

Collection and protection of school sources*

Abstract

Among the historical information on the development of education and upbringing in Poland, it is the school sources that have cognitive value. The school sources include chronicles, official documents, photographs, interviews, school diaries, school newspapers, school equipment, and exhibits in school memorial rooms. Since the school sources have been present as long as the schools themselves, they provide the most accurate information about the activities of schools. Usually, the school documentation duty was imposed by the school authorities, which developed appropriate regulations, and with time the systems for protection of school resources were also implemented. The school authorities also designed detailed guidelines for the preparation of, inter alia, school chronicles, and encouraged employees to write them. The interest in school documentation especially grew in the Second Republic of Poland, which resulted from the process of rebuilding the administrative structures of the Polish state. All documents were subject to an assessment by the School Inspector. The process of creating school documentation was accompanied by initiatives to store and protect it. Pedagogues started to create school museums, where the school documents were to be kept.

School sources meet the criteria of historical sources. However, it is difficult to suggest a uniform typology of school sources, as it depends on the definition of the source. School source materials of invaluable cognitive value and a rich iconographic base might be the basis for research in history, education science, ethnology, sociology and anthropology. Despite their cognitive value, the school sources are currently not protected by law and may become dispersed and irreversibly lost.

Keywords: protection, school, history, resources, legal regulation, school museums, chronicles, documents

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Polish traditions and experiences in the field of production and protection of school sources

Among the historical information showing the development of education and educational system in Poland, an invaluable cognitive value should be attributed to sources of school origins, such as chronicles, official documents, photographs, interviews, school diaries, school bulletins, school equipment and exhibits collected in school memory rooms. School sources have been around since schools were first created. I justify this bold statement with the fact that we would not have had the knowledge of school activity if there had not been school sources. School documents were the result of school activity and thus became a remnant of their operation. The amounts of school archival resources are determined by many external factors and the internal life of the school. As a result of the socio-political situation, running school office was mandatory and legally enforced through regulations issued by school authorities or resulted from school tradition and depended on historical awareness and meticulousness in keeping school documentation by the head/principal of the school. The obligation to keep school documentation was imposed by school authorities, who prepared various school regulations. Over time, a system of protection of school sources was developed. School documentation was prepared in accordance with the guidelines contained in: *School rules of 1909*, *Silesian and Prussian school rules*, *Temporary laws on elementary schools*, *the Decree of the Chief of State of 17 February 1919*, *Rules for the heads of the general schools of 25 June 1923*¹. School authorities also developed detailed guidelines for the preparation of individual documents, such as school chronicles, and encouraged keeping them through official procedures².

A particular attention was paid to school documentation in the Second Republic of Poland, which resulted from the reconstruction of the administrative structures of the Polish state. During the interwar period, when one of the directions of state policy was the unification the system of education, school authorities encouraged paying special attention to school documentation. The purpose of school documents was to ensure that the pedagogical and educational activities were carried out correctly in accordance with the recommendations and school rules. All documents were subject to inspections conducted by a school inspector. According to the school laws, regulations and rules, each school was supposed to keep the following school books and records: a school chronicle, a list of children in the school district, the main directory, an activity register, a class register, a distribution of the educational material, an inspection book, a school property inventory, a library inventory, a collection of school laws and regulations published by school authorities, a registration catalogue, a daily attendance catalogue (an attendance book). In addition, each school should have a separate book for completing end-of-semester and the

¹ LEWICKI, W., ZAKLIKA, Z., *Kancelaria szkolna, czyli instrukcja do prowadzenia kancelarii szkolnej*, [School office or the instruction to run a school office] Lviv 1930, p. 11.

² Guidelines for keeping school chronicles are included in a special 1916 booklet in the area of the former Congress Poland. In 1945, in turn, a school inspector from Konin encouraged reconstruction of school chronicles. Information obtained from dr hab. Piotr Gołdyn on 2 July 2017.

Teaching Board meeting protocols, a book of leaves and substitutions in the teaching staff, a book of school head's orders and school head's inspection notes³.

