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THE PRIVILEGING OF *VISIO* OVER *VOX* IN THE MYSTICAL EXPERIENCES OF HILDEGARD OF BINGEN AND JOAN OF ARC

Even though medieval women mystics have enjoyed increased attention in recent scholarly discussion, a topic that still has not been tackled is the possible difference between seeing a vision and hearing a voice during a mystical experience and the ramifications of this difference in the context of medieval text production and in the status of mystics as authors. When a mystic relates a mystical experience, she inevitably creates a text and becomes an author (Petroff 1986, 20-21). In the Christian Middle Ages, medieval text creation hinged on authority and authorization, as an imitation of the creative power of God, the Master Author and the Logos (Word) itself, and thus has religious consequences for an aspiring author (Minnis 1988, 73). Bernard McGinn points to this logocentrality of medieval writing: "Jesus the preacher of the message became Jesus the preached message and soon Jesus the written message, as elements of his preaching and the stories about him, especially the account of his sacrificial death and rising, were fixed in written form" (1991, 63).[1]

Mystics, however, not only imitate the creative power of God, but also claim to deliver His messages. Their stake in authorship is thus doubled, and for female medieval mystics, text production proved to be an especially ambivalent endeavor. On the one hand, as Elizabeth Alvilda Petroff notes, the "women writers of mystical literature... lacked the authority, and the authoritative language, to communicate spiritual truths" (1994, 4). Because of rampant medieval misogyny, female claims to authorship were especially suspect, as women were often associated with evil. This association carried over from antiquity and found fertile ground in the minds of the church fathers who villainized Eve's role in the fall (Beer, 1991, 2-3; Newman 1985, 170). Thus, backed by the Pauline rule on women's ecclesiastical silence, Jean Gerson's pronouncement on Bridget of Sweden at the Council of Constance echoes the accepted medieval norm: "'All words and works of women must be held suspect'" (quoted in Lagorio 1984, 72). On the other hand, Petroff claims,

"[v]isions led women to the acquisition of power in the world while affirming their knowledge of themselves as women. Visions were a socially sanctioned activity that freed a woman from conventional female roles by identifying her as a religious figure... [and] an artist " (1994, 6). But as the experiences of the twelfth-century visionary Hildegard of Bingen and the fifteenth-century heroine Joan of Arc illustrate, not all women's visions, words, and works were created equally suspect or equally acceptable.

We do not question whether Hildegard and Joan actually had mystical experiences, but merely how each woman's mode of presentation — vision and voice, respectively — affected her credibility. Several factors contribute to the success of a female medieval mystic as author: the form of the mystical experience — vision rather than voice alone — and the authentication process by the ecclesiastical authorities. For the vision-oriented mystic, the process of relaying the mystical message is more difficult, as she has to translate the visionary tableau into a text, whereas a voice-oriented mystic needs only to repeat the words, which requires less participation on the mystic's part. We suggest, therefore, that a vision is simultaneously both a greater and a more indirect claim to authorship and authentication, while a voice is a lesser but more direct claim. On the one hand, the mystic's role in creative translation of a tableau is greater, but her claim to authorship is less because it is an experience with "intellectual words" (Underhill 1911, 329) that are interpreted as divine. On the other hand, the mystic's relaying of a voice relegates her to the status of a mere mouthpiece, but can at the same time elevate her message to one that derives directly from the ultimate divine authorial source (Benz 1969, 648-9).[2] Hildegard claimed in her mystical experiences more of a tableau presented as a written text, while Joan's message was both aurally received and orally transmitted, making her less credible as a medieval mystical author. Some critics might object here that Joan cannot be considered an author, as she did not write her own words down, but, by virtue of claiming heavenly inspiration, she situated herself much closer to a claim for authorship than did most medieval authors, including Hildegard. Furthermore, Joan's mystical experience — however unsatisfying to her original audience — was written down both by her examiners at Poitiers and by her accusers in Rouen, an action that resembles the practice of female medieval writers requiring male scribes for authentication purposes.[3] In Joan's case, however, the customary scribal authentication eventually doomed her.

It is our argument that the female mystic's self-categorization into the accepted system of mystical experience — between vision and voice, tableau and text —

coupled with her adherence to particular patriarchal and ecclesiastical expectations, generally determines her success as mystic and author: in the dichotomous pair of Hildegard and Joan, Hildegard almost always claimed visions, foregrounded her mystical messages with the politically and theologically correct rhetoric of the time, and actively solicited ecclesiastical support, whereas Joan — when pressed to divulge the content of her mystical experiences — claimed only revelation via inferior voice, did not foreground her mystical messages with the correct rhetoric, and shunned ecclesiastical support. That Hildegard died in her bed at the age of eighty-one while Joan was burned at the stake at the age of seventeen has much to do, we argue, with their respective approach to mystical experience and expression of that experience.

We are, of course, cognizant of the different historical circumstances of Hildegard and Joan. Carolyn Walker Bynum illuminates their differing experience in this regard:

> The powerful abbesses of the early Middle Ages are seldom found in the later period.... In late-fourteenth- and fifteenth-century hagiography, holy women appear more and more isolated and male-oriented.... Although holy women were, by the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, more likely to be lay and married, to reside in the world, and to have opportunities for significant geographical mobility through pilgrimage, they were also more subject to male scrutiny and in greater danger of being accused of heresy or witchcraft. By the time of Catherine of Siena, Bridget of Sweden, and Joan of Arc the influence — even the survival — of pious women depended almost wholly on the success, in ecclesiastical and secular politics, of their male adherents (1987, 22-23).

Both despite and because of the different historical circumstances described here, Hildegard and Joan also illustrate Jo Ann McNamara's argument that the status of mystics increased from the twelfth to the fourteenth century, but declined in the fifteenth century (1993, 9-27): initially the help of mystics was enlisted against potential heretics; then they became heretics themselves. First their text was welcomed and accepted, but later the texts and their authors were denied validity. Hildegard lived in an era and locale in which mysticism flourished, but Joan was not so fortunate on either count. In all of medieval Western Europe, France can claim the fewest number of mystics (Bäurle and Braun 1985, 2; Dinzelbacher

1985, 17-20)[4] — and then usually only ones who were rejected and died for their beliefs, such as Marguerite Porète. Not only did Joan have to suffer at the hands of a hostile ecclesiastical court, she also had to deal with a cultural climate unaccustomed to mystical experiences made public like hers.

Our essay intends to move beyond the political level, however, by examining the possible textual-philosophical underpinnings in those logocentric Middle Ages that influenced the divergent fates of Hildegard and Joan. These two women were chosen for our study precisely because they are an opposite pair. Hildegard was a nobly born, educated, cloistered, and middle-aged nun when she publicized her visions, whereas Joan was an illiterate young shepherdess from a small farm community. Nevertheless, despite their differences in time, place, and upbringing, their common goal was a mission to change what they saw as great wrongs in their respective societies, accompanied by a claim to mystical experiences. Scholars have long been divided over whether either of these women should be considered mystics. By the classic definition of mysticism, however, as "an immediate knowledge of God attained in this life through personal religious experience" (Livingstone 1977, 350),[5] both would qualify. Hildegard is often more specifically called a visionary, but almost every modern commentary designates her as a mystic.[6] Even Hildegard herself refers to her mystical tasks: "I beseech you, my Lord, give me understanding, that by my account I may be able to make known these mystical things" (Hart and Bishop 1990, 309).[7] More scholars might balk at Joan's being called a mystic, but several have termed her so.[8] And like other medieval mystics, Hildegard and Joan felt called to intervene in church and state affairs, to complement mystical experience with commensurate action (Dinzelbacher 1985, 15). Both women perceived themselves living in an age with a pervasive power void and felt the urge to act, albeit with different goals. Hildegard considered her era "effeminate" (Epist. 23, lines 158-9) and the clergy lacking in virility, while Joan mustered sorely needed military momentum for the French kingdom. Both women were convinced that, paradoxically, a woman was needed to eradicate the effeminacy of the age, and both claimed the authority of mystical experiences in this very public mission. The crucial difference was how they encountered their mystical experiences, either by vision or by voice. Before we can examine Hildegard's and Joan's mystical experiences in detail, however, we need to look at the theories of mysticism accepted in the Middle Ages and how those informed Hildegard's presentation of vision and Joan's presentation of voice.

