

# THE CHOSEN BOOK

## Charting the Course: The University of Florida's Collection Management Policy for Jewish Studies

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*A collection development policy should be both a rational assessment of a library collection's current strengths and weaknesses as well as a map to guide future acquisitions along a defined course. At the outset, it should be stated that academic programs and levels of financial support (both public and private) vary widely, as do faculty research interests, and no policy statement can serve as an exact model for uncritical adoption at another institution. The collecting needs of a rabbinical seminary for sifre kodesh (religious texts) are by no means identical to the curricular needs of a college serving a predominantly undergraduate clientele with little or no preparation in foreign languages. A university offering advanced graduate degrees culminating in the doctorate places sophisticated demands on the aspiring research library, more often than not necessitating an intensified retrospective collection building program on the out-of-print and/or microform market.*

*In the current tight-money environment marked by declining dollars, it is all the more incumbent on bibliographers to seek and spend allocated funds on library materials of enduring value to academic programs in targeted collecting areas and in appropriate languages. Ideally, collaborative projects (acquisitions, resource sharing, preservation filming) will also be facilitated through the sharing of collection management policies in Jewish studies (Lerman, 1990). Although the University of Florida's policy as presented here is an internal document negotiated with the relevant teaching faculty, and thus reflects local needs and priorities, its value as a potential model and as a catalyst for similar activity warrants its broader dissemination.*

### Introduction

The field of Jewish studies has as its focal point the Jewish experience, defined broadly here to encompass the history, religion, culture, and literature of the Jewish people in all epochs and in all of the world's geographic areas. Although the Jewish homeland of Israel is central to Jewish theology and the modern Jewish experience, the Jewish diaspora has tremendous antiquity, with Jews typically enriching the culture of every country in which they have been afforded a modicum of religious toleration and civil liberty. The convergence of Western civilization and Jewish culture is of long duration and is so pervasive and intertwined that Jewish studies and Hebrew, even at the introductory level, have a secure place in the academic programs of over 300 universities and colleges in the United States.

The policy statement given here attempts to outline the broad realm of Jewish Studies and the reciprocal responsibility of the faculty affiliated with the Center for Jewish Studies program and the corps of bibliographers and selectors attached to the University of Florida Libraries to enhance the collections through the timely identification, acquisition, and logical placement of supporting library materials.

### Center for Jewish Studies

Although Judaica in Western languages was collected sporadically by the University of Florida Libraries as undergraduate and research collections were built in support of academic programs in religion, history, the arts, and literature, the impetus for a research-level collection containing Hebraica as well as Judaica was recognized only in 1973 with the formation of the Center for Jewish Studies. The Center has grown to eight core FTE [full-time equivalent] faculty drawn from the academic depart-

ments of History, Religion, Asian and African Languages and Literatures, and English. In addition to coordinating course offerings, the Center sponsors public lectures throughout the academic year and issues, in conjunction with the Price Library of Judaica, an annual newsletter, *Amudim*, mailed to some 4,700 potential friends and supporters. Dr. Warren Bargad (English Dept.) has directed the Center's programs since 1985, relieving Dr. Barry Mesch (Religion Dept.), the Center's founder.

### Program Description

A B.A. in Jewish Studies was approved by the Board of Regents in July, 1989. At the present time, approximately 750 students are registered in Jewish Studies courses each year; included in this number are twenty-five majors and over thirty minors. Hebrew language and literature, Jewish philosophy and thought, classical and modern Judaism are currently receiving emphasis in the curriculum. With the recent appointment of Dr. Daniel Schroeter, it is anticipated that Jewish history will receive increased attention in the form of course offerings and demands on the collection.

### The Price Library of Judaica

The University of Florida (UF) Libraries' core holdings supporting Jewish Studies are housed at the Price Library of Judaica, named for Isser and Rae Price of Jacksonville in recognition of an endowment created in 1977 in their honor by their sons, Jack and Sam, both UF alumni. The "3M" foundation collections (Mishkin, Marenoff, Morgenstern) were acquired between 1977 and 1979; to these have been added thousands of new and retrospective titles so that the Price Library, with some 42,500 volumes, is the largest collection of Judaica and Hebraica in the southeastern United States. For the most part a fully cataloged and circulating collection of

twentieth-century monographs, these holdings are supplemented by over 400 current periodical subscriptions and an equal number of increasingly scarce serials that are no longer current. At least half of the collection consists of books and scarce pamphlets in Hebrew and Yiddish, while microforms of manuscripts and newspapers continue to be acquired as resources permit. Generally speaking, the Price Library is responsible for the humanities and social sciences as they relate to the Jewish experience or to Israel.

