

Between Theory and Practice

Editing Transylvanian Romanian Historical Documents (1848–1900)

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EDITING HISTORICAL documents is the most important step in reconstructing the past. Whether it is about political, administrative, juridical, military structures, about economic activities, or about social relations or cultural events, history is written in documents. Based on documents, we can analyze events, explain ideas and concepts, create arguments, explain historical controversies, question and deconstruct historiographic stereotypes. The background of the sources, whether individual or collective works, should indicate a high professional level, scientific rigor and an ongoing process of informing oneself. The technique of document editing is acquired and applied on a daily basis, thus shaping the expertise needed to overcome the difficulties faced by re-

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searchers all the time; however, once solved, they stimulate the researchers' appetite for learning.

This paper aims at establishing the extent to which the theoretic principles regarding the editing of archive documents can be concretely applied to texts written in Romanian in the second half of the 19th century. The transcription norms, usually applicable in principle, apply partially at times or cannot apply because of the lack of a set alphabet and of a unified orthography. There will always be exceptions. Under these circumstances, the only solution is to familiarize ourselves with the writing and the topics of the documents, and a lot of practice.

Some specialized historical terms, regarding the organization and the political, administrative, juridical, church-related, school-related and military functions, etc. have become obsolete as they designate notions that have disappeared or represent archaisms usually explained in a glossary of terms at the end of the paper. These terms give flavor to the reading experience, they impress the reader and let the reader discover the wonderful Romanian tongue.

The paper stresses practical and theoretical aspects, from particular to general ones. By concrete examples, we try to illustrate various cases in order to outline the current stage of research. The undertaking is based exclusively on original historical sources written in Romanian which reflect the evolution of the Romanian language and orthography between 1850 and 1900.

The intention behind this study was to put together a document-editing applicative guide, and it was expressed on the occasion of the workshop "Applied Paleography: the 18th and the 19th Centuries in Central and Eastern Europe" that took place on 23 November 2011 at George Barițiu Institute of History in Cluj-Napoca. The basic idea was to update, from a historical perspective, the processing and editing norms for the written sources of the modern era. The collections of documents, already consecrated in historiography, *Documenta Romaniae Historica, Series C. Transylvania* (11th–14th centuries),¹ *Izvoarele Răscoalei lui Horea* (Sources on Horea's uprising), *Documente privind revoluția de la 1848 în Țările Române* (Documents regarding the 1848 revolution in the Romanian Principalities), *Series C. Transylvania*,² *Documente privind mișcarea națională a românilor din Transilvania între 1849–1918* (Documents on the national movement of the Romanians in Transylvania between 1849 and 1918),³ illustrate the main research direction and continue a genuine historical tradition. To these we must add many critical editions of documents that cover a wide range of topics, such as church documents, school documents, succession documents, military documents, marriage and birth documents, medical documents, etc., all of significant historical value.

Due to a draft bill regarding the obligation to introduce the Hungarian language instead of the Latin language, a heated debate regarding the Romanian

language ensued in the multi-linguistic landscape of Transylvania before the 1848 Revolution. The pathos of the debates on the Romanian language, with obvious national connotations, involved promoters of the national movement as well as institutions like the Greek-Catholic Consistory in Blaj or the Imperial Court in Vienna. One consequence of these actions was to focus the efforts of all Romanian stakeholders to create a unified, reformed literary Romanian language, integrated in the cultural pluralism of the Habsburg Empire. In Transylvania, the 1850s correspond to the beginning of the efforts to shape and stabilize the Romanian language. The transition from the Cyrillic alphabet to the Latin alphabet was gradual and not deprived of polemical debates.⁴ There were many opinions about the evolution of the language, generated by the passion of the etymological, phonetic or Latinist trends. Meanwhile, the orthography was imprecise, discouraging, and lacking in coherence; it had many abbreviations, symbols, pseudonyms or initials instead of proper names or toponyms. Texts would include many archaisms, outdated phrases and standard phrases that today make reading difficult, as well as a burdensome, intricate style. That is why the editing of historic documents corresponding to this period of time requires considerable effort.

