

**“The True-Born Englishman” and the Irish Bull:
Daniel Defoe in the “Oxen of the Sun” Episode of *Ulysses***

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Abstract: This essay uses evidence from the notes that Joyce made in preparation to recapitulate the historical development of English prose style in the “Oxen of the Sun” chapter of *Ulysses* to identify the traces of Defoe’s works that appear in the text of the Gabler edition. It investigates how Joyce used strategies of (mis)quotation and syntactical imitation to synthesise Defoe’s individual style and mobilise his authorial imprint, both as a stage in the recapitulation of the evolution of English prose and as a means to enact revenge on the narrative heritage of English imperialism. In doing so, it offers a genetic reinterpretation of Defoe’s presence in “Oxen” by the light of “Realism and Idealism in English Literature (Daniel Defoe–William Blake)”, Joyce’s notes for a series of lectures at the Università Popolare, Trieste (1912).

Keywords: James Joyce, Daniel Defoe, Robinson Crusoe, Genetic Criticism, *Ulysses*, Oxen of the Sun, notesheets, quotations, intertextuality

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In the “Oxen of the Sun” episode of *Ulysses* Joyce stages a high-spirited historical pageant of English prose style through the ages, synthesising the voices of celebrated male writers to produce the impression that the narrative is recounted from successive period points of view. The performance of English prose style reaches back as far as its origins in Latin and Anglo Saxon, surging forward all the way to the late nineteenth century, only to be followed by an eruption of male oral culture and the drunken vernacular of Dublin circa 1904. Joyce explained how he envisaged this stylistic evolution would unfold in a frequently quoted letter of March 1920, addressed to Frank Budgen:

Am working hard at *Oxen of the Sun*, the idea being the crime committed against fecundity by sterilizing the act of coition. Scene, lying-in hospital. Technique: a nineparted episode without divisions introduced by a Sallustian-Tacitean prelude (the unfertilized ovum), then by way of earliest English

alliterative and monosyllabic and Anglo-Saxon [...] then by way of Mandeville, then Malory's *Morte d'Arthur* [...] then the Elizabethan chronicle style [...] then a passage solemn, as of Milton, Taylor, Hooker, followed by a choppy Latin-gossipy bit, style of Burton-Browne, then a passage Bunyanesque [...] after a diarystyle bit Pepys-Evelyn [...] and so on through Defoe-Swift and Steele-Addison-Sterne and Landor-Pater-Newman until it ends in a frightful jumble of Pidgin English, nigger English, Cockney, Irish, Bowery slang and broken doggerel. This progression is also linked back at each part subtly with some foregoing episode of the day and, besides this, with the natural stages of development in the embryo and the periods of faunal evolution in general [...] Bloom is the spermatozoon, the hospital the womb, the nurse the ovum, Stephen the embryo.

How's that for high?

Notably, this giddy exposition of the guiding technique and theme was written at an early stage in the episode's genesis, several months before the first part of "Oxen" was ready to be published in the September–December 1920 issue of the *Little Review*. Earlier critics worked assiduously and ingeniously to interpret the episode in accordance with this germinal outline, failing to appreciate that it was an exuberant statement of work in progress.

In 1921 Joyce prepared a revised schema for *Ulysses*, designating the 'technic' of "Oxen" to be "embryonic development". This conceit accords well with the elaborate gestational parallels set out in the letter to Budgen, linking the stylistic evolution to the episode's ostensible subject (Mina Purefoy's labour and the meeting of the "embryo philosopher" (*U* 14.1295) Stephen with the fatherly Bloom). The correspondence between the "natural stages of development in the embryo and the periods of faunal evolution in general" has a basis in the cutting-edge scientific thinking of the day. Following Charles Darwin's theory of evolution in *On the Origin of Species* (1859), the German freethinker Ernst Haeckel formulated the now discredited biogenetic law that ontogeny (the embryological development of the individual organism) recapitulates phylogeny (the evolutionary history of the species), a theory that was also applied to the origin and development of human language. Applying this biogenetic law to "Oxen", the notion that the individual's development from embryo to adult passes through successive stages in the evolutionary development of the species strongly implies that Joyce achieves a mature style representative of a new stage in the evolutionary process by recapitulating the styles of the past. This reading accords well with the biological metaphors for literary lineage that Stephen develops as he articulates his theory of *Hamlet* in "Scylla and Charybdis", whereby artistic paternity is modelled as "a mystical estate, and apostolic succession" (*U* 9.837-8) in which the mantle passes from father to son, who becomes "himself his own father" (*U* 9.875) on reaching artistic maturity.

Among the "apostolic succession" of English writers paraded in the famous letter to Budgen, the English journalist, pamphleteer and novelist Daniel Defoe (1661-

1731) stands out as an author who was of paramount interest to Joyce. As Budgen later recorded:

Joyce was a great admirer of Defoe. He possessed his complete works, and had read every line of them. Of only three other writers, he said, could he make this claim: Flaubert, Ben Jonson and Ibsen. *Robinson Crusoe* he called the English *Ulysses*.

Defoe's celebrated account of Robinson Crusoe's adventures when shipwrecked on a lonely island belongs to the same maritime tradition as Odysseus's epic periplus around the Aegean, but replaces Homer's marvellous allegories for the real dangers that travellers might encounter on ancient trade routes with supposedly factual reportage.

Joyce wrote extensively on Defoe in his notes for "Verismo ed idealismo nella letteratura inglese (Daniele De Foe e William Blake)", a short lecture series he delivered at the Università Popolare, Trieste (1912), now better known as "Realism and Idealism in English Literature (Daniel Defoe–William Blake)".

The first English writer to write without copying or adapting foreign works, to create without literary models, to instil a truly national spirit into the creations of his pen, and to manufacture an artistic form for himself that is perhaps without precedent (...) is Daniel Defoe, the father of the English novel.

