FLAMMA VIRTUTIS: A SOCIO-RHETORICAL INVESTIGATION OF THE FIRE MIRACLES IN THE VITA CAESARII

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Abstract

The authors of the *vita* of Caesarius, the bishop of Arles from 502 to 542, attribute numerous miracles to a man who himself provided little comment on contemporary miracles, and was completely silent regarding the popular relic cult of his day. This disparity in focus has led to the scholarly categorization of Caesarius and his biography in two separate cultural spheres; one representing a waning patristic focus on practical action, and the other anticipating the voracious Merovingian appetite for thaumaturgy. While both perspectives are true, the latter has largely ignored the fact that the authors of Caesarius’ *vita* were intimate disciples of the bishop, and that they engineered miracle narratives in the bishop’s biography in order to endorse the practical actions that Caesarius had promoted in his own large collection of sermons.

In response to recent scholarly demand for new methodologies in the investigation of late antique miracle accounts, this study applies the “socio-rhetorical” analytical approach of the New Testament scholar Vernon K. Robbins to three distinctive miracles in the *vita*; those in which Caesarius extinguishes destructive fires. It is demonstrated that the fire miracle accounts are invested with implicit and explicit rhetorical structures that could either be readily understood by an audience, or authoritatively interpreted by a preacher on Caesarius’ feast day. In addition to associating Caesarius with scriptural holy men, and reinforcing the need for the protective presence of his body in Arles, the authors of the bishop’s *vita* inserted the analogous symbol *flamma virtutis* in the second miracle account. This symbol echoes similar analogues in Caesarius’ corpus of preaching, which were used to effectively illustrate for the bishop’s audience the practical path towards proper Christian living.
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Abbreviations

CCSL- Corpus Christianorum, Series Latina

CSEL- Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticarum Latinorum

MGH- Monumenta Germaniae Historica

PG- Patrologia Graeca

PL- Patrologia Latina


To Erica
Introduction

On August 27, 542, Caesarius, bishop of Arles from 502, was buried in the city’s St. Mary’s basilica. By 549, five of the bishop’s disciples had come together to write a vita of Caesarius, in which there are three distinct miracle accounts in which the bishop extinguishes fires:

1 “But so that God’s grace might not remain hidden in him, it happened one night that the city (of Bordeaux) was struck by a great fire. People quickly ran to the man of God and shouted ‘By your prayers, holy Caesarius, extinguish the roaring flames!’ When the man of God heard this, he was moved by sorrow and compassion. He prostrated himself in prayer in the face of the oncoming fire, and at once stopped the flames and drove them back. On seeing this, everyone praised God’s manifestation of power in Caesarius. After this miracle everyone in Bordeaux admired him so much that they regarded him not only as a bishop but also as an apostle. The devil, who had instigated his persecution, was thus thwarted when he saw that miracles of divine power brought renown to the man he had tried to accuse. We learned by a reliable report that the event happened this way.”2

2 “One day in this city - something that many know - the house of a man named John that was next to the (women’s) monastery caught fire. The fire then began to come so close that no one doubted that everything there would be surely burned up. Disturbed because they were forbidden to leave the monastery, the maidservants of God threw their books, their possessions, and themselves into cisterns where, by God’s mercy, to keep them from despairing, there was no water at the time. The assistants (to the steward) of the monastery ran to the father of the nuns and announced that the fire was already near their cell. Caesarius quickly ran out in the middle of the night along the wall to the place where the fire was approaching. Throwing himself forward in prayer he gave them orders and

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1 For an excellent overview of the vita’s writing and aims, see William E. Klingshirn, “Caesarius’ Monastery for Women in Arles and the Composition and Function of the ‘Vita Caesarii’,” Revue Bénédictine 100 (1990): 441-81. Klingshirn identifies 549 as the terminus ante quem of the vita, as one of the authors, the bishop Viventius, did not sign at the council of Orléans that year, and therefore had most likely died; see Klingshirn’s introduction to his translation, Caesarius of Arles: Life, Testament, Letters, Translated Texts for Historians 19 (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1994), 1, n. 3. For the dates of Caesarius’ bishopric, see Klingshirn, “Church Politics and Chronology: Dating the Episcopacy of Caesarius of Arles,” Revue des études Augustiniennes 38 (1992): 80-8. For an earlier monograph on Caesarius’ vita, see Samuel Cavallin, Literarhistorische und textkritische Studien zur Vita S. Caesarii Arelatensis (Lund: C.W.K. Gleerup, 1934).

2 VC 1.22.
shouted from the wall, “Do not fear blessed women.” Soon, burning with the flame of his own virtue (flamma virtutis) he sent the fire away.”

“Likewise one day the house of a man named Vincentius caught fire. Its wooden terrace was overcome by flames. Seeing that he could do nothing Vincentius went as fast as he could to the lord. Throwing himself at his knees, he asked him to send a prayer. Caesarius went outside and made the sign of the cross against the flames. They retreated and were extinguished so quickly that no sign of them appeared on the planks of the terrace.”

William Klingshirn, Caesarius’ most recent biographer, asserts that these miracle narratives represent historical ritual actions performed by the bishop in the face of threatening fires, as opposed to being fictional accounts. While this assertion is likely true, it was through the oral and literary dissemination of these events that Caesarius was most effectively credited with the miraculous, in a rhetorical attempt by his followers to “transform the coincidental into the providential”. In their written form, these accounts became integral components of Saint Caesarius’ cult, and reached their widest and most socially variegated audience during the morning mass on the bishop’s August 27 feast day.

What is most intriguing regarding the “miracle rhetoric” of Caesarius’ vita is that in his own voluminous collection of sermons, the bishop provided little overt comment on contemporary miracles. Although he did preach on the feast days of saints, Caesarius encouraged his audience to emulate how the dead had lived, which would not only merit

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3 VC 2.26.
4 VC 2.28.
temporal intercession, but more importantly eternal rewards. This disparity between Caesarius’ *vita* and sermons has led S.T. Loseby to wonder, “what Caesarius would have made of his own cult;” and has contributed to the predominant scholarly classification of the *vita* as a stepping-stone towards the thaumaturgic obsession of later Gallic writers such as Gregory of Tours (c.538 - c.594). Although the recognition of cultural progression is important, such a forward-facing orientation has effectively ignored the strong rhetorical relationship between Caesarius’ *vita* and his sermons in persuading their audiences to act and think in appropriate Christian ways. On Caesarius’ feast day in Arles, these two literary forms came together to edify their audience, and accordingly the fire miracles in Caesarius’ *vita* contain explicit and implicit references to themes emphasized in the bishop’s own sermons.

Following the pioneering work of Peter Brown, scholarship of late antiquity has generally avoided formal methodological usage in favor of broad sociological descriptions, thereby providing no proven approach for examining the rhetorical

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8 See S.T. Loseby’s review of Klingshirn, *Community*, and Raymond Van Dam, *Saints and their Miracles in Late Antique Gaul*, *The Journal of Roman Studies* 85 (1995): 336-8, 338. For an overview of the social and cultural changes from Caesarius to Gregory see Peter Brown’s chapter, “Reverentia, Rusticitas: Caesarius of Arles to Gregory of Tours,” in *The Rise of Western Christendom: Triumph and Diversity AD 200-1000* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1997), 95-111. Klingshirn, in *Life*, xvi, sums up the political and religious differences between Caesarius and Gregory’s Gallic situation, “Caesarius’ Gaul was both more Roman and more Mediterranean than Gregory’s Gaul. It was in regular communication with Rome and the East, and enjoyed the distant toleration of Arian Goths rather than the intrusive proximity of Catholic Franks. Above all, influenced more by the spirituality of Lérins than by the cult of St. Martin, its ideals of Christianization gave as much weight to the power of rhetoric as to the potency of relics.” Aron Gurevich asserts that Caesarius’ work represents the end of the patristic period, and uses him as a marker for his study of medieval Christian culture up to the time of the bishop’s namesake, Caesarius of Heisterbach (died c. 1240), *Medieval Popular Culture: Problems of Belief and Perception* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 8-10. For an overview of Gregory of Tours and his densely symbolic writings, see Giselle de Nie, *Views From a Many-Windowed Tower: Studies of Imagination in the Works of Gregory of Tours* (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1987), 1-14.

9 See Chaïm Perelman, *The Realm of Rhetoric*, tr. William Kluback (Notre Dame, London: University of Notre Dame Press, 1982), 12, who asserts that the church in late antiquity followed a rhetorical program of inserting in their audiences a “disposition to act” in appropriate Christian ways. Also see Klingshirn, *Community*, 6, who asserts that Caesarius’ *vita* and sermons are the two best sources for the, “complex relationship between the citizens of Arles and their bishop,” and that they, “reveal the ideas and actions of those they were meant to convince, seldom accessible by other means.”
relationship between Caesarius' sermons and the fire miracles in his *vita*. Therefore, in response to Brown and Raymond Van Dam's calls for new methodologies in miracle investigation, this study will utilize the "socio-rhetorical" model developed by the New Testament scholar Vernon K. Robbins. Robbins describes every text as an, "intricately woven tapestry," from which individual threads can be teased out and examined through five analytical "angles" of investigation. This study will examine two components of Robbins' method; "inner textual" analysis investigates the "intermingling patterns" of imagery and symbolism within a text, while "intertextural" analysis examines the *vita's* use of oral, textual, cultural, and social information. This combination of a close textual reading with a socio-cultural analysis will demonstrate that the fire miracles in Caesarius' *vita* are rhetorically structured in such a way as to associate the bishop with scriptural holy men, promote his miraculous relics, and persuade the text's audience to act in

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10 See John Kitchen, *Saints' Lives and the Rhetoric of Gender: Male and Female in Merovingian Hagiography* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), 6, who labels the predominant scholarly situation as "Brownian," in which methodology is subordinated to the ability to weave an impressive historical story.


13 For an outline of inner textual analysis, see Robbins, *Exploring*, 7-39 and *Tapestry*, 44-95; and for a layout of his intertextual process, see *Exploring*, 40-70 and *Tapestry*, 96-143. For "intermingling patterns," see idem, *Tapestry*, 46. The three other arenas of socio-rhetorical investigation provided by Robbins are social and cultural texture, which focuses on the use of sociological and anthropological analytical tools, ideological texture, which examines the political background to a text, and sacred texture, which explores theological implications of a text; see *Tapestry*, 144-191, 192-236, and *Exploring*, 3, respectively, for overviews. Current late antique scholarship has overwhelmingly focused on sociological and political analyses of texts. Therefore, these analytics are being passed over in favor of the more innovative inner textual and intertextual tools.
appropriate Christian ways by means of explicit example, and didactic fire analogies often used by the bishop in his own sermons.\textsuperscript{14}

\textbf{Caesarius’ Background}

Caesarius was born in 469/470 to an aristocratic Gallo-Roman family in the central-eastern Gallic port of Chalon, on the Saône River. At seventeen he entered the clergy under the bishop Silvester, but after two years was “set aflare by the promptings of divine grace” \textit{(argento ergo pontifice gratias Christo)}, and decided to set out for the famed monastic island of Lérins, 4km south of modern Cannes.\textsuperscript{15} Due to his hard work and ascetic dedication, Caesarius was appointed the cellarer \textit{(cellerarius)} of the community, and placed in charge of distributing provisions to his fellow monks. Using what his biographers call “holy discrimination” \textit{(sancta discretio)}, Caesarius declined to give rations to those for whom he believed it unnecessary, enraging his fellow monks, and leading to his removal from the post by the abbot Porcarius.\textsuperscript{16} In reaction, Caesarius turned to strict vigils and fasting, and “burning as he was for spiritual things” \textit{(fervens ad spiritualia)}, he burnt himself out; contracting a life-threatening fever due to his increased ascetic efforts.\textsuperscript{17} To aid in his recovery, Porcarius sent the monk to Arles on the southern Rhône, the administrative and ecclesial capital of Gaul, between 495 and 499.\textsuperscript{18}

\textsuperscript{14} The importance of examining both textual and social aspects of Gallic hagiography has been recognized by John H. Corbett in, “Hagiography and the Experience of the Holy in the Work of Gregory of Tours,” \textit{Florilegium} 7 (1985): 40-54, 42, who promotes a greater understanding of the, “interaction of text, belief, and social experience.”

\textsuperscript{15} VC 1.4.

\textsuperscript{16} VC 1.6.

\textsuperscript{17} Klingshirn translates this as, “burning as he was with a desire for spiritual things,” VC 1.7. See Klingshirn, \textit{Community}, 18-32, for dates, locations and details on Caesarius’ early years and his life at Lérins.

In Arles, Caesarius was received into the home of the Christian aristocrats Firminus and his wife Gregoria, where he benefitted from the tutelage of the famed rhetor and priest Julianus Pomerius. In his extant, “On the Contemplative Life” (De Vita Contemplativa), Pomerius encouraged the Gallic clergy to lay aside aristocratic concerns and center their activities around the monastic ideal; a call to reform that Caesarius would continue during his own bishopric. After discovering common ancestry with the city’s bishop Aeonious (bishop c.485 - 501/2), Caesarius became a deacon, then priest, and by 498/499 was installed as the abbot of a men’s monastery on a nearby island of the Rhône. Seeing that his death was imminent, Aeonious persuaded the ruling Visigoths, under Alaric II (484 - 507), to ensure that Caesarius would succeed him as bishop. Although Aeonious died on August 16, 501 or 502, Caesarius was not elected until December 502, leading Klingshirn to suggest that a competing candidate named Johannes had the seat during the interim, and was strategically left out of Caesarius’ vita.

As bishop, Caesarius was a distinguished politician and preacher, whose tenure saw Arles change hands from Visigothic to Ostrogothic governance between 508 - 511, until it was ceded by the Ostrogoths in 536/537 to the Frankish king Childebert I (496 -

University of America Press, 1989), 18-9, sees this increase in Gaul’s secular status as a direct contributor to Arles’ growth in ecclesiastical standing throughout the fifth-century. Also see P. Heather in “The Emergence of the Visigothic Kingdom,” in Fifth-Century Gaul: A Crisis of Identity?, ed. John Drinkwater and Hugh Elton (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 84-94, 85, who states that Arles served as the “jugular of Roman administration in the area.”

For Caesarius’ habitation with Firminus and Gregoria, see VC 1.8-10. For information on Julianus Pomerius, whose dates are unknown, and a translation of De Vita Contemplativa, see Mary Suelzer, ed. and tr., Julianus Pomerius: The Contemplative Life, Ancient Christian Writers 4 (Westminster, Maryland: The Newman Press, 1947), 3-12. Also see Robert Markus, The End of Ancient Christianity (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 191, who states that Pomerius sought to balance the ascetic ideal with the social responsibilities and concerns of the clergy in Gaul.

See VC 1.10-13 for Caesarius’ relationship with Aeonious and his eventual election. For the date of Caesarius joining the monastery, see Klingshirn, Community, 83. Klingshirn states that the monastery was most likely located 3 km southeast of Arles, Life, 15, n.19. Klingshirn’s argument of a contested election is based on the gap between Aeonious’ death and Caesarius’ ordination, and a list of bishops c. 900 that includes a bishop Johannes between Aeonious and Caesarius, see Community, 83-7, and “Church Politics and Chronology,” 86-8.
Caesarius fostered beneficial relationships with the Gothic kings Alaric II and Theoderic (471-526), receiving tax exemptions and funds that he used to ransom the captives of the ongoing skirmishes. His concern with releasing these captives extended to melting down church plate and cutting silver ornamentation out of the church columns in Arles. Due to his reputation (fama) for such acts of civic responsibility, Caesarius was designated the papal vicar (vicarius) of Gaul by pope Symmachus (pope 498-514) in 514, providing him with the authority to convene Gallic church councils, and widely disseminate reform principles through his vast sermon output.

In his sermons, Caesarius sought to improve the actions of his congregation through the twin tactics of “policing desire,” and promoting the emulation of appropriate spiritual exemplars, such as the martyrs that were honored on feast days,

“A martyr, indeed, is a witness (testis). Therefore, if anyone bears witness to the truth and judges all cases with justice, God will consider as martyrdom everything that he endures in testimony of the truth and justice. Similarly, if a man resists drunkenness and with God’s help wishes to persevere, suffering tribulations for that purpose, God will count all these things towards the glory of martyrdom (martyrii gloriain).”

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21 For a detailed chronology of the political shifts in Gaul following the decline of Rome to the beginning of the sixth-century, see John Drinkwater and Hugh Elton ed., A Crisis of Identity?, xvii-xx. For the movement from Visigothic to Ostrogothic and finally Frankish Arles, see Klingshirn, Community, 111-13. The authors of Caesarius’ vita praise the rule of Childebert in VC 1.34 and 2.45.

22 See Klingshirn’s excellent overview of Caesarius’ ransoming actions in relation to the strengthening of his authority in “Charity and Power: Caesarius of Arles and the Ransoming of Captives in Sub-Roman Gaul,” Journal of Roman Studies 75 (1985): 183-203. For the selling of ornamental silver and church plate, see VC 1.32. VC 1.20 presents the tax exemptions and money for captives received by Caesarius from the Visigothic king Alaric II, and VC 1.37-38 describes the gifts and accolades given to Caesarius by the Ostrogothic king Theoderic.

23 The meeting between Caesarius and Symmachus is found in VC 1.42, and Klingshirn summarizes their relationship in Community, 127-132. Caesarius presided over six Gallic councils, Agde (506), Arles (524), Carpentras (527), Orange (529), Vaison (520), and Marseilles (533); see ibid., 95-106, and 137.


25 SC 47.2.
Caesarius’ feast day focus on the imitable as opposed to the extraordinary stood in direct contrast to the concerns of the majority of his audience, who expected imminent irruptions of God’s power, and enjoyed the alcohol-fueled revelry of the celebrations that followed the church service. By neglecting the miraculous, the bishop had sacrificed a valuable rhetorical tool; and the authors of his own vita would understand that “miracle was too effective a means of socio-psychological influence on believers for the church to disregard.” Therefore, they filled Caesarius’ vita with numerous miracle accounts, elaborated with implicit and explicit rhetorical themes that could be explicated during feast day preaching.

Scholarly Treatment of the Miraculous

For a millennium following the writing of Caesarius’ vita, miracle stories of the saints were a popular, and largely unquestioned, means by which the Catholic Church “secured adherence” to its value system throughout Europe. However, by the sixteenth century, Reformation writers such as John Calvin (1509 - 1564) began to criticize miracles attributed to the saints, labeling them as “sheer delusions of Satan” that deceptively deflected praise and worship due to God alone. In response to growing skepticism, a group of Jesuit scholars arose in Belgium, popularly labeled the “Bollandists,” after Jean Bolland (1596 - 1665), who continued the work begun by the

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26 Gurevich, Medieval Popular Culture, 54.
Dutch scholar Héribert Rosweyde (1569 - 1629). The mission of the Bollandists was to collect and organize the vast literature pertaining to the saints that was spread throughout Europe, and through a focus on source criticism, to uncover the holy exemplars that had often been “lost beneath layers of legend and rhetoric.” The first edition of the resulting Acta Sanctorum was published in 1643, which presented edited martyr and saint accounts alongside information on relics, festivals, and patronage destinations. While the theological presuppositions of the earlier scholars necessarily limited their criticisms, the Bollandists continue their work today in the academic journal Analecta Bollandiana.

Further challenges to the miraculous arose with Enlightenment thought, notably in the work of the Scottish philosopher David Hume (1711 - 1776). In his 1748 collection of essays, An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding, Hume placed the burden of evidence upon miracles: “A miracle is a violation of the laws of nature; and as a firm and unalterable experience has established these laws, the proof against a miracle, from the very nature of the fact, is as entire as any argument from experience can possibly be imagined.” Although this view has remained the authoritative empirical reasoning against the occurrence of miracles, outright dismissal ignores that “laws of nature” are

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30 Knowles, Great Historical Enterprises, 5.

subjective, and that for an audience that believes in the miraculous, the natural state of
the world includes regular and direct “acausal” intervention by God.\(^{32}\)

The scholarly shift towards historiography in the 19\(^{th}\) century prompted the
establishment of ambitious European projects to collect and classify the histories of
national Völker, such as the Monumenta Germaniae Historica begun in 1819, which
contains the first edited version of Caesarius’ vita.\(^{33}\) Miracle-filled texts were seen as
historically suspect, leading to the creation of “hagiography” as a genre for information
believed to, “obscure the realities of those centuries, not illuminate them.”\(^{34}\) In 1905, the
Bollandist scholar Hippolyte Delehaye published his monumental work, The Legends of
the Saints, in which he applied techniques of historical criticism to the troublesome
material.\(^{35}\) Delehaye concluded that while miracle narratives officially accepted by the
Catholic Church were historically reliable, many others were “brightly colored pictures,”
that were invented to satisfy the demands of a credulous public.\(^{36}\) Despite his overt
theological bias, Delehaye established a lasting scholarly doubt over the historical value
of miracles, as seen in Claudia Rapp’s 2005 work, Holy Bishops in Late Antiquity. Rapp
describes miracles accounts as “sensational” and “overemphasized,” and asserts that

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\(^{32}\) See Benedicta Ward, “Monks and Miracle,” in Miracles in Jewish and Christian Antiquity: Imagining
Truth, ed. John C. Cavadini (Notre Dame, Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 1999), 127-37, 128,
who states that, “In the ancient or medieval world...the notion of the law of nature was not used in
opposition to the nature of creation by God.” For “acausal,” see Gurevich, Medieval Popular Culture, 18.

\(^{33}\) For the origins of the continuing Monumenta Germanicae Historica, which contains the first critical
edition of Caesarius’ vita, see Knowles, Great Historical Enterprises, 65-97. For the vita in the MGH, see
Cyprianus of Toulon, et al., Vita Caesarii episcopi Arelatensis (MGH Scriptores Rerum Merovingicarum

\(^{34}\) For the quote, see Felice Lifshitz, “Beyond Positivism and Genre: ‘Hagiographical’ Texts as Historical

\(^{35}\) See Thomas J. Heffernan, “Hippolyte Delehaye (1859 - 1941),” in Medieval Scholarship: Biographical
Studies on the Formation of a Discipline: Volume 2: Literature and Philology, ed. Helen Damico (New
York and London: Garland Publishing Inc., 1998), 215-26, who also points out that Delehaye made more
than one thousand contributions to the Analecta Bollandiana during his life, 219.

\(^{36}\) Hippolyte Delehaye, The Legends of the Saints, 4\(^{th}\) ed., tr. Donald Attwater (New York: Fordham
University Press, 1962), 18. Delehaye states that, “it is useless to expect a high degree of intelligence in a
crowd, so it is to expect a high standard of morality;” ibid., 37.
letters are stronger evidence of the relationship between a bishop and his followers.\textsuperscript{37} However, this narrow focus limits her study to the elite’s interaction with living bishops, and ignores the relationships people of all classes had with deceased bishops, in which orally traded miracle stories were the foremost communication medium of the saints.\textsuperscript{38}

Felice Lifshitz asserts that the problems associated with a strict historical focus have contributed to the current scholarly prevalence of “reconstructing mentalities” by means of sociological and anthropological tools.\textsuperscript{39} Most influential in this regard has been Peter Brown, who warns that stressing the credulity of the devout, as Delehaye and Rapp have done, “puts an emphasis on a subjective capacity for religious emotion that is inappropriate to the study of ancient and of much medieval religion.”\textsuperscript{40} Although the amazing nature of miraculous acts was at the core of piety for many Christians, monks and ecclesiastical officials often subordinated discussion of the historical actuality of the events in favor of extrapolating religious meanings.\textsuperscript{41} Despite these divergent understandings of miracle, the saint’s tomb served as an important social adhesive, where Christians of all classes gathered to pay reverence to the saint in exchange for miraculous intercession, following established Roman structures of patronage. Thus, the “cult of the saints” was a key factor in the church’s cohesion and growth following the decline of

\textsuperscript{38} For the importance of oral stories of Caesarius’ miracles, see Klingshirn, “Caesarius’ Monastery for Women,” 471.
\textsuperscript{39} Lifshitz, “Beyond Positivism and Genre,” 92. See also Paul Fouracre, “Merovingian History and Merovingian Hagiography,” \textit{Past and Present} 127 (1990): 3-38, who asserts that historians who ignore the miraculous, “disregard the integrity of each text they touched upon,” 5.
\textsuperscript{41} See Ward, “Monks and Miracle”. 
Rome. Ever the reappraiser, Brown has recently expressed concern over his previous tendency to paint societal pictures with a wide brush, and has called for new models that focus on the “implicit imaginative structures that explained not only how the saints worked, but why the saints worked and, above all, on what objects.”

