The Forgotten Diaspora (2)

OTHER ILLUSTRATIVE DISPARITIES:

Medieval Sephardim routinely referred to the Ashkenazim as “Jews from the Caucuses”–a very peculiar appellation for fellow Jews to employ had the Ashkenazim originally been Sephardic. It makes sense, then, that the renown (Andalusian) Sephardic writer, Judah “ha-Levi” of Toledo (1085-1140) referred to the Ashkenazim as the “Yehudim Kuzari”–a moniker that explicitly announced the Ashkenazim’s [k]Hazarian roots. In spite of holding them in abeyance, Judah “ha-Levi” saw this newly-minted community of Jews as legitimately Jewish. In that same text, he even praises the righteous King Bulan! {59}

There were various pejoratives used by Sephardim to refer to this foreign element of Beth Israel–most notably: “Tudesco”. It is well-attested that Sephardim treated Ashkenazim as subalterns; though, tellingly, not as TRAITORS. Traitors would have only made sense had they seen the Ashkenazim as a separatist group that had–as it were–broken away. Rather, they were just thought of as alien Jews—that is: as THE OTHER within the global community subscribing to the Mosaic Faith. They were inferiors, not apostates. (To reiterate: religious FACTIONS don’t see each other in this manner.) Consequently, miscegenation was generally forbidden. Such divisive

mores would not have been warranted if the only issue had been quibbles on doctrinal points. It was STOCK with which Sephardim were concerned. At the time, they did not see Ashkenazim as fellow Semites…even if (strange) fellow denizens of Beth Israel.

Moreover, Sephardim decried the Ashkenazim's glaring ignorance of Hebrew literature. Indeed, this peculiarly foreign Jewish people seemed oddly oblivious to–and simply heedless of–the coveted traditions ("minhag") of which "normal" Jews seemed to take for granted.

Assessment of Jewish custom also points to different backgrounds. In other words, there are clear cultural discrepancies between the Ashkenazim and Sephardim that–to the present day–attest to disparate origins. As it turns out, the Ashkenazi "Yiddishkeit" (sense of Jewish identity) has origins that are entirely un- connected from the Semitic (read: Mishnaic / Masoretic) roots of both Sephardim and Misra[c]him.

Wait. "-keit"? From whence might this suffix have come? (Shouldn't the term be "JudenKultur"?) At the time, this peculiar morpheme was unique to the Rhineland. How so? As it turns out, it was a morphological quirk stemming from the Old Saxon term for "character", "heit", via the morpheme "ek- heit" [meaning "with the character of"; "-ness" / "-hood"]. It stands to reason that the Ashkenazi immigrants referred to their culture as something "with Jewish characteristics", as immigrants seeking to retain certain aspects of their identity in a new geo-political context. This would have been a rather odd way for traditional Jews to conceive of their own culture. (The Sephardim, meanwhile, referred to their culture as "minhag" / "masorah".) "Yiddishkeit" reveals a newly-established community asserting its identity in a novel context; so that is how they came to refer to it.

It comes as no surprise, then, that in "Yiddishkeit" (a community "with Jewish characteristics"), we encounter NONE of the signature features of the creed established by the renowned "Gaon", Sa'adiah ben Yosef of Faym in his landmark work: "Beliefs And Opinions", which was composed in Judeo-Arabic c. 933. This work championed the Rabbinic tradition; which is to say that it favored the Talmudic approach over the Karaite approach that would eventually come to characterize Ashkenazi liturgy. There are notable discrepancies between Ashkenazic and Sephardic "nusa[c]h" (liturgical style). The latter often refer to their rites as the "Eidot Hamizra[c]h". Might such discrepancies simply be due to geography? It is no

secret that different vernaculars–and idioms–are attributable to different regions (just as different sartorial practices can be attributed to differences in climate), even within the same religious group.

There is nothing surprising about the fact that Sephardim tend to say certain things one way while Ashkenazim tend to say them another; as two different liturgical styles would invariably emerge due to geographical differences. So different customs do not alone indicate different ancestry. After all, environmental factors impinge upon cultures, molding them according to circumstance…even if geographically separate people happen to have a shared ethnic background.

Before proceeding, it is important to ensure we are looking at the relevant timeframe. The Halakha only started to be reconciled between the Sephardic and Ashkenazic communities when the Andalusian rabbi, Joseph ben Ephraim Karo composed the "Shul[c]han Arukh" c. 1563 (based largely on the "Arba'ah Turim", a Halakhic work by Jacob ben Asher from the early 14th century). {77} Tellingly, in their adoption of this precedent, Ashkenazim made no reference to the most important Halakhist of the 11th century: the Algerian "posek", Isaac ben Jacob "al-Fasi" (mentor of Judah "ha-Levi"…who, incidentally, used the [k]Hazars in his parable: "The Book of the [k]Huzari"). Over time, such reconciliation occurred under the auspices of "mizug" [merging / absorption], the implication of which is Mosaic solidarity via doctrinal homogeneity (that is: unity at the expense of pluralism). This accounts for the Zionist "mizug Galuyot" [in-gathering at Galilee]: a geo-political conglomeration of Jewish people that included the establishment of a new language: modern Hebrew. Hence the "aliyah", birthright, and all the rest.

And so it went: The composition of Joseph ben Ephraim Karo's "Shul[c]han Arukh" (a distillation of his landmark "Beth Yusef") established the mid-16th century as the **terminus POST quem** for the revamped Ashkeanazi legacy. Thereafter, a slow, steady doctrinal reconciliation proceeded; whereby Ashkenazim explored the wider Judaic "minhag", and thus became more interested in the Talmudic tradition. The relevant period if juxtaposition, then, is the beginning of the 11th century thru the end of the 15th century–that is: prior to that cultural melding. That is why THIS temporal threshold serves as a **terminus ANTE quem** for any valid analysis.

The timeline here is key. A worthwhile analysis honors a temporal threshold that exists when we trace the metamorphosis of Ashkenazi culture. The pivotal time-period is roughly between c. 1000 and c. 1500; with a focus on the High Middle Ages. By the 16th century, Sephardic and Ashkenazi “minhag” had begun to meld—especially pursuant to Joseph Karo’s reconciliatory disquisitions in the 1550’s.

We can now conduct some cultural forensics on the Ashkenazim vis a vis Sephardim. While there are myriad differences between Ashkenazim and Sephardim that likely emerged simply due to them being different communities in different regions, there are other differences that can only be explained by disparate provenance.

Certain superficial liturgical discrepancies can be explained explicitly by geographical differences. For example, Ashkenazim stand during Kaddish; Sephardim sit. Ashkenazim wrap their Torah scroll in a “mappe” or “wimpel”; Sephardim put it in a hard case. Ashkenazim say “SHA-bos”; Sephardim say “Sha-BAT”. Etc. Such discrepancies tell us little about ancestral origins. Indeed, many discrepancies we now see likely emerged during the last few centuries.

So let’s look at deeper cultural discrepancies (regarding key vernacular, customs, and liturgies), which are indicative of disjunctive HERITAGES. There is a myriad of nuanced differences between the two traditions. While some kinds of discrepancies are not necessarily indicative of disparate ETHNIC antecedents, it is worth looking at some tell-tale signs that these two Judaic peoples do, indeed, have different BACKGROUNDS. Here are four of the most notable:

ONE: Let’s start with marriage. The Synod (regarding Takkonot) at Troyes is renowned for having outlawed polygyny (following the precedent set by Gershom ben Judah). This council was convened to clarify doctrine in 1078; and was followed by another in 1160. Yet polygyny had already been prohibited in Sephardic Judaism for OVER A THOUSAND YEARS. (Mizra[c]hi Jews would continue the practice into the modern era.) Suffice to say: This decision would not have been warranted had there not been a recent development—that is: an encounter with those who had a significant difference of opinion (to wit: a community for whom polygyny was still at issue). {35}

Bear in mind that it had barely been three generations since the famed Maghrebi "posek", Isaac ben Jacob "ha-Cohen" of Fez (a.k.a. "Al-Fasi")—student of the "Gaon", Nissim ben Jacob "ha-Maftea[c]h" of Kairouan—had written his landmark work on Halakha: the "Sefer ha-Halakhot", which established precedent for the Sephardic community. {84}

It strains credulity that fellow Sephardim suddenly felt the need to back-track, and revisit Jewish law that had been long-established…unless, that is, they were suddenly contending with another Jewish community, which had recently been encountered. (Note that other Synods were convened at Mainz in 1196 and 1233.)

Other marriage protocols give some clues. The Sephardim practiced "yibbum" (a Levirate marriage, whereby a man is obliged to wed his late brother's widow) in keeping with the "Sefer ha-Halachot" by the aforementioned Al-Fasi. (The writings of Maimonides confirm this.) Ashkenazim, though, did NOT practice "yibbum". Instead they use a normalized "[c]hali[t]zah"; whereby a widow is absolved of any obligation to wed her late husband's brother. This difference in precedent indicates that the Ashkenazim were operating from a different tradition than those of western Europe and the Mediterranean basin. That makes sense, as women in medieval Turkic cultures (where matriarchy was more prevalent) had far more prerogative than women in Semitic cultures (spec. Abrahamic traditions, which tend to be highly patriarchal).

TWO: Ashkenazim and Sephardim had different dietary protocols. "Kashrut[h]" is a Semitic word. Yet Ashkenazim ended up using the term "kosher" for permissible foods, which was a mis-pronunciation of the Semitic root for "fit": "K-Sh-R" (pronounced "kashr"). Would a people with a Semitic heritage have made such a flub?

During "Pesa[c]h" (Passover), when food containing leavened ingredients is avoided, Ashkenazim–unlike Sephardim–avoid rice. This dietary restriction is quite telling; as it is entirely explicable via the present thesis. For rice was a staple of Eurasian cuisine, but NOT of either Western European, Mediterranean, OR Middle Eastern cuisine. Meanwhile, bread (the primary focus of what was leavened vs. unleavened) was NOT a primary staple in Eurasia…at least, not nearly as much as it was in Europe, the Mediterranean basin, and the Middle East.

It comes as no surprise, then, that Jews hailing from the Eurasian Steppes would have taken this dietary restriction to pertain to rice. The inclusion of rice in off-limits fare would never have occurred to Sephardim, for whom bread would have been the natural embodiment of "[c]hametz". Consequently, they have no qualms with incorporating rice (and legumes) into their cuisine on Passover.

Also note: On Hanukkah and Shavuot, Ashkenazim eat cheese-stuffed pancakes (sometimes fried in oil) known as "blintzes", which are a variation on the medieval Slavic "blini". If they were a break-away community from western European Jews, Ashkenazim would have more likely carried with them a Sephardic dish for such occasions. It makes little sense that they would have jettisoned a long-standing culinary tradition.

There are several more lexical clues. The Yiddish term for a sweet, doughy desert is "baklava"—a Turkic word. The Yiddish term for noodles (typically in broth), "loksh[en]" is from the Turkic word for noodles, "loksha". The Yiddish term for dumplings, "pirogi" is from the Turkic "böreg". The Yiddish term for beef or lamb brisket, "pastrami" is from the Turkic "pastirma". So it goes with "kabak" (squash), "bülbe" (potato), "solet" (meat and potato stew), and "knish" (meat-filled dough): ALL from the language of the Tatars. Some of these were eventually adopted by Western languages from Yiddish—though without recognizing their earlier (Turkic) etymology.

Why the inordinate amount of residual Turkic vernacular when it comes to food? Because even when an ethnic group migrates to a new land, it tends to retain its cuisine, insofar as it is possible to do so. (This lexical retention often includes hallowed customs that have no direct translation in alternate tongues.) So it makes sense that much of what remains of the [k]Hazarian tongue is found with culinary terms.

To this day, Sephardic Jews tend to eat "boyikos" (crispy cheese), "bu[r]muelos" (fried pastries), and "bombonikos" (chocolate treats). Mizra[c]hi Jews eat "kubaneh". (Maghrebi Jews eat "mo[u]na"; Yemeni Jews eat "ja[c]hnun" and "malawa[c]h".) Sephardim eat "hamin" (hard boiled eggs; "huevos haminados" in Ladino), which are sometimes served in a stew known as "cholent" (from French), "[a]dafina" (from Ladino), or "hareesa" (from the Maghrebi dialect).

Meanwhile, Ashkenazi Jews tend to eat gefilte fish: stuffed carp, beluga, or pike. These were species that existed only in central Asia at the time. (Other species–like mullet–were incorporated into the culinary repertoire in the modern era.) While some stylistic variation emerged amongst Ashkenazi communities–notably between (Ukrainian) Galician Jews ("Galitzianer") who used sugar, and Lithuanian Jews ("Litvak") who used pepper–, the dish was distinctly Ashkenazi. Ashkenazim also eat a stew of meat and potatoes known as "solet" (from the Turkic term for the dish) or "osh[i]" (from the Sogdian term for the dish). Potatoes have always been standard fare for Eurasians, so this makes sense. It's also worth noting that the term, "knish" has Turkic origins. Ashkenazim eat meats like "kishke" and "helzel"; and–as mentioned–make it a point to NOT incorporate rice (or legumes) into their cuisine on Passover (due to the prevalence of rice in the Eurasian diet).

Reconciliation of religious precedents between Ashkenazim and Sephardim began after Joseph Karo's "Shul[c]han Arukh" moved to homogenize protocols in the late 16th century (pace some hedging that was explicated by the Ashkenazi posek, Moses ben Israel of Krakow). This included a melding of vernacular. Notably, Ashkenazim eventually started using the term "schalet" for "cholent". Consumption of "matzah" (dumplings, often served in soup) was transmitted in the opposite direction. For Ashkenazim, they were originally referred to as "knödel" / "knedli" (later rendered "kneidel"); and were served with potatoes. Usually no eggs were involved. When Sephardim made the dumplings, they referred to them as "matzo"; and typically served them WITHOUT potatoes, yet WITH eggs.

THREE: Liturgy also shows us some key differences. Note the presence of "Hatanu Lefanecha" and "Keil Nora Alila" in Sephardic prayer books, in contradistinction to the presence of "Kol Nidrei" in Ashkenazi prayer books. This disparity indicates disparate liturgical genealogies. {47} What could possibly explain this? The former two prayers have HEBRAIC origins whereas the latter prayer has ARAMAIC origins. This is explicable when we consider the different histories involved.

As it happened, the use of the "Kol Nidrei" suddenly became a point of contention in the 11th century–most notably with the French Tosafist, Meir ben Samuel. It continued to be a source of controversy during the 12th century (as attested by the French Talmudist, Simhah ben Samuel of Vitry and the Andalusian Talmudist, Judah ben Barzillai)…and on into the 13th century (as attested by the French Tosafist, Meir of Rothenburg). In other words: The "Kol Nidrei" suddenly became a hot topic when the [k]Hazrian diaspora arrived in Eastern Europe. Go figure.

Eventually, most Sephardim came to reject this particular prayer as an integral part of Yom Kippur–in keeping with the position taken by the geonim from the Babylonian Talmudic academies. It seems that the [k]Hazrian Jews never got the memo on this matter; and, moreover, seem to have not been around for the inclusion of the "Hatanu Lefanecha" and "Keil Nora Alila" in Judaic liturgy. {78}

As mentioned earlier, toward the end of the 11th century, a student of Rashi, Simhah ben Samuel of Vitry (who was the grandfather of Isaac ben Samuel "the Elder") compiled a highly-influential prayer book: the "Ma[c]h[a]zor Vitry". Interestingly, the only surviving manuscript of this work is from the 19th century (redacted by an Italic scribe, Isaac Samuel Reggio of Gorizia; a.k.a. "YaShaR"). None of that material seems to have influenced the earliest Ashkenazim; let alone been INFLUENCED BY them. This would be a peculiar oversight had Simhah ben Samuel hailed from the same community. The book is cited in the 12th century by the Sephardic scholar, Jacob ben Meir ben Samuel of Ramerupt (a.k.a. "Rabbeinu Tam"), who finished his career in Troyes. Clearly, for Sephardim, the book was a big deal at the time. Not so for Ashkenazim. Why not? Well, because the latter came from a different place than the former; so wouldn't have been privy to such material when it was first written. {96} It would not be until the 15th century that Ashkenazim would fully embrace the Talmudic tradition.

Finally, it's worth noting that the Ashkenazim never made use of the "Avodah Zarah", which essentially served as a guidebook for interacting with "avodei ha-kochavim" ("star-worshippers", essentially meaning pagans / idolators); yet this tract had been indispensable for Sephardim for centuries. Oddly, the book would have been all-the-MORE important in Eastern Europe at the time, as paganism still maintained a presence. Had Sephardim migrated their, the "Avordah Zarah" would have been eminently relevant; not non-existent.

FOUR: Ashkenazim don the "kolpik" (alt. "spodik"; a.k.a. "shtreimel"): a large, black, fur hat that was used by medieval Turkic peoples–including Tatars, Alans, and Magyars. Sure enough, the Yiddish term for this article of clothing is derived from the Old Turkic word for hat: "kalpak". ("Kara-kalpak" means "Black Hats" in Old Turkic.)

The only other medieval instance of this kind of hat was the “papakha”, which was worn by Turkic peoples in the Caucasus. (Turkic peoples from the Caucasus? This should ring some bells.) As it happens, “papak” was ANOTHER Old Turkic word for “hat”. (The Slavic term, “ushanka” is a more recent development; and eventually became popular in the Balkans and in Russia.)

Notably, the Kalmyk, Ingush (a.k.a. “[Vai-]Nakh”) and Balkar / Karachay people of the former [k]Hazaria (who–to this day–dwell in the northern Caucuses) donned this sort of head-dress through the Middle Ages. (In the Georgian Chronicles, they were associated with a folkloric figure known as D[z]urdzuk, a descendent of the mythical patriarch, Kavkas[os]. In Judaic lore, they were associated with the Biblical figure, Togarmah. They were likely some combination of Alan and Kipchak.) The Kumyks—likely, descendants of the [k]Hazars—STILL don the tall fur hats that are used by some Haredim / Hassidim to the present day. Wherefore? Well, the Kumyks and Haredim have a common ancestry. In other words, they have divergent custom-based continua with a shared origin point. (Also worth noting are the Ingush / [Vai-]Nakh people—known in Georgian as the “Dzurdzuki”—who don similar tall fur hats.)

If we want to conduct worthwhile genetic evaluation, we should check to see if the all these groups come from the same haplo-group going back a millennium—a task that would require factoring in any miscegenation that has occurred in the intervening time. Heaven forfend that Ashkenazim share ancestry with Turkic peoples like the Dagestanis and Chechens—most of whom converted to Islam during the Middle Ages; and are associated with the (oft-derided) Japhethites (via Gomer).

The point is not to simply point to the (obvious) fact that Sephardim, who lived in much warmer climes, did not wear furry winter hats. Why would they? The point is that, of all other options, Ashkenazim wore distinctly Turkic hats; and even called them by their Turkic name. They did not acquire this sartorial practice, or adopt this vernacular, from the Germans or the Slavs (amongst whom they came to live). The only alternative is that they CAME WITH the sartorial practice, as well as the vernacular.

And let’s not forget that the skull-cap was called a “yarmulke”, based on the Turkic “yargmuluk” (“protective dome / canopy”; i.e. a cap) rather than the Sephardic term: “kippah”. Meanwhile, the head-wrap worn by Ashkenazi women is called a

“tikhl” (a Turkic lexeme) rather than a “mitpa[c]hat” (a Hebraic lexeme). Both these etymologies were discussed in the previous section, on language. Such a lexical switch would have made no sense had Ashkenazim previously been Sephardim.

There are myriad other clothing discrepancies. Into the 18th century, Ashkenazi winter attire consisted primarily of an inexpensive, coarse cloth known as “paklak”—often in the form of a “zhupitse” / “yupitse” [alt. “zhupe” / “yupe”], “kapote”, “tuzlik”, or “bekeshe”. Lighter garments included the “kh[a]lat” (jacket) and “brislak” (vest). Women often donned a “brusttukh” (bodice) and “patsheyle” (head wrapping). ALL these terms have Turkic etymologies.

Taken in light of the linguistic discrepancies discussed in the previous section, these four cultural differences (marriage protocols, culinary practices, liturgical practices, and sartorial practices) make perfect sense. Without the present thesis, NONE of them make ANY sense.

While there are palpable traces of the Andalusian influence in Sephardic “minhag” (e.g. the cosmopolitan ideal known as “Adab”), there are ZERO such traces in early Ashkenazi culture. The Sephardic world was infused with the Talmudic tradition; yet no trace of such a tradition could be found in “Yiddishkeit” during the High or Middle Ages. {124} Again, this would be inexplicable but for the present thesis.

How people talk, wed, eat, pray, and dress tells us a lot about their culture. Sephardim and Ashkenazim differ in language, domestic customs, diet, supplication, and attire—exactly as we would expect given their disparate provenance. Sephardim NOTICED all this. It’s not for nothing that, in his “Sefer ha-Kabbalah” c. 1161, the Andalusian rabbi, Ibrahim ibn Dawood of Cordoba [Ladino for “Abraham, son of David”] (a.k.a. “Rabad”) viciously attacked Karaite Judaism. What prompted such animus? The “Karaim” were Turkic Jews who practiced a version of Judaism that was likely quite foreign to him; and—in any case—they weren’t Semitic. So, in his eyes, they would have been ethnically suspect. Such asperity would not have made sense if he saw them as fellow Sephardim; or even a wayward denomination thereof.

As mentioned earlier, the anti-Semitic “blood libel” myth (that Gentile children were being murdered by nefarious Jews, who used the victims’ blood for diabolism) cropped up in Eastern Europe in the early 12th century. How is it that such a perfidious rumor suddenly emerged at THAT particular point in history, and began circulating in THAT particular region? Bear in mind that, by then, anti-Semitism had

existed throughout Christendom for over a thousand years; and in the Middle East since the Iron Age. Not only did it exist throughout the Holy Roman Empire—from Slavic lands to the Frankish lands—, it proliferated from the Hindu Kush to the Barbary Coast. There was anti-Semitism in Britannia, Andalusia, Gallia, Frankia, Germania, and Italia. So why did this particular urban legend crop up **there** and **then**? The present thesis reveals what the catalyst would have been.

It's also worth exploring the brand of Jewish mysticism that came to be known as "[c]Hassidei Ashkenaz" suddenly emerged in the Rhineland in the 12th century. This is typically ascribed to Judah ben Samuel of Speyer (a.k.a. "Ha-Hasid"; who primarily operated out of Regensburg) and Eleazer ben Judah of Mainz (a.k.a. "ha-Rokeach"; who primarily operated out of Worms); though there is no hard evidence for this supposition. (See the Appendix for more on these two figures.) A slew of apocrypha proliferated with respect to the origins of this movement–replete with purported visitations from the ghost of the Biblical prophet, Elijah. Such tall tales don't bode well for the credence of the accompanying historiography.

What is peculiar is that there is a disjuncture between THIS brand of mysticism and the Kabbalah of medieval times. Had Ashkenazim been descendants of Sephardim, one would expect to find vestiges of the Kabbalah in their (new-fangled) mysticism. After all, such vestiges proliferated amongst contemporaneous SEPHARDIC practitioners. The medieval (Sephardic) mystical movement can be separated into six major groups:

The Occitanian mystics of Narbonne and Lunel (a.k.a. "Hachmei Provence"): As legend has it, Makhir ben Judah Zakkai—whose family hailed from the Middle East—pioneered the movement in Narbonne at some point in the 8th century. Abraham ben David (a.k.a. "Rabad", who's family hailed from Marida, Andalusia), Merwan "ha-Levi", and Moses ben Jacob ben Moses ben Abun "ha-Darshan" contributed to the movement in Narbonne during the 11th century. Judah ben Saul ibn Tibbon (originally from Granada, Andalusia) and Abraham ben Nathan were both influential in Lunel in the late 12th century. Yitzhak Saggi Nehor (a.k.a. "Isaac the Blind") conceptualized the divine as "ayn sof" [unending]; and penned the "Sefer ha-Bahir" [Book of Brightness / Illumination] c. 1200 (which he attributed to the 2nd-century sage, Nehunya ben ha-Kanah).

The Castilian mystics of Leon and Castile: Moses of Leon penned the "Zohar" in the 13th century (which he attributed to the 2nd-century sage, Shimon bar Yochai). Joseph ben Abraham Giketilla, who pioneered "gematria" and "temurah",

was said to have performed miracles; so was often referred to as “Ba’al ha-Nissim”. Also notable here were Meir ben Todros “Abu Lafia” (a.k.a. the “Ramah”) and his nephew, Todros ben Joseph “Abu Lafia”.

The Catalonian mystics of Girona: The star pupil of Isaac the Blind, Azriel ibn Mena[c]hem ibn Ibrahim al-Taras adopted his mentor’s term, “ayn sof” in the early 13th century. Moses ben Na[c]hman (a.k.a. “Nachmanides”) engaged in this teaching soon thereafter.

The Aragon mystics of Zaragoza: Bahya ben Joseph ibn Pakuda was influential in this community. Abraham ben Samuel “Abu Lafia” (also affiliated with Tudela in Navarre) penned the Book of Jasher in the 13th century. His student, Joseph ben Abraham Gikatilla ended up teaching in Castile.

The Andalusian mystics of Cordoba: Solomon ben Judah ibn Gabirol of Malaga (who also taught in Valencia and Toledo) coined the term, “she-en lo tiklah” [the Endless One] in the 11th century. Moses ben Maimon ben Joseph (a.k.a. “Maimonides”) penned the highly-influential “Guide To The Perplexed” c. 1190; while Aaron of Cardena penned “Karnayim” [Rays] around the same time.

The Berber mystics of the Maghreb: Dunash ibn Tamim and Jacob ben Nissim ibn Shahin of Kairouan wrote major commentaries on the Italic “Sefer Yetzirah” in the 10th century.

Yet there was no trace of Kabbalist activity—either having to do with the Merkovah [Chariot] or the Hekhalot [Palaces] texts—amongst Ashkenazi mystics during the relevant period. Nor was there anything from the “Sefer Yetzira”. This absence is quite remarkable considering the sudden efflorescence of “[c]Hassidei Ashkenaz” in the 12th century.

Had Ashkenazim been a break-away sect of the Sephardim, some palpable memetic residue from Sephardic mysticism would have subsisted in Ashkenazic mystical vernacular (e.g. exhibiting traces of Ladino, as found in the “Zohar”). Hence one would also expect to find key Semitic terms like “sefirot” (divine powers / emanations), “sod” (mystery), “[neh]or” (light), and “bahir” (brightness / illumination) in the earliest Ashkenazi mystical tradition. We find no such ideations. How about “ayn sof”? Nope. Instead, we find novel locutions like “ratzon ha-borei” (Will of the Creator) and a peculiar usage of the ancient term, “K-B-D” (typically rendered “kavod”)…which could mean anything from “weight” / “gravity” to “honor”. (One of the Mosaic commandments is to give “K-B-D” to one’s parents.)

Moreover, there was no fascination–let alone obsession–with the Hebrew alphabet amongst Ashkenazi mystics (until the advent of Hassidism in the 17th century). This makes sense for those who were not of a Semitic background. Such "gematria" and "temurah" include silly games like P-R-D-S ["orchard", derived from the same Persian root as "paradise"], whereby practitioners purport to uncover "sod" (secrets) hidden deep within Biblical text. While Sephardim pioneered this hokey art; medieval Ashkenazim seemed utterly unaware it existed.

Later, Sephardic mystics began operating in Greece—notably: Joseph ben Solomon Taitazak, who taught in Thessalonika in the early 16th century (after having migrated from Andalusia in 1492, pursuant to the expulsion).

Recall the watershed moment discussed earlier: Joseph Karo's great doctrinal reconciliation, at which point the Talmudic tradition began penetrating Yiddishkeit. Lo and behold, it was not until the 16th century that Kabbalist activity finally emerged amongst the Ashkenazim—notably: with Elijah ben Aaron Judah "Ba'al Shem" of Lublin, who earned his renown teaching in the Cherven town of Chelm / Khelm. (Unsurprisingly, various apocrypha came to surround him—most notably: tales of the golem.) By the time Bezal-El ben Abraham (followed by his famous student, Isaac ben Solomon Luria) was teaching in Palestine, Kabbalist teachings had spread throughout Beth Israel. (Interestingly, these men had mixed Ashkenazic-Sephardic parentage—something that had started to occur by that time.)

Prior to c. 1500, was there any interaction between the Sephardic mystics and ANYONE in Ashkenaz? No. So when Judah ben Saul ibn Tibbon of Granada left Spain c. 1150 due to the anti-Semitic policies of the Almohades, he went to Lunel in Occitania to join the Hachmei Provence. It would have never occurred to him to venture into Eastern Europe.

NONE of the Kabbalah had origins in Eastern Europe. Mysticism didn't really take off amongst Ashkenazim until Israel ben Eliezer of Volhynia-Galicia (a.k.a. "Baal Shem Tov") founded Hassidism in the 18th century. And EVEN HE employed some novel vernacular–referring to communion with the divine as "dvekut": a term that had never existed in Talmudic literature (though it has since been incorporated into the modern Hebrew lexicon). Lo and behold: "Dve-Kut" is Old Turkic for "emphatic blessing"!

Upon assaying the earliest Ashkenazic mysticism, we find no palpable influence from Western Europe (i.e. from Sephardim). There did not even seem to be any influence from Eleazer ben Judah of Worms' "Sefer Galei Razia" (transmitted via the "Sefer Raziel ha-Malakh"). This would be inexplicable had the Ashkenazim splintered off from Sephardic forebears.

Such a marked disjuncture–nay, complete disconnect–in mysticism would not make any sense had such material come from a people who had been immersed in the Kabbalist tradition for over a thousand years. While I'm no expert on Jewish mysticism, I suspect that traces of Turkic mysticism may have existed in "[c]Hassidei Ashkenaz" in the first few centuries. Such memetic residue would stem from the Shamanism of the Eurasian Steppes. Hence further inquiries might be made about vestiges of Turkic shamanism in early Ashkenazi mysticism.

What are we to make of all this? That question brings us back to the crucial point: There is no record of some great Jewish schism in the 10th or 11th century—a religious fissure that would have led to the bifurcation of Beth Israel. Had such an event occurred, we would surely have heard about it. There would have been documentation regarding numerous points of disagreement—nay, points of serious contention—during the late Masoretic period (roughly: when the era of the Geonim transitioned to the Rishonim) that came to be a major source of discord within European Jewry. This would have boiled over in central Europe…to the point that one community (the progenitors of the Ashkenazim) decided to separate from the other; thus discarding centuries of Rabbinic heritage. That never happened. YET…we suddenly find two Judaic communities in Europe, only one of which was Talmudic; only one of which exhibited Semitic (Mishnaic / Masoretic) linguistic features. All evidence indicates that the other must have had alternate provenance.

There is another item of note. The "göz bonc[h]uk" [Turkic for "eye bead"] was used by medieval Turkic peoples as the "evil eye". The periapt seems to have had Hellenic origins, and may have come to the Eurasian Steppes via Bactrian influences. The distinctly Turkic version of the talisman made its way into Ashkenazic culture in a way that is notably different from its modern (much more recent) incarnation in Sephardic culture. The idea was to ward off evil forces by donning an amulet (typically on a necklace). In the Middle East, the notion of a protective eye actually goes back to the Bronze Age with the Eye Temple at Nagar in Nineveh (now "Tel Brak")—a leitmotif that was adopted by the Akkadians / Assyrians; as well as the Hurrians and Hittites of Anatolia. Yet it did NOT propagate in Semitic traditions thereafter. (Such pagan magic wasn't consummate with

traditional Abrahamic lore.) During Classical and Late Antiquity, it was primarily found in Hellenic and Persian / Bactrian cultures; then—during the Middle Ages—in Sogdian and Turkic cultures. (The “evil eye” seems NOT to have played a noticeable role in Sephardic culture in the Middle Ages.) Only later did Ottoman Turks adopt this semiotic, as their literati were primarily influenced by PERSIAN culture.

Tellingly, when warding off evil, the Ashkenazim of the early modern period opted for the phrase, “[AWAY] ayin hara” (Hebrew for “evil eye”). Interestingly, the “away” was rendered with “kein” (the Germanic negation) instead of “b’li” (the Hebraic negation). This is an odd lexical combination for a singular phrase. Clearly, the speakers did not come from a Hebraic (read: Talmudic) background; or they would not have divided the locution between two languages. Once more, we see that, as Yiddish developed, Ashkenazim incorporated Hebrew terms into their vernacular in awkward ways—that is: in ways that would not have made sense for those who used to be Sephardic (i.e. well-versed in Hebrew). {104}

We might also note a more general assessment of the two peoples. It is no secret that–until the Second World War–Sephardim tended to be much more cosmopolitan (open to other cultures), whereas Ashkenazim tended to be much more parochial (closed off to the rest of the world). The question naturally arises: How is it that the FORMER came to be decidedly worldly while the LATTER came to be decidedly insular? Though the explanation is complicated, their different histories offer a clue.

During the Middle Ages, Sephardim–after having lived amongst the Romans for many centuries–were living amongst Arab Muslims (spec. during the Islamic Golden Age), as well as people like the (Greek) Byzantines, (Maghrebi) Berbers, (Syriac) Assyrians, Persians, and Armenians. Over time, they would have grown accustomed to intermixing culturally / linguistically with a diverse array of non-Jewish people… whenever the need arose.