That new "artistic form" was realism. Pedants decried "the small mistakes which the great precursor of the Realist movement had run into"; the biscuits stowed in pockets after Crusoe had undressed; the written agreement he produced without ink or quill. Joyce acknowledged that the mistakes are there, but insisted that "the wide river of the new realism sweeps them majestically away like bushes and rushes uprooted by the flood". As a writer, Joyce swims in Defoe's wide wake, imagining a credible, if not actual, Dublin through an accumulation of verifiable or at least plausible detail.

Defoe's nascent realism extends to the distinctively English mindset of his characters. The instinct for "immense world conquest" is already latent in Crusoe's actions to colonise the island and enslave Friday. For Joyce, *Robinson Crusoe* "reveals, perhaps a no other book in all English literature does, the cautious and heroic instinct of the rational being and the prophecy of the empire". Joyce's genuine admiration for Defoe as a proto-realist and thus "father of the English novel" is tempered by his vitriolic account of the pre-colonial politics that underlie the Englishman's pioneering techniques.

This essay explores Defoe's presence in "Oxen of the Sun" in his symbolic capacity as the progenitor of the English novel and literary realism by the light of Joyce's draft lecture on Defoe. In doing so, it responds to "Oxen"'s thematic invitation to trace developments back to their origins by exploring the episode's genesis, but does so in the knowledge that this invitation is double-edged. Evolution is, after all, a process that advances by unexpected turns. Building on previous studies of "Oxen"

and its avant-texte, the essay uses genetic evidence from Joyce's preparatory notes to identify the traces of Defoe's works that appear in *Ulysses*. It reflects on the notesheets as working documents, investigating how Joyce uses strategies of (mis)quotation and syntactical imitation to synthesise Defoe's individual style and mobilise his authorial imprint, both as a stage in his recapitulation of the historical development of English prose and as a means to enact revenge on the narrative heritage of English imperialism.

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In 1938, Paul Léon sent a set of twenty-nine holograph sheets containing Joyce's preparatory notes for the last seven episodes of *Ulysses* to Harriet Shaw Weaver, who later presented them to the British Museum (now the British Library). The sheets were transcribed from microfilm by Phillip F. Herring in *James Joyce's "Ulysses" Notesheets in the British Museum* (1972). The difficulties that he encountered were legion. At the time, he observed that "The handwriting is extremely difficult, and some of the entries are completely illegible". He later produced a short list of light corrections and additions in an Appendix to *Joyce's Notes and Early Drafts for "Ulysses": Selections from the Buffalo Collection* (1977). Colour facsimiles of the notesheets later appeared in volume IX of the *James Joyce Archive* (1978), presented in a different order to Herring.

The spatial arrangement of the individual entries on the five folded, double-sided sheets of notes for "Oxen" is complex. One of the notesheets contains nine concentric ovoid rings representing the stages of "embryological development" in the nine months of human gestation, surrounded by fragmentary notes in Joyce's hand (*JJA* XII, 23). The remaining nineteen contain further fragmentary notes, which are typically organised into one or more central columns, inscribed at an angle, with each successive line entered a fraction further to the right and further sets of marginal notes orientated to make best use of the remaining space. The majority of the notes are struck through by Joyce in red, and occasionally in blue or more rarely in green, partially obscuring the text beneath. Of the 3,000 or so fragmentary entries on the "Oxen" notesheets, approximately 2,000 contain fragmented examples of distinctive period diction and collocations. The remainder pertain to embryology, the stages of human gestation and references to other episodes. This essay adopts Herring's system for numbering notesheets and individual entries for ease of reference. However, it works primarily with the facsimiles, as the spatial arrangement of the notesheets is crucial for understanding how Joyce assembled these working documents, his note-taking practices, and the use he made of the sources that he consulted.

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Robert Janusko was the first scholar to discover that it is possible to pinpoint Joyce's sources for many of the clusters of period words and phrases that he entered on to

the “Oxen” notesheets. Joyce was attracted to linguistic and grammatical curiosities that were somehow redolent of a particular phase in the evolution of language or the individuating manner of a particular author. Because he raided his raw materials systematically, listing distinctive words and collocations for the most part sequentially, the entries contain snippets of a genetic code that is unique to a particular literary text. In the main, it was Joyce’s practice to strike through entries as they were transferred to another note repository or incorporated into his work in progress. Moving in the other direction, identifying where and how around 1,100 of the literary notesheet entries appear in the text of “Oxen” gives an extraordinarily detailed picture of the intertextual tapestry that Joyce weaves in order to synthesise the evolution of English style.

Around 1,100 of the literary notesheet entries have been sourced to date, mainly to the editions and anthologies that Joyce left behind him in Trieste when he moved to Paris in July 1920 (by which time “Oxen” had been through at least two full drafts and Joyce was at work on the typescripts for the episode). Identifying the provenance of as many of the remaining literary entries as is possible was a primary aim of “Intertextual Joyce”, a project supported by funding from the British Academy. It began life as a solo venture, but gathered momentum when Chrissie Van Mierlo joined as a Research Assistant in the summer of 2013, with the remit of preparing new semi-diplomatic spatial transcriptions of understudied “Oxen” notesheets for us to source and annotate. The project has uncovered numerous new sources for “Oxen”, including: linguistic reference works such as Heinrich Baumann, *Londinismen, Slang und Cant* (c. 1902); primary texts such as Thomas Burke, *Limehouse Nights: Tales of Chinatown* (1917); and anthologies such as A.T. Martin, *Selections from Malory Malory's Le Morte d'Arthur edited, with introduction, notes, and glossary* (1896), which Chrissie Van Mierlo discusses in her contribution to this collection.

