

DNA, Historical Evidence and The Settlement of Sephardic and Ashkenazic Jews in Colonial Texas

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Abstract

The Lone Star state has long been a symbol of the American West, complete with cowboys, Native Americans, buffalo, cattle drives and the Alamo. Using DNA and genealogical analysis, together with historical documents, this article shows that both the original Spanish settlers and the later “Anglo” arrivals were primarily of Sephardic and Ashkenazic Jewish descent. These findings challenge traditional narratives of “how the West was won”, as well as the prevailing ideology of Anglo-American culture.

Keywords: Texas Old 300, Sephardic Jews, New Mexico, Crypto-Jews, Colonial Mexico

In recent years, a series of books and scholarly articles have been published about the phenomenon of Crypto-Judaism [1-5]. Briefly, Crypto-Jewish research asserts that many of the early Spanish settlements in the New World, including those in South and Central America, the Caribbean and Mexico were populated primarily by persons of Sephardic (Spanish and Portuguese) Jewish descent. Often these colonists desired to escape the prying eyes of the Inquisition, which, if they were discovered continuing to practice Jewish rites, would sentence them to torture and death [6]. It will be shown that the Spanish settlers of what was to become Texas were also primarily of Sephardic Jewish descent. This would not be surprising, since many of the Spanish settlers of New Mexico believe that they are of Sephardic descent, based on their family religious practices.

This hypothesis is tested by using DNA data and extending it to include the proposal that the early “Anglo” settlers of Texas were also of Sephardic Jewish descent. Our focus will be placed primarily on the Old 300 colony founded by Impresario Stephen F. Austin and his father Moses Austin. To investigate this possibility, a diverse set of methods and data sources are used. Among these are naming patterns, for example, what names did the early Texas

colonists have and give to their children; second are genealogies, for example, are there patterns of close cousin-to-cousin marriage? These are often indicative of Sephardic ethnicity. Third, what religious practices did the settlers follow? Finally – and most revealingly – what does the DNA ancestry of both the men and women among the early Texas colonists reveal about their ethnic heritage? Fortunately, there are publicly available DNA data bases for both the Spanish and Anglo settlers of Early Texas, and also data bases of the settlers of nearby New Mexico, as well as Sephardic Jewish data bases. By comparing the DNA markers of the New Mexico and Texas colonists with those of present-day Jews, we can determine if and how close a relationship exists.

Colonial Texas

There are several excellent histories on the Spanish and Anglo colonial settlers in what was to become the state of Texas [7-9]. An examination of the indexes of these books reveals that the terms “Jew”, “Jewish”, and “Sephardic” do not appear with regard to the Colonial settlement of the state. Instead, there are four ethnicities mentioned as pertinent to Texas history: Native Americans; Spaniards; Anglo-Americans; Blacks/Negroes. The focus is on the second and third of these groups.



Stephen Fuller Austin



Moses Austin

Spanish Texas, situated on the northern border of Spain's vast American empire, encompassed only a small portion of what became the Lone Star State. The province of Texas lay above the Nueces River and to the east of the Medina River; it extended into what is now Louisiana. During the Spanish colonial era, Texas was classified as a part of four different provinces in the Viceroyalty of New Spain [9-11].

Over 300 years elapsed between the time the Texas shoreline was first viewed by a Spaniard in 1519 and July 21, 1821, when the Spanish flag was lowered for the last time at San Antonio; yet Texas was never a core part of the Spanish New World Empire. When early rumors of wealthy Native American civilizations to the north of Mexico were found to be untrue, the Spaniards re-focused their attention southward. However, Spain did not want to lose control of this northern region, viewing it as an important barrier between Mexico and the English and French colonization efforts on the North American continent.

For various reasons, the most prominent being the fierce resistance by the regional Native American tribes, the Spanish occupation of Texas (1716–1821) lasted for just 105 years.

The Anglos Arrive

Spellman's book, *Old 300: Gone to Texas*, is the primary document source for examining the first Anglo-American settlers in Spanish Texas. His work contains a plethora of early travel maps, census records, land purchase contracts, marriage certificates and genealogies, including personal family material from the initial settlers and provides the most accurate and complete account of these settlers' origins and lives in Texas.

Spellman sets out to debunk some, but not all, of the traditional historic narrative that is taught in American history textbooks and classes, such as the common story that British immigrants ventured to the New World in order to seek a better life, freedom of religion, and greater opportunity than that found in the Old World. Yet there is a critical difference with the Texas story. In it, the Anglo colonists are already in the New World, North America, and already would be presumed to have religious freedom and economic opportunity. So why were they willing to face additional physical hardships, economic disruption and political repression by leaving their existing lives in the United States and venturing farther westward into a region claimed by Catholic Spain and inhabited by multiple hostile Native tribes?

