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The Welsh Way of Colonisation in Patagonia: The International Politics of Moral Superiority

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ABSTRACT

This article explores the ‘myth of friendship’ between the Welsh and indigenous communities of Patagonia in the mid to late nineteenth century. Drawing on extensive archival research, it unpacks the purpose of this myth which is to demonstrate the moral superiority of the Welsh nation. The proof of Welsh righteousness derives not only from their peaceful, loving approach to colonisation in Patagonia but from stories which recount that the ‘Indians’ loved them back. This technique of elevation works because it is framed by the international politics of colonial expansion, thus the Welsh settlers compare themselves favourably to the violent and oppressive actions of the British Empire and Argentine state. This assertion of moral superiority is not only a way to raise the position of the Welsh nation on the global stage, it targets those who enforce Welsh political and linguistic subordination, both in Wales (the English elite) and as settlers (the Argentine government). In this way, their claim to high status and national dignity based on ‘righteousness’ is an act of resistance, as well as elevation. I conclude that this new interpretation of Y Wladfa (the colony) offers fresh insight to understandings of Welsh internationalism. Moreover, its reflections on the use of moral capital as a tool of resistance might find wider parallels. Certainly, I argue, the persistence of the ‘myth of friendship’ continues to conceal the brutal reality of indigenous dispossession.

KEYWORDS

Settler colonialism; Wales; Patagonia; indigenous; international politics; nineteenth century; Argentina; Y Wladfa; righteousness

In 1902 the Reverend William Phillips wrote a lecture telling his audience about the adventures and virtues of the Welsh colony in Patagonia. Like many of those colonists who published memoirs at the time, he peppered his reminiscences with stories featuring ‘the Indians’. These were the various indigenous communities (Tehuelche, Pampa and later Mapuche) whom the Welsh encountered shortly after their arrival in 1865. For twenty years until 1885 the two groups traded and lived alongside one another peacefully, creating a powerful

mythology, for the Welsh, of Welsh-‘Indian’ friendship. This myth underpins one story that Reverend Phillips recounts:

Into Gaiman a town in the centre of the colony an old Indian woman came one day with some others and she was discovered to be the sister of an Indian chief who had shown no little kindness to the early settlers. The Congregational Minister Mr J.C. Evans invited her to come to tea at his house one day.

‘How shall I set the table, mother?’ said Miss Evans ‘Must I put a clean cloth and get out the best china?’

‘Yes’ said the mother ‘Set is as nicely as if Queen Victoria were coming to tea with us!’¹

Reverend Phillips chose this story to illustrate a positive version of the everyday social world in Welsh Patagonia: the grateful and courteous preacher; the venerable ‘Indian woman’; the obedient daughter; the proper Victorian mother; the civilising influence of tea-time. Yet, what deeper message does this vignette of domesticity convey? To whom? And to what purpose? These are the questions that rose to mind when reading this and many similar anecdotes in the letters, memoirs, newspaper reports and lectures of the archives on which this article draws.² The message, I suggest, is that the Welsh are exemplary because they cultivate righteousness in their relationships with the ‘Indians’ and thus excel in that key arena of global competition at the time: the colonial endeavour. While theirs is not the largest nor the richest colony, according to this logic, it is the best because it is the most moral. For the ideologues of Y Wladfa (the Welsh colony) this settlement was an expression of defiance and resistance to ‘English’ domination and disdain and thus was underpinned with nationalist – even anti-colonialist – concerns.³ This story spoke indirectly, therefore, to the English elite (at home) and the Argentine state (in the colony) which also sought to dominate the Welsh politically and culturally. Its more direct audience, though, were the Welsh in whom this story generated pride and the satisfaction of moral superiority. Its purpose, therefore, was to contest dominant portrayals of the Welsh as inferior and intervene in power-plays within British society by asserting Welsh righteousness. The arena for this moral contest was, significantly, the central field of endeavour for nineteenth century international politics: colonial expansion.

This article therefore offers insight beyond those of a fascinating case and suggests two avenues of wider significance. Firstly, it offers a fresh interpretation of Y Wladfa (the colony) and challenges conventional interpretations of what is, even today, a central motif of Welsh identity. As such, it raises important questions for scholars of Welsh history and society, especially in the field of international relationships. Secondly, and more broadly, it suggests the importance of moral capital as a tool that the subordinate can employ to elevate their position, engender pride, and resist the disparagement of otherwise dominant forces. The notion of righteousness (of ‘doing right, selflessly’) beyond a strictly

religious interpretation might thus offer a fruitful concept for understanding the strategies of a wide range of subaltern groups. These points will be developed in the conclusion.

Contextualising the Welsh Patagonian Colony, Y Wladfa

In 1865 around 160 people set sail from Liverpool on the *Mimosa* to found a new settlement, Y Wladfa, arriving on a beach in Patagonia where the city of Puerto Madryn sits today.⁴ Their aim was to build a community run by the Welsh and in Welsh, a desire for autonomy that was realised fully over the first ten years of the colony (1865–1875).⁵ By 1885, though, the settlement was thoroughly incorporated within state structures, and ruled by Buenos Aires.⁶ During those twenty years the Welsh created the settlements of Rawson, Trelew and Gaiman in the Chubut Valley, and later established the communities of Esquel and Trevelin in the Andes and Puerto Madryn on the coast.⁷ These are the facts of Y Wladfa, but they occurred within the far broader sweep of political dynamics in Europe and the Americas which provide an essential context, both academic and historical.

Indigenous-Settler Relations in the Americas

The Welsh settlers and nomadic indigenous communities of the region developed sporadic yet entangled relationships which were mutually (though not equally) beneficial.⁸ This is not unique in the Americas, as has been revealed by many scholars, starting with Richard White's ground-breaking analysis of complex settler-indigenous relations which put the lie to easy, binary accounts of the relationship between coloniser and colonised.⁹ While Patrick Wolfe's argument that (successful) settler colonialism is fundamentally violent and eliminatory is compelling, the everyday reality of settler colonialism is based on human interactions that are seldom straightforward, especially in the early years.¹⁰ For example, Karen Ordahl Kupperman's account of encounters between the English and the Algonquians in the Sixteenth Century reveals their dependence on the indigenous for trade and knowledge of how to live in the landscape.¹¹ Similarly, the Welsh were bewildered by the dry 'empty' environment and wild livestock so different to the busy, verdant hills and domestic farm-animals of home.¹² Indeed, they suffered privation and near starvation in the early months and it was only after learning basic indigenous skills that they could 'settle'.¹³ Memoirs recount how Cacique (Leader) Francisco gave them horses and taught them how to ride, hunt and cook, to find water, herbs and pathways which enabled them to survive – even flourish – on the pampas.¹⁴ Moreover, it was the trade in guanaco skins and rhea feathers, bought from the 'Indians' and sold to Buenos Aires, that kick-started the Welsh Patagonian economy, allowing them to buy additional livestock, tools

and building materials to construct the houses, chapels and schools in which they could practice their Welsh culture and values.¹⁵