Among the c. 2,000 stylistic entries on the “Oxen” notesheets drawn from esoteric sources, we have identified that over ninety derive from the works of Daniel Defoe, a circumstance that confirms that Joyce intended Defoe to have a significant presence in the episode at an early stage in the writing process. These notesheet entries are tabulated in the Appendix, where the distribution of Defoean words and phrasings in relevant lines of the Gabler edition is set out alongside the notesheet entries and their sources.

In *The Sources and Structures of James Joyce's “Oxen”* (1983), Janusko identified Defoe’s *The History and Remarkable Life of the Truly Honourable Col. Jacque, Commonly Call'd Col. Jack* to be a prime source for the chapter, having discovered forty-eight notesheet entries “taken, a word, a phrase, even a sentence at a time, from all through the book”. Of these entries, thirty-two make it into the final text of “Oxen”, very often in a revised form. Janusko likens Defoe’s Colonel Jack to Joyce’s Lenehan. Jack confesses:

I had a natural Talent of Talking, and could say as much to the Purpose as most People that had been taught no more than I I many times brought myself off with my Tongue, where my Hands would not have been sufficient.

Lenehan is likewise never at a loss for a wisecrack. He is described as a man whom:

if he had but gotten himself in a mess of broken victuals or a platter of tripes with a bare tester in his purse he could always bring himself off with his tongue, some randy quip he had from a punk or whatnot that every mother's son of them would burst their sides. (*U* 14.541-4)

In this instance, the quotation has been shifted into the past tense and the second person, but is otherwise sufficiently long and distinctive to echo clearly.

Janusko also lists a series of five brief entries from an editorially-titled excerpt from Defoe's *A Journal of the Plague Year*, "The Plague: Predictions and Visions", in William Peacock's anthology *English Prose from Mandeville to Ruskin* (first published 1903, Joyce's copy in his Trieste Library, 1912), and a further nine entries from "A Quack Doctor", a character sketch of an unscrupulous medic whose remedies frequently proved to be fatal, also collected in Peacock. Because the densest concentration of the Defoean diction then known appeared in the description of Lenehan and Costello, from "With this came up Lenehan" to "he sent the ale purling about, an Irish bull in an English chinashop" (*U* 14.529-81), Janusko proposed that this paragraph was in the style of Defoe. On the basis of the 800 entries then sourced, Janusko prepared "A Working Outline of the 'Oxen of the Sun'", along the lines of the schema that Joyce set out in the letter to Budgen, in which Joyce's impersonation of Defoe comes after "a diarystyle bit Pepys-Evelyn" and ultimately segues into Swiftian prose.

Annotators of *Ulysses* typically follow the structure that Janusko set out in 1983 when ascribing presiding stylists to passages of "Oxen", despite certain anomalies Janusko noticed and also J.S. Atherton's suggestion that Joyce's imitation of Daniel Defoe's style was already underway before Lenehan stands up. In 1990, Janusko discovered another set of Defoe-derived notesheet entries, taken from another prose anthology in Joyce's Trieste library – Annie Barnett and Lucy Dale, *An Anthology of English Prose (1332-1740)* (1912) – and listed the sources without further comment on how they might unsettle previous accounts of the episode's intertextual structure. Barnett and Dale select an episode from *Adventures of Robinson Crusoe*, where Crusoe describes how in his eleventh year as a castaway he set up a smallholding to farm goats for meat, to which they give the title "Robinson Crusoe's Animals", and some reflections on "The Education of Women", drawn from *An Essay on Projects*, where he explains why denying "the advantages of learning to women" is "one of the most barbarous customs in the world". Gregory M. Downing began the colossal task of checking, collating and adding to previous genetic scholarship on the episode in 2002, but only completed this work for notesheet 1 and lines 1-52 of notesheet 2, on which the largest part of the Defoean diction appears.

More recent "Sherlockholmesing" (*U* 17.831) on the "Oxen" notesheets has revealed that Joyce only creates the semblance of period points of view. His practice

was to weave diverse snippets of diction into convincing, and compelling, imitations that feel redolent of particular periods or authors, but which were in fact taken from many diverse sources. In the course of working on “Intertextual Joyce”, I have found a further set of entries from *Moll Flanders* in the left and right hand margins of notesheet 6, a sheet which has been otherwise been overlooked by hunters of literary sources, as the central column contains notes on embryology and Homeric myth, as well as assorted memoranda concerning characters and plot (*JJA XII*, 28).

Joyce left three volumes of the Bohn’s British Classics seven-volume series *The Novels and Miscellaneous Works of Daniel de Foe* behind him in Trieste, and so presumably had these to hand when he was drafting “Oxen”. Budgen’s testimony suggests that Joyce was once in possession of the complete set, which is why I have sourced the entries on notesheet 6 to a companion volume in Bohn’s series: Daniel Defoe, *Works, III, Moll Flanders and History of the Devil* (1889). In the following list, notesheet and line numbers correspond to those given by Herring. Where words and phrases from or derived from *Moll Flanders* are incorporated in the final text of “Oxen”, either in the sense in which Defoe used them, or where the syntax has been preserved, the episode and line number of *Ulysses* is supplied.

A New Sequence of Words and Phrases from *Moll Flanders* on “Oxen of the Sun” Notesheet 6

N 6.7 ~~quick with child~~

“However it was, they all agree in this, that my mother pleaded her belly, and being found quick with child, she was respited for about seven months”, *Moll Flanders*, p. 2.

Cf. “for there was above one quick with child”, *U* 14.168-9.

N 6.9 to learn her

“they were as heartily willing to learn me everything that they had been taught themselves”, *Moll Flanders*, p. 10.

Cf. “to learn his letters”, *U* 14.555.

