The Welsh Outlook was a monthly periodical, which was published in Wales between 1914 and 1933. It stands out amongst similar publications because it aimed to discuss current and political affairs from a Welsh point of view while avoiding “parish pump” attitudes. It is tempting to view the ephemeral output of newspapers and periodicals mainly as ‘a source of historical information, rather than as a subject of historical enquiry’ (Aled Jones, 1993: 5). But instead of taking the Outlook as a source of information, I would like to analyse the contents of the periodical itself and attempt to assess, firstly, whether it lived up to the expectations expressed by its first editor Thomas Jones. Secondly, I would like to show how the Outlook exemplified the peculiarities of the Welsh public sphere at the beginning of the 20th century. Thirdly, I would like to speculate why, after 20 years of existence, the Outlook finally failed in 1933. My analysis is based mainly on sources such as Ballin (2008 and 2004), Jenkins (1985/86) and Williams (1979) as well as on my own analysis of a systematic sample of 60 issues published between 1914 and 1933.

E.L. Ellis provides a good description of the motivations for establishing The Welsh Outlook:

[Thomas Jones] and his friends had come to the conclusion . . . that the weekly and monthly press in Wales was too partisan in attitude, too parochial in outlook, and too much concerned with theological and literary subjects to provide effective comment on the great social and political changes that had occurred or were impending. People were bewildered by rapid change and conflicting or uncertain moral standards. There ought to be a proper debate in Wales, and enlightened opinion should take the initiative. (Ellis, 1992: 158)

The Outlook was to fill a gap in the serious periodical press in Wales by engaging with social and political topics. The title was programmatic: expressive of distinctively Welsh views the magazine was to look beyond Wales at UK and world affairs. The quotation also neatly encapsulates the remarkable certainty of Thomas Jones and his friends that they were the people whose ‘enlightened opinion’ was to guide their readers.

To assess the Outlook’s impact, a few words about the specificities of the Welsh public sphere are appropriate here. Historically, the public sphere as described by Jürgen Habermas developed alongside the political sphere. The public sphere is populated by journalists, opinion formers, think tanks, cultural
organisations – in short, by everyone who wants to influence public opinion and has the means to do so. Today, the public sphere exerts a great influence over the political sphere. In fact, the spheres often overlap as politicians moonlight as journalists and as actors in the public sphere become politicians (see Habermas, 1990 and 1991). In England at the beginning of the 20th century, metropolitan intellectuals and other denizens of the public sphere just began to be able to exert influence over the political sphere (Collini, 2006, see also Heyck, 1998). In Wales, however, a different state of affairs prevailed due to the physical separation of the political sphere in Westminster, where Welsh MPs represented their constituencies, and the public sphere located in Wales, e.g. in the numerous newspapers and magazines published in Welsh and in English, and in the Welsh ‘diaspora’ in London, Liverpool and other places. Even as more Wales-specific legislation appeared and as administrative units such as the Central Welsh Board of Education began to be located in Wales, serious public discussion tended to concentrate on cultural, linguistic and religious topics – perhaps because it was in these spheres that this ‘nation without state’ (Guibernau, 1999) commanded the independence it lacked politically. Public intellectual commentary in periodicals tended to focus on topics that arose out of, to appropriate the Gramscian term, ‘organic culture’: publications like Seren Gomer, a 19th-century Baptist newspaper, could speak directly to the Welsh Baptist community. By contrast, political commentary could not be certain to reach the political sphere in the same way: a well-chosen word in the ear of a civil servant in a select London club could be far more certain to be heeded than a cry of outrage in a Welsh newspaper column. The Welsh Outlook was meant to bridge this gap by providing serious political commentary, by looking beyond the Welsh borders and by influencing Welsh politics in Westminster.

The Welsh Outlook appeared when Wales’ national self-confidence and unity of vision had reached its zenith. Some of this feeling of self-confidence achieved a tangible presence in the granting of the charter to the University of Wales in 1893, the founding of the National Library in Aberystwyth in 1909 and the establishment of the National Museum of Wales, whose charter was granted in 1907. Social, cultural, religious and linguistic change was undoubtedly in the air, but commentators did not doubt that this change could be incorporated into the greater vision. This vision, which was enthusiastically championed by the members of the Liberal establishment that formed the core of the contributors of the Welsh Outlook, was based on a belief in Wales as a “classless” society of a people, who shared a language, non-conformist religion, Liberal or Lib-Lab political convictions and a pride in an “organic” culture. Voices like that of W. Llewellyn Williams, who proudly declared that Wales had a ‘higher standard of popular culture . . . than any other country in Europe’ epitomised
this sense of optimism even as this image began to be challenged (W. Llewellyn Williams, 1914: 141). Ellis calls this a ‘populist form of ethnic nationalism’ (John Ellis, 2008: 26). By 1914 nationalists had successfully permeated Welsh public and the political spheres:

When Lloyd George assumed a cabinet position in the Liberal government of 1906-1914, he did so secure in the knowledge that the forces of Welsh nonconformist nationalism now virtually controlled the political, cultural, social and economic life of Wales. Welsh political nationalism had worked splendidly and, by all appearances, was advancing from a position of strength at the turn of the century. (John Ellis, 2008: 33)

The Welsh Outlook was an expression of this sense of national self-confidence and optimism. It gave voice to a particular political, religious and linguistic viewpoint and unhesitatingly applied it to the whole nation.