Valuable sociological investigations of late antique Gallic wonderworking have followed in Brown’s wake, beginning with Clare Stancliffe’s 1983 work, St. Martin and His Hagiographer: History and Miracle in Sulpicius Severus, which examines the miracle-filled presentation of Martin, bishop of Tours (c.336 - c.397), by his biographer Sulpicius Severus (c. 355 - c.420). Stancliffe emphasizes the societal construction of “laws of nature,” and stresses that holy men like Martin were believed to be “plugged-in” to God’s grace and power, allowing them to direct natural processes. In 1993, Raymond Van Dam published Saints and their Miracles in Late Antique Gaul, in which he demonstrated how healing rituals at saint’s tombs emphasized, “caring over curing,” by providing psychological and sociological reassurance for the ill. Following Brown, Van Dam views the body as a symbolic “idiom” for the Christian community, wherein the illness and healing of the body represent the corruption and ultimate restoration of the sinful by God. Thereby, he posits a rhetorical relationship between community values

42 For the importance of reverentia, see Brown, Relics and Social Status, 232-3. For the importance of the saint’s cult as a social adhesive, see idem, Cult, 99.
45 Van Dam, Saints and their Miracles, 115.
and miracle accounts, asserting that "an investigation of misfortune becomes a study of Merovingian values of communities, and the means at their disposal to encourage the acceptance of those values." Despite this inclusive statement, Van Dam does not venture to investigate calamities beyond illness.

In Klingshirn's 1994 work, *Caesarius of Arles: The Making of a Christian Community in Late Antique Gaul*, he asserts that while the bishop was alive, his ritual actions in the face of disaster served as a "centralized therapy," through which the anxieties of his followers could be allayed. Following his death, Caesarius’ scattered relics provided a "decentralized therapy" to everyone that they reached. The bishop’s *vita* worked alongside the relics to spread a "vivid recreation of the bishop’s very presence" into the minds of its audience; a *praesentia* that Brown describes as "the greatest blessing that a late antique Christian could enjoy." Although Klingshirn recognizes the unusual focus on fire miracles in Caesarius’ *vita*, his search for the "unquestionable univocity" of social and historical information has kept him from investigating the multiple layers of meaning that he believes to exist in the miracle accounts; what the anthropologist Victor Turner terms the “multivocality” of their symbolic structure. Although these sociological approaches to Gallic wonderworking

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48 Klingshirn, *Community*, 162.
49 For, “vivid recreation of the bishop’s very presence,” see Klingshirn, *Life*, 4-5. Also see Brown, *Cult of the Saints*, 88.
50 For Klingshirn’s recognition of the heavy focus on fire miracles, and his understanding that miracle accounts possess many meanings, see *Community*, 162-63. For the “unquestionable univocity” of history, see Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca, *The New Rhetoric*, 7. Victor Turner’s term “multivocality,” a descriptor of symbols with multiple meanings, will be used for the remainder of this study, see *The Forest of Symbols: Aspects of Ndembu Ritual* (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1967), 43. Cam Grey has recently called for a more multivocal study of demon possession accounts in “Demoniacs, Dissent, and Disempowerment in the Late Roman West: Some Case Studies From the Hagiographical Literature,” *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 13 (2005): 39-69. He stresses the need to use “a variety of interpretative contexts and to apply each one of these contexts to each case in pursuit of the multiple layers of meaning inherent in each episode,” 68.
have provided invaluable information regarding the function of saint’s cults, in regards to miracle narratives, the “trees” have often been neglected in favor of the “forest”. Fire miracle narratives possessed characteristics unique to the alleviated calamity, and would have held particular significance for anyone who had experienced “the sense of helplessness and futility that accompanied its destructive course, and the feelings of relief and gratitude that welled up when all was not lost.”

As literary tools dominated by the secular and ecclesial aristocracy, *vitae* were not dispassionate reports of miraculous occurrences, but rather engineered “Acts of the Gallic Apostles,” in a social milieu in which miracle narratives were also transmitted through oral, architectural, pictorial, and geographical means. Patricia Cox Miller has recently offered intriguing studies investigating the “aesthetic rhetoric” of late antique relics and their associated poetry and art. She asserts that the fire and light imagery of the different media combined to present a “rhetorical dazzle,” that both enthralled and educated audiences, and combined to sustain what Kathryn Hume calls the “culturally shared fantasies” of the saints. However, as literary entities, miracle accounts in *vitae* contain...
rhetorical structures unique to their medium. This allows for the application of narrative and semiological analytical tools, which can aid in uncovering what J.L. Derouet terms the "vrai contenu du message véhiculé par l'hagiographie."  

In 1988, Thomas Heffernan contributed a narrative investigation of what he terms "sacred biography," in which he states that miracle narratives are "polysemous linguistic constructs" that contain multiple inherent meanings. A more accurate understanding of miraculous multivocality comes with the recognition of "analogue thought" in the recent work of Giselle de Nie and William McCready. In her work on the texts of Gregory of Tours, de Nie has demonstrated how his miracle-filled and richly symbolic writing, which had previously been described as "imprecise" and "confused" by the literary scholar Eric Auerbach, was actually organized according to a broad network of analogical relationships. According to the rhetorical investigators Chaïm Perelman and L. Olbrechts-Tyteca, an analogical connection exists when two referents are, "integrated into a mythical or speculative reality in which they are mutual participants." McCready further clarifies this concept in relation to the miracle narratives in the writings of Gregory the Great (pope 590 - 604),

"The relationship between a miracle event, which pertains to the natural order, and its significance, which pertains to the spiritual order, is often mediated by analogies between the two realms. This has interesting implications: it seems to presuppose that reality is structured in such a way that"
that the moral or spiritual order is reflected in the physical order, that the
one is an analogue of the other: it seems to imply a holistic view of reality
in which the most basic connections are not causal but analogical.58

In this regard, Christian fire imagery had the dual advantage of referencing both a
universally understood physical phenomenon, and a multivocal spiritual symbol with a
deep history rooted in the Bible; from the burning bush, to the Pentecostal fire of the
Holy Spirit, to the eternal flames of hell.59 This inherent multivocality endowed fire
miracles with a vast potential for analogical interpretation, as is readily apparent in
Bede’s (672/673 - 735) analysis of a fire miracle in his vita of St. Cuthbert,

“It is not to be wondered at that such perfect men who served God
faithfully received great power (potestatem) against the strength of flames,
when, by daily practice of virtue (virtutum), they learned both to overcome
the lusts of the flesh and ‘to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one’
(Eph 6:16)...But I and those like me, conscious of our weakness and
helplessness, are certain that we dare take no such measures against
material fire (ignem materialem); we are also uncertain whether we can
escape unharmed from that inextinguishable fire of future punishment
(ignem illum inextinguibilem futurae castigationis). But the loving-
kindness of our Saviour is mighty and abundant; and He will use the grace
of his protection even now to extinguish the flames of vices (viciorum
incendia) in us, unworthy though we be, and to escape the flames of
punishment (poenarum flammis) in the time to come.”60

McCready likens Bede’s movement from the physical flames to the flames of hell with
the modern technique of “free association”.61 The analogue “flames of vices” (viciorum
incendia) connects the physical and spiritual in a rhetorical attempt to urge the audience
towards the “daily practice of virtue” (virtutem) of their hero Cuthbert. This analogical

58 William D. McCready, Signs of Sanctity: Miracles in the Thought of Gregory the Great (Toronto:
Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 1989), 256.
59 For examples of the varied Biblical fire symbolism, see Moses and the burning bush in Exodus 3, fire
representing the Holy Spirit in Acts 2, and the flames of hell that are consistently referenced throughout the
book of Revelation.
60 Bede, Vita sancti Cuthberti prosaica auctore Beda, 14, in Bertram Colgrave, ed. and tr., Two Lives of
Saint Cuthbert (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1940), 141-307, 203. The English translation is
heavily informed by Colgrave, but modernized by McCready in Bede, 35.
61 McCready, Bede, 35.
construct supports McCready’s assertion that miracle accounts were primarily “signs of sanctity,” through which the “essential internal virtue” of a subject was communicated, alongside practical instructions for Christian improvement.  

Explicit evidence for this type of construction in Caesarius’ fire miracles is found in the climax of the second fire miracle narrative: “Soon, burning with the flame of his own virtue (flamma virtutis) he sent the fire away.” With its combination of natural and spiritual significance, the mediating analogue flamma virtutis both demonstrates the holiness of Caesarius, and presents a complex literary symbol packed with potential rhetorical interpretations. Virtus has long been understood as a multivocal term, and McCready asserts that the ambiguity of the word served “to underline the connection between miracle and moral virtue,” as demonstrated in the example from Bede.

De Nie asserts that Caesarius’ vita represents a Gallic literary shift from the “abstract religion mediated by words,” as found in the bishop’s sermons, to a focus on analogical interpretations of “visible persons and palpable objects” abundant in the miracle narratives of his vita. However, as will be demonstrated, Caesarius repeatedly turned to fire analogies in his preaching in order to encourage his audience to perform specific acts of virtue, and an examination of his sermons will reveal a blueprint of the potential interpretations built into the flamma virtutis of his vita.

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62 McCready, Signs of Sanctity, 71-2, and see 87.
63 VC 2.26.
64 McCready, Signs of Sanctity, 91. For the multivocality of virtue, see Stancliffe, St. Martin, 9. Heffernan, in Sacred Biography, 145, states that virtue could be seen as, “an internal, spiritual change which results from right action.” Thomas Head and Thomas Noble, in the introduction to Soldier of Christ: Saints and Saints’ Lives From Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages (Pennsylvania: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1995), xvi, state that the term was connected to, “the saint’s works on earth and the miracles after his death.” Also see Gurevich, Medieval Popular Culture, 49, who states that the saint’s power came from his “fusion of sanctity and thaumaturgy.”
Although significant gains have been made in both the social and literary investigation of miracle accounts in late antiquity, what is required at this stage is a model that can combine their approaches. In the absence of appropriate methods from late antique scholarship, this study will utilize an analytical tool developed in the field of New Testament studies. In 1984 Vernon Robbins introduced his work, *Jesus the Teacher: A Socio-Rhetorical Interpretation of Mark*, in which he criticized the predominant scholarly focus on intramural Christian history. He asserted that such an approach, “failed to keep in touch with the basic social and cultural phenomena in the Mediterranean world that created the environment in which Christianity lived and moved and had its being.”

In response, he borrowed from the fields of anthropology, sociology, literary theory, and rhetorical analysis in order to examine how the author of Mark sought to, “change attitudes and induce action,” by combining Hellenistic Jewish traditions with themes found in Greco-Roman literature such as Plato’s *Dialogues*, Xenophon’s *Memorabilia*, and Philostratus’ *Life of Apollonius of Tyana*. Robbins concluded that the gospel of Mark was widely persuasive in contemporary Mediterranean circles, as it was, “a document in which a teacher-king enacted a role that was honored in Greco-Roman society.”

In the ensuing years, Robbins concentrated on the middle ground between, “interpreters who focus on literary and rhetorical phenomena and interpreters who focus on historical, social, cultural, ideological and theological phenomena,” and he further

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67 Ibid., 6.
68 Ibid., 210.
developed socio-rhetorical investigation as a means by which the wide range of influence upon the rhetorical structure of New Testament texts could be explored.\textsuperscript{69}

"Socio-rhetorical critics are interested in the nature of texts as social, cultural, historical, theological, and ideological discourse. They approach a text much like an anthropologist "reads" a village and its culture. The interpreter perceives the dwellings and their arrangement; the interaction of the people and their rituals; and the sounds of the speech, the songs, the drums and the barking as signs that invite research, analysis and interpretation."\textsuperscript{70}

In order to effectively examine such textual complexity, Robbins introduced a metaphor of texts as intricate tapestries, in which five component textures could be isolated and investigated; inner texture, intertexture, social and cultural texture, ideological texture, and sacred texture.\textsuperscript{71} Among the primary forms of rhetorical communication he has uncovered in the New Testament is "miracle discourse," which, he asserts, "places human personal afflictions, ailments, and crises in the position of major topics, rather than human social relationships."\textsuperscript{72} Accordingly, as will be demonstrated in the socio-rhetorical investigation of the fire miracles in Caesarius' \textit{vita}, the most important levels of meaning in the narratives extend far beyond the extinguishing of physical flames.

Socio-rhetorical investigation has not been without its critics, and as Eugene Gallagher points out, Robbins' approach could be viewed as a "simple exhortation to

\textsuperscript{69} Robbins, \textit{Tapestry}, 2-3, and see idem, 1-17, for an overview of the scholarly developments that led to the creation of socio-rhetorical investigation.


\textsuperscript{71} Robbins, \textit{Exploring}, 3.

study a text from every conceivable point of view.

However, Robbins has consistently maintained that using all of his investigative tools is beyond the scope of any one study, and he suggests that initial readings of a text will aid in selecting the appropriate analytics for its investigation. Although socio-rhetorical investigation has predominantly been used to examine texts from the New Testament, its recognized success has led to its recent use in examining texts ranging from the Qur'an, to the third or fourth century *Apocalypse of Paul*. This study will further the scope of socio-rhetorical analysis, by applying Robbins' "inner textual" and "intertextual" analytics to the fire miracles in Caesarius' *vita*. It will demonstrate that these miracle narratives share both implicit and explicit themes with Caesarius' sermons, and show how the two could work together to communicate Christian history and values.

**Late Antique Miraculous Rhetoric**

Prior to applying socio-rhetorical investigation to the fire miracles of Caesarius' *vita*, we must provide an overview of the developments that led to such a disparate focus on miracle between Caesarius and his biographers, as the eventual rhetorical success of contemporary miracle narratives in Gaul was not always guaranteed. A turning point in western piety towards the saints came with Ambrose, the bishop of Milan from 374 to

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397, who discovered the bodies of the Milanese martyrs Gervasius and Protasius outside of the city’s walls in 386. The martyrs were brought into the city’s newly designed basilica Ambrosiana with great pomp, and were immediately credited with numerous healings; as Neil McLynn states, “in Milan, it seemed, the age of the apostles had returned.”

However, there was an immediate outcry against the truth of the miracle claims by the city’s Arian minority, whose perception of Christ as a secondary being did not allow for the possibility of such miracles by his servants. Chief among the Arian dissenters was Justina, the mother of the young emperor Valentinian, and Ambrose’s “formidable and long-standing rival” in matters political and theological. The bishop’s biographer, Paulinus of Milan, likened the Arians, who “scoffed at the great grace of God” (deridebat tantam Dei gratiam), displayed in “the merits of his martyrs” (meritis martyrum), to the Jews who questioned Jesus’ exorcisms in the Gospels. Eleven years later, Augustine (354 - 430), the bishop of Hippo, would recount the incident as a victory for Ambrose, and assert that God had orchestrated the discovery and miracles specifically to refute the Arian leaders: “praises of you were fervent (ferventes) and radiant (lucentes), and the mind of that hostile woman (Justina), though not converted to sound faith

76 Neil McLynn, Ambrose of Milan: Church and Court in a Christian Capital (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994), 212. For dates see ibid., 3 and 366.
77 For the opposition to the martyrs, see ibid., 213-14. For the opposition of Arian Christians to claims of miracles of the saints in general, see Van Dam, Leadership, 187, and Brown, Relics, 235.
78 For “formidable and long-standing rival,” see McLynn, Ambrose, 161, and for the contentious relations between Ambrose and Justina, 158-219.
(sanitatem credendi), was nevertheless checked in its anger (furore).” Thus, political and theological rhetoric were tightly intertwined with the installation of the Milanese martyrs.

While relics and celebrations at the tombs of martyrs had played an important role in western Christendom for over two centuries, Ambrose had significantly moved previously private graveyard celebrations into his basilica, and under church control. As Brown states, he was “like an electrician who rewires an antiquated wiring system.” This rewiring project included the laying of cable far beyond Ambrose’s own see, as he sent away gifts of relics to strengthen ecclesial bonds. De Laude Sanctorum, the only surviving work of Victricius, the Bishop of Rouen in the late 390’s, indicates that Ambrose’s gifts made it as far as Gaul. In his sermon, Victricius describes the process by which the divine and corporeal merge to produce the miraculous, “the spirit also, wet with the moisture of blood, has taken on the fiery heat of the Word (flammeum verbi...ardorem). This being so, it is most certain that our apostles and martyrs have come to us with their powers (virtutibus) intact...(and they) actually distribute the benefits of health (sanitatis) and salvation (salutis).” For Victricius, the combination of spirit, blood and the heat of the Holy Spirit effectively recreated a saint’s human presence in a relic, alongside the ability to distribute God’s gift of life over death.


Brown, *Cult of the Saints*, 37. Snoek states that the reverence for martyrs goes back to the 2nd century, or earlier, with celebrations at catacombs and cemeteries. He points to the Edict of Milan in 313 as a turning point for the practice, when the freedom of religion brought these celebrations into the open at graveyards, where there were Eucharistic meals held for the celebrated dead, *Medieval Piety*, 9-10.


David Hunter asserts that Victricius belonged to a “controversial minority” in Gaul, whereas the majority Gallic opinion comes from Vigilantius, a presbyter associate of Sulpicius Severus and Jerome (347 - 420) from Calagurris, 50km southwest of Toulouse. Unfortunately, his work is available to us only through Jerome’s rebuttal, Contra Vigilantium; described by Hunter as his “most abusive treatise”. The priest had visited Jerome in Bethlehem in 395, but by the turn of the century had become a vocal opponent to the relic trade and miraculous claims. Jerome’s response had been spurred on by a pamphlet of the presbyter, in which Vigilantius had complained that, “Under the cloak of religion (praetextu religionis) we see what is all but heathen ceremony (ritum gentilium) introduced into the churches,” and he was appalled that Christians rushed to “kiss and adore a bit of powder wrapped up in a cloth (pulverem linteamine circumdatum).” Vigilantius disagreed that body parts infused with the Holy Spirit could bridge heaven and earth, and viewed death as a permanent severing of the relationship between saints and the devout. In reply, Jerome argued that such intercession is exactly what Vigilantius needed, in order to cleanse him of the demon that led to his doubt, “Let me give you my advice: go to the basilicas of the martyrs (basilicas martyrum), and some day you will be cleansed; you will find there many in like case with yourself, and will be set on fire (combureris), not by the martyr’s tapers which offend you, but by invisible flames (flammis invisibilius); and you will then confess what you now deny.”

For Jerome, the miracles provided by the relics of the martyrs paralleled the miraculous resurrection of Christ, rendering the unfaithful like Vigilantius as enemies of Jesus, in need of the cleansing “invisible flames” of the Holy Spirit found in the martyrs’ churches. Despite Vigilantius’ objections, this model of miraculous localization would soon become dominant in Gaul, as relics would come to anchor a network of pilgrimage sites that rivaled those of the Holy Land.89

Concomitant with the rising Gallic focus on miraculous relics was an increased focus on the “confessors,” men whose ascetic withdrawal from the world became “culturally assimilated” to the sacrifices of the martyrs.90 The archetypal model of these ascetic heroes was the mid-fourth century “Life of Antony” (vita Antonii), attributed to the bishop of Alexandria, Athanasius (c. 295 - 373), and widely disseminated in both Latin and Greek.91 Through a combination of pagan biography, eulogy, martyr accounts and Scriptural themes, Athanasius initiated a new literary structure for presenting the life of the Christian holy man, one that would come to enjoy extraordinary success.92 Having obeyed Christ’s command in Matthew 19:21 to renounce the world, Antony (c. 251 - 356) withdrew into the desert and battled the devil, who sought “to deceive the heart by conspicuous and filthy pleasure (obscenas voluptates).”93 Athanasius asserted that Antony’s success over the devil’s attacks led to his miraculous ability to heal, perform

89 Brown, Relics, 32.
91 See Robert C. Gregg tr., Athanasius: The Life of Antony and the Letter to Marcellinus (Mawah, New Jersey: Paulist Press), 1-20. Gregg tells us that there is a Greek text mentioned by Jerome as coming from Athanasius, and two Latin texts, one attributed to Evagrius of Antioch, which will be used here, ibid., 14.
92 Although Christian biography certainly drew on pagan forms of literature, as Averil Cameron states, “the writing of ‘Lives’ was inherent to Christian literature in a way that it was not to pagan,” see Christianity and the Rhetoric of Empire: The Development of Christian Discourse, Sather Classical Lectures 55 (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991), 145. Gregg states that, “The Life of Antony, however dependant for literary form on the pagans’ lives of their heroes, inaugurated the genre and therefore established the frame of Christian hagiography,” The Life of Antony, xiii.
exorcisms, control wild animals, and receive springs of water in the desert by calling on the power of Christ in prayer. Following his death, Antony’s secret burial prevented the growth of a relic cult around his body, yet the miraculous literary presentation of the monk served to present a holy exemplar, “so that those who hear may know that the commandments have power for amendment of life, and may gain zeal for the way of piety (pietas iter).” Thus, as William Harmless asserts, the portrayal of the pious monk Antony “did not just affect Christian literature: it affected Christian lives.”

Among those influenced by Antony’s practical example was Augustine, a major influence on Caesarius’ thought. The future bishop of Hippo had been motivated to “take and read” (tolle lege) the passage from Romans 13:13 that led to his conversion by recalling the account of Antony’s unflinching obedience to the Matthean passage. Although Augustine makes no reference to Antony’s miraculous powers, his recounting of the healings performed by the martyrs discovered by Ambrose in Milan demonstrates that he had recognized contemporary miracle accounts by the writing of his Confessiones in 397. Yet, Augustine provided no further comment on the burgeoning relic trade until well after pieces of the newly discovered body of Saint Stephen were introduced into North Africa in 416. By 424, a chapel housing Stephen’s relics had been built in Hippo, prompting Augustine to assemble a list of North African miracles in the twenty-second book of his Civitas Dei. As Brown points out, Augustine’s eventual acknowledgment of

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94 For Antony against the devil and his demons, see Vita Ant. 5-7, 9-13, 39-42, 51-3. For healings, see ibid., 14, 48, 56-8, 61-2. For exorcisms, ibid., 64-5, and 71. For control over animals, see ibid., 50-1. For the water, see ibid., 54. For an example of Athanasius attributing Antony’s miracles to Christ, see ibid., 84.
relics and their power should not be viewed as a concession to credulity, but a victory of faith.99 Once he had achieved the means, Augustine embraced reports of the miraculous with the same enthusiasm as Christianity’s central miracles, the creation, and the resurrection of Christ. For the bishop, contemporary miracles functioned as proofs of Christ’s resurrection, and served the rhetorical purpose of encouraging faith in Jesus, “What do these miracles (ista miracula) attest but the faith (fidei) which proclaims that Christ rose in the flesh (in carne) and ascended into heaven with the flesh (cum carne)?”100

In Gaul, the continuing debate over the rhetorical utility of miracle accounts is apparent in the writings of John Cassian (c. 360 - 430s) and Sulpicius Severus. The priest Cassian had established both a male and female monastery in Marseilles circa 415, and had codified fifteen years of Egyptian ascetic experience in his influential Institutiones and Collationes.101 Caesarius’ monastic rules were largely drawn from Cassian’s work, and it is likely that he sent his sister to Cassian’s female community for her initial ascetic training.102 While Cassian asserted that miracles continued to occur, and that he had witnessed them in the desert, he found them to be of little didactic use, “Apart from


wonderment (admiratione) they contribute nothing to the reader’s instruction in a perfect life (instructionem perfectae vitae)." On the other side was Severus and his miracle-filled vita Martini, which became the model for all subsequent Gallic vita, including Caesarius'.

Martin of Tours was a radical monk, turned bishop of Tours, a “most unusual man” whose shabby dress and strict ascetic focus rendered him the target of aristocratic churchmen battling ascetic ordination in Gaul. His biographer and associate Severus, part of the “controversial minority” alongside Victricius, liberally applied miraculous powers to his hero, in order to ensure that, “one who really should be imitated (esset imitandus) does not remain unknown (ne is lateret).” As Lynda Coon states, the vita Martinii represents a shift in Christian hagiography, from the desert wise man Antony to a singular focus on wonderworking that was intended to recreate, “the charismatic and miraculous powers of the Hebrew prophets and Christ.” Severus’ holy man model would prove exceptionally successful in Gaul and beyond, and accordingly his writings will be extensively investigated in the following section on intertexture.