N 6.11 ~~Woman looks at mind after adieu~~

In the absence of any clear candidate for a source, this entry may have been inspired by Moll’s response to receiving a letter from her husband ending “adieu, my dear, forever! – I am yours affectionately, J.E.” : “I sat me down and looked upon these things two hours together, and scarce spoke a word”, *Moll Flanders*, p. 122.

N 6.18 ~~the word x was a language~~

“The word Miss was a language that had hardly been heard of in our school”, *Moll Flanders*, p. 6.

N 6.21 ~~drove her trade~~

“I found that she drove something of the old trade still”, *Moll Flanders*, p. 159. Similar phrasing appears on p. 136 (“and yet it was a wicked trade she drove too”), but because the next entry can be traced securely to p. 159, the first sentence is the most likely source.

Cf. “a worthy salesmaster that drove his trade for live stock”, *U* 14.571.

N 6.22-23 ~~more money than forecast~~

“some thoughtless lady, that had more money than forecast”, *Moll Flanders*, p. 159.

N 6.24-26 ~~lay together went for her husband~~

“but my governess, who was not willing to lose me, and expected great things of me, brought me one day into company with a young woman and a fellow that went for her husband, though as it appeared afterwards she was not his wife, but they were partners in the trade they carried on ; and in something else too. In short, they robbed together, lay together, were taken together, and at last were hanged together”, *Moll Flanders*, p. 169.

Cf “as we reclined together”, *U* 14.1154.

N 6.27 ~~gust to it~~

“I had no gust to the laying it down”, *Moll Flanders*, p. 168.

N 6.53 ~~a little moved but very handsomely~~

“The constable told him, a little moved, but very handsomely, I know my duty, and what I am, sir”, *Moll Flanders*, p. 198.

Cf. “Stephen, a little moved but very handsomely”, *U* 14.574.

N 6.54 ~~carry her~~

“I must carry her before a justice now, whether you think well of it or not [...] When the mercer saw that, Well, says he to the constable, you may carry her where you please”, *Moll Flanders*, p. 200.

N 6.54 ~~about her lawful occasions~~

“you have broken the peace in bringing an honest woman out of the street, when she was about her lawful occasions, confining her in your shop, and ill using her here by your servants”, *Moll Flanders*, p. 200.

Cf. “when she was about her lawful occasions”, *U* 14.875.

N 96-97 ~~which he had eyed in the daytime and found the place where by laid them~~

“One time they particularly proposed robbing a watchmaker of three gold watches, which they had eyed in the daytime, and found the place where he laid them”, *Moll Flanders*, p. 169.

Cf. “which he had eyed wishly in the meantime and found the place which was indeed the chief design of his embassy”, *U* 14.549-51.

N 6.99 ~~nauseate the man~~

“and then to observe the poor creature preaching confession and repentance to me in the morning, and find him drunk with brandy by noon, this had something in it so shocking, that I began to nauseate the man”, *Moll Flanders*, p. 228.

Cf. “for he nauseated the wretch”, *U* 14.854

N 6.101 ~~took on so~~

“But she cried and took on, like a distracted body, wringing her hands, and crying out that she was undone, that she believed there was a curse from heaven upon her, that she should be damned”, *Moll Flanders*, p. 233.

N 6.102 ~~impudent mocks~~

“the maids made their impudent mocks upon that”, *Moll Flanders*, p. 234.

Cf. “some impudent mocks”, *U* 14.846.

Notes *N* 6.7-27 appear in the bottom left margin of notesheet 6. Notes *N* 6.96-102 appear in the top right margin. Herring’s linear transcription places *N* 6.53-54 in the list of entries he designates ‘left column horizontal’, when in fact they are positioned to the right of these entries, between *N* 6.96-7 and *N* 6.99. With the exception of “stap my vitals” (an exclamation first made famous by Vanbrugh’s *The Relapse* as Lord Foppington’s catchphrase that Joyce could also have encountered in Defoe’s “A Foppish Letter”), the few remaining candidates for items of period diction on notesheet 6 remain unsourced.

The spatial arrangement of the text of notesheet 6 indicates that Joyce began by entering notes in an oblique central column and then inserted fragments from *Moll Flanders* in the right and left margins, alongside further notes to do with embryology, maternity, character development and plot exposition. In this instance, Joyce was clearly working from an edition of *Moll Flanders* rather than an excerpt in an anthology, as he took notes from pp. 2-234, and entered choice fragments in roughly the order that he encountered them in the text. (Neither *Moll Flanders* nor *Colonel Jack* are sampled in Barnett and Dale or Peacock.) As one might expect, given the subject of *Moll Flanders*, many of the entries concern criminal or scurrilous behaviour, but there is otherwise no clear logic that guides Joyce’s selections. It can only be assumed that the snippets of text caught his eye for their distinctively Defoean diction or syntax. Just one entry, “quick with child” (*N* 6.7), relates to the theme of human gestation. Interestingly, “pleaded her belly”, another fragment that happens to be in the same sentence in *Moll Flanders*, appears in isolation on line 18 of notesheet 1, surrounded by a string of jottings from *Colonel Jack*. Pleading pregnancy to evade execution is a prominent plot device in *Moll Flanders* and fits well with the theme of crimes against fertility that Joyce announced in his letter to Budgen. If the phrase indeed derives from Defoe, its presence on notesheet 1 indicates that while Joyce was in the habit of canvassing his sources in near

sequence, now and then phrases such as “pleaded her belly” sprung into his mind and were entered there and then, wherever he found space.

