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'A Year of Rejoicing': The Welsh Revival 1904-05 and its International Challenges

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I. Introduction

As we celebrate the centenaries of great revivals and spiritual movements, the Welsh revival of 1904-05 stands out as one of the most important. If we define 'big revival' as an awakening which influences the whole nation and brings changes apparent for everybody, *Wales 04* (as it is called in an abbreviated form) was certainly the *last big revival in Europe*—it was even the daily news of secular newspapers in Wales and attracted many visitors from Europe and abroad. Its origins are

mainly indigenous, in a long tradition of Welsh revivals.

But even more impressive seems to be the worldwide influence of this very well documented revival.¹ It was not the actuator of *all* these worldwide awakenings even though it was certainly the most impressive part of a general simultaneous movement. Never before in church history had there been such a great revival influence flowing from one country into so many others in literally all continents

¹ See the books mentioned in the notes to this article and the following: Brynmore P. Jones, *Voices from the Welsh Revival. An Anthology of Testimonies, Reports, and Eyewitness Statements from Wales's Year of Blessing, 1904-05* (Bridgend, 1995); Jessie Penn-Lewis, *The Awakening in Wales and Some of Its Hidden Springs* (n.p., 1905, new edition, 1993).

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in such a short time.² Thus there were historical connections and influences between Wales and other movements, such as India 1905-07, Los Angeles 1906, Korea 1906-07, to name only a few. So this worldwide revival in the first decade of the 20th century was called the 'furthest reaching revival movement of all times'.³ As Edwin Orr states,

The early 20th century Evangelical Awakening was a worldwide movement. It did not begin with the phenomenal Welsh Revival of 1904-05. Rather the sources were in the springs of little prayer meetings which seemed to arise spontaneously all over the world, combining into streams of expectation which became a river of blessing in which the Welsh revival became the greatest cataract.⁴

The last revival in Wales is also a good example for discussion of important *theological questions* about revival: the relationship of divine and human factors in the preparation of a revival; the very essence of a revival as seen in relation to God's overwhelming presence; personal and social changes; and (ephemeral) enthusiasm and unusual 'phenomena'; blessing and failure of key persons; and finally the cessation and the long term lasting effects of a

revival. On the level of historiography and comparative revival research, *Wales 04* shows the necessity of a *network of international research on revivals* in a worldwide perspective, which is a proposal which I shall make in the last part of this paper.

II. Historical and spiritual context—influencing factors before the revival of 1904-05

When we enquire about the causes, context and origin of the last Welsh revival we have to consider, as in all revivals since the beginnings of the growth of the early church, sociological, economical, political and other secular contexts on one hand, and theological and ecclesiastical causes on the other.⁵ Historians of revivals have sometimes tended to isolate one or the other dimension which produces a defective and incomplete picture.

A. The Welsh revival in the context of the challenge of 'modernity'

At the beginning of the 20th century Welsh society was in a period of great change and turmoil. On one side it nearly exploded with energy and optimism. People were fascinated by the technical progress and amazing inventions which 'followed hot on one

2 The Welsh theologian Noel Gibbard has given the most detailed description: *On the Wings of the Dove: The International Effects of the Welsh Revival of 1904-05* (Bridgend, 2002).

3 On the cover of Edwin J. Orr, *The Flaming Tongue. The Impact of the Twentieth Century Revivals* (Chicago, 1973).

4 Orr, *Flaming Tongue*, p. 192.

5 For the early church, see e.g., a summary of factors in Wolfgang Reinhardt, *Das Wachstum des Gottesvolkes. Biblische Theologie des Gemeindegewachstums (The Growth of the People of God, Biblical Theology of Church Growth)* (Göttingen 1995), pp. 336-338.

another's heels.' 'The romance of progress continued to mesmerize those people who remembered Wales as a wholly agricultural society.'⁶ But also ordinary people took profit from the minor products of the new industries like cheap coal and newspapers, chemical discoveries and the sewing machine.

But beside the optimism there was great economical, political and social unrest which could not fail to affect the Christian faith of the people. Already since 1850 industry had begun to change the face of the country. An aggressive capitalism of heavy industry expanded, coal mining employed more people than any other industry, and Cardiff became the biggest coal export harbour of the world. But the quick and unstructured growth of the industrial cities created many social, spiritual and moral problems, with which the church had to deal.⁷

A first effect of industrialisation was the enormous growth and migration of the population. In some areas the number multiplied tenfold, and the total population of Wales grew in the 40 years between 1871 und 1911 by one million to 2.4 million inhabitants, people who to their greatest extent

filled the churches and chapels and demanded an army of new ministers. Migration from the rural areas was remarkable and enhanced by the hopes of a better income. Though poor housing and brutal working conditions raised the wrath of social reformers, thousands were glad to flee from the poverty, uniformity and social oppression in the rural areas. But the negative side was that the churches which, in the rural areas had been so much influenced by the Christian tradition, were weakened. The workers who went to the highly industrialized areas mainly in the southern valleys lost to a large extent their bonds with Christian tradition and traditional values.

A second division and danger was linguistic: in 1901 half of the population spoke Welsh, and the further west the more Welsh was the main or even the only spoken language. However, the relative decrease of Welsh speaking people was considered to be a threat to national identity which was closely connected to Christian identity. Many heroes of the nation were Christian heroes, the classics of Welsh literature were often Christian classics, and the Bible offered the ideals for society and private life. After 1890 the relative uniformity and robust Christian language culture seemed to give way to pluralism.

At the end of the 19th century Wales saw a battle between 'church and chapel'. According to detailed census figures, in 1905 two in five Welsh people were church members—25.9 % were communicants of the Anglican church, 23.5 % members of the Independents (Congregationalists), nearly the same percentage (23%) were Calvinistic Methodists, 19.2 % Bap-

6 R. Tudur Jones, *Faith and the Crisis of a Nation: Wales 1890-1914* (Cardiff 2004) (English translation of *Ffydd ac Argyfwng Cenedl*, 2 vol. 1981 u. 1982), p. 8.

7 The following summary relies mainly on Jones, *Faith*, pp. 1ff; and the introductory paper of Prof. Densil Morgan, at the *Interdisciplinary Centenary Conference to the Welsh Revival of 1904-1905* at the University of Bangor, 2004, to be published in the forthcoming conference volume.

tists, only 5.4 Wesleyan Methodists and 3 % members of smaller denominations. This meant that although the portion of Anglicans had increased in the second part of the 19th century, it now represented only a minority; about three-quarters of the religious population was non-Conformist. Non-Conformity became highly politicised and radically committed for the disestablishment of the Anglican Church which did not represent the majority of the population but still enjoyed the privileges of tithing and church rates. The 'Church in Wales'—as it was known—on the other side was fighting tooth and nail to retain its status. So the revival occurred when the atmosphere was rather poisoned by this tragic battle between church and chapel.

Another conflict and one of the ironies of modernity arose in the field of education. The chapel goers wanted the best education possible for their children, so they founded, for example, the University of Wales. But it was precisely this higher education which became the means of secularization. The Sunday School had been the university of the nation, the Sunday School had made Wales into a reading nation. Now secular education challenged the convictions and creeds which they were taught by the Bible and the Sunday School.

These were some of the conflicts and turmoil which threatened the national identity and Christian tradition of Wales.

B. It was the Wales of a long pietistic revival tradition

Talking about a strong '*Pietist*' tradition in Wales, we are aware of course

that the Methodist tradition and British 'evangelicalism' are not identical with continental 'Pietism'. But without entering into discussion on the wider or more narrow definition of 'Pietismus'⁸, 'Pietist' and 'Evangelical' have much more in common than in contrast.⁹ We can name at least five or six common features: the importance of conversion, the role of the Bible in daily life, vital fellowship among believers, evangelism and social responsibility, interdenominational unity, and eschatological interests.¹⁰

We must also never forget that the vital church life of Wales was not just a branch of English Methodism but the Welsh had their own great preachers, especially in the Golden Age of Welsh Methodism, the 18th century. Extraordinary personalities like Howel Harris

8 I consider it an unnecessary dispute as it is reasonable to differentiate between a narrower meaning of the term 'Pietismus' (for the epoch of classical Pietism in 17th and 18th century) and a wider understanding as a typological term including 'Pietists' from the 17th to the 21st century (see below note 101).

9 If one considers the characteristics of Pietism in the narrower sense (see Martin Brecht, 'Einleitung' (Introduction) to *Geschichte des Pietismus* I, p.1) and the specifics of Anglo-Saxon 'evangelicalism' (as e.g. Reginald Ward has described it in *The Protestant Evangelical Awakening* (Cambridge 1992, 1994)), the English term 'evangelicals' is older and wider than the modern German term 'Evangelikale'.

