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Mobility and migration: Calais and the Welsh imagination in the late Middle Ages

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The historiography of the Hundred Years War focuses, not surprisingly, on the warring nations of England and France, the politics of their quarrels, the military triumphs and defeats and the cultural impact of hostilities expressed in contemporary literary and historical accounts.[1] One aspect of the conflict which has received less attention is the effect of the Hundred Years War on the experiential and cultural life of the people of Wales, whose contribution to the war was significant, both for themselves and for the outcome of the conflict. In this chapter, I will offer some new perspectives on the Welsh engagement with the Hundred Years War from the point of view of the increased mobility of many Welshmen in the fourteenth century followed by more purposeful migration in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. Using the evidence of medieval Welsh poetry and some Middle English poetry as my primary sources, and focusing on the town of Calais as a particular example of Welsh engagement with English colonialism, I will suggest that the century of the war was responsible for the transformation of Wales from a marginal region to a diverse nation that was highly connected to the rest of Europe.

My reading of medieval Calais as an imagined space is filtered through ideas of migration and mobility, and the kinds of cultural identities that are formed as a result of dislocation and relocation. Calais was an outpost of England for two centuries, from its capture by Edward III in 1347 until its final release back to France in 1558 under the Tudor Queen Mary. It was therefore a forerunner of later colonial acquisitions which began in the late sixteenth century and

which came to characterise the British empire in its heyday of the nineteenth century.[2]

Medieval Calais is often referred to by historians as an English town or a town in English hands.[3] The use of the word 'English' is somewhat ambiguous in this context – what it technically means is that Calais belonged to the kingdom of England, not to the geographical territory of England or to those who identify themselves culturally as English. The reality was that Calais was a colony of the English crown and therefore inhabited by people from all jurisdictions within the kingdom of England – not only English, but Welsh and Irish as well, and even some French and Flemings left over from the capture of the town.[4] The contemporary evidence suggests that Calais was perceived, on both sides of the Channel, as part of England and yet not England. In that respect, it can be compared to Wales, since Calais and Wales occupied a similar position in relation to the English crown. Both were colonies under the jurisdiction of the Crown, with senior members of the English aristocracy notionally in charge, but with local deputies appointed from the resident population. In both places, the incoming colonists had displaced a local population. In the case of Welsh migrants to Calais, drawn either by the commercial opportunities there or the career-enhancing opportunities for military service, a colonised people (the Welsh) became themselves the colonisers of another people (the Flemings), complicating our understanding of migration and mobility as a process controlled by a dominant class at the expense of a subaltern group.

Diversity and mobility in fourteenth-century Wales

Before the early fourteenth century, Wales was by and large an inward-looking country. It was divided into multiple territories ruled by dynastic princes who competed with each other and with the Norman and English barons who had been colonising the Marches to the east and south since 1066.[5] Literary influences came to Wales via Latin and French texts, the most popular of which were translated or adapted into Welsh.[6] Exposure to such texts connected Welsh men of letters and their patrons to the European

world, but the continuing prestige of vernacular writing, particularly the longstanding tradition of court poetry addressed to the Welsh princes and their families, kept the focus of the Welsh imaginary on their own land and its proud history as the original island nation of Britain before the coming of the Saxons. In the poetry composed before about 1300, place-name references are almost entirely directed to places in Wales or the territories of the British peoples during their conflicts with the English. For the court poets of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, 'Prydein' ('Britain') and its regions, led by British heroes of the pre-Norman age such as Urien, Owain and Cunedda, were the main points of cultural contact for their patrons, rather than the territories and cities of Europe.[7]

By the time the Hundred Years War gripped Europe in the fourteenth century, Wales had become significantly more diverse. Following the conquest of north Wales in 1282 by Edward I, the territories of the Welsh princes, in the north and west of the country, were made forfeit to the Crown, becoming Crown lordships. The Marcher lordships were greatly expanded as Edward rewarded his magnates for their military service and established an even greater bulwark between England and the native Welsh regions. To secure his conquest further, and to develop Wales as a commercial asset, Edward built a series of new fortified towns in north Wales which were populated by English colonists.[8] English and Flemish settlers, already prominent in the south Welsh March, increased their numbers as towns such as Cardiff and Carmarthen grew in size.

The impact of the Edwardian conquest, especially on the March of Wales, was dramatic. With the influx of English speakers, code-switching and multilingualism among Welsh and English settlers became more common.[9] A new type of poet and patron emerged from the wreckage of the Welsh princely courts: in place of the court poets composing sonorous praise poetry, a more mobile group of poets circulated round the manor houses and abbeys of the *uchelwyr*, the class of noble landowners and clerics who were now the elite of Wales and keepers of its cultural heritage. Urbanisation began to increase, with new markets and fairs supplying a wider range of consumer goods imported from England and the Continent. Though the Welsh were excluded from trading in

the English towns, they benefited from the consequences of a more commercialised economy, as is evident from the poetry of Dafydd ap Gwilym (fl. *c.*1325–70), one of the earliest of the new generation of poets to the gentry. In his poems, Dafydd sometimes refers to the consumer goods available in towns, not only beer and wine, but jewels such as rubies and pearls and fine woollen clothing.[10] By the middle of the fifteenth century, larger towns such as Oswestry, a border town with a large Welsh population, could boast a vigorous long-distance import trade offering exotic items such as *cwmin*[cumin], *pomgarnets*[pomegranates], *sarsned*[sarsnet, a fine woven fabric], and *fflelfed*[velvet].[11]

