Twitter Thread by Antonio García Martínez

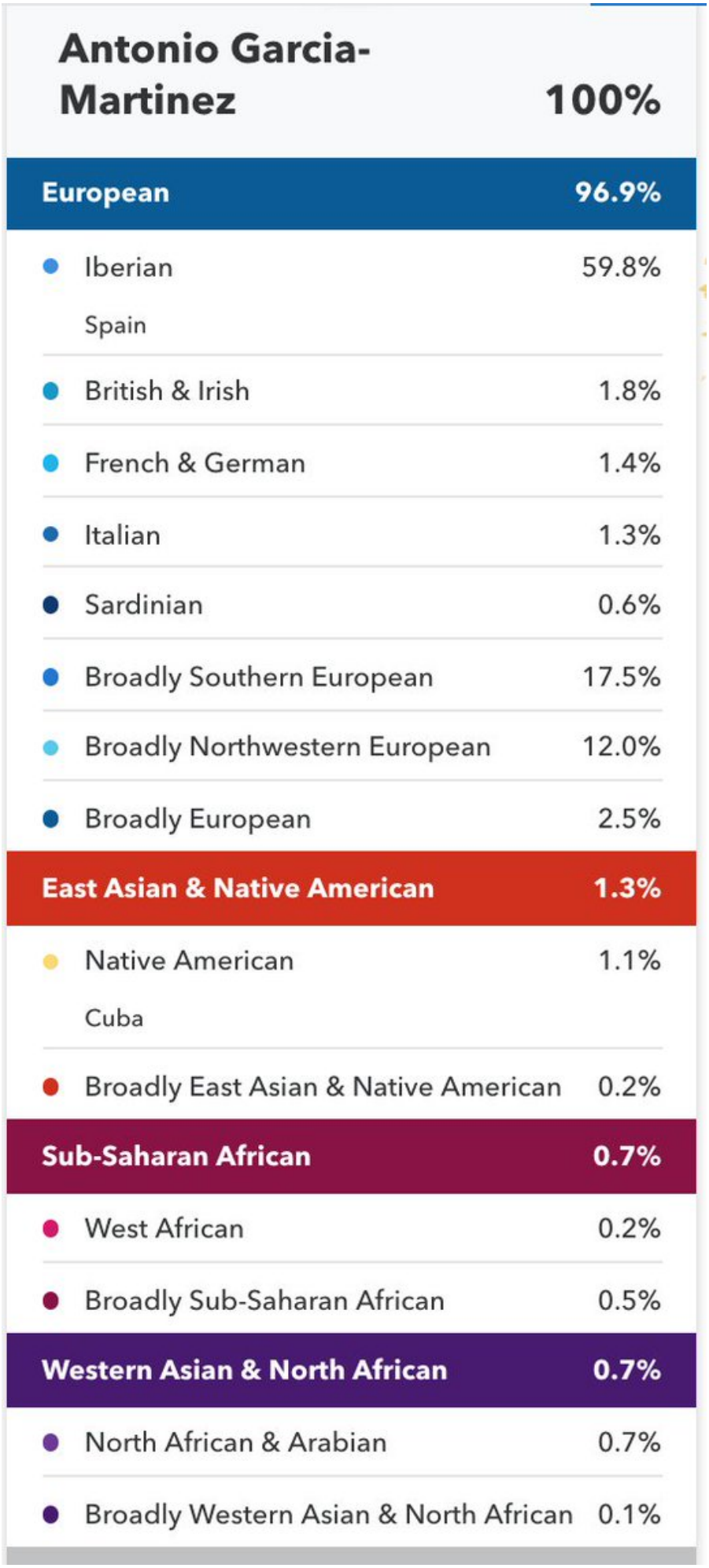


Antonio García Martínez
@antoniogm

Ok, I'll hop on this Elizabeth Warren/Native American testing bandwagon (gently and non-politically).

I've been a @23andMe customer for a while, and have followed their ancestry updates closely.

All is more or less as expected....except for this bit about Native American.



The family is almost completely composed of Spanish peasants (from various regions) who emigrated, along with a massive wave in the late 19th-cent./early 20th-cent., to Cuba back when it was a booming economy (richer than Spain's) and worth

emigrating to (Communism killed that).

Also, the native population of Cuba was annihilated early on---was the first place the Spanish colonized after all. Having a native background in Cuba would be like having the same in, say, Massachusetts, particularly if you're (say) mostly Irish. Just really, really unlikely.

(Note: the North African/Arab background is less mysterious. The Iberian peninsula was part of the Muslim world for centuries. It would be odd *not* to have some Arab/Middle Eastern background coming from Spain. Given the family is mostly from Northern Spain, it's small though.)

I have a Spanish passport, have been back to the ancestral villages in Spain, seen the church where my grandmother was baptized, my grandfather told me stories about growing up as the child of Spanish colonists in rural Cuba. The native bit just clashes with all the family lore.

