

## SOME REMARKS ON THE STRUCTURE OF JOHN EUGENIKOS' *EKPHRASEIS* OF CITIES AND PLACES\*

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Among the prose works of John Eugenikos<sup>1</sup> an important place is held by his seven *ekphraseis*, the short rhetorical descriptions he composed on Corinth, Trebizond, the Peloponnesian village of Petrina, the island of Imbros, an icon of the Theotokos, and two works of art, pictures of a plane tree and the newly-wed royal couple in a garden, imprinted respectively on leather and fabric.<sup>2</sup> The first four *ekphraseis* form a unit, because they describe two cities, a village and an island: that is, they are *ekphraseis* of places. The structural and verbal similarities found in these texts, which have been pointed out from time to time, will give rise to some overall assessments concerning the composition of these *ekphraseis*.<sup>3</sup>

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1 For John Eugenikos, see *PLP* 6189; A. ΓΙΟΜΒΛΑΚΗΣ, Ἰωάννης ὁ Εὐγενικός. Βίος, ἐκκλησιαστικὴ δράσις καὶ τὸ συγγραφικὸν ἔργον αὐτοῦ. Diss., Thessaloniki 1982 and A. ΒΟΥΔΟΥΡΙ, Αυτοτελή εγκώμια πόλεων τῆς ὑστερῆς βυζαντινῆς περιόδου ὑπὸ το πρῖσμα τῆς προγενέστερης παράδοσής τους. Diss., Athens 2016, 594–596.

2 For the *ekphrasis* of Corinth, see S. LAMBROS, Παλαιολόγια καὶ Πελοποννησιακά, 1. Athens 1912–1923 (repr. 1972) 47–48, while for the commentary of the text, see ΒΟΥΔΟΥΡΙ (cited n. 1), 618–627. For the *ekphrasis* of Trebizond, see O. LAMPSIDIS, Ἡ ἔκφρασις Τραπεζοῦντος τοῦ Ἰωάννου Εὐγενικοῦ. *Ἀρχεῖον Πόντου* 20 (1955) 3–39, as well as for the text, see ΒΟΥΔΟΥΡΙ (cited n. 1), 596–618. For the *ekphrasis* of Petrina, see LAMBROS (cited n. 2), 49–55 and A. ΡΗΟΥ, Bemerkungen zur Κώμης ἔκφρασις des Johannes Eugenikos. *JÖB* 51 (2001) 321–335. For the *ekphrasis* of Imbros, see J.F. BOISSONADE, *Anecdota nova*. Paris 1844 (repr. Hildesheim 1962), 329–331.

3 In his critical edition of the *ekphrasis* of Trebizond LAMPSIDIS (cited n. 2) noted the lexical similarities of the *ekphraseis* of John Eugenikos with the other *ekphraseis*, as did ΡΗΟΥ

The contribution of the ancient textbooks on rhetoric, and primarily the instructions of pseudo-Menander, was essential to the composition of an *ekphrasis*, for they described the elements that the author should mention in praising a city, harbour, country, etc.<sup>4</sup> Along with those handbooks, however, the encomia of cities composed in Late Antiquity, such as Libanius' *Antiochikos*, also served as models and shaped the evolution of this literary genre.<sup>5</sup>

John Eugenikos' four *ekphraseis* of place display similarities not only in structure but also in content. The common phrases that he uses in composing his *ekphraseis* suggest that either there was a standard pattern for such works or one of these *ekphraseis* served as a model for the others. The internal evidence permitting a dating of these texts is quite limited: the *ekphrasis* of Trebizond should be dated between the years 1444–1450,<sup>6</sup> and the *ekphrasis* of Corinth between the years 1443–1446.<sup>7</sup> For the other two *ekphraseis* there are no reliable indications of date that can help us order these four texts chronologically and thus establish one as the oldest and the model for the rest.

That John Eugenikos must certainly have visited these places can be seen from the epilogues of his *ekphraseis*, which are offered in return for hospitality shown to him (δῶρον ξένιον).<sup>8</sup> However, the recurrence of phrases and common sentences gives the impression that the *ekphraseis* adhered to a pattern repeated in these texts, casting doubt on the author's actual personal observation. Examining the similarities in these texts, therefore, can point to the structural model that Eugenikos used to compose the *ekphraseis*, while identifying the differences will allow us to recognise the elements of originality that may indeed be due to personal observation.

But first let us look at the structure of the texts.

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(cited n. 2), while VOUDOURI (cited n. 1), comparing the *ekphraseis* of Trebizond and Corinth in her doctoral dissertation, noted structural similarities between the two.

4 See D.A. RUSSELL – N.G. WILSON (eds.), *Menander Rhetor*. Edited with translation and commentary. Oxford 1981, 344.15-346.25.

