

Λόγος τέταρτος

Ἀνδραγαθία ἄρχονται ἐντεῦθεν τοῦ Ἀκρίτου,
καὶ πῶς τὴν κόρην ἥρπαξε τὴν πάγκαλον ἐκείνην
καὶ περὶ γάμου τοῦ αὐτοῦ λόγος τέταρτος ἔστιν.

Καὶ εὐθὺς περὶ ἔρωτος ὑμᾶς ἀναμνήσκω·

- 5 ῥίζα γὰρ οὗτος καὶ ἀρχὴ καθέστηκεν ἀγάπης,
ἐξ ἧς φιλία τίκτεται, εἴτα γεννᾶται πόθος, E702
ὃς αὐξηθεὶς κατὰ μικρὸν φέρει καρπὸν τοιοῦτον,
μερίμνας μὲν διηνεκεῖς, ἐννοίας καὶ φροντίδας, E703
εὐθὺς κινδύνους παμπληθεῖς καὶ χωρισμὸν γονέων. E704
- 10 Νεότης γὰρ ἀκμάζουσα καρδίας ἀνασπάει,
εἴτα πάντα κατατολμᾷ τῶν ἀνεπιχειρήτων, E704
θαλάττης μὲν ἐφίκεσθαι, πῦρ μηδὲ πτοεῖσθαι. E705
δράκοντας δὲ καὶ λέοντας καὶ τὰ λοιπὰ θηρία
οὐδοποιοῦν λογίζεται στερεωθεὶς ὁ πόθος E706
- 15 καὶ τοὺς ληστὰς τοὺς τολμηροὺς ἀντ' οὐδενὸς ἡγεῖται,
νύκτας ἡμέρας προσδοκᾷ καὶ τὰς κλεισούρας κάμπους, E708
ἀγρυπνίαν ἀνάπαυσιν καὶ τὰ μακρὰν πλησίον. E708
πολλοὶ καὶ πίστιν τὴν αὐτῶν ἀρνοῦνται διὰ πόθον.

Καὶ τοῦτο μηδεὶς ἄπιστον ἐξ ὑμῶν λογισθήτω, 21r

4 εὐθὺς G: αὐθὺς Kalonaros, cf. Z1253 ἀναμνήσκω Legrand: ἀναμνήσκω G
16 προσδοκᾷ Legrand: προσδοκᾶν G

Fourth book

From this point begin the brave deeds of Akritis the Frontiersman,
and how he abducted that very lovely girl,
and the fourth book is about his marriage.

And immediately I remind you about passion,

- 5 for this is established as the root and beginning of love,
from which affection is begotten, then desire is born,
which as it increases gradually bears such fruit
as constant anxieties, worries and concerns,
and immediately brings abundant dangers and separation from
parents.
- 10 For youth in its prime breaks hearts,
then dares every deed that has never been ventured,
to reach the sea and have no fear at all of fire;
ogres and lions and other wild beasts
desire, once established, considers as trifles,
- 15 and it regards bold brigands as worth nothing;
it reckons night as day and mountain passes as plains,
sleeplessness as rest and what is far off as near.
And many renounce their faith because of desire.
And let none of you consider this incredible,

Book 4, the longest of G's eight books, deals with the hero's transition to manhood through hunting exploits, culminating in his wooing of the girl who is abruptly introduced at G4.254. At G4.971 ff. the emperor's visit is loosely linked to the main narrative as the ultimate demonstration of Digenis' fame. The equivalent material in E (without the emperor episode) is found at E702–1094.

1–64 The first part of Book 4 provides the point of articulation between the two parts of the poem and is reflected, though more briefly, in E. This confirms that *Digenis included both the emir's story and that of Digenis, linked by similar narratives of the latter's childhood and by their common exemplification of the power of love.

4–18 This passage, reflected in E702–8, begins with details (separation from parents and the sea) of dubious relevance to Digenis, though the emir is separated from his mother and his father has raided the sea (probably not for love). These are more general characteristics of the ancient romance and its twelfth-century revival. Later items on the list are specific to Digenis and especially the emir.

- 20 μάρτυρα γὰρ ἐπαινετὸν εἰς μέσον παραστήσω
 ἄμιρᾶν τὸν πανεύγενον καὶ πρῶτον τῆς Συρίας,
 ὃς εἶχε κάλλη πάντερπινα καὶ τόλμην θηριώδη
 καὶ μέγεθος πανθαύμαστον, ἰσχὺν γενναιοτάτην,
 καὶ μᾶλλον δεύτερος Σαμψὼν αὐτὸς ἐπενοήθη.
- 25 ἐκείνος γὰρ ἠρίστευσε χερσὶ λέοντα σχίσας,
 οὗτος δὲ πλήθος ἄπειρον ἀπέκτεινε λεόντων.
 Παύσασθε γράφειν Ὅμηρον καὶ μύθους Ἀχιλλέως
 ὡσαύτως καὶ τοῦ Ἑκτορος, ἅπερ εἰσὶ ψευδέα.
 Ἀλέξανδρος ὁ Μακεδὼν δυνατὸς ἐν φρονήσει,
- 30 Θεὸν τε ἔχων συνεργὸν γέγονε κοσμοκράτωρ.
 Αὐτὸς δὲ φρόνημα στερρὸν ἔχων Θεὸν ἐπεγνώ,
 ἐκέκτετο καὶ μετ' αὐτοῦ ἀνδρείαν τε καὶ τόλμην.
 Φιλοπαπποῦ τοῦ γέροντος, Κιννάμου καὶ Ἰωαννάκη
 οὐδ' ὅλως ἔστιν ἄξιον τὰ αὐτῶν καταλέγειν.
- 35 οὗτοι γὰρ ἐκαυχήσαντο μηδὲν πεπονηκότες,
 τούτου δὲ πάντα ἀληθῆ καὶ μαρτυρημένα. E718
 Ἀμβρων ὑπῆρχεν ὁ παπποῦς, θεῖος τοῦ ὁ Καρόης.
 διαλεκτοὺς τὸν ἔδωκαν τρισχιλίους κονταράτους, E728
 πᾶσαν Συρίαν ὑπέταξεν, ἐπίασε τὸ Κοῦφερ.
- 40 εἶθ' οὕτως ἐν τοῖς μέρεσιν ἦλθε τῆς Ῥωμανίας, E731
 κάστρα πολλὰ ἐκούρσευσεν χώρας τοῦ Ἡρακλέος, E732
 Χαρζιανὴν ἐπραΐδευσε καὶ τὴν Καππαδοκίαν.
 κόρην τερπνὴν ἀφῆρπαξεν εὐγενῇ τῶν Δουκάδων E733
 διὰ κάλλος τὸ θαυμαστὸν καὶ τερπνὴν ἡλικίαν, 21v E734
- 45 τὰ πάντα ἀρνησάμενος, πίστιν ὁμοῦ καὶ δόξαν,
 καὶ γέγονε Χριστιανὸς ὀρθόδοξος διὰ ταύτην. E735

