

The main topic for this week, tying in with the last of the assignment options, is the effects of the Renaissance in Wales. As this is the last lecture for this half of the module, it includes an overview of the poetry and prose we've been considering so far, mainly from the point of view of the manuscripts where we find this material. Then I'll say a bit about the state of affairs of Welsh learning on what's been called the eve of the Renaissance. And then we can have a quick look at the effects of the Renaissance. But I won't go in to too much detail, as you'll want to look into this yourselves of course if you're doing that essay.

(SLIDE) So we started off looking at lyric poetry... which includes some of the oldest Celtic poetry we have, though it's far from being confined to the *early* Middle Ages. In the fourteenth century of course we have Dafydd ap Gwilym, who was a master of lyric poetry, amongst other genres.

Then we looked at heroic poetry, which in its purest form *does* tend to be early. We looked briefly at saga poetry, the poems which are part of a wider story, and tend to express a more complex and nuanced view of the world, rather than the straightforward idea of fighting for glory that we get in the 'Gododdin'.

And we looked at praise poetry, which can be traced back to poems attributed to Taliesin and was the dominant genre used by the court poets of the twelfth and thirteenth century – by definition, really, because the main role of a professional poet was to praise his lord. In the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries praise poetry remained the dominant genre, as the professional poets found new patrons amongst the Welsh gentry.

But other genres were popular too, such as love poems, satires, poems requesting or giving thanks for gifts, and religious poems praising God or the saints. Even in the works of a single poet like Dafydd ap Gwilym we can find a great variety of genres and poems varying in tone from the light-hearted or indeed the pornographic, to serious meditations on the nature of the human

condition. If you want to explore the range of later medieval poetry you could also look at the Guto'r Glyn website. Guto'r Glyn was perhaps the best and most prolific of the fifteenth-century poets, and an interesting figure because we know he was also a professional archer who fought in France during the Hundred Years War. The gutorglyn.net website has information about him and editions and translations of all the poems. And there's poems to saints on the Welsh Saints website that I've mentioned before. But that's just if you wanted to explore in that direction – it's certainly not essential reading.

So let's have a look at some of the manuscripts we've come across so far.

And I'll put them up in chronological order. (SLIDE)

First we have the Black Book of Carmarthen. This is where we find the poem 'Sadness in Springtime' that we looked at in the first lecture, as well as a lot of other interesting poems, including those involving Merlin or Myrddin. And this is thought to have been written in the mid-thirteenth century at the Augustinian priory of Carmarthen. This page isn't the one with Sadness in Springtime, it's actually a poem beginning *Breuddwyd a welwn neithiwr*, 'I had a dream last night', which is a prophetic poem or series of proverbs. But I chose that image because I like the picture of the lion!

And I should say that all the images I'm showing are from the National Library's website, (SLIDE) and you can find the various manuscripts and printed books if you click on the link 'Discover' on the front page (SLIDE) and choose the 'Digital Gallery' option. And then you can choose either manuscripts or printed material as appropriate.

Anyway, going back to the manuscripts we've met before (SLIDE), from the second half of the thirteenth century, we have the Book of Aneirin, containing the 'Gododdin', that we talked about in week two. And it's thought that it was

probably written at Aberconwy Abbey, which was near Llandudno on the north Wales coast. So, another religious house.

Then we come (SLIDE) to the Hendregadredd manuscript, which is an important source for the works of the Poets of the Princes, that we discussed, again, in week two. It's named after a mansion in Caernarfonshire called Hendregadredd, which is where it was discovered, in a wardrobe, in 1910. It's nice to think there might be other manuscripts with medieval poems, lurking in other wardrobes in Wales and waiting to be discovered!

Anyway, this image is the first page and shows the beginning of Meilyr Brydydd's elegy for Gruffudd ap Cynan, a twelfth-century king of Gwynedd. There are several phases of writing in this manuscript. It was begun shortly after the conquest of Wales at the end of the thirteenth century, apparently as a conscious attempt to commemorate the Welsh kings and princes, and was probably written at Strata Florida abbey, which is in Ceredigion, in mid-Wales. So, a third religious house.

