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Indexation, memory, power and representations at the beginning of the 12th century

The rediscovery of pages from the tables to the *Liber de Honoribus*, the first Cartulary of the Collegiate Church of St Julian of Auvergne (Brioude)¹

Jean Berger

The recent 'rediscovery' of fragments of the alphabetical tables of the first Cartulary of the Collegiate Church of St Julian of Auvergne, compiled at the beginning of the 12th century, would seem to have introduced a new milestone into the general understanding of the history of indexing. This article looks briefly at the chronology of the use of alphabetical order in the West and the appearance of the first indexes; analyses the distinctive features of the Brivadois fragments; and finally, looks behind the text and its formal distinctions at the human context in which it came into being, and sets out the religious, economic and social mechanisms which led to its appearance and were influenced by its use.

From alphabetization to indexing

Alphabetical order: from its origins to Christianity

Let me start with a quick review of the history of alphabetical order and the alphabetical classification of textual data, 'alphabetization' as Anglo-Saxon researchers, pioneers in the field, term it.²

Alphabetical order, the conventional order of written letters, was evident from the very beginning, in the 14th century BC in the kingdom of Ugarit. It has come down to us principally in the form of ABC primers ('*abécédaires*').³ This order was broadly accepted in the semitic world and then, via the Phoenicians, was extended throughout the ancient Mediterranean world, in particular to the Greeks, the Carthaginians and the Romans. And the order was maintained in each of the linguistic areas which adopted the alphabetic system of writing. The 3rd-century librarians at Alexandria are credited with the first documentary application of an alphabetical classification.⁴ Although not alone, it was the Greek world which did most to develop the use of alphabetical classification.⁵

Respect for alphabetical order, a fixed order linked to a consonant-based system, was observed, one by one, by all the nations adopting this particular system. Alphabetical order also had an important influence on the various religious systems. In the Hebrew tradition, alphabetical order was a consideration in the composition of the Psalms, Proverbs and Lamentations. And this heritage was passed on: psalms 25, 34, 37 and 118 in the present Biblical canon

are subdivided into 22 acrostic strophes corresponding to the letters of the Hebrew alphabet. This last psalm (known as the *abécédarium* by the glossators) in particular, was commented on at an early stage by Bishop Hilary of Poitiers (c 480–547) and introduced into the core of the monastic liturgy by St Benedict (c 480–547) for the recitation of the *petites heures*. From the moment of its official acceptance, Christianity used a fixed, alphabetical, order. It was a key argument in an African tract of the 6th century for the defence of the faith directed against arianism by St Fulgentius (468–533).⁶ The Alpha and Omega of the Revelations of John⁷ together with the *labarum* of Constantine⁸ and then the palaeochristian Chrismons are the very symbols of the new Christian order: the alphabet sublimates 'the beginning and the end'.

With the end of antiquity, we enter into a period of a slow, general, decline in the practice of writing in the West. Classification according to alphabetical order withdraws to the safety of the ecclesiastical *scriptoria*. More markedly than in the Greek world, alphabetical ordering becomes increasingly sporadic, and above all, the preserve of a minority of the lettered classes, showing itself only occasionally in modest lexicons in imitation of the encyclopedism of ancient authors. Isidore of Seville (c 560–636)⁹ produced Book X of *Etymologiae*, entitled *De vocabulis*, in which he attempted to explain the origin of about 300 names. But recourse to alphabetical order stopped at the initial letter. Thereafter, the words were arranged within paragraphs by derivation, i.e. according to their supposed etymology. The

Venerable Bede (c 673–735) counted among his numerous writings a short treatise, *De orthographia*,¹⁰ a compilation of rare terms from the scriptures classified in alphabetical order of the initial letter. Bede expands on the Latin grammatical characteristics of the terms and provides some definitions.

In the closing years of late antiquity, as it passed into the mediaeval epoch, some experts go so far as to speak of the use of alphabetical ordering sinking into oblivion. At best, it became rare, and survived essentially by virtue of an innovatory lexicographic practice.

