

Journals and chronicle as a crucial source of historical pedagogical cognition

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Diaries and journals play a special role in the historical and pedagogical knowledge. The significance of sources in this situation will refer to the knowledge of specific areas of education. First of all, are they related with: school atmosphere, exceptional lessons and school activities, relationships with school staff, participation in youth organizations and circles of interests.

Key words: historical cognition; sources; diaries; memoirs; theory of knowledge; historical and pedagogical knowledge; history of education; secondary school

The aim of this article is to present the particular role of journals and chronicles in the process of historical pedagogical cognition. It will be also necessary to present the borders of discussed cognition.

As yet, various publications connected with using magazines,¹ press,² guides,³ literary works,⁴ autobiographies,⁵ pieces of art⁶ biographies⁷ or biographism⁸ have appeared in the history and education history research.

¹ Sztanke, G. (1993). Czasopisma psychologiczno-pedagogiczne źródłem do badań rodziny. In *Metodologia w badaniach naukowych historii wychowania*. Łódź.

² Kicowska, A. (1993). Prasa jako źródło w badaniach historyczno-edukacyjnych. In *op. cit.*, Łódź.

³ Matek, A. *Edukacja zdrowotna w poradnikach dla rodziców okresu II RP i Polskiej Rzeczypospolitej Ludowej. Analiza porównawcza*.

⁴ Jałmużna, T. (1993). Twórczość literacka źródłem do historii wychowania. In *Metodologia w badaniach naukowych historii wychowania*, Łódź.

⁵ Podgórska, E. (1993). Autobiografia jako źródło do historii wychowania. In *ibid.*

⁶ Wrabec, J. (1993). Niektóre współczesne poglądy na dzieło sztuki jako źródło historyczne. In *ibid.*

⁷ Michalski, G. (1993). Z zagadnień metodologicznych biografii – kilka uwag o źródłach. In *ibid.*

⁸ Szulakiewicz, W. (2004): Biografistyka i jej miejsce w historiografii edukacyjnej po II wojnie światowej. *Biuletyn Historii Wychowania*, nr. 1–2.

Historical research, as Włodzimierz Goriszowski noticed, has culture study aspect for the given country and nation. It enables the tradition continuity in domain of national education at the level of obligatory education.⁹ S. Michalski emphasizes that the mission of education history works, namely : 'how the particular elements of pedagogic tradition are useful to solve the current issues of pedagogic theory and practice; how this elements help teachers and education stuff to understand the essence of modern educational tendencies and to realize the main concepts of the current educational politics and to what degree some of tradition elements, directly or indirectly incumbent on our vision of many current pedagogic issues, make it harder to understand modern educational reform and impede its realization'.¹⁰ Therefore, following Bogdan Suchodolski, it should be emphasized that works from education history should teach the value of pedagogical historical phenomena, presenting their roles and importance and make it easier to understand and realize the current tendency in pedagogical theory and practice in the light of positive past experience.¹¹ As Czeslaw Majorek noticed modern pedagogic has rejected the history of education and does not notify the need for its works. Additionally, the education history itself cannot retire from traditional methods and research area, limiting it to the fact description or institution which is treated like an island, an isolated educational case.¹² Nevertheless, Stefania Walasek is convinced that education history is for 'understanding and analyzing pedagogical phenomena against the background of social living because education is and it was the result of the political, economic, social, culture and civilizational development of countries and nations'.¹³

From a perspective of an education historian apart from his descriptions and interpretations, a number of requirements can be marked out. As Stefania Walasek pays her attention they are the requirements connected with an impartiality, an honest truth subordination, an understanding of facts, phenomena and people and the respect for another person, the other opinions, environments,

⁹ Goriszewski, W. (1993). Elementy wspólne i różne w pedagogicznych badaniach z zakresu historii wychowania. In *Konteksty i metody w badaniach historyczno-pedagogicznych*. Kraków, p. 89.

¹⁰ Michalski, G. (1970). Miejsce historii wychowania w systemie nauk humanistycznych. *Studia Metodologiczne*, nr. 7, p. 48.

¹¹ Ibidem, p. 48.

