

Leveraging Genealogy as an Academic Discipline

By Arnon Hershkovitz

Genealogy as an academic discipline has been much discussed in recent years especially by Neville Lamdan, Daniel Wagner and Tom Jones, all of whom have considered the topic in detail. Lamdan is director of the International Institute for Jewish Genealogy and Paul Jacobi Center (IJG) one of whose goals is “developing Jewish genealogy into a recognized field of academic investigation within the realm of Jewish Studies and in association with a broad range of other sciences on an inter-disciplinary ba-

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sis.”¹ In accordance with this goal, IJG has developed a proposed syllabus for teaching Jewish genealogy at the university level.² Lamdan, who holds a Doctorate in History, places Jewish genealogy under Jewish Studies, i.e., in the Humanities. On the other hand, Wagner, a Professor of Material Science, suggests that genealogy is closely related to the Exact Sciences, and Professor of Education Jones places genealogy under the Social Sciences while indicating that it is related to no fewer than 45 research fields, among which are Animal Husbandry, Cartography, Herbolgy, Numismatics, and Women’s Studies.³

The question of whether genealogy is (or is not) an academic discipline, however, has not yet been discussed under a comprehensive framework of “what is an academic discipline?” In this article, we present such a framework and examine the disciplinarity of genealogy within it. We suggest that although genealogy meets most of the prerequisites to become an academic discipline, it fails to meet two crucial ones: a comprehensive and organized body of knowledge and institutional manifestation. Following that, we suggest a bottom-up process of leveraging genealogy to a fully recognized academic discipline, a process that will be initiated by forming an international community of scholars in any discipline who already are affiliated with

academic institutions, who are willing to bring genealogy to the front of their research interests, and who will continue to construct the needed body of knowledge for genealogy.

What Is an Academic Discipline?

While considering whether or not Women’s Studies is an academic discipline, Sandra Coyner addresses what an academic discipline is *not*.⁴ According to Coyner, a discipline is *not* equal to a subject; that is, it is not just the summation of things people want to (or should) know about a certain topic. Related to this is the fact that some topics are treated by more than one discipline. For example, questions about migration patterns might be examined by historians, economists, geographers and/or statisticians. A discipline is not defined by the use of specific research methodologies; interviews, tests, case studies, archival research and other research methodologies are shared by many disciplines. Disciplines are *not* single, unified structures with regard to the knowledge underlying the subject matter. Different trends within a discipline (e.g., micro-history and macro-history) do not complete each other, but rather compete by suggesting different explanations for the same phenomena. Sometimes dissimilarities in a discipline are at least as great as those between disciplines, and it might be thought that often the grouping of several topics into a discipline is random. Conyer maintains that disciplines are *not* objective or apolitical, and that all research—starting from its initial questions and ending with its interpretation—rests on values or is narrowed by selective perceptions.

Applying Conyer’s views of what disciplines are not, we may begin to understand what they are. Disciplines are systems that deal with certain bodies of knowledge but also with their construction, concepts, representation, teaching, inquiry, judgment, values, ethics, and much more. Disciplines are not only about knowledge, but also about the people who form this knowledge, use it and discuss it. Those scholars have the sense of belonging, through which they form their identity, and share kudos.⁵ Like other professional fields, disciplines use their own forms of organization to link together specialists scattered among institutions, and they also provide culture to the scholars.⁶ All in all, disciplines are neither solely about subjects nor are they

¹ As appears on the Institute’s Mission statement, available at www.ijg.org/Mission/Aims.aspx (accessed September 2011),

² Neville Lamdan, “The International Institute for Jewish Genealogy: Five Years of Progress,” AVOTAYNU, Vol. XXVII, No. 2, Summer 2011.

³ See: H. Daniel Wagner, “Genealogy as an Academic Discipline,” AVOTAYNU, Vol XXII, No. 1, Spring 2006, 3–11; T.W. Jones, “Post Secondary Study of Genealogy: Curriculum and its Contexts.” Presented at the *IJG Symposium*. Jerusalem, Israel, 2007.

⁴ S. Coyner, “Women’s Studies as an Academic Discipline: Why and How to Do It.” In G. Bowles and R. Duelli Klein (Eds.), *Theories of Women’s Studies*, 46–71. London, UK: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1983.

⁵ M. Terras, “Disciplined: Using Educational Studies to Analyze ‘Humanities Computing’.” *Literary and Linguistic Computing*, 21(2), 2006, 229–246.