Both Hildegard and Joan fit into the classical hierarchy of mystical experiences as defined by Augustine. The three Augustinian categories of vision experiences in descending order of validity are "intellectuale," "spiritale," and "corporale" (12.7.16). The purest intellectual visions employ neither the eyes of the body nor those of the soul (Agaësse and Signac 1972, 12.10.21). In a spiritual vision, the mystic sees with the interior eyes of the soul, while a corporeal vision utilizes the external eyes and is thus the least viable as a mystical experience (12.7.17). Voices, too, can be grouped into a corresponding system: the "inarticulate voice," one that leaves more of an impression than definite words; the "distinct interior voice," which speaks in clear words but is recognized as being inside the mind; and "the exterior voice, which appears to be speaking externally to the subject and to be heard by the outward ear" (Underhill 1911, 273). For the mystic, the first kind of voice — the kind Hildegard of Bingen experienced — is the best. While the second type, "distinct interior words," is often treated with suspicion by the hearer (274), because these voices are so precise, they are more difficult to resist, even if the command of the voices runs counter to the desires of the hearer (276). The third type, those voices heard by the exterior ear, like Joan of Arc's, is one that "mystics for the most part regard with suspicion and dislike" (277).

Even though Augustine distinguishes between a vision and voice, in the modern scholarly debate the term *vision* is often used to include the auditory. In Peter Dinzelbacher's taxonomic work on vision literature, he provides a comparison of the occurrence of vision and voice in mystical experiences. He distinguishes among visions in which the auditory plays a negligible role; visions in which the auditory plays a large role; visions in which the auditory edges out the visual after a short impression; and, finally, "visions" in which the auditory replaces the visual entirely. He considers the last two as quasi-aberrations of the acoustic experiences during a vision and thus a transition to pure audition (1981, 163).[9] It thus appears that a greater emphasis has been and is placed on the visual experience, as even Evelyn Underhill claims that "visions and voices . . . are the *media* by which the 'seeing self' truly approaches the Absolute" (1911, 323). William James actually eliminates from his description of mystical experience all auditory forms of revelation, with the exception of music (1961, 320, 330). The term "visionary" for a person experiencing a vision, even when that experience is accompanied by a voice, shows that sight is the privileged mode of perception, there being no corresponding term for a person who undergoes a pure "audition," such as "voiceary."

By the twelfth century, the privileged Christian medieval form of mystical experience was vision of God, *visio Dei*. A plethora of ancient and Christian examples expound on *visio Dei* as the desired form of communication with the divine, a concept that is grounded in the belief that the eyes are the windows to the soul (Riehle 1977, 172-9). With this widespread endorsement of vision as the preferred form of mystical experience, it is perhaps not surprising that the learned Hildegard of Bingen clearly privileges vision over voice in her mystical experiences. She fits into the Augustinian hierarchy the following way: on her visions alone, she situates herself on the two highest rungs of "intellectual" and "imaginary," and concerning her voices, she claims the superior "immediate" voice experience. Her mystical experiences are featured most prominently in her trilogy of theological-philosophical books, consisting mostly of didactic visions[10]— *Scivias* (1141-51), *Liber vitae meritorum* (1158-63), and *Liber divinorum operum* (1163-73), as well as many of her letters. In and through these, Hildegard was primarily concerned with the authentication of her experience and the ecclesiastical sanctioning of her authorship, a process she pursued actively and relentlessly. During this process, she assumed the expected humble position of a woman treading on forbidden ground, which makes of heightened interest the candor with which she discusses the forms of her mystical experiences and her rhetorical strategies. All of these measures served to fashion her into the most accepted female authority of the twelfth century and helped to assure the orthodoxy of her mystical experiences and to validate her as an author in the eyes of the ecclesiastical authorities.

Hildegard's three visionary books contain introductions explaining her authorial activity and emphasizing the authentication of her visions. The prologue to her *Scivias*, the most extensive of the three prologues, best illuminates her mystical experience and visionary mission. Every one of her visions has two parts: first a description of her vision, then an allegorical interpretation. Occasionally, a heavenly voice addresses her to clarify points. In the *Scivias* prologue, Hildegard explains: "I saw a heavenly vision ... in which resounded a voice from Heaven" ("uidi maximum splendorem, in quo facta est uox de caelo") (Hart and Bishop 1990, 59). Her visions are flamelike — like Ezekiel's — and the voice clearly commands, "Say and write what you see and hear" ("dic et scribe quae uides et audis"), further delineating the parameters of both her experience and authorship:

> But since you are timid in speaking, and simple in expounding, and untaught in writing, speak and write these things not by a human mouth, and not by the understanding of human invention, and not by the requirements of human composition, but as you see and hear them on high in the heavenly places in the wonders of God. Explain these things in such a way that the hearer, receiving the words of his instructor, may expound them in those words, according to that will, vision and instruction. Thus therefore, O human, speak these things that you see and hear. And write them not by yourself or any other human being, but by the will of Him Who knows, sees and disposes of all things in the secrets of His mysteries (Hart and Bishop 1990, 59).[11]

This passage addresses several key concerns. First, it paints Hildegard as humble and unpolished, a reluctant Moses-like medium who assumes the risky task of authorship only after the repeated command from God the Master Author and, as she relates a page later, only after she has refused and has been subsequently struck down by God with illness. All of these humility gestures, of course, served to release her from potential criticism by the patriarchal hierarchy. Second, she has also been liberated from the constraints of scholastic rhetoric, a statement that can be taken as an implicit criticism of a system that did not grant women the same scholastic education as men.[12] Third, the visions and instructions are geographically fixed in "heavenly places," not on earth. The prologue testifies also to her being one of St. Matthew's pure-hearted, as she is said to have visions because she is pure in spirit (*Scivias* 1, lines 45-6). The prologues of her other two visionary books contain similar, shorter authenticating passages, with the last book showing the least humility, implying that over the years she felt more sure as a prophetess and gained confidence as an author.

