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# Medieval Discourse about Humans

An analysis of the discourse about humans in the Middle Dutch Sidrac

Final Thesis

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## 1. Introduction

Yuval Noah Harari starts his book entitled *Sapiens* with a chapter called ‘Een weinig belangwekkende diersoort’, *an animal species of little importance* (Harari 2014 11).<sup>1</sup> Humans, apparently, have little significance within the vast history of planet Earth and its inhabitants, which provokes a certain modesty. *Sapiens*, despite its humbling first chapter, does not have a modest print run. It is up to its seventeenth print (2017) and has been translated in 32 languages (Hulspas 2014).<sup>2</sup> According to the cover of *Sapiens*, Mark Zuckerberg called it ‘a great history of the human civilization’, and no one less than Barack Obama described it with the words ‘important and provocative’. Apparently, at least according to the reactions on this book that were selected by the publisher, it is still possible to say important and provocative things about humans and human society in the year 2017.<sup>3</sup> Whether the founder of Facebook is to be considered an authority on non-fiction, I would like to leave undiscussed. Nonetheless, the popularity of *Sapiens* is unmistakable.

‘Provocative’, however, is an interesting choice of words to describe *Sapiens*. Despite the apparent authoritative faith in its importance that is displayed on the cover, reviews of this book are positive as well as judgmental. For example, as was written by Galen Strawson in *The Guardian*:

*Much of Sapiens is extremely interesting, and it is often well expressed. As one reads on, however, the attractive features of the book are overwhelmed by carelessness, exaggeration and sensationalism.* (Strawson 2014)<sup>4</sup>

It appears that the way in which Harari wrote his book inflicted annoyance as well as interest for Strawson. *The Guardian* is not the only newspaper that offers a point of view in disagreement with the general tone of the comments printed on the book itself. Marcel Hulspas in *De Volkskrant* calls *Sapiens* ‘een verwarrende geschiedenis’ *a confusing history*. Hulspas adds to this supposed confusion a description of Harari’s style as ‘borrelpraat’ *pub*

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<sup>1</sup> Harari, Yuval Noah. *Sapiens*. Thomas Rap, 2014.

<sup>2</sup> Hulspas, Marcel. “Een verwarrende geschiedenis.” *De Volkskrant*, issue 12/04/2014, URL: <https://www.volkskrant.nl/archief/een-verwarrende-geschiedenis~a3634079/>. Accessed 12 Jan. 2018.

<sup>3</sup> Harari also wrote a sequel to *Sapiens*, which is called *Homo Deus* (2017), which offers a point of view on the future of human kind when God is dead and we take the next step in our evolution.

<sup>4</sup> Strawson, Galen. “Sapiens: A Brief History of Humankind by Yuval Noah Harari – review. A swash-buckling account that begins with the origin of the species and ends with post-human” *The Guardian*, issue 11/09/2014, URL: <https://www.theguardian.com/books/2014/sep/11/sapiens-brief-history-humankind-yuval-noah-harari-review>. Accessed 12 Jan. 2018.

*talk*. Clearly there is a difference with the way in which *Sapiens* was advertised. Whilst called interesting and provocative, this book is also described as careless and overly ambitious.

Despite the idea that Harari might have been too short sighted in his summary of the vast history of mankind, this book has remained very popular. One wonders why this kind of 'sensational' popularized science is so immensely popular, even when the critics have a rather negative opinion about its value. Apparently, there is something about its content, its ambition to write about a topic as vast as human history in only 446 pages, that appeals to a large audience. This collective fascination is of key interest for the topic of this thesis, which is about the discussion about humans in popular science from the Middle Ages.

*Sapiens* is divided into four parts, which all discuss a separate revolution in human history. These revolutions are the cognitive revolution, the agricultural revolution, the unification of mankind, and the scientific revolution. Through the discussion of these proclaimed turning points in human history, Harari attempts to give an overview of the human evolution from its origin in chimp-like creatures until now. He does so by shallowly elaborating on many different scientific theories about the evolution of humans. Quite a tough subject it would seem, yet this book is surprisingly easy to read and it is as was mentioned above, vastly popular. Hence, *Sapiens* could be described as a record of popularized science which scrutinizes a vast amount of scientific writing on the subject in an attempt to make it understandable for a broad public. The popular fundamental curiosity about humans and their role in the world, however, isn't an isolated occurrence of this century alone. The popular science genre isn't a matter confined to the present, either. Rather, both are practices that were eagerly exerted in the Middle Ages, specifically in the genre of the *artes*. One of the most interesting medieval texts in the vernacular that belong to the *artes* genre, is the Middle Dutch *Sidrac*, which will be the main topic of this thesis.

*Sidrac* is a popular scientific work based on contemporary knowledge, much like *Sapiens*. It was written in the fourteenth century. One of the reoccurring subjects of *Sidrac* and other texts alike, is mankind. *Sidrac* was chosen as a case study because it is an accomplishment of the medieval *artes* in the vernacular, an important notion to which I will return later. This thesis hence has been written to gain a better understanding of the medieval discussion about humans within *Sidrac*, which reflects a point of discussion that is apparently still relevant today. I will proceed by discussing the scholarly context of the *artes* genre, to create better understanding of *Sidrac's* place within Middle Dutch literature and its

scientific value, both now and in the Middle Ages in chapter 1.1. Further on, I will employ the theory on discourse and discourse analysis provided by Johnstone (2004) to formulate a research question, after a thorough discussion of *Sidrac* itself in 1.2.

### **1.1 The Importance of the Vernacular in the *Artes* Genre**

In order to understand the importance of *Sidrac*, it is necessary to further investigate the *artes* genre, and the implications of the language it was written in. The *artes* genre in Middle Dutch consists of many different kinds of texts, which somehow have enough in common to be considered as belonging to the same genre. In his *Wereld in Woorden, Geschiedenis van de Nederlandse literatuur 1300 – 1400* (2013), Frits Van Oostrom argues that the many texts considered part of the *artes* genre, contain information about ‘kennis en kunde’, *knowledge and skills* (Van Oostrom 2013 79).<sup>5</sup> This somewhat loose definition will form the basis for the rest of this section.

Van Oostrom claims that these texts were not a rarity in the Middle Ages. In fact, he estimates that about fifteen percent of the total amount of remaining texts in Middle Dutch are from the *artes* genre, which indicates a certain modest popularity. Yet the amount of *artes* texts from before the fourteenth century that are handed down and still available for research is very small. There is however an exponential growth in remaining *artes* texts in Middle Dutch from after 1300. Van Oostrom therefore calls the fourteenth century a century of expansion (Van Oostrom 2013 79). The Middle Dutch translation of *Sidrac* has been dated of the same century (Lie 2006 9), which is one of the reasons this thesis was written about this text. To say that *Sidrac* is representative for the *artes* genre would be too rash. Nonetheless, the recognition that it was translated during the genre’s peak in terms of expansion should at least be part of the reason to highlight *Sidrac* as one of the remaining texts.

The *artes* genre was also quite versatile according to Van Oostrom. The remaining texts from this genre vary from medical handbooks, to calendars, to tractates on how to do laundry. One of the most striking things about these texts is that they were meant for laymen. Above that, they convey a professional knowledge and know-how that has its foundation in everyday life (Van Oostrom 2013 79). Van Oostrom argues that there was a broad public for literary non-fiction in the fourteenth century (Van Oostrom 2013 83). This

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<sup>5</sup> Van Oostrom, F. *Wereld in woorden. Geschiedenis van de Nederlandse literatuur 1300 – 1400* Uitgeverij Bert Bakker, 2013.

popularity is an argument not only to say that popular science isn't just a thing of the present, but it might also explain why these texts were written in the vernacular for laymen, opposed to scholars, who read Latin.

The fourteenth century's expansion of *artes* literature in Middle Dutch, however, does not guarantee popularity amongst modern scholars. One group of researchers that nonetheless has pointed out the interesting aspects of this genre, is WEMAL (Werkgroep Middel nederlandse Artesliteratuur). WEMAL has published a series of books on Middle Dutch *artes* literature and is led by Orlanda Lie.<sup>6</sup> In this series, the research team shows an infectious ambition to create more awareness of the genre in modern research.<sup>7</sup> WEMAL defines *artes* literature as follows:

*Artesteksten zijn geschriften die een nuttig en instructief doel beogen. Bijvoorbeeld: teksten met recepten, teksten over chirurgie, magie, astrologie en alchemie.*<sup>8</sup>

Translation: *Artes* texts are written sources which have a useful and instructive goal in mind. For example: texts with recipes, texts about surgery, magic, astrology and alchemy.

This definition is pretty similar to the one by Van Oostrom considering its emphasis on usefulness, but it adds the aspect of instruction. This aspect is especially relevant for *Sidrac*, since the idea of an instructive nature of *artes* literature is again confirmed by Lie individually when she calls *Sidrac* 'een handboek voor leken' a *handbook for laymen* (Lie 2006 9).<sup>9</sup> Van Oostrom considered it part of the Middle Dutch *artes* tradition. He calls *Sidrac* a more generalist text for laymen (Van Oostrom 2013 109). According to Van Oostrom, *Sidrac* offers a combination of knowledge, insights, and ethics about a variety of subjects, which I think makes it not only interesting but also challenging because of its diversity (Van Oostrom 2013 113). In a more general note, Van Oostrom refers to *artes* (Van Oostrom 2013

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<sup>6</sup> This series is called *Artesliteratuur in de Nederlanden*, translation: *artes* literature in the Low Countries.

<sup>7</sup> On the WEMAL website, the mission of this research group is formulated as follows: 'Deze werkgroep heeft zicht ten doel gesteld om onderzoek op het gebied van de Middel nederlandse artesliteratuur te stimuleren en het relatief onbekende vakgebied onder bredere aandacht te brengen, Het ontsluiten van bronnen, het onderzoek naar de handschriftelijke inbedding van artesteksten, het proces van kennisoverdracht naar de volkstaal en het verschijnsel van berijmde en proza-artesteksten vormen de belangrijkste punten van aandacht voor de werkgroep.' (URL: <http://wemal.let.uu.nl/> last consulted on 28/10/17).

<sup>8</sup> URL: <http://wemal.let.uu.nl/>

<sup>9</sup> Lie, O. S. H. [red]. *Het Boek van Sidrac. Een honderdtal vragen uit een middeleeuwse encyclopedie*. Hilversum Verloren, 2006.

83) as the osmosis of ethics and religious literature, which coincides with the idea that this text was a handbook.

Both Van Oostrom's and Lie's books are rather recent. They offer a more modern description of the work than for example the last full edition of the Middle Dutch *Sidrac*, which was written by Fredericus Josephus Van Tol in 1936.<sup>10</sup> This edition entitled *Het boek van Sidrac in de Nederlanden* was based on Oxford, B.L., Ms. Marshall 28. Van Tol discusses *Sidrac* in his introduction in a context of a medieval urge to summarize the contemporary state of science, which reminds strongly of Harari's book. According to Van Tol, the Middle Dutch *Sidrac* is part of a tradition that came after the interpretation of primitive encyclopedic works. This tradition did not mean to interpret the ancient books of knowledge, but rather sought to explain scripture and to illustrate it with the things that happened in society (Van Tol 1936 XV). Van Tol's choice of words implies a form of judgement, especially when he continues by saying that the scientific value of most of these works is not that impressive, mainly because the medieval writer has a lot of faith in the existing authorities. Besides that, their own understanding of the subject matter wasn't always very extensive (Van Tol 1936 XV). The question I would like to ask at this point is this: when taken to the extreme, does Van Tol mean that *Sidrac* and its genre in the vernacular are nothing more than a dumbed-down version of Latin reality, or is there something more going on? I think the latter statement is true. In my opinion, Van Tol offers an interesting perspective on the tension between the Middle Dutch *artes* literature meant for laymen and its sources from a Latin tradition. In order to deal with this tension, I would like first to refer back to Van Oostrom and then to another study in the book series from WEMAL, which was written by Saskia Bogaart.

Van Oostrom claims that the writers and readers of *artes* literature in any European language always had at least some expertise in Latin. Nonetheless, in the *artes*, multilingual manuscripts are common. Sometimes the vernacular and Latin even occur in the same source and they therefore work together (Van Oostrom 2013 80). Van Oostrom says that the difference in quality between Latin and vernacular is a misconception which is common in earlier studies (like Van Tol's). Still, he points out, some medieval authors were very bad

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<sup>10</sup> Van Tol, Johannus Fredericus Josephus. *Het boek van Sidrac in de Nederlanden*. Amsterdam, 1936. There is however a more recent edition available of the English *Sidrac*, which is T.L. Burton, *Sidrak and Bokkus*, vol. 1 and 2. Oxford University Press, 1998.

translators (Van Oostrom 2013 86-87). Thus knowledge, when translated, can differ from the source. This idea of difference, however, I think should not be associated with a lack of quality because of the lack of translation skills. Rather, it should be attributed to the habit of 'browsing' in the Latin tradition, in order to write a vernacular source. Van Oostrom describes this habit as follows:

*Veeleer gingen de volkstalige schrijvers en publiek vrijelijk grasduinen in de Latijnse hof des artes, plukten daar hun aanbelangende gewassen en lieten andere onberoerd. Is de Latijnse bibliotheek der artes dus encyclopedisch en systematisch, de volkstalige is fundamenteel eclecticisch.* (Van Oostrom 2013 86).

In this quotation, Van Oostrom points out the fact that translators or users of the Latin tradition were selective in the information they chose to copy or adapt. This means that even vernacular sources which claim to have a Latin foundation, are not exactly the same as their sources. This invokes the idea that vernacular and Latin sources are not similar, but rather, they are different. Van Oostrom takes this idea even further, when he describes *Sidrac* as part of a movement away from translation and towards new creations. He claims that during the expansion of medieval *artes* literature in the fourteenth century, authors emerged who actually dared to be authorities without reference to a Latin source text (Van Oostrom 2013 86).<sup>11</sup> Thus, *artes* texts written in the vernacular offer their own tradition, with their own adapted knowledge. Specifically, this means that *Sidrac* is part of a system of adapted knowledge that might have things in common with the Latin tradition, but this knowledge is not the same as the knowledge from the Latin tradition, moreover because *Sidrac* does not have a Latin source. *Sidrac* is therefore interesting despite its lack of Latin tradition.

To further support this claim of difference, I would like to refer to the case study by Saskia Bogaart (2004), which is part 4 of *Artesliteratuur in de Nederlanden*.<sup>12</sup> In her case study, Bogaart compares a text called *Van den proprieteyten der dinghen* (Haarlem 1485) to a text by van Maerlant and an *artes* text in the English vernacular. In her prologue, Bogaart focusses on the process of translation from Latin to the vernacular in the *artes* genre. The

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<sup>11</sup> As I will point out in chapter 2.1, this particular idea offers an interesting perspective on the source fiction of *Sidrac*.

<sup>12</sup> Bogaart, Saskia *Geleerde kennis in de volkstaal. Van den proprieteyten der dinghen (Haarlem 1485) in perspectief*. Hilversum Verloren, 2004.

phrase Bogaart uses, 'het omzetten van wetenschap in de volkstaal', *the conversion of knowledge into the vernacular* (Bogaart 2004 11) gives an indication of what the possible problems of this process can be. After all, 'conversion' (or : *translatio*) is a term that is different from the modern concept of translation. *Van den proprieteyten der dinghen* was translated from a Latin source text, but was also reformulated and adapted to the vernacular audience. Bogaart points out that the 'vernacularization' of the medieval Latin tradition is in fact the making available, adapting and processing of knowledge and insights previously only available in Latin (Bogaart 2004 21). Thus, with its roots in Latin, the vernacular *artes* literature conveys an intrinsic attempt not only to understand, but also to adapt Latin knowledge. Through the act of *translatio*, the *artes* genre creates a separate knowledge system. *Sidrac* is part of this knowledge. Rather than a translation, it is part of a tradition collected from adapted insights. Therefore I think that *Sidrac* is deserving more individual research, and that the investigation of Middle Dutch *artes* literature hasn't reached its satiety.

Bogaart points out the growing interest in Middle Dutch *artes* literature over the last 30 years. To pinpoint this remark, she refers to the *Repertorium van de Middelnederlandse artesliteratuur* by Ria Jansen-Sieben (1989), which caused an uplift in the interest in *artes* literature in Middle Dutch.<sup>13</sup> According to Jansen-Sieben's *Repertorium*, fourteen manuscripts of *Sidrac* survive, and it has been printed numerous times between 1495 and 1564 (Jansen-Sieben 1989 186-187). Despite its contemporary popularity however, very little research on the Middle Dutch *Sidrac* has been done. Still, the leader of WEMAL Orlanda Lie has made the effort of publishing a very useful book on *Sidrac* called *Het boek van Sidrac* (the fifth part of *Artesliteratuur in de Nederlanden*, 2006), which has been referred to above. She refers to *Sidrac* as a medieval encyclopedia on a broad variety of subjects about the medieval physical and mental world (Lie 2006 7). The book offers a partial translation of the text that is, according to Lie, representative for the entire work (Lie 2006 7). The discussions of these translations were then divided in four parts. The first part is about humans and the universe, the second about humans and their environment (geography, meteorology, and the animal kingdom), the third about the human body, and the fourth about humans amongst each other (codes of conduct and Christian morality). Even though these themes

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<sup>13</sup> Jansen-Sieben, Ria. *Repertorium van de Middelnederlandse artesliteratuur*. Utrecht HES, 1989.

were the result of observations of several individuals within the research team, the striking common factor is the human being. Apparently, humans are an important constant factor within the broad variety of themes that is discussed in this text. Above that, Bogaart claims that contemporary ideas on God, angels, mankind, and nature are discussed in *artes* literature in general (Bogaart 2004 14). Because of the apparent frequency of the subject of humans in the genre as well as in *Sidrac* itself, I have chosen to write this thesis about humans in *Sidrac*.

Now that the connection of this thesis to modern society through Harari, the *artes* or medieval popular science genre in the vernacular, and the language issues of this tradition have been discussed, I should finish the general part of this introduction where I started it. Harari's contemporary discussion about humans (with its assumed provocativeness), is a discussion that was also present in the Middle Dutch *artes* literature. In the final paragraph of this introduction, I will zoom in on *Sidrac* and its content, after which I will formulate a research question and a methodology.

## **1.2 *Sidrac* and its Medieval Discourse about Humans**

In order to connect *Sidrac* to the topic of humans, it is essential to know what this text is about. In the following paragraph, I will give a short overview of *Sidrac*'s survival, form, and content. After that, I will focus on the discussion about humans in this text and formulate a research question.

The Middle Dutch *Sidrac* was translated from a French source text in the fourteenth century, according to Lie (2006 9). The manuscript (Oxford, B.L., Ms. Marshall 28) used for the edition by Van Tol (1936), however, was dated of the late fifteenth century according to the catalogue of the Bodleian Library. It was written in the form of a dialogue between two participants. The first participant asks questions, which the second participant answers. There are 421 questions in total. The writer who performed the *translatio* made a selective adaptation from the French source text, leaving out some questions and even adding a new question to the list (Van Oostrom 2013 110). Through this *translatio*, the medieval writer did not only create a new text, but he gave the text a new frame of reference in another language. The French source text is called *Sydrac le philosophe, le livre de la fontaine de toutes sciences*. According to Lie, it was very popular from the thirteenth up until the sixteenth century, especially amongst aristocratic audiences. Apart from Middle Dutch, this text was translated into Italian, two German dialects, Danish, English, and Catalan (Lie 2006

15). The exact text on which the Middle Dutch *Sidrac* is based, has never been found, but it was probably a short version of the French text (Lie 2006 16).

As far as modern translation goes, Lie (2006) offers a translation of slightly more than 120 questions from *Sidrac*. Apart from this selective translation, little has been done recently to investigate the Middle Dutch *Sidrac*.

As was mentioned above, *Sidrac* was written in the form of a dialogue. In this dialogue, king Bottus asks a man called Sidrac questions on a vast variety of topics, with a broad audience in mind (Lie 2006 7). King Bottus is a newly converted ruler and Sidrac is a Christian learned man. King Bottus asks all kinds of questions, which are then answered by Sidrac.<sup>14</sup> In total, 421 questions are answered. A few examples are: Where in the body does the soul live?; Do women have testicles?; Is it o.k. to hit your wife?; Why is one wine white and the other red?; Why do we sleep?; Why can we feel but not see the wind?; Do animals have souls?; Why are some people white, some brown, and some black?; Why do people get scabies?; Who discovered music first?; and so on.

*Sidrac* offers a framework in which the questions of king Bottus should be situated, in its prologue. The frame story tells that after the deluge flood, Noah and his family started a life on Earth. There were many children. Out of love and to reward their piety, God rewarded the family by giving them a special and intelligent descendant. That offspring was Sidrac. God gave Sidrac all kinds of knowledge of the Trinity, but also of the past, the present, and the future up until the end of the world. Basically, he gave him all the knowledge of the world. By situating Sidrac before the events of the Old Testament, the author creates a source fiction that places the book *Sidrac* even earlier than the Bible. In the Bible, however, no mention of this book can be found, although the name Sirach/Sidrach has been used for others of great wisdom, which might have something to do with Sidrac (Lie 2006 9 – 10). The elaborate source fiction of *Sidrac* is interesting because it attributes some kind of authority, which otherwise might have been established through a Latin source text. Unfortunately, there is no evidence that indicates such a text existed.

King Bottus has a different backstory. The prologue describes him as a king of a land in the East called Bactorije. King Bottus orders an enormous tower to be built on the border of Bactorije and India, which is ruled by king Garaab. However, every time it is built,

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<sup>14</sup> To avoid confusion, when referring to Sidrac the character I will use the roman font. When referring to *Sidrac* as a full text, I will use italics.

something goes wrong with the tower. After every night, the tower has collapsed. No one can explain why. To solve this mystery, king Bottus orders all wise men to investigate the matter, until one of these wise men refers him to Sidrac. Sidrac then is summoned and tells Bottus that the tower has been enchanted, and that to reverse the spell, he will need certain herbs that grow in India. King Bottus thus invents a plan to invade India. To succeed in this endeavor, he orders sacrifices to his gods. When Sidrac refuses to take part in these heathen rituals, king Bottus demands why. It turns out that Sidrac is a man of the true faith. To prove this to Bottus, Sidrac performs a series of miracles, which eventually motivate the king to convert. Bottus' people then are converted as well. Yet because he doesn't know a lot about his newly acquired faith, Bottus has a lot of questions for Sidrac. The answers to these questions please the king so much, that he orders them to be written down (Lie 10 -11).

