

Indexes reviewed

Edited by Christine Shuttleworth

These extracts from reviews do not pretend to represent a complete survey of all reviews in journals and newspapers. We offer only a selection from quotations that readers have sent in. Our reproduction of comments is not a stamp of approval from The Indexer upon the reviewer's assessment of an index. Extracts are arranged alphabetically under the names of publishers, within the sections: Indexes praised; Two cheers!; Indexes censured; Indexes omitted; Obiter dicta.

Indexes praised

British Library: *Catalogue of Scandinavian books in the British Library printed before 1801*, 3 vols (2007, xxi + 2184 pp, £295). Rev. by Christopher Skelton-Foord, *Rare Books Newsletter*, 82, 2008.

The indexes to subjects and provenance, which make up volume three of the catalogue, represent a body of information not previously contained within the British Library's existing printed or online catalogues. The subject index is a remarkable piece of scholarship, its entries ranging from obstetrics to sand dunes, climate to musical instruments; and provenance details record, among many other remarkable individuals and bodies, the Cambridge Philosophical Society, Carl Linnaeus, Pope Pius VI, and Robert Southey. Peter Hogg's outstanding catalogue is sure to facilitate research immensely, now and for many years to come.

British Library (in association with the British Academy): *Scottish libraries*, ed. by John Higgitt (2006, lxxvi + 506 pp, £85). Rev. by Murray C. T. Simpson, *Rare Books Newsletter*, 82, 2008.

The indices [*sic*] are vital tools: one on incipits and second (and third and penultimate) folios; one listing the manuscripts printed in this volume, surviving manuscripts (lamentably short) and other manuscripts mentioned; lists of surviving printed books, those where the particular institutional copies cannot be traced and other printed books mentioned; works seen in Scotland by compilers of the *Registrum Anglie*; authors; anonymous works; donors and former owners; and finally a general index. The close and exacting toil involved in compiling a volume such as this over almost twenty years must have been enormous. It is a worthy addition to a noble series.

Cambridge University Press: *The indexing companion*, by Glenda Browne and Jonathan Jermy (2007, 249 pp, Aus\$49.95). Rev. by John MacRitchie, *Australian Library Journal*, 57(2), May 2008.

This is an excellent work, highly recommended for librarians and for the general reader. This book has delightful touches of wit throughout, and its own index, expertly compiled by Browne, is similarly amusing and piquant. The authors do not touch on this, but surely indexes reflect their compiler's personality? [*Glenda Browne is a member of ANZSI and contributor to The Indexer.*]

Faber: *Diaries, Vol 1, 1907-1914, Vol 2, 1915-1923*, by Sergei Prokofiev, tr. and annotated by Anthony Phillips (2006 and 2008, 835 and 775 pp, £30 each). Rev. by G. S. Smith, *Times Literary Supplement*, 20 June 2008.

The superb indexes in both volumes will enable those in search of particular figures to hunt them down with great efficiency. If they use these books selectively for this purpose, though, they will deprive themselves of an intellectual and aesthetic treat, because reading the diaries in sequence gives a marvellous impression of the dozens of unfortunates whose musical careers never got very far, the harassed rank-and-file support staffs, and the abject hangers-on and gormless groupies.

Nick Hern Books: *Theatre writings*, by Kenneth Tynan (2008, 304 pp, £9.99). Rev. by Nicholas Lezard, *Guardian*, 30 August 2008.

Annoyingly, the book itself is printed in such a way that the pages fall out if you don't treat it as carefully as a newborn baby, and someone influential there thinks the word is spelled 'dessicated'. But there's a good index, and the selection is impeccably made. You should have this book even if you don't like the theatre. Especially if you don't like the theatre.

Information Today, *Caribbean libraries of the 21st century*, ed. by Cheryl Peltier-Davis and Sharmin Renwick (2007, 387 pp, \$49.50). Rev. by Mike Freeman, *New Library World*, 109(5/6), 2008.

Well produced, it has a good, clear index and a useful list of acronyms.

Oxford University Press/Hodder Arnold: *Cystic fibrosis* (3rd edn), ed. by Margaret Hodson et al (2007, 503 pp, £99). Rev. by Edward F. McKone, *Respiratory Care*, 53(5), March 2008.