In addition, the guidebook publications, which provided guidelines for running the school office, appeared on the publishing market during the interwar period to support school heads in the office work⁴. A textbook by Władysław Lewicki and Zenon Zaklika entitled *Kancelarja szkolna (School office)* was published in Lviv in 1923. It was intended only for local use because the instructions provided within dealt with the problems of running a school office in the lands of the former Austrian partition. However, the fourth edition of this guidebook, published in 1930, included changes resulting from new school laws and regulations covering the entire territory of the Republic of Poland⁵. Another useful source of information for keeping school documentation was the content included in the school head guidebook entitled *Kancelarja publicznej szkoły powszechnej*⁶ (*General public school office*) authored by Piotr Tłuczek and published in Warsaw in 1928. Information about the school head duties were published in the publications written by Bolesław Dontent⁷ and S. Klebanowski⁸. In his brochure entitled *About the school chronicle (O kronice szkolnej)* published in Sandomierz in 1926, Waław Skarbimir Laskowski drew attention to the manner of keeping the school chronicle, its significance in the school activity and historical research⁹. A practical guide to writing school rules, protocols and chronicles was the paper by J. Hełczyński published in Lviv in 1938 as part of a student series¹⁰. These guidelines persuaded school heads of the need to keep school documentation and asked for reliability and objectivity when preparing the records. On the issue of school chronicles, P. Tłuczek wrote that one should “carefully avoid any moral and intellectual judgements of their colleagues and avoid including any information from their private life. When describing one's own work, one should do so in a modest way, without pretending to be a hero”¹¹. However, despite numerous publications of a counselling nature, school heads used mainly the Official Journal of the Ministry of Religious Denominations

³ LEWICKI, W., ZAKLIKA, Z., *Kancelaria szkolna*, p. 7.

⁴ A guide to running an office authored by Edward Zarębski was published in Warsaw in 1915, in which the author gave practical tips for running commercial and industrial companies. However, this was not useful to schools. There were no detailed regulations, instructions and literature in this area. ZARĘBSKI, E., *Organizacja biurowa*, [*Office organisation*], Vol. I, Warsaw 1915.

⁵ LEWICKI, W., ZAKLIKA, Z., *Kancelaria szkolna*.

⁶ TŁUCZEK, P., *Kancelarja publicznej szkoły powszechnej*, [*General public school office*], Warsaw 1928.

⁷ DONTEN, B., *Kompetencje kierownika szkoły*, [*School head competences*], Krasnystaw 1928.

⁸ KLEBANOWSKI, S., *Obowiązki i rola kierownika szkoły*, [*School head's duties and role*], Warsaw 1930.

⁹ LASKOWSKI, W. S., *O kronice szkolnej*, [*About the school chronicle*], Sandomierz 1926.

¹⁰ HEŁCZYŃSKI, J., *Pisanie regulaminów Protokołów Kroniki Szkolnej, Praca wewnętrzna organizacji uczniowskich*, [*Writing rules, protocols, school chronicle, internal work of student organisations*], Lviv 1938.

¹¹ TŁUCZEK, P., *Kancelarja publicznej szkoły powszechnej*, p. 74

and Public Enlightenment and their own initiative in practice. As a result of school heads' independent activities, school sources varied and were not unified across all schools in the Second Republic of Poland. However, the working procedures of school offices were worked out during the interwar period and the 20-year-long work of school heads became the foundation for keeping school documentations during World War II and probably in the Polish People's Republic.

As the process of producing school documentation continued, initiatives showing the need for their collection and protection emerged. During the interwar period, attention was also paid to the issues of protection of school documentation, which was addressed in the *Rules for the heads of general schools* and guides. In *School office...*, Lewicki wrote that "the school chronicle should be carefully guarded"¹². Requests were made to protect other school documents, as well. It was thought that "the list of children in the school district should be carefully guarded and stored to protect sheets and children's cards from being lost or destroyed. The list of children in the school district played a very important role because it kept a permanent record of all the school-age children in the district so that none of them could shirk the duty to attend the school"¹³.

The school documentation system, which was growing during the interwar period, created the need to protect school documents but its great importance for the national heritage had been already emphasised by the representatives of Polish pedagogical thought. The first initiatives related to the protection of school sources emerged with the idea and activity of school museums, whose primary goal was to train teachers using reference materials while the collection of relics and historical school records was their secondary activity. The idea of establishing a museum for school and teaching purposes appeared as early as in the 18th century. A member of the National Education Commission and a great crown official Michał Mniszech published *Thoughts with regard to the foundation of the Musaeum Polonicum* in 1775. A school museum is also mentioned by the acts of the National Education Commission in section IV, which recommend inspectors to examine e.g. the state of the school buildings, libraries and museums. In reality, museums began to emerge in the mid-19th century in England, France and Germany – the countries that were leaders in the industrial development. Museums brought in teaching aids and school equipment from factories, examined its usefulness and recommended schools to buy the best products. In 1907, there were 68 school museums in the world, including in Austria-Hungary, Switzerland, Great Britain, Holland, the USA, Japan and Russia. Some school museums, such as the Paris Museum, collected archival materials and historical and didactic documents, while others, such as Pestalozzianum in Zurich, turned into biographical museums. When a Parisian museum supported by the French government created a Slavic section in order to collect pedagogical resources, this attracted the interest of Polish educational activists. Samuel Dickstein and Adolf Dygasiński called for the creation of a school museum in Warsaw. Eugeniusz Babiński, a principal of a Warsaw Realschule, gathered

¹² LEWICKI, W., ZAKLIKA, Z., *Kancelaria szkolna*, p. 6.

