Alejandro Laguna López

LITERARY SUBVERSION IN NIKETAS EUGENIANOS' *DROSILLA & CHARIKLES*

MA Thesis in Late Antique, Medieval and Early Modern Studies

Central European University
Vienna
May 2024

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by
Alejandro Laguna López
(Spain)

Thesis submitted to the Department of Medieval Studies,
Central European University, Vienna, in partial fulfillment of the requirements
of the Master of Arts degree in Late Antique, Medieval and Early Modern Studies.
Accepted in conformance with the standards of the CEU.

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Baukje van den Berg
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Thesis Supervisor

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Examiner

Vienna
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I, the undersigned, **Alejandro Laguna López**, candidate for the MA degree in Late Antique, Medieval and Early Modern Studies, declare herewith that the present thesis is exclusively my own work, based on my research and only such external information as properly credited in notes and bibliography. I declare that no unidentified and illegitimate use was made of the work of others, and no part of the thesis infringes on any person's or institution's copyright. I also declare that no part of the thesis has been submitted in this form to any other institution of higher education for an academic degree.

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Abstract

Komnenian novels were, for some time, considered mere "replicas" of Hellenistic novels. In the last decades research has started to take a different tack, approaching the 12th century novels as refined and complex pieces of literature that enter a dialogue with their own period through their rewriting of ancient models. Niketas Eugenianos' novel "*Drosilla & Charikles*" stands out among the other Komnenian novels, due to its subversive engagement with previous and contemporary literary works. Research on Eugenianos' novel, which previously focused on its transtextual links with other works, has recently shifted its focus to narratological aspects.

Although the literary models used by Eugenianos have been thoroughly discussed, his "distancing" from such models has not received scholarly attention so far. Eugenianos acknowledges his debt to previous works while still deliberately choosing to explore different paths, thereby building up anticipation and suspense, while ultimately subverting readerly expectations.

This thesis will analyze the effects and functions of these literary strategies, as well as how they might have contributed to Eugenianos' display of literary virtuosity. I will first perform a narratological analysis of the novel, which will provide the basis for further research. I will then explore various episodes in *Drosilla & Charikles* where Eugenianos' dialogue with previous and contemporary works, his use of comic elements, and his establishment of contrasts can be seen as subversive. The analysis of *Drosilla & Charikles* as a subversive work will shed light on Eugenianos' engagement with other works and on the interaction between the author, who purposefully creates a multilayered meaning, and his well-educated audience, capable of deciphering and understanding these strategies.

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I would like to show my sincerest gratitude to my supervisor, Baukje van den Berg, whose insightful comments, exhaustive proofreading, and many "what do you mean exactly?" have been fundamental for my thesis. This process would have certainly been way more painful if it hadn't been for her continuous support and guidance. I would also like to thank the other faculty members who introduced me to the Middle Ages, and especially Éloïse Adde for giving me advice when I needed it and Cristian Gașpar for proofreading my first chapter. I would also like to thank Osman Özdemir for all the help with narratology and for his interest and advice, as well as Paloma Cortez for our enlightening discussion on Eugenianos' novel. Moreover, I would like to thank this institution for giving me the opportunity and financial support to share my research with colleagues.

I would also like to thank Paula Caballero for tricking me into these Byzantine matters, I do not regret the decision at all. Thanks also to my friends back in Málaga for their support and for sometimes allowing me to rant about the things I discuss in this thesis (don't worry, you guys don't need to read this). Many thanks to the friends I have made at CEU, and especially to Ada Kök, Daria Ageeva, Osman Kocabal, and María Ruigómez Eraso, who have kept me company countless days, in and out of campus.

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Introduction

During the Hellenistic period, several works with similar settings and a common narrative structure were composed that we have come to group together under the designation of "ancient Greek novels". Set in the Mediterranean, these narratives cover the story of two lovers, who are repeatedly separated and whose love is tested by Fortune but who are ultimately able to reunite and live happily ever after.[1] The last of the five traditionally recognized Greek novels, Heliodoros' *Aethiopika*, was written during the fourth century CE.[2] Although literary modes typical of Hellenistic novels were continued in hagiographical works, we must wait until the twelfth century for the next novel to be written.[3]

Works that masterfully resemble the ancient novels were created by four writers of the Komnenian period: Eumathios Makrembolites, Theodoros Prodromos, Niketas Eugenianos, and Konstantinos Manasses.[4] They emulate the ancient novels – and other works – by using

[1] Research on the ancient Greek novel is extensive. Key studies include Tim Whitmarsh, *The Cambridge Companion to the Greek and Roman Novel* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008); Edmund P. Cueva and Shannon N. Byrne, *A Companion to the Ancient Novel* (Malden: Wiley Blackwell, 2014); and Massimo Fusillo, "Mapping the Roots: The Novel in Antiquity," in *Fictional Storytelling in the Medieval Eastern Mediterranean and Beyond*, ed. Carolina Cupane and Bettina Krönung (Leiden: Brill, 2016), 21-38. An interesting and more recent contribution is that of Jean Alvares, *Ideal Themes in the Greek and Roman Novel* (London: Routledge, 2022).

[2] John R. Morgan, "Heliodorus," in *The Novel in the Ancient World*, ed. Gareth L. Schmeling (Leiden: Brill, 1996), 417-421.

[3] On the continuation of the narrative mode in hagiography, see Roderick Beaton, *The Medieval Greek Romance* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 27.

[4] Manasses' novel survives in a fragmentary state; the other three are better preserved, with around five manuscripts containing the novels by Prodromos and Eugenianos, and more than forty manuscripts containing Makrembolites' novel. I use Elizabeth Jeffrey's translation of these texts: *Four Byzantine Novels: Theodore Prodromos, "Rhodante and Dosikles". Eumathios Makrembolites, "Hysmine and Hysminias". Constantine Manasses, "Aristandros and Kallithea". Niketas Eugenianos, "Drosilla and Charikles"* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2012). Jeffrey's translation is mostly based on the edition by Fabrizio Conca, ed., *Nicetas Eugenianus. De Drosillae et Chariclis amoribus* (Amsterdam: J. C. Gieben, 1990). Throughout this thesis I will use both "*Drosilla & Charikles*" and "*D&C*" to refer to the novel itself, while I will use "Drosilla and Charikles" to refer to the two characters.

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them as a sort of template for their own ἐρωτικά διηγήματα or erotic narratives. [5] Although the so-called Hellenistic novels were in prose, among their twelfth-century successors the only one to maintain this form is *Hysmine and Hysminias* (*H&H*), by Eumathios Makrembolites. On the contrary, Theodoros Prodromos' *Rhodanthe and Dosikles* (*R&D*), Niketas Eugenianos' *Drosilla and Charikles* (*D&C*), and Konstantinos Manasses' *Aristandros and Kallithea* (*A&K*) are in verse: the first two are written in dodecasyllables and Manasses' in political verse.[6] Many efforts have been made towards dating the Komnenian novels, but the only necessary remark here is that Eugenianos' novel was written after Prodromos' *Rhodanthe & Dosikles*.[7]

The Komnenian period was a time of great economic and cultural flourishing.[8] A professional class of literati appeared.[9] Komnenian writers who did not hold an official post in the state or the church bureaucracy made their living as teachers or relied on the more or

[5] In antiquity there seems to have been no term that meant "novel" and separated it from other types of compositions: Morgan, "Heliodorus," 11. During the Byzantine period "ἐρωτική διήγημα" came to be used: see Panagiotis Agapitos, *Η Ερωτική Διήγηση στα Μεσαιωνικά Χρόνια: Πέρσια – Βυζάντιο – Φράγκια* [*The Erotic Story in the Middle Ages: Persia – Bizantium – France*] (Athens: Εκδόσεις Άγρα, 2008), 14. For a full discussion of the terminology in antiquity and Byzantium for referring to the novel, see Nicoletta Marini, "Δράμα. Possibile denominazione per il romanzo greco d'amore," *Studi italiani di filologia classica* 84, no. 3(9) (1991), 232-243.

[6] Eugenianos' *D&C*, although mainly written in dodecasyllables, also features other verse forms through the inclusion of letters and epigrams, threnodic laments, love songs, and comic scenes in the narrative. On such diversity, see Nikos Zagklas, "Experimenting with Prose and Verse in Twelfth-Century Byzantium: A Preliminary Study," *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 71 (2017), 229-248. On the popularity of verse in this period, see Elizabeth Jeffreys, "Why Produce Verse in Twelfth-century Constantinople?," in *"Doux remède..." Poésie et poétique à Byzance. Actes du IVe colloque international philologique "Hermeneia". Paris, 23-24-25 février 2006*, ed. Paolo Odorico, Panagiotis Agapitos, and Martin Hinterberger (Paris: Centre d'Etudes Byzantines, Neo-Helleniques et Sud-Est Européennes, Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales, 2009), 219-228.

[7] See Suzanne Macalister, "Byzantine Twelfth-Century Romances: A Relative Chronology," *Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies* 15, no. 1 (1991), 175-211; Roderick Beaton, *The Medieval Greek Romance* (London: Routledge, 1989), 114-140; and Elizabeth Jeffreys, "A Date for Rhodanthe and Dosikles?" in *Der Roman im Byzanz der Komnenenzeit: Referate des Internationalen Symposiums an der Freien Universität Berlin, 3. bis 6. April 1998*, ed. Panagiotis Agapitos and Diether Roderich Reinsch (Frankfurt am Main: Beerenverlag, 2000), 127-136.

[8] Robert Browning, *History, Language and Literacy in the Byzantine World* (Northampton: Variorum reprints, 1989), VI, 5-9; and Ingela Nilsson, *Raconter Byzance: La Littérature au XIIe siècle* (Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 2014), 32-38.

[9] See Ingela Nilsson, "Romantic Love in Rhetorical Guise: The Byzantine Revival of the Twelfth Century," in *Fictional Storytelling in the Medieval Eastern Mediterranean and Beyond*, ed. Carolina Cupane and Bettina Krönung (Leiden: Brill, 2016), 46-48; Alexander P. Kazhdan and Annabel Jane Wharton Epstein, *Change in Byzantine culture in the eleventh and twelfth centuries* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985), 74-166; Cyril Mango (ed.), *The Oxford History of Byzantium* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 214-305; and Florence Meunier, *Le roman byzantin du XIIe siècle: à la découverte d'un nouveau monde?* (Paris: H. Champion, 2007), 13-38.

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less continuous financial support of aristocrats and the ruling family, who commissioned pieces of literature of diverse nature.[10] Most compositions were, before publication, first presented before an audience in literary gatherings or θέατρα.[11] Byzantine writers praised the language, rhetorical ability and creative prowess of ancient authors, and they drew inspiration from ancient Greek literature for the composition of their own works.[12] Byzantine literati were highly educated and showcase a great knowledge of the literary canon, which they display, among other things, through literary imitation.[13] Their literary production is therefore

[10] For more information on patronage and the aristocratization of Komnenian society, see Margaret Mullett, "Aristocracy and patronage in the literary circles of Comnenian Constantinople," in *The Byzantine Aristocracy IX-XIII Centuries, Papers of the Sixteenth Spring Symposium of Byzantine Studies (Edinburgh, March 1982)*, ed. M. Angold (Hampshire: Ashgate Publishing, 2007), 409-423; and Ingela Nilsson, *Writer and Occasion in Twelfth-Century Byzantium. The Authorial Voice of Constantine Manasses* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2021), 58-85.

[11] On θέατρα and literary circles, see Mullett, "Aristocracy and patronage in the literary circles of Comnenian Constantinople"; Przemysław Marciniak, "Byzantine Theatron – A Place of Performance?" in *Theatron: rhetorische Kultur in Spätantike und Mittelalter*, ed. Michael Grünbart (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2007), 277-285; and Niels Gaul, "Performative Reading in the Late Byzantine Theatron," in *Reading in the Byzantine Empire and Beyond*, ed. Teresa Shawcross and Ida Toth (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018), 215-233.

[12] On Hellenism in Byzantium and on the "antiquarianism" of Byzantine scholars, see e.g. Kazhdan and Wharton, *Change in Byzantine Culture in the Eleventh and Twelfth Centuries*, 138-141; Anthony Kaldellis, *Hellenism in Byzantium. The Transformations of Greek Identity and the Reception of the Classical Tradition* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008); and Emmanuel Bourbouhakis, "Byzantine Literary Criticism and the Classical Heritage," in *The Cambridge Intellectual History of Byzantium*, ed. Anthony Kaldellis and Nikitas Siniossoglou (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017), 113-128. See also Anthony Kaldellis, "Classical Scholarship in Twelfth Century Byzantium," in *Medieval Greek Commentaries on the Nicomachean Ethics*, ed. Charles Barber and David Jenkins (Leiden: Brill, 2009), 1-43; and Anthony Kaldellis, "The Reception of Classical Literature and Ancient Myth," in *The Oxford Handbook of Byzantine Literature*, ed. Stratis Papaioannou (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2021), 162-171.

[13] I will use the term "literary imitation" rather than "mimesis" (μίμησις). See the remarks by Juan Signes Codoñer and Inmaculada Pérez Martín in *Textual Transmission in Byzantium: Between Textual Criticism and Quellenforschung* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2014), 11-30 and 61-90; who emphasize the importance of not focusing only on mimesis (as imitation of the past) but also on actualization (how texts function in their own time). See also Ingela Nilsson, "Literature. No Longer the Cinderella of Byzantine Studies," in *The 24th International Congress of Byzantine Studies*, ed. Emiliano Fiori and Michele Trizio (Venice: Fondazione Università Ca' Foscari, 2022), 150-152.

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often characterized by a high degree of transtextuality.[14] We should therefore assume an educated audience, capable of understanding and enjoying the ubiquitous allusions to previous texts in Byzantine literary works.[15]

The ancient novels were read among the educated throughout the history of Byzantium.[16] Both the ancient novels and their Komnenian successors were regarded as exercises of rhetorical prowess, as the marginal annotations in some of the codices containing Greek erotic fiction suggest.[17] The re-emergence of the novelistic tradition might have been facilitated by the heightened interest in ancient literature in the twelfth century. Moreover, there seems to be a link between the interest in the depiction of amorous matters and the importance of marriage as a political matter in the Komnenian period.[18] The re-appearance of the novel took place in an aristocratic environment, and Komnenian novels had as their

[14] On literary imitation, see e.g. Herbert Hunger, "On the Imitation (ΜΙΜΗΣΙΣ) of Antiquity in Byzantine Literature," *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 23/24 (1969-1970), 17; and Ingela Nilsson, "The Same Story, but Another. A Reappraisal of Literary Imitation in Byzantium," in *Imitatio - Aemulatio - Variatio. Akten des Internationalen Wissenschaftlichen Symposions zur Byzantinischen Sprache und Literatur (Wien, 22.–25. Oktober 2008)*, ed. Andreas Rhoby and Elisabeth Schiffer (Wien: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 2010), 198-202. On literary imitation as cultural appropriation, see Przemysław Marciniak, "The Undead in Byzantium. Some Notes on the Reception of Ancient Literature in Twelfth-Century Byzantium," *Troianalexandrina* 13 (2013), 95-111. For a broader view on rewriting, see Stephanos Efthymiadis, "Rewriting," in *The Oxford Handbook of Byzantine Literature*, ed. Stratis Papaioannou (New York: Oxford University Press, 2021), 348-364; and Stavroula Constantinou, "Metaphrasis. Mapping Premodern Rewriting", in *Metaphrasis. A Byzantine Concept of Rewriting and Its Hagiographical Products*, ed. Stavroula Constantinou and Cristian Høgel (Leiden: Brill, 2021), 3-60. On transtextuality, understood as the textual transcendence of a text – that is, its overt or concealed interrelationships with other texts –, see Gérard Genette: *The Architext: An Introduction* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992), *Palimpsests: Literature in the Second Degree* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1997), and *Paratexts. Thresholds of Interpretation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997).

[15] On the audience of Komnenian novels, see Panagiotis Roilos, *Amphoteroglossia: A Poetics of the Twelfth-Century Medieval Greek Novel* (Washington D.C.: Harvard University Press, 2005), 11-13.

[16] See Ingela Nilsson and Nikos Zagklas, "'Hurry up, reap every flower of the logoi!': The Use of Greek Novels in Byzantium," *Greek, Roman, and Byzantine Studies* 57 (2017), 1120-1148; and Nikos Manousakis, "(Re)discovering Love Stories: Byzantine Mentality and the Greek Novel from the Ninth to the Fifteenth Century CE," *The Journal of Greco-Roman Studies* 57 (2018), 123-144.

[17] See Roilos, "'I grasp, oh, artist, your enigma, I grasp your drama': Reconstructing the Implied Audience of the Twelfth-Century Byzantine Novel," in *Fictional Storytelling in the Medieval Eastern Mediterranean and Beyond*, ed. Carolina Cupane and Bettina Krönung (Leiden: Brill, 2016), 466-468; and Roilos, "Amphoteroglossia: The Role of Rhetoric in the Medieval Greek Learned Novel," in *Der Roman im Byzanz der Komnenenzeit: Referate des Internationalen Symposiums an der Freien Universität Berlin, 3. bis 6. April 1998*, ed. Panagiotis Agapitos and Diether Roderich Reinsch (Frankfurt am Main: Beerenverlag, 2000), 110-112.

