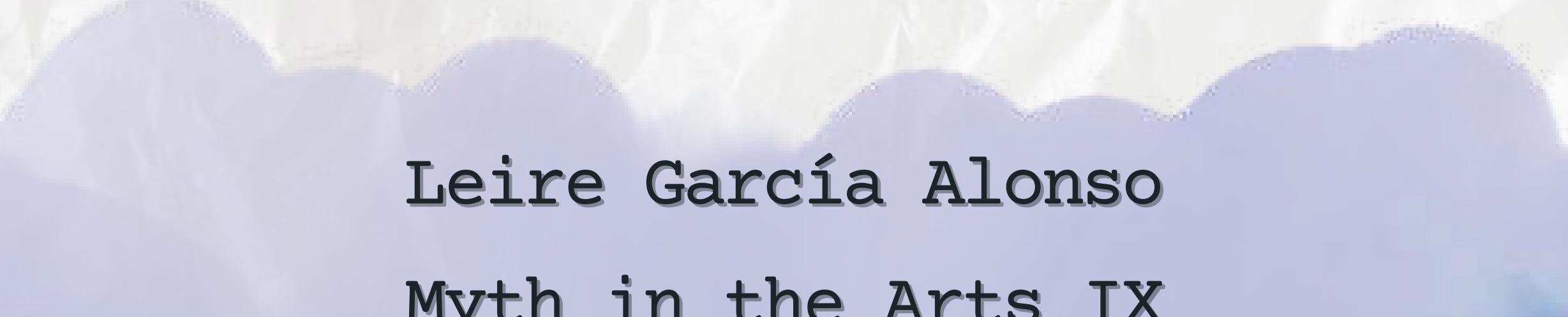




To Death and Beyond: A Comparative Analysis of **HARRY POTTER'S DEATH & JOHN DONNE'S 'SONNET X'**



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Myth in the Arts IX

Introduction

- Death: a recurrent theme in literature
- Objects of study:
 - John Donne's 'Holy Sonnet X'
 - Harry Potter's death, in J.K. Rowling's *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows*
- Focus:
 - Death
 - Eternal Life



John Donne

- Born in London in 1572, the founder of the Metaphysical Poets
- Roman Catholic family, studied in Oxford & Cambridge.
- Roman Catholic first, then member of the Anglican Church.
- Struggled to provide for his family.
- Ordained deacon in 1615, installed as dean of St Paul's Cathedral (London) in 1621.
- Mostly wrote love poems and religious verses; also known for the sermons he gave during mass



J. K. Rowling

- Born in Yate, Gloucestershire, in 1965.
- Enrolled as a child at the Church of England School in Tutshill.
- Joined the Second Tidenham Brownie Pack: a church group where she and her companions completed activities once a week.
- Always identified herself as a Christian and a member of the Church of Scotland.
- Trouble keeping her faith, she worked some of those issues into the *Harry Potter* series.

DEATH

I

Genesis 3:19

"By the sweat of your brow you will eat your food until you return to the ground, since from it you were taken; for dust you are and to dust you will return."

II

Revelation 20:14-15

Then Death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death— the lake of fire. And if anyone was found whose name was not written in the Book of Life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.

III

Romans 5:12

Therefore, just as sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, and in this way death came to all people, because all sinned—

LIMBO

I

Cambridge Dictionary

“an uncertain situation that you cannot control and in which there is no progress or improvement”

II

Cambridge Dictionary

“the place between Heaven and Hell to which Roman Catholics believe that the spirits of dead children who have not been baptized go”

III

Psalm 16:10

because you will not abandon me to the realm of the dead [Sheol], nor will you let your faithful one see decay.

Holy Sonnet X

Death, be not proud, though some
have called thee

Mighty and dreadful, for thou art
not so;

For those whom thou think'st thou
dost overthrow

Die not, poor Death, nor yet canst
thou kill me.

From rest and sleep, which but thy
pictures be,

Much pleasure; then from thee much
more must flow,

And soonest our best men with thee
do go, (7)

Rest of their bones, and soul's
delivery.

Thou art slave to fate, chance,
kings, and desperate men, (9)
And dost with poison, war, and
sickness dwell, (10)

And poppy or charms can make us
sleep as well

And better than thy stroke; why
swell'st thou then?

One short sleep past, we wake
eternally (13)

And death shall be no more; Death,
thou shalt die. (14)

Inevitability of Death



- O1 And soonest our best men with thee do go, (7)
- O2 Thou art slave to fate, chance, kings, and desperate men, (9)
- O3 And dost with poison, war, and sickness dwell,
(10)
Harry understood at last that he was not supposed to survive. His job was to walk calmly into Death's welcoming arms. [...] so that when at last he flung himself across Voldemort's path, and did not raise a wand to defend himself, the end would be clean (564)
- O4 Yet it did not occur to him now to try to escape, to outrun Voldemort. It was over, he knew it, and all that was left was the thing itself: dying. (564)
- O5 Like rain on a cold window, these thoughts pattered against the hard surface of the incontrovertible truth, which was that he must die. I must die. It must end. (566)
- O6

Eternal Life



- O1 One short sleep past, we wake eternally (13)
- O2 And death shall be no more; Death, thou shalt die. (14)
- O3 "Well, where do you think we are?" asked Harry, a little defensively. "My dear boy, I have no idea. This is, as they say, your party." (582)
- O4 "Tell me one last thing," said Harry. "Is this real? Or has this been happening inside my head?" [...] "Of course it is happening inside your head, Harry, but why on Earth should that mean that it is not real?" (591)
- O5 "I've got to go back, haven't I?" "That is up to you." "I've got a choice?" "Oh yes." [...] I think that if you decided not to go back, you would be able to ... let's say ... board a train." "And where would it take me?" "On," (590)

Conclusions

- The Christian tradition has transcended time and helped shape Western literature.
- Acceptance of Death = heroism and virtue
- Eternal Death: achieved first through faith, then shifts to individual morality

THANK YOU
FOR LISTENING

ΚΛΛΩΣ Λ
ΚΟΥΞΙΝ ΜΑΛ
ΔΟΝ Η ΠΛΟΥ
ΤΕΙΝ ΘΕΛΕ

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