¹³ *Ibidem*, p. 28.

a considerable amount of teaching aids, but the school's financial standing prevented the museum from being opened. It was only in 1905 on the initiative of the Urania Scientific Aid Society that the Society of the Pedagogical Museum was set up. It created Muzeum Macierzy Szkolnej in Warsaw with reference teaching aids, where guidance was given to teachers in the area of establishing the school workshops. Another museum institute was Muzeum Pedagogiczne Miejskie (Municipal Pedagogical Museum) established in Warsaw in 1917, where a library of publications was organised. In 1927, the library included 5,500 volumes, including those in the field of the history of education¹⁴. The Association of Higher Education Teachers in Lviv, which initiated the foundation of the School Museum in 1903, which was the first institution of this kind in the Polish territory, drew attention to the need to gather and take care of school resources and its significance as historical sources¹⁵. There were educational museums in Lviv and Warsaw, i.e. the Pedagogical Museum and the Museum of Education and Upbringing, during the interwar period. Warsaw institutions where the educational museum resources were collected received the patronage of the Commission for the Study of History of Education and Educational System in Poland. In 1937, Maria Grzegorzewska disseminated a proposal to set up the Central Museum of Education in the *Chowanna* magazine. Professor Grzegorzewska suggested that the museum should be a "nucleus of living, continuous work, an educationally dynamic centre of scientific and research work and at the same time a centre reflecting cultural life and its needs"¹⁶. After World War II, postulates for the establishment of the Museum of Educational System and Education at the Union of Polish Teachers appeared in *Głos Nauczycielski* magazine already in 1947¹⁷. Despite the support from teachers, educational authorities and prominent academic figures, the initiative was not implemented¹⁸. The museum of adult education which Adam Horbowski from the Teacher Training College

¹⁴ GŁOWACKA, A., "Z dziejów polskiego muzeum szkolnego", [From the history of the Polish school museum], *Zeszyty Naukowe Uniwersytetu im. A. Mickiewicza w Poznaniu, Biblioteka* 1966, no. 6/61, p. 2–7.

¹⁵ The school museum was to consist of two departments: historical and contemporary. In the area of historical relics, it was planned to organise a library with books on the history of Polish education and monographs of schools and also collect school items, such as drawings, textbooks and old scientific items, including atlases and diagrams. The contemporary department was to exhibit the latest scientific items, equipment for gymnastics and games, contemporary pedagogical works and students' works, "Sprawozdanie komisji, zarządzającej Polskie Muzeum Szkolne za czas do końca kwietnia 1904 roku", [Report of the commission establishing the Polish School Museum for the period until the end of April 1904], *Muzeum...* 20 (1904), no. 5, p. 20–21.

¹⁶ As cited in PODGÓRSKI, W. J., „Wołanie o muzeum”, [„Calling for a museum”], *Głos Nauczycielski* 1987, no. 24, p. 6.

¹⁷ *Głos Nauczycielski*, 1947, no. 17.

¹⁸ RELL, J., „Utworzyć muzeum oświaty i wychowania”, [„Create a museum of educational system and education”], *Głos Nauczycielski* 1979, no. 45; PLUTA, W., „Ocalić od zapomnienia”, [„Save from oblivion”], *Głos Nauczycielski* 1979, no. 50; GRZEŚ, B., „Muzeum Oświaty i wychowania”, [„Museum of Educational System and Education”], *Głos Nauczycielski* 1979, no. 52; ORYSIAK, S., „Otworzyć Muzeum Oświaty. Zainteresowali się Bułgarzy”, [„Open Museum of Education. Bulgarians are interested”], *Głos Nauczycielski* 1980, no. 1; PODGÓRSKI, W. J., „Wołanie o muzeum”, *Głos Nauczycielski* 1987, no. 24

of Rzeszów drew attention to was not established either¹⁹. An indirect result of the noble museum idea was the numerous regional school chambers, and at the end of the 1980s it became possible to open the Museum of Education of the Land of Łódź (1983) Museum of Education in Bydgoszcz (1985) and Educational Museum in Puławy (1987). The latter was founded on the initiative of retired teachers, Stanisław Jędrych and Mikołaj Spóźio, who adapted an 1811 school building and together with the teachers affiliated to the Union of Polish Teachers, they gathered books, documents and school equipment there²⁰.

