some time before the common era. One cannot find a comparable index at present in any computer program. Since this Septuagint usage shaped some, at least, of the Greek of New Testament writers, New Testament lexical research will turn to this list frequently. Therefore, every owner of Hatch and Redpath will want to add this tool to their philological resources. (Baker has also republished the Hatch-Redpath Concordance to the Septuagint in an edition that includes Muraoka's Index (also 1998, $125.00).

For a full explanation of the index, see Muraoka's article “A New Index to Hatch and Redpath” in Ephemerides Theologicae Lovanienses 73 (1997) 257–76. (I owe this reference to David Aiken, Editor of Academic and Reference Books at Baker Books.)

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The publication of these books in paperback editions is a welcome addition to recent, affordable historical Jesus studies. In terms of content and methodology, the volumes under review are rather pointedly at odds with one another.

Adopting the format of a study Bible, The Five Gospels (orig. pub.: Macmillan, 1993) includes an introduction, a new translation of the NT Gospels and the Gospel of Thomas, and thought-provoking notes on numerous issues and passages. The book’s purpose is a noble one: to make available to the general public the findings of this academic society. The “Scholars Version” translation (SV) is touted as “authorized by scholars” and the only major English translation that “is free of ecclesiastical and religious control” (xviii). As is well known, the words attributed to Jesus in these five Gospels are printed in one of four colors (red, pink, gray, or black), depending on gradations of authenticity as designated by voting members of the Jesus Seminar.

One issue critical to the Jesus Seminar’s methodology surrounds the claim that the second-century Gospel of Thomas, which contains neither eschatological teaching nor passion narrative, not only existed in an earlier form that was contemporary with or earlier than the NT Gospels, but also offers the least theologically biased presentation of Jesus’ teaching. These scholars thus begin with the sometimes incoherent aphoristic wisdom sayings of Thomas, which are judged to be roughly contemporary with “Q” (ca. 50-60 C.E.) and then trace the evolution of attributions to Jesus in Mark and the other NT Gospels. In my view, neither The Five Gospels nor the individual members of the Jesus Seminar has produced a convincing argument for the historical priority of Thomas. On this point readers are referred to representative arguments for (Stephen J. Patterson, The Gospel of Thomas and Jesus, Sonoma, CA: Polebridge, 1993) and against (Christopher N. Tuckett, “Thomas and the Synoptics,” Novum Testamentum 30 [1988] 132-57) the early date and independence of Thomas vis-à-vis the Synoptic Gospels.

In The Real Jesus, Johnson, a respected NT scholar who teaches at Emory University in Atlanta, is unreserved in his colorful attack on the Jesus Seminar’s methodology and intentions. Like a newspaper reporter, he chronicles how these scholars waged a media campaign to popularize their approach to the Gospels in opposition to the religious right. Particularly valuable for nonspecialists is Johnson’s review of recent studies of the historical Jesus. Perhaps ironically, all but one of the seven authors he critiques on pp. 29–56 also published with HarperCollins! Questioning the importance of the historical Jesus problem for the church, Johnson emphasizes instead that personal encounters with the living Lord have inspired people to faith through the centuries. He thus calls Christian scholars not to follow the ways of the secular academy. To this paperback edition Johnson adds a preface in which he reflects on the historical Jesus debate since his book was first pub-
lished in 1996 and reiterates that for him the primary issue concerns "the limits of historical reconstruction, and its appropriateness or adequacy for the grounding of Christian faith" (p. x; cf. "The Limitations of History," 81–104).

Concerning Johnson’s recommendations, one can wonder whether his call for the separation of church and critical scholarship is either possible or desirable, for traditional questions arising from the different portraits of Jesus in the NT and other early Christian writings still require an explanation. Parts of The Real Jesus might be more useful as an introduction to a comprehensive study of the primary sources. Since Johnson has not (yet?) offered this, we are left wondering how to proceed since neither he nor the Jesus Seminar offers an adequate solution.

In spite of their shortcomings, both volumes under review are recommended to pastors and laypersons who are interested in both perennial issues and debates of recent years. I would consider using Johnson’s book to introduce the historical Jesus problem to undergraduates. More appropriate on the graduate level are studies by individual Fellows of the Jesus Seminar (e.g. R. W. Funk and J. D. Crossan) who are listed on pp. 533–37 of that volume.

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This is a helpful collection of thirteen previously published articles and a presumably original concluding one by Horsley, encompassing both Christian sources and general Roman socio-political issues relevant to our understanding of earliest Christianity. It will be informative for pastors and general readers with a solid background in New Testament history.

The editor notes that the collection attempts to take important steps forward in these areas: emperor cult, imperial patronage, and the political significance of Paul’s language and his activities.

Part 1, “The Gospel and Imperial Salvation,” with articles by P. A. Brunt, Dieter Georgi, S. R. F. Price, and Paul Zanker, shows that, contrary to traditional assessment by New Testament critics, imperial cult and political power were inseparable, and that the influence of the imperial cult was much more pervasive than has been thought.

Part 2, “ Patronage, Priesthoods, and Power,” with articles by P. Garnsey and R. Saller, John K. Chow, and Richard Gordon, shows that the imperial patronage system was the foundation of the spread and maintenance of Roman power. This was already true by Paul’s day in cities of Greece and Asia Minor like Corinth, Ephesus, and Philippi.

Part 3, “Paul’s Counter-Imperial Gospel,” with articles by Dieter Georgi, Helmut Koester, and Neil Elliott, presents the new image of Paul in recent scholarship, not as the anti-Jewish Christian convert, but as the messianic Jewish preacher who turns the language of salvation, already familiar from the imperial cult, into a message of salvation by the God of Israel.

Part 4, “Building an Alternative Society,” with articles by Karl P. Donfried, Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza, and Richard A. Horsley, shows that both Judaism and Christianity were in a formative period in the middle of the first century, and that Paul saw his strategies of community formation as “building an international alternative society” (8).

The selection of articles is necessarily somewhat eclectic and difficult to unite, but Horsley’s general and chapter introductions do that effectively. This is a good way of updating on these aspects of recent Pauline scholarship.

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