

Abstract: This study explores the transformation of genealogy in the Czech Republic from 1997 to 2022, with a strong focus on the significance of electronic sources. While traditionally limited to the nobility, genealogy has become widely accessible to the civilian population thanks to the internet and the digitization of records. The availability of online tools and websites has made archival materials and family tree creation convenient for the public. Looking ahead, the integration of genealogy with digital science is expected to continue. It is necessary to emphasize the critical need for education at all levels to ensure responsible research and data sharing, especially in the era of electronic resources.

Key words: genealogical research in the Czech Republic, digital archives, online genealogical tools, family tree creation, Czech genealogical literature

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The auxiliary sciences of history comprise a rather broad group of sciences. According to the essential manual of this discipline, *Vademecum pomocných věd historických* (Hlaváček – Kašpar – Nový, 2002), they as standard include diplomatics, paleography, chronology, historical metrology, codicology, sphragistics, heraldry, epigraphy, numismatics, and finally the above-mentioned genealogy. This group of historical sciences is truly diverse, yet it can be generally said that they are used mainly by the expert public and the lay public comes in touch with them only marginally. With one important exception, though – the genealogy. In the past,

[1] The study is the result of a specific research project No. 2122/2023 called *Where are you from and where are you going, man? Transformation of genealogy at the beginning of the 21st century*, carried out at the Philosophical Faculty of the University of Hradec Králové.

genealogy was the privilege of noble families. It served the purpose of proving descent to gain individual offices, underline the glory of the family, prove friendship with the ruling families, etc. Today with civil genealogy on the rise, there has been an enormous growth of interest in genealogy which has led to, in many respects, significant development of the discipline. Although the greatest changes in development occurred only in the new millennium, the period of the last quarter century (that is from 1997 to 2022) was chosen for a better comparison with the situation in the past, so that it can be clearly demonstrated what changes has genealogy undergone and where it stands at the moment. The following pages will take into account especially the development from the perspective of the lay public, and partly also from the perspective of the expert public which includes professional genealogists, archivists, and historians.

The group of auxiliary sciences of history is enumerated intentionally in the beginning of this article; the already mentioned *Vademecum* is generally accepted as the fundamental and essential manual for studying this discipline. It offers a comprehensive overview as well as basic orientation in the individual disciplines, all in relatively detailed chapters. Ironically, the only exception again being genealogy. Information about genealogy has gradually grown in the subsequent editions to full twelve pages (Hlaváček – Kašpar – Nový, 2002, 141–153), out of which eight pages are the actual text, one page is a pictorial insert, and three pages are dedicated to bibliography. Other sciences are described at least on twice that many pages and texts pertaining to some disciplines have several dozens of pages (Hlaváček – Kašpar – Nový, 2002, 539–544).^[2]

The quoted editions of *Vademecum* from the end of the last millennium and the beginning of this one unwittingly point to the main problem of that period for those interested in genealogy – the general lack of information. One must realize that in that period it was not yet possible to use internet on a mass scale to search for information, and those potentially interested in studying genealogy had to rely on books or information passed in an oral form. The entrance gate to potential research were therefore libraries. To get an idea about what literature was available then, let us have a look at small statistics created on the basis of data from the Union Catalogue of the Czech Republic which is available on the National Library of the Czech Republic webpage.^[3] When the keyword “genealogy” is entered, more than 551 thousand links are displayed. Yet when the following filters are used as well – “Date of publication” (1900–1997), “Language” (Czech), and “Type of documents” (Books) – the result is mere 445 publications! If we simulate a situation in which

[2] In the previous edition from 1997, the text about genealogy was one fourth shorter. The actual text had six pages, bibliography had two pages, and the pictorial insert was again one page. The passage can be found on pages 119–128.

[3] The National Library of the Czech Republic, 2022 [online]. NKP. Available at: <https://www.nkp.cz/katalogy-a-db/souborny-katalog-cr> (December 18, 2022).

we suppose that an amateur interested in genealogy would have at his/her disposal all 445 publications from the list in 1997, it would be obviously necessary to filter out books pertaining to the genealogy of particular families, books outside of the discipline of history (genealogy is also the keyword for numerous publications on genetics), and since it would be the first encounter with this topic, also synoptic almanacs and anthologies that do not offer an introduction into the topic, but develop it instead and are therefore suitable for more advanced study. This means that when these filters would be used, we would get approximately twenty publications suitable for beginners. By way of contrast, if the time is changed to the period 1998–2022 and the parameters remain the same, the keyword “genealogy” returns 755 books. If the selection is narrowed, then over forty publications correspond to the same parameters. It is thus obvious that there is a growing tendency in the publication of genealogic manuals.

