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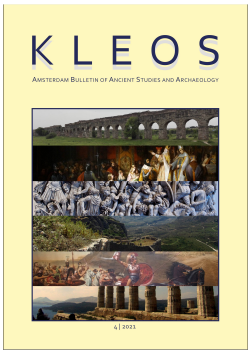

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'Mixing roses with milk': Recovering the Tradition behind the *Ekphrasis* of Niketas Eugenianos' *Drosilla and Charikles* 1.120-158

Emma Huig

Abstract

This article discusses similarities between a passage from Niketas Eugenianos' novel *Drosilla and Charikles* and the poem *anacr.* 16. Although connections between Eugenianos' novel and the Anacreontea poems have been discussed in modern scholarship, this particular resemblance has not yet been discussed. Notable similarities between the passages are, first, a painter that supposedly contributed to the creation of the girls, and second, the use of the metaphor of a mixture of milk and roses to describe the girls' skin colour. This article firstly aims to analyse these similarities and discuss the possibility that Eugenianos retrieved inspiration from *anacr.* 16. As *Drosilla and Charikles* contains many references to ancient texts, the Anacreontea poems are not the only possible source of inspiration. Therefore, this article secondly aims to compare the passage from Eugenianos' text with similar descriptions of beautiful people from other ancient and Byzantine novels.

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▶*Profile page*

Introduction

In 12th-century Constantinople, the capital of the Byzantine Empire, four stories about love and adventure were written by Theodore Prodromos, Eumathios Makrembolites, Constantine Manasses and Niketas Eugenianos.[1] These texts have in modern scholarship been defined as Byzantine novels, to distinguish them from the later, 14th-century Byzantine romances, which contain similar themes. The novels are clearly modelled after the ancient Greek novels from the Second Sophistic and also contain many references to other ancient texts.[2] It has been shown in modern scholarship that the novel *Drosilla and Charikles* by Eugenianos

1 See the following publications on the 12th - century novels: Hunger 1980; Agapitos 1992; Beaton 1996; Nilsson 2001; Roilos 2005; Jeffreys 2012. See on possible connections with western medieval romances: Jeffreys 1980; Jeffreys 2013.

2 Burton 2004, xi.

contains references to the *Anacreontea* poems.[3] These are a collection of poems written in the style of the archaic Greek poet Anacreon and have only survived as an appendix to the *Anthologia Palatina*. They are generally thought to have been written roughly between 300 BC and the sixth century AD, however, their exact dating remains a subject of discussion in modern scholarship.[4] The passages *Drosilla and Charikles* 1.120-158 and *anacr.* 16 seem to bear a resemblance, as they contain similar elements and metaphors.[5] This article aims to analyse similarities between said passages.

Both texts contain a description of an exceptionally beautiful girl, which can be categorised as an *ekphrasis*.[6] The girls are described using a technique called *eikonismos*, where a body is broken up into different components.[7] Some tools and metaphors used to describe the girls are alike, suggesting that Eugenianos might have been inspired by *anacr.* 16. These are, first, the usage of a painter as a supposed creator of the girls and, secondly, the metaphors of milk and roses to describe their skin colour. At the same time, however, descriptions of the physical appearance of main characters seem to recur in ancient and Byzantine novels and follow certain conventions. This raises the question whether the resemblances between *Drosilla and Charikles* 1.120-158 and *anacr.* 16 are unique or rather a product of ancient and contemporary tradition. Therefore, in this paper, I aim to answer the following question: did Eugenianos model his description of Drosilla specifically after *anacr.* 16, or is this *ekphrasis* rather a result of Eugenianos' knowledge of a wider literary tradition?

To answer this question, I will discuss three aspects from the

3 Jeffreys 2012, 349; Rosenmeyer 1992, 229-230.

4 For an elaborate introduction on the *Anacreontea* poems, including their dating, see Campbell 1988, 4-18. The poems have survived in the tenth-century manuscript of the *Anthologia Palatina* (AP xv). However, they are thought not to have been part of the collection of the tenth-century compiler Constantine Cephalas, but to have been added later. On the *Anthologia Palatina*, its scribes and the survival of the *Anacreontea* in this manuscript see, Cameron 1993, 97-159; 298-328; Lauxtermann 2003, 86-89; 107-118.

5 Jeffreys 2012, 349; Rosenmeyer 1992, 229-230. Both authors discuss similarities between *Drosilla and Charikles* and the *Anacreontea*, but the possible connection between the description of Drosilla and *anacr.* 16 is not mentioned.

