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## FAMILY, FRIENDSHIP, AND MEMORABILIA IN INSCRIBED AMATEUR FAMILY PHOTOGRAPHS

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**Abstract:** *The presented research is based on the study of amateur Soviet photography as a massive visual historical source. The author refers to the Russian and foreign experience of using visual representations to study socio-cultural characteristics thus setting a goal to reveal, by means of family cases, the presence of sociable or family ties and memory practices using images and text located on a single photographic medium and presented in material domestic space. The study covered the southwestern districts of the Bryansk Oblast, with its historical small provincial towns and rural settlements, which are quite typical for the Soviet period of the region's history. The study demonstrated that Soviet amateur photography was the most accessible and popular way of transferring memory, preserving and presenting sociable, family, and kinship ties, including between rural and urban relatives, parents and children, and the older and younger generations. Most often, photo captions contain 'commemorating' inscriptions, indicating the time and place of picture-taking. Relative signings on behalf of the child were also popular since it emphasized 'team-building' of social and kin groups and networks through photo sharing. The very nature of the inscription often indicated the age or seniority of the author: school-age 'lined notebook-style' writings, youthful poetry, popular rhymed phrases on the theme of friendship and memory, arranged diagonally and with underscores and accentuations on some letters. Group photographs in rural areas were rarely signed; however, souvenir photos from the army, places of study, or work often contain some explanatory footnotes.*

**Keywords:** *Amateur photographs, inscription, photo-text reading, Soviet culture, storage methods, 'memory keeper'.*

### INTRODUCTION

Interest in amateur photography did not arise by accident; on the contrary, it is well supported by Russian historical science. It represents a massive source of information available for study, apparent to the most casual observer in family albums, websites, or private collections. Photography became a popular hobby for the last few decades of the USSR's existence, mounting up its traditions and motives for taking

pictures and ways of storing, displaying, and exchanging captured memorable scenes. At the same time, many amateur photographs of the Soviet era are now being increasingly forfeited: they are thrown away, replaced by others with more 'aesthetic appearance' appropriate for the new generations; family ties grow weaker, which also leads to the loss of family archives. Thus, the development of photography as a visual historical source is relevant for modern science; it may also supplement the rather scarce data among personal narratives peculiar to Soviet society.

## METHODS

The use of visual representations to study socio-cultural characteristics that are rarely recorded in texts has become a common method for several humanitarian research areas. The formation of visual research went through several stages. First, at the beginning of the XX century, came the ethnographic stage when images were applied as an illustration to texts about the life of exotic peoples; then the evolutionary stage when the variety of cultural types was demonstrated with the help of images; and the stage of art criticism when visual forms were considered primarily as an object of art that was subject to analysis. However, in the second half of the XX century, the technical capabilities of the production of visual objects have increased dramatically, as have the options for their perception and introduction to the visual in a socio-cultural context. Visual anthropologists, sociologists, experts in visual, cultural, and film studies have revised their views on social reality and actively started using visual images in the study of culture, social experience, personality, and social groups. Pierre Bourdieu in his work on the social function of photography addressed matters related to photographing at weddings, baptismal ceremonies, and first communion. French sociologist pointed out that photography is a collectivizing discourse; it speaks for the group and, in its essence, appears to be a letter or a message (Bourdieu, 1998). Bourdieu expresses the idea that photography does not represent a real image but someone's idea of this image correlating, as a rule, with the expectations and representation of a social group: '...the most unassuming photograph expresses - in addition to the explicit intentions of the person who took it - the system of patterns of perception, thoughts, and assessments, common to the group as a whole' (Bourdieu, 2014). The interpretation of visual artifacts has caused numerous discussions, which can be defined as 'disputes on the methods of visual anthropology': 'Who actually owns the right to interpret an image: its creator or the audience? What do photographs and depicted articles allow people to speak about?' (Visual Anthropology, 2009) Thus, visual anthropologist and documentary filmmaker David MacDougall proposed the concept of reflexive and performative anthropology, where we find a statement on the study of cultural experience through the visual and verbal: 'the text and the image should be considered co-equal and not perceive the visual through the prism of the verbal'. MacDougall explains that "written' and 'visual' don't speak differently, but tell us different things' (MacDougall, 1998). This idea turned out quite relevant for the presented study since it was necessary to outline the methods of researching amateur photographs accompanied by captions or inscriptions that belong to the family collections of the Soviet era. Thus, the focus of the study is text and image, technically located on the same information carrier. Agreeing that a photographic image carries a high proportion of subjective reflection of reality, the study also recognized the significance of the position of Marcus Banks, Professor of Visual Anthropology: 'When studying visual representations that have been created by others the dual strands of