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104 Ralph Mathisen, Ecclesiastical Factionalism, 20. Severus certainly was not a monk in the Martinian sense, as he appears to have led a life closer to the scholastic otium of ages past, however, as Stancliffe states, the diversity of ideas of the ascetic in the period “cannot be easily defined,” St. Martin, 27.


106 Sulpicius Severus, De Vita Beati Martini 1.3 (PL 20:161). For the English translation, see Hoare, The Western Fathers, 12. Unless noted, Hoare’s translation will be used for the English. For Severus’ writings as competition against Vigilantius’ opinion, see Stancliffe, St. Martin, 297-311.

107 Lynda L. Coon, Holy Women and Hagiography in Late Antiquity (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1997), 8. See also Van Dam, who states that Severus looked to “redirect traditional ideologies of authority” onto Martin, Leadership, 127. Philip Rousseau, in Ascetics, Authority and the Church in the Age of Jerome and Cassian (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1978), 165, states that there was an “apostolic enterprise” underway in Gaul during the period.
The discrepancy between Cassian and Severus' opinion on the rhetorical value of miracle can be seen in their respective retellings of the same Egyptian anecdote. In his *Dialogues*, Severus describes a monk ordered by his master to repeatedly water a dead stick. After three years, the branch miraculously sprouted, vividly portraying the "virtue of obedience" (*oboedientiae virtus*).\(^{108}\) Cassian's version of the story is comparably anticlimactic. As the master approached the soaked stick, he asked his disciple,

"'O John, has this tree established roots or not?' And when he said that he did not know, the old man, as if investigating the situation and trying to see whether it had already sprouted roots, with a slight movement pulled up the branch in his presence and cast it aside, ordering him to cease watering it from then on."\(^{109}\)

Both stories served the persuasive purpose of promoting obedience, however, as Owen Chadwick asserts, Cassian's recounting of the parable would have let down those who "expected of Egypt the excitement of the marvelous".\(^{110}\) Indeed, Cassian himself expressed concern over monks who fell asleep during the recital of holy stories, yet paid rapt attention to vulgar tales.\(^{111}\) Although Severus' concentration on the miraculous provided the benefit of ensuring awareness, the increased attention also heightened scrutiny, rendering any incident in which Martin appeared flawed fodder for doubters.

An example of this skepticism is found in a letter of Severus to an anonymous critic, who questioned him as to why Martin, who had "averted flames from houses" (*flammas domibus depulisset*), had himself been badly burned in a church fire.\(^{112}\)

Following a savage attack on the questioner's faith, Severus retorts by transforming the


misfortune into a miracle. He writes of Martin spending the night in a rural parish, and scattering his straw bed in favor of piously sleeping on the church’s heated floor. During the night the straw caught fire, and the panicked Martin struggled with the bolted door, a hasty decision attributed to the “devil’s wiles” (diaboli arte). However, Martin quickly realized that safety came only through God, and “taking the prayer of faith for his shield” (scutum fidei et orationis arripiens); he miraculously repelled the flames until his monks came to rescue him. Thus, by the addition of another miracle, Severus transforms an embarrassing situation into a proof of Martin’s faith; “Martin was certainly tested (probatum) by that danger but in truth was not found wanting.” While it is unlikely that this explanation would have satisfied Severus’ critic, as will be demonstrated, his presentation of harmful fires as a trial would prove very influential on fire miracles in subsequent Gallic vitae.

Contemporaneous with the work of Cassian and Severus was the ascetic haven of Lérins; founded by the future bishop of Arles, Honoratus (c. 350 - 429), on an island 4km south of modern Cannes between 410 and 411. The island was transformed into a pious city, and was populated by a “combined familial-cultural atmosphere” of men, women and children. Lérins would become an important source of bishops for mainland Gaul, and Eucherius, a former resident and bishop of Lyon (died c.449), stated that by 428 the community “both nourished the most outstanding monks, and sent forth the most sought-after bishops.” Those groomed for the mainland were trained to be

114 Ibid.
115 Ibid.
116 See Klingshirn, Community, 23.
117 Mathisen, Ecclesiastical Factionalism, 84.
biblical “moralists,” and their hagiographic portrayals stressed the bishop’s virtuous actions over tales of miracles, as seen in Honoratus’ *vita*, written by his successor at Arles, Hilarius (c. 401 - 449), “Your virtue (*meritum tuum*) did not need to be attested by manifestations and marvels (*signis*). For your manner of life (*conversatio*) was itself full of acts of power (*virtutibus*) and pre-eminently something new to wonder at; in a sense, it was one continuous manifestation (*perpetuum quodam signum*)”119

Caesarius would remain faithful to the Lérinian Biblical fixation, and he aimed to improve his flock’s behavior. By drawing on scripture, practical example, and the sermons of other preachers, particularly Augustine, the bishop provided an idealized and detailed moral map for his audience to follow.120 In order to most effectively reach his socially variegated audience, Caesarius was “*intentionnellment un vulgarisateur,*” and his simple language stands in direct contrast to the flowery language of contemporaries such as Avitus of Vienne (died 517/518).121 He urged his fellow bishops, priests and deacons to ensure the understanding of the lowest common linguistic denominator,
"even if a priest possesses fine-flowing worldly eloquence (exuberans eloquentia saecularis), as I already mentioned above, it is not at all proper if he wants to preach in church in such a way that his admonition cannot reach all of the Lord’s flock, as it should, but only a few learned men (paucos...scholasticos). Therefore, all my priests of the Lord should preach to the people in simple (simplici), ordinary (pedestri) language which all the people can grasp."122

Alongside preaching to the audiences of his diocese, Caesarius’ sermons were largely created and copied out of a “library workshop,” located in the city’s basilica of St. Stephen, from which reproductions were distributed throughout Gaul, Italy, Spain, and beyond.123 As Alberto Ferreiro has pointed out, not only preachers, but also the laity were encouraged to read, or have read to them, copies of these sermons at home alongside the Bible; Caesarius prescribed “at least three hours” of study in the slow winter.124

Despite Caesarius’ relative silence regarding relics and miracle, the bishop performed acts of reverentia to the saints through construction projects and preaching on feast days.125 In accordance with his Léринian training, the bishop stressed that if his audience desired intercession from the saints, they would have to earn it,

“with God’s help let us strive as much as we can to give joy to our special patrons before God by our good deeds (bonis operibus) rather than to

122 SC 1:20. Also see SC 5.
123 For the spread and influence of Caesarius’ sermons, see G. Morin, “The Homilies of St. Caesarius of Arles: Their Influence on the Christian Civilization of Europe,” Orate Fratres 40 (1940), 481-6, and see VC 1.55, where the authors state that the sermons were spread through “Gaul, Italy, Spain, and other provinces.” For “library workshop,” see Mueller, who states that, “The more accomplished students were assigned the task of extracting from the writings of the Fathers, especially from St. Augustine, those passages best suited to the instruction of the people. Then the bishop would touch up this material, abridging the uselessly worded passages and bringing light into the obscure ones, so that there remained only what was practical and intelligible to all,” Sermons, xxi.
124 See Alberto Ferreiro, “Frequentier Legere: The Propogation of Literacy, Education, and Divine Wisdom in Caesarius of Arles,” Journal of Ecclesiastical History 43 (1992): 5-15, 7. See SC 6.2, for, “at least three hours”. Also see SC 7.1, “How much more, then, should it not suffice for your spiritual profit that you hear the divine lessons in church, but among your company at home you should engage in sacred reading, even several hours, at night, when the days are short.” In addition, see SC 6.8 and 8.1.
125 For the importance of reverentia, see Brown, Relics, 232-3. Caesarius dedicated a basilica to Mary in 524, which contained altars for both John the Baptist and Martin; see Klingshirn, Community, 117-8. Klingshirn also states that Caesarius’ association with St. Stephen’s relics, as shown in VC 2.29, “validated his own claims to sanctity,” ibid., 153. For Caesarius preaching in honor of the saints, see SC 214-29.
sadden them through our sins and negligences. Then the holy martyrs and distinguished bishops will be able to intercede for us with the Lord through their prayers and with confidence, if they see us always fulfilling God’s precepts and devoted to good works (bonis operibus). If, however - may God forbid - we are willing to be involved in wicked deeds (malis), we indeed sadden them, but we also acquire for ourselves everlasting damnation.”¹²⁶

By acting virtuously, Christians not only pleased their heavenly patrons, but also shared in the miraculous virtue of the saints: “not everyone is given the grace to exercise those powers (virtutes) and to work miracles (mirabilia). But to live piously and chastely, to preserve charity (caritatem) with all men, with God’s help is easy for everyone.”¹²⁷ To clarify the concept further, Caesarius utilized the following example:

“We should not believe that special powers (virtutes) are present only in driving out demons or healing the sick and restoring good health. Every good action is a special gift. If you perform good deeds every day, if you live piously and justly, you daily accomplish holy acts of virtue (virtutem opera sancta). Is a man unable to cure the bodily disease of his neighbor? He should anoint the sickness of his own soul. It is not asked of a man that he provide the gift of good health which has not been granted by divine will.”¹²⁸

This is an excellent example of Caesarius’ regular use of “comforting analogies” (similitudinis consolatione); a flexible rhetorical tool by which the bishop could effectively disseminate theological principles and calls to Christian action.¹²⁹ Through the

¹²⁶ SC 214.2.
¹²⁷ SC 223.2.
¹²⁸ SC 211.4. Morin sees influence in this sermon from the work of Faustus of Riez, Sermones, 840-1.
¹²⁹ For “reassuring analogies,” see VC 1.16. Also, for Caesarius’ focus on reaching the laity with his sermons, see VC 2.1, and SC 86. According to Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca, The New Rhetoric, 385, analogies are useful for imparting information, as they “facilitate the development and extension of thought.” De Nie, in “A Broken Lamp or the Effluence of Holy Power? Common Sense and Belief-Reality in Gregory of Tours’ Own Experience,” Medievistik 3 (1990): 269-79, 275, asserts that, “visual images” were easier for an audience to process than “abstract concepts.” For the lack of theological discussion in Caesarius’ works, see Mark Dorenkemer, The Trinitarian Doctrine and Sources of St. Caesarius of Arles (Fribourg, Switzerland: The University Press, 1953), 7.
mediating analogue of anointing, Caesarius directly equates a bishop’s wondrous healings to the laity’s ability to heal their own “spiritual” wounds.\textsuperscript{130}

Elsewhere, Caesarius extends the healing analogue to provide a map of achieving sanctity; encouraging his audience to cure the anger (\textit{iram}), indignation (\textit{indignationem}), hatred (\textit{odium}) and iniquity (\textit{iniquitatem}) that compose the persistent “disease of the soul” (\textit{morbum animi}), in themselves and others.\textsuperscript{131} Healing the soul comes through “acts of virtue” (\textit{virtutum opera}), and is available to those who, “seek chastity (\textit{castitatem}), seize hold of sobriety (\textit{sobrietatem}), cling to self-discipline (\textit{disciplinam}), and love charity (\textit{caritatem}).”\textsuperscript{132} Thus, Caesarius’ anointing analogue is a multivocalic symbol, from which a large “cluster” of latent analogical connections could be drawn on for preaching purposes.\textsuperscript{133} As will be demonstrated through the use of Robbins’ socio-rhetorical analysis, the fire miracles in Caesarius’ \textit{vita}, and particularly the analogue \textit{flamma virtutis}, also carried the potential for varied interpretations, which are evident in the bishop’s own sermons.

\textbf{Background to the Text}

Prior to entering upon an inner textural analysis, we must first define some of the basic terms that constitute Robbins’ socio-rhetorical model, alongside providing essential background information to the \textit{vita}. The work is divided into two books, and is unusually attributed to five ecclesiastical associates of Caesarius. Book I was written by three of Caesarius’ fellow bishops; Cyprianus of Toulon (bishop from c.517 - 545); to whom Klingshirn plausibly attributes the bulk of the authorship and editing, Firminus of Uzès

\textsuperscript{130} For the healing and anointing functions of the bishop, see Henry Beck, \textit{The Pastoral Care of Souls in Southeast France during the Sixth Century} (Rome: apud Aedes Universitatis Gregorianae, 1950), 55.
\textsuperscript{131} For the “disease of the soul,” and its symptoms, see \textit{SC} 21.8.
\textsuperscript{132} \textit{SC} 211.4.
\textsuperscript{133} For “clusters” of analogical “patterns,” see de Nie, \textit{Views}, 57.
(bishop from c.534 - 552), and Viventius, whose see is not known (bishop from c.541 - before 549). Book II appears to have been narrated to Cyprianus by Caesarius’ priest Messianus and his deacon Stephanus.  

According to Robbins, the “implied author” of a text is revealed through the “manifestations of their expressions in texts;” and in Caesarius’ vita, the authors’ self-portrayal shifts markedly between the two books. In Book I, the bishops assert that they will communicate by, “imitating the eloquence of fishermen (piscatorum) rather than of rhetoricians (rhetorum),” as Caesarius had encouraged them to address the audiences of their preaching. Despite this humbling assertion, the men present themselves as cohorts in Caesarius’ “official” ecclesiastical career, concentrating on grand political and ecclesiastical matters, such as the bishop’s relationships with popes and kings, which in addition to highlighting Caesarius’ successes, legitimized the authority of the office that they shared with him.

In contrast, Messianius the priest and Stephanus the deacon were part of Caesarius’ intimate monastic entourage, having served him since his adolescence. They slept in the same cell as the bishop, ate daily with him at a common table, and accompanied him on his travels. Accordingly, Book II concentrates on Caesarius’

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134 For the dates and background information of these men, see Klingshirn, Life, 1-5.
135 Robbins, Tapestry, 21.
136 VC 1.2. For the same comment from Caesarius, see SC 1.20. This is a common topos for Christian literature, see M. Bambeck, “Fischer und Bauern gegen Philosophen und sonstige Grosskopfeten; ein christlicher Topos in Antike und Mittelalter,” Mittellateinisches Jahrbuch 18 (1983), 29-50.
137 For “official,” see Klingshirn, “Caesarius’ Monastery for Women,” 447. For enhancing authority, see Coon, Holy Women, 11, “Saint’s lives served as the medium through which bishops promoted themselves as the arbiters of Christian spirituality.” The defense of Caesarius against various political allegations represents their interest in defending not only the bishop himself from specific charges, but also defending the office that they share with him. Their emphasis on this theme, however, might imply that members of their audience may have raised legitimate objections to Caesarius’ political involvements; see further Klingshirn, Community, 93-94, and 107-110.
138 For the men attending to Caesarius since his adolescence, see VC 1.1. See VC 2.5-6 for sleeping in the same cell. For eating together, see VC 2.31-33.
“way of life (conversatione) and miracles (virtutibus)” in Arles and its surrounding parishes, with many citizens mentioned by name.\textsuperscript{139} This includes the deacon Peter whose daughter was ill, the wounded praetorian prefect Liberius and his hemorrhaging wife Agretia, the priest Lucius and deacon Didimus, the priest Jacob, John and Vincentius whose homes caught fire, the record keeper Desiderius, the ill sons of Salvius and Martianus; and Caesaria (the younger), the abbess of Arles’ female monastery at the time of writing.\textsuperscript{140} The temporal relevance of their report is evidenced by the assertions that while some of the people mentioned, like Peter’s daughter, are “today a living witness (vivens...testis) of this miracle;” others, like Martianus’ son, have passed on.\textsuperscript{141} This intimate presentation of both the dioceses’ inhabitants, and the bishop himself, provided Messianus and Stephanus with the authority to describe the bishop’s daily life.\textsuperscript{142}

Robbins defines the “implied reader” as, “the reader the text implies and the interpreter infers in relation to real readers and audiences.”\textsuperscript{143} In the prologue of Book I, the authors state that the \textit{vita} was written at the request of the abbess Caesaria the younger, which immediately denotes a primarily monastic audience.\textsuperscript{144} However, Klingshirn has identified five additional components of the implied readership as indicated by references in the text; bishops associated with the church in Arles, the

\begin{footnotesize}
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  \item \textsuperscript{139} VC 2.1. There are numerous references to areas within the city of Arles; for the basilica of St. Stephen, see VC 2.16 and VC 2.29, for the women’s monastery see VC 2.47, and see VC 2.50 for the basilica of St. Mary. For some of the rural parishes see VC 2.10 for \textit{Saint-Gabriel}, VC 2.18 for \textit{Luso}, VC 2.20 for \textit{Berrem}, VC 2.21 for \textit{La Ciotat}, and VC 2.22 for \textit{Succentriones}.
  \item \textsuperscript{140} For Peter see VC 2.2, for Liberius see VC 2.10-13, for Agretia, see VC 2.13-15, for Lucius and Didimus see VC 2.19, for the priest Jacob, see VC 2.24, for John see VC 2.26, for Vincentius see VC 2.27, for Desiderius see VC 2.39, for Salvius see VC 2.40, for Martianus see VC 2.41, for Caesaria II see VC 2.47. For a brief overview of Caesaria II, who succeeded Caesarius’ sister of the same name as the abbess of the convent in Arles, see Jo Ann McNamara and John E. Halborg ed. and tr., \textit{Sainted Women of the Dark Ages} (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 1992), 112-4.
  \item \textsuperscript{141} For Peter’s daughter as “a living witness of this miracle,” see VC 2.4; for Martianus as “now deceased,” see VC 2.41.
  \item \textsuperscript{142} Klingshirn, “Caesarius’ Monastery for Women,” 448.
  \item \textsuperscript{143} Robbins, \textit{Tapestry}, 22.
  \item \textsuperscript{144} VC 1.1.
\end{itemize}
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Frankish royal family, and the aristocracy, clergy, and laity of Arles. He believes that the vita was deliberately structured to reach all components of this varied audience, although the miracle narratives were primarily targeted at those living in Arles.¹⁴⁵

**Inner Texture**

Robbins’ socio-rhetorical analysis begins by examining inner texture, the literary means by which authors construct meaning in a text. Inner textual investigation is not concerned with a deep analysis of meaning, but rather seeks to uncover a text’s structural organization; the “words, word patterns, voices, structures, devices, and modes in the text.”¹⁴⁶ Robbins proposes the isolation and interpretation of six textual patterns, of which this study will examine four; opening-middle-closing texture, repetitive texture, progressive texture, and argumentative texture.¹⁴⁷ First, it will be demonstrated that the three fire miracle narratives in Caesarius’ vita are embedded in two larger literary units, with the second and third miracles occurring within the same unit of Book II. These two sections will be labeled “Unit One” and “Unit Two” respectively. Secondly, these two units will be subjected to the inner textual analytics separately, which will reveal important literary patterns.

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¹⁴⁵ For the audience groups see Klingshirn, “Caesarius’ Monastery for Women,” 451-3.
¹⁴⁷ Ibid., 7. The other two inner textual analytics are “narrational inner texture,” which examines how narrators and characters “tell” a story, and “sensory-aesthetic inner texture,” which investigates how language is used to communicate “feeling;” see idem, *Tapestry*, 53-58, and 64-65, respectively. As per Robbins’ suggestion, initial readings of Caesarius’ vita revealed that these analytics would be comparatively limited in their results; thus, they have been left out of the present study.
Unit One

Opening-Middle-Closing Texture

Prior to the application of the other inner textual tools, a precise demarcation of each unit’s narrative “brackets” is required. Klingshirn’s translation, following Morin, presents the first fire miracle in Book I in a discrete paragraph (22), however, the conjunction “but” (sed) at the opening of the paragraph draws the reader back to the preceding paragraph (21), which details the charge of treason laid by Caesarius’ notary Licinianus that led to the bishop’s exile by Alaric II. The temporal qualification, “a few days later” (post paucos dies) at the opening of this paragraph leads the reader back once more to paragraph 20, which describes Caesarius’ concern for the sick, poor, and captives; alongside highlighting the favorable relationship the bishop maintained with the Arian king. Paragraph 20 concludes a string of paragraphs detailing Caesarius’ achievements as bishop, including his restructuring of church land management (15), his preaching ability (16), his hospitality and admonitions toward guests (17), his encouragement of fellow bishops in their pastoral duties (18), and his desire that his congregation memorize hymns and psalms (19). While paragraph 20 consequently highlights Caesarius’ concern for the poor, by the end of the paragraph the focus is on tax relief provided for the church by Alaric II. The latter section appears in only one of the source codices of the vita, raising doubts as to whether it was present in the original text. This study will include the segment, as it appears to be crucial for facilitating narrative movement from Caesarius’ social work to the political focus of the remaining unit.

148 Robbins stresses the importance of this step, stating that a “discernible beginning and ending are part of an overall arrangement of units and subunits,” Tapestry, 50.
149 There are two sections of paragraph 20 that only appear in one codex used by Morin; codex Paris. B. N. lat. 5295. Accordingly, there has been some dispute over whether they should be included in the vita, as
Now that the appropriate beginning of the section has been found, we must uncover its proper ending. While paragraph 22 concludes with the assertion that the events in Bordeaux are described according to a faithful report, Caesarius remains in exile; a narrative limbo that urges the reader to continue towards his repatriation. The opening of the following paragraph (23) contains the conjunction “and so” (itaque), leading the reader to an indirect “mini-sermon” of Caesarius, which combines messages of obedience to authority with an explicit anti-Arian proclamation. Paragraph 24 describes Caesarius’ absolution by Alaric II, and the bishop’s success in preventing a mob from stoning his accuser, whom he wished to be spared for penance. Paragraph 25 continues this regulation of punishments, as Caesarius limits the amount of lashes an offender might receive from church officials. Finally, paragraph 26 depicts Caesarius’ joyous return to Arles, which is punctuated by a miraculous rain-shower. Aside from concluding the banishment-exile-return narrative structure, paragraph 26 is the proper endpoint of the first unit, as Klingshirn points out that the subsequent paragraph (27) is based on an account from the fifth-century *Vita Hilarii*. Therefore, the Bordeaux fire miracle resides near the centre of a literary unit of 29 *sententiae*, which according to Klingshirn was entirely composed by the bishop Cyprianus.

pointed out by Klingshirn in *Life*, 19, n.29 and 31. I will accept the first section due to the qualitative weight of its support by Krusch and Morin; and its thematic agreement with the remainder of the paragraph regarding concern for the unfortunate. I will also accept the section ending the paragraph regarding Caesarius’ relations with Alaric along with Krusch, despite the hesitance of Cavallin and Morin. My reasons are three-fold, a) The agreement of the section with the church tax exemptions mentioned elsewhere, as *per* Klingshirn, *Life, Testament* 19, n.31, b) the importance of the paragraph as a “hinge” between previous descriptions of Caesarius’ attributes and the following story of exile necessitates elements of both in this paragraph, and c) the temporal conjunctive phrase opening the subsequent paragraph (21), “But a few days later” (*sed...post paucos dies*), requires a specific prior temporal situation for attachment. Apart from the meeting with Alaric, the rest of the paragraph is temporally general. This is evidenced by such phrases as, “He regularly used to tell his attendant” (*Praecipiebat ministro suo semper*), “he used to say” (*dicebat*), and “he also used to say” (*Addebat*).

151 Klingshirn, “Caesarius’ Monastery for Women,” 450.
Repetitive Texture

Repetitive texture exists when a word is found more than once in a literary unit, and its identification aids in the organization of a particular narrative section. The goal of repetition analysis is the exposition of “sign and sound patterns” in a text, which are then organized according to their “basic lexical meaning”. In this particular study, repetition will be examined at the level of the individual word, which often involves a division of compound phrases into their component parts. It is believed that this procedure will aid in uncovering linguistic patterns that might be missed through larger criteria.

In the first unit, there are multiple references to what could be termed “scriptural” characters, whose existence is rooted in the Bible:

Table 1: “Scriptural” Characters in Unit One

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For an overview of repetition analysis, see Robbins, Exploring, 8-9 and Tapestry, 46-50.