⁶ B.A. Clark, “Academic Culture. Working Paper No. 42, Yale University Higher Education Research Group, New Haven, CT., 1980

about people or institutions, as “nothing is more certain in the lives of the disciplines, whatever the field, whatever the institutional setting, than that they are forever changing.”⁷ Moreover, academic disciplines are about the organization of learning and the systematic production of new knowledge through research.⁸

Dozens of studies discuss the question of whether or not various fields are academic disciplines but only few include a suggested measure for this examination. One list of conditions that must be met in order for a field of study to be considered a discipline has been constructed by the Council of Graduate Schools (CGS).⁹ This list is quoted in an article trying to assess whether statistics is an academic discipline.¹⁰ Another general list is found in a working paper discussing academic disciplines.¹¹

Merging the two lists, we have a framework within which we can assess whether or not genealogy is an academic discipline. According to this merged list, an academic discipline should have:

- Particular objects of research
- Unique research methods
- Significant market demand
- Professionals working essentially in the field
- Specific terminologies or technical language
- A theory, concepts and a body of literature
- Professional journals regularly publishing new advances in the subject
- Institutional manifestation

Let us now examine how genealogy fits this list.

Specific Objects of Research. Obviously, *people* are the main object of most genealogy research. Genealogists investigate people’s life spans, look for documentation about people, trace migration paths of people, decipher tombstones telling about people, and more. One also can extend the scope of genealogy research to *families*. Although the definition of the term “family” may be open to debate, as

used here it means “a group of people who are related to each other,”¹² a definition that fits families from the 16th century as well as new families from the 21st century, and may also fit other familial configurations genealogists often research, such as groups of individuals who all descend from the same individual (or couple). A research object may extend also to *communities*, groups of individuals and families who reside(d) in the same place at certain periods. Although communities do not have a birth date and cannot be interviewed in toto, they do have growth and decline patterns, changing borders and collective memory.¹³

Genealogy often deals with other objects as well. Two of the most common are *names and family trees*. Names borne by people, both given names and surnames have been extensively studied historically;¹⁴ etymologically;¹⁵ culturally;¹⁶ biologically;¹⁷ and from other angles. Family trees which describe the relationships between people and families, also might be treated as research objects in themselves. Genealogists have raised interesting research questions about their visualization,¹⁸ growth rate and more.¹⁹

Although people, families, communities, names and family trees all are objects of research in other disciplines (for example, people in History, families in Sociology, communities in Economics, names in Linguistics, and family trees in Genetics)—research interests in them in genealogy are different and unique.

Thus, we may conclude that genealogy does have particular objects of research.

Research Methods. Genealogy certainly uses some unique research methodologies to answer potential research questions, although some of the methods are not fully for-

⁷ J. Monroe, J. “Introduction: The Shapes of Fields.” In *Writing and Revising the Disciplines*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2002, 1–12.

⁸ R. Krishnan, “What are academic disciplines?” Working paper, University of Southampton National Center for Research Methods, Southampton, UK, 2009.

⁹ American Council of Graduate Schools (CGS) is comprised of more than 500 institutions of higher education in the United States and Canada that are engaged in graduate education, research and the preparation of candidates for advanced degrees. CGS member institutions award 94 percent of the doctoral degrees and 80 percent of the master’s degrees in the United States (as reported in: “Investigating Collaboration in Graduate Education,” *University World News*, Issue 46, September 28, 2008; available at <http://www.universityworldnews.com> [accessed May 2010])

¹⁰ P.D. Minton, “The Visibility of Statistics as a Discipline.” *The American Statistician*, 37(4), 1983, 284–289.

¹¹ R. Krishnan R. “What are Academic Disciplines?” Working paper, University of Southampton National Center for Research Methods, Southampton, UK, 2009

¹² In *Cambridge Dictionaries Online*. Retrieved August 2011, from <http://dictionary.cambridge.org>.

¹³ Collective Memory is a term from the sociology domain describing the set of information structures shared, passed on and constructed by groups of people or societies. For example, memory of the Holocaust is shared and passed on by all the Jews around the world, including those who were born long after it had ended.

¹⁴ C.M. Yonge, C.M. *The History of Christian Names*. London, UK: Parker, Son, and Bourn, 1863.

¹⁵ A. Beider, *A Dictionary of Jewish Surnames from the Russian Empire*. Teaneck, NJ: Avotaynu, 1993.

