ANGLO-FLEMISH ECONOMIC RELATIONS, COMPLEX URBAN REVOLTS AND THE POLITICS OF COLLECTIVE EXILE IN FLANDERS

There are several factors in the host country and the country of origin that might cause people to migrate. Pre-existing historical contacts and a favourable economic situation in the country of destination are amongst the primary elements to influence migrants' choice. In order to explain the post-1500 migratory patterns between countries with a colonial past, or where the economic influence was intense (Germany's over Eastern European countries, for example), the 'world-system' model has been used.[1] The main tenets of this approach to migration history are built on the work of Immanuel Wallerstein, whose main idea was to establish that the sixteenth century witnessed the rise of a capitalist world economy, where different forces and relations of production were created and led to an unequal division of labour between two interdependent regions. The division of labour is based on a hierarchical power structure where one country (the core) will dominate the other (the periphery).[2] In migration history, the central idea of the scheme consists of explanations whereby the same capitalist economic processes create the situation where immigrants from the periphery want to move to the core countries. While it is impossible to claim that Flanders was England's periphery, the world-system theory also sees migration as a reaction to changes in intertwined economies. Given the increase in interdependence of the two economies prior to the mid fourteenth century and the economic disruption caused by the Hundred Years War, as well as the structural changes in cloth manufacture during the same period, adopting this model to consider the causes of movement between the Low

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[1] For numerous examples in the modern and early modern periods where this model has been used, see Portes and Walton, *Labor, Class, and the International System*; Morawska, 'The sociology and historiography of immigration', pp. 187–240; Sassen, *The Mobility of Labor and Capital*.

[2] Wallerstein, *The Modern World System*. In Wallerstein's own first definition, the world system is a 'multicultural territorial division of labour in which the production and exchange of basic goods and raw materials is necessary for the everyday life of its inhabitants'.

Countries and England is perfectly valid, without implying the existence of a more generalised world system. This chapter will examine the political and economic developments in England, and in Flemish and Brabantine cities before the mid fourteenth century, and how they created the conditions for the migration of textile workers. I shall argue that the migratory process was driven by the prior intensity of trade relations, the existence of communication and transportation links, and the relative frequency of travel between the countries, as well as the political situation, which led to some involuntary migration too.

ENGLAND AND THE LOW COUNTRIES – THEIR RELATIONS

Since the tenth century and our first evidence of diplomatic contact between England and Flanders, the relationship of the two regions grew ever tighter, over the following centuries, to form a political and commercial bond that was based on common interests. Throughout the whole late medieval period the established links would have an enormous impact on the industrial prosperity of both countries and eventually create economic interdependence, which would contain both benefits and inconveniences. This commercial affinity was fostered by the fact that the principal industry of the Middle Ages, the manufacture of woollen cloth, pivoted around the Low Countries. As we will see below, favoured by its location, the county of Flanders from very early on distinguished itself by higher specialisation and division of labour that would enable the development of an export-oriented cloth industry marked by the production of superior fabrics. The proximity of England and its burgeoning production of high-quality wool, woolfells and hides imposed itself as the natural partner for the growing number of urban artisans in Flanders. By the thirteenth century the county's manufacturing industries were heavily dependent on the regular supply of English wool. However, this does not mean that cloth manufacture was non-existent in England – far from it.

The two centuries preceding the Black Death in England represented a period of growth in almost all economic sectors. Pushed by the increase in population, the area under cultivation expanded as new agricultural land was developed from marshes and forests. Commercial activity in towns accelerated, and overseas trade expanded, while landlords were encouraged to found new trade fairs.[3] England sent relatively small amount of goods overseas, wool and tin being the main items, along

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[3] Britnell, *The Commercialisation*, pp. 79–81; Bolton, *The Medieval English Economy*, p. 180.

with (to some extent) cheaper cloths. Although the rich represented the main customers for imported goods such as quality textiles, wine, precious metals and expensive pottery, most of the demand for consumer goods from ordinary people was satisfied through domestic production.[4] Slow but steady growth in industrial and agricultural output brought better living standards to a number of Englishmen and - women, as an increase in demand encouraged the development of new occupations. This was particularly evident in the urban cloth industry. The manufacture of textiles certainly existed in the countryside and mainly catered for the needs of neighbours. It was in towns, however, where more specialist crafts were more likely to develop.[5] A higher degree of local specialisation achieved by some towns like Lincoln, Stamford, Winchester or York, where cloth-making developed into a major industrial activity, enabled their cloth-workers to supply markets more extensive than their neighbourhoods already by the end of the twelfth century. By 1200, English cloths were well known in Genoa and sent on from there to even more distant markets.[6] Around the same time, English cloth-making was further fostered by the diffusion of the fulling mill.[7]

Although the cloth industries of Lincoln, York, Winchester, Stamford, London and Oxford flourished for most of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, they were mostly in the hands of a mercantile elite. Indeed, fullers and weavers were reduced to the status of dependent employees and had been forbidden from engaging in the sale of cloth outside town or from being a part of exclusive organisations such as the merchant guild.[8] Members of these organisations were usually the urban elite, and they controlled the provision of raw materials (wool and dyestuffs) and the marketing of finished goods.[9] Artisans were allowed to weave or full only for the merchants of the town.[10] At the same time, in order to facilitate the representation of their own interests, fullers, weavers and other cloth-making artisans started creating formal associations. The earliest urban guilds of craftsmen in the textile industry are attested already in the twelfth century. The first extant account of the exchequer is the pipe roll of 1130–1. It lists amounts ranging from £4 to £10 paid to the crown by guilds of weavers from London, Lincoln, Winchester, Nottingham, Oxford, Huntington and York, and by the fullers of Winchester.[11] At this stage, in contrast to the later Middle Ages, fullers

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[4] Hatcher and Miller, *Medieval England*, pp. 51–2. [5] Britnell, *The Commercialisation*, p. 80.
[6] Miller, 'The fortunes of the English textile industry', 65. [7] *Ibid.* [8] *Ibid.*, 68.
[9] Carus-Wilson, 'The woollen industry', pp. 627–9.
[10] Hatcher and Miller, *Medieval England*, pp. 105, 111–12.
[11] Carus-Wilson, 'The woollen industry', pp. 627–9.

and the weavers had to circumvent municipal government by seeking royal privilege directly. Urban governments, still controlled by the merchants, would probably not have authorised the creation of formal craft associations, as they feared that the artisans would occupy positions of power in towns.[12] Given the annual cost of the royal charter, it seems that fullers' and weavers' earnings allowed them to acquire these privileges, giving us an indication of fairly flourishing textile industries in English towns.

The English evidence does not tell us much about the types of cloth that these cloth-workers produced. The Assize of Measures in 1196 stipulated that all cloth produced in England had to be woven to the width of 1 yard.[13] However, from the earliest records of cloth sales in the Mediterranean basin, we find that, apart from similar cloths from France and the Low Countries, the lighter textiles from England called *Stamfords* predominated in the Mediterranean market. With signs of the development of fulling mills from the 1180s, everything indicates that most of the sector was driven by the production of cheaper woollens, like worsteds and serges.[14] The former were named after the medieval Norfolk textile town of Worstead, and their main characteristic was that these cloths were not oiled or greased, thus the name *draperie sèche*, and they weighed about one-third of a true broadcloth.[15] Slightly later, English cloth-makers would focus on an intermediate woollen, the so-called serges, also known as says, a hybrid worsted woollen (something between worsted and broadcloth).[16] Even though these cloths were cheaper and lighter, they nevertheless required several specialist skills in order to be produced, and this becomes visible throughout the thirteenth century. Growing demand for such fabrics, in both domestic and foreign markets, would certainly foster a further division of labour and the development of local specialisation in know-how.

As in England, the textile industry of the Low Countries throughout the twelfth and thirteenth centuries was predominantly urban. In the main towns of the Low Countries – Ghent, Douai, Saint-Omer, Arras and Ypres in Flanders, and Artois (Artesia), Louvain, Brussels and Malines

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[12] Hatcher and Miller, *Medieval England*, p. 106.

[13] Bridbury, *Medieval English Clothmaking*, pp. 106–7.

[14] J. H. Munro, 'The rise, expansion, and decline of the Italian wool-based cloth industries, 1100–1730: A study in international competition, transaction costs, and comparative advantage', *Studies in Medieval and Renaissance History*, 9 (2012), 45–207, at 59.

[15] Munro, 'Medieval woollens: The western European woollen industries', vol. I, pp. 312–16; see Tables 5.7 and 5.8.

[16] J. H. Munro, 'Textile technology', in J. R. Strayer et al. (eds), *Dictionary of the Middle Ages* (New York, 1988), pp. 693–711; Munro, 'Medieval woollens: Textiles', vol. I, pp. 200–4.

in Brabant, and Leiden in Holland, and many of the smaller towns – it was textile manufacture that provided these towns with an industrial foundation and turned them into a market-oriented society with a growing division of labour, allowing the accumulation of wealth.[17] However, it must be noted that the chronological trajectory of the industry's growth differed according to region. The Flemish towns of Ghent, Bruges, Douai, Saint-Omer, Arras and Ypres were experiencing growth throughout the twelfth and thirteenth centuries and absolutely dominated cloth manufacture in the region until the social upheavals and changes in the industry at the beginning of the fourteenth century.[18] Textile workers in the towns of the Duchy of Brabant, such as Brussels, Malines and Louvain, would profit from this turbulent period for the Flemish cloth industry and see their industries develop exponentially from 1270.[19]

With slightly richer evidence from the sources than in England, we know that before the fourteenth century Flemish urban manufacture was organised in a manner similar to that in English towns, where it was controlled by the mercantile urban elites, who were themselves organised in a guild-like structure of merchants and entrepreneurs controlled by the city authorities.[20] At this stage (the twelfth and early thirteenth centuries), there were still no formal associations run by craftsmen, and most of the cloth-making was controlled by the commercial capital.[21] Thus, the merchant-capitalists were able to establish control over the whole cycle of manufacture and trade in raw materials. They had enough capital to acquire large amounts of wool or dyestuffs, which they would distribute among local artisans, and then buy the finished cloth from them to be put into circulation on the international market. They ordered and regulated the work of producers on demand, while potentially owning workshops of their own where labourers were put to work. Before 1300, urban governments in Flanders and Brabant were controlled by these patricians, an oligarchic elite that got its wealth from the possession of urban land and commercial activities.[22]

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[17] J. Dumolyn, J. Puttevils and P. Stabel, 'Production, markets and socio-economic structures, I: c. 1100 – c. 1320', in Brown and Dumolyn (eds), *Medieval Bruges*, pp. 80–2.

