CLEANTHES, CHRYSIPPUS AND THE PYTHAGOREAN GOLDEN VERSES

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ABSTRACT
This article re-examines the literary relationship between the Stoics Cleanthes and Chrysippus and the Pythagorean Golden Verses. Contrary to scholarly consensus, I shall argue that the two Stoics show literary dependence on the Pythagorean poem, and not vice versa. Previous scholars have dated the Golden Verses sometime in the Imperial period and they consequently either argue for direct dependence of the Golden Verses on the Stoic authors, or for a shared dependence on a hypothetical third text. If one examines the literary relationships between the various texts critically, while bracketing the chronological problem, it becomes evident that the far more traditional Pythagorean poem must have been used by the more sophisticated Stoic authors, instead of the author of the former having simplified his Stoic sources. This conclusion has important implications for the value of the Golden Verses within the Pythagorean tradition.

The early Stoics consciously and explicitly made use of earlier philosophical and poetic traditions in developing and demonstrating their doctrines. Zeno of Citium (d. 262/1 BC)\(^1\) formulated this practice ironically by turning the famous Hesiodic saying around to read: ‘He is best of all who follows good advice; good, too, is he who finds out all things for himself’ (τοῦς θ’ Ἡσιόδου στίχους μεταγράφειν οὔτω· κεῖνος μὲν πανάριστος δὲ εὖ εἰπόντι πίθηται, ἵσθος δ’ αὖ κάκεινος δὲ οὔτος πάντα νοὴση).\(^2\) From the titles of his works listed by Diogenes Laertius, we also get an indication of his engagement with early poetry, for example, in titles such as ‘On Listening to Poetry’, ‘Homerica Problems’ and ‘On Hesiod’s Theogony’. Significant for what follows, he also wrote on ‘Pythagorean Matters’.\(^3\)

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\(^{1}\) For the chronology of Zeno and Cleanthes, see Dorandi 1991:23-28, esp. 27.
\(^{3}\) SVF 1.41 (= Diog. Laert. 7.4), 100, 103-05, 167, 276; see Steinmetz 1994:521-22.
The second Stoic school head, Cleanthes (331/0-230/29 BC), not only wrote poetry himself, but also reflected theoretically on the appropriateness of the poetic form to express the sublime. The constraints of poetry, he says, concentrate and intensify meaning, just as a trumpet, by forcing air through a narrow tube, enhances and magnifies the sound (SVF 1.486, 487). More importantly for our present purpose, Cleanthes has numerous allusions to Homeric epic poetry in his *Hymn to Zeus*, as well as imitations of Solon and Heraclitus. In addition, he wrote extensive commentaries on Heraclitus, as well as one on Homer.

Chrysippus (c. 280-207 BC) uses such an over-abundance of citations and interpretations of poets and philosophers in his writings, that Apollodorus of Athens complained that, if we erased them, we would be left with blank pages. In one work, Chrysippus almost quoted the whole of Euripides’ *Medea*, so that one reader, when asked what he was reading, replied, ‘The Medea of Chrysippus’. Steinmetz’s explanation for Chrysippus’ copious use of poets and philosophers may perhaps be valid for the other two Stoics as well: ‘Er empfindet die stoische Philosophie, wie er sie vertritt, im Einklang mit allem, was die Menschen bisher an Vernünftigem gedacht und ausgesprochen haben. In ihr gipfelt das menschliche Denken.’

1. **The problem**

In this article I wish to consider the possible literary dependence of Cleanthes and Chrysippus on one poem in particular, the Pythagorean *Golden Verses* (abbreviated as GV). Some connection between these

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5 See, for example, in recent scholarship Long 1975-1976; Watanabe 1988:156-71; Cavallini 1989; Sier 1990.


7 Diog. Laert. 7.180; see Steinmetz 1994:592. In Diog. Laert. 10.26-27 it is Carneades who complains that Chrysippus ‘has so many citations that they alone fill his books.’

8 Steinmetz 1994:592.

9 For a text and translation of this poem, with a detailed introduction and commentary, see Thom 1995. All translations of the *Golden Verses* are from this work.

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two Stoics and the *Golden Verses* has been recognized by several scholars, and on the face of it, the situation seems quite clear: Chrysippus quotes what we now know as *GV 54* in a fragment of his work *On Fate* (*SVF 2.1000 = Gell. NA 7.2.12*) as something ‘said by the Pythagoreans’ (ὑπὸ τῶν Πυθαγορείων εἰρημένοι). In addition, there are very striking verbal similarities between Cleanthes’ *Hymn to Zeus* and the *Golden Verses*. It would therefore appear obvious that both these Stoic authors knew and made use of the Pythagorean poem.

There is, however, a serious obstacle to this simple interpretation of the relationship between the *Golden Verses* and the Stoics, namely, the late date assigned to the Pythagorean poem by modern scholars such as August Nauck, Armand Delatte, P.C. van der Horst and, more recently, Albrecht Dihle. The problem of the dating of the *Golden Verses* has been discussed in detail elsewhere, and I do not wish to repeat those arguments. In what follows, I will therefore confine myself to a brief summary of the previous discussion, with the addition of points not emphasized earlier.

The case against an early date is based on the following considerations:

1. **Even though there is in addition to Chrysippus a considerable number of Late Hellenistic and Early Imperial testimonia to the poem, none of them cites the Golden Verses by name before the time of Alciphron and Iamblichus (that is, the 3rd century AD) and they may therefore not be used as evidence for the existence of the poem.**

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10 See Vollgraff 1924; 1926; 1932; Theiler 1926; Dragaona-Monachou 1971; Rolke 1975:490-91; Sier 1990:102 n. 15.