The gloss

In fact, alphabetical order was to come back into use in the gloss (a meticulous commentary in a given text on words which were rare, little used or taken from foreign or extinct dialects). Let me describe what happened. Glosses were originally entered on the text itself, in the form of marginal annotations. For convenience and out of respect for the integrity of the work, they were then sometimes transposed to an independent document or annex. However, they were still arranged in order of appearance in the text, following the line of argument. Then the scribes of those times began more and more frequently to compile volumes of glosses on different texts, grouping them together in a glossary.¹¹ Some system of guidance became absolutely essential. Basing themselves on the lexicons of the early authorities or drawing inspiration from them, the scribes began, often very imperfectly, reorganizing the entries alphabetically.

The Carolingian renaissance saw the production of many glossaries, but alphabetical organization was not often fully realized and was not adopted as the sole method. Resort to other classification systems was common. One example is the voluminous glosses of Reichenau,¹² a collection of 4,877 glosses, for the most part Latin to Latin. The glosses fall into two groups: the alphabetical (1,725), which slavishly follows the approach of Isidore of Seville or the *Glossarium Ansileubi/Liber Glossarum*, and the biblical (3,152).

The *Glossarium Affatim* respects the alphabetical order of its glosses as far as the first letter, and thereafter that of the consonants of the first syllable. The *Abstrusa*, dating from the 7th and 8th centuries, follows the order of the first two letters. The *Glossarium Ansileubi* or *Liber Glossarum*, dating from the end of the 8th century, is seen as a masterpiece. Not only is respect for alphabetical order more or less systematic, but the chapters are also indexed by subject matter. This work was to become the basis for many subsequent glossaries.¹³ It is also worth mentioning the so-called *Glossae Placidi*, known only from manuscripts of the 8th and 9th centuries. It is to the 7th and 8th centuries that we owe the practice of arranging glossaries almost entirely by alphabetical order.¹⁴ This is true also, a little later, of the 9th-century *Abavus*-type glossaries. However, the options remained diverse, and no single technique was adopted across the board.

The turn of the millennium was a pivotal point. There are no innovations. At most there is some copying and amplification of lemmata¹⁵ from the old collections. As an isolated example in the middle of the century, the scholarly

Papias¹⁶ arranged the lemmata in a monumental *Elementarium doctrinae erudimentum* up to the third or fourth letters. And, for the first time, the choice of an alphabetical classification was made explicit and justified in the prologue of his work. It is only with the 12th century that things took off again. Let me mention just Osbern of Gloucester and his *Panormia* or *Liber derivationum*, produced in the middle of the 12th century, which mixes in equal parts a hierarchy of lemmata in alphabetical order and derivation.¹⁷ The 13th century was to be the century of the index.

Reconsidering the history of the index

From the medieval documents to our own dictionaries, alphabetical order is the very structure of the document. As for the index, it is an independent tool, supporting the document and providing a guide to the heart of the material, taking as its starting point (at least for documentary material) the idea of presenting an overall picture of the content of the given document with a system of markers taking the user to the point in question.

Until recently, the index has been thought of as originating in intellectual and scholastic circles in Paris in the course of the 13th century. The flood of new compilations then being produced, particularly in theology and canon law, required new 'signposting' systems. University exegetes and the reformed religious orders, returning ever more strictly to the Scriptures, gave a definitive structure to biblical material (definitive organization of the canon, division into chapters, pagination). The 'indexer' was thus freed from the problems of a text with no fixed structure, no 'hooks': from now on it was possible to think in terms of an alphabetical classification of concordances.¹⁸ In the 14th century the practice spread throughout literary circles, gradually – particularly with the arrival of printing – becoming the norm.¹⁹ But in the Middle Ages, there were more links in the chain to consider than just what came out of Parisian intellectual circles.

