Gaul lacked any type of unified orthodox front against Arianism.

Sidonius Apollinaris was born in Lyons in about 430 into one of the premier Gallo-Roman aristocratic families. His ancestors had filled the highest offices in the imperial hierarchy. His grandfather had been prefect of Gaul under the usurper Constantine, and his father held the same office under Valentinian III. As a member of the highest Gallo-Roman social stratum, Sidonius found himself close to the center of the major political events in Gaul during the last decades of the western Empire.

From his early years, Sidonius was involved with a group of patriotic Gallo-Roman aristocrats who wanted to make Gaul a major political power in the western empire with the aid of the Gothic *foederati*.9 Absolutely central to Sidonius and his circle's understanding of the acceptable Roman order was the concept of the *foedus* (treaty) with the Arian Goths, who as *foederati* were to serve as military auxiliaries to ensure order and stability in Gaul. For Sidonius, the existence of the *foedus* was the crucial litmus test for the acceptability of Roman dealings with the Goths.10 Since 418, the Goths had been *foederati* of the Empire. As imperial servants, the Arianism of the Goths was not a major concern for many of the Catholic Gallo-Roman elite.11 Sidonius's generation grew up thinking that there was nothing blameworthy in working with barbarian Arian federates, going to their courts, flattering their kings and queens, and agreeing to their military ventures when they could not be

prevented. Indeed, Sidonius and his contemporaries could look to several Christian writers from the first half of the fifth century such as Saint Augustine, Orosius, and Salvian of Marsielle who had praised German Arians for their piety.[12] Sidonius and his circle's desire to maintain friendly terms with the Goths required Catholic Gallo-Romans to turn a blind eye to the Goths' denial of Christ's divinity.

In his panegyrics and first book of letters, Sidonius published writings which depicted how he had advocated amicable relations with the Arian Goths. The best example of this pro-Gothic agenda are the materials that relate to the emperorship of Avitus.[13] Sidonius was the son-in-law of Avitus, who became praetorian prefect in 439, and had close ties with the Gothic court since 418/19.[14] In 455, when the last member of the Theodosian dynasty was murdered, Avitus became emperor with the help of the Gothic king Theoderic II (453-66). On January 1, 456, Sidonius delivered a panegyric to his father-in-law at Rome, a work which in essence is a history of the Gallo-Roman endeavors to bolster Gaul's political power with the help of the Goths. In this panegyric, Sidonius repeatedly emphasized that Avitus had maintained good working relations with the Goths throughout his political career through the enforcement of the *foedus*.[15]

Sidonius published his first book of letters before the end of 469 to justify and win support for Gallic political machinations with the help of the Arian barbarians. Following the dedicatory letter of his first book, Sidonius's next letter was his famous laudatory description of the Visigothic king, Theoderic II, and his court. The issue of Theoderic's Arianism was a real concern for the Gallo-Romans, and Sidonius went out of his way to depict the Gothic king's heretical religion in the most favorable light. Sidonius wrote: "Before dawn he goes with a very small retinue to the gathering of his priests (*sacerdotum suorum coetus*), and he worships with great earnestness, though (between ourselves) one can see that his devotion is a matter of routine rather than of conviction."[16] In Sidonius's mind, the faith of the barbarians to the *foedus* was of much greater importance than their heretical Christian faith. These materials related to Avitus's rise to the imperial throne demonstrate Sidonius's willingness to excuse the Arian religion of the Goths in order to further Gallo-Gothic relations and uphold the cherished *foedus*, the cornerstone of his conception of Roman order in Gaul. In addition to this sympathetic tone towards the Arian Goths, Sidonius's earlier writings are almost completely devoid of any interest in Christianity, orthodox or otherwise.[17]

Between 470 and 476, a series of events transpired which forced Sidonius to re-think completely his ideas about acceptable relations between Catholics and Arian Goths. In 470, like many members of his class in the second-half of the fifth-century, Sidonius entered the Church and became bishop of Clermont. About the same time, the Gothic king Euric (466-84) broke the 418- *foedus* and began to conquer the remaining imperial territories in Gaul.[18] Although Sidonius valiantly led Clermont's resistance against the Gothic siege, in 475 Emperor Julius Nepos ceded the rest of Gaul, including Clermont, to Euric in return for Provence.[19] In this conquest, Euric left vacant about one-quarter of the Gallo-Roman sees, since they had become centers of Gallo-Roman resistance to Gothic expansion.[20] In agreement with this policy, Euric exiled Sidonius to Capendu and Bordeaux for two years before allowing him to return as bishop to Clermont.[21] Euric ceased his anti-Catholic policy soon after the Gallo-Roman bishops recognized his conquests.[22] In the final analysis, Euric's conquests were characterized by political realism rather than religious fanaticism.