[18] Munro, 'Medieval woollens: The western European woollen industries', vol. I, pp. 230–48; R. Holbach, *Frühformen von Verlag und Grossbetrieb in der gewerblichen Produktion (13.–16. Jahrhundert)* (Stuttgart, 1994).

[19] J. P. Peeters, 'De produktiestructuur der Mechelse lakennijverheid en de ambachten van wevers en volders van 1270 tot 1430', *Handelingen van de Koninklijke Kring voor Oudheidkunde, Letteren en Kunst van Mechelen*, 88 (1984), 93–158.

[20] Dumolyn, Puttevils and Stabel, 'Production, markets', p. 82.   [21] *Ibid*.

[22] H. van Werveke, 'De koopman-ondernemer en de ondernemer in de Vlaamsche lakennijverheid van de late middeleeuwen', *Mededeelingen van de Koninklijke Academie voor Wetenschappen, Letteren*

More generally, these towns were more and more economically dependent upon one another, and gradually became connected to interregional and international trade networks, which at a later stage would result in the expansion of highly skilled, luxury-oriented industries. One of the particular features of economic development in the Low Countries was the 'gateway town', which functioned on the basis whereby a bigger town would become a node for the export from its hinterlands and for the supply of products that were missing in the network itself.[23] Such hierarchical organisation led the gateway cities to grow into nodes that concentrated capital, demand, and the distribution of finished products and raw materials, and, last but not least, know-how and knowledge, all of which facilitated the development of export-oriented cloth manufacture. From very early on, Flemish cloth was well known not only in Germany but as far east as Novgorod, where each year the Fraternity of Merchants of Saint John the Baptist gave a whole cloth of Ypres to the bishop when he said mass for them on the feast of their patron saint.[24] The growth of trade fairs in Champagne and the importance of Italian merchants in the Mediterranean trade would popularise the cloth produced in the towns of the Low Countries throughout all parts of Europe and North Africa.

Similarly, the neighbouring towns of the Duchy of Brabant would start to find their place in the international market as well. It was the cloth of Malines and Louvain that appeared first in a table of the lengths of cloths sold at Champagne trade fairs which can be dated with precision from 1288.[25] Brussels cloth would appear only in 1305 in the same source.[26] By 1298, various types of cloth from these towns would penetrate the French market. Their presence would be felt mainly in Paris, where they took an important place alongside Flemish producers.[27] Over the course of the following fifteen years, these fabrics would

en Schoone Kunsten van België, Klasse der Letteren, 8 (1946), 5–26; Holbach, *Frühformen*; and J. H. Munro, 'Industrial entrepreneurship in the late medieval Low Countries: Urban draperies, fullers and the art of survival', in Paul Klep and Eddy Van Cauwenberghe (eds), *Entrepreneurship and the Transformation of the Economy (10th–20th Centuries): Essays in Honour of Herman van der Wee* (Leuven, 1994), pp. 377–88.

[23] W. Blockmans, B. De Munck and P. Stabel, 'Economic vitality: Urbanisation, regional complementarity and European interaction', in B. Blondé, M. Boone and A.-L. Van Bruaene (eds), *City and Society in the Low Countries 1100–1600* (Cambridge, 2018), p. 38.

[24] Carus-Wilson, 'The woollen industry', p. 628.

[25] R.-H. Bautier, 'La Place de la draperie brabançonne et plus particulièrement bruxelloise dans l'industrie textile du Moyen Âge', *Annales de la Société Royale d'Archéologie de Bruxelles*, 51 (1966), 31–63, at 35–6.

[26] *Ibid.*

[27] R. Van Uytven, 'De omvang van de Mechelse lakenproductie vanaf de 14de eeuw tot de 16de eeuw', *Noordgouw*, 5 (1965), 1–22; R. Van Uytven, 'La Draperie brabançonne et malinoise du

permeate markets all over Europe. In 1303, the merchants of Munich would take some of the Brabantine cloths to Tyrol and Nuremberg. A few years later, they would appear in Italy as well. They appear first in 1307 in the accounts of the Florentine company Alberti, and then, in 1310, the scarlets of Brussels would be sold in Genoa. By 1312, the scarlets of Brussels and Malines would even reach Cyprus, and in the same year the cloth of Brussels was reported in Montpellier and the Iberian peninsula.[28]

This rise in the manufacture of textiles made sure that a significant percentage of the growing population of the later twelfth and thirteenth centuries was employed in the cloth industry.[29] Other industries were sources of employment too: in Bruges, for example, production was large enough by the thirteenth century to provide work for fifty specialised crafts. These included the leather, metal and brewing industries, as well as herring fisheries, but cloth manufacture had become the most important component of the Flemish economy.[30] The proximity of the country-side, with the production of raw materials (wool from sheep in the coastal salt marshes) and a supply of cheap labour, turned the cities of Flanders into centres of industrial activity and cloth-making in northern Europe.[31] More importantly, the strategic location of the Low Countries on the main European trade routes ensured a constant supply of raw materials from abroad and facilitated the export of finished goods.[32] 'Thus, strong urban growth, the security afforded by the castles of local nobles, and flourishing local and developing long-distance markets together formed the preconditions for the first 'industrial revolution' in European history – the urban-based mass production of woollen textiles'.[33]

The twelfth and thirteenth centuries marked the growing economic interdependence of all parts of Europe upon one another, but nothing could be compared with the extent to which the advance of the cloth industry in Flanders was based upon raw materials brought in from other lands. Both Flanders and England produced wool as the raw material. However, by the thirteenth century, England became the main provider to both nations' industries. In addition to the rapid increase in industrial output, Flanders had to import wool from England, as her own

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XIIe au XVIIIe siècles: Grandeur éphémère et décadence', in M. Spallanzani (ed.), *Produzione, commercio e consumo dei panni di lana* (Florence, 1976), pp. 85–97.
[28] Bautier, 'La Place de la draperie brabançonne', 36–8.
[29] Dumolyn, Puttevils and Stabel, 'Production, markets', p. 82, and bibliography there.   [30] *Ibid.*
[31] Blockmans, De Munck and Stabel, 'Economic vitality', p. 22.
[32] Dumolyn, Puttevils and Stabel, 'Production, markets', p. 80.   [33] Ibid., p. 100.

domestically produced wool was inadequate both in terms of quantity and quality. The period between the twelfth and thirteenth centuries has been characterised by historians as the phase of the 'active Flemish trade': Flemish merchants carried their trade to foreign markets.[34] Despite the fact that the Zwin estuary and the city of Bruges saw a lot of foreign traders, the Flemings and especially Bruges merchants were active in foreign markets, where merchants from other Flemish and Artesian cities, including Arras, Ypres, Ghent, and even Diksmuide, joined them there.[35]

Already in the early twelfth century many Flemings were visiting England to purchase wheat and English wool, and to sell wine and woollen cloth.[36] At this stage, much of England's continental trade was controlled by Flemish merchants, who had a pivotal role in transferring goods between Flanders, the English trade fairs, London and the Champagne trade fairs. These commercial ties were strengthened by the privileges granted to Flemish traders in 1213 by King John, exempting them from tolls in York and Winchester.[37] This allowed Flemish cloth manufacturers to contract large supplies of wool, either through agents or directly from the growers, throughout the thirteenth century. They also purchased from English monasteries, but considerable quantities were bought by Flemings in other parts of England, and also in Scotland, Wales and Ireland.[38] While Flemish merchants were particularly active at the St Ives trade fairs, it seems that quite a few of them also established themselves in London.[39] Furthermore, Bruges merchants took a leading role in the Flemish 'Hanse of the Seventeen Cities', the merchant guild that managed Flemish trade abroad, and by creating commercial networks in England, they ensured a supply of what over time evolved into the primary ingredient of English wool.[40] During

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[34] H. Van Werveke, 'Der Flandrische Eigenhandel im Mittelalter', *Hansische Geschichtsblätter*, 61 (1936), 7–24.

[35] J. A. Van Houtte, *De geschiedenis van Brugge* (Tielt, 1982), pp. 93–4; Dumolyn, Puttevils and Stabel, 'Production, markets', pp. 106–7.

[36] Nicholas, *Medieval Flanders*, pp. 116–18; E. Wedemeyer Moore, *The Fairs of Medieval England: An Introductory Study* (Toronto, 1985), pp. 30–1.

[37] Dumolyn, Puttevils and Stabel, 'Production, markets', p. 87.

[38] S. Rose, *The Wealth of England: The Medieval Wool Trade and Its Political importance 1100–1600* (Oxbow, 2018), pp. 45–63.

[39] Nicholas, *Medieval Flanders*, pp. 164–6; E. Varenbergh, *Histoire des relations diplomatiques entre le comté de Flandre et l'Angleterre au Moyen Âge* (Ghent, 1868), pp. 153–5; Wedemeyer Moore, *The Fairs*, pp. 13–14; J. A. Van Houtte, *An Economic History of the Low Countries, 800–1800* (London, 1977), p. 35.

[40] Dumolyn, Puttevils and Stabel, 'Production, markets', pp. 106–12.

much of the thirteenth century, the Hanse practically governed northern cloth sales at the Champagne trade fairs.

