

συμβούλιον ἐποίησαν τὴν κόρην ἀφαρπάσαι·
καὶ πάντας συναπέκτεινε καθυποτάσων τούτους,
ὅπως τε κατεπτόησε πᾶσαν τὴν Βαβυλώνα,
Ταρσὸν ὁμοῦ καὶ τὸν Βαγδᾶ, τοὺς Μαυροχιονίτας
970 καὶ ἄλλα μέρη ἱκανὰ τῶν δεινῶν Αἰθιοπίων.
Ταῦτα τὰ κατορθώματα ὁ βασιλεὺς ἀκούσας
ὁ τηνικαῦτα τὴν ἀρχὴν τοῖς Ῥωμαίοις διέπων,
Βασίλειος ὁ εὐτυχῆς καὶ μέγας τροπαιοῦχος,
ὁ καὶ συνθάψας μεθ' ἑαυτοῦ τὴν βασιλείον δόξαν
975 (ἔτυχε γὰρ κατὰ Περσῶν ποιῶν τὴν ἔκστρατείαν
ἐν ἐκείνοις τοῖς μέρεσιν ἐν οἷς ὁ παῖς διῆγεν),
καὶ μαθὼν τὰ περὶ αὐτοῦ ἐξεπλήττετο σφόδρα.
Ποθήσας οὖν κατὰ πολὺ θεάσασθαι τὸν νέον,
γραφὴν πρὸς αὐτὸν ἔστειλε περιέχουσαν τάδε: 40r
980 «Τὰ περὶ σοῦ, ὦ τέκνον μου, ἡ ἐμὴ βασιλεία
μαθοῦσα κατορθώματα ἠύφρανθημεν ἐν τούτοις
τῷ συνεργοῦντι σοι Θεῷ ἀναπέμποντες χάριν·
ἐν ἐφέσει γεγόναμεν αὐτοψεὶ τοῦ ἰδεῖν σε
καὶ παρασχεῖν σοι ἀμοιβὰς τῶν σῶν ἔργων ἀξίας·
985 ἔλθε τοίνυν ὡς πρὸς ἡμᾶς χαίρων ἀνευδοιάστως,
μὴ ὑποπτεύων λυπηρὸν παρ' ἡμῶν ὑποστῆναι.»
Ὁ δὲ ταύτην δεξάμενος ἀντιγραφὴν ἐκπέμπει:
«Ἐγὼ μὲν δούλος ἔσχατος τοῦ σοῦ κράτους τυγχάνω,
εἰ καὶ πάντων τῶν ἀγαθῶν ἀμέτοχος ὑπάρχω.
990 Ποῖον δέ, δέσποτα, ἐμὸν κατόρθωμα θαυμάζεις
τοῦ ταπεινοῦ καὶ εὐτελοῦς καὶ παντελῶς ἀτόλμου;
Ἄλλ' ὅμως πάντα δυνατὰ τῷ πρὸς Θεὸν θαρροῦντι.

971 Ταῦτα Legrand: ταῦτα τοινῶν G

975 κατὰ Legrand: μετὰ G ἔκστρατείαν Legrand: εὐστρατείαν G

983 ἐφέσει Trapp: ἐφέσει δὲ G

and made a plan to abduct the girl.
And he killed them all and subdued them,
just as he terrified all Babylon,
together with Tarsos and Baghdad, the men of the Black Snow
970 and several other territories belonging to the terrible Ethiopians.
When the emperor heard of these achievements,
the emperor who at that time exercised authority over the Romans,
Basil the fortunate and the great winner of victories,
who interred the imperial glory with himself,
975 (for he happened to be on campaign against the Persians
in the regions where the boy was living)
– when he learnt about him, he was absolutely astounded.
Desiring very much, therefore, to see the young man,
he sent him a letter, whose contents were as follows:
980 “Learning of your achievements, my child,
my Majesty took great pleasure in them,
offering up gratitude to God who is your helper.
We are desirous of seeing you with our own eyes
and providing you with fit recompense for your deeds.
985 Come then to us with unhesitating joy
and have no suspicion of any unpleasant experience at our hands.”
When he received this Digenis sent a reply:
“I am the most abject servant of your state,
even if I have no share in all its good things.
990 Which deed of mine, emperor, do you admire,
achieved by my humble and worthless and altogether timid self?
Nevertheless all things are possible for him who trusts in God.

968 On the basis of the redundant τε, Mavrogordato suggests a line has fallen out here (cf. Z2296)

968–70 An apparently haphazard group of places, suggesting greater interest in filling the narrative gap than in geography.

971–1086 On the identification of the emperor, see G4.56 and the Name Index. This narrative of the visit of the emperor to Digenis is completely absent from E, and has been widely used in attempts to date the different versions. Alexiou, 1979, 70 comments that this episode could easily have been added to increase the hero's glory, and was unlikely to fall out once included in the text. Note, however, that this passage includes a line (G4.1058, cf. G4.116) also used by the twelfth-century Ptochoprodromos.

980–1000 This exchange of letters is couched in a caricature of official phraseology, with the third person use of 'Majesty' and the first person plural imperial 'we' in the emperor's letter, ending in a reassurance which implies a cynical attitude in relationships between emperor and subjects (cf. Kekavmenos, *Strategikon* 12 and the exchange between Digenis and his future father-in-law at G4.738). Digenis' reply makes totally insincere use of the humility-topos, and shows why it is easier for the narrative to keep the hero on his own and not to make him a soldier or imperial official.

- καὶ ἐπειδήπερ βούλεσαι ἰδεῖν τὸν σὸν οἰκέτην,
 μετ' ὀλίγων παραγενοῦ πρὸς ποταμὸν Εὐφράτην
 995 κάκει με ὄψει, δέσποτα ἅγιε, ὅταν βούλει.
 Καὶ μὴ νομίσης ἀπειθῶ πρὸς σέ παραγενέσθαι,
 ἀλλ' ὅτι κέκτησαι τινὰς ἀπείρους στρατιώτας,
 καὶ εἰ μὲν ἴσως εἴπωσι τινὲς ὅπερ οὐ δέον,
 ποιήσω σε εἰς τὸ βέβαιον ἄμοιρον τῶν τοιούτων.
 1000 τοῖς γὰρ νέοις, ὧ δέσποτα, συμβαίνουσι τοιαῦτα.»
 Καὶ τὴν γραφὴν ὁ βασιλεὺς διεξιὼν κατ' ἔπος
 ἐθαύμαζε τὴν τοῦ παιδὸς ταπεινῶσιν τοῦ λόγου
 καὶ ἔχαιρε κατανοῶν τὸ ὕψος τῆς ἀνδρείας.
 Σφόδρα δὲ ὀρεγόμενος ἰδεῖν τὸν νεανίαν,
 1005 παραλαβὼν μεθ' ἑαυτοῦ ἑκατὸν στρατιώτας 40ν
 καὶ δορυφόρους ἱκανοὺς ἦλθεν εἰς τὸν Εὐφράτην
 πᾶσιν ἐπαγγειλάμενος τοῦ φθέγξασθαι μηδ' ὅλων
 λόγον τινὰ ἐπίμωμον ἔμπροσθεν τοῦ Ἀκρίτου.
 Οἱ δέ γε τούτου ἔνεκα φυλάττειν συνταχθέντες
 1010 παρὰ μικρὸν ἀπήγγειλαν τὴν ἄφιξιν συντόμως
 βασιλέως πρὸς Διγενῆ τὸν θαυμαστὸν Ἀκρίτην.
 Καὶ πρὸς αὐτὸν ὁ Διγενῆς μονώτατος ἐξῆλθεν,
 ὅς μέχρι γῆς τὴν ἑαυτοῦ κεφαλὴν ὑποκλίνας,
 «Χαίροις,» ἔφη, «ὁ ἐκ Θεοῦ λαβὼν τὴν βασιλείαν
 1015 καὶ δι' ἀσέβειαν ἔθνῶν ἅπασι κυριεύσας,
 πόθεν μοι τοῦτο γέγονεν ὁ γῆς πάσης δεσπότης
 παραγενέσθαι πρὸς ἐμὲ τὸν ἐξουθενημένον;»
 Τοῦτον ἰδὼν ὁ βασιλεὺς καὶ ἐκπλαγεὶς τὴν θέαν,
 παντὸς ἐπιλαθόμενος ὄγκου τῆς βασιλείας,
 1020 μικρὸν τοῦ θρόνου προελθὼν κατησπάζετο χαίρων,
 κατεφίλει περιχαρῶς ἡλικίαν θαυμάζων
 καὶ τὴν πολλὴν κατάθεσιν τοῦ εὐμεγέθους κάλλους,
 «Ἐχεις,» λέγων, «ὦ τέκνον μου, ἀπόδειξιν τῶν ἔργων,
 τοῦ γὰρ κάλλους ἢ σύνθεσις ἀνδρείαν εἰκονίζει.
 1025 εἴθε τοιούτους τέσσαρας εἶχεν ἡ Ῥωμανία.
 Λέγε λοιπόν, ὦ τέκνον μου, πεπαρρησιασμένως
 καὶ ὅπερ βούλει λάμβανε τῆς ἐμῆς βασιλείας.»

