University of Bristol

Department of Historical Studies

Best undergraduate dissertations of 2016

Louis Dawson-Jones

'Our heritage and our birthright': North Walian Nationalismand the Empire, 1880-1914

University of BRISTOL

<u>'Our heritage and our birthright': North Walian Nationalism and the Empire, 1880-1914</u>[1]

<u>Introduction</u>

'I claim to be a Nationalist,' wrote a Mr J Isaac Davies from Caernarfon in 1900, 'but a Nationalist that is proud of the position his country holds as a portion of the greatest empire the world has ever seen, and a Nationalist that is proud of the share Welshmen have had in making this same empire what it is.'[2] From the election of a Liberal government in 1880, to 1914 there was an acceleration in what contemporaries termed the "nationalist" project in Wales. Kenneth Morgan has described the change as the "Rebirth of a nation". Wales gained university colleges, a National Library and Museum, a state education system, and was industrialised.[3] Welsh political agitation was conducted through the Liberal Party and was largely focused on disestablishing the Church (enacted in 1920), expanding education and ending landlord privileges. This was termed the Welsh National movement, subscribers to it were termed "nationalists".[4] This definition, as used by late nineteenth century campaigners, will be used here. As shown by the quote, some nationalists were comfortable with an imperial identity. The way in which the Empire was incorporated into nationalist thinking in North Wales has yet to be explored.

Over the course of the century Nonconformist Protestantism had become very popular in Wales, among the tenant farmers and industrial workers that formed the mythical "Gwerin" (folk) of Wales. Henry Richard, Liberal MP, captured the situation when he said in 1868 that "the Nonconformists of Wales are the people of Wales." The Nonconformists' dominance would last until 1914.[5] They campaigned vigorously for the disestablishment of the Church in Wales, so that Nonconformists might

---

[1] Aberystwyth, National Library of Wales (hereafter NLW): GB 0210 HERBLEW, File: D20 Welsh nationalism, 'Welsh Nationality', (Liverpool: Isaac Foulkes, 1892), 16

[2] '"The Vindication of Mr Lloyd George." A County Council Incident. (To the Editor).', *The North Wales Chronicle and Advertiser for the Principality* (hereafter NWC), 18 August 1900

[3] K. O. Morgan, *Rebirth of a Nation: Wales 1880-1980* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1981)

[4] 'The "Times" on Welsh Nationalism', *NWC,* 6 October 1888; 'Notes upon Wales and the Welsh', *Carnarvon and Denbigh Herald* (hereafter CDH), 9 November 1888

[5] Quoted in P. O'Leary, 'Accommodation and Resistance: A Comparison of Cultural Identities in Ireland and Wales, *c.*1880-1914', in S. J. Connolly (ed.), *Kingdoms United? Great Britain and Ireland since 1500* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 1999), 129

gain equality in public life. Land reform was intended to end (mostly Anglican) landlord privileges, and a small contingent even sought Home Rule for Wales. Most Nonconformist tenants were poor and were monoglot Welsh speakers. Consequently many sought to protect the Welsh language and elevate its status: in education and the law courts. These were the goals of the "Welsh National movement". At this time Welsh language periodicals and literature flourished; the Eisteddfod's popularity as a cultural festival rose. The symbolism of dragons, daffodils, leeks, and national dress, today associated with Wales, were all made familiar.[6]

There was also however a 'crisis of Welshness' in the period.[7] In 1801 70% of Wales' population were Welsh monoglots; by 1911 only 43.5% could speak Welsh, yet most North Walian counties recorded populations in which 90% or more spoke Welsh.[8] The national drop in Welsh-speakers can be explained by the rapid industrialisation of South Wales which experienced the second-highest global immigration rate.[9] The Welsh language's problems were compounded by nineteenth century education policies. The 1847 'Report' on schools ("Treason of the Blue Books") denigrated the Welsh people as immoral, promiscuous and stupid, and the Welsh language as subversive and a barbaric barrier to civilisation. The 1870 Education Act enforced nationally the use of English in education and arguably reduced the use of Welsh.[10] Over this period the old Liberal politics of education and Nonconformity were challenged by Labour politics of trade unionism and socialism, and Nonconformity struggled as the numbers of chapelgoers declined. Therefore when the "Welsh National movement" was at its height, Wales' defining characteristics seemed to be on the wane. The fin de siècle also saw the peak of Wales' involvement in the Empire, yet this relationship to Welsh

---

[6] J. Ellis, 'The prince and the dragon: Welsh national identity and the 1911 investiture of the Prince of Wales', *Welsh history review,* 18 (December 1996), 272-294

[7] P. Morgan, 'Keeping the Legends Alive', in T. Curtis (ed.), *Wales: The Imagined Nation: Essays in Cultural and National Identity* (Bridgend: Poetry Wales, 1996), 38

[8] J. Davies, *The Welsh Language* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1993), 54-56

[9] O'Leary, 'Accommodation and Resistance', 126

[10] G. T. Roberts '"Under the Hatches": English Parliamentary Commissioners' views of the people and language of mid-nineteenth century Wales', in B. Schwarz, *The Expansion of England: Race, ethnicity and cultural history* (London: Routledge, 1996)

nationalism has largely been overlooked by historians of Wales.[11] Persistent today is the notion that Wales was a colony of England's; and that rather than being on the wane Welsh identity was deliberately undermined by English culture and the British state.[12]

Historians of Wales such as Kenneth Morgan have noted that Welsh nationalists wanted parity between England and Wales. This dissertation aims to take this further and consider how North Walians viewed themselves within the Empire. From the 1950s to the 1980s those few Welsh scholars who examined their country and the Empire did so on an economic basis. Brinley Thomas argued that Welsh migration had largely been internal, that the concentration of Welsh speakers in the South had brought about a revival of the language and culture.[13] Michael Hechter infamously argued that Wales had in fact been an 'internal colony' of Britain's exploited 'Celtic Fringe'.[14] Ned Thomas argued that Welsh imperialists were 'Britishers', but at home as Welsh-speakers they had been victims of imperialism.[15] Neil Evans has noted, however, that most Welsh historians were not interested in empire, and most historians of empire were not interested in Wales. For example, the pre-eminent Welsh historian Glanmor Williams made virtually no reference to empire in his writings.[16] This lack of interest in empire, it has been suggested, was partly because of the socialist and nationalist sympathies of many historians.[17]

This view has been changing since the 1990s. Historians of the "New British History" including John Pocock and Linda Colley, have attempted to trace a "British" identity across the British Isles, and to

---

[11] Morgan, *Rebirth*; K. O. Morgan, *Wales in British Politics, 1868-1922*, (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1980); D. Smith, *Wales! Wales?*, (London: Allen & Unwin, 1984); G. A. Williams, *When Was Wales?: A History of the Welsh*, (London: Black Raven, 1988)

[12] N. Griffiths, 'Wales: England's oldest colony', *New Statesman*, 23 April 2007

[13] B. Thomas, 'A Cauldron of Rebirth: Population and the Welsh Language in the Nineteenth Century', *Welsh history review Cylchgrawn hanes Cymru*, 13 (December 1987), 418-437

[14] M. Hechter, *Internal Colonialism: the Celtic Fringe in British National Development, 1536-1966,* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1975)

[15] N. Thomas, *The Welsh Extremist: a culture in crisis* (London: Gollancz, 1971), 33

[16] N. Evans, 'Writing Wales into the empire: rhetoric, fragments – and beyond?', in H. V. Bowen, *Wales and the British overseas empire: Interactions and influences, 1650-1830*, (Manchester: Manchester University Press; New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), 25