Many studies of North American encounters, like David Preston's work on German- Mohawk relations, have identified processes of social mixing, intermarriage and transculturation.¹⁶ In a Welsh example, Jerry Hunter has charted the two-way linguistic and cultural exchange between missionaries Evan and John Jones and Cherokee communities, a relationship which deeply influenced both.¹⁷ However, in Patagonia such hybridising dynamics were more limited. While the Welsh borrowed the techniques of physical survival, in cultural, spiritual, political and sexual terms they remained apart, and the indigenous communities adopted little from the Welsh, apart from their *bara* or home-made bread.¹⁸ Some words of each other's language were learned but Spanish dominated social interaction, intermarriage seems not to have occurred and the Welsh did not actively proselytise their religion, nor seek to impose their laws and worldview beyond their immediate environs.¹⁹ This separateness is perhaps due to the strong internal coherence of the Welsh society, but also because the Welsh were merely one element in an already complex network of Tehuelche, Pampa and Mapuche groups whose nomadic journeys and meetings criss-crossed the vast territories of their homelands.²⁰ Indeed, while nominally Argentine on the map, fully half of that country was actually under indigenous control in 1865, including Patagonia, and Y Wladfa fell under de facto indigenous authority.²¹ Nevertheless, indigenous groups were already trading skins and feathers with Argentine towns like Patagones and were thus connected, though distantly, to capitalist networks of global reach. In fact, it was for reasons of trade that the indigenous first approached the Welsh (it motivated both Cacique Francisco's visit and a letter from Cacique Antonio who arrived to trade a few months later).²² The Welsh were favoured by the indigenous because their settlement offered a more convenient trading post and they looked to be harmless, mostly carrying bibles and babies, not guns. Rather than hybridity, then, the indigenous and the Welsh lived parallel yet intersecting lives in which the Welsh were just one more group in a constellation of communities, retaining their own laws, customs and beliefs.

Welsh Motivations

Many Welsh people did enthusiastically join the British imperial project, taking up posts as missionaries or functionaries in the British Empire's outposts in India and Africa.²³ Others joined what James Belich has called the 'explosive colonization' moment by migrating to the USA, South Africa, Canada or Australia in search of personal advancement in the 'Anglo World'.²⁴ However, significant sectors rejected this impulse and sought dignity by creating an autonomous Welsh colony in Patagonia. They chose migration precisely because this strategy had become a natural part of mid-nineteenth century

life, facilitated by advances in shipping technology and the business of migration, and spurred by the ‘fever’ of fresh horizons and opportunities.²⁵

Like other migrants, many of those who set sail for Patagonia were motivated to leave behind the poverty of the industrial valleys or the oppressive conditions of the tenant farmer, seeking personal freedom in a land of opportunity.²⁶ The ‘Handbook of the Welsh Colony’ (*Llawlyfr y Wladychfa Gymreig*), like others of its type, thus dwells extensively on the quality of land in Patagonia, allotments of animals and seeds, and expected incomes.²⁷ However, what made the Welsh Patagonian settlement distinctive was its explicitly anti-colonial impulse linked to the Welsh language. Given that around 80% of the population spoke Welsh as their first (often only) language in 1841, this was not driven by fear of language extinction, but rather because the language was subordinated to English in the Anglo-settler world – and because it was disparaged.²⁸ Reverend Michael D. Jones, the driving force behind Y Wladfa, visited Ohio in the 1848 where large numbers of Welsh people had already emigrated.²⁹ There he observed that:

Outside of Wales, the Welsh do not have another homeland It is a wrench for both the English and the Welsh to leave the places where they were born, but when the Englishman lands in any British settlement he will be greeted in his own language The feeling of the Welsh settler is very different . . . ; he is greeted in a foreign language and . . . he must spend a good deal of time catching up with the Englishman.³⁰

This placed the Welsh at a great disadvantage, he argued, and proposed a solution:

But if a Welsh-speaking colony was established, where the Government would be in Welsh and the law was administered in Welsh, they would be much more courageous and public-spirited in carrying out their patriotic scheme.³¹

These practical considerations were compounded by anger at the highly disparaging portrayal of the Welsh people and their language by the English establishment. English was the language of powerfulness; not only was it the official language of public life it was portrayed as the conduit of progress and intellect, even in Wales, and Welsh was racially marked as barbaric.³² This depreciation was most publicly enunciated in an 1847 report on education in Wales, known as the Blue Books in which the three English Commissioners blamed Welsh people for their schools’ shortcomings.³³ Key to this inadequacy was the Welsh language, which they deemed to be: ‘a vast drawback to Wales and a manifold barrier to the moral progress and commercial prosperity of its people. It is not easy to over-estimate its evil effects’.³⁴ They linked Welsh to poverty and immorality, thus identifying a racialised cause for social deprivation, and cast aspersions on the moral rectitude of the largely nonconformist Welsh-speaking Welsh, especially Welsh women. As can be imagined, the Reports created uproar, especially among Nonconformist ministers who denounced this slur

on the moral standing of the Welsh nation.³⁵ While some sought to ‘prove’ that the Welsh were ‘just as good’ as the English through active participation in the institutions, armies and missions of Empire³⁶, those backing the Welsh Patagonian enterprise rejected the Empire’s ‘way of colonization’ by advancing their own as superior, as we shall see.

A key element in both Wales and the Patagonian enterprise was Welsh-speaking chapel life which generated Welsh identity as a ‘moral people’.³⁷ Not all Welsh people were religious and moral actors³⁸ – far from it – but morality and the language were deeply entwined in social life which featured chapel services and adult Sunday Schools, plus temperance movements, summer trips and eisteddfodau.³⁹ Nonconformism also infused settler life. Three preachers accompanied the first contingent on the *Mimosa* and one of their first acts after arrival was to hold a service celebrating safe deliverance.⁴⁰ Eventually, fifteen chapels were built in the Chubut Valley which doubled as schools and village halls, and preachers played a key leadership role, both as members of Y Wladfa’s Council and as historians writing the archive’s memoirs. Moreover, nonconformism deeply shaped Welsh settler understandings. Fernando Williams has revealed how early adversities were interpreted as trials sent by God to test their faith.⁴¹ They compared Patagonia to the Land of Canaan, and imagined themselves as ‘the chosen people’ and the ‘sons of Abraham’ who must cross the desert to reach the Promised Land of Israel.⁴²

Of course, religious migrations with a strong moral agenda played a key role in other settler movements, most notably the Puritan colony in Massachusetts. Here too they promoted peaceful relations with Native Americans and sought to establish an explicitly moral regime. Indeed, Abram van Engen’s recent book *Sympathetic Puritans* demonstrates (in a similar impulse to this argument) how lived experiences of sympathy were interpreted through theological doctrine, and how this shaped settler-indigenous (as well as settler-settler) relations.⁴³ However, what makes the Welsh case distinctive is that it combines the enactment of earnest spirituality with real-world political indignation, shaped by a nationalist desire to resist subordination.

In Y Wladfa, the nonconformist agenda shaped the interpretation of colonialism in two key ways. Firstly, colonialism was to be judged in terms of its moral content; and secondly, nonconformist precepts would dictate the everyday practices of Welsh colonialism, especially righteousness.

In the bible, righteousness describes the morally desirable foundation for all social relationships, including our masters, our subordinates and our enemies.⁴⁴ To be righteous is to obey God’s law.⁴⁵ Thus Christian obedience and righteous punishment are central processes in creating a just society which is ‘naturally’ hierarchal, based on moral goodness. Importantly, righteousness trumps all other hierarchal relationships, and worldly rankings based on might or wealth are rendered irrelevant by inner qualities like spiritual striving and righteous moral judgement.⁴⁶ This supremacy of morality over military might, economic

clout and political domination is, as we will see, what allows the Welsh to claim that their colonial project is superior to that of the 'English' and the 'Spanish'.

