

*Originalveröffentlichung in: Jheronimus Bosch : his life and his work; 4th International Jheronimus Bosch Conference April 14-16, 2016 Jheronimus Bosch Art Center, 's-Hertogenbosch 2016, S. 158-175*

# Painted tabletops of the late Middle Ages and Jheronimus Bosch's (workshop) *The Seven Deadly Sins and the Four Last Things*

*Jens Kremb*

## **Jens Kremb**

Kremb is an independent scholar who studied art history at the University of Bonn, as well as studying Christian archaeology, history of science and archives administration. He wrote his doctoral thesis about painted tabletops in the late Middle Ages, which has since been published. His research focuses are German panel painting of the late Middle Ages, portraiture, and the history of furniture and guild artefacts. He has published articles about a rediscovered bust of John Heartfield and has possibly found Mona Lisa's little sister as a part of a double portrait by Martin Schaffner.

---

In 1854, Henry David Thoreau said: 'At the same time that we are earnest to explore and learn all things, we require that all things be mysterious and unexplorable'.<sup>1</sup> These words seem to describe the discussion about the attribution of the painting *The Seven Deadly Sins and the Four Last Things* to Jheronimus Bosch and the discussion about its original function very well (Fig. 1).

In this article, I aim to show that the painting is a painted tabletop. I will therefore begin with a short overview about the painted tabletops of the late Middle Ages. I will not include detailed descriptions of the tabletops or of Bosch's work and the history of research about it.<sup>2</sup> Nevertheless, I want to explore a new thesis that has not yet been expressed in connection with the composition of the painting of *The Seven Deadly Sins and the Four Last Things*.

First, I will describe the tradition of decorating tabletops figuratively, which has existed since antiquity. The oldest preserved examples date from Theodosian times and depict reliefs with animal fighting and hunting scenes.<sup>3</sup> Unfortunately, no tabletops have been preserved from the early and high Middle Ages, but written descriptions of figuratively decorated ones have survived. For instance, Bishop Theodulf of Orleans's statement about a dining table he commissioned on which a mappa mundi was depicted clearly illustrates how pronounced table culture was at the beginning of the ninth century. As Theodulf wrote: 'the body will be satisfied by the food, but the mind has joy through the picture'.<sup>4</sup>

Evidence can also be found for painted tabletops in the late Middle Ages. For the period from 1330 to 1550, there remain 23 tables with painted tabletops north of the Alps that are preserved and/or identifiable in written sources. Eight of those tables can be dated before 1500 and three are located in the Netherlands. The oldest preserved table with a painted tabletop is the 1330 folding table from Lüneburg; it is also the only one with a preserved underframe.<sup>5</sup> Of all the other tables, only the tabletops are preserved. The painting on the folding table from Lüneburg consists of a coat of arms frieze which surrounds the table and five round image fields that depict scenes from the Old Testament (Fig. 2).<sup>6</sup>

The composition of the painting of a folding table from around 1410 in Lower Saxony resembles that of the folding table from Lüneburg, but the four image fields consist of lying and standing barbed quatrefoils. Inside the image fields, biblical scenes and scenes from profane literature are depicted.<sup>7</sup> Both tables distinguish themselves through their size. Because of the alignment of the image fields to one direction, it can be assumed that people were seated on one side of the tables, as shown for example in the illustration of John of Gaunt dining with the king of Portugal from 1470-1480 (Fig. 3).<sup>8</sup> The upper right corner of the illustration depicts two shawm players in a gallery; underneath the gallery, there is a dancer who seems to balance on one leg to show his dancing skills.

This depiction corresponds to the general image of table culture, which can be very well reconstructed for feasts based on written traditions.<sup>9</sup> In his *Chanson de geste* from around