*Sidrac* then continues with an elaboration on the history of the book of Sidrac and the languages it was allegedly translated in. Because this thesis isn't about either the fictional nor the actual history of the manuscripts that contained this text, I won't elaborate on this further. What I will mention, is that according to this fiction, *Sidrac* was translated into Latin, which gives it the same kind of authority as *Van den proprieteyten der dinghen*, only then in fiction. What is also interesting to realize, is that the character Sidrac has, according to the time in which he is situated according to the prologue, the power to predict the future. This is visible in the way in which he talks about Christ in a future tense, for example, since he is still to be born at the claimed time of writing. Above that, Sidrac has knowledge of the past, the creation, and the trinity. All this knowledge is a gift from God. The prophetic knowledge gives Sidrac the key to the conversion of Bottus and his kin (Lie 2006 11-13). But, the reverse is also true. At first glance, Bottus' questions are not structured at all. Still, the recently abandoned heathenism of king Bottus in my point of view enables their strong variety. In this way, the questions of a naïve mind can educate the masses. Other than that, there is no indication of the reasons why these questions and no others were asked. *Sidrac's* content however confirms why it should be considered part of the *artes* genre: it is instructive and discusses contemporary (Christian) knowledge. A similar point of view is presented by Lie, who compares *Sidrac* to a modernday encyclopedia that reflects the contemporary state of science (Lie 2006 9 and 12-13).

Now that the (alleged) manuscript context, the frame story, the form of the dialogue, its participants, and the overall content of their discussion in *Sidrac* have been discussed, it is time to move on to the research question and the methodology to answer it. Both in *Sidrac* and the *artes* genre, humans are a topic of discussion. But what makes humans, human? Which discussions come forward when Sidrac talks about humans? Or in other words: What are the fundamental arguments to discuss humans? My aim for this thesis is to find out more about this discussion. By focusing on the discussion about humans in *Sidrac*, I wish to contribute to the flourishing research about *artes* texts in the vernacular. Also, I wish to indirectly interact with the modern debate on humankind in publications within a comparable genre, such as Harari's *Sapiens* (2014). To look back to the medieval debate about humans could provide a framework to compare the modern discussion with, which would lead to better understanding of the topic.

The 'approach' or 'discussion' of humans is only distillable from text, since text is all we have left from the Middle Ages that is a result of contemporary ideas on the subject. The way in which humans are discussed, could hence give a better idea of the construct of the contemporary understanding of the subject. However, one should not confuse the understanding of formal aspects with world image. The world image is what lies at the basis of the text with, which is an expression of this image. The formal aspects of the text, however, do not provide a direct line to the world image. Rather, they are the result of the expression of the image. The expression is the only thing from the Middle Ages that is still researchable, because text is all there is left that is a result of the world image.

The most applicable method to understand discussion, is a discourse analysis. Barbara Johnstone wrote a manual on the use of discourse methodology, entitled *Discourse Analysis* (2004).<sup>15</sup> Discourses, Johnstone says, 'are ideas as well as ways of talking that influence and are influenced by the ideas' (Johnstone 2004 3). In other words: ideas and the way they are talked about are influenced by each other. Since all that is left of the ideas about humans in *Sidrac*, is *Sidrac* itself, the formal aspects of the text are crucial to understand the discussion about humans. The way of talking about humans will show the contemporary understanding of humans. According to Johnstone, discourse is what connects language and other semiotic systems (Johnstone 2004 2). The semiotic system in which humans are a topic, is essential to understand the discussion about them. To make a

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<sup>15</sup> Johnstone, Barbara. *Discourse Analysis*. Blackwell Publishing Oxford, 2004.

discussion understandable, is to look at the way in which its arguments are communicated. In the words of Johnstone: a discourse analysis can help 'illuminate facts of the communication process that are important and not immediately apparent' (Johnstone 2004 7). Through an analysis of the discourse about humans in *Sidrac*, I hope to connect the subject of humans to other topics under discussion, such as sin or the creation. Discourse is something very unique to text, and it is especially relevant when the text is instructive, because text inspires a point of view through the way it chooses its words. Hence Van Oostrom's claim that *Sidrac* is a very opinionated text, which gives it a unique perspective, might as well interact with the way it discusses its topics (Van Oostrom 2013 110-111). So, in order to investigate the discourse *Sidrac* uses to discuss humans and the topics that are connected to this discussion, the main research question of this thesis will be formulated as follows: *What are the prominent aspects in the discourse about humans in Sidrac?*

Before this analysis can be applied to *Sidrac*, however, it is necessary to isolate those parts of *Sidrac* that actually discuss humans. Therefore, a threefold methodology is necessary: Firstly, I will use a distant reading method to make a selection of relevant information. Secondly, I will make a modern interpretation of that information, and thirdly, I will subject this information to a discourse analysis. This methodology will be elaborated on in chapter 2. Next, in chapter 3, I will execute step 1 to make a selection of those paragraphs of *Sidrac* that I think contain the most relevant and dense discourse about humans. As I will point out in chapter 2, I have made this selection with a distant reading method that offers an interesting perspective on the way in which this kind of research can be done. In chapter 4 I will execute the discourse analysis and attempt to divide gained information into five themes. To complete, I will write down my conclusions and points of discussion in chapter 5, followed by a bibliography.

Before I continue with the rest of this thesis, I would like to sincerely thank dr. Elisa Pallottini for proofreading several drafts. Her suggestions really helped shape my thoughts. I would also like to thank Sterre Schreimer from the Skills Lab, for asking all the right questions. Many thanks to Brit Scheeren, Peter Finke, and Branimir Krizanic, for constantly stimulating my curiosity. Lastly, special thanks to dr. Dieuwke van der Poel for her supervision, her detailed feedback, and her patience.

## 2. Methodology

In the previous chapter, I discussed the topic of humans in medieval as well as modern popular science. *Sidrac* was introduced as the primary source of this paper. To establish which aspects are prominent in the discourse about humans in *Sidrac*, a discourse analysis will be made. Before this analysis can be made, two preliminary steps will have to be made to both select the fragments in *Sidrac* that discuss humans, and to understand what the text is about. More specifically, in step 1 a selection of relevant parts of the text will be made by applying a distant reading method. This step will answer the question where to find the discourse about humans in *Sidrac*. Step 2 will be an interpretation of the selected parts of the text, in order to establish what the text is about. This step is important because the Middle Dutch in this text can be quite complicated. Finally, in step 3, I will make a discourse analysis of the selected parts. This will be done to see which aspects are prominent in the discourse about humans, and to lay bare the way they are proportioned and whether they are coherent. This chapter will explain in detail what has been done in the three steps, and why. However, before the explanation of the steps in chapter 2.2.1 and 2.2.2, I will make a few general remarks to clarify the way in which the edition by Van Tol (1936) has been used in this thesis.

As was mentioned in the source description in chapter 1.2, *Sidrac* consists of a series of questions and answers, contextualized by a prologue and an epilogue. The prologue and the epilogue have been used to specify the background and frame story of *Sidrac*, but not for the discourse analysis. This means that they will be of secondary importance in the phases of analysis (step 2 and 3), because they do not take part in the discussion of the specific questions asked by king Bottus.

Another important remark to be taken into account at this stage, is that each question with its associated answer will henceforth be referred to as a 'unit'. There is a total of 421 units. All the units are numbered. The numbers of the units in this thesis are the same as in Van Tol's edition (1936 6 – 21).<sup>16</sup> The units will be analyzed separately, because I don't want to make the assumption that there is unity throughout the entire text. If this unity will appear anyhow, this should be visible in my conclusions.

In the following two sections, I will explain the threefold methodology of this thesis. Step 1 will clarify which are the most relevant units that contain discourse about humans,

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<sup>16</sup> For a full list of king Bottus' questions also see Van Tol 1936 pp. 6 – 21.

how the units have been selected, and why. Step 2 and 3 will focus on the manner in which the selected units from step 1 will be interpreted and analyzed in order to determine the prominent aspects in the discourse about humans in *Sidrac*.

## **2.1 Step 1: Selection of Relevant Units**

In step 1, as was mentioned above, a selection of relevant units will be made in order to answer the research question. This has to be done because not all 421 units of *Sidrac* can be analyzed in this thesis, but also it is necessary to find specific information within *Sidrac* that answers the research question.

To select the relevant units, a software program called AntConc was used.<sup>17</sup> This tool for analysis is able to access large amounts of texts at the same time. It is able to calculate word frequencies of manually inserted lemmas. Above that, AntConc can show exactly where in the text(s) these words occur through concordance plots. Concordance plots are visualizations of occurrences of chosen lemma's throughout the entire text. Examples of these visualizations are figures 2, 3, and 4 on the next page.

In the entire text, the lemma 'mensch(e)' *human(s)* occurs 260 times. Figure 1 shows the first 20 hits, their concordances, and the units in which they occur in AntConc. In order to make the first visualization, I split the units from *Sidrac* into separate documents, before uploading them to AntConc. Otherwise, AntConc would only show where 'mensch(e)' occurred throughout the whole text, rather than in each separate unit. For figures 2, 3, and 4, I used a document containing the entire text, because I wanted to look at the searched lemmas within the text as a whole. For all visualizations I searched for the lemma 'mensch(e)'.

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<sup>17</sup> For more info or download of AntConc URL:  
<http://taalunieversum.org/taal/terminologie/tools/software.php?id=377>

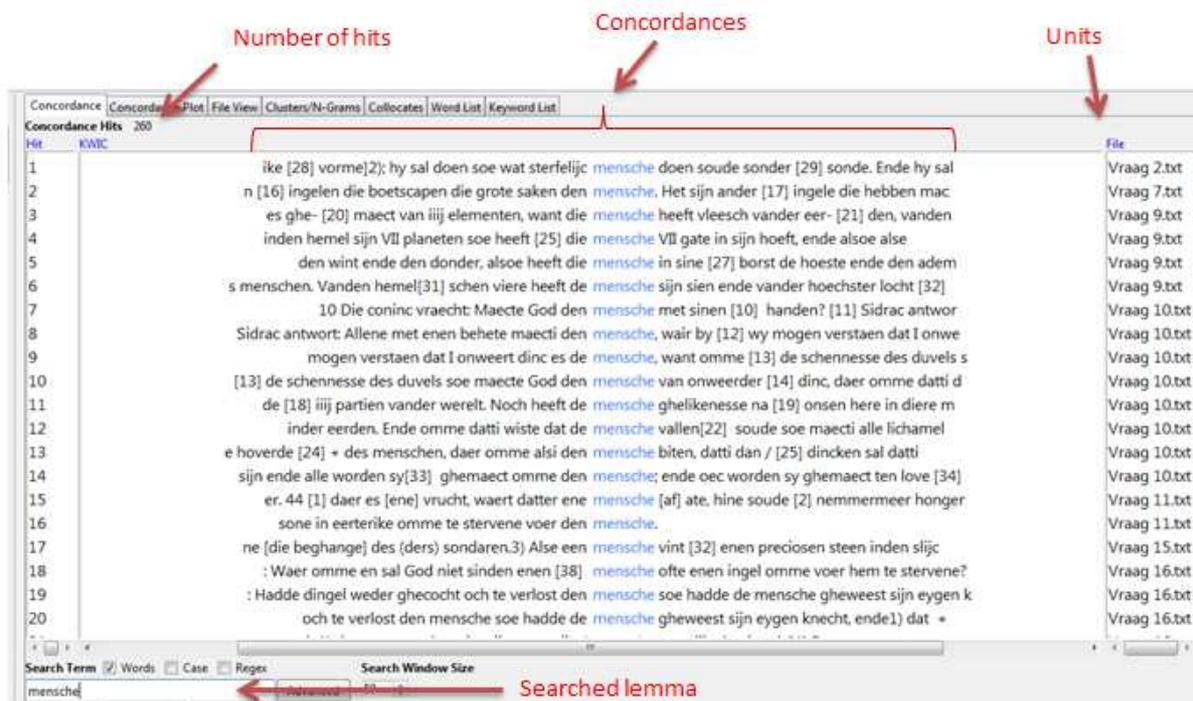


Figure 1: Hits and concordances of lemma ‘menschē’ for each unit separately, own additions in red

In AntConc, it is also possible to see where a lemma occurs throughout the entire document in just one visualization, called the concordance plot. This concordance plot gives a first impression on how the lemma ‘menschē’ is distributed throughout the entire text.

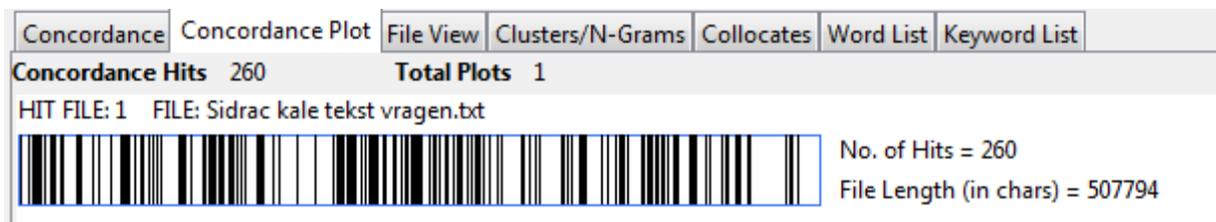


Figure 2: Concordance plot of lemma ‘menschē’ throughout the entire text

In figure 2, it is visible how the use of the lemma ‘menschē’ is distributed throughout the text in a rectangle that represents the entire length of the text. At first glance, the lemma seems to occur pretty regularly, but maybe a little less often towards the end of *Sidrac*. In comparison, the lemma ‘God’ is used 313 times in the entire text. Below I have added the concordance plot of this lemma.

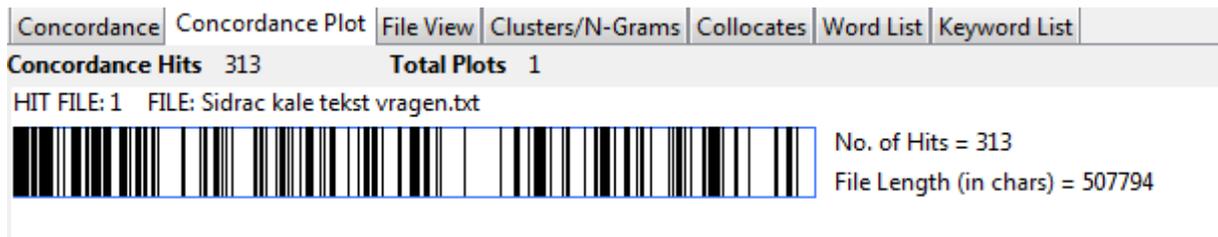


Figure 3: Concordance plot of lemma 'God' throughout the entire text

In figure 3, it is visible that the lemma 'God' occurs a little more often, yet just as regularly as 'mensch(e)'. To add a third to the comparison, the lemma 'beeste' *animal(s)*, on the other hand, only occurs 41 times. This lemma seemingly occurs at random, although there are a few places where the line is thicker, meaning that the lemma occurs several times at the same place in the text.

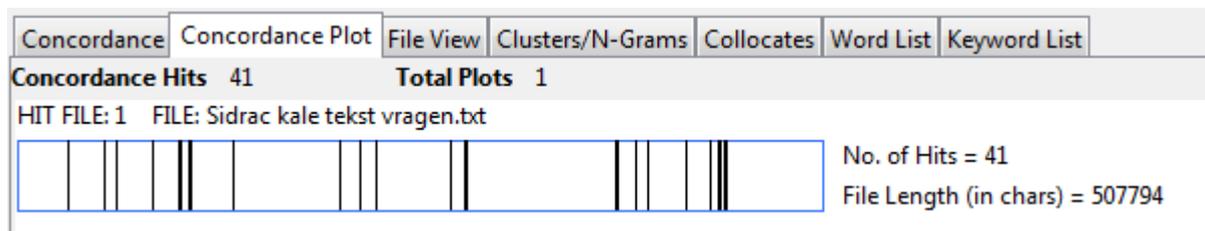


Figure 4: Concordance plot of lemma 'beeste' throughout the entire text

Now what is the use of this? Through this distant reading method, it can be established that the lemma 'mensch(e)' is very regularly mentioned in this text, almost as frequently as 'God'. The lemma 'beeste', on the other hand, occurs less frequently.

For the use of this tool, it is important to separate lemma from meaning. There are many other lemmas referring to all things human apart from 'mensch(e)', such as 'mensen' *humans* and 'menschelike' *human*, to name but two. These will gain importance in the application of this method in chapter 3. For now, however, it suffices to point out that the lemma 'mensch(e)' occurs in this text. AntConc doesn't only prove this, it also shows exactly where in the text the lemma is mentioned. Specifically for this project, this means that a preliminary selection of units that contain the relevant lemma can be made.

Of the 421 units in *Sidrac*, only 150 contain the word 'mensch(e) *human(s)*'. These 150 units combined contain the lemma 260 times, as was already pointed out above. This means that if the other 271 units don't mention any other lemma related to 'mensch(e)' either, there is no point in making them part of the rest of this research. An obvious example: units such as number 31: 'Waer vaert tfier als ment bluscht' *Where does the fire go when it is put out?*,

are not relevant for this paper, because, in this case, it does not contain any of the relevant lemmas. A list of the units that contain relevant lemmas is available in chapter 3.

Above I have discussed how AntConc works. Now the explanation of step 1 will continue with the reasons why this step is necessary and why it was executed this way.

AntConc is a distant reading tool. It was used for two reasons: because of the kind of research question that this thesis was based on, and because of the methodology used to answer the research question further on in step 3. At the basis of this reason lies Els Stronks' article 'De afstand tussen *close* en *distant*. Methoden en vraagstellingen in computationeel letterkundig onderzoek' (2013).<sup>18</sup>

Stronks argues that close and distant reading methods should be combined in research about literary history. In fact, she pleads that literary historians should think of more questions that are solvable through distant reading analysis, because of the current lack of use of digital methods in research about literary history. This idea of innovation is part of the reason why I chose to involve a distant reading method in my analysis. Specifically, however, Stronks wonders what possibilities for close reading are opened up by digital technology (Stronks 2013 206). I think discourse analysis is one of these possibilities, because fragments with relevant lemmas no longer have to be sought manually, so the risk of missing information or miscounting is no longer present. Also, using a distant reading method to select relevant units will avoid the problem of representability, which according to Stronks is a problem often put forward as criticism against literary historians who use close reading methods.

*Letterkundigen die aan close reading doen, krijgen vaak – misschien niet zozeer van disciplinegenoten, maar wel van cultuurhistorici – de vraag: 'wie zegt me dat jullie niet een paar pakkende voorbeelden van verschijnselen in teksten hebben gekozen, hoe vaak komen die voorbeelden eigenlijk voor?' (Stronks 2013 211)*

Translation: Literary historians who use close reading, often – maybe not from their peers, but certainly from cultural historians - get the question: 'who says that you did not merely chose a few gripping examples from occurrences in texts, but how often do these examples actually occur?'

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<sup>18</sup> Stronks, Els "De afstand tussen *close* en *distant*. Methoden en vraagstellingen in computationeel letterkundig onderzoek" *TNTL*, vol 129 4, 2013, pp. 205 – 214.

How representative are the results of a close reading analysis, when all the occurrences in the analysis are handpicked by the researcher? Possibly, the examples given by the researcher, are nothing more than a subjective selection of seemingly good examples to prove a hypothesis of the researcher. A distant reading method eliminates this problem, because it selects *all* occurrences, not just the ones who prove a hypothesis. Hence, to answer the research question thoroughly, it is important to select all units that contain the right lemma, not just a few. Still, it has to be pointed out that not all 150 units in *Sidrac* that contain the right lemmas will be analyzed in this paper. I have added a quantitative requirement (chapter 3.1) to further limit the selection, otherwise this thesis would never end. However, this selection is based on a quantitative – not a subjective - argument, meaning that all selected units have to contain three or more relevant lemmas, which means that the lemmas ‘menschē’, ‘menschen’, or ‘menschelike’, either separately or combined have to occur three times or more

The methodology used in step 3, the discourse analysis, is another reason to use a distant reading method in step 1. Besides that a distant reading method offers the possibility of making a motivated and non-arbitrary selection, it also opens up the possibility to look for patterns without reading the entire text (Stronks 2013 206).

Still, the only thing programs like AntConc can do is count. Interpretation and the decoding of messages are unmistakably human skills (Stronks 2013 207-208). The problem that pops up when counting digitally, is spelling. Spelling variants, especially in medieval literary sources, are a big problem when so much focus lies on a specific lemma (Stronks 2013 211). This problem is not to be underestimated and will be addressed in chapter 3, where I will show exactly what the selection of lemmas will entail.

Stronk’s article offered convincing arguments to the benefit of distant reading. However, this digital method only offers solace for step 1: the selection process. To answer the research question, a human skill of interpretation must be included as well. Only then the discourse can be analyzed. This part of the methodology will be discussed in the next section.

## **2.2 Step 2 and 3: Interpretation and Discourse Analysis**

Steps 2 and 3 concern the interpretation of the Middle Dutch text and the discourse analysis, which will both be explained in the second part of this chapter.

## **Step 2**

In the second step, as was mentioned, I will make an interpretation of the units selected in step 1 in order to understand what is being said in each unit. An accurate modern interpretation in the case of *Sidrac* is particularly important because the text is in Middle Dutch. I have done this with the help of the translations provided by Lie (2006) and the MNW. I will not make a word-for-word translation of each unit. This means that I will have to reformulate the selected units in modern English, whilst also pointing out the problems which might accompany the act of interpretation, to present the discourse in the selected units in an understandable way. To add to this understandability, I have also adapted and added punctuation in the Middle Dutch text. Ultimately, in step 3, the discourse about humans will be analyzed.

## **Step 3**

Once the selected units are interpreted and their discourse has been represented understandably in step 2, the discourse about humans in these units will undergo an analysis. A very practical handbook on this subject is Barbara Johnstone's *Discourse Analysis* (2004). In order to fully establish what discourse is and how it will be analyzed in this thesis, this chapter will continue with an explanation of the terminology and a discussion of the practical way in which this terminology will be used in chapter 4.

### ***What is Discourse?***

The term 'discourse' embodies a collection of concepts and thus several (yet similar) definitions have been proposed. Discourse, a term originally defined by Foucault, is described by Brillenburg Wurth and Rigney (2006) as a knowledge system that brings order to the world.<sup>19</sup> Discourses according to Foucault have their own vocabulary and the possibility to influence people through their structuring function (Brillenburg Wurth and Rigney 2006 401). This definition has been broadened to include the different aspects of this knowledge system for the purpose of interdisciplinary usage by Barbara Johnstone. In her *Discourse Analysis* (2004), Johnstone goes into more detail about what discourse is, when

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<sup>19</sup> The book for students by Brillenburg Wurth and Rigney (2006) offers an introduction on Foucault that makes his approach to the concept clearer. In this thesis, however, the approach of Johnstone (2004) will be prominent because it is more specific. Brillenburg Wurth, Kiene and Rigney, Ann [red.] *Het leven van teksten. Een inleiding tot de literatuurwetenschap*. Amsterdam University Press, 2006.

she describes discourses ‘actual instances of communication in the medium of language’ (Johnstone 2004 2), and thus specifies communication as a goal and language as a medium of conveying discourse.

