

Synesios von Kyrene

Polis – Freundschaft – Jenseitsstrafen

Briefe an und über Johannes
Engel., übers. u. mit interpretierenden Essays vers. v. Katharina Luchner, Bruno Bleckmann, Reinhard Feldmeier u.a.

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Synesius of Cyrene (approx. 370–413 AD) was one of the most remarkable personalities of his time. Born into the local elite of the Cyrenaica, he became not only a philosopher-writer with a very personal perspective on Neoplatonism, but also defended his home town as a military commander in local wars and, finally, was made a bishop with multiple administrative and pastoral duties. Synesius' epistolographic work shows his literary erudition and sophisticated rhetorical skills, but also reflects the social, political, religious and intellectual climate of his age. This volume presents nine of his letters, all of which are addressed to or mention a person named »Joannes« (it is not known if this is always the same person). The longest piece (Ep. 43), an exhortatory oration in the form of a letter, enjoins »Joannes,« who is said to have committed murder, to hand himself over to the judges. Here more popular religious beliefs are subtly combined with a superb blending of otherworldly images from Plato's dialogues. The volume addresses itself equally to readers seeking a first approach to the multifaceted letters of Synesius as to those already acquainted with Late Antique Literature. The literary, historical and religious background of the texts is discussed in 6 interpretative essays.

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Bruno Bleckmann Dr. phil., geb. 1962, ist Professor für Alte Geschichte an der Heinrich-Heine-Universität Düsseldorf.

Reinhard Feldmeier Geboren 1952; Promotion und Habilitation in Tübingen; Pfarrer der bayerischen Landeskirche; 1992–95 Professur in Koblenz; 1995–2002 Professur in Bayreuth; seit 2002 Professor für Neues Testament in Göttingen; Mitglied der Akademie der Wissenschaften zu Göttingen.

Herwig Görgemanns Geboren 1931; 1959 Promotion; 1965 Habilitation; 1967/1968 Fellow am Center for Hellenic Studies der Harvard University; seit 1972 Professor für klassische Philologie an die Universität Heidelberg; 1997 emeritiert.

Katharina Luchner Dr. phil., geb. 1971, ist wissenschaftliche Mitarbeiterin an der Abteilung für Klassische Philologie der Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität München.

Adolf Martin Ritter Geboren 1933; Studium der Ev. Theologie in Marburg, Heidelberg, Göttingen und Athen; 1962 Promotion; 1970 Habilitation; seit 1981 Ordinarius für Historische Theologie in Heidelberg; seit 1999 emeritiert; 2000 Dr. h.c. Cluj-Napoca (Klausenburg); 2002 Dr. h.c. Oradea (Großwardein).

<https://orcid.org/0000-0003-0507-3391>

Ilinca Tanaseanu-Döbler Geboren 1979; seit 2015 Professorin für Religionswissenschaft – Schwerpunkt Europäische Religionsgeschichte an der Georg-August-Universität Göttingen.

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