10 For a synopsis of definitions of the term 'evangelical', see David Bebbington, *Evangelicalism in Modern Britain*, 1989, who identifies conversionism, activism, biblicism, crucicentrism as its characteristics; in my opinion he should have added at least '(vital) fellowship'!

and Daniel Rowland cannot be forgotten, and the preacher and 'poet of the revival', William Williams of Pantycelyn, has given the country many hymns which were sung even much later, e.g. in the revival of 1904-05. The early Methodists were members of the Anglican Church, but when they faced growing opposition they formed the Welsh Calvinistic Methodists in 1811.

Talking about Welsh Pietism and evangelicalism is not possible without mentioning the long chain of revivals. Obviously no other country in Europe had seen so many revivals as Wales—one book title calls it 'The country favoured by many revivals'.¹¹ Between 1762 and 1862 alone there were at least 15 major revivals. After the glorious time of the 18th century it was especially the year 1859 which saw a huge revival connected with the names of Dafydd Morgan and Humphrey Jones. It was linked with the nationwide revivals in Northern Ireland, Scotland and America.

There were witnesses of the 1859 revival still alive at the beginning of the 20th century and they expected a similar revival at that time. Furthermore, an expression of the continuity with these former revivals was the spirit of prayer and expectation of a new nationwide revival.

On one hand there was a growing prayer movement following the example of the famous *Concert of Prayer* from Scotland, which was published by

Jonathan Edwards in 1747.¹² In the 19th century James Haldane Stewart had organized even more far-reaching interdenominational prayer unions,¹³ which received a new boost at the turn of the century. Besides, it is one of the most fascinating facts of that time that independently in many widely separated countries like Australia, India, America and Wales, growing concerts of prayer for a world wide revival were organized with huge numbers responding. Another expression of the growing interest in the Holy Spirit were intensified efforts for *evangelism*, within the Welsh denominations but also across denominations, such as the highly influential *Forward Movement* founded by John Pugh, and joined by Seth and Frank Joshua.

There were other single evangelists, such as the highly influential lady, Rosina Davies, who foreshadowed the great role that young women would play in the great revival of 1904-05. Another preaching woman, who itinerated in many countries outside Wales too, Jessie Penn-Lewis, wrote a widely read book on 'The Awakening in Wales and Some of the Hidden

¹¹ D. Geraint Jones, *Favoured with Frequent Revivals. A Brief History of Revivals in Wales 1762-1862* (Cardiff 2001).

¹² Edwards endorsed these 'concerts of prayer' in his *An Humble Attempt to Promote Explicit Agreement and Visible Union of God's People, in Extraordinary Prayer, for the Revival of Religion and the Advancement of Christ's Kingdom on Earth*.

¹³ 'Hints for a General Union of Christians for the Outpouring of the Holy Spirit' (1821); by 1855 already 332,137 copies had been distributed by the Religious Tract Society. R. Rouse/ S. T. Neill, *Geschichte der ökumenischen Bewegung 1517-1948* (Erster Teil, Göttingen 21963), p. 476.

Springs'.¹⁴ As a prominent speaker in the first Keswick 'conventions for the deepening of spiritual life' she stressed the influence of the Keswick conferences for the Welsh revival. Certainly some Welsh ministers were deeply influenced as participants in Keswick and later in their own 'Keswick in Wales', the annual holiness conventions in the Welsh Llandrindod (since 1903), which were influenced also by Welsh traditions; their lives were transformed in terms of prayer, holiness and effectiveness of their service.

Though 'Keswick in Wales was an integral part of the prayer movement for revival',¹⁵ according to some Welsh authors the Keswick influence was overestimated—the roots were more to be seen in the old revival tradition of the Welsh Calvinistic Methodists than in the new Holiness Movement. The Welsh hymns 'gave expression to the truths of redemption and assurance rather than holiness and consecration',¹⁶ as in the mighty 18th century revival. Typical is the hymn of the revival which impressed the audience especially by the presentation of one of the young singers, Miss Annie Davies: 'Dyma garyad fel ye moroedd' ('*Here is Love, vast as the ocean, Loving kindness as the flood, When the Prince of Life, our ransom Shed for us, His precious blood*;',).

There are two remarkable statements which were made before the start of the national revival and which later turned out to be prophetic. One is the spiritual legacy of Dean *David Howell*, who was one of the most respected personalities in the Anglican Church (and also beyond its boundaries). His declaration 'The Great Need of Wales' was published in the month of his death, January 1903:

... What is Wales' greatest need?... There has never before been so much preaching, but what of the effects?... Take note, if this was to be my last message to my fellow countrymen... before I am taken to the judgement it would remain thus... The greatest need of my dear nation and country at this time is spiritual revival through a specific outpouring of the Holy Spirit... Not a local disturbance... but a kind of spiritual saturation, that overflows into the country as a whole, that would immerse all classes with the Baptism of the Holy Spirit...¹⁷

This eloquent and powerful statement incited great sensation and attention because it was not uttered by any excited non-conformist evangelist but by the highly respected authority of the Established Church, and it was seen as his spiritual last will and testament. He could not see personally the reali-

14 Jessie Penn-Lewis, *The Awakening in Wales and Some of the Hidden Springs* (New York : Revell, 1905; new edition 1953).

15 Noel Gibbard, *Fire on the Altar: A History and Evaluation of the 1904-05 Welsh Revival* (Bridgend, 2005), p. 25.

16 Eifion Evans, *The Welsh Revival of 1904* (Bridgend, 1969), 1987, p. 170.

17 Originally mentioned in Dec. 1902, here cited according to Kevin Adams, & Emyr Jones, *A Pictorial History of Revival. The Outbreak of the 1904 Welsh Awakening* (Farnham, Surrey, 2004), p. 35; and R. Tudor Jones, *Faith*, p. 284.

sation of these prophetic words only a few months later.

The second remarkable word is from the influential evangelist *Seth Joshua* who 'had felt the danger of the prevailing emphasis upon educational rather than spiritual attainments, and after a "very heated discussion over the intellectual qualifications for the pulpit", he "had it laid upon his heart to pray to God to go and take a lad from the coal-mine or from the field, even as He took Elisha from the plough, to revive His work". Not only was his prayer answered, but he was to witness the divine mantle fall on God's chosen instrument.'¹⁸ It seemed that a young coal miner from the south should be that chosen vessel. But before Evan Roberts came on to the scene other events happened.

III. The beginnings of the revival and the mission of Evan Roberts

Ignition by the testimony of a girl

Sometimes Evan Robert's spiritual experiences and first missions are seen as the beginning of the broader national revival, but there was an independent outburst in the north.¹⁹ And if

one wants to undertake the difficult task of fixing a specific date, a different event is to be noted: on the 2nd Sunday in February 1904, a girl named Florrie Evans, who was personally touched by the sermons of Joseph Jenkins, the Calvinistic-Methodist minister of New Quai, gave a very simple testimony in a meeting of young people: 'I am not able to say very much today but I love the Lord Jesus with all my heart—he died for me.'

These unpretentious words became a spark which would ignite a widespread revival. The gathering was said to have become very quiet and then excited in sensing *the awful and overwhelming presence of God*—a description which would be given of many meetings of the later revival (as well as in other countries). Other young women were set aflame too; some of them played an important role in the later revival team of Evan Roberts, while others worked independently of him. The young people spread the flame in neighbouring congregations; Seth Joshua notes in his diary:

The revival is breaking out here in greater power.. The spirit of prayer and of testimony is falling in a marvellous manner. The young are receiving the greatest measure of blessing.... The revival goes on. I cannot leave the building... until 12 and even 1 o'clock in the morning—I have closed the service several times and yet it would break out again quite beyond the control of human power.... Group after group came out to the front seeking the full assurance of faith. What was wonderful to me was the fact that every person engaged in

¹⁸ Evans, *Revival*, p. 63;

¹⁹ R.B. Jones, *Rent heavens: The revival of 1904, some of its hidden springs and prominent results* (1948, CD Welsh Revival Library, Centenary Edition 1904-2004). A comprehensive digital collection of source materials, 1. series, (High St. Bishop's Waltham 2004), p. 28; Gibbard, *Fire on the Altar*, pp. 65-67.

prayer, without one exception.... We lost all sense of time in this service.²⁰

Evan Roberts

The best known figure of the revival, having been raised in a Welsh Calvinist Methodist family in Loughor in the south, had an intensive spiritual life already as a boy. Later he could write: 'I have prayed for revival. I could sit up all night to read or talk about revivals. It was the Spirit who moved me to think about revival.' After working in a coal mine and as a blacksmith, at the age of 25 in 1903 he entered a preparatory school for the ministry at Newcastle Emlyn. Already at that time he had mystical experiences, felt raised to the third heaven and spent hours of the night in intensive 'divine fellowship'.

