

CRETAN POETRY: SOURCES AND INSPIRATION

PREFACE

This is a study of the first period of Cretan poetry, from 1453 to 1500. The second period is the time of Cornaros and the drama, from 1600 to 1669; and from these two periods come nearly all the Cretan poets we know, with Dellaporta standing out as a herald at one end, and Palladas and Lampudios limping sadly at the other.

The plays, *The Fair Shepherdess*, *Erotocritos*, and even *The Cretan War*, form a literature that is comparatively homogeneous. There are great variations in skill and sensibility, but it is very rare to read a passage that does not give the impression of maturity, and of the power that comes from maturity. The force of experience is in the verse, and rolls it along over crudities and longueurs intolerable in younger compositions.

The forging of this weapon happened a century and more before, in a time whose poetry is quite the opposite. The works of the fifteenth century are full of hesitation and infelicity. They are facing a series of challenges: the end of Byzantium, the increase of Western influences and ideas, the discovery of rhyme, the beginning of printing. The answer to these challenges is the subject of this study.

It is not a continuous history, though the episodes are nearly in chronological order. They are built upon two themes: first, the breakdown of old ways of verse, (not complete even today); and second, the synthesis of new forms in a variety of methods ranging from near-translation of foreign models to rearrangement of antique fragments. Running alongside these themes has been the effort to approach the idea of «popularity» in Cretan poetry, in particular by finding out how, and under what conditions, the poems reached their audience.

ABBREVIATIONS

A	Athens version of Acritas
ABC	W. Wagner Ἀλφάβητος τῆς ἀγάπης
AK	The Appeal of Constantinople
AT	Apollonius of Tyre
B	S. Baud - Bovy La chanson populaire grecque du Dodecanese
BGV	E. Legrand Bibliothèque grecque vulgaire
BZ	Byzantinische Zeitschrift
CPG	H. Pernot Chansons populaires grecques
CSBH	Corpus scriptorum byzantinorum historiae Bonn
DC	C. Du Cange Glossarium mediae et infimae graecitatis
E	Escorial version of Acritas
ΕΕΒΣ	Ἐπιτηρίς Ἐταιρείας Βυζαντινῶν Σπουδῶν
K	A. Κριάρης Κρητικά ἄσματα
KX	Κρητικά Χρονικά
M	Montpellier manuscript of Sachlikis
MKI	Μνημεία Κρητικῆς Ἱστορίας
NE	Νέος Ἑλληνομνήμων
O	Oxford version of Achilles
P	Paris manuscript of Sachlikis (ch. 3), Theseus (ch. 5)
PG	Patrologia graeca
PL	Patrologia latina
T	Trebizond version of Acritas
TF	Texte und Forschungen zur byzantinisch - neugriechischen Philologie.
V	Venice edition of Theseus
XK	Χριστιανική Κρήτη

CHAPTER 1*
THE FOLKSONGS

Any work that purports to inquire into the origins of Cretan poetry must presumably deal with the twin sources of literary and traditional inspiration. The first is represented in written or printed works, to most of which we have access; and when treating the second, critics tend to relate the poems they are discussing to extant folk - poetry and folk - lore. The result is nearly always correct; but it leaves in the mind a fragment of doubt. There is always the possibility that the folk - poem, or the folk - tale, is not the forerunner of the sophisticated work, but its reflection. What would our conclusions be if the name of Apollonius had disappeared from all, and not merely some of the folk - versions of Apollonius of Tyre? Will it ever be possible to say whether some *mantinades* were borrowed from, or by Cornaros?

This chapter is an attempt to reach a solution to the problem of what folk - poetry existed in Venetian Crete. It seeks to do for Venetian Crete something which, as far as I know, has not been attempted for any part of the Greek world - to define the «hypothetical corpus» of folk - poetry during a historical period. In practice, this will mean at the end of the Venetian period, for there is little evidence for us to divine the existence of folk - songs which by then had been forgotten.

The material we have is almost confined to Cretan poetry now current, or contained in modern printed and manuscript collections. From this we may remove immediately all work referring to the Turkish occupation, and to it we must add some

*) In this chapter, the abbreviations K and B are used for the most copious collection of Cretan folk - poetry and the most important study that affects it:

A. Κράρης Κρητικά ἄσματα Athens 1921 (very different from the 1909 Canea edition).

S. Baud - Bovy La chanson populaire grecque du Dodecanese. I Les textes Paris 1936.

To reduce footnotes, an appendix to this chapter gives the references to these two books.

few older manuscripts, and such evidence as may be got from incidental references in other works.

There are three ways in which we can tell that a poem was known before the fall of Candia. First, of course, it may have been copied before then in a manuscript now extant. Then for narrative poems of fairly wide distribution we may use a comparative method that consists of the collation of all variants, and the use of certain criteria to decide the centre from which they were dispersed; from this it is sometimes possible to decide what date of composition is likely to suit that particular place. It may be objected that this is irrelevant to the date when the poem reached Crete: that, for instance, a piece composed at Rhodes in the sixteenth century might not have come to Crete until the eighteenth. But poems popular enough to have achieved the distribution of, for instance, *Charzani's*, or *The Faithful Wife* must, in a cultural unit such as the Aegean basin, have achieved that distribution very quickly. A good song spreads at once; and only the barrier of war or blockade can halt its progress. In Crete, a centre of continual commerce, such obstacles can have stopped the spread of a poem only rarely, and for a short time.

The third aid to our dating is the internal evidence of incident and vocabulary, to be used for the songs which are typically Cretan, and almost confined to Crete. We may add certain stylistic considerations which will be discussed later.

If with these instruments we may begin to get some idea of the poetic heritage of a Cretan in the seventeenth century, if we can say «Chortatzes would have heard these lines», «Foscolo would have been familiar with this idea», then we shall be in a position to understand considerably more of their works.

They would have known nearly all the narrative poems now extant. Setting aside the theme of *Digenis Acritas*, which will need a chapter to itself, we may start with the song of *Prophyrus*. The arguments for the identification of *Prophyrus* are difficult¹, but it seems sure that he was one of the mythogenic heroes of those struggles — half - invasion, half - revolt — on Byzantium's Eastern marches, that gave *Digenis* himself, the *Son*

¹) H. Gregoire 'Ο Διγενής 'Ακρίτας New York 1942, p. 28.

Andronicos², Armouris³, and the lesser heroes whose names appear in Prospkyris. In Crete only two of the three are recognisable: one is Nicephoros, the conqueror who won back Crete from the Arabs and restored it to the Byzantine Empire in 961. The song of Prospkyris goes back to the tenth century.

Also from Cappadocia, and perhaps even older, were the two great Panhellenic ballads of Constantine and Areti, which was to spread from Greece all over Europe, and after eight centuries reach even England⁴: and The Bridge of Arta, (more correctly The Bridge of Adana, and probably the very bridge that Justinian built there in the sixth century). Then some songs in twelve-syllabled verse. The antique metre has left them weak and susceptible to change in an ear tuned to politicals. But The Fair Maid's Castle is still known, though its true title is hidden; it should be The Castle of Amorion, and celebrates the fortress which fell to the Arabs in 838. Other Asiatic songs of the same metre are grouped at the edges of the Acritic cycle: The Witch in the Well (this Constantine too is the youngest of nine brothers, as in Constantine and Areti), and two poems with Digenis's doublet, The Death of Yannakis, and Yannis and the Sun. The fragments that we have are lateborn, and contaminated with rhyme, but if we are to regard these heroes as pre-Acritean figures half-merged in the new epic cycle, the poems might well have been old when Nicephoros Phocas came to Crete. All were ancient when the Venetians landed. When Cornaros heard them they were for him twice as old as Erotokritos is for us.

A later arrival in Crete was Chatzarakis, a version of the widespread Charzanis, perhaps composed in Aegina in the twelfth century and refashioned at Rhodes in the early thirteenth. The rhymed version, Sior Tzanakis, is of course later; but even this can well be of the Venetian period, if we may judge from the title.

²) Π. Π. Καλονάρου Βασίλειος Διγενής 'Ακρίτας Athens 1941, vol. 2, p. 210.

³) *Id id.* p. 213.

⁴) W. J. Entwistle European Balladry Oxford 1939, pp. 237ff, 309, and index.

Chatzarakis can be dated by the name of the prince in the Rhodian version. We have an even more precise dating for Henry of Flanders, the ballad of the slaying of this Latin Emperor of Constantinople in 1216⁵. Today only its roughly rhymed form, *King Alexander*, exists in Crete.

The *Faithful Wife* may not at this time have been adopted for its present Cretan use, of being sung (very appropriately) as a journey song for the *ψίκι*, the marriage - procession⁶. This adoption, which has preserved so good a tradition in Crete, we cannot date, but the song itself was of the thirteenth or fourteenth century. The rhymed ending found in some versions came later, but may, like *Sior Tzanakis*, still have been as early as the seventeenth century. Much older was the now rare variant where, after the wife's fidelity has been proved, the husband in his turn is tested, and made to tell the details of his house. Comparisons with Russian songs show that this theme must have appeared (even forgetting the *Odyssey*) before the fall of Byzantium to the Crusaders. It had also been adapted into a love - song (this too sung in the *ψίκι*, and more common than the pure version) where it is not the husband, but the lover, who must gain entrance.

All these would have been heard, not only by Chortatzes and Cornaros and the other poets of the seventeenth century, but by their forerunners as well - Acontianos, Sachlikis, as far back as Dellaporta. As we go on we draw near to the time when these men lived, and must begin to doubt if such and such a song was known to this man or that. This was the most fruitful period of Cretan folk - poetry, when the island became a centre of composition and dispersion. The main stimulus for this activity was certainly the contact with Frankish, and particularly Italian, ideas; the delay after the occupation of Crete points to a settling - down, to the assimilation of the two peoples.

In this group, *The Pregnant Girl*, with its catalogue of the months since her lover has abandoned her, is found in a fifteenth - century manuscript⁷, and is very likely a Cretan com-

⁵) Μ. Μανούσακας Τὸ τραγούδι γιὰ τὸ βασιλιὰ "Ἐρρικο τῆς Φλάνδρας (Λαογραφία 14 (1952) pp 3 - 52).

⁶) Π. Γ. Βλαστός Ὁ γάμος ἐν Κρήτῃ Athens 1893, pp. 71ff.

⁷) Σ. Π. Λάμπρος (BZ3 (1894).

position. Among the rest, which can only be roughly dated in the thirteenth to sixteenth centuries, obviously Italian themes were *The Evil Mother-in-Law*, *Bridesmaid to Bride*, *The Partridge and the Hunter*, *Brother and Sister*, and *His Brother's Wife*. A like subject, almost certainly from Amorgos, was *The Drowned Maiden*. The folkcustoms suggested in the best versions point to Carpathos as the home of *The Murdered Maiden*, though its «happy-ending» variant, *The Hunter and the Maiden*, is more likely to be Cretan, and of a later date. Four certainly Cretan poems made up the total: *Mavrianos's Sister* (on an Italian poem used by Shakespeare in *Cymbeline*; the name is a grecoised memory of the hero Marianson in the French and some Italian forms);⁹ *The Wife and the Mistress*; *Martha*; and, by no means least, the rimada of *The Young Man and the Maiden*¹⁰, dated on manuscript evidence as before 1520¹⁰, (though probably not more than fifty years or so before). In the same manuscript are other lesser poems which are very likely Cretan¹¹.

Another manuscript, from Meteora and of the sixteenth or seventeenth century¹², contains the Pan-European ballad of *The Murderess Mother*, who serves her child's liver as a Thyestean feast for his father. It is likely, however, to be much older. In Crete only a fragmentary beginning now exists, under the name of *The Woman of Mylopotamos*. A similar, but later and less heroic theme, which borrows a line from *The Murderess Mother* is found in *The Adulteress and her Maid*.

In this period there seems to be a certain loosening of the

⁹) There seems no doubt that this, which has not been noted before, is true. Possibly the original Mavrianos was yet another sub-Acrotic hero (certainly very Acrotic phrases are connected with his name) attracted to the Western ballad by the similarity of names.

⁹) H. Pernot *Chansons populaires grecques des XVe et XVIe siècles* Paris 1931 pp. 72ff., and Introduction, pp. 7, 12ff., and notes, pp. 106 - 112.

¹⁰) G. Morgan *Three Cretan manuscripts* (KX 8 (1954) pp. 61 - 71) p. 66.

¹¹) H. Pernot op. cit. pp. 18 - 70, and Introduction, pp. 7, etc.

¹²) N. A. Βέης *Νεοελληνικά δημώδη ἄσματα ἐκ χειρογράφων κωδίκων* (Παναθήναια 10 (1910) pp. 211 - 216).

moral attitude. Many of the poems have plots like those of Boccaccio and his contemporaries. It may be remembered in passing that we have fragments of late Byzantine *novelle* identical with Italian examples¹³, but this does not affect the main conclusion that Cretan popular poetry, just like Cretan sophisticated poetry, was in these centuries drawing freely on Western models. Sometimes the models (and this too applies, as we shall see, to the sophisticated poems) seem not to be Italian, as would be the natural assumption. «The pastoral is a debate in alternating couplets between a gentleman and a shepherdess. The gentleman tries to seduce the young girl with fine promises, and she vigorously repels his advances»¹⁴. With the substitution of «speeches» for «couplets», this would be a fair description of *The Young Man and the Maiden*:

*Κόρη μὲ νιὸ δικάζεται ἀπὸ γὰ παραθύρου
μνιὰ νύκτιαν ὅσο πῶδωκεν ἀγῆς τὸ σημαντήρι
ὁ νιώτερος ζητᾷ φιλι κ' ἢ κόρη δακτυλίδι...*

It is in fact an account of the French, and particularly North French, *pastourelle*¹⁵.

Such were the narratives known to our seventeenthcentury Cretan. But just as this first period of folk - song composition seems to coincide with the first period of literary composition, so the second literary period, of Cretan drama and *Erotocritos*, has its counterpart in a group of sea - faring songs of which Crete is the most likely home¹⁶. The most probable date for them is right at the end of Venetian rule. In this group, spread now all over the Aegean, are *Three Cretan Monks*, *The North Wind*, *The Jewish Renegade*, *The Galley Slave*, (which so often introduces and contaminates the *Acritic*

¹³) See chapter 4.

¹⁴) E. Hoepffner *Les troubadours* Paris 1955, pp. 13 - 14.

¹⁵) *The Young Man and the Maiden* is on the border between popular and sophisticated poetry. In a rather similar position is *Achilles*, in whose variants are plentiful signs of popular transmission, and this too has memories of one of the minor forms of the troubadours' repertoire. The *alba* is a conversation at dawn between a man and his mistress. Parts of its convention are the complaint of the lady after her lover has left, and the presence of his confidant (in *Achilles* it is *Patroclus*) who acts as guard for his retreat. (*Ibid.* p. 14).

¹⁶) For this group see B 253, 262 - 280.

Ride to the Wedding), The Death of the Sailor, and the «sailing - ship» type of The Ailing Husband. A variant of the second, The North Wind and the Shepherd, is very much rarer; it is found only in Carpathos and Crete, and either may claim it.

These by no means exhaust the list of narrative - poems. Many others, whose dispersion - patterns have not been studied sufficiently to provide certain answers to the questions «When?» and «Where?», can be placed at least before the cutting - off of Crete from the Christian world. The Armenian's Son is a variant of the Hellenic poem, The Diver, itself derived in all probability from the famous Sicilian ballad Cola Pesce¹⁷ The Love - Test¹⁸ (in Crete it is only the fragmentary dance - song The Hundred and Two Suitors) also has Italian affinities. Zervopoula's distribution suggests a Cretan origin. The Restless Maiden presents us with a strange problem in ballad - routes, for its model is clearly in a German work, The Nutmeg Tree¹⁹. The solution may be that the author of The Nutmeg Tree had travelled three times in France and may have found some Romance material there²⁰. No such explanation can be found for the four - line fragment Constantis in the Plough, found, as far as I know, only in Crete. This is a remnant of a Greek version of The Count of Rome, another German ballad based on the fifteenth century mastersong Alexander of Metz²¹.

The line between Henry of Flanders and Saint Sophia may now seem tenuous, and if we place there our division

¹⁷) Ν. Γ. Πολιτης 'Εκλογαί από τὰ τραγούδια τοῦ ἑλληνικοῦ λαοῦ. Athens 1932, pp 133 - 137.

¹⁸) Ibid. p. 109.

¹⁹) L. Erk - F. W. Böhme Deutscher Liederhort Leipzig 1893.

²⁰) W. J. Entwistle op. cit. vol. 1, pp. 93ff.

²¹) L. Erk - F. W. Böhme op. cit. vol. 1, pp. 93ff.

*«Er mocht ihn nit entfliehen,
das was sein grösste Klag,
im Pflug da musst er ziehen
viel länger dann Jahr und Tag.
Er leidet viel Hunger und Schwere
was ihm ein grosse Buss,
der König reit für ihm here,
der Graf fiel ihm zu Fuss».*

between the romanticised narrative and the historical song, the justification is in the magnitude of the event rather than the difference of attitude. But the lament for the cathedral of Christendom, and its companion, *The Fall of the City*, are after five hundred years still consciously historical; we may pardonably believe that no woman singing at her loom of King Alexander knows the full meaning of her song. As great a catastrophe as the capture of Constantinople left its impact on all Greece. The two songs we have are only a drop of the wave of poetry inspired by it.

Nearly a century before the end, the last struggles of the Empire had produced another work, characterised as the oldest historical poem of European Greece; *The Sack of Adrianople*²¹ (in 1361) is still sung in the White Mountains.