By the time Sidonius returned from exile in c.476 and set about publishing the last eight books of his letters, many of the assumptions which he had held throughout his earlier life had been undermined. Euric was *dominus* of a "conquered world," and all of Gaul was subjected to the *feodifraga gens* (treaty-breaking race) of the Goths.[23] Gallo-Roman generals and scholars, who had once frequented the Gallic capital of Arles, were now seeking Euric's patronage at the Gothic court.[24] Sidonius could no longer travel freely, and road blocks often harassed letter carriers.[25] Moreover, a German general

had recently deposed the last western emperor. These great changes in his world forced Sidonius to re-think many of the assumptions which he had held about relations between Goths and Romans before 469.

By 476, Sidonius came to realize that his former faith in the maintenance of good relations with Gothic federates--the theme of his earlier published works--had been an embarrassing mistake. In books II-IX, therefore, Sidonius consciously redefined his identity as a patriotic Gallo-Roman. The result was that Sidonius began to identify himself with orthodox Christianity, the Gallic Church, and the rejection of the Arianism of the Goths.

Sidonius draws attention to his "transformation" and rejection of his former life in four main ways: by (1) emphasizing his penitence for his former life, (2) including almost two whole books of correspondence with fellow bishops, (3) describing his role in the episcopal election at Bourges, and (4) emphasizing his efforts to defend Clermont during the Gothic siege.

A strong confessional and penitential theme runs throughout Sidonius's last eight books which goes far beyond the conventional humility-*topos* of early Christian literature.[26] Remarkably, manly scholars have overlooked this theme in books II-IX. Raymond Van Dam, for example, observes merely that Sidonius letters after 476 "took on a more subdued tone." Yet in his last eight books Sidonius repeatedly confessed his earlier mistakes and begged for the forgiveness of God and his fellow bishops. In one published sermon Sidonius admitted that "the responsibilities of this sacred office [the episcopacy of Clermont] were thrust upon me while I strayed amid the lamentable gulfs and sloughs of iniquity."[27] Indeed, Sidonius openly expressed his belief that the fall of Clermont to the Goths was God's ironic retribution for his past dealings with the them.[28] It seems that Sidonius had come under heavy criticism from episcopal colleagues for his past associations with Arians and glancing familiarity of Christian orthodoxy. In the very last letter of his last book Sidonius wrote, "Nor can I recall how many things I wrote in the first fervor of youth; I only wish that most of them might be buried in silence!"[29] C. E. Stevens incorrectly assumes that Sidonius was here referring lost volume of "racy" poems which Sidonius had published as a youth.[30] Yet there is absolutely no evidence that Sidonius ever published such a volume of poetry. Rather, it is clear that Sidonius was here referring to his panegyrics and first book of letters, which had become a terrible embarrassment to him in his later life. This penitential and confessional theme of books II-IX was a clear message to his contemporaries that he had denounced his earlier writings and associations with the Arian Goths.[31]

In his last eight books of letters, Sidonius consciously re-cast his Roman identity in terms of orthodox Christianity and the Church. He underscores his new identity in particular in books VI and VII, which almost exclusively contain letters addressed to his fellow Gallo-Roman bishops. Sidonius appears to have published these two books separately as one work.[32] By publishing these episcopal letters together, Sidonius deliberately associated himself with the network of Gallic orthodox Church leaders, many of whom were active in reform councils at Arles and Lyons in the early 470s.[33] In these letters, Sidonius was able to express his new-found interests that had become central to his new Catholic, episcopal identity: studying scripture, teaching, composing sermons, exhorting others to lead a Christian life, admonishing wayward clerics, visiting parish churches, revering local saints, and praising bishops who wrote theological treatises and who attack Arianism and other heresies.[34] Books VI and VII as a whole, therefore, are an expression of Sidonius's desire to replace the memory of his previous associations with Arians with a strong orthodox Christian and episcopal identity. Indeed, this concern for his memory is underscored by the refrain with which Sidonius ends every episcopal letter: *memor nostri esse dignare, domine papa* (deign to remember be, lord bishop).