### Other Local Library Resources in Judaica

With very few exceptions, Judaica in Western languages acquired prior to 1979, when the Jewish Studies Bibliographer was hired to curate the Price Library, remains in the Libraries' "Main" collection and has never been transferred to Price. In addition, scattered materials related to Jewish art, music, and Israeli law may be found in the Architecture and Fine Arts (AFA) Library, the Music Library and the Legal Information Center, respectively. Maps of Israel and isolated Israeli government publications are similarly held by the Map Library and the Documents Library, though bibliographic access to holdings in these areas may not always be available via LUIS [Library User Information Service, i.e., the online catalog], as is also the case with 19th- and 20th-century English-language juvenile literature of Jewish interest held by the Baldwin Library.

### Jewish Studies Research Collections

*Kiryat sefer*, the bibliographic quarterly of the Jewish National and University Library in Jerusalem, recorded in the pages of vol. 62, covering 1988/89, the acquisition of over 8,000 new publications. Using this standard resource for defining the broad parameters of the bibliographic universe in which a Jewish Studies bibliographer functions, the Price Library currently collects about 10% of this body of literature, while perhaps another 5% is collected and housed in other UF collections, based on recommendations by bibliographers/selectors responsible for history, political science, religion, literature, art, music, science, law, etc. Gifts of non-commercial research reports and newsletters are routinely solicited from

issuing institutions, while duplicate-exchange with other libraries will similarly add important works, the majority of them elusive and out-of-print, at no cost.

### Primary Collecting Responsibilities

With few exceptions, the Price Library of Judaica's acquisitions program concentrates on 20th-century materials (monographs, pamphlets, periodicals), as well as microforms, in English, Hebrew, Yiddish, and the major European research languages in the following *major divisions of Jewish Studies*:

1. **Judaism**, broadly interpreted to include Jewish theology, rabbinical literature, Jewish classical texts and commentaries, liturgy and customs, religious law, mysticism, movements and sects, relations with other religions, homiletics, philosophy and ethics, rabbinic biography, and synagogue history.

2. **Jewish history**, a far-encompassing field spanning 4,000 years of Jewish life in Palestine, modern Israel, and all countries of the Diaspora, with emphasis on the major population centers of Western and Eastern Europe, North Africa and the Middle East, North America, and Latin America. Sefardica, Palestinography, community history and demography, antisemitism, Zionism, Jewish-Arab relations, and the Holocaust (e.g., community memorial books) are but a few collecting highlights and strengths.

3. **Israel**, with emphasis on the pre-State period synonymous with Turkish rule and the British Mandate, and more selectively (yet broadly) for the modern State of Israel in its social, political, and cultural aspects. English-language materials are preferred for more general treatments of Israel for use by undergraduates, while works in Hebrew are selectively chosen for specialized yet non-technical treatments of Israeli life seldom covered by English-language materials. Literature on the Palestinian Arabs in Israel and the Occupied Territories (Gaza, West Bank) may be found in both the Price Library and the "Main" collection; although no clear division of labor exists between the two collections, material in the Price Library will tend to be pro-Israel, though anti-Zionist literature will be found there, and more prevalently in "Main."

Very few works in Hebrew or other foreign languages relating to Israeli science, industry, banking and economics, agriculture, technology, civil and criminal law, medicine, military, etc. are acquired by the Price Library; by and large, only introductory or survey treatments of these subjects in English intended for non-practitioners will be considered for acquisition, and then only selectively. Statistical series and government documents, including those issued by municipalities and regional councils, are not currently being collected beyond the latest Israeli census, Israel's *Statistical Abstract*, and the *Statistical Yearbook of Jerusalem*.

4. **Bible**, including texts, commentaries, and criticism of the Hebrew Scriptures (Old Testament); Biblical history, theology, institutions, personalities, geography, archaeology, etc., provided the works are informative of the growth and development of early Judaism and the Jewish people in the Biblical period and/or said works are from a Jewish perspective or written by authors in the mainstream of scholarly research. Bible is increasingly a difficult area in which to select because of Christianity's claim on the Old Testament as a source of inspiration and dogma; works of a Christian doctrinal or devotional nature, or by authors writing primarily for a non-Jewish audience in the fields of Old and New Testament or the Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha are typically reviewed and purchased by selectors in the humanities for placement in the "Main" collection. The Price Library continues to collect Aramaic texts and literature on the Dead Sea Scrolls and the Qumran community, Essenes, etc.