content and context are fairly easy to investigate in tandem' (Banks, 1995). Thus, to learn about the person depicted and his history is just as important as the history of the authorship of the photo and the possible addressees of the image, as well as their custodians. The problem of the study of the visual is also raised by the Boston-based researcher Richard Chalfen, an expert in the field of visual sociology, communication and media: '...at the center of the problem of how to deal with the visual, we are facing difficult questions related to all symbolic systems, namely, the relationship between meaning, representation, and information' (Chalfen, 2002). The author presents the benefits of using the deliberately ambiguous phrase 'What do they look like?' to understand shifts in the construction of meaning and evidence, attached with images from the 'field', thus 'How They Looked?' could be also read as 'How They Look?'

Judy Weiser raises the question of maintaining the practice of transferring memory through personal snapshots in family photo albums. The author employs the categories such as 'time' and 'flow of life': 'Albums are proof of people's very existence; they will easily outlive the human lives inside the pages and thus tell the world that these people lived and their life mattered <...> Every snapshot a person takes or keeps is also a type of self-portrait, a kind of 'mirror with memory' reflecting back those moments and people that were special enough to be frozen in time forever. Collectively, these photos make visible the ongoing stories of that person's life, serving as visual footprints marking where they have been <...> The observer and the observed become part of the general and immeasurable flow of life, while we, humans, try to stop it with the flick of the photographic lens shutter' (Weiser, 2009).

A noticeable shift in the humanities and the formation in the 1980s of paradigms of 'representational approach' and 'non-representational theory' pushed the development of visual research in the Russian social sciences. Of utmost significance are the collections published in 2007-2009 under the editorship of Ye.R. Yarskaya-Smirnova and P. Romanov (Visual Anthropology, 2007, 2009). The expansion of the subject field of visual anthropology and sociology was facilitated by the theoretical works of V.L. Krutkin (Krutkin, 2012), as well as the development of the training course 'Optical Media' (Krutkin, 2014), which involves acquaintance with the structure of the media world, its main forms of the entry into social research, and consideration of their abilities and boundaries in social cognition.

I. Kulakova noted the development of the visual sphere by historians: 'A historian should be interested in any forms of visual representation of the sociocultural reality of the past and present, clarifying the features of the development of society in different eras' (Kulakova, 2007). The author tends to agree with the description of the subject of visual images research proposed by I. Kulakova. It could be divided into three parts: a conscious construct, unconscious manifestations, and the historical era of the creation and existence of a visual image: '... the study of visual images, consciously 'constructed' by people of the past and present for the purpose of self-presentation or proclamation of any idea. But it seems no less important to visualize a person through unconscious manifestations, in particular, through his habitual life world, something everyday-utilitarian. So it becomes essential to study the imagery that bears the seal of a person of a certain era, which takes shape regardless of his intentions and is captured in any visible spatial objects ...' (Kulakova, 2007).

The choice of theoretical research methods is based on an integrated approach to the analysis and interpretation of visual data. The authors recognize the complex nature of displaying reality in photography, relying on the analytical approach of P. Romanov

and Ye. Yarskaya-Smirnova: 'Any source, including a visual one, is not a direct reflection of a real event, but only its traces, left by someone else's interpretation' (Romanov, Yarskaya-Smirnova, 2009).

