

SOURCES VS. TEXT: AN “INTEGRATED EDITION OF SOURCES”

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The aim of this note is to attract attention to a new venture in scholarly publication—Beatrix Heintze’s *Alfred Schachtzabel’s Reise nach Angola, 1913-1914. Und seine Sammlungen für das Museum für Völkerkunde in Berlin. Rekonstruktion einer Ethnographischen Quelle* (Köln, 1995), the first issue of *Afrika Archiv*, a new series to be devoted to text editions. That this is not to be confused with an ordinary text edition is already intimated by the work’s title, which translates as *Alfred Schachtzabel’s Voyage to Angola, 1913-1914*, and his Collections for the Museum für Völkerkunde in Berlin. *Reconstruction of an Ethnographic Source*. In other words, it speaks of a “reconstruction” and “a source edition,” not “text edition.” As well, Heintze is described as the author of this book rather than the editor. Yet she presents the work as a new kind of edition—the “integrated edition of sources.”

Heintze is an experienced text editor, having published both a voluminous conventional collection of documents and a set of ethnographic drawings.¹ Yet when she examined the surviving documentation pertaining to Schachtzabel’s expedition in Angola, she became convinced that a standard edition of all his work would be unwise. The unpublished materials at hand are too disparate and slender.

Schachtzabel left two slightly different versions of a popular book, part travel account, part ethnographic monograph, including photographs;² documents, including official correspondence, lists of photographs, lists of all his ethnographic collections, and a draft or a copy of a report to the ministry of colonies; three personal manuscripts, including ethnographic notes about the Ngangela and the Cokwe; daily notes about his itinerary for the second part of his journey and the maps he drew as he traveled; thumbnail descriptions of 337 objects which arrived at the Museum für Völkerkunde in Berlin; 80 objects which are still there, while some other objects which had been in Leningrad and then in Leipzig may still surface; two complete objects and parts of five others from a series of 19 which were sold in 1921 to the Museum für Völkerkunde in Leipzig; and, finally, 43 (out of more than 44) sound recordings of songs.³

Heintze argues that, although none of these classes of data is sizeable enough by itself, nor of sufficient intrinsic interest to warrant a separate text edition, yet in content they all are closely related to the ethnographic portions of Schachtzabel’s travels and provide greater detail, including the African terminology, than is present in his published work. The solution to this dilemma, she concluded in a recent article about this case, was to be a new sort of source edition which makes use of the whole range of sources into a single *History in Africa* (23) 1996, 461-465.

work without literally printing every datum. Hence the designation “integrated source edition.”⁴ Her *Alfred Schachtzabel's Reise* is the final product which allows one to evaluate the whole procedure.

The work opens with an introduction about Schachtzabel, his views on ethnology and colonial policies, and a presentation of his expedition, whose major goal was to collect ethnographic objects for the Berlin Museum. She then comments about his collections and his publications and concludes her editorial introduction with an account of the why, what, and how of this new form of text edition. She stresses that her primary goal has been to make the results of Schachtzabel's expedition available to the populations of the regions he visited as a contribution to the history of their lands. Hence she is preparing a translation in Portuguese. Indeed, she modestly claims that, because she is not editing a primary source but merely a contemporary, and still available, ethnographic source, the usefulness of this edition for western scholars remains limited, and, one may add, would not by itself warrant the considerable effort and cost involved in preparing it.⁵

In her eyes the achievement of an “integrated edition of sources” consists in using the surviving source fragments to return individuality, concreteness, and complexity to the original printed text where these had been suppressed, so that the whole book once again fits in a wider meaningful context. She intends to present the original raw data of Schachtzabel—however much he had already selected, deformed, and interpreted those data—so that readers of the new edition can in turn construct their own abstractions within a framework of contemporary contexts.⁶

From the original book, which is still in print and easy to consult, she retains the text insofar as it deals with facts about Schachtzabel's travels and ethnographic descriptions. But where more detailed and more precise manuscript information (in Schachtzabel's own hand) is available, she replaces the original sentences and sections by those from the manuscripts, and indicates such occurrences typographically. She also indicates her own omissions and additions concerning illustrations, maps, photographs, and additions to the catalogs. She maintains the original spelling for African words, as well as the precise spelling given by her sources in her notes and leaves quotations in the original languages. Perhaps Heintze's most important decision was to omit all the parts of the original printed text which contained demeaning value judgments, boorishness, and personal reminiscence such as hunting trips, presumably so as not to outrage her intended popular African audience. Still, these elements are not glossed over entirely, for she abundantly cites samples of his prejudices in the introduction.⁷