They are to be found in the more pragmatic matter of the management of archives, made essential in the old abbeys by the need to classify and make accessible their vast collections of charters recording ancient legal titles. The care religious communities took over the defence of their rights led to a precocious development of real indexing techniques which made it possible to get closer to the heart of this material. This trail was followed by two great mediaevalists, Pierre Toubert and Etienne Hubert,²⁰ who were interested in the work of the archivist of the Benedictine monastery of Farfa, Gregory of Catino. Gregory was responsible for the reorganization of the abbey archives. It was a long job in the course of which he was able, *inter alia*, to compile a voluminous register as well as a complete chronicle,²¹ all dedicated to the defence and celebration of the *libertas* of his community. He put the finishing touches to his work in about 1130, with the production of *Liber floriger chartarum cenobii Farfensis*. The volume took the form of a list, arranged in alphabetical order, of the names of places to which the abbey had made grants and which had been evoked in the compilations of previous grants of title. Like Papias, Gregorio set out his method and intentions in a preface, explaining his

choice of alphabetical order and its aims. The Brivadois archives were part of this movement.

Fragments of the alphabetical table to the first Cartulary of St Julien of Bavard

A rediscovery

The numerical and alphabetical tables, the last remaining evidence of the original Great Cartulary, now lost, were known but ignored by successive editors of the archives of St Julian, who based their work on modern copies.²² The tables were probably contained within a bundle held in the National Archives, in the middle of items which gave way to the more important story of the falsification of the *Ancien Régime*, the titles of the house of Bouillon. Faced with an abundant and contradictory literature by scholars and jurists from the end of the 17th and the beginning of the 18th centuries, historians chose to skirt round the delicacies of a dossier which had such a heavy tradition to contend with. But, following a minute examination and various analyses – palaeographic (script), codicologic (codex techniques), diplomatic (comparison of the form and content of the deeds) – there is no longer any doubt as to the authenticity of a number of these fragments.²³ This alphabetical table is indeed a very early attempt at an index. The deeds to which it refers were written a little later than 1080 but before 1120.

Presentation

There are 12 original or pseudo-original items, ‘bifeuillets’ of parchment²⁴ or fragments thereof, 360 × 240 mm in model format, representing the dispersed remnants of vast numbers of ‘quires’ of tables. Six are alphabetical. In graphical terms, the script is an archaic but well-formed Caroline miniscule, typical of the period. The presentation on the page of the alphabetical and numerical tables is similar. The number of each charter appears in the margin, and against it, in the body of the text, a short note, including, in the following order, the name of the property, the subject or subjects of the grant, its location in terms of the administrative district of the period (‘county’, then vicariate or *aicis* and possibly *villa*), then the number of *villae*, of manses or appendages (agricultural units corresponding to an agreed fiscal unit) making up the grant. This is followed by the name of the donor or donors (or testamentary executors) in the nominative. Each parchment page has thirty or so notes of the following type:

CXXIV *Loberias in aice Brivatensis mansos VIII appendarias //xiii; Staphanos cedo*

The ‘vedettes’ (sections), the geographical matter by name of the properties held by the Chapter, are brought together in ‘chapters’ in alphabetical order of the initial. The use of alphabetical order does not go further than this. Within the chapters, the vedettes appear in incremental order of the number of the charters to which they refer.

The vedettes sometimes reflect the nature of particular deeds: so pontifical and royal privileges are all classified as

privilegium (CVIII, A.N. R² 74, Pièce 35 f^o lr^o). As an exception, the serf *Frannaldus*, exchanged by the Chapter, is the only person indexed.

The place names are in traditional Latin, in the nominative or ablative, but, as in many property lists of the period, one also gets the oblique case of the spoken (‘mesolectic’) form of the *scripta latina rustica*. This explains why the majority of entries terminate in ‘as’ or ‘o’ alongside the pure Occitan or Latin forms, something of a hangover. The abandonment of the *scripta latina rustica* can be dated to the emergence of a ‘diglossia’, a bilingualism marked by the creation, towards the middle of the 12th century, of a literary Occitan.²⁵ The place names/vedettes would seem to refer to the title given to each charter in the body of the Cartulary rather than to the versions to be found in the actual text of the charter. Classification and archive work undoubtedly went on throughout the compilation of the index, this written product of Church lawyers lasting as long as the documentary labours.