Combining the notes derived from *Moll Flanders* with other entries previously identified to originate in Defoe’s works and locating where they have shaped the final text of “Oxen” makes it possible to apprehend Joyce’s borrowings in granular detail, shedding light on aspects of Joyce’s writing practices, his attitudes to source material, quotation, imitation and individuating style. Fragmentary lines from Defoe’s works also appear in cramped clusters in the margins and columns of notesheets 1 and 2 (*JJA*, XII, 24; 28). Notesheet 1 features words and phrases from works by Defoe and Swift, arranged around the nine concentric rings. The sixth ring is distinguished by a star at its apex, and it is possible that this served as a marker that reminded Joyce where Defoe-Swift were to fit in his guiding embryological design for the chapter. Notesheet 2 contains fragments from: *Colonel Jack*; the excerpts of works by late seventeenth- and early eighteenth-century authors which appear Peacock; and *Morte d’Arthur* (c. 1469-70), by Thomas Malory (d. 1471), and *Pilgrim’s Progress* (1678) by John Bunyan (1628-88). On notesheet 17, a further isolated snippet, “for he swore a round hand” (*N* 17.11), appears verbatim in *Mrs. Christian Davies*, but in the absence of any supporting evidence, it may well have been drawn from elsewhere. The single, unstruck word “Crusoe” (*N* 9.62) also appears in isolation notesheet 9, amid a sequence of Latinate notes that have so far resisted our best attempts to discover their source. Many of these surrounding notes were incorporated into the opening paragraphs of “Oxen” (the section that Joyce called the “Sallustian-Tacitean prelude” in his correspondence with Budgen (*U* 14.7-70)), and so it is tempting to speculate that “Crusoe” functioned as a memorandum underscoring the significance of the progenitor of the English novel to a narrative that seeks to take account of beginnings, while simultaneously situating the coloniser’s language within a wider European tradition.

On the whole, Joyce’s jottings from Defoe’s works are brief and in many cases surprisingly bland. They are very often recast in modern spelling in the third-person past tense, and they largely consist of now obsolete collocations such as “pushing at getting of money” (*N* 1.35), enlivened now and then by snatches of colourful period vocabulary and slang that Joyce deemed somehow characteristic of Defoe’s idiolect, for instance “merryandrew” (*N* 1.11), “honest pickle” (*N* 1.12) and “crimp” (*N* 1.41). Only eight of the notesheet entries derived from Defoe exceed five words. Where trifling collocations such as “everyone their” (*N* 1.08) are concerned, it seems unlikely that Joyce had transcribed enough to remind him where and how precisely they fitted into Defoe’s works, even though his powers of memory were prodigious. Of the entries that are incorporated into “Oxen”, many are tweaked further still, so as to fit their new context. It is not uncommon for Joyce to incorporate adjacent notesheet entries in clusters (see for instance *U* 14.534), but there is no consistent pattern to the way in which these echoes of Defoe have been woven into the narrative. Many of the entries that do make their way into the final text untweaked are so slight and indistinct that without evidence from the notesheets their provenance would be unknowable, which casts doubt on their capacity to

function allusively as quotations with recoverable referents. It is rare that the scattering of Defoean words and phrasings are sufficiently resonant to conjure any specific work. The description of Lenehan's loquacity is an exception, but to catch this demands an exceptional knowledge of *Colonel Jack*. The one fragmentary entry from Defoe which would be of concrete help to readers looking to identify Joyce's literary sources is "Cap. Jack was the same man" (N 2.16), which does not make it into the final text. Joyce evidently wanted Budgen (and others) to appreciate his stylistic *tour de force* and ponder the identities of particular authors and styles, but did not wish to give the game away too easily by naming his sources. Taken in isolation, the majority of Joyce's fragmentary notes enter the text as mere intertextual traces from which their original subject, import and context has been effaced.

The intertextual traces of Defoe's work that appear in "Oxen" can be distinguished from direct allusions where the referent is perfectly clear. In the "Hades" and "Lestrygonians" episodes of *Ulysses*, readers are presented with Bloom's untutored reflections on the realism of *Robinson Crusoe*, his behaviour and diet:

Say Robinson Crusoe was true to life. Well then Friday buried him.
Every Friday buries a Thursday if you come to look at it.

O, poor Robinson Crusoe!
How could you possibly do so? (U 6.810-814)

Wonder what kind is swanmeat. Robinson Crusoe had to live on them.
(U 8. 81-82)

Later in "Circe", the Irish and English incarnations of *Ulysses* are aligned. Bloom "contracts his face so as to resemble many historical personages" (U 15.1845) including "Robinson Crusoe" (U 15.1848), who shares his quasi-scientific cast of mind. The strength of the connection between Bloom and Defoe's fiction is such that he has even tried to interest Molly in *Moll Flanders*, to no avail, as readers discover in "Penelope", where she muses: "I don't like books with a Molly in them like that one he brought me about the one from Flanders a whore always shoplifting anything she could and stuff and yards of it" (U 18.657-659). Again, the association is clear: Joyce's frank presentation of Molly is placed firmly in the Defoean tradition, which he defines in "Realism and Idealism in English Literature" when he praises the author of "the unforgettable harlot Moll Flanders" for having "created women with such a cynical, crass and indecent realism" that his "female characters that reduce present-day critics to stupefied speechlessness".