[18] See Anthony Kaldellis, "The Emergence of Literary Fiction in Byzantium and the Paradox of Plausibility," in *Medieval Greek Storytelling: Fictionality and Narrative in Byzantium*, ed. Panagiotis Roilos (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2014), 115-129. On the importance of marriage, see Angeliki E. Laiou, *Mariage, amour et parenté à Byzance aux XIe-XIIIe siècles* (Paris: De Boccard, 1992), 94-96; and Roilos, *Amphoteroglossia*, 4-7.

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audience prominent figures of the court and other literari.[19] It is probable that these works were composed on commission, and were perhaps presented in *theatra*.[20] However, they also may have fulfilled an educational purpose, and many passages in the novels adhere to the progymnasmatic tradition.[21] Although only four erotic fictional tales were written during the Komnenian period, similar works – that have since been classified as "romances" – would be produced in Palaiologan times.[22]

Not much is known about Niketas Eugenianos' life. Eugenianos appears to have worked both as teacher and as a writer on commission. As mentioned by Elizabeth Jeffreys, Eugenianos seems to have had a close relationship with Theodoros Prodromos, who might have been his teacher and for whom he composed various monodies.[23] He authored several other texts, including two marriage poems in verse (*epithalamia*), a funeral oration (*epitaphios*) for Stephanos Komnenos, and a letter to a certain ἐρωμένη γραμματική. Other

[19] See Suzanne MacAlister, "Byzantine Developments," in *Greek fiction: the Greek novel in context*, ed. John R. Morgan and Richard Stoneman (London: Routledge, 1994), 275-278; and Elizabeth Jeffreys, "The Novels of Mid-Twelfth Century Constantinople: The Literary and Social Context," in *AETOS. Studies in Honour of Cyril Mango presented to him on April 14, 1998*, ed. Ihor Sevcenko and Irmgard Hutter (Berlin: De Gruyter, 1998), 191-99. On poetry on commission in Komnenian Byzantium, see Nikos Zagklas, "'How Many Verses Shall I Write and Say?': Poetry in the Komnenian Period (1081–1204)," in *A companion to Byzantine Poetry*, ed. Wolfram Hörandner, Andreas Rhoby, and Nikos Zagklas (Leiden: Brill, 2019), 237-263.

[20] See Nilsson, "Romantic Love in Rhetorical Guise," 51-56; Roilos, *Amphoteroglossia*, 11-13; and Roilos, "I grasp, oh, artist, your enigma, I grasp your drama," 463-465.

[21] See Ingela Nilsson and Nikos Zagklas, "'Hurry up, reap every flower of the *logoi*!': The Use of Greek Novels in Byzantium," 1144-1147. The *progymnasmata* were a series of exercises, increasing in difficulty, aimed at teaching composition strategies to students already proficient in the Greek language. For an overview of the main handbooks of *progymnasmata* used in Byzantium, see George A. Kennedy (ed.), *Progymnasmata: Greek Textbooks of Prose Composition and Rhetoric* (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2003).

[22] On Palaiologan romance, see Carolina Cupane, "In the Realm of Eros: The Late Byzantine Vernacular Romance – Original Texts," in *Fictional Storytelling in the Medieval Eastern Mediterranean and Beyond*, ed. Carolina Cupane and Bettina Krönung (Leiden: Brill, 2016), 95-126; Kostas Yiavis, "The Adaptations of Western Sources by Byzantine Vernacular Romances," in *Fictional Storytelling in the Medieval Eastern Mediterranean and Beyond*, ed. Carolina Cupane and Bettina Krönung (Leiden: Brill, 2016), 127-155; and Adam J. Goldwyn and Ingela Nilsson, ed. *Reading the Late Byzantine Romance* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018). For a broader overview of Medieval Greek erotic fiction, see also Beaton, *The Medieval Greek Romance*.

[23] See Jeffreys, *Four Byzantine Novels*, 341-342; and Roilos, "I grasp, oh, artist, your enigma, I grasp your drama," 464.

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texts have been attributed to him, but his authorship remains debated.[24] In this thesis, I will focus only on his novel, *Drosilla & Charikles*.[25]

Literature review

Although medieval Greek erotic fiction used to be dismissed by scholarship as mere replicas of Hellenistic novels, this changed during the 1970s, with the publication of "Critical Reappraisal of Eustathios Makrembolites' *Hysmine and Hysminias*" by Margaret Alexiou.[26] Since then, scholarly interest in these works has considerably increased, as they became accepted as literary texts worthy of attention. During the last decades, these texts, both from the Komnenian and Palaiologan periods, have been re-edited and translated into modern languages.[27] The early research on *D&C* focused mainly on Eugenianos' literary imitation. Already in 1935, Karel Svoboda published an article in which Eugenianos' indebtedness to Longos, Heliodoros, Theokritos and the Greek Anthology is recognised.[28] Similar observations were made in 1975 by Stavros Deligiorgis, who explores how this text interacts

[24] Namely, some *schede* (grammatical exercises), the *Anarchasis* and some letters following it in a manuscript, and another monody. See Jeffreys, *Four Byzantine Novels*, 341-342.

[25] The text is found in four manuscripts ranging from the 13th century to the 16th century; it is usually found together with epistles and with the other novels of the twelfth century, especially Prodromos' *Rhodanthe & Dosikles.* Out of the four manuscripts, only one of them (cod. Parisinus Graecus 2908, 15th century) is a single text codex. The oldest extant copy of *D&C* is cod. Venetus Marcianus Graecus 412 (13th century), which contains, apart from *D&C*, some minor works by Konstantinos Manasses and Theodoros Prodromos, as well fictional epistles, proverbs, and epigrams, among other compositions. In all three composite manuscripts, Niketas Eugenianos' *D&C* coexists with works by Prodromos and other twelfth-century writers of erotic fiction. In certain manuscripts, *D&C* is attributed to Prodromos or, even more commonly, said to have been composed "in imitation of Prodromos' work".

[26] The modern concept of originality did not exist in Byzantium; authority was created through the use and knowledge of the literary canon and through the literary imitation of previous models. See Margaret Alexiou, "A Critical Reappraisal of Eustathios Makrembolites' *Hysmine and Hysminias*," *Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies* 3, no. 1 (1977), 23-43. For a more detailed overview of previous scholarship on the novel, see Roilos, *Amphoteroglossia*, 13-14.

[27] *D&C* has been translated into French, Czech, Italian, German, English, and Polish: Philippe Le Bas, *Les aventures de Drosilla et Chariclès* (Paris: R. Merlin Libraire, 1841); Rudolf Mertlík, *O lásce Drosilly Charikla* (Prague: Odeon, 1987); Fabrizio Conca, *Il romanzo bizantino del XII. secolo: Teodoro Prodromo, Niceta Eugeniano, Eustazio Macrembolita, Costantino Manasse* (Torino: Unione Tipografico-Editrice Torinese, 1994); Karl Plepetis, *Drosilla und Charikles* (Stuttgart: Hiersemann, 2003); Joan B. Burton, *A Byzantine Novel: Drosilla and Charikles, by Niketas Eugenianos* (Wauconda: Bolchazy-Carducci Publishers, 2004); Jeffreys, *Four Byzantine Novels* (2012); and Katarzyna Gara, *Drosilla i Charikles* (Krakow: Księgarnia Akademicka, 2013). In this thesis, I will use Jeffreys' translation.

[28] Karel Svoboda, "La composition et le style du roman de Nicétas Eugénianos," in *Actes du IVe congrès international des études byzantines, Sofia, septiembre 1934*, ed. Bogdan D. Filov (Sofia: Imprimerie de la Cour, 1935-1936), 1:191-201.

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with the literary tradition, with a particular focus on Eugenianos' engagement with the works of Longos, Heliodoros, and Musaios.[29] More recently, contributions to our understanding of *D&C*'s transtextual relationships were made by Joan Burton, who focuses on its bucolic dimension;[30] by Katalin L. Delbó, who approaches the broader range of literary models for *D&C*;[31] and by Emma Huig, who analyzed the literary models for Drosilla's ekphrasis in Book 1.[32]

Research on *D&C* has thus thoroughly scrutinized the text in the search for the literary models employed by Eugenianos. In recent decades, various scholarly studies on medieval Greek erotic fictions have recently been published.[33] Comprehensive analyses of the so-called Komnenian novels have also started to appear, with research on medieval Greek erotic fiction recently shifting to a narratological approach. Since 2001, Ingela Nilsson has carried out several studies on the Komnenian novels, particularly on *H&H*, for which she provided a

[29] Stavros Deligiorgis, "A Byzantine Romance in International Perspective. The *Drosilla and Charikles* of Niketas Eugenianos," *Neo-Hellenika*, no. 2 (1975), 21-32. For further studies on the transtextual links of *D&C*, see Antonino M. Milazzo, "Motivi bucolici e tecnica alessandrina in due "idilli" di Niceta Eugeniano," *Studi di Filologia Bizantina* 3 (1985), 97-114; Andrea Giusti, "Cultura letteraria e pratica compositiva nel romanzo di Niceta Eugeniano," in *Metodologie della ricerca sulla tarda antichitá. Atti del primo convegno dell'associazione di studi tardoantichi*, ed. Antonio Garzya (Naples: D'Auria, 1989), 407-14; Fabrizio Conca, "Il romanzo di Niceta Eugeniano: Modelli narrativi e stilistici," *Siculorum Gymnasium. Rassegna della Facoltà di Lettere e Filosofia dell'Università di Catania* 39, no. 1-2 (1986), 115-26; and Corinne Jouanno, "Nicetas Eugenianos, un héritier du roman grec," *Revue des Études Grecques* 102 (1989), 346-360. All of them focus on the literary models for *D&C*.

[30] Joan B. Burton, "Reviving the Pagan Greek Novel in a Christian World," *Greek, Roman and Byzantine Studies* 39, no. 2 (1998), 179-216; "A Reemergence of Theocritean Poetry in the Byzantine Novel," *Classical Philology* 98, no. 3 (2003), 251-73; "The Pastoral in Byzantium," in *Brill's Companion to Greek and Latin Pastoral*, ed. Marco Fantuzzi and Theodoros D. Papanghelis (Leiden: Brill, 2011), 549-579; and "From Theocritean to Longan Bucolic: Eugenianus' *Drosilla and Charicles*," *Greek, Roman and Byzantine Studies* 52 (2012), 684-713.

[31] Katalin L. Delbó, "Ein byzantinischer Roman aus dem 12. Jahrhundert. Niketas Eugenianos: *Drosilla und Charikles*," in *Investigatio Fontium. Griechische und lateinische Quellen mit Erläuterungen*, ed. László Horváth (Budapest:Eötvös-József-Collegium, 2014), 71-81; "Παρατηρήσεις σχετικά με τα βυζαντινά μυθιστορήματα του 12ου αιώνα," in *Studia Hellenica*, ed. Zoltán Farkas, Horváth László, and Tamás Mészáros (Budapest:Eötvös-József-Collegium, 2016), 49-56; and "A 12. századi bizánci regény Hagyomány és újítás Nikétas Eugenianos *Drosilla és Chariklés* c. regényében," PhD diss., Eötvös Loránd Tudományegyetem, 2020.

[32] Emma Huig, "'Mixing Roses with Milk': Recovering the Tradition behind the Ekphrasis of Niketas Eugenianos' *Drosilla and Charikles* 1.120-158," *KLEOS - Amsterdam Bulletin of Ancient Studies and Archaeology* 4 (2021), 58-75.

[33] See, for example, Panagiotis Agapitos and Ole L. Smith, *The Study of Medieval Greek Romance: A Reassessment of Recent Work* (Copenhagen: Museum Tusculanum Press, 1992).

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narratological analysis.[34] Similarly, Panagiotis Roilos has studied the poetics and audience of Komnenian erotic fiction.[35] Other relevant contributions to the study of Niketas Eugenianos' *D&C* are those by Arantxa Illgen Izquierdo and Paloma Cortez. Arantxa Illgen Izquierdo's PhD Thesis offers a narratological analysis of *D&C* focused on the role of communication (*logos*) in the narrative and provides valuable insight into the novel.[36] Paloma Cortez's ongoing PhD research focuses on the characters' self-awareness of the literary tradition, a topic on which she has published various articles.[37] It is among these later studies that this thesis finds its place.

Objectives and outline

This thesis' main objective is to provide a deeper understanding of the literary strategies employed by Niketas Eugenianos in *D&C* for undermining the novelistic tradition, subverting generic and readerly expectations, and playfully "distancing" himself from other authors, particularly from other novel writers. I will perform a narratological analysis and explore several examples of Eugenianos' "distancing" and subversion in *D&C*. This thesis will analyze how these strategies work in the narrative, what the effects of such subversion of readerly expectations may be, and how these strategies might have contributed to Eugenianos' display of literary virtuosity. Eugenianos shows a remarkable awareness of his indebtedness to his predecessors and of his place in a long tradition. Despite this – or perhaps

[34] Ingela Nilsson, *Erotic Pathos, Rhetorical Pleasure: Narrative Technique and Mimesis in Eumathios Makrembolites' Hysmine & Hysminias* (Uppsala: Uppsala University Library, 2001); Nilsson, "Romantic Love in Rhetorical Guise"; and Nilsson, *Writer and Occasion in Twelfth-Century Byzantium*.

[35] Roilos, "Amphoteroglossia: The Role of Rhetoric in the Medieval Greek Learned Novel"; Roilos, *Amphoteroglossia*; and Roilos, "I grasp, oh, artist, your enigma, I grasp your drama".

[36] Arantxa Illgen Izquierdo, "Formes del Logos en la novel·la bizantina. Estudi narratològic de les Διηγήσεις bizantines de l'època Comnena (s. XII) i Paleòloga (s. XIII-IV)," PhD diss., Universitat de Barcelona, 2015. For an introduction to the text, see also Arantxa Illgen Izquierdo, "Novel·la bizantina en context: A propòsit de Drosil·la i Chariclés, novel·la comnena de Nicetes Eugenianós, s.XII," *Anuari de Filologia Antiqua et Mediaevalia* 9, no. 1 (2019), 50-73.

[37] Paloma Cortez, "Innovación en torno al tópos anti-bárbaro: la representación del árabe en *Drosila y Caricles*," *Erytheia*, 42 (2021), 59-77; Paloma Cortez, "Personajes secundarios y su vínculo con la tradición literaria en *Drosila y Caricles* de Nicetas Eugeniano (s. XII)," *Anales De Filología Clásica* 1, no. 35 (2022), 37-47; and Paloma Cortez, "Generic self-awareness in a Komnenian novel: the hero in *Drosilla and Charikles*," *Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies* 47, no. 2 (2023).

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due to it –, his dialogue with previous works is not always straightforward. In his reshaping and actualization of literary models, he playfully challenges generic expectations, sometimes highlighting the differences between his work and those of previous authors. This thesis will thus provide insight into the interaction between Eugenianos and his audience, as well as into Eugenianos' dialogue with his literary predecessors, which will in turn highlight the subversive potential of literary imitation.

This thesis is divided into 3 chapters:

- Chapter 1 will be devoted to the narratological and literary analysis of *D&C*. It will provide a division of the text and an overview of its plot and motifs. Furthermore, in this chapter I will identify the narrative techniques employed by Eugenianos for the composition of his novel. This chapter will thus serve as an introduction to the text and the literary devices used by Eugenianos, which will be further analyzed in subsequent chapters.
- Chapter 2 will offer an analysis of Eugenianos dialogue with previous works through "literary distancing". His engagement with the literary canon sometimes serves a subversive purpose and becomes a way for Eugenianos to playfully distance himself from other writers. At the same time, it allows him to display his knowledge of the literary tradition and his virtuosity as a *literatus*. My analysis of such literary strategies aims to identify how Eugenianos positions himself in relation to the literary tradition and to shed light on the intended effect of his "distancing" on *D&C*'s audience.
- Chapter 3 will approach *D&C* as a subversive piece of literature. The narratological analysis of *D&C* in Chapter 1 and the observations in Chapter 2 on the subversive literary strategies employed by Eugenianos in the novel will be here further expanded. By considering Eugenianos' subversion of traditional Greek novelistic conventions

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and motifs, his establishment of contrasts and parallelisms between different storylines, and the comic modulations in *D&C*, I will underline how this work can be – at least partially – understood as a somewhat "anti-novelistic novel", as a work that pokes fun at the traditional ideas about love.

Methodology

In this thesis I will perform a literary analysis of *D&C* drawing primarily on narratology as well as on transtextuality and close reading. The ancient novels and some of the other "Komnenian novels" have already been the subject of narratological study.[38] For my narratological analysis (Chapter 1), I take as reference Mieke Bal's *Narratology: Introduction to the Theory of Narrative* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2017) and Irene J. F. de Jong's *Narratology and Classics: A Practical Guide* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014). I analyze the plot and structure of the text, its narrative strategies and tempo, characterization, and its usage of space and time. In the later sections of Chapter 1, I identify some motifs and themes present in the novel that will be relevant for the discussion of Eugenianos' subversive literary strategies in later chapters.

