

Envisaging Heaven in the Middle Ages

Edited by Carolyn Muessig and Ad Putter

With the assistance of Gareth Griffith
and Judith Jefferson

Contents

<i>List of plates</i>	viii
<i>List of contributors</i>	ix
<i>Preface</i>	xi
<i>Acknowledgements</i>	xii
<i>List of abbreviations</i>	xiii
PART I	
Introduction	1
1 Envisaging heaven: an introduction	3
CAROLYN MUESSIG AND AD PUTTER	
PART II	
The theology of heaven	13
2 <i>Visio dei</i>: seeing God in medieval theology and mysticism	15
BERNARD MCGINN	
3 Constructing heaven in Hildegard of Bingen's <i>Expositiones euangeliorum</i>	34
BEVERLY MAYNE KIENZLE	
4 The completeness of heaven	44
PETER DRONKE	
5 Heaven, earth and the angels: preaching paradise in the sermons of Jacques de Vitry	57
CAROLYN MUESSIG	

PART III

Mystical and visionary traditions 73

6 Access to heaven in medieval visions of the otherworld 75

ROBERT EASTING

7 Bringing heaven down to earth: beguine constructions of heaven 91

MARY SUYDAM

8 *Von Aller Bilden Bildlosekeit*: the trouble with images of heaven in the works of Henry Suso 108

STEVEN ROZENSKI, JR

9 Marguerite Porete: courtliness and transcendence in *The Mirror of Simple Souls* 120

A.C. SPEARING

PART IV

The art of heaven 137

10 'Some high place': actualizing heaven in the Middle Ages 139

PETER MEREDITH

11 Heaven as performance and participation in the *Symphonia armonie celestium revelationum* of Hildegard of Bingen 155

STEPHEN D'EVELYN

12 Afterlives now: a study of *Paradiso* canto 28 166

ROBIN KIRKPATRICK

13 The artifice of eternity: speaking of heaven in three medieval poems 185

BARBARA NEWMAN

PART V

Vernacular appropriations 207

14 Exchanging blood for wine: envisaging heaven in Irish bardic poetry 209

SALVADOR RYAN

15 Chaucer's lovers in metaphorical heaven 222

ELIZABETH ARCHIBALD

16 The influence of visions of the otherworld on some medieval romances 237

AD PUTTER

Index 252

1 Envisaging heaven

An introduction

Carolyn Muessig and Ad Putter

The concept of heaven is broader than the theological tradition of heaven. The theological tradition is itself broader than abstract or academic theology, for it embraces not only formal theology but the life and thought of the entire community. Tradition is not repetition, but the transmission of a living reality, which must be renewed and rethought as the community develops.¹

Jeffrey Burton Russell's words capture the expansive idea of heaven in the Middle Ages and its shifting shapes across different times and different cultures. Many religions have posited 'heavens' of some kind;² and even when we concentrate on a single religion, pre-reformation Christianity, and a single period, the Middle Ages, we discover that the idea of heaven in the Middle Ages was as varied as the people who wrote about it. There was no one heaven, but a polyphony of heavens. Furthermore, because 'the reality' of heaven was one based on speculation as well as fancy, medieval heavens were products both of ingenious thought and of creative wishful imagination.

The interest of the topic of heaven is duly reflected in the recent scholarship devoted to it. Because this scholarship forms the background of the new research collected in this volume, we begin with a brief survey of some important books that have appeared in the last two decades.

In *Heaven: A History*, Colleen McDannell and Bernhard Lang provided a groundbreaking study on the development of heaven from its semitic background to its decline in the modern era.³ The subtitle of their book emphasizes the authors' central point: representations of heaven changed with the times. Perhaps the most important change to occur in the medieval period is the change from visions of heaven as garden (which is what the word 'paradise' originally meant) to visions of heaven as a walled city. Both ideas have precedents in the Bible – the garden in Genesis and the Song of Songs, the city in the Book of Revelation – but, as McDannell and Lang argue, the resurgence of cities in the twelfth century helped reinvigorate the conceit of heaven as a large city.

