Applying Text Linguistics to the Letters of Sidonius

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Chapter Fourteen

APPLYING TEXT LINGUISTICS TO THE LETTERS OF SIDONIUS

Rodie Risselada

1 Introduction

Studies of the language of Late Latin authors cannot easily escape a comparative stance or avoid the questions of whether, how, and how much its vocabulary, syntax, and other rhetorical and stylistic features deviate from the standards of Classical Latin. This can be investigated on the one hand by comparing the texts involved with their Classical counterparts, and on the other by looking for similarities with other texts that are even later or closer to the spoken language, in order to trace elements that foreshadow later developments of Latin.

For authors such as Symmachus and Sidonius Apollinaris this perspective has yielded neat characterizations of the language of their texts. The conclusion is that both authors display, as far as the language per se is involved, a very high standard of literary Latin, which ‘deviates’ only slightly from the Classical Latin of their literary models (such as, e.g., Cicero and Pliny for Sidonius’ letters), mostly in the field of vocabulary, hardly at all in syntax. The few colloquialisms that we find can usually be traced back to Cicero’s letters or even Roman comedy, rather than being associated with later developments of Latin. If these authors are nevertheless unequivocally characterized as Late Latin authors, this is primarily a literary qualification and concerns their mannerism and their recherché style, which has led to harsh judgements over the last century. Only more recently, especially under the influence of Robert’s

1. For the language of Symmachus, cf. Haverling (1988); for Sidonius, cf., e.g., Gualandri (1979) and the introductory chapters of the commentaries on the letters by Köhler (Book 1, 1995), Amherdt (Book 4, 2001) and recently Van Waarden (Book 7, 2010). See also Mannheimer (1975).

2. Cf., e.g., Köhler (1995) 20, who speaks of an ‘erstaunliche Sprachrichtigkeit’ and observes that Sidonius’ Latin is more regular, from a Classical perspective, than e.g. Tacitus.

3. The history of the depreciation of Sidonius’ (and other Late Latin authors’) style is not relevant here, but is vividly described by Roberts (1989a) 1-8 in his introductory
1989 study on the ‘jewelled style’ of Late Antiquity, the style of this period has received more attention in its own right. In his commentary, Van Waarden (2010) devotes an important chapter, entitled ‘Art is everything’, to Sidonius’ style, in which he not only tries to characterize it, but also explains the importance for the author of clinging to stylistic over-perfection in a rapidly changing world. This makes the style and rhetoric of Late Latin authors such as Sidonius an important field of research, which has justly received attention in its own right in recent commentaries, and should continue to command attention, both in general and in relation to individual passages.

In spite of its importance for a good understanding of the language of Sidonius in contemporary perspective, stylistics will not be the focus of this chapter. Instead, I will take one step back and concentrate on linguistic issues which occupy a position in between syntax and style, both in their own right and because they form the linguistic basis on which style is founded. They belong to the field of discourse pragmatics and encompass the linguistic means by which an author embeds the elements of his ‘discourse’ in the textual and situational context: tense, word order, particles, referential expressions (pronouns, noun phrases) as well as sentence complexity. I hope to explain how some of these pragmatic means ‘work’ and to show how, at a deeper, functional level, their use is not very distinct from their use in earlier stages of Latin, however different the outcome may seem at first sight. Sidonian word order, for instance, may seem strangely baroque and superficial, but at least at sentence level – as I hope to illustrate – it is basically the same set of rules and tendencies as in earlier Latin texts that define the stylistic possibilities of which Sidonius makes such abundant use. In a similar manner, Kroon and Rose have shown quite convincingly that the use of tenses in Ammianus Marcellinus’ Res gestae, which is often seen as arbitrary and deviant, did not result from the loss of the original value of the various narrative tenses and consequent interchangeability of tenses, but results from the ways in which Ammianus chooses to present his narrative; the original value of the narrative tenses and the underlying principles that determine their use had not really changed.


4. For instance in terms like ‘a master class in applied rhetorical ornatus’ and ‘a riot of sound, and a maze of verbal and syntactic patterning’ ((2010) 55).
5. Already in the commentaries by Köhler and Amherdt.
Along such lines, this chapter intends primarily to offer some linguistic instruments for those who write commentaries on individual passages.\(^7\) Note that my contribution deals not with Sidonius’ poetry, but modestly restricts itself to his letters, as linguistic issues should always be tested on prose first before we can apply them to poetry. I will start in section 2 with particles. In the next two sections I will deal, from the perspective of textual coherence, with referential expressions in section 3 and word order in section 4, while sentence complexity and tenses will be discussed in section 5 in relation to narrative structure.\(^8\) As I hope to show at various points, a pragmatic approach also provides some means of comparison within the epistolary genre between, for instance, Sidonius’ narrative letters and those of Pliny. The last section will offer some suggestions for future research.

### 2 Particles

After more than one and a half centuries of neglect since the appearance of Hand’s *Tursellinus seu de particulis Latinis* (1829-45), Latin particles have attracted renewed attention over the past three decades. A key study is Kroon’s 1995 monograph on Latin discourse particles, which not only contains detailed analyses of individual particles, such as the alleged synonyms *nam – enim, ergo – igitur* and *at – vero – autem*, but offers a theoretical framework and descriptive instruments for the analysis of other particles as well.\(^9\) In this section I will discuss two specific groups, viz. interactional (section 2.1) and modal particles (section 2.2).

\(^7\) As such, it can be a first step in the direction of the further research outlined by Van Waarden (2010) 67.

\(^8\) For reasons of space, the linguistic articulation of argumentative structure, though not irrelevant for the letters of Sidonius, will not be discussed. It would be interesting, though, to investigate for instance Sidonius’ argumentative use of (rhetorical and other) questions, which are often the last item in a series of arguments, or his argumentative uses of the verbal moods, but there is no room here. For a first approximation of the functions of questions, cf. Risselada (2005); modal particles will be briefly discussed in section 2.2.

2.1 Interactional Particles

Kroon distinguishes three levels to which particles can belong:\textsuperscript{10}

1. the \textit{content} level (e.g., additive, causal, temporal relations between described events);
2. the \textit{rhetorical} level of the presentation of content (e.g., (dis)continuity of topic, contrastivity, foregrounding, backgrounding, etc.);
3. the \textit{interactional} level, which covers the relations between utterances on the one hand and the speaker and addressee, as well as their knowledge, expectations, wishes, objections, etc. on the other (e.g., appeal at consensus, assent and protest, mitigation, politeness, etc.).

For Sidonius’ correspondence in particular the distinction between the second and third layer is useful. It enables us to distinguish between, for instance, \textit{nam} as a neutral ‘presentational’ marker of background information (cf. English ‘for’) versus \textit{enim} as an ‘interactional’ particle by means of which a speaker appeals to the consensus of the addressee (comparable with English ‘y’know’, ‘as you can observe yourself’).\textsuperscript{11} It is for instance no coincidence that, as Kroon observes,\textsuperscript{12} \textit{enim} is much more frequent in Cicero’s letters to Atticus than in his more formal \textit{Ad familiares}, because the former lend themselves more for active involvement of the addressee.

In Sidonius we find \textit{enim} relatively often in rhetorical questions, which are themselves devices aimed at involving the addressee and winning his assent. An example is (1), where Sidonius is paying his addressee, a good friend and in-law, a compliment. He presents the addressee’s superiority as something known by all and by the addressee in particular, hence as incontestable, which reinforces the flattery. Even stronger is the persuasive force which results from the consent claimed by using \textit{enim} in the case of (2), where the \textit{non enim}-statement is adduced to motivate the preceding urgent request to Graecus to alter his position and come to the aid of Clermont:

\begin{itemize}
\item (1) \textit{quis enim} iuvenum nesciat seniorumque te mihi magistrumuisse proprium, cum videremur habere communem, …? (Sidon. Ep. 4.1.2)\textsuperscript{13}
\item (2) \textit{at quousque istae poterunt durare praestigiae? non enim} diutius ipsi maiores nostri hoc nomine gloriamuntur, qui minores incipiunt non
\end{itemize}

\textsuperscript{10} See Kroon (1995) ch. 4.
\textsuperscript{11} See Kroon (1995) ch. 8.
\textsuperscript{13} ‘Don’t we all, young and old, know that you were my special teacher, although we appear to have a common master?’ Translations from Sidonius are based on Anderson,
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habere. quapropter vel consilio, quo potestis, statum concordiae tam turpis incidite. (Sidon. Ep. 7.7.5)

Nam(que), on the other hand, is much more neutral, and hardly used in rhetorical questions. A typical instance is (3), where it introduces the explanation for the opening statement of the letter.

(3) angit me casus Arvandi nec dissimulo quin angat. namque hic quoque cumulus accedit laudibus imperatoris, quod amari palam licet et capite damnatos. (Sidon. Ep. 1.7.1)

Two other interactional particles are ergo and vero. By means of ergo the speaker involves the addressee by ‘reminding’ him that the information which the speaker provides or the directive which he issues is not new, but ensues from the preceding context. In this respect, it is much more interactional than its alleged synonym igitur, whose main function is presentational, viz. to mark that the speaker now comes to his main point. Usually igitur does not mark steps that can be inferred from the preceding context, while by means of ergo the speaker expresses that the utterance involved is a consequence of the preceding context, and irrefutable if the addressee accepts the preceding ones. The difference is nicely illustrated in (4). In this letter, the speaker’s action described by the utterance marked by igitur (section 1) cannot be inferred by the addressee but marks a next and important step in the story after an introductory sketch of the situation. The two directives marked by ergo, on the other hand, are both presented as a natural consequence of what precedes. In fact,

but with modifications in order to bring out the particular function of the particles.