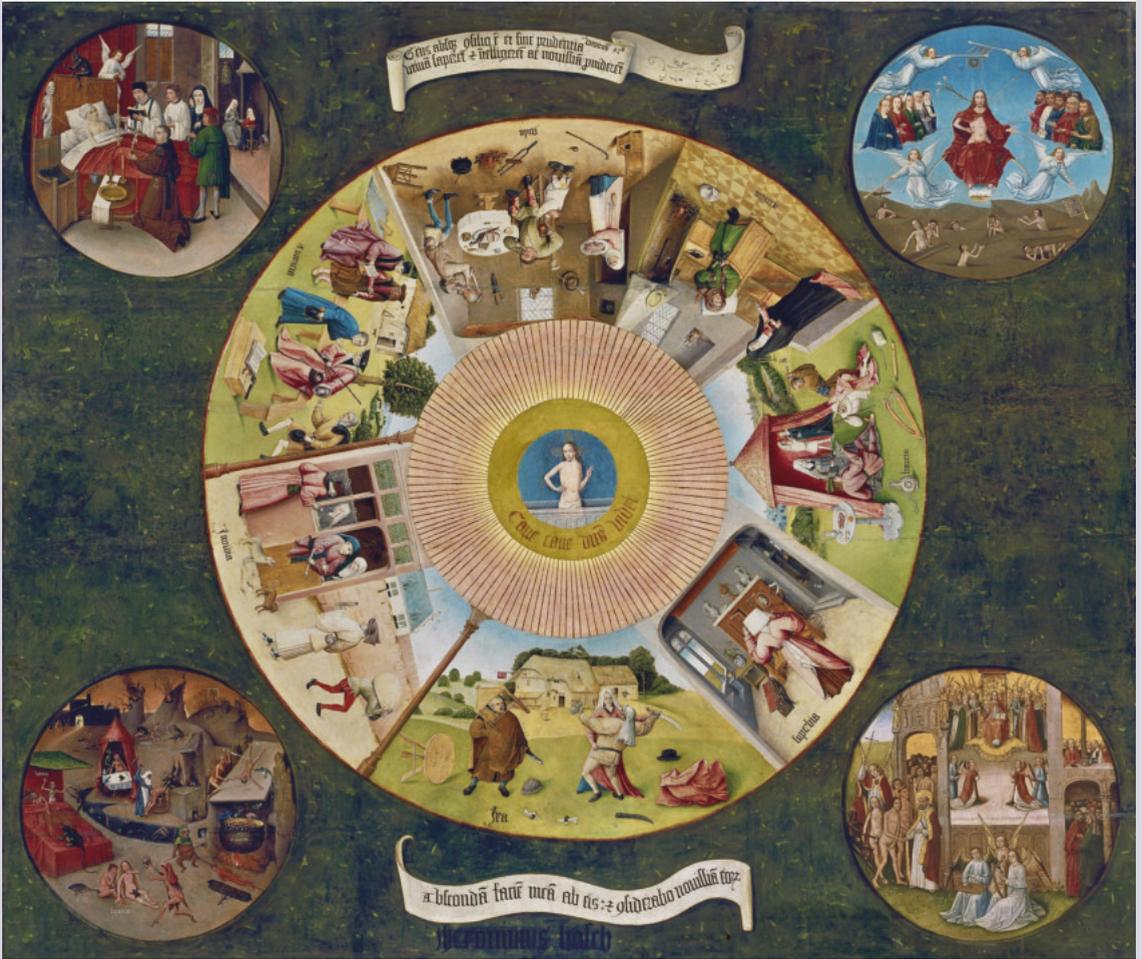


Figure 1  
Jheronimus Bosch/ workshop, *Tabletop with the Seven Deadly Sins and the Four Last Things*, c. 1500, poplar, 120 × 150 cm. Madrid, Museo del Prado, Cat. no. 2822



Figure 2  
Painted folding table, 1330, oak, 660 × 80 cm, closed overview and detail with the depiction of the sacrifice of Isaac. Lüneburg, Museum Lüneburg, Cat. no. R.786 (Source: Biddle 2000, p.40; Neubecker 2002, p. 154)



Figure 3  
Jehan de Wavrin, John of Gaunt (1340-99) dining with the King of Portugal, *Anciennes et nouvelles chroniques d'Angleterre*, 1470-80, Royal MS 14 E IV, fol. 244v. London, British Library

1220, Houn de Bordeaux wrote: 'When they have eaten, they take away the tablecloth. The minstrel has begun singing his fiddle, he lets sound his harp with 30 strings'.<sup>10</sup> If you imagine that after the meal the tablecloth was taken away and the painted tabletops appeared, then such a feast was really an artificial show that combined the different disciplines of cookery, a sort of cabaret and craft art that tantalised all the senses.<sup>11</sup> That shows how pronounced table culture was in the Middle Ages.

But a change in table culture is noticeable at the end of the fifteenth century, which can especially be seen in the sizes of the tables. Instead of the previous large and long tables, they became smaller and more square-shaped. This is shown in the illustration by Archduke Ferdinand I from Austria in the manuscript for Sir Thomas Wriothesley in the first half of the sixteenth century.<sup>12</sup> The participants in the feast were sitting around the table instead of along one side, as before.

This change can also be noticed in the painted tabletops. While the image fields of the folding tables were aimed to one side, the *Swabian tabletop* from the end of the fifteenth century has image fields that are aimed to four sides (Fig. 4).<sup>13</sup> Enclosed by a narrow red marbled edge, on a dark background the image fields depict scenes of the passion in the form of a triptych and a deer hunt beneath. Then there are a *Noli me tangere* and a depiction of the Ursula legend. In between there are flowers, animals, some fruits and lansquenets, and Samson and Delilah.

