

A German Judaica Blanket Order: Description and Analysis

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Introduction

This paper seeks, through description and analysis, to present in detail a comprehensive Blanket Order plan (BO)¹ for Judaica materials published in the German language area of Europe. The authors hope that readers may profit from the experiences related here in the possible consideration and management of their own plans. While it is true that no two plans are identical, our position is that sufficient points of interest and importance may be, or actually are, similar so as to make this exercise fruitful. We would be pleased and satisfied, however, if this paper at least encourages further discussion of the pros and cons of such schemes in the service of Judaica libraries.

Readers should bear in mind that the Library staff members who were concerned with the BO regarded it as a very valuable *selection* tool with which to build the collection in the specific areas serviced by the plan. The vendor responsible for its execution, the well-known firm of Otto Harrassowitz (Wiesbaden, Germany), may be viewed in some sense as an extension of the Library staff. A relationship of collegiality and close cooperation between library and vendor is a key factor in the successful implementation of the plan.² Harrassowitz' fine staff, under the able direction of Dr. Knut Dorn, is largely responsible for the positive results obtained so far.

Description

The Mendel Gottesman Library of Hebraica-Judaica (MGL) holds one of the major Judaica collections in North America. It is charged with the primary responsibility for this field within the Yeshiva University Library system. MGL serves approximately 7,000 students distributed among four different campuses. The main part of the collection consists of ca. 180,000 printed volumes, with an annual growth rate of 1.5%. Rabbinic Literature is the core and particular strength of the Library, but Jewish History, Philosophy and Literature, and Biblical studies are also well represented.

In 1975, there began a concentrated effort aimed at upgrading MGL holdings in comparatively weak areas. Recent German language publications were identified as one of these areas. Members of the staff located and searched available subject bibliographies and introduced a system to monitor the appropriate periodical and trade literature for notices and reviews. With assistance from the faculty, on-going desiderata lists were compiled and maintained. Next, firm orders [orders for monographs] were placed, and the concern of Harrassowitz was found to provide the most reliable and efficient service for MGL's needs in the area of German language publications. This phase of our program was not wholly successful, for despite intensive efforts at finding all appropriate German titles, some were, nevertheless, missed or discovered only so late as to be declared out-of-print by the time orders for them reached the vendor. Additional efforts were needed to improve in-house operations, but these could not be justified on the basis of economy or efficiency. Therefore, Harrassowitz was asked in 1976 to commence supplying MGL with selection forms for those books sent to Brandeis University as part of its Judaica BO. This arrangement, though decidedly better, also proved to be unsatisfactory over a period of time, as Brandeis' aims and needs were different from those of MGL. The information on the forms was, in many cases, insufficient to allow for fully considered selection decisions (provision of subject descriptors would have been of assistance). A solution in the form of a blanket order was debated with all of the usual arguments pro and con being raised.³ Perhaps the decisive factor in favor of its adoption was the desire for comprehensive coverage in a limited and relatively well-defined area. It could be economically achieved only by means of an approval plan.⁴ Success in achieving this goal lay chiefly in our ability to devise a sufficiently detailed and exhaustive profile of the Library's interests in German language area publications.

Interviews with MGL staff and with members of the faculty garnered some of the

needed basic information. A subject analysis of the collection was carried out to establish a detailed description of the full range of its holdings. Note was made of the research interests of the faculty as well as of curricular needs. Throughout, due consideration was accorded to the present and likely future structures and aims of Yeshiva University's different schools, insofar as these were relevant. A model of an ideal Judaica collection was developed—adjusted to and limited by the foregoing—and compared to the actual collection. These, together with financial constraints, made up the basis for a realistic statement that was sent to Harrassowitz for comment and for projections of the number of titles to be supplied and their cost per annum.⁵ No vendors other than Harrassowitz were taken into consideration as possible BO suppliers because of Harrassowitz' highly satisfactory record and because of the firm's long history of successful fulfillment of a wide variety of blanket orders.⁶ Correspondence established an initial estimate of DM4,000⁷ and 100–120 titles a year. Several subject and non-subject parameters were refined as a result of this early exchange. For instance, the exclusion of works by and about Spinoza was extended to other modern Jewish philosophers writing in the European tradition. (Further discussion of this point is found under *Analysis of the Profile* below.)

During the initial phase of the BO, Harrassowitz responded cautiously. For 1980, in order to avoid duplication with previous or concurrent firm orders, a subject list was employed by its staff to pull 1980 imprint titles from the available data bank, and these were then matched against the firm orders. The result was a somewhat disappointing total of 43 items. It must be kept in mind, however, that the BO took effect only in October, so that many titles had been firm ordered by then. Harrassowitz' caution found its chief expression in a literal interpretation of the field of Judaica—which may have been justified as an opening position, to be revised later. This was certainly the prudent business decision. Further contacts with the Library's staff served to alter that view.⁸ Con-

tinued close monitoring of German language area publications resulted in the production of suggestion slips which were then compared against BO receipts. Slips for titles not supplied (an imprint year was generally allowed to pass prior to claiming) were periodically submitted to Harrassowitz for comment. In this manner, its bibliographers gained a closer and fuller understanding of the profile and the Library staff's interpretation of it.

