

BOOK REVIEWS

Index to the Arndt and Gingrich Greek Lexicon, by John R. Alsop, ed.
Santa Ana, Calif.: Wycliffe Bible Translators, Inc., 1964; pp. xiii, 489.

A new working aid for use by translators who can use English language materials with facility, has recently made its appearance under the above title. It will be referred to by the reviewer simply as 'the Index'. A team of Wycliffe Bible Translator workers combined experience, skill and resources to produce this significant work with the aid of electronic computer processing. It intends to be a practical time saver for the field translator at the point of lexicon use, by making it possible to increase the speed with which he can locate the meanings of words of the Greek New Testament in the Greek-English lexicon of Arndt and Gingrich.

Since the Index is keyed to a particular lexicon, it may be useful to comment upon it. The Arndt and Gingrich Greek Lexicon (full title: *A Greek-English Lexicon of the Greek New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*) is the translation into English, with some revision and expansion, of the fourth edition (1952) of Walter Bauer's Greek-German Lexicon. The German editions had for long been the standard on the Continent and among New Testament scholars generally. The work of making this lexicon available in English was done by the very competent Lutheran scholars, Dr W. F. Arndt and Dr F. W. Gingrich (whence the popular short designation for it), with the aid of a number of other eminent colleagues. It was published in 1957 as a joint undertaking of the University of Chicago Press and the Cambridge University Press.

Two features in particular distinguish this lexicon (to be referred to hereafter as A-G). First, it contains the vocabulary of the so-called 'Apostolic Fathers' in addition to that of the New Testament. Since some of these writings were contemporary with the later books of the New Testament canon, they provide valuable materials for comparing the then current meanings of words which they used in common with the New Testament authors.

Second, A-G is not only comprehensive in its treatment of the word-usages of the New Testament and other early Christian literature, it is also a fairly complete guide to significant research on the meanings of the terms of this vocabulary. It copiously cites specialist literature, of international scope, on these matters. Not only are significant publications of the early papyri and citations from other sources of antiquity judiciously included, but so are important research studies from the latter part of the past century right up to within a year or so of the time when the editors concluded their work and committed it to publication. For these reasons particularly, A-G has rapidly replaced other lexicons in general use. The editor of the Index suggests that A-G be one of the first volumes used by Bible translators when beginning the exegesis of a passage (Introduction, p. v).

A few highlights are noted here as a background for subsequent comments:

(1) Entries are listed in textual order, by books, chapters and verses of the New Testament;

(2) Greek words are represented in transliteration, and the placement of entries within a given verse follows the *Greek* alphabetical order rather than in normal verse order;

(3) The meaning which is associated with a term for any given context is located in A–G by a citation system which identifies the quarter of the page on which it appears. Thus the entry at Matt. 7: 23 (GINWSKW 7 ACKNOWLEDGE 160 D) means: the meaning which is conveyed by that form of *γινώσκω* which appears in Matt. 7: 23 is to be located in A–G on p. 160, in the fourth (D) quarter of the page (lower right column), and in section 7 of the article on this word;

(4) Regardless of the actual text form, each Greek word is represented in the Index by its conventional lexicon, or vocabulary, form.

The Index is intended to be a time saver for the translator whether or not he is a proficient student of Greek (Introduction, p. v). In fact, the time-saving aspect of the design is the primary *raison d'être* of this work. The importance of eliminating the time waste involved in word-searching in an unabridged lexicon cannot, in truth, be minimized. Most of us have had frustrating experiences in this regard at one time or another. When a student who has had an adequate grounding in basic Greek grammar is given suitable vocabulary helps he can often double the amount of text which he can translate independently and intelligently in a given time. It is important to give a student such aids so that he can gain more experience in handling the language which he is trying to learn. How much more important is it that a Bible translator be given similar time-saving help.

The Index should help to save time at several points. The first is that of locating those infrequently-occurring words whose meanings are discussed in very brief articles. As anyone who has ever used a Greek lexicon knows, these can often be missed in a hurried search, resulting in loss of time spent in backing up and casting around to find them. The bold type entries in A–G tend to minimize this difficulty; but students, at least, have been observed missing them. The Index points the searcher to one of the four quarters of a given page and assures him that he will find his entry when he looks there.

