

Hildegard of Bingen and the Creation of the
Rupertsburg Scivias:

Power is in the eye of the beholder

By

Kathryn A. Cesarz

A thesis submitted for the degree of M.Phil

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This thesis focuses on the creation of Hildegard of Bingen's *Scito vias Domini* (*Know the Ways of the Lord*: usually abbreviated to *Scivias*). Like all works of art, it was created in a particular historical and cultural context, and can be seen in many ways as a product of its age. However, it is also the product of a particular individual of great originality, whose idiosyncrasies are vitally important in understanding the work. My thesis takes up both these themes – the historical / cultural and the individual – and shows the intricate complexity involved in the genesis of a work like the *Scivias*. In doing so, the thesis tackles such issues as the place of women in a patriarchal society, the question of Hildegard's input into the creation of the *Scivias* illuminations, the role of illness in her visionary experiences, the role of sexual imagery in the *Scivias*, the influence of the artistic milieu in which it was created, and the influence of the Book of Revelation. Like St. John of Patmos, Hildegard's visionary gift gave her a powerful message to pass on to the world, and a powerful voice with which to speak: the message and its expression in the Rupertsburg manuscript of *Scivias* form the substance of the present work.

Acknowledgments

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Introduction

This thesis focuses on the creation of Hildegard of Bingen's *Scito vias Domini* (*Know the Ways of the Lord*; usually abbreviated to *Scivias*). Like all works of art, it was created in a particular historical and cultural context, and can be seen in many ways as a product of its age. However, it is also the product of a particular individual of great originality, whose idiosyncrasies are vitally important in understanding the work. My thesis takes up both these themes – the historical / cultural and the individual – and shows the intricate complexity involved in the genesis of a work like the *Scivias*. In doing so, the thesis tackles such issues as the place of women in a patriarchal society, the question of Hildegard's input into the creation of the *Scivias* illuminations, the role of illness in her visionary experiences, the role of sexual imagery in the *Scivias*, the influence of the artistic milieu in which it was created, and the influence of the Book of Revelation.

Hildegard of Bingen

Hildegard (1098 – 1179) was the tenth child of her parents, Hildebert and Mechtild, and her family was socially and geographically close to the then powerful Sponheim family. Hildegard's father, Hildebert, was lower free nobility and served as a knight in the Court of Meinhard of Sponheim. Sophia of Sponheim's first cousin was Hedwig, who was the mother of the Duke of Saxony, the church's first choice for Emperor. Jutta of Sponheim (1092 – 1136), an anchoress who was later enclosed with Hildegard, was the daughter of Sophia and the brother of Count Meinhard.¹ After surviving a serious illness, Jutta, at the age of twelve, vowed herself to a religious life of enclosure. Jutta was known for her healing powers, reading minds, and is credited with turning water into

wine. The example of Jutta proved influential on Hildegard's parents, suggesting a path for their daughter: consequently, Hildegard was enclosed with Jutta on November 1, 1112, in what was to become a small community of women within the Benedictine monastery located at St. Disibod.² There are conflicting reports of how old Hildegard was when she went to live with Jutta. Hildegard asserted that she was offered as a tithe in her eighth year (c. 1105/6), although she was enclosed on 1 November 1112, which would mean that Hildegard was about fourteen. Jutta would have been about 20 years of age. Jutta taught Hildegard to read the Latin Bible, with particular emphasis on the Psalms, and to chant the Divine Office. Hildegard explained that she did not know how to interpret words or divide syllables; her Latin was unpolished, and her knowledge of literature was sparse. Upon Jutta's death in 1136, Hildegard was elected abbess.

It was not until five years later, in 1141, that Hildegard received a prophetic call to write her visions. From that moment on Hildegard explained that she was given the spiritual gift of understanding all the books of the Old and New Testaments, such as the Psalter and the Gospels. Hildegard claimed "as if in an instant I learn what I know" regarding her studies of the Bible.³ Her experience was both visual and auditory, which is shown by the brilliant colours in the *Scivias* illuminations and in the complementary text.

Another result of Hildegard's visionary experience was an understanding of music. Hildegard's musical talent was expressed in the final vision of *Scivias*. In Book Three, Vision Thirteen, Hildegard's *Ordo virtutum* (*The Play of Virtues*) was the first known liturgical morality play.⁴ The *Ordo virtutum* centred on a battle between vice and virtue over the dominion of the soul. Each character sung their part in the play, except the Devil. Hildegard's reasoning for the

Devil's inability to sing was because music was the language of heaven, and the Devil who was pure evil was incapable of producing such beautiful sounds. Hildegard believed that when the soul was no longer affected by music, it was a premonition that evil was near. The play was most likely created and performed for the dedication of the monastic church at Hildegard's monastery in Rupertsberg in 1152 by the Bishop of Mainz.⁵

After receiving permission to write from her abbot, Henry of Mainz – Archbishop between 1142-1153 – and perhaps Eugenius III – pontiff between 1145-53 – Hildegard's confidence increased and she diligently completed the text of *Scivias*. Later, Hildegard received a command to move from her Disibodenberg monastery and open a new convent in St. Rupert, which met great opposition from the monks in St. Disibod; even some of the nuns protested the move. The move would allow Hildegard financial and spiritual freedom from the male community of St. Disibod, thus giving Hildegard more independence and control, which is perhaps the very reason why the monks protested the move.⁶ Some of the nuns protested because they would be moving from a place that was comfortably furnished to a building site which still needed a lot of work. Hildegard was struck down with an illness, which was seen as divine retribution for not heeding the command in her vision. After realising the seriousness of her illness, the abbot of St. Disibod allowed the move and miraculously Hildegard improved. Therefore, in 1152 Hildegard's new monastery at Rupertsberg was consecrated. Hildegard spent part of the rest of her life in this monastery, although she did travel frequently, and even opened a third convent in Eibingen where she occasionally stayed.

The *Scivias*

Hildegard's first visionary work, *Scivias*, is divided into three books focusing on the creation, salvation, and redemption of the church. Each vision begins with a description of what Hildegard saw followed by a detailed commentary.

Hildegard concluded each vision with a repeated phrase – admonitory in book one, hortatory in books two and three – that remains consistent within each book, providing structural unity. The first book, containing six visions, centres on the fall of Lucifer when sin entered the world and caused the fall of Adam and Eve.⁷ Hildegard explored the effect of original sin on humankind and the world with the transformation of the Old and New churches, personified through monumental illuminations of Synagoga and Ecclesia. The second book, containing seven visions, examines the redemptive nature of God and Christ's role emphasising the importance of the Trinity as a remedy to the original sin dealt with in the first book. Hildegard concentrated on the role of the church, Ecclesia, through the sacraments of baptism, Eucharist, confirmation, holy orders, and penance that provide redemption for mankind.⁸ The third book, containing thirteen visions, advances themes examined in the second book by concentrating on the allegorical building of salvation for the church seen through vibrant architectural imagery.⁹ Hildegard historically re-examined the process of man's salvation through the Incarnation, Passion, and Ascension. Fourteen musical pieces in honour of the Virgin Mary and the angels – later incorporated into her *Symphonia* – form a unique finale to the *Scivias*. Also, the final vision includes the first morality - musical play, later to become part of her *Ordo virtutum*, that concentrates on a lost soul tempted by the devil, but in the end rescued by a choir of Virtues bringing salvation to the lost soul.¹⁰

I focus on the Rupertsburg manuscript of *Scivias* which contains thirty-five colour illuminations whose gold and silver leaf suggests the manuscript was made at great expense.¹¹ The style combines originality with conventionality in design. These illuminations which are pictorial representations of Hildegard's visions form the main focus of my thesis, but just who painted them and when is debatable. From recent literature a consensus emerges that Hildegard had direct supervision over the artistic process in the Rupertsberg scriptorium (If Hildegard had painted the illuminations, surely her biographers would have documented this, and none do, which renders it unlikely that she painted them herself).¹² Most likely the artist was a nun from Hildegard's Rupertsberg or Disibodenberg convents, or perhaps an artist from a nearby monastery. However, the artist stayed close to the text in *Scivias*, ingeniously reworking iconographic motifs to help the reader see inside the visionary world of Hildegard. The question of who painted the illuminations is dealt with more fully in chapter two.

Also problematic is the dating of *Scivias*. Hildegard asserted that *Scivias* was written in a ten-year period, and that in 1141 she received a divine command to "Cry out therefore, and write thus!"¹³ With Hildegard's calculation the manuscript would have been completed by 1152, although some stylistic elements suggest a later completion date of 1165-1179 (the time of her death).¹⁴ The exact dating of the illuminations becomes important for my present purposes in chapter four, when I discuss similarities with other contemporaneous works of art.

In 1945 the *Rupertsberg Scivias* disappeared during the bombing of Dresden. Fortunately, in 1927 a photographic copy of the manuscript had been made, and in 1927-1933 the Eibingen nuns made a hand-copied and hand-painted

facsimile on parchment; an endeavour that took nearly seven years to complete. The manuscript's painted miniatures by Josepha Knips are the only colour reproductions of the original source. These illuminations were reproduced in Lieselotte E. Saurma-Jeltsch's *Die Miniaturen im Liber Scivias der Hildegard von Bingen: Die Wucht der Vision und die Ordnung der Bilder*. For the purpose of this thesis I will use the coloured illuminations reproduced in Saurma-Jeltsch's book as these illuminations provide the reader with a clear image of the colours used in the original manuscript (see pls. 1 and 2).¹⁵

Sources Used

The main primary source that I use for this thesis is the *Corpus Christianorum Continuatio Mediaevalis Hildegardis Scivias* XLIII and XLIIIa edited by Führkötter and Carlevaris (1978), which contains the Latin edition of *Scivias* along with the thirty-five coloured illuminations. I use the coloured *Scivias* facsimile (1927-33) illuminations reproduced in Saurma-Jeltsch's *Die Miniaturen im Liber Scivias der Hildegard von Bingen: Die Wucht der Vision und die Ordnung der Bilder* (1998). Hart-Bishop's *Hildegard of Bingen's Scivias* contains an English translation along with black and white drawings of the thirty-five illuminations. In the main text of the chapters, I derive quotations of the *Scivias* from the Hart-Bishop translation, although I provide the Latin original in footnotes. I also consulted Godfrey of Disibodenberg and Theoderic of Echternach, *The Life of Hildegard of Bingen*, translated by Hugh Feiss (1995). For the discussion of sexuality in chapter three, I use Hildegard of Bingen's *Causae et Curae* edited by Kaiser (1927), translated into English under the title of *Holistic Healing* by Mary Palmquist, John S. Kulas, and Patrick Madigan. I

referred to Galen's *On the Usefulness of the Parts of the Body*, translated by Margaret Tallmadge May. In the fourth chapter I consulted a copy of *Die Bamberger Apokalypse* by Heinrich Wölfflin. In the fifth chapter I derived quotations from the Book of Revelation using the *Biblia Sacra, Vulgatae Editionis* (1894), and *The Holy Bible* (The Douay Translation), translated from the Latin Vulgate (1856).

The following secondary sources are those on which I rely most heavily – though not uncritically – for biography and discussions of Hildegard and the *Scivias*: Sabina Flanagan's *Hildegard of Bingen* (1998), Anne Silvas's *Jutta and Hildegard: The Biographical Sources, Medieval Women: Texts and Contexts* (1998), Madeline Caviness's *Art in the Medieval West and Its Audience* (2001), Barbara Newman's *Sister of Wisdom* (1987) and Burnett and Dronke's *Hildegard of Bingen: The Context of her Thought and Art* (1998). Other secondary sources used were Joan Cadden's article "It Takes All Kinds: Sexuality and Gender Differences in Hildegard of Bingen's Book of Compound Medicine", and Caroline Wörman Sur's *The Feminine Images of God in the Visions of Saint Hildegard of Bingen's Scivias* (originally presented as a Ph.D Dissertation from St. Louis University) (1984) for the third chapter. Mayer-Harting's *Ottonian Book Illumination: An Historical Study* (1991) for consultation of manuscripts discussed in the fourth chapter. Additionally, McGinn's *Antichrist: Two Thousand Years of the Human Fascination with Evil* (1994).

Thesis Structure

The direction of this thesis guides the reader through the most salient features of Hildegard's life and culture that influenced the creation of the *Scivias*. The first

chapter introduces the social, political, and cultural worlds that Hildegard inhabited. Hildegard managed to get her voice heard despite being a woman living in the misogynistic society of the twelfth century. How Hildegard's charisma and visionary gift gave her a powerful voice is the main theme of chapter one. Typically, religious women attributed their writing to divine inspiration. Men were more likely to permit women to write if their creativity could be attributed to divine providence rather than their own powers. In the Middle Ages women were seen as intellectually inferior to men; they were subordinate to men and seen as weak, frail and prone to illness.

Illness is a theme taken up in the second chapter, which looks at Hildegard's visionary experiences and examines critically the hypothesis that migraines played a significant role in generating her visions. The chapter agrees with recent literature that some images in the visions suggests migraines may have played some part, but argues that such reductive hypotheses can be taken too far: by comparing Hildegard's visions with recent accounts of similar transcendental experiences, one becomes aware of just how unsatisfactory an explanation migraine is for them. The rest of the chapter then analyses Hildegard's artistic role in the creation of the *Scivias* illuminations, arguing strongly that Hildegard had a direct supervisory role in the artistic process.

Various uniquely feminine aspects of the *Scivias* illuminations are closely looked at in the third chapter. Hildegard's gender takes on a significant role with an introduction of the 'womanish men' of her age. Her 'feminine frailty' of gender, poor health, and lack of education is briefly examined in the context of Hildegard's struggle to understand her role in God's divine plan. Validation of her authoritative role as abbess, writer and preacher, is found in St. Paul's letter

to the Corinthians that addresses perfection in weakness, in that the weak and frail individual is a vehicle to convey God's divine message. Hildegard's feminine spirituality evident in her illuminations includes the rich symbolism of the 'cosmic egg' that contains potent female sexual imagery buried within a Christ-centric, macrocosmic universe. Another powerful and highly sexual image is seen in the comparison of confirmation into the church and sexual intercourse. In Hildegard's religious-sexual illuminations, human sexuality and the sacred bonds of divine love are seen as at the heart of her message.

The fourth chapter puts the Rupertsburg *Scivias* into its artistic milieu: the Rhineland of the twelfth century. Despite the originality evident in many of the illuminations, they are most definitely a product of their age, as comparisons with other works of art show. A particular focus is on the monumental renditions of Ecclesia in the *Scivias* illuminations, and stylistic similarities are shown between such renditions and those of figures in other manuscripts. A closer analysis of Ecclesia's gender is undertaken by comparing Ottonian manuscripts with Hildegard's portrayal of the personification of the Church. Other comparisons are made with cosmological treatises well-known in Hildegard's day, images of the *Virgin orans* pose (a conventional pose commonly represented in the *Scivias* illuminations), and with twelfth century murals found in the church of St Clemens at Schwarzrheindorf. The artistic repertoire of the day gave Hildegard and her illuminator(s) a rich source of inspiration to use when illuminating the Rupertsburg manuscript.

Part of Hildegard's style is contingent on the many similarities between herself and St. John of Patmos, the possible author of the Book of Revelation, and this is a theme of chapter five. Comparison will be made of the two writers'

personal lives – in particular the profound visionary gift which they had in common – as well as their works; the similarities between Hildegard's *Scivias* and St. John's Revelation will be drawn out showing how the text of Revelation is highly suggestive of the *Scivias* illuminations. Hildegard's well-known apocalyptic image of Ecclesia and the Antichrist will be discussed, suggesting that the *Scivias* manuscript is itself apocalyptic. Chapter five also further emphasises Hildegard's originality by showing that she was the creator of the first known morality play.

Contextualising the creation of a work of art like the *Scivias* is inevitably going to be partial. To fully discuss all relevant factors would be beyond an encyclopaedia, let alone a short thesis. What is possible, however, is to give the reader a flavour of the complexity behind the genesis of the *Scivias* and thus a better idea of how the work fits into its historical context, and how it links in with the idiosyncrasies of an extraordinary abbess.

¹ For Jutta's life, see Silvas, 1998, 46-84.

² For Hildegard's enclosure, see Silvas, 1998, 51, 58, and Maddocks, 2001, 22, 301, no. 7.

³ Lerner, 1993, 54.

⁴ Hart and Bishop, 1990, 523-36, and Taylor and Smith, 1997, 102.

⁵ For Hildegard's liturgical morality play, see Taylor and Smith, 1997, 102-3.

⁶ Hart and Bishop, 1990, 13.

⁷ Flanagan, 1998b, 57.

⁸ Hart and Bishop, 1990, 23: The sacrament of marriage is discussed in the first book under the original creation.

⁹ Flanagan, 1998b, 58.

¹⁰ Hart and Bishop, 1990, 26: Hildegard's morality play predates other liturgical dramas by roughly a century and a half.

¹¹ Copy of the *Rupertsberg Scivias*, Josepha Knips, c. 1927-33. Eibingen, Bibliothek der Abtei St. Hildegard, Cod. 1, Book III, vision 11 (after Saurma-Jeltsch, 1998).

¹² Hart and Bishop, 1990, vi, 25.

¹³ Hart and Bishop, 1990, 61.

¹⁴ Hart and Bishop, 1990, 25: Here the date of 1165 is given for the preparation of *Scivias*, although, Derolez argues for the range of 1175-1180 based on structural evidence. Additionally, Führkötter and Carlevaris agreed on 1165 as the date for *Scivias* in the *Corpus Christianorum. Continuatio Mediaevalis* XLIII and XLIIIa edition (1978).

¹⁵ See pls. 1 and 2 to differentiate between the black and white photocopy and the coloured reproduction of the 1927-33 facsimile. Pl. 1 from Caviness, 2001a, section VII, 100, fig. 10: *Rupertsberg Scivias* (formerly Wiesbaden, Hessisches Landesbibliothek, MS 1, f. 214v) Book III, Vision 11.

Chapter One: The Female Visionary as an Authoritative Voice in the
Patriarchal World of the Medieval Church

In the twelfth century, reforms of the church attempted to restrict the role that women could play, supposedly silencing their voices; and yet powerful female figures – especially visionaries – could still make their voices heard. Hildegard of Bingen was one such female visionary whose voice was heard and to whom much attention was paid. This chapter will show how some women, like Hildegard, achieved a prominent role in the medieval church despite the prevalent patriarchal culture. Achieving prominence meant in some respects accommodating their visionary experience to the beliefs of medieval culture so the clergy would accept their visions and authority. For example, the clergy maintained the notion that women were intellectually inferior to men. In order to appease ecclesiastical leaders, women, such as Hildegard, attributed their intellectual authority to divine inspiration rather than their own mental powers. However, first we must examine more closely the place of religious women in the society of the time to see what difficulties Hildegard and others faced in getting their voices heard; of great relevance to this are the reforms of Pope Gregory VII.

Women and the Gregorian Reforms

McNamara and Wemple describe how '[f]rom the fifth to the eleventh centuries, the frontier age of western Europe, women played a vital and expanding role in laying the foundations of our modern society'.¹ However, come the twelfth century, various reforms meant that 'women found their own spheres of influence beginning to shrink, especially in the upper reaches of economic power'.² Much of this had to do with Gregory VII – pontiff between 1073-1085 – who initiated reforms aimed at upholding the standing of the church. The most

famous of these affected the division between laity and clergy (which included monks and religious women). While this division dates back to the beginning of Christianity, the Gregorian reforms rendered the division more pronounced, developing a church led by the male clergy, in which emphasis was placed on the supernatural power of the priest-controlled Eucharist.³ Gregory was greatly concerned with the perceived immorality of the church, observing that some members of the clergy failed to live up to the chaste and high-minded standards demanded of them. He encouraged the laity to refuse service from priests who committed simony and sexual acts (to allow the laity to judge the morality of the clergy was at this time very radical). However, he saw one of the main sources of the church's moral problems as being the power lay rulers had in choosing members of the clergy.⁴ He became the first pope to forbid the clergy to accept investiture into office from laymen: the church thus gained some freedom from secular rulers, and freedom to promote clerical celibacy. Kings now answered to the clergy in matters of a religious nature. Whilst the lay rulers' power in the church was not altogether eradicated, the reforms limited it through canonical elections and by giving the pope the last word in these elections.⁵

Gregorian reform also established a hierarchy within the church, sharpening the distinction between male and female roles. The reform instituted policies designed to curtail women's rights, abilities, and responsibilities. It tried to limit women's leadership roles and public involvement in church and society. The policy of strict enclosure for religious women had the greatest impact on their active involvement in the public domain. This policy contributed to the economic hardships and the loss of independence for many female communities. Some abbesses lost their former public roles, and instead emphasis was on

private roles within their communities. The reform council arranged the separation of sexes in monastic schools. This policy led to the exclusion of religious women from mainstream education, so increasing the imbalance between the levels of male and female education.⁶ The reformers ostracised women from sacred space, so reducing their activities and visibility. They also focused on double monasteries, where there was a close association of male and female religious figures. Previously, the double monastery allowed women some autonomy and power. However, with the reform this type of institution gradually faded away, resulting in a loss of influence and power for women. The policy of strict enclosure severely limited some women's roles in the public domain, which reduced their independence and power in the church and society.

The reforms reinforced male power within the church: men held the sacramental positions and preached. In contrast, nuns generally had little authority, and convents were dependent on men as women were not ordained. In some cases, nuns had to consult male officials on the election of a prioress, the reception of nuns, alienation of property, and the expansion of the priory.⁷ Furthermore, convents relied on men to provide religious services, to manage estates and to do agricultural work.⁸ Nuns who received assistance from a neighbouring monastery traded independence for protection and material benefits. Nuns were enclosed, unable to leave the convent without the permission of the bishop or the pope (however, in some communities this was not strictly enforced).

Men and women were allocated different tasks in monastic life. The Gilbertine Order founded in the 1130s illustrates how male and female roles were differentiated. Gilbert of Sempringham (c. 1083 – 1189/90) outlined specific

duties: a nun's duties included washing altar linen and monks' clothes, preparing food, cleaning silver, and all tasks seen as suited to their skills; religious men were in charge of buying and selling, and all tasks 'rightfully' theirs. In the Gilbertine Order, a nun's tasks did not deviate from other religious orders, and included sewing, reading, embellishing and copying manuscripts. Such reform increased the division of gender roles, allowing men to maintain and further strengthen their hierarchical roles in the church, while restricting women to a private and domesticated sphere. As there was greater importance associated with the public environment, men were better placed to inspire the ardent devotion required for making a saint, and so secure beatification.⁹ Therefore, when reformers curtailed women's public roles, they also restricted their access to sainthood.

The reform's separation of gender spheres and emphasis on purity created an exaggerated fear of women that often led to misogyny. Distrust of women dated back to Eve's original sin in the Garden of Eden, when she became curious of the fruit of the forbidden tree and tempted Adam to eat. In the twelfth century this story was the foundation of men's fear and suspicion of women. Therefore, when women displayed assertiveness it was associated with their sexuality and thus seen as potentially dangerous.¹⁰ This encouraged restriction of women's functions, and created some suspicion of women in monastic life.

As the clergy believed that virgins were particularly vulnerable to scandal, they were even keener on the enclosure of religious women demanded by the reform.¹¹ The nunnery appealed to women because it offered them an escape from marriage and procreation, despite the strict enclosure, which many might have seen as a drawback. While women were viewed as the weaker sex,

through the Christian ideal that divine strength is perfected in the weak, the virgin was seen as exalted and able to rise above her sex. Virgins were denied visitors, and were closely monitored in their letters and gifts from and to the outside world; in some instances they were denied external communication altogether. In theory, anyway; in practice, behaviour was not always chaste. Aelred, abbot of Rievaulx (1110-1167) related the story of the nun of Watton who kept not to her cell, but became involved sexually with a young monk: 'O close your ears, Virgins of Christ, cover your eyes...She went out a virgin of Christ, and she soon returned an adultress' wrote Aelred.¹²

Women's passivity and silence in the church were compounded by men's aggression and resentment toward them. In secular and religious life women encountered hostility from men in positions of power who attempted to silence women's voices. Cardinal Humbert (c. 1000 – 61), who supported the Gregorian reform, believed in the exclusion of women from public roles. He specifically addressed women's role within the church by forbidding women to speak in church and rule over men.¹³ Also, Idung of Prüfening argued in his essays for strict female enclosure, warning women not to appear in public. He also believed that it was not practical for women to hold positions of monastic governance because they were fickle and by nature not strong enough to resist the temptations of the secular world.¹⁴ Women were taught "God loved nothing but silence and abject humility from his feminine creatures."¹⁵ It would not be surprising if women feared to make themselves heard in the face of such opposition. Of course, however, the likes of Hildegard and other powerful women *did* make themselves heard, and *did* hold positions of power, as we shall see in the next section.

Hildegard lived during a time when many women were attracted to the religious lifestyle. The reasons for the rise of the female religious population is unclear, however some possibilities are the desire of freedom from the limitations and expectations of the secular world combined with the value given to a devout and pious lifestyle. Some sections of the medieval church responded to the increase of religious women by urging strict measures like enclosure. The increasing number of women entering the religious life caused difficulties in some communities through the lack of spiritual advisers and chaplains: the nuns needed mass and only men were allowed to conduct the service.¹⁶ Also, most female visionaries depended on men to translate and record their visions due to illiteracy; learning Latin was not part of their education.¹⁷ Male orders were sometimes reluctant to take on the religious direction of women, perhaps because women demanded extra attention due to their lack of literacy and the limitations that the ecclesiastical leaders created for them.

Women of Power

The foregoing explains some of the obstacles in the path of women seeking to gain authority in the church. However, it was possible for women to gain power. The social and political background of nuns affected the level of control religious men could exercise over a female monastery. Certain areas of Europe, including regions in Germany, maintained opportunities for women to exercise power and influence in church and state. Women of high social and political standing in a monastery might hold leadership roles that men usually would have assumed. Hildegard's Rupertsberg monastery was a prime example of one that admitted only young women from prominent social and political backgrounds.¹⁸

Hildegard justified her exclusion of all but young noblewomen on the grounds that since God created a hierarchy of the angels in heaven, likewise a hierarchy of people on earth should be maintained.

Hildegard exercised authority over her monastery, and such authority over a convent and its lands could confer great economic and political power.¹⁹ Even though each convent had to employ a chaplain to celebrate the Eucharist, the chaplain was answerable to the abbess and had no authority in the community. Lay officials were sometimes considered the servants of an abbess like Hildegard, and she may have delegated routine administrative work to them. In some situations, convents were excused from the bishop's authority and the abbess had only the pope as a superior. Abbesses of an exempt convent, and some queens who were regents for minor heirs, were considered exceptions amongst medieval women in that they enjoyed such independence.

In response to female autonomy, men appeared comfortable with the idea of females as passive transmitters of power; however, men could not accept – at least explicitly – a female exercising authority in her own name.²⁰ A prime example in the secular and political realm was Matilda of Boulogne (c. 1102 – 1167) who claimed the right to rule by inheritance and in her own name. Medieval thinkers never viewed Matilda as a woman exerting power in her own right,²¹ but saw her as a representative of her family. She posed no threat to the feudal order because her authority could be attributed to another source. In the church, ecclesiastical leaders attributed a female's authority to divine inspiration.²² Thus, the ecclesiastical leaders viewed Hildegard's authoritative role as abbess as permissible because they rationalised that she had attained this position through her relationship with God.²³ The church could therefore

acknowledge women's worth without explicitly recognising their full potential or regarding them as highly as men.

When women did exert public authority, men sometimes attributed masculine characteristics to them.²⁴ For instance, in a letter from Bernard of Clairvaux (1090 – 1153) to Melisende of Jerusalem (c. 1105 – 1160) he describes her power in masculine terms by referring to her as ‘king’, rather than ‘queen’.²⁵ This suggests that secular women with public authority had to overcome the perceived disadvantages of their gender, and attain masculine virtues. In monastic life both men and women would interchange gender terms and characteristics. In Bernard’s letters and spiritual writings he describes himself as bride and mother.²⁶ In monastic life exercising authority involved ‘feminine’ attributes such as nurturing, contemplation, patience, wisdom, and prudence, as well as ‘masculine’ attributes such as strength, fidelity, and bravery. In the secular world, women of public authority would acquire masculine qualities, while in monastic life exercising authority involved both male and female virtues.

The achievements of another remarkable woman, Herrad of Hohenburg (Landsberg) (c. 1130 – 1195/96), resemble those of Hildegard.²⁷ Herrad was also a Benedictine abbess who created text and illuminations to inspire and teach her community with the hope of reaching beyond her own monastery in Alsace. Herrad created an encyclopaedia combining a diversity of subjects such as philosophy, ethics, history, and biblical themes. Her work was called *Hortus Deliciarum*, or the Garden of Delights, which contained unbound approximately 400 illuminations and 45,000 lines of text. Herrad worked on her masterpiece between the years of 1159 and 1175. The *Hortus Deliciarum* was composed in

Latin, and was originally designed for the nuns in her monastery; it encompassed the history of the world beginning with the moment of creation. The text incorporated Hebrew and Christian Testaments, along with the writings of the Church Fathers and the history of the Church from Calvary to the Last Judgement.²⁸

Role Models for Women of Power

Female visionaries looked to Mary Magdalen for inspiration as an authoritative woman.²⁹ According to Caviness, women's visionary influence dates back to the Gospels, when Mary Magdalen was the first person to see Christ risen from the dead.³⁰ The Golden Legend explains that Mary Magdalen stayed at the sepulchre while the disciples walked away, and that Christ first appeared when she was alone. Mary Magdalen is told to use sight instead of touch to confirm that Jesus had risen from the dead.³¹ The Golden Legend emphasises that Mary Magdalen was made "Apostle to the Apostles",³² and explains further that Mary Magdalen was given authority to preach to the pagans, eloquently mastering this goal with the help of the Holy Spirit. The scene of Mary Magdalen instructing the Apostles was found in the *Psalter of Christina of Markyate* (c. 1096 – 1160), also known as the *St. Albans Psalter*, dated 1125-50 (see pl. 3), who was one of the first known female recluses in England.³³ Thus, Mary Magdalen was a prime model for female visionaries who had an authoritative role as a preacher.

In the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, although female visionaries regarded Mary Magdalen as an exemplar, theologians saw her right to preach as exceptional.³⁴ Despite the theologians categorising Mary Magdalen as an exception, women's voices were not silenced: Hildegard, among other women,

also preached, but saw it as a gift of divine inspiration rather than intelligence.³⁵ As mentioned earlier, the ecclesiastical leaders justified Hildegard's authoritative role by attributing it to God. They viewed Hildegard's preaching as permissible because they rationalised it as prophecy, which did not originate from the formal education preachers received.³⁶ Prophecy did not contradict the notion that women were intellectually inferior to men because it was seen as a miraculous gift.

The female figures in the Bible with whom Hildegard identified were Deborah and Susanna. Deborah, a prophetess, was one of the Judges of Israel, and was called upon in a time of great distress to govern the people.³⁷ In the Old Testament the Jews were under the rule of the Judges who were unable to rule with manly strength or justice.³⁸ The people of Israel went to Deborah for judgement and advice: when war broke out on all sides, the commander of the army consulted her, and it was Deborah's foreknowledge that determined the victorious outcome of the battle fought at Kishon. This biblical story was interpreted as suggesting that when men were not fulfilling their gender role, women were allowed, with the help of a divine source, to step in and fill the role. Hildegard asserted this notion in the first vision of *Scivias*, when the voice of God commanded her to write down visions, because those in authority were not living up to their potential. Hildegard referred to the ecclesiastical leaders as 'lukewarm and sluggish' when explaining her right, or duty, to teach and preach the word of God.³⁹

In the twelfth century, devotions to the Virgin Mary increased. The Virgin Mary was seen as an intercessor between souls and Christ, and both men and women called upon her in times of distress. The Virgin Mary was a conduit

for God's power. Miracles and answered prayers attributed to the Virgin Mary were seen as acts of God working through Mary to man.

A female role model for literacy was St. Anne who taught the Virgin Mary to read.⁴⁰ Her story was well known not through the canonical gospels, but through the apocryphal *Protevangelium* of James and other texts that derived from it, such as the *Gospel of Pseudo-Matthew*.⁴¹ The *Protevangelium* was written around 150 A.D. and describes Anne's influence in the early years of the Virgin Mary's life. The Virgin Mary was twelve at the time of her marriage to Joseph, and the skills that she was said to have at that age were spinning and weaving. Between the eighth and tenth centuries Byzantine sermons described the Virgin Mary as an intellectual equivalent of the goddess Athena.⁴² Around this time the Virgin Mary's cult became more widespread and gathered momentum. The cult developed the belief that the Virgin Mary must have been both spiritually and intellectually gifted. The *Pseudo-Matthew* portrayed the Virgin Mary as highly intelligent.

In the Middle Ages, it was believed that the Virgin Mary was taught to read in the Temple, and her education was compared with that of nuns. It is difficult to know exactly what Mary read. Otfried of Weissenburg (c. 790 – 875) wrote the poem *Krist*, which describes Mary reading the Psalter as the angel arrives.⁴³ Also, the *Pseudo-Matthew* describes the Virgin Mary as follows: "No one could be found who was better instructed than she (Mary) in wisdom and in the law of God, who was more skilled in singing the songs of David (Psalms)."⁴⁴ Significantly, the only book Hildegard claimed to have read was the Psalter, perhaps because in medieval culture it was deemed an acceptable book for a nun to have read because of the example of the Virgin Mary.

Until the fourteenth century, medieval women had access to books only in religious contexts, unless they were of royal or aristocratic status. All convents had to teach the novices to recite the Divine Office. The standard of education at the convents varied, although some convents became important centres of learning and education.⁴⁵ Large monastic libraries had theological texts and classic texts in Latin. There is evidence of the importance of reading in a nun's daily devotion, and books still survive from some convents. Daily life at Rupertsberg involved reading and writing. On holy days the nuns would learn the chant and apply themselves to silent reading of the *lectio divina*.⁴⁶ In the Middle Ages, with a few exceptions, most learned women were nuns, whereas learned men were not necessarily all monks.

Authenticating Visions: Hildegard's Illness and Visions

At this point we now examine the process whereby Hildegard's visions were authenticated by male clergy, so allowing them to be publicised widely.

Hildegard had her first visionary experience at the age of three, when she saw a bright light that she feared greatly.⁴⁷ Due to Hildegard's young age she could not express the visionary experience to her family and concealed it for many years.

When older, she started to confide in Jutta about her visions and would reveal future events. Jutta told Volmar (d. 1173), the secretary of Disibodenberg monastery and the person in charge of the nun's spiritual welfare, the content of Hildegard's visions. During one vision, a voice told her that she should write down everything she saw and heard, but it was not until after Jutta's death when Hildegard was in her forties, that she realised she must obey God's command.

Hildegard at first hesitated to write down her visions:

But I, though I saw and heard these things, refused to write for a long time through doubt and bad opinion and the diversity of human words, not with stubbornness but in the exercise of humility, until, laid low by the scourge of God, I fell upon a bed of sickness.⁴⁸

Hildegard was apprehensive of speaking about her visions, fearing the judgements of her community: visionaries, such as Hildegard, might have felt inadequate to receive God's command, and may have feared being viewed as mad. Consequently the divine message was often ignored. However, it was not until Hildegard was struck with an illness that rendered her bed-ridden, that she accepted that God truly wanted her to convey these experiences to others.

Hildegard confided in Volmar, the secretary of Disibodenberg monastery, who advised her to write down her visions, so he could see exactly what they contained. After reviewing Hildegard's visions, Volmar believed that they were from God and then told Cuno of Disibodenberg⁴⁹ – abbot between 1136-55 – of the situation. Abbot Cuno gave permission to Hildegard to write down her visions.⁵⁰ From this point on Volmar was eager to work with Hildegard in order to reveal God's command to others. Volmar presided over Hildegard's grammar by helping her with Latin when transcribing her visions. The visions Hildegard began to write down would later on form part of her first book: *Scivias*. Once Hildegard began documenting her visions, she reported a physical change: “and raising myself from illness by the strength I received, I brought this work (*Scivias*) to a close though just barely in ten years.”⁵¹ With Hildegard's renewed strength she devoted her time to transcribing her visions.

However, a career for her as a writer was still uncertain. When Abbot Cuno saw that Hildegard had recovered from her illness once she began writing down her visions, he believed her situation should be made known to the

public.⁵² Therefore, Abbot Cuno went to show Archbishop Henry of Mainz and the cathedral chapter Hildegard's writings and to discuss the recovery of her illness after obeying God's command. Hildegard took the initiative to gain the approval of male authority figures for her writing. In 1146 Hildegard wrote to Bernard of Clairvaux, who was an influential figure in the Cistercian (Benedictine) reform movement.⁵³ It was not until a few years into Hildegard's writing of *Scivias*, in 1146, that she wrote Bernard seeking advice regarding whether to speak or keep silent about her visions. Apparently, Hildegard did not receive a response from Bernard, possibly because he was preoccupied with gathering support for the Second Crusade, until after she sent him a second letter and it is unclear whether Bernard encouraged Hildegard's writing.⁵⁴ He did send what Baird and Ehrman describe as a 'rather perfunctory' letter recognising the 'grace of God' within Hildegard, and urging her to respond 'eagerly to it with all humility and devotion'.⁵⁵ Whether this amounts to encouragement in her writing, it is difficult to say. It has been suggested that the termination of their correspondence and her lack of support for his causes indicates that Hildegard did not receive the full support of Bernard.⁵⁶

A similar situation occurred with the Cistercian Pope Eugenius III. During this time Pope Eugene was at the Council of Trier, which was held from 30 November 1147 to February 1148.⁵⁷ Bernard of Clairvaux and Archbishop Henry of Mainz spoke favourably of Hildegard, and may have informed Pope Eugene of her genuine visions. According to Hildegard's *Vita*, written by the monks Gottfried of Disibodenberg⁵⁸ (d. 1176) and Theodoric of Echternach (d. after 1192), Eugene sent a delegation of individuals, including Albero of Verdun – bishop between 1131-1156 – and his secretary Adalbert I – bishop between

1156-1162 – to speak with Hildegard concerning her visions, and to obtain a copy of her writings.⁵⁹ Pope Eugene had obtained a portion of Hildegard's visionary writings, and read them aloud at the Council of Trier. Also, Eugene had direct contact with Hildegard through her letters. Hildegard may have sent a letter to Eugene resembling the one she sent Bernard.⁶⁰ In her letter she acknowledged that Eugene had obtained a portion of *Scivias*: perhaps looking for validation for her writing. Hildegard became persistent and wrote again, indicating her serious need for permission to write her visions, as she was criticised by others for her gift. Hildegard's voice in this letter was strong, assertive, and commanding, as indicated through her closing, "do not spurn these mysteries of God, because they have a necessity, which lies hidden and has not yet been revealed."⁶¹ After Hildegard made a few attempts through letters, Eugene finally responded. It is questionable whether Eugene did validate Hildegard as a writer, because this letter from him does not survive.⁶² Further, in the preface of *Scivias*, Hildegard closes with the following:

These visions took place and these words were written in the days of Henry, Archbishop of Mainz, and of Conrad, King of the Romans, and of Cuno, Abbot of Disibodenberg, under Pope Eugenius. And I spoke and wrote these things not by the invention of my heart or that of any other person, but as by the secret mysteries of God I heard and received them in the heavenly places.⁶³

Hildegard did not attribute authentication of her visions to any of the above-mentioned. Hildegard only specifically credited God as the one who authorised her to speak and write. Hildegard plainly stated that it was neither herself nor any person who allowed her to speak and write.

Pope Eugene did write to Hildegard in 1151 replying to a letter regarding the noblewoman Richardis of Stade (d. 1152), daughter of the Marchioness of

Stade, whom Hildegard was very close to and requested to keep in the Rupertsberg community.⁶⁴ When Eugene responded he denied her request. Also, he referred to her as “a spirit, which already sufficiently rests on divine virtue.”⁶⁵ This acknowledgement of the spirit within Hildegard suggests that Eugene would have approved of her writing down her visions and making them more widely known.

Interestingly, there is one letter of 1170 that is supposedly from Eugene and that validates Hildegard and her visions.⁶⁶ The contents of the letter contain six significant sentences. The first two sentences depict Hildegard as a miracle filled with the spirit of God revealing his secrets for humankind, as ‘Eugene’ claimed he had heard from witnesses. The third sentence points out Hildegard’s view of the clergy’s failure to teach and admonish; ‘Eugene’ admitted to this failure. The fourth and fifth sentences are an extension of Bernard’s letter (1146-7), addressing his acknowledgment of the grace within her. The fifth sentence urges Hildegard to give utterance to the grace within her.⁶⁷ However, Van Engen has recently argued that the letter was concocted by Volmar, rejecting the idea of Eugene as the author on grounds of style.⁶⁸ If the letter was fabricated – Van Engen argues that concocting letters was not uncommon in an age of oral communication as it allowed individuals to set down their privileges in writing⁶⁹ - it possibly suggests that by 1170 Volmar and Hildegard both remained insecure regarding the authentication of her visions, or at least felt the need to prove to the community or themselves that Hildegard had received validation from Eugene.

If Hildegard did not receive papal authorisation in writing, when Eugene read parts of Hildegard’s *Scivias*, this act might have been taken as approval.

Perhaps, when Eugene sent a delegation to Hildegard's community she and Volmar took this as an implied approval. However, Peter Dronke draws our attention to the possibility that Hildegard – and her contemporary Bernard of Silvestris – might not have got away with so bold a work as the *Scivias* were it not for the fact that Eugene was pope:

Two writers who showed such daring in their cosmological conceptions and formulations could so easily, had it not been for Pope Eugene, have been persecuted, the works called in question and condemned by council or synod, as happened with Abelard, William of Conches, or Gilbert of Poitiers.⁷⁰

Whatever the case, Hildegard continued to write down her visions anyway with the help of Volmar.⁷¹ Hildegard considered herself an unlearned woman, and so depended on Volmar to correct her grammar. Unlike other visionaries, such as Christina of Markyate, Hildegard's final works were accomplished by a combination of writing in her own hand and dictating her visions to Volmar. Volmar's role is seen in Hildegard's description of the divine command she received:

Whenever something is shown to you from on high in familiar human form, you shall not publish it in the Latin language yourself, for this familiarity is not given to you. Rather, let him who has a file⁷² not neglect to finish it off in a form pleasing to the human ear.⁷³

Hildegard's own understanding of the necessity of enlisting Volmar's help was further confirmed through this vision, his role in aiding her visions verified through God's command.

