



Mocu, Maccu

Author(s): Eoin Mac Neill

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MOCU, MACCU

THIS element in proper names (e.g. Dubthach maccu Lugair) belongs solely to the Old-Irish period. The last instance in the Annals of Ulster is at 789, *Comotatio reliquiarum Mo Chuae macu Lagedon*. Here as elsewhere, when *macu* follows a genitive, Hennessy wrongly prints "*mic U*." In this entry the name is clearly that of a person belonging to an earlier time. The latest contemporary use of the term in A.U. is at 690—*Cronan macu Chualne abbas Bennchuir obiit*. It is therefore probable that *mocu* began to go out of use about 700.

The significance of *mocu* is made clear by Adamnan in several places. He always has *mocu*, *moccu*, and possibly this form should be used in restored O.-I. texts. It indicates the *gens* or racial division to which a person belongs: *Fintenus gente mocu Moie* (Ad. p. 20), but *Laisranus mocu Moie*, p. 47. *Lugbeus gente mocu Min*, pp. 53, 56, beside *Lugbeus mocu Min*, pp. 43, 53. *Mailodranus gente mocu Rin*, p. 50.

Eleventh-century writers, like Marianus (1028-1082), had lost touch with this form, and supposed it identical with *macc ui*. In this they have been followed by modern editors generally. Marianus writes *Miluc filius nepotis Buain* for *Miliuc mocu Boi*n (Todd Lectures, vol. iii., p. 17).

Adamnan's '*gente*' puts us on the right track. The word which follows *mocu* is a portion of the name of the *gens*, and is in fact the genitive of the name of the eponymous ancestor. This personage is not a human ancestor, as Middle-Irish and modern writers suppose. I show in *New Ireland Review*, Nov., 1906, that he is the tutelary god of the race.¹ This helps to

¹ In many cases the mythological ancestor is a female. We need not suppose as many gods as eponymous ancestors. There is clear evidence that Irish gods rejoiced in a profusion of synonyms.

explain the early disappearance of *mocu*. The race-name contains the name which follows *mocu*.

Ancient Irish race-names had a variety of forms. Some consisted of *Corcu* or *Dál*, as a separate word meaning *gens*, followed by the genitive of the eponymous ancestor's name, e.g. *Corcu Duibne*, *Dál Buain*. Others contained the ancestral name in composition with the endings *-rige*, *-raige*, *-ne*, *-acht*, e.g. *Boonrige* (an alternative name for *Dál Buain*), *Temenrige* (also called *Corcu Themne*), *Conmaicne*, *Cianacht*. There is a third class of simple race-name, without distinguishing term or ending, e.g. *Loegis*, *Sogain*, *Éli*. In this class, the race-name appears to be identical with the name of the eponymous ancestor. A similar custom was preserved by the descendants of Niall of the Nine Hostages. The simple names of his sons, *Loegaire*, *Eogan*, *Conall*, *Cairbre*, *Ardgal*, are frequently used in the annals and elsewhere to designate the *gentes* descended from them.

Gentilic divisions that arose in historical times are usually designated by *auí*, later *uí*, *í*, prefixed to the name (genitive) of the historical ancestor. Excepting the descendants of Niall, who, however, are comprehensively called *Uí Néill*, the other forms of gentilic names above-mentioned belong all, so far as I can trace, to races of prehistoric origin. I have found no instance of a race-name in *corcu*, *dál*, *-rige*, *-ne*, *-acht* arising during the Christian period or from a historical ancestor. I have found many instances of names in *uí* among peoples of prehistoric origin; but, wherever traceable, such names are always applied to septs or sub-divisions of races otherwise named. I have found only one instance of *mocu* probably identified with a race-name in *uí*.

I have found no instance of *mocu* referable to any branch of the dynasties of Tara and Cashel. In my University College lectures, session 1905-6, I have shown good grounds for believing that these dynasties represent the last Celtic invasion of Ireland, at a date not earlier than the second century—perhaps in the third century—of the Christian era. The dynastic race of Cashel is called *Eoganacht*. The *Dál Cais* are probably an older race quite unrelated to them. With these exceptions, there is no instance of *corcu*, *dál*, *-rige*, *-ne*, or *-acht* in any branch of these races. The race to which Niall belongs is

notably without any race-name in Irish history, being the only dynastic family so circumstanced. Hence I consider *mocu* and the forms of race-name with which *mocu* exchanges as evidence of comparative antiquity of race.