5. **Hebrew language and literature; Yiddish language and literature; other Judeo-languages**. The expanding Hebrew literature program requires creative writing in Hebrew as well as English translations from the Hebrew, while the linguistic component of the program (grammar, lexicography, morphology and syntax, phonology, semantics) is supported by appropriate treatises. In the absence of a Yiddish program, very few purchases are being made in Yiddish literature, but linguistic studies of Yiddish and Yiddish literary criticism are routinely added. Creative writing in Yiddish originating in Latin America, however, is a current collecting emphasis. Studies of other Jewish languages –

Judezmo, Aramaic, Judeo-Persian, Judeo-Italian, Hakitia, Samaritan, etc. — are acquired as they may support broader ethnographic, interlingual, or sociolinguistic research.

**6. Secondary areas of collecting responsibility in the realm of Jewish culture, and collections of potential interest to academic programs beyond Jewish studies:**

**a. Ancient Near East; Orientalia.** Isolated works may be acquired in the context of supporting the study of ancient Israel and its neighbors, Biblical archaeology and epigraphy, Hebrew Scriptures, or Hebrew and Semitic linguistics. Titles acquired in this cognate category tend to be scholarly, multi-author collections and festschriften transecting several subject disciplines and typically containing essays of Jewish interest.

**b. Biography; Genealogy.** The Price Library generally attempts to retain individual and collective biography and autobiography only of Jews active in the Jewish sphere of activity; thus autobiographies and biographies of Jews recognized for their contributions to the professions, the realms of entertainment, sports, and the media, arts and sciences, or literature should typically be considered by other subject or discipline-based bibliographers/selectors. Only commercially available genealogies and family histories are routinely sought for acquisition by the Price Library, but privately-distributed materials related to Florida Jewry may be sought and retained.

**c. Creative writing with Jewish themes or characters.** Although the Price Library has a rather dated collection of American and German novels with Jewish content, responsibility for collecting newer Jewish creative writing (broadly interpreted to include both books by Jewish authors and books by non-Jews with Jewish themes) resides with bibliographers/selectors attached to the appropriate national literatures of the world. The Price Library will have primary responsibility for original creative writing in Hebrew or Yiddish as well as translations of same into English. Research literature on the delineation of the Jewish stereotype in literature and film, or studies of Jewish writers as a class, continue to be acquired by Price.

**d. Hebrew and Yiddish theatre history.**

**e. Jewish art history; Jewish liturgical objects and ritual art; Synagogue architecture; Sepulchral monuments.** Note: "Secular" art; that is, works by and about individual Jewish or Israeli artists, regardless of media, are collected by the Architecture and Fine Arts Library, as are many exhibition catalogs, for use by art specialists.

**f. Jewish education.** The Price Library collection will stress the history and development of Jewish education, religious and secular, at all levels and in all countries of the world. Curricular materials intended for professional educators, and textbooks for school use, are not collected, nor are audio-visual materials for classroom or recreational use.

**g. Jewish folklore, tales, proverbs, humor.**

**h. Jewish law.** The Legal Information Center often duplicates English-language material in this area. Israeli civil and criminal law is the responsibility of the Legal Information Center.

**i. Jewish medicine; Jewish medical law; Medical ethics.**

**j. Jewish music.** The Price Library collection emphasizes the history and criticism of Jewish sacred or popular music, ballads, and folk music. Although Price retains some basic music anthologies and hymnals in book form, sound recordings, tapes, and musical scores for advanced students and musicians are organized by the Music Library. American Yiddish sheet music is held by the Belknap Collection for the Performing Arts.

**k. Jewish numismatics.** Only modest selections of monographs and standard catalogs are made, together with the primary periodicals in English.

**l. Jewish philately.** Only modest selections of monographs and standard catalogs are made, together with the primary periodicals in English.

**m. Jewish onomastics; Jewish epigraphy.**

**n. Jewish press history.** An extensive collection of anniversary issues of newspapers and journals is maintained.

**o. Jewish printing and publishing history; Book arts; Manuscripts.**

Although neither bibliophilic nor limited, signed editions are routinely purchased, the Price Library supports an extensive collection devoted to Jewish bibliography, Hebrew printing and typography, Jewish publishing, and library catalogs of Hebrew manuscripts.

**p. Jewish sociology, i.e., attitudinal studies, demographics, voting behavior, intermarriage, assimilation, identity, mobility, occupations, the Jewish woman, etc.** Materials in English are stressed, but foreign language works are often acquired within the context of community histories.