14. ‘How long will this jugglery of yours be able to continue? Soon, as all can see, our ancestors will no longer glory in the name of ancestor when they are ceasing to have descendants. Cut short at least by counsel, in which you have the power, this present state of disgraceful concord.’


16. In Epistulae 1, 4 and 7, we find 56 instances of nam, of which only two are found in rhetorical questions, against 29 instances of enim, seven of which occur in rhetorical questions.

17. ‘I am distressed by the fall of Arvandus and do not conceal my distress; for it is the crowning glory of our emperor that affection may be openly shown even for men condemned to death.’

18. Cf. Kroon (1995) 369-79 and Kroon (1989). In Classical Latin, ergo is relatively often used in questions by means of which the addressee is asked to confirm a conclusion drawn on the basis of the preceding context. In Cicero’s letters also, ergo is mainly used in questions, esp. in the formulaic quid ergo? In later stages of Latin this preference for questions diminishes, but the interactional appeal on the addressee to accept the utterance involved as a natural consequence from the preceding context remains.
the repetition of a directive, as we find in section 3, is a typical environment of ergo.

(4) Sidonius Proculo suo salutem. 1. filius tuus, immo communis ad me cucerit, qui te relictto deliquisise se maeret, obrutus paenitendi pudore transfugii. igitur audito culpae tenore corripui latitabundum verbis amaris vultu minaci et mea quidem voce sed vice tua dignum abdicatione, cruce, culleo clamans ceterisque suppliciis parricalibus. ad haec ille confusus inrubuit, nil impudenti excusatione deprecatus errem, sed ad cuncta convictum cum redarguerem, verecundiae iunxiti comites lacrimas ita profluas ubertimque manantes, ut secutuia correctioni fidem fecerint. 2. rogo ergo sis clemens in se severo et deum sequens non habeas te iudice reum se profitente damnabilem; … 3. ergo si de moribus tuis deique amicitia iusti meliora praesumo, excusato propitius indulge, … (Sidon. Ep. 4.23)19

The particle vero is used to emphasize the sincerity of the speaker’s intentions, and often lends a special, emphatic status to a particular utterance as compared to its context.20 I will restrict myself here to one clear example in which vero is used to reinforce a request by emphasizing the speaker’s sincerity and thus underlining the importance of this specific second part of the request. It is no accident, I believe, that this second request pertains to the addressee himself.21

(5) quid multa? vis ut paucis quid velim agnoscas? quaeso, ut abbas sit frater Auxanius supra congregationem, tu vero et supra abbatem. (Sidon. Ep. 7.17.4)22

Kroon’s analyses are based on Classical and Silver Latin. As Galdi (2010) has shown, the interactional value of enim and ergo has decreased by the

19. ‘Sidonius to his friend Proculus, greeting. 1. Your son – I ought rather to say our son – has fled to me; he grieves that he went astray by straying from you, and he is plunged in shame at the thought of his regrettable desertion. So, after hearing a general account of his offence, I rebuked the skulking fugitive with bitter words and threatening looks; and although it was my lips that spoke, they spoke for you when I shouted that he was worthy of disinheritance, the cross, the sack, and the other punishments of parricides. At this he blushed in his confusion but made no attempt to extenuate his fault by shameless excuses; on the contrary, as I convicted him on every point and brought his guilt home to him, he reinforced his conviction with gushing floods of tears that gave assurance of his future amendment. 2. I therefore beg you to be lenient with one who is so severe with himself; follow the divine example and do not by your judgement pronounce guilty one who by his own confession has condemned himself. … 3. Therefore, if I am right in taking the more favourable view of your character and of your friendship, show a kindly lenience towards him for whom I have pleaded.’


21. For other examples I refer to the discussions of a number of these particles in Van Waarden (2010) 623, who conveniently lists them together in his index of Latin words, under the heading of ‘particles’.

22. ‘Why labour the point? Do you wish me to tell you in a word what I want? I ask that brother Auxanus as abbot may be over the congregation, and in particular that you should be over the abbot.’
time of Jordanes, where they have become mere synonyms of their presentational counterparts *nam* and *igitur*. In Sidonius’ classicizing letters, however, this development seems to have not yet started. It will be clear that the interactional value of these particles makes them particularly suitable to be employed in letters, in order to reinforce their persuasive force.

2.2 Epistemic Particles

Epistemic particles and adverbs express the speaker’s attitude towards the truth, reliability, or probability of his utterance or the evidence or source for it. Although the speaker’s attitude with respect to factivity can be expressed in a global way by means of verbal mood (factive versus hypothetic versus counterfactual, usually in main clauses only), modal particles and adverbs are much more varied and more specific means of expression.23 The most recent discussion of these expressions is Schrickx (2011). Her monograph deals primarily with *nempe, quippe, scilicet, videlicet* and *nimirum*, but by way of comparison also discusses adverbs such as *profecto, plane, certe* and *sine dubio*.

Whereas most of these words express the speaker’s commitment to the truth, probability or reliability of the utterance, some of them are (also) addressee-oriented. In connection with Sidonius, this distinction can be illustrated with the pair of near synonyms *scilicet* and *videlicet*. As Schrickx observes, both particles express the commitment of the speaker to the truth of his utterance, by pointing out its being self-evident, but they differ in as far as the commitment of the addressee is involved.24 Whereas the evidential value of *videlicet* is based mainly on inference and logical reasoning (‘clearly, as we can see’), *scilicet* appeals (also) to the expectations of the addressee (‘of course, obviously, as we all know’); in the words of Schrickx (2011) 181 *scilicet* is more ‘intersubjektiv’, while *videlicet* is found mainly in neutral or speaker-based observations.

As a result of this intersubjective value, *scilicet* can be exploited for reasons of politeness, when the solidarity with the addressee is emphasized. An example is (6), where Sidonius uses *scilicet* in an explanation for the fact that the *callidus viator Amantius* has managed to cheat Sidonius of a letter in order to use it for his own purposes. He could do so because he was a *lector* – and of course (*scilicet*) the addressee, being a


24. Schrickx (2011) 143-84; esp. 181-84. Her analyses are based on a corpus of Classical and Silver Latin texts.
bishop like Sidonius, knows what this means. Sidonius thus involves his reader and points to common knowledge in order to reinforce their mutual understanding and solidarity.

(6) nam dum solum mercatoris praetendit officium, litteras meas ad formatae vicem, scilicet ut lector, elicuit. (Sidon. Ep. 7.2.1)25

From this perspective it is interesting to see that, in all of his letters, Sidonius uses scilicet twice as often as he uses videlicet,26 and, so it seems, often in combination with second person verb forms. An example is (7), where scilicet is used not only in the context of a second person verb form, but also next to (and emphasizing, by creating hyperbaton) the possessive tuarum.

(7) desiderio spiritualium lectionum, quarum tibi tam per authenticos quam per disputatores bylibothea fidei catholicae perfamiliaris est, etiam illa, quae maxume tuarum scilicet aurium minime digna sunt occupare censuram, noscere cupis. (Sidon. Ep. 7.9.1)27

In (8) on the other hand, where Claudianus complains to Sidonius that the latter offers his goods, friendship and attention always to others, but never to him, the more neutral, speaker-based videlicet is used. Here the speaker presents his observations and conclusions not as based on the addressee’s (prior) knowledge and expectations, but as an inevitable conclusion from the preceding context (cf. also proinde).

(8) ecquo tumet occupatu umquam uspiamve implicabere, quin illud in aliorum commoda reverget? cum precatu deum placas, eundem non modo amicis sed ignotis quoque concilias. cum scripturarum caelestium mysteria rimaris, quo te studiosius imbuis, sed aliis quoque consultum facis. proinde nihil videlicet, profecto nihil est tamen infe-cundum actionum tuarum omnium, quod tibi uni soli tantum et non aliis quoque multis tecum uberem fructum ferat. (Sidon. Ep. 4.2.3)28

25. 'Ostensibly a mere trader, he succeeded, on the plea of being a Reader, you see, in extracting from me a letter in the canonical form.'

26. Viz. 17 and 8 times, respectively. Interestingly, Apuleius also prefers scilicet to videlicet, cf. Schrickx (2011) 177-78.

27. 'In your zeal for spiritual reading (and you are familiar with the whole library of Catholic reading, whether composed by the scriptural writers or by the expositors) you wish to acquaint yourself with even those productions which are obviously quite unworthy to hold the discriminating attention of such a critic as yourself.'

28. 'I doubt if you will ever anywhere involve yourself in any occupation without making your efforts redound to other people’s advantage. When you seek God’s mercy in prayer, you beseech His grace not only for your friends but also for those unknown to you. When you search the mysteries of the heavenly scriptures, the more diligently you steep yourself in them, the more plentifully do you shower instruction on others. When you lavish your wealth for the needs of the poor, you do indeed benefit yourself most of all, but
I hope that this brief discussion shows, first, that Sidonius’ use of particles is in line with their use in Classical Latin and, secondly, illustrates how Sidonius uses them to strengthen the persuasive force of his letters by involving the addressee where possible.