[17] A. Jones and B. Jones 'The Welsh World and the British Empire, *c.*1851-1939: An Exploration', in C. Bridge and K. Fedorowich, *The British World: Diaspora, Culture and Identity*, (London: Frank Cass, 2003), 58

properly consider and integrate the histories of each nation. Keith Robbins and Hugh Kearney have emphasised the importance of regional identities in the British Isles in an effort to combat perceived Anglo-centric scholarship. Interest has also grown in how the British viewed their Empire.[18] Some Welsh historians have also begun to assess Wales' place in the Empire and the wider world. Studies have assessed Welsh emigrant communities and culture in the Empire and United States, and the role of Welsh people in imperial administration and conflict.[19] John S. Ellis has written of the nationalist, Owen Rhoscomyl that 'Welsh nationalism and British imperialism were two aspects of the same cause', this dissertation explores this thinking in North Wales.[20] Aled Jones and Bill Jones considered the role of empire in the Welsh press at the turn of the nineteenth century, whilst an "imperial Welshness" was discerned by Gwyn A Williams in his study of South Wales; moreover Prys Morgan picked up on this theme in examining late nineteenth century Welsh cultural identity.[21]

This dissertation expands on the relatively unexplored notion that an "imperial Welshness" emerged in the period. The focus will be on North Wales because so far this consideration has been given either to the whole nation (Morgan) or exclusively to South Wales (Williams). It will be demonstrated that the Empire informed nationalist thought even in the region of Wales with fewer obvious connections to it. It will be argued that North Walian scholars and print media between 1880 and 1914 contributed to a re-imagining of the Welsh past as imperial. This will be informed by the work of Prys Morgan in *The Invention of Tradition*; which argued that Welsh history was often manipulated and re-written in

---

[18] L. Colley, *Britons: Forging the Nation 1707-1837*, (London: Vintage, 1996); J. G. A. Pocock, *The discovery of islands: essays in British history*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005); K. Robbins, *Nineteenth Century Britain: Integration and Diversity: The Ford Lectures Delivered in the University of Oxford 1986-1987*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1988); H. Kearney, *The British Isles: A History of Four Nations*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995); D. Cannadine, *Ornamentalism: How the British Saw Their Empire*, (London: Allen Lane, 2001)

[19] A. Jones and B. Jones 'The Welsh World and the British Empire, *c.*1851-1939: An Exploration'; R. Davies, *People, Places and Passions: "Pain and Pleasure": A Social History of Wales and the Welsh, 1870–1945* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2015), esp. chapter six

[20] J. S. Ellis, 'Making Owen Rhoscomyl (1863–1919): Biography, Welsh Identity and the British World', *Welsh History Review*, 26 (July 2013), 504

[21] G. A. Williams, *The Welsh in their History*, (London: Croom Helm, 1982), ch.7; Morgan, 'Keeping the Legends Alive', 19-41; A. Jones and B. Jones 'Empire and the Welsh press' in S. J. Potter (ed.), *Newspapers and Empire in Ireland and Britain: Reporting the British Empire, c.1857-1921* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2004)

order to suit a particular political, cultural or personal ambition. The second section will utilise sources including hitherto overlooked political pamphlets from the National Library of Wales and the Caernarfon Records Office, in North Wales to argue that nationalist political campaigns were partly aimed at achieving a bigger imperial role for Wales. However, acceptance of the British polity and Empire did not necessarily mean that a British identity was adopted. The final section will make use of recently digitised newspapers to argue that events in the Empire could legitimise equal status for the Welsh language; moreover that the language could be used to distance Wales from the unpopular aspects of the Empire.

Newspapers and political pamphlets are used throughout, their key limitation is arguably the difficulty in knowing whether or not opinions expressed in them actually represent the views of their readership.[22] With that in mind, this dissertation aims to assess the role of empire in the views of the more select group that wrote and influenced the views expressed in the public sphere. Liberal publications such as the *Carnarvon and Denbigh Herald* and *Baner ac Amserau Cymru* have been used as well as socialist ones such as *Y Cymro and Y Celt*. It is hoped that in doing so, the role of empire in the Nationalist movement will be revealed. In assessing the Welsh language, the power of language to manipulate discourse will be considered, a method not yet used by Welsh historians.[23] The regional focus will address the fact that Wales was not culturally homogeneous in our period; regional identities were important.[24]

---

[22] S. J. Potter 'Introduction', in Potter (ed.), *Newspapers Empire*

[23] S. Jaworska, 'The German Language in Poland: the Eternal Foe and the Wars on Words', in J. Carl and P. Stevenson (eds.), *Language, Discourse and Identity in Central Europe: The German Language in a Multilingual Space* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009)

[24] Smith, *Wales!*, 1; N. Evans, 'Gogs, Cardis and Hwntws: Regions, Nation and State in Wales, 1840-1940', in N. Evans (ed.), *National Identity in the British Isles* (Gwynedd: Centre for Welsh Studies, 1989)

Section One: historicising history

In *The Invention of Tradition*, Prys Morgan outlines how the Welsh linked themselves to the ancient "Celts" giving the Welsh a distinct history from the Anglo-Saxons.[25] Morgan expanded on this in a later essay in which he discussed the role of myths, how Welsh historians linked their "race" to the ancient Britons. They sometimes conceived of themselves as particularly Christian, and also as imperial. This applied to the Tudors, who themselves had emphasised their Welshness, and had subsequently been viewed as the founders of the Empire. This culminated in the idea of the "Gwerin" (folk): classless, industrious, Nonconformist people. They were sometimes anti-English but often sought equality within Britain. As an image it could motivate political action, and its apogee was the 1906 Liberal victory in all Welsh seats.[26] Neil Evans also considered the imperial in Welsh history writing; the aim here is to focus on the turn of the century and examine newspapers as well as history books. Evans concluded that most Welsh people were indifferent and ignorant of the Empire, and more interested in the medieval period.[27] This section will seek to show that a perception of Wales' past as imperial was more prevalent than Evans has suggested.

In our period the Welsh used their apparent link with the Celts to firmly attach their history to British history. Moreover the Welsh were imagined to have had a particularly important role in the foundation of the British Empire. The North Walian scholar, Sir John Rhys (professor of Celtic at Oxford from 1877) associated the image of the Celt with ancient Britain: 'In the struggle between the Kymry and the Angles...the kings of Gwynedd, doubtless, considered that both their power and their dignity were at stake. This is spoken of in Welsh literature as the Crown of Britain.'[28] The "Kymry" (i.e. "Cymry": Welsh people) were a war-like race and true inheritors of Britain, who had bravely fought against the "Angles". The Empire's greatness was portrayed as stemming partly from racial mixing in

---

[25] P. Morgan, 'From a Death to a View: The Hunt for the Welsh Past in the Romantic Period', in E. Hobsbawn and T. Ranger (eds.), *The Invention of Tradition* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 67-9
[26] P. Morgan, 'Keeping the Legends Alive'
[27] N. Evans, 'Writing Wales into the empire: rhetoric, fragments – and beyond?', 18
[28] J. Rhys, *Celtic Britain* (London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 1882), 132

Britain: 'the blood of the sons of Gwalia has mingled with that of the Saxon in cementing an Empire on which the sun never sets.'[29] The "Teutonic" English and "Celtic" Welsh, Irish and Scottish were sometimes said to create an even mixture of races in the Empire.[30] In North Wales the Welsh and English were perceived to be subtly different races who lived side-by-side. Their mixing racially, as well as politically, contributed to the Empire's glory. It was said Bangor University history degrees gave students access to the 'great Anglo-Celtic Empire'. The Celtic invasion of Britain is described as 'an invasion which is still proceeding', which contrasts with rhetoric stressing racial miscegenation and harmony.[31] An expanding Welsh involvement in the Empire was conflated with historical Celtic involvement in Britain. History could thus be used to imply a Whig, teleological destiny for the Welsh to be the inheritors of the British Empire.