1002 λόγου Legrand: λ . . G

1020 προελθὼν Trapp: προσελθὼν G

- Since you wish to see your servant,
 come with a few followers to the river Euphrates,
 995 and there you will see me, holy emperor, whenever you wish.
 And do not think that I am disobedient in not coming to you,
 but you have acquired some inexperienced soldiers
 and if perhaps some of them make an inappropriate remark,
 I will undoubtedly deprive you of such men;
 1000 for, emperor, such things happen to young men."
 The emperor went through the letter word by word,
 admired the humility of the boy's language
 and rejoiced as he perceived the extent of his bravery.
 Being extremely eager to see the young man
 1005 and taking with him a hundred soldiers
 and a number of bodyguards, he came to the Euphrates,
 ordering them all not to utter
 even one blameworthy word before the Frontiersman.
 Those who had been set to keep watch for this purpose
 1010 shortly announced the imminent arrival
 of the emperor before Digenis Akritis, the marvellous Frontiersman of
 Double Descent.
 And Digenis went out towards him, entirely alone,
 and bowed his head to the ground.
 "Welcome," he said, "you who have received imperial power from
 God,
 1015 and are lord over all because of the impiety of the heathen,
 how has it come about that he who is master of the whole earth
 is visiting me in my total insignificance?"
 On seeing him the emperor was astonished at the sight
 and, forgetting all the weight of empire,
 1020 he came forward a little from the throne and embraced him joyfully;
 he kissed him with great joy, admiring his appearance
 and his great endowment of imposing beauty.
 "You have," he said, "my child, proof of your deeds,
 for your beautiful physique is a picture of bravery.
 1025 Would that the Roman territories possessed four such men!
 Speak now, my child, in all freedom
 and receive whatever you wish from my Majesty."

- «Τὰ πάντα ἔχε, δέσποτα,» ὁ παῖς ἀνταπεκρίθη,
 «ἐμοὶ γὰρ ἔστιν ἰκανὴ μόνον ἡ σὴ ἀγάπη·
 1030 οὐ δίκαιον δὲ τοῦ λαβεῖν ἀλλὰ δίδοναι μάλλον,
 ἔχεις καὶ γὰρ ἐν τῷ στρατῷ ἐξόδους ἀνεϊκάστους.
 Ἄξιῳ καὶ ἀντιβολῷ τῆς σῆς δόξης τὸ κράτος 41r
 ἀγαπᾶν τὸ ὑπήκοον, ἔλεεῖν πενομένους,
 1035 ἐξ ἀδικούντων ῥύεσθαι τοὺς καταπονουμένους,
 τοῖς παρὰ γνώμην πταίουσι συγχώρησιν παρέχειν,
 μὴ προσέχειν διαβολαῖς, ἄδικον μὴ λαμβάνειν,
 αἰρετικούς ἀποσοβῶν, ὀρθοδόξους κρατύνων.
 Ταῦτα γάρ, δέσποτα, εἰσὶν ὄπλα δικαιοσύνης,
 μεθ' ὧν δυνήσῃ τῶν ἐχθρῶν πάντων περιγενέσθαι·
 1040 οὐ γὰρ ἔστι δυνάμεως κρατεῖν καὶ βασιλεύειν,
 Θεοῦ μόνον τὸ δῶρημα καὶ δεξιᾶς ὑψίστου.
 Ἐγὼ δὲ ὁ πανευτελής τῷ σῷ κράτει δωροῦμαι
 ὃ ἐδίδου κατὰ καιρὸν τέλος τῷ Ἰκονίῳ
 ἄλλο τοσοῦτον σε λαβεῖν παρ' ἐκείνων ἀκόντων,
 1045 καὶ ποιήσω σε, δέσποτα, ἀμέριμνον ἐκ τούτου,
 ἄχρισ ἂν ἡ ἐμὴ ψυχὴ ἐκ τοῦ σκήνους ἐξέλθῃ.»
 Καὶ ἐχάρη ὁ βασιλεὺς ἐπὶ τούτοις τοῖς λόγοις,
 καὶ φησὶν: «ᾧ θαυμάσιε, κάλλιστε νεανία,
 ἡ βασιλεία ἡ ἐμὴ πατρικίον σε ἔχει
 1050 δωρουμένη σοι ἅπαντα κτήματα τοῦ σοῦ πάππου
 καὶ ἐξουσίαν νέμω σοι τοῦ διοικεῖν τὰς ἄκρας·
 ταῦτα δὲ εἰς χρυσόβουλλον σῶα ἐπικυρώσω
 καὶ ἐσθῆτας βασιλικὰς παρέχω πολυτίμους.»

1034 ἐξ ἀδικούντων ῥύεσθαι τοὺς Kalonaros, cf. Z2352: τοὺς ἀδικούντας ῥύεσθαι καὶ G

1035 πταίουσι Kalonaros, cf. Z2353: παίουσι G

1036 διαβολαῖς Legrand: διαβουλαῖς G

1037 ἀποσοβῶν G: ἀποσοβεῖν Legrand κρατύνων G: κρατύνειν Legrand

- “Keep everything, emperor,” the boy replied.
 “For me your love alone is sufficient.
 1030 It is not right to receive but rather to give,
 for you have unimaginable expenses for the army.
 I ask and entreat your glorious Majesty
 to love his subjects, to pity the needy,
 to rescue the oppressed from wrong-doers,
 1035 to give pardon to those who err unintentionally,
 to pay no heed to slanders, not to accept what is unjust,
 frightening off heretics and strengthening the orthodox.
 These, emperor, are the weapons of justice
 with which you will be able to get the better of your enemies;
 1040 for to govern and rule as emperor is not the result of strength
 but is a gift from God alone and the right hand of the Most High.
 I, quite worthless as I am, grant to your Highness
 that the tribute you once paid Ikonion
 will, against their will, come to you in equivalent amounts;
 1045 and I shall free you from this care, emperor,
 until my soul departs its habitation.”
 The emperor rejoiced at these words,
 and said: “Marvellous and loveliest of youths,
 my Majesty ranks you as a patrikios,
 1050 bestowing on you all your grandfather’s possessions
 and I grant you authority to administer the frontiers.
 I shall ratify this securely in a chrysobull,
 and I shall provide you with precious imperial robes.”

1028 This speech may be seen as a statement of the self-confidence of the magnates of Asia Minor, expressing a feeling of both material and ethical superiority over Constantinople and the emperor; compare the advice, in the tradition of a ‘Mirror of Princes’, attached to Kekavmenos’ tract (Wassiliewsky-Jernstedt, 1896, 93–4). At another level, the speech shows the heroic dominance of the epic hero over even the most powerful figure in the ‘historical’ world.

1043 Mention of tribute paid to Ikonion reflects a time after 1084 when Ikonion was a Turkish capital, with particular signs of large subsidies in the first decade of this period. This fact, once used to date the G ‘version’ (Kyriakidis, 1932, 651 and 1958, 6; Alexiou, 1979, 55), provides a *terminus post quem* only for G itself, already known on codicological evidence to be later.

1050 Digenis’ grandfather had been exiled before the emir’s capture of Digenis’ mother (G1.63).

1053 The imperial favours are authentic: the high-ranking title of patrikios (conferred on governors and generals in the eight to tenth centuries), a chrysobull (document with imperial gold seal) for estates and appropriate robes.