Historical sources vs. school sources

In the literature on the methodology of historical sciences, there are many definitions and typologies of historical sources which evolved together with increasing research needs and the improvement of research techniques²¹. The choice of sources depends on the analysed subject, the time and historian's knowledge and research skills. In the area of the scientific work of the historian of education, the issues related to the development of education over the centuries is as important as the analysis of the pedagogical thought. In order to investigate the issues related to educational system, the historian uses archival resources but the collections of school sources deposited at schools, archives and private collections are also valuable. School sources provide information about specific events from the past, but they can never be a mirror image because the past is elusive due to its infinite nature. History is not a simple description of a sequence of events but rather their interpretation in a diachronic and synchronous systems. It is not so much a science of the past but rather a study of people in time²². Moreover, the methodological literature has not defined school sources and the notion of historical sources is not explicitly defined. A source can be everything that provides information about the past, i.e. chronicles, memoirs, notes, official documents, relics, buildings, equipment, human memory, paintings and photographs – everything people have made and left behind. In the context of the definition developed by Johan Gustaw Droysen, who recognises external characteristics and the way in which sources form as a criterion, it can be assumed that a school source includes those items that teachers deliberately left to future generations as a channel of information and evidence of their activity while items produced out of necessity of the contemporary people, i.e. ban-

¹⁹ HORBOWSKI, A., „Kiedy powstanie muzeum oświaty dorosłych”, [„When the Museum of Adult Education is founded”], *Oświata Dorosłych* 1982, no. 6, p. 357–359.

²⁰ No author, „Puławskie Muzeum Oświatowe”, [„Puławy Educational Museum”], *Głos Nauczycielski* 1994, no. 11.

²¹ MATERNICKI, J., MAJOREK, C., SUCHOŃSKI, A., *Dydaktyka historii*, [Didactics of history], Warsaw 1993, p. 354.

²² SWIEŻAWSKI, S., *Zagadnienie historii filozofii*, [The problem of the history of philosophy], Warsaw 2005, p. 32.

ners, buildings and equipment, can be described as school relics²³. Ernst Bernheim, on the other hand, proposes two definitions of the source: the material used by science for learning and results of human activities, which are particularly well suited to explore and verify historical facts²⁴. According to Bernheim's definition, school sources are the research material and result from the activities of people related to the school. In order to define school sources, it is also advisable to use Marcel Handelsman's proposal, who defines sources as *fixed and preserved traces of thoughts, action or most generally human life*²⁵. Stanisław Kościółkowski, who believed that every trace of human existence in the past serves to explore and reconstruct historical facts, defined a source in a similar manner²⁶. Gerard Labuda proposed a more complex definition of sources, in which the dualistic nature of psycho-physical and social remnants, which are the product of human labour and acquire the capacity to reflect social development by participating in it²⁷. Regardless of whether we adopt the narrower definition proposed by Bernheim and Labuda, who believed that sources spoke only of remnants of human activity, or we will believe that any material used to learn about the past should be considered a historical source, as Kościółkowski and Handelsman thought, the archival resources deposited at schools exhibit characteristics typical of sources. The above attempt to define school sources corresponds also to a broader definition of historical sources proposed by Jerzy Topolski, in which he recognises all sources of historical knowledge (direct and indirect), i.e. information along with information channels about the social past²⁸. The proposed definitions of sources based on the traditional historiography model focus primarily on the source itself as a form of historical communication but ignore the figure of the researcher. In contrast, the modernist interpretation of the historical source draws more attention to the perspective of the researcher, where "the source optics depends on historian's optics"²⁹. The importance of a researcher's perspective in the analysis of school sources seems to be indisputably important as these sources are not very common and the researcher's knowledge, skills and interests and the relevancy of questioning determine the end result of the source analysis. It is also necessary to place school sources, which are a product of human activity and carriers of historical information at the same time, in the context of the discussed definitions of historical sources. This is due to the fact that school is one of the oldest social institutions, in which the processes attributed to social groups, such as social interaction between individual members of the community, the com-

²³ CHORAŻY, E., KONIECZKA-ŚLIWIŃSKA, D., ROSZAK, S., *Edukacja historyczna w szkole*, [Historical education in the school], Warsaw 2008, p. 199.

²⁴ TOPOLSKI, J., *Metodologia historii*, [Methodology of history], Warsaw 1984, p. 342.

²⁵ HANDELSMAN, M., *Historyka*, Warsaw 1928, p. 44.

²⁶ CHORAŻY, E., KONIECZKA-ŚLIWIŃSKA, D., ROSZAK, S., *Edukacja historyczna*, p. 199.

²⁷ LABUDA, G., „Próba nowej systematyki i nowej interpretacji źródeł historycznych”, [„An attempt at new systematics and new interpretation of historical sources”], *Studia Źródłoznawcze*, vol. I, Warsaw 1957, p. 22.