¹⁶ E.S. Azevedo, E.S. “The Anthropological and Cultural Meaning of Family Names in Bahia, Brazil.” *Current Anthropology*, 21(3), 360–363, 1980.

¹⁷ B. Skyes, and C. Irven, “Surnames and the Y Chromosome.” *The American Journal of Human Genetics*, 66(4), 1417–1419, 2000.

¹⁸ M. J. McGuffin, and R. Balakrishnan, “Interactive Visualization of Genealogical Graphs.” In *Proceedings of the 2005 IEEE Symposium on Information Visualization (Minneapolis, MN)*, 16–23, 2005.

¹⁹ B. Pears, “The Ancestor Paradox Revisited,” *Northumberland & Durham Family History Society Journal*, 16(3), 60–62, 1991. and information exchange. {M. Vlietstra, “XML - a replacement for GEDCOM?” *Computers in Genealogy*, 7(7), 302–348, 2001.

malized yet, and need to be defined more precisely. Following are two suggested unique research methods for academic genealogy research:

- Docography (or, maybe Document Storytelling). Named after the Ethnography qualitative research methodology, this is a form of research primarily used in the Social Sciences that employs close field observation of sociocultural phenomena to understand them in context. Docography involves the gathering of empirical data on people, families or communities based on various genealogically relevant documents, such as vital statistics and archival records, professional diplomas, immigration documents and other similar records. The story of the subject of the research arises from the examination of such documents, after evaluation of the reliability of the sources and resolution of any contradictions discovered in them.

- Database Merging. As suggested by Wagner, this methodology aims to gather as much information as possible about a given individual through merging data from two or more databases.²⁰ With this methodology, researchers sometimes may identify instances where a single individual is recorded as if he or she were several different people. The methodology also allows one to discover family relationships otherwise not possible to know.

Of course, research methods used in other fields might be easily applied to genealogy research as well, such as conducting statistical analyses to compare patterns of different communities.

Hence, genealogy definitely possesses its own unique research methods and special techniques.

Significant Market Demand. Without a doubt, a huge market demand exists for genealogy, the extent of which is best illustrated by Ancestry.com, the largest online family history resource, which has 1.6 million paying subscribers (as of August 2011) and revenue of more than 300 million dollars in 2010.²¹

Genealogy certainly meets this requirement.

Specific Terminologies or Technical Language. A physician overhearing two genealogists talk about BMD (births, marriages and deaths), might think they are interested in testing their Bone Mineral Density; the genealogists, however, mean something entirely different. When genealogists speak of Ellis Island, they usually have no intention of touring the place, but rather of researching its archives. Every genealogist who ever used genealogy software knows that GEDCOM is Genealogy Data COMMunication, a protocol for exchanging data among genealogy software applications. Many other examples could be given.

²⁰ D. Wagner, "Tombstone Identification Through Database Merging: A Tool for the Virtual Reconstitution of Vanished Jewish Communities. *Roots-key*, 27(3/4), 32–34, 2007.

²¹ According to various press releases by Ancestry.com Inc. as of August 2011, <http://corporate.ancestry.com/press/press-releases/2011>, and based on Ancestry.com 2010 Financial Results (Press Release), <http://ir.ancestry.com/releasedetail.cfm?ReleaseID=552742>.

Clearly, a specific genealogy jargon is used on a daily basis.

Professionals Working Essentially in the Field. Many genealogists worldwide are self-educated. Currently, no one needs a diploma or any specific studies in order to practice genealogy (either as a hobby or as a profession). Two organizations accredit genealogists: The Board for Certification of Genealogists (BCG) and the International Commission for the Accreditation of Professional Genealogists (ICAPGen). A few manuals describe research in genealogy, the most popular of which is the one published by Board for Certification of Genealogists and the book *Professional Genealogy*, by Elizabeth Shown Mills.²²

Most genealogists are not accredited at all and not required to adhere to any standards in practice. Currently, a genealogist is basically anyone who defines himself as such. The same is true of "professional genealogist."

Overall, genealogy has professionals working in the field.

A Theory, Concepts and a Body of Literature. Psychologists have Freud, Kinsey, Pavlov, and Piaget (and many more); physicists have Einstein, Hertz, Lawrence, and Ohm (and many more); Economists have the Theory of Public Expenditure, Theory of Capital, and Theory of Demand (and many more). But what are the main theories or models of genealogy research? And who are the "ancestors" of this field? As the answers to both questions (and to similar ones) are unclear, it is difficult to ponder a body of literature in genealogy research.