The unity of vision displayed by the Welsh Outlook was centrally influenced by the noted lecturer, adult educator and civil servant Thomas Jones, usually referred to as T.J. ‘A periodical is produced by a guiding editorial intelligence, seeking to project an identity’ (Ballin, 2008: 2) and the Outlook’s editorial line, despite frequent changes of editor, remained closely aligned with that of its first editor. T.J. had no experience as a journalist but was keen to reach a wide audience (E.L. Ellis, 1992: 158). In 1910 he had met David Davies, the coalowner and philanthropist, and had become a close friend and confidant of Davies’ sisters Margaret and Gwendoline. Hoping for financial backing, T.J. wrote a business proposal for a weekly magazine provisionally called ‘The Red Dragon’, which was ‘to assist in the work of Social Reform’, in 1913 (Jenkins, 1985-86: 464). However, these plans did not come to fruition, presumably because David Davies was not prepared to shoulder the financial burden. Then T.J. and a group of friends in Barry and Cardiff came up with a less ambitious project, which David Davies agreed to back: a professionally produced monthly magazine tackling the social issues of the day. The original editorial board was made up of establishment figures of Edwardian Wales: the Rev. Richard Jones, a Calvinist Methodist minister in Llandinam who had originally introduced T.J. to David Davies, took on the responsibility for religion and philosophy. Edgar Jones, the Headmaster of Barry Intermediate School was a close friend of T.J. and took on the editorial responsibility for education. A number of contributors to the Outlook, like Annie Ffoulkes and the poet R. Williams Parry also worked at Barry Intermediate School. R. Silyn Roberts, a well-known poet and former Calvinistic Methodist minister who became first secretary of the Appointments Board of the University of Wales, was responsible for literature, poetry and drama. T.J. himself took on responsibility for social and industrial
questions and co-operation. W.J. Burdon Evans, David Davies’ business secretary was Davies’ nominee on the Board. He looked after health, local government, music, arts and architecture. George M. Lloyd Davies, a pacifist who worked for the Fellowship of Reconciliation in 1914 and entered Parliament in 1923 as a Christian Pacifist MP for the University of Wales and subsequently joined the Labour Party, took on housing. Frank Murrell, a master printer from Barry, was appointed Honorary Secretary and General Manager (Jenkins, 1985-86; E.L. Ellis, 1992; Davies et al, 2008). All members of the editorial board gave their time on a voluntary basis and only T.J.’s assistant Frank Wright drew a small salary. This group of people was highly educated, liberal if not Liberal in outlook and motivated by a high-minded sense of social obligation. However, none of the members of the editorial board were professional journalists or publishers and “the lack of a serious professional approach was to have a deleterious effect on the magazine in the long term” (Jenkins, 1985-86: 464).

What were the aims of the Welsh Outlook? In his second volume of memoirs, Welsh Broth, T.J. writes that in 1914 Wales was going through ‘a period of comparative national prosperity’. He continues: ‘We wanted to translate this wealth into a higher quality of social life in Wales. . . . Our first notion had been to found a weekly paper in which to expound and criticize the changes afoot’ (Thomas Jones, 1951: 141). The Outlook was to raise the quality of social commentary and to broaden the minds of their readership, or, as T.J. put it programmatically in his ‘Foreword’ to the first edition, ‘[t]he imagination of our people must be possessed with the vision of a better Wales’ (January 1914: 2). This sentiment is echoed in the Outlook’s motto from Proverbs 29:18: ‘Where there is no vision, the people perish’ and its subtitle ‘A Monthly Journal of National Social Progress’. T.J. described the nation the magazine was addressing as ‘a seething cauldron of unrest and conflict’ (Thomas Jones, 1951: 141). The Welsh Outlook was to respond meaningfully to the social and cultural changes of the period.

E.L. Ellis suggests that a parallel can be drawn between T.J.’s work for the Outlook and his involvement with the Workers’ Educational Association (E.L. Ellis, 1992: 158). T.J., Silyn Roberts and others helped set up and run the WEA in South Wales. At that time it was an organisation providing relatively orthodox, liberal adult education, which was designed to ‘graft the values of a liberal university education’ on to working-class leaders, who were then meant to be able to detect and reject ‘spurious knowledge and bogus remedies’ for the social and economic issues they were grappling with (Lewis, 1993: xv). This kind of adult education can be construed as manipulative, namely as an attempt to take the brightest and best out of the working-class movement, enculturate them in the values of Liberal Wales and
thus render them unfit for the class struggle – and this was how many Labour activists, particularly those associated with the rival Plebs League and National Labour College, saw the activities of the WEA. However, it can also be seen as a genuine wish to extend the opportunities of the educated middle class to those in the working class, who had the capacity to benefit, and to engage in a social dialogue that would prevent social conflict. The *Welsh Outlook* shared the latter position and was, in T.J.’s words, to provide ‘intelligent guidance’ to its readership (Jenkins, 1985-86: 466).

