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An Unknown Poem by Manuel Philes. Metrical Preface or Script for Performance?

1 Introduction

The fourteenth-century codex Città del Vaticano, BAV, Ott. gr. 213 (Diktyon 65456),¹ preserves, on f. 227r–230r, an unedited poem in 285 lines titled: “Lines by Manuel Philes on the Great Martyr Saint George appearing before a council with his underlings”. The codex is for the most part a collection of theological works (John of Damascus, Theodoret of Cyrrhus, Cyril of Alexandria, Niketas of Maronia) and various letters, but right at the end are a number of poems, three of which are attributed to Manuel Philes and do not appear in any other manuscript.

The poem by Philes, which we shall be dealing with here, has the form of a Preface recited before the reading of the life (and miracles) of a saint or of a homily in honour of a saint. That this is the case is evident from its final line (285), which contains the formulaic phrase “σὺ δ’ ἐπευλόγει, θύτα” of the reader asking the priest to bless him and give him permission to proceed to the reading of the saint’s Life or homily.²

Philes is, of course, one of the poets who composed the most works of this type.³ But none of those 26 poems has more than 81 lines,⁴ while the poem we shall present here is much longer than any other of this kind. One of those that comes to mind, if not the longest, is the Preface to the miracle of the boiled wheat (kollyva) of S.

1 See description of the codex in E. FERON / F. BATTAGLINI, *Codices manuscripti Graeci Ottoboniani Bibliothecae Vaticanae. Romae 1893*, 125 (the catalogue dates the codex to the 15th century). Cf. also G. STICKLER, *Manuel Philes und seine Psalmenmetaphrase. Dissertationen der Universität Wien*, 229. Wien 1992, 238 (14th century dating).

2 For the genre of metrical prefaces see TH. ANTONOPOULOU, *On the Reception of Homilies and Hag-iography in Byzantium. The Recited Metrical Prefaces*, in A. Rhoby / E. Schiffer (Hg.), *Imitatio – Aemulatio – Variatio. Akten des internationalen wissenschaftlichen Symposions zur byzantinischen Sprache und Literatur* (Wien, 22.–25. Oktober 2008). *Denkschriften der philosophisch-historischen Klasse*, 402 = *Veröffentlichungen zur Byzanzforschung*, 21. Wien 2010, 57–79. Specifically for this closing formula see 58.

3 Cf. ANTONOPOULOU, *On the Reception of Homilies* (as footnote 2 above) 68–74.

4 Cf. ANTONOPOULOU, *On the Reception of Homilies* (as footnote 2 above) 72.

Theodore the Recruit (277 lines);⁵ another is the 200-line Preface to a homily on SS Peter and Paul.⁶

The subject of Philes' poem is the martyrdom of St George, all the chief elements of which are set out in it. What distinguishes this text from others of its kind – apart from its unusual length – and makes it so remarkable is that it is written as a dialogue among several persons, which might indicate that its reading would require more than one speaker. Put another way, it is hard to imagine that this text was intended to be recited by a single person, unless that person was an extremely accomplished actor, able to assume the roles of the seven different figures who speak in this poem. These are: an anonymous narrator, Magnentius, St George, the Emperor Diocletian, the executioners (who are treated as a single collective figure), an angel and Queen Alexandra. Also mentioned are a sorcerer named Anastasios⁷ and another executioner symbolically called Nebuzaradan, the name of the chief cook of the King of Babylon, who is mentioned in the Old Testament (2 Kings 25:8–21); these two, however, are silent figures (in theatrical parlance, *figurants* or background actors), because, although they are addressed by Queen Alexandra, they do not reply. A narrator speaks just three times: in the opening lines (1–21) where he introduces the two main characters, the emperor and (with just three lines) the saint; in lines 45–50, with a laconic commentary on how the saint's bold reply left Magnentius dumbfounded; and in lines 128–134 (on the failure of the sword to pierce the saint's belly). Otherwise, the characters interact as if in a play, without the intervention of a narrator, in most cases in dialogue with one another but also in monologue, as on the four occasions when the martyr prays (ll. 120–127, 176–180, 196–199, 234–241) and the two when he comments on his situation (265–270, 278–285), and in the eleven lines (210–220) with which Queen Alexandra proclaims her conversion and devotion to the Christian faith. Changes of speaker

5 Ed. AASS Novembris IV, 80–82 (BHG 1769).

6 Ed. G. SCHIRÒ, Un poemetto bizantino inedito per gli apostoli Pietro e Paolo. *Atti dell'Istituto Veneto di Scienze, Lettere ed Arti. Classe di Scienze Morali e Lettere* 115 (1956–57) 187–209 (text: 200–209). Cf. also ANTONOPOULOU, On the Reception of Homilies (as footnote 2 above) 76–77, and A.D. KOMINIS, Τὸ βυζαντινὸν ἱερὸν ἐπίγραμμα καὶ οἱ ἐπιγραμματικοί. «*Αθηνᾶ*». *Σειρὰ διατριβῶν καὶ μελετημάτων*, 3. Athens 1966, 42–44.

7 In the prose martyrdoms of the saint the name of the sorcerer is Athanasios. It should be noted here, though, that the name does not occur in Philes' poem, but only in the marginal title (before l. 229) indicating the change of speaker: "Alexandra to Anastasios". The name Anastasios (rather than Athanasios) in any case exists only in the printed *Menaia*, not as the name of the sorcerer who prepared the poison but as the man whom the saint brought back from the dead, see K. KRUMBACHER, Der heilige Georg in der griechischen Überlieferung. *Abhandlungen der Königlich Bayerischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, Philosophisch-philologische und historische Klasse*, 25. Bd., 3. Abhandlung. München 1911, 239.

are indicated by 26 intercalated extra-textual prose headings, which serve as stage directions to show who is speaking and to whom⁸ or to set the scene for the next speech.⁹ These interposed titles and frequent changes of speaker suggest that in this text we have a distribution of roles that could well be (indeed would almost have to be) interpreted by different persons – a cast of characters that makes the poem performable. Of course, all metrical Prefaces were intended for recitation, but to the best of my knowledge no other metrical prologue contains multiple interactions of this kind. Our poem has, moreover, an undeniable ‘performativity’, regardless of whether this possibility was ever or might ever have been exploited. Nor can anyone exclude the possibility that the poem’s performativity was intentional. Manuel Philes was, after all, a poet who often used dramatic structure in his works, although in a form far less striking, one might say almost rudimentary.

In those other poems, however, the dialogue involved no more than two persons, or if there were more than two figures they did not interact with the same liveliness but merely took turns speaking. Moreover, these poems are usually longer than the one we are considering here. I might cite for example the monody for the Despot John Palaiologos (†1307), first-born son of Andronikos II and Irene-Yolanda of Montferrat.¹⁰ This poem is 607 lines long and is constructed as a succession of speeches by figures who do not engage with one another but only address the deceased one after the other, just as Andromache, Hecuba and Helen mourn one after the other the dead Hector in book 24 of the *Iliad* (ll. 724–777). It is telling that the monody of Philes has been described as a drama,¹¹ probably influenced by the title it bears in the manuscripts.¹²

Another long poem is a panegyric dialogue that Philes composed (in the 1320s) on his patron and protector the *megas domestikos* (and later emperor) John

8 22–23: ὁ Μαγνέντιος πρὸς τὸν μάρτυρα, 24–44: ὁ μάρτυς τῷ Μαγνεντίῳ, 51–80: ὁ Διοκλητιανὸς πρὸς τὸν μάρτυρα, 81–110: ὁ μάρτυς τῷ Διοκλητιανῷ, 120–127: ὁ μάρτυς εὐχόμενος, 265–270: ὁ ἅγιος καθ’ ἑαυτόν, and so on.

9 176–180: ὁ ἅγιος εὐχόμενος ἐν τῇ φυλακῇ.

10 Ed. E. MILLER, *Manuelis Philae carmina*, 1. Paris 1855 (repr. Amsterdam 1967), 388–414 (F 213). See N. GAUL, *Embedded dialogues and dialogical voices in Palaiologan prose and verse*, in A. Cameron / N. Gaul (ed.), *Dialogues and Debates from Late Antiquity to Late Byzantium*. Abingdon / New York 2017, 184–202 (esp. 191–193); K. KUBINA, *Die enkomiasische Dichtung des Manuel Philes. Form und Funktion des literarischen Lobes in der frühen Palaiologenzeit*. BA, 38. Berlin / Boston 2020, 271–284. For the Despot John Palaiologos see *PLP* 21475.