To study photographs, the author employed the procedure of interpretation of images by Richard Chalfen (guiding questions): What and who is depicted in the photograph? Who created these images and when? What do they mean to family members?

All visual representations were produced and consumed in a social context; therefore, social construction and structural interpretation of amateur snapshots combined into family cases are used as an interpretation of the photo. Thus, the socio-cultural context and the search for significant social structures (family and relative ties, social networks, professional and settlement communities) are revealed with the help of in-depth interviews. The normative component of the methods of storing, fixing, and presenting images captured in a photo, the level of motivation for transferring family memory through photographs (as well as their social value) also deserves a fuller description. The chosen methodology - analysis of family cases of amateur photographs using in-depth interviews - theoretically relies on a discursive approach to visual communication, namely, identification of the explicit and implicit cultural stereotypes and value systems through the order of speech that precedes it; the specified stereotypes and value systems would allow building images through the concept of 'how they seem to appear and how they look' ... After all, the people in the picture look in a certain way: they dressed, combed their hair, took a certain pose, they may have different objects nearby and some kind of environment around - this is how they 'seem'. What did they want to say, how did they want to present their reality and display the ideal scenario of their life in the given picture - this is how they 'look'.

A comprehensive review of amateur family photographs also employs a hermeneutic approach, which requires an analysis of the writing on the back or the inscription on the photo itself. The author's captions to the photo are recorded along with the titles and texts in the albums where the photos are posted; it could also sometimes be used as the signature for the statement of the 'appearance maker' or the Demonstrator.

Theoretical research methods also include the provision on the participants in the process of creating, storing, and reviewing photos from family cases. It is known that R. Barth, speaking of the subjects of photographic experience, distinguishes the one who takes pictures (Operator), the one who is depicted (Spectrum), and the one who views the image (Spectator). Following V. Krutkin, the author would like to single out an extra person - the 'memory keeper', displaying a photograph from the family collection (Krutkin, 2009). The one 'viewing' the image should also be included in the circle of subjects of photography. Y. Panakova pointed out that '... visuality leaves meanings open. This allows the viewer to create new meanings on his own, depending on the context and connotation. Such a strategy, of course, imposes a great responsibility on the viewer, since he must actively participate in the perception and interpretation of anthropological work all by itself' (Panakova, 2007). This means that the researcher virtually should be close enough to the respondents or even be involved in a certain way in their community (such as to be a local resident, to have a family and/or relatives in the community under review - or to rely on in-depth interviews within the case of his own family; any of these cases could also involve 'influence agents' and 'opinion leaders' among the inhabitants of the south-west province of the Bryansk Oblast).

## RESULTS

The object of the presented research is inscribed amateur photographs of the mid-1950s - early 1980s kept by provincial families of small towns and villages in the south-west of the Bryansk Oblast. The subject of analysis is the display of friendships, family ties, and memory practices with the help of images and text located on the same photograph-carrier and presented in the material domestic space (album, portrait, selection of framed pictures, etc.).

It was revealed within this framework of the study that black and white photographs of the Soviet period were kept by pretty much every surveyed family. As a rule, these were several photographs belonging to the first half of the XX century and quite a few photographs of the 1950-1980s. Photos were stored in family albums, boxes, paper envelopes; in one particular case, the photos were found in an old medicine box. A special type of storage and presentation of photographs peculiar to the south-west provinces of the Bryansk Oblast includes homemade glazed picture frames filled with collage-style photos. Some may also have a central part of the photo-story, like two paired portraits of the ancestors of modern family members. In some other cases, the photos were placed over the embroidered picture: a landscape, a basket of flowers, etc. This way of presenting photographs in the domestic space has different names: portrait (hereinafter - heavy local subdialect) 'Over there at the partyret ... inserted at the partyret ...' (Kleutina); frame, setting '... They used to do it before - this is such a bigga setting that fits all the relatives, generations of the familiya ... Mom, where did you huv this one? Or it wuz Zina who had this one? Yeah, it was like that, but right now, felluz, it's no longer the same. You won't find such a thing anymore ... These are what we huv. This one is already ryckety, grandfa was still alive then. This musta be 25 years ago (Perepelko); Around here, you know, I lived in such a bigga hut ... so there was such a bigga frame and a million photocards sat in there' (Perepelko). According to N.A. Golik, the director of the Unechsky local lore museum, the frame or setting in the Starodubsky district was called 'vidik' by locals; residents of the Unechsky district called it 'ryamka'.