6 Scholars have argued that it is not possible to give one definition of *ekphrasis*, as the definition was much broader in antiquity than it is in modern times. In Byzantium, the ancient definition by rhetoricians such as Aphthonius was used (Webb 1999, 9-10). An *ekphrasis* can therefore describe a wide range of topics, such as persons, landscapes, settings and works of art in the Byzantine definition. Scholars have further argued that the essential characteristic of an *ekphrasis* is the connection between written words and visual imagery caused by the vividness (ἐνάργεια) of the descriptions that makes the verbal description come alive (Koopman 2018; Webb 1999). See for scholarship on Greek *ekphrasis* and its definition Koopman 2018; Allan et al. 2017; De Jong 2014; Schaefer/Rentsch 2004; Webb 1999.

7 Hatzaki 2009, 11.

texts and compare these with relevant literature. After providing background information about Eugenianos and the context in which he lived and wrote, I will first analyse the recurring motif of a painter as a supposed creator of the described girls and, next, the metaphors of milk and roses used to describe the girls' skin colour. Finally, I will assess the different body parts, which are described in the *ekphraseis*. By focusing on these aspects, I aim to analyse possible similarities between these descriptions. The passages from *Drosilla and Charikles* and *anacr.* 16 will then be compared to passages from the ancient novels by Longus, Achilles Tatius and Heliodorus, and the Byzantine novel *Rhodanthe and Dosikles* by Theodore Prodromos (born ca. 1100, died ca. 1156/58).[8] The passages used from these texts are all similar *eikonismoi* depicting girls. We can assume that Eugenianos knew and used these texts when writing his own novel, as will be explained further in the next section. In this study, I aim to offer an example of how the novels should be viewed as a product of the context, in which they were produced, and to show that Eugenianos' *ekphrasis* can be placed in this context. I thereby hope to contribute to the understanding of the 12th-century novels.

Eugenianos' life and work in Constantinople

The Byzantine author Niketas Eugenianos (active during the mid-12th century AD) was from a high class or elite background and would therefore have received the education required for an intellectual career. Imitation of and allusion to ancient and contemporary texts formed a fundamental part of the Byzantine school curriculum. The imitation of stylistic models was practised through rhetorical exercises called *progymnasmata*. Students also read ancient texts such as Homer, Demosthenes, tragedies, and comedies.[9] Eugenianos in this way would have become acquainted with ancient texts and style. For this essay, I will presume that Eugenianos only read Greek and would not have been acquainted with Latin literature.[10] Therefore, the studied corpus in this article will be limited to Greek literature.

The preceding 11th century was characterised by an increased

8 Jeffreys 2012, 4-6.

9 See for a more extensive description of middle-Byzantine education Wilson 1983, 21-27; Markopoulos 2008; and Bernard 2014 for the organisational structure of middle-Byzantine schools.

10 Although knowledge of the Latin language is generally assumed to have faded during the seventh century AD, there is evidence for increased contact with and knowledge of Western culture from the late 11th century onwards, which required bilingualists and interpreters. These are thought to have been Westerners that had learned Greek. Byzantines, and especially people born in Constantinople, are generally thought to have only spoken Greek. See R. Browning/A. Cutler 2005 for a more elaborate overview of the Latin language in the Byzantine Empire and Suarez in Suarez/Bucossi 2016.

engagement with ancient Greek literature amongst Byzantine *literati*.[11] This was continued in the 12th century. In the late-11th and 12th century, members of the imperial circle started to act as patrons for intellectuals. Imperial patronage could be gained by self-promotion through writing. The exact meaning and scope of this patronage remain a topic of debate in modern scholarship.[12] Moreover, the 12th-century intellectual circles have been connected to performative contexts, where writers could present their work orally. It has also been argued that an element of competition was involved.[13] These spaces are often referred to as theatra (θέατρα) in modern publications, where gatherings could be hosted by an imperial patron. However, the exact meaning of the word *theatron* and the physical space in which these performances would have taken place, have recently been discussed by modern scholars. It has been argued that the word *theatron* is used in 11th- and 12th-century texts for a variety of spaces and should not be thought of as referring to one specific type of gathering place.[14]

Although the concepts of patronage and literary performance in *theatra* remain topics of debate, we can analyse the texts from the 12th century in these contexts. A performative and possibly competitive context requires appropriate rhetorical skills. An intellectual seeking to improve his social status and gain imperial patronage would need the right education to produce appropriate texts for elite audiences. Additionally, an author would need to promote and distinguish himself from other authors. Therefore, apart from producing texts within the existing traditions and norms, he would seek to innovate and experiment with genre, form, and themes. The performative and competitive literary context of the 12th century could therefore explain the (re-) introduction of genres such as the Greek novel.[15] In short, writing in imperial circles in 12th-century Constantinople required a balance between recognisable rhetoric on the one hand, and innovation and originality on the other.