It is very well referenced and has a detailed index so that CF care providers interested in more extensive reading can delve into each topic as needed. This book will benefit all CF care providers and will be well placed in any CF center's departmental library.

Profile: *Our longest days: a people's history of the Second World War*, ed. by Sandra Koa Wing (2008, 320 pp, £8.99). Rev. by Lindsay Duguid, *Times Literary Supplement*, 18 July 2008.

The editing is helpful, with introductory sections on the main events, year by year, a brief note on the contributors and a detailed index.

Short Books: *Latin love lessons: put a little Ovid in your life*, by Charlotte Higgins (2007, 288 pp, £12.99). Rev. by Philip Womack, *The Tablet*, 17 November 2007.

Classicists will be interested by the section on 'Erotodidaxis', and everybody will be amused by the index (sample entry: 'Rome: Like New York or London, 9; good areas for cruising, 44; wasn't built in a day, 50.')

Franz Steiner Verlag: *Kollegen-Kommilitonen-Kämpfer: Europäische Universitäten im Ersten Weltkrieg*, ed. by Trude Maurer (2006, 376 pp, €47). Rev. by Tracey J. Kinney, H-German, www.h-net.msu.edu/reviews/showrev.cgi?path=191461216068765, September 2007.

The collection benefits greatly from a valuable person and place

index which, the editor notes, has not been created electronically. Therefore, the index references not only explicit occurrences of personal and place names, but also indirect mentions. This is an exceptionally useful resource, insofar as it allows the reader to follow common persons or places across a number of essays.

Think Publishing: *The cyclist's companion*, by George Theohari (2007, 162 pp. £9.99). Rev. by Stephen Dyster, *Cycling World*, 30(3), March 2008.

Overall an informative book that mixes the familiar with the new and the frivolous with the serious. There is a useful index.

Shaun Tyas: *Castles, town defences and artillery fortifications in the United Kingdom and Ireland: a bibliography 1945-2006*, by John R. Kenyon (2008, 752 pp, £35). Rev. in *Refer*, 24(2), Spring/Summer 2008.

There is an index of authors and a particularly valuable index of places leading to entries within counties.

UNSW Press: *Rights and redemption: history, law and indigenous people*, by Ann Curthoys et al (2008, 277 pp. \$49.95). Rev. by Richard Thwaites, *Canberra Times*, 5 July 2008.

This is a fine reference survey for professionals, fully indexed and annotated.

Weidenfeld & Nicolson: *All you can eat: 1000 recipes*, by Tamasin Day-Lewis (£30). Rev. in *Waitrose Food Illustrated*, July 2008.

It's ten years since Day-Lewis's first cookery book, *West of Ireland Summers*, was published. Experience has taught her to know what a cook really wants: a clear index, infallible recipes and imaginative variations on familiar themes. This book will live in your kitchen, becoming dog-eared, flour-dusted and chocolate-splattered with use.

Two cheers!

Benjamins Translation Library: *The turns of translation studies: new paradigms or shifting viewpoints?* by Mary Snell-Hornby (2006, 205 pp, £29.99). Rev. by Peter Newmark, *The Linguist*, June/July 2008.

It remains to commend the fourfold indexing (table of contents, subject index, author index, bibliography; although a keyword index is missing), and to warmly recommend the book.

Tempus: *Saints in the landscape*, by Graham Jones (£16.99). Rev. by Michael Walsh, *The Tablet*, 26 January 2008.

The blurb describes it as 'engagingly written'. It is not. The print is small. Dr Jones' style is hard going, and it is difficult to derive any general theory of church, chapel or well dedication from these pages. On the other hand, if your town or village is one of the many listed in the index (printed in even smaller type), then it is a volume definitely worth consulting.

Indexes censured

The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press: *Journey to the east: the Jesuit mission to China, 1579-1724*, by Liam Matthew Brockey (2007, xiv + 496 pp, \$35). Rev. by Michael C. Wilson,

H-HistGeog, www.h-net.msu.edu/reviews/showrev.cgi?path=264891216046594, July 2008.

