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Summary Information

Repository:	Rare Book and Manuscript Library
Creator:	Laserson, Max M., 1887-1951
Title:	Max M. Laserson Papers
ID:	4079008
ID:	MS#0743
Date [inclusive]:	1900-1951
Physical Description:	3 linear feet 4 manuscript boxes, 2 tall manuscript boxes, 1 half manuscript box, 1 flat box
Language of the Material:	English , Latvian , German , Yiddish , Russian , French , Hebrew .
Abstract:	Max M. Laserson Papers consist of correspondence and writings of Max Matthasia Laserson (Moisei Iakovlevich Laserson), philosopher, jurist, politician and public figure.

Preferred Citation

Identification of specific item; Date (if known); Max M. Laserson papers; Box and Folder; Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Columbia University Library.

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Biographical / Historical

Max M. Laserson, philosopher, jurist, professor, politician and public figure, was born in Mitau, Latvia (now - Jelgava), February 1 (Jan. 20), 1887. He studied and lectured at many universities in Europe and United States, was at one time a member of the Latvian Parliament and an official in the Kerensky Provisional government in Russia.

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Biographical / Historical

In 1911 Max Laserson graduated from the Faculty of Law of the St. Petersburg Imperial University where he obtained his Doctor of Law (LL.D.) degree. He also studied at Berlin University (1912-1913), Heidelberg University (1913) and Tartu University (1914-1916; Magister of Constitutional Law).

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Biographical / Historical

Max Laserson was assistant professor of constitutional and public law at Petrograd University (1916-1920), professor of legal theory and international law at the Riga Graduate School of Economics (1924-1934), co-founder of the Tel Aviv School of Law and Economics (1935), professor of legal philosophy and international law there (1935-1939), lecturer in Contemporary Civilization and Legal Philosophy at Columbia University.

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Biographical / Historical

In 1917 Laserson joined the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Provisional Government. From 1922 to 1932 (1931?) he was a deputy (Zionist-Socialist party) of the Latvian Parliament where he served as secretary of the Public Law and Constitutional Committee (1925-1932) and was a member of the International Association for the Protection of Minority Rights (Hague).

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Biographical / Historical

Laserson left Latvia and went to Mandatory Palestine in 1934 and then in 1939 he moved to United States where worked as a consultant for the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace in 1944-1946. Since 1944 visiting professor at Columbia University and lecturer there in contemporary civilization and legal philosophy.

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Biographical / Historical

Author of books and articles in various languages concerning state law, general and international law, theory and philosophy of law; wrote several books on Russia including "The American Impact on Russia, 1784-1917" and "Poland and Russia, 1919-1945 " (co-authored with James T. Shotwell). Contributor to reviews and journals in the field.

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Biographical / Historical

Max M. Laserson died on 29 November 1951, aged 64, in New York.

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Description

The bulk of the collection comprises Max Laserson's professional and personal correspondence and his writings. There are also some documents, materials related to his teaching at Columbia University, and a photograph. Papers include materials in English, French, German, Hebrew, Latvian, Russian and Yiddish languages.

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Description

Correspondence with various people and organizations includes letters from European and American professors, lawyers, public figures, prominent people such as Julius Genss, Oskar Gruzenberg, Vladimir Jabotinsky, Mark Vishniak and others, as well as correspondence with universities, Jewish organizations and agencies, Zionist associations, publishers, state institutions, etc.

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Description

Laserson's writings include published and unpublished articles, books, some lectures, talks and reports. His works cover a variety of subjects, such as law and philosophy, minorities rights in Latvia and Estonia, Jewry in Latvia and Estonia, Mandate of Palestine, constitution of Israel, Soviet foreign policy, and others.

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Description

Max M. Laserson's name has several variations – he is often referred to as Moisei (Maksim) Iakovlevich Laserson, Max Matthasia Laserson, Matasiia Zusmanovich Laserson, Matisiia Iakovlevich Laserson, or Maks Iakovlevich Laserson.

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Arrangement

This collection is arranged in six series.