By stark contrast, Ashkenazim were a distinct community that had needed to stick together for survival after having abandoned their homeland (in the relatively recent past). Consequently, they found the need to “circle the wagons”, as it were; and thus keep to themselves. Upon arriving in the Rhineland, rather than being an integral part of Germanic society, they found themselves suddenly embedded within it (subsisting in a rather isolated manner). Their insularity, then, was likely a defense mechanism… which would have persisted through the Pale of Settlement in the

midst of the amplified alterity of Tsarist Russia. (While there were certainly distinct Jewish communities in the Middle East, north Africa, the Iberian Peninsula, and France…there was no analogue of the Jewish cordon known as a “shtetle”.)

In assaying the Ashkenazim vis a vis the Sephardim, we find a kind of juxtaposition that cannot be explained by some sort of liturgical schism. Such a marked disparity in ethos would not have occurred had a break-away faction of Sephardim simply continued a migration northward / eastward…and simply re-branded themselves “Ashkenazim”.

By the time of the [k]Hazarian diaspora, Sephardim in southern / western Europe had been contending with Christendom and/or Dar al-Islam for quite some time. And while this had not always gone smoothly (!), they had become relatively acclimated to ethnic diversity over the centuries. So negotiating an environment of Germanic and Slavic peoples would have been nothing strikingly new for them. Their integration THERE would have looked similar to their integration in Andalusia, France, the Italic Peninsula, the Balkan Peninsula, the Maghreb, and the Middle East.

A diaspora from the Pontic Steppes, though, would have been a different story. As we’ve seen, the kind of relations Ashkenazim conducted with Europeans was strictly mercantile; and otherwise culturally segregated.

Let’s review: The issue is not THAT all these differences between Sephardic Jewry and Ashkenazi Jewry existed; it’s WHY they existed. After all, it is unremarkable that social norms differed between separate communities even within the same (Mosaic) Faith; as is typically the case between the various denominations of any given religion. There is even a difference of social norms between different communities WITHIN a given denomination (as with British Anglicans vs. American Episcopalians; or Greek Orthodox Christians vs. Russian Orthodox Christians).

So we are obliged to inquire: How is it that such differences came about in the first place? As we’ve seen, it is not as if the notable differences on these issues emerged AMONGST European Jewry (i.e. within the Sephardic community). On the contrary, the differences we encounter between Sephardic Judaism and Ashkenazi Judaism must have INHERED WITHIN the two groups. In other words, there was not a bifurcation of a formerly single “Masorah”; there was an abutment of two disparate “Masorot[h]” (each hailing from different places) that occurred in the Rhineland. When? Precisely when there was a sudden emergence of a NEW Jewish ethnic group in the region.

Thus: The disjuncture arising from the differences adumbrated above was not concomitant with a SEPARATION (due to a doctrinal divergence); it was the result of an INTERSECTION (due to a geographical convergence). It is, then, understandable that there are residual traces of the Ashkenazim's Turkic origins–origins, that is, in [k]Hazarian "zakanon" [customs] rather than in Sephardic "masorah" / "minhag".

To recapitulate: There is a major linguistic clue that the proximity of Sephardim and Ashkenazim was due to a CONVERGENCE of two groups (hailing from two different places) rather than a DIVERGENCE from a single group (due to a cultural schism): From the 11th thru 14th centuries, Jews from the Rhineland vs. Jews from northern France spoke completely different languages. Obviously, the former did not COME FROM the latter; as such a decisive linguistic disjuncture would not have occurred so abruptly. There are no intermediary tongues linking the Hebraic dialects of the Sephardim (Ladino, Zarfatic, etc.) to Old Yiddish. If there had been some sort of CULTURAL transition, then there would be traces of a LINGUISTIC transition–vestiges of which would exist as some composite (creolized) language between that of, say, Rashi, and that of the early Yiddish expositors.

No such vestiges exist amongst the Ashkenazim.

Moreover, amongst all the Sephardic expositors of that pivotal generation, none mentioned a wayward faction of their Sephardic brethren. This includes the extensive writings of Andalusians enumerated earlier, as well as the major figures of Kairouan in the Maghreb (e.g. Nissim ben Jacob). AND it includes the many expositors of Rashi's generation (e.g. Joseph ben Samuel "Bonfils" of Narbonne) who never mentioned a divergent Jewish community that had recently broken from Sephardim in the Rhineland.

Bottom line: If the Ashkenazim were Sephardic transplants, we would find residual traces of Sephardic culture–linguistically and ritualistically. We find almost none. Instead, we find vestiges of the Ashkenazim's (non-Talmudic) Turkic background. {100}

It is also clear that Ashkenazim do not come from the (Greco-Roman) Romaniote Jews of the eastern Mediterranean rim; as the rites of the respective Jewish communities are markedly different. Tellingly, when the two encountered each other, they did not mix.

So let's review: Pursuant to the Slavic take-over of [k]Hazaria toward the end of the 10th century, the Jews of that (former) Jewish Empire migrated westward into eastern Europe; and they did so simply because there was no other viable option. Thus they moved across the new Slavic kingdom of which they had become a part (Kievan Rus)…westward, through Ruthenia, Moravia / Bohemia, Silesia, and Bavaria…into the Rhineland; and thus out of reach of the Tsarist persecution that had begun in the centuries following the loss of their kingdom.

There is no evidence I could find (not so much as a single document) that belies this explanation.

What is so compelling, then, is not simply that there is so much evidence of the Ashkenazim's [k]Hazarian origins, but the fact that there is literally no evidence to refute it. Of the countless ways the thesis could be easily falsified–a single document declaring, say, "We Ashkenazim, who used to be of the Sephardim…" or "Our ancestors were Sephardim" or "We migrated from the west…from France…", no such statement exists in the historical record.

The point cannot be emphasized enough: There is no record of any schism in Europe's Jewish population. In other words: There was no interlude whereby one group (the Ashkenazim) broke off from another group (the Sephardim)… subsequently asserting a new identity. This only makes sense if the two peoples were never of the same people TO BEGIN WITH. There can be little doubt that if there HAD been any sort of schism, there would have likely been almost NOTHING BUT discussion of that momentous event. Yet nothing of the sort is mentioned in any Jewish document. {6}

It is plain to see, then, that "Yiddeshkeit" did not emerge out of Sephardic "minhag"; it RAN INTO it. When? Between the late 10th and early 12th century. Where? In the Rhineland. This cultural discrepancy remained until the 16th century, when the Galilean Kabbalist, Isaac ben Solomon Luria attempted to reconcile the Sephardic "Nusa[k]h" with the Ashkenazic "Nusa[k]h" via the "Nusa[k]h ha-Ari" [Rites of the Lion]: a precedent that would be adopted by the hyper-fundamentalist Hassidim / Haredim. Subsequently, the Ashkenazi community rebuked the "Haskalah" (the Judaic Enlightenment, replete with its embrace of cosmopolitanism / secularism) in favor of re-constructing an ultra-puritanical "am Israel" (see my essay on "The Land Of Purple"). It was likely during this period that remaining traces of the Ashkenazim's Turkic ancestry were expurgated from the collective memory.

The conclusion is unavoidable: The Ashkenazim came from a different place than the Sephardim. Consequently, the contention that the Ashkenazim had primarily Sephardic origins is without merit. {117}

IMPLICATIONS:

The Ashkenazim clearly have a different background from other European Jews. If this fact were quite clear to most people until the modern age (as we've seen, this was no secret to anyone during the Middle Ages), then wherefore the proliferation of misconceptions NOW?

We might start by asking: How, exactly, did the (unwitting) misconceptions and (deliberately fabricated) historiography about Ashkenazi origins begin? The myth that the Ashkenazim somehow migrated from the Promised Land through southern and/or western Europe–at some undisclosed point in the past, for unspecified reasons, under circumstances that remain unclear, via utterly inexplicable means–was likely started in the 16th century by the Polish mystic, Elijah ben Aharon Yehudah "Ba'al Shem" of Chelm / Lublin. He did this, in part, by harking back to the ancient myth of Noah's grandson via Japeth: Gomer. After all, in Judaic lore, Gomer was traditionally associated with the Cimmerians / Scythians.

How did this “just-so” story work? Gomer–as a Japethite–was said to have sired “Ashkenaz”. He also sired “Ripath” (likely named after the fabled Riphean Mountains, and vaguely associated with the “Huns”; later, the Scythians) and “Togarmah” (purported to have been progenitor of the Turkic peoples). Presto: Different lineages, all traceable to Abrahamic patriarchs, that account for disparate Judaic communities appearing in the appropriate geographical regions! {42} To engage in such retroactive taxonomic chicanery is a blatant case of “post hoc ergo propter hoc”.

Even if we are to take this farcical genealogy seriously, it still begs the question: How is it that the Slavic progeny of Gomer’s eldest son should be considered Semitic? There is no explanation for this leap.

Of course, there was probably no Gomer; and certainly no son of Gomer named “Ashkenaz”. As mentioned, that moniker was likely based on an Assyrian term for the people of the Eurasian Steppes: “Ashkuza”…who were expelled by the Assyrians in the 7th century B.C. Recall that the Torah was originally composed in Babylonian Aramaic during the Exilic Period.

To review: The Halakah (doctrinally) and the Talmudic tradition (more generally) were not reconciled with Ashkenazic Judaism until the mid-16th century–largely as a result of Joseph ben Ephraim Karo’s work in the 1550’s. This means that it is EXCLUSIVELY the period between the downfall of the [k]Hazar Empire (in the late 10th century) and the advent of this reconciliation that serves as the relevant timeframe for our inquiry.

With respect to pre-1000 A.D., when we look to records of East Frankia (spec. the “Annals of Fulda”, which chronicled the entire 9th century), we find no mention of Jews in eastern Europe. (The Abbey of Fulda was in Hesse.) That material—which was primarily concerned with Carolingian exploits—begins with accounts by the Benedictine monk, Einhard; then by the Benedictine monk, Rudolf of Fulda; and by myriad others thereafter. Much of the writing was done in Mainz (where people spoke a Frankish dialect known as “Ripuarian”), Lorsch (which was just 10 kilometers east of Worms), and Regensburg (in Bavaria). The annals end with the tenure of Arnulf of Carinthia, who ruled from Worms…and conducted engagements with the pagans of Moravia and Bohemia; and even with the Magyars of the Carpathian Basin.

This period was followed by the Ottonians (919 to 1024), then the Salians (1024 to 1125). A chronicle composed by the Saxon bishop, Thietmar of Merseburg (c. 1018) as well as the chronicle of “Sancti Pantaleonis” (c. 1237) are historiographies of the Ottonian dynasty (the former put emphasis on the Slavic campaigns around Magdeburg; the latter focused on Cologne)…spanning the early 10th to the early 11th centuries. Meanwhile, the “Gesta Pincipum Polonorum” (c. 1016) chronicles the events around early Poland (spec. the Piast dynasty) during that time.

The Sephardic preoccupation with “Kohenim” (the priestly caste, defined by bloodlines) did not catch on in Ashkenazi communities until much later. Hence the proliferation of surnames like “Coh[e]n” amongst Sephardim during the early Middle Ages, but not amongst Ashkenazim until the modern age.

The delimited scope of Revisionist Zionist propaganda reveals its glaring deficiencies. The preponderance of their material on the Ashkenazic-Sephardic dichotomy pertains to the **post**-Karo period (that is: beginning in the late 16th century); material which is entirely beside the point when it comes to our purposes here. To ascertain the credence of the present thesis, anything that occurred later than the “Shul[c]han Arukh” is largely irrelevant. For by c. 1563, much of the evidence for the [k]Hazarian provenance of the Ashkenazim would have dissipated. And there was certainly no longer any incentive to highlight the Turkic provenance of the Ashkenazim.

The “catch” is that ANY documentation on this matter becomes suspiciously sparse much before the temporal threshold c. 1500.

In sum: Many of those who now claim “Jewish” heritage who hail from Eastern Europe (i.e. the Ashkenazim) are primarily descendants of the [k]Hazars. That is: They are of Turkic–rather than of Semitic–origin. This includes the Krymchaks and Karaites of Crimea–who openly embrace their Turkic roots. It also includes a significant portion of the Ashkenazi population: a people who, according to Judaic lore, were Gomerites who eventually ended up in Eastern Europe. {36}

It is only for ideological purposes that many Ashkenazim now fashion themselves as pristinely Semitic. Doing so enables them to posit a fanciful genealogy that serves their agenda: staking a claim on Palestine as their ancestral homeland. The confabulation furnishes those with Zionist designs with the illusory provenance requisite for their claims of blood and soil. Hence the ethno-nationalism that

undergirds their brazen asseverations about “eretz Israel” is given a quasi-plausible etiological buttress. The obduracy with which this claim is asserted is designed to elide its spuriousness.

The point here has been to show the extent to which ideologues are willing to engage in programatic obfuscation in order to maintain the positions on which they’ve staked their claim.

Again, we find hidebound Reactionaries digging in their heals; as their ideological commitments are tethered to certain conclusions—spurious assertions that are necessary if they wish to uphold their proclamation of “lebensraum” in Palestine (based on ethnic “birthright”). A fabricated heritage provides Revisionist Zionists (esp. those who use the “aliyah” as an excuse to engage in the continued ethnic cleansing of Palestine) with a rational to “return” to their “homeland”. How so? Contrived legacy begets contrived destiny. In reality, if the Ashkenazim really wanted to return to their ancestors’ “homeland”, they would be going back to the Pontic Steppes. Of course, that does not serve the Revisionist Zionist agenda, which requires the conflation of “Beth Israel” with a chimerical “eretz Israel” in order to rationalize the ethnic cleansing of Palestine. {80}

Considering the treatment of Jews in much of Europe during much of the Middle Ages, the paucity of surviving documentation pre-dating Karo’s “Shul[c]han Arukh” is unsurprising. For example, in 1243, at the behest of the Pope, King Louis IX of France ordered the burning of over 12,000 Jewish manuscripts (much of it Talmudic writings, but anything that the authorities could get their hands on). A tremendous amount of historical documentation was surely included in this massive cache, all of which was lost forever. Hence the paucity of evidence for ANYTHING happening (vis a vis Jews in Europe) prior to this time.

The destruction of historical evidence continued into modern times. The Russian Tsars were certainly not deferential to their Jewish subjects. Crimean Tatars–both Jewish and Muslim–were purged by Joseph Stalin after the Second World War. Their records were largely destroyed…along with evidence for their ancestral origins. (Stalin did the same with ALL Turkic peoples, as well as with the Mongols farther east.)

As I discuss at length in my essay on “The Land Of Purple”, the world’s Jews had myriad homelands. And for thousands of years, that was fine. After all, Israel was a people; not a place. Beth Israel was comprised of a resplendent variety of ethnicities, each of which called a different country “home”. It was a mosaic, not a monolith.

It was only in the advent of Revisionist Zionism that the brazen claim started to be made that the ONLY “true” homeland for the world’s Jewish people was a certain tract of land in the Levant; and that this singular ethnic group had an exclusive right to it (a right that trumped the claims of anyone else). This claim was legitimized by appeals to divine ordinance…and to the historical veracity of the Hebrew Bible.

In order to be legitimized, the Jewish ethno-State had to have theocratic underpinnings. After all, ethno-nationalist movements ALL require national origin myths to give themselves an air of legitimacy, and justify their claims of “lebensraum”. This invariably entails pogroms against—and eviction of—an indigenous population that is seen as coming from the wrong stock. When it comes to claims of blood and soil, the formula is always the same–whether it is Judeo-nationalists contra indigenous Palestinians in the Levant or Bamar nationalists contra Rohingya / Chin in Burma. The fetishization of ethnic purity never ends well.

The point is worth repeating: It is helpful to note how incredibly easy it would be to DIS-prove the present thesis, were it errant in some significant way. Indeed, a single piece of incontrovertible evidence could negate it. Yet…of all the possible countervailing evidence that could–and, most likely WOULD–exist if the Ashkenazim were Semitic, literally NONE exists. This fact alone speaks volumes. {6}

With all this in mind, let’s assay the ramifications of the present thesis.

Even as they are every bit as Judaic as the rest of Beth Israel, the Ashkenazim are “racially” more Turkic than Semitic. This is GOOD news for those wishing to fight anti-Semitism (i.e. racism against ethnic Jews); as it reminds us that Faith transcends ethnic background. More to the point, it shows that the “race” for which anti-Semites have contempt is a chimera. Even in the Hebrew Bible, we find the fixation on bloodlines is misplaced when it comes to what it means to be Jewish. In the Book of Ruth, the (eponymous) protagonist is a Moabite women who—felicitously—becomes part of Beth Israel.

The realization that Ashkenazim originated from primarily non-Semitic peoples eliminates the RACIAL basis of anti-Semites' animus. As it turns out, the object of their scorn is–oftentimes–not even Semitic. (!) If racists aim to derogate Ashkenazim based on race, they must–by the same logic–include every other ethnic group with a Turkic and/or Slavic background…and possibly even Persians and Caucasians. (Not that their bigotry is internally consistent anyway. When Christian, anti-Semites often forget that they worship a Palestinian Jew. And when Christian Zionist, the virulent anti-Semitism is often dismissed as a minor technicality so long as they support Revisionist Zionism politically.)

Moreover: One would think the fact that the [k]Hazar Empire was a respected and thriving, cosmopolitan society that championed pluralism and religious tolerance (plus the fact that it was the only sovereign Jewish Empire in history) would be something to CELEBRATE, not to obfuscate. Indeed, the [k]Hazarian roots of the Ashkenazim should be a point of pride for Progressive Jews the world over. The only genuinely democratic Jewish kingdom in history would furnish Beth Israel with a legacy to emulate. (The short-lived Hasmonean dynasty in Palestine was a vassal State of the Roman Imperium.) Suffice to say: Echoing the ideals of the [k]Hazar Empire in Palestine would be a welcome departure from the theocratic ethno-State that is presently called "Israel".

By the same token, this is bad news for Judeo-Supremacists; as it undermines their ethno-centric worldview. {2} More to the point: Revisionist Zionists can no longer use the charge that critics of their deranged ideology are "anti-Semitic"; as the Palestinians they persecute are–it turns out–far more Semitic than most of them! (Who, then, are the REAL anti-Semites?) The lesson here is an important one: When evaluating the virtue of one's own community, bloodlines are patently irrelevant. There is no "birth-right" in civil society; there are only HUMAN rights. We are all fellow humans; and–at the end of the day–that is all that matters.

Generally speaking, those who are caught in the thrall of ethno-centricity are tempted to occlude the actual history of their own tribe, espousing a contrived "sacred history" (read: faux history) in its place. This is often done in a gambit to uphold illusions of ethnic purity; and thereby propound an exalted heritage that exists only in their own imaginations. This unabashed tribalistic conceit is invariably based on a raft of strategically-tailored farce. (Such hubris is standard for those who fixate on bloodlines.)

For the present purpose, it should suffice to point out that there are several other ethno-centric myths that deign to tie some exalted in-group to the fabled Israelites–even non-Jewish versions like British “Israelism” and the American “Christian Identity” movement. ALL of it is, of course, as racist as it is illusory.

Another case in point is the Prussian Supremacy touted by G.W.F. Hegel, who invoked his own version of (divine) Providence to rationalize his brazen claims. That played into the myth of Teutonic Supremacy. {37} A dozen other notable instances of this delusive mindset:

- **North Koreans** fancy themselves as exalted “Choson”–per their ethno-nationalist ideology, “Juche”.
- **Chinese** who are obsessed with “Zhong-hua min-zu” fancy themselves as progeny of the exalted “Hua-Xia”. (Both terms have palpably ethno-centric connotations.) There are also hints of Han Supremacy undergirding Chinese nationalism (as with their treatment of the Uyghurs and Tibetans as subalterns), a supremacy that also undergirds their perfidious designs on Hong Kong and Taiwan.
- **Japanese** who are obsessed with “Kokutai” indulge in fantastical etiological myths about an exalted Nihon- jin of yore. This ethos fueled the hegemonic militarism of Imperial Japan.
- **Burmese** ethno-nationalists fancy themselves as exalted “Bamar”, relegating all other ethnic groups to sub-human status.
- **Turkish** ethno-nationalists fancy themselves as progeny of the Hittites–which makes no sense, as the existence of that Bronze-Age people antedated the category “Turkic” by over a thousand years…and certainly had nothing to do with the Ottoman glory days. (This is analogous to present-day Iraqis deeming the Sumerians part of their national heritage; or present-day Egyptians deeming themselves inheritors of the Pharaonic legacy.)
- **Italian** ethno-nationalists fancy themselves as exalted “Romanitas” (progeny of the Romans, hailing from the fabled Alba Longa); though which medieval Italic kingdom had the TRUE “Italians” depends on who one asks.
- **Romanian** ethno-nationalists fancy themselves as progeny of the Dacians (viz. proto-Chronism), who dwelled northeast of the Danube.
- **Croatian** ethno-nationalists fancy themselves as progeny of the Illyrians.
- **Polish** ethno-nationalists fancy themselves as progeny of the Sarmatians… even as their ancestors—the Polans—were much too far north to have been related to Scythians who dwelled south of the Carpathian mountains.

- **German** ethno-nationalists fancy themselves as exalted “Herren-volk”: a pristinely Nordic / Teutonic master-race.
- **Hungarian** (Magyar) ethno-nationalists fancy themselves as exalted “Turan”: a pristinely Uralic people who were somehow, magically, Roman Catholic. {38}
- **Persian** ethno-nationalists harken back to Zoroastrian lore, in which the “Airyana Vaejah” [Aryan expanse] is the mythical homeland of the ancient Iranians; and thus the axis mundi.

This conceit is ubiquitous; as Exceptionalism is invariably tied to some kind of Providentialism. American ethno-nationalists (esp. WASPs) exhibit what is best described as the Mayflower syndrome–thereby fancying themselves as more authentically “American” than American citizens of alternate ethnic backgrounds. (It’s as if being descended from Europeans who arrived in the New World **earlier** somehow conferred upon them a more exalted status.) Add Christian Dominionism to the mix, and one ends up with what is effectively an American brand of ethno-nationalism.

In sum: This is a common phenomenon. (For a discussion of ethno-nationalism, see my essays on “The Many Faces Of Fascism” and “The Land Of Purple”.)

Irrespective of the in-group, calls for a theocratic ethno-State are always wrong for the same reasons. Exceptionalism is invariably tied to some sort of self-serving national origin myth. The reputedly Semitic background of Ashkenazim (as progeny of god’s “chosen people”) is but one of many examples of fabricated heritage, by which the exalted in-group peddles a gilded legacy based largely on bespoke farce. That legacy is then used as a cudgel to push this or that ethno-centric (viz. nationalistic) agenda.

Manufactured history almost always serves an ideological purpose. Otherwise why go to the trouble of manufacturing it? (A question one might always ask of a sacred history: IF the world were to take this as incontrovertibly true, then cui bono? The answer is often as revealing about contrived historiographies as “follow the money” is informative about ulterior motives in politics.)

This scheme is especially divisive when it is used to lay claim to land–as with Israeli nationalists viz. Palestine, Tamil nationalists viz. Sri Lanka, Turkish nationalists viz. Kurdistan, and Chinese nationalists viz. Xin-jiang and Tibet. In each case, the ideologues are obliged to re-write history (creating just-so stories) to rationalize their odious agenda. The message is that the OTHER (be they Arab Palestinians vis a vis

Jewish Israelis, Sinhalese vis a vis Tamils, Kurds vis a vis Turks, or Uyghurs / Tibetans vis a vis Chinese) is not even a LEGITIMATE PEOPLE, and so has no claim on the coveted land. End of discussion.

Anglo-Saxon settlers thought of the indigenous population of North America and Australia as such; Spanish and Portuguese “Conquistadors” thought of the indigenous population of South and Central America as such; and ALL Europeans thought of indigenous Africans as such. The perpetrators may change; but the atrocity is the same. (Crimes against humanity are not crimes because they happen to be against any particular group.) When crafting sacred histories, both embellishment and selective omission are standard operating procedure; as the aim is to get what happened in the past to legitimize certain “rightful claims” in the present. Legacy augurs destiny; so to get the latter, fabricate the former.

The racist notion, “yikhus” (noble descent; i.e. special bloodlines) coupled with a raft of specious (Biblical) dogmas about Beth Israel force ideologically-driven Ashkenazim to insist on a Semitic ancestry…lest their house of cards completely collapse. Dismayingly, the illusion underlying Judaic lebensraum continues to have purchase amongst a surprising segment of Beth Israel. As I’ve shown, in their flailing attempt to retain a veneer of credence, such interlocutors end up exposing their hubris…and their bigotry. (I discuss this matter in my essays: “Genesis Of A People” and “The Land Of Purple”.)

While historiographers are busy burnishing a contrived legacy for the anointed in-group, those of us concerned with (actual) history are obliged to debunk whatever “received wisdom” happens to prevail. Such a thankless enterprise will invariably be met with stern resistance–nay, outright scorn–from obdurate ideologues; as setting the record straight denies them their casus belli.

True Believers will countenance their coveted historiography (esp. when it is a foundation myth) not because it is TRUE, but because it is USEFUL. (It’s not so much about believing it is true; it is BELIEVING IN the belief that it is true.) Being pragmatic creatures, dogmas are based more on utility than on veracity. A narrative vehicle for the promulgation of an ideology is adopted because it is compelling. By wrenching the chassis from their narrative vehicle, one is depriving True Believers of the means by which they rationalize their agenda. I hope to have done that here.

There's a downside to this enterprise. Anyone with the audacity to bring ACTUAL history to light is held in contempt; and summarily vilified for upsetting the sacred applecart. So far as the X-supremacist is concerned, bringing into question the historiographical underpinnings of X-based Exceptionalism is seen as a sign of anti-X bigotry. For Revisionist Zionists, this comes in the form of (spurious accusations of) "anti-Semitism". Hence the flippant dismissal of the "Khazar theory" by those who are fine not actually knowing anything about the relevant history. It suffices to scoff at those who mention it; basking in the warm froth of their own sanctimony.

Sometimes, it is not so much the myth itself to which proponents cling…as it is the ideological perks that come with it. Pretending it is an incontrovertible "truth" furnishes one with all the etiological claims one needs to justify whatever it is one wants to do. By debunking the myth, hidebound ideologues are deprived of those precious emoluments. Thus: In order to maintain the illusion that their delusions of Exceptionalism are warranted, this house of cards must be left alone. Sacred apple-carts mustn't ever be upset. {8}

Yet another salient example of indulgence in faux history (in the service of ethnic fiction) pertains to what is now known as "Hungarian". Hungarians are descendants of the Magyars, whose origins–it turns out–were also in the Eurasian Steppes. Those who remain in the region to the present day are known as the "Mansi"; yet Magyar pride is reticent to concede that Hungarians and Mansi have shared origins. This is another reminder that dissimulation is de rigueur for ethno-nationalism.

It is worth reviewing the historical background of the Magyars, as it offers a striking parallel to the background of the Ashkenazim. During the Dark Ages, the Magyars–who were ALSO a Turkic people–migrated to the Carpathian basin (known at the time as Pannonia; roughly corresponding to the region of that is now dubbed "Hungary"), and christened the land "Etil-Köz" (using the terms for "river" and "middle" to indicate a land in the midst of the Dniester, Prut, and Siret Rivers). Subsequently, they ALSO mixed with the indigenous (Hellenic, Turkic, and Slavic) peoples; and–as a matter of course–adopted their own (novel) ethnic identity. Being as they were located within the orbit of the (Christian) Holy Roman Empire during the Middle Ages, these early "Hungarians" were obliged to fancy themselves a pristinely European people. Yet, to this day, the residue of their non-European ancestry can be found in their language: Hungarian is a Uralic-Altaic language that originally used Old Turkic runes for its script; and–via Chuvash influences–included many Turkic words in its vernacular. Tellingly, early Hungarian (i.e. Magyar) folklore exhibited many features of Siberian shamanism.

It was not until the 11th century (sound familiar?) that the Hungarians eschewed their pagan roots and adopted a new religion (in their case: Roman Catholicism). Records indicate that this was done during the reign of King Ladislav (a.k.a. “Laszlo”). It makes sense, then, that most Hungarian CHRISTIAN terms are Slavic (indicating a concomitance of lingual and religious influences) even as its older lexicon retains a Turkic etymology. The Old Church Slavonic in which Eastern Orthodox scripture was re-written was a sop to the Slavic peoples of the region, who would have had little affinity for the original liturgical language of the Byzantines: Koine Greek.

Here’s the clincher: Hungarians can ALSO trace much of their lineage back to the [k]Hazars. (!) Indeed, their Magyar origins can be traced to a “kende” [ruler] who was a vassal of the [k]Hazar Empire: **Almos**. (More on him in Postscript 1.)

Unsurprisingly, few Hungarians today recognize their non-Occidental (i.e. pagan Turkic) heritage; as doing so would undermine the magnificently Occidental (read: Christian-centric) foundation myths they so ardently covet. This is a familiar routine. {38} Note that the Ashkenazi surname, “Kertesz” is Magyar for “garden”, which was an important term in the Torah (Hebrew: “Gan”). It strains credulity that a Jewish family with a Semitic background would have opted for a Turkic moniker in lieu of such an auspicious Hebraic term. Naturally, a Jewish family with a Uralic background was apt to use a Uralic lexeme. {111}

Onomastic elision is not uncommon amongst Hungarian Jews. Take billionaire, George Soros, for example. He is a descendent of a family of Jewish Magyars who’s surname had been “Schwartz” during the Pale of Settlement. “Soros” (meaning “dark-skinned”) was a replacement for the more overtly Ashkenazic moniker, which itself would have transplanted a Turkic moniker centuries earlier. (I discuss another famous example in Postscript 1.) When it comes to residual onomastics, note that the “Tosh” / “Tash” dynasty of Hassidim was founded in the 18th century (in the tradition of Baal Shem Tov) by a disciple of the Ruthenian rabbi, Yitzchok Ayzik of Komarno. {50} The dynasty was an eponym for the town in which it began–located in former Magyar territory.

Lo and behold: “Tosh” / “Tash” was Turkic for “stone”; and had played a role in certain onomastic conventions throughout the Middle Ages. (It continues to be part of the Uzbek language.) The term was used in Tabaristan (northeastern Persia near the Caspian sea) for such places as Tash-e Olya and Tash-e Sofia; as well as for Tash-

Kand[a] farther to the east (eventually rendered “Tashkent”). “Kand[a]” was the Sogdian / Turkic term for city. Why in heaven’s name would a Hassidic dynasty name itself using a Turkic lexeme? Unless…

A final point: To acknowledge that Ashkenazim are not GENETICALLY Semitic does not entail that they are not–in a sense–CULTURALLY Semitic. They are, after all, Jewish (which is a traditionally Semitic Faith). Hence: To hold that they are not Semitic in terms of ancestry is NOT to suggest that they are not genuinely Jewish. The point is: One can be Jewish without being Semitic…just as one can be Semitic without being Jewish (e.g. Muslim Palestinians, Assyrians, and Lebanese Druze).

Ignorance on such matters is often not deliberate. In many cases, those acceding to conventional wisdom are not intentionally getting it wrong; they just don’t know any better. It is the haughtiest dogma- traffickers (especially those who have an ax to grind) who end up being the loudest voices. Others are cowed into playing along.

It is an irony that the most zealous Revisionist Zionists (Judean Settlers, who are typically Haredim / [c]Hassidim) hail from the LEAST Semitic part of Beth Israel. As we’ve seen, though, to suppose that the Ashkenazim were somehow descendants of a Semitic peoples, one is forced to take a gigantic leap…while ignoring all the evidence to the contrary. Such Reality-denial does the Ashkenazim no favors. The suggestion that one is not GENUINELY Jewish unless one can trace one’s ancestry to a certain haplo-group is ITSELF bigoted–based as it is on racialist criteria. It is revealed to be a patently anti-Semitic position once one recognizes that the majority of Beth Israel today CANNOT, in fact, trace their ancestry back to the Levant.

As we’ve seen, gilded legacies often require the fabrication of sacred histories. This invariably involves the programatic obfuscation of ACTUAL history. There is a staunch vested interest in upholding the anointed narrative, lest the rationalization for the designated agenda disintegrate. So once established, it is deemed taboo to countermand the “official story”–regardless of how groundless it might be. Consequently, those who simply seek the truth of the matter (and are fine with letting the chips fall where they may) are rendered personae non grata—or even vilified.

A question worth asking: What would be so bad about Ashkenazim having Turkic blood? Unless I’m missing something, it would seem that the only reason to be vociferously against the present thesis is some sort of anti-Turkic sentiment. Ideally, it wouldn’t matter whether or not Ashkenazi Jews had Turkic ancestry. One can’t

help but wonder: Is Semitic provenance supposed to make them more legitimately Jewish? Well, yes, if one's primary criterion is bloodlines. It is entirely predictable, then, that Revisionist Zionists bridle at the prospect that the faux history on which they base their national origin myth be exposed. (See my essay, "The Land Of Purple".)

Is having Turkic ancestry a BAD thing? Of course not. Is ancestry irrelevant when it comes to according esteem? Of course. The suggestion that Semitic ancestry is somehow superior to Turkic ancestry—or is otherwise requisite for being Jewish—is not only absurd; it is bigoted.

There is an important caveat to the present thesis: We cannot be absolutely certain it is true. Indeed, it is POSSIBLE that all the [k]Hazars were entirely killed or entirely died off or entirely converted out of the Faith…and subsequently dissipated into the surrounding populations; and that all the Ashkenazim DID migrate from elsewhere… and thus DID descend from the original Jewish diaspora in Late Antiquity.

In other words, the primary problem with the present theory is that it is, well, just a theory. Be that as it may, given the available evidence (and an ample dose of deductive reasoning), it is–by far–the most likely explanation. And–to reiterate–it is easily falsifiable.