The result of these editorial efforts is a different book altogether, definitely not a text edition of either the 1923 or the 1926 volumes. Both two-page introductions, which are different in the 1923 and 1926 editions, are omitted. So are the first (“From the Coast to the Highlands”) and tenth (“Angola under Portuguese Rule”) chapters of the original. The narrative chapters (1, 2, 3, and 7) are in effect reduced by more than one-fourth and in each case followed by a newly-inserted long second section which contains the relevant data about the

objects collected during the part of the trip described in the first part of each chapter.

Each of these chapters therefore becomes a composite of portions of the original text and additions from Schachtzabel's literary estate. As a result the original chapters 5, 6, 7, and 9 (new 4, 5, 6, and 8) become nearly twice as long or even more than in the forms in which they first appeared. At the end of the work Heintze adds separate appendices containing a final, hitherto unpublished, report by Schachtzabel about this mission, a list of his sound recordings, lists of the ethnographic objects acquired in Angola but abandoned there, and a concordance of the inventory numbers in Schachtzabel's original lists and as she ordered them. These appendices replace the original tables of illustrations and the index. The whole now concludes with a new bibliography and a set of maps, some of which appeared in the original, while others were previously unpublished.

Clearly, the resulting work is a significantly different work. That is already obvious from a gross comparison of the length of the original 1923 edition with Heintze's: 194 pages vs. 392 pages, and up to one-fourth fewer words per page in the original. This work effectively carries the imprint of Heintze's personality more than that of Schachtzabel. That is visible not only in her arrangement of the materials, but even more in the overall tone contributed by her notes. These add not only historical context drawn from other contemporary sources, but also a systematic comparison of Schachtzabel's African terms with those found in later dictionaries and, occasionally, comparative data. In the ethnographic chapters in particular, Heintze utilizes the full potential of Schachtzabel's *disjecta membra* to enrich his printed account almost beyond recognition. Indeed this is a new work whose author is indeed Heintze, not Schachtzabel, although she only uses his words, photographs, and objects. This practice is therefore well beyond the pale of a text edition, and should not be confused with one.

This is not a text edition then, but what is it? As the title page has it, it is a "reconstruction" in which the bulk of the ethnographic information from Schachtzabel is transformed by the new author. It is a salvage project rescuing surviving data which remain of little significance as long as they are not fitted together in a larger whole that gives meaning to its parts. The larger whole which she reconstructs by putting the fragments together is a retrieval of the vision inherent in Schachtzabel's own research design, procedures, and plans for the exposition of his data.

By dint of long hours of work Heintze has produced a very valuable account which may approximate Schachtzabel's original vision of the whole but not his goals. What it certainly does is to rescue information about the Ngangela and, to a lesser extent, the Cokwe that otherwise would effectively remain lost. The result is very much a reference work, a kind of ethnographic survey, but one that obviates the most palpable defects of that genre because the unity of time, space, authorship, and context has been fully maintained and enhanced by Heintze's annotations. In doing so Heintze has created a novel sort of edition, which she has labeled an "integrated edition of sources," in

which “source” is not “text.” It is still an edition because she uses only the author’s own words and data. She is an editor, yes, but she is also more than an editor.

It is not difficult to see why Heintze was attracted to this project. The ethnography and history of the so-called Ngangela are very badly known. Apart from one professional expedition from 1931-32 to a neighboring area, no anthropologist has worked among the Ngangela since 1914. The greatest confusion still reigns about ethnic consciousness and nomenclature at various times in the area, since both have changed considerably since 1913.⁸ In addition new settlers—mainly Cokwe, but perhaps Lucazi as well (both immigrations had scarcely begun by 1914)—have considerably altered the composition of the population. Moreover, events in Angola after 1975 once again have transformed the whole human landscape. Hence the particular value of reconstructing the situation at a given moment in time. Heintze’s work will therefore be extremely useful to scholars as well as to populations in the area. But because she left out derogatory and “personal” data, scholars still need sometimes to refer to Schachtzabel’s original book insofar as such data are necessary to assessing his statements about society and culture.