5 For Libanius' *Antiochikos* and its effect on the autonomous city praises, see VOUDOURI (cited n. 1), 205-254.

6 See LAMPSIDIS (cited n. 2), 18 and VOUDOURI (cited n. 1), 596-599.

7 See VOUDOURI (cited n. 1), 618.

8 Corinth: Ταῦτα ἐκ πολλῶν ὀλίγα τῆ παναρίστη Κορινθίων πόλει [...] τῆ πόλει δὲ αὐτῆ δῶρον ξένιον (LAMBROS [cited n. 2], 48.31-33); Imbros: Ταῦτα ἐκ πολλῶν ὀλίγα τῆ καλλίστη τῶν νήσων Ἴμβρω [...] τῆ νήσῳ δὲ αὐτῆ δῶρον ξένιον (BOISSONADE [cited n. 2], 331.16-18); Petrina: Ταῦτα ἐκ πολλῶν ὀλίγα τῆ καθ' ἡμᾶς τῆδε χρηστῆ κώμη, ἐμοὶ μὲν ὀφλήματος ἔκτισις [...] τῆ κώμη δὲ αὐτῆ δῶρον ἐπιβατήριον (LAMBROS [cited n. 2], 55.14-17); Trebizond: Ταῦτα ἐκ πολλῶν ὀλίγα τῆ καλλίστη τῆδε Τραπεζουντίνων πόλει [...] τῆ πόλει δὲ αὐτῆ δῶρον ξένιον (LAMPSIDIS [cited n. 2], 36.197-200).

### Preface

In these *ekphraseis* the structure of the preface is almost stereotypical: Eugenikos first states the name of the place he is describing and then, after citing some elements that set it apart from other cities or places, defines its location using the standard formula *κεῖται μὲν ἐν καλῷ* before clarifying its position with additional geographical information.<sup>9</sup> In the *ekphraseis* of Trebizond and Imbros, however, he names the two places as the most beautiful sites in the East and the Aegean respectively, using a phrase that does not occur in his other two *ekphraseis*.<sup>10</sup> The image of the preface is completed in the *ekphraseis* of Trebizond and Corinth with the parallel of the *ὄφθαλμὸς* of Asia or even of the earth, an image which is also absent from the other two *ekphraseis*.<sup>11</sup>

Immediately after the preface there follows the *θέσις* of the cities or places:

### Location

In describing the location of cities affected by seasonal climatic change, Eugenikos uses almost word for word the same phraseology to describe Trebizond and Corinth, emphasizing the excellence of climate, air temperature and ambient conditions that prevail in each season.<sup>12</sup> For Imbros, by contrast, Eugenikos con-

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- 9 Corinth: *Κόρινθος ἡ πόλις, ἀκρόπολις μὲν τὸ ἀρχαῖον οὖσα καὶ Ἀκροκόρινθος ὠνομασμένη, νῦν δὲ εἰς πόλιν ὄλην συντελεσθεῖσα, κεῖται μὲν ἐν καλῷ τῆς περιωνύμου Πελοποννήσου [...]* (LAMBROS [cited n. 2], 47.1-4); Imbros: *Ἰμβρος ἡ νῆσος, νῆσος χαριεστάτη καὶ τῶν γε ἐν Αἰγαίῳ πασῶν ἀρίστη, κεῖται μὲν ἐν καλῷ τῆς θαλάττης [...]* (BOISSONADE [cited n. 2], 329.1-2); Petrina: *Κεῖται μὲν ἐν καλῷ καὶ καλλίστῳ εἰπεῖν τῆς περιωνύμου Πελοποννήσου καὶ τῆσδε πάλιν τῆς χρηστῆς Σπάρτης [...]* (LAMBROS [cited n. 2], 49.11-13); Trebizond: *Τραπεζοῦς ἡ πόλις, πόλις ἀρχαιοτάτη καὶ τῶν γε ἐν τῇ ἐῶα πασῶν ἀρίστη, κεῖται μὲν ἐν καλῷ τοῦ Εὐξείνου Πόντου [...]* (LAMPSIDIS [cited n. 2], 25.1-2).
- 10 See LAMPSIDIS (cited n. 2), 25.1-8 and BOISSONADE (cited n. 2), 329.1-9 respectively.
- 11 Corinth: *Εἰ δέ [τις] καὶ κορυφὴν ἢ ὄφθαλμόν τινα συμπάσης τῆς γῆς προσεῖποι, οὐκ ἄν, οἶμαι, τοῦ προσήκοντος ἀμάρτοι* (LAMBROS [cited n. 2], 47.5-6); Trebizond: *Ὅθεν, εἴ τις καὶ κορυφὴν ἢ ὄφθαλμόν τινα συμπάσης Ἀσίας ἢ κόρην ἐν ὄφθαλμῷ τήνδε τὴν πόλιν προσεῖποι, οὐκ ἄν οἶμαι τοῦ προσήκοντος ἀμάρτοι* (LAMPSIDIS [cited n. 2], 25.6-8). For the term *ὄφθαλμὸς* of the earth, see E. FENSTER, *Laudes Constantinopolitanae (Miscellanea Byzantina Monacensia, 9)*. München 1968, 132-167.
- 12 Trebizond: *Τῆς δὲ τῶν στοιχείων ξυμμετρίας, ὃ δὴ κράτιστον ἐν συνοικίαις, καὶ τῆς τῶν ἀέρων κράσεως οὕτως ἀρίστης τετύχηκεν, ὡς ἑτέρα μηδεμιᾶ τῶν πρωτείων ῥαδίως παραχωρεῖν* (LAMPSIDIS [cited n. 2], 25.9-11); Corinth: *Τῆς δὲ τῶν στοιχείων ξυμμετρίας, ὃ δὴ κράτιστον ἐν συνοικίαις, καὶ τῆς τῶν ἀέρων κράσεως οὕτως ἀρίστης τετύχηκεν, ὡς ἑτέρα μηδεμιᾶ τινι τῶν πρωτείων ῥαδίως παραχωρεῖν* (LAMBROS [cited n. 2], 47.6-9); Imbros: *Φύσεως δὲ εἴληχε καὶ ἀέρων κράσεως καλλίστης σφόδρα καὶ εὐφυοῦς* (BOISSONADE [cited n. 2], 329.4-5).