But here's the thing: What is important is NOT whether or not it is true. The point here is that there regrettably exist some people who desperately wish it were untrue…lest the confectionary historiography on which their ethno-centric ideology is based be rendered null and void.

There are certainly key insights that I have missed; more dots to connect. I urge those who are curious to investigate this matter further, and without prejudice. {53} The present disquisition is not a verdict; it is a point of departure. My effort here to set the record straight comes not from a fixation on genetic lineage (a dunderheaded predilection that is the source of so many problems), but from a sincere interest in, well, just getting history right. Only those obsessed with "blood and soil" would be opposed to such an effort.

Lo and behold: Revisionist Zionists are vociferously–nay, militantly–opposed to certain facts coming to light. I devoted so much ink to the topic not because I care one way or the other what the verdict happens to be. It really doesn't matter.

Rather, I did so to demonstrate how much information some ideologues feel obligated to obfuscate when they depend on everyone believing that something isn't true; even when it IS true. {8}

Progressives throughout Beth Israel rise above this illusory (non-)predicament. No less a figure than Abba Solomon Eban noted in his acclaimed book, "My People: The Story Of The Jews": "It is likely too that some Khazar progeny reached the various Slavic lands where they helped to build the great Jewish centers of Eastern Europe". That was in the 1960s. Alas. Such an admission by a top Israeli official would be unheard of today.

It bears worth repeating: An absence of pristinely Semitic ancestry does not make a Jewish person any less Jewish. If that were the case, the majority of Beth Israel TODAY would not qualify as properly "Jewish".

The famed Ashkenazi writer, Isaac Asimov may have put it best in his memoir, "It's Been A Good Life" when he speculated: "It is possible that my [Jewish] ancestry might not move in the direction of ancient Israel at all… After 965, the Khazars were finished as an organized power, but Judaism may have remained. And it may well be that many East European Jews are descended from Khazars and the people they ruled. I may be one of them. Who knows? And who cares?" {107}

Amen.

EndNotes:

{1 Perspicacity is a funny thing; as–like a sense of humor–everyone thinks they have it. Those with a staunch, vested interest in certain dogmas will invariably express consternation at unwelcome theories. That their partiality precludes them from being perspicacious is seen not as problematic; it is seen as a sign of fealty to the cause. (So far as they are concerned, this is all the MORE reason their perspective should be given weight.) When our pride is on the line, each of us consistently manages to convince ourselves that we are being sufficiently impartial to warrant consideration. Alas. Partiality rarely announces itself as such. (Biases typically don't see themselves as biases. It's like a defective diagnostics system that is unable to identify its own problems due to its inability to, well, accurately diagnose problems. This is the real-world repercussion of Gödel's Incompleteness Theorem.) The fact is that conflicts of interest disqualify someone from being impartial. Of course, most of us are disinclined to identify ourselves has having such impairments. We all tend to fashion ourselves as resplendently objective, and so are reticent to recuse ourselves from inquiries in which we have a stake in the outcome. As luck would have it, the only time one should engage in an inquiry is when one really couldn't care less–one way or the other–what the verdict ends up being. When it comes to the present matter, such is the case with me. Had I vested interests, I would not have felt qualified to hold forth on such a contentious topic.}

{2 Upon scrutiny, the Revisionist Zionist obsession with bloodlines implodes. In this respect, anti-Semites and Judeo-Supremacists employ the same tortured logic. That is to say: They are both engaged in bigotry, though pointed in opposite directions. One side encourages the other to indulge in an analogous conceit. The ideologies on both sides thrive off of the ensuing brinkmanship. Nothing bolsters fanaticism more
than trumped-up conflict. (Those with a siege mentality feed off of those who disagree with them; as even the most reasonable argument is taken as further evidence of their imagined plight.) And so it goes: An ideologue may be inclined to posit a spurious racial category (in this case, "Jewish") to either exalt or demean those in that category—depending on whether it is used to designate a (lionized) in-group or a (demonized) out-group. This is emblematic of the tendentious nature of a tribal mindset. Such taxonomic gimmickry attests to the virulent antagonism that is emblematic of tribalism. This becomes all the more apparent whenever Reactionaries from opposing sides confront one another. The only level heads are those who remain above the fray.}

{3 Disclaimer: NONE of the points made in this essay are related to–nor do they in way depend on–the debunked musings of Arthur Koestler. To recognize the salient history, we needn't resort to speculations about "lost tribes" or engage in other flights of fancy. His were spurious conjectures that only ended up offering variations on equally-spurious Abrahamic dogmas (see Endnote 5 below). (For the ACTUAL origins of the [k]Hazars, see Endnotes 9 and 10.) As the history of scholarship on the topic attests (see the lists provided at the beginning of this monograph), recognition of the [k]Hazarian origins of the Ashkenazim LONG predates Koestler's book. The present explication has no connection whatsoever to the fanciful–yet entirely specious–theory Koestler proffered in 1976. In fact, the very next year (1977), when Dan Rottenberg mentioned the [k]Hazarian origins of eastern European Jews in his book, "Finding Our Fathers: A Guidebook to Jewish Genealogy", he did not see fit to mention Koestler's asseverations. (This fact alone tells us all we need to know about what is and what isn't considered serious disquisition on the matter.) Note that right-wing Zionists have been known to engage in similar shenanigans. Most recently, a representative from "Shavei Israel" [Returners of Israel] (a delusive rabbi named Eliyahu Avichail) anointed the Hmar / Mizo people of northeast India the "B'nei Menashe", thereby designated them the "lost" 13th tribe of Israel. This is, of course, hogwash. (Their actual homeland was a place known as Chin- lung / Khur / Shan, which existed at the nexus of Chinese, Tibetan, and Bengal culture…even as they are now generally considered Indian "Kuki" by the Assamese; and "Chin" by the Burmese). This is yet another example of a forgotten diaspora–the origins of which have been occluded by a tangle of ethno-centric taxonomies. As is shown in the present monograph, right-wing Zionists seek to re-write history so as to characterize non-Semitic Jews as descendants of Semitic Jews for entirely ideological reasons.}

{4 Harvard anthropologist, Roland B. Dixon (under the tutelage of Franz Boas) noted the [k]Hazars "spread far and wide to the west and northwest, their modern descendants probably forming the preponderant element among the East European Jews" (ref. "Racial History of Man", 1923). Dixon was fixated on the relationship between phenotypic groups and geography–sometimes to a fault. He has been criticized for treating cultures as static and endemic to a given people. (The same defective thinking is found in Revisionist Zionism and other ethno-nationalist ideologies.) The paradigm in which mankind is categorized according to "race" is, of course, highly problematic. Yet the credence of Dixon's HISTORICAL observation remains.}

{5 It should be noted that there are some cockamamie–and often anti-Semitic–theories surrounding the [k]Hazarian origins of the Ashkenazim. Perspicacity demands that we not allow such zany musings to discount what the actual historical record tells us. Just as criticism of Zionism–and of Israeli government policy–sometimes stems from anti-Semitism (even as much of that criticism is legitimate on its own terms), mention of the [k]Hazarian diaspora sometimes stems from anti-Semitism. Whenever the topic of the [k]Hazars is broached, those with dubious intentions often seize upon a few cherry-picked facts, then propound a myopic version of history for their own ideological purposes. The same might be said of anti-Muslim bigots vis a vis the (undeniably) checkered history of Islam. Most bigots would concede that the moon is not made out of cheese. Their morally problematic mindset does not undermine the credence of this observation. As it turns out, the moon really ISN'T made of cheese. The regrettable incidence of such bad actors in no way undermines the credence of the present thesis. (The nefarious use of certain facts–by bad actors–does not invalidate those facts; as the verity of facts does not depend upon the credibility of any given messenger.) It is unfortunate that this topic has become such an incendiary trigger-point–attracting, as it often does, those with odious motives on both sides of the ideological divide: Revisionist Zionists on the one hand and anti-Semites on the other. Be that as it may, in assaying such a scenario, it is important to avoid false dichotomies: criticism of one camp does not necessarily put one in the other camp. For it is possible to recognize BOTH enterprises to be insidious; as each is right-wing in nature, even if pointed in opposite directions. (See Endnote 2 above.) I hope I have shown here that a good-faith inquiry into ancient history does not require one to wade into these toxic ideological cesspools. This should go without saying. Alas; it needs to be said: The recognition that Ashkenazim do not have Semitic roots in no way entails ill will; nor does it in any way demean Ashkenazi Jews (lest one is bigoted against those with a Turkic background). In fact, the suggestion that it entails anti-Semitism is ITSELF bigoted–an irony that is lost on apologists for Revisionist Zionism. Analogously, it does not follow from the fact that the KKK was virulently anti-Catholic that any criticism of Roman Catholicism somehow entails sympathy for WASP supremacy. Testament to the fact that there is nothing anti-Semitic about plaintively recognizing the Turkic ancestry of the Ashkenazim is the long list of Jewish scholars that advocated the theory.}

{6 Note: This is not to be confused with treating a LACK OF evidence for the counter-claim as (direct) EVIDENCE FOR the thesis. (After all, absence of evidence is not NECESSARILY evidence of absence.) Rather, it is simply noticing that if the

counter-claim were true, then certain things would almost certainly exist. That NONE of those things exist indicates that it is very unlikely the counter-thesis is true. One thing that we might expect to exist if Ashkenazi Jews had nothing to do with the [k]Hazarian Jews is an attestation by the former–dating from the late 10th century–lamenting what surely would have been seen as a gigantic tragedy. There would have been some sort of statement along the lines of: "It's a shame what happened to our [k]Hazarian brethren. They were a thriving Jewish kingdom; and now they are all gone." (Such an eradication would have been a grievous loss; one that all Beth Israel would have mourned… UNLESS…) Suffice to say: If Ashkenazim were NOT descendants of the [k]Hazars, it would be very easy to make the case. I dare say that there would be MOUNTAINS of (easy-to-find) evidence that would conclusively show the present thesis to be erroneous. There is none. In some cases, a lack of evidence for X (that is: evidence that would almost certainly exist if X were the case) CAN be taken as evidence of not-X. There is NOT ONE piece of countervailing evidence to the present thesis (that I could find). This absence speaks volumes. So what can be surmised from Bayesian logic? IF the Ashkenazim were an offshoot of Sephardim, THEN an array of things would be true. There is no evidence for **any** of those things. (Put another way: Were such-and-such the case, we would expect to find CERTAIN THINGS in the historical record; yet we don't find any of them.) Ergo it is highly unlikely the Ashkenazim were an offshoot of Sephardim. I have adumbrated extensive evidence for an alternative explanation; and–after a diligent search–found no evidence to refute it.}

{7 The more renown "Primary Chronicle" (a.k.a. the "Tale of Bygone Years") by Nestor of Kiev was compiled slightly later (c. 1113; see Endnote 65 below). The focus of such tracts is Christendom. The authors were primarily interested in propounding a gilded Christian legacy. Consequently, events prior to the 11th century were of ancillary historiographical concern for the authors (yet another reminder that it is the victors who write history). The only other account from the region for this period are the "Kartlis Tskhovreba" [Georgian Chronicles]–spec. the ones composed in the 11th century by Leonti Mroveli of Urbnisi. During the Renaissance, there was little incentive for the Jewish communities of Eastern Europe to compile accounts of their [k]Hazarian background–as they had embraced an entirely new identity, and were consequently obliged to assimilate within their Occidental environs. This included the adoption of an Occidental ethos. In any case, by 1240, the great Mongol general, Subotai had over-run the Eurasian Steppes, bringing it under control of the (Tengri) Mongol Empire. Later still, the region would fall under the dominion of the (Islamic) Kipchak imperium known as the "Altan / Saru

[h]Ordu" [Golden Horde], which would control the region until after 1500…when it would fall to the Turkic ("Tatar") Khanate of Crimea. There would have been little–if any–motivation for ANYONE, at ANY POINT, to trace the (defunct) connections between [k]Hazarian and Ashkenazi legacy. Indeed, the only regime that would have been inclined to do so was the very regime that had been wiped out. (Defunct empires tend not to be in a position to propound their legacy for posterity.) In spite of all this, we now have ample evidence to show what most likely transpired.}

{8 A well-done disquisition on this topic is Shlomo Sand's "The Invention of the Jewish People" (2009); especially chapter 4, "Realms Of Silence". Also reference my essay, "Genesis Of A People". For further analysis of the relationship between the Ashkenazim and the [k]Hazars, see the long list of works provided at the beginning of this monograph.}

{9 Note that the Alans were referred to as "Ossetes" by Georgians (meaning they were progenitors of the Ossetians), reminding us of yet another Eastern European people with Turkic forebears. As mentioned: Per the Schechter letter, many of this Turkic tribe were Jewish as well. Linguistically, we find that Old Turkic predates even Classical Arabic. Old Turkic was the language of the forebears of the Gök-turks–as attested in, say, the "Or[k]han" inscriptions in Mongolia from the early 8th century. Recall that the origins of the [k]Hazars was most likely the Mongolic "Ashina", who broke away from the Rouran Khaganate in the mid-6th century…and were later driven westward by the Tang dynasty, who ruled China during the relevant time. Only a limited amount is known about the Ashina—or any of the early Altaic peoples. Their Faith would have been Tengri-ism; and their language that of the Gök-türks: Kipchak (later "Chagatai", after merging with Mongolic and other Altaic peoples). It was c. 650 that a figure named "Irbis" established a distinct [k]Hazarian identity. He would be followed by Bazir (alt. "Busir"), who's daughter, Theodora, married the Byzantine Emperor Justinian II. Bazir would be followed by Bihar (alt. "Viharos"), who's daughter, Tzitzak [Turkic for "Flower"; a.k.a. "Irene of Khazaria"] married Byzantine Emperor Constantine V…who's son would become Emperor Leo IV "the Khazar". Such betrothals indicate that there were likely amicable relations between the Byzantines and [k]Hazars during this period. Bihar was khagan during the 730's; so it is likely that he was the grandfather of Bulan…who was, in turn, a close ancestor of Obadiah. For more on this, see Endnote 10 below.}

{10 Obed-i-Yah (that is: "Obadiah") was a close descendent of the patriarch of the [k]Hazars, Bulan (who was himself the grandson of Bihar). Bihar was the son of Bazir, who was the son of Irbis (see Endnote 9 above). Bihar's consort was the

fabled “P-R-S-B-T”, known as Mother of the Khaganate. (It was either Bulan or Obediah who was referred to as “Sabr-i-El” in the Schechter letter.) Here, we’re concerned with the [k]Hazar kagan, Joseph (see Endnote 39 below). The patri-lineage of Joseph going back to Obadiah seems to have been as follows: Obed-i-Yah sired Hezek-i-Yah; then to Manasseh to (c)Hanukkah to Isaac to Zebulun to Moses to Manasseh II to Nisi to Aaron to Mena[c]hem to Benjamin to Aaron II, who sired Joseph. Note that a “Zachariah” seems to have been khagan c. 861 (around the time of Zebulun), so he may have also been involved in this lineage. (Note that most of these names were designated post hoc—retroactively rendered in Hebrew. In reality, they would have all been a Turkic or Sogdian onomastic rather than in the more familiar Hebraic version.) During the late 10th century, Joseph’s son, David would rule a vassal-State to Kievan Rus, which was located on the Taman peninsula. It seems a region of [k]Hazarian sovereignty persisted in the northern Caucuses (possibly along the western bank of the Caspian Sea) into the early 11th century. An abiding [k]Hazar presence is attested by records of a khagan named Georgios of the Tzul, who ended up battling the Byzantines in the Crimea.}

{11 “Crimea” derives from the Mongols’ moniker for the area: “Kyrym”. Before the arrival of the [k]Hazars, the region was referred to as “Taurika” by the Sarmatians–a moniker then used by the Avars and Pechenegs.}

{12 “Huns” just means “people” in Old Turkic. Christian Druthmar of Stavelot-Malmedy [Liège] (rendered “Christian von Stablo” in German) was a philologist from Aquitaine who joined the Benedictine Order. He was most known for his “Expositio in Matthaeum Evangelistam” c. 864. The relevant statement was: “[Those living] in the Land of Gog and Magog [the Eurasian Steppes] are a Hunnic race and are called ‘Kazari’. They are circumcised and observe all the laws of Judaism.” He would have had no incentive to be disingenuous about this fact.}

{13 There is an apocryphal tale of Bulan having convened a debate between representatives of both (Byzantine) Christianity and (Abbasid) Islam so that he could ascertain which of the three major Abrahamic Faiths was most credible. When the debate concluded in a stalemate, he asked each man which of the OTHER (two) Abrahamic Faiths was preferable. Both answered Judaism (by default), thereby persuading Bulan that Judaism probably had the most credence of the three. In terms of geo-political strategy, it was also the most diplomatic option; as it would have incensed the Christians and Muslims the least. Accounts of the conversion of [k]Hazar leadership involve a Karaite rabbi named Isaac “ha-Sengari”. Those

accounts were attested by the 13th-century Andalusian rabbi, Moses ben Na[c]hman of Girona (a.k.a. “Nachmanides”)…and later by the 15th-century Kabbalist, Shem Tov ben Shem Tov.}

{14 It is worth noting that the [k]Hazars had the distinction of being the only empire to arrest the rapacious Seljuk hegemony during the latter’s most explosive epoch of expansion. They managed to do this when even the mighty Byzantine and Persian Empires had failed. (This achievement was not only attributable to their military prowess. Geography also provided a bulwark against incursions–primarily in the form of the Caucuses Mountains between the Black and Caspian Seas.) One would think this to be a point of pride amongst Beth Israel. Indeed, this would be a feat to celebrate…but for the fixation on chimerical bloodlines (and the consequent erasure of the [k]Hazars from standard Judaic historiography). Collective memory is typically ENGINEERED memory…which is as much about invention (remembering what is farcical) as it is about deletion (forgetting anything that doesn’t serve the narrative). Fabrication and obfuscation are two sides of the same coin. Delusive thinking goes hand-in-hand with blind spots.}

{15 An objection commonly leveled by those who reject the [k]Hazarian ancestry of the Ashkenazim is that the [k]Hazars did not convert to Judaism en masse; that it was only the ruling elite who became Jewish. This is based on no evidence whatsoever. Moreover, it defies common sense–as anyone knows who understands how rulers and religions (vis a vis their subjects) have tended to work throughout history. We need only note documentation from the time–especially the sources enumerated here–including Benedictine monk, Christian Druthmar; as well as Ahmad ibn Fadlan and Ibn al-Faqih.}

{16 The timing of prominent Jewish figures in the region is very telling—as with Halakhists / Tosafists like Eliezer ben Nathan of Mainz (a.k.a. “Ra’aven”) and his grandson, Eliezer ben Joel “ha-Levi” of Bonn (both from the 12th century). The point cannot be emphasized enough: Few prominent Judaic figures hailed from the Rhineland prior to the 12th century; and then, all of the sudden, there was a PLETHORA. What could possibly have happened at that point in history to explain such a sudden influx?}

{17 An oft-touted explanation for the (alleged) disappearance of the [k]Hazarian Jews is the invasion of the Mongols. In other words: They vanished because they were wiped out. To take this explanation seriously for more than just a moment betrays an egregious ignorance of history. Let’s mention the two most obvious

reasons. First: The Mongol conquests occurred in the 13th century–long after the period in question. Second: Mongolian law was extremely tolerant of other Faiths (that is: of any Faith other than their own: Tengri-ism). The pre-Islamic Mongols NEVER persecuted anyone due to religious or ethnic affiliation. They only slaughtered those who resisted them, on a city-by-city basis; and only after due warning. Wiping out an entire people would have made no strategic sense; and the Mongols ONLY razed cities as a military strategy (to make a statement; set an example) or as reprisal for being crossed (retribution for some sort of betrayal).}

{18 We might also note the Jewish exiles that hailed from England. The first Jewish communities had come to the British Isles along with the Norman incursion c. 1066, during the reign of William the Conquerer. There would eventually be an emigration of Jews FROM England (probably of less than two thousand); but not until over two centuries later. There was the massacre of 150 Jews at York in March of 1190. But it was not until a century later (July of 1290) that King Edward expelled virtually all Jews from the country. It is difficult to say exactly to where those leaving England–at that particular point in history–ended up dispersing. Some of them likely ended up in northern Europe: Alsace-Lorraine, Greater Frisia (spec. Gelderland), Hainaut, and–yes–even the Rhineland. Many Jews were expelled from France in the 1320's, SOME of whom might have been displaced northeastward. Then, in the late 1340's, as a result of the hysteria resulting from the Black Death (and a need to scapegoat someone for the affliction), Jews were banished from various places across Europe. As it happened, in 1349, the Duke of Guelders (Gelderland) was authorized–by Holy Roman Emperor Louis IV–to allow displaced Jews into his realm. All this was, of course, long after the relevant period. By the 14th century, the [k]Hazarian Jews had already been in Eastern Europe for three centuries.}

{19 This is even more telling when we take into account the existence of the "Amber Road" that was used by a few bold merchants to travel between the northern Balkans and the Baltic region. If the Jewish people of the eastern Mediterranean basin had been inclined to migrate northward to the Rhineland during the time in question, they theoretically COULD have done so…at least to the extent that they made it over the Balkan (Sharr / Pindus / Pirin / Rila) and lower Carpathian mountains. But there is no evidence that this occurred. Who MIGHT have used this route? Radhanites.}

{20 Regarding the late dating of Romanian sites: The Jewish community at Iasi in Moldavia dates to the 17th century (the first synagogue was built in 1671 in the Jewish quarter known by the Turkic moniker, "Târgu Cucului"). Regarding the late

dating of Bulgarian sites: The ruins of a small synagogue at Philippopolis (the location of present-day Plovdiv) dating from the 3rd century is irrelevant to the salient timeline; as it merely indicates that a small Jewish community briefly existed in Thrace during the Roman Empire. Some Jews who emigrated from Spain in 1492 (pursuant to the expulsion) ended up settling in Plovdiv, establishing a Jewish quarter that came to be known as “Orta Mezar”. Others may have settled in Pazardzhik. The exiled Sephardim may have erected a small synagogue or yeshiva at those sites; but this tells us nothing about Ashkenazi migration patterns. There may have been small ASHKENAZI communities at Burgas and Karnobat since the beginning of the 17th century; but the first major synagogues in Bulgaria were built at Vidin, Samokov, and Varna in the late 19th century. The synagogue at Sofia was not built until the beginning of the 20th century. Also of note: In 1217, pursuant to a charter issued by Magyar (Hungarian) Prince Andras II (of Halych), a contingent of Ashkenazim from Germany settled at Hegyes-halom (“hegyes” is Magyar for “mountainous”; “halom” is Magyar for “hill”). This invitation was notable because, prior to that, there had never been a Jewish presence there. Given such dating, it is pure fancy to suppose that a significant number of Jews migrated FROM this region (southeastern Europe) TO northeastern Europe in the 11th and/or 12th century… thereby accounting for the emergence of the Ashkenazim in Lotharingia at that time. Bear in mind that the oldest synagogues in the world exist at the eastern end of the Mediterranean basin; which means that there were Jews in the area at the time who hypothetically COULD HAVE migrated north. Yet there was no movement in the direction of the Rhineland…that is: not until AFTER Askhenazim had already become prominent (see Endnote 19 above). It is clear that between Late Antiquity and the sudden appearance of Jews in Lotharingia, Jews from the eastern end of the Mediterranean basin did not settle anywhere north of Macedonia (that is: nowhere above the Balkan mountains). Hence those who first appeared in Ashkenaz must have come from either western Europe and/or from the east. As we have seen, the latter is the most likely explanation for the significant Jewish population-surge that occurred in the vicinity of the Rhineland beginning in the 11th century.}

{21 For much of the Middle Ages, the region encompassing northeastern Gallia and southwestern Germania–referred to as “Austrasia” in Late Antiquity–was generally known as “Lotharingia”. However, pursuant to the Treaty of Verdun in 843, that realm (at the time, a Carolingian dominion) was divided. The land west of the River Rhine was thereafter considered part of “Frankish Lorraine”; the land east of the river was dubbed “East Frankia” (which encompassed Saxony, Frankonia, Thuringia, and Bavaria; stretching east to the Elbe river basin). The former area included what

came to be dubbed the “Rheinpfalz” (that is: the “Rhenish Palatinate”) and Alsace-Lorraine. The latter area corresponded with what had been dubbed “Marca Geronis” [Saxon Eastern March] during the Dark Ages (which included the Margraviates of the Nordgau, Nordmark, Lusatia, and Moravia). When I refer to the Rhineland (land around the River Rhine), I am using it in the broadest (medieval) sense; and so am referring to this ENTIRE region. All of THAT constituted only the western end of what later came to be called “Ashkenaz”…which eventually stretched across Prussia into Greater Lithuania…and down to Ruthenia. As mentioned, Jews as far north as the Baltics and as far south as the Balkans have considered themselves Ashkenazim. This is attributable, in part, to the immensity of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. And due to the vast expanse of Tsarist Russia, the “Pale of Settlement” stretched from the Baltic Sea down to the Black Sea—accounting for Jewish communities from Latvia in the north to Volhynia in the south.}

{22 Note that there exists an (uncorroborated) account of a small Jewish community that settled in Bohemia (at Josefov in Prague) as early as the 11th century. However, a synagogue would not be erected there until the late 13th century–dubbed the “Alt-S[c]hul” [Old School]. This makes sense if the FIRST Jews who came to the area did not end up remaining for long (as they were transient); and only later returned (back eastward, through Bohemia / Moravia, toward Silesia); at which point they settled for the long term. The first figure of renown in the city was Isaac ben Jacob “ha-Lavan” (late 12th century). Baruch ben Isaac of Worms was an interesting case, as he was SEPHARDIC. A student of Isaac ben Samuel of Danpierre, he hailed from either Worms or somewhere in France; yet apparently spent some time in Regensburg. This shows that, in the late 12th century, some Tosafists did venture into Bavaria. He did not remain there, however; as he spent the end of his life in Palestine. There was already an Ashkenazi community in Regensburg by then, as we know from the Rhineland massacres in 1096 (see Endnote 26 below). The earliest account of the region by Jewish authors are the travelogues of Peta[c]h-i-yah ben Jacob and Judah ben Samuel “ha-(c)Hasid” (each written in the early 13th century, while they were in Regensberg). The former traveled through (the old) [k]Hazaria, then–via Armenia and Kurdistan–to the Middle East. What might have compelled him to travel to Palestine via such a circuitous route? It seems he was interested in seeing the homeland of his ancestors…before ending up in the Holy Land.}

{23 It was around this time (between 985 and 988) that leaders of Kieven Rus (on behalf of Vladimir the Great) composed the “Mandgelis Letter”, in which they refer to “our lord David, the Khazar prince”, who–by that time–had settled on the Taman peninsula (see Endnote 10 above). Assuming this document is authentic (it was discovered by a Karaite archeologist in the 19th century), it would be very telling.

We must be cautious in arriving at conclusions, however; especially after the 19th-century Karaite apologist, Abraham Firkovich was accused of citing inauthentic documents. In any case, it is clear that those in the land north of the Black Sea (known as “Ruthenia” in the Middle Ages) was populated by Slavic peoples who were vassals to the [k]Hazars: the Radmichi and Kryvichi). This persisted until Prince Oleg of Novgorod conquered the land c. 885, at which point they became vassals of the (Varangian) “Rus”.}

{24 An interesting side-note: The Seljuk Turks were founded by an ex-[k]Hazarian military leader named “Seljuk”. It’s worth considering the geo-political exigencies at the time. Even the Byzantine Emperor, Basil II “the Bulgar Slayer” could not stave off the Seljuk incursion. The small kingdom of Vaspura-khan (on the Armenian plateau) would fall c. 1021. During the emigration from their homeland, had the [k]Hazarian Jews ventured into this era, they would have been annihilated. (The Armenian historian, Matthew of Edessa, provides a detailed account of this epoch.) Note, though, that by the time the Jewish traveler, Benjamin of Tudela traveled to the Levant / Mesopotamia over a century later, Seljuk aggression had become appreciably tempered. As it turned out, all those whom Benjamin encountered (i.e. Seljuks and their subjects) did not exhibit any notable anti-Semitism. For, by that time, Muslims’ main antagonists were the Christian Crusaders. (It was the Christian Crusaders who engaged in the majority of pogroms against the Jews in the Levant.) As Benjamin’s travelogues show, Muslims in that region were quite hospitable to Jews during this period. Be that as it may, there was still the sporadic menace of Christian Crusaders—making incursions into the region—with whom Jews in the region needed to contend. Admittedly, first-hand testimonials are sparse when it comes to the treatment of Jewish people in the Levant at the time; as the majority of material is provided by the two primary disputants: Christian Crusaders and Seljuk Muslims. We DO know that Palestinian Jews fought alongside the Muslims (Seljuks) agains the Christian Crusaders (Franks). The Seljuks were eventually displaced in the Levant by the (partially Kurdish) Ayyubids, then the (predominantly Turkic) Mamluks—both of whom ruled out of Egypt. There was even an Armenian kingdom in Cilicia. For the present purposes, the most important perspective is that OF

JEWISH PEOPLE (those who were personally there)–as with “Gaon” A[c]hai of Shabha (8th century), “Gaon” Aaron ben Meir of Palestine (10th century), and the aforesaid traveler, Benjamin of Tudela (12th century). The timing of other relevant events is helpful to note. In England, the infamous Edict of Expulsion was issued in 1290–long after the pivotal period with which we are presently concerned. The Mamluk Sultan, Al-Ashraf Khalil ended the (overtly anti-Semitic) Roman Catholic “Kingdom of Jerusalem” once and for all the very next year (1291), thereby rendering the Levant a safer place for Jews.}

{25 What scholars now refer to as “Samaritan Hebrew” was a variation on the Samaritan script, which was itself a variation of Old Aramaic. Samaritan–along with the Babylonian Aramaic used by the Exilic scribes–was the precursor to Classical (Biblical) Hebrew. Hence the Torah was originally composed in Babylonian Aramaic; which was followed by Mishnaic Hebrew, then Masoretic Hebrew. The “block” script with which we are now familiar did not arise until the 1st century A.D. (See Endnote 46 below.)

