



HAL
open science

Some traces of Pelagian writings in the works of Caesarius of Arles

Laurence Mellerin

► **To cite this version:**

Laurence Mellerin. Some traces of Pelagian writings in the works of Caesarius of Arles. Césaire d'Arles et les cinq continents. Tome V. Influences des Pères de l'Église, pp.181-189, inPress. halshs-03792243v2

HAL Id: halshs-03792243

<https://shs.hal.science/halshs-03792243v2>

Submitted on 14 Jul 2023

HAL is a multi-disciplinary open access archive for the deposit and dissemination of scientific research documents, whether they are published or not. The documents may come from teaching and research institutions in France or abroad, or from public or private research centers.

L'archive ouverte pluridisciplinaire **HAL**, est destinée au dépôt et à la diffusion de documents scientifiques de niveau recherche, publiés ou non, émanant des établissements d'enseignement et de recherche français ou étrangers, des laboratoires publics ou privés.

Some traces of Pelagian writings in the work of Caesarius of Arles

Laurence Mellerin

CNRS, HiSoMA - Sources Chrétiennes, Lyon

p. 187

Contrary to what one might expect from the title of this contribution, it is not intended here to address the place of the struggle against Pelagianism in the works of Caesarius of Arles. On the one hand, many articles have already been devoted to this thematic, notably in Volume IV of this series¹. On the other hand, even if Caesarius of Arles is certainly very familiar with Pelagian and counter-Pelagian literature, and deals with most of the major Augustinian themes related to grace, nowhere does he explicitly mention explicitly mentions Pelagius or his doctrine, even though he mentions other heresies.

For M. Ribreau, this silence can be explained by the bishop's desire for appeasement, anxious to free the positions he was going to support at the Second Council of Orange of Orange (529)² from any polemical charge. Thus, Caesarius writes in a Gallic context where the Augustinian line on grace has been widely contested: if he clearly relies on Augustinian works, he often attenuates the bishop of Hippone elaborates, in particular concerning predestination and the exercise of free will in ascetic practices. This attitude is easier to maintain by fading the repulsive figure of Pelagius. Moreover, Caesarius wrote about a

¹ In particular, J. DELMULLE, < Caesarius of Arles et le 'post-pélagianisme' gaulois >, in *Caesarius of Arles and the five continents*, vol. IV, pp. 197-208.

² M. RIBREAU, "Pélage, Célestius et la controverse pélagienne dans les sermons de Césaire d'Arles à Grégoire le Grand", in M. VINZENT and R. VILLEGAS MARIN (ed.), *Cineres extincti dogmatis refouendo ? "Pelagianism" in the Christian sources from 431 to the Carolingian period*, Bristol (CT) 2021, D. 101-116, here p. 113. On the moderate Augustinianism of the Council of Orange, see R.W. MATHISEN, "Caesarius of Arles, Prevenient Grace, and the Second Council of Orange" in A.Y. HWANG, B. MATZ and A. M.C. CASIDAY (ed.), *Grace for Grace. The Debates after Augustine and Pelagius*, Washington 2014, pp. 208-234. And in *Caesarius of Arles and the five continents*, vol. IV, D. BERTRAND, "L'honneur d'un anathème contre la predestination au mal. La conclusion d'Orange II (529)", pp. 233-240.

century after the disappearance of Pelagius, of whom we lose track of after 420-421³. It is highly probable that the interlocutors of the bishop of Arles no longer knew the Breton monk, except, as monks and clerics were concerned, through their reading of Augustinian works.

However, anonymously, some passages come and go under his pen, that he most probably would see as quotes from Jerome, without being aware that he is reading Pelagius. Actually, even if he condemns the Pelagian denial of the role of grace in the salvation of the baptized, as the canons of the Council of Orange of Orange in 529 clearly show⁴, Caesarius of Arles does not deny the entire heritage of the Roman ascetic. For, he along with the Provençal monks he was concerned to preserve monastic life from the excesses of Augustinianism: the exaltation of virtues and the moral demands of Pelagius could not but suit him.

p. 188

Locating quotations from the works of Pelagius in the Caesarian corpus is not an easy task. On top of the difficulties inherent in the search for sources (which apply to Caesarius as well as to Pelagius)⁵, are added some difficulties that are specific to the latter author. The list of his works is still the subject of delicate research⁶: many of his writings, to which Caesarius may have had access, are lost; others are known only in fragments, through quotations done by his opponents, in particular Augustine; Pelagius himself drew on many sources, and treated subjects that were widespread in the ascetic literature, which makes thematic references very uncertain: Finally, the attribution to Pelagius, in Caesarius' time, of the works at stake is not at all guaranteed. Thus our investigation does not claim to be exhaustive.

³ On life of Pelagius, see G. de PLINVAL, *Pélage. Ses écrits, sa vie, sa réforme*, Lausanne 1943, pp 47- 71.

⁴ Pelagius is the only heretic named in these canons: cf. *Sancti Caesarii Arelatensis opera varia*, ed. G. Morin, Maretioli 1942, p. 69, l. 20 (*Pelagiani erroris*) and p 70, l. 23 (*Pelagii errore*).

⁵ See M.-J. Delage's Introduction to "*Sermons to the people*", vol. I (SC 175, Paris 1971, pp. 94-110).

⁶ See, for example, W. LOHR, *Pélage et le pélagianisme*, Paris 2015, pp. 72-79.