The timing of their exodus from the United States to Spanish Texas in 1836 is also odd as it was over two dozen years after the War of 1812 and over 45 years since the War of Independence from Britain. Virtually all of the original 297 families organized by Moses and Stephen Austin to settle in Spanish Texas had been in North America for the past four or five generations; many owned land and had viable trades and businesses [12]. Why risk it all to join a disorganized group of men, women, and children and venture westward? One explanation provided by Spellman (2014) is that the land available from the Mexican government in Texas cost about 10% of comparable land in the United States; further, the acreage was described by the promoters as being rich farmland with ample water and excellent grazing potential for cattle [13].

Second, going to Texas was seen by many of the settlers as an opportunity to 'start over' as some had been in trouble with the law, some owed money they could not repay, and others were simply drifters or adventurous spirits. It will be argued that there was another, deeply motivating force behind their re-settlement—the great majority were Sephardic Jews. They were the descendants of Spanish Jews cast out of Spain in the late 1400s and early 1500s, spread across Holland, Germany, England, France and Scotland

and now- three hundred years later – seeking to link up with others of the same ethnic descent already living in the northern-most reaches of the New World Spanish Empire, the Crypto-Jews of New Spain [3, 4, 14-16].

Recent studies on Colonial North American settlers as diverse as the Roanoke Colony, the Plymouth Colony, and the Central Appalachia Colony have documented that they were composed primarily of Sephardic Jewish settlers, together with some Ashkenazi (Eastern European) Jewish settlers, some likely Muslim Moors and various persons originating in India, Pakistan, and Southeastern Europe [17-19]. The ethnic ‘memory’ of these settlers remained with them for multiple post-arrival generations, just as it is now well-documented among the descendants of the Spanish settlers throughout the New World that many retained knowledge of their Jewish identities [7, 20, 21].

Family Names and Marital Patterns Indicative of Sephardic Ancestry

Throughout his book, is consistent in describing his subjects as Scots-Irish, British and/or Anglo; clearly he does not ever consider the possibility that they may be of another ethnic ancestry, especially Jewish. He notes that the great majority of the Old 300 Texas Anglo settlers came from within a 100-mile radius encompassing Central Appalachia, while some also journeyed from North Carolina, Georgia, Maryland and Delaware [13]. Notably, even these ‘distant’ families bore similar surnames to those coming from Central Appalachia, indicating the possibility of shared ancestry.

This provides us with our first important clue to their ethnic identity. A 2019 large scale study, examined a Central Appalachian DNA database which contains samples from over 5,000 settlers arriving prior to 1850 and determined that over 95% were of Sephardic Jewish ancestry (after excluding African and Native American lineages) [18]. This data base – the Cumberland Gap DNA Project (FTDNA)-is publicly available at FamilyTreeDNA.com for examination by other investigators. Not only are the Austin family ancestries available in the data set, as well as virtually all the surnames we will discuss below, but also one of the most prominent of the Alamo defenders – David Crockett, whose Y-DNA was matched to multiple Sephardic men [18].

Even if one looks only at the naming practices and family marriage patterns among the Texas settlers – without the DNA data to be discussed later – it readily becomes apparent that these settlers were likely not Christians. For example, Spellman writes that “the largest caravan was that of a single family, the Groces, whose two dozen wagons and one hundred slaves accompanied the large family, its livestock, and even the furniture and tools necessary to build a plantation Spellman notes later that the Groce family surname was originally Gross, which – even at that time – was a widely recognized Jewish surname, albeit Ashkenazic and not Sephardic.

As we move through the Old 300 Colonist narrative, the next family mentioned is that of Zadock Woods. Zadock is Hebrew and references the Biblical High Priest to both Kings David and Solomon. This Zadock was a tavern owner with a wife named Minerva and children named Minerva, Norman, Leander and Montraville. The use of Greek first names is a Jewish practice dating from the

Seleucid Greek occupation of Israel.

Spellman next mentions the Dyer and Duty families who joined the Austin caravan to Texas; dyer was a common Jewish occupation and Duty was probably a corruption of Doody/Dody which are versions of the Hebrew David. Next, we encounter the McFarlands and the Kuykendalls (a Dutch Jewish surname) and Gates (corruption of Goetz – an Ashkenazic surname) families. Given names in these families, together with the Gillelands (Hebrew) included Alexander, Achilles, Marvil, Adam, Abner, Sarah, Joseph, Daniel, Samuel and Barzillai (an Old Testament ally of King David) (www.kveller.com/article/jewish-naming-practices). While naming practices alone certainly do not ‘prove’ one is Jewish; when combined with DNA analysis showing consistency with known Jewish persons, they do serve to suggest that the families involved were not only Jewish in ancestry but were also aware of this and desired to perpetuate this heritage.