During this time Roberts attended a meeting in Blaenannerch at the West coast of Wales, where Seth Joshua was preaching and praying, 'Lord, bend us.' On September 28, Evan Roberts experienced a powerful filling with the Holy Spirit and the decisive call for his future life which he describes in the words.

I felt a living power pervading my bosom... the tears flowed in streams... I cried out 'Bend me! Bend me! Bend us!'... It was God's commending His love which bent me... I was filled with compassion for those who must bend at the judgment, and I wept.... I felt ablaze with a desire to go through the length and breadth of Wales to

tell of the Saviour.²¹

Soon afterwards Roberts felt that he could not continue his studies and he formed a team with his young friends, Sidney Evans and the young women of New Quay, to preach the gospel everywhere in Wales. During the nights Roberts had visions which indicated for him the victory of Christ over hell and the progress of the kingdom of God in an unprecedented way. He saw for example a paper appearing on which the number '100,000' was written and from that time on he prayed specifically for that number of souls which should be won.²² The estimations of numbers of all converts until summer 1905 vary around 100,000, but one has to be careful with numbers as will be discussed below.

Another vision in which he spoke to his former classmates led him to return to his home town and to conduct meetings with the young people of Loughor, which after discouraging beginnings, increased in numbers and intensity. Already during those early meetings Evan announced four conditions for gaining the full blessing of the Spirit which he claimed to have received by the Holy Spirit:

- 1 Confessing openly and fully to God any sin not confessed to him before;
- 2 doing away with anything doubtful in ourselves;
- 3 giving prompt obedience to the influences of the Holy Spirit in the heart;
- 4 confessing Christ openly and pub-

20 Evans, *Revival*, p. 59.

21 Evans, *Revival*, 70.

22 Evans, *Revival* p. 79.

licly before the world.²³

In the early meeting people felt a mighty 'outpouring of the spirit'. There was a lot of weeping, shouting, crying out, joy and brokenness. The news of the events spread like wildfire, newspapers as well as Christian journals reported and raised further expectations. Here there came for the first time a reporter of the national newspaper, *The Western Mail*, who would play an important role in the publication of the later revival, at least as so far Evan Roberts is concerned. He wrote:

Shopkeepers are closing earlier in order to get a place in the chapel, and tin and steel workers throng the place in their working clothes. The only theme of conversation among all classes and sects is 'Evan Roberts.' Even the taprooms of the public-houses are given over to discussion on the origin of the powers possessed by him. Although barely in his majority, Roberts is enabled to attract the people for many miles around.²⁴

These unexpected and incredible events raised the expectation far beyond a local revival to give it a nationwide prominence. Roberts started his missions with his team, the young women singing and giving testimony. Roberts sometimes came late, remained hours in prayer, often in

tears on his knees or lying prostrate on the floor; he never gave a prepared sermon, but claimed to be guided by the Spirit alone. Sometimes he did not preach at all but the meetings seemed to guide themselves. They began long before he arrived and lasted late into the night, people losing the sense of time. In the most well known history of the revival it says that 'a sense of the presence and holiness of God pervaded every area of human experience: at home, at work, in shops and public houses. Eternity seemed inescapably near and real.'²⁵ The numbers increased, with often thousands, sometimes ten thousands waiting for him.

The revival was strongly supported—even bishops of the Anglican Church declared publicly that it was a genuine work of God. A famous sharp critique came from the minister Peter Price who accused Evan Roberts of falsely imitating true revival. But the sympathies in this heated newspaper debate were with Evan Roberts as Price was boasting of his academic qualifications and referred to Roberts' intellectual inferiority. Students of theology turned against him as he seemed to want to damage a movement which was obviously a blessing for the whole country.

Roberts did not take part in this debate but observers stated that he suffered from it and that this was a turning point in his ministry. In the following missions in Wales, Roberts interrupted the meetings more often, saying that the Spirit could not work as there were obstacles for God to pour

²³ According to the version in D. M. Philipps, *Evan Roberts, The Great Welsh Revivalist and His Works* (London, 1906), 1923 edition in CD *Welsh Revival Library*, Centenary Edition 1904-2004. A comprehensive digital collection of source materials, 1. series, (High St. Bishop's Waltham 2004), p. 188

²⁴ *The Western Mail*, November 10, 1904.

²⁵ Evans, *Revival*, p. 95.

out his blessings; a few times he named persons. At this time we see some of the more unpleasant events in Roberts mission—the sad climax being in Cwmafan on the 21 February 1905 where he cried that there was a lost soul in the meeting. When the congregation prayed for him he stopped them crying in agony, 'Too late! Too late!' There was no purpose in praying as this soul was already lost.²⁶

At the end of March 1905 Roberts started his fourth campaign, invited by the Welsh Free Church Council in Liverpool (which had a large Welsh population). In contrast to former campaigns, the meetings in Liverpool were systematically organized. Roberts was received with greatest expectation. Despite some joyful and blessed meetings in Liverpool it became the most controversial of all campaigns with a lot of tension. Even more than had been normal in South Wales, Robert interrupted singing and prayers, stating that there were obstacles and that the 'place must be cleansed', for example, because there were some who were refusing to forgive. The most spectacular announcement 'in the spirit' was that there was a person in the meeting who was trying to hypnotize him; this person should leave or ask the Lord to forgive. On the following day a well known hypnotist who was performing at a local theatre at that time admitted that he had sent somebody of his team to try to hypnotize Roberts. Robert's

announcement of 'a direct message from God' that the *Free Church of the Welsh* 'is not founded on the Rock' created great uproar. In the newspaper he was attacked on the grounds that 'his public work was a sham and that his methods indicated a master of hypnotism and the art of mind reading'.²⁷

The main reason for the stormy and unhappy events in Liverpool (despite some edifying and blessed meetings) was the shift of attention by the press from the message to the messenger, which rejoiced in reporting the sensational and seduced a leading minister to follow this unhealthy shift.²⁸ Even in the case of Roberts, one of his sympathetic biographers wrote that 'in the heat of the moment Evan Roberts was claiming powers for himself that no individual can ever have'.²⁹ Later Roberts asked himself if he was deceived by demonic powers but a humane interpretation may be more adequate for the man who only wanted to do the will of his Lord: 'He was undoubtedly used by the Spirit but could not easily distinguish between what was of God and what arose from his own unconscious. He was a patently good man, but dangerously exposed by virtue of his own sensitivity. Intense spirituality and the consequent exposure to public gaze was more than he could bear.'³⁰

26 Brynmore P. Jones, *Instrument of Revival. The Complete Life of Evan Roberts 1978-1951. An Anatomy of True Revival* (Gainsville 2001), p. 90f; Jones, *Faith*, p. 316; Gibbard, *Fire on the Altar*, p. 46.

27 Jones, *Faith*, p. 325.

28 So Jones, *Faith*, p. 325.

29 Jones, *Instrument of Revival*, p. 101.

30 Nigel Wright, 'Does Revival Quicken or Deaden the Church? A comparison of the 1904 Welsh Revival and John Wimber', in A. Walker & K. Aune (eds.), *On Revival. A Critical Examination* (Carlisle, 2003), pp. 121-135, 132.

Having followed advice to undergo a medical examination which testified to his being mentally and physically sound but over-worked, he took a rest for nearly a month in the heart of Snowdonia which became a blessing for all. Roberts led his last missions, now in the northwest, on the island of Anglesey. There had been great revival here already before Roberts came, so that H. Elvet Lewis could say, 'Anglesey almost belongs to Christ'.³¹ Here Roberts was seen 'at his best' and 'most blessed'. He was concerned about extremes of emotionalism and emphasized the task of inviting and winning others. Thousands again gathered, supported by the local ministers, and Evans seemed to be more balanced though the meetings were relatively enthusiastic. On his seventh and last campaign, restricted to Caernavonshire, he abandoned his former emphasis on the 'four conditions' to get the full blessings, and concentrated on 'Christ's saving work on the cross'.³²

After his missions Roberts suffered extreme spiritual-physical stress—we would call it 'burnout' and 'PTSD'.³³ In 1906 Jessie Penn-Lewis took him under her care in her and her husband's house in Leicester. The years following until his death 1951 are in a certain way a mystery. Many have asked why he only very rarely returned to speak publicly but mainly restricted himself to the task of intercession, private group counselling and writing

articles and books. Jessie Penn-Lewis' influence on him is seen as problematic because of her anthropology and demonology, especially in the book they published under their joint names, *War on the Saints* (translated also into German and read widely around the world). Apparently she convinced Roberts that he was deceived by evil spirits, but this created confusion rather than helping to give clear criteria of discernment. Theologians of Wales found her and his late statements unbalanced.