The Samaritan script–intermixed with Old Turkic–has been discovered in the [k]Hazarian ruins of Crimea, at “Kaffa” (the current “Phiodosia”, an onomastic variant on the original Greek “Theodosia”), dating from the 9th century. Clearly, Judaism permeated the entirety of the [k]Hazar Empire.}

{26 Tragically, persecution did end up occurring–starting with the Rhineland massacres of 1096. (The best sources for this are the chronicles by Solomon ben Samson and Eliezar ben Nathan, both of Mainz, from the 12th century.) The first we hear of Jews in Regensburg is from accounts of the slaughter of Jews by Roman Catholic zealot, Peter L’Hermite of Amiens, who led a mob against the Jews in the city before embarking on the Crusades himself. Later, there would be the massacre at Deggendorf (Bavaria) in 1338, a pogrom in Alsace, Toulon, and Strasbourg in the late 1330’s; and then massacres at Basel (January), Strasbourg (February), Erfurt (March), and Mainz (August) in 1349. Later still, there would be persecution in the northern Caucuses and eastern Ukraine (i.e. what had been the epicenter of [k]Hazaria; known as “Kumania” at the time) by the (Christian) Hetman Cossacks in the 1650’s, pursuant to the Khmelnytsky uprising. Ironically, it was in the Ottoman Empire–including Palestine–that Jews ended up being the SAFEST (i.e. least persecuted) during this period (starting about 1300, after the Crusades started to abate). By 1492, when Jews were expelled from Iberia by the Inquisition, sultan Bayazid II offered sanctuary in his domain. If we are to believe that the Levant was

considered the “homeland” of Beth Israel, this migration FARTHER AWAY from it–into an area of increased peril (the oft-anti-Semitic Holy Roman Empire)–would have been quite strange. For more on this, see Endnote 40 below.}

{27 Regarding “Ai-gül” for “moon-flower”: The use of the Turkic “Ai” for “moon” is telling here considering there was a Hebraic alternative for naming females after the moon: “Yarea[c]h”. To reiterate: opting for Turkic terms when there were Hebraic—often Biblical—terms readily available would have been rather odd; that is, if not for the present thesis. (See also Endnote 50 below.) Another interesting case is the Ashkenazi legend of “dybbük” [demons]. Some contend that the term stems from the Hebrew verb “D-B-K”, meaning “to cling” (because demons “cling” to the people they possess). This is—to put it mildly—a stretch. Riffing off of such a lexeme doesn’t make sense anyway, as there was already a Hebrew word for demon: “shed”. In Turkic folklore, a popular demon was named “Al Ana” [evil mother]. (Nefarious spirits were often characterized as female—as with, say, “Shahmara[n]” in Tatar / Sogdian lore.) Along the Silk Road, a common term for “demon” was “dev”; while “büke” was an alternate Turkic term for “woman”. This offers a much more plausible etymology for “dyb-bük[e]”, requiring only an adjustment of the “v” to a “b”. Lo and behold, another common Turkic female name is “Ai-büke” [moon-woman].}

{28 Reference the research of Israeli geneticist, Eran El-Haik–specifically his work published in the Journal “Frontiers In Genetics” in 2017. Also note his earlier work published in “Genome Biology and Evolution”. Modern genetic testing has proven things that some would much rather prefer remain obfuscated. Upon the analysis of haplo-groups, those who are (predominantly) genetically Ashkenazi discover that they carry a gene-line that traces back to the area around the CASPIAN SEA (i.e. the Pontic Steppes). (See Endnote 29 below.) Recall that the medieval name for this body of water was the [k]Hazar Sea. In other words, the present thesis is born out by genetic testing; making it close to incontrovertible. But no matter. Such genetic evidence is actively suppressed by Revisionist Zionists (see Endnote 30 below). Not all El-Haik’s conclusions are sound, though; as I address in Endnote 71 below.}

{29 Going back even further in time (to the Bronze Age and earlier), we find this genetic lineage following a migration path indicative of ALL (non-African) homo sapiens: from northeast Africa, through the Levant and Mesopotamia, then Persia (spec. Daylam / Hyrkania, on the southern coast of the Caspian Sea). Over this vast timeframe, we are not tracing a distinct haplo-group (let alone a tribe that could be discretely identified as proto-Hebrew). Rather, we are tracing gene-lines (primarily

via the Y-chromosome) amidst a myriad of interacting populations over vast epochs. The timeframe involved in this lineage is far beyond the relevant period for the present inquiry. Bottom line: Genetic studies that purport to refute the [k]Hazarian ancestry of the Ashkenazim actually do no such thing. For instance, some tests on mitochondrial DNA have shown that Ashkenazim can be traced back to FOUR WOMEN from about two millennia ago. Where did they live? Somewhere in the "Near East"…which encompasses Persia, the Caucasus, and–yes–the Pontic Steppes. (See Endnote 30 below.) This genetic bottleneck, occurring c. 1000, would not exist had Ashkenazim come from Sephardim. (!) Of course, one can EVENTUALLY trace the Y-chromosome of Ashkenazim to somewhere in the "Middle East" (the Levant and Mesopotamia); but that is the case with virtually ANYONE'S genome outside of (non-Arab) Africans (see Endnote 57 below). In any case, if we go back far enough, we are all from Africa; a fact that tells us almost nothing about what happened since the Stone Age.}

{30 We might bear in mind that there are no OTHER direct descendants of the [k]Hazars alive today to which we can compare Ashkenazi DNA. Nobody identifying as such has existed for almost a thousand years. So it is neither easy to refute or confirm a genetic lineage going back to a medieval Steppe people. (In the intervening millennium, so much miscegenation—and thus genetic drift—would have occurred that a distinctly [k]Hazarian genome would now be very difficult to identify.) Another tell-tale sign of Ashkenazi Jews' NON-European provenance: Their genome exhibits very little Neanderthal DNA. Here's the thing: All people who hail from Europe (Celts, Franks, Italic peoples, Germanic peoples, Nordic peoples, Slaves, etc.) have palpable vestiges of the Neanderthal genome. (Anglo-Saxons probably have more Neanderthal DNA than anyone else.) This includes Jewish people who come from genetic lines that were in Andalusia, in Occitania, on the Italic Peninsula, and/or on the Baltic Peninsula for over a thousand years (i.e. Sephardim), as they mixed with Europeans. Haplo-groups that never went through Europe, though, did not (directly) intermix with Neanderthal gene lines; until, that is, the Middle Ages. Hence the dearth of Neanderthal DNA in the genetic profile of virtually all sub-Saharan Africans, many east Asians, and—yes—most Ashkenazim. Eran El-Haik of Johns Hopkins University has concluded from an analysis of autosomal DNA that Eastern European Jews did, in fact, have a [k]Hazarian background. (Also see Endnote 57 below.) Other studies have shown that a not insignificant portion of mitochondrial DNA amongst a sample-set of Ashkenazim (which is not necessarily representative of ALL Ashkenazim) exhibited some European origins; which means that–unsurprisingly–there occurred sporadic miscegenation between [k]Hazars and

some Europeans (Gentile and Sephardic) over the course of the last millennium. (A lot can happen with a gene pool in a thousand years.) In 2017, when a popular genome website started notifying Ashkenazim that their ancestors came from the region near the Caspian Sea (based on genetic tests demarcating the genealogy of their haplo-group), there was an outcry of indignation from Judeo- Supremacists. The company was promptly coerced into withholding any further disclosures regarding the [k]Hazarian ancestry of Ashkenazi clients. (It capitulated under intense pressure from vexed Revisionist Zionists.) Such duplicity should sound disturbingly familiar: "Your science corroborates a theory that we are hell-bent on repudiating. So bury it!" Of course, in reality, the "ancestry" company was not concerned with either supporting or refuting any particular historical theory; it was merely announcing the results of the tests it had been hired to conduct. Alas, it has become pro-forma in polite circles to repeat the falsehood that genetic tests have DIS-proven the oft-derided "Khazar theory". Simply asserting this falsehood with sufficient ardor suffices to curtail all further discussion. How dare anyone insinuate that any segment of Beth Israel did not originate in "Eretz Israel" (Palestine)?! The message is clear: "Nothing to see here; so please move on." This is a case-study in systematic obfuscation. As is usually the case, those looking to (aggressively) suppress information–due to ideological commitments–are contemptuous of Truth whenever it ends up being inconvenient. The concern for abetting an ideological agenda trumps intellectual integrity. Virtually ALL Ashkenazim who trace their genome back over a millennium will find that their haplo-group primarily originated in the vicinity of the Caspian sea. Going back MANY millennia (i.e. long before "Hebrews" were an identifiable ethnic group), this will be show to have been via Mesopotamia and Persia (during the Bronze Age). Going back to the Stone Age, they—like all other homo-sapiens—would find the origins to be in East Africa. But never mind any of that. The demand by religious fundamentalists for scientists to "renounce your findings!" has a long history–especially when it undermines key theological dogmas (ref. the Vatican's treatment of Galileo) or strident claims of ethnic purity (as with, say, delusive proponents of "Nordicism"). This is just another instance of the same odious thinking.}

{31 Going back further into history, the land that eventually became [k]Hazaria was originally occupied by the Sarmatians and Scythians. The Krymchaks (i.e. the Jews of Crimea) referred to themselves as "Sral Ballary" (Turkic for "Sons of Israel", a moniker that was based on a rendering that would have been used by all Tatars). We know that the Turkic Jewish presence there dates back to the [k]Hazar Empire

because there was a synagogue erected at Kaffa (formerly, the Greek “Theodosia”) c. 909. There are records of a [k]Hazarian presence at the location going back to the 9th century.}

{32 The apocryphal Kalonymos ben Isaac “the Elder” of Speyer is worth mentioning. He was purportedly the father of the aforesaid Samuel “ha-[c]Hasid” of Speyer…who was himself purportedly the father of the founder of [c]Hassidic Judaism: Judah ben Samuel “ha-[c]Hasid” of Speyer, who is actually more associated with his tenure in Regensburg, Bavaria. The 13th-century Kabbalist, Eleazar ben Judah of Mainz / Worms (a.k.a. “Ro-Kea[c]h”) was a disciple of Judah Ha-[c]Hasid. “[c]Hasidei Ashkenaz” (a newfangled version of Jewish mysticism) suddenly emerged in the Rhineland c. 1200–an eventuality that was attested in the works of both Judah ben Samuel “ha-[c]Hasid” and Eleazar “Rokea[c]h”. Were these men related to the Kalonymos family? Probably not. Is it feasible that descendants of the Kalonymos family had moved to the region by the 13th century? Perhaps. Are they responsible for “[c]Hasidei Ashkenaz”? This requires us to suppose that Samuel Ha-[c]Hasid–about whom there is sparse documentation–was really from an Italic background. This is far fetched; as I show in the Appendix.}

{33 This etymology offers yet another instance of evasion. Revisionist Zionist apologists insist–against all common sense–that this surname is a variation on the Classical Hebrew term for priest, “kohen”; which was itself based on the Babylonian Aramaic “kah[e]na” (alternately rendered “kumra”). It should be obvious that this has nothing to do with the onomastics of “Kagan”. As is commonly known, the surname meaning “priest” was rendered “Coh[e]n”–a surname that was almost exclusively used by Sephardim (not Ashkenazim) until the modern age. Meanwhile, the origins of “Kahn” are difficult to ascertain–as it could either be a variation on the Hebraic “Kohen” or the Turko-Mongolic “Khan”. Morphologically, the latter is more likely.}

{34 Note that these Turkic names CANNOT be attributed to the presence of the Altan Ordu [alt. “Saru Ordu”; a.k.a. the “Golden Horde”], which was established by Batu Khan of Sarai in the 13th century; as they did not first appear in the region until the 14th century. The Golden Horde was Kipchak (i.e. Turkic-Mongol; a.k.a. Tatar). There are four reasons that we can be confident of this non-attributable-ness. **First:** Starting with Batu Khan, the regime’s leaders were referred to as “khan”, a Mongolic honorific rather than as the Turkic “Kagan”. (They were alternately referred to as the Slavic “Tsar” or Persian “Shah”.) **Second:** Operating out of the capital city of “Sarai” (near the former [k]Hazarian capital, Atil), their

domain only stretched as far west as the Danube; so would not have influenced the Ashkenazim until at least the 14th century. **Third:** The Khanate was ISLAMIC. Any Jews still within their domain would not have been inclined to adopt the nomenclature of their Muslim overlords. **Fourth:** The onomastics here predate the Golden Horde by several centuries. There are other Ashkenazi surnames that have hazy etymologies. Take, for instance, “Balik” / “Bilak”–a Slavic name meaning “pale”, which may have Magyar (that is: Turkic) origins. For more on this, see Endnote 45 below.}

{35 The edicts issued during the Synod at Troyes in 1078 are now associated with the acronym, “Sh-V-M”, based on the Hebraic monikers for the three predominant Jewish cities in the Rhineland: Shpira, Vrm’sha, and Magentza (Speyer, Worms, and Mainz). The term is typically Anglicized to “ShUM”. Note that this mustn’t be confused with the Synod at Troyes convened in 1160 by the Tosafists, Jacob ben Meir of Ramerupt (a.k.a. “Rabbeinu Tam”) and Joseph ben Meir ben Samuel of Troyes (a.k.a. “Rashbam”), grandsons of Rashi, which led to the issuing of the “Takkanot ShUM”: an attempt to resolve the on-going disagreements in the region between the Sephardim and Ashkenazim. Other attendees of this later Synod included notable figures like Simha of Speyer, Jacob ben Asher of Speyer, Eliezar ben Joel “ha-Levi” of Bonn, and Eleazar “Rokea[c]h” of Regensburg.}

{36 It is ironic that the Jewish people who are most authentically Semitic are the Mizra[c]him, who are Arab…and currently enjoy the LEAST social status in Beth Israel (as well as in the nation-State of “Israel”). As if to compound the irony, it is for their Arab-ness that they are considered subalterns by many present-day Ashkenazim–who’s origins are primarily NON-Semitic. (Who, then, are the real anti-Semites?!) The only other quasi-Judaic populations that are genuinely Semitic are the Samaritans (as they are the only Abrahamic community to have remained in the Levant since Classical Antiquity). After the Mizra[c]him (Arab Jews) and Samaritans, it is likely that most Sephardim have a Semitic background. But then again, NONE of this matters when it comes to Jewish-ness qua religious affiliation, as belief the Abrahamic deity (and–more specifically–a fealty to the Mosaic creed) has nothing to do with bloodlines. To suppose otherwise is to insinuate that Judaism is inherently ethnocentric–nay, racist (see Endnote 5 above). The present thesis does not entail that Ashkenazim are somehow less Jewish (in the religious sense); it simply points out that their ancestry isn’t Semitic. Only racists fixate on racial categories. In any case, the purity of bloodlines is an invidious myth.}

{37 This was parlayed into the works of Oswald Spengler…which paved the way for the execrable material of Hans Friedrich Karl Günther, Adolf Josef Lanz von Liebenfels, and Guido von List…which, in turn, inspired Hitler's "My Jihad" and–soon thereafter–Carl Schmitt's Manichean diatribe: "The Concept of the Political". For more on this topic, see my essay on "The Many Faces Of Fascism".}

{38 It is notable that the "Arrow Cross Party" of Hungary made use of the farcical (Magyar) national origin myth in the same way that Revisionist Zionists make use of the national origin myth of "Eretz Israel" (see my essay: "The Land Of Purple"). As it turns out, ANY ethno-centricity tends to appeal to a farcical ethno-genesis. Such self-serving farce is an attempt to legitimate claims of "lebensraum" for the anointed tribe.}

{39 Per Joseph's correspondence with the caliph of Cordoba, the [k]Hazar Empire worked diligently to attach itself to the legacy of Jewish prophets–doing so by concocting a chimerical genealogy. In his letter, Joseph pin-pointed Noah's son, Japeth, as the pivotal patriarch. In keeping with the (Judaic) genealogical myth, Joseph designated Japeth's son, Togarmah as the progenitor of all Turkic peoples. (Meanwhile, his son, Gomer was associated with the Scythians. See Endnote 42.) He then posited ten sons of Togarmah to account for the major Turkic tribes (as he saw it) at the time: Ujur [Old Uyghur], Tauri [Tirosz], Avar, Uauz [Oghuz], Bizel [Pecheneg], Tarna [possibly the Gök-türks], [k]Hazar, Janur [Zagur], Bulgar, and Sabir. Note that the Old Uyghurs were a (Tocharian) Orkhon Turkic peoples from Idikut (i.e. Kara-Khoja and Turpan). They were Manichaean and Buddhist. They are not to be confused with the modern Uyghurs of Xin-Jiang, who are descendants of the (Karluk) Kara-Khanids; and are Muslim.}

{40 Make no mistake, things were not always hunky-dory for the Jews of France during the 11th century. King Robert II "the Pious" was notoriously anti-Semitic. So was the Norman potentate, Richard II (who operated out of Rouen). (Recall that it was in the 11th century that the hegemonic Normans overtook England.) There is also record of persecution in Limoges (central France). But here's the thing: Any Jews who were displaced–or who opted to relocate–at this time did NOT move to the northeast. Records are clear that the Jews of France were in constant contact with their brethren along the Mediterranean basin. Indeed, they had regular mercantile dealings with Palestinian and Maghrebi traders (esp. the Radhanite Jews). Moreover, there were safe havens in the south of France–most notably at Narbonne in Occitania. Hence the community known as "Hachmei Provence". At the time, eastern Occitania was located within the Burgundian Kingdom of Arles. It is in THAT

direction that the vast majority of European Jews seeking more hospitable environs would have gone. During this era, some Jews from as far north as Cologne even opted to go SOUTHWARD seeking sanctuary–notably: Asher ben Je[c]hiel in the late 13th century. (See Endnote 18 above.) Bear in mind: When massacres began in 1096 (pursuant to the launching of the Crusades), they occurred in Germany as much as anywhere else; so "Ashkenaz" at that point would not have been seen as a safe haven. In fact, the first we hear of Jews in Regensburg is from accounts of the infamous Peter L'Hermite of Amiens leading a mob to convert or kill all the Jews in the city c. 1096. For more on the Rhineland massacres, see Endnote 26 above.}

{41 Hence he was subsequently known as Adalbert of Magdeburg. Funny enough, Adalbert undertook this career path at the behest of Queen Olga of Kiev…who, soon thereafter, was overthrown by the same Slavic conquerer who overthrew the [k]Hazar Empire: Svyatoslav. A primary source for the Ottonian period in Germany is Thietmar's Chronicle c. 1018.}

{42 The BIBLICAL moniker "Ashkenaz" was based on the Assyrian term; not vice versa. The Biblical figure was purportedly the son of Gomer (thus the grandson of Japheth, who was–in turn–the son of Noah). The progeny of Ashkenaz were associated with the Scythians (who were seen as descendants of the kingdoms of the Urartians and Mannaeans). In the Torah, this apocryphal character is mentioned once–in passing–in Genesis (10:3). His name then appears in First Chronicles (1:6) and Jeremiah (51:27).
In medieval Jewish parlance, the term was typically synonymous with THE OTHER. Consequently, no SEMITE–Jewish or otherwise–would have ever been inclined, under any circumstances, to adopt the moniker for an (ethnic) endonym. That is: No Semitic Jew would have ever self-identified as "Ashkenaz". For more on this point, see Postscript 2.}

{43 There is an irony here. Up until the post-War era, the majority of those who ardently sought to DENY the [k]Hazar theory were the anti-Semites. For they did not want to admit that such a great Empire could have been Jewish. Even more unpalatable was the fact that–for several centuries–Slavic tribes paid tribute to the [k]Hazar imperium. For anti-Semitic Eastern Europeans, the notion that their (Slavic) forebears would have paid tribute to JEWISH rulers—and Turkic people, nevertheless—was unthinkable. Their bigotry only worked if the target of their contempt were actually Semitic. As it turns out, ethno-centricity in BOTH directions depends on the same farce. This is a reminder that rejection of the [k]Hazar theory is often based on racism.}

{44 We might also note that, in cases where Jewish Tatar ancestry is posited, it likely corresponds to [k]Hazar ancestry. In effect, “Tatar” Jewish is often a euphemism for “[k]Hazar” Jewish. This is the case with the Krymchaks and Karaites in the Crimea, the “Lipka Tatars” in the Baltic region, as well as the “Kazan” Jews who–to this day–live in central Eurasia. It is worth bearing in mind that there is plenty of racism WITHIN Beth Israel.}

{45 The suffix “-man[n]” was probably the most common for vocational surnames—as with, say, “Zimmerman[n]” for carpenters, “Tuchman[n]” for cloth merchants, or “Hoffman[n]” for property managers. There were also German vocations ending in “-er”. Twenty common examples: Buchalter, Schuster, Seiler, Sidler / Schittler, Schreiber, Schneider, Spitzer, Sandler, Kertzer, Kramer, Kessler, Kellner, Zeigler, Zinner, Metzger, Mahler, Nadler, Gerber, Gellner, and Fechter. Meanwhile, “[Geld]Wechsler” (alt. “Wexler”; “Veksler”) meant money-changer. These can be contrasted with distinctly Hebraic terms for vocations like Chait (tailor); or even for Coh[e]n (priest). It was inevitable that, along the way, some of the [k]Hazarian diaspora picked up Old Slavic versions of Hebrew names–as with Rivkin / Riv[k]a instead of the Hebraic “Rebekah” and Rashka instead of “Rachel (see Endnote 50 below). If a Jewish family with a SEMITIC background opted for the name of a Biblical figure, they would not have been inclined to adopt a version from a completely unrelated culture. (Some Sephardim adopted ethnic names from the Maghreb, Iberia, France, etc.; but none of those names were taken in lieu of the Hebraic version of a Biblical name.) Of course, a few Ashkenazim adopted surnames related to religious vocations–as with “Rabinowitz” (Germanic) / “Rabinovich” (Slavic) meaning “son of the rabbi”. But there was an obvious reason that this would have happened from time to time: they were religious Jews. Interestingly, in some instances, Jewish families eventually adopted GENERAL Germanic lexemes for their surnames–as with “Blitzer” (one who’s fast), “Jaffe” (beautiful), and “S[c]hul-man” (school man; i.e. teacher at a synagogue). There is also Roz-man / Ros-man [horseman], which would have been a peculiar choice for a family that used to be Sephardic. Note that not all Ashkenazi surnames ending in “man[n]” are vocational. Li[e]p-man, for example, means “beloved man”. And, of course, some Ashkenazim ended up adopting Old Slavic names along the way–as with Tkach (“weaver”), Spivak (“singer”), Slyusar (“locksmith”), Mytnik (“toll collector”), and Kravitz (“tailor”). The rather generic “Novak” was an Old Slavic term for “new”, and used across all ethnicities. Interestingly, “Balik” / “Bilak” means “pale”; and may have actually had Magyar origins (see Endnote 104 below). This is not to say that Ashkenazim didn’t sometimes opt for surnames with Semitic etymologies. But,

interestingly, when that was the case, it was often via SAMARITAN…which is to say that the etymology is traceable directly to Aramaic; meaning it wasn't distinctly Hebraic. See Endnote 25 above.}

{46 Masoretic Hebrew, which was used during the Dark Ages, retains vestiges of its Middle Aramaic roots. An illustrative case is that of the "K-Re" and "K-T-B" (typically rendered "Qere" and "Ket[h]iv"), meaning "that which is recited" and "that which is written" in Aramaic. (Notably: Ashkenazim use a decidedly different rendering: "K-ri Uchesiv".) Classical Arabic (which has many of the same roots, as it was derived primarily from Syriac) likewise used "i-K-Ra" for the verb "recite". After all, that's the basis for "Koran": "Recitation".}

{47 This isn't to say that Ashkenazi liturgy did not eventually adopt Sephardic material. Indeed, many Ashkenazim now make use of the "Nusakh Sephard". As might be expected, over the course of the last millennium, there has been extensive cross-pollination within Beth Israel (though there remain some hyper- insular communities–as with the Haredim / Hassidim.}

{48 In his "When Prophecy Fails", Leon Festinger wrote: "A man with a conviction is a hard man to change. Tell him you disagree and he turns away. Show him facts or figures and he questions your sources. Appeal to logic and he fails to see your point. We have all experienced the futility of trying to change a strong conviction, especially if the convinced person has some investment in his belief. We are familiar with the variety of ingenious defenses with which people protect their convictions, managing to keep them unscathed through the most devastating attacks. But man's resourcefulness goes beyond simply protecting a belief. Suppose an individual believes something with his whole heart. Suppose further that he has a commitment to this belief, that he has taken irrevocable actions because of it. Finally, suppose that he is presented with evidence, unequivocal and undeniable evidence, that his belief is wrong: What will happen? The individual will frequently emerge, not only unshaken, but even more convinced of the truth of his beliefs than ever before. Indeed, he may even show a new fervor about convincing and converting other people to his view."}

{49 An interesting case is the surname, "Kop[pe]l", which came to be associated with the Jewish scull-cap ("yarmulke" in Yiddish, which was based on Turkic). Why? In Silesian / Polabian, the term "köppel" meant "head". Opting for this term would not have made any sense for those who'd been using "Kippah" for centuries.}

{50 Yitzchok Ayzik is a peculiar way to saying Isaac Isaac. It has distinctly Turkic phonetics; which indicates a vestigial (exogenous) morphology. There were other instances of non-Semitic versions of Biblical names. Already mentioned is “A[r]slan” (alt. “Ruslan”), a Turkic term used by some Ashkenazim in lieu of the various Biblical terms for “lion”. Also note: “Zanvl” (instead of “Shema-El”) for Samuel, Mann[is] (instead of Immanuel”) for “god with us”, and “Zalman” (instead of “Shlomo”) for Solomon—all of which have Turkic features. “Gabor”, another popular Ashkenazic name, is the Turkic version of “Gabr-i-El”. Faivish / Fayvush [later rendered “Feivel”] was used instead of something based on the Semitic root “[n]Or” (meaning “bright” / “light” / “shining”). The Old Turkic term for “bright” is “ya-ruk”, for “light” is “ak”, for “shine” is “balk”, for “fire” is “ot”, and for “flame” is “jal-in”; so the etymology of this name remains somewhat of a mystery. “Yankl” (instead of “Yakub” / “Yakov” / “Akiva”) for Jacob and “Ziml” (instead of “Shim[e]on”) for Simon may have had more of a Germanic / Slavic phonetic influence. Meanwhile, the Slavic “Rivka” is used instead of “Rebekah” while “Rashka” is used instead of “Rachel”. This all seems to have occurred within a roiling linguistic nexus (see Endnote 45 above). Morphologically, none of these names exhibit Hebraic features.}

{51 Of course, it is understandable that some people might want to be associated with a dell of beautiful flowers. Is it not rather peculiar, though, that–of all valleys–a Jewish people with did not opt for monikers like “Sh[e]felah” or “Berakah” or “Elah” or “Kidron” or “Jezreel” or some other hallowed valley from Abrahamic lore (when seeking to name themselves after a “Ge[i]” / “Emek” / “Amuk”)? Regarding the lexeme for “valley”, the Germanic “thal” is not a big leap from the Old Turkic “kol”. For “rose”, the [k]Hazars may have used the Sogdian term, “ward”. So why not the Hebraic “vered” for rose? (Note: “Shosha[n]na” originally meant lily.) After all, the SEPHARDIM used Hebraic terms when speaking of roses / lilies and valleys; and would not have abandoned such terms for Germanic lexemes. Once we consider the NON-Semitic origin of Ashkenazim, this all makes sense.}

{52 When it comes to major Jewish figures in Andalusia NOT going to eastern Europe at this time, Moses ben Maimon ben Joseph of Cordoba (a.k.a. “Maimonides”) was only the tip of the iceberg. As we’ve seen, there were many others, all of whom indicated an overwhelming trend. Virtually any notable Sephardic figure living during the relevant period tended to venture elsewhere…if they ventured anywhere at all. The prevailing migration pattern was NOT from southern / western Europe to Lotharingia. Pursuant to the Roman Catholic Church’s pogroms (during the

Renaissance), the majority of Sephardic Jews fled from western Europe to…North Africa. Others opted for the eastern end of the Mediterranean basin—especially the Balkan Peninsula: Greece, Dalmatia (Serbia / Croatia / Bosnia), and Bulgaria. Meticulous records of pre-modern Jewish migration patterns in Europe are rather sparse, as—frankly—the (Christian) authorities didn't care enough to keep such ethnographic accounts. What little we know can be found in "The Cambridge History Of Judaism" (ed. William D. Davies and Louis Frankenstein; 1984) and Routledge's "Medieval Jewish Civilization: An Encyclopedia" (ed. Norman Roth; 2014). Also see Bernard Bachrach's "Early Medieval Jewish Policy In Western Europe" (1977) and Alexander Panayotou's "Jews And Jewish Communities In The Balkans And The Aegean Until The 12th Century" (in "The Jewish-Greek Tradition In Antiquity; And The Byzantine Empire"; 2014).}

{53 File this under "nobody else is doing it, so it may as well be me." That said, it can't be emphasized enough that I am not a professional philologist. NOR am I an expert in Yiddish, or in Old Turkic, or in the culture of medieval Steppe peoples. Yet… **Even I** noticed the plethora of (oft-elided) connections adumbrated in the present monograph. To be clear: I recognize the limits of my knowledge. My own shortcomings are precisely what makes the present disquisition so astonishing. If this can be gleaned EVEN BY ME, then lord knows what might be accomplished by someone with far more insight–and resources–than myself. That said, we must always be wary of charlatans: those who pretend to have more knowledge than they actually have; or who tout fraudulent expertise. We must also be wary of unscrupulous dilettantes: those who blithely hold forth on a subject to which they have not bothered devoting serious investigatory zeal. There is a difference between being audacious yet perspicacious and being provocative yet specious. I have made a concerted effort to emulate the former, and avoid the latter (see Author's Note). By writing this piece, I hope I have inspired more scholars to look into this fascinating topic.}

{54 The gender-neutral Yiddish title, "Tseno Ureno" was based on the (feminine) Hebraic "[t]Ze'ena[h] u-Re'ena[h]" [alt. "Tzena Urena"], which was originally rendered in the feminine as it was addressed to "Daughters Of Zion" (ref. chapter 3 of the Song of Solomon). Contrary to revisionist accounts, this tract was not initially written exclusively for women. The use of the feminine was due to the idiom being employed: "Bat Zion" (as in the opening chapter of the Book of Isaiah, verse 8; as well as in 62:11). There were, of course, masculine idioms as well—as with, say,

“Son[s] of Man” and “Sons of Jacob”. I discuss the idiomatic treatment of Beth Israel in my essay, “Genesis Of A People”; and the idiomatic treatment of Jerusalem in “City Of The Beloved”.}

{55 Semitic “piyyutim” date back to the apocryphal Palestinian writer, Eleazar ben Kalir of Debir from the 6th century. Meanwhile, the Semitic “zemirot” (a.k.a. “pesukei dezimra”) also played a significant role in Sephardic liturgy. All of it was was being written in either the Hebraic Andalusian language (Ladino and Mozarabic) or in medieval Judeo-Arabic…before being translated into Hebrew in the 12th century. This goes for the allegorical “Musar” literature of the Sephardim at the time. A prime example is Judah ben Saul ibn Tibbon of Lunel’s Hebrew translation of the “[Book Of Direction To] The Duties Of The Hearts”, originally composed in Judeo-Arabic by Bahya ben Joseph “ibn Pakuda” of Zaragoza. Meanwhile, Ashkenazim produced their own version, which was in a crude Aramaic. The question arises: Why would Sephardim, who already had a Hebraic rendering (the “Chovot ha-Levavot”) opt to revert back to a crude Aramaic version? It makes more sense that the Ashkenazi version was done by a people without a Hebraic background.}

{56 In 1084, Jews fleeing pogroms in Mainz and Worms took refuge in Speyer at the behest of bishop Rüdiger Hu[o]zmann. (Alas, only twelve years later, in the midst of Crusader hysteria, bishop Emicho of Leiningen led a pogrom against Speyer’s Jewish community.) The first prominent rabbi in the city was the Tosafist, Isaac ben Asher “ha-Levi” (a.k.a. “Riba”), a pupil of Rashi. It was not until c. 1100 that Jews built the “Judenhof” [Jewish courtyard] on the “Judengasse” [Jewish lane], which would serve as the agora for their small community. Speyer’s first synagogue was built c. 1104.}

{57 Note the genetic survey done in 2013 by Martin Richards, an archeo-geneticist from the University of Huddersfield, which corroborated these findings. The bottom line is this: Ashkenazim are more related to Middle-Eastern haplo-groups than to Europeans. (In other words: Ashkenazim did not come FROM Europe.) This is NOT the case with Sephardim, who had resided in southern Europe (the Iberian Peninsula, Occitania, as well as the Italic and Balkan Peninsulas) since Late Antiquity. Moreover, Ashkenazim have a significantly higher frequency of the R-M17 haplo-group than Sephardim. Couple this with the “founder effect” of the relevant haplo-group (which is dated to the 1st millennium A.D.) and everything starts to make sense. Another important point: There is almost NOBODY ELSE in the world today that exhibits [k]Hazarian ancestry. In other words: The [k]Hazars obviously had plenty of descendants; and there is no other group on the planet that accounts for that fact. In other words: There is no other viable alternative to the present thesis.}

{58 There is conjecture that a small (Sephardic) Jewish community had emerged in Cologne in the 4th century A.D.—at the time, a Roman town in Lower Germania known as “Colonia Claudia Ara Agrippinensium” (named after Emperor Claudius’ wife Agrippina). (The outpost was originally referred to as “Oppidum Ubiorum”, meaning “Settlement of the Ubii”.) During Late Antiquity, a Roman Praetorium (governor’s estate) was erected there. What is this conjecture based upon? In 321, Emperor Constantine sent a letter to Cologne’s governor in which he assented to Jews serving in the local “curia” (municipal Senate). This gesture doesn’t mean that there was a major Jewish presence in the Rhineland. The settlement was overtaken by the Ripuarian Franks in the 460’s; and was thereafter ruled by the Merovingian Franks (when it was part of Austrasia). In 953, Holy Roman Emperor Otto appointed Bruno of Saxony to be the city’s bishop (when it was part of Lotharingia); and that is when a significant Jewish community in the city was first established. A good resource for the relevant history of the area is Ruth Gay’s “The Jews Of Germany: A Historical Portrait” (1994).}

{59 The Sephardic writer, Judah “ha-Levi” was from Toledo. His book (rendered in Hebrew as “Sefer ha- K[h]uzari”) was a work of Judaic apologetics written as a parable (see Endnote 84 below). Evidently, this famed Andalusian saw the conversion of the [k]Hazars as an opportunity to articulate his rational for converting to Judaism–which he sardonically dubbed “the despised Faith” in Arabic (“al-Din al-Dhalil”). The book came to be revered throughout Beth Israel–from Andalusia, through Occitania, to Anatolia; down to the Maghreb; and eastward into the Middle East.}

{60 We can only speculate about the thinking of the Ashkenazim who eventually settled in Kiev; as they were surely aware that it had been founded by their forebears (the [k]Hazars) centuries earlier. Did they perceive their arrival as RE-settling what had originally been their ancestors’ city? This prompts another question: Did the [k]Hazarian Jews even LEAVE? Perhaps there was some continuity in their presence; perhaps not. We know from the famed “Kievan letter” (which used Turkic script) that a major Jewish community existed in the city during the 10th century (spec. in the district that was aptly known as “Kozare” at the time; now known as “Podil”). In any case, it’s safe to say that Kiev has been a Jewish city since its inception. The key difference is that, whereas once its Jewish residents identified as [k]Hazars, they later identified as Ashkenazim. (Also see Endnote 87 below.)}

{61 The same suffix may be involved with the Old Yiddish term for prayer: “davnen” (later modified to “daven”); though exactly what the etymology of that word may have been remains somewhat of a mystery. (It is not Semitic. The suggestion that it is from the Aramaic term for platform, “duchan” is far-fetched.) Meanwhile, “dukh” was adopted by the Kieven Rus as the term for “soul” (though the modern Russian term is “dusha”). Old Turkic alternately used “alka” for “bless”; and “tabun” for “pray”.}

{62 “Esterka” is a variation on the heroic Jewish queen of Persia, “Est[h]er” (who foiled a plot to attack the Israelites). While it is derived from neither the Syriac term for star (“kawkba”) nor the Old Turkic term for star (“yul-duz”), it IS derived from the Sogdian term for star (“s-t-r-k”); which was itself from the Persian “a-s-t-r” / “s-t-r-a” (ultimately based on the Assyrian “ishtar”). The familiar Hebrew rendering of the name was likewise based on the Assyrian / Persian; as was the ancient Greek—and later, the Latin and Anglo-Saxon—rendering. The alternate Hebraic rendering of the queen’s name was “Hadassah”. No Semitic Jewess who was named after this Biblical figure would have been named “Esterka”. Clearly, Casimir’s mistress was a Jewish woman who’s name came from a non-Semitic onomastic—which is to say that she did not have a Sephardic background. When it comes to given names with Biblical significance, such alternate versions were not uncommon among Ashkenazim (see Endnote 50 above). Had Ashkenazim come from Sephardic forebears, such onomastic disjuncture would not make any sense. Estarka (who was a champion of Jewish rights in medieval times) is yet another illustration that Ashkenazim had non-Semitic origins.}