11 Nauck (1873; 1884) dates the poem as late as Iamblichus (c. 245-c. 325 AD); Delatte (1915:3-79, esp. 45-46) in the mid-3rd century AD; P.C. van der Horst (1932:xxxiv-xxxviii) argues for the 1st century AD; according to Dihle (1994:82), it originated in ‘Pythagorean circles of the first or second century AD’ (cited with approval by P.W. van der Horst [1996:352]). Giovanni Reale (1990:259; 1991:405) is one of the few recent scholars to prefer an earlier date for the *Golden Verses* than the beginning of the Christian era.

12 See Thom 1995:4-9, 35-58, 82-92. Some reviewers of this book were not persuaded by the argument it made for an earlier date: see Bussanich 1995:731-32; P.W. van der Horst 1996:352; Balch 1996; cf. also Baumgarten 1998:148 n. 26. For a more positive reception of the proposed date, see Harrauer 1999.

I find this argument *e silentio* unconvincing: there is no reason why the composition of the poem and its designation 'Golden Verses' had to coincide—the poem could easily have circulated without a title until sometime in the 2nd century AD, when somebody called it the 'Golden Verses' because of its perceived value. The fact that the early testimonia do not conclusively prove the existence of the poem at that time, does not preclude an early date, either.

2. The poem is incoherent and lacks unity; it is, in fact, a mere compilation of disparate sources, including non-Pythagorean wisdom sayings. The earlier testimonia are to verses which existed independently of the Golden Verses and which were later used by the author who compiled the latter poem, adding a few inferior verses of his own. (Delatte suggests that the 'early' verses all were taken from a fifth-century Pythagorean 'Ιερός λόγος or Sacred Discourse).

Against this position I would argue that the *Golden Verses* do indeed exhibit a conceptual unity; the 'looseness' of its structure is characteristic of gnomic texts. The compilation theory is based on a misunderstanding of the way these texts are composed: they typically consist of clusters of material, often with little overt connection between them. However, even if the poem were incoherent, this fact in itself does not prove that it comes from late antiquity. Incoherence is not the prerogative of a specific age! The fact that the *Golden Verses*, furthermore, contain common wisdom material that is not demonstrably Pythagorean, again cannot be used as proof that it

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14 There is, in fact, ample evidence for a similar designation in the case of other texts; see Thom 1995:33 n. 7. There is a curious tradition preserved in the Arabic bibliography *Fihrist* that the *Golden Verses* 'were called by this name because Galen wrote them with gold so as to glorify and ennoble them' (Dodge 1970:Vol. 2, 590; see also Thom 1995:20). Whatever the value of this rather dubious tradition, it indicates precisely the kind of development I have in mind.
15 See Nauck 1873:476-89; 1884:208-25; Delatte 1915:45-47.
16 Delatte 1915:3-79. Baumgarten (1998:147-65), however, recently argued that the 'Ιερός λόγος is a pseudo-Pythagorean text of c. 300 BC, which is more or less the same time I would date the *Golden Verses*!
17 The compositional unity of the *GV* is demonstrated in Thom 1995:59-68. See also P.C. van der Horst 1932:xxix-xxx.
is a late text, as if early Pythagoreans were of necessity greater purists than later authors.  

3. The later, ‘inferior’ verses are shown up by exhibiting bad metre and using late words.  

This argument also proves to be inconclusive. Metrical and prosodical errors such as hiatus (GV 53) or the breach of Hermann’s Bridge (GV 6, 37, 70) are found in earlier philosopher-poets as well. The only serious lexical indicators of a late date are the present passive of κτάωμα in GV 16 and the aorist active participle ἐξακέσως in GV 66, both of which are not encountered elsewhere before the 2nd century AD. However, in the light of the fact that the greater part of the corpus of Hellenistic writings is lost, it would be unwise to base a dating simply on the non-occurrence of a lexical form in this period. A case in point is the use of the sigmatic aorist ἀπολέιψας in GV 70 instead of the second aorist form ἀπολίπων, which is taken as an indication of a late date. LSJ cite only Pseudo-Phocylides 77 (between 50 BC and AD 100?) and Themistius (a contemporary of the emperor Julian), Or. 25.310d; but a search using the TLG also discovered sigmatic aorists of ἀπολέιπω in Aristophanes of Byzantium, Historiae Animalium Epitome 2.516.2 (c. 257-180 BC), the History of Alexander the Great, recensio α 3.32.15 (1st century BC?), LXX Judges (cod. Vaticanus) 9:9, 13, and an epigram by Philodemus (c. 110-c. 40/35 BC) in the Greek Anthology (11.44.3). Before the Late Hellenistic period, the sigmatic aorist of the simplex λείπω occurs once in Euripides, and there is one uncertain instance in Antiphanes (4th century BC) as well.
4. The poem contains doctrines contradicting early Pythagorean ideas and combines Pythagorean, Platonic, Stoic and perhaps even Epicurean elements.\textsuperscript{26}

