

Text and translation together occupy less than 50 pages, and so the chief focus of the book is the commentary, which proceeds paragraph by paragraph, picking out in each case a central idea, elucidating the argument, and offering verbal and conceptual parallels with Scripture, classical authors and Ambrose's Christian contemporaries – above all, his model Basil of Caesarea.

There is plenty in the story of Naboth – not least its transparent unfairness – which evidently resonated for Ambrose and still does today. Certainly Ambrose had no hesitation in giving the story contemporary relevance: every day, he begins, another Ahab is born, another Naboth is cast out and killed (*De Nab.* 1.1). From this arresting opening he goes on to articulate a vision of the rich as offenders against the natural order, in which all humanity is born equal, naked and hungry. The rhetoric is undeniably striking, although P. rightly notes that its radicalism can be overstated: Ambrose, like Paulinus of Nola, concludes that wealth is not wrong in itself, and advocates Christian charity – not as a path to perfection but as the simple duty of all who have more than their neighbours. Similarly, we should be cautious in drawing on Ambrose for accurate details of late-antique conditions. His illustrations are often borrowed from Basil, and his rhetoric trades inevitably in types, not to say stereotypes: the rich man is in his castle, and the poor man at his gate, but even though we recognise them in church we do not expect to meet them when we emerge. Here P. could have engaged more with recent Anglophone scholarship: the bibliography lacks anything by P. Brown, R. Finn or P. Garnsey, to mention only three scholars who have discussed the *De Nabuthae* and Ambrose's attitude to wealth. In the end, of course, none of this diminishes the force and value of Ambrose's indictment of the acquisitive rich. It remains a fascinating text, and P. is a thorough and reliable guide.

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BURKERT (W.) *La Religion grecque à l'époque archaïque et classique. Traduction et mise à jour bibliographique par Pierre Bonnechère.* (Antiquité/Synthèses 13.) Pp. 477. Paris: Picard, 2011. Paper, €61. ISBN: 978-2-7084-0906-4.

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B.'s *Griechische Religion der archaischen und klassischen Epoche* (1977¹), in its various epiphanies, is the standard work of our times on Greek religion. Only the specialists will turn to M.P. Nilsson's massive, and untranslated, *Geschichte der griechischen Religion* (2 vols, 1967³); whilst those in need of a briefer, more reflective insight, turn to J. Bremmer's issue-packed *Greek Religion* (1994¹). It is astonishing – indeed, 'inimaginable', as Bonnechère puts it (p. 7) – that a French translation has had to wait 34 years.

B.'s books are usually available in German, English and Italian, but otherwise the story is patchy. *Homo necans* was translated into Croatian but not French. *Ancient Mystery Cults* was translated into French, twice (*Les Cultes à mystères dans l'antiquité*, 1992 and 2003): the first translation seems to have been unsatisfactory. This work is the most widely translated, presumably because of the perceived saleability of 'Mysteries'. Second editions rarely make it into English: thus *Greek Religion* has stood still since 1985 (2nd German edition 2011) and the English *Homo Necans* since 1983 (2nd German edition, 1997).

French speakers hitherto have had only *Ancient Mystery Cults* and *Wilder Ursprung* (*Sauvages origines*, 1998), a random selection.

Bonnechère (pp. 7–8) attributes the overlooking of *Griechische Religion* to a French scholarly focus, instead, on the work of the so-called Paris school (Vernant, Vidal-Naquet, Detienne). These are things about which one may speculate, but it is certainly striking, given his towering authority in Germany and the Anglo-Saxon world by then, to read in a 2003 review of *Les cultes à mystères* (<http://www.parutions.com/pages/1-4-4-3826.html>) that ‘W. Burkert est un professeur suisse déjà bien connu des spécialistes pour ses études sur la religion grecque’.

The translator of this French edition, P. Bonnechère, is a well-established scholar of Greek religion, with particular interests in divination, gardens and sacrifice, whose *magnum opus* to date is the definitive study *Le sacrifice humain en Grèce ancienne* (1994). He has worked with all the previous translations and with the manuscript of the second German edition as it stood at the end of 2009, and has been supported particularly by Bernabé and Bremmer. Earlier translations had indeed been expert – one thinks of Arrigoni’s 2003 Italian edition and Bernabé’s Spanish of 2007. Bonnechère’s is wholly reliable, confident and indeed elegant.

Repeated translations of *Griechische Religion* have led to a patchy updating of the original, which is well analysed by A. Herda in his Bryn Mawr review of the second German edition (<http://bmcr.brynmawr.edu/2012/2012-02-21.html>). Bonnechère has addressed this problem with a particularly ambitious update of the bibliography, broadening its scope, and in the process creating a formidable bibliographic resource. The usability of this volume is enhanced by its high quality of production and the clear printing of footnotes, rather than the endnotes of the English edition. The index is much fuller too. This volume is an enviable asset for French students of Greek religion, and they can now set alongside it J. Bremmer, *La religion grecque* (2012).

As for the content, that remains pure B., almost unchanged, steering the steady path that has allowed his work its monumentality. The Near East has engaged him, rather than the Indo-European comparativism and Indology of Dumézil (oddly placed among the structuralists at p. 336, Engl. p. 217; in his own right at p. 35, Engl. p. 18) and the post-Dumézilians. There remains little on J.-P. Vernant and P. Vidal-Naquet (pp. 17, 296–7; Engl. pp. 3, 217–18): their thought and method remain alien to the ‘deutsch-klassisch-humanistische Sicht’ that B. inherited from Walter Otto and Karl Reinhardt (2nd German edition, Vorwort). It is a clear and consistent view. The work of synthesis is for another generation.

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MEI (O.) *Cirene e la ceramica laconica*. (Monografie di Archeologia Libica 35.) Pp. 136, figs, pls. Rome: L’Erma di Bretschneider, 2013. Paper, €105. ISBN: 978-88-913-0695-1.

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The core of this volume is a catalogue of some 77 entries of unpublished Laconian pottery from recent excavations at Cyrene, chosen for reasons that are not divulged, embedded in a fuller statistical analysis of all accessible Laconian from the site, and a useful overview of that