**THE FOUNDING COLLOQUIUM**

*AJS Newsletter, 1983*

*“Introduction,” AJS Newsletter, 1983*

*Would Zunz, Steinschneider, or even Graetz have believed that in 1969 some fifty professors of Judaica, to a considerable degree American-born and trained, would gather at a major American university established by Jews to consider the status of their profession? Our presence at the conference is one among many, but by no means the most trivial of testimonials belying Zunz’s pessimistic prognosis of 1818.*

— Leon Jick

**THE EARLY YEARS: EXPANSION AND THE ESTABLISHMENT OF STANDARDS**

*Massachusetts, September 7 – 10, 1969. At this meeting, “the need for ongoing communication was deeply felt by all of the participants who decided to proceed with the establishment of the Association for Jewish Studies” (Leon Jick, “Introduction,” Massachusetts, September 7 – 10, 1969.)*

*The early years: ‘Would Zunz, Steinschneider, or even Graetz have believed that in 1969 some fifty professors of Judaica, to a considerable degree American-born and trained, would gather at a major American university established by Jews to consider the status of their profession?’ Our presence at the conference is one among many, but by no means the most trivial of testimonials belying Zunz’s pessimistic prognosis of 1818.’*

— Arnold Band

*Interview, 2008*
As a Jew who is devoted to his tradition and people, I allow myself to hope that Jewish students studying with my colleagues and myself will be helped by their Jewish studies to a deeper and more effective personal Jewish life and commitment. As a professor, I can give no consideration to that objective, since my task is to provide students with the tools, methods, and tentative conclusions of learning in my field, but not to save their souls.

– Marvin Fox
Letter to Phyllis Klatzkin, October 22, 1971

Remarkably for its size and scope, AJS at forty maintains a strong sense of community. Although membership has grown from a few hundred to more than seventeen hundred, we have managed to retain the feel of a small organization—familiarity, hominess, friendliness, ease of meeting.

– Sara Horowitz, 2008
"From the President," AJS Perspectives, Fall 2008

As scholars in the field of Jewish Studies, we continue to encourage actively the study of Jewish history, societies, and intellectual and cultural achievements within the general liberal arts curriculum. We must also further recognition of the diversity of the Jewish experience… Acknowledgement and appreciation of our wealth of differences—geographic, ethnic, religious and social, including the ramifications of class and gender—must become the accepted starting points of our scholarship and training. The Women’s Caucus of the [AJS] is excited by these new directions in our academic fields of research and endeavor.

– Judith Baskin
"Report from the AJS Women’s Caucus," AJS Newsletter, Spring 1992
How to chart the middle ground between a mechanical professionalism and a warm, but inevitably exclusionary landsmanschaft-like existence will figure presumably among the tasks of [the AJS’s] future leadership, and to the extent to which there will be public voice given to these struggles—and, if confronted directly, struggles they almost certainly must be—one would like to believe that they will be found, in ample supply, in the pages of its periodicals.

– Steven Zipperstein

"AJS and Its Publications," AJS Perspectives, Spring 2006