The apparent doctrinal contradictions, however, are simply the result of an over-simplistic view of the Pythagorean tradition which does not allow for divergent views between different individuals or groups. In recent scholarship, some voices have rightly been raised in defence of greater diversity among Pythagoreans, including early Pythagoreans.\textsuperscript{27} A close analysis of the contents of the Golden Verses reveals similarities with Stoic ideas and Epicurean practices,\textsuperscript{28} but no clear evidence of dependence: motifs from the Golden Verses (or the Pythagoreanism it represents) could as easily have influenced Epicureanism and Stoicism than the other way round. We should perhaps assume some knowledge of Plato, but even that is not definite.\textsuperscript{29} The only definite doctrinal evidence for a terminus post quem is the quotation from Empedocles (c. 490-430) in GV 71: ἔσσεαι ἀθάνατος, θεός ἄμβροτος, οὐκέτι θητός—cf. ἐγὼ δ’ ὑμῖν θεός ἄμβροτος, οὐκέτι θητός| πωλεῖμαι (Empedocles, Fr. 112.4-5a DK = 102.4-5a Wright).\textsuperscript{30}

5. The Pythagorean tradition apparently came to an end after the beginning of the 4th century bc, and only resumed with the Neopythagorean revival in the 1st century bc. It is therefore unlikely that a poem describing a Pythagorean way of life would have its origin in the Early Hellenistic period.\textsuperscript{31}

\textsuperscript{26} See Nauck 1884:224; P.W. van der Horst 1996:352; Balch 1996.
\textsuperscript{29} Cf. the use of the schema of cardinal virtues in GV 9-20 (discussed in Thom 1995:125-26); the notion of γνώμη as charioteer in GV 69 (discussed in Thom 1995:48, 223).
\textsuperscript{30} For the primacy of Empedocles, see Thom 1995:48; cf. also 88 n. 22 for other Empedoclean influences. Further doctrinal similarities between the Golden Verses and other philosophers are listed in Thom 1995:46-48.
The case for the break in the Pythagorean tradition during the Hellenistic period depends largely on two testimonies, both of which, however, are tendentious.\(^{32}\) The first is Aristothenes’ statement in the mid-4th century that Pythagoreanism had come to an end in his time.\(^ {33}\) Given Aristothenes’ biased views of Pythagoreanism, this probably means nothing more than that the kind of rationalistic Pythagoreanism he approved of disappeared for some time. The second testimony is Cicero’s encomiastic observation that his friend Nigidius Figulus was responsible for the revival of Pythagoreanism in the 1st century BC.\(^ {34}\) Again, this seems to be a typical overstatement within the context of a eulogy. Proponents of the discontinuity theory conveniently disregard the evidence we do have for the continued existence of Pythagoreans during the Hellenistic period as literary fictions, which appears to be begging the question.\(^ {35}\)

If, as I would argue, the case against an early date for the *Golden Verses* cannot be substantiated, it means that the poem could be dated as early as the second half of the 4th century or the beginning of the 3rd century BC, if Chrysippus and perhaps also Cleanthes already knew the poem. To put it in a nutshell, I see no compelling reason why Chrysippus and Cleanthes could not have used the *Golden Verses*. This conclusion in itself does, of course, not yet prove that they indeed had done so. I submit, however, that if we closely analyse the texts of the two Stoic authors, it becomes evident that they do indeed show literary dependence on the *Golden Verses* (or a very similar text!), and not vice versa, as some have argued.

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\(^{33}\) Aristothenes, Frr. 18 (= Iambi. VP 251) and 19 (= Diog. Laert. 8.46) Wehrli; cf. Diod. Sic. 15.76.4.

\(^{34}\) Cic. *Tim.* 1.1.

\(^{35}\) Cf. Burkert 1972a:95-96; 1972b:16-43, 226-46; again recently Baumgarten 1998:165) who calls such evidence ‘Zeugen eines rein literarischen Pythagoreismus ohne reale Basis.’ For a forceful refutation of the ‘literary fiction’ argument, see Kingsley 1995:320-23. According to Riedweg (2001:658), the proliferation of Pseudopythagorean writings in the Hellenistic period is evidence of ‘einem ungebrochenen Interesse an Pythagoras’; he also refers to various books on Pythagoras and the Pythagorean life by authors such as Zeno of Citium, Hermippus and Androcides. This is discussed in more detail in section IV.3.a-b of his forthcoming book on Pythagoras (Riedweg 2002). I am greatly indebted to the author for allowing me access to a prepublication version of this book.
2. Chryssipus

Let us first consider the Chrysippus fragment:

'sicut' inquit 'lapidem cylindrum si per spatia terrae proa atque derupta iacias, causam quidem ei et initium praecipitaniae feceris, mox tamen ille praeeeps volvitur, non quia tu id iam facis, sed quoniam ita sese modus eius et forma volubilitas habet: sic ordo et ratio et necessitas fati genera ipsa et principia causarum movet, impetus vero consiliorum mentiumque nostrarum actionesque ipsas voluntas cuissque propria et animorum ingenia moderantur.'

'Just as', he [sc. Chrysippus] says, 'if you push a stone cylinder [or better: a boulder] on steeply sloping ground, you have produced the cause and beginning of its forward motion, but soon it rolls forward, not because you are still making it do so, but because such are its form and smooth-rolling shape — so, too, the order, rationale and necessity of fate sets in motion the actual types of causes and their beginnings, but the deliberative impulses of our minds and our actual actions are controlled by our own individual will and intellect.'

