

Jan N. Bremmer

Becoming a Man in Ancient Greece and Rome

Essays on Myths and Rituals of Initiation

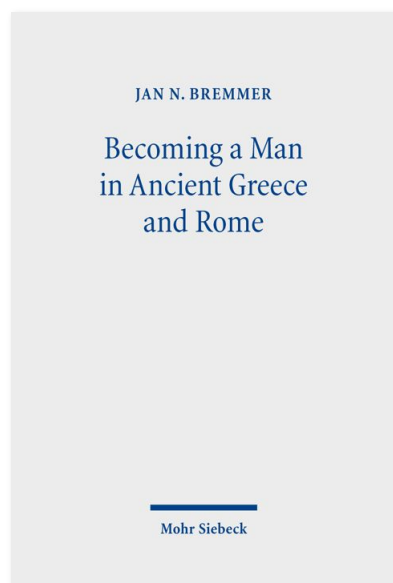
[Becoming a Man in Ancient Greece and Rome]

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In this work, Jan N. Bremmer brings together articles on Greek and Roman myths and rituals of male initiation, which have all been updated and, where necessary, revised and translated into English. The preface sketches the rise of the initiatory paradigm within a wider anthropological and Indo-European perspective and discusses the problem of noting ritual elements in mythical reflections. The first of two following sections concentrates on initiatory motifs in a series of famous myths, such as education by shepherds and 'wild men' (Heracles, Centaurs), travesty (Dionysos and Kaineus), the defeat of a monster (Odysseus vs. the Cyclops, Oedipus and the Sphinx) and warring and wandering groups of young men (the Trojan War, Meleager, Orpheus, Theseus and Peirithoos). The second section focuses on historical rituals, beginning with pederasty and the symposium. The author then moves on to the importance of the maternal family and fosterage in the initiatory process before ending with an archaic Latin inscription that reveals the contours of a group of young men in action in the full light of history.

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