The Siege of Rhodes (by the Turks in 1520) is also common in West Crete. The Ali Pasha of *The Famous Gallean* is not the more notorious lord of Yannina in the early nineteenth century, who never achieved a navy, and whose dealings with the sea were negligible, but the Captain Pasha who died at the head of his fleet at Lepanto in 1570. The ballad of *The Sultan's Wife* refers to Eumenia Vergitzi, who was enslaved as a child of four at the capture of Rethymno in 1646, and became renowned through Europe when she rose to be Sultana eighteen years after²². And to round off our list of strictly datable songs we may include one which can only be a day or two outside the limits of this study — *The Fall of Candia*.

But clear dates and obvious history are by no means our only criteria. Time after time in the reading of a collection of Cretan poetry we meet things which suggest, and often demand, that a poem be admitted the three hundred years or so of currency that give it entrance to our lists. To an account of these the rest of this chapter is devoted.

The Turkish Princess who sits at her window and remembers that Crete once belonged to her father is by no means

²¹) A. Passow *Carmina popularia Graeciae recentioris* Leipzig 1860, p. 145.

²²) Μ. Μανούσακας *Ἡ ρεθεμνιώτισσα σουλτάνα Εὐμενία Βεργίτση στις εὐρωπαϊκὲς χαλκογραφίες καὶ στὰ ἑλληνικὰ δημοτικὰ τραγούδια* (ΚΧ 5 (1951) pp. 349 - 384).

as old as the literal interpretation of her words would demand: but the nine pashas she calls to take the island must be forerunners of the traditional (and historical) seven who accomplished the fall of Candia, and whose graves were marked with the ceremonial halberds now in the museum there. The song need not be another referring to the Sultana Eumenia²⁴; this suggestion seems to be based on a rather strained interpretation of the line,

τὴν Κρήτη ἐθυμήθηκε πῶς ἦταν τοῦ κυροῦ της

It is more likely to come from the first years of the Cretan war, almost certainly before 1650. The later and harder years when the siege was tightened are glanced at in Yannis' Complaint — «battle all day and guard all night». The only situation to fit this in Cretan history began when Candia was finally invested, on May 22nd, 1667, and so remained until its surrender twenty - eight months later.

The few Cretans who remained on the island in the Turkish conquest had among all their sorrows one small consolation. No longer had they anything to fear from the Barbary pirates, who, though not always perfect vassals of the Porte, did not attack Crete when it was in Turkish hands. The Barbary State, that strange example of a whole economy founded on piracy and theft, was organized as a notable power by the brothers Arouj and Khaireddin Barbarossa in the early years of the sixteenth century²⁵. There is a tradition in Crete that Khaireddin made

²⁴) Ibid p. 382 Another suggestion is that of C. Kerofilas. in *Une famille particienne crétoise, les Vlasto*, New York 1932 p. 29, that the song refers to the despatch of twelve Byzantine lords to Crete by Alexis Comnenos in 1092. His version has *ρηγάδες* for *πασάδες*, but the theory is improbable.

²⁵) For the general history of the Barbary pirates, see H - D de Grammont *Histoire d' Alger sous la domination Turque*, Paris, 1887. For Barbarossa and the earlier period, see S. Rang - F. Denis *Fondation de la Régence d' Alger*, Paris 1837 (a translation of an almost contemporary Arabic source), E. Jurien de la Gravière *Doria et Barberousse* 1886, etc. For the sparse and hard- come - by details of the corsairs' activities in the Mediterranean, see Grammont, op. cit. p. 108, Bang - Denis op. cit. vol I pp 303ff, Jurien de la Gravière, op. cit. p. 253, F. Braudel, *La Méditerranée et le monde méditerranéen à l' époque de Philippe II* Paris 1949, pp 704, 706 (who gives the necessary references to documents in the Venetian archives, and to Noiret's collection), and Σ. Ε α ν θ ο υ δ ι δ η ς, 'Η Ένετοκρατία ἐν Κρήτη καὶ οἱ κατὰ τῶν Ένετῶν ἀγῶνες τῶν Κρητῶν (TF 34) Athens 1939 p. 112.

Gavdhos a corsair stronghold for attack on the Cretan coast²⁶. That it was a summer lair in later times we know from such place - names as *Καὐμένη Κατοῦνα* and *Σαρακήνικο*, and from the plans drawn up in 1622 for fortresses to stop the infestation²⁷. But of so early a base there is no record, and it is as likely to be embroidery upon the fact that when the Archpirate turned in 1534 from the Western Mediterranean to the East, his minor attacks in the Peloponnese and the Ionian Islands were followed by a scathing raid on Crete. In 1538 Rethymnon, the third city of Crete, was put to the torch in spite of the resistance of seven thousand men. Apocoronas and eighty villages between were sacked, and thousands taken as slaves. Halfway through the sixteenth century there were 30,000 slaves in Algiers.

After the death of Khaireddin the storm broke again on Crete. The scourge fell in 1560 and again in 1562. In 1567 Rethymnon was burnt once more by Euldj - Ali, who returned four years afterwards to sweep along the Heptanese and Coroni to the long island. It was at this time that the Venetian sea - fortresses of Suda, Spinalonga, and Grambusa were built to meet the peril. But again in 1600 there came a heavy raid, and the affliction continued, though on a lesser scale, until the landing in 1645.

The corsairs were not always successful. Shortly after 1530, the «Young Moor» of Alexandria showed his flag off Canea. The Provveditore, Girolamo Canale, captured him with four of his squadron, killed three hundred janissaries, and freed a thousand slaves. In 1562 the Barbary Dragoutis was killed and his fleet smashed by Pietro Tron.

But in the folk tradition there is no knowledge of such successes. The corsairs are an Act of God, to be countered only by an act, of God or one of his saints. Churches all along the coast of Crete have legends of divine intervention against the pirates²⁸. When the intervention did not come, the church, like

²⁶) This tradition is wide - spread, but I have never seen it published, though it is referred to indirectly in Ν. Β. Τωμαδάκης, *Συμβολή εις τὰς τοπωνυμίας τοῦ Σελίνου* (Κρητικά Ι (1930) pp. 25 - 31) p. 30.

²⁷) G. Gerola, *Monumenti Veneti nell' isola di Creta* Venice 1905-1917, vol. 1, part 2, pp. 647 - 648.

²⁸) Α. Κ. Χατζηγιάκης, 'Εκκλησίες Κρήτης' παραδόσεις Rethymno 1954, *passim*.

Savvathiana near Candia, was moved from the shore up into the mountains, and all the survivors could do was cry

*στῶ Μπαρμπαρέζω τις ἀλλές, ἦλιε μὴν ἀνατείλῃς*⁹⁹

From the first years of the terror must come a line, now out of the context of its own, lost, song

*Μιὰ Μπαρμπαριά κονροσέψαμε, κ' ἡ Κρήτη μᾶς τρομάσσει*¹⁰⁰

for these can only be the words of one of those first corsairs of the Barbarossas, who had scathed all Barbary as they made it into a single principality.

Sometimes the slaves came back. The mother who sang

*τροεῖς χρόνοι πᾶνε σήμερο, τέσσερεις πορπατοῦνε*¹⁰¹

was not without all hope. In Gavdhos, τὸ μετόχι τοῦ Σκλαβονοῦ still records the memory of a Gavdhiot slave who was sold from Algiers to Sclavounia (Illyria) and came home many years after¹⁰². The story of the priest and his wife who returned from captivity after sixteen and twenty - two years is recorded to this day in the inscription on the church they built as a thank - offering at Skepasti in Mylopotamos¹⁰³. But, generally,

*κάτω, κεῖ κάτω σιὴν Ἀξιάν, κεῖ κάτω σι' Ἀλιτζέροι,
ὁ Τάρταρης ἔχει ἐννι' ἀδερφοὺς μὲ τὸ σκοινὶ δεμένους*¹⁰⁴

where Tartaris, who so start was almost certainly some Tatar Bey, some pirate captain, has assumed the name and quality of Death.

In this half - light between the world and the supernatural, the Saracens and the Moors join Digenis as beings beyond human control. They become the «Old Corsairs», whose laire are «where the waters meet»¹⁰⁵. In this company the sailors of

⁹⁹) The Barbary Pirates.

¹⁰⁰) The Warrior - Maiden.

¹⁰¹) K 289, 3.

¹⁰²) This tradition was told me by Mr. G Koumantatakis, President of Gavdhos.

¹⁰³) Κ. Τσατσάρωνάκη, Ἡ πρεσβυτέρα τοῦ παπᾶ Νικοδήμου Τσαρμαροῦ (Νέα Χρονικά of Heracleion, June 5 - 12 - 19, 1949). This was Enldj - Ali's second raid.

¹⁰⁴) Tartaris. A Chian version preserves the form «Τάρταρης». See Α. Θέρος, Τὰ τραγούδια τῶν Ἑλλήνων, Athens 1952, vol 2, pp 163 - 164.

¹⁰⁵) K. 285, 2.

Barbary join the turmarch of Anatolia in the mythical circle of men of great stature :

*οἱ Σέρβοι κ' οἱ Σαρακηνοὶ κ' οἱ Μῶροι γάμο κάνουν,
κι οὐλον τὸν κόσμον τὸν καλοῦν κι οὐλον τὸν πρεμαζώνουν.
Τὸ Διγενὴ δὲ τὸν καλοῦν γιὰ τοὶ κακὲς τοὶ χάρεις...⁸⁶*

The sorrows of the survivors were sometimes as great. The building of the coastal defences may have produced the beautiful love-song *The Red-lipped Maiden* for the Frankish armada watched for can only be a perversion, in the wishes of the people, of «*Τοῦ Τούρκου τὴν ἀρμάδα*». The combination of tower-building and a Frankish fleet does not occur in Cretan history. But in the effort to counter the danger the Venetians extended the system of forced galley-service, the *angarie*⁸⁷. The hardships of the rowers were immense. Moresini boasted in 1629 that there were in the island 40,000 men, «strong and used to suffering», but admitted that in time of danger it would be very difficult to find them⁸⁸. Whole districts were depopulated in fear of the galleys, and the young men took to the mountains to escape the filth, the starvation, and the yearly epidemics that raged in the Arsenal of Canea and Candia⁸⁹. Even the more privileged marine-service, where the men were actually paid, was almost impossible to fill. The same Provveditore writes plaintively that «of the few sailors there were, most are slaves in Barbary»⁹⁰. The cry went up from Crete.

*«Περικαλῶ σε ναύκληρε, κ' ἔσὲ καρaboκύρη,
μὴ δῶσιε τοῦ πολυαγαπῶ βαρὺν κουπὶ νὰ λάμνη»⁹¹.*

This was a lady in a tower of steel and marble, but the words were those of thousands of Cretan mothers who baked their sons' ship's biscuit⁹², and waited for the galleys to come.

⁸⁶) Serbs and Saracens.

⁸⁷) Σ. Ξανθοῦ διδης, op. cit. p. 118.

⁸⁸) F. Moresini, *Relazione...* MDCXXIX ed. Σ. Σπανάκης, (Μνημεία τῆς κρητικῆς ιστορίας, vol. 2) Heracleion 1950, pp. 66 - 67.

⁸⁹) V. Lamansky *Secrets d' état de Venise* S. Petersburg 1884, where the material is from a report by Geronimo Tagliapetra, Duke of Candia in 1561.

⁹⁰) F. Moresini, op. cit. p. 66.

⁹¹) *The Lady's Appeal*.

⁹²) *The Sailor Goes*.

Οὐλὰν τὰ κάτεργά 'ρχονται κι οὐλὰ περνοδιαβαίνουν.
 Τοῦ Μιριαλῆ τὸ κάτεργο μὴδ' ἦρθε μὴ' ἐφάνη,
 ἀπὸυ 'χει Κρητικὸπουλα, ὁμορφα παλληκάρια,
 π' ὄντε σειστοῦν καὶ λυγιστοῦν καὶ παίζουν τὴν τρουμπέτα
 τρὰ μίλια πᾶ τὸ κάτεργο ⁴³.

Too often they did not come.

. . . φοιγάδες ἐπιγῆκανε ἐξῆντα δυὸ χιλιάδες.
 Κλαῖν οἱ μανάδες τὰ παιδιὰ, κλαῖν οἱ γυναῖκες το' ἀντρες ⁴⁴

In the light of the folksongs one begins to doubt the benevolence of Venetian rule in Crete. The structure of sophistication implied in the Cretan theatre, the embassies and advocacies of Sachlikis and Dellaporta are on one side of the page. On the other we see galley - slaves, the walls of Candia, and the tale of revolt, time after time, against the foreign masters.

We are lucky enough to have a unique example of a folksong connected with a current tradition about the Venetian persecutions. In the twin villages of Upper and Lower Rodhakino, in the little - frequented and gorge - scarred seaboard to the east of Sphakia, this story is told : ⁴⁵

Some Venetians insulted the girls of a village called Myrtes, which stood where Rodhakino now is. Their menfolk killed the offenders; and one Cretan, returning to the village, was asked in words which are still sung,

«Εἶνιὰ 'χεις, καπετάνιο μου, κ' εἶσαι συλλογισμένος;
 Σὲ φονικὸ σὲ μπλέξανε, γῆ σὲ σασιναμένιο;»
 «Μὰ μένα δὲν μὲ μπλέξανε εἰσὲ κανένα πρᾶμα,
 μόνον Φράγκους δὲν προσκυνῶ.»

In revenge, the Venetians burnt the place and massacred its inhabitants. Only two brothers escaped, and hid in a thicket. As the enemy came searching the bushes, their sister sang, to warn them,

«Πουλὰκι ποῦσαι σὶὸ κλαδί, κάνε φτερὰ καὶ φύγε,
 γιὰτὶ σὲ τριγυρίσανε πολλῶν λογιῶν γεράκια.»

⁴³) The Admiral's Galley. In this context *μυριαλῆ* — «admiral» is an almost certain correction for the name *Μυργιολῆς*, which has been drawn in from another Cretan ballad in the years when the name and office of Admiral had passed from common memory.

⁴⁴) K. 331.

⁴⁵) A. K. Χατζηγιάκης, op. cit. pp. 91 - 92.

but in vain. One brother was killed, and the other, who was lame, sent to prison. He bribed his way out of jail, and lived in another part of Crete until the arrival of the Turks. Then, as an old man, he returned with his five sons to found the villages of Rodhakino.

Because of its air of authority and its circumstantial detail, this tradition is very important to the study of Cretan folk-poetry.

But such episodes were not rare. We hear of another fugitive

*Γιὰ τὸ Μανώλη θὰ σᾶς πῶ, τὸν Ἀγιαποστολίτη,
ποὺ τὸν γυρεύῃ ἢ ἀφεδειὰ γὰ τὸν ἀναρωτήξῃ.
Μὰ ὁ νιὸς ποὺ τὴν πολλὴ σπουδὴ κι ἀπὸ τὴν προκοπὴν του
φριγάδα καβαλλίκεψε κ' ἐπῆρén τὴν καὶ πάει...⁴⁶*

where the word ἀφεδειά, used of the Venetian administration («signoria») and not of the Turkish, gives us our dating. The nature of this «inquisition» we may guess from a contemporary use of the same verb.

δέρνονν καὶ μαγκλαβίζουν τον, ρωτοῦν κι ἀναρωτοῦν τον⁴⁷

This Manolis escaped: another was not so fortunate.

*Μανώλην ἔχουν στὴ φλακὴ, Μανώλην μαγκλαβίζου,
δέρνονν καὶ μαγκλαβίζουν τον κι ἀδικουτρανοῦν τον.
Κ' ἢ μάνα νιου στὸ γύρο νιου τζαγκουρομαδιομένη
«Μανώλη, μὴν πρικοίνεσαι καὶ μὴν βαροκαρδίξῃς,
καὶ τὴ Μεγάλῃ Παρασκῇ καὶ τὸ Μέγα Σαββᾶτο
κάνουν οἱ γι ἄρχοντες μιστά, βγάνουνε φλακισμένους,
κι ἄ δὲ σὲ βγάλου τοιεῶς ὁ Θεὸς θὰ σὲ γλυτώσῃ»⁴⁸.*

The «lords» who for piety release prisoners at Easter would not have been Moslems.

Who were they? Who were the ἄρχοντες? Historically they are the Ἀρχοντορωμαῖοι, the Ἀρχονιόπουλοι; originally the twelve families by tradition sent over by Alexios Comnenos to colonize Crete in 1092⁴⁹. By 1573 their descendants numbered some

⁴⁶) Manolis of Agiapostoli.

⁴⁷) K. 179.

⁴⁸) Manolis in Prison.

⁴⁹) Σ. Ξανθοῦ δίδης, op. cit. pp 17 - 18, 129. The source-work is E. Gerland, Histoire de la Noblesse crétoise au moyen age (Revue de l' Orient Latin 10 pp.), and this must be modified by Mr. Spanakis's publication of documents in the Μνημεῖα τῆς κρητικῆς ἱστορίας and elsewhere.

four hundred families, holding fiefs or subdivisions of fiefs from the Venetian state. These must have been quite large family groups, for at the same time a single clan of the twelve, the Skordhili of Sphakia, was able to put three hundred fighting men in the field. It is sometimes said that in Sphakia and its province the members of various families are still hold to be *ἀρχοντες*. This does not seem to be so. There is a distinct social convention by which the adjective is applied to a family — «so - and - so is of an *ἀρχοντική οικογένεια*, an *ἀρχοντόσπιτο*» — but the noun is not used and it is reasonable to conjecture that its use was so closely connected with the feudal system set up even before the Venetians came that it virtually disappeared when that system came to an end. Certainly it is very rare in folk - songs of the Turkish era. (The word that replaced it was *καπεταναῖοι*, from the Turkish administrative system of village — headmen — «captains».) It occurs in *Daskaloyannis* in 1770⁵⁰. But in the 160 pages of historical ballads in *Kriaris's* collection, *ἀρχοντες* occurs only in the poem of *Michalis Vlachos*⁵¹, which is associated with a rebel in the early years of the eighteenth century. We may say that the presence of this word shows that a poem is not later than the eighteenth century, and is probably earlier⁵².