The book comprises a preface, an introduction, five chapters each of historical narrative and analysis, a conclusion, endnotes, and a sixteen-page index. [. . .] The index is idiosyncratic: astronomy, despite its importance, is found only by searching under 'science.' Understandably, 'Jesuit' is not in the index, but nor is 'Society of Jesus' there. How does one find the discussions of the founding of the society and of institutional reactions to it?

Bloomsbury: *Leiths Simple Cookery*, by Viv Pidgeon and Jenny Stringer (2008, 544 pp, £30). Rev. by Leslie Geddes-Brown, *Country Life*, 16 July 2008.

My only cavil is the index (why are these so bad today when computers make them simple?), but that's a minor point about a major book. [Sigh . . . but it's the totally computer-generated indexes that are the bad ones! And surely a major book deserves a good index.]

Continuum: *Disputed truth: memoirs II*, by Hans Küng (2008, 576 pp, £30). Rev. by John Wilkins, *The Tablet*, 5 July 2008.

John Bowden's translation from the German is superb. As is almost inevitable in a book of this size, however, there are some erroneous references and a scattering of literals; and the interesting photographs are not deployed in three sections, as announced in the index, but all appear in one chunk. [Possibly a breakdown of communication between publisher and indexer?]

Eland Books: *Persia: through writers' eyes*, ed. by David Blow (2007, 334 pp, £14.99) and *Egypt: through writers' eyes*, ed. by Deborah Manley and Sahar Abdel-Hakim (2007, 334 pp, £12.99). Rev. by Isobel Alexander, *The Tablet*, 5 January 2008.

. . . these marvellous collections . . . are let down only by sloppy editing, the text and indexes littered with misspellings; on occasion, a name is spelt in two different ways in a single line.

Facet Publishing: *The new Walford: guide to reference resources, Vol. 2: The social sciences*, ed. by Ray Lester (2007, 800 pp, £159.95). Rev. by Charles A. Toase, *Refer*, 24(2), Spring/Summer 2008.

Entries [for sport] are under the type of source, rather than the individual sports, so cricket is scattered among dictionaries, libraries (strangely, *Wisden* is here), and 'Keeping up to date', which includes the *Cricketers' who's who* because it is annual (but so is *Wisden*). The topic index fails to bring these together; similarly, the index entry for 'ageing' doesn't pick up the International Council on Active Ageing because it is classified under sport.

Rev. by David Butcher, *CILIP Update*, 7(6), June 2008.

TNW has two indexes – an easily missed short topic index and an extensive author/title index. The topic index lacks specificity, referring only to sections; a search for Freedom of Information produces see references to two subject fields with more than 150 entries when just five are relevant. Many users will find relevant material by serendipity rather than design.

Fourth Estate: *So I have thought of you: the letters of Penelope Fitzgerald*, ed. by Terence Dooley (2008, 624 pp, £25). Rev. by Philip Hensher, *Daily Telegraph*, 2 August 2008.

This volume is edited by her son-in-law, Terence Dooley, and though he would have welcomed this act of filial piety, she might have regretted some of its execution. The letters are arranged not

in chronological order, but grouped by correspondent, which is not very helpful to the reader. The notes are decidedly skimpy, and too often one doesn't know to what Fitzgerald is responding or about whom she is talking. And the index is a great curiosity, somehow contriving to omit all reference to, for instance, Fitzgerald's son Valpy, who is constantly referred to in the letters. It is good to have some of Fitzgerald's letters – there must be hundreds more out there – but some serious work on the apparatus before the paperback would be very welcome. She deserves, as no one doubts, the Rolls-Royce treatment.

Rev. by Jeremy Treglown, *The Spectator*, 16 August 2008.

The reader can feel like an outsider in a conversation in which unfamiliar names and unknown incidents are being recalled as part of a secret language. A cast list, a family tree and a better index would have helped.

Rev. by John Jolliffe, *The Tablet*, 6 September 2008.

Unfortunately, there is a lack of proper editing to the book: characters come and go, their identity unexplained; the introduction, though helpful, provides no coherent sense of context (although perhaps that would be asking too much). Why on earth are there no photographs, which would have helped to bring the chaotic scene to life? The four-page index is a joke, and not a good one (e.g. Fitzgerald, Desmond, husband. 33–173).

