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Hieronymus Bosch's Dismantled Triptych and the '*Devotio Moderna*'

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HIERONYMUS BOSCH'S DISMANTLED TRIPTYCH AND THE *DEVOTIO*

MODERNA

by

Mary E. Tippet
B.A. May 2018, Radford University

A Thesis Submitted to the Faculty of
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ABSTRACT

HIERONYMUS BOSCH'S DISMANTLED TRIPTYCH AND THE *DEVOTIO MODERNA*

Mary E. Tippet
Old Dominion University, 2022
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Flemish painter Jeroen van Aken, better known as Hieronymus Bosch, created a triptych depicting the folly of humanity. This dismantled triptych includes the *Ship of Fools*, the *Allegory of Intemperance*, the *Death of the Miser*, and the *Rotterdam Wayfarer*, completed between 1500 and 1510. Throughout his career, Bosch explored a peculiar take on the traditional forms of well-known religious motifs throughout Renaissance Europe by populating his scenes with fantastical creatures and monsters. Scholars have long since suggested that these forms were inspired by illuminated manuscripts. However, scholars provided no explanation as to why these texts drew Bosch's attention. This thesis argues that the practice of *Devotio Moderna* inspired Bosch to mine the pages of illuminated manuscripts for the fantastical images found throughout his oeuvre. The *Devotio Moderna* movement also functions as a lens through which we can understand the meaning behind his work.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
LIST OF FIGURES	vi
Chapter	
I. INTRODUCTION	1
II. HIERONYMUS BOSCH'S CONTEMPORARY COUNTERPARTS AND THE <i>ARS NOVA</i>	13
III. THE ORIGINS OF BOSCH'S MONSTERS	22
CLASSICAL PAST	25
THE ILLUMINATIONS	26
IV. HIERONYMUS BOSCH DURING THE AGE OF THE <i>DEVOTIO MODERNA</i>	33
BOSCH AND ERASMUS	37
PEDDLERS AND THE DISABLED IN BOSCH'S OEUVRE	41
V. DISCOVERING THE MEANING BEHIND BOSCH'S DISMANTLED TRIPTYCH	49
BOSCH'S <i>SHIP OF FOOLS</i> AND SEBASTIAN BRANT'S INFLUENCES ...	53
BOSCH'S <i>ALLEGORY OF INTEMPERANCE (GLUTTONY AND LUST)</i>	57
BOSCH'S <i>DEATH OF THE MISER</i>	58
BOSCH'S ROTTERDAM <i>WAYFARER</i>	62
VI. CONCLUSION	66
ENDNOTES	69
BIBLIOGRAPHY	87
APPENDICES	93
A. TIMELINE	93
B. IMAGES	96
VITA	134

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure	Page
1.	Hieronymus Bosch, <i>The Ship of Fools</i> , ca. 1500-1510. Oil on oak panel, 58.4 x 33 cm. Musée du Louvre, Paris96
2.	Hieronymus Bosch, <i>Allegory of Intemperance (Gluttony and Lust)</i> , ca. 1500-1510. Oil on oak panel, 34.9 x 31.4 cm (unframed). Yale University Art Gallery, New Haven 97
3.	Hieronymus Bosch, <i>Death of the Miser</i> , ca. 1500-1510. Oil on oak panel, 19.3 x 6.4 cm. The National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C. 98
4.	Hieronymus Bosch, <i>The Wayfarer</i> , ca. 1500-1510. Oil on oak panel, 71.1 x 70.6 cm. Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen, Rotterdam 99
5.	Hieronymus Bosch, <i>The Cure of Folly</i> , ca. 1490. Oil on panel, 48 x 35 cm. Museo Nacional del Prado, Madrid 100
6.	Hieronymus Bosch, <i>The Conjuror</i> , ca. 1502. Oil on panel, 53 x 65 cm. Musée Municipal, Saint Germain-en-Laye 101
7.	Hieronymus Bosch, <i>The Temptation of Saint Anthony</i> (open view), ca. 1502. Oil on oak panel, 131.5 x 119 cm (central panel), 131.5 x 53 cm (wings). Museu Nacional de Arte Antiga, Lisbon 101
8.	Hieronymus Bosch, <i>Saint John on Patmos</i> , after 1488. Oil on oak panel, 61 x 121.9 cm. Staatliche Museen, Gemäldegalerie, Berlin 102
9.	Jan van Eyck, <i>Giovanni Arnolfini and His Wife</i> , 1434. Oil on oak panel, 81.3 x 61 cm. National Gallery, London 103
10.	Jan van Eyck, <i>The Annunciation</i> , ca. 1434-36. Oil on canvas transferred from panel, 93 x 37 cm. National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C. 104
11.	Jan van Eyck, <i>Virgin and Child with Saint Michael and Saint Catherine with a Donor (Dresden Triptych)</i> , ca. 1437. Oil on oak panel, 33.1 x 27.5 cm (central panel), 33.1 x 13.6 cm (wings). Gemäldegalerie Alte Meister, Dresden 105
12.	Jan van Eyck, <i>Virgin and Child with Canon van der Paele</i> , ca. 1434-36. Oil on oak panel, 141 x 176.5 cm (including frame), 122 x 157 (excluding frame). Groeningemuseum, Bruges 105

Figure	Page
13. Jan van Eyck, <i>Madonna in the Church</i> , ca. 1438. Oil on oak panel, 31 x 14 cm. Gemäldegalerie, Staatliche Museen, Berlin	106
14. Robert Campin, <i>Virgin and Child</i> , ca. 1410. Oil on panel, 160 x 68 cm. Städelsches Kunstinstitut und Städtische Galerie, Frankfurt	107
15. Follower of Robert Campin, <i>Madonna before a Firescreen</i> , ca. 1440. Oil on panel, 63.5 x 49.5 cm. The National Gallery, London	108
16. Rogier van der Weyden, <i>Saint Luke Drawing the Virgin</i> , ca. 1435-40. Oil and tempera on panel, 137.5 x 110.8 cm. Museum of Fine Arts, Boston	109
17. Rogier van der Weyden, <i>Saint John Altarpiece</i> , ca. 1455. Oil on oak panel, 77 x 48 cm. Gemäldegalerie, Staatliche Museen, Berlin	110
18. Hieronymus Bosch, <i>Ecce Homo</i> , ca. 1480. Oil on oak panel, 70.1 x 61 cm. Städelsches Kunstinstitut und Städtische Galerie, Frankfurt	111
19. Follower of Hieronymus Bosch, <i>Ecce Homo Triptych</i> , 1496-1500. Oil on oak panel, 73 x 57.2 cm. Museum of Fine Arts, Boston	112
20. Follower of Hieronymus Bosch, <i>Job Triptych</i> , ca. 1500-24. Oil on oak panel, 132 x 98.3 cm. Groeningemuseum, Bruges	112
21. <i>Seventeen monstrous races</i> , ca. 1175. Manuscript, 48.5 x 71.4 cm. British Library, London	113
22. <i>A map of the world</i> , with Jerusalem at the center and the monstrous races on the outermost edge, ca. 1265. Manuscript, 17 x 12.5 cm. British Library, London	114
23. <i>A map of monstrous races</i> , detail of <i>Christ and Angels</i> , ca. 1265. Manuscript. British Library, London	115
24. <i>A map of monstrous races</i> , detail of the <i>dragons</i> , ca. 1265. Manuscript. British Library, London	115
25. <i>A map of monstrous races</i> , detail of the <i>monstrous races</i> , ca. 1265. Manuscript, British Library, London	115
26. Hieronymus Bosch, <i>The Garden of Earthly Delights</i> (open view), ca. 1503-1515. Oil on oak panel, 220 x 97.5 cm. Museo Nacional del Prado, Madrid	116

Figure	Page
27. Hieronymus Bosch, <i>The Garden of Earthly Delights</i> , detail of <i>Hell</i> , ca. 1503-1515. Oil on oak panel, 87 x 38.4 cm. Museo Nacional del Prado, Madrid	117
28. Hieronymus Bosch, <i>Last Judgment Triptych</i> (open view), ca. after 1482. Oil on panel, 160 x 127 cm (central panel), 165 x 61 cm (wings). Akademie der Bildenden Künste, Vienna	118
29. Hieronymus Bosch, <i>Last Judgment Triptych</i> , detail of central panel, ca. after 1482. Oil on panel, 160 x 127 cm. Akademie der Bildenden Künste, Vienna	118
30. Bernadino di Betto (Pinturricchio), <i>Piccolomini Library</i> (interior), ca. 1502-08. Fresco. Siena	119
31. Hieronymus Bosch, <i>Haywain Triptych</i> , ca. 1516. Oil on oak panels, 132.1 x 198.1cm (central panel), 142.2 x 66 cm (wings). Museo Nacional del Prado, Madrid	120
32. Hieronymus Bosch, <i>Adoration of the Magi</i> , ca. after 1485-1500. Oil on panel, 138 x 144 cm. Museo Nacional del Prado, Madrid	120
33. Hieronymus Bosch, <i>Tabletop of the Seven Deadly Sins and the Four Last Things</i> , ca. 1500. Oil on panel, 119.4 x 149.9 cm. Museo Nacional del Prado, Madrid	121
34. Hieronymus Bosch, <i>Last Judgment Triptych</i> , detail of shutters, ca. after 1482. Oil on panel. Akademie der Bildenden Künste, Vienna	122
35. Hieronymus Bosch, <i>Last Judgment Triptych</i> , detail of <i>beggar</i> (closed view), ca. after 1482. Oil on panel, 165 x 61 cm. Akademie der Bildenden Künste, Vienna ..	123
36. Hieronymus Bosch, <i>Christ Carrying the Cross</i> , ca. 1510. Oil on panel, 74 x 81 cm. Museum of Fine Arts, Ghent	123
37. Hieronymus Bosch, <i>Garden of Earthly Delights</i> , detail of <i>tree-man</i> , ca. 1503-1515. Oil on oak panel, 87 x 38.4 cm. Museo Nacional del Prado, Madrid	124
38. Hieronymus Bosch, <i>Tabletop of the Seven Deadly Sins and the Four Last Things</i> , detail of <i>Avaricia</i> , ca. 1500. Oil on panel. Museo Nacional del Prado, Madrid	124

Figure	Page
39. Hieronymus Bosch, <i>Tabletop of the Seven Deadly Sins and the Four Last Things</i> , detail of <i>Invidia</i> , ca. 1500. Oil on panel. Museo Nacional del Prado, Madrid	125
40. Reconstruction of Hieronymus Bosch's <i>Ship of Fools</i> and <i>Allegory of Intemperance</i> (author's reconstruction). See Figures 1 and 2 for further details about the images	126
41. Jan van Eyck, <i>Virgin with the Chancellor Rolin</i> , ca. 1435. Oil on panel, 66 x 62 cm. Musée du Louvre, Paris	127
42. Hieronymus Bosch, <i>Tabletop of the Seven Deadly Sins and the Four Last Things</i> , detail of <i>Luxuria</i> , ca. 1500. Oil on panel. Museo Nacional del Prado, Madrid	128
43. Hieronymus Bosch, <i>Tabletop of the Seven Deadly Sins and the Four Last Things</i> , detail of <i>Death of the Sinner</i> , ca. 1500. Oil on panel. Museo Nacional del Prado, Madrid	128
44. Simon Marmion, <i>The Visions of Tondal</i> , detail of <i>Hellmouth</i> or the <i>Mouth of Hell</i> page, ca. 1475. Manuscript – tempera colors, gold leaf, gold paint, and ink on parchment tipped into a binding of wooden boards covered with brown calf, 36.3 x 26.2 cm (leaf). J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles	129
45. Reconstruction of Hieronymus Bosch's <i>Ship of Fools</i> , <i>Allegory of Intemperance</i> , <i>Death of the Miser</i> , and missing central panel (author's reconstruction). See Figures 1, 2 and 3 for more details about the images	130
46. After Hieronymus Bosch, <i>Cripples, Fools, Musicians, and Beggars</i> , ca. 1570. Engraving, 53.7 x 41 cm (framed). Saint Louis Art Museum, Saint Louis	131
47. Hans Holbein the Younger, <i>The Pilgrim</i> , ca. 1538. Woodcut, 6.5 x 5.2 cm. The British Museum, London	132
48. Reconstruction of Hieronymus Bosch's dismantled triptych (author's reconstruction). See Figures 1, 2, 3 and 4 for further detail about the images	133

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Jeroen van Aken, commonly known as Hieronymus Bosch, was born around 1450 to a family of minor painters in 's-Hertogenbosch, Netherlands. Nothing is known about Bosch before 1474 when he was named as a witness in a deed involving his sister Katherijn.¹ It is not until 1480-81 that he is mentioned as an artist.² This paper focuses on one of the Dutch painter's dismantled triptychs (three panels once hinged together) created between 1500 and 1510. This triptych includes the *Ship of Fools* (Fig. 1), which resides in the Musée du Louvre in Paris, the *Allegory of Intemperance* (Fig. 2) in the Yale University Art Gallery in New Haven, Connecticut, *Death of the Miser* (Fig. 3) in the National Gallery of Art in Washington D.C., and the *Wayfarer* (Fig. 4) in the Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen in Rotterdam. In terms of the artist's iconography, there is no concrete evidence from where his ideas originated, as little is known about his personal life. Furthermore, as was common in the period, he did not title his paintings or drawings, further complicating the interpretation of his oeuvre.

For the past five centuries following the Dutch artist's death, he has been dubbed a “*faiseur de dyable*” (maker of devils) and barely considered an artist up to the modern period.³ Bosch became obscure and was largely forgotten up until the late 19th century when a revival of interest occurred. Research on Bosch materialized in the 20th century and then flourished in the 21st century when an overwhelming interest in the artist developed.⁴ The earliest writings on Bosch and his work date from the 16th century, in which Florentine historians such as Lodovico Guicciardini (1521-1589) in his *Description of all the Low Countries* (1567), referred to the artist as a “very noble and admirable inventor of fantastic and bizarre things.”⁵ Giorgio Vasari (1511-1574), the Italian historian of artists, described Bosch's inventions as “*fantastiche c capricciose*”

(fantastic and whimsical).⁶ In the North, similar statements pertaining to his demons and hell beings are discussed by the Netherlandish historian Marc van Vaernewijck (1518-1569) and Flemish painter, poet, art historian, and art theoretician Karel van Mander (1548-1606). Van Vaernewijck called Bosch “the maker of devils, since he had no rival in the art of depicting demons,” whereas van Mander, who is the Northern counterpart to Vasari, provided very little observation of Bosch’s works and describes them as “gruesome pictures of spooks and horrid phantoms of hell.”⁷

Not only were scholars in Italy and the Netherlands curious about this obscure artist but numerous statements began to appear in Spanish writing, due to the mid-16th-century influx of Bosch’s paintings into Spain.⁸ In 1581, King Philip II journeyed to Lisbon and saw Bosch’s works.⁹ Eventually, he came to own as many as 36 paintings by the Dutch artist—an outstanding number considering the belief that Bosch only created around 40 in total.¹⁰ This large collection was inventoried by Father José de Següenza, a member of the Spanish Order of Saint Jerome. Shortly after the king’s death in 1598, Següenza defended Philip II’s obsessive interest in Bosch by overturning the notion that his paintings were “devilish.”¹¹

Little attention was given by scholars to Northern art during the two-and-a-half centuries following Father José’s defense until the end of the 19th century when respectable scholarship arose. Virginia Rembert believes that this was due to historians looking for a precursor to the realistic impulse occurring in the mid-19th-century.¹² With an interest in Northern art, the renewed fascination of Pieter Bruegel the Elder led to the “rediscovery” of Bosch.¹³ Historians such as Jan Mosmans (1870-1966) searched through the records of ‘s-Hertogenbosch for anything discussing Bosch, but very little was found.¹⁴ French historian Louis Demonts (1882-1954) provided a sketch of the Dutch artist’s oeuvre based on preconceived

ideas. Demonts suggested that Bosch's works drew from subject matter of traditional theological points of view, but was adjusted according to his personal judgment on morality.¹⁵ Late works such as *The Cure of Folly* (Fig. 5), *The Conjuror* (Fig. 6), and *Ship of Fools* (Fig. 1) were shifted to Bosch's youth based on style. With historians once again interested in the Northern Renaissance, Bosch was able to be viewed as a significant artist in the mid-20th-century.

Many Bosch scholars emerged during the 20th century, notably Wilhelm Fränger (1890-1964), Ludwig von Baldass (1887-1963), Walter S. Gibson (1897-1985), and Laurinda Dixon (b. 1948-). The German art historian Wilhelm Fränger dedicated his study of the artist to denouncing the "vulgar misunderstanding," however, he still supported the belief that the Flemish painter fabricated his creations through his imagination.¹⁶ Ludwig von Baldass, an Austrian art historian, validates Fränger's findings while also identifying many of Bosch's patrons and collectors as remarkably respectable.¹⁷ These patrons include, Philip the Fair of Brabant and his sister Archduchess Margaret, William of Orange and Archduke Ernest, as well as citizens of Amsterdam, Haarlem, and Antwerp – and in particular, the Flemish Baroque painter, Peter Paul Rubens (1577-1640) in the 17th century. Most modern scholars, however, dispute the idea that Bosch's fantastical creatures emerged from his unconscious mind.

The American art historian, Walter S. Gibson, expands the scholarship on Bosch by laying out three stages of interpretation from the 16th century.¹⁸ The first incorporates the 16th to 18th century's views on the artist's being known for his paintings of devils and hell. The second stage covers the 19th century when writers became aware of Bosch as an artist, a moralizer, and the discovery of archival material that helped cast him in a more practical biographical and religious light.¹⁹ The final stage began with the appreciation of Bosch as an artist in the 20th century, especially when discussing Dutch realism in genre and landscape.²⁰ Gibson briefly

mentions that “alchemy, astrology, and the other occult sciences, as well as various gnostic doctrines,” were barely touched upon by earlier critics as influences on Bosch’s iconography.²¹

The 20th-century art historian, Laurinda Dixon, began her studies on the alchemical interpretations of Bosch’s work before moving into the field of pharmacy.²² The family of Bosch’s wife included a pharmacist, but the middle-class background might have drawn the artist to the more practical craft of pharmacy, which correlated to alchemy and medicine as seen in the *Temptation of Saint Anthony* triptych (Fig. 7). It can be concluded that Hieronymus Bosch was most likely not closely allied with any school or group of artists.²³ His works differentiate from the norm in Netherlandish art and rely on older forms of displaying the religious subject matter.

Many Bosch scholars identify illuminated manuscripts as the artist’s primary source, noting the parallels between Bosch’s fantastical creatures and the imaginary beings and monsters resting within the letters or peering from within the marginalia of these manuscripts. Illuminated manuscripts range in function, not just for prayer. During this period, they were popularly used for prayer books, but also as items of personal use. Bestiaries are an early form of illumination, depicting creatures and monsters based on descriptions during travel. An example of this is Alexander the Great’s depictions of his foes as monsters.²⁴ The *Biblia moralisée* was designed to interpret and explain Scripture through illustration. Made during the first half of the 13th century, these seven illuminated manuscripts “bring... together sacred texts, allegorical illustrations, and exegetical commentaries all in an invented idiom that challenges and subverts traditional ways of translating and transcribing biblical text.”²⁵ Bestiaries and Bibles provided a wide range of figures and creatures that could convey or represent a specific meaning. As historians, staying within the period eye is critical when looking at imagery that is foreign to our modern

standpoint. Scholars who look at Bosch's paintings or drawings tend to bring up more modern ideals than would have been contemporary to the Dutch artist.

Scholars, such as James Marrow and Walter S. Gibson, have long acknowledged that the fanciful and often fantastical imagery populating Bosch's paintings drew from the artist's knowledge and study of medieval illuminated manuscripts, particularly in the marginalia.²⁶ The question at hand, however, is *why*? Why did Bosch reference and use stylistic and iconographic motifs drawn from medieval examples over more contemporary conventions of the Renaissance? During the Renaissance period, remaining within established tradition in style and iconography was expected and requisite to secure commissions, particularly those serving religious functions. The artist's motivations and gravitation toward older, medieval motifs emerge by examining Bosch's lesser-studied triptych against the historical backdrop of the Netherlands and pre-Reformation Europe. This paper argues that Bosch's employment of medieval imagery in his works draws from the then widespread practice of the *Devotio Moderna*, otherwise known as "modern devotion," a decisive movement for religious reform that emphasized the practice of personal prayer and meditation. The *Devotio Moderna* of the 15th century also provides viewers the ability to understand Bosch's iconography through the period eye.

Throughout Bosch's oeuvre, there is an emphasis on using art as a language. The monsters and creatures depicted within the scenes speak for themselves. Scholars have discussed the language of his work deriving from local myths centered in 's-Hertogenbosch and illuminated manuscripts.²⁷ The Brotherhood of Our Lady and other religious bodies commissioned Bosch to create paintings, mainly altarpieces, using the artist's language. He breaks from the traditional path of Northern-Netherlandish art by introducing beasts and creatures into biblical scenes and providing his own code through medieval illuminations. The

looming question is “How was Bosch exposed to these images?” From where did his ideas stem? And why did he choose to use illuminated manuscripts as his source of inspiration? These questions cannot be answered easily, especially without evidence. Therefore, to look at an artist and the work, we must also look at their origins.

Scholars such as James Marrow, Eric de Bruyn, Hans van Gangelen and Sebastian Ostkamp, and Jean Michel Massing discuss Bosch’s works within its historical context. In the article “Circumdede runt me canes multi: Christ’s Tormentors in Northern European Art of the Late Middle Ages and Early Renaissance” by James Marrow, the author discusses the interrelationship between literary descriptions and artistic images.²⁸ Eric de Bruyn’s article, “The Iconography of Hieronymus Bosch’s *St. Christopher Carrying the Christ Child* (Rotterdam),” explains that Bosch did not paint in a secret language but rather took from iconography found in the 15th and 16th centuries that was easily recognizable by viewers at the time.²⁹ The monstrous creatures in medieval illuminated manuscripts did not function as Bosch’s only source of inspiration. His iconography, in portraying an unidealized approach to the people and figures, draws from what he observed while living in the Netherlands.

Hans van Gangelen and Sebastian Ostkamp, in their chapter, “Parallels Between Hieronymus Bosch’s Imagery and Decorated Material Culture from the Period Between circa 1450 and 1525,” discuss human sin and how this plays a role in most of Bosch’s works.³⁰ They examine different pottery portraying Christ and the devil, noting that the devil serves as a warning. The authors frequently mention the ‘topsy-turvy world’ that Bosch and his contemporaries created. The ‘topsy-turvy world’ is where role switching occurs, whether between humans and animals or a servant becoming the king for a day. Van Gangelen and Ostkamp state that Bosch most likely got the general ideas for his works from illuminated

manuscripts.³¹ Animals such as owls, fish, and toad-like creatures represent the evils who invade art space with their presence. Finally, in Jean Michel Massing's essay, "Sicut erat in diebus Antonii: The Devils under the Bridge in the *Tribulations of Saint Anthony* by Hieronymus Bosch in Lisbon," the author discusses the painting, breaking it down into its perceived sections.³² Massing discusses how the center panel focuses on the devilish deceptions comparing it to the brain's activity according to medieval psychology. According to medieval knowledge, the brain had three parts, one focusing on common sense and imagination, the second on fantasy and the faculty to judge, and the third is where memory is stored.³³ When awake, most control one's imagination; however, when asleep, that control wanes, and fantasy begins to sprout, and common sense takes this as reality.³⁴ Therefore, many believe Bosch drew from his imagination, not what he experienced from his everyday life in 's-Hertogenbosch.