11 C.B. STARK, *Eine Tragödie des Manuel Philes*. *Neue Jahrbücher für Philologie und Pädagogik. Suppl.* 14 (1848) 444–447.

12 «Τοῦ σοφωτάτου καὶ λογικωτάτου κυρ Μανουὴλ Φιλῆ μονωδία ἐπὶ τῷ δεσπότῃ κυρ Ἰωάννῃ τῷ Παλαιολόγῳ, ἐν ᾗ ἐπιφέρει καὶ πρόσωπα τάδε τοῦ δράματος· Πρόσωπα εἰσὶ ταῦτα· Βασιλεὺς, Δέσποινα, Βασιλεὺς, Βασίλισσα, Βασιλεὺς, Θεράπων. [...] Προλογίζει Θεράπων».

Kantakouzenos.¹³ In this 966-line work (138 seven-line stanzas), which in the manuscripts has been titled as a ‘dramatic ethopoia’, two principal characters – *Nous* and *Philes* – engage in dialogue and the only intervening figures are twelve virtues (the four cardinal virtues and eight Christian virtues). Only in the last stanza of the poem does the laudandus speak.

Two alternating speakers also provide the structure for *Philes’ catanyctic* poem “A man in conversation with his soul”,¹⁴ a poem in 24 ten-line stanzas ending with an invocation to the poet’s deceased wife, who refuses to return to the life of this world. Another work in dialogue form is his 100-line funerary poem for George Pachymeres,¹⁵ in which an unnamed orator (probably the poet) and the deceased Pachymeres speak in turn; epitaphs of this sort were, of course, very common in Ancient Greek and Byzantine poetry.¹⁶ These observations lead us to the conclusion that the poem we are considering is something quite distinct, both among the metrical Prefaces and among all the poems Manuel *Philes* wrote.

2 Structure and content of the poem

Philes seemingly wrote this Preface for the reading of the martyrdom of St George, with the object of recapitulating, as concisely but comprehensively as possible, the events preceding it (and which may have been read out earlier), up to the point where the reading of the martyrdom to the congregation would continue.

Specifically, it deals with the following 11 tortures, in the order in which they are mentioned in the poem (ll. 111–241):

1. crucifixion: 116
2. evisceration foiled by sword blade bending like lead: 129
3. fiery nails to the feet: 137
4. hail of javelins: 161
5. imprisonment in a dark dungeon: 172

¹³ Ed. MILLER, *Manuelis Philae carmina* 1 (as footnote 10 above) 143–184 and D. SAMARA (ed.), *Ethopoia Dramatica* by Manuel *Philes*. Introduction, Critical Edition, English Translation, Commentary. *Hellenica*, 112. Alessandria 2024 (F 1). See KUBINA, *Die enkomiaistische Dichtung* (as footnote 10 above) 44–46. For the dialogical character of various poems by *Philes* and the debate on the genre to which they belong, see *ibid.* 44 (footnote 54). On John Kantakouzenos see *PLP* 10973.

¹⁴ Ed. MILLER, *Manuelis Philae carmina* 1 (as footnote 10 above) 419–430 (F 215).

¹⁵ Ed. E. MILLER, *Manuelis Philae carmina*, 2. Paris 1857 (repr. Amsterdam 1967), 400–405 (App. 39).

¹⁶ See also A.M. IERACI BIO, *Il dialogo nella letteratura tardoantica e bizantina*, in A. Garzya (a cura di), *Spirito e forme nella letteratura bizantina. Quaderni dell’Accademia Pontaniana*, 47. Napoli 2006, 21–45.

- 6. lashed to the ground, stretched supine, with a heavy stone on his chest: 185–187
- 7. wheel: 193
- 8. thrown into a pit with quicklime: 225
- 9. made to drink poison: 229–233
- 10. shod with iron sandals: 234
- 11. imprisoned in fetters: 236–238

Then, from lines 242–264, which the angel addresses to the martyr and in which the future tense predominates, one forms the impression that the reading will continue with the narration of the specific torments to which the saint will be subjected and of the miracles which he will perform during them:

- 12. resurrection of a dead man: 247
- 13. resurrection of a dead ox: 254
- 14. extinguishing, by means of a heaven-sent dew, the fire broiling him as he lay tied to an iron bed: 255–260
- 15. molten lead poured into his mouth: 261–262
- 16. again a stone on the chest: 263–264

Finally, in the closing lines of the poem (ll. 265–285) he himself speaks of six more tortures:

- 17. laceration on a wheel: 265–270
- 18. cast into a vat of molten lead: 271–277
- 19. beating with clubs: 278–279
- 20. fire burning the martyr's head: 280
- 21. destroying the idols with the sign of the cross 281–282
- 22. beheading, death and apotheosis: 283–285

If our proposed distinction between the trials that appear to have been read out previously and those that will seemingly be read out presently is valid, then the fact that each group contains the same number (11) of tortures suggests that the reading of the Martyrdom is at its midway point and these lines by Philes are a highly original preface to the second part.

3 The reference text

The kind of tortures the saint was put to, the order in which they are mentioned in the poem, and the use of certain characteristic phrases permit us to identify the text which was to be read out after the recitation of Philes' metrical Preface. In all

likelihood this was the homily of Theodore Daphnopates (10th c.) – the longest of those surviving.¹⁷

One tell-tale indication, for example, is the evident derivation of lines 22–33 in Philes’ poem from the corresponding passage in the text of Theodore Daphnopates, where the emperor’s nephew is questioning the martyr.

Magentius to the martyr:

Ὡ τίς πόθεν σύ, τίς δέ σοι κλησὶς, λέγε·
τίς ἡ θρασύτης; πάντα γὰρ μαθεῖν θέλω.

Cf. Theodore Daphnopates, *Martyrdom* 62, 23–25 Krumbacher:

τούτων ἡδέως ἅμα καὶ γενναίως ὑπαγορευθέντων τῷ μάρτυρι, ἀτενίσας αὐτῷ Μαγνέντιος ἔφη· “Τί σου τὸ ὄνομα; καὶ πῶς ἐπὶ τοσοῦτον προήχθης θρασύτης, ὥστε μετὰ τοσαύτης τόλμης τῷ φοβερῷ τούτῳ βήματι σαυτὸν ἐπιδοῦναι;”

The saint’s bold response follows swiftly and unhesitatingly:

The martyr to Magentius:

Χριστιανὸς μὲν εἰμι καὶ Θεοῦ λάτρης,
25 οὐ τῇ προνοίᾳ πᾶσα συνέστη κτίσις,
ἐμοὶ δὲ πατρίς τῆς Ἑδῆς τὸ χωρίον,
κἂν ὁ προπάτωρ ἦψατο πρὶν τοῦ ξύλου.
Γεώργιός μοι κλησὶς ἀψευδестаτή·
τὰς γὰρ ἀκάνθας τῶν πονηρῶν δογμάτων
30 καὶ τῶν καθ’ ἡμῶν δυσσεβῶν θρησκευμάτων
ἀνεσπακῶς μὲν ριζόθεν τῆς καρδίας,
ἐδεξάμην γόνιμον ἄφθορον σπόρον,
ὅς ἐστι Χριστός, τοῦ Θεοῦ πατρὸς Λόγος

These lines seem drawn directly from the *Martyrdom* composed by Theodore Daphnopates (62, 25–30 Krumbacher):

ὁ ἅγιος Γεώργιος εἶπεν· “Ἐμοὶ τὸ μὲν πρῶτον καὶ τιμιώτατον ὄνομα Χριστιανὸς καὶ Χριστοῦ δοῦλος καὶ τούτῳ πλέον ἐγκαλλωπίζομαι ἢ ἄλλος τῷ τῆς βασιλείας ὀνόματι, τὸ δ’ ἀπὸ γενέσεως φημισθὲν Γεώργιος τοῦ θεοῦ μου κἀνταῦθα οὕτως οἰκονομήσαντος· δεῖ γάρ με τὰ τῆς ἀθέου τῶν εἰδώλων πλάνης ζιζάνια πονηρὰ τῶν ἀνθρωπίνων ἐκτίλαντα καρδιῶν τὴν γονιμωτάτην

17 «Μαρτύριον τοῦ ἁγίου καὶ ἐνδόξου μεγαλομάρτυρος Γεωργίου συγγραφὲν παρὰ Θεοδώρου μαγίστρου τοῦ Δαφνοπάτου», ed. KRUMBACHER, *Der heilige Georg* (as footnote 7 above) 59–77 (BHG 673/674), cf. *ibid.*, 174–180. More specifically for Daphnopates’ sources, see 177–179.