A phenomenon noticed early on was the prevalence of the words "Juden" or "Israel" and their derivatives in the titles of the monographs received. Was it possible that the vendor's staff was focusing, perhaps subconsciously, on these obvious words to the detriment of other titles with no such clear markers, but whose content was relevant to the BO? It turned out that a large number of the potentially relevant items did contain these words in their titles, perhaps as a stratagem to mark them for and to attract the attention of readers and buyers. Closer attention on the part of Harrassowitz to the broader provisions of the BO soon allayed this concern.

The Library's commitment to a comprehensive collection in this language area found a means of expression through the suggestion slips, which serve as a detailed commentary on the progress of the BO. For example, Harrassowitz was asked to send titles dealing with Biblical criticism, but not with Old Testament theology (except in English). As a result, the gray area of theologically oriented commentaries was also excluded—until suggestion slips demonstrated the Library's interest in this genre. Similar steps led to further improvements, such as expanded coverage of titles with substantial but not full Judaica content, of those important for their indirect bearing (e.g., monographs on the book burning episodes in the 1930s), and of those treating Jewish elements or influences in the life and work of prominent figures, whether themselves Jewish or only of Jewish descent. The clause for Jewish Literature was extended to include serious works of fiction in which Jewish themes were found.

An examination of the accompanying tables clearly indicates the rather steady increase in the number of titles supplied as the bibliographers at Harrassowitz have become more familiar with the profile and its interpretation by the Library staff through suggestion slips, correspondence and meetings. There still remain a few areas which may not have been fully exploited in terms of possible items to be supplied. These include Anti-Semitic Literature, works on local Jewish communal affairs and history, and non-

trade publications. Weakness in the first may be attributed to the non-academic nature of the material and to the frequent obscurity of its publishers (not to mention the distaste the vendor must experience in dealing with it). The second and third are difficult for a commercial concern to trace and obtain, and usually yield little profit. Nevertheless, definite improvement has been noted in all of these areas, and satisfactory supply may be expected in the future.

Analysis of the Profile

The BO profile (see Appendix) is divided into two parts. The first provides directions of a general nature which apply to the entire profile. The second consists of an outline by subject of the materials to be supplied. Both are specifically designed to handle the German language publishing area of Europe (Germany—East and West, Austria, and Switzerland). Profiles for other areas would, naturally, require both major and minor changes.⁹

The profile may be regarded as a collection development policy statement. It exhibits the complexities peculiar to many such documents and is, therefore, difficult for the vendor to digest and adjust to. While there may yet exist no consensus regarding which type of profile is easier to service and to monitor—one with relatively few and broad subject specifications or one with many detailed ones—our Judaica profile must present an unusual challenge because it calls for frequent cutting across traditional subject boundaries. In many cases, only close attention to the content of a given work can establish its relevance to the profile—a labor-intensive procedure for the vendor.

Section 1 of the general instructions asked for all formats of publication to insure comprehensive coverage. So far, the bulk of material supplied has been commercially available titles. While understandable from the vendor's point of view, it is regrettable that much valuable material is thus missed. An improvement in this area has already been noted. Wider dissemination of information concerning non-trade publications may lead to an increase in the number of orders for them and, thus, make their handling more nearly profitable.

Works co-published in the U.S. are excluded. This is a useful and common feature of foreign approval plans, since it avoids duplication with domestic acquisition programs. Particular attention must be paid to titles published by firms with offices in both the U.S. and Germany (e.g., Peter Lang or

Walter de Gruyter) and Harrassowitz' suggestion to specifically include or exclude their output was adopted.

Popular titles on modern Israel are excluded in the third section. They are published in large numbers and, in general, add little information to that available elsewhere. Also it is unlikely that MGL readers would call for or need such material. In this case, considerations of cost-effectiveness outweighed those of comprehensiveness.

Section 4 permits the Library to avoid commitment to expensive or extended publication projects without prior study of reviews or consultation with experts. Harrassowitz' policy is to provide the first volume in a set, which, if kept, initiates a standing order for the following volumes.¹⁰ This is sensible, but by the time the reviews are published, it may be too late to return the first volume. There may also be subtle pressure to retain items received that would not ordinarily have been ordered.

Section 5 is important for allowing, indeed mandating, initiative on the part of Harrassowitz' selectors to call to the attention of the MGL staff items of interest excluded on formal grounds, but which the selectors' examination determined may be of interest.¹¹ For example, only a close perusal of a memoir may reveal valuable, even unique comments on events or personalities of Jewish nature. Ordinarily, the Library staff would have neither the requisite knowledge nor the leisure to make these determinations.