In Chapter 2, my focus is Eugenianos' "distancing" from his literary models, that is, Eugenianos' subversive engagement with previous literary works. Ingela Nilsson argued in her 2001 monograph that literary imitation has three functions: 1) providing a space for the display of knowledge, 2) enriching a text with further meanings, and 3) appealing to those who share this literary knowledge.[39] Building on this, in this thesis I explore the functions of literary imitation within the text, for which I analyzed the transtextual relationships established in this process. Although most literary imitation, also in *D&C*, seems to work by

[38] See, e.g., Thomas Hägg, *Narrative Technique in Ancient Greek Romances: Studies of Chariton, Xenophon Ephesus, and Achilles Tatius* (Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell, 1971); and Nilsson, *Erotic Pathos, Rhetorical Pleasure*.
[39] Nilsson, *Erotic Pathos, Rhetorical Pleasure*, 262.

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"reinforcing" or "strengthening" what is being written – thus granting the source text further authority –, I argue that there is also a different type of engagement with previous literary works. Sometimes, an author will produce meanings different to those of his literary models in some sort of revision of a hypotext. Eugenianos deliberately engages in this kind of dialogue with his predecessors, mainly with previous novel writers, differentiating himself from previous literary works by acknowledging readerly expectations while still stepping away from the literary model; that is, through "literary distancing".[40]

D&C is a hybrid composition, since Eugenianos employs a wide range of literary models from different literary traditions. In Chapter 3, I will explore the coexistence of elements and conventions associated with diverse genres and their inclusion in *D&C* through what Alastair Fowler defined as "generic modulations".[41] "Generic modulations" is to be understood as "the incorporation of elements from various literary genres into the genre of the novel". Recent studies have recognized the multigeneric layers of the text and Eugenianos' disregard for established generic boundaries, visible in his employment of rhetorical, allegorical, and comic modulations.[42] I have limited my scope to the comic modulations in *D&C*, that is, I will only analyze the inclusion of comic elements in the novel. To do this, I take as a reference Roilos' 2005 *Amphoteroglossia: A Poetics of the Twelfth-Century Medieval Greek Novel*. Comedy is to be understood as a broad category, ranging from satire to the inclusion of ordinary scenes in the novel. There are several instances of comic elements in *D&C*, both overt and covert, that undermine the text's "solemnity" and

[40] This phenomenon was pointed out by Anthony Kaldellis in "The Reception of Classical Literature and Ancient Myth," 173; but has so far received little attention. On "distancing" – or "contrasting" – as a literary strategy in which the author suggests other possible scenarios and events, see also Baukje van den Berg, *Homer the Rhetorician. Eustathios of Thessalonike on the Composition of the Iliad* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2022), 161.

[41] See Alastair Fowler, *Kinds of Literature. An Introduction to the Theory of Genres and Modes* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1982), 191-212.

[42] See Roilos, *Amphoteroglossia*, 16-24. A similar study is that of Ulrich Moennig: "Literary Genres and Mixture of Generic Features in Late Byzantine Fictional Writing," in *Medieval Greek Storytelling: Fictionality and Narrative in Byzantium*, ed. Panagiotis Roilos (Wiesbaden: Mainzer Veröffentlichungen zur Byzantinistik, 2014), 163-182. Moennig's argument, however, limits this phenomenon to the Late Byzantine period, while I would argue that it is already visible in the literary production of the Komnenian period.

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focus on love. Similarly, the presence of satirical episodes and the coexistence of parodical views on love reinforce Eugenianos' subversion of readerly expectations. This thesis adopts Haldon's definition of humor as "the deliberate or accidental creation of a context in which tension (…) can be built up or dissipated"; it considers parody "the ironic, playful, or subversive dialogue between *D&C* and other texts or literary traditions", a definition adapted from Messis and Nilsson.[43]

My aim in Chapter 3 is not to classify the relevant examples nor to identify the objective behind every instance of humor in the text, but to understand how they function in the text.[44] By analyzing some of its comic elements, its parodic episodes, and the contrasts between different storylines and characters, I will underline how readerly expectations based on knowledge of the literary conventions for a novel are undermined by Eugenianos, making *D&C,* and especially its conceptualization of love – its main topic – subversive. Also useful for this thesis will be the concept of "amphoteroglossia", which serves to characterize the duplicity and contradictions in meaning produced by Byzantine literati through rhetoric.[45] In his study, Roilos highlights the high interdiscursivity and dialogic referentiality of the literary experimentation of Komnenian novelists, which can be considered ambivalent and polyphonous. Eugenianos stands in an amphoteroglossic dialogue with the literary canon, for he establishes several parallelisms and contrasts between different characters, plots, and ideas. Some of them stem from the literary tradition while others contribute to his parody of novelistic conventions, thus further contributing to subversion in *D&C*. By a close analysis of relevant episodes, I aim to demonstrate how *D&C* could be considered an "anti-novelistic

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[43] John Haldon, "Humour and the Everyday in Byzantium," in *Humour, History and Politics in Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages*, ed. Guy Halsall (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 48-71. Charis Messis and Ingela Nilsson, "Parody in Byzantine Literature," in *Satire in the Middle Byzantine Period: The Golden Age of Laughter?*, ed. Przemysław Marciniak and Ingela Nilsson (Leiden: Brill, 2021), 69-70.
[44] On Byzantine humor, see Przemysław Marciniak, "The Byzantine Sense of Humor," in *Humor in der arabischen Kultur*, ed. Georges Tamer (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2009), 127-135.
[45] This term was borrowed from Tzetzes, for whom it represented the rhetor's ability to twist or transform (μεταπλάττειν) meaning and create opposite ideas using the same words. See Roilos, *Amphoteroglossia*, 1-24.

novel" and explore how Eugenianos enters a playful dialogue with previous and contemporary works and displays his literary virtuosity.

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Chapter 1

Drosilla & Charikles: A narratological analysis

Λαβεῖν σε πρὸς νοῦν ἱκετεύω τοὺς πάλαι
ἔρωτι συγκραθέντας εἰς ψυχὴν μίαν

I beseech you to call to mind those who in the past
were united by love into one soul.
(*D&C* 6.386-387)

In this chapter, I will perform a narratological analysis of *D&C*, which will serve as an introduction to this work and as a basis for further research in the following chapters. I will analyze the plot, structure, characterization, narrative strategies and usage of space and time in the novel. I will also tackle some of its most important motifs and themes, but for brevity reasons I will limit my analysis of the motifs in *D&C* to the portrayal of love as a disease, the characters' empathy, and their fortune (Τύχη), topics which will find continuation in the following chapters, as they are central to the passages that will be discussed. I have therefore opted for not including in this analysis some other important motifs for the novel, such as the *topoi* of love at first sight, pirates, elopement, separation, slavery, and imprisonment.

Main plot

Drosilla and Charikles fall in love during Dionysos' festival at Phthia. Trying to elope they get onto a ship that ends up being attacked by pirates. When fleeing from the pirates, they arrive to Barzon, which is being raided by the Parthians, and are taken to Parthia, where they are imprisoned and separated. In prison, Charikles meets Kleandros, who has had experiences similar to his in his courtship of Kalligone, from whom he has been separated.[46] They tell their stories to each other and become friends. The Parthian queen, Chrysilla,

[46] Kleandros' story constitutes the major subplot in the novel.

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develops a romantic interest in Charikles, while her son Kleinias falls in love with Drosilla. The couple pretend to be siblings and to help them fulfil their desires. After the Parthian king, Kratylos, dies poisoned by Chrysilla, nothing stands between the Parthian queen and her love of Charikles. Not long after, a letter arrives from the Arab satrap Chagos demanding the Parthians' surrender. After their negative reply, Chagos prepares an army and besieges Parthia. Kleinias dies in battle and Chrysilla, grieving, kills herself. Drosilla, Charikles, and Kleandros are taken captive for a third time, now by the Arabs, who bring them back to Arabia. On the way there, Drosilla is hit by a branch and falls from the wagon in which she was travelling into the sea. Charikles discovers this and thinks her dead; his laments arouse compassion in Chagos, who frees both him and Kleandros. They go searching for Drosilla, who has survived the fall and, after wandering through the desert, arrives at a village and is found by an old lady named Maryllis, who brings Drosilla to her house and takes care of her.

Drosilla has a dream and discovers that Charikles is nearby, at Xenokrates' inn. She is taken there by Maryllis, but when she inquires about his lover, Kallidemos –Xenokrates' son, who tries to woo Drosilla– is lured by her beauty and says he does not know any Charikles. Charikles receives a similar dream telling him that Drosilla is in the village. When he and Kleandros go looking for her, Kleandros overhears Drosilla mention Charikles' name as she relates her story to Maryllis. The lovers thus reunite. Maryllis hears their story and celebrates their reunion with a banquet. When they go to sleep, a ship captain named Gnathon arrives with a "double announcement", both good and bad. He tells them that Kalligone has died. Kleandros is struck by grief and dies the next day. Gnathon had also been tasked with finding Drosilla and Charikles. Now that he has found them, and after another banquet and Kleandros' death and funeral, he takes them to Barzon, where their fathers are looking for them. They finally manage to return to their homeland and get married.

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Structure and composition

D&C is conventionally divided into nine books, as was also the case with Hellenistic novels and Prodromos' *Rhodanthe & Dosikles*. Eugenianos' novel begins with a prologue containing the argument of the whole novel, a sort of abstract only found in manuscript P (Parisinus Graecus 2908). However, actions are not limited to books, and sometimes they overarch through various books.[47] For my division of this text, I will attend to four main factors: 1) narrative episodes framed by extended descriptions, 2) tempo or rhythm, 3) setting, and 4) presence of secondary characters.

Book 1 sets the scene for the later development of the plot and is the most ekphrastic out of the nine, since the main characters are described when first presented. It provides the complication – the fact that the couple is taken by the Parthians – that triggers the subsequent obstacles of the story. Book 9 gives a somewhat sudden closure to the story – their return home thanks to Gnathon – and brings resolution to their problems through marriage. Therefore, and given that their tempo is slower, I argue that they can be considered respectively to constitute some sort of epilogue and prologue for the novel. Leaving these two books aside, I would therefore suggest a tripartite division of the novel: The first part (books 2 to 4.68) would be that of the heroes and of the friend, Kleandros. The books of this part are analeptic, have a slower tempo, and serve as the orientation of the story since they go over events prior to the beginning of the novel. Eugenianos introduces minor digressions and meter variations throughout them, as he employs a wide array of forms, combining four love letters (2.169-185, 2.202-223, 2.240-277, 2.284-315), four songs (2.326-385, 3.263-288, 3.297-322, 4.156-219), and seven epigrams (3.135-254).[48] The second part (4.69 to 6) would be that relevant to the events surrounding Kleinias and Chrysilla, the first adversaries, in Parthia. It has a faster tempo and takes place in different locations (the cell, the meadow, the

[47] As is the case, for example, with Charikles' and Kleandros' recapitulations, that occupy books 2 to 4.
[48] On the letters in *D&C*, see Carolina Cupane, "Letters in Narrative Literature," in *A Companion to Byzantine Epistolography*, ed. Alexander Riehle (Leiden: Brill, 2020), 416-417.

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Parthian castle, etc.). There are several shifts in tone (love songs, laments, war scenes). In the third part of the novel the tempo slows down again, with some minor obstacles appearing on the horizon. It introduces different locations (such as the village) and new characters (like Kallidemos, Maryllis, and Gnathon), and events happen in relatively fast succession, which, added to the abundance of dialogues, contributes to its rhythm. It occupies books 6 to 8, set mainly in the village and involving Kallidemos, the second adversary.

D&C combines various types of narrative modes, such as descriptions, report – also known as commentary – and speech – also known as dialogue. The prevalence of these discursive modes varies greatly throughout the text, but descriptions are less numerous. The pace of *D&C*, its rhythm or tempo, is regulated by the alternation of these different types of discourse, with books mostly made up of speech and descriptions being slower – as is the case for book 6 – while others, in which commentary and scenes are presented alongside dialogue, have a faster pace – as happens with book 5. Overall, the story builds up in a simple but gradual way: Books 1 to 4 constitute the development phase of the narrative. Books 4 to 8, as other characters start to become obstacles for the love of Drosilla and Charikles, can be considered the crisis of the narrative, and book 9 would stand alone as the closure to the story, very different in rhythm – for everything slows down as they are focusing only on their return – to the book immediately before.

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Narrator and characters

*D&*C has an external and omniscient primary narrator. The narrative includes embedded narratives by secondary internal narrators, namely during the recapitulations of events by the characters and in Kleandros' subplot, and there is even tertiary narration, as is the case for the interventions of Charikles' friends in his story to Charikles. The point of view is generally that of an omniscient external narrator, able to follow the lovers' adventures and

to split their attention whenever Drosilla and Charikles are not together. The primary narratee remains implicit in the main narrative, while embedded narratives are directed towards certain characters as secondary narratees.

The appearance of narratorial comments is also worth noting. In some cases, Eugenianos' narrator comments on the very role of the narrator-writer, such as in 1.42 ("What more can be said? …"), about the siege of Barzon, and in 9.159-167 ("I cannot describe their joy…"), when their families saw the couple. These interventions, albeit few, stress the emotions portrayed – respectively, horror at the terrible nature of the events and happiness – and provide external judgement on certain plot developments, thus contributing to the metaliterariness of the text, for the narrator enters the story questioning the possibility to convey what happened through words.[49] A further example of this, would be 9.220-227. In this narratorial comment, the stereotypical view of women as emotional beings is expressed as a universal remark or gnomic aside commenting on the narrative: "For womankind is easily moved, and is ready to mourn for the sufferings even of strangers, and is ever inclined to weep".[50]

Although the main characters of this novel are clearly Drosilla and Charikles, they are not explored in great detail.[51] *Ekphraseis* of their appearance do appear in the text, both in the case of Drosilla (e.g. 1.120-158) and in that of Charikles (4.79-85), but their character and disposition are not described except for a few scattered remarks on their good character,

[49] See also Nilsson, "Romantic Love in Rhetorical Guise," 48-49. Such rhetorical remarks are not uncommon in Byzantine literature and can be observed in diverse literary forms.

[50] Similar maxims appear also in Achilles Tatios' novel, as pointed out in Koen De Temmerman, "Achilles Tatius," in *Characterization in Ancient Greek Literature*, ed. Koen De Temmerman and Evert van Emde Boas (Leiden: Brill, 2018), 604-606.

[51] As for the ancient novels, the importance given to characterization varies greatly. *Daphnis & Chloe*, for example, develops further and more gradually its lovers' characterization, while *Ephesiaka* does not generally give prominence to character description. On characterization in the ancient Greek novels, see Koen De Temmerman, "Chariton," in *Characterization in Ancient Greek Literature*, ed. Koen De Temmerman and Evert van Emde Boas (Leiden: Brill, 2018), 561-577; Koen De Temmerman, "Xenophon of Ephesus," in *Characterization in Ancient Greek Literature*, ed. Koen De Temmerman and Evert van Emde Boas (Leiden: Brill, 2018), 578-590; De Temmerman, "Achilles Tatius," 591-607; John R. Morgan, "Longus," in *Characterization in Ancient Greek Literature*, ed. Koen De Temmerman and Evert van Emde Boas (Leiden: Brill, 2018), 608-627; and John R. Morgan, "Heliodorus," in *Characterization in Ancient Greek Literature*, ed. Koen De Temmerman and Evert van Emde Boas (Leiden: Brill, 2018), 628-649.

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chastity, and loving nature; nothing that really defines them as living and breathing individuals.[52] Introductory characterization is thus focused mainly on physical aspects, and the characters personality is disclosed through their actions – which they perform according to the requirements of the plot, and which are typified according to predictable behaviors and generic codes already visible in ancient novels.[53] Their emotional reactions are nonetheless visible through their laments.

Like their Hellenistic counterparts, Drosilla and Charikles seem to find themselves unable to act against destiny, and thus suffer through it wondering what will happen next.[54] They are portrayed as actors of their own story in some regards, the main example being their choice to present themselves as siblings instead of lovers so as to not arouse suspicion in the Parthians.[55] However, the plot mostly develops due to other agents. Other characters play this role, such as Chagos, who lets Kleandros and Charikles free; Kleandros, who finds Drosilla and therefore propitiates the lovers' reunion; or Gnathon, who is responsible for their return home.[56] Divine intervention is responsible for much of the development of the plot, for it is Dionysos – their protector – who watches over the couple and allows them to find each other when he signals to them that they are nearby through dreams.