The North Walian historian Owen Edwards wrote some of the most famous books on Welsh history in the period. He presented Wales' present situation as a happy compromise: 'Edward thought that Britain ought to be united: Llywelyn thought Wales ought to be free. Now, happily, we have the union and the freedom.'[32] Edward I conquered Wales in the thirteenth century, defeating the Welsh prince, Llywelyn. Edwards also points out that many Welsh archers fought on the side of the English invaders. When conflict with England was addressed, imagined racial differences between the English and Welsh were downplayed. Yet when the Welsh role in the Empire was emphasised they were said to have enriched it with their Celtic influence. Edwards conveyed a sense of bitterness when he wrote that 'Until quite recently' Welsh culture and language were seen 'as a source of weakness to the Empire rather than of strength...as political misfortunes.'[33] Edwards may be alluding to Wales' nineteenth century experience of education and judicial reforms during which numerous officials had

---

[29] NLW: GB 0210 HERBLEW, File: D20 Welsh nationalism, 'Welsh Nationality', (Liverpool: Isaac Foulkes, 1892), 15

[30] 'The Influence of the Celt in the Making of Britain', *CDH,* 28 December 1888

[31] 'University College of North Wales, Bangor', *CDH,* 5 July 1895

[32] O. Edwards, *A Short History of Wales* (London: T. Fisher Unwin, 1909), 55

[33] Edwards, *Short History*, 118-119

expressed doubts about the viability of the Welsh language.[34] Many may have stressed Wales'

significance to Britain and the Empire because they wanted to counter previous judgements of Wales

as being a hindrance.

Welsh and English laws and customs were said to have originated independently and later mixed. One

article in *Y Celt* went as far as to claim that 'Mae rhan fwyaf o gyfreithiau Prydain wedi eu sylfaenu

oddiar gyfreithiau Hywel Dda.' ('Most of Britain's laws are based on the laws of Hywel Dda.')[35], a

medieval Welsh king who codified Wales' laws. Alternatively ancient Welsh laws and those of England

were said to have simply 'mixed'.[36] The MP Ellis Davies, claimed that Hywel Dda's laws demonstrated

Wales' long-standing cultural independence from England:

> 'Mr Davies urged those present to take more interest in the history of their ancestors,
> because such a study could not fail to endow them with self-respect, and it might
> engender self-confidence and help the nation to take its proper place in the Empire, in
> the building up of which it had certainly done its fair share.'[37]

The use of 'certainly' is useful here; it may be there was still a hint of resentment that the Welsh had

not been credited with the role in imperial history they felt they deserved. The cultural richness and

uniqueness of the Welsh past was often emphasised because of its contribution to the Empire. Hywel

Dda was sometimes invoked by the conservative press to stress continuity and the lasting union of the

Church in Wales and England, but was also invoked by the Liberal press, which catered to the dominant

Liberal Nonconformist, nationalist identity in North Wales.[38] Hywel Dda's invocation is significant; it

was a way of using a more popular part of Welsh history to portray Wales as an imperial nation. This

casts doubt on the division between imperial and medieval history that Neil Evans suggested.

---

[34] M. E. Jones, '"An invidious attempt to accelerate the extinction of our language"', *Welsh history review,* 19 (December 1998), 226-264

[35] Unless stated otherwise, all translations have been carried out by the candidate. '"Y Sais, Y Boer, A'r Cymro"', *Y Celt* (hereafter YC), 2 March 1900

[36] NLW: GB 0210 HERBLEW, File: D20 Welsh nationalism, 'Welsh Nationality', (Liverpool: Isaac Foulkes, 1892), 15

[37] 'Some Welsh Ideals', *CDH,* 3 January 1908

[38] 'The Antiquity and Continuity of the British Church', *NWC*, 1 July 1899

The Tudors were also often depicted as the Welsh founders of the British Empire. They were said to have acceded to the 'British throne', credited with having 'raised Britain from her insular position to be Imperial Britain.'[39] It was also often claimed that the royal family were Welsh because of Tudor descent: 'the blood Royal of old Wales' from the Tudors flowed through the current royal family which held 'the Imperial Throne of the British Empire.'[40] Pride was to be taken in Wales' enduring loyalty to the ancient royal family. It was said the Tudors were

> 'The only family in the world that could claim descent from the princely house both of North and of South Wales was the present Royal House that ruled over the British Empire, whose representatives would come to Carnarvon as the representatives of the ancient lines of Gwynedd and Deheudir.'[41]

The North of Wales is also represented here as being the original home of the royals and birthplace of the Empire. This sentiment was probably fuelled by build-up to the investiture ceremony of the Prince of Wales in Caernarfon in 1911. John Ellis has portrayed it as the last powerful expression of a romantically imagined Wales before 1914.[42] Commonly the implication was that the Welsh were responsible for empire because of their claim to the royal family through the Tudors. It followed therefore that the Welsh ought to remain loyal to the Tudors' creation: 'So we, of all the kindreds of the Empire, should be most in place in swearing in the Heir-Apparent of the Empire.'[43] Indeed, royal connections were emphasised by those seeking to rehabilitate the Elizabethan house of Plas Mawr in Conwy, North Wales.[44]

Nationalist writers or historians with similar agendas wanted Wales to be justly credited with the larger role it had truly played in the Empire. Welsh identity was not anti-imperial; the nationalist movement was, arguably, about achieving parity for Wales in the Empire as part of Britain. Resentment is directed not towards the Empire, but at the exclusion of the Welsh from it. In the same

---

[39] 'The Memory of the Kymric Dead', *CDH,* 26 May 1899
[40] 'Welsh Notes and News', *NWC,* 23 January 1892
[41] 'A Welsh National Valhalla', *CDH,* 16 September 1910
[42] Ellis, 'The prince and the dragon', 272-294
[43] 'The New Prince of Wales', *CDH,* 27 May 1910
[44] NLW: HRC7/3, H., Clarence Whaite and Lily F. Whaite Papers: Papers relating to Plas Mawr, 'The Royal Cambrian Academy of Art: General Outline of Scheme'

way we shall see how many who campaigned for Home Rule were not secessionists. An address given to the Welsh National Society in Liverpool expressed this:

> 'England's glory is our heritage and our birthright, as much at least as that of any other national element of which our Empire is made up. We do not mean to renounce our share in that heritage; we do not mean to surrender our claims to a portion of that glory...We have buried old jealousies and old antipathies in a grave out of which there is no resurrection. We are true as steel to what is now an old alliance, but we have not lost our national individuality, and we do not mean to lose it. Its cultivation is not antagonistic to that union of hearts between the different races of the Empire which is essential to the peace and prosperity of all.'[45]

Wales was portrayed as having a claim to the success which England enjoyed. Here, the past is not presented as having been peaceful or amicable, but any animosities are said to have vanished. Loyalty is again important. Not just to England, but to the British Empire. Welsh nationalism celebrated the difference between the Welsh and the English, but not separateness. In the larger context of Empire, no-one had any reason to doubt why they could not coexist. Indeed, 'union' seemed to have brought untold benefits to Wales. Wales' project of national rehabilitation was to claim its rightful share of and place in the Empire. The suggestion here is that Wales would be unable to do this if it remained an anonymous part of Britain. The Empire was not a place for the Welsh to assimilate into the English; within it they could cultivate their 'individuality'. There is a sense that Wales' current success was deserved, that it had been earned because Wales had been loyal and true to an 'old alliance' with England. The suffering and subjugation of the past was now behind them, and had now been forgotten in the union of countries and races basking in the glory of the British Imperial sun.