Jean Delumeau has taken a similar historicizing approach to the changing conceptions and meanings of paradise in his book *Une Histoire du Paradis*.⁴ Delumeau's study traces paradise and its pre-Christian roots, the theological

developments made by the church fathers and medieval theologians regarding the differences between the earthly and celestial paradises and the 'loss' of paradise in the writings of Emmanuel Kant (1724–1804) and Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712–1778). Delumeau followed this study with *Mille ans de bonheur: Histoire du Paradis* which has the same broad sweep as the first volume, but focuses rather on apocalyptic thought. In the medieval period, the beliefs and teachings of such groups as Joachimites, Lollards and Hussites, receive particular attention.⁵ Although McDannell and Lang's analysis and Delumeau's study present a general summary of the history of heaven and paradise, they are valuable in the understanding of the specific development of ideas about heaven in the Middle Ages.

Two recent studies of the development of heaven in Christian thought are Jeffrey Burton Russell's *A History of Heaven: The Singing Silence* and Alister McGrath's *A Brief History of Heaven*. Russell's magisterial book presents many examples and concepts that were prevalent in the Middle Ages such as visions and their significance in revealing the mysteries of the afterlife, the use of poetry in expressing the inexpressible of the celestial abode and the experience of joy in the heavenly realm.⁶ Whereas Delumeau's history often emphasizes the negative and apocalyptic aspects of the last things, Russell's work highlights the positive function of heaven as the individual's ultimate fulfilment. McGrath's book focuses on a broad range of literature dating from the gospels to the songs of John Lennon. Looking at various themes of heaven such as 'the city', 'the garden', 'atonement and paradise', 'signals of transcendence', 'the consolation of heaven' and 'heaven as the goal of the Christian life', McGrath demonstrates the effectiveness of literature in expressing (however approximately) experiences of paradise, for he argues that unlike theological treatises, which lacked a suppleness of language owing to their systematic approach, imaginative literature allowed for a greater flexibility of expression.⁷

The essay collections *The Iconography of Heaven*, edited by Clifford Davidson, and *Imagining Heaven in the Middle Ages*, edited by J.S. Emerson and Hugh Feiss, present detailed studies of heaven in the late Middle Ages that are more tightly focused than the books so far mentioned.⁸ *The Iconography of Heaven* brings together seven essays which are mainly concerned with representations of heaven in the visual arts and the performing arts of drama and music.⁹ The contributors discuss some of the stereotypical sights, sounds and smells associated with heaven (light, song, the fragrance of flowers and so on) and the ways in which these 'sensations' were artificially produced for earthly audiences. *Imagining Heaven in the Middle Ages* contains eleven essays dealing with the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. The book is broken down into three sections: 'corporeality', which discusses the bodily enjoyment of heaven and issues concerning the corporeal versus the incorporeal reality of paradise; 'desire and fulfilment', which considers the monastic idea of completion in heaven and how exactly this was experienced; the final section, 'transcendence', is devoted to the ultimate heavenly attainment of union with God and the limits of human language in describing that union. At the heart of the collection is the influential

work of Caroline Walker Bynum's *The Resurrection of the Body in Western Christianity, 200–1336*.¹⁰ Here Bynum brilliantly traced the development of personhood and wholeness of self in the resurrected body making clear the centrality of corporeality in medieval heaven.

More recently Bynum with Paul Freedman has edited *Last Things: Death and the Apocalypse in the Middle Ages*.¹¹ The eschatological subject and chronology of this book of collected essays is broad, incorporating examples from the early church to the fifteenth century as well as discussion of not only heaven but also death and the apocalypse. In regard to heaven this study clarifies the immediacy of heaven in the medieval mentality. In particular, Harvey Stahl's article 'The Place of the Elect in an Illuminated Book of Hours', which examines numerous images of heaven in art, concludes that 'the afterworld [...] was not shown consistently but it did move closer to earth'.¹² As illuminators made heaven look familiar, the ineffable and unrepresentable somehow became accessible and tangible.