Mocu appears to be identical in usage with the Ogmic phrase MAQI MUCOI so frequent in the inscriptions. I am inclined to think that it also represents etymologically this phrase, the two words being run together and worn down through frequency of use. From MUCOI alone, we should expect O.-I. *muchu*—I am not sure about the final vowel. For the wearing down of such elements in surnames, compare the modern *mac* in surnames into *mhac*, *ac*, *ach*, even 'c'; 'ap and 'p in Welsh names; *inghean ui*, now *ní*; *inghean mhic*, now *níc*. At all events the examples cited below fairly establish the equivalence in sense of *mocu* with MAQI MUCOI, and fix the significance of the Ogmic phrase.

The material examined and method of reference are here indicated :—

- Ad. . Adamnan, *Vita S. Columbae*, ed. Reeves.
- AU. . Annals of Ulster, vol. i., ed. Hennessy.
- Brash, Ogham Monuments.
- BB. . Book of Ballymote (genealogies).
- CL. . Genealogies of Corca Laighe, ed. O'Donovan.
Féilire of Oingus.
- LL. . Book of Leinster (genealogies).
- L.Arm. Book of Armagh, Hogan's Glossary.
Mac Firbis, Genealogies, R.I.A. MS.
- MD. . Martyrology of Donegal (reference by dates).
- MG. . Martyrology of Gorman.
- Journal of Royal Society of Antiquaries, Ireland, articles
on Ogham inscriptions, by Barry, Rhys, Macalister,
and others (reference by month and year only).

The race-names are taken from many sources, but chiefly from Mac Firbis and other genealogical tracts.

Mocu, *maccu*, MAQI MUCOI, takes the place of (a) *Corcu*, (b) *Dál*, (c) *-raige*, (d) *-ne*, (e) *acht*, in the names of peoples, or (f) precedes gentilic names of simple form.

(a) **Corcu.**

- Corcu Roide = BIR MAQI MUROI ROTTAIS¹ Sept. 1897.
Ernene mocu fir Roide Ad. 237.
Tua mac h. Roida LL. 365.
- Corcu Duibne = NETA LAMINACCA KOI² MAQQI MUROI
DOVVINIAS June, 1896.
MAQI IARI KOI² MAQQI MUROI DOVVINIAS
June, 1896.
Aedan mac h. Duibni LL. 358.
- Corcu Dalann = Cainnechus mocu Dalon Ad. 220.
- Corcu Themne = Luguid mocu Themne Ad. 246.
Comgan macu Teimne AU. 663.
- Corcu Oche = quies Lugdach macu Ocha AU. 608.
- Corcu Loegde = Cronan macu Loegdae AU. 637.
- Corcu Fir tri³ = Suibne maccu Ir tri MD. Jan. 11.

(b) **Dál.**

- Dál Buain = Miliuc maccu Boin L. Arm.
- Dál Araide = Comgellus mocu Aridi Ad. 220.
- Dál Céide = Tochannu mocu fir Cetea Ad. 246.
- Dál Niath Corb = Oisseneus mocu Neth Corb Ad. 22.
- Dál Runtir⁴ = Trenanus mocu Runtir Ad. 47.
- Dál Riatai = Daircill maccu Retai AU. 677.
- Dál Sailne = Colmanus mocu Sailni Ad. 29.
- Dál Corbmaic = Baetan mac ua Corbmaic MG. 56.
Abbán mac ua Corbmaic MD. Mar. 16.
Fiacha mac ua Chorbmaic MD. Dec. 27.
- Dál nImda⁴ = Dolaissi maccu Imde AU. 658.
- Dál Buachalla = Riachuill mac ua Buachalla MG. 76.
- Dál Bairdine⁵ = Nechtan mac h. in Baird LL. 359.
Finnbarr mac hui Bardene AU. 437.
Colman mac ui Bardani FM. 623.
Usaille mac ua Bhaird DM. Aug. 30.

