

University of Chicago Library

Guide to the Nathan Leites Papers 1931-1955



© 2018 University of Chicago Library

Table of Contents

Descriptive Summary	3
Information on Use	3
Access	3
Citation	3
Biographical Note	3
Scope Note	4
Related Resources	4
Subject Headings	5
INVENTORY	5
Series I: Personal	5
Series II: Professional	5
Series III: Reports	6
Series IV: Research files	6

Descriptive Summary

Identifier ICU.SPCL.LEITESN

Title Leites, Nathan. Papers

Date 1931-1955

Size 5 linear feet (10 boxes)

Repository Special Collections Research Center
University of Chicago Library
1100 East 57th Street
Chicago, Illinois 60637 U.S.A.

Abstract Nathan Leites (1912-1987) a political scientist who applied the tools of psychoanalysis to the study of culture and politics, with particular specialization in the Soviet politburo. The collection includes correspondence and memoranda, draft seminar and research papers, research notes and notecards, and syllabi and course materials, mainly related to the politics and cultures of the Soviet Union, Europe, Thailand, Burma, and Japan.

Information on Use

Access

The collection is open for research.

Citation

When quoting material from this collection, the preferred citation is: Leites, Nathan. Papers, [Box #, Folder #], Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library

Biographical Note

Nathan Constantin Leites (July 10, 1912 – June 5, 1987) was born in St. Petersburg, Russia, and raised in Germany and Denmark. He attended the Universities of Berlin and Heidelberg (1929-1933), the University of Lausanne (1933-1934) where he earned his licentiate, and the University of Fribourg (1934-1935), where he earned his doctorate. He immigrated to the United States in 1936, arriving in Illinois as a student and researcher, and he was naturalized in Chicago on November 17, 1941.

Initially a research assistant to Harold D. Lasswell at the University of Chicago in 1937, Leites joined the faculty of the Department of Political Science there in 1938. In 1941, he went on leave to conduct work for the federal government and eventually resigned from his professorship in 1944. He worked as an Analyst in the Special War Policies Unit at the Department of Justice from 1941 to 1942. He then served, from 1942 to 1943, as the Chief of the French Section at

the Foreign Broadcast Intelligence Service. From 1943 to 1945, he was a Regional Specialist at the Office of War Information and he also served as a Visiting Lecturer during the winter semesters at the New School for Social Research from 1943 to 1944. In 1947, he joined the staff of UNESCO in Paris to help set up a research project entitled, "Tensions Dangerous to Peace." Leites then joined the Rand Corporation as a research scientist from 1947 until 1962, remaining on as a consultant. Finally, he returned to serve on the faculty of the Department of Political Science at the University of Chicago from 1962 until 1974.

A political scientist, Leites most famously applied the tools of psychoanalysis to the study of culture and politics, with special attention to world leaders such as Joseph Stalin and the Soviet politburo. He wrote multiple texts including *The Language of Politics* (with Harold D. Lasswell, 1949), *The Operational Code of the Politburo* (1951), *A Study of Bolshevism* (1954), and *On the Game of Politics in France* (1959).

Leites was married to Vera Leites, MD, and they had one child, Edmund Leites, born on November 24, 1939 in Chicago. The couple divorced at some point prior to 1945. Leites then married Dr. Martha Wolfenstein, a psychologist, on June 26, 1946 in New York. They co-wrote *Movies: A Psychological Study* (1950). They eventually divorced as well. Leites retired to France, and passed away there at the age of 75.

Scope Note

The Nathan Leites papers are organized into 4 series:

Series I: Personal.

Series II: Professional.

Series III: Reports.

Series IV: Research files.

The collection contains correspondence and memoranda, articles, travel materials, fellowship applications, reports, research notes, syllabi and course materials, newspaper and magazine articles and clippings, and book reviews. Materials date between 1931 and 1955, with the bulk of material dating from 1945 to 1952. The records primarily document Nathan Leites's research and publications, including his work on the Soviet Union, Lenin, Japan, Burma, and Thailand.

Related Resources

Browse finding aids by topic.

Subject Headings

- Leites, Nathan Constantin, 1912-1987
- Wolfenstein, Martha, 1911-1976
- University of Chicago. Department of Political Science
- Cold War
- Communism – Soviet Union
- Motion pictures – Psychological aspects
- Political psychology
- Psychoanalysis
- Soviet Union – Relations – United States
-
- Burma
- Japan
- Soviet Union – Relations – United States
- Thailand
- United States – Politics and government – 20th century
- United States – Relations – Soviet Union
-

INVENTORY

Series I: Personal

This series contains materials related to Leites's personal life, such as correspondence with his wife, Dr. Martha Wolfenstein. Note that these materials also deal with professional aspects of Leites's life, since he collaborated with Wolfenstein on various projects.

Box 1

Folder 1

Personal correspondence

Series II: Professional

This series contains materials related to Leites's work as a researcher and professor.

Box 1

Folder 2

Travel materials, 1947-1952

Box 1

Folder 3

Guggenheim Memorial Foundation Fellowship application, 1946

Box 1

Folder 4

Course materials – University of Chicago, 1940

Box 1

Folder 5

Course materials – Sarah Lawrence College, 1946-1947

Box 1

Folder 6

Course materials – Yale, 1952

Box 1

Folder 7

Course materials, undated

Box 1

Folder 8

Course materials, undated

Series III: Reports

This series contains reports and articles published by Leites.