Practice with respect to the treatment of the article in the classification seems to have varied. In *A Fontabbem* (CCLXXXIX, A.N. R² 74 item 35), classed under ‘F’, it does not appear. But it is taken into account for *Ad illas Curras* (CLXXIV, A.N. R² 74 item 42), influenced perhaps by the importance of the article linked to a contraction in the eventual Occitan form.

By contrast, in vernacular writings, the archivists limited themselves to the main element. So, *Bonafonte* (*Super bona fonte* CCLXIX, A.N. R² 74 item 35) and *Bona fonte* (CCLXII, A.N. R² 74 item 36) appear under ‘F’, while another similar place name, in a more dialect form, *Bonafont*, appears under ‘B’.

As to editing of the tables, we note that there are frequent corrections, passages crossed out, erased then reinstated, indicating later changes, an updating in the light of practice. It should also be noted that some of the ‘pages’ are palimpsests.²⁶ But the underlying writing seems to be strictly contemporary, and from a document of a form comparable in every respect. The ‘F’ ‘pages’ of the table are double sheets (A.N. R² 74, items 35 and 36). Finally, there are problems here and there with the spacing of the numbering, with a good deal of tidying-up.

The production of the Cartulary would seem from the evidence to have gone hand in hand with a long reorganization of the Charterhouse. The index to the Cartulary, to the book, to an object in the Cartulary, is also a catalogue of the community’s archival material. But this indexation is not just a novelty; by its form it remains the ultimate interpretation of the Carolingian archival heritage and lexicography, itself a contribution to the administrative practices of the Late Roman Empire.

The Index and the ecclesia

Within the framework of the *ecclesia* of St Julian, devising a way of accessing the content of the document had many important practical implications: it made it possible to get quickly to the original titles, which alone had probative value in case of litigation; it made collecting taxes easier; it celebrated the memory of benefactors etc. So we need

briefly to bring the production of the index back into its human context.

The Brivadois is situated on the borders of Velay, the Auvergne and the Gévaudan. According to the sources, it is here that the cult of the French martyr St Julian established itself, from 304 AD. It rapidly reached importance on the national scale and lasted throughout late antiquity and the High Middle Ages.

A diocese without a bishop, a county without a count, a veritable ecclesiastical state came into being, where the temporal and spiritual powers were entirely in the hands of the community of clerics responsible for the maintenance of the martyr's tomb. In accordance with the Roman law of the late compilations and from what we know of the attitude of the Visigoth and Frankish sovereigns, the local Church made good the local gaps. Here it was the *res publica*, an autonomous, aristocratic, mini-Senate.²⁷

The charters of the Cartulary, for the most part, are gifts of property to the Chapter by neighbouring aristocratic families. But the gifts are not just a matter of pious generosity. Family representatives, having transferred the actual 'ownership' of the property, normally kept 'possession' in the form of a life-interest in the usufruct, so keeping the old distinction between *proprietas* (ownership) and *possessio* (possession) in return for the annual payment of a rent calculated on the basis of the value of the gift. These gifts had an anthropological counterpart: in effect, the families made a contribution to the Chapter by giving up a younger son in each generation, thus contributing 'in kind' to the membership of the collegiate government. And by holding on to the usufruct they were certainly helped to make their contribution towards Chapter costs. In these ways, the families held the property (or 'ownership') as an 'honour' for which they put themselves under the *dominium* of the Saint.

The gift also worked to the benefit of the donor's ancestors, providing the means of paying for the preservation of their memory and associating them directly with the community in charge of St Julian's relics. Access to the names of the donors by the 'placing' of the landed property in question was essential for the cult of the dead at a time when 'Books of Life' or 'Memory' were turning into veritable necrologies.