A brief word must be said about the influence exerted by David Davies as the financier and, from 1918, owner of the magazine. The journalistic landscape of early 20th century Britain was dominated by newspaper barons like Lord Northcliffe and Lord Beaverbrook. Nick Davies points out that, in contrast to today’s newspaper magnates like Rupert Murdoch, who are primarily interested in sales, these owners took a close and controlling interest in the editorial line their newspapers were taking (Nick Davies, 2008: 15-16). After 1917, David Davies began to take an active interest in newspaper publishing and acquired the National Press Agency in 1918 and a few journals and newspapers. Even though Davies media interests cannot be compared with those of Northcliffe and Beaverbrook, he clearly took a similar attitude when it came to controlling what was published in “his” *Outlook*. There is evidence of censorship, e.g. of articles by George H. Lloyd Davies, whose pacifist line displeased Davies (Jenkins, 1985-86: 470). Trevor Williams shows how an ill-tempered David Davies threatened closure of the magazine if an article by Edgar L. Chappell for the January 1917 issue entitled ‘The Unrest in the Coalfield’, which presented a socialist argument, were printed. He succeeded and the article did not appear (Trevor Williams, 1979). T.J. habitually sent proofs of articles to Davies for approval before they were published. From 1918, Davies contributed numerous articles. His favourite projects received a great deal of editorial attention, e.g. the King Edwards VII National Memorial Association, an organisation dedicated to the fight against tuberculosis, Home Rule and the Welsh League of Nations Union. Only the Welsh School of Social Service received an equal amount of attention, presumably because two *Outlook* regulars, the Rev. Gwilym Davies and Daniel Lleufer Thomas, were connected with it as founder and chairman respectively. However, more articles originate from speeches given at the Welsh School of Social Services than take the School as their subject. Editors evidently came to regard the School as a convenient quarry from which to get ready-made articles for publication. By contrast, the importance of David Davies-inspired topics can be gleaned from the fact that, out of five special supplements to the *Outlook* published between 1915 and 1919, two deal with the League of Nations, one with the National Memorial
Association, one with Home Rule, one with the reorganisation of the University of Wales and only one with literature, a topic in which Davies appears to have had no special interest in. This is not necessarily an indication of undue pressure: owner and editorial board may have simply agreed on the importance of the causes Davies supported. However, Davies' influence may have made editors fearful of offending him and therefore less likely to commission articles that were controversial.

What were the main subject areas the articles in the *Outlook* dealt with? My analysis is based on a systematic sample of 60 issues published between 1914 and 1933. From the description of the motivation of founding the periodical and the constitution of the editorial board, it could be concluded that the majority of its space was given to social issues. However, the majority of articles address cultural and literary topics (118). Social topics are dealt with in 81 of the articles. Many articles are of a historical nature or discuss Welsh and other personalities past and present (49). Other topics include education (47), religion (46) nature/agriculture/scientific subjects (26), socialism and Labour issues (12), Home Rule, nationalism and the Welsh Party (20) and war and reconstruction (4). Overall, the *Outlook* strikes a good balance between social and literary/cultural topics. However, it was not an incisive current affairs magazine. This must partly be due to the fact that articles published in a monthly periodical cannot engage with current affairs as effectively as a weekly. It must also be borne in mind that editors only had access to a limited pool of non-professional contributors, whose work was semi-voluntary. Given such circumstances, the articles probably reveal more about the interests of their authors than about Welsh politics and the social issues of the day. This interpretation is supported by the fact that a high number – about 45% – of the articles take a historical perspective. They are articles on historical articles on the arts and literature (34), historical Welsh personalities (18), articles on history, e.g. Welsh history, history of religion and extracts of biographies/autobiographies (12), obituaries (9), etc. Seen in the context of Welsh periodical publishing of the time, this reliance on articles dealing with historical matters rather than with current affairs is not surprising. Earlier periodicals, especially those in the miscellany tradition (see Ballin, 2008) include at least as many historical articles. Authors often contributed to more than one periodical and may have fallen into familiar grooves of essay writing. Many of these articles attempt to bring historical Welsh achievement back into the collective consciousness, such as the series on ‘Welsh Pioneers’, which includes an article on the 16th-century mathematician Robert Recorde, who is remembered for inventing the equals sign, and Henry Richard, ‘Apostle of Peace’. In this way, the current public sphere was meant to be imbued with a sense of the national past and achievement. However, the majority of the historical articles are of antiquarian
interest and shed no light on the situation of Wales in the early 20th century. Apart from the lack of authors who could discuss current news at the required level and with sufficient journalistic flair – a problem all small periodicals and little magazines relying mainly on part-time staff and non-professional contributors face and which must be familiar to present-day editors of publications like Planet – there was also a dearth of current news other than local news (Aled Jones, 1993; Jenkins, 1985-86: 484; see also Mathias, 1984). The split between political and public sphere becomes especially problematic here as the political sphere was far removed and most authors had no access to it. It is interesting to note that the ratio of current vs. historical articles changed over time. In the first five years the ratio was 75 current articles vs. 30 historical ones. This shifts to 76:28 (1919-1923) and then to 62:30 (1924-1928) and finally to 59:36 (1929-1933). This means that during the last years of the Outlook's existence, the balance began to tip over in favour of historical articles. The magazine with aspirations of reporting current affairs had turned into a conventional review.