²⁸ TOPOLSKI, J., *Metodologia historii*, p. 344.

²⁹ CHORAŻY, E., KONIECZKA-ŚLIWIŃSKA, D., ROSZAK, S., *Edukacja historyczna*, p. 200.

mon purpose and norms, rules of action, roles and positions of individual members, have occurred for centuries. The school environment can be described as a micro-society which has naturally produced and continues to produce remnants as sources for historical analysis. The school contains a rich and varied range of school sources, which should be classified in the future in order to develop their methodological typology.

School sources can be divided according to two criteria: source classification (the form, origin or content of the source) and methodological classification (the function of the source in the reconstruction of history). In methodological categorisation, the division is made according to the research procedure, which is important for the construction of the historical narrative. Therefore, due to the discussed issue related to the collection of school sources, i.e. the first stage of the research, I will focus mainly on the source classification, as methodological classification stems from the conceptualisation of research. The resource of school sources is varied in terms of their form, content and manner of communication. School sources include all products, documents, memorabilia that serve as a reminder of the life of the and the local community. The source classification takes into account mostly the formal source conditions, focusing on its external characteristics, genetic origin and the content of the material. The resource of school sources is varied in terms of their form, content and manner of communication. School sources include all products, documents, memorabilia that serve as a reminder of the life of the and the local community.

School sources include:

- school chronicles
- iconographic sources (photographs, drawings, paintings) depicting the daily life of schools, i.e. teachers, school infrastructure, school supplies and equipment, celebrations and important events,
- interviews with the oldest teachers, students, employees, people important to the life of the school
- school diaries (which belonged to students, teachers, people related to the school)
- news bulletins, one-day school papers
- school equipment and teaching and didactic aids (specimens, models, instruments and paintings)
- school supplies and articles
- school clothing
- school memory room and regional corners
- official school documents (protocols from Teaching Board meetings, parents' councils, school journals, medical records, teachers' personal acts)
- documentation about the activity of various interest groups, students' councils, school organisations (students' council, cooperatives, scouting, Red Cross group, sport organisations, Maritime League, Airborne and Anti-Gas League, circles of book enthusiasts, school science circles and interest groups)
- other school sources (school exemptions)

I divided them into five divisions according to their intended use: Students' records, Teaching staff matters, Didactic and educational process, Medical documents, Correspondence, Daily school life, Accounting, School inventory, Interviews and memories.

Table. Types of school sources (own study)

| School sources | |
|----------------------------------|---|
| Students' records | lists of children in the school district, attendance book, book of exemptions, students' personal documents (birth certificates, school certificates and school passes) |
| Teaching staff matters | teachers' personal files, book of leaves and substitutions, payroll and insurance documentation |
| Didactic and educational process | inspection notes and book Teaching Board protocol book, class register, division of the scientific material, school programmes, textbook lists, parental council protocol book, catalogue of school library books |
| Medical documents | sanitary book, vaccination certificates, school doctor's documents. |
| Correspondence | activity register, delivery book folders with official records |
| Everyday school life | school chronicle, chronicle of students' council, interest groups, school property inventory, book of school head/principal's orders |
| Accounting | income and expense books, account book, income and expense receipt book, folders with receipts |
| School inventory | equipment, teaching aids, school uniform |
| Memories and accounts | diaries interviews with teachers, school graduates and important people in the life of the school |

Taking into account the ontological status of the source, school sources include material sources, which can be written (historiographic, normative, narrative, epistolary) and unwritten (daily school use objects and intangible sources in the form of customs, ceremonies and school rites). School sources can be divided into oral accounts, unwritten and written sources, using the typology of sources proposed by Joachim Lelewel, one of the earliest precursors to the categorisation of sources, whose 1815 work *Historyka* divided sour-