The term ‘discourse’ was interpreted by Johnstone as an interdisciplinary solution for a variety of interdisciplinary questions. The goal of her book is to offer students a way to look for any (or even: every) possible facet of potential meaning in spoken or written word. Hence, a discourse analysis, according to Johnstone, goes way beyond paraphrase (Johnstone 2004 xii). In her study, the term is defined as ‘Discourses are ideas as well as ways of talking that influence and are influenced by the ideas.’ (Johnstone 2004 3). This means that discourse is both the source and the result of communication through language. Or, in other words, discourse is what lies behind the formulation of ideas but it is also influenced by these ideas. The key to all this is language. Meaning-making is at the center of human experience and activity, and thus a discourse analysis can help answer a variety of questions about humans in society (Johnstone 2004 7).

Johnstone (2004) lists the main features of discourse by discussing six ways discourse is shaped and shapes in its turn. I will proceed to discuss all six of them to gain a better understanding of the terminology and the way it applies to *Sidrac*.

1. The first feature of discourse is that texts and interpretations of texts are shaped by the world, and vice versa. This means that the worlds of both the creators and the interpreters of text are influenced by and influence discourse. According to the definition of Foucault, this would mean that the entire human world is shaped by discourse, because discourse creates a particular image of the world through the way the world is described (Johnstone 2004 10).

Specifically for this thesis, this feature of discourse indicates that the discourse about humans in *Sidrac* is influenced by and influences the world of its writer, its readers, and its interpreters. All these people bring their own world with them when they interpret *Sidrac*, which means that all of them have a different experience of the world, which influences their interpretation. Hence the difference between the modern scholar and the medieval reader: discourse shapes both their experienced worlds, which are brought into being by talking about them (Johnstone 2004 61), but the both of them also influence the discourse through their experienced worlds. The important notion here is that the way in which the

medieval concept of humans is described in this text, both creates and is created by the contemporary ideas about humans (Johnstone 2004 10 – 11).<sup>20</sup>

2. The second feature of discourse, is that discourse is shaped by the possibilities and limitations of language, as well as that it shapes language itself. This means that the conventions of structuring of the language of the text, have an influence on discourse. Depending on the language it is written in, discourse can convey a different meaning or have a different frame of reference (Johnstone 2004 12).

*Sidrac* was originally – as far as we know - written with the reference system of a French tradition. After that, it was translated in Middle Dutch. Through this act of translation, the knowledge inherent to this text is put into a new frame of reference and had to fit into a different tradition of how texts were structured.

3. The third feature of discourse is that it is shaped by interpersonal relations among participants, and discourse helps to shape interpersonal relations. The participants of discourse are speakers, writers, audiences, and overhearers who are *in* the text, as well as those involved in producing and interpreting the text (Johnstone 2004 14).

The dominant speaker in *Sidrac*, is Sidrac. His interpersonal relation with king Bottus is of influence on this text, in a sense that it becomes educational. As was suggested in the introduction of this thesis, king Bottus' ignorance as well as Sidrac's knowledge determine which questions are asked and how they are answered. This means that their fictional interpersonal relation is of major influence on the material discussed in this text. Through their student-teacher dynamics, the participants of *Sidrac* ensure that also the audience experiences education; king Bottus acts as a spokesperson of the audience in order for them to be educated. Hence the idea that this book is a handbook.

4. The fourth feature of discourse is that it is shaped by the expectations created by familiar discourse. Above that, new instances of discourse help to shape our expectations about what future discourse will be like and how it should be interpreted (Johnstone 2004 15). In other words: how discourse is received is under the influence of familiarities such as

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<sup>20</sup> This idea comes from a convention of linguistic relativism, which sees language as a key factor in our view on the world. This point of view is put to the extreme by linguistic determinism, which claims that the entire worldview is constructed by language (Johnstone 2004 33).

categories of style and form, or registers and genres, which have become familiar through the genre. Within the *artes* genre, this means that the form of a dialogue, as a familiar form, has an influence on the discourse about humans and vice versa. The expectation of this genre is to be educational. Other intertextual connections are other encyclopedic works from the Middle Ages and the French source text.

5. The fifth feature of discourse is that it is shaped by the limitations and possibilities of its media, and the possibilities of communications media are shaped by their uses in discourse (Johnstone 2004 16). This has to do with the strategic mixing of media, which in the case of *Sidrac* is hard to recover. In case of an exposition, the limitations of the media would entail the possibilities to add pictures, speech, or other publishing tricks.

6. The sixth and final feature of discourse, is that discourse is shaped by purpose, and that it shapes purpose in return (Johnstone 2004 17). This means that discourse is affected by the purpose of the written text, which in the case of *Sidrac* is the purpose to educate, and vice versa. This indicates that during the discourse analysis, it should become clear that *Sidrac* is an authority figure, who uses evidence and expertise to simplify and explain the things king Bottus wants to know. This idea also has to do with the *artes* genre, and the idea that *Sidrac* is a handbook (Lie 2006 9). The purpose to educate influences the form of the text, because as was discussed in the third feature, the form of a dialogue in *Sidrac* ensures the education of its audience.

All these six features of discourse shed light on the tension between discourse and the primary source of this thesis. They offer opportunity but also limitation to the use of a discourse analysis. Still, the term 'discourse' offers an opportunity to investigate humans in *Sidrac*, because the features discussed above all indicate the connection between the understanding of humans and the way this is visible on a word level.

Because step 3 focusses on each unit and the way it is formulated, the features that are most important of the list above are the first and the second. The first is important because the connection between discourse and the world is what creates understanding, and to clarify which aspects are prominent in the discourse about humans is the main goal of this thesis. The second feature is important because of the fact that *Sidrac* was written in Middle Dutch, and to understand this language is of major importance in step 2. The other

features, however, will be kept in mind though not so thoroughly addressed in the analysis. The participants, purpose, expectations, and genre of this text have already been explained in the introduction, to focus on them through a discourse analysis would be useful, but it is not the main goal of this thesis because it focusses on discourse about humans, which is a topic related to the experienced world and not to the participants and purpose of *Sidrac*.

In this section, the term 'discourse' and its features have been discussed thoroughly. Now, this methodological chapter will conclude with an explanation of how the discourse about humans in *Sidrac* will be analyzed practically.

### ***Discourse in Practice***

Now that an understanding of the term 'discourse' and its features has been established, let's move on the application of a discourse methodology in this thesis. This methodology is based on a combination of Barbara Johnstone's *Discourse Analysis* (2004) and A.L. Becker's 'A tagmemic approach to paragraph analysis' (1965).<sup>21</sup>

According to Johnstone, there is a connection between discourse and structural conventions, which isn't a surprise considering its dependence on language (see feature 2 in previous paragraph). Discourse is structured. This assumed structure implies that generalizations about the reasons why and where topics are discussed can be made based on internal patterns and regularities. By breaking the text apart and making explicit the arrangement of its arguments, the application of discourse can be laid bare (Johnstone 2004 65). This can both be done on the level of the individual sentence or the paragraph. A major advantage of analyzing the structure of discourse on the level of a paragraph, is that it can lay bare the function of discourse about humans within discussions that don't necessarily have humans as their main topic. A second reason to analyze the discourse about humans on a paragraph level, is that it is operable for the particular form of *Sidrac*. Each unit can easily be considered a separate paragraph with its own internal structure. Someone referenced by Johnstone, who wrote an article about the discourse analysis of the paragraph, is A. L. Becker.

According Becker's tagmemic approach (1965), there are two main patterns in which the internal structure of the paragraph can work. Both have structural or semantic slots

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<sup>21</sup> Becker, A.L. "A tagmemic approach to paragraph analysis." *College Composition and Communication*, 16, 1965, pp. 237 – 242.

which can be filled with one or more sentences. The first pattern consists of a problem (**P**), often formulated in the shape of a question, and one or more solutions or causes (**S1, S2, ...**). Conveniently, all units of *Sidrac* start with a question of king Bottus, or ‘problem’, and then continue with an answer from Sidrac, or ‘solution’. Sometimes, the (**S**) slot can be embedded with a TRI-structure, which is the second pattern (Becker 1965 239). This second pattern consists of a topic slot (**T**) followed by a restriction slot (**R**) and an illustration slot (**I**). Each of these slots is more specific than the previous. The (**T**) slot states the topic, which is then narrowed down or defined in the (**R**) slot. The (**I**) slot offers an illustration or description of this definition at a lower level of generality (Becker 1965 238).

The goal of making explicit this structure is to highlight the internal structure of each paragraph and its discourse. This means that the analysis of the structure of each unit of *Sidrac* would lead to a better understanding but also a separation of the different aspects of the discourse about humans. To substantiate the use of his method, Becker argues that ‘an important axiom in tagmemic theory [is]: that meaning cannot be separated from form or form from meaning without serious distortion’ (Becker 1965 237). This claim was also confirmed by Johnstone, when she suggested that discourse (or: meaning-making) and structure are intertwined. This method therefore provides a way to answer the research question of this thesis.

The analysis of the internal structure of each unit will specify the practical implications of the mutual influence of language and discourse, the second feature of discourse that was discussed in the previous paragraph. The first feature, which was the mutual influence of discourse and the world, will be specified in the prominent aspects that will be the result of the analysis.

In chapter 4, after the interpretation of every selected unit, I will emphasize their individual structures with the terminology offered by Becker (1965). By doing so, I hope to go beyond paraphrasing what has been said about humans in each selected unit, and to actually make visible which aspects are prominent in the discourse about humans.

This chapter has specified what will be done in steps 1, 2, and 3, and why, in order to answer the research question *What are the prominent aspect in the discourse about humans in Sidrac?* It is time to move on to the first step. In the next chapter, I will give an overview of the units I selected for the analysis in chapter 4.

### 3. Motivated Selection

In the previous chapter the three steps of the methodology have been explained. In this chapter, I will execute step 1, which is the selection of relevant units that contain discourse about humans. The goal of this selection is filter out those units that are not relevant to answer the research question, and to make a few hypothetical remarks as an introduction and outline for chapter 4, which contains the discourse analysis.

As explained in chapter 2.2.1, AntConc will function as a tool to look at the word concordances of the word 'menschē'. In chapter 3.1 the results of the selection will be discussed with a quantitative requirement of three or more lemmas in mind. In chapter 3.2, the concordances of these lemmas will be used to provide a rough outline for chapter 4.

#### 3.1 Quantitative Requirements and Selection

This section is all about the quantity of relevant lemmas and hence the density of discourse about humans in *Sidrac*. In order to analyze this discourse, it has to be made sure that the parts of the text that will be analyzed are relevant. The lemma 'menschē' occurs 260 times in *Sidrac*, divided between 150 units. The number of lemmas per unit vary between 1 and 6, except for units 189 and 16, both in which the lemma occurs 10 times. In order to make sure that the lemmas about humans are sufficiently present in any selected unit, I will only select units that mention the lemma, variants of it or combinations of variants three or more times. In theory, other relevant variants of the lemma 'menschē' are 'menschen', 'menschelike' (and variants with a different spelling) and 'mense', the latter of which will only be deemed relevant when it is in fact referring to humans and not to the enclisis 'men + se'.

All these lemmas have been inserted in AntConc, after which it became apparent that not all relevant lemmas have the same number of occurrences. 'Menschelike' appears only five times throughout the full text. 'Mense' appears 13 times, of which none actually refer to humans. Because the occurrences of both these lemmas are rather limited – and in fact, the mention of 'men + se' isn't relevant at all - I have decided to only use the units with a occurrence of 'menschelike' either if it appears three times or more, or when it appears in combination with the word 'menschē' and the sum of all lemmas is three or more. The same applies to the lemma 'menschen' (which occurs 78 times); the unit in which it occurs will only be deemed relevant when the lemma appears three or more times on its own or in

combination with 'menschē'. This requirement was added to ensure a certain density when it comes to discourse about humans in selected units.

In total, there are 37 units that comply to this quantitative requirement, a list of which can be found in appendix A. I have added the occurrences of the relevant lemmas in this appendix. Only these 37 units are selected. However, there are two exceptions. These exceptions are units 45 and 211, which both have content in their concordances that will make them fit for selection despite their lack of quantitative value, which will be explained in the next section. The next paragraph of this chapter contains an overview of what stood out in the concordances of the relevant lemmas in the previously mentioned 39 (37 plus 2) units. I will discuss their general thematic and make a few preliminary remarks about the content of the corpus.

### **3.2 First Observations from the Concordances**

The goal of this section is to explore the results from AntConc. For each relevant lemma, I have looked at the concordances in order to roughly determine the content of the unit. By looking at the words in the concordances of relevant lemmas, I have made a preliminary layout for chapter 4 based on their content. In other words: the surrounding words of each relevant lemma have been used to make an outline for the next stage of the analysis.

There were a few things that stood out in the concordances of the relevant lemmas. All observations that were relevant for the discourse about humans are grouped below according to thematic similarities. These similarities will provide a rough layout for chapter 4, in which the selected units will be analyzed.

All concordances of 'menschē' and other relevant lemmas have been considered for selection. Of the 38 previously selected, 28 turned out to have distinguishable information about humans in their concordances. The other 10 merely mentioned humans, but did not have any *wird* in the concordances of the lemmas that stood out. However, they will not be excluded from selection. Rather, they will be added to the rest category because of the lack of distinguishable content in the direct concordances of the relevant lemmas. Units that had a clear theme or content in their concordances, have been divided into subcategories accordingly. Additionally, two units have been added to the selection that did not meet the quantitative requirement, but still had relevant content in the concordances. They were selected based on the words in their concordances, which seemed relevant.

Below, an overview of observations based on the concordances of 'menschē' and derivatives will be presented. Please note that all observations are based on the concordances, which means that they are hypothetical in nature and provide no answer to the research question. Rather, these observations have a sole purpose of dividing the selected units into groups and to make a few exploratory remarks about their content.

As a first observation, there were a few word groups that referred to humans in combination with physical characteristics, meaning that words about the human body occurred in their concordances. For example, unit 93 contains the word 'lichame' in the concordance of 'menschē'. This unit is about how the human body should be kept pure. Units 9 and 152 on the other hand, are about how the human body was created. Unit 384 is about the body of Christ, and how it will be preserved on earth after his death. It seems that where the human body is discussed, this does not happen merely in physical terms. Rather, there seem to be religious conditions connected to the way it is treated. Other units about the human body are units 171 (which is about what humans should eat), 187 (why do humans work?), 189 (body versus mind), 230 (the most beautiful part of the human body), 273 (why do humans have hair?) and 319 (body versus soul).

A second thing that stands out, is the word groups in the concordances discussing modes of action, meaning the things humans do. Examples are concordances in which the verbs 'doen' *to do* and 'leven' *to live* are used. This happens in unit 189 (also mentioned above), which is about doing good or bad, and the consequences of both. Also unit 98 stood out, because it is about acting arrogantly and how this affects the spiritual wellbeing. Human behavior is criticized in many other units, such as units 88 (how to behave in a crowd), 186 (about forgiveness), 204 (about jealousy), 217 and 17 (behavior), 284 (what does the devil have to do with what humans do?), 391 (doing evil) and 411 (about damnation).

A third observation based on the concordances is the combination of the lemma 'menschē' and 'sceppere' *creator*. Unit 45 - which was selected despite not meeting the quantitative requirement - is about the power of the soul, given by God. The verb 'maecte' (often with a mention of God) refers to the same theme, for example in unit 10, which is also about the creation. Unit 28 mentions that God made humans after his own image. Unit 109 questions the idea that humans were made with sin. These units do not discuss humans as separate beings. Rather, they view them in their relationship to God. Other units that had

God and the creation in their concordances are units 55 and 168, which both qualify for selection.

In a fourth observation, humans are curiously enough also recorded alongside angels ('ingelen') a few times. This happens in unit 16, which questions why Jesus was not an angel, but human. Unit 16 mentions the devil alongside angels and humans. Another unit that notices angels is unit 283. Unit 76 is about the way humans feed. In this case it is also relevant to stress that this unit discusses humans as well as beasts. Humans therefore seem to be functioning as part of the selection of creatures that roam the world, rather than on their own, which possibly broadens the discourse about them. This idea also comes forward in unit 211, which was, just like unit 45, selected for its content. Unit 211 is about children, and how they should be loved. Humans, apparently, are not all the same and should be treated accordingly.<sup>22</sup> Unit 211 has been selected because it discusses children as the fruit of humans, and thus contains discourse about humans in general as well as discourse about children specifically.

Fifth, some units discuss the soul in the concordances of 'mensch'. This happens in unit 45 and 319 (both were mentioned earlier). The soul is a trait so characteristic to humans that it by no means should be overlooked. It is what separates them from animals. Unit 45 is about the power of the soul. Unit 319 is about what happens to the body and the soul when humans die. Since having a soul is relevant especially for the afterlife, it is no surprise that unit 319 combines the discourse about humans with lemmas about the soul and death.

Sixth and last, there is a remaining category of units that showed no specific themes in their concordances. Rather, this category (the rest category) is filled with units that met the quantitative requirement, but have no thematic aspects in the concordances of 'mensch' that are similar to those already discussed. These units are still part of the selection. These are units 2, 85, 86, 87, 94, 159, 216, 331, 379, and 401.

A summary of the selected units is presented in the following paragraph, which concludes this chapter before I move on to step 2.

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<sup>22</sup> Closer observation of this problem will happen in step 2. For now, it is sufficient to note that children differ from adults. One could wonder why children (as well as men and women) are not discussed on the same level as humans in this paper. The reason for this is a choice. I chose to discuss humans rather than children, husbands, and wives. However, one could consider discussing these other lemmas more deeply in consecutive research. Despite this choice, unit 211 has been selected because it discusses children as the fruit of humans, and thus contains discourse about humans in general as well as discourse about children specifically.

### 3.3 Results of Step 1: Motivated Selection

In the previous two sections, the method and execution of step 1 has been discussed. Below, I summarized the units that are selected and hence will be analyzed in chapter 4.

Interpretations in modern English of these questions will be provided in chapter 4 as well.

Unit	Die coninc vraecht
2	Mach God werden ghesien?
9	Wat vormen hebben dingele?
10	Maecte God den mensche met sinen handen?
16	Waer omme en sal God niet sinden enen mensche ofte enen ingel omme voer hem te stervene?
17	Waer omme sal hy willen gheboren sijn van ere maget na dien datti van hem selven gheboren es?
28	Hoe salmen gheweten dat God maecte den mensche na sine ghelikenesse?
45	Wat machte gaf God der zielen inden lichame in dit eerterike?
55	Waer omme en orlovede God niet den mensche als ene werven geten hadde, datti hem dan hadde mogen onthouden ene weker?
76	Die meer eet ende drinct dan hy behoeft, doeti sonde ofte quaet?
85	Salmen minnen den vrint getrouwelijc?
86	Mach een mensche orboer doen sonder hem te pinene ende travelgeerne?
87	Salmen altoes wel doen ende salmen geven den armen lieden?
88 x	Hoe sal hem die mensche houden onder die liede?
93	Sal een mensche sijn suver van al sinen lichame [van allen dinghen]?
94	Wien salmen minnen ende haten ende scouwen?
98	Eest goet dat hem een mensche vort doet van dien datti selve ghedaen heeft oft es beter datti swige?
109	Waer omme en maecte God niet den mensche alsoe datti ghene sonde en hadde moghen doen?
152	God die alles mechtich es waer omme en maecti ghene andere creatueren dan beesten vogelen ende vissche?
159	Mach hem een mensche onthouden van luxurien alse hise wille heeft te doene?
168	Hoe vele manieren sijn van lieden die men ere ende reverencie doen sal in de werelt?
171	Eest sonde datmen eet alle dinc?
186	Die ontfermhertege God vergeeft alle die sonden die de mensche doet?
187	Waer omme aerbeit die mensche in dese werelt?
189	Tgoet ende quaet dat de mensche doet in dese werelt weder comet van Gode ofte van hem selven?
204	Waer af compt die meeste hatie vander werelt?
211	Hoe sal de mensche minnen sinen kinderen?
216	Want die werelt staet by woerden, by cruden ende by steenen, welc es dan dbeste woert, dbeste cruut ende die beste steen daer die werelt by steet?
217	Sal de mensche ontdekken sine heimelijcheit sinen vrient?
230	Welc es tsoenste let dat de lichame hevet?

273	Waer omme maecte God haer aenden mensche?
275	Waer omme werden die kindere geboren doef, stom ende cropel?
283	Hoe openbaren hem dingele den mensche?
284	Weten de duvele alle dinghe die men doet?
319	Wie gevoelt dat wee als men van hier scheyt, ofte die lichame oft die ziele?
331	Sal een mensche vergeten tslants dair hy in geboren ende gevoet was?
379	Waer omme sal toch God laten steren synen zone[ende by wat redenen sal hy sterven]?
384	Die lichame des vrays propheten sal hy altoes sijn in eerterike?
391	Welc es mere soe de gracie Goids oft sine gramscap?
401	Wanen sal hy comen die valsche prophete?
411	Wie selen sy sijn die behouden ende verlore sijn selen?

In chapter 4, an interpretation and discourse analysis of these selected units will be made.

#### 4. Analysis of Selected Units

In this chapter, the selected units from the previous chapter will be interpreted in modern English (step 2). After that, a discourse analysis will be made (step 3). This discourse analysis will be made visible through the insertion of the slots discussed in chapter 2 into the interpretation – these slots being **(P)** for problem, **(S)** for solution, and then a possible TRI-structure imbedded in the solution slot, being **(T)** for topic, **(R)** for restriction, and **(I)** for illustration. These slots will be inserted in the interpretation, after which they will be discussed. The structure of each unit, once pointed out, will make explicit the way in which the human discourse of each unit is structured, which will help to answer the question *What are the prominent aspects in the discourse about humans in Sidrac?* The sections 4.1 – 4.6 have been used as a tool to preliminarily divide all selected units into accessible groups, as was discussed in chapter 3.2, for the purpose of clarity. These groups are divided according to themes: chapter 4.1 discusses the human body, chapter 4.2 human behavior, chapter 4.3 the creation, chapter 4.4 humans and other creatures, and chapter 4.5 discusses the human soul. Units from the rest category as specified in chapter 3.2, will be discussed in chapter 4.6. The themes will not be a perfect fit for every entire unit. Some of them will show contents of different themes or will not have a clear theme at all. Because initial division between themes was done based on the concordances looked at in chapter 3.2, some units will turn out to be a better fit for other themes. This problem will be pointed out in the analysis, however because the division in sections is only preliminary, this will have no consequences for the concluding stage of the analysis.

Readers will notice a regular use of brackets in quotations and translations. Round brackets will be used to further clarify the meaning of Sidrac's words in case there could be confusion (for example when it is unclear to whom a personal pronoun refers, which is a pretty common thing in Middle Dutch). Square brackets will be used the same as when they are used by Van Tol. Van Tol uses square brackets in case of conflict with other versions of *Sidrac* or to clarify the text (Van Tol 1936 XIII). All information between square brackets in the selected units is part of the interpretation. The length of each unit (amount of words) as well as the occurrences of relevant lemmas for each unit can be found in appendix A.

