

A Proselytizing Religion

The Invention of the Jewish People

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The fundamental myth of Zionism is the return of *the Jewish people* to its land. The sovereign people was conquered, and exiled far and wide, but remained aloof and united, inspired by the memory of its ancient sovereignty. In the late 19th century the people began its return, which culminated in the dramatic establishment of the state of Israel in 1948, fulfilling two millenia of longing. Tel Aviv University historian Shlomo Sand, in his remarkable book *The Invention of the Jewish People*, marshals past and present academic work to refute the Zionist historiography underlying this myth, and tells instead a story of a religious minority and its creed, waxing and waning through proselytizing and conversion, subject to the same social forces as any other religious minority.

Inspired by Zionist myth, Israeli Jews

know for a certainty that a Jewish nation has been in existence since Moses received the tablets of the law on Mount Sinai, and that they are its direct and exclusive descendants (except for the ten tribes, which are yet to be located). They are convinced that this nation “came out” of Egypt; conquered and settled the “Land of Israel” . . . They are also convinced that this nation was exiled, not once but twice, after its period of glory—after the fall of the First Temple in the sixth century BCE, and again after the fall of the Second Temple, in 70 CE . . .

They believe that these people—their “nation,” which must be the most ancient—wandered in exile for nearly two thousand years and yet, despite this prolonged stay among the gentiles, managed to avoid integration with, or assimilation into, them . . .

Then, at the end of the nineteenth century, they contend, rare circumstances combined to wake the ancient people from its long slumber and to prepare it for rejuvenation and return to its ancient homeland. And so the nation began to return, joyfully . . .

. . . Some uninvited guests had, it is true, settled in this homeland, but since “the people kept faith with it throughout their Dispersion” for two millenia, the land belonged only to that people, and not to that handful without history who had merely stumbled upon it. Therefore the wars waged by the wandering nation in its conquest of the country were justified; the violent resistance of the local population was criminal; and it was only the (highly unbiblical) charity of the Jews that permitted these strangers to remain and dwell among and beside the nation, which had returned to its biblical language and wondrous land.¹

Sand notes the reactionary purpose served by the myth.

Dominated by Zionism’s particular concept of nationality, the State of Israel still refuses, sixty years after its establishment, to see itself as a republic that serves its citizens . . . The excuse

for this grave violation of a principle of modern democracy, and for the preservation of an unbridled ethnocracy that grossly discriminates against certain of its citizens, rests on the active myth of an eternal nation that must ultimately forgather in its ancestral land.²

The absence of evidence for expulsion and the counter-mythical prevalence of conversion and proselytizing show that Jews and Judaism were like any religious minority and its creed. The Babylonians did deport the elite when they conquered the kingdom of Judah in 6th c. BCE. Yet the Babylonians and Assyrians did not deport whole populations. The Temple was rebuilt and Jerusalem devastated by the Romans in suppressing the Zealot rebellion in 70 CE, yet “[n]owhere in the abundant Roman documentation is there any mention of a deportation from Judea.”³ Nor did the Bar Kochba revolt result in expulsion. “Captive fighters were probably taken away, and others must have fled. . . but the Judean masses were not exiled in 135 CE.”⁴

The nationalist historians (Heinrich Graetz, mid-19th c., Simon Dubnow, late 19th-early 20th, Salo Baron, mid-20th) did not link exile and destruction. Graetz and Dubnow echoed Flavius Josephus’s dramatic account of destruction; Baron was more scholarly, but sought above all “to avoid a connection between the end of Judea as a political entity and the disappearance of the Jewish ‘ethnic nation’”⁵ “which ‘never completely fitted into the general patterns of national divisions.’ The Jews, then, are a people with an extraordinary past unlike any other people.”⁶ The Zionist historians (Yitzhak Baer and Ben-Zion Dinur, Hebrew University, mid-20th) did not claim expulsion in 70 CE, but post-dated it to the Arab conquest in the seventh c. CE, as discussed below.