The subject categories were intended to cover all of the Library's areas of collecting, while tempering this with practical considerations of diminishing returns the further afield one went. Thus, for example, inclusiveness is called for in the first two categories, as these are core subjects of Jewish Studies. It would have been inappropriate to apply language restrictions here, for any patron doing serious research on, e.g., the history of acculturation in the Jewish communities of Poland, must be prepared to make use of sources in a variety of languages. The words "pertaining to" were meant to convey the desire to receive titles of indirect interest as well. A treatise on medieval money-lending may, for instance, be highly significant, if we consider the fact that this occupation was primarily practiced by Jews. Additional correspondence and meetings served to refine the scope of indirect material required by the Library.

An enumeration of all aspects of contemporary Jewish life (second category) would have been impractical and almost certainly incomplete. The discretion reserved here for the vendor has, in fact, been well exercised.

The section on Christian theology and religion was formulated with special care. The period which early Christianity spent first in common and then in close association with Judaism surely warrants inclusion for the wealth of information the former's documents shed on the latter. A similar argument applies to the topics of confrontation, dialogue, relations and mutual influences of Judaism and Christianity. An interesting example of the last mentioned was a monograph on the influence of Hebrew on Church liturgy that was recently received.

The writings of the Church Fathers (category 3.II.d) posed a bit of a problem. They undoubtedly contain a great deal of valuable material for Jewish Studies, while their vastness precludes comprehensive coverage for a Judaica library. A middle road was finally chosen which included writings up to and including the time of St. Jerome, since the early period of Patristic Literature contains a higher proportion of relevant information, though interesting later works were admittedly excluded from automatic shipment as a result of this decision.

In the case of Islamic religion and theology, the problem of formulation was even more difficult. No easily comprehensible directions could be found with which to delineate those areas needed to enhance the collection. The staff reluctantly decided to be content with a "relations and mutual influences" statement. Its inadequacy may be gauged from the paucity of titles supplied under this rubric. Firm orders based on reviews and faculty recommendations compensate for this deficiency.

The profile excluded works by and about Spinoza in the fourth subject category because of the perceived abundance of texts and studies being published on the strictly philosophical aspects of his oeuvre, with no connection to Judaica. The exceptions may be ordered separately. At Harrassowitz, this clause was understood in a wider sense: that items by and about Jewish philosophers working in the European tradition were to be excluded. Subsequent review and reconsideration resulted in our asking for primary texts and secondary studies having to do with Jewish philosophers (or those of Jewish descent)—e.g., Emmanuel Levinas—in which Jewish influence may be discerned or discussed.

Publications in several scientific fields (e.g., Physics) form the most notable exclusions in category five—Israel and the Middle East. These more properly belong in collections specializing in science.

The clause asking for every kind of documentary publication on the Holocaust (category 6.I) was, after a time, judged to be not

entirely adequate. Selective inclusion of material on the background and development of the Nazi order was requested to assist our patrons in gaining an understanding of the genesis of the Holocaust. Monographs have been and continue to be published on life under the Nazis in specific regions and towns (within the geographical area of the BO) which often include much valuable information on the fate of local Jewish communities. Harrassowitz was asked to send these, provided that content of Jewish interest was substantial. An important, yet sometimes neglected, element in the study of the Holocaust—as well as that of Jewish History of other periods—is Anti-Semitic literature. A separate paragraph was devoted to it precisely to counter its neglect and to encourage its supply.

The description of requirements in Jewish Literature (category 7) was purposely left general in order to invite a broad interpretation. With hindsight, we realized that this was an unfortunate decision, since a conservative approach by Harrassowitz meant the dispatch of classics for the most part. With further contact, however, this category was redefined to include fiction and literary criticism dealing with Jews or with Jewish themes. As an example, works by and about Joseph Roth may be cited.

The profile for Semitic languages (category 8.I) distinguished between North-West—the narrow group to which Hebrew belongs—and East and South Semitic. Whereas comprehensive collecting was deemed necessary for the former, selective acquisition of mainly reference materials was requested for the latter. We thought that our vendor would benefit from detailed guidance in this instance, as too general a statement would leave many uncertainties. Instructions called for the supply of primary and secondary titles within the North-West Semitic group of languages—which are closest to Hebrew both linguistically and historically—and for reference works only (grammars and dictionaries) pertaining to the remaining Semitic languages, for the purpose of comparative research. The large number of Arabic grammars and dictionaries available prompted their exclusion from automatic shipment, with the ones useful to MGL to be ordered individually. Semitic Ethiopic is of too specialized interest, so that faculty recommendations may best fill any need here.

A specific request for Biblical history materials (category 8.II.a) was found to be useful because Jewish history is sometimes assumed to commence with post-Biblical times. The University's students and faculty require a well-rounded collection in modern higher and lower Biblical criticism in order to integrate these approaches with more

traditional ones. (Although some New Testament scholarship bears important implications for Biblical Studies and at times foreshadows developments in the latter, no clear instruction could be formulated to direct selection of relevant titles.)

