

Modern Jews Not Genetically Hebrew or of Abraham's Seed

The origin of the Ashkenazi Jews, who come most recently from Europe, has largely been shrouded in mystery. But a new study suggests that at least their maternal lineage may derive largely from Europe. **Though the finding may seem intuitive, it contradicts the notion that European Jews mostly descend from people who left Israel and the Middle East around 2,000 years ago. Instead, a substantial proportion of the population originates from local Europeans who converted to Judaism, said co-author Martin Richards, an archaeogeneticist at the University of Huddersfield in England.**

Little is known about the history of Ashkenazi Jews before they were expelled from the Mediterranean and settled in what is now Poland around the 12th century. On average, all Ashkenazi Jews are genetically as closely related to each other as fourth or fifth cousins, said Dr. Harry Ostrer, a pathology, pediatrics and genetics professor at the Albert Einstein College of Medicine in New York and the author of "Legacy: A Genetic History of the Jewish People."

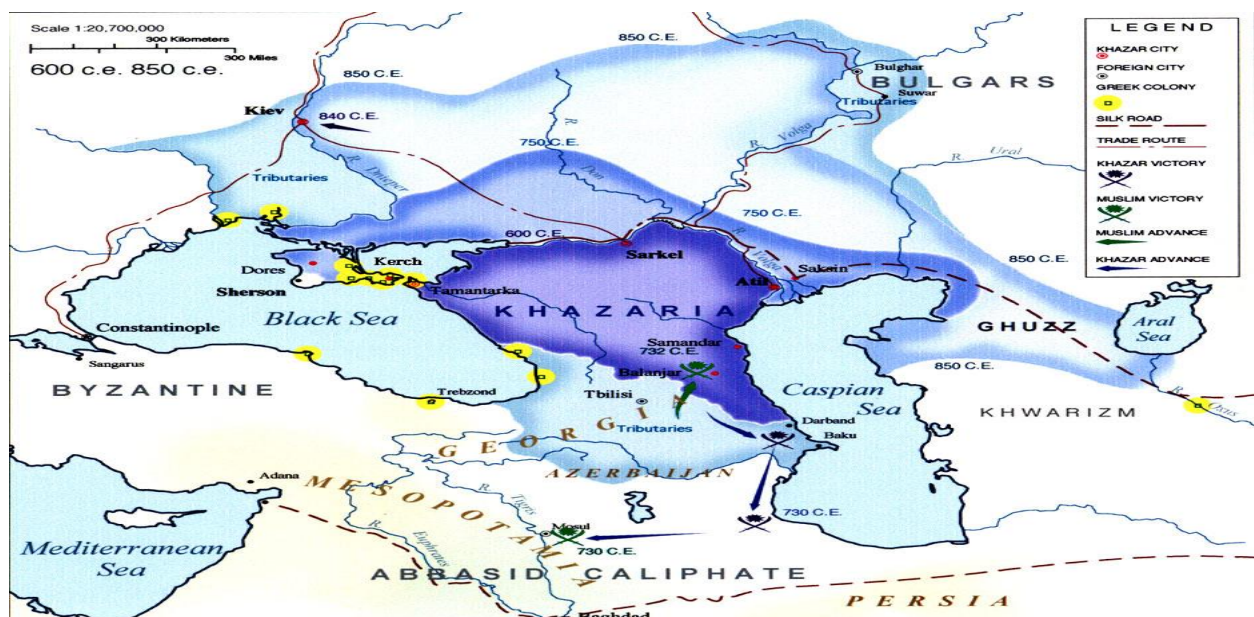
But depending on whether the lineage gets traced through maternal or paternal DNA or through the rest of the genome, researchers got very different answers for whether Ashkenazi originally came from Europe or the Near East. Based on accounts such as those of Jewish historian Flavius Josephus, by the time of the destruction of the Second Temple in A.D. 70, as many as 6 million Jews were living in the Roman Empire, but outside Israel, mainly in Italy and Southern Europe. In contrast, only about 500,000 lived in Judea, said Ostrer, who was not involved in the new study. "The major Jewish communities were outside Judea," Ostrer told LiveScience.

Maternal DNA. Richards and his colleagues analyzed mitochondrial DNA, which is contained in the cytoplasm of the egg and passed down only from the mother, from more than 3,500 people throughout the Near East, the Caucasus and Europe, including Ashkenazi Jews. The team found that four founders were responsible for 40 percent of Ashkenazi mitochondrial DNA, and that all of these founders originated in Europe. The majority of the remaining people could be traced to other European lineages. All told, more than 80 percent of the maternal lineages of Ashkenazi Jews could be traced to Europe, with only a few lineages originating in the Near East. - LiveScience

Second Possibility Still Proves Modern Jews Not of Promise



From Jewish Author Arthur Koestler: "The large majority of surviving Jews in the world is of Eastern European—thus perhaps mainly of Khazar—origin. If so, this would mean that their (the Jews) ancestors came not from Canaan but from the Caucasus, once believed to be the cradle of the Aryan race, and that genetically they are more closely related to the Hun, Ulgur, and Magyar tribes than to the seed of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob..."