tents himself with a simple reference to the excellent location and fine mixing of the winds. In the case of both Trebizond and Corinth the description of location ends with reference to the city as a citadel; these passages begin with precisely the same words but in the *ekphrasis* of Trebizond Eugenikos also notes the city's prominent position between the suburbs and the surrounding settlements.<sup>13</sup>

### Place

For the topography of Trebizond and Corinth, John Eugenikos lists the alternations of mountain and plain and the harmony of the surrounding countryside.<sup>14</sup> Especially for the reconstruction of cities on high ground he quotes the Homeric analogy Ὀλύμπιοι καρήνων. To the harmonious alternation of the terrain Eugenikos attributes the progress of the inhabitants in wisdom and virtue, elements that are presented as more limited in Corinth and obviously more developed in Trebizond. For Imbros and Petrina, by contrast, Eugenikos confines himself to declaring the land smooth and level.<sup>15</sup>

In the *ekphraseis* of Trebizond and Corinth, the description of the place is followed by a description of the virtue of the inhabitants. Eugenikos initially connects the existence of Corinth's single gate and Trebizond's one main road with the sole and difficult road to virtue as described by Hesiod, although in the case of Trebizond he cites a line of Homer as well.<sup>16</sup>

The description of the place is followed and completed by the variety of natural features (rivers, forests, gardens, meadows, harbours), which provide for

13 Corinth: Ἡ αὐτὴ δὲ καὶ πόλις ὅλη καθ' αὐτὴν καὶ ἀκρόπολις οὐ τοῦ ἐν ἰσθμῷ νεουργηθέντος αὐτῆς θαυμαστοῦ περιβόλου μόνον, ἀλλ' ἤδη καὶ ξυμπάσης τῆς Πελοποννήσου (LAMBROS [cited n. 2], 47.11-13); Trebizond: Ἡ αὐτὴ δὲ καὶ πόλις ὅλη καθ' αὐτὴν καὶ ἀκρόπολις οὐ τῶν περὶ αὐτὴν μόνον ἀγρῶν καὶ θείων σηκῶν καὶ τῶν τερπνῶν προαστείων, ἀλλὰ καὶ τῶν ἔξω καὶ ἀπώτερω πολισμάτων αὐτῆς καὶ κωμῶν καὶ ξυμπάσης ἀπλῶς τῆς περιοικίδος, ἤδη δὲ καὶ τῶν ἀντιπέραν ἐνίοις, ὅσοις κόσμος τὸ ἀπὸ Χριστοῦ καλεῖσθαι (LAMPSIDIS [cited n. 2], 26.17-21).

14 Corinth: ἐλευθερίως δὲ καὶ μεγαλοπρεπῶς ἔχουσα τῷ σχήματι, ἐπὶ πολὺ μὲν ὑψοῦ τῆς γῆς ἐξηρμένη, εἰς μέσον δὲ ἀέρα θαυμασίως ἀνφοδομημένη, Ὀλύμπιοι δὲ καρήνων, ποιητικῶς εἰπεῖν, ἐφαπτομένη (LAMBROS [cited n. 2], 47.20-24); Trebizond: ἐλευθερίως καὶ μεγαλοπρεπῶς ἔχουσα τῷ σχήματι, ἐπιβαίνουσα μὲν ταῖς ἀκταῖς ὁμαλῶς, ἀναβαίνουσα δὲ ἐπὶ τοὺς λόφους εὐφρῶς, ἐπὶ πολὺ μὲν ὑψοῦ τῆς γῆς ἐξηρμένη, εἰς μέσον δὲ ἀέρα τῷ πλείστῳ μέρει θαυμασίως ἀνφοδομημένη, Ὀλύμπιοι δὲ καρήνων, ποιητικῶς εἰπεῖν, ἔστιν οὗ τῶν ὀρείων ἐφαπτομένη (LAMPSIDIS [cited n. 2], 27.37-28.41).

