

## Middle-Irish poems on World-Kingship (suite)

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# MIDDLE-IRISH POEMS ON WORLD-KINGSHIP (*suite*)

BY  
SEÁN MAC AIRT

## VI

Ro chosain in [n]Asia mbig  
hi tosaig in rī Pilip ;  
Antigoin ro giallad glac  
fri rē *ocht* mbliadan dēac.

640

Dia hēis ro dedaig in dos  
Seleucus, Ptolomeuss ;  
roptar comthaig immon col  
co torchair leo Antigon.

A mac Dimitir na ndrong,  
ro firfitir in forlonn,  
ō ro rīgad occa thair  
ro dīgail a degathair.

645

637 Ro chossain in aissia big H ; *naisia* mbic L.

638 a tosaig in re pilip H : i tosaich L.

639 ainnticon ro gialladh glacc H.

640 re re .uui. mbliadhan deog H, re re *ocht* L.

641 Dia eis ro deaghaidh in dos in dos H ; es L.

642 siliucus potolmeus H ; siliucus L.

643 robdar comthaigh H ; robdar comthaich imon L.

644 co torchoir leo ainnticon H.

645 dimet- L.

646 ro firidir in forrlond H ; ro firfitir in forlond L.

647 oro righadh aco thair H, uair ro rigad ocaib thair L ; tair L'.

648 ro digail a d-brathair H.

## VI

1. The first to attempt to win Asia Minor was king Philip ; [but] Antigon's hand was obeyed there for a period of eighteen years.
2. Then the hero oppressed Seleucus [and] Ptolomeus ; they were companions in desire and Antigon fell by them.
3. His son Demetrius of the hosts (superior numbers will be used) avenged his goodly father when he had been made king among them in the East.

§ 1. It is difficult to know whether or not the six quatrains here comprise a separate poem or are to be taken with what follows. The MS. indications are that a separate poem is intended, and these are supported by the Prose Appendix. This appendix states that Antigon held the sovereignty of Asia Minor after Alexander, and was followed by his son Demetrius; but thereafter this line did not contest the kingship there.

The reference to Philip (rather than Alexander) is obscure and perhaps a mistake. Euseb. (167) begins his chapter on Asia : Cum Philippus Aridaeus sextum jam regni annum exigeret, ... Antigonus primus imperavit Asiaticis annis xviii...

639. The line may be variously construed. Perh. *glac* (> hero?) may be an epithet in apposition to *Antigoin*; cf. 653.

646. *ro firfitir* (:*Dimitir*). *firfitir* (without *ro*) is attested as a Mid. Ir. fut. pass. pl. from *feraid*, and seems to be established here by the rhyme with *Dimitir*. With the possible construction of *forlond* as a collective with pl. verb, cp. RIA Dict. ex., F 86, 6, *ilar fule firfitir*.

Atracht a n-agaid na rīg,  
 ropa cabair a chētgnīm ;  
 nī anad do greis *nō* gád  
 co ralad leis a ndergār

650

Iaram ro giallad in glac  
 fri rē secht *mbliadan* dēacc  
 for Assia mBic cen brīg mbrōin,  
 a *sē* dīb for Macidōin.

655

Marbthair hi Sicil iar soin —  
 ro-fitir cech firs[h]enchaid ;  
 in luam losglan ropa lia,  
 uad niro cosnad Asia.

660

## VII

Bātar flaithe farraig slōig  
 co mbannaib ic Bāibilōin ;  
 ūen dīb ro scrūtus ria scor  
 Seleūcus Nicanor.