⁵⁰) Μπάριμα - Παντζελιός, Τὸ τραγοῦδι τοῦ Δασκαλογιάννη ed Β. Λαοῦδας, Heracleion 1947.

⁵¹) K: 35, K. 38. Mr. N. Stavrinidis, Keeper of the Archives at Heracleion, tells me that Turkish records dealing with the cruel execution of Vlachos are in his charge, and are dated shortly before 1710. This disposes of Professor Baud - Bovy's statement that rhyme appeared in Crete in «long ballads» in the second half of the eighteenth century, (B. 129). That this is not so has been hinted at in my remarks on *Sior Tzanakis* (above, p. 11), and may be further emphasized in the treatment of *Dolcetta* and *Fiorentino*.

⁵²) Does this argument fail by the presence of the name Ρούσσιο in *Ἀρχόντους ἔχουν σὴ φλακή ὡς χίλιους πεντακόσιους*? The Ρούσσιοι were prominent at the time of the Greek revolution. But it is surely significant that this circumstantial song, with three names and striking situation, does not correspond with anything in our quite detailed accounts of the 1821 revolution in Crete. And the names are already shifting. *Kriaris* gives *Πωλογιωργάκης*, another source *Σηφογιωργάκης* (I. E. Μαθιουδάκης) *Δημοτικά τραγοῦδια Σελίνου* (Κρητικά 1 (1930) pp. 242 - 281) p 249). Such loss of memory does not occur with the other nineteenth - century songs; and if we may not assign this song to the mysterious revolt of

These Lords of the Byzantine Empire were the mainspring of Greek rebellion against Venice. The names of the risings sound like an extract from their pedigrees: The Rebellion of the Skordhili and Melisseni; again of the Melisseni; of the Chortatzi; of Alexios Callergis; of Leon Callergis; of Vlastos; of Cantanoleon.

Filippo Pasqualigo, Captain of Candia in 1594 is speaking of this last battle, the rebellion of Cantanoleon, which had happened long ago in 1527:⁶³

«...disturbances which happened in the time of Gierolemo Cornaro, Captain of Candia, when it was necessary to execute more than three hundred persons, and send many to exile, to burn and raze their villages, confiscate their property, and exact other severe penalties. Now they (the Ἀρχοντοχωμαῖοι) have returned again to a life of pillage, licence, and dissolution, without fear of punishment...»

(The equation of klepht and patriot was not confined to the mainland).

«...Among these villains, the family of the Conti, of Alikampos, has the worst wrongdoers... In the time of Cornaro they were a hundred families, proud and evil... The Phoumis clan, of Kerameia, also boast that they are nobles of the Empire. Many of them were condemned to death for similar seditions... Then there are the Cantanoleons of Khristoyeraka... the Musuri and the Sguraphi, men of the vilest character who live on the Omalo and at Orthouni.»

And so on and so on through the various branches of the Cretan nobility.

Who and, more important, when were the Musuri, these «men of the vilest character»? The first question is easy to answer; they were one of the twelve noble families of Crete, who lived around the Omalo, the small lacustrine plateau high in the White Mountains, a natural stronghold which could be held against thousands⁶⁴. Now it is frequented only in the summer.

Sphakia in 1582 (L a m a n s k y, op. cit. 643), it must at least go back to the ill-charted years before Daskaloyannis's rebellion.

⁶³ F. Pasqualigo, *Relazione*. . MDXCIV ed. Σ. Σπανάκης, (Μνημεία τῆς κρητικῆς ἱστορίας, vol. 3) Heracleion 1953, pp. 137ff.

⁶⁴ A good description in X. Fielding, *The Stronghold*, London 1953, p. 59.

In April or May the shepherds from the three valleys around, from Ayia Irene, Lakki, and Samaria, bring their flocks up to pasture: and with the first chills of winter leave the Omalo deserted and snowbound until Spring. But there is some evidence that long ago it was inhabited throughout the year. A Byzantine road leads up to it from the Ayia Irene valley: this is the one traditionally known as the «Musuri Road». But before discussing the most famous of all Cretan songs, we may try to answer the second question. The mystery is that in the Turkish period the Musuri have disappeared. There are occasional individuals, but the clan, the most notorious of the twelve, has vanished. It is not necessary for us to think of some massacre or plague. More likely is one of those sudden changes of name which so perplex the Cretan historian⁵⁵. As the Ducades became Callergi, the Musuri became - what? Or, as the Skordhili split into Pateri, Papadopouli, Pattaki, and the rest, the Musuri disintegrated under the force of internal vendettas. Whatever the cause, the clan of the Musuri passes from our knowledge during the seventeenth century.

So that the ballad of the Nine Brothers, whose flocks

δὲν εἶν' ἐθιὰ τῷ Σφακιανῷ μνηθῆ καὶ τῷ Μουσούρω

is probably at least as old as the seventeenth century. And the vendetta - song with its echo of Pasqualigo

*Καὶ πάλι κάταν φονικὸ οἱ Ἀρχοντομουσοῦροι*⁵⁶

must also be of this period.

Before we leave the Musuri, we must deal with one of the best known of all Cretan folk - songs, «When shall we see the Springtime stars, when will the brooklets run? — or in another translation, «when will February come?»:

Πότες θὰ κάμη ξεστεργιὰ πότες θὰ φλεβαρίση,

⁵⁵) Explained to the Most Serene Republic by Giacomo Foscarini in 1575, «Et come è costume in quell' Isola tramutar li cognomi loro in certi sopranoi, molti sono chiamati diversamente da quello solevano, come li Papadopuli et li Pateri, sebene ambi discesi da una madesima famiglia». Quoted in J. W. Zinkeisen Geschichte des osmanischen Reiches in Europa Gotha 1856, vol. 4, p. 640.

⁵⁶) Κ. Σκόκος, in Ἡμερολόγιον 1892, Heracleion, pp 353ff. And also the song of George Tsourakis: ἀπὸ σκοτῶσα τὸν βοσκὸ οἱ γι Ἀρχοντομουσοῦροι (Phanourakis's manuscript no. 20).

*νὰ πάρω τὸ τουφέκι μου, τὴν ὄμορφη πατρῶνα,
 καὶ ν' ἀνεβῶ στὸν Ὀμαλό, στὴ σιράια τῶ Μουσούρω,
 νὰ κάμω μάνες δίχως γιούς, γυναῖκες δίχως ἄντρες,
 νὰ κάμω καὶ μωρὰ παιδιὰ νὰ ἴναι δίχως μανάδες.
 νὰ κλαῖν τὴ νύχτα γιὰ βυζι καὶ τὴν ἀγὴ γιὰ γάλα,
 καὶ τ' ἀποδιαφωτίσματα...*

This song is known to every Cretan child to be the inspiration and rallying cry of his ancestors in the revolts against the Turks. Kriaris calls it, roundly, *The Rebel*. And it cannot be denied that it might have had some relevance to the bloody raids of those revolts, for the Ayia Irene valley, to which the Musuri Road gives access, is one of the entrances to the province of Selino, home of the Moslemized Cretans who were the Christians' most fierce adversaries. In fact, for part of it, we have more evidence of antiquity than we have for any other non-historical poem outside a manuscript. The Byzantine poet Michael Glykas, writing in 1156, says of Death:

*γονεῖς ἀτέκνους καθιστᾷ, τέκνα χωρὶς γονέων,
 ἐκ τῆς ἀγκάλης τῆς μητρὸς τὸ βρέφος ἀφαρπάζει,
 τὸ βρέφος ἀπεστέρησε μητέρος θηλαζούσης...⁵¹*

This is a variant in pedantic language of the end of the folk-poem, and it is quite clear that the folk-poem is the original, and the pedantic poem the imitation.

Again there exists a version of the song, *The Warrior's Wish*, which gives a very different picture:

*Χριστὲ νὰ ζώνουμουν σπαθὶ καὶ νὰ ἴπιανα κοντάρι,
 νὰ πρόβαινα στὸν Ὀμαλό, στὴ σιράια τῶ Μουσούρω,
 νὰ σύρω τ' ἀργυρὸ σπαθὶ καὶ τὸ χρουσὸ κοντάρι,
 νὰ κάμω μάνες δίχως γιούς, γυναῖκες δίχως ἄντρες,
 νὰ κάμω καὶ μωρὰ παιδιὰ μὲ δίχως τοὶ μανάδες.*

The Rebel is clearly a later, and, we shall admit, improved version of this. The only alternative would be to assign to the folk poet an antiquarian instinct entirely foreign to the genre, and, in the case of such a famous work, so ridiculous that it could never have survived. It can be said categorically that *The Rebel*, however patriotic it became in the Turkish era, was originally a vendetta-song of the Venetian occupation.

⁵¹) BGV 1. pp. 35 - 37.

The lance, as a cavalry weapon, has persisted into our own century⁵⁸. Quite apart from ceremonial, it was used in the great War, and even later on the Afghan frontier. But at the end of the sixteenth century it was suffering a sharp decline. In 1610 the standard cavalry treatise of the day advocated that only one quarter of a troop should be armed with lances, the rest with arquebuses and swords. By the end of the seventeenth century it was a forgotten weapon in Western Europe, and it was re-adopted as late as the beginning of the nineteenth century.

But even if we could imagine a seventeenth-century Cretan, (with that notorious dislike and contempt for horsemanship which was so regretted by the Venetian Provveditori)⁵⁹ riding with spear in the bucket, yet we could never imagine him doing so in the White Mountains, which must be some of the worst cavalry country in the world. If any *κοντάμι* was ever trailed murderously up the passes to the Omalo it would have been an infantry weapon: and not the long pike, whose only use was against cavalry, but a stabbing-spear or javelin. Yet the infantry-spear was rarely used by the beginning of the fifteenth century, and was even then regarded as an archaism suitable to Germans and Easterners, but not modern enough for the wars of the Italian states. However high we may put the conservatism of Western Crete, The Warrior's Wish cannot be imagined later than the sixteenth century. The traveller Belon, in 1550, does not include a spear in his description of Sphakian armament⁶⁰.

Neither does he mention firearms, though the infantry of Spain had in the fifteenth century laid the foundations of modern small-arms tactics⁶¹. It is recorded that the Sphakiots were reluctant to abandon their bows for the arquebus⁶². But,

⁵⁸) For this information see, principally Enciclopedia Italiana Rome 1933, s. v. *lancia*. Also Encyclopaedia Britannica s. v. *lance*.

⁵⁹) See, for example, Z. Mocenigo, *Relazione...* MDLXXXIX ed. Σ. Σπανιάκης (*Μνημεια τῆς κρητικῆς ιστορίας*, vol. 1, Heracleion 1940) p. 94.

⁶⁰) P. Belon, *Les observations de plusieurs singularités et choses memorables, trouvées en Grèce, Asie, Judée, Egypte, Arabie, et autres pays estranges* Antwerp 1555, p. 38 v.

⁶¹) Enciclopedia Italiana s. w. *archibuse, schioppo, fucile, arciera, etc.*

⁶²) R. Pashley, *Travels in Crete* Cambridge 1837, vol. 2, pp. 286-287, quoting Garzoni in 1586.

thirty - six years afterwards, when Giulio Garzoni went to Sphakia as representative of the Venetian government, part of his entertainment was a shooting - match where he distributed the prizes to the winners :⁶³

δὲν ἔχει ὁ Νάδης κοπελλιές, μηδὲ καὶ χαροκόπους,
μηδὲ καὶ σημαδότοπους νὰ σημαδεύουν οἱ γι ἄντρες,
μηδὲ καὶ βόλι δὲ χωρεῖ...⁶⁴

To the warrior, Hell is a place without shooting - matches. In 1608, the Venetian commission visiting Sphakia was greeted with ceremonial volleys at the foot of the ravine⁶⁵. In the siege of Candia muskets and arquebuses were in common use, and in this Crete merely follows the pattern of all Europe, where, it has been said, «after 1650, the musket was, in general, the exclusive infantry weapon», and it was remarked as a curiosity that English mercenary archers were used in the antique style at the siege of La Rochelle in 1627.

So that the archaism of «sword and spear» would have become very marked, and the change to more modern armament indicated, long before the Venetians left Crete. If the presence of the Turkish word *τουφέκι* appears a stumbling - block, it must be said, once and for all, that Turkish words cannot prove a late date unless allied to Turkish ways. The chap - book of A s s, W o l f, a n d F o x had circulated in Crete since 1539 with the line

*Λουμπάρδες ἔχει φοβερές, τουφέκια γεμισμένα*⁶⁶

and the word was familiar to seventeenth - century authors.

Before we leave this fierce and troubling song, one more question must be asked. What was the *πατόνα*? Kriaris answers, «a sort of large pistol»⁶⁷, and in this sense it has been used by Kazantzakis in his novels of Turkish Crete. But it must be remembered that this Kriaris is the man who thought that the Grand Master (*Πρωτομάστορας*) of Rhodes was a chief engineer, and whose pompous enthusiasm in the Collection of Cretan

⁶³) Ibid. p. 290.

⁶⁴) K. 286.

⁶⁵) Σ. Ε α ν θ ο υ δ ῖ δ η ς, op. cit. p. 148.

⁶⁶) K. K r u m b a c h e r, Geschichte der byzantinischen Litteratur, 2nd edition, Leipzig 1897, p. 883.

⁶⁷) K. 199.

songs was equalled only by his lack of understanding of them⁶⁸. The word in Cretan poetry occurs only here, and in one late poem (1818), where it is part of a formula⁶⁹. «Pistols» are normally *πιστόλες*, and large pistols *κουμπούρια*. And whether the meaning «pistol» is Kriaris's own mistake, or, more likely, a popular mistake crystallised by him, the fact remains that *Patrona* in old Italian meant «a pouch», and in the Venetian dialect specifically «a cartridge - pouch»⁷⁰. It is easy to imagine that this meaning could have been forgotten with the arrival of cartridge belts and the Turkish word *σιλακλίκι*: and that the natural parallelism of the style should suggest another firearm. But the true meaning of this word is yet more evidence for setting The Rebel far back, and calling it a song of Venetian Crete.

In our pursuit of arms we have gone a long way from the warring lords of Crete⁷¹. And until the long-awaited excavation takes place in the Archivio Notarile di Candia, it is probably useless to search for more definite history. Historical background is a different matter. Reading the contracts and wills in

⁶⁸) «We believe that we have succeeded, after more than ten years of labour, patience, persistence, and care, in collecting ALL... Cretan folksongs» K. 378 (His own capitals).

⁶⁹) K. 47.

⁷⁰) G. Boerio, *Dizionario del dialetto veneziano* Venice 1829 s. v. *patrona*. M. Notopoulos has now correctly identified the *patrona*, and even found a near-centenarian in Rethymno who remembered the meaning of the word. See J. A. Notopoulos, *Τὸ κρητικὸ τραγοῦδι τοῦ Ὀμαλοῦ καὶ ἡ πατρόνα* (KX 12 (1958) 171 - 175).

⁷¹) The history of weapons in the Renaissance is largely uncharted seas. The progression of lance, bow or crossbow, arquebus, musket, is hardly ever clearcut, and varies considerably between East and West Europe. The most salutary beginning for the unsuspecting student is a Scots poem celebrating the two dreadful military innovations brought by Edward III in his campaigns against Scotland in 1327 - crests on the helmets of his knights, and cannon. (A. Wagner, *Heraldry in England* London 1946).

In Crete, the bow was used as a hunting - weapon long after it had been given up in war. (P. de Tournafort *A Voyage into the Levant*, English translation, London 1718. See vol. 1, p. 22. The voyage took place in 1700). For this reason the word *δοξάρια* in a poem is an indication, and not a proof, of its age. But against fighting targets armed with muskets the bow was not a reliable weapon, and there is no suggestion in Cretan balladry of its use in combat.

that same Notarial Archive it is hard not to see the young lawyer throwing down his quill to walk in the weekend parade before the Ducal Palace

*Κάθε Σαββατοκύριακο πὸν ν' ἄμορφο τὸ Φόρος,
σκολάζουν οἱ γραμματικοί, σκολάζουν κ' οἱ νοδάροι,
σκολάζει κι ὁ πολυγαπῶ 'πὸν τὸ χρυσὸ κοντύλι*⁷².

perhaps Sachlikis himself, long before Moresini put his fountain in the square, and even longer before it ceased to be «Il Foro», and became *Μεϊνιάνι*⁷³. Not long before, when Salonika was the capital of an independent, and semi-mythical kingdom⁷⁴ (for some said that it was there that Areti was married, and not in Babylon)⁷⁵ a young man could ride off to the war not with sword and spear, but as a lutanist

*βασιτᾶ λαγοῦτα κι ἄργαλα, πολλῶν λογιῶν παιγνίδια*⁷⁶

It is hard to forget the Latin jongleurs who sang, like Elias Cairels, in the courts of Greece⁷⁷. It should be impossible to read the vendetta songs and sheep-stealing ballads without remembering Foscarini's strictures on Cretan lawlessness⁷⁸; to read *The Pregnant Girl* and *The Deserted Maiden* without remembering Venetian complaints on the frequency of bastards in Crete⁷⁹. And (to take one final poem, certainly not Cretan, and perhaps much older than it seems at first sight, for the Turks and Janissaries are definitely a contamination on a

⁷²) Π. Βλασνός op. cit. p. 85.

⁷³) Which it had by the beginning of the eighteenth century. See Michalis Vlachos, K. 37, and p 10, note 2, above.

⁷⁴) For the greatness of Salonica, see O. Tafrafi, *Thessalonique au quatorzième siècle* Paris 1913.

⁷⁵) As in the versions of Crete.