In stressing their contribution to the Empire there was inconsistency in the Welsh historical rhetoric. It was not clear whether the Welsh and English were meant to be racially mixed; or whether they were separate but equal races striving together for the common good. Wales' historical connections to the Empire were said to have been in the medieval period. Less is said of Victorian achievements, probably because of the hostility some Welsh people had encountered towards their culture. The easiest

---

[45] NLW: GB 0210 HERBLEW, File: D20 Welsh nationalism, 'Welsh Nationality', (Liverpool: Isaac Foulkes, 1892), 16

imperial connection to make therefore, was to argue that the Welsh formed the bedrock of the Empire because of Tudor and medieval connections. Prys Morgan points out that this historical re-imagining had been stimulated by the nationalist movement, especially the Cymru Fydd (Young Wales) group.[46] It is to that political movement which we now turn.

---

[46] P. Morgan, 'Keeping the Legends Alive', 37

Section Two: politics and empire

To-date one of the only comprehensive studies of an "imperial Welshness" is Gwyn Williams' chapter on imperial South Wales. In this essay he concluded that South Wales with its global shipping and export connections carried the rest of Wales – Nonconformist, radical, concerned with education – on its 'indifferent back'.[47] Disestablishment of the Church in Wales and Home Rule were two political goals which many Liberal nationalists from across Wales took up. Arguably these political goals persisted for longer in North Wales because it was slower to adopt the politics of labour and trade unionism. The high point of these political movements came in the 1890s when "Cymru Fydd" (Young Wales) was established and campaigned for separate political institutions for Wales. It successfully merged with the North Wales Liberal Federation, but its grassroots membership was divided and after failing to merge with the South Wales Liberal Federation in 1896 it collapsed.[48] The focus in this section will be on Cymru Fydd's aims which continued after its demise. Its successor organisation was the Welsh Nationalist League. This section will argue that this campaign in North Wales largely viewed its goals as achievable within the British Empire. The notion that nationalists who did not condemn the Empire therefore identified as British will be contested.[49] Equally, the notion that Welsh nationalists were anti-imperial because of their hostility to being exploited by the "English" will be challenged.[50]

The Irish context should be acknowledged here, where nationalists had analogous goals. As the clamour for Welsh disestablishment grew from 1880, sympathy for the Irish nationalists grew; where disestablishment had been achieved in 1869.[51] However there was also a tendency in Wales for people to contrast themselves favourably with the unruly Irish as a respectable people of the United Kingdom.

---

[47] Williams, *Welsh History*, 184-185

[48] C. A. Davies, *Welsh Nationalism in the Twentieth Century: The Ethnic Option and the Modern State* (New York; London: Praeger, 1989), 12-13

[49] M. G. H. Pittock, *Celtic Identity and the British image* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1999), 106

[50] K. Bohata, *Postcolonialism Revisited: Writing Wales in English* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2004), chapter 3

[51] D. Howell, 'A "Less Obtrusive and Exacting" Nationality: Welsh Ethnic Mobilisation in Rural Communities, 1850-1920', in D. Howell (ed.) in collaboration with G. V. Pistohlkors and E. Wiengandt, *Roots of Rural Ethnic Mobilisation* (Comparative Studies on Governments and non-Dominant Ethnic Groups in Europe, 1850-1940, 8: Aldershot: Dartmouth; New York: New York University Press, 1993), 65, 73

Comparisons between Ireland and Wales in this period have been carried out, and scholars such as Paul O'Leary have contended that the differences between the nations were greater than the similarities.[52] The imperial aspect has received more attention in the historiography on Ireland.[53] H.V. Brasted has argued that Irish nationalists were divided over the Empire: with some calling for total separation; others for the status quo; and some who were ambivalent and wanted self-rule.[54] A full comparison of the two is precluded from this study because of contextual differences. What is clear is that the contingent who called for total Irish separation from the Empire had virtually no equivalent in Wales.

It would be easy to characterise Welsh Home Rule advocates as anti-imperial; North Walian nationalists criticised the Empire in the 1840s and 1920s.[55] Welsh Home Rule advocates did not necessarily support secession. Towards the end of our period, a pamphlet of the manifesto of the Welsh Nationalist League (successor to Cymru Fydd), circulated in North Wales stated:

> 'The League does not intend binding itself to either Individualism or Socialism, nor either to Liberal Imperialism or Little Englandism, and it may be generally said...that the league will attempt – for the present at any rate – to steer between the tenets of those Liberals who are termed Imperialists and those termed Whigs on the one hand, and the beliefs of the Independent Labour Party on the other...'.[56]

This warns us against the generalisation that nationalists who were not critical of the Empire were therefore pro-imperial. Certainly some radicals were critical of the actions of the British Empire, as we

---

[52] O'Leary 'Accommodation and Resistance', 123; for comparative studies see: M. Cragoe, 'Conscience or coercion? Clerical influence at the general election of 1868 in Wales', *Past and Present*, 149 (1995); P. M. H. Bell, *Disestablishment in Wales and Ireland* (London: Church Historical Society by S.P.C.K., 1969)

[53] S. Howe, *Ireland and empire: colonial legacies in Irish history and culture* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000); K. Jeffrey (ed.), *'An Irish empire'?: aspects of Ireland and the British Empire* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1996); J. M. Mackenzie (ed.), *Imperialism and popular culture* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1986)

[54] H. V. Brasted, 'Irish Nationalism and the British Empire in the Late Nineteenth Century', in O. MacDonagh, W. F. Mandle and P. Travers (eds.), *Irish Culture and Nationalism, 1750-1950* (London: Macmillan: Humanities Research Centre; Canberra: Australian National University, 1983)

[55] D. Tudur, 'The Life, Thought and Work of Michael Daniel Jones (1822-1898)', (PhD thesis, University of Wales, Bangor, 2006), 171; E. Williams, 'The Social and Political Thought of Saunders Lewis', (PhD thesis, University of Wales, Cardiff, 2013), 250-251

[56] Caernarfon, Caernarfon Record Office (hereafter CRO): XM/2023/2, 'Manifesto of the Welsh Nationalist League re Home Rule for the people of Wales January 21st 1911'

shall see in section three. Some wanted to avoid exploitation. The reluctance to identify primarily as 'Imperialists' is not necessarily a rejection of the Empire; rather, it displays an indifferent attitude. The Conservatives opposed disestablishment and Home Rule; while Gladstone was broadly sympathetic to disestablishment this was not true of most of the Liberal Party. The quote reminds us that Welsh MPs calling for disestablishment and especially Home Rule were on the political margins. Nationalists in the Liberal Party tried to differentiate themselves from its other members. We must be aware that this was a very small campaign.[57] If anti-imperial rhetoric was lacking in this extreme faction, it was unlikely to have existed widely in North Wales. The campaigners for Home Rule, including the "father" of Welsh nationalism, Michael D Jones, rarely called for independence, they usually called for "hunan-lywodraeth" (self-government).[58]

