

Medieval Women Mystics

[Elizabeth of Schönau, Hadewijch of Brabant, Beatrijs of Nazareth, Mechthild of Magdeburg; Angela of Foligno, Catherine of Siena, Na Prou Boneta, Marguerite Porete]

- I. Sense of God as remote to Sense of God as immediate and present
 - A. from Hildegard of Bingen's Creation/Apocalypse trajectory
 - B. to more intimate meditations on select passages
 - C. emphasis on living and experiencing the past, not just learning it
 - D. emphasis on the more human aspects of Jesus

- II. Affective Piety
 - A. focusing on particular points in Christ's life
 - i. birth
 - ii. passion
 - B. change in emphasis from Christ's resurrection and teachings
 - C. seeking identification in suffering
 - D. fusion of identities
 - E. emphasis on fullness, satiation, completeness, perfection, union, eternity
 - F. aim of self-transformation

- III. Steps
 - A. requires a series of steps rather than immediate change
 - B. self-transcendence through dissolution of self
 - C. practices of meditation

- IV. How to distinguish mystics from heretics?
threat to Church from doing away with ecclesiastical mediation with God

- V. Individual Writers
 - A. Elizabeth of Schönau
 - i. locus amoenus of romance and troubadour poetry
 - ii. expansion of saintly contacts following liturgy
 - iii. caring for others in one's kin group or community
 - iv. emphasis on exchange, reciprocity
 - B. Hadewijch of Brabant
 - i. lack of reciprocity; no emphasis on faithfulness of others
 - ii. wanting to be God with God
 - iii. being human with Jesus
 - iv. sex with Jesus
 - v. jealousy of Augustine
 - C. Beatrijs of Nazareth
 - i. steps
 - ii. fullness in self-annihilation
 - D. Mechthild of Magdeburg
 - i. her love for God surpassing the created universe
 - E. Angela of Foligno
 - i. looking for coincidence with human Jesus by meditating on passion
 - ii. screaming (demonic possession?)
 - F. Catherine of Siena
 - i. discretion over penance
 - ii. Christ's body as text
 - iii. blood as unifying agent
 - G. Na Prous Boneta
 - i. same visions but followers of Spiritual Franciscans
 - ii. new John the Baptist and new Mary for the age of the Holy Spirit
 - iii. papacy has fallen and invalidated the sacraments
 - H. Marguerite Porete