¹² Walasek, S. (2003). Historia oświaty i jej miejsce wśród nauk pedagogicznych. In: *Nauki pedagogiczne we współczesnej humanistyce*. Toruń, p. 31.

¹³ Ibidem.

cultures.¹⁴ S. Michalski adds that 'education historian aiming at comprehensive showing of past pedagogical reality (with its interpretation) ought to connect the subject matter of his own discipline with similar problems occurring with other domains, operate with crucial knowledge from similar disciplines, as well as use in his research the methods proper for different subsidiary social disciplines, in particular the methods elaborated by pedagogical disciplines and sociology'.¹⁵

Consequently, by the scientific connection of education history and pedagogy on the scientific ground, they have not only descriptive and historical meaning, but also theoretical and practical one.¹⁶ It is also crucial that pedagogy and history are set in an interpretative paradigm of the humanities, thus they are oriented to integration. The need of understanding is actually the factor which compels the need of knowledge integration.¹⁷

Scholars widely formulate the perspective of historical pedagogical research. On the one hand, the nature of contemplation is directed at the right nomenclature such as 'education history' etc., on the other hand it is oriented at methodological problems.

Although, in the methodology of history,¹⁸ philological context is considered, it is omitted on the ground of development of pedagogical historical cooperation.

During historical pedagogical research the analysis of journals or chronicles should be taken into account. This dependency should be essential in considerations of education historians. Every source should lead to historical pedagogical cognition of definite historic reality.

The act of the picture cognition of high school in Second Republic can be based on fields marked out by historical literature of the subject. However, the context of consideration can be concluded from the level of social culture formation of reality. Therefore it is necessary to bring closer the assumptions of historical pedagogic cognition.

¹⁴ Ibid., p. 283.

¹⁵ Michalski, S. (1964). O niektórych zagadnieniach przedmiotu badań historii wychowania i jej roli w edukacji pedagogicznej. *Ruch Pedagogiczny*, nr. 1, p. 28–29.

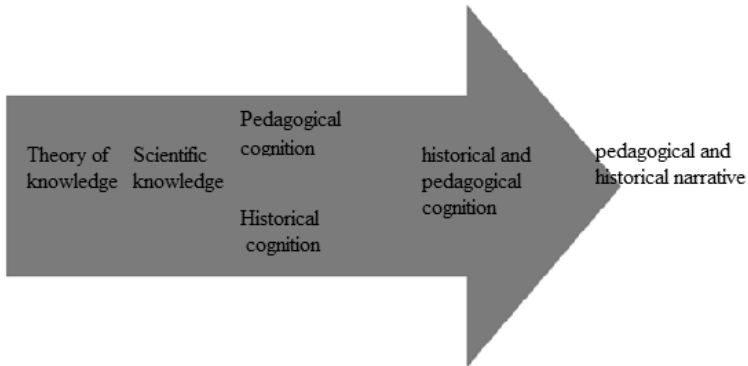
¹⁶ Miśkiewicz, B. (1973). *Wstęp do badań historycznych*. Poznań–Warszawa, p. 109.

¹⁷ Palka, S.: op. cit., p. 69.

¹⁸ Specify should be on the basis of the methodology of history – a method of philological: Topolski, J. (1984). *Metodologia Historii*. Warszawa; Szymański, J. (1983). *Nauki pomocnicze historii*. Warszawa; Topolski, J. (1987). Problemy metodologiczne korzystania ze źródeł literackich w badaniach historycznych. In: *Dzieło literackie w badaniu historycznym*. Warszawa; Bartoszyński, K. *Aspekty i relacje tekstów (źródło-historia-literatura)*; Szymański, J. (1977). O potrzebie stosowania metod filologicznych w badaniach historycznych. *Historyka*, T. 7.

The historical pedagogic cognition.

The complexity of understanding the historical cognition including direct and indirect cognition, truthfulness and falseness of sentences and statements enables detailed sources elaboration. However, the dependence of historical pedagogical cognition can be presented in a chart.



Picture 1. Process of historical and pedagogical knowledge (sources: to develop their own).