649 *anaighidh* na rīgh H ; a]i L ; nadhaigh L'.650 *robo chabhair* a chedghnim H, *robo chabair* L.651 *nir hanadh* fo *ghreis* a *ngadh* H, *ananad* fo *gres* na *in gad* L ; *greis a gad* L'.652 *cor laad* leis a *ndeargar* H, co *rolad* les a *ndeargar* L.653 *Iarum ro gialladh* a *glacc* H, *Iarum ro giallad* a *glac* LL'.654 *re re .uii. mblia-* *deag* H, *re re ocht mbl-* *deac* L.655 *acht* *aissia* *beg* co *mbrigh* *mor* H ; *aissia* L.656 *a se dib* for *babiloin* H, *a se dib* for *maicid-* L ; a .viii. D.657 *Marbthar* a *sicil* *iar sin* H, *Adarbtar* i *sicil* *iar sin* L.658 *ro fidir* *cach* *fir seanchaidh* H ; *cach* L.659 *luamh* H ; *roba* H ; *robo* L.660 *uadh* *ro cosnadh* *in aissia* H ; *aissia*. I A. L.661 *Badar* *flaithe* *fairaigh* *sloig* H ; *Badra* *flaithi* L ; *Batar* *riga* D ; *a sloig* L'.662 *co mbandaibh* a *mbabiloin* H ; *babiloin* L.663 *aen dibh* *ro scrutus* *na scor* H, *en dib* *ro scrutos* *iar scor* L.664 *siluccus* *anicanor* H, *siliucus* *nicanor* L ; *nincanor* D.

4. He rebelled against those kings (his first activity being a help); he avoided neither onset nor peril until he made a slaughter of them.

5. Afterwards the hero was obeyed without sorrowful force in Asia Minor for the space of seventeen years — six of them as ruler of Macedon.

6. Then he is killed in Cicilia, (as) every true antiquarian knows; following this pure prosperous ruler with large forces Asia was not contended for.

## VII

1. At Babylon there were princes of achievement who oppressed the (Jewish) host; (number) one of them at the head of his company I have searched out, namely Seleucus Nicanor.

§ 4. Cf. Orosius, *Hist.* iii, 23.

§ 5. *in glac*: see variant *a glac*, and cp. 639 n. According to Euseb. Demetrius ruled Macedon for five (col. 406) or six (col. 164) years.

660. For the interpretation of the line see above, note on § 1 (end).

§ 1. The prose appendix describes this section as the sovereignty of Babylon after Alexander the Great. It allots Seleucus Nicanor (better S. Nicator) only 30 years however.

Nertmar nos-triallad int ap 665  
 fri rē dā bliadan trīchatt ;  
 Antoich Soter cin cleith cain  
 dā ndeich dō acht ūenbliadain.

Antoich Tesiocus ro clos 670  
 a gargt[h]oich a glē-c[h]omoss,  
 trī cōic bliadan bladmar baí  
 coro marbad ū mōrmnai.

A mac ba faccus i fus 675  
 Siliucus Gāllicinuss,  
 a trī dō cen dīth dar Dia  
 co torchair hi fīch Frigia.

Antiochus Magnus ar blad  
 i n-arus trī deich mbliadan ; 680  
 a mac dā sē, sona in sel  
 Seleucus Pilopater.

665 N-tmur ro trialladh int ab H, Neartmar no triallad int abb L.  
 666 re re da bliadhain .xxx. at H ; trichat L.  
 667 anntoich sot- can cleith cain H. antoich soit- cleith chain L.  
 668 da deich do acht aenblia- (oenbl- L) HL ; dō acht] ocus D.  
 669 Anntoich tes ocus ro clos H ; tesiacus L.  
 670 na gaigthigh a gle chomus H, na gargthoich a gle comus L.  
 671 tri chuig mbliadhan bladmur bai H ; coic L ; bai L.  
 672 coro marbhadh o mormhnai H ; o mormnai L ; ū] on D.  
 673 A m-c ro facus a fus H, A m-c fafocus a bhus L.  
 674 silucus gallicenus ; H ; gallicinus L.  
 676 a fīch frigia H, i fīch- frigia L ; hi frig frigia D.  
 677-680 om. in H.  
 679 sono sel L.  
 680 siliucus polipot- L.

2. This chief did handle them with strength for a period of thirty-two years ; (and) Antiochus Soter, with fair clarity, for twice ten years save one.

3. Antiochus Deus whose rude nature and splendid power was renowned, spent fifteen famous years until he was killed by his great wife.

4. Nigh (unto him) here was his son Seleucus Callinicus ; he had in sooth a profitable three before he fell in the land of Phrygia.

5. Antiochus Magnus was famous ... for thrice ten years ; his son Seleucus Philopater had twice six (a happy spell).

§ 3. *Antiochus Deus* : There is no ancient authority for the textual forms *Tesiocbus*, *Tes-ocbus*, *Tesiacus*, or *Teosiocbus* (prose appendix); they seem to represent a corruption of Θέος to which has been added an ending modelled on that of *Antiochus*. Antiochus' wife was Laoidice (cf. Jerome, in Dan. c. xi, etc.), who poisoned him.