In a letter to Guibert of Gembloux, who later became her secretary, Hildegard discusses the quality of her visions as both intellectual and spiritual and establishes herself as a visionary according to the biblical example of Enoch:

> But ever since I was a child ... I have always seen this vision in my soul, right up to the present time, when I am over seventy, and my soul, just as God willed, climbs in this vision, through the changes of atmosphere, to the top of the firmament and spreads itself out amongst different peoples, although they are a long way away from me in distant regions and places. And since I see these things in this way in my soul, I therefore also see them according to the changing of the clouds and of other creatures. But I do not

> hear these things with my outer ears, nor do I perceive them with the rational parts of my mind, nor with any combination of my five senses; but only in my soul, with my outer eyes open, so that I never suffer in them any unconsciousness induced by ecstasy (Bowie and Davies 1990, 145). [13]

Hildegard "sees" with the eyes of the soul, which makes her visions spiritual. They are not sought out by her but appear before her, as her soul climbs to geographically fixed "heavenly places," and thus her visions also qualify as "intellectual" and highly acceptable. She is quick to disavow further physical involvement by rejecting the influences of ecstasy, although this sets her apart from many mystical authors, including Augustine (Baumgardt 1948, 281).[14] One reason for her rejection of ecstasy might be its corporeality, making the experience suspect as to its effectiveness in providing validation.[15]

In the same letter, Hildegard renounces even more of the corporeal sensory aspect of her visions and makes a crucial distinction between what she sees and what she hears:

> Whatever I see or learn in this vision, I hold in my memory for a long time; so that when I recall what I have seen and heard, I simultaneously see and hear and understand and, as it were, learn in this moment, what I understand. But what I do not see, I do not understand, because I am unlearned. And what I write in the vision, I see and hear; nor do I put down words other than those I hear in the vision, and I present them in Latin, unpolished, just as I hear them in the vision. For I am not taught in this vision to write as the philosophers write; and the words in this vision are not like those which sound from the mouth of man, but like a trembling flame, or like a cloud stirred by the clear air (Bowie and Davies 1990, 146).[16]

Thus, Hildegard asserts that she does not understand what she does not see, which implies that voice alone would not suffice to relate the message. Even when she acknowledges the auditory aspects of her visions, she paints another tableau: not a human voice, but a flame or a cloud, traditional Old Testament images of God, especially as experienced by Moses or Ezekiel.[17] The voices, then, are of the highest intellectual kind and eradicate any human verbal aspect in favor of the highest visual imagery. This puts Hildegard on the top rung of mystical experience and asserts the importance for her and other mystics of vision over voice.

Furthermore, to cement validation of her experiences, Hildegard used the correct rhetorical topoi; she wrote in Latin, the language of the Church. "It has been rightly suggested," Emilie Zum Brunn and Georgette Epiney-Burgard insist, "that neither Meister Eckhardt nor Marguerite [Porète] would have been condemned if their works had appeared only in Latin... Hildegard... wrote, or dictated, in the language of the Church, although she herself said she was not conversant in the Latin of philosophers. Thus she belonged to the domain reserved to the clergy, since she used their language and had received approbation from the Pope and the Synod of Trier" (1989, xxii, xxiii).

Hildegard's superior auditory experience is matched by her visionary experience, as she distinguishes between two different kinds of light, producing two different kinds of vision: "The light which I see... is known to me by the name of the 'reflection of the living light'.... In the same light I sometimes (but infrequently) see another light which is known to me by the name of the living light, but when and how I see it, I cannot tell" (Bowie and Davies 1990, 145, 146).[18] The first platonic light is the medium of most of her visionary images, but in the Living Light she achieved vision without any sensory knowledge or explanation, a true *visio intellectualis*. Such a vision is especially crucial against the backdrop of her search for approval from the mystical authority *sine qua non*, Bernard, who eschewed everything but the most intellectual type of vision.[19]

If Hildegard can be placed on the highest rung of mystical experience, that of the intellectual visionary, then Joan must be placed on the lowest, that of the purely corporeal — and the purely external at that — an issue that was to loom large in her Condemnation trial. In relating her first mystical experience, she insisted that she had only heard a voice — an external voice that came from her father's garden, accompanied merely by a bright light (Champion 1976, 49-50; Barrett 1931, 65),[20] the only similarity in the experiences of Hildegard and Joan. In fact, Joan's voices seemed only to take on form when she was pressed by the examiners at her trial to describe them (Warner 1981, 120-21; Lang 1895, 202).[21] She resorted to naming them as the most popular saints in French folk piety and her personal favorites: the traditional guardian of the Franks, St. Michael; the rhetorician, St. Catherine of Alexandria; and the saintly cross-dresser, St. Margaret of Antioch (Wood 1988, 136-7; Tanz 1991, 127-34), claiming "I saw them with my bodily eyes as well as I see you" (Barrett, 69).[22] Despite this assertion of the visionary nature of her experience, Joan's descriptions of what she saw were conventional, containing the standard iconography of light, crowns, and wings (Warner 1981, 126, 132-6). First, she sees only light (Champion 38, 47, 55-56, 122;

Barrett 55, 63, 70, 114), with no physical form (Champion 45-6, 47-8; Barrett 61, 63), accompanied by a voice so ethereal in nature that sometimes she cannot understand what it is saying (Champion 52, 122; Barrett 67, 114); later, the speakers are described as wearing crowns (Champion 52, 64; Barrett 68, 78), but Joan resists pressure to provide any further description, appealing instead to the records of her examination at Poitiers (Champion 53-4; Barrett 68-69); eventually, she admits to seeing their faces (Champion 64; Barrett 78) and even to touching them (Champion 152-3; Barrett 129-30), but when pressed, she cannot describe them (Champion 64; Barrett 78), finally insisting, "You already have my reply on this matter, and you will get none other from me. I have answered you as best I can" (Barrett 125-6).[23]

It is striking that, throughout her Condemnation trial, the emphasis of her testimony was on the orality of her revelations, on voice rather than vision, on hearing rather than seeing:

> Asked if since Tuesday she had not spoken with St. Catherine and St. Margaret, she answered yes, but she does not know at what time.
>
> Asked on what day, she answered, yesterday and today; "there is no day but I hear them."
>
> Asked if she always saw them in the same dress, she answered she always sees them in the same form; and their heads are richly crowned. Of their outer clothing she does not speak; of their robes she knows nothing.
>
> Asked how she knew whether the apparition was man or woman, she answered she knew for certain, she recognized them by their voices, and they revealed themselves to her; nor did she know anything but by revelation and God's command.
>
> Asked what part of them she saw, she answered the face.
>
> Asked if the saints which appeared to her had hair, she answered: "It's well to know that they have."
>
> Asked if there were anything between their crowns and their hair, she answered no.
>
> Asked if their hair was long and hung down, she answered: "I do not know." She added that she did not know whether they appeared to have arms or other members. She saw they spoke very well and beautifully; and she understood them very well.
>
> Asked how they spoke if they had no other members, she answered: "I leave that to God." She said the voice was gentle, soft and low, and spoke in French. (Barrett 78-9)[24]

Consistently in exchanges such as these,[25] Joan refused to answer questions on what she might have seen — a charge laid heavily against her in the Ordinary trial, that concerning her visions (her accusers' word) (Champion 101-2, 203; Barrett 103, 171), "she refuses to declare them sufficiently by word or sign; but did and still does put off, contradict and refuse" (Barrett 171).[26] Despite her reluctance to tell what she had seen, she did not, however, hesitate to describe the voice in detail, the orality of her mystical experience reflected in her testimony that she "recognize[d] them by their voices" ("cognoscit eas ad voces ipsarum") (Champion 64; Barrett 78;) and distinguished among them by their "greeting" ("salutationem") (Champion 53; Barrett 68).