ἐμφυτεῦσαι γνώσιν τοῦ τῶν πάντων δημιουργοῦ, ὅς ἐστι πατήρ καὶ υἱός καὶ ἅγιον πνεῦμα κ.λπ.

There are also other points later in the text where the connection is equally apparent, for example in lines 45–48 compared to the corresponding passage in Daphnopolates:

45 Μαγνέντιος πρὸς ταῦτα κλείσας τὸ στόμα
καθῆστο σιγῶν οὐ βραχύν τινα χρόνον
(τοὺς γὰρ λόγους πέποιθε μυστικωτέρους,
ἀντιλέγειν ἤκιστα πρὸς τοῦτοις ἔχων),

Cf. Theodore Daphnopolates, *Martyrdom* 62, 39 – 63, 1 Krumbacher:

τούτων ῥηθέντων ὑπὸ τοῦ μάρτυρος, Μαγνέντιος μὲν τοῖς λόγοις ἐμβροντηθεὶς καὶ τὸ πρόσωπον ἐντροπῇ καλυψάμενος καθῆστο τῇ ἀφωνίᾳ πεπεδημένος. πῶς γὰρ καὶ ἔσχυσε τοῦ ψεύδους ὧν λατρευτῆς πρὸς ἀληθείας θεραπευτὴν ἀντιφθέγγασθαι;

Another sign indicating that Philes drew on Daphnopolates is the fact that two of the episodes mentioned in this poem exist only in Daphnopolates' text. These are: 1) the quenching of the fire by a divine dewfall when the martyr was put to the torture of the fiery iron bedstead (255–260) and 2) the pouring of molten lead into his mouth (261–262).¹⁸ Furthermore, two episodes in the poem are repeats of earlier tortures: the stone around the martyr's neck in lines 263–264 (and earlier in lines 185–187) and the brazen wheel in lines 265–270 (and earlier in lines 193–195); precisely the same repetition occurs in Daphnopolates' text.¹⁹

4 Vocabulary

Philes' poem is also very interesting from the point of view of the vocabulary used, which includes 9 *athesaurista* and 8 rare words:

^ο = *athesaurista* * = rare words

^οαἰσχροβουλία, ἡ 6

*γλυπτόμορφος 59

¹⁸ Ed. KRUMBACHER, *Der heilige Georg* (as footnote 7 above) 71, 5–24. Cf. *ibid.*, 176.

¹⁹ For the torture of the stone around the neck see Theodore Daphnopolates, *Martyrdom* 64, 11–22 and 71, 25–29 KRUMBACHER. For the torture of the wheel, see *ibid.*, 64, 23 – 65, 22 and 71, 30 – 72, 28. Cf. also *ibid.*, 178.

*γοητίας, ὁ 161. 226
 *εἰδωλοθυτέω 60
 *ἐξαναζέω 227
 °κρεωλύτης 273
 *λεβητοχάρων 272
 °λεσχολεκτέω 58
 °μυσόμυθος 107
 °πανθρήνητος 244
 °πανθρύλλητος 243
 *προσυλία 95
 *τρυφητίας 272
 °φιλοξόανος 6
 °φλυκτιδουργός 227
 *χριστομανής 9
 °χρυσοπαστόπατος 75

5 Metrics

Of the poem's 285 lines, 204 have a caesura after the fifth syllable (= 71.6%) and 81 after the seventh (= 28.4%).

The first half-line with caesura after the fifth syllable is a) oxytonic in 85 lines (41.7%), b) paroxytonic in 112 lines (= 54.9%), and c) proparoxytonic in 7 lines (= 3.4%).

Where the caesura comes after the seventh syllable the first half-line is a) proparoxytonic in 70 cases (= 86.4%) and b) paroxytonic in 11 (= 13.6%).

In terms of prosody, we identified a single fault: in line 152 the eleventh syllable (the penultimate of the word μολύβδου) is long. In all probability the word μόλυβδος was considered a *terminus technicus* and therefore beyond the scope of prosodic rules.

Finally, it is worth noting that some short segments of Philes' poem, e.g. lines 120–127, 196–199, could also serve as captions for painted representations or manuscript illuminations depicting scenes from the martyrdom of the saint, although it is quite clear from the poem's last line that it was written for another purpose.

Reading Philes' work attentively we come to the realisation that he is not a tedious, uninspired, self-repeating poet (although at times he can be), but one who not infrequently proves to be remarkably inventive, a poet who does not hesitate to experiment, as in this particular case, where a poem written as a metrical

Preface could in the right circumstances serve as the script for a theatrical performance.²⁰

20 On the possibility of using a 9th-century poem with roughly similar characteristics in a school performance, see Speck's interesting observations: P. SPECK, Ignatios Diakonos, Στίχοι εἰς τὸν Ἀδάμ. Eine Aufführung zur Abschlußfeier. *Bsl* 56 (1995) 353–357. These are not shared by Lauxtermann, who “with some hesitation” proposes something equally interesting (p. 86): “I suggest reading the poem as the textual equivalent to a series of episodic images”. See M.D. LAUXTERMANN, Byzantine Poetry from Pisides to Geometres. Texts and Contexts, 2. *WBS*, 24/2. Wien 2019, 83–87 (with further bibliography). The length of some segments of Philes' poem, however, and its characteristic closing words addressed to the priest (σὺ δ' ἐπευλόγει θύτα) unfortunately preclude our entertaining such a use for this poem.

Text & Translation

f. 227r

**Στίχοι Μανουήλ τοῦ Φιλῆ
συνεδριάζοντος τοῦ ἁγίου μεγαλομάρτυρος Γεωργίου
<μετὰ τοῦ βασιλέως> ἔχοντος καὶ τοὺς ὑπ' αὐτόν**

<Ἀφηγητής> Ὡ τῶν παλαιῶν φαυλότης βασιλέων,
ὦ τῶν τυράννων ἀκρότης κακεργάτις,
θυμοῦ λεόντων ἀκρατῶς πεπλησμένε,
τολμηρὲ λυσσόδηκτε δεινὲ σκορπίε,
5 τίς ἢ κατασχοῦσα σε χριστομαχία;
τίς ἢ φιλοξόανος αἰσχροβουλία;
τίς ἢ τοσαύτη τῶν φρενῶν ἀβλεψία;
τίς ἢ περὶ σὲ δυσσεβεστάτη πλάνη;
τίς ἢ κατὰ σὲ χριστομανῆς φατρία;
10 Βέβηλε, παῦε τῶν κακῶν βουλευμάτων,
αἵσχιστε, θραῦε τῆς ψυχῆς σου τοὺς δόλους,
δέδιθι τὴν μέλλουσαν ὀψέ γουν κρίσιν,
τὴν τοῦ Θεοῦ γνῶριζε μακροθυμίαν
καὶ πηλὸς ὦν μάνθανε τὸν κεραμέα,
15 μήπως ἀπιστῶν συντριβῆς σκεύους δίκην
ἐξ ἀδοκίμου χώματος πεπλασμένου·
δεῖ γὰρ πεπεῖσθαι τοῦ προφήτου τοῖς λόγοις
ὥς ἐξ ἁγίου Πνεύματος λαλουμένοις.
Ὡ πῦρ πνεύσεως εὐσεβοῦς γλώσσης τότε,
20 πῶς τοῖς ἔσωθεν βράσμασι στομουμένη
τὴν ἐκτὸς ἐξέκοπτεν εὐθαρσῶς μάχην.

Ὁ Μαγνέντιος πρὸς τὸν μάρτυρα·

Ὡ τίς πόθεν σύ, τίς δέ σοι κλῆσις, λέγε·
τίς ἢ θρασύτης; πάντα γὰρ μαθεῖν θέλω.