Robbins, Tapestry, 48.
These characters were not mere literary references, but were spiritual entities believed to be immanent and effective in the world, directing events in imitation of scriptural accounts, as evidenced by the identification of Licinianus with Judas and the devil, and the alliance of Caesarius with Christ and the apostles.\textsuperscript{154} In accordance with this spiritual binary, repetition analysis of the unit also reveals opposing themes of adversity and innocence:

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\caption{Themes of Adversity and Innocence in Unit One}
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Sentence & \\
1 & adversitas \\
6 & adversus \\
11 & adversitas & inimico \\
12 & accusationis & inimico \\
13 & accusationis & inimico \\
15 & accusationis & inimico \\
16 & accusatio & innocentiae \\
23 & accusator & veritate \\
24 & accusator & veritate \\
25 & adversarium & inimicus \\
27 & accusator & inimicus \\
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This repetitive pattern reinforces that the narrative environment is one of hostility, in which truth and innocence face substantial opposition.

Another notable pattern of repetition in the first unit concerns cities and their inhabitants, with a two-fold repetition of \textit{urbs} alongside a six-fold mention of the \textit{civitas}. Although Bordeaux is the setting of Caesarius' first fire miracle, the unit begins and ends in Arles, which is mentioned three times. The inhabitants of the two cities are presented in generalized terms, twice as \textit{populi}, and twice as "everybody" (\textit{omnium/omnibus}).

\textsuperscript{154} \textit{VC} 1.21.
Likewise, the recipients of Caesarius' compassion and charity are also broadly portrayed, with the poor (*pauperes*) mentioned four times, and the *captives* three. This amorphous representation of the background characters of the unit allows the interaction between the protagonist Caesarius and the antagonist Licinianus to stand out more effectively.

**Progressive Texture**

The investigation of progressive texture stems directly from repetitive texture, and is used to examine how authors utilize “forward movement” in a narrative unit to “build to a dramatic conclusion”.

While the titles for God, *Deus* and *Dominus*, are consistently present throughout the section, the varying forms of *Christus* appear in clusters at the beginning and end. The first three references occur in paragraph 20, in which Caesarius’ contributions to the “tranquility” (*tranquilitatem*) of Arles are reinforced, while the other two accordingly appear in reference to the bishop’s triumphant return to Arles. In the gap between the two groupings of *Christus* lie triple repetitions of both *diabolus* and *apostolus*. The first occurrence of *diabolus* comes in sentence 11, concomitant with the appearance of allegations against Caesarius. The second occurs in sentence 14; connected to his exile, and the third in sentence 20, describing the foiling of the devil by Caesarius’ successful miracle.

*Apostolus* follows a similar progression; the first appearance in sentence 12 is connected to Licinianus’ accusation, the second in sentence 20 after the repelling of the fire, and the third in sentence 22 following the mini-sermon. Therefore, progressive analysis reveals an overarching movement from tranquility-chaos-tranquility in the unit. Christ’s presence is reinforced during periods of harmony, while the center stage of the

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unit portrays a contest between Caesarius, the “apostolic man”, and Licinianus, who is in league with the devil and Judas. The final return to Arles is an appropriately powerful conclusion to the section, with the return of the bishop vividly representing the return of God’s favor to the community.

**Argumentative Texture**

According to Robbins, the primary purpose of rhetorical argument is to, “persuade the reader to think and act in one way rather than another.” As has been demonstrated through progressive analysis, the main arguments of the unit involve assertions of Caesarius’ status as a virtuous bishop, and inheritor of the authority of the apostles and Christ. The accusation of treason leads to an immediate polarization of characters; Licinianus, the “wicked (perditus) man” is likened to the disciple Judas (discipulus Iudas), and works for the devil alongside Alaric II and those urging the king to banish Caesarius. Conversely, the bishop is described as an, “apostolic man” (virum apostolicum), who is connected to “our Savior” (salvatorem nostrum). While Caesarius prays for the “peace of the nations” (pacem gentium) and the “tranquility of the cities” (quietem urbium), his accusers are filled with “barbarian ferocity” (ferocitatem barbaram), and seek to exile the holy man.

The fire miracle in paragraph 22 continues this argument in an imagistic manner. The use of a purpose clause to introduce the account, (Sed ut in eo Dei gratia non lateret), implies that the fire arose in Bordeaux as a means by which Caesarius’ divine favor could be proven. Twice the fire is qualified by the adjective saevus, which parallels

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156 Robbins, Exploring, 21. For an overview of argumentative texture, see ibid., 21-8, and Robbins, Tapestry, 58-63.
157 Klingshirn translates discipulus as apostle, which does not allow for the difference in nature between Caesarius and Judas. I believe that the two different labels were used specifically to separate the devilish Judas from Caesarius.
the *saevissimae accusationis* levied against Caesarius by Licinianus. De Nie, in her work on Gregory of Tours, asserts that he used this adjective only to describe the “destructive, evil power” of the devil, which appears to be the usage here as well. Thus, the chaos caused by the charge of treason is equated to the destruction of the Bordeaux fire, which the devil was permitted to start by God, in order to demonstrate the virtue of Caesarius.

Immediately following Caesarius’ successful miracle, Cyprianus presents three ordered results:

a) All present praised God’s power (*divinae...potentiae*) working through Caesarius with one voice (*omnium concurrentium vocibus*).

b) The bishop was held with the greatest admiration by everyone (*tanta admiratione ab omnibus habitus est*), and was labelled an *apostolus* by all.

c) The devil was “thwarted” (*confunderetur*) when miraculous powers from God (*divini operis miraculis*) served to vindicate (*asserere*) Caesarius.

Thus, Cyprianus argues that the true significance of the miracle extends far beyond the extinguishing of physical fire. The event primarily serves to promote concord in the community, as everyone in Bordeaux acclaims the apostle Caesarius, whose miraculous and mundane activities maintain tranquility in the face of the devil’s consistent calamity.

Following the miracle, the remainder of the unit continues the argument that Caesarius is a harbinger of harmony. In paragraph 24, Alaric II orders Caesarius back to Arles, and Licinianus to be stoned, which presents Caesarius with the opportunity to seek

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158 VC 1.21.
159 De Nie, *Views*, 141.
160 See SC 54.4, “Above all, brethren, know that the Devil cannot injure you, those who belong to you, your animals, or the rest of the earthly substances in smallest matters, unless he receives his power from God.”
the “merciful pardoning” (clementer indulgens) of the notary for penance; effectively saving the man from hell. This concern for appropriate punishment is reinforced in paragraph 25, where the bishop reinforces the “legal number of lashes” that church leaders can use to punish sinners. In paragraph 26, serenity and harmony return to Arles, as the “entire Christian community” (totas fraternitas) greets their bishop, waving candles and crosses, and dancing in celebration of his adventus.\textsuperscript{161} The arrival of Caesarius is accompanied by a mention of Christ, who “confounds traitors by the clear light of his miracles” (perfidos aperta mirabilium luce confundi). As a final imagistic argument for the return of tranquility, God covers the parched land with a miraculous rain shower, a natural display of reprieve that directly juxtaposes the chaos of the Bordeaux fire. In summary, the unit argues that Caesarius’ practical actions, alongside his ability to facilitate the miracles of Christ, promote peace and harmony on earth, results which render accusations of treason untenable.

The initial benefit of inner textual examination of the first fire miracle in Caesarius’ vita has been the expansion of the unit’s narrative brackets, which has allowed for the recognition of the miracle’s central positioning in a larger literary unit. The analysis of repetitive texture has revealed the wealth of references to scriptural characters in the unit, which alongside repeated references to innocence and accusation, suggest Christ’s betrayal by Judas. Progression analysis has demonstrated a movement from the tranquility of Caesarius’ pastoral care in Arles to the chaos of the treason charge and the fire, which, having been dispelled by the bishop’s miracle, led to a return to Arles and civil harmony. The overarching argument made by Cyprianus in the unit is that, like

\textsuperscript{161} For an excellent overview of the tradition of adventus, see Sabine MacCormack, Art and Ceremony in Late Antiquity (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1981), 17-84.
Christ and the apostles, Caesarius counters the devil and his minions by means of both practical and wondrous actions. As such, his presence is integral to tranquility and harmony in Arles, a concept illustrated by the miraculous rainfall that accompanies his return.

Unit Two

The inner textual investigation of the second and third miracles in Caesarius’ vita involves an attendant switch in authorship from the three bishops to the priest Messianus and the deacon Stephanus. As Klingshirn points out, the chronological sequence underlying Book I is largely absent in Book II, which recounts Caesarius’ “way of life and miracles” (conversatio atque virtutes), by means of apparently unconnected anecdotes.\textsuperscript{162} However, despite the lack of chronological continuity in Book II, it will be demonstrated that there is an overarching narrative framework that connects the second fire miracle in paragraph 26 and the third fire miracle in paragraph 28.

Opening-Middle-Closing Texture

The criterion for delineating an appropriate literary unit for the second and third fire miracles is authorship. Klingshirn points to a first-person identification in paragraph 22 as evidence of the beginning of Messianus’ contribution, which leads him to assert that paragraphs 22-32 were written by the priest, with Stephanus returning at paragraph 33.\textsuperscript{163} Klingshirn’s plausible parsing presents a literary unit of 11 paragraphs provided by Messianus, which encapsulates both the second and third fire miracles.

\textsuperscript{162} Klingshirn, “Caesarius’ Monastery for Women,” 448. VC 2.1.
\textsuperscript{163} See Klingshirn, Community, 59, n.120.
Repetitive Texture

What is initially striking in regards to the repetitive texture of the second unit is the absence of any mention of Christ, and only one mention of the apostles, disciples and the devil.\textsuperscript{164} There are numerous references to God throughout the unit, alongside an element that did not appear in the first miracle, demons (\textit{daemonium}). Additionally, there are intriguing repetitions surrounding Caesarius’ staff (\textit{virga/baculus}), Christ’s cross, and a threefold reference to prophecy:

Table 3: Repetition in Unit Two

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sentence</th>
<th>Word(s)</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>\textit{baculum}</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>\textit{virgam}</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31</td>
<td>\textit{baculus}</td>
<td>\textit{crucem/crux}</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35</td>
<td>\textit{crucem}</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36</td>
<td>\textit{daemonio}</td>
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<tr>
<td>37</td>
<td>\textit{daemonio}</td>
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<tr>
<td>41</td>
<td>\textit{Daemonium}</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>46</td>
<td>\textit{daemonio}</td>
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<tr>
<td>47</td>
<td>\textit{crucem}</td>
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<td>54</td>
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<td>57</td>
<td>\textit{prophetica}</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>58</td>
<td>\textit{propheticum}</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Other important repetitions revolve around the locative focus of the unit. Variants on the word \textit{locus} appear eight times, stressing the performance of Caesarius’ miraculous actions in specific, and varied, geographical locations. There are three mentions of a \textit{civitas}, the first referring to events in Marseilles, and the other two focusing on Arles. As well, there is mention of a parish at \textit{Succentriones}, location unknown, and an incident in

\textsuperscript{164} See VC 2.22 for the devil, VC 2.24 for the mention of the basilica of the Apostles (\textit{basilicam Apostolorum}), and VC 2.27 for Caesarius’ \textit{virga discipuli}. 

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the *Alpines*, a group of mountains in the north of Arles’ diocese.\(^{165}\) These dispersed locations present a more itinerant picture of Caesarius’ miraculous activity than the first unit, where the movement between Arles and Bordeaux was politically mandated.

Despite the widespread settings of the miracles, locations within the city of Arles are emphasized, including St. Stephen’s basilica, the homes of John and Vincentius, the female monastery, and the monastic *cellae* of Caesarius and the virgins of Arles. In addition to the detailed locative focus of the second unit, there is a multifaceted representation of Arles’ population, as opposed to the amorphous citizens in the first unit. There is a double mention of the non-citizen (*peregrini*) in reference to the supposed captive Benenatus, and the “young girl,” *puella*, that he claims is his grandchild, *nepos*; the latter term mentioned twice. Of its eight occurrences, *puella* also refers to a girl possessed by a demon, for whom Caesarius prays with her mother (*matrem/matre*) and father (*patre*). *Matrona* appears as the qualifier of the woman at Marseilles, and Caesarius himself is referred to as *patri* of the women in the monastery during the second fire miracle. On the ecclesiastical side, there is a heavy focus on priests, *presbyteri*; with the priest Jacob mentioned thrice, along with a priest from an unnamed diocese outside of Arles.

Another important feature of repetitive texture in the second unit involves physical objects belonging to Caesarius that carry his God-gifted power. In paragraph 25, Caesarius’ saddle (*sellam*) is mentioned in relation to the healing of a woman’s foot in Marseilles, who touches her foot to his “saddle cloth” (*supersellio*). More intriguing, however, are the two staffs of Caesarius that are accidentally left behind during his

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\(^{165}\) For *Succentiones*, see VC 2.22, and for the *Alpines*, see VC 2.27. For the unknown location of *Succentriones*, see Klingshirn, *Life*, 54, n.112. For the location of the *Alpines*, see ibid., 33, n.67.
travels; each alternately labeled as a *virga* and a *baculus*. Messianus states that carrying the staff was the duty of the bishop’s notary (*notariorum officium*), and he admits that he was the notary responsible for the loss of the first.\(^{166}\) In paragraph 22, the bishop’s staff is found by the inhabitants of *Succentriones* and hung up on a haunted bathhouse (*balnearia*), in order to remove the demons within. In paragraph 27, a noble man (*nobilissimi vir*) in the *Alpinis* finds another neglected staff of the bishop, and orders it transformed into a cross (*crucem*) and planted in a high spot, in order to counter inclement weather. This fashioning of a crop protector from the bishop’s staff is the first appearance of the term “cross,” which subsequently appears four times in the unit.

**Progressive Texture**

As has been stated, the structure of Book II differs from Book I in its focus on discrete incidents, as opposed to a linear chronological progression. However, there is a progression in Messianus’ account based on Caesarius’ staff (*virga/baculus*) and the sign of the cross. In the opening paragraph (22), Caesarius’ neglected staff repels demons that have infested a bathhouse. By paragraph 27, the staff has been shaped into a cross, which returns fertility to the nobleman’s fields by God’s miracle (*virtutem*). In the next paragraph (28), which concerns the fire at Vincentius’ house, the homeowner asks Caesarius to pray (*ut oraret*) in order to save his house. Interestingly, Caesarius does not pray, but makes the sign of the cross (*crucem* with *signum* implied) against the flames, extinguishing them instantly. The remaining two miracles focus on Caesarius’ use of the sign of the cross; in paragraph 29, it is Caesarius’ “signing” (*signavit* with *crucem* implied) that ultimately heals the young girl, and in paragraph 30, the bishop makes a hidden sign of the cross (*crucem*) under his cloak in order to cure a demon-possessed

\(^{166}\) *VC 2.22.*
man. Thereby, there appears in the second unit a significant progression from Caesarius’ staff to the sign of Christ’s cross in the production of miracles.

**Argumentative Texture**

An important line of argument running throughout the second unit is the author’s assertions that providence had patterned every incident in Caesarius’ life, particularly the apparently accidental. The inhabitants of *Succentriones* praise the appearance of the bishop’s staff as a gift from God, despite Messianus’ explicit assertion that it was left behind by accident. Likewise, in paragraph 25 it is asserted that, "because the Lord’s mercies are numerous” (*quia multae sunt miserations Domini*), that Caesarius came to Marseille, where he had the opportunity to heal the woman’s foot. Additionally, while Caesarius provided the miracle against the fire in paragraph 26, Cyprianus asserts that it was the mercy of God (*Deo dispensante*) that provided the nuns an empty cistern to hide in. These statements further the intimate connection between Caesarius and God, by reinforcing the divine actions that correspond to Caesarius’ mundane activities.

Another line of argument arises concerning events in which Caesarius is apparently open to blame for lapses in judgment. In paragraph 24, Caesarius’ credence towards the conniving Benenatus is blamed not on the bishop, but is deflected to the misguided suggestion (*per suggestionem*) of the priest Jacob. Additionally, when the girl for whom Caesarius wishes a life of virginity dies the next day, Messianus argues that since God, “as a judge of future events” (*futurorum arbiter*), knew that the girl would not be able to maintain her virginity, he had her die the next day in a virginal state, “so that the prayer of God’s servant would not go unanswered” (*ne servi Dei oratio irrita fieret*).
These two forms of argumentation align Caesarius’ actions with God’s perfect will, and thus save the bishop from potential embarrassment.\textsuperscript{167}

The most intriguing argument in the second unit is the deliberate connection between Caesarius’ staff and Christ’s cross in working wonders. While the staff of Caesarius is itself sufficient to repel demons, in paragraph 27, Cyprianus states that the ability of the cross-shaped staff to repel hail and promote fertility stems from the combination of “the staff of the disciple” (\textit{virga discipuli}) and “the cross of the master” (\textit{crux magistri}). In the miracle accounts of paragraphs 28-30, however, the staff is no longer the focus, and the sign of the cross from the bishop is sufficient for effecting miracles. As will be demonstrated in the following intertextual analysis, this progression from Caesarius’ miracle working staff to the cross of Christ contains significant theological and scriptural importance, and presented future interpreters with a potential connection to a Scriptural interpretative tradition.

Inner textual analysis of the fire miracles in Caesarius’ \textit{vita} has revealed fascinating rhetorical themes, which can be summarized in a three-fold fashion. First, the bishop is consistently aligned with Christ and the apostles. Conversely, those opposed to the holy man, such as Licinianus, are connected to the devil and Judas. Second, Caesarius is presented as favored and guided by God. His miraculous actions, most notably the extinguishing of the fire at Bordeaux, portray him as a Gallic apostle, with the power to continue Christ’s victory over the devil and his minions. Finally, it is asserted that the harmony and concord of Arles was contingent on the presence of Caesarius, a rhetorical

\textsuperscript{167} Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca have recognized this as a common Christian rhetorical tool, “That which can be opposed to God is neither true nor real; that which can be considered incompatible with the divine perfection is by that very fact disqualified and considered an illusion,” \textit{The New Rhetoric}, 311. This line of reasoning would also extend to those asserted to be acting in accordance with God’s will, such as Caesarius.
promotion of both the bishop’s importance in life, and the protective powers of his glorified body lying in St. Mary’s basilica. Another intriguing pattern uncovered by inner textual analysis is the staff-cross progression in the second unit, which, as will be established in the following section, contains the potential for allegorical homiletic interpretation. As well, intertextual investigation will allow for the examination of another literary construct that has yet to be addressed, the *flamma virtutis* of Caesarius that is presented in the second fire miracle.

**Intertexture**

Now that we have examined the literary structuring of the fire miracles in Caesarius’ *vita*, we are able to turn to the investigation of their intertexture, “the ways a new text is created from the metaphors, images and symbolic world of an earlier text or tradition.” Intertextual analysis seeks to discover the *meaning* behind the literary structures revealed through inner textual investigation. Robbins provides four components of intertexture, of which this study will examine three: oral-scribal intertexture, the way in which the *vita* uses oral and written sources; cultural intertexture, the influence of Christian beliefs in Gaul upon the *vita*; and social intertexture, practices and communal interactions of Gallic Christians pertinent to the text. Every *vita* is a “literary composite,” and its sources can be explicit, as is often the case with Biblical

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169 For overviews of intertexture, see Robbins, *Exploring*, 40-70, and idem, *Tapestry*, 96-143. The fourth layer of intertexture is historical intertexture, the ways that a text presents events that occurred during “particular periods of time,” ibid., 118. The work of Klingshirn, in particular, has provided accurate and extensive historical information regarding events in Caesarius’ *vita*. His findings will be used to highlight historical significance where necessary; however, this study subordinates discussion of the actuality of events to the ways in which the authors of the *vita* rhetorically presented situations.
references, or implicit, as with rituals and practices that “shape” the resulting text.\textsuperscript{170} By examining these three intertextual components in light of the patterns uncovered by inner textual analysis, it will be demonstrated that the fire miracles in Caesarius’ \textit{vita} were rhetorically engineered to present “preachable” messages of acceptable action for ritual feast day services, and to promote the spiritual authority and cult of the deceased bishop.

\textbf{Oral-Scribal Intertexture}

The first stage of intertextual analysis is the investigation of the \textit{vita’s} use of oral and written sources. Following an evaluation of the literary culture in Gaul during the writing of the \textit{vita}, this section will compare contemporaneous fire miracles in other Gallic literary sources, and will examine the influence of the Bible upon the text. By the time of the writing of the \textit{vita}, Gaul had experienced a century-long decline in the availability of Roman rhetorical schools, and education increasingly had fallen under the domain of the church, whose literary output was largely unchanged. While some, like Caesarius, had the financial and social connections to be tutored by skilled grammarians such as Julianus Pomerius, for the majority of the \textit{vita’s} audience, “oral communication was the norm.”\textsuperscript{171} Accordingly, the oral realm is the source of many of the reports in Caesarius’ \textit{vita}, with the authors consistently guaranteeing their reliability.\textsuperscript{172} The Bordeaux fire miracle is attributed to a “reliable report” (\textit{fideli relatione}), likely an oral or epistolary source from an ecclesial informant with adequate authority to describe the


\textsuperscript{171} Hen, \textit{Culture and Religion}, 41. Also, see Hen’s excellent discussion of “literacy and orality” in Merovingian Gaul, ibid., 21-42. Wood, in “Continuity or Calamity?,” asserts that literacy in the church remained stable throughout political shifts, 9-18.

\textsuperscript{172} For the authors guaranteeing the reliability of their sources, see the prologues in \textit{VC} 1.1 and 2.1.
presence of the devil. In order to facilitate re-entry of these stories and their themes back into oral culture, the *vita* was intentionally composed in a linguistically simple fashion, a strategy that was also used by Caesarius in his own preaching.

Although oral culture was often the source - and target - of Caesarius’ *vita*, the relationship between oral and written media was one of “interdependence,” as Gallic Christian culture was deeply rooted in literary texts. Foremost in importance was the Bible, which was the literary base of all Gallic *vitae*, as demonstrated by Marc van Uytfanghe in his investigation of the explicit and implicit intertextualité between the Bible and Gallic hagiography from 650 - 700 CE. In regards to explicit Biblical references, de Nie has demonstrated that the story of the three Hebrew men in the burning furnace from Daniel 3 often served as the “image-model” for Gallic fire miracles. In the Vulgate, an angel joins the men in the furnace, pushing back the flames like a “blowing wind of dew” (*quasi ventum roris flantem*). Likewise, Severus recounts the tale of an abbot who orders a monk into a burning furnace as a test in obedience, in which the monk does not burn, but is “bathed as with a cooling dew” (*velut frigido rore*

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173 VC 1.22.
174 For “something that many know,” see VC 2.26. The fire at Vincentius house follows the “very well-known” event in the *Alpines*, VC 2.27, and precedes VC 2.29, which is a story told to the narrators by a priest, making it likely that this story was also reported orally.
175 See VC 2.1, “our master himself frequently said in his public sermons that what was said in a learned fashion would only educate the learned, but what was said in a simple fashion would suitably instruct the learned and simple alike.” Compare to Caesarius, SC 86.1, “What is said to simple souls can, indeed, be understood by the educated, but what is preached to the learned cannot be grasped at all by the simple.”
176 For “interdependence,” see Hen, *Culture and Religion*, 21.
177 See Marc van Uytfanghe’s excellent work, *Stylisation biblique et condition humaine dans l’hagiographie Mérovingienne (600-750)* (Brussels: Paleis der Academien, 1987). Gurevich, in *Medieval Popular Culture*, 10, states that hagiographers used both “overt” and “covert” citation from the Bible. Also see Auerbach in *Mimesis*, 88, who states that *vitae* moved with the “rhythm of the Bible.”
178 See de Nie, *Views*, 154.
179 See Daniel 3:50.
Similarly, when Severus writes of Martin emerging from the fire at the basilica, the bishop of Tours reports to his comrades that as soon as he had gone into a state of prayer, “the flames in the centre had fallen back and he had felt them now as dew upon him” (medias cessisse flammas, sequ tunc sensisse rorantes quas male esset expertus urentes).

Martin’s trial was explicitly referenced in the anonymous Vita Eugendi, the biography of the abbot Eugendus, who governed a monastery in the Jura forests near modern Geneva between 485 - 514. Following a fire that destroys the wooden monastery, an intact bottle of Martin’s oil is found among the ashes, and its survival is compared to how, “the three youths, refreshed by dew (roscidis refrigeriis), covered themselves in glory in the Persian furnace (in camino Persico).” The author offers the fact that nobody perished in the fire as proof of the relic’s power, and parallels the situation to Martin’s miraculous survival in the basilica fire. A similar incident is found in the vita of Germanus of Auxerre (died 448), written by one Constantius c.480.