The quality of publications varies and is difficult to assess. Some of the publications respond to increased interest in the topic and, without adding much value, provide only basic information that is generally valid. On the other hand, among the publications we can note those that have been reprinted due to public interest and that can be used in the long term thanks to the information contained. These publications include books by R. Melichar, B. Lutonský K. Řičář, H. C. Pohanka, J. Peterka or M. Marečková (Melichar, 1988; Lutonský, 1999; Řičar, 1999; Pohanka, 1999; Peterka, 2006; Marečková, 2004).

Let us return to the period at the turn of the millennia, though. Another option how to get better acquainted with genealogy were hobby associations that organized various lectures and courses and prepared publications for their members. If we omit associations with a local sphere of activity, the fundamental organizations dealing with genealogy include the Czech Genealogy and Heraldry Society in Prague (ČGHSP)^[4] and the Moravian Genealogy and Heraldry Society, z.s. (MGHS).^[5]

[4] The Czech Genealogy and Heraldry Society in Prague (ČGHSP) was founded in 1969 and continues in older traditions of the Czechoslovak Genealogy Society. It is a registered association pursuant to the New Civil Code with effect from January 1, 2014 (formerly a citizens' association). As of 2021, it had 980 members. For more details, see The Czech Genealogy and Heraldry Society, 2022 [online]. ČGHSP. Available at: <http://www.genealogie.cz/> (December 18, 2022).

[5] The Moravian Genealogy and Heraldry Society (MGHS) started its activities in 1972 as a branch of the Czech Genealogy and Heraldry Society in Prague. Until 1995, it functioned as a hobby club (Genealogy and Heraldry Club – GHK) by the community center of the Královo Pole Machine Works; since 1996, it has functioned as citizens' professional association – legal person, as stated on its website. Currently, it has around 200 members, both natural and legal persons. See The Moravian Genealogy and Heraldry Society. 2022 [online]. MGHS. Available at: <https://www.mghs.cz/o-spolecnosti-2/o-spolecnosti/> (December 18, 2022).

Materials published by the ČGHSP reflected researchers' interests. This is evidenced by editorial series *Vademecum genealoga* whose first title was a dictionary for genealogists – *Latinsko-německo-český slovník nemocí, úrazů a příčin smrti a výrazů s nimi souvisejících (nejen) pro genealogy* – published already in 1995 (Lutonský – Černý, 1995). It was a unique endeavor for that time, as it strove to make the complicated issue of causes of death more accessible to the lay public. Other materials published by the ČGHSP also contributed to the popularization of genealogy. The Society still publishes its quarterly periodical *Genealogické a heraldické listy*. Moreover, it organizes lectures and courses for the public. The Moravian Genealogy and Heraldry Society offers similar lectures and courses; it also publishes its yearbook *Genealogické a heraldické informace*. In 2015, the Silesian Genealogy and Heraldry Society, z.s. was established, but it has a rather local character.

The increasing availability of literature or the possibility to become a member of a registered association were not the main causes of the growing interest in genealogy, though. The key factor has been the development of internet and modern technologies (and it will be even more so in the future). If somebody in 1997 wanted to study archival materials – in the case of genealogy mostly registers – he/she was bound to personally visit an archive. Yet it was necessary to make an appointment prior to this visit and loans of registers were subject to a fee. Until 2001, Decree No. 22/1977 Coll.^[6] was in force, whose section 34 stated: “Administrative fees as well as its amounts for acts pursuant to this decree are stipulated in a special regulation.” This special regulation was decrees on administrative fees that stipulated a fee for: “A consultation of registers of births, deaths, and marriages, for one book and one commenced day” first in the amount of 5 CSK, and later in the amounts of 10 CSK and 20 CSK. These fees were to be paid in the form of fee stamps. In 2001, this decree was replaced by decree No. 207/2001 Coll.,^[7] yet the obligation to pay an administrative fee for consulting registers remained in force. This has changed with the adoption of Act No. 637/2004 Coll. (Act on Administrative Fees) stipulating that: “Consultations of and searching in archival materials, which also include registers deposited in state and town archives, are not subject to a fee.”