Although the impact of the conquest of 1282 and the rise of urbanisation was far-reaching in social and economic terms, the consequences of the Hundred Years War were even more formative for the development of Wales into a more diverse and outward-looking country. The expansion of the Marcher lordships after 1282 meant that increasing numbers of Welsh people found themselves subject to English baronial control, lords to whom they owed military service, while men from the Crown lordships served the king directly. Throughout the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, Welshmen fought alongside Englishmen as part of the retinues of their English lords, creating bonds of loyalty that cut across the ingrained hostility of the Welsh towards their English neighbours and overlords. Large retinues of Welshmen contributed to the campaigns of Edward III in Scotland in 1334–35 and again at the outbreak of the Hundred Years War, when about 800 Welshmen went with the king to Flanders in 1338–39.[12] Welshmen also fought at the Battle of Crécy in 1346 and at the successful siege of Calais which surrendered in August 1347, some of them serving under Richard Fitzalan, the Earl of Arundel, one of the biggest landowners on the March in the region around Oswestry and Shrewsbury.[13] Many Welsh soldiers served under Welsh leaders loyal to the Crown, men such as Sir Rhys ap Gruffudd (*c.*1283–1356) and Sir Hywel ap Gruffudd (d. *c.*1381), also known as 'Sir Hywel y Fwyall' ('Sir Hywel of the Axe') because of his legendary use of a battleaxe at the Battle of Poitiers in 1356 under Edward, the Black Prince.[14]

These early conflicts of the war are referenced in some of the fourteenth-century Welsh poetry composed by Dafydd ap Gwilym

and his slightly later contemporary Iolo Goch (fl. *c*.1345–97), and these allusions bring with them a flavour of travel and mobility that is new to Welsh poetry. In one of his love poems, Dafydd uses the metaphor of his heart as a fortress, to protect him from the pain of unrequited love, and he compares the fortress of his heart to the fortress of Calais, 'cystal â'r Galais rhag ei elyn' [as good as Calais against its enemy].[15] Throughout the poem, the poet draws on a wide imagery of siege warfare – *durgoly*[steel spike], *magwyr*[rampart], *tra fai ystôr*[while provisions last], *maen blif*[catapult stone] – images which suggest a close familiarity with the technology of war.

Dafydd also alludes to the military activity that he would have perceived around him, even in west Wales where he lived, as men were mustered for the wars in France. One of his more humorous love poems expresses the wish that the husband of his beloved might conveniently drown on his way across the Channel to France. The poem opens with a description of a contingent of men, Welsh and English, setting off to France under the leadership of Sir Rhys ap Gruffudd (*c*.1283–1356) of south-west Wales, an active campaigner on behalf of Edward III who was knighted (an unusual honour for a Welshman) after the Battle of Crécy in 1346. Following a eulogistic opening describing 'brothers in battle' (*brodorion brwydr*) setting off bravely for France, including the poet's own relatives, the tone is suddenly lowered as the poet embarks on a robust denunciation of his love-rival, hoping that someone will throw him overboard as he sails across the Channel in *gwasgwynes*, 'Gascon mare', a metaphor capturing the billowing white sails of the ship:

> Ni cherdda, ni hwylia hi,
> Trychwanddyn, a'r trwch ynddi.
> Gythier efo, gwthr afanc,
> Dros y bwrdd ar draws y banc.[16]

> [She [the ship] will not travel, she will not sail,
> hole-riddled girl, with that scoundrel in her.
> Let him be shoved, that beaver's bum,
> overboard across the side.]

The impact of the Hundred Years War in stoking loyalty to the Crown among Welsh gentry leaders is evident in some of the poems

by Iolo Goch. Forging bonds on the battlefields of France, Welsh soldiers and their commanders were becoming more well-travelled, more outward-looking, and to some extent more tolerant of their English masters as they relied on each other in the hardships of war. Perhaps the most striking poem in that context is the one addressed by Iolo to Edward III, composed at some point between the surrender of Calais in 1347 and the Battle of Poitiers in 1356. This poem, the first in Welsh that we know of to praise an English monarch, marks a turning point in Welsh relations with the English ruling aristocracy, acknowledging that the English king and his magnates are the leaders of armies in which the Welsh will prove their loyalty and their military strength. Following a eulogistic description of Edward's royal lineage and exceptional talents, Iolo refers to Edward's campaigns in Scotland and France:

> Curo â blif, ddylif ddelw,
> Cerrig Caer Ferwig furwelw;
> Rhoist ar gythlwng, rhwystr gwythlawn,
> Ar Fôr Udd aerfa fawr iawn;
> Gelyn fuost i'r Galais
> O gael y dref, golau drais;
> Grasus dy hynt i'r Gresi,
> Gras teg i gan Grist i ti.[17]

> [Battering with a catapult – image of a web –
> the stones of pale-walled Berwick;
> you starved – angry hindrance –
> a very great army on the North Sea;
> you were an enemy to Calais
> by taking the town, splendid force;
> gracious was your progress to Crécy,
> you have fair grace from Christ.]

In the final section of the poem (53–66), Iolo hails Edward as the fulfilment of prophecy, tracing his fictional crusade across Europe to the Holy Land, to Jerusalem, Bethlehem, Constantinople and Babylon. Though the Welsh had not been assiduous crusaders before 1300, their experiences, direct and indirect, of the Hundred Years War opened up the poetic imagination to the real possibilities of travel beyond Wales.