But as self-appointed family genealogist, I noticed one loose end: my paternal great-great-grandmother, unlike everyone else in that level in the tree, was Cuban-born, something I only discovered recently thanks to a transcribed marriage doc that was smuggled out of Cuba in 1963.

TRANSLATION
MARRIAGE CERTIFICATE

DOCTOR GUSTAVO CARLOS PRATS MAYOR, MUNICIPAL JUDGE OF JOVELLANOS AND IN CHARGE OF ITS CIVIL REGISTRY

CERTIFIES : That on page 170 of Volume 5 of the Section of MARRIAGES of this Civil Registry, there is an inscription, No. 71 which reads literally as follows:-

SEVERO GARCIA MIRANDA to MARIANA JOSEFA ROMEU YAÑEZ.- In the town of Jovellanos at 8 a.m. of November 28th. 1908; before Jose de Jesus Gay y Gonzalez, Municipal Judge and Mariano Sole y Guerrero, Secretary was transcribed the Canonical Marriage which reads literally as follows: Marriage Cerificate. I, Blas Perez Carballeira, Parish Priest of Jovellanos province of Matanzas, certify: That at 11 p.m. tonight, in the presence of the witnesses Andres Olivera y Santos and Jose Leonard, who sign; Since no denouncemen was made nor did I know of any impediment, were married: Severo Garcia Miranda, a native of Pravia, Asturias, 38 years old, single, a merchant, a resident of Jose Marti Street in this town, a son of Antònio Garcia y Garcia, a native of Asturias, Spain, deceased; and of Maria Miranda y Garcia, a native and resident of Asturias; and Mariana Josefa Felina Romeu Yañez, a native of Jovellanos, 17 years old, single, of her home, a resident of No. 32 Narciso Lopez Street and a daughter of Jose Romeu y Nin, a native of Calafell in Tarragona, a mechanic, deceased and of Juana Yañez y Sotolongo, a native of Trinidad, deceased. These contracting parties have proven their right to be married and their filiations and other requisites prescribed by Order No. 140 of the General Government of this island, dated May 28th. 1901, and have presented the following documents: Application for License, Marriage Act; Certificate of Banns and Marriage License. And to be sent to the Civil Registry of Jovellanos I issue these presents which has been signed by the contracting parties and witnesses as prescribed by said Order, (signed) The officiator Blas P.Carballeira.- The Bride, Mariana Romeu.- The witnesses: Andres Olivera.- Jose Leonard.- There is a seal of the Church of the Ingreso de Nuestra Señora de la Aduncion de Jovellanos.- The above certificate which has been transcribed has been archived in the Civil Rigistry of this Municipal Court in the Section of Marriages of this year. (signed) Jose de J. Gay.- Mariano Sole.- -
And at the request of M. Juantorena I issue these presents in Jovellanos on the 26th. of March, 1963. -

Dr. Gustavo C.Prats Municipal Judge	Seal of the Municipal Court of Jovellanos	Illegible Signature Judicial Secretary

Cancelled tax stamps.

REPUBLIC OF CUBA
MINISTRY OF JUSTICE
DEPARTMENT OF LEGAL AFFAIRS. LEOPOLDO CRESPO DANGER;
~~DOCTOR MANUEL LLABERIA BLANCO~~, In charge of the Registry of Legalizations of Signatures of Judicial Functionaries, p.a.
CERTIFIES: That the signature of the Judicial Functionary who authorized the foregoing document is seemingly authentic, in view of its resemblance to that which he is accustomed to use in his official acts.
Havana, April 2nd. 1963. Illegible Signature.
Seal of the Ministry of Justice.

I the undersigned, Gerald Brandon, do hereby certify that I am a competent translator and that the foregoing is a true and faithful translation from Spanish into English, of the hereto annexed authentic copy of Marriage Certificate.
Havana, Cuba, June 4th. 1963.

Gerald Brandon
Translator.

GERALD BRANDON · TRADUCTOR AUTORIZADO · Calle 74 No. 2302-M

Per the document (dated 1908), Mariana Josefa Felina Romeu Yañez (my great-grandmother, who I have vague memories of) was a daughter of a Spaniard, and Juana Yañez y Sotolongo....of Trinidad, Cuba. This is a smoking gun, genealogically.

Trinidad, which is now a UNESCO Heritage Site and popular with tourists, is one of the few parts of Cuba with extant Taíno natives. The documentary trail goes cold further back than Juana, but now the 23andme results are less mysterious.

https://t.co/lTNeT7IsQg

So there's 1/16th that isn't necessarily pure European, though what's behind that is unknown. Given general Latin American obsession with 'pureza de sangre' ('purity of blood'), plus the brutal history of early Spanish colonization, it's likely not much. But it's non-zero.

Net: I'm at least as native as Warren apparently is. Which also highlights how absurd this searching for roots in the single-digit percentiles is a bit silly. But humans will cling to anything that answers the perennial riddle of, who am I?