The need for and the appropriateness of a coherent, unified system to transcribe Romanian texts were discussed by the Romanian Academy on 6 December 1961. The initiative group presided by academician Alexandru Rosetti included: Mioara Avram, linguist, head of the Grammar Department of the Bucharest Institute of Linguistics, Boris Cazacu, linguist and philologist, correspondent member of the Romanian Academy, Florica Dimitrescu, expert in the editing of old Romanian texts, a professor with the Chair of History of the Romanian Language of Bucharest University, and Iancu Fischer, classical philologist, outstanding Latinist, a professor at Bucharest University. After several debates, they wrote a report, published one year later in the *Limba română*⁵ magazine, containing general recommendations. Special attention was paid to the lexical aspect of the juridical-administrative style in Transylvania, which, as a result of the historical context, had some specific features that were different from the those in the provinces of Wallachia or Moldavia.⁶

CONCRETELY, WHAT are the general principles of text editing? How do we apply them? What are the mandatory stages in document processing? How did writing evolve from old, rudimentary, burdensome styles to modern, stable styles?

In editing,⁷ the main principle is that material identification should be as exhaustive as possible, based on national archives and foreign archives, as well as on the critical processing of previously published texts. The selection is done accord-

ing to two criteria: subject-matter and chronology. The working method includes the following steps: transcription, collation, translation, summaries, identification of toponymy, critical remarks, index of names and localities.

The transcription of Romanian documents was to be done according to the interpretative principle, by complying with the phonetic and lexical, regional versions, but with an orthography in line with the current norms in the orthographic and orthoepic dictionary.⁸ The basic idea was to reconstruct the text in the most reader-friendly way possible.

The punctuation marks change according to the current rules. The complicated, lengthy, intricate, often unusual structure of the sentence, sometimes written with no graphic signs, requires intervention. Capital initial letters or small initial letters are to be modernized. The days of the week or the months of the year are no longer written in initial capital letters, as they appear in documents. The initial capital letter is used with holidays and names of institutions.

The texts of these documents are transcribed entirely and accurately in their original language. The authentic forms of the dates, the abbreviations of the author, as well as annotations on the margins are usually made by archivists, including short indications about the contents of the document. In the case of letters (correspondence), the address of the recipient is reproduced, whenever there is such an address, in italics between brackets. The interventions of the editor in the original text or in translations are included between brackets. They complete the abbreviated words, titles, introductory phrases to letters and the phrases at the end of letters. Illegible words are set between brackets. All changes in the original text made by someone else, later on, are specified in italics between brackets. Words or paragraphs underlined in the original text are reproduced as such.

The location of the source (archive, library, museum etc), its form (original, copy, concept, printed) and its reference number are mentioned at the end of each document. When two copies of the same manuscript are found, this shall be mentioned between brackets [duplicate]. If the document bears a seal, this shall be mentioned immediately after archive references [with seal]; for instance: *Original with the seal of the Greek-Catholic monastery in Blaj*, or, *Copy, confirmed by signature and seal*.

The most important elements of editing are the date and the location. The date shall be given according to the Gregorian calendar when the document includes both styles, the old style and the new style; for instance, for 1/13 May 1863, the exact date shall remain 13 May 1863. In case one of the two elements, either the date or the location, have not been mentioned, the editor shall establish the missing element based on the information in the text and they shall be marked between brackets. Then, a footnote shall explain the rea-

son for which the completion has been made; for instance, *Băița, în ajunul calendarului lui ianuarie 1843* (Băița, on the eve of the first day of January 1843), meaning *Băița, 31 December 1843*,⁹ or, a letter of Alexandru Papiu-Ilarian to Iosif Hodoș, without location or date, was given a location and a date [Iași, 16 May 1861] according to the data found in a previous letter of the same Papiu-Ilarian of 9 June 1861;¹⁰ the location of a protocol of the Sylvania archpriesthood was given taking into account the fact that the document was written at the office in [Șimleul-Silvaniei].

