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# Genealogy in the System of Modern Knowledge: Theory and Methodology of Cognitive History of O.M. Medushevskaya

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Abstract: The author analyzes the place of genealogy as a unique indicator of humanitarian culture both in historical retrospect and modern society, since the subject of its study has traditionally been universal human values - family, kinship and relationships between different generations. The purpose of the article is to show the role of famous historian O.M. Medushevskaya and the significance of the theory and methodology of cognitive history developed by her for determining the place of genealogy in the system of modern knowledge. In the article, within the framework of this theory the place of genealogy in the system of modern knowledge is determined; the author gives a clear definition of the subject area of genealogy as a sphere of research, the possibility of interdisciplinary synthesis with a number of fundamental sciences, and formulates a program for the development of this field of knowledge in Russia. The author comes to the conclusion that the approach developed by O.M. Medushevskaya transforms genealogy from an auxiliary and applied discipline into one of the central areas of humanitarian-historical knowledge, making it an information resource for studying the history of family and clan, economic history (movement of property), the socio-political structure of society (or the history of classes), culture and its individual representatives.

**Keywords:** auxiliary historical disciplines, methodological problems of biographical research, source study, information resource, study of family history

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# Генеалогия в системе современного знания: теория и методология когнитивной истории О.М. Медушевской

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Аннотация: Анализируется место генеалогии как своеобразного индикатора гуманитарной культуры как в исторической ретроспективе, так и современного общества, поскольку предметом ее изучения традиционно являются общечеловеческие ценности – семья, родственные связи и отношения между разными поколениями. Цель исследования – показать роль известного историка О.М. Медушевской и значение разработанной ею теории и методологии когнитивной истории для определения места генеалогии в системе современного знания. В статье в рамках данной теории определяется место генеалогии в системе современного знания, дается четкое определение предметной области генеалогии как научного направления, возможности междисциплинарного синтеза с рядом фундаментальных наук и сформулирована программа развития данной области знаний в России. Автор приходит к выводу, что подход, разработанный О.М. Медушевской, превращает генеалогию из вспомогательной и прикладной дисциплины в одно из центральных направлений гуманитарно-исторического

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познания, делая ее информационным ресурсом для изучения истории семьи и рода, экономической истории (перемещения собственности и имущества), социально-политической структуры общества (или истории сословий), культуры и отдельных ее представителей.

**Ключевые слова:** вспомогательные исторические дисциплины, методологические проблемы биографических исследований, источниковедение, информационный ресурс, изучение истории семьи и рода

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### Introduction

*Relevance*. In the modern world, with the development of information technologies, the importance of data on identity and areas of knowledge related to its study is rapidly increasing. Genealogy is undoubtedly one among such areas.

Elaboration of the problem. The relevance of genealogical research in modern science is evidenced by the recent appearance of consolidated works on the history of genealogy, its methods and sources, and individual branches of genealogical research. The focus of scientists internationally is on the formation of national identity<sup>2</sup> and such parameters as the historical roots of nations<sup>3</sup>, the geographical movement of individual families, migration processes, the history of classes and social strata<sup>4</sup>, local history and even local history genealogy, which studies the socio-cultural role of individual families at the regional level, socio-psychological issues, in terms of the formation of public opinion and consciousness, biographic studies and prosopography are all important<sup>5</sup>. Genetic and genealogical research has gained particular interest<sup>6</sup>. In contrast to case studies, very little attention is paid to the theoretical and methodological issues of genealogy.

The purpose of the study is to show the significance for Russian and world science of the theory and methodology of cognitive history created by Olga Mikhailovna Medushevskaya, a famous Russian historian<sup>7</sup>. This scientific theory has become a new paradigm in humanities, opening up prospects for interdisciplinary synthesis for a number of