- 20 for I shall set before you a renowned witness,
 the most high-born emir and first man of Syria,
 who possessed the most handsome grace and savage daring,
 and quite amazing stature, most noble strength,
 and indeed was thought to be a second Samson.
- 25 For Samson achieved distinction by rending a lion with his bare hands,
 but the emir killed a boundless host of lions.
 Cease writing of Homer and the legends of Achilles
 and likewise of Hektor; these are false.
 Alexander of Macedon, mighty in his judgement,
- 30 with God to work with him became ruler of the world.
 But the emir with steadfast good sense recognised God, {
 and with him achieved bravery and daring.
 As for old Philopappous, Kinnamos and Ioannakis,
 it is not at all worth recounting stories about them:
- 35 for they have boasted but achieved nothing
 while all stories about the emir are true and have witnesses.
 Ambron was his grandfather, his uncle Karois;
 they gave him three thousand picked spearmen,
 he subdued all Syria, he captured Kufah.
- 40 So then he came into the districts of Roman territory;
 he plundered many fortresses of the land of Herakles,
 he pillaged Charziane and Cappadocia.
 He abducted a delightful high-born girl from the Doukas family,
 because of her marvellous beauty and pleasing appearance,
- 45 renouncing everything including his faith and his reputation,
 and he became an Orthodox Christian because of her;

25–36 This passage seems to move away from the power of love (though each of the heroes listed has a romantic attachment: Achilles with Briseis, Hektor with Andromache, even Alexander with e.g. Kandake and Roxane). Alexander was a potent symbol in Byzantine political mythology (Gleixner, 1961; Moennig, 1993). That the focus changes to general heroic renown is confirmed by mention of Philopappous and his friends who are not obviously motivated by love. It has been said that 'the tale of Digenis is unmistakably here claiming its place in the prestigious literary tradition of which Homer stands at the head' (Beaton, 1989, 44). But that claim is made in a most unpretentious way, using the convention of the 'lying Homer' prominent in the twelfth century in, e.g., the writings of John Tzetzes (Jeffreys, 1978, 126–31). The main point is to stress the veracity of stories about the emir: the other names are examples from different sources chosen to mark that point by contrast. This is the first mention in G before Book 6 of Philopappous, the leader of the guerrillas. Digenis' later opponents; they are not identified as such here (cf. G4.965, 6.120 ff.). Philopappous is not found in E at this point, but will soon appear in the controversial 'First meeting with the guerrillas' (beginning at E624 and Z1044); see G4.253 below.

38–42 For this expedition, cf. G1.49–56, 291–6.

καὶ ὁ ποτε πολέμιος δοῦλος ὦφθη Ῥωμαίων.

Ἐξ ὧν παιδίον τίκτεται περικαλλὲς τῷ ὄντι
καὶ ἐξ αὐτῆς γεννήσεως Βασίλειος ἐκλήθη.

50 λέγεται δὲ καὶ Διγενὴς ὡς ἀπὸ τῶν γονέων,
ἔθνικὸς μὲν ἀπὸ πατρός, ἐκ δὲ μητρὸς Ῥωμαῖος.
φοβερός δὲ γενόμενος, ὡς ὁ λόγος δηλώσει,
Ἀκρίτης ὀνομάζεται τὰς ἄκρας ὑποτάξας.
Τούτου πάππος Ἀντάκινος ἀπὸ τῶν Κινναμάδων,

55 ὃς τέθηκεν ἐξόριστος προστάξει βασιλέως
Βασιλείου τοῦ εὐτυχοῦς, ἀκρίτου τοῦ μεγάλου.
πολὺς ὢν κλῆρος ἐν αὐτῷ καὶ ἀνείκαστος δόξα,
μέγας μὲν ἐφημίζετο στρατηγὸς παρὰ πάντων.
Μάμμη δὲ ἡ στρατήγιςσα εὐγενὴς τῶν Δουκάδων.

60 θείους εἶχε τοὺς θαυμαστοὺς, ἀδελφοὺς τῆς μητρὸς του,
οἱ καὶ ἐμονομάχησαν διὰ τὴν ἀδελφὴν των
τὸν ἀμυρᾶν τὸν θαυμαστὸν τὸν ἑαυτοῦ πατέρα.
Οὗτος ἐβλάστησε φυλῆς ἐξ εὐγενῶν Ῥωμαίων
καὶ γέγονε περίβλεπτος εἰς τὰς ἀνδραγαθίας.
65 Ἦδη λοιπὸν ἀρξώμεθα τὰ αὐτοῦ καταλέγειν.

Οὗτος τοίνυν ὁ θαυμαστὸς Βασίλειος Ἀκρίτης
παιδόμενος εἰς καθηγητὴν παρὰ πατρός ἐδόθη
καὶ τρεῖς ὅλους ἐνιαυτοὺς μαθήμασι σχολάσας
τῇ τοῦ νοὸς ὀξύτητι πλήθος ἔσχε γραμμάτων. 22r
70 Ἐντεῦθεν ἱππηλάσια, καὶ κυνηγεῖν ποθήσας
μετὰ πατρός ἐσχόλαζε καθ' ἐκάστην ἐν τούτοις.

Μιᾶ τοίνυν τῶν ἡμερῶν τὸν πατέρα του λέγει:
«Πόθος, αὐθέντα καὶ πατήρ, ἐσέβη εἰς τὴν ψυχὴν μου
τοῦ δοκιμάσαι ἐμαντὸν εἰς θηρίων πολέμους.
75 καὶ εἴπερ ὅλως ἀγαπᾷς Βασίλειον υἱόν σου,
εἰς τόπον ὅς ἐξέλθωμεν ἔνθα εἰσὶ θηρία,
καὶ πάντως βλέψεις λογισμὸν αἰεὶ με ἐνοχλοῦντα.»

47 ὁ ποτε Legrand: ὁ ποτὲ G

51 Ῥωμαῖος Legrand: Ῥωμαῖος G

57 ὦν G: ἦν Z1320, perhaps correctly

77 βλέψεις G: σβέσεις Grégoire, 1942, 274, cf. Z1357

and he who had once been an enemy proved to be a slave of the Romans.

From these was born a little boy, really very beautiful,
and at his birth he was named Basil;

50 and he is called Digenis, Of Double Descent, because of his parents,
for he was a heathen on his father's side and a Roman on his mother's;
and since he became feared, as the story will reveal,
he is called Akritis, the Frontiersman, because he subjugated the
frontiers.