Fourteenth-century military campaigns engendered bonds of loyalty between Welshmen and their English leaders, and among Welshmen themselves, which were instrumental in determining the politics of England in the first half of the fifteenth century. Owain Glyn Dŵr, who led the rebellion against Henry IV in 1400, had served in Scotland in 1384–85 under Sir Gregory Sais, and at the naval battle and subsequent blockade of Sluys in Flanders in 1387–88 under Richard Fitzalan, earl of Arundel, a prominent Marcher lord to whom Owain and his family were closely connected by ties of service.[18] Owain's service to Arundel, who was executed in 1397, his loyalty to Henry Bolingbroke and his subsequent sense of betrayal when the newly crowned Henry IV failed to support him, were key factors in the eruption of the rebellion. Of the men who mobilised in support of Owain, a significant number were veterans of the wars in Scotland, France and Ireland, men such as his cousins, Rhys and Gwilym ap Tudur, who had distinguished military careers, Henry Dwnn of Cydweli, who had fought in Gascony and Ireland, and Gwilym ap Gruffudd of Anglesey, who had seen service in Scotland and France. Owain was also able to use English hostilities with France to gain French military support for his rebellion and he made a formal alliance with the French in 1404, with the result that 'his cause had now been formally woven into the fabric of the Anglo-French conflict'.[19] Though Owain's cause was ultimately lost, it was a uniquely long-lasting rebellion against the English crown and one whose roots lay in the new social and geographical mobility made possible by the Hundred Years War.

Calais in the fifteenth century

As a frontier town characterised by a mobile and peripatetic population, Calais exerted a force which attracted economic migrants. The economic relationship between England and Calais depended, like modern globalised industries, on a large class of migrant workers who had little choice but to go where the work was. For many soldiers, however, and many Welshmen among them, overseas service was an opportunity to experience the wider world in company with their fellow nationals.

As an example of Welsh migration to Calais, in January 1530 a Welshman from Flintshire called Elis Gruffydd enlisted in the garrison in Calais, which was still held by the English as their only remaining possession in France. He married a Frenchwoman, had two children, and settled in Calais for the remaining 25 years of his life. During that time, starting in 1549, he wrote, in Welsh, a universal chronicle of the history of the world from the creation to his own day, a massive two-volume work of 2,500 pages which was completed around 1552, a few years before his death.[20]

Elis Gruffydd was what we would now call a migrant. He migrated first from Wales to London, where he was in service to Sir Robert Wingfield, and then from London to Calais, exemplifying the transnationalism now associated with modern migrants who often move from one place to another while retaining economic and cultural ties with their place of origin.[21] Gruffydd formed part of what had become a substantial Welsh diaspora in Calais, where many Welsh soldiers served in the garrison, and had done so since the capture of Calais in 1347, with many staying on to settle in Calais. The diaspora was cultural as well as geographical – the Welsh (like Gruffydd) continued to use their own language for everyday communication among themselves and for much of their reading and writing as well, forming a local community and sense of identity within a larger cultural context.

From 1363, Calais was a staple port for wool, which meant that all wool coming out of Britain towards the Low Countries and other parts of Europe had to pass through Calais.[22] The wool merchants of England formed themselves into a company and many of them settled permanently in Calais, maintaining strong links with the English ports; during the fifteenth century the dominant group of wool merchants in Calais identified mainly with London.[23] The presence of the wool staple accounted for the rapid commercial expansion of Calais: both the regular population and the garrison needed to be supported and fed, and most provisions had to be imported from England. Alongside these commercial functions, the town needed a significant infrastructure of administrative support, most of it drawn from the immigrant population. Apart from Calais, many people from Britain migrated to other parts of the English territories in France, especially after the gains made by

Henry V in Normandy, settling their families there and acquiring property or commercial interests. In all these territories, as spaces that were colonial and imperial, there was a similar pattern of settlement and assimilation on the one hand and a more temporary kind of economic migration on the other.

Modern theories of migration are inevitably grounded in a substructure of capitalism, so that economic migration is explained in terms of labour supply and demand or decisions made by rational, freely choosing individuals seeking to improve their prospects. Some of these theories can be applied to the pre-capitalist system of medieval Europe, especially in the context of the growth of towns and urban commerce in the late Middle Ages, though medieval migrants (like their modern counterparts) were by no means always 'freely choosing' individuals. Modern economists talk about 'push and pull' factors determining the mobility of people, often basing their analyses on a rather optimistic model in which 'pull' factors (such as the desire for a 'better life') predominate over 'push' (those factors such as poverty and war which 'push' people into emigrating, often reluctantly).[24] In national and international markets, employers benefit from recruiting low-wage migrant workers into a workforce that can be expanded or contracted as demand fluctuates. Often this is presented as a benefit to the migrants themselves, implied by the term 'economic migrants', but just as often the push factors of poverty and dislocation are ignored or dismissed.