It seems nationalists in North Wales wanted increased power within the structure of the Empire. Independence would imply a total break from empire. A pamphlet entitled 'Ysbryd Glyndwr' (Spirit of Glyndwr) advocating Home Rule consciously warned against pro-independence language:

> 'Nid ydym yn cwbl hoffi y gair annibynol – mae swn her ynddo. Gwell fuasai genym y gair di-ddibynol. | Hwyrach mai y gair *Rhydd* ac nid annibynol a osodai allan oreu natur Plaid Genedlaethol.' ('We do not completely like this word independent – it is too provocative. We would prefer the word non-dependent. | Perhaps the word *free* and not independent sets out the nature of the National Party.')[59]

The evidence that nationalists were not concerned with independence is further backed up by newspaper reports that stressed their aim was to create some kind of federal system that would bind the United Kingdom more closely together.[60] This supports what little has been written about the Welsh Home Rule movement – that its adherents rarely outwardly supported independence; and that

---

[57] D. Howell 'A "Less Obtrusive and Exacting" Nationality', 66-67

[58] D. Tudur, 'The Life, Thought and Work of Michael Daniel Jones (1822-1898)', 190; CRO: XM/2474/74, 'Plaid Genedlaethol Cymru. Amcanion.'

[59] NLW: MS 21910E, Welsh Nationalist League papers, 1911-1912, 'Ysbryd Glyndwr neu Y Cledd Lle Metho Hedd: gan "Iorweth Feddyg" (Aelod o'r Cyngrhair Cenedlaethol Cymreig) y'nghyda Chaldef gan Eifion Wyn', (Wrexham: Hughes a'i Fab Cyhoeddwyr, 1911), 16

[60] 'Home Rule for Wales', *CDH* 20 January 1888; 'Home Rule or Disestablishment', *CDH,* 4 April 1890; 'Home Rule All Round', *CDH,* 18 March 1898

its goals varied greatly.[61] It is possible nationalists moderated their views tactically in order to have a broader appeal, in which case, suggests there was a perception that the public were more sympathetic to the Empire than the nationalists were. Local political pamphlets can therefore potentially shed light on the views of its intended readership, but without accurate circulation information this is very difficult to ascertain. Further research would be able to support or contradict this reading. The impression is given that they viewed the Empire as a fact of politics, but that was not their main focus. Therefore the nationalists' attitude towards it comes across as ambivalent.

Nationalist publications may have been largely neutral towards the Empire; but separation (rather than independence) from the British State and "English" Church was sought. A manifesto for the Welsh Nationalist League which circulated in North Wales called for 'the most perfect Autonomy possible for Wales.' The 'English Church' was described as 'alien and anti-national in its establishment and traditions.'[62] The invective is reserved for England rather than Britain or the Empire. An 1890s Cymru Fydd pamphlet suggested there were poor relations and communication between the Welsh and English. Yet again, a racial distinction is made between the two, when it aimed to make 'the rights of our race better known among Englishmen.' One of Cymru Fydd's stated aims was 'to organise the Welsh vote in English centres', again the chief divide is between Welsh and English.[63] This subtle use of "English" to describe disagreeable British policies and institutions will be explored in section three. However, there was very little antagonism towards the Empire displayed in its language. This warns us against conflating a nationalist view of Wales being a proper and important part of the Empire with any overriding sense of "Britishness". This casts doubt on Pittock's suggestion that Welsh nationalists who accepted empire also saw themselves as British.[64] In North Wales, nationalists were content with elevating Wales' position within the British polity and Empire. We should not assume that there was

---

[61] D. Howell, 'A "Less Obtrusive and Exacting" Nationality', 83-89
[62] CRO: XM/2023/2, 'Manifesto of the Welsh Nationalist League re Home Rule for the people of Wales January 21st 1911'
[63] CRO: XM/10478, 'The "Cymru Fydd" League (Leader)'
[64] Pittock, *Celtic Identity*, 106

a homogeneous attitude to the Empire, positions ranged greatly. It probably was easier to be enthusiastic about the past glory of the Empire rather than its present role. However, this did not mean that it had no political value for the nationalists.

Potter has suggested that British colonies rarely provided a natural yardstick against which the Irish could measure their own position.[65] In North Wales it seems the Empire provided some political campaigners with tangible examples of disestablished churches:

> 'But, as the colonies obtained self-government, a movement was everywhere commenced for terminating this state [aid]...and adopting the principles of religious equality; and at the present time in all our larger dependencies except India...all traces of the former connection between Church and State have been swept away, and with the happiest results.'[66]

The implication is that self-government allowed colonists to fulfil their ambition of ending state aid to the Church. For the disestablishment movement, the Empire was not a hindrance: it was a source of inspiration. Colonies provided a model which Wales should follow. The fact that disestablishment 'is everywhere the settled policy of the British Empire', suggests the autonomy given to the colonies was seen as legitimising Welsh disestablishment. The pamphlet complains that the failure to disestablish the Church in India is particularly unfair given the 1858 royal proclamation which guaranteed religious equality.[67] India's inclusion suggests Welsh nationalists saw equivalent struggles anywhere in the Empire regardless of race or religion. A North Walian League pamphlet advocated the establishment of branches overseas 'in one of the British Colonies or Dependencies or in a Foreign Country'.[68] The distinction made between the Empire and foreign countries suggests Welsh nationalists saw themselves as part of a transnational community that included "our" Empire first, and the rest of the

---

[65] S. J. Potter, 'Introduction' in Potter (ed.), *Newspapers Empire*, 15

[66] NLW: GB 0210 HERBLEW, File: D20 Welsh nationalism, 'The Test of Experience: of the results of Disestablishment in America and the Colonies' (London: Society for the Liberation of Religion from State-Patronage and Control, 1892), 15

[67] NLW: GB 0210 HERBLEW, File: D20 Welsh nationalism, 'The Test of Experience: of the results of Disestablishment in America and the Colonies' (London: Society for the Liberation of Religion from State-Patronage and Control, 1892), 24

[68] CRO: XM/2023/2, 'Manifesto of the Welsh Nationalist League re Home Rule for the people of Wales January 21st 1911'

world second. One booklet saw no objection to Welsh MPs taking the highest imperial offices once Home Rule for Wales had been achieved.[69] The Empire was a multinational, political arena in which Welshmen had a right to participate; Home Rule was a means to widening this participation.

For North Walian nationalists, the Empire was an unavoidable element of politics. Ambivalence and pragmatism characterised the nationalist response to Empire in political writing in North Wales. Nationalist groups like Cymru Fydd and the League advocated some kind of self-government, not independence or secession from the Empire. Comparing the attitude to empire in political pamphlets with history writing we can see that there was little agreement or common view. While outright condemnation of the Empire seems to have been absent, opinions varied from adulation to complete indifference. Identification with similar political aims across the Empire warns us against describing any Welsh nationalists as anti-imperial. On the other hand it is equally clear from anti-English sentiment that, contrary to Pittock's argument, an acceptance of the British state and Empire did not necessarily mean an acceptance of a "British" identity. We shall see this to be the case when we turn to the relationship between language and Empire.