The locality shall be written on the left-hand side of the text. The current name of the locality shall be written, as its corresponding old name appearing in the document shall be included in the toponymic index at the end of the document. All toponyms shall be identified according to the writings belonging to Coriolan Suci¹¹ and to Ion Iordan, Petre Găștescu, and D. I. Oancea,¹² considered to be the main working tools for the modern times. Recent works, written by Ioan Bolovan and Bogdan Crăciun,¹³ as well as by Attila Szabó and Erzsébet Szabó,¹⁴ have updated these working tools.

If the name of a locality changed over time, the current name shall be used, followed by the original form which appears in the document, and the name of the county of the locality: ex. Coșbuc, formerly Hordou, village, Bistrița-Năsăud County; Tiha Bîrgăului, formerly Borgo Tiha, village, Bistrița-Năsăud County; Susenii Bîrgăului, formerly Borgo Suseni, village, Bistrița-Năsăud County; Poienile Zagrei, formerly Poieni, village, Bistrița-Năsăud County; Poiana Ilvei, formerly Sâniosif, village, Bistrița-Năsăud County. In the case of foreign localities, the country shall be specified; ex. Chernowitz, Ukraine; Florence, Italy; Laxenburg, Austria. The writing of foreign localities shall preserve the original version, in the form recommended by the authors: Eperjes, Munkačevo, Küçük-Kaynarca, etc.

Regarding proper names, efforts are made to identify all the persons mentioned in the document. Often, the names of personalities of the time appear in abbreviated form. For instance, only half of the full name is indicated, with the first name or the last name missing; consequently, they must be reconstructed between brackets: [Vasile] Buteanu, revolutionary, politician, deputy in the Pest Parliament; [Alexandru] Bohățel, supreme captain of Năsăud; L[adislau] V[asile] Pop, jurist, high official in the Transylvanian Gubernium, president of the Transylvanian Supreme Court and president of ASTRA between 1868 and 1875; Const[antin] Papfalvi, vicar of Hațeg and Greek-Catholic canon, Dimitrie [Moldovan], imperial official, Ioan [Maniu], jurist, Ioan [Alexi], Greek-Catholic bishop of Gherla. The names written only as initials shall be completed, in the same way, depending of the contents of the text: I[oa]n M[arian], vicar of Năsăud; I[oa]n R[ă]șiu, lawyer, politician. Efforts are made to write the Romanian first names and the last names in a unified manner: Iosif Papp shall be written as

Iosif Pop, Demetriu Sztojan shall be written as Dumitru Stoian. In the case of Hungarian names, the original version shall be preserved: József Kopácsy, primate of Hungary; Miklós Kováts, Roman-Catholic bishop in Transylvania and director of all Catholic schools in the Principality of Transylvania. The name of individuals that have a correspondent in Romanian shall be translated; thus, Ioannes becomes Ioan, Basiliu becomes Vasile, Gregorius becomes Grigore.