The Austin family is next discussed by Spellman who notes that Moses Austin’s wife was named Maria Brown (the given name “Maria” indicating likely Spanish ancestry), two of their children were named Emily and James Elijah (both Hebrew), and they had a close family friend named James Bryan, Bryan being a Hebrew surname and found to be Sephardic in the Cumberland Gap database [13]. We also learn that the Austins were merchants and entrepreneurs from New England (though not always successful), who now lived in Missouri. Also from Missouri were James Orrick (Ashkenazi surname meaning ‘goldworker’), Elijah Roark and James Kerr (Ashkenazi surname). Pamela Pickett (French Huguenot/Sephardic), and a physician Angier (also Huguenot/Sephardic surname) who was raised by his paternal grandmother Katurah Angier. A reference for this Hebrew name is provided below:

Keturah (hebrew: קֶטֶרָה) qet’ura, was a concubine and wife of the biblical patriarch abraham. According to The Book of Genesis, Abraham Married Keturah After the Death of His First Wife, sarah. An additional member of the Austin Colony group from Missouri was David Mouser.

Spellman next turns to detailing the War of 1812 veterans who joined the Austin settlement. These included Thomas Alsbury, James Bailey, Thomas Barnett (Sephardic surname), Bluford Brooks (derived from the Hebrew Baruch), Aylett (Gazelle in Hebrew) Buckner, Jesse Burnam, Alexander Calvit , William Cumings, Nicholas Dillard, Thomas Duke (Ashkenazi surname), Clement Dyer (common Sephardic trade), Simon Miller (common Ashkenazic surname), John Harris (Ashkenazic Horowitz), Seth Ingram (Ashkenazic surname), Joseph Polley (French Huguenot/Sephardic surname), Joseph Newman (Ashkenazic surname) [13]. Additional settlers mentioned by Spellman (2014) at this point include Isaac Van Dorn (Sephardic Jewish surname after immigration to Holland) and Daniel Balis (Turkish surname), together with the large McNeel and Chapman families. In the DNA Analysis section, each of these men were found likely to be of Jewish descent.

Upon arriving in eastern Spanish-ruled Texas, the Austin Colony contingent was joined by several additional families and began establishing new towns. The names of these towns are revealing, as well, including Matagorda (Spanish for canebreak), Egypt, San

Felipe (Saint Phillip – a common Jewish surname dating from the Seleucid Greek period). Another early settlement was named Ayish Bayou – Ayish is Hebrew/Arabic for “Good Life”. Previously, Moses Austin had named new towns he built in Missouri “Herculaneum” (Greek), and “Potosi”, whose meaning is given below

Potosi Was a Mythical Land of Riches, It Is Mentioned in Miguel De Cervantes' Famous Novel, Don Quixote (second part, chap. Lxxi) As A Land of "Extraordinary Richness". We turn next to one of the most colorful actors in early Texas Colonial history – the Baron de Bastrop.

The Baron de Bastrop

According to several sources, the Baron de Bastrop and Moses Austin had first met about twenty years before Austin’s attempt to plant an “Anglo” colony in Texas (see, for example, Handbook of Texas online). The Baron was, in reality, a Dutch merchant named Phillip Hendrick Nering Bogel, who had been born in Dutch Guiana (a largely Sephardic Crypto-Jewish community. Bogel grew up in Holland, served in the army, married Georgine Nyhilt and had five children in Friesland, Dutch Province. However, in 1793, Bogel – who was the regional tax collector – was accused of embezzling government funds. He fled to Spanish Louisiana (no mention of what became of his family) and then moved to Texas, where he was in the service of Antonio Martinez (Martin/Martinez is a

common Sephardic surname, see www.Sephardim.co), the alcalde for the Bexar region where Austin desired to found his colony.

In order to obtain permission to settle in Spanish Texas, Moses Austin had to declare that he would be a subject of the Spanish Crown and was a Catholic (both of which we easily recognize as political expediciencies.) As we shall learn later, the Spanish administrators in the Texas Territory were not deeply committed to either the Spanish Crown or Catholicism, being largely composed of the descendants of Crypto-Jews who had come to the New World to escape the Inquisition back home [22].

Naming Practices Among the Early Texas Anglo Settlers

Names given to one’s children, especially when the family believes itself to be living in a relatively ‘safe’ environment, are a way of commemorating one’s ancestors and celebrating one’s ethnic identity. Surnames that may have been earlier Anglicized in order to ‘fit in’ may remain in place due to their presence on vital records, for example in wills, land purchases, and bank loans. Once a safe place is reached, the family may choose to festoon their offspring with ethnically appropriate names. And so it was with the early Texas settlers. As shown in the chart below, they and their children carried names tying them to their Jewish roots once they arrived in Texas.

