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Edited from the 18th to the 21st century: Mátyás Bél's *Notitia Hungariae novae*

The paper treats Mátyás Bél's (1684–1749) gigantic opus of country description, *Notitia Hungariae novae historico-geographica*, and deals with the issues of its edition. First, the paper addresses some aspects of Hungarian cultural history in order to understand and explain how and why this essential work remained to a great extent in manuscript (the description of 49 counties with only 11 published) in the 18th century. Second, I will treat some issues concerning the principles and technicalities of editing. First of all, how the philologist of the 21st century shall proceed when resuming an edition that started in the 18th century? To what extent the formal and typographical characteristics of the 18th century edition (that mostly reflect the intentions of the author, e.g. formatting of the text, margin texts, headers) shall be considered? The state of the manuscripts caused further difficulties. The description of several counties did not remain in "authentic", Bél's *manu propria* manuscripts, but only in later copies transcribed by József Batthyány, archbishop of Kalocsa at the end of the 18th century. Originally, his transcriptions were intended to preserve Bél's work, however, the scribes of Batthyány followed their own orthographical principles which differed to a great extent from Bél's. Furthermore, the scribes made a multitude of errors and miswritings while copying partly due to the soaked and thus barely readable originals, partly due to their own incompetence. These circumstances provide several issues to consider and decide when editing in the 21st century. Finally, we encountered issues of authorship as well. The posterior copyists of Bél's manuscripts in some cases interpolated the work by inserting eventually long parts in the original text. Besides, certain county descriptions were not written by Bél but by one of his collaborators or a data collector. Therefore we had to elaborate an appropriate solution for the edition and typesetting of the parts not originating from Bél.