Eugenianos most likely formed part of the intellectual elite of Constantinople. After his education, he continued to work in imperial circles, possibly as a tutor of Stephanos Komnenos, who was a member of the imperial Komnenoi family and had received

11 Wilson 1983, 148-179; Papaioannou 2013. The ancient Greek novels also enjoyed the attention of intellectuals. See for example Michael Psellos' essay on Achilles Tatius and Heliodorus in Dyck 1986.

12 Nilsson 2020, 59-84 and Mullett 1984.

13 Bernard 2014, 98-99, 165-173, 211-212.

14 Bernard 2014; Short/Huig 2020, 3-5; See for a full discussion of *theatra* Marciniak 2007; Magdalino 1993, 335-355.

15 See Zagklas 2019 for an overview of these topics and writing of poetry in the 12th century.

the high military rank of *megas droungarios* in 1156.[16] Another person of special significance is Theodore Prodromos (c. 1100-1156/58). Prodromos may at some point have been Eugenianos' teacher and the two grew to become good friends.[17] It has also been shown that Eugenianos followed Prodromos' example when writing his novel.[18]

The previous considerations suggest that we can expect Eugenianos' work to fit into the existing tradition and at the same time to show innovation. We can also presume that Eugenianos was familiar with both the *Anacreontea* poems and the ancient and Byzantine novels. Next, I will turn to the texts to see if and in what way we can find this familiarity in Eugenianos' description of Drosilla.

Comparing the motif of painter as creator between texts

The first similarity between *anacr.* 16 and verses 1.147-149 of *Drosilla and Charikles* is a painter that features as a supposed creator of the girls. In *Drosilla and Charikles* we find this element towards the end of the *ekphrasis.*

"ἔοικεν ὡς ἔμιξε γάλα καὶ ῥόδα,
καὶ συνδιεχρώσατο καθὰ **ζωγράφος**
ταύτης τὸ σῶμα λευκέρυθρον ἡ φύσις˙"

"It looked as if Nature had mixed milk and
roses and, just as a painter,
had dyed her body white and red;"[19]

In *anacr.* 16 we find a painter in the first couple of verses. The anacreontic narrator starts with an address to the painter, which is used as a tool to build the whole description.

"Ἄγε, **ζωγράφω**ν ἄριστε (...)
γράφε τὴν ἐμὴν ἑταίρην"

"Come now, best of painters
paint my girl"[20]

16 Stephanos Komnenos (1127/31-?), grand-nephew of emperor Alexios I Komnenos (reigned 1081-1118), was married to Eudokia Doukaina-Axouch, daughter of the *megas domestikos* Ioannes Axouch. For the connection between Stephanos and Eugenianos, see Jeffreys 2012, 342. For biographical information about Stephanos, see Varzos 1984, 288-291.

17 Eugenianos wrote monodies on Prodromos, Jeffreys 2012, 342.

18 Zagklas 2019.

19 Greek: Conca 1994; translation: author. See for an English translation of the whole novel Jeffreys 2012, and for an Italian translation Conca 1994. Here, I use my own translation to enhance that ἡ φύσις can be taken as the subject of both ἔμιξε and συνδιεχρώσατο.

20 Verses 1 and 5, Greek and translation: Campbell 1988.

In the anacreontic poem, the painter is instructed by the narrator to paint a girl (verses 6-32). The narrator gives the painter detailed instructions for each body part.[21] Two possible suggestions are that an actual painter simultaneously paints the girl, or that the narrator mentally pictures the girl and the details of her body. In any case, the utterance "Enough-I can see her! Soon, wax you will be talking too" (verses 33-34) seems to suggest that either the painting or the mental image of the narrator are complete to such a level that the narrator can see the girl in front of them.[22]