From the last quarter of the thirteenth century, however, the textile industries of England and Flanders started to go through a process of significant structural change. The causes of the onset of this transformation were the same for both – warfare in the Mediterranean and the decline of the Champagne trade fairs – but the urban industries of each country coped with it in different ways. As mentioned above, the urban cloth-makers of Flanders and England focused on the production of cheaper coarse cloths called serges.[41] It was a lighter woollen, fit for mild climates, and, because of its relatively cheap price, the densely populated Mediterranean basin with its hot springs and autumns represented the most suitable market.[42] Most of these textiles were first brought to the Champagne trade fairs by Flemish merchants and then sold to Italian merchants, who eventually re-exported them to North Africa and to other Italian cities. The combination of notarial records from Genoa and Florence, as well as from Castilian port books, shows that these cheaper textiles accounted for the overwhelming majority of thirteenth-century sales throughout the Mediterranean.[43] However, this system of the exchange of northern textiles between Flemings and Italian merchants would come to an end.

The integration of the Champagne region into the French kingdom in 1284 caused a severe decline in the trade fairs. King Philip IV saw an opportunity to capitalise on the presence of merchants by increasing tolls and confiscating their goods.[44] This only forced the merchants to withdraw, leading to the final loss in importance of the Champagne trade

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[41] Although luxury woollens, such as scarlets, were produced in some Flemish cities prior to the fourteenth century, the majority of those engaged in the urban cloth industry produced lighter textiles, like *saies*, *estanfordes*, *biffes*, *faudeits*, *afforchiés*, *rayés* and *burels*. The techniques of making, prices, weights and the place of these fabrics in the market are discussed in more detail in J. H. Munro, *Wool, Cloth and Gold: The Struggle for Bullion in Anglo-Burgundian Trade, 1340–1478* (Brussels and Toronto, 1973), pp. 1–9; J. H. Munro, 'Industrial transformations in the north-west European textile trades, c. 1290 – c. 1340: Economic progress or economic crisis?', in Bruce M. S. Campbell (ed.), *Before the Black Death: Studies in the 'Crisis' of the Early Fourteenth Century* (Manchester and New York, 1991), pp. 110–48, at pp. 110–14.

[42] Munro, 'The "industrial crisis"', pp. 103–41.

[43] P. Chorley, 'English cloth exports during the thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries: The continental evidence', *Historical Research*, 61 (1988), 1–10, at 2–4; P. Chorley, 'The cloth exports of Flanders and northern France during the thirteenth century: A luxury trade?', *The Economic History Review*, 40 (1987), 349–79; H. Hoshino, 'The rise of the Florentine woollen industry in the fourteenth century', in N. B. Harte and K. G. Ponting (eds), *Cloth and Clothing in Medieval Europe* (London, 1983), pp. 184–204; W. Childs, 'The English export trade in cloth in the fourteenth century', in R. H. Britnell and J. Hatcher (eds), *Progress and Problems in Medieval England: Essays in Honour of Edward Miller* (Cambridge, 1996), pp. 121–47.

[44] Nicholas, *Medieval Flanders*, pp. 177–8.

fairs.[45] At the same time, wars in the Mediterranean between 1290 and 1310 not only disrupted the regular trade routes but also increased transport and transaction costs. Collecting evidence from numerous notarial records and customs accounts, John Munro demonstrated that rising transport and transaction costs doubled maritime and freight rates.[46] Naturally, the most affected were the north European textile workers, who focused on the production of export-oriented serges. Under such circumstances, it became virtually impossible for these woollens to bear the freight charges in long-distance trade and compete with local producers in the Mediterranean basin.[47] As a consequence, Flemish and English urban cloth manufacturers faced large-scale unemployment and a more general crisis within the textile industries.

The fact that serges became uncompetitive in foreign markets led English urban textile centres into a severe industrial crisis.[48] The extent of this decline is supported by both internal and external evidence. Notarial documents and cloth-price tariffs, as well as port records from the Continent, suggest that by the 1310s English serges (*Stamfords*, as well as *grays* and *blacks* from York and Lincoln) were almost completely absent from Italian, Iberian and other Mediterranean markets.[49] At the same time, the traditional urban textile centres in England were affected as well. The primary evidence to back this claim comes from the complaints of textile guilds to the king about their inability to pay the annual fee that allowed them to have royal protection and to keep their independence from town governments and mercantile elites. For example, the weavers of Oxford successfully petitioned King Edward I to agree that the annual farm of £6 they had paid since the twelfth century should be reduced to 42s.[50] The guild of weavers in Lincoln stopped paying their farm in 1320, and the fullers' guild there simply ceased to exist.[51] In Winchester, where evidence for the earliest fullers' guild in England is attested in 1130, the guild seems to have been dissolved sometime in the thirteenth century and then reconstituted in 1364.[52] Signs of decline are even clearer in the

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[45] J. Edwards and S. Ogilvie, 'What lessons for economic development can we draw from the Champagne fairs?', *Explorations in Economic History*, 49 (2012), 131–48.

[46] Munro, 'Industrial transformations', pp. 110–48; J. H. Munro, 'The origins of the English "new draperies": The resurrection of an old Flemish industry, 1270–1570', in N. B. Harte (ed.), *The New Draperies in the Low Countries and England, 1300–1800* (Oxford, 1997), pp. 35–127.

[47] Munro, 'Medieval woollens: The western European woollen industries', vol. I, pp. 228–324.

[48] Miller, 'The fortunes of English textile industry', 64–82.

[49] Munro, 'The "industrial crisis"', 107–9; Chorley, 'English cloth exports', 6.

[50] E. Carus-Wilson, *Medieval Merchant Venturers: Collected Studies* (London, 1954), p. 205.

[51] Miller, 'The fortunes of English textile industry', 70.

[52] Keene, *Survey of Medieval Winchester*, vol. I, p. 305; Carus-Wilson, *Medieval Merchant Venturers*, p. 226.

evidence of the dwindling number of cloth artisans. The city of Leicester, once an important textile centre, was completely deserted by its fullers at the beginning of the fourteenth century.[53] In their complaint in 1321, the London burellers stated that the number of looms had dropped from 380, thirty years earlier, to only 80 at the time when they wrote the complaint.[54] In 1334, the authorities of Northampton similarly complained that whereas there had been 300 weavers during the reign of Henry III, only abandoned houses were to be found now.[55] The drop in commercial revenue in Winchester led its authorities to petition Edward III to reduce their annual fee. The main reason for this demand was the collapse in the number of weavers, which confirms the hypothesis that the textile industry had left the town even earlier than the fourteenth century.[56]

While serges were disappearing from international trade and urban manufacture, cheaper coarse textiles from villages were gaining momentum. John Oldland has recently argued that the competition from rural cloth had only accelerated the elimination of serges. These low-priced fabrics produced in the countryside took over the domestic market very rapidly for low- and medium-quality cloths.[57] The demand for middling- and high-quality broadcloths, the production of which was also in decline in the urban cloth-making centres of England in the first half of the fourteenth century, was satisfied by imports. The export of wool as a raw material and the importation of luxury cloths mainly from the Low Countries remained the principal activity of the urban mercantile elite until the 1340s. At the same time, urban weavers initially turned to the production of coarse woollens, but they would soon be able to work on some of the higher-quality cloth in order to fill the gap created by the diminishing demand for imported cloth.[58]

In the same period, from the 1290s to 1320s, the urban textile centres of Flanders and Brabant abandoned the manufacture of lighter, cheaper serges (which relocated to the smaller towns) and turned mostly to the production of high-quality luxury cloth, which was heavily dependent on imports of English wool.[59] Compared with England, Flemish and Brabantine towns enjoyed a long established pre-eminence and reputation in the production of luxury broadcloths, and were able to sustain this

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[53] Miller, 'The fortunes of English textile industry', 70.
[54] Riley, *Liber Custumarum*, vol. II, pp. lxvi–lxviii, 416–25.
[55] *Rotuli Parliamentorum 1278–1503*, 6 vols. (London, 1832), vol. II, pp. 85–6.
[56] Miller, 'The fortunes of English textile industry', 70; Carus-Wilson, *Medieval Merchant Venturers*, pp. 204–5.
[57] Oldland, *The English Woollen Industry*, pp. 98–112.   [58] *Ibid.*, p. 108.
[59] Munro, *Wool, Cloth and Gold*, pp. 1–6.

transition a lot easier.[60] Under market pressure, urban textile industries changed from being manufacturers of all kinds of cloth to being more selective producers of highly expensive greased and striped woollens, demand for which did not diminish after the price increased. The skills of cloth-workers in the finishing stages of manufacture, as well as the use of pricey raw materials (high-quality English wool and dyestuffs), were much more important in determining the value of these luxury woollens. In order to keep the higher level of skill, these textiles had to be manufactured with strict quality standards.[61] What also differed from England during this process of industrial conversion was the development of the internal structure of the industry, which would remain typical of Flemish and Brabantine cloth manufacture for the remainder of the late medieval period. 'The cloth guilds, which could guarantee more efficiently the required standard of quality for more expensive fabrics, had acquired a pivotal role in this new industrial constellation, and slowly the wealthier guild masters, mostly weavers, replaced the capitalist merchant-entrepreneurs as the key organisers of the production chain'.[62]

Although these circumstances deepened the interdependence of the two regions, this economic situation was not sustainable on a longer-term basis. On the one hand, the county of Flanders became a political hostage to England, as its urban industries were vulnerable to the crown's occasional embargoes on wool.[63] On the other hand, very lucrative though it was, the English wool trade was mostly in the hands of foreign merchants, and this situation whereby England held an abundance of high-quality raw material but no established production of quality finished products was no bargain either.[64] Edward III, thus, embarked on a set of policies that aimed to promote the development of a native cloth industry. A statute from 1337 prohibited the export of wool and the import of foreign cloths. Every man or woman was allowed to produce cloth, and alien cloth-workers were invited to settle wherever they wanted within the realm.[65] From that moment onwards, textile workers