But more poetry was added later. Most significantly (SLIDE) it's thought that Dafydd ap Gwilym might have added a poem in his own hand.

So you can see at the top we have the end of a poem written by the main scribe. But someone has added in an empty space beneath it one of Dafydd's poems, and has given it the title 'Englynion which Dafydd Llwyd son of Gwilym Gam composed to the rood of Caer', meaning Carmarthen.

We can't *know* who wrote this, but Daniel Huws, the greatest authority on Welsh manuscripts, has pointed out that it is not the writing of a professional scribe, and that this is the only instance where we find such a long version of Dafydd's name in the manuscripts. So it might be by Dafydd himself. And it's thought he may have seen the manuscript after it had come into the possession of a gentry family at Llangeitho in Ceredigion, namely Ieuan Llwyd and his

wife Angharad. We think this, because much of the added poetry concerns this couple.

So here we see a manuscript which, like the earlier ones I've mentioned, was written first of all in a monastic environment. But then it moved on to one of the homes of the gentry.

At roughly the same time (SLIDE) when Dafydd, or someone, was adding his poem to Llawysgrif Hendregadredd, a more accomplished scribe was writing another collection of poems in the Book of Taliesin. These include the heroic or praise poems to Urien Rheged and other early rulers that we discussed in the second week, and various legendary poems involving different aspects of the persona of Taliesin.

It's thought this manuscript was from south-east Wales, and was written by trained scribe, possibly from Cwm-hir Abbey, but no-one knows for sure.

So far, our manuscripts are mostly and perhaps all from monastic settings, but as we come to the mid-fourteenth century (SLIDE) we find gentry patrons taking an active and important role.

Here's another manuscript we've met before - the White Book of Rhydderch, which contains the earliest full version of the Mabinogion stories. This manuscript takes its name for the patron it was produced for – Rhydderch ab Ieuan Llwyd. And this Rhydderch's father was the same Ieuan Llwyd I mentioned earlier – the one who became the owner or custodian of the Hendregadredd Manuscript. So clearly this was a gentry family with an enduring interest in literature.

The other important source for the Mabinogion tales, and also for poetry, was the Red Book of Hergest. This was written for another gentry patron, Hopcyn ap Tomas of Ynysforan, near Swansea. Three scribes were involved, and we

know the name of one of them, Hywel Fychan. And the name Hergest, by the way, refers to Hergest Court in Herefordshire, which was where the manuscript was kept, later in the Middle Ages.

Of course, the manuscripts I've talked about (SLIDE) weren't the only ones, though they *are* considered the most important.

We have over fifty books written in Welsh and dating from the mid-thirteenth century to the mid-fourteenth century. Many contain texts of the Welsh laws. And there are also versions of *Brut y Brenhinedd*. These are translations so we haven't looked at them in detail, but it's worth saying a bit about them as they were so influential in Welsh literature more widely.

Geoffrey of Monmouth wrote his Latin History of the kings of Britain in the 1130s, claiming that he had an ancient book in the British Language – this is, in effect, Welsh - that was his source for it all. He clearly *did* draw on some genuine sources, including Welsh traditions about King Arthur and about the Trojan origin of the Welsh people. That is, the idea that Aeneas fled from the destruction of Troy with his son Ascanius and settled in Italy, and Ascanius's grandson Brutus became the leader of the exiled Trojans and ultimately became the founder of the kingdom of Britain.

Geoffrey of Monmouth clearly drew on a range of sources, but was in a sense a creative writer, and worked his material into a good story that became very popular. His depiction of King Arthur's reign as the high point of British history was particularly influential, and his view of Britain's glorious past seems to have been very widely believed – there's echoes of it in Welsh poetry, for example. And it was presented as fact, the Welsh translations, called *Brut y Breninhedd*, often being followed in manuscripts by *Brut y Tywysogion* or *Brehinedd y Saesson*, which were genuine chronicles of later kings, princes and events.