Picture 1 illustrates the whole historical pedagogical cognition process beginning from the main epistemological assumptions. The scholar cognition in the further part shows the dichotomy of history and pedagogy on the ground of science. Whereas the result of this process is the effect of pedagogue work in the form of narration.

F. Bacon and A. Comte recognized cognition as an expansion of knowledge over the material world.¹⁹ As far as epistemology is concerned, cognition acts should be taken into account, that is certain physical aspects such as perception, memorizing, judging and more – it is reasoning, argumentation, deduction, explaining etc. Also important are the results of cognition, it is scientific assertions. Cognitive acts as well as cognitive results are estimated from their justification point of view.²⁰ Epistemology, focusing on the fundamental question: what is truth?, organizes its own reflection around the truth problem, sources and limits of cognition.²¹ In the scientific study so called relative truth is accomplished,

¹⁹ Pilch, T. (2003). *Encyklopedia Pedagogiczna XXI wiek*, T. I. Warszawa, p. 1045.

²⁰ Ibidem, p. 1045–1046.

²¹ Ibidem, p. 1046.

which is a step in obtaining the absolute conformity of expressed sentences with reality (an ideal isomorphism), it is the absolute truth. Due to the infinite complexity of the constantly changing natural and social reality – we are only heading for the absolute truth.²² The main difference between the cognition in general and scientific cognition depends on the fact that the purpose of scientific cognition is not to gain knowledge about the world in general, but to acquire scientific knowledge.²³ Thus, the essence of scientific cognition is particularly important from the educational and historical perspective. The main purpose of scientific cognition in the areas of education is to gain knowledge “maximum pure, maximum reliable, maximum general, maximum simple, with a maximum content”.²⁴ It causes too general approach for the cognition itself. However, completing them with issues of historical cognition, quite interesting overview of this issue can be obtained. The source of scientific cognition, like all cognition, is sensual impression, in which we experience the outside world not directly, but as the cause of our sensations, it is as a collection of knowledge about the world.²⁵

Understanding the past, which is done through historical study, is independent of the characteristics attributed to it, a part of the cognition process carried out by human.²⁶ ‘Cognition can be understood in two ways: as a process of learning about the object of cognition by its subject and by the results of this process. In the second case, cognition takes the form of knowledge.’²⁷ On the other hand, knowledge is a result of cognition process, which assumes the memory action.²⁸ F. Bacon emphasizes, above all, the pragmatic moment. He stated, that science helps man to master nature and meets the needs of self-knowledge. Thus, the aim of scientific cognition is getting the true knowledge.²⁹ However, to fulfill this condition, it is important to include in scope of definition the justification procedure, by checking (verification) statements.³⁰

As a result, the historical cognition in a broader sense can be understood as the complete cognition of the past. It also includes the one, often made by us in everyday life when we need a knowledge of

²² Topolski, J. (1984). *Metodologia Historii*. Warszawa, pp. 287–288.

²³ Ibidem, p. 257.

²⁴ Pilch, T. – Bauman, T. (2001). *Zasady badań pedagogicznych. Strategie ilościowe i jakościowe*. Warszawa, p. 17.

²⁵ Topolski, J. (1984). *Metodologia Historii*. Warszawa, p. 259.

²⁶ Ibidem, p. 255.

²⁷ Ibidem.

²⁸ Ibidem.

²⁹ Ibidem, p. 258.

³⁰ Ibidem, p. 260.

what has already happened. However, the scientific cognition of the past facts is focused on gaining scientific knowledge about them.³¹

Jerzy Topolski stated that, historical cognition is a combination of direct and indirect cognition.³² However, it is significant that the historian who is mainly focused on written sources – pointing to the indirectness as a proper understanding of historical cognition, seems roughly correspond to the situation of research in history.³³

As consequence, the historical and pedagogical cognition will be a reconstruction and disclosure of senses and meanings of the education phenomenon in a particular place and time in history.³⁴ The last link showing the work of the educational historian will be the narration.

As J. Topolski noted, in the analysis of narration, first of all, it is necessary to draw attention to the following three issues:

1. types of narration (within a given study);
2. narrative tools;
3. components of narration.³⁵

For the purposes of this article,³⁶ it is worth emphasizing that for the construction of narration with the perspective of time, number of measures (tools) are necessary.