As things stand at present, it would seem that there are traces of three works of the Breton monk in the Caesarian milieu. The main one is the *Letter to Demetrias*⁷, a letter of spiritual direction written around 413 which circulated anonymously and was also passed on under several names, notably that of Julian of Eclanum (a virulent defender of the Pelagian cause after 418), but above all that of Jerome⁸. According to J. Courreau, Caesarius of Arles believed it to be the work of the latter.⁹ One finds textual echoes of it in seven sermons¹⁰ and in the *Letter to the Nuns*. They are limited to one or two sentences, repeated several times, except in *Sermon 82 (The heifer, the ram and the three-year-old goat...)* and 90 (*Blessed Joseph*) which quote larger excerpts from his paragraphs 5, 18 and 30.¹¹ The *Letter of Teridius*, Caesarius' nephew, to *Caesaria the Younger* likely also contains some passages to be related to the *Letter to Demetrias*. The other two works also belong to the genre of ascetic or pastoral treatises or letters, and are also addressed to women:

- The *Letter to Claudia on Virginité (Epistula [ad Claudiam] de virginitate)*¹², for a virgin. Today, specialists tend to attribute this letter to Pelagius¹³. Caesarius of Arles may have referred to it once.

⁷ Letter to Demetrias (= *Dem.*), *PL* 30, 15-45 and 33, 1099-1120; French trans. by Peronne *et al.*, in *Œuvres complètes de saint Augustin*, vol. VI, Paris 1873, 339-379. We do not yet have any reliable critical edition of this text.

⁸ See G. DE PLINVAL, *Pélage. Ses écrits, sa vie et sa réforme*, 22-23. For a recent review, see A. Bonner, *The Scale, Context, and Implications of the Manuscript Transmission of Pelagius' Ad Demetriadem* > (unpublished thesis), Cambridge 2012.

⁹ See J. COURREAU, *L'exégèse de saint Césaire d'Arles*, thesis in 3 volumes, Toulouse 1976, vol. 2, p. 140.

¹⁰ *Serm.* 36, 59, 82, 90, 91, 121, 238.

¹¹ Note that the attribution to Caesarius of the first of the *Epistulas ad sanctimoniales* put under his name (*Opera varia*, II, ed. G. Morin, 1942, pp. 129-134), a letter that includes several quotations from the *Lettre à Démétriede*, was definitively rejected following the work of R. Etaix, "Trois notes sur saint Césaire d'Arles, I", in M. NIJHOFF (ed.), *Corona gratiarum. Miscellanea patristica, historica et liturgica* E. Dekkers XII *lustra complenti oblata*, Bruges 1975, pp. 211-227 and A. DE VOGÜE, "Sentence d'Isidore et autres emprunts dans une lettre attribuée à Césaire d'Arles". *Sacris Erudiri* XXVII (1984), p. 209-220, who dates it as of after 650.

¹² *Epistula [ad Claudiam] de virginitate* (= *Virg.*), inc. *Quantam* (CSEL 1, pp. 224-250, Sulpicius Severus).

¹³ Cf. R. F. EVANS, *Four Letters of Pelagius*, London 1968, p. 41-51.

- The *Letter to Celantia (Epistula ad Celantiam)*¹⁴, for a Roman aristocrat, about the holy life. It is frequently attributed to Jerome in manuscripts¹⁵, but modern critics find strong similarities with works surely written by Pelagius¹⁶. The letter was probably read by Teridius.

In addition to these works of Pelagius there is the *Letter of Fastidius*, his disciple, taken up in Caesarius' *Sermon 20 (Extract from a letter by Saint Fatalis on the Christian life)* and quoted in four others¹⁷ (see below). By contrast, no trace of the exegetical works or theological treatises of Pelagius can apparently be found in Caesarius.

Let us now examine these few occurrences more closely, to see the role they play in the thought and preaching of the bishop of Arles.

p. 189

The Devil's Seduction

On two occasions, Caesarius takes up a sentence of Pelagius synthesizing what he thinks of the action of the Devil-transposing it to singular, as Pelagius, in *Letter to Demetrias 25*¹⁸, applies it to enemies in spiritual combat: according to the formulation of *Sermon 59 (On the confession of sins)*, §3, which is found identically in *Sermon 121 (On David, his father Jesse and Goliath...)*, §6, “[the devil] harms, not by compelling but by persuading, and he does not extort consent from us, but rather asks for it”¹⁹. Although this

¹⁴ Among the works of Paulinus of Nola (CSEL 29, pp. 436-459) or those of Jerome (CSEL 56.1, pp.329-356).

¹⁵ Cf. EVANS, p. 68.

¹⁶ Cf. EVANS, pp. 52-60.

¹⁷ *Serm.* 36, 54, 81, 82.

¹⁸ PL 30, 40B.

¹⁹ *Serm.* 59, 3 (vol. III, SC 330, p. 48, ll. 4-6): *Non enim diabolus cogendo, sed suadendo nocet; nec extorquet anobis consensum, sed petit: Serm.* 121, 6 (CCSL 103, p. 507, ll. 11-12).

idea is expressed in similar terms by others authors²⁰, Caesarius uses Pelagius' formula as a maxim that he combines with other -Augustinian- sources.

