

method and results, p. 52, 67), as well as mutually exclusive, non-absolute and relativizing (so Huber, see p. 53). Plaza demonstrates us that laughter in the *Satyrice* is ambiguous (see p. 53: "ambiguity is its very nature") and it performs simultaneously different functions (ibid.).

In her analysis in 3.1, 3.2 and 3.3, Plaza successfully avoids compartmentalizing laughter; she occasionally tends to underline her arguments for the ambivalent nature of the text so much that the reader finds her own analysis ambivalent to a degree. On p. 83 in the conclusion of the analysis of *Sat.* 1–26.6, she concludes that "the satiric vision is strongly undercut by the facts that the potential satiric vehicle is silenced...On the other hand, it may be said that unrefined mimic laughter in itself is an object of scorn, and such a view would strengthen the satirical interpretation". Consequently, what is left is that the satiric function is, however, very prominent. But I agree with Plaza that the satiric function, or equivalent, is not the only target Petronius aimed at.

Plaza succeeds well in keeping her method in balance throughout the treatise; no single theory of laughter (an overview of them given pp. 4–10) dominates her analysis. Perhaps this (subconsciously) influenced her in her decision to entitle the subchapters with the sentences of the *Satyrice*. This method, having as a starting point the words and their contexts, is not an innovation as such (it is used in a broader sense in commentaries), but it appears to also work in a study of a specific theme like this. The explicit references functioned as "shortcuts" into the more profound messages in Petronius, and they serve methodologically the same purpose in Plaza's analysis. If the reader is interested in the specific passages of the *Satyrice*, this book offers an easy access to the writer's argumentation and debate with her colleagues. I would not, however, consider Plaza's subtitles convenient for a more general reader. She could have found illustrative titles from her own creditable analysis on the narrative strategies, characters and their interactions, intertextual methods and thematic and generic ambivalence in Petronius' work. Or, she could have translated the reference sentences into English, the language of her study.

This valuable treatise by Maria Plaza encourages us to take a step further and imagine that behind Petronius' visions there was not a black and white but a multicoloured Rome, where human laughter appeared on different levels simultaneously.

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SUETONIUS: *Divus Claudius*. Edited by DONNA W. HURLEY. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 2001. ISBN 0-521-59676-9. viii, 274 pp., figs. GBP 40 (hb), 14.95 (pb).

Donna W. Hurley's edition of Suetonius' *Life of Claudius* in the Cambridge Greek and Latin Classics contains an introduction to the author, his work and the Latin text of the *vita Claudii* (based on Ihm/Teubner), a commentary, a list of literature and three indexes.

This book is very useful for the student of Suetonius. Hurley's comments are easy to follow, even if one starts in the middle of them (which is quite usual); she has a fluent way of approaching the text, not a common feature of commentaries due to the problem

of what should be commented upon. I enjoyed Hurley's brief introductions in the beginning of chapters (e.g., *10 Accession*, p. 94, *14–15 Iudex*, pp. 116–118; *16 Censor*, pp. 127–128; *17 Imperator*, pp. 133–134, *35–37 Fearfulness*, pp. 211–212, or *43–46 Death*, pp. 233ff. with subdivisions) which greatly help a reader using this edition as a source book for specific details or sectors of the emperor's life and career.

Hurley's interpretations of the text are careful; she avoids taking a very pointed stand on Suetonius' opinions of Claudius' achievements or decision-making, which, as a whole, is fair to the beginner at least.

Considering Claudius' accession (*mirabili casu*, 10.1), Hurley rightly points out (p. 94) that "Ironically, the *reluctant emperor* image played directly into the portrayal of him as passive, fearful and undignified". Although this is a basic commentary, I would have wished her to focus more on such features of biography in her introduction. For instance, Suetonius' literary devices to knit together the emperor's habits with different occasions of life could have been discussed in Chapter 4, Structure and Style, pp. 17ff. Fortunately, she deals somewhat with the central topics of Suetonius' style in the course of her commenting, as, for instance, fearfulness as "C.'s dominant trait" (pp. 211–217). "Fearfulness" is a biographical rubric to be compared with "cruelty", "luxury" and "gluttony" ("cruelty" also occurs in the *vita Claudii*, [34, see pp.207–211]), but, as known, it is impossible or very difficult to discern fact from fiction in Suetonius. Hurley rightly points out regarding Claudius' insecurity (p. 211–212) that "C. had particular reasons for being so, coming to the principate as he did in the face of a hostile senate, threatened by a coup a year later and never able to protect himself by establishing a firm succession". The reader can judge (and actually expects answers from Hurley) how much of this image of his reign was moulded by a biographer who loved rumours, intrigues and scenes of absurd situations (like the *mirabili casu*, mentioned above).

One difficulty with relatively thick paperbacks like this is how to keep a double page open, say, at a point some 50 pages from the beginning or from the end of the book – that needs inventiveness! Should we turn the opened book upside down and keep turning it when needed while working? Or, should we open it roughly so that it stays open, which, as a result, causes the pages to be in danger of coming loose from the binding. I would not recommend the latter method but the first one: this book deserves to be kept open with its pages in correct order.

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GERHARD ANSELM MÜLLER: *Formen und Funktionen der Vergilzitate und –anspielungen bei Augustin von Hippo. Formen und Funktionen der Zitate und Anspielungen*. Studien zur Geschichte und Kultur des Altertums, 18. Band. Ferdinand Schöningh, Paderborn 2003. ISBN 3-506-79068-4. 508 S. EUR 88,40.

*Formen und Funktionen der Vergilzitate und –anspielungen bei Augustin von Hippo* von Gerhard Anselm Müller ist eine überarbeitete Fassung seiner im 2000–2001 an der Johannes Gutenberg-Universität angenommenen Dissertation. In seinem opus magnum untersucht Müller Augustins Vergilzitate im Horizont ihrer Zeit und die Rolle der Zitate