14–17 Ps. 2,9 ὡς σκεῦος κεραμέως συντρίψεις αὐτούς

V = Vat. Ott. gr. 213, s. XIV, f. 227r–230r

tit. μετὰ τοῦ βασιλέως addidi: om. V ante v. 1 <Ἀφηγητής> addidi: om. V 2 τῶν s.l. V κακεργάτης V 8 δυσσεβεστάτη V 12 δέδηθι V ὀψέ γουν sic V: servavi 20 τοῖς scripsi: τὸ V

**Lines by Manuel Philes on the great martyr Saint George
appearing before a council with the king
attended by his underlings**

<Narrator:> O turpitude of ancient emperors,
 O miscreant zenith of tyranny,
 insatiably full of a lion's rage,
 bold and fearsome, rabid scorpion,
 5 how much hatred for Christ possesses you?
 What evil faith that venerates idols?
 How great the blindness of your blinkered mind?
 What ungodly error possesses you?
 To what Christ-hostile faction do you belong?
 10 Unhallowed soul, cease your malevolence,
 evil man, drop your mischievous designs,
 fear the day of judgement that will come,
 know the great forbearance of the Lord
 and as you are of clay learn who is the potter
 15 lest you be shattered in your unbelief
 like a pot made from the wrong sort of earth.
 Believe, therefore, the words of the prophet,
 for they were spoken by the Holy Ghost.
 What a pious tongue that breathed fire then,
 20 what strength he gained from that inner ardour
 that with courage dispelled the outer strife!

Magnentius to the martyr:

Tell me who you are, your name and whence you come,
 how you have such nerve. I want to know it all.

Ὁ μάρτυς τῷ Μαγνεντίῳ·

- Χριστιανὸς μὲν εἰμι καὶ Θεοῦ λάτρης,
 25 οὗ τῇ προνοίᾳ πᾶσα συνέστη κτίσις,
 ἐμοὶ δὲ πατρίς τῆς Ἑδὲμ τὸ χωρίον,
 κἂν ὁ προπάτωρ ἤψατο πρὶν τοῦ ξύλου.
 Γεώργιός μοι κλῆσις ἀψευδεστάτη· |
 f. 227v τὰς γὰρ ἀκάνθας τῶν πονηρῶν δογμάτων
 30 καὶ τῶν καθ' ἡμῶν δυσσεβῶν θρησκευμάτων
 ἀνεσπακῶς μὲν ριζόθεν τῆς καρδίας,
 ἐδεξάμην γόνιμον ἄφθορον σπόρον,
 ὃς ἐστὶ Χριστός, τοῦ Θεοῦ πατὴρ Λόγος,
 τεχθεὶς ἀφράστως πατρόθεν πρὸ τῶν χρόνων,
 35 ὁφθεὶς ἀνάνδρως μητρόθεν, πλὴν ἐν χρόνῳ,
 καὶ γῆθεν ἄρας τῶν βροτῶν τὴν οὐσίαν
 παρασυρεῖσαν εἰς τὸ νέρτερον σκότος
 ἐχθροῦ ψιθύρου συριγμῶ κακοτρόπῳ.
 Τῶν γοῦν ξοάνων τὴν ἀναίσθητον φύσιν
 40 τὴν τῶν ἀπίστων μορμολύττουσαν φρένα
 λέσχην νομίζω καὶ λιθόξεστον πλάσιν,
 λίθων δὲ χεῖρους μᾶλλον ὑποληπτέον
 τοὺς ἀψύχοις νέμοντας ἄχαρον χάριν
 καὶ τῇ βδελυρᾷ προστετηκότας πλάνην.

- <Ἀφηγητής> 45 Μαγνέντιος πρὸς ταῦτα κλείσας τὸ στόμα
 καθῆστο σιγῶν οὐ βραχύν τινα χρόνον
 (τοὺς γὰρ λόγους πέποιθε μυστικωτέρους,
 ἀντιλέγειν ἥκιστα πρὸς τούτοις ἔχων),
 πλὴν ἄλλ' ἀνοίγει τοῦ στόματος τὰς πύλας
 50 ὁ δυσσεβὴς τύραννος ἐξ ἀντιστρόφου.

Ὁ Διοκλητιανὸς πρὸς τὸν μάρτυρα·

Ἐγὼ θεωρῶ σώματος ξένην πλάσιν
 καὶ βλέμμα γοργὸν καὶ μελῶν εὐρυθμίαν
 καὶ φείδομαί σου τῆς καλῆς ἡλικίας·
 οὐ βούλομαί σε τεθνάναι τρισαθλίως,

25 κτίσις V 27 προπάτωρ V 31 ἀνεσπακῶς μὲν scripsi: ἀνεσπακόμην V (vox nihili quod metro obstat) 32 γόνιμον V 44 βδελυρᾷ a. corr.: βδελλυρᾷ p. corr. V (contra metrum) ante v. 45 <Ἀφηγητής> addidi: om. V 46 καθίστο V 47 πέπειθε μυστηκοτέρους V 54 τεθνάναι V

The martyr to Magnentius:

I am a Christian and I worship God,
 25 by whose providence all was created;
 my birthplace is the land of Eden, though
 my forefather once reached out to the tree.
 George is in very truth my name, because
 the thorns of base and evil doctrines and
 30 ungodly faith that turn against us
 I have uprooted wholly from my heart
 and welcomed the undying fruitful seed,
 which is Christ, the Word of God the Father,
 ineffably begotten before all time and
 35 born of a virgin mother within time,
 who raised on high man's mortal nature
 from the deep darkness whither it was dragged
 by the malicious hissing of the deceiver.
 The insensate nature of the idols
 40 that terrifies the mind of the heathen
 is to me a nonsense, objects carved from stone,
 the idols lesser even than the stones
 that lend graceless grace to the inanimate
 and adhere to an abhorrent fallacy.

<Narrator:> 45 Hearing this Magnentius, dumbfounded,
 sat silent, but not for very long,
 for these words were mysterious to him
 and he had no power to refute them.
 But from the other side the impious king
 50 then opened wide the portals of his mouth.

Diocletian to the martyr:

I see your splendid stature and physique,
 your lively gaze, the harmony of your limbs,
 and I feel sorry for that loveliness.
 I do not want you to die a gruesome death,

- 55 ὃν χρηὶ τὸν ἡδὺν μᾶλλον ἀθρεῖν φωσφόρον
ὥς χαρίτων ἀντικρυς εἰκονουργίαν.
Σὺ δ' ἄλλ' ἑάσας τοὺς μακροὺς τούτους λόγους,
οὓς λεσχολεκτεῖς ἐξ ἀνηνύτου θράσους,
τοὺς γλυπτομόρφους τῶν θεῶν τίμα τύπους·
- 60 εἰδωλοθυτεῖν εὐλαβῶς μὴ διστάσης,
βωμοῖς προσέρχου, χαῖρε ταῖς βουθυσίαις·
ἀθάνατον νόμιζε τὸν παῖδα Κρόνου,
τὴν Ἄρτεμιν κήρυττε σεμνὴν παρθένον,
κυνηγέτιν μᾶλλον δὲ καὶ θηροκτόνον·
- 65 τὴν Ἥραν ἴσθι τὴν σοφὴν Εἰμαρμένην,
Ἑριννύας Μούσας τε, κλεινάς Γοργόνας
καὶ τὰς ἐφεξῆς τῶν θεῶν ὁμηγύρεις,
ὧν τῷ παναλκεῖ βελτιούμεθα κράτει
φῶς ἡλίου βλέποντες ἡμεροσκόπου.
- 70 Πίπτων κατὰ γῆς εὐνοϊκῶς προσκύνει·
καὶ γὰρ πέπεισμαι τῶν θεῶν τούτων χάριν
τὴν κοσμικὴν σύστασιν ἐντελῇ μένειν.
Εἰ γοῦν παράσχῃς τήνδε μοι σὺ τὴν χάριν,
βασιλικῷ σε δεξιῶσομαι κλέει
- 75 καὶ χρυσοπαστόπατον ἰχνεύσεις δόμον,
εἰς ὃν μόνοι στεῖβουσιν ἀνάκτων πόδες.
Εἰ δ' οὐ θελήσῃς τοῖς ἑμοῖς θεοῖς θύσαι,
καταξανῶ σε τοῖς πικροῖς ἀθρεμβόλοις,
ἃ χεῖρες ὠργάνωσαν ἀνδρῶν τεκτόνων
- 80 πρὸ τοῦ πυλῶνος τῶν ἐμῶν ἀνακτόρων.