IV. Not 'the Evan Roberts Revival'!

Considering the role of Evan Roberts in the 1904 revival overall, one has to be clear: it was not, as often stated, 'the Evan Roberts revival'. Already the French theologian Henri Bois in one of the most thorough investigations of the revival had made the criticism 'The *Western Mail* increasingly, and in a rather extreme fashion, came to identify the Revival in Wales with Evan Roberts'.³⁴ This was corroborated by the greatest church historian of Wales, Tudur Jones, 'In fact it is high time that Evan Robert's limited, though important, role in the movement be recognized. Of the tens of thousands of meetings held between 1904 and 1906, Roberts was only present in about 250 of these meetings.... The truth is that "Evan Robert's Revival" was the creation of the newspapers, and it is their biased portrayal that has remained

³¹ Jones, *Faith*, p. 42.

³² Jones, *Faith*, 330.

³³ Gaius Davies, 'Evan Roberts: Blessings and Burnout', paper given at the Bangor conference 2004.

³⁴ Henry Bois, *Le Réveil au Pays de Galles* (Toulouse, Genève s.a.), p. 418.

most firmly in people's memories.'³⁵ T. Fryer gives a good summary in a psychological study of the Welsh revival:

Although Evan Roberts' name is the most prominent in the Revival, he neither created nor sustained it for the most part. He is the embodiment of the Spirit of the Revival, the most striking manifestation of the force that caused it, and to a very great extent its leader and director, but he did not produce the Revival, nor did the Revival produce him.³⁶

There arose in other parts of the country many revivals which were partly influenced by the testimony of these events but some were completely independent of each other.³⁷ Beside the well known revival preachers such as Sidney Evans, Joseph Jenkins, Frank and Seth Joshua, Evan Roberts' brother Dan, Hugh Hughes, Nantlais Williams, W. S. Jones, R.B. Jones, Keri Evans, the young mission team with the female singers of New Quai was active. But 'there is little point in listing names, since there were a multitude of people in every part of the country who became charismatic leaders in

their own localities'.³⁸ At many places there were processions through the streets including also children evangelizing. There were separate but also unified meetings of Nonconformists and Anglicans at many places. Vicars of the evangelical wing of the Anglican Church were strongly instrumental in the spread of the revival especially in the Diocese of St. David's, e.g. by Canon Camber Williams. The vicar of Abermeurig 'invited the chapel people to the church' and he 'was one of the few that heard singing in the air, as was experienced during the revival of 1817 and 1859'.³⁹

Another unusual phenomenon accompanied the revival service of Mary Jones, a farmer's wife in the hamlet of Egryn on the coast of Merionethshire. After severe losses in her family her faith in God was clouded but revived by reading a spiritual book. Without previous instruction she was led in an immensely fruitful service of prayer and leading people to Christ not only in her small village but also travelling in the country. Apart from beatific visions in Egryn she often saw stars and a light in form of a fire ball, and the light resting over houses guided her as to whom to pray for or announced to her the number of converts to be awaited in the meeting. After these lights had been considered as part of her own imaginations they were seen by sceptical journalists and renowned persons of the place too and in spite of many attempts are not

35 Jones, *Faith*, p. 361.

36 A.T. Fryer, 'The Psychological Aspects of the Welsh Revival 1904-5' (Proceedings for the Society of Psychical Research, LI) Dec 1905, 80-161; The Revival Library CD ROM, 2004; p.10.

37 Overviews and many examples of the revivals not connected with Evan Roberts in Gibbard, *Fire on the Altar*, pp. 47-75, 81-86, 90-94; Evans, *Revival*, pp. 98-129; T. Jones, *Faith*, pp. 283-290; 299ff.

38 Jones, *Faith*, p. 311.

39 Gibbard, *Fire on the Altar*, p. 61.

explained even today.⁴⁰ But more important is that her evangelistic zeal was enormously blessed, as a journalist even stated, 'with a success beside which, in proportion of converts to the relative population dealt with, even that which accompanies Evan Roberts' movement in Glamorgan, pales into insignificance'.⁴¹

A Hurricane of the Spirit

One of many examples can show the very essence of a revival. Rev. John Thomas Job was serving in the small town of Bethesda in the north near Bangor. He had been celebrated nationwide through his successes in the National Eisteddfod, but he was brought low and emptied of all pride and his fame became meaningless when he lost his beloved wife and two children; but he did not lose his faith. The people in his church were shattered too by hard working conditions and a strike which split the congregation. But in these difficulties they looked to God to send a revival. There were already some signs of revival evidenced in growing prayer meetings and

sermons 'The revival has arrived here.' 'They were aware of God's presence.' 'It was an awful two weeks, with people in the words of my grandfather—"conquered by the death of the cross". Only church members were affected—the world would be moved later.' The diary read: 'Jesus is here.' And yet this was seen as only the first wave, or the beginnings.

Later, evangelist Joseph Jenkins was in the north and he held meetings together with the girls who were set aflame in the beginning of the revival. A description of the night of December 22nd 1904 helps to understand 'what the core of Revival is'. Thomas Job described the meeting as 'a Hurricane of the Holy Spirit' and his grandson Dafydd Job summarises the diary notes (and here we see the non-Arminian, 'Calvinistic' type of revival sermon):

... Joseph Jenkins preached from Philippians 2:12-13... His theme was God's work in us—not God working in us and then we work it out—rather it is God who does it all—from the new birth to the glorification. God taking hold of man's will, making him captive to Christ. The Holy Spirit turning man's nature as the tide of the sea towards holiness. Now the sermon is described as full of fiery bolts fired from heaven through the fiery heart of the preacher himself. The people listened in silence as God spoke to their hearts. After twenty minutes the whole place was awash with tears. Someone could not stand it any more—he shouted out—his memory of his father on his knees praying for him overcame him. Another gave out a hymn...

⁴⁰ Evans, *Revival*, pp. 115f; T. Jones, *Faith*, pp. 304f; Gibbard, *Fire on the Altar*, pp. 64f; detailed in A.T. Fryer, 'Psychological Aspects'; Kevin McClure, 'Stars, and Rumours of Stars. The Egryn Lights and other Mysterious Phenomena in the Welsh Religious Revival, 1904-1905'; 'Revival in Wales—some historical background' in <www.magonia.demon.co.uk/abwatch/stars/stars1.html>, referring to several articles in newspapers like the *British Weekly*, the *Barmouth Advertiser*, the *Manchester Guardian*.

⁴¹ In the report of the *Cambrian News* of 13 Jan 1905.

They were brought to that point where it didn't matter who was next to them—all that counted was that they were standing before Christ, naked unless He gave them clothing; Condemned unless forgiveness was found in Him.

The people there were as far as can be ascertained, all professing Christians—and yet they came to a deeper understanding than ever before of the reality of their own sinfulness. Job himself had no doubt been a Christian for many years, and a faithful minister of the gospel—but he writes in his diary—'Is this the great night of my salvation?'—it's not that he wasn't a Christian before, but the veil seemed to be pulled back, and he became aware of a reality which he hadn't known before; an assurance that he had not previously experienced....Then there were broken relationships which had to be healed—the strike had caused so much ill feeling. Mothers who had lost their little ones forgave those whose husbands had been 'traitors'...'⁴²

The small amount or even lack of preaching in the meetings with Evan Roberts and some others was not typical for the majority of the revival meetings. But there were times when the Spirit overcame everything. J. T. Job also experienced that on one Sunday in April 1905 'he could not get further than give out the text, the place was awash with repentant tears and people

being brought through the valley of conviction of sin, to a place of praise. But these were the exceptions. So whilst there were others who were denigrating preaching, saying that singing and praying were to carry the day, Job believed that preaching would last throughout the days of this world. And the message preached should be Christ and the cross.'⁴³

V. Evaluation of Revival and Emotionalism

Unusual phenomena

There have been ecstatic and other unusual phenomena in all revivals, for example in the early Pietist times, but there were also very early discriminating and wise evaluations, for example by Philipp Jacob Spener, August Hermann Francke, Johann Albrecht Bengel, Nikolaus Ludwig Graf von Zinzendorf, and Gerhard Tersteegen. Beside theological and spiritual categories they also used biography and human characters for the evaluation of the manifold prophetic and ecstatic phenomena in early Pietism (normally called 'radikaler Pietismus').⁴⁴ In the more recent discussion of unusual experiences most of which were evident already 300 years ago but gained new attention in connection e.g. with

⁴² Unpublished manuscript of Dafydd Job 'A Hurricane of the Holy Spirit', 2004.

⁴³ Job, 'Hurricane'.

⁴⁴ Oskar Föller has collected them in his interesting book, *Pietismus und Enthusiasmus—Streit unter Verwandten Geschichtliche Aspekte der Einordnung und Beurteilung enthusiastisch-charismatischer Frömmigkeit* (Wuppertal, 1998).

the 'Toronto Blessing', these phenomena are often seen as 'black or white' alternatives—either the work of the Holy Spirit or as a work of the demons. Some 'Power Charismatics' of our times as well as the stout anti-charismatics could learn a lot from these differentiated statements of our Pietist Fathers.