There is a noticeable focus on secondary characters. Kleandros has his own story embedded in the novel. Very similar in its essence to the main storyline of *D&C*, Kleandros

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[52] On the *ekphraseis* of this novel, see Ilias Taxidis, *The Ekphraseis in the Byzantine Literature of the 12th Century* (Alessandria: Edizioni dell'Orso, 2021), 76-79.
[53] On character types, and their expected behaviours in the ancient Greek novels, see De Temmerman, "Chariton," 564-567; De Temmerman, "Xenophon of Ephesus," 583-584; and Morgan, "Longus," 611-615.
[54] On the implications of their awareness of their role in the story, a topic which will be discussed further in Chapter 3, see Paloma Cortez, "Generic Self-awareness in a Komnenian Novel". For a broader overview of femininity in ancient Greek novels, see Casilda Álvarez Siverio, "Estereotipos femeninos en la novela helenística," in *Frontera y género: en los límites de la multidisciplinariedad*, ed. María José Chivite de León, María Beatriz Hernández Pérez, and María Eugenia Monzón Perdomo (Murcia: Plaza y Valdés, 2011), 133-144. For a broader overview of masculinity in the ancient Greek novels, see Meriel Jones, *Playing the Man: Performing Masculinities in the Ancient Greek Novel* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012).
[55] On them pretending to be siblings, see Meunier, *Le roman byzantin du XIIe siècle*, 122-123.
[56] Interestingly, a Gnathon is also responsible for the story's closure in Longos' novel. See Morgan, "Longus," 609.

story seems nonetheless much more static.[57] During the readers' first encounter with the character (he is presented at 1.260), he tells us of his romantic advances to Kalligone – first unrequited and then corresponded – and of their eventual separation (2.57-3.46). His narrative, a doubling of the plot, then comes to a halt. His story comes to a sudden close with the news of Kalligone's death (8.183-189) and, subsequently, the death of Kleandros' himself (8.311-314), which contrasts with the happy ending towards which the story of Drosilla and Charikles is headed, providing an alternative outcome to a love story. The love of the main characters remains the focus of the narrative, for which Kleandros proves to be very helpful and supportive despite his own story and despite him missing Kalligone greatly.[58] Whenever the couple achieves happiness, the experiences of Kleandros offer the opposite view. Kleinias and Kallidemos similarly face demise and do not manage to achieve happiness. However, since they desire Drosilla they come to be perceived as adversaries of Charikles and do not become focus of the narration in the same way that Kleandros does. Chrysilla's story also functions somewhat similarly to that of Kleinias and Kallidemos.[59]

As opposed to Charikles' and Drosilla's ideal love story, the experiences of Kleandros, Kleinias, and Kallidemos offer the reader an alternative universe in which love is unfulfilled, unsuccessful, and tragic.

Space and time

The action takes place in an unidentifiable, self-referential world. Place-names serve to give a vague idea of arduous and lengthy travels, and to evoke an ancient, distant, setting.

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[57] On the traditional role of the "friend" in Ancient Greek novels, see Máximo Brioso Sánchez, "Personaje del "amigo" en la novela griega: Caritón," *Minerva* 1 (1987), 61-74; "El personaje del amigo en la novela griega antigua. De Jenofonte de Éfeso a Aquiles Tacio," *Philologia hispalensis* 4, no. 2 (1989), 599-616; and "El personaje del "amigo" en la novela griega antigua: Heliodoro (continuación)," *Philologia Hispalensis* 1, no. 5 (1990), 369-78. Kleandros' story will be explored in detail in Chapter 3.

[58] See Chapter 3 for further remarks on the relationship between the main and secondary plot.

[59] Secondary characters, their luck and experiences, and the contrast that this creates between the different plots will be discussed in Chapter 3.

In *D&C*, space functions as an instrument contributing to the development of the plot literally by keeping the lovers separated from each other (as when Drosilla falls into the sea, at 6.8-12) and symbolically by reuniting them under the protection of the garden and nature (as after their final reunion and the first banquet, at 8.1-3). Although the text begins at Barzon, Drosilla and Charikles are from Phthia; they meet Kleandros, who is from Lesbos, at Parthia. No other place is mentioned by name apart from these four; the main action takes place mostly in Barzon and Parthia. It is mentioned that they are heading for the Arabs' homeland, but no name is given for any city, and even the village where the story continues remains just a simple and anonymous χωρίον (town).[60] Most of the descriptions in *D&C* – of the lovers, nature, and violence – occur in the first part of the novel, with fewer examples in the rest of it. Nature and beauty are the most common objects of extended descriptions or *ekphraseis*.[61] Apart from that, there is little interest in the description of where the action is taking place. The world in which the characters live is only described when necessary for plot development. Objects in the surroundings are neglected by the narrator unless they serve a particular means to the story (as is the case when, in book 7, 274-277, Maryllis grabs two napkins for her "bacchic" dance).

The narrator usually discloses the passage of time. Whether it is how long it takes for his characters to get from one place to another, as is the case with the Arabs' back and forth against Parthia (e.g. 5.276-280) or with Drosilla's wanderings through the desert (6.181-183). The same applies to the waiting time for the next thing to happen, as with the period between Kratylos' death and the arrival of a messenger from Chagos (5.277-278), or the simple circadian cycle of the characters (as in 8.195-196: "the late hour did not permit him to complete his prolonged lament"). There seem to be two tropes – variations of the passage of night and day – for signaling the passage of time *D&C*: resting and sleep (of which the

[60] See Meunier, *Le roman byzantin du XIIe siècle*, 72-74; and Florence Meunier, "Le voyage imaginaire dans le roman byzantine du XIIéme siècle," *Byzantion* 68, no. 1 (1998), 72-90.
[61] Nature will be one of the motifs discussed later in this chapter.

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previous is a great example) and the sun (e.g. 7.1-5, "Already it was morning and saffron-hued day, and lustrous light had poured everywhere over all creation from the great translucent star that rose from the ocean, as learned poetry wisely puts it"). Moreover, for the latter – and also for sleep in 1.278 ("and, my friend, I should obey night") – Eugenianos usually recurs to Homer as his model.

A close reading of the text reveals some discrepancies in the timeline: The parallel action, when Drosilla falls of the wagon, is not narrated, but Drosilla arrives at the village ten days after her fall, and they reunite the next day, making their separation last eleven days. However, we are told that it took Charikles twelve days to get to the village, so there would be one day of difference in their timelines. In a more general view, the whole story takes place in a period of between 74 and 93 days, if we are to take into account the text's disclosure of the passage of time.[62] If one is to leave aside the days during which nothing happened as well as those that were spent only travelling, the events described in *D&C* occupy a very small part of the total timespan. Only counting the days when something relevant for the plot development happens, seven main episodes can be inferred, with a total duration for the *fabula* of *D&C* of around thirteen days.[63]

[62] Drosilla and Charikles eloped and four days after got to Barzon. The next morning, the Parthians attacked. They got to Parthia six days after. The same day of the conversation between Charikles and Kleandros, Kratylos dies. On the eighteenth day, the Arab threat is unveiled, and it takes at least thirteen days for them to start their siege on the city. two days after the beginning of the battle, they go back to their land, and sometime after that Drosilla falls to the sea, with her companions starting to search for her either that same day or the next one. Eleven or twelve days after, they reunite. The next two days the banquets are held, and also Kleandros' funeral. Two days after the funeral, the couple leaves with Gnathon to Barzon, a trip whose duration is not disclosed but which (considering that it took them five days to get from Barzon to Parthia and assuming that the unnamed village was not too far away from there) must have taken around five days. Three days after, they finally leave for Phthia, a trip that takes ten days (despite the fact that the time to get from Phthia to Parthia on the ship at the beginning of the text had been slightly less than four days). They get married the same day of their arrival to Phthia.

[63] The picture would be the following: The first day is their elopement, the second and third day are the Parthian attack, Kratylos' death takes place during the fourth day, with the letter by the Arabs being received on the fifth day. The battle of the Arabs with the Parthians occupies days sixth, seventh and eighth. The reunion of the lovers and the deaths' of Kalligone and Kleandros take place during the ninth, tenth, and eleventh day; and, after travelling back to their homeland for a while, marriage is the twelfth day, with the narration stopping at the beginning of the thirteenth day, after their wedding night. Thus, action is very condensed in the narrative.

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The natural progress of narrated time is undermined in the story by a series of narrative strategies. Analepses – mainly actorial and internal – serve as the means for the recapitulation of past events, by which the couple reflect on their situation or explain it to secondary characters. The most evident example of this is that of Charikles and Kleandros telling their stories to each other (2.57-4.68), but it also happens with Maryllis (7.83-217) and Chagos (6.100-127) as a repeating narration, for instance. There are no proper prolepses in the text, but a similar narrative technique – external – is employed by Eugenianos. In some of their interventions, Drosilla and Charikles disclose their expectations for the future and their fear of facing more dangers – expectations which are heightened by the frequency of these events in the novelistic tradition – and of not being able to continue being together.[64] This narrative strategy heightens the suspense of the plot by withholding information and suggesting possible outcomes, thus creating anticipation in the reader-audience. It leads the reader, accustomed to the succession of obstacles (περιπετείαι) of the ancient novels, to believe that there might be no end to them.[65] The characters' verbalization of such elements, common in the novelistic tradition, creates suspense, for the reader is waiting for these events to come to fruition. Ellipses are rarer; they mostly happen as part of the description of travelling. Instead of telling the details of their journeys, it is enough to mention that they travel, thus speeding up the narrative. As a result of this change of scene produced by their travels, the understanding of the text as a series of different episodes involving the same set of characters is reinforced.

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[64] For further information on the traditional novelistic elements and motifs, see Françoise Létoublon, *Les lieux communs du roman: Stéréotypes grecs d'aventure et d'amour* (Leiden: Brill, 1993).
[65] These narrative strategies can be seen already in Heliodoros: see John J. Winkler, "The mendacity of Kalasiris and the narrative strategy of Heliodoros' *Aithiopika*," in *Later Greek Literature*, ed. Gordon Willis Williams and John J. Winkler (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), 93-158.

The end(s) of love

Marriage is the thread that ties the narrative together. From the moment that Dionysos joins them, Drosilla and Charikles are destined to be together.[66] They elope and face tremendous adversities but throughout the whole story Drosilla manages to preserve her virginity.[67] Chaste and virtuous, Drosilla wards off her many suitors and preserves her fidelity to Charikles, which is remarked once and again through the narrative.[68] But what is Eugenianos' conception of the erotic feeling? And most importantly, how can anyone put an end to the devastation it brings about? Love is highly idealized in this novel, and it creates certain amorous expectations both in the characters and in the reader, the most important one being that love will be successful.[69] Eugenianos stresses the importance of marriage, the goal of erotic desire; for the lovers' union to be physically fulfilled marriage is a prerequisite.[70] The ideas of love disclosed by Eugenianos are, however, discursive constructions and, due to their fictional nature, they do not necessarily reflect how love was generally perceived in this period. Love puts the action into motion. Even the relationship between Charikles and Drosilla starts with his tentative abduction of her. However, love also can be seen to

[66] In some respects, their union by Dionysos constitutes some sort of first marriage. For a broader view on the figure of Eros in Byzantine novels, see Carolina Cupane, "Ἔρως βασιλεύς: La figura di Eros nel romanzo bizantino d'amore," *Atti dell'Accademia di Scienze Lettere e Arti di Palermo* (s. 4) 33 (1973/74): 2:243–297.

[67] Although their separation between plays a role in this, the main obstacles I refer to here are other characters' romantic advances. These attempts are decidedly not successful, not only due to the lovers' refusal but, moreover, thanks to how Eugenianos portrays these characters (which will be explored in Chapter 3). See also Lynda Garland, "'Be Amorous, But Be Chaste': Sexual Morality in Byzantine Learned and Vernacular Romance," *Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies* 14, no.1 (1990), 68-81.

[68] In the Komnenian period, a change in moral values is suggested by appearance of narratives dealing primarily with love during the eleventh and twelfth centuries. See Pedro Bádenas de la Peña, "El erotismo literario como testimonio del cambio de los valores morales en Bizancio en los siglos XI-XII," *Byzantion Nea Hellás* 25 (2006), 157-164. On eroticism in the medieval Greek period, see also Hans-Georg Beck, *Byzantinisches Erotikon* (Munich: Verlag C.H. Beck, 1986). Extensive research on emotive scripts in Komnenian novels has not yet been carried out, but it might provide valuable insight into how these narratives function. On Byzantine ideas on love, its remedies, people's reaction to love, and the gendered expectations associated with erotic emotions, see Charis Messis and Ingela Nilsson, "*Eros* as Passion, Affection and Nature: Gendered Perceptions of Erotic Emotion in Byzantium," in *Emotions and Gender in Byzantine Culture*, ed. Stavroula Constantinou and Mati Meyer (Cham: Springer International Publishing, 2019), 159-190.

[69] As will be seen in the following chapters, Eugenianos subverts these expectations in some passages.

[70] The latter is, however, to be understood as affection stemming from love, and not as a carnal desire. For reasons of brevity, I will not delve into the role of chastity in this chapter.

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constitute an obstacle for the fulfillment of their love, since other characters feel desire for the main couple and act upon such feeling.

Already in book 4 (4.399-401), before any major developments have taken place, Eros is characterized as a leech, sucking up every ounce of blood from the body of the afflicted.[71] Certainly, the conceptualization of love as a disease is not new. Eugenianos' playfulness regarding such feeling is, however, more significant; as Burton points out, he interweaves different literary traditions in his treatment of love.[72] In *D&C*, love is the disease but the object of desire might – yes, only might – be the cure: "You are my sickness but also its remedy" (2.243), which aligns with bucolic ideas of love as suffering.[73] Kleandros, in spite of recognizing in the letter that the loved one will provide solace to his pain and quench the fire ignited in his heart by Eros, also considers other options that might soothe his emotions.[74] In book 1 (1.269-273), he says to Charikles that speech might offer a remedy to those suffering from love; and then, in book 2 (2.145-146), even a written message would suffice. This idea is later reinforced, since in book 6 (6.354) Kallidemos affirms that "silence nurtures disease". In the same book, sleep is posed as the remedy to any pain (6.246). Earlier, Charikles takes as *exemplum* Theokritos' cyclops, suggesting that music is the only cure, which heightens the bucolic echoes in the story (4.379-386).

Such a disease is also visible in the people who hinder their love, as is the case of Kleinias, Chyrsilla, and Kallidemos. They are either consumed by an illness or disease-bringers themselves. Kleinias verbalizes his suffering as he is burning with desire in book 4 (4.156-219). Similarly, Kallidemos experiences such a fire in the form of a fever (τρόμος;

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[71] On the characterization of Eros in Komnenian novels, see Christina Christoforatou, "The Iconography of Eros and the Politics of Desire in Komnenian Byzantium," *Enarratio* 12 (2005), 71-109.
[72] See Burton, "From Theocritean to Longan Bucolic," 684-719, where Eugenianos' *pharmaka* for love are further discussed.
[73] On Theocritean, tormenting love in *D&C*, see Burton, "From Theocritean to Longan Bucolic," 695-700.
[74] Love is also characterized as a fire throughout Eugenianos' novel (e.g. 5.392-398).

7.66-67), preventing him from being a threat to the couple.[75] On the other hand, Chrysilla is the disease-bringer (5.97: "You see the anguish which she brings, you see the sickness"). Not only for the lovers, whose path she tries to impede, but also for her own people, given that she kills her own husband with poison in an attempt to seduce and marry Charikles.[76]

Eugenianos thus does not confine himself to any one idea but instead explores various possibilities, gathered both from the Hellenistic novels and from bucolic poetry. This could be seen as further hinting at the uncertainty of his characters regarding what they can do once in love, but it also enhances the polyphonous nature of *D&C*, for Eugenianos develops the idea that there are many φάρμακα. Sometimes even reciprocity might not be enough, and a kiss will increase the erotic suffering, which Kallidemos suggests in book 6 (6.363-366).[77] Not even 15 lines after, in one of the last fragments dealing with the cure for love, the idea of marriage as the only possible solution is reinstituted: "no one alive has found the antidote to him, except in embraces and sweet marriage" (6.377-378). In the conversation between the lovers after their reunion, Drosilla tells Charikles of Kallidemos' advances and they also comment on Chrysilla's attempts to separate them. Anxious about the many obstacles in their way, Charikles wants to take things further (8.129-130). But Drosilla still holds dear her virtue and refuses to do it without her family's approval:

[75] Unrequited love thus appears to provoke a psychosomatic reaction. Kleinias' fate and role in the story will be further discussed in Chapter 3.

[76] Overall, Chrysilla is portrayed in a more negative way than either Kleinias or Kallidemos. Her old age, her lustfulness, and her betrayal of her husband are just examples of it. An opposite image would be that of Maryllis, whose old age is also, although in a different way, mocked in Eugenianos' novel. On gender issues in Komnenian novels, see Lynda Garland, "Be Amorous, But Be Chaste"; and Corinne Jouanno, "Les jeunes filles dans le roman byzantin du XIIe siècle," in *Les Personnages du roman grec. Actes du colloque de Tours, 18-20 novembre 1999*, ed. Bernard Pouderon (Lyon: Maison de l'Orient et de la Méditerranée Jean Pouilloux, 2001), 329-346. For a wider picture, see also Corinne Jouanno, "Women in Byzantine Novels of the Twelfth Century: An Interplay Between Norm and Fantasy," in *Byzantine Women: Varieties of Experience, 800-1200*, ed. Lynda Garland (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2006).

[77] "Your mouth is, as it were, full of poisons, even if it is smeared with honey on the outside and, when I have apparently achieved a kiss, alas, alas, I acquire even greater anguish", Jeffreys, *Four Byzantine Novels*, 422. Interestingly enough, and enhancing the amphoteroglossic nature of the novel, even φάρμακα are not always good, for he contrasts different meanings for this one word. If he is referring to Eros, what otherwise would be considered a remedy is then turned into a potion (e.g. 2.294), and – in the previous example as well as in Chrysilla's case – it can stand for poison (e.g. 5.63-64).