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[60] Munro, 'The "industrial crisis"', p. 139.
[61] J. L. Murray, *Bruges, Cradle of Capitalism, 1280–1390* (Cambridge, 2005), p. 279.
[62] Dumolyn, Puttevils and Stabel, 'Production, markets', pp. 106–22.
[63] G.-G. Dept, *Les Influences anglaise et française dans le comté de Flandre au début du XIIIe siècle* (Ghent and Paris, 1928); C. Wyffels, 'De Vlaamse handel op Engeland voor het Engels-Vlaams konflikt van 1270–1274', *Bijdragen voor de geschiedenis der Nederlanden*, 17 (1963), 205–13; and H. Berben, 'Une Guerre économique au Moyen Âge: L'embargo sur l'exportation des laines anglaises, 1270–1274', in *Études d'histoire dédiées à la mémoire de Henri Pirenne* (Brussels, 1937), pp. 1–17.
[64] T. H. Lloyd, *The English Wool Trade in the Middle Ages* (Cambridge, 1977), pp. 144–56.
[65] *The Statutes of the Realm: Printed by Command of His Majesty King George the Third: In Pursuance of an Address of the House of Commons of Great Britain; from Original Records and Authentic Manuscripts*, ed.

from the Low Countries started to make their mark in the English records. Most notable were those who were granted individual letters of protection to ply their trade throughout the realm, as we will see in more detail below. In two recent contributions, these letters of protection to Flemings were linked to Edward III's general immigration policy, in which the government started to look at foreign residents' economic potential rather than see them as as a security threat.[66] Although immigration policies were already in place during the 1340s, and Flemish weavers granted sufficient franchises, the expected wave of immigration would appear a little later, provoked by developments on the other side of the English Channel.

At the end of the thirteenth century, there had already been some unsuccessful attempts at encouraging foreign weavers to establish their manufacture in England.[67] However, it was the political situation that led to the development of these specific immigration policies. The relationship between the houses of Plantagenet and Capet, which had been shaky since the Treaty of Paris in 1259, evolved into open Anglo-French warfare due to disagreements about the feudal status of Aquitaine in 1294.[68] As a result, the government confiscated the property of all foreigners resident in England that the crown deemed to be related to the French king. Such radical measures not only proved ineffective and caused economic problems, they also revealed that not all foreigners within the realm represented a national threat: the majority of them actually contributed more positively to their local communities. Indeed, the issues arising from this campaign inspired the crown to be more considerate when dealing with aliens in the future. When the death of Charles IV in 1328 left the French throne without a direct male heir, and the question of the succession was at stake, the English government still took actions against French interests in England, but also issued so-called letters of protection to ameliorate the harshness of the measures for as many people as possible. Even though the war that broke out with France from 1337 presented the crown with much more serious concerns than the campaigns of 1294 and 1328 had done, the consequences in

A Luders et al., 11 vols. in 12, Record Commission (London, 1810–28, reprint London, 1963), vol. I, pp. 280–1.

[66] Lambert and Ormrod, 'A matter of trust', 208–26; Lambert and Ormrod, 'Friendly foreigners', 1–24.

[67] E. Lipson, *The History of the Woollen and Worsted Industries* (London, 1921), p. 10. Henry III's government in 1271 was the first to come up with the policy that would encourage male and female textile workers from abroad to come to England to work for five years.

[68] For the wars between England and France during this period, see M. G. A. Vale, *The Origins of the Hundred Years War: The Angevin Legacy, 1250–1340* (Oxford, 1996).

England for the French, and for other immigrants, were minimal. They would continue to be so for the remainder of the Hundred Years War.[69]

From the 1330s onwards, individual textile workers or groups of weavers who immigrated from the Low Countries were now eligible to get the same letters of protection that had previously been used to exempt foreign residents from the impact of the wartime measures if they wanted to set up their business in England. The first letter of protection with the terms of the craftsman's stay was granted in 1331 to John Kempe.[70] In 1333, the commons in parliament petitioned Edward to protect foreign cloth-workers from arrest and prosecution, so that they could 'teach the people of this land to work the cloth'.[71] With this in mind and in order to preserve and safeguard the immigrant contribution to the English economy, the government seemed to have embarked on a genuinely active immigration policy. Individual letters similar to the one granted to John Kempe were issued to other workers from the Low Countries over the following years, first to weavers William and Hanekin de Brabant in York in 1336,[72] and a year later to fifteen Zeelanders with no specified place of residence,[73] as well as to a dyer, Nicholas Appelman, and his men in Winchester in 1337.[74] Three weavers from Diest in Brabant, exercising their trade in St Ives (Huntingdonshire), in 1338 also received letters.[75] As we have seen, in 1337 a statute was passed that invited textile workers from all 'strange lands' and promised them all the legal franchises they would need.[76] Still, it seems that the settlement of newcomers immediately faced some resistance from local communities. The same year as the statute of invitation was issued, the king had to order the citizens of London to stop injuring foreign cloth-workers.[77] In 1339, a similar proclamation was repeated, while in 1344 the crown even threatened to send those Londoners who were still attacking Flemish weavers to Newgate prison.[78] Without a doubt, native artisans did not have the same vision of the foreign guests as did the crown.[79] Despite this opposition, Edward III would not change his course of action. Protections

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[69] Lambert and Ormrod, 'A matter of trust', 208–26. Apart from the French, the goods of Flemings and Bretons resident in England were confiscated as well.

[70] *CPR, 1330–4*, p. 161.   [71] *PROME*, vol. IV, p. 191.   [72] *CPR, 1334–8*, p. 341.

[73] *Ibid.*, p. 431.   [74] *Ibid.*, p. 500.

[75] *CPR, 1338–40*, p. 13. As the cloth fair was still held in St Ives, this place had probably attracted more textile workers from the Low Countries than only these three weavers.

[76] *Statutes of the Realm*, vol. I, p. 281.   [77] *Letter Book F*, p. 190.

[78] *CCR, 1339–41*, p. 103; *CCR, 1343–6*, p. 486.

[79] Outside London, only the weavers of York are known to have protested against the immigration of cloth-workers from the Low Countries, in 1342. TNA, SC 8/238/11890A.

for Flemish and Brabantine artisans continued throughout the 1340s.[80] In 1351, the government would broaden its immigration policies due to developments on the other side of the English Channel when thousands of textile workers were banished from Flanders because of their involvement in the revolt against the count. Overall, economic, social and political circumstances in Flanders and England played an important role as pull-and-push factors. But we will see in what follows that fourteenth-century Flanders was marked by constant troubles: overpopulation, high taxation, hunger, warfare, and political and social conflicts, as well as plague, and many Flemings were therefore glad to leave or be forced to do so.

FLEMISH REVOLTS AND THE POLITICS OF COLLECTIVE EXILE THROUGHOUT THE FOURTEENTH CENTURY

While both England and the Low Countries were experiencing industrial conversion, vast unemployment, crop failure and famine throughout the late thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries, the county of Flanders was also marked by higher social tensions which led to outright urban rebellions in the 1280s and 1300s. Although the county of Flanders was one of the wealthiest regions in north-western Europe, its social structure represented the perfect ground for these developments. Indeed, as we have already mentioned, during the thirteenth century Flemish (and Brabantine) urban society became increasingly complex as a result of economic growth and a higher division of labour. It had also become a more stratified society, where one could distinguish between the rich and the poor, or between on the one hand the *ghemeen*, or *le commun* – mostly urban craftsmen, petty retailers and unskilled workers (the commoners) – and on the other *de goede lieden*, or *les bonnes gens* – the merchant elites (the patricians) who regulated the production and labour of the commoners, including wages, working hours and product standards. The oppositions between the two were not only social and economic, but also political. Very often the mercantile elite, who monopolised urban political power, did not represent the opinions and needs of the manufacturers. Naturally, these social contrasts led to a wave of dissatisfaction that would be reflected in violent clashes in the form of urban revolts from the 1280s onwards. The initial revolts, which culminated in the triumph of the artisans at the battle of Courtrai in 1302, prompted the inclusion of new groups into political power alongside the patricians.

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[80] See, for example, the grant to John de Bruyn from Ghent, making woollen cloth in Abingdon (Berkshire), in 1343. *CPR, 1343–5*, p. 115.

Cloth manufacture, still by far the main employer in the county, had also passed from being controlled by a rich mercantile elite to guild-organised master craftsmen. The latter would form a new urban class, and gradually become a larger and politically more influential group. But this process of industrial and political change throughout the fourteenth century was disastrous for most textile workers, skilled and unskilled, men and women alike, whose job opportunities must have declined considerably. Many of them left Flanders and Brabant in search of employment, including those workers who were also forced to leave the county as political exiles after their involvement in the revolts.

Already in the 1240s several towns experienced discontent in the form of strikes.[81] However, the first signs of a generalised wave of social and political unrest appeared around 1280, when movements of collective action caused by economic crisis and the systematic exclusion from power of the mass of the urban population touched Flanders as well as other parts of the Low Countries and northern France. Revolts spread to Tournai, Ghent, Douai, Bruges, Ypres, Saint-Omer and Arras in 1280, as well as Brussels in 1282. In these disturbances textile workers played a key role.[82] These circumstances forced the French king, Philip IV 'the Fair', to start getting more directly involved in the internal political situation of Flanders. He found support among the urban oligarchies, who saw him as an instrument for getting rid of comital authority. This political constellation gradually led Flanders to become divided into two oppos-ing camps: one side that would support the count, and the other the French king. The pro-French faction, which consisted mainly of urban oligarchs, became known as the 'Leliaerts' ('Lilies'), after the 'fleur de lys' of the French crown, while the other faction, which consisted mainly of commoners, was referred to as the 'Clauwaerts' ('Claws'), after the lion's claws on the Flemish coat of arms.[83]

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[81] W. Prevenier, 'La Bourgeoisie en Flandre au XIIIe siècle', *Revue de l'Université de Bruxelles*, 4 (1978), 407–28; J. Dumolyn, 'Economic development, social space and political power in Bruges, c. 1127–1302', in H. Skoda, P. Lantschner and R. L. J. Shaw (eds), *Contact and Exchange in Later Medieval Europe: Essays in Honour of Malcolm Vale* (Woodbridge 2012), pp. 33–58.