The category of Palestine and Transjordan (10) rounds out a part of Jewish history by including primary texts that would not ordinarily be placed under the heading of Judaica, but which, nonetheless, serve as important background material for a reconstruction of the Jewish presence in the traditional homeland of the Jews. Secondary works were excluded, since these usually discuss the area only in the context of the history of the larger political units to which this region belonged during most of its history. The risk of receiving many titles of marginal relevance encouraged firm ordering in this instance. The closing date of 1948 for travel accounts was specified to obviate receipt of a flood of modern travel guides and memoirs. The few exceptions are ordered as required.

Category 12 (local Jewish history) specifies a class of items that are especially significant because they provide the basis for a variety of research. It is imperative to pursue these works immediately, since they often have very limited press runs. Special knowledge of the local scene is needed to trace the publishers and secure copies. The timely and expert service of the approval plan vendor is of particular value in this regard.

Statistical Commentary

Much of the data presented in the accompanying tables and figure needs no further explanation.¹² By examining these, the reader will gain understanding of the BO in action.¹³

Table A (Number and Cost of Titles Received) demonstrates that, with the exception of 1984, every year saw significant growth in the number of titles received (the annualized total for 1985 is ca. 350). We attribute this to a continued dialogue with Harrassowitz and a consequent elaboration and refinement of the BO. The average cost per title seemed to stabilize around \$20 (the last quarter of 1980—the first of the BO, which yielded an average cost per title of \$17—may not have been characteristic for the entire year); then it declined sharply to ca. \$15 in 1983. We have not found a definitive explanation for the decline so far, though the following factors may be noted: the DM lost approximately 20% of its value against the dollar between the beginning of 1982 and the close of 1983, thereby lowering the price of books exported to the U.S.; the number of costly titles (above \$50 each)

Table A
Number and Cost of Titles Received Table A

	1 Blanket Order Titles	2 Average Cost per Title	3 Total Blanket Order Expenditure	4 % of Total Har. Exp.	5 % Change of \$ BO Expenditure	6 \$ Change in BO Expenditure
1980	43	17.54	754.42	11		
1981	111	20.66	2293.43	35	+ 67.1	+ 1539
1982	171	20.58	3519.85	33	+ 53.5	+ 1226
1983	232	15.91	3692.02	52	+ 4.9	+ 172
1984	235	18.16	4267.35	60	+ 13.5	+ 575
1985	146	15.38	2246.09	30		

(partial data)

declined precipitously between 1982 and 1983, while the number of those costing \$10 or less rose dramatically (Table E). The combination of these factors served to lower the average price per title. Its rise in 1984 may similarly be attributed to an increase in the number of costly items and to normal inflationary accretions. One cannot draw conclusions from the incomplete data for 1985. The column displaying total BO expenditures shows a steady rise. To a considerable extent, this is due to changes in the profile, which were usually on the side of inclusiveness. Some of it, though, may be attributed to causes beyond the Library's control, such as inflation or an increased number of expensive titles. The likelihood of rises in blanket order costs must be taken into account when budget allocations are decided. It may be worthwhile to request from the vendor written estimates of outlays for the coming year and to provide for safeguards against excesses. Readers may also notice in column 4 of Table A increases in BO disbursements as percentages of total Harrassowitz outlays. As the BO gathered momentum, there became less reason to firm order individual items. Also, with the passage of time, older material pre-dating the BO became progressively unavailable.

Table B (Returns and Claims) illustrates the vendor's conservative approach and sensitivity in executing the profile's instructions. The low number of returns, maintained over a period of years, may be taken as evidence of close monitoring of the German area publication output.¹⁴ Further corroboration is found in the small number of missed items, remarkable in a plan as complex and detailed as this one.¹⁵ (The last was not easy to establish. Figures are based on Harrassowitz' own reports in response to suggestion slips.)

Tables C (Number and Cost of Titles by Subject) and D (Percentage of Titles and Expenditures by Subject) afford detailed information on the working of the BO by subject category and may be utilized to gain estimates of the Judaica publication output in the German language area. Readers may note that production has been very low in the subjects of Rabbinic Literature and Semitic Languages and relatively high in those of Modern Judaism (or Contemporary Jewish Life), Holocaust and Modern Israel, with the remaining categories somewhere in between. It is also interesting to learn that the least active subject categories carry the highest average price per title. The reason may be the preponderance of expensive texts and reference works required for these categories according to the profile.