But even in the twelfth century not everyone believed that Geoffrey of Monmouth's view of Welsh history was reliable (SLIDE). Gerald of Wales, who wrote his famous 'Journey Through Wales' later in that century, relates an anecdote about a man named Meilyr who could foretell the future and explain the occult. This man, when told a lie, would see a demon dancing on the liar's tongue. And he could see other vices in the same way. And Gerald goes on to say: 'When [Meilyr] was harassed beyond endurance by these unclean spirits, St John's Gospel was placed on his lap, and then they all vanished immediately ... If the Gospel were removed and the *History of the Kings of Britain* by Geoffrey of Monmouth put there in its place, just to see what would happen, the demons would alight all over his body, and on the book too, staying there longer than usual'

Ironically, though, elsewhere in the 'Journey Through Wales' it looks very much as if Gerald himself, like so many others, was influenced by Geoffrey of Monmouth's writings.

I'll need to come back to Geoffrey of Monmouth later.

But for now, let's move on towards the Renaissance in Wales. (SLIDE) So we've been looking at the fourteenth century, when we start to find lay, gentry patrons taking a more active role in commissioning and collecting manuscripts. And this continued in the fifteenth century. We also find more evidence of poets writing down their own works, notably Lewys Glyn Cothi, who, like other poets of his day, was very interested in genealogy and heraldry. And he often precedes his poems with a depiction of the patron's coat of arms, as in this example.

Another poet of this period, Gutun Owain, also wrote down some of his own poetry. Here's an extract (SLIDE) from one of his poems in a bardic grammar from the 1450s. And the text at the top says '*byr a thoddaid* [this being the

name of one of the various strict metres] is sung like this'. And then he quotes lines from one of his poems. I like the fact that he's using one of his own poems as a model. These poets were rarely lacking in self-confidence.

And here's the extract (SLIDE) that Gutun quotes, from one of his poems in praise of Siôn ap Rhisiart, who was abbot of the Cistercian abbey of Valle Crucis, near Llangollen in north-east Wales.

Gutun Owain was an important figure, with a broad range of knowledge and love of learning which, as Dafydd Johnston says in his book, 'in some ways anticipates the Renaissance humanists'.

Gutun composed praise poems to a wide range of patrons - to many laymen, as well as to the abbots of Valle Crucis. But the poems to the abbots are interesting in showing us a different aspect of praise poetry. So here we find abbot Siôn's knowledge and mental powers being praised, as well as his godliness. In a sense this is a far cry from the old heroic ideal of praise poetry – though we do still find echoes of that ideal in poems addressed to late-medieval secular patrons. And Gutun has not forgotten the poetic art of hyperbole in praising Siôn as the best abbot in the world.

Gutun Owain wasn't the only poet of this period to praise the learning of his patrons, (SLIDE) and it wasn't only churchmen who were praised for this attribute. Here's a poem of about the same period by Guto'r Glyn. It's an elegy for a patron, Edward ap Dafydd of Bryncunallt, near Chirk – which is in north-east Wales, again. And though it's an elegy, the poet provides some comforting hope for the future in describing the virtues and other things he has passed on to his sons.

Guto says that Robert has received his father's wisdom and his gentleness; Siôn, his understanding and knowledge of legends from books; Edward, his physique and strength, and Richard his appearance, as well as his house! And we know

this wasn't all empty praise, because it's fairly certain that the second son, Siôn, really was an accomplished Latin scholar, and that he was the person who translated the Latin Life of St Martin into Welsh.

Here's the opening section of the Life of Martin (SLIDE). There's no time to go into the details of this text, but the point is that it was the Life of a French or Gaulish saint, written in Latin, and that this and the other contents of the manuscript illustrate the kind of learning and interests that were current amongst the north-Wales gentry in the later fifteenth century.

This manuscript, which is often referred to as Mostyn 88, is one of the most impressive medieval Welsh manuscripts. It's thought to have been written for another member of the gentry of north-east Wales, Siôn Edward of Gwernosbynt, near Chirk. So, a neighbour of the translator, Siôn Trefor. And the scribe (SLIDE) – who names himself in a colophon at the end of the text – was none other than the poet Gutun Owain, who was another local man, from Dudleston in the lordship of Oswestry. So as he says, 'John Trevor translated this Life from the Latin into Welsh and Gutun Owain wrote it in the year of our Lord 1488 in the time of Henry the Seventh, namely the third year after the coronation of the same Henry.