Such accessibility indicates a desire on the part of the artist of these books and their owners to have some kind of concrete understanding of heaven. Indeed, the theme of heaven when applied to medieval culture emerges in almost every context as it was the anticipated fulfilment and much hoped for completion of the Christian life. An ever-present anticipation of heaven made thoughts of the afterlife a vital part of one's daily existence. This explains the popularity of vision literature. Vision literature usually presented accounts of an individual's experience of the afterlife (heaven, purgatory and hell); often these visions happened as part of a near-death experience.¹³ Scholarly interest in the genre is now such that we cannot attempt to survey the scholarship. Fortunately, however, Robert Easting's study *Visions of the Other World in Middle English* provides an excellent bibliographical guide to this growing subject. The title might suggest the bibliography is limited to Middle English scholarship, but general studies and criticism and editions of analogous visions in other vernaculars and Latin are also represented. The wide circulation of many of these visions, as documented by Easting, is testimony to the interest and entertainment they provided to medieval audiences.¹⁴ Easting's study builds on and complements the classic treatment of medieval vision literature, Peter Dinzelbacher's *Vision und Visionliteratur im Mittelalter*.¹⁵ One of the many significant points in Dinzelbacher's study is the change that occurred in vision literature in the early thirteenth century. In the twelfth century most visions were experienced by men and occurred once. In the thirteenth century, there was a shift with visions of the afterlife often being experienced by women and recurring on a regular basis.

The ideas raised in these studies on heaven are expanded and developed in the present collection. *Envisaging Heaven in the Middle Ages* deals with medieval notions of heaven in theological and mystical writings, in visions of the otherworld, in medieval drama, poetry and music, and in vernacular literature. In order to indicate the range of interests and approaches on offer, we have structured the book in four sections, each devoted to a different aspect of the theme of heaven. The first section addresses theological controversies as

well as established traditions concerning heaven. The chapters in the second part of the book deal with mystical and visionary traditions of heaven, and discuss the search for heaven in the writings of medieval mystics and in visions of the otherworld. The third section considers representations of heaven in medieval poetry and drama. Putting heaven into verse or onto stage posed obvious challenges; this section shows how poets and performers took on and overcame these obstacles. The fourth and final section examines vernacular appropriations of the idea of heaven in a range of languages and idioms (Irish bardic poetry, Chaucer's love poetry and medieval romance).

The theology of heaven

The nature of the actual experience of heaven was the focus of intense speculation and debate in the Middle Ages. Some in the tradition of John Chrysostom (d. 407) argued that when the blessed entered heaven they would not achieve a complete understanding of the divine for such comprehension would be beyond the human reach.¹⁶ Augustine viewed heaven as offering an unmediated intellectual understanding of God.¹⁷ Gregory the Great argued that God would be seen immediately after death essentially and naturally.¹⁸ These and other tensions and controversies prevailed in the West throughout the Middle Ages. At the centre of the debate was the question of how the individual interacted with the divine.

The relationship between God and the soul in heaven was a fraught topic in the later Middle Ages. Bernard McGinn's chapter '*Visio dei: seeing God in medieval theology and mysticism*' considers this relationship in heaven with an analysis of the differing concepts of the beatific vision. Pope John XXII (1316–1334) and Pope Benedict XII (1334–1342) each articulated concrete but opposite conclusions regarding the soul's ability to gaze upon God. McGinn shows clearly and precisely how this thread of argumentation developed from Pope Innocent III (1198–1216) to Meister Eckhart (d. 1327/1328).

The fulfilment of the desire to be united to God drove the argument and passion behind the debate of the beatific vision. Jean LeClercq's classic study of the monastic life, *The Love of Learning and the Desire for God*, demonstrated how monks strove to achieve perfect understanding of self and God.¹⁹ This sentiment was also entrenched in the writings of Hildegard of Bingen. Beverly Kienzle in her chapter 'Constructing heaven in Hildegard of Bingen's *Expositiones euangeliorum*', demonstrates that this desire for God is at the heart of Hildegard of Bingen's theology of heaven. In the *Expositiones*, the monastic yearning for union with God finds expression in engineering and architectural motifs. Metaphors of building indicate the path to heaven, but, as Kienzle suggests, they also reveal Hildegard's lived experience as she oversaw the building work at her own monastery Rupertsberg.