Table B
Returns and Claims

	RETURNS		CLAIMS		
	No.	% of Total	No.	Missed	Missed as % of Total
1980	1	2.3	27	5	11.6
1981	4	3.6	N/A	N/A	
1982	3	1.8	51	8	4.7
1983	4	1.7	N/A	N/A	
1984	2	0.9	35	3-5	1.3-2.1
1985	4	2.7			

(partial data)

(Tables C and D on next page)

Table E (Number and Percentage of Titles Costing Above \$50 and Under \$10) points out two important features of the BO. First, readers will observe that costly items call for a high percentage of total BO expenditures, though their number is very small. Second, there is a noteworthy rise in the number of titles costing under \$10 and \$5. These are often pamphlets or other ephemera, which frequently contain precious data not available elsewhere. Harrassowitz' continued perseverance in locating and supplying them in fulfillment of the BO's provisions

and in the face of margins of profit which must be very small (or, more likely, non-existent) is indeed highly commendable and gratifying.

Figure 1 illustrates the unpredictable nature of BO shipments in any given month of the year in terms of number of titles and cost. Two patterns are, however, clear: relatively few books are shipped in the summer months, when many European staff members are away on vacation, while the last two months of the calendar year usually see an increase in shipments, coinciding with the closing of the fiscal year in Europe.

Conclusion

The foregoing presentation, by revealing the process that shaped MGL's German Judaica BO, allows readers to form their own critical evaluations of the merits of such an acquisitions method both in general, theoretical terms and also in this particular case. We believe that the BO has proven its worth as a selection tool. It materially assisted in eliminating a weakness in our collection which, in our considered opinion, could not have been economically accomplished otherwise. The detailed statistics afford a realistic estimate of what other libraries may expect to receive and pay for should they decide to opt for a similar plan, either in whole or only in some subject areas. It should be clear that a blanket order necessitates the devotion of considerable effort and time by a library's staff to monitor it for appropriateness of incoming material, exhaustiveness of coverage, and keeping within pre-set financial limits.

Acknowledgments

The authors wish to acknowledge with thanks the kind assistance of Mr. Joe Abraham and Mr. John Moryl.

Table E
Number and Percentage of Titles Costing Above \$50 and Under \$10

	Titles costing above \$50			Titles costing under \$10		
	No.	% all ti.	% total \$	No. <10	No. <5	% all ti.
1980				9		20.9
1981	7	6.3	17.9	21	10	27.9
1982	14	8.2	26.8	38	17	32.1
1983	7	3.0	11.8	68	32	43.1
1984	17	7.2	32.1	74	30	44.1
1985	7	4.8	23.5	49	27	52.1

No. <10 = Number of titles costing less than \$10

Table C
Number and Cost of Titles by Subject

RABBINICS			BIBLE			ANCIENT JUDAISM			MEDIÉVAL JUDAISM			
Ti.	Total \$	Av. Pr.	Ti.	Total \$	Av. Pr.	Ti.	Total \$	Av. Pr.	Ti.	Total \$	Av. Pr.	
1980			4	111.99	28.00	2	45.73	22.87	3	60.92	20.31	
1981			22	705.49	32.07	10	223.28	22.33	3	108.18	36.06	
1982	5	184.17	36.83	32	851.24	26.60	13	415.81	31.99	6	190.82	31.80
1983	2	21.92	12.96	38	841.11	22.13	22	570.72	25.94	10	227.12	22.71
1984	6	211.64	35.27	32	644.94	20.15	19	900.76	47.41	8	170.34	21.29
1985	3	184.77	61.59	23	389.28	16.93	10	252.69	25.27	5	121.59	24.32
MODERN JUDAISM			HOLOCAUST			MODERN ISRAEL			SEMITIC LANG.			
Ti.	Total \$	Av. Pr.	Ti.	Total \$	Av. Pr.	Ti.	Total \$	Av. Pr.	Ti.	Total \$	Av. Pr.	
1980	11	192.81	17.53	9	159.06	17.67	7	108.77	15.54			
1981	26	414.53	15.94	9	153.94	17.10	14	299.25	21.37	8	202.64	25.33
1982	31	589.09	19.00	18	202.08	11.23	30	481.52	16.04	6	195.32	32.55
1983	39	535.76	13.74	43	416.53	10.16	27	482.55	17.87	3	99.41	33.14
1984	41	820.37	20.01	34	314.83	10.16	27	346.12	12.82	7	210.70	30.10
1985	31	374.60	12.08	32	436.85	13.65	7	59.91	8.56	6	143.64	23.94
PHILOSOPHY			LITERATURE			CHRISTIANITY			ISLAM			
Ti.	Total \$	Av. Pr.	Ti.	Total \$	Av. Pr.	Ti.	Total \$	Av. Pr.	Ti.	Total \$	Av. Pr.	
1980	2	23.26	11.63	1	9.46	9.46	4	42.62	10.65			
1981	4	45.41	11.35	8	111.45	13.93	7	67.61	9.66	1	8.25	8.25
1982	10	165.00	16.50	9	117.45	13.05	10	101.57	10.16			
1983	20	274.46	13.72	12	134.83	11.24	16	175.84	10.34			
1984	13	152.00	11.69	30	346.09	11.54	17	201.16	11.83	1	26.73	26.73
1985	3	11.60	3.87	15	139.14	9.28	10	118.69	11.87	1	7.30	7.30