So what else is in Mostyn 88? (SLIDE) There's astrological material, including a volvella, which was a moveable device for working out the position of the sun and moon in the zodiac; ecclesiastical tables for working out the dates for moveable feast days; genealogy and history; medical charts for bleeding and uroscopy, that is, looking at urine to diagnose diseases; and most famously the 'Zodiac man', as I've shown on the slide, which relates different parts of the body to different astrological symbols.

So the take-home message from all that is that in fifteenth century Wales – and especially in north-east Wales – we have a thriving literary culture amongst the

gentry, with literate poets moving freely between the monasteries and the gentry houses. And there was a wide range of literature being copied and shared.

Gutun Owain also copied a lot of other texts (SLIDE). Another manuscript of his that I should mention is the Black Book of Basingwerk, probably written at Valle Crucis Abbey, and completed by Gutun after it had been begun by another scribe. The image on the slide shows where Gutun took over the copying and is near the beginning of *Brut y Brenhinedd*, that is, one of the Welsh versions of Geoffrey of Monmouth's legendary history of Wales. In this manuscript *Brut y Brenhinedd* is followed by a version of the chronicle *Brenhinedd y Saesson*, positioned as if it were a sequel. This continues up to the year 1461, which is probably the time when Gutun Owain was writing it, and Gutun made a few contributions of his own.

And *Brut y Brenhinedd* is preceded in this manuscript, as was often the case, by a kind of prequel, that is, a translation of a sixth-century account of the Trojan war known as *Ystoria Dared*. That story serves to set the background for *Brut y Brenhinedd*'s account of the founding of Britain by Trojan exiles. So this traces the supposed origin of the British people all the way back to a time before they even came to Britain.

Gutun Owain, then, as well as being a poet was also a scribe, and familiar with a great range of knowledge from history and genealogy to medicine and astrology – which was counted as a science in the Middle Ages, however we might view it now. So it's not unreasonable to refer to him as a kind of proto-Renaissance man, and thinking of Wales more widely, there was clearly a love of literature and scholarship, including Latin scholarship, in certain gentry and ecclesiastical circles long before the Renaissance, or strictly speaking the Italian Renaissance, had any real influence.

So, what was the Italian Renaissance? (SLIDE) The word of course just means rebirth, and is used specifically of the Italian Renaissance of the fourteenth to sixteenth centuries. It began with a new appreciation of classical literature, also leading to a flourishing of painting, sculpture and architecture.

There was an emphasis on the value of learning, especially in the areas of rhetoric and moral philosophy, that is eloquence and wisdom, as being essential for reaching full human potential.

This movement is known as humanism – but today we need to distinguish Renaissance humanism from modern secular humanism. They're two different things. Renaissance humanism focussed on encouraging people to reach their full potential through learning, and did not entail the rejection of God or organized religion.

(SLIDE) The Bible remained a key text, regarded as the supreme historical text. But there was a turning away from medieval ideas of theology. Notably, the idea that asceticism, the renunciation of worldly pleasures, was a key Christian virtue lost favour. There was an emphasis on active life, and individualism, and confidence in man's own creative powers.

There was a particular interest in Latin and Greek texts. Some scholars also learned Hebrew. Study of the Bible was important, but Classical literature was also highly prized. It hadn't been unknown in the Middle Ages, but the Renaissance scholars were keen to discover it in its purest form, free from the interference and errors of medieval scribes, and they would compare manuscripts and try to produce the best edition possible, much as textual scholars do today.

The humanists were keen to spread their knowledge and ideas, and in this (SLIDE) they were greatly assisted by the invention of the printing press in Germany in the mid-fifteenth century. This allowed accurate edited texts to be

circulated widely, and likewise teaching aids for languages, such as grammars and dictionaries.