Two types of photos lay-out were identified within the framework of the study: chronological and related. Thus, the Perepelko family (village Novoye Mesto, Novozybkovsky district) has a collection of five: family album, two army discharge albums of their sons, and then family albums for each of the son. In the case of Strelets family (Karna village of Novozybkovsky district; Lakomaya Buda village of Klimovsky district; now residing in the town of Novozybkov), each of the spouses has own album; however, the wife continued to fill her album as a family one while her husband has it decorated as a wedding gift from his grandmother, so his album contains photographs from childhood, youth, military service and term times. Inscribed photos in such albums are inserted into the slots so that you can take out and read the text; sometimes they are also glued in one corner. Noteworthy that Strelets family perceives the albums as a repository of various memorable details (newspaper clippings with articles about the father or published son's poems, pages of the daughter's school progress reports; the last pages of the family album depict the dates of birth of close relatives and family friends).

Also remarkable is the division of photographs into black-and-white and color (family case of T.I. Churilina, born 1945, Shulakovka village of Unechsky district, Bryansk Oblast); the only case when the photographs were separated into the different

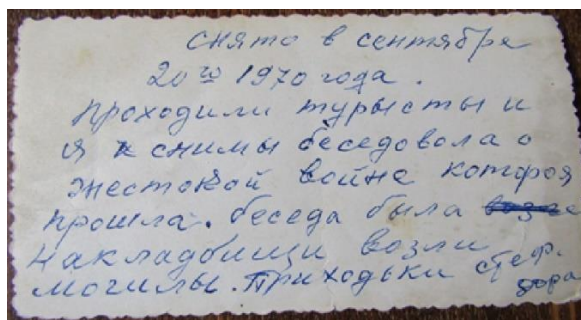
folders by the presence or absence of signatures in the back and stored in chronological order in a leather case from a medicine box was F.I. Frolov's family (born in 1941, Belogorsh village of Unechsky district, Bryansk Oblast).

The most common inscription on a portrait photograph contains the words of 'keepsake/good memory': 'For a keepsake to my friend Nanya from Tanya in honor of our friendship. 1969, Age 11, 5th grade' (A. Strelets) 'For Gennady to a good memory from us. Biryusinsk, March of 1978' (G. Strelets). It should be noted that the respondents themselves explain the presence of such inscribed pictures in their albums this way: 'those photos were given as a souvenir, keepsake 'for a good memory' because they used to print 6 photos per set. So, people usually kept a couple of pics for themselves, and the rest were presented to their best friends and girlfriends ... My mother-in-law still has a separate folder of these' (D. Strelets). Noteworthy that 'Nanya', mentioned in the above inscription, is a diminutive of Anastasia. 'And when they were saying this ... and that ..., ugh, they did not call names, but nicknames. John was for Zhenya, Feka instead of Fedya, and so on. I had to ask again, are these names, or what? They laughed at me; they say these are the names that they called each other when communicating at that time' (D. Strelets). The family case of Tatiana Ivanovna Churilina, born in 1945, a resident of the village of Shulakovka, Unechsky district of Bryansk region, contains such photographs with an inscription addressed to her husband: 'Keepsake to Vas'ka from Valery. As a souvenir to those who know how to keep the cold shadow of a person, and to those who will not allow joking over it throughout the century. 12. XI.63. Signature'; and also to Tatyana Ivanovna herself: 'Keepsake for Tanyukha from Klavdiya. What goes from the heart has no words. In memory of our joint work at the factory. Narva city, 02/10/65. To Tatiana Kolesnikova'. The grantor possibly chose the most beautiful of his/her photographs, at least all of those depicted in pictures dedicated to friends look quite trimmed and romantic. Also noteworthy are the informal appeals peculiar to friendly initiations: 'Tanyukha'... (diminutive of Tatyana), 'Vas'ka' ... (diminutive of Vassily), etc.