His grandfather was Antakinos from the Kinnamos family,
55 who died whilst an exile on the orders of the emperor,
Basil the fortunate, the great frontiersman;
a great inheritance falling to him and unimaginable glory,
he was famed among all as a great general.
The hero's grandmother was a high-born general's lady, from the
Doukas family.

60 He had marvellous uncles, brothers of his mother,
who fought in single combat for the sake of their sister
the marvellous emir, his father.
He was an offspring of the race of high-born Romans,
and became celebrated for his brave deeds.

65 Now then, let us begin to recount his achievements.

And so this marvellous Basil the Frontiersman
from childhood was given by his father to a teacher;
and after he had devoted three whole years to his lessons,
through the sharpness of his mind he had acquired a mass of learning.
70 Then on to horsemanship, and as he wanted to hunt
he devoted himself with his father every day to these matters.

And so, one day, he said to his father:
"A desire, my lord and father, has entered my soul,
to test myself by fighting wild beasts;
75 and, if you love Basil your son at all,
let us go out to a place where there are wild beasts,
and you will certainly see the thought that is always troubling me."

56 On the possible identities of an emperor named Basil, see the Name Index. There may also be reference to the common root with the word βασιλεύς itself, or an explanation for the baptismal name of Digenis, or a reference to the emperor's visit later in this book (not in E).

68 Not to be taken as information on contemporary educational practice but as a conventional sign of heroic achievement in this sphere comparable to other, later, romance heroes.

«Κρότοι καὶ κτύποι καὶ ἀπειλαὶ μὴ σὲ καταπτοήσουν, 139r

G1.134, 135

G1.138, 2.234

μὴ φοβηθῆς τὸν θάνατον παρὰ μητρὸς κατάραν·

μητρὸς κατάραν φύλαττε καὶ μὴ πληγὰς καὶ πόνους.

4 Μέλη μέλη ἂν σὲ ποιήσουσιν, βλέπε ἐντροπήν μὴ ποιήσης.

6 Τοὺς πέντε ἃς μᾶς φονεύουσιν καὶ τότε ἃς τὴν ἐπάρουν.

Μόνον προθύμως ἐξελθε εἰς τοῦ ἀμιρᾶ τὴν τόλμην.

Τὰ δύο σου χέρια φύλαττε καὶ ὁ Θεὸς νὰ μᾶς βοηθήσῃ.»

Καὶ ὁ ἀμιρᾶς ἑκαβαλίκευσεν, εἰς αὐτὸν ὑπαγαίνει.

G1.161

G3.261

10 Φαρίν ἑκαβαλίκευσεν φητὺλὸν καὶ ἀστεράτον·

ὁμπρὸς εἰς τὸ μετώπιν τοῦ χρυσὸν ἀστέραν εἶχεν,

τὰ τέσσερά του ὀνύχια ἀργυροτσάπωτα ἦσαν,

καλιγοκάρφια ὀλάργυρα ἦτον καλιγωμένον,

ἡ οὐρά του συμυνομένη <ἦτον>, μὲ τὸ μαργαριτάριν.1

15 Πρασινορόδινος ἀετὸς ᾿ς τὴν σέλαν ἐξοπίσω 139v

καὶ ἰσκιάζει τὰς κουτάλας τοῦ ἐκ τοῦ ἡλίου τὰς ἀκτίνας.

Κοντάριν ἐμαλάκιζε βένετον, χρυσωμένον.

G1.164

Καὶ τότε πάλιν ὁ ἀμιρᾶς τοῦτον τὸν λόγον λέγει:

«Ἀπὸ πολὺν <τὸν> πόλεμον καὶ ἀπὸ δοκιμασίας

20 καὶ πάλιν ἔχω ἀποδοχὴν νὰ ἐπάρω τοῦ τὸ νίκος.»

Σαρακηνὸς ἐλάλησεν τὸν ἀμιράν τῆς γλώσσης:

«Αὐτό, ἀμιρά, μὴ τὸ γελᾷς, μὴ τὸ κατονειδίζης·

ἐγὼ παιδὶν καλὸν θεωρῶ καὶ δυνατὸν πολέμου,

καὶ ἂν ἔχη καρδίαν ὁ ἄγουρος γλήγορα νὰ γυρίζη,

25 τὴν τόλμην τοῦ τὴν θεωρῶ

νὰ ἐπάρῃ καὶ τὸ ἀδελφὶ τοῦ καὶ ὅλον μας τὸ κοῦρσος» —

4 Μέλη μέλη Karayanni, 1976, 79, cf. Spadaro, 1989, 174–5: μέλη καὶ μέλ E καὶ μέλη Alexiou After ποιήσης E has ἂν κατεβοῦμεν (=E5), deleted by Alexiou

9 ἑκαβαλίκευσεν Trapp: ἑκαβαλίκευσεν E

14 συμυνομένη E: συμυριδομένη Xanthoudidis, 1912, 544 ἦτον [ἦτον] added by Alexiou

15 ᾿ς Trapp, cf. Spadaro, 1989, 175: εἰς E

16 ἡλίου Trapp: ἡλίου E

17 βένετον Hesseling: βενέτον E

19 Ἀπὸ πολὺν τὸν Trapp: ἀπὸ πολλὴν E Εἶμαι ἀπὸ πολὺν Alexiou ἀπὸ πολὺν μου Krumbacher, 1904, 316

20 τοῦ Alexiou: καὶ ἐτούτον E καὶ Krumbacher, 1904, 316

22 κατονειδίζης Krumbacher, 1904, 316: κ᾿νιδίζης E

24 καρδίαν ὁ ἄγουρος E: ὁ ἄγουρος καρδίαν Alexiou γλήγορα νὰ γυρίζη Lambros, 1904, 383: ὅτι νὰ γυρίζη ἐγγύγορα E

25 τοῦ τὴν Trapp: τούτην E

26–32 See the notes to the translation

“... Don’t let noises and blows and threats shock you,

don’t fear death rather than your mother’s curse;

look out for your mother’s curse and not for wounds and pain.

4 Even if they cut you to pieces, see that you don’t disgrace yourself.

6 Let them kill the five of us and then let them take her.

Just set out eagerly against the emir’s daring.

Take good care of your two hands and may God help us.”

The emir mounted and went towards him.

10 He had mounted a horse that was piebald and starred,

it had a golden star in front on its forehead,

its four hoofs were trimmed with silver,

it was shod with solid silver nails,

its tail was perfumed, set with pearls.

15 There was a green and rose eagle silk behind the saddle,

and this shaded its flanks from the rays of the sun.

The emir wielded a blue, gilded spear.

Then in turn he uttered these words:

“After much fighting and great hardship

20 once again I expect to achieve victory over him.”