- Ταῦτα εἰπὼν ὁ βασιλεὺς, εὐθύς ὁ νέος προστάξας
 1055 ἓνα τῶν ἵππων τῶν αὐτοῦ ἀγροικῶν, ἀδαμάστων,
 κομίσαι ἔμπροσθεν αὐτῶν σιδήροις δεδεμένον,
 ὃν λῦσαι ἔφη τοῖς παισὶν καὶ «Ἄφετέ τον τρέχειν.»
 Καὶ τὰς ποδέας ὀχυρῶς πῆξας εἰς τὸ ζωνάριον 41v
 ἤρξατο τρέχειν ὀπισθεν τοῦ καταλαβεῖν τοῦτον·
 1060 καὶ εἰς ὀλίγον διάστημα τῆς χαίτης τε κρατήσας
 ὀπισθεν τον ἐγύρισε τὸν ἀγροικὸν καὶ μέγαν,
 λακτίζων στρηνιάζων <ΤΕ>, φυγεῖν ὄλως εἰκάζων·
 καὶ ἔμπροσθεν τοῦ βασιλέως ἐλθόντος τοῦ γεννάδα
 κάτω τον ἑκατέρραξεν εἰς γῆν ἐφηπλωμένον
 1065 καὶ πάντες ἐξεπλάγησαν τῇ παραδόξῳ θέᾳ.
 Ὑποχωρεῖν βουλόμενος, λέων τις ἐκ τοῦ ἄλλους
 ἐξεληθὼν διεπτόησε τοὺς μετ' αὐτοῦ παρόντας
 (πολλοὶ γὰρ λέοντες εἰσὶν ἐν ἐκείνῳ τῷ τόπῳ)
 καὶ πρὸς φυγὴν δὲ καὶ αὐτὸς ὁ βασιλεὺς ἐτράπη.
 1070 Ὁ δὲ παῖς πρὸς τὸν λέοντα ὑποδραμῶν εὐθέως,
 ποδὸς αὐτοῦ δραξάμενος ἐνὸς τῶν ὀπισθίων,
 ἀποτινάξας ἰσχυρῶς καὶ τῇ γῇ καταρράξας
 νεκρὸν αὐτὸν ἀπέδειξε πάντων ὁμοῦ βλεπόντων.
 Τοῦτον κρατῶν ἐν τῇ χειρὶ, καθάπερ τις τὸν πτώκα,
 1075 πρὸς βασιλέα ἤνεγκε «Δέξαι,» λέγων, «κυνῆγι
 τοῦ σοῦ οἰκέτου, δέσποτα, διὰ σοῦ θηρευθέντα.»
 Καὶ πάντες ἐξεπλάγησαν ἔντρομοι γεγονότες,
 τὴν ὑπεράνθρωπον αὐτοῦ ἰσχὺν κατανοοῦντες.
 Καὶ τὰς χεῖρας ὁ βασιλεὺς πρὸς οὐρανὸν ἐκτείνας,
 1080 «Δόξα σοι,» ἔφη, «δέσποτα, ποιητὰ τῶν ἀπάντων,
 ὅτι με κατηξίωσας τοιοῦτον ἄνδρα βλέψαι
 ἐν τῇ παρουσίᾳ γενεᾶ ἰσχυρὸν παρὰ πάντας.»
 Καὶ τὴν δорὰν τοῦ λέοντος ἐπαρθῆναι κελεύσας
 καὶ πλείστας πρὸς τὸν θαυμαστὸν ἐποίει ὑποσχέσεις· 42r
 1085 ἀλλήλους ἀσπαζόμενοι, ὑπεχώρουν εὐθέως
 πρὸς τὸν στρατὸν ὁ βασιλεὺς, ὁ δὲ παῖς πρὸς τὴν κόρην.

1062 τε added by Legrand

1066 Ὑποχωρεῖν Legrand: ὑποχωρεῖν δὲ G

1084 πλείστας Legrand: πλείστα G

- As the emperor said this, the young man immediately gave orders
 1055 that one of his wild, unbroken horses,
 should be brought before them, bound with iron.
 He told his lads to set him loose, saying "Let him run."
 And tucking his kilts firmly into his belt,
 he began to run behind him so as to catch him.
 1060 And within a short distance he grasped its mane
 and brought the great wild beast back,
 kicking and struggling, altogether looking like getting away.
 And when the young noble came before the emperor,
 he flung the horse down so that it sprawled over the ground
 1065 and everyone was astonished at the extraordinary sight.
 While he was wanting to withdraw, a lion came out of the grove
 and terrified those who were present with him
 (for there are many lions in that place),
 and even the emperor himself turned in flight.
 1070 But the boy immediately ran up to the lion
 and seized one of its back legs;
 he shook it vigorously, dashed it to the ground
 and showed that it was dead as everyone watched.
 Holding it in his hand as you would a hare,
 1075 he took it to the emperor, "Accept," he said,
 "your servant's prey, lord, hunted for you."
 And all were amazed and terrified
 as they became aware of his superhuman strength.
 The emperor lifted his hands to heaven,
 1080 "Thanks be to you," he said, "Lord, Maker of all things,
 because you have found me worthy of seeing
 in this present generation a man of this sort, whose strength surpasses
 all others."
 And ordering the skin to be stripped from the lion,
 he made very many promises to the marvellous youth.
 1085 They embraced each other and immediately withdrew,
 the emperor to the army and the boy to the girl.

1054-78 The hunting scene is a doublet of the earlier hunt of G4.102-212, suggesting limitations to the material in circulation on Digenis. The catching of the unbroken horse may derive ultimately from the story of Alexander the Great and Boukephalos.

1058 Cf. Ptochoprodromos 4.190-1 (and G4.116): evidence that a text like G existed in the mid-twelfth century (Introduction, p. xlvii).

1072 A similar hunting exploit was attributed to Basil I before Michael III (Genesis 4.40); cf. G4.140-5.

Λόγος πέμπτος

- Νεότης πᾶσα ἀληθῶς ματαιότης ὑπάρχει,
 ὀπηνίκα πρὸς ἡδονὰς ἐκτείνει τὰς ἀτάκτους·
 ὁ δέ γε ταύτης ἀσφαλῶς τὰς ἡνίας ἰθύνων
 ἀχείρωτος τοῖς πάθεσιν ἔσαεὶ διαμένει
 5 καὶ κληρονόμος δείκνυται ζωῆς τῆς αἰωνίου
 ἀντὶ προσκαίρου ἡδονῆς τῆς αἰσχροῦ καὶ βεβήλου.
 Ὅς γὰρ τρυφᾷ, ἀδύνατον τυχεῖν τῆς αἰωνίου·
 ὡς γὰρ οὐκ ἔστιν ἐμπρησμὸν μετὰ ἐλαίου σβέσαι,
 οὐδὲ τρυφῶν τις δυνατὸν φυγεῖν τὴν ἁμαρτίαν
 10 δι' ἧς τὸ πῦρ ἐκτρέφεται πᾶσι τοῖς ἀκολάστοις.
 Καὶ γὰρ οὗτος ὁ θαυμαστὸς καὶ γενναῖος Ἀκρίτης,
 ὁ τοῖς χαρίσμασι Θεοῦ πᾶσι πεπλουτισμένος,
 πρὸς ὀλίγον τὴν ἑαυτοῦ νεότητα χαυνώσας
 ἀμελῶς περιπέπτωκεν ἐγκλήματι μοιχείας·
 15 ὕστερον δὲ μετᾶμελος γεγωνῶς ὑπὲρ τούτου 42ν
 τοῖς ἐντυγχάνουσιν αὐτῷ ἀνήγγειλε τὸ σφάλμα,
 οὐ καυχήσεως ἕνεκεν, ἀλλὰ μεταμελείας.
 Καὶ γὰρ μιᾷ τῶν ἡμερῶν ἐντυχὼν Καππαδόκι,
 τὴν ἑαυτοῦ βουλόμενος ἁμαρτίαν φαυλῆσαι
 20 πρὸς αὐτὸν διηγήσατο τάδε μετρίως λέγων:

E1606
E1606_b

Book five

- All youthfulness truly is vanity
 when it reaches out for unruly pleasures;
 but he who controls its reins securely
 remains forever unconquered by the passions,
 5 and is proven to be the heir of life eternal
 rather than fleeting pleasure that is shameful and impure.
 Those who indulge themselves cannot win eternal life;
 for just as it is impossible to quench fire with oil,
 10 so those who lead indulgent lives cannot escape sin
 by which fire is nurtured for all the licentious.
 And Akritis, this marvellous and noble Frontiersman,
 who had been enriched by gifts from God,
 for a while indulged his own youthfulness
 and fell carelessly into the crime of adultery.
 15 Afterwards he repented of this
 and proclaimed his fault to those to whom he spoke,
 not to boast but for the sake of repentance.
 For one day, speaking with a Cappadocian
 and wishing to show the foulness of his sin,
 20 he told him about it, speaking moderately thus: *

G5 is not found in E, except perhaps for E1606–7; it is thus hard to be certain of the episode's relation to *Digenis*. The awkwardness with which this book fits into G as a whole (e.g. first person narrative to an unnamed Cappadocian interlocutor, the psychological crudity of *Digenis*' treatment of the rescued girl largely duplicated in the scene with Maximou in G6, the abrupt temporal markings at G5.281 ff.) is a further indication that the material available on *Digenis* was episodic (cf. Dyck, 1983), and also limited in extent. *Digenis*' adultery and repentance contrasts with the chastity advocated by the twelfth-century novelists (Beck, 1984, 112–28).

1–10 The two parts of this maxim (Odorico, 1989, 157) clearly show an attempt to sanitise a morally reprehensible story. While it is tempting to see the ethical sentiments as late additions, these thoughts, partially present in E, may be part of *Digenis*.

18–20 The introduction of the first-person narrative is not convincing, as is confirmed by the redactor of Z, who has improved the passage (Z2424–31). Again, a natural assumption is that this is a late insertion in G, to conceal a blunt change in narrative. The silent interlocutor is probably made a Cappadocian so that *Digenis* may speak frankly to someone from his own area.