Through the study of the *Devotio Moderna* and looking at illuminated manuscripts, the above statement can be proven false. The *Devotio Moderna* practice founded by Gerard Groote in 1370 sought to shift the Christian faithful's reliance on the Church, which had become increasingly corrupt, to using private devotion. Instead of having to go into Church for prayer and repentance, common people could perform their prayers at home. Through this personal form of prayer and meditation, they would use private books dedicated to their devotional practices such as the *Bible moralisée*, which is a medieval picture Bible, or a Book of Hours, a book of prayers said at the canonical hours in honor of the Virgin, that persuaded those able to afford them to pray at home. Another way common people could perform their prayers was through pilgrimage. The *Devotio Moderna* practice integrates the idea of human existence being a journey or pilgrimage. Furthermore, Bosch did not create monstrous beings out of his

imagination; he just did not follow the traditional style of the Renaissance and paved his own way.

His tendency to break from tradition also included his signature. Instead of going by his family name, Van Aken, the Dutch artist chose the alias of ‘Hieronymus Bosch.’ His name Hieronymus draws from the Dutch Jeroen, which means “sacred,” and Bosch, Dutch for “forest.” Thus, his name directly references ‘s-Hertogenbosch. He was likely named after Saint Jerome as there was a rise in popularity of the Church Father Jerome in the 15th and 16th centuries.³⁵ The *Devotio Moderna*, a movement dedicated to spiritual regeneration, included the Brethren of the Common Life, who adopted Saint Jerome as their patron and therefore they were often referred to as ‘Hieronymites.’³⁶ The Brethren of the Common Life was a Roman Catholic religious community. There is no documentation that Bosch was a member of this community, although he may have been acquainted with their doctrines (perhaps indirectly) and been influenced by their beliefs.³⁷

Bosch’s name first appears in two documents of 1474, but neither mentions him as an artist. On April 5, 1474, Hieronymus was included in a mortgage document alongside his father, sister, and two brothers; whereas in a document dated July 26, 1474, only Bosch and his father appear.³⁸ Seeing as Bosch is named along with his family in the two documents, art historians believe he was a minor at the time. His name disappears from documents after 1474. According to IIsink Matthijs, this may suggest that Bosch spent time away from ‘s-Hertogenbosch; however, there is no concrete evidence to support this. Bosch’s name reappears again in local archives in June of 1481.³⁹

Mentioned in 53 documents throughout Hieronymus Bosch’s life, 22 of these accounts concern payments, with him acting on his own behalf in 12 of them and then 10 referring to his

work as an artist.⁴⁰ The remaining 31 documents only mention Bosch by name as a taxpayer representing his wife or his family. The documents provide only a limited amount of information about the Dutch artist since they deal with payments.

Bosch comes from a family of several generations of artists. Thomas van Aken, his great-grandfather, was a painter, as were his grandfather Jan and father, Anthonius. Originally from Aken, they moved to the duchy of Guelders, namely Nijmegen. A document from 1427 listed the family in 's-Hertogenbosch through Jan van Aken.⁴¹ Not only was Bosch a member of the Brotherhood of Our Lady, but his grandfather was a common member of the Brotherhood. Bosch's grandfather was commissioned to gild and paint several objects in 1430-31.⁴² His grandfather married twice, first to his wife, Katherina, who gave him six children until she died in 1432, while his second wife was a woman named Christina.⁴³ Out of the six children, he had four sons who became painters, the youngest being the father of Hieronymus Bosch. Bosch was the second eldest out of five children, born around 1450. There is neither proof of a young Bosch working in his father's workshop nor any information about him completing his training in another town; however, there is speculation.⁴⁴ He is known to sign his name 'Jheronimus Bosch' for his hometown of 's-Hertogenbosch. Other documents have him labeled as Jheronimus, Jeon, or Jeroen.⁴⁵

Through the wealth gained by marrying Aleid van de Meervenne in 1581, Bosch obtained access to the highest social circles within his hometown, especially the Brotherhood of Our Lady.⁴⁶ Some historians believe that Bosch's iconography was not understandable from the perspective of a middle-class citizen of the time.⁴⁷ Most scholars largely dispute this idea as he was a middle-class citizen, and his paintings and drawings would reflect his social standing. His contemporary audience apparently received the artist's works well, as evidenced by the amount

of commissioned works he completed. However, his works were enigmatic to modern viewers, as religious beliefs and knowledge had changed significantly since the Renaissance.⁴⁸ In order to decipher his puzzling practice and pessimistic view of human nature, one must apply the period eye; that is, examine his works within the context of the late 15th and early 16th centuries.

His high standing in society emerges through his involvement with the Brotherhood of Our Lady, a fellowship composed of mainly priests and academics. Bosch was the only artist inducted into the Brotherhood during his time.⁴⁹ Sworn as a member of the Brotherhood of Our Lady in 1487-8 as Jheronimus Anthunissoens van Aken (Hieronymus, son of Anthony, of Aken), he created the panel of *Saint John on Patmos* (Fig. 8), now in the Gemäldegalerie in Berlin, shortly after he joined.⁵⁰ This appears to be the first painting on which he utilized his Latin signature, ‘Jheromimus bosch.’ His process of joining the Brotherhood of Our Lady was unusual not only because he was not born into the upper echelon of ‘s-Hertogenbosch society but also because he came from a trade background.⁵¹ The position he held in the Brotherhood was not through his financial standing but rather his status as a painter.⁵² After paying dues as a new member, the Brotherhood added Bosch to the margins in the account books, including the title of painter.⁵³ After his induction into the Brotherhood of Our Lady, he was tonsured and began wearing homemade clothes that imitated those worn by ecclesiastics.⁵⁴ In 1488, less than two years later, Bosch became a *frère-suré* (sworn brother); thus, he was promoted to the rank of “notable.”⁵⁵

The Brotherhood of Our Lady did more than organize prayer meetings, preside over funeral ceremonies, and distribute bread to the poor. One of their functions was to train the orchestra, which performed in Saint John’s Cathedral. They also supplied ornaments, altarpieces, and pictures. They had a theatrical company that specialized in staging dramatic performances,

mystery plays, devil dances, a ballet of ghosts and skeletons, farces, and diableries which called for stage properties.⁵⁶ These stage props included iron helmets, fake noses (in leather), painted costumes, masks of cloth and hide, embroidered mantles, silk or cloth or gold banners, tallow candles, and oil torches.⁵⁷ There is evidence that Bosch contributed to making props for stage performances and religious ceremonies.⁵⁸ Bosch's membership in the Brotherhood is suggestive of his status as a leading figure within the community and a highly respected citizen.⁵⁹

Account books of the Brotherhood (*Rekoningen van Saint John*) record that Bosch was employed to paint a coat of arms, design a copper crown, and model a crucifixion.⁶⁰ As mentioned above, Bosch's name appeared for the first time as an artist in 1480-81, stating that "Jeroen die maelre" (Jeroen the painter) supplied the "Lieve-Vrouwe Broederschap" (Brotherhood of Our Lady) using two unfinished wings of an altarpiece his father, Antonius van Aken, left behind after his death in 1478-79.⁶¹ Furthermore, this entry provides us with a general idea of his family background and training as a painter. Bosch had two uncles, Thomas and Johannas, who were also painters.⁶² His grandfather, who passed in 1456, also had the same profession.⁶³ The account books also mention Bosch having supplied two glass-master workers, Henricken Bueken and Willem Lombart, with designs for the chapel of the Brotherhood.⁶⁴

Due to the limited amount of documentation related to Bosch's personal beliefs, works by artists contemporary to his period may reveal why he chose to go against the tide. The work of Northern Renaissance artist Pieter Bruegel the Elder (1525-1569) provides a visual comparison as he imitates Bosch's style.⁶⁵ While Bruegel's art might appear like Bosch's, what we must remember is that he came after his fellow Dutchman and during the time of the Reformation. In contrast, Dutch philosopher, and Catholic theologian Desiderius Erasmus (1466-1536) lived in

's-Hertogenbosch at the same time as Bosch and seemed to have shared similar religious attitudes.

This thesis will therefore include research not only on illuminated manuscripts that may have influenced Bosch's oeuvre but also an examination of Erasmus's life to affirm that Bosch was raised with similar religious beliefs and medieval ideas. A discussion of the *ars nova* and Bosch's departure from the tradition of early and contemporary Netherlandish painters is the focus of Chapter 2. Chapter 3 will provide background information on the visual and written works that may have shaped the Dutch painter's perspective on art. Chapter 4 will analyze the practice of *Devotio Moderna* and examine the Brethren and Sisters of the Common Life in connection to Bosch. Lastly, Chapter 5 will discuss the iconography behind the dismantled altarpiece while highlighting some literature that may have brought about the ideas for each painting. Together, these chapters provide an understanding of *how* modern devotions could influence a professionally trained artist to shift away from the traditional Renaissance style that Jan van Eyck and Rogier van der Weyden established during the 15th century.

CHAPTER II

HIERONYMUS BOSCH'S CONTEMPORARY COUNTERPARTS AND THE *ARS*

NOVA

Before painting in two-dimensional forms became the dominant artistic medium, architecture provided the desired aesthetic and spiritual orientation that commanded the Middle Ages.⁶⁶ The visual vocabulary of Romanesque and Gothic art was born from this manner during the 14th century. Beginning in 15th century Europe, the meaning of art shifted stylistically. In contrast, a building constructed in the 13th century, such as the Basilica of Our Lady at Tongeren in Burgundy (known as eastern Belgium now) and finished three hundred years later, will look uniform, but the two-dimensional form does not. Visual realism became a dominating factor in northern Renaissance paintings and was dubbed *ars nova* (new art) for its ability to mimic color and light found in the real world. The works of Hieronymus Bosch depart significantly from Netherlandish painting in the early 15th century.

Due to the *Devotio Moderna* movement during the 14th century, a growth in piety and devotion on an emotional level emerged. Northern realism produced a shift from abstract metaphors to realistic narratives.⁶⁷ There are signs of change, such as a shift away from scholastic speculation, a medieval school of philosophy that dominated the European educational systems between 1100 and 1700, to self-governing human experiences.⁶⁸ In his article, "Realism and Symbolism in Early Flemish Painting," Craig Harbison suggests that the stress of the economy or social developments produced the change within the artistic scene.⁶⁹ These differences may draw from to the artists' personal styles or outlooks on life and society. Harbison writes that in 15th century Flemish painting, an artist's style is reflective of their psychology and was indicative of their demeanor.⁷⁰

The Flemish artist, Jan van Eyck (1390-1441) was known as one of the inventors of early Netherlandish Renaissance art. His *Giovanni Arnolfini and His Wife* (Fig. 9) is a well-known example of this realism that van Eyck himself made popular. However, not everything is as it appears within the panel. The spatial composition does not correspond with the overall composition of the painting. For instance, the ceiling drops low, allowing the end of the chandelier to level with the top of Giovanni Arnolfini's hat, throwing the perspective off balance. Resting in the middle of the double portrait and hung low on the wall, the convex mirror's position is much too uncomfortable to be practical. Jan van Eyck's work is known to be precise and luxurious, with "enamel-like beauty"; the environment within his paintings is stately and orderly, carefully detailing the visual world through reconstruction.⁷¹ His figures appear aloof and display a noble standing, portraying the Virgin, Child, and saints as timeless beings.

In Jan van Eyck's religious works, he draws the spectator in by modifying the visible reality. Scholars have noted that he was not recording what he saw. Therefore, he was not portraying earthly qualities.⁷² Instead, the artist would consider supernatural truths rather than earthly existences.⁷³ For instance, the church settings in his works, the *Annunciation* (Fig. 10), the *Virgin and Child with Saint Michael and Saint Catherine with Donor* (Fig. 11), the *Virgin and Child with Canon van der Paele* (Fig. 12), and the *Madonna in the Church* (Fig. 13), do not correspond to the architecture or décor of contemporary churches. Many of his contemporaries, just as modern viewers, confuse his imaginary interiors with real constructions. Van Eyck created works that separate the divine from the human realm.⁷⁴

In his *Madonna in the Church* (Fig. 13), van Eyck's Virgin appears too monumental in comparison to the interior in which she stands. By intermixing realism and symbolism, he creates a new order within his compositions by focusing on the themes of the Incarnation and

Immaculate Conception.⁷⁵ Throughout van Eyck's works, he highlights the Virgin Mary in all her pure glory and Christ when he assumes human form. In creating this union of opposites within this new order, van Eyck's oeuvre portrays the *ars nova* through the Netherlandish form of realism, contrasting with the works of Bosch's style, which is not expressed within biblical or secular works.

Scholars dub Jan van Eyck's style as disguised symbolism, beginning with Erwin Panofsky in 1934 in his article "Jan van Eyck's *Arnolfini* Portrait" and later expanded in his text, *Early Netherlandish Painting*.⁷⁶ The use of disguising his symbolism within ordinary objects entices the viewer to search for the hidden significance in every object throughout his work.⁷⁷ Panofsky emphasizes that this does not mean

that the observer is expected to realize such notions consciously. On the contrary, the supreme charm of the picture – and this applies to the creations of Jan van Eyck in general – is essentially based on the fact that the spectator is not irritated by a mass of complicated hieroglyphs but is allowed to abandon himself to the quiet fascination of what I might call a *transfigured reality*.⁷⁸

Panofsky contradicts his claim of the presence of disguised symbolism within the Flemish artist's works as leading the viewer "to suspect a hidden significance in ... every object" but then also argues that it is done unconsciously.⁷⁹

In *Early Netherlandish Painting*, which Panofsky wrote two decades later, he dates his concept of disguised symbolism as early as the Italian Trecento (the 1300s).⁸⁰ The increased naturalistic space and light correspond with the increasing presence of disguised symbols throughout religious paintings. Panofsky appears to suggest that the distinction of replacing traditional symbols with corresponding objects that are suitable for the illustrated context causes these illustrations to be less readable as symbols.⁸¹ The primary purpose was not to intentionally conceal these symbols from view; instead, symbolism and naturalism blended.

Scholars, such as John L. Ward, have argued the concept of disguised symbolism after Panofsky. On one hand, Denis M. Hitchcock, Carol J. Purtle, James H. Marrow, and Barbara Lane write that these symbols were familiar to the everyday 15th-century viewer but modern-day viewers see this as ambiguous and the connections between symbolism and naturalism within art are lost.⁸² On the other hand, Craig Harbison and Jozef de Coo argue that most 15th-century viewers were unfamiliar with church doctrine since attending Mass was not typical and religious paintings of the period were constructed to cause intense and mystical experiences or pleas for salvation.⁸³ It is doubtful that most patrons or viewers would have understood the complex symbolism portrayed in these religious works. Another argument surrounding Panofsky's claim of disguised symbolism is that Netherlandish painters modeled their works after van Eyck's symbolism.⁸⁴ However, Ward demonstrates that van Eyck's use of disguised symbolism in delaying recognition was short-lived and provided little influence.⁸⁵ Essentially, the term disguised symbolism that Ward discusses centers around ordinary objects that do not originally have significant meaning and are being emphasized drastically by Jan van Eyck within his paintings. Aside from van Eyck, other artists during the Northern Renaissance influenced Hieronymus Bosch's contemporaries and perhaps the artist himself in disguising the symbolism of his works.

Robert Campin (1375-1444), also known as the Master of Flémalle, was born in Valenciennes, France. Although his works appear throughout the Netherlands, documents place Campin first in Tournai, Belgium in 1405-06. While his works complement van Eyck's paintings, they are less refined and mundane while also embodying human feelings and earthly events.⁸⁶ A *Virgin and Child* (Fig. 14) and the *Madonna before a Firescreen* (Fig. 15), attributed to a follower of Robert Campin, portray contrasting worlds that Campin highlights throughout

his works. The former displays an image of divinity, where the sacred reality is separate from human existence. At the same time, the latter features an earthly realm that embodies the visible world. His jarring relations between realism and symbolism led scholars to believe that he could not capture the “disguised symbolism” that van Eyck could produce.⁸⁷ Harbison refutes this belief and explains that Campin’s Frankfurt *Virgin and Child* (Fig. 14) is not complex, and the meaning does not emerge between these contrasting elements.⁸⁸ His symbolism is not always hidden Easter eggs; instead, he distinguishes between the sacred and secular realms. Artists like van Eyck blend and glorify divine beings in their works. Their interest in the visible reality displays their difference in attitude toward Christian symbolism.

Rogier van der Weyden (1399/1400-1464) is a Flemish painter from Belgium known for his religious triptychs, altarpieces, and commissioned portraits. In comparison to van Eyck’s works, his painting, *Saint Luke Drawing the Virgin* (Fig. 16), has a crisper, more precise quality and elevates the entire composition allowing for proper perspective. However, he used fewer objects within his panel paintings than van Eyck and Campin, while also limiting his space and color.⁸⁹ Van der Weyden presents a timeless image of divinity and humanity without juxtaposing sacred and secular images.⁹⁰ Instead, he creates a mystical union, overlapping the two worlds. In explaining the universe, his use of symbolism is portrayed through small and natural objects, such as flowers, that do not have a hidden meaning.

These three artists provided a pathway for other 15th century Flemish artists to construct their own style. Harbison suggests that artists like Petrus Christus (1410-1475), Dirk Bouts (1410-1475), Geertgen tot Sint Jans (1465-1495), and Gerard David (1460-1523) appear to follow Campin with everyday reality, embodying the interior and exterior spaces through a scientific approach.⁹¹ Some of these artists also subscribe to van der Weyden’s use of mythic

imagery, contradicting spaces and presences that are otherworldly. Scholars have noted that these later artists may be responding to the “reconstructed realism” of Jan van Eyck’s works.⁹² There is also speculation that artists tried to replicate van Eyck’s ability to blend the two worlds but were unsuccessful. The Flemish painter, Hugo van der Goes (1440-1482), may have competed with the founding father of Flemish art.⁹³ In using natural objects as divine intentions, and demonstrating his religious beliefs through his works, he almost outdoes van Eyck when demonstrating disguised symbolism.⁹⁴ The point in this, Harbison explains, is that each of these artists brings new problems to the forefront while relying on their personal variations.⁹⁵

In terms of perspective, most northern artists during this period did not use the mathematical system of one-point perspective in constructing three-dimensional space onto a two-dimensional surface. Perspective was more popular in southern Italy. Van Eyck’s *Giovanni Arnolfini and His Wife* (Fig. 9) has four vanishing points surrounding the convex mirror; thus, it lacks the systematic approach found in Italian examples. It is not because northern artists knew nothing about vanishing points or perspective; the styles just varied in the construction of space between the figures and the surrounding area of the paintings. Many northern paintings contain revealing light effects and hidden Easter eggs within nooks and crannies.⁹⁶

Much like Bosch, his northern counterparts looked to their history. Dominating the Middle Ages were experimental buildings, today known as Gothic cathedrals, that brought in light and created textures and perspectives that were not always what they appeared. The concept of unity was not a priority for the architects, nor was it for the artists of the north. The works are creative fragmentations, meaning the viewer is not supposed to decipher mathematically the relationship between fragments and reality beyond the frame.⁹⁷ Unity and fragmentation are two

things Bosch and his contemporaries had in common. However, the use of monstrous beings within religious compositions is unique to Bosch.

Rogier van der Weyden's *Saint John Altarpiece* (Fig. 17) does not follow the typical triptych format, as a triptych can fold its half-sized wings inward to protect the central panel.⁹⁸ Instead, the panels of his triptych are of a consecutive size and non-movable, indicating a shift from the traditional. Gothic archways frame the scenes of Saint John the Baptist's life, which continue in the archivolt (curved moldings).⁹⁹ Borrowed from theatrical productions or real life, van der Weyden presents the northern understanding of spatial form and the manipulations of the individual artist.¹⁰⁰

During the period, from 1425 to 1475, known as a successful period of panel paintings, around 20 patrons are identifiable by name in connection to early Netherlandish panel paintings.¹⁰¹ With the shift in styles from the Middle Ages to the Early Renaissance, the patrons shifted as well. Once dominated by the nobility, the upper middle class began to vie for commissioned works. The nobility primarily commissioned portraits to keep records for their genealogy – their family tree.¹⁰² During the late 14th century, a new group known as functionaries emerged from the middle- and upper-class patrons. One well-known member is Giovanni Arnolfini (1400-1472), a merchant who came into money through the Duke of Burgundy to collect wages through the port of Gravelines.¹⁰³ He was a patron of Jan van Eyck, who commissioned the painting *Giovanni Arnolfini and His Wife* (Fig. 9), but he was also a consumer of panel paintings. For these newly wealthy patrons, the ability to display their sudden wealth to the world through paintings instead of tapestries, goldsmith's work, and manuscripts was revolutionary for the period.¹⁰⁴

Much like his contemporaries, Bosch had patrons who commissioned art from him. There are three specific groups of patrons: the church, the Burgundian-Habsburg court, and the wealthy bourgeoisie.¹⁰⁵ Pertaining to the church, most of Bosch's religious commissions came from Saint John's Church and the Brotherhood of Our Lady in 's-Hertogenbosch. There are also documents from a Dominican abbey church in which one of his paintings, the *Ecce Homo* (Fig. 18), and two by followers of Bosch, the *Ecce Homo Triptych* (Fig. 19) and the *Job Triptych* (Fig. 20), might correspond to the 1638 records that show Bosch's altarpiece being sold by the abbey.¹⁰⁶ The Burgundian-Habsburg court of Duke Philip the Fair and his immediate circle admired Bosch's art during the late 15th and early 16th centuries. *The Garden of Earthly Delights* hung in Henry III of Nassau's palace in 1517, but recent scholarship confirms that it was commissioned by Henry III's uncle Engelbert II of Nassau.¹⁰⁷ In terms of the wealthy bourgeoisie, Bosch and his workshop completed artwork commissioned by these commercial elites, as they are documented by the number of surviving paintings done for patrons that were found throughout 's-Hertogenbosch and Antwerp.¹⁰⁸

Furthermore, Bosch, and his contemporaries, drew inspiration from the Middle Ages. While Jan van Eyck and Rogier van der Weyden brought architectural features into their art, Bosch borrowed from illuminated manuscripts. These illuminated forms range from personal prayer books, such as the Book of Hours, to private devotional practices through church manuscripts. Bosch's attention was captured by illuminations, which gained popularity in the Middle Ages. Yet, classical authors, such as Horace and Dante, also seem to play a role in the Dutch artist's iconography through their descriptions of hybrid and chimeric creatures, which will have further elaboration on in Chapter 3. There are also contemporary poets and humanists

who might have influenced Bosch's visual representations and religious standing. Moreover, one must investigate the ancient past to understand from where Bosch's iconography originates.