These should include: the historical imagination,³⁷ the language, the concepts of classification and ordering, counterfactual inference. However, the narration in the presented picture also includes categories of pedagogy. From this perspective, it will be used for explaining and ordering system of education. It would also give meaning to the phenomena and educational situations.

³¹ Ibidem, p. 264.

³² Many authors raise issues of indirection and directness sourcesm. In: Moszczeńska, W. (1977). *Metodologia Historii. Zarys Krytyczny*. Warszawa; Topolski, J. (1984). *Metodologia Historii*. Warszawa; Topolski, J. (1966). *Jak się rozumie i pisze historię. Tajemnice narracji historycznej*. Warszawa; Miśkiewicz, B. (1993). *Wprowadzenie do badań historycznych*. Ławica/Poznań; Buksiński, T. (1979). *Problemy obiektywności wiedzy historycznej*. Warszawa–Poznań.

³³ Ibidem, p. 268.

³⁴ Hejnicka-Bezwińska, T. (2004). *Integracja perspektywy poznawczej pedagogicznej i historycznej w procesie wytwarzania wiedzy naukowej o edukacji*. In Palka, S. (ed.), *Pogranicza pedagogiki i nauk pomocniczych*. Kraków, p. 33.

³⁵ Topolski, J. (1984). *Metodologia Historii*. Warszawa, pp. 499–500.

³⁶ Comprehensively and exhaustively about the historical narrative can be read in Topolski, J. (1984). *Metodologia Historii*. Warszawa; Topolski, J. (1996). *Jak się pisze i rozumie historię. Tajemnice narracji historycznej*. Warszawa; Topolski, J. (1983). *Teoria wiedzy historycznej*. Poznań.

³⁷ A very important part of the examination procedure, writes in: Goff, J. (2007). *Historia i Pamięć*. Warszawa.

Moreover, the 'historical narration (and not just historical) contains beyond logical, grammatical and rhetorical structure, the contents generally inarticulate, which are deeper assumptions throughout the narration'.³⁸ The vision of the world and man is expressed in them and is represented by the historian or by a pedagogue. These deeper narrative assumptions, more or less coherent, which include – of course, also the knowledge of historian (pedagogue), more or less complete, about the past, it is his vision of the historical process, control the entire narration, they determine what is in the information layer and whether and what rhetorical means are used by the author. This layer therefore contains historian's beliefs, both his beliefs about the world, as well as beliefs about the past and this fragment of the past that he conveys to the recipient (the reader).³⁹

The historical narration is a very complex creature, just as a literary work, it is in fact both a literary work and a report on the results of empirical research. Meanwhile, the historical sources provide to its construction only one type of material that can meet at a certain level, this reliability criteria, it is independence from historian learning the past.⁴⁰ Thus, the historical sources enabling determination of historical facts became in this light, by its very nature, a solid base of narration.⁴¹ It should also be noted that there is no difference between the sources and historical narration. As noted they and the narration are in the common area of interpretation, but here we are dealing with its different stages and forms. As noted by J. Topolski without sources, it is difficult to imagine historical research and narration construction.⁴² Therefore, it is worth to present the division of sources and placing journals and diaries as my interesting objects of cognition.

Sources

Sources are the only threads that bind the historian with the past, but they are not connected with any objectively existing reality, but they are the reality constructions themselves, continuing the reference to metaphors, they are threads connected with the awareness of the sources authors.⁴³ So there is a problem with the past historical events or

³⁸ Topolski, J. (1996). *Jak się pisze i rozumie historię*. Warszawa, p. 102.

³⁹ Ibidem.

⁴⁰ Ibidem, p. 342.

⁴¹ Ibidem.

⁴² Ibidem. p. 341–345.