- «Ὀπηνίκα ἐθελοντὶ τοῦ πατρὸς ἐχωρίσθην
καὶ ἐν ταῖς ἄκραις κατοικεῖν μόνος ἠρετισάμην,
ταξιδεῦσαι ἠθέλησα εἰς τὴν ἔνδον Συρίαν,
ἔτος πεντεκαιδέκατον ἄγων τῆς ἡλικίας·
25 ἀνύδρους τε καταλαβὼν κάμπους τῆς Ἀραβίας,
τὴν ὁδὸν, ὡσπερ εἶωθα, μόνος μου διοδεύων,
φάραρ ἐπικαθήμενος, βαστάζων καὶ κοντάριν,
ἔνδιψος ὄλος γέγονα (πολὺς γὰρ ἦν ὁ καύσων)
καὶ πανταχοῦ ἐσκόπευα ποῦ τὸ ὕδωρ ὑπάρχει.
30 Δένδρον ὄρῳ ἀπόμηκα πρὸς τὴν δασέαν βάλτον
καὶ τὴν φάραρ ἐπιλαλῶ νομίσας ὕδωρ ἔχειν
καὶ οὐδαμῶς ἀπέτυχον· φοῖνιξ δὲ ἦν τὸ δένδρον
καὶ ἐκ τῆς ρίζης θαυμαστὴ ἀνεπέμπετο βρύσις.
Ταύτη δ' ὡς ἐπλησίαζον ὀλολυγμοὺς ἀκούω
35 καὶ κλαυσώδεις ὀλοφυρμούς μετὰ πλείστων δακρῦων·
ἡ δὲ θρηνοῦσα κόρη ἦν πάνυ ὠραιοτάτη.
Κάγῳ νομίσας φάντασμα τὸ ὀρώμενον εἶναι
ἔκδειλος ὄλος γέγονα, τριχῶν μου ὄξυθέντων,
καὶ τὸ φρουροῦν με δὴ αἰεὶ διεχάραττον ὄπλον·
40 ἦν γὰρ ὁ τόπος ἔρημος, ἄβατος καὶ ἀλσώδης.
Ἐκείνη δὲ ὡς εἶδε με, ἀνέθορεν εὐθέως,
ἑαυτὴν περιστείλασα ἐν τῷ πρέποντι κόσμῳ 43r
τάς τε βροχὰς τῶν ὀφθαλμῶν ἄρασα τῇ ὀθόνη,
πρὸς με λέγειν ἀπήρξατο περιχαρῶς τοιάδε:
45 Ἴπόθεν, καλὲ νεώτερε, καὶ ποῦ μόνος ὀδεύεις;
Μὴ διὰ πόθον καὶ αὐτὸς ἐπλανήθης ἐνταῦθα;
'Ἄλλ' ἐπειδὴ, ὡς εἴκειν, ἐκ Θεοῦ ὠδηγήθης
τῆς ἐρημίας ὅπως με τὴν ἀθλίαν ἐλκύσης,
πρὸς μικρὸν ἀναπαύθητι, κύριέ μου, ἐνταῦθα,
50 ἵν' ὅπως ἀκριβέστερον τὰ κατ' ἔμοῦ ἀκούσης
καὶ τινὰ <γε> τῶν ὀδυνῶν παρηγορίαν λάβω·
λόγοις γὰρ συνεπαίρεται ἐκ τῆς ψυχῆς ἡ λύπη.'
Ταῦτα κάγῳ ὡς ἤκουσα, εἰς χαρὰν μετεβλήθην

24 τῆς ἡλικίας Legrand: τὴν ἡλικίαν G
28 ἐνδιψος Legrand: ἔδιψος G
51 γε added by Legrand

- “When I willingly separated from my father
and chose to live alone on the frontier,
I wished to journey to inner Syria,
being fifteen years of age.
25 Reaching the waterless plains of Arabia
and making my way along the road alone, as was my custom,
seated on my charger and carrying my spear,
I became incredibly thirsty (for the heat was intense)
and I looked all round for where water might be found.
30 I saw a tree some way off, by the dense swamp,
and I urged my charger on, expecting there to be water,
and I was not out of luck. It was a palm-tree,
and at its root rose a marvellous spring.
As I drew near to it, I heard laments
35 and loud sobs of distress accompanied by copious tears.
The wailing came from a girl who was very beautiful.
I thought that what I saw was an apparition
and I was absolutely terrified; my hair stood on end
and I drew out the weapon that always protects me,
40 for the place was deserted, pathless and marshy.
As soon as she saw me, she immediately jumped up
and covered herself in the proper manner,
and wiping the rain of tears from her eyes with a handkerchief,
she began to speak to me most joyfully, like this:
45 ‘Where are you from, fine young man, and where are you travelling
on your own?
Surely you too are not lost here because of passion?
But since it looks as though you have been guided by God
to rescue me in my misery from the desert,
rest here for a while, my lord,
50 so that you can hear more exactly what has happened to me
and I can find some consolation for my sorrow.
For grief can be removed from the soul with words.’
When I heard this, my mood changed to joy,

26 Digenis is now literally alone. There are problems over his identity as a lonely hero; perhaps the servants and youngsters who share his solitude at G4.960–4 were added by a redactor unable to accept a hero without a retinue, or maybe the retinue (and especially his wife) is now temporarily absent because of the needs of this episode.
37 Finding a girl on her own in a deserted spot is unthinkable, so Digenis suspects a supernatural trick.
42 Propriety of female dress is foregrounded in G, when flouted by this woman (G5.121–2) and by Maximou (G6.736, 766).

- ἀληθές τὸ φαινόμενον ἀκριβῶς ἐννοήσας·
 55 μετὰ πολλῆς τῆς ἡδονῆς ἐπέζευον εὐθέως
 (ἦσατο γάρ μου τῆς ψυχῆς τὸ ἀπόρρητον κάλλος
 ὥστε δευτέραν τῆς ἐμῆς ταύτην εἶναι νομίσας)
 καὶ τὴν μὲν φάραν ἔδησα εἰς τοῦ δένδρου τὸν κλῶνα,
 τὸ δὲ κοντάριν ἔστησα μέσον αὐτοῦ τῆς ρίζης·
 60 καὶ ὕδατος μεταλαβὼν πρὸς αὐτὴν τάδε ἔφην:
 'Λέγε μοι, κόρη, πρότερον πῶς ἐνταῦθα διάγεις
 καὶ τίνος χάριν ἔκησας ἐν τῇ ἐρήμῳ ταύτῃ.
 Εἴθ' οὕτως γνώση καὶ αὐτὴ ποῖος κἀγὼ ὑπάρχω.'
 Εἶτα καθίσαντες ὁμοῦ ἐν θώκῳ χαμαιζήλω,
 65 τάδε λέγειν ἀπήρξατο στενάξασα ἐκ βάθους:
 "Ἐμὴ πατρίς, νεώτερε, τὸ Μεφερκὲ τυγχάνει·
 τὸν Ἀπλορράβδην ἤκουσας, τὸν ἀμιράν τῶν πάντων,
 οὗτος πατὴρ ἐμὸς ἐστὶ, μήτηρ ἡ Μελανθία.
 Ῥωμαιογενὴν ἠγάπησα ἐπὶ κακῷ ἰδίῳ, 43v
 70 ὄντινα εἶχε δέσμιον τρεῖς χρόνους ὁ πατήρ μου
 (καὶ γὰρ ἐνδόξου στρατηγοῦ υἱὸς ἔλεγεν εἶναι),
 τῶν δεσμῶν ἠλευθέρωσα, φυλακῆς ἔρυσάμην,
 φαρία τον ἐχάρισα, πρωτεῖα τοῦ πατρός μου,
 ἄρχοντα τοῦτον ἔδειξα περιφανῆ Συρίας
 75 μετὰ βουλῆς καὶ τῆς μητρός, τοῦ πατρός μου ἀπόντος
 (ἐν τοῖς πολέμοις γὰρ αἰεὶ εἴωθεν ἀσχολεῖσθαι).
 Ἐφαίνετο δὲ εἰς ἐμὲ πολλὴν ἔχων ἀγάπη
 καὶ θνήσκειν εἰ συμβέβηκε πρὸς ὦραν μὴ ἰδεῖν με·
 ὑπῆρχε δὲ ἐπίπλαστος, ὡς ἔδειξε τὸ τέλος.
 80 Καὶ γὰρ μιᾶ τῶν ἡμερῶν δρασμὸν ὑπονοήσας,
 βουλόμενος τοῦ ἐξελεθεῖν ἐπὶ τὴν Ῥωμανίαν
 καὶ τὴν βουλήν ἐξεῖπε μοι, καὶ ὄνπερ εἶχε φόβον
 διὰ πατέρα τὸν ἐμὸν μήποτε ἐπανήξῃ·
 καὶ ἐμὲ κατηνάγκαζε σὺν αὐτῷ πορευθῆναι
 85 ὄρκους ἐπαγγειλάμενος λίαν φρικωδεστάτοις
 μὴ ἀρνηθῆναι με ποτέ, ἀλλὰ σύμβιον ἔχειν·
 οἷσπερ κἀγὼ πιστεύσασα συμφυγεῖν κατεθέμην.

