

findings in text and charts. With this method of “counting piety,” to use a phrase coined by Thomas Lentz (“Counting Piety in the Late Middle Ages,” in *Ordering Medieval Society: Perspectives on Intellectual and Practical Modes of Shaping Social Relations*, ed. Bernhard Jussen [2001]) that is used throughout the entire investigation, Suykerbuyk unearths astonishing results. Particularly revealing is the realization that with the spread of Reformation thought in the 1520s, piety did not decline, as previously assumed, but persisted. Accordingly, instead of a rupture of piety, the Reformation led to the transformation of its material expression and motivations.

Since Zoutleew was spared from the iconoclasm of 1566, older church furnishings could be renewed or replaced with new works. For this third part of the book, the term *Counter-Reformation*, which is omnipresent in research on the southern Netherlands, forms the epistemological basis. When, for example, Merten van Witte and Marie Pylipet commission a sacrament house in 1550/52, or a healing miracle occurs after a long break in 1612, or when Luis de Velasco donates the first (!) relic of Saint Leonard to the church in 1616, Suykerbuyk interprets these primarily as acts in the fight against Protestantism.

He differentiates between the various actors and explains the political level, which is tangible. The arguments are plausible, and one gladly follows the references presented. However, one would often like to add a building block of non-material piety to the structure of the argument. Thomas Lentz was able to prove that late medieval piety was a “counted piety”—he focused on prayer services—that served as an external stimulus for inner piety. One wishes to emphasize the spiritual level of counting for Zoutleew as well: the large sums of money spent on the rich furnishings of St. Leonard’s Chapel served not only to attract pilgrims, but also provided an appropriate dwelling for the saint, who was believed to be actually present there. The donors depicted on a memorial stone opposite the sacrament house were not only representational in value. Given in the attitude of *ewige Anbetung* (eternal adoration), they also venerated the sacrament post mortem.

The brief mention of the aspects of inner piety is not intended to name a shortcoming of the book, but to show that Suykerbuyk’s carefully crafted publication, which is rich in material and findings, makes for stimulating reading. It is a basis and inspiration for further tracing the connection between matter and piety beyond the boundaries of epochs of research.

Esther Meier, *TH Köln / TU Dortmund University*  
doi:10.1017/rqx.2023.120

*Visions of Heaven: Dante and the Art of Divine Light.* Martin Kemp.  
London: Lund Humphries, 2021. 240 pp. £45.

---

In presenting his new book on the representation of heaven in Renaissance and Baroque art, Martin Kemp tells his readers that the project has a personal dimension. It is, as he indicates, a continuation of the project on “optics and European naturalism” that he

published in 1990 under the title *The Science of Art: Optical Themes in Western Art from Brunelleschi to Seurat* (12). Although the purview of the present book is somewhat more limited, it covers a great deal of territory. Beginning with an introduction to “divine optics” in Islamic and Christian writings, Kemp situates Dante as an inheritor of those traditions, and inventor on that basis of a vision of heaven that would have a profound effect on European art in the coming centuries. He then shifts to the discussion of those paintings that contend with Dante’s vision, ranging from fifteenth-century illuminations of the *Commedia* to the ceiling paintings of seventeenth-century Rome.

As a survey of the pictorial representation of heaven and divine light in European art from the fifteenth through the seventeenth century, Kemp’s book does an admirable job of bringing together materials and observations that are likely to generate interest for an educated general audience. It is written in a lively, often personal voice that makes it accessible. The book is also splendidly illustrated with high quality color images. Even without the text, the carefully curated images tell a story. In some ways the author does for his reader what blockbuster exhibitions and their accompanying catalogues do for their audiences. Kemp poses an intriguing question, satisfies the desire for narrative exposition, and does so with sufficient latitude to allow for informal perusal of the materials presented.