Ὁ μάρτυς τῷ Διοκλητιανῷ· |

- f. 228r Σὺ μέν, βασιλεῦ, κἂν δοκῆς φρονεῖν μέγα,
πλὴν ἀδοκίμους καὶ σαθροὺς φθέγγῃ λόγους,
παροιμιακὸν ἐν φρεσὶν κινῶν κάλων·
τοὺς γὰρ στυγητοὺς, οὓς κακῶς πλέκεις, δόλους
- 85 προφητικοῖς ὄμμασι Δαυὶδ προβλέπων

83 cf. Georg. Cyp. Mosqu. 2.27, 5.5; Macar. 7,4 et al. 85–86 cf. Ps. 118,85 διηγῆσαντό μοι
παράνομοι ἀδολεσχίας

55 ἡδὺν scripsi: ἰδεῖν V 57 σύ δ' (sic) V: m.c. servavi 60 εἰδωλοθυτεῖν et δυστάσης V
64 μᾶλλον V 65 ἥραν V 67 ἐφ' ἐξῆς V 68 βερτιούμεθα (sic) V 69 βλέποντος V 77 θελήσεις
et θύσαι V 79 ὠργάνωσαν V 83 παροιμιακῶν V

- 55 you who should rather see the sweet sunshine
as a real image of the graces.
Come now, abandon all that foolish talk,
the idle words said in futile impudence,
and honour the carven idols of the gods.
- 60 Fear not to offer pious sacrifices,
approach their altars, savour the offerings of oxen.
Believe that the son of Cronos is immortal,
proclaim Artemis a maiden pure
but more a huntress, slayer of wild beasts.
- 65 Know Hera, the wise Eimarmene,
the Furies, the Muses, the famous Gorgons,
and the continual forgatherings of the gods,
through whose omnipotence we become better,
seeing the light of the sun, guardian of the day.
- 70 Fall to the ground and pay willing homage,
for I am persuaded that thanks to these gods
the world is maintained to perfection.
Do this for me, and I will reward you
with a royal office, and you shall walk
- 75 in a palace with carved golden floors,
trod upon only by kings. But should you
be unwilling to sacrifice to my gods,
I'll rend you limb from limb with artfully
fashioned instruments of torture
- 80 before the main gate of my palace.

The martyr to Diocletian:

- You, king, appear to be high-minded,
yet unsound and unbefitting are your words,
testing in your mind all means, as the proverb says.
The hateful mischiefs you unseemly spin,
- 85 David had foretold and with prophetic eye

- παρανόμων ἔκρινεν ἀδολεσχίας.
 Τί γοῦν θρασύνῃ, τί δὲ θωπεύῃ μάτην;
 Ὅρᾳς τὸ σῶμα· τοῦτο μαραίνει χρόνος
 καὶ σῆς δαπανᾷ καὶ μεταλλάττει φθίσις·
 90 ναὶ τοῦτο βασάνιζε, ναὶ τοῦτο θλίβε
 καὶ τῆς ψυχῆς τὸ κάλλος ἀγλάϊζε μοι.
 Θεοῖς μυσαρῶς οὐκέτι προσανέχω,
 θεοῖς ἀλάλοις οὐ κλίνω τὸν αὐχένα·
 τί μοι τὰ παράδοξα τοῦ ῥευστοῦ βίου,
 95 τί μοι τὰ λαμπρὰ τῆς κάτω προσυλίας
 ἄλλοις ἀπ' ἄλλων προσγεῶν πεφυκότα;
 Πλὴν ἀλλ' ἐπεὶ μοι τοὺς θεοὺς παρεισάγεις,
 πῶς τοὺς ἔρωτας τοῦ Διὸς παρατρέχεις,
 πῶς τὰς ἐρώσας ὀργιάζεις παρθένους,
 100 πῶς Ἀρτέμιδος οὐ προτείνεις τὸν γάμον,
 πῶς Ἀφροδίτης οὐ βδελύττει τὸν τόκον;
 Ἐὼ τὰ χεῖρω τῶν θεῶν σου πρακτέα,
 μήπως μολυνθῶ σύρφακας δρῶν τοὺς λόγους.
 Εἰ ταῦτα δῆλα, φεῦγε τὴν μοχθηρίαν·
 105 εἰ δ' οὐκ ἀληθῇ, μὴ καταγίνωσκέ μου·
 τοὺς γὰρ ματαίους οὐ προσίεμαι πλάνους
 καὶ τοὺς γραῶδεις ἐκ ψυχῆς μυσομύθους
 καὶ τοὺς γελοίους σοὺς ἀποπτύω λόγους.
 Πρὸς ταῦθ' ὃ βούλει πράττε νωθρείας ἄτερ·
 110 οὐ γάρ με πείσεις· τοῦτο τοῦ λόγου πέρας.

Ὁ Διοκλητιανὸς πρὸς τοὺς δημίους·

- Ὡ ποῦ τὸ λάχος τῆς ἐμῆς τυραννίδος;
 ὦ ποῦ ποτ' ἐστέ, βασάνων ὑπηρέται;
 Τὸν ἄνδρα τοῦτον συλλαβόντες ἀθρόον
 ὡς ἀντίπαλον τῶν ἐμῶν σεβασμάτων,
 115 ἀντίθετον δὲ τῶν Διὸς θεσπισμάτων,
 ἐν ὀρθίῳ τείνατε ληστρικῶς ξύλῳ·
 γνώμην γάρ, ὡς ἔοικεν, αὐχεῖ καμπύλην,
 δι' ἧς θεαινῶν κερτομεῖ ξυναυλίας
 καὶ τῶν θεῶν μου τὴν ἀθάνατον φύσιν.

107 cf. 1 Tim. 4,7 γραῶδεις μύθους

called them foolish pratings of the wicked.
 Why, then, this rashness, why flatter me in vain?
 You see the body: time will wither it,
 old age deform it and worms devour it.
 90 Torture it, then, yes, rend and butcher it,
 and glorify the beauty of my soul.
 I shall not prostrate myself to an unclean god,
 to wordless gods I shall not bend the head.
 What avail the turns and chances of this fluid life,
 95 what use to me fine worldly goods that by
 their nature smile now on one, now another?
 But since you recommend to me your gods,
 how do you overlook the loves of Zeus,
 worship the girls who fell in love with him,
 100 disregard the marriage of Artemis?
 How not abhor the son of Aphrodite?
 The worst actions of your gods I leave out,
 for fear of besmirchment and wasted words.
 If they are patent, avoid the wrong;
 105 if they are untrue, do not censure me
 for loathing those vain, deceptive and
 repulsive myths, tales told by old women;
 and for despising your foolish prattle.
 For what I say, do as you wish without delay;
 110 you shall not sway me: I have no more to say.

Diocletian to the executioners:

Where is the people it befalls me to rule?
 Where are you who see to the tortures?
 Seize this man, arrest him at once,
 – him who is against all that I believe,
 115 who is against the laws of Jupiter –,
 and hang him like a thief upon a post.
 He holds, it seems, a perverted belief
 that mocks the dances of the goddesses
 and the immortal nature of my gods.

Ὁ μάρτυς εὐχόμενος·

120 Ὁ κλίμακα πρὶν Ἰακώβ ὄναρ βλέπων
εἰς οὐρανὸν κάτωθεν ἐστηριγμένην
τοῦ μαρτυρικοῦ μὴ φθονεῖτω μοι ξύλου·
καὶ γὰρ ἐν αὐτῷ προσπαγεῖς ὀρθοστάδην
εὐθὺς δραμοῦμαι πρὸς τὰ τοῦ πόλου πλάτη.

125 Προσχὼν σκοπεῖτω καὶ τὸ Χριστοῦ μοι πάθος·
τοῦ γὰρ τυραννοῦντος με νύττοντος βέλει,
καινὸν τελεῖται καὶ ξενάκουστον τέρας.

<Ἀφηγητής> Χριστοῦ μιμητὴν οὐκ ἀπέκτειναν πόνοι,
Χριστοῦ μιμητὴν οὐκ ἐλύπησε ξίφος·

130 εἰ δ' οὐκ ἀνεστόμωσε πηγὰς αἱμάτων, |
f. 228v εἰ δ' οὐχ' ὕδωρ ἤνεγκεν ἐκ τῶν ἐγκάτων,
πλὴν ἀπαλυνθὲν ὡς μόλυβδος ἐστράφη
πιστούμενον τὸ θαῦμα τοῦ μαρτυρίου·
σταυροῦ γὰρ οὖν πάρεστι κάνταῦθα τύπος.

Οἱ δῆμιοι πρὸς τὸν μάρτυρα·

135 Βούλει πρὸς ὕψος οὐρανῶν θάσσον τρέχειν;
Περιπαρῆναι τλῆθι τοὺς πόδας τέως
γόμφοις ἀπείροις ὀξυτάτοις ἐμπύροις.