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Administrative Information

Publication Statement

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Restrictions on Access

This collection is located off-site. You will need to request this material at least three business days in advance to use the collection in the Rare Book and Manuscript Library reading room.

Restrictions on Access

This collection has no restrictions.

Accruals

No further accruals are expected.

Immediate Source of Acquisition

Source of acquisition--Rosorosky, Rachel. Method of acquisition--Gift; Date of acquisition--1965. Accession number--M-65.

Processing Information

Cataloged Christina Hilton Fenn 07/--/89.

Processing Information

The collection was processed and finding aid written by Katia Davidenko in 2019.

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Accruals

Materials may have been added to the collection since this finding aid was prepared. Contact rbml@columbia.edu for more information.

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Controlled Access Headings

- International law
- World politics
- Zionism
- College teachers
- Israel
- Jews -- Latvia
- Minorities -- Civil rights -- Latvia
- Law
- Philosophy
- Genss, Julius, 1887-1957
- Gruzenberg, O. O. (Oskar Osipovich), 1866-1940
- Jabotinsky, Vladimir, 1880-1940
- Larsons, M. J.
- Vishniak, M. V. (Mark Ven'iaminovich), 1883-1977
- Laserson, Max M., 1887-1951

Collection Inventory

Series I: Correspondence, 1915-1951

Scope and Contents

The series consists of Max Laserson's personal and professional correspondence with various people and organizations, as well as family correspondence. Letters are in English, Russian, German, Hebrew, Yiddish, French, Latvian languages. Arranged in three subseries: Correspondence with Individuals; Family Correspondence; Correspondence with Organizations. There are letters from European and American professors, lawyers, prominent people such as Julius Genss, Oskar Gruzenberg, Vladimir Jabotinsky, and Mark Vishniak.

Subseries I.1: Correspondence with Individuals, 1921-1950

Scope and Contents

(Arranged alphabetically. Unidentified and outgoing correspondence stored at the end)

Title/Description	Instances	
Akzin, V., 1932-1937	box 1	folder 1
Andreates, undated	box 1	folder 1
Babb, Hugh W., 1936, undated	box 1	folder 2
Bain, R., 1939, undated	box 1	folder 2
Bentwich, Norman, 1937		

	box 1	folder 2
Bernstein, Ludwig, 1930, 1936	box 1	folder 2
Bing, Ludwig, 1936	box 1	folder 2
Bonsirver, J., 1939	box 1	folder 2
Brandeis, 1936	box 1	folder 2
Bruns, 1930	box 1	folder 2
Brutzkus, B., 1932	box 1	folder 2
Cardozo, B., 1936	box 1	folder 3
Carlyle, A., 1939	box 1	folder 3
Caspi, M., 1928, undaed	box 1	folder 3
Centnerszwer, M., 1921, 1934	box 1	folder 3
Csekye, Stephan v., 1933	box 1	folder 3
Dikshtein, 1934	box 1	folder 4
Elkin, Boris, 1931	box 1	folder 4
Epshtein, I., 1935	box 1	folder 4
Freund, Heinrich, 1926	box 1	folder 4
Genss, Julius, 1932	box 1	folder 5
Goldman, Nachum, 1934	box 1	folder 5
Gordon, E., 1935-1939	box 1	folder 5
Gringauz, S., 1933	box 1	folder 5
Gruzenberg, Oskar, 1925-1932	box 1	folder 5
Gulak, A., 1934	box 1	folder 5
Gurvich, G. D., 1921-1939	box 1	folder 6
Hallenstein, 1936	box 1	folder 7
Heller, Josef, 1933	box 1	folder 7
General		
(including Laserson's biographical note)		
Herlitz, Nils, 1933, undated	box 1	folder 7
Hirschmann, D. B., 1932	box 1	folder 7
Iakobson, 1932-1933	box 1	folder 8
Iashchenko, Aleksandr, 1932-1934	box 1	folder 9
Imaisumi, K., 1933-1935	box 1	folder 10