Very noteworthy are also the detailed accounts and balanced argumentations of the great preacher and theologian of the First Great Awakening, *Jonathan Edwards*.⁴⁵ As an apologist of the Great Awakening he was fighting two extremes:

He dispatched with the reductionist rationalism of those like Chauncy, who despised all physical and emotional phenomena and claimed their very presence precluded an authentic work of God. But he gave equal space to refuting the enthusiasts who wanted emotional and physical phenomena thrust centre stage, because they assumed their very presence demonstrated a significant work of God.⁴⁶

So, generalizing, one can draw the conclusion that

firstly, the revival phenomena are neutral in themselves, neither proving nor disproving an authentic work of God. Secondly, the phenomena neither guarantee nor pre-

clude significant inner change.... Such eruptions may be spontaneous and authentic, but placed centre stage they tend to generate inauthentic conformity, exhaustion, disillusion and unreality.⁴⁷

Helpful aspects are given also by Nigel Wright.⁴⁸ Despite all differences he sees a connecting link in 'the experience of striking and unusual phenomena of profound spiritual intensity'. He sees 'no particular need to resort to the category of the demonic at this point' (as Jessie Penn-Lewis and Evan Robert did in their book), as it would be 'usually unhelpful and high-blown to do so, just as it is to assess all unusual phenomena as necessarily being inspired by God'. More helpful would be to take seriously the theological category of *the Elemental*⁴⁹ and two anthropological categories: the first is *the Natural*, as no experience of God is 'pure', but 'in the presence of God varying responses are evoked, sometimes dramatically and sometimes not, which are appropriate to the particular configuration of body, soul and spirit that constitutes each person'.⁵⁰ The second is *the Primal*, the deposit of the past at the root of our personality formation which is also part of religious experience. 'Unusual phenomena in times of

⁴⁵ *The Great Awakening* (The Works of Jonathan Edwards, vol. 4), New Haven/ London.

⁴⁶ Rob Warner, 'Ecstatic Spirituality and Entrepreneurial Revivalism. Reflections on the "Toronto Blessing"', in Walker & Aune, *On Revival*, pp. 221-238, 225.

⁴⁷ Warner, 'Spirituality', p. 226.

⁴⁸ Wright, 'Revival', pp. 121-135.

⁴⁹ *The mysterium tremendum*: '... we cannot eliminate from our understanding of God the notion of the elemental power of God that overwhelms and sometimes threatens us, or at least threatens the sin that clings so closely to us' (Wright, 'Revival', p. 124)

⁵⁰ Wright, 'Revival', p. 126.

revival or dramatic renewal can be the rising to the surface of otherwise repressed and contained feelings.' They can effect a positive catharsis, when they 'awaken new depths of emotional energy into people's lives', but become problematic when this enjoyable experience is effected and repeated intentionally.⁵¹

He also refers to the often mentioned difference between *revival* and *revivalism*: *Revival* is 'a free work of God that comes as divine gift, although it may be prepared for in prayer and the search for God,' and one in which unusual phenomena are not 'intrinsically problematic'. *Revivalism* he calls 'the attempt to reproduce through human methodology what is essentially a response to divine gift', 'manipulating phenomena by force of human personality and suggestibility', seeking the 'pleasurable and addictive'. Wright's conclusion is therefore that 'revival quickens, revivalism deadens' the church.⁵² Both sides can be seen in Evan Roberts' mission, though in his case it was not directly intended to manipulate, but he was more a victim of his belief in the absolute reliance on immediate guidance by the Holy Spirit and his lack of fellowship and correction.

There is also a big difference between Evan Roberts and the 'Third Wave' of the Charismatic movement; the Welsh Revival 1904-05 is a world apart from some 'Power Charismatics' like Rodney Howard Browne. The former had unusual experiences, visions

and spiritual agonies, and showed unpredictable reactions, but the emphasis was on the love of God, humbled in the presence of God, while the latter concentrated on power, used a certain technique in every meeting: '[W]hen the Holy Spirit was present, Evan Roberts looked for conversions, but Rodney Howard Browne for physical manifestations.... Evan Roberts did give too much attention to gifts at the expense of the Word, but he was never led on to advocate such excesses as were found in Toronto. And when leaders other than Evan Roberts are considered, it is even clearer that 1904-5 was no Toronto.'⁵³

It was only in the late phase of the revival in 1906 that extremists like Pastor R. Howton rose up, claiming among his healing abilities that he had raised a young man from the dead. This led the revivalist Seth Joshua to make a bitter attack on Howton stating: that the devil 'is raising a counterfeit revival... It is a mixture of spiritualism and mesmerism, and will need a strong hand to keep it down...'⁵⁴ Here again it seems that a shift of focus on the gifts and an intentional use of the paranormal can be observed but this was not typical of the whole revival.

51 Wright, 'Revival', p. 127.

52 Wright, 'Revival', p. 128.

53 Gibbard, *Fire on the Altar*, pp. 164f, against the comparison of Evan Roberts and Rodney Howard Browne as well as between Wales 04 and Toronto-Pensacola by Graham Hind, 'Azusa Street and Pentecostalism III: Pentecostal Influence in the Welsh Revival of 1904', *CRN Journal*, Summer 1998; and idem, 'Weaknesses and Excesses', *The Evangelical Magazine* (Jan-Febr., 2004).

54 Jones, *Faith*, p. 336.

Emotionalism and revival

Furthermore, the differences between the last Welsh revival and the former revivals have been exaggerated. Enthusiasm, excesses and disorder were present in many revivals of the 18th and 19th century in Wales too. Sweeping generalisations that many of the enthusiastic aspects were not new in Wales 1904-05 are not helpful.⁵⁵ To summarise this aspect we may listen to a generalising and balanced judgement of the Welsh historian Tudur Jones:

If there is any truth in the conviction that humankind's fate is of eternal importance, there would be something gravely wrong if the gospel never stirred the emotions. A faith that never excites the emotional side of one's personality is a crippled faith. On the other hand, if there is any truth in the conviction that the heart is deceitful above all things, it would be surprising if the emotional aspect of the Holy Spirit's work did not provide some people with an excuse for yielding to emotionalism in order to feed the lust of the flesh.⁵⁶

Especially in relation to the last Welsh revival, he adds a comment about the failures of some leaders and about others who were circumspect:

⁵⁵ See the details with references to the works on previous revivals in Gibbard, *Fire on the Altar*, pp. 159-163 [against the misleading generalisations of Graham Hind, Gwyne Ll Williams, 'The 1904 Revival Revisited', *Reformation Today* (Nov-Dec. 1982); Ian Murray, *Pentecost Today?* (Edinburgh, 1998, pp. 153-64)].

⁵⁶ Jones, *Faith*, p. 358.

Many leaders were concerned with the overemphasis on feelings.... In the same spirit W.W. Lewis and Keri Evans—'the Camarthan fire-brigade', according to Nantlais Williams—placed a ban on 'fainting fits and pangs of sighing or weeping'. Newspaper reports did much damage by giving excessive coverage of extraordinary events. H. Elvet Lewis (Elfed) believed that the meetings where quiet and deep emotion was experienced had more lasting influence than the meetings where there was great excitement.... All this is true, but it would be foolish to dismiss the passion and emotional excitement of the revival simply because the psychological excesses of wicked people were mingled with the sincerity of true converts.⁵⁷

VI. Immediate and lasting results in Wales

'White gloves' and puzzled pit ponies—social effects

The immediate social effects of the revival were obvious to everybody and some became proverbial. In many places in Wales for some months magistrates found themselves presented with white gloves as a sign that there were no criminal cases to be treated.⁵⁸

⁵⁷ Jones, *Faith*., p. 359.

⁵⁸ For social effects see e.g. the revival edition of the *Western Mail* (Awstin et. al.), e.g. issue 5, p. 14. R.B. Jones, *Rent Heavens*, pp. 42ff.

The usual hundreds of cases of drunkenness in the populous centres were significantly reduced. In one place the policemen were so unemployed that they had nothing better to do than to form a church choir. The effect on the drinking habits of many was very striking. Many public-houses, almost at a stroke, became practically empty. Workers brought their wages home to their poor families or gave part of them for charitable purposes instead of wasting them in public houses. Many homes had undergone a complete transformation through the parents having been brought to a better life through the Revival.