---

[69] NLW: MS 21910E, Nationalist papers, 'Ysbryd Glyndwr', 18

Section Three: language and empire

While many historians consider the Welsh language they rarely connect it with the Empire.[70] Those who have stress either the status of English as the language of the Empire and opportunity, or its use as an imperial tool to dominate the Welsh.[71] Janet Davies pointed out that "Cymro" and "Sais" nominally referred to a Welsh-speaker and an Anglophone respectively; but when extended to describe Welshman and Englishman it was implied that only Welsh speakers were part of the Welsh nation, a 'suggestion fraught with controversy and bitterness.'[72] As noted in the introduction use of the Welsh language was declining yet the number of Welsh speakers remained high in North Wales, which possibly exacerbated the impacts of the Education Act 1870 and exclusion of Welsh from courts. It will be argued that a rejection of the English language did not necessarily mean a rejection of the British Empire. Furthermore, consideration of language's 'structural-functional power', hitherto overlooked by historians of Wales, will show how Welsh commentators could use the Welsh language to dissociate Wales from the unpopular elements of empire.[73]

From the mid-nineteenth century, the North Walian nationalist Michael D. Jones had campaigned for the establishment of a Welsh colony to protect its language, culture, and religion. In 1865 Welsh settlers arrived in Patagonia, Argentina. By the end of the century a thriving colony had been established in which Welsh had a wider use than in Wales, expanding beyond the home and chapel. At this time the Welsh community was made to accept Spanish in their schools. The resentment it stirred up demonstrates the anger people felt in Wales at the treatment of their language:

> 'Ffoi rhag gorthwm a thraha y Sais, I wlad RYDD I gadw'n fyw ein hiaith a'n defion, dyna ran o gyffes ffydd cefnogwyr y Wladfa.' (We fled the oppression and arrogance of the

---

[70] Evans, 'Gogs, Cardis and Hwntws'; Davies, *Welsh Language*; T. Nairn, *The Break-Up of Britain: Crisis and Neo-Nationalism* (London: Verso, 1981); I. G. Jones 'Language and Community in Nineteenth Century Wales', in D. Smith (ed.), *A People and Proletariat: Essays in the History of Wales 1780-1980* (London: Pluto in association with Llafur, The Society for the Study of Welsh Labour History, 1980)

[71] D. Howell, 'A "Less Obtrusive and Exacting" Nationality', 79; C. H. Williams 'Separatism and the Mobilisation of Welsh National Identity', in C. H. Williams (ed.), *National Separatism* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1982), 153; Roberts, '"Under the Hatches"', 193

[72] Davies, *Welsh Language*, 56

[73] Jaworska, 'The German Language in Poland: the Eternal Foe and the Wars on Words'

English to a FREE country in order to keep our language and customs, which is part of the declaration of faith which supporters of the Colony made.').[74]

It is clear, then, that many Welsh emigrants had left because of a grievance against the British government's failure to cater for Welsh monoglots. In the North Wales press it was invariably described as a 'Welsh' rather than a 'British' enterprise; the Empire rarely included Patagonia. In reportage on Patagonia, empire is conspicuous by its absence.[75] Animosity towards the English language and race had led to the establishment of a colony of Welsh settlers who wanted to preserve their language. The North Wales press (English and Welsh language) identified them as Welsh almost exclusively; their endeavour was portrayed as one of refuge, not imperialism.

The *Baner ac Amserau Cymru* characteristically reported that the governor of Patagonia warned people not to call the Welsh settlers 'English' as they would become very angry. Yet when asked to speak Spanish, they retort that they are British subjects.[76] Having fled Britain to gain linguistic freedom, the colonists were prepared to use their clout as British subjects to protect their right to speak Welsh in Argentina. Robert Owen Jones points out that the settlement in Patagonia was the only one which successfully preserved the Welsh language, and was also the only one not under the 'British flag'.[77] However, political animosity towards the Empire does not seem to have been present. When the Argentine state intruded on Patagonian Welsh education, the Welsh colonists petitioned for their area to be recognised as British territory.[78] Moreover, initial attempts to establish a Welsh colony had considered Vancouver Island as a viable spot. The Welsh settlers were fleeing the English language not the British Empire. Their use of their British rights was to protect their status as Welsh-speaking colonists; it should not be taken as subscription to a broader British identity. The wish to flee

---

[74] *Y Drafod,* 30 June 1899 quoted in and translated by R. O. Jones, 'The Welsh Language in Patagonia', in G. H. Jenkins, *Language and Community in the Nineteenth Century* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1998), 313

[75] 'Patagonia', *CDH,* 23 July 1897; 'The Welsh Colony in Patagonia', *CDH,* 23 May 1902; 'Welshmen and the British Empire', *CDH,* 27 January 1893; 'The Welsh in Patagonia', *CDH,* 14 December 1894

[76] 'Cymry Patagonia', *Y Baner ac Amserau Cymru* (hereafter BAC)*,* 28 October 1896

[77] R. O. Jones 'The Welsh Language in Patagonia', 290

[78] 'The Welsh Colony in Patagonia', *NWC,* 28 January 1899

linguistic assimilation seems to have been strongest in North Wales, which had supplied and trained most of its ministers; and in the early twentieth century a majority of Patagonia's immigrants.[79]

Language was not only used to distance the Patagonian settlement from the British; Welsh could also be used to frame discourse on topics not confined to language issues directly. At the time of the Boer War, many described the Empire not as "Prydeining" (British) but as that of the "Sais" (English). "Sais" was used by radical publications to distance themselves from the empire, and "Brytheinig" (British) to link themselves to its achievements and civilisation. In an article published in *Y Celt* (a radical Welsh-language newspaper published in Bangor, North Wales), Mr D. Roberts called for a pure and free country for the Boers. On the British intervention in South Africa he wrote:'Nis gallaf fi weled gwaith y Saeson yn ddim llai na gwanc y Llew...Ysglyfaethodd y Sais ein gwlad oddiarnom ni y Cymry.' ('I cannot see the work of the English as anything less than the greed of the lion...The English tore our country from us Welsh.') He asserts that the 'Sais' were trying 'i daflu dirmyg a drefedigaeth fechan ond dewr y Transvaal.' ('to throw contempt at the small but brave colony of the Transvaal.') However, when speaking of the positive achievements of the British Empire in the same article Roberts is quite happy to describe it as such:

> 'Dywedir yn aml fod Prydain Fawr ar ben y rhestr mewn gwareiddiad. Ni does genyf gwrthwynebiad I hyn. Ond y mae genyf un wrthwynebiad I feddwl am fynydyn mai Sais a ddaeth a hyn i fod. Maw dylanwad y genedl Gymreig, er mor fechan, wedi ac I'w deimloyn Mhrydain.' ('It is often said that Great Britain topped the list of civilisations. I do not oppose this. But I have an opposition to the thought that it was the English that brought this about. The influence of the Welsh nation, despite being small, was and has been felt in Britain.')[80]

When the Empire is portrayed in a bad light it is described as being "English", but when portrayed as the greatest civilisation in the world it is "British", made possible only by a crucial contribution from the Welsh. The implication that the Boer War was an "English" war was common to several North

---

[79] R. O. Jones 'The Welsh Language in Patagonia', 301; G. Williams, *The Desert and the Dream: A Study of Welsh Colonization in Chubut, 1865-1915* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1975), 155
[80] '"Y Sais, Y Boer, A'r Cymro"',*YC,* 2 March 1900

Walian Welsh-language publications.[81] Language was not necessarily the issue here, but the Welsh language could be utilised to subtly display a difference between the Welsh and the English and to present a Welsh relationship to the Empire that was wholly positive. Culpability for its negative global impacts belonged to the English, while the Welsh had helped to make it civilised. This may or may not always have been a conscious decision on the part of authors. It was undoubtedly compounded by habitual references to Britain as England in English-language media. The widespread use of language in this way was disseminated through print media and may have helped to foster a sense that the Empire that was paradoxically both alien to Wales, and (in part) produced by it. Certainly the re-imagining of the Welsh past as imperial in a completely positive way was linked to the denial that the Welsh had played any significant part in the Boer War.