This choice of a writing by Pelagius, or, at least, in the mind of Caesarius of Arles, of a writing emphasizing the role of free will in spiritual combat, is not insignificant. In *Sermon 59*, which is very Augustinian in tone, Caesarius deals with the confession of sins and exposes how Manichaeans and astrologers attempt to remove the responsibility of the sinner. As P. Descotes²¹ shows it, Pelagius's sentence comes in a context of mitigation, at least rhetorical, of the action of grace in resisting the Devil.

The same goes for *Sermon 121*, also of Augustinian substrate, which also exhorts to not overestimate the devil's power to the point of considering him responsible for man's sin: If Christ is indeed evoked, with an Augustinian quotation²², as the one who tied up the Strong of the evangelical apologue (*Matthew 12, 29*), he on the other hand does no longer appears in §6, where the man seems to be alone in front of the chained dog which figures the devil, at the time of deciding whether or not he approaches it:

"For he has been bound like a dog in chains: he cannot bite anyone except the one who approaches him with a quietness that will be fatal to him. See then, brothers, how stupid is the man who is bitten by a chained dog. You, do not bind yourself to him by the pleasures and lusts of the world, and he will not venture to approach you. Barking, he can; seducing, he can; biting, he is absolutely

²⁰ Notably AUGUSTIN, *Enarrationes in Psalmos* 91, 3 (CCSL 39, p. 1280) or *Serm.* 16B = May 17 (CCSL 41, p. 231) *et diabolus, quamvis sit hostis noster, tamen consentientem supplantat. Non habet vim cogendi, sed astutiam suadendi.*

²¹ P. DESCOTES, "Césaire d'Arles et la doctrine augustinienne de la grâce : lecture du sermon 59 de Césaire d'Arles" in *Caesarius of Arles and the Five Continents*, vol. IV, p. 75-82, spec. 81-82.

²² *Enarrationes in Psalmos* 54, 12 (CCSL 39, 665, . 12-13).

incapable, unless one wants to be bitten. For he harms, not by compelling, but by persuading, and he does not extort consent from us, but asks for it."²³

p. 190

Advice to virgins

Apart from this formula, which comes close to the debates on grace, we find reminiscences of the *Letter to Demetrias* among the prescriptions for consecrated virgins. While Caesarius of Arles indicates in the *Rule for Virgins* 19, 1, that the time devoted by the nuns to reading should be two hours²⁴, the *Letter to the Nuns* stipulates that it should last three, following the advice of Pelagius²⁵:

*"Get used to being at reading until the third hour, and devote the best part of the day to the holy work."*²⁶

In the same text, Caesarius of Arles also copies a sentence from the *Letter on Virginity*:

*"Tough are the struggles of chastity, but greater are the rewards."*²⁷

Lastly, the idea that

"Putting off the clothes of the world and taking on those of the religious life, we can do this in the space of an hour, but maintaining a good moral

²³ Translation by J. Courreau and M. Pauliat to appear in *Sources Chrétiennes*.

²⁴ *Oeuvres monastiques*, vol.1 (ed. A. de Vogüé and J. Courreau, SC 345, Paris 1988), p. 192.

²⁵ *Dem.* 23 (PL 30, 37B).

²⁶ *Letter to the nuns* 7, 3 (SC 345, p. 320).

²⁷ *Letter to the nuns* 10, (SC 345, p. 334): *Castitatis dura sunt praelia, sed maiora sunt praemia*, to be compared with *Virg.* 2 : *Magnus quidem est pudicitiae labor, sed maius est praemium, temporalis custodia, sed remuneratio aeterna* (CSEL 1, p. 226), or *Lettre à Demetriade* 28 : *grandis labor est, sed respice quod promissum est* (PL 30, 48D).

level and making efforts against the falsely delightful pleasures of this world, we need to pursue these as long as we live, with the help of Christ."²⁸

could very well echo § 24 of the *Letter to Demetrias*, which expresses the same thought, with similarities of formulation.²⁹

To these traces of Pelagius' texts in Caesarius of Arles, we should add those of Pelagian texts that can be detected in the *Letter of the priest Teridius to Caesaria the Younger*:

- The necessity imposed on virgins to restrict their outings, a theme Caesarius evokes in his *Letter to nuns* 3, 14-17, is expressed in a very way terms in the *Lettre à Demetriade* 22³⁰ and in § 5 of this letter: "But your outdoor coming itself must be as reasonable as it is rare"³¹.
- Similarly, in the next sentence, Caesaria's conversation should always be "combined with gravity and softness"³², which can be compared to the *Lettre à Demetriade* 19³³.

p. 191

- The letter *On virginity* seems to be alluded to as well: "As Paul adorned the virgin of Christ, be "*holy in body and spirit*" (*1 Corinthians* 7:34)³⁴. >> 'This text' is commented on at length.³⁵

²⁸ *Letter to the nuns* 2, 17-18 (SC 345, p. 302).

²⁹ *Vnius borae... mores vero* (PL 30, 38AB).

³⁰ PL 30, 36-37: *quam parca in procedendo debeas esse, quam rara.*

³¹ *Lettre de Teridius* 5, 4 (SC 345, p. 434) : *Ipsa vera processio tua exterior rationabilis non minus debet esse quam rara.*

³² SC 345, 434-436: *Confabulatio [...] semper sit mixta cum gravitate etque dulcedine.*

³³ PL 30, 33-34 : *Mite ac placidum semper eloquium tum ornet mixta cum gravitate suavitas, cum pudore sapientia.*

³⁴ *Letter of Teridius* 5, 16 (SC 345, p. 438).