¹ Perhaps for ROTTAIS, unless an Ogmic feminine genitive in *-ais* corresponded to the Latin *-ai, -ae*.

² Also read POI.

³ The race of Lugna Fer Tri, Mac F., p. 362. Cp. Corco Thri de Lugnib Connacht, LL. 363.

⁴ Dál Runtair, Dál nImda, and Glasraige were the three divisions of the Conaille of Murthemne, LL. 318.

⁵ Otherwise Corcu Bairdni "ó Dún Cermna," LL. 331.

- Dál Fiatach = Finnio mac h. Fiatach LL. 362.
 Dál Cualni¹ = Crónán macu Chualne AU. 690.

(c) **Rige.**

- Boonrige, see Dál Buain.
 Temenrige, see Corcu Themne.
 Greccraige = mac h. Greccae LL. 356.
 Menraige = Lugbeus mocu Min Ad. 43, 53.
 Lugbeus gente mocu Min Ad. 53, 56.
 Lugneus mocu Min Ad. 127, 141.
 Cairige = Ecce mac h. Chae LL. 356.
 Fionocc maccu Cha MD. Oct. 4.
 Ciarraige = MAQI MUROI QEROI Brash, 223.
 Lucill mac h. Chiara LL. 357.
 Garbraige = Mac h. Gairb LL. 364.
 Siollán mac ua Ghairbh MD. Oct. 31.
 Gaolraige = Mo Cholmoc mac h. Gualae vel h. Gáili, di
 Gáilinni di Ultaib do LL. 364.
 Calraige? = CASSITTAS MAQI MUROI CALLITTI Brash.
 Crothraige? = TTGENU MAQI MUROI QRITTI Brash, 138.
 Brekraige = NETTA SAGRU MAQI MUROI BRECI Mar.
 1902.
 Artraige = Mo Cholmocc mac ua Arta MD. June 7.
 Dartraige = Inis mac ua Dartadha MD. May 21.
 Dubraige = Naeman macua Duib MG. 176.
 Nechtraige = Molaissi maccua Necte MD. Jan. 19.
 Tratraige = Luighthighern mac ua Trato MD. Apl. 28.
 Nosraige = Cluain macu Nois Passim.

(d) Gentilic names in **-ne** offer only three examples, with two ways of treatment when changed into personal names.

- Luigne = CONNI MAQI MUROI LUGUNI March, 1898.
 MODDAGNI MAQI GATIGNI MUROI LUGUNI
 Brash, 268.
 Conmaicne = LUGUDI MAQI LIDU MAQ MUROI CUNAMAQI
 Dec. 1898.

Galline, see Gaolraige.

In LUGUNI, the termination is retained after MUROI. In

¹ Caulnia ocus Condluan, emon ruc Lebarcham ingen Oe ocus Adarce do Choin Chulainn, is dib Corco Caullain ocus Dal Cualni i Cruithniu. LL. 318.

Gailline, the termination is dropped—*maccu Gáili*. The last two letters of *CUNAMAQI* are doubtful, as are the words *LIDU MAQ*.

- (e) Gentilic names in *-acht* are rare. Only one, *Cianachta*, furnishes examples in a single passage.

Cianachta = *Sinech mater virorum mocu Ceí* in [*read mocu Cein*] *Cuile Aque*, quorum nomina sunt *Aidanus monachus*,¹ qui sepultus est hi *Cuil Uisci*, et *Chonrii moccu Cein*, qui sepultus est in *Daurmaig*; *avia Tocummi mocu Cein*, qui in *Iona finivit vitam*.

Ad. 247.

- (f) Gentilic names without any special prefix or termination take *mocu*, etc., before the name itself.

Ligis = *Columbanus mocu Loigse* Ad. 210.

Oenu mac h. Laigsi LL. 356.

Enna maccu Laigsi Stokes, Lives, 275.