The next most popular group of inscriptions is associated with fixing the place and time of the picture (also narrated in heavy local subdialect). 'It wuz my album, big fut book. Went from work together, I worked on a brickyard then ... they tuk us all on excursions ... there we tuk pictures ... I've been doing brickyard job since 1957' (Anischenko).

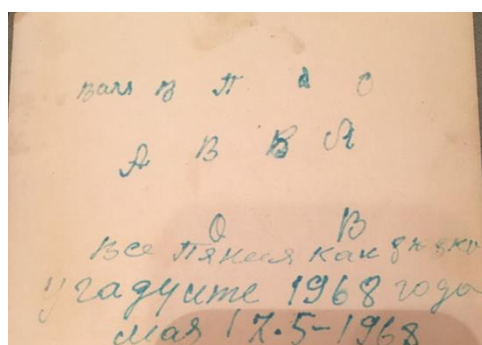
Many tried to find and show the visiting researcher the oldest photograph from the family collection. 'It turns out ... we counted - 1932. This is my mother-in-law's husband in the photo, he is three years old here ... I specially called my niece, she brought this photo. But this photo is already on the Internet. Perepelko Alexey Mikhailovich, born in 1929 He is at the age of three here, it is the oldest photo ...' (Perepelko). Dating accompanies most of the children's photographs; sometimes the inscription also contains an indication of depicted child's age: In memory of parents from his nephew and grandson Seryozha. Photographed here at the age of 2 years and 6 months, st. Krasnoarmeyskaya P.M.O.-135'.

One of the photographs of Tatiana Churilina was signed by her daughter, most likely at primary school age. She applied diagonal lines with a ruler and signed a group photo: 'This is Mom's work. Yes, yes, yes to the sunny world. No, no, no to nuclear bomb' (lyrics from the Young Pioneers song). In the case of N.A. Shcherba family from the village of Shulakovka, Unechsky district, the following inscription was made on the picture, which depicts a rural street with people:



**Figure 1.** Photo 1. Text: *Photographed on September 20, 1970. Tourist came in and I had a conversation with them about a cruel war that I went through. We stopped to chat near the cemetery by Prikhod'ko's grave*

Specially encrypted signatures addressed to relatives could be also attributed to the same group. In the case of E. Vakulina's family, her relatives from the village of Novye Yurovichi in the Klimovsky district of the Bryansk Oblast, being the Old Believers by religion, marked their relatives on the photograph in capital letters with Church Slavonic style and accompanied them with the inscription 'Guess!' (dated May 1968).



**Figure 2.** Photo 2

Studying the family case of N.A. Golik from the Bryansk regional town of Unecha reveals the photographs and family ties of Evgenia Grigorievna Kedrova (born 1929) and Yakov Yakovlevich (born 1919). Kedrov's family is representing the mass Soviet intelligentsia. Yakov Yakovlevich was a former WWII battle-front veteran; later he becomes a local school principal. Evgenia Grigorievna taught the Russian language and mathematics in high school. Yakov Yakovlevich was clearly taking pictures more often; his wife poses for him in many photos. He also made many inscriptions to photographs that were sent to relatives in the Bryansk Oblast. They are mostly of the playful character: *'My grand lady of the half-manor in the bosom of nature'*, *'Mother admiring her moppet'*, *'Mom is talking to the legendary hero-knight Yurka. P.S. Yurka wears a new coat made by the modiste Ms. Kedrova'*.