A true turning point for the study of genealogy was digitalization. The process of digitalization began approximately in 2005. At that time, it was far from obvious where it will lead to and to what extent it will make the work of scientists and lay genealogists easier. In its beginnings, digitalization was motivated by attempts to make backup copies that would protect the originals, similarly as in the case of

[6] Decree of the Federal Ministry of the Interior on more detailed rules pertaining to the Act on Registers.

[7] Decree of the Ministry of the Interior implementing Act No. 301/2001 Coll. on registers, names and surnames, and on amendments to certain related laws.

microfilms. In the Czech Republic, as well as in most other states, the process of digitalization was under the direction of the individual archives at first; there was no methodology stipulated from *above*. Because of that, no unified platform for presenting these data was established and the individual regional archives had to think up their own ways how to operate the so-called digital study rooms, depending on their financial and personnel possibilities. The first institution that presented its solution to the researchers was the State Regional Archives in Třeboň, namely in 2008 when it started to operate its digital browser of registers (Kaiseršat – Hankovec, 2012). Other regional archives soon followed suit (Novotná, 2011; Vichta, 2020; Vladyková, 2013; Plávek, 2017). The systems operated by the individual State regional archives, or rather the Land archives, are still very diverse which can be quite confusing for genealogist-beginners.

Concurrently with the professional, institutionally planned digitalization, private digitalization started to take place as well. Expansion of digital cameras enabled researchers to make large numbers of high-quality digital copies of archival materials without the assistance of study rooms' staff and thus to get an almost unlimited amount of pictures in a very short time. It can be said that this "lay", spontaneous digitalization motivated the archives to proceed faster as well, since they did not want to lag behind the technical progress. In the course of time, various genealogical databases started to be created, as well as other tools with the aim of making the search for one's ancestors easier. The researchers use these platforms to exchange information and often also digitalized versions of the sources. This issue will be discussed in more detail below.

By this digitalization of registers and subsequently of other archival materials too, barriers discouraging many of those interested in genealogy from the actual research have been removed. Firstly, there was no longer the need to visit the archives personally; that was convenient since these visits were possible only on certain specified research days and depending on limited capacities of the study rooms, which meant that an appointment had to be made prior to such visit. In addition to that, numerous lay genealogists were occupying places which professional historians were claiming for themselves and representatives of these two groups started to look down on each other. As a consequence of the mass digitalization and of making the data accessible online, the only prerequisites for starting one's own research were the internet connection and basic ability to use a computer. Study rooms of archives thus moved to the comfort of one's home.

This trend of growing interest in genealogy was further supported by the successful TV series *Tajemství rodu* [The Secret of the Lineage], which is the Czech version of the British genealogy documentary series *Who Do You Think You Are?*. The first series was broadcasted by the Czech Television in 2013, the second one in 2015. The opening episode was watched by 1.107 million viewers over 15 years

of age.^[8] Both series met with a strongly favorable response from the viewers and caused an unusual wave of interest in genealogy among the public, which manifested itself in higher numbers of visitors in the archives and in higher demand for this type of information on the internet.^[9]

Hand in hand with the development of the internet and the availability of online information, a paradoxical situation occurred. A quarter century ago, the biggest obstacle for the genealogic research was the lack of information, but nowadays we face the opposite problem. There is a whole range of possibilities how to obtain the desired data and what to do with them. The digitalization of sources together with modern technologies have offered the researchers from among the professionals as well as the lay public many new tools and opportunities for research. Its possibilities and procedures have changed dramatically. Nowadays, the researchers are not limited by the number of free seats in study rooms, by the opening hours, nor by the limited number of archival units that can be viewed in one day. If anybody decides to start with genealogic research today, he/she does not have to search for professional literature in libraries nor consult other possibilities with archivists. It suffices to visit several webpages, genealogical forums, or groups on the Facebook platform.

The most commonly used tool for the administration of obtained genealogic data is currently (given the dynamically developing situation, the word *still* could be used to be more precise) desktop software.^[10] Moreover, there are also many global genealogic servers that offer similar options of user data administration and search in the digitalized materials and databases.^[11] Since the quality of a database depends mainly on its content, mainly foreign databases containing large amounts of data from all over the world are used in the Czech Republic. The reason which makes such databases helpful and facilitating is the fact that many Czech people have foreign ancestors. Let us have a look at least at those most frequently used ones in the Czech Republic.

