

THE SOCIAL CONSTRUCTION OF AMERICAN JEWRY

Circa 2,000 BCE	The prophet Abraham and the Covenant
586 BCE	The Jewish Exile out of their Mediterranean homeland begins as the result of successive invasions
70 AD	The Jewish Exile out of their homeland is finalized by the Romans---“Judea Capta”---The Jewish Diaspora begins
70---1800	Jews are segregated physically and socially in ghettos and politically disenfranchised throughout Europe and Africa; periodic pogroms are conducted against Jews everywhere as Jews become the standard scapegoat for world problems
1492	By decree of the King of Spain all Jews exiled from Spain. Despite edicts forbidding it, the first Sephardic Jews emigrate to the New World out of Spain and most settle in Recife, Brazil until 1654 when Portugal exiles all Jews out of Brazil
1654-1664	First exiled Brazilian Jews arrive in New Amsterdam (New York City today). Attempts to exile them are defeated by the King of Holland through orders to Governor Peter Stuyvesant; Sephardic Jews prosper in the America as merchants and craftsmen enjoying full citizenship rights for the first time in any country in the world since 70 AD
1776	Total Jewish population in the United States is 3,000
1800-1880	Yiddish speaking Germanic Jews arrive in America (circa 200,000 total) and disperse throughout the heartland as itinerant peddlers; many of these Jews become successful merchants (e.g., Levi Strauss, Guggenheims, Macy, Altman, Abraham & Strauss; Reform Judaism is created
1880-1924	Large influx (circa 2 million) of Eastern European Jews (mostly from Russia and Poland); most have some marketable trade skills in the area of textile manufacturing; most of these Jews are Orthodox and live segregated from other Jews at first
1948	The modern state of Israel is recreated with the cooperation of England which held Palestine as a colony and the United States which consented to the Jewish resettlement of Israel
2000	Israel now has a population of about 5 million people, mostly Jews but a substantial minority of Palestinians. And the number of Jewish persons in the United States is now 5.5 million or 2 percent of the US population.