The rapid growth of the Jewish population around the eastern Mediterranean *before* 70 CE posed another problem for the nationalist historians. The Zionist view lists, in descending order of importance, deportations, emigration from hardship, voluntary emigration, and finally, a proselytizing and conversion movement that climaxed in the first century CE. Sand argues that the last factor was by far the most important, despite the conventional view that Judaism is a non-proselytizing, aloof religion. A heterodox 1965 dissertation at the Hebrew University by Uriel Rapaport stated flatly: “‘Given its great scale, the expansion of Judaism in the ancient world cannot be accounted for by natural increase, by migration from the homeland, or by any other explanation that does not include outsiders joining it.’”⁷ “Rapaport joined a (non-Jewish) historiographic tradition that included the great scholars of ancient history” which “asserted, to use the sharp words of Theodor Mommsen, that ‘ancient Judaism was not exclusive at all; it was, rather, as keen to propagate itself as Christianity and Islam would be in the future.’”⁸ The dissertation

“was well received at the Hebrew University” in 1965, “before the war of 1967, before the hardening of ethnocentrism in Israel, and then in Jewish communities in the Western world.”⁹

Expansion by conversion was the chief practice of the Hasmonean dynasty, founded in 165 BCE. Zionist historiography, “presented Judaism as opposed to Hellenism, and described the Hellenization of the urban elites as treason.”¹⁰ Yet “what the Maccabees drove out of Judea was not Hellenism but polytheism. . . The Hasmoneans and their power structures were both uncompromisingly monotheistic and typically Hellenistic.”¹¹ “Hellenism injected Judaism with the vital element of anti-tribal universalism, which in turn strengthened the rulers’ appetite for propagating their religion. . . The Hasmoneans did not claim descent from the House of David, and saw no reason to emulate the story of Joshua, the mythological conqueror of Canaan.”¹² The Hasmoneans conquered central and southern Palestine and forcibly converted its inhabitants, and later did the same to the Galilee. A Greek translation of the bible was undertaken in Alexandria, starting in the third c. BCE; Judaism was “turning into a multilingual religion.”¹³ “It would not be an exaggeration to say that, but for the symbiosis between Judaism and Hellenism, which, more than anything, turned the former into a dynamic, propagative religion for more than three hundred years, the number of Jews in the today’s world would be roughly the same as the number of Samaritans.”¹⁴ “The Mishnah, Talmud and the many commentaries are full of statements and debates designed to persuade the Jewish public to accept the proselytes and treat them as equals.”¹⁵ Part of Christianity’s competition with Judaism in the first centuries CE was the “mythology about the Jews being exiled in punishment for their rejection and crucifixion of Jesus,” dating from the writings of Justin the Martyr in the second century, which were echoed by other Christian writers.¹⁶

When Christianity became the Byzantine state religion under Constantine I, “the legal status of Jews was not drastically altered,” but repressive edicts contributed to Judaism’s decline.¹⁷ Moreover, “Jewish believers. . . began to adopt the notion of exile as divine punishment.”¹⁸ “The concept of exile came to shape the definitions of rabbinical Judaism vis-a-vis Christianity’s growing might.” The “future that would annul [exile] was wholly messianic and totally outside the power of the humbled Jews.”¹⁹ The Jewish population began to decline, as proselytizing gains became losses by conversion to Christianity.²⁰

For Zionist historians, it “was still necessary to have a forced exile, otherwise it would be impossible to understand the ‘organic’ history of the ‘wandering’ Jewish people. . . The start of the ‘exile-without-expulsion’ . . . began only with the Arab conquest.”²¹ This helped “reduce the time in exile to a minimum so as to maximize the national proprietary claim over the country.”²² “According to Dinur, it was only

because ‘the ceaseless penetration of desert people into the country, their amalgamation with its alien (Syrio-Aramean) elements, the capture of the agriculture by the new conquerors and their seizure of Jewish lands,’ that the country changed hands.”²³ Yet an “embarrassing lack of material is cited by Dinur in his effort to substantiate his thesis” on a Muslim expulsion of Jews.²⁴ The sharp reduction of the Jewish population “following the Muslim conquest in the seventh century. . . was not due to the uprooting of Jews from the country, for which there is not a shred of evidence in the historical record.”²⁵