Looking briefly at articles that address contemporary issues, the balance of subject matter is the following: the most popular topics were education (46), religion/the Church/theology (39), arts/literature (25), political/administrative issues/housing (22), Home Rule and nationalism (20), travel writing (16), social issues (14), Welsh culture/eisteddfod (13), agriculture and the natural environment (13), Socialism and the Labour movement (10), international affairs (9), women (7) and public health (6). Thus, the articles on contemporary issues do reflect the Outlook's editorial mission quite closely. The weighting of topics reveals a lot about the reforming zeal of Liberal Wales and about the personal interests of T.J. and subsequent editors. It is perhaps striking that international affairs are not given as much prominence as might have been expected from the rather defensive-sounding editorial note of the January 1915 issue in which T.J. writes that ‘we need not apologize for the attention given to other countries in our pages’ (3). The majority of commentary on international affairs appears to be contained within the editorial ‘Notes of the Month’, which were presumably written just before going to press and are the nearest to current political commentary the Outlook gets.

A closer look at four subject areas, namely religion, socialism/Labour relations/industrial development, Home Rule/nationalism and education, gives a flavour of the contents of the articles printed in the 60 issues under consideration. The Outlook was a secular magazine and, therefore, did not allocate a great deal of space to religious topics. Nevertheless, a familiarity with and an interest in religious topics were assumed by the editors as the relatively high number of articles on religious topics – 46 – shows. True to the Outlook's mission of being a magazine for “national social progress”, the majority of articles discuss the social role and the
relevance of religion and Church/chapel for Wales (12). This can be considered progressive as Church and chapel usually concerned themselves with the spiritual progress of individuals but had very little to say about society. Herbert Morgan, a Baptist Minister at the time, conducted a survey of religious and Labour leaders entitled “The Church and Labour: a Symposium”. The results of this survey were published in the February, March, April and May issues in 1918. Morgan’s own views lean towards embracing the Church’s social role and collaborating with the Labour Movement. His vision is one of compromise rather than conflict and therefore fits in well within the general tone of the Outlook:

A truly spiritual Church will want to express its spirituality within the economic and social order, and on the other hand a genuine passion for reform in the Labour groups will be directed by a spiritual interest of a broad human kind. (May, 1918: 164)

He concludes with a strong affirmation of the social role of the Church:

It is entirely wrong for Church people to represent Christianity as being concerned merely with the individual. The Church is a society within which the individual is gathered, and it should be a pattern of a more perfect society where each prefers the other in honour instead of grabbing at prizes and honours for the individual as is too often the case in what is called the world. Until the Church takes its own social character seriously it has nothing truly impressive to say to the world. (May, 1918: 166; italics in original)

Morgan’s impassioned plea for the social role of the Church/chapel was not readily accepted, which is probably why he and other left-leaning ministers like R. Silyn Roberts left the ministry. Publishing articles like this placed the Outlook at the forefront of non-denominational religious discussion in Wales.

Other popular topics include historical articles (7), articles with broadly theological and philosophical themes (7), articles on religious education in schools (6) and interdenominational issues (5). The same issue that contains Herbert Morgan’s final part of his ‘Symposium’ also includes an article by Ellis Jones ‘A Neglected Book: A Serious Call’, which refers ‘to the Bible, a book once widely read throughout the Principality, but now, alas! sadly neglected’ (May 1918: 157) and contains a detailed discussion of Bible instruction in Sunday Schools, primary and secondary schools as well as teacher training. A few articles address the establishment of a Department of Theology at the University College of North Wales at Bangor (4), a controversial issue as the theological colleges were not overly keen on the University intruding on their territory. Only two articles from 1918 and 1919 deal with the disestablishment of what became the Church in Wales in 1920 and there are a few articles on other issues. It is noticeable that the number of socially engaged articles
decreases after 1923 while the number of historical articles increases, presumably because of the Outlook’s difficulties in retaining authors who could provide such material. The discussion (especially of theological and interdenominational issues) was carried on in the letters to the editor and testifies to the high levels of interest of at least a few engaged readers, who, like J. Arthur Price, were often contributors as well. The Outlook’s ongoing engagement with religious topics at a relatively high level of discussion is also documented by the large number of reviews of books on theology, religious issues, religious literature (such as collected sermons) and religious periodicals. While it can be assumed that this interest in religious matters met those of the implied readership in 1914, it probably made the magazine look slightly out of touch by the 1930s. By comparison, the journal The Welsh Review, which was published from 1939, includes almost no discussion of religious themes or book reviews of religious literature.