³⁵ *Virg.* 9-11 (PL 20, 233-236). See also G. CARUSO, "L'esegesi di 1 Co 7 nell'epistola pelagiana De castitate", *Augustinianum* 45 (2005), pp. 467-499.

- Finally, we can see two thematic proximities, but without textual coincidence, with *Lettre à Célantia* 23³⁶: one should not give in to slander (1, 15-16³⁷) and must be concerned about one's good reputation (5, 12)³⁸.

Let us add that Caesaria herself, in her *Letter*, attributes the sentence: “Let your worship be reasonable” to “the Apostle”, like Pelagius.³⁹

These traces seem to indicate that the writings of Pelagius, at least those relating to the ascetic life of consecrated virgins, were circulating in southern Gaul at the time of Caesarius and were part enough of a common background to be evoked in an allusive way.

Let us turn now to the two sermons of Caesarius, which contain relatively long literal quotations from Pelagius.

The Day of Judgment

In his *Sermon* 82, the bishop comments on the sacrifice of Abraham in *Genesis* 15. The third and final section of the sermon interprets “the oven burning and smoking and a brand of fire passing between the parts of the victims” (*Genesis* 15:12,17) as a prefiguration of the Day of Judgment. If this passage contains Augustinian reminiscences, it is mainly to be compared with the last part of the *Letter to Demetrias*, from which it takes up the movement and part of the scriptural material: Caesarius of Arles relies on five verses also used by Pelagius, which form like a common framework for the two texts; he takes up from Pelagius, beside rhetorical techniques - the anaphora in *ubi* [where] - parts of non-biblical sentences.

However, he does not slavishly follow his source. When Pelagius actually evokes the archangelical trumpet of a frightening end of time for those who lack perseverance and

³⁶ *CSEL* 56.1, pp. 349-350.

³⁷ *SC* 345, p. 422.

³⁸ *SC* 345, p. 436.

³⁹ *Dem.* (*PL* 30, 24-25) and *CESARIE, Lettre*, 78 (*SC* 345, p. 488, l. 6): *Rationabile sis obsequium vestrum.*

vigilance, it is to underline by contrast how desirable it is for its only recipient, Demetrias, as a day of reward, of exaltation and joy.

The approach of Caesarius of Arles on the other hand is exegetical and pastoral:

"In order not to come to this torture of the soul, let us wake up".⁴⁰

To honor the exegetical aspect, Caesarius adjusts the quotations of Pelagius to his own allegorical interpretation: if Pelagius resorts to *2 Peter* 3:10-12 in the context

p. 192

of an evocation of the brevity of earthly life, in order to insist on the unexpected arrival of the end of time, the bishop of Arles only takes up the description of the burning fire, mentioning marginally only the unpreparedness of sinners. Similarly, at the end of the text, he will only borrow from *1 Thessalonians* 4:16-17 the flight of the soul, which alone is consistent with his exegesis of the undivided birds of Abraham. To honor the pastoral aspect, he will not take up the evocation of the invasion of Rome by the Goths, but will substitute a more timeless enumeration of vices; he will also switch the quotations from *Matthew* 24:29 and *1 Thessalonians* 4:16, to evoke, from the first of these two texts, the apocalyptic climate.

And if in Pelagius the immortal glory which is opposed to that, transient, of the world, concerns only the exceptional course of Demetrias, assimilated to the bride of the *Song*, the glory of God in the doxology which concludes the sermon of Caesarius is indeed the horizon of all the doves and turtle-doves which populate the book of Solomon, and which will rise together towards the sky by their spiritual wings. The bishop of Arles has thus taken up the evocative power of his source, while wiping out its elitism.

⁴⁰ SC 447, p. 110, ll. 13-14.

The example of Joseph

But the most significant borrowing made by Caesarius from Pelagius is about the figure of Joseph, son of Jacob. By Pelagius, it is part of the series of Old Testament characters whose holiness before the giving of the Law attests to the intrinsic goodness of human nature.⁴¹ Pelagius and then Caesarius make of Joseph a model of chastity, in his resistance to the advances of Putiphar's wife (cf. *Genesis* 39:7-20), and a model of mercy and fraternal charity, in his benevolent attitude towards his brothers, who had abandoned him in the pit and whom he nevertheless welcomed with open arms in Egypt, years later. Pelagius and Caesarius seem to be the only Latin authors of the first six centuries to quote *Genesis* 45:15.

This borrowing, which consists of two successive quotations - from paragraphs 5 and 18 respectively of the *Letter to Demetrias* - appears in its most developed form within Sermon 90. These extracts are combined with two other sources: Augustine's Sermon 343, *On Susanna and Joseph*,⁴² and Cyprian's treatise *On Jealousy and Envy*. We find repetitions, of varying length, of this section on Joseph in three other sermons: *Sermon* 238,⁴³ *to the monks, on reading and prayer during Lent*, takes up with some variations *Sermon* 90, 4-5 ; *Sermon* 91, also devoted to the figure of Joseph - but to show, in a not at all Pelagian spirit, that the Old Testament saints also committed sins -, contains in its sixth paragraph a clear textual echo of

p. 193

⁴¹ *Dem.* 5-7.

⁴² Cf. C. LAMBOT, "Le sermon CCCXLIII de St. Augustin *De Susanna et Ioseph*", *Revue Benedictine* 66 (1956), pp. 20-38.

