

ANTHROPOLOGICAL STRUCTURE OF THE JEWISH PEOPLE IN THE LIGHT OF POLISH ANALYSES*

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ALL HUMAN populations which have been examined as to their anthropological composition as well as from the serological point of view appear to be biologically hybrid. An analysis of the various population groups into their anthropological components makes possible a simple comparison between those groups.

My friend and pupil, the late Dr. Salomon Czortkower, carried out analyses of a large number of anthropological samples contributed by several investigators. These have enabled a general survey of the anthropological structure of the Jewish people to be made. It is based on the fact that the Jews in Europe (including the Mediterranean and the Orient) can be divided into three main population groups: (1) the Oriental, (2) the Caucasian, and (3) the Central European.

They all consist of the same anthropological components as the rest of the European population of the Mediterranean basin. They show no greater range of anthropological structures than do other European populations. Even the large difference between the Jewish populations of Egypt and the Yemen can be compared with the range found among the indigenous populations of the Iberian peninsula. In both cases the wide variations are probably partly the result of the influence of the Arab population.

The only peculiarity of the Jews is that both in the Caucasus and in Central Europe there are still clear anthropological traces of the old connexion with the population of the Eastern Mediterranean. The fact that they fall clearly into three population groups is doubtless a consequence of the influence of the autochthonous populations in the Caucasus and in Central Europe. The great changes in anthropological structure caused by historical processes are shown in the analytical results in Table 1.

* Based on a paper read at the Second World Congress of Jewish Studies, Jerusalem, 1957, in the Section 'Demography of the Jews'.

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TABLE I

<i>Population groups</i>	<i>Anthropological Components</i>				
	<i>Nordic %</i>	<i>Mediterranean %</i>	<i>Armenoid %</i>	<i>Lapponoid %</i>	<i>Oriental %</i>
<i>Oriental</i>					
Jews from Mesopotamia	2.8	30.0	15.0	5.1	46.5
from Baghdad	—	31.9	24.2	2.9	41.7
<i>Caucasian</i>					
Jews from Urmia	—	14.4	57.7	8.1	19.7
Transcaucasian Armenians	13.8	21.2	51.6	13.1	—
<i>Central European</i>					
Jewish Students, Lwów University	20.0	12.9	20.0	36.7	9.9
German, Keuper Franks from Bavaria	19.6	12.2	21.4	46.8	—

This analytical material can only mean that in Mesopotamia the original anthropological structure of the Jews has remained up to the present less changed than elsewhere. The last two population groups show the effects of later changes. It is also clear that at present the majority of the Jewish people belong to the Central European population group. The other two are relatively few in number.

Both in the Central European and in the Caucasian population groups the Oriental components which are so characteristic of the Semites and Hamites have greatly shrunk in numbers. In the Caucasus this anthropological change has led to a strong concentration of the Armenoid component. In Central Europe, on the other hand, the mixed population group which is characteristic of that area has won the day, with the Lapponoid component to the fore. This shows the South German and Slav influence.

The shrinking of the Oriental component in Europe occurs everywhere, and not only among the Jewish people. It has also been found in the Basques, where traces of neolithic waves of the Hamites play the major role. It is improbable that the later Arab expansion which flooded the greater part of the country in the Middle Ages has managed to leave anthropological traces so far North. Unfortunately we have as yet no analytical results which could give exact evidence of the part the Oriental components have played in the present Spanish and Portuguese population. All we know is that it is at least as strong as among the Jewish population of Central Europe.

We know little more about the strength of the Oriental component in the Apennine Peninsula. It is certain that even today it plays a prominent part in the south, especially in Sicily. It is particularly strong in Malta, where the population speaks a mixed romanico-semitic language. It would seem that the Oriental component reaches as far north as Naples.

The shrinking of the Oriental components on European soil is probably conditioned by the unfavourable influence of the foreign geographical surroundings. Similarly, the Mediterranean components are gradually decreasing in Europe north of the Alps.

The problem of the social-anthropological strata of the Jews has not yet been examined. The Lwów sample proves that very great differences have become apparent which must be explained historically. They are shown in Table 2.

TABLE 2

Sample	Anthropological Components				
	Nordic %	Mediterranean %	Armenoid %	Laponoid %	Oriental %
Jewish University students in Lwów	20.0	12.9	20.0	36.9	9.9
Keuper Franks from Bavaria	19.6	12.2	21.4	46.8	—
Poorest Jewish population in Lwów	12.1	19.9	42.4	16.6	9.4
Ossetes from Caucasia	11.8	23.6	40.8	23.6	—

This table shows that the Jewish upper class from which the Lwów university students are drawn has remained very similar in its anthropological structure to the Frank population of Bavaria. This is shown by the Frankish dialect spoken by their forefathers. The poorer class of the same cultural community, on the other hand, represents the Caucasian population group. The structure of the poorer class population coincides with that of the Ossetes of the Caucasus and anthropologically belongs more closely to Karaitic series of the Taurus Peninsula rather than the Jewish.

The Karaites of the Taurus can be considered as Judaised remnants of the Turkish (Hun) Khazars who have been strongly influenced by the Caucasians. One can therefore conclude that the poorest stratum of the Jewish population of Lwów forms part of the Judaised remnant of the Khazars, just as the Karaites of the Crimea. The same anthropological structure shows in the Jews of Polesia, where the population of the Ukraine fled in order to escape the horrors of the seventeenth-century Cossack wars. It is therefore probable that the poorest Jews of Lwów are descendants of these refugees who did not manage to recover economically in the following three centuries. These anthropological differences seem to prove that the old Jewish population of the Ukraine consisted to a large extent of descendants of Judaised Khazars. This explains also the obvious anthropological shift of the Jewish population of Poland and Lithuania towards the present biologically isolated Karaites.

As a large part has been played in the history of the Jews by the

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Judaized Khazars and the closely related Karaites, the latter must be briefly discussed. We know something about their anthropological history. Originally they were a Jewish sect in eighth-century Babylon, whence they emigrated in several directions. Those who went to Egypt were strongly influenced anthropologically by the native population. The same applies to the Karaites in the northern Caucasus, where the Turkish Khazars were converted to Judaism. As a consequence the language of the Karaites was influenced by the Turks. Anthropologically they attached themselves most closely to the Caucasian Iranians, the Ossetes, and have thus remained intact in the Crimea (Tauria). Further north in the Ukrainian steppe they became influenced by the Iranian Alanes. That is shown by the anthropological structure of the Karaites of Volhynia and Lithuania, and explains the presence of Iranian words in the Karaite language.

The analysis of the peoples of Egypt and the Yemen, Jewish as well as Karaite and Arab, is marked by the occurrence of a colour mixture. This complication of anthropological structure must be the consequence of a later infiltration. It cannot be original and must therefore be interpreted as a result of Arab influence, as the Arabs always had large numbers of Negro slaves.

The above facts bring one to the conclusion that the Jews originally had a Mediterranean-Oriental anthropological structure, and that this has withstood the storms of history through thousands of years, with the smallest changes occurring nearest to their original home.

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See also works by Czortkower, S., listed in Appendix II below.