The distribution of words and phrases in the final text of "Oxen" that can be securely traced back to Defoe using evidence from the notesheets indicates that Joyce wished to produce a fragment narrative that is recognisably Defoean, while also diffusing intertextual traces of his work across passages which are primarily

redolent of other authors or periods. Just thirty-eight of the ninety or so Defoean notesheet entries have been embedded in the lines typically designated to be in the style of Defoe (*U* 14.529-581). Ten fragments appear before, the first being “quick with child” (*N* 6.07), which is transplanted verbatim into *U* 14.169 in a passage typically said to be in the style of Sir Thomas Malory (d.1471). Since “quick with child” appears struck through in a notesheet containing no Middle English, it is almost certain that this anachronism was deliberate. Though the phrase was drawn from Defoe, it is not out of place in a passage that emulates fifteenth-century prose. Fourteen fragments appear after the Defoe pastiche is typically presumed to have slid into a supposed imitation of his contemporary Swift, the last being an echo of *Moll Flanders* at *U* 14.1154. That critics have been content to ascribe lines *U* 14.529-71 to the style of Defoe shows just how much of the affect of Joyce’s pastiche derives from the scrupulous attention he pays to syntax, rather than simply his use of historically appropriate vocabulary. As Chrissie Van Mierlo notes in her discussion of A. T. Martin’s *Selections from Malory’s “Le Morte d’Arthur”*, the need to acquire a deep understanding of the formal patternings of period prose explains why Joyce canvassed studies in which primary texts are introduced, glossed and analysed from a historical-linguistic perspective in terms of their place in the evolution of English grammar and syntax. Roughly a third of the Defoean notes Joyce made fell by the wayside. The distribution of Defoean echoes in the final text is consistent with Joyce’s practice with the other authors whose works he raided.

Broadly speaking, Joyce’s attitude to his raw materials verges on ambivalence. Not only are his extant notes from individual authors fragmentary, but they are drawn from a range of works, including anthologised excerpts, which he consulted in preference to longer texts. Typically, words and phrases originating in the works of major authors are distributed haphazardly across one or more notesheets (three, or possibly four, in the case of Defoe); circumstances which do not favour the construction of the pedantically correct historical pageant Joyce advertised to Budgen. It would seem, then, that even at a very early stage in the writing process, Joyce’s note-taking practices were already moving the episode away from an author-by-author recapitulation towards something less prescriptive.

The way that Joyce harvested interesting diction and collocations from Defoe, an author in whom he had a developed and longstanding interest, and who assumed a particular significance in his larger thematic design, is indicative of a wider indifference to the specific provenance of literary notes for “Oxen”. Joyce was not especially concerned that his gleanings should appear in the dedicated imitation if he found that they could be usefully deployed elsewhere. Although he did take care to concentrate resonant words and phrasings in passages that would be redolent of a particular author or style, it is clear that he also deliberately dispersed fragments more widely in local but systemic contradiction of the design he articulated in the letter to Budgen. As the blanks in the text presented in the Appendix show, even the passages with the highest concentration of Defoean diction contain many other words as well: some can be traced to other authors via evidence from the notesheets, but the majority have no verifiable source.

The final destinations of the Defoean words and phrasings (and those of other authors too) are illustrative of a double strategy that creates an impossible dialectic. Quotations and echoes are mobilised both to fortify impersonations and to undermine the very notion of personal style by asserting that style is as an accessory that can be readily borrowed and put to new use. Successive passages present a new stage in the “apostolic succession”, but that succession is mocked by persistent localised interference in the fine execution of the developmental conceit on which the episode rests. “Oxen” wilfully perverts Haeckel’s law. It takes for granted that the achievements of great male writers are imprinted on the genetic code that makes up literature in English. But far from passing through successive stages in the evolutionary development of the species as it matured, even at the note-taking stage in its genesis “Oxen” has evolved beyond recapitulation towards recombination, freely reworking the evolutionary stages through which English prose has passed, refusing to capitulate to the nightmare that is history or the notion of apostolic succession. It is testament to Joyce’s supreme talent as a mimic, and his exceptional ear for the distinctive cadences of celebrated stylists, that for all its granular anachronisms and miscellaneous micro-quotations and echoes, “Oxen” nonetheless imparts the unshakeable impression that it mimes the historical progression of English prose style and that amid this performance the voices of great English authors can be heard.

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The impression that “Oxen” presents an author-by-author development accords well with the aims of early twentieth-century anthologists such as Martin, Peacock, and Barnett and Dale. The Preface to Barnett and Dale informs readers that the excerpts are intended “to be a companion to histories of literature” while Peacock states that “The object of the present volume of selections is to illustrate the development of English prose”. It seems that the anthologies were simply the most expedient way to access representative passages of prose: the task of selection had already been done for Joyce. There is no evidence that the representative passages that Joyce sampled inspired him to consult full-text editions of the selections he encountered in anthologies, even when he had the books to hand. Notes from *A Journal of the Plague Year*, “A Quack Doctor”, *Adventures of Robinson Crusoe* or *An Essay on Projects* restricted to anthologised passages, as are the long strings of notes drawn from the works of other authors whom Joyce encountered via Peacock, Barnett and Dale, et al. The many anthologies that Joyce consulted did not function as gateways to a more expansive appreciation of individual works. Joyce’s note-taking habits strongly suggest that he was finally less interested in an author’s works in their specificity than contemporary anthologists’ and literary historian’s sense of authors’ position in the early twentieth-century narratives of the development of English prose. This reading is consistent with the fact that Joyce made efforts to range over Defoe’s wider oeuvre, once he had exhausted the excerpts in Peacock and Barnett

and Dale, consulting the majority of the works that he mentioned in “Realism and Idealism”.

The succession of English prose stylists is mapped out in the contents pages of the anthologies Joyce consulted. In Peacock, for instance, Defoe follows Pepys and precedes Swift:

SAMUEL PEPYS. 1633-1700.

The Great Plague	122
The Great Fire	124

DANIEL DEFOE. 1661-1731.

The Plague: Predictions and Visions	129
A Quack Doctor	132

JONATHAN SWIFT. 1667-1745.