During a village fire, the bishop’s holy presence saves the house he inhabited, “the flames leaped over it and, although they raged on either side of it, there glittered unharmed amid

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182 For a background of the three Jura vitae, and the principles of their monastic community, see Vivian, Vivian, and Russell, 23-80.
184 See the Vita Eugendi, 164, “Thus the fiery misfortune, I believe, was not allowed more power over holy Eugendus than, as I have said, when it retreated from blessed Martin. Consequently, we recall, the monks of Condadisco escaped thanks to the oil and power of Martin,” Vivian, Vivian and Russell, The Lives of the Jura Fathers, 176, and Martine, Vie des Peres du Jura, 415. Compare to Severus, Ep. 1.
185 For the uncertainty over whether this author is Constantius of Lyons and for the date of writing, see Wolfert S. van Egmond, Conversing With the Saints: Communication in Pre-Carolingian Hagiography from Auxerre (Turnhout, Belgium: Brepols Publishers, 2006), 25-7. For the date of Germanus, see Hen, Culture and Religion, 97.
the burning balls of flames (globos flammantis incendii) a tabernacle intact (incolome tabernaculum), preserved by the occupant within.”

While there is no mention of any “cooling dew,” the notion of safety amid flames is a clear echo of the Daniel account. The “trial by fire” motif of these miracle accounts provided the dual rhetorical advantage of a Biblical connection, and a means by which the unavoidable history of destructive fires could be spun into proofs of sanctity. Indeed, as Caesarius stated in a sermon on the men in the Daniel story, “The heat of the flames withdrew from the merits of their virtues (virtutum meritis).”

Although this focus on virtue parallels the presentation of Caesarius’ flamma virtutis in the second fire miracle, the accounts in the latter’s vita do not focus on the bodily trial of the Daniel passage.

Another fire miracle attributed to Martin that would have been familiar to Caesarius’ biographers is found in the Vita Martini:

“He (Martin) had set on fire (ignem inmisisset) a very ancient and much frequented shrine (fano antiquissimo et celeberrimo) in a certain village and the flames were being driven by the wind against a neighboring, in fact adjacent, house. When Martin noticed this, he climbed speedily to the roof of the house and placed himself in front of the oncoming flames. Then you might have seen an amazing sight- the flames bending back against the force of the wind (venti) till it looked like a battle between warring elements. Such were his powers (virtute) that the fire destroyed only where it was bidden.”

The similarity between Caesarius’ three miracles and this account is striking; in all four situations the bishops address threatening flames and contain them prior to complete devastation. However, there are also significant differences between the narratives. First, Martin is responsible for the fire in his vita due to his own act of anti-pagan aggression.

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186 Constantius, Vita Germani, 16.8 (MGH Scriptores Rerum Merovingiarum 7:263). For the English translation, see Hoare, The Western Fathers, 299, although he translates globos flammantis incendii as “furnaces”.
187 SC 167.7.
Second, there is no mention of any ritual action performed by Martin to repel the flames. Finally, Martin’s powers direct the wind, while Caesarius is presented as directly interacting with the fire itself.

A stronger potential exemplar for Caesarius’ fire miracles is found in an account regarding Mamertus of Vienne (c.451/452 - c.473/474), as found in a letter written by Sidonius Apollinaris, the bishop of Clermont (c.469 - 485), and in a sermon delivered by Avitus of Vienne. Sidonius was an associate of Firminus, the man with whom Caesarius initially had lived in Arles, and to whom Sidonius had dedicated the ninth book of his famous epistolae. In his letter, Sidonius praises Mamertus for his institution of the Rogation Days, a three-day period of community atonement before Easter that was believed to ward off misfortune. The practice spread rapidly throughout Gaul, and Caesarius used Rogation Day sermons to reinforce the correlation between sin and calamity. As an assertion of Mamertus’ authority, Sidonius describes his actions against a fire at Vienne,

“But you resorted in our latter day to the example shown of old in Nineveh, that you at least might not discredit the divine warning by the spectacle of your despair. And, indeed, you of all men had been least justified in distrusting the providence of God, after the proof of it vouchsafed to your own virtues (virtutum). Once, in a sudden conflagration, your faith burned stronger than the flames (fides tua in illo ardore plus caluit). In full sight of the trembling crowd, you stood forth all alone to stay them, and lo! the fire leapt back before you, a sinuous beaten fugitive. It was miracle (miraculo), a formidable thing, unseen before and

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189 For the dates of Sidonius, see Shanzer and Wood, Avitus of Vienne, 102. For the dates of Mamertus, see ibid., 383-4, n.7.
190 For the literary relationship between Sidonius and Firminus, see Klingshirn, Community, 72-3.
191 See Beck, Pastoral Care, 104-5.
192 SC 71.1, “I think that no one among you is so foolish, dearly beloved, that he cannot see that the great evils of our day, the great miseries with which we are constantly worn out and afflicted, are the just desserts of our sins.” See also SC 70, and 207-9.
unexpected, the element which naturally shrinks from nothing, retired in awe at your approach.”

While Sidonius’ flowery language presents a sharp contrast to the intentionally simple prose of Caesarius’ *vita*, there is the striking assertion that Mamertus’ “faith burned,” which parallels Caesarius’ *flamma virtutis* in revealing the subject’s sanctity in an imagistic fashion. Following the miracle account, Sidonius explicates the rhetorical function of the narrative, “You taught that it was by water of tears (*aqua...oculorum*), rather than water of rivers (*aqua...fluminum*) that the obstinate and raging fire could be best extinguished, and by firm faith (*fidei stabilitate*) the threatening shock of earthquake stayed.”

Thereby, the miracle narrative presents Sidonius with the rhetorical opportunity to promote penitential action and an increase in his audience’s faith during the Rogation Days.

A fascinating aspect of Mamertus’ fire miracle is that we are able to observe another interpretation of the event in the preaching of the bishop’s successor, and Caesarius’ contemporary, Avitus, on a subsequent Rogation Day in Vienne. Notably, Avitus takes the rhetorical image of the “water of tears,” which occurs after the miracle in Sidonius’ letter, and inserts it directly into the miraculous events.

“For the city hall which exalted sublimity had set on high atop the summit of the city, began to burn with terrible flames (*flammis terribilibus*) in the twilight period. The joy of the solemn feast was thus interrupted by the announcement of disaster. The church was evacuated by people full of terror, for all feared a similar fate for their own property and houses from a certain citadel where the fire blazed on high. But invincible the bishop stood fast at the festive altars and inflaming the warmth of his faith

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194 Ibid., 7.1.7. Ibid., 96.
(calorem fidei) he checked the power allowed to the fires with a river of tears (flumine lacrimarum) as the fire retreated."\textsuperscript{195}

Like Sidonius, Avitus demonstrates the holiness of his hero by means of a fire analogy, and provides an image of tears extinguishing flames. However, Mamertus’ miraculous “river of tears” has taken centre stage in Avitus’ account, inserting the imagistic instruction for the actions of his audience into the section likely to receive the most attention. Following the miracle, Avitus encourages his listeners to pour out their “annual dues consisting of tears (uberi),” which had succeeded in “purging the land infected with vice (infectam vitiis) with an abundant flow of reparation.”\textsuperscript{196}

As has been shown, the fire miracles in Caesarius’ \textit{vita} do not follow the Daniel model common to Gallic accounts, but more closely resemble the interventions of Martin and Mamertus in the legitimization of their respective subjects’ authority; Martin in his fight against paganism, Mamertus in his institution of the rogation days, and Caesarius in his contest with Licinianus and the requirement of his presence in Arles. Additionally, the presentation of Mamertus’ burning faith by both Sidonius and Avitus parallels the \textit{flamma virtutis} of Caesarius as a rhetorical device by which each bishop’s merits could be revealed in an imagistic way. It will be shown in the section on social intertexture that just as Mamertus’ burning faith provided Sidonius with a tool to spur his audience to increase their own faith, Caesarius’ \textit{flamma virtutis} also contained the potential to be interpreted in ways that would promote acceptable action.

The prominent use of the Daniel model in Gallic fire miracles, alongside Sidonius’ reference to the city of Nineveh’s repentance in the book of Jonah,

\textsuperscript{196} Ibid., 6.1 (\textit{MGH Scriptores Auctores Antiquissimi} 6:108). Ibid., 381.
demonstrates the integral role that Biblical references played in these accounts. Likewise, Caesarius’ fire miracles contain numerous implicit and explicit Biblical references, which can be organized according to criteria laid out by Robbins. The first is textual “recitation,” the explicit duplication of a literary source by an author. In the first unit, there is the explicit recitation of three Biblical passages in the mini-sermon of paragraph 23, which immediately follows the successful miracle. The first is Matthew 22:21, “to render to God what belonged to God, and to Caesar what belonged to Caesar,” which van Uytfanghe believes was used to endorse a “dissociation” between the church and civil government. This is supported by Cyprianus’ assertion that the “impious king” (nefarius princeps) Alaric II had not believed Caesarius’ innocence until after his miracle. Likewise, the recitation of Titus 3:1, “obey kings and magistrates when they give just orders,” would have promoted submission to the ruling Frankish and Catholic king Childebert I, as opposed to the long deceased Alaric II, who had been filled with, “the depravity of Arian teaching” (Arriani dogmatis pravitatem). Finally, there is a paraphrase of Matthew 5:14-16, a common passage in Gallic hagiography and Caesarius’

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197 See Jonah 3-4. See also Avitus’ reference to Genesis 19:24 regarding the fire in Vienne, “For who would not fear the showers of Sodom amidst frequent fires?” (Quis enim in crebris ignibus imbres Sodomiticos non timeret?), Ex Homiliarum Libro 6.10 (MGH Scriptores Auctores Antiquissimi 6:109). Shanzer and Wood, Avitus of Vienne, 382.
198 Robbins, Tapestry, 103.
199 van Uytfanghe, Stylisation, 51. For “impious king,” see VC 1.24. See also Caesarius SC 32.1, where he uses this verse to promote almsgiving through a dissociation of images, “What else did he seem to say except that, just as you give Caesar his own image in the coin, so you should give God His image in yourself?”
200 See the praise given to Childebert I in VC 2.45. For the “depravity of Arian teaching,” see VC 1.23. Sometime after 533, Childebert I issued a praeceptum banning “pagan” rituals and idol worship, which may have appealed to the sensibilities of Caesarius and his followers, see J.M. Wallace-Hadrill, The Frankish Church (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1983), 32.
sermons, in which the bishop is likened to a lamp placed on a mountain, a scriptural
cognate to the bishop’s *flamma virtutis*.\(^{201}\)

In the second unit, all Biblical recitations occur in the last two paragraphs; again
in a mini-sermon given by Caesarius to his monks. Messianus describes Caesarius’
preaching as “welcome to those who wished to hear it and unwelcome to those who did
not,” a paraphrase of 2 Timothy 4:2. The bishop provides a lesson on “spiritual food”
(*cibo spirituali*), advising his disinterested audience to “Gather in the Lord’s wheat,” his
spiritual lessons, while they were available.\(^{202}\) There are also several references to
prophecy in the section, and Messianus recalls the “prophetic voice” (*voce prophetica*)
with which the bishop had delivered the above admonition, connecting it to the warning
of Amos 8:11: “I shall send you a famine in the earth, a famine…not of bread and water
but of hearing the word of God.” By the *vita’s* writing, these prophecies had been
fulfilled, as Caesarius, who had obeyed the command in Isaiah 58:1 to “Cry out
unceasingly,” had been silenced by death. An important feature of the scriptural recitation
in both mini-sermons of Caesarius is that, aside from the Titus selection, the bishop used
these passages in his own sermons.\(^{203}\) Indeed, in the second mini-sermon, Messianus
states that “the sermons (*praedicationes*) he produced are still recited,” an explicit
advertisement for Caesarius’ prophetic preaching.\(^{204}\) It is to this relationship between the
*vita* and Caesarius’ sermons that we shall now turn, in order to highlight an implicit
reference to a scriptural tradition in the second unit.

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\(^{201}\) For the extent of this passage’s use in Merovingian hagiography, see van Uytfanghe, *Stylisation*, 37. For
paraphrases of this passage in Caesarius’ sermons, see *SC* 1.16, 89.4, 104.6, 146.1, 187.3, and 233.7.
\(^{202}\) *VC* 2.32.
\(^{203}\) For 2 Timothy 4:2, see *SC* 1.3 and 4.2. Caesarius repeatedly used Isaiah 58:1 to encourage preaching,
see *SC* 1.3, 4.2, 5.1, 57.1, 115.5, 183.1, 230.3, also see his use of the passage to promote singing in church,
80.2. For Amos 8:11, see *SC* 1.15 and 4.4.
\(^{204}\) *VC* 2.32.
The next component of oral-scribal intertexture to be investigated is reconfiguration, the “restructuring of an antecedent tradition” by an author. Robbins points to the Gospel authors’ reconfiguration of the Israelites’ forty-year desert journey into the forty-day temptation of Jesus as an example of this rhetorical technique.\textsuperscript{205} As has been sufficiently demonstrated through inner textual examination, there is an explicit reconfiguration of Jesus’ betrayal by Judas in Licinianus’ disloyalty to Caesarius, with Cyprianus asserting that Licinianus “took on” (\textit{assumpsit}) the character of Judas in his accusation of the Christ-like Caesarius.\textsuperscript{206} Both Caesarius’ repelling of the Bordeaux fire and the miraculous resurrection of Jesus provide a proof of innocence and salvation for the afflicted. However, more intriguing is an apparent implicit reconfiguration in the second unit of the Christian allegorical tradition of interpreting the staffs mentioned in the Old Testament as prefigurations of the cross of Christ. The identification of this reconfiguration stems from the staff-cross-sign progression uncovered in the inner textual analysis of unit two, and receives support from Caesarius’ own homiletic use of allegory.

As Courreau has thoroughly demonstrated, Caesarius often used allegorical scriptural readings, particularly those of Origen, to draw spiritual meaning from Old Testament passages in his preaching.\textsuperscript{207} For instance, Caesarius repeatedly presents Moses’ staff, which Eucherius of Lyons described as, “a staff powerful in miraculous


\textsuperscript{206} \textit{VC} 1.21.

effects” *(virgam... in opera signorum potentem)*, as a prefiguration of Christ’s cross, as seen in the following sermon on Exodus 7:8-13, 208

“That staff (illa virga), dearly beloved, prefigured the mystery of the cross *(crucis mysterium praeferebat)*. Just as through the staff Egypt was struck by ten plagues, so also the whole world was humiliated and conquered by the cross. Just as Pharaoh and his people were afflicted by the power of the staff, with the result that he released the Jewish people to serve God, so the devil and his angels are wearied and oppressed by the mystery of the cross to such an extent that they cannot recall the Christian people from God’s service.” 209

As Courreau points out, this particular association between the staff of Moses and Christ’s cross was intended to exemplify themes of victory. 210 The ability of Caesarius’ miraculous staff to drive away the demons from the bathhouse in *Succentriones* continues this theme, with Messianus stating that, “until the present, the adversary *(adversarius)* has not dared to inflict any more wicked evil *(nequissimum malum)* on anyone in that place.” 211

The allegorical integration of the staffs of Old Testament characters and Christ’s cross is presented in the next stage of the progression in an imagistic way, with the alteration of Caesarius’ staff into the shape of the cross by the nobleman in the *Alpines*.

208 Eucherius of Lyon, *De Laude Eremi 7* *(PL 50:703)*. For the English translation, see Vivian, Vivian and Russell, 200-1.

209 *SC* 95.5. See also *SC* 95.8, “We have mentioned that the staff *(virgam)* prefigured the cross. Therefore, the cross which is considered foolishness by unbelievers - as the Apostle says: ‘To the Gentiles Foolishness,’ - after it was thrown on the ground, that is, prepared for the Lord’s Passion, it was turned into a serpent or wisdom.” Morin points out the influence on this sermon of Origen’s fourth Homily on Exodus, see *Sermones*, 392, n.376. Also see *SC* 97.3, “After this Moses is commanded to strike the sea with his rod *(virga)*. In the rod *(virga)*, as I said before, is recognized the mystery of the holy cross *(mysterium sanctae crucis)*. Moreover, it is true, brethren, for listen and see that, if the rod *(virga)* were not raised over the sea, God’s people would not be removed from Pharaoh’s power. Thus it is, dearly beloved, that if the cross had not been lifted up, the Christian people would have perished forever. But when the rod *(virga)* was raised, that is, when the cross was lifted up, the sea and its waves drew back, that is, the world and its powers were overcome.” See *SC* 99.1, for Moses’ staff in relation to the ten plagues of Egypt, and *SC* 103, in which Caesarius discusses Moses using his staff to get water from a rock. Also see *SC* 112:4, where Caesarius states regarding Moses, “he received from the Lord a rod *(virgam)* to work wonders *(signa)* and prodigies *(prodigia)* in Egypt.”


211 *VC* 2.22.
An analogous theme can be found in Caesarius’ sermon on the miraculous staff of Aaron from Numbers 17:1-11, taken almost entirely from Origen,

“Just as Aaron’s rod (virga) sprouted among the Jewish people, so the cross of Christ flowered among the Gentiles. However, since Christ is the true high priest, as we have often said, He is the only one whose rod of the cross (virga crucis) not only sprouted but blossomed, and produced the fruit of all believers.”

Aaron’s flowering rod parallels the cross-shaped staff of Caesarius, which renders the nobleman’s land “very fertile” (maximam ubertatem). Additionally, both staffs point to Christ’s “rod of the cross” (virga crucis), whose believers are likened to an abundant crop. The final stage of the progression concerns Caesarius’ use of the sign of the cross in paragraphs 28-30, for which the bishop provides a corresponding allegorical reading of Exodus 17:8-13, “When the cruel enemy Alamec came, Josue was commanded to hold the staff (virgam) and Moses extended his arms in the form of a cross. Thus, by the figure (figuram) of the cross, an invincible enemy was overcome.”

This imaginative reading of the passage mirrors the miraculous efficacy of Caesarius’ signing of the cross apart from his staff.

As van Uytfanghe has pointed out, there is precedent for this “spiritual” connection of events in the bishop’s life to Old Testament themes in the description of Caesarius’ pending death near the end of the vita: “Meanwhile the departure of Israel from the land of Egypt, that is the departure of the bodily life (corporalis vitae) of a holy soul (animae sanctae) from the world, became imminent and drew near.”

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212 SC 111.1. Morin sees this sermon as almost completely excerpted from Origen’s ninth Homily on Numbers, see Sermones, 457.
213 VC 2.27.
214 SC 112.4.
215 VC 2.46.
numerous homiletic references to the allegorical tradition, render it likely that the second unit was intentionally structured in this fashion to provide opportunities for explication during preaching. Caesarius’ staff is thus presented as a “postconfiguration” of Christ’s cross, pointing back to the cross and Christ’s triumphant death, just as the staffs of Moses and Aaron point forward. Although Caesarius is explicitly linked to other Old Testament holy men, namely Daniel, Noah, and Elisha, these implicit references to the allegorical tradition regarding Moses and Aaron have not yet been recognized.216

However, what are we to make of the dual designations of Caesarius’ staff as both a virga and a baculus? In Caesarius’ sermons, each word carries a particular connotation, with the virga frequently representing a staff carried by a political leader, while the baculus is often equated to the staffs carried by shepherds and prophets. The former connection is apparent in a reference to Aaron’s rod: “Every leader of a tribe of people has a rod (virgam), for no man can rule people unless he possesses one.”217 The bishop also continued the longstanding tradition of Christian leaders as protective shepherds, “By the barking of dogs and the shepherd’s staff (baculoque pastorum) the fury of wolves is to be warded off,” and he indicates prefigurations of the cross in both the shepherd David’s staff (baculo) and the staff (baculum) carried by the prophet Elisha.218 Yet, the division between terms is not completely clear-cut, as the bishop once refers to Moses’ staff as a baculum in comparison with that carried by Elisha.219

216 This is pointed out by van Uytfanghe in Stylistation, 18. For “our Daniel” (Danihel...noster), see VC 1.31, for Caesarius as a “Noah of our time” (temporis nostri Noe), see VC 1.35, and for “another Elisha” (alter Heliseus), see VC 2.2.
217 SC 111.1.
218 SC 1.5. See also SC 1.19, where priests are classified as shepherds. For the David connections, see SC 121.5, referring to events in 1 Samuel 17. For Elisha, see SC 128.7, pointing to 2 Kings 4:25-31.
219 SC 128.7.
A combination of the two terms appears once in a sermon on the Old Testament figure Gideon, which Caesarius largely derived from Ambrose. In the sermon, Caesarius describes Christ’s, “rod of discipline and the staff of the cross” (*virga disciplinae vel baculo crucis*), in a reading of the staff used by an angel to consume the offering laid by Gideon in Judges 6:21. It is plausible that this pairing of *virga* and *baculus* from Ambrose, along with the combination of the terms in Caesarius’ *vita*, stems from Psalm 22:4, “Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I fear no evil; for you are with me; your rod and your staff (*virga tua et baculus tuus*) they comfort me.” The theme of the Psalm certainly parallels the overcoming of tribulation found in Caesarius’ miracles, and provides a corresponding reassurance of God’s presence in the midst of chaotic situations.

In the following section on social intertexture, it will be argued that the key role of the Psalms in Gallic Christian piety, along with the importance of preaching during the feast day liturgy, make it probable that these implicit connections of the bishop’s staff with scriptural traditions were intentionally placed in the *vita* for homiletic interpretation. Indeed, an examination of Caesarius’ own sermons has revealed some of the potential readings available to a preacher.

**Cultural Intertexture**

According to Robbins, cultural intertextual analysis examines the, “symbolic worlds that particular communities of discourse nurture with special nuances and emphases,” in short, the beliefs of the Gallic Christian community. Our primary evidence for the Christian cultural structure behind the *vita* is the writings of a narrow

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20 SC 117.6. Morin points out that this sermon is almost entirely derived from the prologue to Ambrose’s *De Spiritu Sancto, Sermones*, 486-7.
Gallic-Roman ecclesiastical aristocracy who, as Wood has demonstrated, were composed of a “well-defined nexus of family, social, and religious relationships.” This aristocratic network was only one component of a diverse cultural milieu in Arles, which included a large proportion of indigenous Celts, along with the many Greco-Oriental traders who used the city as a trading port. Additionally, the culture of the Arian Goths was pervasive during Caesarius’ bishopric, and the capture of Arles by Childebert I in 536/537 introduced Frankish cultural mores by the writing of the bishop’s vita.

The attitude of the vita’s authors toward the Arians is one of cultural superiority, with Cyprianus stating that Alaric II and his Visigoths were filled with the “heresy of barbarians” (barbariei perversitate), and that Theoderic’s troops acted with the “savageness of barbarians” (barbarorum ferocitate). The ruling Catholic Franks receive much better treatment, with Childebert I described as the “most glorious king” (gloriosissimi regis), who ushered in a “most catholic kingdom in Christ’s name” (catholicissimum in Christi nomine regnum). The increased cultural compatibility between the authors of the vita and the Catholic Franks is further demonstrated by Stephanus’ account of a feverish Frank who asks him for a piece of the deceased Caesarius’ clothing, so that he might place it in water to drink as a cure. Arian Christians, who did not believe in miracles performed by Christ’s followers, would not have sought this type of treatment.

Wood, “Continuity or Calamity?,” 10.
L.A. Constans, Arles antique (Paris: de Boccard, 1921), 112.
For “heresy of barbarians,” see VC 1.20. For “savageness of barbarians,” see VC 1.28.
For “most glorious king,” see VC 1.34. For “most catholic kingdom in Christ’s name,” see VC 2.45.
VC 2.42.
Another important cultural component of late antique Gaul was the widespread belief in the efficacy of “pagan” practices for natural intercession. Although the extent of these activities has been a matter of considerable debate, Caesarius’ preoccupation with these observances indicates that they were a challenge to the church during his bishopric. The bishop repeatedly warns against activities such as “fulfilling vows to fountains or trees (ad fontes aut ad arbores vota reddere)...consulting sorcerers (caraios), seers (divinos) or charmers (praecantatores), hanging devilish phylacteries (fylacteria...diabolica), magic signs (characteres), herbs (herbas), or charms (sucinos) on themselves or their family.” What specifically raised the bishop’s ire was not the existence of these actions per se, but the involvement of Christians. Accordingly, he encouraged Christian landowners to tear down “shrines” (fana), “diabolical altars” (aras diabolicas), and trees that were worshipped on their property, and to physically punish those complicit in such acts, in order to eradicate this component of Christian culture.