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Do not struggle, do not force me, do not make pointless efforts;
it is not right for a girl who is chaste
to behave in an unseemly manner.
(…)
I will not betray my virgin state like a courtesan
without the consent of my kin, my mother and my father.
(*D&C* 8.141-146)[78]

Τύχη

Drosilla is hopeful and does not share Charikles' anguish over the prospective perils. Therefore, she shares with her lover what she envisions for the ending of their story, namely going back to their homeland and getting properly married, with no mention of what dangers Fate might still reserve for them:

I shall in due time see my fatherland
and Myrtion and dear Hedypnoe,
and I shall dance with the dear maidens who are my companions
at the altar of the god Dionysos,
and I shall drink from the streams of the lovely Melirrhoe,
and I shall join, Charikles, in marriage with you.
(*D&C* 8.151-160)

Charikles' preoccupations in this same episode, however, seem to stem from their unawareness of their future Fortune, of the possibility of never achieving peace and happiness together.[79] He wonders whether they will ever get to be united or Fate will obstruct their wishes each and every time (8.167-169: "All this would be very sensible and very proper, maiden, unless, as we travel to Phthia, we should be obstructed once again by Fate"). In the end, they get their happy ending, and the maiden remains a maiden until her wedding night: "and the girl who in the evening was a virgin, arose from her bed in the morning a woman" (*D&C*, 9.299-300). No one can know what to expect from the future, and their story could have easily ended differently, as Kleandros' did.[80] Τύχη – along with Dionysos – is the

[78] Further information on the sexual conventions and the role of women in twelfth-century novels can be found in Jouanno, "Women in Byzantine Novels of the Twelfth Century."
[79] See Chapter 2 for further analysis of their expectations and awareness of possible and prospective perils.
[80] This contrast will be explored in detail in Chapter 3, as it is vital for the story of Drosilla and Charikles.

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biggest force in the story, as Eugenianos' characters seem to be dragged one way and another by it.[81]

Empathy

Empathy is another important force in *D&C*. Characters understand each other's feelings and sufferings, they encounter solace in talking to each other and sharing their situation.[82] This empathy characterizes, for example, the relationship between the couple Charikles-Drosilla and the couple Kleandros-Kalligone, but also the mechanics within each couple (e.g. 3.193: "You are in distress? I was in distress before. You take this badly? I used to too"). In their first encounter, Kleandros and Charikles lament together about their misfortunes and find that the other's experiences also relate to themselves. Kleandros's support, which he expresses by hinting at how what Charikles is feeling is a shared experience by similarly fated people (2.48-49: "Are you in pain? I am in pain too. Do you weep? I weep with you. Do you feel desire? I feel desire too, and for a beautiful maiden") is expected throughout the whole story by Charikles (3.344: "…what? Kleandros, do you not weep with me?").

Similarly, Drosilla laments Kalligone's fate and sympathizes with her, as she understands that this could have also been her destiny. Even nature, although this is a traditional *topos* in Greek literature, pities Drosilla (e.g. 4.365-366: "you are silent; the cool air is silent for you. You are asleep; the tribe of winds are slumbering too"). Drosilla's laments are particularly interesting due to their variation in emotionality. Following Burton's

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[81] On the role of τύχη in Greek erotic fiction, see Corinne Jouanno, "Du roman grec au roman byzantin: réflexions sur le rôle de la tyché," in *Les hommes et les dieux dans l'ancien roman. Actes du colloque de Tours, 22-24 octobre 2009*, ed. Cécile Bost-Pouderon and Bernard Pouderon (Lyon: Maison de l'Orient et de la Méditerranée Jean Pouilloux, 2012), 287-304.

[82] On the symmetry between characters in *D&C*, see also Meunier, *Le roman byzantin du XIIe siècle*, 99-103; and Illgen Izquierdo, "Novel.la bizantina en context," 70. This issue will be further explored in Chapter 3.

analysis, they are strikingly different, for her lamentation for Kleandros is "proper and conventional", while her lament for Kalligone constitutes "purely a solitary act".[83]

A final, and to a certain extent the most surprising, example of empathy in *D&C* is that of Chagos.[84] The Arab lord, whom one expects to be warlike and belligerent, releases Charikles and Kleandros when he hears about their misfortunes, as they have not done anything against him and were already prisoners of his enemies (6.130-153). Pious and understanding, he pities both of them for what they have gone through and bids them farewell and good luck on their search for Drosilla.

Other motifs

Dreams play a very important role in *D&C*.[85] Sent by Dionysos, they serve both as a way for the characters to cope with their emotions (1.347-348: "Come hither, Sleep, and overcome me a little, in the hope that a dream may appear and calm me, by showing me my beloved Charikles") and as way to advance the plot and reunite the lovers (6.664-668: "As he was drooping once more towards sleep, the handsome form of Dionysos came near and revealed that Drosilla was in the village, in the dwelling of old Maryllis, and granted him conversation with her"). Sleep and night offer refuge for the lovers. Charikles performs a love song for Drosilla while she is sleeping in the meadow (4.345-413), and it is only when Kleandros and Maryllis have turned to sleep that they get some alone time (8.1-182). Night, however, also brings forth their misfortune, with events such as the capture of Kleandros and

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[83] See Burton, "A Reemergence of Theocritean Poetry in the Byzantine Novel," 262-267. This serves as a way to differentiate them, the former being a public and shared feeling filled with bucolic imagery, and the second the burden of Drosilla's unending grief and worry and, I argue, further proof of her metaliterary awareness of how her own story could have ended. Their literary awareness will be further discussed in the following chapters. On laments in general, see Margaret Alexiou, *The Ritual Lament in Greek Tradition*, 2nd edition, revised by Dimitrios Yatromanolakis and Panagiotis Roilos (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2002).

[84] Meunier, *Le roman byzantin du XIIe siècle*, 131-32.

[85] For a broad overview of the motif of dreams in Byzantium, see Christine Angelidi and George T. Calofonos, *Dreaming in Byzantium and Beyond* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2014). Also interesting is Suzanne MacAlister's diachronic study of Greek erotic fiction *Dreams and Suicides: The Greek Novel from Antiquity to the Byzantine Empire* (London: Routledge, 1996).

Kalligone (3.20-30), the news of Kalligone's death (8.184-185), and Kleandros' own death (8.311-314) all happening at dusk.

Many studies have explored the tendency in Byzantine literature to portray love in relation to nature.[86] The garden, in particular, is a very common *topos* for the expression of erotic love and desire.[87] The garden stands as a *locus amoenus*, a place of retreat where love can be easy. Nature also plays a crucial role in the novel's figurative language. Drosilla and Charikles are presented for the first time surrounded by nature in a meadow:

> In the midst of the plain was a most delightful meadow,
> around which were beautiful bay trees,
> cypresses, planes and oaks,
> while within it there were delightful fruit trees.
> There were lily plants and delightful rose bushes
> in great numbers, within the meadow.
> The buds of the roses, which were closed,
> or, more accurately, just slightly opened,
> kept the flowers in seclusion like a maiden.
> (*D&C* 1.77-96)

Drosilla and Charikles find themselves surrounded by nature also during Dionysos' festivities, when they fall in love, and again during book 5, when Charikles sings to Drosilla, and then again in the beginning of book 8, where he compares their love to that of birds, hoping that theirs will also be completed by their union. The *ekphrasis* of Drosilla in book 1 compares her to a bud, to honey, to roses, and to a cypress, among many other elements.[88] All

[86] On the role of nature in the Byzantine novel, see Adam J. Goldwyn, *Byzantine Ecocriticism: Women, Nature, and Power in the Medieval Greek Romance* (Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018); Charles Barber, "Reading the Garden in Byzantium: Nature and Sexuality," *Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies* 16 (1992), 1-19; Terése Nilsson, "Ancient Water in Fictional Fountains: Waterworks in Byzantine Novels and Romances," in *Fountains and Water Culture in Byzantium*, ed. Brooke Shilling and Paul Stephenson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016), 281-98; Charis Messis and Ingela Nilsson, "Eros as Passion, Affection and Nature. Gendered Perceptions of Erotic Emotion in Byzantium," 159-90; and Kirsty Stewart, "Literary Landscapes in the Palaiologan Romances: An Ecocritical Approach," in *Reading the Late Byzantine Romance*, ed. Adam J. Goldwyn and Ingela Nilsson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019), 272-298.

[87] On the role of the garden, see Anthony R. Littlewood, "Romantic Paradises: The Rôle of the Garden in the Byzantine Romance," *Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies* 5, no. 1 (1979): 95-114. On the broader use of natural motifs for the portrayal of erotic love, see J. C. B. Petropoulos, *Eroticism in Ancient and Medieval Greek Poetry* (London, Duckworth: 2003), especially pp. 31-38 and 611-673, where many of the motifs identifiable in *D&C* are discussed.

[88] Also interesting regarding Drosilla's characterisation is the tendency to compare her to a mixture of milk and roses, which Emma Huig studied in "Mixing Roses with Milk," 58-75.

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of Drosilla's suitors compare her to the natural world. Kleinias in 4.121-144, for whom she is, among other things, a cluster of grapes, a comb of honey, a meadow, a narcissus, a red-hued rose, and a dark-gleaming violet; Charikles in 4.261-288, for whom she is the gardener, her breasts apples and grapes, and her kiss a honeycomb; and Kallidemos in 6.568-573, who compares Drosilla to a meadow and to ripe fruit; they all use the same metaphors for her beauty.[89]

In *D&C*, the young lovers are equated with trees and livestock when taken by the Parthians (e.g. 1.26-29: "In their excess they cut down every tree, although they saw they were heavy with fruit. They also plundered those goats and cattle which had not fled within the walls in time").[90] Ivy and oak are interesting ways of characterizing true lovers in Eugenianos' text as inseparable, like one single body, as visible regarding Drosilla and Charikles in 7.229-230. Before this, moreover, it is precisely holding on to an oak bark which saves Drosilla from dying after her fall from the wagon (6.19 and 6.231). No attempt to pose as oak and ivy is made neither by Kleinias nor by Kallidemos. The only other character who successfully makes use of this trope is Kleandros in his account of how he got to meet Kalligone (2.298). Following up on that interpretation, a similar attempt by Kleinias, where he compares Drosilla's curls to ivy but does not pose any reference to the missing oak, could also be interpreted as a hint at the fact that he is not her true lover.

> Ivy is inseparable from oak,
> for it has been accustomed to its embrace from its first growth
> and has become incorporated into it and seems to have developed
> one body with a double energy;
> (*D&C* 1.324-327)

[89] Charikles' speech is more lustful and straightforward than on other occasions, which could stem from the fact that it is not clearly addressed to Drosilla. Although no name is given to the woman about whom Charikles is speaking, it is safe to assume that he is just using his feelings towards Drosilla to provide a story for Kleinias. For further discussion, see Corinne Jouanno, "Women in Byzantine Novels of the Twelfth Century," 157. Anthomorphic metaphors in *D&C* align with what has been described for *Digenis Akritas* in Goldwyn, *Byzantine Ecocriticism*, 64-75.

[90] This fragment could be understood literally. However, we are told in the beginning of the story that the Parthians did not seek violence on its own and instead just wanted to capture people and take hold of their belongings. Furthermore, natural imagery is recurrent as a comparison for the characters.

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Conclusion

In this chapter, I have provided a narratological analysis for *D&C*. I analyzed its plot, structure, narrative strategies and characterization, alongside some of its main motifs. I provided a tripartite division of the text in which I highlighted how the narrative can be perceived as episodic, due to the changes in auxiliary characters and setting. Among the literary strategies employed by Eugenianos, the discussion of characters' expectations of the future that never come to fruition, as a sort of unfulfilled prolepsis, stands out, and it will be the focus of my second chapter, where I will analyze several instances of this phenomenon by which Eugenianos distances *D&C* from other literary works.

The story develops mostly due to secondary characters interventions – such as Gnathon, who brings closure to the plot by bringing the lovers to their homeland –, and Dionysos, Τύχη, and Eros are the main forces in the story. The main plot is that of Drosilla and Charikles, characters whose portrayal is not very vivid but instead constructed according to traditional character types inherited from the ancient novels. A secondary plot, embedded in the main narrative, is that of Kleandros (and Kalligone). Their subplot offers a doubling of the plot, in which the idea of ideal love is subverted, and generic as well as readerly expectations for a happy ending are thus not completely met, an issue which will be further discussed in Chapter 3. Among the main motifs in *D&C*, I discussed love, its remedies, and amorous expectations, demonstrating Eugenianos' usage of diverse traditions revolving around love, as well as the role of empathy in the story – namely, that the characters mirror each other's experiences, being constructed in contrast to one another –, topics which will the subjects of further analysis in the next chapters.

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Chapter 2

Eugenianos' distancing from other writers

ὡς ἡ σοφὴ ποίησις εἰδυῖα γράφει

as learned poetry wisely puts it
(*D&C* 7.5)

The narratological analysis in Chapter 1 shed light on how *D&C* functions and thus served as an introduction to the text, its themes, and structure. Many of the motifs presented in the first chapter will recur in this chapter. I will explore different examples of how Eugenianos engages in what I call "distancing". This term is to be understood as the literary strategy by which an author suggests similarities with previous works so as to display his literary knowledge, which they then choose not to follow, thus subverting readerly expectations. As I mentioned in the introduction, there are many passages in *D&C* where Eugenianos refers to previous works and suggests a link between his novel and them. Although it follows the traditional plot and motifs of Hellenistic novels, *D&C* stands in dialogue not only with the novelistic tradition but also with a wider array of Greek texts, which Eugenianos recycles and reshapes to his own liking – and most probably to the literary tastes of the period. The novel thus sits at a crossroad and partakes in a complex network of transtextual relationships, which have already been studied in detail.[91]

Nevertheless, Eugenianos' subversive dialogue with previous literary works has not received scholarly attention so far. Eugenianos acknowledges his debt to earlier literature but ultimately takes a different direction. Instead of using these texts as literary models to strengthen his own work, he sometimes deliberately – for he knows them and uses them elsewhere – chooses to go against such models, creating immersion in the reader who is

[91] For an overview of the scholarly interest in *D&C*'s transtextual links with other works, see the Introduction to this thesis.

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aware of such models – and therefore expecting a determined outcome – but in the end subverting readerly expectations. Since its audience must have been well-versed in literature and most probably knew the Hellenistic novels Eugenianos was taking as literary models, they would have been able to identify these strategies. In this chapter I will argue that distancing, as a narrative strategy, does not only build suspense, but also helps Eugenianos distance himself from other writers to carve out a space for himself in the literary tradition. I will also investigate how this phenomenon affects the expectations of *D&C*'s audience. This chapter therefore does not aim to identify the textual transcendence of this novel exhaustively, nor to give an account of all its literary models, but instead attempts a re-evaluation of its engagement with the literary canon and to underline its composite and creative nature.

Eugenianos' distancing from previous and contemporary writers

As has been shown, Eugenianos' novel is in constant dialogue with the previous literary tradition. Such a dialogue can often be perceived as straightforward, as is the case with the many explicit mentions of characters from the literary tradition, particularly those that are taken as *exempla* by Kallidemos in his speech to Drosilla (6.332-558).[92] In other instances, however, Eugenianos' engagement with his literary predecessors can be perceived as a strategy aimed at establishing the differences between his work and that of previous novelists, which I call "distancing". Recognizing which models Eugenianos undermines and distances himself from – as well how he does it – will advance our understanding of how he shapes his authorial voice and of how he identifies his work among previous works. In Eugenianos, distancing functions through transtextual links to other texts – both ancient and contemporary –, the events and ideas of which he somewhat subtly acknowledges but which,

[92] On the episode when Kallidemos uses the Cyclops as an *exemplum*, see Joan B. Burton, "A Reemergence of Theocritean Poetry in the Byzantine Novel," 253-262.

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in the end, he purposefully chooses not to incorporate into his own narrative. Its function is therefore that of undermining previous works and contrasting them with his own, which allows him to signal how his work stands out from others'. Needless to say, Eugenianos' audience would have had a similar knowledge of the literary canon and thus would have been able to understand his distancing. I will analyze some examples of this phenomenon.[93]

In book 2 (2.284-292), Kleandros addresses Kalligone and stresses her beauty by suggesting in his fourth letter to her that, if a contest like that of the judgement of Paris were to be held, there could be no other winner than Kalligone. Anyone acquainted with this episode might recall that it was Eris' device, her apple inscribed with the words "for the most beautiful", that started the argument between Hera, Athena, and Aphrodite. The three goddesses, quarrelling and each affirming that, due to its inscription, it could only be for them, decide to leave the decision to an external judge, for which they choose Paris. In Eugenianos' novel, however, the apple bears no words (2.284-285: "Receive the golden apple that has no inscription, Kalligone, whose body is entirely graceful"), which strongly contrasts with what a reader of Greek classics might recall. Eugenianos revisits this literary model and deliberately distinguishes his own work from previous retellings of the judgement of Paris by establishing such a contrast. This idea is reinforced in the following lines, in which he does mention the inscription: "And if it were inscribed, what competition could there be with you? Receive, fair one, the apple, for you alone are fair; you are the fairest in the dance of maidens" (2.286-288). Such a reformulation of the initial mention of the apple could be interpreted as the character second-guessing himself once remembering the literary tradition. Furthermore, the antithesis between the two perceptions of the apple – inscribed and

[93] A similar phenomenon was identified in Homer by Eustathios of Thessalonike. In the case of Homer, "literary misdirection" is similarly used to suggest other possibilities for the forthcoming events, as pointed out in van den Berg, *Homer the Rhetorician*, 161. Unlike in Eugenianos, however, we cannot retrieve such imagined courses of events from the existing literary tradition. While in both cases such misdirection foregroundS literary creativity, in Eugenianos it also serves the purpose of distancing himself from previous writers.