**r. Semitics.** Isolated works may be acquired in the context of supporting the study of Hebrew etymology, linguistics, or Biblical studies.

**Selection Guidelines**

The Price Library aspires to be a comprehensive research collection (level 4), collecting not only for present needs but also for the future in anticipation of additional growth in the Jewish Studies Program culminating in graduate-level research. Price is generally a Level 4 in terms of English-language materials and a Level 3 (instructional support) for Hebraica, and more selectively for works in other foreign languages. In developing this collection, the following considerations to guide decisions are applicable:

**1. Cost.** The Price Library does not generally purchase expensive rarities or signed, limited-issue bibliophilic or facsimile editions; as a rule, subject to case-by-case exceptions, single books or sets, regardless of date and with a cost exceeding \$500, are not purchased unless "adopted" by a private donor. For microforms, see paragraph 4, below.

**2. Format.** Manuscripts, sheet maps, or audio-visual materials are not held at this time by the Price Library, as the processing, storage, public service, environmental, and security considerations would dictate that other library units are better repositories for organizing and servicing these formats.

**3. Ephemera.** Special efforts are made to identify and retain ephemeral pamphlets, institutional reports, research

reports, newsletters, lecture series, eulogies, keepsakes, calendars, broadsides, etc. Although some titles are only available through purchase, preference will be given to gift acquisitions.

**4. Microforms.** Microforms (fiche or roll film) are the preferred format for newspapers and older periodicals that are invariably embrittled, bulky, or occupy a great deal of shelf space. As extraordinary resources become available, numerous brittle serials already in the collection will be replaced with microforms, while additional titles or microform packages of primary source material will similarly be added.

**5. Language.** Original works in English, Hebrew, and Yiddish will naturally comprise the bulk of the collection, though works in other languages appropriate to the subject matter are routinely added, as in the case of rabbinics, Israel, community and synagogue histories, biography and personal narratives, etc.

**6. Translations.** Translations into Hebrew or Yiddish from other languages are typically not acquired; exceptions might be classics of world literature or translations that could be important because the translator is a noteworthy figure, or owing to new prefatory/critical apparatus. Translations into English of Hebrew and Yiddish creative writing and non-fiction are comprehensively acquired within the subject scope of this policy statement.

**7. Dissertations.** Unless devoted to a subject area not extensively covered by published literature (e.g., Judeo-languages), American doctoral dissertations are not routinely acquired, unless specifically requested by a faculty member or a graduate student. Israeli dissertations, typically published in exceedingly small editions for institutional and private distribution by the author, are acquired in appropriate subject areas to the extent they are available commercially or on exchange. The Center for Research Libraries will be relied upon to supply all other foreign dissertations.

**8. Juvenile works and primers** are not collected, but exceptions may be made when a well-known author is already well represented in the collection with adult-level books. Abridged works in simplified Hebrew, for adult learners, are added to the collection.

**9. Serials** are an important and valuable component of the Price Library of Judaica; the majority of these holdings are unique in Florida, if not the entire Southeast. Owing to the enormous difficulty of replacing lost issues and the need to have serials equitably and readily available for consultation and for servicing photoduplication requests, all serials in the collection are non-circulating, except by special permission of the Jewish Studies Bibliographer.

### Cataloging Priorities

For the most part, everything of lasting research value published in English and the Western research languages since 1970 should be fully cataloged, beginning with items of more than 50 printed pages; the remainder may be controlled on LUIS by means of provisional records whenever there is a clear statement of authorship, or organized in bulk in archival boxes or "vertical file" envelopes, by subject or institution. Hebraica and Yiddish materials, particularly brittle titles and smaller pamphlets, are likewise controlled on LUIS by means of provisional records, with cataloging priority given to newer books as Library of Congress cataloging copy is found, and more selectively for modern Hebrew literature, Jewish philosophy, rabbinics, Bible, critical editions of classic texts, Israeli politics, etc., with shared OCLC copy. This cataloging policy for Hebraica is necessitated by the fact that the librarian responsible for cataloging Hebraica is not permitted to devote more than two days a week to these materials.

### Preservation Priorities

Smaller items in need of preservation may be photocopied on archival paper by trained staff in the Preservation Office. Since there is no external funding to support in-house preservation filming, and the only internal funding available for this purpose reduces the budgetary balance for current and retrospective acquisitions and serial subscriptions, it is the policy of the Price Library, subject to case-by-case exceptions, to microfilm only Jewish newspapers published in Florida.