This is a quotation by Gellius to illustrate Chrysippus' views on the problem of fate (or determinism) and free will. To illustrate the relationship between fate and the human will, Chrysippus uses the simile of setting a 'stone cylinder' (lapidem cylindrum) into motion: fate provides the initial impulse to human action (the setting into motion of the stone), but continued actions are due to human beings' own volition and inclinations (the roundness of the stone that enables it to roll). In support of this statement, Chrysippus then quotes GV 54, followed by his own interpretation of the verse. Gellius has preserved this sentence in the original Greek:

Διό καὶ ὑπὸ Πυθαγορείων εἰρηται·
γνώσει δ' ἀνθρώπους συναίρετα πάματ' ἔχοντας,

Hence it is also said by the Pythagoreans,

‘You will come to know that the miseries men suffer are self-incurred’, meaning that the harm they suffer lies in each individual’s own hands, and that it is in accordance with their impulse and their own mentality and character that they go wrong and are harmed.\(^{37}\)

This fragment of Chrysippus should now be compared with GV 54-58:

\[\text{γνώση} \ δ' \ \text{ἁνθρώπους} \ \text{αὐθαίρετα} \ \text{πήματ'} \ \text{ἐχοντας} \ \text{τλήμονας}, \ οντ' \ \text{ἀγαθων} \ \text{πέλας} \ \text{οντων} \ \text{οὐτ'} \ \text{ἐσορωσιν} \ \text{οὔτε} \ \text{κλύουσι,} \ \text{λύσιν} \ \text{δὲ} \ \text{κακὼν} \ \text{παθροι} \ \text{συνιάσιν}. \ \text{τοῦτη} \ \text{μοῖρ'} \ \text{αὐτῶν} \ \text{βλάπτει} \ \text{φρένας:} \ \text{ὡς} \ \text{δὲ} \ \text{κύλινδροι} \ \text{ἀλλοτ'} \ \text{ἐπ'} \ \text{ἄλλα} \ \text{φέρονται} \ \text{ἀπείρονα} \ \text{πήματ'} \ \text{ἐχοντες}.\]

You will come to know that the miseries men suffer are self-incurred: the wretched people, who do not see the good even though it is near, nor do they hear it. Few understand the deliverance from their troubles. Such is the fate that harms their minds: like tumbling stones they are borne hither and thither, suffering endless miseries.

What immediately strikes us is that we also find the image of the κύλινδροι here in GV 57, in close proximity to the verse quoted by Chrysippus (GV 54).\(^{38}\) The co-occurrence of the Pythagorean verse and the image of the rolling stone in both the Chrysippus fragment and the Golden Verses cannot be coincidence: Willy Theiler therefore suggests that the compiler of the

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\(^{38}\) Although the Greek word κύλινδρος usually means ‘cylinder’, it can also mean ‘boulder’, which is obviously the meaning required in GV 54 and probably in Chrysippus as well; see Vollgraff 1924 and 1926. Rolke (1975:92, 375-80) accepts Vollgraff’s interpretation of \textit{cylindrus} in Chrysippus; cf. his heading ‘Rollender Felsblock’ when discussing this passage. See also LSJ s.v., 1.
Golden Verses took the simile as well as GV 54 from Chrysippus. He finds the simile ‘totally incomprehensible’ within the context of the Golden Verses, a clear sign that it was taken over from another source.\textsuperscript{39}

To refute Theiler’s position, we only need to take a brief look at the two texts. The passage in question from the Golden Verses, namely GV 54-58 (cited in full below), comes from the latter part of the poem in which the benefits of the way of life advanced in the first part of the poem are indicated, and it contains the third of three promises concerning additional insights the student will gain: the first is about insight into the relationship of gods and human beings (GV 50-51), the second about insight into nature (GV 52-53), and the third deals with the problem of human suffering (GV 54-60). People suffer because they lack insight into what is good or evil. The author uses a simple and straightforward simile from nature to describe the fate of these people without insight. The term ‘fate’, μοῖρα, in GV 57 is used in a non-technical sense to denote the logical outcome of their way of life: since they have no fixed criterion to apply in choosing between various actions and goals, they are carried from one extreme to the other, completely subject to external influences; they suffer endless misfortunes, just as rolling boulders are damaged by collisions against other stones without being able to prevent them.\textsuperscript{40} I would argue against Theiler that the image of boulders rushing along out of control is perfectly apt to describe the life of people without insight.\textsuperscript{41}

Let us now turn to the Chrysippus fragment. A few lines above the passage where he uses the image of the rolling stone, he states that people who are ‘ignorant, inept, and unsupported by education’ are more likely to be influenced by the external forces of fate than people who have a ‘healthy and beneficial’ mental disposition; even without ‘fated disadvantages’, they ‘plunge themselves into continual wrongdoings and transgressions’:

(1) ‘quamquam ita sit’ inquit ‘ut ratione quadam necessaria et principali coacta atque conexa sint fato omnia, ingenia tamen ipsa mentium nostrarum proinde sunt fato obnoxia, ut proprietas eorum est ipsa et qualitas. (2) nam si sunt per

\textsuperscript{39} See Theiler 1926:148. He appears unaware of Vollgraff’s article published two years earlier.

\textsuperscript{40} For this interpretation of the passage, see Thom 1995:193-98, esp. 197.

\textsuperscript{41} This interpretation of the image is supported by the negative and often metaphorical use of the related verb κυλίνδω; cf. πήμα θεὸς Δαναοίς κυλίνδετο, Hom. Iliad 17.688; τοίσιν γὰρ
naturam primitus salubriter utilitque dicta, omnem illam uim quae de fato extrinsecus ingruit inoffensius tractabiliusque transmittunt. sin vero sunt aspera et inscita et rudia nullisque artium bonarum adminiculis fulta, etiamsi parvo sive nullo fatalis in commodo conflictu urgeantur, sua tamen scaevitate et voluntario impetu assidua delicta et in errores se ruunt.'