Sidonius illustrates his new identity with two particular episodes recorded in his letter collection, both of which underscore his opposition to Arianism and the Goths, and his loyalty to the Catholic Church. These two episodes are preserved in *epistolae* VII.5-VII.7, which suggests that Sidonius grouped these letters together intentionally. The first episode is Sidonius's involvement in the episcopal election of Bourges, probably in 470.[35] In this case, Sidonius had been called to Bourges to appoint the next archbishop of Aquitania Prima, and he found there a fierce struggle between the candidates of "both confessions"--the orthodox Catholics and "those who favor the faith of the Arians."[36] In a series of three letters, Sidonius depicted how he painstakingly considered all the candidates and finally decided on the *inlustris* and orthodox Simplicius as the next archbishop. There was a strong symbolic element in Sidonius's detailed description of how he defeated the Arian party in favor of the orthodox Christianity at Bourges: after 476, Euric had exiled the orthodox bishop of Bourges and made the city the center of his administration over Aquitania Prima.[37] Thus, the whole episode underscored Sidonius's loyalty to orthodox Christianity and his opposition to Arianism and the Gothic conquests.

The second episode which Sidonius described in memorable detail was his efforts to defend the Gallo-Roman church as Gaul was being overrun by Euric's forces in 471-476.[38] Although Euric left only those bishoprics vacant that were centers of political resistance, Sidonius portrayed Euric's conquests as an Arian holy war against Christian orthodoxy:

> "So repugnant is the mention of the word 'catholic' to his mouth and his heart that one doubts whether he is more the ruler of his nation or of his sect (*secta*).... He imagines that the success of his dealings and plans comes from the legitimacy of his religion, whereas it would be truer to say that he achieves it by earthly good fortune."[39]

Sidonius exhorted the negotiators with Euric to win one fundamental concession: "that episcopal ordination being permitted we may hold according to the faith, though we cannot hold according to the treaty (*teneamus ex fide, etsi non tenemus ex fodere*), those peoples of Gaul who are enclosed within the bounds of the Gothic domain."[40] Here one clearly sees how, in Sidonius's mind, the orthodox Christian *fides* and episcopal hierarchy had come to replace the *foedus* with the Goths as the cornerstone of proper Roman order in Gaul.

The writings of Sidonius Apollinaris reveal how one of the leading Gallo-Roman aristocrats of the fifth century re-defined his patriotic Roman identity and idea of proper Roman order. Until 469, Sidonius believed that the proper way to carry out politics in Gaul was through friendly relations with the Arian Goths through the maintenance of the 418-*foedus*. During this period, Sidonius was willing to pardon and ignore the heresy of the Goths, and he was moreover noticeably aloof towards his own orthodox Catholic identity. After becoming bishop of Clermont in c.470 and witnessing Euric's conquest of Gaul, Sidonius underwent a major transformation of identity. Expressed in books II-IX of his published letters, Sidonius after 476 denounced his former associations with the Arian Gothic federates. For Sidonius, the "proper order" in Gaul had become the ideal of Catholic Gallo-Romans bound to the Church in opposition to the Arian Goths. Sidonius's works, therefore, underscore how the history of Catholic-Arian relations in Gaul differed from those at Constantinople and in northern Italy. Lacking any centralized authority such as Theodosius or Ambrose to lead the orthodox opposition to heresy in Gaul, it seems that Gallo-Romans such as Sidonius only came to denounce Arianism after the Goths broke the 418-*foedus* and conquered Gaul. From the example of Sidonius Apollinaris, therefore, it is possible to suggest a correlation between the collapse of the imperial administration and the establishment of a Gothic kingdom in Gaul, with an increasing association of Roman identity with orthodox Christianity and the Catholic Church. Just as the Roman Empire had withdrawn from Gaul, so now Gallo-Romans were prepared to withdraw behind the edifice of the Gallic church and orthodox Christianity.

Notes for "The Fall of the Roman Empire Revisited

1. Ian Wood, "Continuity or calamity?: the constraints of literary models," in *Fifth-century Gaul: a crisis of identity?*, eds. John Drinkwater and Hugh Elton (Cambridge, 1992), pp. 9-18.