3 Textual Coherence: Reference, Pronouns, and the Special Role of iste

For classicists, who are trained in rhetoric, the observation that texts do not consist of series of randomly collected, independent sentences, but form coherent and consistent structures, is quite self-evident. But how do we recognize this coherence and how is it coded in our texts and in the language? And how does Sidonius use the various devices that were available in Classical language?

Like other languages, Latin disposes of various, quite divergent devices to express textual coherence, which usually do not operate in isolation, but co-occur and ‘cooperate’ in various ways.29

First of all, textual coherence is expressed in the ways in which we refer to the various persons and things that are mentioned in the text. This type of coherence is called ‘referential coherence’. Thus, in (9) the use of ‘he’ instead of a repetition of the proper name ‘Harry’ serves to make clear that the speaker continues to talk about the same person, while the use of the proper names ‘Snape’ and the noun phrase ‘the three-headed dog’ are signs of discontinuity. Likewise, ‘his’ establishes a connection between the leg and Snape, who is by now familiar from the preceding context.30

(9) The evening before Harry’s first Quidditch match, he sees Snape receiving medical attention for a bite on his leg by the three-headed dog.

As we will see in the remainder of this section, Latin has a quite sophisticated system of referential expression. Besides, continuity and discontinuity of reference can also be reflected in Latin word order and choice of subject, as will be briefly indicated below in 3.1; word order will be discussed in more detail in section 4.

others share the benefit. So clearly there is nothing, no nothing, in all your actions so unproductive as to yield rich fruit to yourself alone and not to many others beside.’

29. One of the first to make this point for Latin was Pinkster (1990) ch. 12. More recent discussions are e.g. Bolkestein (2002) and Rosén (2002). A good impression can also be gained from various papers on Greek and Latin in Allan and Buijs (2007).

30. Note that English ‘his’ is ambiguous in the sense that it could refer, theoretically, to both Snape and Harry; in Classical Latin, as we will see, the use of a genitive of hic or is versus ille serves to disambiguate the reference.
However, texts do not only exhibit coherence between the persons (and things) involved in a text, but also between clauses and utterances as a whole, and even between larger units of texts. Here conjunctions (because, when, etc.), discourse markers (e.g., on the other hand, after all) and connective particles (e.g., so, well, though) play an important role in marking the relationships between the various ‘chunks’ that make up a text. Other linguistic means are the various tenses to express the relationships between events described and the use of subordinate clauses and participial constructions in complex sentences. These devices will be discussed in section 5 in connection with narrative structure.

3.1 Referential Coherence

Speakers of Latin can choose between a number of different expressions, with varying degrees of explicitness, in order to refer to persons and things. On the one end of the scale there are proper names and noun phrases which in virtue of their unique reference or unambiguous description rule out all but one interpretation (‘the sun’ ‘the eldest grandson of Queen Elizabeth’, ‘Sidonius Apollinaris’). On the other end there is the phenomenon of ellipsis or ‘zero-anaphora’, in which case a sentence constituent, most often the subject, is left implicit and its specific reference can only be established on the basis of the context or situation. In between we find various types of (personal, anaphoric, relative) pronouns. Latin is especially rich in anaphoric pronouns: apart from the purely anaphoric is, the deictic pronouns hic and ille can also be used in anaphoric reference, plus, as we shall see, iste. When a pronoun is used, the addressee has to establish its reference on the basis of the preceding context, but at least he is helped by an indication of the number and gender of the reference. In the case of zero-anaphora, on the other hand, even that information is lacking. Thus, noun phrases, pronouns and zero-anaphora differ with respect to the referential information they provide and the effort it takes to ‘decode’ them. We could say that the less information a specific expression provides, the more continuous and ‘given’ the person (or thing) to which it refers must be, and it is exactly to provide this type of instruction that the various referential means are used.31

In addition to the referential information provided by these various means, the choice of grammatical subject (by means of lexical choice or by

active/passive variation), may also express the coherence with the preceding context. A third factor in the expression of coherence is word order at sentence level. The following passage from the second letter of Book 7 may serve as an illustration, where the use of all these means as well as their interrelatedness can be exemplified by looking at how the protagonist of this letter, the trader Amantius, is presented in the first section.

(10) oneras, consummatissime pontificum, verecundiam meam, multifaria laude cumulando si quid stilo rusticante peraravero. atque utinam reatu careat, quod apicum primore congressu quamquam circumscripit veritati resultantia tamen et diversa conexui; ignorantiae siquidem meae callidus viator imposuit. nam Ø dum solum mercatoris praetendit officium, litteras meas ad formatae vicem, scilicet ut lector, elicuit, sed quas aliquam gratiarum actionem continere decuisset. namque, ut post comperi, Ø plus Massiliensium benignitate provectus est, quam status sui per censum seu per familiam forma pateretur. (Sidon. Ep. 7.2.1)

Amantius is introduced in the discourse in the third sentence by means of the qualifying noun phrase callidus viator. As is not uncommon when new entities are introduced in the discourse, its position is not at the beginning of the sentence, but together with the finite verb at the end of the clause, which is the preferred position for new and salient information. After his first introduction, Amantius can be considered as 'given information'. Because he is not explicitly mentioned in the next two sentences (zero-anaphora, indicated in (10) by means of the symbol Ø), his 'continuity' cannot be signalled by word order, but by the fact that he is the grammatical subject of the (active) finite verbs praetendit, elicuit and provectus est. This combination of grammatical subject and zero-anaphora instructs the reader (i) to consider the subject of these clauses as continuous and given, and (ii) to establish its reference on the basis of the preceding context. All in all, we see here how referential expression,

32. Cf. the different possibilities of subject choice in (i) Federer beat Nadal versus Nadal lost to Federer (lexical choice) and (ii) Federer beat Nadal versus Nadal was beaten by Federer (grammatical choice by active/passive variation). For active/passive variation, cf. Risselada (1991).

33. ‘Most consummate of pontiffs, you overwhelm my modesty with a load of manifold praise every time that I scribble anything with my clownish pen. I only wish I could establish my innocence in one matter: it is true that I had been taken in by false pretences, but the fact remains that the first time I corresponded with you I spun a tale utterly at variance with the truth. A wily traveller imposed upon my ignorance; ostensibly a mere trader, he succeeded, on the plea of being a Reader, you see, in extracting from me a letter in the canonical form, a letter, however, which ought properly to have contained some expression of thanks. For, as I afterwards discovered, the kindness of the people of Massilia advanced him further than could be justified by his standing in respect of wealth or of birth.’

34. For a more detailed discussion of Latin word order, see section 4 below.
word order, and choice of grammatical subject ‘cooperate’ in establishing Amantius as a coherent and central element in the discourse, and they seem to do so in a way that is very similar to Classical Latin.

What is unusual here however, compared to Classical Latin, is the fact that directly after his introduction zero-anaphora is used to refer to Amantius. It is more usual to find here the anaphorical pronouns \textit{hic} or \textit{is}, and to proceed to zero-anaphora only after that. This procedure is what we find, for example, in section 6 of this same letter, where the neighbours’ daughter (\textit{cuius} \textit{filia}, introduced via her mother (\textit{quaedam femina}) in the first sentence, is resumed in the next sentence by \textit{huic}.

\begin{quote}
(11) \textit{forte accidit}, \textit{ut deversorio, cui ipse successerat}, \textit{quaedam femina non minus censu quam moribus idonea vicinaretur}, \textit{cuius \textit{filia} infantiae iam temporibus emensis necdum tamen nubilibus annis appropinquabat}, \textit{huic \textit{hic} blandus (siquidem ea aetas infantulae, ut adhuc decenter) nunc quae-

dam frivola, nunc ludo apta virgineo scrutu donabat}. (Sidon. Ep. 7.2.6)
\end{quote}

Moreover we can observe that, although the patterns of reference at large function very much the same as they did in Classical Latin, the use of individual pronouns and their division of labour is somewhat different. In Classical Latin, \textit{hic} and \textit{is} are mainly used for firmly establishing recently introduced entities in the discourse, whereas \textit{ille} is especially found when there is a contrast, discontinuity, or ambiguity because there are other persons or entities in the context that could be intended.\textsuperscript{36} Sidonius, however, seems to use the various pronouns as well as zero-anaphora in less clear-cut ways: the purely anaphoric pronoun \textit{is} is slowly disappearing in this period, especially in the nominative case, and its functions are taken over by \textit{hic} and \textit{ille} (and \textit{iste}, but see below).\textsuperscript{37} This may explain the somewhat unusual collocation of \textit{huic \textit{hic}} in (11), the first referring to the newly introduced girl and the latter to the overall

\textsuperscript{35} ‘It chanced that near the lodging where he had taken up residence there lived a certain lady as attractive in character as in income, whose \textit{daughter} though past childhood was still a good way short of the marriagable age. \textit{Her \textit{he}} used to pet (her tender years still allowed this to be done without impropriety), and he would give her from time to time some trifles or some frippery suitable for a girl’s amusement.’

\textsuperscript{36} Cf. Bolkestein and Van de Grift (1994). I will not here go into the more subtle differences between the originally deictic \textit{hic} and the purely anaphorical \textit{is}, but see J.R. de Jong (1996) and Kroon (2010) for some proposals for Classical Latin. Spevak (2008), who discusses word order and pronominal use in Gregory of Tours, points out that \textit{hic} is preferred in the nominative case (often in the case of topics, in first position), while \textit{is} is usually preferred in the oblique cases and found within sentences.