Given the Outlook’s aim to discuss the important social and political movements of the day, one would expect that a great deal of room would be given to the discussion of socialism, the Labour movement and related topics. The first few years of publication show an attempt to come to grips with the Labour movement and the socialist, communist or syndicalist theories underpinning it, but this interest quickly cools – unsurprisingly, perhaps, considering David Davies’ powerful hidden editorial pen. Compared to 46 articles on religion, the total sum of 11 articles on the Labour movement and related topics seems meagre. Only one article attempts to elucidate socialist and syndicalist thought, three are about the Labour movement and the war and two deal with Labour relations more generally. Four articles, which are mainly published around 1927, deal with industry and one is a historical article. The tone of the articles is generally detached, “objective”, and the authors seem keen to inform their readership about the Labour movement and its ideas. The tone is usually sympathetic, although some authors warn of the dangers of radicalism. The motivation of these articles is educational: the implied readership is construed as in need of information about this new social movement. The working class and its leaders are the subjects for discussion and not interlocutors or even a projected readership. Only very rarely were selected leaders of the Labour movement allowed to put the case themselves. An example is the discussion of the article ‘Labour and Welsh Autonomy’ by “G.”, which was initiated by Edgar L. Chappell. He sent proofs of the article to selected Labour leaders and invited them to write short responses, which appeared in a slightly edited form in the following issues (April and May 1916). Those Labour leaders, however, were establishment figures themselves (councillors, MPs, administrators) and do not represent the majority, let alone the radical wing, of the Labour movement. No Noah Ablett or A.J. Cook was invited to
contribute – but then again they might have refused to write for this magazine of the Liberal establishment. An all too rare exception is an article on “Unrest in the Coalfield” written by Frank Hodges in the November 1917 issue. Neither are articles on industry written by industrialists – authors here are mostly academics. Most often, the Outlook’s contributors write for people much like themselves: educated, interested in social progress, keen to understand the other side and possibly secretly convinced of the superiority of their own convictions. David Davies was, for a time, enthusiastic about Home Rule and the Outlook reflects this by, e.g. producing a supplement for the March 1919 issue, which contains the Government of Wales Bill proposed by E.T. John and co-written by David Davies in 1914 in full. The topic was only intensively discussed between 1918 and 1924, however, probably coinciding with David Davies involvement in politics. The magazine’s interest mainly emerges in the “Notes of the Month”. Here the frustration of the editors Edgar L. Chappell (1918), Thomas Hughes Jones (1919) and T. Huws Davies (1920-1925) with a distant Welsh Party – a grouping made up of Liberal and Lib-Lab MPs – and their somewhat lacklustre promotion of the cause of Home Rule shines through in biting editorial remarks. A few articles deal with the desirability of Home Rule in a general way (4) and others deal with the administrative, legal, economic and other implications of Home Rule (4). As the interest in Home Rule diminishes, articles about nationalism, including an early discussion of fascism (8), and the newly formed Plaid Genedlaethol Cymru (2) begin to appear. The majority of articles on Home Rule and nationalism remain at a general level of discussion thus contributing to the impression of vagueness and dullness. Trevor Williams accuses the journal of (Trevor Williams, 1979). The various possibilities of Home Rule, from a partial devolution of powers to complete independence, could have been discussed but are not. It seems that contributors were more interested in ideological discussions about what Home Rule and later Plaid Genedlaethol Cymru would mean for Wales than getting down to political practicalities. Considering that in other subject areas, e.g. education, town planning or housing, the Outlook was quite prepared to print highly technical articles that often look like barely altered academic papers, this lack of concrete political discussion may be a reflection of the distance between political and public sphere even for an editor like T. Huws Davies who lived in London. Unless authors were also players on the political stage or professional political journalists – an unlikely scenario given the pool of regular contributors – discussion would always be hampered by a lack of detailed knowledge.

T.J.’s interest in education ensured that this topic had a high profile in the Outlook. Out of 46 articles, the majority deal with administrative and legislative
issues (9), schools (7) and with the University of Wales (6), thus demonstrating the impact of Wales-specific legislation in the sphere of education. There are historical articles (5), articles on curricular/pedagogical issues (4), articles on education and the adolescent (4) and articles on commercial/vocational education (3). Articles on school education very often deal with the administrative practicalities of a Welsh education system and argue for the professionalisation of the teaching profession, an issue often linked to teacher training and remuneration. Curricular issues are discussed in fine detail, e.g. in ‘A History Course for Secondary Schools in Wales’ in which J.E. Lloyd develops a detailed curriculum for History teaching (January 1928). Other topics are more ideological in nature and address the role of education in society, such as E. Towyn Jones’ article ‘The School and Community Service’ (May 1928), in which the author summarises the role of education in the following terms: ‘It is the duty and the privilege of all educational institutions to provide the facilities necessary for the free development of ideals of social service, and to foster those qualities which are indispensable to good citizenship’ (120). Only two articles in my sample deal with adult education, which seems astonishing given the role in the development of secular adult education in Wales usually ascribed to the Outlook (see Ballin, 2008: 153). The role of adult education is conceived of in similarly moral terms as school education but with a more obvious class bias. Ronald Burrows’ ‘Evolution or Revolution’ (January 1914) perfectly encapsulates the Outlook’s line on the role of adult education. Ronald Burrows was Professor of Greek and Principal of the University of Wales College of South Wales and Monmouthshire at Cardiff. He also founded the University Settlement in Splott, which provided educational and recreational facilities for working class students. Burrows speaks eloquently of the hope for reconciliation between the classes. Adult education is meant to furnish working-class students with the understanding necessary to seek out solutions (evolution) rather than give into ‘the inevitableness of a class war’ (revolution). Burrows was a social progressive but thought within established social frameworks, which were to be gradually “remoulded”, thus expressing the political views of the Liberal establishment just before the First World War. The Outlook was to stick to this interpretation of social relations throughout its existence.

