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Sommario/riassunto	Laughter was often the subject of theoretical reflection. In contrast, studies on the specific historical constellations of laughter in pre-modern times are almost completely absent. This volume is dedicated to this deficit. Historical laughter can be inferred from laughter. Values and taboos emerge in a particularly concise manner in political, historiographical, literary and letter-related testimonies that deal with laughter. Laughter is a form of communication and social interaction that can not only create and consolidate new identities through instrumentalization in propaganda. Laughter serves as an instrument of power, contributes to communication within the group and is a means of creating meaning. The articles collected here examine the valences of laughter empirically and in an interdisciplinary perspective from the Middle Ages to the 18th century. Exemplary studies thus explore the potential of historical research into laughter.