2. For general treatments of the life of Sidonius Apollinaris, see: Samuel Dill, *Roman Society in the Last Century of the Western Empire* (New York, 1958, reprinted 1960), pp. 187-223, 323-345; Andre Loyen, *Sidoine Apollinaire*, vol. I, *Poems* (Paris, 1960), pp. vii- xxix; idem, *Sidoine Apollinaire et l'Esprit Precieux en Gaul aux Derniers Jours de l'Empire* (Paris, 1943); J. R. Martindale, *The Prosopography of the Later Roman Empire*, vol. II, *A. D. 395-527* (Cambridge, 1980), pp. 115-118; C. E. Stevens, *Sidonius Apollinaris and his Age* (Oxford, 1933, reprinted 1979); Raymond Van Dam, *Leadership and Community in Late Antique Gaul* (Berkeley, 1985), pp. 157-178.

3. For discussions of the dating of Sidonius's works, see: W. B. Anderson, *Sidonius*, vol. I: *Poems and Letters* (Loeb Classical Library, Cambridge, 1936, reprinted 1980), p. lx and n. 1; J. D. Harries, "Sidonius Apollinaris, Rome and the barbarians: a climate of treason?" in *Fifth-century Gaul: a crisis of identity?*, p. 299; A. Loyen, *Sidoine Apollinaire*, vol. II, *Lettres* (Paris, 1960), pp. xi-xxiv, xlvi-xlix; Stevens, *Sidonius*, pp. 168- 74.

4. Harries, "Sidonius Apollinaris," p. 299.

5. Stevens, *Sidonius*, p. ix.

6. John Matthews, *Western Aristocracies and Imperial Court, A. D. 364-425* (Oxford, 1975), pp. 122-23.

7. Ibid. , pp. 188-190.

8. Ibid. , pp. 307-320; C. E. V. Nixon, "Relations between Visigoths and Romans in Fifth-Century Gaul," in *Fifth-century Gaul: a crisis of identity?*, pp. 65-68.

9. Dill, *Roman Society*, p. 328.

10. Harries, "Sidonius Apollinaris," p. 301.

11. Peter Heather, "The Emergence of the Visigothic Kingdom," in *Fifth-century Gaul: a crisis of identity?*, p. 90; Ralph W. Mathisen, *Roman Aristocrats in Barbarian Gaul. Strategies for Survival in an Age of Transition* (Austin, 1993), pp. 33, 48.

12. Augustine, *De civitate Dei libri XXII*, 1. 1, 3. 29; Orosius, *Historiarum adversum paganos libri VII*, VII. 39; Salvianus of Marseille, *De Gubernatione Dei*, 4. 13, 16, 19.

13. Heather, "The Emergence of the Visigothic Kingdom," p. 92.

14. Dill, *Roman Society*, pp. 325-29; Martindale, *Prosopography*, vol. II, pp. 196- 198; Herwig Wolfram, *History of the Goths*, trans. Thomas J. Dunlap (Berkeley, 1988), pp. 178-9.

15. Sidonius, *Carmen* VII. 223f. , 306-14, 411f; Loyen, *Recherches Historique*, pp. 35-58. After the *magister militum preasentalis* Ricimer overthrew and subsequently murdered Avitus in 456, Sidonius continued to pursue his objective of reestablishing political stability in the West through Gallic leadership backed by barbarian arms. Beginning in late 456, Sidonius was apparently involved in the shadowy *coniuratio Marcelliana*, a failed attempt at Lyon to raise a certain Marcellinus to the imperial throne with the help of the Burgundians and Visigoths. When this "conspiracy" capitulated before the forces of Emperor Majorian, Sidonius was forced to deliver his second imperial panegyric, this time begging the emperor to be merciful: Sidonius, *Carmen* V. 575, *Epistolae*, I. 11. 6; Dill, *Roman Society*, p. 338; Stevens, *Sidonius*, pp. 36-52, 181-85. Sidonius' mysterious embassy to emperor Anthemius and Ricimer in Rome in 467/8 might also have been aimed at improving official relations with the new Gothic king, Euric, who succeeded Theoderic II in 466 [Sidonius, *Carmen* II]. Moreover, before Sidonius became a bishop, a friend of his, Arvandus, was convicted in Rome of treason for conspiring with the Gothic king: Sidonius, *Epistolae* I. 7; H. C. Teitler, "Un-Roman activities in late-antique Gaul: the cases of Arvandus and Seronatus," in *Fifth-century Gaul: a crisis of identity?*, pp. 309-14.

