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The wife's prayer for her husband in the *Cantar de mio Cid* and the Escorial version of *Digenis Akritis*

Ioannis Kioridis
Hellenic Open University

To Helen, Thanos and Steve

Introduction¹

In 2009, as part of our doctoral thesis, we presented an extensive comparative study between the *Cantar de mio Cid* (CMC from now on) and *Digenis Akritis*' Escorial manuscript (from now on *E*).² These texts of the 14th and mid-15th century respectively, according to all indications, preserve the authentic spirit of the original epic compositions of the early 13th and 12th century in both Castile and Byzantium.

In that work, we noted among other things, that the religious element is certainly present in both poems, which is normal for medieval texts, but its role is relatively limited. Furthermore, we gave more details about various aspects of the subject. One of these aspects is the invocation of the Divine through prayer which appears, as we noted, in

¹ This study is part of the activities under the *Proyecto Nacional de I+D+i «FFI2009-13058: Formas de la épica hispánica: tradiciones y contextos históricos II»* prepared by a scientific group of the University of Zaragoza, under the direction of Professor Montaner, funded by the *Ministerio de Economía y Competitividad del Reino de España*.

² Kioridis 2009. For an interesting comparison between *Digenis Akritis* and the Old Spanish Epics, see Hook 1993.

innumerable cases, especially in the *CMC*. However, in our opinion, this seems to be just a minimum sample of normal religiosity for an average person of the time and nothing more.³

Nevertheless, there are two cases, one in each poem, where the prayer is long (*CMC* 330-365, *E* 1808-1860). In both cases it is the wife who prays for her husband's safety. And although there is a sufficient number of Spanish studies on the topic, far fewer things have been written on the subject concerning the Byzantine poem.⁴

These two prayers which constitute a common epic motif will be the subject of our comparative analysis in this article. Apart from the use of studies mentioned above, we rely mainly on our own observations on the two passages. Our aim is to find the similarities and differences in handling the matter on both prayers, to examine the role they play, expand the thoughts that we have presented in our thesis and stimulate further discussion, in a broader scientific context.

The two fragments

Let us begin with the two passages for consideration. In the *CMC* the prayer begins in v. 330 and finishes in 365, in other words, at an early point in the song that comprises a total of 3733 verses and at the beginning of the first of three parts in which the *CMC* is conventionally divided. *Rodrigo Díaz de Vivar*, Castilian hero of the mid 11th century, slandered by his competitors in the Court of King Alfonso the 6th, falls out of his favor and is exiled to the land of the Muslims, beyond the borders of Castile. One of his first aims is to entrust his wife, *Jimena*, and his two daughters to the friendly monastery of *San Pedro de Cardeña*. Before crossing Castile's border with his men in v. 399, meets with his wife in the monastery and according to vv. 324-328, during the Divine

³ Kioridis 2009, 198-200.

⁴ For the topic in the *CMC* see Baños Vallejo 1994, 205-215, Gimeno Casalduero, 1957-1958, 113-125, Gerli 1980, 436-441, Montaner 2007, 25-26, Redfield 1986, 77-81, Rosende 2007, 253-263, Russell 1978, 113-158, Saracino 2007, 265-276, Webber 1995, 619-647, Zaderenko 2007, 219-242. For the prayer in *E* there are some references in Alexiou 1985, Castillo Didier 1994, Jeffreys 1998.

Liturgy, he goes to the church with Jimena, where she begins to pray.⁵

Jimena's prayer (*CMC* 330-365) summarizes in the following structure:

-Invocation to the glorious Lord, Father who art in Heaven (330).

-Narration of events from the Old and the New Testament: Creation, Christ's Conception, Birth, Life, Work, Death, Resurrection and Ascension (331-360).