*Sogain*² = *VEDACU MAQ TOBIRA MUCOI SOGINI* June, 1896.

Nemaidon mocu Sogin Ad. 108.

Eili? = *Aedhach mac ua Elich* MD. April 9.

- (g) *Ui Echdach* = *quies Finntain filii nepotis Echdach*
AU. 602.

Mocu may be expected in disguise, especially in published texts. Thus Hennessy prints *mac Curetai* for *maccu Retai* (O.I. *Dál Rétai* = *Dál Riada*) AU. 677, *mac Curthri* for *maccu [F]ir Thri* (*Corcu Fir Thri*) AU. 656, *mac Cuinide* for *maccu Imde* (*Dál Imde*) AU. 638. He was puzzled by this last instance, as he found *Cairill* elsewhere as the name of St. Molaissi's father.

My notes are unfortunately so much deranged that I cannot give the instances, or statistics of them, in which I have failed to find corresponding race-names. In known Oghams, there are at least fifty-five instances of *MUCOI*, including what are held to be nominatives singular, *MUCO* (1), *MOCO* (1), gen. pl. *MOCON* (1); gen. sg. *MUCOI* (42), *MOCOI* (4), *MUCCOI* (3), *MOCCOI* (1), *MOQOI* (1), and *MUCCOE* (1). My equated instances are thus a

¹ Reeves (Ad. 247) gives his descent from the *Cianachta*.

² *Corcu Sogain* and *Soghraighe* were probably equivalents.

small minority, which is not strange, since many race-divisions must have become extinct between the time of the Oghams and of the historical MSS. now available. On the other hand, out of twenty examples of *mocu* noted in Adamnan, I have equated fourteen. Out of twelve noted in AU., I have equated seven. In all, I have probably found race-names for about half of the instances of *mocu* noted. And while the instances noted present a definite field, the search after race-names is at present a thing without limit.¹

No inflexional change in *mocu* appears in Old Irish. (Hennessy's *mic u* is doubtless a contraction wrongly expanded.) Its effect on a following consonant cannot be judged from M.-I. instances, in which it is usually taken for *macc ui*. The O.-I. instances before *c*, *t*, *f* are too few to be decisive. Following a nom. sg. it aspirates in AU. 662, *Ultan macu Chonchubhair quievit*, and again 690, *Cronan macu Chualne obiit*. But Hennessy's text appears to have had aspiration marks added by a modern hand. In Adamnan, passage cited under Cianachta, *mocu Cein* occurs without change after gen. pl., nom. sg., and gen. sg.

Mocu seems to afford a dating criterion for part of the Annals of Ulster. The occurrence of *mac hui* 437, *maic nepotis* 578, *fili nepotis* 602, and *mac hui* 654, apparently as substitutes for *mocu*, indicates that the early entries are a Middle-Irish insertion; whereas, in the later part of the O.-I. period, the entries appear to be contemporary with the events. I think this indication is confirmed by other linguistic evidences.

Mocu occurs in place-names, but seemingly even there denotes an individual person. Cluain macu Nóis, Inis macu Dartada, 'Mellan mac h. Chuind o Inis mic h. Chuind for Loch Oirbsen,' Félire, xxxv., note. *Connachta* would give *mocu Chuinn*. In that case we should understand, not the whole region commonly called Connachta, or its people, but a small race-group in the north of Connacht called *na teora Connachta*, the three Connachts—probably the remnant of a race which

¹ Since this paper was written, many other instances have turned up, especially in the BB. list of saints and in Macalister's 'Irish Epigraphy.' My paper fails to show the local identity of the names equated, except in a few instances. I have material for this identification in many more instances; but the thesis seems sufficiently clear to dispense with more extensive annotations.

dominated the region and gave a name to it before its settlement by Brian and Fiachra, brothers of Niall of the Nine Hostages. According to MacFirbis, until the time of Eochu Muigmedoin, father of these men, Connacht was ruled by a dynasty of the Fir Domnann, whose home territory corresponded to the later Ui Fiachrach. I suggest that *na teora Connachta* represented this dynastic race.

EOIN MAC NEILL

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