The monastic life, so Hildegard of Bingen or Bernard of Clairvaux would have argued, is the gateway to heaven. In this argument, heaven afforded privileged positions to those who had lived a life of monastic perfection. But there were conflicting views of who would gain access to heaven. Throughout the

history of Christianity, some theologians argued that after a period of purification all individuals could be restored to perfection, regardless of their way of life. Even the greatest sinners would one day return to God; this theological belief is known as apocatastasis among the Greek Fathers. In the West this belief was declared an anathema: only those who found redemption within the sacramental church could enter heaven. Yet, as Peter Dronke shows in his chapter 'The completeness of heaven', apocatastasis was an attractive belief that continued to find advocates, for it was based on the idea (at once logical and beautiful) that heaven could only be perfected when all created things returned to it. Looking at an impressive breadth of material, from the New Testament to Dostoyevsky, Dronke shows that even in the medieval West some theologians retained elements of apocatastasis in their theological view of redemption.

Carolyn Muessig's chapter 'Heaven, earth and the angels: preaching paradise in the sermons of Jacques de Vitry' uncovers a heaven that is militantly orthodox and designed to combat heretical views. Although heaven was the abode of God, the blessed and the angels, Jacques de Vitry reminds us that it was also the birthplace of discord and schism; in particular heaven was the region from which God had exiled the rebellious angels. His sermons demonstrate that heaven could be anything but peaceful; it could be viewed as a parallel universe which provided precedent for violent action against such groups as the Cathars.

Mystical and visionary traditions

As indicated above, the bodily resurrection was an expectation in Christian theology.²⁰ Such an expectation points to the logical conclusion that heaven was not only a notional reality but a physical place where all the blessed would reside. Much time was spent in trying to figure out where this heaven was located and how it was arranged. Many theologians perceived it to be above the earthly and heavenly firmaments.²¹ However, perceptions of heaven were often relayed not only through theological treatises but visionary literature. Such writings made heaven visible and tangible in the here and now, partly as an incentive to virtuous living on earth. As Robert Easting points out in *Visions of the Other World*: 'Medieval visionary experiences and everyday practicalities did not always inhabit divided and distinguished worlds. Moreover, both religious and the laity were encouraged to mediate and "see" the other worlds as part of a regular consideration of one's mortality.'²²

This seeing accounts for perhaps the most dynamic and memorable accounts of heaven, the medieval legends of visits to the other world. As Robert Easting shows in his chapter on these legends, 'Access to heaven in medieval visions of the otherworld', the authors of vision literature were careful not to reveal too much about heaven, by imposing restrictions not only on what the visionary was allowed or able to report but also on what he was allowed to see. The visionary can see but only imperfectly, from afar. And it is not always clear what place he is describing: some visions make it clear that the visionary is not seeing the heavenly city itself but only its surroundings. The male visionary's reticence to

present all the details of his otherworldly encounter is a recurrent theme in the twelfth century.

The thirteenth-century beguines offer a very different visionary mode. Mary Suydam demonstrates how women could enter the spatial dimension of heaven and communicate with the divine. Her chapter 'Bringing heaven down to earth: beguine constructions of heaven' substantiates Dinzelbacher's observation concerning the rise of female visions in the thirteenth century. Suydam notes that such female visionary abilities challenged ecclesiastical restrictions of the official place of women in the church and allowed women a way to subvert hierarchical limitations. Furthermore, where male visionaries were sometimes reticent to speak, female visionaries spoke of their visions in graphic and highly personal detail, developing models of holiness that depended on the intimacy of their contacts with the divine rather than on institutional recognition.

This tension between verbal profusion and reticence in attempts to describe heaven is at the core of many visionary accounts. Steven Rozenski grapples with this seeming contradiction in his chapter '*Von Aller Bilden Bildlosekeit*: the trouble with images of heaven in the works of Henry Suso'. Rozenski discusses one of the few male visionaries from the fourteenth century, Henry Suso, whose use of both cataphatic and apophatic imaging of God embraces at once the concrete language of heaven as articulated by the beguines and the abstract intellectualization of Meister Eckhart under whom Suso studied.