Nicknames shall be explained in a footnote, whenever possible. Nicknames would be used in a negative manner, to denigrate personalities. The identification of these co-names requires considerable familiarization with the historical realities. Here are some examples: Simion Bărnuțiu, a philosophy professor from Blaj, future national leader of the 1848 Revolution, was referred to as *Brutus*¹⁵ after the historical character; *The Sultan* or *Ali-Pașa the Tyrant* was the nickname of Ioan Lemeni, the Greek-Catholic bishop of Alba Iulia and Făgăraș;¹⁶ Timotei Cipariu was called *Judah the Iscariot* or *Judah the Traitor*, due to his conflict and the lawsuit underway in Blaj between 1835 and 1836 involving Rector Vasile Rațiu¹⁷; Ferenc Kemény, imperial chancellor of Transylvania until 13 September 1861, had the nickname *Kiminea*; Andrei Șaguna, the Orthodox bishop and metropolitan of Transylvania, was called *Abdul*, *Abdul-Azis*, *the Sultan* or *Big-Beard*;¹⁸ *the Chevalier*, *the Star-shooter* was Ioan Pușcariu, a 1848 revolutionary and a historian of the Transylvanian noble Romanian families; *Ochilariu*, *Ilie Ochilariu* was Ilie Măcelariu, a 1848 revolutionary, a tribune of the 2nd Sebeș Prefecture, judge in Sibiu, deputy in the Transylvanian Diet and in the Pest Parliament; *the Pasha* was Simion Crainic, chapter vicar in Blaj;¹⁹ General Friedrich Lichtenstein, governor of Transylvania between 26 July 1858 and 15 April 1861, was called *the Prince*;²⁰ Alexandru Sterca-Șuluțiu, a Greek-Catholic metropolitan bishop, was called *the Elder*;²¹ Alexandru Bohățel, supreme captain of Năsăud district, was called *Buha-Țel*; Miron Călugărul, deputy in the Budapest Parliament in 1869 and later on metropolitan bishop in Transylvania, was called *Miron Romanul* (the Roman).²²

Criticism, irony and humor abounded in Transylvanian society; the proof is not only in the nicknames but also in the press of the time. An example is the satirical magazine entitled *Gura satului* (The village gossip) edited by Iosif Vulcan, Ioan Slavici and Ioan Rusu-Șirianu. Published between 1871 and 1903 this “social-political satirical organ” intended to criticize the mistakes made by politicians and society by publishing poems in which the personalities of the time were called by their nicknames: “Frunză verde pe răvaș / Pușcă Stele-n Făgăraș / Deputat atunci va fi / Când și peștii vor vorbi / Buha de același Țel, / Doamne dă să scap de el / Zice: Duce-m-aș să pot / Dar nu m-aleg la Năsăud. / Apoi Grind-al nostru frate / Cu căldarea lui în spate / Înc-atunci se va alege / Când Dunărea-n sus va merge. / Lazăr, Tincu și Tulbașiu, / Vor fi toți trei tovarăși / Și la Pesta n-or

mai merge / Că nime' nu-i va alege.²²³ (The leaf is green and the waters rush / *Pușcă Stele*²⁴ from Făgăraș / Will become a deputy / When the fish can speak of me / While Mr. *Buha* from *Țel*,²⁵ / Is on the list to go to hell / He wishes he could / Become elected in Năsăud. / Also their peer Mr. *Grind*²⁶ / With a bucket in his hand / Will be elected to office / When the Danube flows upwards. / *Lazăr*,²⁷ *Tincu*²⁸ and *Tulbașiu*,²⁹ / All of them missing a shoe / Will sit in the Pest Parliament / When kissed by their dead aunt.)

The footnotes are explanatory. They may include short biographical presentations of major personalities or of personalities that were less known. They may also explain notions or terms that are seldom used nowadays days, like *asentare* (conscription into military service), *sudiți* (foreign subjects), *ered* (inheritor), soldiers with *urlaubpas* (soldiers that had leave permits, or a reserve booklet, or a provisional permit), *miliție vagă*, *umblătoare* (soldiers on active duty). The footnotes may refer to other documents published in the same volume, either directly or indirectly related to the text.

The fragments in other languages, like Hungarian, German, and Latin, and inserted into the text must be transcribed and translated in a footnote, to make the text legible. For instance, the terms coming from Hungarian, like *foișpan* (supreme county ruler) or *solgabinu* (district judge), often used in the administrative language, or *chișchineu* (handkerchief, scarf), *culduș* (beggar), still used in the informal language in Transylvania today, must all be translated.

Each document has an abstract (*regestum*). The summary includes the main information in the text: the author of the text and the recipient of the text, with their functions at the time, the contents of the document, and the most important names of persons and localities referred to. The summaries shall include the current names of the localities.