⁷⁶) K. 205.

⁷⁷) «Elias Cairels si fo de Sarlat, d' un borc de Peiregorc; et era laboraire d' or e d' argent e designaire d' armas. E fetz se joglar. Mal cantava, e mal trobava, e mal vidava, e peichs parlava: e ben escriviva motz e sons. En Romanias est et lonc temps; e quant el s' en parti, si s' en tornet a Sarlat, e la el morie.» Quoted in J A Buchon *Histoire des conquêtes et de l' établissement des Français dans les états de l' ancien Grèce...* Paris 1846, (from a manuscript at Venice), pp. 436 - 449. For other Frankish troubadours in positions of honour in Greece, see W. Miller, *The Latins in the Levant*, London 1908, p 218.

⁷⁸) See above.

⁷⁹) V. Lamansky, op. cit. pp. 038ff.

crusading theme) it should be impossible to read *The Blood-stained Stream* without remembering the reprisals after Cantanoleon's rebellion. «For greater terror, he had four pregnant women brought before him, wives of the Capurioni; he had their bellies slashed open with cutlasses and the embryos pulled out. This act threw immense fear into the peasantry⁸⁰».

Only by remembering such things can we understand much of Cretan folkpoetry.

In 1645 the Turks landed at Canea: in 1669 the Venetians sailed from Candia. Between those years the process of physical conquest had been accomplished. The process of cultural conquest was never accomplished, but the Turks left behind them far more than their minarets. Even today, with the effects of Greek education — and a pedantic, purist education at that — growing with every year, six to seven hundred Turkish words are recorded in use in Crete⁸¹. The question that must now be set is whether these words (not their use, nor their form, for these would be difficult matters indeed), the existence of these words, can help our knowledge of Cretan folksong.

No song can be dated to the Turkish era by Turkish words in the absence of Turkish conditions. By the year 1600, Greek historical authors had used the words: *ἀγᾶς, ἀζάπης, ἀμήρσοια, ἀμηρᾶς, βεζιρής, γενίτζαροι, δερβίσης, διβάνι, ζάρι, ιαννιτζάραγας, καθῆς, κουρμπάνι, λαλά, μαγαζιά, μουτερίζης, μπεγλεμπέης, ονιάδες, παζάρι, πασιᾶς, πεσκέσιον, ραγιάδες, σαράγιον, σερμπέτι, σεφέρι, σουλιᾶνος, σπαχίδες, τζαμί, τζελέπης, τιμάριον, τουφέκιον, χαράτζιον, χότζιας*, to name only the more common examples⁸². The same chap-book of Ass. Wolf and Fox which gave us the word *τουφέκι* in its first edition in 1539 can also provide *παζάρι*⁸³. The «Rhodian» lovesongs, presumably of the fifteenth century, have

⁸⁰) R. Pashley, op. cit. vol. 1, p. 154 (quoting Trivan).

⁸¹) I. I. Παπαγεωργοράκις, Συλλογή ξενογλώσσων λέξεων Canea 1952, pp 75 - 132.

⁸²) G. Moravcsik, Byzantinoturcica II Sprachreste der Türkvolker in den byzantinischen Quellen, Budapest 1945, p. 305.

⁸³) In the edition I have used Γαδάρου, Λύκου και Ἄλουπος διήγησις χαρῆς Venice 1848, line 12. A critical edition has been published by Δ. Ἀλεξίου, Ἡ Φυλλάδα τοῦ Γαδάρου (ΚΧ 9 (1955) 81-118).

γιασιμίν⁸⁴. In folksongs which are demonstrably far older than the Turkish occupation, Turkish words occur.

In such cases the only thing that they can prove is the truism that the song has at some stage passed through an area where the words were used. Almost always it can be shown that the Turkish is a local or personal use, and not part of the universal pattern of the song. In the very Frankish song, *The Broken Cage*, the only Turkish words occur in an obviously inserted parallelism:

ἀπὸν σὺ τρωῶς ἄσπρο ψωμί κ' ἐγὼ τὸ χορταράκι,
καὶ πίνεις καὶ γλυκὴν κρασί κ' ἐγὼ τὸ νερουλάκι,
(κ' ἐσὸν τὸ πίνεις τὸ κρασί σὲ φαρφουρὶ φλιντσάνι,
κ' ἐγὼ τὸ πίνω τὸ νερό στοῆ γῆς τ' ἀρολιθάκι.)

In the Cretan version of Mavrianos's *Sister*, the word ἀγάδες corresponds to ἀρχοντολόι in older variants. The introduction of rhyme brought many Turkish words to (what is in Crete a very characteristic position for them) the end of a line. No one would argue against the antiquity of Saint George, though perhaps we should not go as far as Kriaris, in assigning it to the year 303. But when it was converted to couplets, it acquired two Turkish words, both forced rhymes:

Κ' ἐπαίζανε τὰ μπολεθιά κι ὄτινος εἶχεν πέσει
νὰ παίρνῃ τὸ παιδάκιν του στοῦ λιονταριοῦ πεσοκέσι

and

Ὀλόχροουσα τῆ βάνανε, ὄλο μαργαριτάρι,
τὸν ἥλιο βάνει πρόσωπο, τὴ θάλασσα γιορρντάμι!

The same thing happens in Sior Tzanakis, the rhymed version of Charzanis

Πάρε τὴν ἀξαδέρφη σου καὶ κάμε τῆ ραέτι.

In a song discussed above, the word *μπεντένι* would suggest a late date; but another version has *τεῖχος*.

Having disposed of this fallacy (for Turkish words crop up quite frequently as «proof» of some dating or other) we may ask another, and more difficult question. Does the absence of Turkish words indicate a pre-Turkish date for a song? It is very important to remember the word «indicate»: such an argumentum e silentio can hardly ever «prove» anything.

⁸⁴) W. Wagner, *Ἀλφάβητος τῆς ἀγάπης* Leipzig 1879, p. 6.

Proof in a matter of this sort could come only if we could show (what seems at first sight very likely) that occasionally some Turkish words completely replaced their Greek equivalents. Is, for example, at the end of the eighteenth century, *μπαιράκι*, *ἀσκέρι*, *σοκάκι* and *πεσκέσι* had completely ousted their counterparts, then the use of *φλάμπουρο*, *στρατός*, *σιενό* and *δῶρο* would give positive dating. But we cannot go as far as this. Our results must be limited to what evidence we can get from the study of songs known to be of the Turkish occupation.

Songs of the Cretan insurrections are full of Turkish words. A rough count in Kriaris's collection gives about two hundred and fifty different examples, most of which are used more than once. Many obviously come from administration and now customs: *ἀγᾶς*, *πασᾶς*, *μπιμπασῆς*, *μπουγιουρντί*, *σεφέρι*, *δκά*, *σερασκέρης*, *ραυπηῆ* — all these are explicable. But when we come to words like *χαμπέρι*, *κιτάπι*, *μπεντένι*, *ἔριτζι* and the rest, for which good Greek equivalents exist, then it is fair to suspect that the Turkish influence on vocabulary is more than a colouring. And when the machinery of speech, adverbs and conjunctions, begin to be Turkish, and we meet *δμπανέ*, *μπιροντένι*, *ἄτζεμπα*, when we find verbformations like *γιουργάρω*, *νιαγιαντίζω*, *γιοκλανιάρω*, from Turkish roots with Greek endings, it is clear that common speech, however basically and essentially Greek, has suffered a serious contamination. And the contamination is immediate. The Siege of Vienna, in 1683, introduces us to *σαλαβαντίζω*, *γιοκλανιάρω*, *ἀσκέρι*, and *νιεριέρι*, Suda (1707 - 8) to *φιρμάνι*, *χαϊβάνι*, *ισαντήρι*, *κουμπαραδες* and *μπελᾶς*. Later «three priests sit down to write an appeal (*ἀριτζιχάλι*) to the Russians, to send them help (*μιντάι*)

*Σαφῆς ἔξερεμέ δούδουμε, τὰ μούρκια μας πουλιοῦρε*⁶⁵

«Daskaloyannis is entertained by the Governor on the *νιβάι*,

*Φέριτε ταιμποῦκι γιασεμί καὶ φαλφουρι φλιντισάνι*⁶⁶.

Faced with such lines as these, and firm in the knowledge that our own historical song—Saint Sophia, The Fall of the City, The Siege of Rhodes, Manolis of Ayia postoli, and the rest, show not one Turkish word between them⁶⁷,

⁶⁵) K. 58.

⁶⁶) K. 32.

there is a strong temptation to say that any poem with no signs of the conqueror's language must have been composed before the conqueror came.

But was there, perhaps, a convention by which such words were licit in historical poems and illicit in the ballads of romance and adventure? Even if folk-psychology could make such a distinction, there is good evidence that it did not. There is no difference of vocabulary (apart from that imposed by the subject) between the revolutionary poems and the few ballads that we can distinguish as being of the Turkish period. *Lenio* is the song of a forced marriage, with the bride dying of a broken heart: it uses *χαϊζής*, *νιωναμάς*, *ἀσκέρι* and *χαλάλι*. The Murder of Ibrahim Aga, a vendetta-song, has *ραμπή*, *φυσέκι*, *γιαταγάνι*, *νιαβράνια*. The most romantic of them all, which tells how *Susa* was killed by her brother for her affair with a young Turk, *Saribagli*, uses *ροσποῦ*, *χαντζεράκι*, *χαμπέρι* and *χάλι*. Finally, *Diamanto*, of the enslaving and ransom of a Spanish lady, provides from its octosyllables an imposing list: *κουρμπάνι*, *τελάλης*, *μερτσιανένιος*, *μπάρμπας*, *δντά*, *ταϊνι*, *κιαγιᾶς*, *καπανταής*, *ἀσκέρι*, *καϊής*, *μπαξίσι*, *μπινίσι*, *ταϊφᾶς*, *λαχουρί*.

The inference is clear. In all poems known to be of the Turkish epoch Turkish words are found⁸⁷. In most poems known to be of the Venetian epoch no Turkish words are found, and those which have Turkish words have them nearly always in positions where they are demonstrably not part of the original text. Therefore the absence of Turkish words in a song not otherwise datable must always be strong evidence that it comes from the time of the Venetian occupation.

The pattern of Cretan folk-song has now become clearer. The next problem to be solved is that of the correlation between date and form: whether we can say that certain types of song flourished at a certain period.

⁸⁷) Except *πασᾶς*, in *The Sultan's Wife* well after the beginning of the Cretan War.

⁸⁸) I shall allow one possible exception; the short poem *Hillasmén* and *Plainsmen* has the word *πορτακάλλι*. And it seems that in 1700, at least, there were no Portugal oranges in Crete (Tournefort, *op. cit.* vol 1, p. 20). But the word is in the last half-line, which, for reasons to be mentioned later, is always a place very susceptible to corruption.

A metrical classification shows that the great bulk of the poems is in fifteen-syllabled verse, either rhymed or unrhymed. But apart from the rare dance songs in shorter metres (the proportion of them in Crete is far smaller than in other places, notably the Dodecanese) there are two minor forms which may both be used for dating. The few works in dodecasyllables include *The Castle of Amorion* and the songs about the pre-Acritis Yannis. The others are free from Turkish words. The antiquity of the metre is certain, but it seems to have survived only because of its attachment to one or two good tunes; we have no sign of it, when, in written works, words are divorced from music. In Crete it can safely be said that twelve-syllabled songs are not merely from the Venetian occupation, but probably from its early days, and quite possibly before it.

The other case is quite different: the rhymed hendecasyllable is known to have been an importation from Italy⁸⁹. The songs which have survived in oral tradition in Crete are closely grouped: *The Siege of Vienna* (1683), *Suda* (1707-8), *Manettas* (1766)⁹⁰, and *The Plague of Canea* (1770). The one remaining example is *Tzortzakis and Zapheras*, where the absence of Turkish words points to the beginning of this period. The fact that three of these poems are seafaring recalls that strange and ill-recorded minor thalassocracy which grew at Sphakia, was broken by the effects on the Sphakiot of Daskaloyannis's rebellion.

*πού 'χαν καράβια ξακουστά και ναύτες παινεμένους,
 σιτήν Πόλη και σιτή Βενεθιά περίσσα ξακουσμένους.
 Δέν έδειλιοῦσαν πέλαγος, φουρτιοῦνες δέν ψηφοῦσα,
 και τὰ στοιχειά τῆ θάλασσας κι αδιάνα τὰ νικοῦσα!
 Καί δά βαρκάκια βλέπουσι, σάπια και τρυνπημένα,
 εἰς τήν ἀμμουίτσα κείτουνται, ξερά, χαρβαλιασμένα⁹¹,*

And never recovered all its old prosperity. But that is outside the scope of this study, which may be satisfied that eleven-syllabled folk verse comes after the fall of Crete to the Turks.

⁸⁹) B. 116

⁹⁰) Kriaris's «1666» must be regarded as a misprint. The source of his information is unknown to me, but the mention of the Russians certainly points to the years just before Daskaloyannis's rebellion.

⁹¹) Μάργα - Παντζελιδός op. cit. Lines 903-908.

No such certainty relieves our researches on the rhymed political. The first great historical folk poem in rhymed couplets seems to be Michalis Vlachos (c 1705), and by 1770 this was exclusively the form for historical narrative. Similarly, the romantic narratives of the Turkish era, *Lenio*, *Susa*, and the rest, are rhymed⁹³. But it cannot safely be said that rhyme was unknown to folk poetry before the Venetians left. The couplet itself, the «*mantinada*», can be traced back to the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, for still-current *mantinades* are found in manuscripts of that time⁹⁴. It is arguable, though, that these come under the heading of sophisticated works absorbed into the popular tradition, (a subject which will be dealt with later), and the same may be said for the *Song of Archistrata*⁹⁴. The adaptations of older poems into rhymed couplets, notably *Sior Tzanakis* and *Saint George*, have in them slight signs of Turkish vocabulary, so that the name of the former hero may be only a memory of the Italian form of address. On the whole it seems unlikely that a psychological division between historical and non-historical narrative could have been made; and we should place the introduction of the rhymed political into original folksong about the beginning of the eighteenth century.

This does not necessarily mean that unrhymed political verse stopped at the same time. *Nanos* comes half a century later, but this is clearly an importation from the mainland, and is sung in Macedonia, so that it does not really affect the argument. The same may be said of *The Ghost of Mastrachas*, an obvious romantic and antiquarian production of the sort known in Greece as *παλιολλαδίτικα*; it contrasts markedly with the true folksong on the murder of the same hero in 1868.

⁹³) *Susa* is presumably based on an older unrhymed version, dated before 1679, if we are to judge from the two lines discovered by Legrand, written in an old edition of *The Fair Shepherdess*. Mr. Dulgerakis does wrong to doubt Legrand on this point. It does not in the least affect the chronology of the *rimada*, which would probably be eighteenth century. See E. I. Δουλιγεράκης, *Τὸ κρητικὸν δημῶδες ᾄσμα τῆς Σουσάννας* (ΚΧ 9 (1955) 334 - 376), pp. 357 - 9.

⁹⁴) The most notable collection in Cod. Vind. Theol. Gr. 244, published in H. Pernot op. cit.

⁹⁴) See chapter 8.

So that although it was perfectly possible for the unrhymed and rhymed styles of composition to exist at the same time, at least we have no certain unrhymed Cretan songs after 1710⁹⁵. While the comparison with sophisticated poetry, in which, two centuries earlier, the same displacement of unrhymed by rhymed took place suddenly and completely, so that no example of the earlier style may be positively dated after the first emergence of the later, leads us to think that any fifteen-syllabled Cretan verse without rhyme may fairly be presumed earlier than the eighteenth century.

At this point, perhaps we need an analysis and statement of what we know about the dates of Cretan poetry in unrhymed politicals:

- 1) The Acritic songs are pre-Venetian.
- 2) The semi-religious songs (kalanda, Saint George, and the rest), are probably pre-Venetian.
- 3) Of the narratives a few may be pre-Venetian. The rest are distributed between the thirteenth and the seventeenth centuries.
- 4) Of the *τραγούδια τῆς τάβλας* we have found six clearly and datably historical ones—Adrianople, Saint Sophia, The Fall of the City, The Siege of Rhodes, The Sultan's Wife, and The Fall of Candia. To these we can add about thirty which may not be strictly datable, but are just as clearly from the pre-Turkish era. Historical songs after the Venetians left are Michalis Vlachos, (which is not really a *τραγοῦδι τῆς τάβλας*; properly it is the only unrhymed historical narrative surviving in Crete), Karamusas, (1680)⁹⁶, and

⁹⁵) But see footnote 2 on page.

⁹⁶) The three variants of this song which tells of an episode in Karamusas's pacification of Crete in 1680, have never been dated, nor the historical event described. I owe this account to Mr. Stavrinidis's work in the Turkish archives of Candia:

Karamusas was made bey of Rethymno in 1647, and was one of the most efficient Turkish governors in Crete. After the fall of Candia, the sporadic unrest of the *χαϊνηδες* (traitor kinsmen) as the Turks called them, notably, in Sphakia, culminated in the «Revolt of the Chainides» in 1679-1680. The danger was aggravated by the incompetence of the beys of Canea and Candia, and at one time there was a chance of Canea falling to the rebels. Only the action of Karamusas, who on his own

Yannaronicolas, (dated by Kriaris as «1690 - 1740»). One other, Moros, is also of Turkish date⁸⁷.

It becomes more and more clear that the proportion of songs that can be proved to come after 1669 is very small indeed; and this is all the more marked when we think how much richer are our records of the Turkish period than of the Venetian. From the very first year of the landing until this century we possess more than half the Turkish archives⁸⁸. In Greek we have rich memoirs of the nineteenth century, and a growing number of family and ecclesiastic documents of an earlier time. But of the Venetian era our historians very rarely give a Greek name, being more concerned with the officers of state than with their subjects. If a person was distinguished enough, either by virtue or by circumstance, to have a song made up about him, and is still unknown to history, there is a very strong probability that he lived under Venetian rule.