It is awkward to talk about theories of genealogy research when the basic structures needed for any theory still are missing in genealogy. Standards for documenting names, dates and places—the elementary units of any genealogy research—are still not to be found; only in 2008, was such a standard first proposed.²³ A suggested standard for citing sources (a necessary aspect of any genealogical research) was published only a few years before that and was widely accepted.²⁴

An example of a genealogy theory—which is not a theory grounded in the discipline of History or in any other discipline—is the one related to the growth rate of family trees, regarding the number of ancestors in each generation. The expected purely mathematical doubling number of ancestors in each generation leads to the Ancestor Paradox, according to which in a certain generation in the past, the number of ancestors was (much) larger than the world

²² Board for Certification of Genealogists, *The BCG Genealogical Standards Manual*. Orem, UT: Ancestry.com, 2000; Mills, E.S. (Ed.). *Professional Genealogy: A Manual for Researchers, Writers, Editors, Lecturers, and Librarians*. Baltimore, MD: Genealogical Publishing Company, 2001.

²³ G. Mokotoff, (2008). "A Proposed Standard for Names, Dates and Places in Genealogical Databases," AVOTAYNU, Vol. XXIV, No. 3, 3–6, 2008.

²⁴ E.S. Mills. *Evidence!: Citation & analysis for the family historian*. Baltimore, MD: Genealogical Publishing Company, 1997.

population at the time.²⁵ A theory suggesting a solution to this paradox was suggested by Pears a few years after his original publication.²⁶ Usually called The Diamond Theory of Ancestors, this theory suggests that at a certain point, through a number of (early) generations, the number of ancestors is actually decreasing and not increasing.

Another example might demonstrate the need for theories in genealogy research. When comparing information from two or more family trees, or when desiring to merge family trees, genealogists must be certain that two persons appearing on the two different trees, who are assumed to be the same individual—are indeed the same person. This problem becomes more difficult if genealogists do not document dates of birth or death, either because of objective limitations such as a lack of such information, or because of a bad habit of not following documentation standards (if such standards exist). For fitting family trees on a time scale and, therefore, allowing a comparison between them, at least two methods, which might be considered theories of family trees synchronization, have been suggested: Paul Jacobi's Absolute Generations Scale and Michael Honey's Jewish Historical Clock.²⁷

These two examples are an exception and highlight the need for theories and grounded-theories (theories generated from data) of fundamental topics within genealogy research.

Without such theories, and without basic standards, no body of genealogy literature can exist; neither can its academic quality be assured.

Professional Journals Regularly Publishing New Advances in the Subject. Many genealogy journals and magazines have been published for dozens of years, either by local or national genealogical societies or by commercial ventures. How can we measure, however, if a given journal publishes "advances in the subject?" Some topics might seem not to advance the subject, such as, for example, a genealogy of a certain family or a new database useful to only a few researchers; while other topics might definitely be considered advances in the subject, such as new details about the genealogy of a "common" ancestor (e.g., a historical figure from whom many sub-trees descend, e.g., Saul Wahl), new methods for bypassing the multi-spelling problems of surnames, discovery of new archival resources, or suggestions for tree merging. It might be suggested that a certain publication demonstrates new advances in genealogy

²⁵ B. Pears, "Our Ancestors, Conceptions, Misconceptions and a Paradox," *Northumberland & Durham Family History Society Journal*, 11(1), 8-10, 1986.

²⁶ B. Pears, "The Ancestor Paradox Revisited," *Northumberland & Durham Family History Society Journal*, 16(3), 60-62, 1991.

²⁷ Rapaport, C. (2009). Jacobi absolute generations scale. Available online at <http://ijg.org/Documents/AbsoluteGenerations.pdf> (accessed August 2011); M. Honey, "A Method for Depicting Interconnected Rabbinical Families Simultaneously: The Jewish Historical Clock." *AVOTAYNU*, Vol. 17, No. 3, 10-15, 2001.

ogy if it contributes to the knowledge base of the community. To make sure that studies are worth publishing, academic communities all over the world usually employ peer-review mechanisms and standardize the format of their publications. This standard format is necessary for easily communicating research and research results among members of the community, thereby permitting assimilation of knowledge and enabling fruitful discussions of studies in the field. This is why almost any academic publication—be it a short conference paper, a journal paper, a thesis/dissertation, or a book—is considered a complete unit of research and is brought to the reader as such. It usually includes an Introduction, explaining what is being done; Background, demonstrating what has been done before; Research description, allowing others to carefully review it and maybe to replicate it; Results, communicating the findings; and Conclusion/Discussions, which synthesizes all that has gone before and indicates directions for further research.