-New invocation to Christ-petition: to protect *Cid* from evil and help him meet his family again (361-365).⁶

On the other hand, in *E* we find the prayer just before the poem's end, specifically in vv. 1808-1860. The whole song numbers 1867 verses. *Digenis Akritis*, a tenth-eleventh century legendary hero of the byzantine-arab border, has just completed his work in Euphrates' area. He has subdued bandits and has imposed order. Having a foreboding that his death is near, he prepares his palace as well as his tomb in the area. He falls ill and as he lies in his bed in pain he admonishes his men and wife, looking back at his life and actions. As he sees the Angel of death approaching, he gives his last advice to his wife. She listens to his words and it is at that point that she resorts to prayer to save him from death.⁷

Wife's prayer is summarized in the following structure:

-Invocation to Lord God, King of all (1808).

-Narration of events of the Old and New Testament, such as Creation and moments of Christ's life: Incarnation, Nativity, Passion, Crucifixion, Resurrection (1808-1822).

-Multiple repetition of God's and Son's Invocation (1823, 1824, 1826, 1833, 1834, 1839, 1842, 1844, 1846, 1848, 1852, 1857)-dual request: save him from death (1823-1832, 1837-1851, 1853-1856) or take

⁵ For the verses in the original text see the excellent edition of A. Montaner 2007. For the story of the *CMC* see Kioridis 2009, 33-34.

⁶ For the convenience of the reader we have included all the prayer in a special annex at the end of the text. We use the edition of Bailey 2004, who has translated the text into English. The whole prayer is available in electronic form in <http://www.laits.utexas.edu/cid/main/folio.php?f=07v&v=eng>, <http://www.laits.utexas.edu/cid/main/folio.php?f=08r&v=eng>.

⁷ For more information about *Digenis E* story see the magnificent edition of Alexiou 1985, λζ-νδ, who highlighted the above text emphasizing convincingly its value and epic conformity.

her together with him in death (1852, 1857-1860). Request is mixed with references to events of the New Testament (1826-1828, 1834-1836, 1850-1851).⁸

Comparative analysis

In both cases, it is the woman who prays for her husband: *Jimena* for *Cid* and the anonymous wife of *Digenis* for him. However, the place differs: the altarpiece of the church in *CMC* 327,⁹ Euphrates' region in *E*. Position also varies in the poem. In contrast to the French epic prayers, *Jimena's* takes place in the church, at an early point in the poem and is not addressed by a moribund hero, facing a great danger in the battlefield or a dueling.¹⁰ It may not be the only one, as *CMC* is full of prayers, but clearly it is the most extensive and elaborated.¹¹ On the other hand, communication with the Divine in *E* is rather rare. It is a moribund hero's prayer made not by himself, but by his wife. It is located just before the end of the poem. The extension also differs: 36 verses in *CMC*, much more in *E*. The request is also different, as we will see later in our analysis.

Before the prayer, we find in each poem a short introduction, which already includes the request in the case of the *CMC*. The good wife submits her petition, in the best way she knows, to the Creator: liberating *Cid Campeador* from evil (328-329). This is the "evil" of exile and its consequences.¹² As aptly noted by Russell, the poet with great mastery already in vv. 240-241 informs us that the hero reaching the monastery

⁸ The prayer of *Digenis'* wife is also listed in a separate annex at the end of our study according to the edition and the English translation by Ricks 1990. For the references to text *E*, see, also, the excellent critical edition of Alexiou 1985.

⁹ Montaner 1997, 25. Prayer is linked to a specific Liturgy of the Holy Trinity in a monastery church according to Zaderenko 2007, 119.

¹⁰ For the position of prayer in the *CMC* see Russell 1978, 115, Zaderenko 2007, 234.

¹¹ Zaderenko 2007, 228. Prayer reminds *Itinerarium*, a prayer of priests or monks before travelling, see Gerli 1980, 437 and Zaderenko 2007, 235. For Baños Vallejo 1994, 206 and Webber 1995 this prayer is a common topic in epic poetry.