Volmar continued to aid Hildegard in recording her visions, and even moved to Rupertsberg with her so that their partnership would continue. In 1173, their collaboration ended with his death. Therefore, Hildegard needed to find a new secretary and provost for the Rupertsberg monastery.⁷⁴ At first,

Hildegard procured her nephew Wezelin, who was provost of St. Andreas at Cologne. Hildegard also recruited Ludwig of St. Eucharius at Trier (d. 1187), who later on assigned Theodoric to complete her *Vita*.⁷⁵ Finally, Hildegard took the matter to Alexander III – pontiff between 1159-81 – so that after a year of negotiations, the monk Gottfried was sent from Disibodenberg between late 1174 and early 1175. While provost at Rupertsberg, Gottfried began to write Hildegard's *Vita*, but died shortly after his arrival in 1176. Around this same time, the monk Guibert of Gembloux (c. 1124/5-1213), who corresponded with Hildegard since 1175, made more of an impact on her life from this point forth. Guibert visited Hildegard at Rupertsberg and continued to record Hildegard's *Vita*. In the *Vita* Guibert included Hildegard's later life, her visionary works, and the method of writing. When Gottfried died in 1176, Hildegard's brother Hugo took the roles of secretary and provost. Hugo acquired these positions at Hildegard's monastery, while he was a canon from St. Stephen's at Mainz. In 1177 Hildegard invited Guibert to Rupertsberg, who replaced Hugo and the Mainz clergy, and took the roles of secretary and provost of the monastery. Guibert continued with these positions until 1180 when he was called back to Gembloux; Hildegard had passed away the previous year.

There was a correlation between Hildegard's illness and the ecclesiastical leaders' acceptance of her requests. For example, Abbot Cuno accepted her visions after realising the seriousness of her illnesses. Further, Hildegard recovered after writing down her visions, which assured Abbot Cuno that God's spirit was within her, so he informed the Archbishop Henry of Mainz. Another instance involved Hildegard's vision instructing her to move with her nuns to St. Rupertsberg. Previously, Hildegard and her nuns presided at Disibodenberg

monastery, which was described as having lush fields and vineyards. The majority of Hildegard's time at Disibodenberg was filled with expanding and relocating the nun's quarters. During this time Hildegard announced that she had a vision, in which God commanded her to move to Rupertsberg (about 30 km from Disibodenberg), and found a monastery for her nuns. This vision was met with great opposition by the monks and most likely from the parents of the nuns.⁷⁶ The parents of the nuns were probably upset because when the nuns entered the convent their parents donated property (such as land), which increased the wealth of the monastery. Also, many faithful individuals added to the wealth through gifts, because they were attracted to Hildegard's holiness. The monks were upset, because it meant that they would have a difficult time maintaining their control and authority of the nun's spiritual welfare, due to the physical distance. Since Hildegard's request was met with great opposition, she became ill and was bed-ridden once more. Hildegard could not speak and was immobile. Abbot Cuno came to Hildegard's bedchamber, and was astonished that he could not move her.⁷⁷ Similar to the first incident, Hildegard's illness convinced Abbot Cuno that God was behind her illness, and that the vision should be heeded. Hildegard's illnesses could certainly prove useful in getting her own way.

Besides God helping Hildegard in this endeavour, she had Marchioness Richardis of Stade (the mother of one of the nuns) come to her aid. On Hildegard's behalf the Marchioness went to the Archbishop Henry of Mainz, and with his support purchased land at Rupertsberg around 1150. Hildegard's move to Rupertsberg was significant because it meant that she had greater control and autonomy, because of the physical separation from the monks of Disibodenberg.

The combination of divine intervention and friendship granted Hildegard the permission from authoritative figures that she needed in order to carry through with God's command.

Hildegard's age was also a crucial factor in gaining the acceptance of Volmar and Abbot Cuno, making them believe that divine inspiration was at hand. William of St. Thierry (c. 1085 – 1148) argued that through spiritual growth the female soul was gradually altered into a masculine spirit with a virile mind.⁷⁸ Perfect reasoning was associated with men, and in contrast was not associated with women. This may explain why female visionaries waited until forty-something to write, because in the Middle Ages this age was considered postmenopausal and thought of as less female.⁷⁹ Hildegard received visions from a young age, but it was not until she was 42 years of age that she was commanded to speak and write of her visions. It was pertinent that Hildegard waited or was called forth by God at this age to reveal her visions to the world. The ecclesiastical leaders reasoned that it would not be entirely unrealistic for God to command a female at this specific time in her life. However, after 40 years of experiencing her visions it may have been only then that Hildegard felt she understood their meaning sufficiently to write them down, hence her long wait before writing.

Another aspect that supported the authenticity of Hildegard's visions was her self-criticism. Hildegard would constantly speak of herself as an unlearned woman, which was the reason why she needed help from Volmar with her Latin. Hildegard claimed that her knowledge came entirely from a divine source: this was a clear sign that God was working through her, and what Volmar and Abbot Cuno based their judgement on when giving her permission to write down her

visions. As mentioned earlier Hildegard's only book was the Psalter, and her primary education was from Jutta, who was not formally educated (although, Hildegard's works indicate that she was knowledgeable in natural science, astrology, neo-Platonic philosophy, and classical Latin literature).⁸⁰ A very common rhetorical topos for medieval writers was to emphasise and exaggerate their 'poor' writing, which Hildegard clearly demonstrates.⁸¹ Also, both male and female visionaries would refer to themselves as a 'weak woman.'⁸² Hildegard referred to herself as a 'simple creature' and a 'poor little woman.' Hildegard may have done this to illustrate her humility, inferiority, and submissiveness in the religious culture. The conventional nature of such self-effacing remarks suggests that one should not read too much into them, however: it is impossible to say how much she really meant such sentiments.

Thus, through such means Hildegard gained the required authentication from the male clergy to write down and publicise her visions. Her powerful will, her network of allies, her illness, and her visionary power combined together to form social dynamite, exploding notions that women's voices should not be heard. While some church fathers were hoping to silence women through rules aimed at religious women in general, the authority gained by particular women like Hildegard suggests such rules could be broken down in practice. The next chapter now turns to Rupertsburg manuscript of *Scivias*, and the process of its creation from vision to text to illumination. The ongoing debate as to the role of Hildegard in the creation of the illuminations that accompany the *Scivias* manuscript will be examined, using her possible illness and its symptoms as evidence for her playing more part in their creation than some suggest.

¹ McNamara and Wemple, 1977, 92.

² Loc. cit.

- ³ Bynum, 1982, 10, and Bolton, 1983, 80.
- ⁴ For Gregorian reform, see Bynum, 1982, 6-21, and Lynch, 1992, 137-50.
- ⁵ Lynch, 1992, 145.
- ⁶ Schulenberg, 1988, 115.
- ⁷ Elkins, 1988, 50.
- ⁸ Lynch, 1992, 213.
- ⁹ Schulenberg, 1988, 119.
- ¹⁰ McNamara, 1993, 10.
- ¹¹ For virginity, see McNamara, 1993, 14-15.
- ¹² Constable, 1978, 207. Constable points out as interesting the 'relative ease with which the two young people were able to communicate and meet, which contrasts strongly with the later provisions [of Gilbertine legislation] forbidding a woman from so much as seeing a man, let alone from speaking with him or leaving the monastery to meet him' (1978: 219). The episode occurred in the 1160s.
- ¹³ Schulenberg, 1988, 117.
- ¹⁴ Schulenberg, 1988, 117.
- ¹⁵ McNamara, 1993, 10.
- ¹⁶ Petroff, 1994, 130.
- ¹⁷ McNamara, 1993, 10.
- ¹⁸ Flanagan, 1998a, 16.
- ¹⁹ For abbesses, see Hamilton, 1986, 34, and Schulenberg, 1988, 115.
- ²⁰ Parsons, 1994, 191.
- ²¹ For secular women with power, see Parsons, 1994, 189-201.
- ²² Muessig, 1998, 148.
- ²³ Muessig, 1998, 148.
- ²⁴ For masculine traits associated with women, see Parsons, 1994, 200, and Bynum, 1982, 115-18.
- ²⁵ Parsons, 1994, 200.
- ²⁶ Bynum, 1982, 115-118.
- ²⁷ For Herrad of Hohenbourg, see Taylor and Smith, 1997, 96-105, Mews, 2001, 221-43, and Petersen and Wilson, 1976, 15-16.
- ²⁸ Taylor and Smith, 1997, 99.
- ²⁹ For Mary Magdalen as a role model for women, see Caviness, 2001a, section IV, 2-7.
- ³⁰ Caviness, 2001a, section IV, 4.
- ³¹ Jn. 20: 1-18; Mk. 16:9; Matt. 28:1; Lk. 24:15 states that Christ first appeared to Peter and Cleopas on the road to Emmaus.
- ³² Voragine, 1941, 356-57.
- ³³ Pl. 3 from Caviness, 2001a, section IV, fig. 4: Psalter of Christina of Markyate (Albani-Psalter), 1125-1150, Dombibliothek, Hildesheim, MS God. 1, f. 51.
- ³⁴ Muessig, 1998, 147: This article asserts that in a thirteenth-century collection of model sermons Mary Magdalen's role of teaching is described as following: "And although it is prohibited for other women to preach, this woman had dispensation from the highest pope, therefore, she is called the apostle of the apostles, for she taught not only the simple but also the doctors."
- ³⁵ Similar to Hildegard, is Marie of Oignies (d. 1213) who had the authority to sing about theological issues because it was attributed to prophecy and not logical reasoning.
- ³⁶ Muessig, 1998, 148.
- ³⁷ For Deborah, see Judges 4, Spronk, 2001, 232-42, and Webb, 1987, 134-45.
- ³⁸ Jgs. 4:4-24: The people of Israel cried out to the Lord for help, and the Lord sent the prophetess Deborah.
- ³⁹ For further discussion of ecclesiastical leaders as 'lukewarm', see chapter 3, pages 2-4, and Blamires, 1997, 7.
- ⁴⁰ For St. Anne as role model for literacy, see Sheingorn, 1993.
- ⁴¹ Cartlidge and Elliot, 2001, 3: *The Gospel of Pseudo Matthew* was composed in the eighth or ninth century.
- ⁴² Sheingorn, 1993, 69.
- ⁴³ Schiller, 1971, vol. I, 42.
- ⁴⁴ Schiller, 1971, vol. I, 42.
- ⁴⁵ Schulenberg, 1988, 112.

- ⁴⁶ Silvas, 1998, 101.
- ⁴⁷ For visionary experiences, see Silvas, 1998, 140-41, 157-60.
- ⁴⁸ Translated from Hart and Bishop, 1990, 60. Original Latin text from Führkötter and Carlevaris, 1978, 5 is as follows: "Sed ego, quamuis haec uiderem et audirem, tamen propter dubietatem et malam opinionem et propter diuersitatem uerborum hominum, tamdiu non in pertinacia, sed in humilitatis officio scribere recusau, quousque in lectum aegritudinis flagello Dei depressa caderem."
- ⁴⁹ Also written as 'Kuno'.
- ⁵⁰ Flanagan, 1998b, 4.
- ⁵¹ Translated from Hart and Bishop, 1990, 61. Original Latin text from Führkötter and Carlevaris, 1978, 6 is as follows: "Ut praedixi, sentiens, uiribusque receptis de aegritudine me erigens, uix opus istud decem annis consummans ad finem perduxi."
- ⁵² For authentication of Hildegard's visions, see Silvas, 1998, 141, Flanagan, 1998b, 4-5, Baird and Ehrman, 1994, 27-33, Bowie and Davies, 1990, 10-12, Van Engen, 2000, 379-92, and Atherton, 2001, 3-5.
- ⁵³ For Hildegard's letter to Abbot Bernard of Clairvaux and his response, see Baird and Ehrman, 1994, 27-32.
- ⁵⁴ Van Engen, 2000, 382, and Atherton, 2001, 3.
- ⁵⁵ Baird and Ehrman, 1994, 31.
- ⁵⁶ Van Engen, 2000, 382.
- ⁵⁷ The Council of Trier advocated church reforms, such as reorganising schools of philosophy and theology and issuing canons fulfilling the Lateran Council's orders that took place in 1139.
- ⁵⁸ Also written as 'Godfrey'.
- ⁵⁹ In 1156 Adalbert succeeded Bishop Albero of Verdun. For the delegation receiving a sample of Hildegard's writing, see Van Engen, 2000, 384.
- ⁶⁰ Van Engen, 2000, 383: In the Middle Ages it was common for writers to send the same letter, or slightly revised, to multiple recipients.
- ⁶¹ Baird and Ehrman, 1994, 33.
- ⁶² Baird and Ehrman, 1994, 34, and Van Engen, 2000, 384-5.
- ⁶³ Translated from Hart and Bishop, 1990, 61. Original Latin text from Führkötter and Carlevaris, 1978, 6 is as follows: "In diebus Heinrici moguntini archiepiscopi et Conradi Romanorum regis et Cunonis abbatis in monte beati Disibodi pontificis, sub papa Eugenio, hae uisiones et uerba facta sunt. Et dixi et scripsi haec non secundum adinuationem cordis mei aut ullius hominis, sed ut ea in caelestibus uidi, audiui et percepi per secreta mysteria Dei."
- ⁶⁴ For Pope Eugenius's letter to Hildegard, see Baird and Ehrman, 1994, 34-36.
- ⁶⁵ Baird and Ehrman, 1994, 35.
- ⁶⁶ Van Engen, 2000, 386.
- ⁶⁷ Van Engen, 2000, 387.
- ⁶⁸ Van Engen, 2000, 386-390.
- ⁶⁹ Van Engen, 2000, 388.
- ⁷⁰ Dronke, 1984, 148.
- ⁷¹ For Volmar as secretary to Hildegard, see Silvas, 1998, 155-58.
- ⁷² Silvas, 1998, 156: for example, 'polish'.
- ⁷³ Silvas, 1998, 156.
- ⁷⁴ For Volmar's death and replacement of secretary, see Flanagan, 1998b, 10-11.
- ⁷⁵ Flanagan, 1998b, 10.
- ⁷⁶ Flanagan, 1998b, 5.
- ⁷⁷ Flanagan, 1998b, 6.
- ⁷⁸ Newman, 1989-90, 115.
- ⁷⁹ Johnson, 1991, 838.
- ⁸⁰ For Hildegard's wide knowledge, see Burnett and Dronke, 1998, and Singer, 1958, 199-239.
- ⁸¹ For topos of humility, see Bowie and Davies, 1990, 44-45.
- ⁸² Bowie and Davies, 1990, 44.

Chapter Two: From Vision to Illumination

In this chapter I discuss Hildegard's visions and how they were transformed into the illuminated manuscript of the Rupertsburg *Scivias*. It appears possible that some influence on *Scivias* may have come from an illness resembling migraine, and in analysing the creative process behind the work it is important to examine this influence. However, in this chapter I also show the limitations of a medical explanation for the visions: they were first and foremost a profound spiritual experience. Also tackled in this chapter is the question as to what Hildegard's exact role was in relation to the *Scivias* illuminations. *Scivias* contains 35 illuminations, richly adorned with gold and silver leaf; they are in many ways unique in style and structure. The identity of their artist(s) is uncertain and widely debated, and this chapter looks at the evidence, arguing that Hildegard did in fact supervise the artistic process. Discussions of Hildegard's illness and the authorship of the illuminations are linked: if Hildegard did indeed suffer from migraines, the portrayal in the illuminations of visual auras associated with the illness suggests strongly that she had a very direct role in their creation.

Hildegard's Visions

From an early age Hildegard experienced visions and was plagued with illnesses that left her bed-ridden. There are three pieces of evidence that document her visions and illnesses: Hildegard's own account of her visionary experiences; the illuminations themselves; and the observations of Godfrey and Theodoric, her contemporary biographers.

As established in chapter one, Hildegard interpreted her illnesses as a punishment from God for disobeying his commands.¹ Godfrey and Theodoric also described her illnesses as a reprimand from God: "She suffered from this

kind of illness not only then but whenever, out of feminine diffidence, she hesitated or was dubious about furthering the business of the divine will.”²

Hildegard realised that whenever she defied God’s instructions she became so ill as to be confined to bed.

However, Hildegard’s illnesses were perhaps not a punishment for disobeying God, or an epiphenomenon of the visions, but might in fact have played in role generating some elements of what Hildegard saw in her visions.

As Hildegard related:

One time God stretched me out on a bed of sickness and poured painful humours into my whole body...I remained in this agony for thirty days so that my stomach grew warm from the heat of the fiery humour...during those days I saw in a true vision a great army of angels, more than the human understanding can count. They belonged to that army which was fighting with Michael against the dragon...one from among them shouted to me, saying: “Why, o eagle, do you remain asleep in regard to knowledge? Arise from doubt!...So, rise up, young woman!” Immediately my body and my senses switched to the present life...and thus I recovered my former strength.³

This passage clearly demonstrates the interconnectedness of Hildegard’s illness and her visions as her becoming ill precedes the visions.

Hildegard made perfectly clear that she was conscious during her visions.⁴ During the visionary state, Hildegard was aware of the ‘real’ world and was capable of seeing and hearing the objects surrounding her. A good description of a visionary experience for comparative purposes comes from Hildegard’s contemporary Elisabeth of Schönau (c. 1128/9 - 1164/5).⁵ Elisabeth’s visions bear a closer similarity to hallucination than Hildegard’s experiences. Elisabeth recounted thus the onset of her visionary state: “Then when the Mass of Our Lady the Blessed Virgin was begun, it being Sunday, I fell into an ecstasy, and my heart was opened, and I saw above the air.”⁶

Descriptions of Elisabeth's visionary experiences, in contrast to Hildegard's, are suggestive of a trance: her brother, Eckbert, reported that she appeared lifeless and was not even breathing.⁷ Another important difference between the two contemporaries was the type of interaction between elements of the vision and the visionary herself. Hildegard's experiences were non-interactive: Hildegard was a passive observer, watching the visions as though they were projected onto a screen. In contrast, Elisabeth interacted with elements in her visions to the extent that she even spoke with her abbot.⁸ Regarding another interactive vision Elisabeth stated: "The angel of the Lord took me to another place of most cheerful pleasantness, and set me under a tree, which was covered with most beautiful flowers. Soon I sat on the grass and picked a handful of flowers, which were lying all around me."⁹ The difference in the degree of interaction between the two visionaries indicates that Elisabeth's experience rather more resembled an overwhelming hallucination, while Hildegard's experience, during which she was conscious and could distinguish between objects in the 'real' world and in her visionary experience, is suggestive of a less extreme mental state.¹⁰ In Elisabeth's case, it is highly probable that disease or ascetic practices caused these trance-like hallucinations.

Hildegard's visionary state – while less extreme – might also have been linked to illness. Hildegard's visions are original and creative, as the *Scivias* text and illuminations show, but may be, to a degree, medically explained.¹¹ Charles Singer, the first scholar to suggest a physical cause for Hildegard's visionary powers, linked her visions to a functional nervous disorder, citing as evidence the following: her full recovery after each illness; the extent of her activity between her illnesses; and the long life that she lived.¹²

It is certainly possible that migraines constituted this nervous disorder.

The most distinctive aspect of a migraine episode is seeing points of light.

Migraine patients often interpret these lights as stars or flaming eyes, which shimmer in a wavelike way.¹³ Hildegard's vivid description of a typical visionary experience reads:

I saw a great star, splendid and beautiful, come forth from the One seated on the throne. And with that star came a great multitude of shining sparks, which followed the star toward the South, looking on the One seated on the throne like a stranger; they turned away from Him and stared toward the North instead of contemplating Him. But, in the very act of turning away their gaze, they were all extinguished and were changed into black cinders.¹⁴

Hildegard, in reference to *Scivias* Book Three, Vision One (see pl. 4a), believed the shining sparks that were extinguished represented fallen angels, who were quenched in the bluish-green, wavelike ocean. A medical explanation would classify the flaring stars as phosphenes moving across the visual field.¹⁵

Phosphenes are visual disturbances that are seen as bright lights and occur in the early stages of a migraine episode. Phosphenes, or jagged-edged lights, are usually white when displayed as sparks or flashes, although they can be brilliant in colour. Migraine sufferers explain that phosphenes can number up to a hundred and move quickly across the visual field. One migraine patient complained of similar visual disturbances to Hildegard:¹⁶ the patient related that when she looked at a bright light she saw bright stars, and that occasionally one star was brighter than the rest. The brighter star would originate in the lower right-hand corner and move quickly across the visual field, eventually being extinguished as it reached the left side. Sometimes when this brighter star reached the other side of the visual field and broke up, it would leave behind a dazzling effect or even blindness. When closing the eyes the phosphenes can

reverse so that the colour changes from a white or a dark rim to bright silver, like a shattered mirror.¹⁷ In Hildegard's case the colour changed to a steel grey, as demonstrated in Book Three, Vision One (see pl. 4a) and Book One, Vision One (see pl. 5). When reopening the eyes, the splinters of the mirror can occasionally become infused with colour, although this is not reported by all migraine sufferers. In Hildegard's vision, the flickering lights embedded in the black stars and immersed in the brilliant blue and green waves clearly resemble migraine auras.

Another classic symptom of a migraine is a scotoma, which is a longer and far more detailed phantasm in the visual field than a phosphene. Scotomas are visual disturbances perceived as flickering lights during a migraine episode. The large variety of physical symptoms of a migraine episode has led to an increase in the classificatory terminology used for the different types one may suffer.¹⁸ The 'migraine spectrum' refers to the varying shape and colour of the scotomas. The 'fortification spectrum' (teichopsia) refers to a visual disturbance that involves the structure of the scotoma's margins, and often resembles a walled city.¹⁹ The latter might be visible in *Scivias* Book Three, Vision Five (see pl. 6), and in the upper right quadrant of *Scivias* Book Three, Vision 11 (see pl. 2). In both of these visions, Hildegard had migraine and fortification spectra radiating from a luminous and shimmering point. *Scivias* Book Three, Vision Two (see pl. 7) additionally shows the fortification spectrum through the radiating light, which comprises one of the two materials that form the walls of the four-sided building. The *Scivias* illuminations thus exhibit images similar to both migraine and fortification spectra of scotomas.

The term scintillating scotoma, which Singer labels as a symptom of Hildegard's illness as reflected in her visions, pertains to the flickering lights of varying shape and colour.²⁰ In *Scivias* Book One, Vision Two (see pl. 8)

Hildegard claimed to see:

a great multitude of very bright living lamps, which received fiery brilliance and acquired an unclouded splendour. And behold! A pit of great breadth and depth appeared, with a mouth like the mouth of a well, emitting fiery smoke with great stench, from which a loathsome cloud spread out and touched a deceitful, vein-shaped form... When this was done, a luminous splendour surrounded that region, and all the elements of the world, which before had existed in great calm, were turned to the greatest agitation and displayed horrible terrors.²¹

Usually the lights of a scintillating scotoma appear as though they are boiling, shimmering or fermenting. Further, the negative scotoma is the area of blindness that generally follows, although it may precede in some cases, the scintillating scotoma. Many patients report a dazzled quality, which is another distinctive feature of a negative scotoma. The blindness from the negative scotoma can appear as a huge black hole obstructing the visual field for the patient.

Regarding Hildegard's above description, the deep pit – which Hildegard links to hell – might be a manifestation of a negative scotoma. Additionally, in the complementary text of this vision, Hildegard stated, "The jealousy of the Lord, reaching out in fiery blackness, cast him down with all his retinue, so that they were made burning instead of shining and black instead of fair."²² The visual effects of phosphenes, the scintillating scotomas, and the negative scotomas can be seen in many of the *Scivias* illuminations, but particularly in *Scivias* Book One, Vision Two (see pl. 8), as previously described. Hildegard most likely experienced a downpour of phosphenes followed by a scintillating and negative scotoma.

Additionally, Hildegard sometimes experienced a second scotoma, which would follow the original scintillating scotoma.²³ Her description of seeing another light within the original light suggests a second scotoma: "Sometimes I behold within this light another light, which I name 'the Living Light itself'."²⁴ Occasionally this light was much larger than the rest and had a series of concentric wavering circles around it. This is illustrated in *Scivias* Book Two, Vision One (see pl. 9). Often a human-shaped figure or the 'Living Light' is shown in the coloured areas of the circles, such as *Scivias* Book Two, Vision Two (see pl. 10). In this vision a sapphire coloured figure emerges from a layering of concentric circles, gold-coloured in the centre, but silver elsewhere.²⁵ In this bright light Hildegard was able to see the sapphire figure within it. It was during the second scotoma that Hildegard saw and heard the 'Living Light.'

In the following quotation Hildegard reported symptoms of an illness, which may simultaneously be part of a vision:

There was a time when I saw no light because my eyes were clouded over, and I was so weighed down by the weight of my body that I was unable to rise. I lay there preoccupied with worst sorrows...I suffered these things until I made known the name of the place [Rupertsberg] in which I now am. Then I immediately recovered my sight and had it somewhat easier...²⁶

A typical feature of a migraine is blurry vision, due to increased watering of the eyes.²⁷ It is thus possible that Hildegard's clouded vision was a symptom of migraine.

In other visions Hildegard reported that the light was so bright that it blinded her, and therefore she could not look directly at it to perceive the figure inside. This occurred in *Scivias* Book One, Vision One (see pl. 5), in which Hildegard was able to discern and reproduce most of the vision. In this vision Hildegard gave a description of the bright light:

I saw a great mountain the colour of iron, and enthroned on it One of such great glory that it blinded my sight. On each side of him there extended a soft shadow, like a wing of wondrous breadth and length... upon whose head such glory descended from the One enthroned upon that mountain that I could not look at its face. But from the One who sat enthroned upon that mountain many living sparks sprang forth.²⁸

This passage suggests that Hildegard suffered from partial blindness and sensitivity to the light. She was blinded to the degree that she could not look directly at the figure she calls 'Poor in Spirit', indicated by the figure's missing head, which was replaced with a streaming bright light originating from the 'One' enthroned. Perhaps an intense migraine inspired the luminous and colourful visual auras found in the *Scivias* illuminations.

More than a migraine:

Linking Hildegard's visions with a physiological illness, such as migraines, suggests one variable at work in the generation of her experiences. Maddocks, in speaking of the passion with which Caviness – herself a sufferer of the same complaint – speaks of the evidence of migraine-induced visual effects in Hildegard's work, urges some caution:

This [relating artistic endeavour to illness] can go too far, almost denying artistry itself (where is the migraine in the music?). Stylistic innovation in art is often ascribed to madness or eye defects ('they saw funny'), as if vision and invention need some doctor's or optician's certificate as an alibi: think of El Greco or Monet – or Picasso, who has recently been added (by a Dutch doctor in Leiden) to the catalogue of hypothetical migraine patients.²⁹

Clearly caution is required: one should not boldly state that Hildegard's creativity can be reduced to migraines. However, suggesting that migraines were one factor – amongst many others – that seems to have influenced Hildegard in the creative process does not in any way detract from her artistry: on the

contrary, it in some ways adds to it, showing her strength in drawing inspiration from such a crippling source, and incorporating symptoms of illness into art. Whilst migraines can indeed be crippling, it should be emphasised that for Hildegard the visionary experience was not itself crippling. On the contrary, once Hildegard had accepted and understood the nature of her experiences – as we saw in chapter one, it took some time for Hildegard to come to terms with them – she clearly felt them as a liberating gift rather than a stifling illness.

Also, the experiences recounted by Hildegard can be related to other accounts of visionary experiences, most of which have no link to migraine. Maxwell and Tschudin provide case-studies of visionary experiences drawn from accounts in the Alister Hardy Research Centre, and many of them resemble strikingly Hildegard's visions.³⁰ They contrast well the visionary state from mystical states, as described by William James.³¹ Of particular interest in respect to Hildegard's account is that mystical states are often characterised by ineffability: 'Those who struggle to put into words what they experienced invariably add that words are only a pale reflection of the real thing'.³² However, with visionary states, 'writers seem not to have the same difficulty of putting into words what happened to them...They are dealing with something almost tangible, and therefore words are more easily available'.³³ While Hildegard might have had some difficulty with her Latin, her written accounts of the visions in the *Scivias* are testament to her ability to record what she saw. Of course, her text was much enhanced by the illuminations in the Rupertsburg manuscript which, as we shall see, nuance the accompanying text in various ways.

Many accounts in the Alister Hardy archive also describe visions of radiant light in various forms. One woman described an experience she had

when she was sixteen: 'Everywhere surrounding me was this white, bright, sparkling light, like sun on a frosty snow, like a million diamonds, and there was no cornfield, no trees, no sky, this *light* was everywhere; my ordinary eyes were open, but I was not seeing with them'.³⁴ Another woman describes her experiences as follows: 'I can be driving in my car, walking down the street, working in my garden, etc., when all around me literally glows with light, colours become absolutely vibrant and such a tremendous feeling of Divine Love washes over me I feel attuned in perfect harmony with every living being in the universe'.³⁵

Like Hildegard, many people experience a 'presence' and 'speak of the presence of God...[and] angels, saints or unnamed figures'.³⁶ One man speaks of seeing his late mother in a vision: 'There was a sort of turbulence in the air, for which there appeared to be no apparent cause, and as the turbulence subsided, a bright radiance formed in that part of the air where the turbulence was subsiding and my mother's transfigured face (with her features readily recognizable) became visible to me'.³⁷ Many also report hearing voices, and one woman, when suffering from depression, heard a voice from within admonishing her by saying: 'Carry on as you are and you are dead'.³⁸ While Michael's voice snapped Hildegard into action (see quotation above), this voice started the healing process of the woman's depression.

Many of those quoted in Maxwell and Tschudin's book had some form of religious upbringing, and this obviously plays a part in how visions are experienced and interpreted. For Hildegard, living a religious life in an age and culture where genuine visionary experiences were highly valued, it is not hard to see how her experiences were understood within the religious framework she

knew so well. There is clearly a strong cultural component in Hildegard's visions. However, the experiences of Hildegard and those mentioned in the Hardy Archive are of such an intensity that pointing out the definite influence of a religious culture hardly offers an explanation for them. The feelings of joy, oneness and awe – and even, occasionally, horror – in the accounts of Hildegard and others speak well of this intensity. Such feelings also illustrate that although migraine explains well some visual forms in her visions, it hardly gets near to encompassing the totality of these extraordinary experiences.

Hildegard's Role in Creating the Illuminations

Having experienced such visions, by what process were they transformed into the illuminations of the Rupertsburg *Scivias*? Crucial to piecing this together is the question of Hildegard's role in the creation of the illuminations, and this is much debated. Did she just provide the text from which professional artists worked from? Might she have had a more supervisory role? Or might she even have been the artist?

Baillet and De Puniet argued early last century that such a deluxe work must have been made in a monastery both 'riche et voisine des deux monastères fondés par sainte Hildegarde' (ibid. 144). It needed to be big 'pour avoir possédé un nombre d'artistes suffisant à une pareille tâche' and rich 'pour y avoir dépensé, sans compter, l'or, l'argent, les couleurs les plus solides et les plus fines' (loc. cit.). They also point out that it would need to have easy access to Hildegard so she could be consulted whenever 'le texte embarrassait le peintre par la surabondance des détails ou l'obscurité de quelque point particulier' (loc. cit.). Therefore, Baillet supposes Hildegard to have had at least an advisory role

when the illuminators needed clarification. Baillet considers that the abbey of Biscovesberg matched these conditions most closely. However, he concludes by stating that aside from proximity, Trier is a very strong possibility, especially considering its active scriptorium. By comparing the calligraphy in the Rupertsburg manuscript to that in several Trier ones, Baillet's collaborator de Puniet provides further evidence for a link to Trier, as he finds much similarity in calligraphy between the Rupertsburg manuscript and several of Trier.³⁹

Later writers have also considered the question of the manuscript's birthplace and the role of Hildegard. Adelgundis Führkötter strongly believes that monks prepared the illuminations, while Karen Petersen and J.J. Wilson argue that nuns in Hildegard's abbey prepared the illuminations.⁴⁰ Barbara Newman believes that a nun in Hildegard's house made the illuminations (probably under Hildegard's supervision), while Frances Beer asserts that Hildegard herself might have painted the images.⁴¹ More recently, Mother Placid Dempsey, the illustrator of the 1990 English edition of *Scivias*, reckons that the disparate styles suggest that different artists created the illuminations, and that they might have been designed at different times.⁴² Despite this, Dempsey agrees with Newman that the illuminations were most likely created under Hildegard's direct supervision.⁴³ Finally, Caviness maintains that Hildegard was the 'designer' of the illuminations by connecting her assumed medical condition [viz. migraine] with the *Scivias* illuminations.⁴⁴

I argue that Hildegard directly supervised the illuminations, and agree with Caviness that linking Hildegard's visions to a medical illness supports this hypothesis. A large proportion of the imagery in the *Scivias* illuminations is original, and migraines may be responsible for some of this originality.

Migraines are an extremely personal experience: it would be hard for a non-sufferer to accurately portray – verbally or pictorially – the visual auras that accompany the illness. In order to depict clearly such visual effects in the *Scivias* illuminations, either Hildegard directly supervised their composition, or possibly even painted them herself (barring the unlikely possibility that another migraine-sufferer was responsible for them). There is other evidence for the role Hildegard played in their creation, and to this we now turn.

Transcribing the Visions

In the *Scivias* author portrait (see pl. 11), Hildegard claimed that she was told to “say and write what you see and hear.”⁴⁵ Volmar’s role of fixing Hildegard’s grammar was even confirmed by a vision, which explained his purpose in the collaboration.⁴⁶ Hildegard was adamant that no one, including her secretaries, changed her words;⁴⁷ it is therefore unlikely that she would have relinquished complete control of the pictorial representation of her visions during her lifetime. That said, the question remains regarding the degree of her involvement in the process of creating the illuminations. Both the text and illumination of the *Scivias* author portrait (see pl. 11) provide evidence for Hildegard’s role. Hildegard is shown with a wax tablet receiving her vision through divine inspiration, while Volmar is off on the side listening intently in order to help in transcribing. The main purpose of the *Scivias* author portrait is to establish that Hildegard has the authority to speak and write God’s message. Hildegard could not have written down everything the voice spoke while processing and remembering the visual aspects of shapes and colours. When Hildegard discussed her third visionary book, *Liber divinorum operum* (*Book of the Divine*

Works), she described a vision that took over her entire being: "At a later time I saw a mysterious and wonderful vision so that my inmost core was convulsed and I lost all bodily sensation, as my knowledge was altered to another mode, unknown to myself."⁴⁸ It seems impossible that Hildegard could have continued recording the words from the 'Living Light' while simultaneously imparting to Volmar the visual information. Further, the text provides a description of each illumination. Hildegard described a feeling so intense that it would have been difficult for her simultaneously to express or convey images or words to Volmar. It is highly probable that Volmar was not present during the visions, and instead Hildegard conveyed later on to him the descriptions of her visions. Most likely, Volmar was portrayed in the author portrait to show that he recorded the visions, not necessarily to demonstrate that he was present during the visions.

In the Middle Ages a portrait of an author with wax tablets, such as in *Scivias* (see pl. 11), was common as also illustrated in a well-known image of St. Gregory (see pl. 12).⁴⁹ Both Hildegard and St. Gregory are depicted as recipients of divine inspiration: in Hildegard's case, the divine inspiration is depicted in the form of wavy lines, and in his case in the form of a bird. Both have an assistant portrayed off to the side. This type of portrait mainly served as an iconographic representation of the subject in the act of composing.⁵⁰

Additionally, the 'Living Light' spoke to Hildegard in Latin, and the Latin words can be interpreted in a variety of ways. Hildegard was told "Dic et scribe quae uides et audis."⁵¹ The verb 'scribere' was construed as the transcription of a text, not the composition.⁵² A better translation of 'scribere' would convey the notion of inscribing marks with a stylus on a wax tablet.⁵³ Therefore, 'scribere' included writing, drawing, and designing. In the Middle

Ages, 'dictitare' was used for writing or composing. The verb 'scriptitare' meant transcribing a better copy on parchment. In the Middle Ages, wax tablets were not exclusively used for writing text, but were also used for drawing. A wax tablet consisted of a thin piece of concave wood with wax spread over it.⁵⁴ A stylus was used to write on the wax: it had a metal point on one end for writing and a flat surface used for erasing, or rubbing the wax to make smooth, on the other. According to Adomnán (d. 704), the ninth abbot of Iona, around 700 a pilgrim used a wax tablet to draw a plan of the Holy Sepulchre.⁵⁵ Also, Gerald of Wales (c. 1147-1223), Hildegard's contemporary, believed that an angel showed him the designs on the wax tablets on which were based the drawings in the Irish Gospels of St. Brigit.⁵⁶ Both examples indicate that in the early Middle Ages, wax tablets were used for simple and impermanent drawing. Wax tablets were small and light so that they were portable. For example, the Flemish mystic Jan van Ruusbroec (c.1293-1381) carried a wax tablet, prepared anytime to dictate the words from the Holy Spirit.⁵⁷ It is therefore conceivable that when the 'Living Light' instructed Hildegard: 'scribe'; she obeyed by designing the visual aspect of her experiences on a wax tablet, as indicated through the *Scivias* author portrait.

Sometimes wax tablets were made as diptychs, in which one side was covered with wax while the other was covered with paper.⁵⁸ Such a diptych is depicted in the *Manesse codex* (c. 1320) of Reinmar von Zweter (see pl. 13).⁵⁹ Zweter dictates to a young boy who writes on a wax tablet, and also present is a young woman who writes on parchment. Besides the *Manesse codex*, another example of a wax tablet diptych was the Probianus Diptych (c. 400) from Rome.⁶⁰ The text of *Scivias* does not mention that wax tablets were the medium

chosen for the endeavour; instead, the symbolic representation of the artist with wax tablets was sufficient to identify the medium of composition.

Also important is the execution of the *Scivias* illuminations in relation to the frame: this resembles the shape of a wax tablet. Many of the illuminations have a tall narrow frame, sometimes occupying an entire column of text, such as: Book Three, Vision Ten (see pl. 14), also Book Three, Vision One (see pl. 4a), Book One, Vision One (see pl. 5), and Book One, Vision Two (see pl. 8).⁶¹ Some of the illuminations even turn horizontally across the top or bottom of the page. This style was easy to employ with narrow wax tablets as illustrated in the Book Three, Vision Four (see pl. 15a) illumination. Plus, some of the illuminations have a square design in which two separate images are juxtaposed, such as in *Scivias* Book Three, Vision Eleven (see pl. 2). After the sketches were made the images would have been then transferred onto parchment as wax tablets damage easily. The wax tablets would have provided Hildegard the means to make many compositional sketches as she could have reused the tablets.

There is not a consistent or customary layout of the illuminations throughout *Scivias*. Instead, a variety of designs are used, many of which suggest a narrow wax tablet as the source of the original sketch. In *Scivias* Book One, Vision Six (see pl. 16) the text explains that there are nine armies and that they are shaped in a crown. The crown represents the heavenly sphere as depicted in the form of a circle.⁶² Hildegard's traditional elongated, rectangular frame slices awkwardly into the circular design. Hildegard could have resorted to a square format, in which a better fit would have occurred. A drawback of wax tablets was that they provided limited space for composition.⁶³ This offers further evidence that Hildegard directly supervised the execution of the *Scivias*

illuminations, as she retained the elongated, rectangular frame of a wax tablet for the illumination.

The Inseparability of Text and Illumination

It seems plausible that during the visionary experiences Hildegard created sketches for the foundation of the illuminations, while she repeated the words of the 'Living Light' to Volmar. If this was the case then the illuminations warrant more attention than previously given. Generally, images are viewed as secondary to the text: the pictorial translation of words.⁶⁴ It is easy to overlook and give priority of one form, such as text, over another. However, regarding Hildegard's *Scivias*, Otto Pächt believes that text mediates between image and the final creation, as he refers to it, of the illustration.⁶⁵ Hildegard's text and illuminations are inseparable,⁶⁶ and I agree with Caviness that she created initial sketches of the illuminations and drafts of the text at around the same time.

The *Scivias* illumination Book One, Vision Two (see pl. 8), which uses the tall narrow frame layout, suggests that Hildegard was directly involved in creating the illumination by the unconventional nature of its depiction of a biblical scene, and because elements in it are not deducible from the text such as Adam's lack of genitalia and the different colour of the cloud that symbolises Eve.⁶⁷ This illumination shows Hildegard's radical beliefs through its eccentric imagery. In *Scivias* Book One, Vision Two (see pl. 8) Eve is symbolised as cloud, which unites air and water rather than following the established Aristotelian works on the microcosm, which would unite the elements air and earth.⁶⁸ Eve, shaped like a wing-like cloud, is rising out of Adam's rib. Adam, situated next to fire and earth, is portrayed without genitalia. This reflects

Hildegard's view that sex was unnecessary for procreation before the fall. Furthering this belief, Hildegard placed many stars inside the cloud. The stars represent future generations, and are located inside the cloud because Eve is the mother of the human race. This signifies that Eve does not need Adam to procreate. The stars inside the cloud are echoed by the stars in the firmament, which according to the divine plan are supposed to replace the devil and the fallen angels. Usually, conventional iconography of the Genesis story portrays Eve as lustful, and emphasises how she fell for the Devil's trickery. Instead, Hildegard avoided showing Eve as lustful, by portraying her as a symbol. Since Hildegard's unique views were portrayed in this illumination, it is plausible that she was the designer or at least had direct supervision of this illumination.

Many *Scivias* illuminations also add information which the text lacks, and even occasionally correct the text. There is a silence in the text that is filled in by the illuminations.⁶⁹ When this occurs special attention should be given to the illumination, and even more so to the specific detail in the image. For instance, in *Scivias* Book One, Vision Two (see pl. 8), Hildegard's description of the image and the accompanying text both state explicitly the colour of the wing-like cloud, symbolising Eve, is white.⁷⁰ However, upon inspection one can clearly see that there is a shade of green evident in the cloud, and that it is not purely white as Hildegard previously described. Hildegard related the colour green with 'viriditas,' which refers to life and fertility.⁷¹ Also, 'viriditas' was connected with God as the source of life and the verdure of paradise.⁷² Thus, the mixed colour cloud is suitable for Eve because the colour denotes her fertility as mother of the human race. An important point is Hildegard's silence on the cloud's greenish colour. In other illuminations Hildegard provided details of colours and

shapes. Prime examples are seen in Hildegard's description of the Virtue's attire in *Scivias* Book Three, Visions Three (see pls. 17a and 17b) and Six (see pl. 18).⁷³ Hildegard gave explicit details of the colours of the Virtue's shoes, tunics, cloaks, veils and hair. Further, there is no variation between the text and illuminations. Therefore, the inconsistency of the text and illumination in *Scivias* Book One, Vision Two (see pl. 8) must be intentional. The reason for Hildegard's reticence is unclear, although she may have been unforthcoming about the shade of colour because she did not want it to be misconstrued.

A more intricate interpretation for this silence may reflect Hildegard's beliefs regarding the Cathars and their struggle with the origins of good and evil. Cathars were Christians who believed their Church was supreme and opposed the Catholic Church.⁷⁴ The Cathars believed the Catholic Church was evil with false prophets, and the Church of heretics. Hildegard disagreed with the Cathars' extreme beliefs and preached against them in Cologne around 1163. The Cathars believed that the fallen angel, Lucifer, not God, created the world. This belief originates in the apocalyptic myth of the fight between the angel Michael and the dragon, which embodied evil.⁷⁵ Michael threw the dragon into darkness, and in the descent the dragon took with him one-third of the heavenly stars (souls). Thus, the Cathars believed that souls were trapped inside the body, which was inherently evil.⁷⁶ Orthodox Catholics did not consider the body entirely evil, and differentiated the body from the sinful nature of the flesh. Accordingly, Hildegard described in her vision that the souls (stars) were positioned in a body of light, which was the colour of white. Since Hildegard maintained that the body is not intrinsically sinful, she emphasised that the souls (stars) were not trapped in the body, nor were they in darkness. In fact, the souls inside Eve

shine equally bright as the souls in heaven. It is possible that the text would have been read by others, or even read out loud by Hildegard herself when she preached, while the illumination remained at her monastery. If this were the case, then Hildegard would have strongly asserted her beliefs, even through minute details such as colour, through both text and illumination. Hildegard would have been cognizant of the audience for each format, and would express clearly her beliefs; either she would accommodate the audience or take advantage of the opportunity to voice her own beliefs whether or not they were orthodox in twelfth century society.

