trasforma gli *atti lascivi* in null'altro che atti *retrosi e schivi* è ciò che può permettere il recupero del rimosso. La sessualità "rimossa" dall'"acculturazione" si oppone alla "sessualità accettata" della "naturalità".

Il secondo motivo centrale dell'opera è imperniato, per la studiosa, sull'esemplificazione delle dinamiche adolescenziali dell'innamoramento e la scoperta della sessualità attraverso cui si stabilisce una "relazione oggettuale intensa" (24). Il contrasto tra Amore e Venere si legge invece come autoaffermazione dell'uno nei confronti dell'altra. Il figlio a rappresentare la naturalità dell'adolescente contro la madre, adulta, a rappresentare ciò che è istituzionalizzato, "culturizzato", come scrive Caponigro. La "crisi affettiva adolescenziale" di Aminta e Silvia si inserisce quindi in queste dinamiche di opposizione tra natura e cultura, contrasto anticipato nel Prologo che si concluderà con un lieto fine, sia pur dopo sofferenze e pene d'amore. Silvia "naturalmente" matura un senso narcisistico per il proprio corpo. Quando Aminta la libera, dopo essere stata legata ad un albero da Satiro, egli non la possiede e, dice Caponigro, Silvia viene frustrata sessualmente. Solo il tentativo di suicidio di Aminta porterà la giovane a ricambiarne il sentimento. Ad essi si aggiunge Satiro che Caponigro associa alla sessualità negata di Aminta; Satiro è quindi portatore di una sessualità della naturalità che viene fuggita da Silvia la quale non è in grado di accettarla se non entro i limiti imposti dalla società. Sarà proprio Satiro, per Caponigro, a permettere a Silvia di liberare la sua sessualità repressa e permettere ad Aminta, quindi, di mostrarsi come un eroe "rassicurante". Il motivo del rifiuto di Aminta da parte di Silvia è chiarito secondo la formulazione freudiana esposta in *Contributi alla psicologia della vita amorosa*: la sessualità di Silvia, ancora "acerba" rifiuta colui che per primo le prospetta l'atto sessuale "per una reazione arcaica di ostilità verso l'uomo che la possiede per la prima volta" (47).

Nel capitolo quarto, "Dinamiche linguistiche e dinamiche psicologiche", viene fornito l'indice di frequenza delle occorrenze e viene anche proposta una lettura in termini psicologico-linguistici. Al capitolo si aggiunge un'appendice che riporta i passi significativi relativi alla proposta di lettura data nello stesso capitolo.

Nel quinto ed ultimo capitolo, "La negazione dell'eros", Caponigro tira le file del suo discorso definendo l'opera come "dramma essenzialmente psicoanalitico" (71) perché permette, dice Caponigro, l'esplorazione del profondo e lo svelamento della "precarietà dei suoi codici culturali" (47). La negazione dell'eros rappresentata in maniera non esplicita fa quindi del dramma una messa in scena di natura psicanalitica. Il testo si avvale anche di una breve bibliografia tassiano-psicanalitica e di un indice dei nomi.

MARIA LAURA MOSCO

University of Toronto

The Premodern Teenager. Youth and Society 1150-1650, ed. Konrad Eisenbichler. Toronto: CRRS, 2002. Pp. 348, Figs. 12. ISBN 0-7727-2018-5. US\$ 39.95, Can\$ 59.95.

The publication of Philippe Ariès's pioneering *L'enfant et la vie familiale sous l'ancien régime* in 1972 marked the beginning of a period of intense research on the