## 4.1 The Human Body

This section contains units from the selection in chapter 3.3 that showed clear references to body parts or physical traits of humans in the concordances of the relevant lemmas. Units analyzed in this section are numbers 9, 93, 152, 171, 211, 230, 273, 319, and 384.

### Unit 9

Unit 9 starts with a question from king Bottus. The king asks: **(P)** ‘Wat vormen hebben dingele’ *What figure (or: shape, stature) do the angels have?* (Van Tol 1936 42 [11]) Sidrac answers: **(S1)** ‘Dene maniere hebben de vorme van Gode, want alsoe gelijc was de gedane ons here in hem’ *On the one hand they have the figure of God, because like that the figure of God was in him(self)* (Van Tol 1936 42 [12]- [13]). **(S2)** And on the other hand, as ugly as the devils are now, as full of beauty they were then. **(S3)** They know everything about the future, because they *see it* (sien + t)<sup>23</sup> in God and have the power of everything they want without *effort* (‘sonder swaernesste te doene’ Van Tol 1936 42 [17]). **(S4)** And because the number of angels was filled, thus **(T4)** the humans were made of physical and spiritual substances. **(R4.1)** The bodily was made of four elements, **(I4.1.1)** because humans have (received) flesh from the earth, blood from water, the soul from the air, and heat from fire. The head of humans is round as the *celestial dome* (also: *sky* ‘firmament’ Van Tol 1936 42 [22]) and it has two eyes as the celestial dome has two lights, which are the sun and the moon. Like the celestial dome has seven planets, the human has seven holes in his head. Like the air has wind and thunder inside her, the human in his chest has cough (‘hoeste’ Van Tol 1936 42 [27]) and breath (‘adem’ Van Tol 1936 42 [27]). Like the sea collects everything in her seaweed, the belly has received (‘ontfeet’, past tense of the verb ‘ontfaen’ *to receive* Van Tol 1936 42 [29]) everything that the body has collected. Like the earth supports all things, the feet support the weight of humans. From the heavenly fire humans got their sight and from the highest air the nose. The bladder comes from lower air and water. He (the human) has some of the toughness of stone in him and the greenness of the trees in his eyes. **(R4.2)** Of spiritual substances, he (the human) has the soul, because it is written. **(I4.2.1)** He (God) created humans after his own image, that’s the shape of the soul, and her greatness is in the Trinity. The soul has memory in her, where she recalls all things ‘die toe comende sin’ *which*

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<sup>23</sup> ‘Sien’ could also be a different spelling of ‘sijn’: they *are* in God, ‘sy sient in Gode’. This interpretation according the MNW however mainly occurs in poetry, where it part of a rhyme scheme. It therefore seems unlikely to translate it into *to be* here.

*are in the future* (Van Tol 1936 42 [38]). She also has understanding of current things and things one cannot see. And she has the desire to renounce evil and do good. In God is every virtue and God is in the soul, which looks like God's whole, and the soul is a thing that accompanies her with all things. So she cannot withstand heaven, she knows enough of heavenly things and also of hell, because she is a spiritual substance copied after the image of God our lord.

The first unit in this analysis immediately seems to be misplaced, because according to Bottus' question it is supposed to be about angels. However, when looking at the full unit and the word groups in which lemmas of humans occur, the reason why it has been added to this chapter quickly becomes clear. The interpretation of this unit benefitted greatly from the translation by Lie (2006, 35).

The problem **(P)** of this unit is clear: Bottus wants to know what figure angels have. Four solutions are offered for the problem slot. **(S1)** says that angels were made with God in mind, according to **(S2)** they were full of beauty and in **(S3)** it becomes clear what kind of powers angels have. **(S4)** however, isn't really a solution for the problem. Rather, it continues with the notion humans were created because all the numbers of angels were filled, which has nothing to do with the shape of angels that the problem slot refers to. Rather, it indicates that there were enough angels, so humans were created instead.

**(S4)** is filled with an elaborate imbedded TRI-structure. The topic **(T4)** indicates that humans have two main components. The first of them is the body, which was made of four elements **(R4.1)**. To illustrate this in **(I4.1.1)**, Sidrac makes several comparisons. Firstly, he compares the human head to the celestial dome, the eyes to the sun and the moon, and the seven holes in the face to seven planets. Through these comparisons, the aspect of the macrocosm enters the discourse about humans in the illustration slot **(I4.1.1)**. Lie (2006) also noticed this aspect in *Sidrac*:

*De mens werd gezien als een afspiegeling in het klein van de grote kosmos. Al in de Oudheid werden daarvoor de begrippen 'microkosmos' en 'macrokosmos' genoemd: de mens is de microkosmos, de wereld in het klein, het heelal is de macrokosmos. (Lie 2006 22)*

Translation: The human being was seen as a small reflection of the large cosmos. Already in Ancient times the terms 'microcosm' and 'macrocosm' were used:

mankind is the microcosm, a small projection of the world, the universe is the macrocosm.

According to Lie (2006), the human being was the mirror image of the macrocosm. A comparison of the two hence connects the physical to the celestial, the human body to worldly nature.

After **(I4.1.1.)**, Sidrac adds a second restriction or component in **(R4.2)** to the human substance, which is the spiritual. In **(I.4.2.1)** this idea is illustrated by the notion that the human soul was created after God's own image. Sidrac explains that the soul has so much knowledge that it knows the future as well as the past. This knowledge, which is God-given, induces the soul to want to do good and to renounce the bad. By describing the soul as something divine, it is connected to God himself.

This unit might have started with angels, it quickly moves on to an elaborate illustration of what humans are made of. Especially when the relevant lemmas are highlighted in this text, it becomes clear that the discourse about humans contains several interesting aspects, which are all used as illustrations to explain their figure. Firstly, the comparison of the human head to the celestial dome, induces the idea of the different cosmos to the discourse about humans in **(I4.1.1.)**. Specifically, this means that the physical traits of humans and the elements are somehow connected and comparable. Secondly, in the second illustration **(I.4.2.1)** the soul is described as something divine or godly, which adds an aspect of divinity to the discourse about humans in this unit.

### **Unit 93**

Unit 93 starts with the question of king Bottus. The king asks: **(P)** 'Sal een mensche sijn suver van al sinen lichame [van allen dinghen]?' *Should a human be pure (or: stark) of all his body [of everything]?* (Van Tol 1936 86 [17]-[18]). Sidrac answers: **(T)** the human should be pure of all things in all his body. **(R)** First of all of luxuries, of swearing, which is to speak *evil* (or: *harmful* 'quaet' Van Tol 1936 86 [20], which is evil; (humans should not) hear evil, think evil, nor act evil, nor *give bad advice* (or: *instigate*, 'raden' Van Tol 1936 86 [22]), nor eat or drink *inattentively* ('in arge'). Of all these things one should be pure, as well as of many others. **(I)** The one who God made after his image, he shall be pure of all things, thus he (the human) shall be worthy of his (God's) *glory* ('glorien' Van Tol 1936 86 [25]). *Because God has given sense and understanding to every human so that he may behold* (or: *pay attention to*,

'scouwen') *all these things: once he does it so, God is his friend and then he (the human) is worthy of his (God's) company* ('Want God heeft gegeven sin ende verstantesse elcken mensche datti scouwen mach alle dese dingen; eest dat hijt doet soe es God sijn vrint ende soe es hy weerdich siere geselschap' Van Tol 1936 86 [25]-[28]).

This unit is about the things that should be voided for the sake of the human body. In the problem slot **(P)** the translation of 'suver' *pure*, can be interpreted ambiguously. Aside from *pure*, as in *clean*, 'suver' could also mean *untouched* in a way a virgin is untouched. Sidrac's answer hardly offers any clarity on this point, although to be a virgin to food is the same as to never have had any, and thus to be clean of it. The solution slot has an embedded TRI-structure

Sidrac points out in which way the human should be pure in the **(T)** and **(R)** slots. The **(T)** slot indicates that the human should be pure of pretty much everything, although specifics are given in **(R)**. Humans should avoid too much luxury, gluttony, and swearing. The **(I)** slot then continues *why* humans should be pure: it is to please God and thus to make him act friendly towards humans, because they will deserve it. Hence the discourse about humans is illustrated with a religious aspect about having to please God in order to be worthy of his company in heaven. Apart from that, the **(T)** and **(R)** slot contain something that feels like an instruction, which could make these actions within human discourse something that has to be learnt, and thus was not a part of the creation. The things that humans should learn in this unit are illustrated with religious aspects of divine reward and the creation, which makes those aspects part of the discourse about humans.

### **Unit 152**

Unit 152 starts as follows. The king asks: **(P)** Why did God who has power over everything not create any other creatures than beasts, birds, and fish? Sidrac answers: **(S)** God in his power created all things well and *appropriately* ( or: *properly, as they should be* 'behoerlijc' Van Tol 1936 113 [37]), and *organized* ('wel gheoirdineert' Van Tol 1936 113 37)<sup>24</sup> 'te redenen' (which could mean *in agreement with the unwritten law adhered by God* Van Tol 1936 113 [37]), **(T)** because he has created in the world four elements; and he has made the **(R)** humans of four *complexities* ('complexien' could also mean *temperaments* Van Tol 1936 113 [39]): heat, cold, dryness and moist; and he made **(I1)** the bodies of the humans of the

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<sup>24</sup> The MNW translates 'wel gheoirdineert' below 'ordineerlike' as *in the right way*.

earth, the bodies of beasts of heat, the birds of air, and the fish of the water; **(I2)** and if he had made the bodies for them (the beasts, birds, and fish) of earth [like the humans], then they would *stand up* (or: *rise up* ‘opstaen’ Van Tol 114 [4]) at judgement day with the humans. But because they don’t have bodies of earth, thus they didn’t become like that (which is: like humans) and they will *perish into nothingness* (‘comen al te nieute’ Van Tol 1936 114 [6]).<sup>25</sup>

The interpretation of this unit benefitted from the translation by Lie (2006 67). In this unit, king Bottus wants to know in **(P)** why God didn’t create any other creatures than beasts, birds, and fish. Sidrac seems to seek refuge in the idea that the creation is complete as it is in **(S1)**. To exemplify the idea that the creation is complete, he adds the four elements that are the building blocks for the entire world in **(T)**. In the restriction slot **(R)**, it becomes clear that God also used four temperaments for the creation of humans. Then, in the illustration slots, Sidrac points out the use of the elements in the creation of several living creatures including humans in **(I1)**. After that, in **(I2)**, he continues by pointing out what would happen if God *hadn’t* done it this way. If he hadn’t, animals would be subjects to final judgement as well as humans, but they’re not, so they won’t. In this restriction slot, the humors are introduced as factors in discourse about humans. When it comes to the human body, however, earth, animals and the elements are distinctive aspects within the discourse.

### **Unit 171**

In unit 171, the king asks: **(P)** Is it healthy to eat everything?<sup>26</sup> Sidrac answers: **(S)** God in his compassion and his power made everything for the humans, and so that humans could be lords of the earth like God is in heaven, of drink, of food, of commanding and of working all creatures to serve him and to be in the humans’ service. **(T)** And because of the large gift and advantage that God has given us and also power over everything, thus we have the power to kill and to eat all creatures; **(R)** and so what we kill and eat with a good heart<sup>27</sup> and good will,<sup>28</sup> that is good and a favor. **(I)** And would it be so that we ate the most noble animal of the world that could be eaten, or the noblest bread, or the noblest wine we drank,

<sup>25</sup> Lie (2006) 67 translates as *(then) nothing of them will remain*, ‘(dan) zal er niets van hen overblijven’.

<sup>26</sup> Translation to *healthy* comes from MNW ‘sonde’ II (< ‘gesonde’). Also means: *sin*, but that doesn’t sound very applicable in this unit. *Sinful* would however be possible.

<sup>27</sup> MNW translates ‘herte’ as *Hart als zetel van alle gemoedsaandoeningen en eigenschappen der menschelijke natuur*, which translates as the heart as a common place for human nature.

<sup>28</sup> *Will* comes from MNW ‘meninge’, ‘soe wat wy dooden ende eten met goeder herten ende met goeder meininghen’ (Van Tol 1936 122 [18]-[19]). This could also be translated as ‘desire’ or ‘intent’.

and this good meal would lay on our hearts and we didn't eat it with good *will* (also: *desire*, 'meninghe', see note 28), [and] know that this meal would be neither a gift nor of any use. Because what people eat with good will, is a gift and is useful. And what a human eats without good heart and against their will is neither good, nor a gift, nor *prosperous* ('oirboirlijc', searched lemma: 'orboir').

In the problem slot **(P)** of this unit, king Bottus asks about food, and if it is healthy to eat all things. One would expect a solution about food. Nevertheless, the solution slot **(S)** is about the creation and how much of it happened to the advantage and service of humans. Humans were created as kings of all living things. The power that accompanies this, is however not to be treated lightly, as is indicated in **(R)**. In the illustration **(I)**, it becomes clear why it is so important that humans treat the power given to them rightly. In the illustration, the creation is connected back to the problem slot, because Sidrac says that food eaten without good heart, is not healthy at all, however superior the food itself might be. The notion that humans are part of a hierarchy that was established during the creation becomes important in terms of what this argument is based on. In other words: despite that the problem slot is about food, both the topic and the restriction slot contain information about the creation. Therefore the aspect of the creation is added to the discourse about humans through the element of nourishment.

### **Unit 211**

In unit 211, the king asks: **(P)** How is the food that the human eats divided in the body? Sidrac answers: **(S1)** The food that the human eats gathers in the stomach and there it boils and digests and **(T1)** when it is well boiled and digested then it divides itself in **(R1)** four parts. **(I1)** Yes, the noblest and the smallest of the food, the first part, goes straight to the heart, the other goes to the brains and to the eyes and to every [place] in the head, the third goes everywhere in the body and in every limb; the fourth part goes to the fundament, that is the manure and thus it is of the urine.

The content of this unit might be a little peculiar, since the question of king Bottus is about the digestion system. Nonetheless, the solution to the problem slot in **(T1)** clearly points that the food first goes through the stomach, once it is consumed. After the boiling and digesting, it is divided **(T1)** in four parts **(R1)**. Which parts, are illustrated in **(I1)**. Despite

the idea that there is a hierarchy of which parts of the human body are fueled first, no distinctive aspects to the discourse about humans can be found.

### **Unit 230**

The physical abilities and characteristics of the human body are things that clearly fascinate king Bottus. For example, in unit 230, he asks: 'Welc es tsoenste let dat de lichame hevet?'

**(P)** *Which is the most beautiful part of the body?* Sidrac answers: **(S)** The most beautiful part of the body is the nose. Because the nose on the body is as the sun in the sky at midday, which has its beauty above the entire world. Thus the nose beautifies the body. **(S1)** If humans would miss an eye in their head, or if they had lost a hand, they wouldn't be as ugly as when they would have lost their nose. **(S2)** Yet it would be more of a flaw to miss another body part than to miss a nose. It would be much more of a flaw to miss a hand, because one can miss it less than a foot, because a wooden foot can be worn by a human everywhere, but otherwise for the hand it has no advantage.

It may be clear that the nose, according to Sidrac, is quite important. There is only one part of the body that is the most beautiful, which is why there is only one **(S)** slot present. This is the main solution to the problem slot. There are, however, two sub-solutions that aren't very clearly structured in a TRI, which is why I have called them **(S1)** and **(S2)**, which both stand below **(S)**. **(S1)** shows an interesting comparison of the nose to the sun. The nose beautifies the face as the sun beautifies the world. This comparison plays well into the medieval idea of the microcosm. The human body, a microcosm in its own, is part of the macrocosm, the world. This solution bases an argument of human beauty on the discourse of nature and the idea that every small thing has a function within the larger unity of the world (or: the body). When we take this idea one step further, and decide to imagine to have lost a nose, the face without a nose can be quite ugly. Uglier, even, than a face that would miss an eye, or a body that would miss a hand. The final solution in **(S2)** of the wooden foot seems a rather random addition (which is pretty typical for Sidrac) because it has nothing to do with beauty or the face, but it has a practical note. A foot can be replaced. A hand (or nose) cannot. Sidrac however does not offer any further explanation as to why he would mention this limb at all. **(S2)** seems to be an elaboration of the previously mentioned lost hand, rather than an actual solution slot to Bottus' question. It seems to point out that even

though missing a nose would make you ugly, missing a hand would make life a lot more difficult. The hierarchy between beauty and practicality however is unclear.

The most important thing in this unit is the reference to nature and the macrocosm through the comparison of the nose to the sun. It points out that apparently, the beauty of human parts can be put into words through a comparison to the beauty of nature. This would mean that the natural world and thus the macrocosm is an important aspect in discourse about the human body.

### **Unit 273**

Another unit that is concerned with physical human traits is unit 273, which questions the usefulness of hair on humans. The king asks: **(P)** Why did God create hair on humans? **(S1)** Sidrac answers: God created human hair to show the subtleties of his work. **(S2)** The body is a friend of nature ('die lichame es geselle der Eerden' Van Tol 1936 168 [15]) and **(S3)** humans should cover their **(T3)** shame in hair. **(R3)** For this purpose, (the hairs) will be his clothing. If he would be undressed of grace because of his gluttony, than (at least) he (the human) would be covered in hair. **(I3)** Because by the time Adam ate the apple, they (humans) had no shame of their body parts. But when they were excluded from paradise and undressed of grace, then they themselves felt naked and (they) covered themselves with their hair. Because all their body parts were hairy and it (the hair) reached even their ankles [and before that they were young and bald as children].

In this unit, king Bottus wants to know why humans have hair in the problem slot **(P)**. The answer to this question is threefold. First of all, according to **(S1)** God is so good at creating that he apparently is showing off the subtleties of the small things he can make. God created hair, basically just because he could. **(S2)**, however, is formulated a little more ambiguously. *The human body is a companion to earth* - this formulation is a little problematic. 'Geselle der eerden' may refer to the idea that the human body is made out of four elements, namely earth, water, wind and fire, and that earth is the most important one. Van Tol mentions in his 'Aantekeningen' that the French edition of this text gives a further explanation of the phrase. According to Van Tol, the French version says the following.

*et pour ce que le corps est comparaison de la terre et de sa nature, pour si lui montent le poil et les cheveux, car ainsi comme croissent les herbes en la terre, aussy croissant au corps les cheveux et le poil pour sa vesture.*<sup>29</sup>

Translation: And because the body is compared to the earth and its nature, thus are the skin and the hair, just like the herbs grow from the earth, as well as the hairs and the skin grow from the body to cover it.

According to the French version and Van Tol, the comparison of the body to earth is a little more specific than the idea of the four elements. The French Sidrac indicates that like herbs grown on the earth, hair grows on the skin in order to keep it dressed or covered. The idea to keep the human covered invites another subsequent interpretation. The Middle Dutch version mentions that humans should cover their shame in hair in **(S3)**, which follows straight after **(S2)**. **(T3)** explains the main topic of the solution slot: shame. This could refer to the need to cover human genitals, but it is unclear. **(R3)** specifies the idea of shame by saying that hair is necessary to do the covering. In **(I3)**, a reference is made from hairiness to Adam, who was naked as a baby when he hadn't eaten the apple yet. The text says that before Adam ate the apple, he had no shame and still had God's favor. However, when he was banned from Paradise, he lost the 'clothing' of God's favor and mercy ('clederen der gracien'), which means that now he felt naked, ashamed, and undeserving of God's grace. Hence the reason why he let himself be covered in hair: to hide the shame he felt when he was banned from Paradise.

There were three solutions to the problem slot in this unit. The first was the idea that God wanted to show his skills of creating, which connects the discourse about the human body to the topic of the creation. The next two solutions seem to be closely connected. The body is a friend to nature and should be covered in hair, possibly the same way in which herbs cover the earth, similarly to how Adam had to cover his shame. The third solution is about the idea that humans should cover their shame the same way Adam had to. These two solutions connect the discourse about humans to two different subjects, namely that of nature and the original sin.

### **Unit 319**

In unit 319, the king asks: **(P)** Who feels the pain when one dies,<sup>30</sup> the body or the soul? Sidrac answers: **(S)** Four things happen **(T)** when the soul separates from the body. **(R)** The

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<sup>29</sup> Van Tol (1936) p. 240, 'Aantekeningen'.

soul has fear and sorrow; the body has pain and regret. **(I1)** The fear of the soul is so big and so strong as no human could imagine, because she who knows herself as rogue, fears her rightful judge. **(I2)** The sorrow of the souls is also so big, even when a woman saw her children killed before her eyes, she would be less sorrowful. **(I3)** The pain of the body is so big and so strong that one couldn't imagine. Because if a human was beaten with hammers on an anvil and he couldn't die and he was beaten so small that he could go through a *ring* ('hantvingerlijn' Van Tol 186 [22]), that wouldn't be a tenth of the pain of the body when the soul departed him, [yes how soon it separated from him]<sup>31</sup>. **(I4)** The body also has regret because it turns to ash and becomes nothing. Because that a human would be so powerful that he would be lord of all the world and all the people, beasts, birds were under his command and did him honor and respect: and the human lost his richness and this advantage and this honor, and he became so poor and so low that he had nothing to eat for a day, thus wouldn't be a tenth of the regret that the body has when the soul separates from him.

The structure of this unit pretty straightforward: it has a problem slot which is answered by Sidrac with one solution with an embedded TRI-structure, which has three different illustrations. The problem slot **(P)** contains the question which feels the pain when a person dies, the body or the soul. The solution to the problem slot is that both the body and the soul feel the pain of dying in **(T)**, although not in the same way **(R)**. In the illustrations, the four feelings within the body and soul are explained through examples. In **(I1)** the death of the man is connected to the idea of God as a judge that is to be feared, because this illustration discusses the unimaginable fear of the soul, which dreads the final judgment. **(I2)** connects the sorrow of the soul to the pain of a mother when she witnesses the death of her children, but even that pain wouldn't be as hurtful as the pain of the soul when the human dies. **(I3)** illustrates the pain of the body through a comparison with torture, which would be less painful. Lastly, **(I4)** connects the pain of dying to losing the prominent position of the human within the world of living creatures, and the hurt of hunger after a day without food. All of these things are less painful than dying, according to Sidrac. Through the illustrations in this unit about dying, the aspects of the difference between the

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<sup>30</sup> 'van hier scheyt' *to die* (Van Tol 1936 186 [10] – [11]. According to Van Tol, the original was erased. It probably said 'henen keert', which literally means *to return hither* Van Tol 1936 186.

<sup>31</sup> This could be a reference to Jesus Christ, who Sidrac knows would only die for a short period of time before he will come back to life.

body and the soul, the final judgement, family and loss, torture, and the creation are added to the discourse about humans in the illustration slots.