§ 4 (675). According to Euseb. Seleucus Callinicus reigned 21 years, hence *tri secht* ( $3 \times 7$ ) seems to be required. But all the MSS, including the Prose Appendix have the number three.

§ 5. In Euseb. (412), etc., Antiochus Magnus is allotted 36 years, but 30, as here, in the Irish Prose Appendix. *arus* (678), with short *a* as indicated by the rhyme with *Magnus*, is obscure; it can hardly be a variant of *forus*, 'habitation', etc., which is sometimes glossed *árus* (with long *a*).

[Flaith *trīchit* mbliadan co mblaith  
in breō brianglan, a brāthair  
diarb' ainm ar tochus (trōgh tlus)  
Anntochus mōr Maighinus.

A mac nara chrupus cor  
Silucus Pilepatur ;  
re rē sē mbliadan fo trí  
glē ro giallad in gargrī

685

Antochius Epifánus  
dā bliadain dēc dō hi cādus ;  
ba garg do cach dīne a dū,  
marb cen mīne Machabdu.

690

[Gabais dā sē mbliadan mbān  
Anntoich iarum Epifān,  
ba garb in mac, tarb in trū,  
diaro marbh na Machabdu.]

695

Antoichius aile a cōic cain  
ocus dā sē Dimitir,  
Alaxander dā c[h]ōic cain,  
Dimitir dā aenbliadain.

700

Mad Antoich is ō iar tain  
nī rō [dō] dī deigbliadain ;  
dā sē cen feillbrīg, a fir,  
don deigrīg do Dimetir.

681-688 *in H only.*689-692 *om. in H.* 689. eipifanus L.

690 deg do icadus L.

691 garb do each L.

692 machabu L.

693-696 *in H only.*697-700 *in DL' only.* Antochius L'.701-708 *not in DL'.* The text is from L.

701 Madh antoich aso iar sin H.

702 ni go dho da deighbliadhain H.

(voir suite des notes p. 291)

5a. [Sovereign for thirty famous years was the clear-speaking firebrand his brother, who was called great Antiochus Magnus by virtue of his property-qualification (in wretched cattle).]

5b. His son, whose turn I have not erased (?), was Seleucus Philopater; this fierce king was splendidly obeyed for a period of thrice six years.]

6. Antiochus Epiphanes was venerated for twelve years; his place was a harsh one for every race: he killed the Machabites pitilessly.

6a [Then Antiochus Epiphanes had twelve fair years during which he slew the Machabees; he was a rough lad, a fierce warrior this villain destined to die.]

7. Another Antiochus had a fair five, and Demetrius twice six; Alexander two fair fives, and [another] Demetrius two single years.

7a. If it be the younger Antiochus then, two goodly years for him are not too much; [and] twice six without treacherous force, friend, to the goodly king Demetrius.

§ 5a-§ 5b, § 6a. These are MS. variant versions of §§ 5, 6.

§ 5b. *chrūpus* (685). The rhyme with *Sil-ūcus* (cf. *scrūtus*: *Sele-ūcus*, 663-4) indicates that the verb is to be identified with mod. *crúbaid*, 'paws', etc., but the exact meaning of the phrase is obscure.

1. 687: *fo trī!* recte *fo dī* ('twice').

§ 6, 1. 692. *marb*: apparently for *ro marb*.

§ 7, 1. 697. *cōic cain*: *cōic* is a wrong transliteration of *.ii.* (similarly *.u.* in the prose appendix). Two years is the number allotted to Antiochus (Eupator) in Euseb. (418), etc. *cain* (unfluenced by *cain*, 699) is unmetrical.

1. 699-700. Alexander reigned 9 years and 10 months acc. to Euseb. 419, but 15 years according to Euseb. 177. Demetrius had 3 years, as stated below, 1. 708.

703 da .ui. cen feirbrigh a fir H.

704 don deirigh do dimitir H.

A deich ro baī cairb na cnead  
diarbo ainm Alaxander,  
a trī cen dīmicin de  
fa rī in Dimetir aile.

705

Antoich Sitides tailg tenn,  
hē ro airg Hierusalem,  
*ocus tri chét* tallann d'ōr  
ro.dos.tadall ō Simmōn.