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uninscribed – also serves as a reassessment of the mythological episode and as a strategy on Kleandros' part to reinforce his words.

The characterization of Eros, also in book 2, also seems to imply a distancing from the literary tradition. Eugenianos' only model – at least so far identified – is, this time, Theokritos' third idyll, but he seems to slightly depart from it.[94] For both of them, Eros is the offspring of wild beasts – in Eugenianos, "Eros, offspring of savage beasts" (γέννημα θηρίων Ἔρως, 2.88:).[95] In Theokritos, the child Love was reared and feed by a lioness in the woods: "Now I am acquainted with Love, and a grievous god is he. Verily a lioness' was the dug he sucked, and in the wild woods his mother reared him" (Theok. *Id*. 3, 15-16).[96] For Eugenianos this is also the case, although he is not certain whether Eros only was breastfed by a lioness or perhaps also reared by a bear: "indeed you have sucked a lioness's milk and perhaps nuzzled a bear's teats." (2.90-91).

Thus, Eugenianos is aware of Theokritos and chooses his idyll as a model for literary imitation. Eugenianos seems to endorse Theokritos' version of Love's upbringing but then he suggests a different version, a similar story, thus expressing a certain disbelief towards this attribution for Eros.[97] The choice of words is significant here, for he ends both verses with a judgement of certainty. Jeffreys translates the first verse as "indeed you have sucked a lioness' milk", underlining the function of ἄρα in this construction. For the second verse, she translates "and perhaps nuzzled a bear's teats", although other possibilities for the translation of τάχα could have been "supposedly" or "allegedly". Regardless of the choice for translation, their meaning and positioning at the end of very similar structures in these verses suggests that with these words Eugenianos tried to establish a contrast between the two

[94] To my best knowledge, no other precedent apart from Theokritos has been identified as a literary model for this passage.
[95] As was shown in Chapter 1, Eugenianos does not follow his models faithfully regarding love and its remedies.
[96] Andrew F. S. Gow, *Theocritus (Vol. 1. Introduction, Text and Translation)* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1950), 31.
[97] On the portrayal of Eros in Komnenian novels, see Christoforatou, "The Iconography of Eros and the Politics of Desire in Komnenian Byzantium," 71-87; and Garland, "Be Amorous, But Be Chaste," 70-81.

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statements: one that he accepts as true and one that he deems possible. As for the function of his doubts in the second verse, I believe that it serves to undermine the previous statement, the one taken from Theokritos, by suggesting even further possibilities and exaggerating the circumstances under which Eros grew and his wild nature. However this may be, it certainly shows how Eugenianos, to a certain degree, avoids fully following his literary models and instead engages in a different kind of dialogue with the literary tradition: he positions himself in contrast to it.

Another motif that contributes to the distancing effect is that of the lovers' abduction.[98] As Joan Burton points out, both Charikles (3.367-369) and Kallidemos (7.59-61) contemplate abducting the girl. However, these courses of action never happen.[99] Charikles finally chooses to instead confess his love and intentions to the maiden (3.384-393), to which she agrees, whereas Kallidemos falls ill and is thus unable to carry out his plans (7.62-72). The topic of abduction is common in ancient novels, but Eugenianos does not choose to go this path and instead only suggests the possibility, without it ever coming to term, which might be yet another sign of his awareness of the tropes of the literary tradition to which his novel is ascribed and of his wish to distinguish himself from it.[100]

Already in the first lines of his novel, Eugenianos points out the differences between what is going on in his novel and what has been done before. Like in the previous example, here too Eugenianos distances himself from the literary canon. However, in this example the reference to other texts is not directly obvious. The episode at hand is the description of the attack on Barzon, where the lovers are taken captive by the Parthians:

[98] See Joan B. Burton, "Abduction and Elopement in the Byzantine Novel," *Greek, Roman and Byzantine Studies* 41, no. 4 (2000), 390-391.
[99] Although, as was mentioned in Chapter 1, it is his intention to abduct her that begins the *fabula*'s development.
[100] On abduction in the ancient novel, see Sophia Papaioannou, "Kidnapping in the Ancient Novels," in *The Reality of Women in the Universe of the Ancient Novel*, ed. María Paz López Martínez, Carlos Sánchez-Moreno Ellart, and Ana Belén Zaera García (Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing Company, 2023), 244-259. On the legal and social implications of sex and consent in Byzantium, see Angeliki Laiou, "Sex, Consent, and Coercion in Byzantium," in *Consent and Coercion to Sex and Marriage in Ancient and Medieval Societies* (Washington D.C.: Dumbarton Oaks, 1993), 109-221.

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> Parthians attacked the city of Barzon,
> not to make a formal assault against it,
> nor to hurl battlement-breaking stones
> at the wall from artillery engines,
> nor to knock them down from above
> by rocks, sappers' tortoises and bronze-tipped rams
> – for the city was not easy for them to capture
> since a precipice surrounded it in on all sides –
> but to abduct those of the men of Barzon
> they could capture outside the boundaries
> and all the possessions they had with them.
> (*D&C* 1.6-16)[101]

Other novels also start with an attack or a siege on a city, such as Heliodoros' *Aithiopika* and Theodoros Prodromos' *Rhodanthe & Dosikles*. I believe this has prompted previous scholarship, as I suggested earlier in this chapter, to suggest that they are Eugenianos' primary models. Nevertheless, their descriptions of the attack are very different. In Heliodoros' novel, the barbarians came and killed everyone in all ways imaginable. In Prodromos', the barbarians ravaged everything, both killing and taking prisoners. In *D&C*, on the contrary, we can see that "Parthians attacked the city of Barzon not to make a formal assault against it, nor to hurl battlement-breaking stones at the wall from artillery engines, nor to knock them down from above by rocks (…)". Their aim was not that, "but to abduct those of the men of Barzon they could capture outside the boundaries and all the possessions they had with them."[102] Eugenianos' opening scene seems like a development of this commonplace, for he distances himself from previous attacks on cities by consciously deciding not to imitate these models. He clearly knows these models, as he uses them

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[101] Πάρθοι παρεμπίπτουσι Βάρζῳ τῇ πόλει, **οὐχ ὡς** κατ' αὐτῆς συγκροτήσοντες μάχην, **οὐδ' ὡς** βαλοῦντες ῥιψεπάλξιδας λίθους ἐκ πετροπομπῶν εἰς τὸ τεῖχος ὀργάνων, **οὐδ' ὡς** κατασπάσοντες ἐκ τῶν ὑψόθεν πέτραις χελώναις καὶ κριοῖς χαλκοστόμοις —οὐκ ἦν γὰρ εὐάλωτος αὐτοῖς ἡ πόλις, κρημνοῦ περισφίγγοντος αὐτὴν κυκλόθεν—, **ἀλλ' ὡς** ἀφαρπάσοντες ἄνδρας Βαρζίτας οὓς ἐκτὸς ἂν λήψοιντο τῶν ὁρισμάτων, καὶ πᾶσαν αὐτῶν τὴν τυχοῦσαν οὐσίαν.

[102] On the differences between the attack scene in the three texts, see also Nilsson, *Raconter Byzance*, 78-79.

elsewhere, but here he decides to establish a contrast between his story and previous ones.[103] This is reinforced by the way he discloses what Parthians did to the city and its inhabitants, first stressing what they did not do – by repeating the negation at the beginning of several verses – and only in the end revealing what actually took place. He expects a well-educated reader, who knows the other novels, to know how the situation of an attack on a city usually develops, and, although in a certain way Eugenianos acknowledges these models, he decides to surprise his audience by following a different path, through this literary misdirection. Eugenianos thus does not only distance himself from ancient authors but also from Prodromos, who is said to have been his teacher and whose novel, according to the manuscript tradition, is supposed to have inspired Eugenianos'.[104] One may wonder whether this choice was only Eugenianos' playful engagement with other works in the novelistic tradition or also an attempt to step out of Prodromos' shadow and no longer be only his student.

We will delve into one last example of this phenomenon by which Eugenianos distances himself from both ancient and Komnenian novelists, which Panagiotis Roilos first pointed out.[105] In book 1, when the lovers have just been separated by the Parthians and are lamenting their fate each in their own cell, Charikles laments for Drosilla, wondering what could have happened to her, wondering if she is suffering. In his lament, the references to the other Komnenian novels – or at the very least to typical elements in the novelistic tradition – are very clear.

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[103] This example could also be considered an example of apophasis or paraleipsis, for it is constructed on the basis of a partial refutation followed by an expansion. However, and even if Eugenianos' intention was not to distance himself from other writers by alluding to what happens in other works, I believe that it works as such. It is a straightforward reference and it would have been interpreted by readers in contrast to these other novelists, especially given that, in many of the manuscripts, *D&C* is introduced in relation to Prodromos' *R&D* by stating that it was composed in its imitation.

[104] See Nikos Zagklas, *Theodoros Prodromos: Miscellaneuous Poems. An Edition and Literary Study* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2023), 2-5, who points out that Prodromos' production is also characterized by literary experimentation, "which helped him to shape his own authorial trademark and establish himself within the fiercely competitive twelfth-century literary market."

[105] Roilos, *Amphoteroglossia*, 107-108.

> Alas, Drosilla, where are you going? Where are you living?
> To what servile tasks have you been set?
> (…)
> Which enemy, now declared your master,
> is receiving his wine-bowl from your fingers?
> Or perhaps in his advanced intoxication
> he will strike you with his barbarian fist
> for some unwitting offence? Oh, woe upon our fate!
> Or perhaps Kratylos here will cast his lascivious eye
> on you and envy our marriage?
> Before he succeeds, Chrysilla's jealousy
> will destroy you with a cup of poison.
> (*D&C* 1.230-246)

All the situations he mentions are possible and, in fact, typical of the novelistic tradition. Except for the weeping part, none of them are – nor become – true. Three possibilities among them stand out, since they take place in the novels by Prodromos and Eumathios Makrembolites. The first is that she could be beaten by the barbarians, which happens to Dosikles in Prodromos' novel (*R&D* 6.182-185).[106] She could also be serving her masters as a waitress, which is the case for Hysmine in Makrembolites' novel (*H&H* 10.8.2). A third possibility, which also finds resemblance in the work of a Komnenian novelist, is the option that she could be poisoned by someone jealous. In Prodromos' novel this almost happens to Rhodanthe, for Myrilla, the daughter of her master, tries to poison her (8.430-443). She does not achieve her goal, and Rhodanthe lives. Nevertheless, as Panagiotis Roilos points out, the resemblance of her name with Chrysilla's, who in Eugenianos' story poisons her husband the king to be with Charikles, is significant.[107]

It has been recognized that characters in *D&C* show a remarkable self-awareness of their role in a "novel" and the generic expectations held for them. As Paloma Cortez points out, Eugenianos' characters are aware of the traditional novelistic plot, their role in it and the

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[106] For further information on the role of barbarians in the Komnenian novels, see Corinne Jouanno, "Les barbares dans le roman byzantin du XIIe siècle: function d'un topos," *Byzantion* 62 (1992), 264-300.
[107] This interconnectedness between the Komnenian novels was pointed out in Roilos, *Amphoteroglossia*, 107-108.

possible obstacles that stand in the way of their reunion and eventual marriage.[108] I believe it also constitutes a metanarrative strategy, for it allows for a certain playfulness between the author and his audience's expectations. As I mentioned in Chapter 1, the characters' verbalization of these traditionally novelistic elements also creates a certain tension and suspense in the text, by means of anticipation. A similar phenomenon occurs in book 8 (8.167-179). Here Charikles, trying to achieve physical intimacy with Drosilla, manifests how he worries about the future dangers that await them and might prevent them from marrying and reaching the happy ending. Among the perils he mentions elements typical of the novelistic tradition, such as barbarians, wreckage of their ship, and bandits, that may constitute a threat to their love. This sort of anticipation, in which Charikles suggests a variety of possible events that, nonetheless, do not actually take place, is but yet another example of Eugenianos' awareness of the literary tradition and deliberate literary misdirection, or distancing. Such perils are even hinted by having them almost get captured by pirates (4.1-55), and the lovers' avoidance of unpleasant outcomes such as shipwrecks (265-269) strengthens, towards the end of the story, the distancing effect. The intricacy of the relations between Eugenianos' novel and the works of other Komnenian novelists seems to suggest a playfulness and interaction between them. They constituted, most probably, part of the audience of each other's compositions, where they might have gotten further inspiration for their own writings by listening to those of the other literati who were also indulging in the creation of erotic fictional narratives.[109]

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Conclusion

In this chapter I have argued that *D&C* constitutes a wonderful display of Eugenianos' desire to distinguish himself from other writers and to carve out his own place within the

[108] See Paloma Cortez, "Generic Self-awareness in a Komnenian Novel".
[109] On the audience of twelfth century byzantine novels, see Roilos, "I grasp, oh, artist, your enigma, I grasp your drama," 463-478.

tradition and in the highly competitive literary circles of Komnenian Byzantium, which might have contributed to his creation of a recognizable authorial voice.[110] Eugenianos' audience was well-educated and acquainted with the literary models he employed for the composition of *D&C*. Therefore, they must have been able to recognize the literary strategies Eugenianos uses for subverting their literary expectations and the way that he distances himself from other writers. An apple that – apparently – lacks any kind of inscription, a not-so-violent siege, and Eros' doubtful upbringing are examples of Eugenianos' literary strategies to provoke a reaction in the reader, aware of the literary tradition. These strategies would have created suspense, for the audience of *D&C* would have expected a certain outcome, but also surprise, when Eugenianos decides to step away from the literary model.

The question would then be: Do the other Komnenian novelists do something similar? Given that they worked sometimes under the same patrons and in the same city, they probably attended the same literary circles.[111] There, they must have heard each other's compositions, which may have instigated the somewhat contagious desire to write erotic fiction. A certain intellectual competitivity could have sprung from this, which would explain Eugenianos distancing from the others Komnenian novels as a strategy aimed at establishing his authority and individuality. It would then be expected for the other Komnenian novelists to engage in relatively similar strategies for the subversion of readerly expectations. Further research will be needed, but both possibilities, either the discovery of similar subversion and distancing in the other novelists or finding that this happens only in Eugenianos' novel, could

[110] As Katalin Delbó points out in "Ein byzantinischer Roman aus dem 12. Jahrhundert. Niketas Eugenianos: *Drosilla und Charikles*," 71-72, the Komnenian period saw an increase in individualism and in literary experimentation. No studies exist on Eugenianos' authorial voice. On Komnenian authors' self-quotation and creation of an authorial voice, see Ingela Nilsson, "Life, Love and the Past. Self-quotation and Recycling," in *Writer and Occasion in Twelfth-Century Byzantium. The Authorial Voice of Constantine Manasses* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2022), 142-169.

[111] For instance, the literary circle connected to the *sevastokratorissa* Eirene, who might be the best-known example. See Elizabeth Jeffreys, "The Sebastokratorissa Irene as Patron," in *Female Founders in Byzantium and Beyond*, ed. Lioba Theis, Margaret Mullett, and Michael Grünbart (Vienna: Böhlau Verlag, 2011-2012), 175-192; Jeffreys, "The Novels of Mid-Twelfth Century Constantinople," 191-199; and Nilsson, "Romantic Love in Rhetorical Guise," 55-56.

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provide valuable insight into the intellectual and literary life of twelfth-century Constantinople. Whether or not Eugenianos attempted to establish his authority as a writer, his distancing from other writers can be seen as proof of a playful attempt to display his virtuosity as a *literatus*.

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Chapter 3

Eugenianos' subversive rewriting: An anti-novelistic novel?

Δεινὸν φιλῆσαι, μὴ φιλῆσαι δὲ πλέον·
δεινῶν δὲ πάντων χαλεπώτερον κρίνω
τὸ τοὺς φιλοῦντας εὐκόλως μὴ τυγχάνειν.

It is dreadful to love, but more so not to love;
I consider it the worst of all evils
that lovers do not always meet with success
(*D&C* 5.146-148)

In Chapter 1, I performed a narratological analysis of *D&C* in which I highlighted the literary devices employed by Eugenianos and some of the main motifs in the novel. Chapter 2 was devoted to a brief overview of the transtextual relationships of *D&C* and to a detailed analysis of some instances in which Eugenianos "distances" himself from previous writers. Building up on the previous discussion, Chapter 3 will approach *D&C* as a subversive piece of literature.