Ti. = Number of Titles

Av. Pr. = Average Price

Table D
Percentage of Titles and Expenditures by Subject

	1980		1981		1982		1983		1984		1985	
	Ti. %	\$ %	Ti. %	\$ %	Ti. %	\$ %	Ti. %	\$ %	Ti. %	\$ %	Ti. %	\$ %
<i>Rabbinics</i>					2.9	5.2	0.9	0.6	2.6	5.0	2.1	8.2
<i>Bible</i>	9.3	14.8	19.8	30.8	18.7	24.2	16.4	22.8	13.6	15.1	15.8	17.3
<i>Ancient Judaism</i>	4.7	6.1	9.0	9.7	7.6	11.8	9.5	15.5	8.1	21.1	6.9	11.3
<i>Medieval Judaism</i>	7.0	8.1	2.7	4.7	3.5	5.4	4.3	6.2	3.4	4.0	3.4	5.4
<i>Modern Judaism</i>	25.6	25.6	23.4	18.1	18.1	16.7	16.8	14.5	17.5	19.2	21.2	16.7
<i>Holocaust</i>	20.9	21.1	8.1	6.7	10.5	5.7	18.5	11.3	14.5	7.4	21.9	19.5
<i>Israel</i>	16.3	14.4	12.6	13.1	17.5	13.7	11.6	13.1	11.5	8.1	4.8	2.7
<i>Semitics</i>			7.2	8.8	3.5	5.5	1.3	2.7	3.0	4.9	4.1	6.4
<i>Philosophy</i>	4.7	3.1	3.6	2.0	5.9	4.7	8.6	7.4	5.5	3.6	2.1	0.5
<i>Literature</i>	2.3	1.3	7.2	4.9	5.3	3.3	5.2	3.7	12.8	8.1	10.3	6.2
<i>Christianity</i>	9.3	5.7	6.3	3.0	5.9	2.9	6.9	4.8	7.2	4.7	6.9	5.3
<i>Islam</i>			0.9	0.4					0.4	0.6	0.7	0.3