710

A naī ro rīgad dia ēs  
Antoich sīrglan Sitidēs ;  
hē luid co fobaid, ciar fell,  
do thogail Ierusailem.

715

Co ruc trīchait talland n-ōir,  
ciarbo far[r]ond findōrōil,  
[ō fhir] fuair trī mīli dīb  
i n-uaig dil dīne Dauīd.

720

705 A .x. fofuair carbh na cneadh H.

706 alaxaindear H.

707 a tri cen dimeicin de H ; cen dimoin de L.

708 ba ri in dimitir eile H.

709-712 *in DL' only ; the text is partly illegible in D. Sitres D ; tailc L'.*

710 Ierusalem L'.

711-12. Text from L'.

713-720 *not in DL'. The text is from L.*

713 A nnoi L ; Anai ro gialladh dia eis H.

714 antoich srianglan suisdineis H.

715 co fodhaigh cer fheall H.

716 iarusaileam H.

717 Co ruc .xxx.a talland dor H ; tallaind L.

718 cerbo arrand imarol H ; findoroil L.

719 o fhir fuair tri mile dib H.

720 a nuaimh dil dine d-d H.

7b. Ten had that hero of the wounds called Alexander; for an undespised three the other Demetrius was king.]

8. Antiochus Sitedes, energetic and severe, 'twas that plundered Jerusalem and (took) three hundred talents of gold which had come to them (the Jews ?) from Simon.

8a. [For nine afterwards the ever-pure Antiochus Sidetes reigned; 'twas he who went swiftly though treacherously to destroy Jerusalem.

8b. And he carried off thirty talents of gold (though it was (only) an additional portion of a measure of burnished gold) from a man who had found three thousand of them in the cherished sepulchre of David's race.]

§ 7b. 705. *cairb*: The variant spelling of H (*carbh*) suggests that the word is that for 'ship', not 'jaw', 'cheek' (*cairb*, Contribb. 305); but *cairb* or *cairbh* is required by rhyme.

§ 8. Cp. Antiochus Sidetes (annis ix) rex Syriae... Hierosolymam vallo circumdans..., Euseb. 421.

§ 8a. 714. *sirghlan*: perh. reflects *Pius*, the Latin equivalent of Antiochus' Jewish epithet. Cf. Josephus, Antiq. xiii, 8.

§ 8b. 717. *trichail* (which seems to be determined here by alliteration) is an error for *tri chét*. Josephus and the Prose Appendix have 300.

718. *far[r]ond*: I have tentatively taken this to be a compound of *rann*, 'division'. RIA Dict. has both *forann* ('? division') and *forrann* ('additional quatrain'). The rhyme with *tallann* here indicates the form with *rr*. With the H variant *arrand*, cp. perhaps *ór arand*, Metr. Ds. Gloss.

719. *fhir* (= *shiur*): *dil* is unmetrical, if rhyme was intended.

Simon Hircan ard a modh,  
fo-fuair arg i n-adnacal ;  
Dimitir a ceathair cain,  
Griphus dā sē 'na degaidh.

Simon Hircan ard cen on  
fuair arg isan adnocol ;  
as tuc ūr drennach co ndath  
do c[h]ennach a chaemchathrach.

Ceithri bliadna ūs brīg bil  
robo rī in tres Dimitir ;  
dorad do rat[h] tara ēs  
ōn lō adbath Sitidēs.

Antoich Asticcinus ān  
noī mbliadna dēc ba dianbāg ;  
a dō Pilip, gēg co nglōir,  
tiugfhlaithe Grēc i mBaibilōin.

Dā sē saerbliadan a fus  
ro saergiall[ad] Orifus ;

721-724. In DL' only ; — a modh] ainod D; i] in D; adhnacol L'; ceathair L'; Oriphus D, Oiriphus, L'.

725-732 (exc. 725-726 = 721-722) *not in DL'.* The text is from L.

725 ircan H.

726 isin adhnacol H.

727 is tug or dreadach co ndath H.

728 a ceannach na morthachrach H.

729 Ceathra bliadna os brigh mbil H.

730 ba righ in treas H.

731 re tri mbli-an tara eis H.

732 anntoich srianglan suisdineis H.