¹² Verse 329 is reminiscent of *Lord's Prayer*. See Montaner 1997, 25, note in v. 329.

finds *Jimena* praying, a forewarning that a prayer will follow.¹³ On the other hand, *E* lacks clear warning of what is going to happen: wife turns eastward, raises her hands and with her sorrowful voice supplicates God (1806-1807). Yet, we don't know the reason: only in v. 1805 we learn that the prayer is made after hearing the words of the beloved husband about his upcoming death and her widowhood, elements showing that a prayer will follow.¹⁴

The prayers in both cases generally follow the French style of division in three parts: Invocation of the Divine, narration of miracles, request.¹⁵ We can say, agreeing with Fernando Baños, that we have two narrative prayers in a broad sense. In these, after a brief invocation, the person who prays seeks grace, grounded in Divine omnipotence and mercy, by reminding or narrating marvelous episodes of the Christian faith.¹⁶

Invocation is short on both prayers: one verse each time (*CMC* 330, *E* 1808). Both concern the first person of the Trinity which is assigned with various adjectives and properties: “*Oh Glorious Lord, Father who art in Heaven*” in *CMC*, “*Lord God, King of all*” in *E*.¹⁷

Then, the narration follows, much more extensive, especially in the Castilian poem (*CMC* 331-360, *E* 1808-1822). In the narration, *CMC* includes events of the Old Testament, life of Christ, the Apostles and Saints, while in *E* main emphasis is given to Creation and secondarily in Christ's birth and action.

Both narrations reminiscent *Creed*, especially in the beginning. Both start with the events of Creation giving emphasis to God's omnipotence. *CMC* is more concise in this aspect (vv. 331-332), while *E* dedicates eight verses (1808-1815). *Jimena* in the *CMC* reminds God of the Crea-

¹³ Russell 1978, 117-118.

¹⁴ See vv. 1805-1807 in Alexiou 1985, 71.

¹⁵ Gimeno Casalduero 1957-1958, 113, Zaderenko 2007, 228.

¹⁶ Baños Vallejo 1994, 206-207. Positioned in favor of the narrative character of the prayer in the *CMC* are Menéndez Pidal and Milá Fontanals (see footnotes 2 and 3 in Gimeno Casalduero 1957-1958, 113). Russell 1978, 116 is positioned against the narrative character of this prayer in the *CMC*.

¹⁷ According to Russell 1978, 119 invocation in *CMC* is done in the usual way of the French prayers and comes from the Latin religious liturgical phraseology.

tion of the Universe's elements (Heaven and Earth, sea, stars and moon, sun). Certainly, as noted by Russell, the text does not follow the chronological order of Old Testament. What matters here is not Doctrine, but to demonstrate the omnipotence of God. Important detail: God made sun for heating, not to illuminate.¹⁸ The scene is more extensive in *E*. Here again, the second singular person predominates. In addition to other common elements of Creation, we also find references to the creation of Adam and Eve (1812) and the Paradise (1813), elements lacking from the *CMC*.¹⁹ Apart from the Divine Omnipotence, a first reference is made to the compassionate God: *who hast shown light and air to wretched me*; (1815)

Then, both texts refer to the second person of the Trinity, Christ. Essentially, the narration of Creation is united with the arrival of Christ, so often we can not distinguish to which person of the Holy Trinity the prayer addresses. For the folk tradition, God is one, without distinction of persons.

The byzantine poem dedicates significantly fewer verses to Christ (*E* 1816-1820/1). It refers to Descent from Heaven, Incarnation, admirable Nativity, Passion, Crucifixion and Resurrection.²⁰ Praying addresses to Christ twice (1816, 1820/1) and once to God (1817). Two points deserve to be attended to. On the one hand, the Omnipotence of God and, on the other, His greatest love for man. Vv. 1816 and 1820/1 refer to the omnipotent Divine will, while vv. 1817, 1822 emphasize that God and Christ always act for human well being. These two points are highlighted in other parts of prayer, as we will see below. After these verses, the Byzantine poem goes directly to the request, which, as we shall see, includes references to Christ's miracles.

CMC dedicates many more verses to Christ's life and action (333-360). Narrative order is, at first, chronological, reminiscent of the second part of the *Creed*: Incarnation and Nativity (333-334), Adoration

¹⁸ Russell 1978, 120.