Another silence in the text is also found in the illumination of *Scivias* Book One, Vision Two (see pl. 8) and regards the phallic scene of the serpent.⁷⁷ In the illumination the black serpent is seen as an extension coming out of hell, and it spews a black poison on Eve, the wing-like cloud. The accompanying text discusses sexually related issues, such as: chastity, and suitable and inappropriate marital conduct. In the text's description of the illumination, Hildegard does not elaborate on the black poison emitted from the serpent's mouth. In fact, Hildegard virtually avoids giving an explanation of this scene. As discussed earlier, in the text Hildegard was usually candid in providing explanations of specific colours and descriptions of her figures. Further, Hildegard provided explanations of the multi-coloured zones for Synagogue and Ecclesia.⁷⁸ It is unusual for Hildegard, who in other visions directly explains the variety of colours, not to give an interpretation of the black poison.

Again, this silence in the text might very well be deliberate. One interpretation of the black poison is that it is semen.⁷⁹ After the fall sexual desire became a punishment for sin. Hildegard portrays this notion of disorderly lust

through the Devil's act of spewing black poison, or semen, consequently tainting the entire human race. Hildegard may not address this aspect in the text, because her beliefs on sexual desire and sin differ from Augustinian theory. Augustine asserted that the fall of humanity happened because Eve already had in her mind a desire for her own power.⁸⁰ The punishment for men focused on the guilty enjoyment of their member. The punishment for women was the pain of childbirth; not the guilty enjoyment that men experienced. Later, theologians attempted to compensate the prejudice against men by placing all the lust and temptation on women. Hildegard did not believe that sexual desire was evil or a punishment by God.⁸¹ She did not want to directly disagree with Augustinian theory, which her male contemporaries ardently followed as indicated by the misogyny in the church during her period. However, Hildegard most likely wanted to clear the guilt associated with Eve, and so emphasised the Devil's role of deceiving Eve, which was based on his jealous motives of Eve's motherhood. When the Devil breathes poison (semen) on Eve, Hildegard depicted Eve as becoming infected. Thus, when Eve passes the disease on to Adam semen became poisonous, which happened after the fall.⁸² Additionally, Hildegard redeemed Eve, or women, through her beliefs that semen was poisonous until "it was neutralised by the benign elements of the woman's womb."⁸³ Thus, Eve may be susceptible to temptation, but in turn receives redemption.

The Question of Authorship

In conclusion, when discussing the relationship between Hildegard and the *Scivias* illuminations there are three possibilities regarding her involvement: firstly, Hildegard was the artist of the *Scivias* illuminations; or secondly,

Hildegard directly supervised the illumination process; or thirdly, the *Scivias* illuminations were drawn by unknown artists who were not under the direct supervision of Hildegard, but instead used the text as a guide to composition. The first possibility is rejected because if Hildegard was the artist then her contemporary biographers would have mentioned this fact in her *Vita*. The artist of the *Scivias* illuminations most likely was not formally trained, as seen through the awkward layout of frame and circular design (see pl. 16), but had a certain degree of skill because the colours and designs on the whole are fairly refined and not crude. If Hildegard had been the artist, she would have needed some type of experience to execute such fairly refined illuminations, which her background is unlikely to have provided. Also, the third choice is rejected, because the illuminations are not always consistent with the text, but add information not in the text, some of which is highly particularised to the life and experiences of Hildegard herself. Barbara Newman, in addressing the complex issue of Hildegard as artist, states:

Recent literature has presented the abbess herself as painter, but there is no medieval evidence to support this hypothesis, and if it were true both Hildegard and her biographers would surely have mentioned such a notable achievement. Given the peculiarities of the work, however, it seems likely that the artist (or artists) lacked formal training and worked under the visionary's personal supervision. The painter may have been a gifted Rupertsberg nun, or perhaps a monk from St. Disibod or another monastery closely associated with Hildegard.⁸⁴

Thus the most plausible solution is that Hildegard directly supervised the *Scivias* illuminations. Their idiosyncrasies, including the detailed depiction of the visual auras that may have accompanied Hildegard's supposed illness, lend strength to this conclusion.

Differences between a later extant manuscript of the *Scivias* – the Salem *Scivias* – and the Rupertsburg manuscript allow one to gauge the effect of Hildegard's supervision on the latter: the Salem manuscript was a later version, most likely completed after Hildegard's death.⁸⁵ The appearance of the two manuscripts is strikingly different: in comparison to the *de luxe* Rupertsburg *Scivias*, the Salem manuscript (see pls. 19 and 20) pales, suggesting that more time, effort and resources went into the former.⁸⁶ The juxtaposition of the illuminations from the Salem *Scivias* (see pl. 19) and the Rupertsberg *Scivias* (pls. 4a and 4b) of Book Three, Vision One of Christ enthroned with a multitude of fallen stars reveals clearly the great differences between the manuscripts. The brilliant colours of the blue and green waves quenching the blackened stars in the Rupertsburg miniature give a much more dynamic and powerful interpretation to this vision.⁸⁷ Much of Hildegard's idiosyncrasy relates to her use of powerful feminine imagery, and this idiosyncrasy is far more visible in the Rupertsburg manuscript: in contrast, the Salem illuminations of Hildegard's text are far more conventional. As Caviness relates:

Many of the illustrations to the visions that were not executed under her direction [including those of the Salem manuscript] appear to have been shaped by a familiar repertory of images, some from Apocalyptic illustration, others from cosmological diagrams. The illustrations to the earlier lost Rupertsburg codex of the *Scivias*, however, are highly original in composition and imagery, and a good case can be made that they were controlled by Hildegard. When adaptations from standard iconographies occur, they often provide a gender corrective, for instance where Synagogue appropriates the form usually given to Abraham, subverting patriarchy; and Ecclesia is a fecund and all-embracing mother.⁸⁸

The feminine imagery found in the Rupertsburg illuminations certainly offer further evidence for Hildegard playing a large part in the painting process besides providing the text. Indeed, the use of feminine imagery in the manuscript is

striking, and in the following chapter we look at it closely, showing the reader the influence of Hildegard's 'feminine spirituality' on the *Scivias*.

¹ Chapter one, 13, no. 45.

² Feiss, 1995, 32.

³ Feiss, 1995, 55-56, and Gies and Gies, 1978, 78.

⁴ Beer, 1992, 28.

⁵ For Elisabeth of Schönau's visionary experience as a hallucination, see Flanagan, 1998b, 188-90.

⁶ Flanagan, 1998b, 189.

⁷ Flanagan, 1998b, 189.

⁸ Flanagan, 1998b, 190.

⁹ Flanagan, 1998b, 190.

¹⁰ There is an exception regarding Hildegard's discussion of her third visionary book 'see below: 11, no. 38' where Hildegard appears to have been overwhelmed.

¹¹ Such an explanation is too reductive to offer a full explanation for her visions. Her illness might have provided material for her visions, but just how Hildegard interpreted what she saw clearly depends on her background, personality, and the wider context of the age in which she lived.

¹² For Hildegard's illnesses linked with migraines, see Singer, 1958, 230-4, and Caviness, 2001a, section VII, 84-7; and for background of migraines, see Sacks, 1992.

¹³ Singer, 1958, 232.

¹⁴ Translated from Hart and Bishop, 1990, 309. Original Latin text from Führkötter and Carlevaris, 1978, 328 is as follows: "Vidi etiam tunc de secreto eiusdem sedentis in throno stellam magnam multi splendoris ac decoris prodire, et cum ea plurimum multitudinem candentium scintillarum quae cum eadem stella omnes confluentes ad austrum inspiciebant ipsum sedentem in throno quasi alienum, seque ab eo auertentes magis inhiabant ad aquilonem quam eum inspicere uellent. Sed statim in ipsa auersione inspectionis suae ones exstinctae sunt, sic uersae in nigredinem carbonu."

¹⁵ For phosphenes, see Sacks, 1992, 55-6.

¹⁶ Sacks, 1992, 55.

¹⁷ Caviness, 2001a, section VII, 85.

¹⁸ For migraine terminology, see Sacks, 1992, 56.

¹⁹ For fortification spectra, see Sacks, 1992, 56, 299-301.

²⁰ For scotomas, see Singer, 1958, 23-4, and Sacks, 1992, 56-64.

²¹ Translated from Hart and Bishop, 1990, 73. Original Latin text from Führkötter and Carlevaris, 1978, 13 is as follows: "maximam multitudinem uiuentium lampadarum multam claritatem habentium, quae igneum fulgorem accipientes ita serenissimum splendorem adeptae sunt. Et ecce lacus multae latitudinis et profunditatis apparuit, os uelut os putei habens et igneum fumum cum multo foetore emittens, de quo etiam taeterrima nebula se extendens quasi uenam uisum deceptibilem habentem tetigit...Quo facto lucidissimus splendor eandem regionem circumdedit, et ita omnia elementa mundi, quae prius in magna quiete constiterant, in maximam inquietudinem uersa horribiles terrores ostenderunt."

²² Translated from Hart and Bishop, 1990, 74. Original Latin text from Führkötter and Carlevaris, 1978, 15 is as follows: "zelus Domini se extendens in ignea nigredine illum cum omni comitatu suo deiecit, ita quod ipsi feruidi contra fulgorem et nigri contra serenitatem quam habuerant effecti sunt."

²³ For second scotoma, see Sacks, 1992, 301.

²⁴ Sacks, 1992, 301.

²⁵ Sur, 1993, 116: The artist(s) for the *Scivias* illuminations customarily reserved the colour of gold for deities.

²⁶ Feiss, 1995, 49, and Silvas, 1998, 163.

²⁷ Sacks, 1992, 18.

²⁸ Translated from Hart and Bishop, 1990, 67. Original Latin text from Führkötter and Carlevaris, 1978, 7 is as follows: "Vidi quasi montem magnum ferreum colorem habentem, et super ipsum quendam tantae claritatis sedentem, ut claritas ipsius uisum meum reuerberaret, de

quo ab utraque parte sui lenis umbra uelut ala mirae latitudinis et longitudinis extendebatur...super cuius caput tanta claritas de eodem super montem ipsum sedente descendit ut faciem eius intueri non possem. Sed ab eodem qui super montem illum sedebat multae uiuentes scintillae exierunt.”

²⁹ Maddocks, 2001, 208.

³⁰ Maxwell and Tschudin, 1990. See also Hardy, 1979.

³¹ See *The Varieties of Religious Experience* by William James (New York, 1902).

³² Maxwell and Tschudin, 1990, 17-18.

³³ *Ibid.* 28.

³⁴ *Ibid.* 52-53.

³⁵ *Ibid.* 137.

³⁶ *Ibid.* 30.

³⁷ *Ibid.* 91.

³⁸ *Ibid.* 75.

³⁹ Baillet, 1912, 133-139. Baillet considers that several hands were involved in painting the miniatures: ‘La multiplicité des collaborateurs rendra compte de toutes les divergences de détail, et l’unité de maître sera nécessaire pour expliquer les similitudes que l’on remarque dans l’allure, dans les procédés, dans l’iconographie’ (1912, 127). Of course, if Hildegard was acting as a supervisor, that would explain such similarities in iconography despite the different hands at work.

⁴⁰ Führkötter and Carlevaris, 1978, 9-10, and Petersen and Wilson, 1976, 15.

⁴¹ Newman, 1987, 17-18, and Beer, 1992, 30.

⁴² Hart and Bishop, 1990, vi.

⁴³ Hart and Bishop, 1990, vi.

⁴⁴ Caviness, 2001a, section VII, 85-86.

⁴⁵ Translated from Hart and Bishop, 1990, 60. Original Latin text from Führkötter and Carlevaris, 1978, 3 is as follows: “Dic et scribe quae uides et audis.”

⁴⁶ See chapter one, 18, no. 68.

⁴⁷ See chapter five, 16, no. 60.

⁴⁸ Flanagan, 1998b, 135.

⁴⁹ Pl. 12 from Mayr-Harting, 1991, part I, 30, fig. 13: Frontispiece to Gregory’s Letters, Gregory Master or *Registrum Gregorii*, c. 983-84. Trier, Stadtbibliothek, MS 171/1626.

⁵⁰ Rouse and Rouse, 1989, 179-180.

⁵¹ Führkötter and Carlevaris, 1978, 3.

⁵² Caviness, 2001a, section VII, 89.

⁵³ For translations of Latin words, see Caviness, 2001a, section VII, 89.

⁵⁴ For wax tablets, see Rouse and Rouse, 1989, 175.

⁵⁵ Alexander, 1992, 157: “has...figuras...juxta exemplar quod mihi...sanctus Arculfus in paginola figuravit cerata depinximus.”

⁵⁶ Alexander, 1992, 157: “Figuram quandam tabulae quam manu praeferebat impressam...Eandem figuram aliasque multas.”

⁵⁷ Rouse and Rouse, 1989, 180.

⁵⁸ Rouse and Rouse, 1989, 176: In the Middle Ages wax was the earliest medium for school children to practice writing. A diptych of wax and paper was useful for school children learning to write, in which one side they could copy the text and the other side do the exercise, such as practice making the letters.

⁵⁹ Pl. 13 from Rouse and Rouse, 1989, vol. 9, 182, fig. 3: *Manesse Codex*, c. 1320. Heidelberg, Universitätsbibliothek MS. Germ 848.

⁶⁰ Pächt, 1986, 14-15.

⁶¹ Caviness, 2001a, section VII, 90-1.

⁶² Hart and Bishop, 1990, 139.

⁶³ Rouse and Rouse, 1989, 187.

⁶⁴ Camille, 1985, 26, and Caviness, 2001a, section VII, 71. See Schapiro, 1996, for a semiotic approach to the pictorial representation of texts.

⁶⁵ Caviness, 2001a, section VII, 78.

⁶⁶ For text and image inseparability, see Caviness, 2001a, sections VII and VIII.

⁶⁷ The text describes the colour of Eve’s cloud as white, while in the illumination the colour is greenish-white.

⁶⁸ Caviness, 2001a, section VII, 84.

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- ⁶⁹ For silence in text, see Caviness, 2001a, section VII.
- ⁷⁰ Hart and Bishop, 1990, 73, 77.
- ⁷¹ Garber, 1998, 111.
- ⁷² Garber, 1998, 111.
- ⁷³ Hart and Bishop, 1990, 343-4, 389.
- ⁷⁴ For Catharism, see Brenon, 1998, 114-32, and Garber, 1998, 112.
- ⁷⁵ Brenon, 1998, 119.
- ⁷⁶ Brenon, 1998, 119, and Garber, 1998, 112.
- ⁷⁷ For silence in text of Adam and Eve scene, see Garber, 1998, 113-5.
- ⁷⁸ Hart and Bishop, 1990, 132-36, 199-234.
- ⁷⁹ Garber, 1998, 114-5.
- ⁸⁰ For Augustine's beliefs, see Newman, 1987, 108-9.
- ⁸¹ Newman, 1987, 112.
- ⁸² Newman, 1987, 116.
- ⁸³ Garber, 1998, 114, 127-28, no. 22. "At that time when Adam transgressed, the strength of man in his genital member was changed into a poisonous foam." (Nam in transgressio Adae fortitudo viri in genitali membro versus est in venonosam spumam): Causae et Curae 60. The black colour of the semen contrasts the actual colour of semen, however, semen is symbolically black to show that it is poisonous.
- ⁸⁴ Hart and Bishop, 1990, 25.
- ⁸⁵ See Caviness, 2001a, section VII.
- ⁸⁶ Pls. 19 and 20 from Caviness, 2001a, section VII: for pl. 19, fig. 3: Salem *Scivias*, c. 1200, Heidelberg, Universitätsbibliothek Cod. Salem X, 16, f. 111; for pl. 20, fig. 23: Salem *Scivias*, c. 1200, Heidelberg, Universitätsbibliothek Cod. Salem X, 16, f. 176.
- ⁸⁷ See Caviness, 2001a, section VII, 73. She also compares the *Scivias* illuminations with one from the Bamberg Apocalypse, showing how the Salem *Scivias* illumination is closer to the conventionality of the Bamberg illumination.
- ⁸⁸ Caviness, 2001a, section IV, 6.

Chapter Three: Feminine Spirituality and Sexuality in the *Scivias*

This chapter focuses on the powerful feminine imagery – much of it sexual – to be found in *Scivias*. Through such imagery, Hildegard emphasised the importance of female characters – such as Eve, Mary, Synagoga, and Ecclesia – and female attributes within the religious sphere. Hildegard never claimed that women were more powerful than men, nor did she advocate equality of the sexes: she was not advocating a feminist theology.¹ She reckoned that men and women both have strengths and weaknesses, albeit of different kinds. Hildegard agreed with the conventional views of the time that men are physically stronger, while women are passive and more flexible with their energies.² However, her feminine spirituality departed from the norms of the twelfth century, where women aspired for validation in a patriarchal society. She desired to present the female holistically, to show that while women were in some sense frail, they were the ones with the power to redeem the church in an age of an effete clergy.³ In this chapter, before looking at the highly sexual nature of much of her imagery, I first demonstrate how Hildegard's antagonistic views to the male clergy helps us understand her feminine spirituality, a spirituality reflected in the *Scivias* illuminations.

Womanish Men

Hildegard's *Scivias* constituted a powerful attack against the male clergy's misconduct within the church, but not the hierarchical power structure itself.⁴ Hildegard stated in her *Vita* that ecclesiastical leaders began to fail in their positions around the time of her birth: "For by the 1100th year after the incarnation of Christ, the teaching of the Apostles and ardent justice which he

had established in Christian and spiritual people began to grow slack and become tentative.”⁵ Hildegard thought men had become womanish, feeble, and lax in religious matters. She believed that the male clergy had become engrossed in an easy life and bodily pleasures, so making them effete. Additionally, ecclesiastical leaders’ devotion for the Lord’s work had become weak and half-hearted. As a result of their apathy, their message to others became sterile, distorted, and corrupt. Consequently, some were losing trust in the Church and losing faith. Hildegard referred to her era as ‘womanish’ many times, such as in the introduction of a letter (c.1152) to Hillinus, the Archbishop of Trier:

Wisdom cries out, saying: The present time is a squalid, womanish time...Now, therefore, O shepherd, hear what the justice of God has in store for you, because the grace of God has not put you in office in vain. The fact is, however, that when you do perform good works, you become tired all too quickly, and when you are called to the symphony, so that you pause to pray, you immediately dry up.⁶

In the last paragraph of a letter to the prelates at Mainz (c. 1178-79) she stated: “This time is a womanish time, because the dispensation of God’s justice is weak. But the strength of God’s justice is exerting itself, a female warrior battling against injustice, so that it might fall defeated.”⁷ Hildegard identified with this female warrior. In the same letter Hildegard noted that this corrupt time would pass:

But, alas, this present time is neither cold nor hot; it is squalid. After this, a time will come which will bring forth manly strength in the midst of great dangers, fear, injustice, and ferocity. At that time, the error of errors will blow like the four winds which inundate the world with slander amidst great dangers.⁸

In fact, God made woman virile to return the Church to its previous state, and chose Hildegard to take on an authoritative role, because of the male clergy’s dereliction of duty. Therefore, Hildegard regarded female

authority as a restoration of the proper social order, not as a challenge to male hierarchy.

Perfection in Weakness

Hildegard voiced the prevalent view of her time of women's inferiority.⁹ In the twelfth century women were supposed to be submissive, obedient, and acquiescent. In the Middle Ages religious writers, both male and female, commonly referred to themselves as 'weak women.'¹⁰ This familiar topos of humility involved a negative portrayal of women. When directed towards women, this remark was used to undermine their authority and belittle their works.¹¹ Regarding feminine weakness, Hildegard adhered to the opinion of St. Paul expressed in his first letter to the Corinthians: "God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise, God chose what is weak in the world, even things that are not, to bring to nothing things that are, so that no human being might boast in the presence of God."¹² Such a notion allowed Hildegard to feel justified in dispensing God's knowledge despite being a 'weak woman'.¹³ Also, Hildegard probably identified with the Beatitude, "Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the Earth."¹⁴ Eventually, Hildegard saw that women's weakness was, paradoxically, an asset. Moreover, she compensated for her era's poor regard for women by highlighting the worth in her gender, as seen in the *Scivias* illuminations.¹⁵

The *Scivias* illuminations are bold, courageous, and confident when projecting feminine imagery, displaying powerful images of female allegorical figures such as Synagogue and Ecclesia (see pls. 21, 22, 23). Hildegard also developed radical notions expressed in the *Scivias* illuminations, and a source of

inspiration for these illuminations was the theme of the Incarnation. Hildegard's feminine imagery contradicts the twelfth century topos of 'weak woman', which Hildegard altered to 'poor little woman.'¹⁶ Her views on the role of women in the Church are presented in the *Scivias* illuminations through female figures and powerful imagery like the cosmic egg. I first look at the personifications of Synagoga and Ecclesia.

Synagoga and Ecclesia

In Book One, Vision Five (see pl. 21) Synagoga, also known as Sapientia (Wisdom), carries Abraham and Moses, in her bosom:

And in her heart stands Abraham; for he was the beginning of circumcision in the Synagogue; and in her breast Moses; for he brought the divine Law into human hearts; and in her womb the rest of the prophets; that is, they stand in that tradition that was given them by God as observers of the divine precepts...they displayed the miracles of their prophecies by marvellous symbols and with great wonder waited for the noble beauty of the new Bride.¹⁷

Synagoga, like the cosmic egg (discussed below), embodies continuity and wholeness by linking both the Old and New Testament Scriptures. The bottom half of Synagoga is dark (see pl. 21), signifying the mistakes of the Jews, while the upper half is light, representing the coming of Christ and the process of Salvation. The illumination of Synagoga represents the transformation of the Scriptures and the Church.

In the Middle Ages, Synagoga was referred to as the mother and enemy of Ecclesia (Church).¹⁸ As Honorius of Autun (Augustodunensis) (c. 1085- 1145/56) pointed out in his commentary on the *Song of Songs*, the reason why Christ refers to Ecclesia as his sister was because both have

God as their Father and Synagoga as their mother. Likewise, Hildegard described Synagoga's maternal role as,

Synagogue...is the mother of the Incarnation of the Son of God. From the time her children began to be born until their full strength she foresaw in the shadows the secrets of God, but did not fully reveal them. For she was not the glowing dawn who speaks openly, but gazed on the latter from afar with great admiration...For it is she who blooms with the resplendent virtues given her by the Son of God and flows with brooks of Scripture.¹⁹

Synagoga was mother of the church, because she conceived the Apostles, who developed the church through the Gospel. The antipathy between Christians and Jews affected the symbol as reflected through differing viewpoints of the birth of Christ. According to Rupert of Deutz (c. 1070-1129), Ecclesia bore Christ in her womb, through Abraham's faith, and was present during His passion and resurrection.²⁰ On the contrary, Saint Peter Chrysologus (c. 406-50) believed that Synagoga conceived Christ, and later was the mother-in-law of Christ's bride, Ecclesia.²¹

Ecclesia (see pls. 22 and 23) serves as an important model in Christianity through her virginity and role as maternal figure of the Christian church. Ecclesia's crown is most likely symbolic of a mother and fertility goddess.²² Through her virginity she fulfils the noble roles of bride of Christ and mother of Christians, in which humanity can identify with both these attributes.²³ Ecclesia can be seen as the second Eve, analogous to Mary. Just as Eve was born from the side of man, Adam, similarly Ecclesia was born from Christ, when he was pierced in his side on the Cross. Another instance in which Ecclesia is paralleled to Mary concerns the symbolic imagery of location. Hildegard's imagery associates Mary with Paradise, while linking Ecclesia with the apocalyptic

city.²⁴ Both locations are considered feminine, and both relate to different stages of Christianity. Mary and Ecclesia are the first and the last, the Alpha and Omega of salvation.²⁵ For Hildegard, Ecclesia was a conduit for the expression of her views towards the male clergy's apathy in religious affairs.

The Rivalry of Synagoga and Ecclesia

The rivalry between Synagoga and Ecclesia was a popular theme in art from the ninth century onwards. For instance, the Crucifixion with Synagoga and Ecclesia each on one side of Christ is seen in the Paten of chalice (c. 1170) from Lower Saxony (see pl. 24), and in the Crucifixion from the *Essen Missal* (c.1000) (see pl. 25).²⁶ In both illustrations Ecclesia is on the right of Christ, and Synagoga on the left. In the Paten (see pl. 24), Synagoga, head turned down, is blindfolded, and in the *Essen Missal* (see pl. 25) her head is turned down and her eyes closed. In both illustrations Ecclesia holds a staff in one hand and a chalice to catch Christ's blood in the other.

In *Scivias* Book Two, Vision Six (see pl. 26), this motif differs noticeably. In the Crucifixion scene Synagoga is not included on the other side of Christ. Instead, replacing the figure of Synagoga is a banner with the voice from Heaven saying to Christ, "May she, O Son, be your Bride for the restoration of My people; may she be a mother to them, regenerating souls through the salvation of the Spirit and water."²⁷ The illumination purposefully ignores the presence of Synagoga, who in the twelfth century was commonly positioned opposite Ecclesia in the

Crucifixion scene. Further, the inscription does not refer to Synagoga. Instead, the inscription emphasises Ecclesia's new role as the mother Church of the people and the importance of her continuity in the future survival of Christ's legacy.

In plate 26, the upper portion contains the aforementioned Crucifixion scene. In the lower portion, the remembrance of the Crucifixion is acted out with the main focus on an altar and chalice and with Christ as the divine source. In this illumination a woman appears next to the altar, as if in the role of a priest, although Hildegard was clearly not suggesting that a woman take up this role in the church. In fact, Hildegard strongly opposed women as priests, as she stated in the accompanying text of this illumination:

A woman conceives a child not by herself but through a man, as the ground is plowed, not by itself but by a farmer. Therefore, just as the earth cannot plow itself, a woman must not be a priest and do the work of consecrating the body and blood of My Son; though she can sing the praise of her Creator, as the earth can receive rain to water its fruits.²⁸

Hildegard's reasoning does not pertain to the familiar medieval reasoning of the inferiority of women to men. She paralleled feminine imagery of the earth and the Church to show the reader her message (see pl. 27).²⁹ First, Hildegard saw the earth as feminine, emphasising the maternal and fertile aspects that yielded a fruitful harvest, such as Adam and Eve. The link between earth and man connects fertility with the soul.³⁰ Hildegard went on to link the earth with woman: "And as the earth brings forth all fruits, so in Woman the fruit of all good works is perfected."³¹ Since the earth and woman was analogous, similarly the Church was compared to the earth. Just as the earth needs a farmer to plough a field to produce fruit, or a

woman needs a spouse to procreate, the Church needs the attention of another to produce the fruit to perfection.³² In order to bring forth fruit, Ecclesia's role was like that of the Virgin Mary, in that the Holy Spirit worked God's mystery through a virgin, as Hildegard wrote:

And thus the Church is the virginal mother of all Christians, since by the mystery of the Holy Spirit she conceives and bears them, offering them to God so that they are called the children of God. And as the Holy Spirit overshadowed the Blessed Mother, so that she miraculously conceived and painlessly bore the Son of God and yet remained a virgin, so does the Holy Spirit illumine the Church, happy mother of believers, so that without any corruption she conceives and bears children naturally, yet remains a virgin.³³

In this role, Ecclesia's virginity, maternity, and fruitfulness, by the power of the Holy Spirit, are all emphasised.

With this vivid analogy, Hildegard showed that it was essential to personify Ecclesia as a female, as the bride of Christ, not just because of the Latin gender of the word Ecclesia, but also because of her feminine role. On this subject, Hildegard wrote that through this union Ecclesia would become fruitful:

As a bride, subjected to her bridegroom in her offering of subordination and obedience, receives from him a gift of fertility and a pact of love for procreating children, and educates them as to their inheritance. So too the Church, joined to the Son of God in the exercise of humility and charity, receives from Him the regeneration of the Spirit and water to save souls and restore life, and sends those souls to Heaven.³⁴

Regarding the previous passage and the accompanying illumination (see pl. 26), the virgin Church receives the Eucharist (Christ), by the power of the Holy Spirit, with the priest's word. Returning to Hildegard's views on the ordination of women, she was adamant that only men be admitted to the priestly office, and

therefore, Ecclesia should be female. In the heavenly bridegroom, Ecclesia shares in the priesthood and all the fruitful abundances it yields.

The Cosmic Egg: Introduction

In *Scivias*, Hildegard envisioned the universe as an egg, and although this representation was unusual for her time, some medieval writers were familiar with the association.³⁵ The cosmic egg, featured in Book One, Vision Three (see pl. 28), is a symbolic image that originates from Egypt and India, and has Greek and Druidic derivatives. Dronke speaks thus of its varied use by classical and medieval writers:

Both among the ancient Latin texts that transmitted the image to the Middle Ages, and among the medieval texts themselves, we find a spectrum of uses that ranges from the merest suspicion of a *similitudo*, among authors who in fact believed the universe to be round not oval, to a heady cosmological *fabula*, sustained and rich in evocative meanings.³⁶

Hildegard associated a goddess with the conception of the universal, or golden, egg.³⁷ For her, the shape of the egg relates directly to the notion of the female as the source of life. In *Scivias*, the cosmic egg is composed of a layering of concentric ovals; each oval is unique in itself and comprises different elements. Hildegard discussed the four elements of the cosmos: earth, air, fire and water. She purposely labelled air and water as feminine, and earth and fire as masculine.³⁸ In the beginning of Hildegard's vision, she described:

After this I saw a vast instrument, round and shadowed, in the shape of an egg, small at the top, large in the middle and narrowed at the bottom; outside it, surrounding its circumference, there was a bright fire with, as it were, a shadowy zone under it. And in that fire there was a globe of sparkling flame so great that the whole instrument was illuminated by it, over which three little torches so great were arranged in such a way that by their fire they held up the globe lest if

fall...and from the zone beneath it rushed forth another blast with its own whirlwinds, which diffused themselves hither and thither throughout the instrument. In that zone, too, there was a dark fire of such great horror that I could not look at it, whose force shook the whole zone, full of thunder, tempest and exceedingly sharp stones both large and small.³⁹

After the dark layer Hildegard finds an area of pure ether that contains star-like spheres, and a circular area of moisture with both areas made up of the elements of air and water. At the centre of the cosmic egg is a dry, sandy globe, which contains a large mountain.

The bright and colourful illumination (see pl. 28) of the cosmic egg holds deep religious and scientific undertones that are represented through the concentric ovals, the various zones, and their constituents.⁴⁰ The outer layer represents God, burning and purifying his creation through fire. The red globe, or the sun, signifies Christ who gives light to all creatures with his glory.⁴¹ The three torches above the red globe and the additional two torches below are planets: Saturn, Jupiter, Mars, Venus, and Mercury.⁴² The moon, positioned below the sun and the torches symbolises the Church, and the stars are the people.⁴³ The whirlwinds suggest that God's truth and justice unfold over all creation, while the dark zone symbolises the Devil's anger. The shadowy zone contains a dark fire, thunderstorms, and sharp stones; these elements bring to mind Cain's murder of Abel, an act with greed and callousness at its core. The pure ether symbolises tranquillity of faith, and the elements of moist air and wind are a sign of faith and the power of baptism. The mountain within the dry, sandy globe divides light from dark, implying that the Devil cannot taint the joy of salvation. The cosmic egg signifies the unity and wholeness of creation: the egg contains the forces of good and evil, harmony and disorder, and creation. These forces balance each other and make the universe complete. In the relation

of man to the cosmos, Hildegard believed that “God has arranged all things in the world in consideration of everything else.”⁴⁴ The interconnectedness of all the components of cosmos creates and continually renews the whole universe. As long as creation endures, evil will be present. In the centre of all things, however, a mountain divides good and evil, and the rising sun in the East (Christ) will overcome evil in the end. The cosmic egg symbolises the mystery of creation and the mystery of the Incarnation. The Incarnation, carried out through a woman, is represented in an abstract fashion in the cosmic egg.

Dronke compares thus Hildegard’s dynamic descriptions of the cosmic egg with those of Milo and Abelard, two other twelfth century cosmologists:

Where the other twelfth-century cosmologists had presented the world-egg schematically – only Milo evoking the actions of the cosmic marriage taking place within it – Hildegard presents a turbulent drama of the cosmic processes: within the egg all is dynamic, there is a ceaseless interpenetration of creative and destructive forces... This egg does not, like Abelard’s, hatch into a fully formed universe: it *is* the universe in flux, exposed to the never-ending interplay of divine and daemonic forces.⁴⁵

Christ as Clitoris?

This illumination (see pl. 28) suggests that all things are contained within the egg. As the egg is symbolically associated with the female, in essence creation derives from God through the female. The cosmic egg symbolises the origin of life, with the female as the catalyst. According to Pächt, the inner zone, which contains the dark strip and pure ether, forms a “mandorla-shaped oval.”⁴⁶ Technically speaking, an egg is an ovoid that is larger at one end, while a mandorla is symmetric on both ends. The word *mandala*, in Latin – from which mandorla is derived – means ‘almond’, which was a maternity charm and one of the symbols of the female genitalia.⁴⁷ Therefore, following Pächt, one can see

that the mandorla within the egg visually reflects the female genitalia. In the centre of the cosmic egg is a globe containing a large mountain that is surrounded by air and water, giving moisture to the egg. Marilyn Mumford argues that this large mountain separating dark from light closely resembles the clitoris; on this point she seems mistaken.⁴⁸

While the cosmic egg (see pl. 28) resembles female genitalia, it seems more likely that what Hildegard calls the 'sparkling globe', which is above the shadowy zone, represents the clitoris, rather than the mountain. Hildegard referred to the Son of God as the 'sparkling globe' or the sun:

And in that fire there is a globe of sparkling flame, so great that the whole instrument is illuminated by it, which in the splendour of its brightness shows that within God the Father is His ineffable Only-Begotten, the sun of justice with the brilliance of burning charity, of such great glory that every creature is illumined by the brightness of His light.⁴⁹

Further in her *Causae et Curae*, Hildegard described women's sexual drive thus, "pleasure in a woman...comparable to the sun, which gently, calmly, and continuously spreads the earth with its heat, so that it may bring forth fruit."⁵⁰ In this reading, the main pleasure zone in a woman, the clitoris, feels a pleasure 'so great' that the entire body is consumed with burning heat and glory. Just as the sun and the Son of God bring life, warmth and heat, and burn with the brightest light, so these same qualities are present in sexual intercourse. The sun brings life by emitting light and heat, the Son of God gives us life through the Resurrection, and similarly, sexual intercourse brings life, procreation, to the world.

A Brief Cultural History of the Clitoris

Hildegard was no doubt well aware of the sensitivity and pleasure associated with the clitoris, as shown by the previous illumination; although she most likely did not call this organ by the name we know it today.⁵¹ Instead, Hildegard indirectly referred to the clitoris through symbolic imagery, such as the sun. Medieval society was aware of this organ, although due to the confusion and mystery surrounding the female genitalia, this organ was known by various names throughout the Middle Ages. The word clitoris (κλειτορίς) is derived from the Greek κλείς, which refers to a key.⁵² The word κλειτορίς means 'the touch' and 'gem.'⁵³ In the Middle Ages, specifically female organs were explained through comparison with male equivalents; a detailed description of the organs appearance or function was not given.⁵⁴ For example, the penis was equivalent to the cervix of the uterus, thus female sensitivity was solely vaginal. Description of the female anatomy loosely corresponded to that of the male anatomy, with the sole function of the female genitalia focusing on reproduction. In the *De Usu Partium* (second century), Galen's narration of the female genitalia discussed body parts in terms of their protective function:

As for the outgrowths of skin at the ends of the two pudenda, in woman they [the labia majora and minora] were formed for the sake of ornament and are set in front as a covering to keep the uteri from being chilled; in man it was impossible not to have them at all... and besides, they [the prepuce] serve as an ornament. The part called nympha [the clitoris] gives the same sort of protection to the uteri that the uvulva gives to the pharynx; for it covers the orifice of their neck by coming down into the female pendulum and keeps it from being chilled.⁵⁵

It proved difficult to describe this body part by finding a corresponding organ of the male anatomy. Therefore, it gathered numerous names, such as *bazr*, *badedera*, *tentigo*, *batharum*, and *landica*.⁵⁶ Also, due to the confusion and mystery that surrounded the female anatomy some men, such as ‘Ali ibn al-‘Abbas (d. between 982 – 995), a medical doctor, even confused this organ with the *labia minora*. However, the mystery of the clitoris was not an obstacle for all medieval medics. For instance in as-Samau’al ibn Yahyâ’s (d. 1180) *Book of Conversation with Friends on the Intimate Relations Between Lovers in the Domain of the Science of Sexuality*, he distinguished between a vaginal orgasm and clitoral pleasure in regard to lesbianism.⁵⁷ Although this and other sources indicate that knowledge of the location, sensitivity, and even pleasure associated with the clitoris did exist in the Middle Ages, such sources were often overlooked. This was possibly due to the difficulties in the process of translation (relatively few people could read Greek and Arabic); or perhaps it was willingly ignored, as it was not associated with reproduction.⁵⁸

Winds of Desire in the Cosmic Egg

I agree with Mumford that the cosmic egg is suggestive of an orgasm. When Hildegard discussed the whirlwinds in the text accompanying the illumination of the cosmic egg (see pl. 28), her symbolic narration of winds of desire and pleasure from the later book *Causae et Curae* is brought to mind. Hildegard believed that in both sexes the winds of desire originated in the marrow (*medulla*):

The blood vessels that are in the liver and the stomach of the male meet in his sexual organs. As the storm of desire leaves man’s marrow, it descends into his loins and arouses a foretaste of desire in

the blood...Like a ship in high seas that ascends the rivers as a result of strong storm winds, and becomes so endangered that occasionally it can scarcely maintain itself, so also, only with difficulty, can man's nature be restrained and mastered in the storm of desire.⁵⁹

Additionally, Hildegard discussed the winds of pleasure in a woman and the combination of these winds in regard to their final place:

However, when the wind of desire comes out from the marrow of the woman, it enters her womb which is fastened at the navel and arouses the woman's blood to desire. Since the womb possesses a large and so to speak accessible room in the region of the woman's navel, this wind spreads out in her stomach.⁶⁰

It is evident that Hildegard associated wind with sexual desires and pleasures, thus labelling this notion the winds of desire. In the text accompanying the cosmic egg, Hildegard revealed four groups of whirlwinds. In the third group of whirlwinds Hildegard described the winds in the purest ether:

Therefore also from the ether a blast comes forth with its whirlwinds, which spreads itself everywhere throughout the instrument; for from the unity of faith there comes forth to help humanity a strong tradition of true and perfect statements, which swiftly penetrate to the ends of the earth.⁶¹

I believe the whirlwinds in the purest ether mentioned above are symbolic representations of the winds of pleasure that spread out in a woman's womb, which Hildegard regarded as spacious. These winds of desire help humanity by aiding in the process of procreation. Similarly, Hildegard saw a fourth group of whirlwinds in the watery air and white zone beneath it:

Therefore from that air too comes a blast with its whirlwinds that spreads itself throughout the aforementioned instrument; for when the flood of baptism brings salvation to believers, a true report of the words of forcible sermons goes forth and pervades the whole world with its manifest blessedness, so that the people, forsaking infidelity and seeking after the Catholic faith, openly declare it.⁶²

I believe the fourth group of whirlwinds symbolise the masculine winds of pleasure. Hildegard's use of phrases such as, 'forcible sermons' reflects the male persona, which sends forth a blast of whirlwinds into the cosmic egg. I think the world represents the womb, so that the male persona, or penis, goes into the vagina to create new Christians, or aid in the process of procreation, in which a new life will abound in the womb infused with spiritual knowledge.

Purging Female Secretions

In the shadowy zone (see pl. 28) are tiny clusters of objects that Hildegard referred to as stones; she associated them with the corruption of murder:

...[F]ull of thunder, tempest and exceedingly sharp stones large and small, for murder is full of avarice...while it makes its thunders heard, the bright fire and the winds and the air are all in commotion, because when murder cries out in its eagerness to shed blood, it arouses the justice of Heaven...so that lightning precedes those thunders, for the fire feels in itself the turbulence of the thunder...God consumes by the fire of His vengeance all those who are outside the true faith, and those who remain within the Catholic faith He purifies by the fire of His consolation; thus He throws down the darkness of devilish perversity.⁶³

The stones shed blood, or devilish ways, in order to be purified through fire by God. Mumford labelled the tiny clusters as unfertilised eggs with streams of blood, which she has suggested may be menstrual.⁶⁴ In the Middle Ages menstrual blood was thought to expel toxins from the body, and was thus viewed as a means of purification.⁶⁵ In the thirteenth century, Albert the Great believed that women should purge their toxic secretions, and extract strength from a man to remain healthy.⁶⁶

Like Albert the Great, Hildegard believed that for a healthy life women should purge their secretions of blood. Additionally, Hildegard

thought women emitted a seed, like that of a man, and should also be purged; although she claimed the female's seed was weak and not as white in comparison to a man's seed.⁶⁷ For reproduction Hildegard believed both male and female must take part in the winds of pleasure:

However, the man's flesh becomes heated-both on the inside and the outside-by the woman's warmth and sweat, and it draws something into itself from the foam and sweat of the woman...If the semen has reached the right place, it draws the afore-mentioned very strong heat in the brain to itself and holds it fast. At that point, the loins of the woman contract and all the members, which at the time of the monthly flow were ready to open themselves, quickly close themselves up tight, as when a strong man closes something in his hand. Then the monthly blood mixes itself with the semen, makes it bloody, and causes it to become flesh.⁶⁸

Hildegard seemed to suggest that a woman releases a seed at the moment of orgasm in order to conceive. Therefore, if the veins of a woman's womb are clogged, she may not release a seed for conception. Further, Hildegard thought that if a woman emits a seed without having intercourse, the seed would then be expelled with blood through menstruation.⁶⁹ For Hildegard menstruation was a means of purging a woman's secretions to prepare for conception and to remain healthy.

Baptismal Fluids?

Past the shadowy zone (see pl. 28) and inside the pure ether, two additional circular formations stand out. In descending order, these would seem to represent the urethra, and the vagina. Following this interpretation of the reflection of female genitalia, Hildegard discussed fluids in the cosmic egg, surrounding the globe in the centre, which encloses the vagina. Hildegard associated this globe with baptism of the Church, and Caroline Wörman Sur has

suggested Hildegard's description of the sacramental fluids brings to mind the human birth process:

And beneath that ether you see watery air with a white zone beneath it, which diffuses itself here and there and imparts moisture to the whole instrument...baptism in the Church for the salvation of believers is truly shown to you, which, founded on blessed innocence and stability, propagates itself everywhere by divine inspiration and brings to the whole world the overflowing waters of salvation for believers. When this zone suddenly contracts, it sends forth sudden rain with great noise, and when it gently spreads out it gives a pleasant and softly falling rain.⁷⁰

The baptismal 'fluid' of the Church is synonymous with the fluids of human conception and birth present in the vagina. When Hildegard narrated that the zone contracts and sends forth rain, this area is similar to the birthing canal, which contracts and expands during labour.⁷¹ Thus, the Baptism of the Church parallels human birth.

