Exegetical Dictionary of the New Testament. Edited by Horst Balz and Gerhard Schneider. Translated by Virgil P. Howard, James W. Thompson, John W. Medendorp and Douglas W. Stott. 3 vols. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1990–93. German original: *Exegetisches Wörterbuch zum Neuen Testament* (1980–83). Pp. xxiv + 463; xxiv + 555; xxiv + 566 (including English-Greek index), $39.95; $49.99; $49.99.*

This originally German work appears to have found a largely positive reception in North America. There are a number of features that make the *EDNT* more user-friendly than the work it may be used to supplement and update, i.e., the *TDNT*. (1) The at-times-excessive emphasis on diachronic components of word meaning has been corrected. The *EDNT* generally focuses on the meaning of a given term in the various corpora of the NT, referring to extra-Biblical usage only where it is judged relevant for the word's use in the NT. (2) The length of the entries is more appropriate for an initial survey of the occurrences of an expression in the NT than the essays contained in the *TDNT,* whose length is often prohibitive. (3) From a practical standpoint the *EDNT* is in many ways the ideal tool for the busy, at least mildly Greek-literate pastor or the conscientious exegete. It puts a wealth of helpful information, including bibliographical information for further study, at his or her fingertips that should greatly increase the quality of sermons and individual and group Bible study. (4) The volumes are well translated and published.

While the practical benefits of this new reference work are substantial, the purist may still register the following cautions. To begin with, what exactly is an "exegetical dictionary"? Apparently this designation refers to a hybrid between a lexicon and a theological dictionary. The term "dictionary" may simply indicate that entries are organized alphabetically. Usually the expression is also taken to denote a certain objectivity and general validity that elevates the work over specific interpretive issues. Doubtless, however, an "exegetical dictionary" involves linguistic, historical, theological and exegetical judgments that are to a significant extent dependent on a given writer's viewpoints on any number of issues. This leads to the second concern. The authors claim that the *EDNT* considers recent developments in linguistics without presupposing anyone theory. This very issue, of course, led to the need for Kittel's *TDNT* to be corrected, if not replaced, in the light of Barr's critique in *Semantics of Biblical Language* (1961). In view of the seriousness of the concerns raised by Barr and others, the above-quoted assurance by the authors of the *EDNT* appears unduly glib. Exactly how were recent linguistic viewpoints considered? And which ones? A foreword of the scope found in the *Greek-English Lexicon* by Louw and Nida would be necessary to lay out the procedure. Still, there seems to be an occasional intermingling of the study of words and concepts. The meaning of individual words at times blends with connotations derived from their use in their respective contexts to the extent that denotation and connotation are not adequately distinguished. Overall, one gets the impression that, despite assurances to the contrary, recent linguistic insights have not been faced in their full consequences so that the *EDNT* rises only partially above the limitations of its predecessors.

A case in point is the article on *apostellō* ("send"). The *TDNT* features an essay by K-H. Rengstorf that is divided into three sections, tracing the term in secular Greek (2 pp.), the LXX (OT) and Judaism (3 pp.), and the NT (3 pp.). The entire discussion is based on the author's conviction that *apostellō* differs semantically from another word, *pempō,* which also means "send." Rengstorf attempts to document this thesis in his

survey of ancient literature. Where there appears to be no difference in the usage of these two words, such as in Josephus or Luke/Acts, the author claims that these authors were unaware of the general usage of these terms in their day. But how credible is it to charge a writer such as Luke, who displays a significant degree of literary sophistication in his writings, with linguistic incompetence in his use of a term that occurs twenty-six times (not counting compounds) in his writings? This seems to be a rather desperate expedient to be able to maintain the validity of one's own general theory. Overall, one is left with the impression that the essay prejudges the result of contextual exegesis of NT passages where *apostellō* is found, in at least two ways: (1) By giving preeminence to diachronic analysis, the meaning of words in earlier centuries appears to be presupposed in later writings, including the NT. (2) Not word meanings, but entire Biblical concepts, are the real subject of study.

Expectantly one turns to the *EDNT* to see whether or not and, if so, how these deficiencies have been remedied. Instead of the eight pages of the *TDNT* article, the equivalent entry in the *EDNT* covers only one page. Rather than proceeding diachronically, the author of the *EDNT* essays begins immediately with a survey of the term's occurrences in the NT. This brief inventory is followed by a discussion of the meaning and usage of *apostellō*. We are informed that "the vb. means *send forth, send out."* The author then proceeds to substantiate this assertion in this rather lengthy phrase: "When it is not used to circumscribe the successful completion of a messenger's journey (for the purpose of delivering an object or a piece of information) but is sharpened to focus on the purpose and goal of the event in question and hence on the sending forth and completion of the assignment, the vb. assumes the meaning of *commission.*" At the end of this section, almost as a throwaway remark, it is noted that "the meaning of ἀποστέλλω in the NT is determined by its connection, mediated by the LXX, with Heb. *šālah* as well as with the understanding found there of 'send' and 'let oneself be represented.' " Parts 3–4 provide discussions of the usage of *apostellō* in the synoptic gospels and John. The latter part presents a sketch of the author's (J.-A. Bühner) own thesis that John developed pre-Johannine confessional traditions (such as Acts 3:20, 26; Rom 8:3; Gal 4:4) under the influence of Jewish teaching about sending into the basis for Christological legitimation. *Apostellō* in John, according to Bühner, thus "denotes commissioning and authorization from God."

The *EDNT* article is indeed an improvement over the essay in the *TDNT* in its more synchronic orientation (i.e. its focus on the NT usage). Here, however, the problem of an "exegetical dictionary" surfaces. What is said to be part of a term's meaning is in fact provided by the respective contexts in which the term occurs. For example *apostellō*, by itself, in John hardly "denotes commissioning and authorization *from God"* (cf. e.g. 1:19 where priests and Levites are sent by the Jews from Jerusalem and where *apostellō* is used). This information is rather supplied by words such as *ho patēr* used in conjunction with *apostellō*. The essay thus turns out to be a linguistically not so sophisticated study of the various NT passages where the term under consideration occurs, coupled with an effort to provide larger conceptual categories that accommodate the various uses. Moreover it should be noted that the data allow for other reconstructions than the one given by the author. This, however, is not noted, thus giving the impression that the analysis set forth in the essay is the only possible reading of the evidence. Diachronic connections, likewise, are merely asserted without adequate discussion. In

this regard the *EDNT* does not replace but merely supplements the *TDNT*.

The individual entries are of course of different quality, depending on the respective author. As other reviewers have already noted (e.g. D. L. Bock, *BSac* 150 [1993] 111–112), some individual contributors adopt an unduly negative stance toward the historicity of usage. The teachings of Jesus and the role of the evangelists are occasionally viewed disjunctively, with the result that the contribution of the latter is overemphasized while the part of the former is diminished. It should also be noted that North American readers are supplied with the translation of a work already over ten years old (the bibliographies to vols. 2 and 3 are updated until 1990). In the light of the rapid developments in the discipline, this constitutes a time lag that should at least be acknowledged. Finally, the effort to market this work as an international effort is surprising, not to say inaccurate, since the vast majority of the contributors are German. Apart from the ethical implications of this practice, one may consider the lack of collaborators from Anglo-American and third-world scholars a limitation of the work's scope, assuming that at least some helpful NT scholarship is done by non-Germans.

Overall, these volumes will serve the pragmatician well. Purists, on the other hand, may be left longing for a linguistically more sophisticated and methodologically more rigorous alternative to Kittel's dinosaur achievement.

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