\textsuperscript{37} Cf., e.g., Haverling (1988) 39 on Symmachus: ‘The pronoun \textit{is} had a very weak sense [in Vulgar Latin] and tended to be replaced by the somewhat stronger \textit{hic} and \textit{ille}. … even Symmachus may use \textit{hic} where Cicero probably would have preferred \textit{is} in a few passages’. See also Spevak (2008).
Applying text linguistics to the letters of Sidonius

The protagonist of the story, Amantius, a combination which would probably have been avoided in earlier Latin. Secondly, *ille* seems to be used more often than before, even when there is no obvious ambiguity or discontinuity at stake. Finally, the pronoun *iste* turns up, and seems to be used, at least at first sight, arbitrarily instead of *hic*.

Examples of these changes can be found in the narration proper (sections 3-8) of the same letter 7.2. In the preceding sections 1-2, which were primarily about storytelling and what this story should be about, Amantius had figured twice, in the last case at the end of the sentence, referred to in an elaborate description by means of a defining relative clause.

(12) *simul et, si moris est regularum ut ex materia omni usurpentur principia dicendi, cur hic quoque quodcumque mihi sermocinaturo materia longius quaeratur expetaturque, nisi ut sermoni nostro sit ipse pro causa, cui erit noster sermo pro sarcina?* (Sidon. *Ep.* 7.2.2)

At the start of the narration proper in section 3, Amantius is ‘resumed’ by *hui* as the protagonist of the passage to come.

(13) 3. *Arverni hui patria; parentes natalibus non superbis sed absolutis, et sicut nihil illustre iactantes, ita nihil servile metuantes, contenti cense modico sed cedem vel sufficiente vel libero; militia illis in clericali potius quam in Palatino decursa comitatu. Pater istius granditer frugi et liberes parum liberalis quiique per nimiam parsimoniam iuveni filio plus prodesse quam placere maluerit. Quo relictio tunc puer iste vos petii nimis expeditus, quod erat maximum conatibus primis impedimentum; nihil est enim viatico levi gravius.* (Sidon. *Ep.* 7.2.3-4)

Sidonius goes on to speak about his parents, who are introduced by the noun phrase *parentes* and continued in the next sentence by means of *illis*. Although, strictly speaking, there is no discontinuity or change of reference *illis* is used here, because there is potential ambiguity, and the reader is reminded that this is not about our ‘protagonist’ Amantius himself.

38. ‘Besides, if the established rules allow a composition to start from any sort of material, why in the preparation of a casual screed should I go out of my way in seeking and searching for material instead of making the subject of my screed this very man, whose luggage will be this screed of mine?’

39. ‘3. He is a native of Auvergne; *his parents’ origin, though not imposing, is irreproachable: boasting no grandeur and fearing no servile degradation, they are content with a modest fortune – modest but adequate and unencumbered. *Their* public office has been in the service of the Church rather than of the State. *His father* is immensely frugal and niggardly towards his children, and as his son grew up by excess of parsimony he chose to give him more profit than pleasure. Thereupon *your young man* had left his father and had betaken himself to your town. He carried small equipment – a great burden to his first efforts, for there is no heavier handicap than a light scrip. 4. Nevertheless, good luck seconded *his* first entry into your city.’
When in the next sentence, the description is continued in terms of only one of the two parents, we need a specification in the form of *pater.* Here, however, we observe something strange, because now Amantius himself is referred to by *iste* – a pronoun that in Classical Latin was associated with the second person, i.e. the addressee, who does not play a role himself in this story. I will discuss the use of *iste* in some detail below, in section 3.2, but for the moment we can conclude that the neat binary division of referential labour between *hic* and *ille* has become less clear by the apparition of *iste* as a third player on the stage. A further indication that the referential system is getting more ‘muddled’, is found at the start of section 4, where Amantius is resumed (after the preceding *puer iste*) by means of *illi* in a situation of continuity, and with no potential ambiguity of reference involved.

All in all, it seems safe to observe that the use of specific pronouns is no longer exclusively governed by their Classical referential value, but that (i) the system is complicated by the addition of the second person deictic pronoun *iste*, and (ii) the referential use of the pronoun *hic* seems to be more ad hoc, signalling simple continuity (cf. *huic hic* in 3) without regarding overall coherence, while (iii) *ille* is used in cases in which no discontinuity of ambiguity is involved. The more general mechanisms, however, governing the use of full noun phrase versus pronoun versus zero-anaphora, seem to be intact, as well as the cooperation with word order and choice of grammatical subject.

Before we turn to word order, it is interesting to take a closer look at *iste*. As we saw already, its anaphorical use is expanded, but we will also see that this is not totally new, since it has interesting precedents in earlier epistolography.

### 3.2 *Iste*

The appearance of *iste* (*puer*) in 7.2.3, discussed in the preceding section, forms a good starting point for a brief excursus on this pronoun. Although *iste* cannot refer literally here in its original strict deictic sense of ‘belonging to the addressee’, its use ‘instead of *hic*’ is not as arbitrary as is commonly claimed in the literature on Late Latin.\(^{40}\) *Iste* seems to loosely appeal

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\(^{40}\) Thus, at several points in his commentary (e.g., ad 7.1.6 *populus iste*) Van Waarden mentions that *iste* ‘from early times encroached more and more on the territory of *ille* and especially *hic*’; cf. also his comments that the adverbial *istic* is used often to refer to the place where the speaker himself is, and only sometimes to the place where the addressee is ((2010) 241-42, with references to other studies). For *iste* in Symmachus, cf. Haverling (1988) 40.
here to the addressee in the sense of involving him, not as a participant in the story, but as the addressee of the story: ‘this boy I have been telling you about, whom you know by now’.\textsuperscript{41} Note also that the expression appears at the moment in the story at which its referent, Amantius, arrives in the addressee’s town for the first time (\textit{tunc puer iste vos petiit nimis expeditus}), which makes such an involvement of the addressee quite natural.

This use of \textit{iste} is, in fact, not entirely new and it is interesting to make a comparison with Cicero’s and Pliny’s correspondence. For this purpose, I analysed the use of \textit{iste} in Sidonius’ letters, Books 1, 4 and 7, and compared it with equally long passages of Cicero’s letters to Atticus and Pliny’s letters.\textsuperscript{42} As we can see in table 1, the overall frequency of \textit{iste} as a pronoun has not increased over time; in fact, Cicero uses \textit{iste} even more frequently (34 times) than does Sidonius (29 times). When the adverbial use is added, the picture remains roughly the same.

\begin{table}[h]
\centering
\begin{tabular}{|l|c|c|c|}
\hline
 & Cic. \textit{Att.} 1 – 2.16.2 & Plin. \textit{Ep.} 1 – 3.5.17 & Sidon. \textit{Ep.} 1, 4 and 7 \\
\hline
pronominal use & 34 & 26 & 29 \\
adverbs (\textit{istic, istuc, istinc, istunc, istim}) & 5 & 1 & 6 \\
\textit{Total} & 39 & 27 & 35 \\
\hline
\end{tabular}
\caption{The frequency of \textit{iste} in the letters of Cicero, Pliny and Sidonius}
\end{table}

More interesting than its frequency is, of course, the question whether the use of \textit{iste} has become more arbitrary in Late Latin and whether it loses its second person deictic value. To answer that question, I want to distinguish four categories of instances of \textit{iste}:\textsuperscript{43}

1. Cases in which we find a direct reference to the place or situation of the addressee and \textit{iste} has its full second person value; here also belong those instances referring to things, situations, or even words ‘belonging’ to the addressee.
2. Cases in which we can establish an indirect reference to the addressee, for instance because the addressee has introduced the item involved in the discourse in the directly preceding context or earlier, or even in

\textsuperscript{41} Cf. Pieroni (2010) 412–13, who distinguishes between an ‘ego’ as part of the described world and the ‘ego locuteur’ or speaker. The present section is inspired by her insightful analysis of the use of \textit{iste} (409-19), in a section on the category ‘person’ (395–423).
\textsuperscript{42} Cic. \textit{Att.} 1 – 2.16.2 (14,854 words) and Plin. \textit{Ep.} 1 – 3.5.17 (14,875 words); Sidonius’ \textit{Epistulae} books 1, 4 and 7 contain 14,898 words.
\textsuperscript{43} This classification is inspired by a paper by J.R. de Jong (1998) on the use of \textit{iste} in Plautus and Seneca maior; cf. also the elaborate paper by Pieroni referred to in n. 41.
another letter; note that, especially in epistolography, this is not always easy to establish.

3. Following up on 2 there are instances such as (13) above, where the item has been introduced by the speaker but is now sufficiently well known to the addressee as well; here iste is used to emphasize the involvement of the addressee in the interaction.

A more concrete subclass of 3 consists of those instances in which the speaker has sent something to the addressee (a poem, a book, advice, etc.) which is now in the addressee’s hands or head.

4. Finally, there are problematic instances, for which none of the above-mentioned explanations seems to obtain; in some cases we might detect a negative association, in others a negative connotation is excluded, and it is simply not clear why iste is used.

