

On indexing *The heritage of North Cyprus*: a personal approach

Rosamond Hanworth

An account of how and why the author set about indexing a 'popular' work on a country's history and archaeology.

The nature of the book

It is a good idea when beginning to write something to decide who is likely to read it. My recent book on the cultural heritage of North Cyprus has two aims: first it is a 'popular' and thus a descriptive and synthesizing work designed for a general intelligent readership, either visitors to the Turkish Republic of North Cyprus or local residents.¹ The latter are mainly Turkish Cypriots; but there is a strong, though small, stratum of Britons and other settlers. Straight away it emerges that there can be difficulties in a multilingual situation and that presentation needs to be clear and simple, without jargon. The second, and perhaps concealed, objective has been to address the country's would-be scholars who, because of a politically imposed intellectual embargo, do not have ready access to the vast literature which exists regarding their island's heritage.² For this reason, special attention was given to the bibliography, to a glossary of place names, to an extended list of contents, and above all, to the index.

The book was published by the Ministry of Tourism; and that introduced two constraints: lack of funds owing to a tight budget, and shortage of personnel with a sufficient command of English to undertake the work of indexing. Thus the work fell to the author. I was not sorry to have the opportunity to present the evidence again in a logical manner, one which needed to be of practical use to the reader. A Turkish colleague said to me 'When I am assessing the value of a book I start by looking at the index'. That was greatly encouraging.

The shape of the index

Although I have had quite a lot of editing experience, I had not done an index and needed to consult works of reference. Because it was high summer when the page proofs arrived, the libraries which I use were closed for the vacation. I studied the indexes of all the works most familiar to me. Sir George Hill's four-volume history of Cyprus is a joy,³ one can browse in it by the hour. Amongst more recent publications I was much impressed by N. K. Sandars's *The Sea*

Peoples.⁴ Cherry Lavell, a Council Member of the Society of Indexers and editor of the archaeological newsletter *Trial Trench*,⁵ proved a tower of strength, supplying me with photocopies of articles and with advice, and the Society of Antiquaries produced R. F. Hunnisett's *Indexing for editors*.⁶ Even though there was more material there than I needed, it proved invaluable, particularly on persons, subjects and places.

Historically, Greek place names have taken precedence over Turkish ones; some Frankish and Venetian elements survive as well. Up to 1974 names were published on maps in Greek, Turkish and English. In recent archaeological writing there has been a convention to express them as a locality followed by the site name, for example Ayios Epiktitos/Vrysi. To that it now becomes necessary to add the current Turkish place name, even though the entry in the index appears cumbersome: Ayios Epiktitos/Vrysi—Çatalköy. A check in the glossary will give the meaning of the Turkish names. These deserve to be studied; some date back to the 16th century, many are descriptive of the physical geography, some commemorate the home towns of settlers. When indexing places outside the island, the country of origin has been included in brackets, for example Salamis (Greece), not to be confused with Salamis in Cyprus which for a time was known as Constantia.

There are several foreign words in current use, such as *Evkaf*, or *mufti*, or *Haute Cour*. These were expressed in italics and so also were the titles of literary works, the *Iliad*, *Twelfth Night*, *Don Quixote*, which were entered under their authors' names. It was necessary to use some conventional abbreviations and these were listed in the introductory paragraph, for example B. British, Byz. Byzantine, H. R. Holy Roman and so forth. Personal names were not difficult: the text already explained that Frankish names, which were spelt in a variety of ways in the Middle Ages, have been standardized to the most usual form. Acronyms were spelt out—not everyone would readily know that AKEL meant the local communist party or UNFICYP United Nations Forces in Cyprus. Sub-entries were not run on, again to make it easier for the

non-specialist or foreign reader. The book has 159 illustrations; these were listed, but not indexed.

costume:

- at baptism, 77
- boots (high), 130
- of British Consul, 148
- cloaks, 58, 99, 107
- coats of mail, 62(n6)
- coins sewn onto, 149
- described by Herodotus, 53
- disguise, 100, 112
- Egyptian, 51
- Frankish, 99
- on idols, 16, 38
- for Jews, 124
- pins, 17
- purple woolen, 71(n13)
- of royal family, 104
- of Shakespeare's *Olivia*, 115(n22)
- shirts, sewn by Queen Heloise, 103
- shoemakers, 130
- turbans, 17, 55(n28), 138
- Turkish national, 148
- wealth displayed in, 60, 99

see also textiles

- Cotovicus, Ioannes (Johann van Kootwyck), 124
- cotton wool, 124
- Coudoin (France), 83(n9)
- Council of Europe, 173
- crafts & craftsmen, 16, 58, 101, 131, 148
 - carpenters, carpentry, 47, 131, 141, 148
 - embroidery & lace, 17, 124, 148
 - inlay, 34, 48, 148
 - metalwork, 47, 130, 148
 - monks as, 93
 - native, 47, 58, 148
 - potters, 14, 17, 36, 47, 145
 - possession of, in Istanbul, 131
 - shoe & bootmakers, 130
 - settled in Cyprus by Turks, 131
 - spinning & weaving, 16, 58, 67, 101, 130, 148
 - stone knapping, 4, 13-14, 16
 - stonemasons 101, 105-6, 131
 - tailors, 131, 148
 - tanners, 131
 - woodwork, 14, 34, 47, 141, 148

see also arts, textiles

Organizing the task

Cherry Lavell, in asking me to write this piece, suggested I should explain 'what I went through'. I think my experience can be recorded under the headings of *How*, and *When*. First, the question of how I organized the task. For a one-off exercise, I did not feel like investing in yet another set of index cards. Instead, a chapter's topics were written down, one after another as they occurred in the text, on to a series of sheets of A4 ruled paper. Next, all those entries whose key words started with the letters A, B, C and D were each colour-coded using four highlight pens, red green blue yellow in that order, so that they could then be typed in their right sequence onto a disk in my Amstrad word processor. When that had been done and the written entries on the A4 sheet struck

out, the next four groups, E-H, were colour-coded and the exercise was continued to the end of the alphabet. This process was repeated for each chapter in turn. Of course, the 'pasting' of each entry into its correct alphabetical position on the disk was done manually, but the colour-coding saved a considerable amount of work and, as the typed index grew, it was easy to slot a new entry into its right place. Entries needing cross-references were given a large X in red ink on the A4 sheet and were tackled there and then as the typing proceeded. Some topics, such as raids, would recur in different circumstances in other chapters; this meant that arbitrary decisions had sometimes to be made so as to confine cross-references to reasonable limits. Many keywords were related but not synonymous; so several entries acquired '*see also*' at the foot. For example, money had links with coins, economics, taxation, tribute; and law with constitutional reform. Altogether there were 2,128 entries and sub-entries: this relates to a text and footnotes of 14 chapters, one of which is a long epilogue. Together with the illustrations, the text takes up 180 pages. The mechanics of the process just described were simple in practice and relatively efficient, though to a professional they must appear primitive.

When—an unusual experience?

The question of when I was able to do the work is the next matter. Many archaeologists tend to find that their spouses grow resentful of the concentration they give to a time-consuming project, so one has to look for ways round this. Mine was to train myself to wake at 3 am. Letting myself out through the back door, I would go into my work-hut in the garden and, in silence and privacy, put in a couple of hours' work. This went on intermittently for about four or five weeks.

It was a strenuous, but certainly a good experience. Rather like Tom in his midnight garden,⁷ I could step into a magic world and witness without being seen the goings-on of all those personalities who gave the narrative its texture. That Edwardian girl (and embryo formidable scholar) Dorothea Bate, searching out fossil pigmy hippopotami and the Cyprus wren; the captive Byzantine princess, daughter of Isaac Comnenus, but whose name nobody can remember, being shipped off to France as a serving maid to Queen Berengaria; Chaucer, getting worked up about the murder of the unsatisfactory Lusignan king Peter I and writing his obituary in the *Monk's tale*; the saintly desert father, Hilarion, indulging in gentle irony at the curmudgeonly bishop, Epiphanius's table; the architect Jeffery, saving the ancient monument Bellapais Abbey from being knocked down to make road metalling—and dozens more. Then, the stint completed and dawn breaking, I could go back quietly to my pleasantly-sleeping husband.