### **Unit 384**

Unit 384 is one of the longer units in this analysis, and it is also the last one that will be analyzed in this section. The king asks: **(P)** Will the body of the true prophet always be in the earthly realm? Sidrac answers: **(S1)** His body will always be in the earthly realm in his holy house, with the power he will give to his *youngsters* (also: 'jongeren' means *students*, which seems more likely as a translation, because it refers to the apostles Van Tol 1936 208 [35]) and his *servants* ('ministren' Van Tol 1936 208 [36]). **(T1)** Because he shall be at the table with them and shall take bread and tell them: take and eat my flesh, this is my body and my blood. Know that all who shall take and receive this body respectfully (*worthily* 'weerdelijk' Van Tol 1936 209 [1]) of God, they shall remain. **(R1)** Because the servants (those who will serve a.k.a. the followers) who come next, shall sacrifice bread with the words they shall say and with the sign of the cross they shall make on it, so that the bread will become flesh and blood. **(I1)** Because no human body can be without blood. And when he will be dead on the cross and stabbed with a lance in his right side, so that the blood that pours out of it will be given to behold to he who will stab him, as will his holy body, that will be embellished in his house, give light and see the humans. **(S2)** Because in him will be humanity and godliness, flesh and blood; because without those he will not be allowed to be, because always the body that lives has blood in him. Those who will have power of keeping the body of our lord will be worthy of the shepherd. **(S3)** Because as soon as they will say the holy words on it and make the sign of the cross, so soon will his body and the blood of the true prophet be full of life. Even if it were (the case) that there were 1000 before him, or more or less, currently they will be his body of the true prophet the son of God. **(T3)** And the ones who won't embellish it, will themselves receive and (be) given the people and they will all be one and the one will not be better than the other. And the ones that will embellish the body of God, will lift it up high and show the people in sign that he is up in the heaven and that he is there now. And he who sees there, sees God, because people will think that the son of God came in earthly realm and became human and delivered him to death at the cross (and) to redeem us and because they can show themselves every day in forgiveness of her sins all those who receive judgement. **(R3)** But all those people won't escape anything otherwise

than those who will believe in him and will do his commandments. **(I3)** And those who don't want to convert themselves and don't believe with whole hearts do penance and won't escape him. The little children that don't know God because of their youth also won't escape him [because God because of her purity is always in him. The ones who won't believe in him also won't escape it]. But if they want to convert themselves and [do] penance, then they will escape him. [And those who receive differently than was foretold won't escape during] their damnation, because he returns in himself and does not stay there; and they were turned into the eternal fire.

This elaborate unit is about the body of Christ. Bottus asks if this body will always remain in the earthly realm in **(P)**, on which the answer of Sidrac is a whole-hearted yes in **(S1)**, because this slot indicates that the body will always be in the earthly realm, in that it will give its power to his followers. Sidrac then explains this through addressing the ritual of the breaking of bread and the sharing of wine at the last supper in **(T1)**. This topic is then restricted in **(R1)** by the idea that all this was done to instruct the followers who come next, and thus to keep alive the power of Christ. Then, in **(I1)**, Sidrac goes further into the idea that the blood of Christ is essential to this entire process mentioned in **(S2)**. Another thing that Sidrac wants to stress in this second solution slot, is that in Christ, there is both humanity and godliness, which implicitly makes him able to always stay in the earthly realm in some way, shape, or form. In **(S3)**, then, there is an elaboration on the care of the body once Christ will have died on the cross. The topic **(T3)** that is imbedded in this solution then focusses on those who *don't* believe, who will not be treated any differently at the final judgement according to **(R3)**, which states that God will judge everyone when their time comes, also those without the faith. This is then illustrated in **(I3)** by a few examples of people who don't believe but still won't be able to escape judgement.

Several things are discussed in this unit. In the first solution, the topic of the last supper and the ritual that will grow from it are added to the discussion about the body of Christ, which is human. This supposed humanity however is nuanced in the second solution, which indicates that Christ is human as well as godly. In the third solution it becomes clear that there is no final distinction between believers and non-believers at the final judgement. These three solutions imply that the last supper, godliness, and the final judgement are all aspects of the discourse about Christ, who is a specific kind of human, but human nonetheless.

## 4.2 Human Behavior

Humans aren't static creatures. They move, feed, think, and decide. This section contains the analysis of the units that had verbs in the concordances of the relevant lemmas. Units that belong to this group are units 88, 98, 186, 204, 217, 284, 391, and 411.

### **Unit 88**

King Bottus asks: **(P)** 'Hoe sal hem die mensche hebben onder die liede' *How shall humans behave themselves amongst others?* (Van Tol 1936 83 [35]). Sidrac answers: **(S1)** When a human is amongst the people **(T1)** he shall behave like (he is) sensible, civilized, and friendly (Lie 2006 110) with a clean face and pure manners, **(R1)** (he shall) speak sparsely and argue when it is time (for it) and he hears the argument of other people, and also when this (argument) doesn't please him. **(I1.1)** Because it is very sensible and polite to look at the one who speaks and to listen to what he has to say, because that pleases him. **(I1.2)** Also one should behave worthy, without being arrogant and to feel superior to the other people, even if one is of higher ancestry; because from such a powerful, noble and humble attire, one will be (or become) even more noble and better. **(I1.3)** And when someone has to say something, he has to think about what he has to say and how he can say it the most beautifully. He therefore should speak carefully with a friendly face and with a good heart; **(I1.4)** and he shouldn't overestimate himself, (but he also shouldn't) be too shy. Because it often happens when someone is right, (but) overestimates himself or is too shy, (that) he loses his argument and his right. **(S2)** Once he sees that to them (the others) his courtesy and help isn't reciprocated, then he as well shall behave sneaky as he sees them doing. Therefore one shall be good amongst the good, evil amongst the evil, cruel amongst the cruel, yes, when it is so that neither his virtue nor his wisdom is reciprocated .

The interpretation of this unit benefitted greatly from the translation by Lie (2006, 110). The problem slot in this unit is about the way one should behave amongst others. This problem has two solutions, of which only the first has an embedded TRI-structure. In **(S1)**, Sidrac explains how to have a reasonable discussion without vexing your opponent. In the topic slot **(T1)**, the ways how to do this are summarized. **(R1)** specifies these by explaining how to achieve them. The four illustrations are added as elaborations: you should look at your partner **(I1)** avoid being arrogant **(I2)**, speak beautifully **(I3)**, and again, don't be arrogant, but also don't be too shy **(I4)**. **(S2)** however warns against overdoing it: you should

remember not to let yourself get overruled by your opponent and hence you should adapt to them. At the end of the unit, the core of the business is summarized by the idea that you should adapt your own attitude in conversation to the attitude of your partner(s).

The desired behavior of humans in this unit is illustrated by several rhetorical attitudes, which add the aspect of rhetoric to the discourse about human behavior. This happens through the hypothesis that in a conversation with other humans, a speaker adapts himself to his audience, although he should always try to remain humble and pay attention to the beauty of the way he speaks.

### **Unit 98**

Unit 98 is about pride. King Bottus asks: **(P)** Is it good that a human displays himself with what he has done himself (his achievements) or is it better if he keeps silent? Sidrac answers the king: **(S)** The human shall not praise himself for that what he has done, because if he stays silent **(T)** he praises God and shames the devil. **(R)** Because when a human is pious and brave and he has glory in him and (if he) speaks (about) it himself or he puts himself forward because of it, like that he does what God hates very much and like that he acts as an insulting human and a *coward* ('bloede' Van Tol 1936 98 [22], or: *a bitter person*) and (someone who) shames and scorns people, even if they do not tell him (so). **(I1)** And his piousness one will prefer over cowardice, because the coward praises himself because of it, because they have no power in them and (they) hope to keep themselves pious and brave with their denial, and with that that they lure themselves and because of that they are considered insulting and less virtuous than they are. **(I2)** But the devout man who is brave and pious, he will stay silent and keep himself quiet of telling about his piousness; and then thus [he is] more praised and raised, because the people speak about him and then he has great honor of it. **(I3)** And the false and the evil who praises himself, he is not a human but he is an animal when the talks about his disgrace and his sin and his shame, like an animal that is never (too) ashamed of himself to poop in front of the other animals. She doesn't have any damage of it because she doesn't have the sense that she does her pooping on purpose; she can't do any sin because she is an animal without soul. But the one who praises himself of his sins that he has done and brags about himself in the sins, he shall be rightfully held above an animal and (logical would be: but) above no human.

The problem slot **(P)** in this unit contains the question if one should talk about his accomplishments, or rather remain silent. The solution **(S)** is to be silent. The topic slot reveals that this would please God and put shame to the devil in **(T)**. The restriction slot **(R)** specifies what this silent pious man should be like. This man is illustrated in three ways. The first, **(I1)**, explains that coward men are considered less virtuous, hence they are not pious. **(I2)** explains that devout men are talked about by others, which makes them receive more honor. Thus talking about yourself is bad for your virtue, but to subtly make others do it, gives you honor. **(I3)** then finishes the small list of illustrations by comparing a bragging man to an animal that poops in front of other animals. The arrogant man stands above the animal, but below the pious man in the hierarchy of piousness.

In the topic slot, desired behavior of humans is put into words by invoking the desire to please God and the dissuasion to please the devil. These words build a connection between discourse about human behavior and Christian guilt and piousness. To uphold one's reputation is also important, especially in **(I2)**, when the man is encouraged to leave the boasting about his accomplishments to other people. Individual behavior and behavior in groups are apparently connected. Lastly, in **(I3)**, the arrogant human is compared to a pooping animal. The fact that the arrogant human stands above this soulless animal in the hierarchy of pious creatures might be reassuring, but the comparison itself remains alarming. Hence, animals and the soul are aspects that are connected to discourse about bad human behavior.

### ***Unit 186***

Unit number 186 starts as follows: The king asks: **(P)** Does the merciful God forgive all the sins that the human commits? Sidrac answers: **(S)** All the drops of the sea and all the land of the earth and all the leaves of the trees and all the stars of the sky and all the hairs of animals and of the people and (if) all were counted with each other, still they were not one tenth of one tenth of the mercy of God for all those who seek it and all those who deserve it. **(I1)** Even if a human had killed his father, his mother, and his child, and 1000 humans more, and if all had laid with him, and had he converted and he changed his mind about all misdeeds with good heart and he would keep himself further (away) from doing evil, God would forgive him everything and would hold him in front of him. **(I2)** And the one who doesn't want to convert himself to God, and no human heart could imagine the great pain

he will have in the other world. And in the time that the people will be of God's son, (those) who exclude him then want to be liberated of their sins, they will flee of their sins with sorrow of the hearts and with purer conscience, and (they) will hope for mercy of those who are upholding the law and govern, and (they) will promise God that they will never return to sin. And those who will die in this way, will be sure of the life that will last forever. Because their sins will be washed off like the water washes and cleans the foot.

The problem slot that starts off this unit, is about the question **(P)** if the merciful God forgives all sins that humans commit. The answer **(S)** is a wholehearted, yet implicit, yes. It draws an elaborate comparison that shows how merciful God is. Both the topic and the restriction slot are implicit, but there are two illustrations that give more explanation to the solution, which is why I have added them without a **(T)** and **(R)**. **(I1)** Gives an example of a man who killed a lot of people, and is still forgiven by God if he converts, shows remorse and decides to never do these things again. **(I2)** explains that if a person converts himself to God, eternal life awaits him. His sins will be washed away like dirt from a foot.

The first illustration slot of this unit implies that the aspect of remorse is an inherent part of the way in which humans will be treated in the afterlife, which makes this aspect a part of the discourse about humans. In the second illustration, the comparison of the clean foot to the sinless soul adds both the soul and the human body to the discourse about humans.

### **Unit 204**

Unit 204 is about a more emotional matter. The king asks: **(P)** Where does most of the hatred in the world come from? Sidrac answers the king: **(S)** Most of the hate in the world comes from religion, of the deeds of lords, and of women. **(I1)** When a human upholds a religion, even if this law is bad, and another disapproves of it, know that the human will become very angry because of him; and he cherishes great hatred to him who blasphemies against his God and speaks ill of him, whom he loves above all that is, who is his God. **(I2)** The other is the fact of rule that the human takes for himself or wants to take or wants. That one will hate very much and thereof comes great envy. **(I3)** The third way is of women or of other things one loves, and that someone else wants to take and remove of him, such a person one hates and he (that person) envies certainly a lot; of these things and many other things comes hatred.

The interpretation of this unit benefitted greatly from the translation by Lie (2006, 114). The problem slot is about where the hate of the world comes from. Sidrac answers that it comes from three things – religion, power, and women – and then all three are illustrated in **(I1)**, **(I2)** and **(I3)**. In this unit, the human discourse involves the aspects of gender, power, and religion in the illustration slots through that they are examples of hatred. However, despite the idea that hatred is a human sentiment, it is difficult to connect these aspects to the discourse about humans.

### **Unit 217**

Unit 217 contains behavioral codes for friendship. The king asks: **(P)** Should the human reveal his secrets to his friend? Sidrac answers: **(S1)** In a way, the human shall uncover his secrecy to his friend, that is to know to God who knows it already; that's to understand as those who will have God's persistence (so: those who will persist in believing in God) in the earthly realm after the arrival of the true prophet. **(S2)** But in other ways you shouldn't reveal your secrets; and if you do uncover them to your friend, during adventures your friend will *tell them to* (literally *tell them on 'saelt voert seggen'* Van Tol [22]) his friend who he loves. And there are several humans who have some more friends than you and that friend will tell it to his other friend and of the one the other will know thus a great deal of people; and thus you can be shamed and honored all the time. **(S3)** And for this reason it is not good that you reveal your secrets to someone; because as long as you keep your secrets closed in your heart then you are their lord; and as soon as you have uncovered her (your secret), you are her servant and you yourself have left your freedom. And like this (someone) can discover your secrecy who is more evil, less than you are. And if he did something wrong to you and told, you wouldn't dare to resist or speak up against it because of the fear that you would have of him who would mention your secrecy. **(S4)** And when you couldn't resist yourself and you would always tell about your secrecy, and your heart is so full of your foolishness that you always have to say it, then go away from the people, somewhere you are alone and say them to yourself, again and again, as if you would tell them to other humans, and your heart will cool down for you and stop swelling. **(S5)** And if it is necessary and you need advice about your secrecy, thus think well who are the ones whom you tell, so that they are such men that they afterwards won't blame you, if he would be angry with you.

The problem slot **(P)** in this unit contains the question if you should tell your secrets to your friend. Sidrac offers five solutions. The first solutions **(S1)** indicates that you will have to tell only one of your friends about your secrets, and he already knows. God, who is the ultimate judge, apparently can also be considered a friend. The second solution **(S2)** contains a profound *no, don't tell your secrets to anyone*, because your friends will tell their friends and on and on and on. The third solution **(S3)** emphasizes that you should keep your secrets close to your heart, or bad people could take advantage of you. The fourth solution **(S4)** stresses that if you really can't resist to tell anyone, you should tell your secret only when you do not have a conversation partner, just to get it out of your system. And if you *really* can't resist, there is always option five in **(S5)**, which is to only tell your secrets to a friend you have carefully chosen for their trustworthiness, so someone who won't tell it to other people, even when he's angry at you.

The emphasis in friends in this unit is what strikes the most. The telling of secrets itself is almost secretive itself, because only God, the keeper of secrets, and maybe a very best friend are involved. Apart from the aspect of friendship, the factor of keeping one's reputation is part of the discourse about humans in this unit.

#### **Unit 284**

Unit 284 is about the devil. The king asks: **(P)** Does the devil know everything that one does? Sidrac answers: **(S)** In all places [of the earthly realm] are devils [amongst us] who have beneath them many devils who are submissive to them, (devils beneath them) who don't do anything else than fool the souls. **(T)** And all the evil that the human does, they tell their master; **(R)** and if it happens that one of them is conquered by some good human thus they take him (the devil) and throw him in the abyss of the hell, in that way he cannot hurt any humans there, but in his place then another is sent out. **(I)** Like Adam was thrown out of the paradise when he was conquered by the devil, like that the devil was doomed by his master whom he is beneath, when he was conquered by the human.

The problem slot **(P)** in this unit consists of the question if devils know about everything that humans do. The answer is *yes*, because every devil reports back to his superior devil according to the topic slot **(T)**. The restriction slot **(R)** then points out that it is

possible for humans to conquer a devil. If that happens, this submissive devil will then be thrown into hell like Adam was thrown out of paradise according to **(I)**.

In the restriction slot, human behavior is given the ability to conquer submissive devils. This idea involves the aspect of choice into the discourse about humans and devils. In the illustration slot, the comparison of the subverted devil to Adam indicated that upper devils in a way want to play God, because they act similarly when they punish those who disappoint them. This comparison involves the biblical story of Adam and Eve in the discourse about humans and their behavior.<sup>32</sup>

### **Unit 391**

The king asks: **(P)** Which one is greater (literally: *more*), the mercy of God or his wrath?

Sidrac answers the king: **(S)** The mercy of God is so big that no human heart could imagine it, because she is more than the drops of the sea and all of the sand on the earth and all the hair of humans and of animals that were here or will be here. And all these together are still more than one could imagine, still the mercy of God is even more for those who deserved it; because those who need his mercy have to, be it short or long, always come to their eternal glory. But all the things that were mentioned before must be taken into (account), and [his mercy may never] take [more]. And all who want his mercy and do his will , he has his mercy without end. But the evil that the human does, doesn't come from God, because in God is nothing but mercy and compassion. But the evil that the human does will retaliate on he who does it.

The problem slot **(P)** of this unit contains the question about which one is bigger: God's mercy or his wrath. The solution in **(S)** is simple: his mercy is bigger. The comparisons in the first few lines illustrate how big this mercy actually is, which is rather unimaginable. In something that reminds mostly of a side note, Sidrac also adds that all people who seek God's mercy will be granted it, but still, what goes around comes around, so evil things will find their way back to them. There is no clear structure in this unit, which is why I have only indicated the presence of one solution slot in Sidrac's answer. However, in this one slot, the comparisons ensure that the aspects of nature are once again added to the discourse about humans, because these elements are compared to mercy, and all humans want mercy. Sinful

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<sup>32</sup> Implicitly, one could also claim that the story about Lucifer adds weight to this aspect of human discourse as well, because he as well as Adam was punished by God through banishment. However, Lucifer is not an explicit part of the discourse in this unit. It is too implicit to turn up in this analysis.

behavior is attributed not to God, but to humans themselves, which indicates that mercy still has to be earned despite that God has so much of it. Hence, this solitary solution slot contains several aspects of discourse about humans, which are human nature and the sinfulness of human behavior.

### **Unit 411**

The king asks: **(P)** Who will be the ones who will be kept and who will be lost? Sidrac answers the king: **(S1)** The ones who will have kept God's commandments, and the ones who will have told about the arrival of God's son, [and his apostles] and those who won't do anything against the ten commandments of the law that God will send (with) a human, those will be kept. **(S2)** And **(T)** those who don't do this and **(R)** with their evil works repress God and won't keep his commandments, will be damned and to them God's son will say: Separate from me who (I) have heard (to be) evil. **(I)** Because the good they will find in the truth, the ones who don't want to do good and who don't want to believe her words and her works, they will experience God's son and his wrath. And a fire will come and devour them and burn them all. And he (God) will submit all things peacefully and perfectly and give all right judgement on those (who are) evil. And by that he (the sinner) will think that he is honored and that he has a terrible view because the damnation goes over him because every (person) will damn his conscience. And all will be clear and public of the cross of God's son, because just like the sun has been seen by all humans, like that will be seen and known the conscience of all humans.

The problem slot in this unit is about who will be kept and who will be lost, which is probably referring to judgement day. Sidrac answers in referral to the arrival of Christ on earth that those who will believe in him, will be kept in heaven **(S1)**. Those who neglect to do so will perish according to **(S2)**. This is then illustrated with a story on how God will judge these people in an illustration slot. In this unit, God and Christ seem to be the same person, because their roles are superfluous. By illustrating judgement with the story of Christ and the idea that non-believers have to perish, this unit inserts the aspects of judgement and heathenism to the discourse about humans.

### **4.3 The Creation of Humans**

Another important theme that often comes up is the creation. Units that are part of this group are units 10, 17, 28, 45, 55, 109, and 168.

## Unit 10

In unit 10 the king asks: **(P)** ‘Maecte God den mensche met sinen handen?’ *Did God make the human with his hands?* Sidrac answers: **(S1)** He made the human only with one *promise* (or: *order* ‘*behete*’), **(T)** by which we may understand that he, the human, is a *despicable* (or: *vile, contemptible*, ‘*onweert*’ Van Tol 1936 43 [12]) thing, **(R)** in order to disgrace the devil thus God made humans of despicable thing(s), **(I)** so that he (the devil) has shame of that thing (which) is so despicable (that it) will climb in the honor out of which it fell with its *haughtiness* (or: *pride*, ‘*hoverden*’ Van Tol 1936 43 [11]). **(S2)** He (God) placed names of four parts of the world: Sanaaf, Carboam, Grunaf torcois, Samef, so that five languages will fill the four parts of the world. **(S3)** Nevertheless the human resembles our lord in his ways: **(I1)** because just like our lord is above all things in the heaven, thus he has made the humans<sup>33</sup> above all that is on earth. **(I2)** And because he knew that the humans would fall, he made all bodily things he would have to. **(I3)** Also, he made flies, ants and other *worms* (also more generally: *insects*, ‘*wormekine*’ Van Tol 1936 43 [23]) because of the haughtiness of humans, because if they (the insects) bite the humans, then he (the human) shall think he is made from vile materials, that he cannot stop damage from small things. The ants and the spiders they work in their labor. They give us the example that we should work towards, so that we thus understand well that God created everything for our *needs* (or: *advantage*, ‘*behoef*’ Van Tol 1936 43 [29]). That would be a big joy, because the flowers have beauty, the herbs have medicine, the fruit of the earth feeds us, the wind, the sun, and the moon have their task and meaning in all things that are good and all are made because of the humans; also they are made to praise God and his glory.

The problem slot **(P)** of this unit asks about the way in which humans are made. The information in this unit seems to be assembled rather messily. From **(S1)**, it is possible to conclude that the answer to **(P)** is *no, God did not create humans with his hands, but only with an order*. The imbedded TRI-structure then goes further into the idea that this promise is part of the despicableness of humans, which can otherwise be described as an insult to the devil. What **(S2)** has to do with this, remains unclear, because it only refers to places in the world and not to what they have to do with the creation of humans, except that they have their own languages. **(S3)** goes further into the resemblances between humans and God, and that God created many things to show the humans how they should behave. The

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<sup>33</sup> Interesting spelling: ‘*mensce*’ Van Tol 1636 43 [20].

first illustration refers to the fact that God is great. The second indicates that God knew what was going to happen to humans, meaning that they would fall from grace. The exemplary task of ants in **(I3)** has seemingly not much to do with *how* God created humans. Rather, it seems that the human discourse touched upon by the problem slot, steers into the direction of shame and the discourse about fallen angels indirectly with also the notion of a coherent creation. The question of *how* is answered by a *because*, which is remarkable. The human discourse is hence referred to by the aspects of falling from grace, insects, and God's greatness.