A classification of the instances according to these four categories is presented in table 2. Note that the figures are inevitably subjective, because the boundaries between the categories are in some cases difficult to determine. What is important, however, is that the number of ‘problematic cases’ (category 4) is more or less the same for all three authors. This seems to be strong evidence against the common claims (cf. n. 40), not only that iste is used more and more frequently in Later Latin, often instead of hic, but also with an increasing loss of its original meaning.

### Table 2. A classification of the uses of iste in the letters of Cicero, Pliny and Sidonius

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(1) direct reference: ‘belonging’ to addressee</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(2) indirect reference: introduced earlier by addressee</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(3) by now well known to addressee</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(4) difficult (no connection with second person; sometimes negative, but not always)</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>34</strong></td>
<td><strong>26</strong></td>
<td><strong>29</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The scope and purpose of the present chapter preclude an extensive discussion of these results, but I will give some examples to illustrate my point. In (14) the reference to the addressee as the one whose thoughts and accusations are represented here, is perfectly clear from the second
person verb forms *coniectas* and *reare*. In my opinion an instance such as (15) can be explained along these same lines, and not primarily, as Van Waarden claims, as having negative force. 44 In the preceding context, Sidonius has blamed the current behaviour of his addressee in terms of second person verb forms, and the pronouns *vos* and *vester*. In the lines quoted under (15) *iste* is used anaphorically to refer back to this behaviour, while at the same time connecting it with the addressee. If he had used *vestrae* here, the reference would be to the addressee only and it would lack the anaphoric reference to the preceding context. Of course, the *praestigiae* are negatively presented here, but since that negative tone is not involved in a number of the instances in Sidonius, it cannot be taken as *iste*’s primary meaning. 45

(14) *committi, domine maior, in necessitudinis iura pronuntias, … praeter aequum ista coniectas, si reare mortalium quempiam, cui tamen sermocinari Latialiter cordi est, non pavere, cum in examen aurium tuarum quippe scriptus adducitur.* (Sidon. Ep. 4.3.1)46

(15) *(vos … vos … vobis … aures vestras …) parum in commune consulitis; et, cum in concilium convenitis, non tam curae est publicis mederi peri culis quam privatis studere fortunis; quod utique saepe diuque facientes iam non primi comprovincialium coepistis esse, sed ultimi. 5. at quousque istae poterunt durare praestigiae?* (Sidon. Ep. 7.7.4-5)47

These examples are classified under my first category of ‘direct reference to the addressee’. 48 Note that quite similar instances are found in Cicero’s and Pliny’s letters, cf. (16).

(16) *quod ad me scribis te in Asiam statuisse non ire, equidem mallem, ut ires, ac vereor, ne quid in ista re minus commode fiat; sed tamen non*

44. Van Waarden (2010) 371 ad loc.
45. Cf., e.g., Sidon. Ep. 4.8.5, 4.22.3, 7.17.2 *angulus iste*, 7.9.19 and 20 (all belonging to the first category); and 4.2.1, 4.7.1, 7.1.3, 7.18.1, 7.17.4 (third category) which all lack such a negative connotation. Even the remaining, problematic instances in the fourth category cannot all be explained in terms of a negative connotation, cf. 4.21.1, 4.22.6, 7.1.6, 7.14.4.
46. ‘My honoured lord, you declare that I am offending against the laws of friendship. … Your guess at what is happening is unfair if you imagine that there is any man, at least anyone with a real regard for Latin expression, who is not alarmed when he is submitted, and in written form too, to the judgement of your ears.’
47. ‘(You … your ears …) You are not acting for the common weal; and when you come together into the council you are less concerned to relieve public dangers than to advance personal interests; and, having done this at all hazards for a long time and many times, you are now beginning to be not first, but last, among the members of your province. 5 How long will this jugglery of yours be able to continue?’
48. Other instances in this category are found in 4.10.2, 4.18.5, 4.22.3, 4.22.6 (*materiae istius*, ‘… suggested by you’), 7.9.20 (twice). Purely deictic ‘yours, with you’ is *angulus*
There are no instances of the second category in Sidonius, although it is quite common in Cicero and Pliny, cf. (17). The donatio involved is Pliny’s own (he waives the repayment of a loan), on the basis of which one might have expected haec, but ista is actually used here because it is the addressee who has brought up the topic in his letter. Note again that there is no negative tone whatsoever.

(17) ad quod te ne verbis magis quam rebus horter, quidquid mihi pater tuus debuit, acceptum tibi fieri iubebo. Nec est quod verearis ne sit mihi onerosa ista donatio. (Plin. Ep. 2.4.3)

The most interesting category is the third: instances in which something sent by, belonging to, or narrated or described by the speaker/writer is nevertheless referred to by means of iste. By using iste, the one who sends the letter indicates that the thing involved is by now part of addressee’s ‘world’. When the letter is accompanied by a poem or book, this will be in the hands of the addressee when he reads the letter: cf. (18), where ista refers to an opus which Sidonius sends to his addressee together with this letter. More interesting are those instances where iste refers to words, arguments or ideas that have been ‘transmitted’ to the addressee earlier in the letter. A nice example is (19), which contains, according to the manuscripts, a combination of haec and istaec. This is, in itself, already an indication that these two pronouns do not have the same function.

(18) a te principium, tibi desinet. nam petitum misimus opus raptim relectis exemplaribus, quae ob hoc in manus pauca venerunt, quia mihi nil de libelli huiusce conscriptione meditanti hactenus incustodita nequeunt

iste in 7.17.2 v. 21; istoque cultu in 4.8.5 can be either anaphoric or directly referring to the addressee. The instance in 4.6.2 is part of an imaginary dialogue.

49. ‘You say you have decided not to go to Asia. For my part I would rather you had been going, and I have some fear of awkwardness arising over this situation of yours. Still I can’t blame your decision, especially as I have not gone out to a province myself’ (translation D.R. Shackleton Bailey, Loeb, modified).

50. ‘To provide you with practical as well as verbal encouragement I shall give instructions for your father’s debt to me to be entered as paid. You need not fear that such a gift to you will tax my finances’ (translation B. Radice, Loeb, modified).

51. A similar instance is found in 4.18.5. Pliny also uses iste often in this way, cf. si modo tu curam tuam admoveris interim istis, mox iis quae sequuntur, ‘if you will only give your critical attention to what you have now, and afterwards to what follows’ (Plin. Ep. 2.5.9, translation B. Radice), where istis refers to a speech that Pliny sends with his letter, while iis refers to something which he will send later.

inveniri. sane ista pauc, quae quidem et levia sunt, celeriter absolvi. (Sidon. Ep. 7.18.1)\(^{53}\)

(19) (After having given a number of arguments why the addressee should support his proposal for a bishop in Bourges) sed cur ego ista haec ineptus adieci, tamquam darem consilium qui poposci? quin potius omnia ex vestro nutu arbitrio litterisque disponentur sacerdotibus, popularibus manifestabuntur. (Sidon. Ep. 7.8.4)\(^{54}\)

The division of labour between haec and ista in (19) is quite clear: haec indicates that the arguments listed before are Sidonius’ own, while ista indicates that they have been transmitted to and are now known to the addressee.\(^{55}\) Both pronouns are anaphorically referring to the preceding context, while vestro (nutu) on the other hand refers to the addressee only.

The instances of (puer) iste in 7.2.3-6, with which we started our discussion, also belong to this third category, but they go a little bit further. Here iste refers not to ideas or arguments transferred to the addressee, but to a personage in the story who is by now well known to the addressee because Sidonius has introduced him to the addressee and told him about him. We could say that Sidonius directs, as it were, the addressee’s attention as a means to involve him in the storytelling.\(^{56}\)

A comparable instance is (20), where the involvement of the addressee is also clear from the surrounding second person references. The difference with the instances from 7.2.3-6 is that the addressee in (20) is not only the addressee of the narrative but also plays a role in it himself. Sidonius describes to him what the latter did and saw himself on a former occasion. The use of ista could be classified under the first category (inter ista, ‘among those things there with you’), but note that ista also refers back to what Sidonius just described to him (‘among those things

53. “‘With thee begun, with thee ’twill end.’ I send you the work you sought, having hastily selected certain copies; only a small number came to hand, because I had no thought of compiling a little volume of this sort and so a number of pieces which so far had not been carefully kept cannot now be discovered. Indeed, the few specimens which you have now, being indeed of little importance, have been quickly finished off.’

54. ‘But why have I stupidly added these remarks, as if after asking for advice I were now giving it? On the contrary, all instructions to be given to priests and communicated to the laity shall follow your nod and pleasure and the tenor of your letter.’

55. Comparable instances are 4.2.1 and 7.11.1. In 7.6.2, translated by Van Waarden (2010) 289 as ‘the wolf of our time’, we can, I think, interpret the use of istius in istius aetatis as a means to involve the addressee. More difficult is 4.7.1 where ista (without haec) refers back to the opening sentence of Sidonius’ letter: again clearly Sidonius’ words, but by now read by and taken up by the addressee?

56. An intermediary case is found in Egeria’s travels, where she literally directs the addressee’s gaze: ecce ista fundamenta in giro colliculo isto, quae videtis, ... (Eg. 14.2). For the use of pronouns in Egeria see also Fruyt (2003), esp. 117-18.
which I just described to you and which are now (again) under your attention). Therefore, we could also classify this instance under the third category. Either way, the choice of *ista* is not random.