Evgenia Grigorievna most often addresses the pictures to her mother, sister, and brother, mentioning in her comments about the relationship, the age of the depicted children, and feelings for loved ones: *'To Mom, Galya, and Shurik from Zhenya, Vovochka, and Yurochka. 15.VI-55'*; *'To my dear mom. Zhenya'*; *'Dear mommy. Yasha says I look like a Chinese here. Kisses to you, Zhenya, 1955'*. Some of the inscriptions on the photographs with children were made on their behalf: *'Keepsake to grandmother, aunt Galya, and uncle Shura from grandson and nephew Yuri Kedrov (aged 1). 16 / X- 55 Rovenki village'*.

Another typical feature of the photographs of city dwellers is their background, which often represents a garden, a city park, and country gardening. The villagers take group pictures in front of the wall of the house or a fence; they sit or stand together on the ground and a bench.



**Figure 3.** Photo 3



**Figure 4.** Photo 4

Many respondents perceive the presence of the photo captions as a lost tradition of the past; they were also a bit embarrassed by the fact that the researcher is thoroughly investigating captions to their photos from the family archive. *'Why are you smiling? - Director of the Unechsky local lore museum N.A. Golik addresses his young colleagues, who assisted in digitalizing the inscribed photographs from Kedrovs' family albums. 'I also wrote such dedications when I was young and gave photos to my friends. It was quite common to do so'. 'I really have no idea why I did this,' - a young lady from the town of Novozybkov adds a comment on her 10-year-old photo. '... Probably because my mother is from the older generation and I saw this in our family album' (D. Strelets).*

Respondents from rural areas cited examples of the destruction of old frames with photographs while moving or changing the ownership of the house (*heavy local subdialect*) *'We dug a hole in the nursery, and dug 'em in. Why would I huv da pics in anuther hut? Left everything whut nobody needed ...'* (Perepelko), including the case of the death of the owner: *'... Yes, what I say, goes the way it wuz. We all talka these way...see, not only my, but she, and her kidz too... Oh, it's still gonna be made a bonfire of anyway ... so*



*when our neighbor died, they had a bonfire for three days ... and cards, pictures, photos, all were burned... blankets and pillows, her dresses - the weariest day draws to an end, everything went to the fire. That one died, another died from that street, still all their stuff got burned' (Pinchukova).*

## DISCUSSION

Modern domestic researchers are now studying amateur photographs of the last century, however, still defining different subjects of research. For example, O. Sergeeva analyzed the daily practices of the first generations of Soviet television viewers, using photographs as a source of empirical data (Sergeeva, 2009). O. Boytsova studied the tradition of photographing mourning rituals and funeral in Russian culture (Boytsova, 2010); V.P. Chistyakova considered family photographs as a unique ethnological source (Chistyakova, 2012). T.E. Svinina and A.A. Petrova turned to wedding photography as a subject of research in visual sociology (Svinina, 2011). Some researchers have addressed the narrative practices that are formed by virtue of family photo albums (Vlasova, 2007). In addition to the studies above, the Russian experiment in the implementation of the multimedia project 'Images of Russian everyday life in photographs of a family album' in Izhevsk in 2005, summarized by V. Krutkin in several publications (Krutkin, 2007), allows formulating (based on the experience of domestic researchers) own subject of research and describe the research methodology.