The correspondent of *The Daily News* (December, 1904) told the story,

The worst class of worker in the colliery is the haulier, who has charge of the poor horses doomed to perpetual underground darkness. These men, as a class, are proverbial for their profanity and cruelty, but now the change is so marked that the poor, bewildered horses do not know what to make of it. Accustomed to words of command, every one of which is either a curse or an obscenity, they hardly know how to obey the requests now couched in quiet and gentle phrases.⁵⁹

In the pits there were organized underground services. The miners gathered to pray and praise God before they began their hard work. The revival resulted in lots of debts being repaid and the reconciliation of bitter enemies, especially those families who

had suffered from the strike and strike breakers in the northern Bethesda quarry. 'Many converts immediately became practical philanthropists': Young people in different areas visited the poor and sick, providing bibles, food and clothing for the needy, there were ministries to the gypsies and tramps.⁶⁰ More long lasting were the institutions formed by the revival like Rescue Homes for women who had earned their money by prostitution and for homeless men.

Attitude to politics

As in the evangelical movement today there were different attitudes and debates over political engagement and socialism. The political activities of the Nonconformists concentrated mainly on the already mentioned battle against the Education Act of 1902 by which even the Nonconformists were forced to support Church Schools even though the Anglican Church formed only a minority in the country.

While Nonconformist ministers usually were Liberal in politics and some were active supporters of the Party, there were also prominent revival ministers who voted for the Labour Party. In the years after the revival Socialism often became obsolete in the eyes of believers because it did not only attack the failures of the churches on the social field but offered a new gospel when many passionately tried 'to provide a religious justification for the political battle'.⁶¹ The 'Kingdom Con-

59 R.B. Jones, *Rent Heavens*, p. 45.

60 Gibbard, *Fire on the Altar*, pp. 130f; Jones, *Faith*, p. 367.

61 Jones, *Faith*, p. 410.

cept' of Keir Hardy and others was not interested in a heavenly kingdom but wanted to create heaven on earth. 'Socialism was the true revelation and Christian doctrine had to be pruned to respond to its requirements.'⁶² But a minority welcomed socialism, and in some the 'social conscience was quickened during the Revival'.⁶³

After the revival there was a debate about whether the revival had prevented or intensified the churches' interest in the social implications of the gospel. In some cases, especially where there was a Keswick influence on personal perfection, social interest was weakened. But a more comprehensive and balanced consideration comes to the conclusion that 'There was a clear tendency within perfectionist movements—as in America with the emancipation of slaves—to encourage social activity. There is a very close link between aiming for personal holiness and the sanctification of society and there is room to believe that social interest was heightened rather than diminished by the revival.'⁶⁴ If one looks for abolition of structural evils of society as a result of revival, the general observation from comparative studies should also be taken into account, viz. that 'significant changes, like abolishing slavery, were due to more long-term campaigning led by Evangelical parliamentarians and slave uprisings led by Baptist

deacons than to revivalism as such'.⁶⁵

Socialism turned Christian reasoning on its head but the critical question has to be raised, not so much as to the revival which provided a different and specific chance and challenge, but as to the churches in the years until the First World War: whether they missed the chance to 'open the door to a social doctrine that would be derived from the Bible and that would simultaneously get to grips with the complexities of contemporary society.... Socialism stepped into the gap and offered holistic doctrine of life, and Welsh Christian thinkers did not really know how to criticize it creatively while accepting what was valuable in it and rejecting those elements which were false.'⁶⁶ This may be *one* of several reasons for the decline of Welsh Christianity in the following decades.

Lasting Influence in Wales?

The total *number* of converts given varies between 80,000 and 162,000. Although there was 'an obsession with the numbers of converts during the revival'⁶⁷ exact figures especially of the influx of new members cannot be given as the relationship between converts and members is not documented; many converts may have been already members, and different terms were used in

⁶² Jones, *Faith*., p. 409.

⁶³ Gibbard, *Fire on the Altar*, p. 146. and pp 140-7.

⁶⁴ Jones, *Faith*, p. 368.

⁶⁵ Steve Latham, "God came from Teman": Revival and Contemporary Revivalism', in Walker & Aune, *On Revival*, pp. 171-186, 179.

⁶⁶ Jones, *Faith*, p. 411.

⁶⁷ Jones, *Faith*, p. 362; Gibbard adds that the counting of converts had also occurred in the 1839 and 1859 revivals (*Fire on the Altar*, p. 133).

the different denominations such as *members, communicants, adherers or listeners*.⁶⁸ But the real increase of membership in all churches was substantial, e.g. the increase of the four major (non-conformist) churches between 1903 and 1905 was 83,000.⁶⁹ But all these experienced a loss and decrease in the years after the revival though widely varying in different regions. A comparison with former revivals justifies the general statement: 'It seems that, following a spiritual blessing, reaction is inevitable.'⁷⁰ But still in 1912, church membership in the whole of Wales was ten percent higher than in 1903.⁷¹

The existing churches received 'new energy to continue with their daily work', 'enabled the churches to face the terrible crisis of the Great War and the social upheaval of the Depression that followed' and 'a huge phalanx of church leaders emerged who continued to make substantial contribution to Christian life in every part of the country until the outbreak of the Second World War'.⁷² Never before were so many women introduced in the public work of the churches which turned out

to be 'providential' for the following years (of the First World War) 'when many congregations would depend more on women than on men'.⁷³

As result of the revival a number of men and women felt the call to go out in to the world 'by faith' as witnesses, some on their own subjective call, others sent by existing or newly formed missionary societies.⁷⁴ On the institutional level (which is always an expression of the lasting results of revivals)⁷⁵ new independent churches were founded by children of the revival (not only the two Pentecostal churches mentioned below). New conventions (on a smaller scale than Llandrindod) were arranged, three Bible schools were opened, an evangelical magazine⁷⁶ started, as well as the social institutions already mentioned.

And the individual effects should also not be underestimated even when the emotional heat of a revival has disappeared:

It is often argued that revivalism is ephemeral. So are apple blossoms. But apples are born of them. And as the brief historical retrospect shows, the fruits of revivals are among the most permanent things in history... as a matter of fact, while some undoubtedly fall away, and very few indeed ever permanently retain the ecstasy and the vision of the moment of their con-

68 For the facts and the discussion of statistics see Gibbard, *Fire on the Altar*, pp. 132-136, 191f; Jones, *Faith*, pp. 362-365.

69 The figures of the Anglican Church refer only to the number of communicants on Easter Sunday, but the steady growth of these numbers from 1905 even to 1912 is probably influenced also by the positive response of the Anglicans to the revival (Gibbard, *Fire on the Altar*, p. 136).

70 Gibbard, *Fire on the Altar*, p. 136.

71 Jones, *Faith*, p. 364.

72 Jones, *Faith*, p. 362.

73 Jones, *Faith*, p. 362.

74 Gibbard, *Wings of the Dove*, pp. 201-211.

75 Wright, 'Does Revival Quicken?', p. 132.

76 Compare for all aspects Gibbard, *Fire on the Altar*, pp. 123-127; 200; R.B. Jones, *Rent Heavens*, pp. 50f, 60ff.

version, the majority of converts made in times of revival remain steadfast.' Professor Starbuck, in his *Psychology of Religion*, concludes that conversion 'brings with it a changed attitude towards life which is fairly constant and permanent, although the feelings fluctuate'.⁷⁷

General summary

Despite all reservations, the work of Roberts and even more the revival in total was mainly seen as a blessing for the country. Some bishops of the Anglican Church praised it as 'clearly the work of the Holy Ghost' and 'expressed a hope that the blessings which had unquestionably come to Wales should be extended to England'.⁷⁸ It was even welcomed by the Welsh member of Parliament, Lloyd George, who became the respected Prime Minister. He once postponed a political meeting in North Wales in order not to interfere with a revival meeting of Roberts which he considered to be more important. He told his ministers: 'The material conditions of this country will not improve until there comes a spiritual awakening', adding, 'and I charge you ministers with the responsibility of promot-

ing and fostering such a revival'.⁷⁹

Eifion Evans finishes his classic book on the revival:

Whatever may have been the aberrations introduced by human ingenuity subsequent to 1904, the revival in the period of its most powerful manifestations was unquestionably due to divine initiative. In its origin there was so much of God's presence, in its extension so little of man's design; its effects were so evidently supernatural, its fruit so patently holy, that none could reasonably deny its divine source.⁸⁰

Tudur Jones summarises his detailed discussion of the weaknesses and strengths of the Welsh revival in the chapter 'Fool's Gold or the Real Thing':

Taking a broad view, it is clear that it was an extremely fruitful blessing. Although Wales would soon turn its back on the God who gave it such a thrilling opportunity in 1904-5, the historian must note that the revival was on the whole, a hugely significant event.⁸¹

VII. Pilgrims from all over the world and international effects

People from many countries made pilgrimages to Wales, including, (taking as an example my country of Germany)

⁷⁷ W. T. S. (Stead), 'The Psychology of the Revival', in Arthur Goodrich [et al.], *The Story of the Welsh revival As Told By Eyewitnesses Together With A Sketch Of Evan Roberts And His Message to the World To which is added a number of incidents of this most remarkable movement* (n.p. 1905, CD ed.), pp. 61-64.