⁴³ *Oeuvres monastiques*, vol. II, SC 398, p. 140. For J. Courreau and A. de Vogüé, *Sermon* 238 is posterior to *Sermon* 90 (see SC 338, p. 48).

the treatment of *Genesis* 45, 14-15 in *Sermon* 90⁴⁴; it is the same in *Sermon* 36, 2⁴⁵, where the evocation of Joseph, more cursory, is interposed between that of Jacob and those of Moses, Job and David, to illustrate the mercy of the saints of old towards their enemies.

We notice that Caesarius follows much more literally Pelagius here than in *Sermon* 82. It is therefore necessary to pay attention to the details of the modifications he makes.

The theme of *Sermon* 90 is stated in its first sentence: Joseph's brothers "envied him", an "envy" which echoes that of Cain towards Abel. Caesarius therefore adds the words "by envy" to Pelagius' text. On the other hand, Joseph, whom Caesarius qualifies as a "saint" as he usually does,⁴⁶ will prove to be the model of the free man, who, by his own will and although in a servile condition, will be able to exercise the virtues that are opposed to envy: chastity and fraternal charity. Pelagius shows Joseph only from an external point of view: in fact, he resists Putiphar's wife. Caesarius feels the need to complete this dry description with the Augustinian analysis of Joseph's true love for "the inner beauty of chastity in the mirror of his conscience"⁴⁷. In contrast to the false love of debauchery shown by Putiphar's wife, Joseph is an example for all husbands, who should, in their wives, love more chastity than the beauty of the flesh and seek to preserve in themselves "the holy chastity in the chamber of their hearts"⁴⁸. Caesarius, having specified that the sanctity of Joseph flows from that of God - it is not insignificant that he underlines this point, which is not very developed by his source -, then takes up the thread of Pelagius' text. Concentrating on the figure of Joseph, he does not consider it useful to take up the reference to *Matthew* 5:28 -

⁴⁴ *Serm.* 91,6 (SC 447, p. 236, ll. 26-29) : *cum vero illos pro peccato quod in ipso admiserant humiliter vidit adflictos, deosculatus est singulos, et per singulos flevit, et paventium colla pio oculorum rore perfundens odium fratrum caritatis lacrimis abluebat.*

⁴⁵ *Serm* 36, 2 (vol. II, SC 243, p. 210, l. 20): *Osculabatur enim singulos, et per singulos flebat. Quibus non solum nihil mali rependens, sed etiam omnia bona retribuens, tam vivo quam mortuo patre germano semper amore dilexit.*

⁴⁶ See note on *Serm.* 81 (SC 447, p. 89).

⁴⁷ SC 447, p. 210, ll. 9-11.

⁴⁸ SC 447, p. 214, ll. 11-12.

nor, a little further on, the quotation from *Leviticus* 19:18 - and, following the plan of his source, continues with the evocation of the goodness of his hero. This passage is much briefer, and paraphrases the *Genesis* narrative. Caesarius still follows Pelagius when he sees in it the proof that the evangelical precepts - rendering good for evil - may have been already applied by the patriarchs; but he wipes out the Pelagian arguments by omitting the mention of nature opposed to the law. He then adds a small transition, which again gives a more introspective view of Joseph's virtue, and adds the mention of God's help which is absent from Pelagius' text: "Blessed Joseph, thinking of the sweetness of true charity, strove, with

p. 194

God's help, to drive the venom of envy from his heart"⁴⁹. The description of the torments into which the envious person is plunged is borrowed from § 18 of Pelagius, less literally than what precedes; but Caesarius cannot leave it there: while Pelagius goes on browsing through a catalog of vices, Caesarius wishes to go deeper and turns to other sources, and in particular to Cyprian, to describe the "spiritual moth", the "moral rust"⁵⁰ of envy⁵¹.

On the Christian life (*De vita christiana*)

Let us conclude this survey of the Pelagian texts in Caesarius with *Sermon* 20⁵², which has successively attracted the attention of G. Morin⁵³, J. Coureau⁵⁴ and J.

⁴⁹ SC 447, pp. 216-218, ll. 6-8.

⁵⁰ SC 447, p. 218, ll. 27-28.

⁵¹ On this passage, see also J. COURREAU, *L'exégèse de saint Césaire d'Arles*, vol. 2, p. 140.

⁵² Ed. G. Morin (CCSL 103, pp. 91-94) and French translation by M.-J. Delage (SC 175, pp. 494-503).

⁵³ G. MORIN, the « *De vita christiana* de l'évêque Breton Fastidius", *Revue bénédictine* 15 (1898), p. 481-493 gives a first edition of it.

⁵⁴ J. COURREAU, *L'exégèse de saint Césaire d'Arles*, vol. 2, p. 297.