Rev. by Isabel Quigley, *The Oldie*, October 2008.

Terence Dooley, her son-in-law, has edited the letters with obvious care and affection but to my mind a little too skimpily. His introduction, like A. S. Byatt's preface, is excellent, but more footnotes would allow us to follow the sometimes confusing or unexplained references in the text. The fact that I am misspelt everywhere as 'Quigley' – in text, footnotes, and index – makes me wonder about the accuracy of the rest. But never mind: we are given a rich, rewarding glimpse of a life of extraordinary interest and a personality both warm and attractive and sometimes disconcertingly sharp.

Kent State University Press: *Meade's army: the private notebooks of Lt. Col. Theodore Lyman*, ed. by David W. Lowe. (2007, xviii + 518 pp, \$45). Rev. by Michael Thomas Smith, H-CivWar, www.h-net.msu.edu/reviews/showrev.cgi?path=230111216667046, July 2008.

The index, however, could have used greater attention. The entry for 'Charles Fremont' robs the Republican Party's 1856 presidential candidate and later unsuccessful Union general of his first name as well as the accent mark that he added to his last name; Robert Hoke was a Confederate, not a Union general; the Battle of 'Sailer's Creek' was actually Sayler's Creek; Henry Slocum's middle initial was 'W'; and why no entry for the colorful Union General P. R. de Trobriand, who is mentioned in the text? (Another unfair slight to this able but often overlooked officer.)

Little, Brown: *Speaking for myself: the autobiography*, by Cherie Blair (2008, 421 pp, £18.99). Rev. by Edward Enfield, *The Oldie*, August 2008.

I think the index of her book must have been arranged by a computer as it is all wrong, which is what you get when you leave things to computers. Apparently it gives the impression that a Mr John Higham QC was one of those admitted to Mrs Blair's favours, but he wasn't. Mr Higham has said, 'I have never been out with Cherie Blair', and I like the way he phrased it. This is so much more dignified than saying 'I have not had sexual relations with that

woman Cherie Blair', which is how their pal Clinton would have put it.

Lion Hudson: *The new Lion handbook of the history of Christianity*, by Jonathan Hill (2007, 560 pp, £25). Rev. by Alan Wakely, *The Reader*, 105(2), Summer 2008.

. . . George Whitfield is portrayed as a substantially more important figure than Pius X (who does not even feature in the index).

O'Reilly Media: *Head first HTML with CSS & XHTML*, by Elizabeth Edwards and Eric Edwards (2006, 504 pp, £35). Rev. by 'Ekamouse', www.oreillynet.com/cs/catalog/view/cs_msg/93613, 1 November 2007.

We're using this book in a college course I'm taking. This book contains a massive amount of really good information, which has been buried in a landslide of unnecessary blather. Add to this the complete lack of a sensible, extensive index, and this book leaves me so frustrated, I am nearly ready to drop the class.

The amount of useful information in the book makes it difficult to remember it all at one time, but it's impossible to find anything a week after I've read it without leafing through an entire chapter or more, page by page, because the index is so brief and incomplete.

With a good, complete index, I'd give this book 4.5 stars for its excellent content (withholding ½ star for all the blather). Without a usable index, the book is nearly worthless to me.

Would O'Reilly consider giving buyers a supplemental index, or a searchable electronic index? I would love the book, if I could just find what I want to find in it.

[On 8 November 2007, Laurie Petrycki, General Manager of Head First, responded on behalf of the publishers:]

We agree with your assessment of the index in *Head First HTML with CSS and XHTML*. So in part, because of your comments, we're going to redo the index and post it online in addition to including it in the next reprint of the book. We expect the index to be complete in January 2008. Check headfirstlabs.com for the latest information on this and all the books in the Head First series.

I'd also like to suggest you give the Safari Books Online service a try, safari.oreilly.com. The Safari service gives you the ability to search the text of *Head First HTML* and pinpoint the pages you need.

I hope this information helps you. Good luck with your class.

[But an 'Anonymous Reader' wrote on 11 February 2008:]

I've been checking for the index online. It's February, and I can't find it yet. Do you still plan to post it? I'd really like to have a good comprehensive index for this book. Thanks.