15 See RHOBV (cited n. 2), 323-324.

16 Corinth: Μίαν μόνην εἴσοδον, καὶ ταύτην τραχυτάτην κατὰ τὸν τῆς ἀρετῆς οἶμον, προβαλλομένη (LAMBROS [cited n. 2], 47.17-18); Trebizond: Μακρὸς μὲν καὶ ὄρθιος οἶμος ἐπ' αὐτὴν καὶ τριχῦς τὸ πρῶτον, ἐπὶ δ' εἰς ἄκρον ἵκηται, ρῆϊδιη δ' ἔπειτα πέλει χαλεπὴ περ δοκοῦσα, μικρὸν ὑπαλλάξας ποιητῆς ἂν εἴποι τις (LAMPSIDIS [cited n. 2], 28.50-54).

accommodation and refreshment of the inhabitants. In the case of Trebizond in particular, he draws attention to the existence of places for the holding of horse races and connects the leisure of the citizens with a series of celebrations and festivals.<sup>17</sup>

### *Description of Nature*

In his descriptions of nature, Eugenikos first mentions the variety of goods that create self-sufficiency in the places he is presenting. But while for Imbros, Corinth and Petrina he contents himself with a set of adjectives (εὔβοτος, εὔμηλος, οἰνοπληθής) borrowed from Homer,<sup>18</sup> in the case of Trebizond he augments each of his adjectives with a passage from the Old Testament, emphasizing the abundance of goods and likening the city to the Promised Land.<sup>19</sup> This association allows Eugenikos to portray the piety of its inhabitants: with a play on the word εὐγενής he links the *noble* city with its patron saint Eugenios, the presence of priests and monks, and the opportunity afforded by the region to those who desire to dedicate themselves to God and to practise monasticism.<sup>20</sup> In no other *ekphrasis* does he associate a patron saint with the piety of the inhabitants, although the correlation of geomorphology and the possibility of solitary exercise is also found in the other *ekphraseis*.<sup>21</sup>

Concluding his territorial description of the place, Eugenikos immediately follows his account of its geographical symmetry with a portrait of its fauna: all the places he describes are characterised by a symmetry in their geomorphology, for they are built neither too low nor too high. On the contrary, the alternations between their mountainous and lowland parts are characterised by harmony, while in their forests and gorges it is possible to find animals for hunting, and in Trebizond and Petrina in particular a variety of sea creatures as well.<sup>22</sup>

17 See LAMPSIDIS (cited n. 2), 27.35-29.71.

18 Corinth: Ἡ δὲ προσεχὴς ἡπειρος [...] εὔβοτος, εὔμηλος, οἰνοπληθής (LAMBROS [cited n. 2], 48.9); Imbros: Ἡ γῆ εὔβοτος, εὔμηλος, οἰνοπληθής, ἦσεν ἄν Ὅμηρος (BOISSONADE [cited n. 2], 331.7-8); Petrina: Ἡ αὐτὴ γοῦν [...] γῆ [...] ἐριβώλαξ, εὔβοτος, εὔμηλος, οἰνοπληθής (LAMBROS [cited n. 2], 55.6-7).

19 Trebizond: Ὅρη γοῦν ὄλα καὶ πεδία καὶ νάπαι καὶ φάραγγες, Ἐλαῖαι πανταχόσε κατά-καρποι. Ἄμπελοι δέ, τί δεῖ λέγειν; ὡς μὲν οἰνοπληθής ἡ γῆ, ὡς δὲ πρὸς τῇ βωτιανείρῃ καὶ εὐμήλῳ καὶ πίονι καὶ ἐριβώλακι καὶ βοτρυόδωρος. Ἐκάλυπεν ὄρη τῇ σκιᾷ, Δαβιδ ἄν ἦσεν, ἐκάστη ἄμπελος καὶ ταῖς ἀναδενδράσιν αὐτῆς τὰς κέδρους τοῦ θεοῦ. [...] (LAMPSIDIS [cited n. 2], 29.74-79).

