

Journal for the Study of the New Testament 28.5 (2006)
Booklist 1. New Testament General

Neues Testament und Antike Kultur. I. Prolegomena, Quellen, Geschichte
Kurt Erlemann et al., eds.
Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener, 2005, 3-7887-2036-0, €29.90, viii + 268 pb

The four-volume interdisciplinary series that this book begins is a major new resource for helping students and scholars into study of the NT in its context. An international team of over 80 specialists has put together a collection of introductory articles that are wide-ranging in scope and methodology. This volume covers everything from a list of coinage in circulation in early Roman Palestine (Ruprecht Ziegler) to discussion of modern and ancient concepts of culture (Klaus Neumann and Wolfgang Stegemann). The articles are fairly short (typically about five pages). Each begins with a list of relevant NT texts and ends with a bibliography (of works mainly in German or English). Ancient texts are not quoted at length but, where they are quoted at all, this is in German translation.

This volume has four main sections. First, a general section has articles on culture, religion, politics, philosophy, society and ritual. It would have been good to include some even more general discussion on what it means to relate the NT to its context. However, this would really have required articles from scholars with competing views, which would have disrupted the generally irenic tone of this project. The next section considers sources and their influence on the NT. General articles on intertextuality, pseudonymity and allegory etc. are followed by sets of articles on various types of Jewish literature, non-Jewish literature and non-literary sources. I was surprised by the absence of an article on the Dead Sea Scrolls—a page in the article on Essenes in vol. 3 seems very insufficient. The third section covers historical context, with 17 articles, organized mainly on a geographical basis, including several by John Barclay (in German, as are all the articles) on diaspora communities in various locations. The final section looks at various aspects of first-century law.

Peter Oakes

Neues Testament und Antike Kultur. II. Familie, Gesellschaft, Wirtschaft
Kurt Erlemann et al., eds.
Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener, 2005, 3-7887-2037-9, €29.90, ix + 263 pb

Volume 2 of *NTAK* begins, interestingly and helpfully, with an article by Ulrich Volp on the ritual aspect of first-century life. This is articulated in various contexts. This is a useful way in to a collection of articles on social and economic subjects that NT students can easily see in modern, anachronistic terms.

There is then one long main section followed by four short ones. The section on people and society is subdivided. 'Daily life in house and family' has nine articles, including one on sexuality. Further subsections cover phases of life, difficulties, friendship and associations, social strata, the village (four articles) and the town. This last section is elaborated into articles on particular towns and cities, often by key authorities such as Peter Lampe (Rome) and Peter Pilhofer (Philippi). The remaining sections of the book cover economy, technical subjects such as architecture and medicine, education (including book production) and art and music. As with vol. 1, the drawbacks of the relative brevity of the articles are outweighed by the advantage of having such a breadth of topics and expertise in one place.

Peter Oakes

Neues Testament und Antike Kultur. III. Weltauffassung, Kult, Ethos
Kurt Erlemann et al., eds.
Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener, 2005, 3-7887-2038-7, €29.90, viii + 253 pb

The substantive content of *NTAK* is brought to completion by a volume with a philosophical and religious focus. Volume 4 is due to comprise pictures, charts, maps and indexes. The organizing principle of vol. 3 is to look at world-views and then praxis. There are two sections on world-views, one relating to various trends and groups, the other to themes.

The structure that this produces is actually quite curious. The 'trends and groups' section has a long article on varieties of philosophy, a short one on mystery cults, eight on movements in Palestine, one on Asia Minor and three on gnosticism. A few of the gaps in this strange picture of the first-century world are plugged in the praxis section, but the survey of 'trends and groups' remains a very fragmentary one if one's interest is, for example, in NT texts composed in Greece. 'Themes' covers cosmology, deity, time, the person, death and resurrection, miracle and magic (too briefly), oracles, the state. 'Praxis in cult and ethics' looks at ethics, temple-cult in Jerusalem and elsewhere, synagogues, imperial cult, prayer, piety, mysticism, numerology, engagement with people of different religious views. Again, whatever criticisms one might have, this whole series is a basic resource for NT study.

Peter Oakes

The New Interpreters Bible Index
Leander E. Keck, et al., eds.
Nashville: Abingdon, 2004, 0-687-03916-9, \$40.00, £22.99, viii + 520 hb

Why buy an index volume when you can do a computer-search of the CD version of a commentary series? The editors of this volume raise that question themselves and