And the songs themselves show their age. Apart from the history in them there are many times when the clear affinities of a song are with the Byzantine and Frankish poetry of the Middle Ages. When the Cretan of today sings

μὰ θὰ σοῦ πέψω μιὰ γραφή γλυκὰ λόγια νὰ λέη
νὰ βρῆς καλὸ γραμματικὸ νὰ σοῦ τήνε διαβάση (Κ 320,1)

he is expressing what his ancestor four hundred years ago expressed :

initiative left Rethymno, marched west, and exacted a fierce revenge, saved Turkish dominion in the island.

⁸⁷) In a different class come one or two songs obviously based on older poems. The Captains of Lakki is the sort of list-song which is revised from generation to generation: only the Turkish *καπετανλίκι* distinguishes it from, say, The Lords at the Wedding. Three more come from the Turkish period — Tsiolis, The Three Sons Slain, and Arnaoutopoula — but they are in no way to be considered «original» works. All three (and in particular Tsiolis) are centos of well known tags with a little local detail, and go far beyond the usual and legitimate borrowing of folksong-motifs. They are artificial, as are the «songs of the German occupation» published by Vavules; their complete lack of inspiration has already rendered them almost completely unknown. Perhaps one or two lines will survive:

ρίγρον κανόνια μονεσιά, στρατιῶτες μὲ τσ' ὀμπρέλλες
(Π. Π. Βαβουλές, Ὁ κρητικὸς τραγουδιστὴς Canea 1950, p. 221).

⁸⁸) That is, we have the complete archives of Candia. The other

Χαρτί σὲ πέμπω, λυγερή, ἀφέντρα, ἀνάγνωσέ το (CPG p. 18)⁹⁹
and the only difference is in the estimate he makes of his lady's
literacy. Where he says

τοῦ μανιζιοράνας τῆ κορφή, στοῦ ροσμαριουῦ τῆ φοῦντα (K 248.1)
his forerunner made it

τῆς μαζουράνας ἢ κορφή, καλοῦ βαροάμον ρίζα (CPG p. 54)
He half - boasts

Ἐγὼ περνωῶ καὶ δὲ μιλῶ, κ' ἢ κόρη χαιρετᾷ με
«Ποῦ πάεις ψεύτη τοῦ φιλιουῦ καὶ κομπωτῆ τοῦ ἀγάπης;» (K 236)
where the rhythm preserves a verb - form that was too old for
Erotocritos. His predecessor had the same habits :

...ἐγίνης κύρκας πέπανος καὶ γίνης διωματάρης,
καὶ γίνης ἀκατάδεκτος, διαβαίνεις ἀπὸ μπρός μου,
διαβαίνεις, δὲν μᾶς χαιρετᾷς καὶ δὲν μᾶς συντυχαίνεις (CPG p. 62)
and

...ὄτε διαβαίνεις, οὐ λαλεῖς, βλέπεις, οὐ χαιρετᾷς με (ABC 40)
Where his love - songs reach their most heroic heights—

Νά ᾿χεν ἡ γῆς πατήματα κι ὁ οὐρανὸς κερκέλια,
νὰ πάθιονν τὰ πατήματα, νὰ ᾿πιανα τὰ κερκέλια,
ν' ἀνέβαινα σιὸν οὐρανό, νὰ διπλωθῶ νὰ κάτσω,
νὰ δώσω σεῖσμα τ' οὐρανοῦ νὰ βγάλῃ μαῦρα νέφη,
νὰ βρέξῃ χιόνι καὶ νερὸ κι ἀμάλαγο χρουσάφι,
τὸ χιὸν νὰ ρίξῃ στὰ βουνὰ καὶ τὸ νερὸ σιὸι κάμπους,
σὴν πόρτα τοῦ πολυγαλαπῶς τ' ἀμάλαγο χρουσάφι, (K 264)
he is anticipated, but not bettered, by the man of 1500 :

ποῖσε καὶ μένα σύγνεφον σιὸς οὐρανοὺς ἀπάνω,
νὰ βρέχω εἰς τὸν Γαλατῶν καὶ νὰ χιονίζω εἰς κάμπους,
καὶ σὴν ἀλλήν ὁποῦ ἀγαπῶ ν'᾿βγῃ μαργαριτάρι. (CPG p. 24)

In the τραγούδια τῆς τάβλας we find the Byzantine motifs still
as fresh as ever. The bird in the cage is there—

πουλάκιν εἶχα σιὸ κλουβί, ὄγια νὰ τὸ μερώσω (K 301)
like Achilles's paramour, the partridge—

περοδίκιν ἠῦρα σιὸ κλουβίν, ἀδοῦλωτον τοῦ πόθου. (A c h O 545)

part, the archives of Canea, was destroyed by looters at the end of the
German occupation.

⁹⁹) Cf. Achilles O line 346.

χαρτί σὲ πέμπω, λυγερή, χαρτὶν ἄλλ' ἀπὸ πόθου.

The wondrous garden survives, its description isolated and set as a feasting - song—

*Γιὰ ἰδὲς περβόλιν ὄμορφο, γιὰ ἰδὲς κατάκρονα βρούση¹⁰⁰,
κι ὄσα δεντρά 'μπεφεν ὁ Θεὸς μέσα 'νιαι φντεμμένα,
κι ὄσα πουλιά πετούμενα μέσα 'νιαι φωλεμμένα.
μέσα σ' ἐκεῖναν τὰ πουλιά εὐρέθ' ἕνα παγόνη,
καὶ χιίζει τῆ φωλίτσιαν του σὲ μιᾶς μηλιᾶς κλωνάρι!* (K 241)

The red apple held by the lady on her golden throne is one of those enamelled fruit that were the prerogative of the nobility of the great palace.

The ways of speech are the same. The clear opening note of the *Rimada*

Κόρη μὲ νιὸ δικάζεται ἀπόνα παραθύρι (CPEp 72)

echoes back and fore

**Αγγουρος ἀπ' Ἀνατολὴ κόρη ἀγαπᾷ σὴ Δύση...* (K 258)

**Ενας πανώριος ἄγουρος ἀγαπᾷ ὠραίαν κόρη...* (ABCp 48)

and

*Κόρη καὶ νιὸς ἐπαίζανε σ' ὄρειο περιβολάκι,
κι ἀπὸν τὸ παῖξε - γέλασε, πὸν τὸ πολὺ κανάκι,
ἀποκοιμήθ' ὁ νιὸς γλυκιὰ σισῆ λυγερῆς τὸ ἀγκάλες.
Σιγὰ σιγὰ τόνε ξυπνᾷ κι ἀγαλιανὰ τοῦ λέει
«Ξύπνα τὸ τραγονάκι μου, ξύπνα, γλυκειά μ' ἀγάπη»* (K 300.1)

The song may as well be quoted in full for its memory of Achilles

*Κι ἀπὸ τὰ καταφιλήματα, καὶ τὰς περιπλοκάς των
τὰ δένδρη τὰ ἀναίσθητα αὐτοδονοῦσιν πλέον.
Ὅτιως κατέλαβεν ἡ ἀγῆ, καὶ πρὸς ἐκεῖνον λέγει
«Ἐγείρου, χρυσοπιέρονγε φαλκέ, ἀπὸ τῆς κλίνης* (A ch O 446 9)

The Gothic attack in the appeal to Christ:

Χριστέ κ' εἶντα μοῦ τὰ 'μπεφες τοῦ πέρδικας τὰ κάλλη., (K 292.1)

Χριστέ μου νὰ 'σπα τῆ φλακῆ, νὰ ρθῆ νὰ τὸν νταμώσω.. (K 289.3)

Χριστέ μου καὶ νὰ κάτεχα ποιο μήνα θὰ ποθάνω.. (K 292.2)

Χριστέ καὶ νὰ 'μουνε λυτὸ νὰ 'βγαῖνα σιὸ κυνήγι.. (K 207.1)

Χριστέ καὶ νὰ προβαίνανε δώδεκα καβαλλάροι.. (K 242.1)

this is perhaps unknown, certainly rare, in the folksongs of the rest of Greece. In Crete it is found many more times than these

¹⁰⁰) Cf. Florios and Platziaflora, 745ff.

examples show, and in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries it was just as common¹⁰¹:

κι ὁ λογισμός μου λέγει μου. «Χριστέ μου νὰ σὲ φίλωνν (GPG 304)
 Χριστέ καὶ ἄς ἠδύρϊσκετον πούπειτες θεραπεία.. (CPG 479)
 Χριστέ, παρακαλῶ σε το, δός μου καιρὸν καὶ τόπον. (CPG 430)
 Χριστέ, τί τὸν ὀρέγομαι τὸν κοκκινσοκαριάτισο.. (CPG 553)

Even one of the less pleasing facets of Byzantine romantic poetry is preserved in Cretan folksong: its love of the strange compound adjectives whose poetic virtues, one would have thought, had been settled by Aristophanes almost two thousand years before. Perhaps not the extremities of

. . τὴν κρουσταλλίδα τοῦ νεροῦ, τὴν παχνοχιονάτην,
 τὴν νερατζαρωτάκουστην κρινοτριανταφυλλάτην,
 τραχηλομαρμαρόμνοστην, ροδοκοκκίνοχείλαν,
 τὴν συντυχογλυκόλαλον, ἔρωτοπονεμένην.. (Florios 190-193)

but a girl is still ἀσημοκονκλωμένη, a man στρογγυλομαυρογένης, a horse ἀνεμοκνλοπόδης¹⁰². The word-play which seems so unlike a folksong in

Ξένο κ' ἐγὼ ξένο κ' ἐσὺ ξένο καὶ τὸ περβόλι,
 ξένο μου κι ἄς τὰ παίξουμε ἐμεῖς τὰ δυὸ σὰ ξένα (K 312.1)

recalls the same clicking-together of

Χείλη μου, χείλη κόκκινα, χείλη, γλυκά μου χείλη,
 χιλιάκις ἄς ἐφίλουνα τῆς λυγερῆς τὰ χείλη.. (CPGp 32)

In the seventeen folksongs which have just been quoted, four Turkish words occur. One is *τουφέκι*, two more come in a line which has already been cited as an example of late interpolation, and the fourth is in a little rhyming jingle quite foreign to the poem around it. This result may be regarded as typical of the *τραγούδια τῆς τάβλας*.

But we have already used the words *τραγούδια τῆς τάβλας* a few times without explaining them. Perhaps the best explanation will come from a study of an even more heroic subject: Digenis in Crete.

¹⁰¹) Perhaps not only in Greece: cf. the anonymous English
 «Christ that my love were in my arms»,
 sixteenth century). The Oxford Book of English Verse ed. A. Quiller-
 Couch. Oxford 1912. no 27).

¹⁰²) K. 207.1, 317.1, 339.2.

APPENDIX TO CHAPTER 1

Admiral's Galley, The	K 341.2
Adulteress and her Maid, The	K 287
Ailing Husband, The	B 252 K 246.4
Armenian's Son, The	K 203.1
Arnaoutopoula	K
Barbary Pirates, The	K 185.2 K 185.3 K 332.1
Bloodstained Stream, The	K 294.2
Bridesmaid to Bride	B 213 K 274
Bridge of Arta, The	B 168 K 374
Broken Cage, The	K 301.2
Brother and Sister	B 242 K 230
Captains of Lakki, The	K 281.1
Constantine and Areti	B 163 K 221
Constantis in the Plough	K 11.1
Death of the Sailor, The	B 262 K 218 K 220.1
Death of Yannakis, The	B 289
Deserted Maiden, The	B 217 K 226.2
Diamanto	K 251
Drowned Maiden, The	B 258 K 275.2
Evil Mother - in - law, The	B 236 K 215 K 377.1
Fair Maid's Castle, The	B 275
Faithful Wife, The	B 228 K 296
Fall of Candia, The	K 330.2
Fall of the City, The	K 10
Famous Galleon, The	K 249.2 K 273
Galley - Slave, The	K 283.1 K 313.2
George Tsourakis	K 12.1
Ghost of Mastrachas, The	K 154
Hillsmen and Plainsmen	K 337.1
His Brother's Wife	B K 329.2
Hundred - and - two Suitors, The	K 204.2
Hunter and the Maiden, The	B 225 K 307.3 K 325.2 K 326
Jewish Renegade, The	B 267 K 305
Karamusas	K 41
King Alexander	K 344
Lady's Appeal, The	K 235
Lenio	K 298
Lords at the Wedding, The	K 217.3
Manettas	K 22
Manolis in Prison	K 325.1
Manolis of Ayiapostoli	K 285.2
Martha	B 250 K 340.1
Mavrianos's Sister	B 245 K 226.3 K 270.2

Michalis Vlachos	K 35 K 38
Moros	K 11.2
Murdered Maiden, The	B 220 K 372
Murderess Mother, The	B 256
Murder of Ibrahim Aga, The	K 295
Nanos	K 40
Nine Brothers, The	K 224
North Wind, The	B 266 K 218
North Wind and the Shepherd, The	B 269 K 313.1
Partridge and the Hunter, The	B 254 K 302.2
Plague of Canea, The	K 42.2
Pregnant Girl, The	B 219 K 256.2
Prosphyris	B 146 K 233
Rebel, The	K 199.3
Red - lipped Maiden, The	K 261.2
Restless Maiden, The	K 367
Sailor Goes, The	K 200.1
Saint George	K 7 K 236.2
Saint Sophia	K 200.3
Serbs and Saracens	K 203.3
Siege of Rhodes, The	K 44.1
Siege of Vienna, The	K 44.2
Sior Tzanakis	K 16 K 13
Suda	K 18
Susa	K 303.2
Tartaris	K 310.1
Three Cretan Monks	K 283.2
Three Sons Slain	K 270.1
Tsiolis	K 178.2
Turkish Princess, The	K 266.3
Tzortzakis and Zapheras	K 20
Warrior - Maiden, The	K 220.2
Warrior's Wish, The	K 335.3
Wife and the Mistress, The	B 251 K 284
Witch in the Well, The	B 287 K 320.2
Women of Mylopotamos, The	K 327.2
Yannaronicolas	K 30.1
Yannis and the Sun	B 291 K 323.3
Yannis's Complaint	K 311.1 K 341.1
Young man and the Maiden	B 201
Zervopula	K 240

CHAPTER 2 DIGENIS IN CRETE

The epic of *Digenis Akritas* is without doubt the greatest achievement of Byzantine demotic poetry, and its persistence in oral transmission for a thousand years is a fair gauge of its stature. Its heroic content has gathered to it a heroic amount of research and criticism, and only after the most startling discoveries and identifications have the main lines been established¹.

In the ninth and tenth centuries a body of heroic poetry existed among the «Acrites», the marcher-troops of the Byzantine empire. Its themes were the historic themes of the day, of the struggles between Byzantium, its heroic rebels, and the Saracens. Its scene lay in Cappadocia on the Euphrates. But although in the characters of these poems we may often see real personages,—Greek, Armenian, Paulician, and Saracen—from the conflicts of the time, the main hero about whom the songs accumulated was one *Digenis*, who may be identified with a Byzantine baron who died in a border clash in 788.

Behind this first plane of comparatively historical poetry we may divine older and stranger themes. There are old heroes from Parthia and Commagene whom the new *Digenis* has supplanted: *Cinnamos* and *Philopappos* are of the first and second centuries of our era. *Maximo* is one of the old Amazons, and Arab and Persian romances supply the models and some of the details of episodes from the hero's life.

¹) The best idea of the vast work on *Digenis Akritas* may be gained from the book-lists of three works which in their different ways give an excellent introduction to the Acritic problem and make another bibliography superfluous: Π. Π. Καλονάρος, *Βασίλειος Διγενής Ἀκρίτας* Athens 1941. Line-references are given from this edition. H. Gregoire, *Ὁ Διγενής Ἀκρίτας* New York 1942. J. Mavrogordato, *Digenes Akrites* Oxford 1956 To these may be added A. Χατζής, *Εὐστάθιος Μακροβολίτης καὶ Ἀκριτής* (Ἀθηνᾶ 54 (1950) pp. 134-176, 55 (1951) pp. 189-224) who gives a list of fifteen works by himself pointedly ignored in Gregoire's bibliography. Admittedly some of Chatzis's arguments on Byzantine literature are eccentric, but perhaps not more so than some of Gregoire's own on Byzantine history.

Towards the end of the eleventh century, an epic romance based upon these songs was composed in an archaizing style. From that romance have come the seven versions we know today. No normal methods of copying can explain the differences between them, and we must recognise that if our seven extant versions can vary so widely between themselves, *Acritas* must have suffered innumerable recensions as it was passed from hand to hand.

The Grottaferrata manuscript is of the fourteenth century; the Escorial late fifteenth or early sixteenth. The manuscripts of Athens (once called Andros) and Trebizond, which show the greatest likeness to each other, are both of the sixteenth century; and a rhymed version was composed in 1670 by a Chiot priest, and is now in Oxford. We have a prose version from a manuscript written in 1623, and three fragments of an Old Russian prose text which probably has a twelfth century origin. Finally we know of the existence of two other manuscripts in verse, and one in prose, all now lost².

Side by side with this written tradition, are the «Acritic» folk-songs, gathered from all parts of the Greek world. «Acritic» is a loose term, and includes not only songs containing obvious episodes or names from the main epos, but also poems about other characters from the heroic age, Constantes, Porphyris, Xanthinos, and the rest; and sometimes is stretched to include even obviously later ballads which have adopted some phraseology or detail from the earlier poetry. A few Acritic poems (The Son of Armuris, The Sons of Andronicos, and perhaps some others) can be shown on historical grounds to be earlier than the composition of the epic. Whether the rest are before or after the written text is still hotly debated.