{63 The only Jewish figure at the time who seems to have cared about BOTH Hebrew AND Yiddish (as well as Aramaic, Latin, Italian, and German) was a Bavarian grammarian named Elijah [alt. “Elia”] “ha-Ba[c]hur”. But that wasn’t until the 16th century. His renown came from penning the “Bovo Bukh” [alt. “Baba Buche”] c. 1541: an adaptation of a chivalric romance that has no basis in Hebrew lore. ALL of Elia’s work was secular in nature; and he seems to have made it a point to embrace his Ashkenazi identity, even when studying on the Italic peninsula. Before then, no Hebrew grammarian could be found in Eastern Europe. Going back to the 10th century, such scholars were primarily found in the Middle East (as with Sa’adia ben Joseph of Faym); on the Iberian peninsula; or on the Barbary Coast (as with Dunash ben Labrat of Fez and the various rabbis at Kairouan like Nissim ben Jacob and [c]Hanan-El ben [c]Hush-i-El).}

{64 A good example of an ethnonym that many forget is an exonym is “Greek[s]”, which was based on the Roman term for them: “Graeci”. Their endonym was “Hellenes”. (After all, the name of their nation is not “Greece”; it’s the Hellenic Republic.) Meanwhile, the ancient Greeks referred to the Italic peoples as “Tyrrhenians”, even as the latter referred to themselves “Rasenna”. We now refer to such pre-Roman people as “Etruscans”. Meanwhile, white Americans were inclined to refer to Native Americans as “Indians” into the 21st century—a misnomer that began with Christopher Columbus’ geographical misapprehensions in 1492. This is a reminder that ethnonyms often depend on perspective; and that one ethnicity’s favored taxonomy does not necessarily tell the whole story. Once an ethnonym catches on, we tend to lose track of whether it is an exonym or an endonym; and we often don’t even care. Onomastics are typically self-serving, and so elide any perspective that is not gratifyingly ethno-centric.}

{65 In the Old Slavic “Tales of Bygone Years” (a.k.a. the “Primary Chronicle”) from c. 1113, a Jewish man is amicably portrayed in a tale (about the conversion tale of Vladimir “the Great” of Novgorod in the 980’s). We are told that he is a [k]Hazar. It is very telling that it was a [k]Hazar who was selected to represent the Jewish people rather than a Sephardic Jew. If the Ashkenazim at the time had been thought of a break-away group from the Sephardim of Europe, this reference would not have made any sense.}

{66 An alternate Turkic word for carpet was “kiviz” / “kigiz”. The Slavic suffix, “-nik” was used in intriguing ways by Ashkenazim. For instance, “Selz-nik” was a person associated with the Selz River in Swabia (in the southern Rhineland). But, as with “Kilim-nik”, we encounter other roots from the Eurasian Steppes—as with “Okhot-nik” (one who hunts) and “Kukuruz-nik” (one who works with grain).}

{67 The Slavs would not retain the old [k]Hazar lands forever. In the 13th century, the entire region would be over-run and held by the (Kipchak) Golden Horde (lead by Batu Khan, the son of Genghis’ son, Jochi), which established a Turkic-Mongol “Ulug Ulus” (Turkic for “Great State”) operating out of the capital, Sarai (a city founded on the Akhtuba River by Batu Khan). This temporarily brought Tengri-ism back to the region; though the Khanate would start to convert to Islam under Batu Khan’s great-grandson, Tode Mongke Khan. The Islamization of that empire would be completed under Uz Beg Khan when he took power c. 1313. Pursuant to the fragmentation of the Khanate (into the White and Blue Hordes), the Slavs would begin to take back

the region in the late 14th century. The former [k]Hazar capital, Atil was rebuilt as “Saksin-Bolgar”. Sarai would eventually be razed by the Islamic tyrant, Timur of Kesh (for its sacrilege); never again to be rebuilt.}

{68 In the Middle Ages, the Turkic (spec. Kipchak) term for a woman’s head scarf was “oramal” (probably derived from Sogdian). The general term in Old Turkic was “bash-lik” [head item]. Other Turkic (spec. Kipchak) words for cloth wrapping were “jaw-lik” / “jag-lik” / “yag-lik” and “yagliga”. It’s anyone’s guess what the [k]Hazars might have called a woman’s head scarf. It is possible that it shared an etymology with (the Chuvash) “tukhya”…which is what would have led to (the Yiddish) “tikhl”. What we do know is that, at the time, the Jews of western Europe were using either “mitpa[c]hat” (Hebrew) or “pe’ar” (Ladino and Zarfatic), indicating that Ashkenazim did not have Sephardic provenance.}

{69 Wexler (erroneously) supposes that Old Yiddish has predominantly Slavic roots (spec. Sorbian / Polabian). During the westward migration, it is unsurprising that the [k]Hazarian diaspora accrued a smattering of Slavic memes along the way—of which there are still traces in Yiddishkeit to the present day. As Wexler points out, we find vestiges of Slavic (both pagan and Christian) elements in early Ashkenazi culture: memetic residue that would make no sense had the Ashkenazim originated in western Europe (i.e. from a Sephardic background). But it doesn’t follow that this (Slavic) residue accounts for the linguistic origins of Yiddish, let alone for the (geographical) origins of the earliest speakers of Yiddish. Another hint: Yiddish includes definite and indefinite articles, which tend not to exist in Slavic languages, yet DO exist in both Germanic and Turkic languages. (All this might be contrasted to Bulgar: a Turkic language that took on a distinctly Slavic character.) In focusing on the sporadic Slavic influences found in Ashkenazi culture, Wexler touches upon something important: an accretion of Slavic memes that would not make sense had Ashkenazim originally hailed from western Europe. It only makes sense had their arrival in Lotharingia (spec. the Rhineland) involved a couple centuries of slow, steady migration through Slavic lands…from a place that was NOT characterized by Sephardic (read: Talmudic) heritage. This would have occurred at a time the community was undergoing some sort of ethnic metamorphosis, and thus gradually appropriating novel cultural elements (language, tidbits of folklore, etc.) along the way. That is not something Sephardim arriving in Eastern Europe would have done… while ensuring that they erased all traces of their Talmudic heritage in the process!}

{70 Zarfatic / Shuadit (effectively, Judaized Old French that incorporated a small amount of Hebrew vernacular) was typically written in an Occitanian version of Hebraic script known as “Solitreo”. Tellingly, vowel sounds were handled using Masoretic (spec. Tiberian) nomenclature. This creole language clearly emerged within the Talmudic / Tosafist tradition. It was most famously used by Moses “ha-Darshan” of Narbonne and Solomon ben Isaac of Troyes (a.k.a. “Rashi”) in the 11th century. Only later did the Sephardic version of Hebraic script inspire the “cursive” script that was eventually adopted by the Ashkenazim. That adoption did not occur until the late 13th century (as attested by the “Dokus Horant”), which belies the supposition that the Ashkenazim had been using Hebraic script all along. Even then, it was quite clear that Ashkenazi lore—while Judaic—did not emerge within the Talmudic tradition.}

{71 While Eran El-Haik offers some valuable insights regarding the genetic origins of Ashkenazi Jews, he erroneously supposes that the Ashkenazim and Ottoman Turks have a shared provenance. This would entail the origins of Old Yiddish was concomitant with Turk-ISH: an Oghuz language that was brought to Anatolia by the Seljuk Turks in the 11th century…via a route that was well south of the Eurasian Steppes. (Ottoman Turks did not adopt the Persian “Nastaliq” script until the 14th century.) Oddly, El-Haik conjectures that the salient linguistic line originated in Persia; and at some point migrated westward (across Persia and Mesopotamia) and THEN northward via Anatolia and Thrace and/or the Balkan Peninsula…all the way up to the Rhineland. There’s a problem with this theory. In order to connect all Turkic substrates back to a common source, one needs to go back to the 9th century to find their common ancestor, Old Turkic—as found in, say, the “Irk Bitig”. This would have been the language of the Gök-Türks, who were involved with trade along the Silk Road (and whose tongue was influenced by Sogdian). There are no palpable vestiges of Sogdian in Ottoman Turk-ISH. The propagation of the Oghuz line of Turkic seems to have shed any Sogdian influences. This line never made it north of the Caucuses Mountains, and only made it as far as the Balkan Peninsula—that is: no farther north or west. More to the point, the Oghuz GENETIC lineage had no bearing on the [k]Hazarian Diaspora (or vice versa). For the [k]Hazars, the salient line of Old Turkic was Old Uyghur, which—due to their involvement with commerce along the Silk Road—WAS influenced by Sogdian; and occurred across the Eurasian Steppes. (That branch of Old Turkic—i.e. Karluk—was first promulgated by the Kara-Khanids; and used Old Uyghur script.) This accounted for a distinct (Old Uyghur) genealogy. The Old Uyghur linguistic line led to the Kipchak family of languages, which involved the various Tatar / Oghuric tongues (of which the [k]Hazarian language was a part).

This line had nothing to do with Seljuk hegemony, which accounted for the Oghuz line that propagated farther to the south (and eventually led to Ottoman “Turkish”). So as we assay Yiddish for Turkic roots, it is the the Old Uyghur (read: Kipchak) line that is salient. The Ottoman Turks had unrelated provenance.}

{72 Operating out of Novgorod, the Grand Princes of Kiev were Greek Orthodox Christian; they were not considered part of the Holy Roman Empire. Meanwhile, the Grand Duchy of Lithuania was not brought into the Roman Catholic fold until 1386 with the Union of Krevo, whereby it was united with the Kingdom Of Poland. Note: Also in the 11th century, the Count of Flanders (Baldwin V) invited Jews from northern France to settle in his domain—specifically: in the bustling mercantile cities of Ypres, Bruges, Ghent, and Louvain / Leuven (Brabant). They were Sephardim, not Ashkenazim. His gracious invitation had nothing to do with the influx of Jews into the Rhineland, who’s progeny would be the Ashkenazim.}

{73 It might be noted that things did not go well for ANY of the Turkic peoples in the late 10th century, as Svyatoslav conquered not just the [k]Hazars, but the Alans and Bulgars as well. The Pechenegs managed to maintain prominence until things took a downward turn during the reign Vladimir the Great; and they were defunct by the reign of Yaroslav the Wise. It was only much farther east that the Kipchaks, Kumans, Karluks, and Uyghurs managed to maintain a presence…until, that is, the Mongol conquests at the beginning of the 13th century.}

{74 Paradoxically, proponents of today’s fascistic Hungarian “Jobbik” movement fetishize Turan-ism (a mythic identity) even as they think of their Magyar forebears as pristinely Occidental (to wit: Roman Catholic). This is another case of obfuscation (viz. bloodlines) for religious purposes. Confabulated heritage, it turns out, is a universal phenomenon whenever ethno-centricity is afoot (see my essay, “Genesis Of A People”).}

{75 “Lah-yish” is often rendered “Layish”. Meanwhile, “labi” / “lebiyah” have been used for old lion / lioness; while “kefir” for lion cub.}

{76 Farther to the east, the Chuvash peoples (who descended from [upper] Volga Bulgars, and were originally Tengri-ist) speak Oghuric to the present day. (This shares roots with both the—now extinct—Old Bulgar, Avar, Sabir, and [k]Hazar tongues.) Their cultural transition was primarily the result of Timurid and Samanid (Muslim) hegemony. (Meanwhile, it was the Seljuks who brought the Oghuz branch of Turkic language to Anatolia, eventually leading to Ottoman “Turkish”; leaving the

modern “Turkmen” tongue in the homeland back east.) The Bashkirs remained in the Ural region of Badzhgard. Meanwhile, the Kazakh, Kyrgyz, Khakas, Tatar, and Tuvan peoples of the Eurasian Steppes descended from the Kipchaks (with Karluk influences), and were more of a Turkic-Mongolic mix. Most of those communities transitioned to Islam from Tengri-ism during the Timurid and Samanid era. (Even farther east, Yakut / Sak[h]a communities still practice Tengri-ism, as–dwelling on the Siberian tundra–they were not as influenced by either Christendom or Dar al-Islam.) The Kara-Khanids (heavily influenced by the Kumens and Pechenegs) accounted for the Karluk linguistic lineage—which yielded Chagatai…and eventually led to the modern Uzbek tongue.}

{77 The “Shul[c]han Arukh” was a distillation of Karo’s magnum opus, the “Bet[h] Yosef” [House of Joseph], which he composed in the 1550’s. That was, in turn, based on the “Arba’ah Turim” [Four Columns] by Jacob ben Asher ben Je[c]h-i-El, who was born in Cologne c. 1269, yet pursued his career in Toledo, Andalusia.}

{78 Interesting disparities remained within the Ashkenazi community. For example, most Ashkenazim recite the “Nusa[c]h Ashkenaz”; yet Hassidim opted—ironically—to adopt the “Nusa[c]h Sefarad” so as to distinguish themselves from other Ashkenazim. The idea was to use a version of the prayer that better reflected the Talmudic tradition.}

{79 Who may have used this route? Naturally, SOME merchants that used the Silk Road had destinations in Eastern Europe. This likely included the Radhanites. So prior to the [k]Hazarian Diaspora, were there ANY Jewish people that ventured into Eastern Europe? Perhaps. Passing mention of Radhanite Jews using trade routes in Eastern Europe can be found in accounts by Yehuda ben Meir of Mainz (from the early 11th century) and by Eliezer ben Nathan of Mainz [a.k.a. “Ra’aven”] (from the 12th century). These passages do NOT refer to fellow Sephardim. The accounts seem to be acknowledgement of, well, OTHER Jewish people that were engaged in trade. They were likely referencing the same (Radhanite) Jewish merchants that the Persian chronicler, Ibn Khordadbeh of Khorasan had mentioned in his “Book of Roads and Kingdoms” c. 900. And, of course, [k]Hazars were regularly trading with the (Hellenic) Byzantines and Slavic peoples of eastern Europe.}

{80 This historiographic boondoggle required that most of the founders of the modern nation-State of “Israel” occlude their non-Semitic heritage. After all, they deign to rationalize an ETHNO-State in Palestine based on purported bloodlines… traceable all the way back to Abraham’s grandson, Jacob (a.k.a. “Yisra-El”). This

preterition involves obfuscation as well as confabulation. And so it goes: Right-wing Zionists who are Ashkenazi are forced to elide their non-Semitic LINGUISTIC heritage while positing chimerical bloodlines (and fabricating national origin myths). It is not for nothing that the founders of this new ethno- State eschewed Yiddish; as they wanted to bolster their Semitic bona fides. Establishing a new-fangled Semitic language was a surefire way to do this. Hence the development of modern Hebrew in the late 19th century—a measure that served to further obfuscate the Ashkenazim's actual origins, while serving as an affirmation of farcical Semitic origins. For more on this, see my essay on "The Land Of Purple".}

{81 The Tosafist, Meir ben Baruch of Worms was also a student of Rashi. While he may have eventually taken his career to Rothenburg (in Bavaria), he studied in Paris and Würzburg. He was known as the greatest Jewish leader of "Zarfat" [France]; so was clearly not Ashkenazi. The common moniker "Meir of Rothenburg" is thus misleading.}

{82 Some say the "Riaz" was born in Bohemia. This is questionable. Growing up, he was the student of the famed Tosafist, Samson ben Samson "ha-Sar" of Coucy, in northern France (along with Moses ben Jacob "Mikkotsi")…who was himself the student of Isaac ben Samuel "the Elder" of Ramerupt / Dampierre (a.k.a. "Ri ha-Zaken")…who was, in turn, the student of Rashi's grandson, Jacob ben Meir of Ramerupt (a.k.a. "Rabbeinu Tam"). The first synagogue in Bohemia was a Gothic structure built in Prague c. 1270…by Ashkenazim. The "Riaz" came to be most associated with Vienna; hence he is often (misleadingly) referred to as "Isaac ben Moses of Vienna".}

{83 The "Samuel Book" was a kind of fan-fiction regarding the Biblical tale of Saul and David. It was likely inspired by the Rhinelandic "Rhyming Bible" of the early 12th century. Tellingly, it was composed using the "Hildebrand stanza" format popular in Germanic folklore (as found in, say, the "Nibelungenlied" c. 1200)…rather than exhibiting any of the signature discursive features of Mishnaic / Masoretic literature: the hallmark of Tosafot. The question, then, is: Would Sephardim have been inclined to compose material on Judaic lore in Germanic verse, eschewing styles that–for centuries–had been indicative of the hallowed Talmudic tradition?}

{84 Tellingly, it was one of Al-Fasi's students, Judah "ha-Levi" of Toledo [alt. Tudela], who found the need to write about—you guessed it—the [k]Hazars. (!) His "Sefer ha-Kuzari" was composed c. 1140—long after the fall of the [k]Hazar Empire. Nevertheless, he found the need to speculate as to how it came to be that these

Turkic Jews came to embrace Judaism. He opted for the apocryphal tale of the [k]Hazarian king meeting with representatives of the three Abrahamic religions; eventually deciding upon the Faith that the Muslim and Christian most preferred after their own.}

{85 Kalmykia is for starters. How often do we hear about archeological digs in Dagestan? Astrakhan? How many people today travel the Volga River? Kazan is still there, though—thanks to the Cossacks, then the Soviets—its ancient Turkic history is largely veiled. How about the Don River? ("Don" derives from "Danu": the Sarmatian / Scythian word for "river".) There's Azov, which used to be known as "Tmutarakan" under the (Slavic) Kieven Rus…which had been the [k]Hazar city of Tamantar-khan (known as "Azak" by the Kipchaks). Prior to that, it had been an (Akatziri) Hunnic hub, which was built on the site of the Sarmatian / Scythian "Hermonassa". Before that, it was an Iron Age Greek colony known as "Tanais". The city's name changes—from one epoch to the next—reveal a buried history. (The Azov Museum of History, Archaeology, and Paleontology has almost no artifacts from the relevant period.) And what about the founding of Ryazan—attributed to ancestors of the Mari and/or Mordvins (spec. the Moksha and Erzya people)? Alas, they are Turkic; so this doesn't fit into the preferred narrative. In sum: To glean new insights, more than just archeological digging is needed.}

{86 Were there SEPHARDIC names that had been influenced by their surroundings? Of course. It was inevitable that Sephardic nomenclature would come to exhibit SOME parity with the indigenous language. It comes a no surprise that some Sephardim adopted EXTANT toponyms: Gibraltarian (Benady and Cardozo), Portuguese (Spinoza, Amaral, and Feijoo), Iberian Galician (Coronel and Touro), Castilian Spanish (Cayetano, Pardo, Toledano, and Cordov[er]o), Basque (Mena), French (Benveniste, La Calle, and Gabay), Italian (Galante, Oliveira, Lombrozo, Mortara, and Senigaglia), Berber (Shitrit), Arabic (Abergel, Abu-Lafia, and Al-Hadeff), and even Greek (Todros). Meanwhile, "Zarfati" simply meant "from France". But such onomastic appropriation did not occur nearly to the degree that we find with Ashkenazim. In most cases, the surname already existed (as a Gentile surname); and was simply adopted to fit in–as with, say, "Salvador": the Iberian term for savior / messiah. The oldest Sephardic families of Andalusia were palpably Hebraic: "Ab[a]-Rabban-El" [Father(s) of the Teacher(s) of God; often rendered "Abravanel"] and "Abu-Ab" [Father(s) of the Father(s)]. The etymology of such surnames often involved Arabic onomastics—as with Palacci / Palaggi [alt. "Pallache"], an offshoot of the Abu-l'Afi[y]a] family. Ashkenazi toponyms, on the other hand, are largely sui

generis. It is likely that, at various points in the last two millennia, Sephardic families sought to (marginally) assimilate into the ambient culture; and, in some cases, to blend in (to be more accepted by their fellow countrymen). But at no point did any Sephardic community completely jettison the Hebraic elements of its vernacular. Early Ashkenazi onomastics, on the contrary, exhibited no Hebraic vestiges whatsoever—something that is almost inconceivable had they recently been Sephardic. Semiotic schemes do not just disappear; and nomenclature does not vanish overnight.}

{87 It is uncertain what the city on the shores of the northern Dnieper River might have been called by the [k]Hazars. **“Podil”** (a distinctly Turkic onomastic) may have been the original moniker. A later Tatar name for the city was **“Man-kermen”** (“man” was Turkic for “great” and “kermen” was the Turkic for “city”; the latter stemming from the same lexeme as “karim”, which was Turkic for “fortress” / “strength”: the etymological basis for “Crimea”). The city seems to have been referred to as **“Kiy-əv”** [later rendered “Kiyyov” / “Kiyyob” / “Keyibe”] by its (Turkic) Jewish residents through much of the Middle Ages. This seems to have been based on the Turkic words for riverbank (“Kui”) and settlement (“Ev”). That name was rendered “Kiwa” in Old Slavic, “Kio[a]va” in Greek, “Cuieva” in Latin, and “Kuyaba” in medieval Arabic. (Because of the Byzantines, Greek was a prevalent onomastic convention, as illustrated by the use of the suffix “-pol” for many cities in the region.) **“Kiev”** soon became the Slavic moniker for the city; and was used by the Varangians (i.e. the Kieven Rus) going back to the 10th century (when they first conquered the territory; seizing it from the [k]Hazars). According to local legend, the name derives from the hero, “Kii” [alt. “Kyi”], a character in the “Tale Of Bygone Years” c. 1113 (ref. the Kievan Chronicle c. 1200). Being, as it was, entirely apocryphal, this Slavic origin story served to obfuscate the Turkic etymology of the city’s name (“riverbank settlement”), so as to burnish the Varangian / Rurikid legacy. (While “-evo” / “-ovo” was sometimes appended to city names in Kieven Rus, “-ev” / “-ov” was generally not; that is, barring instances where it was not a suffix—as with Rostov, Pleskov, and Rzhev. So “Kyi-ev” doesn’t make sense etymologically.) From the Turkic moniker, the city’s name eventually came to be rendered **“Kyiv”** in the modern Ruthenian language (a.k.a. “Ukrainian”). That would come to be used as the official pronunciation pursuant to the dissolution of the Soviet block c. 1991. To reiterate: The city was originally [k]Hazarian; though it was located within the realm of Polans, Severians, and Drevlyans (Slavic tribes). When it was taken over by the Kievan Rus (Varangians) in the 920’s by the Rurikid Grand Prince, Igor the Old, it became part of “Ruthenia”, which was later annexed by the

Grand Duchy of Lithuania (later the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth) in the 14th century…along with “Bela[ya]-Rus” (i.e. White Ruthenia). Thus the ethnographic history of the city is quite complex. For more on this topic, see J. Brutzkus’ “The Khazar Origin Of Ancient Kiev” in the Slavonic And East European Review (American series); vol. 3, May 1944. For more on the region that is now known as “Ukraine”, see Endnote 88 below.}

{88 During the Iron Age, what is now “Ukraine” was dominated by the Cimmerians. During Classical and Late Antiquity, it was the land of the Sarmatians (an offshoot of the Scythians). During the Middle Ages, the region west of the Dnieper River was primarily Ruthenian (the Slavic progenitors of ethnic Ukrainians) with some Turkic presence (Avars, Bulgars, and Magyars; as well as some Alans). It was thus generally referred to as **“Ruthenia”**, which was simply the Romanized version of the Hellenic **“Ros[s]ia”** (used by the Byzantines), meaning “land of the Rus”. The Ruthenian tongue served as the linguistic basis for Belarusian, Rusyn, and contemporary Ukrainian. What we now refer to as “Ukrainian” is effectively a creole language that developed from the tongue of the Kieven Rus in the midst of Polish influences (and beyond the influence of Old Church Slavonic). It is colloquially referred to as “Surzhyk”. Meanwhile, the region east of the Dnieper River was predominantly Turkic (Kumen-Kipchak; primarily Alan, Pecheneg, and [k]Hazar), with a smattering of Slavic peoples in the vicinity of Kiev (Polans, Severians, and Drevlyans; with the Vyatichi farther to the north and the Tivertsi farther to the south). The original ethnography was followed by a massive infusion of Slavic / Varangian peoples pursuant to the hegemony of the Kieven Rus in the 10th century. (The best sources for this epoch are the Galician-Volhynian and Kievan Chronicles.) During the 14th thru 18th centuries, the region was considered part of the **“Dikoia Pole”** [Wild Fields] by the Polish-Lithuanian rulers (during the Grand Duchy of Lithuania); and then **“Novo Rossia”** [New Russia] by the Tsars (during the Pale of Settlement). (“Ros[s]ia” had become the standard toponym for “land of the Rus”.) All the while, the entire region was still being referred to as **“Casari”** [Land of the Khazars] into the 18th century. (!) Vestiges of the Kumen-Kipchak presence remained in the east (spec. the Donbass and Crimea)—accounting for the people who came to be known as the “Crimean Tatars”. Farther east were the Circassian Tatars. Farther to the north, the “Lipka” Tatars dwelled in Greater Lithuania; and many ended up speaking the medieval Ruthenian language. In the present monograph, the most salient section of Ruthenia was “Halych-Volyn” (Galicia-Volhynia) and Podolia (“Po-Dol” meant “along the valley” in Old Slavic); as that was where many shtetels (Ashkenazi settlements) were eventually established. (This

was in the southern-most part of what came to be known as “the Pale of Settlement” during Tzarist rule.) The toponym, **“[o]U-krai-na”** (Old Slavic for “borderland” / “frontier region”) was coined in the late 16th century by the Polish-Lithuanian rulers—likely due to the territory’s position between their realm and the Tatar realm. This onomastic was then adopted by the (Hetman) Cossacks. “Ukrainian” emerged as an ethnonym for the generation preceding the First World War—as **“Ukraina”** had transplanted the toponym **“Malaya Ros[s]ia”** [Little Russia] for Ruthenia. Thus the Ruthenian language went from being referred to as “Rus-ska [mova]” to “Ukrain-ska [mova]” (or “prosta mova”). As an official geo-political entity, “Ukraina” was a Soviet construct established following the Bolshevik Revolution (ref. the First Universal of the Ukrainian Central Rada c. 1917). In 1918, at the conclusion of the First World War, it was briefly a sovereign nation-State under the rule of the Cossack Hetmans (who—in an odd twist—asserted a distinct Ukrainian identity, in contradistinction to the Bolsheviks). Like most imperial demarcations, this “republika” was ill-conceived given the ethnographic exigencies at the time; and has caused ethnic strife ever since (see Endnote 89 below).}

{89 Pursuant to the dissolution of the Soviet bloc in 1991, “Ukraina” became a sovereign nation—with ethnic Ukrainians largely in the north and west; ethnic Russians largely in the south and east. This arrangement eventually proved to be a recipe for ethnic conflict, as seething resentments abided within both groups. Ethnic Ukrainians recalled the Holodomor (genocide via engineered famine) perpetrated by Stalin in 1932-33. Meanwhile, ethnic Russians recalled the Nazi collaborationists amongst ethnic Ukrainians a decade later—of which fascistic elements persist to the present day. Note the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists (spec. the Bandera faction), and its military arm, the UPA (vestiges of which are the Azov Battalion and “Galician” paramilitary). As is often the case, racial animus travels in both directions. In the region, such antipathy has not been limited to ethnic Ukrainians vis a vis ethnic Russians; it has also been between Slavic and Turkic peoples; and—during the 15th thru 19th centuries—between Cossacks and, well, just about anyone with whom they decided to sow enmity (Jews, Poles, Tatars, etc.) at any given juncture. This is a reminder that national borders do not necessarily represent the will of the ethnic groups contained within them. It is also a reminder that ethnic identities can be quite amorphous.}

{90 Tellingly, Hasdai ibn Shaprut was employed at the court of the (Umayyad) caliph of Cordoba on behalf of the (Saxon) Holy Roman Emperor, Otto The Great… who, as it turned out, hailed from **East Frankia** (that is: what came to be known as

“Ashkenaz”). Surely, if he had been of the same people as these Eurasian Jews, Hasdai would have not been so intrigued by them; and been so eager to learn about them. At the time he was writing, there was–of course–no separate Jewish group known as “Ashkenazim”. In Europe, there were only Sephardim—whether Andalusian, Alsatian, Occitanian, Italian, or anything else. There were no accepted labels yet for Turkic Jews; as there was no need that was yet apparent. But, as we’ve seen, the taxonomy would soon evolve. There must have been a reason that Hasdai was so concerned with the Jewish people from lands to the east. They were, indeed, quite foreign to him; and he was clearly fascinated with them—what with their non-Talmudic brand of Judaism and their foreign ways. Also in the 10th century, the Persian geographer, Ahmad ibn Rustah of Isfahan made mention of the [k]Hazars. And—peculiarly—a “khagan” associated with the (Varangian) “Rus” was referred to in the (Farighunid) Persian book, **“Hudud al-Alam”** [Boundaries Of The World] c. 982. Neither of those documents provides much helpful information about the [k]Hazarian diaspora. This is a reminder that much work remains to be done on the subject—namely: reviewing documents from the Viking Age that pertain to the goings on of Eastern Europe and the Pontic Steppes. A geographic and demographic (specifically: ethnographic) assessment of Turkic movements during the High Middle Ages would be a good start. That might be followed by a survey of shtetels that were established across Eastern Europe during the Late Middle Ages and—within the Pale of Settlement—into the Early Modern Period. An area that needs much more investigation is the origins of the **“Lipka” Tatars**: Turkic peoples who dwelled within the realm of the Turkic-Mongol “Ulug Ulus” (a.k.a. the “Golden Horde”), which overlapped with the Grand Duchy of Lithuania (later: the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth). (“Lipka” was the Turkic name for Greater Lithuania.) This segment of Turkic peoples share origins with the Turkic peoples of Kazan and of the Crimea. Here’s the catch: Their presence in Eastern Europe PRECEDED that of the Ulug Ulus (which was not established until the 13th century). Many practiced Karaite Judaism (and were thus known as “Karaim”)—a Faith that certainly did not come from Jochi Khan or his sons, Orda and Batu (all of whom were Tengri-ist), nor of Berke (the other son, who eventually converted to Islam) . Alas, little is known about this ethnic group prior to the Mongol invasions. (They were likely of the [k]Hazarian diaspora.) We know that Turkic peoples eventually settled in “Tatar-skaya Slabada” (near present-day Minsk) c. 1428. Some of them were absorbed into the “szlachta” (Polish-Lithuanian nobility). Others remained peasants. And most eventually converted to Islam. The oldest document about them is the **“Risale-yi Tatar-i Leh”** [Message About Tatars Of Poland], composed by a (Muslim) Lipka Tatar for Ottoman sultan, Suleyman the Magnificent during a visit in Constantinople c. 1557. The Kieven Rus

referred to **Kumans**, **Kipchaks**, AND **[k]Hazars** (collectively known as “Tatars”) as “Polovtsy”, revealing that they saw them as members of a singular ethnic group. (They even referred to [k]Hazaria as the “Polovtsian” Steppes.) It’s worth noting that many “Polovtsy” were Jewish. To this day, Lipka Tatars have surnames ending in “-owicz” / “-ewicz”: a Slavic suffix that is common amongst Ashkenazim. For more on these onomastic quirks, see Endnote 64 above.}

{91 Some of what makes the philology here so complicated is the need to factor in the Mongol invasions, and the subsequent fragmentation of the Mongol empire into various Turkic-Mongol khanates / khaganates—specifically the “Ulug Ulus” (a.k.a. “Golden Horde”) in Eastern Europe, which preceded the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. Circumstances PRIOR TO the Mongol invasions (i.e. the period with which we are concerned) are difficult to discern, given the scant historical (ethnographic) record; not to mention attenuated incentives to look into the matter. Salient etymologies are obfuscated due to extensive ethnic displacement and ethnic mixing—as well as changing geo-political exigencies—from epoch to epoch. (In addition to all this, myriad national origin myths—propounded by those seeking to burnish their own ethnic legacy—muddy the waters.) It’s worth bearing in mind that the “Crimean Tatars” share ancestry with the Karaim of Greater Lithuania—as illustrated by the Karaites of Trakai, who flourished after the Magdeburger Rights were issued by Emperor Otto in the 10th century.}

{92 This Oghuric branch (which would have led to the languages of the Eurasian Steppes, including the language of the [k]Hazars) is not to be confused with the Oghuz branch of Turkic. The latter was brought to Anatolia and the southeastern edge of Europe—via Persia and Mesopotamia—by the Seljuks (yielding Azeri, Gagauz, and Ottoman Turkish); even as it remains in its modern form (Turkmen) in central Asia. When it comes to Old Turkic, such extensive linguistic ramification makes it difficult to believe that Old Uyghur (a Karluk language) and Yiddish (a Germanic language) share some of the same ancient influences (originating with the Gök-Türks, when it became an offshoot of Sogdian). But the fact is that languages merge and ramify over the centuries, depending on the geo-political exigencies at any given juncture. Another great illustration of a startling linguistic confluence is Bactrian: the lingua franca of the Kushan Empire. Who could imagine that a people located in ancient Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Nepal spoke a language that melded Hellenic (Koine Greek), Semitic (Syriac / Manichaean), and Persian (Parthian / Sogdian)? Meanwhile, we might note that Transylvanian (in southeastern Europe) and Brazilian Portuguese (in South America) have the same parent tongue: Vulgar