Eugenianos uses the same word for painter, ζώγραφος (verse 1.148).[23] There are however differences between the two passages. The anacreontic internal narrator-focaliser addresses the painter directly, as if the painter is standing next to him, using an imperative as an incitement, γράφε τὴν ἐμὴν ἑταίρην. The imagined painter stays present in the whole poem and thus forms a prominent or even essential feature of the poem. The narrator in the passages from Eugenianos' text is external. Consequently, the painter is not addressed directly, as the narrator describes how *it seems as if* nature *like* a painter has painted Drosilla. Moreover, the act of creating Drosilla is attributed more to nature than to the painter. The similarities between the two passages are restricted to the word ζώγραφος and to the theme of beautiful girls being imagined to be painted by artists, thus making them into works of art.[24] A connection with the painter in *anacr.* 16 is thus not evident in this case. At the same time, none of the studied *eikonismoi* in the novels by Longus, Achilles Tatius, Heliodorus and Prodromos feature a similar painter. This suggests that Eugenianos may have indeed taken the element of a painter from *anacr.* 16.

Another notable feature in this passage is nature, which Eugenianos mentions as the creator of Drosilla's skin colour. This element does not occur in *anacr.* 16. However, as noted by Jeffreys, there is a connection with verses 2.246-250 of Prodromos' novel

21 Here, the term narrator is used to refer to the focaliser of the poem. I use this term to indicate that narrator and author are not always the same entity, and therefore we must distinguish between them. The narrator-focaliser in this poem is internal, which means that the story is focalised from the perspective of a character within the narrative (De Jong 2014, 48). An external focaliser tells the narrative from an outside perspective. During the research for my BA-thesis I analysed the difference in focalisation between different passages, assessing whether a difference in focalisation is reflected by differences in the body parts that are mentioned in the *eikonismoi*. For theoretical studies on focalisation see Bal 2017; De Jong 2014.

22 The completeness and vividness of this mental image is an essential aspect of *ekphraseis* and is called ἐνάργεια, see above note 6.

23 This word is specifically used for someone who 'paints from life or nature', Liddell-Scott-Jones Greek-English Lexicon Online.

24 Jouanno 1998, 90; Hatzaki 2009, 28.

Rhodanthe and Dosikles.[25] Here, Dosikles describes Rhodanthe's complexion as follows:

> "Rhodanthe's complexion is beautiful;
> for it is not possible to remove or add anything
> from its excellent and perfect composition,
> for the *geometer* Nature (ἡ γεωμέτρις Φύσις) has constructed it
> beautifully and according to the rules."[26]

Both narrators in the novels of Prodromos and Eugenianos refer to nature as a personified creator of a beautiful body. This topos is discussed by Cupane, who writes that nature as a personified creator of beautiful things is a rhetorical device that occurs in antique literature since Statius (second century AD).[27] Presuming that Eugenianos did not read Latin, it is unlikely that he was aware of this usage in Statius.[28] Interestingly, the topos of nature as a creator (*Natura Formatrix*) is less commonly used in Greek literature. Cupane only mentions the *Anthologia Graeca*. The next occurrence is in the 12th-century novels, leaving a significant chronological void.[29] Presuming that the novelists mainly read Greek literature, the topos must have been transmitted through its usage in the *Anthologia Graeca.*[30]

Both Prodromos and Eugenianos use the topos of *Natura Formatrix* in the studied passages from their novels. In these passages, however, nature does not feature as the creator of the whole body.[31] In both instances, it is applied to one aspect of the body only; Rhodanthe's face and Drosilla's skin. Moreover, in *Drosilla and Charikles* nature is presented as a metaphor by the external focaliser, as the narrator describes how *it seems like* nature *like* a painter has painted Drosilla. In the description of Rhodanthe by the internal focaliser Dosikles, an elaborate description of the genius of nature's perfect creation is offered.[32] This is less the case in the description of Drosilla. Still, the topos is clear and the similarity between the two passages is evident.

25 Jeffreys 2012, 356 note 11.

26 Greek: Conca 1994; translation: Jeffreys 2012.

27 Cupane 1984, 38.

28 There is evidence, however, that bilingualism did exist in 12th-century Constantinople. See above note 10, R. Browning/A. Cutler 2005 and Suarez 2016.

29 Cupane 1984, 47.

30 The fact that Nature as a personified force, as a representative of God, does not occur frequently in Byzantine literature is in Cupane's view difficult to explain: "sei es, dass die strenge orthodoxe Theologie das Aufkommen solch häretische Phantasie im Keim erstickte, sei es, dass ein solcher Mythos an sich nicht in die Denkkategorien und zum literarischen Geschmack der Byzantiner passte." (Cupane 1984, 45).