The submitted article represents an attempt to organize the analysis of Soviet amateur photography sourced from family archives, choosing inscribed photographs as the object. Nevertheless, the answers received are of a debatable nature. Photography as a visual way of fixing family memory is associated with the type of storage, the technical capability of families to capture themselves and their loved ones on camera, and the presence of social ties that are developed further by presenting souvenir photos for the family archive. The most popular way of storing photographs in the material domestic space in the south-west of the Bryansk Oblast should be recognized as the 'portrait' or 'frame'. However, with this method of storing photographs, family members tend to forget about the presence of inscriptions or some explanatory footnotes. Perhaps some of the pictures may have been signed, but this was not important when selecting them to be framed. As a rule, such a frame or setting contains portraits of several generations of the family; also, the framed picture often captures some important moments of biographies. Among the recurring subjects are the wedding, military service, and the appearance of a new child. Nowadays this way of storing family photos is lost, family albums with photos are in a way better condition.

It would be also essential to dwell on the method of structuring photographs, which was explained by the 'memory keeper' when demonstrating the photographs to researchers. The exchange and gifting of signed photographs were part of group communications, confirmation of family ties, and the presence of kinship. Inscriptions on children's photographs are usually performed in 'lined notebook-style', while photographs depicting youngsters are manifesting all sorts of 'embellishments' in the captions: diagonal, underlines, rhymed verses. The 'memory keepers' notes on the inscribed photographs often contain some explanations about the place, time, and circumstances of picture-taking (especially if it was the term time or military service); people captured in the photographs are often called by nicknames or diminutive names.

As a rule, in the family cases studied in the south-west of the Bryansk Oblast, the text of the inscription is directly related to the image. However, there were still several cases where the textual utterance did not have such a clear connection with the image. On the other hand, signing the photo on behalf of the child is quite traditional; this trend was recorded both in urban and rural family cases. It seems that such an inscription served as a confirmation of kinship, the child's acquisition of subjectivity in an extended family that no longer exists under one roof but at a distance. Starting from the 1950s, a camera accompanied every vacation for at least a part of Soviet families; it was an element of the emerging leisure industry, also contributing to the arrangement of the private sphere (Krutkin, 2009). Most likely this hobby penetrated the provincial community of the south-west of the Bryansk Oblast, being promoted by the local intelligentsia (Mishchenko 2020). The inscriptions and explanatory footnotes also help to understand the pictures' ways into the family archive - whether they were mailed by relatives, presented at school, in the army, or while at job training.

One should agree with Natalia Bogdanova, the lecturer of the class named 'How to read a photo?' - the linear construction of the image, when the camera looks directly at the participants, speaks of the inclusion of the photographer in the local community. Indeed, people in rural group shots are organized in a linear fashion: they pose 'frozen' in front of the camera, their legs and arms are often stretched along with their bodies, and their mouths are clenched. Urban provincial residents, according to the 'seem and look' theory, tend to look at the picture more relaxed, carefree, and joyously. The provincial urban community demonstrated a high motivation to store, study, present, and transmit family history through photographs. Commonly, the family reached a joint understanding on who exactly, and on what conditions will acquire the family archive of photographs; sometimes these are children, but more often the grandchildren of older family members. However, it turns out that, in rural areas, the older generation is quite concerned by the fact that the problem of transmission of family history gets slurred over.

## CONCLUSION

Thus, Soviet amateur family photography is an important historical source, associated with a variety of everyday practices identified during the study of family cases of provincial urban and rural residents of the Bryansk south-west. Natalia Bogdanova, the lecturer of the 'How to read a photo?' class, noted that 'Soviet visual culture is distinguished by the maximum clarity, glare, and ease of perception. Perhaps, that is why the visual canons created in the Soviet era, are so closely intertwined with the individual consciousness that they remain even in the post-Soviet space' (Bogdanova). Modern family archives of black-and-white photographs can be found virtually everywhere in the studied region; however, they are being increasingly forfeited, their way of storage and presentation is changing. Consideration of the visual and verbal content of the images allows identifying broader contexts of different meanings. Thus, an inscribed photograph gives the opportunity to embed a picture into a family-related system, enhance the value of memory, convey emotional ties, and record collective practices inherent in local communities.

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