The Struldbrugs or Immortals	137
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Conventional readings of “Oxen” discern the same line of succession at work, asserting that the lines preceding the passage in imitation of Defoe are in the style of late-seventeenth-century diarists, especially Pepys (*U* 14.474-528) and that the following section from “An Irish Bull” is in the style of Swift (*U* 14.581-650). While these pastiches cannot be said to be pure Pepys or Defoe or Swift, there are passages that are recognisably in the style of the authors named, thanks to Joyce’s inventive use of period diction and syntax, and their broader theme or content, with the proviso that the characters described and the preoccupations they have are Joyce’s own.

In the passage of “Oxen” that contains the densest concentration of Defoe-derived words, Joyce is not invoking specific works by Defoe in their singularity, but Defoe the author as a historical construction, not only the authorial personality manifest in the style and manner of his works, but also the position he has been accorded in literary history and the annals of English prose. This circumstance may explain the emphasis that Joyce places on the surnames in the letter to Budgen. The sheer number of Defoean notes that Joyce took, combined with the deliberate attempt to evoke Defoe’s style in his prose pageant (albeit by mixing and blending fragments from Defoe and other writers), requires a broader interpretative response to Defoe’s presence in “Oxen”. The concluding section of the essay attempts to apply insights from the genetic recovery work undertaken to determine how Joyce invokes Defoe’s authorial persona to make wider arguments about his position in the English canon and Joyce’s own relation to English literary heritage.

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The passage of “Oxen” that is richest with Defoean words and collocations (and also most redolent of Defoe) describes Lenehan, who is “[m]ean in fortunes”

and in the habit of frequenting the modern-day equivalent of “coffeehouses and low taverns” (U 14.535, U 14.536). Among the “crimps, ostlers, bookies, Paul’s men, runners, flatcaps, waistcoateers, ladies of the bagnio and other rogues of the game” whom Lenehan consorts with is Corley, who has a side-line as a police informer, passing “loose gossip” to “chanceable catchpoles” (U 14.537-9, U 14.540, U 14.538). Frank Costello, the other reveller described in this passage, is another “donought” (U 14.554), “more familiar with the justiciary and the parish beadle” than with his schoolbooks (U 14.558):

One time he would be a playactor, then a sutler or a welsher, then nought would keep him from the bearpit or the cocking main, then he was for the ocean sea or to hoof it on the roads with the romany folk, kidnapping a squire’s heir by favour of moonlight or fecking maid’s linen or chocking chicken behind a hedge. (U 14. 559-63)

It is thematically appropriate that these two ne’er-do-wells should be introduced in a high-spirited imitation of Defoe’s prose style, as it was Defoe whom Joyce admiringly credited with introducing “the lowest dregs of the populace into European literature: the foundling, the pick-pocket, the crooked dealer, the prostitute, the hag, the robber, the shipwrecked” in “Realism and Idealism”.

Lenehan announces that the letter regarding foot-and-mouth disease in Irish cattle which Mr Deasy asked Stephen to place in the *Evening Telegraph* has appeared. Costello refers to the outbreak as the “plague” (U 14.547). This word does not appear on the notesheets, but in the context it recalls Defoe’s *A Journal of the Plague Year*. Bloom is shocked by the prospect of a foot-and-mouth epidemic and suggests that it may just be “the hoose or the timber tongue” (U 14.573). The ‘hoose’ is a bronchial disease (the first attested use of the term is 1722), and ‘timber tongue’ is a bacterial disease which hardens the tongue. Both maladies are discussed in “Cyclops” (U 12.834, U 12.834-35). The terms are still current today, but are not out of place in the Defoe pastiche. Stephen insists it is foot-and-mouth and explains that Doctor Rinderpest has been sent for. (‘Rinderpest’ is cattle disease in German.) The Doctor arrives with “a bolus or two of physic” (U 14.577), suggesting that Doctor Rinderpest is a quack. Intriguingly, ‘physic’ appears three times in “A Quack Doctor” as do ‘boluses’ and ‘bolus’, but these terms were not entered onto Notesheet 1 along with the other entries from that text. ‘Physic’ appears at N 2.110, but none of the surrounding entries confirm that “A Quack Doctor” is the source. Either the quackery of Rinderpest prompted Joyce to think about “A Quack Doctor”, which was still fresh in his mind, or otherwise summoned words from that text, or he returned to the excerpt in Peacock as he was writing, an act which would suggest a greater degree of attention to source materials than the notesheets alone would indicate. Whichever is the case, it is clear that traces of Defoe in the passage are not limited to the material on the notesheets.

There follows a series of punning jokes about Irish bulls as the assembled drinkers engage in a cattle-themed flight of fancy that ultimately concerns historical

relations between England, Ireland and the Catholic Church (*U* 14.581-650). The true subject of the satire is signalled when Stephen spills his beer and exclaims “Irish by name and Irish by nature” (*U* 14.580), in the manner of “an Irish bull in an English chinashop” (*U* 14.581). ‘Irish bull’ of course refers to Irish cattle, but, as Don Gifford notes, it is “a statement that makes logical sense to its innocent and wrongheaded speaker but that in objective and literal terms is nonsense” or the papal bull in which Pope Adrian IV, the only English Pope, “granted the overlordship of Ireland to Henry II of England”. Defoe, the progenitor of English realism, the first to capture Anglo-Saxon spirit and historical narratives of empire, is invoked as a prose stylist as part of a performance which turns the tables on the colonial victors, appropriating their styles to criticise the nationalist politics their texts encode, and the nationalist narratives anthologies uphold.