Both Robert Markus and Yitzhak Hen have argued against a rise in “pagan” activity in late antique and early medieval Gaul, despite an apparent increase in church actions against such practices. Hen, in Culture and Religion, 205, states that, “Pagan survivals and superstitions, whenever and wherever they can be documented, were small in number and culturally insignificant.” Markus, in “From Caesarius to Boniface: Christianity and Paganism in Gaul,” in The Seventh Century: Change and Continuity, ed. J.N. Hillgarth and Jaques Fontaine (London: The Warburg Institute/University of London, 1992), 250-76, 262, asserts that there was, “an increased sensitivity to these activities, not an increase in actions.” Valerie Flint, on the other hand, views an ever-increasing amount of pagan activities, which the church subsumed as miraculous actions in a form of syncretism, see The Rise of Magic in Early Medieval Europe (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991), 5. Both sides argue the extremes, and it is most likely that there was a substantial amount of pagan activities, with participation by Christians and non-Christians alike. Klingshirn, in Community, 213, believes that many of the servants and slaves in Arles, “though baptized, were still ardent pagans.” Delage asserts that many people were only nominally Christian, and held tightly to the beliefs and practices of their ancestors, “Un évêque,” 39. Also see Agnès Boulouis, in “Références pour la conversion du monde païen aux VIIe et VIIIe siècles: Augustin d’Hippone, Césaire d’Arles, Grégoire le Grand,” Revue des Études Augustiniennes 33 (1987): 90-112, 100, who states that Caesarius’ primary target was, “les formes de syncretisme” in Arles.

For the list, see SC 13.5. Caesarius’ prohibitions against these forms of practice were numerous, see SC 1.2, 12.4 13.3, 13.5, 19.3-4, 50, 52.2-52.5, 53, 54, 184.4, 189.2, 192, 193, 197.2, and 204.3. For “shrines” and “diabolical altars,” see SC 53.1. See SC 54.5, for Caesarius encouraging landowners to cut down such trees on their property. See SC 54:6, for Caesarius asserting that people are participating in “devilish banquets” (diabolica convivia) at these sites. Also see SC 13.5 and 53.2, for Caesarius promoting physical violence against people performing these rituals.
Caesarius pejoratively labeled these Christians, who believed that “holiness still oozed from the earth,” as *rustici*, and set them against the *sapientes* who sought change through proper *reverentia* to the “local manifestation of God” in a city’s church and bishop.\(^{231}\)

Regardless of contrasting forms of intercession, the Christian cultural conception of the natural order was of a system that contained predictable cyclical elements, while being simultaneously pervaded by invisible and supernatural forces that could be manipulated by ritual activities.\(^{232}\) Although Caesarius allowed that pagan practices could prove effective, he classified them as “works of the Devil” (*opera diaboli*), who, as he warned his audience, “does not want to kill the body as much as the soul”.\(^{233}\) In calamitous situations such as illness, the bishop encouraged his audience to come to the church for anointing with “blessed oil” (*oleum benedictum*), prayer, and the Eucharist; all of which provided the “double good” (*dupilia bona*) of corporeal health alongside absolution from sins.\(^{234}\) Thus, Caesarius promoted the church as a conduit of “clean” access to both temporal aid and spiritual salvation, which parallels the mixture of miracles and spiritual lessons presented in his *vita*.\(^{235}\)

According to Robbins, one of the main benefits of cultural intertextual investigation is the revelation of implicit information that is transmitted by the “careful

\(^{231}\) For “holiness still oozed from the earth,” see Brown, *The Rise of Western Christendom*, 97. Brown also points to Caesarius’ *SC* 44.7, to demonstrate the differing ways in which the *sapientes* and *rustici* dealt with misfortune, *Relics*, 232. See *SC* 50 and 172 for more of Caesarius’ comments on the *rustici*. For “local manifestation of God,” see Hadrill, *The Frankish Church*, 79.

\(^{232}\) Stancliffe states that there was no division between the natural and supernatural spheres in the thought of the period, *St. Martin*, 215. See also T.C. Williams, who stresses the universal understanding of natural cycles, *The Idea of the Miraculous*: “It is not true that people were unacquainted with laws of nature. You don’t need to have any scientific experience to know that people do not rise from the dead, that water freezes when it gets very cold, that heavy objects tend to fall towards the earth, and so on,” 30.

\(^{233}\) *SC* 12.4.

\(^{234}\) *SC* 13.3. Also see *SC* 19.5, 50.1, 52.5 and 184.5, for Caesarius directing people to the church for healing.

\(^{235}\) For a discussion of “clean,” as opposed to “unclean” forms of natural intercession, see Brown, *Cult*, 102-7.
use of language." In this context we can investigate the *flamma virtutis* of Caesarius, an analogue at the core of the bishop’s ability to repel the monastery fire in the second literary unit. De Nie has demonstrated that in late antique Gaul, human bodies were understood as “vessels,” which could be penetrated and filled by physical and spiritual entities. Accordingly, Caesarius encouraged his audience to be sure that they were filled appropriately: “Let the dwelling of our heart be freed of vices (*evacuetur vitis*) and filled with virtues (*virtutibus repleatur*),” and he warned that those who performed evil acts “eject Christ from their hearts and bring in the devil.” In his *vita*, Caesarius’ biographers represented the bishop’s internal virtue by means of the analogical symbol *flamma virtutis*, a linguistic tool also used by Sidonius and Avitus in their descriptions of Mamertus’ faith. However, these internal fiery states were not perceived as mere literary symbols, rather, the explication of their physical reality was intricately tied to ecclesial authority structures in Gaul.

In his *Dialogorum Libri*, Sulpicius Severus presents the monk Postumianus recounting when the bishop Martin entered into his church after virtuously exchanging tunics with a beggar,

“Martin, then proceeded in this garment to the church to offer sacrifice to God. Now, on that same day (I am coming to something very wonderful) he had begun to bless the altar in accordance with the ritual when we saw a ball of fire (*globum ignis*) dart out from his head, so that, as it rose in the

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238 For “Let the dwelling of our heart be freed of vices and filled with virtues,” see SC 227.1. For “eject Christ from their hearts and bring in the devil,” see SC 229.4. Also see SC 79.3, “Therefore, with God’s help let us work hard to correct or destroy all our sins, so that virtues may take the place of vices.”
Postumianus dodges an explanation; however, it would have been understood that the remaining congregations' lack of perception was connected to a lack of spiritual authority. Although Martin's sermon was given in front of a packed church, Mamertus' miracle performed in front of the citizens of Vienne, and Caesarius' feat accomplished at the monastery at Arles, which was at the city's highest elevation, the true significance of each event was relegated to the sight of the minority, who had access to the "really real" virtuous flames of the bishops. Consequently, Caesarius' *vita* is filled with allusions to the bishop's inner brilliance, with assertions that his "good deeds shone out" (*bona fulserunt*), "his face shone because of his joyful heart" (*corde laetante vultus floreret*), and "all the individual virtues shone out in him" (*resplenduerunt in eum singulae quaeque virtutes*).242

Alongside enhancing the status of those able to discern Caesarius' internal fire, the bishop's *flamma virtutis* was analogously connected to a large symbolic world of internal flame imagery that had been thoroughly mapped out by the bishop himself.

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241 See VC, 2.6, where it is asserted that the fire at the monastery was "something that many know". See Maria McCarthy, *The Rule for Nuns of St. Caesarius of Arles: A Translation With a Critical Introduction* (Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 1960), 20, for the southeastern intramural location of Arles' second female monastic community. For "really real," see de Nie, "A Broken Lamp", 275. For the notion that sin kept people from being able to see *virtus*, see idem, *Views*, 178-9. Heffernan, in *Sacred Biography*, asserts that in the medieval mind, the "real" was "hidden beneath the surface," and required authoritative explanation for its revelation, 38.
242 For "good deeds shone out," see VC 1.7. For "his face shone because of his joyful heart," which is a paraphrase of Proverbs 15:13, see VC 1.46. For "all the individual virtues shone out in him," see VC 1.53. See also VC 1.11, "his expression always seemed to shine forth like something heavenly" (*vultus eius qualitas nescio quid sempervideretur rentiere caeleste*), and VC 1.14, for the assertion that Caesarius' holiness revealed him to those seaching to make him bishop, and VC 2.35, "His face shone brightly along with his soul" (*resplendebat cum anima vultus eius*).
Caesarius presented two contrasting categories of internal flames that could fill a person, the “fire of charity” (ignis caritatis) and the “fire of passion” (ignis cupiditatis).243 According to the bishop, the flame of charity directly correlates to the flamma virtutis, as it is “more noble than all the virtues” (omnibus virtutibus sublimior), and, effectively, “contains all virtues” (continentur omnia bona).244 He likens charity to the oil that fills the lamp of the virtuous Christian, which the bishop himself is likened to in the mini-sermon following the first fire miracle.245 Sparking the flame of charity begins with the faithful reception of the fire of the Holy Spirit, as scripturally portrayed in the men who met Christ on the road to Emmaus, “they no longer spoke unbelief as though they were cold or lukewarm, but glowing with the Holy Spirit (ferventes Spiritu sancto) they preached faith in God, saying: ‘Was not our heart burning within us while he was speaking on the road and explaining to us the Scriptures?’ (Luke 24:32)”246 The entry of the Holy Spirit carries the additional benefit of burning off a person’s previous vice, and its presence protects against the entry of future sins.247

243 See SC 96.2 and 228.3, for “fire of charity,” and “fire of passion.” See also SC 100.7, which is based largely on Augustine, 100.7, “Men burn with indignation, but also with grace, for both the man who wishes to kill and the one who desires to help his neighbor glows with passion. The former is inflamed with disease, the latter by precept; the one with poisonous ulcers, the other good works.”
244 For “more noble than all the virtues,” see SC 29.2. For “contains all virtues,” see SC 23.3.
245 SC 29.2. See VC 1.23 for the connection to the lamp imagery in Matthew 5:14-16.
246 SC 169.8. For the connection between charity and faith in Caesarius’ thought, see M.E. Lauziere, “Saint Césaire: L’enseignement,” 145, who points to SC 80, “La charité fraternelle, en dépouillant le fidèle, garantit et dilate la foi. Mais la charité fraternelle n’est pas autre que la charité à l’égard de Dieu. Donc dans la pensée de Césaire, foi et charité sont étroitement unies.”
247 See SC 72.3, “If our soul is on fire with love for the Holy Spirit it will consume every vice with the fire of compunction (compunctionis...igne) and prayer and dispel all its wandering, fleeting fancies, so that only virtues and holy exercises will find room in our hearts,” and SC 96.1, “If only that fire would take hold of us, lest it find us hardened and be unable to consume us. Let us rather pray that this fire may burn in us, destroying and annihilating the thorns of our sins.” See also SC 99.2, for the connection between the burning bush and the flame of the Holy Spirit, “The Lord also sends hail to destroy the still tender shoots of vice, and knowing that there are thorns and briars of sin which flames should feed upon, He also sends fire,” and SC 99.3, “Heavenly teaching is recognized in the thunder; in the hail, the discipline received by sinners; in the fire, the grace of the Holy Ghost, which consumes the pleasure of unlawful desires and the thorns of sin.”
Conversely, for those filled with the flame of passion, there is not to be found any virtue, “nothing that is good will remain in a man in whom the fire of passion (ignis cupiditatis) has been kindled.” Those sins that remain in a person provide fuel for the punishing flames of the afterlife. For residual minor (minuta) sins, Caesarius asserts that offenders “will have to stay in that fire of purgatory (igne purgatorio) as long as those above-mentioned slight sins are consumed like wood and hay and straw.” In the case of those who die filled with mortal (capitalia) sins, the internal flame of passion is a preview into the everlasting fires of hell. Accordingly, Caesarius calls for his congregation to reform their actions and those of their peers, even in the face of temporal discomfort, “A little distress dissolves enormous sins which eternal fire (ardor aeternus) would scarcely have destroyed.” The bishop reassures his audience that those who turn to faith in Christ receive the benefit of being, “immediately inflamed with the fire of charity (flamma caritatis),” which will keep them from both present vice and eternal punishment.

Caesarius shared his biographers’ cultural belief that all people were filled with internal fire, whether good or evil. What was crucial for the Christian was ensuring that the flame of passion was extinguished, while the flame of charity was kindled by faith and virtuous action. The multivocality of Caesarius’ flamma virtutis invested it with the

248 SC 96.2.
249 SC 179.4.
250 SC 193.1. See also SC 167.5, “For this reason, the unquenchable fire there will have to burn whatever healing penance and salutary conversion of life here has failed to cure,” and SC 167.8, “Since these facts are true, beloved, let us realize that men will not be able to escape intolerable.” Also see SC 206:3, “the discipline of fire will in true proportion inflict as much punishment upon a man as his guilt demands, and wise pain will rage in proportion to what foolish sinfulness committed.” For a discussion of the two types of sins in Caesarius’ thought, see A. Voog, “La péché,” 1062-80.
251 SC 189.1. See also SC 197.1, based on Faustus of Riez, “Short labor makes up for huge sins which eternal fire (ardor aeternus) was going to consume only with difficulty.”
252 SC 228.4.
potential to be analogously linked to a wide range of acceptable Christian actions, and set against forbidden practices that fanned the flame of passion. In the following section on social intertexture, the investigation of the bishop’s *flamma virtutis* will explore the specific practical actions that could contribute to either fire; actions that received extensive comment by Caesarius in his sermons.

**Social Intertexture**

Following Robbins’ model, social intertextual investigation will examine the physical practices and interactions of the Christian Gallic society associated with Caesarius’ *vita.*

First, the practices surrounding the *vita*’s liturgical use will be investigated, followed by an examination of prescribed and prohibited actions that could be extrapolated from Caesarius’ *flamma virtutis.* The bishop’s death on August 27, 542 positioned his feast day in the middle of a large group of celebrations in Arles. The city’s central saint was Genesius, a martyr believed to have been beheaded during the persecutions of Diocletian (c.236 - 315), whose feast day arrived two days before Caesarius’ on August 25. As well, Caesarius’ feast was the day before Augustine’s on the 28th, and two days before the celebration of John the Baptist’s martyrdom on the 29th.

Caesarius preached on many feast days, predominantly during the period that Beck terms the “prolongation to the Christmas cycle;” St. Stephen’s on December 26, the celebration for the apostles James and John on the 27th, and the feast of the Holy Innocents on the 28th. Additionally, the bishop composed sermons for the burial day of

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254 See VC 2.46, where Caesarius is presented as pleased that his impending date of death would occur near that of Augustine. Hen has presented a plausible outline of the feast days, and their dates, celebrated in Arles during Caesarius’ time, *Culture and Religion*, 89-92. For Genesius, see Loseby, “Arles in Late Antiquity,” 58-66, and Klingshirn, *Community*, 166, who believes that Caesarius would have preached on the feast day of the city’s patron martyr.
Honoratus on January 14, the martyrdom and birthday of John the Baptist on August 28 and June 24 respectively, along with a group of generalized sermons for celebrations of the martyrs. This sanctoral cycle of the church was intertwined with the natural rhythm of Gaul, and while the Christmas feasts occurred during periods of greyness and cold, it seems appropriate that Caesarius's own summer feast day coincided with an increase in the possibility of destructive fires.

Feast days in Arles were popular social events by which participants demonstrated solidarity with both their fellow Christians and their heroes in heaven, who could intercede with God, on the people's behalf, for temporal and eternal benefits. People from the outskirts of Arles' diocese, whom Caesarius regretted that he could see only two or three times a year, gathered for feasting, miraculous healings, and the reading of their saint's sacred story. The large number of people who attended these festivals is apparent in the following anecdote from Gregory of Tours, in which a crowd of Genesius' devotees crosses the Rhône between two pilgrimage sites sometime during the bishopric of Honoratus (427 - 430),

"Over the Rhône river there is a bridge at the spot where the blessed martyr Genesius is said to have escaped by swimming. This bridge was placed on top of boats. Once, on the festival of the saint, it broke its anchor chains and began to swing. Because of the great weight of the people, the boats broke and submerged the people in the riverbed. Everyone was placed in the same danger, and they shouted with one voice and said: 'Blessed Genesius, save us by the power of your own holiness, lest the people who have faithfully and piously come to celebrate your festival perish.' Soon a wind blew up and the entire crowd of people was

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255 For quote and dates, see Beck, Pastoral Care, 98. For Stephen, see SC 219 and 220, for James and John see SC 221, for the Holy Innocents, see SC 222, for Honoratus, see SC 214 and 215, for the nativity of John the Baptist, see SC 216 and 217, and for the martyrdom of the same, see SC 218. For Caesarius' general sermons on the martyrs, see SC 223, 224, 225.

256 For the connection between the natural and sanctoral cycle, see Van Dam, Leadership, 293.

257 For Caesarius' regret that he was not able to visit outlying areas more often, see SC 6.1.
brought to the bank. They marveled that they had been saved by the power of the martyr (virtute martyris).”

Many, if not most, people attended feast day celebrations for social interactions apart from the liturgy of the church, which greatly angered Caesarius. The bishop lamented that while the “divine lessons” (lectiones divinas) were being read, many Christians were not even inside the church, but remained outside to “plead cases” (litigare), which sometimes led to physical confrontation. Caesarius also protested against the drinking, dancing, and secular singing at these gatherings, through which pilgrims, and even members of the city’s clergy, expressed their religious reverence outside the sphere of ecclesiastical control.

Another aspect of feast day celebrations that angered the bishop was what he pejoratively labelled, “pagan observances” (paganorum observatione) followed by Christians, such as the custom on the day of John the Baptist’s birth to “bathe in the fountains or marshes or rivers either at night or early in the morning;” a ritual that exhibits a specifically Christian link to the Baptist’s vocation. Likewise, Caesarius would have frowned upon the popular practice in Arles of venerating a mulberry tree that

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258 Gregory of Tours, *Liber in Gloria Martyrum* 68.1-3 (*MGH Scriptores Rerum Merovingicarum* 1,2:533-4). For the English, see Van Dam, tr., *Gregory of Tours: Glory of the Martyrs*, Translated Texts for Historians Latin Series 3 (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1988), 91-2. The two pilgrimage sites were Genesius’ tomb near the city, and a mulberry tree at the spot of his beheading, see Loseby, “Aries in Late Antiquity,” 58-9.

259 SC 55.1.

260 For Caesarius’ prohibitions against such actions, see SC 1.12, 16.3, 33, 55, 224.1, 225.5, and 229.4. For the bishop’s further comments on excessive drinking, see SC 46, 47, and 53.3. For priests drinking, pleading cases, and fighting, see SC 55.4-5. Klingshirn reminds us that these were not actually pagan practices, as Caesarius asserts, but forms of Christian devotion outside of ecclesiastical control, *Community*, 188-200. For an intriguing article on Caesarius’ reaction to drinking in relation to issues of gender, see Lisa Kaaren Bailey’s recent article, “‘These Are Not Men’: Sex and Drink in the Sermons of Caesarius of Arles,” *Journal of Early Christianity* 15 (2007): 23-43.

261 SC 33.4.
marked the spot of Genesius' execution. These ritual practices, although endowed with Christian significance, lay beyond the bishop's direct control, and distracted pilgrims from the liturgical procedures that the church had set up for these events. Therefore, Caesarius objected in the strongest terms, stating that those who persisted in such actions sought to "destroy themselves and ruin others," and were destined for hell.

On feast days, the church's prescribed liturgical celebrations began the evening before with all-night vigils, during which the singing of Psalms was the primary focus. The chanting and singing of Psalms was omnipresent in the Christian piety of Caesarius' congregation, playing a fundamental role in the church's standard liturgy, rogation and feast day vigils, and the monastic office. Caesarius commanded his congregation to embrace "the holy practice of singing the Psalms" (sanctam psallendi contulit devotionem), as replacements for their accustomed "shameful songs" (cantica turpica). He also encouraged his audience to memorize "psalms and hymns" (psalmos et hymnos), so that, like him, they could chant them even in their sleep. This deep integration of the

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262 For the importance of the tree, see Gregory of Tours, Liber in Gloria Martyrum 67 (MGH Scriptores Rerum Merovingicarum 1.2:533).
263 SC 55.2.
264 For the singing of Psalms at the vigils, see Hen, Culture and Religion, 85. Also see Beck, Pastoral Care, 294, and Catherine E. Dunn, The Gallican Saint's Life and the Late Roman Dramatic Tradition (Washington, DC: The Catholic University of America Press, 1989), 29. While Dunn provides much useful information on the Gallic liturgy, she fails to prove her assertion that the readings of vitae on these days were an ancestor to medieval theatre. For instance, she overemphasizes SC 89 of Caesarius in creating a binary between public spectacles and attending church, as though they were diametrically opposed forms of entertainment, ibid., 69.
265 Robert Taft, in The Liturgy of the Hours in East and West: The Origins of the Divine Office and its Meaning for Today (Collegeville, Minnesota: The Liturgical Press, 1986), 150-6, has provided an excellent overview and plausible recreation of the liturgy in Caesarius' Arles. As Hen points out, such recreations are necessary, as we do not have ample explicit literary evidence for the Gallic liturgy, see "The Liturgy of the Bobbio Missal," in The Bobbio Missal: Liturgy and Religious Culture in Merovingian Gaul, ed. Yitzhak Hen and Rob Meens (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 140-53, 141. For Caesarius prescribing the singing of Psalms on rogation days, see SC, 207.4, and 208.
266 For "the holy practice of singing the Psalms," see SC 75.1. For "shameful songs," see SC 6.3.
267 For "to learn psalms and hymns by heart," see VC 1.19. For Caesarius singing Psalms in his sleep, see VC 1.46, and VC 2.5, in which Stephanus states that in his sleep, Caesarius would "sing psalms spiritually with the saints" (spiritualiter cum sanctis psallebat).
Psalms in Gallic piety suggests that many Christians would have inherently understood the allusion to Psalm 22 in the virga and baculus pairings found in the second unit of Caesarius’ vita.

Following the vigil, there was a mass at nine in the morning, during which the saint’s miracles were summarized in the opening prayer, the contestatio. The vita, or sections excised from it, was read in place of a selection from the epistles, which together with a gospel and prophetic reading comprised the lectionary of the Gallic mass.268 According to Catherine Dunn, the reading of the vita was a “consciously structured experiment in religious education,” which encouraged the audience to seek Caesarius’ aid in the face of misfortune, along with imparting spiritual messages.269 While van Uytfanghe rightly points out that consistent references to reading in Merovingian hagiography also suggest substantial literacy among the audience, it was through the vita’s presentation in the feast day mass that it would reach its largest and most diverse audience, and receive authoritative interpretation by the presiding preacher.270 This interpretive opportunity was not lost on the authors of the vita, and as Heffernan asserts, “from the fifth-century onward, the primary motivating force behind the composition of the majority of hagiographic texts was the liturgy.”271

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268 For contestatio, see Dunn, The Gallican Saint’s Life, 80-3. Hen plausibly asserts that the vitae were too long to be read in one sitting, and states that sections were excised for reading in place of the Epistles, Community and Religion, 86. Besides this one alteration, he states that the feast day liturgy followed the standard liturgy, which he summarizes in ibid., 67-71.
269 Dunn, The Gallican Saint’s Life, 71.
270 For the importance of both reading and listening to hagiographical accounts, see van Uytfanghe, “L’hagiographie et son public au début du Moyen Âge,” Studia Patristica 16 (1985): 54-62, 55.
Following the readings came a sermon, which on Caesarius’ feast day would have likely been from his own collection. This is evidenced by the bishop’s instructions regarding his sermons, “These the holy presbyters or deacons should read on the major feasts (festivitatibus maioribus) to the people entrusted to them.” Supporting this is Cyprianus’ quotation of the bishop in his vita: “If priests and deacons read the words of the Lord, the prophets, and the apostles, why should they not read the words of Ambrose, Augustine, my humble self, or any of the holy (fathers)?” As Klingshirn points out, this speech paraphrases a section found in a sermon of Caesarius; “If any deacon is worthy to read what Christ has said, he should not be considered unworthy to read what St. Hilary, St. Ambrose, St. Augustine, or the rest of the Fathers preached.” In his original sermon, Caesarius does not include himself as a potential source, revealing Cyprianus’ rhetorical aim of legitimizing the use of the bishop’s sermons. Although we do not possess evidence as to what sermons would be presented on Caesarius’ feast day, the fact that his own were plausibly used justifies the preceding and following thematic comparisons between the bishop’s sermons and his vita.