Oxford University Press: *Fragmented France: two centuries of disputed identity*, by Jack Hayward (2007, 381 pp, £60). Rev. by Robert Tombs, *Times Literary Supplement*, 20 June 2008.

Criticisms are of form rather than substance. The proofreading is startlingly imperfect. There are footnotes, but no bibliography. Translating names of functions and organizations is unhelpful; for example, the right-wing 'camelots du roi' become 'the King's Newsvendors' and Croix de Feu becomes 'Fiery Cross' (none of the alternative versions being listed in the index).

Oxford University Press: *The Oxford guide to literary Britain and Ireland* (3rd edn), by Daniel Hahn and Nicholas Robins (2008, 370 pp, £30). Rev. by Toby Barnard, *Times Literary Supplement*, 13 August 2008.

Ardent in promoting informed awareness of the distinctiveness of place was Geoffrey Grigson In the *Guide*, Grigson creeps onto the Isles of Scilly, the title of his early book of poems, but not into the index.

Rowman and Littlefield: *William Jennings Bryan: an uncertain trumpet*, by Gerald Leinwand (2007, xx + 208 pp, \$33). Rev. by Mark E. Benbow, H-SHGAPE, www.h-net.msu.edu/reviews/showrev.cgi?path=179701214319086, June 2008.

My only other complaint is that the index and the suggested readings list are rather skimpy, even for so short a book.

Tempus: *Medieval building techniques*, by Gunther Binding, tr. by Alex Cameron (2004, 215 pp, £25). Rev. by Bob Meeson, *Vernacular Architecture*, 36 (2005), 105–25.

The stated aim of the book is to illustrate building techniques, not simply the tools employed in their execution, and it does this admirably. However, while more than 130 different types of tool and equipment are identified in the index, trades or processes are not included. The index is fallible, and a hierarchical system would have been easier to use; for example, bow-, frame-, hand- and long-saws would be quicker to locate under a group heading for saws. More than eighty indexed items on scaffolding have to be searched to discriminate between the two main types – one supported from the ground on wooden poles, the other employing only putlogs. Some drills are indexed as such, while others are listed as augers. In this case it might have been helpful to subcategorise the implement, as in addition to easing the location of the different types, it would have demonstrated the predominance of the auger over the brace. Only two braces are depicted (105, 249) and neither of them is indexed Setting up the building site included the construction of simple shelters with earthfast posts; these are variously listed as masons' lodge, builders' hut and temporary shelter, and sometimes not indexed at all Perhaps with dry humour, on a twelfth-century illumination now in the Pierpoint Morgan Library (New York) two of the carpenters are removing bent nails with wrenches – a tool that does not appear in the index (356 Drawings of machinery include a fifteenth-century demolition crane (344), and fourteenth- and fifteenth-century pile drivers (341); however, the other two index entries for pile-drivers turn out to be large mallets (650, 670).

Indexes omitted

Arcadia Books: *Ken: the ups and downs of Ken Livingstone*, by Andrew Hosken (2008, 340 pp, £15.99). Rev. by ???, *The Oldie*, Summer 2008.

There's no index – a shame, given the book is of far wider interest than a mere biography of a fascinating politician. [*So a 'mere biography' doesn't need an index?*]

Bantam Doubleday Dell: *Age wave: how the most important trend of our time can change your future*, by Ken Dychtwald (1998, 400 pp, £13.95). Rev. by Carolyn Praytor Boyd, *School Library Journal* (n.d.), cited on www.amazon.com.

The lack of an index restricts the book's use for research on specific areas, but it does include many names of people and organizations within the text which could lead to further research.

Bloomsbury: *Risky business*, by Al Alvarez (£8.99). Rev. by Nicholas Lezard, *Guardian*, 9 February 2008.

Bloomsbury are to be congratulated for putting this collection out (and even the almost biblically thin paper they use is nice, making a 400-page book light and manageable); I can almost forgive them for not including an index. Had there been one, there would have been quite a few entries under 'writing, undesirability of as a career' . . .

Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt: *Die Adenauer-CDU: Gründung, Aufstieg und Krise einer Erfolgspartei 1945-1969*, by Frank Bösch (2001, 575 pp, €39.80). Rev. by Robert Mark Spaulding, H-German, www.h-net.msu.edu/reviews/showrev.cgi?path=15571216071703, November 2007.