Any land seizures were minimal, because the conquering army was relatively small, and left for other campaigns after its victory. The conquerors also had a “relatively liberal attitude toward the religions of the defeated people—provided they were monotheists, of course.”²⁶ Christians and Jews were required only to pay a poll tax. Absent other evidence it “is reasonable to assume that a slow, moderate pace of conversion took place in Palestine/Land of Israel, and accounted for the disappearance of the Jewish majority in the country.”²⁷

Outflanked in the Mediterranean, Judaism expanded on the margins of Christianity. The powerful Himyar tribe and kingdom which ruled today’s Yemen converted to Judaism in 378, and a Jewish dynasty ruled until the first quarter of the sixth c. The Himyars may have been the source of the Falasha tribe of Ethiopian Jews. In 525 the Himyar kingdom was conquered by the Christian kingdom of Axum, across the Red Sea in modern Ethiopia, In 570 the area was conquered by the Persians, halting its Christianization, but it did not convert to Zoroastrianism. Arriving in 629, the Islamic armies found a Christian and Jewish population, and “the prophet warned them in a letter not to force the local populations to convert to Islam.”²⁸

The Himyarite Jews were the basis of historic Yemeni Jewry. Baron wrote “several pages about ‘the ancestors of the Jewry of the Yemen,’ and sought in various ways to justify their harsh treatment of the Christians,” such as the massacre by Himyar King Dhu Nuwas of 20,000 who refused to convert.²⁹ The massacre was discussed in a BBC program on the Himyars and prompted protests from the Board of Deputies of British Jews, whose spokesman dismissed Dhu Nuwas as a “renegade convert.” “It is widely known that Judaism is not a proselytising religion.” The BBC was supported by Israeli historians, one of whom stated: “He [the king] did massacre many Christians. The volume of knowledge on the subject is growing. The tribe did convert at the end of the fourth century and Judaism was considered missionary in those days. It’s a sensitive matter from a Jewish [Zionist!] point of view.”³⁰ The Himyars disappeared from Zionist historiography.

Dinur's monumental compilation *Israel in Exile* opens with 'the Jewish people going into exile' in the seventh century CE, and so the earlier Jewish kingdom in southern Arabia disappears. Some Israeli scholars questioned the Jewishness of the Himyarites, which was probably not entirely rabbinical; others simply passed over this troublesome historical chapter. School textbooks issued after the 1950s made no mention of the proselytized southern kingdom.³¹

Haim Ze'ev Hirschberg, an Israeli scholar of Arab Jewry, asserted that " 'the Jews who had come from the Land of Israel. . . were the living soul of the Jewish community in the Yemen. . . they decided every issue.' " ³² Sand argues that "Hirschberg had not the slightest evidence concerning the number, if any, of 'born Jews' in the different classes of Himyarite society, nor about the origins of those who clung to the Jewish faith. But the ethnocentric imperative was stronger than his historical training, and demanded that he conclude his work with the 'call of the blood'." ³³ Yemeni historians, in contrast, "insist that the Jews of Yemen are 'an inseparable part of the Yemeni people. These people converted and adopted the Jewish religion in their homeland, which was then religiously tolerant.' " ³⁴

North Africa was another successful chapter in Jewish proselytizing, probably beginning with the Phoenician survivors of the Roman sack of Carthage. There is substantial archaeological and epigraphic evidence of Jewish religious life. The years 115-17 saw a "large-scale, messianic, anti-pagan revolt," led by a Jewish Hellenistic king. The Severan Roman emperors of 2nd-3rd c. originated in North Africa and had a philo-Semitic policy. North African Christian writers Tertullian and Augustine acknowledged the strength of Judaism. A Jewish Berber queen, Dihya al-Kahina, rallied tribes in eastern Algeria and defeated the Umayyad general Hassan ibn al-Numan in 689. Five years later his forces killed her in battle, and her sons converted to Islam and joined the conquerors. Ibn Khaldun in the 14th c. recounted her reign, and described Jewish Berber tribes from the region of modern Tripoli to Fez in Morocco. "[T]hese tribal areas roughly correspond to the sites where Jewish communities persisted until modern times."³⁵ In Sand's account, Hirschberg dismissed this history, including the Jewish Berber queen, and evidence of Jewish Berber ancestry. "His constant effort to prove that the Jews were a nation-race that had been torn from its ancient homeland. . . met the imperative of mainstream Zionist historiography. . . [which] constituted the 'scientific source' " for the "standard history textbooks of the Israeli educational system."³⁶