While the image fields on the *Swabian tabletop* appear to be asymmetrical and of different sizes, the tabletop painted by Martin Schaffner has a much clearer appearance and he perfectly managed the transitions of the image fields.<sup>14</sup> The iconography of Schaffner's tabletop is very complex: it combines a conception of the global parts of astrology and alchemy, as well as Christian and humanistic content, which is all based on a set of seven. It is especially notable that in 1533 it already showed Nicolaus Copernicus's heliocentric system, which was published in 1510 but only printed in 1543.<sup>15</sup> That shows very clearly that the artist incorporated the newest scientific knowledge when painting this tabletop. Another example is the tabletop from Hans Wertinger/his workshop from 1531, which shows an extension of the map *Bavaria Illustrata*, which was created by Johannes Aventinus in 1523.<sup>16</sup>

The painted tabletops are not only important because they reproduced the newest scientific knowledge, but also because their painters used the newest painting techniques and depictions for the first time. The painted tabletops play a special and important role in the development of panel painting. In this context, see the folding table from 1410 from Lower Saxony, which included illusionistic painting. The three-dimensional depiction of the quatrefoils based on shadows and the overlaps gives the viewers the impression that they are looking through the quatrefoils onto another level (Fig. 5). The imitation of stone suggested by the grey colour reminds one of the *Grisaille* painting as it was used in panel painting, for example on the Ghent altarpiece by the van Eyck brothers from 1432.



Figure 4  
Swabian tabletop, 116 × 106 cm, End of 15th century, Vienna, Austrian Museum of Applied Arts  
(Source: Kremb 2016, fig. 20 © MaK Wien)



Figure 5  
Detail from the folding table from Lower Saxony, 455 × 76,5 cm, c. 1410. Paris, Musée national du Moyen Âge, Cat. no. Cl. 7725 (Source: Kremb 2016, fig. 11 © bpk/ RMN – Grand Palais, Gérard Blot)

On the *Swabian tabletop* especially, the aspect of crossing the border of the painting was used in relation to illusionistic painting, when parts of the image fields overlap the red marbled edge. This approach of crossing the painting's border and referring to the viewer had already been used in the first half of the fifteenth century; it can also be seen on the left wing of the *Triptych with the Death of Mary* by Joos van Cleve the elder from 1515, on which the founder is kneeling on corners of the carpet that cover the golden frame.<sup>17</sup> Finally, Hans Herbst used a *trompe l'œil* technique on his tabletop, depicting items in their original size that appeared to be randomly laid on the table. These were items that one might expect to see on a table, such as glasses, a letter, playing cards and a quill.<sup>18</sup>

The examples given so far make it very clear that in the fifteenth and the beginning of the sixteenth centuries it was usual to create painted tabletops that were objects of the highest standard. This high quality is evident not only in the innovative iconography or painting techniques, but also because of the famous artists and masters like Martin Schaffner, Hans Baldung Grien, Hans Herbst, Hans Wertinger and Lucas Cranach who painted such tabletops.

It therefore does not seem to be extraordinary that Jheronimus Bosch or his workshop would have created a painted tabletop such as *The Seven Deadly Sins and the Four Last Things*. The theme of this work had already been depicted in other genres, but with this tabletop it was transferred to panel painting.<sup>19</sup> As I said before, there is an increasing discussion about the original function of this work by Bosch/his workshop and different reasons have been given for concluding that it is not a painted tabletop.

First, it has been asserted that the type of wood from which the work was made (poplar) would be too soft to use as a tabletop.<sup>20</sup> In response, others have argued that tabletops from other artists are made of woods whose raw density is similar to that of poplar.<sup>21</sup> For instance, the tabletops created by Schaffner and Herbst, as well as the folding table in Strasbourg,<sup>22</sup> were all made from lime wood. And the tabletop by Wertinger was made of spruce wood. Another fact is that poplar has a high wear resistance in proportion to its low raw density.<sup>23</sup> Because of that, poplar is very popular with furniture manufacturers, who especially like to use it for tabletops.<sup>24</sup>

Critics have also noted that the work is missing traces of an underframe on the back of the panel. But it has already been known since 2001 that the panel must have been prepared later, so traces of an underframe could have been removed.<sup>25</sup>

Other critics have asserted that since Bosch's panel does not show the expected marks of wear, it could therefore not be a tabletop, or at least not be one that had been used.<sup>26</sup> For instance, another table with a painted tabletop, the folding table at the Berne abbey in Heeswijk-Dinther,<sup>27</sup> has been mentioned as an example of a table that shows marks of wear. However, if you take a closer look at Bosch's panel, you can see some marks of wear, the edges of which are very clear and sharpened. This observation fits together with the statement by van

Rosmalen, who declared in 1969 that these traces originate from an attempt to plane down the panel.<sup>28</sup> So the so-called traces of wear are unlike those that can be found on a tabletop which has been used daily. And it should be mentioned that some of the bigger traces of wear on the other tabletops originate from incorrect use in the recent past. The folding table from Lüneburg, for example, was long used as a kind of a washstand in a storage room in the city hall of Lüneburg.<sup>29</sup> Other tabletops are in really good condition, so the argument that Bosch's panel could not have been used as a tabletop because of the painting's good condition is incorrect.