(1) 'Although it is true', he [sc. Chrysippus] says, 'that all things are enforced and linked through fate by a certain necessary and primary rationale, nevertheless our minds’ own degree of regulation by fate depends on their peculiar quality. (2) For if our minds’ initial natural make-up is a healthy and beneficial one, all that external force exerted upon them as a result of fate slides over them fairly smoothly and without obstruction. But if they are coarse, ignorant, inept, and unsupported by education, then, even if they are under little or no pressure from fated disadvantages, they still, through their own ineptitude and voluntary impulse, plunge themselves into continual wrongdoings and transgressions.'

He then uses the image of the rolling stone as an analogy to the connection between fate and will: the initial impetus setting the stone into motion is analogous to the causal influence of fate, while the continued motion depends on the shape of the stone, which again is analogous to 'our own ... will and intellect'. As we have seen, he then quotes the Pythagorean verse to demonstrate that the harm people suffer is not to be ascribed to fate, but to their own ‘impulse and mentality and character’. Although Chrysippus states in this fragment that 'all things are enforced and linked through fate', the causal nexus between fate and suffering is a complex psycho-physical chain of events in which mental assent plays a decisive role. In terms of Chrysippus' theory of causality, fate provides the triggering cause for a chain of events (it sets the stone rolling), but the outcome depends on the mental assent of the agent as primary cause.\footnote{See Long & Sedley 1987:392-94; Steinmetz 1994:611.}
To which of the two texts, the passage from the *Golden Verses* or the Chrysippus fragment, should we assign chronological priority?

In the first place, it is quite clear that Chrysippus must have taken the Pythagorean verse (*GV 54*) from a larger context similar to the one we presently have in the *Golden Verses*, that is, a context in which the promise ‘you will come to know ...’ is made as the result of the compliance with certain conditions, and with some explanation of why human miseries are ‘self-incurred’. If the line quoted by Chrysippus did not come from the *Golden Verses*, it must have come from a very similar context. Secondly, even if we grant, for the sake of the argument, that a later compiler read through Chrysippus’ work *On Fate* and discovered a Pythagorean verse that he could fit into his own concoction, how probable is it that he would, at the same time, extract the rolling stone simile from Chrysippus’ fairly technical discussion (with no direct reference to Pythagoreanism) and build that into his compilation as well? As we have seen, the *GV*, also in *GV 57*, connects the simile with ‘fate’, but in a much more naive and traditional way than Chrysippus. Is it not more plausible to suppose that Chrysippus knew the Pythagorean poem by heart, as did Epictetus and Galen in a later period,⁴⁴ or that he, at least, had easy access to the poem, and that he recognized the potential of the simile in *GV 57-58*, adapted it for his own philosophical discussion of fate, suffering and human responsibility, and then quoted *GV 54*, which, as he knew from the Pythagorean poem, was the statement the simile attempted to illuminate?⁴⁵

3. **Cleanthes**

Turning to Cleanthes, Chrysippus’ predecessor as Stoic school head, we also find striking verbal and conceptual parallels between his *Hymn to Zeus* (abbreviated *HZ*) and the *Golden Verses*.⁴⁶ The most important of the parallels occur in more or less the same passage of the *Golden Verses* that Chrysippus used. This should not surprise us, since this section of the

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⁴⁵ According to Baumgarten (1998:154-55), Chrysippus took both passages, not from the *Golden Verses*, but from another, unknown Pythagorean poem that existed in the 3rd century BC.

⁴⁶ This was first pointed out by Vollgraff (1932) and discussed in some detail by Dragona-Monachou (1971). See also Sier 1990:102 n. 15.
Golden Verses refers to physical and theological doctrines which would probably have been of more interest to the Stoics than the more general wisdom traditions we find earlier in the poem.

Let us consider the most important parallels:  

\[ \text{Golden Verses 49b-69} \]

toûτων δὲ κρατήσας
50 γνώσεαι ἀθανάτων τε θεῶν θυντῶν τ’ ἄνθρωπων σύστασιν, ἂν τε ἐκκαταλλαγή τε κράτει.  

γνώση δ’, ἡ θεμις ἑστί, φύσιν περὶ παντῶς ὁμοίην, ὡστε σε μήτε ἴδελπτ’ ἐλπίζειν μήτε τι λήθειν.  

γνώση δ’ ἄνθρωπος αὐθαίρετο τίμητ’ ἐχοντας
55 τλήμονας. οὐτ’ ἁγαθῶν πέλας ὅταν οὐτ’ ἐσορόσιν  

οὕτε κλύουσιν, λύσιν δὲ κακῶν παροί κυνιασιν.  

toῆ μοῖρ’ αὐτῶν βλάπτει φρένας: ώς δὲ κύλινδροι  

ἀλλοτ’ ἐπ’ ἀλλα φέρονται ἀπειρον πήματ’ ἐχοντες.

λυγρά γὰρ συνοπαδὸς "Ερις βλάπτουσα λέληθην
60 σύμφωνας, ἤν οὐ δεῖ προάγειν, εἰκονα δὲ φεύγειν.  

Ζεῦ πάτερ, ἡ πολλῶν κε κακῶν λύσειας ἄπαντας,  

εἰ πάσιν δείξαις, οἶω τῷ δαίμονι χρώνται.  

