

Introduction to Celtic Literatures

Dafydd ap Gwilym

Editions and Translations

Thomas Parry, *Gwaith Dafydd ap Gwilym* (1952)

Rachel Bromwich, *Dafydd ap Gwilym: A Selection of Poems* (1985)

Gwyn Thomas, *Dafydd ap Gwilym: His Poems* (2001)

www.dafyddapgwilym.net – new texts of 171 poems, with translations and notes (2007)

Dafydd Johnston et al (eds), *Cerddi Dafydd ap Gwilym* (2010)

Joseph P. Clancy, *The Poems of Dafydd ap Gwilym* (2016)

Studies

Rachel Bromwich, *Aspects of the Poetry of Dafydd ap Gwilym* (1986)

Huw M. Edwards, 'The Literary Context' on dafyddapgwilym.net.

Dafydd ap Gwilym was active in the 1330s and 40s, one of a new generation of poets who emerged after the loss of Welsh independence at the end of the 13th century. In contrast to the old court poets, their poems of love and nature in the new *cywydd* metre were light and entertaining, and their popularity ensured that a large body of Dafydd's work has survived. His poems show European literary influences associated with the conventions of courtly love.

Example of the *cywydd* and *cynghanedd*:

'Trafferth mewn Tafarn'

Deuthum i ddinas dethol
A'm hardd wreang i'm hôl.
Cain hoywdraul, lle cwyn hydrum,
Cymryd, balch o febyd fûm,
Llety, urddedig ddigawn,
Cyffredin, a gwin a gawn.
Canfod rhiaid addfeindeg
Yn y tŷ, f'un enaid teg.
Bwrw yn llwyr, liw haul dwyrain,
Fy mryd ar wyn fy myd main,
Prynu rhost, nid er bostiaw,
A gwin drud, mi a gwen draw.

'Trouble at an Inn' (extract)

I came to an exclusive town
followed by my handsome page-boy.
Fine merry expense, place of ready dinner,
I took, I was a fine young man,
common lodging, dignified enough,
and I had some wine.
I spotted a fair slender maid
in the house, my one fair soul.
I set my mind entirely upon
my slender darling, colour of the rising sun,
I bought roast (not to show off)
and expensive wine, for me and that beauty.

Cynghanedd (literally 'harmony') involves alliteration and/or rhyme within each line. There are four main types:

Cynghanedd lusk = rhyme with penultimate syllable – Prynu rhost, nid er bostiaw

Cynghanedd draws = consonants at beginning and end of line correspond – Deuthum i ddinas dethol

Cynghanedd groes = fuller correspondence between two halves – A gwin drud, mi a gwen draw

Cynghanedd sain = combination of rhyme and alliteration – Fy mryd ar wyn fy myd main

See if you can identify the types of *cynghanedd* in the other lines (for discussion in class).

For a full explication of *cynghanedd* see Barry Lewis, *Medieval Welsh Poems to Saints and Shrines*