history of childhood in the premodern era. Aries maintained that the sociopsychological concept of childhood did not exist in the Middle Ages, the proof of which was supposedly demonstrated by the inability of medieval artists to portray children realistically. For Ariès, a concept of childhood as a special stage in human life, distinct from adulthood, was an invention of the early modern period. Far from liberating children and improving their lives, he held, the so-called invention of childhood denied children the relative freedom they had enjoyed in the Middle Ages and subjected them to an unprecedented degree of harsh discipline. Aries's ideas about the invention of childhood attracted enthusiastic adherents, but were also contested by many leading scholars (David Herlihy, Shulamith Shahar, Barbara Hanawalt, and Nicholas Orme, to name a few). There is now a broad consensus among historians that the concept of childhood was never invented. Quite the opposite: from the ancient world to the present there existed an ever-mutable, yet discernable, conceptual vocabulary which has been employed to distinguish children from adults. Current research focuses on both the cultural construction of childhood and the actual treatment of children by adults, and how concepts and practices relating to childhood were shaped over time by religious beliefs, medical knowledge, legal prescriptions, family matters, socioeconomic conditions, demographic trends, local contexts, and not least, gender.

Konrad Eisenbichler, the author of the prize-winning study *Boys of the Archangel Raphael: A Youth Confraternity in Florence, 1411-1785* and the editor of the volume under review, acknowledges the profusion of research on mediaeval and early modern childhood yet contends that scholars have failed to pay sustained attention to adolescence, that formative stage beginning with the commencement of puberty and terminating with adulthood, that is, when one married, became head of a family, or reached legal majority. The seventeen essays represent an impressive sample of ongoing interdisciplinary research on the culture and comportment of adolescent boys and girls in medieval and early modern Europe.

The volume is divided into six sections. In the first section, "Identifying Youths: Terminology and Sub-Culture," Ilaria Taddei examines the range of terms used to refer to male infancy and youth (*infante*, *putto*, *bambino*, *fanciullo*, *adolescente*, *giovane*, *garzone* and *ragazzo*) in Renaissance Florence. Although these terms had overlapping meanings and did not correspond to precise chronological ages, various sources indicate that terms such as *adolescente* carried cultural specificity and referred to a person located between *puerizia* (boyhood) and *giovinetza* (youth). In turn, Ludovica Sebgondi spotlights the clothes worn by Florentine adolescents, which were designed to distinguish them from adult males. As Roni Weinstein reveals, there were crucial differences dividing Jewish and Christian adolescents in early modern Italy. For one thing, having reached the age of thirteen, the beginning of adulthood, both Jewish boys and girls tended to leave the parental home. In Jewish culture adolescence was treated as a stage of unbridled and dangerous passions that had to be reined in. While negative views of adolescent passion derived from Augustinianism continued to inform Christian attitudes toward children, there also existed new perspectives advanced by the humanists that youth was a time of positive intellectual and social possibilities. The major

point of Weinstein's piece is that the ghettoization of Jews in the sixteenth century paradoxically empowered a sub-culture of young Jewish males, who, like their Christian counterparts, banded together in homosocial gangs prone to violence.

The rituals of youth are the subject of three fine papers, one on Italy, the others on England. Based on her study of sixty volumes of documents produced between 1590 and 1630 by the criminal court (*Torrone*) of Bologna, Ottavia Niccoli details how the city's authorities, animated by the reforming zeal of the Council of Trent, worked to curb the supposedly harmful games and rituals, such as stone throwing, defending one's honour, public kissing, performed by young men in Bologna and its vicinity. According to Niccoli, the most popular ritual in the Bolognese countryside was the ritual of the May tree. In this ritual, celebrated the night of the first of May, a suitor placed branches, bunches of flowers, and undeveloped trees in front of the door or window of the young woman he was courting or wished to court. When the intention was to honour the woman, the branches were filled with presents, when to dishonour, a donkey's bell or a pair of slippers, signifying exposed female genitalia, were hung from the branches. The May tree ritual was officially suppressed in 1687 by the papal legate. Although the youth of King Edward II has been much studied, Virginia A. Cole stresses that in performing religious rituals expected of an aristocratic youth and member of the royal family, the adolescent Edward exhibited a surprising degree of independence. Taking a different tack, Robert Zajkowski focuses on the edificatory rituals attending the royal entry of the adolescent Henry VI into London in 1432.