One word of caution: the book has no index. Readers who hoped they might use this work to explore the importance of specific individuals, issues, or organizations will be frustrated by their inability to get quickly to the material they seek. A relatively well-elaborated table of contents is not a sufficient substitute for a proper index in a book of this length.

Faber: *War Plc*, by Stephen Armstrong (£14.99). Rev. by Siobhan Murphy, *Metro*, 9 July 2008.

In fact, Armstrong relies quite heavily on previously published material – which makes the lack of footnotes and index in this book an odd decision.

Fordham University Press: *Lincoln revisited: new insights from the Lincoln Forum*, ed. by John Y. Simon, Harold Holzer and Dawn Vogel (2007, xiii + 369 pp, \$27.95). Rev. by Jeffrey D. Julson, H-CivWar, www.h-net.msu.edu/reviews/showrev.cgi?path=127461211215538, May 2008.

This book also lacks an index, which would be a useful and welcome addition even in an edited collection of essays.

Harper Perennial: *The barefoot emperor: an Ethiopian tragedy*, by Philip Marsden (2008, 320 pp, £8.99). Rev. in *The Times*, 2 August 2008.

The only thing this book lacks is an index.

Harper Press: *Grub Street irregular: scenes from literary life*, by Jeremy Lewis (2008, 352 pp, £20). Rev. by Mark Bostridge, *Independent on Sunday*, 6 July 2008.

A book so heavy with personalities could have done with an index (there's also an amusing failure in the copyediting when a previously unknown work called *Summoned by Joy* is attributed to C. S. Lewis).

Headline: *The man who ate the world*, by Jay Rayner (2008, 352 pp, £16.99). Rev. in *Harden's Newsletter* (online): www.hardens.com/articles/london_and_uk_restaurant_newsletter/jun08_restaurant_news.php

Make no mistake though: if you can unpick it, there is much in this book – both factual and thought-provoking – on an interesting topic that hardly ever gets the concentrated coverage it deserves. But to get real value out of it, you'd have to make your own index. The publishers, outrageously, couldn't be bothered.

Allen Lane: *Britain and Ireland's best wild places*, by Christopher Somerville (2008, 544 pp, £25). Rev. by Robert MacFarlane, *Sunday Times*, 29 June 2008.

Barring the inexplicable absence of an index (a serious skimp in a book of this kind), it has been beautifully produced.

Miegunyah Press: *Blood and tinsel*, by Jim Sharman (2008, 403 pp, £34.50). Rev. by Katherine Brisbane, *Sydney Morning Herald*, 25 August 2008.

I cannot end this review without saying that, while the contents are fascinating, the book itself is an uncomfortable object. Its design is alienating, the chosen paper heavy and uncoated, making many photographs indistinct. The worst sin is the lack of an index. This book is an invaluable resource and as such has been published by The Miegunyah Press, Melbourne University Press's prestigious imprint. But how can one make use of 400 packed pages without an index? Melbourne University Press should be ashamed.

There are misspellings of names: Katharine Hepburn, Helen Montagu, Coral Browne, Socratis Otto. These might well have been picked up by an indexer.

Mohr Siebeck: *Selma Stern (1890–1981): Das Eigene in der Geschichte: Selbstentwürfe und Geschichtsentwürfe einer Historikerin*, by Marina Sassenberg (2004, 293 pp, €69). Rev. by Dean Phillip Bell, H-German, www.h-net.msu.edu/reviews/showrev.cgi?path=66811216072593, December 2007.

The volume contains a brief but summative conclusion and a chronology of key dates in Stern's life. It also includes an excellent bibliography that provides information on Stern's publications, reviews of Stern's works, primary sources, and secondary literature both about Stern and various related historical topics. It is quite unfortunate, however, that the book contains no index.

M-Y Books: *A physicist's labour in war and peace: memoirs 1933-1999*, by E. Walter Kellermann (2004, 350 pp, £8.99). Rev. by Drew Rankine, *UC Magazine* (University & College Union), June 2008.

In spite of the minor typos and lack of an index, this is a thoroughly enjoyable autobiography.