As has been shown in previous chapters, *D&C* stands in dialogue with its predecessors in many different ways. One device stands out and has become the focus of this thesis: Eugenianos' distancing from other novel writers. Eugenianos' departures from – and subversion of – readerly expectations suggests a certain playfulness in his engagement with his audience. In this chapter, I will explore *D&C* as a parody of the previous novelistic tradition, or at least of some of the elements and ideas commonly used in it.[112] By considering Eugenianos' subversion of novelistic conventions and motifs, his establishment of contrasts and parallelisms between different storylines, and the comic modulations in *D&C*, I will

[112] There are previous attempts at seeing Greek novels as parodical works. See, for instance, Donal Blythe Durham, "Parody in Achilles Tatius," *Classical Philology* 33, no. 1 (1938), 1-19.

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underline how *D&C* can be understood as a somewhat "anti-novelistic" novel. By "anti-novelistic novel" I highlight the idea that *D&C* seems to poke fun at elements and plot developments typical of the novelistic tradition, whether this might be Eugenianos' deliberate intention or not. It does not imply that Eugenianos' intention was to undermine the "literary genre" to which his novel is ascribed but rather that to produce amusement and a reaction in his audience by playfully questioning elements associated with the literary tradition, as well as to showcase his literary virtuosity. This chapter does not aim to identify the textual transcendence of this novel exhaustively, nor to give an account of all its literary models, but instead to highlight its subversion of readerly expectations.

Previous studies have tackled the apparent self-awareness of Eugenianos' characters regarding their presence in a "novel", their role in the story, the dangers awaiting them, and the expectations held for them.[113] This phenomenon is also perceivable in Prodromos' novel, and may be assumed to characterize the broader Komnenian novelistic production. Further research into *H&H* and *A&K* would be required, but this literary awareness can be observed in *R&D* in, for example, 6.148-149 ("And so, what then? They took Dosikles alive, together with Rhodanthe. But how was it possible to capture alive out of them all only the one who was united with the girl?") and 6.355-358 ("Did I not know that the fates are mischievous? Did I not know that ambushes and robber bands await travellers, that storms and pirate fleets encounter those who sail?"). These examples seem to constitute some sort of self-criticism towards Prodromos' plot construction and its verisimilitude, but they are likewise proof of his awareness of traditional novelistic elements and, as is the case for Eugenianos, of the relation between narrative and reality.

As for *D&C*, I argued in Chapter 2 that this self-awareness ties in with Eugenianos' literary distancing from previous writers, as it provides a way for Eugenianos to distinguish

[113] See Cortez, "Personajes secundarios y su vínculo con la tradición literaria en *Drosila y Caricles* de Nicetas Eugeniano (s. XII)," and "Generic Self-awareness in a Komnenian Novel." See also Chapter 1 of this thesis for a longer discussion of their literary awareness.

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his own work from other novels in the novelistic tradition. His refusal to follow the expected path for a novel would have been therefore understood as something that makes his novel different from others. Even if not completely intentional, an educated reader would have been able to discern the subtle references to other works, whose rules Eugenianos appears to observe but from which he nonetheless playfully departs, both creating anticipation and subverting readerly expectations. In the same effort to stand out in the highly competitive literary environment in Komnenian Byzantium; Eugenianos experimented not only through his generic modulations, but also through character construction and through the novel's plot development.[114] Innovation and experimentation do not need to be equated with invention but, more precisely, with diversity in the combination of pre-existing elements.[115]

Amorous expectations

Eugenianos' treatment of love is ambiguous to say the least, as was shown in Chapter 1. In his view, those wounded by Eros cannot be soothed, and what appears to be beneficial may well not really be so in the end, even if it is a kiss, the much-anticipated remedy. Several different ideas coexist and contribute towards his conceptualization of love. As we have seen, love is a disease, a fire that water cannot quench. Among the possible remedies for it – if there even is such a thing – Eugenianos suggests speech, letter-writing, sleep, song, and music, and, finally, marriage and sweet embrace. Thus, in his portrayal of love, Eugenianos establishes several contrasts between his characters and their experiences of love that contribute to the polyphonous character of his novel. In *D&C*, views on love are subject to change and align with different literary traditions, not just with the novelistic one, thus

[114] For further information as to the other Komnenian novelists' innovations, see also Nikos Zagklas, *Theodoros Prodromos: Miscellaneous Poems*, 1-30; and Nilsson, *Erotic Pathos, Rethorical Pleasure*, 261-289.
[115] For a broader idea of "innovation" in Byzantium, see Alexander P. Kazhdan, "Innovation in Byzantium," in *Originality in Byzantine Literature, Art and Music: A Collection of Essays*, ed. Anthony P. Littlewood (Oxford: Oxbow, 1995), 1-14. On the Byzantine perceptions of innovation, Apostolos Spanos, "Was Innovation Unwanted in Byzantium?" in *Byzantium Wanted: The Desire for a Lost Empire*, ed. Ingela Nilsson and Paul Stephenson (Uppsala: Uppsala University Press, 2014), 43-56.

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subverting generic expectations. Some characters suffer from love in a way reminiscent of bucolic poetry while others achieve the ideal love expected from a Hellenistic novel. This might in some ways signal the uncertainty of Eugenianos' characters regarding their future, a result of their literary self-awareness.[116]

Love can also be unreciprocated, as happens to many of Eugenianos' characters.[117] This is certainly the case of the suitors, but also of Kleandros. In the beginning of the story, while in their cell in the Parthian city, Kleandros and Charikles share with each other their experiences of love. Kleandros tells Charikles of his advances and of the letters he sent to Kalligone, and Charikles listens patiently to each of them. After the end of the first letter, Charikles is waiting to hear what her response was, for he assumes that she answered Kleandros' letter reciprocating his feelings, as would have been ideal.[118] On the contrary, Kleandros tells him she did not respond and asks him to wait for the second letter.[119] Charikles, understanding that it took a long courtship, mentions he will even listen to the third of the letters; in the end he listens to four of them.[120] After the second letter, Charikles begins a longer intervention in between Kleandros' letters, which might suggest that he thought that was it and there were no more letters, but Kleandros stops him, continuing to tell him his messages to Kalligone.

Kleandros is first rejected by Kalligone, who does not even answer his emotional letters as she was yet unexperienced in matters of love. Her initial rejection highlights her morals, for she acts how she was expected to. Despite this rejection, it only takes Eros' intervention to make it work, and she finally agrees to meet with him, already accepting and

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[116] See Cortez, "Personajes secundarios y su vínculo con la tradición literaria en *Drosila y Caricles* de Nicetas Eugeniano (s. XII)" and "Generic self-awareness in a Komnenian novel: the hero in *Drosilla and Charikles*".
[117] Drosilla and Charikles are the only ones for whom it works from the beginning and for whom love translates into wedding.
[118] "But tell me – for you know the answer – what then did Kalligone reply to Kleandros, how did she respond?" (2.191-192)
[119] "The girl said nothing, Charikles, as was likely. Either she did not receive that letter or she was too busy with her playmates. So listen to my second message." (2.193-195)
[120] "Don't begrudge me, my good Kleandros, even the third message that you sent the girl." (2.197-198)

sharing Kleandros' feelings. As usual, the god Love has joined them in a dream, with no previous hint of this development to be found in the narrative. Eugenianos' lack of interest in exploring this episode is worth-noting. Such an omission is due to its intertextuality with other novels in which that type of dreams are described in detail, such as is the case with *H&H* (3.1-3).[121] Little attention is given to such an episode (3.5-6) and the prophetic dream just functions as justification for her change of mind. As mentioned by Elizabeth Jeffreys, this episode "reads as a parody of the role and images associated with Eros".[122]

While imprisoned, although before the two friends have had the chance to share their thoughts and fears, Charikles begins to wonder what might have happened to Drosilla. Already in Chapter 2 it was shown that this episode constitutes an example of Eugenianos' distancing from other authors – in this case contemporary authors, for he references events that take place in the novels by Prodromos and Makrembolites. Furthermore, the closure of this scene is worthy of attention. Charikles, separated from his beloved, laments their fate until he is interrupted by Kleandros. Following his friend's advice, he deems it better to go to sleep: "let me be calm and lie down, in the hope that I may close my eyes for a little sleep, and forget my sufferings for a while" (1.279-281). Immediately after, the focus shifts to Drosilla. She starts her lament by stating that Charikles is "asleep in some corner of the prison without the slightest thought (…) for Drosilla" (1.291-292). The contrast between both characters is here voiced by Drosilla herself: "But Drosilla is lamenting loudly about Charikles" (1.297). Drosilla reproaches Charikles for falling asleep; towards the end of her lament, however, she tones down her complaints about his unresponsiveness to their destiny:

> End your sleep, if you have been able to drowse,
> think of Drosilla: she laments for you, she weeps for you;
> weep with her, lament with her, despair with her.
> Indeed, Charikles, you were not born of oak,

[121] The imagery surrounding Eros is similar in the two novels, but there are no explicit mentions of Eros as an emperor in *D&C*, which does happen in *H&H*.
[122] See Jeffreys, *Four Byzantine Novels*, 374.

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and I know that you are lamenting and weeping
and not drowsing in the depths of night
as you think constantly of the maiden Drosilla.
(*D&C* 1.340-346)

Amorous expectations are that both lovers, unable to think about anything other than the loved one, would spend their captivity lamenting about their separation. Drosilla claims that Charikles is indeed asleep and has forgotten her, which heightens the emotionality of her lament, although later she assumes that her lover is suffering as much as she is. Two opposing ideas are thus verbalized by Drosilla, the one being that of the actual events, that of her intuition, and the other the idea stemming from her literary self-awareness and her knowledge of other lovers' stories.[123] The contrast between the two lovers is maintained for a while, until Drosilla decides to go to sleep as well, so that she might see Charikles in her dreams. Charikles goes to sleep because he does not see the point in weeping for her when he cannot do anything. Drosilla's lament highlights the differences in her suffering from that of Charikles. She says she is not able to sleep and will keep grieving – although she does in the end go to sleep, which subverts readerly expectations. The swift shift in focalization and the difference in the way they cope with separation hint at a less idealized and somewhat parodical love, for they are suffering unequally and care about each other differently.

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[123] Similarly, in *H&H* Hysminias is unable to sleep for he is worried about Hysmine (9.6.4: "I rose from my mattress without sleep having come near my eyelids"; and 9.11.3: "I lay down on the ground, in the manner of a slave, with my fellow slaves, but my thoughts would not permit me to sleep; the night was for me like day, as far as sleep and wakefulness were concerned"). See also, as for the ancient novels, *Lekcippe and Kleitophon* (1, 6: "Indeed, I was drunk with love; but when I readied the chamber where I always lay I was unable to get to sleep. For Nature will have it that diseases and bodily wounds are worse at night (…) but when the body is bound fast by bodily rest, the soul has the greater freedom to be tossed about by its woe: all the sensations which were lately at rest are then aroused; mourners feel their grief anew, the anxious their cares, those in danger their fears, and lovers their consuming flame"), S. Gaselee (tr.), *Achilles Tatius* (London: William Heinemann, 1917).

Sex and the city: Kallidemos' failure as a suitor

An episode that contributes to the comic dimension of *D&C* is that of Kallidemos, which has received much attention in recent scholarship.[124] In this episode, Eugenianos displays satirical ability by portraying Kallidemos as an unworthy suitor, as a village man who tries to act like a Constantinopolitan and fails miserably in his wooing attempts, as he uses his literary *exempla* wrong. Unrefined and not educated enough, he fails in his efforts, and Drosilla laughs at the idea of being with him or with any other villager, as she is tired of listening to his monologue.[125] In an overtly satirical manner, Kallidemos is made fun of due to his inability to choose appropriate characters from the literary *exempla* he uses. I will not analyze this passage in depth, as this has been done before. It suffices to say that Kallidemos does not fulfill the role he is supposed to. He does not live up to the expectations of the character and is not capable of being a real threat to the couple, but instead becomes an anecdote in Drosilla's story, a parody on the role of suitors in the novelistic tradition.

His intentions to abduct Drosilla are disclosed in the novel: "So he planned in the desert-wastes of night to fall unexpectedly on the young men, having with him comrades of his own age, in order to abduct the girl – for he had prepared a vessel for their departure" (7.262-266). However, he does not get the opportunity to carry out his plans, as his lovesickness gets in the way, manifesting itself as a psychosomatic condition: "But instead of the flame which his desires had kindled, the fire of a tertian fever gripped him; instead of a vessel sailing away, it was a couch of suffering that claimed him; instead of a speedy departure to another village, he discovered protracted immobility for his limbs" (7.267-272). The antitheses in this last passage reinforce the idea that Kallidemos is not what he ought to be. The outcome of Kallidemos' passion is not fulfilled love but a fever, and he does not

[124] See Jouanno, "Nicetas Eugenianos, un héritier du roman grec," 346-360; Burton, "A Reemergence of Theocritean Poetry in the Byzantine Novel"; and Nilsson, "Romantic Love in Rhetorical Guise," 41-45.
[125] On village perceptions in this scene, see Roilos, *Amphoteroglossia*, 76-77. On Drosilla's laughing at Kallidemos, see Burton, "The Pastoral in Byzantium," 567.

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manage to abduct Drosilla, which goes against readerly expectations of him becoming a tangible threat to the couple.[126] It depends on the same contrast that was mentioned earlier, that between expectations – stemming from the literary tradition – and reality – to be understood here as narrative developments. Although Kallidemos would never have managed to snatch Drosilla away– or at least not for long before the lovers managed to reunite –, he does not even get the chance to try.

Drosilla's suitors are very different. Kleinias constitutes a real threat to the couple while Kallidemos, as was shown, is only a mere inconvenience. Both fall in love with Drosilla, but only Kleinias has the power to posit a real danger to the lovers, which is frustrated by his death at the hands of the Arabs; Kallidemos is stopped by Fate itself in an anticlimactic manner. The end of both threats is abrupt, but Kleinias' obeys external reasons while Kallidemos' is a result of his lovesickness. Furthermore, while Kallidemos is portrayed in the beginning as Theokritos' loving Cyclops (*Idyll* 11), he later comes to represent said mythological figure in an aggressive or violent way.[127] The same literary reference therefore serves to convey quite different aspects of his personality, and such a reversal, that of a literary model that had previously been used in a positive way, contributes to the amphoteroglossic dimension of Eugenianos' novel.[128]

Maryllis and the banquet, and Chyrsilla's lament

D&C contains several episodes that could be considered manifestly funny. Earlier studies have already highlighted Maryllis' dance as one of the most overtly comic episodes of

[126] On abduction in the ancient novels, see Papaioannou, "Kidnapping in the Ancient Novels," 244-259; and Burton, "Abduction and Elopement in the Byzantine Novel," 384-385.
[127] On Eugenianos' use of Theokritos' *Idyll 11* in *D&C*, see Jouanno, "Nicetas Eugenianos, un héritier du roman grec," 355-357; and Burton, "From Theocritean to Longan Bucolic."
[128] As was mentioned in the Methodology section above, the concept of "amphoteroglossia", as used by Roilos in his 2005 monograph, stands for the rhetor's ability to convey different meanings with the same utterance. In this case, the same literary model stands for very different characteristics.

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the novel.[129] During the first banquet scene, Maryllis – the old lady who helps the couple – gets so happy about their reunion that she drinks in excess and, carried away in her joy, begins what is described as "a somewhat Bacchic dance" celebrating the lovers' happiness (7.274-277). It does not end well: she trips and falls, becoming the object of laughter:

> the constant gyrations quickly
> tripped Maryllis up in her movements
> and so the poor wretch fell over
> with her legs in a tangle;
> she promptly lifted her feet over her head
> and pushed her head into the ground.
> The symposiasts let out a huge guffaw.
> Old Maryllis lay where she fell
> and farted three times,
> because she could not bear the pressure on her head
> (*D&C* 7.280-289).

Not only is the episode funny *per se*, but the young people's later reinterpretation of what happen sets a humorous contrast too. When they manage to stop laughing and Kleandros helps Maryllis get up from the uncomfortable position in which she lays in the ground, the old woman does not feel ashamed of what just happened but, instead, thanks the youth for the laughter and happiness they brought to her. The youth, sharing this feeling, politely provide a unanimous but somewhat different account of what just happened:

> And your dancing and skillful gyrations,
> and the abundant movements of your feet,
> and the speed of your subtle contrapuntal motions,
> have delighted us more than food, more than drink,
> more than the most luxurious banquet,
> more than the most overflowing cup
> (*D&C* 7.319-324)

While the qualitative judgement in this excerpt is different from what the narrator describes a few lines before, the contrast here is not aimed at ridiculing Maryllis but instead at making

[129] See, for example, Panagiotis Roilos, "Satirical Modulations in 12th-Century Greek Literature," in *Satire in the Middle Byzantine Period: The Golden Age of Laughter?*, ed. Przemysław Marciniak and Ingela Nilsson (Leiden: Brill, 2021), 274-275. See also, on dance as an activity to be mocked, Floris Bernard, "Laughter, Derision, and Abuse in Byzantine Verse," in *Satire in the Middle Byzantine Period: The Golden Age of Laughter?*, ed. Przemysław Marciniak and Ingela Nilsson (Leiden: Brill, 2021), 47.