¹⁹ Alexiou 1985 refers to Patristic and Liturgical sources of vv. 1810, 1815. See footnotes in vv. 1810, 1815 on page 153.

²⁰ Sources of vv. 1818 and 1819 respectively are the *Supplication Canon to the Theotokos* and the *Canon of Christmas*. See, Alexiou 1985, footnote in verses 1818-1819, p. 153.

of Shepherds and Magicians (335-338).²¹ As it also happens in *E*, CMC already from v. 334 emphasizes the power of the Divine will, which is something repeated in vv. 338, 346, 359. Also in v. 333, as shown in the original Spanish text (*prisist encarnación*) the disposal of Christ is active. As we'll see in the verses that follow, God's will is connected with a series of miracles. A favorable answer to the prayer will depend on God's will. The text emphasizes on the omnipotence of the Divine's will, as well as on Jimena's belief that God can exercise his will for *Cid's* safety.²²

As the text continues, the chronological order of the narrative is interrupted. While up to this point it emphasizes the Lord's greatness and omnipotence, the digression of vv. 339-342, which begins with the repeated verb "you saved", is associated with miracles, testified in the Old Testament and Life of Saints. These verses underline the mercy of God, who would be pleased to help *Cid* in danger, as He did with other people mentioned in vv. 339-342. Of course, someone would easily notice that, except for the case of St. Sebastian (v. 341), the three miracles mentioned should be reasonably attributed to God and not to Christ, as they come from the Old Testament. It should be noted that matters of chronological consistency are less important than the poet's desire to show God's mercy. Facts showing God as Omnipotent require order, which is cleaved by those that present him as Merciful. We should also not be surprised by the confusion between the two persons of the Holy Trinity, always present in popular consciousness.²³

²¹ About vv. 333-334, Russell 1978, 120 notes that they follow the French model. For vv. 335-338 see Russell 1978, 121-122.

²² For the meaning of the Divine's will see Russell 1978, 120-121, Zaderenko 2007, 230. Russell notes that it is a French influence that the Castilian creator develops stylistically. In his opinion, see p. 116, emphasis given to God's Omnipotence aims to remind God that He has the power to overcome human law with a new miracle saving *Cid* from the danger.

²³ On the issue of the existence of a chronological order or not, see Gimeno Casalduero 1957-1958, 115, 117, 119, Zaderenko 2007, 229. Russell 1978, 122-123 notes that vv. 339-342 remind of Latin prayers, especially those before dying (*ordo commendationis animae*). Also, in pp. 123-124 analyzes the above verses. For the old model of prayer, style *Ordo* ... see Gimeno Casalduero 1957-1958, 118.

Then, the text returns to chronological order. Eighteen whole verses follow, devoted to Christ, the *spiritual Lord*, and His miraculous action (vv. 343-360). According to the *CMC*, Lord walked the earth for 32 years providing His benefits to people (343-344): he turned water into wine and stone into bread (345), resurrected Lazarus (346). He was voluntarily caught and crucified between two criminals, one saved, and one not (347-350). Even on the cross did not stop helping people (351). He cured Longinus from his blindness (352-357). When resurrected, which is the greatest miracle of all, He went to Hades, broke its doors and liberated the Holy Fathers (358-360). The New Testament and the popular traditions are the sources of the poet.²⁴

Points deserving attention are the voluntary capture of the Lord by the Jews (347), the detailed reference to Longinus, while other miracles are briefly presented, the confusion of the miracle of the water with the Temptation in the desert (345), the reversal of the correct sequence of events in vv. 358-359. Let's not forget that this is a poetic text and a popular prayer that serves specific purposes, therefore accuracy of facts is not required. What matters is to show how wondrous the life of the Lord was. It is time for a wonderful help to *Cid*. Invocation of miracles reveals the Lord's omnipotence and especially His mercy and affection for every human being. The absolute faith in God and Christ, (*he [Longinus] believed in you instantly, therefore he is free from evil, v. 357*) and the reference to their omnipotence are the basis of the claim that will follow.