Ti. % = Percentage of titles

\$ % = Percentage of expenditures

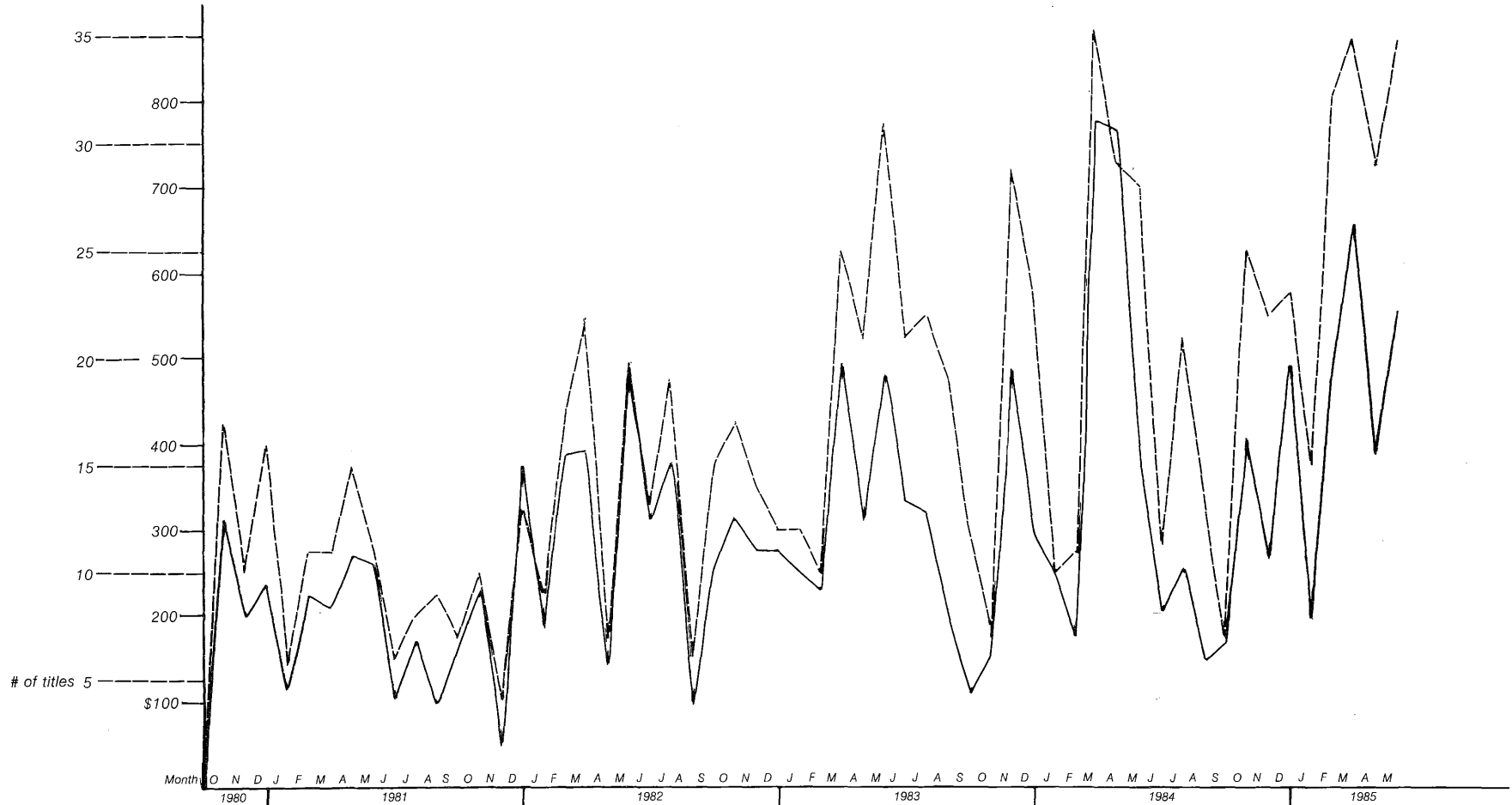


Figure I. Number and Cost of Titles Shipped by Month

Notes

¹For a convenient definition, see Kevill, p. 14. A survey of the literature may be found in McCullough, with further listings in Wynar, Godden and Hersberger.

²A number of presentations of the vendor's point of view are available. See, for instance, most recently, Alessi.

³A wide literature exists on the topic and this is not the place to list or evaluate the arguments. The interested reader is referred to the following articles, which the authors found useful: Steele, Kevill, Posey & McCullough, Cargill (esp. pp. 4ff.), Evans & Argyres (esp. pp. 38ff.) and the ARL *Kit 83* (pp. 50f., 79f., 88).

⁴A brief survey of the history of foreign approval plans is to be found in Magrill, pp. 96ff. Bright offers a more breezy history together with some fascinating comments on the difficulties of managing approval plans.

⁵See Gutierrez-Witt for a comparison of 5 separate BOs for Latin America. The list of criteria these used most often in formulating their profiles is very instructive.

⁶The ARL's *Kit 83* (p.22) contains an interesting statistical breakdown of Brown University's approval plan with Harrassowitz over a five-year period.

Reidelbach & Shirk (1983) provide an excellent guide to the selection of an approval plan vendor. In this connection, see also Cargill, pp. 26ff.

⁷The Library sought unsuccessfully to secure a discount. Harrassowitz argued, in rejecting our proposal, that while U.S. vendors often grant significant discounts on their approval plan shipments (Reidelbach & Shirk 1984, pp. 195-6), because of low margins granted to dealers by German publishers, the former are hard pressed to offer a discount to libraries and still maintain an acceptable level of both profit and service (see Dorn, 1972). It was also pointed out that it would be unfair for Harrassowitz to enter into special arrangements with only selected customers. Harrassowitz was initially asked to consider the DM 4,000 per annum estimate as an upper limit to expenditure on the BO, as well as to notify the Library in advance should additional funds be considered necessary. See Reidelbach & Shirk (1984), pp. 199-200 for other options. With the steady expansion of the scope of the BO—as understood by Harrassowitz—this limit was soon exceeded, and, in practice, we found it difficult to establish new ones, though this remains an important goal to pursue.

⁸No regular schedule of meetings or correspondence was ever set, and these took place as needed. There were, on the average, 1-2 meetings a year and letters exchanged every 2-3 months. These are less frequent than the level usual for domestic approval plans. See Reidelbach & Shirk (1984), p. 174.

⁹Valuable advice on drawing up a profile can be found in Cargill, pp. 45-9 and Magrill, pp. 10ff.

¹⁰See Reidelbach & Shirk (1984), pp. 181-2 for other options provided by some domestic approval plan vendors.

¹¹It would be interesting to learn the exact procedure followed by selectors at Harrassowitz in fulfilling the BO. Some notion may be gained from their approval plan information booklets. See also: Reidelbach & Shirk (1984), pp. 186-7 and Dorn (1969). We have already noted that for the last quarter of 1980, Harrassowitz retrieved a list of titles from its computerized data bank via subject headings. Current selection may operate along similar lines. If so, it would be interesting to know which sources were used to compile the subject thesaurus and the method used to assign terms to each title. Information on these matters for domestic vendors may be found in Reidelbach & Shirk (1984), pp. 182-3. Harrassowitz' numerous catalogues show evidence of both computer-generated lists and of highly sophisticated manual selection.