[8] *Tajemství rodu a Sestřičky ve středu nad milionem*. MediaGuru. Homepage [online]. Available at: <https://www.mediaguru.cz/clanky/2013/01/tajemstvi-rodu-a-sestricky-ve-stredu-nad-milionem/> (December 22, 2022).

[9] *Tajemství rodu* – Wikipedia. [online]. Available at: https://cs.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tajemstv%C3%AD_rodu (December 22, 2022).

[10] The most frequently used program in the Czech Republic is *Family Tree Builder* by MyHeritage Company and *Ancestry* software by Czech developer Martin Doležal (this software has not been updated since 2013, though).

[11] This way of data administration has its advantages as well as disadvantages. The advantages include especially the unlimited access from any computer, saving of space on the disc, and easier sharing of information. The disadvantages include especially the risk that these data can be stolen, misused, or lost for good.

One of the most often visited genealogic servers is the webpage of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints^[12] – portal FamilySearch.^[13] Its popularity among users stems mostly from the following facts: it is free, it provides access to digitalized archival materials from all over the world, including sources from the Czech and Moravian archives,^[14] it regularly invests finances into software development, and it keeps adding new language mutations. Given the very gradual and completely unsystematic manner in which the obtained digitalized versions were being made available, which has already been discussed above, for a fairly long time this webpage constituted for the researchers the only possibility how to study these archival materials without the need to visit the study rooms in person.

In addition to browsing through the images, it is also possible to search in a database which collects data from the copies of digitalized materials. The group of volunteers who index these sources is possibly unparalleled.^[15] The disadvantage is the varied quality of the copied data, since they are being checked at random and the relevance of a given copy differs depending on the reader's abilities. These abilities can be limiting especially with respect to transcription of sources from Central Europe, as German cursive handwriting (Kurrent) and German language

[12] The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, hereinafter the LDS Church, is one of the Churches which was founded in the USA based on the ideas of spiritual leader Joseph Smith. Based on this genesis, this Church is known worldwide as the Mormons. Their main motivation to finance the mass digitalization of sources arises from their religious obligation to gather information on all people that ever lived, in order to baptize the deceased. Initially, the materials were scanned via microfilms, and these copies could be studied in the main library in Salt Lake City, Utah, but more study rooms were subsequently being established all over the world. The Church offered to archives its technology, its workers, as well as the processing of data. Unlike in the case of Slovakia in 1991, no general agreement between the State and the Mormon Church on systematic copying of archival materials was concluded in the Czech Republic. Part of the Czech and Moravian archives have the digitalization projects completely under their direction without any cooperation with the Mormon Church (Novotná – Kopečková, 2014).

[13] Webpage FamilySearch operated by the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints was launched in 1999, and in 2021 it had over 200 million users worldwide. It is the largest free collection of family trees, genealogical entries, and sources in the world. See <https://www.familysearch.org/> (December 20, 2022).

[14] For the Czech Republic in addition to the digitized registers, which are the most represented, other genealogical sources are also available. For example, land registers, historical books of taxes and duties, testament books, census records, and, among others, school registers of pupils. The availability of digitized sources depends on the archival material provided by the archives for digitization.

[15] In addition to the actual members of the LDS Church, genealogists from all over the world participate in these activities as well. From the beginning of the project to the end of 2021, over 14.3 billion names from the historical images were indexed. For more information on other numerical milestones reached in 2021, see *FamilySearch Year in Review*, 30.12.2021, [familysearch.org/en/blog/2021-familysearch-year-in-review](https://www.familysearch.org/en/blog/2021-familysearch-year-in-review), (December 28, 2022).

prevail in these documents. The last function is an interface enabling the users to create their own family tree online, including a generation of interesting graphic outputs of the family tree. The advantage, which is at the same time also the disadvantage, is – just as in the case of the Geni^[16] Company – that it is an attempt to create one worldwide family tree, which in practice means that anybody can interfere with your data and change them. However, the actual administration of the family tree is very intuitive, and it offers many useful tools.