In recent years, research on *Acritas* has taken two main li-

²) The prose manuscript was seen in the last century by Dr. Mordtmann: see Σ. Γωαννίδης, "Ἔπος μεσαιωνικὸν ἐκ τοῦ χειρογράφου Τραπεζοῦντος. Ὁ Βασίλειος Διγενῆς Ἀκρίτης ὁ Καππαδόκης Constantinople 1887, p. . The manuscript might well have been in the library of Köprülü Mehemed Pasha, from which Mordtmann published at least one text (Mitteilungen des Deutschen Excursions-Clubs in Constantinopel, 1889, Heft II, pp. 39 - 40). The verse manuscripts were seen by Constantine Dapontes in the eighteenth century; one was illustrated. See Π. Π. Καλονάρος op. cit. Vol. 1, pp.

nes. The more fruitful has been the investigation of the historical background of the heroic age, and comparisons with the heroic poetry of the Mohammedans, and (less convincingly) the Crusaders. The other has concerned itself with the resemblances between *Acritas* and other Byzantine poetry and romance. Neither research has been able to go very far without emphasizing the radical difference between one text of the poem and all the others, and many problems will be illuminated if we can establish the nature and circumstances of this one text.

That the Escorial manuscript of *Acritas* was Cretan was first affirmed by Xanthoudides in 1913, and his conclusion may be considered all the more certain for the obvious regret with which he announces it; «admitting that this poem in no way honours the Cretan Muse who has produced *Erotocritos*, *The Fair Shepherdess*, *Erophile*, and the beautiful folksongs of the island³ He bases his findings on some fifty words and expressions claimed to be Cretan. The argument is occasionally marred by the use as criteria of words from texts whose Cretan origin is by no means certain (e. g. *Lybistros* and *Florios*) but Xanthoudides' result is not affected if we take no notice of the half dozen words concerned, and no one has yet succeeded in disproving his main statement: «It does not escape me that some of the linguistic elements catalogued above, as I have already said in many places, are not exclusively Cretan, but also found in other islands; and some perhaps may be found locally in other provinces of Greece...On the other hand, those which are found elsewhere are not found all together in the dialect of any one island or province... Therefore I believe that only in the Cretan dialect could be found together and simultaneously all these linguistic element, and that, accordingly, this version is from Crete»⁴. He is prepared to go even further, and say that it is from West Crete.

No objection may be taken to Xanthoudides's dating, again on the language, as «before 1500 but not long before 1450»⁵. But it has been suggested that his wholesale assignment to Cre-

³) Σ. Ξανθοῦ διδης, Διγενής Ἀκρίτας κατὰ τὸ χειρόγραφον Ἐσχωριὰν (XK 1 (1913) pp. 523 - 572). See page 561.

⁴) *Ibid.* pp. 540 - 541.

⁵) *Ibid.* p. 591.

te of many works (including *Acritas E*) was based on a misunderstanding: and that these are, in fact, written in the common demotic of the day, of which more traces have survived in Crete than anywhere else. This theory would require a great deal of proof but *prima facie* it can be shown to be very unlikely; and if the more detailed examination of the poems of Dellaporta, written before 1403, shows, as seems likely, definitely Cretan characteristics, Xanthoudides's claims for many poems will have to be seriously considered.

We may examine some additional evidence for the Cretan origin of the work. *Acritas E* contains two historical names which are not found in any other version, yet are certainly genuine parts of the original tradition. The survival of Samosata (*E* 1320) cannot adequately be explained, though Crete has always had a reputation for preserving otherwise lost epic traditions; but there is a very good reason why Cretans should have remembered the name of Abou-Hafs (*E* 506). There is little doubt that the Abou-Hafs of the cycle is Amer's grandson, who turned renegade and brought his entire tribe over to the Byzantine side in 928⁶. But the name was well-known in Crete from another Abou-Hafs - the Spanish Saracen who led the expedition which captured Crete in 824, and was a mythopoetic character even for the Byzantine chroniclers⁷. This name would certainly have remained known in the island (perhaps even in the heroic poetry of the time) and would have been retained in a Cretan *Acritas* after it had been lost elsewhere.

Yet more evidence may be found in Cretan parodies of parts of *Acritas*. More will be said later about the way in which Sachlikis' poem *Pothotsoutsounia* is a burlesque of an *Acritic* theme. The main point of resemblance is where Sachlikis' whorles sit and boast:

καὶ τότε ἀπὴν ἐσχόλασεν ἐκεῖνο τὸ παζάριον
ἐκάτσαν καὶ ἐκανχίσθησαν διὰ τὲς ἀνδραγαθές τους.
καὶ μιὰ ἀπ' ἐκεῖνες ἤρχισε νὰ λέγῃ τὰ καλά της·
«Ὁὐκ ἤθρηκα πολιτικὴν κάλλιαν παρὰ ἐμένα».
* Ἄλλῃ εἶπεν «οὐκ ἤθρηκα μαυλίστριαν νὰ μὲ διάβῃ».

⁶) H. Gregoire, 'Ο Διγενῆς Ἀκρίτας New York 1922, pp. 110-111.

⁷) Ἰ. Παπαδόπουλος, Ἡ Κρήτη ὑπὸ τοὺς Σαρακηνούς (TF 43) Athens 1948. See p. 61.

Ἄλλη εἶπε «πίνω τὸ κρασὶν παρ' ἄνδρα ἢ γυναῖκα».

Ἄλλη εἶπε «πίνω τὸ κρασὶν μανλίζω καὶ μεθύω» (Poth 817-823)

which is a reminiscence of *Acritas E* 679 - 683

*τραπέξιν ἤσπεσαν ὀμπρός τὰ φάγουν καὶ τὰ πίνον
καὶ καλ' ἔφαγαν, καλὰ ἔπιον καὶ ἔκαλοψυχῆσαν.*

ἄλλος ἔλεγεν «Ἐγὼ ἅπαντῶ πενήνια».

ἄλλος ἔλεγεν «Ἐγὼ ἅπαντῶ ἑβδομηντα».

ἄλλος ἔλεγεν «Ἐγὼ ἅπαντῶ διακόσιους». (E 679 - 683)

This passage is entirely missing in the Grottaferrata and Trebisond versions, and in the Athens manuscript reads

τραπέξαν ἔθεντο ἀντὶ ἔμπροσθεν θαυμασίαν,

ἔφαγον δὲ καὶ ἔπιον ἅπαντες χαριέντως·

καὶ μετὰ ταῦτα ἔλεγον ἕκαστος ἕξ ἐκείνων

ὅτι δύνανται πολεμεῖν πολλοὺς ἐκ τῶν ἀνδρείων (A 1628 1631)

It is obvious that Sachlikis's allusion is to *Acritas E*.

A smaller instance is in a modern spell for getting rid of ants from a threshing - floor. The ant (*μερμήγκι* or *μελίτακας*) is addressed;

«Μέρμηγκα πρωτομάστορα, πρῶτε τῶ μελιτάκω»⁸

a parody of *Acritas E* 797

«Στράτορα, πρωτοστράτορα, καὶ πρῶτε τῶν στρατόρων»

This line again is in no other version.

Other evidence may appear in the course of this study; already there is enough to let us call the Escorial *Acritas* a Cretan poem.

The text of *Acritas E* is in a dreadful state. A whole quaternion is missing at the beginning - though it is unnecessary to assume, as Krumbacher does, that this would have been entirely occupied with *Acritas*, and represents a loss of some three hundred and fifty verses⁹. It is far more likely that the lost opening coincided with that of the Grottaferrata version, and that about a hundred and fifty lines have dropped out. There are some large gaps in the narrative, and a fair propor-

⁸) E. K. Φραγκάκη, Συμβολὴ εἰς τὰ λαογραφικὰ τῆς Κρήτης Athens 1949, See p. 33.

⁹) K. Krumbacher, Eine neue Handschrift des Digenis Acritas (Sitz. der philos. - philol. - hist. kl. der Kgl. Bay. Akad. der Wiss. 1904, vol. 2 pp. 309 - 356). See p. 314.

tion of metrical and verbal difficulties, but by far the most striking fault is the large number of lines which appear to be either very short or very long, (which really come to the same thing, as the manuscript is written as prose). The other faults can be explained by the usual accidents of missing leaves, illiterate copyists, and inept adaptors. But the most inept adaptor imaginable is not likely to have produced so regularly such confessions of metrical impotence as these half - lines seem to be. (It will be convenient to call them half - lines, though, as I shall show later, many in their manuscript form cannot strictly so be described.)

When looking for a reason for this phenomenon, it is worth recalling the words of the latest editor of the Escorial text: «It is possible that it came from the bad dictation of a more perfect, but still popular and compressed, text, of the sort which in other times used to circulate among illiterate bards (*ποιητάδες*) and singers, who had the talent of being able to remember thousands of verses»¹⁰. This seems a sensible statement, especially if we remove the words «in other times». Illiterate bards are still found in Greece; and if their memories do not now run to thousands of verses consecutively, poems (including Acritic poems) of two to three hundred lines have been taken down in the present century. In the works of these bards are found the same «half - lines» as we find in the Escorial manuscript.

Many collectors of folk - song have considered them a blemish, and have taken care to remove them. In Politis's collection, where two or more versions of the same song are often combined, no half - lines are found. One of the earliest collectors, Colonel Leake, who was in Epirus and Rumeli between 1804 and 1806, was more conscientious. «In (his) manuscript of these songs, after the first line, the first half of each succeeding line is always given in advance. These half - lines are always omitted in the text except where they contain a slight variety of reading»¹¹. In other words, the songs taken down by Colonel Leake were of the well - known type where single political verses are fitted to a tune covering one - and - a - half lines; to the first stanza are sung the first line and the first half of the se-

¹⁰) Π. Π. Καλονάρος, *op. cit.* 1 κθ.

¹¹) F. H. Marshall, *Four Klephtic Songs* (Είς μνήμην Σπ. Λάμπρου) Athens 1933 pp. 42 - 49. See p. 42.

cond; to the second stanza are sung the second line and the first half of the third; and so on until the end of the song, or until any pause in it, when the last line sung consists of the first half of a political verse, the second half being non-existent. For this style of song we shall use the name «link-song», as each stanza is linked into the next¹².

This form of folk-music is found only in Greece, and naturally enough, is used only for unrhymed texts. It is the predominant pattern in the cleptic ballads of the mainland, in the narrative-songs (though, as far as our evidence goes, it is more common in this use in the islands than anywhere else), and above all in the *τραγούδια τῆς τάβλας* — which we may translate as «feast-songs» — sung principally at weddings and baptisms in Crete; and almost all in Western Crete. It should be emphasized that the feast-songs are almost exclusively Cretan. There is a significant number of similar songs in Methone and Corone, where the connexion with Crete is clear and obvious¹³; elsewhere they are rare¹⁴.

Of their performance, we may quote at length from the description by a native of the Selinos valley running up into the White Mountains. It was written about a quarter of a century ago¹⁵.

¹²) I have seen the term *τραγούδια με κρίκο* used in a magazine article on folk-music.

¹³) Γ. ΤΑΡΣΟΥΛΗ, *Μωραϊτικά τραγούδια Κορώνης και Μεθώνης* Athens 1941. See especially nos 17, 92, 97, 189, 190, 193, 263, 271, 273.

¹⁴) A very interesting example has been published since I wrote this study, in the folk-version of *Erophile*, performed to this day in Amphilochia. (Γ. Θ. Ζώρας, *Πανάριτος* ΕΕΒΣ 27 (1951) 110-126). The prologue, spoken by Death, is in rhymed couplets, like the rest of the play; but at one point its structure disintegrates, and we have this passage:

*Ποῦ εἶν' ἡ ἀνδρεία τοῦ Ἀλέξανδρου, ποῦ εἶν' ἡ ἀνδρεία Φιλίππου,
ποῦ εἶν' ἡ ἀνδρεία τοῦ Δαρείου;
"Ολοὶ ἀπὸ μὲ περᾶσανε, δλοὶ ἀπὸ μὲ χαθῆκαν.
Σήμερα τὸ πρῶτ' - πρῶτ', προτοῦ περᾶση ἡ μέρα,
ἔχω νὰ θανατώσω τρεῖς,
τὸν Βασιλιᾶ, Πανάριτο, κι αὐτὴ τὴ θυγατέρα.*

Folk-music is used in the performance, and is presumably used quite extensively, if the 132 lines last half-an-hour. But it is not clear whether any of the play is actually sung. In any case, as will be seen, the use of the half-lines is exactly the same as in linksong narrative.

¹⁵) I. Ε. Μαθιουδάκης.

Journey - songs (*τραγούδια ιής στράτας*) are mostly longer poems, and are always sung to a tune different from that of the feast - songs. There are less of them: journey - songs are never sung at a feast or vice versa.

Feast songs are very numerous, and so are the tunes to which they are sung. The difference of the tunes lies in the repeats and interjected refrains (*ἀπογέσματα και ἀποτσιόσματα*) and in the insertion of various lines foreign to the song. Unfortunately they are more curtailed than journey - songs: Few are more than three or four stanzas (*κοντυλιές ήτοι ἐκφωνήσεις*).

Among us the songs, (whether sung or recited), are performed by two choruses, each consisting of one or two good singers reinforced by a number of «helpers» (*τσιρόπαιδες*). One group sings one verse (one - and - a - half or two lines), and the other repeats it.

At the weddings, baptisms, and so on, at which these songs are principally sung, since all the villagers gather together with the women and children, and everybody wants to sing not only one or two songs but the whole repertoire, (as well as the askites, the products of momentary inspiration) they are compelled to perform only half or less of each poem; justifying themselves with the adage «His mother will die, who sings to the end». It should be noted that the curtailment of these songs is assisted too by the attitude of the persons at these gatherings who sing only for exhibition, so that others may not say «So - and - so doesn't know how, and not from any real urge to sing. Again, whoever plays an instrument, lute or lyra, does not sing, but plays almost continuously: for the musicians remember that their payment depends on the dancing, and whoever dances pays. Finally, the songs are curtailed by the common interchange of tune. For instance, when a poem of six lines is sung to a one - and - half - line tune, the last half - line will be omitted. If, after years have passed, some rememberer of old ways and tunes brings the poem back to a two - line verse, most often the remaining half of the last line, with all the line before it, will be removed as well. In this way a song of six lines becomes one of four...».

Some points of this account need comment. The system of a double chorus seems local, or certainly not general. Normally the verses are not repeated. Again, the author's very justified

stress on the interchange of tunes as a cause of text - shortening rather obscures the fact that some poems have by now become attached to particular tunes. It may be estimated that in Crete about a hundred and fifty feastsongs are sung to about thirty tunes. The Phanurakis manuscript and Vavules's collection show that this attachment has become quite definite. No doubt is ever shown as to what tune should be used for a song, and it appears that some tunes have even acquired names — The Ibex, and The Apple tree — taken from the first words of a poem sung exclusively to them¹⁶. Mathiudakis's description is of a system which was already near its end.

The content of these songs has already been shown ancient; and it would be fair to assume that ancient words go with equally ancient tunes. But we do not have to make this assumption. There is evidence that this form goes back at least as far as the fifteenth century, when the unique Moscow manuscript of the *Son of Armuris* contains six half - lines, including the ending. In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries we have manuscript examples from the monastery of Iberon, where the text has a musical notation showing it to correspond closely with modern Cretan feast - songs¹⁷; and also from Meteora¹⁸.

The most likely hypothesis to explain the use of this tune — pattern for two entirely different classes of poem — the long cleptic narratives, and the short feast - songs, largely of Acritic content — is that at one time it was used for long Acritic narratives. In Epirus and Rumeli, where the Acritic cycle is now very little known, and rhyme has never come into use for narrative - songs, they gave way to cleptic ballads. And in Crete, where rhyme began to be used for revolution — ballads shortly after 1700¹⁹, and was known from the popular chap — books continually published from 1515 onwards, they suffered a gradual

¹⁶) Phanurakis, MS.

¹⁷) Σ. Λάμπρος, Δεκαετία δημόδη ᾄσματα μετὰ μουσικῶν σημείων (NE II (1914) pp. 425 - 432). See also S. Baud - Bouy, Sur la strophe de la chanson «cleptique». (Annuaire de l'Institut de Philologie et d'Histoire Orientales et Slaves, 10 (1950) (Παγκάφεια - Melanges Henri Gregoire) pp. 53 - 78).

¹⁸) Ν. Α. Βέης, Νεοελληνικά ᾄσματα χειρογράφων κωδίκων (Παναθήναια (1919) pp. 211 - 218).

¹⁹) See chapter 1, p. 31 ff.

fragmentation into the short feast - songs of today. These long Acritic narratives, of which the Son of Armur is the oldest example, might even include the material of all the epic known to us from more sophisticated versions, and attain to the length of, say, the Escorial Acritas.

It seems quite clear that the feast - songs are a product of fragmentation. At present they are very short, the majority being four or five lines long, but generally speaking, the older collections have the longer songs, and it is easy to see our recorded development as a late stage in a continual shortening. The same dissolution is affecting the journey - songs. Today it would be rare for the Faithful Wife, or the Galley - Slave, to have thirty lines. Both are recorded from the last century in forty - line versions²⁰. At the same period there was living at least one person who had some vague memory of a complete Digenis - romance, albeit in a very corrupt and mutilated form²¹.

In 1870 a manuscript was sent to the Parnassus Society of Athens, which was making a collection of Greek poetry. It was from Crete, and contained less than twenty lines of verse in fragments, all that could be remembered from a long narrative summarised in prose. The story begins with Digenis's wooing (which is contaminated with the tale of Charzanis). The King and his five sons pursue the lovers, and are defeated. They claim that they were bringing dowry, but are nevertheless killed. Digenis digs a grave and (here an epilogue from another story is tacked on) covers himself and the maiden in it. From the grave now grow a reed and a laurel.