20 LAMPSIDIS (cited n. 2), 29.72-31.98.

21 See RHOBY (cited n. 2), 332.

22 Imbros: Θῆρα παντοία καὶ κυνηγεσίους πληθυνομένη, πέρδιξι τε καὶ ὄρτυξι καὶ λαγωῖς καὶ περιστραῖς γε καὶ φάτταις (BOISSONADE [cited n. 2], 330.7-9); Petrina-Trebizond:

*Locus amoenus*

Immediately after this, Eugenikos chooses to describe the elements of cities and other places that delight the senses of visitors and residents.<sup>23</sup> For the presentation of the senses Eugenikos does not merely create an idyllic place, such as exists in all *ekphraseis*, but in the cases of Petrina and Trebizond employs mythological images as well: the golden plane tree, to enrich the sense of the pleasure of sight, and the myth of Procne for the sense of hearing.<sup>24</sup> The image of the idyllic place is completed by the abundance of flowing water in Corinth, Petrina and Trebizond; there is, by contrast, no mention of water in the *ekphrasis* of Imbros.<sup>25</sup>

Before concluding his *ekphrasis* of Trebizond, Eugenikos describes the professional life (ἐπιτήδευσις κατὰ τὰς τέχνας) and the leisure of the city's inhabitants (ἐπιτήδευσις κατὰ τὰς ἐπιστήμας).<sup>26</sup> He mentions the abundance of the goods and trades that make the city self-sufficient, as well as the leisure opportunities it offers its inhabitants. The reference to ἐπιτήδευσις κατὰ τὰς ἐπιστήμας also exists in the

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[...] ὥστε ἔχειν, ὄσαι ὥραι, τοὺς προσοίκους αὐτῇ πῶκας βάλλειν καὶ κατατρέχειν δορκάδων καὶ κάπροις ἔστιν οὐ θηριομαχεῖν καὶ ἐπιβουλεύειν ἀλώπεξι καὶ κεραοῖς ἐλάφοις ἐπαγωνίζεσθαι, αὐθίς τε ὠτίσι καὶ περιστεραῖς καὶ πέρδιξι καὶ κοφίχοις καὶ ὄρνυξι καὶ νήτταις δὲ καὶ φάτταις ἐπεντυφᾶν [...] ὥστε ἐρίζειν δεῦρο σαφῶς ἡπειρόν τε καὶ θάλατταν, τὴν μὲν ὄλας ἀγέλας πτηνῶν καὶ χερσαίων ζῶων καὶ κνωδάλων, τὴν δὲ ἰχθύων καὶ ζωοφύτων προβαλλομένην (LAMPSIDIS [cited n. 2], 112-116; LAMBROS [cited n. 2], 50-6-11).

- 23 Corinth: Καὶ ἄμπελος ἦβᾶ καὶ φυτὸν βρύει καὶ πόα θάλλει καὶ ὄψις τρυφᾶ τοῖς ἀπανταχόθεν ἠπλωμέναις διαπρεπῶς χάρισι (LAMBROS [cited n. 2], 48.19-21); Petrina: Ἐκεῖσε λειμῶνων φαιδρότης, θάμνων πυκνότης, πόας χλωρότης, ἀνθέων ποικιλία (LAMBROS [cited n. 2], 54.21-55.1); Trebizond: [...] θάμνων τε καὶ πόας χλωρότης καὶ ἄμπελος ἀνηρητημένη καὶ φυτὰ βρῦοντα καὶ περιχορεύειν δοκοῦσαι κυπάριττοι (LAMPSIDIS [cited n. 2], 33.128-130).
- 24 See LAMBROS (cited n. 2), 51.13-52.8 and LAMPSIDIS (cited n. 2), 33.130-144 respectively.
- 25 Corinth: ἐνταῦθα δὲ διειδὲς καὶ πότιμον ὕδωρ, τὸ πολυχρηστότατον τῶν στοιχείων καὶ ἀναγκαιότατον (LAMBROS [cited n. 2], 48.15-17); Petrina: οὐ διειδὲς καὶ ψυχρὸν μόνον, ἀλλὰ καὶ ἡδιστον καὶ ὑγιεινότατον ἂν εἶπες τοῖς παρὰ τῶν ἰατρῶν ἐπὶ σωτηρία τοῖς καχεκτοῦσι διδομένοις φαρμάκοις ἀμιλλᾶσθαι πίων. Ἐντεῦθεν τοῖς δεῦρο προσοίκους ἔμφυτον τὸ τῆς ὑγείας καλόν, οὐ κρείττον φασιν οὐδέν (LAMBROS [cited n. 2], 52.23-53.3); Trebizond: ὕδωρ τὸ πολὺ χρηστότατον τῶν στοιχείων καὶ ἀναγκαιότατον, τὸ νηφάλιον καὶ εὐωνον πόμα, πατέρες φασί, Δαβιδ ἂν ἐπὶ τῷδε μᾶλλον ἦσε πίων, ὡς εὐφραίνει καρδίαν ἀνθρώπου, οὐ διειδῆ καὶ ψυχρὰ μόνον, ἀλλὰ καὶ ἡδίστα καὶ ὑγιεινότατα, εἶπες ἂν, τοῖς παρὰ τῶν ἰατρῶν ἐπὶ σωτηρία τοῖς καχεκτοῦσι διδομένοις φαρμάκοις ἀμιλλᾶσθαι σαφῶς. Ἐντεῦθεν τοῖς δεῦρο προσοίκους ἔμφυτον τὸ τῆς ὑγείας καλόν, οὐ κρείττον φασιν οὐδέν (LAMPSIDIS [cited n. 2], 35.162-169).
- 26 LAMPSIDIS (cited n. 2), 35.170-190. For the terms ἐπιτήδευσις κατὰ τὰς τέχνας and ἐπιτήδευσις κατὰ τὰς ἐπιστήμας, see RUSSELL – WILSON (cited n. 4), 360.17-32 and VOUDOURI (cited n. 1), 150-151.