A second aspect of righteousness is also important; Christian love, in the form of pity, charity, forgiveness, mercy and generosity.⁴⁷ It is love that measures the quality of social relationships and what makes them work, and it is love which adds deep legitimacy to the moral hierarchy because it sweetens inequality and eliminates abuse or exploitation. Those in a superior position have, like a parent, a duty of care for those below and may tell them how to live their lives, not in order to exploit or abuse them but to nurture. The ultimate proof of righteousness, therefore, is the love expressed by the subordinate for their moral masters. We will see this motif emerge strongly in Welsh Patagonia where the 'love' of the Indians for the 'good' Welshmen is proudly celebrated and extolled.

Settler Colonial Theory, Indigeneity and Decolonial Concerns

Historical research on settler-indigenous relations and the experiences that drove the settlement enterprise provides fascinating insight, but this article is also framed by theoretical considerations and an explicit political stance which understands colonisation to be an act of domination. Settler colonial theory, as developed by Lorenzo Veracini and many others, foregrounds the fundamentally violent nature of appropriating people's land and usurping their sovereignty, a process which is 'a structure not an event'.⁴⁸ Moreover, settler success involves obliterating indigenous presence both physically and epistemologically, effecting what Patrick Wolfe has called the 'elimination of the native'.⁴⁹

This epistemological and physical erasure was explicitly pursued by the government in Buenos Aires. They invited the Welsh to settle as part of a nation-building strategy which was predicated on civilising Argentina by importing white Europeans and deploying their famed Protestant values to create prosperity and banish 'Indian' barbarism from the south.⁵⁰ This settlement strategy was backed by a military operation called the 'Conquest of the Desert' which swept down, laying claim to territory and pushing indigenous people southwards, killing those who resisted and interning those captured in internment camps.⁵¹ This juggernaut of capitalist modernity brought violence, displacement and dispossession to indigenous communities, yet it also spelled the end for Welsh autonomy as they too were drawn into 'Argentina'. The appointment of Commisario Oneto in 1875 had begun the gradual influx of state officials to challenge Welsh political authority and impose Spanish-language schooling, law and bureaucracy, culminating in the arrival of Governor Fontana, supreme representative of the state, in 1885.⁵² The Welsh were thus obliged to bow to a dominant government and language (as in Wales), for political subordination and linguistic domination were the price of Argentine citizenship. Y Wladfa thus demonstrates that settler status is not necessarily a straightforward

relationship at all. Indeed, one could argue that both the Welsh and the indigenous lost language rights and political autonomy when the state arrived.

However, this would be to ignore the stark and bitter contrast in the subject positions of the Welsh and the indigenous. For the Welsh, though no longer independent, could stand to one side and watch while the 'Indians' were marched to the internment camp in Valcheta, and their children could inherit valuable farms while 'Indian' families were dispossessed of their land and dispersed to the sugar refineries of the north or to service in the new middle class houses of Buenos Aires.⁵³ Decolonial historians like Claudia Briones and Walter Delrio excavate the archives and collect oral histories to reveal these realities which provide a vital counterpart to the settler archive.⁵⁴ Such oral histories tell of connections to trading posts to the south like Santa Cruz, regular migrations across the Andes to lands now within Chile, and linkages to indigenous communities to the north; they detail political and social alliances and conflicts within indigenous society, and pragmatic treaties with the state alongside deceptions, forced migrations and massacres.

The importance of such scholarship is not just to fill out the empty spaces of the archive with factual detail, though this is vital enough, but also to present indigenous people as complex social, political and economic agents who are central to the story of colonisation.⁵⁵ In *Y Wladfa*, this implies unpacking the 'myth of friendship' by questioning whether such 'friendship' was reciprocated, asking what purpose it served, and for whose benefit. It is essential, then, that the study of settlers take indigenous experiences seriously, yet the existing archives present us with a problem.⁵⁶ Very few indigenous archives mention the Welsh who were bit-players in the wider story of indigenous Patagonia, so it is hard to make definitive statements about indigenous society or its views of *Y Wladfa*. The letters, diaries and memoirs of the Welsh Patagonian archive, in turn, often portray the indigenous as objects of colonisation rather than agents in a social world. We see this in the opening excerpt; the 'Indian Woman' of the story is nameless and silent, and her only role in the story is to reveal Welsh goodness.⁵⁷ Decolonial scholarship, both empirical and theoretical, reveals the political power of silencing in such portrayals which not only disguise experiences of domination but dress them in the veneer of kindness.⁵⁸

Indigenous presence thus raises questions rather than answers, but these provide critical tools with which to interrogate the much vaunted friendship. Yet it is also vital that we pay close attention to the historical, political and linguistic context of *Y Wladfa*, because this stops us from merely denouncing Welsh colonisation and from simplifying settler colonialism to a brutal act. Only by seeing all political actors as complex social agents can we interrogate the purpose of this myth and reveal its role in justifying settler colonialism – even to today.

The 'Welsh Way' of Colonisation: Myth and Reality

An early moment which helped to define the Welsh way of colonisation in Y Wladfa was their first encounter with the 'Indians', a foundational meeting mentioned in all memoirs, whether the authors were present or not.⁵⁹ Two Tehuelche (Cacique Francisco and his wife) arrived one day in April 1866 and, after initial shocks and apprehensiveness, the Welsh and Tehuelche shared food and water and began to talk. However, and according to the recollections of Richard Jones Berwyn,

One of the main officers of the colony came forward and said 'Well I think that we have had enough of looking at the wild animals now. I think that it is time to draw an end to the preaching and bring these two along at once and put an end to them. They are just robbers and spies, and they came here just to spy on behalf of a swarm of other savages. Kill them both!'

This is of course the 'expected' colonial response – fear and violence; instead, it seems that the community chose to respond with love in the form of mercy.

'I will not do that' said one ...

'The face of this man' added another 'is not that of a savage killer. Let us show more courage and more of our Christian nature than rushing to take the life of an old man and his wife'.

Everyone agreed with this. ... In this way we laid the foundations of friendship.⁶⁰

This 'friendly' encounter story is the mythologised founding moment of a community that chose not to follow the oppressive impulse of other colonists but rather the path of peace and love – the path of righteousness. This moment, lauded and gilded in the memoirs, encapsulates Welsh distinctiveness and holds it aloft as a source of pride.

According to another prolific writer and lecturer, W. Casnodyn Rhys, the nature of the Welsh-indigenous relationship was also decided at that moment. He reiterates the encounter story and tells us how it ended:

A meeting was convened and one question was put. 'How shall we treat the Indians?'. One person suggested the destruction of the party, that the other Indians might not come to know of the existence of the colony. This proposal met with the contempt that it deserved and a resolution was adopted 'to treat the Indians exactly as we treat each other and even to extend to them, as we do to children, the leniency due to ignorance'.⁶¹

This statement seems to contain a paradox, but it is one that righteousness can explain, as human equality and social hierarchy are reconciled through the mediating action of love. That is, the equal worth of the Tehuelche visitors (as God's subjects, like the Welsh) is recognised and advocated as an everyday act of righteous behaviour ('exactly as we treat each other'), but this equality is structured by a 'natural' moral hierarchy (as 'savage' heathens who meet 'civilised' believers)

which subordinates them to the Welsh. Thus equality of worth between these communities is openly celebrated in a way that the usual racial hierarchies of nineteenth century imperialism cannot envisage. But this is tempered, using the metaphor of the patriarchal family, by their allocation to a debased position ('even to extend to them, as we do to children, the leniency due to ignorance'). This subordination is constituted by two entangled hierarchal threads. The first is linked to righteousness, for as heathens the 'Indians' cannot be righteous, and the Welsh, acting through righteous love, extend down to them the mercy and compassion that they deserve as equal human beings. The second reflects the racial and geopolitical hierarchies which shaped European (and Welsh) thinking in the nineteenth century.