Ὁ ἅγιος πρὸς τοὺς δημίους·

Δεῦρ' ἴτε λοιπόν· εὐτρεπεῖς γὰρ οἱ πόδες·
εἰ δὲ προσηλώσατε καὶ τὰς παλάμας,
140 ἡγησάμην ἂν τοὺς πόνους εὐεργέτας,
Χριστοῦ τὸ σεπτὸν ἐκμιμούμενος πάθος.
Εἰ<ς> γοῦν ἱκανὴν ἀρκέσει τιμωρίαν
ἢ τῶν ὀνύχων τῶν σιδηρῶν ὀξύτης.

Οἱ δῆμιοι πρὸς τὸν Διοκλητιανόν·

Ἡμεῖς μὲν ὄντες οἰκέται σου τοῦ κράτους
145 τοῖς σοῖς, βασιλεῦ, καθυπεύκομεν λόγοις·

120–21 Gen. 28,12 καὶ ἐνυπνιάσθη, καὶ ἰδοὺ κλίμαξ ἐστηριγμένη ἐν τῇ γῇ 127 ξενάκουστον τέρας: Niceph. Call. Xanthop. 16.1 (p. 341 Vassis); idem, *Miracula* S. Nicolai 247 (ed. Papadopoulos-Kerameus, Ἀνάλεκτα Ἱεροσολ. σταχυολ. IV, 361)

122 φθονήτω V ante v. 128 <Ἀφηγητής> addidi: om. V 134 οὖν scripsi: οὐ V 138 εὐτρεπεῖς V: correxi 142 εἰ V: correxi 144 σου τοῦ: an τοῦ σοῦ scribendum?

The martyr, praying:

- 120 Jacob, who saw a ladder in his dream
 that reached to heaven from the earth beneath,
 shall not envy me by means of martyrdom,
 for bound upon that upright post I shall
 at once mount into the celestial span.
 125 He may perceive as well the passion of the Christ,
 for as the slayer wounds me with his arrow
 there shall appear a wonderful new sign.

<Narrator:> The blade did not kill the imitator of Christ;
 nor was the imitator of Christ hurt by the sword,
 130 for if it did not cause the martyr's blood to flow,
 if it did not cause water to flow from his side,
 but softened like lead and bent and turned,
 attesting the miracle wrought at his trial,
 since the sign of the cross was present also there.

The executioners to the martyr:

- 135 You want to get to heaven faster?
 Suffer now the piercing of your feet
 with countless red-hot sharp-tipped nails.

The saint to the executioners:

- Go ahead, my feet are ready for that,
 and if you were to nail my hands as well
 140 I would count each pain a blessing,
 a reflection of Christ's suffering on the cross.
 Those pointed iron nails will, of course,
 be a sufficient punishment.

The executioners to Diocletian:

- We who are slaves of your authority
 145 and dutifully carry out your commands,

καὶ γὰρ τὸν ἄνδρα τουτονὶ τὸν αὐθάδη
 νεύροις βοῶν θλάσαντες, ὡς πρῶτως ἔφης,
 εἶτα προσηλώσαντες ὀρθίῳ ξύλῳ
 κεντῶμεν αἰχμῇ τὴν ἑαυτοῦ γαστέρα,
 150 σχεδὸν δοκοῦντες ὕδατος ρεῦσαι τρόπους
 τὴν ὕδατῶδη σύνθεσιν τῶν ἐγκάτων,
 ἀλλὰ στραφέντος τοῦ ξίφους ὡς μολύβδου
 ἔκπληξις ἡμᾶς εἶχε καὶ θάμβος μέγα.
 Γόητα γοῦν κρίναντες αὐτόν, ὡς θέμις,
 155 ἥλοις πυρίνοις ἐμπεδοῦμεν τοὺς πόδας,
 οὗτος δὲ πάντα καρτερῶς φέρων πόνον
 – ὦ θαῦμα καινόν – ἀβλαβῆς πάλιν μένει.
 Λοιπὰς βασάνους τοιγαροῦν δριμυτέρας
 σκέπτου, λογίζου τῶν θεῶν ἐχθροῦ χάριν.

Ὁ Διοκλητιανὸς πρὸς τοὺς δημίους·

160 Ἄνδρες τελεσταὶ τῶν ἐμῶν προσταγμάτων,
 ἀκοντίοις πλήξατε τὸν γοητίαν,
 ὅπως ῥαγείσης τῆς πνοῆς ἐκ τῆς βίας
 δεινῶς σπαραχθῇ καὶ νεκρωθῇ καὶ πέσῃ.

Ὁ μάρτυς πρὸς τὸν Διοκλητιανόν·

Ναὶ βάλλε, ναὶ λόγχευε, ναὶ τίτρωσκέ με.
 165 Χριστῷ πεποιθὼς, ἡσβολωμένε δράκον,
 καὶ τῇ πρὸς αὐτὸν ἐλπίδι πεφραγμένος
 τροπώσομαί σου τὸ κράτος κατακράτος·
 τὰς γὰρ βολὰς σου καὶ τὰ τοξεύματά σου
 βολὰς ἀδρανεῖς εὐτελῶν βρεφῶν κρίνω.

Ὁ Μαγνέντιος πρὸς τὸν βασιλέα·

170 Ἐπεὶ τοσαύτας βασάνους τετευχότες
 οὐ πείθομεν τὸν ἄνδρα, μὴ κάμνε πλέον,
 φρουρᾷ δὲ καθείργνυε πάντῃ νυκτέρῳ,

165 Prosuch, In s. Mariam Aegypt. 307 (p. 44 Treu): ἡσβολωμένε δράκον 168–69 cf. Ps. 63,8 βέλος νηπίων ἐγενήθησαν αἱ πληγαὶ αὐτῶν; Const. Meliten., De process. s. spir. PG 141, 1185A 8–9: βρεφῶν τρώσεις λογισάμενοι τὰς τούτου βολὰς

147 νεῦροις V 165 πεπειθὼς V ἡσβολωμένε V δράκων V 167 κατακράτως V 168 βουλὰς V: m.c. correxi 169 βουλὰς V: sensu gratia correxi 170 τετευκότες V 171 πείθομαι V

this stubborn stiff-necked man we have beaten
 with bull-whips, as you bade us first of all,
 then we bound him to an upright post
 and stabbed him in the belly with a sword,
 150 thinking to see pour forth as water flows
 the mingled contents of his guts,
 but when the sword blade bent like lead,
 awe and amazement overpowered us.
 Taking him, then, naturally, for a sorcerer,
 155 we pounded red-hot nails into his feet,
 but he abided every torture patiently
 and wondrously remained unscathed.
 But harsher tortures still you should devise
 against this adversary of the gods.

Diocletian to the executioners:

160 You men who carry out my commands,
 rain your javelins upon this trickster,
 a violent assault to cut him down
 and bring him to a sure and painful death.

The martyr to Diocletian:

 Yes, beat me, wound me, pierce me with the lance.
 165 Having faith in Christ, soot-covered dragon,
 and armoured with my hope in Him
 I will crush your power absolutely,
 because your blows, your blades and arrows,
 I hold them weak and impotent as babes.

Magnentius to the king:

170 Since we have applied so many tortures
 without effect, do not trouble with more
 but place him in a dungeon, deep and dark,

καλοῖς καταψῶν ἐξεπίτηδες λόγοις·
 ἴσως μαλαχθεῖς ὑποκύψει τῇ βίᾳ
 175 καὶ τῶν ἐπ' αὐτῇ παύσεται πονημάτων.

Ὁ ἅγιος εὐχόμενος ἐν τῇ φυλακῇ· |
 f. 229r Ὁ τὸν προφήτην Δανιὴλ σῶσας πάλαι
 λάκκου ζοφώδους καὶ λεόντων ἀγρίων
 ὁρῶν ὑπὲρ σοῦ, δέσποτα, πάσχοντά με
 τῇ μυστικῇ σου φαίδρυνον φρυκτωρίᾳ
 180 φρουρᾶς τὸ βαθὺ διαλυοῦση σκότος.

Ὁ Διοκλητιανὸς πρὸς τὸν ἅγιον·
 Ἄρα συνῆκας τῶν ἐμῶν κελευσμάτων
 ἢ σχετλιάζεις τοὺς θεοὺς, τλήμον, πάλιν;

Ὁ ἅγιος τῷ Διοκλητιανῷ·
 Ἦκιστα πείσεις· τοιγαροῦν κόλαζέ με·
 ζῶντος θεοῦ γάρ εἰμι πιστὸς οἰκέτης.

