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*...un tuo serto di fiori
in man recando*

SCRITTI IN ONORE DI
MARIA AMALIA D'ARONCO

2/ A CURA DI
PATRIZIA LENDINARA

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THE RECEPTION OF DEFENSOR'S *LIBER SCINTILLARUM* IN ANGLO-SAXON ENGLAND

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Defensor in Leiden

Amongst its rich and varied collections, Leiden University Library keeps a small notebook, to be ordered by call number Vossius Latinus Octavo 100 (de Meyier: 188-190). It is bound in a charming English leather binding of the second half of the seventeenth century, the leaves are paper and its contents, two texts, were written down by no less a man than the great seventeenth-century Anglo-Saxonist, Franciscus Junius¹. The second item does not really concern us here: it is a long poem with an equally long title, *De la grandeur de Dieu, et de la cognoissance qu'on peult avoir de luy par ses oeuvres*, written by Pierre Duval (bishop of Sées, 1545-1564) and copied by Junius in all likelihood from a printed edition. The poem was first printed in 1553, with early reprints in 1555 and 1557 (de Meyier: 190). What attracted my attention when I inspected the notebook for the first time was a meticulously written transcript of Defensor's *Liber scintillarum*. Preceding the actual text itself, Junius wrote a chapter index provided with page numbers for easy reference to the text that he had so neatly copied. Neither at the beginning of this transcript nor at the end did Junius reveal its source. However, in a note carefully stuck on to a front fly leaf (fol. 1x^v) and penned in a hand that betrays him to have become much older than when he copied Defensor's *Liber* into his notebook, Junius provided some further information. He wrote:

Hic liber Scintillarum è quodam Vossianae bibliothecae codice membranaceo descriptus, evincit alibi quoque plures fuisse libros Scintillarum, praeter nobilem Scintillarum Anglosaxonice interlineatum, qui asservatur in Regiâ bibliothecâ Londini, et è cujus fragmentis plurima quondam in usum nostrum excerptimus.

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¹ On Junius, see 'For My Worthy Friend Mr. Franciscus Junius'... Ed. van Romburgh and the book edited by Bremmer.

(This *Liber scintillarum*, transcribed from a manuscript that once belonged to [Gerard] Vossius's library, makes clear that elsewhere there have also been many *libri scintillarum*, in addition to the noble Scintillarius interlineated in Anglo-Saxon, which is kept in the Royal Library in London, and from whose fragments we [= I] have also once copied much for our [= my] usage.)

Two pieces of information give away that Junius had transcribed his 'Scintillarius' in Holland from a manuscript that had once belonged to his brother-in-law, Gerard Vossius, and not initially to the latter's son Isaac whose library eventually ended up in Leiden. The first indication is that the only copy of a Defensor text in Isaac's collection has a version that differs from that in Junius's notebook². The other is the word «quodam» qualifying the «Vossiana bibliothecae». Apparently, that library was no longer intact and this conclusion tallies with what we know of Gerard Vossius's collection. It was sold not long after Gerard's death to Queen Christina of Sweden in 1649 by his son Isaac, then Christina's personal librarian (Blok: 272-273). Isaac's library, on the other hand, was still complete at the time when Junius wrote his little note.

As an aside, because it is not relevant to the subject of my paper, but interesting perhaps for the recipient of this *Festschrift*, I should like to mention that on fly leaf fol. 1x^r Junius noted two distichs in Italian, a language which he had learned when he was about twenty-nine years old³:

Almo Signor ti aspetto, e più non voglio
Viver senza il tuo amor, e tuo cordoglio.

(Holy Lord, I wait for you, and I do not want
to live any longer without your love, and your commiseration.)

and:

Chi siede solitario, e piensa, e tace,
S'alza sopra si stesso, e trova pace.

(Who sits alone, and thinks and is silent,
raises above himself, and finds peace.)

² Leiden, Universiteitsbibliotheek, Voss. Lat. Oct. 88, Part III, fols. 96-103v (s. xiii⁴; prov. France); cfr. de Meyier: 188. For example, Junius's transcript in Voss. Lat. Oct. 100 of ch. i «De caritate» contains only eight 'sparks' against fifty-two in Rochais's edition. Moreover, Junius's transcript in Voss. Lat. Oct. 100 covers all chapters, whereas the text in Voss. Lat. Oct. 88 ends in the middle of chapter vii.