CHAPTER III

THE ORIGIN OF BOSCH'S MONSTERS

As there is limited documentation on Bosch's personal life, his religious position remains speculative at best. As a result, scholars tend to search for potential sources of inspiration behind his unusual iconography in intellectual mediums. Many scholars have pointed out that Bosch borrowed creatures from the Bestiary and biblical scenes, all of which were largely in illuminated manuscript form.¹⁰⁹ Aside from books on beasts and biblical texts, Horace's *Ars Poetica*, Dante's *Divine Comedy*, and Erasmus's *The Praise of Folly* could have shaped or inspired the images seen in Bosch's drawings and paintings, particularly his use of satire and comedy in horrific depictions. The former two writers may have influenced the illustrations found within illuminated texts. However, the latter was traveling in the Netherlands at the same time Bosch joined the Brotherhood of Our Lady, and they may have met one another.

Ancient Greek writers described monstrous beings, connecting them to men living in Africa and the Indian subcontinent.¹¹⁰ Among these writers is the Greek historian Herodotus (ca. 484 – ca. 425 BCE), who wrote about mountain-dwelling people with feet like goats, and the Greek historian and physician Ctesias (active fifth century BCE), who described the creatures that inhabited India.¹¹¹ One of the most influential writers was the Roman historian Pliny the Elder (23-79 CE), whose *Natural History* became one of the most important sources of information about the monstrous races during the Middle Ages.¹¹² Stories of these nightmarish races written by Ctesias, Pliny, and the Latin grammarian, geographer, and compiler Gaius Julius Solinus (active mid-third century BCE) were reshaped late in the 10th century in an Anglo-Saxon text known today as the *Wonders of the East*.¹¹³ This book circulated in Latin and Old English between ca. 970 and ca. 1150, describing the marvelous creatures and races of humans that lived

on distant continents.¹¹⁴ Rather than accepting the written text, the medieval people wanted pictures to go along with the descriptions. The artists who drew up these creatures had to imagine their appearance based on literary descriptions. Consequently, the same text could inspire different images to the point that neither correlates with the other.

The mere aspect of these monstrous races caused problems for Christian thinkers, who questioned ‘did they exist, and if so, did they have human souls?’ In the fourth century, the theologian and philosopher Saint Augustine of Hippo (354-430 CE) expressed concerns about whether these monstrous races shared a common ancestry with humans.¹¹⁵ Were they descendants of Adam and Eve? He argued that if these creatures descended from the first man and woman, they had souls and “were therefore capable of achieving salvation.”¹¹⁶ Saint Augustine reasoned that God, being all-powerful, would have created these beings for a reason, a divine purpose. “It ought to be absurd of us,” Saint Augustine wrote, “that just as some monsters occur within the various races of mankind, as there should be certain monstrous races within the human races as a whole.”¹¹⁷ Therefore, as descendants of Adam and Eve, he believed these monsters must appear as a wondrous expression of divine power.¹¹⁸ While Augustine does seem open-minded, he also describes these atypical people as *monstrous* within and outside normal human society.¹¹⁹ It appears that he is more preoccupied with the question whether these ‘partial-others’ (hybrids) should be classified as humans or separated into a class of their own.¹²⁰ Despite his open-minded actions, Christians chose to use monstrous imagery to demonize foreigners and those of different religions. An example of this emerges from Alexander the Great’s descriptions of his foes as monstrous beings.¹²¹ In these tales, Alexander would bring civilization to ‘wild’ and ‘untamed lands.’¹²² His reports of these ‘uncivilized’ nations

characterized them as bloodthirsty creatures. Thus, the illustrations formed around Alexander's campaigns in medieval texts depicted them as such.¹²³

Medieval people marveled at the idea of monstrous races, and these pictorial forms began to appear in surprising places. One example appears on a blank page within a folio of an enormous Bible at the Premonstratensian Abbey of Arnstein in Germany.¹²⁴ Presumably, one of the monks took advantage of this blank piece of parchment and drew seventeen monstrous humans (Fig. 21). Another example is a miniature map of the world in a Psalter manuscript made ca. 1265 in England, depicting a Christian view of the monstrous races (Fig. 22).¹²⁵ Much like modern maps, this manuscript has the "continents, oceans, mountains, rivers and cities" with each feature written in Latin.¹²⁶ The similarities end here, though, as Christ stands at the upper center watching from a heavenly vantage point with an orb, perhaps representing the world, and making a sign of blessing with his other hand (Fig. 23). The background is deep blue with white dots, likely stars, flanked by two angels who swing incense burners.¹²⁷ At the bottom of the page, two seated dragons either hold the world on their backs or the dragons are about to be crushed by its weight (Fig. 24). Christianity began steadily to push paganism and mythological creature representation out of thoughts and practice. Therefore, Christ and the angels represent heaven, whereas the dragons may suggest hell. The dragons have feather-like wings, which could echo that of the angels seen at the top of the manuscript. Jerusalem is at the center of the world map, marking it as the holiest city. The right side of the map displays fourteen tiny images of the monstrous races (Fig. 25).

Even when traveling through trade routes, conducting missionary activity, and committing warfare, those who traveled throughout the Middle Ages into foreign countries were convinced that monsters existed or might "inhabit the edges of civilization."¹²⁸ These monsters

seem rooted in real creatures that people warped by the storytelling, becoming increasingly exaggerated, misunderstood, and distorted. Artists during the 15th and 16th centuries moved away from the monsters depicted in this barbarous lore and, following the Proto-Renaissance, became more realistic in their approach to biblical depictions and commissioned works, excluding Bosch and Pieter Bruegel the Elder.

Classical Past

The Roman satirist and poet Horace (65 BCE – 8 BCE) witnessed the “final destruction of the Roman Republic.”¹²⁹ Facing such disasters, one after another shaped Horace into the satirist and poet known today. In discussing Horace’s poetry, W.R. Johnson observes that his core style lies in satire or a steady form of irony. Johnson writes in the forward of *The Essential Horace: Odes, Epodes, Satires, and Epistles*, that:

Horace enjoys fighting against words, ideas, received opinions, and feelings; not so much because he hopes to win (rather early he began to sense that nobody wins...), but because, as Socrates had shown, once and for all, fighting is a way of coming to know, perhaps the best way of coming to know.¹³⁰

Within his poetry, Horace introduces many *personae* (personas) that contradict conventional notions.

The German-Jewish classicist Charles Oscar Brink explains in his book, *Horace on Poetry: The ‘Ars Poetica’* that in order to understand Horace’s work, the reader cannot approach the *Ars Poetica* in purely conceptual terms or by ignoring the literary theory within its context.¹³¹ Instead, the *Ars Poetica* functions as a poetic symbol within an academic approach.¹³² Brink proposes that Horace did not “make up the technicalities of an *ars poetica* but reflected and re-created such an *ars* in the pattern and spirit of his own poetry.”¹³³

The Italian poet, writer, and philosopher Dante Alighieri (1265-1321) wrote one of the most powerful literary depictions of the medieval conception of hell in his *Divine Comedy*.¹³⁴

Narrating a dream-like vision of travels through hell, purgatory, and paradise (otherwise known as heaven), the ancient poet Virgil guides the Italian poet through the earth, which leads into a vast chasm to hell. The souls within hell are deformed and tortured signifying the sins they committed during their time on earth. There are similar scenes found throughout Bosch's drawings and paintings, creating images that might appear disturbing but bring the point across through symbolism. Dante's concepts of Heaven, Hell and Purgatory can be seen in the Dutch artist's infamous *Garden of Earthly Delights* panels (Fig. 26).

The Illuminations

During the Middle Ages, illuminated books were luxury items for the elite. The functions of these books were one of two types: personal devotion, Book of Hours, for example, or private devotion in the church, Psalters.¹³⁵ There is very little documentation about the books made and ordered in the 13th century. Monastic orders produced these illuminated books up to the 12th century. In some cases, during this period, historians have found that the employment of lay artists and scribes was necessary to assist the monks before the artists moved elsewhere. However, the production of these books began to change in the late 12th and early 13th centuries.¹³⁶ A halt in tradition occurred due to the "lack of continuity in a figure and ornamental style, or in script and format."¹³⁷

These books required collaboration between the clergy and scholars, then the scribes and illustrators. The patron or advisor had to provide specific prayers to the illuminators. The cost of these illuminated manuscripts and the ordering system are unknown to scholars.¹³⁸ There do not appear to be many contracts made by these practitioners or to have survived into the 21st century.

In the Old Testament, the Book of Psalms was one of the more heavily decorated forms of illuminations during the 12th century.¹³⁹ These devotional texts celebrated one's luxury and

ability to perform private devotions outside the church. Often, the illuminations did not coincide with the subject of the text but functioned as a picture book. These pictures were narratives of biblical stories, with very few acting as devotional images.¹⁴⁰ As the practice evolves, “single full-page miniatures of the Crucifixion and the Virgin and Child” become appealing through their sentimental and devotional aspects.¹⁴¹ These “become pictures which assist through contemplation in the private prayers and meditation of the owner,” leading to the mature forms of devotional images of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries.¹⁴²

Line endings (or line fillers) within the pages of the Psalter allowed for decoration that is more elaborate. Instead of just images separate from the text, these forms of decoration fill the entirety of the space, from the last word of the verses to the edges of the text.¹⁴³ In their simplest forms in colored pens, they act as ornamental patterns. In contrast, their more elaborate forms appear as fully illuminated and gilded works with animals, grotesque shapes, and human figures filling the page. The decoration within these pages reflects the book’s importance, plus the person’s ability to pay for such an elaborate book. Eventually, the Book of Hours replaced the Psalter texts, which became personalized forms of private devotion, depicting the life of Christ, the Virgin Mary, and specific saints.

Aside from personal devotional usage, medieval people also turned to other genres to understand monsters better. Among the most popular was the Bestiary (which was a manuscript that flourished in England during the 12th and 13th centuries), a moralized encyclopedia of animals, including fantastic and real creatures.¹⁴⁴ Therefore, this can be thought of as a more humanistic tradition, as it informs “us more about human beings and the history of ideas” than that of the history of nature.¹⁴⁵ Beginning in Alexandria during the second century of the Christian era, the idea of the Bestiary and its composition then evolved into the manuscripts

constructed in the 1100s. While only the Greek version survived, there were likely more written in Egyptian, Jewish, and perhaps even Indian.¹⁴⁶ The Bestiary arranged the animals in chapters, explaining each animal's behavior symbolically. Alongside everyday animals such as elephants, wolves, eagles, and leopards, readers would find mythical beasts, unicorns, mermaids, satyrs and dragons among its pages. Many 'normal' creatures exhibit monstrous abilities, while the monsters draw from ordinary animals, like snakes and lizards, thus blurring the line between the real and the imaginary. Alixe Bovey writes, "the ultimate purpose of the Bestiary was to explore divine truth through the interpretation of the natural world."¹⁴⁷ Throughout the entire Bestiary manuscript, the monsters are hideous. There is some speculation that their unapproachable appearance relates to inward moral corruption.¹⁴⁸

The Roman poet Horace may have impacted Bosch through his use of satire and comedy, which can be reflected in a painting such as the *Temptations of Saint Anthony* altarpiece located in the Museu Nacional de Arte Antiga in Lisbon. Horace discusses hybrids as a form of poetic and artistic license. While Bosch's creatures do not resemble every animal within the Bestiary, his use of reptiles, frogs and owls prominently draws from their descriptions. The reptile symbolized mischievousness or danger to come. If a painting included a land frog, it represented righteousness; however, if it included a water frog, then it referenced a sinful congregationalist.¹⁴⁹ The owl, on the other hand, can mean many things. This creature can go from being a warning or bad omen (typically depicted by a barn owl) to representing wisdom and intelligence.¹⁵⁰ Although the owl may signify wisdom, Bosch scholars view the owl as a bad omen. Some go as far as to say that the owl represents Bosch himself.¹⁵¹

Another form of literature that heavily influenced Bosch's creations were Bibles. One Bible that was popular was the *Biblia moralisée*, a visual representation of biblical scenes. There

are not many monsters in the Bible. In the Old Testament, there is Nephilim (Genesis 6; Numbers 13), Goliath (1 Samuel 17), and Behemoth and Leviathan (Job 40-41).¹⁵² The more familiar and popular monsters appear in the Book of Revelation, also known as the Apocalypse, where dragons and other monstrous creatures run amok. Beasts with multiple heads, plagues of insects and frogs, and demons populate this apocalyptic setting.¹⁵³ Aspects of these creatures appear throughout Bosch's works, especially his religious commissions. In some instances, he highlights them explicitly, while in others, they remain hidden in the background or as part of a hybrid human figure.

The monsters depicted within illuminated manuscripts come from classical mythology, literature and art, the writings of medieval authors and the imaginations of medieval artists.¹⁵⁴ The monsters would "inhabit corners and column capitals, peer down from the ceiling bosses in cathedrals, slither around small ivories, and squat under the sears in choir stalls."¹⁵⁵ The illuminated manuscripts collectively preserve more medieval art than any other type of object, according to Alixe Bovey.¹⁵⁶ Human bodies twist and merge with commonplace animals in both comedic and grotesque ways. These hybrid forms were suggestive of unknown worlds and unthinkable dangers for those from the medieval period. They were simultaneously entertaining and electrifying to those viewing them. Furthermore, these illuminated manuscripts have shaped how medieval readers and artists viewed those of different races and incorporated writing into imagery.

There are many terms used to describe the marginal monsters of medieval manuscripts. This is where the terms *hybrid* and *chimera* come about, monsters whose bodies are composed of individual elements meshed into a singular form. Typically depicted as fire-breathing monsters with a lion's head, a goat's body and a serpentine tail, the chimera was the 'mother' of hybrids

(derived from Greek mythology).¹⁵⁷ In some stories, this being can be described as a woman with inky hair and the ability to shift forms.¹⁵⁸ Eventually, the word ‘chimera’ has come to represent similar hybridized creatures. An example of a chimera-like creature appears in the bottom right-hand panel, dubbed Hell, in the *Garden of Earthly Delights* (Fig. 27). This shift in definition came about late in the 14th century. Another term is *gryllus*, a Latin word for grasshopper used to describe marginal creatures made up of legs with faces between them.¹⁵⁹ In the center panel of the *Last Judgment Triptych* (Fig. 28), a *gryllus* is spotted at the bottom left-hand side (Fig. 29). Instead of looking like a cricket, though, this figure appears to be a head wearing a headdress attached to a pair of oversized feet. Comical creatures sometimes appeared in the margins as *drolleries*; the term is universal, though, when discussing the other creatures hiding within the margins.¹⁶⁰ Drolleries appear throughout the Limbourg Brothers’ *Très Riches Heures du Duc de Berry*, which is a Book of Hours for Jean de France, duc de Berry (John, Duke of Berry). Surrounding the scene of the *Visitation*, the drolleries make light of this serious scene. Medieval people used the Middle English work *bebewyn* to describe the beings decorating their books.¹⁶¹

Of these terms, *grotesque* is one of the most renowned of them all. In the context of medieval illuminated manuscripts, the “grotesque are unnatural combinations of animal, plant and human forms.¹⁶² The term ‘monster’ is what the medieval people would use (in its Latin form or medieval vernacular), whereas ‘grotesque’ is a term that came from the post-modern era.¹⁶³ In 1488, the palace of Emperor Nero (d. 68 CE) was discovered in the *grottoes*, otherwise known as a cave system, on the edge of Rome.¹⁶⁴ Artists, architects and interior designers “were dazzled by the profusion of *putti*, mythical monsters, *trompe-l’oeil* architectural forms and floral decorations which embellished its walls and ceilings.”¹⁶⁵ By the 16th century, people began using

the term grotesque to describe images containing motifs of classical derivation similar to the ones found in Roman *grottoes*.¹⁶⁶ Due to its connection to antique sources, the term *grottoes* applies to images created within the margins of manuscripts during the 18th century.¹⁶⁷ *Grottoes* is a portmanteau term, the blending of words based on their sound and meaning, used to describe different comic, repulsive, and absurd imagery in manuscripts in the 21st century.

Furthermore, what is grotesque? According to the *Dictionary of Art and Artists* by Peter and Linda Murray, the technical usage for *grotesque* is not its usual association.¹⁶⁸ Initially, it referenced an ornament to decorate antiquities such as medallions, sphinxes, foliage, and similar elements.¹⁶⁹ The name grotesque derives “from the fact that these classical ornaments were rediscovered in places like the Golden House of Nero, in *grottoes*, and were thus named *grotteschi*.”¹⁷⁰ The word *grottesco* first appears in 1502 in the contract for Pinturicchio’s *Piccolomini Library* (Fig. 30) frescoes in Siena – which Raphael may have viewed.¹⁷¹

Hieronymus Bosch’s use of the grotesque and hybrid creatures was not an invention of his own. Before his time, these creatures and figures could be found in illuminated manuscripts, typically in the margin or woven into the words during the Middle Ages. The grotesque of the Renaissance appears to be considered an “art in transition,” pliable to external influences in the process of defining their style and expressive means.¹⁷² The grotesque is “reflected [through] the cultural vibrations... internalizing them and rearranging them according to patterns in continuous evolution,” Damiano Acciaro explains.¹⁷³ The focus on the grotesque also allowed Renaissance art to grow and evolve.

Bosch executed many paintings with underdrawings, demonstrating the influence of growing up in an art guild in ‘s-Hertogenbosch. His works have a classical sense but lack the theme of a central figure. Instead, much like the margins in illuminated manuscripts, he has other

figures and creatures that line the work and fill in the spaces. It appears that Bosch was drawn to the medium of illuminated manuscripts, and not necessarily to a specific kind of textual subject. His earlier works do conform slightly with the times, as he was creating these paintings for the Brotherhood of Our Lady in 's-Hertogenbosch. His later works, such as *The Garden of Earthly Delights* (Fig. 26) and the *Haywain Triptych* (Fig. 31), are more chaotic and stray from the typical commissions that artists like Jan van Eyck, Rogier van der Weyden, or Hans Memling would paint. Instead, Bosch appears to have identified a problem with the existing power structures. It does not seem as if he is defying the church or his brotherhood through his works but rather informing society of what he truly sees: corruption and poverty. He deviates from the lines and focuses on the gesture instead.

It is not only religious text that may have influenced the Dutch painter's iconography. Contemporary to Bosch is the Dutch philosopher Desiderius Erasmus. Bosch might have witnessed the writing process of *The Praise of Folly* or read it after its publication in the vernacular in 1511. Erasmus's *The Praise of Folly* will receive a more elaborate discussion in Chapter 4, alongside Sebastian Brant, another humanist and satirist, whose *Das Nafferschiff* (*Ship of Fools*) will appear in Chapter 5. Through the possible interactions between Bosch and Erasmus, the former had many influences driving his 'profane' genre. One of these influences is known as the *Devotio Moderna*, a form of modern devotion that became popular during the 14th century and appears throughout Bosch's works, particularly in his non-hybrid paintings.

CHAPTER IV

HIERONYMUS BOSCH DURING THE AGE OF THE *DEVOTIO MODERNA*

Devotio Moderna was a distinctive movement that had a beginning and an end. Regnerus Richardus Post's, *The Modern Devotion: Confrontation with Reformation and Humanism*, discusses the practice of *Devotio Moderna* from its beginnings.¹⁷⁴ Post charts its origins from the Dutch author Gerard Groote (1340-1384) in ca. 1379 to the Brethren and Sisters of the Common Life and the canons of the Congregation of Windesheim until it progressively died by 1600.¹⁷⁵ He points out that “not everything that was devout in the late Middle Ages formed part of the Modern Devotion.”¹⁷⁶ This point is mainly brought up in the first section of his book concerning whether Humanism and Reformation are linked heavily to the *Devotio Moderna*. Post provides his findings through three writers—Paul Mersterdt, Gaston Bonet-Maury, and Albert Hyma—who conclude that the rise of Humanism connects directly to the *Devotio Moderna* and the Brethren of the Common Life.

The American author, Albert Hyma, refers to the *Devotio Moderna* as the Christian Renaissance.¹⁷⁷ He explained in his introduction of *The Christian Renaissance: A History of the “Devotio Moderna”* that this was Christianity's great rebirth.¹⁷⁸ Much like the Italian Renaissance, this movement produced a revival of learning. Just as Italy had Venice, the Low Countries had IJssel valley, where Gerard Groote set up his institution. Sharing in the prosperity of Bruges, Ghent and Antwerp, IJssel formed a part of the Low Countries that circulated Western thought from the reign of Charlemagne (r. 768-814 BCE) to the end of the 15th century.¹⁷⁹

Groote led the *Devotio Moderna* movement to bring together all forms of prayer. He believed that if a woman were to pray at home rather than in a church like a nun, then she equally was as devoted to serving God as those working in the Church.¹⁸⁰ The Dutch author

sought to redefine the word ‘religio,’ which initially separated the everyday person from those of the clergy, monks and nuns.¹⁸¹ After leaving the monastery in 1379, Groote never returned. He was a reformer, not a revolutionary. While he did not attack Church doctrines, he voiced his opinions about the Church through constructive plans. He believed the Church was a divine institution, and its teachings were presided over by “servants of God... inspired by the Holy Ghost.”¹⁸² However, the one thing Groote disapproved of was the Church accepting money as penance for people’s sins, also known as indulgences. Later, the German theologian Martin Luther (1483-1546) would make indulgences the center of his *Ninety-Five Theses*. This text, nailed to the door of Wittenberg Cathedral on 31 October 1517, criticized the Catholic Church on ninety-five points, which sparked the Protestant Reformation only a year after Bosch’s death.

Dubbed the “Fountain of the *Devotio Moderna*” of the Christian Renaissance by his followers, Gerard Groote was also the founder of the Brethren of the Common Life and the Windesheim Congregation.¹⁸³ The latter instituted the last reforms of the 15th century, applied corrections to the Latin Vulgate, provided translations of parts of the Bible, and sent thousands of religious books throughout Western Europe.¹⁸⁴ The Congregation also remodeled schools and textbooks, comforted the sick, fed the poor, provided accommodations for the homeless, and composed the *De Imitatione Christi (Imitation of Christ)*.¹⁸⁵ This book, partially edited and written by Thomas à Kempis, explains the depravity of human nature and urges the readers to fight temptation.¹⁸⁶ The *Imitation of Christ* arises from the *Devotio Moderna* community and grows past the movement, only to end with the Protestant Reformation. Groote’s pupils copied this book, which discussed “a man of tremendous spiritual power who gathered around him twelve chosen disciples, of whom one became a traitor.”¹⁸⁷ Through Groote’s teachings, he sought to instill personal faith rather than construct doctrines.

The Brethren of the Common Life grew out of the Sisters of the Common Life; the first constitution Groote founded for poor middle-aged women.¹⁸⁸ He was not vying for a new monastic order but a place for them to worship God in peace.¹⁸⁹ After finding success in creating this constitution, he began a brotherhood that not only catered to theologians but also to poor men who wished to devote their lives to God, not in the Church, but in a private environment. Groote and Dutch theologian Wessel Gransfort (1419-1489) taught that salvation was available to all, known as providence, which Christ himself taught.¹⁹⁰

As mentioned in Chapter 3, there is no evidence of Bosch having been a member of the Brethren of Common Life or that he knew Desiderius Erasmus personally. How would he have been aware of this developing practice? During the 16th century 's-Hertogenbosch was a busy center for artistic commissions and religious activities. By 1500, the city's population was 17,280 with 980 of them monks and nuns.¹⁹¹ With more than thirty religious groups, the city of 's-Hertogenbosch was crowded with religious people, institutions, and organizations.¹⁹² The Brotherhood of Our Lady was devoted to the Virgin Mary, similar to many religious groups during the Middle Ages. The Brethren of the Common Life and their adherence to the *Devotio Moderna* practice heavily dominated the town. It is plausible that the teachings of the Brethren of the Common Life influenced the Brotherhood of Our Lady, and in turn, Bosch. Bosch and Erasmus were educated within the city of 's-Hertogenbosch, which may account for religious parallels between their respective works.