Brown asserts that the rambunctious activities witnessed by Caesarius during feast day celebrations were a direct contributor to his fixation on promoting emulation of the practical actions of the saints to ensure intercession, “as often as we desire to celebrate

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272 For the liturgical positioning of the sermon after the readings, see Hen, Culture and Religion, 68.
273 SC 2.1.
274 VC 1.54.
275 SC 1.15.
276 For the rhetorical connection between sermons and vitae, see Gurevich: “It was through these sermons and tales about devils, demons, and saints that Christianity, developed in monasteries and hermitages, found its way into the consciousness of the people...In the struggle waged by the church for the minds and souls of the common people, these genres played a crucial part. They were the most important channels of communication between clergy and masses, as it was through them that churchmen gained control of the spiritual life of the lay people,” Medieval Popular Culture, 2. See also Klingshirn, “miracles thus helped to reinforce in the most concrete and immediate possible terms the values, practices, and beliefs that Caesarius taught more abstractly through the preaching and the liturgy,” Community, 169.
the feasts of holy martyrs (*natalica sanctorum martyrum*), the blessed martyrs ought to recognize in us something of their virtues (*suis virtutibus*), in order that it may please them to beseech the mercy of God on our behalf.”

To bring this concept of imitation down to the level of achievable action for his audience, Caesarius transformed the inimitable finality of the martyr’s death into practical directives for appropriate Christian living,

“Martyr is a Greek word, which in Latin means a witness (*testis*). As we have often said, anyone who bears witness to Christ for the sake of justice is without doubt a martyr. Likewise, anyone who resists the champions of dissipation (*defensoribus luxuriae*) and persecutors of chastity (*persecutoribus castitatis*) out of love for God will receive the crown of martyrdom (*martyrii coronam*). Therefore, there are martyrs even in our own day. If a man reproves evil-doers with justice (*iustitia*) and charity (*caritate*), or warns against the indiscriminate taking of oaths (*iurandum*), perjury (*periurandum*), calumny (*detrahendum*), and slander (*maledicendum*), he will be Christ’s martyr by giving testimony (*testimonium*) to the things which please God.”

Although he did not encourage his audience to imitate the bloody end of their heroes, Caesarius stressed that they had little excuse not to bear the persecutions of others,

“Consider the many men and women, illustrious boys and delicate girls, who calmly endured flames and fire and swords and wild beasts for Christ. Then can we say that we cannot endure the reproaches of foolish men?”

By being meek (*mitis*), humble (*humilis*), and by forgiving their enemies, Christians not only emulated the martyrs, but

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277 Brown, *Enjoying*, 5-8. For the bishop’s quote, see *SC* 225.1. Also see *SC* 229.4, “If we come to the feast of a church and the solemn festival of the saints in such a spirit, we will merit to obtain in its entirety whatever we have justly willed to ask of God,” and *SC* 224:1, “as often as we celebrate the feasts of holy martyrs, we ought to show ourselves such that we make ourselves worthy of the sacred solemnity.”

278 *SC* 52.1.

279 *SC* 37.2.
also the prototypical martyr Christ, whose miracles in the Gospels were also beyond the ability of the laity.\textsuperscript{280}

In accordance with Caesarius’ calls for the imitation of the martyrs, his own \textit{vita} presented what Heffernan terms, “a veritable thesaurus of established approved actions,” which could be readily imitated by an audience.\textsuperscript{281} While many of the bishop’s imitable attributes are explicitly presented in the two units under investigation, such as his charity towards captives and his care for the sick, the bishop’s portrayed \textit{flamma virtutis} was also an ideal multivocalic analogue, with the potential to promote and prohibit specific actions. Caesarius understood that fire analogies were a flexible tool by which a preacher could persuade acceptable Christian action, as seen in the following sermon on Proverbs 6:

“When a man seizes coals of fire (\textit{carbones ignis}) but immediately throws them away they do not hurt him, but if he wants to keep them longer he cannot get rid of them without injury. Similarly, if a man gazes lustfully and by lingering over it allows the evil of lust (\textit{libidinus malum}) in his heart to get a hold on his thoughts, he cannot shake them off without injury to his soul.”\textsuperscript{282}

Interestingly, in another sermon Caesarius freely adapts the same analogy to highlight a different vice,

“There is another comparison (\textit{similtudo}) which we ought to consider prudently. Notice this, brethren, that if anyone picks up a live coal

\textsuperscript{280} See \textit{SC} 223.2, for Caesarius exhorting his audience to emulate the martyrs, “to be meek (\textit{mites}) and humble of heart (\textit{humiles corde}), and to love our enemies with our whole heart and strength,” and see \textit{SC} 215.2, “For not only the shedding of blood effects martyrdom, and not only the burning of flames gives the martyr’s palm. The man who refuses to imitate the holy martyrs, as far as he can, will not be able to reach their bliss.” For Caesarius’ analogous calls to imitate Christ, see \textit{SC} 35.2, “It is true that you cannot imitate Christ in all things. You cannot imitate him in raising the dead to life and performing other virtues (\textit{virtutes}), but you can imitate Christ in meekness (\textit{mitis}) and humility of heart (\textit{humilis corde}).” See also \textit{SC} 35.1, “He hung on the cross for you and still is not an avenger (\textit{vindicator}). Why do you want to take vengeance (\textit{vindicare})?”

\textsuperscript{281} Heffernan, \textit{Sacred Biography}, 6. Van Uytfanghe, in “L’hagiographic,” 56, states that one of the primary goals of a \textit{vita} is to present, “un exemple à imiter.”

\textsuperscript{282} \textit{SC} 41.5.
(carbonem vivum) in his hand, even a large one, but throws it away at once, he will not feel the burn (conbusturum) or even pain; but if he keeps it even for a moment, he cannot throw it away without injury...we can and should consider with great shame that, although we are unwilling to allow a spark of fire (scintillam ignis) to enter the chest where our clothes are, we not only allow the flames of anger (flammas iracundiae) interiorly to enter the chest of our conscience by bad thoughts, but by false admiration even provoke and stir them up to a greater blaze (maiorem incendium).”

The rhetorical message behind both analogues is a call for his audience to improve their actions; “Why do we not fear concerning evil thoughts (cognitionibus malis) in our hearts what we observe with regard to living coals on our body?”

As previously demonstrated, Caesarius divided internal flames into two opposing fires, the flame of charity, and the flame of passion. While the flame of charity was necessarily maintained by virtuous actions, the flame of passion was stoked through the evil deeds of vice. Caesarius provided myriad examples of actions that contributed to these flames, and by investigating references in his sermons we can gain insight into the potential analogous connections lying latent in his flamma virtutis. Following the fiery entry of the Holy Spirit, Caesarius called Christians to kindle the “spark of repentance” (scintillam conpunctionis), which would, “consume with a salutary fire (salubri igne) all worldly pleasure (saeculi voluptatem) like thorns and thistles of malice (tribulos nequitiae).” Caesarius also expressed this act of repentance by means of sacrificial imagery: “How powerful those three words are! They are but three, “I have sinned,” yet in those three words the flame of the heart’s sacrifice (flamma sacrificii cordis) goes up to heaven.”

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283 SC 45.3.
284 Ibid.
285 SC 235.5
286 SC 63.1, the quote is based on a reading of 2 Kings 12:13. See also, SC 60, for Caesarius discussing repentance at length.
Following the eradication of sin from the heart, the Christian was ready to be lit with the “spark of spontaneous love” (scintillam gratuiti amoris), which could be brought to a roaring flame through “humble prayer (prece humilitatis), the sufferings of penance (dolore paenitentiae), delightful justice (delectatione iustitiae), good works (operibus bonis), sincere groaning (gemitibus sinceris), a praiseworthy life (conversatione laudabili), and devout friendship (amicitia fidelis).”

Once this fire had been started, it was the responsibility of Christians to fan the fire of charity by good works, particularly through love towards God and neighbours. Caesarius stressed that almsgiving was an appropriate fuel for the fire of charity, which could not be kindled through self-focused efforts alone, “fasting (ieiunium) without almsgiving (elemosina) is like a lamp without oil. Just as a lamp which is lit without oil can smoke but cannot give light, so fasting without almsgiving pains the body, to be sure, but does not illuminate the soul with the light of charity (caritatis lumine).” The bishop also emphasized that charity towards neighbours was to be extended to enemies as well, “Always burn with fraternal charity (fraterno amore flagretis) both toward one who has become your brother, and toward your enemy so that he may become your brother through love.”

This charitable fire had the potential to spread rapidly, which unlike physical blazes, benefitted everything in its path, “One who before was inclined to harbor wrath against you like a cold maniac...”

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287 SC 140.6, Caesarius equated this fire to that spoken of by Jesus in Luke 12:49, “Surely this is that fire about which our Lord Himself said: ‘I have come to light a fire on the earth. How I wish the blaze were ignited.’” Morin points out that this sermon is largely derived from Augustine’s 178th sermon, Sermones, 576.
288 See SC 39.6.
289 SC 199.6.
290 SC 137.5. See also SC 29, 36, 39.3, and 137, for further comments of Caesarius regarding charity towards others.
(frigidus...freneticus) now begins to love you with his whole heart through being kindled with spiritual warmth (spiritali colore) arising from your kindness (tua bonitate).\textsuperscript{291}

Once the fire of charity was roaring in a Christian’s heart, consistent action was required to prevent the flame from disappearing; “Let not the flame of charity (flamma caritatis) which has begun to burn devoutly in your hearts grow cold (refrigescat) through some negligence.”\textsuperscript{292} Additionally, sinful actions could serve to spur on this cooling process, “the charity of many men freezes because of the excessive coldness of their sins (peccatorum frigore) and they become hard as ice; however, when the warmth of divine mercy (calor divinae misericordiae comes upon them again, they are melted.”\textsuperscript{293} Indeed, sinful action could freeze out the salvatory presence of the Holy Spirit, “Do not allow the seed of God’s word to freeze in you through the coldness of your sins (peccatorum frigore), according to what is written: ‘Iniquity will abound, charity will grow cold (Matthew 24:12).’”\textsuperscript{294}

Although Caesarius asserted that sinful action could leave a person feeling cold, this was only in relation to an absence of the fire of charity. The bishop also presented a sinful interior state as a roaring flame, which charitable action could help extinguish, as evidenced by his repeated references to Ecclesiastes 3:33, “As water quenches a fire, so alms resists sins.”\textsuperscript{295} The foremost fire of passion that Caesarius sought to remove from his audience was the fire of lust, a flame kindled so often that the bishop believed if

\textsuperscript{291} SC 36.5. Also see SC 137.5, “Always burn with fraternal charity (fraterno amore flagretis) both toward one who has become your brother, and toward your enemy so that he may become your brother through love.”
\textsuperscript{292} SC 75.1.
\textsuperscript{293} SC 101.4. These notions of charity grown cold were derived from scriptural examples; and the entire sermon is focused on the hardening of Pharaoh’s heart by God in Exodus 4:21.
\textsuperscript{294} SC 138.1, which Morin asserts is largely based on Augustine’s 37th sermon, see Sermones, 569. See also SC 154.1 for the same quote.
\textsuperscript{295} SC 10.3. For other promotions of almsgiving, see SC 16.2, 153.4, and 229.4.
communion was withheld from offenders, there would scarcely be any Christian
community left in Arles! The bishop called his priests to rebuke men who were
unfaithful to their wives, “inflamed with such lustful passion (libidinis furore) that they
do not fear or blush to commit adultery (adulteria committere) with their own servants or
those of another, or even with strange wives or daughters.' Again, Caesarius’
identification of fiery lust is based largely on the Bible; with two references to the
previously mentioned Proverbs 6:26-28, and one reference to Hosea 7:4, “All adulterers
are like a blazing oven (clibanus) in their hearts”. Caesarius makes a further scriptural
connection between fire and lust by quoting Paul’s exhortation in 1 Corinthians 7:9; “it is
better to marry than to burn (melius est nubere quam uri)”.  

Like the fire of charity, passionate fire also carried the potential to burn out of
control, which posed a substantial threat to Christian concord. Men filled with the “fire of
wrath” (iracundiae igne) could easily provoke others to burn as well, against which
Caesarius called for Christians to be on guard,

“Therefore, if in an evil spirit someone who is inflamed with the fury of
wrath (iracundiae furore) tries to stir up a good man, it is still doubtful
whether the latter can be consumed with rage; but there is no doubt that
the first one is glowing with anger. Perhaps that good man who is full of
spiritual vigor and the refreshment of the Holy Ghost will not get excited,
even if the fire of persecution (persecutionis igne) is inflicted; but without
any doubt the one who tried to arouse him cannot fail to burn with
passion.”

If evil thoughts did arise, Caesarius urged Christians to dispel them as quickly as
possible, again using the example from Proverbs 6, “if he immediately throws them away

296 SC 43.5.
297 SC 42.2. Also see SC 144.2, “lust inflames another (alterum inflammat cupiditas),” and SC 144.4, “lust
inflamed” (cupiditas incenderit). For other prohibitions against adultery, see SC 13.1, 16.3, 53.3.
298 SC 189.4. For Proverbs 6:26-28, see SC 41.3 and 41.5.
299 SC 32.4.
300 SC 86.4. For “fire of wrath,” see SC 187.3. Also see SC 61.3, “through anger (iracundiam) they burn
with a cruel fire (crudeli incendio).”
without delay, the burning fire (*ignis*) will not be able to hurt him, but if he allows any
delay at all, they will not be thrown away without a wound."\(^{301}\)

Related to the fire of anger was pride and envy; selfish states that furthered the
kindling of the flames of passion in those who not only “allow the flames of anger
(*flammas iracundiae*) interiorly to enter the chest of (their) conscience by bad thoughts
(*iniquas...cognitiones*), but by false admiration (*falsis suspicionibus*) even provoke and
stir them up to a greater blaze.”\(^{302}\) The inflamed fury of envious and prideful men did not
only damage them temporally, but also offered a preview of hell,

“envy (*invidia*), the root of all evils (*malorum omnium radix*), which is
distressed at the advantage of another as though it were evil to itself, even
now with a hidden fire (*secreto ardore*) consumes the souls of the living
by an inextinguishable flame (*inextinguibili flamma*) like the fire of hell
(*gehennae ignis*) in the world to come, and it chokes them with biting
cares.”\(^{303}\)

Akin to the flames of anger, the fires of envy and jealousy become increasingly difficult
to control as time progressed, since the “more the object of envy proceeds with greater
success, the more the jealous soul is inflamed by the fire of malice (*incendium livoris*) to
greater passion.”\(^{304}\) This envious state could also attack the poor if they longed for riches,

“what is the benefit of not possessing wealth, if a man burns with ambition (*ardet
cupiditate*)? How, I repeat, is it profitable for a poor man to be poor, as long as he prefers

\(^{301}\) *SC* 152.2.

\(^{302}\) *SC* 45.4. See also Caesarius’ admonition to his audience regarding feast days, “Because we have begun
to speak in the most precise examples, I am also suggesting what you already know very well. I do not
think that there is a man, who keeps precious garments locked up in a chest, who agrees to enclose within it
either a live coal or any kind of spark. Why is this, brethren? Because he is afraid that the clothing which he
wears on a feast may be burned. I ask you, brethren, if a man does not want to put a spark of fire in his
chest of clothes, why does he not fear to kindle the flame of wrath (*flammam...iracundiae*) in his soul?,”

*SC* 227.5.

\(^{303}\) *SC* 193.1.

\(^{304}\) *SC* 90.5.
to be proud rather than to be humble?\textsuperscript{305} Avarice, the desire for money was a never-ending lust that could attack rich and poor alike, and its satiation added fuel to the fire: “A larger amount of money does not close the jaws of avarice (fauces avaritiae), but stretches them still wider; does not give pleasing moisture, but kindles the flame (accendit).”\textsuperscript{306}

As has been demonstrated by this intensive examination of Caesarius’ sermons, the bishop consistently used fire analogies as a rhetorical device by which he could urge his audience to improve their actions. The bishop believed in two general fiery states that could fill a person, the flames of charity and the flames of passion, and he provided extensive descriptions of actions that could stoke either fire. In this context, we can view the presentation of Caesarius’ flamma virtutis as a didactic mediating analogue, which a preacher on the bishop’s feast day could connect to any number of practical actions that had been similarly analogized in Caesarius’ own sermons.

To conclude our investigation of intertexture, we can turn to one final component of the social intertextual framework surrounding Caesarius’ \textit{vita}, his relics. Caesarius did not once mention relics in his preaching, likely, as Klingshirn suggests, because they represented a form of access to the divine that he could not control, much like the extra-church activities on feast days.\textsuperscript{307} However, the bishop’s own relics play an important role in his \textit{vita}; and items such as cloth that came in contact with the bishop, oil blessed by Caesarius, water that his corpse was washed in, and as we have seen, his staff, were

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{enumerate}
\item SC 48.4.
\item SC 35.3. See also SC 41.1, “Like a fire (velut ignis), avarice (avaritiae) is to be contemned, for the more it gets the more it wants.”\textsuperscript{306}
\item Klingshirn, Community, 166-7.
\end{enumerate}
\end{footnotesize}
credited with the ability to perform miracles. Accordingly, demand for such scarce items was high, and as Stephanus notes, mourners at the bishop’s funeral clamored over each other with ‘pious violence’ (pia violentia) to snatch holy pieces of clothing from his body. In this regard, the advertisement of the efficacy and existence of the two staffs of Caesarius in the second unit can be seen as a public legitimization of the possession of these objects.

For the devout, these small items carried within them the largesse of Caesarius’ sanctity, and thus were prized objects for both individuals and the church. For an example of the latter, Aurelianus, the second bishop of Arles after Caesarius, includes the bishop’s remains in a list of relics transferred to the city’s newly established St. Peter’s monastery in 548. However, the central relics of the bishop, his sacramental vestments, remained in the basilica of St. Mary in Arles, enhancing the prestige and sanctity of the location alongside the tomb containing the bishop’s body. In 869, an invasion of Arles by a Saracen force left the tomb in ruins, until it was rebuilt by the archbishop Rostang in 883. In 1791, the tomb was again destroyed by French revolutionaries, and the relics from the adjoining convent were transferred to the city’s “église de la Major,” including a collection of the bishop’s clothing and an intricately carved ivory belt buckle.

One relic that was not immediately transferred was the “bâton pastoral,” the bishop’s purported staff, which was retained by the abbess of the convent, according to

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308 For the power of Caesarius’ clothing, see VC 2.10-15, 2.41, 2.42, 2.49. For the power of Caesarius’ oil, see VC 2.17, 2.19, and 2.21. For water that washed the bishop’s body, see VC 2.39-40. For the staffs, see VC 2.22, and 2.27.
309 VC 2.49.
311 Klingshirn, Community, 260-1.
Benoit, because of its perceived protective power against fire. This perception must have been popular, as the staff, made of black wood, was subsequently cut into at least three pieces. By 1843, two of these segments joined the other relics at “l’église de la Major,” housed in a cylindrical container with an inscription from the early 19th century; “Bâton pastoral de saint Césère pour préserver du feu.” Benoit connects the belief in the fire-preventing power of this staff, whether it is truly that of Caesarius or not, with the fire miracles in his vita, going as far as to assert that the sign of the cross made by Caesarius to counteract the fire at the home of Vincentius was actually performed with his staff. Regardless, this example demonstrates the enduring power of the rhetorical link between the vita and the relics of Caesarius, and the extension of miraculous powers presented in the bishop’s biography to objects that persisted well beyond his death.

Conclusion

Applying Vernon Robbins’ socio-rhetorical method to the three fire miracles in Caesarius’ vita has revealed many layers of persuasion in the text, as well as an unexpected wealth of potential analogous connections, allegorical scriptural references, and rhetorical structures that have been overlooked by previous approaches to the bishop’s biography. Although the authors of the vita assert that the aim of the text is to provide a straightforward account of the bishop’s way of life and miracles, the miracle narratives within are in reality complex literary constructs. It has been demonstrated how the rhetorical intentions of the fire miracles in Caesarius’ vita were threefold; they sought to connect Caesarius to scriptural holy men and Christ, promote the power of his

314 Ibid., 52.
315 Ibid., 53.
miraculous relics, and promote correct Christian action to their audience through example and analogy. These themes would have likely been extrapolated on the bishop's feast day sermon, and as such, the miracles were engineered to be didactically compatible with the sermons of Caesarius. The results of this analysis prove that socio-rhetorical investigation is a powerful tool by which miracle narratives in the *vitae* of late antiquity and the early middle ages can be examined, and effectively demonstrate that the true significance of these tales lay far beyond instilling awe and wonder.
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Appendices

Appendix A: Latin Text of the Two Units

The following sections are taken from Cyprianus of Toulon et al., *Vita Caesarii*, in *Sancti Caesarii episcopi Arelatensis Opera omnia nunc primum in unum collecta*, 2 vols., ed. G. Morin (Maredsous, 1937 and 1942), 303-306, and 334-338.

Unit One:

20. “*Infirmis vero adprime consuluit, subvenitque eis, et spatioissimam deputavit domum, in qua sine strepitu aliquo basilicae opus sanctum possint audire: lectos, lectuaria, sumptos cum persona quae obsequi et mederi possit, instituit. Locum libertatemque suggerendi captivis et pauperibus non negavit. Praecipiebat ministro suo semper dicens: ‘Vide si aliqui pauperum pro foribus adstant, ne pro quiete nostra forsan trepida et verecunda paupertas ad peccatum nostrum praestolans patiatur iniuriam. (Non enim implebitur regulariter ordinis nostri censura, si differamus miseros respicere vel audire, qui nos de diversis provinciis aerumnarum causa noscuntur expetere.’ Data etiam redemptione prout causa extitit, commendatosque, addens qua tutarentur orationem, laxavit.) Trahensque longa de profundo corde suspiria, dicebat: ‘Vere factus est Christus blaterator et garrulus surdis; et tamen rogat omnes, suadet, admonet, contestatur’. Addebat etiam nostris procul dubio profectibus in praesenti saeculo pauperes impertitos, quibus nunc fideiussores Christo commendaremus in terris, quod postea reciproremus in caelis. (Interim etiam adiit dei servus ob remedium Arelatensis ecclesiae Alaricum Vuisigothorum regem, ad quem tunc Arelatensis civitas pertinebat, invisere. A quo est reverentia tanta suspectus, ut, cum esset Arriana barbarie perversitate subversus, summo tamen cultu summaque reverentia cum proceribus suis*
Christi servum veneraretur pariter et ditaret. Namque pecunias captivorum profuturas remediiis impertivit, et dati firmitate praecepti ecclesiam in perpetuum tributis fecit inmunem.)"

21. "Sed tranquilitatem huius sancti viri post paucos dies aemula diaboli perturbavit adversitas, et cui non habebat quae opponeret vitia corporis, crimen obiecit traditoris. Etenim post aliquod tempus perditus quidam de notariis beati viri Licinianus nomine assumpsit gerere in virum apostolicum, quod discipulus Iudas non timuit adversus salvatorem nostrum. Veneno enim saevissimae accusationis armatus, sugessit per auricularios Alarico regi, quod beatissimus Caesarius, quia de Galliis haberet originem, totis viribus affectaret territorium et civitatem Arelatensem Burgundionum ditionibus subiugare: cum ille praestanissimus utique pastor flexis genibus pacem gentium, quietem urbium diebus ac noctibus a domino generaliter postularet. Qua magis causa credendum est instinctu diaboli ad exilium sancti viri ferocitatem fuisse barbaram concitatam. Non enim acceptus aut gratus est inimico is qui orat, ut eius contradicatur operibus. Igitur instigatione praesentium, nec innocentiae fides attenditur, nec accusationis veritas flagitat: sed falsis et illicitis accusationibus condemnpnatus, cum ab Arelato fuisset abstractus, in Burdigalensem civitatem est quasi in exilio relegatus."