Latin.) Yet another major branch of Old Turkic remained in the Far East, primarily as a result of the Kara-Khanids (who's tongue served as the basis for the ensuing Karluk branch). That was the origin-point of the Oghuz divergence. The language now exists in the region as "Turkmen". The Karluk branch led to Old Uyghur (which influenced the development of Mongolian), Khorezmian (the basis for Chagatai, which eventually became Uzbek and the modern "Uyghur" tongue now prevalent in the Tarim Basin), and Khitan (the lingua franca of the western Liao Kingdom). Another branch of Common Turkic remained in eastern Siberia—accounting for Yakut / Sakha, Tuvan, Khakas, and Old Uyghur…as well as the various Altaic and Tungusic dialects farther east, which combined with medieval Chinese and indigenous tongues to influence the development of Korean and Japanese. (!) Such mass proliferation—and such diverse ramification—should give us pause; as it shows how widespread the influence of Old Turkic really was. Before it was taken to Eastern Europe by the Tatars (the Oghuric branch) and to Anatolia by the Sejluks (the Oghuz branch), Turkic had established a presence in Tang China. By the time the [k]Hazarian diaspora ended up in Eastern Europe, the tongue of the Kara-Khitai had influenced the tongue used by both the Liao (Khitan) and Manchurian (Jurchen) regimes. Understandably, today's Manchu tend not to emphasize their Gök-Turk heritage going back to the 6th century. It is unfortunate that so many are inclined to elide their Turkic provenance.}

{93 For insights into the likely influence of the tongues of the Silk Road (spec. Sogdian) on the formation of Old Yiddish, see Persian geographer, Ibn Khordadbeh's magnum opus: "Book Of Roads And Kingdoms" (c. 870). For more on the participation of Jewish people on the Silk Road during the relevant period, see Louis Isaac Rabinowitz's "Jewish Merchant Adventurers: A Study Of The Radhanites" (1948), Shlomo Sand's "The Invention Of The Jewish People" (2009), and Peter Frankopan's "The Silk Roads" (2015). In assaying how Yiddish came to be, it's worth noting: It was not uncommon for migrant groups into the region-in-question to combine their endogenous tongue with the prevailing (Germanic) tongue. For instance, the Sorbians / Lusatians adopted a hybridization of Old Slavic (medieval Slovene) and Old High German (Althochdeutsch), yielding Wendish. A similar linguistic hybridization occurred with formation of the Pomeranian / Kashubian tongue. Meanwhile, Silesian emerged at the nexus of Bavarian (Altbairisch), Bohemian / Moravian (Old Czech), and the language of the Polans (Old Polish). During the Middle Ages, such melding is how MOST languages formed (as with, say, Catalan and Romansh within the Latin sphere). Had the Ashkenazim been Semitic,

they would have done what the rest of world Jewry did: Develop a hybridization of HEBREW and the local language. They didn't; which tells us that they did not have Sephardic provenance.}

{94 Mojzesz's family originally hailed from Regensburg, Bavaria. Tellingly, his given name ("Moses") was rendered in a Slavic ("Mojzesz") rather than in the traditional Hebraic form ("Moshe"). Nobody with a Sephardic background would have done that with a Biblical name. This onomastic quirk indicates that he was probably from the [k]Hazarian diaspora. Once more, we look at vernacular and onomastics and ask not merely "What would Turkic Jews have probably done?" but, more pointedly: "What would Sephardic Jews have most likely NOT have done?"}

{95 At the time, the Jewish merchants traveling through Pr[z]emyshl were not from western Europe. We know this because of how the Jewish people in that eastern region were referred to by Sephardic commentators of the time—notably: Ibrahim ibn Yaqub and Shlomo Yitzchaki (a.k.a. "Rashi"), who's commentaries were composed in Zarfatic. Such merchants were clearly NOT seen as fellow Sephardim; as references to them used the phrasing of alterity. If not Sephardic, and if not from western Europe, then who were their ancestors; and from whence did all of those Jewish merchants hail?}

{96 Rabbeinu Tam's father (the renowned Tosafist, Meir ben Samuel of Ramerupt) studied in Lorraine under two men who hailed from Lotharingia during the pre-Ashkenazic era: Isaac ben Asher "Ha-Levi" of Speyer (a.k.a. "Riba") and Eliezer ben Isaac "ha-Gadol" of Mainz. These men were not progenitors of the Ashkenazim who came to the Rhineland. Like Rashi, they were Sephardim who taught in the area prior to the arrival of the [k]Hazarian diaspora. Tellingly, Jacob ben Meir ended his career in Troyes; as, by that time, Turkic Jews would have established a prominent presence in the Rhineland. As discussed, Rhineland Sephardim of the era were displaced once the Ashkenazim asserted a major presence. Every major Jewish figure in the region at that time corroborates this ethnographic migration pattern (see Endnote 52 above).}

{97 Shneur Zalman was purportedly a descendent of Judah Loew ben Bezalel of Prague (a.k.a. the "Maharal"), himself purportedly a descendent of Judah Leib "the Elder". (Note that those two ancestors—each named Judah—opted for different NON-Hebraic monikers. Both "loew" and "leib" are Germanic; the Hebraic term for "lion" was "Ar[-Yah]"; and for "beloved", it was "David".) As it happened, Shneur Zalman's "[c]Habad" movement created tension amongst the Ashkenazim of the

time—precipitating a schism WITHIN the wider Ashkenazi society (that is: between the new Hassidic community and more traditional followers of Elijah ben Solomon Zalman of Vilna). As with many cynosures in Beth Israel, proponents of the new movement concocted a genealogy that connected their hero to the fabled Dividic line. They did so by claiming that Judah Leib "the Elder" (who was Ashkenazi) was somehow a descendent of the 11th-century Talmudic scholar, Samuel ibn Nagrillah of Merida (who was Sephardic). The latter taught in Cordoba and Malaga; and was touted as having descended from the House of David. (We are expected to believe that he had solid documentation of patri-lineage going back two millennia.) Even if we grant that unlikely scenario, there is no evidence that this early 16th-century rabbi in Bohemia was a descendent of that early 11th-century rabbi in Andalusia. Other historiographers are even more ambitious; and just skip over Samuel ibn Nagrillah altogether, going straight back to the famed "gaon", Hai ben Sherira ben Hanina of Pumbedita in Mesopotamia…who, by the way, was not known to have sired any children. For more on this topic, see Endnote 98 below. I address the fanciful genealogy of the fabled "Kalonymos" family in the Appendix.}

{98 Such genealogical shenanigans are commonplace in Abrahamic circles—a matter I address in my essay, "Genesis Of A People". Leaders of the Franks traced their bloodlines to Jesus of Nazareth (via the Merovingians, then Carolingians). Meanwhile, virtually every Arab Muslim leader in history has claimed some sort of lineage back to Mohammed of Mecca—a difficult task, as he had no surviving sons or siblings; and only one biological daughter (Fatimah), through whom Ali ibn Abi Talib purportedly sired offspring. As Sunnis tend not to be super-fans of Ali, this makes for a rather fraught proposition. And in Judaic circles, we encounter the same dubious lineages with regard to the hallowed Dividic line; as well as with the fabled lineage of "Kohen-im" (i.e. Levites).}

{99 Such ethnic inter-mixture involved not just memes, but genes. In other words, it was not just a matter of cultural blending; it was a matter of miscegenation as well. This makes both legacies and ancestries more convoluted than some may like to admit (esp. those with an ethno-centric mindset). So, yes, Romanians and Moldavians also have Turkic forebears; as Turkic peoples were in the hills of Transylvania and the plains of Pannonia (the Carpathian basin) for many centuries. (Wallachia was referred to in Turkic as "Bog-dan [i]Vlak" in the late 14th century, with the first term meaning "god-given" or "gift of god".) Alas, the obdurate assertion of ethnic identity today often elides the actual origins of those ethnicities; as everyone likes to fancy an ethnic purity—going back to the beginning of the

universe—amongst their own people; a purity that does not exist (see Endnote 98 above). This makes it difficult to even broach the topic with those whose entire worldview is predicated on an ethno-centric view of the world; and an unsullied, gilded heritage for themselves. For more on this topic, see my essay, “Genesis of a People”.}

{100 This matter warrants further investigation. In assaying the earliest instances of Ashkenazi culture, scholars might look for vestiges of what are now understood to be Chuvash, Bashkir, Sabir, Nakh, and Kalmyk folk legends. The key is to distill certain elements of Ashkenazi folklore—abstracting from that which was (eventually) incorporated from the [h]Aggadah after the fact. This area of study was pioneered by Joseph Jacobs. The “catch” is that he worked primarily from later material—as found in, say, the “Maasebüch[er]”. Finding residual traces of Turkic folklore in the earliest Ashkenazic material is no easy task, as few are well-versed in both Old Turkic and Old Yiddish. Moreover, there has been very limited inter-disciplinary scholarship that takes into account BOTH Tatar and Ashkenazi history. Alas, the vast majority of those who study Ashkenazi folklore focus solely on the modern period—as is the case with, say, Itzik Gottesman at the University of Texas. Meanwhile, those who specialize in medieval Turkic peoples (e.g. Kagan Arik at the University of Chicago) tend not to be well-versed in Ashkenazi culture. There has heretofore been little incentive for cross-over research.}

{101 No [k]Hazarian documents? Where does that leave us? Well, if we’re honest, we need to proceed agnostically…until, that is, further discoveries are made. A lot more archeology needs to be done in the northern Caucuses—particularly off the northwest coast of the Caspian Sea (from Astrakhan to Dagestan); as well as along the Don and Volga rivers (esp. at Samosdelka and S[h]arkil). The countryside of Kalmykia ALSO probably offers a wealth of archeological treasures waiting to be discovered—waiting, that is, ever since the arrival of the Varangians over a millennium ago. This is a tall order. Today’s Chechens are not exactly known for their groundbreaking archeological discoveries. (Try explaining to a Chechen that you want to do excavations in his back yard in an attempt to uncover the origin of the Ashkenazi Jews.) An indication of the obstacles before us: The present denizens of North Caucasia are reticent to acknowledge that the modern Avars were defending the land from Russian incursion long before they were. For archeological investigation, other areas of interest would include Kuban and the Donbas, as well as the present-day oblasts of Volgo-grad and Ros-tov. My hunch is that buried somewhere in this vast region of verdant meadows, lush groves, and rolling hills is a

cache of long-forgotten [k]Hazarian documents which contain some extremely useful information. Such an endeavor wouldn't merely be about procuring a better understanding of the [k]Hazars; it would also help to reveal heretofore unknown parallels between [k]Hazarian customs (between the 7th and 10th centuries) and the earliest Ashkenazi customs (between the 11th and 14th centuries). With a bit of linguistic forensics, it would also reveal any relationship between Old Turkic and Old Yiddish (see Endnote 102 below). Moreover, it would afford the opportunity to look for evidence AGAINST the present thesis…thereby disproving it, should it turn out to be erroneous. (For example, a document might be found where the [k]Hazars spoke of the Ashkenazim as a foreign people; or Ashkenazim spoke of their Sephardic ancestors.) Such an enterprise would involve getting the likes of Itzik Gottesman and Kagan Arik (that is: specialists in their respective fields) to the same table. Alas. Interdisciplinary work between university departments is often dismissed; and sometimes even shunned. Those seeking tenure and/or grants would much prefer not to rock any boats, and risk being ostracized by the academic kingmakers who are wed to orthodoxy. So here we are.}

{102 It's worth reviewing what we know of the Old Turkic lexicon. A dozen examples: "gök" (sky), "yulduz" (star), "künesh" (sun), "ai" (moon), "su[v]" (water / river), "köl" (lake), "töpu" (hill), "tag" (mountain), "yürek" (heart), "bilig" (wisdom / knowledge), "at" (horse), and "kishi" (person). These were not necessarily identical to the lexemes used by the [k]Hazars; for when we look at the modern Turkic tongues that are likely to most resemble [k]Hazarian (Chuvash, Bashkir, and Kumyk), the words are sometimes different. (Unfortunately, the Sabirs no longer exist.) This illustrates how much the various Turkic languages underwent ramification over the past millennium (see Endnote 92 above). In its original incarnation (that is: as it was used by the Gök-Turks in the Orkhon Valley), Old Turkic stopped being spoken in the 13th century, pursuant to the Mongol conquests—when it was transplanted by the potpourri of Karluk and Kipchak offshoots (e.g. Chagatai), as well as by Mongolian. Old Turkic script became obsolete after the collapse of the [k]Hazar Empire. (The Magyars continued to use a variant of Turkic runes until c. 1000, when King Stephen converted to Christianity and adopted the Roman alphabet.) This was simply a stage in what was an on-going process. Indeed, Old Turkic was ITSELF a mutation—stemming from Bactrian and Sogdian (which were themselves hybrids of Syriac and Middle Persian). (Genetically, the confluence of ancient Persian and Turkic peoples goes back to the Dahaeans: progenitors of the Aparni, Saka / Cimmerians / Scythians, and Sogdians.) So tracking the genealogy of the [k]Hazarian tongue forward to Old Yiddish (a process that occurred a thousand

years ago, and involved significant Germanic—and even some Slavic—influences) is a formidable task. It not only entails conducting in-depth linguistic forensics regarding the myriad variants of Old Turkic; it entails abstracting ENTIRELY from Germanic influences on the tongue spoken by the earliest Ashkenazim…as well as from the Hebrew lexemes that were eventually incorporated into the Yiddish vernacular long after the fact (i.e. in the past five or six centuries). Such linguistic forensics could be conducted only by the rare philologist specializing in BOTH the history of the peoples of the Eurasian Steppes AND the Jewish people of Eastern Europe (see Endnote 103 below). A good place to start is Karl Reichl's "Turkic Oral Epic Poetry" in the Routledge Revivals series.}

{103 Such linguistic forensics would involve far more than just philology; it would involve an understanding of fluctuating geopolitics over the course of centuries—shifting ethnographies, the changing of sovereign domains, the melding of linguas franca, etc. The task would be formidable largely because of the blind spots. Imagine trying to trace modern (Parisian) French back to Classical Latin without ever having ever seen a single document in the common tongue of the (west) Romans; thereby being forced to discern vestiges of Vulgar Latin in the "langues d'oïl"…while, of course, abstracting from the influence of indigenous Gaulish and of Old High German during the period of Frankish rule (both of which contributed to the formation of French). Or imagine trying to identify parities between modern English and Old French without having any material in the latter; so only being able to go off of traces of Norman in contemporary English vernacular. In doing so, one would need to abstract from any and all influences of the North Sea Germanic languages (Old English, Old Norse, Old Frisian, and Old Saxon) on the formation of modern English over the course of the last millennium. One would thus be limited to isolating the language of the Franks in Neustria a thousand years ago (Norman), and seeing how THAT might provide clues to its Gallic antecedents.}

{104 Another indication that Germanic terms were adopted in a haphazard fashion is the occurrence of mondegreens in Ashkenazi onomastics. This is likely what happened with the surname "Katz[e]" (which is simply German for "cat"). It was not, as some suggest, an acronym from "Kohen Zedek [alt. Zadok]" (meaning Priest of Righteousness). Rather, it was a mondegreen for "Chatti"—a Germanic tribe related to the Batavians, originally from Saxony, who likely resided in the Rhineland at the time. (By that point, they would have adopted a Frankish identity, and re-branded themselves "Chattuarii".) We know this to be the case, as the surname, "Katzenberg" neither means "hill of cats" nor "hill of righteous priests". The use of

the suffix “-berg” (hill) in Ashkenazi onomastics typically made sense—as with, say, “Rosen-berg” (rose hill) or “Grün-berg” (green hill). The surname “Katzen-berg” was likely adopted by Ashkenazim who’d become acquainted with the Chatti and other descendants of the Batavians. We also find some peculiar lexical combinations with some Ashkenazi surnames—as with Hirsch-lag, which combines the Germanic term for “deer” with the peculiar suffix “-lag”…a morpheme that may have been a variant of the German term for “laying” (“legen”) or possibly from the Old Turkic term for warm (“yilig”). Nobody’s really sure. “Zeitlin” combines “Zeitl” (German for lately) with the Slavic suffix “-in”. Meanwhile, “Lit[t]-man[n]” combines the Slavic “Lit” (used in Lit- o-vel, Lit-o-bor, Lit-o-mir, Lit-o-slav) with the familiar Germanic suffix. And “Zuch-man[n]” combines the Slavic term for “resourceful” with that suffix… though “zuch” might have come from either the Germanic “zucht” (pertaining to cultivation / harvesting; i.e. farming) or “zug” (an agrarian term that seems to have had Uralic origins). The Jews who created such surnames were clearly neither Germanic nor Slavic. They were cobbling together disparate lexical bits and pieces from exogenous sources to create novel surnames—that is: to forge a new ethnic identity via an ad hoc onomastic. To suppose that Sephardim would have done this strains credulity.}

{105 Another possibility is that the [k]Hazars were influenced by the Christian kingdom immediately to their south. The Sarir Kingdom was in Dagestan from c. 500 to the 12th century; and was an ally with the [k]Hazar Empire (until, that is, they defected; and allied with the Alans, who were adversaries of the [k]Hazars). Little is known about the Sarir people, but they seem to have been some combination of Persian, Syriac, and indigenous [Vai-]Nakh / Adyghe (a.k.a. “Circassians”); and would have been conversant in the tongues of the Silk Road: Sogdian, Syriac, and Common Turkic. They likely adopted their Abrahamic creed from the ancient Georgians; and—in their common dealings with the [k]Hazars over the centuries—would have exposed the them to Abrahamic lore; though in which ways is anyone’s guess. Since the Sarir people were vassals of the [k]Hazars, any memetic transference (involving selected elements of the Mosaic creed) would have been on [k]Hazarian terms.}

{106 Today’s Uyghurs speak MODERN Uyghur—a hybrid of Mongol-Turkic from the Chagatai epoch, which originated as Karluk under the Kara-Khanids. Their tongue is NOT from Old Uyghur, which was the language of the Orkhon Uyghur Khaganate operating out of Ötüken (later Ordu-Balik; now Kara-Balghas[un]).}

{107 This comment is extremely revealing. Nobody was more of a stickler for facts than Isaac Asimov—a man who likely commanded more knowledge than anyone who has ever walked the face of the Earth. And few people were more renown for debunking myths than he. So if the theory of the Ashkenazim's [k]Hazarian origins had been erroneous, he would have been the first to point that out.}

{108 Would we know if there WAS some kind of schism? Well, as it happens, history furnishes us with an example. Lo and behold: There was a great schism at the exact same time (with another religion). And we know A LOT about it—as one might expect when something like that occurs. In 1054, European Christianity officially divided into two realms: Papism in the west and Orthodoxy in the east. (To this day, both consider themselves "Catholic".) Granted, the dispute was not only doctrinal in nature; as the former was Roman (Frankish and Latin based) while the latter was Byzantine (Slavic and Greek based). This rift had a long history. Recall that Emperor Diocletian had divided the Empire—for administrative purposes—into two halves along cultural lines c. 300 (amidst his pogroms against Manichaeans and Christians), thereby amplifying this disparity. So the seeds for division were already planted in the Early Middle Ages. By the 11th century, the primary issue was fealty to the Vatican—a development that was well-documented throughout Christendom. It's only natural that there was extensive documentation, as a massive religious community BIFURCATED. How could it NOT be discussed—at length—by those involved? By contrast, there was not a peep about any such schism in Beth Israel. For the "Ashkenazim broke away from the Sephardim" theory to hold any water, there would need to be some sort of mention of such a break-away…by SOMEONE, SOMEWHERE, AT SOME POINT. There was NONE. For those interested in relevant feuds within Christendom during this pivotal time, the one between (Frankish) Emperor Charlemagne and (Byzantine) Empress Irene c. 800 is a fascinating one. Also note the Photian Controversy in 863…and the acrimony that ensued…onward through the Crusaders' sacking of Constantinople in April 1204, where they massacred thousands of Orthodox Christian civilians. Clearly, that high degree of hostility did not exist between Sephardim and Ashkenazim. There seems to have only been a moderate degree of alterity. Had there been some sort of schismatic event, there surely would have been some resentment on the part of both parties. No such sentiment was forthcoming. There was only some suspicion, as one might expect, when the Turkic Jews appeared in Eastern Europe.}

{109 Most ancient languages that are now extinct simply morphed into subsequent incarnations. They were thus stages within this or that linguistic lineage. But sometimes a linguistic terminus occurs. It is no secret that languages can die out even as the people who speak them survive. Consider what happened to the languages of the region stretching from the Balkans up to the Carpathian mountains. Almost no traces remain of Illyrian, Thracian, or Dacian…except, perhaps, for sparse vestiges in Bulgarian, Albanian, and Romanian. It's not that the Illyrians, Thracians, and Dacians VANISHED. Due to medieval geo-politics, their identities changed…along with the languages they spoke. Be that as it may, it would be odd for today's Serbs / Croats (effectively, the modern incarnation of Dalmatians) and Albanians (effectively, the modern incarnation of the Ardiaeans) to insist that they weren't somehow the descendants of Illyrians…or for modern Bulgarians (effectively, the modern incarnation of Steppe Bulgars) to insist that they weren't somehow descendants of Thracians…or for Romanians (effectively, the modern incarnation of Wallachians) to insist that they weren't somehow descendants of Dacians.}

{110 Where are the Zoroastrians now? They used to account for the entirety of Persia; now, they are scattered to the four winds—from Zanzibar to India. (Freddie Mercury's family was from the Swahili Coast. For the past century, India's biggest philanthropists have been the Tata family.) Where are the Armenians now? They used to be prevalent in eastern Anatolia (around Lake Van); now, they primarily reside in the lower Caucuses, having established their own nation-State there (barring Artsakh, which Stalin partitioned off for Azerbaijan). We might also ask: Where are the Roma now? The Hmong? The Hmar / Kuki? Of course, not ALL ethnic minorities are displaced from their homeland. The Sikhs are still in Punjab; the Yazidis are still (barely) in northern Mesopotamia; the Kurds are still in, well, Kurdistan; and the Druze are still in the northern Levant. Such communities often have their own diaspora—as with the Armenians, some of whom ventured into the upper Caucuses; and—later—Los Angeles, California.}

{111 Though Hungarian is now characterized as more of a Slavic language, its Magyar roots are, of course, Uralic (see Endnote 112 below). Other Uralic languages (those in the Baltic region: Finnish, Estonian, and Karelian) began forming much earlier—in pre-Turkic times (as a proto-Balto-Finnic tongue that had migrated from the Ural region). The indigenous precursors to languages like Mari, Sami, and Suomi (postulated as variants of "Finno-Permic") melded with Old Norse during the Middle Ages. This hybridization was largely due to the hegemony of the Danes and Swedes

into the Baltic region during the Livonian Crusades. Slavic infusions had already occurred during the epoch of Varangians, with the hegemony of the Kieven Rus—a process that would continue into the modern age under Tzarist Russia. It's no surprise, then, that Finnish is now more associated with Scandinavia than with its distant origins in the Eurasian Steppes.}

{112 The Hungarians (qua Magyars) began as the Khanty-Mansi (a.k.a. "Voguls"): a Turkic people closely related to the Bashkirs; as they shared Kara-Yakupovo origins. In the Early Middle Ages, they—along with myriad other Tatars—migrated westward from the Ural region into eastern Europe. They made it all the way to the Carpathian Basin (a region known as Pannonia at the time); and later asserted a novel identity under the Arpad dynasty c. 855. The kingdom transitioned to Christianity c. 1000 under the "Nagy-Fejedelem" [Grand Prince], Vajk (who was re-christened "Istvan" [Stephen]: the Christianized name that had been taken by his father). That transition occurred pursuant to Stephen's alliance with the (Germanic) Ottonians in the north (solidified with his betrothal to the Ottonian princess, Gisele of Bavaria; sister of the future Holy Roman Emperor, Henry II). While the (Frankish / Saxon) Ottonians were Roman Catholic (going back to the Carolingians), the tongue of the Magyars would have thereafter been transformed by the prevalence of Old Church Slavonic—liturgical language of the Eastern Empire—in their discourse. A notable Turkic onomastic that remained in the Magyar lexicon was "Kalman", which the reader might recognize as the original surname of the Rothschilds (see Postscript 1). Stephen was the son of Geza, who's mother was a [k]Hazar princess.}

{113 The small set of Bukharan Jews—who ended up settling between the Syr Darya and Amu Darya at some point in the Middle Ages—were not originally Turkic. They seem to have originated in the vicinity of Merv, migrating eastward from the northeastern edge of Persia—through Khwarazm (an oasis region on the edge of the Kyzyl-kum desert) and into the Fergana Valley—for reasons that are difficult to ascertain. Some seem to have made it as far east as Samarkand and Balkh. Small Jewish communities had resided in Persia as early the Parthian period, likely in Daylam / Hyrkania. (In the 3rd century A.D., Sassanid "shah" Shapur had a friendly relationship with the "amora", Samuel bar Abba of Nehardea, showing that the Persian rulers were on good terms with Jews i their domain.) This northeastward route was not unknown to world history—as attested by the Hellenization of Bactrian culture and the Syriac influences of Sogdian culture (throughout Late Antiquity). The movement of Persians into that region actually dates back to the Iron-Age

“Dahaeans”. It is likely that the movement of Persian Jews toward Bukhara may have been related to the activity of Radhanite merchants along the Silk Road, in conjunction with the movement of the Sogdians, Mishars / Nizhgars, and Burtas.}

{114 Note that, even in their aggressive expansion out of Khorasan, the hegemonic Seljuks (who spoke Oghuz Turkic) did not bother venturing north of the Aral Sea (that is: north of Khwarazm) to meddle in the affairs of the Yabgu (who were also Oghuz)…or bother confronting any of the Kumen-Kipchak tribes that remained from the heyday of the Kangar Union…let alone risk an encounter the hostile Kara-Khanids farther to the northeast. Bottom line: The territory east of [k]Hazaria was not an enticing place to venture for, well, ANYONE. Note that the Seljuks were not inclined to venture due eastward either; as, closer to the Hindu Kush, the Ghaznavids were a potent force. So WESTWARD they eventually went, through Persia, across northern Mesopotamia, into Anatolia…bringing the Oghuz Turkic tongue with them. Hence the predominant language in modern Anatolia: Turkish.}

{115 Semiotic pertinence does not always track with linguistic inheritance, as the significance of memes can change as they migrate from one cultural milieu to another. Find this befuddling? Consider the term, “democracy”: an adaptation of the Greek “demo-kratia, which was derived from “demos kratos” [rule by the people], an ideation that emerged in ancient Athens. Neither English nor German–nor any of the Romance languages–have much of a Hellenic linguistic basis; yet the variations on the lexeme (and the concept) were adopted nevertheless; primarily due to superficial ideological affinities. In the modern world, those who use this term are not necessarily Greek, nor do they necessarily seek to uphold any kind of Hellenistic legacy. Oftentimes, they are not even interested in, well, ACTUAL democracy. It’s a buzz-term that has become largely disconnected from its etymology. In other words: The linguistic inheritance became untethered from the semiotic pertinence—an eventuality most flagrantly illustrated by the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea.}

{116 As it happened, one of the great Ashkenazi rabbis of the era died that fateful year (1492). Jacob Margolioth of Nuremberg had maintained an excellent relationship with the Holy Roman Emperor, Frederick III—who had gone so far as to consult the rabbi for advice on matters involving the Jewish communities in his domain. Indeed, it was Frederick III who chartered the “Judengasse” [Jewish Lane] in Frankfurt. (!) This indicates that, until then, Germany was relatively hospitable to

Jews (pace the Duke of Bavaria, Albert IV). Jacob passed away in Worms precisely when the worst of the pogroms were about to be underway. For more on this, see Endnote 26 above.}

{117 Further work needs to be done on the vestiges of Turkic culture that lingered for centuries in Ashkenazic culture. One might start with Routledge Revivals' "Turkic Oral Epic Poetry" by Karl Reichl. Make no mistake: Identifying residual traces of [k]Hazarian heritage in Yiddishkeit is sure to be a thankless task, as it will likely render one persona non grata in Reactionary circles. So be it. Bold scholarship is undeterred by obdurate proponents of the status quo.}

{118 To keep these numbers in perspective: As a result of the pogroms of the late 15th and early 16th centuries, there were fewer than a million Jews in all of Europe—probably far fewer—by the end of the 16th century. That's six centuries after the [k]Hazarian diaspora would have begun: a displacement that would have involved tens—or even hundreds—of thousands. Demographically, the impact of this amount of Turkic Jews arriving in Eastern Europe would not have been trivial.}

{119 The other notable figure in Occitania at the time (the late 11th century) was Isaac ben Merwan. He would be followed by his famed pupils, Meshullam ben Jacob of Lunel and Moses ben Joseph [ben Merwan] of Narbonne…and then the latter's famed pupil, Abraham ben Isaac of Narbonne. Later, there was Abraham ben David of Narbonne (father of Issac the Blind) and his famed pupil, Abraham ben Nathan of Lunel. As mentioned, the Hachmei Provence was most known for Merwan "ha-Levi" and Moses ha-Darshan (11th century) as well as Abraham ben David and Isaac the Blind (12th century).}

{120 It's worth noting that the elision of Turkic ancestry was not unique to the Ashkenazim. The Mamluks ruled Egypt, the Levant, and the Hijaz for about three centuries (from the early 13th century to the early 16th century); and had been a prominent ethnic group in the region since the 12th century (under the Kurdish / Ayyubid ruler, Salah ad-Din; a.k.a. "Saladin"). They were Turkic (Kipchak, Cumen, and Oghuz); yet today, few Arabs from that region (spec. those with Mamluk ancestry) openly speak of their Turkic blood.}

{121 Consider a Wayne University paper from 2013 entitled: "No Evidence from Genome-Wide Data of a Khazar Origin for the Ashkenazi Jews" (published in vol. 85 of the university's "Human Biology"). The authors openly concede: "Because the Khazar population has left no obvious modern descendants that could enable a clear

test for a contribution to Ashkenazi Jewish ancestry, the Khazar hypothesis has been difficult to examine using genetics." They add that "because only limited genetic data have been available from the Caucasus region, and because these data have been concentrated in populations that are genetically close to populations from the Middle East, the attribution of any signal of Ashkenazi-Caucasus genetic similarity to Khazar ancestry rather than shared ancestral Middle Eastern ancestry has been problematic." Here's the problem: They gathered their samples from CURRENT denizens of the area of the former [k]Hazaria ("the region historically associated with the Khazar Khaganate," as they put it). They then declare that they found little parity with Ashkenazi samples. OF COURSE they didn't find parity. They were taking samples FROM THE WRONG PEOPLE. Myriad ethnic groups have been in that region (the Pontic Steppes, the Caucuses) in the intervening thousand-plus years. The researchers should have limited their sample to those who are KNOWN to have most likely descended from the [k]Hazars—like the Kumyks, Kalmyks, Bashkirs, and Sabirs. Also: Is there some inter-mixture of some European DNA in TODAY'S Ashkenazi genome? Of course there is. There has been miscegenation with both European Jews AND gentiles in the thousand years SINCE. The question is: What did the genome look like PRIOR TO such miscegenation—that is: a millennium ago? The authors fail to consider this elementary point.}

{122 The honorific "Tzar" [alt. "Tsar"; sometimes rendered "Czar" / "Csar"] was first used by the Bulgars in the late 7th century, as a more Slavic rendering of the Latin "Caesar" (the title that had been used for Roman emperors since Gaius Octavius c. 27 B.C.) It was not used as an official title until the late 10th century, when it was adopted by the Armenian "Kometopuli" dynasty of the first Bulgarian Empire. Later, the term was adopted by Michael Yaro-slavich of Tver (ruler of the Kieven Rus) at the beginning of the 14th century; as an onomastic way to differentiate himself from the "Khans" of the Golden Horde. It was also adopted by Stefan Dushan in 1345 (in lieu of the Byzantine honorific, "basileus") when he became ruler of the Serbs, Albanians, Bulgars, Macedonians, and Greeks. The first official use of "Tzar" by Russians was by the despot, Ivan IV Vasilyevich (known to history as "Ivan the Terrible") in 1547, whereupon he re-branded the Rurikid dynasty. When I use the term here, I am simply referring to the rulers of Kieven Rus (which eventually became the Grand Duchy of Moscow).}

{123 Svyato-slav Igorevich [Holy-Glory, son of Igor] was ultimately the ruler who conquered the [k]Hazar Empire. Regarding the origins of what we now call the "Russians", we need to go back to the Varangians—a Nordic peoples who merged

with the ancient Slavs (primarily, the Drevlians). Their first dynasty was Rurikid. Notable was the ruler, Oleg “the Wise” of Novgorod who first made inroads into the [k]Hazarian settlement of Kiev (ref. the Schechter Letter; also see the Endnote 87). Located as it was on the Dnieper River, it was on a key trading route from the Baltic region (i.e. the principality of Novgorod) down to the Black Sea. Oleg conquered Smolensk, at the northern end of the river, c. 882. Soon thereafter, Kiev—farther down river—would be overtaken. And less than a century later (in the late 960’s), the [k]Hazarian imperium in the north Caucuses would fall. The Pechenegs (from the far east) were subsequently able to surge into the former [k]Hazaria—sweeping across the Pontic Steppes, eventually reaching the Dnieper River. It was there, in 972, that they ambushed Svyatoslav and killed him. Soon thereafter, Vladimir “the Great” of Novgorod anointed himself Grand Prince of Kiev (that is: as ruler of the Kievan Rus). Strategically, his wives were Scandinavian, Bohemian, and Macedonian (that is: Nordic, Slavic, and Hellenic). It was the marriage to the last (Byzantine princess Anna Porphyrogenita) that prompted his conversion to Christianity c. 989. By the turn of the millennium, what had formerly been [k]Hazara was being Christianized. The pagans (largely Tengri-ists) were being converted, while many of the [k]Hazarian Jews (esp. those who did not end up converting to Christianity) were displaced westward. This transformation occurred on into the 11th century. While the ruler, Yaro-slav [Fierce Glory] “the Wise” had his hands full subduing the Pechenegs, the [k]Hazarian diaspora migrated into Eastern Europe.}

{124 For more on the Sephardic ideal known as “Adab”, see Maria Rosa Menocal’s “The Ornament Of The World”. For more on the disjuncture between Sephardic and Ashkenazi Jewry, see Jose Faur’s “In The Shadow Of History”. That the right-wing incarnation of Zionism emerged primarily amongst the Ashkenazim is explicable due to a variety of factors. First and foremost was the need for Jews in Eastern Europe to find refuge during the Third Reich. Historically, the Ashkenazim have been far more parochial, while the Sephardim have been more cosmopolitan. Moreover, by the 20th century, the Sephardim—while Semitic—had engaged in almost two thousand years of miscegenation with Arabs, Berbers, and other ethnic groups around the Mediterranean Basin: a problem for those who prioritized racial purity. With the Palestinians seen as the new adversary to Beth Israel, the thinking of Revisionist Zionists was: Hey, at least they didn’t have ARAB heritage mixed in with their own. (The irony, of course, was that Ashkenazim had an EVEN LESS Semitic ancestry than the Sephardim.)}

Postscript 1:

An interesting case-study is the lineage of one of the most infamous Ashkenazic dynasties: the Roth[en]schild family. The famed patriarch of the family was Mayer ben Amschel ben Moses ben Kalman. Of course, he came to be known by the familiar surname (meaning “Red Shield”). His father (Amschel ben Moses ben Kalman) seems to have adopted the moniker from the name of a boardinghouse in Frankfurt where he–and perhaps even his father–had been raised. It was located on the Judengasse, which had purportedly existed since the 15th century. * Little is known about the family’s background. What we do know is that Mayer’s father sent him to a “s[c]hul” in Frankonia (rather than to a Sephardic yeshiva).

