Dio Chrysostom's *Charidemus* and Aristotle's *Eudemus*

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Dio Chrysostom's dialogue *Charidemus* exhibits a rich intertextual network, and recent scholarship has explored Dio's interaction with Plato's *Phaedo*, with Hellenistic philosophy (particularly Stoicism and Cynicism), and with consolation, λόγος παραμυθητικός.[1] In this note I would like to add to the literary background of the dialogue by arguing that, so far as extant evidence allows us to judge, Dio's *Charidemus* seems to have been particularly closely associated with Aristotle's lost dialogue *Eudemus* in respect to format, overall character, and themes covered.

Aristotle's *Eudemus* was a dialogue written to commemorate Eudemus of Cyprus, a deceased friend and a member of the Academy, who died in Syracuse around 354 B.C.E.[2] Ps.-Plutarch's *Consolation to Apollonius* 115B (= Arist. fr.44) informs us that Aristotle's work was known under the title *Eudemus, or On the soul*. We do not know who the interlocutors were; Aristotle may have been one of the speakers.[3] From Cicero's *De*

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[1] For Plato see J. Moles, "The Dionian *Charidemus*," 187–210, and M. Trapp, "Plato in Dio," 213–239, in S. Swain (ed.), *Dio Chrysostom. Politics, Letters, and Philosophy* (Oxford 2000); K. Jażdżewska, "Dio Chrysostom's *Charidemos*: A Study," *Eos* 101 (2014) 67–81, at 69–76. For consolatory *topoi*, M. C. Giner Soria, "Acotaciones a un diálogo consolatorio," *Faventia* 12–13 (1990) 293–305. For an overview of various influences on the *Charidemus*, M. Menchelli, *Dione di Prusa. Caridemo (Or. XXX)* (Naples 1999) 37–75.

[2] There are several editions of the fragments of the *Eudemus*. Here I use the numeration in Rose's 1886 edition.

[3] It has been argued that besides a conversation between Aristotle and some other interlocutor the dialogue might have also included a conver-

divinatione 1.25 (= fr.37) we learn that the dialogue narrated Eudemus' prophetic dream which, among other things, predicted that in five years he would return home; five years later, Eudemus died in battle. It is therefore assumed that one of the motifs developed in the dialogue was the metaphor of death as homecoming. Another important testimony comes from the Ps.-Plutarch *Consolation* (115B–E = fr.44), in which the famous story about Midas' capture of Silenus is narrated: Silenus was asked what the best thing for a man is; his answer was, not to be born, and second after that, to die as quickly as possible. It is possible that Aristotle, like Plato, made use of an eschatological myth to explain what happens after death and that the Silenus-passage was part of this.[4]

It is generally agreed that the *Eudemus* must have been strongly influenced by Plato's *Phaedo*.[5] Both works were known in antiquity as dialogues "on the soul" (περὶ ψυχῆς); both commemorated a deceased friend, discussed the fate of the soul after death,[6] and contained a cosmic myth explaining the afterlife. The Platonic motif of imprisonment, φρουρά, may have played a significant role in the *Eudemus*.[7]

Composed after the death of a friend, the *Eudemus* probably had some consolatory component; Silenus' pessimistic view on

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sation between Eudemus and Philip of Macedon: K. Gaiser, "Ein Gespräch mit König Philipp: zum 'Eudemos' des Aristoteles," in J. Wiesner (ed.), *Aristoteles: Werk und Wirkung* I (Berlin 1985) 457–484.

[4] O. Gigon, "Prolegomena to an Edition of the *Eudemus*," in I. Düring and G. E. L. Owen (eds.), *Aristotle and Plato in the Mid-Fourth Century* (Göteborg 1960) 19–33, at 24–26; A. P. Bos, *Cosmic and Meta-Cosmic Theology in Aristotle's Lost Dialogues* (Leiden 1989) 103–105.

[5] Gigon, in *Aristotle and Plato* 26, 29–30; Bos, *Cosmic and Meta-Cosmic Theology* 75, 103–105.