Sexuality in the Middle Ages

In the twelfth century, and the remainder of the Middle Ages, church leaders adhered to Gratian's *Decretum* (1140) concerning values of sexual behaviour.⁷² In the *Decretum*, Gratian emphasised that marital sexual intercourse, in general, was for the purpose of procreation and other sexual activity and pleasure deriving from it should be avoided.⁷³ The pastoral manuals go into great detail regarding sexual sins, indicating that such 'sinful' behaviour was fairly common throughout the Middle Ages.⁷⁴ Most of the sexual offences, such as masturbation, marital intercourse unclothed and/or during the daylight hours, were considered minor and therefore dealt with privately in confession, instead of in the courts. Serious offences, such as fornication, adultery and sodomy, were dealt with in

court.⁷⁵ In contrast with the views expressed on this subject by clerical authors, the laity continued to indulge in sexual relations between unmarried men and women. Many could not fathom that simple fornication and minor sexual offences would lead them to hell. Therefore, the efforts of the church leaders to control such behaviour had little impact on the laity, although much guilt might have arisen in those who believed the clergy but departed from their precepts.

Hildegard and Healthy Sexuality

As a Benedictine nun in the twelfth century, it is curious that Hildegard expressed in her writing such vivid detail regarding the act of sexual intercourse. Hildegard had taken a vow of chastity, and yet spoke of the burning flames of sexual intercourse as though she had directly experienced these feelings. A question persists whether Hildegard experienced these burning desires through mystical visions, at the core of which was a real sexual experience, perhaps the solitary act of masturbation. In the Middle Ages, masturbation was often deemed an immoral sexual act, and Hildegard herself forcefully criticises it in the following quotation from *Scivias* Book Two, Vision Six:

And men who touch their own genital organ and emit their semen seriously imperil their souls, for they excite themselves to distraction; they appear to Me as impure animals devouring their own whelps, for they wickedly produce their semen only for abusive pollution. And women who imitate them in this unchaste touching, and excite themselves to bodily convulsions by provoking their burning lust, are extremely guilty, for they pollute themselves with uncleanness when they should be keeping themselves in chastity. Hence both women and men who elicit their own seed by touching themselves in the body do a filthy deed and inflict ulcers and wounds on their souls; for they will not keep themselves in a state of chastity for love of Me.⁷⁶

Despite this particular condemnation of both male and female masturbation, there is some evidence to suggest that medieval views differentiated between the sexes regarding this issue. Notions of the different sexual needs of men and women are described by Jacquart and Thomasset: "While medicine attempts to conserve male semen and reduce its production in order to avoid any loss, it encourages the expulsion of female liquid, retention of which can be harmful."⁷⁷ Men were discouraged from masturbation because it meant losing their seed to an unworthy cause; women were encouraged to expel secretions because they were considered toxic. Thus, there were few medical prohibitions of female masturbation.⁷⁸

When Hildegard mentioned sexual desires she emphasised that moderation was the key to healthy life.⁷⁹ Just as a man and a woman were biologically different, so too each gender's control over their arousal and secretions was dissimilar. Hildegard believed that for a man sexual arousal was similar to a storm of lust (*tempestas libidinis*), indicating he is easily aroused and thus has a far more difficult time managing self-control. Further, Hildegard added that if a man became aroused without emitting semen, he might become sick. In contrast, Hildegard described sexual arousal for a woman as calm winds filling the spacious uterus; therefore she has better control over her sexual feelings.⁸⁰

How severely masturbation was viewed by others around the twelfth century puts into context Hildegard's own views on this subject. The penitentials gave great attention to masturbation.⁸¹ The penances given to those who masturbated varied. For instance, according to

Theodore (c. 602 – 690), the Archbishop of Canterbury, in his *Penitential*, the penance for masturbation was thirty days of fasting for boys and forty days for men.⁸² The *Bigotianum* allocated a harsher penance with a hundred days of fasting for masturbation given to first offenders and a full year of fasting for repeat offenders. However, there are conflicting reports in the *Bigotianum* regarding this sexual offence: for example, a priest's penance for masturbation was three weeks of fasting.⁸³ Additionally, St. Columban believed that for masturbation the penance should be two years of fasting for laymen and three years for clerics. The penances increased if the sexual offence was mutual masturbation. Further, the penitentials addressed female masturbation in a similar manner. Interestingly, the penitential authors' preoccupation lay more with female use of instruments, such as dildos, rather than male use of mechanical instruments. Brundage suggests that the routine nature of the penances given to those who masturbated, such as fasting and recitation of psalms, hints that the fundamental issue was not that it was a grave sin but merely that it was such a common one.⁸⁴

Compared with other sexual offences solitary masturbation ranks very low on a scale of sinfulness compared with, say, homosexuality, which was considered extremely immoral.⁸⁵ According to Brundage, the penitentials' attention to masturbation and homosexuality "mirrored the experience and concerns of the monastic environment in which most penitential writers received their spiritual and intellectual formation."⁸⁶ Out of ten penitentials, masturbation ranks as the least grievous sin out of the following sexual offences, in ascending order of severity: masturbation,

fornication between unmarried persons, adultery, bestiality, anal intercourse and oral sex.⁸⁷ It is clear that masturbation, although a sin, was not considered a particularly grievous one. However, some did regard it as very bad: for example, the Book of Gomorrah by St. Peter Damian (c. 1007-1072) was explicitly against 'sins against nature' such as masturbation and homosexuality. Damian's book was mainly aimed at the unnatural sex acts of the clergy, but also intended to convey a message to the laity. Interestingly, Pope Alexander II (c.1061-1073) tried to ban this book and get rid of it. Specifically, Damian's view on solitary masturbation was that since it was 'against nature' it was considered sodomy, which deserved the severe punishments of other sodomy acts, like being burnt to death.⁸⁸ Most canonists did not share his extreme view of punishment regarding masturbation, however.

The *Glossa Palatina* (c. 1215) addressed the issue of ecclesiastical status among religious women who might have partaken in sexual activity. If a woman's hymen ruptured during masturbation or foreplay, her status would remain as a virgin for ecclesiastical reasons.⁸⁹ If a woman's hymen ruptured due to penetration by a penis, then she lost her virgin status; she was consequently unable to become a choir nun, although she could still be a lay sister. Even though the *Glossa Palatina* was a little after Hildegard's time, one can deduce that a woman could become or remain a nun if she indulged in solitary masturbation. Although solitary masturbation was a sin, mutual masturbation and the use of mechanical aids would have been considered worse. Still, other sexual offences were considered more serious sins, and thus concerned ecclesiastical leaders. Some appear to

have regarded masturbation in a more positive light, and even as necessary in certain circumstances. Such a view was not unique in medieval times: masturbation was even prescribed for medical problems like the retention of sperm.⁹⁰ The thirteenth century physician Arnald of Villanova (c. 1240-1311) advised nuns and widows to massage their genitals.⁹¹ Further, Albert the Great emphasised that the purpose behind inserting a hand into the vagina is what makes it sinful or not; for instance, in the act of curing an ailment what the hand does is not considered corrupting.

Despite the explicit denunciation of masturbation in the above quotation from *Scivias*, one might still suppose that the implicit sexual imagery of *Scivias* – in particular that of the Cosmic Egg – suggests a personal knowledge of sexual behaviour possibly resulting from masturbation. The implicit sexual imagery perhaps subverts the explicit condemnation, or perhaps suggests ambivalence. Hildegard also tackled the subject of non-reproductive sex, which raised a variety of issues. Hildegard admitted that an individual is capable of producing and emitting ‘foam’ without touching the genitals. Further, she said that an individual might release ‘foam’ when touching the genitals alone, which might suggest masturbation.⁹² Lastly, Hildegard stated that contact with someone while touching the genitals would lead to a discharge of foam. When discussing such intimate topics, Hildegard is direct and non-judgmental, in contrast to the very judgmental tone of her explicit condemnation. As one would expect, however, Hildegard does not explain the full implications of her statements.

Overall, in regard to sexuality, she stressed that sexual desire or pleasure alone did not cause illness; instead only immoderate sexual behaviour may cause sickness.⁹³ Hildegard believed that sexual desire, if moderately acted upon, could have a positive effect by releasing both male and female secretions, the combination of which would appear as blood.⁹⁴ Also, madness or ulcers result from sexual abstinence. Therefore, if an individual either restrains or over-indulges in their sexual impulses, an unhealthy life might result.

In Hildegard's vision of Ecclesia, Book Two, Vision Four (see pl. 22) there are deep religious and sexual undertones present, and again the message seems to be that sexuality is not necessarily bad. Hildegard's vision parallels confirmation into the Church with sexual intercourse:

So also each of the faithful who is regenerated by the Spirit and water should be decorated and confirmed by a bishop's anointing, so that he will be strengthened in all his members toward achieving beatitude and find himself most perfectly adorned with the full fruits of highest justice. Therefore, this tower that you see represents the flaming forth of the gifts of the Holy Spirit, which the Father sent into the world for love of His Son, to enkindle the hearts of His disciples with fiery tongues and make them stronger in the name of the Holy and True Trinity. Before the coming upon them of the Holy Spirit in fire, they were sitting shut up in their house, protecting their bodies, for they were timid about speaking of God's justice and feeble in facing their enemies' persecutions... You see the tower as immense and round, all made of a single white stone. This means that the sweetness of the Holy Spirit is boundless and swift to encompass all creatures in grace, and no corruption can take away the fullness of its just integrity. Its path is a torrent, and streams of sanctity flow from it in its bright power, with never a stain of dirt in them; for the Holy Spirit Itself is a burning and shining serenity, which cannot be nullified, and which enkindles ardent virtue so as to put all darkness to flight.⁹⁵

The immense tower that Hildegard described in this vision, and seen through the accompanying illumination, evokes the male genitalia.

Further, this phallic tower shoots forth streams of fire to burn in the hearts

of Christ's followers. These 'fiery tongues' are the Holy Spirit, which strengthens and imprints Christ's love on the hearts of others. This vivid description of the Holy Spirit is analogous to semen. From this vision, Hildegard showed how the Holy Spirit is sent forth to regenerate souls and bring life in the New Church. Just as semen from a man's penis brings human life into the womb of a woman through the act of sexual intercourse, so does fire from the Holy Spirit restore souls and bring life into the Church. Additionally, Hildegard indicated that the Holy Spirit is a positive and encompassing entity that with its 'bright power' brings life, strength, and light to all that it touches. If we do read this passage seeing the power of the Holy Spirit as equivalent to the life-giving power of semen, the message conveyed is that human sexuality is not wrong, or dirty. Instead, Hildegard showed that semen or human sexuality was sanctified and a divine act of love between Ecclesia and her heavenly bridegroom, Jesus.

Through the spiritual union of Ecclesia and Jesus, sexual intercourse became sacred, but only if one receives the sacraments of baptism and confirmation. Therefore, Hildegard described the importance of the sacrament of confirmation:

The anointing with the gifts of the Holy Spirit by confirmation is the special ability of the episcopal office, which is to be done among the faithful after the regeneration of the Spirit and water, to found the believer upon a firm rock...and then the Holy Spirit illuminated the world in fiery ardour, confirming all justice in the hearts of His disciples and revealing to them what had before been hidden...The Holy Spirit enkindled their hearts as the sun, beginning to appear from around a cloud, shows its burning heat by its shining light...Love of My Son was secretly burning in their minds, and thus the fire of the Holy Spirit passed through them and showed the bright sunlight of their teaching.⁹⁶

Whereas the sacrament of baptism, Spirit and water, gives birth to a Christian, the sacrament of confirmation, Spirit and fire, fortifies the believer's Christian faith. Additionally, Hildegard's metaphorical phrases insinuate sexual references. Specifically, in saying that the disciples had burning thoughts of Jesus in their minds, she suggested that the fire, or semen, was subsequently released through their systems.

Hildegard's use of sexual imagery is startling, especially considering her status as a Benedictine nun. Of course, one should not see her as advocating some form of free-love: she is far too ambivalent on sexuality to be interpreted in such a way. Even so, the message coming from her sexual imagery seems far from conventional, as does her portrayal of female characters in the context of an age where she viewed the clergy as effeminate. Thus there is much idiosyncrasy in *Scivias* and Hildegard's other works; such idiosyncrasy forms a nice contrast with the theme of the next chapter which examines the more conventional aspects of style and iconography in the illuminations. No-one is one hundred percent original, and Hildegard and her artist(s) are no exceptions.

¹ Thompson, 1994, 352: An important point is that Hildegard saw God in both masculine and feminine terms. Hildegard saw God as the Father, when regarding power and authority and saw God as the Mother in regards to creation.

² Bowie and Davies, 1990, 44.

³ Newman, 1987, 34-35.

⁴ Newman, 1987, 254.

⁵ Translation from Feiss, 1995, 43-44. Original Latin text from *Patrologia Latina*, v. 197 is as follows: "Nam post Incarnationem Christi anno millesimo centesimo doctrina apostolorum et

ardens iustitia, quam in Christianis et spiritualibus constituerat, tardare coepit, et in haesitationem vertebatur. Illis temporibus nata sum, et parentes mei cum suspirio [ms. suspiriis] Deo me vovebant.”

⁶ Translation from Baird and Ehrman, 1994, 88.

⁷ Translation from Baird and Ehrman, 1994, 79. Full letter to be found: Baird and Ehrman, 1994, 76-80. Latin translation found in the endnotes of Baird and Ehrman, 1994, 207: “Istud tempus tempus muliebre est, quia iustitia Dei debilis est. Sed fortitudo iustitiae Dei exsodat, et bellatrix contra iniustitiam existit, quatenus deuicta cadat.”

⁸ Baird and Ehrman, 1994, 88.

⁹ For female inferiority, see Newman, 1987, 34-41, 66, 254-57, and Bowie and Davies, 1990, 44-46.

¹⁰ Bowie and Davies, 1990, 44.

¹¹ Bowie and Davies, 1990, 44.

¹² I Cor. 1:27-29.

¹³ Examples of biblical figures, such as Christ and the Virgin Mary, exhibiting perfection in weakness were commonly seen throughout the Bible. For instance, the Virgin Mary, a poor handmaid of God, said: “He[God] has scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts, he has put down the mighty from their thrones, and exalted those of low degree.” (Lk. 1:51-52).

¹⁴ Matt. 4:5.

¹⁵ Newman, 1987, 255.

¹⁶ Beer, 1992, 30.

¹⁷ Translation from Hart and Bishop, 1990, 135. Original Latin text from Führkötter and Carlevaris, 1978, 96 is as follows: “Sed in corde ipsius stat Abraham: quoniam initium circumcissionis in synagoga ipse fuit; et in pectore eius Moyses: quia in praecordia hominum diuinam legem ille attulit; ac in uentre ipsius reliqui prophetae: id est in institutione illa quae ipsi diuinitus tradita fuerat, inspectores diuinorum praeceptorum... quoniam ipsi miracula prophetiae suae in mirabilibus signis ostenderunt et speciositatem generositatis nouae sponsae in multa admiratione attenderunt.”

¹⁸ Newman, 1987, 205.

¹⁹ Translation from Hart and Bishop, 1990, 133-34. Original Latin text from Führkötter and Carlevaris, 1978, 94 is as follows: “est synagoga mater incarnationis Filii Dei existens et ab initio surgentium filiorum suorum usque ad fortitudinem eorum secreta Dei in obumbratione praecidens, sed ea non pleniter aperiens, illa autem rutilans aurora quae aperte loquitur non existens sed eam in multa admiratione... Haec enim est quae a Filio Dei dotata in praecclaris uirtutibus uiget et in riuiulis Scripturarum abundat.”

²⁰ Newman, 1987, 205.

²¹ Newman, 1987, 206.

²² Vries, 1974, 471-2: This illumination evokes the bronze tower, where Danae was imprisoned and became pregnant with Perseus through Zeus’ golden rays.

²³ For Ecclesia, see Newman, 1987, 196-249.

²⁴ Newman, 1987, 200.

²⁵ Newman, 1987, 200.

²⁶ Pl. 24 from Swarzenski, 1967, fig. 436: Paten of Chalice. Christ on the Cross. Church and Synagogue, c. 1170. Precognitions of the New Testament. Tremessen (Poland), Abbey Church, and Pl. 25 from Mellinkoff, 1993, fig. III.17: *Essen Missal*, Crucifixion, c. 1000. Dusseldorf, Landesbibliothek, Cod. D.4, f. 8v (detail).

²⁷ Translation from Hart and Bishop, 1990, 237. Original Latin text from Führkötter and Carlevaris, 1978, 230 is as follows: “Haec, Fili, sit tibi sponsa in restaurationem populi mei, cui ipsa mater sit, animas per saluationem spiritus et aquae regenerans.”

²⁸ Translation from Hart and Bishop, 1990, 278. Original Latin text from Führkötter and Carlevaris, 1978, 290 is as follows: “Sed femina non per semetipsam, sed de uiro infantem concipit, sicut nec terra per semetipsam sed per agricolam aratur. Quapropter ut terra semetipsam arare non potest, ita nec femina in officio consecrationis corporis et sanguinis Filii mei sacerdoti comparanda est, quamuis in laude creatoris sui sonare possit, ut et terra ad irrigationem fructuum pluuiam suscipit.”

²⁹ For parallel between earth and church, see Thompson, 1994. An additional illumination in Book One, Vision Four shows a woman lying on the ground with an infant inside the womb: see Führkötter and Carlevaris, 1978, Book One, Vision Four.

³⁰ Thompson, 1994, 354: This parallel of the earth with the soul, although unusual, does not drift from the medieval logic of linking the body with the earth. Further in Hildegard's case, both the words soul (*anima*) and earth (*terra*) are grammatically feminine; in contrast to the more prevalent thought of her age, which would differ grammatically, body (*corpus*) and earth (*terra*). This grammatically feminine equivalent emphasises her view of the earth as life giving.

³¹ Translation from Hart and Bishop, 1990, 278. Original Latin text from Führkötter and Carlevaris, 1978, 290 is as follows: "Et ut terra omnem fructum profert, ita etiam et in femina omnis fructus boni operis perficitur."

³² Thompson, 1994, 355.

³³ Translation from Hart and Bishop, 1990, 173-74. Original Latin text from Führkötter and Carlevaris, 1978, 142 is as follows: "Vnde et ecclesia omnium Christianorum uirginea mater est; quoniam in secreto Spiritus sancti eos concipit et parit, illos Deo offerens, ita quod et filii Dei uocantur. Et ut beatam Matrem Spiritus sanctus obumbravit, ita quod sine dolore mirabiliter Filium Dei concepit et peperit et tamen uirgo permansit, sic et ecclesiam felicem matrem credentium Spiritus sanctus illustrat, ita quod sine ulla corruptione simpliciter filios concipit et parit et uirgo perdurat."

³⁴ Translation from Hart and Bishop, 1990, 238-39. Original Latin text from Führkötter and Carlevaris, 1978, 233 is as follows: "Vt sponsa sponso suo in subiectionis et obaeditionis obsequio subiecta fertilem donationem cum foederis amore ab eo in procreatione filiorum accipiens eos ad hereditatem suam educat, ita etiam ecclesia Filio Dei in humilitatis et caritatis officio coniuncta regenerationem spiritus et aquae cum saluatione animarum ab eo ad restaurationem uitae suscipiens eas ad superna transmittit."

³⁵ Singer, 1958, 207. Later in life, Hildegard saw the universe as a sphere, which was the more scientific and commonly held view of her time.

³⁶ Dronke, 1974, 79-80.

³⁷ Cirlot, 1962, 90-91, and Vries, 1974, 158-59.

³⁸ Hart and Bishop, 1990, 93-105.

³⁹ Translation from Hart and Bishop, 1990, 93. Original Latin text from Führkötter and Carlevaris, 1978, 40 is as follows: "Post haec uidi maximum instrumentum rotundum et umbrosam secundum similitudinem oui, superius artum et in medio amplum ac inferius constrictum, in cuius exteriori parte per circuitum lucidus ignis fuit, quasi pellem umbrosam sub se habens. Et in igne isto erat globus rutilantis ignis tantaeque magnitudinis quod idem instrumentum totum ab eo illustrabatur, super se tres faculas sursum ordinate positas habens quae suo igne eundem globum ne laberetur continebant. Et idem globus se aliquando sursum eleuauit et plurimus ignis ei occurrit, ita quod exinde flammam suas longius produxit, ac se aliquando deorsum inclinauit, multumque frigus ei obuiam uenit, ita quod et ex hoc flammam suas citius subduxit. Sed et de igne illo qui idem instrumentum circumdederat flatus quidam cum suis turbinibus exiebat, et de pelle illa quae sub eo fuit alius flatus cum turbinibus suis ebulliebat, qui se in ipso instrumento hac et illac diffundebant. In eadem quoque pelle quidam tenebrosus ignis tanti horrois erat quod eum intueri non poteram, qui totam pellem illam sua fortitudine concutiebat, plenus sonituum, tempestatum et acutissimorum lapidum maiorum et minorum."

⁴⁰ For religious undertones, see Hart and Bishop, 1990, 91-105, Beer, 1992, 43-7, and Fox, 1985, 35-7.

⁴¹ Hart and Bishop, 1990, 94-95.

⁴² Fox, 1985, 36, and Singer, 1958, 206.

⁴³ Hart and Bishop, 1990, 96-97.

⁴⁴ Fox, 1985, 36.

⁴⁵ Dronke, 1974, 97.

⁴⁶ Pächt, 1986, 160.

⁴⁷ Sur, 1993, 71.

⁴⁸ For the link between cosmic egg and female genitalia, see Mumford, 1993, 51.

⁴⁹ Translation from Hart and Bishop, 1990, 94-95. Original Latin text from Führkötter and Carlevaris, 1978, 43 is as follows: "Et in igne isto est globus rutilantis ignis tantaeque magnitudinis quod idem instrumentum totum ab eo illustratur: qui splendore claritatis suae ostendit quia in Deo Patre est ineffabilis Vnigenitus eius, sol iustitiae fulgorem ardentis caritatis habens, tantaeque gloriae existens quod omnis creatura claritate lucis eius illuminatur."

⁵⁰ Translated from Cadden, 1984, 158. Original Latin text from Kaiser, 1903, 76 is as follows: "Delectatio autem in muliere soli comparatur, qui blande et leniter et assidue terram calore suo

perfundit, ut fructus proferat, quia si eam acrius in assiduitate incenderet, fructus magis laederet quam eos produceret.”

⁵¹ Hildegard did not directly address the function of this organ in her later book, *Causae et Curae*, written around 1151 that deals with illnesses and remedies of the human body.

⁵² Liddell and Scott, 1968, 957.

⁵³ Liddell and Scott, 1968, 957. The word κλειτορίς was used by Rufus Medicus (2nd A.D.) in *Onomasia*, vol. III, in reference to ‘the touch,’ and was used by Pseudo-Plutarchus (1-2 A.D.) in *de Fluvis* 25.5, vol. III, in reference to ‘gem.’

⁵⁴ For sexuality in the Middle Ages, see Jacquart and Thomasset, 1988.

⁵⁵ Translated from May, 1968, 660-61.

⁵⁶ Jacquart and Thomasset, 1988, 24, 45-46.

⁵⁷ Jacquart and Thomasset, 1988, 124.

⁵⁸ Jacquart and Thomasset, 1988, 46: It was not until the Renaissance that the purpose and function of the clitoris was more definitively described when Gabriel Fallopio spoke of the extreme sensitivity of this female organ.

⁵⁹ Translated from Palmquist and Kulas, 1994, 63. Original Latin text from Kaiser, 1903, 69 is as follows: “Venae autem, quae in iecore et in ventre masculi sunt, in genitalibus eius sibi occurrunt. Et cum ventus delectationis a medulla masculi egreditur, in lumbos eius cadit et gustum delectationis in sanguine movet... Nam quemadmodum in magnis undis, quae de fortibus ventis et procellis in fluminibus assurgunt, navis periclitatur, ita quod vix interdum contineri et subsistere potest, sic etiam in procella delectationis natura viri difficile compesci et contineri valet.”

⁶⁰ Translated from Palmquist and Kulas, 1994, 68. Original Latin text from Kaiser, 1903, 76 is as follows: “Sed cum ventus delectationis ex medulla feminae egreditur, in matricem, quae umbilico adhaeret, cadit et sanguinem mulieris ad delectationem movet, et quia matrix circa umbilicum mulieris amplum et velut apertum locum habet, ventus ille in ventrem eius se dilatat, et ideo lenius, quamvis prae humiditate sua saepius, ibi in delectationem ardet, et ideo etiam aut prae timore aut prae pudore facilius quam vir a delectatione se continere valet.”

⁶¹ Translated from Hart and Bishop, 1990, 97. Original Latin text from Führkötter and Carlevaris, 1978, 47 is as follows: “Vnde et ab ipso aethere quidam flatus cum suis turbinibus se effundit qui se in praefatum instrumentum ubique dilatat: quia ab unitate fidei fortissima fama cum ueris et perfectis assertionibus in auxilium hominum emanans fines totius orbis multa celeritate percutiebat.”

⁶² Translated from Hart and Bishop, 1990, 98. Original Latin text from Führkötter and Carlevaris, 1978, 48 is as follows: “Quapropter et ex eo quidam flatus cum turbinibus suis exiens per praedictum instrumentum se ubique diffundit: quoniam ab inundatione baptismatis salutem credentibus afferentis uerissima fama cum uerbis fortissimorum sermonum egrediens omnem mundum manifestatione beatitudinis suae perfudit, ut iam in populis infidelitatem deserentibus et fidem catholicam appetentibus aperte declaratur.”

⁶³ Translated from Hart and Bishop, 1990, 94, 96. Original Latin text from Führkötter and Carlevaris, 1978, 42, 45 is as follows: “Plenus sonitum, tempestatum et acutissimorum lapidum maiorum et minorum: quia homicidium plenum est auaritia... Qui dum sonitum suum eleuat, ille lucidus ignis et uenti et aer commouentur: quoniam dum homicidium in auaritia effusionis sanguinis stridet, superna iudicia... suscitantur, ita quod fulgura sonitum ipsum praecueniunt; quia ignis ille primum commotionem eiusdem sonitus in se sentit... Deus illos qui extra ueram fidem sunt ubique per ignem ultionis suae exurens, hos qui intra fidem catholicam manent ubique per ignem consolationis suae purificat, ita diabolicae peruersitatis tenebrositatem prosternens.”

⁶⁴ Mumford, 1993, 51.

⁶⁵ Bullough and Brundage, 1996, 89: In the Middle Ages men were defined by semen, which was viewed as pure and valuable; while menstruation defined women, and had fairly negative connotations.

⁶⁶ Bullough and Brundage, 1996, 90: Further, Albert the Great warned men about excessive intercourse, which may lead to the side effects of nervousness and weakness.

⁶⁷ Cadden, 1984, 155, no. 79: Hildegard was confused as to whether a woman emitted a seed. At one point earlier in *Causae et Curae* she indicated that women do not produce a seed (Kaiser, 1903, 60). Although later in the same book she suggested that women do have a seed (Kaiser, 1903, 76).

⁶⁸ Cadden, 1993, 86, and Kaiser, 1903, 67, 104.

⁶⁹ Cadden, 1984, 171, no. 79.

⁷⁰ Translated from Hart and Bishop, 1990, 97. Original Latin text from Führkötter and Carlevaris, 1978, 47 is as follows: "Sub eodem autem aethere aquosum aerem uides albam pellem sub se habentem, qui se hac et illac diffundens omni instrumento illi umorem dat...baptismus in ecclesia ad salutem credentium, ut tibi uerissime manifestatur, in innocentia beatissimae stabilitatis fundatus, se diuina inspiratione ubique dilatans, uniuerso orbi irrigationem salutis in credentibus attulit. Qui dum se interdum repente congregat, repentinam pluuiam multo fragore emittit, et dum se leniter diffundit, blandam pluuiam leni motu dat."

⁷¹ Sur, 1993, 74.

⁷² For medieval sexual behaviour, see Bullough and Brundage, 1996.

⁷³ Bullough and Brundage, 1996, 40-41: During this time marital sexual intercourse using the missionary position was deemed natural; all other forms of sexual behaviour was seen as unnatural, and the church leaders had to convey to the laity this notion emphasising that it was a serious moral offence.

⁷⁴ Chadwick, 1997, 149: It has also been argued that some of the sins occurred only in the overheated minds of the monks and other clerical authors. It has also been suggested that the sins and punishments in the penitentials were excessively schematised and did not reflect reality.

⁷⁵ Bullough and Brundage, 1996, 43: In the Middle Ages sodomy was defined as sexual relations between two individuals of the same gender, and all other sexual relations, other than vaginal, between men and women. Additionally, the punishment, according to the degree of the sexual crime, might involve personal and public repentance. If the sexual crime went to the courts, then this would most likely entail a public penitence, and perhaps a public whipping or asking the community's forgiveness. This would occur in order to set an example to the public by emphasising the seriousness of the offence.

⁷⁶ Translation from Hart and Bishop, 1990, 279. Original Latin text from Führkötter and Carlevaris, 1978, 292 is as follows: "Illi quoque mares qui cum tactu praeputii sui semen suum educunt magnum casum animae suae imponunt, quia in hac inquietudine se omnino concutiant, et ideo uelut immunda animalia quae catulos suos deorant coram me apparent, quoniam semen suum peruerse excutientes illud ad contumeliosam pollutionem deducunt. Quos et feminae impudico tactu imitantes, cum in incentiuo ardore ardentis libidinis in constrictiones corporis sui semetipsas fatigant, ualde culpabiles exinde sunt; quia cum in castitate se continere deberent, se in immunditu polluant. Unde tam feminae quam uiri qui proprio tactu corporis sui semen suum de se excutiant, in hac sorde sua ulceribus et uulneribus semetipsos in animabus suis inficiunt, cum propter amorem meum in officio castitatis se constringere noluerunt."

⁷⁷ Jacquart and Thomasset, 1988, 153.

⁷⁸ Bullough and Brundage, 1996, 90.

⁷⁹ For Hildegard and sexuality, see Cadden, 1984 and 1993 (pg. 87).

⁸⁰ Cadden, 1993, 85.

⁸¹ For penances regarding masturbation, see Brundage, 1987.

⁸² Brundage, 1987, 165.

⁸³ Brundage, 1987, 166.

⁸⁴ Brundage, 1987, 166.

⁸⁵ Brundage, 1987, 174.

⁸⁶ Brundage, 1987, 174.

⁸⁷ Brundage, 1987, 168, 598-600.

⁸⁸ Brundage, 1987, 213.

⁸⁹ Brundage, 1987, 385.

⁹⁰ Jacquart and Thomasset, 1985, 176.

⁹¹ Jacquart and Thomasset, 1985, 176.

⁹² Cadden, 1993, 86-87.

⁹³ Cadden, 1993, 87.

⁹⁴ Cadden, 1993, 87.

⁹⁵ Translation from Hart and Bishop, 1990, 190. Original Latin text from Führkötter and Carlevaris, 1978, 161-62 is as follows: "Ita etiam fidelis homo, qui regenerationem in Spiritu et aqua percipit, per unctionem superioris doctoris ornari et stabiliri debet, ut in omnibus membris suis ad effectum beatitudinis confortatus, plenitudinem fructus summae iustitiae proferens decorum sui ornatus perfecte inueniat. Quapropter turris haec, quam uides, designat flagrationem donorum Spiritus sancti quam misit Pater in mundum propter amorem Filii sui, incendentes corda discipulorum illius in igneis linguis, unde robustiores redditi sunt in nomine sanctae et uerae Trinitatis. Sed quod ipsi ante aduentum eiusdem ignei Spiritus sancti in habitaculo suo

clausi sedebant, clausuram corporis ipsorum ostendebat, per quam timidi ad loquendum iustitiam Dei et imbecilles pati poenas aduersariorum erant...Sed quod eam uides magnam et rotundam totamque integrum et album lapidem existentem hoc est quod immensa est dulcedo Spiritus sancti et uolubilis in gratia omnes creaturas circuiens, ita quod nulla corruptio in integritate plenitudinis iustitiae eam euacuat; quoniam ipsa torrens iter habens, omnes riuulos sanctitatis in claritate fortitudinis illius emittit, in qua numquam maculositas ullius sordis inuenta est; quia ipse Spiritus sanctus est ardens et lucens serenitas quae numquam euacuabitur et quae ardentes uirtutes fortiter accendit, ac ideo omnes tenebrae ab eo fugantur.”

⁹⁶ Translation from Hart and Bishop, 1990, 193. Original Latin text from Führkötter and Carlevaris, 1978, 166 is as follows: “Vnctio confirmandi per donum sancti Spiritus in episcopali officio specialiter fulget, quod in fideli populo post regenerationem Spiritus et aquae exercendum est, cum credulus homo confirmandus est supra firmam petram...ac deinde Spiritus sanctus in igneo ardore mundum illustrauit, confirmans omnem iustitiam in cordibus discipulorum illius, cum eis aperuit quod antea absconsum erat...Sic Spiritus sanctus corda illorum accendit, ut sol cum sub nube incipit apparere ardentem calorem suum ostendit in sua praeclara luce...Amor Filii mei in mentibus eorum latenter ardebat, et ita calor Spiritus sancti eos pertransiens fortissimum solem doctrinae illorum ostendebat.”

Chapter Four: The *Scivias* Illuminations and their Artistic Milieu

In this chapter I place the *Scivias* illuminations into the artistic milieu of the twelfth century Rhineland, showing how they inevitably bear the impress of their cultural context and inherited tradition. Some of these elements were readily understood as they formed part of a widespread monastic culture and took visual form in more conventional illuminations of the age. These could be recognised as forming a repertoire of conventional visual sources. Other elements are more particular to manuscripts that Hildegard or her illuminators may well have seen. Tracing the whole visual repertoire behind the images in *Scivias* would clearly be unfeasible in the present work; however, this chapter does attempt to lay out some of the artistic precedents available to Hildegard and her illuminators as well as works illustrative of the artistic milieu. Firstly, however, by looking at how artistic conventions and particular art works inevitably had an impact on the *Scivias* illuminations, and by giving as accurate a date as possible for when the illuminations were created, I provide parameters within which our search for precedents can be undertaken.

Influences on the Illuminations in the Rupertsburg *Scivias*

The illuminations of the Rupertsburg *Scivias* are striking in appearance and contain many original elements. However, the illuminations were not created in a cultural vacuum. Much of their style and iconography is shared with other manuscripts, wall paintings and even imagery found on medallions. The visions of Hildegard were converted into illuminations identifiable as works of art from the Rhineland of the twelfth century.¹ Of course, being immersed in a religious

world where conventional Christian iconography was ubiquitous, it is possible that Hildegard's visionary experience was itself influenced by such conventional imagery: the illuminations may have captured what she saw quite accurately, rather than representing an artistic transformation of her visions into conventional imagery. Dodwell makes a similar point, stating that '[t]he impact of pictures also led to their influence on visions', and he provides several examples of this phenomenon, including a vision of Christ in Majesty which 'must have been the best known of all artistic themes' of the time.²

In chapter two I argued that Hildegard supervised the creation of the *Scivias* illuminations; but other hands were certainly involved in the creation of the manuscript, and even though Hildegard would have exercised control over its creation, her illuminators would have a particular artistic background and exposure to a wide range of art works. Hildegard – a woman of prodigious creative output – is unlikely to have had the time to stand over the shoulder of the artist(s) guiding every brush stroke. The artist(s) are thus likely to have relied on their own artistic background and contemporary conventions in style and iconography for much of the creative process, even if Hildegard had provided provisional sketches. The conventional style and iconography of the day was bound to enter into the creative process. As an example of such widespread conventional iconography, I shall discuss below the use of the *virgin orans* pose in the illuminations.

Tracing the influence of particular works of art on the illuminations is a harder proposition than pointing out elements that are widely found in the religious art of the day. Of course, Hildegard herself is silent on possible sources: she claimed all inspiration came from a divine source, and does not

reveal her earthly influences, such as other manuscripts. The lack of information regarding the Rupertsberg library is problematic, especially the lack of a catalogue of illuminated manuscripts held there during Hildegard's time.³ It is possible that particular manuscripts held there may have been the source for much of her inspiration when supervising the illumination process. Also, Hildegard was not just restricted to her library at Rupertsberg, and her visits to other centres of learning may have provided further influential models for the Rupertsberg *Scivias*.

Hildegard embarked on four preaching tours between 1158-1161. During this time she visited and preached in Trier, Metz, Würzburg, Bamberg and Krauftal.⁴ She continued to travel to other German monasteries well into old age. In 1163 she visited Cologne, Boppard, Andernach, Werden, Siegburg, and Liège. At the time of Hildegard's preaching tours she was around sixty years of age and had periodic illnesses. Hildegard's main mode of transportation was boat as many of the cities on her itinerary were located on or near the Rhine, Nahe, Neckar, and Moselle Rivers.⁵ During Hildegard's final trip in 1170 she visited the monasteries at: Maulbronn, Hirsau, Kirchheim, Zwiefalten, and Hördt.⁶ Additionally, Hildegard visited and preached at Eberbach, Rothenkirchen, Kitzingen, Höningen, Marienberg, Klause and Winkel.⁷ In all these travels, Hildegard may well have seen striking elements in local works of art that were consciously or unconsciously incorporated into the illuminations.

Her artist(s) too were likely schooled in the art of one particular locale, and therefore it would make the task of identifying possible influences on the illuminations easier if we knew in which particular scriptorium the manuscript was made. As we saw in chapter two, some scholars suppose that the manuscript

was created at Rupertsburg: for example, Derolez (1998:24) states that '[t]he interaction between scribes, illuminators and rubricators has been a reason to suppose that both writing and painting were executed in the Rupertsberg workshop'.⁸ Others, however, suppose it to have been created in the workshop of the Saint-Mathias monastery at Trier. Baillet and his collaborator de Puniet offer evidence for this in an article published early last century.⁹ There also exist other possibilities: I shall show a strong resemblance in style between the *Scivias* and *The Passion of Lucy*, a manuscript made in the scriptorium of St Vincent of Metz. This resemblance may have resulted from Hildegard or the artists having seen *The Passion of Lucy*, but may feasibly suggest an alternative birthplace for the Rupertsburg *Scivias*. However, rather than attempting to prove definitively in which scriptorium the *Scivias* manuscript was made, I attempt the more manageable task of bringing out the impress of the twelfth century Rhineland on the illuminations, pointing out conventional iconography in the *Scivias* found in manuscripts throughout the region, as well as some similarities to unconventional elements in other manuscripts. I therefore limit my search for artistic influences and precedents to one particular geographic area and one particular era. To begin such a search it is vital to have a clear idea of the date when the manuscript was made. This is the subject of the next section.

Dating the Rupertsburg *Scivias*

By closely examining representations of costumes in the illuminations and comparing them with contemporary clothing, Baillet demonstrates effectively that they were the products of the twelfth century.¹⁰ But can we be more specific? We can be fairly sure that the bulk of the text was

written in the period 1141-1151 based on Hildegard's recollection in its preface:

In the eleven hundred and forty-first year of the Incarnation of the Son of God, Jesus Christ, when I was forty-two years and seven months old...I set my hand to the writing...I brought this work [*Scivias*] to a close, though just barely, in ten years. These visions took place and these words were written in the days of Henry, Archbishop of Mainz, and of Conrad, King of the Romans, and of Cuno, Abbot of Disibodenberg, under Pope Eugenius.¹¹

However, this is unlikely to refer to the composition of the illuminated manuscript which concerns us: Hildegard could easily have continued to work on the illuminations at a later date, and it has been suggested that *Scivias* was created over a longer period,¹² although it is still generally accepted that this manuscript was made at the Rupertsberg scriptorium and during Hildegard's lifetime.¹³ A completion date of 1165 was put forth by Schrader and Führkötter (1956), and restated in the *Corpus Christianorum* edition of *Hildegardis Scivias* XLIII and XLIIIa edited by Führkötter and Carlevaris (1978). Führkötter and Carlevaris's argument for the date of 1165 is based on the comparison of handwriting of older Rupertsberg manuscripts, including the oldest manuscript of the Rupertsberg necrology.¹⁴ Caviness agrees with this date of 1165, basing her argument on other books from that region; additionally, she argues that text and image are inseparably linked and that Hildegard began working on the sketches in the 1140s while writing down her visions.¹⁵ Baillet and de Puniet¹⁶ put forth the date of 1160-1180: the manuscript has affinities with the Ghent *Liber divinorum operum* (copied in 1170-74, this is the only known example of a first-copy parchment of a Hildegardian work), and

with works (c. 1180) from the Benedictine abbey of SS. Eucharius and Matthias in Trier.¹⁷

Derolez agrees that a later date is better suited for the manuscript, although he narrows the date to 1175-1180 using structural evidence.¹⁸ He bases his argument on a comparison between the *Rupertsberg Scivias* and the Oxford manuscript of *Scivias*. The latter uses the earlier method of placing the *Capitula* (chapter) in front of each *Pars* (part), and additionally repeating the chapter headings in front of each corresponding chapter.¹⁹ These rubrics are later additions either seen in the margins or between the columns.²⁰ Therefore, in the Oxford manuscript the chapter headings are separated from the Table of Contents, and placed, as a rubric, before each chapter. In the *Rupertsberg Scivias* the chapter list is in front of each vision, instead of in front of each *Pars* (part). It is unlikely, Derolez maintains, that this advanced degree of organisation was managed at an early date.²¹

Accepting a later date for the completion of the illuminated *Rupertsberg Scivias* allows us to search a wider range of art works possibly influential in its creation or which demonstrate clearly the conventions of the contemporaneous artistic milieu.²² The art of the twelfth century was not restricted to illuminated manuscripts, however, and I first take a look at a wall painting from Schwarzrheindorf that contains imagery reminiscent of some found in the *Scivias*. Secondly, I turn to the precedents for some of the cosmological imagery found in the *Scivias* – particularly the cosmic egg: Hildegard and her artist(s) would undoubtedly have been familiar with illuminated cosmological treatises. The *Virgin Orans* pose is the subject of

the next section, comparing several renditions of this conventional pose in the Rupertsburg *Scivias* with those in other manuscripts and on a twelfth century bronze medallion. Fourthly, I focus on the portrayal of Ecclesia in *Scivias*, comparing the monumental rendition in *Scivias* with those of Ecclesia and other female figures in various contemporary manuscripts, noting in particular the closeness of style between the *Scivias* illuminations and those of a Metz manuscript, the *Passion of Lucy*. A comparison is also made with the portrayal of Ecclesia in a manuscript of Herrad of Hohenburg's *Hortus Deliciarum*, a later work with many similarities to *Scivias*. I also show a more idiosyncratic use of iconography involving Ecclesia in *Scivias*, where conventional imagery of exorcism is used to represent baptism: an example of Hildegard and her artist(s) taking convention and giving it an original twist.

The particular case-studies in this chapter provide only a partial glimpse of the place of the *Scivias* illuminations in twelfth century art, but should provide enough evidence to show that, for all their originality, the illuminations still bear the distinct impress of the era and environs in which they were made.