The painting or its composition on the tabletop is the main argument used to question the function of the panel as a tabletop. Critics constantly repeat that, almost like a prayer wheel, the segments of the image field in the middle are aimed to four sides but the four smaller fields in the corners and the text banners are not, which means that the panel was made to be viewed from only one side and one direction.<sup>30</sup> This is correct insofar that a main direction is indicated, but this is also found on the older folding tables in Lüneburg and from Lower Saxony, where the image fields are aimed to one side and the coat of arms friezes are aimed to four sides. In relation to the development of the compositional schemes of painted tabletops, Bosch's panel fits very well into the transitional phase at the end of the fifteenth and the beginning of the sixteenth centuries. At that time, the composition schemes changed from one main direction to four sides, as can be seen on the *Swabian tabletop* with its asymmetrical composition. This is also in line with the dating of Bosch's tabletop, which remains unclear although a date between 1495 and 1520 is often discussed.<sup>31</sup>

Another question related to the composition concerns the underframe of the tabletop. In the Middle Ages, different varieties of underframes were used for tables and there are many examples where the tabletop can be put upright because of its construction. Such an example is the fifteenth-century folding table in Aalst at the Saint Elisabeth hospital. The tabletop on that simple constructed table can be put upright and can be fixed to move the table aside to save space. Esaias Boursse's painting, *Dutch interior with a woman* (c. 1650), shows that practice in daily life: a box table with an upright tabletop has been moved to the side of the room.<sup>32</sup> The tabletop of the pay table in Basel from the end of the fifteenth century is decorated with elaborate carvings and can also be put upright and fixed.<sup>33</sup> If we assume such a construction for Bosch's tabletop, it also could have been viewed as a painting and the combination of the orientation of the painting to four sides with a focus to one side would have made sense.

Art historians have made various suggestions about the derivation and the paragons of the composition of the Seven Deadly Sins. The depiction from an Italian manuscript (c. second half of the eleventh century) is certainly one of the oldest examples that represents the graphic genre and depicts the 12 signs of the zodiac.<sup>34</sup> The 'tapestry of creation' from the early twelfth century in the cathedral of Girona depicts eight segments that are arranged around a centre field in which god is depicted; they are scenes of the creation.<sup>35</sup> The composition of the tapestry takes the vertical presentation into account and all the depictions are aimed to one side so the