[6] Recent scholarship tends to assume that in the *Eudemus* Aristotle argued for immortality of the intellect only, not of the soul. See A. P. Bos, "Aristotle on the Etruscan Robbers: A Core Text of 'Aristotelian Dualism'," *JHPh* 41 (2003) 289–306; L. P. Gerson, *Aristotle and Other Platonists* (Ithaca 2005) 51–59.

[7] Bos, *Cosmic and Meta-Cosmic Theology* 103.

human life undoubtedly fits into the consolatory context (if life is miserable, there is no reason to lament its end).[8] Gigon expressed the opinion that the *Eudemus* influenced subsequent consolatory texts: Theophrastus' work (possibly a dialogue) *Callisthenes, or On Grief* [9] and Crantor's *On Grief*, the latter of which served as a model and a mining ground for subsequent authors of consolations.[10] Yet, as has been pointed out by Rudolf Kassel,[11] there is an essential difference between consolations, the chief purpose of which is not so much finding truth as soothing grief, and philosophical dialogues such as the *Phaedo* and *Eudemus*, the main aim of which is philosophical reflection on life and death. Both the *Phaedo* and *Eudemus* combined this reflection with a commemoration of a deceased friend.[12]

Turning now to Dio Chrysostom's *Charidemus*, let us notice that, like the *Eudemus*, it is a dialogue praising and commemorating a friend of one of the interlocutors (who is usually

[8] Cf. W. Jaeger, *Aristoteles. Grundlegung einer Geschichte seiner Entwicklung* (Berlin 1923) 38: "Der *Eudemos* war ein Trostbuch." A.-H. Chroust, "Eudemus or on the Soul: A Lost Dialogue of Aristotle on the Immortality of the Soul," *Mnemosyne* 19 (1966) 17–30, at 21: as Aristotle's *Eudemus* "probably is also intended to be a *consolatio mortis*, it is not surprising that he should extol death as a desirable incident, comparable to the exile's joyous return or to a happy escape from imprisonment." It is also possible that the pessimism of the Silenus-story had a more optimistic counterpart in a lost part of the dialogue, as suggested by Bos, *Cosmic and Meta-Cosmic Theology* 103.

[9] For a recent discussion of Theophrastus' *Callisthenes* see S. A. White, "Theophrastus and Callisthenes," in D. C. Mirhady (ed.), *Influences on Peripatetic Rhetoric. Essays in Honor of William W. Fortenbaugh* (Leiden/Boston 2007) 211–230.

[10] Gigon, in *Aristotle and Plato* 31. For a recent discussion of Crantor's lost work see M. Graver, *Cicero on the Emotions. Tusculan Disputations 3 and 4* (Chicago 2002) 187–194. Ps.-Plut. *Consolation to Apollonius* 115B refers to both Crantor and Aristotle as saying that human life is a punishment; Crantor may have drawn the motif from Aristotle.

[11] R. Kassel, *Untersuchungen zur griechischen und römischen Konsolationsliteratur* (München 1958) 32–34.

[12] Another Platonic dialogue commemorating a deceased friend is the *Theaetetus*.

identified with Dio, though the name does not appear in the text). Like Eudemus, Charidemus was a philosopher who died a premature death. Although the phonetic resemblance of the names of the two men is hard to miss, it should not be *per se* taken as an argument for Dio's interaction with Aristotle's dialogue.

While the *Charidemus* interacts with the tradition of a consolation, nevertheless, its main focus is not on soothing grief. The eponymous character emphasizes that he cares only about the truth and that he will not shrink from presenting an unpleasant view on human life and afterlife (*Or.* 30.9–10). A death-bed speech of Charidemus, which constitutes the core of the text, focuses on the condition of the human race and on the good, philosophical, life and death. The tract praises a life of reason and moderation (νοῦς, σωφροσύνη), and its dominant tone is protreptic and moralizing.

As has been noticed by Hirzel and subsequent scholars, Dio's *Charidemus* is rewriting the Platonic *Phaedo*.[13] This is particularly evident in the first part of the speech of Charidemus (the so-called first *logos*, 10–24), which develops some of Plato's motifs (the prison metaphor and the succession of pain and pleasure) with particular emphasis on the grim and unpleasant aspects of human life.[14] In this *mimesis* of the *Phaedo* Dio had a precedent in Aristotle'e *Eudemus*, which, as noted above, elaborated on motifs and images from the *Phaedo*, and which, as scholars believe, also developed them, at least in some parts of the text, in the spirit of pessimism (both in Silenus' story and in the passage about the Etruscan pirates; as has been observed, the vision of human life in these testimonies is more pessimistic than the one we find in Plato's *Phaedo*).