A comparison with a Schwarzhendorf mural painting

Of course, the artistic repertoire of the twelfth century was not restricted to illuminated manuscripts, and much imagery was far more accessible in the form of wall paintings. Stylistic and iconographic similarities to the *Scivias* illuminations can be found in mural paintings of the period, one example being murals painted in Sankt Clemens of Schwarzhendorf (Bonn), a church

consecrated in 1151.²³ According to Demus: 'The presence of over painting makes it all the more difficult to decide whether they were painted before or immediately after the consecration in 1151, or perhaps later, when the chapel was converted into the nunnery church'.²⁴ However, the murals contain scenes of the Apocalypse and from the book of Ezekiel; some of these images are highly reminiscent of the *Scivias* illuminations in style and iconography. In particular, the murals are influenced by what is known as the *weichfliessend Stil* (the 'soft-flowing style'). This was a 'highly individual stylistic phenomenon...of the 1160s and 1170s, which in [the opinion of Demus] was a native product of Cologne'.²⁵ We shall return to this style later in our discussion of the portrayal of Ecclesia in the *Scivias*. Baillet points out that the mural paintings were likely contemporaneous with Hildegard, and that she may very well have seen them as Schwarzrheindorf 'n'est pas très éloigné de Bingen, résidence ordinaire de sainte Hildegarde: souvent elle voyageait dans les environs'.²⁶

One of the first images of this mural (see pl.29) that stands out as similar to the *Scivias* illuminations is an image of Christ emerging from a circular design that contains him.²⁷ This can be compared to *Scivias* Book Two, Vision Two (see pl. 10). Both images portray Christ with long hair, standing face forward, fully robed with the drapery revealing the shape of the body, and in the *orans* pose (the *Scivias* showing both hands up with palms open, while the mural shows only one hand in this position and the other clasped near his waist). The circular pattern behind each image of Christ gives the impression of depth within the image so that the figure appears as though it is almost emerging from the circular design. Additionally, in *Scivias* Book Three, Vision Four (see pl. 15a) stands a fully robed virtue - the knowledge of God - in an identical *orans* pose as the

Schwarzrheindorf mural (see pl. 29) although her head is slightly cocked to the left side. Further, on either side of the virtue are angels, two of whom have hands in slightly similar positions to the two prophets near Christ in the mural (see pl. 29). The positioning of the hands of the prophet on the right is also reminiscent of Ecclesia's hands in the bottom half of the *Scivias* image in Book Two, Vision Six (see pl. 26), although seen from the left hand side in the *Scivias* illumination.

Another image in this mural (see pl. 29) shows a seated king, representing one of the four kingdoms of the world, whose monumental and regal status resembles some of the images of Ecclesia in *Scivias* (see pls. 22, 23, and 30). Both Ecclesia and the king are crowned and regal; in particular the king has a decorative diamond-shaped design near his neck that appears to pin his cloak around him. This detail resembles the decorative flower-like design seen near the top middle of Ecclesia's garment in some of the *Scivias* illuminations (see pls. 22 and 30). Both designs add to the regal appearance of the king and Ecclesia. Further, on closer inspection the facial details of the two figures are worth mentioning: both have elongated noses, long eyebrows, hair falling on the side of the face, and a serious expression of the mouth and pupils near the top of their eyes adding to the iconic monumentality of each figure (see pls. 22, 23, 29).

Comparison with Astronomical and Scientific Manuscripts

Scientific beliefs about the nature of the universe and man's relation to it – macrocosm and microcosm – were certainly influential on Hildegard and her artist(s) and this can clearly be seen in certain *Scivias* illuminations. Sources of early medieval cosmology Hildegard and her artist(s) might have been familiar

with include the *Liber Nimrod* (c. 791-826); a twelfth century copy of this astronomical handbook is linked with an abbey of Hildegard's friend Ludwig of Trier.²⁸ This codex also included Bede's *On the Nature of Things*, and Plato's *Timaeus* in Calcidius' translation and commentary. The influence of the work of Hugh of St Victor on Hildegard is perhaps evident in an illumination from the *Liber Divinorum*. Hugh's drawing of 'Christ embracing the cosmos... in which Christ embraces a circular symbolic cosmos which surrounds a highly schematised ark of Noah' no longer exists, but from his description it appears it was 'similar *in form* (but not precisely in content...) to Hildegard of Bingen's conception of *Nous* embracing the cosmos and pervaded by the Godhead'.²⁹ Zinn issues the following caveat, however: 'The similarity of form should not obscure a significant divergence in concern and content; Hildegard is oriented toward cosmology and the macrocosm/microcosm correlation; Hugh is oriented toward history and spirituality'.³⁰

Focusing again on the *Scivias*, Hildegard's cosmic egg (see pl. 28) strongly suggests the influence of astronomical and scientific sources on the creation of the *Scivias*. There exists a well-known image of the microcosm-macrocosm in Byrhtferth of Ramsey's *Handbook of Computus*, made in the early twelfth century. A copy of it, dated 1110-12 (see pl. 31), is entitled 'Diagram of the Physical and Physiological Fours', and links the four elements with the four seasons, four directions, and the signs of the zodiac, the months, the four humours, and the four ages of man.³¹ By adding four circles – following the pattern of the elements and man in the centre found in the Byrhtferth diagram – to a drawing of the *Rupertsberg Scivias* cosmic egg (see pl. 32), one clearly sees a similarity of geometrical design underlying the colourful universe: with the

four whirlwinds as the equivalent to fire, air, water, and man in the centre and Christ, or the sun, linked with earth.³² The large initials relate the following: Anathole, sunrise; Disis, sunset; Arcton, north; Mesembrios, noon. They spell out the name of the first man.³³

In Hildegard's cosmic egg, Book One, Vision Three (see pl. 28) there are four sets of three-faced wind creatures scattered throughout the egg, which resemble figures in a Paris manuscript of the *Clavis Physicae* (see pl. 33), a work by the Benedictine theologian Honorius of Autun (Augustodunensis) (c. 1085-1145/56), who was born in France but spent the majority of his life in southern Germany.³⁴ In this illumination there is a four-faced figure in the second register from the top that resembles a three-faced figure in the cosmic egg illumination (see pl.28). In the top register are personifications of the principal causes of the universe, and below in the second register are the effects of the principal causes; labelled from left to right, time, matter, and place. The four faces of matter are the four elements represented in the register below; labelled from left to right, fire, air, water, earth. The image's message is that all creation begins with God and will return to God in the final days.³⁵ Time, place, and matter all exist in accord with each other. This four-faced figure (see pl. 33) resembles strongly the three-faced whirlwinds in Hildegard's cosmic egg (see pl. 28).³⁶ While the four faces of matter in *Clavis Physicae* reflect the four elements in the world, Hildegard's three-faced whirlwinds might reflect the Trinity: she discusses the unity of faith in her commentary on the third whirlwind (at the bottom of the folio).

The *Orans* Pose

Dating back to Early Christian art, the *orans* pose is position of prayer with ancient Eastern origins.³⁷ The *orans* pose usually involves a male or female in a frontal, standing posture with raised arms bent at the elbow and both hands held up at the height of the shoulder or head, palms facing forward in prayer.³⁸

Christian art adopted the *orans* pose from pagan iconography. The interest in early Christian art in portraying the arms raised grew out of the symbolic association with Christ on the cross, emphasising his Passion and Resurrection. In Early Christian funerary art the *orans* pose often represented the piety of the dead. The orant eventually became less common and, around 400, the pose became more symbolic of intercession and was reserved for virgins, Saints, and martyrs.³⁹ This gesture of the hands and arms is a symbol of divine power and protection.⁴⁰ *Ka* is a transliteration of the Egyptian hieroglyphic sign for raised arms.⁴¹ *Ka*, the main aspect of the soul, symbolises an individual's energy, in which all life originates and returns to after death. A parallel to *ka* may be found in Christianity in the Trinity, or more specifically in Christ.

The *orans* pose features in some of the *Scivias* illuminations (see pls. 5, 10, 14, 22, and 34). One of particular importance is the sapphire man in Book Two, Vision Two (see pl. 10). In this illumination Hildegard saw the Trinity:

Therefore, you see a bright light, which without any flaw of illusion, deficiency or deception designates the Father; and in this light the figure of a man the colour of a sapphire, which without any flaw of obstinacy, envy or iniquity designates the Son...which is all blazing with a gentle glowing fire, which fire without any flaw of aridity, morality or darkness designates the Holy Spirit.⁴²

Caviness has questioned the gender of this figure, arguing that it is androgynous and perhaps even female.⁴³ She bases her argument on the position of the figure's hands, which cover the chest, and the unconventional representation of

Christ as long-haired and beardless.⁴⁴ Basing my argument on Hildegard's commentary, I believe the sapphire man is Christ, and is simply portrayed unconventionally. This representation of Christ is unusual for many reasons. In the twelfth century Jesus was customarily depicted with a beard and usually portrayed either enthroned or on the cross.⁴⁵ One possible reason that Christ is unconventionally portrayed is that the sapphire man is also a representation of the Triune God: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Thus, the portrayal of Christ will differ, because it is not just a representation of Christ; instead the image shows three persons in one God, manifested through the sapphire man and all that surrounds him.

A good representation of the *orans* pose as a stylistic convention of the mid-twelfth century is in the Bamberg text of *St. Ambrose* (see pl. 35).⁴⁶ This was a manuscript most likely made for the abbey of Michelsberg at Bamberg, and it is plausible that Hildegard or her artist(s) saw this image. It shows St. Michael surrounded by monks in roundels, symbolising the production of a manuscript.⁴⁷ The inner rectangle contains St. Michael along with four additional angels displaying the *orans* pose. The image, with its simple frame and roundels layout, and its *orans* pose, exhibits a widespread convention in a Bamberg manuscript.

A further example of this pose appears on an early twelfth-century bronze medallion from Munich showing the Virgin *orans* with her hands open over her chest, thumbs not touching (see pl. 36).⁴⁸ The medallion is on a circular beaded plate that has irregular drilled holes, suggesting that it was intended originally to be attached to another surface, perhaps designed for a book cover or a reliquary box, with the central roundel affixed to a cross. This iconographic image was

widely reproduced on crosses, cameos, seals and jewellery.⁴⁹ Further, the *Scivias* image in Book Two, Vision Two (see pl. 10) resembles the Munich medallion (see pl. 36), with a Virgin *orans* where the thumbs do not touch. Additionally, on close inspection, the right thumb on both the *Scivias* image (see pl. 10) and the Munich medallion (see pl. 36) is slightly higher than the left thumb, although this is more easily noticeable in the *Scivias* image.

A few further *Scivias* illuminations contain the Virgin *orans* pose, mainly on female figures in which both hands cover the breasts. The first example is seen in Book One, Vision One (see pl. 5) on a figure that Hildegard identified as 'Poor in Spirit.' Another image is Book Two, Vision Four (see pl. 22) of Ecclesia, who holds her hands up, palm outwards. Next, the illumination in Book Three, Vision Nine (see pl. 34) shows a female figure in the Virgin *orans* pose. Finally, in Book Three, Vision Ten (see pl. 14) the illumination shows the virtue Concord in the *orans* position. The significance of these figures in the *orans* pose is to show true blessedness and faithfulness in devotion to God. Ecclesia in the *orans* pose might possibly serve to aid in the intercession of prayer, like the Virgin's role as a conduit of prayer between God and man.

Portrayal of Ecclesia

We have already looked at the portrayal of Ecclesia in chapter three, but it is worthwhile at this point to make a more focused comparison of Ecclesia in *Scivias* with her representation – and the representation of similarly strong female characters – in other manuscripts of the period.

Ecclesia in the Bamberg Commentaries:

The portrayal of Ecclesia in the *Bamberg Commentaries* (c. 1000), a lustrous Ottonian manuscript of Daniel, Song of Songs, and Proverbs, might help explain Hildegard's unusual Crucifixion scene. A miniature in the Commentaries of the Song of Songs (see pl. 37) emphasises the building of the church and suggests its progress toward salvation.⁵⁰ Here an upward, golden spiral curve denotes the ascent toward salvation with the Eucharist in Ecclesia's hand. Following Ecclesia are the earthly representatives consisting of holy men and women with people newly baptized by St Peter in the centre. In comparison with Hildegard's Crucifixion scene Book Two, Vision Six (see pl. 26), the ascent toward salvation is linear, although the placement of the chalice and Eucharist on a three-dimensional altar in the centre of the golden rays, which is linked to the Crucifix, along with the rays' small curves, might imply an upward or downward movement reminiscent of a spiral. Hildegard's illumination is horizontally divided in half: the upper register has Ecclesia to the side of Christ's Crucifix and the hand of God representing heaven; the lower register has Ecclesia to the side of the altar, and four roundels showing Christ's ministry on earth. In the commentary Hildegard provided an analogy to show that the golden rays are symbolic of the pathway to salvation:

For, as the goldsmith first unites his gold by melting it in the fire, and then divides it when it is united, so I, the Father, first glorify the body and blood of My Son by the sanctification of the Holy Spirit when it is offered, and then, when it is glorified, distribute it to the faithful for their salvation.⁵¹

Just as the golden spiral in the Bamberg manuscript (see pl. 37) shows the ascent toward salvation beginning with the building of the church through the sacrament of baptism, likewise, Hildegard's illumination (see pl. 26) uses golden rays linking the cross (heaven) and the sacrament of the Eucharist (earth) to show a similar theme of progression toward salvation. Christ's body and blood is the source which is spiritually transformed into the Eucharist and when given to the faithful leads to salvation.

Interestingly, if this manuscript influenced Hildegard or her artist(s), a noticeable difference is the change in the sacrament from baptism to the Eucharist. The change of sacraments emphasises Ecclesia's role as bride, as demonstrated in the layout of the *Scivias* illumination (see pl. 26).

It is interesting to consider the portrayal of Ecclesia's femininity in the *Bamberg Commentaries*. In the Song of Songs illumination, Ecclesia appears feminine through her graceful posture and delicate frame, while her face is stern and masculine. Other Ottonian manuscripts of the tenth and eleventh centuries display an Ecclesia with a masculine-looking face, such as the *Aschaffenburg Pericopes* (see pl. 38) and *Sigebert of Minden's Sacramentary*, c. 1022-36, (see pl. 39), which perhaps is the style of representing a strong and virtuous woman as noted in Proverbs and Bede's commentary on these verses (*De Muliere Forti*).⁵² Out of the Ottonian manuscripts mentioned above, Bamberg's Ecclesia is the most feminine; perhaps this influenced Hildegard's depiction. In text and illumination Hildegard's Ecclesia is strikingly female, being portrayed with a jewelled robe, long hair, and three-diadem crown (see pl. 26). Ecclesia rightfully bears the titles of mother Church and bride of Christ.

The Passion of Lucy:

Important stylistic similarities can be found in the portrayal of Ecclesia in the *Scivias* and the portrayal of the martyr Lucy in the *Passion of Lucy*, from the Monastery of St. Vincent in Metz from 1130. Lucy (c. 283 – 304) was a virgin and martyr from Sicily, whose relics were moved to the monastery of St. Vincent by Otto III in 972.⁵³ During the late eleventh century, Sigebert of the Belgian monastery of Gembloux was a schoolmaster at Metz, and wrote the texts based on Lucy's life; the illustrations date to about 1130, approximately sixty years after Sigebert's text.⁵⁴ The Berlin manuscript represents a standard virgin martyr's life, and considering the small size and lack of monastic documents included, the manuscript was most likely open to a wider monastic community without the same precautions taken as is usual with more valued manuscripts in monastic care. Although its dedication page emphasises its primary readership consisted of monks, it has been suggested that it was available to nuns too.⁵⁵ It is therefore plausible that Hildegard might have seen this manuscript as it was not only located in a city, Metz, that she had visited, but also was possibly available to her. However, stylistic similarities suggest that the artist(s) of the Rupertsburg *Scivias* may have been closely linked to Metz.

A resemblance exists between the iconic portrayal of Lucy and Hildegard's personifications of Ecclesia and the Virtues. Lucy's portrait in the *Passion of Lucy* (see pl. 40) is a powerful iconic image of the saint, who appears regal and severe.⁵⁶ The manuscript's only entirely frontal

pose of a figure, Lucy, is crowned and wearing a jewelled dress customarily associated with saintly virgins, perhaps suggesting her royal status in heaven.⁵⁷ Hildegard's Ecclesia Book Two, Vision Four (see pl. 22) resembles this saintly virgin's frontal, and imposing, display of imperial power as crowned in a jewelled costume, although the type of crown and dress differ. The representations of Ecclesia also resemble each other stylistically, both being rendered in the *weichfliessend stil* mentioned earlier in this chapter in respect of the Schwarzrheindorf murals. Demus emphasises the importance of this style for twelfth century Cologne. According to him, the style grew out of the 'inexhaustible wealth of the artistic tradition of Cologne itself, a tradition which was capable of absorbing elements from both east and west without losing its essential character'.⁵⁸

There are other images of Ecclesia in *Scivias* that show how powerful was Hildegard's portrayal of her: Book Three, Vision Eleven (see pl. 2); Book Two, Vision Six (see pl. 26); Book Two, Vision Three (see pl. 30); and Book Two, Vision Five (see pl. 23). Both illuminations (see pls. 22 and 40) display powerful and imposing women through their large size and direct, frontal position; the image of a strong and virtuous woman is presented. These attributes of strength and power were seen as masculine, as shown in the previous manuscripts displaying a more masculine Ecclesia. However, Hildegard's artist(s) and the artist of the *Passion of Lucy* brought out these masculine attributes in a woman while still portraying her as beautiful and elegant using the 'soft-flowing' style, suggesting that women who have these characteristics are not necessarily

any less female, along with the simple fact that women can and do possess characteristics stereotypically thought of as male. Additionally, Lucy's portrait shares similarities to frontispieces to the Lives of Virgins: thus, even if Hildegard or her artist(s) were not familiar with the Berlin manuscript, they were very likely aware of the conventional portrayal of saintly virgins associated with imperial status, incorporating this motif into *Scivias* in the regal presentation of Ecclesia and the Virtues.⁵⁹

Another image from the *Passion of Lucy* worth comparing portrays Lucy with Paschasius, a pagan official (see pl. 41).⁶⁰ Lucy is sent to visit Paschasius as her fiancé has accused her of following the Christian faith. The image portrays the start of Lucy's formal interrogation with Paschasius seated on a throne. This resembles the upper quadrant of the *Scivias* image of Christ enthroned with Ecclesia grasping the side of the throne (see pl. 30). Lucy does not touch the throne where Paschasius is seated, however, she does reach out with both arms in his direction (see pl. 41). The positioning of Lucy's arms is similar to the positioning of Ecclesia's arms in the lower quadrant of the *Scivias* image (see pl. 30), although they are in reverse directions.

Another image from the *Passion of Lucy* portrays the wise virgins appearing before Christ (see pl. 42).⁶¹ Here the five virgins each hold an oil lamp, representing their good works. Interestingly, Christ's flower-like patterned vest (see pl. 42) is very similar to the decorative throne on which Christ sits in the previous *Scivias* image (see pl. 30). Both show a decorative pattern of a flower boxed within a square. Furthermore, the iconic Christ encircled with a crescent ring, separating him from the five virgins (see pl. 42) can be compared with an iconic image of Ecclesia (see pl. 23) in *Scivias*. The golden horn-shaped

objects arising from her chest are reminiscent of the ring-like semi-circle enclosing Christ in the *Passion of Lucy*. Both images display a central iconic and regal figure. Both are positioned in the *orans* pose (see pls. 23 and 42), with arms bent at the elbow, palms open and forward; although in the *Scivias* image (see pl. 23) Ecclesia's arms, draped with elongated sleeves, easily blend in with the golden horn-shaped objects. In Ecclesia's bosom are an array of virgins (see pl. 23), some with white veils on their heads, who stand in the midst of the bright golden splendour. In the text to this vision Hildegard explains that the virgins shine brightly because of their good works for Christ, and further emphasises the importance of virginity. One last note, the iconic facial appearance of Ecclesia (see pl. 23) is paralleled by the portrayal of Christ (see pl. 42) in the *Passion of Lucy*: both figures have a jewelled crown, hair falling on each side of their face, and stare outward toward the viewer.

Hortus Deliciarum:

Although a later manuscript, it is worth comparing Herrad of Hohenburg's *Hortus Deliciarum*⁶² with *Scivias* as the portrayal of Ecclesia in the former shares the power and monumentality of Hildegard's portrayal. In the *Scivias* text and illuminations (see pls. 26 and 30), Hildegard's presentation of Ecclesia could just as easily be applied to Hohenburg's image of Ecclesia in a Crucifixion scene in the *Hortus Deliciarum* (see pl. 43): "I could not make out her attire, except that she was arrayed in great splendor and gleamed lucid serenity, and on her breast shone a red glow like the dawn; and I heard a sound of all kinds of music singing about her, 'Like the dawn, greatly sparkling.'"⁶³ Both manuscripts portray Ecclesia shining

brilliantly with a golden crown, married to Christ and mother of the faithful. In *Scivias* Book One, Vision Five (see pl. 21), Synagoga is a blinded monumental figure, mother of patriarchs, who “was soiled by deviation from the Law and by transgression of the heritage of her fathers.”⁶⁴

There is another similarity to *Scivias* in an apocalyptic image of the portrayal of the Church in the *Hortus Deliciarum*. In the *Hortus* the presentation of Ecclesia (see pl. 44) is monumental exceeding the geometric circles labelled the sun and moon behind her, giving her a powerful, regal appearance.⁶⁵ Like the portrayal of Ecclesia in *Scivias* (see pls. 22 and 23), she is shown in a frontal position, eyes wide open staring at the viewer, and is displayed with a three diadem crown and regal clothing. In the *Hortus* illumination (see pl. 44) on the right of Ecclesia is a dragon with a seven crowned head representing the devil who wishes to snatch away a baby. However, an angel appears in the upper left hand corner and rescues the infant. Angrily, the dragon vomits forth water in hope of drowning Ecclesia, however the earth swallows the water up. On the right of Ecclesia (see pl. 44) is a beast with a sword, who according to Herrad is the Antichrist.⁶⁶ With Ecclesia’s lifesaving wings she flies away from the danger of the Antichrist. Similarly, in a *Scivias* image (see pl. 22) of the confirmation of the church, Ecclesia appears enormous in comparison to a smaller form of a dragon’s head spewing forth water. Further, a comparison can be made to another image of a *Scivias* Ecclesia (see pl. 23) showing her arms outstretch, hands upright palm open with long glowing golden sleeves. Ecclesia (see pl. 23) has golden horn-like extensions

arising from her bosom reaching upwards and is cradling virgins in her bosom. Both the golden sleeves and golden horns are reminiscent of Ecclesia's mighty wings in Herrad's *Hortus Deliciarum* image (see pl. 44); these three elements add power to the iconic portrayal of Ecclesia.

Hildegard's *Scivias* suggests a tension between Synagoga's guilt of killing Christ and her redemption, which is maintained in Herrad's Crucifixion scene (see pl. 43). This tension is also maintained in representations of Synagoga and Ecclesia in the south portal of Strasbourg Cathedral (see pl. 45).⁶⁷ Work began in the late twelfth century on rebuilding the Strasbourg south transept, and the south portal dates to around 1235. Although later than the Rupertsburg manuscript, such representations do show the continuing importance of these iconic figures, and were influenced by the same artistic and intellectual currents as influenced Hildegard and Herrad of Hohenburg.⁶⁸ The *Scivias* illuminations portraying Synagoga and Ecclesia (see pls. 21 and 26) reflect the biblical text of the Song of Songs, which became popular in exegesis during the second half the twelfth century and throughout the thirteenth century. Although the *Scivias* figures of Synagoga and Ecclesia differ slightly from the Strasbourg figures (see pl. 45), their representation in the *Scivias* text, as quoted above, is mirrored in the dramatic portrayal in the south portal of Strasbourg Cathedral.

Baptismal Exorcism:

After describing several similarities between representations of Ecclesia in *Scivias* and those in other manuscripts, it is worth noting an example where

the representation gets an unusual twist in the Rupertsburg manuscript. In one *Scivias* illumination, the theme of the expulsion of demons is creatively adapted to represent instead baptism.⁶⁹ Hildegard, who was known to have performed an exorcism on a young noblewoman named Sigewize, would have been familiar with this image.⁷⁰ This design is found in the historiated initial 'D' in the *Drogo Sacramentary* (c. 850) in Metz (see pl. 46).⁷¹ This initial illustrates the life of St. Arnulf, showing him baptizing, preaching, and exorcising. Exorcism in medieval art was conventionally shown as in this image with a demon leaving the possessed individual's mouth. Interestingly, a manuscript from Trier, made c. 1100 illustrating the healing of a leper shows the expulsion of demons through the mouth and anus of two additional men (see pl. 47).⁷² In Book Two, Vision Three (see pl. 30) Hildegard incorporated this design of a figure coming out of the mouth of Ecclesia, mother of the Catholic faith, in relation to the sacrament of baptism:

Then I saw black children moving in the air near the ground like fishes in water, and they entered the womb of the image through the openings that pierced it. But she groaned, drawing them upward to her head, and they went out by her mouth, while she remained untouched. And behold, that serene light with the figure of a man in it, blazing with a glowing fire, which I had seen in my previous vision, again appeared to me, and stripped the black skin off each of them and threw it away; and it clothed each of them in a pure white garment and opened to them the serene light, saying to them one by one: 'Cast off the old injustice, and put on the new sanctity. For the gate of your inheritance is unlocked for you.'⁷³

The black children are catechumens who are stained with original sin.

Thus, baptismal exorcism was introduced in the church as preparation for the sacrament, not because the catechumens were possessed, but because it was thought that original sin subjected an individual to the power of the

devil and his works. When an individual had original sin, their body was a tabernacle for the devil. Therefore, baptismal exorcism was seen as a means to restrain the devil from interfering with the ceremony in which the recipient of the sacrament renounces Satan and becomes a member of the Church.⁷⁴ The baptismal ceremony sometimes included *exsufflatio*, or the exhaling of the demon, so that there was space for *insufflatio* – inhaling the Holy Spirit – could occur.⁷⁵ In the commentary Hildegard briefly noted the role of the Holy Spirit in this sacrament: “For the Holy Spirit, as was said before, expels Satan’s power from Man in baptism, sanctifying him as a new person in regeneration, so that he can receive his lost joys.”⁷⁶ The exsufflation was portrayed in medieval art with demons being expelled through the mouth (see pls. 46 and 47). Hildegard’s iconography of baptism (see pl. 30) emphasises Ecclesia virginal status, despite her – like Mary – conceiving and bearing children. According to St. Paul in his letter to the Ephesians, “Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her, that he might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word that he might present the church to himself in splendour, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing that she might be holy and without blemish. (Eph. 5: 25-27).”⁷⁷ Therefore, Hildegard’s illumination shows Ecclesia’s baptismal exorcism (see pl. 30), as she is unaffected from the corruption of the children who pass through her. Exorcism was a part of consecrating places and things, like churches or altars, to protect those using them. Hildegard’s baptismal imagery conveys Ecclesia’s strength and purity, demonstrated through a self-regeneration of the Church for protection against the attacks of the devil.

Another *Scivias* illumination that shows the exhalation of a figure from the mouth is an image of a soul departing from the body, whose fate is decided upon depending on the good or evil works performed during its life in Book One, Vision Four (see pl. 27). Hildegard compared the human body to a tree and the soul to its sap, hence the green colour of the figure exhaled through the woman's mouth. Hildegard explained that when the body sins by participating in evil deeds, the soul is remorseful and needs to release itself from the body. Upon the soul's departure from the physical body, good and evil spirits appear. The spirits wait upon the judgment of the soul, and depending upon the outcome, the soul is led by either the good or the evil spirits. Through this illumination, Hildegard reminds the reader of their baptismal vows to reject Satan and incorporate the Triune God into their life.

Thus, this chapter has shown how the miniatures of the Rupertsburg *Scivias* fit into the artistic milieu of the twelfth century Rhineland. The particular case studies provide examples of work affected by the same artistic and intellectual currents as influenced *Scivias*. The *Scivias* illuminations are not purely derivative, however: Hildegard's adaptations of conventional designs are distinctive. Wider influences were moulded when incorporated into the *Scivias*, becoming in many respects original: a prime example being her use of feminine imagery – noted in chapter three – and the baptismal exorcism theme mentioned in this chapter.

In considering the artistic and intellectual currents that affected Hildegard and the Rupertsburg *Scivias*, the influence of Apocalyptic texts and imagery is crucial. The next chapter contextualises *Scivias* as an Apocalyptic manuscript, and brings out the parallels in the lives of Hildegard and John of Patmos, highlighting similarities in the experiences of these two visionaries and in their strident denunciation of the moral failings of the church.

¹ See section on dating below.

² Dodwell, 1993, 33-34.

³ Caviness, 2001a, section VII, 75: "No other illuminated manuscript from Hildegard's Rupertsberg has been authenticated, so comparisons cannot be made with other illuminated books from her scriptorium."

⁴ For places visited, see Feiss, 1995, 79, and Flanagan, 1998b, 9.

⁵ Silvas, 1998, 191, and Flanagan, 1998b, 8-9.

⁶ Flanagan, 1998b, 9, Silvas, 1998, 191, Newman, 1987, 11, and Maddocks, 2001, 215.

⁷ Feiss, 1995, 79.

⁸ Derolez, 1998, 24.

⁹ Baillet, 1912. See chapter two for more detail on Baillet and De Puniet's calligraphic evidence for the link of the Rupertsburg *Scivias* to Trier.

¹⁰ *Ibid.* 139-142.

¹¹ Translation from Hart and Bishop, 1990, 59-61. Original Latin text from Führkötter and Carlevaris, 1978, 3-6 is as follows: "In millesimo centesimo quadragesimo primo Filii Dei Iesu Christi incarnationis anno, cum quadraginta duorum annorum septemque mensium essem... manus ad scribendum apposui... uix opus istud decem annis consummans ad finem perduxi. In diebus Heinrici moguntini archiepiscopi et Conradi Romanorum regis et Cunonis abbatis in monte beati Disibodi pontificis, sub papa Eugenio, hae uisiones et uerba facta sunt."

¹² For the *Scivias* dating debate, see Derolez, 1998, 17-28.

¹³ Derolez, 1998, 24, no. 21.

¹⁴ Führkötter and Carlevaris, 1978, xxxiii-xxxiv.

¹⁵ Caviness, 2001a, section VII, 73.

¹⁶ Derolez, 1998, 24.

¹⁷ Derolez, 1998, 18-20, 24, and Newman, 1998, 224, no. 2.

¹⁸ Derolez, 1998, 24.

¹⁹ Derolez, 1998, 23: Although, the Oxford manuscript has a slightly later date and was not made in the Rupertsberg convent, it nevertheless provides substantial evidence for the argument.

²⁰ Derolez, 1998, 23.

²¹ Derolez, 1998, 24.

²² As discussed in chapter two it is plausible that Hildegard began sketches, which became the basis for the illuminations, during the visionary process and continued to modify them while working on the text. See Caviness, 2001a, section VII, 73.

²³ Demus & Hirmer, 1970, 128.

²⁴ Demus & Hirmer, 1970, 604.

²⁵ Demus & Hirmer, 1970, 127.

- ²⁶ Baillet, 1912, 53.
- ²⁷ Pl. 29 from Demus & Hirmer, 1970, fig. 249: Schwarzrheindorf: Sankt Clemens, South wall: Transfiguration, Roof: Allegories of the tribulations of Israel, East niche: Figure symbolising one of the four kingdoms of the world, c. 1150-70.
- ²⁸ Dronke, 1998, 10.
- ²⁹ Zimm, 1972, 324 fn.23.
- ³⁰ Zimm, 1972, 324, fn.23.
- ³¹ Caviness, 2001a, section II, 11, and pl. 31 from Caviness, 2001a, section II, fig. 19: *Handbook of Computus*, Byrhtferth of Ramsey, c. 1110-12. Oxford, St. John's College, MS 17, f. 7v.
- ³² Pl. 32 from Singer, 1928, 206: Simplified representation of *Rupertsberg Scivias*, Book I, vision 3 (four circles added by Kathryn Cesarz).
- ³³ Caviness, 2001a, section II, 11.
- ³⁴ Pl. 33 from Mentré, 1984, 52, 65-66: *Clavis Physicae*, Honorius d'Autun, mid twelfth century. Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, MS lat. 6734, f. 3v.
- ³⁵ Mentré, 1984, 65-66.
- ³⁶ There is also a three-faced figure in Herrad of Hohenburg's *Hortus Deliciarum*, dated 1176-1196, in an image illustrating philosophy, the liberal arts, and the poets: see Green, 1979, vol. II, 33 (f. 32r).
- ³⁷ Murray and Murray, 1996, 357.
- ³⁸ Murray and Murray, 1996, 357, and Speake, 1994, 106.
- ³⁹ Speake, 1994, 106, and Strayer, 1987, 256.
- ⁴⁰ Hazzikostas, 1998, 55.
- ⁴¹ Hazzikostas, 1998, 55.
- ⁴² Translation from Hart and Bishop, 1990, 161. Original Latin text from Führkötter and Carlevaris, 1978, 125, is as follows: "Quapropter uides serenissimam lucem, quae sine macula illusionis, defectonis ac fallaciae designat Patrem, et in ipsa sapphirini coloris speciem hominis, quae sine macula obduracionis, inuidiae et iniquitatis declarat Filium... quae tota suauissimo rutilante igne flagrat, qui ignis sine macula ariditatis, mortalitatis atque tenebrositatis demonstrat Spiritum sanctum."
- ⁴³ Caviness, 2001a, section VII, 80-81.
- ⁴⁴ Caviness, 2001a, section VII, 80-81: In Carolingian and Ottonian art Christ was sometimes presented as long-haired and beardless, although in the twelfth century this was rarely seen.
- ⁴⁵ Caviness, 2001a, section VII, 80-81.
- ⁴⁶ Pl. 35 from Dodwell, 1993, 312, fig. 318: *St. Ambrose*, mid twelfth century. Bamberg, Staatsbibliothek, MS Patr. 5, f. 1v.
- ⁴⁷ Dronke, 1998, 13, and Dodwell, 1993, 309.
- ⁴⁸ Pl. 36 from Vassilaki, 2000, 313: Medallion with the Virgin Orans, twelfth century. Bronze, Munich, Christian Schmidt Collection, Inv. No. 919.
- ⁴⁹ Vassilaki, 2000, 313.
- ⁵⁰ Pl. 37 from Hahn, 2001, 37, fig. 6: *Bamberg Commentaries*, c. 1000. Bamberg, Staatsbibliothek, MS Bibl. 22, f. 4v.
- ⁵¹ Translation from Hart and Bishop, 1990, 240. Original Latin text from Führkötter and Carlevaris, 1978, 236 is as follows: "Quia sicut faber aurum suum per ignem modo liquefaciens unit et modo unitum diuidit, ita etiam et ego Pater carnem et sanguinem Filii mei per sanctificationem Spiritus sancti in oblatione nunc glorifico et nunc glorificatum fidelibus hominibus ad salutem ipsorum distribuo."
- ⁵² Pl. 38 from Mayr-Harting, 1991, part II, pl. IX: *Aschaffenburg Pericopes*, c. 970. Aschaffenburg, Hofbibliothek, MS 2, f. 1v. Pl. 39 from Mayr-Harting, 1991, part II, 45, fig. 31: *Sacramentary of Bishop Sigebert of Minden*, c. 1022-36. Berlin, Staatsbibliothek, MS theol. lat. fol. 2, f. 9 (detail).
- ⁵³ <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/09414a.htm>
- ⁵⁴ Hahn, 2001, 97.
- ⁵⁵ Hahn, 2001, 97, 368, no. 32.
- ⁵⁶ Pl. 40 from Hahn, 2001, 98, fig. 29: *Passion of Lucy*, c. 1130. Berlin, Staatliche Museen, Kupferstichkabinett, 78 A 4, f. 61r.
- ⁵⁷ Hahn, 2001, 99.
- ⁵⁸ Demus & Hirmer 1970, 128.
- ⁵⁹ Hahn, 2001, 96, fig. 28, 99.

- ⁶⁰ Pl. 41 from Hahn, 2001, 114, fig. 38: *Passion of Lucy*, c. 1130. Berlin, Staatliche Museen, Kupferstichkabinett, 78 A 4, f. 3r.
- ⁶¹ Pl. 42 from Hahn, 2001, 102, fig. 31: *Passion of Lucy*, c. 1130. Berlin, Staatliche Museen, Kupferstichkabinett, 78 A 4, f. 18r.
- ⁶² For origin and nature of the *Hortus Deliciarum*, see chapter one.
- ⁶³ Pl. 43 from Nicolai, 2002, 120, fig. 11: *Hortus Deliciarum*, c. 1176-96. Formerly Strasbourg, Bibliothèque Nationale, f. 150. Translation from Hart and Bishop, 1990, 169. Original Latin text from Führkötter and Carlevaris, 1978, 134-35 is as follows: "Sed nulla uestimenta eius considerare poteram, nisi quod tota lucidissima serenitate fulgens multo splendore circumdata fuerat, in pectore eius uelut aurora rubeo fulgore rutilante; ubi etiam multimode genere musicorum audiui de ipsa 'quasi aurora ualde rutilas' decantari."
- ⁶⁴ Nicolai, 2002, 119, no. 48.
- ⁶⁵ Pl. 44 from Smith and Taylor, 1996, 99, fig. 50: *Hortus Deliciarum*, c. 1176-96. Formerly Strasbourg, Bibliothèque Nationale, f. 261v.
- ⁶⁶ Smith and Taylor, 1996, 100.
- ⁶⁷ Pl. 45 from Nicolai, 2002, 116, fig. 6: Strasbourg Cathedral, Ecclesia and Synagoga, c. 1235. Now in Musée d'Oeuvre Notre-Dame, Strasbourg.
- ⁶⁸ Nicolai, 2002, 118-19: it seems a connection exists between Hildegard and Strasbourg. In the early thirteenth century a Strasbourgian cleric went to Paris to inquire about Hildegard's holiness and the quality or worth of her visions.
- ⁶⁹ Schiller, 1971, vol. I, 173-174: Schiller provides images of the expulsion of demons, however, he concludes, "in general, the healing of the demoniacs was an uncommon theme."
- ⁷⁰ Maddocks, 2001, 223-226.
- ⁷¹ Pl. 46 from Hahn, 2001, 144, fig. 55: *Drogo Sacramentary*, c. 850. Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, MS lat. 9428, f. 91r.
- ⁷² Pl. 47 from Kessler, 1994, section I, fig. 7: Martin Healing the Leper, c. 1100. Trier, Stadtbibliothek, MS Cod. 1378, f. 136r.
- ⁷³ Translation from Hart and Bishop, 1990, 169. Original Latin text from Führkötter and Carlevaris, 1978, 135, is as follows: "Deinde uidi nigros infantes iuxta terram in aere quasi pisces in aqua pergentes, et uentrem eiusdem imagines in foraminibus ubi perforata erat intrantes. At illa ingemuit, sursum eos ad caput suum trahens, ubi ad os eius exierunt, ipsa tamen integra permanente. Et ecce illa serena lux et in ipsa species hominis tota rutilante igne flagrans (secundum uisionem quam prius uideram) iterum mihi apparuit, et singulis eorum nigerrimam cutem abstrahens ac extra uiam easdem cutes proiciens, singulos illorum candidissima ueste induit ac eis serenissimam lucem aperuit, singulis eorum dicens: 'Exue uetustatem iniustitiae, induens nouitatem sanctitatis. Reserata est enim tibi ianua hereditatis tuae.'"
- ⁷⁴ New Catholic Encyclopedia, Vol. 5, 1967, 749.
- ⁷⁵ New Catholic Encyclopedia, Vol. 2, 1967, 61-63.
- ⁷⁶ Translated from Hart and Bishop, 1990, 181. Original Latin text from Führkötter and Carlevaris, 1978, 152, is as follows: "Nam Spiritus sanctus, ut praedictum est, potestatem Satanae in baptismo expellit ab homine, sanctificans eum nouum hominem in regeneratione, ut perditam gaudia recipere ualeat."
- ⁷⁷ Eph. 5:25-27.

Chapter Five: *Seivias* as an Apocalyptic Manuscript

This chapter addresses the theme of the apocalypse in *Scivias* by examining both illuminations and text. It begins by tracing the theme through Church history, looking at Adso of Montier-en-Der's *Letter on the Antichrist*. A primary focus is Hildegard's demand for clerical reform, a demand strikingly expressed through her use of apocalyptic imagery and language. In particular, this affects her depiction of Ecclesia, the female personification of the church. Hildegard's use of the apocalyptic theme of the battle of good and evil is considered in the context of her morality play, the *Ordo virtutum*. As the *Scivias* illuminations themselves were likely to have been influenced by apocalyptic images, an examination of the apocalyptic cycles in two twelfth century manuscripts, the *Liber Floridus* and the *Hortus Deliciarum*, forms an important part of the chapter. Also, similarities found between Hildegard and John of Patmos, the possible author of the Book of Revelation, are highlighted. This chapter shows how the text of Revelation can evoke the *Scivias* illuminations, and might even be seen as a commentary for them. This chapter thus adds an important dimension to our understanding of *Scivias*, suggesting that apocalyptic themes in art and Church history were highly influential in its creation.

Background: the Book of Revelation and the Apocalyptic Genre

The word 'apocalypse' derives from the Greek word meaning 'reveal', and refers to a divine truth or secret revealed by God.¹ The Book of Revelation is now the last book of the New Testament; "the revelation (Gk. apokálypsis) of Jesus Christ",² and takes the form of a letter to each of the seven churches in Asia. Revelation was written during a thirty-year range (the mid 60s to the end of the first century/early second century), and in the context of two persecutions: the

Neronian persecution (after the fire in Rome in c. 64) and the Domitianic persecution (the late c. 90s).³ The biblical text was meant to admonish Christians to remain faithful and trust in Christ believing in the Second coming and the Last Judgement bringing eternal life to all who believe in Christ. It is the most widely known example of a Christian apocalyptic text, although the apocalyptic genre itself can be traced as early as 200 B.C.⁴ Apocalyptic books characteristically include the following: visions, an 'interpreting' angel, prophecies, dualism between good and evil, descriptions of the end of the world, the attribution of mystical qualities to numbers (e.g. 666 being the 'number of the beast'), pessimism, and strange imagery.⁵ Form, content, and function in the genre are usually similar: (1) form: revelatory prophecies are usually conveyed through visionary experience inspired by God, and the structured events lead to a climax; (2) content: usually eschatological in nature; (3) function: usually urges readers to change behaviour and so prepare for the end of time.⁶

Early Christian apocalypticism centred on Jesus, and fuelled the theme of 'Antichristology' by providing a detailed account of the final enemy.⁷ The term Antichrist is appropriate because he will work against Christ, and is contrary to everything Christ stands for in this world. The theme of the Antichrist derives from Revelation 13 and 17, which gives a description of the monster and his adulterous mother, the antithesis of the pure Virgin Mary. Additionally, Revelation 13 speaks of two beasts and a dragon forming a satanic Trinity, explicitly describing the second beast as human.⁸

A popular source of Western Apocalypticism that Hildegard would have been aware of is a *Letter on the Origin and Life of the Antichrist* (c. 950) written by the monk Adso of Montier-en-Der (c. 910-92), and commissioned by the

Frankish Queen Gerberga, sister of Otto I and wife of Louis IV of West Francia, who wanted clarification of the various legends in circulation.⁹ Adso's letter was popular as it supplied an informative description of the life of the Antichrist, and with the coming millennium served the fears and curiosities of a preoccupied society.¹⁰ Also, the structure of the letter more resembled a saint's *vita* than exegesis making the text appealing and easy to read.¹¹ The letter, written in Latin and vernacular languages, begins with a description of the forerunners of the Antichrist, including Antiochus, Nero, and, "Anyone, layman, cleric, or monk, who lives contrary to justice and attacks the rule of his way of life and blasphemes what is good is an Antichrist, the minister of Satan."¹² Following this, Adso delivered a detailed report of the Antichrist, based on the Book of Revelation:

The Antichrist will be born from the Jewish people, that is, from the tribe of Dan...The Antichrist will have magicians, enchanters, diviners, and wizards who at the devil's bidding will rear him and instruct him in every evil, error, and wicked art...He will circumcise himself and will pretend that he is the son of Almighty God...[He] will plague the whole world...for three and a half years...The teachers say that Antichrist will be killed on the Mount of Olives...the place opposite to where the Lord ascended to heaven.¹³

During the Antichrist's reign the downfall of the Papacy and Holy Roman Empire will occur. Adso's letter does not give the period of the Antichrist's reign, which would have revealed the timing of the Second coming and the Last Judgement. Adso's detailed description of the Antichrist's life was much referred to in medieval times, and was highly influential on medieval art and literature.¹⁴ It certainly helped form the context of apocalyptic thought in which apocalyptic aspects of *Scivias* should be understood.