For practical purposes, one might also think of this work of indexation as a register of taxation,²⁸ a document recording tax liability. It was possible from each entry to calculate the tax due on property held in usufruct, listed by all the places where the community was to collect it. Payment of the tax, the motor of liturgical activity, took place principally at St Julian. The index certainly helped in the account keeping.

Finally, let us ask ourselves if the Chapter's growing awareness of its properties was motivated, perhaps, by the 'competition'. The end of the 11th century saw the creation, by two former members of the Chapter (St Robert of Turlande à La Chaise-Dieu and St Peter of Chavanon à Pébrac), of two reforming religious orders on the borders of the Chapter possessions.

Conclusion

Thanks to its index, the *Liber de Honoribus* is not just a monument to the power of the Chapter, a document of prestige. The apparent lack of organization in the document is misleading. Indexed, it becomes an important instrument for the cohesion of the patrimony of St Julian and for the Brivadois Church. Thanks to its tables, restored to favour as a result of documentary analysis, the *Liber de Honoribus* has revealed its potential, giving an access to the very heart of the text unique for the period. Kept at the time in the treasury, it determined the structure of the territory of the Brivadois, the driving force behind the economy of a region and the liturgical practice of the clergy. Not just a simple documentary technique, this experiment in alphabetical indexation is also a legal, economic and liturgical compilation of the very first importance, a veritable mirror of a whole *ecclesia*, a whole society.

Notes

- [Translator's note: St Julian of Brioude is more commonly known in English as St Julian of Auvergne, the style adopted here.]
- A number of my observations are based on a study which remains indispensable: L. W. Daly, *Contributions to a history of alphabetisation in antiquity and the Middle Ages*, Latomus, Revue d'études latines, no. XCJ, Brussels, 1967.
- For some of the dozens of 'ABC' tablets, see the catalogue of the exhibition: *The Kingdom of Ougarit, at the birth of the alphabet*, Lyon, 2004.
- Daly, *op. cit.*, p. 94
- See in particular the octagonal pillar of Halsarna, on the Island of Cos, on which the names of citizens taking part in the cult of Apollo and Heracles are engraved in alphabetical order. This dates from the beginning of the 2nd century BC. The inscription is published in W. R. Paton and E. L. Hicks (eds), *The Inscriptions of Cos*, 1891, no 368.
- Fulgentius of Ruspe, *Abecedarium* in J. N. Hillgarth (ed.), *Christianity and Paganism, 350–750: The Conversion of Western Europe*, Philadelphia, 1986, p. 72.
- Revelations 1, 8; 21.6; 22.13. 'Ego sum Alpha et Omega, principium et finis.'
- [Translator's note: the *labarum* is the monogram adopted by Constantine using the Greek letters, Chi (X) and Rho (P) (the initial letters of Christ), sometimes known as the Chrismon.]
- An editorial point on the *Etymologies* of Isidore of Seville. *Patrologiae cursus completus. Patres ... Ecclesiae Latinae*, J.-P. Migne (General Editor), Paris, 1857–66, vol. 82, col. 73–728), after *Sancti Isidori Hispalensis episcopi opera omnia*, F. Arevalo (ed.), 2 vols [Scriptorum classicorum bibliotheca Oxoniensis], Oxford, 1911; *San Isidoro de Sevilla, Etimologías*, J. Oroz Teta and M.-A. Marcos Casquero (Editors and Translators), 2 vols. [Biblioteca de auctores christianos, vol. 433], Madrid, 1982–3, since when publication has been in process of *Isidore de Séville, Étymologies livres I–XX*, J. Fontaine and Y. Lefevre (general editors). [Auteurs latins du Moyen Âge, Les Belles Lettres]. Paris 1981 et seq.
- Bedae Venerabilis opera. Pars VI, Opera didascalica*, C. W. Jones (ed.) [*Corpus Christianorum, Series latina, v. 123A*], vol. 1, *Turnhout*, 1975 [republished 2003 in a single volume of *Opera didascalica*].
- On the question of alphabetical order in lexicography, see the recent publication of J.-Cl. Boulanger, *Les inventeurs de dictionnaires: de l'éduba des scribes mésopotamiens au*