As I said, the Renaissance began in Italy, but soon spread. And in fact the conditions needed for these kind of ideas were already quite widespread in Europe. In the fifteenth century there was already a widespread flourishing class of literate and quite well-educated laymen, often lawyers or administrators. And as we've seen, Wales had its own thriving literary culture in the fifteenth century.

(SLIDE) The first Italian humanists arrived in the English universities of Oxford and Cambridge at around the end of the fifteenth century, and soon there was two-way movement of scholars between England and Italy. Henry the Eighth was glad to welcome scholars to his court.

It's generally said (SLIDE) that the effects of the Renaissance did not reach Wales until a little later, around the second quarter of the sixteenth century. This is hardly surprising as Wales did not have its own university at the time; neither did it have a royal court to entice foreign scholars. But there were some other changes going on in the early sixteenth century which accelerated the effects of the Renaissance.

Firstly, there was the other *R* word - the Protestant Reformation. This could itself be defined as having its roots in the Renaissance, though in England its immediate cause was Henry the Eighth's marital problems of course, which led him to separate the English Church from the Catholic Church of Rome. And another major upheaval was the Dissolution of the Monasteries in the 1530s.

Secondly, there were the Acts of Union which effectively made Wales part of England. One of the stipulations was 'no person or persons that use the Welsh speech or language shall have or enjoy any manor, office or fees ... unless he or they use and exercise the speech or language of English.' In effect, English

became the official language of public life, and very attractive for the gentry classes who wanted to get on in the world. This placed the very survival of the Welsh language under threat and *might* have led to its extinction. But it didn't, of course, for reasons we'll get to shortly.

(SLIDE) Taken together, these developments led to an increased need for educated administrators, and incentives for Welshmen to acquire the necessary education. And there was also, in general, an increased coming and going between Wales and England.

Grammar schools flourished, and more Welshmen went to university. That's not to say there had been no schools beforehand. It's been shown for example that the abbeys of Valle Crucis and Basingwerk sponsored schools where local, fee-paying boys could receive an elementary education. And Welshmen had been attending Oxford university, in particular, long before the sixteenth century. But now their numbers increased and some attended Cambridge or went to continental universities – especially in the case of those Catholics who wanted to continue to practise their faith.

So, what *form* did the Renaissance take in Wales? (SLIDE) First of all, the situation was complicated by the Reformation. So there were both Protestant and Catholic Renaissance humanists in Wales. They were of course members of the gentry, and there were a lot of them in north-east Wales in particular. So we can see a continuation of that late-medieval literary culture that I talked about earlier.

There were a lot of keen Latin scholars – and again, we saw this at the end of the fifteenth century too, as in the case of Siôn Trefor and the Life of St Martin.

But a love of Latin literature didn't make them undervalue their own language. On the contrary, the Welsh humanists were very keen to elevate the status of

Welsh, so that it too would be seen as an ancient language worthy of respect and suitable to be used for any kind of learned topic or debate.

As well as the language, the humanists were very interested in the history of Wales – or rather, in the particular, glorious version of Welsh history that was current at the time.

Specifically, they tended to be interested in some or all of what R. Geraint Gruffydd calls Wales's foundation myths. And I should say that this latter part of my talk is mostly derived from his chapter in the book 'The Celts and the Renaissance', which you can find in digital form via the Leganto reading list.

In summary, these myths were, (SLIDE) firstly, the story that the origin of the bardic and druidic orders could be traced back to Samothès, a grandson of the Biblical Noah. The idea was that Samothès was a son of Noah's son Japheth, who occupied the Celtic lands after the Flood and founded a line of kings including Druys and Bardus, who established, respectively, the bardic and druidic orders. And this seems to derive from a tract published in Rome in 1498. So these ideas trace the origin of the learned orders of Wales to a time long before even the earliest records made by classical writers like Julius Caesar. And I should say that those records were also known by Welsh Renaissance scholars, so they knew about the importance of druids from other sources.

Secondly there was the story of Brutus as founder of Britain's line of kings, popularized by Geoffrey of Monmouth as I mentioned earlier. And his *Historia Regum Britanniae*, and its Welsh translations, called *Brut y Brenhinedd*, were still popular and taken at face value by many in Wales at the end of the Middle Ages and for some time after.