As we have already seen in both narrations, for the Father and the Son nothing is impossible, so why not answer the prayers of the two women? So, the request follows in both poems.

Request in *E* occupies 37 lines (vv. 1823-1860), much more than the rest of the prayer and what we see in *CMC*. The frequent repetition of the invocation to Christ in second person (vv. 1823, 1824, 1826, 1833, 1834, 1839, 1842, 1844, 1846, 1848, 1852, 1857) is characteristic. The vast extension of the request and the constant invocation of the charity

²⁴ For vv. 345-360 see Russell 1978, 126-129, Zaderenko 2007, footnotes 24 and 25, p. 230. For vv. 351-357 see Saracino 2007. For vv. 358-361 see Rosende 2007. For Resurrection and Ascension in the *CMC* see Redfield 1986.

of the Lord indicate the extreme drama of the scene. Besides, it is not just the uncertainty and danger risk, as in the *CMC*, but the certainty of death that awaits *Akritis*.

Wife asks the benevolent Christ to resurrect her lord, give him health, not to allow his death (vv. 1823-1825). Asks him to do what he did with Lazarus, moved by the grief of Martha and Mary. Besides, the young man has pinned all his hopes in Him (vv. 1826-1832). It is a first digression with reference to a miracle in the request.²⁵ Then, again in second person, the woman addresses to the only knower of hearts and benevolent despot (v. 1833), reporting back on what he did out of love for man: endured poverty voluntarily, wore human illness and weakness, fed a crowd with only five breads (vv. 1834-1836). It combines reference to the Lord's mercy and the miracle He performed.

Invocation continues even stronger. It's a cry of despair. The woman, with a series of imperatives, asks the Lord to not overlook her supplication, but to send His mercy: to resurrect the young man from death, since He awaits every sinner to come to repentance (1837-1847). God is begged to save him, as he saved Peter from drowning, clearly referring to the New Testament (vv. 1848-1851). This is the third miracle inserted into the request, just to show the Lord's mercy, which is also illustrated by the words used in a particular invocation to Him (1823, 1824, 1827, 1833, 1842, 1844, 1848).²⁶ However, the wife presents an alternative: if it's not God's will to save him, let Him take her first: she would not want to be left a widow, nor to see him dead (vv. 1852-1860). Besides, nothing is impossible for Christ (1860). Here ends the prayer in *E*.

In *CMC* the request is summarized in only the last two verses of the prayer (vv. 364-365). Says *Jimena*: "*for my Cid the Campeador, may God keep him from harm, now that today we are separating, in this life bring us together*" (it is the first time we hear it). Of course, we find again the full faith invocation of his wife to Christ and his Father: *you are king of kings and Father of all the world, I adore and believe you with all my heart* (vv. 361-362). *Jimena* also invokes the help of St.

²⁵ For v. 1827 see Alexiou 1985, footnote in v. 1827, p. 154.

²⁶ For the influence of religious texts in vv. 1838, 1847, 1850 see Alexiou 1985, footnote in vv. 1838, 1847, 1850, pp. 154-155.

Peter, whose name honors the monastery where she will be accommodated. Furthermore, it is the space where the prayer takes place (v. 363).

Through the request, therefore, a favor is asked, associated with miracles described. The text also includes a confession of faith on the part of the prayer, reinforced with new invocation of God or requesting the intervention of the Saints.²⁷ According to Russell, *Jimena's* confession of faith in vv. 361-362 is a specificity of the text. The poet did not want to present the hero himself praying, so he uses *Jimena* to do this after the Liturgy. Two different types of prayer are combined here: the one that asks for Divine assistance as with biblical persons and the other that highlights personal faith. *Creed* begins with Longinus (357) and continues with *Jimena* (362).²⁸ From her side, Zaderenko notes that the request for mediation of St. Peter is associated with the desire of the author to connect the monastery with the subsequent success of *Cid*. *Jimena's* prayer ends here.²⁹

Some final thoughts

But what is the result of these prayers? In *CMC* we soon find out: after a few verses, Archangel Gabriel appears in *Cid's* dream (vv. 405-412) assuring him (v. 409) that everything will go well. The hero wakes up and expresses his gratitude.³⁰ Indeed, *Cid* is expelled, goes through many adventures, but finally, after the conquest of Valencia, he earns the forgiveness of the King and his favor, joins his family again and arranges second marriages for his daughters, with the princes of Navarre and the Aragon. What could be better than these developments.