Although this tradition is so fragmentary, we may fairly draw from it the conclusion that at some period, (presumably about 1750 - 1800, when we begin to have the first great revolution - ballads), a form of Acritas was known orally in Crete. The degeneration of this form from the epic as we know it else, where may be compared with the degeneration of the versions of Apollonius of Tyre, sung early in the present century, from the original poem²².

²⁰) Π. Γ. Βλαστός, 'Ο γάμος ἐν Κρήτη Athens 1893, pp. 76, 80.

²¹) For this occurrence, see Ν. Γ. Πολίτης, 'Ακριτικά ἄσματα' ὁ θάνατος τοῦ Διγενῆ (Λαογραφία 1 (1900) pp. 242ff); also S. Baud - Bovy La chanson populaire grecque du Dodecanèse I Les taxte Paris 1936, p. 192.

²²) See chapter 8.

At the same time the vitality of some of the more exciting episodes of the cycle roused imitations in such poems as that (significantly, half in rhyme and half not) where an Anoyiate shepherd, Manuras, kills a monster:

κ' εἶχε διπλὸς τοὶ κεφαλές, καὶ δυὸ ζευγάργια μάθια²³
κ' ἤβγανε ἴπὸν τ' ἀρθούνιά του δυὸ καμινῶ φουγάρο.

We may consider *Acritas E* as a version of the epic circulating in Crete by oral tradition in the fifteenth century, and that the Escorial manuscript was copied from a bard's private *aide-memoire*, or from a script taken down in actual performance, by a copyist who did not understand the reason for the frequent half-lines. A few were left as they stood; others were lopped or padded or changed to produce some sort of sense, even though it might be quite unmetrical; and we may guess that others were incorporated into the fifteen-syllable system in the way which has produced so many metrical irregularities in the poem.

But when we begin to examine the half-lines in *Acritas E*, we are at once confronted with a difficulty. In the songs collected by Colonel Leake the half-line is indeed the first hemistich of a political verse, and this is an almost universal rule in the songs of Continental Greece and Crete today. In the Escorial text, of the fifty-eight half-lines visible without emendation (of which more will be said later) only fourteen conform to this rule. The rest have seven syllables ending weakly (-υ), and so may be regarded as the second, not the first, half of the verse.

There is evidence that this is an early form. It occurs once in the *Son of Armuris*, and that in the most important place, the end:

..καὶ ἂν λάχῃ κέρδος ἴποιτες, ἀντάμα νὰ τὸ μοιράζουν,
καὶ νά' ναι ἀγαπημένοι.

In the *Evil Mother*²⁴, from a sixteenth or seventeenth-century manuscript at Meteora, we have a fine ending:

«Μὴ φᾶς, ἀφέντη μου, μὴ φᾶς, καὶ φᾶς καὶ μαγαθίσης,
ἀφ' τοῦ γνιοῦ σου τὸ σκῶτι».
Κ' ἔσυρε τὸ σπαθᾶκι του κι ἀποκεφάλισέ την.

From a seventeenth-century manuscript we have a *Hundred-Song* with

²³) E. K. Φραγκάκη, *op. cit.* p. 93.

²⁴) For this and the *Hundred-Song*, see N. A. Βέης, *op. cit.* pp. 212 ff.

*"Α δὲ πιστεύεις, κόρη μου, ὅτι θέλω φιλήσει
γιὰ πᾶ σὸ περιβόλι*

and the frequent

τρία λόγια τί εἶναι;

and so on up to a hundred.

While in one body of poetry, that of the Saracatsans, it seems to be the prevalent form of the half-line, so dominant that it has developed the habit in some places of rhyming with the preceding line²⁵. (It is clear that where this happens it is a late development. In such cases the rhyme is the only one in the song.) The Saracatsans are (or were before the war), a nomad people of Macedonia and Bulgaria, but it seems clear that this way of life has, as always, tended to preserve old traditions, and that Saracatsan music is more conservative than that of their former neighbours in Epirus.

The «musical» hypothesis for the state of the Escorial text demands that the tune or tunes used for the performance of the poem must have been capable of ending in either an eight-syllable or a seven-syllable hemistich. One tune in the repertoire of Cretan feast-songs fits this requirement exactly. By using a notation in which musical phrases are expressed by letters and syllables by numbers, this tune may be represented:

Line I a 1-4, 1-8
b 9-10, 9-15
b 9-10, 9-15

Line II a 1-4, 1-8

This forms a one-and-a-half line stanza. In performance there is a marked pause before the next stanza; there is a slighter, but still noticeable, pause at the end of the line (i. e. after the repetition of phrase b). So that this tune, if used for an Acritic narrative, could close in the normal octosyllable, as given above, or, by very slightly varying the formula, in a heptasyllable;

Line I a 1-4, 1-8
b 9-10, 9-15
Line II b 9-10, 9-15
(Line III a 1-4, 1-8)

²⁵ E. Σ. Τζάτζιος, *Τραγούδια τῶν Σαρακατσαναίων* Athens 1928 passim. See also C. Hoëge, *Les Saracatsans une tribu nomade grecque: I étude linguistique* Paris - Copenhagen 1926.

It is very satisfactory to record that the tune concerned is that which above all others may be called Acritic, and was regarded as so characteristically Cretan that the performer chosen to record it for the Folk Music Archive of Greece was none other than Eleftherios Venizelos himself: it is the Death of Digenis²⁶.

As far as I know this is the only tune to present in this pure form the answer to the problem of the Escorial text. This is not to say that the problem might not be answered with slightly more difficulty by other Cretan feast-tunes. The tune to which the Rebel is sung may be written:²⁷

Line I	a	1 - 3, 1 - 8
	b	9 - 12, 12 - 15
	c	9 - 15
Line II	d	1 - 4, 4 - 6
	e	1 - 8

Here phrases b and c correspond metrically, though not musically. This tune is called Death (*τοῦ Χάρωντα ὁ σκοπὸς*) from its frequent use of the Charos-songs.

Very rarely in Crete, as more often with the Saracatsans, the heptasyllable has been kept by being reinforced with rhyme, or used for a half-nonsensical refrain²⁸. Otherwise the eight-syllabled half-line seems universal.

That the weak close gave way to the now customary strong one is probably due to the fact that «Greek music abhors a paroxytone ending to the melody»²⁹, so that we have such phenomena as the two-line tune to which Erotocritos is now sung in Crete; where the last syllable of the couplet is not sung, but spoken, and almost suppressed³⁰. It even seems that Cretan

²⁶) Γ. Ν. Νάξος, 50 δημώδη ᾄσματα Πελοποννήσου καὶ Κρήτης Athens 1928, pp. 62 - 63.

²⁷) Ibid., pp. 56 - 57.

²⁸) Ἀπάνηξέ μ' ὁ μέρμηγκας, κ' εἶχε τ' ἀτζὶ σιριμμένο
τὸ μπράτσο σηκωμένο,
κ' εἰς τὴν Συριὰν ἐπήγαινε, ὀγιά νὰ πολέμησῃ.
Στὴ σιράτα τοῦ συναπαντοῦν Σαρακηνοὶ καὶ Μῶροι,
σαράντα γιανισόροι.

(K 289,2): a very interesting example because it is so obviously a parody of Acritic poetry, and therefore presumably of a date close to it.

²⁹) S. Baud-Bovy, Sur la strophe.. p. 68.

³⁰) Β. Κορνάρος, Ἐρωτόκριτος introduction by Α. Πολίτης Athens 1952 pp. 40, 54, where the music is printed.

music is rather more definite on this point than that of Continental Greece. In Rumeli the most usual ending for a link-tune is for the last syllable to be sung to part of a descending scale, basically four to eight notes, but often with a very complicated melismata⁸¹. The normal Cretan ending has a single note or a pair of short notes for the last syllable⁸².

Without the music, at least, the weak heptasyllable is usually more effective, and it is strange that the musical element has now so completely prevailed. But although modern half-lines are almost without exception octosyllables, there is still a tendency towards the dying fall, and in Passow's collection, for example, there are twice as many weak endings (- v v) as strong ones (v̄ v -)⁸³.

The purpose of the half-line is firstly technical; to vary the stream of a narrative which might otherwise become monotonous. The melody of *Errotocritos* has already been mentioned. In fact, there are two melodies, the second line of both being the same, and the first considerably different⁸⁴. One is used as the basic recitative, and is varied as the singer wills by the introduction of the other, normally for a single couplet, occasionally for two. It would be impossible to sing long narrative without such variation, and it is therefore a technical requirement. But in the best performances the variation has an organic connexion with the text. The second melody of *Errotocritos* has a heightening effect, rising to the subtonic where the standard melody goes only to the dominant. It is therefore used to tense and emphasize the narration. The half-line variation in unrhymed verse has the different intention of introducing a

⁸¹) M. O. Μεγαλιέ, *Τραγούδια της Ρούμελης* Athens 1931, pp. 8, 9, 11, 22, et passim.

⁸²) Γ. Ν. Νάξος, op. cit. pp. 63, 65, 71 et passim.

⁸³) A. Passow, *Popularia carmina Graeciae recentioris* Leipzig 1860.

⁸⁴) The recent study by Professor Baud-Bovy shows that the first melody is directly descended from a French tune presumably introduced to fifteenth-century Cyprus and dispersed from there to many parts of the Greek world. The second melody, however, which is an echo of the first, and gives to the sung *Errotocritos* its especial power, seems to be a particular invention of Crete. See S. Baud-Bovy *La strophe de distiques rimes dans la chanson grecque* (*Studia memoriae Belae Bartok sacra* Budapest 1956, pp. 365 - 383).

pause, which may close and satisfy the sense of the preceding passage; and always throws new strength onto the line that follows, when the singer's words appear clean and untrammelled.

At its best, the effect can be very powerful, and nowhere as powerful as at the end of a poem. In *The Faithful Wife*, after the strange horseman has told the woman that he has seen the body of her husband who has been away for so many years, slowly her fidelity is proved, and in the end she knows him:

κι ἀναιτρανίζει ταπεινά σὶ τοῦ μαυροκαβαλλάρη
κι ἐκείνη τὸν ἐγνώρισε⁸⁵.

There is nothing like this in *Acritas*, where the ending is corrupt in any case, but there are lesser examples of this locking of the sense: some in thought:

Εἶδα γάρ, ὀμμαΐά μου, τὰ δάκρυα τῆς μητρός μου,
καὶ ὡς δι' αὐτὸ ὑπαγαίνω. (E 376 - 377)

and

ἐγὼ μόνος μου, μοναχός, φουσοῦσα πολεμίζω
καὶ ὅλα νὰ νικήσω. (E 876 - 877)

and some in action:

καὶ σύρει τὸ σπαθίτιζιν του, κόπνει τὴν κεφαλὴν του,
καὶ ἔσχισέν τον μέσα (E 520 - 521)

And of course in the obvious place at the end of a speech: when the maiden sees the crowd of horsemen approaching, she says:

«Ὁμιμέν, ἀφέντη μου καλέ, καὶ βέβαιον νὰ μᾶς χωρίσουν
σήμερον ἀπ' ἀλλήλων» (E 1162 - 1163)

The Amir on his march calls on his warriors:

«καὶ πάντα ἔχετε τὸν νοῦν σας εἰς τὰς στενάς κλεισοῦρας,
μὴ ἀργήση καὶ μὴ φιορκιστῶ⁸⁶ καὶ λυπηθῆ ἡ ψυχὴ μου
καὶ ὁμοίως καὶ ἡ καλή μου». (E 491 - 493)

The other functions of the half-line, the gathering of strength which leads to the opening of a new theme, in effectively used to introduce speeches, sometimes quite quietly, with such lines as

καὶ ἐγὼ πάλιν οἶς λέγω (E 1190)

and

καὶ ὁ θεῖος τοῦ λέγει (E 760)

but once at least more powerfully, when it introduces one

⁸⁵) Π. Γ. Βλαστός, *op. cit.* p. 77.

⁸⁶) Text *φιορκίσω*.

of the most spell-binding passages in Greek folk-poetry:

Ἐπήγην καὶ ἐπέξευσεν κάτω καὶ ἀνέσια ἐσύνιυχεν
τὸν πρωτοστράτορά του·
«Στράτορα, πρωτοστράτορα καὶ πρῶτε τῶν στρατόρων,
ἀπόστρωσε τὸν μαῦρόν μου καὶ στρῶσέ μου τὸν γρίβαν,
τὸν εἶχε πάντι ὁ θεῖός μου εἰς τὰς ἀνδραγαθίας του.
Τρεῖς ὕγκλες μου τὸν ὕγκλωσε καὶ τρεῖς ὀμπροσιελίνες
καὶ τὸ βαρὸν χαλίναρον διὰ τὰ γοργογυρίζη.» (E 795 · 801)

In other places the introduction is to a new episode:

Καὶ ὡς ὑπήγαιεν μοναχός του,
εὗρεν καλάμιν καὶ νερόν καὶ ἦτον ἀπέσω λέων (E 630 · 631)

or

Τὸ ἰδεῖν τοὺς νεωτέρους,
γοργὸν ἐπήγην τὸ ραβδὶν καὶ προσυπήνησέν τους (E 973β · 974)

These ends and beginnings have shown us the half-line, however well-manipulated, near its basic technical significance. We pass to another plane of composition (or performance: in heroic poetry it is often hard to know the difference) when it is used in a few special effects.

For sarcasm: Maximo scorns Philopappos for summoning her aid with the excuse that Digenis has a powerful army:

«Ἐγὼ μόνη καὶ μοναχὴ τὰ κατεβῶ εἰς αὐτόν,
τὰ κόψω τὸ κεφάλιν του καὶ ἐδῶ τὰ σᾶς τὸ φέρω,
τὰ ἐπάρω τὸ κοράσιον καὶ ἐδῶ τὰ σᾶς τὸ φέρω,
τὰ ἐπάρω τὴν πιθυμίαν σας καὶ ἐδῶ τὰ σᾶς τὴν φέρω,
καὶ ἐσεῖς μὴ κουρασθῆτε.» (E 1523 · 1527)

The Amir's mother writes of his marriage with the unbeliever:

«. . . ἡ χαιζιροφαγοῦσα
.
τὴν εἶχες εἰς τὸν σταυλόν σου καὶ ξιχές τὴν καὶ σκλάβαν,
ἐποϊκές τὴν κυρὰν σου.» (E 269 · 272)

For threat: twice close together in

«Εἰ δὲ καὶ οὐκ ἔλθῃς τὸ γοργόν,
μὰ τὸν Προφήτην τὸν καλόν, τὸν μέγαν Μαχουμέτην,
τὰ τέκνα σου τὰ σφάζουσι καὶ ἐμέναν θέλουν πνίξει,
τὰ δὲ κοράσιά σου τὰ καλὰ ἄλλους τὰ περιλάβουν!
Καὶ ἄν οὐδὲν ἔλθῃς τὸ γοργόν, κατέβειν ἔχω εἰς τὸ Μάγγας»¹⁾

¹⁾ If we accept the likely emendation:

Καὶ ἄν οὐδὲν ἔλθῃς τὸ γοργόν,

εἰς τὸ μνήμαν τοῦ Προφήτου

καὶ κλίνειν ἔχω κεφαλὴν ὑπὲρ εὐχῆς μου πρώτης,

καὶ νὰ ἔχῃς τὴν κατάραν μου ὑπὲρ εὐχῆς γονέων». (E 284 - 291)

where the half - lines give a solemnity of stride which suggests naturally their use in oath :

«Κύριε, Θεὲ φιλάνθρωπε, ὁ κτίσας τοὺς αἰῶνας,

εἰάν ἐγὼ ἐνθυμηθῶ νὰ σὲ παραπονέσω,

θηρία νὰ μὲ διαμεριστοῦν». (E 903 - 905)

and

καὶ τοῦτο δμνύω καὶ λέγω σας'

μὰ τὸν Προφήτην (τὸν καλόν) τὸν μέγαν Μαχουμίτην⁸⁸ (E 164-165)

It is noticeable that in these oaths and threats three of the half - lines and perhaps the fourth are the rising octosyllable, from whose rhythm come their deliberation and force. In such discrimination we see the hand of a real poet behind the Escorial *Acritas*.

The half - lines so far quoted have almost all been chosen from the fifty - eight that stand as perfect octosyllables or heptasyllables in the manuscript. But one of the main ailments of the Escorial text is a certain ponderous prosaicism. Time and time again we get the impression that genuine lines from the tradition have been swollen and twisted to produce a flatter narrative, and this impression is most readily confirmed when lines in *Acritas E* are close to lines in other versions. The truly heroic

Δεῦτε, καβαλλικεύσωμεν, ὑπάγωμεν εἰς κυνήγιν (T 872)

becomes

Δεῦτε ἄς καβαλλικεύσωμεν καὶ ἄς ὑπάγωμεν εἰς τὸ κυνήγιν

(E 571)

and

καὶ ἔβαλαν τὸ πρᾶγμα εἰς τὸ σπίνιν του,

καὶ τὰ φαρία ἔβαλαν εἰς τὸν σταῦλον (E 601 - 602)

is better read as prose, while its equivalent elsewhere, though not markedly poetical, has at least the appropriate metre :

καὶ ἔβαλαν τὰ πρᾶγματα ἔνδοθεν εἰς τὰς θήκας,

καὶ τὰ φαρία ἔθεντο εἰς τοὺς μεγάλους σταύλους (A 1276 - 1277)

κατέβειν ἔχω εἰς τὸ Μακέ, εἰς τὸ μνήμαν τοῦ Προφήτου,

Mággas is a very difficult form for *Μακὲ* - «Mecca», which is known to the poet in line 537.