The indexes shall be differentiated into two categories: localities and persons. In some cases,³⁰ a thematic index can be made. Usual abbreviations for *municipium* (mun.), *town* (or.), *village* (s.), *disappeared locality* (a.d.), *county* (jud.) shall be used to simplify the toponymic index. The list of abbreviations shall be completed with other specialist terms or often used terms that can be abbreviated. Here are some examples: *fl.* (florin), *cr.* (Kreutzer), *cott.* (*comitatus*, county), *st. v.* (old style), *Ord.* (Ordinariat), *m. p.* (*manu propria*, one's own hand),

In indexes, the names of localities in Latin, Hungarian and German shall be explained by indicating their current names (Oláh Lápösbánya, see Băiuț). The index of names shall include all names of persons found in the documents, accompanied by remarks regarding their position (emperor, governor, county ruler, bishop, teacher) or social status (noble, peasant, leaseholder).

THIS PAPER does not present an exhaustive list of the matters related to the editing of a historical text. The matter remains to be further analyzed from the historical perspective. It deserves full attention and an in-depth analysis because of the huge number of sources that are waiting to be published. The solutions provided for the 19th century Romanian documents must be completed with the conclusions of the editors of the texts written in Hungarian and German.

Irrespective of the language of the sources, document editing is a demanding and complex endeavor. Aurelian Sacerdoțeanu, historian, professor and archivist, characterized it as follows: “All documents, irrespective of the specialty of the editor, concern the pragmatic historian, the historian of institutions, of social classes, of old law, the economist and the philologist. Many documents concern the geographer, not only for historical geography but also for physical geography, apparently with no connection to history. Consequently, any document must be completely and accurately edited so that no expert could have any doubts about the form in which the source is presented.”³¹

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(Translated by MARCELA GANEA)

Notes

1. Lidia Gros, “Din începuturile unei colecții: Documente privind istoria României. Seria C. Transilvania,” *Anuarul Institutului de Istorie “George Barițiu” din Cluj-Napoca* 46 (2007): 33–39.
2. Gelu Neamțu, editor-in-chief of the collection. For references and works of Gelu Neamțu see Veronica Turcuș, Felicia Hristodol, and Gheorghe Hristodol, *Bibliografia lucrărilor științifice ale membrilor Institutului de Istorie din Cluj-Napoca 1920-2005* (Bucharest, 2008), 261–267.
3. Dumitru Suci, editor-in-chief of the collection. See references and works of Dumitru Suci, in *ibid.*, 328–330.
4. For instance, the polemic between George Barițiu and Alecu Russo on the two main philologic trends, Latinist and local. See George Barițiu “Răsboiul limbilor,” *Foaie pentru minte, inimă și literatură* (Brașov) 18, 13 (1855): 66–67; no. 14: 71–76; no. 15: 77–78; no. 16: 82–86; no. 17: 89–90; Ionel Roman, “Preocupările filologilor români din Transilvania pentru studiul limbii, la mijlocul veacului al XIX-lea,” *Annales Universitatis Apulensis* (Alba Iulia), *Series Philologia* (2000): 149–160.
5. “Principii de transcriere a textelor românești,” *Limba română* (Bucharest) 11, 5 (1962): 577–581.
6. Elena Șerban, “Observații asupra lexicului unor documente de la 1848,” in *Contribuții la istoria limbii române literare în secolul al XIX-lea*, vol. 2 (Bucharest, 1958), 115–135; Remus Todoran, “Contribuții la studiul terminologiei juridico-administrative românești