³ 'For My Worthy Freind Mr. Franciscus Junius'....: 186-187 (letter no. 28e).

Junius, then, evidently had an interest in Defensor's *Liber scintillarum* that was unusual for his time and which predates 1650, the year when Gerard Vossius's library was sold. I shall briefly return to the nature of Junius's interest at a later point in my paper. But let me first explain the purpose and course of this paper which will first explain who Defensor was and what the nature of his *Liber scintillarum*. The problemization comes with its reception and usage in Anglo-Saxon England.

Defensor the author

Little is known of Defensor as the author of the *Liber scintillarum* (cfr. Rochais 1951: 9-28). He must have lived after 636, the year in which Isidore of Seville died, since he quotes from this Spanish Church Father, providing the date *post quem*. He must have finished his work by the mid-eighth century, because the oldest manuscript containing his book is put at that date (Würzburg, Universitätsbibliothek, M.P.Th.F. 13; CLA IX, 1404: s. viii²)⁴ which gives us the *ante quem*. His identity as the author of the *Liber scintillarum* remained hidden until around 1675 when the Benedictine scholar Jean Mabillon discovered a manuscript with a copy of the *Liber* in the library of Monte Casino. In its preface, Defensor reveals himself as the *Liber*'s author. With topical modesty, Defensor declares in the first person to have written his book at the instigation of his abbot, Ursinus. Furthermore, Defensor informs the reader that he presents the volume to the monastery where he had taken the tonsure, St Martin's at Ligugé, adding that since his early youth his masters have enriched him with their spiritual gifts.

These facts allow us to assume that Defensor compiled his book somewhere between 700, when Abbot Ursinus died, and 750, the approximate date of the oldest manuscript. It was from this oldest monastery in France, founded by St Martin himself just outside Poitiers in the fourth century, that the *Liber scintillarum* began its tour of victory. Today it survives in over 370 manuscripts⁵, making it, in the words of René Derolez: «one of the texts most widely read in monastic circles to the very end of the Middle Ages» (Derolez: 142). Despite this great success, Defensor is not widely known today. Indeed, judging by both the *Catholic Encyclopaedia*, published between 1906 and 1919, and the *New Catholic Encyclopaedia*, compiled some fifty years later,

⁴ *Defensor Locogasiensis. Liber scintillarum*: 9, dates the manuscript to 750.

⁵ New copies keeps turning up, see e.g. Bischoff and Brown: no. 1815: s. viii², fragment.

Defensor, through his absence in both works, is not even deemed worthy of being remembered by professed Roman-Catholics as one of the most popular early medieval authors. It was a sad fate that befell this author even fairly soon after his death: the *Liber* was no longer associated with Defensor but attributed to men of greater fame and authority such as Cassiodorus or the Venerable Bede.

Defensor's book

The *Liber scintillarum*, or 'Book of Sparks', is an anthology of sayings from the Lord and from the saints, or, in other words, from the Bible and from the Church Fathers. Defensor expressly states to have added nothing of his own. He also explains the title:

Veluti de igne procedunt scintillae, ita huc minutae sententiae pluribus ex libris inveniuntur fulgentes Scripturarum inter hoc scintillarum volumen (*LS* I, 49, lines 13-15).

(Just as a fire emits sparks, so one can see glowing here pithy sentences taken from numerous books of the Scriptures, in this volume of sparks.)

Defensor's express purpose is to save the reader the trouble of having to browse through endless rows of books: here the reader will find what he is looking for. An innovating aspect of the *Liber scintillarum* compared to earlier anthologies such as Isidore of Seville's *Sententiae* is that Defensor has culled his «minutae sententiae» 'pithy sentences', as he calls them in his preface, from two distinct source categories. His is not a selection from either the Bible or the Fathers but from both these sources (Rochais 1951: 14).