Discarding this history leaves a "great conundrum in the history textbooks in Israel. . . the existence of such a large Jewish community in Spain."³⁷ Linguistic evidence suggests that " 'the Sephardic Jews are primarily descendants of Arabs, Berbers and Europeans who converted to Judaism.' " ³⁸ Moreover, "Hebrew and Aramaic made their appearance in [European] Jewish texts only in the tenth century CE, and

were not a product of an earlier autochthonous linguistic development. This means that exiles or emigres from Judea had not settled in Spain in the first century CE or introduced their original language.”³⁹ The Iberian Jews welcomed their conquerors as a respite from Visigothic Christianity, and the Berber influx and further proselytizing swelled Jewish ranks, until conversion to Islam set in. This was offset substantially by the “immigration of Jews from all over southern Europe and even more from North Africa” due to the “admirable symbiosis between [Judaism] and the tolerant Arabism of the kingdom of Al-Andalus and the principalities that succeeded it.”⁴⁰

The Himyar and Berber proselytes are overshadowed by the Khazars, who ruled from the fourth century, along the Volga, and in the eastern Ukraine, the Crimean peninsula and modern Georgia. The Silk Road and the Don and Volga gave the kingdom a rich and flourishing trade, and means for a powerful army. While the “spoken Khazar language consisted of Hunnic-Bulgarian dialects with others from the Turkic family,” “[t]here is no doubt. . . that the Khazars’ sacred tongue and written communication was Hebrew.”⁴¹ The Khazars converted over time between the mid-eighth and mid-ninth centuries, and for the same reason “that accounted for Himyar’s conversion. . . [t]he desire to remain independent in the face of mighty, grasping empires. . . Had the Khazars adopted Islam. . . they would have become subjects of the caliph. Had they remained pagan, they would have been marked for annihilation by the Muslims. . . Christianity, of course, would have subjected them to the Eastern Empire.”⁴² Conversion began with the elite and included the larger population over time. Khazar Judaism was substantially rabbinical, though Kairate Judaism, a Protestant-like sect which regards the Hebrew Bible as solely authoritative, may have flourished also.

Like Andalusia, “the Khazar power sheltered Jews, Muslims, Christians and pagans.”⁴³ In the late 10th and early 11th centuries, Kiev, until then a Khazar vassal territory, allied with Byzantium and defeated the Khazar kingdom. Evidence of Judaism in the towns, steppes and mountains remained, to be swept away in the Mongol conquest of the 13th century, save for traces in the mountains. The Khazar empire was too well attested “by Arabic, Persian, Byzantine, Russian, Armenian, Hebrew, and even Chinese sources” to ignore, but Graetz, Dubnow, Baron and Dinur Zionized it nonetheless, dismissing it as a passing phenomenon, a puzzle, or the result of a massive migration from the “Land of Israel.”⁴⁴ The only Israeli study of the Khazars, by Abraham Polak, last published in 1951, assured its readers that “‘a large Jewish community grew there, of which the proselyte Khazars were only a part.’”⁴⁵ Sand suggests that in the 1950s and 1960s “the Israeli memory-merchants” were anxious “about the legitimacy of the Zionist project, should it become widely known that the settling Jewish masses were not the direct descendants of the ‘Children

of Israel.’”⁴⁶ “The conquest of the ‘City of David’ in 1967 had to be achieved by the direct descendants of the House of David—not, perish the thought, by the offspring of tough horsemen from the Volga-Don steppes, the deserts of southern Arabia, or the coast of North Africa.”⁴⁷

Sand also considers the argument popularized by Arthur Koestler in *The Thirteenth Tribe*, that migration by the Khazars was the basis of east European Jewry, against the standard Zionist view that those Jews emigrated from western Germany (via Rome and the “Land of Israel.”)⁴⁸ “Khazaria collapsed some time before the presence of Jews in Eastern Europe, and it is difficult not to connect the two.”⁴⁹ The Khazars were studied extensively by credible Russian, Polish and Soviet scholars, Jewish and non-, from the early 19th c., and were commonly seen as the source of east European Jewry. Polak, and after him Baron and Dinur, acknowledged the Khazars as the source of eastern Jewry, even if they all deprecated the Khazars’ proselyte origins.