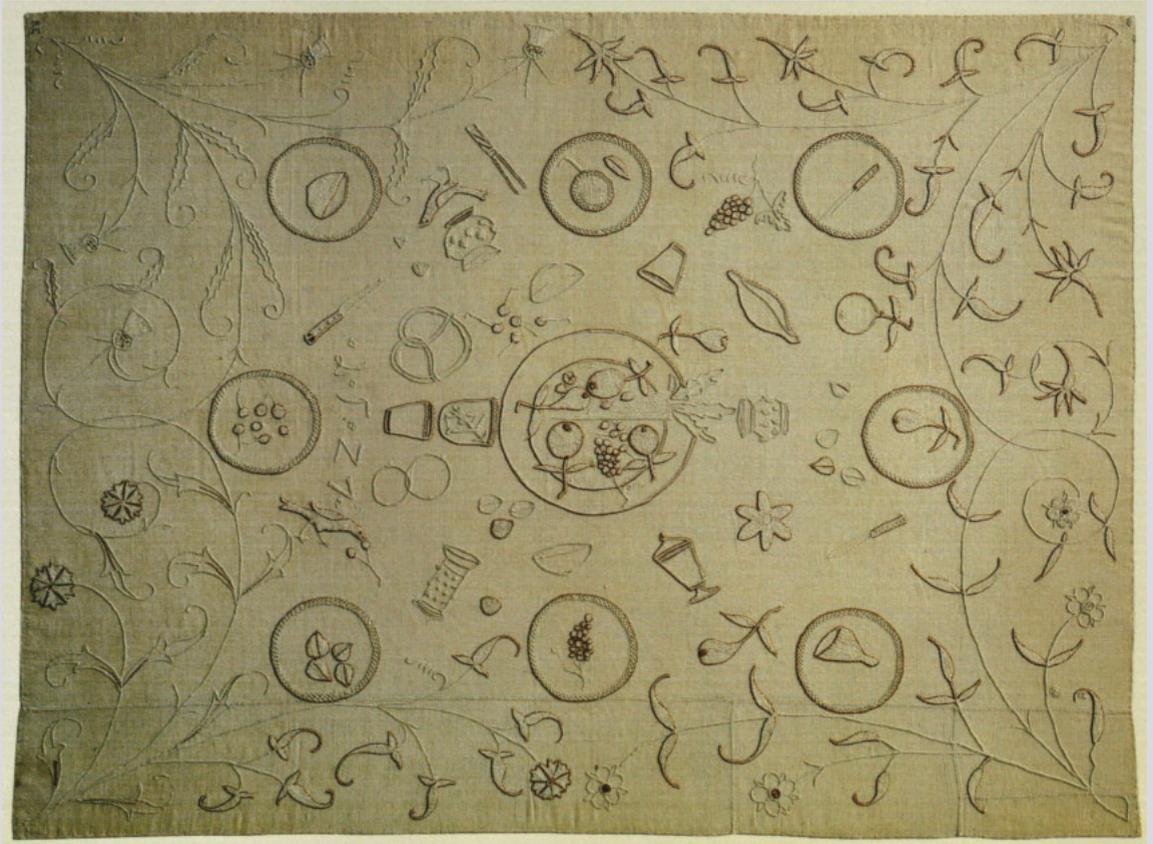


Figure 6  
*Tablecloth of the Hauser family, 1527, 165 × 115 cm. Zurich, Swiss National Museum (Source: Morel 2001, p. 23)*



Figure 7  
Joos van Cleve, *The Christ Child eating grapes*, painted wooden plate, 1520. Zaltbommel, Collection Aad Penders (Source: Abbenes and Ostkamp 2015, p. 10)

viewer, who stands in front of the tapestry, will be easily able to recognise them. That kind of composition can also be found on an early fifteenth-century wall painting at the church in Ingatestone, England, which has not been preserved but also depicted the seven deadly sins in a kind of a wheel scheme.<sup>36</sup> It is significant that the compositions of both the tapestry and the wall painting took the vertical presentation into account. The depictions of the manuscript are partially upside down, but the viewer can turn the manuscript and view the depictions correctly. This kind of two-way view is also available on a tabletop: whether it is presented folded up or standing in a room, the viewer can go around the table.

Another example that uses a sort of wheel scheme is a wooden painted bowl from the end of the fifteenth century.<sup>37</sup> The bowl also has a main direction from which it can be viewed, shown by the depiction of the king in the middle, but the 16 segments are also aimed on the surface so the viewer has to turn the bowl to be able to read the verses.

Table settings present another possible derivation of the painting's composition, which contains a larger round centre field and four smaller round fields in the corners. A tablecloth from the Hauser family (Fig. 6) is a fine example of the arrangement of a dinner service with a large round decorative plate in the middle and smaller plates around it.<sup>38</sup> This is similar to the table setting depicted in the *Last Supper* from the circle of the Master of the Amsterdam Death of the Virgin (c. 1485-1500).<sup>39</sup> Therefore the round image fields on Bosch's tabletop could depict round plates or at least the depiction could have been oriented to such plates.

This possibility can be supported by many preserved wooden and painted plates from the first half of the sixteenth century. Examples with traces of use indicate that the choice of a sacral topic as a motif or the superior quality of the paintings – which critics often refer to when arguing that such paintings could not have been used in daily life – are not reasons to say that the plates were not used for what they were made for. Even famous artists, like Joos van Cleve, are connected to painted plates, as shown in the depiction of the infant Jesus eating grapes from 1520 in the collection of Aad Penders (Fig. 7).<sup>40</sup> Other examples have been attributed to Pieter Brueghel the Elder<sup>41</sup> and nine plates are kept in Nuremberg.<sup>42</sup>

All these plates are primed with a red colour which is based on lead and is water-resistant, so the primary use of the red colour was to seal the wood. You can see the red primer in many pictures that depict plates, such as *De eierdans* by Pieter Aertsen<sup>43</sup> or *De Braspenningmaaltijd* by Cornelis Anthonisz.<sup>44</sup> The idea that there may have been an intention to represent painted plates, at least for the four tondi on Bosch's table, may be based on the fact that the under-painting of the four round image fields is based on orange, pink and red. This method is not used elsewhere on the table.<sup>45</sup>

If you recall that it was customary to use illusionistic depictions and *trompe-l'œil*s on painted tabletops, and if you now compare the painted plates (which have a small unpainted edge bead) with the four tondi of the *Four Last Things* on the tabletop by Bosch (which also has a



Figure 8

Photo montage of *De Braspenningmaaltijd* by Cornelis Anthonisz from 1533. Amsterdam, Amsterdam Museum - Jheronimus Bosch/ workshop, *Tabletop with the Seven Deadly Sins and the Four Last Things*, c. 1500. Madrid, Museo del Prado

small edge bead), then I believe the similarity is obvious. This, in combination with the fact that Bosch imitated stone for the background of the tabletop with the depiction of *The Seven Deadly Sins and the Four Last Things* (as he did on the backsides of the panels of the *Vision of the hereafter*, c. 1505-1546), makes it possible that for the composition, Bosch may have been oriented towards a tabletop made out of stone with a bigger decorative plate in the middle and four painted plates in the corners.<sup>47</sup> For a clue about how this could have looked in daily use, see the photo montage (Fig. 8).