Another version of the encounter narrative, this time a novel billed as 'very like reality' in its dedication, also shapes popular understandings of the Welsh-indigenous encounter.⁶² The protagonist Lizzy (Elizabeth Humphreys) is at home, cutting bread and butter for tea and gazing at her baby daughter Mary, the first child born in Patagonia. She looks up to see a group of 'Indians' who are the first that she has ever met. Faced with this unique situation, Lizzy asks herself:

'What shall I do ... ? There in the corner is Morris' [her husband's] rifle, but I hardly know how to use it ... Also, God preserve me ... kill someone ... and they don't seem aggressive ... they look like a family'. So she made a decision. She went to the cradle, lifted her child and went out of the house towards the Indians ... 'My daughter ... this is my daughter ...'.'⁶³

The child is taken gently and fondled by the indigenous woman. Lizzy then invites the family in for bread and butter: "I am sharing the Lord's bread with Indians, the bread of friendship"⁶⁴ she says; the 'Indians' reciprocate with a present of guanaco meat.

While the story is significantly different to Berwyn's account, the message is the same. Lizzy chooses the path of righteousness, not violence, and takes her Christian courage in her hands, offering not only bread (the staff of life) but the life which is most precious to her – her child (like Abraham, and God). Friendship and peace are her reward as her righteous actions establish a righteous foundation for settler colonialism, sealed with 'the Lord's bread' and reciprocated with meat.

Implicit in both accounts is a comparison with the usual violence of other colonial encounters, and it is this that makes the Welsh way of colonisation special. For it is their capacity to see and celebrate equality in the eyes of God, *precisely where others don't*, which proves Welsh righteousness and thus confirms their moral superiority – and that of their colonial project.

However, these misty-eyed stories should not be taken for reality. A different portrayal of Welsh-indigenous relations can be found in the unguarded diaries of the archive and T.G. Pritchard's account gives us more credible insight.

Pritchard arrived in the Chubut Valley 1876, bringing with him 30 'Snider' rifles which he had bought in Liverpool to sell to the settlers. He spent a few months travelling about and had the time (and the curiosity of a newcomer) to fill out his diary with observations which are not honeyed reminiscences.

Wednesday 26 January 1876. The Indian Sama Chwan and a gaucho were fighting together and got really drunk, and the President of the Council of Y Wladfa was selling alcohol to them, and later the same man came forward and struck a drunken Haycock until he fell, and called on the Indian Sam to kick him. Oh savagery! All this happened in the store where the Evangelist preaches peace at 3 o'clock each Sabbath ... There was one Irishman called M.D. who was quite afraid and attempted to borrow a revolver from me, just in case.⁶⁵

This 'Wild West' picture of Y Wladfa comes as a surprise after the rose-tinted portrayals that dominate the memoirs. The righteous ideals were real yet tempered by ambiguous reactions. For example, Pritchard notes that: 'a host of Indians came to town with horses and skins [to trade]' accompanied by a leader he describes as 'looking majestic and dignified'.⁶⁶ Yet he then adds: 'they say that they are more sly now than before, but also that deceptions are practiced on them shamefully by some Welsh people, especially those who sell them liquor'.⁶⁷ Similarly, Pritchard's diary charts his travels to the outlying farms to sell the rifles but also regular religious devotion and the ever-present fear yet also familiarity of indigenous encounters. For example:

Sunday 25th [February]: In [Sunday] School in the morning Mathew 2. In the house in the afternoon, some Indians round about the house, Powel preached Psalm 1-1.

Monday 26th: Around the house ... Yesterday morning they caught Kitch Kwth in the house furthest up from Gaiman stealing horses, but he escaped, then Canta fled from fear of the Welshmen's guns

Tuesday 27: In the house looking out for Indians. 28th ditto.

Monday 3 May: (...) Today there was hue and cry out that the Indians had stolen horses here. Everyone is awfully agitated. By the afternoon, they had got hold of the horses and the whole thing was just a scare.⁶⁸

This diary does not describe 'friendship', then, but rather an uneasy and distrustful coexistence, in which familiar prejudices and hierarchies shape social relationships and guns – the threat of violence – are ever present, though seldom deployed. Still, given that both the Welsh and the indigenous are ordinary human beings in a settler colonial situation, marked by capitalist expansion and global racial hierarchies it is hardly surprising that such tensions existed.

The question that arises, though, persists: why is it so important to the Welsh that they portray this relationship in idyllic terms of mutual respect, sharing bread and children and gracious tea-time encounters? What work are these stories doing and to what purpose? This is, I think, where the second role of righteousness comes in; righteous behaviour as a claim to moral superiority.

This status was proven by arguing for Welsh excellence in the chief mechanism of international relationships and rivalry at that time – colonialism.

Righteousness and the Superiority of the Welsh Way of Colonisation

A third, and geopolitical, interpretation of righteousness points to moral superiority on the international stage, and echoes Welsh anti-colonial sentiments. Biblical dictionaries were widely used to clarify matters of doctrine, and the Thomas Rees (et. al) dictionary suggests an important aspect of righteousness: the righteousness of a ‘covenanted’ people or *cyfiawnder cenedlaethol* (national righteousness). The author of the entry draws on the example of Israel whose captivity and subjugation was understood to be ‘a punishment for their lack of faithfulness’⁶⁹: their road to recognition among a community of nations, and therefore national dignity, was thus to strive for righteousness. The authors of the dictionary entry explain: ‘Israel expected that their return would be tantamount to righteousness before the nations; just as their subjugation was a cause of contempt for the nations, so their recovery was their defence against this’.⁷⁰ Their ‘recovery’ proves their righteousness, and, as Isaiah says, ‘The nations will see your righteousness and all the kings your glory (62:2)’.⁷¹ This use of righteousness links the moral behaviour of a people to their political power and international esteem, and chimes with the Welsh colonists’ vision of themselves as a covenanted people in search of a promised land and redemption, like the Israelites.

The moral superiority of the Welsh in Patagonia, demonstrated through their actions, is used to make a claim to powerfulness and dignity on behalf of all the Welsh People and against the disparagements of London and Buenos Aires. This claim was explicitly enunciated by W. Casnodyn Rhys. After discussing the Welsh policy ‘to treat the Indians exactly as we treat each other ...’, he claims it as a matter of global prestige:

This [policy] is a decision of worthy of record; let it be written in the history of colonization in letters of gold. Is there anywhere an instance of a nobler levelling up? Even the Quaker settlement of Pennsylvania did not surpass this.⁷²

Rhys is hugely proud of the decision and policy. He emphasises the Welsh impulse to egalitarianism (the noble ‘levelling up’) and underlines their magnanimity and humanitarianism, adding that this exceeds even that of the most famously compassionate settlers, the Quakers of Pennsylvania. He seems to say: ‘we are world-leaders in Christian love and we should be recognised for this’ by writing this decision, and its consequences, in ‘letters of gold’.