A Saracen addressed the emir in his own tongue:

“Do not mock him, emir, do not scoff at him;

I see a fine boy who is mighty in war,

and if the youngster has the spirit to turn quickly,

25 I can see he has the daring

to capture his sister and all our booty”

The text in E lacks its opening pages and up to around 100 lines, and begins on f. 139r after a space left blank for illustration; see Introduction, pp. xix–xxii. The abducted girl’s brothers are encouraging the youngest in his challenge to the emir; the missing narrative was probably similar to G1.1–133.

Lines 1–609 (cf. G1.134–3.343) are defined by Alexiou (cf. Ricks, 1990) as ‘The Song of the Emir’; there is no manuscript evidence for this division. The episode would have been part of *Digenis*: see Beaton, 1993b.

10–16 Compare the description of Maximou’s horse at E1486–8.

15 Haldon, 1990, 221–2 refers to the multi-coloured eagle silks of Byzantine court ceremonial in the tenth century, which were used for garments rather than saddlecloths. 21, 30, 46 Why is it surprising that the emir and his henchmen speak the same language, whether Arabic or Syriac? Is there reference here to a dialect (Karayanni, 1976, 83)? At G1.218 an interpreter is needed between the Byzantine Greeks and the Saracen peasant.

- 28 σπεύδει γὰρ καὶ ὁ φθόνος του μὴ καὶ εἰς δειλίαν τὸν φέρη.
 27 Ταχέως ἐκαβαλίκευσαν, ὅς τὸν κάμπον κατεβαίνουν.
 30 Σαρακηνὸς ἐλάλησεν τὸν ἀμυρὰν τῆς γλώσσης:
 «Πίασε, μούλε, τὸν ἄγουρον, ταχέως νὰ τὸν νικήσης.
 29 αὐτὸς σκυλὶ Ρωμαῖος ἐν', μὴ σὲ κακοδικήσῃ.» G1.189
 32 Εὐθύς ἐκαβαλίκευσαν, ὅς τὸν κάμπον κατεβαίνουν. G1.172
 ὥς δράκοντες ἐσύριζαν καὶ ὡς λέοντες ἐβρυχοῦντα G1.173-4
 καὶ ὡς ἄετοι ἐπέτουντα, καὶ ἐσμίξασιν οἱ δύο. G1.173
 35 καὶ τότε νὰ ἰδῆς πόλεμον καλῶν παλληκαρίων.
 Καὶ ἀπὸ τῆς μάχης τῆς πολλῆς κροῦσιν διλασυντόμως. 140r
 καὶ ἀπὸ τὸν κτύπον τὸν πολὺν καὶ ἀπὸ τὸ δὸς καὶ λάβε
 οἱ κάμποι φόβον εἶχασιν καὶ τὰ βουνιὰ ἀηδονοῦσαν, G1.180
 τὰ δένδρη ἐξεριζώνουντα καὶ ὁ ἥλιος ἐσκοτίσθη.
 40 Τὸ αἷμαν ἐκατέρειεν εἰς τὰ σκαλόλουρά των G1.181
 καὶ ὁ ἵδρος τοὺς ἐξέβαινεν ἀπάνω ἀπ' τὰ λουρίκια.
 Ἦτον <καὶ> γὰρ τοῦ Κωνσταντῆ γοργότερος ὁ μαῦρος,
 καὶ θαυμαστὸς νεώτερος ἦτον ὁ καβελάρης.
 κατέβηκε εἰς τὸν ἀμυρὰν καὶ κρούει του ραβδέα
 45 καὶ τότε ἐχέρισε ὁ ἀμυρὰς νὰ τρέμη καὶ νὰ φεύγῃ.
 Σαρακηνὸς ἐλάλησεν τὸν ἀμυρὰν τῆς γλώσσης:
 «Πίασε, μούλε, τὸν ἄγουρον, ταχέως νὰ τὸν νικήσης,
 μὴ εἰς σύντομόν του γύρισμα πάρῃ τὴν κεφαλὴν σου.
 αὐτὸς καλὰ σ' ἐσέβηκεν, τώρα νὰ σὲ γκρεμίσῃ.
 50 Ἐγώ, μούλε, οὐ τὸ ἐγνοιάζομαι νὰ τὸν καταπονέσῃς,
 ἀλλὰ μὴ τὸ καυχάσεται ὅτι ἔτρεψεν φουσάτα.»
 Καὶ ὁ ἀμυρὰς ὡς τὸ ἤκουσεν, μακρὰ τὸν ἀποξέβην,
 ἔριψεν τὸ κοντάριν του καὶ δάκτυλον τοῦ δείχνει G1.193-4
 καὶ μετὰ τοῦ δακτύλου του τοιοῦτον λόγον λέγει:

- 28 σπεύδει Alexiou: σπουδὴ E (perhaps correctly; Prombonas, 1993, 74: μὴ καὶ = μὴ
 κε = μὴ οὐκ) δειλίαν Alexiou: δηλεία E
 27 ὅς Alexiou: εἰς E
 32 ὅς Trapp: εἰς E
 38 βουνιὰ Trapp: βουνία E ἀηδονοῦσαν Politis, 1973, 344: ἡδονοῦσαν E
 41 ἀπ' Trapp: ἀπὸ E
 42 Ἦτον καὶ Alexiou: ἦτον E ἦτον E Krumbacher, 1904, 317
 43 θαυμαστὸς Alexiou, cf. Z340: καλῶς E
 44 κατέβηκε Alexiou: καὶ ἐκατέβηκεν E
 45 ἐχέρισε Karayanni, 1976, 81-2, cf. Spadaro, 1989, 175: ἐχέρισε E
 47 Πίασε Alexiou, cf. 31: ὦ πίασε E
 48 εἰς Alexiou: εἰς τὸ E
 50 Ἐγώ, μούλε, οὐ τὸ Alexiou, note: ἐγὼ δὲ μούλε οὐδὲν τὸν E μούλε, ἐγὼ οὐδὲν τὸ
 Spadaro, 1988, 145
 51 φουσάτα Krumbacher, 1904, 317: φουσάτε E

- 28 – for his jealousy urged him on, hoping to make the emir show
 cowardice.
 27 They mounted swiftly and they came to the battlefield.
 30 A Saracen addressed the emir in his own tongue:
 “Seize the youngster, my lord, and grab a quick victory.
 29 He is a Roman cur! Don’t let him do you down!”
 32 They mounted at once and they came to the battlefield.
 They hissed like serpents, they roared like lions,
 they soared like eagles, and the two clashed.
 35 And then you could see a fight between fine brave youths.
 In the heat of the battle they struck continuously,
 and from the great clashing and the cut and thrust
 the plains grew fearful and the mountains re-echoed,
 trees were uprooted and the sun was darkened.
 40 Blood flowed down over their horse-trappings
 and their sweat ran out over their breastplates.
 Constantine’s black horse was speedier,
 and its rider was a marvellous young man.
 He charged at the emir and struck him a blow with his stick
 45 and then the emir began to tremble and flee.
 A Saracen addressed the emir in his own tongue:
 “Seize the youngster, my lord, and grab a quick victory,
 so that he doesn’t take your head off with his sudden turn.
 He has made a fine attack on you and now he might finish you off.
 50 I don’t think, my lord, you are going to do him much harm,
 but don’t let him boast that he routed an army.”
 When the emir heard this, he withdrew some way from the youth,
 he threw away his spear and showed him his finger,
 and with this gesture he said these words:

27–32 This passage, though defended by Prombonas (1993, 72–6), has given all editors problems. Kalonaros and Trapp remove 27, 30 and 31, Alexiou obelises 27, Ricks obelises 27, 28. With the lines rearranged thus (28, 27, 30, 31, 29, 32), E30–2 form a narrative doublet to E21–7, opening with the Saracen’s address and closing with the speakers galloping off (cf. Fenik, 1991, 42–50).

31 The Arabic origin of μούλε (= lord) is discussed by Karayanni (1976, 83).

44 In G the stick is the weapon most characteristic of Digenis; we meet it early in E, in the hands of the hero’s future maternal uncle.

53–4 It has been suggested that this is a Muslim indication of submission, referring to belief in the one God (Alexiou, 1979, 35 and 1985, note). At G1.194 the emir crosses his fingers, apparently in defeat. Given the lack of clear medieval parallels, it is hard to decide how either gesture is to be interpreted.

- 605 καὶ <ἐξ>ἀπέστειλεν αὐτοὺς πάλιν εἰς τὴν Συρίαν.
 Κἂν Ἀραβίτας ἑκατὸν ἐκράτησεν καὶ μόνον,
 καὶ ἐκράτησεν τὴν μάναν του μετὰ τοὺς ἀδελφούς του
 καὶ ἐβάπτισεν <ὁ ἀμιράς> ἅπαντα τὸν λαόν του G3.330
 καὶ τόπον τοὺς ἐχάρισε καὶ ἐκάθετο ὁ λαός του.
 610 Καὶ τότε <πάλιν> τὸ παιδὶν ὁ Διγενής Ἀκρίτης G3.339
 <γλυκέα> ἀναθρέφετον, ὡς πρέπει καὶ ὡς ἀξιάζει,
 καὶ ὡς <ὁ> ἥλιος ἔλαμπεν <λαμπρὰ> τὸ πρόσωπόν του
 καὶ ὡς κυπαρίσσι ἐτρέφετον τὴν ἅπασαν ἡμέραν·
 χέρι ἔβανε καὶ δύνεται ὥσπερ καὶ ἀνδρειωμένος.
 615 Τὸ χαλινάρι ὄνταν κρατεῖ, ἐπῆρεν καὶ κοντάριν
 νὰ ὑπάγῃ με τοὺς κυνηγούς διὰ νὰ περιδιαβάσῃ.
 Κ' ἐθώρει τὸ παιδόπουλον τὸ πλῆθος τῶν θηρίων
 καὶ ἐκατέβηκεν τὸ παιδὶν 'ς τὴν μέσην τῶν θηρίων.
 'Εδὰ ὅς σὰς ἀφηγήσωμαι περὶ τὰς ἀμωρίας του.
 620 Ὁ Θεὸς τοῦ ἔδωκε εὐτυχίαν εἰς τὴν πολλήν του ἀνδρείαν
 καὶ ὅπου καὶ ἂν τύχῃ † . . . † ποιεῖ ἀνδραγαθίας.
 623 Ὁ θαυμαστὸς Βασίλειος, τὸ φῶς τῶν ἀνδρειωμένων 158r
 περὶ ἀπελάτων ἤκουσε εὐγενικῶν καὶ ἀνδρείων,
 625 ὅτι κρατοῦν στενώματα καὶ ποιοῦν ἀντραγαθίας
 καὶ ζήλος ἦλθεν εἰς αὐτὸν νὰ ἰδῇ τοὺς ἀπελάτας.
 Καὶ ἑκάτσειν καὶ εὐθείασεν ὠραῖον, τερπνὸν λαβοῦτον·

- 605 ἐξαπέστειλεν Trapp: ἀπέστειλεν E
 606 Κἂν Ἀραβίτας ἑκατὸν Alexiou: κἂν ἑκατὸν ἀραβήτας after καὶ ἐκράτησεν μόνον E
 E ἐκράτησεν καὶ μόνον corr.: καὶ ἐκράτησεν μόνον E
 607 μάναν Alexiou: μράν (= μητέρα) E
 608 ὁ ἀμιράς added by Alexiou
 609 τόπον τοὺς ἐχάρισε Trapp: ἐχάρισέ τοὺς τόπον E ἐκάθετο Trapp: ἐκάθετον E
 610 πάλιν added by Karayanni, 1976, 103
 611 γλυκέα added ἀναθρέφετον Hesseling: ἀναθρεφέτων E
 612 ὁ added λαμπρὰ added
 613 κυπαρίσσι ἐτρέφετον corr.: κυπαρίσσην ἀνατρέφετον E
 614 χέρι ἔβανε καὶ corr.: καὶ ἔβανεν χαίριν καὶ νὰ E
 615 Τὸ χαλινάρι ὄνταν κρατεῖ, ἐπῆρεν καὶ κοντάριν corr.: ὅτι ἐδύνετον κρατὴν τὸ
 χαλινάριν· ἐπῆρεν κοντάριν καὶ ραβδὶν E
 616 διὰ Trapp: ὡς διὰ E
 617 Κ' ἐθώρει Trapp: καὶ θόρι E
 618 'ς Trapp: εἰς E
 619 ἀφηγήσωμαι Karayanni, 1976, 103: ἀφηγήσωμεν E
 620 ἔδωκε corr.: ἔδωκεν E
 622/623 ἀνδρειωμένων Alexiou: ἀπελάτων, ἡ δόλφα τῶν ἀνδριομένων (=623) E
 625 ἀντραγαθίας Trapp: ἀντραγαθίας μεγάλας E

- 605 and sent them back to Syria.
 He kept about a hundred Arabs only with him,
 and he kept his mother and his brothers;
 the emir baptised all his company
 and granted them land, and his company settled there.
 610 Then the child, Digenis Akritis, the Frontiersman of Double Descent,
 was brought up sweetly as is proper and fit,
 and his face glowed brightly like the sun
 and he continued to thrive every day like a cypress;
 he began to have strength like a brave man.
 615 As soon as he could grasp the reins, he took a spear
 to go with the hunters and roam around.
 And the little child saw a host of wild beasts
 and the child went in amongst the wild beasts.
 Now let me tell you about his infancy.
 620 God gave him good fortune in his acts of great bravery
 and wherever he went he achieved feats of valour.
 622/623 The marvellous Vasilis, the light of the brave,
 heard about the noble and brave guerrillas,
 625 that they held the passes and performed valiant deeds,
 and enthusiasm came over him to see the guerrillas.
 So he sat down and prepared a beautiful, delightful lute;