The remaining articles on education are about the philosophy of education, bilingual education, the study of history, education and society, and teaching Welsh in schools. There is a slight whiff of moral panic detectable in the articles on the adolescent, which may be connected to the increasingly desperate unemployment situation especially in the industrial areas of Wales. Contrary to today’s policymakers’ unshakeable optimism about the direct link between education and “employability”, the Outlook persists in seeing education in terms of personal and
moral improvement. It is not regarded a way out of unemployment but can mitigate the detrimental influence of “idleness”. As with religion, articles on current issues decrease and historical articles of little significance for contemporary society increase in the second decade of the Outlook’s existence: four out of the five historical articles on education were written after 1927. Current issues were not abandoned: we find an article on ‘Educational Problems of the South Wales Coalfield’ side by side with the reminiscence ‘School in the Early Eighties’ in the January issue of 1932, for instance. However, in this subject area, too, the magazine became increasingly detached from the social reality of 1930s Wales.

To assess the impact of the Outlook on the Welsh public sphere, it pays to have a closer look at who contributed to the magazine. Contrary to the practice of earlier periodicals, most articles published in the Outlook were signed. Often authors’ names, academic degrees and professional or honorific titles were displayed in full. Editorials and some articles were usually anonymised. The fact that a considerable number of contributors appear in works of reference like the Welsh Biography Online or the Welsh Academy Encyclopaedia of Wales shows that T.J. and subsequent editors were successful in attracting the ‘great and the good’ of early 20th-century Wales. Authors were often loyal to the Outlook and contributed more than one piece: in the 60 issues under consideration, no less than 38 authors published two articles, ten published three, six published four and twelve authors published five or more articles. Often these articles appeared in consecutive numbers, such as the seven essays written by the dramatist John Oswald Francis (January 1919-September 1924). Other contributors, such as David Davies published throughout the lifespan of the magazine. The engagement of regular authors can be gleaned from the range of their contributions: they often wrote articles, creative pieces, reviews and letters to the editor. The poet, writer, translator and scholar Thomas Gwynn Jones, the first incumbent of the chair of Welsh Literature at the University of Wales College, Aberystwyth sponsored by Gwendoline and Margaret Davies, contributed five articles (January 1914-December 1933), poetry in English (January 1918 and September 1920), poetry in Welsh (January 1928 and May 1928) and reviews (May 1915 and May 1924). Other particularly loyal contributors were the Rev. Gwilym Davies and the London-based barrister J. Arthur Price. The former published 25 articles between 1918 and 1933, usually in the form of the ‘social diary’ for the month. He also wrote articles on international peace and co-operation and four of his letters to the editor were printed between January 1920 and May 1926. J. Arthur Price, who mainly wrote on religion and Welsh self-government, contributed six articles (May 1917-January 1931), two reviews (September 1922 and December 1931) and four letters to the editor (May 1925-December 1933). Reprints of speeches, such
as those by Sir Harry Reichel, the Principal of the University of Wales College of North Wales at Bangor (May 1917-May 1930), were also popular. Overall an impression emerges that a relatively small group of people with a shared political outlook made active use of the public forum established by the Welsh Outlook to discuss their favourite topics and each others’ contributions. The Outlook did not create a new group of active public intellectuals, but it became a convenient and congenial vehicle for those who were already actively involved in Welsh affairs. When the Outlook ceased to exist in 1933, contributors simply wrote for other available journals. The Welsh Review, a journal that appeared for the first time in 1939 and that resembled the Outlook quite closely despite the editor Gwyn Jones’ protestations that it was ‘a new journal for a new day’ (Gwyn Jones, 1939: 3), gave a home to Outlook contributors such as Gwilym Davies, who continued to write on international issues, Huw Menai, A.W. Wade-Evans and Iorwerth C. Peate. The Welsh Anvil, published from 1949 and edited by Alwyn D. Rees, gave space to W.J. Gruffydd, H.A. Marquand, Ben Bowen Thomas and Sydney Herbert, and 1940s numbers of Wales, which were edited by Keidrych Rhys, included pieces by H. Idris Bell, Huw Menai, R. Williams Parry, Iorwerth C. Peate, Charles Davies and Walter Dowding.

What set the Outlook apart from its competitors in 1914 was the fact that its authors were largely drawn from the secular and often from the academic sphere, thus contributing to a shift away from the popular conception that Welsh opinion formers and ‘organic intellectuals’ were ministers and schoolteachers. Authors were largely drawn from one of the four colleges that made up the University of Wales, such as Alfred E. Zimmern, first incumbent of the David Davies-sponsored chair of International Politics at the University of Wales College, Aberystwyth, or Sir Arthur Elijah Trueman, Professor of Geology at the University of Wales College, Swansea. Other contributors included the highly influential Henry Jones, Professor of Moral Philosophy at the University of Glasgow and T.J.’s erstwhile academic teacher. Authors from the theological colleges included two Principals of Bala-Bangor College, Thomas Rees and J. Morgan Jones. Other contributors were drawn from the civil service and other professions, e.g. the contributor and editor Edgar L. Chappell, who was an inspector for the Housing Department of the Ministry for Health (1918-1921), then became Secretary of the South Wales Regional Survey Committee for the Ministry of Health (from 1921) and later left to form and manage land development companies in South Wales and London. About 28 authors were ministers – a relatively small number considering that the overall number of contributors in my sample is 264. It appears that the Welsh Outlook moved public discourse into a secular public sphere, which, in this case, was dominated by a highly educated, socially
cohesive group of professional people, a great number of whom were connected with T.J. in some way. A considerable number of contributors did not live in Wales, thus confirming that the Welsh public sphere included a large Welsh diaspora.