Although Joan seemed to follow her questioners' lead in identifying her voices — if the examiners referred to a voice, so did she; if they called the voice by a name, she did as well (Wood 1988, 236); if they insisted Gabriel appeared to her, she finally conceded that he did[27] — her judges seemed willing to accept her terminology, of voice rather than vision: in Article X of the seventy drawn up after the Preparatory trial, for example, the accusations use the words "visions" and "revelations," but when a summary is given of Joan's own testimony in response to those accusations, the term "voice" (or "voices") — and only that term — appears, including twenty-five times in Article X alone (Champion 177-80; Barrett 146-51). Keeping in mind that we only have her accusers' record of what she said — and that she complained that they only wrote down what was said against her (Pernoud 1955, 202) — we find this emphasis on voice striking, especially given that when the twelve articles were drawn up on which she was to be convicted, the focus dramatically changed: in that purported summary of Joan's experiences, they are presented not as verbal but as visual and corporeal, those of body, eyes, form, appearance, flesh, sight, touch, physicality (Champion 270-2; Barrett 227). These were the articles read and voted on by the theologians at the University of Paris — and yet, when Joan was admonished by that body, the articles read to her, once again, referred primarily to voices (Champion 352-3; Barrett 301). Even so, it is the visual aspect that appears, this time with no orality at all, in the letters written after Joan's execution (Champion 402-8; Barrett

339-45) by England's Henry VI, who had been the one to insist on her ecclesiastical trial (Champion 404-5; Barrett 344).

For Marina Warner the major issue of that trial is the "nature of [Joan's] voices" (1981, 118); for W. S. Scott, it is submission to the church (1974, 106). Actually, as we show here, it was both. But in the Nullification trial, submission to the church was the foremost question; the issue of Joan's voices was practically nonexistent. As Charles Wayland Lightbody points out, "It is interesting to note that the Church avoided pronouncing on the divine inspiration of Joan's 'Voices,' in the Process of Rehabilitation. This touchy question was left over for the controversies of future generations" (1961, 140). At the Nullification trial, those who mention her voices at all are few — her confessor, Jean Pasqueral; two of her companions, Jean de Metz, who talks about her "brothers in Paradise," and Jean d'Aulon; the one remaining witness from Poitiers, Séguin de Séguin; and a few of her former judges at Rouen, Jean Fabri, Pierre Miget, Martin Ladvenu, Jean Beaupère, and Thomas de Courcelles, still skeptical as to the divine nature of the voices — and almost always as a "voice" or "counsel" (Pernoud 1955, 162, 166, 87, 101, 191-3, 200, 215, 226, 229; Lang 1895, 208). Furthermore, mention of the voices is lacking entirely from either of the articles concerning points on which witnesses were sworn to answer (Pernoud 1955, 251-60).

Joan's Condemnation trial experience also gives us a glimpse of her role in the process of establishing the authority of her mystical text. In the text that comes down to us, we can see creation of her experience through its fine-tuning — her rewriting, as it were. In fact, in a more general sense, Joan was allowed to "rewrite" her testimony at the conclusion of the Preparatory trial (Barrett 156-7; Champion 132-33) when she asked "that the questions and answers should be read consecutively to her and that which was read without contradiction on her part she allowed to be true and confessed" (Barrett 133).[28] At the conclusion of the reading and after some modifications of the text, "Jeanne confessed that she believed she had spoken well according to what had been written in the register and read to her" (Barrett 133).[29] Despite these revisions, the final conclusion of her judges at Rouen was that her revelations were "fictitious" ("ficta") (Champion 289; Barrett 338) — a word that suggests the failure of her text to convince her audience as to its basis in actual experience.

In contrast, Hildegard never had to submit to an ecclesiastical trial, but she had two ecclesiastical favors to seek: authentication of her visions and validation by the Church. She achieved the former by claiming God as the source of her visions.

For instance, in the prologue to her *Scivias*, Hildegard immediately asserts her *visio Dei* in the headline "These Are True Visions Flowing from God" (Hart and Bishop 1990, 59),[30] thus insisting that a demonic source was out of the question and affirming that even in the words she repeats she had authority from the highest source of logocentric creation in Christ, the Word himself. Claims of authenticity, which are usually provided by that visionary voice, are woven throughout the *Scivias* and *Liber divinorum operum*, but they are extensive in the *Liber vitae meritorum*. In Vision One of Book Two in the *Scivias*, Hildegard is told: "You may not see anything further regarding this mystery unless it is granted you by a miracle of faith" (Hart and Bishop 1990, 149).[31] In Vision Four of Book Three, the voice of her vision makes it unmistakably clear what its source is: "And as I looked at this, I heard from Heaven a terrifying voice, rebuking me and saying, 'What you see is divine!'" (357).[32] Although her descriptions of the visions contain many references to divine iconography, such as Hildegard's description of God on his throne, the divinity of the voice accompanying her visions is most clearly and beautifully stated in the *Liber vitae meritorum*. Hildegard's visions are repeatedly accompanied (more than thirty times) by the sentence "These things that you see are true, and as you see them, so they are" (Hozeski 1994, 47).[33] Since this work of Hildegard's strikes a heavy exhortatory note to sinners, she constantly reinforces her claims to the veracity of her visions. But it is after the extensive pronouncements of the voice that the visions are true that the voice from heaven[34] reveals itself as the Logos in his redemptive mission — the voice is therefore foregrounded by the vision. Found at the end of the *Liber vitae meritorum*, the statement is a summary of redemptive history from the viewpoint of Christ as he experiences his part in it. It contains passages like this: "I am the power of the Divinity, which was before eternity and before time and which did not even have a beginning in time, for I am the power of the Divinity by which God made all things that are to be discerned and probed .... I then became like a flame, and approaching the womb of the Virgin, I rested in it. I became incarnate in her flesh" (Hozeski 1994, 283, 284).[35] Hildegard effectively authenticated her visions as sent from God by the use of an appropriate, theologically correct spokesperson, Jesus the Logos, an authentication that Joan of Arc, in contrast, did not claim, resorting instead to angels and saints popular in her time and place, a strategy that might have weakened the already tenuous position of an adolescent girl claiming to hear voices from heaven.

To achieve the second objective, authorization by the Church, Hildegard looked to others besides Bernard of Clairvaux for ecclesiastical support and sanction.

She enlisted the support of three different ecclesiastics: her scribe Volmar, Bernard, and Pope Eugenius III. As her scribe, Volmar helped with her first rite of passage into authorship. Many medieval women writers, even if they themselves could write, employed scribes for two reasons. First, a male scribe — usually a cleric — lent credibility to a female author[36] and could speed her acceptance, since through this method a male member of the Church at least implicitly sanctioned what she had created. Second, scribes allowed women to maintain the appearance of illiteracy as part of donning the wimple of humility. The manuscript illustration titled "The Seeress" on the first page of the *Scivias* exposes the ambiguity of Hildegard's humility; she is shown sitting in the middle of the arch of a small room, writing on a tablet, visibly inspired by flamelike light from above, while Volmar is sitting outside the arch of the room, literally marginalized, with only his head peeking into the realm of Hildegard. He is entirely idle, holding what could be another empty tablet, but clearly not engaged in any writing at that point. As this illustration shows, Volmar was present to authenticate Hildegard's vision and creative process, but he assumed only ancillary status as a scribe, merely copying her first drafts and smoothing out stylistic blemishes. Yet Volmar was credited as recently as 1930 with the writing of her visions.[37]