Nonsuch: *Cotswold churches*, by David Verey (2007, 288 pp, £25). Rev. by Richard Lethbridge, *The Tablet*, 5 January 2008.

Lack of an index, however, makes individual churches hard to find for those who don't know their Evenlode from their Windrush.

Oxford University Press: *Pigs and humans: 10,000 years of interaction*, ed. by Umberto Albarella *et al.* (2007, 454 pp, £85). Rev. by Juliet Clutton-Brock, *Times Literary Supplement*, 25 July 2008.

Those reading it for methods of analysing the remains of pigs from archaeological sites [*well, each to his own*] may find the glossary useful, others will not need it, but unfortunately most will regret that there is no index.

Palgrave Macmillan: *Making common cause: German-Soviet secret relations, 1919-1922*, by Vasilis Vourkoutiotis (2007, vi + 200 pp, \$69.95). Rev. by Wolfram von Scheliha, H-German, www.h-net.msu.edu/reviews/showrev.cgi?path=187331212521710, November 2007.

However, it must be said that the book has substantial shortcomings. Spelling mistakes, annoying as they are, occur in every book and they may not be noteworthy even if such a distinguished historical figure as Aristide Briand (not Briande, pp. 130, 196) is concerned; and it may be nitpicking to note that Vourkoutiotis

confuses Foreign Minister Walter Simons with State Secretary Ernst von Simson (pp. 161–162) and that he conflates in the index Hugo Haase, the leader of the Independent Social Democratic Party (and for a short time a member of the Council of People's Deputies) with Colonel Otto Hasse, a member of Sondergruppe R (and from 1923-25 chief of the Truppenamt, as the General Staff was called at that time [p. 197]).

Penguin Classics: *The Qur'an: a new translation*, by Tarif Khalidi (2008, 530 pp, £25). Rev. by Ziauddin Sardar, *Guardian*, 21 June, 5 July 2008.

There are a couple of other unforgivable omissions. In the main text, the chapters have no numbers. While there is a short glossary, there is no index. I found the translation very difficult to navigate. These omissions notwithstanding, this is a magnificent achievement.

Rodopi: *Un-civilizing processes? Excess and transgression in German society and culture: perspectives debating with Norbert Elias*, ed. by Mary Fulbrook (2007, 296 pp, \$86). Rev. by Uli Linke, H-German, www.h-net.msu.edu/reviews/showrev.cgi?path=138981212599666, November, 2007.

On a final technical note, the volume lacks an index and bibliographic reference section.

K. G. Saur: *International genealogy and local history: papers presented by the Genealogy and Local History section at IFLA conferences 2001-2005*, ed. by Ruth Hedegaard and Elizabeth Anne Melrose (2008, 287 pp, €78). Rev. by Diana Dixon, *CILIP Update*, 7(9), September 2008.

Given the range of material, it is a pity that the work has no index.

Obiter dicta

Bodley Head: *We danced all night: a social history of Britain between the wars*, by Martin Pugh (2008, 495 pp, £20). Rev. by David Kynaston, *Financial Times*, 30 June 2008.

There is one other serious flaw. The 1931 census found that 78 per cent of the population was working class, while the majority of the rest were middle class. Yet Pugh is almost bizarrely obsessed by the already overpublicised aristocracy. As a result, his index has four times as many entries for 'Cooper, Lady Diana' as for 'miners'. One does not have to be prolier than thou to find this dismaying.

A very personal index

. . . it is an excellent habit to make pencil notes. These should be conducted on some system such as will demonstrate to subsequent readers of the book (of your copy of the book) how bright and studious you are.

The best thing to do is to scribble a sort of guide or index at the end of the book, which gives to your errant markings a certain conformity and meaning. This index, however, should be of a very personal nature, and not understandable to the uninitiate. My own books are scored with such annotations. I do not write 'very feeble and cheap' in the margin of a particular passage. I merely mark the thing with a neat but non-committal line against the side. And at the end I put 'F and C. pp. 23, 58, 69, 78, 92, 105, 114,' and so on. Nor do I confine myself to denigration. 'G.B.,' I put, 'pp. 54, 98, 224, 669, 9956, 10456, 24378,' 'G. B.' means

'Good Bits,' just as 'B.B.' signifies 'Bad Bits' or 'l.o.s.o.p,' 'Lack of sense of proportion'.