With 20 years of publication, the Outlook, despite ‘sometimes [being] dull, even in some respects, despite its initial high-toned pretensions, shallow and mundane’ (E.L. Ellis, 1992: 177) was one of the most successful Welsh periodicals in English ever produced. However, in the late 1920s and 1930s it went into a decline from which it was not to recover and it finally ceased publication in 1933. What were the reasons for its demise? Probably the main reason for failure of periodicals is that they, after having carefully cultivated close relationships with their audiences, eventually fall out of step with them (Ballin, 2008: 6). The Outlook, which belonged to a ‘a tradition of review journals which reached the peak of their popularity in the Victorian age’ (Jenkins, 1985-86: 463) most probably fell out of favour not so much because it was out of sympathy with an established audience but because it failed to attract a new audience. In the absence of sales and circulation figures except for 1914, 1918, 1919 and 1933 actual impact on the public sphere is difficult to gauge. Sales figures hovered around 3000 in the first nine months of the Outlook’s existence, probably never went much above 4000, and, by the end, fell to about 700 (Jenkins, 1985-86: 486; E.L. Ellis, 1992: 160). The initial circulation figures sound impressive but they cannot compare with those of popular magazines such as O.M. Edwards’ Cymru’r Plant, which had a circulation figure of 12,000 copies every month (Mari Jones, 1998: 21).

The circulation figures point categorically to a limited readership based on the university towns, the major cities of south Wales, Cardiff and Swansea, and among exiled Welshmen in London, Liverpool, Manchester or abroad. . . [T]he Outlook hardly penetrated into the south Wales valleys and the same is true for the more rural parts of Wales. The Outlook’s readership consisted for the most part of the well-educated Welsh middle class and this is borne out by an analysis of the list of subscribers, many of whose names are to be found among the pages of Who’s Who in Wales. By 1933 it had also lost touch with many of the strands of Welsh radicalism which were now channelled into the Labour Movement and, in a minor though growing contributory, the Welsh Nationalist Party (Jenkins, 1985-86: 485).

Jenkins probably slightly underestimates readership figures. Each subscribing household would have had more than one reader. Also, a number of public libraries subscribed to the Outlook, such as Cardiff Public Library and the Carnegie Free Library in Rhyl. Other libraries include the Brecon Memorial College Library and the library of the Swansea Training College. Some Miners’ and Workingmen’s Institute
libraries subscribed: records exist for Bargoed Workingmen’s Institute and for Aberbargoed Workingmen’s Institute for 1923 (Francis, 1976: 195). It is likely, though, that many Institute libraries would have cancelled their subscription by the end of the 1920s due to the desperate unemployment situation in the industrial areas and the subsequent drop in revenue for the Institutes.

In some ways the Outlook failed to grasp the enormity of the social change taking place under its nose and, therefore, by 1933 had become obsolete. A few examples shall serve to illustrate this. At its inception in 1914, the editors of the Outlook made several tacit assumptions about the nation they were commenting on. One concerned the degree to which Welsh culture had a Welsh-language core even as more and more cultural expression was mediated through the English language. An example of this is the publication of poetry in Welsh in an otherwise wholly English-language magazine. The Outlook simply assumed that all its readers were able to read and enjoy poetry in Welsh. However, the changing ratio of Welsh vs. English poetry shows something of the changing linguistic realities in Wales. In 1914, 80% of the poetry published in the Outlook was in Welsh. From 1916 onwards (with the exception of 1919, 1922 and 1928), more than 50% of the poetry is in English. Numbers with poetry exclusively in English are to be found in 1921, 1924, 1929, 1932 and 1933. It is unlikely that the Outlook was able to commission poetry. The choice of poetry published reflects the editors’ connections in the literary world as well as the amount of poetry that arrived unsolicited in the editors’ postbag. Assumptions about a culture centrally based on the Welsh language were becoming tenuous.