Thirdly there was the story that Joseph of Arimathea founded an ancient British Church soon after the time of Christ. This idea can be traced back to the thirteenth century and to Glastonbury Abbey, but was especially favoured by

Renaissance Protestants. They saw the later arrival of St Augustine, bringing with him the influence of Rome, as bringing about a falling away from a purer version of Christianity which they felt they were in a sense restoring.

The fourth story could be viewed as a response to a question posed by the story of Samoths, and especially by that of Joseph of Arimathea. If Wales were the inheritor of such a long and glorious tradition of ancient learning, what had happened to all the books? So the story of Ysgolan, who destroyed a valuable book or books, amongst other crimes, became popular. It seems to be first attested in a poem from the Black Book of Carmarthen, but is also found in a later Breton ballad, surviving in a number of different versions.

The Welsh humanists, then, saw Wales as having a long and glorious history, in terms of its ancient rulers as well as its learning and religion, though they also believed there had been a falling away from that glory.

So what were their aims? (SLIDE) Firstly, they were unimpressed by the current state of Welsh literary culture – I am not sure this is entirely fair in the case of prose, but their low opinion of contemporary poetry perhaps has more justification. The bardic order, with its strict-metre poetry, does seem to have gone into something of a decline during the sixteenth century. Tudur Aled, who died in 1526, is generally regarded as the last of the great poets of his era.

In part this decline reflects social changes, as more and more of the Welsh gentry, who had been the patrons of the professional poets, looked to England for advancement. And of course the monasteries, who had also provided patronage, had been dissolved by this time.

It seems too that praise poetry began to be seen as old-fashioned. The humanists criticized it as being lacking in originality and creativity – which perhaps indeed it was by this time. And they regarded it as being full of lies. That is, they took exception to the poets' flattery of their patrons, which is a valid objection in a

sense, but also suggests the humanists didn't really understand what the poetry was all about, or the tradition and conventions that lay behind it.

The humanists also criticised the poets' lack of learning, by which they meant grammar-school or university learning. This was more unfair, as the poets *did* have their own learning.

And they criticised their secrecy, that is, their desire to keep their own brand of learning within their own professional ranks.

As well as literature, the humanists also felt that the Welsh language itself was in danger. They saw it as in need of standardization, and under threat from English, especially in the wake of the Act of Union which, as I mentioned, made it a legal requirement for holders of public office to be able to speak English.

Lastly, they wanted to defend the foundation myths. Geoffrey of Monmouth's view of British history, in particular, became a subject of fierce debate between critics and defenders. As I mentioned there had been some criticism even in the twelfth century, but in 1534 the Italian humanist Polydore Vergil, a resident at the Tudor court in England, launched a strong attack, pointing out that Geoffrey's account was not backed up by Roman historians. A long debate ensued, with John Leland and Sir John Prise being eager defenders. The argument continued even into the seventeenth century, but was eventually abandoned.

In the field of more recent history, the Welsh humanists' efforts were more lasting (SLIDE). An Oxford-educated scholar called Humphrey Lhuyd made an abridged and annotated translation of *Brut y Tywysogion* 'or the Chronicle of the Princes', and the writings of Gerald of Wales were put into print.

There were also texts combining history and geography, and local histories, which drew upon the genealogical and heraldic material preserved by the poets. And some of these remain useful to scholars to this day, including the *History of Pembrokeshire* written by the Elizabethan scholar, George Owen.

Another, enormous debt which modern scholarship (SLIDE) owes to the Welsh Renaissance scholars sprang from their zeal in collecting and preserving old manuscripts. Sir John Prise, for example, essentially hoovered up the manuscript collections of the Welsh monasteries, when he was charged with overseeing their dissolution. We might condemn him for abusing his position, but at least the manuscripts were preserved rather than being lost, and some eventually found their way into the collection of the National Library of Wales.

Prise, who came from Breckonshire in south-east Wales, is an interesting figure. He was one of the defenders of Geoffrey of Monmouth, as I mentioned, and Geraint Gruffydd considers him the earliest identifiable Welsh humanist. He was also responsible for the earliest printed book in Welsh, known as *Yny lhyvyr hwnn*, which contains Christian texts including the Apostles' Creed and the Lord's prayer and aids to reading Welsh, aimed of course at a wide audience.