The webpage MyHeritage.com^[17] is another genealogic web that is very popular among the broad public. Just as FamilySearch focuses on the digitalization of sources and on making them accessible, MyHeritage focuses on the development of new genealogic tools using machine learning.^[18] The main tool is the Smart Matches™ function which searches matching or highly similar information about people in a family tree. An intelligent browser finds similar entries in the already existing family trees and offers the user the possibility to adopt this new information and people. This function can be a very useful tool for genealogists, yet it also brings considerable difficulties and limitations. A problem occurs if one user enters false data in the system. Based on a “match”, the data can be taken over by other users and knock-on effects are triggered. At first blush, this may seem like an insignificant difficulty. Given the total number of users, though, one piece of wrong data can threaten the relevance of thousands of data in the end, and thus lead to a subsequent research of a completely wrong family.^[19] It is therefore necessary

[16] See <https://www.geni.com/home> (December 28, 2022).

[17] MyHeritage Company was established by Gilad Japhet in 2003 as a free online service that helps people to compile their family trees. In the course of time, it continued to grow exponentially and kept adding advanced technologies for pairing that made it easier for individuals to locate and study the members of their line. In 2010, *MyHeritage* application was launched that enables its users to create family trees available online, share pictures, plan family meetings and to search for one’s ancestors. See Wikipedia: The Free Encyclopedia: MyHeritage [online]. 2022 (December 25, 2022). Available at: <<https://cs.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=MyHeritage&oldid=21752196>>

[18] Some tools of the web interface can be used in the *Family Tree Builder* software as well. This program is one of the most popular genealogic software worldwide. For more information, see: <https://www.myheritage.cz/family-tree-builder>.

[19] For illustration, one case is mentioned here. It regards the entry on certain Matěj Šilhan of Březka, one of the authors’ ancestors. According to the entry, he died on January 22, 1774, yet ten years later (February 11, 1784) he got married. The obviously impossible chronology did not prevent the primary user from creating the entry, which is now being “offered” further in this form. It comes as a surprise that the system does not have any in-built protection mechanisms that would prevent the creation of such an entry; in this case, it would have been better if these data were more closely checked and verified by the users, instead of just blindly taking them over. See Matěj Šilhan, [online]. <https://www.myheritage.cz/research/collection-1/myheritage-rodokmeny?itemId=77287821-1-42&action=showRecord&recordTitle=Mat%C4%9Bj+%C5%A0ilhan> (December 28, 2022).

to verify the data using other sources and resources, namely whether the data are correct and complete. On the other hand, considering the worldwide introduction of stricter rules for the protection of personal data, this is often the only way how to get information about distant family members from the past and through ties of these family members also about family members from the recent past.

Another technology which the MyHeritage Company continuously strives to develop further is the work with photographs. Initially, black-and-white photographs could be colored using the MyHeritage In Color™ tool, thanks to machine learning algorithms. The black-and-white photos, as well as the colour ones, can be subsequently automatically retouched with the help of another tool – Photo Enhancer.^[20] One of the most frequently used functions is face animation Deep Nostalgia™, which uses several templates of movement.^[21] The most recent functionality that can be used for the photographs of one's ancestors so far is the tool DeepStory.^[22] This technology enables the users to create a short video in which a person from a chosen photo cites a text entered by the user. The user interface offers several voices and speeds; optionally other photos can be added as well to be shown during the story. Another functionality that could be useful in the genealogic practice is the machine reading of faces and their subsequent comparison with the database or the labeling of people in the photographs. However, given the limits of the black-and-white photos, especially their resolution, this function is still only approximate. Opinions on the tool for the coloring of black-and-white pictures are very contradictory, though. The loss of the authenticity of the photos is one of the most serious reproaches. On the other hand, the coloring of photos can be a useful tool, if the photos depict smaller or darker objects that are not so clearly visible in the black-and-white versions. The last tool is intended for the user administration of the photos, and enables the so-called tagging – i.e., labeling of individual people. These photos are then visible to other genealogists as well, namely among the results when they research other people.

In addition to these tools for working with photographs, the MyHeritage webpage offers standard genealogic tools as well. They include the administration of one's own family tree, as well as the creation of various graphic outputs or the family timeline. The webpage also offers tools for the processing of genetic genealogy^[23] data or a search engine browsing through databases from all over the world.

[20] See <https://www.myheritage.cz/photo-enhancer> (January 3, 2023).