The competing interests of pull and push factors in the process of migration are neatly illustrated by two related Middle English poems referring to Calais in the fifteenth century. The first is the well-known political poem, *The Libelle of Englyshe Polycye*, written in the aftermath of the successful defence of Calais against attack by the Duke of Burgundy in 1436.[25] Inevitably jingoistic in its sentiments, the poem emphasises the pull factor of Calais as a commercial powerhouse, a strategy which actually works on behalf of the dominant classes rather than the workers. The poet leaves us in no doubt that the possession of Calais by the English Crown was crucial to the control of the Channel and therefore England's domination of international trade. Writing at a time when Parliament was increasingly reluctant to commit yet more money to supporting England's lordships in France, the poet urges the more important

claims of Calais to additional resources compared to Normandy which, unlike the magnates, he saw as less crucial to the national interest. Describing the trade in commodities coming from Spain, Italy, Flanders, Portugal, Brittany and the Low Countries, he asserts that if the English want to go on enjoying the fruits of this international trade, they need to regulate imports, especially through markets and fairs, and keep the Channel properly managed and free of war:

> Thene here I ende of the comoditees
> Ffor whiche nede is well to kepe the sees;
> Este and weste, sowthe and northe they be;
> And chefely kepe the sharpe narowe see,
> Betwene Dover and Caleise, and as thus
> That *fosse passe not wythought gode wyll of us,   *foes*
> And they *abyde oure daunger in the lenghte,   *accept our domination*
> What for oure costis and Caleise in oure strenghte.[26]

The poem therefore identifies what was undoubtedly a strong 'pull' factor from the rewards of international trade, enough to encourage merchants and tradesmen of all kinds to travel over the sea to Calais as economic migrants. They made their homes in Calais and the other northern French towns under English rule and often encouraged their families and neighbours to follow them there.

But the poem ignores the kind of 'push' factors which prospective migrants often have to contend with. A second poem, beginning with the line 'Goo forth, lybell, and mekly schew thy face', dating from around the middle of the fifteenth century, deliberately takes issue with the earlier *Libelle* by echoing some of its lines while giving a rather different message. Instead of writing on behalf of the merchant class, the poet highlights the 'push' factors of poor wages and working conditions which create a mobile labour force for the benefit of the elites. The poet begins by emphasising England's pre-eminence in supplying the Western world with commodities, especially wool, with merchants coming to buy English wool from all over Europe and beyond, as far as Prussia and Turkey. But he then goes on to write in support of the workers who fuel this lucrative wool industry, those labourers, many of them migrants from poorer rural areas, who prepare the raw material but are cheated out of a

living wage. The rich clothmakers and merchants force them to take some of their wages in the form of merchandise valued at the retail rather than wholesale price:

> Lytyll þei take for theyre labur, yet halff ys merchaundyse.
> Alas! for rewth, yt ys gret pyte!

> þat they take for vj*d*, yt ys dere ynow of iij;
> And thus þei be defrawdyd in euery contre;
> The pore haue þe labur, the ryche the wynnyng.
> This acordythe nowȝte, it is a heuy partyng.[27] (ll. 87–92)

This is the downside of a labour-intensive industry which depends on a steady supply of skilled workers. In global markets today, multinational firms pursuing neocolonial agendas attract international migrants from regions of low growth to areas of high commercial activity. This was the situation in Calais relative to England and Wales: many workers at the lower end of the manufacturing trades were attracted to Calais as a commercial hub and emigrated there to seek a more prosperous life for themselves and their families. But in many of these cases, the pull of Calais was balanced by the push factors of poverty and low wages back in their home locality.

This kind of colonial settlement was marked by a considerable degree of transnationalism, with the coming and going of people between France and Britain to visit family or manage estates or business interests in both places. Writing about contemporary globalisation, Saskia Sassen has argued that the growth of international capital has created communities of transnational workers, what she calls the 'global classes', moving from place to place in search of employment.[28] This applies not only to poorer workers but to those at the elite and managerial levels of society as well, the kind of people whose work takes them from London to New York to Tokyo and back again.

On a much smaller scale, we can see a similar transnationalism operating between England and France during the first half of the fifteenth century, and particularly between London and Calais, the two gateways to international trade across the Channel. Maurice Keen has made the point that during the reign of Henry VI

the governing classes, which he defines as noblemen or heads of county families or shire members of parliament, were mobile for economic reasons but were too tied to their own estates in England to become part of the standing garrisons and expatriate communities who now lived more or less permanently in northern France.[29] Alongside the more settled population of Calais, there were layers of peripatetic officers and businessmen whose main base of operations was in England but whose work often took them to Calais, men such as John Paston II who, writing to his brother in 1473, says: 'As for me, I am nott serteyn whether I shall to Caleys, to Leysetre, or come hom in-to Norffolk.'[30] David Grummitt has pointed to the cosmopolitan nature of the Calais garrison, containing men for whom 'military service was just one part of a wide and varied career'.[31]

These close and ongoing links between England and Calais provide evidence of another kind of migration pattern, that of social networks. Besides the 'pull' of economic advantage, people are often motivated to migrate by the 'pull' of their links with relatives and neighbours who have already moved to the country of destination. In this model of network-mediated migration, a more or less constant flow of migrants is produced since 'each act of migration itself creates the social structure needed to sustain it. Every new migrant reduces the costs of subsequent migration for a set of friends and relatives, and some of these people are thereby induced to migrate, which further expands the set of people with ties abroad.'[32] Elis Gruffydd, for example, probably made the move to Calais because his lord, Sir Robert Wingfield, became lieutenant of the castle at Calais in 1526 and moved there semi-permanently.[33]