⁷⁸ Shaw, S.B., *The Great Revival in Wales*, 1905, (repr. Pensacola, 2002), pp. 197f; 109; 196.

⁷⁹ R. B. Jones, *Rent heavens*., p.67.

⁸⁰ Evans, *Revival*, p. 199.

⁸¹ Jones, *Faith*, p. 369.

leading persons of the new German Gemeinschaftsbewegung ('Fellowship Movement' in the established *Evangelical Church of Germany*). Many aristocratic women visited Wales and came back enthusiastically giving testimony to the miracles of this revival, and invited others to come with them next time. In her widely read autobiography, Eva von Tiele-Winckler, the founder of a growing sisterhood of deaconesses and the 'Friedenshort' for homeless children and others in Miechowitz (Upper Silesia), describes her impressions of one of the meetings without Evan Roberts and of the changing power of the Holy Spirit on a whole town and a big crowd.⁸²

In consequence of the visits of the members of the German 'Gemeinschaftsbewegung' smaller *regional awakenings* were to be seen in some parts of Germany, although not as large and influential as the great Revival Movement in the Evangelical Church of Germany during the first half of the 19th century. There were also open debates *pro and contra*: in Hamburg one Lutheran pastor published a booklet: 'Wittenberg or Wales? A serious question'. Another Lutheran pastor answered by his pamphlet, 'Wittenberg and Wales!'⁸³ The influence of Wales was seen especially during the

national conference of the Evangelical Alliance in Bad Blankenburg 1905 where people described a revival atmosphere among the 1300 participants. The written report mentions that this was not a simple imitation of Wales as some had feared.⁸⁴

But the attitude changed after the sad ecstatic events 1907 in my home town Kassel during meetings with two young female evangelists from the young Pentecostal movement in Norway, who had been invited to Germany by the missionary Emil Meyer from Hamburg. The young women were part of the 'tongues movement' in Norway, influenced by the Methodist Thomas Ball Barratt who claimed to have received this gift in the USA. So there is a chain between Los Angeles, Christiana, Hamburg and Kassel. But when the gatherings which had been blessed initially got so much out of order with paroxysmal manifestations, they were completely discredited in the eyes of the public of the town of Kassel by reports in the newspaper. Even the police had to intervene and the leadership of the (established) Evangelical

⁸² On her visits to Wales and Keswick see *Denksteine des lebendigen Gottes. Aufzeichnungen selbsterlebter Führungen* (Gießen/ Basel, 1963, pp. 36-49; pp. 38f.).

⁸³ Max Glage, *Wittenberg oder Wales? Eine ernste Frage* (Hamburg, 1905); R. Mumssen, *Wittenberg und Wales! Erwiderung auf P. Glage's Schrift: Wittenberg oder Wales?* (Neumünster n.d.).

⁸⁴ 'Reden und Ansprachen der zwanzigsten Allianz-Konferenz zur Vertiefung des Glaubenslebens, 28. August bis 2. September 1905' (Blankenburg 1905), p. III; also, 'Evangelisches Allianzblatt 1905', pp. 357ff; pp. 365ff.

⁸⁵ For the events in Kassel and Hessen, the most detailed account is Ernst Giese, *Und flicken die Netze. Dokumente zur Erweckungsgeschichte des 20. Jahrhunderts*, (Marburg, 1976), pp. 49-119; more summarised, Paul Fleisch, *Geschichte der Pfingstbewegung in Deutschland von 1900 bis 1950*, (Marburg, 1983), pp. 36-51.

Church decided to forbid everybody from participating in these meetings.⁸⁵ An initial positive evaluation by some leading Pietistic pastors changed to sharp criticism. The events and the theology were condemned by the *Berliner Erklärung (Declaration of Berlin)* 1909.⁸⁶ (These events were said to be 'from below', by Satan or by human emotions but not by God's Spirit.)

But the evangelical Gnadau brethren opposed also the words and writings of one of the renowned speakers of the Fellowship Movement, Rev. Jonathan Paul, on the 'pure heart' and the possibility of not sinning any more. Also the teachings of a 'Baptism in the Spirit' as a separate act after conversion was regarded as unevangelical and not consistent with the doctrine of Reformation. They rejected the expectation of a 'new Pentecost' as it had been obvious already in 'Irvingianism' with all its failures. At the Gnadau Conference of 1910 there was not only a reaction against the rising Pentecostal movement but more generally against the new (American-British) influences which were considered to be foreign to the rich theological tradition of the reformation in Germany.⁸⁷

So, unbalanced adoptions of Anglo-Saxon influences on Holiness teaching and the Baptism by the Spirit, some excesses in Kassel, a leadership weak and unprepared for the events and the radical opposition of the largest part of

the 'evangelicals' within the Evangelical Church of Germany led to a deep split in the German Fellowship Movement and the formation of a Pentecostal movement outside the (established) Evangelical Church of Germany. All these developments were to poison the relationship between the Pietists of the Evangelical Church of Germany and the later Pentecostal and charismatic movements in Germany for about hundred years up to the present. Unfortunately these events certainly affected the later evaluation of and the silence about the great Welsh revival too.

Wales and the Pentecostal Movement

The relationship of the Welsh Revival to the revival of Los Angeles 1907 and the rising Pentecostal Movement can be answered only in a differentiated way. During his sabbatical, Joseph Smale, the pastor of the First Baptist Church in Los Angeles, visited Evan Roberts in Wales and reported in his home church where they started to pray for a revival similar to that in Wales. The biographer of the events, Frank Bartleman, had correspondence with Roberts who encouraged him and prayed for the congregation in America. In his articles Bartleman spoke about the worldwide revival which, as he saw it, had been rocked in the cradle of the small country of Wales, broken out in India and later fully grown up in Los Angeles.

More important was the direct influence of the Welsh revival on the birth of two new Pentecostal churches by children of the revival: the *Elim Church* by George Jeffreys, an important

⁸⁶ For text, see Giese, *Netze*, pp. 126-129..

⁸⁷ 'Verhandlungen der achten Gnadauer Pfingstkonferenz gehalten zu Wernigerode', 17.-19. Mai, Stuttgart 1910.

British evangelist of the 20th century,⁸⁸ and the *Apostolic Church* founded by Daniel Powell Williams in Pen-y-Groes in Camarthenshire.⁸⁹ One can mention also Alexander A. Boddy, the vicar of All Saints' Parish Church, Sunderland, who had met Evan Roberts in Tony-pandy and T.B. Barratt in Norway. He encouraged people to exercise the gift of tongues within denominations. In 1909 he formed the Pentecostal Missionary Union which was to send many missionaries overseas.⁹⁰

Comparing the phenomena, the most important distinctive criterion of the new Pentecostal movement, speaking in tongues, *glossolalia*, played only a very small role in Wales 1904-05.⁹¹ There are also parallels in the influence of visions and auditions for some leaders of the revival. But a more important parallel—though not only to

the Pentecostal churches—was the character of the enthusiastic meetings which seemed to be led not by human will.⁹²

Donald Gee remarks that perhaps the most formative result of Wales 'was the creation of a widespread spirit of expectation for still greater things. Men justly asked "Why Wales only? Why not other lands? Why not a worldwide Revival?"... Faith was rising to visualise a return to apostolic Christianity in all its pristine beauty and power... In this manner the spiritual soil was prepared in the providence of God for the rise of the Pentecostal Movement.'⁹³

Worldwide results

Reflecting on the results of the Welsh Revival after 1905-05, we have to mention the *effects* outside Wales, sometimes by Welsh people all over the world, or by visitors or simply by the sharing of news from the huge events in Wales. There were greater or smaller effects and local revivals in England, Scotland and Ireland;⁹⁴ on the continent the most effective were in France, Germany, and Norway,⁹⁵ but

88 Neil Hudson & Andrew Walker, 'George Jeffreys, Revivalist and Reformer: A Revaluation', in Walker & Aune, (ed.), *On Revival*, pp. 137-156.

89 T. N. Turnbull, *What God hath Wrought: A Short History of the Apostolic Church* (Bradford, 1959); James E. Worsfold, *The Origins of the Apostolic Church in Great Britain* (Thorndon, Wellington NZ, 1991); B. Llewellyn, 'A study in the History of the Apostolic Church in Wales in the Context of Pentecostalism', Unpublished MPhil thesis, University of Bangor, 1997.

90 Gibbard, *Fire on the Altar*, p. 183; idem, *Wings*, pp. 201f.; Donald Gee, *Wind and Flame, The Pentecostal Movement*, (London 1941; revised, enlarged and re-entitled, Croydon, 1967), p. 6.