Table: 1 Texas Settlers and Children’s Given Names

Caleb	Micajah	Seth	Asa	Perry (Periera)	Lydia
Elvira	Jonas	Ira	Esther	Rebekah	Elam
Abner	Joseph	Isaiah	Horatio	Amelia	Barra
Elijah	Elisha	Jesse	Zeno	Reuben	Aylett
Jemima	Trammel	Mirabeau	Prudencio	Tabitha	Joel
Isaac	Noah	Josiah	Leah	Ezekial	Imla
Jacob	Hosea	Eli	Rachel	Maria	Hiram

The Spanish Presence in Texas

The Spanish presence in Texas was deeply impacted by the end of the American Revolution which established the United States as an independent nation. The Treaty of Paris in 1788 extended the US western boundary to the Mississippi River, and Appalachian settlers soon began looking toward the Spanish colonies of Louisiana and Texas as markets for their crops. However, Spain, fearful of these encroaching Americans, closed the mouth of the Mississippi to foreigners from 1784 until 1795, making shipping problematic. Nonetheless, some Americans risked arrest and travelled to Texas to capture wild mustangs and establish trade with the Native tribes (Handbook of Texas online).

One of these was Phillip Nolan, who became the first Anglo-American known to attempt rounding up mustangs in Texas. Nolan was arrested several times by the Spanish. The Spanish feared (correctly) that Nolan was additionally a spy, and in 1800 sent troops to capture him and his party of eighteen armed men; Nolan was killed during the ensuing battle [8].

By 1810, many Americans were trading guns and ammunition to

the Spanish Texas Natives, especially the Comanche, in return for livestock. This, of course, helped arm the Natives against the Spanish. Making matters worse, in order to meet the American demand for livestock, the Comanche turned to raiding the area around San Antonio, killing several Spaniards [23].

The Spanish government realized that better security would come only with a larger population, but was unable to attract colonists from Spain or from other New World Spanish colonies to the Texas territory – largely due to its reputation as a violent place to live. Thus, the population remained relatively stagnant, having grown only to 3,169 individuals in 1790 from 3,103 in 1777. Additionally, only half of this population was classified as Spanish, with Natives making up most of the rest [24].

Intermarriage between Spanish men and women of Native or Black origin was common, due to the few Spanish women in the settlement. Despite the small population, however, Spain actively discouraged immigration to Texas by Americans, and a permanent garrison was placed in Nacogdoches in 1790 to keep foreigners

(usually Americans) from entering. Immigrants from the United States were allowed to settle in Louisiana and Florida after taking an oath of allegiance to Spain and agreeing to convert to Catholicism, though no checks were made to see if this commitment was actually honored.

In Spanish Texas, the requirement to follow Catholicism was also rarely enforced and the region was declared “secularized” in 1793. The Franciscan monks who had operated a mission in San Antonio left it, and by the time Austin’s “Anglo” settlers began moving into the territory from Louisiana, Florida and Missouri, the only religious leader left in the area was an Irishman, Father Muldoon, who had “liberal views” on religious observance and travelled through the “Anglo” settlements periodically to perform weddings – the parents’ already-born children often participating in the ceremony. This meant that the Spanish Texas colonists were largely left to their own devices in maintaining religious observances [13].

Using Maternal and Paternal DNA Samples to Ascertain Ethnic Ancestry

Any conjectures about the possible Jewish origins of the Colonial Texas settlers must remain speculative unless there is hard evidence to support them. However, the unquestioned “document supremacy” of social historians is on the cusp of being eclipsed by human genetic science. An entirely new form of historical inscription is now available which can reveal the past without the concern of forgery or incompleteness that artifacts and texts are subject to [25].

Human DNA testing for ancestry identification was revolutionized in 2001 with provision to the general public of personal DNA tests; these could be used to link individuals to distant relatives and ancestors (see e.g., FamilyTreeDNA.com, 23andMe.com, Ancestry.com.) Concurrently, population geneticists began collecting DNA samples from nationality and ethnic groups to trace patterns of migration from ancient to modern times. By 2010, it became possible to track human ancestry not only out of Africa, but around the world, both on a personal and group level [25].

At present, academic and commercial enterprises have greatly expanded the mapping of human origins, to the extent that virtually every ethnic group, religious group, nationality and indigenous tribe has been tested and the results uploaded onto publicly-accessible websites (see e.g., FTDNA.com). The present study utilizes a database containing both female (MtDNA) and male (Y chromosome) DNA samples. These two types of DNA ancestry testing are described below.