Returning Captives Details - Ezra 2 & Nehemiah 7

Genetic Linkage. Looking at some of the details of the lists, it should be noted that the Nehemiah of Ezra 2:2 and Nehemiah 7:7 is not the same as the Nehemiah after whom the book of Nehemiah is named. Mordecai in the same verses was not the later Mordecai of the book of Esther. Nehemiah 7:7 lists an extra leader named Nahamani. Some maintain that the description "people of Israel" in these verses means all 12 tribes are indicated. Yet we have already seen that those returning were of the tribes of Judah, Benjamin and Levi (Ezra 1:5). Among the small remnant that returned to Judea from Babylon in this and subsequent returns, there were a few people whose ancestors had migrated to Judah from the northern 10 tribes. Yet the vast majority of the people of the northern tribes remained scattered throughout this period—and they have not returned to the Promised Land to this day. The Jews, as the remnant of Israel, were appropriately designated as people of Israel. All Jews are Israelites. Yet, as has been amply demonstrated in past readings and comments, not all Israelites are Jews.

The total number of returning priests was 4,289 (see 2:36-39; Nehemiah 7:39-42). This was around 10 percent of the total of those returning (see Ezra 2:64; Nehemiah 7:66). "The relatively high proportion of priests amongst those who returned was doubtless due to the prospect of a new Temple, with its opportunities of service" (*New Bible Commentary: Revised*, 1970, note on Ezra 2:36-39). On the other hand, the total number of returning Levites is surprisingly listed as just 341 or 380 (see Ezra 2:40-42; Nehemiah 7:43-45)—much less than the 24,000 Levites involved in the worship of God in David's time (see 1 Chronicles 23:4). Why did so few come, particularly as compared with the priests? We don't know, but perhaps it is significant that priests had leadership positions with a certain glory, whereas the temple duties of the other Levites may have been viewed with comparatively little excitement or prestige. We then see a listing of the Nethinim and the sons of Solomon's servants (Ezra 2:43-58; Nehemiah 7:46-60). "Nethinim means 'Given Ones' or 'Dedicated Ones.' In 1 Chr. 9:2, the Nethinim are distinguished from the priests and the Levites. Jewish tradition identifies the Nethinim with the Gibeonites who had been assigned by Joshua to assist the Levites in more menial tasks (see Josh. 9:27).... The sons of Solomon's servants are linked with the Nethinim ([Ezra 2] v. 43). The numbers of the two groups are totaled together (see v. 58; Neh. 7:60)" (*Nelson Study Bible*, notes on Ezra 2:43-50, 55). The latter, according to *The Expositor's Bible Commentary's* note on Ezra 2:55, "may be the descendants of the Canaanites whom Solomon enslaved (1 Kings 9:20-21). But [another commentator] argues that they were instead descendants of the royal officers who were merchants in the service of Solomon (1 Kings 9:22, 27)."

It is interesting to observe the care with which the priesthood was guarded. People had to prove their genealogy to serve in it. Even those reckoned as priests yet without the documentary evidence were excluded from priestly service and entitlement until the Urim and Thummim could be consulted - (see Ezra 2:59-63; Nehemiah 7:61-65). However, "the rabbis held that 'since the destruction of the first temple the Urim and the Thummim ceased' (*Tosefta Sota* 13.1). They held that Ezra 2:63 expressed, not a historical possibility, but an eschatological [end-time] hope (b. *Sotah* 48a-b). Elsewhere in the Talmud (b. *Shebuoth* 16a), we read that Ezra had to reconsecrate the temple without benefit of the Urim and Thummim" (*Expositor's*, note on verse 63). – Bible Commentary, United Church of God

The Time Was At Hand, "Antichrist Mythology", Robert Finley

"A peaceful take-over by Muslims took place when the spreading Islamic revival reached Jerusalem around 630. I remember reading in Robert Ripley's *Believe It or Not* about sixty years ago how the city was delivered to Omar Al-Khattab in 637 without a struggle. *That's because so many of the Hebrew rabbis in Palestine had come to believe that Muhammad was that prophet foretold by Moses in Deut 18: 18 – 19.* They were astonished to see thousands of new converts to Islam from their own synagogues kneeling in prayer to worship God five times daily. Eventually, virtually all the synagogues in Palestine became mosques." (pg.219)

"There are no ten lost tribes. (All but one returned during Hasmonean Period.) Only one tribe, that of Dan, disappeared from the records of the twelve tribes until the time of the New Covenant. It was not until the Seventh Century that the twelve tribes lost their identity, and that was because a majority of Hebrews in Palestine converted to Islam. A few who did not convert emigrated to Khazaria, where the whole Ashkenazim nation converted to Judaism in the 8th Century."

"One major country that failed to convert [to Islam] was the empire of Khazaria, which lay between the Black Sea and the Caspian Sea in regions now called southern Russia and southeastern Ukraine. The Khazars had no religion, and earnest attempts were made to win them over by Roman Catholics on the west and Muslims along their eastern borders. King Bulan knew that if his people embraced the religion of either of their neighbors, they would have war with the other. So, around the middle of the Eighth Century (730-760) a choice was made to convert the population to Judaism. That move provided neutrality toward the two powerful religions on their borders."