*ekphrasis* of Petrina, but is entirely absent from those of Imbros and Corinth.<sup>27</sup>

In the penultimate section, Eugenikos constructs fanciful derivations of the names of the places, associating Trebizond (*Trapezous*) with a table (*trapeza*), Corinth with the blossom (*anthos*) of the eye (*kore* = pupil of the eye), and Petrina with the solid rock upon which it is built.<sup>28</sup> It is worth noting, however, that in the case of Petrina Eugenikos plays this etymological game at the beginning of the *ekphrasis*, while for Imbros he attempts no etymological correlation.

The last paragraph of the text concerns the purpose for which the *ekphrasis* was written (δῶρον ξένιον): a token of gratitude for the hospitality of the people, a dedication to the ruler / despot, and his pleasure in composing the *ekphrasis*.<sup>29</sup>

Consequently, we may give the following shape to the structure of the *ekphraseis* of Eugenikos:

#### PROOIMION

ὄφθαλμός: Corinth: LAMBROS (cited n. 2), 47.5-6; Trebizond: LAMPSIDIS (cited n. 2), 25.6-8.

#### LOCATION

Θέσις: Trebizond: LAMPSIDIS (cited n. 2), 25.1-6; Corinth: LAMBROS (cited n. 2), 47.1-4; Imbros: BOISSONADE (cited n. 2), 329.1-4; Petrina: LAMBROS (cited n. 2), 49.11-13.

Θέσις κατὰ τὰς ὥρας: Trebizond: LAMPSIDIS (cited n. 2), 25.9-26.16; Corinth: LAMBROS (cited n. 2), 47.6-11; Imbros: BOISSONADE (cited n. 2), 329.4-5.

Neighborhood-Superiority over other places: Trebizond: LAMPSIDIS (cited n. 2), 26.17-21; Corinth: LAMBROS (cited n. 2), 47, 11-13; Imbros: BOISSONADE (cited n. 2), 329. 8-9; 330.1-3).

#### PLACE

Ἀκρόπολις: Trebizond: LAMPSIDIS (cited n. 2), 26.17-21; Corinth: LAMBROS (cited n. 2), 47.11-13.

Topography: Trebizond: LAMPSIDIS (cited n. 2), 27.37-28.49; Corinth: LAMBROS (cited n. 2), 47.20-24.

27 Petrina: LAMBROS (cited n. 2), 55.7-9; Trebizond: LAMPSIDIS (cited n. 2), 35.182-36.196.

28 Corinth: Εἰ δὲ δεῖ τι καὶ ἀπὸ τοῦ ὀνόματος προσπεριεργάζεσθαι, κόρη τις ἐν ὀφθαλμῶ καὶ ἄνθος ἐν βίῳ ἢ δε ἢ πόλις (LAMBROS [cited n. 2], 48.25-27); Petrina: Πετρίνα τοίνυν τοῦτο γὰρ αὐτῇ τοῦνομα, οὐχ ὅτι σκληρὰ καὶ λιθώδης ἀλλ' ὡς εὐθετος καὶ στερρὰ καὶ ἀσφαλῆς καὶ καλῶς ἐρηρισμένη (LAMBROS [cited n. 2], 49.7-10); Trebizond: Εἰ δὲ δεῖ τι καὶ ἀπὸ τοῦ ὀνόματος προσπεριεργάζεσθαι, ὡς τράπεζά τις λαμπρὰ καὶ τραπεζοειδῆς ἀτεχνῶς ἢ φερώνυμος Τραπεζοῦς ἢ δε πόλις, χώρος ἀναγκαίας τρυφῆς καὶ θεοφιλοῦς τοῖς προσέχουσιν ἀπολαύσεως (LAMPSIDIS [cited n. 2], 36.191-194).

29 See RHOBY (cited n. 2), 333.

Virtue: Corinth: LAMBROS (cited n. 2), 47.17-18; Trebizond: LAMPSIDIS (cited n. 2), 28.50-54.

City facilities / Charity: Trebizond: LAMPSIDIS (cited n. 2), 28.56-29.71; Corinth: LAMBROS (cited n. 2), 47.26-48.6.