es into: tradition (oral accounts, interviews), unwritten sources (“silent relics”³⁰), such as photographs, and written sources, such as a school chronicle. Following the methodological concepts of J. G. Droysen and E. Bernheim³¹, which started to emerge in the second half of the 20th century, school sources can be divided into remnants, i.e. material (written and unwritten) traces of school activity, sources of accounts deliberately drawn-up for descendants. According to the source categorisation by M. Handelsman, who based his ideas on Droysen and Bernheim to propose his own division taking into consideration the criterion of purposefulness and the awareness of the intended use of the source, school sources can be divided into direct and indirect sources. Direct school sources, i.e. “preserved traces of direct human existence and activity in the past”³², include the material base of the school, i.e. buildings, equipment, textbooks and teaching aids, which may form a category of school relics. In turn, indirect school sources are “documents intended to preserve the memory of the past times”³³; this is the school tradition, which is divided into the form of the message: verbal (accounts), pictorial (photos) and written (chronicles, other school documents). The choice of Handelsman’s typology is justified by the division adopted by S. Kościalkowski, who adopted the division into written and unwritten sources as a fundamental criterion for the differentiation between sources³⁴. An entirely new division of sources was proposed by G. Labuda, who adopted the degree of “reflection” of a particular activity by the source as the classification criterion. He distinguished the ergotechnical, sociotechnical, psychotechnical sources and tradition, i.e. “the forms of remnants of the memory of past times embedded in living people”³⁵. Considering the status of school sources as carriers of historical knowledge, they can be divided according to Labuda’s proposed classification. Taking into account the physical qualities of the source, such as its content, we can distinguish the following types of school sources in accordance with G. Labuda’s classification: ergotechnical sources (economic side of the activity, physical and demographic data), i.e. buildings, equipment, teaching aids; socio-technical sources (results of interpersonal and social interactions), i.e. school chronicle; and psycho-technical sources (the state of human consciousness, diaries), which include school diaries and accounts. In the context of an attempt to typologise school sources, it is worthwhile to suggest one of the propos-

³⁰ LELEWEL, J., *Dziela, [Works]*, Vol. II (1836-1841), Kraków 1949, p. 180.

³¹ J. G. Droysen divided sources into three categories: remnants, i.e. material (written and unwritten) traces of human activity; sources, i.e. accounts deliberately prepared for descendants; and monuments, i.e. a form of purposeful remnants whose goal is to provide information about an individual, a family (gravestones, medals and legal documents). E. Bernheim adopted the source purpose as the criterion of division. Just like Droysen, he distinguished remnants and tradition, which present historical facts via arbitrary signs. TOPOLSKI, J., op. cit., p. 346.

³² HANDELSMAN, M., *Historyka*, p. 44-45.

³³ Ibidem.

³⁴ Starting from the division into direct and indirect sources, S. Kościalkowski proposed the division into unwritten (material, remnant) sources and written sources, such as documentary (direct) sources, narrative (indirect) sources and epistolary (letter) sources. HANDELSMAN, M., *Historyka*, p. 24, 52.

³⁵ LABUDA, G., „Próba nowej systematyki...”, p. 3-52.

als by J. Topolski³⁶, who drew attention to the direct and indirect sources, which describe the human activity and are related to the figure of the informant. When using direct sources, it is important to verify their authenticity while in the indirect sources one should verify both their authenticity and credibility of the author. Direct school sources encompassing material resources are a part of the human activity at school. Examples include tools, furniture, clothing, buildings as well as chronicles in the sense of a material item. Indirect school sources are information obtained from someone. They are burdened by the author's perception and knowledge and marked by their interpretation. The informant does not perform the role of an intermediary between the past and the historian because they cannot observe the whole past but only its piece. In this category, we can include existing indirect sources, such as school chronicles and diaries, and elicited indirect sources, such as interviews. School sources are potential sources and represent infinite information power which depends on the questions and initial knowledge of the historian and the principles they adopt, which – in turn – transforms potential knowledge into the effective one³⁷.

Proposing a uniform typology of school sources is difficult because the boundaries of categorisation are fluid and dependent on the context and the accepted definition of the source, which may have several characteristics. One can use an example of school photographs as a historical source. According to the J. Lelewel's typology, photographs are undoubtedly a "relic" but according to Droyser it is a remnant that is not a text and therefore is not a source, although it is created deliberately to convey information to future generations. As a source, school photographs meet the requirements of Bernheim's definition of source and as an unwritten source which shows the traces of human existence, it meets the criteria set by S. Kościałkowski. According to Handelsman, a photograph will be a document storing a memory which represents the transfer of image-based tradition. According to G. Labuda, though, it will be a resource of socio- and psycho-technical sources. The situation looks similar for a school chronicle, which can be both a relic and a deliberate indirect source showing school tradition in a written form, falling within the scope of socio- and psychological sources.

Importance of school sources

As the educational institution around which the entire cultural life of a town is concentrated, a school is a direct and impartial witness of the facts occurring in its immediate surroundings. School sources are deposited in the school institution where they are also prepared. As a potential source, school materials indirectly show the organisational structure and daily life of schools in the context of local community and a changing political situation. Because of their content, form and provenance, they have scientific, local and social significance.

³⁶ The second methodological concept, proposed by J. Topolski in 1972, divides sources into addressed and non-addressed sources. TOPOLSKI, J., *Teoria wiedzy historycznej*, [Theory of historical knowledge], p. 261.

³⁷ TOPOLSKI, J., *Wprowadzenie do historii*, [Introduction to history], Poznań 2001, p. 37.