610–792 At this point questions of the structure of E and its relationship to G and *Digenis become acute. Kalonaros, largely followed by Trapp, suggests that the order of lines and episodes (cf. the sequence in G) should be: 609 (cf. G3.338–9), 702–41 (cf. G4.4–51: role of Eros and summary of the emir's story), 610–19 (cf. G4.52–71: growth of Digenis), 742–91 (cf. G4.72–163: Digenis's first hunt, with text missing after 791, see below), 620–701 (Digenis' first visit to the guerrillas), 792 ff. (cf. G4.373: return from hunt). Note that E620–701, placed by Z1028–92 between G4.253–4 during Digenis' return from the hunt, are not now represented in G at all and probably never were (MacAlister, 1984). E's order of lines has been retained here.

610–21 Relegated by Alexiou to an appendix on the grounds that they are a late attempt to impose a narrative flow on an episodic text, and repositioned by Kalonaros and Trapp, these lines are problematic and need even more intervention than elsewhere to heal the metre; they form a bridging passage from the emir's tale to the story of Digenis, though not marked off in any way in the manuscript. For similar bridging passages see G3.339–43 and 4.52–71.

622–701 This section forms Alexiou's 'Digenis and the Guerrillas'.

622/623 'Vasilis', the more modern equivalent in English of the hero's first name 'Basil', has been chosen to point the contrast between the linguistic usages of E and G.

624 Digenis' connection with the guerrillas is emphasised before he encounters them, an indication that the material on Digenis had its own traditions.

627 A stringed instrument is an unusual implement to take on a dangerous expedition; that it was part of Digenis' traditional accoutrements is suggested by its presence in the so-called Akritic plates (Notopoulos, 1964; Frantz, 1940/1).

ἐπῆρεν το καὶ ἐξέβηκεν ἀπὸ τὰ γονικά του
καὶ εἰς μίαν ἐκατέλαβεν καὶ τὰς στενὰς κλεισούρας.

- 630 Καὶ ὡς ὑπῆγεν μοναχός,
εὔρεν καλάμιν καὶ νερόν καὶ ἦτον ἀπέσω λέων –
καὶ τρίτον τὸν ἐγύρισεν καὶ ἐμπασίαν οὐκ ἦνεν –
καὶ εἶχεν γροθέαν ἐξηστρεπτήν ἀπὸ Γιαννάκη χέρια.
Καὶ ὡς εἶδεν τὸν λέοντα ὁ Διγενὴς Ἀκρίτης,
635 ἀπὸ καρδίας ἐστέναξεν, ἐκ βάθους τῆς ψυχῆς του:
«Πότε νὰ ἴδουν τὰ μάτια μου τὸ φῶς τῶν ἀπελάτων,

Νὰ γομωστοῦν τὰ ὀμμάτια μου τὸ φῶς τῶν ἀπελάτων;» 158v

- Τὸν νεροφόρον ἤρρηκεν, τὸν εἶχαν οἱ ἀπελάτες,
καὶ αὐτὸν τὸν ἐρώτησεν ὁ Διγενὴς Ἀκρίτης:
640 «Τὸν Θεόν, καλὲ νεώτερε, ποῦ μένουν οἱ ἀπελάτες;»
Καὶ ὁ νεροφόρος <παρευθύς> τὸν Διγενὴν ἐλάλει:
«Τὸν Θεόν, καλὲ νεώτερε, τί τοὺς καταγυρεύεις;»
«Γυρεύω καὶ κατερωτῶ νὰ εἶμαι καὶ ἐγὼ ἀπελάτης,
ἵνα ρογεύωμαι καὶ ἐγὼ μετὰ τῶν ἀπελάτων.»
645 Ὁ νεροφόρος παίρνει τον, ὅς τὸ λησταρχεῖον ὑπάγει.

Ἐκεῖ ἦνεν τὸν Φιλοπαπποῦν καὶ ἐκείτετο εἰς κλινάριν·
πολλῶν θηρίων δέρματα εἶχεν ἀπάνω κάτω,
τὸν λέοντα καὶ τὸν σύαγρον εἶχεν προσκεφαλὰδιν.
Καὶ ὑπόκυψεν ὁ νεώτερος καὶ χαμηλὰ ἐπροσκύναν. 159r G4.674
650 <Καὶ ὁ γέρων> ὁ Φιλοπαπποῦς οὕτως τὸν ἀπεκρίθη:

- 628 του Kyriakidis, 1926, 60: του ἀπέσω E
629 ἐκατέλαβεν corr.: ἐκατέμαθεν E
630 ὑπῆγεν μοναχός corr.: ὑπῆγενεν μοναχός του E
631 εὔρεν Kalonaros: εὔρεν καὶ E
633 καὶ Alexiou: καὶ ὁ λέων E Γιαννάκη Alexiou: τοῦ γιαννάκη τὰ E
636 μάτια E: ὀμμάτια Alexiou
639 αὐτὸν Kalonaros: αὐτὸς E εὐθύς Alexiou
641 παρευθύς added by Trapp, cf. Z1566
642 Θεόν Hesseling: θν' σου E
645 Ὁ νεροφόρος παίρνει τον corr.: ἀπῆρε τον ὁ νεροφόρος (νεροφός Prombonas, 1985, 10–11) E ὅς Alexiou: καὶ εἰς E ὑπάγει corr.: ὑπαγέει E
646 Ἐκεῖ Alexiou: κεῖ E (capital omitted) ἐκείτετο Krumbacher, 1904, 329: ἐκίτετον E εἰς Trapp: εἰς τὸ E
647 κάτω Krumbacher, 1904, 329: ἀποκάτω E
648 τὸν λέοντα καὶ τὸν σύαγρον Krumbacher, 1904, 329: τῶν λεόντων· κὶ τῶν σιαγρὸν E
649 νεώτερος Trapp: νεότερος τὴν κεφαλὴν E
650 Καὶ ὁ γέρων added by Trapp, cf. E656

he took it and left his parents' estates
and in an instant he reached the narrow passes.

- 630 And as he went forward on his own,
he found a reed-bed and water and there was a lion within
– and he searched around three times and could not find an entrance –
a lion that had received a back-handed blow from Giannakis.
When Digenis Akritis, the Frontiersman of Double Descent, saw the
lion,
635 he sighed from the bottom of his heart, from the depth of his soul:
“When will my eyes see the light of the guerrillas,

so that my eyes may be filled with the light of the guerrillas?”