References

1. *The heritage of North Cyprus: a description of the archaeological and historical remains to be found in the Turkish Republic of North Cyprus together with a brief history of the island.* Photography by George Pollock. Lefkoşa: Ministry of Communications, Public Works and Tourism. n.d. but 1992.
2. On this see Van der Werff, Y. *Council of Europe Information Report on the Cultural Heritage of North Cyprus*, Doc 6079, 6 July 1989, 15.
3. Hill, G. *A history of Cyprus* (4 vols). Cambridge, 1940–52.
4. Sanders, Nancy K. *The Sea Peoples*. London: Thames & Hudson Ltd, 1978.
5. *Trial Trench*, a newsletter for archaeological indexers. London: The Society of Indexers.
6. Hunnisett, R. F. *Indexing for editors*. British Records Association (Archives and the user 2). London: 1972.
7. Pearce, Philippa. *Tom's midnight garden*. Oxford University Press, 1958. Reprinted London: Puffin Books, 1978.

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THE INDEXER Thirty years ago

Technology to the fore

The spring, 1965 issue of *The Indexer*, Volume 4, No. 3, had forty pages of text, predominantly technological.

In 'A scientific examination of codification', F. R. Gurney claimed, 'in the scientific and engineering fields, the functions of indexing, classification and codification . . . have become almost synonymous. In engineering particularly, a new specialist is emerging . . . in one branch he is a Compiler; in another, a Compiling Engineer; in another, a Documentation Clerk. . . . The essence of his work is the documentation of all aspects of Science and Engineering'. Gurney examines several codification systems used in these fields—GRACE, NATO's, UNESCO's ISIC, KOMPASS, BRISCH, 3-letter—in over five pages of text with seven pages of illustrative figures.

G. J. Narayana and K. Ramaswami had conducted a study 'with special reference to subject indexing, examining indexes to individual volumes of 30 periodicals in the field of science and technology'. They noted 'the widely differing types of indexing practices in use today' for work on periodicals, and observed that a major contribution to the improving of indexes to periodicals had been the Society of Indexers' distribution of a leaflet, *Standards for indexes to learned and scientific periodicals* to editors and publishers (in 1960): 'the first and only effort directed exclusively at periodicals'. Two appendices of tables show details and pattern of subject indexing as followed by research, technical and trade, and educative periodicals. The authors conclude, 'A study of indexes to individual periodicals . . . yields valuable information on the anatomy and physiology of the periodical itself'.

Hard-nosed technology continues with R. C. Wright's 'Analytical index to documents on aerodynamics' (two pages). Two new systems, WADEX (word and author indexing) for retrospective search, and uniterms for co-ordinate indexing, are described.

More generally, Ronald Sturt surveys books on the heritage of libraries. The first pages of 'Comments and extracts' from press reviews mentioning indexes appear, including Anthony Powell's 'To publish it without an index was worse than a crime: it was a blunder. Even a phoney one would have made a nostalgic Dada gesture'.

The conditions of the Wheatley Medal are published, with further expansion (the award is to be limited to indexes compiled by individuals, not by corporate bodies); while as a postscript to the award for 1963 reported in the previous issue of the journal, a Highly Commended for that year is now also announced (Joyce Line for *Salaries in public services in England and Wales*).

Correspondence considers humour in indexing (rather ponderously) and indexing the peerage. G. Norman Knight is notable in providing fillers and short items. Eight more books are reviewed, chiefly on libraries.

H.K.B.

Can it be?

'The senior librarian . . . Joyce Babcock . . . was a woman without vision or curiosity; her distaste for books was equalled only by her dislike of people. . . . Helen often wondered at her choice of career. It had something to do with order, she decided; Joyce mistrusted books for their content, but liked the way they could be marshalled.'

—Penelope Lively in *Passing on* (Deutsch, 1989).