This understanding of the Welsh as both expert and ‘good’ colonisers underpinned the enterprise from the start, as is evident in *Gwladychfa Gymreig* written by Michael D. Jones. This preacher and leading advocate of Y Wladfa wrote the

book explicitly to promote the migration enterprise. His opening words present the Welsh as brilliant settlers, saying:

Since the earliest times, the Welsh have distinguished themselves as migrants [*ymfudwyr*]. Even before the time of the Romans, they came from the east to the extreme west of Europe, not as unskilled barbarians, but bringing high levels of civilization in their wake.⁷³

This superior mode of living included: the habits of war: ‘They could fight according to the best methods of the heroic age’; agriculture: ‘they worked the land, grew wheat, reared animals and lived in open cleared ground’; and early industry: ‘The Welsh knew how to work metals; and they were the first miners that we can identify in history’.⁷⁴ In this way, Jones established the supreme credentials of the Welsh as colonisers, based on leading the march to civilisation in Britain, and by inference, the mid-nineteenth century imperial world. Indeed, Welsh society and culture, he argues, is the foundation of British civilisation:

Only the Welsh established the cities of Britain which became the most important in the world. They used currency to trade. They had learned men and used Greek letters to write like other Celtic peoples. The Welsh language is a founding element of the English language. Their laws are the foundation for laws in Britain, the United States and all the British settlements.⁷⁵

Not only were the Welsh expert settlers, according to Jones, the unquestioned legitimacy of migration (settlement) was asserted by framing it as a God-given right:

Indeed, migration is a right that comes down from the Heavens ... through migration Noah’s descendants will populate the world, and according to the same law the world will become filled with men. The Welsh will take up their part, and it will be pleasant for them to do this in the most wise, orderly and effective way.⁷⁶

For Jones, the Wladfa enterprise was righteous because migration was blessed by God’s law, but *how* migration (and the colonisation it entailed) was conducted also mattered greatly – it should be ‘wise, orderly and effective’. This is the terrain – *how colonial relationships were managed* – that set the Welsh apart and demonstrated their moral superiority, creating the basis for a claim to power and exalted status within ‘the community of nations’.

Time and again within the archive, the Welsh are measured against the two other colonial experiences close to hand – the Spanish (Argentine) and English (British Empire). Importantly, these were also their key political competitors. We should recall that the Welsh in Patagonia had initially desired to create a colony that enjoyed autonomy and maintained cultural-linguistic hegemony. This dream was eroded and then abandoned following Y Wladfa’s absorption within the Territorio Nacional in 1884 which turned its inhabitants from *gwladychwyr* to Argentine citizens. Some, such as the leaders Lewis Jones and

Richard Jones Berwyn resisted this assimilation, and the question of schooling became a flashpoint for resistance to Argentinization.⁷⁷ Campaigns against the imposition of Spanish language schooling and a curriculum based on Argentine history and values were mounted, initiatives which had powerful echoes with the racial-linguistic prejudices of the Education Commissioners' *Blue Books*. Once more, the Welsh language was being disdained and silenced in favour of a domineering, centralised understanding of the 'national' which asserted the superiority of a metropolitan mother tongue.⁷⁸ However, it was not this topic that most commentators chose to highlight when they wanted to criticise the 'Spanish', but rather their treatment of the 'Indians'. Welsh superiority is demonstrated not by dwelling on subjugation, then, but on their compassionate and righteous behaviour (and in telling contrast to the 'Spanish').

In particular, the Welsh side with the indigenous during the 'Conquest of the Desert'. They received a letter from Cacique Sayhueque, written in the name of the Native Government in which he asked them to intercede on behalf of his people who had endured dispossession and violent oppression. The letter indicates hope and perhaps good faith in the Welsh and culminates in the following request: 'because of this, friend, I ask you to place my complaints in full, as well as the tribulations I have suffered, before the Government'.⁷⁹ While Cacique Sayhueque's use of the term 'friend' in the letter may have been more strategic than affectionate, the Welsh cite this as evidence of reciprocal friendship. In turn they quickly wrote to General Vinnter who commanded the army in the area, saying:

We, the inhabitants of Chubut plead for your clemency and in this way express our strong feelings in favour of some of the 'aborigines' of these regions, known to us We desire that you might, as well as fulfilling your military obligations, and according to your own judgement, leave our old indigenous neighbours in their homes, whilst they remain so peaceful and harmless as they have up to today. (Signed in the name of all, 20 July 1883).⁸⁰

This positioning might have reflected pragmatic self-interest (the community still did a good deal of trade with the 'Indians') and the violence must have seemed disproportionate given that they had experienced no intimidation themselves. But it was also shaped by the blueprint codes of righteousness which called for Christian love; compassion, forgiveness and mercy (framed by paternalism).

This response is lauded as righteous, but such altruism had political consequences too. It allowed the Welsh to generate significant moral capital by contrasting the injustice and brutality of the Argentine Army's actions with their own righteous defence of Sayhueque and his people. The righteousness of this policy was extrapolated to the Welsh everywhere, thus raising their standing within the 'community of nations', and generating national pride. The 'friendly' relations with the Indians – their colonial policy – set the Welsh above the 'Spaniards' and their violent form of colonial domination. Of course, standing up for

those being oppressed is laudable, but doing so foregrounds the vulnerability and subordination of the victim and delegitimizes the actions of the aggressor, thus doubly reinforcing the moral power of the defender – the Welsh. The fact that the Argentine army paid no heed to the Welsh demonstrates the fragility of moral arguments in the face of *de facto* military power, but its utility as a badge of moral courage and righteousness after the fact, and for the Welsh, remains. In the long run, it is the Welsh coloniser who benefits, not the colonised indigenous.

The motif of Welsh moral standing and the brutality of ‘other’ colonisers recurs often in the archive, with the ‘English’ as a common target. For example, and again reflecting on the Conquest of the Desert, W. Casnodyn Rhys asserts:

The wrong done to the savage population ... is one of the blackest blots on modern civilization. I would not fasten this blot on any one nation it belongs to the white man whatever his tongue or flag. The Spaniard mal-treats him abominably but so does the north American whose name for Indians is “varmient”. So also do the British in South Africa. Can we forget the clearing of Rhodesia and the remorseless hunting down of Lobengula?⁸¹

Here, Rhys rails against three different colonial situations, the British Empire, settler colonial USA and his own (new) homeland, Argentina. In each case he finds colonialism to be characterised by violence and disparagement of the indigenous and speaks out against this inhumanity (though himself labelling them as ‘savage’). In doing so he places the Welsh model in a highly favourable light (and as if he isn’t a ‘white man’) and sets Wales itself above these colonial giants which might be powerful, he seems to argue, but are immoral; Wales is the moral giant.

The ‘English’ (and the Argentine Army) are also the target of Welsh righteous indignation in the journal of Llwyd ap Iwan. A son of Michael D. Jones, ap Iwan arrived in Y Wladfa to work as a surveyor, and undertook an expedition in 1887, in the company of an army unit. Ap Iwan describes an incident in which an indigenous girl who has been captured by the soldiers ‘this night escapes’ because she has been harassed by the Lieutenant ‘the reader will know what for’.⁸² Generally, ap Iwan’s journal is a calm reflection filled with observations about the landscape and everyday stories of the journey, but he cannot contain his anger about this sexual assault.