⁸⁸) See line 285 quoted above.

Sometimes the order of words is changed. The prosy line

Μὴ τοῦτος ἦν τὸν λέγουν ὁ Διγενῆς Ἀκροίτης! (E 1216)

has in the Athens text a more heroic shape:

Μὴ αὐτὸς ἦν ὁ Διγενῆς τὸν λέγουσιν Ἀκροίτην! (A 3054)

It is hard to believe that some of these distortions were not the product of an inconsistent and half-hearted attempt to produce a prose version like that of Andros.

Half-lines, being often the most poetic and pungent points of the narrative, notably suffered from this treatment, which has given rise to the many quite unmetrical lines which are longer than a hemistich and shorter than a full verse. Using square brackets to excise the intruding words, we find such things as

[καὶ ἐσὺ] ἔχεις ἐμένα [τῶρα] δοῦλον (E 357)

to correspond with the half-line already quoted

ἐποϊκῆς τὴν κυρὰν σου. (E 272)

And obvious superfluities point to the corrections in

[καὶ οἱ γέροντες] ἐκ τοῦ Ραχᾶς τὸ κάστρον (E 531)

the elders do not appear in the other versions): in

[καὶ ἐκίνησεν] εἰς Ρωμανίαν νὰ ὑπάγη (E 577)

and

[ὁ Φιλοπιπτοῦς] οὕτως τὸν ἀπεκρίθη (E 650)

Many other examples could be given: and there are also signs that half-lines have sometimes been expanded to become full verses. In one passage, the inserted words seem not only to be superfluous, but to interrupt the sense. They make it seem that more than one occasion is referred to, whereas the other texts make it clear that only the battle of Malakopi is meant:

τὸ πῶς σᾶς ἐγλύτωσα ὡς διὰ τὰς ἀνδραγαθίας μου

[καὶ πάντως, ἀγῶροί μου εἶδατε] εἰς τὰ Μυλοκοπία,

διὰν ἐφθάσασιν σιρατηγοὶ καὶ ἐπῆράν σᾶς δεμένους. (E 502-504)

The more learned for ἀγῶροι for ἄγουροι adds to our suspicion. Similar grounds suggest the corruption in

[καὶ ἦλθασιν] καὶ ἤθρασιν [τὸ ἐρμηνευθῆν] τὸ ρυάκιν. (E 78)

And yet again the excision of excessively archaizing forms in a demotic passage produces a reasonable and plausible result:

Καὶ ἂν θέλῃς, κυρά, νὰ θεραπεύσωμεν Γιαννάκην καὶ τὸν Λέον,

τὸν Κίναμον τὸν θαυμαστόν, [κ' ἐμὲν τὸν σὸν ἰκέτην],

κοπίασε, αὐθέντρια καὶ κυρά, καὶ ἄς ποίσωμεν δουλείαν,

καὶ ἄς θαραπευθοῦμεν [καὶ ἡμεῖς διὰ τὴν σὴν ἀγάπην].

(E 1379 - 1382)

We come now to another fault in transmission which can be attributed to a «musical» cause.

The usual collection of folk - poetry gives very little idea of what the words of a song sound like in actual performance. A stanza of the famous cleptic theme *The Golden Eagle* reads:

Χρυσὸς ἀητὸς καθόντανε σὲ κλέφτικο λημέρι.

Βαστοῦσε καὶ σιὰ νύχια του...

Taken down from the mouth of the singer, it would be :

Μωρὲ χρυσὸς ἀητὸς; αἶντε-ν-ἀητὸς καθόν' μωρὲ καθόντανε

μωρὲ σὲ κλέφτικο λημέρι.

Βαστοῦσε καὶ αἶ-ν-ἀητέ μ' σιὰ νύ' μωρὲ νύχια του

while at the end of each stanza (that is, in the middle of every fifteen - syllabled verse) there would be a refrain (*τοῦκισμα*) whose content would have no connexion with the theme of the narrative.

The distortions are of two sorts; some produced by repetitions of words and parts of words from the text, and some by interjections which may be stereotyped, or may have some relation to the story. All questions about the origins of Greek verse - forms should be treated with great wariness, but it seems fair to assume that such distortions are the result of fitting political verses to melodies intended for some quite different metrical shape. In taking down songs from performance these additions are pruned away so as to leave bare the fifteen - syllabled verse, and it is only in modern collections with music that we are able to see the original.

It might be imagined that the most inept transcriber could easily remove at least the errors of the first type, arising from plain repetition. In fact, *Acritas E* shows occasional signs of having been taken down from performance by a transcriber whose ineptitude reaches to the retention even of these mistakes. Common dittography might account for

ὁ Θεὸς τοῦ ἔδωσεν [ἔδωσεν] ἐδτυχίαν εἰς τὴν πολλὴν του ἀνδρείαν.

(E 620)

but in

καὶ νὰ [σὲ] στερηθῶ καὶ τὸ φῶς τοῦ λάμποντος ἡλίου (E 388)

the *σὲ* is obviously superfluous. The Amir (thee) is not mentioned at the corresponding points in other versions; *σὲ* must have come from the ligature it closely resembles, *σιέ*, and *καὶ νὰ σιε*, *στερηθῶ* is to be compared with the modern

*Ἐγὼ ῥμ' ἢ βλά -, ἢ βλάχα ἢ ἔμορφη*³⁹.

As for the passage

*Καὶ δὲν εἶναι κοράσια εἰς τὸν Παδᾶ [εἰς τοῦ Παπαδᾶ]
εἰς τοῦ Παστρᾶ τὸ κάσιτρον ;* (E 232 - 233)

—this seems so obvious a case as to require no further comment. Something of the same sort may account even for the overlong line in the opening of our text, which should be read

Μέλη καὶ [μέλη] ἄν σὲ ποιήσουσιν, βλέπε ἐντροπήν μὴ ποιήσης (E4)

The second sort of error, which comes from the interjections in the singing, is perhaps more difficult to deal with, because sometimes the interjection is more closely connected with the needs of the narrative. In fact we find many such mistakes in the Escorial text. The easiest type to identify, and therefore to reject, is not present: this is the entirely formal and meaningless ejaculation which is represented in the Peloponnese and Rumeli by *μωρὲ* and *ἄϊντε*. The Asia Minor equivalents, now spread all over Greece with the refugees of 1922, in *ἄμάν*; and rather more rarely in Crete we have the guttural expressed as *ὦχ* or *ἔχ*.

None of these is found in *Acritas E*, though we have some notable examples of the next type, where there is a basic meaning in the ejaculation, which has however become all but formalised. This is represented in modern folk-song by *λέει*⁴⁰, and *μᾶνα ῥμ*⁴¹, and we may compare the metrical improvements caused by the excisions in these lines:

ῶ πιάσε μου [λέ] τὸν ἄγουρον ταχέως νὰ τὸν νικήσης (E 47)

Ἐγὼ δὲ [μοῦ λέ] οὐδὲ τὸν ἐγνοιάζουμαι νὰ τὸν καταπονέσης (E 50)

καὶ εἶδα [μᾶνα μου] καὶ ἄνθρωπος νεκρὸς κ' ἔτριχαν τὸ ἄγιον
(*μύρος*) (E 551)

Σὺ δέ, [υἱήτηρ], γλυκειά μου παρηγορία. (E 557)

In these examples the interjections have rather more than their current debased meaning, and approach the third modern type, where the inserted words have a sense in the song. They are almost exclusively, in modern usage, vocatives: *μωρ* *Ἀράπη*, *Βασίλη Τσέλιο μου*. *Ρήνα Ρηνοῦλά μου*. *ἄϊ πουλί μ'*, *γυιέ μ'*, *ὦχ ὀ νιός*, *καλέ*, *μωρὲς κοπέλλες*⁴².

³⁹) M. O. Μεσλιέ, op. cit p. 73.

⁴⁰) Ibid. pp. 62, 64, 70 etc.

⁴¹) Ibid. p. 52 etc., Γ. Δ. Παχτικός, 260 δημώδη ἑλληνικά ἄσματα Athens 1905, p. 13.

In the Escorial text we find:

Φαίνεται μου [ἀδέλφια μου ὅτι] οἱ γέρακες ἄνδρες ἀρπάκτες ἐνι
(E 327)

καὶ μηδὲν σοῦ φανῆ [νεώτερε] κακόν... (E 443)

καὶ ὁποιος εὐρεθῆ ἡ γὰ τὸν σκοτώση [Διγενῆ] ἔναι πολλὰ ἀνδρειω-
[μένος (E 762)

Εὐλόγησέν σου ὁ Θεὸς [νεώτερε] τὴν περίσσην σου ἀνδρείαν (E 1289)

Καὶ ἂν θέλης [κυρᾶ] ἡ γὰ θεραπεύσωμεν Γιαννάκην καὶ τὸν Λέον
(E 1379)

Other cases, where the excision of similar vocatives would have similar metrical advantages, have been left out because the corresponding passages in other versions have words which could have given rise to a purely textual error. The examples cited can come from no textual confusions of this sort: there is an overwhelming presumption that they are interjections which have crept into a script taken down in performance.

Yet more evidence may be found in the exceptionally large proportion of lines beginning with the conjunction *καί*. Demotic poetry is almost exclusively endstopped, so that it is nearly always possible to begin a line with a coordinate conjunction: but more reason than this is needed for the extraordinary groups of as many as nine consecutive lines (E 1719 ff), or twenty lines out of twenty-four (E 1612 - 1635). The answer is again a musical one. Some link-tunes insert an extra syllable at the beginning of a repetition. The first line of *The Rebel* is sung

πότε θά, καὶ πότε θὰ κάμη ξεστειριά...

(in our notation 1 - 3, 1 - 8 — more properly 1 - 3, x, 1 - 8)⁴⁸

The second is sung

ἡ γὰ πάρω, καὶ ἡ γὰ πάρω τὸ τουφέκι μου...

and so on; so that to the unskilled recorder, who did not really understand the mechanics of what he was writing, or even to the highly-skilled performer, who knew them so well that he could use them as indication rather than authority, a ballad sung to this or a similar tune could easily produce strings of lines beginning with *καί*.

It remains only to point out that the part of the Escorial

⁴⁸⁾ M. O. Μετλιέ, op. cit. pp. 13, 22, 54, 60 - 62, 96 etc. op. cit. p. 107.

⁴⁹⁾ Γ. Ν. Νάξος, op. cit. pp. 56 - 57.

text where this habit is most highly marked, (and from which these examples have been taken), is the episode of the death of Digenis: and that the tune of *The Rebel* is the *Death* - tune of Cretan folksong.

Some of the history of *Digenis Acritas* has been mentioned at the beginning of this chapter. Can we now trace a little more exactly its literary progress?

The historical fact of the slaying of a Byzantine officer in 788 gave rise to a cycle of lays, in which he was introduced to the company of older heroes, and became their leader. During the ninth and tenth centuries we may imagine this cycle taking a shape near that of the epic as we know it. Likenesses to Arab and Persian works show that this shaping took place before the story passed from the hands of the border bards - the Paphlagonians of *Arethas*, «who made up songs of the feats of famous men, and sang them from house to house at an obol a time». Their everyday life was with the Moslem; they were open to Saracen influences in a way which was impossible for the courtiers of Byzantium.

In the eleventh century, and probably at the end of the eleventh century, if we are to accept as part of the original composition the knowledge of the fall of Iconium in 1072, there was composed, not a paraphrase, but a fully - coordinated epic romance based on the ballad - cycle. It has certain near memories of *Achilles Tatius*, and may or may not have been written by *Eustathios Macrembolites*, author of *Hysmine* and *Hysminias*, who also imitates this writer: it is certain at least that it had stylistic resemblances to *Macrembolites's* work and to *Prodromos's Rhodanthe* and *Dosicles*, and was of a similar date and of similar courtly influences. This was the archetype, the original from which our seven known versions stem.

They can have come only by oral tradition. There is no process of written transmission which could have produced such divergences as exist between the five poetic versions, or even between the two closest of them, those of Athens and Trebizond. «How could oral transmission have produced such widely differing forms of a work so totally unsuited to oral popularity?». This is the obvious question, and the answer must be that it is a question based upon fallacy; the fallacy that popular poetry

must necessarily be simple and in the contemporary language of the people. Homer was known and recited with reverence long after his dialect had passed from use. Of modern Icelandic folk-poems it has been written «They are subject to very complex conventions of alliteration and rhyme, and they are grouped together under rules which forbid the repetition of the same devices... The Icelandic people were, and are, acute critics of the form⁴⁴. The metrical conventions of Welsh ballads are equally complicated; and in medieval Provence at this very time the *trobadoric*, abounding in obscure allusions and ornamental forms, was rivalling, and even ousting, the simple *trobador plan*⁴⁵. Strange though it may seem to our tastes, it cannot be doubted that the archaizing romance of *Digenis Acritas* was, to the Byzantine world, popular poetry; and like all popular poetry, was recited, in part or even as a whole, up and down the land. From time to time (and the occasions must have been very rare compared with the total) one of these performances would be recorded, perhaps by a hearer, more probably by the performer himself. Our seven versions are like seven fossils of a prehistoric beast caught at varying stages in its evolution. Six of them have been subject to the pressure of layer upon layer of copyists, so that in the extreme cases one is metamorphosed into a different language, one into prose, one into rhyme. The seventh, the Escorial, is an almost immediate impression of the reality, of a performance given in Crete in the fifteenth or early sixteenth century.

This does not mean, of course, that we have the original text taken down from recital. The manuscript itself, with its tutored hand and its spaces left for illustration, would show us that. But the comparative absence of purely scribal errors, in combination with the multitude of non-scribal errors, makes it certain that we have something very close to the original performance⁴⁶.

What was this performance? Of one thing at least we are

⁴⁴) W. J. Entwistle, *European Balladry*, Oxford 1939, pp. 227 - 228.

⁴⁵) E. Hoepffner, *Les Troubadours*, Paris 1955, pp. 81 ff.

⁴⁶) It must be stressed that mistakes like *ἀδέλφη* for *ἀδέλφι*, or *μούστει* for *μούστη*, must not be regarded as scribal errors. At this time, and in manuscripts of this sort, spelling was sufficiently correct if it produced the right sound - as it was, indeed, in England.

fairly sure - that it was unlikely to have been a performance of the whole poem. Even this is not impossible. «Avdo Mededovic.. would sing for about two hours in the morning and for another two hours in the afternoon, resting for five or ten minutes every half-hour. To sing a long song took him two weeks with a week's rest in between to recover his voice. The result was an epic poem..which has about 12,000 lines»⁴⁷. The Serbian bard's narration rate was about 250 lines an hour. A similar performance with link - tune narration (whose rate varies with the tunes from about eighty to a hundred and eighty lines an hour) would have produced, at the best, a work of over eight thousand lines. But such Marathons are exceptional. The longest normal recital would be confined to the space of an evening: five or six hundred lines may be regarded as a limit and much shorter episodes would be the rule⁴⁸.

This episodic form of transmission is very clearly visible in *A'critas E*. If a manuscript is founded upon a collection of recitals, heard at different times from different bards, there are bound to be unevennesses in the result. One of these unevennesses has already been mentioned, and it has been suggested that it is caused by the use of a special sort of tune in the episode of Digenis's death. But even in the very structure of the poem there is often no attempt to conceal the break between one episode and another.

In this way the young Digenis's encounter with the Apelates is almost completely independent of its context. It is introduced by the line

'Eδὰ ἄς σᾶς ἀφηγήσωμεν περὶ τὰς ἀνωρίας του (E 619)

which comes after a ten-line passage which can only be described as a bard's false start to the Beast - slaying. It goes on for eighty lines (a very comfortable hour's entertainment), stops,

⁴⁷) C. M. Bowra, *Heroic Poetry*, London 1952, p. 351.

⁴⁸) It is hard to pin down the legends of a complete performance of *Erotocritos* (over 10,000 lines). A reputation of knowing in all by heart is comparatively common and very possibly true. The latest witness is Mr. Leigh - Fermor, in his introduction to C. P'sychoundakis, *The Cretan Runner*, London 1955, p. 13. — «One would fall asleep for an hour or two, and wake up to find some gnarled shepherd still intoning». The narration rate of *Erotocritos* can be as high as five hundred lines an hour.

and without any pretence at transition the text moves straight to a very different matter - a praise of Love, leading to an entirely new introduction and scene - setting for a lay of Digenis Acritas.

Many of the «internal gaps and disturbance in the order of the lines» which the editors have seen in the Escorial text are explained quite simply by episodic composition. Yet another false start underlies the confusion in the account of the Amir's duel with Constantis. At line 30 the bard starts:

Σαρακηνός ἐλάλησεν τὸν Ἀμηρὸν τῆς γλώσσης (E 30)

then remembers something he has left out: he abandons his beginning, sings the fine demotic song where all nature shudders at the shock of the combatants, and then starts his narrative again.

Given such a method of composition, it is easy to understand the differences of scale and style which would have been impossible in a homogeneous work. The versions of Grottaferrata, Athens, and Trebizond show similar differences beneath their naere. But it is arguable that the excessive variation of style between, for instance, the prayer at Digenis's death - bed and Maximo's scorn of Philopappos show that Acritas E is well into the decline of heroic poetry. The record has been made at a highly significant time. The decline had already started, and soon it is to be hastened by the two events which together left the people only small memories of the old poetry - the invention of rhymed verse, and the establishment at Venice of firms specialising in the production of Greek chap - books. Only in areas remote from Venetian influence - Cyprus and Pontus - could Acritic poetry keep some of its old stature. In Crete the fall could not be averted. The Parnassos manuscript is a witness of the last stage of the tradition before it vanished from popular knowledge.

GARETH MORGAN

[Συνεχίζεται στο ἐπόμενο τεύχος]