ἀλλὰ σὺ θάρσει, ἐπεὶ θείον γένος ἑστὶ βροτοίςιν,  

οῖς ἵερα προφέρουσα φύσις δείκνυσιν ἐκκατα.

65 ὃν εἰ σοὶ τι μέτεστι, κρατήσεις ἄν σε κελεύω  

ἐξακέσας, ψυχήν δὲ τόνων ἀπὸ τόνδε σασίησις.  

ἀλλ’ εἴργου βρατῶν ἄν εἴπομεν ἐν τῇ Καθαρμοίς  

ἐν τῇ λύσει ψυχῆς, κρίνων καὶ φράζεω ἐκατα  

ἡνίοχον γνώμην στήσας καθύπερθεν ἀρίστην.

When you have mastered these [sc. precepts],
you will come to know the essence of immortal gods and mortal men,
how it pervades each thing and how each thing is ruled [by it].
You will come to know, as is right, nature, alike in everything,

\[ \text{47 The text of the Hymn to Zeus is my own, based on that of Zuntz (1958). For the} \]
\[ \text{translation of the whole hymn, see Thom 2001:482-83. Similarities are in italics; the} \]
\[ \text{most important parallels have also been underlined.} \]

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so that you do not expect what is not to be expected, nor anything escape your notice.

You will come to know that the miseries men suffer are self-incurred
the wretched people, who do not see the good even though it is near,
nor do they hear it. Few understand the deliverance from their troubles.
Such is the fate that harms their minds: like tumbling stones
they are borne hither and thither, suffering endless miseries.

For a deadly innate companion, Discord, has injured them
unawares. This one must not promote, but withdraw and flee from it.

Father Zeus, you would surely deliver all from many evils,
if you would show all what kind of ‘daimon’ they have.

But take courage, for mortals have a divine origin,
to whom Nature displays and shows each sacred object.

If you have any share in this, you will master what I command you
by means of a thorough cure,
and you will save your soul from these sufferings.

But keep away from food that we have mentioned in ‘Purifications’
and in ‘Deliverance of the Soul’, with discernment, and consider each thing
by putting the excellent faculty of judgment in control as charioteer.

Hymn to Zeus 22-35

δεν φεύγοντες ἐδώσει δόσι θυσίαν κακοὶ εἰσι,
δύσμοροι, οί τ’ ἀγαθῶν μὲν ἄει κτήσιν ποιεοντες
οὔτ’ ἐσορᾶσι θεού κοινὸν νόμον ὅτε κλύωσιν.

κεν πειθόμενοι σὺν νῷ βίον ἐσθλὸν ἔχοιεν.

αὐτοί δ’ αὖθ’ ὁρμᾶσιν ἄνευ νόου ἄλλος ἔπ’ ἄλλα:
οὶ μὲν ὑπὲρ δόξης σπουδὴν δυσεριστον ἔχοντες,
οὶ δ’ ἐπὶ κερδοσύνας τετραμμένοι οὐδενὶ κόσμῳ,

ἔπε’ ἄλλατε δ’ ἄλλα φέροντε
σπεύδοντες μᾶλα πάμπαν ἐναντία τῶν δε γενέσθαι.

άλλα Ζεῦ πάνδωρε, κελαίνεις, ἀρχικέραυνε,
ἀνθρώπως ρύου <σὺ γ’> ἀπειροσύνης ἀπὸ λυγής·

ὑν σὺ, πάτερ, σκέδασον ψυχής ἀπο, δός δὲ κυρίοι
γνώμης ἢ πίσυνος σὺ δίκης μέτα πάντα κυβερνᾷς.

This [sc. the universal reason] all mortals that are bad flee from and avoid,
the wretched, who though always desiring to acquire good things,
neither see nor hear God’s universal law,
obeying which they could have a good life with understanding. But they immediately rush without understanding, each after something else,

some with a belligerent eagerness for glory, others without discipline intent on profits, yet others on indulgence and the pleasurable actions of the body. 

..., but they are borne now to this, then to that, while striving eagerly that the complete opposite of these things happens. But, all-bountiful Zeus, cloud-wrapped ruler of the thunderbolt, deliver human beings from their destructive ignorance; disperse it from their souls; grant that they obtain

the insight on which you rely when governing everything with justice.

GV 54-60 and Cleanthes HZ 22-31 both deal with the problem of human suffering and failure; both ascribe this condition to ignorance and lack of insight (cf. esp. GV 55-57; HZ 23-26). In both cases Zeus is petitioned to save men from this piteous state by granting them insight (GV 61-62; HZ 32-35).

Against this background of general thematic agreement, it is very significant that there are also verbal repetitions in these two passages. In both GV 55-56 and HZ 23-24 we find the phrases o' t' ἁγαθῶν ... οὔτ' ἔσορῷσι ... οὔτε κλύουσιν in adjectival clauses describing ‘the wretched’ (τλήμονας, δύσμοροι). In GV 58 and in HZ 30 we have ἄλλοτ' ἐπ' ἄλλα φέρονται and ἐπ' ἄλλοτε δ' ἄλλα φέρονται respectively, both clauses indicating the instability of people with morally unsound goals. Other verbal and conceptual parallels include λυγρά ... ἔρις (GV 59) and ἀπειροσύνης ... λυγρῆς (HZ 33); εἰκόνα δὲ φεύγειν (GV 60) and φεύγοντες ἔωσιν (HZ 22); Ζεὺς πάτερ (GV 61) and Ζεῦ πάνδορε (HZ 32); λύσειας (GV 61) and ῥύου (HZ 33); ἡνίοχον (GV 69) and κυβερνᾶς (HZ 35); γνώμην (GV 69) and γνώμης (HZ 35).