Whatever your opinion of this thesis, I believe it should not call into question the above explanations that I think prove the panel with the depiction of *The Seven Deadly Sins and the Four Last Things* is a painted tabletop. It is significant that the table culture of the Middle Ages, especially the late Middle Ages, was much more pronounced and colourful than normally assumed and it was usual to paint utilitarian objects like tables, bowls and plates. So the mental food also should be allegorised in connection with table culture. The fact that painted tabletops, contrary to the general assumption, were also used as dining tables proves the truth of the entry in the 'inventory of the movable goods of his grand house Achter-Sint-Pieter 4' of the canon Jan van Renesse from Utrecht in 1504. There it was written that the canon was 'obviously a great lover of painting. The dining table in his hall showed a dance of death'.<sup>48</sup> And that is compatible with the statement by Theodulf of Orleans: 'the body will be satisfied by the food, but the mind has joy through the picture'.

- 1 Thoreau 1854.
- 2 For a full and detailed overview of the topic of painted tabletops in the late Middle Ages, see the publication of my doctoral thesis: Kremb 2016. I also want to refer to all the other publications about Jheronimus Bosch that discuss the tabletop in several ways and in relation to other topics. In the newest publication (BRCP 2016), for example, you can find more information about the discussion of the source from de Guevara and the translation of his label *una mesa* for Bosch's work. Because of the limited space in this article, I cannot elaborate on all these kinds of discussions here.
- 3 Dresken-Weiland 1991.
- 4 Schlosser 1891: 154.
- 5 The folding table, which is made out of oak, is housed at the Museum Lüneburg (Cat. no. R.786). Its overall dimension is 660 cm and it is divided into three parts: 165, 330 and 165 cm, respectively. The panel is 4 cm thick and 80 cm wide.
- 6 The five round image fields depict scenes from the Old Testament, like Abraham's sacrifice, the erection of the brazen serpent, David and Goliath, the judgement of Solomon and Samson with the lion.
- 7 The folding table is housed at the Musée national du Moyen Âge in Paris (Cat. no. Cl. 7725). It is made from oak and the overall dimension of the tabletop is 455 cm. The tabletop is divided into three parts: 135, 272 and 135 cm, respectively. The panel is 76 cm wide and 4.2 cm thick. The image fields depict a numerical saying of Solomon and his judgement, as well as the donkey lying in the bed from the twelfth-century parable *De Asino et Porco* by the English preacher Odo of Cheriton

- and the lion with the mouse from the fourteenth-century fable collection *Der edel Stein* by Ulrich Boner.
- 8 British Library, Royal 14 E IV, f. 244v.
  - 9 Since the twelfth century, codes of conduct around eating and drinking, the correct usage of cutlery and dishes and even the manners to be used with table companions have been conveyed through 'table manners' (eg the *Wälschen Gast* by Thomasin of Zircklaere from 1215). The symbolic meanings of a feast and its necessity were first limited to the courtly circle, but starting in the fourteenth century there was a noticeable transition of these behaviour patterns to the City-Bourgeois Patriciat. See Düwel 1989: 140.
  - 10 Rieger 1990: 41.
  - 11 Kremb 2016: 164.
  - 12 MS. Vincent 152, London, College of Arms.
  - 13 The tabletop is housed at the Museum of Applied Arts in Vienna. The tabletop is made from cherry wood and its dimensions are 116 × 106 cm.
  - 14 The tabletop is housed at the Gemäldegalerie Alte Meister in Kassel, Museumslandschaft Hessen Kassel (Cat. no. GK 22). The dimensions of the tabletop, which is made from lime wood, are 108.5 × 117.5 cm, and the panel is 2.6-3 cm thick.
  - 15 Lange 2002: 78.
  - 16 The tabletop is housed at the Bayerische Nationalmuseum in Munich (Cat. no. 14/ 130). The dimensions of the tabletop, which is made from softwood, are 110 × 106 cm and the panel is 3.5 cm thick. Graepler 1957, p. 106.
  - 17 The triptych is housed at the Wallraf-Richartz Museum in Cologne (Cat. no. WRM 0430).
  - 18 The tabletop is housed at the Swiss National Museum in Zurich (Cat. no. DEP-527). It is made from lime wood and its dimensions are 102.3 × 138.2 cm. In addition to the middle field, which is aimed to two sides and in which the figures of the *Nobody* and the *Sleeping Chandler* are shown, the fields on the edge of the tabletop, which have a trapezoidal-based form, are aimed to four sides. These fields depict a tournament, different types of fishing, hunting for red deer and wild boar, and different types of fowling.
  - 19 Hammer-Tugendhat 1981: 53. The scene of the *Gula* can be named as an example, which Hammer-Tugendhat compared with the *Tafel der Mäßigen und Unmäßigen* in the Leipzig Valerius-Maximus-Manuscript (p. 20). She also saw paragons in the works by the Master of the Turin book of hours, which Bosch could have used for his paintings (p. 25). The procedure in which depictions that had already been used in other genres were transferred to panel painting through the painted tabletops is also recognisable on the *Swabian tabletop*, for example. There, the depiction of Samson and Delilah still has a graphical appearance, but it is simultaneously the oldest known depiction of Samson and Delilah in panel painting until now.
  - 20 Pokorny 2010: 37.
  - 21 The raw density of these woods in grams per cubic centimetre with an average wood humidity of 15% percent is about 0.53 and 0.47, respectively. The raw density of poplar is about 0.56. See Nutsch 1990: 58 and 64.
  - 22 The tabletop is housed at the Musée de l'Œuvre Notre-Dame in Strasbourg (Cat. no. 22.2010.1.1.).
  - 23 Grosser: 57.