In *Joyce’s Revenge: History, Politics, and Aesthetics in “Ulysses”* (2002) Andrew Gibson argues that Joyce’s lecture on Defoe at the Università Popolare utilises the rhetorical figure of the Irish bull. Elaborating on the theme of *The True-Born Englishman: A Satyr* (1701), in which Defoe ironically undermined English objections to the Dutch-born King William III by profiling the nation’s heterogeneous racial mix, Joyce cites Defoe as the writer with whom “the true English spirit begins to appear in literature” and yet notes “Defoe was a director of a Dutch tile factory and actively involved himself in politics, publishing pamphlets, essays, satires, tracts, all in defence of the foreign king’s party”. Joyce presents Defoe’s works as the productions of a true-born Englishman, a member of that hybrid race that is ever alert to opportunities to profit abroad. The “true English spirit” is pregnant in Defoe’s novels, and *Robinson Crusoe* is its most decisive expression:

The true symbol of the British conquest is Robinson Crusoe who, shipwrecked on a lonely island, with a knife and a pipe in his pocket, becomes an architect, carpenter, knife-grinder, astronomer, and cleric. He is the true prototype of the British colonist just as Friday (the faithful savage who arrives one ill-starred day) is the symbol of the subject race. All the Anglo-Saxon soul is in Crusoe: virile independence, unthinking cruelty, persistence, slow yet effective intelligence, sexual apathy, practical and well-balanced religiosity, calculating dourness. Whoever re-reads this simple and moving book in the light of subsequent history cannot but be taken by its prophetic spell.

Even as early as 1912, Joyce was preoccupied with interpolating Defoe into a larger historical narrative. Indeed, as Gibson notes, Joyce “rewrites the history of English literature”:

In the centuries following the French conquest, English literature was schooled by masters such as Boccaccio, Dante, Tasso and Messer Lodovico. Chaucer’s *Canterbury Tales* are a version of the *Decameron* or the *Novellino*; Milton’s *Paradise Lost* is a puritanical transcript of the *Divine Comedy*. Shakespeare, with his Titianesque palette, his eloquence, his epileptic

passion, and his creative fury, is an Italinized Englishman, while the theatre of the Restoration takes its cue from the Spanish stage and the works of Calderon and Lope de Vega.

In the capsule history that Joyce outlines, “a richly European literature deriving from Catholic sources shrinks to mere Englishness” with the arrival of Defoe.

Joyce’s sense of Defoe’s place in prophetic history comes through even more strongly in a cancelled paragraph in the draft version of the lecture:

The narrative that pivots upon this simple marvel is a whole, harmonious and consistent national epic, a solemn and triumphant music which the mournful chant of the savage and innocent soul accompanies. Our century which loves to trace present phenomena back to their origins to convince itself once more of the truth of the theory of evolution, which teaches us that when we were little we were not big, might profitably re-read the tale of Robinson Crusoe and his servant Friday. It would find therein many extremely useful tips for that international industry of our times – the cheap manufacture of imperialist type and its sale at knock-down prices.

While the tone suggests that Joyce does not take this modish preoccupation with tracing “present phenomena back to their origins” entirely seriously, as is suggested by the facile lesson he draws out “when we were little we were not big”, there is no doubt that the Triestine lectures place Defoe’s works at a critical point in the evolutionary narratives of English history and race that have led to the modern-day international industry that manufactures “imperialist type”. The evolutionary metaphor endures in the final extant version of the lecture: “English feminism and English imperialism are already lurking in” the ‘souls’ of Defoe’s characters. Defoe’s characters, Joyce explains, “which have but recently emerged from the animal kingdom”. The Englishman is inserted just one rung above the ape, when he notes that European caricature amuses itself by representing the Englishman as “an overgrown man with an ape’s jaw, dressed in chequered clothes that are too shot and tight and with huge feet; or else John Bull”.

In “Oxen” Joyce mockingly enacts the modern fetish for tracing present phenomena back to their origins” by performing a sham evolution of English prose history, the integrity of the stylistic imitations undermined by systematic adulteration. In the same spirit as the alternative literary history that Joyce sets out in capsule in the lecture on Defoe, the form of the episode parodies the standard nationalist English histories set out in prose anthologies like Peacock and Barnett and Dale, writing back against the narrative histories of English imperialism. The Defoean paragraphs themselves are an ambivalent acknowledgement of the influence of the originator of English realism, his position in literary history and his prophecies of empire. They incorporate only a scattering of fragmentary echoes, without any necessary regard for the literary qualities of any of Defoe’s works in their singularity. These fragments combine with other shards from diverse sources and busily evoke

enough of Defoe's manner to leave a definite impression, but they do so to the greater glory of Joyce, a supremely gifted stylist, with no singular style of his own.

The central stylistic conceit that "Oxen" recapitulates the English canon depends on the supposed uniqueness of celebrated authors and the power of their individuating style to invoke their work and thus their person, concepts that Joyce systematically dismantles in the process of writing as he transplants material from one source into a plausible pastiche of another. Joyce mines Defoe's works for material that is thematically appropriate to his broad sense of his historical importance as the originator of a truly English literary tradition, while undermining the authority and individuality on which the concept of the author as a unique talent. He additionally disparages what it means to belong to that tradition, insisting that what makes Defoe the 'true-born' Englishman *truly* English is that in his person and his writing he is an imperialist through and through, who is alive to opportunities to profit abroad. As Joyce mockingly re-enacts the succession of prose stylists who drove their trade in English and who, by the logic of Haeckel's law, make up his own genetic code as an author, he exacts 'revenge' on the narrative heritage of English imperialism, taking shreds from the works of precursors and turning them to his own purpose. Although the chapter is named after the sacred cattle of Helios, genetic investigation reveals that "Oxen" takes the form of a deliberate Irish bull: at every turn, its actual construction contradicts its apparent and abiding premise rendering it absurd. While "Oxen" purports to recapitulate the historic progression of English prose by paying successive literary talents the compliment of close imitation, closely examining the use Joyce made of its raw materials shows that he makes a nonsense of the works it echoes, the authors it invokes, and the literary succession it sarcastically mimes. Quite simply, "Oxen" presents English literary history as a fixed narrative that is in the process of being re-written.