31 Cupane 1984, 47.

32 See on the geometrical perfection described by Prodromos Hatzaki 2009, 28.

These considerations suggest that Eugenianos retrieved inspiration for the verses 1.147-149 from two possible sources. The first is the painter in *anacr.* 16, the second is nature as creator from Prodromos' novel. This would mean that Eugenianos was inspired by two literary predecessors: one being ancient and the other a contemporary Byzantine source. The latter is of special significance, as Eugenianos was inspired by Prodromos' novel. The fact that he indeed has combined two topoi could indicate that he did this consciously, as he has not merely copied the elements, but reapplied them in a creative way.

Metaphors of milk and roses for skin colour in Medieval and Ancient texts

Besides the painter, both passages in *Drosilla and Charikle*s and *anacr.* 16 feature the metaphor of a mixture of milk and roses to describe the girls' skin colour. The phrase in Drosilla's description is ἔμιξε γάλα καὶ ῥόδα (verse 1.147). In *anacr.* 16, the same words are used, although with a different syntax: ῥόδα τῷ γάλακτι μίξας (verse 23). In both passages, the metaphors are used to describe the girls' skin colour apparently as white with a pink or red flush. The exact combination of three words is a notable similarity, pointing towards a possible allusion to *anacr.* 16.

Roses as a metaphor for a rosy complexion occur quite frequently throughout ancient Greek and Byzantine literature, so my focus will remain on the combination of milk and roses.[33] In the ancient novels, only one other parallel for milk can be found, in 1.17.3 of Longus' *Daphnis and Chloe:* "her face truly whiter (λευκότερον) even than goats' milk (γάλακτος)."[34] Here the word γάλα is similarly used to describe the white colour of the heroine's face. The same passage contains another simile with Drosilla's description. The passage "Her lips are softer than rose petals (ῥόδων) and her mouth is sweeter than honeycombs (κηρίων)"[35] from *Daphnis and Chloe*, although using different words, resembles verses 1.128-129 from *Drosilla and Charikles*: "her lips were a pursed bud (κάλυξ), an opening hive (σίμβλον), / pouring out the pleasant honey (μέλι) of her speech."[36] Given Eugenianos' literary knowledge and considering the fact that within the same description two similarities can be found, it is plausible that Eugenianos was familiar with Longus' text and used it as an

33 See for example *anacr.* 17 verse 18; Chariton. *Callirhoë* 1.1.5; Achilles Tatius. *Leucippe and Clithophon* 1.4.3-4; Longus, *Daphnis and Chloe* 18.1.

34 Longus. *Daphnis and Chloe* 17.3; translation Henderson 2009.

35 Longus. *Daphnis and Chloe* 18.1; translation Henderson 2009.

36 Eugenianos. *Drosilla and Charikles* 1.128-129; translation: J. effreys 2012. Burton 2004 translates verse 129 as "they poured forth the sweet honey of her speech".

inspiration for his own work. Despite these similarities, the topoi of milk and roses to describe a person's skin colour do not specifically occur as a pair in the ancient novels, which makes it likely that Eugenianos retrieved these metaphors from *anacr.* 16. Something can be said, however, about beauty ideals in Byzantium and the position of the white-and-red colours within that ideal. According to Myrto Hatzaki, a typically beautiful body in the Byzantine definition is built up from the following beautiful parts (complying with the technique of *eikonismos*): golden or dark hair, a strong and tall build, a rosy and white complexion, radiant skin and dark and bright eyes.[37] Hatzaki, describing these beauty ideals in Byzantium, also discusses the description of Drosilla. She argues that this description indeed agrees with the general Byzantine beauty ideal, which appears from both historical and fictional works. The significance of the white and red colour is illuminated by Eugenianos' description of Drosilla as he uses compound words to describe this specific colour combination: λευκερυθρόχρουν ('whitish red skin') in verse 1.133 and λευκέρυθρον ('whitish red') in verse 1.149. The same combination of white skin with rosy cheeks is also used in ancient personal descriptions.[38]

Anacr. 17, which follows *anacr.* 16 in the *Anthologia*, contains a similarly detailed description of a boy. The colour of his skin is compared to roses, apples, and ivory: "Make his downy cheek as rosy (ῥοδέην) as an apple, and, if possible, add a blush (ἐρύθημα) like that of Modesty. (...) After his face make an ivory (ἐλεφάντινος) neck finer than that of Adonis."[39] In the passage 1.4.3-4 of Achilles Tatius' *Leucippe and Clitophon*, the contrast of the white skin with rosy cheeks is again described. Moreover, Achilles Tatius compares Leucippe's lips to a rosebud, a comparison similar to that made by Eugenianos.