Bosch received critical artistic commissions while working for the Brotherhood of Our Lady and created at least five works between 1493 and 1512.¹⁹³ Unfortunately, many of the artist's paintings "probably disappeared when 's-Hertogenbosch was taken from the Spanish in 1629 by Prince Frederick Henry and his Dutch troops, and Catholic splendor was replaced by

Calvinist austerity.”¹⁹⁴ Many of the works now lost were commissioned by religious patrons, some documented and others not. Seeing as the works constructed for the Brotherhood would be in public view, patrons would have selected an artist who was deemed worthy and able to handle the pressure. Kari Duffield explains, “because Bosch was a pious man, they would have valued the artist’s moralizing tone and ability to handle religious subjects with great reverence.”¹⁹⁵ The *Adoration of the Magi* (Fig. 32) from ca. 1485-1500 includes images of the Bronckhorst and Bosschuyse coat of arms in the side panels, indicating that this is a commission from wealthy individuals in his hometown of ‘s-Hertogenbosch.¹⁹⁶ Initially, this painting hung in one of the chapels dedicated to the Brotherhood of Our Lady after escaping the outbreak of religious iconoclasm on August 22, 1566.¹⁹⁷ The *Adoration of the Magi* demonstrates Bosch’s artistic practice and ability to stay afloat in such a religious patron-filled town.

As a member of the Brotherhood of Our Lady, Bosch likely made many social contacts. Since his works found their way to Italy and Spain, it is not surprising that Spaniards from Brabant received his works.¹⁹⁸ Diego de Guevara (1450-1520), the father of the Spanish Humanist Felipe de Guevara, was another private patron in ‘s-Hertogenbosch. De Guevara was a member of the Brotherhood, joining in as early as 1498/9 and collected six paintings throughout Bosch’s career.¹⁹⁹ These paintings include the *Tabletop of the Seven Deadly Sins and the Four Last Things* (Fig. 33) and a version of the *Haywain Triptych* (Fig. 31). Not all his patrons were associated with the religious order directly; some were from the church of Saint John or wealthy private families, like the Brockhorsts and Bosschuyes.²⁰⁰ His association with these religious donors may have informed his devout beliefs, shaping him into a product of his age.²⁰¹

Bosch and Erasmus

The years Erasmus spent in 's-Hertogenbosch with the Brethren of the Common Life coincided with the rise of Humanism in the Netherlands.²⁰² Due to his earlier education, English humanist circles embraced Erasmus with open arms. He “was impressed by the quality of learning and culture among those he met” and acquired an affinity for Plato’s teachings after studying Christian Platonism in Florence with his new friends.²⁰³ While in London with the English humanist William Blount (1478-1534), the 4th Baron Mountjoy, Erasmus met Thomas More (1478-1535), a humanistic statesman, writer, and philosopher. The two became fast friends, and together, they translated some of the dialogues of the ancient satirist Lucian in 1505.²⁰⁴ Through his exposure to Humanism from Blount and More, Erasmus understood the importance of studying the ancient Greek and Roman civilizations to gain insight into contemporary European life. Humanism did not denounce the Christian religion. Humanists examined Greek and Roman cultures and “regarded familiarity with them as essential to the proper study and understanding of Christian theology and origins; indeed, they saw classical civilization as preparing the human mind for God’s full revelation of himself in Christ.”²⁰⁵ The knowledge of classical texts and languages was essential to better understanding the original meaning of Scripture. Erasmus combined his education with the Brethren with his interests in Christian Humanism. He studied and translated the Bible while reading literature from antiquity. He disdained Medieval Latin and prized the Latin of classical Rome instead.²⁰⁶ Members of the *Devotio Moderna* practice justified their ideas through ancient sources, making the practice viable for Erasmus’s approach to religious studies.²⁰⁷

Erasmus traveled to Italy in 1506, surrounding himself in the “center of humanistic discovery and learning through its proximity to the world of the ancient Greeks and Romans.”²⁰⁸

However, there was trouble between Pope Julius II (r. 1503-1513) and Bologna upon his arrival. The Bentivoglio family acted independently of the pope, causing Julius II to invade and forcefully return papal rule. This experience resulted in Erasmus likely writing *Pope Julius Barred from Heaven* after the pope's death in 1513. Widely attributed to the theologian, this work is anonymous. This work charged the pope with "pederasty, simony... nepotism, and subordination to murder."²⁰⁹ After several years in Italy, Blount invited Erasmus back to England in 1509. The invitation came in the wake of Henry VIII's succession to the English throne "to inaugurate an enlightened reign in which scholarship and scholars would be prized."²¹⁰ Accepting Blount's suggestion to return, Erasmus began his travels over the Swiss Alps while reflecting on Brant's *Das Narrenschiff*, or *Ship of Fools*, published ca. 1494.²¹¹ As the title suggests, the text discusses over one hundred different types of fools in a satiric way. These influences helped Erasmus write his famous *Moriae Encomium*, or *The Praise of Folly*, named after his friend and source of inspiration. The title loosely translates to "The Praise of More" as well, producing not only an amusing pun but also promoting the humanistic ideas and lack of foolishness in More.

The Praise of Folly was extremely popular during Erasmus's lifetime, printed by 21 printers in 11 different cities and circulated in approximately 36 editions.²¹² Folly is the protagonist of this text, who wears the attire of a jester. She praises herself and the ignorant happiness she provides throughout the book. During the Middle Ages, the courts often employed fools who entertained and teased the court members without fear of retribution; it was their job to act foolishly in front of such an influential audience. The character of Folly, therefore, represented a relevant and familiar personification. Another aspect that matches the Middle Age approach is her paradoxical encomium form of speech.²¹³ This is a genre used by classical

writers when they praise something or someone unworthy of praise. Erasmus's use of this genre is not surprising as it is reminiscent of Lucian, a Greek satirist he and More translated four years before *Folly* came about.²¹⁴ From his previous studies of Christian Platonism, Erasmus also brings in Platonic ideas. For instance, Erasmus uses Folly to quote Plato more often than he does other ancient philosophers.²¹⁵ There are also over one hundred ancient proverbs from Erasmus's *Adages* mentioned by the protagonist, including "Birds of a feather flock together" and "A wise father had many times a foolish son."²¹⁶ The writer uses these proverbs to influence the popularity of satire within humanistic circles.

The protagonist, Folly, conveys irony and satire in a serious manner throughout the text. Similar to her creator, Erasmus disguises his serious statements behind jovial words as a serious text would not provide the sharp bite needed to make his satire so effective.²¹⁷ It was "not by the rod but by amusement and laughter" that the theologian "sought to teach and to convert."²¹⁸ In constructing Folly, Erasmus is able to avoid taking the blame for her words when voicing his opinions on religious and courtly figures. An example of this appears toward the end of the text where Folly states that if she has "said anything too confidently or impertinently, be pleased to consider that it was spoken by Folly, and that under the person of a woman."²¹⁹ She also provides a disclaimer to remind her readers that they should "at all times remember the applicability of the Greek proverb: A fool oft speaks of seasonable truth."²²⁰ With this, the protagonist is warning the reader against taking her words too seriously but also hinting at the fact that what she is saying is the truth. Likewise, Erasmus can speak out against medieval corruption while also placing blame on Folly's commentary.

The reason Erasmus is able to use pretty words but also be blunt in his writing is that he was introduced to court life when serving the Bishop of Cambrai years earlier.²²¹ It was during

his visits to Italy during Pope Julius II's reign that led to his distrust of the papacy, who he believed was ignoring the true Christian message.²²² The theologian's disdain for Julius II is displayed more obviously after the pope's death when Erasmus rewords specific aspects of *The Praise of Folly*. A.H.T. Levi writes in the introduction to his translation of *Praise of Folly* that the text was strengthened "considerably in two important ways: by sharpening the attack on the scholastic theologians, and by increasing his perfectly serious insistence that Christian sanctity is folly to the world."²²³ With the popes and the church becoming corrupt, Erasmus believed that instead of taking a scholastic approach to studying religion, scholars should take on the humanist perspective. Even though he remained a practicing Catholic until his death, the theologian used the character Folly as a mouthpiece when addressing papal corruption and deceit due to the negative experiences he witnessed while in Italy.²²⁴ In the last section of the text, the folly of Jesus and the apostle Paul receives praise from Folly as she finds the actions of Jesus becoming mortal to save mankind foolish. However, Erasmus's emphasis on this folly leads to the path to heaven that Groote outlines in the *Devotio Moderna*.²²⁵

The original message of Christianity, Folly asserts, has "become twisted by theologians over the centuries, illuminating the differences between what the Gospels teach and what was... [occurring] in Erasmus's contemporary society."²²⁶ The customs within the church began to alter according to the places and persons, causing the religious orders to appear fabricated to Folly. To support this, Folly explains within the text that religious orders

are mindful of nothing more than of their being distinguished from each other by their different customs and habits. They seem indeed not so careful of becoming like Christ, and of being known to be his disciples, as the being unlike to one another, and distinguishable for followers of their several founders... as if the common name of Christian were too mean and vulgar. Most of them place their greatest stress for salvation on strict conformity to their foppish ceremonies, and a belief of their legendary traditions.²²⁷

Ultimately, Erasmus's text serves as an opportunity to support Christian Humanism and the teachings of the Brethren of the Common Life. Seeking reform within the corrupted medieval faith and stressing the importance of personal piety over the manufacture of religious traditions are ideas that also helped Martin Luther triumph with his sermons.²²⁸ Luther and Erasmus promoted the view that faith led to salvation and that salvation was achievable outside the church.

Peddlers and the Disabled in Bosch's Oeuvre

Another artist who represented the *Devotio Moderna* movement through iconography and as a member of the Brotherhood was Flemish painter Hugo van der Goes (1440-1482). His name appears in the Joyous Entry into Bruges of Charles the Bold and Margaret of York in 1468.

...given Hugo van der Goes, painter, for the paintings made by him and his helpers, to be used at the triumphal entry of the formidable lord and prince, the figures to be attached to cloths on the sides of the streets and elsewhere.²²⁹

He became an affiliate of the Brotherhood of Our Lady in 1478 through the Red Cloister.²³⁰ He received the ranking between a layman and a monk, known as a brother *conversi*.²³¹ Van der Goes likely became a member after many years of listening to the ideas surrounding the Brotherhood, which were known best through the writings of the Dutch-German canon Thomas à Kempis.²³² The Flemish painter created figures, particularly peasants, that were divinely illuminated but not repulsive compared to the central holy figures. Compositions displaying religious figures close-up were well suited to private devotion, which was central to the practice the *Devotio Moderna* promoted. From Groote's teachings, Thomas à Kempis called for nearness when meditating, to the point where those devout enough would feel the blood falling onto them or that they could physically touch the holy figures and participate in sacred events.²³³ Elaborate clothes, even on the Virgin, were to be simplistic.²³⁴ The same goes for the furniture, landscaping

and textiles, done so as not to draw from what was essential.²³⁵ Bosch was different because his paintings are ‘busy’ with figures and creatures cluttering the composition. There is no documentation that Bosch and van der Goes crossed paths while the latter was alive, and in the Brotherhood of Our Lady. However, due to how the artistic and religious realms intertwined throughout the Low Countries, Bosch likely saw van der Goes’ work since they were both from the Netherlands.

In the *Devotio Moderna* practice, poverty was ideal; Gerard Groote encouraged his followers to practice poverty. Amplifying Thomas à Kempis’ praise of the poor and warnings against material possessions, he recalls how Gerard Groote

was...earnest in reading the scriptures, but was not careless enough to possess books carefully adorned; the Breviary from which he read his “Hours” was of no great value since he avoided using anything that was outwardly splendid or that savoured not of simplicity: so when he saw one who had a book sumptuously ornamented, and noted how carefully the owner looked to it and turned the leaves, he said to him... “books should serve the interests of their reader’s minds, not the nice taste of him who doth look at them”; for this reason the devout master gave more attention to the matter of a book than to the outward beauty of an embellished copy; so, too, the Blessed Jerome preferred to have a well corrected text, though the form of the book might be of small value, rather than a beautifully ornamented but incorrect copy.²³⁶

The sole dedication of the concept of devout austerity and simplicity cannot go to the practice of *Devotio Moderna*, as Franciscans and theologians equally criticized opulent artwork in churches.²³⁷ Furthermore, poverty is the personification of late medieval spirituality and the apostolic mission, which are found throughout Bosch’s paintings and drawings.

The peddlers depicted in Bosch’s oeuvre correlate with the Dutch artist’s use of poverty and the Christian pilgrimages that were either faith-based or spiritual with cultural interest. Two works often come to mind when discussing the pilgrim figure detailed in Bosch’s works and the embodiment of the *Devotio Moderna*: the outer wings of the *Last Judgment Triptych* (Fig. 34), and the *Tabletop of the Seven Deadly Sins and Four Last Things* (Fig. 33), respectively.

The *Last Judgment Triptych* (Fig. 34) is one of the only paintings that can be associated with Bosch's use of impaired beggars.²³⁸ Erwin Pokorny writes that these beggars represent how a sinner's soul is bare in the physical world through one's body.²³⁹ To the left behind Saint Bavo in the right-hand wing, a pitiable figure crouches with a severed foot several inches away from him (Fig. 35). This figure could be trying to evoke sympathy from the viewer. This shriveled foot, according to Sebastian Brant, might have once belonged to a completed corpse and Bosch could be using this image as a symbol of deceit.²⁴⁰ The meaning of the coin-size bleeding sore on the man's forearm remains unclear. Similar sores appear in Bosch's Madrid *Adoration of the Magi* (Fig. 32), on the leg of a half-naked man standing in the stable doorway, on the wicked thief's head in the Ghent *Christ Carrying the Cross* (Fig. 36), and in the Hell wing in the *Garden of Earthly Delights* in Madrid (Fig. 37) on the leg of the tree-man.²⁴¹ These beggar figures appear to be receiving a form of punishment throughout the paintings, providing the audience with the impression that Bosch appears to loathe professional beggars and fakers.

Bosch's *Last Judgment Triptych* (Fig. 28) displays a pessimistic worldview. The left-hand wing displays the figure of Saint James the Great as a wandering pilgrim with the background covered in grim motifs. Located in the landscape, in contrast to the pious saint, there are two disabled beggars on a pilgrimage, along with a pilgrim's grave, a rape scene, a dead tree, and a hanged man.²⁴² The beggar on the left can be thought of as a blind man due to the long stick and is being led through the scene by his deformed companion. Another way Bosch indicates his aversion to beggars is in "his habit of creating fanciful, hybrid creatures that combine features of cripples and devils."²⁴³ Notably, in the central panel of the Vienna triptych is a bird-headed, crutch-wielding demon.²⁴⁴ Attached to the bottom of its crutch is a hollow bone suggesting, similarly to empty wine jars attached to the legs of demons, that gluttony and

intemperance lead to poverty, a form of functional symbolism in his works. Another interpretation of the hollow bone is that the Dutch word for bone is *been*, meaning “leg,” corresponding with the proverb “op een been kan men niet lopen” (you can’t run on one leg) and then *bot*, which means “dull” or “stupid.”²⁴⁵ The plural form of this is *botten*, meaning “to bud” or “to cheat.”²⁴⁶ The word *kruk*, in this context, means not only “crutch,” but also “swindler” or “crook.”²⁴⁷ The proverb “De leugen gaat op krukken” (lies walk on crutches) is similar to the German adage “Lügen haben kurze Beine” (lies have shorter legs).²⁴⁸ The significance of attached bones, however, becomes lost by the middle of the 16th century.

In Madrid, the *Tabletop of Seven Deadly Sins and Four Last Things* (Fig. 33) is what Walter S. Gibson dubs the “unwanted stepchild” among Hieronymus Bosch’s works.²⁴⁹ He explains that it is because it has not received much attention from art historians, and that its attribution to Bosch is questionable, even though, the artist’s name is found near the lower border under the banderole.²⁵⁰ As early as the 16th century, writers questioned the painting’s authorship. Philip II of Spain acquired the work sometime around 1560 as a work by Bosch.²⁵¹ In Fray José de Següenza’s *Historia de la Orden de San Gerónimo (History of the Order of Saint Jerome)* of 1605, he writes that this painting was described to be from ‘the hand of Geronimo Bosque’ in a royal inventory from 1577.²⁵² Contrary to this, though, in Felipe de Guevara’s 1560 book, *Commenrarios de la Pintura (Comments on the Painting)*, the author attributes the work to a follower of Bosch.²⁵³ Guevara could have had personal knowledge of this painting, as he was a collector of Flemish paintings during the 16th century, including van Eyck’s *Giovanni Arnolfini and His Wife* (Fig. 9), and may have collected works by Bosch and his followers.²⁵⁴ The shift in style between the circular section and the rest of the panel may have led Guevara to believe that

the author was a follower rather than the master; however, he neglected to identify Bosch's pupil.

Due to damage and restoration, the original quality of the work is lost, but historians have found it difficult to associate the *Tabletop of Seven Deadly Sins and the Four Last Things* (Fig. 33) with the rest of Bosch's works. Gibson rationalizes this in his article: "the short, sturdy figures are... [a]typical, as are the dark, heavy outline and the hard, brightly colored surfaces. Especially crude are the four corner medallions, while the Hell scene shows little of the inventive genius which Bosch displays elsewhere in such subjects."²⁵⁵ Due to the similarities between Bosch's Lust and Hell scenes within the *Tabletop of Seven Deadly Sins and the Four Last Things* to his *Allegory of Intemperance* and *Death of the Miser*, this work does not belong within Bosch's early period.²⁵⁶ Even though Guevara's theory might be true, it is still possible that Bosch participated in the creation of sections of the *Tabletop of Seven Deadly Sins and the Four Last Things*. There are details within the painting that appear to be of higher quality than in other areas, such as the *Avaricia* (Fig. 38) and *Invidia* (Fig. 39). Therefore, it may have been a collaborative project between Bosch and his assistants with the work completed around 1500. Bosch likely created the original design for this work due to the iconography displaying similar themes encountered within his art.

Scholars have related the circular shape of the main section to a wheel, demonstrating the path taken by sinners.²⁵⁷ Psalm 11:9 (Latin Vulgate version) proclaims that "The wicked walk around in a circle," which is associated with medieval art in circles of sin and folly.²⁵⁸ For example, a 15th century German wooden plate displays an unknown enthroned figure with various fools surrounding him separated in a continuous arcade of columns.²⁵⁹ Resembling the spokes of a wheel, these columns create the impression that these figures revolve around the

center.²⁶⁰ Moreover, the *Tabletop of Seven Deadly Sins and the Four Last Things* (Fig. 33) center may contain allusions to the medieval man judged by an all-seeing God who judges him in the Last Judgment. Often portrayed through the image of a mirror, this ominous God exists outside of time. An example of this is in the detail of the convex mirror in Jan van Eyck's *Giovanni Arnolfini and His Wife* (Fig. 9) painted in 1434. Giovanni Arnolfini and his bride solemnize their marriage with the infamous inscription *Johannes de Eyck fuit hic* (Johannes de Eyck was here) written on the wall behind the mirror. Behind the couple, the reflection in the mirror shows two human witnesses in the doorway in front of the couple (in the viewers' space).²⁶¹ Scholars largely identify these witnesses as van Eyck and a companion. This mirror could also symbolize the Divine Eye, indicating that God could be present in the ceremony. Through this single image, van Eyck unites the heavenly and earthly witness.

The function of the Eye of God in Bosch's *Tabletop of Seven Deadly Sins and the Four Last Things* (Fig. 33) is more complex than how it appears. Gibson writes, "if it mirrors the vices of mankind in general, it is also a mirror wherein the individual viewer beholds a faithful reflection of his own sinful soul."²⁶² In the pupil of the Divine Eye, Christ represents the Man of Sorrows as he stands in his sarcophagus in the nude with his wounds on display for the viewer. The Man of Sorrows image is important as it encourages the individual to reflect upon one's daily life as described in the *Imitatio Christi* of Thomas à Kempis. It is through the soul that the image of God appears but only when one turns away from sin. Thus, combining the Seven Deadly Sins and the Man of Sorrows, Bosch presents a twofold image within his Eye of God.²⁶³ Not only does it show a man what he is, but it also shows him what he should endeavor to achieve. Therefore, the *of Seven Deadly Sins and the Four Last Things* likely functioned for private meditation, especially when one is examining his sins before going to Confession.

While a few scholars discuss the Prado *Tabletop of Seven Deadly Sins and the Four Last Things* (Fig. 33), the *Four Last Things* medallions on each corner have not seen much scholarship. Barbara G. Lane's essay, "Bosch's *Tabletop of the Seven Deadly Sins* and the *Cordiale quattuor novissimorum*," discusses how the *Cordiale quattuor novissimorum* is a work associated with Gerard Groote or Dionysius de Leuwis (1402-1471).²⁶⁴ Recent scholarship conveys how it was written by a monk of the "Ordo Theutonicorum" in Utrecht, Gerard de Vliederhoven, between 1380 and 1396 since he is mentioned by name in the two earlier manuscripts.²⁶⁵ The *Cordiale* differs from the *Ars moriendi* (*Art of Dying Well*), which is one of the more famous medieval treatises on death.²⁶⁶ Instead of emphasizing the act of dying, the former highlights the avoidance of sin in one's daily life.²⁶⁷ During the 15th century, the Brethren of the Common Life produced over two hundred Latin manuscripts of the *Cordiale*.²⁶⁸ By the end of the 15th century, the manuscript received its first Dutch translation around 1471.²⁶⁹ One thing to note is that the *Four Last Things* does not receive any recognition as a combined image, only as separate forms. It is not until Hieronymus Bosch constructs his *Tabletop of Seven Deadly Sins and the Four Last Things* that the *Four Last Things* properly appear within a unified theme. Bosch's painting is a visual representation of the meaning and content behind the *Cordiale*.²⁷⁰ The aim of this tabletop, like de Vliederhoven's treatise, is not only to construct "an unforgettable image of the final end," but also to "act as a guide to the achievement of salvation through avoidance of sin."²⁷¹

Moreover, scholarship on Bosch's use of the *Devotio Moderna* does not center on his monstrous paintings. The *Haywain Triptych* (Fig. 31), the *Last Judgment Triptych* (Fig. 28), and the Prado *Tabletop of Seven Deadly Sins and Last Four Things* (Fig. 33) are all examples of Bosch borrowing from the teachings of the Dutch Catholic deacon Gerard Groote and the

German-Dutch canon Thomas à Kempis. The iconography of his paintings does not come from contemporary artists but follows the path of manuscript illuminations from the Middle Ages.

Bosch presents his viewers with disguised symbolism that not only encompasses his unique style but also gives him the opportunity to be different during a time when there were two specific styles vying for attention, Netherlandish and Italian. The symbolism he brings into his works encompass his religious views and are a reflection of the crisis occurring in Europe at this time, specifically within his dismantled triptych.