If many of the English knew the meaning of war ... they would not be so ready to send their soldiers out to oppress nations. The killing and wounding of bodies is nothing to the pitifulness that follows, the crushed feelings, the violence and oppressions, the ... diseases, famine, the destruction of families ... humiliating people ... bitter lessons which will be revisited ... on those who have caused all this.⁸³

His sense of outrage is a response to seeing the brutality of the Conquest of the Desert first hand, but interestingly his condemnation is not just (implicitly) of the Argentine policy but explicitly of the wider project of ‘English’ imperial

domination. He separates himself as a Welsh man from the British imperial project and claims the moral high ground which he seems to share with the oppressed; he is not being oppressed himself but stands in their moral defence, thus adopting a paternalistic position marked by the combination of superiority and love expressed by righteousness.

The Proof of Righteousness – Love

The righteousness of the Welsh policy of friendship is confirmed by two proofs: firstly, its effectiveness, evidenced by the lack of violence and the Welsh community's prosperity; and secondly the love of the 'Indians' for the Welsh. They argue that theirs is a better sort of colonialism in a practical sense precisely because it is righteous which, in a self-fulfilling circular logic, is itself justified by being most effective by generating peace and prosperity. The myth of friendship is central to proving that the Welsh are morally good – they demonstrate righteousness by loving the Indians – but more importantly the truth of this love is confirmed because, according to Welsh recollection, they loved them back. William Phillips recounts here an oft-related story which illustrates the moral lesson:

One winter the Indians came and camped ... they broke up the encampment as spring was coming on and as they were leaving they asked the Welsh 'Who are you? for we know you are not Xtns [Christians]'. 'Yes' said the Welsh 'we are Xtns'. 'No' said the Indians 'we know Xtns for we have visited other colonies and the Xtns rob and cheat us, they steal our horses and kill us when they can. You never do these things but buy what you need and pay for it. We have never lost a horse among you and you have never done us any harm. No we shall never call you Xtns – we shall call you Galensos [from the Spanish 'Galense' meaning Welsh]'. And today the Indians of the Pampas distinguish between the Welsh and other white people, and while all other white folks are classed as Xtns the Welsh are always honoured with a distinctive name which is endearing to every Indian and that name is Galensos.⁸⁴

Here, the 'Indians' reconfirm to the Welsh their special status as somehow non-White and imbue this identity with a high moral status by comparing the Welsh to the hypocritical Christians who 'rob and cheat'. This story conveys an ideal of mutual love, a love which does not challenge but reinforces the 'natural' racial and civilizational hierarchies of nineteenth century thinking.

However, there is scant evidence that indigenous communities reciprocated this love. There are accounts of strong friendship – such as Jonathan Ceredig Davies' professed deep friendship with Kingel⁸⁵ and the affection and grief which John Daniel Evans conveys when he recounts meeting an old school friend in the indigenous internment camp at Valcheta⁸⁶ – but these are expressed by the Welsh, not the indigenous. This is not to say that the relationships weren't reciprocated, but we cannot assume that such feelings were mutual, because very little mention of the Welsh exists in the indigenous archive. One credible, though ventriloquised, source of opinion comes from

George Musters (an Englishman who travelled with various indigenous groups in the region in the 1870s). He recalls that Cacique Hinchel's people believed that 'the honest Welsh colonists were much pleasanter and safer to deal with than 'the Christians' [Argentines] of Rio Negro ...'; he adds that '[Cacique] Jackechan often expatiated on the liberality of the colonists and the goodness of their bread.'⁸⁷ Such statements suggest that the relationship, in general, was based more on a lack of violence, exploitation and abuse, coupled with good bread and fair dealing, than to love. It indicates a pragmatic, rather than emotional, approach. Nevertheless, it is clear that the myth of a friendship replete with love was (and indeed still is) hugely important to the Welsh, especially those writing memoirs twenty years or so after Y Wladfa was founded. Why was this? Some answers emerge from analysis of the most testing incident in Welsh-indigenous relationships; the killing of three Welshmen, known as the Three Martyrs or Malacara incident.

In 1884, at the height of the Conquest of the Desert in the Chubut Valley region, a group of young men set out on an expedition, including John Daniel Evans. According to Evans, they travelled 'quietly and happily' until they met the Military Chief Commandante Roa who had many soldiers with him and many 'Indian' prisoners who he had captured and was taking to the internment camp at Valcheta.⁸⁸ After exploring and looking for gold, they then met two indigenous men, one called Juan Salvo, who were wary and suspicious but nevertheless shared their food and camp. The two turned out to be spies for Cacique Foyel, and Evans tells us that Salvo warned 'if he found out that we were government spies we would never see the Chubut Valley again'.⁸⁹ Despite this, there were assurances all round and two of the four men (Evans and John Hughes) agreed to go with Foyel's men the following day. However, through misunderstandings they went a little way with them, and then turned back which the two spies interpreted as treachery. The Welsh agreed that 'if it was necessary to kill in order to save our lives then we were ready to do so'⁹⁰ but after much to-ing and fro-ing all four Welshmen were reunited and they set off for home. A few days later they were surprised by Foyel's men who attacked them with spears, killing three of the four. John Daniel Evans survived and rode around 200 miles all the way home, mostly at a gallop, and his horse Malacara made a famous leap across a canyon. Once returned, Evans then led a group of men back to what is now known as the Valley of the Martyrs where they found and buried the bodies but saw no fresh signs of Foyel's men.

Evans' account, as the only witness, must be regarded as reliable, and the turn of events towards aggression in a context of state violence and heightened suspicion is credible. However, Welsh writing about the incident distorts this story in a surprising way. We might imagine that they would brand the indigenous as treacherous savages, reverting to the usual tropes of nineteenth century colonialism but instead they evince sympathy and compassion. Jonathan Ceredig Davies, for example, says:

we must not judge the Indians too hard after all for this act of slaughter as they themselves were so cruelly treated at the time by the soldiers and officers of the Argentine government until their vengeance was excited against every white man. The men who committed this fearful massacre were a band of Indians who had been hunted to madness by the soldiers from one place to another all over the country and as the four young Welshmen were wearing the uniform of Argentine soldiers or military clothes which they had bought from an Italian trader during their journey, the wild Indians rushed on them in mistake for men belonging to the army.⁹¹

There is no evidence to support this story about uniforms at all – so why does Davies need the tale of ‘mistaken identity’? Davies explains the incident as a tragic accident, one which reinforces the portrayal of Argentines as bad colonisers and the Welsh as good – and recognised as such by the indigenous. This is so important to Davies that he invents a fabricated explanation that explains (and justifies) the killings and implies that they would never have killed the Welshmen, if they had known.