In the context of scientific research, they provide a wealth of factual knowledge about the school activities and processes in the local community. School sources remove the barrier of time, so dead people are still present in the collective memory and fixed events and objects of the past are replayed in the present. School source materials of invaluable cognitive value and a rich iconographic database may serve as a basis for scientific papers in the areas of history, pedagogy, ethnology, sociology or anthropology. They are the foundation of school monographs in the history of education. They show the educational processes taking place within the region. They are representations of educational goals and school laws implemented in the everyday school life. Due to their selective nature, which results from the selection of material preserved in the form of school sources, reliable verification and criticism are required from the researcher. They are an emanation, reflection and implementation of the educational, local and regional policies. Archival school resources can reflect the school's past in the context of its impact on the local community and create regional micro-histories. In the context of research, when taking into account the varied forms of school sources, one can comprehensively analyse their contents in four dimensions of social memory. As the first one, I propose to adopt the dimension of remembered events, described chronologically in school chronicles and mentioned in interviews with the oldest teachers, students and people taking part in the school life. This content makes it possible to identify the second dimension, which applies to the remembered figures, i.e. teachers, principals, students, patrons or people important for the functioning of the school. The next dimension is of material nature and is associated with remembered products and items, such as teaching aids, school equipment, chronicles and school bulletins. The final direction of the analysis of school sources is attributed to the value categories, i.e. ideas, patterns of behaviour, taking into account the socio-political context. The inclusion of all four dimensions of the analysis of school sources makes it possible to show the overall issue related to school history in the context of local community and social change.

On the other hand, in the case of the school community, the goal of school sources is to represent the school community subject to idealisation, on the basis of which the image of the school is being built, which constitutes the medium of school tradition. School sources, in particular photographs, preserved chronicles and banners perform a prestige function and become a symbol of status and historical awareness. Archival school materials provide value for the school community because their content, which is passed on to the next generations, and the process of producing it are both important. The production of school sources is accompanied by an emotional element of varied nature, an example of which can be the integrating and celebratory time of taking a joint class photograph, the sense of responsibility or reluctance resulting from the assigned task of preparing a school bulletin or keeping a chronicle. The contemporary school sources can be a basis for practical and promotional activities and can be used by teachers, museum workers, cultural leaders and local and state government employees. At nearly every school, they can be a reason for pride, provide cognitive value and be an attractive element of the local identity.

In the social dimension, school sources integrate the school community, creating and sustaining local relations. They preserve and communicate the content about important

life spaces of the school. They are also a carrier of the collective memory and are used in its shaping, remodelling and fixing. School sources make it possible to tame school space after socio-political changes. They act as a medium through which the information about changes within the school and the local group is communicated.

In addition, each form of school sources has a research and social value in itself. So, school sources provide comprehensive knowledge about school's activities in the local community on the one hand and on the other hand – each form is an independent historical source. For example, the value of a school chronicle lies in its content, which shows the inner and outer life of the school and its immediate surroundings, as well as in its form, which is also subject to change under the influence of social changes. By recording chronologically events related to the school, the commune or the church, the chronicle supplies material for the history of education in the country; it provides information about the development of the school and the local relations. It presents students' activities, their involvement in school activities and provides information about teacher's work in terms of its educational and social aspects and pedagogical results. Apart from the chronological record, school events also have a cyclic and repetitive nature. The structure of the content of school chronicles can be divided into the following areas:

Table. School chronicle analysis areas (own elaboration)

| School chronicle: analysis | |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| I. External characteristics | |
| | date and place, structure, author, form, |
| II. Content | |
| 1. Statistical and informative data | a list of teachers, staff change the number of students starting and being promoted to the next grade, the number of graduates learning difficulties. |
| 2. School life | the start of the school year, celebrations state, national and school celebrations readings, trips theatre, cinema, concert performances, sports entertainment, the end of school year. |
| 3. Student life | formation and development of various student organisations (students' council, students' store, school savings bank, co-operatives); readings, discussions, trips organised by student organisations; mentions of the development of school organisations (extracts from reports); students' achievements and contributions |
| 4. Social environment | the information about important people and people officially or unofficially visiting the school, cooperation with parents, the impact of the school on the local community. |

Apart from the cognitive value derived from the content of the school chronicles, the scientific analysis may include its form, which has changed from descriptive, to image-based to virtual in response to social changes.

School documentation also provides information about students' demographic processes, attendance, religion, gender, personal predispositions and abilities and the course of the educational and didactic processes. A cognitively valuable document is the school property inventory – an inventory book, usually divided into sections relating to school land, school buildings, school allowances, school equipment, teaching aids, student and teacher library resources. The inventory is the image of the school's property, its didactic base and the level of development of the tangible structure of the school. Preserved teaching aids demonstrate the development of school enterprises and nowadays provide a museum relic value. In addition, schools serve as custodians of local traditions. In their space, they organise memory rooms and regional corners, where they also gather remnants of the regional culture in addition to school relics.

