

Middle-Irish poems on World-Kingship (suite)

Seán Mac Airt

Citer ce document / Cite this document :

Mac Airt Seán. Middle-Irish poems on World-Kingship (suite). In: Etudes Celtiques, vol. 8, fascicule 2, 1959. pp. 284-297;

doi : <https://doi.org/10.3406/ecelt.1959.1315>

https://www.persee.fr/doc/ecelt_0373-1928_1959_num_8_2_1315

Fichier pdf généré le 23/09/2021

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, 645
ro firfitir in forlonn,
ō ro rīgad occa thair
ro dīgail a degathair.

- 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 .uii. 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 rīghadh aco thair H, uair ro rīgad ocaib thair L ; tair L'.
648 ro dīgail 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] Ptolemaeus ; 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 firfilir* (:Dimitir). *firfilir* (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 firfilir*.

Atracht a n-agaid na rīg,
ropa cabair a chētgnīm ; 650
nī anad do greis *nō* gád
co ralad leis a ndergār

Iaram ro giallad in glac
fri rē secht mbliadan dēacc
for Assia mBic cen brīg mbrōin, 655
a *sē* dīb for Macidōin.

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 ;
ōen dīb ro scrūtus ria scor
Seleūcus Nicanor.

- 649 anaighidh na righ H ; aji 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 gád 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. mbliad- 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 fídir cach fír 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 ōenbliadain.

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

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

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

- 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 gairgthigh 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 ; ō] on D.
 673 A m-c ro facus a fus H, A m-c fafocus a bhus L.
 674 silucus gaillicnus ; 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 *Tesiochus*, *Tes-ocus*, *Tesiacus*, or *Teosiochos* (prose appendix); they seem to represent a corruption of $\theta\acute{\epsilon}\omicron\sigma$ 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* (3×7) 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 mblaidh
in breō brianglan, a brāthair
diarb' ainm ar tochus (trōgh tlus)
Anntochus mōr Maighinus.

A mac nara chrupus cor 685
Silucus Pilepatur;
re rē sē mbliadan fo trí
glē ro giallad in gargrī

Antochius Epifānus
dā bliadain dēc dō hi cādus; 690
ba garg do cach dīne a dū,
marb cen mīne Machabdu.

[Gabais dā sē mbliadan mbān
Anntoich iarum Epifān,
ba garb in mac, tarb in trū, 695
diaro marbh na Machabdhu.]

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 fīr,
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 cach 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 anntoich 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.

l. 687: *fo lrī*: recte *fo dī* ('twice').

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

§ 7, l. 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* (uninfluenced by *cain*, 699) is unmetrical.

l. 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, l. 708.

703 da .ui. cen feirbrigh a fir H.

704 don deirigh do dimitir H.

A deich ro baī cairb na cnead 705
 diarbo ainm *Alaxander*,
 a trī cen dīmicin de
 fa rī in Dimetir aile.

Antoich Sitides tailg tenn,
 hē ro airg Hierusalem, 710
ocus tri chét tallann d'ōr
 ro.dos.tadall ō Simmōn.

A naī ro rīgad dia ēs
 Antoich sīrglan Sitidēs ;
 hē luid co fobaid, ciar fell, 715
 do thogail Ierusailem.

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. foīuair carbh na cneadh H.

706 alaxaindear H.

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

708 ba rī 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 chél*. 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 *lallann* here indicates the form with *rr*. With the H variant *arrand*, cp. perhaps *ór arand*, *Metr. Ds.* Gloss.

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

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

Simon Hircan ard cen on 725
fuair arg isan adnocol;
as tuc ōr drennach co ndath
do c[h]ennach a chaemchathrach.

Ceithri bliadna ōs brīg bil
robo rī in tres Dimitir; 730
dorad do rat[h] tara ēs
ōn lō adbath Sitidēs.

Antoich Asticcinus ān
noī mbliadna dēc ba dianbāg;
a dō Pilip, gēg co nglōir, 735
tiugfhlaith 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'; Oiriphus 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 morchatrach H.

729 Ceathra bliadna os brigh mbil H.

730 ba righ in treas H.

731 re tri mbli-an tara cis H.

732 anntoich srianglan suisdineis H.

733-736 in DL' only. asticoinus L'; .ix. mbl- do ba dianbadh L'; nglór L'; tiugfh- L'; mbabiloin L'.

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

737 abhus H.

738 ro teabgiallad aeiripus H.

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 *Trislicinus* of 740, begin with *ast-* or *as-*. The prose Appendix has *A. Aslicinus*.

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

a noī dēc co ngargblaid 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 745
remes Grēg ōs gach glansluagh,
saegul sē fer ndēc hi fus
ro bātar i n-ardf[h]laithius. B.

Rōmāin i rrīgi iar s[a]in 750
co dīne derid domain;
ro-sia a neart s[e]in nach than
cēin [m]beth [a] feib ro bādur. 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 aenrigh 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.

11*b*. 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 fol a flaithiusa*, 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 *celhair* 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 Antigonos, the first king listed in poem VI, Euseb. (401) has the entry: *Machabaeorum Hebrae historia hinc Graecorum supputat regnum...*