[82] C. Wyffels, 'Nieuwe gegevens betreffende een XIIIde eeuwse "democratische" stedelijke opstand: De Brugse "Moerlemaye" (1280–81)', *Bulletin de la Commission Royale d'Histoire*, 132 (1966), 37–142; M. Boone, 'Social conflicts in the cloth industry of Ypres (late 13th–early 14th centuries): The Cockerulle Reconsidered', in M. Dewilde, A. Ervynck and A. Wielemans (eds), *Ypres and the Medieval Cloth Industry in Flanders: Archaeological and Historical Contributions* (Zellik, 1998), pp. 147–55.

[83] J. Braekevelt, F. Buylaert, J. Dumolyn and J. Haemers, 'The politics of factional conflict in late medieval Flanders', *Historical Research*, 85 (2012), 13–31; M. Boone, 'Une Société urbanisée sous tension: Le comté de Flandre vers 1302', in R. C. Van Caenegem (ed.), *Le Désastre de Courtrai: Mythe et réalité de la bataille des éperons d'or* (Antwerp 2002), pp. 27–77.

Given the importance of English wool for the economic prosperity of Flemish towns in the second half of the thirteenth century, counts were reluctant to support the pro-French party and thereby put urban manufactures at risk from the potential imposition of higher tariffs or an embargo by the English crown. Thus, in 1297 Count Guy de Dampierre decided to renounce his feudal allegiance to King Philip, side with the English king, Edward I, and become an ally of the commoners. French troops invaded Flanders, and by 1300 the county was almost completely under French control. The property of supporters of the count was confiscated, and Bruges guildsmen who rebelled against the Lily regime were collectively banished in 1301.[84] Popular resistance grew in Ghent and especially in Bruges, where, during the early morning of 18 May 1302, French occupying troops were killed or chased away during the Good Friday revolt. Subsequently, a Flemish army mostly consisting of urban militiamen defeated the French chivalric army near Kortrijk (Courtrai) on 11 July of the same year.

The popular victory of the battle of the Golden Spurs in 1302 generally led to more socio-economic emancipation of the craftsmen and to the textile guilds' participation in the government of the large towns of Flanders.[85] In this new composition of urban governments, the normative framework that concerned the quality of manufacture and labour relations was now co-determined by the representatives of guilds. Amongst other important changes in social relations in the county's important cities that took place after this revolt was above all the organisation of cloth manufacture. The traditional structure, where a rich mercantile elite would control all stages of manufacture and marketing, which characterised a large part of the thirteenth century, became history. This role shifted instead to the richer guild masters of weavers, who were now able to hire labourers to work at their shops, or subcontract other artisans who worked from their homes, while marketing the finished cloth themselves.[86] Merchants still remained in charge of exports and focused on controlling regional supply networks, but the organisation of labour and local trade was now in the hands of these artisan–entrepreneurs.[87] The success of these weaver–drapers lay in

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[84] J. F. Verbruggen, *The Battle of the Golden Spurs: Courtrai, 11 July 1302* (Woodbridge, 2002), pp. 19, 22; J. F. Verbruggen, *1302: Opstand in Vlaanderen: De Guldensporenslag* (Brussels 1977), pp. 9, 72. The city also had to send 466 hostages to Tournai: L. Verriest, 'Le Registre de la 'Loi' de Tournai, de 1302 et les listes des otages de Bruges (1301) et de Courtrai', *Bulletin de la Commission Royale d'Histoire*, 80 (1911), 369–527.

[85] Boone, *Une Société urbanisée*, p. 27–77.   [86] Van Werveke, 'De koopman-ondernemer', 5–26.

[87] Munro, 'Industrial transformations', pp. 110–48. Similar developments were observed in Normandy in the second half of the fourteenth and throughout the fifteenth centuries: J.-L.

the fact that they were able to control manufacturing processes, organise manufacturing networks, and monopolise skill and expertise through guild supervision.[88] The development of this new urban class was a process in the making throughout the second half of the thirteenth century, but after the revolt in 1302, its members were able to become involved in urban office-holding.[89]

The achievement of the textile guilds in Flemish towns hastened a political evolution in other towns in the Low Countries with somewhat related cloth industries and similar social structures. Shortly after 1302, the craftsmen and their guilds in Brabant succeeded in contesting the monopoly in urban office of the mercantile elite; however, this was only temporary. Urban uprisings broke out in Malines and Brussels in 1303.[90] In Brussels, the commoners were granted access to the urban government for three years, but in 1306 the patrician families regained absolute control.[91] The situation was slightly better for craft guilds in Malines. Even though the revolt was suppressed, the guilds were still allowed to appoint their representatives to the city's council, along with the patricians. In Louvain, the power of the patricians was likewise contested between 1303 and 1306, but here as well they remained in power. Although this political change was short-lived in the towns of Brussels and Louvain, it would not stop the ambition of textile guilds and would only pave the way for it to re-emerge later.

After the rush of victory had passed and the city-dwellers lost their military superiority, the French king was able to impose the Treaty of Athis-sur-Orge on the county on 16 January 1305. One of its main clauses included the return of all the Lily exiles and the restitution of their confiscated property.[92] Moreover, the Flemings were obliged to pay an enormous indemnity to the king.[93] Those who had gained most

Roch, *Un Autre Monde du travail: La draperie en Normandie au Moyen Âge* (Mont Saint-Aignan, 2013), pp. 87–9.

[88] P. Stabel, 'Labour time, guild time? Working hours in the cloth industry of medieval Flanders and Artois (thirteenth and fourteenth centuries)', *The Low Countries Journal of Social and Economic History*, 11:4 (2014), 27–9.

[89] H. Soly, 'The political economy of European craft guilds: Power relations and economic strategies of merchants and master artisans in the medieval and early modern textile industries', *International Review of Social History*, 53 (2008), 45–71.

[90] H. Vandecandelaere, 'Een opstand in "zeven aktes": Brussel 1303–1306', *Cahiers Bruxellois*, 40 (2008–9), 4–67.

[91] F. Favresse, *L'Avènement du régime démocratique à Bruxelles pendant le Moyen Âge (1306–1423)* (Bruxelles, 1932), p. 98.

[92] *Codex diplomaticus Flandriae inde ab anno 1296 ad usque 1325*, ed. Th. De Limburg-Stirum (Bruges, 1879), vol. I, pp. 336–7, 358, 364–5.

[93] J. Van Herwaarden, *Opgelegde bedevaarten: Een studie over de praktijk van opleggen van bedevaarten (met name in de stedelijke rechtspraak) in de Nederlanden gedurende de late middeleeuwen (ca. 1300–ca. 1500)*

from the victory in 1302, the textile workers, gradually felt more betrayed by their formal allies within the comital family. One of the biggest burdens on the population was now the fiscal policy of Count Robert of Béthune, who had succeeded his deceased father, Guy. In most cities of Flanders, members of the Lily party, now again with the full support of the count they had previously detested, assumed or consolidated power and introduced measures against the guildsmen.[94] In this climate of popular disappointment, the return of the previously exiled and fugitive Lilies after the Treaty of Athis seems to have been the primary cause for a new series of risings. Revolts broke out in 1309–10 in Bruges, in 1309 in the rural district of the castellany of Waas, in 1309–11 in Aardenburg and in 1311 in Ghent, provoked by discontent with the terms of the treaty.[95]

Continuing sentiments of discontent among the popular classes were further fuelled by the inexperience of the new pro-French Count Louis of Nevers, who took up office in 1322.[96] A new, massive rebellion would finally break out in Flanders in 1323–8. It started among the peasants of the coastal plain of Flanders, and soon Bruges, Ypres, Kortrijk, Geraardsbergen and other towns joined in, though in Ghent the elites held on to power, and rebellious textile workers once again fled the city.[97] Facing the massive revolt of 1323–8, for instance, Louis of Nevers had sought help in Paris, and in 1328 the rebels were crushed at Cassel by the French army, joined by the count and troops from Ghent. The punishment for the insurgents would be an exemplary one. In Bruges itself the rebel leaders were executed. Willem de Deken, burgomaster of Bruges and the main leader of the revolt, was taken to Paris for torture and execution.[98] All the goods of the culprits were confiscated or burned, and all privileges enjoyed by the rebel castellanies were revoked or revised.[99] The cities of Bruges and Ypres were condemned to have

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(Assen-Amsterdam, 1978), p. 56; D. van den Auweele, 'De Brugse gijzelaarslijsten, 1301, 1305 en 1328: Een komparatieve analyse', *Handelingen van het Genootschap voor Geschiedenis*, 100 (1973), p. 120.

[94] W. Te Brake, *A Plague of Insurrection: Popular Politics and Peasant Revolt in Flanders, 1323–1328* (Philadelphia, 1993), p. 51.

[95] *Annals of Ghent*, ed. H. Johnstone (London, 1951), p. 99.

[96] TeBrake, *A Plague of Insurrection*, pp. 46–7; J. Sabbe, *Vlaanderen in opstand 1323–1328: Nikolaas Zannekin, Zeger Janszone en Willem de Deken* (Bruges, 1992).

[97] See for this period J. F. Verbruggen, *Vlaanderen na de Guldensporenslag: De vrijheidsstrijd van het graafschap Vlaanderen, 1303–1305* (Bruges, 1991) and Sabbe, *Vlaanderen in opstand*.