The Calais garrison provides a further example of the social network model of migration, not only because of the pull of family and neighbours, though this was undoubtedly significant, but because of the push factor provided by the obligations of military service. In descriptions of military life in Calais, in both English and Welsh, the significance of social and professional links stretching across the Channel lies very close to the surface of daily life in fortified Calais. Just as Elis Gruffydd refers in his chronicle to relatives and neighbours of his who had served in the garrison at Calais, so did many of the Welsh soldiers in Calais migrate to the city as

part of regional networks of families and neighbours within Wales. Moreover, as Welsh archers and men-at-arms were particularly in demand, and, since an archer's pay was twice that of a labourer, the 'pull' factor towards service in France was strong.[34]

The importance of regional and linguistic networks is made clear in a Welsh poem (appended below) probably composed in the 1460s when Edward IV was on the throne.[35] The poem, known as 'Sawdwyr Calais' ('The Soldiers of Calais'), is by Robert Leiaf, a man about whom we know very little but who was probably active as a poet from about 1440 to about 1490. We know that he went on a pilgrimage to Rome and would almost certainly have passed through Calais on that journey, where he found many of his fellow Welshmen.[36] His poem about the Welsh garrison in Calais emphasises these local connections between the Welsh soldiers who know each other from back home and who fight together as a group, maintaining the networks of home that help to create bonds in the new location: 'pob dyn, pawb adwaenynt' [every person knows everyone else] (50). The Welsh contingent have adopted Calais as their own place: although Calais is 'England's lock' (*clo Lloegr*), that is, the lock that keeps the Channel and the coastal ports of England safe, it is equivalent to a corner of the island of Anglesey; though it is 'Edward's city' (which could be Edward IV or Edward III who first captured it), men of 'our country', that is, Wales, are keeping it safe. The poem is framed as a song of praise to Calais and its Welsh soldiers, as though they were the only ones holding it safe, and it evokes the camaraderie of a troop of fighting men who all come from the same place to form part of a collective identity within the garrison.[37] What lies behind this bond is the impact of migration from Wales to Calais, a migration driven by the pull of economic advantage and the presence of fellow countrymen who have already made the move to the new land.

The politics of migration

My last point is related to the similar status of both Calais and Wales as colonies of the English kingdom – one of the reasons, perhaps, that Welshmen felt at home there, wanted to travel there and even

emigrate there, like Elis Gruffydd and many before him. In Wales, following the Edwardian conquest of 1282, the classic pattern of Norman colonisation by means of town, church and castle was imposed on those areas (mainly in the north and west) that had thus far escaped Norman settlement. New towns were established and populated with English burgesses supported by generous rent remissions and land grants. The native Welsh found themselves reclassified as 'aliens' and excluded from all urban privileges, including the right to trade.[38] The same process of ethnic discrimination was repeated in Calais after 1347. The native Flemish were driven out of the town and English immigrants were recruited on the promise of 'liberties, privileges and immunities'.[39] In both cases, what we are dealing with are classic examples of colonial migration, people moving from one region to another, either permanently or temporarily, usually for economic reasons, with a favoured group incentivised to settle at the expense of a disempowered resident population. The fortified town of Calais, an island in a sea of French lands after 1453, would have been recognisable to its Welsh inhabitants as similar to the fortified cities of the March such as Flint and Denbigh, English bastions in a sea of colonised Welshness.

In the case of Wales, there is a double process at work – Welsh lands were colonised from 1066 onwards to the point where the Welsh themselves became migrants to France in the later Middle Ages. For some postcolonial theorists, Wales can scarcely be regarded as a colony of England at all since, it is argued, Wales itself became so heavily implicated in the British imperial expansion of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.[40] Welsh migration to Calais in the late Middle Ages can perhaps be interpreted as an earlier part of the same process, placing the Welsh in Calais in what seems to be an ambivalent situation. On the one hand Wales had been colonised by the English Crown, but on the other hand Welsh men and women moved to Calais as part of the English colonial programme. So were they the colonised or the colonisers? The situation of the Welsh in Calais can be reinterpreted through modern theories of migration and transnationalism where the processes of colonisation and mobility are occluded by the rhetoric of economic migration. Presenting migration as a positive and desirable step for people who are euphemistically termed 'economic migrants' forms

a convenient smokescreen for larger macroeconomic agendas of major state powers such as the English crown in the late Middle Ages.

Men born in Wales and men born in Calais were treated similarly by the English Crown with regard to their nationality – both groups were regarded as aliens, having been born 'abroad' (though this did not, of course apply to the children of the English nobility). Many such people, with an eye to the future, were motivated to apply for denizenship (that is, the status of a naturalised Englishman) in order to acquire the rights of English nationality, which they could then pass on to their children. The website, 'England's Immigrants', which provides data on thousands of people who immigrated into England during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, provides numerous examples of residents of Calais and residents of Wales petitioning for denizenship, often as a means of circumventing anti-migrant legislation or finding work in London.[41] John Donne, a resident of Calais, but originally from Picardy in the surrounding hinterland, applied for letters of denization in 1468. John Butte, a Welshman from Carmarthen, who had lived in Bridport in Dorset for more than 30 years, applied for letters of denization in 1437.

In other words, though Wales and Calais were both considered to be part of the kingdom of England, their inhabitants were none-theless treated as aliens from the point of view of English citizen-ship, a situation not dissimilar to modern attempts to deal with the issue of British citizenship for those born in the former colonies of the United Kingdom. The resulting confusion, including changes in the law and inconsistencies in the treatment of various individuals, are much the same in both cases, and lead to similar levels of legal negotiations and challenges, with all the costs and despair that goes with them.