Delmulle⁵⁵. The title of this text in the ms. Pal. lat. 216 of the Vatican Library indicates that it is an extract (*excarpsum*) from *St. Fatalis' Letter on Christian Life*. In reality, it is a compilation of extracts from the treatise addressed by Fastidius⁵⁶, a Britton bishop of the beginning of the fifth century, disciple of Pelagius, to Fatalis: as G. Morin notes it, with the exception of the first words and the brief conclusion, of a small borrowing from *Commentary on Psalms 102* by Augustine⁵⁷ and a few lines from another letter by Fastidius⁵⁸. According to J. Coureau, the rest of § 4,

*"which contains the only scriptural quotation in the entire sermon (Luke 17:21), is not found in the model used by Caesarius. However, Dom Morin believes that it must be taken from a work by Fastidius as well. Whatever the possible attribution, the little commentary on this verse is clearly Pelagian in its inspiration: 'The weapons of the Gospel are not heavy, but light to those with a good will.'"*⁵⁹

We find in this exhortation to conversion before it is too late, a certain number of themes already encountered in Pelagius' texts used by Caesarius: the comparison with the saints of old, in this case the apostles, our fathers and Abraham; the rejection of hypocrisy and the need to do the right thing; the exaltation of effort and the certainty that it can

⁵⁵ J. DELMULLE, « Césaire d'Arles et le 'post-pélagianisme' gaulois », p. 200.

⁵⁶ Cf. GENNADIUS, *De viris illustribus* 57 (ed. E.C. Richardson, Leipzig 1896, p. 81): "Fastidius, bishop of the Bretons, wrote to a certain Fatalis a book *De vita christiana* and another *De viduitate servanda*, of sound doctrine worthy of God". See Introduction (*Sermons*, vol. I, SC 175, p. 97).

⁵⁷ *Serm.* 20, 2 (SC 175, p. 498, ll. 20-22) and 3-4 (p.500, ll. 23-27).

⁵⁸ *Serm.* 20, 4 (SC 175, p. 500, l. 13 - p. 502, l. 4). This is the anonymous Pelagian text edited by C.P. Caspari, *Briefe, Abhandlungen und Predigten*, Christiana 1890, p. 4.

⁵⁹ "*Fastidius ad Fatalem?* Pages inédites du cinquième siècle d'après le manuscrit CCXXI de Reichenau", *Revue bénédictine* 46 (1934), pp. 3-17. This text can be found in PLS 1, 1699-1704.

succeed - "He who gave life, is it not by chance that he can give enough to live in the present?"⁶⁰

p. 195

A formula in this text is clearly dear to Caesarius, and to him only, according to the *Library of Latin Texts*:

*"Torments did not separate them from Christ; we indeed are separated from Him by idle chatter and denigration."*⁶¹

It recurs in three other sermons:

- *Sermon 36, 7*: to contrast apostolic men with Caesarius' contemporaries;⁶²
- *Sermon 54, 2*: to contrast the good Christians to the lukewarm and the careless ones;⁶³
- *Sermon 82, 2*: after a quotation from *Romans 8, 35.39*, to mark the contrast between the spiritual and the carnal ones.⁶⁴

Another sentence from *Sermon 20*, can again be read in *Sermon 81. 1*: "We hold fast to the steps of Christ"⁶⁵.

⁶⁰ SC 175, p. 496, ll. 10-11.

⁶¹ *Serm. 20, 1* (SC 175, p. 496, ll. 3-4) : *Tormentis non separabantur a Christo ; et nos aut otiosis fabulis aut detractionibus separamur.*

⁶² *Serm. 36, 7* (SC 243, p. 222, ll. 10-12).

⁶³ *Serm. 54, 2* (SC 243, p. 454, ll. 14-16).

⁶⁴ *Serm. 82, 2* (SC 447, p. 106, ll. 6-8).

⁶⁵ SC 447, p. 90, ll. 15-16 : *Christi vestigiis inhaeremus.*

Conclusion

The bishop of Arles thus retains, from the Roman ascetic, precepts having to do with the observances of the religious life of virgins, passages which exalt chastity, and exhortative formulas to the practices of Christian virtues. If he probably quotes Pelagius at times simply to satisfy his taste for formula, however, this overview of his borrowings allows us to see that, however limited they may be, they nevertheless are often significant. He undoubtedly resorts very consciously to the sentences which insist on the role of free will in the spiritual struggle, and even without necessarily knowing the author of his source, he knows how to use them with subtlety: to attenuate an excessive Augustinianism, but by always recalling the role of the divine assistance in the human virtues. Thus, even though Caesarius' quotations from Pelagius seemed to be uncoupled from his theological reflections on grace, we see that the way in which he uses them is entirely consistent with his concern for balance in these matters. As for the longer passages that he takes up from the *Letter to Demetrias*, he takes care to adapt them very finely to his exegetical and pastoral aim.

Appendices

The synopsis below shows Caesarius' way of working: bold passages correspond to literal textual reproductions of the Pelagian source, while underlined passages show stylistic reproductions. Identical biblical references are framed.

