



WHO IS A JEW? RACE, “THE CHOSEN PEOPLE” AND BIOPOLITICS

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Israel is structured as the “homeland” of the race called “Jews,” but not for the faith of Judaism, since many who say they are “Jews” through faith are not [racially qualified to be Israeli](#), and are thus excluded. To become an Israeli, one must possess state-approved racial credentials. Thus, geography is wedded to genetics ([biopolitics](#)), or what Friedrich Ratzel called “anthropogeography”: non-Jews are perpetually the Other who, because of their DNA, have no legitimacy, let alone place, within the state, or on the land; they are barely tolerated [and openly hated](#). To [then speak](#) of “democracy” or even “civilization” in the context of Israel is to ignore this biopolitical fact. Historically, we must bear in mind that the idea of a Jewish homeland in Palestine was grounded in [the currents of eugenics](#) of the 19th and 20th century. Thus, Israel is a habitation (*Lebensraum*) for the race officially labeled “Jews,” and none other; and the purpose of the state is [the regeneration of “Jews.”](#)

But such a biopolitical set-up requires that there be a clear, genetic demarcation of the “Jew” from the “non-Jew.” This distinction was once based on tradition, in that those people who belonged to historical Judaic faith communities were accepted as “Jews.” This meant that not only the majority Ashkenazi (from Europe) and the Sephardic (from North Africa), but also the Mizrahi (from Iran, Syria, Iraq), the Beta Israel (Falasha) of Ethiopia, the various Jewish groups of Yemen, India, Central Asia and China—were all regarded as belonging to a greater Jewry, although the latter six groups were given this status [very reluctantly, if at all](#). Given the predominance of the Ashkenazi in Israel (since the state has always been a German Ashkenazi project), there is [extreme prejudice](#) against “Jews” [who do not “look”](#) like the Ashkenazi.

But also given this diversity—is there a distinct racial stock that can be clearly labeled as “Jew?” The state of Israel certainly thinks so, for it has various racial laws in place (the Jewish Nation-State Law, the Law of “Return,” the Citizenship and Entry into Israel Law). This protection now also includes a state-mandated DNA test to determine the racial qualification of anyone wanting to immigrate to Israel. In fact, it is [illegal and thus impossible](#) for ordinary Israelis to get a DNA test (as commonly done in the rest of the world, as a personal, fun, genealogical project)—such a test is only possible via court order (the [Genetic Information Law 5761](#), passed in 2000)—because only the state of Israel can say who is a proper “Jew.” Such racial policing by the state implies that Israeli bureaucracy possesses clear and precise racial biomarkers. The [notion of a distinct race](#) of “Jews” is paramount—which guarantees Israel's uniqueness. Without it, the logic of Israel as a “the land for Jews” falls apart, and it would then be a country like any other in this world, where just ordinary folk live.

“The Chosen People”

Lurking behind this racial distinction is the Protestant reading of the Bible, whereby modern-day "Jews" are held to be a unique people, especially chosen by God to carry out divine work in the world. The common understanding therefore is that the people known as "Jews" today are direct descendants of individuals inhabiting Holy Scripture. In other words, there is a supposed unbroken racial continuity from Abraham to today, despite the glaring fact that Abraham neglected to leave behind a sample of his DNA. Likewise, there are no DNA samples on record for all the prophets, kings, chief priests, scribes, guards, sadducees and pharasees mentioned in Holy Writ. So, what possible basis can there be for any sort of claim of familial descent stretching back thousands of years?

This model of uniqueness was introduced and codified by the German Jewish historian Heinrich Graetz, in his eleven-volume *History of the Jews* (published, 1853-1870); and then other historians, such as Moses Hess, went on to affirm the notion of "Jews" as a distinct race—thus, there was a *jüdische Typus* (a "Jewish type"), which was "scientifically" knowable (and here the "science" of the day was utilized, such as skull shape, shape of ears, noses, etc.). These historians, in turn, were following the age-old Protestant project of aligning with God's "Chosen people," which created "Christian Zionism," and which led to various wry remarks, such as, that "Presbyterians are Jews who eat pork." Here, the question of race was, and remains, central. Non-Protestant Christians, on the other hand, understand the term "the Chosen people" as the Church, the people who follow Christ, and not as a distinct race.

Graetz's notion also grounds the state of Israel, whereby the Bible is the legal "deed" of ownership of the land once known as Palestine, in that the "Jews" of today are phyletic heirs of the ancient Israelites, whose literary lives and episodes play out against the backdrop of Palestinian geography.

But once we wade into antiquity and actually try to locate the ancient "Jews" outside faith, we run into [all kinds of difficulties](#)—lexical, linguistic, archaeological, and historical. First, you might be wondering why "Jew" is here quotation marks—in order to indicate that this racial category is a recent one. In antiquity, we do not have a term that can be rendered as "Jew." Instead, what we have is a geographical designation: "Judaean," that is, someone who lived in the area called "Judaea." In antiquity, there are Judaeans; there are no "Jews." In other words, geography is not akin to race, and it is impossible to push the racial term "Jew" back, say, 3,000 years.

This also therefore means that it is impossible to pinpoint a distinct genetic marker within the archaeological record for "Jews." What we have are people (Judaeans) living in the region now called Israel, a region called "Palestine" by the Romans. The race of these people is impossible to determine.