The experience of Calais shows that the consequences of coloni-sation by force of arms inevitably turns migrants into refugees. The opposite of colonisation is decolonisation, and this is what hap-pened at the end of the Hundred Years War. When the crash finally came in 1453 and all the English possessions in France, apart from Calais, were restored to the French, the colonisers who had settled in northern France, often for several generations, became displaced, with the kind of disastrous results we see today following territorial

wars. A stream of British refugees had already started heading back to Britain in 1449, visible symbols of the perils of migration and of Britain's humiliation at the hands of French. The French had re-taken Normandy and Gascony was to fall in 1453 after nearly three years of intensive fighting. This is how Robert Bale, a lawyer and notary living in London, described the refugee crisis in his chronicle, writing in about 1450:

> And than wer all þe Englisshmen dryven and sent oute from ffraunce Normandy and Angeoy and cam into þis land in greet mysery and poverte be many companyes and felawships and yede into severall places of þe land to be enherite and to lyve upon the almes of the peple. But many of them drewe to theft and misrule and noyed sore the cominalte of þis land spirituell and temporell and many of þeym afterward hanged.[42]

Conclusion

Calais remained an English possession for another hundred years, safeguarding English trade across the Channel and providing a home for migrants like Elis Gruffydd. As a colonial outpost in a foreign land, Calais might technically have been an English pos-session and may have contained elements of a diasporic cultural Englishness, but it was not imagined as an English town by contem-porary writers who lived or visited there. The writers I have been considering, both Welsh and English, recognised the pull of Calais as somewhere that was self-evidently not England – a colonial outpost and a migrant destination.

In Wales, the effects of the Hundred Years War were transforma-tive for the social, economic and cultural life of the Welsh, whether as serving soldiers, participants in urban trade, rebels against the Crown, or poets observing the heroism of their patrons in battle. The first half of the long war equipped the Welsh with the military experience and warband loyalties that would determine the course of the Glyn Dŵr rebellion and, later, the Wars of the Roses. The second half of the war, from Agincourt to the fall of Normandy, saw Welsh soldiers and civilians, often with their families, moving between France and Wales as part of military contingents or as

transnational migrants, contributing to a new Welsh experience of travel and mobility beyond Wales. From the fifteenth century, Welsh poetry is full of place-names from around the empire, from Calais to Rome and Constantinople, with pilgrimage to Rome and the Holy Land, usually via Calais, becoming a normative experience for many Welsh people. During the century of the Hundred Years War, Wales was transformed from an inward-looking land at odds with England to a diverse nation that faced outwards across the Channel and played a measurable part in the rise and fall of English kings.

Cywydd i Galais a'i Milwyr	Poem to Calais and its soldiers
Robert Leiaf (fl. c.1440–90)	
Cwrs ydyw caru sawdwyr,	It's a way of life to love soldiers,
Cerais y Galais a'i gwŷr.	[and] I have loved Calais and her men.
Cymry'n ffres, cymeren' Ffrainc,	Mettlesome Welshmen, they would take France,
Ceirw Troya, cwrtwyr ieuainc,	stags of Troy, young courtiers,
Calais yn herio Cwlen,	Calais defying Cologne,
Cynafon hil Cynfyn Hen.	cubs of the line of Cynfyn the Old.
Pan gollo Cymro, p'le cais	When a Welshman goes missing,
Oni gweler 'n y Galais?	where can he be found except in Calais?
Mi a welais y milwyr	I've seen the soldiers
Oedd ar goll – pand oedd dda'r gwŷr?	who were missing – were they not fine men?
Cefais wŷr a gollais gynt –	I found men I'd lost touch with a while ago –
Sawdwyr yng Nghalais ydynt!	they are soldiers in Calais!
Da yw'r ban y derbynnir	Fine is the rampart where the brave lads
Y gweision dewrion i dir.	have been received in the land.
I'r un gaer yr ân' i gyd,	To the same fortress they all go,

Line numbers in the original: 4 (at "Ceirw Troya, cwrtwyr ieuainc" / "stags of Troy, young courtiers"), 8 (at "Oni gweler 'n y Galais?" / "where can he be found except in Calais?"), 12 (at "Sawdwyr yng Nghalais ydynt!" / "they are soldiers in Calais!")

I'r gwinoedd awr ac ennyd;	16	to the wine supplies time and again;
O'r gaer, pe bai rhew ac ôd,		from the fortress, whether it be frost or snow,
I'r maes lle bai'r ymosod.		to the battlefield wherever the attack might be.
Dail a wnâi'r efail i'r ais,		The forge makes chainmail for the breast,
Dur Cwlen am deirw Calais,	20	steel of Cologne for the bulls of Calais,
Dynion yn cadw un dinas,		men guarding a single city,
Daear a gloed â dŵr glas.		a land enclosed by blue water.
Tref ar lwff lle trof i'r lan,		A town on the windward side where I turn to shore,
Tref iachus, Troya fechan,	24	a wholesome town, a little Troy,
Caer falch a dâl cwr o Fôn,		a proud fortress which is worth a corner of Môn,
Clo Lloegr, nis cêl y llygion.		England's lock, the civilians do not deny it.
Duw a roes ei gadw ar wŷr,		God has given its keeping to men,
Dinas Edwart dan sawdwyr.	28	Edward's city under men-at-arms.
Gwyn ein byd, gwenwyn ni bo,		Blessed are we, may there be no envy,
Gael dynion o'n gwlad yno.		to have men from our country there.
Ni all gŵr ennill ar gais		A man cannot succeed at first try
Bygylu neb o Galais;	32	in bullying anyone from Calais;
Gyrrant hwy, chwedl Geraint oedd,		they will drive – it was the tale of Geraint –
Wŷr ymerodr i'r moroedd;		the emperor's men to the seas;
Mynnwn fod, gorfod i'r gwŷr,		I would wish, victory to the men,
Dâr sawden gyda'r sawdwyr.	36	that the soldiers had an oak-strong leader.