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48 The δαίμων referred to in GV 62 is a kind of guardian spirit intimately connected with one’s fate; insight into the character of one’s δαιμων is therefore also insight into one’s fate. See the interpretation in Thom 1995:200-04.

49 Other parallels occurring outside the quoted texts are ἐπεὶ θείοι γένος ἐστί βροτοῖσιν (GV 63) and ἐκ σοῦ γὰρ γένος ἐσμέν (HZ 4); γνώμην ἄθανάτων τε θείον θυμάτων τ' ἄνθρωπων ἵ σύστασιν, ἵ τε ἐκαστα διάρκειαι, ἵ τε κρατεῖται (GV 50-51) and πάς δὲ κόσμος ... ἵ ἐκόν υπὸ σεό κρατεῖται, ... κοινὸν δὲ διὰ πάντων ἐφοτίσσα (HZ 7-8, 12-13). Dragona-Monachou (1971:355-75) proposes even more, less obvious, parallels.
Some of these correspondences may indeed be explained as mere coincidences. Others, such as GV 55-56 and HZ 23-24, and GV 58 and HZ 30, are more difficult to dismiss. In the former case, not only do we have exact phraseological parallels, but the blindness and deafness in both the Golden Verses and Hymn to Zeus also concern humans’ inability to understand their position in the cosmos. It is admittedly not uncommon in similar contexts to describe such lack of understanding as blindness and deafness, but in none of the comparable passages do we find the same phraseological parallels. In the case of GV 58 and HZ 30, the slight variation in phraseology may easily be explained as necessitated by the metre. Even though this phrase may appear common enough, a search of the TLG database on CD-ROM E discovered no other parallels. Furthermore, in both texts the second parallel (being borne to and fro) is a consequence of, and follows upon, the first (intellectual blindness and deafness). Taken together, these parallels make a strong case for some form of literary dependence.

How then, do we account for the similarities? Previous scholars have considered three possible explanations: (a) the similarities may simply be typical elements of hymns and ἱεροὶ λόγοι (sacred texts); (b) the one poem may have imitated the other; or (c) they may both be based on a common source.

Many scholars have indeed pointed out traditional elements in the two poems (= a), but these are not enough to explain the close similarities. Wilhelm Vollgraf and, more recently, Kurt Sier simply assert that the author of the Golden Verses used the Hymn to Zeus as a source. Dragona-

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52 We find the same combination of ideas in Parmenides, Fr. 6.4-9 DK, but without the verbal similarities, which underscores the significance of the parallels in the Golden Verses and Hymn to Zeus: οὕτως ἐκεῖτ’ ἀπὸ τῆς, ἢν δῆ βροτοὶ εἰδότες οὐδέν | πλάτηνται, δίκαιαν ἀμηναίη γάρ ἐν αὐτῶν | στήθεσιν ἱδνεί πλακτών νόον: οἱ δὲ φοροῦσι | καρποὶ ὁμοὶ | τύφλοι τε, τεθητήτες, ἠκριβωτές, | οίς τὸ πέλειν τε καὶ οὐκ εἴναι ταύτων νενόμιστοι | καὶ ταύτων, πάντων δὲ παλιντροποις ἐστι κέλευθος. See also the commentary on this passage in Mourelatos 1970:76-77.
53 See, for example, for the HZ, Neustadt 1931; Zuntz 1958; Watanabe 1988:156-71; and for the GV, P.C. van der Horst 1932; Thom 1995.
54 See Vollgraf 1932; Sier 1990:102 n. 15.
Monachou, who until now has given the problem the most serious consideration, finds the first explanation (= a) inadequate and rejects the second possibility (= b), because Cleanthes could not have imitated the much later *Golden Verses*, and imitation in the other direction does not appear very plausible.\(^{55}\) She therefore proposes the third explanation (= c), postulating Delatte’s hypothetical fifth-century Pythagorean ‘Ιερὸς λόγος as source used by both authors.\(^{56}\) It should be noted at once that the only reason why Dragona-Monachou does not consider imitation by Cleanthes of the *Golden Verses* possible, is the relative dating of the poems; she therefore has to assume a third text as common source. If we accept for the moment, as I have argued earlier, that the *Golden Verses* could indeed have existed in the time of Chrysippus and Cleanthes, the need for a third text disappears.

However, let us consider the possibility of a Pythagorean ‘Ιερὸς λόγος as common source. Although there can be no doubt that one or more Pythagorean texts did circulate under this title, perhaps even as early as the 5th or 4th century BC, Delatte was not very successful in proving the contents of such a ‘sacred discourse’. Despite the fact that not a single testimonium connects any line from the *Golden Verses* with the ‘Ιερὸς λόγος, most of the verses Delatte assigns to the latter come from the *Golden Verses*, all in all about two-thirds of the poem.\(^{57}\) Delatte’s failure to prove that the *Golden Verses* is based on a Ίερὸς λόγος does not, of course, exclude the possibility that there did exist a Pythagorean text that served as source for both the *Golden Verses* and our Stoic authors. The problem with this hypothesis is that it postulates a text that would have overlapped substantially with the *Golden Verses*; in fact, it would be difficult to determine in which aspects it differed from the *Golden Verses*. Setting up a fictional text to explain the relationship between the *Golden Verses* and the *Hymn to Zeus*, instead of the simpler solution that the one had

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\(^{56}\) See Delatte 1915:3-79; Dragona-Monachou 1971:350-55.