During the Boer War, the irony of the British government prohibiting Boers to use Dutch while doing the equivalent in Wales was not lost on commentators: 'One of the reasons alleged for the war is that the Boers insisted that Dutch should be the only official language in the Transvaal. The English residents find the rule very irksome but few of those who shout for war, recognise what Wales has suffered, and still suffers from a similar grievance.'[82] One newspaper report suggested that the outrage caused by this irony led to a resolution in parliament being passed that allowed Welsh schools to communicate with the Education Department in Welsh.[83] One column wryly noted that the jingoistic arguments used to criticise the Boers, were also applicable to Britain. This included an unelected chamber in parliament, landlord privileges, and the use of only one language in government, by excluding Welsh and Gaelic.[84] The use of the Welsh language remained high in North Wales, which may have meant its exclusion was a more acute problem there. The function of empire here was to illustrate liberal arguments in favour of reforming the education system of Wales. While

---

[81] 'Prydain a'r Transvaal', *YC,* 15 June 1900; 'Cromwell a Kruger', *Y Cymro,* 23 November 1899; 'Congl Y Beirdd', *Yr Wythnos a'r Eryr,* 28 February 1900; 'Rhyfel Y Boer a'r Brython', *BAC,* 8 March 1902
[82] 'The Language Difficulty', *CDH,* 9 February 1900
[83] 'The Language Difficulty', *CDH,* 16 February 1900
[84] '"Beati Pacificatores"', *CDH,* 6 October 1899

a study of Irish responses to the Boer War has been undertaken, a fuller study which did the equivalent for the Welsh press would be welcome.[85] For North Walians, who (as seen by the emigration to Patagonia) may have felt that their language was under threat, the situation in South Africa made for particularly potent irony.

As in section two we have seen how North Walians saw the Empire as a political arena separate from cultural rebirth or Welsh expansion overseas. The Empire could protect the distinctly "Welsh" and non-imperial colony in Patagonia, and provide examples to highlight cultural controversies over the treatment of the Welsh language, as it had done for political campaigns. Revealingly, the way language was used suggests that North Walians wanted to be associated with the Empire, as history-writing also shows. Further study of Welsh print media would show whether the use of language to distance the Welsh from unpopular imperialism was a linguistic tactic used by nationalists, or simply an unconscious feature of Welsh-language writing. Language as a tool allowed the Welsh press to dissociate its audience with unpopular elements of the British Empire and vice versa. In this way it was able to subtly imply that the Welsh were better imperialists.

[85] D. Lowry, 'Nationalist and unionist responses to the British empire in the age of the South African War, 1899-1902' in Potter (ed.), *Newspapers Empire*

Conclusion

For much of the twentieth century North Wales was to be the hot-bed of Welsh nationalism, indicated by voting patterns in referenda and general elections and local expressions of anti-English sentiment.[86] It is true that resentment at the treatment of Welsh culture was shown in history writing, political pamphlets, and in efforts to protect the Welsh language. To conclude that North Walian nationalists were therefore anti-imperial would be wrong. There was great enthusiasm for it displayed in history writing, to the extent that popular Welsh medieval history was re-cast as "imperial". Some went as far as to say that the English and Welsh had mixed, culturally and racially. Even those who had no enthusiasm for the "English" used the British polity to their advantage. This was true of settlers in Patagonia; those who satirically saw parallels to the Welsh experience in South Africa; and those who took inspiration from colonies which seemed to be more progressive than Wales in disestablishing their Churches and gaining Home Rule. Political campaigning and grumblings in the press complained of the failings of the British state. Empire was not their main focus, but they never suggested secession. Being pro-imperial did not necessarily mean identifying as British. Ethnically, the Welsh nationalists portrayed themselves as separate but equal to the English. This was portrayed by their history-writing which presented England and Wales as historically distinct, but complimentary; and of their political situation in which the Welsh were another people in the Empire which was displayed as a multinational, global community. A community in which the nationalists sought a greater role for Wales: their use of the Welsh language demonstrates how they wanted Wales to be associated with its positive aspects only.

A focus on North Wales reveals that in the area where one might expect to exist the most anti-imperialism there was actually very little. Empire was seen as a multinational, global, political entity in which the Welsh existed as a proud and distinct people who deserved a greater role. The disparity between the enthusiastic musings on Wales' historical imperial role and ambivalence toward the

---

[86] Pittock, *Celtic Identity,* 118

Empire in current politics reminds us to temper any generalisations. The nationalist "movement" was a small part of Liberal politics. This dissertation is a regional snapshot of a fringe movement, popular opinion did not support Home Rule, for example. Opinions expressed in leaflets and newspapers did not necessarily reflect those of the thousands of readers. We can draw from them what was believed to sell newspapers and persuade people of political arguments. It seems that anti-imperialism was not a sentiment that campaigners or newspaper commentators believed existed widely enough to warrant its promotion or vilification. While few condemned the Empire, the tone of responses has ranged greatly.

More research into North Walian nationalism may be able to confirm or cast doubt on our conclusions: nationalists saw themselves as "Welsh" rather than British, but felt comfortable in pursuing their distinct national goals through the Empire. Such work could also shine light on whether communities saw themselves as "British" and the extent to which people separated the political entity of the Empire from a wider imagined ethnic community. Use of sources such as diaries and private letters would allow us to discern whether the opinions expressed in newspapers and pamphlets were shared by their potential readers. Consideration should be given in future to the power of language and how Welsh could be used to frame topics (especially during conflicts) to appeal to certain audiences.

It is hoped that in exploring hitherto unasked questions using new archival evidence, it has been demonstrated that the Welsh were not victims of imperialist English interlopers. To read back anti-imperialism into the period would be a teleological fallacy. In fact, the Welsh nationalists far from being anti-imperial were complaining not against Empire, but their exclusion from it. The nationalists did not want to be part of an English imperial project; they wanted the United Kingdom's other peoples to have a fair share in it. What they wanted was a truly British Empire.

Bibliography

Primary

Aberystwyth, NLW: MS 21910E, Welsh Nationalist League papers, 'Ysbryd Glyndwr neu Y Cledd Lle Metho Hedd: gan "Iorweth Feddyg" (Aelod o'r Cyngrhair Cenedlaethol Cymreig) y'nghyda Chaldef gan Eifion Wyn', (Wrexham: Hughes a'i Fab Cyhoeddwyr, 1911).

Aberystwyth, NLW: GB 0210 HERBLEW, File: D20 Welsh nationalism, 'Welsh Nationality', (Liverpool: Isaac Foulkes, 1892).

Aberystwyth, NLW: GB 0210 HERBLEW, File: D20 Welsh nationalism, 'The Test of Experience: of the results of Disestablishment in America and the Colonies' (London: Society for the Liberation of Religion from State-Patronage and Control, 1892).

Aberystwyth, NLW: HRC7/3, H. Clarence Whaite and Lily F. Whaite Papers: Papers relating to Plas Mawr, 'The Royal Cambrian Academy of Art: General Outline of Scheme'.