To summarize: the comparison of Dio's *Charidemus* with what we know about Aristotle's *Eudemus* indicates that the two belonged to the same literary tradition: dialogues commem-

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[13] R. Hirzel, *Der Dialog. Ein literarhistorischer Versuch* II (Leipzig 1895) 111.

[14] Jażdżewska, *Eos* 101 (2014) 75.

orating deceased persons (and named after them), containing reflections on life and death inspired by Plato's *Phaedo*, and elaborating on its themes. In terms of format, the *Charidemus* may provide, together with Plato's *Phaedo*, one of the closest parallels to Aristotle's *Eudemus* in extant ancient Greek literature.[15] Consequently, the *Eudemus* should be considered an important element of the literary tradition in which the *Charidemus* partakes, in addition to Plato's *Phaedo* and Crantor's *On Grief*.

It is worthwhile in this context to draw attention to parallels between the *Charidemus* and an Aristotelian fragment. In *Charidemus* 10–11 we read:[16]

τοῦ τῶν Τιτάνων αἵματός ἐσμεν ἡμεῖς ἅπαντες οἱ ἄνθρωποι. ὡς οὖν ἐκείνων ἐχθρῶν ὄντων τοῖς θεοῖς καὶ πολεμησάντων οὐδὲ ἡμεῖς φίλοι ἐσμέν, ἀλλὰ κολαζόμεθά τε ὑπ' αὐτῶν καὶ ἐπὶ τιμωρίᾳ γεγόναμεν, ἐν φρουρᾷ δὴ ὄντες ἐν τῷ βίῳ τοσοῦτον χρόνον ὅσον ἕκαστοι ζῶμεν. τοὺς δὲ ἀποθνήσκοντας ἡμῶν κεκολασμένους ἤδη ἱκανῶς λύεσθαί τε καὶ ἀπαλλάττεσθαι.

all we human beings are of the blood of the Titans. Then, because they were hateful to the gods and had waged war on them, we are not dear to them either, but are punished by them and have been born for chastisement, being, in truth, imprisoned in life for as long a time as we each live. And when any of us die, it means that we, having been sufficiently chastised, are released and go our way. (transl. Cohoon)

This passage evokes Plato's *Phaedo* 62B, in which Socrates refers to secret Orphic doctrines that compared human life to a prison (ἔν τινι φρουρᾷ ἐσμεν οἱ ἄνθρωποι καὶ οὐ δεῖ δὴ ἑαυτὸν ἐκ ταύτης λύειν οὐδ' ἀποδιδράσκειν).[17] Yet the motif of life as a punishment in the *Charidemus* and the vocabulary Dio uses are

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[15] Other dialogues which in some way interact with the consolatory tradition include the Ps.-Platonic *Axiochus*, Cicero's *Tusculan Discourses*, and Dio Chrysostom's *Melancomas II* (*Or.* 28).

[16] The Greek text follows von Arnim's standard edition of Dio's works.

[17] For other parallels see K. Meiser, "Über den *Charidemos* des Dion von Prusa," in *SBMünch* (1912.II.3) 1–31, at 5–6; Menchelli, *Caridemo* 228–230.

strongly reminiscent of Iamblichus' *Protrepticus* 8 and Augustine's *Contra Iulianum*, both of which are considered to draw from either Aristotle's *Protrepticus* or *Eudemus* (fr.60).[18] I quote the passage from Iamblichus, for it allows for a comparison at the verbal level:[19]

τίς ἂν οὖν εἰς ταῦτα βλέπων οἴοιτο εὐδαίμων εἶναι καὶ μακάριος, οἳ πρῶτον εὐθὺς φύσει συνέσταμεν, καθάπερ φασὶν οἱ τὰς τελετὰς λέγοντες, ὥσπερ ἂν ἐπὶ τιμωρίᾳ πάντες; τοῦτο γὰρ θείως οἱ ἀρχαιότεροι λέγουσι τὸ φάναι διδόναι τὴν ψυχὴν τιμωρίαν καὶ ζῆν ἡμᾶς ἐπὶ κολάσει μεγάλων τινῶν ἁμαρτημάτων.