Among school sources, it is worth to draw attention to the value of photography, which allows for direct access to the past time, because “the historical time is captured by the lens as a living environment. Even arranged shots show real people and the real world. An object on the photo appears alive as it maintains a bond with the time of its own present. It reflects and confirms the existence of something and is a visible trace of the past. Its fulfils the historian's dreams to “see with their own eyes”. The visual archives “transforms objects into images and stores them in the form of images, which even after the disappearance of objects prove their existence³⁸”

An invaluable cognitive value is provided by interviews with people related to school, teachers and graduates. Accounts of past events seen with one's own eyes and experienced in the course of one's life may – in addition to historical facts – also include the content of school folklore, customs and school practices, and in this context, they may constitute the primary resource of intangible sources. Thanks to interviews, one can obtain research material, where there are no written sources. In the 1980s, oral history was considered a valuable supplement to historian's knowledge³⁹. Nowadays, thanks to the use of the ethnological toolkit, the content acquired during an interview can enrich and fill in the historical knowledge.

Conclusion

School sources are an invaluable resource of knowledge about school processes and social change. However, the difficult access limits the opportunities for optimal use of school sources, which may be scattered, unclassified, damaged, privately owned or irre-

³⁸ STIEGLER, B., *Obrazy fotografii. Album metafor fotograficznych*, [*Photo images. Photo metaphor album*], Kraków 2009, p. 22.

³⁹ KERSTEN, K., *Relacja jako typ źródła historycznego*, [*Account as a type of historical source*], Warsaw 1968.

trievably lost. So far, school documents have been archived based on the Act 7 September 1991 on the educational system, the Act of 14 July 1983 on the national archive resource and archives and the Ordinance of the President of the Council of Ministers of 18 January 2011 on the administrative office instructions, uniform lists of records and instructions on the organisation and scope of operation of company archives. As a result of legal regulations, all documentation produced and collected by schools and educational institutions is unarchived, marked as the archival category B (with temporary practical significance), i.e. it is not part of the national archive resource. It is stored for a specified period of time in the institution using a specific, implemented unified itemised list of files which classifies school records according to the symbols contained in the ordinance and specifies how long the documents should be stored. A school keeps a school storage room (school archives) in accordance with the provisions of the Act of the 14 July 1983 on the national archive resource and archives (Journal of Laws of 2011, no. 123, item 698 as amended), the Ordinance of the Minister of Culture of 16 September 2002 on the handling of documentation, the principles of its classification and qualification and the principles and procedures for the transfer of archival materials to state archives (Journal of Laws of 2002, no. 167, item 1375). At the moment of the liquidation of the school, a part of the documentation is transferred to the Internal Archives of the Regional Educational Authority⁴⁰. *In case of a liquidation of a school, the documentation of the course of study is transferred to the pedagogical supervision authority on the basis of a hand-over report and the other documentation is transferred – on the basis of transfer records – to the archives of the institution which takes over the duties of the liquidated institution or to the body administering the institution. The temporary school files may be transferred from the organisational unit to waste, but this must be done under the supervision of a person from the state archive.*

Because school sources are not legally protected, any planned reorganisation of schools can result in their considerable dispersion and irrevocable loss⁴¹. In spite of the valuable local school initiatives aimed at preserving all school sources, many documents are lost irrevocably. Securing school sources is an urgent need of the moment and interviewing the oldest teachers should be prioritised because of the inevitability of passing time.

⁴⁰ According to the archival classification, the following documents are kept for 50 years: grade sheet books, grade books, pupil/student/auditor books, the documents concerning the reconstruction of destroyed documentation of the course of study, unclaimed certificates, the register of issued certificates, the register of graduates, resolutions of the teachers' board on the classification and promotion of students and graduation, legal acts, reports from the meetings of the teachers' board meetings, certificates of completion of school and certificates of maturity. Matriculation exam protocols and semester, final and correction exam reports are stored at school for 25 years. Class records and records of other activities and school certificate prints are stored for 6 years.

⁴¹ A school keeps a school storage room (school archives) in accordance with the provisions of the Act of the 14 July 1983 on the national archive resource and archives (Journal of Laws of 2011, no. 123, item 698 as amended), the Ordinance of the Minister of Culture of 16 September 2002 on the handling of documentation, the principles of its classification and qualification and the principles and procedures for the transfer of archival materials to state archives (Journal of Laws of 2002, no. 167, item 1375).

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