### **Unit 17**

To discuss unit 17, it might be helpful to take note that unit 16 was about the nature of Christ and how he was born from a virgin. Units 11 until 15, however, are about Adam. In unit 17, subsequently, the king asks: 'Waer omme sal hy (Christ / God) willen gheboren sijn van ere maget na dien datti van hem selven gheboren es?' (Van Tol 1936 47 [16]) or: **(P)** *Why will he want to be born from a virgin after he is born from (God) himself?* Sidrac answers: **(S)** Because of four reasons he made the humans as such. **(S1)** The first reason is this: When Adam was born, he had neither a father nor a mother besides God and then soon God (or: Jesus) will be born from the virgin, like this he will be a son of the father and the holy ghost and he himself will be human. **(S2)** The other way is because of his (God's) power and because he wanted it like this. Also because of other ways, **(S3)** because he wanted to annoy the devil with the woman, and to liberate humans of his (the devil's) ability and the commandments of the world, and **(S4)** then God will behold those who love him most and keep his commandment and worship his praised body. **(T4)** Of this lineage will [have] come the virgin and (she) will be untouched and chaste without sin and (she will) bloom of all glory and **(R4)** (she) will receive the keeper of the entire world without flaw and (she will) maintain (him) in her body; **(I4)** and the *gate* (in this case: *the gate of nature or the vagina* 'porte' Van Tol 1936 47 [31]) will be closed when the sunshine comes in through the glass without hurting (it). And there he will take on human nature and in there (he will) live nine months to fulfill the nine numbers of angels of the people that will be born in this world; and he shall know everything like God when he will be born and in his power he can do everything, but he will want to keep inside him everything.

The structure of this unit is somewhat unclear. The problem slot **(P)**, which is about why Jesus was born from a virgin, seems not to be answered through the solution slot **(S)**. **(S1)** Is about Adam, who had no parents, but was also a creation of God similarly to Jesus. **(S2)** Shortly elaborates on the idea that God does things the way he does them, because this is how he wants and is able to do them. The third part of the solution **(S3)** points at a desire to annoy the devil. And then, in **(S4)**, this long build up finally gets a climax through the idea that Jesus will be born from a virgin. The question *how* rather than *why* (which was in the problem slot) is answered. The then imbedded TRI-structure elaborates on how it is possible that Maria received Christ whilst remaining a virgin, which is through her chastity in **(T)**, the fact that she will receive Christ in **(R)**, and that she will be pregnant without having sex in **(I)**.

The central issue here is why Christ will be born from a virgin rather than just by himself, since that would be well within the power of God. By explaining how this will happen rather than why, Sidrac allows the discussion of humans in general rather than just the humanity of Christ in this unit. Humans are implicitly present as he explains how Christ differs from them. In this way, the birth of Christ becomes a part of the discourse about humans. Mary operates as an example for women, which makes her virginity an aspect of human piety. Also the idea that Adam had no parents and Christ will have them, inserts the aspect of the original sin in the discourse about humans.

### **Unit 28**

Unit 28 is about the creation. The king asks: **(P)** 'Hoe salmen gheweten dat God maecte den menschen na sine ghelikenesse?' *How should one know that God made the human in his own likeness?* Sidrac answers: **(S1)** We find described in the book of Moses, God's loyal vassal: When God wanted to make humanity, he said: We shall make a human with our likeness, and that word was spoken after the godliness and after the holy ghost. And because of these words we thus know well that God made the humans in his likeness, and that he is one God in three personae. And he may well have said: We shall make a man, without saying anything more. And it is to be understood that the human is not the father, not the son, nor the holy ghost, **(S2)** nor God, (who) didn't come himself to redeem some human of the power of the enemy, that's why he said: We will make the humans. Because of that we will know that he made us after his likeness and has given us the conscience and

knowledge of the distinction between good and evil, that we are the most excellent thing on the earth.

The answer to the problem slot in this case could be quite simple: we know that God created humans in his likeness, because it is written, according to **(S1)**. This adds the aspect of the written truth to the discourse about the creation of humans. In **(S2)**, it becomes clear that humans have to redeem themselves, because like God, they know the difference between good and evil, which is why they will have the possibility to repent. This final solution highlights the aspect of God's likeness within the discourse about humans.

### **Unit 55**

Unit 55 starts with: The king asks: **(P)** Why didn't God allow humans after they ate once, that they could abstain for a week? Sidrac answers: **(S)** The hunger is one of the pains due to the sin that Adam did. **(T)** Because humans were made so that when they ate, they would always be without the pain of hunger. **(R)** But after he had fallen, he couldn't keep what he had lost and that is why God allowed **(I)** hunger, cold, and thirst and other things, so that humans could with their pain conquer and recover what they had lost with disobedience.<sup>34</sup>

The problem slot in this unit is about the need to feed. This unit points out that the human need for nutrition is caused by Adam's sin in **(S)**. Apparently, there is a biblical explanation for the fact that even the kings of the creation have bodily needs and weaknesses. In **(T)**, this idea is specified by saying that originally, humans didn't go hungry. According to **(R)**, it was only after they had fallen from grace that hunger was felt, which is illustrated by the addition of other sorrows such as cold and thirst in **(I)**. Through the illustration of human hunger with Adam, the aspect of the original sin is inserted in the discourse about humans.<sup>35</sup>

### **Unit 109**

The king asks: **(P)** Why didn't God create the human so that so he couldn't have done any sin? Sidrac answers: **(S)** If God had made the human so that he couldn't have done any sin, thus the human couldn't deserve any good, because the good deed would have returned back to God whom it came from. **(T)** Because even when the human had deserved the glory

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<sup>34</sup> MNL 'vercoevereren' to recover or to regain Van Tol 1936 64 [9].

<sup>35</sup> On a side note: because humans as well as animals need to feed regularly, the fall of Adam could be considered as a 'degradation' of humans, which made them move away from God and closer to animals than before Adam fell.

of our lord, he would only have done this because of God, who made him of the nature that he could do well without his (God's) interference. **(R)** Know that he wouldn't have deserved any praise, because the good he then would have done wouldn't have come from his will, but because God always wanted him to deserve God's glory, and because he wouldn't be able to deserve it with his own accomplishments, he also wouldn't have shamed the devil. **(I)** Because the human has an own will, to do good and evil and with his good deed he deserves the reward of glory, of which the devil has great shame, that such a weak thing as a human creature deserves with his will the eternal glory which he has been thrown out of because of his pride of which he was full, and that he did his will against his creator; and also because of that the human did the evil and didn't do the good when he wanted, that he will be judged with the evil that he did because he wanted it himself. And that he then will have the value of one or the other like he deserves, because all will be because he wanted it himself.

The problem slot in this unit is about the reason why God didn't create humans without the urge to do sinful things. In **(S)**, Sidrac answers this question by explaining that if humans would be naturally good, all the good deeds they would do would be attributed to God, and not themselves. This would not make the humans deserving of God's glory. But if humans would have their own will to do either good or bad as is specified in **(T)**, they could actually deserve the glory God would bestow on them in **(R)**. This idea is then illustrated in **(I)** with the notion that in the end, those who do good because of their own will, will deserve eternal glory when they die. This aspect of choice and the deserving of grace are thus added to the discourse about humans through the explanation of why humans aren't naturally without sin.

### ***Unit 168***

The king asks: **(P)** How many kinds of people are there (to whom) one should pay tribute and honor in the world? Sidrac answers: **(S1)** First of all the human should honor and worship his creator who made you and will undo you if it is his will. **(S2)** After that one should honor their wife who God gave to him; like God gave a friend to Adam and ordered him that they would be one, like every man will (be) with his wife. **(S3)** After that every human should honor his father and his mother above all things and he will help them and stand by them truthfully. **(S4)** After that the human should honor his lord whom he owes loyalty and attribute all things that could happen to him. **(S5)** And after that the human shall [honor] his

friends and those who are good to him, his stomach and his brothers, sisters, children and all the people if he can do it right and everyone one shall honor and love.

The solution to the problem slot **(P)** on how many kinds of people there are to whom you should pay tribute, has five parts. First of all you should honor God **(S1)**, than your wife **(S2)**, then you parents **(S3)**, then your lord **(S4)**, and **(S5)** then the rest of the people you hold dear. By giving the example of Adam and the way he loved Eve because she was given to him by God, adds the aspect of the story of Adam and Eve to the discourse about humans. Apart from that, the fact that there is a hierarchy in those one should love, inserts the aspects of love, obedience, and even guilt to one's lord to the discourse.

#### **4.4 Humans and Other Creatures**

The title of this section used to be 'Humans and Other Living Creatures'. However, because there had been a debate even in the Middle Ages whether angels are really alive, I have chosen to change it into what it is now. Angels, as will become clear, are a part of the spectrum of creatures of God, in which also humans play their part. Units that discuss creatures other than humans in their concordances, but still contained enough relevant lemmas are units 16, 76, and 283.

##### **Unit 16**

Unit 16 says: **(P)** Why will God send a human and not an angel to die for him? Sidrac answers: **(S)** (If) the angel had bought back (*to buy back* 'weder ghecocht' Van Tol 1936 47 [1]) and redeemed the humans, then the humans would have been their own vassal, and that should not be, because the human is similar to the angel. **(T)** Because of that, God did not want it that way, because the angel is refined and weak in his nature, and if he would have made a human out of this and sent him to liberate himself, then the power of the angel would have diminished. **(R)** And because neither the angel nor the human could redeem the humans, nor was allowed to do enough for that, **(I1)** God's son will take flesh in a virgin in two ways: the one way is that he will be God and will conquer the devil, like the devil conquered the humans, and he (God) shall have power above all things, like the one who will be rightfully God and he will open all their eyes and their hearts (of those) who will be his friends. **(I2)** The other way is that he will be really human and will do everything that truthful humans would do, but without any sin.

The problem slot **(P)** in this unit is about the reason why Christ is human and not an angel. The solution to this problem in **(S)**, is that both an angel and a human on their own would be incapable to complete the redemption of the humans. Both in the topic slot **(T)** and in the restriction slot **(R)**, this idea is clarified by the idea that angels have other powers, which would have diminished if they had to put them in service of the redemption on humans. Then there are two illustration slots to this idea: **(I1)** first that Jesus will come from a virgin so that he can be divine, and second in **(I2)** that he will also be human at the same time. The ideas that an angel wouldn't be the right kind of saviour and the idea that someone who is both divine and human will be, make for the answer of this problem slot. Hence the aspects of angels and divinity are prominent in the discourse about humans in this unit. It turns out that only a creature that is both divine and human is able to steer humans towards their own redemption.

### **Unit 76**

Unit 76 'Die coninc vraecht: **(P)** Die meer eet ende drinct dan hy behoeft, doeti sonde ofte quaet?' *The king asks: He who eats and drinks more than he needs, does he do sin or evil?* (Van Tol 1936 76 [19]) Sidrac answers: **(S)** Those who eat and drink more than they need, they do great evil to their bodies and great sin to their souls and damage also to the food, of which another might live who doesn't have it, and *he is a glutton and more evil than an animal and they act against God's order.* ('[...]dat es een glot ende quader dan ene beeste endie doen iegen dordinancie ons heren.' Van Tol 1936 76 [24]-[25]) **(T)** Because God has ordained that humans shall eat as much as they need, and that he (the humans) will pass it on and use it to make those who need it happy. **(R)** In this way, they shall eat and drink once or twice a day, and those who do it differently act very wrong and painfully. **(I)** And he is called a glutton and lives in the way of animals, which have no understanding as humans do. When animals are satisfied, they rest until they get hungry (again). By right nature, a human shall do better than an animal without understanding.

The problem slot **(P)** of this unit is about the question if it is bad to eat too much. The answer is a clear yes. The topic slot **(T)** explains that God wanted everyone to eat enough and share what they don't need. The restriction slot **(R)** then continues by explaining that thus, we should all eat once or twice a day. This idea adds the aspect of the feeding habits of humans to the discourse about human virtues such as sharing, and charity. Then, the aspect

of animals is added to the discourse about humans through a comparison in **(I)**. Humans who eat too much, act like animals, which is wrong behavior for humans. At the point where Sidrac repeats himself (Van Tol 1936 76 [31]), he says that the humans in question live the way animals without do. In the first part of the solution slot **(S)**, the phrase ‘dat es een glot ende quader dan ene beeste’ (Van Tol 1936 76 [24]-[25]) is used. This sentence also contains a comparison. It says that a voracious human is a ‘glot’ (which is basically a noun for voracious). Thus the aspects of gluttony, charity, and animals go hand in hand when they are part of the discourse about humans.

### **Unit 283**

Unit 283 starts with: The king asks: **(P)** How do the angels reveal themselves to the humans? Sidrac answers: **(S)** If the angels reveal themselves to humans then they **(T)** take a body of the air with the likeliness of a human, **(R)** because the human cannot see spiritual things as long as he is physical; and because of that they (the angels) take a body from the air because otherwise they cannot be seen by the human. **(I1)** Because no one is so good nor so bad in the world, who was so ill or has such a big sorrow or had taken on such shame, as soon as they would see an angel, he would forget all his sorrow and would be happier and lighter than all the humans of the world; **(I2)** and he would get the impression that he was in the glory of seeing God himself and his angels. Rightly we should believe in God and keep his commandments through which we can come in the company of the angels and see [them] face to face after our own will and desire.

The problem slot **(P)** of this unit is about the way in which angels can show themselves to humans. In the solution **(S)**, Sidrac says that when this will happen, in **(T)** they will take their bodies from the air, in **(R)** because humans are not allowed to see spiritual things as long as they themselves are physical, which basically means alive. In the two following illustrations **(I1)** and **(I2)**, the joy is explained of seeing an angel and the idea that their presence reminds humans of God, despite that the angels have familiar faces. This unit specifies the aspect of the balance of the spiritual (the angel in its natural form) and the physical (the angel when it shows itself to humans) in a context of human visual experiences. However, it says very little about humans themselves, which makes it hard to analyze any aspects that are explicitly part of the discourse about humans.

## 4.5 The Human Soul

Some units have references to the soul in the concordances of their relevant lemmas. Units that are selected for this section because they refer to the human soul are units 45, 187, and 189.

### *Unit 45*

The king asks: **(P)** What made God the souls (do) in the bodies on this earth? Sidrac answers: **(S)** God has given to every soul a kingdom to tend to and to steer, and when he (the soul) keeps and governs that kingdom well, he will be crowned and put in the kingly chair with big joy and happiness for God and God will tell him: My friend, come in my company and receive the crown of the kingdom that I have given you to rule. Because you have protected it well and reliably and best kept it precious, so wear this crown, because it is well spent on you. **(T)** That kingdom is the body [and the good things this body does] in this world, it is the good guardianship and the good faith that the human has in his creator when he holds his (the creator's) commandments well. Thus what the soul wants is the body depending on its power, because the soul is the king and the body the kingdom. **(R)** And the commandments that the good king commands in his kingdom, those are the good works that God has given. And when that he (the soul) does not steer his kingdom well, like that he will be delivered to the evil fire with shame. And therefore we will neglect the evil works of the devil and will do the commandments that were commanded by God. **(I1)** He had a good friend (which is God) who did many good things for him, and that friend asked that he would do a big deed and deal with it, who had done so many good things for him. **(I2)** Like that it is rightful that we believe in our lord and in our creator and that we do what he commands us. Because he has given us the rule over all things of the earth and he commands us no work or pain, but that we believe and worship him and that we do well because of our love for him. **(I3)** Know that those who come after us and those who will come after him, who will be named the people of God's son the true prophet, him he will command even more than us or those who will come before him; because he will command him to keep more than a few peoples [that were before him].

The problem slot **(P)** of this unit starts with the question what the soul has to do in the body. In the solution slot **(S)**, Sidrac compares the soul in the body to a king in a kingdom, which adds the aspect of the royal role of the soul to the discourse about humans. This king, as it turns out in the topic slot **(T)**, is there to obey the commandments of God, and

also **(R)** not to obey the devil. This slot makes the soul the driving force behind human action. These ideas are then illustrated in **(I1)**, which is about the friendship the human should have with God, and **(I2)**, which points out that everything the people at the time of Christ will do, will have an effect on what happens to his followers. These final two slots insert the aspect of guilt after bad behavior and the idea that God is friendly to those who please him to the discourse about humans.

### **Unit 187**

In unit 187, the king asks: **(P)** Why does the human work in this world? Sidrac answers: Because of two causes: **(S1)** the one to beware the body of that what is his *need* ('nootdorft' Van Tol 1936 130 [13]), **(S2)** the other because the body can have *strength and power* ('cracht ende macht' Van Tol 1936 130 [14]) to serve his creator because of the soul. **(T)** Because the soul can't have **(R)** anything good that comes from the merit of his body. **(I1)** Because of this the wise, who want to live well, work. The fools who live uselessly and work because of her sustenance and to keep after her death her kids and her friends, know that they work *plentiful* ('riselijc' = 'rikelijc' Van Tol 1936 130 [19]), because that can't be without sin. **(I2)** Because one shall do as the ant that works in the summer to sustain her body in the winter. Like this one shall work in this world to [sustain the body and] help the souls with charities and with *caritas* that one shall do to the poor and to those to whom it is lacking; and *depending on his power* ('na sine macht' Van Tol 1936 130 [24]-[25]) (he shall) also help *his kin* ('de sinen' literally: *his* plural Van Tol 1936 130 [25]), if they need it. **(I3)** One shall not say: I will leave these goods to my children. If these children are good and of good will, they will obtain like you did. And if you have something with which (you can) help the souls then help them, that will be [much] better for you than when it stays in your stomach. The *caritas* that you do of the heart with your hands will be better for you than 100 children would do because of you. Because when you do a *caritas* in your life that you give to God for your soul and it is by hand offered to God just as soon as it has been received by the arm. **(I4)** And there is nothing so small that one cares about God and is offered as soon to God with great praise and with honor. *And that which you will leave behind, you do not want to leave because you do not know what else to do with it, you cannot keep it for yourself but you have to leave it here.* ('Ende dattu laets na dy, dat en doestu willens niet dune weetster anders wat toe doen, du en connes voer dy niet ghevoren maer du moets hier laten.' Van Tol 1936

130 [33]-[35]) When you do any good deed, you gain of it two things: the one is that you know that you because of the small charity will find the great good in the other world, the other is the greater good and the big prayer that were done for God because of the charity for you. **(I5)** And because of that nobody will sacrifice his soul because of children, because of the stomach, nor because of his own body. Because if the human in this world knew what loss is (what is the loss in this world) of the soul, he would (only) want to sacrifice her for 900 children, if he had them and if it could be. A human can sacrifice his body for his friend and for his children and for his loyalty, and those who do this, do it to redeem and protect their soul. Because the body redeems the soul, and that soul is much more noble than the body. The soul is the most noble thing that is besides God, because of that one shall not sacrifice the soul unless because of something better and worthier than she is. And because then she is so noble and so good, like that one shall protect and wait against the body and against all things that may be. When the deluge came in the world then flowed all the *people* ('lieden' Van Tol 1936 131 [17]) here and there and when the water becomes big, the put their children on their head so that they wouldn't drown; and when the water washed so far that it came to her throat then they took her children, that they had put on their head before that because of the fear of death, and lead them under their feet to heighten them up above water. When the human thus fear the loss of the body that is not, then one shall fear more the loss of the soul that is better than all the world.

At first glance, I thought this unit was about the human body. The further I read on, however, it became clear that it belongs in this section. When it comes to the soul, this unit is extremely elaborate, even though the problem slot **(P)** addresses the body. In **(S1)**, it is made clear that the human works, to keep his body from taking over and going rogue. The second solution **(S2)** seems to be the most important, because it gets a lot of elaboration. It has an imbedded TRI-structure, which clarifies the reason why wise men work in **(I1)**. Then, it continues with a comparison of the human work ethic to that of the ant in **(I2)**. **(I3)** goes on with the warning against giving everything you earned to one's children. Rather, one should use what he has earned for the benefit of souls which need charity. **(I4)** then elaborates on good deeds to benefit the soul and **(I5)** ends with the ignorance of humans, who if they only knew how important the benefit of their souls is, would work very hard to maintain this.

In this unit, the human is stimulated to work hard for the benefit of his soul, and to give charity to other souls when he doesn't need anything for himself anymore. The soul is something specifically human, which makes it an exceptional motivational factor. Hard work for the benefit of the soul, charity, the difference between the soul and the body, unnecessary testaments, and human ignorance are all aspects that in this unit are added to the discourse about humans.

### **Unit 189**

Unit 189 starts with Bottus' question: **(P)** Does the good and the evil that the human does in this world come from God or from himself? Sidrac answers: **(S1)** Truthfully I tell you that God would never devise evil, but all grace and glory poured out of him; nor could the heart of humans devise such goodness as is in him (God). Because he created the heaven and the earth and the sea, the sun and the moon and the stars and all things that are and he did all of this out of *caritas* and kindness. And he did never do anything evil and he wants the human only to do good, so that he (the human) because of this good can have his (God's) glory and because of the evil, (he, the human, can have) pain of hell. **(S2)** And if God had made human thus that he couldn't have done any sin, then he would've done as he wanted, but then he would have done injustice to the devil, who he repelled from heaven because of a thought; and thus the human hadn't deserved glory because of himself. Because the good that he had done had not come from him but of God and thus the good returned to God whom it came from. **(S3)** But the human will do well (to do) his own thinking and his own will and hate the evil, because God had given the human [the will] to confess one thing and another so that he with his work and his own will can win the glory in heaven and be amongst the angels. Because the angels are spirits alone, but the human will be body and spirit. The body feels wealth and happiness and also the grief of the world and other bodily things. The human will be pious and skillful to win the glory that will last forever with this work in the city where one will have rest and happiness, where that he will be worthy of the benefits of the eternal glory; because the body will work for the rest of the soul. **(T)** And because of that it lets evil and does (evil) that wants good with itself, (then) it is not without reason that he has the glory of God, because he deserves it. **(R)** And if it were that the soul went to heaven with sin, then the body would be more honorable and superior to the soul. **(I)** And if the body would go to heaven with the soul and he had had the pleasures of the

world, that wouldn't be a reason. And had God also made it like that that the soul would always have been in the glory and the body had always stayed on earth, then there wouldn't have been a need to the earthly realm was made of earth, but then he would've only made the soul and put it in heaven and she then [would have been an angel and not the world] had been. **(S4)** Because the world wasn't made for any other reason than the will of the soul, God didn't want to do it, but he wanted to do everything rightfully and reasonably. Because he wanted both the soul and the body to be and that together they would be truly like a groom and a bride and that they would judge each other purely and blissfully to thank God and to worship and to multiply the kin to fill the chairs where the angels were thrown from because of their arrogance. And therefore he gave the human use to understand that he rejected the devil from heaven because of his haughtiness and that the humans would clench to heaven because of her boon and have the glory they had fallen from because of her sin, the devil. **(S5)** Thus the humans shall do to have that good and we shall neglect to do the evil, that we wouldn't be thrown [in the abyss] in the company of the lord of evil things, who first started the evil things, that was the devil. And we shall do the good thing to be in the company of the lord of all good things that is God. And God knew very well that the human would fall and do sin, and he did that for justice and so that he would deserve the truthful value of God's wage. That's why God granted use and understanding that he would do God of his will. And that was what we foresaid [that God had well made the human] that he shouldn't have done sin; but that he wanted those that put their will in the devil and in evil and left the will of our lord, that they got the merit of their sins.