Jimena's prayer is a very interesting part of the *CMC*. The poet attaches particular importance to it: narration stops at a static episode at a time when the hero ought to be in a hurry to cross the border.³¹ In our opinion, however, the hero's successes are the product of his own efforts

²⁷ Gimeno Casaldueiro 1957-1958, 113-114.

²⁸ Russell 1978, 130.

²⁹ Zaderenko 2007, footnote 26, p. 230. For the role of St. Peter see Russell 1978, 131.

³⁰ For these verses see Montaner 2007, 28-29.

³¹ Russell 1978, 117.

and struggles and not of some supernatural Divine intervention. In any case, answer to the prayer is self-evident in the *CMC*. Simply, extensive prayer gives one more opportunity to “demonstrate religiosity”, and takes place in a church connected directly to the legend of *Cid*, which is something to be expected in a medieval text. It also shows the love that *Jimena* has for her husband, which is evident in other parts of the *Cantar*. Invocation of the Divine, as we suggested in our thesis, exists in dozens of other cases in the text, but to a lesser extent. *CMC* is, in our opinion, a medieval text of a medium religiosity.

On the other hand, impact of prayer in *E* is immediate: an Angel of death acts here, not an Angel of hope as we see in the *CMC*. God listens to the second request and gets the wife first to Hades, followed by *Akritis* (1861-1867).³² However, the text is not known for its warm religiosity. As we argued in our thesis, references to the Divine are extremely limited in the poem. In this sense, the presence of such a lengthy prayer towards the end of the text surprises the reader. This prayer does not relate to the general style of the rest of the text. It is governed by a scholarly style, reminiscent of ecclesiastical texts, and differs essentially in language, style and versification. So it was seen by many prominent scholars as a later addition.³³

We think, that indeed the poet would not want to let the hero die in an antiheroic way, leaving his wife a widow or even agreeing to a second marriage of her. A “reasonable” end would be to find a way for her to die as well. For this to happen it was necessary to add this lengthy prayer, which included finally the second request. The hero could not be saved, so at least the poet lets him die together with his wife. It is an opportunity for the poet to show once again *Akritis*’ love for his wife and

³² Alexiou 1985, 73.

³³ Alexiou 1985, Αζ notes that these verses seem to be a pseudo-archaic scholar addition to the original form of *E* influenced by religious texts. He attributes it to another poet and notes some inconsistencies with the rest of the text. For all these reasons, Alexiou integrates these verses in a special annex at the end of his edition of 1985. This annex is evidenced in all editions and therefore an integral part of the poem. Prof. Alexiou on page 154 in response to v.1845 notes that the death scene lacks confession, priest and Holy Communion. Also in pp. ρα-ρβ notes that popular Christianity dominates in *E*, by a poet who knows the basic tenets, loves Virgin Mary, saints, icons, but nothing deeper.

close the poem without suspense.³⁴

We have before us two popular invented prayers which serve specific purposes. Prayer in *CMC* is based on liturgical and paraliturgical elements while that of *Akritis* revokes New Testament and ecclesiastical liturgical texts. We also referred to the style, position and functional role of the two prayers. What is certain is that they constitute another comparable dimension between two epic traditions, the Castilian and the Byzantine one, and they could be the basis of a wider study of religiosity in both poems, which we hope to do in another occasion.