> "(...) pale cheeks (λευκὴ παρειά), the pallor shading in the centre into a ruddy hue (πορφύραν), like that stain wherewith the Lydian women tint ivory;[40] and a mouth that was a rose (ῥόδων) – a rose-bud (τὸ ῥόδον) just beginning to uncurl its petals."[41]

The blush on one's cheeks as a beauty ideal also appears in

37 Hatzaki 2009, 8-9, referring for example to Drosilla's description in *Drosilla and Charikles*, Michael Psellos' description of a young Michael IV and emperor Constantine IX Monomachos in *Chronographia* 3.18 and 6.126, and Anna Komnene's description of the Norman leader Bohemund in *Alexiad* 13.10.

38 For beauty ideals in Greek poetry, see Jax 1933.

39 *Anacr.* 17 verses 18-21; 27-29, translation: Campbell 1988.

40 This is a reference to *Iliad* 4.141-142, see Winkler in Reardon 1990, 208 note 10.

41 Achilles Tatius. *Leucippe en Clitophon* 1.4.3-4; translation: Gaselee 1969.

Heliodorus' *Aethiopica* 1.21.

> "Eventually she looked Thyamis full in the face. Her beauty dazzled him even more now, for her reflections had brought a special blush (πεφοίνικτο) to her cheeks, and there was a fire in her eyes."[42]

These examples indicate that a white skin and blushed cheeks were part of the beauty ideal in ancient times and were used as such in contemporary Byzantine texts. By highlighting this feature of Drosilla's appearance, Eugenianos conforms to this convention. Nevertheless, the exact combination of γάλα καὶ ῥόδα does not occur in any of the ancient or Byzantine novels. It does, however, appear in a passage from Anna Komnene's *Alexiad*.[43] In III.1.3 Komnene describes the appearance of the young Constantine Doukas, using similar metaphors to those in Drosilla's description.

> "He was blond, with a skin as white as milk (γάλα), his cheeks suffused with red like some dazzling rose (ῥόδα) that has just left the calyx."[44]

It cannot be ascertained beyond doubt if Eugenianos read Komnene's work as she might not have formed part of the imperial court during the years in which she wrote the *Alexiad*.[45] However, both authors enjoyed a similar education and worked in the same intellectual circles, in which they will have been familiarised with the same literary traditions. Whether or not Eugenianos read this description, the *Alexiad* passage confirms the existence of such a tradition, which, as shown by Hatzaki, prescribes the description of a person's skin as white and rosy, potentially using the metaphors of milk and roses. Similarly, the difference in genre is not relevant here, as Byzantine histories could contain the same rhetoric as fictional texts.

By describing Drosilla's skin colour as a combination of white and roses, Eugenianos conforms with beauty ideals as represented

42 Heliodorus *Aethiopika* 1.2; translation: Morgan 1989.

43 This history was written between 1143 and 1153 (Sewter 1969, xiv) by Anna Komnene, daughter of emperor Alexios I Komnenos (reigned 1081-1118) and empress Eirene Doukaina. Utilising elements of panegyric, the text covers Alexios' reign and his dealings with internal and external business and conflicts, including the First Crusade. See for an introduction on this text the introduction by P. Frankopan in Sewter 1969.

44 Anna Komnene. *Alexiad* 3.1.3; translation Sewter 1969.

45 Leonora Neville has recently argued that Anna was in fact not isolated from the court at that time, see Neville 2015, 133-140.

in ancient and Byzantine literature.[46] The metaphor of milk for a white skin occurs in two other passage other than *anacr.* 16 and Drosilla's description. The exact element of 'mixing milk and roses' however only occurs in *anacr*. 16 and Eugenianos' novel. This leads to the conclusion that the used colours and themes are not unique, but the exact combination of the three words could have been retrieved from *anacr.* 16 specifically.