Hildegard and the Apocalypse

Of course, Hildegard's *Scivias* illuminations are not the only ones to make use of apocalyptic imagery: such imagery is evident in illuminations created both before and after the *Scivias*. Comparison of the *Scivias* images with those found in other manuscripts – although somewhat of a reprise of the theme of chapter four – serves to contextualise Hildegard's use of such apocalyptic images.¹⁵

The *Liber Floridus*, written by the canon monk Lambert at the Chapter of Our Lady at Saint-Omer in Liège, was completed in 1120, and is one of the most important illustrated medieval encyclopaedias, containing a calendar and an apocalyptic cycle. Seven copies of the *Liber Floridus* survive, ranging in date from the third quarter of the twelfth century to the early sixteenth century. The *Liber Floridus*'s apocalyptic cycle lacks a commentary, which, although listed in the table of contents, is lost from the original manuscript. However, according to a recent *Liber Floridus* colloquia edited by Alberto Derolez:

this cycle can be reconstructed from the surviving later copies. The earliest one, in Wolfenbüttel, has the advantage of being not only accurate in the iconographical rendering of the illustrations preserved in the autograph, but also in producing them with a fair degree of stylistic understanding.¹⁶

Even though the apocalyptic cycle in the Wolfenbüttel copy is incomplete, it can be reconstructed from the extant later copies in Paris, Chantilly, and The Hague. The following example focuses specifically on an image from The Hague copy of the *Liber Floridus* (see pl. 48), dated 1460.¹⁷ This shows a clear similarity with the *Scivias* image of a face in the genitalia region (see pl. 2). The *Liber Floridus* image illustrates Revelation 16, where the seven bowls of the plagues of God are discussed. The fifth bowl was poured on the beast and its kingdom. Both images include a crowned figure with an additional face covering the

genitalia, along with an erect phallus symbolising the Antichrist. A similar image in the Paris copy of the *Liber Floridus* (see pl. 49) illustrates Revelation 16 and 17, which was a topos to show the Devil with faces at his genitals, and at the very least provides one example of the many similarities between the seven copies.¹⁸ Obviously, Hildegard did not see this image, and it is unlikely that she was familiar with the *Liber Floridus*. However, what remains important is that this image was likely to have been included in the original *Liber Floridus* and is possibly representative of the stock of images available to Lambert for the creation of his encyclopaedia. Hildegard and her artist(s) would have drawn from a stock of similar images.

Another *Liber Floridus* image illustrates Revelation 6-8 (see pl. 50), which includes the head of a beast, labelled 'infernus,' spewing fire that engulfs one figure, labelled 'fames' meaning "hunger."¹⁹ This image is similar to Book Two, Vision Seven (see pl. 51a), which shows a monster spewing flames that engulf humans and the earth. In Revelation 8, the sounds of the trumpets of the first and second angels are the harbingers of the flames that burn one third of the earth and sea; the third angel's trumpet causes a great burning star to fall from heaven; and the fourth angel's trumpet results in a third of the moon, stars and sun to lose their brightness. The effects of the four angels' trumpets can be related to the monster's fiery flames in *Scivias*. Hildegard divided them into four: one flame sent forth to the secular people who pursue earthly affairs (first trumpet: burning of the earth); another to the abyss (second trumpet: burning of the sea); another to the clouds that will affect individuals who seek heaven, but may fall back to earth (third trumpet: a star falls from the sky); and one flame to

spiritual people whose hearts are plagued with darkness (fourth trumpet: darkness of the sky).²⁰

Another *Liber Floridus* image is the tree of Virtues (see pl. 52).²¹ From a trunk of a tree come flowering branches with medallions – alternating in background colour between gold and blue – of the personified virtues, with the writing ‘Arbor Bona,’ representing the fidelity of Ecclesia.²² The message conveyed is that if one overcomes the temptation of the flesh, then, like the virtues, the fruitful tree of life will be the reward. Comparison can be made between the top central medallion bust of Ecclesia where ‘Fides’ is written in the *Liber Floridus*, and the top medallion of Queen Humility in *Scivias*: both are depicted with a similar gesture of arms wide open, although in the *Scivias* image Queen Humility holds a Eucharist wafer and a fruit branch (see pl. 53). In the *Liber Floridus*, the other twelve virtues are labelled with their medallions. All of the *Liber Floridus* medallions contain only one virtue per medallion. In the *Scivias* image the medallion enclosing Queen Humility is the only roundel with just one figure; the remaining six medallions contain several virtues.

Herrad of Hohenburg’s encyclopaedia, the *Hortus Deliciarum*, dated 1176-96, contains an image that is worth comparing with a *Scivias* illumination. This image in the *Hortus Deliciarum* illustrates the ladder of virtues (see pl. 54) and has a Latin inscription that translates as: “ascent of virtue and the exercise of holy sanctity that obtain the crown of eternal life.”²³ Charity is the only virtue that reaches the top of the ladder to join Christ, represented by a hand. Meanwhile, the other virtues attempt to climb the diagonal ladder but are drawn back by earthly temptations, or else fall from the devil’s arrows. However, through penitence the virtues may climb the ladder again. In *Scivias*, a similar

theme of the ascent of the virtues on a diagonal ladder is used in Book Three, Vision Eight (see pl. 55), which reads: "But in the pillar, there was an ascent like a ladder from bottom to top, on which I saw all the virtues of God descending and ascending, laden down with stones and going with keen zeal to their work."²⁴ This theme addresses the struggle between good and evil, calling to mind the morality play that is included in the last *Scivias* vision (see below). The *Scivias* text identifies seven virtues along their ascent to heaven, periodically using symbols of a tree with branches, recalling the tree of virtues in the *Liber Floridus*.

Further evidence for the convention of the ladder symbolism is provided by the following examples. A copy from Cologne of the twelfth-century spiritual handbook for nuns, the *Speculum Virginum*, uses the metaphor to convey the importance of doing good works for those hoping to reach heaven (see pl. 56).²⁵ Additionally, an image from the *Zwiefalten Legendary*, dated 1162, depicts St. Benedict in his scriptorium along with two ladders demonstrating the morality theme (see pl. 57).²⁶ It is unlikely that the *Speculum Virginum* influenced Hildegard directly, although she visited both Cologne and Zwiefalten, and so might have seen the two other images. Again, even if Hildegard or her artist(s) did not see the images themselves, they were likely to have had access to similar ones because ladder symbolism is conventional. Comparison can be made with one *Scivias* image (see pl. 55) and an earlier illumination in Book Three, Vision Four (see pl. 15b). The image (see pl. 15b) shows a silver pillar with steps on either side, like a ladder, with a dove at the very top, symbolising Christ. On the left side are the prophets Abraham, Moses, and Joshua; on the right are seated other prophets and patriarchs. Hildegard described a woman representing the

knowledge of God (see pl. 15a), and this virtue proclaimed: ““Consider the garment you have put on, and do not forget your Creator Who made you.””²⁷

The symbolic pillar of the word of God along with the virtue of the knowledge of God is a reminder to individuals baptised in the church to do good works and turn away from evil. The reference to the garment might indirectly allude to the priestly robes of the clergy, reminding the ecclesiastical leaders of their vows of humility and poverty.

One apocalyptic image that Hildegard might have seen is from a *Zwiefalten Psalter* (see pl. 58), dating to the twelfth century, illustrating the passage in Revelation (14:1-4) where 144,000 sing and surround the Lamb on Mount Zion.²⁸ A similarity can be seen in the *Scivias* illumination Book One, Vision Six (see pl. 16) showing the hierarchy of angels singing praise to God displayed in the shape of a crown. In the commentary on this image Hildegard discussed the significance of each of the nine armies of angels. The *Zwiefalten* image is the standard representation of the apocalyptic theme of the New Jerusalem. Interestingly, a copy of the *Liber Floridus* (see pl. 59) from the mid-thirteenth century illustrates a similar design of concentric circles with angels surrounding the outer circle, and the twelve apostles surrounding an inner group of circles.²⁹

Hildegard's *Ordo Virtutum*

This last vision of *Scivias* contains hymns and the first ever morality play *Ordo virtutum*, or the *Play of Virtues* found in Book Three, Vision Thirteen (see pl. 53). A morality play involves a struggle between good and evil, a distinctly apocalyptic theme, usually with the objective to teach a moral lesson.³⁰ A

morality play consists of characters personifying abstract concepts, as found in Hildegard's play, along with a separation of gender caused by following the gender of the Latin names for the characters: sixteen virtues and the soul as female; the Devil as male.³¹ The illumination accompanying the text shows the blessed citizens in heaven, including Queen Humility, in seven roundels (see pl. 53). In the roundels the symphony of the blessed sing praises to Mary, the Old Prophets and Patriarchs, the Apostles, and Martyrs. It is suggested that this play was acted out at Hildegard's convent at Rupertsberg, with her nuns playing the virtues and the soul, and Volmar playing the Devil.³² The *Play of Virtues* commences with a procession of virtues who encounter a group of souls mourning over the alienation of their earthly life. One of the souls, Anima, doubts her faith, and consequently journeys away from her fellow souls and virtues to seek the world below. In the following excerpt the Devil attempts to seduce Queen Humility's followers, the virtues and souls:

THE DEVIL (to the virtues): What good is it that there should be no power but God's? I say that I will give you everything to the one who follows me and his own will; but you and all your followers have nothing to give, for none of you knows who you are.

HUMILITY: I and my companions know well that you are the ancient dragon, who tried to fly higher than the Most High, and was thrown into the deepest abyss by God Himself.³³

In response to this exchange all the virtues reject the Devil. In particular, Anima, a sinful soul, laments because she left the company of the virtues and other souls. The virtues encourage Anima to be strong, to resist the temptations of the Devil, and reassure her that she is welcome once more in their company. Anima, along with the virtues, fights against the angry Devil, and leaves him bound in chains to rejoin the blessed Virtues and Queen Humility in heaven. The play finishes with the Devil bound in chains as seen in Book Two, Vision Seven (see pl. 51b) in the

lower half of the image with a multitude of the blessed shining brightly, unharmed by the Devil's flames or poison. The Devil's flames signify the evils that he sends out into the world onto the people. This illumination shows how God strengthens the faithful to allow them to conquer the Devil, preparing them for the Second coming and the Last Judgement.

Apocalyptic Reform: Illumination Book Three, Vision Eleven

Clerical reform is central to Hildegard's theme of salvation history. She believed that the church must be purged from all sinfulness so that spiritual renewal could occur. She believed the false prophets did not cause the church's sinfulness, but rather were the symptoms, or consequences, of the church's corruption.³⁴ One of Hildegard's most striking illuminations is found in Book Three, Vision Eleven (see pl. 2), which is the primary apocalyptic vision. Hildegard began the vision with an account of the various animals she saw, each representing a specific era of individuals who became sinful by indulging in the pleasures of the flesh.

Then I looked to the North, and behold! five beasts stood there... One is like a dog, fiery but not burning; for that era will produce people with a biting temperament, who seem fiery in their own estimation, but do not burn with the justice of God...Another is like a yellow lion; for this era will endure martial people, who instigate many wars but do not think of the righteousness of God in them; for those kingdoms will begin to weaken and tire, as the yellow color shows...Another is like a pale horse; for those times will produce people who drown themselves in sin, and in their licentious and swift-moving pleasures neglect all virtuous activities. And then these kingdoms will lose their ruddy strength and grow pale with the fear of ruin, and their hearts will be broken...And another like a black pig; for this epoch will have leaders who blacken themselves with misery and wallow in the mud of impurity. They will infringe the divine law by fornication and other like evils, and will plot to diverge from the holiness of God's commands...And the last is like a gray wolf. For those times will have people who plunder each other, robbing the powerful and the fortunate; and in these conflicts they will show themselves to be neither black nor white, but gray in their cunning.³⁵

In the twelfth century, Hildegard's beasts would be identified as apocalyptic symbols bringing to mind creatures from the books of Daniel and Revelation.³⁶ Five beasts look toward the West, an apocalyptic direction associated with the Last Judgement.³⁷ Interestingly, Hildegard saw the five beasts in the North, because in Christian symbolism that is the direction from where evil comes.³⁸ In Hildegard's later work, the *Liber divinorum operum* (1163-74), she expands on the description of the periods of the five beasts. Hildegard believed she lived during the epoch of the fiery dog, a time of spiritual weakness, in which both secular and religious people will be corrupt, and referred to the clergy during this period as forerunners of the Antichrist.³⁹ The age of the lion will be a time of chastisement where spiritual renewal is obtained through the Church's purgation of sinfulness.⁴⁰ Peace and abundance will be bestowed upon this period, along with a conversion of pagans. The third beast (see pl. 2), the pale horse, will experience both sorrow at the church's pollution and then spiritual renewal. In the beginning of the age the Church and Empire will be weak, later gaining strength. The church will regain its pristine order with a time of peace. The age of the black pig, a time of spiritual decline, will see the reign of the Antichrist's forerunners when many will leave the church.⁴¹ The signs of the end will be present, before the final age of the grey wolf. This period will witness the reign of the Antichrist, and the persecution of the faithful. After the Antichrist is defeated, spiritual renewal of the Church will be achieved, and finally the Last Judgment will occur.

Hildegard viewed the corruption of the church in terms of the apocalypse, linking the clergy with the forerunners of the Antichrist. She considered the clergy's sexual immorality as an assault on the virgin Ecclesia.⁴² The repulsive

monster (see pl. 2), presumably Antichrist, has ears like an ox and the nose and mouth of a lion. Interestingly, a lion is an animal that is representative of both Christ and Satan: the two sons of God.⁴³ The monster is violently born of the virgin Ecclesia, his typological mother. His horrible face appears in the place of Ecclesia's genitals, as his primary aim is to seduce the church, just as Satan tempted Eve. The monster's ear – shaped like an erect phallus (see pl. 2) – along with the blood falling down Ecclesia's legs is suggestive of an inverted rape (with the monster coming out of Ecclesia rather than entering her). Hildegard explained in *Liber divinorum operum* that the Antichrist attacked the virtue of virginity by arguing that sexuality is natural. Contrary to the Incarnation, the Antichrist was born of an unchaste woman whose lustfulness is a parody of the Virgin Mary's purity.⁴⁴

Hildegard's opposition of sexual purity and deviance, symbolised through a metaphor of light and dark, is depicted in this eschatological illumination of Christ and Ecclesia (see pl. 2). In the upper right corner (see pl. 2) Christ is the cornerstone of the New Jerusalem, and in place of his genitals are a lyre and the rosy dawn yet he is under a 'shadow'.⁴⁵ This signifies that Christians will endure torments in the last days before the Second coming that will ultimately lead to heavenly joy.⁴⁶ Satan's assault on the virginal Ecclesia reveals a perverse and repellent image, while Christ embodies virginity through the symbols of music and the glowing dawn.⁴⁷ The Antichrist is the final and most threatening enemy. As Ecclesia has her final vindication, Satan will be forever banished and the gates of the New Jerusalem will open for the faithful. Ecclesia's body filled with symbols can be read historically from the top down (see pl. 2). At the top she is crowned with justice, while her lower parts are bloody and scratched signifying

the darkness of the church and the suffering she must endure in the final days when the Antichrist will appear. Importantly, Hildegard envisioned a time of peace and renewal reflected in the lightness of Christ's and Ecclesia's white feet (see pl. 2), which symbolise that in the end the church will attain goodness, despite the dark torments of previous ages. The church will experience vicissitudes in fortune as expressed in the allegory of the five beasts. Thus, Christ and his church, Ecclesia, are both innately good; however, for a period before the Second coming both are overshadowed by darkness.

Hildegard's apocalypse includes gender symbolism that is clearly shown in the representations of her figures. The most obvious representations occur in the female bride of Christ, Ecclesia, and the emphasis of a male-gendered Devil. The gender symbolism of these figures allowed Hildegard to develop this legend in a new sexual direction. According to Neal R. Clemens there are "overtones of sexual violence" in Satan's assault on Eve, most dramatically observed in the *Scivias* illumination of Book Three, Vision Eleven.⁴⁸ There were deep fears and anxieties about the female genitalia in the twelfth century, perhaps influenced by the much earlier North African Church Father, Tertullian's (c. 160-225), belief that this area was the gateway of the devil, which might partly explain Hildegard's powerful image (see pl. 2) of the Antichrist's head between Ecclesia's upper legs.⁴⁹ The monster's mouth, with upper and lower teeth, symbolically connects the two worlds: heaven and hell.⁵⁰ Hildegard's illumination shows that the church incorporated the Antichrist by using the potent image of the monster's head in the place of Ecclesia's genitalia.

The corruption is within the Church.⁵¹ The clergy were supposed to strengthen the church through their purity by taking vows of humility and

poverty, appearing to reject worldly possessions. Hildegard attacked the clergy for hiding knowledge from the laity and for their failure of teaching.⁵² Ecclesiastical leaders misused their special powers; thus they caused their own downfall and imperilled the whole community.⁵³ Therefore, Ecclesia is internally corrupt as shown in this *Scivias* illumination (see pl. 2), but is capable of expelling the Antichrist; whereas traditional apocalyptic iconography shows a dragon, symbolised as the devil, externally corrupting the church as seen in an illumination from the *Liber Floridus* (see pl. 60).⁵⁴ Instead, in the *Scivias* illumination (see pl. 2), the church gives birth to the Antichrist.⁵⁵ The blood on Ecclesia's legs suggests pain and suffering. Although Ecclesia symbolises a city, this image (see pl. 2) emphasises the destruction of a woman through the female genitalia as the source of corruption. It can also be seen in terms of the corruption of the institution, i.e. the church, as Hildegard frequently attacked the clergy for their sexual and financial impurities.

Comparison with John of Patmos

That similarities exist between Hildegard and John of Patmos, the possible author of the Book of Revelation, is evident in both their personal lives and works: specifically in the *Scivias* and Revelation texts. Such connections between the two are striking, although one must issue the *caveat* that there are also important differences between them.

First, both writers were visionaries; God commanded each to write their visions. John heard an angel say "What thou seest, write in a book, and send to the seven churches which are in Asia," while Hildegard was told by a divine source, "say and write what you see and hear."⁵⁶ In Hildegard's first vision,

Book One, Vision One (see pl. 5), a seated figure on a mountain is mentioned, which is essentially the same figure that John described at the beginning of Revelation. Both authors, in their closing, gave stern warnings against anyone who changes their words. One of John's closing remarks provides this admonition,

For I testify to every one that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book. If any man shall add to these things, God shall add unto him the plagues written in this book. And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from these things that are written in this book.⁵⁷

Additionally Hildegard ended her visionary trilogy with a similar warning: "But whoever rashly conceals these words written by the finger of God, madly abridging them, or for any human reason taking them to a strange place and scoffing at them, let him be reprobate; and the finger of God shall crush him."⁵⁸ Both authors urged their readers to heed their words of truth. If anyone were to reject these words, they would also reject Christ, and would not enter into the kingdom of God. Both authors warned Christians who do not fulfil the obligations of their vocations, as seen in Hildegard's first vision:

O human, who are fragile dust of the earth and ashes of ashes! Cry out and speak of the origin of pure salvation until those people are instructed, who, though they see the inmost contents of the Scriptures, do not wish to tell them or preach them, because they are lukewarm and sluggish in serving God's justice. Unlock for them the enclosure of mysteries that they, timid as they are, conceal in a hidden and fruitless field.⁵⁹

Both authors used analogies of unlocking doors and concealed treasure to warn those individuals who ignore their words and fail to live out their vocation. Similarities are seen in their works, one describing a defeat of evil and the triumph of Ecclesia with the building of a New Jerusalem. In Book Three,

Vision Ten, Hildegard included an excerpt of John's Revelation, and followed this with her version of the new city:

“And he took me up in the spirit to a great and high mountain; and he showed me the holy city Jerusalem, coming down out of Heaven with the glory of God” [Revelation 21:10-11]...The heavenly Jerusalem is to be built spiritually, without the work of physical hands, through work given by the Holy Spirit. The greatness and loftiness of these works of the Spirit are manifest, for that city will be adorned by good works performed by people touched by the Holy Spirit. It will be situated upon a hill, with countless buildings assembled from the most noble of stones: the holy souls in the vision of peace, purified from all taint of sin.⁶⁰

The holy city of Jerusalem consists of good souls purged of all sin, and Ecclesia is pure once more.

Interestingly, Hildegard concluded each vision with a repetitive phrase used consistently within each of her three books. In Book One of *Scivias*, the following is repeated: “Therefore, whoever has knowledge in the Holy Spirit and wings of faith, let this one not ignore My admonition but taste it, embrace it and receive it in his soul,” at the end of each vision.⁶¹ Book Two of *Scivias* has the recurring phrase: “But let the one who sees with watchful eyes and hears with attentive ears welcome with a kiss My mystical words, which proceed from Me Who am life.”⁶² Book Three of *Scivias* repeats: “But let the one who has ears sharp to hear inner meanings ardently love My reflection and pant after My words, and inscribe them in his soul and conscience.”⁶³ In the second and third chapters of Revelation, John ended his letters to the seven churches with the repetitive phrase: “He, that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith to the churches,” a reference to Christ's own words.⁶⁴ This repetitive device is powerful because it aids the memory while conveying the message to readers.

Similarities can be found in the way each author presents him/herself. Both authors endured confinement and suffering; both factors are conducive for prayer and contemplation: John was isolated on the island of Patmos, while Hildegard was raised in an environment with few individuals. In this lonely environment undoubtedly each suffered physically and spiritually. Due to isolation and suffering both Hildegard and John were weak and fragile, and thus ideal conduits for the divine message; their weakened bodies being susceptible to the visionary experience.⁶⁵

Hildegard's writing style has more in common with John than Rupert of Deutz, however, Rupert's reliance on divine inspiration for legitimising his writing career shows the power of visions. The visionary and exegete Rupert of Deutz, a monk of Liège, came to the abbey of Deutz in 1119, near Cologne Cathedral, and remained there until his death. Rupert did not reveal the visionary inspiration behind his writing career until there was controversy over his ideas and he was forced to justify himself, a standard defence against charges of heresy. Thus in 1125, in the twelfth book of *On the Glory and Honor of the Son of Man*, a commentary on Matthew, Rupert claimed God as the authoritative source of his inspiration. Rupert's testimony helped legitimise visions as an authentic source of the divine word.⁶⁶ Hildegard differed from Rupert because she did not refer to scripture verse by verse, even though this form of writing was standard and granted authority. Constant J. Mews notes the difference in writing style between Hildegard and ecclesiastical men, such as Rupert:

In a world in which authority was conferred by the action of commenting on Scripture, a privilege traditionally reserved for a male elite...she differed from other exegetes in that, rather than commenting on John's vision in verse-by-verse fashion, she saw herself as privileged with the same mode of insight as John the Divine.⁶⁷

During this time, it was more unusual for a woman to be an exegete than a visionary, and Hildegard's visionary gift – so redolent of John's – thus circumvented problems that might have arisen had she played the traditionally male role of the exegete.⁶⁸ The visionary message that she felt impelled to spread was concerned with morality: the defeat of evil, and the search for the path of truth and salvation. She relied on visual images to convey the need for church reform, and the need for individuals to live according to the sacramental structure of the church. Hildegard expressed the same meaning as Rupert and other exegetes, but did not use the medium of scriptures; instead, she, like John, was blessed with visionary insight and had the power to spread that insight through such works as the Rupertsburg *Scivias*.

Comparison of Text

A comparison between Hildegard's *Scivias* and John's Revelation is relevant for further discussion to show the degree of overlapping between the two works, indicating just how influential the biblical text was on the *Scivias* illuminations. In the *Scivias*, each vision contains a detailed description of the image with a longer, additional accompanying text explaining various aspects of the illumination. Interestingly, this commentary is needed for Hildegard's desired interpretation, unlike conventional iconography in which the image alone suffices.⁶⁹ When one reads the Book of Revelation, images similar to those in the *Scivias* illuminations readily come to mind. Therefore, an examination of the Revelation text that brings to mind the *Scivias* illuminations is necessary. A few examples highlighting this point will serve to bring out the originality and source of her inspiration.

Both authors discussed church officials in similar terms and two *Scivias* illuminations are evoked (see pls. 27 and 30): one image (see pl. 30) shows a baptismal exorcism of the church and the other image (see pl. 27) illustrates a woman lying on the ground with a figure coming out of the mouth. In Revelation 3:15-16, John's dictation to the angel of the church in Laodicea, regarding the clergy, may be the source of the *Scivias* images, "I know thy works, that thou art neither cold, nor hot. I would thou wert cold, or hot. But because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold, nor hot, I will begin to vomit thee out of my mouth."⁷⁰ John's descriptive phrase in Revelation vividly evokes Ecclesia's baptismal exorcism and the woman lying on the ground: a figure emerging from each woman's mouth. Incidentally, in a later vision (Book Three, Vision Ten) Hildegard addressed the clergy's laziness similar to John:

Therefore, they are also in My sight like a tepid breeze, with no briskness of heat or cold. For their mental heat makes them unfit to persevere in the virginity they began in; and in the cold of secular affairs they cannot proceed as they would like. They do not wander outside the confines of the law like the publicans, or sin within it like the unjust, but are inwardly tepid, neither just nor unjust...And so I spew them out of My mouth.⁷¹

Hildegard agreed with John that it is better for an individual to be either hot or cold, rather than 'tepid' or 'lukewarm.' In both cases, the phrases and message are extremely similar suggesting the Revelation text as a possible source of inspiration for the *Scivias* illuminations.

When comparing the *Scivias* text and the Revelation text a parallel can be seen in the choice of words and analogies used to convey similar messages and visual images. In this example, 'tepid' comes from the Latin 'tepidus,' which also translates as 'lukewarm.'⁷² Both John and Hildegard used the word 'tepidus' to refer to the clergy's inefficiency. Her belief, identical to John's, was

that those clerics who made empty promises and failed to fulfil their vows were worse than those who did not even attempt to take on the tasks of religious office. Hildegard urged the clergy to change their sinful ways, and warned that half-hearted commitment and spiritual poverty, especially in the religious setting, was one of the worst of their crimes. Both writers described the clergy's sinfulness being released through the mouth as a result of their inadequacy. The *Scivias* uses the word 'exsufflo' ('blow out'), while Revelation uses 'evomere' ('vomit').⁷³ Despite the different words used, the image created is the same.

One more example is seen in the marriage of the lamb and Ecclesia in Book Two, Vision Six (see pl. 26). Both Hildegard and John used similar language and analogies. The most descriptive and noticeable phrases regard Christ's blood. Hildegard's visionary description relates that Ecclesia "raised herself upward so that she was sprinkled by the blood from His side; and thus, by the will of the Heavenly Father, she was joined with Him in happy betrothal and nobly dowered with His body and blood."⁷⁴ Additionally, in reference to Christ's blood Hildegard stated, "And by the will of the Father He is trodden on the altar as if in a winepress."⁷⁵ John used similar phrases in his account of the spiritual marriage of Jesus and Ecclesia, "Blessed are they that are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb...and he was clothed with a garment sprinkled with blood...and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness of the wrath of God the Almighty."⁷⁶ Both Hildegard and John used phrases that evoke the spiritual marriage in the *Scivias* illumination (see pl. 26). In the Latin original, Hildegard used the verb 'fluere' ('to flow') in regard to Christ's blood, whereas John used the verb 'aspergere' for ('to sprinkle').⁷⁷ Although the Latin differs, both writers express the same spilling of Christ's blood on a garment. Also, both writers use

the analogy of a winepress in discussing Christ's blood wiping away sins. Both use the 'calcare' for 'to tread', and both use 'torcular' for 'press'.⁷⁸ In Revelation, 'vini' is used to qualify 'press', while in *Scivias* no word for wine is used as a qualifier: the reader being expected to know that the 'press' was a 'wine-press'. From this one can see a parallel of the choice of words and phrases between Hildegard and John concerning the spiritual marriage of Ecclesia and her heavenly bridegroom.

Three *Scivias* illuminations (see pls. 2, 51a, and 51b) show the defeat of the Devil. In the visionary description Hildegard's phrases suggest various aspects of the images, while, phrases from Revelation are so fitting that they perhaps bring to mind the image just as clearly as the *Scivias* text. For example, phrases in the *Scivias* commentary read for Book Two, Vision Seven (see pls. 51a and 51b), "His wicked intent outwardly inflicts harm on human bodies and inwardly drives a fiery dart into their souls...you are wavering and soft, and thus cannot avoid the poisonous arrows of human corruption...those who fall into error and slide into ruin."⁷⁹ John's style of writing equally evokes these three *Scivias* images (see pls. 2, 51a, and 51b) without giving a detailed account of the contents of the image:

And that great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, who is called the devil and satan, who seduceth the whole world; and he was cast unto the earth...and the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed up the river, which the dragon cast out of his mouth...And the beast, which I saw was like to a leopard, and his feet were as the feet of a bear, and his mouth as the mouth of a lion...Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen; and is become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every unclean spirit, and the hold of every unclean and hateful bird...And I saw an Angel coming down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit, and a great chain in his hand. And he laid hold on the dragon the old serpent, which is the devil and satan, and bound him for a thousand years. And he cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up.⁸⁰

John's passage equally calls to mind the *Scivias* illuminations without specifically describing the contents of the three visions invocation.

All this points to the influence of the Book of Revelation on *Scivias*. Hildegard's vivid use of apocalyptic imagery makes her demand for clerical reform seem all the more powerful: such was the moral decay of the clergy, that Hildegard felt justified in describing the church's predicament as stridently as John did regarding the predicament of Christianity in his day.

¹ McGinn, 1979, 4, and Merriam-Webster online dictionary.

² Freedman, Myers, and Beck, 2000, 1124.

³ Achtemeier, 1985, 868: This thirty-year range is based on a compilation of research on the text read against the backdrop of the two persecutions under the Roman Emperors Nero and Domitian's reigns.

⁴ Talbert, 1994, 4-5: Some examples of Jewish apocalyptic writings: 1 Enoch 1-36 (ca. 200 B.C.); Dn. 7-12, 1 Enoch 85-90 (160 B.C.); and Testament of Levi 2-5 (first or second century B.C.). Some examples of Christian apocalyptic writings: Mk. 13 (first century A.D.); Shepherd of Hermas, "Visions 1-4" (late first or early second century A.D.); and Apocalypse of Peter (second century A.D.).

⁵ Freedman, Myers, and Beck, 2000, 1124.

⁶ Freedman, Myers, and Beck, 2000, 1124.

⁷ McGinn, 1979, 17.

⁸ Rev. 13: 11-18.

⁹ For background of Adso's treatise, see McGinn, 1979, 81-88.

¹⁰ Emerson, 1981, 77.

¹¹ McGinn, 1994, 101.

¹² McGinn, 1979, 90, and Verhelst, 1976, 22: "Quicumque enim, siue laicus, siue canonicus, siue etiam monachus, contra iusticiam uiuit et ordinis sui regulam impugnat et quod bonum est blasphemat."

¹³ Translation from McGinn, 1979, 89-96. Original Latin text from Verhelst, 1976, 22-29.

¹⁴ For popularity of Adso's treatise, see McGinn, 1994, 103, 313, no. 130: which provides eight later versions of the treatise from the eleventh and twelfth centuries.

¹⁵ The *Bamberg Apocalypse* is an important work in this genre. The influence of this manuscript on *Scivias* is dealt with in chapter four.

¹⁶ Derolez, 1973, 27-28.

¹⁷ Pl. 48 from Derolez, 1973, fig. 19: *Liber Floridus*, c. 1460. The Hague, Royal Library, MS 128 C4, f. 29.

¹⁸ Pl. 49 from Derolez, 1973, fig. 20: *Liber Floridus*, c. 1260. Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, MS lat. 8865, f. 41r.

¹⁹ Pl. 50 from Derolez, 1973, fig. 8: *Liber Floridus*, last quarter of the twelfth century.

Wolfenbüttel, Herzog-August-Bibliothek, MS Guelf. I, Gud. lat. 2, f. 11v.

²⁰ Hart and Bishop, 1990, 297-300.

²¹ Pl. 52 from Derolez, 1968: *Liber Floridus*, c. 1445-75. Ghent, University Library, MS 92, f. 231v.

²² Derolez, 1968, 462-63: The facing folio (232r) shows a trunk of a tree with withering branches and medallions of the vices, who are not humanised, with written 'Arbor Male' which is representative of Synagoga.

²³ Pl. 54 from Green, 1979, vol. I, 352, pl. 124: *Hortus Deliciarum*, c. 1176-96. Formerly Strasbourg, Bibliothèque Nationale, f. 215v. Translated from Hamburger, 1990, 49. Original

Latin text from Green, 1979, vol. II, 201 is as follows: “ascensum uirtutum et religiosum sanctitatis exercitium quo eterne uite corona adipiscitur.”

²⁴ Translation from Hart and Bishop, 1990, 425. Original Latin text from Führkötter and Carlevaris, 1978, 478 is as follows: “In columna autem ista ab imo usque ad summum eius in modum scalae ascensus erat, ubi omnes uirtutes Dei descendentes et ascendentes oneratas lapidibus ad opus suum ire uidebam.”

²⁵ Pl. 56 from Saurma-Jeltsch, 1998, 175, fig. 90: *Speculum Virginum*, twelfth century. Cologne, Historisches Archiv der Stadt Köln: W 267a, f. 78v.

²⁶ Pl. 57 from Saurma-Jeltsch, 1998, 177, fig. 91: *Zwiefalten Legendary*, c. 1162. Stuttgart, Württembergische Landesbibliothek, Cod. hist. 2° 415, f. 87

²⁷ Translation from Hart and Bishop, 1990, 358. Original Latin text from Führkötter and Carlevaris, 1978, 392 is as follows: “Considera indumentum quod induisti, et noli obliuisci creatoris tui qui te creauit.”

²⁸ Pl. 58 from Schiller, 1990: *Zwiefalten Psalter*, twelfth century. Stuttgart, Württembergische Landesbibliothek, MS Brev. 100.

²⁹ Pl. 59 from Derolez, 1973, fig. 21: *Liber Floridus*, c. 1260. Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, MS lat. 8865, f. 42v.

³⁰ Merriam-Webster online dictionary.

³¹ Potter, 1998, 191, 195, no. 5: It has been debated whether *Scivias* contains the first draft of the play before it was set to music or just a revision of the play without the music.

³² Potter, 1998, 190-91: Additionally, medieval plays usually are performed with a special event, such as a feast day, and location in mind. It has been suggested that the morality play was written in 1152 for the new convent buildings at Rupertsberg, in which the Archbishops of Mainz would have been present. Another possibility is that the play was written for a solemn mass to consecrate virgins, such as a young woman taking her vows. Also, perhaps a commemorative reason for the creation of the morality may not be needed.

³³ Translation from Hart and Bishop, 1990, 530. Original Latin text from Führkötter and Carlevaris, 1978, 576, 625 is as follows: “STREPITVS DIABOLI AD HVMILITATEM ET AD RELIQUAS VIRTUTES: Quae est haec potestas, quod nullus sit praeter Deum? Ego autem dico: ‘Qui uoluerit me et uoluntatem suam sequi, dabo illi omnia’; tu uero cum tuis sequacibus nihil habes quod dare possis, quia etiam uos omnes nescitis quid sitis. HVMILITAS RESPONDET: Ego cum meis sodalibus bene scio quod tu es ille antiquus draco, qui super summum uolare uoluisti, sed ipse Deus in abyssum proiecit te.”

³⁴ Kerby-Fulton, 1990, 45.

³⁵ Translation from Hart and Bishop, 1990, 493-95. Original Latin text from Führkötter and Carlevaris, 1978, 576, 578-79 is as follows: “Deinde uidi ad aquilonem: et ecce ibi quinque bestiae stabant... Quarum una est ut canis igneus, sed non ardens: quia cursus temporum illorum homines suae constitutionis mordaces habebit, in sua quidem aestimatione uelut ignis apparentes, sed in iustitia Dei non ardentes... Et una ut leo fului coloris est: quoniam cursus ille bellicosos homines sustinebit, multa quidem bella mouentes sed in eis rectitudinem Dei non insipientes: quia in fuluo colore regna illa incipient fatigationem debilitates incurrere... Alia autem ut equus pallidus: quia tempora illa homines in diluuiio peccati lasciuos et in uelocitate uoluptatis suae operationem bonarum uirtutum transilientes producunt, ubi tunc cor regnorum illorum in pallore ruinae suae confringetur, quoniam ruborem fortitudinis suae iam perdet... Sed alia ut niger porcus: quoniam cursus ille rectores magnam nigredinem tristitiae in semetipsis facientes habet et se luto immunditiae inuoluentes, uidelicet diuinam legem in multis contrarietatibus fornicationum et aliorum similium malorum postponentes, ac multa schismata diuinorum praeceptorum in sanctitate machinantes... Alia uero ut lupus griseus: quia illa tempora habebunt homines multas rapinas tam in potestatis quam in reliquis successibus sibimetipsis inferentes, cum in his certaminibus nec nigros nec albos sed uelut griseos in uersutiis suis se ostendentes.”

³⁶ Emmerson, 2002, 97.

³⁷ Emmerson, 2002, 97: Hildegard’s choice and number of beasts are unusual. According to Jerome’s commentary on Daniel, the four beasts symbolise the four ancient empires that will precede the Antichrist’s reign.

³⁸ Emmerson, 2002, 97.

³⁹ McGinn, 1994, 130.

⁴⁰ For chart and description of Hildegard’s ages, see Kerby-Fulton, 1990, 49-50.

⁴¹ Kerby-Fulton, 1990, 50.

⁴² McGinn, 1994, 131.

⁴³ Vries, 1974, 301.

⁴⁴ McGinn, 1994, 131.

⁴⁵ Emerson, 2002, 98.

⁴⁶ Newman, 1987, 245.

⁴⁷ Newman, 1987, 245.

⁴⁸ McGinn, 1994, 131.

⁴⁹ Caviness, 2001b, 171, and Cirlot, 1962, 195: In medieval iconography a monster's head symbolises the gates of hell.

⁵⁰ Cirlot, 1962, 211.

⁵¹ For internal corruption of church, see Emerson, 2002, 100-01.

⁵² Kerby-Fulton, 1990, 69.

⁵³ Kerby-Fulton, 1990, 1, 32-33.

⁵⁴ Emerson, 2002, 98, and pl. 60 from Derolez, 1973, fig. 14: *Liber Floridus*, last quarter of the twelfth century. Wolfenbüttel, Herzog-August-Bibliothek, MS Guelf. I, Gud. lat. 2, f. 14v.

⁵⁵ Caviness, 2001b, 171.

⁵⁶ Rev. 1:11 (The Holy Bible, 1856, 194). Original Latin text from *Biblia Sacra*, 1894, 175 is as follows: "Quod vides, scribe in libro: et mitte septem ecclesiis, quae sunt in Asia." Hart and Bishop, 1990, 59. Original Latin text from Führkötter and Carlevaris, 1978, 3 is as follows: "Dic et scribe quae vides et audis."

⁵⁷ Rev. 22: 18-19 (The Holy Bible, 1856, 207). Original Latin text from *Biblia Sacra*, 1894, 186 is as follows: "Contestor enim omni audienti verba prophetiae libri hujus: Si quis apposuerit ad haec, apponet Deus super illum plagas scriptas in libro isto. Et si quis diminuerit de verbis libri prophetiae hujus, auferet Deus partem ejus de libro vitae, et de civitate sancta, et de his, quae scripta sunt in libro isto."

⁵⁸ Translation from Hart and Bishop, 1990, 536. Original Latin text from Führkötter and Carlevaris, 1978, 636 is as follows: "Sed si quis haec uerba digiti Dei temere absconderit et ea per rabiem suam minuerit aut in alienum locum alicuius humani sensus causa abduxerit et ita deriserit, ille reprobatus sit. Et digitus Dei conteret illum."

⁵⁹ Translation from Hart and Bishop, 1990, 67. Original Latin text from Führkötter and Carlevaris, 1978, 8 is as follows: "O homo, quae fragilis es de puluere terrae et cinis de cinere, clama et dic de introitu incorruptae saluationis, quatenus hi erudiantur qui medullam litterarum uidentes eam nec dicere nec praedicare uolunt, quia tepidi et hebetes ad conseruandam iustitiam Dei sunt, quibus clausuram mysticorum resera quam ipsi timidi in abscondito agro sine fructu celant."

⁶⁰ Translation from Hart and Bishop, 1990, 488-89. Original Latin text from Führkötter and Carlevaris, 1978, 570-71 is as follows: "Et sustulit me in spiritu in montem magnum et altum. Et ostendit mihi ciuitatem sanctam Ierusalem descendentem de caelo, habentem claritatem Dei. ...Sicut etiam caelestis Ierusalem sine opere manuum carnis per opus a Spiritu sancto datum spiritaliter aedificanda est, ita magnitudine et altitudine sanctorum operum in spiritu apparente, ut eadem ciuitas in operibus bonis quae tactu Spiritus sancti fiunt in hominibus adornabitur: quoniam ipsa sic supra montem posita et in innumeris aedificationibus aedificata in se nobilissimos lapides, qui sanctae animae in uisione pacis sunt, colligit, ab omni putredine peccati purgatos."

⁶¹ Translation from Hart and Bishop, 1990, 69. Original Latin text from Führkötter and Carlevaris, 1978, 11 is as follows: "Vnde quicumque scientiam in Spiritu sancto et pennas in fide habet, iste admonitionem meam non transcendat, sed eam in gustu animae suae amplectendo percipiat."

⁶² Translation from Hart and Bishop, 1990, 157. Original Latin text from Führkötter and Carlevaris, 1978, 123 is as follows: "Sed qui uigilantibus oculis uidet et sonantibus auribus audit, hic mysticis uerbis meis osculum amplexionis praebat, quae de me uiuente emanant."