[21] See <https://www.myheritage.cz/deep-nostalgia> (January 3, 2023).

[22] See <https://www.myheritage.cz/deepstories/> (January 3, 2023).

[23] Genetic genealogy is a science that combines an analysis of genetic information with the methods of the auxiliary science of history – genealogy. It currently experiences a surge of interest among professional, as well as among the lay public. These methods make it possible to confirm or disprove family relationships and they can also help with respect to adding information which is missing in written genealogic sources (especially in the register books). MyHeritage belongs

However, for the genealogic research in the Czech environment the (still) largest database of pictures and data resulting from these pictures is the FamilySearch server that is for free, unlike the MyHeritage one.

Interesting possibilities of research are also brought by databases gathering information on people buried at cemeteries and places of commemoration all over the world. This information can simplify the work of genealogists as tombstones often give the birth and death dates of the deceased. This information is often found in civil registers, which are not accessible to the public for privacy reasons, so gravestones are often the only way to find out. Finding the final resting place of ancestors can as well be important to genealogists for commemorative reasons. It also provides an opportunity to make contact with other living relatives. *Billion Graves*^[24] and *Find a Grave*^[25] belong among the most famous ones worldwide. Both offer similar tools for the collection of data on burial sites and the people buried there (for more details see Nový, 2020). The basic form of searching is to enter a name of a person or a place into the search engine, but map sources can be used as well. Other functions include uploading of photos, transcription of data from tombstones, or requests for a photo of a grave to be taken. Czech databases exist as well, but they are usually limited to a certain area^[26] or a certain group of people.^[27]

The Billion Graves company also offers a mobile application that enables its users to make pictures including a GPS location. Photos of burial sites and indexation of data from graves give genealogists a unique tool for finding the ancestors' graves and getting new information. It can be also very useful when it comes to the protection of cultural heritage – many graves are being canceled or destroyed by people or ravages of time, and their pictures are often the only thing that remains. At the same time, this indexation of graves can be very controversial, since it can lead to violations of privacy of the deceased, as well as of their living relatives. It is therefore important to maintain dignity during the indexation of graves, so that the protection of the personal data and of the privacy of these people is ensured.

among the numerous companies that also offer testing for this purpose, and the subsequent administration of the gained data (Vaněk, 2016; Bettinger, 2019).

[24] See <https://billiongraves.com/> (January 3, 2023).

[25] See <https://www.findagrave.com/> (January 3, 2023).

[26] Especially the portal of Czech cemeteries *České hřbitovy*, <https://www.ceskehřbitovy.cz/index.php> (January 3, 2023); the webpage of the Administration of Prague graves, <https://www.hrbitovy.cz/index.html/> (January 3, 2023), or Brno graves (Brněnské hřbitovy) <https://gis.brno.cz/mapa/hrbitovy/> (January 3, 2023).

[27] For instance the Ministry of Defense operates a database of military graves and people buried in them, <https://evidencevh.army.cz/> (January 3, 2023); a similar database is administered by the Association for military places of remembrance (Spolek pro vojenská pietní místa), <https://www.vets.cz/> (January 3, 2023).

The evolution of genealogy in the upcoming years can be roughly estimated. Thanks to its cooperation with the genetic science and as result of the birth of genetic genealogy that we are witnessing, it can be said for sure that the classic methods will be changed and the entire research will be accelerated. Such a dynamic evolution also brings many risks, though. One of them is for instance the risk that the data can be stolen, misused, or lost for good if tools for the administration of genealogic data are used. It is thus important that the researchers and users of online tools keep educating themselves and enter in the systems only data that do not threaten to endanger their privacy or that of their relatives.

If good awareness and correct education are ensured, these modern technologies can constitute a very useful and welcome tool for researchers, not only in the field of genealogy, but in all the auxiliary sciences of history. Research conducted with the help of online databases and other tools can bring much more complex results compared to the research prior the digitalization. It also makes it easier to share the collected information among the researchers worldwide and to establish cooperation among genealogists.

Yet the above-mentioned education is a necessity, and it has to be done at various levels. The lay researchers should educate themselves through literature, courses, and online fora. With respect to universities, a space for comprehensive education of genealogists – or rather of historians and archivists focusing on genealogy – must be created, since they will not only conduct genealogic research, but they will also help to develop the discipline at both theoretical and methodological levels.

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