Mitochondrial DNA (MtDNA) Testing

Mitochondrial DNA is passed directly from mother to child across generations, so one’s direct maternal ancestor can be traced using mtDNA. A perfect match found to another person’s mtDNA test results indicates shared ancestry of possibly between one and fifty generations ago. More distant matching to a specific haplogroup or subclade may be linked to a common geographic or ethnic group origin. In the present study, female ancestry to the ethnic group level is traced, since there are viable DNA samples for Sephardic Jews, Ashkenazic Jews, Colonial New Mexico settlers and Colonial Texas settlers, which are -- the populations being compared.

MtDNA is divided into three regions. They are the coding region (00577-16023) and two Hyper-Variable Regions (HVR1 [16024-16569], and HVR2 [00001-00576]). The most common mtDNA tests are a sequence of HVR1 and HVR2 and a full sequence of the mitochondria. This type of testing was used in the present study.

Y Chromosome Testing

The Y-Chromosome is one of the twenty-three pairs of human chromosomes. Only males have a Y-chromosome. A man’s paternal ancestry can be traced, because the Y-chromosome is transmitted from father to son nearly unchanged. A man’s test results can be compared to those of another man to determine the time-frame in which the two individuals may have shared a common ancestor in their direct paternal line. A woman who desires to know her paternal ancestry can ask her father, brother, paternal uncle or paternal grandfather to take a test for her. There are two types of male DNA testing: STRs and SNPs [25].

The most common type of male ancestry testing is conducted using STR’s or Short Tandem Repeats. These are pairings of genetic coding material that are passed from father to son. The more STR markers tested, the more accurate the results will be in determining paternal lineage. In the present study, comparisons with as many as thirty-seven STR markers are used, which provides a high degree of accuracy. The results of two individuals are then compared to see how closely they are related [25].

A Brief Excursion to New Mexico

Now that the techniques of DNA genealogical testing have been introduced, we will first apply them to the original Colonial settlers in Texas, the Spanish. Texas was only sparsely populated by Spanish colonists, as noted earlier. When Texas won its independence from Spain in 1836, several of these inhabitants made their way farther west to New Mexico. At that time New Mexico was the most northern point of Spanish America [3]. Because of the great distance in travel time from the Spanish (and later Mexican) central government – and therefore laxer supervision -- New Mexico and Texas were desirable locales for Spaniards of Sephardic Jewish descent who did not want their ethnic identities to be discovered.

Many of these Spanish settlers were of Jewish origin, but kept their religious affiliation secret and continued to practice Judaism in their homes [22]. It is only in the past twenty or so years that their descendants have begun investigating their ethnic roots through both documents and especially through DNA testing [5]. There are now several organizations devoted to the religious re-awakening of these Sephardic Jewish descendants, and specific DNA testing programs are now underway to identify their origins [5].

One of these is the New Mexico DNA Project (FTDNA.com) which has collected over 3,572 samples.

The DNA results from this project for both men and women were downloaded in their entirety and examined as to ethnic origins. The maternal (mitochondrial) DNA samples indicate that several of the female ancestors of the Colonial New Mexico population are of Native American origins, these include the eighteen women in mtDNA Haplogroups D and X. There are an additional thirty-six women having sub-Saharan African MtDNA haplotypes in the L

Haplogroup. There is also one woman in each of the M and N Sub-Saharan African haplogroups. Four women are in the R mtDNA haplogroup, which is rare, but widespread across the globe. These women were not considered to represent Jewish ancestry.

New Mexico Female Settler Analysis

Next we turn to the Eurasian mtDNA haplogroups. There are thirty-three women classified as H (undifferentiated), which is common in Spain and also among Sephardic Jews. These specific haplotypes were compared against those in the Sephardic DNA Project database and found to match in all but one case. There were fifty-nine women having H1 – H8 haplotypes and approximately 85% had matches in the Sephardic DNA Project database.

Now we encounter some notable mtDNA data. Seven of the women in the New Mexico Settlers project belonged to Haplogroup I. This is a relatively rare haplogroup that is found in Germany, Poland, Russia, the Ukraine and Bulgaria – in other words, it is Eastern European and the haplotypes displayed matches to Ashkenazi Jews. Reinforcing this finding is the presence of 14 K mtDNA haplotypes, and also 14 K1 and K2 haplotypes matching Ashkenazi Jewish.

This strongly suggests the presence of Ashkenazi Jewish females among the early settler population of New Mexico. There are also two haplogroups in the sample which originate in the Middle East, T and J. There were twenty-one women having T, T1 or T2 haplotypes, which could indicate Sephardic, Ashkenazic or Moorish/Arabic ancestry. There were 15 women having haplotypes in the J, J1 or J2 haplogroup who also would be of Sephardic, Ashkenazic

or Moorish/Arabic ancestry. Since this is recognized as Semitic MT DNA, it is apparent that many of the original settlers in New Mexico, both Spanish and European, had Middle Eastern maternal lineages. When the specific haplotypes were compared to those of women with known Jewish ancestry, there was an 80% overlap.