\(^{57}\) For a more extensive criticism of Delatte’s hypothesis, see Thom 1995:7-8, 56-57. Theiler (1926:147-48) and Burkert (1972a:219-20) are also very sceptical. Delatte’s reconstruction has more recently been closely investigated by Baumgarten (1998:144-65). Although he accepts many of the passages used by Delatte, he considers the ‘Ιερὸς λόγος as a late fourth- or early third-century BC falsification. He considers the *Golden Verses* to be even later, however. He appears to date the latter before Stobaeus and after the 1st century AD; cf. 1998:148 n. 26, 153-54.
imitated the other, seems to me to be an unnecessary complication.

Which text, however, imitated which? Dragona-Monachou seems to me correct in her assertion that it is implausible that the author of the *Golden Verses* imitated Cleanthes, even though she does not expand on this statement. Let us again consider the two texts.

The notion of a mental blindness and deafness that we find in both *GV* 55-56 and *HZ* 23-24 is quite old; we first encounter it in the *Homeric Hymn to Demeter* 256-57 (7th or 6th century BC):

*νήμες ἀνθρωποι καὶ ἀφράδμοις οὐτ’ ἄγαθοῖο αἰσθὴν ἐπερχόμενον προγνώμενα οὐτε κακοῖο.*

Ignorant and senseless human beings, unable to foresee the allotted share of coming good or evil.

We find the same tradition, probably in imitation of the *Homn to Demeter*, also in two Orphic fragments (Fr. 233 and 49.95-97 Kern). Characteristic of this tradition is a criticism of the inability to appropriate the present good or to escape the approaching evil. Considering our two texts, we see that the *Golden Verses* keep fairly close to this tradition, while Cleanthes, on the other hand, adapts it: he only mentions acquiring good things ἄγαθῶν ... κτήσεων and leaves out evil; he further introduces the Stoic notion of 'the universal law' (κοινὸν νόμον), which people fail to see or hear. We see that Cleanthes replaces the motif of the 'proximity of the good' with the 'universality' of the law, and that he dispenses with the motif of cosmic 'evil' since this will not fit into his Stoic world view. A similar situation therefore obtains to that with Chrysippus and the *Golden Verses*: the latter represent a simpler, more traditional version, while the *Hymn to Zeus*

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60 Rohde (1898:2.124n. 2), among others, thinks that the *Golden Verses* imitated the Orphic texts, but the direction of dependency is not at all clear; see Thom 1995:51-53.
61 The question of evil in Cleanthes’ *Hymn to Zeus* is discussed in Thom 1998. Kirk (1954:49-50), citing Neustadt 1931:397, asserts that Cleanthes *HZ* 24-25 contains 'an indubitable reminiscence' of Heraclitus, Fr. 114 DK; cf. also Marcovich 1967:88-89. Even though the similarity between Cleanthes and Heraclitus is not nearly as close as that between Cleanthes and the *Golden Verses*, this would support my view that Cleanthes is transforming traditional material to accommodate his own Stoic position.
contains a more elaborated form of the tradition.

It is in my view inconceivable that the author of the *Golden Verses* would have removed all the fairly technical Stoic elements from the *Hymn to Zeus* and ‘simplify’ it into traditional and relatively straightforward statements such as we have in *GV* 55-56. On the other hand, it is quite feasible for Cleanthes to have elaborated the lines from the *Golden Verses* into a more complex Stoic text. Once again the Pythagorean poem appears to be the older text.

### 4. Conclusion

It is clear that dependence by Chrysippus and Cleanthes on the Pythagorean poem is much more probable than vice versa. In both cases, the Stoic texts represent more elaborate and philosophically sophisticated versions of the lines found in the Pythagorean text. This conclusion is, furthermore, reinforced by the fact that these two Stoics both knew the Pythagorean poem; dependence in the other direction would imply that the author of the Pythagorean text avidly searched through Stoic texts in order to extract not only verses cited as ‘Pythagorean’, but also material not so labelled. The fact that Cleanthes and Chrysippus cite or allude to the same section of the Pythagorean poem suggests that this section may have featured prominently in their discussions.

Whether the two Stoic authors used the *Golden Verses* or another Pythagorean text remains a moot point.\(^6^2\) However, if we consider the evidence for the combined contents of the poem the two of them must have known, it is apparent that this Pythagorean poem closely resembled the latter half of the *Golden Verses*. Since we have no definite evidence for the existence of another Pythagorean text at this time (that is, c. 300 BC), and since the arguments against an early date for the *Golden Verses* are inconclusive, the most economical conclusion is that the two Stoics did indeed have access to the *Golden Verses*.

If this conclusion is accepted, it invests the text with greater importance for the history of Pythagorean tradition than has hitherto been

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\(^{62}\) Riedweg (1997) has recently discussed the question whether Pythagoras or his close followers left any writings. Although he convincingly argues that they did, the contents of such texts remain the subject of further investigation.
accepted. Further research may help us to pinpoint the date of the poem more precisely, although a post-Platonic date seems probable. If this is the case, the text provides us with valuable material about the Pythagorean tradition in a period about which we otherwise know very little, thus encouraging us to re-examine existing evidence about Hellenistic Pythagoreanism, as well as its relationship to early Stoicism.

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