⁶³ Translation from Hart and Bishop, 1990, 321. Original Latin text from Führkötter and Carlevaris, 1978, 347 is as follows: "Qui autem acutas aures interioris intellectus habet, hic in ardente amore speculi mei ad uerba haec anhelet et ea in conscientia animi sui conscribat."

⁶⁴ Rev. 2:7, 11, 17, 29; 3: 6, 13, 22 (The Holy Bible, 1856, 195-96). Original Latin text from *Biblia Sacra*, 1894, 176-77 is as follows: "Qui habet aurem, audiat quid Spiritus dicit ecclesiis."

⁶⁵ See chapter two for the link of illness with visions.

⁶⁶ Mews, 1996, 31.

⁶⁷ Mews, 1996, 33-34.

⁶⁸ Emerson, 2002, 102.

⁶⁹ Newman, 1987, 24-25.

⁷⁰ Rev. 3:15-16 (The Holy Bible, 1856, 196). Original Latin text from *Biblia Sacra*, 1894, 177 is as follows: "Scio opera tua: quia neque frigidus es, neque calidus: utinam frigidus esses, aut calidus. Sed quia tepidus es, et necfrigidus, nec calidus, incipiam te evomere ex ore meo."

⁷¹ Translation from Hart and Bishop, 1990, 479. Original Latin text from Führkötter and Carlevaris, 1978, 556 is as follows: "Vnde et coram me sunt ut tepidus uentus, cuius nec calor nec frigus ullum uigorem habet: quia nec utiles sunt in calore animi sui ut perseuerent in uirginitatis continentia, ut coeperunt; nec ualent in frigore mundanae causae ut eant in saecularibus rebus, ut sibi proponunt. Nam nec extra legem peccant ut publicani, nec infra legem ut iniusti, sed in semetipsis tepentes, nec perfecte iusti nec iniusti sunt...Vnde et ab ore meo exsufflo eos, quia indigni sunt aspectu meo, si sic impaenitentes perseuerauerint."

⁷² Lewis and Short, 1962, 1857.

⁷³ Lewis and Short, 1962, 705, 669.

⁷⁴ Translation from Hart and Bishop, 1990, 237. Original Latin text from Führkötter and Carlevaris, 1978, 230 is as follows: "sanguine qui de latere eius fluxit se sursum eleuante perfusa ipsi per uoluntatem superni Patris felici desponsatione associata est atque carne et sanguine eius nobiliter dotata."

⁷⁵ Translation from Hart and Bishop, 1990, 256. Original Latin text from Führkötter and Carlevaris, 1978, 259 is as follows: "Quapropter et super altare uelut in torculari per uoluntatem Patris calcatur."

⁷⁶ Rev. 19: 9, 13, 15 (The Holy Bible, 1856, 204). Original Latin text from *Biblia Sacra*, 1894, 184 is as follows: "Beati, qui ad coenam nuptiarum Agni vocati sunt...et vestitus erat veste aspersa sanguine...et ipse calcatur torcular vini furoris irae Dei omnipotentis."

⁷⁷ Lewis and Short, 1962, 763, 174-75.

⁷⁸ Lewis and Short, 1962, 267-68, 1878.

⁷⁹ Translation from Hart and Bishop, 1990, 296-97, 302-03. Original Latin text from Führkötter and Carlevaris, 1978, 314, 322-33 is as follows: "Intentio peruersitatis ipsius uelut extrinsecus sanguineum nefas corporibus hominum incutit et uelut intrinsecus igneum iaculum animabus eorum infert...vos instabiles et molles ad deuitandum uenenosas sagittas humanae pollutionis estis...labantes in lapsu et cadentes in ruina."

⁸⁰ Rev. 12:9, 16; 13:2; 18:2; 20:1-3 (The Holy Bible, 1856, 200-01, 203, 205). Original Latin text from *Biblia Sacra*, 1894, 180-81, 183, 185 is as follows: "Et projectus est draco ille magnus, serpens antiquus, qui uocatur diabolus, et satanas, qui seducit universum orbem: et projectus est in terram...et aperuit terra os suum, et absorbit flumen, quod misit draco de ore suo...Et bestia, quam uidi, similes erat pardo, et pedes ejus sicut pedes ursi, et os ejus sicut os leonis...Cecidit, cecidit Babylon magna: et facta est habitatio daemoniorum, et custodia omnis spiritus immundi, et custodia omnis uolucris immundae, et odibilis...Et uidi Angelum descendentem de coelo, habentem clauem abyssi, et catenam magnam in manu sua. Et apprehendit draconem, serpentem antiquum, qui est diabolus, et satanas, et ligauit eum per annos mille: Et misit eum in abyssum, et clausit."

Conclusion

The chapters constituting this thesis examine various aspects of the creative process that culminated in the illuminated manuscript of Hildegard's *Rupertsberg Scivias*. The aim throughout has been to contextualise this creative process within its historical setting, and to bring out the interplay of convention and personal idiosyncrasy that led to it taking the shape it did. To summarise:

Hildegard's *Scivias* reflects societal and religious views of the difference between genders. Fears concerning women and their behaviour were rife among the ecclesiastical leaders of Hildegard's day, and consequently women's voices were silenced in the church (the ramifications of this are still felt in the church to this day). Hildegard needed authentication in order to create the *Scivias*. To gain this authentication, she used the perceived 'frailty' of her gender, her poor health, and insufficient education to her advantage, presenting herself as a mere conduit for divine inspiration, and so circumventing the misgivings of a misogynous clergy. However, the main source of her power – and the main reason why her voice became influential – was her visionary experiences: what she once feared as a child proved to be a great blessing in her life.

Hildegard's illness was a highly idiosyncratic element in the creative process, providing in the form of her visions much original material to build into her great work. However, as I emphasise in chapter two, seeing her visions as the result of illness scarcely does justice to the nature of such experiences: her visions were far more than a migraine. In tackling the question of who was the artist(s) responsible for the illuminations, the particularity of Hildegard's assumed illness exhibited through her visual auras, as well as other unconventional elements in

the illuminations, provides evidence that most likely she had direct supervision over the *Scivias* illuminations.

Much of the individuality found in the illuminations has an underlying feminine theme expressed through vivid, potent illuminations, some entailing iconic female images. Hildegard's feminine spirituality and sexuality in some ways is a response to the lack of virility and the effeminate ecclesiastical leaders of her era. Mumford addresses Hildegard's unusual role and its historical and social implications: "Hildegard pursued an unfeminine career as a writer, reformer, and preacher. She naturally encountered opposition, both from her enemies and from within her own psyche. As a result, she developed an unusual degree of self-awareness about her gender and its social and spiritual implications."¹ The *Scivias* illuminations are a perfect testimony to this theory as expressed through the infamous cosmic egg, in which historical, social, cosmographic, and sexual forces coalesce to reveal a dynamic and multifaceted invention.

The *Scivias* was not created in a vacuum. Just as all works bear an imprint of its age, this medieval manuscript reveals iconographical motifs and themes of its time. The artistic milieu of the Rhineland of the twelfth century provided a rich stylistic and iconographic repertoire on which Hildegard and her artist(s) could draw. The more derivative elements in the *Scivias* illuminations should not detract from their originality, however, as all art – no matter how original – is derivative to some degree.

The *Scivias* contains much potent apocalyptic imagery, linking the work with a genre stretching back to the Revelation of John and even further still. Comparing Hildegard with John reveals two visionaries with much in common,

who both reflected in their work concern with the church of the day. The text of Revelation even evokes images found in the *Scivias* illuminations. Such was Hildegard's deep unease with the clergy, she felt powerful apocalyptic imagery was a fitting medium to use in expressing this unease.

Powerful women of Hildegard's age relied upon their perceived weakness for strength. They found power in their weakness. They also found their voice in the church through sight: through the visionary experience. What was made visible to the supposedly subordinate gender through divine inspiration they made visible to the church. Hildegard's visions gave her the power to voice a poignant message aimed at the clergy, urging action and calling for change of their sinful ways of the past. Hildegard made the clergy's shameful behaviour an underlying theme of *Scivias*, with a strong warning of the consequences of their actions for the church. She was thus able to both gain permission from the clergy to communicate to the world, and in doing so communicate a message that was deeply critical of the clergy. The 'poor' and 'weak' woman beheld visions of great profundity and so was able to utter a powerful message: in such a case, power was indeed in the eye of the beholder.

¹ Mumford, 1993, 47.

Appendix

Plates

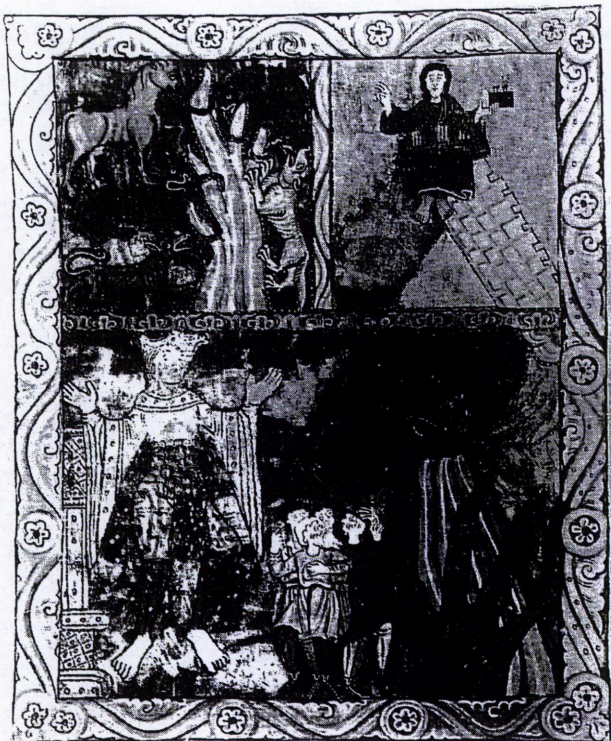


Plate 1 *Rupertsberg Scivias*, c. 1165. Formerly Wiesbaden, Hessisches Landesbibliothek, MS 1, f. 214v, Book III, vision 11 (photo: Rheinisches Bildarchiv).

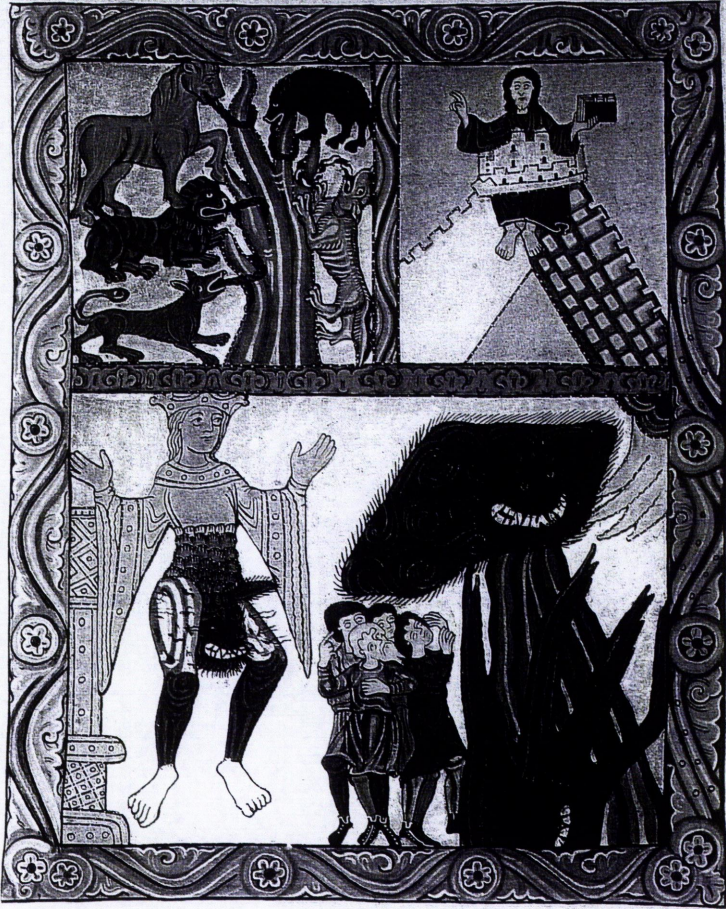
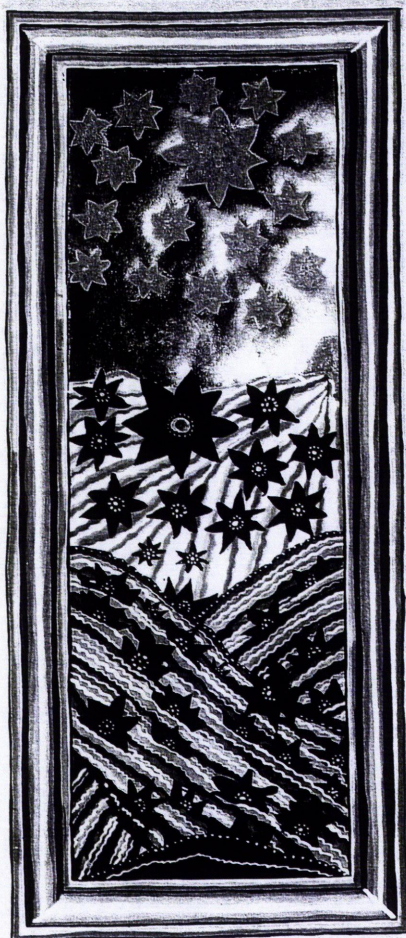


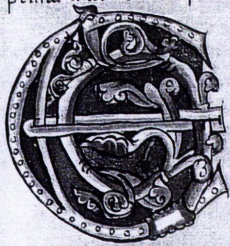
Plate 2 Copy of the *Rupertsberg Scivias*, Josepha Knips, c. 1927-33.
Eibingen, Bibliothek der Abtei St. Hildegard, Cod. 1, Book III, vision 11
(after Saurma-Jeltsch, 1998).



Plate 3 *Psalter of Christina of Markyate (St. Albans Psalter)*, c. 1125-50.
Hildesheim, Dombibliothek, MS God. 1, f. 51.



Prima visio tertie partis.



¶ 160
 homo
 sumpra
 ab alis
 homini
 bus que
 n̄ sū dig
 na nomi

nari homo pp̄r̄ t̄n̄l̄ḡressione legis
 d̄i. cū deberem ē̄ uisla & san̄ inuisla.
 n̄ q̄d̄ d̄i creatura sum ipsi gr̄a. que
 me etiā saluabit. uidi ad orientem.
 & ecce illic conspexi uelut lapidem
 unū totū integrū unūq̄ latitudi
 nis atq; altitudinis habentē ferreū
 colorē. & sup̄ ipsum candidā nubē.
 ac sup̄ ea positū regalem thronum ro
 tundū in quo sedebat quidā uiuen
 lucidus mirabilis gl̄e tanq; clarita
 tis ut nullaten̄ eū p̄spicue possem
 tr̄uere. habent̄ q̄m̄ in pectore suo li
 m̄ū nigrū & lutescentū tanq; lati
 tudinis ut alicui magni hominis
 pectus ē̄. circūdarū lapidib; p̄ciosis
 atq; margaritis. Et de ip̄o lucido
 sedente throno p̄tendebat magnus
 circulus auri coloris ut aurora. cui
 amplitudinē nullom̄ cōphendere
 potui. grant̄ ab oriente ad septentri
 onē & ad occidentē atq; ad meridiem.

Plate 4e. Copy of the *Rupertsberg Scivias*, Josepha Knips, c. 1927-33.
 Eibingen, Bibliothek der Abtei St. Hildegard, Cod. 1, Book III, vision 1
 (after Saurma-Jeltsch, 1998).

- I. **Q**uod corda fidelium timere & uere xvi
 timere debet magnitudinem. lantitudinem. altitudinem timoris dñi.
- II. **Q**uod omnis fidelis anima sapienter xvi
 timens dñm. p. fidelis scilicet dñi ē.
- III. **Q**uod profunditas multorum dei xvii
 hominibus. incomprehensibilis ē. n̄ qm̄
 tū ipso donante fide concipit.
- III. **Q**uod in sapientia dñi patris. p. amo
 re filia sui pfectio omnium elec
 torū cōpūata ē.
- v. **E**xemplū in euanglō de eadē re.
- vi. **Q**uod significat luxuriam lūm spacio
 re. & cur homo ab anglo n̄ sperat.
- vii. **V**erba p̄lue adam dñi re. n̄ nat.
- viii. **V**erba dauid.
- viii. **Q**uod dñs pat̄ in filio suo ab auro
 uirgine incarnato. opac̄ orchi
 nat. ac p̄ficat omnia opa sua.
- x. **D**e circulo quante.
- xi. **Q**uod potestas dñi altior ē qm̄ homi
 ni sciendū sit. & cur angli lau
 dent dñm.
- xii. **Q**uod dñs ē p̄cipua iusticia. uer^o
 & iustus abiq; cōmūtatione.
- xiii. **Q**uod iustus. iusticia. & iudiciū dñi. nul
 lum finē habet. qui cōphench pos
 sit hum. ino sentia.
- xii. **D**e casu p̄mi angli & tibi o senten
 tiā. & qm̄. & quom̄. & q̄ ceciderūt.
- xv. **V**erba czechielis de eadem re.

Quod q̄ta splendoris illi quē diabo
 lus p̄ iugbiā p̄didit. seruata ē ille
 cetero patris. alii facti iuge.

Quod diabolus cecidit abiq; herede.
 homo autē cecidit habens herede.

Exemplū de goliath & de dauid
 ad eandem rem.



Plate 4b Copy of the *Rupertsberg Scivias*, Josepha Knips, c. 1927-33. Eibingen, Bibliothek der Abtei St. Hildegard, Cod. 1, Book III, vision 1 (after Saurma-Jeltsch, 1998).

altam pfunditatem expositionis libror
 ut pdixi sentent. iuribusq. recepat. de
 egritudine me erigens uix opus stud
 decem annis consummans ad finem
 pdixi. In diebus autem HEINRICI
 ogoiminti archiepi ⁊ Conradi roma
 nouum regis ⁊ Günonis abbatil in
 monte beati dÿsibodi pontificis.
 sub papa Ergenio he uisiones ⁊ uerba
 facta sunt. Et dixi ⁊ scpsi hec n̄ secundū
 adiuentionē cordis mei aut ullius ho
 minis. sed ut ea in celestib' uidi. audiu
 ⁊ pcepi. p secreta misteria di Et iterum
 audiu uocem de celo michi dicentem.
 Clama ⁊ ⁊ scribe sic.

Incipiunt capitula libri scivias
 simplicis hominis
 Capitula p̄nc̄ uisionis p̄nc̄ partis.

- I. De fortitudine ⁊ stabilitate eternitatē
 regni dei.
- ii. De timore domini.
- iii. De his qui paupes spū sunt.
- iiii. Quod uirtutes a dō uenientes. tantes dñi
 ⁊ paupes spū custodiunt.
- v. Quod agnitioni di abscondi n̄ possunt
 studia actuum hominum.
- vi. Salomon de eadem re.

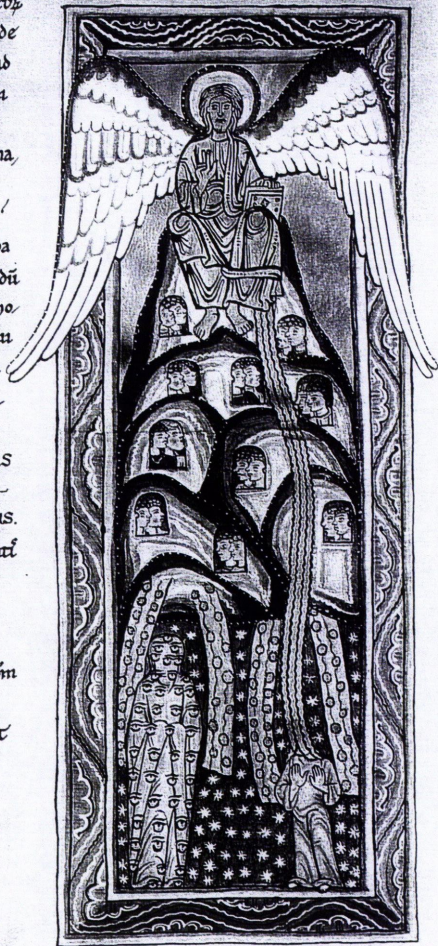


Plate 5 Copy of the *Rupertsberg Scivias*, Josepha Knips, c. 1927-33.
 Eibingen, Bibliothek der Abtei St. Hildegard, Cod. 1, Book I, vision 1
 (after Saurma-Jeltsch, 1998).

sanguine homicidii uel fornicatio **xxv** **Q**ui zelo dñi n̄ ē amor mirantis
 ne polluit. & q̄ signatū lapidē in
 sacrificio n̄ habent. & q̄ decimas
 uel res templi diripiūt. oīe illis **xxvi** **Q**ui scientia ī homine ē q̄u speculū
 oīe miserū illis
xxvii **Q**ui res ecclēz camb. & potest. id ē p̄ **xxviii** **Q**uom̄ ex metu pcedit t̄. S. li.
 uis hominū diuidit. hos uel sem̄
 eorū de hūmo ḡdu usq̄, ad itimū
 zelus dī picat. **xxviiii** **D**e p̄ma radice. id ē discretionē ho
xxix **Q**uom̄ d̄s ultione sua cedit. credū
 los & incredulos.
xxx **Q**ui putat se sapientel. & potest. **xxxiiii** **Q**ui nemo in excusatione peccati
 suā p̄ multa iudicia deuat. q̄m
 miserabiliter hos zelus dī exurit.
 m̄m̄. & de timore tremor. & q̄m
 homo p̄ hec tria debet opari. qd̄
 m̄m̄. & de ignea sup̄ addita
 gr̄a in xpo.
 sui debet mutitare cont̄ creato
 rem suum.

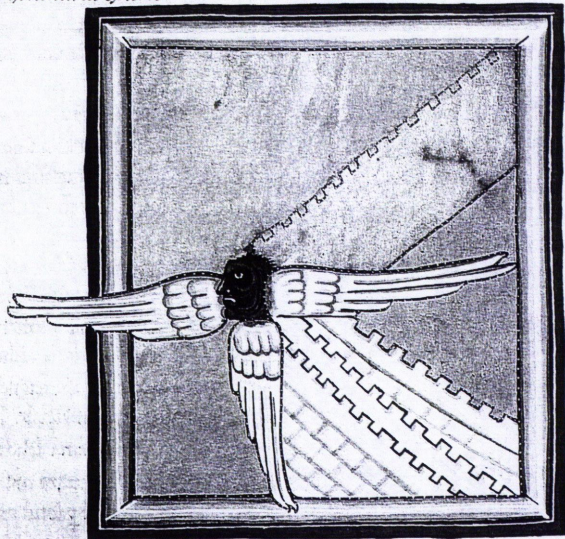


Plate 6 Copy of the *Rupertsberg Scivias*, Josepha Knips, c. 1927-33.
 Eibingen, Bibliothek der Abtei St. Hildegard, Cod. 1, Book III, vision 7
 (after Saurma-Jeltsch, 1998).

- xxiii Q. d. homo exequatur elemos. stant.
fide catholica equali deuotione.
- xxiiii Q. d. fidelis homo ascendat scolat.
de uirtute i uirtutem.
- xxv. Q. d. filius di nullus e unmundum
lectm temp' pordinatu aparte.
ut pficeret uoluntate par.

d. supbia mali uel fine ei i opante
catura aut uncuu aut fine supne
iusticie uisla q; distributione
uoluntatis di null' hoium p
seruari potest.

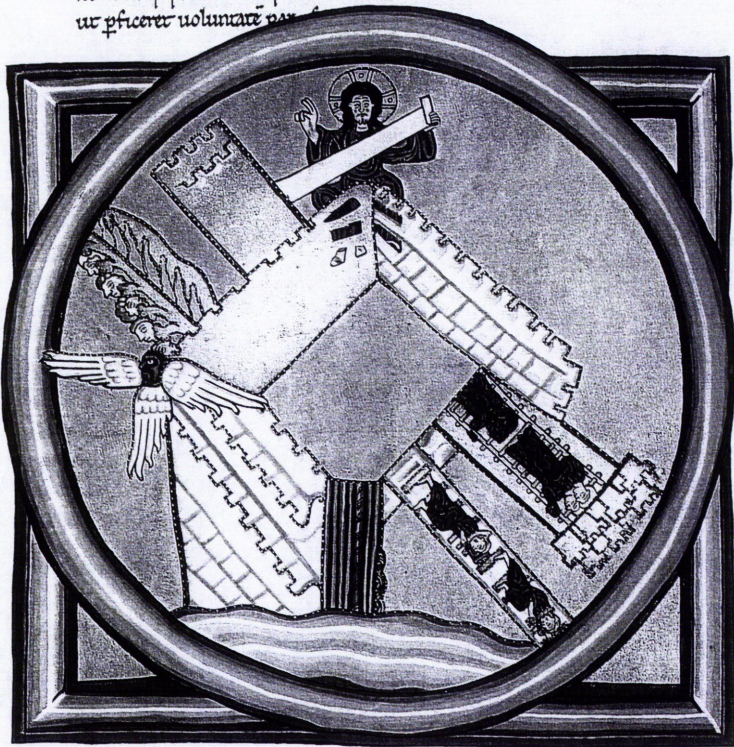


Plate 7 Copy of the *Rupertsberg Scivias*, Josepha Knips, c. 1927-33.
Eibingen, Bibliothek der Abtei St. Hildegard, Cod. 1, Book III, vision 2
(after Saurma-Jeltsch, 1998).

- xxxi Quod uir non nisi in forti etate.
non nisi nubilem uxorem ducat.
- xxxii De uitanda illicita et libidinosa
pollutione.
- xxxiii Quare mulier post partum uel
a uiro corrupta in occulto mane
at et ab ingressu templi abstineat
Qui in cotu pregnantis se pollu-
unt. homicide sunt.
- xxxiiii Osee de eadem re.
- xxxv De commendatione castitatis.
- xxxvi Iohannes de eadem re.
- xxxvii Quod expulso adam de paradysu
munuit.
- xxxviii Quod quia homo deo rebellis existi-
t. creatura ei prius subiecta se
illi opposuit.
- xxxix De amenitate paradysi que su-
cum et uinum terre tribuit. ut
anima corpori.
- xl Quare deus hominem talem fecit
quod peccare potuit.
- xli Quod homo non debet summa per
seruari cum nec infima ualeat
examinare.
- xlii Quod homo nunc clarior fulget
quam prius in celo.
- xliiii Inutilitas horum. ouis et marga-
rite ad hominem.
- xliiiii De commendatione humilitatis
et caritatis. que clariores ceteris
uiratibus existunt.



Plate 8 Copy of the *Rupertsberg Scivias*, Josepha Knips, c. 1927-33.
Eibingen, Bibliothek der Abtei St. Hildegard, Cod. 1, Book I, vision 2
(after Saurma-Jeltsch, 1998).

Quod homo secreta dī n̄ debet
plus scrutari. quā ipse uult manife

Quod fili' dī nat' in **Istare.**
mundo morte sua diabolū superauit
et electos suos ad hereditatē suā re

Verba osee de eadē re. **Scyxit**

Qd corp' filiū dī in sepulchro
p̄ tūm iacens resurrexit. et homi

ni uia ueritatis de morte ad uitā
ostensa ē. **Iūi eol' apparuit.**

Qd fili' dī a morte resurgens di
cupulis suis frequēt' ad corroboran

Qd filio dī ascendente ad pa
trē. sponsa et diuersis ornant' sin

I data ē.



Plate 9 Copy of the *Rupertsberg Scivias*, Josepha Knips, c. 1927-33.
Eibingen, Bibliothek der Abtei St. Hildegard, Cod. 1, Book II, vision 1
(after Saurma-Jeltsch. 1998).



Plate 10 Copy of the *Rupertsberg Scivias*, Josepha Knips, c. 1927-33.
Eibingen, Bibliothek der Abtei St. Hildegard, Cod. 1, Book II, vision 2
(after Saurma-Jeltsch, 1998).



Ecce quadra-
gesimo tercio
temporalis cur-
sus mei anno
cum celesti uisi-
oni magno ti-
more ⁊ tremu-
la intentione inhererem uidi maxi-
mū splendorē. in quo facta ē uox
de celo ad me dicent. O homo fragi-
lis ⁊ cinis cineris ⁊ putredo putredi-
nis. dic ⁊ scribe q̄ uidet ⁊ audis. Sed
quia timida es ad loquendū ⁊ simplex

ad exponendum ⁊ indocta ad scriben-
dum ea dic ⁊ scribe illa n̄ scdm̄ of homi-
nis. nec scdm̄ intellectum humanę ad-
inventionis nec scdm̄ uoluntatē huma-
nę compositionis s̄ scdm̄ id quod ea in
celestib⁹ desup̄ in mirabilib⁹ dī uidet ⁊ au-
dit. ea sic edisserendo p̄ferent. quemadmo-
dum ⁊ auditor uerba p̄ceptorū suū p̄cipi-
ent. ea scdm̄ tenorē locutionis illi ipso uo-
lente ostendente. ⁊ p̄cipiente p̄palat. Sic
ḡ ⁊ tu o homo. dic ea q̄ uidet ⁊ audis. ⁊ sc̄-
be ea non scdm̄ te. nec scdm̄ aliū homi-
nem s̄ secundū uoluntatē scientis uiden-
tis ⁊ disponentis omnia in secretis mis-
teriorum suorum. Et terū audiui uocē
de celo michi dicentē. Dic ḡ mirabilia
hec. ⁊ scribe ea. hoc modo edocta ⁊ dic.

Factum ē in millesimo centesimo
quadragesimo p̄mo filiū dī ih̄u x̄
incarnationis anno. cū q̄draginta duoy
annoy septē q; m̄siuum eēn maxime consca-
tionis igneū lum̄ ayro celo uenient totū
cerebrū meū tr̄nsfudit. ⁊ totū cor totūq;
pectus meū uelut flamma n̄ tam ar-
dens s̄ calens ita inflammauit. ut sol-
rem aliquam calefacti. sup̄ quam radi-
os suos ponit. Et repente intellectum
expositionis libroy uidelicet. p̄lasterū
euuangelii ⁊ alioy catholicoy tam ue-
teris quam noui testamenti uolumi-
num sapiebam. n̄ autē interpretatio-
nem uerboy textus eoy. nec diuisionē



Plate 12 *Registrum Gregorii*, c. 983-84. Trier, Stadtbibliothek, MS 171/1626.



Plate 13 *Manesse Codex*, c. 1320. Heidelberg, Universitätsbibliothek MS. Germ. 848.



Decima visio tertiae partis.



et post
hec i summa
te orientali
anguli pre
monstrari
adificii ubi
p'dictę duę

partes muri ipsi illa lucida & lapi
dea uidebat. quicquid erat. uidi
q̄si septē gradus candidissimi lapi
dis. qui ad lapide illū magnum sup
quē p̄fatus lucidus sedens i chrono
apparuit. ut modū testudinis ad
uolui uidebant. Et sup eisdē gra
dus sedes posita erat. sup quā uir
nus quidā sedens uirlem & nobilem
uultū pallidi tam coloris. & capillo
subnigros usq; ad scapulas ipsi descen
dentes habebat. purpurea tunica
indutus. Qui a capite suo usq; ad um
bilicū r̄ apparuit. s; ab umbilico
deorsū op̄umbrat̄ in ad uidentium
fuerat. Et ipse respiciens imundū
maxima fortitudine uociferabat̄
ad homines qui i eo erāt dicens.

Verba filij hominis:
Istulci homines qui tepide &
corpū manent i uobis inceptis.
nolentes uel oculū unū ap̄re adui
dendū q̄d i bonitate sp̄c ur̄i fact. s;

Plate 14 Copy of the *Rupertsberg Scivias*, Josepha Knips, c. 1927-33.
Eibingen, Bibliothek der Abtei St. Hildegard, Cod. 1, Book III, vision 10
(after Saurma-Jeltsch, 1998).



D Et deinde ut
 predicta turri
 percursui uolum
 tari dicitur, cubi
 to uno infra
 angulum qui
 respicit ad sep
 tentrionē. uidi quasi colūpnā calibri
 coloris p̄fatis lucide parti muri eisdē
 edificii extrui appositam. ualde tri
 bilem aspectu. tantę, magnitudi
 nis ac altitudinis. ut m̄suram eius
 nullom̄ discernere possem. Et eadē
 colūpnā tres angulos habebat ab uno
 usq; ad summum quasi gladiū acutus.
 quorū primū respiciebat ad orientē.
 sedē autē ad septentrionē. & tertius
 ad meridie. extrui ipsi edificio aliqn̄
 tum. hūmilitat. Ex angulo autē qui
 respiciebat ad orientē p̄cedebant
 rami aradice usq; ad cacumē eius.
 uicta cui radice uidi i primo ramo

abraham sedentē. in sc̄to ū moysen. &
 in tr̄o ioh̄. ac deinde reliquos patri
 archas & p̄ph̄as. ita surtiū singulos in
 singulis ramis ordinatē sedentē. sc̄dm̄
 temp̄ quo in hoc sc̄to libmet successe
 rant. qui se om̄t quertant ad angu
 lum eisdē colūpnę qui respiciebat
 ad septentrionē. admirantē ea quę in
 ip̄o futura uiderunt i ipsa S. inter
 hos duos angulos. unū sc̄licet uer
 gente adoriente & altum ad septen
 trionē. erat ante facies ipsorū pat̄r
 charū & p̄ph̄arū. eadem colūpnā ab
 uno usq; ad summū quasi cornuū &
 rotunda. plenaq; rugarū. ut de ar
 boris cortice solet gerā pullulare.
 A sc̄to ū angulo respiciente ad septen
 trionē exiit splendor mirę clarita
 tis. se extendens & reflectens ad
 angulum qui respiciebat ad meri
 die. Et in eodē splendore i tam mag
 nam latitudinē se diffundente. ḡt̄p̄t̄

diffundent se i fructu benedictionis
 sic puenent ad easde doctores

xi Quid pdicante xpo facti sunt apli mar
 tures & alii electi.

xii Diffusio euanglio. extensa e in ho
 minibz sapientia diuine scripturaz
 que i unio minoris studii erat &
 in fine debilis refrigescere carna
 te multoru.

xiii Quid homo in pncipio boni opis
 debet e timidus i medio fortis
 & stans i ultimo humilis.

xiiii Quid misteria filii dii i profundissimo
 secreto patris in uentre & nouo tela
 mto eduxa gra spe sci declarata
 sunt qd cinereo homini si nisi i
 umbratione ostendit

xv De scientia dii & statu ei. & quid
 significet. §. ti sunt

xvi Quid angli circa ea sunt & cur ala

xvii De his qui dicunt spulle oues.

xviii Quid ds quosda leniore qsdm for
 tiore flagello qsdm maxima erup
 na mitis & corpus constringit.

xix Exemplu de pharaone & moy
 se & aaron aduante re.

xx De modis castigacionu & di con
 solacionu uas horu inspiciunt.

xxi Verba sapientie salomonis.

xxii Quare scientia dii inspiciat ho
 mines noua ueste induat.

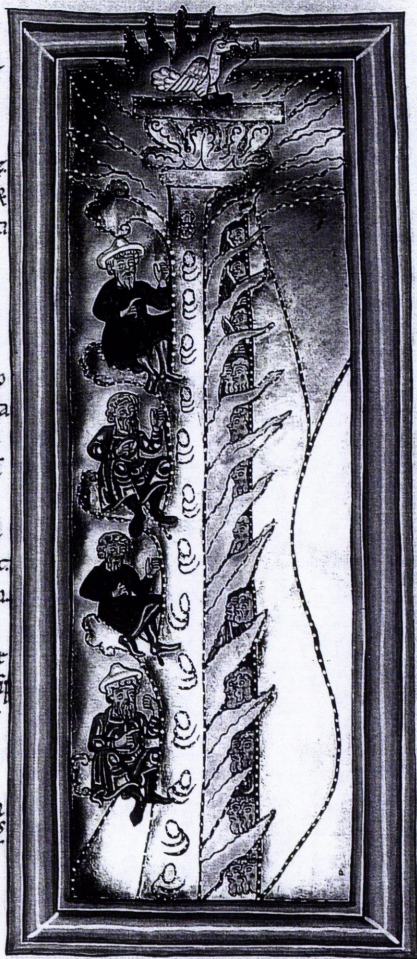


Plate 15b Copy of the *Rupertsberg Scivias*, Josepha Knips, c. 1927-33.
 Eibingen, Bibliothek der Abtei St. Hildegard, Cod. 1, Book III, vision 4
 (after Saurma-Jeltsch, 1998).

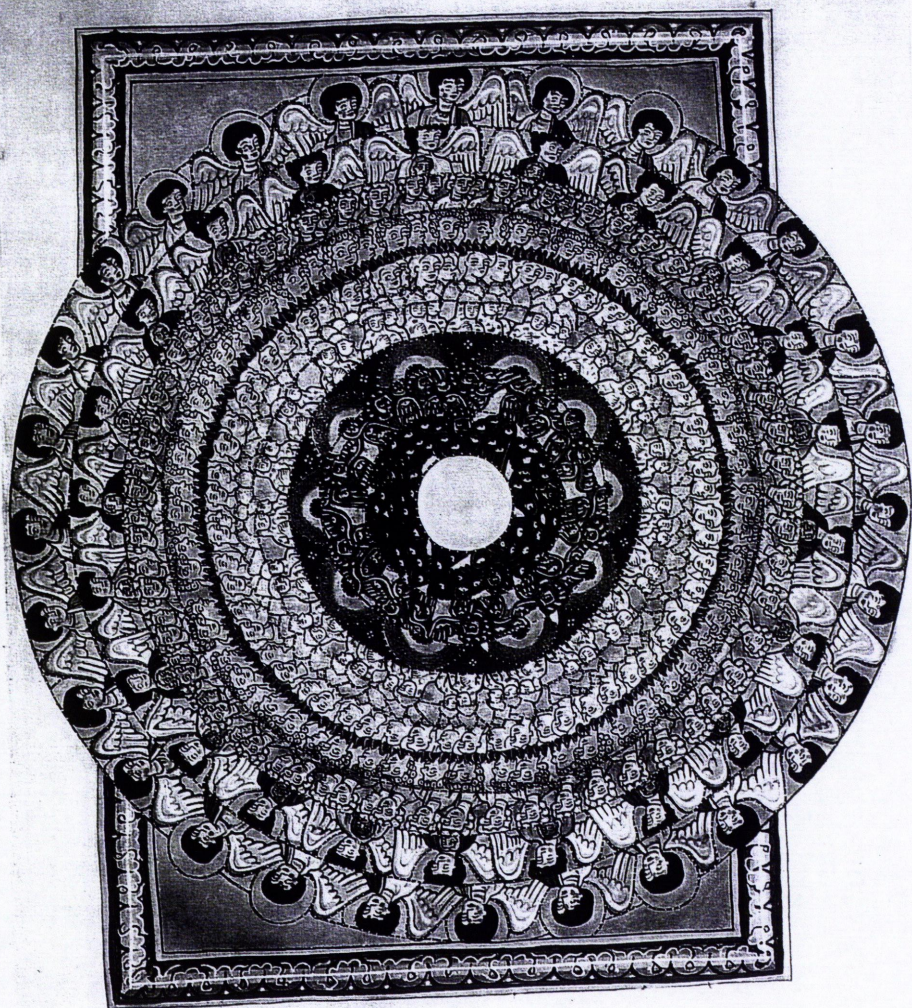


Plate 16 Copy of the *Rupertsberg Scivias*, Josepha Knips, c. 1927-33. Eibingen, Bibliothek der Abtei St. Hildegard, Cod. 1, Book I, vision 6 (after Saurma-Jeltsch, 1998).

ualeat. n̄ q̄ntū p̄missione mea con-
 cedit. Qui autē acutal aurei unioris
 intellectus habet. hic i ardente amo-
 re speculi mei ad uerba hec anhelat.
 & ea i sciencia animi sui conscribat.

Capitula tertie uisionis tertie
 partis.

- i. Quod diuine uirtutes sub lege
 pullulantet noua lege plurimu
 fructum afferunt.
- ii. Quod uoluntate di uirtutes ope-
 rant i hominib.
- iii. De statu amoris celestis discipli-
 ne uerecundie misericordie uictorie.
 & qd significet.

- De habitu carūde & qd significet.
- Specialit̄ de amore celesti & habi-
 tu ei & qd significet.
- Specialit̄ de disciplina & habitu
 ei & qd significet.
- Specialit̄ de uerecundia & habitu
 ei & qd significet. Significet.
- Specialit̄ de misa & habitu ei & qd.
- Specialit̄ de uictoria & habitu ei.
 & qd significet. Significet.
- De statu pacencie & genuit̄ & qd.
- De habitu carūde & qd significet.
- Specialit̄ de paciencia & habitu
 ei & qd significet.
- Specialit̄ de genuit̄ & habitu ei
 & quid significet.

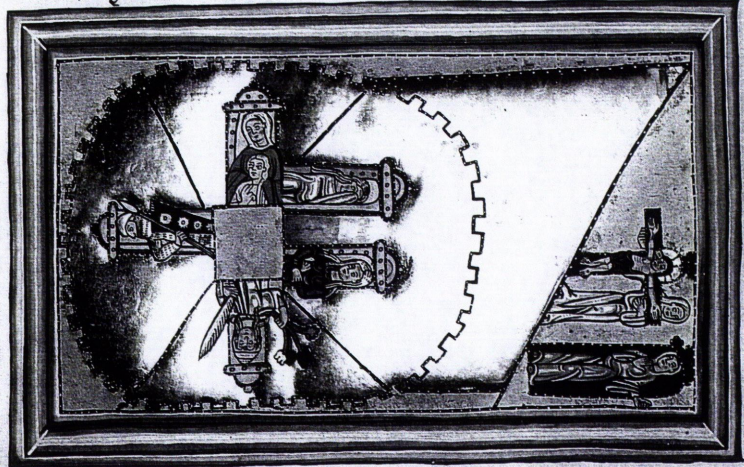
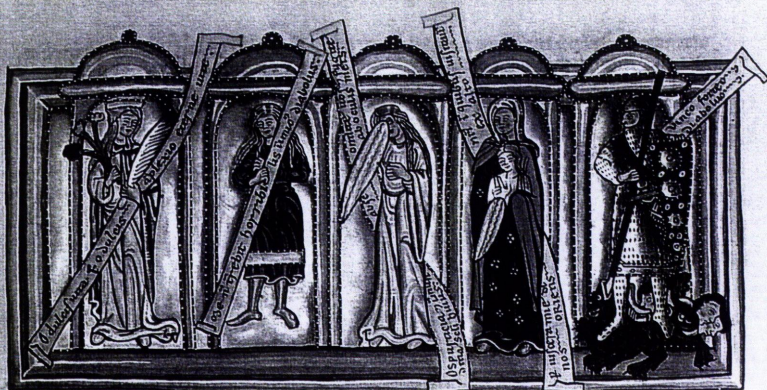


Plate 17a Copy of the Rupertsberg Scivias, Josepha Knips, c. 1927-33.
 Eibingen, Bibliothek der Abtei St. Hildegard, Cod. 1, Book III, vision 3
 (after Saurma-Jeltsch, 1998).



ost hec u
di. & ecce qñ
i medio lon
gitudinis
p dicitur luci
de parti mu
ri designari

Dedificiu stabat uelut turtis fer
ri coloris ipsi muro exteri un
posita latitudinis quatuor cu
bitoru & altitudinis septē cubi
toru in qua si pecti qñq; imagi
nel singularitē stantet i singulo
arcu desup quasi turticu conum
habentē. quarū pma respiciebat ad
orientē scđa aut ad aquilonē. tētia
ū ad septentrionē & quarta ad colup
nā uerbi dī in cui radice abraham
patriarcha residebat. ac qñca ad tur
rum gēdū & ad illos homines qui i

ipso edificio huc & illuc discurrē
bant. Similitudo autē una erat eis
in hoc singulē earū uestitū erant
solūm qñ singulū uestitū serici &
calciatū calciamentū albi. excepta qñ
ca que ex omī parte armata uide
bat. Scđa ū & tētia erant nudo ca
pice dissoluta coma & alba caren
tes amictu palliorū. Prima autē
& tētia ac quarta induitū erāt tu
nicū albi. S; dissimilitudo ex hoc
erat eis. Prima imago gestabat
i capite suo pontificalem infulam.
i partē capillū & albi. induca qñ
pallio albo. inferi i duab; orti ipsi
purpura contexto. In dexta uero
habebat lilia & alios flores. i sinis
tra autē palmā. Et dixit. O dulci
uita & o dulci amplexio etnē uite.
& o beata felicitas in qua sūt etna

Specialiū de saluatione animarū.