Annex

Cantar de mio Cid 330-365

-Oh glorious Lord, Father who art in Heaven, 330
you made Heaven and Earth, and thirdly the sea,
you made stars and moon, and the sun for heating,
you became incarnate in mother Holy Mary,
in Bethlehem you were born, as was your will,
shepherds glorified you, they praised you, 335
three kings from Arabia came to worship you,
Melchior, and Caspar, and Balthasar, gold and frankincense and myrrh
they offered you, as was your will.
You saved Jonah when he fell into the sea,
you saved Daniel from the lions in the evil den, 340
in Rome you saved lord Saint Sebastian,
you saved Saint Susanna from false witness,
on Earth you walked for thirty-two years, spiritual Lord,
performing miracles, therefore we have much to tell,
from water you made wine and from stone, bread, 345
you raised up Lazarus, as was your will,
you let yourself be taken prisoner by the Jews, in a place they call
Mount Calvary
they put you on a cross, in a place named Golgotha,

³⁴ Castillo Didier 1994, page 60, footnote 108 notes that woman's death before her husband's is a normal motif in Greek folk songs.

two thieves with you, these on either side,
 one is in Paradise, for the other one did not enter there, 350
 while you were on the cross you performed a great miracle,
 Longinus was blind, he never ever had seen.
 He pierced your side with his lance, from whence blood flowed,
 the blood ran down the shaft, his hands wet with it,
 he raised them up, brought them to his face, 355
 he opened his eyes, he looked in every direction,
 he believed in you instantly, therefore he is free from evil.
 In the sepulcher you arose and went into Hell,
 as was your will,
 you broke down the gates and brought out the holy fathers. 360
 You are the king of kings and father of all the world,
 I adore and believe in you with all my heart,
 and I pray to Saint Peter that he help me pray
 for my Cid the Campeador, may God keep him from harm,
 now that today we are separating, in this life bring us together.- 365

(English translation by Bailey, 2004)

Digenis Akritis E 1808-1860

‘Lord God, King of all, ruler of the ages,
 Thou who hast made the firmament and founded the earth;
 who hast walled round the boundless sea with sand 1810
 and ordered the fish to breed in it;
 who hast made Adam from earth, and Eve;
 who hast planted delightful Paradise by hand;
 who hast set up mountains and glades by word;
 who hast shown light and air to wretched me; 1815
 who hast descended, Word, from the heavens at will;
 and who hast taken on the form of flesh for me, my Maker;
 and who hast taken for Thy mother the stainless heaven.
 Born without change,
 and suffering, as Thou hast deemed fit, and crucified, my Christ; 1820/1
 making a gift of resurrection unto me the fallen one:
 loving One, resurrect my lord;
 and Word, merciful as Thou art, restore him to health;
 and may I never see the death of the one of my desire. 1825
 But, my Christ, even as thou hast on a time resurrected Lazarus,

when, loving One, thou sawest Martha and Mary
shedding tears ardently;
even so now resurrect a youth despaired of
by all physicians, acquaintances and friends, 1830
and who places in Thee all hopes,
and who takes cheer always in Thy aid.
Yea, loving Master, only knower of hearts,
Yea, Lord, Thou who hast endured poverty for my sake,
who willingly put on the garb of my weakness; 1835
who nourished a boundless multitude with five loaves;
do not overlook the prayer of unworthy me,
but quickly send mercy in holiness;
bend Thine ear, Master, hearken unto my wish;
be swift now to aid me in time of need; be swift in grief; 1840
come to the aid of us who pray;
and merciful One, make miracles for Thy pity.
Resurrect from Death Thy suppliant, merciful One; 1844
snatch from Death a young man who has not repented; 1845
for thou hast said, Master, that Thou wishest not at all
the death of a sinner, but that he turn back to the right path.
And now, loving God, help him who lies sick,
and stretch out Thy mighty hand as benefactor;
and as Thou hast saved Peter from danger of the sea, 1850
so now, Master, take pity on Thy hopeless suppliant.
But if not, master, decree that I die first:
may I not see him voiceless, lying breathless,
with his lovely eyes hidden;
may I not see his fine hands, expert in deeds of might, 1855
crossed, arranged in the order of death.
Christ, do not overlook my tears as I pray;
do not permit me to look on such great affliction;
but take my soul before this come to pass;
for thou canst do all things by word; nought is impossible for Thee.’

(English translation by Ricks, 1990, pp. 167, 169)

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