(20) *cum tu inter ista discessu primorum populariumque statu urbis exinanquito ad nova celer veterum Ninivitarum exempla decurristi, ne divinae admonitioni tua quoque desperatio conviciaretur.* (Sidon. Ep. 7.1.3)\(^57\)

However, in spite of the fact that quite a number of instances of *iste* can be explained along these lines, there remains a fourth category of instances in which the second person reference of *iste* cannot, or only in an artificial way, be established. First of all, the combination *ille .. iste* .. seems to be used instead of an earlier *hic .. ille*.\(^58\) Difficult is, furthermore, an instance such as (21), taken from the same letter as (20), where *populus iste* (the people of Clermont and therefore primarily belonging to Sidonius) is directly contrasted with the *Viennensibus tuis* of the addressee.\(^59\)

(21) *denique illic deinceps non fuere vel damna calamitati vel ostenta formidini. quae omnia sciens populus iste Viennensibus tuis et accidisse prius et non accessisse posterius vestigia tam sacrosanctae informationis amplectitur, sedulo petens, ut conscientiae tuae beatitudo mittat orationum suarum suffragia quibus exempla transmisit.* (Sidon. Ep. 7.1.6)\(^60\)

Or could we say here, too, that the people of Clermont are referred to by means of *iste* in consequence of the fact that Sidonius appeals to the addressee to come to their rescue and that he has ‘presented’, so to speak, his people to the addressee? That would mean that *iste* would be used here quite rhetorically to stress the addressee’s relation with the people of Clermont as his responsibility?\(^61\)

Although there remain some difficult cases, it should be emphasized that we find these in Cicero and Pliny as well. Moreover, the majority of instances in Sidonius that were analysed can be explained in terms of second person reference and addressee involvement. The conclusion

57. ‘When amid these terrors surrounding you the city-strength was being depleted by the flight of citizens both high and low, you promptly resorted to a new version of the historic procedure at Nineveh, that you at least might not bring reproach on the divine warning by giving way to despair.’

58. In 4.18.5 (classified in category 1) the deictic reference to the second person (who is the reader of the epigram standing in front of the church) is quite natural, but, e.g., in 4.21.1 and 7.13.3 the use of *iste* seems to be purely idiomatic.


60. ‘So thenceforth losses were no calamity and portents no terror in that city. This people of Clermont, knowing that these calamities all came upon your people of Vienne before your intervention and have not come near them since, eagerly follow the lead of your hallowed instruction, diligently entreating that one so blessedly supreme in spirituality may grant the support of his prayers to those to whom he has now sent copies of the Rogations.’

61. Other problematic cases are: 4.22.6 (*ista*), 4.18.5 (*ista*), 7.13.3, 7.14.4.
should therefore be, to repeat it one more time, that \textit{iste} is, at least in Sidonius' letters, not (yet) the random replacer of \textit{hic} it is often claimed to be. After this lengthy excursus on the use of \textit{iste}, we will return to textual coherence, in order to briefly discuss Sidonian word order.

4 Textual Coherence Continued: Word Order at Sentence Level

As we saw in the previous section, textual coherence is usually brought about by a combination of various features. One of these features is word order, in the sense of ‘constituent order’, since the units involved need not be single words but can consist of (complex) noun phrases, which as a whole are the ‘sentence constituents’ that entertain syntactic relations at sentence level.

Constituent order should be distinguished from the order of single words (nouns, adjectives, genitives and prepositional modifiers) within constituents. In the case of Sidonius, and literary Late Latin more generally, this distinction is quite essential, since it is especially here, i.e. in the internal make-up of the individual sentence constituents, that we find the baroque word order patterns which are so typical of the mannerism of Late Antiquity. Here stylistic needs surpass and overcome the original pragmatically motivated basic rules, and therefore word order within the noun phrase will be left out of account here.\textsuperscript{62} At the level of the sentence, on the other hand, as we will see, the order of constituents seems to operate still along more or less the same lines as we saw in Classical Latin. Of course the discontinuity within individual constituents (i.e. hyperbaton) has some ‘distorting’ consequences at sentence level as well,\textsuperscript{63} but all in all the two levels of word order (sentence level versus noun phrase level) can be analysed separately.

4.1 The Basic Principles of Constituent Order

Constituent order in Latin can be adequately characterized as ‘free but not arbitrary’. This means that there are no strict, syntax-based rules

\textsuperscript{62} The pragmatic basis of hyperbaton is discussed in J.R. de Jong (1994); for its increasingly stylistic character in Later Latin, see Pinkster (2005). A recent volume of papers on the word order within the Latin noun phrase is Spevak (2010c); her own contribution to the volume (Spevak (2010a) gives a useful overview of the state of the question.

\textsuperscript{63} It is, e.g., sometimes difficult to establish ‘where’ precisely a particular constituent is located: is the position of the head (the central noun) decisive or the position of the first element of a discontinuous noun phrase?
which unconditionally govern word order like we find, for example, in English, Dutch or French. The order is, however, not random either, nor is it meaningless: we do find a number of tendencies which are pragmatically motivated and can be used to explain individual patterns of constituent order. Note that the tendencies involved do not necessarily exclude each other, and hence leave the speaker (writer) some room to choose.

In spite of these reservations, it seems safe to list the following principles of constituent order, which are more or less generally accepted by Latin linguists nowadays: 64

1. anaphoric constituents (pronouns, adverbs) are usually placed at the beginning of the sentence, which reflects their function as a bridge between the former and the upcoming sentence;
2. if other constituents are placed before anaphoric elements the former tend to be pragmatically salient;
3. so-called ‘heavy’ constituents (i.e. complex, long noun phrases, accusative and infinitive-constructions and other embedded clauses) tend to occur towards the end of sentences, both for the ease of processing and, especially, for pragmatic reasons, because longer constituents usually contain more and newer information;
4. the topic (‘what the sentence is about’) usually precedes the focus (‘new and/or salient information’);
5. but note that emphatic (contrastive, counter-presuppositional, etc.) constituents usually precede other constituents, not only when they are topic but also when they carry focus;
6. furthermore ‘settings’ (stating time, place and/or circumstances), which form the background for the content of the sentence to come, seem to occupy a place of their own right at the start of a sentence or a whole paragraph, and tend to precede whatever other constituents with specific pragmatic status as outlined above;
7. when no particular pragmatic constellation is present, as, e.g., in relatively neutral clauses in which no specific constituent is highlighted, we tend to find the verb at the end of the sentence;
8. in subordinate clauses the finite verb is much more often found at the end, functioning as a syntactic marker of boundary; if it is not the finite verb, it usually is one of its obligatory ‘arguments’ (subject, object, etc.);

64. The main studies are Panhuis (1982); Pinkster (1990); Devine and Stephens (2006); Spevak (2010b). The analyses proposed by Pinkster and Spevak are based on ideas stemming from Dik’s Functional Grammar. Devine and Stephens take a somewhat different position, being strongly influenced by a more formalist tradition.
9. in main clauses, on the other hand, focal or otherwise highlighted elements are regularly placed beyond the finite verb that serves as the predicate of the main clause.

Note, incidentally, that these principles pertain mainly to the beginning and the end of sentences and clauses, positions which are pragmatically most relevant. What happens within clauses is less well studied, and also seems to be less regulated.\(^{65}\) Note furthermore that it is not one single principle that determines what we find at the beginning of a clause; we can for instance find topics there (if they are explicitly expressed), whether or not preceded by settings, as well as emphatic, contrastive or counterfactual focus.

When we now apply the above mentioned tendencies, based on the analysis of Classical Latin prose, to Sidonius’ letters, we find that they are still surprisingly adequate, as we can see in the following section.

### 4.2 An Illustration: Constituent Order in the Opening Section of 7.7.1

(22) Rumor est Gothos in Romanum solum castra movisse: huic semper irruptioni nos miseri Arverni ianua sumus, namque odis inimicorum hinc peculiaria fomenta subministramus, quia, quod necdum terminos suos ab Oceano in Rhodanum Ligeris alveo limitaverunt, solam sub ope Christi moram de nostra tantum obice patiuntur. (Sidon. Ep. 7.7.1)

The letter opens with rumor est, followed by an accusative and infinitive clause (or ‘AcI’). The AcI is positioned at the end of the sentence on pragmatic grounds (it contains all new, salient information and forms the focus of the sentence) as well as because of its ‘heaviness’. The initial rumor est has itself no specific pragmatic status other than introducing its pragmatically salient content. The basic word order pattern of the AcI itself (subject – complement – fixed collocation castra movisse) reflects that none of its members is more salient than the other: the fact as a whole is what is new here.

After this introduction the invasion of the Gothi has become ‘given’ information and huic ... irruptioni functions as the topic of the next sentence. Within the remainder of that sentence nos miseri Arverni is the most salient part and therefore focus; the predicate ianua sumus is neutrally positioned at the end. The pronoun huic anaphorically refers to the

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65. Attempts to analyse the order within the clause as well, such as Panhuis (1982), are in that respect less convincing.
66. ‘There is a rumour that the Goths have moved their camp into Roman soil; we luckless Arvernians are always the gateway to such incursions, for we kindle our enemies’ hatred in a special degree; the reason is, that their failure so far to make the channel of the Loire the boundary of their territories between the Atlantic and the Rhône is due, with Christ’s help, solely to the barrier which we interpose.’
content of the preceding sentence, and is therefore placed in first position; *irruptionis* belongs to the same constituent, but whereas *huić* just anaphorically refers to the preceding information, *irruptionis* contains the author’s evaluation of this event, as is underlined by the intrusion (causing hyperbaton) of *semper* within the noun phrase.