22. "Sed ut in eo dei gratia non lateret, casu accidit, ut node quadam civitas saevissimo flagraret incendio, populique velociter concurrentes ad dei hominem proclamarent: 'Sancte Caesari, orationibus tuis extingue ignem saevientem.' Quod cum vir dei audisset, dolore ac pietate commotus, venienti flammae obvius in oratione prostriritur, et statim flammarum globos fixit et repulit. Quo viso omnium concurrentium vocibus divinæ per eum laus est celebrata potentiae. Post hanc virtutem tanta admiratione ab omnibus
habitus est, ut in eadem urbe non solum ut sacerdos, sed ut apostolus haberetur, et auctor persecutionis eius, id est, diabolus confunderetur, qui eum quem nisus fuerat reum asserere, videbat divini operis miraculis eminere. Quod ita factum fidei relatione comperimus."

23. "Instruxit itaque et ibi et ubique semper ecclesiam reddere quae dei sunt deo et quae sunt Caesaris Caesari: oboedire quidem iuxta apostolum regibus et potestatibus quando iusta praecipiant, nam despectui habere in princepe Arriani dogmatis pravitatem. Sic testante veritate non potuit lucerna abscondi posita super montem, sed quocumque accessit, cunctos illuminavit radians super candelabrum domini."

24. "Post haec comperta innocentia beati viri poscit nefarius princeps, quatinus sanctus antistes ad pristinam reveretur ecclesiam, sequit civitati pariter praesentaret et clero; accusatorem vero eius lapidari rex praecepit. Iamque cum lapidibus populi concurrentes, subito ad aures eius iussio regis pervenit; statim festinus adsurgens intercessione sua vir sanctus non tam vindictae suae accusatorem dari voluit, quam supplicatione propria maluit paenitentiae reservari, ut animam eius per paenitentiam curaret dominus, quam per falsam priditionem captivam fecerat inimicus, et domesticlo hosti clementer indulgens, antiquum adversarium in una causa conscientia pura bis vinceret."

25. "Hoc etiam specialius servus dei studuit custodire, ut sive de servis seu de ingenuis obsequentibus sibi numquam extra legitimam disciplinam, id est XXXVIII quisquis peccans acciperet. Si vero in gravi fuisset culpa deprehensus, permittebat ut post dies aliquot paucis iterum caederetur: praepositosque ecclesiae contestans, quod si quis amplius neglegentem caedi praeciperet, et pro ipsa disciplina homo mortuus fuerit, reus esset homicidii, cuius imperio factum fuerit."
26. "Cumque igitur nuntiatus fuisset homo Christi reverti atque imminere propere civitati, egreditur in occursum ipsius tota fraternitas totusque sexus cum cereis et crucibus, psallendo sancti viri opperiens introitum. Et quia facit suos trepudiare virtutibus Christus, et perfidos aperta mirabilium luce confundi, in adventu servi sui dominus arentem terram longissima siccitate largissimo imbre perfudit, ut fructuum fecunditas sequeretur, quando revertebatur sibi placitus dispensator."

Unit Two:


23. "Accidit etiam quodam tempore, ut unus ex Galliis Benenatus quidam nomine, non opere, venerit, quique se deploraret cum nepotibus suis captivum esse. Habebat puellam parvulam, quam virili habitu induens ad ipsum demonstrans dicebat: 'Hic nepos meus est, et mecum cum sorore sua, quae post nos huc properat, captivi detinentur.' Tunc vir
dei dolens de captivitate eorum, pro affectu quem ei dominus ab infantia inspiraverat, illum qui puellam ipsum exhibuerat, et ipsum, velut puerum credens, utrumque blande resalutans osculatur. Igitur accepta uterque redemptione ubi applicuerunt revertuntur.

24. "Post biduum iterum puellam ipsum velut in habitu proprio, ut amplius solidos acciperet, revocat. Haec vero agebantur per suggestionem sancti viri Iacobi presbyteri, qui sancta simplicitate sua omnia illum in veritate queri insinuabat. Tunc et huius, id est ipsius puellae, accepit iterum redemptionem. Nam quorum tunc sollicitudinis fuit, cognoverunt quid ipsum postea exhibuerat, quam prius virili habitu ostentaverat. Quod cum indignatione sancto dei non solus ego illi, sed etiam supradictus presbyter simul et cum verecundia suggerebant. Tunc ille, ut erat circa peregrinos semper mitissimus et benignus, presbytero dixit: 'Noli, inquit, tu, sancte, irasci: tu bene fecisti peregrinum commendare, tibi pro bona voluntate tua redditurus est deus mercedem; et illi misello parcat deus peccatum hoc, qui me fecit puellam osculari; et hoc praemium puella ipsa percipiat, ut quia etsi indignum sacerdotem osculari praesumpsit, talem sanctimoniam faciat, ut alium virum numquam osculetur.' Sed quia futurorum arbiter deus scivit illum sine dubio in virginitate perdurare non posse, ne servi dei oratio irrita fieret, alia statim die de hoc mundo discessit. Haec Arelato ad basilicam Apostolorum, ubi ipse metatum habuerat, celebre acta noscuntur.

25. "Alio vero tempore matrona quaedam in urbe Massiliense casu pedem sibi luxavit, ita ut per tempora multa pedem ipsum in terra ponere non posset, sed manibus sustentata servulorum suorum, vix ad ecclesiæ duci poterat, validissimum sustinens dolorem. Sed quia multae sunt miserationes domini, quando ipse voluit causas effecit, ut vir dei ad civitatem ipsum ambularet. Audito mulier adventum ipsius, fecit se ad eum salutandum
adduci. Quae accepta ab eo oratione et benedictione, nihil illi de causa sua praeumpsit suggerere; sed regresa ab eo ad sellarem ipsius adpropinquari se permitti rogavit. Quae de supersellio qui sellam tegebant locum debilitatum fideliter tangens, statim pristinam sanitatem recipiens, tamquam si male nihil fuisset perfessa, pedibus suis nullo sustentante incolomis reversa est, domino usque in praesentem diem gratias agens.”


27. “Nec hoc silebo. Quodam igitur tempore in Alpinis locis factum esse celeberrimum praedicatur, dum cuiusdam fines nobilissimi viri tempestas assidua perniciosa infusione contereret, cunctosque fructos loci illius vis grandinis devoraret, ita ut annis singulis nulla ibidem spes subsidii remaneret, cessitque iterum ut baculus eius casu ibidem remaneret; de qua virga possessor ipse crucem fieri iussit, quam eminentiori loco fide armatus infixit, ut veniente lapide contrairet virga discipuli, cruc magistri. Tantam ibidem deus ob honorem servi sui dignatus est operari virtutem, ut ibi postmodum maximam ubertatem daret, unde reppulerat tempestatem.”
28. "Item quadam die domus Vincenti cuiusdam comprehendit, cuius solarium ex ligno factum flamma cedebat. Ille videns se nihil valere posse, quanta potuit velocitate ad ipsum domnum perrexit; genibus eius advolutus rogat ut oraret. Egressusque foras, crucem contra flammam fecit, quae continuo regrediens, ita sopita est, ut nec signum apparuisset in solarii tabulas."

29. "Retulit etiam nobis nuper quidam presbyter, quod ante aliquos annos, dum adhuc laicus esset, filia sua daemonio vexabatur. Qui maerens et lugens uni ex amicis sui dixit: 'Quid faciam infelix, quod filia mea a daemonio vexatur. Melius mihi fuerat, nec nata aut certe mortua fuisset.' Cui ille respondit: 'Noli flere, sed vade, duc eam ad domnum Caesarium, et offer eam illi secrete, et curat eam.' Ille vero nihil dubitans venit Arelato, et vadens occurrit ei, et prostravit se ad pedes eius, cum lacrimis dicens: 'Domne, miserere mihi misero; cura filiam meam.' Qui sollicite interrogans quid haberet, respondit: 'Daemonium.' Dixit ei: 'Tace et revertere ad domum tuam. Mane cum matutinae dicuntur, revertere et adduc tecum puellam ipsam et matrem eius, et observa dictis matutinis in atrio sancti Stephani; et cum secretum videris, veni ad cellam et appellant. Ille vero fecit sicut iussarit. Ipse autem secrete egrediens, et genu in terra figens, cum patre et matre puellae oravit, erigensque se signavit eam et dimisit sanam."

30. "Iterum ambulans per plateam civitatis, vidit e contra inforo hominem qui a daemonio agebatur. Quem cum adtendisset e contra, manum sub casulla habens ut a suis non videretur, crucem contra eum fecit; qui statim a temptatione inimici absolutus est."

31. "Nam illud quam sanctum et dulce erat, cum per diem incessabiliter oportune inportune, volentibus nolentibus, verbum dei ingererat! Cum iam sero pausare veniret, ut vel ipsius horae momento de scripturis divinis et de instructione sancta non vacaret,
aiebat ad nos: 'Dicite mihi, inquit, quid cenavimus hodie, qualia fercula habuimus?' Nos
tacentes suspirabamus, quia illuc intellectus noster ducebatur, quo ille solitus erat nos
provocare, quod de cibo spirituali loqui volebat, et ideo nos interrogaret. Dicebat iterum:
'Scio, inquit, quod si sollicitus fuero, quid cenaverimus, etiam et quid prandidistis
retinetis; si autem interrogemus quid ad mensam lectum sit, non recordamur. Unde datur
intelligi quia illud nobis quod retinemus dulciter sapuit; illud vero quod non retinemus,
non solum saporem in palato cordis nostri nullum praestitit, sed etiam fastidium forsitan
fecit.' Et ingemiscens dicebat: 'O infelix oblivio bonorum, cui nihil infelicius!'

32. "Et incipiens ab initio, quod lectum fuerat vel expositum repetebat, nobisque misellis
voce prophetica cum gemitu dicebat: 'Colligite, colligite triticum dominicum, quia vere
dico vobis; non diu erit ut colligatis. Vide te quod dico: colligite, quia quaesituri estis
istud tempus; vere, vere quaesituri estis dies istos et valde desideraturi.' Quod etsi tunc
abusive desidia nostra suscipiebat, iam tamen nunc venisse probamus quod dixit. Illud
propheticum in nobis impletum est: MITTAM VOBIS FAMEM IN TERRA, FAMEM,
inquit, NON PANIS ET AQUAE, SED AUDIENDI VERBUM DEI. Licet praedicationes
quas instituit recitentur, tamen cessavit illa incessabilis vox, quae implebat illud
propheticum: CLAMMA, NE CESSES, hoc saepius dicens: 'Palatus cuiusque cum
verbum dei fastidit, anima eius febrit; cum ad sanitatem venerit, tunc esuriet et sitiet
quod, dum infirmatur, repudiat et negliget.'"
Appendix B: English Translation of the Two Units


Unit One:

20. "He had a very great concern for the sick and came to their assistance. He granted them a spacious house, in which they could listen undisturbed to the holy office being sung in the basilica. He set up beds and bedding, provided for expenses, and supplied a person to take care of them and heal them. He did not deny to captives and the poor the place and opportunity to make requests. He regularly used to tell his attendant, 'See whether any of the poor are standing at the doors, afraid and ashamed because of their poverty, lest for the sake of my own convenience and as a result of my own sinfulness they suffer any harm while waiting. For the responsibilities of our rank will not be properly fulfilled if we put off looking after and listening to the wretched, who are known to seek us out from different provinces because of their needs.' When ransom had been given as the need arose, he released those who had been commended to the church, adding a prayer by which they might be protected. And drawing long sighs from the depths of his heart he used to say, 'Truly Christ has become a babbler and talkative to the deaf; but nevertheless he asks, persuades, advises, and calls all to witness.' He also used to say that the poor no doubt shared in our spiritual progress in the present world, because, with Christ as surety, we now commend to them on earth what we are later to receive in heaven. Meanwhile, to obtain relief for the church of Arles the servant of God also went to see Alaric II, king of the Visigoths, to whom at that time the city of Arles
belonged. Caesarius was so reverently received by the king that although they were corrupted by the Arian heresy of the barbarians, Alaric and his court nevertheless venerated the servant of Christ with great ceremony and respect, and enriched him as well. For Alaric furnished him with money that was to be used for the relief of captives. Moreover, through the assurance of a published edict he ordered that the church remain immune from taxation in perpetuity.”

21. “But a few days later, the envious adversity of the devil disturbed the tranquillity of this holy man, and since the devil could not accuse him of any carnal vices, he charged him with treason. Indeed, shortly afterwards a wicked man named Licinianus, one of his notaries, took on against this apostolic man the role that the apostle Judas had not feared to take on against our Savior. Equipped with the poison of a dire accusation, Licinianus asserted to king Alaric, through attendants, that since Caesarius had been born in Burgundian Gaul, he was trying with all his might to bring the territory and city of Arles under Burgundian rule. He said this despite the fact that this most outstanding pastor regularly prayed to the Lord on bended knee day and night for the peace of the nations and the tranquillity of the cities – all the more reason to believe that it was at the devil’s impulse that barbarian ferocity was stirred up to exile the holy man. For he who prays that the enemy’s deeds might be opposed is not acceptable or pleasing to him. Therefore, at the urging of those present the king placed no faith in his innocence, and demanded no proof of the accusation. Instead, after being condemned by false and illegal allegations, Caesarius was taken from Arles and banished to the city of Bordeaux as if in exile.”

22. “But so that God’s grace might not remain hidden in him, it happened one night that the city of Bordeaux was struck by a great fire. People quickly ran to the man of God and
shouted, 'By your prayers, holy Caesarius, extinguish the roaring flames!' When the man of God heard this, he was moved by sorrow and compassion. He prostrated himself in prayer in the face of the oncoming fire, and at once stopped the flames and drove them back. On seeing this, everyone praised God's manifestation of power in Caesarius. After this miracle everyone in Bordeaux admired him so much that they regarded him not only as a bishop but also as an apostle. The devil, who had instigated his persecution, was thus thwarted when he saw that miracles of divine power brought renown to the man he had tried to accuse. We learned by a reliable report that the event happened this way.”

23. “And so he always instructed the church both there and everywhere ‘to render to God what belonged to God, and to Caesar what belonged to Caesar’ (Matt. 22:21), and further, in accordance with the apostle, to obey kings and magistrates when they give just orders (cf. Titus 3:1), but to despise in a ruler the depravity of Arian teaching. When the truth was proclaimed in this fashion, the lamp placed upon a mountain could not be hidden, but wherever it went it enlightened all men as it shone atop the candelabrum of the Lord (cf. Matt. 5:14-16).”

24. “After this, when he had ascertained the blessed man’s innocence, the impious king ordered the holy bishop to return to his own church and present himself to the city and clergy. His accuser, however, the king ordered to be stoned. And when people were assembling with stones in hand, the king’s order suddenly reached Caesarius. The holy man quickly rose to intercede, for he did not want his accuser to be handed over for revenge. He asked instead through a personal request that the man be spared for penance, so that the Lord might cure through penance the soul that the devil had captured through the man’s unwarranted betrayal. So by mercifully pardoning an adversary who belonged
to his own household Caesarius could by his pure conscience conquer the ancient enemy twice in a single case.”

25. “The servant of God was particularly eager to observe the following rule, that no sinner, whether one of his slaves or the freeborn men under his control, should ever receive more than the legal number of lashes, that is thirty-nine. But if someone was caught in a serious crime, Caesarius permitted him to be beaten again after several days with a few more blows. He warned the overseers of the church that if anyone ordered an offender to be beaten more than this and the man died from the punishment, the official responsible would be accused of murder.”

26. “When it was reported that the man of Christ was returning and was rapidly approaching the city of Arles, the whole Christian community went out to meet him. There, men and women holding tapers and crosses and singing psalms awaited the entrance of the holy man. Because Christ makes his people dance with joy at his wonderful deeds and confounds traitors by the clear light of his miracles, at the arrival of his servant the Lord covered the drought-stricken land with an abundant rain, so that the crops would flourish when the steward who was pleasing to him returned.”

Unit Two:

22. “Some time later, he said, Caesarius came to a property belonging to our church, where the parish of Succentriones is located. A bath house had been built there with high walls. If anyone at any given moment happened to go by it, he would immediately be called by name. At the same instant he looked with fear at huge stones falling in front of his feet or behind him. Everyone was careful never to go past the place. For this reason they would also warn everyone who did not know about the place not to go there lest they
come to harm. And when – mark this! – the man of God had been summoned to another 
church and was travelling there, the cleric whose responsibility it was to carry his staff 
forgot it. This was the duty of his notaries, in which capacity my useless self was serving. 
When the inhabitants of the place found it, they joyfully proclaimed that it had been 
furnished to them by their lord so that they could find something belonging to him. They 
were amazed and thanked God and hung the staff from the wall. And immediately the 
devil’s snare was put to flight, and until the present the adversary has not dared to inflict 
any more wicked evil on anyone in that place.”

23. “It also happened one time that a man came from northern Gaul, Benenatus in name 
but not in deed. He complained that he and his grandchildren were captives. He had a 
young girl whom he had dressed in boy’s clothing and showed to Caesarius. ‘This is my 
grandson,’ he said, ‘and with me and his sister, who is hurrying here after us, he is 
detained as a captive.’ Then the man of God, grieving over their captivity, acted in 
accordance with the affection that the Lord had inspired in him from infancy. He greeted 
each of them politely and kissed them, the man who introduced the girl and the girl 
whom he believed was a boy. When he had given each of them ransom money, they 
returned to the place where they were staying.”

24. “Two days later the bishop called the girl back, this time in her own clothing, so to 
speak, to give her more solidi. In doing this he was following the suggestion of Jacob, a 
 holy man and priest, who asserted in his holy simplicity that Benenatus’ complaints were 
all true. Then Benenatus received ransom money for this child, that is, for the girl, a 
second time. But those who were concerned about the case realized that on the second 
occasion he was introducing the same girl he had first displayed in male clothing. I
indignantly mentioned this to the holy man of God, as did Jacob, with some 
embarrassment. But since he was always very mild and kindly toward strangers, he said 
to the priest, ‘Do not become angry, holy man. You have done well to commend a 
stranger. God will reward you for your good intentions. And may God pardon that 
wretched man for his sin in making me kiss the girl. And may the girl be rewarded for 
daring to kiss a bishop, albeit an unworthy one. Let God make her such a good nun that 
she never kisses another man.’ But because God, as judge of future events, doubtless 
knew that she would not be able to maintain her virginity, she immediately departed from 
this world the next day, so that the prayer of God’s servant would not go unanswered. 
These deeds are very well known in Arles at the basilica of the Apostles, where Jacob 
lived.”

25. “On another occasion a woman in Marseille happened to dislocate her foot so badly 
that for a long time she could not put it on the ground. Held up by the hands of her slaves 
and enduring great pain, she could barely be led to church. But because the Lord’s 
mercies are numerous, he produced reasons for the man of God to go to Marseille when 
he wanted him to. When she learned of his arrival, the woman had herself brought to 
meet him. Although she received a prayer and a blessing from him, she did not dare to 
mention her own affliction to him, but as she left him, she asked to be permitted to 
approach his saddle horse. She faithfully touched the injured spot with the saddle cloth 
that was covering the saddle. Immediately she recovered her former good health, as if she 
had suffered no affliction. Unimpaired, she returned home on her own feet with no one 
supporting her and has given thanks to the Lord to this very day.”
26. "One day in this city – something that many know – the house of a man named John that was next to the women’s monastery caught fire. The fire then began to come so close that no one doubted that everything there would surely be burned up. Disturbed because they were forbidden to leave the monastery, the maidservants of God threw their books, their possessions, and themselves into cisterns where, by God’s mercy, to keep them from despairing, there was no water at the time. The assistants to the steward of the monastery ran to the father of the nuns and announced that the fire was already near their cell. Caesarius quickly ran out in the middle of the night along the wall to the place where the fire was approaching. Throwing himself forward in prayer he gave them orders and shouted from the wall, ‘Do not fear, blessed women.’ Soon, burning with the flame of his own virtue, he sent the fire away.”

27. “Nor shall I be silent about the following very well-known event, which is said to have occurred once in the Alpilles. Constant bad weather kept destroying the property of a certain very noble man. The rain was most destructive, and powerful hailstorms devoured all the produce of the area. Every year, therefore, there was no hope of assistance for the place. It then happened again that Caesarius’ staff was left there by accident. From this staff the owner ordered a cross to be made. Fortified by his faith, he then put it up in a prominent place, so that the staff of the disciple and the cross of the master might counteract the incoming hailstones. In honor of his servant, God deigned to work so great a miracle there that after he had driven away the bad weather he made the place very fertile.”

28. “Likewise one day the house of a man named Vincentius caught fire. Its wooden terrace was overcome by flames. Seeing that he could do nothing Vincentius went as fast
as he could to the lord. Throwing himself at his knees he asked him to say a prayer.

Caesarius went outside and made the sign of the cross against the flames. They retreated and were extinguished so quickly that no sign of them appeared on the planks of the terrace.”

29. “A certain priest also informed us recently that some years earlier when he was still a layman, his daughter was harassed by a demon. In sorrow and mourning he asked one of his friends, ‘What should I do? I am unhappy because my daughter is afflicted by a demon. It would have been better for me if she had never been born or if she had died.’ His friend responded, ‘Do not weep, but go and take her to lord Caesarius, and present her to him in private, and he will cure her.’ He did not hesitate, but came to Arles and met him on his journey. Prostrating himself at his feet, he said tearfully, ‘Lord, take pity on me in my wretchedness. Cure my daughter.’ Caesarius carefully asked what she had, and he responded, ‘A demon.’ Then he said to him, ‘Keep silent and go back home. In the morning, when Matins are said, come back and bring your daughter with you along with her mother. After Matins, wait in the vestibule of the church of St. Stephen. And when you see that no one else is about, come to my cell and call me.’ He did just as Caesarius ordered. Caesarius then came without anyone’s knowledge. He knelt on the ground and prayed with the girl’s father and mother. Then he rose, made the sign of the cross over her, and sent her away in good health.”

30. “Another time while walking down a street in the city he saw from the opposite side of the forum a man possessed by a demon. When he had noticed him from afar, he held his hand under his cloak so that he would not be seen by his own attendants and made the
sign of the cross in the man's direction. Immediately the man was freed from the enemy's attack."

31. "How holy and sweet it was when day by day, unceasingly, he preached the word of God, welcome to those who wished to hear it and unwelcome to those who did not (2 Tim. 4:2). Now whenever he went to bed late, which he did so as not to keep away from the divine scriptures and holy instruction even at that hour, he used to say to us, 'Tell me. What have we dined on today? What sort of dishes have we had?' We remained silent and sighed, for as often as he did, he was guiding our reasoning to the point where he could elicit from us what he wanted to say about spiritual food, and it was for this reason that he questioned us. He said again, 'I know that if I asked you what we ate for dinner and even what you had for the afternoon meal, you would remember. But if we asked what was read at table, you would not remember. From this it is to be understood that we remember what tastes good to us. But we do not remember what not only seems insipid on the palate of our heart but perhaps even disgusts us.' And groaning deeply he used to say, 'The failure to remember what is good is indeed unfortunate. Nothing is more unfortunate than this!'"

32. "And then he used to repeat from the beginning what had been read or explained, and he used to say to us poor wretches in a sorrowful and prophetic voice, 'Gather in the Lord's wheat, gather it in, because I tell you truly, you will not have a long time in which to do so! See what I say. Gather it in because you will be searching for that time; truly you will be seeking those days and you will long for them very much.' But even though at that time we did not take this seriously because of our sluggishness, nevertheless we now realize that what he said has come to pass. That saying of the prophet was fulfilled in
us: ‘I shall send you a famine in the earth, a famine,’ he says, ‘not of bread and water but of hearing the word of God’ (Amos 8:11). Although the sermons he produced are still recited, that unceasing voice has nonetheless ceased, which fulfilled the saying of the prophet, ‘Cry out unceasingly’ (Isa. 58:1). He said this often: ‘When someone’s palate despises the word of God, his soul grows feverish. When he regains his health, then he will hunger and thirst for what he scorned and refused while sick.’”