Which of us, looking to these facts, would think himself happy and blessed—which of us, all of whom are from the very first beginning (as they say in the initiation rites) shaped by nature as though for punishment? For it is an inspired saying of the ancients that the soul pays penalties and that we live for the punishment of great sins.

Both Dio and Iamblichus develop here the idea hinted at in *Phaedo* 62ʙ, in which the metaphor of the prison implies that the human race is condemned to earthly life as a punishment. Note the parallels: the phrase ἐπὶ τιμωρίᾳ appears in both; Iamblichus' κόλασις is paralleled by Dio's κολαζόμεθα and κεκολασμένους and by his repeated use of the noun κόλασις in next chapters (12 κολάσεις δεινάς, 16 <τὰς> ἔξωθεν κολάσεις, 17 πρὶν ἂν … καταλίπῃ διάδοχον τῆς κολάσεως). This vocabulary (κόλασις, κολάζειν, τιμωρία) does not appear in the parallel passage in the *Phaedo*. Dio's explicit mention of the

[18] Both passages are ascribed to Aristotle's *Protrepticus* by Rose. O. Gigon, *Aristotelis Opera* III (Berlin/New York 1987), placed Iamblichus' passage among "λόγοι προτρεπτικοί aus mehreren Dialogen exzerpiert." The passage is from the *Eudemus* in the view of J. Brunschwig, "Aristote et les pirates tyrrhéniens," *RPhilos* 153 (1963) 171–190, and Bos, *JHPh* 41 (2003) 289–306. For discussion of the passage see also D. S. Hutchinson and M. R. Johnson, "Authenticating Aristotle's *Protrepticus*," *OSAPh* 29 (2005) 193–294, at 255–258.

[19] Ed. Pistelli 47.21–48.2; transl. I. Düring, *Aristotle's Protrepticus* (Göteborg 1961) 91.

Titans may have had a parallel in the *Eudemus*.[20]

There may also be a connection between the image of prisoners chained together in *Charidemus* 17 and Aristotle's famous account of the practices of Etruscan pirates, with which Iamblichus continues (48.2–9):

πάνυ γὰρ ἡ σύζευξις τοιούτῳ τινὶ ἔοικε πρὸς τὸ σῶμα τῆς ψυχῆς. ὥσπερ γὰρ τοὺς ἐν τῇ Τυρρηνίᾳ φασὶ βασανίζειν πολλάκις τοὺς ἁλισκομένους προσδεσμεύοντας κατ᾽ ἀντικρὺ τοῖς ζῶσι νεκροὺς ἀντιπροσώπους ἕκαστον πρὸς ἕκαστον μέρος προσαρμόττοντας, οὕτως ἔοικεν ἡ ψυχὴ διατετάσθαι καὶ προσ-κεκολλῆσθαι πᾶσι τοῖς αἰσθητικοῖς τοῦ σώματος μέλεσιν.

For, indeed, the conjunction of the soul with the body looks very much like this. For as the Etruscans are said often to torture captives by chaining dead bodies face to face with the living, fitting part to part, so the soul seems to be extended throughout and affixed to all the sensitive members of the body.

Compare this passage with chapter 17 of the *Charidemus*, in which Dio describes the fate of the human race and compares it to the fate of prisoners:

μένειν δὲ οὐχ ἑκόντας, ἀλλὰ μιᾷ πάντας ἀλύσει δεδέσθαι τά τε σώματα καὶ τὰς ψυχάς, [καθάπερ καὶ ἐφ᾽ ἡμῶν ἰδεῖν ἔστιν ἐν ἀλύσει μιᾷ δεδεμένους πολλοὺς ἐφεξῆς,][21] τοὺς μὲν αὐτῶν σμικρούς, τοὺς δὲ μεγάλους, καὶ τοὺς μὲν αἰσχρούς, τοὺς δ᾽ εὐπρεπεῖς, οὐδὲν δὲ ἧττον ἅπαντας ἐπ᾽ ἴσης ἐν τῇ αὐτῇ ἀνάγκῃ ἔχεσθαι.