*It seems that this requirement is implemented only to a limited degree within the genealogy community, with only a few journals making sure their published materials are peer-reviewed and follow certain guidelines.*²⁸

Institutional Manifestation. Although the libraries of many academic institutions have genealogy divisions, only a few institutions have genealogy as one of its academic branches. The most common library classifications place genealogy as a sub-topic of, or as complimentary to history. "Biography, genealogy, insignia" is number 920 in the Dewey Decimal Classification Class 900; "History, geography and biography," and "Genealogy" is Subclass CS in the Library of Congress Classification's Class C, "Auxiliary Sciences of History (General)." Only a handful of U.S. academic programs focus on genealogy: The Institute of Genealogy and History Research at Samford University (Birmingham, Alabama); Boston University's Center for Professional Education (Boston, Massachusetts); The Center for Family History and Genealogy at Brigham Young University (Provo, Utah); the Genealogy Program at Wallace State College (Hanceville, Alabama); and professional-oriented certificates of genealogy in Akamai University's Center for Education and Literacy (Hilo, Hawaii) and in University of Washington's Professional and Continuing Education (Seattle, Washington). The primary focus of these centers and programs is educational and/or practical, however; they are not actively involved in academic research in genealogy.

In short, it appears that no academic genealogy department with a focus on research exists in the United States or outside of the U.S. as far as the author knows.

Is Genealogy an Academic Discipline?

Examining whether genealogy is an academic discipline based on the eight points that form the merged list of char-

²⁸ The *National Genealogical Society Quarterly* is probably the finest example of a journal that meets the highest standards.

acteristics of an academic discipline, suggests that genealogy has the potential to become an academic discipline—as it has a huge market demand, professionals working in the field, many journal papers regularly published, special jargon, specific objects of research, and some unique methodologies—but also highlights the difficulties that must be overcome before such a step can be completed. What genealogy lacks is a comprehensive and organized body of knowledge involving theories and concepts and institutional manifestation—and the former seemingly is a prerequisite to the latter.

Bottom-Up Leveraging Genealogy As an Academic Discipline

Although genealogy is a pursuit being undertaken by many people around the world, and although it heavily involves inquiry, it still lacks an academic facet. According to the analysis described in this article, the fundamental barrier preventing recognition of genealogy as a discipline is its lack of a core body of knowledge involving theories and concepts and its absence from the academic milieu. In addition, the type of milieu in which it might be represented in the near future is not quite obvious. The social structure of the newly suggested field is crucially important, as academic disciplinarity does not only require a curriculum, but also an organized social grouping and network of commu-

nications. It is primarily the communication within such networks that plays a major role in a field's formation and progression.

Moreover, when using the term "Academic Genealogy," one must wonder what is an example of academic research in this field. Clearly, single family research is not of interest academically, for academic research must have some anchors in previous research, as well as some implications going forward, in order to make it interesting.

- Revealing the truth about one's great-grandfather's military service may be interesting family lore to investigate, but if it also is a case study that uses a novel research methodology, this might be of interest also as academic research.

- Compiling a list of a certain tiny farming community population according to census and vital statistics records may indeed be an interesting community research project, but if from these data some knowledge about changes in the population age in that tiny farming community over the years is to be extracted, or some comparable data is to be extracted, this might be inspiring academic research.

- Merging trees according to common information is a practical tool for solving mysteries in family research, but determining the minimum number of trees and the distribution of their sizes (say, within a certain ethnic group) which assure such a merging is a fascinating research question to be resolved (probably with the help of Mathematics).

These are just a few examples of possible research interests that might comfortably fit beneath the "Academic Genealogy" umbrella. It is clear that genealogy is an interdisciplinary research field, and this might promote its formation, as it would be an accessible field for genealogy-interested scholars from across disciplines.