16. Sidonius, *Epistolae* I. 2. 4.

17. Stevens, *Sidonius*, p. 132. The one exception to this general avoidance of Christian topics is Sidonius' panegyric to Bishop Faustus of Riez, in which Sidonius embarrassingly confuses several biblical references: *Carmen* XVI. 18, 31.

18. For the details of the Gothic conquests, see Heather, "The Emergence of the Visigoth Kingdom," p. 86-90; A. H. M. Jones, *The Later Roman Empire. 284-602*, vol. 1 (Oxford, 1964, reprinted 1973), pp. 257ff. ; Loyen, *Sidoine Apollinaire*, vol. II, *Lettres*, p. xvff. ; Wolfram, *History of the Goths*, pp. 184-88.

19. Knut Schaferdiek, *Die Kirche der Westgoten und Suewen* (Berlin, 1967), pp. 18ff; Ralph W. Mathisen, *Ecclesiastical Factionalism and Religious Controversy in Fifth-Century Gaul* (Washington, 1989), p. 269; Stevens, *Sidonius*, p. 158-60, 207ff.

20. Sidonius, *Epistolae* VII. 5. 3, VII. 6. 7; Mathisen, *Roman Aristocrats*, pp. 32-33; Wolfram, *History of the Goths*, p. 200.

21. Sidonius, *Epistolae*, IV. 10. 1, VIII. 9, IX. 3. 3.

22. Jones, *Later Roman Empire*, vol. I, pp. 262-64; Schaferdiek, *Kirche der Westgoten*, p. 29.

23. Sidonius, *Epistolae*, VII. 9. 19-20, VI. 6. 1. See also V. 12. 2.

24. Sidonius, *Epistolae*, IV. 8, IV. 22, VIII. 3, VIII. 6, VIII. 9. Stevens, *Sidonius*, p. 92.

25. Sidonius, *Epistolae*, IV. 10. 2, IX. 3. 1.

26. Van Dam, *Leadership*, p. 172.

27. Sidonius, *Epistolae* VII. 9. 6.

28. Sidonius, *Epistolae* VII. 6. 5.

29. Sidonius, *Epistolae* IX. 16. 41-44. For examples of Sidonius's concern for his critics, see: *Epistolae*,VII. 11. 1, IX. 1. 3, IX. 2. 3, IX. 9. 5, IX. 16. 9-16. In many places Sidonius confessed the limitations of his theological knowledge; for example, *Epistolae* IV. 3. 1, IV. 12. 3, VI. 7. 1, IX. 2. 3.

30. Stevens, *Sidonius*, p. 19 and n. 3.

31. For other examples of Sidonius' confessional and penitential message, see: IV. 3. 9, VII. 9. 7, VII. 10. 2, VII. 18. 3, IX. 3. 4, IX. 8. 2, IX. 11. 4, IX. 16. 53-56.

32. In *epistola* VII. 12. 1,4, Sidonius refers to *hoc opus* as a list of *pontificum nomines*. This suggests that Sidonius published either book VII, or VI and VII together, as a separate work (*opus*).

33. Mathisen, *Ecclesiastical Factionalism*, pp. 247-268, esp. 251-3.

34. Sidonius, *Epistolae* VI. 12, VII. 3, VII. 6, VII. 14, VII. 15, VII. 17. Also see IV. 2, IV. 3, IV. 9, IV. 12, V. 14, IX. 16

35. Sidonius, *Epistolae* VII. 5, VII. 8-9. For the date of the election at Bourges, see Stevens, *Sidonius*, pp. xiii, 126-9.

36. Sidonius, *Epistolae*, VII. 5. 1, VII. 8. 3.

37. Sidonius, *Epistolae*, VII. 6. 9.

38. Sidonius, *Epistolae*, VII. 6, VII. 7.

39. Sidonius, *Epistolae*, VII. 6. 6. This letter later gave Gregory of Tours (*HF* 2. 25) the inspiration to invent a "grave persecution of Christians in Gaul" under Euric: Wood, "Continuity or calamity?," pp. 12-13.

40. Sidonius, *Epistolae*, VII. 6. 10.