There were twenty-four women in the New Mexico Project who had U5 haplotypes. Of these, twenty had matches with women of known Jewish ancestry. There were two women having U6 haplotypes which are most commonly found in North Africa, and twelve belonging to the V MT DNA haplogroup which is found among the Berbers and Tauregs of North Africa, as well as among the Cantabrians and Basques of Iberia.; These all matched women of known Jewish ancestry. Finally, two women in MT DNA haplogroup W, which is present at high levels in the northwestern Iberian Peninsula, were also found to match women in the Jewish Heritage Project.

Table: 2 New Mexico Mt DNA Data Distribution

H 33	T, T1, T2 21
H1-H8 59	J, J1, J2 15
I 7	U5 24
K 14	V 12
K1, K2 14	W 2

New Mexico Male Settler DNA Analysis

Table Y DNA Haplogroups

Native American 195	G 201 Semitic 107	J-m267/J1 Semitic 99	R-m269 878
SubSaharan African 42	I-m253 Baltic 156	J-m172/J2 Semitic 159	T Semitic 11
E-M35 Semitic 157	I-m223 Baltic 67	R1a1a/R-m512 Ashkenazi Levite 24	

As shown in the Table above, the male New Mexico Colonial settlers have a distinct Semitic element—the J-m267, J-m172, T, E-m35 and G-201 haplogroups all originate in the Middle East and are predominant among both Jews and Arabs. Thus, it is likely that most of these men were likely Jewish, though some may have been Muslim. Additionally, there were twenty-four men having Ashkenazi Levite ancestry, which may account for the Ashkenazi female haplotypes found among the New Mexico settlers. As was found in earlier studies of Colonial North American populations in Central Appalachia, there was often a mixture of Sephardic and Ashkenazic ancestries occurring among European-origin North America Jewish colonists [18].

There are various explanations for this phenomenon but the most plausible is that the 150,000 Sephardic Jews who were exiled from Spain in 1492 during the Inquisition travelled to many countries already inhabited by Ashkenazic Jews, for example Germany, Austria, Poland, the Balkans, Italy, Romania, Holland and France. There they encountered (or may already have had business relations with) their co-religionists-the Ashkenazim. These two com-

munities may have begun to intermarry at that time, or upon later arriving in Colonial America, may have found marriage partners among their co-religionists.

Examining the DNA of the Colonial Texas ‘Anglo’ Settlers The Early Texas Settler DNA Project (FTDNA.com) describes its content as:

Members with the earliest ancestors—those who settled before Texas became a state on 19 February 1846; this group includes descendants of the early Spanish and Mexican settlers, Austin’s Old Three Hundred, Families of Alamo Defenders, descendants whose ancestors were part of a colony such as Mercer’s, Robertson’s, Castro’s, DeWitt’s, Edwards, and others.”

Currently, the Project has 625 members whose DNA haplotypes are available on-line. These are used in the present analysis. We first turn to a discussion of the female (mitochondrial) DNA samples.

Table:3 MtDNA of Early Texas Female Settlers

Native American 11	H2 3	HV 4	J2 2	T1a 6	V 5
SubSaharan African 6	H3 7	I 6	K 5	T2b 11	W 2
H 19	H4 3	J 2	K1 11	U2, U4, U3 6	
H1 28	H5 5	J1 12	K2 3	U5 20	

The wives of the Early Texas settlers included some Native Americans and Sub-Saharan Africans, as would be expected in a migratory community consisting mostly of Eurasian men. The same inter-mixing was found in the Colonial New Mexico Project. There were a large number of H-type haplogroup women, suggesting not only European, but also possible Sephardic ancestry. Similarly, the HV and K haplogroups are associated with Ashkenazic Jewish ancestry. When the specific haplotypes of these women were compared to those of known Jewish women in the Jewish Heritage Project (FTDNA), an 85% match was found. Among the twenty U5 female haplotypes, eighteen were found to match women in the Jewish Heritage Project (FTDNA.com) But it is the J1, J2 and T MtDNA haplogroups that are most strongly indicative

of deep Semitic roots among the early Texas women (haplomap.com/genetics-of-the-jewish-people). All of these haplotypes had matches in the Jewish Heritage Project. Thus, a strong case can be made that the Early Texas settlers included a large Jewish component.

Also of importance, given the above reasoning regarding Jewish community mixing, is the presence of nineteen haplotype K, K1, K2 women in the group, who matched women of Ashkenazi descent (FTDNA.com). This would support the thesis that the Sephardic and Ashkenazic Jewish communities may have joined together 'on the American frontier' and migrated to Texas as one community.