Box 1

Folder 9

Kecskemeti and Leites, Some Psychological Hypotheses on Nazi
• Germany, 1945

Box 1

Folder 10

Leites, Garthoff, and Bernaut, Politburo Images of Stalin, 1950

Box 1

Folder 11

Leites, The Politburo at the Party Congress, 1952

Box 1

Folder 12

Leites, Trends in Affectlessness (1947); Leites, Choice in China (1949); Wolfenstein and Leites, “Trends in French Films” (1955); and Leites, Un Detour de Dieu (French, undated)

Series IV: Research files

This series contains documents related to Leites’s research and writing including research papers; manuscript drafts; correspondence; memoranda; syllabi and course materials; newspapers and magazine clippings; and book reviews.

Box 2

Folder 1

Notes, personality tests, and reports including a Rorschach Personality Test; A Study of Values questionnaire (1931); Robert G. Bernreuter’s The Personality (1935); and Martha Wolfenstein’s The Reality Principle in Story Preferences of Neurotics and Psychotics (1944); 1931-1944; most documents undated.

Box 2

Folder 2

Bibliographies and reports, 1940, most documents undated.

Box 2

Folder 3

Notes and drafts; undated magazine article on psychoanalysis; report; A Study of Terror; Office of War Information Propaganda Techniques (1945); 1945; most documents undated.

Box 2

Folder 4

Notes on Japan including bibliographies and interviews, 1945; most documents undated.

Box 2

Folder 5

Newspaper articles and clippings; periodicals; correspondence; and reports, 1945-1948, some documents undated. Includes a number of documents related to Nazi concentration camps such as Buchenwald. Also includes Siegfried Kracauer's Hollywood's Terror Films (1946); Politics (periodical, 1945); Commentary (periodical, undated); Articles in English, Russian and German language.

Box 2

Folder 6

Correspondence, 1946-1947.

Box 2

Folder 7

Correspondence; newspaper clippings; magazine articles, 1946-1949. Includes a clipping from The Economist (1946), issues of Instead (1948) and Manas (1948) and articles re Huxley's Brave New World.

Box 2

Folder 8

Correspondence and memoranda, research papers, manuscript notes, 1946-1950. Includes correspondence with Ruth Benedict and Talcott Parsons and research on Japan.

Box 2

Folder 9

Correspondence related to "Trends in Affectlessness," 1947.

Box 2

Folder 10

Correspondence, notes; reviews; 1947-1948.

Box 2

Folder 11

Notes and correspondence, 1948, most documents undated.²³

Box 2

Folder 12

Correspondence and memoranda; research papers; notes on films; 1948.

Box 2

Folder 13

Newspaper and magazine articles and clippings, notes. Includes notes on Anthony Powell's Afternoon Men; installments of Evelyn Waugh's Brideshead Revisited (1948); and The Tablet (periodical, 1949). 1948-1949, many documents undated.

Box 2

Folder 14

Correspondence, notes, meeting minutes; 1948-1949; Includes Studies in Soviet Culture meeting minutes.

Box 3

Folder 1

Memoranda, report from UNESCO, 1948-1950.

Box 3

Folder 2

Correspondence and memoranda; research papers; notes on films; 1949.

Box 3

Folder 3

Disk transcripts, 1949, part 1.

Box 3

Folder 4

Disk transcripts, 1949, part 2.

Box 3

Folder 5

Disk transcripts, 1949, part 3.

Box 3

Folder 6

Disk transcripts, 1949, part 4.

Box 3

Folder 7

Correspondence, reports, 1949-1950; Includes documents related to Studies in Soviet Culture.

Box 3

Folder 8

Correspondence and memoranda, book reviews, notes, syllabi and course materials, bibliographies, and Yale Interprets the News radio broadcast transcripts, 1949-1952. Includes Leites's "Some Useful Passages from Lenin and Stalin," "Appeals of Totalitarianism: The Case of the Assimilated Bolshevik," and "Some Unconscious Aspects of Bolshevik Politics."

Box 3

Folder 9

Correspondence and memoranda, research papers 1949-1952. 35

Box 3

Folder 10

Correspondence and memoranda; 1950. Includes memos directed to Hans Speier and research regarding the Politburo.

Box 3

Folder 11

Notes, 1951. Includes World Review Guide to Fashions in Taste.

Box 4

Folder 1

Book reviews; newspaper articles; correspondence, 1951-1952.

Box 4

Folder 2

Notes, French language, undated

Box 4

Folder 3

Notes related to psychoanalysis and politics, undated

Box 4

Folder 4

Notecards related to research, somewhat cryptic, undated

Box 4

Folder 5

Notes on Japan, undated

Box 4

Folder 6

Notes on Japan, undated

Box 4

Folder 7

Notes on Japan, undated

Box 4

Folder 8

Notes on Lenin, undated

Box 4

Folder 9

Notes on Lenin, undated

Box 4

Folder 10

Notes, related to research and reading, somewhat cryptic, undated

Box 4

Folder 11

Notes on Burma and Thailand, part 1

Box 4

Folder 12

Notes on Burma and Thailand, part 2

Box 4

Folder 13

Notes on Burma and Thailand, part 3

Box 5

Folder 1-5

Notecards covering a variety of topics, including psychoanalysis and politics, undated

Box 6

Folder 1-5

Notecards covering a variety of topics, including psychoanalysis and politics, undated

Box 7

Notecards covering a variety of topics, including psychoanalysis and politics, undated

Box 8

Notecards covering a variety of topics, including psychoanalysis and politics, undated

Box 9

Notecards covering a variety of topics, including psychoanalysis and politics, undated

Box 10

Notecards covering a variety of topics, including psychoanalysis and politics, undated