⁴³ Ibidem, p. 345.

subject causations of historical cognition.⁴⁴ Despite the many discussions about the sources (internal and external criticism,⁴⁵ directness and indirectness,⁴⁶ classification, division) I will use the classification proposed by Jerzy Serczyk, namely:

- descriptive sources (narrative). They include, historiographical works, biographies, hagiographies (lives of saints), chronicles, memories, reports, and the whole journalistic work (magazines, newspapers, journals, leaflets, propaganda, etc.) and private correspondence;
- filing and documentary sources, including both all kinds of documents and collections of files which are the result of business offices and public and state institutions activity, there may also be records of private origin, eg as a result of the activities of individual people or groups of people. Thus, for example, there are records of administrative authorities, Inland Revenues, judicial, military, school, church, files of associations and organizations.⁴⁷

However, we should focus more on the aspects that are more interesting for me regarding this article, the sources: journal and diary.

Firstly, we can classify them as biographic and personal documents. Robert Redfield emphasizes that although 'the differences in the various definitions their essential element is the same'. In other words, these are documents expressing human and personal characteristics of the author in such way that the reader recognizes the author's opinions about the events he refers to.⁴⁸

According to Robert Angell, this is a document revealing an opinion about events he participated in. In turn, Herbert Blumer adds that this is a report of the unit experience, presenting its activities as a man and his participant in a social life.⁴⁹ Jan Szczepański concludes that in all definitions, the psychological attitudes, motivations, views of a given person are emphasized.⁵⁰

⁴⁴ In detail it is described dispute between obiektywistami and presentists in Buksiński, T. (1979). *Problemy obiektywności wiedzy historycznej*. Warszawa-Poznań; Schaff, A. (1970). *Historia i Prawda*. Warszawa; Burzyńska, A. – Markowski, M. P. (2006). *Teorie literatury XX wieku*, Kraków.

⁴⁵ Topolski, J. (1984). *Metodologia Historii*. Warszawa; Moszczeńska, W. (1977). *Zarys krytyczny metodologii historii*. Warszawa.

⁴⁶ Miśkiewicz, B. (1993). *Wprowadzenie do badań historycznych*. Ławica-Poznań.

⁴⁷ Ibidem, p. 71.

⁴⁸ Gottschalk, L. – Kluckhohn, C. – Angell, R. (1945). *The Use of Personal Documents in history. Anthropology and Sociology, Social Science Research Council*. New York, p. VII.

⁴⁹ Szczepański, J. (1973). *Odmiany czasu teraźniejszego*. Warszawa, p. 622.

⁵⁰ Ibidem, p. 623.

As a journal we can call an everyday record from the strictly documentary, which task is to consolidate events (chronicle), to those that are close to literary expression. It does not compose the construction made in advance, its structure is not determined by compositional idea, but the course of events that the author perpetuates.

Its constituent records may be varied both in terms of composition and in the theme. Sometimes journal, in spite of being written without artistic intentions, is considered as outstanding literary work (an intimate journal, a travel journal).⁵¹ Journals can be regular when they record in the form of a diary systematic course of events, or irregular, when they record events from case to case.⁵²

The chronicle, in turn, has quite special place in historical writings. Writing chronicles actually appeared in the late Middle Ages, but not without the influence of certain ancient genres. It used to be divided into many varieties of genre, due to the wide range of both stylistic and thematic structures. Here can be distinguished: chronicles, epistolographic reports, logs, memoirs and diaries in the strict sense and poetry diaries. The reasons of writing chronicles are various. In addition to the desire to report on the public activities or to note-as a participant – the events, they are also determined by the moments of a private nature.⁵³ The chronicle also has the characteristics of a log, but the distinctive criterion is an author's personal involvement in the events described and the way and circumstances of demonstrating his presence in those events. Please note also, that there is always some distance of time which separates the diarist and the events he describes. Thanks to that, his work gains the characteristics of a developed narration.⁵⁴ There is also the issue of cognitive curiosity of diary interpreter. On the one hand it can be a will of identification and reconstruction of the author's personality, on the other hand defining his cultural attitude.⁵⁵ Of course, we can add a number of other cognitive values that determine the acceptance of a particular perspective of the scientific examination. Interpretative reconstruction of 'a personal stigma'⁵⁶ can be as diverse as diaries themselves.⁵⁷

⁵¹ Kostkiewicz, T. – Okopień-Stawińska, A. – Stawiński, J. *Słownik terminów literackich*, p. 245.

