JONES, JOHN ROBERT (1911 - 1970), philosopher and patriot

Name: John Robert Jones
Date of birth: 1911
Date of death: 1970
Spouse: Catherine Julia Charles Jones (née Roberts)
Parent: Kate Jones
Parent: William Jones
Gender: Male
Occupation: philosopher and patriot
Area of activity: Patriots; Scholarship and Languages
Author: Mary Beynon Davies

Born 4 September 1911 in Pwllheli, Caernarfonshire, son of William and Kate Jones. He was educated at Troed-yr-allt school, Pwllheli county school, and then at University Coll. of Wales, Aberystwyth where he graduated with 1st-class hons. in philosophy. He gained an M.A. with distinction and then went to Balliol College, Oxford, with a University of Wales Fellowship, where he gained a D.Phil. He was appointed a lecturer in philosophy at his old college in Aberystwyth and remained there until his appointment as Professor of Philosophy at the University College of Swansea in 1952. He married Catherine Julia Charles Roberts of Nefyn in 1943 and they had one daughter. He was visiting professor at Chapel Hill University, North Carolina, in 1961.

He began his career as a candidate for the ministry but turned to philosophy as his major academic interest after graduating, though he continued to preach throughout his life. He preached throughout Wales and gave addresses several times at meetings of the (CM) Association. His preaching was characterised by unusual passion which led many to refer to him as a prophet.

In his philosophical work he concentrated on three problems - the nature of the self, the nature of perception, the nature of universals. Of these the most important for him was the question of the nature of the self, and this was the subject of his first and of his last contributions to *Efrydiau Athronyddol*. Later in his career he was influenced by the ideas of Tillich, Wittgenstein and Simone Weil. During this period he delivered his television address *Yr Argyfwng Gwacter Ysbryd* ('the crisis of meaninglessness'), later published as a pamphlet which gave a new phrase to the Welsh language.

After moving to Swansea and seeing the decline of Welsh in the south Wales valleys his interest turned to the condition of Wales; and after his return from America where he had become aware of the lack of roots in the 1960s, he became increasingly concerned about the crisis of Wales and of Welsh. During his last years this was his main concern. He strongly opposed the 1969 Investiture and resigned as one of the editors of *Y Traethodydd* and as a member of the Gorsedd of Bards. He wrote *Prydeindod* ('Britishness') at this time and delivered several address to the Welsh Language Society. During the final months of his illness he prepared two books for the press, *Gwaedd yng Nghymru* and *Ac Onide*, both of which were published after his death. He died 3 June 1970 at his home in Swansea and was buried in Pwllheli.

He published a number of books and pamphlets: *Yr Argyfwng Gwacter Ystyr* (1964); *Prydeindod* (1966); *Arwyddion yr Eiriolaeth* (from *Yr Ymofynnydd*); *Cristnogaeth a Chenedlaetholdeb*; ' Gweithredu Anghyfreithlon ' in *Areithiau Eisteddfod Aberafan*; *Ni fyn y taeog mo'i ryddhau* (1968); *A rhaid i'r iaith ein gwahanu?* (1967); *Yr ewyllys i barhau* (1969); *Gwaedd yng Nghymru* (1970); *Ac Onide* (1970); Welsh articles on philosophy and religion in *Y Drysorfa*, 1933, 1943, 1949; *Credaf*, 1944; *Taliesin*, 1967; *Efrydiau Athronyddol*, 1938, 1939, 1947, 1950, 1951, 1957, 1961, 1969; *Diwinyddiaeth*, 1969; *Y Drysorfa* 1956; *Saith ysgrif ar grefydd* (ed. Dewi Z. Phillips), 1967; in English, *Religion as true myth* (inaugural lecture University College of Swansea, (1953); articles in *Mind*, 1948, 1950, 1954; *Philosophical Review*, 1949, 1951; *Philosophy*, 1950; *Philosophical Studies*, 1950; *Philosophical Quarterly*, 1951; *Aristotelian Society Symposium Suppl.*, 30 (1956), *Proc.*, 49 (1958-59); *Presidential Address*, 1967; *Analysis*, 1950; *Congregational Quarterly*, 1950; *Sophia*, 1970; and in *Religion and Understanding* (ed. Dewi Z. Phillips, 1967).

Author

Mary Beynon Davies, (2001)

Sources

R. I. Aaron, 'John Robert Jones', *Efrydiau Athronyddol*, 1971

Efrydiau Athronyddol, 35, 1972

personal knowledge

Dewi Z. Phillips, *J. R. Jones* (1995)

Further Reading

Wikipedia Article: John Robert Jones

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