91 See Gibbard, *Fire on the Altar*, p. 182. Russell Davies, *Secret Sins. Sex, Violence and Society in Camarthenshire 1870-1920* (Cardiff, 1996), p. 201.

92 This similarity is also emphasized by Vinson Synan, *The Century of the Holy Spirit. 100 Years of Pentecostal and Charismatic Renewal, 1901-2001* (Nashville, 2001), p. 42.

93 Gee, *Wind and Flame*, pp. 5f.

94 Gibbard, *Fire on the Altar*, pp. 95-122; Jones, *Faith*, pp. 337-342; Orr, *Flaming Tongue*, pp. 29-49.

95 'Nowhere outside of Wales was the revival more powerful than in Norway, and Albert Lunde was regarded as the Evan Roberts of that country.' (Gibbard, *Wings of the Dove*, p. 49).

less in Sweden, Denmark and Russia,⁹⁶ There were smaller effects in Holland, Belgium and Switzerland, and not such direct links to revivals in Hungary, Latvia and Bulgaria.⁹⁷ Outside Europe there were great effects in America: in the United States, Patagonia and the West Indies. There were great results in Asia: in China, Korea, Manchuria, Japan and most of all in India!⁹⁸ In South Africa, Congo and especially in Madagascar (where the pioneers of Protestant mission were Welsh missionaries),⁹⁹ also in Australia and New Zealand.¹⁰⁰

Gibbard differentiates between primary and secondary influences of Wales. It was certainly the most important source for the revivals in India, Madagascar, Patagonia, and France while its influence on Korea, Australia and New Zealand was not so direct but not unimportant. In countries with revivals directly influenced by Wales, it is possible to detect a different level of intensity: thus the revival meetings in India 1905-06 and Madagascar were more similar to those in Wales than those in Russia which were quieter.¹⁰¹

⁹⁶ For Europe, see Gibbard, *Wings of the Dove*, pp. 23-66.

⁹⁷ Jones, *Faith*, p.347; his contributions to France, Scandinavia, Germany and Eastern Europe pp. 345-347.

⁹⁸ Gibbard, *Wings of the Dove*, pp. 117-167; Orr, *Flaming Tongue*, pp. 130ff.

⁹⁹ Gibbard, *Wings of the Dove*, pp. 101-113; Orr, *Flaming Tongue*, pp. 116f; 122.

¹⁰⁰ *Wings of the Dove*, pp. 171-73; Compare Orr, *Flaming Tongue*, pp. 109f.

¹⁰¹ Gibbard, *Wings of the Dove*, p. 220.

VIII. A call for a network of international research on the newer revival movements¹⁰²

All these highly interesting international connections deserve further research. As the majority of World Christianity is no longer living in the western and northern world, the revivals in the new churches of all continents must be part of future church histories and historical research. The synchronic (regional) and diachronic links and networks between European and Non-European revivals must be taken seriously, so the continental European studies should no longer be restricted to a too narrow definition of 'The Revival Movement' excluding the 20th century and neglecting scholars from Asia, Africa, Australia, Latin America and their research.¹⁰³

¹⁰² For details see my papers, 'Revival movements in the 20th century as an urgent task of international research network. The deficit and challenge with special reference to the Welsh Revival of 1904/05', forthcoming volume of the Interdisciplinary Centenary Conference to the Welsh Revival of 1904-1905, University of Bangor, 2004; and: 'Die Erforschung der Erweckungsbewegungen des 20. Jahrhunderts als dringendes Desiderat der internationalen Pietismusforschung', in *Interdisziplinäre Pietismusforschungen. Beiträge zum Ersten Internationalen Kongress für Pietismusforschung* 2001, ed. Udo Sträter (Hallesche Forschungen 17) Tübingen 2005, vol. II, pp. 813-23.

¹⁰³ Here I disagree sharply with Ulrich Gäßler who wanted to restrict the term 'Erweckungsbewegung' ('The Revival Movement') to the one renewal movement in the context of the Enlightenment in Europe and North America at the beginning of the 19th century, which is untenable for several reasons (Gäßler, *Auferstehungszeit. Erweckung-*

Important investigational work has been done by J. Edwin Orr who probably had the largest knowledge and greatest overview in historical and regional respects¹⁰⁴ due to his many visits to all continents and his life-long investigations of revival movements. Certainly his works are methodically weak and need to be supplemented.¹⁰⁵ The huge task of a 'History of Revival Movements' and the comparative investigation of the phenomenology of revivals is still ahead of us¹⁰⁶ and can never be done by one person as Orr attempted to achieve. This includes of course a lot of methodological work and a thorough discussion of the defin-

ition of the term 'Revival Movement'.¹⁰⁷ This task may be difficult, but it would be wrong to overestimate the difficulties of defining the movement.¹⁰⁸

In order to make progress in revival research I make the following proposals:

a) Organize well prepared *international conferences* with the best experts on revivals of *all* continents about specific subjects which promote inter-linked and comparative research on historical and systematic aspects of revivals (like 'Revival and social effects on society'). A first congress could concentrate in connection with the centenaries on the phenomenon of worldwide revivals during the first decade of the last century.

b) As this very large task cannot be undertaken by isolated scholars, there should be more permanent cooperation between scholars all over the world. Too often researchers on 'The Revival Movement' on the European continent do not know much of the work of their colleagues even in Britain, to say nothing of research in other continents. Even the great revival in Wales is not mentioned in our most popular handbooks of general Church History, the 'Heussi' and the 'Hauschild'; the same is true for most articles on worldwide

sprediger des 19. Jahrhunderts. Sechs Porträts, München 1991, p. 179, n.7. Idem, Article 'Erweckungsbewegung' in: EKL3 I, col. 1081-1088.

104 E.g. his five regional works on 'Evangelical Awakenings' in Africa (1974); Eastern Asia (1975); Latin America (1978); Southern Asia (1976); and in the South Seas (1976).

105 'Orr is often doing no more than chronicling a long series of facts without much attempt at assessing their significance... sometimes he sees revivals where there are none!' But 'he is the only researcher who has done any work at all on revivals in certain periods and places. Orr's pioneering work needs to be supplemented, and at times, possibly be corrected by further study, but for the present, his is the only work which has been done in bringing together the host of evidence present in newspaper and magazine reports, and other contemporary writings.' (R.E. Davies, *I Will Pour out My Spirit. A History and Theology of Revivals and Evangelical Awakenings*, (Tunbridge Wells, 1992), p. 13, n. 5, 7.

106 Tudor Jones: 'No doubt wide-ranging and detailed research in the countries where revival has been experienced would reveal common elements but this research is hitherto far from complete.' (*Faith*, p. 356.)

107 See e.g. Latham, 'God came from Teman', and other articles in Walker & Aune, *On Revival*; R. E. Davies, *I will Pour out my Spirit*, p. 15.

108 As Hartmut Lehmann said in the context of the difficulties defining the term 'Pietismus': Zur Definition des 'Pietismus'. in Martin Greschat (ed.) *Zur neueren Pietismusforschung* (WdF 440), (Darmstadt, 1977), pp. 82-90.

revivals of the 20th century in the biggest lexica or monographs.¹⁰⁹ Information in the other direction is no better—it is astonishing how little some English publications know about revivals in Germany. Perhaps such cooperation could be initiated and organized by the new *Centre for the Study of World Christian Revitalization Movements* at Asbury Seminary, Wilmore. But we need a similar centre in Europe and perhaps in other continents too.¹¹⁰

The last word shall be from one of the Welsh authors (whose historical works on the revival deserve to be more widely known all over the world). It can inspire us to desire revivals

despite their ephemeral character and impress us 'with a sense of the infinite importance of Revivals, and of the need of making the most of them while they last'. One of the most fruitful revival preachers of 1904-05, Rhys Bevan Jones, commented 25 years later:

They do not come so frequently as to justify indifference and negligence. They are tides in the life of a generation which, if not taken advantage of, leave the vessel high and dry on the shore. They are but few who live long enough to have the privilege of experiencing more than one of these stirring movements of the Spirit. Recognizing this fact, Mr. Roberts in 1904 warned his congregation, saying, that that sort of thing would not go on for ever; that fever-heat could not be kept going long; but they must keep at it until the Churches could be raised to a higher level, and then they could 'settle down to business'.¹¹¹

109 For references, examples and discussions see my more detailed papers of Bangor and Halle in note 101 above.

110 Perhaps in cooperation with one of the existing centres on similar subjects like the *Interdisciplinary Center for the Study of Pietism* in Halle, or the *Hollenweger Center for the Interdisciplinary Study of Pentecostalism and Charismatic Movements* in Amsterdam, if the focus could be widened to include the majority of non-Pentecostal revivals.

111 Jones, *Rent Heavens*, p. 56.

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