- scriptorium des moines médiévaux*, Ottawa, 2003, the chapter of interest to us having been published previously in J.-Cl. Boulanger, 'Petite histoire de la conquête de l'ordre alphabétique dans les dictionnaires médiévaux' in *Cahiers de lexicologie*, no. 80, fasc. I, 2002, pp. 9–24. Previous to that: K. Miethaner-V, 'Das Alphabet in der mittelalterlichen Lexicographie: Verwendungsweisen, Formen und Entwicklung des alphabetischen Anordnungsprinzips' in *La lexicographie au Moyen Age*, Claude Buridant (ed.) [Lexique, no. 4] Lille, 1986, pp.83–112. To this selection of the literature may be added the excellent historical outline by J. F. Shaw, *Contributions to a Study of the Printed Dictionary in France before 1539*, Toronto, 1997, available on-line at www.chass.utoronto.ca/~wulftric/edicta/shaw/frame.htm.
12. Probably compiled at the beginning of the 9th century, the manuscript dating from the first half of the 10th century: ms. Karlsruhe Landesbibliothek Aug. perg. CCXLVIII; H.-W. Klein, A. Labhardt, *Die Reichenauer Glossen*, vol. 1; *Einleitung, Text, vollständige Index und Konkordanzen* [Beiträge zur romanischen Philologie des Mittelalters; 1, 2], Munich, 1972.
 13. On Ansileube's *Liber Glossarum* see J. A. McGeachy 'The glossarium Salomanis and its relationship to the *Liber Glossarum*' in *Speculum*, vol. 13, Cambridge (Mass.), 1938, pp. 309–18. I owe this invaluable reference to my teacher, Professor A. Dubreucq.
 14. Most of these old glossaries are to be found in the *Corpus Glossariorum Latinorum a Gustavo Loewe inchoatum, auspiciis Academiae Litterarum Saxonicae composuit recensuit edidit Georgius Goetz*, y vol. Leipsig, 1888–1923, and in W. M. Lindsay et al. (eds), *Glossaria latina iussu Academiae Britannicae edita*, 4 vols, Paris, 1926–31.
 15. [Translator's note: Lemmata: argument or subject of literary compositions, dictionary article, annotation etc., prefixed as a heading (*Concise Oxford Dictionary*).]
 16. V. de Angelis, *Papiae elementarium, Littera A*, 3 vols, Milan, 1977–80.
 17. P. Busdrache (ed.), Osbernus Glocestriensis, *Derivazioni* [Biblioteca di 'Medioevo latino', no.16], 2 vols, Spoleto, 1996.
 18. For more detailed consideration of the these technical processes, see the excellent article by M.-A. House and H. Richard, 'La naissance des Index' in *Histoire de l'édition française*, vol. 1, Paris, 1989, pp.95–108. For a broader perspective on the key examples of exegeses of the period, see M. Albaric, 'A history of access to information: inspiration, constitution, transmission and the story of the biblical corpus in the Christian tradition' in *Solari, information communication*, dossier no. 16, 1997. For the general history of indexing, see the stimulating observations of B. H. Weinberg, 'Indexes and religion: reflections on research in the history of indexes' in *The Indexer*, No. 22, pp. 2–13.
 19. On the index volume to the historical part of Vincent de Beauvais' encyclopaedia, composed towards 1320 by Jean Hautfuney, see M. Paulmier-Foucart (ed.), *Jean Hautfuney, Tabula super Speculum historiale fratris Vincentii*. Presentation of the second part of the edition. Edition M-Z. Edition of the Table of the Flores. An example of computerised treatment ...' in *Spicae – Cahiers de l'Atelier Vincent de Beauvais*, 3 (1981), pp. 7–208.