But Hildegard went beyond authentication by a male scribe. In 1146-47, Hildegard wrote to Bernard to ask for his blessing on her endeavor, an astute move, as he was considered the most eminent authority of his day on mysticism:

> Through this vision which touches my heart and soul like a burning flame, teaching me profundities of meaning, I have an inward understanding of the Psalter, the Gospels, and other volumes. Nevertheless, I do not receive this knowledge in German. Indeed, I have no formal training at all, for I know how to read only on the most elementary level, certainly with no deep analysis. But please give me your opinion in this matter, because I am untaught and untrained in exterior material, but am only taught inwardly, in my spirit (Baird and Ehrman 1994, 28).[38]

In this letter, Hildegard emphasizes her need for ecclesiastical confirmation, due to her self-proclaimed "elementary" literacy and understanding, and especially denies the use of the vernacular in her visions. Hildegard adds to this that she is seeking Bernard's advice because she is afraid of heresies, a reference to the many women drawn to the heretical sects of the twelfth century. Bernard's reply

to Hildegard assures her of the orthodoxy of her visions because they fall into the intellectual category he so favored (Epist. II). Additionally, Bernard supported her cause with Pope Eugenius, whom she petitioned next.

In 1148, a letter accompanying a part of her *Scivias* was sent to Pope Eugenius and, while Hildegard again presented herself humbly, this letter has a certain immediacy and urgency that implies that even an infallible pope might not know everything: "O gentle father, poor little woman though I am, I have written those things to you which God saw fit to teach me in a true vision, by mystic inspiration" (Baird and Ehrman 1994, 32).[39] Both the issue of authentication — hence the reference to God's command — and a possible criticism feature here: "Therefore, I send this letter to you now, as God has instructed me. And my spirit desires that the Light of Light shine in you and purify your eyes and arouse your spirit to your duty concerning my writings, so that your soul may be crowned, which will be pleasing to God. In their instability, many people, those wise in worldly things, disparage these writings of mine, criticizing me, a poor creature formed from a rib, ignorant of philosophical matters" (32).[40] Two points stand out: Hildegard's implication that either some ecclesiastics or Eugenius himself are too worldly, and her advice to Eugenius to have the same purity of sight in judging her writing that Matthew requires and that she possesses. She closes the letter with an admonition, "Do not spurn these mysteries of God, because they have a necessity which lies hidden and has not yet been revealed" (33).[41] Subsequently, the pope approved her writings and thereby validated her status as prophetess. Given such a mark of approval, it is no wonder, then, that several years later Hildegard felt she could chastise Eugenius–for his stance toward the emperor–as well as many other political and ecclesiastical figures during her lifetime, often strengthened by her claim to true visions, which the Church authorities had validated for her in the first place.[42]

For Joan, the process of authorizing her voices was entirely different, as she did not seek ecclesiastical support in the first place, perhaps because as a laywoman she was not as theologically aware as Hildegard or because she demonstrated the distrust of the unlettered for the learned. Given the duplicity of her examiners at Rouen,[43] it comes as no surprise that Joan was reluctant (what her judges called obstinate) (Champion 317-8; Barrett 273) to discuss her mystical experiences: a constant refrain in her trial was to insist "I will not tell you" ("Ego non dicam hoc vobis") or to request "pass that question" ("Transeatis ultra") (Barrett 46; Champion 41). Unlike Hildegard, who was ordered by the voice accompanying her visions to reveal those visions, Joan felt compelled to keep

her revelations secret (Champion 93; Barrett 101): "She replied that concerning her father and her mother and what she had done since she had taken the road to France, she would gladly swear; but concerning the revelations from God, these she had never told or revealed to anyone, save only to Charles whom she called King; nor would she reveal them to save her head" (Barrett 50).[44] Later she modifies this list: "Asked if she had not spoken to her priest or any other churchman of the visions which she claimed to have she answered no, save to Robert de Baudricourt and to her king" (Barrett 101).[45] Whether she told one person or two seems to be of little importance; what is obvious is that, perhaps because of this compulsion to keep her counsel secret (Champion 29-30; Barrett 50), Joan never sought to have her revelations sanctioned by the Church. Although she heard the voices as often as three times a week, she remained silent about them for over four years — much like Hildegard, who saw visions for half her life before she revealed them — and when Joan finally did reveal them, she did so strictly to secular authorities. This became a major issue in her Condemnation trial. Warner paraphrases the trial records on this point:

> She was ... accused that though she proclaimed her belief in her voices as firm as her faith, ... she had not consulted a bishop or a priest about her voices to receive their approval. Joan had trespassed gravely. It mattered less what colours one flew than who bestowed these colours; the ritual was legitimised only by the legitimacy of the performer, not by the words themselves. Joan had never told anyone about her voices; she had not obeyed them because they had been approved by a man of the Church. She had not told her confessor, not any of the high ecclesiastics she met later. Her voices had remained a private affair, and as a laywoman she had no right to trust in them without the formal permission of the Church (1981, 228).

In this, Joan was no different than many other medieval mystics. As W. T. Jones explains:

> To the Church as an institution, the mystic is a maverick. He is a nonconformist and a troublemaker; he upsets efficiently functioning procedures; he rejects the authority of the institution whenever it conflicts with his private vision. The weight of numbers and of persons, traditions, convenience, decency, and respectability count for him as nothing in comparison with his inner conviction. Indeed, too large a dose of mysticism can destroy even the most efficient of institutions. Under the circumstances, what is surprising is the Church's remarkable capacity for keeping the Christian mystics within its fold, and not only keeping them there but using them to revitalize itself .... In general, with such individualists the Church has a simple alternative: It can either canonize them or expel them as heretics. It cannot ignore them. (1969, 56).[46]

In the case of Joan, of course, the Church did both: first it condemned her as a heretic, then elevated her as a saint.

If we accept Warner's assertion, then we must seemingly discount the clergy who examined Joan at Poitiers — but Joan seems to have done that very thing herself.[47] Although she appealed to the records at Poitiers to bolster her answers concerning her revelations (Champion 53-4; Barrett 68-9), indicating that she understood the importance of having written validation and verification of her voices similar to that given to Hildegard through scribal transcription of her visions, Joan insisted, upon direct examination, that "for believing in her revelations she did not ask the advice of bishop or priest or any other" (Barrett 190).[48] Her judges at Rouen hammered away at this point, in obvious disregard for whatever the decision of the committee of examiners at Poitiers had been to sanction her mission — and, presumably, her voices (Champion 56-7; Barrett 71). Instead, her accusers in Rouen, slightly overstating their case, complained that concerning her revelations, "she consulted no bishop, priest or other prelate of the Church, or any other cleric to discover whether she should give credence to such spirits; and declares that she was forbidden by her voices to reveal these communications to anyone except a captain of soldiers, to the said Charles, and to other purely secular persons" (Barrett 190).[49] Even after twenty-five years, in testimony at her Nullification trial, one of those who had examined her at Rouen complained that she had "been examined and not rebuked" ("a été examinée et non reprinse") (Pernoud 1955, 205; Quicherat 1965, 17) by those in Poitiers.