Jabotinsky, Vladimir, 1927-1928	box 1	folder 11
Jennings, W., 1939	box 1	folder 12
Joffe, 1928	box 1	folder 12
Joseph, Bernard, 1937	box 1	folder 12
Kabalkin, 1932	box 1	folder 9
Kelsen, Hans, 1934	box 1	folder 13
Khirooka, undated	box 1	folder 13
Kholuts, Iakov (or Kholuf), 1935	box 1	folder 13
Kulisher, A., 1935	box 1	folder 13
Levy, Jacob J., 1935	box 1	folder 13
Maborinskii, V., 1923	box 1	folder 13
Moreins, Zalmon, 1935	box 1	folder 13
Robinsonas, Jokubas, 1935	box 1	folder 14
Sobolbitz, A. (or Sobolvitz), 1935	box 1	folder 14
Vishniak, Mark, 1935	box 1	folder 14
Vulig (or Vaulig, or Vollig), 1935	box 1	folder 14
Washburn, Stanley, 1950	box 1	folder 14
Yehuda, Zalman, 1932	box 1	folder 14
Zeliksons, L., 1935	box 1	folder 14
Unidentified, 1929-1950	box 1	folder 15-17
Outgoing, 1932-1949, undated	box 1	folder 18
Various	box 1	folder 29

Subseries I.2: Family Correspondence, 1934-1949, undated

Scope and Contents

(Correspondence with family members, including Laserson's mother and brother Maurice)

Title/Description	Instances	
Laserson, Eleazar, undated	box 1	folder 19
General		
(including his writings)		
Laserson, Herman, 1935	box 1	folder 20
Laserson, Maurice, 1934-1946	box 1	folder 21

General

(incoming and outgoing)

Laserson, Vladimir, undated	box 1	folder 22
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Mother, undated	box 1	folder 23
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General

(see also: letter of 01.15.1935 in Box 1, Folder 20)

Mariamy, undated	box 1	folder 23
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Rene; Leopold; Simon; Flora; Minna; unidentified, 1935-1949	box 1	folder 24
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Subseries I.3: Correspondence with Organizations, 1915-1951

Scope and Contents

(Consists of correspondence with various organizations, including universities, Jewish organizations and agencies, Zionist associations, state institutions, publishers, congresses, etc. Arranged alphabetically)

Title/Description	Instances	
A-D, 1930-1951	box 1	folder 25
E1930-1933	box 1	folder 26
G-I, 1915-1937	box 1	folder 27
J-Z, 1925-1950	box 1	folder 28

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Series II: Writings, 1919-1951

Scope and Contents

The series comprises published and unpublished works of Max Laserson, including articles, monographs, talks, reports, etc. Arranged in five subseries.

Subseries II.1: Articles and Monographs, 1927-1951

Scope and Contents

(Manuscripts, typescripts, notes and drafts of Laserson's complete and incomplete works. Also includes reprints and books. Arranged alphabetically)

Title/Description	Instances	
American Impact on Russia: Diplomatic and Ideological, 1784-1917, undated		
Typescript (1st copy of the original)	box 2	folder 1-12

Manuscript	box 2	folder 13-19
Manuscript (cont.)	box 3	folder 1-7
Drafts and notes	box 3	folder 8-11
Highlights of Ameican Imapct on Russia (for a journal)	box 3	folder 12
Reviews	box 3	folder 13
Various	box 3	folder 14
Democracy as a regulative idea and as an established regime: the democratic tradition in Russia and Germany (reprint), 1947	box 5	folder 2
Development of Soviet foreign policy in Europe, 1917-1942: a selection of documents (New York, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, Division of Intercourse and Education), 1943		
Germany and Russia, 1940s-1950s, undated	box 4	folder 2-4
General (notes and research materials, including clippings and publications)		
Hebrew Roots of International Law, undated	box 4	folder 5-6
General (typescript, manuscript, notes, drafts)		
John Selden and the Commandments to International Law: see Hebrew Roots of International Law, undated	box Unknown	folder Unknown
Law, Ethics and Politics (alternative title - Law and Politics in the Making), 1946-1947	box 4	folder 7-14
General (typescripts, manuscripts, notes, drafts, research and reference materials)		
Law, Ethics and Politics (cont.), undated	box 5	folder 1-6
Memorandum on Unexplained Absence in Latvian Law, undated	box 5	folder 7
General (typescript, notes)		
On the Making of the Constitution of Israel, 1950	box 5	folder 8