Comparing body parts in Medieval and Ancient *eikonismoi*

The previous section shows that certain conventions and beauty ideals existed in ancient and Byzantine times and that beautiful people are described in roughly similar terms.[47] We have also seen that Eugenianos complies with these conventions in his description of Drosilla. However, Eugenianos mentions more body parts than the convention prescribes. Analysing how many and which body parts form part of the descriptions is another way to examine the potential inspiration from *anacr.* 16 for Drosilla's description.

In *Drosilla and Charikles*, the narrator mentions the following body parts consecutively: hands, lips, cheeks, eyes, cheek, nose, hair, lips, neck, eyebrows, cheeks, hair, jaw, neck, lips, breast, nose, teeth, eyebrows, fingers, ears, hands, and feet. The rest of the body is covered by a white and purple cloak.[48] Notable is how some body parts are mentioned more than once. For example, Drosilla's cheeks are mentioned three times in verses 124, 126 and 134, respectively. Moreover, no clear order of description can be determined.

In *anacr.* 16, the following body parts are mentioned: hair, cheek, brow, eyebrows, eyes, nose, cheeks, lips, neck (Appendix 1). A few similarities with Drosilla's description can be identified. The description is reasonably detailed, focusing on all features of the girl's face. Secondly, like Drosilla, the girl in *anacr.* 16 wears a light purple gown, covering most of her body. There are however a few differences between Drosilla's description and *anacr.* 16. Firstly, the description in *anacr.* 16 is limited to the head alone. Secondly, the description seems to roughly follow a top-to-bottom order. Finally, except for the cheeks and eyes, all other parts are mentioned only once.

46 A passage similar to 1.147-149 of Eugeniaos' novel can be found in the Life of St. Elias the Younger, section 11: "How did the art of painters (ζωγράφον τέξνη) let his face gleam, and in such a way that you would say that it was touched by milk (γάλακτι κεχρίσθαι), that a rose bloomed (ῥόδον δὲ ἐκφυῆναι) on his cheeks, and that his eye flashed with spirit" (Greek: Rossi Taibbi 1962; translation: author). This text was written by an anonymous author in the tenth century in the monastery of Saline (Rossi Taibbi 1962, xvii-xviii). This passage will not be incorporated in this paper but should be considered in further studies on this topic.

47 Hatzaki 2009, 9.

48 In the appendix, the Greek words and the corresponding verses are laid out.

In Achilles Tatius' *Leucippe and Clitophon,* the story is told from the perspective of Clitophon. When he sees Leucippe for the first time in 1.4, he is astonished by her beauty. He describes her appearance as follows: first her hair, then eyebrows, cheeks, and finally mouth. This description is thus limited to the head and seems to roughly follow a top-to-bottom order. Regarding the mentioned body parts, the description complies with the supposed tradition. In Longus' *Daphnis and Chloe* 1.17, Daphnis becomes aware of Chloe's beauty for the first time. A short description of her face follows: hair, eyes, and the colour of her face. Again, the description only refers to the face, although later in the story Daphnis also looks at Chloe's full body, while she is bathing (1.32). The body parts mentioned comply with tradition. The description is however too short to discuss its order accurately.

In the Byzantine novel *Rhodanthe and Dosikles,* the extensive *eikonismos* of Rhodanthe is told by the external narrator.[49] This description is quite elaborate and detailed. After her full figure, Rhodanthe's skin and limbs are described and next her eyebrows, nose, cheeks, mouth, elbows, arms, fingers, and ankles (1.39-60). This description is significantly more detailed than those in ancient novels. Moreover, the description is not limited to the face as Rhodanthe's figure and limbs are also mentioned. The narrator proceeds systematically, first describing Rhodanthe's general appearance before moving on to different body parts in detail, starting with her eyebrows and gradually making his way down to her ankles.

Following these considerations, a few things stand out. Firstly, descriptions in Byzantine novels differ from those in ancient novels, describing more than just the face. Moreover, they are focalised by external narrators, rather than an internal admiring character.[50] Additionally, the Byzantine *eikonismoi* are much more elaborate than those in ancient novels. In that respect, they resemble the ekphrasis of both *anacr.* 16 more.

Drosilla's description resembles those in *anacr.* 16 and *Rhodanthe and Dosikles*. It also complies with the traditional way in which beautiful bodies are described in Byzantine literature, picturing the different body parts in a way that resembles contemporary descriptions. A few aspects of Drosilla's description, however, are notable and different from the other analysed passages. It is more elaborate than Rhodanthe's description and

49 Later, in 2.246-250, a second, shorter description of Rhodanthe is given from the perspective of Dosikles. As this is not an *eikonismos* I do not include this description in my analysis.