It may seem that Defensor is merely passing on to the reader what he has found worthy of selection, without any personal additions. What words he added to the sayings is confined to a bare minimum and consists of such simple sentences as «Augustinus dixit» or «In libro Clementis dixit». We find neither evaluative comments nor even the occasional modifying adverb. Yet, we cannot say either that Defensor's person is absent from the text. Such a conclusion would be misleading, for Defensor has undeniably imposed his personal stamp on the collection even though he refrained from acknowledging so. Unlike other early anthologies, in which the sayings are usually arranged according to a particular Father, Defensor has grouped his choice of dicta in 'chapterets' or *capitula* and all of them according to a particular subject. To our judgement there is no apparent order or system to be detected in the sequence of topics. The collection begins with a *capitulum* «De caritate», to be followed by «De patientia» and «De dilectione Dei et proximi»

and so on down to the eighty-first and last *capitulum*, called «De lectionibus». Whether intentionally or not, a considerable number of *capitula* focuses on vices and virtues. All in all, Defensor's book contains the impressive amount of 2,505 sayings, of which about one third originally flowed from Isidore's quill.

If no system can be detected in the sequence of the *capitula*, the same cannot be said for the ordering of the material within each chapter. Here Defensor followed a steady course by applying the same hierarchy throughout his book. He first begins with quotations from the Bible and then continues with the Fathers. Within the Bible quotations, Defensor's ordering hand is detectable once more. First he presents quotations from the Gospels, then from the apostles, i.e. from the New Testament pastoral epistles, to end with citations from the Old Testament. In his presentation of patristic sayings, on the other hand, Defensor was less scrupulous in establishing a hierarchy. On the whole it appears that he began this part of the *capitula* with the four great Fathers, Augustine, Gregory, Jerome and Ambrose, though not consistently in the same order. Basil usually comes next, while anonymous sources, such as the *Vitae patrum* appear in the rear end of the *capitula*. Finally, absence of systemization also becomes apparent in the size of the *capitula* which may vary between a mere five to an impressive amount of one hundred sayings.

It should be mentioned that Defensor never gave any precise reference for his quotations. His entries typically take the following shape, with openings like: «Dominus dicit in Evangelio: [...]» or «Augustinus dixit: [...]». Not quite surprisingly, modern scholars have found difficulties in tracing all the book's patristic sayings to their appropriate sources, but the number of unsourced items has steadily decreased since Dom Henri Rochais published the first modern edition of the *Liber scintillarum* in 1957⁶. In this year, Rochais confessed to have been unable to bring home some 240 passages, about one tenth of the total amount of sayings. In his Latin-French edition of 1961, Rochais had managed to reduce this number to 200, while in an article published in 1983, Rochais («Apostilles...») listed a further amount of new sources thus bringing back the unsourced sayings to 116⁷. Finally, in 2002, Leslie MacCoull (298) announced that with the help of electronic corpuses he had managed to identify sixty-two more sources added with «another 45 that were similar to known passages or noted in quotations by other authors». All in all, some nine sources still remain to be detected since they have «neither author nor parallel nor even an echo», according to MacCoull. It appears that the progress that has been made in recovering the sources used by Defensor is

⁶ Defensor Locogasiensis. *Liber scintillarum* and *Defensor de Ligugé. Livre d'étincelles*.

⁷ Further unidentified sources in *LS* were traced by Crouzel and by de Vogüé: 220.

an excellent illustration of the importance of electronic corpuses in this branch of scholarship, tools which can be neglected only at one's peril.

In view of the above, one can see the value of the sayings in the collection of the *Liber scintillarum*. They prove to be the result of Defensor's lifelong devotion to reading, collecting and sifting the Bible and a whole range of patristic writings. Small wonder that Defensor's book was to have such a wide acclaim as testified by the more than 370 manuscripts in which it survives today.

Defensor in Anglo-Saxon manuscripts

Was Defensor equally widely read in Anglo-Saxon England as he was on the continent of Europe? If we go by the manuscripts in which his *Liber* has survived, the answer must be negative. Less than one percent of the total amount of manuscripts with Defensor's *Liber* in it that have survived can be attributed to the Anglo-Saxons' interest, and as their dates make clear, none of these manuscripts was produced before the year 1000. They are the following three:

1. London, British Library, Royal 7 C.iv (Gneuss no. 470, s. xi¹, Canterbury CC?, prov. *ibid.*)
2. Cambridge, Corpus Christi College 190, pp. iii-xii, 1-294 (Gneuss no. 59, s. xi¹, Worcester?, «a version of Wulfstan's 'Handbook'»)
3. Cambridge, Clare College 30, pt. ii (Gneuss no. 34.1, s. xi² or xi^{3/4}, Worcester).

