distributed together' in a *congiarium*; and (contra 153) we are exactly where we were before its discovery in understanding the iconography of the pieces that happened to compose it.

Russell argues that the prominent S.C. on the base metal coinage of Augustus and his successors functioned, if not actually aimed, to show that the Senate was a central part of the Roman Imperial state; but did men really need to be told that the Roman state was the S.P.Q.R.? Rowan states that the issues of the moneyers under Augustus combined in each issue an Imperial and a family type; has anyone believed anything different? On the coinage of one of these colleges, Woods argues that a lyre is, by way of the Greek word *terpein*, 'to delight', a pun on the name Turpilianus, as also the name Tarpeia; a crab tearing apart a butterfly, by way of *dirimere*, 'to tear apart', a pun on the name Durmius: not even Varro could have invented anything so absurd. Greet considers the eagle on coins of Augustus, reminding anyone who needs reminding that the bird recalls a legionary standard, a veteran colony, and the standards recovered from Parthia; an eagle holding a wreath in its claws is supposed, by way of the story of the eagle that removed and then replaced the cap on the head of Tarquinius Priscus, to allude to the grant of the *corona ciuica* to Augustus; since he went to great lengths to disguise the fact that he was a despot, this is hardly credible, except as a black joke.

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PASCAL MONTLAHUC, *LE POUVOIR DES BONS MOTS: «FAIRE RIRE» ET POLITIQUE A ROME DU MILIEU DU IIIᵉ SIECLE A.C. A L'AVENEMENT DES ANTONINS*. Rome: École française de Rome, 2019. Pp. xi + 500. ISBN 9782728313662. €37.

With this book, Pascal Montlahuc provides an extensive and very insightful history of political humour and laughter in Rome from the third century B.C. to the second century A.D. Due to his broad chronological scope and carefully contextualised readings, M. significantly adds to, and sometimes usefully corrects, previous work in the field, most notably Anthony Corbeill's *Controlling Laughter: Political Humor in the Late Roman Republic* (1996). M. considers the socio-political mechanisms that determined the success or failure of remarks intended to provoke laughter (*risum movere*). To this end, he examines 478 passages that are mostly derived from literary sources, although ch. 4 also includes graffiti. Most of the material is from Cicero, Plutarch, Suetonius and, to a lesser extent, Quintilian. M.'s extensive use of ancient biography adds a valuable new perspective to the study of the politics of humour in Rome. Another strength of the book is its broad conception of politics. M. considers the political uses of laughter not only in what he calls 'la politique', Rome's formal political institutions, such as the law courts, senate and *contiones*, but also in 'le politique', the social practices and political rituals of civic society at large that took place in the forum, the streets and even on military campaigns.

The book is divided into three sections. The first considers the final two centuries of the Republic. In ch. 1 (23–76), M. qualifies Corbeill's argument that political humour in the republican period primarily functioned as an instrument of control and exclusion in the hands of the Roman elite. Although public laughter played an important role within the competition for status between members of the elite, M. shows that this competition was judged by a broad, civic audience whose views had to be considered in order to win the day. What is more, about a third of the passages analysed by M. display a 'bottom-up' form of mockery aimed at the elites rather than a 'top-down' use of humour that legitimated their political dominance. Corbeill's notion of controlling laughter is further challenged in ch. 2 (77–141), which shows that *risum movere* was not merely a game between the most powerful but also involved other actors, such as *pedarii*, plebeians and soldiers. The participation of the lower segments of society, moreover, was not limited to the reinforcement of existing hierarchies but could also take the form of 'humorous rebellions' that modified socio-political relations.

The second part traces the transformation of the politics of humour during the first century B.C. Ch. 3 (147–83) examines the elites' response to the rise of Caesar. Although Caesar could not be the target of open mockery like any of the other aristocrats, M. convincingly argues that Cicero's claims about Caesarean censorship should not be taken at face value. Instead, it was prudence and self-censorship that gave rise to a new, less openly aggressive form of political humour. In ch. 4 (185–213),

M. examines the use of slogans, jokes and satirical comments on the streets and walls of Rome. Although these are often seen as originating from the lower classes, their authors, M. shows, actually belonged to a reasonably educated and politicised section of the population. Ch. 5 (215–64) considers the triumviral years. Here, M. points to the coexistence of anonymous taunts and open criticism to challenge the notion that this period was marked by the death of public speech. Ch. 6 (265–75) briefly outlines the function of political humour in the portrayal of Caesar and Octavian by ancient authors.

The third part examines the early Principate. In ch. 7 (283–333), M. examines Augustus' response to, and use of, humour. He notices a shift between the beginning of Augustus' reign, when the emperor tolerated jokes from aristocrats and the populace, provided that they could not form the basis for systematic opposition, and its end, when imperial authority came under pressure and tolerance towards verbal attacks on the emperor decreased. Augustus himself, M. argues, used humour to bridge the gap between himself and his subjects as well as to legitimate his position. Ch. 8 (335–402) considers the emperors after Augustus. Here, M. rightfully draws attention to the distorting influence of the distinction between the 'good prince', who benevolently tolerated mockery, and the 'tyrant', who sought to repress all forms of laughter, articulated in ancient historiography. Moving beyond this simple dichotomy, M.'s readings reveal how the emperor's response to a particular joke depended on its context, the identity of the author and the potential threat it posed to his authority. In the conclusion (403–7), M. succinctly outlines the major developments in political humour from the Republic to the Principate.

To conclude, *Le pouvoir des bons mots* constitutes an ambitious monograph that significantly advances the study of Roman political humour. M.'s careful readings of humoristic exchanges, which pay close attention to the historical circumstances as well as to the actors and audiences involved, offer fresh insights into the socio-political practices that structured Roman politics in the Republic, the triumviral period and the early empire.

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HEDVIG VON EHRENHEIM and MARINA PRUSAC-LINDHAGEN (EDS), *READING ROMAN EMOTIONS: VISUAL AND TEXTUAL INTERPRETATIONS* (Skrifter utgivna av Svenska institutet i Rom, 4° 64). Stockholm: Svenska Institutet i Rom, 2020. Pp. 199, illus. ISBN 9789170421860. SEK530.

This collection of studies, deriving from a workshop held at the Swedish Institute in Rome on 16–17 April 2014, is a novel contribution to a growing literature on the history of the emotions. First of all, it is *Roman*. Latin studies have been late to the topic, which remains dominated by Hellenists. This book redresses that balance by placing Roman culture at the centre in its own terms while thematising emotions in general, rather than one emotion in particular. Secondly, it embeds ancient emotion studies more firmly in the work of historians and psychologists of the emotions in the early modern world. This has been relatively rare in studies of ancient emotions, with the unintended effect of projecting a notion of 'ancient Greece' as a unique case among human cultures. Roman culture seems to be more easily understood in continuity with later traditions and our own psychological perceptions, counterbalancing the alterity of the 'Greeks'. Last, but not least, the volume highlights the visual dimension of cultural history. It engages with actual images right from the start, provides a theoretical justification for the approach (while also recognising its limits), and discusses many concrete examples, taking a broad conception of the visual, including performance and imagery as well as artefacts.

The collection is opened by Susan Matt, with a chapter on 'recovering emotion from visual culture'. This rounded introduction has much of value to say on the differences between textual and visual sources, on the tension between particularism and universality in the study of emotions and on the need to attend to demographic variability (by class, gender, or age) as well as to historical change. The chapter is an excellent introduction to the subject, offering a bridge