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A Guide to the
Alexander Vucinich Papers
1961-1984

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Prepared by Timothy H. Horning
September 2014

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PROVENANCE

The Alexander Vucinich papers were donated to the University Archives by the Department of History and Sociology of Science in 1993 (accession number 1993:040).

ARRANGEMENT

The papers of Alexander Vucinich are organized into three series – General File, Teaching Material, and Research and Writings – which are each arranged alphabetically.

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

Alexander Vucinich was a Professor in the Department of History and Sociology of Science at the University of Pennsylvania from 1976 to 1985. He was also a scholar of the social and cultural history of science in the Russian Empire and Soviet Union.

Born on October 23, 1914 in Wilmington, California to parents who had emigrated from Serbia, Vucinich was orphaned when both parents died in 1918 of influenza. He and two older siblings were sent to live with an uncle in a small village in Herzegovina called Bileca Rudine. After graduating from the University of Belgrade in 1938, Vucinich came back to California and attended the University of California, Berkeley, where he earned an M.A. in 1941. He then earned a Ph.D. in sociology in 1950 from Columbia University in New York City. He taught at San Jose State College from 1950 to 1964, the University of Illinois from 1964 to 1970 and the University of Texas from 1970 to 1976. Vucinich joined the Department of History and Sociology of Science at the University of Pennsylvania in 1976 and retired as Professor Emeritus in 1985.

Vucinich studied the history of Russian science at a time when most Western scholars were dismissive of their scientific traditions and contributions. He sought to restore the legacy of Russian science and scientists to the mainstream academic intellectual current. In addition to several scholarly articles, he authored several books on the topic, including: *Soviet Economic Institutions: The Social Structure of Production Units* (1952); *The Soviet Academy of Sciences* (1956); *Science in Russian Culture: A History to 1860* (1963); *Science in Russian Culture: 1861-1917* (1970); *Social Thought in Tsarist Russia: The Quest for a General Science of Society* (1976); *Empire of Knowledge: The Academy of Sciences of the USSR, 1917-1970* (1984); *Darwin in Russian Thought* (1988); and *Einstein in Soviet Ideology* (2001). In the spring of 1967 he went to the Soviet Union as part of an exchange program between the American Council of Learned Societies and the Academy of Sciences of the USSR. This program gave him the chance to work first hand with leading Soviet experts in the history of science at the Lenin Library in Moscow and the Saltykov-Shchedrin Library in Leningrad.

Alexander Vucinich died on May 25, 2002 at his home in Berkeley, California. He was survived by his brother Wayne (a professor of Eastern European studies at Stanford University), his wife Dorothy, and their two children, Andrea and John.

SCOPE AND CONTENT

The Alexander Vucinich papers are professional in nature and document Vucinich's tenure as a Professor in the University of Pennsylvania's Department of History and Sociology of Science and his work as a scholar of the history of Russian science.

The bulk of the Vucinich papers are contained within the Research and Writings series. This material pertains to his studies of the social and cultural history of science in the Russian Empire and Soviet Union. Most of this research consists of bibliographic citations and notes grouped topically. There is, however, a group of untitled notebooks as well as a sequence of numbered but otherwise untitled notebooks that contain bibliographic notations along with summaries or analysis of the notated source. There is no indication what article, book, or project this research correlates to. Vucinich took notes in a combination of English and what appears to be Russian (but could also be Serbian). This series also includes a complete draft of Vucinich's *Empire of Knowledge: The Academy of Sciences of the USSR (1917-1970)*.

The Teaching Material series contains lectures and syllabi for courses Vucinich taught in the University of Pennsylvania's Department of History and Sociology of Science. There is some material for a course called HIS 339 which likely comes from one of Vucinich's professorships prior to coming to the University of Pennsylvania.

Finally, the General File series contains material that is not related to teaching or research, including correspondence, letters of recommendation written by Vucinich, and reports on the Department of History and Sociology of Science.

CONTROLLED ACCESS HEADINGS

Subject(s)

- Science--History--Study and teaching--Pennsylvania--Philadelphia.
- Science--Russia--History
- University of Pennsylvania. Department of History and Sociology of Science

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INVENTORY

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American Council of Learned Societies Cultural Exchange, 1961-1968	1	1
American Philosophical Society, 1962-1972	1	2
American Physical Society, 1975	1	3
Biographical Information, 1977-1983	1	4
Correspondence, 1949-1984	1	5
Department of History and Sociology of Science: Report and Review, 1980-1981	1	6
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Syllabus, Spring 1984	1	77
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<i>Ivan Pavlov: Science, Philosophy and Ideology</i> , 1974	2	30
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<i>Nikolai Ivanovich Lobachevskii: The Man Behind the First Non-Euclidean Geometry</i> , 1962	2	33
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Puzzles, Problems and Enigmas, undated	3	21
Quest for a General Science of Society, undated	3	22
<i>Science and Morality: A Soviet Dilemma</i> , 1968	3	23
<i>Science in Russian Culture</i> Bibliographic Notes, undated	3	24
Sociology of Science, undated	3	25
Soviet Science, undated	3	26