Royal 7.C.iv begins with Defensor which takes up the first 100 folios, to be followed by a much shorter text of only six folios with the incipit: «Hic pauca incipiunt de vitiis et peccatis. Apostrophe de muliere nequam» (Here begin a few words about vices and sins. An exclamatory address about a wicked woman). This text was compiled from extracts lifted from chapters 25 and 26 of Ecclesiasticus (Wisdom of Jesus Son of Sirach) and a brief passage from Isidore's *Sententiae* II.vi (PL 83) on the predestination of the elect and the reject. Taken together, these three texts impress one as some kind of didactic programme in which Defensor's *Liber* offers a guide for contemplation and instruction on how to live well, in which the two chapters from Ecclesiasticus indirectly extol the advantages of male celibacy, and in which the selections from Isidore show how essential the choice or rejection of such a virtuous life will be. The credibility for such an interpretation of the conjunction of these three texts is confirmed by the fact that three English manuscripts from the twelfth and thirteenth centuries feature the same three texts in the same order⁸.

⁸ Ker: no. 256, art. 2; Doane 5.10. They are London, British Library, Royal 6.D.v (s. xii, Rochester),

For the other two Anglo-Saxon manuscripts such a didactic programmatic interpretation seems less likely, and, in the case of Cambridge, Corpus Christi College, 190, even unlikely at all. CCCC 190 is a voluminous miscellany and one of eleven manuscripts known as Wulfstan's Commonplace Book⁹. It is also the only copy of this Commonplace Book to have included Defensor's *Liber*. The occurrence of the *Liber* among fourteen quite disparate and often longer texts does not add to the probability of the text being part here of a didactic programme. Rather, its presence must have been practical and will have served Wulfstan in the composition of one of his sermons, as we shall see. A further argument pleading against a programmatic interpretation is that Defensor's *Liber* was not integrally included in CCCC 190 but only as a compilation of extracts which together takes up sixteen pages (265-280). Quite ironically, such a fate – or was it an honour? – eventually befell Defensor: the anthologizer became anthologized himself.

The third manuscript, Cambridge, Clare College, 30, part ii, opens with Defensor and continues with Julian of Toledo's *Prognosticon futuri saeculi* to finish with an incomplete version of Alcuin's *De fide sanctae et individuae Trinitatis*. Julian's treatise (ca. 650) was the first to give a detailed and comprehensive account of the doctrine of the afterlife¹⁰. Alcuin's *De fide* is an exposition of the doctrine of the Trinity (Cavadini).

In addition to these three manuscript witnesses, we have some further indications from which we can deduce Defensor's presence in eleventh-century Anglo-Saxon England: the non-surviving exemplars from which the three scribes copied their Defensor. This conclusion is borne out even more strongly by the Royal manuscript, because its Latin text was given a near-contemporary continuous gloss of such an excellent quality that Junius confessed to have rarely seen anything like it¹¹. Analysis of the Old English Defensor gloss (Ed. Rhodes) has brought to light that it was not original but copied from an exemplar with a Latin redaction that differed from the one in Royal 7 C.iv (Verdonck: 97).

London, British Library, Royal 8.A.xxi (s. xiii, St Peter's, Gloucester) and Oxford, Bodleian Library, Rawlinson C 23 (s. xii^m, but without provenance in Macray: col. 8). Since none of these three manuscripts appears in Gameson's catalogue, I assume that they should be dated to after ca. 1130.

⁹ As first observed by Bethurum. For a description of the contents of CCCC 190, see Clemoes, and especially Budny: I, 535-544 (no. 34).

¹⁰ Schreckenberg, with further bibliographical information.

¹¹ «[...] tanta cum cura glossata, ut non putem uspiam reperiri aliam aliquam interlineationem pari studio iudicioque elaboratam»: Junius. *Glossarium Gothicum*, ****4. Junius also excerpted the glossed Royal version in a copy book preserved as Oxford, Bodleian Library, Junius 40, see Madan: no. 5152.

Finally, according to Ogilvy (128) – whose *Books Known to the English, 597-1066* should be the starting point for anyone interested in the Sources of Anglo-Saxon Literary Culture project – there would be an indication from the world of the book trade. Around 1068, Sewold, abbot of Bath Abbey, travelled to Flanders with a cargo of books the items of which he had carefully listed before he donated them to the monastery of St Vaast in Arras. Ogilvy claims that Defensor's *Liber* was included in the inventory, but his claim rests upon a misreading of two French articles written by Phillip Grierson¹², and must hence be rejected. Summing up the direct and indirect manuscript evidence, we may say that after all Defensor's *Liber scintillarum* enjoyed a modest popularity in Anglo-Saxon England in the eleventh century.

