

Claim Ashkenazi Jews are descendants of pagan Khazars who converted in Middle Ages confirmed as myth

The claim that today's Ashkenazi Jews are descended from Khazars who converted in the Middle Ages is a myth, according to new research by a Hebrew University historian.

The Khazar thesis gained global prominence when Prof. Shlomo Sand of Tel Aviv University published "The Invention of the Jewish People" in 2008. In that book, which became a best seller and was translated into several languages, Sand argued that the "Jewish people" is an invention, forged out of myths and fictitious "history" to justify Jewish ownership of the Land of Israel.

Now, another Israeli historian has challenged one of the foundations of Sand's argument: his claim that Ashkenazi Jews are descended from the people of the Khazar kingdom, who in the eighth century converted en masse on the instruction of their king. In an article published this month in the journal "Jewish Social Studies," Prof. Shaul Stampfer concluded that there is no evidence to support this assertion.

"Such a conversion, even though it's a wonderful story, never happened," Stampfer said.

Read the full, original story: [Why Ashkenazi Jews Are Not Descended From Khazars — and What It Means](#)