- din Transilvania de la începutul secolului al XIX-lea,” in *ibid.*, vol. 3 (Bucharest, 1962), 103–136; Gheorghe Bulgăr, “Evoluția stilului administrativ în prima jumătate a secolului al XIX-lea,” in *Studii de istoria limbii române literare (sec. al XIX-lea)*, vol. 2 (Bucharest, 1969), 167–199; Olga Cazan, “Evoluția stilului juridico-administrativ în limba română (perioada 1780–1860),” *Uniterm* (Timișoara) 7, 7 (2009): 10–20.
7. This article is based on the instructions for editing historical documents of the Modern History Team, *National Movement of the Transylvanian Romanians between 1849 and 1918*, from the Institute of History in Cluj-Napoca.
 8. Ioana Vintilă-Rădulescu, ed., *Dicționarul ortografic, ortoepic și morfologic al limbii române*, 2nd edition, rev. and enl. (Bucharest, 2005).
 9. Daniela Deteșan, *Dosarul procesului lemeian*, vol. 1 (Cluj-Napoca, 2007), 218.
 10. Simion Retegan, ed., *Mișcarea națională a românilor din Transilvania între 1849–1918: Documente*, vol. 4 (Bucharest, 2007), 237.
 11. Coriolan Suci, *Dicționar istoric al localităților din Transilvania*, 2 vols. (Bucharest, 1967–1986).
 12. I. Jordan, P. Gâștescu, and D. I. Oancea, *Indicatorul localităților din România* (Bucharest, 1974).
 13. Bogdan Crăciun and Ioan Bolovan, *Consignatio statistico topographica singulorum in Magno Principatu Transylvaniae (Transilvania la 1829–1831)* (Cluj-Napoca, 2003).
 14. Szabó Attila and Szabó Erzsébet, *Dicționar de localități din Transilvania. Erdélyi helységnevszótár. Ortsnamenverzeichnis für Siebenbürgen* (Bucharest, 1992).
 15. Deteșan, 171, 424, 426.
 16. *Ibid.*, 99–100.
 17. *Ibid.*, 107, 195.
 18. Retegan, 4: 417, 607.
 19. Deteșan, 100.
 20. Retegan, 3: 389, 463.
 21. *Ibid.*, 539.
 22. *Gura satului* (Pest) 8, 5 (1870): 19.
 23. *Gura satului*, 7, 2 (1869).
 24. Ioan Pușcariu (1824–1911), high Romanian public official, historian, member of the Romanian Academy.
 25. Alexandru Bohățel (1816–1897), deputy in the Pest Parliament between 1848 and 1849, jurist, director of Economul Bank in Cluj.
 26. Matei Pop Grindeanu, assessor with the Royal Table in Târgu-Mureș, member of ASTRA.
 27. Alexandru Lazăr (1815–1885), governmental adviser.
 28. Avram Tincu, Orthodox lawyer from Orăștie, elected deputy in the Pest Parliament between 1866 and 1867.
 29. Ioan Tulbașiu, deputy in the Pest Parliament.
 30. For instance, in the case of the correspondence of George Barițiu with his contemporaries.
 31. Aurelian Sacerdoțeanu, “Despre editarea documentelor,” in *Arhivele Olteniei* (Craiova) 10 (1931): 296.

Abstract

Between Theory and Practice: Editing Transylvanian Romanian Historical Documents (1848–1900)

The study presents the general principles guiding, in practice, the editing of the Transylvanian Romanian historical documents from the second half of the 19th century. Nevertheless, there are some general norms and theoretical principles to be followed and to be concretely applied to texts written in Romanian (1848–1900). After describing the language debate in Transylvania before the 1848 Revolution, the author explains the contemporary attempts to shape and stabilize the Romanian language, presenting the etymological, phonetic and Latinist trends. The evolution of the Romanian language in the 19th century implies the need for a coherent, unified system to transcribe today older Romanian texts. The author debates the main issues involved in selecting, processing and editing these documents: transcription, punctuation, regime of capital letters, location of sources and references, date and place of the documents, proper names and nicknames, explanatory and critical footnotes, interpolated fragments in foreign languages, the document abstract (*regestum*), the indexes of localities and persons.

Keywords

editing Romanian documents, 19th century Transylvania, transcription principles, historical onomastics and nicknames