What holds the book together is the authority of a scholar with a longstanding investment in the study of optics and perspective as scientific endeavors that both underpin and define Renaissance art as a precursor of modern science. For Kemp, the situation of Dante vis-à-vis the subsequent development of Renaissance representations of heaven as divine light is analogous to the position of Einstein with respect to the development of nuclear physics. The choice of Dante as the protagonist makes sense in the context of this rehearsal of a familiar pattern in the history of ideas, but it does not hold up to scrutiny. While Kemp’s exposition of Dante’s treatment of light and vision in *Paradiso* is compelling, it offers no robust definition of Dante’s vision as distinct from the author’s. The problem is predicted in the introduction, where, by way of a methodological statement, Kemp tells us that, while he is “naturally interested when there is evidence of Dante’s impact on the artists” he discusses, he is “also dealing with a more general diffusion of Dante’s vision” (13). As the text proceeds, the former interest proves to be an accessory to the latter. Evidence of Dante’s impact on artists is sometimes taken to be so obvious as to require no examination, as in the case of illuminated manuscripts of Dante’s writings, and sometimes presented as an inevitable result of the fact Dante and a given artist, such as Ghiberti, both came from Florence.

Perhaps the strangest circumambulation of potentially rich grounds for exploration in the quest to find Dante’s vision occurs in the sixth chapter, in the section on Ludovico Cigoli’s experiments with perspective and perspective machines (198–202). Here Kemp points to the painter’s friendship with Galileo Galilei (whose works include a consideration of the shape, location, and dimensions of Dante’s *Inferno*) to secure the connection between Cigoli’s pictorial experiments and Dante. The treatment of Galileo

as a supporting character in this portion of Kemp's story is perplexing. As Eileen Reeves documented in her book on the correspondence surrounding Galileo's observations of the heavens, the relations between seeing, understanding, and representing the heavens were very much in dispute at the time (*Painting the Heavens: Art and Science in the Age of Galileo* [1998]). Those debates involved artisanal practices in ways that escape Kemp's vision. I wonder how much richer his account of Cigoli's experiments might have been if it were in discussion with the expanding literature on artisanal epistemologies.

There is no doubt that books directed to a general reader are necessary to the survival of specialized fields of study, and that their authors deserve our thanks for having the courage to stand above the scholarly fray, be selective, and say what they think in light of their experience and accumulated knowledge. For all its merits, however, Kemp's story feels oddly insulated from the contemporary currents and challenges of Renaissance studies as a vital and evolving field of inquiry.

C. Jean Campbell, *Emory University*  
doi:10.1017/rqx.2023.121

*A User's Guide to Melancholy*. Mary Ann Lund.

Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2021. xiv + 256 pp. \$24.99.

---

A popular Burton is possible. Mary Ann Lund's *A User's Guide to Melancholy* gives Robert Burton's *Anatomy* a contemporary clarity that will make it a companion to his classic for years to come. Lund's introduction shows the relationship of this project to her earlier monograph on Burton. There, her thesis, supported by deep archival research, showed that Burton intended his text to be read therapeutically. In this slim volume, Lund makes it possible for a modern audience to read him this way again. Her wealth of historical acumen is not shown as an antiquarian exercise, but to better make Burton our contemporary we must share in his time as much as he illuminates ours. The book's three divisions (Causes, Symptoms, and Cures) mirror Burton's categories without replicating his text's recursive complications. The *Anatomy's* mazininess had led an earlier generation of Burton scholars—Ruth Fox and Stanley Fish, notably—to emphasize the work's structure over its rich content. Lund's *Anatomy* is no mere tangled chain or self-consuming artifact, but a richly varied witness to a condition both historical and human, at once foreign and familiar.

Each chapter employs a similar strategy: Lund takes one or two of Burton's many anecdotes and limns them with historical detail. We learn from the treatment of the Earl of Montfort's hypochondriacal melancholy—he was required to abstain from pork and fish, drink white wine, and leave the intrigues of the royal court—that melancholy was a