- 24 Grosser: 60.
- 25 Garrido Schoute 2001: 77 and 79.
- 26 BRCP 2016: 473.
- 27 The tabletop is still housed at the abbey of Berne in Heeswijk-Dinther.
- 28 Rosmalen 1969: 281.
- 29 Kremb 2016: 31.
- 30 Pokorny 2010: 37. BRCP 2016: 473.
- 31 Pokorny 2010: 41.
- 32 This picture is a loan from the Gemäldegalerie der Staatlichen Museen zu Berlin and housed at the Suermondt-Ludwig Museum in Aachen.
- 33 This table from the Augustinian monastery is housed at the Historisches Museum in Basel (Cat. no. 1872.60). I also want to point to the painted folding tables from Hindeloopen (called *Klap-aan-de-wand*) that are dated from the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The compositions of the paintings on these tables take into account the possibility to put the tabletop upright. Many such examples are preserved (eg in the Germanisches Nationalmuseum in Nuremberg (Cat. no. VK4266) or in the Museum Europäischer Kulturen der Staatlichen Museen zu Berlin (Cat. no. I (6 B) 1/1957)). These examples may indicate a long tradition of the usage of tables in the Netherlands that have tabletops that can be put upright.
- 34 Pokorny 2010: 40 and 41 fig. 4. The medical manuscript Lat. 7028 shows on fol. 154r Helios and Zodiac and it is housed at the Bibliothèque nationale de France in Paris.
- 35 Pokorny 2010: 40.
- 36 Gibson 1973: 211 and 213 fig. 7.
- 37 Gibson 1973: 212 and 214 fig. 8. The painted wooden bowl is housed at the Germanisches Nationalmuseum in Nuremberg (Cat. no. HG 1382). This bowl is one example of several wooden and painted bowls which are preserved and are called *Hochzeitsschüsseln*. Fink 1951.
- 38 The tablecloth is housed at the Schweizerisches Nationalmuseum in Zurich (Cat. no. AG-2385).
- 39 The picture is housed at the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam (Cat. no. SK-A-2129).
- 40 Abbense and Ostkamp 2015: 56. Another tondo with a sacred topic that depicts a pieta was created by Jan Malouel around 1400. It is housed at the Louvre. Because the frame was carved concave out of the panel, it is possible that this tondo was also used as the '*Hochzeitsschüsseln*'.
- 41 The Museum Mayer van den Bergh in Antwerp has twelve painted plates from the second half of the sixteenth century that depict proverbs which are allegorised by personifications in a typical act. Abbense and Ostkamp 2015: 12.
- 42 Abbense and Ostkamp 2015: 16. The nine plates from around 1530 originate from the Netherlands and are now housed at the Germanisches Nationalmuseum in Nuremberg. They contain depictions of the months. Furthermore, some plates housed at the Staatliche Museen in Berlin are dated to 1520-30 and originate from the Netherlands; the Stedelijk Museum in Alkmaar also has plates dated from 1550. Abbense and Ostkamp 2015: 14 and 18.
- 43 This picture is housed at the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam (Cat. no. SK-A-3). The table depicted in the picture also includes small painted boards. Abbense and Ostkamp 2015: S. 30. Similar boards painted with a red primary colour can be seen on the table in the picture *The Triumph of Death* by Pieter Breughel the Elder from 1562, housed at the Museo Nacional del Prado (Cat. no. P01393).