CHAPTER V

DISCOVERING THE MEANING BEHIND BOSCH'S DISMANTLED TRIPTYCH

In recent years, scholars have begun to view Bosch's ideal vision as less fantastical and instead as reflective of the orthodox religious belief systems he grew up knowing.²⁷² His depictions of sinful humanity and concepts of Heaven and Hell are consistent with those of late medieval didactic literature and sermons. Interpreted in terms of late medieval morality by Christian writers, his works now hold a more profound significance by art historians. Most scholars accept that Bosch created an iconography to teach specific moral and spiritual truths like other Northern Renaissance artists and writers, such as the poet Robert Henryson.²⁷³ The images have a precise and premeditated significance. According to Dirk Bax, Bosch's paintings are visual representations of verbal metaphors and puns drawn from both biblical and folkloric sources.²⁷⁴ Even with such scholarship, his works still elicit profound questions about the ambiguity within his paintings. The lessons Bosch imparted to his audience were relatable and memorable. As a completed triptych, his dismantled panels would have presented a side-by-side demonstration of both good and bad results of one's choices.²⁷⁵

In examining the artist's iconographical choices in his *Ship of Fools* (Fig. 1), Kay C. Rossiter discusses in her article "Bosch and Brant: Images of Folly" how this painting and the *Allegory of Intemperance* (Fig. 2) are similar in the context of gluttony and lust.²⁷⁶ The idea of gluttony can be seen by the act of foolishness on the ship, how each occupant is either eating or drinking to the point of not caring where the ship might be heading. The ship appears to have run aground as it does not seem surrounded by water but by land.

Erwin Pokorny's argument in "Bosch's Cripples and Drawings by His Imitators" surrounds the imagery of the disabled beggars seen throughout Bosch's timeline.²⁷⁷ The

influence for the idea of the 15th century beggar would be Sebastian Brant's *Narrenschiff* (*Ship of Fools*) in 1494 before Bosch began working on his alleged triptych.²⁷⁸ Like Brant, Bosch's depiction of the beggars is negative in context. Bosch shaped these beggars into hybrid creatures that appear as combined forms of an impaired human and devils and showed how gluttony and intemperance would lead to poverty.²⁷⁹ Like Bosch, his followers use these beggars throughout their work, years after Bosch died. The fact that the Dutch artist is transforming these beggars into hybrids within the context of poverty becomes a common sight within his paintings and drawings. Rossiter and Pokorny's interpretation suggest that most of Bosch's works are centered around the seven deadly sins, providing a warning of what the then-present-day Christian should avoid.²⁸⁰ When it comes to *Ship of Fools* (Fig. 1), the acts of gluttony and lust can be found throughout the painting, dictating his motif of warning the viewer not to commit the sinful acts shown in the painting.

An article by Anne M. Morganstern, "The Rest of Bosch's *Ship of Fools*," is dedicated to examining this painting and the alleged panel works that align into an altarpiece.²⁸¹ Morganstern addresses the relationship between *Ship of Fools* (Fig. 1) in the Louvre and *Allegory of Intemperance* (Fig. 2) in the Robinowitz Collection.²⁸² She explains how these paintings could have been a part of an altarpiece, the two aligned with the former on the top and the latter resting under.²⁸³ She details how X-radiographs clearly show where the two of them connect, explaining how the *Ship of Fools* seems related to the *Allegory of Intemperance* because the lower and upper edges seem to bind (Fig. 40).²⁸⁴ Alongside the X-radiographs, there are *grisaille* drawings by Bosch, which correspond to the paintings mentioned in the previous chapter, including *Death of the Miser* (Fig. 3).²⁸⁵ However, they are shorter than the final paintings. The acts within *Ship*

of *Fools*, *Allegory of Intemperance*, and the *Death of the Miser* are forms of sin, the association between Gluttony and Lust weaving through all three paintings.

Anna Boczkowska discusses in “The Lunar Symbolism of the *Ship of Fools* by Hieronymus Bosch,” two elements that many art historians have not touched on: the tree that forms the mast of the ship and the crescent moon hanging from the tree-mast.²⁸⁶ To support her argument, the author brings in the Flemish author, Diederik Theodorus Enklaar (1894-1962), who suggested Jacob van Oestvoren’s poem of 1413 *De Blauwe Schuit* (*The Blue Boat*) as Bosch’s inspiration.²⁸⁷ The second suggestion that Enklaar makes is a representation of the *carrus navalis* (naval carriage), from which Boczkowska derives the idea of *Ship of Fools*’ relation to the lunar moon.²⁸⁸ The *carrus navalis* matches the color of the water and reflects the true color of the moon, blue, representing the Luna sign.²⁸⁹ Found in a South German workshop, there is an example of the crescent moon painted blue with the use of watercolor dating to the first half of the 15th century in the Hungarian Academy of Sciences collection.²⁹⁰ Another example is a manuscript miniature of 1411 by Hans Wintler, *Die Blumen der Tugend* (*The Flower of Virtue*), in the Landesbibliothek in Gotha.²⁹¹ It is not only the color blue that relates to lunar symbolism but also the tree for a mast. One of the very attributes of the moon is trees, signifying the influence within the plant world.²⁹² According to Arabic and Greek astrology, “the moon... directed growth, blossoming, ripening and withering of plants.”²⁹³ However, the tree in Bosch’s *Ship of Fools* (Fig. 1) does not fall into the same category as illuminated calendars; instead, it is the central composition.²⁹⁴ Associated with the moon in Bosch’s painting, the tree of life in the boat represents one of the more popular symbols of change and the passing of time, including birth, life, and death.²⁹⁵

In her chapter, “On Spiritual Creativity in Hieronymus Bosch,” Anne Simonson discusses how Bosch’s contemporaries would have viewed his works.²⁹⁶ She does not refute what viewers today perceive, but rather that the processes of art making and viewership differ from then to now. To do this, the author brings in the comparisons between Bosch, van Eyck, and van der Weyden. In comparing Jan van Eyck’s *Virgin with the Chancellor Rolin* (Fig. 41) to Bosch’s *Death of the Miser* (Fig. 3), the former represents the early painting tradition with van Eyck’s focus on the tangible world. In contrast, the latter demonstrates the world through dematerializing known objects. Bosch demonstrates that the divine is only visible for observant viewers. Take his *Saint John on Patmos* (Fig. 8), for example, where John is isolated from everything but his ability to pray, which allows him to receive a vision of the Virgin. By contrast, the Miser in *Death of the Miser* is much too distracted by the material world.²⁹⁷ Another difference between these two artists is in their application of light or lack thereof in Bosch’s case. Light symbolism was a staple in early Netherlandish art, van Eyck’s in particular. Bosch, however, does not employ much light or color in his works, keeping them muted and subtle. With this, he displays his figures in several stages of spiritual illumination.

Simonson questions what art historians know about Bosch’s life and how his patrons used the ‘odd images’ he had created. She concludes her writing by saying that “Bosch painted the world from the inside, his painting being a mirror ... of the inner world... [T]he cosmic panorama of landscape through which Everyman treads.”²⁹⁸ In writing this, she explains how Bosch’s style visualizes the message – through its diversity, spontaneity, and awareness of light and color. Furthermore, this discussion highlights what Bosch meant to accomplish with his works. He was not aiming for beauty, but rather the reality of the world in which he lived. He was not wearing rose-tinted glasses but viewing the world through true eyes.

Bosch's *Ship of Fools* and Sebastian Brant's Influences

The *Ship of Fools* (Fig. 1) shows ten people adrift on a boat with two others overboard. In the center of this group, a nun plays the lute with a friar. The brown robes of these figures clearly identify them as Franciscans. Situated between these seated figures is a board with a dish of cherries resting on top (a symbol of sensual pleasures).²⁹⁹ The nun's lute had an erotic association during the time. On the left side of the painting, a woman appears in the midst of hitting a man who is dragging a flagon in the water. To the right of this group is another man who seems to be vomiting over the boat's side. Above him, a man dressed as a fool drinks from a bowl. He wears the traditional fool's cap with ass's ears, a bauble, and a faux head dangle above his shoulders.³⁰⁰ The fool is drinking liquor from an olive green bowl with little dabs of white, which causes him to stand out against the dark green foliage provided by the hazel tree (a symbol of stupidity in 16th century literature).³⁰¹ A boatman uses a large ladle instead of an oar, while the other has a flagon on the end of his oar. Dangling from the mast is a cake, which the central group is trying to eat that references a traditional folk custom or game.³⁰² Climbing up the mast is another figure who is about to carve some meat from a roasted bird. The mast itself is tree-like and covered in flowers and leaves.³⁰³ From the mast flies a flag bearing a crescent moon, which could symbolize 'lunacy.'³⁰⁴ High in the mast foliage is an owl, which resembles a skull at first glance. Owls in medieval times were a symbol of bad luck.³⁰⁵ The boat itself functions as a symbol. The hull of this fragile vessel is precariously resting and swaying on the surface of a dark green sea, its color being the hue of moral degradation. This ship represents the church, a refuge for the outcasts of society (a widely circulated idea in medieval Europe), and the emblem for the *Blau Schult* (the Blue Boat) loyal club.³⁰⁶

The overall image derives from Sebastian Brant's 1494 allegory named *Das Narrenschiff* (*Ship of Fools*), which describes a group of fools drifting through a sea of life while eating and drinking excessively.³⁰⁷ These figures are without morals despite the church being aboard, and each lacks direction in life, oblivious to the men overboard. The individuals in Bosch's painting prefer to enjoy life's pleasures than worry about their salvation.³⁰⁸

The owl perched within the mast and above the fool is an easily recognized symbol of evil or a bad omen. Going as far back as antiquity, "the owl carried mostly negative connotations, ranging from death and evil to stupidity and sloth."³⁰⁹ The idea of the owl as a primarily negative bird was perpetuated by bestiaries, "whose primary contribution to owl symbolism was to identify the owl with sinners in general and with the Jews in particular."³¹⁰ The crescent moon located on the billowing flag is another sinister representation "of the devil, revelry, licentiousness and unchastity."³¹¹

Sebastian Brant's book, *Das Narrenschiff*, provides a balance of humor and seriousness to his readers, much as Erasmus and Bosch have done in their respective works. Scholars have noted that this text helped shape Erasmus's *The Praise of Folly*.³¹² When examining Bosch's connection to Brant, the road is less straightforward. Since the artist did not date his paintings, scholars cannot agree on whether this text could have influenced Bosch. Due to a lack of creation dates, historians have used stylistic differences and other evidence to place the artist's paintings in a tentative chronology. In examining this timeline, it is unclear if Bosch's comedic *Ship of Fools* (Fig. 1) dates before or after the publication of Brant's work. While there is no evidence, Bosch was likely literate and exposed to the original version of Brant's book or one of its many translations.³¹³

Regarding literary sources, Brant's work is the most direct parallel to Bosch's painting.³¹⁴ However, the folk tradition represented in both did not originate with the artist or author. A ship of foolish merrymakers "was widespread from Holland to Austria before Brant's time."³¹⁵ Writers such as Jacquemart Gielée in 1288, Heinrich Teichner in 1360, and Jacob van Oestvoren in 1413 also discussed these foolish individuals.³¹⁶ Inspiration may have come from "a humorous academic oration, delivered in Latin from a platform built in the style of a ship, by Jodocus Gallus some time in the late 1480s at a meeting presided over by Brant's friend Wimpheling."³¹⁷ Moreover, illustrated Books of Hours may have inspired Brant and Erasmus's boating parties. Originally,

depictions of the activities of each month had been done mostly in the form of wall paintings until the fifteenth century, when they began to appear in manuscript miniatures. There are Books of Hours from the time when Bosch began his career in which... the month of May was generally illustrated with a boating party. From the same period there are also pictures of groups of monks in boats, and since the devils always busy themselves with such lusty companies, they would appear to be meant as disreputable. It is a safe assumption that, in Bosch's time, such an association of boat trips with sinful monks was widespread.³¹⁸

As discussed in Chapter 3, Bosch, and probably Erasmus and Brant, were all familiar with this medieval imagery and appointed it in their visual and literary works.

Brant felt strongly about religious reform and "was a man of deep religious convictions and... stern morality" who strove "to elevate his generation, and [also] dreamed...of improving its political condition through regeneration."³¹⁹ In his later works, Bosch displays religious turmoil with his fierce "contempt for the noisome corruption of the orthodox clergy," which he shared with his more enlightened contemporaries.³²⁰ It appears that the actions of the church's corrupt practitioners condemned the Christian faith in Bosch's eyes. Furthermore, Bosch's *Ship of Fools* (Fig. 1) was humorous and morally instructive to his contemporary viewers, indicating his use of popular moralizing traditions.

These traditions demand viewing Bosch's work through the lens of the *Devotio Moderna*, as the decorations of illuminated manuscripts are a blend of representations and signs done in such an intricate fashion that the modern audience becomes confused about what an artist might be representing.³²¹ Bosch uses the form of illuminated manuscripts as his medium, a source material in which its ideas come to life. For instance, Brant's *Das Narrenschiff* is a source from which the Dutch artist might have borrowed to construct his own version of *Ship of Fools* (Fig. 1). Where did Brant get his idea from, then? In illuminated manuscripts, there is a pattern of scenes, such as one having a conversation, a bedroom scene, and a boat scene.³²² The former two are stock scenes used for secular and religious illustrations. At the same time, the boat scenes appear in other manuscripts but are not as common. Visual language materializes through these scenes and conducts a story without relating to the written words.

An example of a secular illumination is the motif of boats in the story of Tristan and Iseult.³²³ This is a Celtic legend about illicit love between the Cornish knight Tristan and the Irish princess Iseult. The knight is on a mission to escort the princess from Ireland to Cornwall to marry his uncle, King Mark of Cornwall. In these scenes, the protagonist is typically dead and transported to a resting place by boat. With *Ship of Fools* (Fig. 1), the fools depicted in the set have struck land while conducting their foolish acts. Perhaps this could be Bosch's way of informing the audience that there is nowhere for them to go. Will they be stuck on a little island with what little food they have left once they come to understand their situation? Will they all perish because they are not paying attention to what their actions have caused? It is uncertain what the outcome of this painting will be. It is up to the viewer to decide whether the fools safely make it back to shore or are condemned for their sins.

Bosch's *Allegory of Intemperance (Gluttony and Lust)*

Bosch's *Allegory of Intemperance* (Fig. 2), often known as the *Allegory of Gluttony and Lust*, has a similar theme to *Ship of Fools* (Fig. 1). After careful examination of its underdrawings, scholars have been able to place this work directly under *Ship of Fools*, making it part of a larger triptych. In the upper left corner of the composition, another fool appears with a funnel for a hat. He is straddling a barrel of wine and blowing into a trumpet. Below him, a male figure fills his cup from a hole in the barrel. Three figures appear, swimming up from behind and pushing the barrel toward shore. On the right side of the shore, a couple stares intimately at one another within a tent. Scattered in the foreground are various personal items, including articles of clothing from a sparse tree to the entrance of the tent with shoes. This part of the scene suggests an act of undressing. Bosch's *Allegory of Intemperance* presents a relationship between gluttony and lust that medieval viewers would have easily understood. It is an interpretation of "sins of the flesh."³²⁴ The artist creates a series of images depicting comical sinners who are spiritually doomed yet too immersed in their sinful conduct to care.

The vices depicted in this painting by Bosch display the monastic orders and how "the situation must have been particularly acute in 's-Hertogenbosch, given the unusually high proportion of its population in religious orders."³²⁵ His religious background would have affected the creation of his piece as the "knife-edge of his irony was the taste of the times, paralleled in the scalded sarcasm of the writings of Erasmus," presenting human folly in the form of satire.³²⁶

This painting by Bosch through the lens of the *Devotio Moderna* displays figures without concern for their safety or the sins they are committing. In the *Tabletop of the Seven Deadly Sins and the Four Last Things* (Fig. 33), Bosch created a panel depicting the sin of Lust. The Fall of Man is associated with this sin, causing the expulsion of Adam and Eve from Paradise.³²⁷ Similar

to the *Allegory of Intemperance, Luxuria* (Fig. 42) depicts a young aristocratic couple embracing inside a tent surrounded by a peaceful landscape. In this painting too, foolish characters surround the figures alluding to their folly. Instead of acting in a courtly manner, the couple partakes in the sinful nature around them. Their placement in an outdoor landscape reminds viewers of how the Garden of Eden, God's creation of the pure and peaceful, was corrupted by the foolishness of human beings.³²⁸

Bosch's *Death of the Miser*

The *Death of the Miser* (Fig. 3) functions as the opposite wing to *Ship of Fools* (Fig. 1) and *Allegory of Intemperance* (Fig. 2) within this disassembled triptych. There are similarities to the artist's *Tabletop of the Seven Deadly Sins and the Four Last Things* (Fig. 33) from the late 15th century. *Death of the Miser* is the first painting within the dismantled triptych to have a complete interior space. Situated in a bedroom, the miser sits upright on his deathbed in the background. The figure of Death appears to the left of the miser, peering ominously around the door and facing the dying man. Death is pointing an arrow sharply at the miser.

In contrast, an angel is on the right side with a hand on the miser's shoulder and gesturing upwards toward the crucifixion and the rays of light blocked by the light red canopy. The detail of Death in *Tabletop of the Seven Deadly Sins and the Four Last Things* (Fig. 43) portrays a similar scene in which death, the skeletal figure, is peaking around the back of the bed frame. Death points an arrow at the dying man and shows the audience that his time is close to being up. A devil (demon) and an angel will fight over the man's soul after he dies.

The objects within the *Death of the Miser* suggest that the miser's sin is usury.³²⁹ An orange coat and a pink coat or another long garment appear in the foreground carelessly draped across the wall. Just outside the room, a helmet, tournament shield, sword, lance and gauntlet are

in disarray. A metal vessel or vessels appear behind the devil with the moneybag, along with a sealed note, and a weight with a dagger propped up against the lid of the trunk. Excluding the sealed notes and weights, these items were often pawned off by those who needed cash in the late Middle Ages.³³⁰ In terms of the nobility, they would pawn off their jewelry and plates, while knights would pawn their jousting equipment, and then the poor would vie for clothes, kitchenware or bedding.³³¹ The miser was storing many items, which he would never use. It is difficult, however, for him to repent for his sins while on his deathbed. The only way the miser will achieve salvation is by repenting for his sins and making replacements for his will.³³²

The bedside scene that Bosch portrays for the miser is critical and makes his predicament more serious. Bosch situates the miser between Death, who is at the door, the devil with the moneybag beside his bed, and the angel at his side.³³³ He appears to be warding off both Death and the devil, the former who is pointing an arrow at the miser, demonstrating that his end is near, while the latter holds the moneybag. There is no obvious sign of the miser making restitution to those to whom he owes money, and he appears unaware of the sunlight shining in through the window at the upper left of the composition. Even in a moment surrounded by death, he is unable to separate himself from his material objects. Instead of feeling guilty for the pawns he has collected, the miser is even more tempted by material objects. Bosch is using the same method he employed in the Prado *Tabletop of Seven Deadly Sins and the Four Last Things* (Fig. 33) in which each scene found in contemporary life represents a sin.³³⁴

Bed scenes in illuminated manuscripts are typically associated with sickness, sleep, dreams or visions, birth, and death.³³⁵ The depiction of the location depends on the number and attitude of the figures surrounding the bed. The posture and attitude the figure in the bed displays also brings the story to life.³³⁶ Here, in the *Death of the Miser* (Fig. 3), the figures outside the bed

fight over the miser's soul, compelling him to enter salvation through the angel or fall to the depths of hell with the demon. The latter appears to be occurring with Death peering around the door as the miser holds out a bag of gold in his general direction. There is a conversation occurring, but there is no text to convey what is actively happening within the scene. Bosch does this purposefully. Many of his paintings and drawings occur in the middle of a scene, giving the audience the chance to provide their own interpretations. Illustrators would add images/scenes that did not correspond with the written text because they could not read what was being discussed or wanted to bring some flavor to the manuscript.

Kari Duffield notes that the artist drew his inspiration for this piece from *The Visions of Tondal*, an illuminated manuscript from 1475.³³⁷ After witnessing the punishments of the avaricious in hell, Tondal, a greedy knight, was tortured similarly in the mouth of an enormous beast (Fig. 44).³³⁸ Like Tondal, Bosch's miser too witnesses a supernatural vision of Death, demons and an angel. Another literary influence Bosch could be referencing is the *Ars Moriendi* or *Art of Dying Well*. Duffield quotes Larry Silver, stating that the text was "one of the most popular of all medieval books... in which a series of temptations are paraded before the dying man in his bed, to be contested by his better spirit."³³⁹ The five temptations were infidelity, despair, impatience, vanity and greed. It appears that Bosch took the literal description of the text's illustrations, as the demon is always the one preying on the greedy nature of the protagonist. Master E. S.'s engravings (ca. 1450) and the British Museum block book of the *Ars Moriendi* appear in this painting. Based on an earlier illustrated manuscript proposed by Ludwig Kämmerer and then by Fritz Saxl in 1942, these works are almost identical.³⁴⁰ These "morally instruct the viewer on dying well and reaching salvation."³⁴¹ Each portrayal is a dying man faced

with the temptations of greed. This demonstrates another notion of Bosch warning his viewers of giving into temptation and committing folly.

These depictions of a miser falling victim to his greed never progress to him finding salvation and receiving God's mercy by the angel. Bosch displays the struggle that early Christian practitioners did not have to face due to their confidence in eternal salvation, and how this fear slowly builds over time in which death decides one's eternal fate: either victory over or accepting greed and going to hell.³⁴² Like the *Ars Moriendi*, he "uses the world of angels and demons to signal the moral universe in which human sinfulness succumbs to temptation... the viewer is presented with a moralizing and pessimistic vision of the miser's fate."³⁴³ The miser controls the destiny of his own soul depending on what he chooses: salvation or damnation. Fear of the plague and the apocalypse brought trepidation and could have influenced the disturbing imagery seen within *Death of the Miser* (Fig. 3).³⁴⁴

Bosch's painting also reflects the tension the miser must feel as he considers vice and salvation. With the swarm of demons in his bedchambers, the miser's choice is challenging. Does he accept the moneybag from the demon, or is he trying to bribe Death to buy his salvation? While unclear, the miser faces Death, meaning that perhaps his chance of salvation is slowly dimming the longer he considers an offer. The struggle between the demons and the lone angel outwardly symbolizes his internal struggles, as they fight over his soul. It is unclear who will be triumphant, even if in the *Ars Moriendi* the angel wants the dying man's soul. Bosch is warning his viewers to choose wisely, for their personal decisions lead to their spiritual destination.

In order to overcome these problems through the practice of *Devotio Moderna*, the viewer must imitate Jesus's life, therefore, what he did on the cross: how he prayed, cried out to

God, wept and felt sorrow for sins, commended a soul to God, and gave up his spirit willingly.³⁴⁵ The former teaches the importance of humility and the teachings of the Brethren of the Common Life; Bosch provides a composition that functions didactically. He attempts to educate his viewers by delivering a contemporary interior, rather than the more traditional, religious type. By demonstrating this 15th-century dwelling with greed, Bosch is employing “the same didactic principle employed in his *Tabletop of the Seven Deadly Sins and the Four Last Things* in the Museo Nacional del Prado, where each sin is illustrated by a scene from contemporary life,” including what can be found in *Ars Moriendi* and the teachings of the *Devotio Moderna*.³⁴⁶ Furthermore, reaching salvation for the miser and Bosch’s contemporaries would be a complex task.

