

# ***SELECTED LECTURES ON GENEALOGY: AN INTRODUCTION TO SCIENTIFIC TOOLS***, Ed. Daniel Wagner (Weizmann Institute of Science, Rehovot, Israel, 2013).

Contents: A few decades ago the 'hard' sciences –mathematics, biology, computer science, and so on- played no significant role in the field of genealogy. Nowadays, genealogy is undergoing a rapid transformation: what used to be mainly an activity similar to stamp collecting, practiced mainly by the elderly, has become a field of ample information and knowledge. Genealogy —and Jewish genealogy in particular—is in the midst of a major transition. In the last 40 years the number of publications in the exact sciences has largely outgrown those in the fields more traditionally associated with genealogy. Such a gap is rooted in recent major scientific advances. The past and present training of genealogists does by no means reflect such science-related developments. However, the impact of the fast growing number of intricate scientific facets in this field makes it indispensable that genealogists are offered a basic set of introductory tools in the relevant aspects of the hard sciences.

This booklet is primarily designed as a sort of introductory guide in the form of a collection of basic articles, and can be used as a reference to find scientific methods suitable to their genealogical pursuit. Moreover, the book should be appropriate for self-teaching. The aim is to prepare the student genealogist for a basic understanding of the scientific operations relevant to genealogical problems and to enable him/her to communicate successfully with scientists in case help is needed. In this respect, this booklet is the first of its kind.

Selected scientific tools belonging to the “hard” sciences should be part of a future curriculum in the teaching of genealogy. Research in modern genealogy will not progress and develop without them. Many more topics exist beyond the set of papers presented in this booklet, which could have been included and may appear in a future update.

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