PELAGIUS, <i>Letter to Demetrias</i> 30 ⁶⁶	CAESARIUS, <i>Sermon</i> 82, 3 ⁶⁷
<p>[...] illum tantum diem totam para te, in quo mundi gloria finienda est. Illum, inquam, <u>diem, quem Salvator diluvio comparavit</u> : qui multos fallaci securitate deceptos, furtivo, ut ait Apostolus, comprehendet adventu (cf. <i>1 Th</i> 5, 2).</p> <p>Quem beatus quoque Petrus describens ait : <i>Adveniet autem dies Domini sicut fur : in qua caeli magno impetu transibunt. Elementa vero a calore resolventur. Cum igitur haec omnia dissolvenda sint, quales oportet nos esse in sanctis conversationibus et pietatibus exspectantes et properantes in adventum Domini Dei, in quo caeli ardentes solventur, et elementa ignis calore tabescent</i> (2 P 3, 10-12)? Recens factum est, et quod ipsa audisti, cum ad stridulae buccinae</p>	<p>Clibanus ille ardens et fumans et lampas ignis diem iudicii figuravit; et ideo super beatum Abraham timor et horror tenebrosus incubuit. Vnde intellegimus, quod si in <u>die iudicii</u> <i>iustus vix salvabitur, peccator et impius ubi parebit?</i> (<i>1 P</i> 4, 18)</p> <p>clibanus ergo ardens et fumans significavit <u>diem iudicii : diem</u>, inquam, <u>iudicii</u>, in quo erit fletus et stridor dentium (<i>Mt</i> 8, 12), in quo erit ululatus et lamentatio et tarda paenitentia : quando movebuntur fundamenta montium, et ardebit terra usque ad inferos deorsum : quando, sicut dicit beatus Petrus apostolus, <i>caeli ardentes solventur, elementa ignis ardore tabescent</i> (2 P 3, 10-12) : quando, sicut Dominus ipse in evangelio dicit, <i>etiam</i></p>

⁶⁶ PL 30, 44-45.

⁶⁷ SC 447, pp. 108-110.

<p>sonum, Gothorumque clamorem, lugubri oppressa metu domina orbis Roma contremuit. Vbi tunc nobilitatis ordo? ubi certi et distincti illius dignitatis gradus? [...] Si ita mortalis timemus hostis humanam manum : quid faciemus cum clangore terribili tuba intonare de caelo coeperit : et ad illam archangeli vocem (cf. 1 Th 4, 16), omni buccina clariorem, totus simul remugiet mundus? cum viderimus super nos non manufacta arma concuti, sed et virtutes caelorum commoveri (Mt 24, 29), sicut Propheta dicit : Cum venerit Dominus ponere orbem terrae desertum : et peccatores perdere ex eo (Is 13, 9 VL) : quis tunc nobis pavor, quae caligo, quae tenebrae, cum nos saepius ac toties admonitos, et tamen imparatos dies ille repererit? Tunc, inquit, <i>plangent super se omnes tribus terrae : et videbunt Filium hominis venientem in nubibus caeli cum virtute multa et maiestate</i> (Mt 24, 30). <i>Tunc dicent montibus. Cadite super nos : et collibus, Operite nos : et petris, Aperite vos nobis</i> (Lk 23, 30). [...] et cum Christo semper futura es, Apostolo</p>	<p>virtutes caelorum commovebuntur, quando sol obscurabitur, quando et luna non dabit lumen suum, et stellae cadent de caelo (Mt 24, 29). Vbi se tunc impii videbunt? ubi adulteri, ubi ebriosi, ubi maledici recognoscent? ubi amatores luxuriae, ubi raptores, ubi superbi et invidi apparebunt? quid infelices pro sua defensione dicturi sunt, quos totiens admonitos et tamen imparatos dies ille repererit? cum ad illam archangeli tubam (cf. 1 Th 4, 16) omni buccina clariorem totus simul coeperit mugire mundus; cum, sicut dicit Propheta, venerit Dominus ponere orbem terrae desertum, et peccatores perdere ex eo (Is 13, 9 VL); quando, sicut dicit Scriptura, peccatores et impii mittentur in stagnum ignis (cf. Ap 21, 8), <i>et fumus tormentorum illorum ascendet in saecula saeculorum</i> (Ap 14, 11) : qui tunc tremor, quae caligo, quae tenebrae criminosos quosque negligentes ac tepidos occupabunt?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">[...]</p>
---	--

<p>dicente : <i>Quoniam ipse Dominus in iussu et in voce archangeli, et in tuba Dei descendet de caelo : et mortui qui in Christo sunt, resurgent primi. Deinde nos qui vivimus : qui relinquimur, simul rapiemur cum illis in nubibus obviam Domino in aere : et ita semper cum Christo erimus</i> (1 Th 4, 16-17). Haec sit igitur cura tua semper, hoc studium : [...]</p>	<p>sed simplicitatem columbae et castitatem turturis praeferebant spiritalibus virtutum pinnis elevemur in caelum, secundum illud quod ait Apostolus : <i>simul</i>, inquit, rapiemur in nubibus obviam Christo in aera, et sic semper cum domino erimus (1 Th 4, 17) : praestante Domino nostro Iesu Christo, cui est honor et gloria cum Patre et Spiritu Sancto in saecula saeculorum. Amen.</p>
---	---

Table 2: The example of Joseph

Bolded passages correspond to literal text.

PELAGE, <i>Letter to Demetrias</i> 5 et 18 ⁶⁸	CAESARIUS, <i>Sermon</i> 90 ⁶⁹
<p>Ioseph fidelis Domini famulus a puero, tribulationibus magis iustus et perfectus ostenditur: qui primum a fratribus, Ismaelitis, in servum addictus est (<i>Gn</i> 37, 28) : ab eisque venditus, a quibus se viderat adorandum. Deinde Aegyptio Domino traditus, semper tamen ingenuam animae tenuit dignitatem: docuitque exemplo suo, et servos et liberos in peccando, non</p>	<p>1. [...] Ioseph ergo sanctus et fidelis domini famulus tribulationibus magis iustus ostenditur, qui primum per invidiam a fratribus ismahelitis in servum addictus, ab eis que venditus, a quibus se viderat adoratum, deinde aegyptio domino traditus, semper tamen ingenuae animae tenuit dignitatem; docuit que exemplo suo et servos et liberos, in peccando non</p>

⁶⁸ *Dem.* 5 (*PL* 30, 20C-21B) et 18 (*PL* 30, 32BC).