Early Texas Male Haplotypes

Table: 4 Early Texas Settlers Y DNA

Sub-Saharan African 2	I-M201/223 (Baltic) 14
Native American 3	E-M35 (Semitic) 10
R-M269 122	J-M172 (Semitic) 5
R-M512,198 (Ashkenazi Levite) 6	G-M201 (Semitic) 9
I-M253 (Baltic) 15	T (Semitic) 1

As with the Early Texas Settlers women, there are some men who are either Native American or Sub-Saharan African in ancestry. The largest single haplogroup is R-m269 with 122 members. These individuals were compared with known Jewish men in the Jewish R1b/R-m269 Project and found to have a 90% match.

and often Jewish.

Additionally, there are four Semitic haplogroups represented in the male sample: E-m35, J-m172, G- m210 and T. Thus, these settlers likely were of either Jewish or Arabic-Moorish origin. The I-m253 and I-m201/223 haplogroups may also be indicative of Jewish ancestry, but as was found in an earlier study, they could also be derived from early North American settlers arriving during the mid to late 1500s from the Balkans [19].

His markers were compared to those in the I-m223 DNA Project and found to match the persons shown below. The initial listings are for persons gathered early in the I-m223 Project. These are revelatory in that they suggest this haplotype originated in the Balkan Region, specifically the area near Northern Greece and Southern Turkey. They also include a man with a Sephardic surname (Steele = Castille) whose surname is common in Central Appalachia and among the mixed-ancestry Lumbee Native American tribe and a French-Huguenot (Sephardic) surname (LeSage) [18, 19]. The surname Avent is French for 'canopy or roof,' and the Avent/Avant family was of French Huguenot descent as indicated by the biographical material below.

The Moses Austin Family and DNA

Material on the Moses Austin genealogy is presented below. While all of the sources located assume that the Austin family was of English Protestant ancestry, that assumption can be challenged and in its place it is proposed that the Austin family, in England and North America, was most likely of Jewish origin and aware of their ancestry. Richard Austin of Charlestown, Mass., born either 1598 (or 1698) in England with sons listed as Anthony, Richard and Joseph, is identified in various biographies as the ancestor of Moses Austin [13]. This man's DNA profile is I-m223, which is Balkan

From this evidence we deduce that the Austin family was of Jewish descent, originating in the Balkan Region, immigrating to France where they became Huguenots (publicly), then immigrating to England and onward to North America where they continued their 'outward' Protestant/ 'inward' Jewish practices. What is somewhat remarkable is that the surname Avent/Avant means 'roofer' in French and that the Austin family, itself, was engaged in lead roofing when Moses Austin was its patriarch.

Table 5: Richard Austin DNA Markers

15	13	9	27
23	11	8	
15	14	11	
11	12	11	
15	31	24	
15	16	14	
11	8	29	

Table: 6

N5658	Steele	Thomas Steill, married 1701, Selkirk	Scotland	I-M223	15	23	15	10	15-15	11	13	11	13	12	31
461132	Korelov	Greek-Erzurum (TUR)-->Avranlo(GEO)	Greece	I-M223	15	23	15	10	15-15	11	13	11	14	12	31
492631	Alexov	Pontic Greek-Trabzon(TUR)-->Santa(GEO)	Greece	I-M223	15	23	15	10	15-15	11	13	11	14	12	31
289451	LeSage	Jaque LeSage, b.1757 and d. 1836	France	I-M223	15	23	15	11	15-15	11	13	11	14	12	32

114097	Avent	Thomas Avent UK	United Kingdom	I-M223	15	23	15	11	15-15	11	13	11	13	12	29	16	8-9	11	11	27	15	21	29	12-14-14-15
289044	Avent	Col. Thomas Avent, b.1672 and d. 1757	England	I-M223	15	23	15	11	15-15	11	13	11	13	12	29	16	8-9	11	11	27	15	21	29	12-14-14-15

114097	Avent	Thomas Avent UK	United Kingdom	I-M223	11	11	19-19	14	15	16	18	33-36	12	10										
289044	Avent	Col. Thomas Avent, b.1672 and d. 1757	England	I-M223	11	11	19-19	14	15	16	18	33-36	12	10	11	8	15-16	8	11	10	8	9	9	

114097	Avent	Thomas Avent UK	United Kingdom	I-M223																				
289044	Avent	Col. Thomas Avent, b.1672 and d. 1757	England	I-M223	12	21-22	15	11	12	12	19	9	13	25	21	9	13	12	13	11	12	13	11	

112931	Evans	William Evans, c.1829 - c.1860	Un known Origin	I-M223	15	24	15	11	15-15	11	13	11	13	12	29	16	8-9	11	11	27	15	21	29	12-14-14-15
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Thomas Avant

www.geocities.ws/judys-space/Vol1/avant.htm

Thomas Avant left France in 1698, during the French Huguenot Migration. He travelled first to England then on to America. During the Colonial Wars, Thomas Avent served as a Colonel. He was a large land owner. From 1728 to 1755, he served as the Justice of the Peace of Surrey County, Virginia.