But who was “Kalman” (a man who would have lived in the mid to late 17th century)? As it turns out, the name is of TURKIC origin–meaning “Remnant”. (To this day, it is a common Magyar name–including amongst Hungarian Jews.) Remnant of WHAT? The term has Biblical significance, as it means: What remains of a community after it has undergone a catastrophe. In other words: It is quite possible that the [k]Hazarian diaspora was known TO ITSELF as “Kalman”. (!)

Needless to say: Jewish people with a Semitic background would have never opted for a Turkic term in lieu of the Hebrew “She’ar”. Interestingly, Kalman’s great-grandfather was ALSO named “Kalman”, and purportedly hailed from Bavaria. (While some apocryphal tales exist, anything further back than that is purely speculative.)

It should be noted that “Kalman” is often erroneously associated with the Greco-Judaic “Kalonymos”, the medieval Irish Christian “Col[e]man”, and/or the Slavic “Koloman”. The Magyar “Kalman” has been (misleadingly) translated as any one of these–either out of orthographic convenience (when rendered across languages) or in a deliberate attempt to elide its Turkic etymology.

Indeed, this misnomer is precisely what we find with the fluctuating appellation of (Christian) King Kalman “the learned” of Hungary. He is (erroneously) referenced as “Koloman” in various historical accounts. In fact, King Kalman was of the (Turkic) Arpad dynasty, which was founded in the 9th century by the (pagan) [k]Havar “kende” [ruler]: Almos of Ung-var (son of Ügyek)…who was, it just so happened, a vassal of the [k]Hazars. HIS son was Arpad: namesake for the ensuing dynasty (the first with a distinctly Magyar pedigree). **

Legend has it that Almos [Turkic for “dreamed one”] had a preternatural birth in Ung-var (Magyar for “Fort on the Uzh River”; etymological basis for [h]Ung-varia, a.k.a. “Hungaria”). He was conceived after his mother (princess Emese of Dentü-Mogyer) was impregnated by a divine gyr-falcon [“turul”] somewhere in Dentü-Mogyer, as the story goes.

But wait. Where was “Dentü-Mogyer” (rendered “Levedia” by some Europeans)? Lo and behold: It was the Magyar name for [k]Hazaria! Almos seems to have been appointed by the khagan of the [k]Hazars; which means that Almos may well have been influenced by Judaism. The name “Kalman” is a vestige of this legacy…as the name “stuck” even after Hungary converted to Christianity. Hence the name of the Arpad king” Kalman “the Learned”. The fantastical tale of Almos’ birth may have been concocted to obfuscate his [k]Hazarian ancestry. ***

The Magyars had broken from [k]Hazar dominion c. 862. They seem to have also shared ancestry with the Chuvash [alt. “Chavash”] and Suvars [alt. “Sabirs]…who, in turn, share an ethnicity with the Bulgars. In Old Turkic, “suvar” meant horseman (a term that had been adopted from Sogdian). Lo and behold: We find that “Suvar” is often used as a given name in the Baltic region to the present day.

Even as the Magyars were a Turkic people, they ended up speaking a rather novel variation of Old Turkic. Their language (Old Hungarian) was a Uralic language, which seems to have originated in the Upper Volga region (just to the west of the Ural Mountains), and likely has Altaic / Tungusic origins. The mother tongue eventually yielded a wider language family; which came to include Baltic variants like Mari, Sami, and Suomi (for those who migrated farther to the north), yielding Finnish, Karelian, and Estonian. The Magyars, on the other hand, were a Turkic tribe who migrated to the Carpathian Basin (and into Transylvania) in the late 9th century–possibly as the "[k]Havars" [alt. "Khabars"; a.k.a. the "Khalyz" / "Khvalis" / "Khalyzians"]. (For documentation of this, see the "Novgorod First Chronicle".) The [k]Havars were a breakaway community that had been vassals of the [k]Hazar imperium; and was (also) largely Jewish. They defected to the Magyars at some point in the 840's or 850's.

Note that it would be a mistake to conflate the Magyars with the aforementioned Baltic ethnicities due to their shared Uralic linguistic roots. (Doing so would be like assuming that the Portuguese and Romanians have a shared ethnic heritage simply because they both speak a Latin-based language.) Tellingly, the other major peoples who have Uralic linguistic roots are the Cher[e]mish[i] (who speak "Mari") and the Udmurts (Turkic for "meadow people"). These are Turkic peoples who live in Tatarstan to the present day—that is: in the region where the (Turkic) Bashkirs can also still be found (on the western bank of the Ural Mountains around the Kama River). The ancestors of the Chirmesh and Udmurts were among those who boasted the ancient Turkic epic, "Ural Batyr", which was grounded in Tengri-ist theology. Hence the most notable Uralic intermediaries linking Baltic / Finnic peoples to Volga Turks are the Chermish and the Mordvins (spec. the Moksha and Erzya people).

The Komi people offer a (geographically and linguistically) intermediate case for those speaking a Uralic language, as they hail from the region near the upper Kama and upper Volga Rivers (especially between the Vetluga and Vyatka Rivers)–that is: between Tatarstan and the Baltic region. Thus we see how the language migrated northward, undergoing a metamorphosis from Old Turkic to a more distinctly Baltic tongue. ****

The fact that the Magyars migrated from the Ural region on a more southward route, to the Carpathian Basin, mustn't throw us off. To reiterate: the link between the Magyars and [k]Hazars if found with the Kabars / Khavars in the late 9th century. How many of THEM might have been Jewish at the time is anyone's guess.

Bear in mind: the [k]Hazar language seems to have been most closely related to Avar, Bulgar, and Magyar, as well as the Chuvash and Suvar / Sabir languages—all of which are categorized as Tatar / Oghuric: the Oghurs / Onogurs being a vaguely-defined (nomadic) Turkic peoples of the Eurasian Steppes. (This stemmed from the Old Uyghur linguistic line of Old Turkic, which led to the Kipchak family of tongues.)

While modern Hungarian does not exhibit a plethora of lexemes from Old Turkic, it does share the syntactic structure found in other Turkic languages. The original Magyar alphabet (Old Hungarian runes; a variant of Old Turkic runes) was, well, Turkic; as its roots were Old Uyghur (with Sogdian influences due to the influence of commerce along the Silk Road in the Eurasian Steppes). This linguistic propagation involved Kipchak—replete with the variety of Tatar / Oghuric tongues (including that spoken by the [k]Hazars). A variation on the Magyar tongue was likely Kumen—spoken by a Turkic peoples who practiced Tengri-ism and also ended up in the region (i.e. the Carpathian basin). Ottoman Turkish, on the other hand, was based on the Oghuz line of Old Turkic, which was brought to Anatolia by the Seljuks (in the 11th century) via Persia and Mesopotamia. (This is a reminder that Yiddish has nothing to do with Turk-ISH.)

The connection between the Uralic peoples and Turkic progenitors is also illustrated by the Moksha people, who's ancestors were the Burtas—residing just north of the [k]Hazar / Caspian sea. The Mokshas were an Oghuric (read: Tatar) people who were possibly related to the Alans, and—like the [k]Havars—were subjects of the [k]Hazars.

It comes as no surprise that, to this day, some Ashkenazi names have Magyar etymologies—as with, say, "Polgar" (tenant farmer; free peasant) and "Lantos" (minstrel; bard). The Ashkenazi name "[k]Husyt" may have derived from the town of "Khust", which was founded c. 1090 in Pannonia—at the confluence of the Tisa and Rika Rivers—by the Magyars (effectively the southwestern edge of Ruthenia).

Again, we encounter an obsession with bloodlines; and thus the positing of the so-called "yikhus" (noble descent), which requires Semitic ancestry…lest participants in the charade be deprived of the foundation for their desired historiography (and thus: of their ideology).

That Mayer Rothschild's great-grandfather was named Kalman…and HIS great-grandfather was also named Kalman…makes perfect sense, in light of the present thesis; especially considering the term's original meaning ("Remnant") and the history of those who used it: Turkic people from the Pontic Steppes.

{* Jewish people seem to have first settled in Frankfurt in the 13th century. (The earliest graves in the old cemetery date to c. 1270.) There were two major pogroms ["Judenschlacht"] against the city's Jewish population: the first in 1241, another in 1349. The community grew in the 15th century in the advent of Jewish expulsions from Trier (1418), Vienna (1420), Cologne (1424), Augsburg (1438), and Breslau (1453); then two more expulsions in the last decade of the century: from Magdeburg (1493) and then from Nuremberg (1499). In the midst of all this, the Judengasse [Jewish Lane] was established (c. 1462) at the behest of Holy Roman Emperor Frederick III. (Later, there would be an expulsion from Regensburg c. 1519.) Thereafter, Frankfurt became a major center of commerce.}

{** Reference the "Gesta Hungarorum"; the chronicles of Simon of Keza; and "De Administrando Imperio" by Byzantine Emperor Constantine VII Flavius Porphyrogenitus.}

{*** The tradition of surname-changing is a long one. Recall that the current monarchic family of England, the "Windsors", changed their dynastic name from "Sachsen-Coburg" during the First World War because the original surname–embraced throughout the Victorian era–was too Germanic. So the dynasty went from being named after a Saxon Dutchy (stemming from the House of Wettin) to being named after a place in Berkshire (made famous by a Norman king). The elision of ethnic backgrounds (viz. in the historical memory) is not uncommon. Byzantine Emperor Heraclius was Armenian…as was Byzantine Emperor, Basil the Macedonian. The famed Ottoman sultan, Saladin was Kurdish. English King George I was German; while English King Richard "the Lion-heart" was French. Russian Empress Catherine the Great was German; while Russian tyrant, Joseph Stalin was Georgian. German tyrant, Adolph Hitler was Austrian (and an eighth Ashkenazi). Spanish tyrant, Francisco Franco was Galician. French ruler, Napoleon Bonaparte was Italian. Italian King Victor Emmanuel II was Sardinian. The Florentine patriarch, Alessandro de Medici was half Moorish (as was the German composer, Beethoven). Often, the ethnicity of prominent figures / families does accord with their public image. (How often to we think of Steve Jobs or Ralph Nader as Arab?) Due to undesirable stigmas, Mulatto heritage has often been elided–as with Queen Charlotte of England and American icon, Alexander Hamilton (not to mention

Alexander Pushkin, Alexander Dumas, Clark Gable, and J. Edgar Hoover). Saint Nicholas of Myra (the man on whom Santa Claus is based) is typically considered white. He was actually Lycian (Anatolian). But don't tell that to Europeans whilst they celebrate a resplendently Occidental Christmas.}

{**** After the Sarmatians, it was primarily Turkic people's who populated the lower Ural region (along the lower Volga)…until, that is, the Slavic take-over under Svyatoslav in the 10th century. The potpourri of Eurasian peoples that populated the Steppes during the Middle Ages constituted a perpetually fluctuating mélange of cultures and languages—each impinging upon the other in myriad ways. Rarely can a singular, linear relationship be traced from one ethnic group to the next.}

Postscript 2:

When it comes to scholarship on any topic, the idea is to follow the evidence wherever it leads. Assess what we know, and let the chips fall where they may. Hence scholars enter into an inquiry with no vested interest in any particular verdict. Perspicacity demands nothing less.

The point is worth reiterating: I'm personally ambivalent to what the verdict on this matter happens to be–one way or the other. I don't care because IT DOESN'T MATTER. The only thing any honest scholar is concerned with is Truth. Intellectual integrity must always prevail over ideological commitments. But good luck persuading religious fanatics to accede to this maxim.

Vested interests—be they financial or ideological—entail conflicts of interest; and this disqualifies one from being a dependable (read: impartial) expositor on a given issue. Genuine scholars undertake an investigation without wedding themselves to pre-conceived notions of the subject-matter.

When we encounter a scenario in which the preponderance of evidence points to a certain explanation, yet is denied by a cult movement, we are reminded of the lengths True Believers will go to obfuscate anything that undermines their ideological claims. Under such circumstances, Truth–be it in the form of archeological evidence or historical documentation–is seen as a threat (see Endnote 48 above). After all, it doesn't matter how spurious such claims might be; they serve a purpose. So long as they are compelling, they play a crucial role in sustaining a sanctified dogmatic system. If Ashkenazim turn out to be the progeny of a Turkic people—even a Jewish Turkic people, then on what shall Revisionist Zionists stake their claim? Their dreams of ethnic purity end; and any "birthright" disintegrates.

The contention that Ashkenazim are a Semitic people (qua ancestry) has been buried beneath a mountain of countervailing evidence. As we've seen, they are primarily descendants of Turkic peoples from the Pontic Steppes. This conclusion is–admittedly–politically fraught; as it deprives Judaic ethno-nationalists of a coveted etiological myth. It comes as little surprise, then, that Revisionist Zionists–obsessed as they are with (chimerical) bloodlines–dig in their heals; and are virulently contemptuous of anyone who is candid on this matter. For their ideology is predicated on (farcical) claims of blood and soil in the Levant (see my essay on "The Land Of Purple").

Eliding Turkic ancestry is not unique to the Ashkenazim. For example, Vladimir Lenin was likely ethnic Chuvash, though he was certainly not characterized as such. (His successor, Stalin, did not consider the Turkic peoples within his dominion legitimate Russians; an alterity that accounted for the horrific pogroms he undertook against them.) Once ethnocentricity enters into the equation, all bets are off.

Those determined to propound claims of blood and soil will try to maintain the illusion of credibility for their spurious assertions about Ashkenazi provenance. For them, bloodlines matter; so they are obliged to uphold the illusion of Semitic ancestry for what was, in reality, the (now forgotten) [k]Hazarian diaspora. And so it goes: Hidebound ideologues (especially those obsessed with bloodlines; e.g. Shaul Stampfer) will fight the present thesis tooth and nail. Stampfer rests his case on three fraudulent claims: That there is no genetic, linguistic, or cultural evidence for the present thesis. On the contrary: As we've seen, there is plenty of evidence **on all three counts**.

It's worth revisiting the onomastic, "Ashkenazi". How plausible is it that a break-away segment of Sephardim would have adopted this as an ethnonym? Not likely. **In fact, during the Crusades, the indigenous (Palestinian) Jew referred to the attacking Franks as "Ashkenaz".** (!) Note that the farcical genealogies go on and on. The Hamites were assumed to account for a slew of other OTHER-IZED lineages: Kush (Nubians, and–via Nimrod–Babylonians), Mizra[c]him (Arabs), Put (Egyptians, Abyssinians, and Numidians; i.e. Berbers), and Canaan (for non-Hebrew Canaanites; esp. the Amorites). According to this scheme, it was only some of the progeny of Shem who–via [h]Eber–begat the Abrahamic linage, which originated in Chaldea. ALL of this is, of course, bunkum. It involves some combination of racism (see: the "curse of Ham") and backwards history (Africans being descendants of someone in the Middle East). But where EXACTLY was it that the fabled Ashkenaz (ben Gomer ben Japheth ben Noah) was supposed to have settled during the Bronze Age? Lo and behold: Above the Caucasus Mountains, between the Black Sea and the Caspian sea–that is: the land that would later become Khazaria. (!) (In Abrahamic lore, this was also associated with Ashkenaz's menacing uncle, Magog.) That land was later dubbed "Scythia". (The remaining Scythians–from the Sarmatians to the Alans–were associated with Gomer's other progeny.) In sum: No Jewish people with Semitic provenance would ahve ever been inclined to identify themselves as "Ashkenaz[i]".

So the query regarding the etymology of "Ashkenaz" is resolved: the [k]Hazarian diaspora was open about the fact that it was from, well, [k]Hazaria–that is: a land that ALL Jews traditionally associated with the northern Caucuses, in the Pontic Steppes. Since that is where the "Ashkenazim" were actually from, that was naturally how the [k]Hazarian diaspora identified itself. In sum: The moniker was announcing: "THIS IS WHO WE ARE". And that endonym–which is used to the present day–originally had nothing to do with the Rhineland (see Endnote 64).

It is important to bear in mind the basic tenets of the scientific method. Just as important as the (disinterested) assessment of all available evidence, a key feature of a hypothesis is its falsifiability. Put another way: The sign of a strong theory is that anyone can readily articulate the specific ways in which it might be falsified. We can then show that it has (or has not) been falsified in those specific ways.

So it goes with the matter at hand.

We have already debunked the supposition that Ashkenazim came from west European Sephardim (i.e. from France and/or the Iberian Peninsula). The only other alternative to the present thesis is that they migrated northward from the eastern end of the Mediterranean basin (the Balkan Peninsula, Anatolia, and/or the Levant). If it can be shown that the sudden appearance of Ashkenazim a thousand years ago is completely–or even mostly–attributable to such a migration, then there would be reason to question the salience of a [k]Hazarian diaspora into Eastern Europe. Such a migration is often proposed in a gambit to refute the present thesis. The problem, though, is that there is no evidence for such an event.

If not from western Europe, then from where? The only other (debunked) proposition is as follows: Ashkenazim BECAME “Ashkenazim” after having migrated from the eastern end of the Mediterranean basin at some point during Late Antiquity. But as we’ve seen, the historical record refutes this. Recall that the appearance of synagogues across the land between the northeastern of Mediterranean rim (spec. the Balkan and Italic peninsulas) and the Rhineland follows a timeline that is the OPPOSITE of what we’d expect if said proposition were true. It moves southeastward rather than the other way around. Moreover, it begins only AFTER the community-in-question was already established. So the archeological record of such communities (in southeastern Europe) is after the fact.

And with respect to the Roman-held Middle-East through all of Late Antiquity: Between the relevant exilic flash-points (the Roman crack-down c. 70 and/or the Bar Kokhba revolt in the early 130’s) and the establishment of a distinct Ashkenazic community, there is an inexplicable NINE-CENTURY hiatus. This gigantic temporal gap cannot be accounted for by any historical events.

Suffice to say: If there HAD existed nine centuries of Jewish people migrating from the eastern end of the Mediterranean basin into northeastern Europe, there would be an extensive historical record of it. This is especially so considering it would have occurred during the epochs of the Amoraim and Geonim…and into the Masoretic

period; and would have surely been a major topic of discussion. Because not a shred of documentation for such a migration exists (e.g. northward along the Amber Road in the late 10th thru early 12th centuries), proponents of “received wisdom” are forced to go from merely far-fetched to downright absurd. In other words: They are obliged to just make stuff up.

Recall: In the 11th century, Rashi mentioned a group of foreign Jews who spoke a peculiar language and dwelled in a land called Ashkenaz. This is how we know Rashi was Sephardic, not Ashkenazi. (Clearly, Rashi did not consider HIMSELF, or his followers, Ashkenazi.) Also in the 11th century, the Mesopotamian “Gaon”, Hai ben Sherira [bar Hanina] of Pumbedita (Nehardea) mentioned faraway Jews who’d recently posed questions to him. He did not identify these interlocutors as Sephardim, but rather as “Ashkuza”. Such alterity is telling. Even then, Ashkenazim were considered an entirely separate ethnic group from Sephardim…as opposed to some divergent sect of (west European) Sephardim who’d simply migrated eastward.

In the late 12th century, at no point did the famed Sephardic expositor, Moses ben Maimon ben Joseph of Cordoba (a.k.a. “Maimonides”) lament a recent schism in world Jewry. Neither he, nor any of the denizens of Hachmei Provence in Occitania, nor any of the Jewish scholars in Andalusia, mention a break-away contingent that—for the time being, at least—eschewed the Talmudic tradition. It makes more sense that the Jews-in-question did not have a Talmudic tradition to begin with; and only acquired it later on. Were Ashkenazim a faction that had broken away from the Sephardic world? No.

We might suppose that Sephardim of the time were obliquely aware of a diaspora of Turkic Jews that had arrived in Eastern Europe (from the Eurasian Steppes) over the course of the previous two centuries; but this would not have been considered an earth-shattering development—at least, not for a man living amongst Karaites in Egypt. What WOULD have been earth-shattering, though: A partition of Beth Israel due to a wayward faction of Sephardim in the Rhineland. That did not occur; so it’s no surprise that no prominent Sephardic Jew thought to reference such a development anywhere in all their vast writings.

By the 13th century, most of the world’s Jews resided in the Middle East and North Africa. Anatolia was under the (Seljuk) Sultanate of Rum, precursor to the Ottoman Empire; Mesopotamia and Persia were under the (Turko-Mongolic) Ilkhanate, prior to its fragmentation into myriad fiefdoms; Egypt and the Levant were under the

(Turkic) Mamluks; and the Maghreb—along with parts of Andalusia—was under the remnants of the fractured (Berber) Almohad regime. In the early 13th century, the global Jewish population was about 2 million, roughly 250,000 of whom resided in the Holy Roman Empire (western Europe). There was a smattering of small Jewish communities in eastern Europe, yet estimates at the time seem not to have included those who resided in Slavic lands (that is: Kieven Rus and Greater Lithuania). It's as if (Turkic) Jews were not recognized as part of Beth Israel at the time; at least not by mainline Jewish expositors. *

In the midst of this inquiry, there is a historical question that cannot be avoided: Did the [k]Hazarian Jews just VANISH? If the present thesis is NOT true, then we are forced to explain: What in heaven's name happened to all of them? In the advent of Svyatoslav's conquest c. 965, there is no record of genocide, nor is there any record of a mass conversion of Jews into Eastern Rite Christianity (that of the Byzantines and the Slavs). Either event would have been significant; and documented by those involved.

Notably, just after we STOP hearing about [k]Hazars as a people, we BEGIN hearing about the Ashkenazim as a people. Coincidence? Probably not. How else might this be explained? There is no record of a massive swath of Sephardim in north-eastern Europe suddenly breaking off from their forebears; let alone doing so at exactly that time. As we've seen, the Sephardic communities remained remarkably cohesive through the Middle Ages—a fact made plain by the "Tosafist" tradition.

Unlike the "Tosafot", the Ashkenazim did not come from a Talmudic background. Even so, the [k]Hazars used Abrahamic tropes ("There is one god; and Moses is his messenger" embossed on their coins) and distinctly Judaic iconography (menorahs carved into stone walls). So there is really only ONE explanation for the rather abrupt emergence non-Talmudic Jewish communities in Eastern Europe at that time.

We might also recall the vestigial Turkic onomastics. Behold Ashkenazi names like Burak, Sevim, Khanum / Khatum, Kalman, A[r]slan, Mann[is], Zalman, Gabor, S[h]agan, Kaplan, K[h]agan[ek], Kahan / Khanin, Kazan, Khesin, Perchek, Kozar, Lazar, Kilimnik, Krak[h]mal, Bak[k]al, Bak[h]shi, Pamuk, Kulaga, etc. all have a Turkic etymology. The same goes for many surnames with a Slavic suffix: "Jeljaszewicz", "Sulkiewicz" / "Sulkowicz", "Achmatowicz", "Abakanowicz", etc. Other surnames had a more Slavic origin—as with Kazh-dan [alt. "Kashtan"] and "Bog-dan".

It might be noted that there are various other Ashkenazi surnames that likely have Turkic etymologies—including Shu-pak (“shu” means “this” in Turkic; “-pak” means “pure” in Persian and Turkic) and Bog-oraz (while “bog” is Slavic for “god”, “oraz” is Turkic for “fast”). ** Meanwhile, during the Middle Ages, there were Lithuanian shtetlekh (Jewish villages) referred to as “Kozara”, “Kozari”, and “Kosarze”. This is further evidence for the present thesis.

Of course, very rarely do Ashkenazim STILL use overtly Turkic family names. As would be expected, the onomastic vestiges of their Turkic forebears became increasingly sparse over the centuries. (A lot can happen over the course of a thousand years.) In light of the circumstances in which they found themselves after the dissolution of the [k]Hazar Empire, such onomastic molting makes sense. And the adoption of secular vocational names (using the Germanic suffixes “-man” and “-er”) in the indigenous tongue of their new homeland is exactly the sort of thing we’d expect. (Also recall the 50+ Germanic toponyms enumerated earlier, which would probably not have been adopted by Jews who hailed from an already-European background; who would have migrated from western Europe with Semitic onomastics already in tact.) As we’ve seen, all Sephardic tongues boasted palpable Semitic elements—whether Ladino, Zarfadic, or any of the other creole languages enumerated earlier. Old Yiddish had NONE.

Another clue is the Turkic origins of key terms in the Yiddish lexicon–from “yarmulke” and “kalpak” / “kolpik” (male headwear) to “borekh-habo” (a customary greeting). As discussed, the onomastic vestiges of Turkic even applies to the endonym for the people themselves: “Ashkuza”. What makes this striking is that, as a label for the Rhineland, “Ashkenaz” did not exist before the 11th century. Not once was it used by anyone in Beth Israel to refer to that particular geographic region…UNTIL, that is, it was used by the first “Ashkenazim” (when the [k]Hazarian diaspora established communities there). In other words: This particular geographical label derived from the endonym; not the other way around. It was coined only when the [k]Hazars (self-identified as “Ashkuza”) arrived in that new land, and felt obliged to give that land a name. ***

Recall that the only other time “Ashkenaz” was used by those of the Abrahamic Faith to allude to a PLACE was when the region in the Eurasian Steppes (i.e. Scythia; later [k]Hazaria) was associated with the Biblical figure by that name. (It is likely that the Biblical figure was derived from the latent Assyrian exonym, “Ashkuza”: an

ethnonym intimating alterity; see Endnote 42.) Before then, no Jewish literature referred to Germania as “Ashkenaz”–not any Talmudic literature, nor even the Tosafot who dwelled in Frankish lands.

To recapitulate: Upon arriving in the Rhineland, the [k]Hazarian diaspora adopted a new identity. So it stands to reason that, when we survey the Yiddish vernacular, we do not find more residual traces of Turkic than we do.

As with any other kind of religiosity, Faith does not preclude one from coming to terms with historical facts…even if those facts pose a problem for those clinging to outmoded dogmas. Progressive denizens of Beth Israel have no problem eschewing folk history for REAL history; as their Faith is predicated neither on racial purity nor on fanciful historiography.

Right-wing proselytes will harbor a seething contempt for any scholar who has the gall to shed light on things that they would much rather remain obfuscated (that is: anything that refutes the sanctified narrative on which their central conceit depends). They insist that Ashkenazim had nothing whatsoever to do with the [k]Hazars (or ANY Turkic peoples); and vice versa. So far as they’re concerned, all Ashkenazim hail from the bloodlines originating in the Judean countryside. End of discussion. As I hope to have shown: Given the panoply of archeological, cultural, genetic, onomastic, and linguistic evidence, such a position is untenable.

We might bear in mind that, when it comes to ethno-centric ideologues engaging in programmatic obfuscation, Revisionist Zionists are not the only culprits. Scholarship on the [k]Hazar Empire was forbidden in the Soviet Union. Joseph Stalin (an ethnic Georgian) despised the notion that a powerful Jewish empire had occupied much of central (present-day) Russia, and had been influential in medieval Slavic lands. Consequently, he ordered references to [k]Hazar history be expunged from all texts. His motive was clear: The ACTUAL history undermined the gilded Russian legacy—as well as claims of Russian dominion across Eurasia—he so avidly sought to promulgate. He was especially incensed by the Eurasian theory of Russian history, which was championed at the time by such scholars as George Vernadsky. This wasn’t just a matter of Russian nationalism; it was impelled by virulent anti-Semitism as well.

Such contempt was not an isolated case; as Stalin did the same for OTHER Turkic-Mongolian peoples—from Kazakhs to Kyrgyz. He went so far as to commit a virtual ethnocide of the Mongols—replete with the systematic destruction of their texts and artifacts.

Again, the attempted cover-up serves to expose precisely what the perpetrators are trying to obfuscate. And as usual, the attempted cover-up ens up showing the rest of us precisely where we need to look. Those with Truth on their side don't find the need to hide anything. "Look away; there's nothing to see here" is always a red flag. Honest scholars say: "By all means, look into it; and see for yourself."

Even in the current era, with our panoply of modern technology, things can be expunged from the record; and from people's memories along with it. Consider an example from contemporary pop culture: The original music video for Bryan Adams' 1991 ballad, "Everything I Do (I Do It For You)". At some point, the video was wiped from the internet (likely for reasons having to do with corporate ownership). Not only did the video disappear; any hint that it is gone is also nowhere to be found. In fact, there is no evidence—anywhere on the world wide web—that the original video even existed. Bear in mind, this was one of the biggest music videos of MTV's heyday (the 80's and 90's). Gone. With no mention of the fact that it is gone. (But fear not: The original music video can still be found in the film's DVD extras, preserved in dust-covered plastic cases in closets across America.)

To reiterate: Not only is there—now—no trace of this music video anywhere on the internet; there is no acknowledgement that THERE EVER WAS such a video. In its place is a different music video: a black- and-white concert video rather than the one with Adams performing in Sherwood forest [really Sheffield, England], in color, interspersed with scenes from the film, "Robin Hood: Prince Of Thieves". The idea, it seems, is to pretend that the concert video was the official video all along.

Without acknowledgement, people forget. This is a reminder that part of a cover-up is covering up that there was a cover-up. After all, an aspect of forgetting is not realizing that one has forgotten. Therein lies the rub: It is difficult to find something when it doesn't even occur to us that there is anything to look for. There's a difference between not recalling where one has placed one's car keys and not even remembering that, at some point in the past, one had car keys. In the former case, one is at least trying to find something. In the latter case, it doesn't even occur to one that anything has been lost.

It comes as little surprise, then, that the [k]Hazars are not featured in Ashkenazi historiography. Ashkenazim would only have been inclined to talk about [k]Hazarian Jews if they were different from themselves (i.e. those Turkic Jews from the Pontic Steppes). They would NOT have been inclined to tout their own former identity—which was, by then, eschewed. It speaks volumes that the early Ashkenazim do not mention the [k]Hazars qua [k]Hazars. Similarly, the Nabataeans are not explicitly accounted for in Islamic lore. Why not? The Arabs who became Mohammedans saw THEMSELVES as (former) Nabataeans. (I explore this in my essay on “The Meccan Cube”.)

Another example serves to illustrate this point. Even though their ancestors were part of a Celtic diaspora originating in Gaul, the (Gaelic) Irish rarely commemorate their Gallic provenance. Continental Celts have no role to play in their most hallowed origin myths; so the etiological musings begin in Albion with the fabled “Tuath De Danann”. To construe the absence of European Celts in the sacred histories of the Gaels as an indication that they had no Celtic provenance would be rather daft. Yet that is precisely the sort of thing we encounter in ancient Gaelic folklore. Historians do not let this deter them from studying actual history.

When it comes to official historiographies, the omitted part is precisely where we need to look THE MOST if we are to understand what really occurred. The “catch” is that such tidbits are not readily available. Proponents of conventional wisdom depend on nobody having the time or the will to do a lot of digging. Why would anyone? For those wed to the vaunted legacy that was crafted by forebears, there’s little incentive to do so (which explains why the present monograph is the first of its kind). Once sanctified, bespoke historiographies become inveterate—a contrived heritage gilded for posterity. Whatever’s been left out is not meant to be found. Why let the truth get in the way of a good story?

The preceding monograph demonstrated how much must be elided in order to maintain the farce that is the Semitic origins of all Ashkenazi Jews. My aim was to show the lengths to which ideologues will go in order to maintain a sacrosanct–though groundless–etiological myth; especially when the credence of their entire ideology is at stake. (For another case-study of this, see my essay, “America’s Founding Origin Myth”, where I show how much theocrats in the United States must occlude in order to get their claims of Christian Nationalism to seem remotely plausible.) For ideologues engaging in apologetics, being unscrupulous is not a bug; it’s a feature. To rationalize forgone conclusions, perspicacity can only ever get in the way.