[98] R. C. Van Caenegem, 'Nota over de terechtstelling van Willem de Deken te Parijs in 1328', *Handelingen van het Genootschap voor Geschiedenis*, 90 (1953), 140–2.

[99] H. Pirenne, *Le Soulèvement de la Flandre maritime de 1323–1328: Documents inédits* (Brussels, 1900), p. xxxi; J. Van Rompaey, 'De Brugse keure van 1329 en de aanvullende privileges', *Bulletin de la Commission Royale des Anciennes Lois et Ordonnances de Belgique*, 21 (1965), 35–99.

their fortifications destroyed, and hundreds of people were sent into exile and also had to pay enormous fines.[100]

Among the various sanctions imposed upon the rebellious cities of Bruges and Ypres, the townsmen also had to provide hostages to the king. From Bruges, 500 rebels were requested to temporarily serve as hostages, while another 500 weavers and 500 fullers were ordered to leave the city of Ypres immediately and settle 'beyond the River Somme'.[101] Skilled artisans who had been exiled often opted either to settle in a foreign city in order to find work, without any hope of going back home, or wait patiently until the political tide had turned. These artisans (mostly textile workers), who were sent as a punishment to France, seem to have chosen to live in Paris, Troyes and Provins for the duration of their 'fine'. However, some of these weavers might have left for England for some time and then returned. The period coincides with Edward III's policy of encouraging Flemish weavers to settle in England and import their skills, which started almost exactly around this period. Indeed, Jan Ackerman, Henri Meyer and some other exiles from Bruges named in the 1328 charter appear in the records of the English chancery.[102] The political situation in Flanders, and the high mobility and possible adaptability of skilled artisans, might have inspired the English authorities at this point to develop a more targeted immigration policy towards textile workers. And still in 1330, Count Louis of Nevers and the aldermen of Ghent sent a list with the names of 626 weavers from the latter city to the count of Hainaut asking that they be arrested and returned to Flanders in order to be punished for all their 'evildoings against the count and against the city of Ghent'.[103] The Flemish weaver John Kemp, the first to be granted a letter patent from Edward III in 1331, inviting him to come with his men and ply his trade in England as part of Edward's policy to develop a native textile industry, may have been one of these exiles, as the name of one weaver who figures on the list of 626 names is Jehan le Kempe.[104]

The end of the revolt of 1323–8 marked an era of deep and often insurmountable class and factional divisions that characterised Flemish

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[100] *Inventaire analytique des chartes et documents appartenants aux archives de la ville d'Ypres*, ed. I. Diegerick, 6 vols. (Bruges, 1853), vol. II, p. 51; *Inventaire des archives de la ville de Bruges*, ed. L. Gilliodts-Van Severen, 9 vols. (Bruges, 1871–85), vol. I, p. 401.

[101] Sabbe, *Vlaanderen in opstand*, p. 78; Brussels, *General Archives of the Realm*, Oorkonden van Vlaanderen, 1e reeks, nos 2158, 2159.

[102] *CPR, 1327–30*, p. 573.

[103] P. Van Duyse and E. De Buscher, *Inventaire analytique des chartes et documents appartenant aux archives de la ville de Gand* (Ghent, 1867), p. 118.

[104] *CPR, 1330–4*, p. 161.

urban society during this period.[105] The immediate consequence of the disturbances and the departure of so many weavers and fullers was a sharp decline in cloth production. For example, in the city of Ypres, the contraction of production after 1328 and throughout the 1330s was about 50 per cent in comparison with figures from the 1310s.[106] The textile industries of Ghent and Bruges were hit as hard as manufacture in Ypres.[107] On the other hand, the urban industry of the Duchy of Brabant would benefit from this disruption of the Flemish cloth industries and reach the highest point of its output in the 1330s.[108] However, as we will see later, even with the growth of the industry, Brabantine cloth-workers would not be without difficulties, and some of them still preferred to emigrate. The general crisis in the Flemish cloth industry meant a further loss of textile workers' political influence within urban governments. Pushed by deteriorating working conditions, a lack of opportunities for social mobility and isolation from political decision-making, cloth manufacturers, especially weavers, would become more and more radical. Thus, not long after the defeat at Cassel, disturbances returned to the county.

As relations between England and France worsened, in Flanders, highly dependent on English wool, a strong pro-English party started to develop. This broad faction considered that the count, who was now an ally of the patricians, represented the interests of the king of France more than those of the Flemish towns. In an attempt to force the count of Flanders into an alliance with England, in 1336 Edward III imposed upon the county an embargo on the exportation of English wool there. However, Count Louis of Nevers decided to align with King Philip IV of France. This decision, combined with the shortage of wool, eventually led to a generalised revolt across several towns. In 1337, both the guilds and many richer burghers (*poorters*) united against the count during a revolt in Ghent and forced him to flee to France. The city would now be

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[105] J. Dumolyn and M. Lenoir, 'De sociaal-politieke verhoudingen binnen het Brugse stadsbestuur tidens het midden van de 14de eeuw (1326–1361)', *Handelingen van het Genootschap voor Geschiedenis te Brugge*, 151 (2014), 323–76.

[106] P. Chorley, 'The Ypres cloth industry 1200–1350: The pattern of change in output and demand', in M. De Wilde, A. Ervynck and A. Wielmans (eds), *Ypres and the Medieval Cloth Industry in Flanders: Archaeological and Historical Contributions* (Zellik, 1998), pp. 111–21, at p. 118; H. Van Werveke, 'De omvang van de Ieperse lakenproductie in de veertiende eeuw', *Mededelingen van de Koninklijke Vlaamse academie voor wetenschappen, letteren en schone kunsten van België*, 9 (1947), 1–32.

[107] D. Nicholas, *The Metamorphosis of a Medieval City: Ghent in the Age of Van Arteveldes, 1302–1390* (Lincoln, 1987), pp. 136–8; J. Dumolyn, F. Buylaert, G. Dupont, J. Haemers and A. Ramandt, 'Political power and social groups 1300–1500', in Brown and Dumolyn, *Medieval Bruges*, pp. 268–328, at pp. 287–9.

[108] Van Uytven, 'De omvang', 1–22 and 'La Draperie brabançonne', pp. 85–97.

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ruled by five captains (*hooftmannen*) and by the deans of weavers, fullers and small guilds. Eventually it was James of Artevelde, a citizen of Ghent, who in 1338 became the chief of the five captains, which gave him considerable power over the aldermen. After he managed to seize power in Ghent, one of the first things he did was to re-establish representatives of the weavers to the city's government, from which they had been excluded since 1320 at the expense of the fullers. Many of those exiled during the 1323–8 revolt could now return. By 1340, Artevelde had established his regime all over the county. While the rebels claimed to rule in the name of the count, in practice Flanders was divided into quarters, which would be ruled by the 'Three Cities': Ghent, Bruges and Ypres, the first dominating the latter two. Flanders also turned completely from fealty to the French to an alliance with England, and in 1340 Edward III was recognised as king of France at the Friday market in Ghent.[109] Even if the legal fiction of princely rule over Flanders was maintained, in practice, however, for some years, the 'Three Cities' had ruled as virtual city-states over their rural hinterlands, acting as *de facto* administrators of princely justice as well.[110]

The 'Three Cities' wanted to establish complete control over heavy cloth production and eliminate competition from rural areas. Small towns as well as the surrounding countryside occasionally faced legal prosecution because their cloth manufacturers imitated the woollens of the established cloth centres.[111] In the early 1340s, Ypres accused Poperinge, a town in its immediate vicinity and for a long time a rival in the textile industry, of repeatedly violating its privileges dealing with the production of cloth. In 1344 the long quarrel resulted in a judicial inquiry.[112] Poperinge was found guilty and according to the sentence it had to find twenty of the main culprits. They were to be banished to England for three years, and after that period they were supposed to bring letters confirming their stay there.[113] Indeed, as the city of Ghent

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[109] See, on this period: H. S. Lucas, *The Low Countries and the Hundred Years' War, 1326–1347* (Ann Arbor, 1929); D. Nicholas, *The Van Arteveldes of Ghent: The Varieties of Vendetta and the Hero in History* (Ithaca, 1988).

[110] M. Boone and W. Prevenier, 'Le Rêve d'un état urbain (quatorzième et quinzième siècles)', in J. Decavele (ed.), *Apologie d'une ville rebelle: Histoire, art, culture* (Antwerp, 1989), pp. 81–105; D. Nicholas, *Town and Countryside: Social, Economic and Political Tensions in 14th-Century Flanders* (Bruges, 1971).

[111] Murray, *Bruges*, p. 281.   [112] Espinas and Pirenne, *Recueil*, vol. I, pp. 120–53.