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> F. Weil, Family Trees: A History of Genealogy in America (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2013).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> B. Durie, *Scottish Genealogy* (Stroud: History Press, 2009).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> M. Yan, *Research Guide to Chinese Genealogy* (New Westminster: Global Research and Archival Management Inc., 2010).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> O.N. Naumov, *Streshnevy: materialy k rodosloviyu* [Streshnevs: materials for genealogy] (Kaluga: [N.s.], 2013).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Istochnikovedcheskie i metodologicheskie problemy biograficheskikh issledovanii: Sbornik materialov nauchno-prakticheskogo seminara (Sankt-Peterburg, 4–5 iiunia 2002 g.). [Source studies and methodological problems of biographical research. Collecion of materials of the scientific and practical seminar (St. Petersburg, June 4–5, 2002)] (St. Petersburg: Izdatelstvo Sankt-Peterburgskogo universiteta Publ., 2002).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> E.Ya. Tetushkin, "Geneticheskaia genealogiia: istoriia i metodologiia [Genetic genealogy: history and methodology]," *Genetika* 47, no. 5 (2011): 581–596.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> Kognitivnaia istoriia: ponyatiie – metody – issledovatelskiie praktiki: Chteniia pamyati professora Olgi Mikhailovny Medushevskoi [Cognitive history: concept – methods – research practices: Readings in memory of Professor Olga Mikhailovna Medushevskaya] (Moscow: RGGU Publ., 2011); "Round table on the book 'Theory and methodology of cognitive history,' by O.M. Medushevskaya," Russian History, no. 1 (2010): 131–166; A.N. Medushevsky, "The concept of cognitive history: intellectual sources, place in the structure of modern humanitarian knowledge, development prospects," Dialogue with Time. Intellectual History Review, no. 44 (2013): 6–16; O.M. Medushevskaya, Rossiiskie istoriki. Ikonografiia [Russian Historians. Iconography] (Moscow: Sobranie Publ., 2015); Bezzavetnoie sluzheniie nauke i obrazovaniyu. K 100-letiiu so dnia rozhdeniia professora Olgi Mikhailovny Medushevskoi. Mezhdunarodnaia nauchnaia konferentsiia 6 oktiabria 2022 [Selfless service to science and education. To the 100th anniversary of the birth of Professor Olga Mikhailovna Medushevskaya. International scientific conference October 6, 2022] (Moscow: RGGU Publ., 2023).

scientific directions and disciplines – from information theory and neuroscience to history, anthropology, source studies, archival studies, and the entire complex of auxiliary historical disciplines, including genealogy.

The source base for this project is the four-volume edition of "Collected Works" by O.M. Medushevskaya and the introduction into scholarly discourse of the entire corpus of the scientist's works, methodological materials, lecture course programs, as well as extensive historiography about her activity. Materials which makes it possible to reveal the process of the formation of this concept and the direction of its development in historiography.

### Goals and objectives of humanitarian cognition

The process of humanitarian cognition in the works of O.M. Medushevskaya is presented as the reconstruction by the researcher of a system of information exchange – direct and indirect, which functioned in the past and is reflected in an entire set of the products of purposeful human activity. The main task of this cognition is to establish the meaningfulness of this activity by decoding recorded information from the entire set of historical sources<sup>9</sup>. Related to this is special attention to the forms of recording information in the past – issues of its encoding, transmission and interpretation, methods that allow a researcher to provide accurate and demonstrative reconstruction of the meaning of the concepts of a historical source and the cognitive reality behind it – understanding of space, time and the meaning of human existence of a certain era, including those significantly distant from us in time<sup>10</sup>.

# Importance of auxiliary historical disciplines for the process of humanitarian cognition

Within the framework of this research logic focused on understanding the meaning of ideas of the past and their demonstrative reconstruction, a special place is given to theoretical and applied source studies and the entire complex of so-called auxiliary historical disciplines, in which special precise methods are used to analyze certain areas of the construction of reality: language (palaeography), time (chronology), space (historical geography and toponymy), trade exchange (numismatics), recording of legal relations (diplomacy and sphragistics), class status (heraldry), kinship relations (genealogy), and choice of proper names (onomastics)<sup>11</sup>. At the same time, emphasis has been placed on the special importance of the system of these disciplines and their methods in modern humanitarian culture<sup>12</sup>. Within the framework of the activities of the department of source studies and