Bosch’s Rotterdam *Wayfarer*

The *Wayfarer* (Fig. 4) represents the last panel connected to the *Ship of Fools* (Fig. 1) and served as the exterior panel of the triptych. In examining the physical dimensions of the four paintings these panels clearly were once connected. The *Ship of Fools* and *Allegory of Intemperance* (Fig. 2) were once one above the other.³⁴⁷ These panels would have been opposite *Death of the Miser* (Fig. 3), forming two interior side panels. Both the left and right panels would have flanked the central panel, which is either lost or may have been destroyed (Fig. 45). After its completion, the *Wayfarer* consisted of two panels originally glued together, likely around the time of its removal. Initially, the panels were able to open and close independently of the other, due to being separate and on hinges. There is some speculation that a member of Bosch’s workshop rather than the artist himself completed the *Wayfarer*.³⁴⁸ *Ship of Fools*, *Allegory of Intemperance*, *Death of the Miser*, and the Rotterdam *Wayfarer* must be studied together to discover their common subjects, stylistic elements, and themes.³⁴⁹

As to the theme of peddlers, the composition of the *Wayfarer* (Fig. 4) encompasses a man embarking on a journey. While it is not certain whether the man is a peddler, it is, however, similar to his drawings of disabled men (Fig. 46). With a gaunt face and gray hair, the man appears unkempt to the viewer and is wearing two different shoes. His clothes are ragged, dirty, and full of holes with a knapsack thrown over his shoulder, holding what few possessions he either has or was able to bring with him, and he also carries a walking stick to aid his journey. As for the setting, the ragged-looking protagonist either is leaving home during the beginning of his journey or is passing through an unknown town while traveling.³⁵⁰ Walter Gibson writes that during the Middle Ages, “every man was a pilgrim in a more spiritual sense. He was but a stranger on earth, an exile searching for his lost homeland.”³⁵¹ In terms of the *Devotio Moderna*, the wayfarer represents an everyday man who is making a journey through life while making decisions that will influence the fate of his soul. The character portrayed in the Rotterdam *Wayfarer* must have been familiar to contemporary viewers because other sources also represent him, including *The Pilgrim* (Fig. 47) by Hans Holbein the Younger of ca. 1538.

As mentioned in Chapter 4, poverty was a form of spiritual personification during the medieval period. Bosch’s wayfarer displays the image of a wandering pilgrim who appears to be leaving his home. Pilgrimages were quite common for contemporary Christians for they would travel to repent, visit holy sites or obtain holy relics without having to travel to Rome, Jerusalem, and Santiago de Compostela.³⁵² These pilgrims would wander from place to place with very few material objects so they could experience their own divine encounters without anything holding them back. The *Devotio Moderna* movement sought to not only enlighten people but also “transform the whole of human existence into a rewarding pilgrimage.”³⁵³ This act of pilgrimage

was promoted as a solitary journey, so that participants could experience their own divine interaction.

Bosch's composition shows various dangers, vices, and temptations that the wayfarer will meet. Foremost, a dog is at his heels as he leaves the town. The dog's head hangs low, its teeth are bared displaying that this animal should not be trusted, nor will it be nice. Another sinister symbol on display is an owl perched in the tree directly above the traveler. A man is urinating near the tavern at the left of the painting with his back to the viewer. Located on the right side of the panel, a group of pigs eat from a trough, which could represent gluttony. In the background, more figures appear through the open windows and door of the tavern. While a face is curiously peering out the window, a man appears to be courting a serving woman in the doorway. The interaction at the entrance may symbolize lust, as the man most likely propositions the woman for sexual favors. The painting does not show whether the worldly pleasures described above will be inviting enough for the wayfarer to enter.

Equivalent to the predicament the miser faces in the *Death of the Miser* (Fig. 3), the wanderer can turn away from the hub of vices within the tavern and escape committing any sinful acts. Once free of the sins, he would then be able to travel through the gates located on the right side of the panel. The gates and the open field represent Christian symbols, which Bosch's contemporary audience might have recognized.³⁵⁴ These symbols refer to Jesus, who "in John 10:9, speaks of himself as the door through which those who enter 'shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture.'"³⁵⁵ Bosch guides the wayfarer to the path of salvation; however, it is ultimately up to the man to choose his way. Likewise, the artist is warning his viewers to be cautious regarding the paths they choose in life. Due to the pessimism of the Middle Ages, "whether the pilgrim will turn away from the tavern to pass through the gate is as doubtful as the

issue of the struggle between angel and devils in the *Death of the Miser*.³⁵⁶ Bosch's painting is ambiguous, as the path taken is not highlighted or noteworthy. It is up to the viewer to understand the subject of his own free will.

A couple of questions come up when discussing Bosch's iconography: first, is this dismantled triptych depicting scenes of folly? Secondly, does the imagery composing the triptych represent Bosch's way of warning his Renaissance audience not to sin? The simplistic answer is 'yes.' The Dutch artist creates images displaying folly at its core. A warning plays through the protagonists within the dismantled triptychs to live humbly. The *Devotio Moderna* practice and the Brethren of the Common Life were the outline or standard of understanding Christian thought during Bosch's lifetime. The latter held a considerable amount of influence in 's-Hertogenbosch, therefore, it can be concluded that Bosch's art reflects "the importance of personal piety while also showing an appreciation for the popular characters and literary genres of the time."³⁵⁷ Enlightened thinkers used literary allusions and humor to facilitate the accessibility of the messages to the public.

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSION

Hieronymus Bosch was an artist lost in time before his rediscovery in the early 20th century. To untrained modern viewers, his works contain monsters, chaos, and no plot. However, due to the research by historians such as Erwin Panofsky and Charles de Tolnay, Hieronymus Bosch's story makes itself known again. While his work can be associated with the Surrealist movement in the mid-20th century or with the Mannerist style in the late-16th century, his style was not exactly original. Borrowing from the *Devotio Moderna* movement and illuminated manuscripts, the Dutch artist moved away from the traditional style emerging during the Early Renaissance. Instead of creating forms of realism, his paintings and drawings were composed of desolated and usually dark motifs. Art historians read this as Bosch rebelling against the style that began in Italy and traveled to the north. Others interpret his peculiar style and iconography as the artist's personal response to what was happening around him. The latter is what this thesis focused on, proving that the Dutch artist did not create monsters out of thin air but borrowed from the medieval period.

The teachings of the *Devotio Moderna* through Gerard Groote and Thomas à Kempis profoundly inspired the artist. He was an enlightened thinker and a devout Christian who believed that the individual was to live morally and worship according to the teachings of Jesus Christ. He sought to teach specific moral and spiritual truths to the 15th- and early 16th-century viewers.³⁵⁸ His images are humorous outside of their context; however, his patrons would have understood the hidden messages and taken heed of them. The Dutch artist worked in a time of religious unrest, right before the Protestant Reformation. It is no surprise that his works would criticize the practices of the church, reflecting on its corruption. Bosch is a precursor to the

Mannerist movement in the late-16th century, begun by Michelangelo di Lodovico Buonarroti (1475-1564) during his late period. They both reacted to the change in the environment around them. Bosch reacted to the shift in the Church structure, leading to the Protestant Reformation. Michelangelo lived through the Protestant and Catholic Counter-Reformations, both of which sought reform in the Church for different purposes.

His dismantled triptych, containing the *Ship of Fools* (Fig. 1), *Allegory of Intemperance (Gluttony and Lust)* (Fig. 2), *Death of the Miser* (Fig. 3) and the *Rotterdam Wayfarer* (Fig. 4), includes the creatures for which he is most renowned (Fig. 48). His monster and hybrid forms come not only from the Middle Ages but well before that, during the classical period when travelers would document foreign people as Other. They were different because of their skin color and culture, not fitting into the Euro-centric norm. The Bestiary comes to life through Alexander the Great's conquest before developing into the manuscript it is known for during the 12th century. However, his works contain not only hideous creatures and hilarious forms; the Dutch artist is also warning his viewers to avoid temptation and sin.

It is not known if this triptych is a commissioned work or if Bosch constructed it within his workshop. There is also the case of a missing central panel, which would have been flanked by *Ship of Fools* with *Allegory of Intemperance* as the left wing and *Death of the Miser* on the right. Although many of Bosch's works went missing during the exchange of power in 1629 from Spanish to Dutch rule, it remains unclear whether this panel was lost or never constructed. The former would tie into this being a commissioned work, whereas the concept of this triptych being constructed in Bosch's workshop connects to the latter. There are also connections between this set of works and the *Tabletop of Seven Deadly Sins and the Four Last Things* (Fig. 33), namely the *Death of the Sinner* (Fig. 43) and *Luxuria* (Fig. 42) scenes in which the concepts

are almost identical. It is believed that different scenes through the *Tabletop of Seven Deadly Sins and the Four Last Things* panel were painted by Bosch and then his workshop assistants. If that is the case, then this is another connection to the construction of illuminated manuscripts. The monks would call upon artists to construct images within the marginalia of these manuscripts. Essentially, they would provide the template, the manuscript leaf, and then the artist would use their creative license to create an image that may not exactly match the text. However, it is the process that is important here. Bosch likely provided a sketch of the *Last Four Things* section, and his assistants added the paint and styling after.

Furthermore, this thesis argued that the Dutch artist Hieronymus Bosch went against the traditional art of Northern Europe. It was not through his imagination that he constructed these monstrous forms but through the impact of illuminated manuscripts and the *Devotio Moderna* movement from the Middle Ages. He is responding to a time of crisis in the Netherlands, warning his viewers not to sin otherwise their souls will be damned to the pits of hell.

ENDNOTES

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- ³ Virginia Pitts Rembert, *Hieronymus Bosch* (New York: Parkstone International, 2012), 15. Also see Maurice Gossart, *Hieronymus Bosch* (Lille: Centrale du Nord, 1907).
- ⁴ Rembert, *Hieronymus Bosch*, 15.
- ⁵ Lodovico Guicciardini, *Description of all the Low Countries* (Amsterdam and Norwood, NJ: Theatrum Orbis Terrarum and W.J. Johnson, 1976).
- ⁶ Giorgio Vasari, *The Lives of the Most Excellent Painters, Sculptors, and Architects*, trans. of Vite de' più eccellenti pittori, scultori et architettori, ed. William Gaunt (London and New York: Dent and Dutton, 1963).
- ⁷ Marc van Vaernewijck, *Mémoires d'un patricien gantois du XVIe siècle; troubles religieux en Flandre et dans les Pays-Bas au XVIe siècle*; personal diaries (2 vols.), trans. Hermann P. van Duyse (Ghent: Maison d'Éditions d'Art, 1905-06); Karel van Mander, *Dutch and Flemish Painters*, trans. of the Schilder-boeck (New York: McFarlane, Warde, McFarlane, 1936).
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- ⁹ Rembert, *Hieronymus Bosch*, 18.
- ¹⁰ Rembert, *Hieronymus Bosch*, 18.
- ¹¹ Rembert, *Hieronymus Bosch*, 18. See Wilhelm Fränger, *The Millennium of Hieronymus Bosch*, trans. Eithne Wilkins and Ernst Kaiser (New York: Hacker Art Books, 1976), 8.
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- ¹³ Rembert, *Hieronymus Bosch*, 21.
- ¹⁴ Rembert, *Hieronymus Bosch*, 22.
- ¹⁵ Rembert, *Hieronymus Bosch*, 22.
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- ¹⁸ Walter S. Gibson, *Hieronymus Bosch: An Annotated Bibliography* (New York: Hall, 1983).

- ¹⁹ Rembert, *Hieronymus Bosch*, 69.
- ²⁰ Rembert, *Hieronymus Bosch*, 69.
- ²¹ Rembert, *Hieronymus Bosch*, 69.
- ²² Laurinda Dixon, *Alchemical Imagery in Bosch's Garden of Earthly Delights* (Ann Arbor, Michigan: UMI Research Press, 1981).
- ²³ Rembert, *Hieronymus Bosch*, 81.
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- ²⁵ Erin Grady, "Moralizing Monsters: Heretics in the *Bible moralisée*, Vienna 2554" (PhD diss., University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 2016), 1.
- ²⁶ See James Marrow, "Circumdederunt me canes multi: Christ's Tormentors in Northern European Art of the Late Middle Ages and Early Renaissance," *Art Bulletin* 59, no. 2 (1977): 167-181 and Joseph Koerner, "Impossible Objects: Bosch's Realism," *Anthropology and Aesthetics*, no. 46 (2000): 73-97.
- ²⁷ See Walter S. Gibson, "Imitatio Christi: The Passion Scenes of Hieronymus Bosch," *Simiolus: Netherlands Quarterly for the History of Art* 16, no. 2-3 (1972-1973): 83-93.
- ²⁸ Marrow, "Circumdederunt me canes multi," 169.
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- ³⁴ Massing, "Sicut erat in diebus Antonii," 110.

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- ⁴¹ Janssen, “Hieronymus Bosch,” 239.
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- ⁴⁶ Janssen, “Hieronymus Bosch,” 242.
- ⁴⁷ Fisher, *Hieronymus Bosch*, 21.
- ⁴⁸ Kari A. Duffield, “Hieronymus Bosch in Context: A Re-evaluation of the Artist Through the Enlightened Thinking of Desiderius Erasmus” (MA thesis, California State University, Long Beach, 2014), 118.
- ⁴⁹ Develoy, *Bosch*, 10.
- ⁵⁰ Develoy, *Bosch*, 10.
- ⁵¹ Matthijs, *Hieronymus Bosch*, 21.
- ⁵² Matthijs, *Hieronymus Bosch*, 21.
- ⁵³ Matthijs, *Hieronymus Bosch*, 21.
- ⁵⁴ Develoy, *Bosch*, 10.
- ⁵⁵ Develoy, *Bosch*, 10.

⁵⁶ Diablerie is another word for black magic or sorcery. Some scholars believe that Bosch was a user of black magic and alchemy because of the mischievous behaviors happening throughout his works. See Develoy, *Bosch*, 10.

⁵⁷ Develoy, *Bosch*, 11.

⁵⁸ Develoy, *Bosch*, 11.

⁵⁹ Develoy, *Bosch*, 11.

⁶⁰ Develoy, *Bosch*, 11.

⁶¹ Develoy, *Bosch*, 11.

⁶² Develoy, *Bosch*, 12.

⁶³ Develoy, *Bosch*, 12.

⁶⁴ Develoy, *Bosch*, 12.

⁶⁵ Duffield, "Hieronymus Bosch in Context," 12.

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⁷⁵ Harbison, "Realism and Symbolism in Early Flemish Painting," 590.

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⁷⁷ Panofsky, "Jan van Eyck's *Arnolfini* Portrait," 126.

⁷⁸ Panofsky, "Jan van Eyck's *Arnolfini* Portrait," 126.

⁷⁹ See John L. Ward, "Disguised Symbolism as Enactive Symbolism in Van Eyck's Paintings," *Artibus et Historiae* 15, no. 29 (1994): 11, where he makes a point that Panofsky is being ambiguous with his explanation of disguised symbolism.

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⁸⁵ Ward, "Disguised Symbolism," 12.

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⁸⁷ Harbison, "Realism and Symbolism in Early Flemish Painting," 591.

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⁹⁵ Harbison, "Realism and Symbolism in Early Flemish Painting," 597.

⁹⁶ Harbison, "Realism," 35.

⁹⁷ Harbison, "Realism," 38.

⁹⁸ The three major scenes portrayed in this triptych of Saint John the Baptist's life are the *Naming of John*, the *Baptism of Christ by John*, and the *Beheading of John*. See Harbison, "Realism, 40.

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¹⁰¹ Harbison, "Realism," 48.

¹⁰² Harbison, "Realism," 48.

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¹⁰⁵ Ilsink, *Hieronymus Bosch*, 27.

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¹⁰⁷ Ilsink, *Hieronymus Bosch*, 27.

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¹⁰⁹ See Develoy, *Bosch*, 10; Walter S. Gibson, "Hieronymus Bosch and the Mirror Man: The Authorship and Iconography of the *Tabletop of the Seven Deadly Sins*," *Oud Holland* 87, no. 4 (1973): 210; and de Tolnay, *Hieronymus Bosch*, 10.

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¹¹¹ Bovey, *Monsters and Grotesques*, 7.

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- ¹³⁶ Morgan, *A Survey of Manuscripts Illuminated in the British Isles*, 14.
- ¹³⁷ Morgan, *Survey of Manuscripts Illuminated in the British Isles*, 14.
- ¹³⁸ Morgan, *Survey of Manuscripts Illuminated in the British Isles*, 14.
- ¹³⁹ Morgan, *Survey of Manuscripts Illuminated in the British Isles*, 15.
- ¹⁴⁰ Morgan, *Survey of Manuscripts Illuminated in the British Isles*, 15.
- ¹⁴¹ Morgan, *Survey of Manuscripts Illuminated in the British Isles*, 15.
- ¹⁴² Morgan, *Survey of Manuscripts Illuminated in the British Isles*, 15.
- ¹⁴³ Morgan, *Survey of Manuscripts Illuminated in the British Isles*, 15.
- ¹⁴⁴ Bovey, *Monsters and Grotesques*, 21.
- ¹⁴⁵ T. J. Elliott, *A Medieval Bestiary*, Trans. T. J. Elliott (Boston, MA: Godine, 1971), 1.
- ¹⁴⁶ Bovey, *Monsters and Grotesques*, 22.
- ¹⁴⁷ Bovey, *Monsters and Grotesques*, 22.
- ¹⁴⁸ Bovey, *Monsters and Grotesques*, 25.
- ¹⁴⁹ Bovey, *Monsters and Grotesques*, 22.
- ¹⁵⁰ Bovey, *Monsters and Grotesques*, 22.
- ¹⁵¹ Ilsink, *Hieronymus Bosch*, 27.
- ¹⁵² Asa Simon Mittman, and Marcus Hensel, eds., *Primary Sources on Monsters: Demonstrare*, vol. 2 (Leeds: Arc Humanities Press, 2018), 18-21.
- ¹⁵³ Bovey, *Monsters and Grotesques*, 27.
- ¹⁵⁴ Bovey, *Monsters and Grotesques*, 5.
- ¹⁵⁵ Bovey, *Monsters and Grotesques*, 5.
- ¹⁵⁶ Bovey, *Monsters and Grotesques*, 5.

¹⁵⁷ Bovey, *Monsters and Grotesques*, 43.

¹⁵⁸ Bovey, *Monsters and Grotesques*, 43.

¹⁵⁹ Bovey, *Monsters and Grotesques*, 43.

¹⁶⁰ Bovey, *Monsters and Grotesques*, 43.

¹⁶¹ *Bebewyn* is the root of the modern English word, baboon – See Bovey, *Monsters and Grotesques*, 43.

¹⁶² Bovey, *Monsters and Grotesques*, 43.

¹⁶³ Peter and Linda Murray, *Dictionary of Art and Artists*, Middlesex, UK, Baltimore, MA, and Victoria, AU: Penguin Books (1972), 192.

¹⁶⁴ Bovey, *Monsters and Grotesques*, 43.

¹⁶⁵ Bovey, *Monsters and Grotesques*, 43-4.

¹⁶⁶ Bovey, *Monsters and Grotesques*, 44.

¹⁶⁷ Bovey, *Monsters and Grotesques*, 44.

¹⁶⁸ Murray, *Dictionary of Art and Artists*, 192.

¹⁶⁹ Arabesque is also sometimes used, but the two terms are not identical as arabesque is a flowing linear decoration. See Murray, *Dictionary of Art and Artists*, 192.

¹⁷⁰ Raphael was one of the first modern artists to use these motifs. – See Murray, *Dictionary of Art and Artists*, 192.

¹⁷¹ Murray, *Dictionary of Art and Artists*, 192.

¹⁷² Damiano Acciarino, “Between Renaissance and Reformation: Grotesque and the Debate on Images,” in Damiano Acciarino, ed., *Paradigms of Renaissance Grotesque*, Essays and Studies, 43 (Toronto: Center of Reformation and Renaissance Studies, 2019), 49.

¹⁷³ Acciarino, “Between Renaissance and Reformation,” 49.

¹⁷⁴ R. R. Post. *The Modern Devotion: Confrontation with Reformation and Humanism* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1968), x.

¹⁷⁵ Post, *The Modern Devotion*, x.

- ¹⁷⁶ Post, *The Modern Devotion*, xi.
- ¹⁷⁷ Albert Hyma, *The Christian Renaissance: A History of the "Devotio Moderna"* (Hamden, CT: Archen Books, 1965), 5.
- ¹⁷⁸ Hyma, *The Christian Renaissance*, 5.
- ¹⁷⁹ Hyma, *The Christian Renaissance*, 6.
- ¹⁸⁰ Hyma, *The Christian Renaissance*, 25.
- ¹⁸¹ In Groote's day, the word 'religio' was not the English translation for *religion* as it is now.
- ¹⁸² Hyma, *The Christian Renaissance*, 27.
- ¹⁸³ Hyma, *The Christian Renaissance*, 38.
- ¹⁸⁴ Hyma, *The Christian Renaissance*, 39-40.
- ¹⁸⁵ Hyma, *The Christian Renaissance*, 40.
- ¹⁸⁶ Hyma, *The Christian Renaissance*, 160.
- ¹⁸⁷ Hyma, *The Christian Renaissance*, 512.
- ¹⁸⁸ Hyma, *The Christian Renaissance*, 43.
- ¹⁸⁹ Hyma, *The Christian Renaissance*, 41.
- ¹⁹⁰ Hyma, *The Christian Renaissance*, 519.
- ¹⁹¹ Duffield, "Hieronymus Bosch in Context," 6-7.
- ¹⁹² Duffield, "Hieronymus Bosch in Context," 7.
- ¹⁹³ Duffield, "Hieronymus Bosch in Context," 7-8.
- ¹⁹⁴ Gibson, *Hieronymus Bosch*, 18.
- ¹⁹⁵ Duffield, "Hieronymus Bosch in Context," 8-9.
- ¹⁹⁶ John Rowlands, *Bosch* (London: Phaidon Press, 1975), 12.
- ¹⁹⁷ Rowlands, *Bosch*, 12.
- ¹⁹⁸ Duffield, "Hieronymus Bosch in Context," 9.

- ¹⁹⁹ Develoy, *Bosch*, 12.
- ²⁰⁰ Duffield, “Hieronymus Bosch in Context,” 8.
- ²⁰¹ Art historians do not have specific documentation about Bosch’s life or patrons; therefore, speculation occurs when discussing his religious donors, particularly about his beliefs.
- ²⁰² Post, *The Modern Devotion*, 397.
- ²⁰³ Duffield, “Hieronymus Bosch in Context,” 2.
- ²⁰⁴ Duffield, “Hieronymus Bosch in Context,” 10.
- ²⁰⁵ Duffield, “Hieronymus Bosch in Context,” 11.
- ²⁰⁶ Duffield, “Hieronymus Bosch in Context,” 11.
- ²⁰⁷ Duffield, “Hieronymus Bosch in Context,” 11.
- ²⁰⁸ Duffield, “Hieronymus Bosch in Context,” 11.
- ²⁰⁹ Robert M. Adams, introduction to *Julius Excluded from Heaven*, in *The Praise of Folly and Other Writings: A New Translation with Critical Commentary* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1989), 142.
- ²¹⁰ Duffield, “Hieronymus Bosch in Context,” 12.
- ²¹¹ Duffield, “Hieronymus Bosch in Context,” 12.
- ²¹² Duffield, “Hieronymus Bosch in Context,” 13.
- ²¹³ Duffield, “Hieronymus Bosch in Context,” 13.
- ²¹⁴ Clarence H. Miller, “Introduction to *Praise of Folly*,” in Desiderius Erasmus, *The Praise of Folly*, trans. Clarence H. Miller (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1979), xi.
- ²¹⁵ Duffield, “Hieronymus Bosch in Context,” 14.
- ²¹⁶ Erasmus, *The Praise of Folly*, 19, 37.
- ²¹⁷ Rosemary Devonshire Jones, *Erasmus and Luther* (London: Oxford University Press, 1968), 48.
- ²¹⁸ Margaret Mann Phillips, *Erasmus and the Northern Renaissance* (New York: Collier Books, 1965), 22.