- 44 This picture is housed at the Amsterdam Museum in Amsterdam (Cat. no. A 7279).
- 45 Garrido Schoute 2001: 34 and 91.
- 46 These panels are housed at the Museo di Palazzo Grimani in Venice (Cat. no. 184).
- 47 You can also see that kind of imitation of stone or marble on the *Swabian tabletop*. At the beginning of the sixteenth century, it was usual to build tables with stone tabletops. The most famous table with a stone tabletop is the table by Tilman Riemenschneider from 1506, which today is housed at in the Mainfränkische Museum in Würzburg.
- 48 Genderen 2012: S. 21.

## References

- C. Abbenes and S. Ostkamp, *Rondgedraaid & beschilderd. Teljoren uit de late middeleeuwen en renaissance. De Collectie Aad Penders*. Hoorn, 2015.
- M. Biddle, *King Arthur's round table: An archaeological investigation*. Hong Kong, 2000.
- BRCP, *Hieronymus Bosch. Maler und Zeichner. Catalogue Raisonné*. Stuttgart, 2016.
- J. Dresken-Weiland, *Reliefierte Tischplatten aus theodosianischer Zeit* (Studi di antichità cristiana. Pubblicati a cura del pontificio istituto de archeologia cristiana, Bd. XLVIII). Vatican City State/ Rome, 1991.
- K. Düwel, "Über Nahrungsgewohnheiten und Tischzuchten des Mittelalters", in: B. Herrmann (ed.), *Umwelt in der Geschichte. Beiträge zur Umweltgeschichte*. Göttingen, 1989, pp. 129-49.
- A. Fink, "Die Braunschweiger Hochzeitsschüsseln", in: *Braunschweigisches Jahrbuch*, 32, 1951, pp. 90-102.
- C. Garrido and R. van Schoute, *Bosch at the Museo del Prado: Technical study*. Madrid, 2001.
- B. van den Hoven van Genderen, "Die Stadt Utrecht und die goldenen Blumen auf dem Mantel des heiligen Martin", in: D. Preising and M. Rief (eds.), *Mittelalterliche Bildwerke aus Utrecht. 1430–1530*. Stuttgart, 2012.
- W. Gibson, "Hieronymus Bosch and the mirror of man. The authorship and iconography of the tabletop of the seven deadly sins", in: *Oud Holland*, 87/1973, pp. 205-26.
- C. Graepler, "Die Tischplatte mit der Bayernkarte aus dem Jahre 1531", in: *Münchener Jahrbuch der bildenden Kunst*, 3. Folge, Bd. 1957. Munich, 1958, pp. 103-14.
- D. Grosser, *Das Holz der Pappeln – Eigenschaften und Verwendung* (<http://www.lwf.bayern.de/cms04/forsttechnik-holz/holzverwendung/038606/index.php>).
- D. Hammer-Tugendhat, *Hieronymus Bosch. Eine historische Interpretation seiner Gestaltungsprinzipien* (Theorie und Geschichte der Literatur und der schönen Künste, Bd. 58). Munich, 1981.
- J. Kremb, *Bemalte Tischplatten des Spätmittelalters* (Studien zur Kunst, 34). Cologne Weimar Vienna, 2016.
- J. Lange, *Die Erfindung der Welt. Martin Schaffners bemalte Tischplatte von 1533*. Kassel, 2002.
- A. Morel, *Der gedeckte Tisch. Zur Geschichte der Tafelkultur*. Zurich, 2001.
- O. Neubecker, *Heraldik. Wappen – ihr Ursprung, Sinn und Wert*. Munich, 2002.
- W. Nutsch (ed.), *Holztechnik. Fachkunde für Schreiner*. Haan-Gruiten, 1990.
- E. Pokorny, "Die sogenannte Tischplatte mit den Sieben Todsünden und den vier letzten Dingen", in: *Die sieben Todsünden in der Frühen Neuzeit* (Frühneuzeit-Info 21/2010, 1/2). Vienna, 2010, pp. 35-43.
- D. Rieger, "Par devant lui chantent li jugleor. Mittelalterliche Dichtung im Kontext des «Gesamtkunstwerks» der höfischen Mahlzeit", in: I. Bitsch (ed.), *Essen und Trinken in Mittelalter und Neuzeit. Vorträge eines*

*interdisziplinären Symposiums vom 10. bis 13. Juni 1987 an der Justus-Liebig-Universität Gießen.*

Sigmaringen, 1990, pp. 27-44.

N. J. M. van Rosmalen, "De restauratie van het Heeswijkse tafelblad", in: *Antiek*, Vol. 4, No. 5, December 1969, pp. 281-3.

J. von Schlosser, *Beiträge zur Kunstgeschichte aus den Schriftquellen des frühen Mittelalters. Sitzungsberichte der kaiserlichen Akademie der Wissenschaften in Wien. Philosophisch-Historische Classe*, Bd. 123, Vienna, 1891.

H. D. Thoreau, *Walden. Or life in the woods*. Boston, 1854. (<http://www.gutenberg.org/files/205/205-h/205-h.htm>).