57 νομίσας G, cf. G4.142, 955, Eideneier, 1070, 311: νομίσαι Legrand
 67 τῶν πάντων Legrand: που πάντως G

- for I clearly understood that what I saw was real.
 55 I immediately dismounted with great pleasure
 (for her ineffable beauty touched my soul
 so that I thought her equal to mine)
 and I tied my charger to the branch of the tree
 and stood my spear between its roots;
 60 I took some water and said this to her:
 "Tell me, girl, first, how you come to be living here
 and why you settled in this desert.
 And then you will find out yourself what sort of person I am."
 Then as we sat down together on a low seat,
 65 she began to speak, sighing deeply:
 "My city, young man, is Meferke.
 You have heard of Aploravdis, who is emir over all –
 he is my father; my mother is Melanthia.
 To my own misfortune I fell in love with a man of Roman birth,
 70 whom my father held captive for three years
 (for he said he was the son of a famous general).
 I set him free from his chains, I saved him from prison,
 I gave him horses, my father's best,
 I set him up as a proud ruler in Syria,
 75 with my mother's advice, for my father was away
 (as he was always busy in the wars).
 He seemed very much in love with me
 and ready to die if he happened not to see me for a while;
 but he was a deceiver, as what followed showed.
 80 For one day, when he was thinking of flight
 and wanting to escape into Roman territory,
 he described his plan to me and also his fear
 of my father, should he return.
 And he insisted I set off with him,
 85 declaring with the most terrifying and solemn oaths
 that he would never disown me but keep me as his wife;
 I believed this and agreed to run away with him.

56 An ambiguous phrase: Digenis could be comparing the girl to his wife or to his own soul.

68 Both the mother's name and the romantic story seem inspired by the ancient novels.
 69 Another mixed race liaison, an unsuccessful and unheroic counterpart to that of Digenis' parents.

75–6 The absence of the girl's father again parallels the circumstances of Digenis' parents, perhaps stressing that no question of a spouse of different race will arise if the patriarchal family is intact.

- Ἄδειαν εἶτα ἐφευρεῖν ἄμφω διεσκοποῦμεν
τὸν πλοῦτον ὅπως ἄρωμεν τῶν ἐμῶν γεννητόρων.
- 90 Καὶ δὴ κατὰ τινὰ πικρὰν καὶ δαιμονίαν τύχην,
νόσος ἐπῆλθε τῇ μητρὶ θανάτῳ γειννῶσα·
καὶ οἱ μὲν ἄλλοι ἅπαντες πρὸς θρήνους οἱ ἐν οἴκοις
ἔτρεχον ἀνοιμῶζοντες ἐνθα θάνατος ἦγεν·
ἐγὼ δέ, ἡ παντάλαινα, ἀδείας ἐντυχοῦσα,
- 95 πλοῦτον πολὺν διάρασα τῷ πλάνῳ συνεξῆλθον,
ὑπουργησάσης τῆς νυκτὸς εὐχερῶς πρὸς τὸ ἔργον· 44r
ἀσέλγητος γὰρ ἔτυχε καὶ ἀφώτιστος πάντῃ.
- Ἐφ' ἵπποις δὲ ἀμφοτέροι τοῖς προητοιμασμένοις
ἐποχῆθέντες τῆς ὁδοῦ ἤρχόμεθα σπουδαίως
- 100 καὶ φόβον μέγαν εἶχομεν ἄχρι τοῦ τριμιλίου·
ὡς δὲ παρήλθομεν αὐτὸ ὑπ' οὐδενὸς γνωσθέντες
τὰ λοιπὰ διηλύομεν ἀδεῶς μετὰ μόχθου
τροφῆς μεταλαμβάνοντες ὅτε καιρὸς ἐκάλει,
ὑπνου τε κορεννύμενοι καὶ τρυφῆς μετασχόντες.
- 105 Ἐρώτων δὲ μυστήρια ἐρυθριῶ τοῦ λέγειν
ἀγάπην τε τὴν πρὸς ἐμὲ παρ' αὐτοῦ δεικνυμένην·
ψυχὴν γὰρ με ὠνόμαζε, φῶς ὀφθαλμῶν ἐκάλει
καὶ μετ' ὀλίγον γαμετὴν ἔλεγε καὶ φιλόττην
ἀκορέστως καταφιλῶν, κρατῶν με ταῖς ἀγκάλαις.
- 110 Οὕτως ἐν πάσῃ τῇ ὁδῷ συγχαίροντες ἀλλήλοις
ἐν ταύτῃ κατελάβομεν τῇ ὀρωμένη βρύσει
καὶ τρεῖς ἀναπαυσάμενοι ἡμέρας τε καὶ νύκτας
ἐρωτικὰς μεταβολὰς τελοῦντες ἀκορέστως,
γνώμην αὐτοῦ τὴν ἔνδοθεν δολίως κεκρυμμένην
- 115 ἀνακαλύπτειν ἄρχεται ὁ δεινὸς παραβάτης.
Καὶ γὰρ ὁμοῦ καθεύδοντες ἐν τῇ νυκτὶ τῇ τρίτῃ,
λάθρα τῆς κοίτης ἀναστὰς ἐπέστρωσε τοὺς ἵππους,
τόν τε χρυσὸν ἀφείλετο καὶ τὰ κρείττονα σκεύη.
Ὡς δὲ τοῦτο ἐπέγνωκα τοῦ ὑπνου ἀναστᾶσα,
- 120 ἐμαντὴν ὡς πρὸς τὴν ὁδὸν ἠὲ τρέπιζον εὐθέως
εἰς νεανίσκου τὴν στολὴν μεταβαλοῦσα εἶδος·
τοιούτῳ γὰρ τῷ σχήματι τῆς πατρίδος ἐξῆλθον.
Ἐφ' ἵππου τοίνυν ἐπιβὰς τοῦ ἰδίου ἐκείνος 44v
εἶλκε χερσὶ τὸν ἕτερον καὶ ᾤχετο τοῦ δρόμου.
- 125 Τοῦτο γοῦν τὸ παράλογον ἀνέλπιστον ὡς εἶδον,

- Then we both kept a look-out for an opportunity
to make off with my parents' wealth.
- 90 And, by some bitter and devilish chance,
sickness bordering on death attacked my mother,
and while all the others in the house
rushed to lament, wailing at the death-bed,
I, in my utter wretchedness, found my opportunity,
- 95 seized much wealth and made off with the seducer;
night helped to make the deed easy,
for it was moonless and quite without light.
- We both set off on horses that had been prepared beforehand
and we began our journey hurriedly.
- 100 We were very frightened up until the third milestone;
but when we had passed that without being recognised by anyone,
we completed the rest of our journey without fear but with difficulty,
partaking of food when the moment called,
having our fill of sleep and sharing our delight.
- 105 I blush to speak of our rites of passion
and the love shown me by him.
For he named me his soul, he called me the light of his eyes,
and after a while he said I was his wife and his dearest,
kissing me insatiably, holding me in his arms.
- 110 While we were thus taking pleasure in each other all along the road,
we came to this spring that you see.
We rested there for three days and nights,
indulging in insatiable and passionate lovemaking,
and then the purpose that had been deceitfully hidden within
- 115 began to be revealed by that dreadful renegade.
For while we were sleeping together on the third night,
he secretly got out of bed, saddled the horses
and took the gold and most of our baggage.
As soon as I woke up and realized what had happened,
- 120 I immediately got myself ready for the road,
changing my appearance by dressing as a young lad,
for it was in that disguise that I had left my country.
But when that man had mounted his own horse,
he had led the other with his hand and gone off along the road.
- 125 When I saw this unexpected disaster,