The slippage between imagistic and imageless depictions of heaven in Suso illustrates the tensions inherent in the mystic's enterprise. A.C. Spearing's chapter 'Marguerite Porete: courtliness and transcendence in *The Mirror of Simple Souls*' provides an extreme case in point. In her controversial *Mirror of Simple Souls*, Marguerite Porete acts out the turbulent and paradoxical movements of transcendence. In the writings of studiously orthodox mystics, the union with God in this world is carefully distinguished from the union with God in the afterlife; in Porete's *Mirror* this difference is one of a number of logical distinctions to be suspended at delirious moments in the discourse. At such moments, the mystical union with God in the here and now seems to be not merely a foretaste of heaven but a complete achievement of it in the present life. The imaginative entertainment of such 'heretical' possibilities eventually caused Marguerite to be burned to death as a heretic.

The art of heaven

Those who had allegedly experienced the visions of heaven and came back to speak of it often remarked upon its ineffableness. But this never stopped individuals from saying as much as possible about what was beyond description. This tension between apophatic and cataphatic sensibilities created some of the finest poetry of the period. Pushing language to its limits, heaven was sung about and lauded in poetry. Although poetry and visions in particular gave authors greater scope and licence to envisage heaven creatively and expansively, the task nevertheless challenged them to match the loftiness of their theme with

the beauty and sublimeness of their own language. And it also challenged the ingenuity of playwrights, directors and performers, who had to put heaven on stage and make actors ascend to and descend from it.

The chapters in this section discuss how heaven was represented in medieval poetry and drama. Medieval religious plays (which included accounts of the Creation and the Fall) had to wrestle with the problem of how heaven could be accommodated to the stage (or the wagon cart). Aesthetic ideas of paradise had to be translated into creative sets that could capture the dramatic biblical moments involving heaven. In his chapter ‘“Some high place”: actualizing heaven in the Middle Ages’, Peter Meredith illustrates the performance of heaven in late medieval mystery plays performed in Florence, Lucerne and York. The ingenious stage directions and special effects of these plays demonstrates that, even as the emotion and meaning of heaven loomed large in theological and visionary circles, it was also intensely realized for popular audiences.

The emotion of a dramatic event is sometimes most powerfully conveyed through music, which reaches emotions that word and images alone cannot touch. In his chapter ‘Heaven as performance and participation in the *Symphonia armonie celestium revelationum* of Hildegard of Bingen’, Stephen D’Evelyn shows how ideas of mystery, beauty and community of heaven are evoked in the haunting liturgical songs of Hildegard of Bingen. As he argues, in these songs the words, the music and the setting of the performance are integrated to evoke, as it were, heaven on earth.

Of course, it is Dante’s *Divina Commedia* that proves beyond all doubt that theological thought and poetry can indeed enrich each other. Robin Kirkpatrick’s chapter ‘Afterlives now: a study of *Paradiso* canto 28’ is devoted to Dante, as theological thinker and poet, and presents a close reading of canto 28 of Dante’s *Paradiso*. This section of the *Paradiso* addresses the ordering of the angelic hierarchies. Kirkpatrick’s analysis presents a fresh interpretation of the canto, clarifying and bringing to the fore all the artistic and cultural components that have gone into the realization of these angelic lines which invite the reader to participate in Dante’s own vision of heaven.

Looking at Dante again in the context of two other vernacular poets, Barbara Newman demonstrates in her article ‘The artifice of eternity: speaking of heaven in three medieval poems’, how poets could elucidate the wonder of heaven with stunning effect. Newman analyses *Pearl* (anonymous, Middle English), *Paradiso* (Dante, Italian) and *Marienleich* (Heinrich von Meißen (Frauenlob), Middle High German), all of which have a heavenly Lady at their centre. Newman uncovers the ‘celestial poetics’ of these works, demonstrating that each author’s intimacy with the language allows for a myriad of mathematical, linguistic and poetic manoeuvres which all bring the reader to a heightened awareness of the excellence of heaven.

Vernacular appropriations

The first three sections of this book are devoted to Latin and vernacular sources that are self-evidently crucial to our understanding of how medieval people envisaged, represented and used heaven: visions, mystical works and the writings of poets, preachers, theologians and academics. The chapters in the final section, ‘Vernacular appropriations’, focus on the distinctive forms in which heaven found its way into texts where one might not, at first sight, expect to find it: in the bardic poetry of later medieval and early Modern Ireland, in the poetry of Chaucer, and in the medieval romances of England and the continent.