In unit 189 a similar thing happens as in the previous unit: unexpectedly with the concordances in mind, I had to put it in the chapter on the soul. It may be clear why. The problem slot **(P)** starts with the question if the reason humans do good and bad deeds are to be attributed to God. The answer in **(S1)** is very clear: it was not God who devised evil. If God had his way, humans would be without sin, but then he would've ignored what happened during the downfall of Lucifer, which is why humans have to deserve their place in heaven **(S2)**. In **(S3)**, then, the importance of the soul is stressed. In the topic slot, it becomes clear that because of the first two solutions, the soul has to deserve to share in God's glory. **(R)** specifies this to the idea that the soul is greater than the body. The body is the main difference between humans and angels. The importance of the soul is illustrated in **(I)** through the idea that there is a reason why this soul is more important. Two other solutions

are added. One is about the idea that the world only exists for the soul to have a chance to redeem itself in **(S4)**. The other in **(S5)** concludes by saying that humans should deserve their place at God's side rather than just be handed such glory

The discourse about humans in this unit uses terms that remind of guilt and debt. If Lucifer hadn't fallen from heaven, God would have created humans without sin, but he has fallen, so we are sinful. These ideas combined add the aspect of religious axioms such as being indebted to God and the idea that he has created the earth just for humans to the discourse about humans. Life is not a gift for humans, but it is a chance for us to do better than Lucifer did. Thus there is a religious motivation for the both the good and bad in people, which makes this an aspect that is part of the discourse about humans.

#### **4.6 Units from the Rest Category**

The rest category contains units 2, 85, 86, 87, 94, 159, 216, 331, 379, and 401.

##### ***Unit 2***

The king asks: **(P)** Can God be seen? Sidrac answers the king: **(S)** God is (both) visible and invisible, **(T)** because he sees everything and he can[not] be seen, **(R)** because no earthly body can see a spiritual thing. **(I1)** Both the spirits can see spirits, if he is good and justified (or: judged). **(I2)** And if it comes after the time that God's son will come in a virgin and will adopt flesh inside her, thus he will be young and seen [in human form]! he will do what humans would do if they would be without sin. And he himself will be God, because his power will be everywhere in heaven and on earth; and a virgin will [be] his mother when she has received him and will (still) remain a virgin after [she has given birth]. And if he hadn't taken any body (in) the virgin, no bodily thing should be able to see him.

In the problem slot of this unit, in **(P)**, king Bottus asks if God can be seen. The solution in **(S)** is twofold: he is both visible and invisible. To narrow down this topic in **(T)**, Sidrac explains that God himself sees all, though he cannot be seen himself. In the restriction slot **(R)**, the reason God cannot be seen is explained: because no physical thing can see something spiritual. In the first illustration **(I1)**, this is nuanced by the idea that spiritual things, however, are able to see him. The only human spiritual thing is the soul, so when Sidrac says that the spiritual can see God once the spiritual is justified and has been God, this refers to the time when the human is dead and nothing is left of him but the soul. In the final

illustration, **(I2)**, it is explained that Christ even though he is divine, will be visible, because he had taken human (thus bodily, physical) form inside the virgin Mary.

Through the reference to Christ and what soul can see after death, this unit highlights the aspects of body and soul when it presents a discourse about humans. The difference between the two is what compels them to either see God, or not see him.

### **Unit 85**

The king asks: **(P)** Should one love their friend loyally? Sidrac answers: **(S)** The human shall love his friend loyally of good and pure heart, and he will do him virtue, and (he will give him) collaboration like he has the power (to do so), and he (the human) will carry his (the friend's) burdens on his neck. **(T)** But this thing one should not do (for) all the friends, because the friends are of many ways (which means: there are many kinds of friends): **(R)** one finds friends that accompany the human because of their advantage and profit, and (who) don't care what he does or gives because of them, whether it is his prosperity or his damage. **(I1)** And they allow everything he wants and his pleasure, and don't care what comes of it, just because they have their will, and they will follow him in foolishness, so that they themselves can profit from this advantage. And like that they pretend to be good friends, but they are his lethal enemies. **(I2)** There are different kind of friends, such as company, of eating and drinking and many other ways. If he would need the possessions of his good friend, like that he would find in him the hardly anything that would harm him. And if he had done a misdeed against him, they should repay him with great shame and anger. And of these friends the humans will beware, and keep far away from him, **(I3)** but one shall love the friend, who doesn't adhere the profit and thinks with evil will of his friend, but those who don't blame and scourge when someone acts wrongly, even when he makes them angry. And because of this anger he will not refrain, to tell him his judgement and his honor and when this friend acts wrongly against him, therefore he will not leave him. When acted like that, such a friend one should love, praise, support, believe and trust.

In the problems slot **(P)**, this unit starts with the question if the friend should be loved loyally. The solution slot **(S)** explains that there are many good things one can do for a friend, but there turn out to be many kinds of friends in **(R)**. These kinds are all illustrated. **(I1)**, Sidrac talks about fake friends, who are only in the friendship for their own benefit. These people are not real friends but rather enemies. In **(I2)**, friends who are disloyal when

something bad happens are discussed. The unit finishes with **(I3)**, in which Sidrac explains what a real friend is, which is someone who will be loyal and not judge their friend for their mistakes. This is the true friend who must be loved loyally.

Explicit discourse about humans is hard to find in this unit. The thing that does stand out, is that friendship has many shapes, as do the humans that are involved in them. This highlights the idea that there are differences between humans, which is an aspect in the discourse about humans.

### ***Unit 86***

The king asks: **(P)** Can a human make profit without anguishing and exerting himself? The king answers: **(S1)** After Adam ate the apple that God had forbidden him, then never again a human might make profit without work; because before that they did and there was never such a powerful man, nor will there be one who can profit without working, and after this profit despite that there is little profit in the world, because most of it is vain and false. **(S2)** And also poor people need to do bodily work, and the rich of their hearts and mind and this allows the body to come after the soul to eternal reward, which we have lost because of Adam. Because of that it should be that the rich work the same as the poor, because the poor works for his living and like that the rich will do for God and his soul. And it should be that the work they do for profit and [the profit] after that. **(S3)** Thus it is like they would go two ways; the one day he finds those who climb on a horse and honor him and provide him shelter. The other day he finds someone who does him more honor and more rest, the third day he finds [who does even more], the fourth and the fifth day even more. The seventh day he finds people who beat him and do him great disgrace and hang him by his throat. And know that such honor and attire as one has in the evil world, that after that follows an evil ending, that they have to receive what gives them consent and stay in it. The other humans, who went away from the others, of those who did nothing but beat and do him great shame and thus even more until the seventh day. On the seventh day of those many good people will run into him with great happiness and did him great honor and gave him a kingdom. Like this it is in this world. Those who want to profit and gain that which is big and lasts forever, they must punish themselves for a short while in this world because of the creator of the heaven and the earth, they will lose all, because it may last him shortly and also one finds much evil and falsehood, there is the eternal happiness with loss.

This unit is very elaborate. In the problem slot **(P)**, king Bottus asks if a human can make profit without anguish or effort. There are three main solutions for this problem. In **(S1)**, Sidrac explains that since Adam had fallen from grace, no one else has been able to make profit without anguish. Because Adam ate the apple, he lost the easy life he had. After that, humans had to work harder in order to gain the things they need. This slot lies a connection between Adam and the discourse about humans through the original sin. In **(S2)**, Sidrac elaborates on the difference between rich and poor humans; poor humans work mainly to survive. Because in the end, all humans are equal, rich humans should work for their survival as well. Thus, they need to perform physical work for their salvation. This salvation, which is of influence of the afterlife, inserts the aspect of an afterlife in heaven to the discourse about humans. Lastly, in **(S3)**, Sidrac explains that those who take advantage of help that is given to them will lose everything in the end. People who don't take advantage, will still benefit from help through that they will end up in eternal happiness, even though that they as well will lose everything. This solution confirms the idea that the afterlife is an aspect in the discourse about humans, but it also stresses that eternal happiness is only for those who behave well and only take help when they need it.

### **Unit 87**

The king asks: **(P)** Should one always do good and should one give to the poor people? Sidrac answers: **(S)** Truly one will do so and give to the poor people and one will pay attention to who they are, because God has given the rich people so that they will help the poor who have nothing to live off. **(T)** And the rich human will think in himself that he was born from Adam and of Eve like the poor is after his likeness and that **(R)** he is a human just like him and that he after the richness that God has given him, has ever more than his body and his daughters need, if he has them. **(I)** Because when he dies he will not put it (his wealth) in front of him, and like a poor person he will stride to where he came from. And because of that the human will do good with what God has given him, and share it with the poor people and if he does that, than that will be his humility without arrogance and with good intention.

This unit has a solution slot with an embedded TRI-structure. First, in **(P)**, the king asks if the human should do good and give to the poor. The answer is *yes*. In the solution slot **(S)**, Sidrac explains that rich people were made rich so that they could share their wealth with the poor, who have nothing. In the topic slot **(T)**, this idea is substantiated by the claim

that humans, rich and poor, are all the same. In **(R)**, the idea is presented that because they are both the same, the rich man should give his surplus to a poor man, once he has taken care of his daughters. This then is illustrated in **(I)** with the idea that once humans die, they are stripped of their wealth, and all that remains is a poor person and his actions. In order to be judged as a good person, the person who was rich in his earthly life needs to showcase his spiritual wealth by handling his physical wealth with humility and generosity. Through this illustration slot, the aspects of spiritual and physical wealth are connected to the discussion of good human behavior, which makes them part of the discourse about humans.

#### **Unit 94**

The king asks: **(P)** Who should one love and hate and reckon with? Sidrac answers: **(S)** One will go the way that is clean and soft and pure and one will look at the way that is hard and stony and where thorns are. And also one will behold the fire, because those who go through fire or through thorns, he must have bad luck or damage of it, and he who goes the soft way goes without bad luck. **(T)** And surely this is to be understood, one shall love good people and travel in their company [and of that one can] otherwise not [have] that which is also good; and there he is protected and sure. **(R)** These are those who go one the clean green way; and the ones who walk with evil company, as if they were good people, one should behold them as evil. **(I)** And of that, they aren't allowed to have anything but shame and dishonor and bad name amongst the people and they will be condemned and shamed of the good people. And the good people will think: that they were not as evil as the others, they didn't go with them nor did they approve of their evilness. Thus they were hurt like those who go through thorns or through fire and because of that one shall love the good and thus travel with them, whether they are rich or poor, and always they will hate and behold the evil.

The problem slot of this unit is a little vague. In **(P)**, Bottus asks who should be loved, hated and reckoned with. Sidrac answers in **(S)** that the human should imagine that there are two roads: one easy and one difficult. In the topic slot **(T)**, this is specified by saying that good people walk in good company, and in **(R)**, this idea is tied back to the solution slot by referring to good people as those who walk the easy road, and bad people as those who walked the hard road. This idea is then illustrated in **(I)** and tied back to the problem slot by the idea that to walk with the good people, you should condemn the bad ones. Good humans hence should be loved, and bad ones hated.

The way this question is answered has an interesting structure. With only the solution slot, the connection between **(P)** and the rest of the unit is entirely unclear. With the illustration, the comparison of the road is tied back to those who humans should love and those who should be hated. This comparison adds the aspect of the physical world or implicitly travelling to the discourse about human behavior and judgement of humans by humans. Good humans, are hence stimulated by the comparison to the physical world in the discourse about humans.

### **Unit 159**

The king asks: **(P)** Can a human live from lust if he is able to have it? Sidrac answers: **(S)** Yes easily, the human who has the ability, he will think because of his creator who has made him, (that he is) worthy after his likeness; and (he thinks) that such a noble likeness will not stain him, but **(T)** they will honor themselves and keep chaste because of the love of that which doesn't make worthy after his likeness; and he might think that he will die and will perish and that his soul will receive such a reward in the other world as the body has deserved in this world, depending on if these works are good or bad. **(R)** And because of this thought he will lose the evil urge. **(I1)** If a king gave a man his clothes, he would keep them in honor and chaste and he will be kept in honor amongst the people if he wore them. Like that we will instantly be chaste and even more pure and will love the likeness God has dressed us in, which is with himself. And if you think in this way in that hour and in your will, your desire will be bestowed on you and you will let it happen and thus you will not abandon your will and won't let one thought replace the other. **(I2)** Because that is like fire: like this one keeps on the light and even more the glow, and with this though you will think lightly about people, if that is what you want. And know that a human thus resists and tolerates, thus he can understand more and he can use it more, thus you can use it more. The fire that glows and does damage that one shall kill and put out with water so that it will never do any more damage; and like that one shall treat luxuries. She is a sin that is very worrying and that does a lot of damage to the body and the soul. Therefore one shall kill it and put it out always with good thoughts that are clean and strong.

The question of king Bottus in **(P)** is about lust, and if it is good to live off. The solution provided by Sidrac has an imbedded TRI-structure. In the solution slot, Sidrac says sure, those who know they are created after God's likeness probably think that it cannot

hurt. However, those who want to deserve God's love, as specified in **(T)**, they will remain chaste and pure. In **(R)**, the consequence of this thought is made explicit: unclean thoughts about lust will disappear because God will be loved. This idea illustrated in two illustrations. In **(I1)**, a comparison is made between cherishing a lack of lust and cherishing / wearing proudly the garments given by a king. In **(I2)**, lust is compared with fire. The discourse with which to discuss the desirable sexual behavior of humans, apparently can be illustrated with comparisons to clothes and fire.

### **Unit 216**

The king asks: **(P)** If the world consists of words, herbs and stones, which one is the best word, the best herb and the best stone of which the world exists? Sidrac answers the king: **(S)** God made in three things more power than in any other that exists in the world, because these three things belong without question to the world and the world would not last without them. The first are the [words] that are worshipped [by the humans], and that praise their creator; because no words can be better nor may they leave the human's mouth. And the noblest herbs that are on the world [and] [that are those] that humans live off and that humans have the most benefit of; those are wheat and corn. Because those we need most and they cannot be missed above anything other in the world and that's why we call it the most noble herb in the world. Of stones one finds several that are noble, be we shall not talk about their qualities now. However, there is one stone that cannot lack, which is the stone that grinds the corn, because this one serves all people and the world needs it. And that's why this is the most precious stone that is and that one can miss the worst.

The interpretation of this unit benefitted from the translation by Lie (2006 67). In the problem slot of this unit **(P)**, king Bottus asks which are the best word, the best herb, and the best stone. The solution slot is pretty straightforward: the best word is of the scripture, the best herbs are grane and wheat, and the best stone can be found in a mill. The most striking thing about this solution slot, is that the 'best-ness' of each thing is explained through its relation to humans. Scripture should be believed by humans because it is sacred. Wheat and grain feed humans. The stone in the mill helps to feed humans. This means that in this unit, the sacristy of scripture and the function of objects that feed humans are added to the discourse about humans, because they are good for them.

### **Unit 331**

The king asks: **(P)** Should a human forget the country where he was born and fed? Sidrac answers: **(S)** A human is allowed to forget his land. **(T)** If he is poor and doesn't have to live off of it and you than travel to another country where you find good things and honor, you would do well to forget your country then, because you were poor and didn't benefit from it. **(R)** Even if you were born in the best and the purest land of the earth and you had many servants and friends of greater power and you were so poor there, that out of poverty you could not stay there and then you went to another country, because you had the need, than that is your land rightfully. **(I1)** And the country where you find what you need that you shall love and not leave, and not love the land where you were born, because you could not live off of it. Because those who want things immediately, then all people would be strangers in this world, because no one has other land than the land where he is sheltered; and then we will have to leave. **(I2)** The lingering in this world even if she lasted 1000 years, she wouldn't be an hour long after the time of eternity of the other world. And if a human lived 1000 years, that would not be any different from when he lived one hour in a place where he was sheltered, for which he went there; and because of that we are all strangers in this world.

The problem slot **(P)** of this unit focusses on land, and if a human is allowed to forget about his land if he leaves it. The answer is yes. In the solution slot and the topic slot **(S)** and **(T)**, Sidrac explains that if a land makes a human poor and doesn't feed him enough, the human will leave, and hence is allowed to forget about this land. In the restriction slot, the human is reassured that leaving a country that does not feed him is ok. Two illustrations complete this unit. **(I1)** makes explicit that once a new land is found, the human is allowed to love it. **(I2)** then, takes the whole discussion to a more philosophical level by saying that the places we live in make us all strangers, because the time we spend there is nothing compared to eternity. The subjects of agriculture, food and land in this unit, provide an opportunity to once more refer to the afterlife. Through the last illustration, taking care of human needs such as shelter and food is connected to the topic of the afterlife. This makes both aspects of the discourse about humans.

### **Unit 379**

The king asks: **(P)** Why will God allow his son to die [and for what reasons will he die]? Sidrac answers: **(S1)** Because of submission, because he will be submissive until death and he will

be a rightful human in his life and in his preaching. Of this submission the humanity will reach the Godliness. **(S2)** Who is he who would deliver his son [to death] to redeem his servant? When our lord will see the beautiful work his son will do, that he will want to die and fight against the devil the redeem the offspring of Adam, like that he will allow him to die and in this way he will want to show his love to the world, because he will give his son to pay for his servant. The father will give his son and himself and all of this out of love; and he will die for humanity out of benevolence, to redeem those who were damning with benevolence and with his death he will compel the sins of the humans. Because his love is greater than all the sins of the world and thus like his life will be holier than all the world, like that hi death will be more than all deaths of humans.

The problem slot in this unit contains a question about Christ. Why will he be allowed to die? The solution to this problem is twofold: Because the submission of Christ and his followers will bring them closer to God, and because God is who he is. In **(S1)** Sidrac explains that submission is essential if humans want to reach godliness, which basically means that they want to go the heaven. Thus they must die as believers, and the only way to create believers, is for Christ to die. **(S2)** contains more information about God himself, and why he will allow his son to die. This reason is that God loves his servants, and he will thus give up a part of himself to make them closer to him. In this unit this divinity, submission to God, and the story of Jesus' death are added to the discourse about humans.

#### ***Unit 401***

The king asks: **(P)** When will the false prophet come? Sidrac answers: **(S)** The false prophet will be born in the city of Babylonia of and evil woman, who will in her mother body be full of the spirit of the devil. **(T)** And he will be king of kings and all the people and all the world he will destroy with fire. He will attract to himself the noble people and he will promise [gifts] to the rich; in the other way he will attract the needy people with fear and with apprehension that he will do to hem and because of the strict judgement he will speak. The third way is, he will be such a good cleric that he will win over all pious clerics with his science, because he will be full of great wisdom and will speak wisely with it and he will know all clergy and scripture; and he will be of great power and strength; fourth he will trick people of penance, those are brethren, monks and other good people who have rotten the world. This will happen with clergy with miracles and omens, because he will make come a

fire or it came from the heaven, which will burn all his enemies for him. And he will make the dead rise, who will bear witness to what he said. And don't understand that the dead may stand up, but the devils will come in the bodies of those who are damned; and they will carry the bodies and make them speak as if they were healthy and he will make them work and conquer the land as if God did it himself. And he will found and make the city of God's son Jerusalem and the people of the first religion (which are the Jews) will receive him with great honor, because [they will come] from all parts of the world. But they shall return to religion and the belief of God's son through the preaching of two humans Enocx and Helyas, who will say all the truth and will preach and after that he will torture them and (they will) die a bitter death. And those two good people one will see rise upwards to heaven with the angels. And this false prophet will kill and rule for three and a half years. After that he will strive to conquer the good rightful people and then one will find him dead [because of murder], because God will kill him with the spirit of his mouth; that is to be understood that he will be killed with the commandments of God. Those days will then be finished because of these actions, because the days will die as we do, because he shall rule no longer than three and a half years. The bodies of the humans shall then be less than us, as we are less than our beneficiaries.

This grim unit is definitely a nice way to end this chapter of analysis. The problem slot of unit 401 is about the Antichrist, and when he will come. The interesting thing about the solution Sidrac offers in this unit, is that it pretty much answers all questions about the Antichrist, except *when* he will come. Sidrac explains exactly where he will come from, who his mother is, what he will do, the problems that he will cause, the followers he will gain (which are the Jews), how long he will rule, who will try to defeat him, and how he will eventually die. There is however no timetable for his arrival. The only thing about humans in this unit is that apparently, many will fall for the tricks and threats that come from this person. This ensures that the Antichrist, antisemitism, and human vulnerability are aspects in the discourse about humans in this unit.

#### **4.7 General Remarks to conclude Analysis**

King Bottus has asked enough questions. Through the application of the discourse analysis by placing the different slots in each separate unit, I have made explicit the aspects that are part of the discourse about humans in each selected unit. Many topics have emerged. Some

occurred isolated, but many also occurred several times and in coherence with others. I will proceed with a compact summary of the aspects that are part of the discourse about humans. I look at their coherence and dominance in chapter 5, which contains the conclusion of this thesis. This section only contains a summary of the aspects that resulted from the analysis.

A first aspect that occurred in the discourse about humans, is the macrocosm. In unit 9, the shape of humans has been explained in the illustration slot through a comparison of the human head to the earth. This cosmos is also part of the discourse in unit 230, which compares the most beautiful part of the human body – the nose – to the sun. Part of the macrocosm are also the elements, which are prominent in the illustration of unit 152. Another unit that addresses this topic, is unit 273, which compares human hair to herbs on the ground. Finally, unit 159 compares lust to fire.

The second aspect that came out of the discourse analysis, is divinity. Unit 9 discusses angels alongside humans, and thus the divine alongside the physical, in its illustration slot. The problem of body versus soul comes back in unit 319, which explains where the soul lives inside the body. Another unit that uses the soul to illustrate its solution is unit 186, which is about the forgiveness of sins. The link between work, charity, and the soul is pointed out in unit 187.