Ὁ Διοκλητιανὸς πρὸς τοὺς δημίους·
 185 Βρόχοις σταθήτω κατὰ γῆς ἐρραγμένοις
 ὁ Γότθος οὗτος, ἄνδρες ὑπερωμίαι,
 λίθος δέ τις δύσοιστος αὐτὸν θραυσάτω·
 ψυχὴν γὰρ ἀτέραμνον ἐνδοθεν φέρων
 λίθους κυκλήσκει τοὺς θεοὺς ὡς ἀψύχους.
 190 Εἰ δ' οὐχ' ὑπεῖξει τῷ βάρει τοῦ φορτίου,
 τροχηλατεῖσθω κυκλικῶς τὸ σαρκίον,
 ὃ καὶν ἀπέδρα τῶν προλαβόντων ἄθλων,
 τὴν <τοῦ> τροχοῦ γοῦν οὐ φύγη τιμωρίαν·
 ῥυήσεται γὰρ τοῦ κυλίνδρου τῷ δρόμῳ
 195 καὶ τοῖς ὑπ' αὐτὸν ἰδρυθεῖσι κεντρίοις.

Ὁ ἅγιος εὐχόμενος·
 Ἰεζεκιὴλ ὁ τροχοὺς ζῶντας βλέπων

176–77 Dan. 6,17–23 196–97 Ez. 1,15–24 196–99 cf. Theod. Prodróm., Tetrast. in S. Georgium LVII (II p. 298 Miller)

179 φρυκτωρία V 180 διαλυοῦση (sc. φρυκτωρία) scripsi: διαλυούσης V 182 τλήμων V
 187 δύσοιστος V 189 κυκλήσκει V 193 τοῦ addidi τροχοῦ Vpc: τροοῦ Vac 194 ῥυήσεται V

coaxing him with soft and well-directed words.
 Maybe he will soften and submit to you,
 175 ceasing his resistance to your power.

The saint, in prison, prays:

You who once released the prophet Daniel
 from the dark prison of the lions' den,
 seeing me, Lord, now suffering for your sake,
 shed upon me that mystic light of yours
 180 which dissolves the darkness of the dungeon.

Diocletian to the saint:

Well, then, have you understood my orders,
 wretch, or do you still criticise the gods?

The saint to Diocletian:

You'll not persuade me, torture me how you will.
 I am a faithful servant of a living God.

Diocletian to the executioners:

185 Bind this Goth's arms with rope, tall fellows,
 and cast him down upon the ground. A great stone
 place upon his chest to crush him with its weight,
 because he has within him an unbending soul,
 and he calls my gods inanimate stones.
 190 And should he not be crushed by that great weight,
 then let his frame be placed upon the wheel,
 for even if nothing else could touch him,
 'tis certain he'll not survive the wheel,
 because he'll bleed to death from its rotation
 195 and from the spear-points studding the device.

The saint, praying:

May Ezekiel, who saw living wheels

θαυμαζέτω μὲν τῶν πτερύγων τὸν ψόφον,
 πρὸς τὸν τροχόν δε τοῦτον ἐντραιζέτω
 καὶ τοῦ κροτάλου τὸν κρότον γνωρίζετω.

Ὁ ἄγγελος πρὸς τὸν μάρτυρα·

- 200 Θάρσει, πολύτλα, χαῖρε τῆς εὐψυχίας·
 τῶν οὐρανῶν μέχρις γὰρ ὁ κτύπος φθάσας,
 πρὸς τῶν τυράννων τοῦ τροχοῦ κινουμένου,
 τὰς ἀκοὰς μὲν εἰσέδου τοῦ δεσπότης
 καὶ πᾶσαν ἐξέπληξε τάξιν ἀγγέλων.
 205 Ἐγὼ δὲ πεμφθεὶς ὧδε μαθεῖν τὸ δράμα
 λύω τὰ δεσμὰ καὶ τὸ σῶμα ῥωννύω
 καὶ καταφιλῶ τῶν μελῶν σου τὰς ξέσεις.
 Ἴσχυε τοίνυν· ἐπλάκη γὰρ τὸ στέφος,
 ἐν ᾧ σε Χριστὸς φαιδρυνεῖ μετὰ τέλος.

Ἡ Ἀλεξάνδρα·

- 210 Τὸν εὐσεβείας ἀκριβέστατον λάτρην
 καὶ δυσσεβείας ἀνδρικὸν καθαιρέτην
 ζηλοῦσα κάγω τῶν ἀμετρήτων πόνων
 πρόσσεμι Χριστῷ τῷ βασιλεῖ τῶν ὅλων.
 Οὐ πλοῦτον αἰτῶ – χαιρέτω πλοῦτος πλάνος –,
 215 οὐ χρυσόν, οὐκ ἄργυρον, οὐ λαμπροὺς λίθους,
 οὐ βασιλείας ὕψος, οὐ κράτος μέγα·
 πρὸς τὴν ἄνω γὰρ καὶ μένουσαν ἀξίαν
 οὐδὲν νομίζω πάντα τὸν κάτω βίον.
 Ὅλλοιτο λοιπὸν σύμπας Ἑλλήνων ὕθλος
 220 καὶ τῶν ξοάνων ἢ κατάπτυστος φύσις.

Ὁ Μαγνέντιος πρὸς τὴν Ἀλεξάνδραν·

- Ἄνασσα, τίς σου τὰς φρένας ἐκεκλόφει;
 τί δρᾷς ἂ μὴ χρή, λοιδοροῦσα τὸ κράτος; |
 f. 229v φεῦ, τί πέπονθας; πῶς ὅλη παρετράπη;
 μὴ παρεσύρης τῇ Γεωργίου πλάνη;
 225 Βόθρος τὸ λοιπὸν τιτάνων πεπλησμένος
 εἰσδέξεται τὸν ἄνδρα τὸν γοητίαν,

and was awed by the noise of the wings,
 may he see now this other wheel
 and learn the sound of its rattle.

The angel to the martyr:

- 200 Take courage, poor soul, and bravo spirit!
 The thumping that rises up to heaven
 from the wheel turned by your torturers
 has reached the ears of the Lord and filled
 with amazement the angelic hosts.
- 205 And I, who am sent to learn what is happening,
 now undo your bonds, strengthen your body,
 and bathe with kisses the wounds on your limbs.
 Be restored, for the crown already waits
 with which Christ shall glorify you at the end.

Alexandra:

- 210 Of this true devotee of godliness
 and warrior who routs impiety
 I envy the immeasurable trials
 and draw near to Christ, the king of all.
 Riches I seek not – farewell to those snares –,
- 215 nor gold, nor silver, nor sparkling gems,
 nor queen's crown, nor power and high office:
 before the celestial and imperishable
 I reckon as naught this life on earth.
 Away, then, with the idle chatter of the Greeks
- 220 and the abomination of the idols.

Magnentius to Alexandra:

- Who, Queen, has turned your head? Why do you do
 unseemly things and rail against the Crown?
 What, alas, has brought about this change?
 Have you been swayed by George's false beliefs?
- 225 A pit of quicklime now awaits
 the trickster, hot and bubbling from the fire

ὃς φλυκτιδουργὸν ἐξαναζέσας φλόγα
φθαρεῖ τὸ τρισάθλιον αὐτοῦ σαρκίον.

Ἡ Ἀλεξάνδρα πρὸς τὸν Ἀναστάσιον·

Ὁ φαρμακός, τέκταινε τὴν πικρὰν πόσιν,
230 ὁ σταυρικός, γλύκαινε ταύτην αὖ, τύπος·
κάνταῦθα Μωσῆς ἐστὶ <τὴν> Μερρὰν τρέπων,
εἴτ' οὖν ὁ μάρτυς τοῦ κρατῆρος τὴν χύσιν,
ἦν περ σφραγίσας νέκταρος δίκην πίνῃ.

Ὁ ἅγιος εὐχόμενος·

Πάλιν πτεροῦσι τοὺς πόδας αἱ κρηπίδες,
235 καὶ πάλιν αὐτὸς εὐχαρὴς ἄνω τρέχω·
πάλιν με συσφίγγουσι δυσλύτοις πέδαις
οἱ τῇ ζοφώδει κεκρατημένοι πλάνη,
καὶ πάλιν εἰρκτὴ δυσθέατος λαμβάνει.
Σὺ δ' ὁ κραταιᾷ πάντα χειρὶ συνέχων
240 γενοῦ βοηθός, δέσποτα παντοκράτωρ,
καὶ τῶν μακρῶν ῥῦσαι με πειρατηρίων.