50 During the research for my BA-thesis, I have found evidence that an admirer, or internal focaliser, gives a detailed description of the head, whereas an external narrator gives a more general description of the whole body. I suggest that further research on the perspective and focalisation of the descriptions could be done.

anacr. 16, as it describes seemingly unusual body parts like teeth, nose, and feet. Furthermore, an order of description cannot be detected. The narrator's eyes move all over Drosilla's body.[51] The fact that Eugenianos' description differs significantly from the other passages suggests that he tried to innovate the structure of his *eikonismos*, rather than keeping to the traditional order. Finally, and potentially adding to the disorder of the description, some parts are mentioned multiple times. This suggests that Eugenianos has partly used the tradition as it was displayed by his ancient and contemporary predecessors, but at the same time added new features. This means that he was most likely aware of the existing tradition but has chosen to innovate by changing and adding elements of the description. This can be explained by the literary context in which Eugenianos worked, as outlined in previous sections.

Conclusion

In conclusion, I have shown that Eugenianos, in his description of Drosilla, has indeed adopted certain elements from *anacr.* 16. These include firstly the painter, which is mentioned by both narrators as a supposed creator of the girls described in the poems. A difference between the passages is caused by a difference in narrator-focaliser, which is internal in *anacr.* 16 and external in the description of Drosilla. Consequently, the anacreontic narrator is able to address the painter directly, whereas Eugenianos' narrator is not, referring to the painter only as a metaphor. The second element which both passages have in common, are the metaphors of milk and roses. Generally, Eugenianos' *eikonismos* resembles other descriptions within the studied corpus, but at the same time contains features that seem less conventional. In this way, the description complies with existing literary tradition on personal descriptions, whilst also varying and innovating upon existing conventions. This can be explained by reference to the context of 12th-century Constantinople. As described by Zagklas, authors enjoyed education in ancient and contemporary literary tradition during this time, whilst also being encouraged to innovate and experiment. In future research, I hope to develop this idea, aiming to uncover further why Eugenianos might have added new features to his *eikonismos.* Interestingly, verses 1.126-132 of Drosilla's description are identical to verses 67-73 in a wedding poem, attributed to the same author. This poem was written for and

51 The order, or lack thereof, of a description could influence the mental image the reader creates on reception of the text. A clear head-to-toe description might leave the reader with a more complete mental image than a chaotic *eikonismos* such as Drosilla's. On 'completeness' in this sense, see Baumann 2014.

possibly performed at an actual wedding between a Komnenos man and a Doukas woman.[52] The similarities between these passages are a potential starting point for further research on why Eugenianos has added new characteristics to his *eikonismos*.

52 Kazhdan 1993. The *Epithalamium* is published in Gallovati, 1935, 'Novi Laurentiana codicis analecta'. *Studi bizantini e neoellenici* 4. 233-236. Kazhdan suggests that the Komnenoi man was the *Megas Droungarios* Stephanos Komnenos, a great-nephew of Alexios I and Eugenianos' tutee, while the woman was his wife Eudokia Doukaina-Axouch.

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APPENDIX 1: BODY PARTS MENTIONED IN *ANACR.* 16 AND EUGENIANOS' DESCRIPTION OF DROSILLA

verse	*anacr*. 16	Body part	Eugenianos	verse
6, 11	τρίχας, χαίταις	Hair	κόμη, βόστρυχος, πλοκαμίδες	126, 136, 136
10, 22	παρειῆς, παρειάς	Cheeks	παρειὰς, παρειά, παρειῶν,	124, 126, 134
12	μέτωπον	Brow	-	-
13	μεσόφρυον	Eyebrows	ὀφρύες, ὀφρύων	132, 145
17, 18	βλεφάρων, βλέμμα	Eyes	ὀφθαλμὸς	125
22	ῥῖνα	Nose	ῥὶς, ῥίς	126, 143
24	χεῖλος	Lips	χείλη, χείλη, χεῖλος	124, 128, 140
26	γενείου	Chin	-	-
27	τραχήλῳ	Neck	τράχηλος, τράχηλος	131, 139
-	-	Jaw	γνάθος	139
-	-	Breast	στέρνον	141
-	-	Teeth	ὀδόντων	143
-	-	Fingers	δάκτυλοι	152
-	-	Ears	ὤτων	152
-	-	Hands	χεῖρες	155
-	-	Feet	πόδες	156