It should give similar help with finding polysyllabic words which one might fail to alphabetize properly. Two very common failures of this type stem (1) from thinking wrong sound-symbol correlations (as *kappa* for *chi*, which English-speaking students tend to pronounce alike); or (2) from mental metathesis of letters in the word. One might try to find *κατέρχομαι* shortly after *κατεργάζομαι* for example; or he might miss *ἐργάζομαι* because thinking—and looking for—*ἐγράφομαι*. Use of the Index should tend to make such mistakes very unlikely.

Perhaps the greatest usefulness of the Index as a time saver will appear in connection with long articles which discuss frequently-used terms having

multiple meanings. In these it locates for the worker immediately that meaning which seems best to suit the context under study. When one considers that articles on some entries may run from two or more columns to two or more pages in A-G, the advantage of using the Index appears in proper perspective. To use the example cited above: the meaning for *γινώσκω* (Index, GINWSKW) in Matt. 7: 23 to which the user is directed is 'acknowledge, recognize as that which one is or claims to be' (A-G, p. 160, sec. 7). Here, the first New Testament example of this meaning is Matt. 7: 23, with a good deal of supporting evidence from examples found elsewhere in the New Testament and other literature of the times. The translator has thus been directed immediately to that meaning which, in scholarly opinion, was most likely to have been intended by the author in that context.

Of course, the translator is not relieved of the responsibility of studying in detail the other usages of the word in New Testament times and by the particular author whose work he is translating; nor do the producers of the Index suggest that it is intended to relieve him of this duty. He should do the study necessary to his making a responsible personal judgement as to how he will translate the term in its context; but this study does not have to be undertaken afresh every time he encounters the same term. After preliminary study of this sort, undertaken perhaps upon his first encounter with a given term, the Index can still save time by locating for him immediately the (probably correct) contextual meaning for it which he needs upon subsequent occurrences.

As Alsop implies in the Introduction, translation is not just a mechanical process of matching a given term from the New Testament with a term of apparently comparable lexical meaning in the receptor language. Also to be taken into account are: (1) the additional grammatical ideas added by the inflectional features of the term or by special features of the syntax; (2) whether it is being used in a special idiom rather than in a relatively straightforward way; and (3) the nature of the particular context in which the term occurs. In short, the translator must reflect upon the total meaning—including associations of a psycho-social and general cultural nature together with any possible special religious or theological implications—which the New Testament writer intended to convey to his original audience by this word and by the phrase in which it is found. He next has to consider how this total meaning can best be expressed by the linguistic resources of the receptor language. The Index is intended to eliminate the time waste involved in finding the term in the lexicon, to enable the translator to begin working sooner on this aspect of the task, thus giving him more time per word for the more significant activity of interpreting the passage at hand and of finding the best way to render it in the receptor language.

Does the Index actually accomplish its purpose? A few tests indicate that it does. The editor reports a preliminary experiment in which use of the Index enabled a capable Greek student to cut his word-search time to less than half that consumed without the Index (Introduction, p. v). Students who tested the use of the Index for this reviewer reported that it cut down their word-search time by a significant degree, especially in connection with words having multiple meanings. Later in his Introduction, the editor

reports (p. xi) that an experienced translator was helped by use of the Index to *decrease* the percentage of time spent in word-hunting and to *increase* the time actually given to reflection upon how to translate each term: the averages of time spent in each of these activities previously without using the Index were reversed with its use.

It would seem that, for those whose command of New Testament Greek is limited, regular use of the Index could, theoretically, stimulate them to increase their ability to handle the Greek as part of the translation task. Whether it does so must be tested by actual use in the field, of course; yet it is difficult to believe that it would provide such stimulus for none. For it continually confronts the worker with the Greek terms by way of reference to A-G. The worker who has had any orientation in Greek grammar at all must surely be led to review the Greek verb system as an aid to distinguishing voice forms, for instance, when he is frequently reminded by the lexicon that a particular verb has middle voice usages different from those of the active voice. Or he will surely want to refresh his ability to distinguish between the various tenses, when he is made aware by the lexicon that the actual text form of the verb he is considering is, say, aorist rather than present; or when he notices that an aorist form, for instance, receives different (English) translations in different contexts. Even after the translator has located his word in the lexicon and determined a basic meaning for it in context, does he not still have to deal with its grammatical form before his task is complete? It would seem that it is a part of the translator's responsibility to become as informed in all such matters as possible, and that the use of the Index with A-G would be a constant reminder of this aspect of his work.