⁶⁹ *Serm.* 90, *De beato Ioseph* (*SC* 447, pp. 208-225).

<p>conditionem cuiquam obesse, sed mentem. Hic, quaeso, remorare paulisper: et castum animum, sollicite, virgo, considera. Concupiscitur a domina Ioseph adolescens: nec ad concupiscentiam provocatur : rogatur, et fugit. Una hac in re et blanditur et supplicat, quae in caeteris imperabat.</p> <p>Amor Dei, mulieris amore non vincitur. Castum animum, nec aetas adolescentiae permovet, nec diligentis auctoritas. Contempta frequenter domina, propiores adolescenti insidias tendit. In secreto ac sine testibus, manu impudens apprehendit : ac procacioribus verbis hortatur ad crimen. Ne hic quidem vincitur, sed ut verba verbis, ita res rebus refert. Nam qui frequenter rogatus negaverat : nunc comprehensus aufugit, et antequam illud evangelicum diceretur : <i>Qui viderit mulierem ad concupiscendum eam, jam moechatus est eam in corde suo (Mt 5, 28) :</i></p>	<p>condicionem cuiquam obesse, sed mentem.</p> <p>2. Concupiscitur aduliscens a domina, nec ad concupiscentiam provocatur: rogatur, et refugit; una hac in re blanditur et supplicat, quae in ceteris imperabat.</p> <p>[... insertion of large excerpts from Augustine, <i>Sermon 343</i>, 6-8 and a passage specific to Caesarius...]</p> <p>Adfuit dominus sancto Ioseph; et quia sanctum amabat, mulieris amore non vincitur. Castum animum nec aetas aduliscenciae permovet, nec diligentis auctoritas, contemptam frequentare dominam. Ore proprio aduliscenti tendit insidias, secreto ac sine testibus manu inpudens adprehendit, procacioribus verbis hortatur ad crimen; nec ibi quidem vincitur, sed ut verba verbis, ita et res rebus refert : nam qui frequenter rogatus negaverat, tunc comprehensus aufugit.</p>
--	--

ille non aspectu solum, sed ipso pene complexu provocatus a femina, feminam non concupivit. **Castitatis** virtutem

hucusque **mirata es : nunc benignitatem.** Priusquam

diceret : *Unusquisque malitiam sui non reminiscatur in corde suo (Lv 19,18)*: **ille pro odio reddidit caritatem, et cum videret fratres suos,**

immo inimicos ex fratribus, cumque ab eis cognosci vellet, dilectionis affectum pro dolore testatus est : *Deosculabatur singulos (Gn 45, 15)* ; et irriguis fletibus, paventium colla perfundens, odium fratrum charitatis lacrymis abluebat: quos tam vivo patre quam mortuo, germano semper dilexit amore. Nec recordatus est illum, in quo ob necem fuit dejectus, lacum. Non cogitavit addictam germanitatem pretio, sed *pro malis bonum retribuens (Rm 12, 17)*, *apostolicum praeceptum sub naturae adhuc lege complevit.*

4. Mirati estis castitatem Ioseph : aspiciate nunc benignitatem.

Ille pro odio reddit caritatem; et cum videret fratres suos, immo inimicos ex fratribus, cumque ab eis agnosci vellet, dilectionis affectum pio dolore testatus est. *Deosculabatur singulos*, et per singulos flebat ; et irriguis fletibus paventium colla perfundens, odium fratrum caritatis lacrimis abluebat : quos tam vivo patre quam mortuo germano semper amore dilexit. Nec recordatur illum in quo ad necem fuerat deiectus lacum, non cogitavit addictam pretio germanitatem; sed *pro malis bona restituens (Rm 12, 17)*, iam tunc necdum data **apostolica praecepta complevit.**

Ergo beatus Ioseph cogitans verae caritatis dulcedinem, venenum invidiae, quo fratres suos noverat fuisse percussos, Deo auxiliante studuit de corde suo repellere. 5.

<p>18 : [...] Quid, oro te, invido, delectationis praestat invidia, quem secretis quibusdam conscientiae unguis livor ipse decerpit, et alienam felicitatem tormentum eius facit? Quid vero alter ab odio mercedis accipit, nisi horribiles animae tenebras, et confusae mentis horrorem? Qui vultu semper animoque moerente, voto quo alteri vult nocere, seipsum cruciat ? Quid autem iracundo furor suus confert, quem saevissimis exagitatum stimulis conscientiae, ita ab omni consilio ac mente deturbat, ut dum irascitur, insanire credatur ? [...]</p>	<p>Et revera, fratres, quid infelici invido praestat invidia, quem secretis quibusdam conscientiae unguis livor ipse discerpit, et alienam felicitatem tormentum illius facit ? quam, inquam, mercedem ex odio suo recipiet, nisi horribiles animae tenebras, et confusae mentis horrorem? qui vultu semper animo que maerente, voto, quo vult alteri nocere, se cruciat: quem saevissimis exagitatum stimulis ab omni consilio ac mentis sobrietate deturbat. [...]</p> <p>[extracts of CYPRIAN, <i>De zelo et livore</i>]</p>
--	---