Oes yn fyw, ni cheisiwn fach,

Are there living, I would not take bets,

Ais yn ddur, weision ddewrach?

braver young men with ribs of steel?

Heddiw wynt yw gwahoddwyr,

They are the hosts today,

Haelion a gwychion yw'r gŵyr, 40

the men are generous and splendid,

Gwaed Gamber, galwer i'n gŵydd,

Camber's blood, may it be summoned in our presence,

Gwyal entriad galawntrwydd.

saplings at the gateway of chivalry.

Chwerddais – paham na chwerddent?–

I rejoiced – why would anyone not rejoice? –

Pan welais Galais o Gent. 44

when I saw Calais from Kent.

Gweled ym fuddugoliaeth,

I seemed to see victory,

Gweled tref yn gwylio traeth.

I saw a town guarding the beachfront.

Ys da dref, ystod Rufain,

It is a fine town, on the road to Rome,

Ys da wŷr hwnt, pyst yw'r rhain. 48

there are fine men in it, they are pillars.

Pob gŵr wrth y pibau gynt,

Each man at the wine-taps before,

Pob dyn, pawb adwaenynt.

every person knows everyone else.

Prynwyd i'r pererinion

Osey is bought generously for the pilgrims,

Osai'n hael, Cymry sy'n hon; 52

it's Welshmen who are in that town;

Prynwyd ym – perai nid oedd –

wine and beer – it wasn't perry –

Win a bir yn aberoedd.

are bought for me in floods.

Dydd gwaith cedwaist obaith Sais,

On a working day you guarded England's hope,

Dydd gŵyl, da oedd y Galais, 56

on a feast day, Calais was a fine place,

Caer sad ni ddwg gŵr i sêl,	a solid fortress a man could not bring under seal,
Caer gref, cerrig o ryfel,	a strong fortress, stones of war,
Caer wen lle ni phlyco'r wart,	a white fortress where the ward will not yield,
Caer gadarn, cerrig Edwart. 60	a powerful fortress, the stones of Edward.
Ni bu'r dref heb wŷr o draeth,	The town has not lacked men from the shore,
Ni bo'r wal heb wroliaeth.	may the wall not lack manpower.
Ni bu hawdd gwrth'nebu hon,	It would not be easy to attack that place,
Ni bydd unnos heb ddynion. 64	there is no single night without guards.
Ni bu Fwlen heb filwyr,	Boulogne has never lacked soldiers,
Ni bo ei gwal heb ei gwŷr.	may its wall not be without its men.

Notes

1 The cultural and literary aspects of the Hundred Years War have been less discussed than the political and military history of the conflict. For examples of the former, see the Introduction to this volume.

2 Calais and the other English territories in Normandy and Gascony were by no means the earliest colonies of England. It could be argued that the Anglo-Saxons were the earliest English colonists in Britain, while Wales, Ireland and the lowlands of Scotland were all colonised by Norman and English armies and settlers during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries.

3 The very useful biography of the town by Rose is called *Calais: An English Town in France*.

4 It is worth remembering that Calais was in the county of Flanders, controlled by the Dukes of Burgundy. See Nicholas, *Medieval Flanders*,

317–56. Wallace has written about the trauma experienced by the French when Calais was fell into English hands, though he does not consider the experiences of non-English subjects of the Crown. See *Premodern Places*, 48–54. In his chapter on Calais in volume I of *Europe*, Wallace highlights the rivalry between English and French without specifically mentioning other nationalities represented in Calais.

5 On the history of Wales under the Normans, see Davies, *Age of Conquest*; Lieberman, *March of Wales*.

6 Fulton, 'Translating Europe in Medieval Wales'.

7 There are some references in Welsh court poetry to classical heroes such as Hercules and Alexander, indicating Welsh knowledge of Latin epic. See Haycock, 'Some Talk of Alexander and Some of Hercules'.

8 These new towns followed others already built by Edward as part of his military campaigns against the Welsh during the 1270s, such as Flint, Rhuddlan and Aberystwyth, established in 1277. See Beresford, *New Towns of the Middle Ages*, 35–51.

9 For a survey of the linguistic situation in medieval Wales, see Smith, 'The Welsh Language before 1536'; Davies, *Welsh Language*.

10 For the poetry of Dafydd ap Gwilym, see Dafydd ap Gwilym, *Cerddi Dafydd ap Gwilym*, ed. Johnston. English translations and notes are available on the website *Dafydd ap Gwilym.net*, www.dafyddapgwilym.net (accessed 30 September 2019). See especially poems 120, 138 and 156 for references to commodities traded in towns and fairs.

11 These items are all mentioned in a poem by Tudur Aled (*c.*1465–1525) which eulogises the town of Oswestry, comparing the riches of its markets to London's Cheapside. The poem is edited by Jones: Tudur Aled, *Gwaith Tudur Aled*, no. 65; see also *Oxford Book of Welsh Verse*, ed. Parry, no. 92. There is no published translation of the poem, but see Fulton, 'Trading Places'; Smith, 'Oswestry'; Johnston, 'Towns in Medieval Welsh Poetry'.