The fact that the entries in the Index are in transliteration should prove no serious hindrance to its rapid use. With two main exceptions, the transliteration schema conforms to that which is conventional in grammars of Greek for use by English-speaking students. The exceptions are: (1) the vowel *ēta* is represented by the numeral 8 whose name, 'eight', has the vowel sound usually associated with the Greek (*ēta*). (2) The vowel *ω* (*ōmega*) is represented by W, a rough visual association being made between the two symbols. It was a clever solution by which these Greek letters could be distinctively represented in transliteration without the use of diacritic marks, which are normally employed.

Even the fact that within a given verse the entries follow the *Greek* alphabetical order rather than their word order in the verse is relatively easy to become accustomed to. One must, however, think the Greek alphabetic order which the transliteration represents, e.g. in looking for a word which begins with *χ* (*chi*, transliterated CH) one looks for it after words beginning with S, T, U (or HU), and PH (for *φ phi*), and not after words beginning with B. The students who used the Index reported having little difficulty with this schema.

In spite of a generally favourable appraisal which can be ungrudgingly given this hopeful aid to translators, it has a few omissions and weaknesses which need attention. One of the students who used it commented on his failure to find needed words on occasions. A personal survey made in two

chapters of Hebrews and two of 2 Peter turned up several such omissions. Four important omissions occurred in a single verse (Heb. 12: 3), and there were several scattered ones. These cannot be accounted for by the plan of entries, in which words which occur frequently within one or several adjacent verses are entered only at the first occurrence. Further proof-reading will undoubtedly reveal more of these which, one assumes, can be readily cared for in another printing.

Somewhat more disturbing is that no definite plan for the inclusion or omission of the common particles (especially the more common prepositions and *hina*) seems obvious. The entries of *hina* through Hebrews and 2 Peter, which were checked in their entirety with the help of the Moulton-Geden concordance, seem to be especially sporadic. Nevertheless, a reasonable plan of entries should be worked out and described in the Introduction for the guidance of users.

One student (in second year Greek studies) commented that it would be helpful if such forms as 2nd aorists were listed in the Index, when this is the actual text form, rather than the conventional lexicon form. The reviewer shares this viewpoint concerning the manner of listing verbs which, in the text, appear in suppletive or radically reductive aorist and perfect (not to mention future) tense forms. A fairly good student can forget that *helomenos* (Heb. 11: 25) is the participle of *heilomēn* which, in turn, is the deponent suppletive 2nd aorist for *haireō* (Index, HAIREW). One less competent may even experience some difficulties with *eklelēsthe*, being more inclined to relate it first to *eklaleō* rather than to *eklanthanomai*, of which it is a perfect tense form (Heb. 12: 5). Examples could be multiplied.

This objection is partially anticipated in the Introduction, where a suggestion as to how to obviate it appears (p. xi). Yet, the method suggested for overcoming the initial confusion seems to reintroduce a time-wasting procedure into the Index which defeats its purpose at such points. The actual working practice of translators may prove otherwise; but to us it seems that for those who wish to match text form with lexicon form as rapidly as possible, it would save time and confusion for them if the Index gave help with such types of verb. Since A-G gives a synopsis of the simplex of the irregular verbs, forms such as the above could be entered with an immediate reference to their lexicon representatives. Thus the entry on p. 427 at Heb. 11: 25 would appear as follows: HEILOM8N: HAIREW 2 CHOOSE 23 C. A similar system could be worked out for handling similar problems with compound verbs.

In spite of the foregoing defects, which can be corrected (and are not fatal in any case), the Index has considerable potential for usefulness. It will undoubtedly be much used by colleagues of its producers in the Wycliffe Translators group. It deserves to be received and used with gratitude by the much wider circle of those who are seeking to give God's Word to the nations in this day.

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