- πεζή ὡς εἶχον ἔτρεχον κατόπισθε βοῶσα:
 «Ἀπέρχεσαι, ὦ φίλτατε, ἐμὲ λιπῶν ποῦ μόνην;
 Ἐπελάθου τῶν ἀγαθῶν ὧν σοι ἐνεδειξάμην;
 Οὐ μνημονεύεις ἐξ ἀρχῆς τοὺς ἐξαιρέτους ὄρκους;»
 130 Ὡς δὲ οὐχ ὑπεστρέφετο, ἔτι μᾶλλον ἐφώνουν:
 «Ἐλέησον, οἰκτείρησον, σῶσον με τὴν ἀθλίαν,
 μὴ ἐνταῦθα ἐάσης με ὑπὸ θηρῶν βρωθῆναι.»
 Καὶ ἄλλα πλείονα αὐτῷ ἔλεγον θρηνηδοῦσα,
 ὁ δὲ γέγονεν ἀφανῆς μὴ φθεγξάμενος ὄλωσ·
 135 ἐμοῦ δὲ ἤδη τῶν ποδῶν ἀπάρτι ἀποκαμόντων
 τοῖς τῶν πετρῶν προσκρούσμασι πάντοθεν αἰμαχθέντων,
 ἐκεῖσε που κατέπεσον νεκρὰ ἐφηπλωμένη·
 καὶ μεθ' ἡμέρας ἑαυτὴν μόλις ἀναλαβοῦσα,
 ἐν τῇ πηγῇ ὑπέστρεψα ἀνάγκη βαδιοῦσα.
 140 Καὶ εἰμὶ πάντων ἔρημος μὴ ἔχουσα ἐλπίδας·
 οὐ γὰρ τολμῶ εἰς τοὺς γονεῖς τοὺς ἐμοὺς ὑποστρέψαι,
 αἰσχύνομαι τοὺς γείτονας, τὰς συνομήλικάς μου·
 ποῦ εὐρεῖν τὸν πλανήσαντα παντελῶς οὐ γινώσκω
 καὶ δέομαί σου μάχαιραν τοῦ δοῦναι μοι εἰς χεῖρας
 145 καὶ κατασφάξω ἑμαυτὴν ὡς πράξασαν ἀφρόνως·
 οὐ γὰρ συμφέρει μοι τοῦ ζῆν πάντων ἀποτυχοῦση.
 Ὡ τῶν ἐμῶν ἀτυχιῶν, ὦ συμφορῶν μεγίστων,
 ἡλλοτριώθην συγγενῶν, γονέων ἐχωρίσθην
 πρὸς τὸ κερδῆσαι φίλτατον καὶ αὐτοῦ ὑστερήθην·
 150 Ὡς δὲ ταῦτα ἐφθέγγετο ἡ κόρη θρηνηδοῦσα, 45r
 τοὺς βοστρύχους συντέμνουσα, τύπτουσα καὶ τὴν ὄψιν,
 ἐγὼ ταύτην, ὡς δυνατὸν, ἀνέστειλα τοῦ θρήνου,
 τὰς χεῖρας τε τῶν πλοκαμῶν ἀπέσπασα ἐν μέτρῳ
 ἔχειν παραμυθούμενος ἐλπίδας χρηστοτέρας
 155 καὶ ἐπηρώτησα μαθεῖν, Ἵπσοι εἰσὶν ἡμέραι
 ἀφ' ἧς ὁ πλάνος μόνην σε κατέλιπεν ἐνταῦθα;
 Ἡ δὲ αὖθις στενάξασα, Ἐδέκα ἡμέρας, ἔφη,
 ἄχρι τοῦ νῦν ἐπλήρωσα ἐν ταύτῃ τῇ ἐρήμῳ,
 μὴ ἰδοῦσα ἐκτός σου ἕτερον ἀνθρώπου χαρακτηῖρα
 160 καὶ τινος ἄλλου γηραιοῦ κατὰ τὴν χθὲς ἡμέραν
 ὃς ἔλεγε καὶ τὸν υἱὸν αὐτοῦ παρὰ Ἀράβων
 ἀφαιρεθῆναι πρὸ μικροῦ καὶ αἰχμάλωτον εἶναι

146 ἀποτυχοῦση Trapp: ἀποτυχοῦσα G

159 ἕτερον Legrand: ἄλλον G

161 αὐτοῦ Legrand: αὐτοῦ ποτὲ G

- I ran behind, on foot as I was, shouting.
 "Are you going off, my dearest? Where are you leaving me on my
 own?
 Have you forgotten the kindnesses which I showed you?
 Do you not remember your exceptional oaths at the beginning?"
 130 When he did not turn around, I cried out all the more,
 "Have mercy, take pity, save me in my misery,
 do not leave me here to be eaten by wild beasts."
 And I made further pleas like this to him as I lamented,
 but he just vanished without saying a word.
 135 With my feet now already worn out
 and bloody all over from pounding on the rocks,
 I fell down somewhere over there, collapsed in a dead faint.
 Coming to with difficulty as day broke,
 I returned to the spring, walking painfully.
 140 And I am bereft of everything, without hope;
 for I dare not return to my parents,
 I am ashamed in front of my neighbours and my girl friends.
 I have no idea at all where I can find the deceiver,
 and I beg you to put a dagger into my hands –
 145 and I will kill myself because I have acted so stupidly.
 There is no point in my living, now that I have lost everything.
 Alas for my misfortunes, alas for my great disasters,
 I estranged myself from my kinsmen, I parted from my parents
 to win my beloved, and I have been deprived of him.'
 150 As the girl was saying this in her lamentations,
 tearing at her curls, striking her face,
 I, so far as I could, stopped her lament
 and pulled her hands gently from her braids,
 encouraging her to hope for something better,
 155 and I enquired and asked, 'How many days
 is it since the deceiver left you alone here?'
 She sighed again, 'Ten days,' she said,
 'up till now I have spent in this desert,
 not seeing another person's face apart from yours,
 160 and one other's, an old man's, yesterday morning,
 who said his son had just been abducted
 by Arabs and was a prisoner.

- καὶ σπεύδειν εἰς ἀνάρρυσιν αὐτοῦ εἰς Ἀραβίαν.
 Οὗτος μοι διηγήσατο, τὰ κατ' ἐμὲ ἀκούσας,
 165 ὅτι πρὸ πέντε ἡμερῶν εἰς τὸ Βλαττολιβάδιον
 παιδὶν ξανθόν, ἀρτιγενές, μακρὸν τῆ ἡλικίας,
 εἰς φάρακα ἐποχοῦμενον καὶ συρτὸν ἄλλον φέρον,
 ὁ Μουσούρ ἐστασίασε καὶ σπαθέαν τον ἐδώκε·
 καὶ εἰ μὴ ὁ νεώτερος ὁ Ἀκρίτης εὐρέθη,
 170 ἐφόνευε τὸν ἄγουρον ἐν τῇ ὥρᾳ ἐκείνῃ·
 λέγω δὲ τοῦτον ἐκ παντὸς τὸν παραβάτην εἶναι,
 ταῦτα γὰρ τὰ γνωρίσματα ἐκείνον βεβαιούσι.
 Οἴμοι, οἴμοι, παντάλαινα καὶ παναθλία τύχη,
 ἡ ἀδοκίμως ἀγαθοῦ τοιοῦτου στερηθεῖσα,
 175 ἡ τὸ γλυκὺ πρὸ τοῦ πιεῖν ἀπολέσασα κάλλος,
 καὶ ὡς δένδρον νεόφυτον πρὸ καιροῦ ξηρανθεῖσα.^{45v}
 Ταῦτα ἡ κόρη λέγουσα, δακρύουσα ἀσχέτως,
 καὶ Ἀραβοὶ ἐξήεσαν ἄφνω ἀπὸ τῆς ἔλης
 ὑπέρτεροι τῶν ἑκατόν, πάντες δὲ κονταράτοι,
 180 οὕτως δέ μοι ὑπέπεσαν ὡς γῦπες εἰς τὸ βρώμα·
 καὶ ὁ φάραξ πολλὰ φθαρεῖς ἀπέσπασε τὸν κλώνον,
 ἐγὼ δὲ τοῦτον κατασχὼν ἐχόμενον τοῦ δρόμου
 μετὰ σπουδῆς ἐπέβαινον κατέχων τὸ κοντάρην
 καὶ πρὸς αὐτοὺς ἐπιδραμῶν πολλοὺς τούτων ἀνείλον.
 185 Τινὲς δέ με γνωρίσαντες ἔλεγον πρὸς ἀλλήλους:
 'Αὕτη ἡ τόλμη ἀληθῶς καὶ ἡ πολλὴ ἀνδρεία
 τὸν Ἀκρίτην ἐμφαίνουσιν· ἀπωλόμεθα πάντες.'
 Οἱ δὲ τοῦτο ἀκούσαντες ἔφυγον εἰς τὴν ἔλην,
 τὰ κοντάρια ρίψαντες ἔνιοι καὶ ἀσπίδας
 190 μῆτε μίαν προσμείναντες κἄν στιγμήν τὸ παράπαν.
 Ὡς δὲ καὶ μόνον ἑαυτὸν εἶδον περιλειφθέντα,
 πρὸς τὴν πηγὴν ὑπέστρεφον ἔνθα ἦτον ἡ κόρη·
 ἐκείνη δὲ εἰς εὐχερὲς δένδρον ἐπανελθοῦσα
 ἐώρα τὰ λεγόμενα καὶ γεγονότα πάντα·
 195 ἰδοῦσα δέ με πρὸς αὐτὴν ἀπερχόμενον μόνον

170 ἄγουρον Legrand: ἐκ παντὸς G

176 G writes νεώτατον with νεόφυτον above

184 τούτων Legrand: τούτους G

194 λεγόμενα G: γενόμενα Legrand

- and he was hurrying to Arabia to rescue him.
 He told me, when he heard my story,
 165 that five days previously, at Vlattolivadin,
 a fair-haired boy, with a new beard, tall in height,
 riding one charger and leading another,
 had a disagreement with Mousour who had struck him with his sword;
 and if Akritis, the young Frontiersman, had not been there,
 170 Mousour would have killed the youngster at that moment.
 I say that this is unquestionably the renegade,
 for the points of his description prove it was he.
 Alas, alas, most wretched and most miserable fate,
 to be deprived unexpectedly of such a benefit,
 175 to have lost sweet beauty before drinking it,
 and to have withered before time like a newly planted tree.'
 As the girl was saying this and weeping copiously,
 Arabs suddenly burst out of the marsh,
 more than a hundred, all armed with spears.
 180 They fell on me like vultures on a carcass,
 and my charger in great panic broke the branch away,
 but I caught him as he started down the road
 and mounted hastily, grasping my spear;
 I made an onslaught on them and killed many of them.
 185 Some recognised me and said to each other,
 'This boldness and great bravery truly
 reveal that this is the Frontiersman; we are all done for.'
 Those who heard this fled back to the marsh,
 throwing down their spears and some even their shields,
 190 not waiting even a second longer.
 When I saw that I was left on my own,
 I returned to the spring where the girl was.
 She had climbed a nearby tree
 and watched all that was said and done.
 195 Seeing me returning to her on my own,