Should Heintze’s example be imitated? It salvages valuable data and enhances the value of the disparate products left of ethnographic work, as her book shows in a spectacular fashion. And historians are well aware of the irreplaceable and crucial position of ethnographies as sources.⁹ But not all ethnographer’s legacies would be suited. In many cases they are voluminous enough in each category to deserve a strict text publication. In Central Africa the enormous legacies of G. Tessmann, Jan Czekanowski, Emil Torday, and H. Lang spring to mind. A case can also be made for a more modest edition integrating notebooks with extant but dispersed data relevant to the ethnographic objects collected.¹⁰

Still, there remain some authors whose legacy is similar to that Schachtzabel’s both in its relatively small volume and poor state of publication. For central Africa several names come to mind.¹¹ But anyone considering whether to undertake the considerable effort of reconstruction involved will probably decide the matter on the grounds of its potential contribution to the state of our present knowledge about that time, place, society, and culture. In the end, the potential significance, as viewed from the present, of an ethnographer’s contribution will decide whose work is worthy of restoration and whose not.

In the opinion of one who has struggled with the ethnographic literature about the area visited by Schachtzabel, Heintze’s reconstruction is not just meritorious, but invaluable, and she should be praised for her decision to treat the materials as she did. But readers should be aware that this is not a text edition.

Moreover, this novel practice draws attention to the limits of what should legitimately be called a text edition, i.e., a text printed and annotated in such a fashion that it gives the reader the undisturbed text of the original and any additional information needed to clarify the author’s meanings, but no more

than that. By being something else, this work also reveals the limits of the permissible in text editions. Furthermore, it underlines by analogy that all text editions are constructs, never merely facsimiles. However unobtrusive, the editor's personality is never wholly submerged behind the original author and editorial notes enhance both the importance of the text and a *particular* reading of it. Even at the least intrusive, the very choice of what text to edit, together with the editorial apparatus, applies a coat of interpretative varnish over the original painting.

Notes

1. Beatrix Heintze, *Fontes para a história de Angola no século XVII* (2 vols.: Stuttgart, 1985), for the edition of a collection of documents, and idem., *Ethnographische Zeichnungen der Lwimbi/Ngangela (Zentral-Angola)*, (Wiesbaden, 1988), for drawings from the literary estate of Hermann Baumann.

2. Alfred Schachtzabel, *Im Hochland von Angola. Studienreise durch den Süden Portugiesisch-West-Afrikas* (Dresden, 1923); idem., *Angola. Forschungen und Erlebnisse in Südwestafrika* (Berlin, 1926). The illustrations are different, while the text remains nearly identical. Four chapters out of a total of twelve are ethnographic reports, the rest being the travel account *per se*. It also has a list of photographs, of drawings and an index.

3. Heintze, *Alfred Schachtzabels Reise*, 34-35.

4. Heintze, "Plädoyer für eine integrierte Quellen Edition," *Baessler-Archiv*, n.s. 41 (1993), 323-39.

5. Heintze, *Reise*, 11-41, esp. 38.

6. *Ibid.*, 39.

7. *Ibid.*, 15-21, 39-41.

8. T. Delachaux traveled to Ngangela country south of the area covered by Schachtzabel in 1932-33. This expedition produced a record rather similar to this one: a travel book and two general ethnographic articles. Gerhard Kubik's fieldwork in the 1970s relates to an area further east.

9. E.g., Jan Vansina, "The Ethnographic Account as a Genre in Central Africa" in Beatrix Heintze and Adam Jones, eds., *European Sources for Sub-Saharan Africa Before 1900: Use and Abuse* [*Paideuma* 33] (Stuttgart, 1987), 433-44.

10. As H. Klein did with these sorts of data from the first Frobenius expedition. Cf. her *Leo Frobenius: Ethnographische Notizen aus den Jahren 1905-1906* (4 vols.: Stuttgart, 1985-90).

11. Heintze, "Plädoyer," 325-27, for Angola. One also thinks of F. Starr or A. Hutereau for the Congo Free State, and perhaps even of B. Ankermann or M. P. Thorbecke for Cameroun.