### Coordination with Other Institutions

Given the fact that the cataloging activity of the University of Florida Libraries is

reflected on the OCLC and RLIN bibliographic networks (assuming current taping/loading of records), there is considerable potential for national resource sharing of Florida's Judaica and Hebraica. The University of Florida Libraries has joined the Jewish and Middle Eastern Studies (JAMES)<sup>2</sup> program of the Research Libraries Group (RLG) to promote and coordinate cooperative resource sharing, vernacular cataloging, retrospective conversion, and preservation activities among member institutions.

Materials not held by the Price Library of Judaica because of insufficient funds, unavailability, or because of their peripheral nature in relation to known instructional and academic needs can be routinely requested on interlibrary loan; this well-established network also supplies Hebraica and Yiddish lent by comprehensive-level (see below) institutions such as the Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion, Jewish Theological Seminary, New York Public Library, Brandeis University, Harvard, Yeshiva University, YIVO Institute for Jewish Research, etc. Decisions made by the Jewish Studies Bibliographer not to purchase monographs or not to subscribe to a serial are made in the context of short- and long-term academic needs as well as the availability of these titles on interlibrary loan.

### Collecting Levels

#### A. Definitions

- Level 1:* Minimal;
- Level 2:* Basic Information;
- Level 3:* Instructional Support;
- Level 4:* Research;
- Level 5:* Comprehensive.

#### Language codes

- E, English language predominates, with little or no foreign languages;
- F, Selected European research languages included, together with Hebrew and Yiddish;
- W, wide selection in all applicable languages;
- Y, material is primarily in one foreign language, e.g., Hebrew or Yiddish.

Current Collecting Intensity/Desired Collecting Intensity and relevant language code is expressed as follows: 2E/3W (a current collecting intensity at

the Basic Information level, predominantly in English, and a desired collecting intensity at the Instructional Support level, with materials in all applicable languages). [Source of definitions: American Library Association, 1977.]

## B. Major Divisions of Jewish Studies

1. Judaism. 3F/4F (LC class BM 1-990).
2. Jewish History. 4F/4F (primarily LC classes D 810.J4 for Holocaust; DS 101-151 for Jews in Israel and the Diaspora; scattered but discrete sections of E and F for Jewish communal/regional history in the United States, Canada, and Latin America/Caribbean).
3. Bible. 3F/3F (LC class BS 1-1830 for Old Testament).
4. Hebrew Language and Literature; Aramaic. 3Y/4Y (LC class PJ 4501-5329).
5. Yiddish Language and Literature. 2Y/2Y (LC class PJ 5110-5191)

Note: Acquisitions and Catalog Dept. staff should bring uncataloged titles, whether purchased by other budget accounts for "Main," or received on a series standing order or in a donated collection, to the attention of the Jewish Studies Bibliographer for consideration of possible placement in the Price Library of Judaica collection, whenever their subject matter is of obvious Jewish interest or their call numbers, as determined by CIP (Cataloging in Publication) data or other sources, fall within the following LC classification blocks:

BM 1-990  
BS 1-1830  
DS 101-151  
PJ 4501-5329

## C. Secondary Divisions of Jewish Studies

All are collected at Level 3 or better, with selections made in English, Hebrew, and foreign languages appropriate to the subject matter, e.g., a work in Hungarian on Jewish family names in Hungary. By and large, the publishing universe is not extensive within these divisions, and only modest resources are expended to maintain current collecting intensities.

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## Postscript

*The Jewish Studies Bibliographer is now able to assist the Catalog Dept. with classification and verification work, thereby contributing to far greater use of shared cataloging copy for Hebrew and Yiddish materials and less reliance on Library of Congress copy. In-house preservation microfilming of brittle books has been initiated with costs being absorbed by the Preservation Office. On the negative side, budget cuts at the University of Florida have resulted in the loss through attrition of two full-time teaching positions in the Center for Jewish Studies.*

## Notes

1. The duplication with the Legal Information Center is for the most part intentional, if for no other reason that the LIC, as a professional school, is physically remote from the main part of campus (and the Price Library) and the needs of LIC's clientele are better served there with "everything" under one roof.

2. All program groups of RLG, including JAMES, were disbanded on Sept. 1, 1991, to be replaced by project-driven task forces.

## References

American Library Association, Resources and Technical Services Division, Resources Section, Collection Development Committee. "Guidelines for the Formulation of Collection Development Policies." *Library Resources & Technical Services*, vol. 21, no. 1 (Winter 1977), pp. 42-43 ("Definitions").

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