 20. P. Toubert, *Les structures du Latium medieval. Le Latium méridional et la Sabine du IXème siècle à la fin du XIIIème siècle* [Bibliothèque des Écoles Françaises d'Athènes et de Rome, 1ère série, no. 221], 2 vols, Paris/Rome, 1973; vol. I, p. 78. E. Hubert, *L'incastellamento en Italie centrale, pouvoirs, territoire et peuplement dans le vallée du Turano au Moyen Age* [Bibliothèque de l'École Française de Rome, 1ère série, no. 309], 2002, p. 28, n. 31.
 21. M. T. Maggi Bei (ed.), *Gregorio da Catino. Il Liber Floriger di Gregorio da Catino, parte I testo* [Miscellanea della Società romana di storia patria, 26], Rome, 1984.
 22. The first scientific studies of the Cartulary were those of the archivist, Alexandre Bruel: A. Bruel, *Essai sur le text ancien et la chronologie du cartulaire de Briouade, 'Liber de honoribus sancto Juliano collatis'*, a thesis of the École des Chartes, Paris, 1866, a resumé of which can be found in A. Bruel, 'Essai sur la chronologie du cartulaire de Briouade' in *Bibliothèque de l'École des Chartes*, Paris, 1866, fasc. 1, 6th series, vol. II, pp. 444–504. A first edition of the Cartulary was then produced by H. Doniol, *Cartulaire de Briouade, Liber de Honoribus sancto Juliano collatis*, Paris-Clermont-Ferrand, (vol. XXXV, *Académie des Sciences, Belles-Lettres et Arts de Clermont-Ferrand*, and vol. XCV *des Annales de Mémoires* by the same society, 1935). For further details on the manuscript tradition of the Cartulary, I refer to my work: J. Berger, *Societas Ecclesiae Sancti Juliani Brivatensis, Usages du text, du chanoine à l'historien*, a memoir of DEA under the direction of Professor A. Dubreque, Lyons III, 2004.
 23. For details of these analyses, see J. Berger, *op. cit.*
 24. [Translator's note: 'bifeuillets' were the parchment or skin of the animal folded in two to form the verso and recto. These were stitched together in sets of four to form an 8-page 'quire' (French 'cahier').]
 25. For all these comments of a linguistic nature, see J.-P. Chambon, 'L'histoire linguistique de l'Auvergne et du Velay: notes pour une synthèse provisoire' in *Travaux de linguistique et de philologie*, vol. XXXVIII, Paris, 2000, pp.83–153.
 26. [Translator's note: a 'palimpsest' is a reused sheet of parchment – in other words, a bit of recycling.]
 27. See the table drawn up by Chr. Lauranson-Rosaz, *L'Auvergne et ses marges (Velay, Gévaudan) du VIII^e au XI^e siècle. La fin du monde antique?* Le Puy-en-Velay, 1987, p. 257.
 28. On this type of documentation, produced at about the same date, in what was almost certainly a dependence of the Chapter, near to Brioude, which had by then passed under the dominance of Cluny, see the remarkable sociolinguistic studies of Jean-Pierre Chambon, in particular J.-P. Chambon, 'L'onomastique du censier interpolé (ca 946) dans la charte de fondation du monastère auvergnat de Sauxillanges', in *Revue de Linguistique romane*, Strasbourg, 2004, pp. 105–80.

No index? It must be fiction

A recent exchange between librarians:

'Have you any suggestions of fiction set in Sierra Leone?'

'The only one we have specific to that region is "The Devil that danced on the water" by Aminatta Forna.'

"The devil that danced on the water" is non-fiction – a fascinating account of Forna's early life and her return in adulthood to her father's homeland, Sierra Leone.'

'Yes but we put anything without an index in our fiction section! Hence we put biographies and autobiographies in there. Sorry for the confusion!'

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