It has been suggested that Defensor's book was particularly used for reading in the refectory during meals. In how far is this suggestion borne out by the Anglo-Saxon manuscript evidence? At least one of the three manuscripts seems to support such an assumption, i.e. Royal 7 C.iv, because it combines the *Liber* with two texts that also continued to travel together in at least three post-Conquest manuscripts. CCCC 190 speaks against the suggestion, while the conjunction of Defensor with Julian's and Alcuin's tracts in Clare College 30 seems less suitable for edifying diner reading to me. At least, I have difficulties in imagining how the monks will have digested this spiritual food while they were eating.

Defensor digested in Anglo-Saxon England

What effect did the familiarity in Anglo-Saxon England with Defensor's anthology have? Let me first make clear that, for all I know, no Anglo-Saxon was aware of Defensor having been the author of the *Liber scintillarum*. As a matter of fact, only some thirty-two manuscripts (all of them continental) identify Defensor as the author, or, perhaps more appropriately, as the collector. If they did not know his name in England at the time, neither were they always aware that this *florilegium* had a proper title. In the Royal manuscript, for example, the text is presented without title or author. However, a fifteenth-century reader identified the text at the top of fol. 1 as «*liber scintillarum*» but did not take the trouble of adding its author's name or, even more likely, was ignorant of it. In CCCC 190, however, the selection is announced as «*excerptiones ex libro*

¹² Grierson (1940a) does not include Defensor, whose *Liber* was present in the twelfth century in St Vaast as no. 205, but not in an Anglo-Saxon manuscript. Ogilvy was probably misled by the next item in Grierson's list, which indeed was donated by Sewold, see Grierson 1940b: 135.

scintillarum» and in Clare College 30 as «liber qui dicitur scintillarum»¹³.

There need be no doubt that Defensor was digested in Anglo-Saxon England, but to what extent this digestion is reflected in the writings of Anglo-Saxons is a matter that has not yet been properly chewed. Ogilvy (128) devoted seven lines to Defensor¹⁴, mentioning Royal 7 C.iv, CCCC 190 and Sewold's booklist, but he appears to have been unaware of Clare College 30. As for the employment of Defensor's text as a source for quotations, Ogilvy furthermore lists two items: the sermon *Be þurhwununge* in British Library, Cotton Tiberius A.iii (with reference to Max Förster), and Wulfstan's Homily XIII (with reference to Dorothy Bethurum). The British *Fontes Anglo-Saxonici* project has not (yet) covered the sermon *Be þurhwununge* but it does mention Wulfstan's sermon. In addition, the *Fontes* record Felix's *Vita Guthlaci* as an Anglo-Saxon composition with two possible quotations from Defensor. Of course, one should ask whether the information in both Ogilvy and the *Fontes* (in the person of Rosalind Love) can stand a critical test.

I have just used the qualification of 'collector' for Defensor on purpose, for the problem with the *Liber scintillarum* is that its contents are obviously derivative. How is one to know whether a later author is quoting a Church Father, let alone the Scriptures, from this Merovingian *florilegium* or from another source, including the ultimate source to which everything goes back, also known in *Fontes* terminology as the 'antecedent source'? Hypothetically speaking, the answer can only be affirmative when a borrowing author complies with one or more of the following conditions: (1) he mentions the author's name, (2) he gives the title of his source, (3) he quotes a number of Fathers from the same *capitulum* in Defensor's work, preferably within a narrow confine of the later work, or (4) he displays in his quotation some kind of phrasing that is peculiar only to Defensor's text. With these four conditions in mind we can put earlier attributions of quotations to Defensor to the test.

I shall first to turn to Felix's *Vita Guthlaci* in which Defensor might have been quoted twice according to the *Fontes* project. These quotations are:

- a) Quanto enim in hoc saeculo frangeris, tanto in perpetuum solidaris; et quanto in praesenti adfligeris, tanto in futuro gaudebis. (For in so far as you are broken down in this world, you shall be made whole and firm in eternity; and to the degree that you are afflicted in this present life, so much shall you rejoice in the future) (Felix. VG, cap. xxx: 98,24-26).