After this *captatio benevolentiae*, the first *narratio* starts. In the first sentence *hinc* is not in first position; this tallies with the fact that *hinc* is not anaphoric here, but refers kataphorically to the *quia*-clause that follows after the main clause.67 The topic (‘we’) is a so-called ‘given’ topic, continued from the preceding sentence and here not explicitly expressed (apart from the ending of the verb) as it was in the preceding clause, where *nos miserī Averni* was focus. The first position of this sentence is therefore not occupied by an explicit topic constituent, or by another pragmatically salient constituent, but one can explain the first position of *odiis inimicorum* here by the ‘givenness’ of *inimicorum* (a qualified reference to the *Gothos* of the first sentence), while also their *odia* can be somehow inferred from their behaviour. The rest of the sentence, on the other hand, is all new information, with the causal clause as the main focus.

The order of constituents in the following, embedded clauses likewise ranges from topical to focal. The *quia*-clause as a whole is, as the focus of the whole sentence, positioned at the end. Within the *quia*-clause, the *quod*-clause functions as a setting which explains in which respect the *inimici* are frustrated by the Arverni. Within this *quod*-clause, *necdum* is emphatic focus and it emphatically denies what the *inimici* had expected to have reached. As was stated in section 4.1, emphatic constituents, both emphatic focus and contrastive topic, tend to be positioned at the beginning of the clause. Since negation is ‘inherently focal’, negative elements (*non, nemo, nihil*, etc.) are quite often found at the beginning of sentences and clauses.68 The remainder of the *quod*-clause is ordered quite straightforwardly with the focus *Ligeris alveo* at the end just before the finite verb that marks the boundary of this clause. The *quia*-clause likewise exhibits a straightforward order of topic (*solum ... moram*) - focus (*de nostra ... obice*), although within both noun groups we find the adjectives *solum* and *nostram* again emphatically preposed as well as separated from their head noun by the external (and emotional) appeal *sub ope Christi* and the internal *tantum*, respectively.

Now what can we conclude from this short analysis? In spite of its brief and impressionistic character, it is clear, I hope, that the principles operative here have not really changed since the period of Classical Latin prose.

67. For the collocation of *hinc ... quia* see Van Waarden (2010) 86 *ad loc.*
68. Cf. the first sentence in 7.1.3, with emphatic *non enim* at the beginning.
This causes no surprise in view of Sidonius’ strong orientation on Classical Latin literature. But note that not only in literary Late Latin did the constituent order remain pragmatically based; as Pinkster (1995) shows, roughly the same can be observed in the non-literary transcripts of a conference of bishops in Carthage in 411 CE (*Gesta conlationis Carthaginiensis*). This is not to say, of course, that there are no differences between the word order in Sidonius and these *Gesta* or between Sidonius’ letters and Classical prose. But the differences are located, not at the level of the sentence, but within the individual noun phrases, where highly frequent discontinuity (hyperbaton), use of paired synonyms, chiasmus, and so on, are responsible for the baroque impression which Sidonius’ language radiates. Fundamental changes at sentence level as are claimed by some for later or more colloquial stages of Latin are not involved here yet.69

5 Text Linguistics and Narrative Structure

In the previous sections various aspects of textual coherence were discussed. We now turn more specifically to the articulation of narrative as the background for a discussion of tenses and sentence complexity. Here, too, the basic assumption is that various linguistic properties cooperate in creating certain effects. I will follow the lines of a combined narrative and pragmatic approach that has been developed in recent years in Amsterdam, especially by classical linguists of VU University.70 This will also provide ways to compare some of Sidonius’ more narrative letters with those by Pliny.

In his commentary on Sidonius’ *Ep. 7.2.3-8*, Van Waarden applies some of these insights to the use of tenses in this narrative passage.71 Following Bakker (1997) and Kroon (2002), he distinguishes between two ‘narrative modes’, viz. the ‘mimetic’ and ‘diegetic’ modes, which represent a closely observing, pseudo-eyewitness report and a more distant presentation in retrospect, respectively. With these two modes correspond specific clusters of linguistic properties, as listed in table 3. It turns out that in the letters analysed the same linguistic properties tend to cluster and accordingly it is possible to identify the narrative modes involved.

69. Recently, e.g., Clackson and Horrocks (2007) 291–92, with reference to the language of Egeria’s *Travels* — although even here, in my opinion, word order is still more pragmatics-based than they claim.
70. Allan (Ancient Greek) and Kroon and Adema (Latin). For an interesting application of some of these insights in a recent (discourse-linguistic) commentary on Augustinus *De cura pro mortuis gerenda*, see Rose (2011).
Table 3. Properties of the diegetic and mimetic narrative modes
(Kroon (2002))

| diegetic (or 'constative') mode: (omniscient) narrator looking back | mimetic (or 'observing') mode: immediate narrator, pretends to watch events unfold before his eyes |
| background/foreground structure | no background/foreground structure |
| perfect/imperfect/pluperfect verb not in initial position | historic present / historic infinitive / ellipse verb in initial position |
| flash back / flash forward | – |
| complex sentence structure connectives, particles | simple sentence structure asyndeton |
| evaluative and modal expressions | – |

In a paper on the narrative style of Thucydides, Allan (2007) combines this concept of narrative modes with a narratological approach to narrative structure, taken from, among others, Chafe (1994). This approach to narrative structure is based on patterns in storytelling. Usually, speakers start a story with some kind of summary, which Chafe calls ‘abstract’, and continue with a brief description of the setting (time and/or place), and persons involved, the ‘orientation’. Then the story proper can start, most commonly because there is some sort of ‘complication’, which comes to a ‘climax’ and a subsequent ‘resolution’ (or outcome). Speakers may or may not continue to ‘evaluate’ the events, and often round off with a so-called ‘coda’.

Although no proper tools are discussed, it is often surprisingly unproblematic to identify the various stages in terms of their typical content. If we turn back, for a moment, to the narration in 7.2, which was discussed in section 3.1, we can identify the abstract at the end of section 1 (plus Massiliensium benignitate provectus est quam status sui seu per censum seu per familiam forma pateretur). The orientation follows in sections 3-5, the complication in section 6 (forte accidit ut ... anni obiter thalamo pares), after which the climax is introduced by means of the authorial comment quid morer multis? in 7. We could say that the aftermath in section 8 is the resolution. Section 9, finally, contains a beautiful coda: habetis historiam iuvenis eximii, with a comment on the nature of the story itself.

72. Actually, a brief new complication is inserted here (quo profecto mater puellae ... maerere) which is immediately solved again (quando iam ... gaudebat). This illustrates that the system is to some extent recursive and admits of embedding.

73. A slight complication in this narration is that the story of the successful marriage is itself embedded in the story of how the protagonist came to be a letter bearer for Sidonius. I prefer to see this outer story as a kind of frame story, and leave it out of account; this frame story does not have a narrative structure of its own.
Now an analysis of the narrative structure is not an aim in itself. Allan’s point is that these various stages of a story can be connected with the use of the narrative modes discussed above, as is presented in table 4:

Table 4. The combination of narrative episodes and moods
(Allan (2007))

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>narrative structure</th>
<th>function</th>
<th>presentation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A: abstract</td>
<td>occasion / summary</td>
<td>diegetic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>O: orientation</td>
<td>setting: time/place/persons</td>
<td>diegetic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Co: complication</td>
<td>start; building up tension</td>
<td>diegetic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cl: climax</td>
<td></td>
<td>mimetic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R: resolution</td>
<td>outcome</td>
<td>both</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E: evaluation</td>
<td>comments, etc.</td>
<td>diegetic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coda</td>
<td>closing, consequences</td>
<td>diegetic</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If we now apply these ideas to the letter discussed above (7.2), we immediately observe that the climax of this story (section 7, especially the end) conforms very nicely to the properties of the mimetic mode: historic present and ellipsis of verb, asyndeton, simple sentence structure, verb in first (or even only) position, etc. Likewise, the orientation and complication stages are convincingly diegetic: complex sentences, perfect tenses combined with imperfects (foreground-background structure), evaluative expressions (*idonea*, *decenter*, *frivola*, *apta*, *parum grandibus*).

In the appendix of this chapter, four letters from Sidonius, Pliny and Egeria are analysed and classified along the lines of Allan (2007), as is indicated by various kinds of typographic distinctions, which I hope can speak for themselves. A quick comparison of these letters illustrates that analyses such as proposed here are not only useful for understanding the working of tenses, discourse particles and variation in sentence complexity, but may also be instrumental in a comparison of epistolary style.

Pliny’s first letter (2.18, about finding a teacher for the son of a friend) is a nice concise example of a narration in which the characteristics of the narrative modes correspond very clearly with the narratological stages distinguished. In an imitation of Caesar’s *veni, vidi, vici*, his climax is extremely immediate and brief, although the tense is perfect. The series of three subsequent verb forms is, in fact, divided over three different narrative stages: *iocabantur*, belonging to a longer sentence, is the last word of the orientation and functions as a background tense for the following complication (*intravi*) and climax *conticuerunt*. There is no
resolution, but Pliny immediately continues to evaluate the story. The conciseness of the story is also reflected in the fact that Pliny uses here very few presentational discourse particles (only one *nam* in a subsection of the abstract). This letter may, however, be somewhat atypical, since in the other letter by Pliny (the famous Vesuvius letter, 6.16) the tenses are quite important in marking the various stages. However, here again we do not find many presentational particles.