166–8 The seducer's whereabouts are discovered through a coincidence – a useful motif, poorly handled. The reader has been told nothing of Mousour. Digenis, the narrator here, conceals his own previous killing of Mousour and rescue of the seducer (revealed at G5.214), with considerable loss of clarity in the narrative. Why does he not reassure her at G5.169–70? At Z2431–57 and 2465–76, at the equivalent of G5.20 and 27, the Mousour story is filled out; the vocabulary is very close to that in the girl's narrative at G5.66 ff., suggesting that the text in the G tradition used by the redactor of Z was not more complete here than the extant G version and the redactor was working with what he could extrapolate.

- ἐκ τοῦ δένδρου κατήρχετο καὶ σπουδαίως ὑπήντα,
 παρεκάλει τε λέγουσα μετὰ δακρύων τάδε:
 'Κύριέ μου καὶ τῆς ἐμῆς πρόξενε σωτηρίας,
 εἰ ὁ Ἀκρίτης ἀληθῶς σὺ ὑπάρχεις ἐκεῖνος
 200 ὁ τὸν ἐμὸν ῥυσάμενος φίλτατον ἐκ θανάτου,
 οὗ τὸ ὄνομα ἔφριξαν καὶ νῦν οἱ Ἀραβῖται,
 ἀπάγγελόν μοι, δέομαι, μὴ ἀποκρύψης ὅλως, 46r
 καὶ τὴν σπαθέαν τοῦ Μουσοῦρ, εἰ μετεῖχε θανάτου.'
 Ἐμὲ δὲ εἶχεν ἔκπληξις καὶ θαυμάζειν ἐποίει
 205 τῆς κόρης βλέπων τὴν πολλὴν ἀγάπην πρὸς τὸν παῖδα
 τὸν ταύτη προξενήσαντα συμφορὰς ἀνεϊκάστους,
 τῶν γεννητόρων χωρισμόν, ἀφαίρεσιν τοῦ πλοῦτου
 καὶ φρικώδη κατάλειψιν ἐν ἐρήμῳ ἀβάτῳ
 μὴ προσδοκῶσα ἄλλο τι ἢ τὸ θανεῖν ἀδίκως.
 210 Καὶ τότε πρῶτον ἔμαθον ἀγάπην γυναικείαν
 θερμότεραν κατὰ πολὺ ὑπάρχειν τῶν ἀρρένων.
 φθείρει δὲ μᾶλλον ἄθεσμος καὶ παράνομος μίξις.
 Ἐγὼ δὲ ἔφην πρὸς αὐτήν: 'Παῦσαι, κόρη, τοῦ κλαίειν
 καὶ τοῦ θρηνεῖν ὑπὲρ αὐτοῦ τοῦ δι' ἐμοῦ σωθέντος.
 215 ἐγὼ εἰμὶ ὁ τὸν Μουσοῦρ δικαίως θανατώσας
 τὸν ὁδοστάτην καὶ ληστήν, τὸν τὰς ὁδοὺς κρατοῦντα,
 ὡς μηδένα κατατολμᾶν διελθεῖν τοῖς ἐκεῖσε.
 ἐγὼ εἰμὶ <ὁ> ἐξ αὐτοῦ ἐλκύσας καὶ θανάτου
 ὃν οὐκ οἶδα πῶς ἀγαπᾶς καὶ ἐπὶ μνήμην φέρεις
 220 φίλτατον τὸν ἀβέβαιον ὀνομάζουσα παῖδα.
 Ἄλλὰ δεῦρο καὶ πρὸς αὐτὸν ἐγὼ σε ἀπαγάγω,
 παρασκευάσω τε αὐτὸν τοῦ γαμετήν σε ἔχειν,
 εἰ καὶ τὸ σέβας ἀρνηθῆς τῶν αἰσχροῶν Αἰθιοπίων.'
 Ἡ δὲ τοῦτο ἀκούσασα, χαρᾶς ἐμφορηθεῖσα,
 225 'Κύριέ μου,' ἀντέφησε, 'μέγιστε ἀντιλήπτορ,
 καὶ τοῦ θείου βαπτίσματος γέγονα ἐν μεθέξει
 πρὶν συναφθῆναι τῷ ἀνδρὶ παρ' αὐτοῦ κελευσθεῖσα.
 οὐδὲν γὰρ εἶχον δυνατὸν τῷ πόθῳ δουλωθεῖσα 46v

- she came down from the tree and rushed to meet me,
 and said to me pleadingly, with tears:
 'My lord, you who are responsible for my safety,
 if you are truly the famous Frontiersman
 200 who saved my dearest from death
 and whose name just now made the Arabs tremble,
 tell me, I beg you, do not conceal anything –
 the thrust of Mousour's sword, did it bring death?'
 Astonishment seized me and made me wonder
 205 as I saw the girl's great love for the boy
 who was responsible for her unimaginable disasters –
 separation from her parents, deprivation of her wealth,
 and horrifying desertion in a trackless desert
 where she could expect nothing except an unjust death.
 210 And then for the first time I discovered that a woman's love
 is much more intense than that of men,
 and wrongful and illegal intercourse corrupts it more.
 I said to her: 'Stop crying, girl,
 and weeping over him, for he was saved by me.
 215 It was I who justly put to death Mousour,
 the highwayman and brigand who controlled the roads
 so that no one dared to travel to these parts.
 It was I who rescued from Mousour and death
 the one whom you love – I can't think why – and whose memory
 you cherish,
 220 calling the fickle boy your dearest.
 But come, I will bring you to him,
 and I will arrange for him to take you as his wife,
 if you renounce the faith of the shameful Ethiopians.'
 When she heard this she was carried away with joy.
 225 'My lord,' she replied, 'greatest protector,
 I had received holy baptism
 before my union with the man, on his instructions;
 for, enslaved as I was by desire, I could do nothing other

207 Once again the loss of parents is considered a major disaster; cf. G4.9.
 210–12 The moralising is startlingly insulated from any thought of the rape which
 Digenis is about to commit. The masculine code cannot conceive of loyalty towards a
 person who has behaved as badly as the man in this case: in looking for reasons for her
 continuing love, Digenis is unable to think beyond her womanly weakness in
 surrendering to illicit sexual urges. On how the patriarchal code has been breached,
 see Galatariotou, 1987, 57–8 and Laiou, 1993, 213–14.
 223 This contempt for Islam belies earlier positive references in the emir's story.

218 ὁ added by Legrand

223 ἀρνηθῆς Legrand: ἀρνήση G

τὰ παρ' αὐτοῦ λεγόμενα μὴ ἀγαγεῖν εἰς ἔργον,
 230 δι' ὃν γονεῖς καὶ ἀγχιστὰς εἰς οὐδὲν ἐλογίσθη·'
 Ταῦτα, φίλε, ὡς ἤκουσα ἐκ στόματος τῆς κόρης,
 καθάπερ φλόξ εἰς τὴν ἐμὴν καρδίαν ἐπεισῆλθεν
 καὶ προσέφερεν ἔρωτα καὶ παράνομον μίξιν·
 καὶ πρῶτα μὲν ἀνέστελλον τὴν ἀκάθεκτον γνώμην
 235 καὶ ἤθελον, εἰ δυνατὸν, φυγεῖν τὴν ἀμαρτίαν·
 ἀλλὰ πάντως ἀδύνατον πῦρ παραμεῖναι χόρτῳ.
 Ὡς γὰρ ταύτην ἀνήγαγον ἐν τῷ ἰδίῳ ἵππῳ
 καὶ τῆς ὁδοῦ ἠπτόμεθα ὡς πρὸς τὴν Χαλκουργίαν
 (τόπος γὰρ οὗτος πέφυκε πλησίον τῆς Συρίας),
 240 οὐκ εἶχον ὅ,τι γένωμαι, πῦρ ὅλος ἐγενόμην
 τοῦ ἔρωτος ὀλοσχερῶς ἐν ἐμοὶ αὐξηθέντος·
 καταβαλόντες τὸ λοιπὸν χρεῖαν τάχα ποιήσαι,
 ἐν τῷ κάλλει τοῦς ὀφθαλμούς, ἐν τῇ ἀφῆ τὰς χεῖρας,
 τὸ στόμα τοῖς φιλήμασι καὶ ἀκοὴν τοῖς λόγοις,
 245 ἤρξάμην ἅπαντα ποιεῖν πράξεως παρανόμου·
 καὶ γεγόνασιν ἅπαντα ὅσα ἤθελον ἔργα,
 καὶ ἐμιάνθη ἡ ὁδὸς ἀπὸ τῆς ἀνομίας
 συνεργείᾳ σατανικῇ καὶ ψυχῆς ἀμελείᾳ,
 εἰ καὶ πολλὰ ἀντίστατο ἡ κόρη πρὸς τὸ ἔργον,
 250 εἰς Θεὸν καθορκίζουσα καὶ εἰς ψυχὰς γονέων.
 Ἄλλὰ ὁ ἀντικείμενος, τοῦ σκότους ὁ προστάτης,
 ὁ ἐχθρὸς καὶ πολέμιος τοῦ ἡμετέρου γένους,
 καὶ αὐτοῦ παρεσκεύασε Θεοῦ ἐπιλαθῆσθαι
 καὶ τῆς ἀνταποδόσεως τῆς φοβερᾶς ἡμέρας, 47r
 255 ἐν ἧ πάντα τὰ κρύφια πταιίσματα φανεροῦνται
 τῶν ἀγγέλων ἐνώπιον καὶ τῶν ἀνθρώπων πάντων.
 Εἶτα παραγενόμενος ἐπὶ τὴν Χαλκουργίαν,
 ἐκείσε τὸν πλανήσαντα ταύτην εὐρομεν παῖδα.
 Ἦν δὲ ἄρα τοῦ στρατηγοῦ υἱὸς τοῦ Ἀντιόχου,