¹³ «Liber qui dicitur scintillarum. Sunt autem in hoc libro diuersorum patrum sententie de diuersis collecte uoluminibus tam noui quam ueteris testamenti»: James: 50.

¹⁴ Ogilvy wrote the name of Defensor's monastery as «Linguge».

- b) [...] quando humanum consilium defecisset, divinum adesset (When the advice of men has failed, may divine advice be there) (Felix. *VG*, cap. xlix: 148,16-17).

Colgrave, in his annotated edition of Felix, remains silent on the possibly derivative nature of quotation (a).

According to *Fontes* (L.E.2.1.110.01) the source for the portion of Defensor quoted here is Isidore's *Synonyma* I.28 (PL 83: 834A-B). It does not seem possible to determine whether Felix actually drew upon Isidore directly rather than using Defensor's compilation. Nevertheless, the wording of the *Fontes* comment betrays a certain hesitance. Defensor quoted his source, with credits to Isidore, as follows: «Quantum enim in hoc saeculo frangimur, tantum in perpetuo solidamur. [-et] Quantum hic in praesenti affligimur, tantum in futuro gaudebimus» (*LS* L «De tribulatione», no. 29). The differences in grammatical person (2nd sg. versus 1st pl.) and case (acc. versus dat.) between Felix and Defensor would appear to be negligible and hence *Fontes* has qualified the source with an 'S1', which in *Fontes* terminology means 'certain source'. So much is certain indeed, that Isidore is the antecedent source, but whether in this case Defensor must be credited as Felix's direct source remains to be demonstrated.

Concerning the second attribution to Defensor in *Fontes* (L.E.2.1.066), no comment is provided and the certificate given is 'S2', meaning 'probable source' i.e. 'not certain source', again expressing some hesitance. However, this time Colgrave (192) has something to say in his commentary which seems to have been overlooked by the *Fontes* contributor. A similar phrase as (b) is also found in Gildas's *De excidio et conquestu Britanniae*, where Gildas acknowledges Philo as his source. Almost the same phrase is used much later by the Carolingian author Eginhard in one of his letters, and he too attributes it to Philo. Colgrave also points out that the origin can be found in Rufinus's translation of Eusebius's *Historia ecclesiastica* II.5.5. Defensor, not mentioned as a possible source by Colgrave, attributed the saying to Josephus, however, and presented it as follows: «Necesse adest divinum, ubi humanum cessat auxilium» (*LS* LXVII «De Dei auxilio», no. 14), for which Rochais in his Defensor edition also identified Rufinus as the original source. Comparison of Defensor's phrasing with that of Felix brings so many differences to light that even a qualification of 'S2' must be judged as unlikely here. The sum total, then, of our test is the following: we note that (1) Felix does not mention Defensor's name; (2) Felix does not give the title of the source; (3) Felix does not use the quotation together with a further selection from Defensor's *Liber* within a narrow confine of his text, because the other alleged quotation occurs only twenty-nine chapters later in his *Vita Guthlaci*; and (4) quotation (a)

ultimately derives from Isidore's *Synonyma* for whose popularity in early Anglo-Saxon England we have far more evidence than for Defensor¹⁵, while quotation (b) differs in its phrasing so much from the way that Defensor presents it that it needs an intellectual summersault to give credibility to the *Fontes* identification. The corollary of these four observations is that it seems extremely unlikely for Felix (fl. 713 x 749) to have consulted Defensor. I would strongly recommend these two attributions to be removed from the *Fontes* list.