They do not stay voluntarily, but are all bound fast by one chain, body and soul, just as you may see many persons bound by us by one chain in a row, some of them small, some large,

[20] The Titans are not mentioned in the *Phaedo*. For the possibility of the myth of the Titans in the *Eudemus* see Brunschwig, *RPhilos* 153 (1963) 171–190; Bos, *Cosmic and Meta-Cosmic Theology* 103–105. For the connection of the myth of the Titans with Orphic teachings see M. L. West, *The Orphic Poems* (Oxford 1983) 164–166.

[21] Secl. von Arnim, but accepted by Menchelli, *Caridemo* 166, and J. W. Cohoon, *Dio Chrysostom* II (Cambridge [Mass.]/London 1939) 413.

some ugly and some good looking; but none the less all of them are held on equal terms in the same constraint.

Again, the image of the chain has a Platonic inspiration (*Phd.* 60B–C, where Socrates refers to the sensation in his leg after the prison chains were taken off; 83D, where pleasure and pain are said to be responsible for the soul being affixed to the body: ἑκάστη ἡδονὴ καὶ λύπη ὥσπερ ἧλον ἔχουσα προσηλοῖ αὐτὴν πρὸς τὸ σῶμα). The chain imagery recurs in Seneca, and Dio himself elaborates on it in *Or.* 80.7–14.[22] What Iamblichus and the passage from *Charidemus* have in common, however, is that both seem to evoke the image of prisoners tied together in order to represent the communion of the soul and the body—in Iamblichus it is living men tied to dead bodies, in Dio a row of prisoners tied together (Iamblichus ἡ σύζευξις … πρὸς τὸ σῶμα τῆς ψυχῆς, Dio πάντας … δεδέσθαι τά τε σώματα καὶ τὰς ψυχάς). This chaining of souls and bodies together, Dio suggests, keeps people from escaping from the prison (that is, from the earthly life). It should be observed, however, that Dio's passage is not entirely clear and there is some fluidity in his metaphor: he seems, on the one hand, to envision bodies and souls chained together (which forces people to live a human life and makes it impossible for them to die, as in the Iamblichus passage), while on the other, to imagine many men bound together by one chain (which means that all men, regardless of their status, share the same fate).[23] This lack of clarity is indicative of Dio's limited interest in the philosophical question of the immortality or mortality of the soul and, more generally, in the constitution of a human being and the relationship between the soul and the body. While these themes seem to have played an important role in the *Eudemus*, the chief

[22] Menchelli, *Caridemo* 249–251. In *Or.* 80 the image is slightly different: Dio there emphasizes that men put bonds and fetters on themselves (80.7), while in the *Charidemus* the image of the chains is a part of the metaphor of a prison that has been prepared by the gods for the human race.

[23] This second use of the image is reminiscent of Seneca's use of the chain (*catena*) metaphor, e.g. *Dial.* 7.16 (= *De vita beata*), *Tranq.* 10.

goals of the *Charidemus* are protreptic rather than theoretical or exploratory.

Finally, let us observe that the motif of torture that appears in Iamblichus' passage (βασανίζειν) is extensively developed by Dio in 13–17, where the soul and the body are presented as instruments of torture (13 ξυγκεῖσθαι δὲ ἡμᾶς ἐξ αὐτῶν δὴ τῶν βασανιζόντων, ψυχῆς τε καὶ σώματος, 17 τοιαῖσδε μὲν δὴ καὶ τοσαῖσδε βασάνοις ξυνεχομένους τοὺς ἀνθρώπους).

Unfortunately, the issue of the provenience of the Aristotelian passage (fr.60) is unresolved; if we knew that it comes from the *Eudemus*, it would strengthen my proposition that the *Eudemus* was influential in Dio's composition of the dialogue and we could with more certainty consider the *Charidemus* as a conscious adaptation not only of motifs from Plato's *Phaedo*, but also from Aristotle's *Eudemus*.

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