than carry out what I was told by him,
 230 the man for whom I reckoned my parents and relations as nothing.'
 When, my friend, I heard this from the girl's mouth
 it was as if a flame entered my heart
 and aroused passion and illegal intercourse.
 At first I tried to subdue this ungovernable intention
 235 and I wanted, if possible, to escape the sin,
 but it is altogether impossible for fire to stay in grass.
 For as I took her off on my horse
 and we began the journey to Chalkourgia
 (this was a place near Syria),
 240 I could not control what came over me, I was all on fire,
 with passion growing overwhelmingly within me.
 Dismounting then to perform our natural functions
 – my eyes in beauty, my hands in touch,
 my mouth with kisses and my hearing with words –
 245 I began to do everything that was unlawful.
 And all that I wanted to do was done,
 and our journey was besmirched by the lawlessness,
 with the complicity of the devil and my soul's heedlessness,
 even if the girl resisted the act vigorously,
 250 calling to witness God and her parents' souls.
 But the adversary, the prince of darkness,
 the enemy and antagonist of our race,
 led me to forget God himself
 and the retribution of that dreadful day
 255 on which all hidden faults will be revealed
 before the angels and all mankind.
 Then, arriving at Chalkourgia,
 we found there the boy who had seduced her.
 He was indeed the son of the general Antiochos

244 τὸ στόμα τοῖς φιλήμασι Legrand: τῷ στόματι φιλήματα G
 259 τοῦ στρατηγοῦ υἱὸς Legrand: υἱὸς στρατηγοῦ G

231 Reference to Digenis' interlocutor reinforces the framework of the first-person narrative.

242–4 The earthiness of G5.242 has struck commentators as extreme bad taste (Trapp obelised the line). The next two have lyricism and balance (after Legrand's correction), spoiled by a lack of integration into the passage by sense or syntax. Probably the text has been distorted by a prurient reaction to its sexual content (cf. G5.247–56 below), though it is unclear when in the poem's textual history this happened.

256 The prior life of Aploravdis' daughter and her being alone on the open highway meant Digenis' actions were almost inevitable, though legally there was no question of rape since this was applicable only to virgins (Laiou, 1993, 213–15).

- 260 τοῦ πρὸ χρόνων ἐν τῷ Ζυγῷ ὑπὸ Περσῶν σφαγέντος.
 ὣς γὰρ αὐτὸν ἀπὸ χειρῶν τοῦ Μουσούρ ἐρυσάμην,
 ἔμπροσθέν μου οὐκ εἶασα τοῦ πορευθῆναι τοῦτον,
 γνωστὸν δὲ πᾶσιν ἔφηνα καὶ παράνομον μάλα
 καὶ τοῦτον παραδέδωκα πρὸς τοὺς ἐκεῖ μου φίλους,
 265 ὡς ἂν διάγη μετ' αὐτῆς ἄχρις οὗ ὑποστρέψω –
 'Εἰ δ' οὖν καὶ ταύτην ἐκβαλεῖν τὴν κόρην βουληθείης,
 μὰ τὸν σωτήρα μου Χριστόν, πλεῖον ζωῆν οὐχ ἔξεις.'
 Φήσας αὐτῷ μὴ ἀδικεῖν τὴν κόρην μήτε βλάπτειν,
 τοῦτον ἐκεῖ καταλιπὼν πλεῖστα τε νοθετήσας,
 270 δεύτερον ἐντειλάμενος μὴ ταύτην ἀθετήσαι
 ἀλλ' ἔχειν, ὡς ὑπέσχετο, γαμετὴν διὰ νόμου,
 διηγησάμην ἅπασιν πῶς τε εὗρον τὴν κόρην
 καὶ πῶς ταύτην ἀφήρπασα ἀπὸ τῶν Ἀραβίτων·
 τὰ δὲ μὴ δεόν ἐξειπεῖν παρέτρεχον τῷ λόγῳ,
 275 ἵνα μὴ σκάνδαλον ὁ παῖς εἰς διάνοιαν λάβῃ.
 Εἶτα τὸν πλοῦτον ἅπαντα παραδοὺς ἀμφοτέροις
 ὃν ἡ κόρη ἀφείλετο ἐξ οἰκείων γονέων
 καὶ ἵππους δύο τοὺς αὐτῶν ἀπέπεμπον ἐκεῖθεν,
 αὐτὴς ἐπαγγειλάμενος τῷ νέῳ δημοσίως
 280 τοῦ μηδέποτε ἀδικῶν ἔτι τῇ κόρῃ πράξαι. 47v
 Καὶ μετ' ὀλίγον καὶ αὐτὸς ἦλθον εἰς τὴν καλὴν μου
 τοῦ Ἀπριλίου τρέχοντος πρὸς μεσότητα ἤδη,
 τὸ συνειδὸς κατήγορον φέρων τῆς ἀμαρτίας
 καὶ ταλανίζων ἑμαυτὸν ἐν τῇ ἀθέσμῳ πράξει·
 285 ὀπηνίκα τὸν ἥλιον, τὴν ἐμὴν ψυχὴν εἶδον,
 ὡς αἰσχυνόμενος αὐτὴν μεγάλως ἀδικήσας,
 μετ' ὀλίγον γὰρ ἔδοξα μετοίκησιν ποιῆσαι
 (διὰ τὸ γινῶναι καὶ αὐτὴ τὴν παράνομον μίξιν),
 ἦν δὴ καὶ πεποιήκαμεν ἀπάραντες ἐκεῖθεν.»

265 Legrand suggests αὐτῶν

270 δεύτερον Trapp: καὶ δεύτερον G

- 260 who years before had been killed by the Persians in the Zygos
 mountains.
 When I rescued him from Mousour's hands,
 I did not allow him to travel on ahead of me
 but told everyone about him and especially that he was a law-breaker;
 and I handed him over to my friends there,
 265 so that he should live with her until my return –
 'If ever you plan to turn this girl out,
 by my saviour Christ, you will cease to live.'
 I told him not to wrong the girl or to harm her,
 left him there with much advice,
 270 and instructed him for a second time not to reject her
 but to take her, as he had promised, as his lawful wife.
 I told everyone how I found the girl
 and how I saved her from the Arabs,
 but I passed over in my story what should not be told,
 275 so that the boy should not take offence.
 Then, handing over to both of them all the wealth,
 which the girl had taken from her own parents,
 and their two horses, I sent them away from there,
 once more instructing the young man publicly
 280 never again to do any wrong to the girl.
 And after a while I myself returned to my lovely girl,
 as April was already hastening towards its mid-point,
 having a guilty consciousness of my sin
 and castigating myself for my illicit deed.
 285 When I saw my sun, my soul,
 since I was ashamed of having greatly wronged her,
 after a while I decided to move our home
 (because she too knew of my unlawful intercourse),
 which we did, removing ourselves from there."

260 If Ζυγός is a proper name, it will refer to the Anti-Tauros range; if not, it could mean a mountain ridge in general, or a line of troops, or, more likely, the yoke of slavery and captivity. 'Persians' here are unlikely to refer to pre-Islamic times and may be a twelfth-century linguistically conservative reference to Turks.

288 Digenis' wife, here as later in the case of Maximou, acts as a kind of extension of his conscience. The change of residence, as well as underlining the disjointed nature of this book, also has a psychological basis, since there is no sign of wide local knowledge of Digenis' rape, and its victim has been sent off with her man.