Perhaps the most persuasive source cited by Sand on the proselyte origins of Ashkenazi Jewry is Tel Aviv University linguist Paul Wexler, author of *The Ashkenazic Jews: A Slavo-Turkic People in Search of a Jewish Identity* (and of *The Non-Jewish Origin of the Sephardic Jews*). Wexler argues that “the language known as Yiddish. . . developed in the bilingual Germano-Slavic lands in the 9th century as a Judaized form of Sorbian.” Sorbian is a Slavic language spoken today by about 50,000 people in southeast Brandenburg. “Yiddish is not a ‘form of German.’”⁵⁰ The “tiny Jewish communities in the monolingual western German lands” cannot have been the basis of the millions of east European Jews.⁵¹ “Judeo-Sorbian underwent ‘re-lexification’ . . . beginning with the 9th-10th centuries, but at the latest by the early 13th century.” “The result was. . . the grafting of [eastern] High German vocabulary. . . onto a Judeo-Sorbian syntax, phonology, phonotactics, and to some extent, morphotactics. Thus, despite its ‘German look,’ Yiddish remains a west Slavic language.”⁵² Modern Hebrew is also a Slavic language, not a “rebirth” of Old Semitic Hebrew, which is “impossible. . . because there are no native speakers to provide a native norm.” “Modern Hebrew simply embodies the syntax and sound system of the Eastern Yiddish language spoken by the first Modern Hebrew language planners in Ottoman Palestine, while its lexicon. . . was systematically replaced by Biblical and Mishnaic Hebrew vocabulary.”⁵³

Wexler argues from linguistic and other evidence “that the Ashkenazic Jews must have consisted of a mix of Greek, Balkan Romance and Balkan Slavic, Germano-Slavic and Turkic (Khazar, Avar) converts to Judaism and their descendants and only a minority of ethnic Jews—many of whom in all probability came from other parts of Europe rather than Palestine itself.”⁵⁴ Wexler rejects the Khazar

mass migration hypothesis on linguistic grounds, arguing that there was more conversion in place than migration.⁵⁵ “Hence, contemporary Judaism is best defined not as the continuation of the Judaism which served as an antecedent of Christianity and Islam, but as a newly Judaized variant of European (mainly Slavic) paganism and Christianity. . . most of the features of Old Palestinian Judaism and Semitic Hebrew to be found in Ashkenazic ‘Judaism’ and Medieval Ashkenazic/Modern Israeli ‘Hebrew’ were latter borrowings rather than original inheritance [original emphasis].”⁵⁶ This thesis has been obscured by philo-German and anti-Slavic chauvinism among scholars, Jewish and non-, of Ashkenazi Jewry, by disciplinary blinders, and by inertia.⁵⁷

Sand also considers Zionist racialism, from proto-Zionist Moses Hess, who “needed a good deal of racial theory to dream up the Jewish people,” to kibbutz godfather Arthur Ruppin’s “ideas about the Darwinist struggle of the ‘Jewish race’,” including consultations with “experts” in Nazi Germany, to the discreet attempt of Israeli genetics after 1948 “to discover a biological homogeneity among the Jews in the world” while investigating Jewish diseases, which revealed east European carriers of Tay-Sachs, but also Yemeni and Iraqi carriers of favism.⁵⁸ “Israel’s rule since 1967 over a growing non-Jewish population,” and concomitant need to “find an enclosing ethnobiological boundary” which highlights “the basic genetic similarities. . . and the small proportion of ‘alien’ genes in the genetic stock characteristic of Jews” led to “new findings” which “corroborated the literature about the dispersal and wanderings of the Jews from ancient times to the present. At last, biology confirmed history,” in the current pseudo-science of “Jewish genetics.”⁵⁹

