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Descriptive Summary

Identifier          ICU.SPCL.DERMONAT
Title               Der Monat. Records
Date                1948-1971
Size                41.5 linear feet (80 boxes)
Repository          Special Collections Research Center
                    University of Chicago Library
                    1100 East 57th Street
                    Chicago, Illinois 60637 U.S.A.

Abstract
The records of Der Monat comprise correspondence files, reports, and papers of the American editor Melvin J. Lasky. Der Monat, a German-language political and cultural journal, first appeared in Germany in October, 1948. The purpose of the publication was to serve as a weapon against communism and fascism and to be a voice for western ideals. After six years of U.S. government sponsorship, Der Monat became a private journal, independently published by the Gesellschaft für Internationale Publizistik. The last issue appeared in 1971 after a long association with the International Association for Cultural Freedom.

Information on Use
Access
No restrictions.

Citation
When quoting material from this collection, the preferred citation is: Der Monat. Records, [Box #, Folder #], Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library

Historical Note
Der Monat, a German-language political and cultural journal, first appeared in Germany in October 1948. After the Allied occupation of Germany in November 1944, all German media services were suspended. The Office of the Military Government for Germany (US) [OMGUS] filled the information gap, which resulted from this prohibition with the issuing of various so-called "overt publications," of which Der Monat was the fifth to appear. Melvin J. Lasky, the first editor of Der Monat, worked out of the Political Information Branch of the Information Services Division of the OMGUS, and in close association with the New York Field Office. German editors joined the staff in later years.
Der Monat’s purpose was two-fold: to serve as a weapon against communism and fascism, and to be a voice for Western ideals, assisting Germany and German intellectuals in finding their place in the western orbit after years of isolation. Der Monat’s orientation was unmistakably American, but its founders intended the review to be international in range and impact, avoiding narrow, doctrinaire positions. Its contents reflected a concern for covering a broad range of political and cultural issues, and included articles, book excerpts, short stories, book reviews, and theater and film articles and reviews. Internationally acclaimed figures such as Bertrand Russell, Arnold Toynbee, Jean-Paul Sartre, James Agee and Rebecca West contributed to early issues.

Initial response in the West to the publication of Der Monat was enthusiastic. Critics hailed it as an intellectual journal of the first rank. In addition, Der Monat also played an important role as a weapon in the cold war. Large numbers of the journal were smuggled into East Germany and other Soviet bloc countries, despite Soviet efforts to keep it out.

By 1954, after six years of U. S. government sponsorship, Der Monat became a private journal, independently published by the Gesellschaft für Internationale Publizistik. The end of the allied occupation of Germany and a growing concern for Germanization called into question the propriety of the U. S. government’s ongoing sponsorship of Der Monat. A grant from the Ford Foundation made possible Der Monat’s transition to private status. During its remaining years of publication, Der Monat enjoyed a close association with the International Association for Cultural Freedom.

As more and more publications similar in scope and interest to Der Monat appeared in Germany, its readership began to decline. The magazine suffered financial setbacks, which eventually made continued publication impossible. The last issue appeared in March 1971.

Scope Note

The records of Der Monat comprise correspondence files, reports, and the papers of Melvin J. Lasky. The order of the records directly reflects the original organization of Der Monat’s files.

Series I: Correspondence, 1948-1969, comprises the bulk of the collection. It is arranged chronologically by year and alphabetically within each annual group. Miscellaneous materials from a given year are filed with correspondence from that year. Included here is correspondence relating to the 1950 Congress for Cultural Freedom in Berlin.

Series II contains Personnel files associated with the publication of Der Monat.

Series III: Special Reports, includes reports and related documents with special reference to the founding of Der Monat, and its transition to private status in 1954.
Series IV: Financial documents, includes tax and accounting materials from the 1960s.

Series V: Melvin J Lasky papers, contains manuscripts and lectures written by Lasky.

Series VI: Addenda materials, including correspondence and special reports.

Series VII: Oversize Materials

**Related Resources**
The following related resources are located in the Department of Special Collections:

http://www.lib.uchicago.edu/e/spcl/select.html

**Subject Headings**
- Lasky, Melvin J.
- International Association for Cultural Freedom
- Denazification
- Germany -- History -- 1945-1990
- Germany -- Foreign relations -- United States
- German periodicals

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• I Didn't Want to be a Murderer!: The Strange Story of the "K-5" Trial in
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