12 Chapman, *Welsh Soldiers*, 61–3.

13 Chapman, *Welsh Soldiers*, 68–9.

14 For further details about Sir Hywel's nickname, see Chapman, *Welsh Soldiers*, 73.

15 Johnston (ed.), *Cerddi Dafydd ap Gwilym*, no. 122 (20). For translations of the whole poem, see *Dafydd ap Gwilym.net*, no. 122; Dayfdd ap Gwilym, *Dafydd ap Gwilym: His Poems*, trans. Thomas, no. 140.

16 Dafydd ap Gwilym, *Cerddi Dafydd ap Gwilym*, no. 116, 29–32 (my translation).

17 Iolo Goch, *Poems*, ed. and trans. Johnston, no. 1 (33–40).

18 Chapman, *Welsh Soldiers*, 90, 94. See also Davies, *Revolt of Owain Glyn Dŵr*; Goodman, 'Owain Glyn Dŵr before 1400'.

19 Davies, *Age of Conquest*, 445.

20 The chronicle has not yet been fully edited or translated, though sections appear in Hunter, 'Chronicle of Elis Gruffydd'. See also the editions and translations of selected extracts in Elis Gruffydd, *Elis Gruffydd and the 1544 Enterprises of Paris and Boulogne*, ed. J. Davies, trans. M. Bryn Davies; Elis Gruffydd, *'An Ill Jurney for the Englishemen'*, ed. Davies. The first volume of Gruffydd's chronicle contains a history of the world from Creation to Christianity; the second volume contains a history of England and Wales from 1066 to 1552, including many details about life in Calais. See Hunter, 'Taliesin at the Court of Henry VIII'; Jones, 'A Welsh chronicler in Tudor England'; Morgan, 'Elis Gruffudd of Gronant'.

21 The concept of transnationalism was first theorised by Schiller et al. (eds), *Towards a Transnational Perspective on Migration*, 1. The experience of Elis Gruffydd, and others like him, corresponds to Dahinden's model of migrant transnationalism, which is based on the combination of mobility – movement across transnational spaces – and locality, specific places where migrants are anchored by a framework of social relations. See Dahinden, 'Dynamics of Migrants' Transnational Formations'.

22 Spufford notes that 'only Italians sending wool directly to Italy, and Hanseatics sending it direct to the Baltic, were permitted to avoid Calais'. *Power and Profit*, 329.

23 Clapham, *Concise Economic History of Britain*, 142.

24 See for example the discussion of theories of international migration by Bean and Brown, 'Analyses of Immigration', 69–74.

25 Holmes dates the poem to 'between the autumn of 1436 and the early part of 1438' and argues that it was written in support of the political position of Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester ('"Libel of English Policy"', 193). Sobecki says that the poem was written 'most likely before the end of 1438' and that 'it must have been composed from within the closest circle of Henry VI's senior administrators'. He suggests it can be interpreted as a petition or bill of complaint (*libellus*) against current government policy ('Bureaucratic Verse', 252, 251). Doig discusses the poem in the context of political propaganda around the siege of Calais ('Propaganda, Public Opinion and the Siege of Calais in 1436'). Boffey notes that at least one copy of the poem circulated in Calais as part of a bilingual anthology ('Books and Readers in Calais', 70–1).

26 *Political Poems and Songs*, ed. Wright, II.191. For another edition, see *Libelle of Englyshe Polycye*, ed. Warner.

27 *Historical Poems of the XIVth and XVth Centuries*, ed. Robbins, no. 70, with discussion on xlii–xliv.

28 Sassen, *Territory, Authority, Rights*, 298–303. Sassen emphasises that global mobility does not preclude a sense of national identity.

29 Keen, *England in the Later Middle Ages*, 406.

30 *Paston Letters and Papers*, ed. Davis, vol. I, letter 273 (457).

31 Grummitt, *Calais Garrison*, 77. Grummitt also refers to what I would describe as the 'push' factor of 'escape [from] legal or family problems back in England' (77).

32 Massey et al., 'Theories of International Migration', 449.

33 Morgan, 'Chroniqueur gallois', 196.

34 Evans, *Wales and the Wars of the Roses*, 27.

35 This makes the poem contemporaneous with the English Lancastrian poem *Knyghthode and Batayle*, attributed to a 'parson [person] of Calais' and composed between 1457 and 1460. See Wallace, *Premodern Places*, 62–3. My edition and translation of the Welsh poem (from London, BL Additional MS 14967, fol. 154, dating from the first half of the sixteenth century) are printed below, and line numbers refer to this edition. For another edition, with manuscript variants, see Taylor, 'Gwaith Barddonol', 140–4, and notes on 196–8.

36 Taylor suggests that Robert Leiaf's familiarity with the garrison may have indicated he served there himself at one time ('Gwaith Barddonol', 196).

37 Grummitt has described the Calais garrison of the fifteenth century as a 'brotherhood-in-arms', sustained by 'a sense of martial honour' and a collective identity (*Calais Garrison*, 97).

38 For a description of this process, see Davies, *Age of Conquest*, 371–3.

39 Rose, *Calais*, 24.

40 Evidence for the participation of Wales in the imperial project of Britain is amply provided by the chapters in Bowen (ed.), *Wales and the British Overseas Empire*.

41 *England's Immigrants 1330–1550*, www.englandsimmigrants.com (accessed 30 September 2022).

42 *Six Town Chronicles*, ed. Flenley, 128.