Let us now move on to the anonymous sermon *Be þurhwununge* (On Perseverance). In 1909, Max Förster¹⁶, an early champion sourcer, claimed that this sermon was a translation/adaptation of chapter 22 «De perseverantia» in Defensor's *Liber*. However, Ker (no. 186.27) identified the immediate source of the anonymous sermon as chapter 26 «De perseverantia» from Alcuin's *De virtutibus et vitiis*, written not in England but on the continent around 800. The source for Alcuin's chapter had been identified as *LS LXXX* «De perseverantia» by the Defensor expert Henri Rochais who claimed to have found many more quotations from Defensor in the first part of Alcuin's treatise¹⁷. Indeed, Defensor had filled so many of his *capitula* with quotations from the Bible and the Fathers on vices and virtues, that it was quite natural for Dom Rochais to come to his conclusion. Luitpold Wallach, on the other hand, convincingly demonstrated with the help of ample textual evidence that Alcuin had found his quotations not in Defensor's anthology but directly in the Church Fathers' works themselves¹⁸. The similarity in interest in vices and virtues shared by Defensor and Alcuin had brought them to the same antecedent sources. Alcuin was as intimately at home in the Fathers as was Defensor. When it comes to the dissemination of patristic learning in England and on the continent, Alcuin's intermediary role was greater than that of Defensor's¹⁹. Both Alcuin's *De virtutibus et vitiis* and the Old English sermon *Be þurhwununge* that was translated from it should therefore be removed from the Anglo-Saxon texts for which Ogilvy had identified Defensor as a source.

On the other hand, Wulfstan's indebtedness to Defensor in his Homily XIII, also known as 'The Pastoral Letter', can be allowed to stay, albeit with some restrictions. The identification was made by Dorothy Bethurum on p. 339 in her edition of Wulfstan's homilies, and the ground for this identification

¹⁵ See, e.g., Di Sciacca 2007b.

¹⁶ Förster: 259-261.

¹⁷ Rochais 1951.

¹⁸ Wallach; cfr. Torkar: 9 and Szarmach: 30. Yet, Alcuin's chapter 26 displays a remarkable overlap with quotations also found in Defensor's chapter on perseverance.

¹⁹ Szarmach: 29.

ultimately derives from Isidore's *Synonyma* for whose popularity in early Anglo-Saxon England we have far more evidence than for Defensor¹⁵, while quotation (b) differs in its phrasing so much from the way that Defensor presents it that it needs an intellectual summersault to give credibility to the *Fontes* identification. The corollary of these four observations is that it seems extremely unlikely for Felix (fl. 713 x 749) to have consulted Defensor. I would strongly recommend these two attributions to be removed from the *Fontes* list.

Let us now move on to the anonymous sermon *Be þurhwununge* (On Perseverance). In 1909, Max Förster¹⁶, an early champion sourcer, claimed that this sermon was a translation/adaptation of chapter 22 «De perseverantia» in Defensor's *Liber*. However, Ker (no. 186.27) identified the immediate source of the anonymous sermon as chapter 26 «De perseverantia» from Alcuin's *De virtutibus et vitiis*, written not in England but on the continent around 800. The source for Alcuin's chapter had been identified as *LS LXXX* «De perseverantia» by the Defensor expert Henri Rochais who claimed to have found many more quotations from Defensor in the first part of Alcuin's treatise¹⁷. Indeed, Defensor had filled so many of his *capitula* with quotations from the Bible and the Fathers on vices and virtues, that it was quite natural for Dom Rochais to come to his conclusion. Luitpold Wallach, on the other hand, convincingly demonstrated with the help of ample textual evidence that Alcuin had found his quotations not in Defensor's anthology but directly in the Church Fathers' works themselves¹⁸. The similarity in interest in vices and virtues shared by Defensor and Alcuin had brought them to the same antecedent sources. Alcuin was as intimately at home in the Fathers as was Defensor. When it comes to the dissemination of patristic learning in England and on the continent, Alcuin's intermediary role was greater than that of Defensor's¹⁹. Both Alcuin's *De virtutibus et vitiis* and the Old English sermon *Be þurhwununge* that was translated from it should therefore be removed from the Anglo-Saxon texts for which Ogilvy had identified Defensor as a source.

On the other hand, Wulfstan's indebtedness to Defensor in his Homily XIII, also known as 'The Pastoral Letter', can be allowed to stay, albeit with some restrictions. The identification was made by Dorothy Bethurum on p. 339 in her edition of Wulfstan's homilies, and the ground for this identification

¹⁵ See, e.g., Di Sciacca 2007b.

¹⁶ Förster: 259-261.

¹⁷ Rochais 1951.

¹⁸ Wallach; cfr. Torkar: 9 and Szarmach: 30. Yet, Alcuin's chapter 26 displays a remarkable overlap with quotations also found in Defensor's chapter on perseverance.