In recent years, genealogy has been discussed in academic studies, either as the main methodology used or as a phenomenon examined. Professor Gur Alroy of the Faculty of Humanities, Haifa University (Israel), has studied the role of Jewish Colonization Association (JCA) and Jewish Territorialism Organization (ITO) in the Jewish emigration from the Pale of Settlement in the Russian Empire in the early 20th century. The results of his research—published in a number of journals enrich knowledge of Jewish immigration from Eastern Europe at the turn of the 20th century. This helps many genealogists, since Alroy constructed a novel resource as part of the study: a database of applications made by Jewish immigrants to JCA and ITO's information bureaus.²⁹

Another example is a History masters thesis submitted by Christine Garrett, entitled: "Genealogical Research, Ancestry.com, and Archives."³⁰ The primary conclusion of the research, which was based on surveys taken by professional genealogical researchers, was that while Ancestry.com has

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²⁹ The Mass Jewish Migration Database, available at <http://mjmd.haifa.ac.il/>.

³⁰ The research was done in Auburn University, Auburn, AL; thesis submitted in 2010.

made genealogical research easier, it has not replaced the need to visit archives for the participants in the survey. Such a conclusion is important when discussing the extent to which archives are accessible to the public, and it can serve as empirical evidence when negotiating with policymakers about public access to records (since administrators might claim that today, with “everything on the Internet,” people don’t really need access to actual archives).³¹

Another dimension of potential academic genealogical research is visualization. As genealogical data may be quite a complex structure to visualize (think not only about a family tree that holds a few ancestral families, but also about family trees connecting families from the same community), researchers—mainly from Computer Science departments—have suggested novel ways to make the task of browsing this data easier. Recent examples include:

- TimeNets, a visualization that makes temporal relationships—in particular, births and marriages—as important as family structure, with individuals represented using timelines that converge and diverge to indicate marriage and divorce, and directional edges, i.e., arrowed lines connect parents and children;³²

- PedVis is a new way to arrange family trees visualization, with the root person in the middle and his parents above, below or to the sides of the root individual, with positions of parents alternating between generations;³³

- GeneaQuilts is a visualization that takes the form of a diagonally filled matrix, where rows are individuals and columns are nuclear families.³⁴

The developers of these visualizations suggest that the methods not only assist in genealogical data representation, but also in genealogy research per se and, thus, may be important to both software developers and end-users.

The examples cited above clearly demonstrate the multifaceted nature of possible academic genealogy research. It might be conducted in various departments and its implications may be relevant to many individuals in the genealogy field and beyond. Genealogy is not only about people and families, but also about communities and family trees as objects of research; it is based not only on documents but also on common research methods (e.g., surveys) or on unique methodologies. More than that, these examples

³¹ See, for example, IAJGS’ Public Records Access Monitoring Committee activity, as reported in www.iajgs.org/pramc/legislation.html.

³² N.W. Kim, S.K. Card and J. Heer, “Tracing Genealogical Data with TimeNets.” Paper presented in the International Working Conference on Advanced Visual Interfaces, Rome, Italy, May 25–29, 2010.

³³ C. Tuttle, L.G. Nonato, and C. Silva, “PedVis: A Structured, Space-Efficient Technique for Pedigree Visualization.” *IEEE Transactions on Visualization and Computer Graphics*, 16(6), 1063–1072, 2010.

³⁴ A. Bezerianos, P. Dragicevic, J-D Fekete, J. Bae and B. Watson, B. *IEEE Transactions on Visualization and Computer Graphics*, 16(6), 1073–1081, 2010.

demonstrate that genealogy-related research has been conducted in academic institutions for some time. Those interested in making genealogy a bona fide academic discipline might use this fact as part of an attempt to leverage genealogy into its own field of study.

How Genealogy Can Be Academized?

A first step in the academization of genealogy might be, therefore, the mapping of genealogy-related academic research that already has been conducted, and of affiliated scholars who might be interested in bringing genealogy to the front of their research interests in order to examine it from their academic point of view, be it mathematical, biological, historical, linguistic, sociological, legal, medical, or any other. These scholars might potentially form the core of a new multidisciplinary community the members of which will discuss and promote research in the field, via meetings, journal publishing and other communication. This way, the field will be built bottom-up from within the academic system with a non-empty core. Hopefully, such a community will grow in content (i.e., as more research is undertaken, the more a body of knowledge will grow), size (e.g., by the joining of new generations of researchers into it), and visibility (i.e., by publishing a journal and/or organizing conferences). When that happens, we will know that the journey to the academization of genealogy has ended and that a new journey of the academic genealogy community has started.

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