Israel “became a world leader in the ‘investigation of the origins of populations’” even as “Israeli researchers. . . regularly blended historical mythologies and sociological assumptions with dubious and scanty genetic findings.”⁶⁰ These included mitochondrial DNA purportedly showing that “40% of all Ashkenazis in the world descend from four matriarchs (as in the Bible),”⁶¹ and a haplotype carried by 50% of men named Cohen, which “proved” that “the Jewish priesthood was indeed founded by a common ancestor thirty-three centuries ago.”⁶² This drek appeared in publications such as *Nature* and the *American Journal of Human Genetics*, and was respectfully reported in *Haaretz* and elsewhere, but rarely skepticism or contrary findings. “Yet so far, no research had found unique and unifying characteristics of Jewish heredity based on a random sampling of genetic material whose ethnic origin is not known in advance. . . after all the costly ‘scientific’ endeavors, a Jewish individual cannot be defined by any biological criteria whatsoever.”⁶³

Sand's account of Judaism, from exclusive Israelite genealogy, to Hellenic proselytizing, to proselytizing and conversion on the margins of Christianity, in Arabia, North Africa, Spain, and among the Khazars and the Slavs, to defensive introversion amidst the final triumph of Christianity, is the interesting and compelling story of a religious minority subject to normal historical forces. The contrary view of the unitary Jewish people expelled from its homeland, and wandering aloof in exile for two thousand years, until beginning its return in the late 19th c., is a reactionary myth which Zionism has deployed to conquer Palestine and compel support for it—the same myth upheld by abnormal historical forces in Nazi Germany. The myth prevails unchecked today not only in Israel but worldwide. Nothing “has challenged the fundamental concepts that were formed in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.”⁶⁴ Advances in the study of nations and nationalism have not “affected the departments of the ‘History of the People of Israel’ (aka Jewish history) in Israeli universities. Nor, amazingly, have they left their imprint on the ample output of Jewish studies departments in American or European universities.”⁶⁵ The Zionist myth expresses a virulently racialized Jewish consciousness. In the canonical liberal view “anyone who argued that all Jews belong to a nation of alien origin would have been classified at once as an anti-Semite. Nowadays, anyone who dares to suggest that the people known in the world as Jews (as distinct from today's Jewish Israelis) have never been, and are still not, a people or a nation is immediately denounced as a Jew-hater.”⁶⁶

Sand states in closing that “the mood at the end of this book. . . is more pessimistic than hopeful.”⁶⁷ His last paragraph asks:

In the final account, if it was possible to change the historical imaginary so profoundly, why not put forth a similarly lavish effort of the imagination to create a different tomorrow? If the nation's history was mainly a dream, why not dream afresh, before it becomes a nightmare?⁶⁸

Notes

¹Shlomo Sand, *The Invention of the Jewish People* (New York: Verso, 2009), pp. 16-17

²ibid., pp. 21-2

³ibid., p. 131

⁴ibid., p. 133

⁵ibid., p. 138

⁶ibid.

⁷ibid., p. 154

⁸ibid.

⁹ibid., note.

¹⁰ibid., p. 155

¹¹ibid., pp. 156-7

¹²ibid., p. 157

¹³ibid.

¹⁴ibid., p. 161

¹⁵ibid., p. 174

¹⁶ibid., p. 134

¹⁷ibid., p. 177

¹⁸ibid., p. 134

¹⁹ibid., p. 135

²⁰Sand states that “between the fall of the kingdom in the year 70 CE and the Muslim conquest six centuries later, there seemed to be a Judean minority between the Jordan River and the Mediterranean” (p. 179). The last Judean revolt before the Islamic conquest, in the Galilee in 614, attests to a strong Jewish presence (p. 178). Yet Palestine had a heavily Christian ambience when the Arabs arrived, and the Judean majority was reduced if not made a minority by conversion to Christianity. See Andrej Kreutz, “A History of Palestine: 634-1099,” *Arab Studies Quarterly*, Fall 1993, review of Moshe Gil, *A History of Palestine, 634-1099* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992). The Jewish position under Muslim rule was that of a “well established and well-protected middle class rather than persecuted outcasts” because of Jewish prominence in trade, the professions and administration.

