



Hildegard von Bingen's *Physica*: The Complete English Translation of Her Classic Work on Health and Healing

By Hildegard of Bingen

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One of two major medical treatises by medieval healer Hildegard von Bingen, presented in its entirety for the first time in English during the 900th anniversary of her birth.

- A seminal text in the development of Western herbal medicine
- Presents nine categories of healing systems--Plants, Elements, Trees, Stones, Fish, Birds, Animals, Reptiles, and Metals--and elaborates on their medicinal use
- Closely related to Eastern medical approaches that are gaining respect today

Saint, mystic, healer, visionary, fighter, Hildegard von Bingen stands as one of the great figures in the history of women in me.

At a time when few women could write and most were denied a formal education, Hildegard von Bingen became a legendary healer, visionary, musician, artist, poet, and saint. Her works include twenty-seven symphonic compositions; *Scivias*, a compilation of her visions; and her two major medical works, *Causae et Curae*, a medical compendium, and *Physica*, published here in English in its entirety for the first time.

Physica has a strong affinity with the Eastern medical approaches gaining great respect today. The modern reader interested in natural healing will recognize the enormous truth in the theories of this 12th-century physician, which remind us that our cures for illness depend on our natural world and our place in it.

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Editorial Review

Review

"A work filled with astonishments and delights for present-day readers." (*Lee Pennock Huntington, Montpelier Times Argus*)

"Saint, mystic, healer, visionary, fighter, Hildegard von Bingen stands as one of the great figures in the history of women in medicine. She was renowned for her healing work and her original theories of medicine." (*Elisabeth Brooke, in Women Healers*)

"Gives a good sense of 12th century herbalism based on humors, common superstition, and sprinkled with a dose of Bingen's mystical insights." (*American Herb Association, Vol 16:2*)

Language Notes

Text: English

Original Language: Latin

From the Inside Flap

HERBAL MEDICINE / HISTORY OF MEDICINE

"Saint, mystic, healer, visionary, fighter, Hildegard von Bingen stands as one of the great figures in the history of women in medicine. She wrote profusely on a wide variety of subjects, more than any other woman of her time. . . . She was a friend and correspondent of popes, emperors, and queens and was renowned and respected for her healing work and her original theories of medicine."

--Elisabeth Brooke, in *Women Healers*

At a time when few women could write and most were denied a formal education, Hildegard von Bingen became a legendary healer, visionary, musician, artist, poet, and saint. Her works include twenty-seven symphonic compositions; *Scivias*, a compilation of her visions; and her two major medical works, *Causae et Curae*, a medical compendium, and *Physica*, published here in English in its entirety for the first time.

In *Physica*, Hildegard presents nine "books" of healing systems: Plants, Elements, Trees, Stones, Fish, Birds, Animals, Reptiles, and Metals. In each book she discusses the qualities of these natural creations and elaborates on their medicinal use, explaining how to prepare and apply different remedies. With its emphasis on balancing the humors, *Physica* has strong affinity with the Oriental medical approaches gaining great respect today. The modern reader interested in natural healing will recognize the enormous truth in the theories of this twelfth-century physician, many of which prove effective today, serving as a reminder that our cures for illness depend on our natural world and our place in it. As Hildegard states in *Physica*, "With earth was the human being created. All the elements served mankind and, sensing that he was alive, they busied themselves in aiding his life in every way."

A Latin and Greek scholar, translator PRISCILLA THROOP holds a master's degree from the Centre for Medieval Studies at the University of Toronto, as well as a Certificate of Advanced Theological Studies from the Episcopal Divinity School in Cambridge. She is a member of the Vermont Classical Language Association and is currently translating Isidore of Seville's *Etymologiae*. She lives in Charlotte, Vermont.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Lindsey Gant:

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Alexander Taylor:

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