There is a perverse irony to this obduracy. For the supposition that the only way to be a REAL Jew is to have Semitic ancestry is itself born of racism. It is a tenet on which Aryan Supremacists and Judeo-Supremacists concur. Yet once all ethno-centric worldviews are discarded, the entire issue becomes moot; and we can proceed with attending to global human solidarity—celebrating our resplendent ethnic diversity without losing touch of our shared humanity.

The fact of the matter is: The ancestors of the first Ashkenazi Jews were primarily [k]Hazars. There is no reason for anyone to take exception to this–or any other–genealogical reality. Why not? When it comes to assessing the value of our fellow humans, bloodlines shouldn't matter.

{* When it comes to ethnographies during the relevant period, also worth consulting is the first chapter of volume I of S.M. Dubnow's "History Of The Jews In Russia And Poland: From The Earliest Times To The Present Day", published in 1916.}

{** While "raz" does have a meaning in Hebrew ("secret"), no Jew would have used a non-Judaic term for god (that is: the Slavic "bog" in lieu of the various monikers in the Hebraic lexicon). In any case, there was already a Hebrew name for "secret of god": "Raz-i-El". "Bog-oraz" meant "fast god" in a Slavic-Turkic context. And if interpreted instead as the Slavic for "god set apart"; it is even more odd that they opted for this Gentile moniker instead of the well-known Hebrew moniker, "adonai m'kadesh".}

{*** It is telling that there were no Coh[e]ns or Levis (on record) amongst Ashkenazim until the last five centuries–that is: after Sephardim and Misra[c]him began intermixing with the Ashkenazic community. There is another indication that an early variant of "Ashkenaz" was used by Turkic Jews as an endonym. Some places in Anatolia (located at the western end of the Silk Road) were founded under that name–towns like Is[h]kenaz, Es[h]kenaz, and Ash[k]anaz. Israeli geneticist, Eran El-Haik has done research on this; and attributed it to the [k]Hazarian influence on those trade routes. In other words, the locations were associated with TURKIC Jewish merchants along the Silk Road. It is important, though, not to jump to the (erroneous) conclusion that Anatolia was a place of Ashkenazi settlement–let alone of Ashkenazi origin–as El-Haik insinuates. There are other explanations for the propagation of Turkic onomastics.}

APPENDIX:

THIS thesis—let's call it the "Kalonymos connection thesis"—is simply that there is a continuous genealogical lineage from the (Sephardic) Kalonymos family to Samuel "ha-[c]Hasid" of Regensburg and/or to his student, Eleazar ben Judah of Mainz (a.k.a. "Rokea[c]h").

The former is said to have been the son of the (possibly apocryphal) "Kalonymos the Elder" of Speyer. Upon pursuing his storied career in Regensburg, he was said to have performed many miracles, and even seen a vision of the prophet, Elijah. He was employed as a seer, and claimed to know the exact date of Beth Israel's day of redemption. He indulged in (oft zany) mysticism, as attested in his "Sefer ha-Kavod" [Book of Majesty]. So exactly how much about him (in the official record) we should take seriously is up for debate. (It was his son, Judah, who founded "[c]Hasidei Ashkenaz".)

The latter pursued his career in Worms. His father was (purportedly) referred to as Judah ben Kalonymos ben Moses, who hailed from Speyer. (HIS father, then, was named "Kalonymos ben Moses", which correlates with two figures in the genealogy outlined in this Appendix: Kalonymos II ben Moses II and Kalonymos IV ben Moses III. Such striking correlation—an dual coincidence—indicates that some genealogical

contrivance may have been afoot.) As the story goes: Rokea[c]h's father (Judah) was the student of a man named Shemar-i-Yah ben Mordekai…who was a student of the first Tosafist, Isaac ben Asher of Speyer ("Riba")…who was, in turn, a student of Rashi. If we were to assume that all this is accurate, it would entail that Rokea[c]h was Sephardic.

My contention is that the Kalonymos connection thesis is spurious. To be clear: The contention is—effectively—that the Kalonymos family went from bieng Sephardic to being Ashkenazi. In considering this, questions arise: Was this contrived lineage an attempt to establish Sephardic ancestry for Ashkenazim (spec. [c]Hasidei Ashkenaz)? To link Ashkenazi mysticism c. 1200 to the Talmudic tradition? To fabricate ethnic continuity throughout Beth Israel? All three, perhaps?

Let's start with the limited amount we know about this storied family. It is documented that Kalonymos III ben Meshullam III was from France. In the late 11th century, he moved to the Rhineland (Mainz); whereby he became involved in legends of the apocryphal "Amnon". As the story goes, he then went to Worms, where he perished during the Rhineland Massacres. All his ancestors (starting with his father, Meshullam III, going back) hailed from the Italic peninsula—primarily Lucca and Rome. (Hence the Romanized version of the surname: "Kalonymus".) The moniker is Greek for "good name"—the equivalent of "Shem-Tov" in Hebrew. * (That Hebrew honorific would be used in the 18th-century by the Ashkenazi mystic who founded [c]Hassidism: Yisra-El ben El-i-Ezer [alt. "Israel ben Eleazar"], who claimed direct descent from King David.)

As might be expected, the contention-in-question stems from a fixation on patrilineal bloodlines. The patriarch of this fabled lineage (the original "Meshullam") would have lived in the late 8th century. The name is based on the (Kohathite) Levite figure in the Hebrew Bible who aided the prophet, Ezra. According to the official narrative, a Roman Jew by that auspicious name sired Ith-i-El [sign of god], who sired Meshullam II, who sired Moses, who sired Jekut[h]-i-El, who sired the first Kalonymos c. 900. THAT man (Kalonymos) then sired Moses II, who sired Kalonymos II, who sired Meshullam III (a.k.a. "Meshullam the Great"): the father of Kalonymos III (better known to history as "Kalonymos ben Meshullam").

While in Mainz, Kalonymos III sired Moses III, who sired Kalonymos IV. So the question becomes: How do we get from Kalonymos IV (who would have lived in the mid-to-late 11th century) to the man known as Kalonymos ben Isaac <A> ben Eleazar ben Isaac <B> (a.k.a. "Kalonymos the Elder"), who is said to have died c.

1126? That later Kalonymos purportedly lived in Speyer, and—**as the story goes**—was the father of Samuel “ha-[c]Hasid” [the Pious]…who, in turn, sired Judah: founder of [c]Hasidei Ashkenaz at Regensburg (Bavaria) in the late 12th century.

To reiterate: Many tall tales surround Samuel “ha-[c]Hasid”. He was said to have been a miracle-worker and an oracle. It’s no wonder his acolytes referred to him as “ha-Nabi” [the Prophet] and “ha-Kodesh” [the Holy]; and wove fantastical yarns (e.g. about the mythical golem) around him. Given the cultic nature of his following, the credence of many accounts of this figure is rather dubious. Much of it is fantastical hagiography, composed by acolytes.

Upon scrutiny, we find that the contention-in-question does not hold much water; as the Kalonymos family was primarily dwelling in Occitania (southern France) in the 11th thru 15th centuries—as with, say, the famed Kononymos ben Todros (who lived in Narbonne). In the late 13th / early 14th century, Kalonymos ben Kalonymos (a denizen of Hachmei Provence) lived in Avignon, then finished his life back in Rome. In the late 14th / early 15th century, Isaac Nathan ben Kalonymos lived in Avignon as well.

The renowned Meshullam ben Jacob lived in Lunel in the 12th century. He would be followed by his famous sons: Asher ben Meshullam and Aaron ben Meshullam. (Meanwhile, Samuel ben Judah “Ibn Tibbon” lived in Lunel in the late 12th / early 13th century; and “Abba” Mari ben Moses ben Joseph lived there in the late 13th / early 14th century.) There was no trend of Occitanian Jews–let alone members of the Kalonymos family–migrating up to Lotharingia. They’d been Occitanian all along; and all remained Occitanian—in the tradition of the Hachmei Provence.

The idea is to connect the “[c]Hasidei Ashkenaz” movement (that is: the brand of medieval Judaic mysticism that is ipso facto associated with the Ashkenazim) to Sephardim via the (Sephardic) Kalonymos lineage…culminating in the teachings of Judah ben Samuel “ha-[c]Hasid” and/or Eleazar “Rokea[c]h” c. 1200. But HOW?

Even if it means grasping at straws, let’s try. According to the official narrative, Eleazer’s father was named “Judah ben Kalonymos ben Moses”, and was originally from Speyer. Let’s suppose that THIS Eleazar (who taught in Mainz) may have been conflated with Kalonymos the Elder’s grandfather (who was also named Eleazar and also taught in Mainz); and that the grandfather of THAT (singular) Eleazar was Kalonymos IV (son of Moses III). Thus “Eleazar Rokea[c]h” (who, according to this hypothesis, must have lived at least a century earlier than reported) is really the

same person as “Eleazar ha-Gadol”. Granted, nobody knows who Kalonymos IV’s son was. No matter. We need only suppose that, whoever it was, it was this singular Eleazar’s father. And that singular Eleazar had a grandson: Kalonymos the Elder (purported father of Samuel “ha-[c]Hasid”). Presto! This completes the proposed lineage.

There are several problems with this.

- Given all the above, it is still possible that “Kalonymos the Elder” is largely apocryphal; so the true father of Samuel “ha-[c]Hasid” was, well, someone else (read: not a Kalonymos).
- The father of Eleazar “Rokea[c]h” was named JUDAH (note: not Judah ben Samuel “ha-[c]Hasid”); whereas the father of Eleazar “ha-Gadol” was named ISAAC <B>. They couldn’t both be the designated son of Kalonymos IV.
- Eleazar “Rokea[c]h” lived in the late 12th / early 13th century; as he studied under Isaac ben Asher “ha- Levi” (a.k.a. “Riba”), who was himself a student of Rashi. (Rokea[c]h also studied with Judah ben Samuel “ha-[c]Hasid”.) Eleazar “ha-Gadol”, on the other hand, purportedly lived in the 11th century; as he was the student of Gershom ben Judah, and was the TEACHER of Rashi…not to mention the purported grandfather of “Kalonymos the Elder” (who was supposed to be the father of **the elder mentor of** Eleazar “Rokea[c]h”). It’s a stretch to suppose anyone would have missed such a significant chronological snafu.
- This genealogy would entail squeezing four generations (from Kalonymos IV to Kalonymos the Elder) into a very short period–enough time for perhaps a single intervening generation. Ergo there is too little time to account for this hypothetical genealogy.

So that proposed lineage doesn’t work. But wait. There’s another possibility. Assuming Rokea[c]h’s father **really was** Judah ben Kalonymos ben Moses; HE may have been the son of Kalonymos IV (who—lo and behold—was the son of a man named Moses). This supposition would require omitting the father of Samuel “ha-[c]Hasid” (Kalonymos the Elder) from the relevant lineage. (Fine; he may have been largely apocryphal anyway.) The key connection, then, would be Eleazar “Rokea[c]h” instead of Samual “ha-[c]Hasid”. But there’s still a problem. This “Judah” lived until c. 1200; so how could he possibly be the son of a man who lived back in the 11th century? With this hypothetical genealogy, there is a surfeit of un-accounted-for time from the purported father’s death (in the late 11th century) to the purported son’s birth (which would need to have been at least a couple decades

into the 12th century). And even if we ignore that temporal glitch, it ends up being rather beside the point…if, that is, Eleazar "Rokea[c]h" turns out to have been a Tosofist. He was, after all, born in Mainz in the late 12th century. It is, indeed, possible that Eleazar "Rokea[c]h" was Sephardic. Even so, it doesn't follow that a movement he supported couldn't have been an Ashkenazi one. (And it certainly has no bearing on the thesis of the preceding monograph.)

Back to the hypothetical Kalonymos connection: Are there any other viable ways to connect the dots here? Nope. Every just-so story strains credulity. Bottom line: No Ashkenazim were descendants of the fabled Kalonymos family. **

To get the desired lineage to work, some genealogical shenanigans are required. So from whence did the contention-in-question come? The faux heritage seems to have first been proposed by the Ashkenazi mystic, Solomon ben Ye[c]h-i-El Luria in the 16th century; as he sought to unify the Sephardic and Ashkenazi legacies. What might his motive have been? He had moved from Poznan in Poland to Safed in Palestine; and married a Sephardic woman—subsequently siring his famous son, Isaac "ha-Ari": founder of Lurianic Kabbala. By then (the 16th century), Ashkenazim were thoroughly immersed in the Talmudic tradition, and were often inter-marrying with Sephardim / Mizra[c]him; so they were likely seeking to nullify the disparate provenances regarding themselves vis a vis the rest of Beth Israel. This was especially true of those promulgating Jewish mysticism in Palestine.

Isaac ben Solomon Luria's inspiration was another Jewish figure (from Prague) who had settled in Palestine: Bezalel ben Abraham (who—at the risk of being too on the nose—was known as "Ashkenazi"). Bear in mind, Bezalel was already known for telling tall tales: He was the source of the beguiling golem legends surrounding the first synagogue in Prague.

There would have been an allure to playing along with this confabulation—the fabricated genealogy regarding the Kalonymos bloodline. The notion that Ashkenazi mysticism could be traced back to Sephardim meant that there was a common ETHNIC heritage for the entirety of world Jewry. That way, Yiddishkeit could be assumed to have been Talmudic ALL ALONG. (Recall that Luria's confabulation occurred in the immediate wake of Joseph ben Ephraim Karo's landmark work, "Beth Yusef" [House of Joseph], which reconciled the Halakah for all Beth Israel. So this issue was clearly front and center.) The fact that the founder of [c]Hassidism adopted the hallowed moniker "Shem-Tov" is unsurprising, seeing as how he lived in

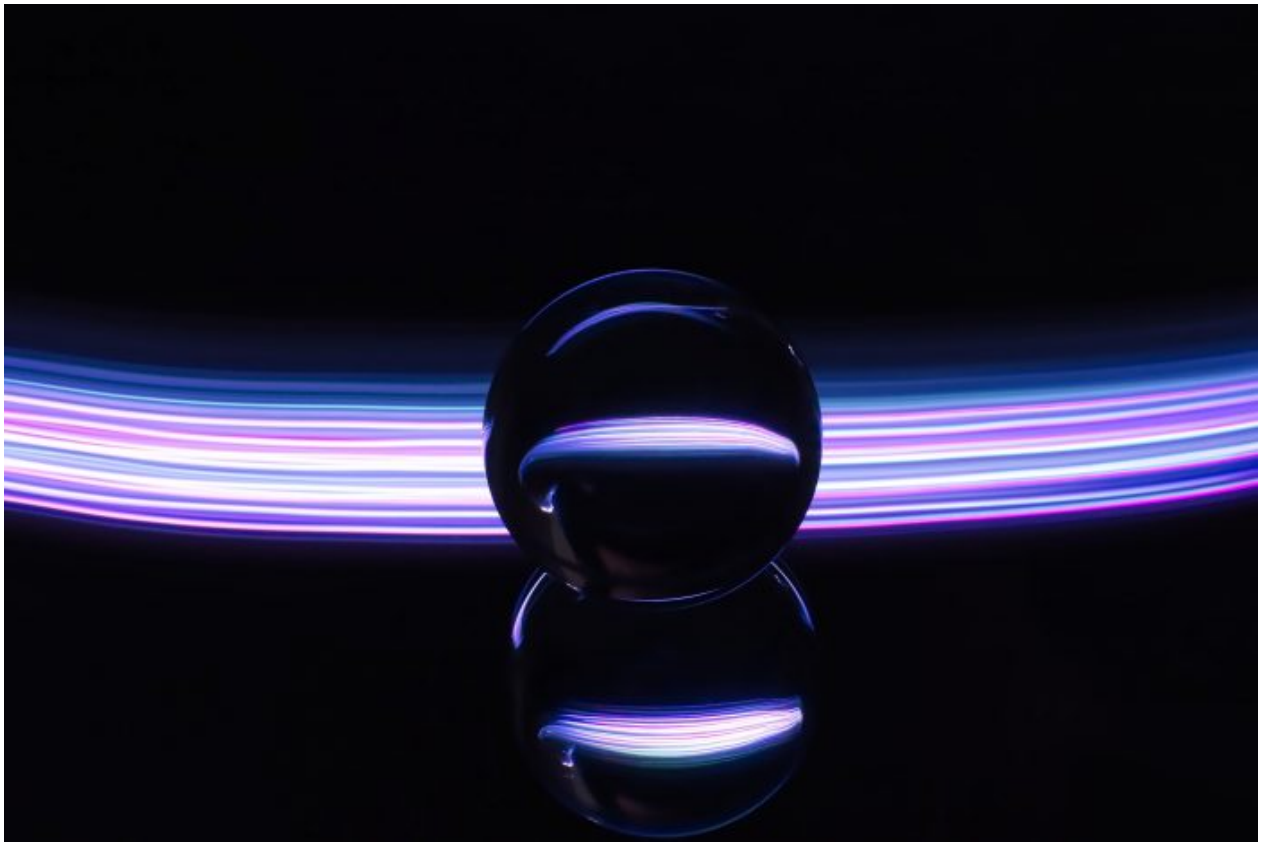
the modern age (by which time Ashkenazim had incorporated the Talmudic tradition into their doctrinal repertoire). It further stands to reason considering this panjandrum sought to identify with the vaunted Davidic line.

So it went: The putative “Kalonymos” family line was tailored to fit the desired narrative. But never mind the historiographical glitches. Credence is beside the point when one is pursuing an idealogical agenda.

In conclusion: It is far more plausible that the father of Samuel “ha-[c]Hasid” was not a Kalonymos. Eleazar “Rokea[c]h” was probably not a Kalonymos either (though may have been Sephardic). Ergo the fabled “[c]Hasidei Ashkenaz” had nothing to do with Sephardim; as least, not by that route. The majority of participants in this medieval movement were likely as Turkic as the rest of the Ashkenazim at the time. This is not a bad thing. A non-Semitic ancestry did not make them any less Jewish.

{* The name may have alternately been a variant on Kalymnos—an island off the coast of Caria in the Aegean Sea, near Kos. The island had previously been ethnic Carian. At the time, though, the island was within the Byzantine realm; and served as a navel outpost for the Republic of Venice. Why a Jewish family might have named themselves after this island is anyone’s guess.}

{** One can find a slew of surnames the origins of which are somewhat elided by flawed etymologies. For example, Meyer[s] is not based on the Hebrew “Meir”; it is an accidental cognate based on an Anglo-Saxon surname…which was, in turn, based on the Germanic “meiger”…itself a cognate of the Latin “maior”, meaning “greater”. While it is easy to conflate with “Mei[e]r”, “Meyer[s]” was never a Jewish name before the modern era. Notably, the Jewish mob boss, Meier Suchow-lanski of Grodno rendered his name “Meyer Lansky” to assert a more American identity. (Also note Meyerson, which was the basis for Golda Meir’s married name. Hardly Hebraic.) This is why there are plenty of non-Jewish Anglo-Saxons named “Meyer”. I explore other Ashkenazi names in Endnote 50.}



Author’s Note:

I reflect on the fact that I came of age watching Woody Allen movies; and it didn’t matter to me one wit how Semitic or Turkic he might have been. That he happened to be Jewish was—so far as I could see—an opportunity for him to be droll (that is: engage in cheeky self-deprecation). I was a huge fan of his dry humor. Allen was Ashkenazi…which meant what? Frankly, it never occurred to me to care. Likewise, with Albert Einstein. When considering the General and Special theories of Relativity, whether the famous physicist had Turkic ancestors was—so far as I could see—patently irrelevant.

This prompts the question: Why did I even bother with the preceding monograph if—in an ideal world—the verdict on that particular point doesn’t really matter? Five reasons come to mind.

First and foremost: It dispels the misapprehension that Sephardim and Ashkenazim must be consanguineous in order to be considered homologous denizens of Beth Israel.

Second: It shows the lengths to which hidebound ideologues will go to occlude history. As discussed, they do so in a desperate gambit to uphold their ramshackle dogmatic edifice. The preceding monograph has shown that this requires ignoring—or outright denying—oodles and oodles of evidence.

Third: It sheds light on the adversities with which European Jews were forced to contend in the Middle Ages. Knowledge of this history better equips us to combat anti-Semitism TODAY.

Fourth: Overall, the relevant history is utterly fascinating; and not talked about nearly enough. This monograph has the up-side of catalyzing new avenues of inquiry; or—at the very least—starting new conversations from which historians might benefit. I suspect that elucidation on this particular matter may have (as-yet unforeseen, and likely salutary) ancillary effects on our understanding of world history. And it certainly affords us all a chance to learn about the history of Beth Israel. That's a GOOD thing. *

Fifth: Sacred cow-tipping is kinda what I do. The moment I hear an ideologue—of ANY kind—ardently insist, "There's nothing to see here!" I am all-the-more inclined to look into the matter. Those with nothing to hide don't diligently try to divert everyone's attention away from things. (Oftentimes, things that some believe are worth hiding are, for the rest of us, worth revealing.) Peculiarly, when it comes to the infamous "Khazar hypothesis", proponents of conventional wisdom bend over backwards to curtail any discussion of the matter. If there was REALLY nothing to it, then surely any honest scholar would say: "By all means, look into it!" with the surety that those who oblige will simply wind up empty-handed. After all, in the process, inquirers may end up finding something ELSE interesting. So why not?

In sum, my decision to weigh in on this topic stemmed primarily from an abiding devotion to Truth; and a demonstration of how ideologues are apt to elide it. That being the case, the question still arises, and is almost impossible to avoid: In writing the preceding monograph, where am I (personally) coming from? More to the point: When it comes to this (rather contentious) topic, might I have my own conflicts of interest? How can one be so sure that I am the impartial bystander I purport to be? After all, it is quite possible I harbor biases of my own—some of which I may be unaware.

I am a bit reticent to respond to this query, as self-reporting is rather useless. "Take my word for it" is hardly a solid justification. Worse, I risk offering what sounds like the dubious rationalization: "I have a [insert ethnic group] friend, so how could I possibly be bigoted against [insert same ethnic group]?" Such a plea is casuistic because it tokenizes members of the group-in-question. It is therefore necessary to make a distinction between two very different things:

A: There being many people from a marginalized community who are an integral part of one's life.

B: Treating casual acquaintances as props, thereby using them for self-serving purposes. **

The distinction might be illustrated by considering two extremes. If one is married to a Latino, and many of one's closest friends are Latino, and many of one's heroes are Latino, and one regularly lobbies for Latino rights, then one is almost certainly not bigoted against Latinos. It is highly implausible that one decides to orient one's life around members of an ethnic group simply to use them as cover for a covert bias against them. On the other hand, if I play poker every Friday night with a group of guys, one of whom happens to be Latino, I cannot use that as evidence that I'm not bigoted against Latinos.

I'll make my case here via **(A)**; but I fear that doing so may be mischaracterized—by unscrupulous bystanders—as **(B)**. How so? The more one makes the case that **(A)** is not **(B)**, one opens oneself up to the allegation: "Thou doth protest too much!" Special pleading never comes off well. Hence my hesitation to address the matter.

Be that as it may, I have nothing to hide; so will go ahead, and engage in some disclosure…in the vain of **(A)**. Plus, I figure my readers may want to know a bit more about me personally.

My hero is Ashkenazi. Though he was born and raised in Philadelpha, Noam Chomsky's family was originally from Ukraine. In fact, barring Baruch-cum-Benedict Spinoza (who was Sephardic) and Thomas Paine (who was English), FIVE of my biggest heroes are Ashkenazi Jews—Ludwig Wittgenstein, Isaac Asimov, Bella Abzug, and Howard Zinn being the others.

I would submit that a clear pattern of admiration for members of an ethnic group—over the course of a lifetime—precludes bias against that group. After all, the five aforementioned figures aren't mere tokens; they are role models. Such luminaries

are in addition to Ashkenazim who have inspired me over the course of my life—including Karl Marx, Émile Durkheim, Rudolph Rocker, Theodor Adorno, Max Horkheimer, Victor Frankl, Albert Schweitzer, Louis Brandeis, Emma Goldman, Erich Fromm, Karl Popper, Ernst Cassirer, Thomas Kuhn, Seymour Hersh, Eric Hobsbawm, David Halberstam, Reinhold Niebuhr, Harvey Milk, Douglas Hofstadter, Ernest Becker, Richard Hofstadter, Sheldon S. Wolin, Michael Mann, Ronald Dworkin, and Martha Nussbaum…to mention 25 more. That their forebears might have been Turkic is patently irrelevant to the esteem I hold for them. Frankly, that any of them happened to be Jewish never even occurred to me. I may as well have considered what kind of shampoo they used.

Were many of their forebears Turkic? As it turns out: yes. I can't imagine why it matters to so many that such a thing be obfuscated. In lauding them, are we to suppose that Semitic ancestry is somehow superior to Turkic ancestry? Vice versa? No matter what their GENETIC provenance, one can say one thing for sure: The world is now a better place because such people were in it.

In assessing the great work of pop-culture icons like Steven Spielberg and Larry David, it would never occur to me to factor in how Semitic their ancestry may or may not have been. (They are probably more Turkic.) A juxtaposition may serve to make the point: When I would watch Lea Michele on Glee, I didn't find myself wishing away her Semitic ancestry; and when I would watch Idina Menzel in Wicked, I didn't find myself distraught that she might have Turkic ancestry. I no more wished Lea was more Turkic than I wished Idina was more Semitic.

And, yes, over the course of my life, I've had some very good friends who have been Ashkenazi. Others have been Sephardic. Others have been Tatar. Neither I nor they cared who their ancestors happened to be (pace upholding this or that cultural legacy). Human connection has been—and always will be—the foundation of such kith-ship. In every case, our shared humanity has been the over-riding factor.

That brings me back to Woody Allen's movies and Albert Einstein's theories. Growing up, my favorite singer was Billy Joel. My favorite broadway musical is by Stephen Schwartz. My second favorite is by Leonard Bernstein and Stephen Sondheim. My third favorite is by Charles Strouse. My second favorite novel is by Michael Chabon. Comedians that have made a key difference? Lenny Bruce and Al Franken. Three (more) of my favorite scientists? Carl Sagan, Stuart Kauffman, and John von Neumann. Three (more) of my favorite composers? Felix Mendelssohn, Gustav

Mahler, and Arnold Schoenberg. Three (more) of my favorite authors? Franz Kafka, Herman Wouk, and Na[c]hem Male[c]h (a.k.a. Norman Mailer). And the music from my favorite Disney movies? Composed by Alan Menken.

I could go on and on. The last genuine intellectual to vie for the U.S. presidency: Adlai Stevenson. The American politician for whom I have the most respect: Bernie Sanders. The greatest Supreme Court justice of my lifetime: Stephen Breyer. One of the podcasts I watch each week: "Useful Idiots", currently hosted by Katie Halper and Aaron Maté.

Does it matter to me whether or not any of these people might have (had) Turkic ancestry? Nope. (Being Ashkenazi, it so happens that they ALL probably had / have Turkic ancestry.) What matters is that every one of them made significant contributions for which we should all be thankful.

That said, I find it intriguing that such ancestry DOES matter so much to certain parties; and that they will go to great lengths to obfuscate the facts when it comes to elucidating the truth-of-the-matter. Such interlocutors are a reminder that there is a difference between not knowing and not wanting to know.

But wait. Is it possible that I might have a penchant for denying that certain (exalted) Jewish figures have Semitic bloodlines? That would be hard to square with the reverence I have for Spinoza. The same goes for the philosopher, Michel de Montaigne…and the economist, David Ricardo…and the human rights advocate, René Samuel Cassin…and every other Sephardic figure for whom I have great respect. (Nobody doubts that Sephardim are Semitic.) Do these men having one ancestry rather than another factor into my esteem for them? Frankly, I couldn't care less; and neither should anyone else.

How feasible is it, then, that I harbor some sort of inexplicable pro-Turkic bias—or have some other ulterior motive that might account for the thesis of the preceding monograph? I'll leave that for the reader to surmise. (I suspect that my secret plan to exalt the world's Tatars may need to go a bit beyond this monograph.)

Another thing to consider: Bias can just as well work in the opposite direction. So we might ask: Is it possible that I'm inclined to ascribe a certain ethnic background to figures for whom I have CONTEMPT? Answer: No. Henry Kissinger, arguably the world's biggest war criminal in the post-War era, serves as a good example. Do I WISH that Kissinger was more Turkic than Semitic? That would make no sense. For in doing so, would my aim be to disparage the world's Turkic people; or to insist that

such a baleful person couldn't possibly be Semitic? (On the contrary, if one were anti-Semitic, one would actually INSIST on the Semitic ancestry of the world's most vile people.) Yes, Kissinger probably has Turkic provenance because he's Ashkenazi. This fact in no way reflects badly on the Turkic peoples of the world—Jewish or not.

I have plenty of umbrage to take with certain figures of Turkic ancestry; but never BECAUSE of their Turkic ancestry. (Arguably, the worst human being to ever live was Timur of Kesh. See my discussion of him in part 2 of my essay on "The History Of Salafism".) The suggestion that Turkic ancestry is inferior OR superior to Semitic ancestry is patently absurd.

Again: Esteem is to be accorded exclusively based on merit—that is: on an individual-by-individual basis, after a consideration of what the person stood for. As it turns out, the likes of Ze'ev Jabotinsky and Sheldon Adelson were more Turkic than many of us realized. Again: I couldn't care less. After all, it only makes sense to assess people based on their deeds, not on their ancestry. These men were deplorable people; and it had absolutely nothing to do with their bloodlines. (If anything, it was THEY who made things about racial purity—obsessed, as they were, with establishing a theocratic ethno-State in Palestine.)

I cannot fathom any honest person reading "The Forgotten Diaspora" and being left with the impression that it was done in anything other than good faith. But for hidebound ideologues, intellectual integrity is entirely beside the point. They take anything that counters their sanctified narrative as a personal affront. Revisionist Zionists especially don't like having preconceived notions of their racial identity challenged; as it undercuts their rational for a theocratic ethno-State in Palestine.

Meanwhile, the rest of the world is not hindered by such vested interests. What does the preceding thesis change about the way I view / treat any given Ashkenazi Jew?

Absolutely nothing.

It's worth repeating: The preceding piece should serve as a point of departure. Rather than pretending to be the final word on the matter, it merely aims to set the record straight on what we currently know; and all-but-begs for further investigation.

Throughout my research for this monograph, my attitude was as follows: If even a mere amateur like ME noticed these things, then god only knows what a renown scholar in the relevant field(s) might uncover. Should the preceding monograph serve to inspire further inquiry into the fate of the [k]Hazars and/or the origins of Ashkenazim, then my wish has been granted.

It's worth asking: If we come to find that many of the world's Jewish people have some sort of kinship with many of the world's Turkic people, would that be such a bad thing? Their Jewishness certainly does not hinge on an ancestry being traced back to people living in the Judean countryside during Classical Antiquity.

In the end, though, the Turkic-Semitic distinction simply shouldn't matter. I imagine the comedian, Jerry Seinfeld does not consider his mother (who was Mizra[c]hi) more Jewish than his father (who was Ashkenazi)…even as the former had Semitic provenance and the latter probably had Turkic provenance. There is a term for those who would contend that Ashkenazim are less Jewish because they are less Semitic: anti-Semitic. Ironically, an obsession with (ostensibly) pure bloodlines going back to an anointed tribe—based on some fantastical etiological myth—is ALSO morally problematic.

I am neither an expert on Sephardim nor on Ashkenazim; and have only a basic knowledge of Judaism. My lack of expertise does not make these points any less factual. What it shows is that these points are so elementary that **EVEN I**–merely a curious bystander–noticed them. (As always, readers are encouraged: "Don't just take my word for it. See for yourself.") I suspect that if I knew significantly more about this topic, this list of cultural discrepancies would be much larger. I look forward to hearing more about this matter from scholars who specialize in Jewish history.

Pending further investigation, the observations provided in the preceding monograph are sufficient to illustrate the disparate provenance of the two Judaic peoples in question. As there was no documented schism in Beth Israel a millennium ago, it is prudent to surmise that these two communities came to abut each other due to a convergence rather than a divergence.

A final thought: So far as I see it, the world's Turkic people should celebrate the fact that Judaism was part of their history. Meanwhile, the world's Jewish people should consider it a point of pride that there was a thriving Jewish kingdom in central Asia

for centuries; and that the progeny of its people are still with us. After all, it is a reminder that Germanic, Slavic, Turkic, Semitic, or anything else; at the end of the day, we're all human.

In the final analysis, the monograph's verdict shouldn't matter. That it DOES matter to certain parties is the problem.

{* I, for one, learned a tremendous amount about the history of the Jewish people; and about the Turkic peoples of the Eurasian Steppes. Not only that. In doing the research for the preceding monograph, I learned a tremendous amount about the history of anti-Semitism in Europe, about Judaism as a creed, and about medieval geo-politics. PLUS I learned some Old Yiddish and some Old Turkic! In fact, the knowledge I gleaned from the research requisite for this monograph helped me understand the travails of Beth Israel even more than I already had. If only more people looked into this, they would be exposed to an area of European history that is often not stressed in Occidental circles—namely: one that gives precedence to peoples of the Orient. What was thought to be ancillary is brought center-stage; and we are furnished with a wonderful new perspective on world history.}

{** Examples of this are well-known—from "Behold my [token] black friend" to "Behold my [token] Muslim friend." Says the misogynist: "I fancy certain women, so how could I possibly be a misogynist?" Tokenism is the height of condescension. (After all, that's one of the things that makes identity politics so abhorrent.) At the end of the day, casual associations tell us very little about a person's character. The values that guide one's life (and the moral principles on which one bases one's decisions): THAT is what reveals the sort of person someone really is. Many white racists routinely commiserate with people of color. Some watch Oprah. Some enjoy dancing to Salsa. But none of them genuinely care about the latter's plight as members of a marginalized group.}