A second assumption was political. The magazine was imbued with a Liberal spirit in 1914 and it retained its affiliation with Liberal and Lib-Lab politics with a focus on Welsh national issues throughout its existence. The political affiliations of authors are difficult to trace. Overall, it is easier to establish authors’ support for civic and cultural institutions of Wales, such as the National Library, the National Museum, the National Eisteddfod, the Society of Cymmrodorion, the Board of Celtic Studies and the University of Wales and its Guild of Graduates. This may be proof of the split between public sphere, which tended to be concerned with cultural issues, and the political sphere in Wales. It also shows that the Outlook had but a limited impact on the political sphere. Out of the few contributors whose political affiliations can be established with any certainty, Liberal Party MPs outweigh Labour Party MPs by a factor of 6:1. Several contributors were friends of Lloyd George at one time or another. The swelling political support for the Labour Party and other, more radical, left-wing organisations in the late 1920s and 1930s seems to have passed the Outlook by.
A further clue why the *Outlook* failed to attract a new readership is the age and gender profile of its contributors. One might expect a generational shift to occur within 20 years of publication as “older” authors are slowly replaced by “younger” authors. In fact the majority of contributors whose birth dates can be identified belong to roughly the same generation regardless of when their article or piece of creative writing appears. More than half of all authors identified were born between 1870 and 1890. It appears that newer voices were either not interested in publishing in the *Outlook*, were not commissioned by increasingly out of touch editors or did not have the same impact on the public sphere as “older” authors, as they do not appear in standard works of reference. Further, the gender balance of authors remains resolutely male-dominated. I can only identify 23 female authors of articles. Female authors were also unlikely to submit more than one piece. Rare exceptions were Lilian Winstanley, a lecturer of English at University College of Wales, Aberystwyth, and author of several novels, e.g. *The Scholar Vagabond* (1909) and M.M. who contributed a regular ‘Welshwoman’s Page’. When female authors were invited to write articles, the editorial practice was not obviously discriminatory, i.e. female authors were not confined to “female” topics. Topics range from Olive A. Wheeler’s article on “The Education of the Adolescent” (January 1924) to Mrs John Lewis’ article on “A Plea for Hungary” (May 1919). One area in which the number of contributions by female authors rose steadily was creative writing, especially of short stories, although here, too, authors are difficult to trace. An example is Dorothy N. Bonarjee, who might have been the first female Law student who took an LL.B. at University College London in 1917 (Auchmuty, 65) and who published poetry in English between January 1915 and January 1916. Lilian Winstanley published poetry in English between September 1915 and January 1921. Dilys Cadwaladr published short stories between May 1928 and September 1929 and her work can also be found in *The Welsh Review*.

Finally, the range of subjects never changed in 20 years. An editorial note written by the editor William Watkin Davies (1925-1927) sounds much like the ones written by T.J. some twelve years earlier: ‘We endeavour always to remember that ours is a Welsh magazine; and that it exists, primarily for the discussion of matters pertaining to Wales, -- politics, education, religion, music, literature and art’ (“Notes of the Month”, January 1926: 4). The December 1933 issue made a point of commissioning overview articles. The choice of topics for these articles is therefore important as they summarise what the *Outlook* had been about. They are: ‘Literature’, ‘Education’, ‘Religion’, ‘Yesterday and To-day in a Border Village’, ‘Yesterday and To-day in a Mining Valley’, ‘Drama’, ‘Music’, ‘Health’, ‘Politics’, ‘Wales and the World’, ‘The Story of Porthdinllaen’ (II) and ‘Shakespeare’s Welsh
Characters’. What is interesting about this list of topics and titles are the topics that are omitted: the lack of science writing had already been regretted by T.J., but nothing was done to remedy the omission (E.L. Ellis, 1992: 177). The widespread unemployment in the industrial areas was deplored in a few articles, but no effort was made to think creatively about economic change. Very few articles deal with industrial development. The Outlook paid almost no attention to popular culture, such as sport, radio, cinema and popular theatre (see Jenkins, 1985-86: 484).

Exceptions were articles like George H. Green’s ‘The Cinematograph and the School’, in which discussing film becomes acceptable because it is pinned to the topic of education, regular “notes” on ‘The Gramophone’, which focus on classical music, and dispersed editorial notes on topics like the radio (May 1928) or rugby (May 1930), which cannot be said to amount to any serious discussion. Attempts by editors like Edgar L. Chappell to give the Outlook “bite” did not succeed – whether that was due to David Davies’ continued interference or the timidity of the editors is difficult to tell. What cannot have helped was the resolute refusal of Margaret and Gwendoline Davies, who had taken over the Outlook after their brother lost interest in 1927, to countenance a popularisation of the magazine (Jenkins, 1985/86). Instead page after page was filled with long book reviews – a favourite strategy of editors when there were more pages to fill than articles available – and some frankly boring serialisations such as ‘The Recollections of a Welsh Doctor’, which appeared in 1932 and 1933. Articles on current affairs continued to appear, but it must be assumed that the Outlook had less and less impact in the public sphere of commentators and opinion formers. In a political sphere now dominated by the Labour Party, the Outlook with its increasingly out of date profile, had a negligible impact (Jenkins, 1985-86: 486). The fact that T.J. returned to oversee the final issues of the Outlook in some way only confirms that its time had passed.

It is perhaps unfair to judge the overall impact of the Welsh Outlook by its failings, many of them due to its semi-professional status and dependence on the largely voluntary efforts of editors and contributors. The Outlook provides documentary evidence of a fleeting “inbetween” period between Liberal Victorian Wales and a 20th century in which the political split between the Labour Party and Plaid Cymru can be read emblematically for a deeper cultural and social split of the nation. While obviously failing to make itself heard in the political sphere, it can be credited with influencing central shifts in the Welsh public sphere: in the Outlook, secular academics largely replaced ministers of religion as opinion formers, and while its editors were assuming that the Welsh language was to remain at the core of Welsh culture and identity, it supported the permeation of the public sphere by the English language. Importantly, though English was not to replace Welsh. The
Outlook noted the increasing divergence of English-language and Welsh-language Wales and the new, divisive class-based politics. It struggled against these fissures and held on to a vision of a unified Wales for as long as possible. It is an alternative vision of Wales than the one that was to gain prominence later in the century and, for all the eye-watering class-based and other assumptions, it is perhaps to be regretted that its time passed so quickly.

Bibliography