General

(includes Laserson's biographical note)

On the Mandate of Palestine, [1948]	box 5	folder 9
On Universal and Regional Federalism (reprint), 1940a	box 5	folder 10
Political history of Latvian Jewry (1918-1934), undated	box 5	folder 11
Reflection on the Israeli Consitution, undated	box 5	folder Unknown
Rights, Righthandedness, and Uprightness (reprint), undated	box 4	folder 8
Russische Rechtsphilosophie (Berlin-Grunewald: Rothschild), 1933	box 5	folder 13
Spinoza, undated	box 6	folder 1
Staat, souveranitat und minoritat (Riga, Berlin: Bernhard Lamey Verlag), 1927	box 6	folder 2
Work of Leon Petrazhitskii: inquiry into the psychological aspects of the nature of law (reprint), 1951	box 6	folder 3
Zur Lage der Jud. Mindarheit in Lettland (Addendum re: Jewish minority in Latvia. See Correspondence with Organizations, box 1, folder 26), undated	box 1	folder 26

Subseries II.2: Loose Notes and Drafts, 1946-1950, undated**Scope and Contents**

(Fragments, loose pages, notes, notebooks, research and reference materials on various subjects including law, social philosophy, politics and others. Related to his writings and university courses)

Title/Description	Instances	
Fragments, loose pages, undated	box 6	folder 4-7
Notebooks, 1946-1950	box 6	folder 8-11

General

(Latvijas parlaments un Zidivinos; Soviet [legal and] social philosophy; untitled)

Subseries II.3: Lectures, Talks, Reports, 1919, undated**Scope and Contents**

(In alphabetical order)

Title/Description	Instances	
On Soviet foreign policy (lecture), undated	box 6	folder 12

Reports on Latvia and Estonia (in relation to minority rights), undated	box 6	folder 13
Sushchnost' i razvitie estestvennogo prava (talk abstract and notes), 1919	box 6	folder 14

Subseries II.4: Diary

Title/Description	Instances	
Personal entry, [1931]	box 6	folder 15

Subseries II.5: Bibliography of Works of Max Laserson

Title/Description	Instances	
Bibliography of chief works and scholarly articles, 1947, undated	box 6	folder 16

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Series III: Teaching at Columbia University, 1945-1951, undated

Scope and Contents

The series consists of course proposals, internal correspondence and documents.

Title/Description	Instances	
Course proposals and syllabus, 1949-1950, undated	box 7	folder 1
Internal correspondence and documents, 1948-1949, undated	box 7	folder 2
Student papers and employment, 1945-1951, undated	box 7	folder 3
Notes, undated	box 7	folder 4

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Series IV: Documents, 1942, 1947, undated

Title/Description	Instances	
Laserson's application for Guggenheim Memoria Foundation project "Toward Justice: a Legal and Political Philosophy", 1947	box 7	folder 5
General		
(contains biographical information)		
Reports and announcements, 1942	box 7	folder 6

General

(Laserson's report and American Jewish Congress announcement)

Letterheads, undated	box 7	folder 7
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Series V: Photographs and Postcards, 1900, undated

Title/Description	Instances	
Max Laserson, 1900	box 7	folder 8
Tel Aviv, undated	box 7	folder 8

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Series VI: Research and Reference Materials, 1932-1951, undated

Scope and Contents

The series comprises reprints, clippings, newspapers with materials on subjects related to Laserson's writings and teaching.

Title/Description	Instances	
Library book requests (call slips), undated	box 7	folder 9
Clippings and publications, 1932-1951	box 7	folder 10
Oversize clippings and newspapers, 1935-1951	flatbox 8	folder 1-3

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