Both in the scholarship and in the general consciousness, the bardic poets are much better known for their secular verse than for their religious poetry. Their dependence on the munificence of wealthy chieftains is reflected in the predominance of bardic poems in praise of the (potential) patron. Naturally, these panegyrics emphasize the warm welcome extended to guests at the door, the host’s generosity, the friendliness and beauty of his wife or daughter, the abundance of food and more especially drink. Yet alongside this secular poetry of praise, there survives a considerable corpus of popular religious poetry. As Salvador Ryan shows in his chapter ‘Exchanging blood for wine: envisaging heaven in Irish bardic poetry’, in this poetry heaven is represented and expressed in the unmistakable vernacular idiom of the secular bardic tradition. The poets like to imagine it as a lavish feast: God is the welcoming host (and there is no rude doorkeeper to keep the poet out); Mary is the obliging and accessible hostess; the wine flows liberally.

Bardic poetry thus reveals, perhaps in a way that vernacular poetry does most tellingly, that medieval (and modern) perceptions of heaven are always projections of earthly ideals. And it is precisely the fact that heaven, then and now, is shot through with earthly hopes and fears, that explains why heaven was so useful and meaningful to secular writers as a source for comparisons or hyperboles. In these figurative uses, heaven can be made to pay back some of the values and emotions that humans have invested in it from the beginning.

This figurative transference is explored in the two final chapters by Elizabeth Archibald and Ad Putter. In a comparison of Chaucer with his sources, Archibald in her chapter ‘Chaucer’s lovers in metaphorical heaven’ highlights Chaucer’s fondness for using heaven in the context of human love. Chaucer’s lovers are frequently transported to ‘heaven’, or (when things have gone wrong) to ‘hell’ or ‘purgatory’; gazing upon his blissful lovers is, as Chaucer frequently tells us, like envisaging heaven itself. As Archibald argues, such tropes are used in remarkably self-conscious ways in the *Merchant’s Tale* and *Troilus and Criseyde*. In the former, ‘paradise’ is methodically invoked as the ultimate model of marital bliss, even as the sordid realities of the plot make it painfully clear that in this tale the ideal exists only in the deluded fantasies of old January. In the tragic story of love that is *Troilus and Criseyde* Chaucer many times speaks of ‘heaven’ and ‘hell’ where his source does not: are the similes and metaphors used in order to sacralize human love? Or, rather, to insist on the

incomparability of human and divine love? Or perhaps both? These are some of the questions that Archibald opens up in her chapter.

Ad Putter in 'The influence of visions of the otherworld on some medieval romances' detects the presence of heaven in a number of medieval English and continental romances. As he shows, castle descriptions in particular betray the influence of celestial visions: castles were often modelled on heaven, occasionally in graphic detail, as in the *Roman de Troie*, where Troy is imagined as being embellished with the same twelve precious stones that adorn the new city of Jerusalem in St John's Apocalypse. Putter's chapter culminates in a discussion of two of Chrétien de Troyes's romances, where Chrétien wittily and audaciously makes use of otherworldly motifs.

Conclusion

Because the pains of hell and the fulfilment of heaven were expected to be experienced for eternity, the afterlife was central to the medieval imagination. As these chapters show, while many must have worried that theirs would be a hellish end, people never stopped hoping for heaven. The strength of human optimism is evident from the theological discussions regarding the beatific vision and apocatastasis. Such hopefulness combined with genuine curiosity about the nature of heaven. The pulleys and ropes of the medieval stage, the liturgical imitation of heavenly music in the monastery, and the verbal wizardry of medieval poets and mystics brought individuals to a closer realization of heaven, though the effort and artifice expended in the attempt also reminded them they were not in heaven yet.