He found the water-carrier employed by the guerrillas
and Digenis Akritis asked him:

- 640 “By God, fine young man, where do the guerrillas live?”
And the water-carrier said immediately to Digenis:
“By God, fine young man, why are you seeking them out?”
“I am seeking them out and asking about them so as to become a
guerrilla myself,
so that I too can be enrolled among the guerrillas.”
645 The water-carrier took him and brought him to the robbers’
headquarters.

There he found Philopappous reclining on his couch,
with many animal skins all around him;
he had a lion and a boar for his pillow.
The young man bowed and made deep obeisance.

- 650 And old Philopappous answered him like this:

- 630 The first mention in E of Digenis' characteristic preference for acting alone.
632 The opening lines of this episode are condensed and confused. The abrupt reference to Giannakis also implies that this was material familiar to the poet and his audience.
637 The repeated phrases frame a picture space in the manuscript.
640, 642 There is probably some irony in the water-carrier's direct reflection of Digenis' oath – though there is so much repetition in this poem that such judgements remain uncertain.
644 The technical term 'enrolled' implies that the guerrillas have a military function.
648 Philopappous is shown to place emphasis on wild animal skins (cf. E664), which contribute to his characterisation.

«Καλῶς ἦλθες, νεώτερε, ἂν οὐκ εἴσαι ἡροδότης.»

Καὶ τότε ὁ νεώτερος οὕτως ἀπιλογᾶται:

«Ὡ μὰ τὸν Θεόν, Φιλοπαππού, οὐκ εἶμαι ἐγὼ ἡροδότης·

γυρεύω καὶ κατερωτῶ νὰ εἶμαι καὶ ἐγὼ ἀπελάτης,

655 ἵνα ρογεύωμαι καὶ ἐγὼ μετὰ τῶν ἀπελάτων.»

Καὶ ὁ γέρον ὁ Φιλοπαππούς οὕτως τὸν ἀπεκρίθη:

«Θεωρῶ σε, κύρκα, ὑπόλιγνον καὶ ὡς ἀχαμνὰ ζωσμένον

καὶ χαμηλὰ ἢ ποδέα σου καὶ οὐ ποιεῖς ἐσὺ ἀπελάτης.

Ἐὰν καυχᾶσαι, νεώτερε, νὰ εἴσαι ἀπελάτης,

660 δύνασαι ἐπάρειν τὸ ραβδίν, νὰ κατεβῇς ᾽ς τὴν βίγλαν

καὶ νὰ νηστεύσης, νεώτερε, κἂν δεκαπέντε ἡμέρας,

νὰ μὴδε φᾶς, νὰ μὴδε πιῇς, νὰ μὴδε ὕπνον χορτάσης,

καὶ ἀπέκει ὡς λέων νὰ βρουχισθῇς, νὰ ἐβγουν τὰ λεοντάρια,

νὰ ἐπάρης τὰ δερμάτια τῶν καὶ ἐδῶ νὰ <μὲ> τὰ φέρης;

665 Καὶ δύνασαι, νεώτερε, νὰ κατεβῇς ᾽ς τὴν βίγλαν

καὶ νὰ διαβούν οἱ ἄρχοντες, μὲ τὸν γαμπρόν, τὴν νύμφην,

καὶ μὲ ὅλον τὸ φουσάτον τοὺς καὶ ἐσὺ νὰ ἔμπης ᾽ς τὴν μέσην,

νὰ ἐπάρης τὴν νεόνυμφον καὶ ἐδῶ νὰ μὲ τὴν φέρης;»

Καὶ τότε δὲ καὶ ὁ Διγενὴς οὕτως τὸν συντυχαίνει: 159v

670 «Ἄλλα μὲ εἶπέ, Φιλοπαππού, τὰ οὐ δύναμαι νὰ ποίσω·

αὐτὰ, γέρον, τὰ μὲ λαλεῖς, πέντε χρονῶν τὰ ἐποῖκα.

Ἄμῃ ἄκουσόν μου, γέροντα· μίλιν ἂν ἦτον ἕναν

ὀρυάκιν εἰς τὸ πλάτος,

<καὶ> διπλοπόδης πάραυτα εἰς μίαν νὰ τὸ πηδήσω,

675 καὶ τὸν λαγὸν ᾽ς τ' ἀνήφορον τρίτο νὰ τὸν γυρίσω,

πέρδικα ὄντα χαμποπετᾶ, ν' ἀπλώσω νὰ τὴν πάρω.»

Καὶ τότε καὶ ὁ Φιλοπαππούς τοιοῦτον λόγον λέγει:

653 οὐκ Alexiou (note), Garandoudis, 1993, 206: οὐδὲν E

655 ρογεύωμαι Alexiou: ρογέυομεν E

657 σε Hesseling: τε E ζωσμένον Xanthoudidis, 1912, 556: ζοσμένος E

660 νὰ corr.: καὶ E ᾽ς Trapp: εἰς E

662 πιῇς Hesseling: πῖς E

663 ὡς λέων νὰ βρουχισθῇς Alexiou: νὰ βρουχισθεῖς ὡς λέων E

664 μὲ added by Hesseling, cf. E668

665 Καὶ Alexiou: καὶ πάλιν E ᾽ς Trapp: εἰς E

666 τὸν γαμπρόν, τὴν νύμφην Alexiou: τὴν νύμφην καὶ με τὸν γαμπρόν E

667 τὸ φουσάτον τοὺς Alexiou: τοὺς τὸ φουσάτον E ᾽ς corr.: εἰς E

669 Διγενὴς Kalonaros: εὐγενὴς E

670 τὰ οὐ Alexiou: ὅπου οὐδὲν E

671 γέρον, τὰ Karayanni, 1976, 105–6: γέροντα E

674 καὶ added by Alexiou

675 ᾽ς Trapp: εἰς E

676 πέρδικα corr.: τὴν πέρδικαν E

“Welcome, young man, providing you are not a traitor.”

And the young man replied like this:

“By God, Philopappous, I am no traitor.

I am seeking and demanding to become a guerrilla myself,

655 so that I too can be enrolled among the guerrillas.”

And old Philopappous answered him like this:

“I can see, my sweetheart, that you are rather slender and delicately dressed

and your kilt is long: you would never make a guerrilla.

If you boast, young man, of becoming a guerrilla,

660 can you take your stick to go out on guard,

go without food, young man, for about fifteen days,

and eat nothing, drink nothing, go without your sleep,

and then roar like a lion to bring out the lions

and get their hides and bring them back to me here?

665 And can you, young man, go out on guard

and when the lords go by with the bride-groom and the bride

and all their army, can you burst into their midst

and seize the newly-wedded bride and bring her back to me here?”