#### NATURAL ENVIRONMENT AND PIETY OF THE RESIDENTS

Nature: Trebizond: LAMPSIDIS (cited n. 2), 29.72-30.83; Corinth: LAMBROS (cited n. 2), 48.9; Imbros: BOISSONADE (cited n. 2), 331.6-8.

Piety: Imbros: BOISSONADE (cited n. 2), 331.11-15; Trebizond: LAMPSIDIS (cited n. 2), 30.84-90; Corinth: LAMBROS (cited n. 2), 48.21-23.

Geographical Symmetry: Corinth: LAMBROS (cited n. 2), 48.11-12; Imbros: BOISSONADE (cited n. 2), 330.1-3; Petrina: LAMBROS (cited n. 2), 49.16-50.6; Trebizond: LAMPSIDIS (cited n. 2), 31.99-107.

Suitable place for hunting and / or fishing: Corinth: LAMBROS (cited n. 2), 48.10-12; Imbros: BOISSONADE (cited n. 2), 330.7-11; Petrina: LAMBROS (cited n. 2), 50.6-15; Trebizond: LAMPSIDIS (cited n. 2), 31.108-32.124.

#### THE PLEASURE OF SENSES – LOCUS AMOENUS

Vision: Corinth: LAMBROS (cited n. 2), 48.19-21; Petrina: LAMBROS (cited n. 2), 51.19-21/54.12-25; Trebizond: LAMPSIDIS (cited n. 2), 32.125-33.136.

Hearing-smell: Petrina: LAMBROS (cited n. 2), 51.22-52.2; Trebizond: LAMPSIDIS (cited n. 2), 33.137-144.

Taste-touch: Corinth: LAMBROS (cited n. 2), 48.19-20; Petrina: LAMBROS (cited n. 2), 52.3-8; Trebizond: LAMPSIDIS (cited n. 2), 34.145-160.

Water: Corinth: LAMBROS (cited n. 2), 48.15-17; Petrina: LAMBROS (cited n. 2), 52.23-53.3; Trebizond: LAMPSIDIS (cited n. 2), 35.162-169.

#### OCCUPATION OF THE RESIDENTS

Κατὰ τὰς τέχναις: Imbros: BOISSONADE (cited n. 2), 330.11-14/331.3-6; Petrina: LAMBROS (cited n. 2), 53.20-53.3; Trebizond: LAMPSIDIS (cited n. 2), 35.170-181.

Κατὰ τὰς ἐπιστήμας: Petrina: LAMBROS (cited n. 2), 55.7-9; Trebizond: LAMPSIDIS (cited n. 2), 35.182-36.190.

#### DERIVATION OF THE NAMES

Corinth: LAMBROS (cited n. 2), 48.25-27; Petrina: LAMBROS (cited n. 2), 49.7-11; Trebizond: LAMPSIDIS (cited n. 2), 36.191-194.

#### PURPOSE OF WRITING

δῶρον ξένιον: Corinth: LAMBROS (cited n. 2), 48.31-33; Imbros: BOISSONADE (cited n. 2), 331.16-18; Petrina: LAMBROS (cited n. 2), 55.14-17; Trebizond: LAMPSIDIS (cited n. 2), 36.197-200.



From the above figure it seems that the *ekphrasis* of Imbros is the most stereotypical, with no particular originality. It is also more limited in extent and its structure does not deviate from the elements that exist in the other *ekphraseis*, except for two points: first, the comparison of the island with the neighbouring islands of Samothrace and Lemnos, a comparison reminiscent of similar comparisons in Theodoros Metochites' *Byzantios*, where the islands around Constantinople appear to serve the capital; and secondly, the presence of the two cities and their likening to eyes that protect the island.<sup>30</sup>

By contrast, the *ekphraseis* of Corinth and Trebizond share more similarities, although the *ekphrasis* of Corinth is clearly more limited than that of Trebizond. In the *ekphrasis* of Trebizond, Eugenikos seems to bring the model of his *ekphraseis* to perfection, as (a) he connects the citadel and the security of the city with the valour of the inhabitants and completes the encomium with reference to its historic past (Pompey), something that while common in the praise of cities is not found in those of Eugenikos, except in part by a brief reference in the *ekphrasis* of Corinth;<sup>31</sup>(b) he completes the image of the senses that delight visitors and residents (while in other *ekphraseis* the image concerns only vision) and embellishes it with mythological or biblical images (e.g. golden plane tree);<sup>32</sup> (c) he maintains the structural form but enriches it with Ancient Greek and Biblical echoes, making the *ekphrasis* of Trebizond fuller than the others.<sup>33</sup>

In all fairness to Petrina and Imbros, it should be noted the Trebizond was a city and the seat of a Despotate, which could justify the multiplication of images and the stylistic perfection achieved by Eugenikos.

