

**Die Goueverhouding  
in die struktuur van  
Vergilius se *Ecloga*-boek**

deur

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**voorgelê ter gedeeltelike vervulling van die vereistes vir die  
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*Socrates:*

What, then, is there in the mixture which is most precious, and which is the principle cause why such a state is universally beloved by all? When we have discovered it, we will proceed to ask whether this omnipresent nature is more akin to pleasure or to mind.

*Protarchus:*

Quite right; in that way we shall be better able to judge.

*Socrates:*

And there is no difficulty in seeing the cause, which renders any mixture either of the highest value or none at all.

*Protarchus:*

What do you mean?

*Socrates:*

Every man knows it.

*Protarchus:*

What?

*Socrates:*

He knows that any want of measure and symmetry in any mixture whatever must always of necessity be fatal, both to the elements and to the mixture, which is then not a mixture, but only a confused medley which brings confusion to the possessor of it.

**OPSOMMING**

*Die Goue Verhouding*  
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deur

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Vergilius se gedigte is besonder kompleks en veelvlaklig en die begrip en verklaring van die diepere betekenis word tot 'n mate deur die gemaklike oppervlakstruktuur bemoeilik. 'n Struktuuranalise is 'n goeie manier om tot die diepere vlakke van die gedig te delf. Sedert studies oor simboliese getalle en die goue verhouding in Vergilius se werke in die eerste helfte van die twintigste eeu gepubliseer is, het dit onder kritici 'n gevoelige onderwerp geword. Hierdie dissertasie poog 'n antwoord tussen die ekstremistiese oogpunte voor te stel.

Die hipotese van hierdie dissertasie is dat die goue verhouding ( $1: (\sqrt{5}-1)/2$ ) 'n belangrike rol speel in die struktuur van die *Eclogae*-boek en in sekere van die individuele gedigte.

Die eerste hoofstuk is gemoeid met die basiese strukturele patrone wat in Vergilius se werk te sien is. Daar word geargumenteer dat die asimmetriese verdeling van 'n gedig of digbundel, soos die baie meer bekende simmetriese verdelings, nie lukraak gemaak is nie, maar dieselfde akkuraatheid en noukeurigheid, vertoon. Die hoofstuk bekyk die omarmende paneel, parallelle patrone en asimmetriese verdelings, bespreek die funksies daarvan en noem enkele riglyne, wat by die verdelings van die teks gebruik word.

Die goue verhouding self word in die tweede hoofstuk gedefinieer en bespreek. Die voorkoms daarvan in die natuur word bekyk en die antieke mens se kennis en gebruik daarvan in argitektuur en die beeldende kunste word aangerak.

Die struktuur van die onderskeie *Eclogae* en die *Ecloga*-boek as geheel, word in hoofstukke vier en vyf uiteengesit. Die goue verhoudings wat in sekere van die gedigte voorkom en die funksies van hierdie verhoudings word uitgewys en in die perspektief van die bundel as ‘n geheel geplaas. Die stukturele patrone in die gedigte herhaal in die struktuur van die bundel en hoofstuk vyf volg die verskillende stukturele modelle waarmee die boek al beskryf is. Met die ondersteunende bewyse van numeriese gegewens, word daar gepoog om die verbande en verhoudings tussen die gedigte en groepe gedigte in ‘n nuwe model te beskryf.

*SUMMARY*

*The Golden Ratio*

**in the structure of Vergil's *Eclogae***

by

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Vergil's poems are exceptionally complex and polyhedral. An understanding and interpretation of the deeper meaning are further hindered by the fluency of the surface structure. A structural analysis is an excellent way to penetrate to the deeper levels of a poem.

Since studies on the symbolic numbers and the golden ratio in Vergil's work were published in the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, it became a sensitive subject among critics. This dissertation tries to give an answer between the most extreme viewpoints. The hypothesis of the dissertation is that the golden ratio ( $1: \frac{\sqrt{5}-1}{2}$ ) plays an important part in the structures of both the *Eclogae* book and in some of the individual poems.

The first chapter is concerned with the basic structural patterns in the *Eclogues*. It argues that the asymmetric division of a poem or book of poems is not made by chance, but the same accuracy shows in the ratios of one part to another, than the more common symmetrical structure. The chapter looks at the recessed panel, parallel patterns and asymmetric divisions, discusses their functions in poetry and touches on textual clues to the division of poems.

The golden ratio is defined in the second chapter. Its frequency in nature is shown and the ancient peoples' knowledge of its properties and use in architecture and plastic arts is discussed.

The structure of the *Eclogues* and the *Eclogue* book is enunciated in chapters 4 and 5. The golden ratios present in some of the poems are discussed, placed in the perspective of the whole book and their functions in the work explained. The structures in the poems themselves recur in the structure of the book and chapter 5 re-evaluate the structural model of the *Eclogues* already proposed. With the supplementary numerical data a new structural model is proposed that would better explain the various relationships between the poems and groups of poems.

## **Abstract**

*This study is chiefly concerned with the golden mean ratios in the structure of Vergil's Eclogue book and is, largely, a continuation of work done by G. le Grelle, G.E.*

*Duckworth and E.L. Brown. This work tries to show three things (1) The importance of numerical symmetry and symbolism in the poetry of the first century BC, (2) the importance of numerical symmetry in Vergil's Eclogues and (3) how golden mean ratios function, as another form of symmetry in the Eclogue book.*

*The paper starts with an overview of the basic structural patterns found in poetry in general and specifically in Vergil. The asymmetric distribution forms part of this collection and is viewed as another variation in the poet's repertoire. The golden mean is defined in the next chapter and the ancients' knowledge of the ratio; its frequency in nature, ancient architecture, art and poetry is discussed. This is followed by discussion of the individual poems, of the way in which the golden mean ratio is used in certain poems and how the ratios serve to balance pairs and groups of poems. The fifth chapter ends with a synthesis of the principle theories of the structure of the Eclogue book and proposes some additions and refinements.*

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