And then Digenis addressed him thus:

670 “Tell me, Philopappous, about something I can’t do!

What you are talking about, old man, I did when I was five.

But listen to me, old man. If there were a stream

one mile wide,

even with my two feet together I would leap across it in an instant,

675 and I would run down the hare on a slope three times

and I would stretch out and catch the partridge as it flies low.”

And then Philopappous uttered these words:

657 κύρκα (of debatable etymology; see Kriaras, 1969– under this word) is usually taken as a diminutive of κύρ; it is most frequently found as an endearment used by a girl of her lover. Here, where it is applied by a seasoned warrior to a youth, the implication must be that Digenis looks more like a ladies’ man than a fighter.

658 This is the only reference in E to Digenis’ ποδέα, where it seems effeminate rather than heroic; see Introduction, p. xl.

665 For Philopappous bride-snatching is a major and admirable part of the guerrillas’ activities, the ultimate hunt; see Mackridge, 1993a and contrast Laiou, 1993, 205–6.

«Σύρετε ἀργυρὸν σελίν, νὰ κάτση ὁ κύρ Βασίλης.»
 Τραπεζίιν ἤστεσαν ὁμπρός, νὰ φάγουν καὶ νὰ πίνουν.
 680 Καλὰ ἔφαγαν, καλὰ ἔπιαν, καλὰ ἔκαλοψυχῆσαν.
 <καὶ τότε> ἄλλος ἔλεγεν: «Ἐγὼ ἀπαντῶ πενήντα»·
 <καὶ πάλιν> ἄλλος ἔλεγεν: «Ἐγὼ ἀπαντῶ ἑβδομήντα»·
 <καὶ πάλιν> ἄλλος ἔλεγεν: «Ἐγὼ ἀπαντῶ διακόσιους.»

Ἦ νεώτερος ἐκάθετον, ποτέ του οὐκ ἐλάλει. 160r
 685 <Καὶ ὁ γέρων> ὁ Φιλοπαππούς τὸν νεώτερον ἐλάλει:
 «Ἐσὺ <δὲ> πόσους δύνασαι, Βασίλη, ἀπαντῆσαι;»
 Ὁ δὲ νεώτερος <εὐθύς> τὸν γέρονταν ἐλάλει:
 «<Ἐναν,> ἐὰν ἔναι ὥσάν ἐμέν, δύναμαι ἀπαντῆσαι·
 εἰ δὲ ἔναι δυνατώτερος, νὰ δώσω καὶ τὸν δώσω.
 690 Καὶ δεῦτε, ἀγοῦροι, ἅς λάβωμεν ὑπόκοντα ραβδία
 καὶ ἅς κατὰβωμεν <ἀπαντες> κάτω εἰς τὴν ὁμαλίαν,
 ἵνα <ἀλλήλους> δώσωμεν χωριατικὰς ραβδέας.»
 Καὶ πάραυτα ἐπήρασαν ὑπόκοντα ραβδία
 καὶ <ὅλοι> ἐκατέβησαν κάτω εἰς τὴν ὁμαλίαν,
 695 ὅπως <ἀλλήλους> δώσουσιν χωριατικὰς ραβδέας.

<Καὶ> τότε <δὲ> ὁ Διγενής ἔριξεν τὸ ραβδὶν του·
 τοὺς μὲν γροθῆας ἔκρουεν, τοὺς ἄλλους σφοντυλάς
 ἀλλὰ ἐπέσασιν ὁλονῶν ραβδία τῶν ἀπελάτων 160v
 καὶ ἐφορτώθησαν ταὶ ὁ Διγενής, τὸν γέρον τὰ ὑπαγαίνει:
 700 «Παράλαβε, Φιλοπαππού, ραβδία τῶν ἀπελάτων

- 678 κύρ Trapp: κήριος E
 680 Καλὰ¹ and ² Alexiou: καὶ καλὰ E καλὰ³ Alexiou: καὶ E
 681 καὶ τότε added by Alexiou
 682 καὶ πάλιν added by Alexiou
 683 καὶ πάλιν added by Alexiou διακόσιους Alexiou: διακοσίους E
 684 Ὁ Trapp: Ὁ δὲ E
 685 Καὶ ὁ γέρων ὁ Alexiou, cf. E650, 656: ὁ δὲ E Ὁ δὲ γέρων Trapp
 686 δὲ added by Trapp, cf. Z1605
 687 εὐθύς added by Trapp, cf. Z1606
 688 Ἐναν added by Hesselung
 689 νὰ corr.: νὰ με E με Alexiou τὸν Alexiou: νὰ τὸν E
 691 ἀπαντες added by Trapp
 692 ἀλλήλους added by Alexiou
 693 Καὶ πάραυτα corr.: ἀλλὰ E
 694 ὅλοι added by Trapp, cf. Z1614
 695 ἀλλήλους added by Alexiou χωριατικὰς Alexiou: χωριάτικας E
 696 Καὶ τότε δὲ Alexiou: Τότε E
 698 ἐπέσασιν corr.: ἐπέσασιν E ραβδία Trapp, cf. E700: τὰ ραβδία E

“Draw up a silver stool for Sir Vasilis to sit down.”
 They put a table in front of them so they could eat and drink.
 680 They ate well, they drank well, they were well away with their high
 spirits.
 And then one of them said: “I can fight against fifty.”
 And another said in turn: “I can fight against seventy.”
 And another said in turn: “I can fight against two hundred.”

685 But the young man sat and never said a word.
 And old Philopappous said to the young man:
 “And you, Vasilis, how many can you fight against?”
 And at once the young man said to the old man:
 “Only one, if he is like me, can I fight against;
 if he is stronger, let him strike me and I will strike him.
 But come, lads, let’s take our short sticks
 690 and let’s all go down to the level ground
 so that we can have a stick fight with each other in country style.”
 And at once they took their short sticks
 and all went down to the level ground
 695 to have a stick fight with each other in country style.

But then Digenis threw down his stick.
 Some he struck with his fist, others with the flat of his hand on the
 neck
 and all the guerrillas dropped their sticks.
 Digenis bundled them up and carried them off to the old man.
 700 “Accept, Philopappous, the guerrillas’ sticks.

- 678 ‘κύρ’, verging on the modern ‘κύριος’, implies a provisional social acceptance of the young hero; one is tempted to translate the phrase as ‘Mr Vasilis’.
 681 For a similar triple boast see Sachlikis, Ἀφήγησις παράξενος (Papadimitriou, 1896), lines 817–23 (MacAlister, 1984, 561), and in other literary contexts the *gabs* (boasts) in the *Chanson de Roland* (laissez 70–9) or the twelfth-century *Pelérinage de Charlemagne* (laissez 24–37). This whole passage is full of the patterning of oral storytelling.