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Introduction

This issue of *Studia Paedagogica Ignatiana*, devoted to biographical research, is titled *Pedagogical Biographies: Source and Interpretive Contexts*. In inviting researchers working in the broad field of biography to contribute, the journal's editors have called for a discussion of the sources on which biographies are based.

Biography and biographical studies have a long tradition in contemporary historiography and continue to attract the interest of scholars from various academic disciplines. Since Grażyna Karolewicz suggested the need for research on pedagogical biography (Karolewicz 2002), numerous studies have appeared. The importance of biographical research in reconstructing the history of education and science has been demonstrated by, among others, Czesław Majorek (Majorek 1997), as well as Zbigniew Marek and Anna Walulik (Marek, Walulik 2019). Many publications have also discussed the sources necessary for this type of research. Among them, it is worth mentioning several studies devoted specifically to this topic (Lalak, Ostaszewska 2016; Michalski 2004; Podgórska 1993; Szulakiewicz 2007, 2013, 2015). This subject is also reflected in the journal *Biografistyka Pedagogiczna (Biographical Studies in Education)*. Scholars specializing in biography include many historians of education, educators, historians, theologians, and other specialists. The authors whose texts are collected in this issue likewise represent these disciplines.

The studies and essays published here primarily concern pedagogical or educational biographies and illustrate different methods of interpreting source materials. The articles demonstrate the importance of sources in reconstructing the biographies of figures from the fields of education, science, and public life. The texts discuss sources relevant to developing the biographies of individuals who have contributed to science, education, social life, and religion. The central theme of this issue is further reinforced by a study in the “Miscellanea” section, two reviews essays on autobiography, and a conference report.

In keeping with the main theme, the authors emphasize the value of lesser-known archival and printed sources that can provide the foundation for new biographical studies. Their articles highlight the significance of these materials in uncovering biographical nuances and underscore the importance of archives, periodicals, letters, autobiographies, diaries, scholarly publications, and elicited sources. The texts present sources for both collective and individual biographies. Together with chronological order, this distinction between individual and collective biographies was adopted by the editors as a principle for organizing the contributions included in this issue.

By presenting this collection of studies, the editors encourage further exploration of sources that may be used in biographical research.

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