Ὁ ἄγγελος πρὸς τὸν μάρτυρα·

ὦ χαῖρε, φανότατε λύχνε μαρτύρων·
ὦ χαῖρε, πανθρύλλητον εὐσεβῶν κύδος,
ὦ χαῖρε, πανθρήνητον ἀσεβῶν δάκος,
245 τὴν τῶν καμάτων ἐκ Θεοῦ χάριν δέχου
καὶ δύναμιν λάμβανε πολλῶν θαυμάτων·
ἄνδρα γὰρ ἄπνουν ἐξαναστήσεις λόγῳ
μιμούμενος δὴ τὸν θεάνθρωπον Λόγον,
ὃς ἐμψυχώσας Λάζαρον πρὸ τοῦ πάθους
250 ἑαυτὸν ἐκδέδωκεν εἰς πείραν πάθους.
Καὶ σὺ κἂν ὑπήνεγκας ἄλγῃ μυρία,
πλὴν ἀλλὰ μείζους προσδόκα τιμωρίας,
ὅταν τὸν ἄπνουν ἐξέλης τοῦ θανάτου
καὶ βοῦν θανόντα ψυχαγωγῆσῃς πάλιν.

227 ἐξαναζέσας: Aesch. Prom. 370 ἐξαναζέσει χόλον 231 Ex. 15,23–25

227 φλυκτιδουργὸν V not. ante 229 Ἀναστάσιος: fort. Ἀθανάσιος scribendum? 231 κάνταῦ-
θα Vpc: κἂν ταῦτα Vac τὴν m.gr. addidi: om. V 236 συσφύγγουσι V δυσλύταις V: correxi
243 κύδος V contra metrum 254 ψυχαγωγῆσεις πάλαι V: correxi

which will cover him with blisters
and dissolve his thrice-cursed body.

Alexandra to Anastasios:

Sorcerer, prepare the bitter poison,
230 and do you sweeten it, sign of the cross.
For here too is a Moses, as at Marah:
it is the martyr who the bitter cup
will bless and drink of it as nectar.

The saint, praying:

Again the iron shoes give wings to the feet;
235 again full of joy I rush toward heaven.
Again they bind me fast with firm-fixed bonds,
they who are ruled by the dark fallacy,
and again an unseen prison receives me.
You, though, Almighty Lord, who hold all things
240 in your powerful hand, be my helper and
save me from the endless trials and torments.

The angel to the martyr:

Rejoice, thou brightest lamp of the martyrs,
rejoice, far-famed glory of the reverent,
rejoice, bite that brings sorrow to the ungodly,
245 receive the grace of God for your struggles
and the strength to perform many miracles,
for you shall raise a dead man by your word,
just as did the incarnate Word of God, who
having first restored Lazaros to life
250 gave himself up to endure the Passion.
And although untold pain has been your lot,
yet greater torments still await you,
when you recall the lifeless man from death
and restore the fallen ox to life.

255 Ἄν οὖν σιδηρέα σε δέξηται κλίνη
καὶ πυρπολήσῃ τὸ τρισόλβιον δέμας,
τοὺς τρεῖς ἐκείνους ἐννόει νεανίας,
οἱ τὴν βαβυλώνιον ἔσβεσαν φλόγα·
τῷ γὰρ δροσισμῷ τῆς ἐμῆς παρουσίας
260 καὶ σὺ δροσισθεῖς, τὸ φλογίζον πῦρ σβέσεις.
Ἄν πυρπνόον μόλυβδον ὡς ὕδωρ πίης,
αἰνιγματωδῶς γνωριεῖς τὸ σὸν τέλος·
ἂν δὲ σπαραχθῇς τὸν τράχηλον ἐκ λίθου,
Χριστὸν τὸν ἀκρόγωνον ἀθρήσεις λίθον.

Ὁ ἅγιος καθ' ἑαυτόν·

265 Τίς Ἥλιαν οὐκ οἶδε τὸν διωρηλάτην,
ὃν ἀρετῶν ὕψωσεν ἄρμα πυρφόρον;
Ἐκεῖνος αὐτός εἰμι, κἂν μὴ Θεοσβίτης·
ὁ γὰρ τροχὸς κύκλω με καὶ πάλιν στρέφω
ἀναβιβάσει μέχρις ἀντύγων πόλου
270 μαρτυρικοῖς αἵμασιν ἡγλαῖσμένον. | f. 230r

Ἡ Ἀλεξάνδρα πρὸς τὸν Ναβουζαρδάν·

Ναβουζαρδᾶ, μάγειρε τῶν Αἰγυπτίων,
λεβητοχάρων, σπάταλε, τρυφητία,
τοὺς σοὺς ἀφείς λέβητας ὡς κρεωλύτας
τὸν μαρτυρικὸν ὧδε λουτήρα βλέπε·
275 τὸν γὰρ μόλυβδον ὡς ὕδωρ ζέον φέρων
τὸ σῶμα τοῦ μάρτυρος αὐτάρκως πλύνῃς
λαμπρῶς γναφευθὲν ταῖς ῥοαῖς τῶν αἱμάτων.

Ὁ ἅγιος περὶ αὐτοῦ·

Πάλιν ῥοπάλοις ἀκρατῶς ξαίνουσί με

257–58 Dan. 3,49–50 265–66 IV Regn. 2,11; cf. Diad. Phot. 62 (p. 80, 11–14 Rutherford): Διόπερ ὅλως καὶ ἐπὶ ἄρματος πυρὸς ἀνελήφθη ὁ τοσοῦτος τῆς σοφίας τρόφιμος (sc. Ἥλιος), ὡς ἵπποις ταῖς οἰκείαις ἐμοὶ δοκεῖν ὁ σώφρων χρησάμενος ἀρεταῖς ἐν τῷ ἀρπάξαντι αὐτὸν ἐν αὐρᾷ πυρὸς πνεύματι 271 = Prosuch, In s. Mariam Aegypt. 306 (p. 44 Treu): Ναβουζαρδάν, μάγειρε τῶν Αἰγυπτίων; cf. IV Regn. 25,8–21 272 cf. Const. Manass. Brev. chron. 6581 τριγέρων ἀπαλόβιος, σπάταλος, τρυφητίας

256 πυρπολήσει V 258 βαβυλόνειαν (sic) V: correxi 263 σπαραχθῇς scripsi: παραχθείς V 264 ἀκρόγονον V 265 εἶδε V δυφριλάτην V 272 τριψηλία V: correxi 273 κρεωλήτας V 275 ζέων V ante v. 278 nota περὶ αὐτόν V: correxi 278 ξένουσί V

- 255 If, then, you are laid upon the iron bed
 and your thrice-blessed body is set on fire,
 remember those three youths who quenched the pyre
 prepared for them in Babylon,
 for with the fresh dew of my presence
 260 you shall be cooled and quench th'enveloping flames.
 If the molten lead you drink like water,
 you will understand symbolically your fate.
 If your neck is crushed by a weighty stone,
 you will see Christ, who is the cornerstone.

The saint, to himself:

- 265 Who does not know the charioteer Elijah,
 who was driven by the fiery chariot of virtues up to heaven?
 I am he, though I am not a Tishbite,
 for the wheel turning me round once again
 will raise me to the vault of heaven
 270 glorified by my blood of martyrdom.

Alexandra to Nebuzaradan:

- Nebuzaradan, chief cook of the Aegyptians,
 boiler friend, waster, gluttonous,
 leave your great kettles of simmering meat
 and look to the wash-tub of the martyr,
 275 because by fetching the lead like hot water
 you will sufficiently cleanse his body
 where the skin has been well tanned by his spilt blood.

The saint to himself:

Again bloodthirsty executioners

χεῖρες τυράννων αἰμοχαρῶν ἀγρίων.
 280 Πλὴν ἀλλὰ κἄν πῦρ τὴν ἐμὴν φλέξῃ κάραν,
 ἐγὼ τὰ γλυπτὰ σταυρικῶ θλάσας τύπῳ
 τὸν Χριστὸν ἴδω τῶν ἐμῶν ἄθλων πέρας·
 τμηθήσομαι γὰρ τὴν κεφαλὴν τῷ ξίφει
 καὶ συγχορεύσω ταῖς αὐλοῖς οὐσίαις
 285 εἰς τρυφερὰν γῆν· σύ δ' ἐπευλόγει, θύτα.

285 θύτα V

shower me with blows from heavy clubs.

- 280 But even were fire to burn my head, I would
destroy the graven idols by the sign of the cross.
And at the end of my torments I shall meet Christ.
For the sword shall sever head from body
and I shall join the dance of the incorporeal,
285 in a kindly land. And now, priest, give your blessing.