In the *ekphrasis* of Petrina, on the other hand, Eugenikos seems to maintain the structural form of the *ekphraseis* of cities that he has composed but to deviate from the stereotypical phrases he uses elsewhere.<sup>34</sup> The preface to the *ekphrasis*

30 Ed. I. POLEMIS – E. KALTSOGIANNI, Theodoros Metochites, *Orationes* (*Bibliotheca Teubneriana*, 2031). Berlin–Boston 2019, 11, 25.1-28.

31 Trebizond: Στερρῶ δὲ τείχει καὶ πύργοις ἡσφαλισμένη καὶ τοῖς ἐκατέρωθεν ποταμοῖς καὶ φάραξι καὶ ταῖς κύκλω δυσχωρίαις περιπεφραγμένη καὶ ἀντ' ἀκροπόλεως ἄνω πρὸς ταῖς κορυφαῖς ἐν ἐπικαίρῳ τόπῳ τοῖς λαμπροῖς βασιλείοις κατωχυρωμένη πόρρωθεν αἰεὶ τὴν πολεμίων ἔφοδον ἀποτρέπει καὶ πᾶσαν ἀσφάλειαν τοῖς οἰκῆτορσιν ἐμποιεῖ. Δῆλον ὡς οὐδέπω καὶ νῦν ἐς τὸδε καιροῦ, εἴη δὲ καὶ δι' αἰῶνος, οὐποτ' ἐχθροῖς ἐάλω [...]. Ἄλλὰ καὶ ὅς πάλα πρῶτον Ῥωμαῖοις [...] Πομπήιος ὁ Μάγνος, πειθοῖ μόνη καὶ συνθήκαις, ἀλλ' οὐ βία καὶ νόμῳ πολέμου ταύτην αὐταῖς ψκείωσατο [...] (LAMPSIDIS [cited n. 2], 27.22-34); Corinth: Ἀπορθήτω δὲ τείχει καὶ πύργοις ἡσφαλισμένη καὶ ἀκροπόλει πρὸς τῷ τῆς κορυφῆς ἀκροτάτῳ κατωχυρωμένη, πόρρωθεν αἰεὶ τὴν τῶν πολεμίων ἔφοδον ἀποτρέπει καὶ πᾶσαν ἀσφάλειαν τοῖς οἰκῆτορσιν ἐμποιεῖ (LAMBROS [cited n. 2], 47.13-16).

32 *Op. cit.*, n. 25.

33 LAMPSIDIS (cited n. 2), 33.139-144.

34 See also the observations of RHOBY (cited n. 2), 335.

on Petrina does not follow the usual structure of the other *ekphraseis*, but begins with a rhetorical question on the injustice the author would be guilty of were he to fail to sing the praises of the city.<sup>35</sup> He highlights the personification of the sea which creates bays and shores that recall a similar image from Theodore Metochites' *Byzantios*.<sup>36</sup> He also seizes the opportunity to paint a more detailed picture of Petrina, describing the lake, the peak of Haghios Elias and other places of recreation, refers to its churches and chapels, speaks of neighbouring ancient sites, thus connecting the place with Antiquity, and includes a comic incident illustrating the health of the townsfolk, bestowed by the climate, the water, and the fine mingling of the winds.<sup>37</sup> The mention of the local production of salt gives Eugenikos an opportunity to extend his *ekphrasis* with a digression on the usefulness of salt based on the parable in St Mark's Gospel.<sup>38</sup> The story of the nimble old man who despite his advanced years can leap like a youth, an episode that amuses the reader and enlivens the text, is perhaps reminiscent of the comic episode in Constantine Manasses' *ekphrasis* of *Hunting finches and linnets*.<sup>39</sup>

We would, therefore, be wronging John Eugenikos if we accept that he follows a slavish pattern in the writing of his *ekphraseis*. Instead, we have the opportunity to see the enrichment of the original structural model and the departures from it, elements that show Eugenikos to be a writer who does not stop working on his text and is constantly improving his *ekphraseis*.

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#### ABSTRACT

This article attempts a global survey of the similarities observed in the *ekphraseis* of cities and places composed by John Eugenikos, on the one hand identifying the structural similarity they display and on the other tracing the form they appear to follow. The ultimate object is to highlight the differences between them, which are not simply a matter of divergence from the common framework but on the contrary demonstrate the writer's striving for originality in these texts.

35 LAMBROS (cited n. 2), 49.1-6. See also RHOBY (cited n. 2), 322.

36 See LAMBROS (cited n. 2), 50.20-28 and POLEMIS – KALTSOGIANNI (cited n. 30), 11, 24.1-25.10.

37 LAMBROS (cited n. 2), 51.9-21 and 52.10-53.9. See also RHOBY (cited n. 2), 321-335.

38 LAMBROS (cited n. 2), 51.6-9.

39 K. HORNA, *Analekten zur byzantinischen Literatur*. Wien 1905, 9.105-10.144.