Regarding education, Mark H. Lawhorn writes about Jacobean theatre as a site for public consideration of the coming of age of young English princes, while Marian Rothstein considers the popularity of portrayals of exceptional children in Renaissance French novels. Christopher Carlsmith examines the careers of fellowship students who left Bergamo to study at the University of Padua in the mid sixteenth century and concludes that there was a "greater emphasis upon imposing obedience, orthodoxy and 'godly discipline' among adolescents after 1550" (169). Teen knights and combat is the subject of Ruth Mazo Karras paper, which argues persuasively that in the chivalric world of male camaraderie of the late Middle Ages the competition among young and prospective knights for the love of women was less about erotic love than about signaling their masculinity to other men. In his paper, the military historian Kelly DeVries cautions that one should not assume from the examples of the Black Prince and Joan of Arc that adolescents normally participated in warfare in the Middle Ages. The evidence for children's participation is uneven and equivocal.

The lead essay on sex and adolescence by Fiona Harris Stoertz contrasts monastic regulations of the early Middle Ages, which were aimed at protecting adolescents from sexual predators, with later monastic regulations, beginning with those of Cluny in the eleventh century, which were aimed at constraining restless and intransigent adolescent flesh itself. Phillip D. Collington uses Shakespeare's *Two Gentlemen of Verona* to investigate the "cuckoldry anxiety" of adolescent males provoked by the already-present dread of future wifely infidelity. In a different vein, Ursula Potter, writing about the depiction of youthful sexuality in *Romeo*

and Juliet, explores the anxieties of Juliet's father who reduces "lovemaking to sex making, and women's anatomy to a fearful handicap" (289).

Carol Lansing opens the final section ("Teens in Trouble") with an essay that brings to light several cases concerning young girls in late thirteenth-century Bologna, who, without family protection and resources, were forced into concubinage and prostitution and pseudoadulthood. In the concluding essay, John Leland offers an informative discussion of the circumstances prompting young people to return to their natal homes in the countryside after serving urban apprenticeships.

Although the addition of essays on medical doctrines and legal regulations would have enhanced the value of the collection, the volume nevertheless provides a series of valuable entry points into a fascinating subject.

JULIUS KIRSHNER

University of Chicago

Comanini, Gregorio. *The Figino, or On the Purpose of Painting: Art Theory in the Late Renaissance*, trans. with introduction and notes by Ann Doyle-Anderson and Giancarlo Maiorino. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2001. Pp. xxi, 158. ISBN 0-8020-3574-4. (cloth), 0-8020-8446-X. (paper). \$ 50 (cloth), \$ 21.95 (paper).

Amidst the piety and censure of the Catholic Reform movement in late sixteenth-century Italy, Gregorio Comanini, a Lateran canon resident in Milan, composed a learned dialogue on the purpose of painting: whether painting should merely delight or instead seriously instruct and morally uplift? Comanini's treatise, *Il Figino overo del fine della Pittura* of 1591 has been known to some Renaissance specialists and art historians through Paola Barocchi's Italian edition (*Trattati d'arte del Cinquecento*, 3 v., Bari, 1962). However, the new and complete English translation by Ann Doyle-Anderson and Giancarlo Maiorino brings the text to a much larger audience for the first time. Scholars and students will benefit from several aspects of this easily readable text.

Il Figino can now be included in the teaching of Renaissance art at the undergraduate level. Comanini's discussion of painting's purpose would enhance a seminar on Cinquecento art theory that focused on the well-known works by Giorgio Vasari and Giovanni Paolo Lomazzo. Vasari's monumental *Lives* (*Le vite...*, 1550 and 1568) charts the history of Italian art chronologically, using a framework of style-criticism to establish progress from one stage of development to the next. The style of Michelangelo, Vasari's artist-genius, establishes the peak of perfection in the narrative. Vasari traces how Florentine and Roman artists, from Giotto to Masaccio to Leonardo and Raphael, exhibited salient features in their paintings that heralded the supernatural spirit of Michelangelo's art. Working for the Medici and in the shadow of Michelangelo, Vasari's history reflects his Florentine allegiances. Lomazzo, on the other hand, was one of several Northern Italians who took exception to Vasari's perspective. In his long and complex *Trattato dell'arte della pittura* (Milan, 1584),