Sidonius, on the other hand (in *Ep.* 3.12.1-4, about the desecration of the grave of his grandfather), is a more elaborate narrator, who slowly builds up tension in the complication (with a *iam*-inversum construction), uses presentational particles and authorial markers like *quid plura* more lavishly, and shows much more variation in tenses than Pliny. A quite different style, finally, is displayed by Egeria, who uses tense variation only in the complication, but is very rich in presentational discourse particles.

To conclude, we can observe that both Pliny and Sidonius use the same set of characteristics that belong to the two narrative modes, but vary in the way they employ it in actual letters. In less literary Late Latin, such as Egeria’s travels, on the other hand, we see that the number of devices used is much more restricted; in fact she relies on discourse particles alone.

6 Conclusions and Perspectives

An application of recent pragmatic insights to the Late Latin of Sidonian letters confirms the observations made in the recent commentaries on Books 1, 4, and 7 concerning the essentially ‘classical’ nature of his Latin. As is the case in the field of syntax, Sidonius’ use of, for instance, word order (i.e. at sentence level), referential expressions, particles and devices to mark the narrative structure fits in with what we know from the Classical epistolography of Cicero and Pliny. This should not surprise us, in view of his rhetorical training and deep acquaintance with the text of his models. Even at some points where, according to scholars of Later Latin, Sidonius’ texts seem to betray traces of later developments of Latin, a closer inspection with the help of recently developed linguistics tools shows that this is not really the case: his use of, for instance, the pronouns *iste* and *ille* is still based on the principles found in the Classical and Silver Latin of Cicero and Pliny, although he does ‘stretch’ the possibilities offered and is more abundant in his application of some devices, as his Latin is more abundant in general. As regards word order, the
baroque impression created by his frequent employment of stylistic devices such as hyperbaton and chiasmus is counterbalanced by a basically unchanged word order at sentence level. The results presented here are, of course, tentative and would profit from further elaboration as well as application in individual commentaries.

In addition to their usefulness for an evaluation of Sidonius’ Latin in diachronic terms, the pragmatic insights discussed contribute to our understanding of the nature of his correspondence as such. It may teach us that Sidonius established and expressed his strongly interactive relation with his addressees not only at the level of content, but also in his linguistic choices. Thus, the use of interactional particles and adverbs, such as *enim*, *ergo*, *scilicet*, as well as his anaphoric use of the second person pronoun *iste*, do not only illustrate that the interactional value of these expressions was still much the same, but also display Sidonius’ skillful employment and even exploitation of these devices to reinforce his persuasive power. Here, I think, there is still much work to do. One could think, for instance, of a comparison of Sidonius’ letters to different kinds of addressee on the basis of these aspects, but also of a comparison with the correspondence of other, earlier, contemporaneous and later letter writers.

As regards the third part of this chapter, recent combinations of narratology and linguistics have yielded a fruitful approach to analyse the narrative structure of the *narrationes* in some of the letters. This offers a good background for the analysis of tense, sentence complexity and discourse marking expressions in a cohesive and meaningful combination. These analyses, in turn, can provide a good basis for the comparison of Sidonius as a narrator with his models, on the one hand, and with his contemporaries and later narrators. The examples briefly discussed here yield a first characterization of Sidonius as a relatively explicit and regular narrator, who does not thread his stories with series of *et tunc* ... *et postquam* as a simple narrator such as Egeria does, but does not seem to use the more sophisticated techniques of Pliny either, who alternates acceleration and slowing down, and makes extensive use of alternations of tenses to structure his narrations. Especially here, I think, opportunities are found to integrate linguistic research with the more literary preoccupations which commentators usually have.
Appendix: narrative modes and structure in letters by Sidonius and Pliny (see discussion in section 5)

Sidon. Ep. 3.12.1-4 (Secundo suo, his nephew)

[abstract] Avi mei, proavi tui tumulum hesterno (pro dolori) die paene manus profana temeraverat; sed deus adfuisset, ne nefas tantum perpetraretur.

[orientation] campus autem ipse dudum refertus tam bustualibus favillis quam cadaveribus nullam iam diu scrobem recipiebat; sed tamen tellus, humatis quae superducitur, redierat in pristinam distenta planitiem pondere nivali seu diuturno imbricatus acervis:

[complication] quae fuit causa, ut locum auderent tamquam vacatam corporum baiuli rastris funeribus impiaire. quid plura? iam niger caespes ex viridi, iam supra antiquum sepulchrum glaebae recentes, cum forte pergens urbem ad Arvernem publicum sceilus et supercilio vicini collis aspexi

[climax] meque equo effuso tam per aequata quam per abrupta proripiens et morae exiguae sic quoque impatiens, ante quam pervenirem, facinus audax praevio clamore compescui, dum dubitant in crimine reperti dilaberentur an starent, superveni.

[resolution] confiteor errorem: supplicia captorum differre non potuit, sed supra senis nostri ipsum opertorum torse latrones, quantum sufficere posset superstitione curae, mortuorum securiti.

[evaluation] ceterum nostro quod sacerdoti nil reservavi, meae causeque personae praescius in commune consuelti, ne vel haec iusto clementius vindicare vel illa iusto severius vindicaret. cui cum tamen totum ordinem rei ut satisfacisset ex itinere mandassem, vir sanctus et iustus iracundiae meae dedit gloriem, cum nil amplius ego venia postularem, prouentius more majorum reos tantae temeritatis iure caesos videri.

[coda] sed ne quid in posterum casibus liceat, quo ab exemplo vitare debemus, posco ut actutum me quoque absente tua cura sed meo sumptu resurgat in molem sparsa congeries, ....

Plin. Ep. 2.18 (Maurico suo)


[orientation] Nam proxime frequenti auditorio inter se coram multis ordinis nostri clare iocabantur;

[complication] intravi,

[climax] conticuerunt;

[evaluation] quod non referrem, nisi ad illorum magis laudem quam ad meam pertineret, ac nisi sperare te velem posse fratri tui filios probe discere.

[coda] Quod superest, cum omnes qui profitentur audiero, quid de quoque sentiam scribam, efficiamque quantum tamen epistula consecui potero, ut ipse omnes audisse videaris. 4 Debeo enim tibi, debo memoriae fratri tui hanc fidem hoc studium, praesertim super tanta re. Nam quid magis interest vestra, quam ut liberi–dicerem tui, nisi nunc illos magis amares – digni illo patre, te patruo reperiantur? quam curam mihi etiam si non mandasses vindicassem. 5 Nec ignoro suscipiendas ofensas in eligendo praeceptore, sed opportet me non modo ofensas, verum etiam simulatas pro fratri tui filiiis tam aequo animo subire quam parentes pro suis. Vale.
Plin. Ep. 6.16 (Tacito suo)


[orientation] Erat Miseni classemque imperio praesens regebat.


[climax] Iubet liburnicam aptari; mihi si venire una vellem facit copiam; respondi studere me malle, et forte ipse quod scriberem dederat.

[complication] Egrediebatur domo; accipit codicillos Rectinae Tasci imminenti periculo exterritae — nam villa eius subiacebat, nec ulla nisi navibus fuga -: ut se tanto discrimini eriperet orabat.


Egeria 19.8-13

[abstract] Et tunc retulit mihi de ipsa aqua sic sanctus episcopus dicens:

[orientation] «quodam tempore, postea quam scripsert Aggarus rex ad Dominum et Dominus rescripsert Aggaro per Ananiam cursorem, sicut scriptum est in ipsa epistola: [complication] transacto ergo aliquanto tempore supervenient Persi et girant civitate istam. Sed statim Aggarus epistolam Domini ferens ad portam cum omni exercitu suo publice oravit. Et post dixit: «Domine Iesu, tu promiseras nobis, ne aliquis hostium ingrederetur civitate istam, et ecce nunc Persae inpugnant nos». [climax] Quod cum dixisset tenens manibus levatis epistolam ipsam rex, ad subito tantae tenebrae factae sunt, foras civitatem tamen ante oculos Persarum, cum iam prope plicarunt civitati, sed ita ter- tium millarium de civitate esset: sed ita mox tenebris turbati sunt, ut vix castra ponantur et perigrarunt in miliario tertio totam civitatem. Ita autem turbari sunt Persae, ut nunquam viderent postea, qua parte in civitate ingredentur, sed custodiuntur civitatem per giro clusam hostibus in miliaro tamen tertio, quam tamen custo- dierunt mensibus aliquod.

[complication] Postmodum autem, cum viderent se nullo modo possi in civitate, voluerunt siti eos occidere, qui in civitate erant. Nam monticulum istum, quem Persae averterant, ita sicca est in ea hora, ut nec ipsi haberent vel una die quod biberent, qui obsedebant civitate, sic tamen et usque in hodie appararet. Nam postea nonnullum in qualiscumque humor ibi apparruit usque in hodie. [resolution] Ac sic iubente Deo, qui hic promiserat futurum, necesse fuit eos statim reverti ad sua, id est in Persida. [coda] Nam et postmodum quotiescumque voluerunt venire et expugnare hanc civitatem hostes, haec epistola prolata est et lecta est in porta, et statim nutu Dei expulsi sunt omnes hostes». 