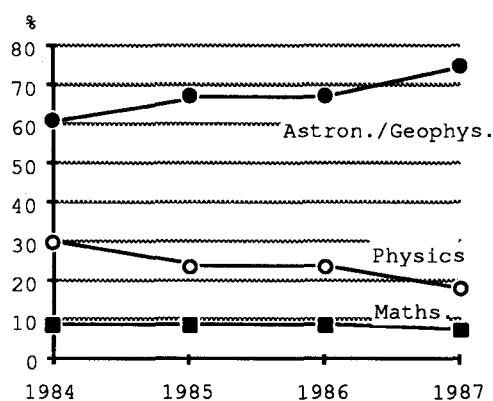


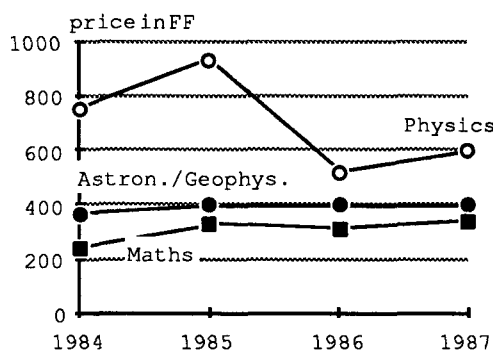
PHYSICS AND MATHEMATICS ACQUISITIONS IN FRENCH LIBRARIES SPECIALIZED IN ASTRONOMY: SOME COMMENTS

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The importance of physics and mathematics in astronomical research has been growing for the last twenty years; yet, the volume of book acquisitions in the relating fields has been decreasing in most french libraries⁽¹⁾ specialized in astronomy (graph 1).

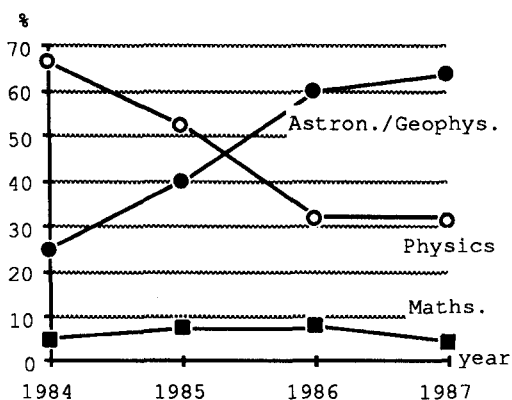


1. Ratio of the acquired titles

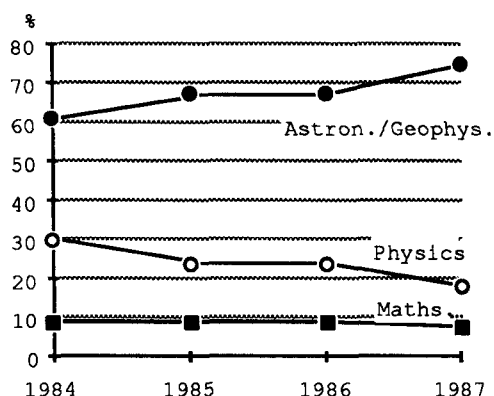


2. Evolution of book prices

Compared amount of book acquisitions in astronomy, physics and mathematics



3. middle size libraries

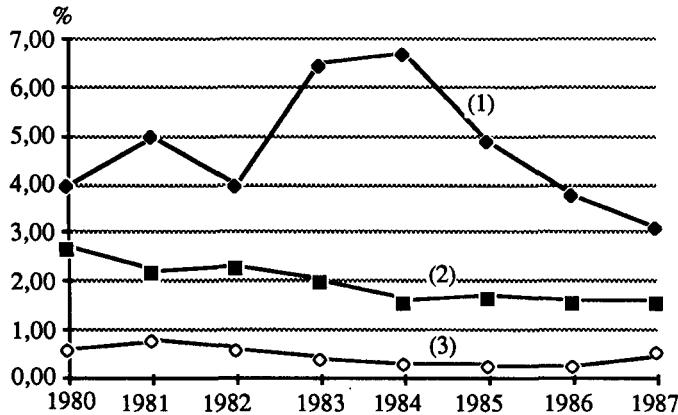


4. other libraries

(1) 5 small libraries and 2 larger ones have kindly provided us with their acquisition data

Great are the consequences of the physics book high prices (graph 2) on the acquisition volume and more drastic is the selection when the total amount of acquisitions is low, i.e. in small libraries (graphs 3 and 4). Yet, the restriction of acquisitions has not generated increasing inter-library loans in the relating fields and national service (CADIST) acquisitions in physics and mathematics have also been dropping. This point, connected with the concomitant general growth of astronomical book accessions, leads us to explain the contradictory observations as mentioned above here from the astronomical publication contents.

5. Compared volume of physics and mathematics in astronomical publications



Curve (1): ratio of "Physical Processes" (section 9 and 12) in *Astronomy & Astrophysics*⁽²⁾

Curve (2): ratio of physics papers (section 022) in *Astronomy & Astrophysics Abstracts*

Curve (3): ratio of mathematics papers (section 021) in *Astronomy & Astrophysics Abstracts*

Until quite recently, works were published in separate scientific documents or separate sections of serials, according to their types: observational data and results apart from theoretical works. Present astronomical publications, containing more theoretical argumentation, are more comprehensive by themselves: their use needs not so many additional documents in physics and mathematics as it did before.

This is corroborated by the decrease of purely theoretical works published by astronomers (graph 5 and Davoust's study, *J.A.F.*, 1987, n° 29, p. 35).

Is it a local phenomenon, is it a general evolution? Further investigations would be necessary to know it.

(2) 1983-1987 data have been kindly communicated by F. Praderie