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> O.M. Medushevskaia, *Sobraniie sochinenii v 4 tomakh* [Collected works in 4 volumes] (Moscow; Berlin: Direct-Media Publ., 2017).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> O.M. Medushevskaya, "Teoriya i metodologiya kognitivnoy istorii [Theory and methodology of cognitive history]," in *Sobranie sochinenii* [Collected works] (Moscow; Berlin: Direct-Media Publ., 2017), 248–250.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>10</sup> O.M. Medushevskaya, "Kognitivno-informatsionnaia teoriia v sotsiologii istorii i antropologii [Cognitive-information theory in the sociology of history and anthropology]," in *Sobranie sochinenii* [Collected works] (Moscow; Berlin: Direct-Media Publ., 2017), 168–175.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>11</sup> Vspomogatelnye istoricheskie distsipliny – istochnikovedeniie – metodologiia istorii v sisteme gumanitarnogo znaniia. Sbornik pamiati O.M. Medushevskoi [Auxiliary historical disciplines – source study – methodology of history in the system of humanities. Collection in memory of O.M. Medushevskaya] (Moscow: RGGU Publ., 2008); Shustova Yu.E., ed. Vspomogatelnye istoricheskie distsipliny i istochnikovedenie: sovremennye issledovaniia i perspektivy razvitiia: Materialy XXVII Mezhdunarodnaia nauchnaia konferentsiia. Moskva, 9 – 11 aprelya 2015 g. [Auxiliary historical disciplines and source studies: modern research and development prospects: Materials of the XXVII International scientific conference Moscow, 9 – April 11, 2015] (Moscow: RGGU Publ., 2015).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>12</sup> O.M. Medushevskaya, "Vspomogatelnye istoricheskie disstipliny: osobaia sistema metodov gumanitarnogo poznaniia [Auxiliary historical disciplines: a special system of methods of humanitarian knowledge]," in *Sobranie sochinenii* [Collected works] (Moscow; Berlin: Direct-Media Publ., 2017), 368–370.

auxiliary historical disciplines (Moscow State Institute for History and Archives (MGIAI, later RSUH), O.M. Medushevskaya, who was the undisputed scientific leader of this center, played a key role in the creation of the general concept of humanitarian historical and archival education, and the development of source studies and auxiliary scientific disciplines<sup>13</sup>. Their teaching on the subject, the creation of specialized courses and programs, in particular on genealogy<sup>14</sup>, and scientific supervision of the first candidate's dissertations in this field all proved to be crucial<sup>15</sup>. She initiated the first MGIAI conferences on genealogy<sup>16</sup>, summarizing Russian and foreign research in this area<sup>17</sup>.

## Genealogy as a field of research activity

O.M. Medushevskaya's contribution to the development of genealogy is significant, and it was made in a number of areas. Firstly, she played a key role in preserving and promoting the classical traditions of genealogical research in Russian academic science during the Soviet period, when they were completely disregarded as legacy of "bourgeois science of the past" and could exist exclusively within the framework of the general course of source study of Russian history as a narrow, "auxiliary" area of research activity. Starting from the 1950s, in this capacity, genealogy was constantly present in O.M. Medushevskaya's works on the theory, history, and practice of source studies<sup>18</sup>. Secondly, of great significance was the formulation of the question by O.M. Medushevskaya about the role and methods of genealogical research in the study of the socioeconomic and political history of Russian statehood. To this end, in cooperation with domestic and foreign researchers of Russian and Western feudalism, she carried out a targeted identification of sources containing genealogical information 19. Sources of this kind were represented, above all, by a corpus of documents of an office-work and accounting nature, which were actively introduced into scholarly discourse in the 1970-1980s: genealogical books, boyar books, boyar lists, censuses of officials, service people, and sources from Cossacks. In order to expand the application of genealogical research to other social strata, such as the merchant class, the urban population or the peasantry, she studied a wide range of documents of various origins containing data on kinship – written, visual, recorded from oral testimonies. Thirdly, the formulation of the question about the boundaries of the application of genealogical methods developed for the feudal period to the periods of modern and recent history, related to the consideration of the specifics of doc-