This is taken to extremes by Eluned Morgan (daughter of Lewis Jones, the influential leader of Y Wladfa). Her book *Dringo'r Andes* (1909) presents a highly romantic account of the Welsh community which was read widely at the time and established the tone of mythologised nostalgia that continues to shape Welsh thinking today, as Wyn James notes.⁹² Morgan recounts the story, supposedly as it was told to her by John Daniel Evans, but it too has unfounded embellishments. She adopts the ‘noble savage’ position and blames the ‘carnage’ on Argentine violence: ‘The old simple, peaceful savages were turned through the cruelties of civilisation into predatory bandits whose thirst for blood became the chief passion of their life’.⁹³ She also repeats the story about Argentine uniforms, but adds a significant – and religious – element to the story. She reports, accurately, that a funeral service was held over the grave of the three Welshmen, and the group ‘sang together the glorious old hymn “Bydd myrdd o ryfeddodau”’.⁹⁴ She adds, however, that although they didn’t realise it ‘all the nooks and crannies roundabout were teeming with Indians, ready to kill and tear them limb from limb like before, except that the strange singing in the middle of the vast silent expanses tamed and gentled them’.⁹⁵ Not only were these savages quieted by the magical song of the Welsh which conveyed the word of God,

this was when they understood that it was Welshmen they had killed, and not Spanish [Argentine] soldiers ... and it was often a source of genuine grief for the Indians that they had killed their Welsh brothers [*ei frodyr Cymreig*] by mistake.⁹⁶

Thus righteous nonconformist Christianity proves its superiority by taming the impulses of a bestialised people embedded in the wild landscape by deploying that most Welsh of cultural expressions – singing a hymn, in Welsh. Moreover, this incident reveals that righteousness is what had protected the Welsh all along. For it was the realisation that they had killed their ‘Welsh brothers’

which sparked remorse, precisely because they were not enemies but loving – and loved – friends. It is this myth of friendship and true love which confirms that Welsh colonisation is morally better and therefore morally justified, in contrast to the ‘Spanish’ who deserved all the violence they got; as you sow, so you shall reap.

Conclusion

The Welsh Patagonian archive is replete with fascinating incidents and characters that reveal much about the logics and assumptions that underpinned this particular example of settler colonialism. Their decision to promote peaceful engagement and their recognition of the indigenous communities as full economic and political agents stands out for its humanity and deserves some of the praise and pride that it generates in Wales, even today. However, this article has taken a critical approach to understanding the much vaunted ‘friendship’, and not only by revealing the everyday ambiguities of settler life as revealed in T.G. Pritchard’s diary. The article argues that this ‘Welsh way’ of colonisation was shaped by two social dynamics rooted in Welsh experiences back home. Firstly, the linguistic-racial depreciation within a Britain dominated by English culture and language; and secondly, the sense of moral powerfulness and pride generated by nonconformism, enunciated through the Welsh language. These dynamics combined to create a political project which linked resistance to the domineering and disdainful ‘English’ state with a clear and righteous blueprint for a new society. Given the ‘explosive’ nature of the Anglo World’s expansion at the time, the settler colonial strategy was an obvious choice, though the enterprise was distinctive from the outset. Centring righteousness in their philosophy and practice of colonialism infused the Welsh settlement with moral power – a power that generated pride and certainty within the community, but which also created a claim to superiority over the regimes that controlled them. For while the Welsh could not resist the political, military and economic dominance of both England (in Wales) and Argentina (in the Chubut Valley), they could assert superiority on the moral plane, and earn political capital by flexing the power of their righteousness.

The device of righteousness might have wider application. It could help scholars of Welsh history and identity to interpret other ‘internationalist’ impulses. For example, it suggests that the significant Welsh support for anti-slavery movements in the USA, as detailed by Daniel Williams, were a chance to exercise righteous indignation and national (and personal) elevation based on a claim to moral superiority.⁹⁷ It might also provide a way to articulate the altruistic desires of the many Welsh missionaries who were eager to risk injury and death to ‘spread the word’ of God’s truth.⁹⁸ That is, the logic of ‘righteousness’ described here elucidates the link between religious doctrine and everyday socio-political disarrangements *as a Welsh people* and might account, in part, for their avid

mission. Indeed, at a more basic level it might even help to explain why nonconformism was so prevalent in Wales.

I have argued here that a claim to righteousness can generate political capital for the Welsh and suggest that other subordinated groups might also adopt the same strategy. Moral capital has been addressed by a few authors: John Kane developed this theme in relation to the US presidency, while Christopher Brown uses moral capital as the pivot point for his analysis of the British slavery abolitionist movement.⁹⁹ However, both of these treatments examine moral capital as a strategy of the powerful, while the analysis here examines its efficacy as a 'weapon of the weak'. Indeed, a focus on moral virtue, rather than political power or wealth, suggests that this strategy is ideally suited to subaltern actors in their struggle against injustice. Moreover, righteousness is a notion that transcends Christian doctrine and has been employed, for example, by Native American thinkers who assert a rightful relationship to nature founded in mutual and reciprocal relations rather than domination and exploitation.¹⁰⁰ The logic of righteousness might thus provide a fresh angle to aid our understanding of how resistance might operate through a claim to virtue.

Historical studies of settler colonialism can also help to not just important for academic reasons, though; dismantling the discourses that justify settler colonialism also contributes to decolonial struggle.¹⁰¹ In our case, the myth of friendship persists to today and continues to smooth over, erase and depoliticise experiences of dispossession and violence in the Chubut Valley. The myth was particularly prominent during the 150th anniversary of the Welsh arrival, commemorated on 28 July 2015, when First Minister of Wales Carwyn Jones visited Patagonia to celebrate the enduring persistence of the Welsh language and culture.¹⁰² His words of pride and celebration glossed over the colonial context and sustained the story of friendship. This reinforced the moral status of the settlement – and Wales – today by reiterating Welsh righteousness.

In Argentina, the myth was deployed as a 'good news' story of friendship which displaced the 'elimination of the native' during the Conquest of the Desert. Indeed, Argentine officials explicitly iterated key motifs of the myth that we have observed in the archive. The local newspaper *El Chubut*, for example, described the Welsh settlement as 'a metaphor for tolerance' and the Welsh as 'simple people, free, happy and supportive, who treated the Indians like themselves', echoing the much lauded Welsh policy of 'equality'.¹⁰³ Moreover, National Deputy Mario Das Neves proposed, in an echo of Phillips' desire to 'let it be written in letters of gold' that 'this happened in our beloved Chubut and we should show it off with pride to the world'.¹⁰⁴

For both leaders, and for both nations, this prevailing image of the Welsh community of settlers as peaceful and their relationship with the indigenous as 'friendly' is of huge importance in portraying both their nations as virtuous and legitimate. The comments promote the rightfulness of the settler colonial

project in an Argentina grappling with an indigenous resurgence and multicultural agenda, but they also assert the dignity of the Welsh people in a context of recent political devolution and enhanced autonomy. A lot of political capital is, therefore, embedded in the stories of superior Welsh colonisation of the Chubut valley and it is intimately connected to nation-building projects – albeit of very different sorts – in both Argentina and Wales. The claim to power based on moral status employed in the nineteenth century is redeployed in the twenty first.

A different and indigenous experience of settler colonialism is hidden by the myth of friendship – of violent oppression but also political autonomy, social networks and cultural authority. If those studying settler colonialism wish to promote indigenous struggles and a decolonial agenda our most useful contribution is to show how its logics work and to dismantle them. This task can only be done by understanding decolonisation as not only a matter for indigenous communities but for the whole of settler society today.