& habitu ei. & quid significet.

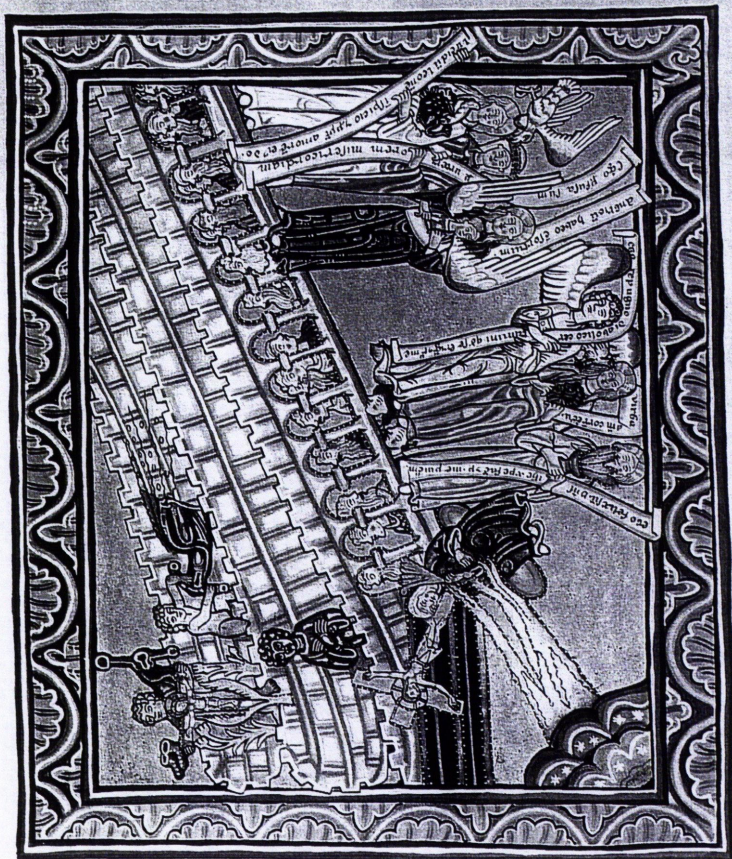


Plate 18 Copy of the *Rupertsberg Scivias*, Josepha Knips, c. 1927-33. Eibingen, Bibliothek der Abtei St. Hildegard, Cod. 1, Book III, vision 6 (after Saurma-Jeltsch, 1998).



Plate 19 *Salem Scivias*, c. 1200. Heidelberg, Universitätsbibliothek, Cod. Salem X,
 16, f. 111, Book III, vision 1.



Plate 20 *Salem Scivias*, c. 1200. Heidelberg, Universitätsbibliothek, Cod. Salem X,
 16, f. 176, Book III, vision 4 (left half of page), with vision 10 (right half).

- i. De synagoga matre incarnacionis domini. filii dei.
- ii. Verba salomonis.
- iii. Verba ysaię pphete.
- iiii. De diuerso colore synagoge.
- v. De cecitate eius et quod in corde abraham. in pectore moyses. in uentre eius reliqui pphete. qđ significet.
- vi. Quod magna ut turris. habens circulum in capite. similem aurore.
- vii. Verba ezechielis. *Irem*
- viii. Comparatio de samson. et de saul et de dauid. ad eandem



Plate 21 Copy of the *Rupertsberg Scivias*, Josepha Knips, c. 1927-33. Eibingen, Bibliothek der Abtei St. Hildegard, Cod. 1, Book I, vision 5 (after Saurma-Jeltsch, 1998).

- I. Quod omnis baptizatus p̄ unctionē
epi ornari & stabiliri debet.
- II. Quod unius & indeficientis dulcedo
spe sc̄i datur in 9firmatione.
- III. Quod ineffabilis et immutabilis 9firma
tione manifestat̄ & uiridissimis
uirtutib⁹ declaratur. / potest.
- III. Qd̄ ecclia unctione spe sc̄i munta.
nūq̄m i errore pueritatis deici -
- V. Verba moysi de eadem re.
- VI. Quod baptizati i unctione crisma
tis apontifice decorantur.
- VII. Verba libri regū ad eandē rē.
- VIII. Qd̄ baptizatus & n̄ 9firmatus carita
tē baptismatis habet. s; ornati
9fulgore unctionis supioris doc
toris sui n̄ habet.
- IX. Qd̄ i honore spe sc̄i p̄ solos ep̄os con
firmatio exercenda ē.
- X. Qui 9firmandū manib⁹ tenet. in
carnali p̄creatione ei n̄ 9ungat̄.
- XI. Qui post baptismū ad diabolū re
uertit̄. n̄ penitet 9dempnabit̄.
qui aut̄ baptismū fidelit̄ seq̄. actō
fidei p̄it̄. ecclia p̄filiū suū d̄m̄ exorantē.
Teret̄ modi quib⁹ ecclia resonat ut
tuba. / timoda.
- XII. De diuersitate baptizatorū mul
tū.
- XIII. Verba ezechielis de eodem.
- Quarta Visio Sede
p a r t i s.



Plate 22 Copy of the *Rupertsberg Scivias*, Josepha Knips, c. 1927-33.
Eibingen, Bibliothek der Abtei St. Hildegard, Cod. 1, Book II, vision 4
(after Saurma-Jeltsch, 1998).



Plate 23 Copy of the *Rupertsberg Scivias*, Josepha Knips, c. 1927-33.
Eibingen, Bibliothek der Abtei St. Hildegard, Cod. 1, Book II, vision 5
(after Saurma-Jeltsch, 1998).



Plate 24 Paten of Chalice. Niello, engraved. Christ on the Cross. Church and Synagogue, c. 1170. Prefigurations of the New Testament. Tremessen (Poland), Abbey Church.



Plate 25 *Essen Missal*, Crucifixion, c. 1000. Dusseldorf, Landesbibliothek, Cod. D.4, f. 8v (detail).

lxxx. Quid nemo propter pondus peccatorum suorum desperet.

lxxxv. Evangelium de eodem.

lxxxviii. Quid peccata et elemosina et propter culpam satisfactione deleri de-

lxxxix. De libro sapientie. S. bene

xc. Quid elemosina lacu voluptatum hominum

xcv. Qui elemosinam dant et qui suscipiunt ea suscipiunt hoc in uanum non faci-

xcviii. Quid pauperes et diuites et boni dant. re potestati appetunt unquam sed in uocatione sua remunerantur.

ccii. Quid sacerdos exorando et coherendo monet propter deum et festi-

ccv. Quod sacerdos auctore sermone ritate magistrum populo non ostendat nisi sacerdos si lupi uo-

ccviii. Quod elemosina contra deum sciantur. ululant super iustitiam sacerdotum et celi iustitiam esse suscipiunt.

ccxii. Quid sacerdos habet potestatem ligandi et soluendi.

ccxv. Verba euangelii de eodem.

ccxviii. Quod nullus absque culpabili culpa ligandus est.

ccxxi. Quod si aliquis innocens attributus fuerit propter honorem dei solutionem querere debet.

ccxxv. Quod rebelles ad christum reuerti nolentibus et obduratis nulla misericordia querentibus antiquum serpentem

inuantur.

cii. Verba diaboli.

ciii. Quod homines de tenebrositate infidelitatis per incarnationem filii dei educati sunt.



Plate 26 Copy of the *Rupertsberg Scivias*, Josepha Knips, c. 1927-33. Eibingen, Bibliothek der Abtei St. Hildegard, Cod. 1, Book II, vision 6 (after Saurma-Jeltsch, 1998).



Plate 27 Copy of the *Rupertsberg Scivias*, Josepha Knips, c. 1927-33.
Eibingen, Bibliothek der Abtei St. Hildegard, Cod. 1, Book I, vision 4
(after Saurma-Jeltsch, 1998).



Plate 28 Copy of the *Rupertsberg Scivias*, Josepha Knips, c. 1927-33.
Eibingen, Bibliothek der Abtei St. Hildegard, Cod. 1, Book 1, vision 3
(after Saurma-Jeltsch, 1998).



Plate 29 Schwarzrheindorf, Sankt Clemens, South wall: Transfiguration, Roof: Allegories of the tribulations of Israel, East niche: Figure symbolising one of the four kingdoms of the world, c. 1150-70.



Plate 30 Copy of the *Rupertsberg Scivias*, Josepha Knips, c. 1927-33.
Eibingen, Bibliothek der Abtei St. Hildegard, Cod. 1, Book II, vision 3
(after Saurma-Jeltsch, 1998).

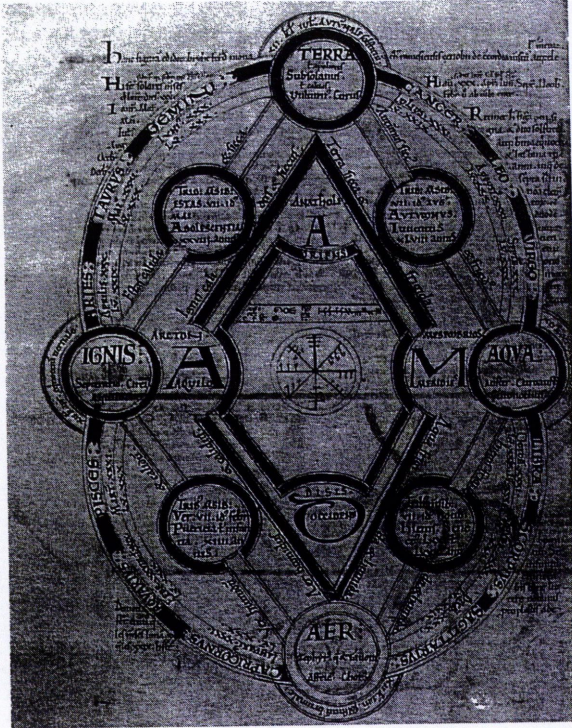


Plate 31 *Handbook of Computus*, Byrhtferth of Ramsey, c. 1110-12. Oxford, St. John's College, MS 17, f. 7v.

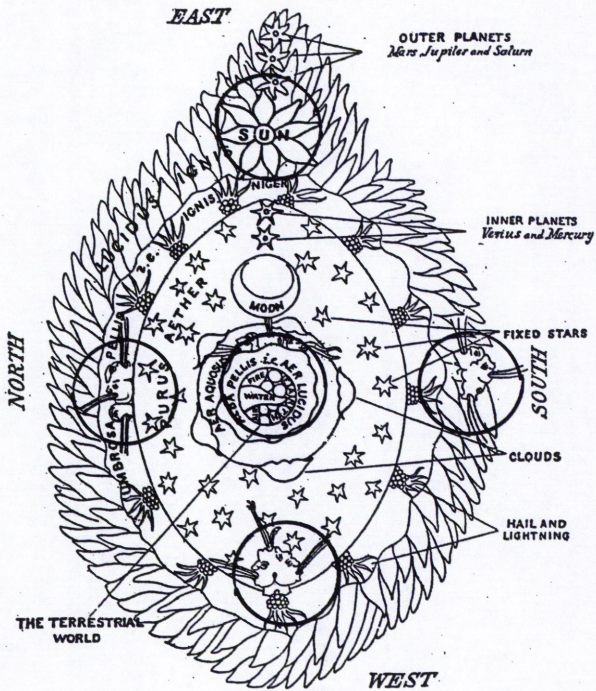


Plate 32 Simplified representation of *Rupertsberg Scivias* Book I, vision 3, in Charles Singer, 1928, pg. 206 (four circles added by Kathryn Cesarz).



Plate 33 *Clavis Physicae*, Honorius d'Autun, mid twelfth century. Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, MS lat. 6734, f. 3v.

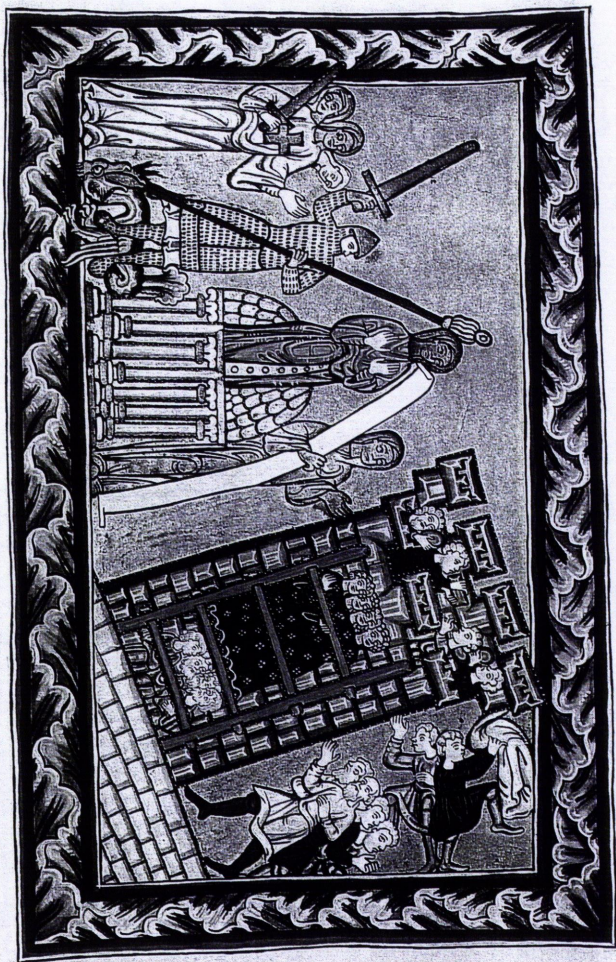


Plate 34 Copy of the *Rupertsberg Scivias*, Josepha Knips, c. 1927-33.
Eibingen, Bibliothek der Abtei St. Hildegard, Cod. 1, Book III, vision 9
(after Saurma-Jeltsch, 1998).



Plate 35 *St. Ambrose*, mid twelfth century. Bamberg, Staatsbibliothek, MS Patr. 5, f. 1v.



Plate 36 Medallion with the Virgin Orans, twelfth century. Bronze, Munich, Christian Schmidt Collection, Inv. No. 919.

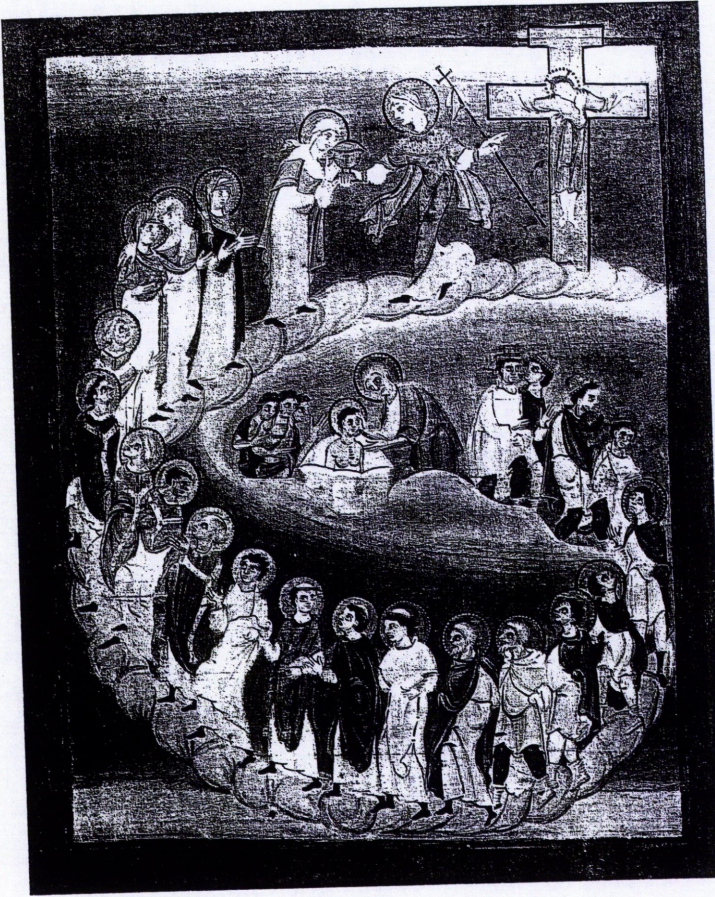


Plate 37 *Bamberg Commentaries*, c. 1000. Bamberg, Staatsbibliothek, MS
Bibl. 22, f. 4v.



Plate 38 *Aschaffenburg Pericopes*, c. 970. Aschaffenburg, Hofbibliothek. MS 2, f. 1v.



Plate 39 *Sacramentary of Bishop Sigebert of Minden*, c. 1022-36. Berlin, Staatsbibliothek, MS theol. lat. fol. 2, f. 9 (detail).



Plate 40 *Passion of Lucy*, c. 1130. Berlin, Staatliche Museen, Kupferstichkabinett, 78 A 4, f. 61r.

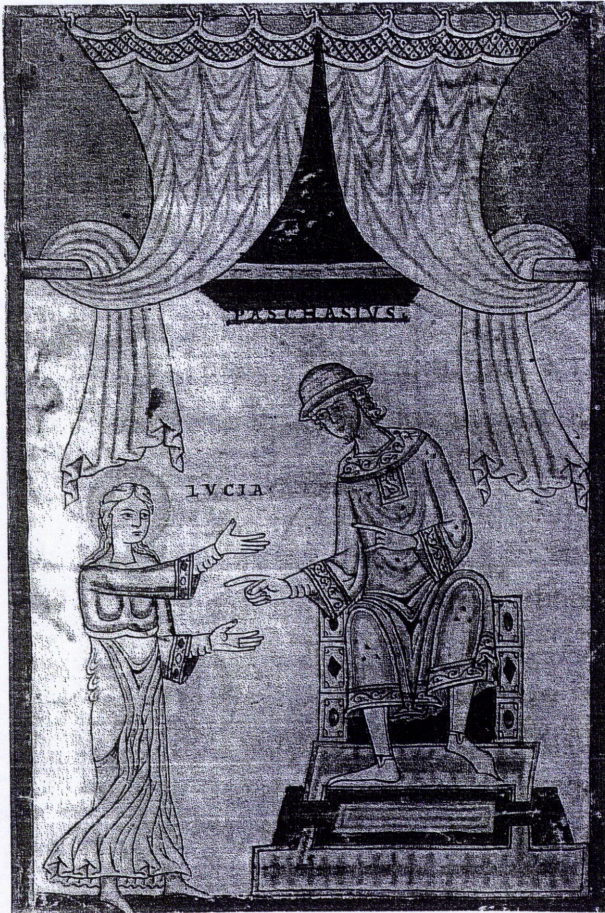


Plate 41 *Passion of Lucy*, c. 1130. Berlin, Staatliche Museen, Kupferstichkabinett, 78 A 4, f. 3r.



Plate 42 *Passion of Lucy*, c. 1130. Berlin, Staatliche Museen, Kupferstichkabinett, 78 A 4, f. 18r.



Plate 44 *Hortus Deliciarum*, c. 1176-96. Formerly Strasbourg, Bibliothèque Nationale, f. 261v.



Plate 45 Strasbourg Cathedral, Ecclesia and Synagoga, c. 1235. Now in Musée d'Œuvre Notre-Dame, Strasbourg.

XVII K̄AL SEPTEMB̄RIS
 NAT̄L S̄CI ARNULFI
 SQUI BEATUM
 arnulfum confesso
 rem tuum atq; pon
 tificem doctorem
 p̄cipuum catho
 licamq; fidei p̄dicato
 rem officere digna
 tus es: p̄fecta q̄rit
 ipso pronobis interce
 dente peccatorum nosc̄orū



Plate 46 *Drogo Sacramentary*, c. 850. Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, MS lat. 9428, f. 91r.



Plate 47 Martin Healing the Leper, c. 1100. Trier, Stadtbibliothek, MS Cod. 1378, f. 136r.

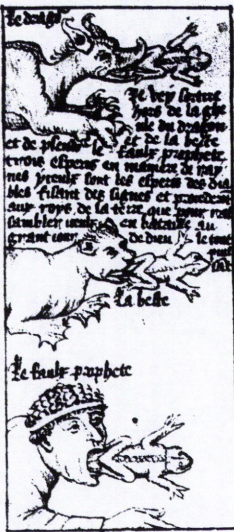
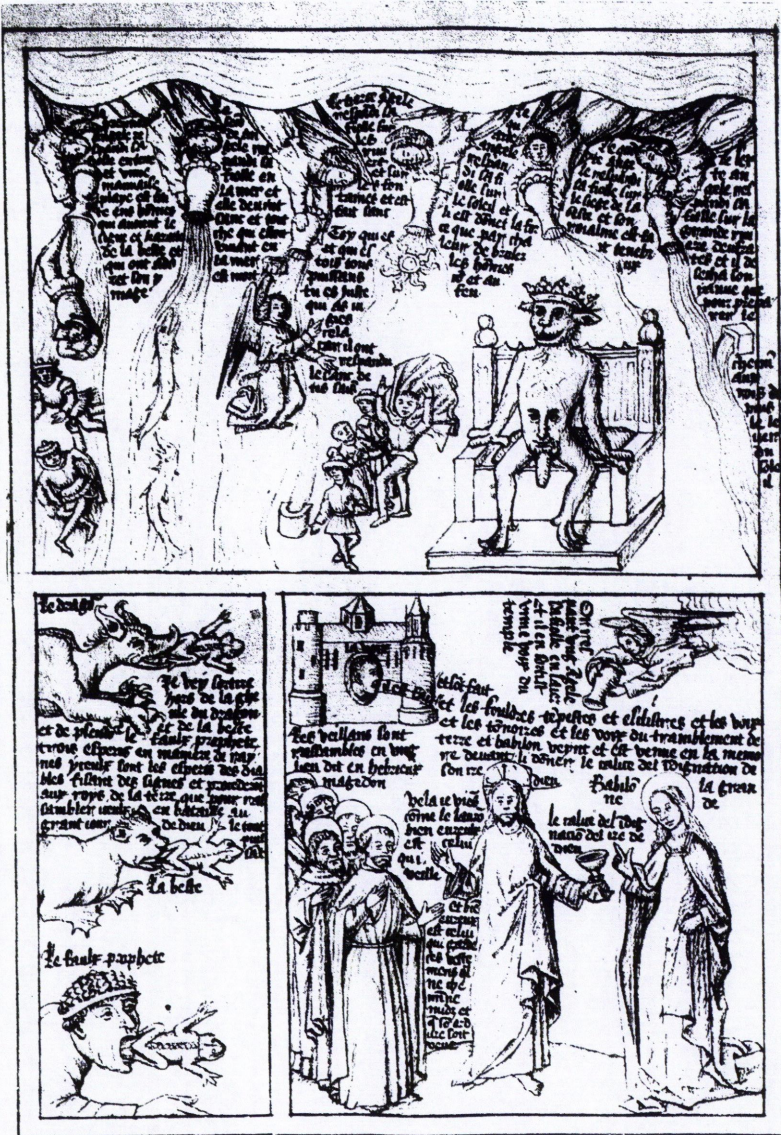


Plate 48 *Liber Floridus*, c. 1460. The Hague, Royal Library, MS 128 C 4, f. 29.

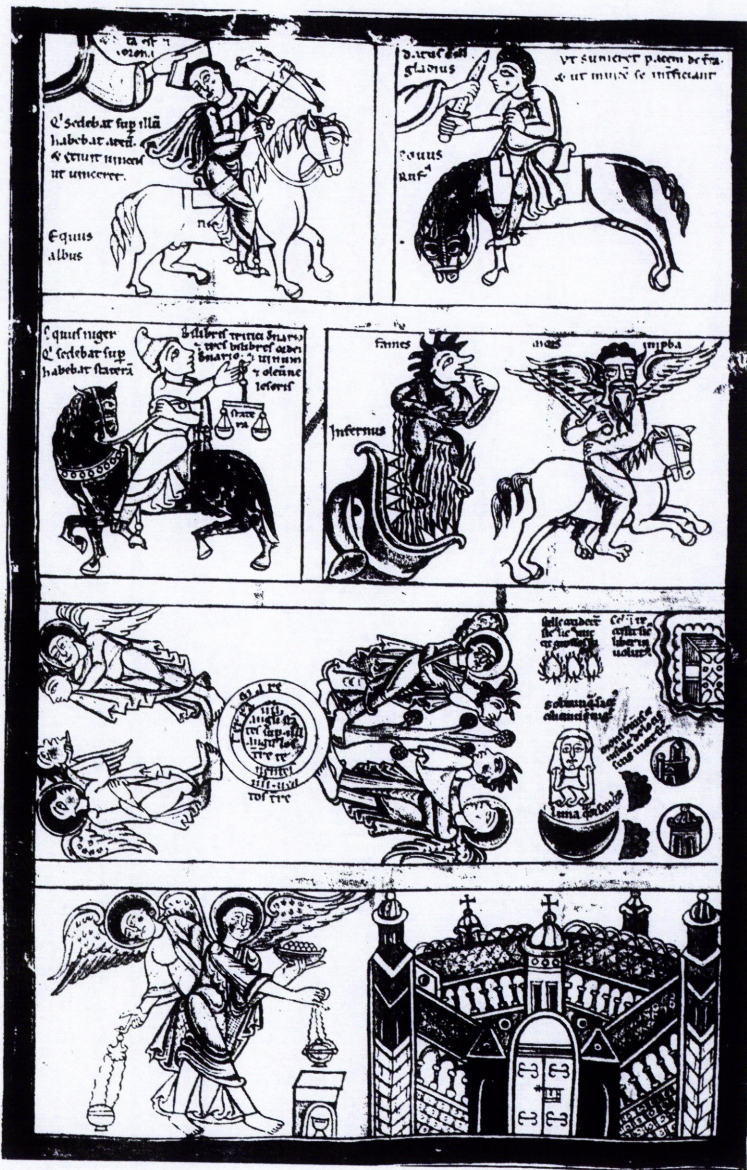


Plate 50 *Liber Floridus*, last quarter of the twelfth century. Wolfenbüttel, Herzog-August-Bibliothek, MS Guelf. I, Gud. lat. 2, f. 11v.



Septima uisio secunde partis.

Et uide
idi arden
tem lucem
tantę mag
nitudinē
ut aliquis
montē mag

nus & altus ē. infūmitate sua uelut
ī multas linguas diuisā. Et coram
lucē istā quēdam multitudo albarū
rum hominū stabat. ante quos ue
lūt quoddam uelum tāqm cristal
las plucidū. apectore usq; ad pedes
eorum extēdū erat. S; & ante
multitudinē istā. quasi ī qdā uia
uelut quidā uermis mure magni
tudinē & longitudinē supinū iace
bat. qui tanti horrori & infamie
uidebat. ultra quā homo effari po
test. Ad cuius sinistram quasi forū erāt.
ubi diuicij hominū atq; delitice se
culares & mercatorū diuersarū rerū
apparuerūt. ubi etiā quidā homines
multa celeritate currentes. nullum
mercatorū faciebant. quidā autē te
pide euntes. & uendicionē & emptio
ni ubi insistebant. Vermis autē ille
niger & hirsutus atq; ulcerib; & pu
shulis plenus erat. q; uarietates
acapite p uentē suū usq; ad pedes

Plate 51a Copy of the *Rupertsberg Scivias*, Josepha Knips, c. 1927-33.
Eibingen, Bibliothek der Abtei St. Hildegard, Cod. 1, Book II, vision 7
(after Saurma-Jeltsch, 1998).

- ⁱⁱⁱ
xvi. **D**e sagittis oris eius. & de fumo pec-
toris. & de humore lumborū qđ
significant.
- xx. **D**e turbine umbilici. & de imundi-
cia ranarū uentris ei. quid signifi-
cat.
- ⁱ
xx. **Q**uod diabolus stultos homi-
nes p̄ iniquā incredulitatē exagi-
tat. uerū eē putantes qđ ipse eis
fallaciē demonstrat.
- ⁱⁱ
xx. **Q**uod heretici uitandi. & ab ecclia eici-
endi sunt. qui diabolum p̄ dō colunt.
& sunt ulcera diaboli. & p̄currentis
germen filii p̄ditionis.
- ⁱⁱⁱⁱ
xx. **Q**uod adiutorū dī contempnent. grā
dī deserit. querentib; aut̄ misericor-
diā subuenit.
- ⁱⁱⁱⁱ
xx. **V**erba salomonis de eodem.
- ^{xx}
xx. **Q**ui ueri cultores dī qui toto annu-
terrena concalcant. antiquū ser-
pentem forti conuisione deiciunt.

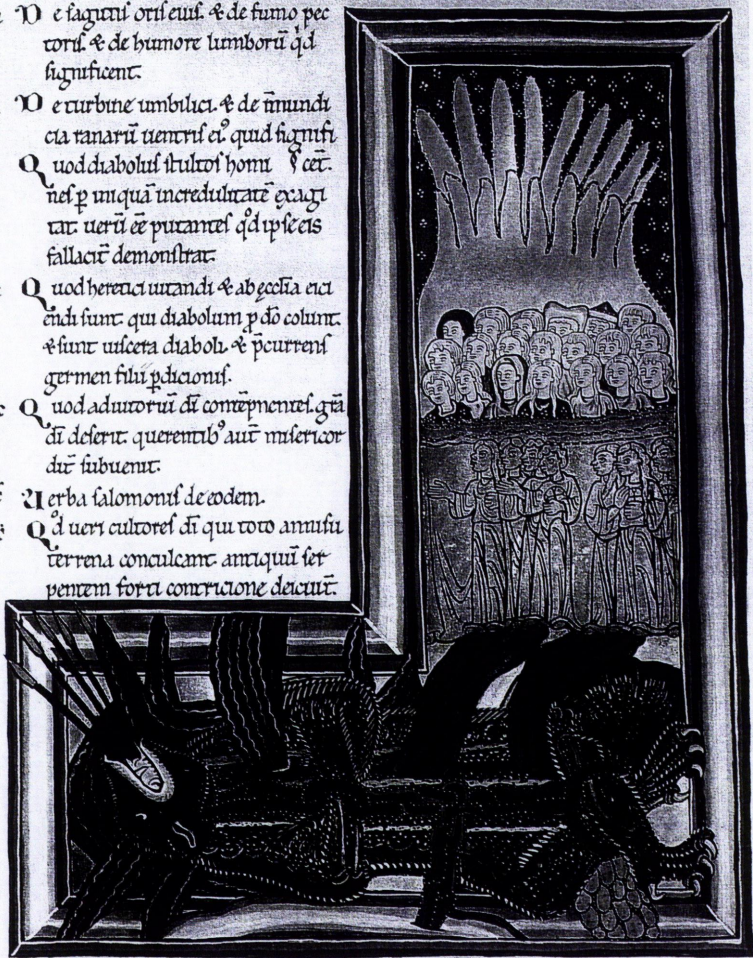


Plate 51b Copy of the *Rupertsberg Scivias*, Josepha Knips, c. 1927-33.
Eibingen, Bibliothek der Abtei St. Hildegard, Cod. 1, Book II, vision 7
(after Saurma-Jeltsch. 1998).

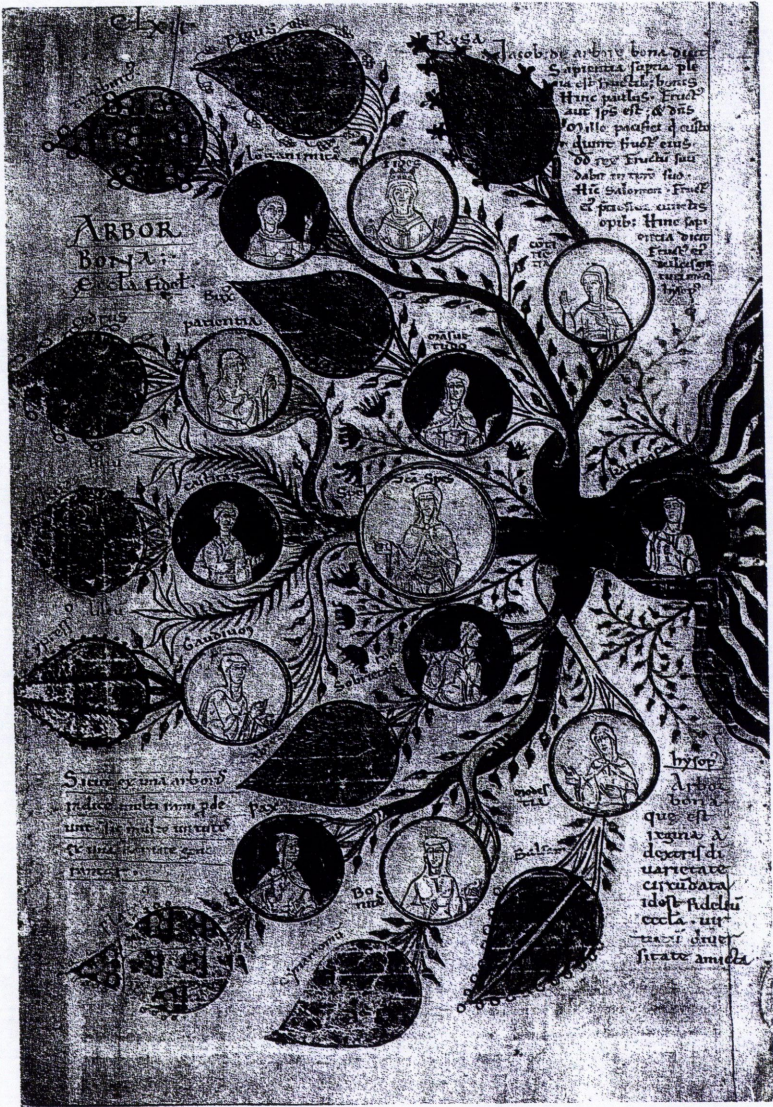


Plate 52 *Liber Floridus*, c. 1445-75. Ghent, University Library, MS 92, f. 231v.

- dictione diabolicarū artū.
 x Q d de ineffabili grā sua corde & ore
 dō ineffabiliter laudandus ē.
 xi Q d hymphonia i unanimitate & con
 cordia pferenda ē.
 xii Q d uerbum corp hymphonia auct
 spm & armonia diuinitate uerbu
 ū humanitate filii designat.
 xiii Q d p hymphonia rationali uerit cor
 pens anima excitat ad iuglandū.
 xiiii Q d hymphonia dura corda emollit.
 & humore & punctionis inducit. &
 spm scm aduocat.
 xv Q d fidelis omni deuotione icellantē
 iubilare debet.
 xvi Verba dauid de eadem re.



Plate 53 Copy of the *Rupertsberg Scivias*, Josepha Knips, c. 1927-33.
 Eibingen, Bibliothek der Abtei St. Hildegard, Cod. 1, Book III, vision 13
 (after Saurma-Jeltsch, 1998).

cuius & quid significet.
 xvii. Specialiter de caritate & habitu
 ei & quid significet.
 xviii. Specialiter de timore dñi & habitu
 cuius & quid significet.
 xix. Specialiter de obedientia & habitu
 ei & quid significet.
 xx. Specialiter de fide & habitu eius.
 & quid significet.
 xxi. Specialiter de spe & habitu cuius &
 quid significet.
 xxii. Specialiter de castitate & habitu
 cuius & quid significet.
 xxiii. Specialiter de gratia di. & statu & ha
 bitu ei & quid significet.



Plate 55 Copy of the *Rupertsberg Scivias*, Josepha Knips, c. 1927-33.
 Eibingen, Bibliothek der Abtei St. Hildegard, Cod. 1, Book III, vision 8
 (after Saurma-Jeltsch, 1998).

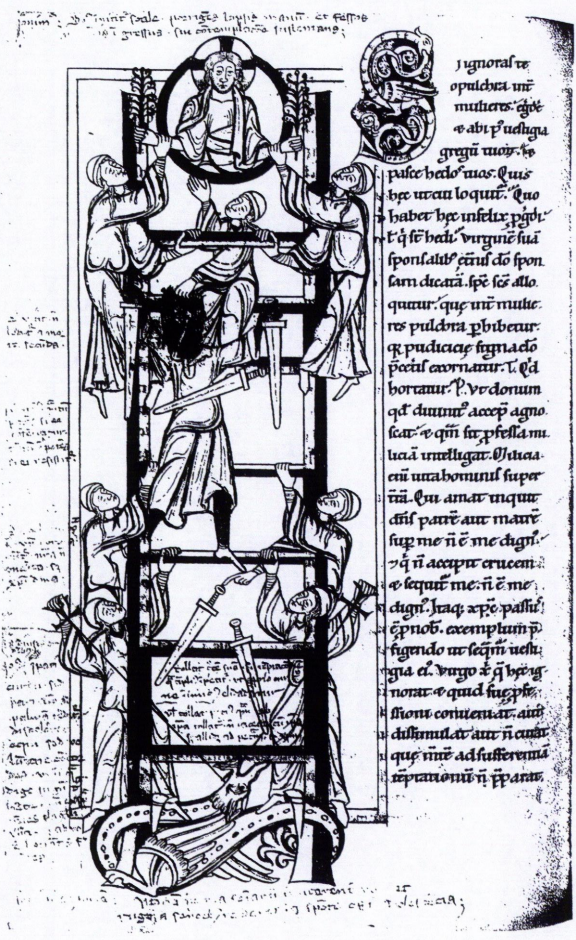


Plate 56 *Speculum Virginum*, twelfth century. Cologne, Historisches Archiv der Stadt Cologne: W 267a, f. 78v.

ex potestate. q̄ a pontifice romano ad p̄dicandū directa. cande
maropolim martyri. sui c̄stionē illustre fecerunt. Et in eadē
urbe s̄c̄t̄ Colūb̄c̄ uirḡ. quē sup̄ato igni gladio c̄sa ē. Recens
s̄c̄t̄ Cr̄m̄s̄ exorast̄.



Plate 57 *Zwiefalten Legendary*, c. 1162. Stuttgart, Württembergische Landesbibliothek, Cod. hist. 2° 415, f. 87.

Adversus p. dicitur
 r. p. ludo sp. h. r. m.
 ut m. s. l. h. p. d. i. c.
 r. f. r. g. n. i. t. i. s. a. r.
 d. e. n. t. r. e. t. i. c. e. r. e. t. i. f.
 i. g. l. a. b. i. o. f. e. d. e. r. a. t. i. o.
 i. n. q. u. i. d. p. o. d. u. c. t. u. r.
 a. n. t. e. q. u. i. p. u. r.

Letitius cecur?



Quoniam amantem fuisse nullo
 dicit solentur bartholomaeus deo
 et seducendo q. fr. i. g. g. r. m. g.

Debra i. n. p. p. r. e. r. t. o. g. l. i. a. r. i. u. m.
 f. u. r. a. d. f. r. a. t. r. e. m.
 d. u. m. d. i. u. m.
 e. u. m. d. i. o. q. u. i.
 l. e. d. e. r. i. t. i. n. a. q. u. i.
 a. l. b. o.



La tur.

Venit uen
 dita p. m. s.
 ma p. e. r. c. i. p. i.
 t. e. r. e. c. o. g. n. a. t. i. o.
 n. u. r. o. p. a. r. t. e.



Iti manes
 d. i. s. c. e. d. e. r. e. a.
 m. e. m. a. l. e. b. e. r. e.
 i. n. t. e. r. i. g. n. o. s. e.
 a. n. t. e. m. e. n. t. e. m.
 q. u. i. p. e. c. c. a. t. i. s.
 e. i. s. o. b. i. i. t. o. l. o.
 r. a. n. g. e. l. o. s. e. l. e. v. a. t.
 i. n. t. e. l. a. n. t. e. m. e. r. i. t. u. m.



Amor dicitur
 r. p. n. s. a. d. r. d. i. s.
 i. o. l. u. s. i. b. a. r. t. h. o. l. o. m. a. e.



For r. d. i. s. t. i. n. c. t. i. o.
 d. i. c. t. u. r. h. o. m. i. n. u. m.
 d. i. s. t. i. n. c. t. i. o. n. e.
 d. i. c. t. u. r. e. u. m. a. l. l. i. s.
 i. n. q. u. i. p. p. l. i. s. e. u. m.
 e. u. m. r. e. t. i. p. e. s.
 a. n. t. e. e. i. s. e. t. e. r. n. e.
 e. o. r. u. m. d. e. u. s.

Hyacintho habens
 p. n. s. d. r. a. c. o. n. i. t. e. m.
 e. p. i. s. t. o. l. a. s. a. p. o. s. t. o. l. i. c. a. s.
 n. o. m. i. n. a. d. r. i. c. t. o. n. i.
 q. u. i. d. r. a. d. i. c. a. m. l. a. y.
 e. d. i. t. i. s. p. a. r. t. e. s. a. p. o. s. t. o. l. i. c. a. s.

Johannes
 u. i. o. e. u. s. d. i. c. t. u. r.
 f. e. c. e. r. u. m. c. o. n. s. e. r.
 u. t. u. s. e. u. m. a. n.
 t. e. s. f. u. i. t. i. n. f. a.
 c. t. u. m. t. u. o. d. i.
 u. e. i. a. l. t. o. r. a.



Debes agni.

Et utraque p. m.
 s. u. m. m. a. n. t. u. r.
 n. u. l. l. i. t. u. r. o. f. f. e.
 r. e. n. s. f. r. u. t. u. s.

Et suscipit me i. q. u. i. t.
 e. d. i. t. i. s. t. h. e. i. n. d. e. l. a. n. d. e. n. t. i. s.
 d. e. c. e. l. o. c. o. n. a. r. u. m. a. n. t. o.
 i. n. l. a. y. d. i. b. u. s. p. e. n. o. s. i. s.
 t. u. r. o. c. a. m.

Veni o. d. e. r. d. e. m.
 r. i. b. i. t. h. e. n. i. s. i. n. t. u. r.
 e. u. m. a. g. n. u. m.



Plate 59 Liber Floridus, c. 1260. Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, MS lat. 8865, f. 42v.



Plate 60 *Liber Floridus*, last quarter of the twelfth century. Wolfenbüttel,
 Herzog-August-Bibliothek, MS Guelf. I, Gud. lat. 2, f. 14v.

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