So here we see the broad humanist aims of spreading learning as a means for people to better themselves, as well as the Welsh humanist aims of promoting Welsh as a language of learning.

In this the humanists were very successful. And of course, for Protestant humanists in particular, there was a strong desire to make scriptures available to the Welsh people in their own language so that they could access them directly.

(SLIDE)

William Salesbury was particularly active in this project. He was another scholar from *north*-east Wales, who went to Oxford and probably converted there to Protestantism. His first publication containing material from the

Scriptures was a translation of the lessons used in the Church Communion service, printed in 1551 under the title *Kynniver llith a ban*, and translations of the Book of Common prayer and the New Testament followed in 1567. And then later, in 1588, William Morgan's magnificent translation of the Welsh Bible appeared. The Bible, in particular, had an enormous effect in safeguarding Welsh as a living language, and in providing a standardized model for later Welsh prose. And it's significant that, despite the downgrading of Welsh in the Act of Union, the translation of the Bible had actually been encouraged by a law passed in 1563, early in the reign of Queen Elizabeth. And that of course was all part of the Protestant movement.

The role of Welsh Catholic humanists was also important. They too seized on printing as a means of spreading the word. An early Counter-Reformation text called, *Athrauath Gristnogawl* or 'Christian Philosophy' was printed in Milan in 1568 by the exiled Morys Clynnog. He was another Oxford graduate, who was elected Bishop of Bangor during the reign of the Catholic queen Mary, but before his consecration, chose voluntary exile when Queen Elizabeth's new Protestant regime took over.

And a couple of decades later *Y Drych Cristionogawl* became the first book to be printed on Welsh soil, produced in secret in a cave on the Little Orme near Llandudno. Its author declared himself only by his initials but may have been the missionary priest and author Robert Gwyn.

Lastly, (SLIDE) dictionaries and grammars were another sign of the humanists' eagerness to standardize the language and broaden its vocabulary. As William Morgan had done in his translation of the Bible, they drew upon the works of the poets, who to some extent had already been using a standardized form of Welsh, and who sometimes wrote down word-lists of their own.

It seems a number of Welsh humanists compiled dictionaries, some of which have not survived. But the earliest surviving dictionary was William Salesbury's English-Welsh dictionary of 1547.

Another scholar who was at Oxford, and was influenced by Salesbury, was Thomas Wiliems. He produced an early Latin-Welsh dictionary which was unpublished, but formed the basis for John Davies's *Dictionarium Duplex* of 1632. And these early dictionaries remain important today – they're very often cited in the Welsh historical dictionary, *Geiriadur Prifysgol Cymru*, for example.

Another aspect of standardization was the writing and publication of grammars. The medieval poets had produced their own bardic grammars, but the first of the Renaissance era grammars was produced by Dr Gruffudd Robert, another Catholic exile, in Milan in 1567. Another grammar, produced by John Davies of Mallwyd, again, has been called 'the crowning glory of the Renaissance in Wales'. You can read more about all this in Geraint Gruffydd's chapter, and in Dafydd Johnston's.

And you'll form your own opinions about the Renaissance and the effects it had on Welsh literature.

I've just put a few thoughts (SLIDE) on a closing slide.....

So perhaps the clearest positive effects of the Renaissance were in safeguarding the Welsh language, with the Welsh Bible setting a standard for Welsh prose. And the collection and preservation of manuscripts containing a wealth of medieval literature. And indeed, the Renaissance scholars also made copies and new collections of medieval texts – for example, both Thomas Wiliems and his contemporary Roger Morris made important collections of saints' Lives, in some cases preserving texts from sources which have since been lost.

The negative effects might include helping to speed the decline of strict metre poetry – though as I mentioned there were wider social changes at work as well.

As you do the reading, and especially if you're doing the essay on the Renaissance, you'll form your own conclusions on this. And on whether the humanists succeeded in meeting their aims.