²¹ibid., p. 139

²²ibid.

²³ibid., p. 179

²⁴ibid., p. 179, n. 106

²⁵ibid., p. 180

²⁶ibid., p. 180

²⁷ibid., p. 182

²⁸ibid., p. 196

²⁹ibid., p. 197

³⁰Marcus Dysch, “Historians back BBC over Jewish massacre claim,” *Jewish Chronicle*, September 18, 2009.

<http://www.thejc.com/news/uk-news/historians-back-bbc-over-jewish-massacre-claim>

³¹Sand, *The Invention of the Jewish People*, p. 197.

³²ibid., p. 198

³³ibid.

³⁴ibid., p. 199, n. 16.

³⁵ibid., p. 202

³⁶ibid., pp. 206-7

³⁷ibid., pp. 208-9

³⁸ibid., p. 208, quoting Paul Wexler, *The Non-Jewish Origin of the Sephardic Jews* (Albany: SUNY Press, 1996).

³⁹ibid., p. 208. Sand cites *The Non-Jewish Origin of the Sephardic Jews* on the absence of Hebrew and Aramaic in Europe before the 10th c., saying it may be “Wexler’s most important discovery.” “During the first millenium CE, Jewish believers in Europe knew no Hebrew or Aramaic. Only after the religious canonization of classical Arabic in the Muslim world, and of medieval Latin in Christendom, did Judaism adopt and propagate its own religious language as a high cultural code.” (p. 208)

⁴⁰ibid., p. 210

⁴¹ibid., p. 218

⁴²ibid., p. 221

⁴³ibid., p. 223

⁴⁴ibid., p. 213, 232, 234

⁴⁵ibid., pp. 234-5

⁴⁶ibid., p. 236

⁴⁷Sand, *The Invention of the Jewish People*, p. 243.

⁴⁸Arthur Koestler, *The Thirteenth Tribe* (New York: Random House, 1976) was translated into Hebrew and “issued in Jerusalem by a private publisher, who did not risk distributing it to the bookshops.” (p. 238). The *New York Times* reviewer of a new biography of Koestler referred to “a consistent note of autodidactic crankiness” in, e.g., “the belief—laid out in his late book ‘The Thirteenth Tribe’—that Ashkenazi Jews are descended from the Khazars of the North Caucasus.” Christopher Caldwell, “Arthur Koestler, Man of Darkness,” review of Michael Scammell, *Koestler: The Literary and Political Odyssey of a Twentieth-Century Skeptic* (New York: Random House, 2009), *New York Times*, December 24, 2009.

⁴⁹Sand, *The Invention of the Jewish People*, p. 246.

⁵⁰Paul Wexler, *The Ashkenazic Jews: A Slavo-Turkic People in Search of a Jewish Identity* (Columbus, OH: Slavica Publishers, 1992), p. 66

⁵¹*ibid.*, p. 72

⁵²*ibid.*, p. 67

⁵³*ibid.*, p. 43.

⁵⁴*ibid.*, p. 56

⁵⁵*ibid.*, pp. 72-3

⁵⁶*ibid.*, p. 48

⁵⁷*ibid.*, p. 73-6, 151-6

⁵⁸Sand, *The Invention of the Jewish People*, pp. 256, 273; see also Ken Koltun-Fromm *Moses Hess and Modern Jewish Identity* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2001).

⁵⁹*ibid.*, pp. 274-5

⁶⁰*ibid.*, p. 275

⁶¹*ibid.*, p. 277

⁶²*ibid.*, p. 278

⁶³*ibid.*, p. 279; see pp. 272-80 on “Jewish genetics” alone.

⁶⁴*ibid.*, p. 17

⁶⁵*ibid.*, pp. 17-18

⁶⁶*ibid.*, p. 21

⁶⁷*ibid.*, p. 313

⁶⁸*ibid.*