⁵² Szymański, J. (1983): *Nauki pomocnicze historii*. Warszawa, p. 48.

⁵³ Ibidem, p. 46.

⁵⁴ Ibidem, p. 48.

⁵⁵ Cieński, A. (1979). *Interpretacja dzieła pamiętnikarskie*. In: *Zagadnienia literaturoznawczej interpretacji*, Wrocław-Warszawa, p. 184.

⁵⁶ The main value of each diary, what writer willy-nilly he squeezed Lisicki, H. (1876). *F. Lubieński. Pamiętniki*. Warszawa, p. 690).

It is essential that journals and chronicles put on the common ground of history and literary comprise the only source of cognition. One of conditions of a proper approach is a point in methodology which creates a methodological triad: philology-history-pedagogy.

What is more, the sphere of a proper approach to the research should account for not only documented knowledge, which source is the observation of reality. Obviously, this observation is not made by the historian himself. Researcher can use the results of his own observation of the world, research of the past, historical researches and other sciences⁵⁸.

A philological reference to research pays an important role. According to Joachim Lelewel auxiliary sciences or sciences which allow us to get to know the historical genesis decide on a scientific cognition of the past.⁵⁹

Above all, chronicles, journals, lists and other personal documents are a material used to research deliberate sides of social processes, in other words, historic processes.⁶⁰ On the general level, without understanding attitudes, purposes of human behavior, we cannot understand historic process through the actions of these people.⁶¹

Diaries can provide a lot of material for other analysis: they constitute a base to make a research of a whole sphere of socially accepted imaginations, opinions, they cast a light on imagination about what is science, art, technology in understanding members of different layers and social classes. They can also help to recreate changes in ideology, outlook on life, magical views and a whole common knowledge which constitutes a base for life orientation.⁶² All these elements of social consciousness, which can be investigated on the basis of textbooks, are indispensable in creating the course of a historic process.⁶³

J. Ecarus adds that preserved life stories inform us what is in fact defining ourselves, overcoming life necessities, emancipation, and self materialization, what ways in their course are overcome by the individual, which social conditions support them and which cause breakdowns and failures.⁶⁴

⁵⁷ Cieński, A. op., cit. p. 184.

⁵⁸ Topolski, J. (1984). *Metodologia Historii*. Warszawa, p. 338.

⁵⁹ Lelewel, J. (1950). Nauki dające poznawać źródła historyczne. In: *Wybór pism historycznych*. Wrocław, p. 24.

⁶⁰ Chałasiński, J.: *Pamiętniki Polaków 1918–1978*, Warszawa 1982, s. 33.

⁶¹ Ibidem, p. 34–35.

⁶² Chałasiński, J.: op. cit., p. 42–47.

⁶³ Ibidem, p. 47.

⁶⁴ Michalski, G. Źródła do badań biograficznych w historii wychowania. In *op. cit.*, p. 175.

Thus, the underestimated value of journals and chronicles is shown on the common ground of many sciences. One may even claim that the science is poor if it resigns from such a valuable sources as personal documents. From researcher's perspective this material is interesting because of possibility of cognition different atmosphere, climate in which protagonist lived. It also allows to see him in a broader context, in connection with the environment, entangled in different personal interrelationships and to see him through the eyes of other people – whether benevolent or adversary.⁶⁵

This way of organizing papers on diaries and journals allows to see many research aspects. Most of all, person/student shall be put on the first place due to his nurturing position (subject to social influence) by institutions as well as single units. What can be seen here is the grasp of many phenomenon including cultural aspect, mentioned by W. Dilthey. Additionally, one must pay attention to the atmosphere in the classroom. It should be connected with the person of a teacher as well as special lessons which are conducted by him. Not less important role will play after school classes, events, anniversaries attended by students. Of course, in this context, widely understood after school activity of student community will be crucial. It can be revealed by participation in sports, arts or other interests clubs. The last important area of my interest is a belonging to youth organizations and the resulting repercussions. Sources in the course of analysis may reveal additional areas that need to be included in the examination of secondary education in the interwar period.

⁶⁵ Michalski, G. Z zagadnień metodologicznych biografii-klika uwag o źródłach. In *op. cit.*, p. 222.