¹⁹ Szarmach: 29.

rests precisely in CCCC 190. In addition to an extract from Defensor's *Liber*, this manuscript also contains an unpublished Latin homiletic text on «pp. 95-96» [*recte* pp. 94-96] which Bethurum: (340) calls «a passage on the subject [viz. of Wulfstan's homily] made up largely of sentences from Defensor's *Liber scintillarum*». The passage in Wulfstan's sermon, according to Bethurum, is a more generalized adaptation of the detailed phrasing offered by the Latin extract than a straightforward translation:

Of eorðan gewurdan ærest geworhte þa ðe we ealle of coman, 7 to eorðan we sculan ealle geweorðan 7 syððan habban swa ece wite a butan ende, swa ece blisse, swa hwæðer swa we on life ær geearnedon²⁰. Eala, lytel is se fyrst þyses lifes, 7 lyðre is, þæt we lufiað 7 on wuniað, 7 foroft hit wyrð raðost forloren þonne hit wære leofost gehealden (Homily XIII, lines 8-14. Ed. Bethurum: 225).

(Of dust were first made those that we all descent from, and to dust we shall all turn, and afterwards we shall have either such eternal punishment without end or such eternal glory, depending on what we had deserved in life. Lo, short is the period of this life, and it is wretched, and very often it is lost most quickly when it would be preserved most dearly.)

Compare the above vernacular passage with the untitled Latin text in CCCC 190 as given by Bethurum (*Homilies*: 340), but which I quote here in the better and more complete edition by Di Sciacca: 226, lines 17-21:

Breuis igitur est huius uite felicitas, modica est huius sæculi gloria; caduca est et fragilis temporalis potentia. [...] Hec namque corde tenus considerata sunt et tormenta gehenne semper cauenda; et satis feliciter uiuit uel regnat in terra, qui de terreno regno merebitur celeste.

For Homily XIII («Eala, lytel is [...]»), Wulfstan used only the sentence «Breuis igitur [...]», paraphrasing the passage beginning with «Hec [...]». The passage in its entirety can be traced to Defensor (*LS* LXXX.11), who in turn attributed it to Jerome. It therefore seems more likely to me that Wulfstan did not borrow the passage in Homily XIII directly from Defensor but rather from the anonymous Latin text in CCCC 190. But how are we to know whether this anonymous piece did not quote Jerome from another source than Defensor? In a detailed study and edition of a hitherto unpublished Latin sermon in

²⁰ This passage is also found in HomU 21, lines 12-16: «Ac soþ is, þæt ic secge: of eorþan gewurdan ærest geworhte þa, ðe we sylfe ealle of coman, and to eorþan we scylan ealle geweorþan and syþþan habban swa ece wite aa butan ende, swa ece blisse, swa hwæþer we on life æror geearnedon»: *Wulfstan. Sammlung der ihm zugeschriebenen Homilien...*: 5; cfr. Bethurum: 339.

CCCC 190, pp. 94-96, Claudia Di Sciacca (227-230 and 239) has demonstrated not only the homiletic nature of this anonymous piece but also isolated three further quotations in it from Defensor, also taken from chapter 80 «De breuitate huius uitae». So for this anonymous Latin homily, my condition (3) is certainly met with, i.e. quotations from the same *capitulum* are found within a narrow confine.

In conclusion, then, Defensor's *Liber scintillarum* was certainly one of the books known to the Anglo-Saxons. However, the primary and secondary manuscript evidence points to a late, eleventh-century introduction to England, most likely as a result of the Benedictine Renaissance. Previous attributions of acquaintance with Defensor, such as Felix and Alcuin and from Alcuin to the anonymous sermon *Be þurhwununge* must be rejected. Even the passage in Wulfstan's Homily XIII has turned out to be indirect. The 'Book of Sparks' was still illuminating many Anglo-Saxon readers and listeners more than three hundred years after its compilation. Despite the very nature of this derivative book, it even managed to spark off creative ideas. Somebody thought it worth the while to provide a continued gloss in the vernacular which was so impressively good that somebody else copied this gloss into a Latin text that was not designed for an interlinear gloss demonstrably in only one of them. However, the silent invitation to work creatively with the rubricated collection of sayings in *Liber scintillarum* was answered by only one person: the author, as yet anonymous, of the Latin *Ubi sunt* homily in CCCC 190²¹.

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²¹ I am grateful to Claudia Di Sciacca for sharing information and ideas on CCCC 190 with me and to Christine Rauer for her constructive comments on an earlier version of this essay.

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