733-736 *in DL' only.* asticcoinus L'; .ix. mbl- do ba dianbadh L'; nglór L'; tiugfl- L'; mbabiloin L'.

737-740 *not in DL'.* The text is from L.

737 abhus H.

738 ro teabgiallad aeiripus H.

725

730

735

9. Simon Hyrcanus of lofty honour found a coffer in a burial place ; Demetrius had a fair four, and Grypus two sixes after him.

9a. [Noble Simon Hyrcanus without blemish found a coffer in the burial place ; from it he took colourful contentious gold to redeem his fair city.]

10. For four years rising above happy power the third Demetrius was king ; from the day Sitides died he left prosperity behind him.

11. Noble Antiochus Cyzicenus had nineteen years — a stern boast ; and Philip, a scion of renown who was the last Grecian sovereign in Babylon, had two.

11a. [For twice six noble years here Grypus was freely

§ 9. 724. All the MSS. including the Prose Appendix have *Oriphus* of the like for Grypus. Euseb., col. 422, allots Antiochus Grypus 12 years, but 26 in col. 178.

§ 11. *Cyzicenus* : all the Irish forms, except the *Tristicinus* of 740, begin with *asl-* or *as-*. The prose Appendix has *A. Astlicinus*.

§ 11 a. 738. *Grypus* : the metre requires tri-syllabic *Orifus* ; cp. § 9 n.

a noī dēc co ngargblaíd ngus  
do Antoich Tristicinus.

740

A dō do Pilip, nī brēc,  
do deigrīg na ndeilbGrēc ;  
tara maithius tar cac[h] mām  
and ro leath flaithius Rōmān.

Dā c[h]ēd bliadan acht i mmuad  
remes Grēg ōs gach glansluagh,  
saegul sē fer ndēc hi fus  
ro bātar i n-ardf[h]laithius.

745

B.

Rōmāin i rrīgi iar s[a]in  
co dīne derid domain ;  
ro-sia a neart s[e]in nach than  
cēin [m]beth [a] feib ro bādur.

750

B. S.

739 a nai dec conngarb blaigh ngus H ; dec] dech L.

740 don anntoich asoichinus H.

741-744 om. L'.

741 A dho do pilip ni bhreg H.

742 do do aenrīgh na nglan grec H.

743 tar chach maithius tar chach mban H.

745-748 om. H. cet LL' ; g-cc L' ; glannsl- L'.

746 eadh rogobsad os cech luag L.

747 remus se fer ndeg afus L.

748 ro badur i n-ardflaithius L.

749-752 not in DL'. The text is from L.

749 Roman a rige iar sin H.

750 deiridh H.

751 rosroith a neart sein nach tan H ; a nneart L.

752 co mbeith a feibh ro badar. Badur F. F. S. H.

(à suivre)

obeyed ; nineteen with rude renown for valour had  
Antiochus Cyzicenus.

11b. Philip, the goodly king of the shapely Greeks,  
had a veritable two ; then the dominion of the Romans  
spread out over their affluence beyond every mountain  
pass (?).]

12. For two hundred years ... the Grecian sway lasted  
over every complete host — the life-span of sixteen men  
here who held the chief sovereignty.

13. The Romans afterwards hold the kingship to the  
last generation of the world ; their power will always  
exist while they remain in the state which they were.

§ 11 b, 742. The line is a syllable short. Perh. the *dō* is exceptionally to  
be repeated, as in H.

744. *mām* : for other meanings of this word see RIA Contribb.

§ 12. 745. *acht i mmuad* : meaning uncertain ; none of the meanings  
given for *muad* in RIA Dict. would suit the context. The Prose Appendix,  
which has *Da .c. b. acht iiii fot a flathiusa*, suggests, however, that *i mmuad*  
is for earlier *i muad*, and that the latter is a misreading of *iiii uad* ; but the  
expansion of *iiii* to *cethair* or *cethre* would give the line a syll. too many,  
unless *bliadan* is to be replaced by O. I. *bliadnae* (with elision of *a* of *acht*).  
According to Euseb. the Asian (Syrian) monarchy lasted 225 years.

746. *Grēc* : Opposite the name Antigonus, the first king listed in poem  
VI, Euseb. (401) has the entry : *Machabaeorum Hebrae historia hinc  
Graecorum supputat regnum...*