What made this so galling to the Inquisition at Rouen was that in this failure to obtain Church sanction — in her "individualism of thought" as W. S. Scott puts it (1974, 140) — Joan seemed to be claiming direct authority from God, but without either the direct authorship of reported vision — transmission of text — or the authorization of the Church that Hildegard so enjoyed.[50] This latter point is critical. Joan's accusers insisted that as "an unlettered and ignorant woman"

("mulier illiterata et ignorans") (Champion 305; Barrett 264), she must submit to their instruction, as Hildegard had done voluntarily. Furthermore, they claimed that Joan lacked a sign, especially the sign of humility[51] that Hildegard did so much to cultivate. This disparagement of her character ("qualitate personae") (Champion 338; Barrett 289) was phrased as criticism of the text of her life as well as of her revelations. She was commanded by the Inquisition "to reform yourself and your sayings and correct them by submitting your acts and your words to the Church, and by accepting her judgment" (Barrett 307).[52] Like editors in a publishing house, her judges seem to be asking for an extensive rewrite of both her life and her experiences — a revision, if we can use the word of Joan, of her implicit and explicit text creation. Joan's failure in this creation and its subsequent authorization resulted — in sharp contrast with Hildegard's successes in these areas — in Joan's judges declaring that "These revelations so invented had been as it were the root which had induced her to so many other crimes" (Barrett 274-5);[53] in other words, her revelations had led her to heresy in the view of at least that tribunal of the Church, thus landing Joan in the midst of the very charge of heresy that Hildegard had worked so hard to avoid concerning her own visions. One reason for Hildegard's success in avoiding such an accusation was her ensuring that her imagery came mostly from the writings of Scripture, while Joan's failure may be that her descriptions seem to have been based on the images and statues of saints and angels she had seen in various churches. At one point in her trial, Joan explained that the angels pictured on her standard were not a visual representation of anything she had seen — except for that in church.[54] One might argue that Joan's success in battle could have been a sign of the validity of her voices. As Charles Wood points out, "each of her actions became, for her, nothing less than a judicial ordeal, a test in which the legitimacy of those voices — indeed, the reality of their presence — was validated only by her success in achieving the goals they had set for her" — but Wood also concedes that "the point can never be proved conclusively, largely because Joan's own testimony on the subject is frequently vague, ambiguous, and contradictory" (1988, 143). Rather than insisting on her successes on the battlefield as a sign of God's grace, Joan preferred to take as her sign Charles' coronation (which is how we read her "vision" of the angel with the crown)[55] — a sign those in Rouen would not be inclined to believe.

In every way, then, Joan's mystic experiences differed from Hildegard's. She was a true "voiceary," experiencing corporeal, external voices but refusing to reveal, beyond rough paraphrases, what those voices might have said. Although

she believed her voices to be from God, she also claimed they were the voices of two women saints and an angel, thereby not asserting the same authority, *visio Dei* or even *vox Dei*, of source that Hildegard did. That these were messengers of God rather than messages from God himself may have allowed Joan first to disobey her voices, when they commanded her not to attempt an escape, and then to disavow them "for fear of the fire" ("prae timore ignis") (Champion 319; Barrett 376) — something we cannot imagine Hildegard doing even for a moment.[56] Furthermore, Joan insisted that her voices spoke to her in French, the language of the people, rather than in Latin, the language of the Church, or in English, the language of her captors, and she had never spoken in detail of her voices to her confessor or, prior to her trial at Rouen, to any cleric — thereby denying her any assistance in ecclesiastical authentication of her experience. Thus, in the oral nature of Joan's revelations, in her sometimes contradictory wording of those experiences, resulting in a lack of convincing text, in the very language in which and with which her revelations were expressed, and in her failure to obtain Church approval, Joan failed as a mystical author where Hildegard had, centuries before, succeeded.

In twelfth-century Germany, where mysticism was a more common phenomenon, Hildegard and her visions were more readily accepted — making it all the more significant that, despite the generally receptive conditions, Hildegard went to such trouble to make sure her visions and her writings were endorsed by the Church, while Joan, living in an era less friendly to mystics, seems to have not understood the necessity for such an endorsement at all. Nevertheless, despite the comparative safety or danger inherent in such a course, both Hildegard and Joan chose to resort to mystical methods to assist them in their very public missions: Hildegard's preaching and admonition of temporal and ecclesiastical potentates alike, Joan's leading an army — both of which were roles the respective hierarchies frowned upon greatly. Visions — carefully orchestrated and sanctioned — can help Hildegard to authorial power, but voices — naively employed — can send Joan to the stake.

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NOTES

1. McGinn elaborates further that the move from orality to written record "illustrates the transition from oral to written sacred communication characteristic of the whole late ancient world" (1991, 85-6).

2. Benz claims that heavenly dictation as a visionary method ranges from Old Testament prophecy to early Christian vision literature to Swedenborg. In his index of visionaries (1969, 657), starting with the Apostle Paul and ending with Sadhu Sundar Singh (1930), Benz does not name Joan of Arc, yet many secondary sources mistakenly call her experiences visions.

3. Joan faced the Inquisition three times. The first was an examination in Poitiers. The next two were actual trials, the Ordinary and the Condemnation trials in Rouen. Twenty-four years later, the Nullification trial reversed the charge of heresy — although a bit too late for Joan.

4. Dinzelbacher lists the only French women with mystical experiences in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries as Alpais de Cudot (1211), Marguerite Porète (1310), Doucelina de Digne (1214-74), Beatrix de Ornacieux (1303), and Marguerite d'Oingt (1310) (1985, 17-20).

5. For other definitions of mysticism, see Weeks 1993, 1-13, especially 3, 7, 9; Zum Brunn and Epiney-Burgard 1989, xiii-xxxiv, especially xvii-xviii.

6. Liebeschütz notes that her mode is closer to prophetism (1930, 51). McGinn classifies her as a pure visionary (1994, 333-7).

7. "'Rogo te, mi Domine, ut mihi des intellectum, quatenus possim enarrabiliter proferre haec mystica'" (*Scivias*, 2:3.1, lines 80-1).

8. Among those who call Joan a mystic: Barstow 1986, Beer 1991, Bynum 1991, Heer 1962, Lerner 1993, Michelet 1967, Stolpe 1956, Underhill 1911, Zum Brunn and Epiney-Burgard 1989.

9. Despite Dinzelbacher's final two categories, the preferred but not always accurate term employed in the scholarly discussion is vision; audition is scarcely used. Dinzelbacher excludes Hildegard from his study, as he sees her as an exception to his taxonomy.

10. On a discussion of didactic visions, see Liebeschütz 1930, 42-56.

11. "Sed quia timida es ad loquendum et simplex ad exponendum et indocta ad scribendum ea, dic et scribe illa non secundum os hominis nec secundum intellectum humanae adinuentionis nec secundum uoluntatem humanae compositionis, sed secundem id quod ea in caelestibus desuper in mirabilibus Dei uides et audis, ea sic edisserendo proferens, quemadmodum et auditor uerba praeceptoris sui percipiens, ea secundum tenorem locutionis illius, ipso uolente, ostendente et preacipiente propalat. Sic ergo et tu, o homo, dic ea quae uides et audis; et scribe ea non secundum te nec secundum alium hominem, sed secundum uolentatem scientis, uidentis et disponentis omnia in secretis mysteriorum suorum" (*Scivias*, 1, lines 10-21).

12. Note that the approach of medieval religious writers "was, in fact, quite the contrary to that of the scholastic doctors" (Zum Brunn and Epiney-Burgard 1989, xiv). Ursula Peters postulates that men were more liable to write on theology and pastoral care, while women specialized in visionary literature and elaborate saints' lives (1988, 46). See also Wilson 1984, ix.

