Coming of Age in Ancient Greece is the catalog accompanying the exhibition of the same name (originating at the Hood Museum of Art, Dartmouth College). As an exhibition catalog, however, it goes beyond the narrow confines of the genre usually focused only on the works of art, their provenance, and styles. Although most current art-historical and archaeological research aims to contextualize its subjects or findings, the editors of this volume have also looked to the intellectual history of their venture, the sweeping twentieth-century project to recover the private lives of people in the past (the title consciously echoes Margaret Mead, *Coming of Age in Samoa* [New York, 1928]; Philippe Ariès, *L’enfant et la vie familiale sous l’ancien régime* [Paris, 1960], also receives due recognition).

The subject of childhood, by necessity, entails discussion of the structures of social life, the family, religion, and the state. Yet scholars of classical antiquity have often lingered on the images of ideal youth—for example, the glorious horseman on the Parthenon frieze—while passing over the grim realities of abandoned newborns, who were fortunate if they were rescued from the dung heaps to be taken as slaves. The editors’ contribution lies in the breadth and depth of their inquiry. The inclusion of an essay by Jill Korbin on not exclusively contemporary concerns, such as the definition of childhood and children’s agency, is bold for a field in which interdisciplinary studies tend to range from Greek archaeology to Greek literature.

The elegance and familiarity of Greek art encourages modern viewers to identify with the citizens of the Greek *polis* and assume a cross section of basic values, including the raising and care of maidens and ephebes. The selection of artworks—mostly small objects (figurines, vases, and toys, along with several larger funerary reliefs and statues) from North American museums—deserves a wider audience. Some vases from European collections fill in the gaps. The catalog is organized into themes, such as myth, the household, education, play, ritual, and the transition to adulthood, which also figure prominently in the volume’s conceptualization of childhood. The essays, however, reveal how remote and strange the Greeks could be in the sixth and fifth centuries B.C.E.: For example, the practice of initiating elite youth into adulthood through homoerotic courtships in the gymnasium and the conflation of marriage and death in girls’ rites of passage run counter to the current orthodoxy of socializing young adults in most Western societies.

Written by established scholars in the field (including Mark Golden, Helene Foley, and Alan Shapiro), the essays explore not only family relationships and hierarchies but also the myths and rituals that gave shape to the social realities of children from infancy to adolescence. Greek myth, in particular, is rich in the peculiar pathology of families with dis-
Chapters 10 and 11 illustrate how the film's use of characters and plot elements remediates traditional Orientalist tropes about the Middle East. These chapters are among the strongest in the book, presenting the film as a text that engages with and challenges dominant discourses about the region.

The conclusion of the book summarizes the key themes and findings of the study, highlighting the film's role as a transnational text that operates within and against dominant narratives about the Middle East. The conclusion argues that the film's transnationalism is not just a question of distributing cultural commodities across national borders, but also involves the way in which these commodities are consumed and negotiated in different cultural contexts.

In summary, this book provides a comprehensive analysis of the film's transnationalism, demonstrating how it engages with and challenges dominant discourses about the Middle East. The book also offers insights into the ways in which transnational media texts can be understood as cultural products that are produced and consumed in multiple national contexts.

References