A third aspect that occurs in *Sidrac* when discourse about human is present, is divine reward in the afterlife, which is closely related to the discussions about the soul. Unit 93 discussed the need to keep the human body pure, in order to please God in its illustration slot. The need to please God also occurs in the topic slot of unit 98, which is about pride. Divine forgiveness is prominent in the discourse of unit 186, which is about the forgiving of sins. Falling from grace is discussed in unit 10, which is about the creation. Human action and its consequences pop up in the discourse of unit 189. Through the reference to Christ and what the soul can see after death, unit 2 highlights the aspects of body and soul when it presents a discourse about humans. The difference between the two is what compels them to either see God, or not see him. Unit 86 has a solution slot that confirms the idea that the afterlife is an aspect in the discourse about humans, but it also stresses that eternal happiness is only for those who behave well and only take help when they need it. Unit 87 is about giving to the poor. In its illustration slot, the aspects of spiritual and physical wealth are connected to the discussion about good human behavior, which makes them part of the

discourse about humans. Unit 331 is about the taking care of basic human needs, such as shelter and food, in connection to the afterlife. The last unit that contains the afterlife in its discourse about humans, is unit 379, which is about God's will to sacrifice his son.

Sins are present as well in unit 186, which is about God's mercy. Final judgement goes hand in hand with heathenism in unit 411. Why humans can't be sinless is a question prominent in unit 109. The Antichrist, antisemitism, and human vulnerability to sin are aspects in the discourse about humans in unit 401.

Divinity and angels go hand in hand in unit 16, which about why a human and not a angel will be sent to die for God. Unit 283 specifies the aspect of the balance of the spiritual (the angel in its natural form) and the physical (the angel when it shows itself to humans) in a context of human visual experiences, which makes these aspects part of the discourse about humans.

Despite the divine, the physical body is discussed as well, for example in unit 384, which discusses the body of Christ. The birth of Christ is added to the discourse about humans in unit 17, which elaborates on the fact that Christ was born from a virgin. A comparison of a clean foot to a clean soul is made in unit 186, which is about the forgiving of sins.

The creation is also one of the aspects in the discourse about humans in the units that were selected. It is even the main topic of some units, for example unit 152. It also takes quite curious form, for example in unit 171, where the creation turns up in illustration slot of a unit that is about food. Unit 273 also addresses the creation, when it claims in the first solution slot that God wanted to show off what he could do by creating hair for humans. Another unit that contains discourse about creation and the written truth of scripture is unit 28.

The original sin is a topic also quite present in discourse about humans. For example, it is addressed in unit 273, in which hair serves as a tool to cover human shame in the same way Adam had to cover his after he was banned from paradise. Adam and Eve are used to illustrate in unit 284, in order to explain the way the devil seduces humans to commit sins. Also the idea that Adam had no parents and Christ will have them, inserts the aspect of the original sin in the discourse about humans in unit 17. In unit 55, the aspect of the original sin is inserted in the discourse about humans through the illustration of Adam who cause human suffering. The solution slot in unit 168 also gives an example of Adam and the way he

loved Eve because she was given to him by God, which adds the aspect of the story of Adam and Eve to the discourse about humans.

Interestingly, alongside humans, animals are part of the discourse about humans as well. A comparison of humans with bad behavior to animals is drawn in unit 152. In unit 98, in the illustration slot, even a comparison is drawn between a human and a pooping animal, which symbolizes arrogant behavior without regard for others. Ants are present in unit 10, which is about the creation of humans. The ants in this unit give an example of great work. Lastly, animals are associated with gluttony in unit 76, which is about food. Food also takes a prominent place in unit 211.

Apart from these prominent aspects, there were a few smaller topics that occurred in the discourse analysis. For example the study of humors, which is casually mentioned in unit 152 it discusses the creation in the restriction slot. Another topic that occurs is the last supper, in unit 384, which discusses the body of Christ. Rhetoric is a topic discussed in the discourse about human interaction in unit 88. Others are power (in unit 202), gender (unit 204), reputation, and friends (both unit 217 and 85), and scripture (216)

These are the prominent aspects in the discourse about humans in the selected units from *Sidrac*. The final chapter of this thesis contains the conclusion, which will be given on a methodological level and to further clarify the remarks I made about the units in this section.

## 5. Conclusions and Discussions

At the start of this thesis, the modern book by Yuval Harari entitled *Sapiens* was compared to the medieval *artes* genre. It was established that the genre that aims to educate the masses who can read the vernacular, isn't an occurrence of the twenty-first century alone. Rather, this genre was popular in the Middle Ages of the fourteenth century as well as now, which has encouraged the writing of this thesis all the more.

Like Harari's book, *Sidrac* was written in the vernacular, which gives it an interesting status within the *artes* genre as well as within written books of the Middle Ages in general. The differences between Latin works and those in the vernacular have been illustrated through the elaboration on Saskia Bogaarts analysis of *Van den proprieteyten der dinghen* (2004), which stresses the differences between the languages and the fact that both should be investigated.

Within the *artes* genre, it has been established that humans are a prominent point of discussion. Written sources are all we have from the Middle Ages, and they are an expression of the contemporary world view. This thesis has focused on the use of language in *Sidrac* in order to formulate how humans were discussed. Hence, the research question was formulated as *What are the prominent aspects in the discourse about humans in Sidrac?*

In order to focus this project as much as possible, I had to make a selection of relevant units in step 1, which I did with the help of AntConc and a quantitative requirement. This selection was divided in sections according to the words that occurred in the concordances of the lemma 'menschē', 'menschen' and 'menschelike'. The selected units I have then interpreted in step 2, and analyzed in step 3 with a discourse analysis method. This analysis divided each unit into a problem slot (**P**) and a solution slot (**S**). In the solution slot, a TRI-structure can be imbedded, which stands for topic slot (**T**), restriction slot (**R**), and illustration slot (**I**). By looking at the human discourse which is influenced by the contemporary ideas about humanity and vice versa, I have analyzed on which aspects are prominent in the discourse about humans.

This chapter contains the concluding remarks of this entire thesis. It will be formulated in two parts. In the first, I will look back at the methodology and its practical use. I will return to the six features of discourse according to Johnstone (2004), in order to specify what has been done in the analysis once more. In the second part of this conclusion, I will

repeat the results from chapter 4, I will give them some more context, and finally, I will conclude with suggestions on what can be done next on the topic of humans in *Sidrac*.

## 5.1 Methodological Advantages and Disadvantages

The threefold methodology that was used in this thesis had strengths as well as limitations. These will be discussed in this chapter.

### ***About Step 1***

Let's start with one of the problems, which is lemmas. In step 1, I have made a selection of relevant units based upon the usage of the lemmas 'menschē', 'menschen', and 'menschelike'. The number of lemmas (or combinations of them) had to be at least three in one unit in order for the unit to be selected. The main problem of this method is based on uniformity. Some units are long and others are relatively short, but I have decided to consider every unit as a separate whole, which means that a short unit with three mentions of 'menschē' could be selected rather than a unit that might mention 'menschē' less times, but gives more elaboration on the subject.

Another objection to this method might be the lemmas themselves. They were chosen because of their relevant meaning to answer the research question. However, there are other lemmas that might be connected to the discourse as well. For example, the lemma 'lieden' was excluded from the requirements. This lemma is a little less straightforward than 'menschē', because it can mean *people* (humans) as well as the singular of *peoples*, such as the strange peoples in unit 76. Unit 76 was not selected to be analyzed in this thesis because it does not use the required lemmas enough times, yet it does offer an interesting perspective on what *kinds* of humans walked the medieval earth. This would take the discussion to a whole different field, namely that of mythological creatures and the plinian races, which have remained undiscussed in this thesis. Still, these monsters are described as stock features of the occidental mentality by Wittkower (1942 159), which might make it interesting to see how their conception might have influenced the discourse about them.<sup>36</sup> Humans might even be present in it. One could wonder: How human are these races? The plinian monsters find themselves on the edge of the discourse that was investigated in this thesis, which is why it is a pity they didn't turn up in the selection of step 1.

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<sup>36</sup> Wittkower, *Marvels of the East*. London Warburg Institute, 1942.

Other lemmas that were excluded but might nuance the approach of the human discourse, are lemmas like 'man' *man* and 'wif' *woman*. Both are human, but only further research could determine if their concordances would contribute to the human discourse.

Another problem with the choice of lemmas, is spelling. In unit 3 for example, I came across a different spelling of 'mensch', as 'mensch'. This, however, is an exception, so the impact of this problem is minimal. Above that, since AntConc analyzes a digital edition, occurrences of 'mensch' in footnotes were counted as if they were part of the original (this happened in unit 2, for example). The occurrences of relevant lemmas are available in Appendix A.

Using AntConc to select relevant material, however, also had its advantages. The first is quite simple: the program allowed this research to be limited to the analysis of 38 units rather than 421. Another strength is more relevant for the field of medieval studies. The conclusion of Els Stronks' essay entitled 'De afstand tussen *close* en *distant*. Methoden en vraagstellingen in computationeel letterkundig onderzoek' (2013) is that literary scientists should come up with more questions to further explore the possibilities of digital research in literary studies. Stronks thinks that the results of *distant reading* methods in our field are too limited because there is a lack of literary scientists involved in the exploration of this kind of method (Stronks 2013 212-213). Therefore, she concludes, we should insert more questions into this field. Also, I have used a digital method to avoid missing relevant information and choosing examples manually.

### **About Step 2 and 3**

The problems with step 2 in this thesis were limited, although it turned out to be the most time consuming step of all. The Middle Dutch in *Sidrac* is anything but straightforward most of the time.

Step 3 – the division into slots provided by Becker (1965) – proved very useful because the division in slots really forces the scholar to investigate every aspect of the argument, which makes the discussion more complete and nuanced. However, in chapter 4 it turned out that not all units are structured similarly or clearly. Whether this is a problem specific to Middle Dutch texts or whether there are other methods applicable in these situations remains unclear, but there are a few units that were hardly useful.

The definition of discourse proved to be complicated. Johnstone offers six features of discourse, but not all of them are always applicable to research. The first feature of discourse is that texts and interpretations of texts are shaped by the world, and vice versa. This means that the worlds of both the creators and the interpreters of text are influenced by and influence discourse (Johnstone 2004 10 – 11). I could only investigate the way in which humans were discussed, which means that there is no control mechanism that could help validate my results in the experience world.

The second feature of discourse, is that discourse is shaped by the possibilities and limitations of language, as well as that it shapes language itself. This means that the conventions of structuring of the language of the text, have an influence on discourse (Johnstone 2004 12). The frame of reference belonging to the Middle Dutch language is as foreign as its speakers, which means that there probably are things that I have missed. However, this discourse analysis was instigated with a distant reading method, which means that I tried to eliminate as little information as possible. Then there is also the fact that *Sidrac* has a French source text. A comparison of the two might shed a better light on this feature of discourse. The structuring of language of text was investigated in this paper by applying the methodology of Becker (1965), which means to divide paragraphs into slot in order to make explicit their internal structure to distillate the discourse. Despite the fact that not all units had a clear structure, it became apparent that the discourse about humans concentrated in the solution slot, was often used as an illustration for solving a problem.

As was mentioned in chapter two, the first two features were the most important for this analysis. The others, I will address briefly.

The third feature of discourse is that it is shaped by interpersonal relations among participants in it, and on its turn discourse helps to shape interpersonal relations (Johnstone 2004 14). To focus on this feature of discourse, would be to lie more focus on the educational discourse that *Sidrac* uses, because that would highlight the interpersonal relation between the two. Similarly, with an analysis like that the ignorance of Bottus might be more closely observed as well. The three participants in this text, which are *Sidrac*, Bottus, and the audience, together inflict the educational vibe of *Sidrac*. However, to determine how exactly *Sidrac* is educational was not the main goal of this thesis. Rather, the goal was to see how the discourse about humans is formulated, implicitly in order to be taught.

The fourth feature of discourse is that it is shaped by the expectations created by familiar discourse. Above that, new instances of discourse help to shape our expectations about what future discourse will be like and how it should be interpreted (Johnstone 2004 15). This feature has been addressed by the discussion of the Middle Dutch *artes* genre. The fact that Lie (2006, 9) describes *Sidrac* as a handbook for laymen contributes to this discussion as well, because it exemplifies the idea that *artes* texts in the vernacular, were meant to educate the masses.

The fifth feature of discourse is that it is shaped by the limitations and possibilities of its media, and the possibilities of communications media are shaped by their uses in discourse (Johnstone 2004 16). This has to do with the strategic mixing of media, which in the case of *Sidrac* is hard to recover.

The sixth and final feature of discourse, is that discourse is shaped by purpose, and that it shapes purpose in return (Johnstone 2004 17). This means that discourse is affected by the purpose of the written text, which in the case of *Sidrac* is the purpose to educate, and vice versa. This idea also has to do with the *artes* genre, and the idea that *Sidrac* is a handbook (Lie 2006 9).

Now that the advantages and disadvantages of each step, plus the features of discourse have been discussed, it is time to move on to the final stage of this conclusion. This is the summary of the results from the discourse analysis and the way in which they are coherent.

## **5.2 Results of the Discourse Analysis**

Through the application of the discourse analysis by placing the different slots in each separate unit, I have made explicit the aspects that are part of the discourse about humans in each selected unit. Many topics have emerged. Some occurred isolated, but many also occurred several times and in coherence with each other. This final section is meant to highlight the coherence between them and see which ones are dominant.

Divinity and divine reward in the afterlife are definitely among the most dominant aspects in the discourse about humans. This is interesting, because on a very basic level, humans and God are very different. However, it turns out that in the discussion of humans, their dependence on the divine is very prominent. One of the things in the discourse about humans that depends on the divine, is the afterlife. Several units show this aspect when they try to legitimize certain desired behavior. For example, unit 187 focusses in its discourse on

the link between work, charity, and the soul. To do good work and to give what you have left to others, is healthy for the soul, which guaranties a good spot in the afterlife. Other units that have salvation on their agenda, are units 93 and 98. Unit 93 uses the illustration slot to point out that the body should be kept pure in order to please God. Unit 98 is about pride, and how it displeases God, which is why it is a sin. A sin is a human action, because the body is responsible for the sins that influence the soul. Human action and its consequences pop up in the discourse of unit 189 as well. Unit 86 has a solution slot that confirms the idea that the afterlife is an aspect in the discourse about humans, but it also stresses that eternal happiness is only for those who behave well and only take help when they need it. Unit 87 is about giving to the poor. In its illustration slot, the aspects of spiritual and physical wealth are connected to the discussion about good human behavior. Unit 331 is about the taking care of basic human needs, such as shelter and food, in connection to the afterlife. The last unit that contains the afterlife in its discourse about humans, is unit 379, which is about God's will to sacrifice his son to save his servants. The afterlife, as it turns out, is something you have to work for. Summed up, this means that in the discourse about humans, divinity, the soul, the afterlife, and human behavior are closely related.

Sin and the soul are also things closely related to the afterlife and the divine, since sins are bad for the afterlife because they have an effect on the soul. These three were constantly coherent in the discourse about humans, which is why it is hard to find units that treat them separately. Rather, they occur together for example in unit 186, which is about the forgiveness of sins. The lack of forgiveness of sins, or the 'falling from grace', on the other hand is prominent in unit 10, which ties it back to the creation. Creation, thus, is also an aspect that is coherent with the divine. It is even the main topic of some units, for example unit 152. The creation also takes quite curious form, for example in unit 171, where it turns up in illustration slot of a unit that is about food. Unit 273 also addresses the creation, when it claims in the first solution slot that God wanted to show off what he could do by creating hair for humans. Another unit that contains discourse about creation and the written truth of scripture is unit 28. Sins are present as well in unit 186, which is about God's mercy. Final judgement goes hand in hand with heathenism in unit 411. Why humans can't be sinless is a question prominent in unit 109. The Antichrist, antisemitism, and human

vulnerability to sin are aspects in the discourse about humans in unit 401. The soul, the afterlife and the creation are all intertwined in the discourse about humans.<sup>37</sup>

Alongside the divine, also the physical is a prominent aspect in the discourse about humans in *Sidrac*. Unit 9 discusses angels alongside humans, and thus the divine alongside the physical, in its illustration slot. The angel and the soul are divine, but the human body is not. The problem of body versus soul also comes back in unit 319, which explains where the soul lives inside the body. Through the reference to Christ and what the soul can see after death, unit 2 highlights the aspects of body and soul when it presents a discourse about humans. The difference between the two is what compels them to either see God, or not see him. Another example is unit 384, which discusses the body of Christ. The birth of Christ is added to the discourse about humans in unit 17, which elaborates on the fact that Christ was born from a virgin. A comparison of a clean foot to a clean soul is made in unit 186, which is about the forgiving of sins. This ties the physical quite literally to the divine by comparing the soul to the foot.

Other aspects that showed up in the discourse analysis, were creatures other than humans. Divinity and angels go hand in hand in unit 16, which about why a human and not an angel will be sent to die for God. Unit 283 specifies the aspect of the balance of the spiritual (the angel in its natural form) and the physical (the angel when it shows itself to humans) in a context of human visual experiences, which makes these aspects part of the discourse about humans. However, angels themselves are hardly used in the discourse about humans to distinguish their humanity. Rather, humans are described as what angels are not, which is physical and hence sinful.

Closely related to the sin and the divine, is the story about Adam and Eve. Curiously, there are several units that refer back to it. For example, the topic is addressed in unit 273, in which hair serves as a tool to cover human shame in the same way Adam had to cover his after he was banned from paradise. Adam and Eve are used to illustrate in unit 284, in order to explain the way the devil seduces humans to commit sins. Also the idea that Adam had no

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<sup>37</sup> The soul and sins are even so connected, that according to Stoffers in his book *De middeleeuwse ideeënwereld 1000 – 1300*, there is no distinction between them at all.

*Er wordt geen onderscheid gemaakt tussen de substantie van de ziel, haar vermogens en haar acten of werkingen; evenmin tussen gedachten, gevoelens, passies of deugden.* (Stoffers 1994 203)

Translation: There was no distinction made between the substance of the soul, her abilities and acting or operations; nor between thoughts, feelings, passions or virtues.

parents and Christ will have them, inserts the aspect of the original sin in the discourse about humans in unit 17. In unit 55, the aspect of the original sin is inserted in the discourse about humans through the illustration of Adam who cause human suffering. The solution slot in unit 168 also gives an example of Adam and the way he loved Eve because she was given to him by God, which adds the aspect of the story of Adam and Eve to the discourse about humans. It is interesting to see that of all biblical characters, Adam and Eve have had the most influence in the discourse about humans.

Other creatures than angels that were still part of the discourse about humans, are animals. A comparison of humans with bad behavior to animals is drawn in unit 152. In unit 98, in the illustration slot, even a comparison is drawn between a human and a pooping animal, which symbolizes arrogant behavior without regard for others. Ants are present in unit 10, which is about the creation of humans. The ants in this unit give an example of great work. Lastly, animals are associated with gluttony in unit 76, which is about food. Food also takes a prominent place in unit 211. According to Stoffers, animals, angels, and humans are all tied up together in the hierarchy of the creation, which in theory ties all three of them together.

*De mens is koning van de schepping, en staat net onder de engelen in de zijshierarchie, zonder dat een van de dieren hem kan evenaren; ten slotte het belangrijkste van al: de mens is geschapen naar het beeld ende gelijkenis van God.*  
(Stoffers 1994 203)

Translation: Mankind is king of the creation, and stands just below the angels in the hierarchy of being, without competition of the animals; after all the most important thing of all: mankind is created after the image and likeness of God

However, apart from the unit that connects the ant to the topic of the creation through a comparison, I have found no convincing connection within the discourse about humans for this claim.

Another aspect that occurred in the discourse about humans that for a change has nothing to do with the divine, is the macrocosm. Hence, the human can be seen as the world projected, which is what happens in several units. In unit 9, the shape of humans has been explained in the illustration slot through a comparison of the human head to the earth. This cosmos is also part of the discourse in unit 230, which compares the most beautiful part of the human body – the nose – to the sun. Part of the macrocosm are also the elements, which are prominent in the illustration of unit 152. Another unit that addresses this topic, is

unit 273, which compares human hair to herbs on the ground. Finally, unit 159 compares lust to fire. The macrocosm and microcosm occur less often than the divine, but still they are of importance in the discussion of humans in *Sidrac*.

Apart from these prominent aspects, there were a few smaller topics that occurred in the discourse analysis. For example the study of humors, which is casually mentioned in unit 152 it discusses the creation in the restriction slot. Another topic that occurs is the last supper, in unit 384, which discusses the body of Christ. Rhetoric is a topic discussed in the discourse about human interaction in unit 88. Others are power (in unit 202), gender (unit 204), reputation, and friends (both unit 217 and 85), and scripture (216)

According to *Sidrac*, humans are defined by several aspects, which have come forward by the application of a discourse analysis. Central to the ideas about humans is the aspect of divinity, which utters itself in different ways. First of all, it comes forward in the discussion of the soul, which is described as something divine. Secondly, sins are bad for the soul, and hence displease the divinity or God. Thirdly, if the soul is treated badly, or in other words: when the body has committed sins that are bad for the soul, the punishment has an effect on the afterlife. The fact that humans commit sin, has to do with the creation and the original sin of Adam and Eve. Humans can commit sins because Eve ate the apple. Closely related to sin is bad behavior, which is often associated with the behavior of animals. Angels are divine and not human, but other than that they have a limited role in the discourse about humans. The microcosm and macrocosm are aspects used often in comparisons, which makes them illustrations of certain human traits and thus part of the discourse about humans. Other smaller topics that has only a limited role in the discourse about humans are power, reputation, and scripture in general. In order to put these observations in a boarder perspective, it might be interesting to compare the discourse about humans in *Sidrac* to the discourse of other texts.

It may be clear, that the discourse about humans in *Sidrac* contains quite a number of aspects that are religious in nature. The discourse analysis proved useful to discover this. If this kind of analysis does not please the beholder, I for one will not hesitate to blame Adam and Eve.

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## Appendix A: List of Selected Units and Occurrences of Relevant Lemmas

Unit	Word Count	'menschē'	'menschen'	'menschelike'	Remarks
2	145	1	1	1	of which 1 footnote
9	401	6	2	0	
10	273	8	1	0	
16	189	10	0	0	
17	247	4	0	1	
28	170	7	0	0	
45	393	1	0	0	selected because of content
55	101	3	0	0	
76	172	2	1	0	
85	290	3	0	0	
86	382	3	0	0	
87	164	3	0	0	
88	291	3	0	0	
93	129	3	0	0	
98	312	6	0	0	
109	262	6	0	0	
152	122	2	2	0	Of which one proclisis 'smenschen' <i>des + menschen</i>
159	321	3	0	0	
168	160	4	0	0	
171	401	6	2	0	
186	250	2	2	0	
187	616	4	0	0	
189	734	10	1	0	
204	153	3	0	0	
211	98	0	0	0	selected because of content
216	211	1	3	0	
217	321	3	1	0	
230	143	3	0	0	
273	131	3	0	0	
283	167	3	3	0	
284	131	4	0	0	
319	250	3	0	0	
331	240	3	0	0	
379	211	1	2	0	'menschheit': 2
384	515	1	1	0	'menschelijc': 1, 'menschelijcheit': 1
391	175	2	2	0	
401	462	0	3	0	
411	230	1	2	0	