13. "Ab infantia autem mea ... uisionis huius munere in anima mea usque ad presens tempus semper fruor, cum iam plus quam septuaginta annorum sim. Spiritus uero meus, prout Deus uult, in hac uisione sursum in altitudinem firmamenti et in uicissitudinem diuersi aeris ascendit, atque inter diuersos populos se dilatat, quamuis in longinquis regionibus et locis a me remoti sint. Et quoniam hec tali modo uideo, idcirco etiam secundum uicissitudinem nubium et aliarum creaturarum ea conspicio. Ista autem nec corporeis auribus audio nec cogitationibus cordis mei, nec ulla collatione sensuum meorum quinque percipio, sed tantum in anima mea, apertis exterioribus oculis, ita ut numquam in eis defectum extasis patiar; sed uigilanter die ac nocte illa uideo" (Epist. CIII, lines 62-75).

14. Even Augustine discusses ecstasy in positive terms; see McGinn, 1991, 237-43. In contrast with Hildegard's denial of ecstatic experience is Joan's embracing of it. Joan's descriptions of her own ecstatic experience — "the sweetness and pleasure of it," as Marina Warner puts it (1981, 124) — show her to be gripped by "the *dulcedo Dei*, the intense rapture of Julian of Norwich, or Richard Rolle" (125). Nevertheless, as Warner points out, Joan was also known for her "levelheadedness ... at a time when hysterical raptures, self-inflicted pain, and fits of demon-conquering were the hallmark of the visionary" (78); hence, as so often was true of Joan, even the descriptions she offered of her ecstatic experience were not enough to make these experiences acceptable to her listeners.

15. True intellectual vision was also advocated by Hildegard's contemporary Rupert of Deutz, but Rupert is less emphatic on the authenticity issue because, as a male author, he was not in as much need of validation. See Newman 1985, 173 and McGinn 1994, 328-33.

16. "Quidquid autem in hac uisione uidere seu didicero, huius memoriam per longum tempus habeo, ita quod, quoniam illud aliquando uiderim et audierim, recordor. Et simul uideo et audio ac scio, et quasi in momento hoc quod scio disco. Quod autem non uideo, illud nescio, quia indocta sum. Et ea que scribo, illa in uisione uideo et audi, nec alia uerba pono quam illa que audio, latinisque uerbis non limatis ea profero quemadmodum illa in uisione audio, quoniam sicut philosophi scribunt scribere in uisione hac non doceor. Atque uerba que in uisione ista uideo et audio, non sunt sicut uerba que ab ore hominis sonant, sed sicut flamma coruscans et ut nubes in aere puro mota" (Epist. CIII, lines 84-95).

17. For a detailed account of Ezekiel's vision in religion and literature, see Lieb 1991.

18. "Lumen igitur quod video... illudque umbra uiuentis luminis mihi nominatur... Et in eodem lumine aliam lucem, que lux uiuens mihi nominata est, interdum et non frequentur aspicio, quam nimirum quomodo uideam multo minus quam priorem proferre sufficio" (Epist. CIII, lines 78, 80-1, 97-99, 261-2)

19. See McGinn 1994, 208. In the writings of Symeon the New Theologian, a tenth-century Byzantine mystic, vision is also treated as superior to voice. For an extended argument for Symeon's case, see Karrer 1948 and Haas 1975.

20. From here onwards in the notes, page numbers only will be given for the Latin quotations from Champion and for the English translations from Barrett.

21. Johan Huizinga, somewhat inaccurately, claims that "Joan's heavenly counsel was quite without visual form, a sheer *daimonion* about which she talked with great diffidence and reticence. She speaks only of *son conseil* ['her counsel']... Even during the hearings she was very little inclined to go into detail about her visions. Asked about the great light accompanying them, she said: *passez oultre* ['pass to another question']" (1959, 223-224). While Huizinga is correct to put the emphasis on the oral rather than on the visual, Joan's descriptions, while lacking substance, were not entirely devoid of visual aspects.

22. "vidi eos oculis meis corporalibus aeque bene sicut ego video vos" (54).

23. "Vos de hoc habetis responsum quod habebitis ex me, nec habebitis aliud. Et vobis de hoc respondi ad certius quod ego sciam" (144-5).

24. "Interrogata an post diem martis novissimam ipsa locuta est cum sanctis Katharina et Margareta: respondit quod sic; sed nescit horam.

    Interrogata quo die: respondit quod heri et hodie; nec est dies quin eas audiat.

    Interrogata si videt eas semper in eodem habitu: respondit quod videt semper eas in eadem forma; et figurae earum sunt coronatae multum opulenter. De aliis habitibus non loquitur. Item dicit quod de tunicis earum nihil scit.

    Interrogata qualiter scit quod res sibi apparens est vir vel mulier: respondit quod bene scit et cognoscit eas ad voces ipsarum, et quod sibi revelaverunt; nec scit aliquid quin sit factum per revelationem et praeceptum Dei.

    Interrogata qualem figuram ibi videt: respondit quod videt faciem.

    Interrogata an illae Sanctae apparentes habent capillos: respondit: "Bonum est ad sciendum!"

    Interrogata an aliquid erat medium inter coronas earum et capillos: respondit quod non.

    Interrogata si capilli earum erant longi et pendentes: respondit: "Ego nihil scio." Dicit etiam quod nescit an ibi aliquid erat de brachiis, vel an erant alia membra figurata. Item dicit quod loquebantur optime et pulchre, et eas optime intelligebat.

    Interrogata qualiter loquebantur, cum non haberent membra: respondit: "Ego me refero ad Deum." Item dicit quod vox illa est pulchra, dulcis et humilis, et loquitur idioma Gallicum" (64). See also Champion 1976, 66-7, 69-70; Barrett 1931, 81, 83-4.

25. Examples of others are in Champion 1976, 140-45; Barrett 1931, 123-6.

26. "imo nec eas sufficienter declarare verbo vel signo; sed hoc facere distulit, contradixit et recusavit, differt, contradicit et recusat" (204).

27. Compare Champion 63; Barrett 78 with Champion 70, 326-7; and Barrett 83-4, 279.

28. "quod legerentur consequenter interrogatoria et responsiones, et ea quae legerentur, si non contradiceret, tenebat pro veris et confessatis" (157).

29. "Johanna confessa fuit quod bene credebat se dixisse prout scriptum erat in registro et prout eidem lectum fuit; nec ad aliqua de dictis contentis in dicto registro contradixit" (157).

30. "Protestificatio ueracium uisionum a Deo fluentium" (*Scivias*, 1:1.3).

31. "De hoc mysterio non poteris quidquam amplius uidere nisi ut tibi propter miraculum credendi conceditur" (*Scivias*, 1:2.1, lines 75-6).

32. "Cumque illuc aspicerem audiui uocem de caelo magno terrore me redarguentem et dicentem: 'Quod uides diuinum est'" (*Scivias*, 2:3.4, lines 92-3).

33. "Hec que uides uera sunt; et ut ea uides ita sunt" (*Scivias*, 1.77, lines 1342-3).

34. See Gregory the Great's discussion on the "'the voice above the firmament'" as "'the voice of God" (McGinn 1994, 57) and thus as the highest form of voice experience.

35. "Ego uis diuinitatis ante euum et ante tempora sum, nec inceptionem temporum habeo. Vis enim diuinitatis sum, qua Deus omnia discernendo et probando fecit... Deinde flammanter ueni, ac in utero Virginis eo accenso requieui, et de carne ipsius... incarnatus sum" (*Scivias*, 6.32, lines 702-4, 714-6). Weeks points out that "German mysticism remains Christocentric" (1993, 10).