- ²¹⁹ Erasmus, *The Praise of Folly*, 164.
- ²²⁰ Erasmus, *The Praise of Folly*, 164.
- ²²¹ Roger Clarke, "Extra Materials on Erasmus's *Praise of Folly* and Other Texts Translated in This Volume," in *Praise of Folly* by Desiderius Erasmus, 245-284 (Richmond: Oneworld Classics), 252.
- ²²² Clarke, "Extra Materials on Erasmus's *Praise of Folly*", 265.
- ²²³ A.H.T. Levi, "Introduction," in Desiderius Erasmus, *The Praise of Folly*, trans. Betty Radice (New York: Penguin Books, 1993), vi.
- ²²⁴ Duffield, "Hieronymus Bosch in Context," 15.
- ²²⁵ Duffield, "Hieronymus Bosch in Context," 16.
- ²²⁶ Duffield, "Hieronymus Bosch in Context," 16.
- ²²⁷ Erasmus, *The Praise of Folly*, 112-113.
- ²²⁸ Duffield, "Hieronymus Bosch in Context," 16.
- ²²⁹ Diane Wolfthal, *The Beginnings of Netherlandish Canvas Painting: 1400-1530* (Cambridge, NY, New Rochelle, Melbourne, Sydney: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 15.
- ²³⁰ Wolfthal, *The Beginnings of Netherlandish Canvas Painting*, 34.
- ²³¹ Wolfthal, *The Beginnings of Netherlandish Canvas Painting*, 34.
- ²³² Wolfthal, *The Beginnings of Netherlandish Canvas Painting*, 34.
- ²³³ Wolfthal, *The Beginnings of Netherlandish Canvas Painting*, 35.
- ²³⁴ Wolfthal, *The Beginnings of Netherlandish Canvas Painting*, 35.
- ²³⁵ Wolfthal, *The Beginnings of Netherlandish Canvas Painting*, 35.
- ²³⁶ Wolfthal, *The Beginnings of Netherlandish Canvas Painting*, 36.
- ²³⁷ Wolfthal, *The Beginnings of Netherlandish Canvas Painting*, 36.
- ²³⁸ Erwin Pokorny, "Bosch's Cripples and Drawings by His Imitators," *Master Drawings* 41, no. 3 (2003): 293.
- ²³⁹ Pokorny, "Bosch's Cripples and Drawings by His Imitators," 293.

²⁴⁰ Pokorny, “Bosch’s Cripples and Drawings by His Imitators,” 293.

²⁴¹ Pokorny, “Bosch’s Cripples and Drawings by His Imitators,” 294.

²⁴² Pokorny, “Bosch’s Cripples and Drawings by His Imitators,” 294.

²⁴³ Pokorny, “Bosch’s Cripples and Drawings by His Imitators,” 294.

²⁴⁴ Pokorny, “Bosch’s Cripples and Drawings by His Imitators,” 294.

²⁴⁵ Pokorny, “Bosch’s Cripples and Drawings by His Imitators,” 296.

²⁴⁶ Pokorny, “Bosch’s Cripples and Drawings by His Imitators,” 296.

²⁴⁷ Pokorny, “Bosch’s Cripples and Drawings by His Imitators,” 296.

²⁴⁸ Pokorny, “Bosch’s Cripples and Drawings by His Imitators,” 296.

²⁴⁹ Gibson, “Hieronymus Bosch and the Mirror Man: The Authorship and Iconography of the *Tabletop of the Seven Deadly Sins*,” 205.

²⁵⁰ A banderole is the streamer part of a knight’s lance or an inscription on a ribbon-shaped scroll. See Gibson, “Hieronymus Bosch and the Mirror Man,” 205.

²⁵¹ Gibson, “Hieronymus Bosch and the Mirror Man,” 205.

²⁵² Gibson, “Hieronymus Bosch and the Mirror Man,” 205.

²⁵³ Gibson, “Hieronymus Bosch and the Mirror Man,” 205-6.

²⁵⁴ Gibson, “Hieronymus Bosch and the Mirror Man,” 207.

²⁵⁵ Gibson, “Hieronymus Bosch and the Mirror Man,” 207.

²⁵⁶ Gibson, “Hieronymus Bosch and the Mirror Man,” 208.

²⁵⁷ Gibson, “Hieronymus Bosch and the Mirror Man,” 211.

²⁵⁸ Gibson, “Hieronymus Bosch and the Mirror Man,” 212.

²⁵⁹ Gibson, “Hieronymus Bosch and the Mirror Man,” 212-13.

²⁶⁰ Gibson, “Hieronymus Bosch and the Mirror Man,” 213.

²⁶¹ Gibson, “Hieronymus Bosch and the Mirror Man,” 218.

²⁶² Gibson, “Hieronymus Bosch and the Mirror Man,” 218.

- ²⁶³ Gibson, "Hieronymus Bosch and the Mirror Man," 221.
- ²⁶⁴ Barbara G. Lane, "Bosch's *Tabletop of the Seven Deadly Sins* and the *Corfiale Quattuor Novissimorum*," in William W. Clark eds., *Tribute to Lotte Brand Philip, art historian and detective* (New York: Queens College, 1985), 89.
- ²⁶⁵ Barbara G. Lane, "Bosch's *Tabletop of the Seven Deadly Sins*," 89.
- ²⁶⁶ Lane, "Bosch's *Tabletop of the Seven Deadly Sins*," 90.
- ²⁶⁷ Lane, "Bosch's *Tabletop of the Seven Deadly Sins*," 90.
- ²⁶⁸ Lane, "Bosch's *Tabletop of the Seven Deadly Sins*," 90.
- ²⁶⁹ Lane, "Bosch's *Tabletop of the Seven Deadly Sins*," 91.
- ²⁷⁰ Lane, "Bosch's *Tabletop of the Seven Deadly Sins*," 92.
- ²⁷¹ Lane, "Bosch's *Tabletop of the Seven Deadly Sins*," 92.
- ²⁷² Gibson, *Hieronymus Bosch*, 9.
- ²⁷³ Gibson, *Hieronymus Bosch*, 9.
- ²⁷⁴ Walter S. Gibson, *Figures of Speech: Picturing Proverbs in Renaissance Netherlands* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 2010), 39.
- ²⁷⁵ Alison Daines, "Ascents and Descents: Personal Pilgrimage in Hieronymus Bosch's *The Haywain*" (MA thesis, Brigham Young University, 2009), 8.
- ²⁷⁶ Kay C. Rossiter, "Bosch and Brant: Images of Folly," *Yale University Art Gallery Bulletin* 34, no. 2 (1973): 18.
- ²⁷⁷ Pokorny, "Bosch's Cripples and Drawings by His Imitators," 293.
- ²⁷⁸ Pokorny, "Bosch's Cripples and Drawings by His Imitators," 293.
- ²⁷⁹ The bird-headed, crutch-wielding demon is one of his many imitations. See Pokorny, "Bosch's Cripples and Drawings by His Imitators," 293.
- ²⁸⁰ See Rossiter, "Bosch and Brant: Images of Folly," 23 and Pokorny, "Bosch's Cripples and Drawings by His Imitators," 293.
- ²⁸¹ Anne M. Morganstern, "The Rest of Bosch's *Ship of Fools*," *Art Bulletin* 66, no. 2 (1984): 295.

- ²⁸² Morganstern, “The Rest of Bosch’s *Ship of Fools*,” 295.
- ²⁸³ Morganstern, “The Rest of Bosch’s *Ship of Fools*,” 295.
- ²⁸⁴ Morganstern, “The Rest of Bosch’s *Ship of Fools*,” 295.
- ²⁸⁵ Morganstern, “The Rest of Bosch’s *Ship of Fools*,” 298.
- ²⁸⁶ Anna Boczkowska, “The Lunar Symbolism of the *Ship of Fools* by Hieronymus Bosch,” *Oud Holland* 86, no. 2/3 (1971): 47.
- ²⁸⁷ Boczkowska, “The Lunar Symbolism of the *Ship of Fools* by Hieronymus Bosch,” 47.
- ²⁸⁸ The *carrus navalis* is a boat on wheels pulled along by participants in the carnival procession celebrating the return of Spring.
- ²⁸⁹ Boczkowska, “The Lunar Symbolism of the *Ship of Fools* by Hieronymus Bosch,” 57.
- ²⁹⁰ Boczkowska, “The Lunar Symbolism of the *Ship of Fools* by Hieronymus Bosch,” 57.
- ²⁹¹ Boczkowska, “The Lunar Symbolism of the *Ship of Fools* by Hieronymus Bosch,” 57.
- ²⁹² Boczkowska, “The Lunar Symbolism of the *Ship of Fools* by Hieronymus Bosch,” 57.
- ²⁹³ Boczkowska, “The Lunar Symbolism of the *Ship of Fools* by Hieronymus Bosch,” 57.
- ²⁹⁴ Boczkowska, “The Lunar Symbolism of the *Ship of Fools* by Hieronymus Bosch,” 58.
- ²⁹⁵ Boczkowska, “The Lunar Symbolism of the *Ship of Fools* by Hieronymus Bosch,” 60.
- ²⁹⁶ Anne Simonson, “On Spiritual Creativity in Hieronymus Bosch,” in Edelgard E. DuBruck and William C. McDonald ed., *Fifteenth Century Studies* (Kalamazoo, MI: Medieval Institute Publications and Western Michigan University, 1991), 221.
- ²⁹⁷ Simonson, “On Spiritual Creativity in Hieronymus Bosch,” 225.
- ²⁹⁸ Simonson, “On Spiritual Creativity in Hieronymus Bosch,” 240.
- ²⁹⁹ Duffield, “Hieronymus Bosch in Context,” 28.
- ³⁰⁰ Delevoy, “Hieronymus Bosch in Context,” 36.
- ³⁰¹ Duffield, “Hieronymus Bosch in Context,” 28.
- ³⁰² Duffield, “Hieronymus Bosch in Context,” 28.
- ³⁰³ Boczkowska, “The Lunar Symbolism of the *Ship of Fools* by Hieronymus Bosch,” 57.

- ³⁰⁴ Bozckowska, “The Lunar Symbolism of the *Ship of Fools* by Hieronymus Bosch,” 57.
- ³⁰⁵ Dirk Bax, *Hieronymus Bosch and Lucas Cranach: Two Last Judgement Triptychs* (Amsterdam, Oxford, New York: North-Holland Publishing Company, 1983), 358.
- ³⁰⁶ Bozckowska, “The Lunar Symbolism of the *Ship of Fools* by Hieronymus Bosch,” 47.
- ³⁰⁷ Sebastian Brant’s *Narrenschiff* was published in 1494 in the vernacular, then translated into French by Rivière (*La Nas des Fous*, Paris 1497) and Latin by Jakob Locher (*Nauvis Stultifera*, Basel 1497). In 1501, the *Narrenschiff* was re-issued by the Flemish scholar journalist Judocus Badius Ascensius in Paris under the title *Stultiferae Naues*. – See Delevoy, *Bosch: Biographical and Critical Study*, 36.
- ³⁰⁸ Duffield, “Hieronymus Bosch in Context,” 28.
- ³⁰⁹ Larry Silver, “Money Matters,” in *Peasant Scenes and Landscapes: The Rise of Pictorial Genres in the Antwerp Art Market*, 57
- ³¹⁰ Mariko Miyazaki, “Misericord Owls and Medieval Anti-Semitism,” in *The Mark of the Beast: The Medieval Bestiary in Art, Life, and Literature*, 27.
- ³¹¹ Bax, *Hieronymus Bosch and Lucas Cranach*,” 380.
- ³¹² Duffield, “Hieronymus Bosch in Context,” 30.
- ³¹³ Edwin H. Zeydel, “Introduction,” in Sebastian Brant, *Ship of Fools*, trans. Edwin H. Zeydel (New York: Dover Publications, 1962), 24.
- ³¹⁴ Hans Belting, *Hieronymus Bosch: Garden of Earthly Delights*, trans. Ishbel Flett (Munich: Prestel Verlag, 2002), 65.
- ³¹⁵ Zeydel, “Introduction,” 12.
- ³¹⁶ Duffield, “Hieronymus Bosch in Context,” 31.
- ³¹⁷ Zeydel, “Introduction,” 12.
- ³¹⁸ Carl Linfert, *Hieronymus Bosch: The Paintings* (London: The Phaidon Press, 1959), 66.
- ³¹⁹ Linfert, *Hieronymus Bosch*, 7.
- ³²⁰ Peter S. Beagle, *The Garden of Earthly Delights*, 26. Need full citation.
- ³²¹ Virginie Greene, “The Bed and the Boat: Illustrations of the Demoiselle d’Escalot’s Story in Illuminated Manuscripts of *La Mort Artu*,” *Arthuriana* 12, no. 4 (2002): 51.

³²² Greene, “The Bed and the Boat,” 52.

³²³ Constance B. Bouchard, “The Possible Nonexistence of Thomas, Author of Tristan and Isolde,” *Modern Philology* 79, no. 1 (1981): 67.

³²⁴ Federico Zeri, ed., *Bosch: The Garden of Earthly Delights*, trans. Susan Scott (Richmond Hill: NDE Canada Corporation, 2001), 23.

³²⁵ Gibson, *Hieronymus Bosch*, 44.

³²⁶ Richard Foster and Pamela Tudor-Craig, *The Secret Life of Paintings* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1986), 72.

³²⁷ Eunyoung Hwang, “Reinterpreting Hieronymus Bosch’s *Table Top of the Seven Deadly Sins and the Four Other Things Through the Seven Day Prayer of the Devotio Moderna*,” MA thesis, University of North Texas, 2000), 42.

³²⁸ Hwang, “Reinterpreting Hieronymus Bosch,” 43.

³²⁹ Anne M. Morganstern, “The Pawns in Bosch’s Death and the Miser,” *Studies in the History of Art* 12 (1982): 33.

³³⁰ Morganstern, “The Pawns in Bosch’s Death and the Miser,” 33.

³³¹ Morganstern, “The Pawns in Bosch’s Death and the Miser,” 33.

³³² Morganstern, “The Pawns in Bosch’s Death and the Miser,” 36.

³³³ Morganstern, “The Pawns in Bosch’s Death and the Miser,” 37.

³³⁴ Morganstern, “The Pawns in Bosch’s Death and the Miser,” 38.

³³⁵ Greene, “The Bed and the Boat,” 55.

³³⁶ Greene, “The Bed and the Boat,” 55.

³³⁷ Duffield, “Hieronymus Bosch in Context,” 36.

³³⁸ Duffield, “Hieronymus Bosch in Context,” 36.

³³⁹ Duffield, “Hieronymus Bosch in Context,” 36.

³⁴⁰ Duffield, “Hieronymus Bosch in Context,” 36.

³⁴¹ Duffield, “Hieronymus Bosch in Context,” 36-7.

³⁴² Duffield, “Hieronymus Bosch in Context,” 38.

³⁴³ Silver, “Money Matters,” 54.

³⁴⁴ Some believed that the world was nearing its end with the year 1500 marking the halfway point through a millennium.

³⁴⁵ Duffield, "Hieronymus Bosch in Context," 40.

³⁴⁶ Morgenstern, "The Pawns in Bosch's Death and the Miser," 36.

³⁴⁷ Duffield, "Hieronymus Bosch in Context," 46.

³⁴⁸ Gibson, *Hieronymus Bosch*, 101.

³⁴⁹ Duffield, "Hieronymus Bosch in Context," 47.

³⁵⁰ Duffield, "Hieronymus Bosch in Context," 47.

³⁵¹ Gibson, *Hieronymus Bosch*, 101.

³⁵² Daines, "Ascents and Descents," 8.

³⁵³ Daines, "Ascents and Descents," 9.

³⁵⁴ Gibson, *Hieronymus Bosch*, 103.

³⁵⁵ Gibson, *Hieronymus Bosch*, 106.

³⁵⁶ Gibson, *Hieronymus Bosch*, 106.

³⁵⁷ Duffield, "Hieronymus Bosch in Context," 50.

³⁵⁸ Duffield, "Hieronymus Bosch in Context," 117.

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APPENDIX A

TIMELINE

- 1318 Brotherhood of Our Lady was founded. The Brotherhood was a religious confraternity founded in 's-Hertogenbosch devoted to the Mother of God (the Virgin Mary).
- Late 1300s Brethren of the Common Life was founded. The Brethren was a religious community established in the late 14th century by Geert Groote at Deventer, in the Netherlands.
- 1375 Robert Campin, also called the Master of Flémalle (due to his many unsigned works) was born. He was one of the three who paved the way in art during the early Renaissance in Flanders.
- 1390 Jan van Eyck was born in Maaseik, Belgium. He was an active painter in Bruges and known as one of the inventors of early Netherlandish Renaissance art, creating the *ars nova*.
- 1399/1400 Rogier van der Weyden was born in Tournai, Belgium. He is known for his religious triptychs, altarpieces, and commissioned portraits.
- 1430 Hans Memling was born in Seligenstadt, Germany. He was a painter active in Flanders and spent time in Rogier van der Weyden's workshop in Brussels.
- 1440 Hugo van der Goes was born in Ghent, Belgium. He was a painter of altarpieces and portraits during the 15th century.
- 1441 Jan van Eyck died in Bruges, Belgium.
- 1444 Robert Campin died in Tournai, Belgium.
- 1450 Hieronymus Bosch was born Jeroen van Aken in the town his name pays homage to, 's-Hertogenbosch, Netherlands.
- 1457/8 The death of Bosch's father, Anthonis van Aken who was a painter as well.
- 1458 Sebastian Brant was born in Strasbourg, France, and was a German humanist and satirist.
- 1464 Rogier van der Weyden died in Brussels Agglomeration, Belgium.
- 1466 Desiderius Erasmus was born in Rotterdam, Netherlands. He was a Dutch philosopher and Catholic theologian who wrote the *Praise of Folly*.

- 1474 Hieronymus Bosch first appeared in the Municipal record along with his two brothers and sister.
- 1475 Town records show that Bosch was listed as a member of his father's workshop, and it is assumed that his father and uncles taught him to paint.
- 1479/81 Bosch is mentioned as the husband of Aleyt van der Meervenne who was a patrician lady coming from a family of pharmacists.
- 1482 Hugo van der Goes died in Auderghem, Belgium.
- 1486 There is a citation of Bosch's name and profession in 's-Hertogenbosch's town record listing him as *Insignis Pictor* (Distinguished Painter).
- 1486/7 Bosch enrolled in the Brotherhood of Our Lady. The brotherhood was devoted to the Virgin Mary and widely respected throughout Catholic Europe.
- 1494 Hans Memling died in Bruges, Belgium.
- Sebastian Brant's *Das Narrenschiff* (*Ship of Fools*) was first published in Basel, Switzerland in German. This satirical allegory may have influenced Bosch's *Ship of Fools* painting.
- 1497 Hans Holbein the Younger was born in Augsburg, Germany. He was a German-Swiss painter and printmaker. During his time, he produced religious art, satire, and Reformation propaganda.
- Das Narrenschiff* was translated into Latin.
- 1498/9 It can be assumed that Bosch met Diego de Guevara, father of the Spanish Humanist Felipe de Guevara around this time. De Guevara obtained six works by both, two including his *Tabletop of the Seven Deadly Sins and the Four Last Things* and an original *Haywain Triptych*.
- 1500 Bosch completed his *Tabletop of the Seven Deadly Sins and the Four Last Things*.
- Between 1500 to 1516, Bosch constructed his *Temptation of Saint Anthony* painting.
- Bosch began working on his dismantled triptych from 1500 to 1510, which includes *Ship of Fools*, the *Allegory of Intemperance*, *Death of the Miser*, and the *Rotterdam Wayfarer*.
- 1503 Between 1503 to 1510, he worked on one of his more renowned triptychs, the *Garden of Earthly Delights*.

- 1503/5 Bosch may have traveled from the Netherlands to Italy, mainly up north and Venice. No physical documentation exists on his travels, however.
- 1509 Erasmus wrote the first edition of *The Praise of Folly* in Latin.
- 1511 *The Praise of Folly* was first printed in June of 1511.
- 1516 Death of Dutch painter, Hieronymus Bosch. His death was recorded by the Brotherhood of Our Lady. A funeral mass was served at the church of Saint John in his memory 9 August 1516.
- 1517 Following Hieronymus Bosch's death, Martin Luther, a German Augustinian Monk and Protestant Reformer (1483-1546), posted his *Ninety-Five Theses* on the door of Wittenberg Cathedral 31 October 1517.
- 1521 Sebastian Brant died in Strasbourg, France.
- 1536 Desiderius Erasmus died in Basel, Switzerland.
- 1543 Hans Holbein the Younger died in London, United Kingdom.
- 1549 *The Praise of Folly* was published in English.



Fig. 2. Hieronymus Bosch, *Allegory of Intemperance (Gluttony and Lust)*, ca. 1500-1510. Oil on oak panel, 34.9 x 31.4 cm (unframed). Yale University Art Gallery, New Haven.



Fig. 3. Hieronymus Bosch, *Death of the Miser*, ca. 1500-1510.
Oil on oak panel, 19.3 x 6.4 cm. National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.



Fig. 4. Hieronymus Bosch, *The Wayfarer*, ca. 1500-1510. Oil on oak panel, 71.1 x 70.6 cm. Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen, Rotterdam.



Fig. 5. Hieronymus Bosch, *The Cure of Folly*, ca. 1490. Oil on panel, 48 x 35 cm. Museo Nacional del Prado, Madrid



Fig. 6. Hieronymus Bosch, *The Conjurer*, ca. 1502. Oil on panel, 53 x 65 cm.
Musée Municipal, Saint Germain-en-Laye.



Fig. 7. Hieronymus Bosch, *The Temptation of Saint Anthony* (open view), ca. 1502.
Oil on oak panel, 131.5 x 119 cm (central panel), 131.5 x 53 cm (side panels).
Museu Nacional de Arte Antiga, Lisbon.



Fig. 8. Hieronymus Bosch, *Saint John on Patmos*, ca. after 1488. Oil on oak panel, 61 x 121.9 cm. Staatliche Museen, Gemäldegalerie, Berlin.



Fig. 9. Jan van Eyck, *Giovanni Arnolfini and His Wife*, ca. 1434.
Oil on oak panel, 81.3 x 61 cm. The National Gallery, London.



Fig. 10. Jan van Eyck, *The Annunciation*, ca. 1434-36.
Oil on canvas transferred from panel, 93 x 37 cm.
National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.