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>13</sup> O.M. Medushevskaya, *Istochnikovedenie v sisteme gumanitarnogo obrazovaniia. Nauchno-pedagogicheskaia shkola istochnikovedeniia Istoriko-arhivnogo instituta* [Source study in the system of humanitarian education. Scientific and pedagogical school of source study of the Historical and Archival Institute] (Moscow: RGGU Publ., 2001).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>14</sup> Genealogiia: programma kursa dlia spetsial'nostei № 020700 – Istoriya, № 020800 – Istoriko-arkhivovedeniye [Genealogy: course program for specialties No. 020700 – History, No. 020800 – Historical and archival studies] (Moscow: RGGU Publ., 1999).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>15</sup> E.V. Pchelov, *Genealogiya drevnerusskikh knyazey IX – nachala XI vekov. Istochniki, problemy, interpretatsii* [Genealogy of ancient Russian princes of the IX – early XI centuries. Sources, problems, interpretations], PhD thesis, Russian State University for the Humanities, 1997.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>16</sup> Genealogiia: istochniki, problemy, metody issledovaniia: tezisy dokladov i soobshchenii: Moskva, 31 ianvaria – 3 fevralia 1989 g. [Genealogy: sources, problems, research methods: abstracts of reports and communications: Moscow, January 31 – February 3, 1989] (Moscow: MGIAI Publ., 1989).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>17</sup> O.M. Medushevskaya, "Genealogiia v zarubezhnykh issledovaniiakh [Genealogy in foreign research]." In *Genealogicheskie issledovaniia* [Genealogical research] (Moscow: RGGU Publ., 1994), 50–58.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>18</sup> This interest is already reflected in the first major scientific works on the history of Russian geographical discoveries. See: O.M. Medushevskaya, "Prostranstvo i vremia v naukakh o cheloveke [Space and time in the human sciences]," in *Izbrannye trudy* [Selected works] (Moscow: Center for Humanitarian Initiatives Publ., 2013), 125–134.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>19</sup> O.M. Medushevskaya, "Genealogicheskie issledovaniia polskikh istorikov [Genealogical research of Polish historians]," in *S.B. Veselovskii i problemy genealogicheskikh issledovanii* [S.B. Veselovsky and problems of genealogical research] (Moscow: Nauka Publ., 1977), 266–273.

umentation and solution to the problems of obtaining verifiable and evidentiary information that require special professional skills in source studies research, were studied. Particular attention was paid to the genealogy of the most dynamic social groups that changed the cognitive ideas of the era, including, for example, leading representatives of scientific schools<sup>20</sup>, explorers, sailors<sup>21</sup>, and the participants in Russian geographical discoveries<sup>22</sup>.

Assessing the place of genealogical research in Russian source studies, O.M. Medushevskaya noted at the same time that they often go beyond these limits, since the discovery of new sources of genealogical information affects the problems of archival science and sociology. She emphasizes:

Genealogical facts acquire scientific significance when it becomes possible to connect them with additional information about a person's class, property status, education, official status, political or other social activities of those persons whose family ties are being studied<sup>23</sup>.

In this sense, genealogy is addressed to the universal human values of family, kinship, and generational relationships; its subject is of interest not only to specialists, but also to society, regardless of social, national, and professional divisions in it, and therefore it acts as an important indicator of humanitarian culture<sup>24</sup>. At the same time, one of the key problems of cognition is achieved – "to overcome the separate study of the biological, psychological, social aspects of human nature."<sup>25</sup>

## Genealogy and universal values

Having noted the appearance in Western science of the 1960–1970s of such a phenomenon as the "renaissance of erudition," O.M. Medushevskaya explained it, on the one hand, by the transformation of consciousness towards humanization, historicism, and interest in the human personality, and on the other hand, by a change in the structure of society, family, and the emergence of a new type of relationship between "fathers and children" through the transition to a new perception of kinship and related social stereotypes. These trends were expressed in the revival of genealogical research in the historiography of European countries, represented by the increase in scientific literature, the publication of reviews of archival funds and guidebooks, encyclopedias, catalogues, reference books, individual documents in many countries – from France, Germany, Great Britain and Poland (where these studies are based on long historical tradition) to the USA and Australia, where they became a response to the growing social demand of society to identify their own historical roots starting from the era of colonization. O.M. Medushevskaya stated:

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>20</sup> O.M. Medushevskaya, "Istoriia nauki kak dinamicheskii protsess [History of science as a dynamic process]," in *Sobranie sochinenii* [Collected works] (Moscow; Berlin: Direct-Media Publ., 2017), 263–261.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>21</sup> O.M. Medushevskaya, "Sotsyalnyi sostav morekhodov XVIII v. [Social composition of sailors of the XVIII century]," in *Spornye voprosy otechestvennoi istorii XI–XVIII vekov* [Controversial issues of Russian history of the XI–XVIII centuries] (Moscow: RGGU Publ., 1990), 22–32.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>22</sup> O.M. Medushevskaya, "Istochniki o plavaniiakh russkikh morekhodov na Aleutskie ostrova vo vtoroi polovine XVIII v. [Sources about the voyages of Russian sailors to the Aleutian Islands in the second half of the XVIII century]," in *Realizm istoricheskogo myshleniia: problemy otechestvennoi istorii perioda feodalizma* [Realism of historical thinking: problems of national history of the period of feudalism] (Moscow: RGGU Publ., 1990), 3–14.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>23</sup> O.M. Medushevskaya, "Teoriia, istoriia i metod istochnikovedeniia [Source studies and humanitarian culture]," in *Sobranie sochinenii* [Collected works] (Moscow; Berlin: Direct-Media Publ., 2017), 760–768.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>24</sup> O.M. Medushevskaya, "Istochnikovedenie i gumanitarnaia kultura [Source studies and humanitarian culture]," in *Sobranie sochinenii* [Collected works] (Moscow; Berlin: Direct-Media Publ., 2017), 868–875.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>25</sup> O.M. Medushevskaya, "Edinstvo cheloveka v svete istochnikovedcheskoi paradigmy metodologii gumanitarnogo poznaniia [The unity of man in the light of the source study paradigm of the methodology of humanitarian knowledge]," in *Sobranie sochinenii* [Collected works] (Moscow; Berlin: Direct-Media Publ., 2017), 452–453.

"Today genealogical problems act as one of those areas of activity where the connection between professionalism and mass initiative, the movement of history lovers most actively manifests itself." From this perspective, there is an increased relevance of research, coordination and organizational issues, and above all, "combining interest in genealogy, on the one hand, and the necessary source studies professionalism, on the other hand." <sup>26</sup>

## Genealogy in the system of modern knowledge

O.M. Medushevskaya had a central role in restoring the prestige of genealogy and genealogical research in the post-Soviet period. She wrote a series of extremely resonant articles and made speeches on these issues in the late 1970s – early 1990s, summarizing the achievements of Western and Russian science. Playing a key role in the formation of the scientific and pedagogical concept of the Russian State University for the Humanities, O.M. Medushevskaya in her works emphasized the independent role of genealogical research<sup>27</sup>, seeing its importance not only for strengthening academic professionalism, but also increasing the prestige of humanitarian historical education in society from such an unexpectedly discovered field of activity, as well as reorienting the activities of archives in accordance with this social demand. The result, along with academic research, was the emergence of a significant number of genealogical societies and amateur genealogists in various countries, including Russia<sup>28</sup>.

It was O.M. Medushevskaya's report on the issue "Genealogy in the system of modern knowledge" at a special conference of the Society of Historians and Archivists in 1993 which played such a significant role during that period<sup>29</sup>. The report clearly presented the definition of the subject of this scientific field, the possibility of interdisciplinary synthesis, and it formulated a program for the development of this field of knowledge in Russia. The subject of genealogy (one of the ancient historical disciplines), as noted in the report, is important for the traditional understanding of the establishment and consolidation of kinship systems in the memory of generations. Genealogy development in a class society is associated with the practical needs of privileged classes to consolidate the status determined by origin, recorded by genealogy (a family tree). However, it does not follow from this understanding that the subject of genealogy as a modern scientific discipline is limited to this range of tasks – it is determined by the wide information capabilities that this discipline demonstrates in identifying and studying the entire corpus of historical sources containing genealogical information.

The corpus of documents containing such information is reconstructed by O.M. Medushevskaya from the standpoint of a theoretical source studies based on their source classification. This is, firstly, this is in the form genealogical documentation proper, specially created or selected to prove origin and kinship (for example, genealogical books of the Russian nobility); secondly, these are documents containing information of mass nature, which were created for other purposes, but include genealogical data (for example, some types of accounting and control documents); thirdly, this is any documentation containing data about specific individuals, which with appropriate comparison and research allows supplementing genealogical information. Systematic identification in archives and com-

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>26</sup> O.M. Medushevskaya, "Genealogiia v zarubezhnykh issledovaniiakh [Genealogy in foreign research]," in *Genealogicheskie issledovaniia* [Genealogical research] (Moscow: RGGU Publ., 1994), 50–58.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>27</sup> Kontseptsiia razvitiia Istoriko-arkhivnogo instituta RGGU [Development concept of the Historical and Archival Institute of the Russian State University for the Humanities] (Moscow: RGGU Publ., 2002).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>28</sup> O.M. Medushevskaya, "O problemah genealogii [About problems of genealogy]," *Sovetskie arkhivy*, no. 6 (1989): 25–34.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>29</sup> O.M. Medushevskaya, "Genealogiia v sisteme sovremennogo znaniia [Genealogy in the system of modern knowledge]," in *Sobranie sochinenii* [Collected works] (Moscow; Berlin: Direct-Media Publ., 2017), 371–376.

bined study of these documents from the standpoint of genealogy make it possible to create a reservoir of genealogical information with the possibility of recording it, classifying it in accordance with various criteria and practical application – making it available for use.