¹²Attention may be called to some recent studies of the performance of blanket orders: Grant & Perelmuter evaluate several domestic vendors asked to service the same profile, DeVilbiss and Hulbert & Curry compare approval plans with more traditional acquisition methods, and McDonald and his colleagues describe a convenient evaluative method. Several useful pointers for better control of blanket orders are available in Evans & Argyres, pp. 40-1. Criteria for vendor evaluation are given and discussed by Shirk. Mention may also be made of the survey by Hodge.

¹³It is customary for U.S. approval plan vendors to automatically provide several kinds of statistical reports, such as, number of books—total by LC classification; number returned and reasons; dollar amount of items shipped; and so forth. See Reidelbach & Shirk (1984), pp. 200-1.

¹⁴Our rates of return may be favorably compared with those expected by some of the major U.S. vendors. See Reidelbach & Shirk (1984), p. 192.

¹⁵Some of the items claimed were dissertations not available through the trade. (The situation with regard to German dissertations leaves much to be desired, as there is no central clearinghouse to handle orders for them. The Peter Lang publishing house, in particular, has done a great deal to disseminate German dissertations in published form. Their cost is usually high, however, and many worthwhile ones remain unpublished and unavailable, except by applying directly to the degree-granting university—a daunting proposition.)

A few other claimed titles were published and did not come to Harrassowitz' attention. Concerning the usual exclusion of these from approval plans, see Reidelbach & Shirk (1984), p. 178. Most of the claims were for items that turned out either to have been already shipped or to be translations, reprints or unrevised new editions, for

which full bibliographic data were not available to the Library staff.

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Appendix

The Mendel Gottesman Library German Approval Plan Profile

General instructions

1. The following are to be supplied: books, periodicals, pamphlets, reports, etc., published in the Federal Republic of Germany, the German Democratic Republic, Austria, and Switzerland *only*.
2. Exclude materials co-published in the United States.
3. Exclude mass market publications about Israel.
4. Inform only of catalogues of collections of printed books and collections of manuscripts whose subjects fall within the detailed categories.
5. Inform only of material not covered by the detailed categories, but which you nevertheless feel deserve our attention.

Subject categories

1. Jewish History: all works pertaining to the history of the Jews in any part of the world published in any of the modern European languages or in Hebrew or in Arabic.
2. Contemporary Jewish Life: works published in any of the modern European languages.
3. Religion and Theology: materials falling within one of the following categories:
 - I. Judaism: works concerning any period published in any of the modern European languages.

II. Christianity: works published in French, German or English and falling within any of the following topics:

- a. ancient Jewish-Christianity,
- b. Jewish-Christian polemics or dialogue,
- c. Jewish-Christian relations or mutual influences,
- d. editions of any of the writings of the Church Fathers up to and including St. Jerome (Hieronymus), but excluding editions of and commentaries on the New Testament.

III. Islam: works published in French, German or English concerning Islamic-Jewish relations or mutual influences in any period.

4. Jewish Philosophy: works pertaining to any period published in any of the modern European languages. *Exclude*: works by and about Spinoza.

5. Modern Israel and the Middle East: original works published in French, German, or English covering any of the following topics:

- I. the modern politics or economy of Israel,
- II. Israeli-Arab conflicts and relations,
- III. geography of Israel or Jordan,
- IV. sociology of Israeli society.

6. Anti-Semitic Literature and the Holocaust:

I. the Holocaust: personal accounts or documentation of any aspect of the persecution or destruction of Jews, 1933-1945.

II. Anti-Semitic literature: primary sources or secondary materials published in any of the modern European languages.

7. Jewish literature: primary sources or secondary materials from or about any period published in the original language of composition or translated into English.

8. Bible and the Ancient Near East:

I. Semitic languages and literatures: works falling within any of the following categories:

- a. any grammars or dictionaries of any of the Semitic languages (except Arabic or Ethiopic) published in French, German, or English. *Notify only* of multi-volume sets,
- b. editions of North-West Semitic inscriptions, ostraca, or papyri,
- c. monographs dealing with North-West Semitic languages and literatures published in French, German, or English.

II. Biblical studies: works falling within any of the following topics:

- a. Biblical history,
- b. the text of the Old Testament,
- c. Old Testament Biblical criticism,
- d. Biblical theology (Old Testament and only in English).

9. Jewish Rituals, Customs and Law: new works published in French, German, or English.

10. Palestine and Transjordan: works published in French, German, or English and falling within any of the following topics:

I. archaeology: from the Iron Age to the present,

II. history: editions of ancient or medieval historians or original modern works concerning any period, exclusive of the pre-Biblical or the Biblical,

III. editions of descriptions or of travel accounts originally composed prior to 1948.

11. Works dealing with the role of the Jews in or their influence on German, Austrian or Swiss society in any period published in French, German, or English.

12. Make a special effort to supply materials pertaining to local Jewish communal affairs and history.

Shmuel Klein, formerly of the Mendel Gottesman Library staff, served as Reference Librarian and Judaica Research Fellow.

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