Harold Nicolson, 'How to read books', *Small Talk* (Constable, 1937)

Never mind the book, review the index?

The prominent scientist Richard Dawkins has been denounced as a 'secularist bigot' by a philosopher who was once a renowned atheist. Prof. Antony Flew accuses Prof. Dawkins of being more interested in promoting his own views than finding the truth, in his [Dawkins'] best-selling book *The God Delusion*. Prof. Dawkins, professor of the Public Understanding of Science at Oxford University, is also said to have 'scandalously' selected quotes from Einstein to back up his claims that God does not exist. . . . [Flew] says there are five references to Einstein in the index to *The God Delusion*, but no mention of his [Einstein's] belief that the complexity of physics led him to conclude that there must be a divine intelligence.

Prof. Dawkins told *The Daily Telegraph* that Prof. Flew, now 85, has lost the ability to read a book, let alone write one, and that his 'review' of *The God Delusion* was just a review of its index. He said: 'He only needed to read Chapter 1 in order to see the absurdity of his claims about my treatment of Einstein.'

Martin Beckford, 'Dawkins labelled a "secularist bigot"', *Daily Telegraph*, 2 August 2008.

Typical . . .

At the start of the meeting [junior Treasury minister Kitty] Usher had given the committee a 100-page document laying out the government's ideas on helping weak banks. Philip Dunne (Con, Ludlow) complained that he and his fellow MPs had not had enough time to read the thing. It didn't even have an index (typical of the Treasury, said Dunne).

'Gavel Basher', 'Called to Ordure' column, *Private Eye*, no. 1216, 8–21 August 2008.

Tendentious entries

The book's general tenor is signaled by its index; under 'science,' the entries include 'corruption and fraud and,' 'Indian explanations ignored by,' 'lack of proof for theories of,' 'myth of objectivity of,' and 'racism of.' . . . [In Deloria's opinion] 'archeology is mainly about easing white guilt.'

Charles C. Mann, 1491 (2005), on *Red Earth, White Lies*, by Vine Deloria

Such is fame

In my office, there's a dusty section of shelving holding books written to convince us to believe in politicians long since discredited. *Looking Forward: An Autobiography* (1988) by George Bush Sr is now most notable for the fact that two pages are given to a family member detailed in the index as 'Bush, C. Fred (dog)', while the son who is now president is mentioned only in lists of family members.

Mark Lawson, 'Leaders who seek readers', *Guardian*, 22 August 2008.

Aprikosen and Marillen

Sir, – In commenting on the misspelling of Mahler's favourite dessert, Ruth Kraus (Letters, August 8) might have specified that in Germany, apricots are *Aprikosen*, but in Austria, *Marillen*.

That this is considered important (at least by Austrians) is shown by their insistence on adding Protocol no. 10 to the European Union-Austria membership Treaty (1995). The appendix to this Protocol lists the terms (*Marillen* is one of them) which must be mentioned in both German and Austrian forms in the relevant legal texts that are published in the Official Journal of the European Union.

I might add that in my wife's grandmother's *Süddeutsche Küche* by Katharina Prato, 1908 (1st edition 1857, eighty editions to 1957), a classical Austrian cookbook, the index refers you from 'Aprikosen' to 'Marillen'.

Under the latter we find twenty-nine entries, including of course the notorious *Marillenknoedel* [apricot dumplings].

Harold Beyerly, Vienna, letters, *Times Literary Supplement*, 22 and 29 August 2008.

Those little numbers

We had a trainee come to the library who, when given the textbook that would answer his query, asked, 'What's this list at the back and what do these little numbers mean?'

Emma Harris, Law Society Librarian, quoted by Jonathan Rayner, 'Net-surfing lawyers warned of compliance risk', *Law Gazette*, 12 June 2008, and again in *CILIP Update*, 7(7–8) July/August 2008.

Correction

The author of *All things Darwin: an encyclopedia of Darwin's world* (Greenwood Press, 2007), mentioned in this section in the September 2008 issue of *The Indexer*, is Patrick H. Armstrong.

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