This determines the place of genealogy in the system of modern knowledge, as well as its addressee – the circle of recipients of genealogical information. The specifics of the subject of genealogy (establishing kinship relationships) from the perspective of information exchange are presented in three directions: vertically (the chronological axis of transferring data on kinship from the past to the future), horizontally (a network of kinship relationships of a certain period of time, and along the functioning of social institutions – from family and clan to social groups, strata. It also includes the determination of their status and socio-psychological attitudes in society (including symbols, myths and legends that legitimize their origin and right to a place in the social hierarchy).

# Genealogy from the perspective of theory and methodology of cognitive history

This particular approach to defining the subject and problem area of genealogical research from the standpoint of the theory and methodology of cognitive history transforms the discipline from an auxiliary and applied one into one of the central areas of humanitarian-historical knowledge, opening up new opportunities for interdisciplinary synthesis. Genealogical research is compatible with a number of fundamental sciences: sociology – the study of social stratification and mobility, allowing one to understand the processes of the formation of classes and castes, professional groups, movement from some social groups to others and the historical trends of these changes, law – the disclosure of a system of written or unwritten norms (customary law) that determine the status and privileges of an individual and a group depending on the system of kinship, and social psychology – the disclosure of social stereotypes associated with religious, national, class, property and age characteristics of marriage and the scale of their preference in societies of different types.

The range of areas of interaction between genealogy and historical science includes interdisciplinary contacts with: *historical demography* – the study of the patterns of heredity, health, influence of natural and social factors on population growth or decline, *historical geography* – analysis of population relocation from one region to another with changes in their family relationships, the *study of institutions from the perspective of prosopography (collective biography method)* which allows reconstructing the composition and family ties of members of sustainable social corporations, organizations, and institutions, which enables us to understand their social profile, interests and factors of sustainability of existence. In general, genealogical data become an information reservoir for revealing the *history of family and clan*, economic history (movement of property) and socio-political structure (or history of classes), culture, including the research of the lives of prominent figures from the standpoint of their origin, as well as family and social connections.

## Social significance of genealogy

Speaking about the social significance of genealogy and genealogical research, O.M. Medushevskaya emphasized three aspects of this phenomenon. The first one is the obvious increase in the population's demand for genealogical information, which began in the post-Soviet period and is associated mainly with the search by different social strata for cultural, historical, and hereditary continuity (restoration of family memory) broken by the Russian revolution, emigration, and subsequent radical changes in public consciousness. The second one is the degree of readiness of the State Archival Service of Russia to respond to this request by providing the necessary genealogical information from the archives and creating search systems that make the implementation of this re-

quest technically feasible. The third one is the level of education and professionalism of researchers necessary for high-quality scientific support of this activity and the debunking of various pseudoscientific constructs and myths, as well as a full-fledged source examination of introduced documentary resources and an evidence-based analysis of their information value.

#### **Conclusions**

The theory and methodology of cognitive history proposed by O.M. Medushevskaya considers genealogy not only as an auxiliary and applied discipline, but also as one of the most important areas of humanitarian and historical knowledge, an information resource for studying the history of family and clan, and through this the economic and sociopolitical history of society and its culture.

In the modern globalizing world, genealogy which traditionally studies family, kinship ties, relationships between generations contributes to the preservation of universal human values, regardless of social, national or professional affiliation. This explains the fact that interest in genealogy has gone beyond the boundaries of academic historical science, and has increasingly attracted the attention of various strata of modern society, as evidenced by the statistics of visits to archives and the analysis of thematic requests of citizens. Those who turn to an archive for genealogical information often have a vague idea of conducting historical research and working with documents. In the current situation, the combined efforts of society, including archivists and researchers, can be considered as an important component of success in such a field of knowledge as genealogy. Therefore O.M. Medushevskaya's idea of the creation of a unified national Center for Genealogical Research capable of integrating, coordinating, and directing activities on the formation of modern genealogical research and genealogical education at different levels remains important.

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