

Death and Judgement in Medieval Literature

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Session sponsored by the Medieval Institute, University of Notre Dame

The question of what happens after death was a prominent subject in medieval thought, bringing together themes of temporality, materiality, spirituality, and salvation history. The moment of judgment can be seen as signifying a moment of passage between two spaces: the physical world and the spiritual afterlife. The ultimate concern of any pious Christian was the enactment of good deeds in their earthly life to save their soul in the afterlife, but souls in the afterlife could also influence the material world (for example, through the intervention of saints, or through visions). How fixed, then, were the boundaries between life, judgement, and death in medieval literature? How did medieval writers envision the afterlife, and how was the process of Christian judgement understood?

This panel is prompted by the 700th anniversary of the death of Dante Alighieri, whose *Divina Commedia* is one of the most famous medieval explorations of the architecture of Christian judgement through its detailed mapping of Hell, Purgatory, and Heaven. However, we encourage participants to propose papers on any area of medieval literature concerned with the themes of death and judgement. Given the ubiquity of death and judgement in the medieval world, studying them is inevitably an interdisciplinary enterprise. This session invites papers that draw upon a variety of fields and materials, whether literary, art historical, theological, legal, or otherwise, in order to explore death and judgement in medieval literature. Participants are encouraged, but not limited, to engage with canon from the High and Late Middle Ages (c.1000-1500).

Please submit a proposal of 300 words or less via the Congress' Confex system (<https://icms.confex.com/icms/2022am/cfp.cgi>). Please send any queries to Will Beattie (wbeattie@nd.edu). The deadline for submission is **September 15th, 2021**.