The anticipation of heaven shaped the expectations of the medieval individuals, but their lived experiences also shaped the contours of heaven with equal effect. Hildegard of Bingen's choice of engineering images reflects her idea of the heavenly city of Jerusalem as well her involvement in the construction of her monastery. Jacques de Vitry promoted traditional views of heaven while introducing combative interpretations of paradise to justify persecution of the Cathars. In bardic poetry, too, heaven is in part the projection of earthly wishes: it is a banquet held by a generous chieftain and a charming hostess. The language of paradise in theological or secular writings, although rooted in biblical and patristic writings, mirrored the cultural milieux of its authors, and their historical situation transformed received ideas of heaven into a colourful mosaic of inherited and contemporary values and practices. Because paradise meant so much to medieval minds, poets of the period naturally used heaven figuratively to evoke emotions of ecstatic joy or utter despair (as when Chaucer's lovers are in heaven or hell) and drew on visions of heaven to give their settings a touch of the supernatural.

At the core of these varied notions and uses of heaven lies the desire to comprehend heaven and to know who would earn a privileged place there. Driven by intellectual curiosity and intense emotion, both hope and fear, anticipation and trepidation, this speculation generated a vivid array of heavens. The heavens that

have survived in art and writing remain one of the most impressive creations of the medieval heart and mind. As our observations will have suggested, we are as yet far from knowing all there is to know about the multiple representations of heaven in the Middle Ages. However, the richness of the findings presented in the following chapters shows the potential rewards for future study of the making of medieval heaven.

Notes

- 1 J.B. Russell, *A History of Heaven: The Singing Silence*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997, p.17.
- 2 For examples of 'heavens' in different religious faiths see C. and P. Zaleski (eds) *The Book of Heaven: An Anthology of Writings from Ancient to Modern Times*, New York: Oxford, 2000.
- 3 C. McDannell and B. Lang, *Heaven: A History*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1988.
- 4 J. Delumeau, *Une Histoire du Paradis*, vol. 1, Paris: Fayard, 1992.
- 5 J. Delumeau, *Mille Ans de Bonheur: Histoire du Paradis*, vol. 2, Paris: Fayard, 1995.
- 6 Russell, *A History of Heaven*.
- 7 A.E. McGrath, *A Brief History of Heaven*, Oxford: Blackwell, 2003.
- 8 C. Davidson (ed.) *The Iconography of Heaven*, Kalamazoo, MI: Medieval Institute, 1994. J.S. Emerson and H. Feiss (eds) *Imagining Heaven in the Middle Ages*, New York: Garland Publishing, 2000.
- 9 The essay on music is by Richard Rastall. Rastall's later monograph study on the music of the angels in the drama and liturgy of the period also deserves to be mentioned. See R. Rastall, *The Heaven Singing: Music in Early English Religious Drama*, Woodbridge: Boydell and Brewer, 1996.
- 10 C.W. Bynum, *The Resurrection of the Body in Western Christianity, 200–1336*, New York: Columbia University Press, 1995.
- 11 C.W. Bynum and P. Freedman (eds) *Last Things: Death and the Apocalypse in the Middle Ages*, Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2000.
- 12 H. Stahl, 'Heaven in View: The Place of the Elect in an Illuminated Book of Hours', in Bynum and Freedman, *Last Things*, pp.205–32, at p.232.
- 13 C. Zaleski, *Otherworld Journeys: Accounts on Near-death Experience in Medieval and Modern Times*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987; C. Zaleski, *Life of the World to Come: Near-death Experience and Christian Hope*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996.
- 14 R. Easting, *Visions of the Other World in Middle English*, Annotated Bibliographies of Old and Middle English Literature, 3, Cambridge: D.S. Brewer, 1997.
- 15 P. Dinzelsbacher's *Vision und Visionlitteratur im Mittelalter*, Monographien zur Geschichte des Mittelalters, 23, Stuttgart: Hiersemann, 1981.
- 16 Russell, *A History of Heaven*, p.84.
- 17 Russell, *A History of Heaven*, p.88.
- 18 Russell, *A History of Heaven*, p.96.
- 19 J. Leclercq, *The Love for Learning and the Desire for God: A Study of Monastic Culture*, C. Misrahi (trans.), 3rd edn, New York: Fordham University Press, 1982.
- 20 Bynum, *The Resurrection of The Body*.
- 21 Basil of Caesarea, Bede and Thomas Aquinas are just a few of the theologians who speculated about the place and organization of heaven.
- 22 Easting, *Visions of the Other World in Middle English*, p.4.