36. See Johnson: "Hildegard thus underlines her authority as both author and seer, an authority manifested through Volmar, who does not attempt to impose his will upon her words ... Both the miniature [showing Hildegard passing along the words of the Living Light to Volmar] and Hildegard's account of Volmar seem to hint that an author's authority is in some measure enhanced by the presence of a scribe ... Since St. Augustine, St. Gregory, and St. Bernard had composed 'through' a secretary, Hildegard explicitly claimed her right to compose and asserted her status as an author. This authority she traces directly to divine inspiration, which allowed an 'unlearned' woman to understand exegetical and theological matters for which she was not trained. Hildegard's special understanding is then further verified by the scribe, who transcribes in a more permanent form the wax tablets he receives from the author" (1991, 823-4).

37. See Newman 1990, 47, 53 n. 87.

38. "Scio enim in textu interiorem intelligentiam expositionis Psalterii et Euangelii et aliorum uoluminum, que monstrantur mihi de hac uisione, que tangit pectus meum et animam sicut flamma comburens, docens me hec profunda expositionis. Sed tamen non docet me litteras in Teutonica lingua, quas nescio, sed tantum scio in simplicitate legere, non in abscisione textus. Et de hoc responde mihi, quid tibi inde uideatur, quia homo sum indocta de ulla magistratione cum exteriori materia, sed intus in anima mea sum docta" (Epist. I, lines 17-25: see the translator's note on the problems here, p. 29).

39. "O mitis pater, ego paupercula forma scripsi tibi hec in uera uisione in mystico spiramine, sicut Deus uoluit me docere" (Epist. II, lines 1-2, 7).

40. "Vnde nunc mitto tibi litteras istas in uera admonitione Dei. Et anima mea desiderat, ut lumen de lumine in te luceat, et puros oculos tibi infundat et spiritum tuum exsuscitet ad opus scripture istius, quatenus anima tua inde coronetur, quod Deo placet; quia multi prudentes de terrenis uisceribus spargunt hec in mutationem mentium suarum propter pauperem formam, que edificata est in costa et que est indocta de philosophis" (Epist. II, lines 8-15, 7-8).

41. "Caue ne spernas hec mystica Dei, quia sunt necessaria in illa necessitate, que absconsa latet et que nondum aperte apparet" (Epist. II, lines 26-28).

42. For an analysis of Hildegard's letter-writing ethos, see Ahlgren 1993.

43. Article I of the twelve-article accusation is especially full of misrepresentations of Joan's testimony, her accusers' own exercise in rewriting the text.

44. "Ipsa rursum respondit quod de patre et matre, et his quae fecerat, postquam iter arripuerat in Franciam, libenter juraret; sed, de revelationibus eidem factis ex parte Dei, nunquam alicui dixerat seu revelaverat, nisi soli Karolo quem dicit regem suum; nec etiam revelaret si deberet eidem caput amputari" (29-30).

45. "Interrogata an de istis visionibus, quas dicit se habere, feceritne verbum curato suo vel alteri homini ecclessiastico: respondit quod non, sed soli Roberto de Baudricuria et suo regi" (100).

46. See also McGinn 1994, 155.

47. The examination by the clergy at Poitiers on the nature of Joan's voices does not seem to have been thorough, and its conclusions on those voices were certainly not binding on Joan. Scott claims that only two hours were spent on her voices — out of three weeks of examination (1974, 42). The conclusion of her examination at Poitiers — "one can find no evil in her, but only goodness, humility, virginity, devoutness, honesty, and simplicity" ("mais en elle on ne trouve point de mal, fors que bien, humilité, virginité, dévocion, honnesteté, simplesse") (Pernoud 1955, 95; Quicherat 1965, 3:392) — gives an implicit approval to her voices, but not an explicit one. As for Joan's opinion of the proceedings, she did not seem to think that there was anything in the records from her examination at Poitiers to condemn her (56-7, 66-7, 263; 71, 81, 215), but she was still not willing "to refer herself and submit to the Church of Poitiers" ("se referre vel submittere ecclesiae Pictavensi") (324; 278). The ease with which she passed any test concerning her revelations is reflected in the testimony of the only member of the Poitiers committee to survive to the time of the Nullification trial, Séguin de Séguin, who provides no details about her voice (the term is singular in his testimony) except to claim that it spoke better French than did Séguin, who spoke with a Limousin accent (Pernoud 1955, 101). Sabine Tanz speculates that because of the precarious situation of the French troops, the examiners at Poitiers were biased in favor of Joan and subjected her to an unusually benevolent interrogation for an Inquisition (1991, 245). Given the popularity of the "Merlin prophecies" (Wood 1988, 138, 141) and the acknowledged desperate willingness of the French, including the clergy who were on their side, to believe anyone who promised victory (see the testimony of Séguin de Séguin and Jean Barbin in Pernoud 1955, 102), perhaps it is not so difficult to believe that the examiners at Poitiers would not have scrutinized Joan's revelations to the same extent as did those at Rouen.

48. "de credendo suis revelationibus, ipsa non petivit consilium episcopo, curato aut aliis" (226).

49. "nec etiam super hoc consuluerit episcopum, curatum aut aliquem praelatum Ecclesiae seu quamcumque personam ecclesiasticam, an hujusmodi credulitatem talibus spiritibus deberet adhibere; quin imo praemissa detegere alicui dicebat sibi prohibitum per voces, nisi duntaxat primitus uni capitaneo gentium armorum et praefato Karolo, aliisque personis pure laicis" (225-6).

50. Perhaps hoping for some sort of textual evidence from someone known to be illiterate, Joan's examiners at Rouen asked whether "the angel had written her letters" ("utrum angelus scripserat sibi litteras") (110; 115); her answer was no.

51. See Champion 1976, 295, 314-5; Barrett 1931, 255, 271.

52. "nisi vos et dicta vestra correxeritis et emendaveritis, vos et facta vestra Ecclesiae subjiciendo, judiciumque ipsius acceptando" (358).

53. "Item quod, est ista radice revelationum sic confictarum, in multa alia crimina proruperat" (318).

54. See Champion 1976, 147, 249; Barrett 1931, 127, 209.

55. See Champion 1976, 109-16; Barrett 1931, 107-11.

56. Interestingly, despite the controversy over what Joan actually signed during her abjuration (see Scott 1974, 115-117), all the witnesses to that abjuration agree that the first few lines, those dealing directly with her voices, were included: "I confess that I have most grievously sinned, in falsely pretending to have had revelations and apparitions from God, His angels, and Saint Catherine and Saint Margaret" ("je confesse que j'ay très griefment péchié, en faignant mencongeusement avoir eu révélacions et apparicions de par Dieu, par les anges et saincte Katherine et saincte Marguerite") (313; 367). Her relapse, then, was in insisting that her voices had indeed come from God and her heresy in believing those revelations.

57. Obermeier is primarily responsible for the theoretical framework and Hildegard. Kennison is primarily responsible for Joan of Arc. We also wish to thank Robert E. Bjork, Laurie Francis, Henry Ansgar Kelly, Dhira Mahoney, and Martha Sullivan for careful reading and thoughtful comments; as well as Kathleen Coyne Kelly for her encouragement.

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