1. Col. Thomas Avent (1671-1757)...

www.genealogieonline.nl/en/leedom-family-tree/.

Col. Thomas Avent was born on October 30, 1671 in Rouen, Normandy, France. He was married in the year 1700 in Northampton, Virginia to Margaret Elizabeth Gooch, they had 1 child. Colonel Avent died on October 31, 1757 in Sussex, Virginia. This information is part of Genealogy Online.

Moses Austin Genealogy

Birthdate: April 25, 1716

Birthplace: Suffield, Middlesex County, Province of Massachusetts

Death: 1762 (45-46)

Durham, Hartford County, Connecticut

“Moses Austin was a native of Connecticut, born... in 1767. When a boy, he went to Philadelphia, and in 1787 he married Maria Brown. His brother, Stephen, was then head of an important house in Philadelphia [business not identified], and Moses Austin soon after his marriage took charge of a branch house in Richmond, Virginia. The brothers purchased Chizzel’s lead mines in Wythe County, Virginia, and Moses took charge of the enterprise. On the 3rd of November 1793, Stephen Fuller Austin, the future colonial empresario of Texas, was born. Two other children lived to maturity and came to Texas, James Brown Austin and Emily M. Austin. James died of yellow fever at New Orleans in August 1829. Emily married twice, first James Bryan, and after his death James F. Perry.” [26].

Note that in the above passage, the children of Moses and Maria Austin married a Bryan and a Perry (Jewish surname, Sephardim.com). Thus the family appears to be aware of and purposely continuing its Jewish identity.

The Meaning of Texas

As a celebrated American philosopher once said, “It’s déjà vu all over again”. And so it can be said of Texas, “It’s the story of America all over again...” Since its founding as a Republic in 1838, Texas has represented the American mythology in a bigger and grander form: the story of how stalwart, noble, industrious people from the British Isles sailed in leaky boats over stormy seas for months on end to reach the New World -- the Promised Land, where they would be able to re-invent their lives freed from the religious and social restrictions of the Old World. For the past three centuries this journey has been portrayed – and accepted for the gospel truth – as representing the enterprising spirit of White Anglo-Saxon Protestants. In the historical biographies presented above for the Moses Austin family, this same story is re-told and

celebrated, just as it has been told and re-told for the Texas 300 and the Defenders of the Alamo over the past 250 years.

Yet, as has been argued here, it is a classic example of a false narrative. Research which began with early, and initially widely ridiculed claims of secret Judaism in the American Southwest during the early 2000s, has now been documented using genealogical DNA research across several Colonial North and South American populations. Texas and New Mexico can now be added to the DNA-documented list. The Austin family is emblematic of both the admirable and flawed aspects of these incomers. Moses Austin was what would currently be termed a ‘serial entrepreneur’. His ancestors and he established a series of businesses ranging from retailing, to mining, to smelting, to banking; some of these succeeded grandly, many others failed terribly, leaving the Austin family deeply in debt by the early 1800s.

And it was this indebtedness that spurred the family to undertake their biggest venture of all – taking a group of 297 settlers to the Spanish territory of Texas. Why not? Here were others like themselves: secret Jews who had remained in Spain as “good Catholics” until they could immigrate to the New Spain colonies and re-collect themselves at the northern border. There their secret traditions could be practiced in private with co-religionists. The present research has documented that these Spanish colonists, now mostly dwelling in New Mexico, never forgot their roots, married among themselves and even welcomed Ashkenazi Jews wandering in from the East.

These same Spanish secret Jews seem to have largely welcomed the new arrivals in the 1820s, having already closed down the Catholic missions and allowing “Father Muldoon” to keep up religious appearances in Spanish Texas. The mysterious Baron de Bastrop, Moses Austin and Antonio Martinez no doubt found they had much in common.

And so we are now confronted with a new version of our American Myth and one that is much more ethnically accurate. How will current Americans and Texans react to it? At present the US is at an ethnic and cultural crossroads. Those presumed to be White Anglo Saxon Protestants are already becoming a dwindling majority. To prevent further erosion of their hegemony, laws limiting immigration from Latinx countries are being proposed and turned into political “walls”. The extraordinary irony here, of course, is that the majority of America’s earliest “white” citizens appear to be largely the descendants of the same ethnic gene pool that settled the countries whose refugees they are now seeking to exclude. How will it all work out? We will just have to stay tuned and find out [27-34].

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