Many communities lived in the area, and all of them shared an indistinguishable and thus common material culture (Egyptian, Canaanite, Philistine). In other words, there is no indication at all in archaeology that a tribe of Hebrews erupted into "the Promised land," conquered and settled it ([Grabbe, 2017](#), pp. 82-88). This then [calls into question](#) the sequence of events known as the "Exodus," which is the etiology used to justify possession of Palestinian land that comprises the modern-day state of Israel. Whoever the people were that God chose have long disappeared in the obscurity of millennia. They have vanished without a trace. Nothing genetically associates them to the people that call themselves "Jews" today.

But the concept of the "Chosen people" also means a racial uniqueness from [the rest of humanity](#) (supremacism), which is widely assumed and believed, and given that archaeology, linguistics and history cannot verify such a distinction, a more crucial question arises: to say that modern "Jews" are heirs to an ancient Hebrew matrimony and patrimony (race and land)—means that we possess a precise genetic marker of the "Chosen people"—ancient and modern, both of which match perfectly. Of course, none exists. How then can the modern "Jew" be genetically matched with the people of the Bible, as their living heir?

Here, we could veer into the history of modern Judaism, but suffice it to say that it is not the one talked about in the Bible—whatever that ancient belief system may have been, it has little to do with the faith called "Judaism" today. The only indications we have of that ancient Judaeian faith are from Josephus, and they do not match up at all with modern-day Judaic practice. In the words of Rabbi Ben Zion Bokser: "This is not an uncommon impression and one finds it sometimes among the Jews as well as Christians—that Judaism is the religion of the Hebrew Bible. It is, of course, a fallacious impression... Judaism is not the religion of the Bible" ([Judaism and the Christian Predicament](#), p. 59). A fact very clearly enunciated by the *Jewish Almanac* (1980, p. 3): "Strictly speaking it is incorrect to call an ancient Israelite a 'Jew' or to call a contemporary Jew an Israelite or a Hebrew."

In short, there is no unbroken genetic history of the "Chosen people" from Abraham down to our times, nor is there a persistent, unchanging "Judaism," especially since much suggests that there were systems of belief that were pre-Mosaic (pre-Torah, as it were). Whoever the people of the Bible were, they have disappeared; perhaps because they either became Christians, or later, Muslim. Their genes are impossible to trace let alone find in the populations of today.

But does a race of "Jews" exist today? The majority of the inhabitants of Israel are Ashkenazi, and then

Sephardic, and Mizrahi. What history does their DNA contain? In a nutshell, largely Central and Eastern European and with some Asian. The most recent study suggests that the Ashkenazi are [from Italy](#), and are [thus Europeans](#). Very many [hopeful studies](#) have been carried out, which [seek to "prove"](#) that the "Jews" of today are indeed the descendants of the ancient Israelites. The originary assumption of all these analyses is to assert vague claims about continuity of ancient bloodlines, such as the Levites or the Cohenim. Needless to say, no one possesses the genomes of ancient Levites and Cohenim, against which to compare their modern descendants. Much is also made of the rare disorders that afflict "Jews" (Tay-Sachs, Neimann-Pick, and Gaucher); but again, these diseases are hardly confined to the "Jews" alone and are widespread in other groups.

More sober and neutral studies and analyses come up with a very different picture—that those we call "Jews" today are a mongrel lot of Romans, Greeks, Anatolians, Slavs, Iranians, Greater Turks (Khazar) and North Africans, with very little Middle Eastern components (of course, "Middle Eastern" itself is a vague category, which in no way can imply direct descent from Abraham). Such neutral studies are routinely attacked and vilified by those with vested interests—but they are never negated. In fact, a recent challenge by the eminent Israeli geneticist, [Eran Elhaik](#), to prove "Jewishness" once and for all, [using very precise criteria](#), was accepted and taken up by only two of the many pro-"Chosen-people" geneticists. And the results these two brought in only confirmed once again that a distinct race of "Jews" does not exist. There are only people of varied and mixed descent—like the rest of humanity. Those that believe in the "Chosen people" supremacy simply believe in a lie.

Biopolitics

It was Johann Rudolf Kjellén, who coined the phrase "biopolitics" (as well as the phrase "geopolitics"), by which he understood the state as an "ethnic individuality" which gives it organic power used to dominate others in order to persist. In this process, the myth of the "Chosen people" is essential as the ground upon which the entirety of the Zionist project that is Israel rests. This myth gives Israel power over others, especially over Protestant America whose unbounded support is legendary and uncompromising ([billions of dollars and weapons](#)), because it believes that it is thus aligned with God's "Chosen people" (and all manner of Bible quotations are tossed about as "proof" for such support).

Therefore, Israel presents itself as the land of the racially homogeneous "Chosen people," and this explains its authoritarianism when it comes to the Palestinians—because Israel is a closed community with supposed common DNA, inherited from dim antiquity, which can only mean that other races must

exist in a hierarchy of inequality with "Jews," since these Others mean to harm the "Chosen people." In effect, the life of Israel (past, present and future) is determined by perceived hereditary biology for the welfare and protection of "Jews." The baseline protection consists in discouraging and religiously denying any mixed marriage and extra-marital sex between "Jew" and "non-Jew."

The entirety of Israel's actions, political and social, are best understood as expressions of "Jewish" biology, whose welfare is guaranteed by the state's innate race-based structure—that is, the essentialized association of DNA with geography. "The Chosen people" thus can do no wrong, for they are merely pursuing their biological destiny.

Perhaps, Israel some day will learn to live without the crutch of race and will abandon its supremacist ideology. If it does not, it will eventually disappear, as "Jewish supremacism" is a deadend.

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Featured: *The Children of Israel Crossing the Red Sea*, by Frédéric Schopin; painted ca. 1850-1860.