Notes

1. Phillips “Darlith: ‘Fifteen years in Patagonia’,” 32. All translations from Welsh and Spanish sources are undertaken by the author.
2. Archives were sourced in: National Library of Wales (Aberystwyth); Archive of the University of Bangor; Museo Regional de Gaiman; Museo Regional de Trevelin (my sincere thanks to the many archivists who helped me in my quest). They consist of letters, diaries and journals written by the early settlers, plus newspapers in Y Wladfa and Wales. Key protagonists books, pamphlets, memoirs, newspaper articles or delivered lectures, often around twenty years after the events they describe. Indigenous voices are much harder to identify, probably because relations with a small and convenient Welsh colony were far less significant than with other indigenous communities and a large and violent state. These latter topics are the focus for the oral histories (Delrio, *Memorias de Expropiación*) and letters (Pávez Ojeda, *Cartas Mapuches*). Two important letters to the leaders of Y Wladfa do exist, see ‘Correspondence ... Welsh Colony,’ 33; Jones, *Hanes y Wladfa Gymreig*, 116–8, (fn. 82); for discussion, see author reference. Significant silences, especially working class and women’s voices, remain.
3. Author reference.
4. Williams, *Desert and the Dream*, 1–8; Williams, *Y Wladfa*, 1–26.
5. Matthews, *Hanes y Wladfa Gymreig*, 4.
6. Jones, *Hanes*.
7. Williams, “Welsh Settlers and Native Americans.”
8. Author reference.
9. White, *The Middle Ground*.
10. Wolfe, ‘Settler Colonialism.’
11. Ordahl Kupperman, *Indians and English*.
12. Matthews, *Hanes*, 16–7; Jones, *Historia de los Comienzos*, 29–48.
13. Williams, *Desert*, 39–56.
14. Rhys, ‘Pioneering in Patagonia’, 46–8.
15. Gavirati, “El Contacto entre Galeses.”

16. Preston, *Texture of Contact*.
17. Hunter, *Llwybrau Cenhedloedd*.
18. A habit extolled by many, including Davies, 'Deunydd a Defnyddiwyd', 268–9.
19. Commander Denniston "General and Statistical Report," 18.
20. Briones, *Cartografías Argentinas*; Delrio, *Memorias*.
21. Quijada "Ciudadanización del 'Indio Bárbaro'," 675.
22. Gavirati, "El Contacto."
23. Jones, "The Other Internationalism?"; Jones and Jones "The Welsh World."
24. Belich *Replenishing the Earth*; for an overview of approaches to migration, see Howe, 'British Worlds, Settler Worlds'.
25. On migrant motivations and context see Jones, "Raising the Wind."
26. An instructive study of how Welsh migrant motivations shape settler communities is Knowles, *Calvinists Incorporated*.
27. Hughes, *Llawlyfr y Wladychfa Gymreig*. For a description of Australian examples, see: Jones "Representations of Australia."
28. Tyson Roberts, *Language of the Blue Books*, 220.
29. Knowles, *Calvinists Incorporated*, 13–41.
30. Jones *Gwladychfa Cymreig*, 6–7.
31. *Ibid.*, 7.
32. Bohata, "Apes and Cannibals"; Roberts, *Language*, 44–58.
33. Morgan, *Brad y Llyfrau Gleision*.
34. *Reports of the Commissioners*, 66.
35. Tyson Roberts, *Language*, 209–19.
36. Ellis, "Making Owen Rhoscomyl"; O'Leary, "Language of Patriotism."
37. Jones, "Nonconformity and the Welsh Language," 239–64
38. For a vivid and non-romantic account of Wales at this time, see Davies, *Secret Sins*.
39. Eisteddfodau are Welsh-language musical and literary competitions.
40. Robert Meirion Williams (Baptist); Lewis Humphreys and Abraham Matthews (Congregationalists). Williams "Entre el Desierto y el Jardín," 94.
41. *Ibid.*, 101.
42. *Ibid.*, 89–113.
43. Van Engen, *Sympathetic Puritans*.
44. Atkinson and Field, *New Dictionary of Christian Ethics*, 744.
45. Key insights into Welsh nonconformist thinking can be found by studying biblical dictionaries of which Jones ('Mathetes') and Rees (et al) are the most prominent. Jones, *Geiriadur Beiblaidd a Duwinyddol*, 450.
46. Rees et al. *Geiriadur Beiblaidd*, 335–7.
47. *Ibid.*; Jones *Geiriadur*, 442.
48. Amongst many, see Veracini, *Settler Colonial Present*, 68–94;
49. Wolfe, "Settler."
50. Briones and Delrio, "The 'Conquest of the Desert'."
51. Quijada, "Ciudadanización."
52. Jones, *Wladva*.
53. An event described and decried by Davies, "Deunydd"; Papazian and Nagy, "Prácticas de Disciplinamiento Indígena."
54. Briones, *Cartografías*; Delrio, *Memorias*.
55. I explore indigenous archives and agency in greater depth in: author reference.
56. Snelgrove, Dhamoon and Corntassel, "Unsettling Settler Colonialism."
57. A trait also identified by Gethin Matthews' in his analysis of Welsh newspaper portrayals of 'Indians' in British Columbia. Matthews "Y Dynion Mwyaf Diniwed."

58. From a vast literature, see Tuhiwai-Smith, *Decolonizing Methodologies*; Lander, *La Colonialidad del Saber*.
59. Author reference.
60. Jones Berwyn, "Gyda'r Gwladwawrwyr," 42. This is the most detailed account from a key protagonist in the incident, although this is written twenty years after the event.
61. Rhys, "Articles by B.Q," 12.
62. Centeno Humphreys, *Evangelio y Don Eduardo*, 5.
63. *Ibid.*, 28.
64. *Ibid.*, 29.
65. Pritchard "Hanes fy Nhaith," 20. Copy of the original (now lost/taken) made by Fabio Gonzáles, Director of the Museo Regional Gaiman. The decision to sell alcohol was a controversial yet pragmatic one, as it was a key trading commodity.
66. Pritchard "Hanes," 21.
67. *Ibid.*, 24.
68. *Ibid.*
69. Rees et.al, *Geiriadur Beiblaid*, 336.
70. *Ibid.*
71. *Ibid.*
72. Rhys, "Articles," 12.
73. Jones, *Gwladychfa Gymreig*, 3.
74. *Ibid.*
75. *Ibid.*
76. *Ibid.*, 5–6.
77. Massa and Barzini, "Nación Escribio con Tiza," 143–82.
78. Jones, "Y Carchariaid a'i Ganlyniadau," 1–5.
79. Jones *Hanes*, 116–18 in Welsh (presumably translated from Spanish); for an English translation of this, see Williams "Welsh," 58–9.
80. Jones *Hanes*, 115 in Welsh; translated into English in Williams "Welsh," 60.
81. Rhys, "Articles," 27.
82. Ap Iwan, "Dyddiaduron," May 1 entry.
83. *Ibid.*
84. Phillips, "Darlith," 27–8.
85. Davies "'Deunydd'" 274–9.
86. Evans, *John Daniel Evans*, 92–3.
87. Musters, *At Home with Patagonians*, 97.
88. Evans *John Daniel Evans*, 39–40.
89. *Ibid.*, 42.
90. *Ibid.*, 44.
91. Davies, "'Deunydd'," 288–9.
92. James "Eluned Morgan."
93. Morgan, *Dringo'r Andes*, 30.
94. *Ibid.*, 31.
95. *Ibid.*
96. *Ibid.*
97. Williams, *Black Skin, Blue Books*.
98. Aaron, "Slaughter and Salvation."
99. Kane, *Politics of Moral Capital*; Brown, *Moral Capital*.
100. Mohawk, "Origins of Iroquois Political Thought."
101. Lublin, "Y Wladfa."
102. Jones, "Written Statement."

103. “Los Galeses en Chubut.”

104. “Es un Ejemplo.”

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