Caernarfon, CRO: XM/2474/74, 'Amcanion Plaid Genedlaethol Cymru'.

Caernarfon, CRO: XM/10478, 'The "Cymru Fydd" League (Leader)'.

Caernarfon, CRO: XM/2023/2, 'Manifesto of the Welsh Nationalist League re Home Rule for the people of Wales January 21st 1911'.

Caernarfon, CRO: XM/2474/74, 'Plaid Genedlaethol Cymru. Amcanion'.

Edwards, O., *A Short History of Wales* (London: T. Fisher Unwin, 1909).

Rhys, J., *Celtic Britain* (London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 1882).

Welsh Newspapers Online

[http://newspapers.library.wales/]

Y Baner ac Amserau Cymru

Carnarvon and Denbigh Herald

Y Celt

Y Cymro

The North Wales Chronicle and Advertiser for the Principality

Yr Wythnos a'r Eryr

Secondary

Bell, P., M., H., *Disestablishment in Wales and Ireland*, (London: Church Historical Society by S.P.C.K., 1969).

Bohata, K., *Postcolonialism Revisited: Writing Wales in English*, (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2004) https://books.google.co.uk/books?id=mkKuBwAAQBAJ [accessed: 10/04/16].

Bridge, C., and K. Fedorowich, *The British World: Diaspora, Culture and Identity*, (London: Frank Cass, 2003). http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/03086530310001705606 [accessed: 16/03/16].

Bowen, H. V., *Wales and the British overseas empire: Interactions and influences, 1650-1830*, (Manchester: Manchester University Press; New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011).

Cannadine, D., *Ornamentalism: How the British Saw Their Empire*, (London: Allen Lane, 2001).

Carl, J., and Patrick Stevenson (eds.), *Language, Discourse and Identity in Central Europe: The German Language in a Multilingual Space*, (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009).

Colley, L., *Britons: Forging the Nation 1707-1837*, (London: Vintage, 1994).

Connolly, S. J., (ed.), *Kingdoms United? Great Britain and Ireland since 1500*, (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 1999).

Cragoe, M., 'Conscience or coercion? Clerical influence at the general election of 1868 in Wales', *Past and Present*, 149 (1995). http://www.jstor.org/stable/651101 [accessed: 17/02/16].

Curtis, T., (ed.), *Wales: The Imagined Nation: Essays in Cultural and National Identity*, (Bridgend: Poetry Wales, 1996).

Davies, J., *The Welsh Language*, (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1993).

Davies, C. A., *Welsh Nationalism in the Twentieth Century: The Ethnic Option and the Modern State*, (New York, London: Praeger, 1989).

Davies, R., *People, Places and Passions: "Pain and Pleasure": A Social History of Wales and the Welsh, 1870–1945*, (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2015) http://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctt17w8h74 [accessed: 20/02/16].

Ellis, J., S., 'Making Owen Rhoscomyl (1863–1919): Biography, Welsh Identity and the British World', *Welsh History Review*, 26 (July 2013), 482-511 http://www.ingentaconnect.com/content/uwp/whis/2013/00000026/00000003/art00006 [accessed: 18/02/16]

Ellis, J., S., 'The prince and the dragon: Welsh national identity and the 1911 investiture of the Prince of Wales', *Welsh history review,* 18 (December 1996), 272-294 272-294 1082967/article/000016748 [accessed: 17/03/16].

Evans, N., (ed.), *National Identity in the British Isles*, (Gwynedd: Centre for Welsh Studies, 1989).

Griffiths, N., 'Wales: England's oldest colony', *New Statesman*, (23 April 2007) http://www.newstatesman.com/politics/2007/04/welsh-language-wales-england [accessed: 30/03/16].

Hechter, M., *Internal Colonialism: the Celtic Fringe in British National Development, 1536-1966* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1975).

Hobsbawm, E., *The Age of Empire: 1875-1914* (London: Abacus, 1994).

Hobsbawn, Eric, and T. Ranger (eds.), *The Invention of Tradition* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992).

Howe, S., *Ireland and Empire: Colonial Legacies in Irish History and Culture* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000).

Howell, D., (ed.) in collaboration with G. V. Pistohlkors and E. Wiengandt, *Roots of Rural Ethnic Mobilisation* (Comparative Studies on Governments and non-Dominant Ethnic Groups in Europe, 1850-1940, 8: Aldershot: Dartmouth; New York: New York University Press, 1993).

Jeffrey, K., *'An Irish empire'?: aspects of Ireland and the British Empire* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1996).

Jenkins, G. H., *Language and Community in the Nineteenth Century* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1998).

Jones, M., E., '"An invidious attempt to accelerate the extinction of our language"', *Welsh history review,* 19 (December 1998), 226-264 1083764/article/000016784 [accessed: 18/03/16].

Kearney, H., *The British Isles: A History of Four Nations* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995).

MacDonagh, O., W. F. Mandle, and P. Travers, (eds.), *Irish Culture and Nationalism, 1750-1950* (London: Macmillan: Humanities Research Centre; Canberra: Australian National University, 1983).

Mackenzie, J. M., (ed.), *Imperialism and popular culture,* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1986).

Morgan, K. O., *Rebirth of a Nation: Wales 1880-1980* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1981).

Morgan, K., O., *Wales in British Politics, 1868-1922* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1980).

Nairn, T., *The Break-Up of Britain: Crisis and Neo-Nationalism* (London: Verso, 1981).

Pittock, M., G., H., *Celtic Identity and the British image* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1999).

Pocock, J., G., A., *The discovery of islands: essays in British history* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005) http://dx.doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511614873 [accessed: 10/04/16].

Potter, S. J., (ed.), *Newspapers and Empire in Ireland and Britain: Reporting the British Empire,* c.*1857-1921* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2004).

Robbins, K., *Nineteenth Century Britain: Integration and Diversity: The Ford Lectures Delivered in the University of Oxford 1986-1987* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1988).

Schwarz, B., *The Expansion of England: Race, ethnicity and cultural history* (London: Routledge, 1996).

Smith, D., (ed.), *A People and Proletariat: Essays in the History of Wales 1780-1980* (London: Pluto in association with Llafur, The Society for the Study of Welsh Labour History, 1980).

Smith, D., *Wales! Wales?*, (London: Allen & Unwin, 1984).

Thomas, B., 'A Cauldron of Rebirth: Population and the Welsh Language in the Nineteenth Century', *Welsh history review Cylchgrawn hanes Cymru*, 13 (December 1987), 418-437 http://welshjournals.llgc.org.uk/browse/viewobject/llgc-id:1079586/article/000016658 [accessed: 02/02/2016].

Thomas, N., *The Welsh Extremist*, (London: Gollancz, 1971).

Tudur, D., 'The Life, Thought and Work of Michael Daniel Jones (1822-1898)', (PhD thesis, University of Wales, Bangor, 2006) http://e.bangor.ac.uk/4373/1/429843 [accessed: 18/03/16].

Williams, G., *The Desert and the Dream: A Study of Welsh Colonization in Chubut, 1865-1915*, (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1975).

Williams, C., H., (ed.), *National Separatism*, (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1982).

Williams, E., 'The Social and Political Thought of Saunders Lewis', (PhD thesis, University of Wales, Cardiff, 2013) http://orca.cf.ac.uk/54521/1/U584622 [accessed: 18/03/16].

Williams, G., A., *The Welsh in their History*, (London: Croom Helm, 1982).

Williams, G., A., *When Was Wales?: A History of the Welsh*, (London: Black Raven, 1985).