Fig. 11. Jan van Eyck, *Virgin and Child with Saint Michael and Saint Catherine with a Donor* (*Dresden Triptych*), ca. 1437. Oil on oak panel, 33.1 x 27.5 cm (central panel) x 33.1 x 13.6 cm (wings). Gemäldegalerie Alte Meister, Dresden.

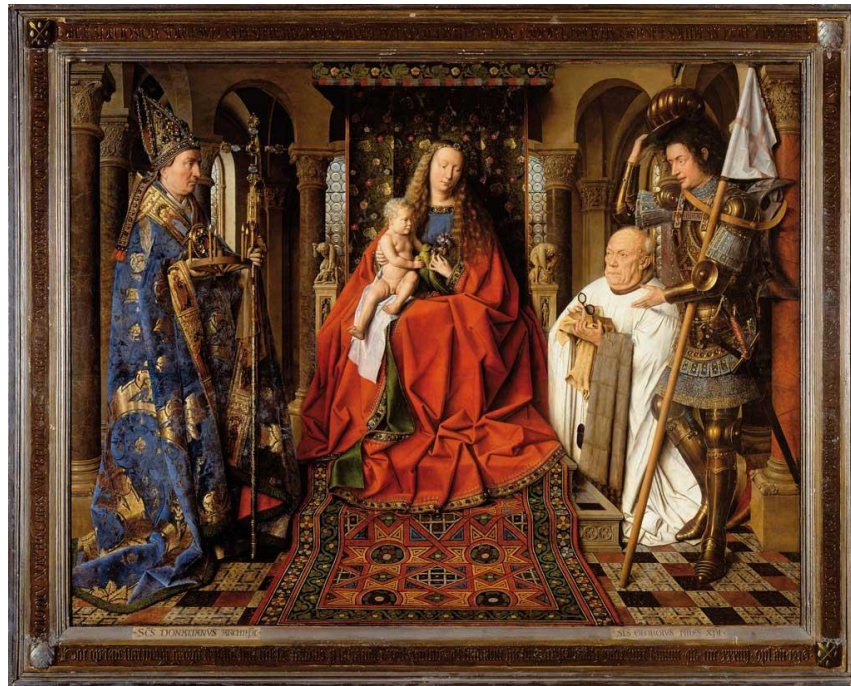


Fig. 12. Jan van Eyck, *Virgin and Child with Canon van der Paele*, ca. 1434-36. Oil on oak panel, 141 x 176.5 cm (including frame), 122 x 157 (excluding frame). Groeningemuseum, Bruges.



Fig. 13. Jan van Eyck, *Madonna in the Church*, ca. 1438.
Oil on oak panel, 31 x 14 cm. Gemäldegalerie, Staatliche Museen, Berlin.



Fig. 14. Robert Campin, *Virgin and Child*, ca. 1410.
Oil on panel, 160 x 68 cm. Städelsches Kunstinstitut, Frankfurt.



Fig. 15. Follower of Robert Campin, *Madonna before a Firescreen*, ca. 1440.
Oil on panel, 63.5 x 49.5 cm. The National Gallery, London.



Fig. 16. Rogier van der Weyden, *Saint Luke Drawing the Virgin*, ca. 1435-40.
Oil and tempera on panel, 137.5 x 110.8 cm. Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.

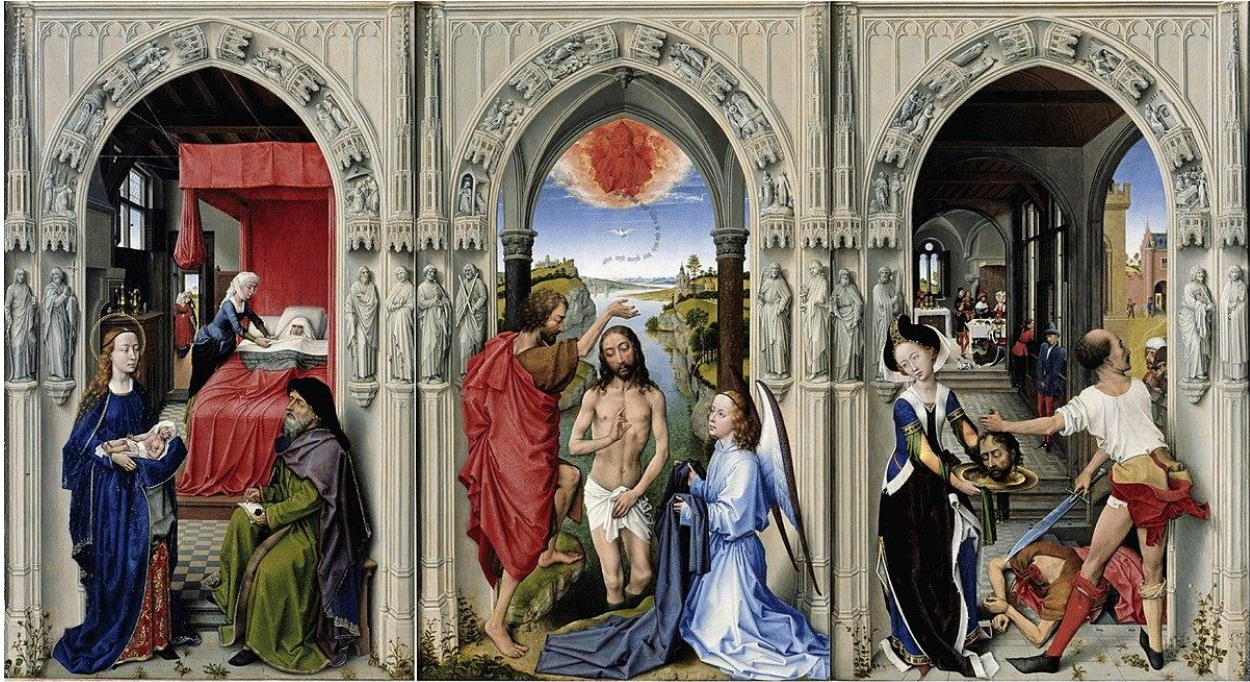


Fig. 17. Rogier van der Weyden, *Saint John Altarpiece*, ca. 1455.
Oil on oak panel, 77 x 48 cm. Gemäldegalerie, Berlin.



Fig. 18. Hieronymus Bosch, *Ecce Homo*, ca. 1480. Oil on oak panel, 70.1 x 61 cm. Städelsches Kunstinstitut, Frankfurt.



Fig. 19. Follower of Hieronymus Bosch, *Ecce Homo Triptych*, 1496-1500. Oil on oak panel, 73 x 57.2 cm. Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.



Fig. 20. Follower of Hieronymus Bosch, *Jobs Triptych*, ca. 1500-24. Oil on oak panel, 132 x 98.3 cm. Groeningemuseum, Bruges.



Fig. 21. *Seventeen monstrous races*, ca. 1175. Manuscript, 48.5 x 71.4 cm. British Library, London.



Fig. 22. A map of the world, with Jerusalem at the center and the monstrous races on the outermost edge, ca. 1265. Manuscript, 17 x 12.5 cm. British Library.



Fig. 23. A map of monstrous races, detail of Christ and Angels, ca. 1265. Manuscript. British Library, London.



Fig. 24. A map of monstrous races, detail of the dragons, ca. 1265. Manuscript. British Library, London.



Fig. 25. A map of monstrous races, detail of the monstrous races, ca. 1265. Manuscript. British Library, London.



Fig. 26. Hieronymus Bosh, *The Garden of Earthly Delights* (open view), ca. 1503-1515.
Oil on oak panel, 6'7" x 12'6". Museo Nacional del Prado, Madrid.



Fig. 27. Hieronymus Bosch, *The Garden of Earthly Delights*, detail of *Hell*, ca. 1503-1515. Oil on oak panel, 87 x 38.4 cm. Museo Nacional del Prado, Madrid.



Fig. 28. Hieronymus Bosch, *Last Judgment Triptych* (open view), ca. after 1482.
Oil on panel, 160 x 127 cm (central panel), 165 x 61 cm (wings).
Akademie der Bildenden Künste, Vienna.



Fig. 29. Hieronymus Bosh, *Last Judgement Triptych*, detail of central panel, ca. after 1482.
Oil on panel, 160 x 127 cm. Akademie der Bildenden Künste, Vienna.

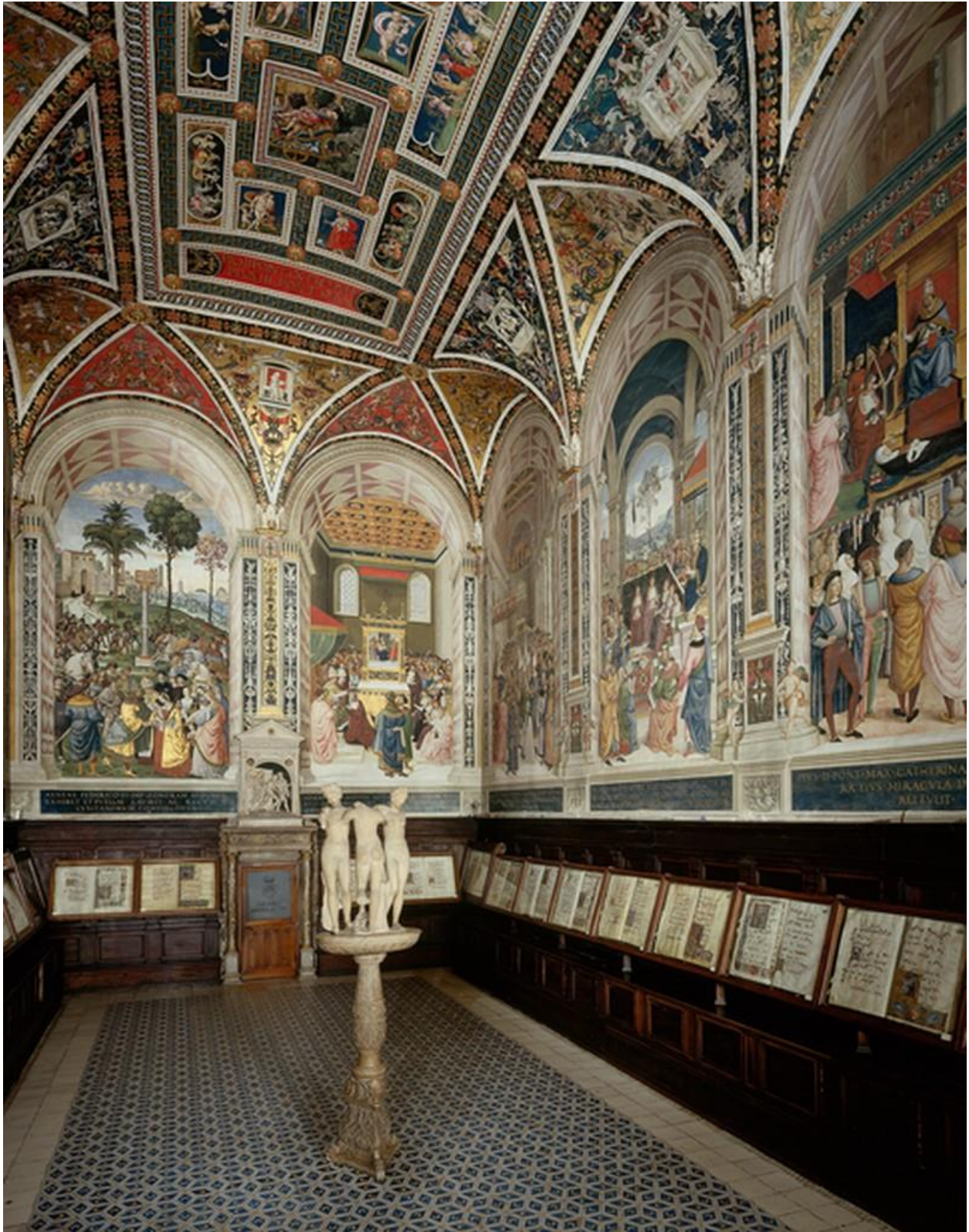


Fig. 30. Bernadino di Betto (Pinturricchio), *Piccolomini Library* (interior), ca. 1502-08. Fresco. Siena.



Fig. 31. Hieronymus Bosh, *Haywain Triptych*, ca. 1516.
Oil on oak panels, 132.1 x 198.1 cm (central panel) x 142.2 x 66 cm (wings).
Museo Nacional del Prado, Madrid.



Figure 32. Hieronymus Bosch, *Adoration of the Magi*, ca. after 1485-1500.
Oil on panel, 138 x 144 cm. Museo Nacional del Prado, Madrid.



Fig. 33. Hieronymus Bosh, *Tabletop of the Seven Deadly Sins and the Four Last Things*, ca. 1500. Oil on panel, 119.4 x 149.9 cm. Museo Nacional del Prado, Madrid.

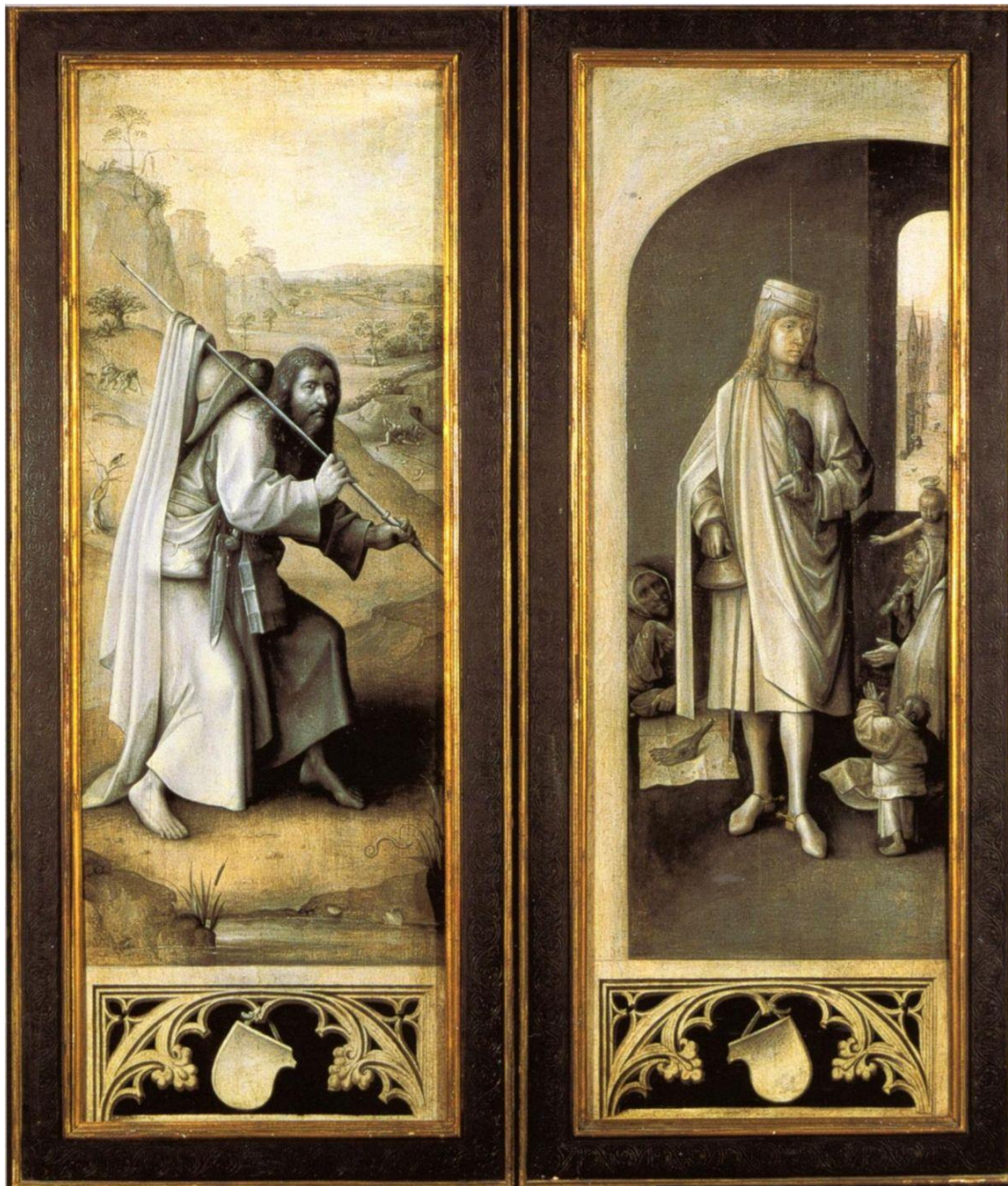


Fig. 34. Hieronymus Bosch, *Last Judgment Triptych*, detail of shutters, ca. after 1482. Oil on panel, 165 x 61 cm. Akademie der Bildenden Künste, Vienna.



Fig. 35. Hieronymus Bosch, *Last Judgement Triptych*, detail of *beggar* (closed view), ca. after 1482. Oil on panel. Akademie der Bildenden Künste, Vienna.



Figure 36. Hieronymus Bosch, *Christ Carrying the Cross*, ca. 1510. Oil on panel, 74 x 81 cm. Museum of Fine Arts, Ghent.



Fig. 37. Hieronymus Bosch, *Garden of Earthly Delights*, detail of tree-man, ca. 1503-1515. Oil on oak panel, 87 x 38.4 cm. Museo Nacional del Prado, Madrid.



Figure 38. Hieronymus Bosh, *Tabletop of the Seven Deadly Sins and the Four Last Things*, detail of *Avaricia*, ca. 1500. Oil on panel. Museo Nacional del Prado, Madrid.



Figure 39. Hieronymus Bosch, *Tabletop of the Seven Deadly Sins and the Four Last Things*, detail of *Invidia*, ca. 1500. Oil on panel. Museo Nacional del Prado, Madrid.



Fig. 40. Reconstruction of Hieronymus Bosch's *Ship of Fools* and *Allegory of Intemperance* (author's reconstruction). See Figures 1 and 2 for more details about the images.



Figure 41. Jan van Eyck, *Virgin with the Chancellor Rolin*, ca. 1435.
Oil on panel, 66 x 62 cm. Musée du Louvre, Paris.



Fig. 42. Hieronymus Bosch, *Tabletop of the Seven Deadly Sins and the Four Last Things*, detail of *Luxuria*, ca. 1500. Oil on panel. Museo Nacional del Prado, Madrid.



Fig. 43. Hieronymus Bosch, *Tabletop of the Seven Deadly Sins and the Four Last Things*, detail of *Death of the Sinner*, ca. 1500. Oil on panel. Museo Nacional del Prado, Madrid.



Fig. 44. Simon Marmion. *The Visions of Tondal*, detail of *Hellmouth* or *the Mouth of Hell* page, ca. 1475. Manuscript – tempera colors, gold leaf, gold paint, and ink on parchment tipped into a binding of wooden boards covered with brown calf, 36.3 x 26.2 cm (leaf). J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles.

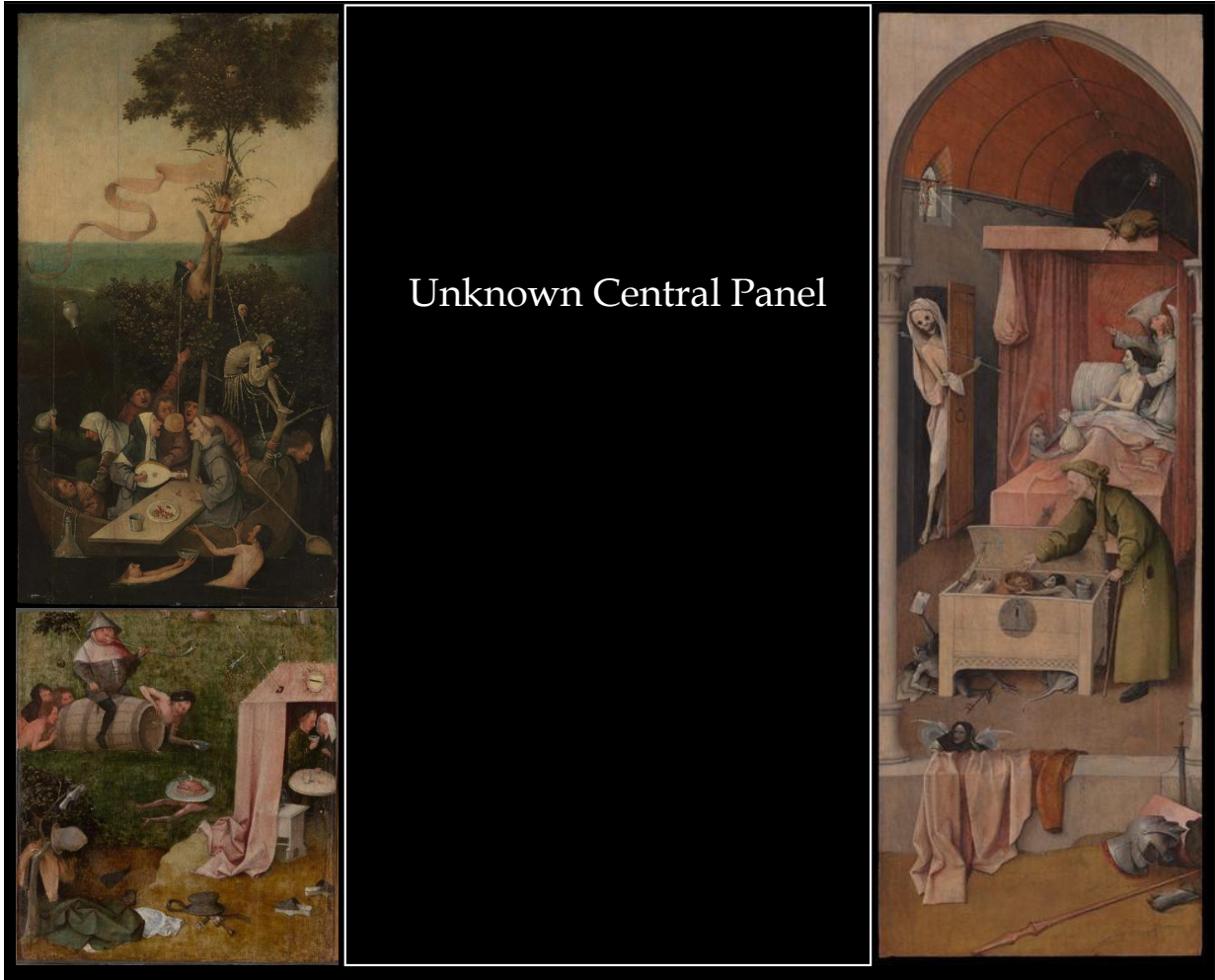


Fig. 45. Reconstruction of Hieronymus Bosch's *Ship of Fools*, *Allegory of Intemperance*, *Death of the Miser*, and missing central panel (author's reconstruction). See Figures 1, 2 and 3 for more details about the images.



Fig. 46. After Hieronymus Bosch, *Cripples, Fools, Musicians, and Beggars*, ca. 1570. Engraving, 53.7 x 41 cm (framed). Saint Louis Art Museum, Saint Louis.



Fig. 47. Hans Holbein the Younger, *The Pilgrim*, ca. 1538.
Woodcut, 6.5 x 5.2 cm. The British Museum, London.



Fig. 48. Reconstruction of Hieronymus Bosch's dismantled triptych (author's reconstruction).
See Figures 1, 2, 3 and 4 for further detail on the images.

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