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her feel better.[130] Since the reader is provided before with the real account of the events regarding Maryllis fall, the differences in this evaluation of what happened stand out even more. It does not constitute an attack on Maryllis, but the situation is nevertheless made fun of, and this contributes to the overall narrative by providing comic relief. The reunion of the lovers and their retelling of what they went through would have made the text's tempo slower, and its character more solemn and serious. After Maryllis' scene, the couple once again recalls what they have been through and Kleandros discovers Kalligone's death. Its positioning between such episodes reinforces the idea that it serves as comic relief. Maryllis' irreverent scene at the banquet provides a humorous note building on the couple's happiness. It also constitutes an example of subversion, a blow of reality, for idealized love and major events of the narrative are interrupted by a mundane event.

As was said, Maryllis is portrayed as a nice and amicable old woman, a helper of the couple and especially of Drosilla, for whom she cares after she arrives to the village. Although she is made fun of, her character continues being portrayed in a positive light, her old age being only partially a cause for laughter.[131] On the contrary, Chrysilla is criticized for her old age combined with her lustfulness and for her willingness to do anything to pursue her desires.[132] The Parthian queen is characterized as a lustful and loathsome woman (5.73-87), capable of betraying her own family – for she poisons her husband (5.62-65) guided by her inappropriate feelings towards Charikles – and of faking her emotions (5.181-182) – as

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[130] Parody is generally thought of as an attack, abuse, or insult. See, for example, Floris Bernard, "Laughter, Derision, and Abuse in Byzantine Verse," 41-42. In this thesis, as was mentioned in the previous pages, this term will instead be used for "the ironic, playful, or subversive dialogue between *D&C* and other texts or literary traditions." As for this case, it could be considered that it parodies the previous account of her dance.

[131] On this episode and the comic portrayal of old women, see Roilos, *Amphoteroglossia*, 288-295. See also Andrea Giusti, "Nota a Niceta Eugeniano (*Dros. et Char*., VII 247-332)," *Studi italiani di filologia classica* 11, no. 1-2 (1993), 216-23.

[132] Prodromos characterizes an old woman in a similar way in one of his works. See Przemysław Marciniak, "Prodromos, Aristophanes, and a Lustful Woman: A Byzantine Satire by Theodore Prodromos," *Byzantinoslavica* 73 (2015), 23-34.

with her parodied lament (5.180-237).[133] After such a lament, she immediately turns to confessing her feelings to Charikles, which further contributes to the juxtaposition of love and grief that was mentioned in Chapter 1. Although she grieves her husband as was expected of her, she has ulterior motifs, which are disclosed once she pursues Charikles.[134]

Τὰ κατά Κλέανδρον καὶ Καλλιγόνην: Secondary characters as the real protagonists

This section will explore the parallelisms between the two couples in *D&C*. Although the main characters in the story are Drosilla and Charikles, their experiences are sometimes eclipsed by those of the couple in the subplot, that is, Kleandros and Kalligone. For the most part, both plots follow a similar structure and adhere to the same conventions. In both cases the couple elopes and flees their homeland, being later imprisoned by the Parthians, where Charikles and Kleandros meet. Kleandros' story is brought to a sudden stop after he tells Charikles what he has gone through with Kalligone, for she is no longer around and Kleandros is merely waiting for their reunion. Once Kleandros' own erotic story comes to a halt, he becomes the helper of the main characters, assuming the role of friend.[135] This is anticipated as soon as book 2, when he shows empathy to Charikles:

> Are you in pain? I am in pain too. Do you weep? I weep with you.
> Do you feel desire? I feel desire too, and for a beautiful maiden,
> Kalligone who has been snatched away from me.
> (*D&C* 2.48-50)

After their meeting, Kleandros follows Charikles, and is ultimately responsible for the couple's reunion, as he overhears Drosilla in the village. Only when the return home of

[133] The fact that she has poisoned her husband is disclosed earlier (5.62-65). On Chyrsilla's parodied lament, see Roilos, *Amphoteroglossia*, 109-111.

[134] Megan Moore already pointed out the coexistence of grief and eros in diverse medieval literary works and the fact that grief is often portrayed as an emotion entailing also desire. See *The Erotics of Grief. Emotions and the Construction of Privilege in the Medieval Mediterranean* (New York: Cornwell University Press, 2021), 60-89.

[135] On the role of the friend in the novelistic tradition, see Brioso Sánchez, "Personaje del "amigo" en la novela griega: Caritón"; Brioso Sánchez, "El personaje del amigo en la novela griega antigua. De Jenofonte de Éfeso a Aquiles Tacio"; and Brioso Sánchez, "El personaje del "amigo" en la novela griega antigua: Heliodoro (continuación)".

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Drosilla and Charikles is about to become tangible does Kleandros story find closure. The love of Kleandros and Kalligone stands in contrast to that of Drosilla and Charikles, as a parody of the expected course of a love story. Their stories mirror each other, as they have gone through similar experiences, experiences typical of the novelistic tradition. Yet this repetition admits variations; their fates are completely different. For Drosilla and Charikles the happy ending is just around the corner, and Drosilla is aware of that: "I shall in due time see my fatherland (…) and I shall join, Charikles, in marriage with you (8.155-160). On the contrary, Kleandros' story is destined to tragedy. Apart from being a foil to Charikles, Kleandros also mirrors Kalligone, whose misfortune he will suffer too: "You are sick? I am sick too. You rejoice? With you I rejoice greatly. You are in pain? I am in pain too. You weep? I weep with you." (2.252-253).[136] In the beginning he asks Charon, in one of his letters, what he plans on doing to Kalligone:

> "Wretched Charon, bereft of joy,
> will you miserably snatch away
> Kalligone, best of girls, together with our peers
> and will you destroy that far-famed beauty
> and, alas, tear asunder those orbs of her eyes
> which have shot at me,
> rather than withdraw from gazing at her beauty?"
> This is what I said, but the mighty figure,
> sad, ill-fated Charon, replied, Yes.
> (*D&C* 2.173-181)

As a clear instance of prolepsis, with this letter Eugenianos hints at future developments of Kleandros' love story to the reader, just as the prologue to the book served as an argument of *D&C*'s main plotline. Charon's monosyllabic answer, although certainly tragic – for their miserable fate is here disclosed –, could also be considered somewhat comic, as it constitutes an abrupt and succinct response to Kleandros' lengthier and more emotionally charged intervention. This passage builds suspense as the reader anticipates that Kalligone will be

[136] This was first pointed out by Paloma Cortez in "Personajes secundarios y su vínculo con la tradición literaria en *Drosila y Caricles* de Nicetas Eugeniano (s. XII)," 39-42 and 45.

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snatched away from him by Charon. However, as has already been said, the news of Kalligone's death arrives quite suddenly and unexpectedly, inciting surprise. Charon stands by his promise, later echoed by Drosilla in her lament for Kleandros, in which she also highlights the similarities in the secondary lovers' destiny:

> Alas, alas, I mourn you who have died, as it were harvested
> like an unripe grape or an immature ear of corn
> in the field by Charon's hostile fingers.
> How can I bear this abominable fate,
> as disaster after fresh disaster in succession
> encompasses my head?
> You escaped from the hands of barbarian men,
> but not from Charon, the slayer of men.
> The hope that till now nurtured me has perished,
> Kleandros has perished like Kalligone."
> (*D&C* 8.218-227)

Male and female characters also stand in contrast, as they are subject to what has been termed "symmetry".[137] The experiences of characters of both genders mimic each other, especially on a narrative level. When Charikles performs a lament, so does Drosilla. The same applies to Kleandros and Kalligone – even if she does not appear in the story – in one of the passages mentioned above, where Kleandros argues that their destinies are one. A similar albeit subtler symmetry takes place between the two women. After her lament for Kleandros, Drosilla performs another one, this time for Kalligone, her "fellow maiden". In it, she states that she knows her, even if she has never seen her – for she has seen her through Kleandros, which strengthens the idea that there are parallelisms between the two women. Their experiences are similar, and Drosilla shows that she is scared about her future; what happened to Kalligone could have very easily been her own story. Drosilla has already, by this point, expressed a few times her worries about the prospective perils in their way. Knowing what Kalligone must have gone through would have increased her fear that her own destiny might be similar to hers.

[137] See Corinne Jouanno, "Women in Byzantine Novels of the Twelfth Century," 141-162; and Illgen Izquierdo, "Novel·la bizantina en context," 70.

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So I mourn for you, Kalligone,
fellow maiden; it is I who weep for you, buried in the earth,
instead of Kleandros who has departed,
who shared our exile in foreign lands;
I weep for you who are deprived of your mother and father,
and who, alas, died far from your homeland;
yet I never saw you, never entered into conversation with you,
did not greet you and embrace you in time of joy,
nor have you as a consolation in time of disaster.
Would that I had never seen Kleandros
and shared food and tears with him.
(*D&C* 9.244-254)

The lovers' reunion is mudded with sadness: "Thus around Drosilla and Charikles Fate's hostility did not cease scattering the debris of disaster and painfully mingling distressing events with happier ones" (8.317-320). Drosilla and Charikles could have died during their adventures, but thanks to Gnathon appearing out of thin air they manage to return to their homeland. As was pointed out in Chapter 1, in *D&C* happiness and sadness, joy and grief, coexist.[138]

After Kleandros' death, Gnathon gives Drosilla and Charikles some advice, telling them to "give precedence to joy" and to forget about the hardships they went through and the friends they lost.[139] Whether or not the main characters follow this advice, I believe it does not apply to the novel's audience. It has been argued that Kleandros' death represents the ultimate aspiration of any character in erotic fiction. He is not the main character, and yet it is

[138] See also Moore, *The Erotics of Grief*, 299-320. Moore coined the term "erotics of grief" to describe the connection between love and death, a phenomenon which applies to this novel but is also visible in other works. For a different approach on the interrelation between love and death and for a cognitive understanding of love and chastity in the ancient Greek novels, see also Benito García-Valero, "Configuración neurocognitiva del ideal amoroso y castidad en las protagonistas de la novela griega," in *The Reality of Women in the Universe of the Ancient Novel*, ed. María Paz López Martínez, Carlos Sánchez-Moreno Ellart, and Ana Belén Zaera García (Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing Company, 2023), 407-415. The coexistence of both continued in Palaiologan romance; see Panagiotis Agapitos, "Words Filled with Tears. Amorous Discourse as Lamentation in the Palaiologan Romances," in *Greek Laughter and Tears: Antiquity and After*, ed. Margaret Alexiou and Douglas L. Cairns (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2017), 441-466. See also Ingela Nilsson, "Comforting Tears and Suggestive Smiles: To Laugh and Cry in the Komnenian Novel," in *Greek Laughter and Tears: Antiquity and After*, ed. Margaret Alexiou and Douglas L. Cairns (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2017), 367-391.

[139] "If some unexpected painful event that grieves the mind takes place in the midst of joy, the sensible man gives precedence to joy; when the grief is unmitigated, then no one can be reproached for excessive tears; but if benefits are mixed with what is distressing, then – I think – the more favorable aspects of fate should be preferred." (9.109-118).

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him, the friend, who embodies idealized love: not being able to live without the loved one and thus dying from love. Taking also into consideration where in the narrative this event happens – that is, towards the happy ending of the main couple – and the number of lines devoted to it, I believe Kleandros' death to be more interesting than the couple's eventual marriage.[140] While their union is to be expected from a novel, Kleandros' death is an entirely new episode and surprises the reader, subverting existing expectations about the ending of tales of erotic fiction. Readerly expectations for the ending of *D&C* would have depended on the readers knowledge of the literary tradition and its common happy ending.[141] These expectations, however, are only partially fulfilled, for Kleandros' story undermines the happiness of the main lovers' reunion. Various clues are given on the latter's final misfortune by Eugenianos throughout the novel, such as the notion that Kleandros mirrors Kalligone and Charon's foretelling of her fate. Similarly, I would argue that Eugenianos intention might have been to parody the novelistic tradition by placing the focus on Kleandros unfulfilled and non-ideal love story.

Conclusion

D&C differs from previous novels in many aspects. This chapter has intended to show how this novel could be considered partially subversive, both of readerly expectations – an overarching theme in the thesis – and of the plot inherited from the novelistic tradition. By analyzing various passages from *D&C*, I have surveyed how its comic modulations, its parallelisms, and the symmetry between its characters contribute to this dimension of the novel.

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[140] On Kleandros' death, see also Burton, "The Pastoral in Byzantium," 570; and Cortez, "Personajes secundarios y su vínculo con la tradición literaria en *Drosila y Caricles* de Nicetas Eugeniano (s. XII)." Many characters in the novelistic tradition talk about dying, or even die, but not from grief.
[141] See Máximo Brioso Sánchez, "El final en la novela griega antigua," *Habis* 35 (2004), 319-342.

Comic elements are not particularly common throughout the novel. However, they happen at interesting points in the narrative: they provide comic relief and constitute a parody of the unfulfilled role of certain characters, as is the case with Kallidemos' sudden inability to abduct Drosilla. Several contrasts are established by Eugenianos, such as those between the first lamentations of Drosilla and Charikles, or those between Chrysilla's lament and her flirtatious attempts. Similarly, the sustained parallelisms between the different storylines, with secondary characters mirroring the experiences of the main characters – or the other way around, if we are to pay attention to their chronology – contribute to its subversion of the literary tradition.

If Chapter 2 focused on Eugenianos' distancing, this chapter could be said to survey his characters' distance from each other and from what would be expected of them. The opposition and contrast between Kleandros' story and that of the main characters contributes particularly to undermining the effect of the happy ending on the reader and signals Eugenianos' wish to write a parody of love. Eugenianos portrays, in *D&C*, different love stories: those that end well and those that do not. He does not settle for just one type of love story, but instead explores both, which brings us back to the beginning of the chapter: "It is dreadful to love, but more so not to love; I consider it the worst of all evils that lovers do not always meet with success" (5.146-148).

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Conclusions

In this thesis, I aimed to shed light on Eugenianos' subversive engagement with previous and contemporary literary works. Chapter 1 offered a narratological analysis of *D&C*, in which I highlighted the important role of secondary characters in the narrative, who are in charge of the plot development, and especially of Kleandros, whose plot is a doubling of that of Drosilla and Charikles. Eugenianos' portrayal of love and its remedies is ambiguous and even contradictory, for it combines influences from diverse literary traditions. Other important issues dealt with in that chapter were the literary self-awareness, and the empathy of his characters. The former allows for Eugenianos' characters to have expectations of their future, while the latter contributes to the interaction between different storylines.

In Chapter 2, I focused on the analysis of what I have called "literary distancing", that is, Eugenianos' subversive dialogue with other literary works. Eugenianos was active in a highly competitive intellectual environment where *literati* were praised for their rhetorical ability, innovation, and creativity. In order to display his rhetorical prowess and virtuosity as a *literatus*, Eugenianos employed various strategies, including his "distancing" from previous and contemporary works. Eugenianos often engages in a subversive dialogue with his literary models, in which he introduces a certain literary model which, in the end, he does not to follow. Through this sort of "literary misdirections", he would not only display his knowledge of the canon, but also provoke a reaction in his audience, with whom he shared an educational background and who would have been able to grasp these references and to appreciate his literary strategies. Such strategies would have created an atmosphere of anticipation and suspense, culminating in a sense of surprise, as Eugenianos ultimately decides to deviate from the expected model.

In Chapter 3, I approached Eugenianos' *D&C* as a subversive literary work. My analysis was centered around his inclusion of comic modulations, his subversion of

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traditional novelistic motifs and conventions, and his establishment of parallelisms and contrasts between different characters and plotlines. Eugenianos' characters sometimes do not comply with generic expectations, with lovers' falling asleep instead of being worried about each other, and suitors not fulfilling their role as such. These strategies, I argued in Chapter 3, contribute to the perception that *D&C* constitutes an exploration of the wider universe of possibilities for love stories. Eugenianos does present a love story, but his emphasis on Kleandros' tragic subplot undermines readerly expectations of love as idealized. Happiness and sadness coexist as a fundamental part of this story. In the novelistic tradition, love was supposed to have a happy ending. So is the case for Drosilla and Charikles, but the story of Kleandros and Kalligone, to which so much narrative space is devoted, gives an alternative view. Although certainly a great example of Greek erotic fiction, *D&C* is at the same time a somewhat anti-novelistic novel. It largely follows novelistic literary conventions while at the same time stepping away from the expected path.

Future research might benefit from further analysis of Eugenianos' choice of models and from the identification of patterns and dynamics underlying Eugenianos' engagement with – and reworking of – diverse literary models. Such an analysis would provide insight into Eugenianos' literary preferences as well as into the question of what tradition his work belonged to. An interesting issue, on which I am currently working, is how this choice of models contributes to characterization, that is, whether the characters in *D&C* are delimited according to particular literary models. Another issue that awaits further study is how Eugenianos' choice of literary models compares to that of the other Komnenian novelists. Similarly, future research identifying similar subversive literary strategies, such as "distancing", in other writers might provide fruitful insight into their intellectual competitivity and playful literary dialogues. Moreover, Eugenianos' authorial voice, on which this study has started to shed some light, could fruitfully be explored across his oeuvre.

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