[113] *Ypre jeghen Poperinghe angaende den verboden: Gedinkstukken der XIVe eeuw nopens het laken*, ed. N. De Pauw (Ghent, 1899), pp. 15, 231, 'ende, die claerlike gheweiten dat menre tote twinteghen sal senden drie jaer te woene in Inghelant, dewelke tenden jare goeden lettren sullen bringhen, dat zire hare residentie wel ghehouden hebben'; *Inventaire*, Diegerick, vol. II, p. 134; Espinas and Pirenne, *Recueil*, vol. I, p. 147.

was arbitrating the dispute, the Artevelde regime seems to have wanted to demonstrate that they took the alliance seriously by sending skilled workers to England at the same time as dealing with internal affairs. This seems plausible, considering that this period coincides with Edward III's policy of further developing cloth production within his realm.[114]

Artevelde's rule was weakened by economic decline in the mid 1340s, and in 1345 he was eventually murdered by his former followers. However, the political constellation that had governed the county during the previous seven years remained intact. In 1346, Louis of Nevers died at the battle of Crécy and was succeeded by his son, Louis of Male. Determined to establish his rule over the county, in 1348 he started an invasion of Flanders with support from his French overlord. Bruges, Ypres and other castellanies gave up resistance very quickly. Ghent, led by its weavers, persevered in rebellion against the count until 13 January 1349, an event known as 'Good Tuesday', when Louis of Male, with his troops, together with a coalition of fullers, the *poorters* and the smaller crafts, stormed the city and bloodily crushed the last rebellious strongholds.[115]

On 5 August 1349, Count Louis of Male ordered an inquiry in all the towns of Flanders to punish the rebel leaders who had withstood his and his father's authority.[116] In England, Edward III anticipated the potential persecution of hundreds of skilled artisans who had been involved in the revolt. Already in May 1350, he issued letters of protection to those Flemings who, following the failure of the rebellion, had emigrated to London, Canterbury, Norwich, Salisbury, Lynn and other English cities and towns. Very similar to those granted to a number of French residents in England during the same years,[117] the documents qualified the Flemings as *incolae*, a term derived from Roman law to denote permanent residents born outside the kingdom. As a reward for their loyalty during the Flemish conflict, they were allowed to live in the realm, to leave, enter and move around freely, and to trade their goods. Officers

[114] *The Parliamentary Rolls of Medieval England*, ed. C. Given-Wilson et al. (Woodbridge, 2005), vol. IV, p. 191; *Statutes of the Realm*, ed. Luders et al., vol. I, pp. 280–1.

[115] M. Boone and W. Prevenier, 'La Construction d'un républicanisme urbain: Enjeux de la politique municipale dans les villes flamandes au bas Moyen Âge', in D. Menjot and J.-L. Pinol (eds), *Enjeux et expressions de la politique municipale (XIIe–XXe siècles)* (Paris, 1997), pp. 41–60; M. Boone and H. Brand, 'Vollersoproeren en collectieve actie in Gent en Leiden in de 14e en 15e eeuw', *Tijdschrift voor Sociale Geschidenis*, 19 (1993), 168–93; J. Vuylsteke, 'Goede Disendach, 13 januari 1349', *Handelingen van de Maatschappij voor Geschiedenis en Oudheidkunde te Gent*, 1 (1894), 9–47.

[116] *Cartulaire de Louis de Male*, ed. De Limburg-Stirum, vol. I, pp. 78–9; *Inventaire Bruges*, ed. Gilliodts-Van Severen, vol. II, pp. 8–9.

[117] Lambert and Ormrod, 'Friendly foreigners', 8–14.

57

were instructed to protect them against physical aggression and their property against confiscation.[118] The investigation finished two years later, and on 5 October 1351 many of the participants in the revolt were sent into exile and took refuge in England, as we shall see later.

The official sentence after the inquiry listed the names of the main culprits who had initiated the rebellion. These survive only for the city of Bruges and for the liberty of Bruges, and they contain, respectively, the names of 464 and 128 banished rebels.[119] For Ghent, Ypres and other towns in Flanders we have to rely on the lists drawn up in 1359 of 1,460 exiles who were eligible for pardon under certain conditions.[120] Fifteenth-century copies of the city of Bruges chartulary called Groenenboek inform us that waves of revolts and other mass expulsions of craftsmen followed in 1361, 1362, 1366 and 1369.[121] These provide another 579 names for the city of Bruges and allow us to engage in an extensive prosopographical analysis of the rebels throughout the period of this study. We can easily establish that some of those who accepted pardon and returned to Flanders in 1359 would have been involved in the rebellion, and exiled again, in 1361.[122] On 25 September 1351, ten days before the sentence of banishment was pronounced by the chancery of Louis of Male, Edward III, perhaps with foreknowledge of this verdict, issued a letter patent of protection allowing all people banished from Flanders and willing to work to settle in England.[123] Shortly afterwards, artisans mentioned on the lists appear in various sources from English towns, and they remain visible for another thirty years (Map 1).

Yet the arrival of the exiles was not without problems. There was an ambiguity in their legal status and especially concerning the conditions under which they were supposed to exercise their trade. While the statute of 1337 allowed all cloth-workers from 'strange lands' to settle

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[118] The letters were not entered on the chancery patent rolls but were recorded in an inspeximus confirmation by London's court of husting in 1364. LMA, CLA/023/DW/93, n. 19. For the context of the confirmation, see in Chapter 2, and B. Lambert and M. Pajic, 'Immigration and the common profit: Native cloth-workers, Flemish exiles and royal policy in fourteenth-century London', *Journal of British Studies*, 55:4 (2016), 633–57, at 638.

[119] SAB, Oud Archief, Groenenboek C, fos 127–35; SAB, Politieke charters 1e reeks, no. 497.

[120] ADN Série B, 1596, fos. 30 r.–35 v., published in *Cartulaire Historique et Généalogique des Artevelde*, ed. De Pauw, pp. 711–32.

[121] SAB, Oud Archief, Groenenboek C, fos 127–35.

[122] Pardoned exiles would usually plot and organise various collective actions against the political conditions of fourteenth-century Flanders and be banished again. For a detailed analysis of the procedure, consequences and orgins of political exile in fourteenth-century Flanders, see J. Dumolyn and M. Pajic, 'Enemies of the count and of the city: The collective exile of rebels in fourteenth-century Flanders', *The Legal History Review*, 84:3–4 (2016), 461–501.

[123] *CPR, 1350–4*, p. 147; *Foedera, conventiones, literae et cujuscunque generis acta publica*, ed. T. Rymer, 4 vols. (London, 1816–69), vol. III, p. 232.

58

wherever they wished within the realm and under the king's protection, the arrival of exiles required further precision about their legal status. Forced migration to England meant that the number of Flemish immigrants was now sufficiently high to appear significantly in English sources. It should be noted that in the local sources of towns like Colchester or Great Yarmouth, the first Flemings do not appear until 1352. The arrival of large numbers of exiled textile workers in England after the revolt against Louis of Male made them more visible to the English population than in previous years. This led to discontent among the members of the guild of weavers of London. Already in 1352, they were complaining about the presence of alien weavers in the city. After several disputes between the representatives of the London Weavers' Guild and the newcomers, which will be discussed more in detail in Chapter 6, the king was forced to clarify the exiles' legal status with a letter patent in 1352:[124]

Whereas by statute of 11 Edward III (1337), it is ordained that foreign workers of cloth may come to England and stay there and the king will grant them so many and such liberties as shall be sufficient for them, by a petition of such workers exhibited before him and his council in the present Parliament it has been shewn that they are hindered in the exercise of their mistery as well in London as in other cities and places of the realm, wherefore he, with the assent of the prelates, earls, barons and other magnates in the present Parliament has granted to all workers of such cloths from foreign parts of whatsoever land they be, who are now in England, Ireland or Wales, or who shall come there from now, and will stay and exercise their mistery therein and bear themselves well and faithfully towards him, that they may do so safely and securely under his protection, without that that they be compelled to be of the gild of the weavers of London or other weavers or be held to pay any sums by reason of such gild, and that in any city, borough or town where they shall stay and exercise their mistery they may elect two men of their mistery to survey the work of the same foreign workers that it be duly made, and punish all insufficient or fraudulent workers by view and testimony of these two, saving pleas whereof cognisance pertains to the king. Grant also that they shall not be compelled to deliver work, when done, before they be satisfied for the same according to the covenant made with them, that in any damages, injuries or trespasses done to them, justice shall be done for them without delay by mayors, sheriffs or bailiffs in whose bailiwicks the wrong has been done, and that if any of them be taken for trespass, debt or account or other cause where bail is allowed, he shall be

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[124] For more details on disputes between Flemish and native weavers in London throughout the second half of the fourteenth century, see Lambert and Pajic, 'Immigration and the common profit', 633–57. The key sections of the letter patent from 1352 are calendared in *CPR, 1350–4*, p. 232, but a complete translation can be found in *The Records of the City of Norwich*, ed. W. Hudson and J. C. Tingey, 2 vols. (Norwich, 1906 and 1910), vol. II, pp. 330–2.

released on sufficient mainprise according to the law and custom of our Realm of England.

As can be seen, the letter patent not only confirmed the existing statute of 1337, but it also extended it with additional franchises. Flemish textile workers were allowed to settle where they wanted and organise themselves in any way they preferred, without being compelled to be part of existing guilds in towns where they plied their trade. They were instead granted the right to choose two masters of their own who would supervise their trade. We will see later in Chapters 2, 3 and 6 that in London this led to the creation of a guild of alien weavers separate from the natives'. More importantly, royal and municipal officers were instructed to provide speedy justice if any damages were incurred by the Flemings, or vice versa, which basically means that they were granted the right to plead in courts of law. On top of that, if new artisans from overseas were to join them, they would enjoy the same rights. We do not know whether this last provision encouraged other immigrants from the Low Countries to come to England, but we do know that exiles from Flanders were followed by their wives and children, and by other artisans from the Low Countries (notably those from neighbouring Zeeland and Brabant).

At the same time, throughout the 1350s and the 1360s, the Duchy of Brabant was going through a turbulent period and had also seen a number of similar disturbances. While the Brabantine woollen industries benefited from the decline of Flemish urban production in the first half of the fourteenth century (and especially after the defeat at Cassel), the position of weavers and fullers did not improve much. The whole production and marketing process was in the hands of merchant-drapers, who were part of the patrician elites. Grouped around the solid guild structure and supported by the dukes, they were able to put down workers' rebellions and thus prevent any rise in wages. Most of the output was exported to France, where Brabantine cloth virtually eclipsed Flemish woollens, as Philip le Bel and subsequent monarchs clearly favoured merchants from Malines, Brussels, Antwerp and Louvain.[125] Indeed, because of frozen wages, the price of cloth was lower in Brabant than in Flanders and was thus more attractive. On top of the matter of low wages, weavers and fullers, even though they had their own guilds, had no political representation in the municipal governments, unlike

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[125] Various princely accounts are a testament to this: *Inventaires mobiliers et extraits des comptes des ducs de Bourgogne de la maison de Valois (1363–1477)*, ed. B. Prost and H. Prost, vol. II (1902–13); *Nouveaux Comptes de l'argenterie des rois de France au XIVe siècle*, ed. L. Douët d'Arcq (Paris, 1851), pp. 84–9.

