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Martyrdom and Noble Death: Selected Texts from Graeco-Roman, Jewish and Christian Antiquity (Context of Early Christianity)

Friedrich Avemarie, Jan Willem van Henten

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This volume explores the fascinating phenomenon of noble death through pagan, Jewish and Christian sources. Today's society is uncomfortable with death, and willingly submitting to a violent and ostentatious death in public is seen as particularly shocking and unusual. Yet classical sources give a different view, with public self-sacrifice often being applauded. The Romans admired a heroic end in the battlefield or the arena, suicide in the tradition of Socrates was something laudable, and Christians and Jews alike faithfully commemorated their heroes who died during religious persecutions. The cross-cultural approach and wide chronological range of this study make it valuable for students and scholars of ancient history, religion and literature.

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