Map 1   England and the Low Countries c. 1350 – Towns of immigrants' origin and settlement (map made by Davor Salihovic)

their Flemish counterparts.[126] Moreover, the situation on the international stage would affect Brabantine textile industries. In 1334, an economic blockade was imposed on the duchy by neighbouring counties, which, together with Edward III's ban on the exportation of wool in 1336, caused a sharp drop in the number of fabrics produced.[127] More generally, the Anglo-French war further hampered Brabantine trade. When the English king moved the staple to Bruges in 1340, the Flemish towns tried to secure English wool for themselves at the expense of all other buyers.[128] On top of that, the war of succession that started in 1347 once again brought the economy of Brabant to a standstill.[129]

All these events would lead the textile workers to express their discontent through riots in Brussels and Louvain in 1340, and then again in 1350. Social tension was further increased by the devaluation of the Brabantine currency, which reduced purchasing power from 1347 onwards. The fixing of nominal wages in devalued currency fomented the social discontent that broke out in 1360 in rebellions of weavers in Brussels, Malines, Antwerp and Louvain.[130] As a result of the revolts, the artisans of the Brabantine cities were subjected to punishments similar to those of the Flemish cities. Many leaders of the revolt and their supporters were killed or banished on the orders of the aldermen. Unfortunately, the normative sources covering the aftermath of these events are not as detailed as those from Flanders and do not allow us to trace the individuals who were banished from Brabantine cities in English sources.[131] Even though the artisans were defeated on this occasion and faced reprisals thereafter, they would not back down in their quest for political representation. In 1364, another wave of disturbances would break out in Brussels and Louvain. The sources do not provide many details about

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[126] Favresse, *L'Avènement Bruxelles*, pp. 98–106.
[127] Van Uytven, 'La Draperie brabançonne', p. 88.
[128] J. de Sturler, *Les Relations politiques et les échanges commerciaux entre le duché de Brabant et l'Angleterre au Moyen Âge: L'Étape des laines anglaises en Brabant et les origines du développement du port d'Anvers* (Paris, 1936), pp. 392–4.
[129] Lucas, *The Low Countries and the Hundred Years' War*, pp. 198, 256–7, 528–72.
[130] R. Van Uytven, 'Peter Couthereel en de troebelen te Leuven van 1350 tot 1363: Kritische nota over de persoon van een hertogelijk ambtenaar en zijn rol in de politieke geschiedenis van Brabant en Leuven', *Mededelingen van de Geschied- en Oudheidkundige Kring voor Leuven en Omgeving*, 3 (1963), 63–97; H. Vander Linden, *Histoire de la constitution de la ville de Louvain au Moyen Âge* (Ghent, 1892); J. Cuvelier, *Les Institutions de la ville de Louvain au Moyen Âge* (Leuven, 1935).
[131] Most of our evidence about revolts and banishments in the cities of Brabant comes from the narrative sources: E. De Dynter, *Chronicon ducum Brabantiae*, ed. P. F. X. de Ram, 3 vols. (Brussels, 1854–60), vol. III, pp. 51–3; J. De Klerk et An., *De Brabantsche Yeesten ofrymkronyk van Braband*, ed. J. F. Willems and J. H. Bormans, 3 vols. (Brussels, 1839–69), vol. II, pp. 166–71.

these revolts, but two sentences pronounced in June 1364 indicate that at least 100 weavers and fullers were banished from Brussels and another 40 from Louvain who were designated as the instigators of the revolt alongside the main ringleaders Jean de Meyere, a butcher from Brussels, and Peter Coutereel, from Louvain.[132]

In both Flanders and Brabant, besides the exiles, many others probably voluntarily left to avoid physical danger or dire economic conditions after the revolts. As we will see in Chapter 2, numerous individuals with Flemish names recorded in England are not on the lists of exiles, presumably because they emigrated of their own volition. In order to prevent any further insurgency, the urban authorities introduced measures that would be likely to push the remaining artisans to consider emigrating to England. For example, the weavers of Ghent had to deal with the humiliating conditions imposed by the fuller-dominated aldermen after the revolt. By the statute of 29 November 1349, weavers were forbidden to carry weapons or change occupations. They could no longer assemble in groups of more than three, and whoever saw them gathered had the right to take off and keep their upper clothes. If any of the remaining weavers breached the law, they still risked banishment of three to fifty years. Weavers were ousted from political office again and were made to pay an indemnity until 1375.[133] Similar measures were introduced in Brussels after the rebellion of 1360.[134] The revolts contributed further to the disorganisation of industry that already reigned over urban cloth-making in both Flanders and Brabant. Moreover, an acute scarcity of skilled textile workers was rapidly felt as a result of forced and voluntary departure of thousands of weavers and fullers.[135] Political instability and economic stagnation left the cities with numerous idle and underpaid textile workers. All of these conditions reinforced the emigration of a lot more people (other than just the exiles) who would be pushed to seek safety in England and who were not willing to return any time soon.

Nevertheless, the count's policies seem to have softened after Edward III's request, and some exiles did return. In 1359, Count Louis of Male offered a general pardon to numerous rebels from the major cities of Flanders. The artisans who returned to Bruges, such as Jan de Weerd (John Were in English sources) or Jacop de Deken, apparently had to buy

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[132] Favresse, *L'Avènement Bruxelles*, pp. 118–19.
[133] *Voorgeboden der stad Gent in der XIVe eeuw (1337–1382)*, ed. N. De Pauw (Ghent, 1885), pp. 41, 51, 52, 53, 65.
[134] Favresse, *L'Avènement Bruxelles*, p. 118.   [135] Nicholas, *The Metamorphosis*, p. 155.

63

their status of citizen again.[136] Sometimes, only wives were allowed to return, as in the case of Lievin Fisker: he was banished after the revolt in Ghent and found refuge in London, but only his wife, Merrin, was allowed to return.[137] We will see cases in Chapter 3 where some exiles returned either to their city of origin or elsewhere in Flanders and subsequently, after several years, came back to England. In these cases, it is then difficult to consider them 'exiles', as their legal status would have changed. Also, it was common for some Flemings to change their place of residence in England while still in exile. All of these points, along with the fact that the exiles were followed by people who left voluntarily, together make it very challenging to define immigrants from the Low Countries under one single term.

The experiences of exiles from the Low Countries should also be regarded differently from those of felons, banished individually for various crimes they committed. Individual exiles were for the most part left all alone, with only the necessary goods and guidance to survive until they reached their destination.[138] Flemish exiles, although they were considered felons by the count for being 'his enemies and of his cities', were banished for political reasons principally. And although they might have been humiliated publicly before they left their towns of origin, they travelled as a collective, which would have made it a lot easier to decide how to act upon settling in a new area, compared with the cases of individual exiles. They also enjoyed an invitation and protection from the king, which would distinguish them from other immigrant groups; thus their administrative integration was held to the same standard as that of any other immigrant. For example, when John Kempe, an exile from Ghent, became a citizen of London in 1356, he was still obliged to find four pledges to guarantee his good behaviour.[139] The exiles were privileged in having collective protection from the king, but in practice, for many things, they were seen as just like any other aliens who resided in England throughout the late Middle Ages.

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[136] SAB, Oud Archief, Groenenboek C fo. 111r; *Cartulaire historique et généalogique des Artevelde*, ed. De Pauw, p. 719; *CPMR*, vol. II, p. 116; A. Jamees, *Brugse poorters opgetekend uit de stadsrekeningen, Deel 1: 1281–1421* (Handzame, 1974), pp. 112–13.

[137] *Cartulaire historique et généalogique des Artevelde*, ed. De Pauw, p. 715.

[138] W. C. Jordan, *From England to France: Felony and Exile in the High Middle Ages* (New Jersey, 2015), pp. 63–4. The authorities made sure that they were left with some money to purchase food when travelling. They were also given instructions on how to get to a intended destination, as well as being subject to surveillance, to ensure they were not left entirely unattended until they reached the port of departure.

[139] LMA, CLA/023/CP/01/80, 4d.

CONCLUSION

Taken together, the situation from the thirteenth century onwards in both England and the Low Countries was such as to stimulate immigration. This chapter has shown that a combination of economic conditions, the proximity of the two countries and political developments was probably the determining factor for this migration. Political relations also ensured directly and indirectly that the textile industries of the two regions evolved together and became interdependent. This development of events was accelerated at the start of the Hundred Years War when Edward III placed an embargo on the export of English wool to Flanders in order to force an alliance with the Flemish count against the French. It did not really work, as the only ones to support the alliance were the textile workers, who were highly dependent upon imports of English wool. Gradually, the county would be deluged by a wave of urban revolts, which would finally see the victory of the count's pro-French party and the expulsion of numerous cloth-workers from their towns. In order to avoid legal and political repercussions or death, these rebels, followed by other economic migrants, would quickly move to a number of English towns, both in the old and newly established textile centres. Moreover, the medieval Low Countries had some very 'progressive' characteristics which made them the forerunner in many societal developments: a low level of feudalism, early forms of proletarianisation and wage-labour, the relatively autonomous role of women in the labour market and the reasonably independent position of children, who were more or less able to choose their own marriage partner.[140] This disconnection from family and institutions, to which one must add greater skills in the weaving industry, made it easier for Flemings to emigrate to and integrate within England. These two questions of the arrival and integration of immigrants from the Low Countries will be explored in Chapters 2 and 3.

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[140] Lucassen and Willems, *Living in the City*, p. 3.