Register of the A. S. Esenin-Vol'pin papers

Finding aid prepared by Lyalya Kharitonova
Hoover Institution Archives
434 Galvez Mall
Stanford University
Stanford, CA, 94305-6010
(650) 723-3563
hooverarchives@stanford.edu
© 2016
Title: A. S. Esenin-Vol'pin papers
Date (inclusive): 1903-2010
Collection Number: 2016C44
Contributing Institution: Hoover Institution Archives
Language of Material: Russian
Physical Description: 2 manuscript boxes, 1 oversize box (2.8 linear feet)
Abstract: Memoirs, other writings, correspondence, police file, printed matter, and photographs relating to civil liberties and dissent in the Soviet Union.
Physical Location: Hoover Institution Archives
Creator: Esenin-Vol'pin, A. S.,
Access
The collection is open for research.
The Hoover Institution Archives only allows access to copies of audiovisual items. To listen to sound recordings or to view videos or films during your visit, please contact the Archives at least two working days before your arrival. We will then advise you of the accessibility of the material you wish to see or hear. Please note that not all audiovisual material is immediately accessible.
Publication Rights
For copyright status, please contact the Hoover Institution Archives.
Preferred Citation
[Identification of item], A. S. Esenin-Vol'pin papers, [Box no.], Hoover Institution Archives.
Acquisition Information
Materials were acquired by the Hoover Institution Archives in 2016.
Accruals
Materials may have been added to the collection since this finding aid was prepared. To determine if this has occurred, find the collection in Stanford University's online catalog at http://searchworks.stanford.edu/. Materials have been added to the collection if the number of boxes listed in the catalog is larger than the number of boxes listed in this finding aid.
Biographical Note
Aleksandr Sergeevich Esenin-Vol'pin was a prominent Russian poet and mathematician, a notable dissident, political prisoner, and a leader of the Soviet human rights movement.
Esenin-Vol'pin was born on May 12, 1924 in the Soviet Union. His mother, Nadezhda Vol'pin, was a poet and translator from French and English. His father was Sergei Yesenin, a celebrated Russian poet, who never met his son. In 1933, Esenin-Vol'pin and his mother moved from Leningrad to Moscow.
Esenin-Vol'pin graduated from Moscow State University with a candidate dissertation in the spring of 1949. After graduation, he was sent to the Ukrainian city of Chernovtsy to teach mathematics at the local state university. Less than a month after his arrival, he was arrested by the KGB, sent on a plane back to Moscow, and incarcerated in the Lubyanka prison. Esenin-Vol'pin was charged with “systematically conducting anti-Soviet agitation, writing anti-Soviet poems, and reading them to acquaintances.” His first psychiatric imprisonments took place the same year for anti-Soviet poetry. In 1950, Esenin-Vol'pin was released from the prison hospital and sentenced to five years exile in the Kazakh town of Karaganda as a socially dangerous element. In 1953, after the death of Joseph Stalin, Esenin-Vol'pin was released due to a general amnesty. Soon he became a known mathematician specializing in the fields of ultrafinitism and intuitionism.
Esenin-Volpin was institutionalized again in 1959 for secretly sending samizdat abroad. In 1965, he organized a legendary glasnost meeting, a demonstration at Pushkin Square in the center of Moscow demanding an open and fair trial for the arrested writers Andrei Sinyavsky and Yuli Daniel. In the following years, Esenin-Volpin became an important voice in the human rights movement in the Soviet Union. He was one of the first Soviet dissidents who took on a legalist strategy of dissent. He proclaimed that it is possible and necessary to defend human rights by strictly observing the law. Esenin-Volpin was again put in a psikhushka (psychiatric institute) in February 1968 as one of those protesting most strongly against the trial of Alexander Ginzburg and Yury Galanskov (the Galanskov-Ginzburg trial). After he had been confined, 99 Soviet mathematicians sent a letter to the Soviet authorities asking for his release. This fact became public, and the Voice of America conducted a broadcast on the topic; Esenin-Vol'pin was released almost immediately thereafter in 1968.
Esenin-Vol'pin spent a total of fourteen years incarcerated and repressed by the Soviet authorities in prisons, psikhushkas, and exile. In May 1972, he immigrated to the United States, where he worked at Boston University. In 2005, Esenin-Vol'pin
participated in They Chose Freedom, a four-part television documentary on the history of the Soviet dissident movement. He died on March 16, 2016.

**Scope and Content of Collection**

Memoirs, other writings, correspondence, police file, printed matter, and photographs relating to civil liberties and dissent in the Soviet Union.

**Subjects and Indexing Terms**

Civil rights--Soviet Union.
Dissenters--Soviet Union.

---

**Biographical File, 1909-2010**

**Scope and Contents note**
Includes biographical writings, photographs, and other materials compiled by friends and family to celebrate the 80th birthday of Esenin-Vol'pin.

**Box/Folder 1 : 1**

**Materials compiled to celebrate the 80th and 86th birthdays of Esenin-Vol'pin, 2004-2010**

**Scope and Contents note**
Includes illustrated biographical digital printouts.

**Box/Folder 1 : 2**

**Photographs, 1909-2010**

**Scope and Contents note**
Includes photographs of Esenin-Vol'pin and his family.

**Box/Folder 1 : 3**

**Travel documents, 2002**

**Scope and Contents note**
Includes Esenin-Vol'pin's visa application to the Consulate-General of Russia in San Francisco, itineraries, and photographs taken during his visit to the Moscow State Esenin Museum.

**Correspondence, 1998-2010**

**Box/Folder 1 : 4**

**General, 2003, undated**

**Bjornson, Helene, 2000**

**Kuzichev, Aleksandr Sergeevich, 1998**

**Vishnevskaya, Iulia, 2010**

**Wyman, Lowry, 1998**

**Speeches and Writings, 1948-2005**

**Box/Folder 1 : 9**

**Articles and poems, circa 1948-2003**

**Interviews, 1987-2005**

**Scope and Contents note**
Includes an interview with Esenin-Vol'pin by L. Korsun on the 40th anniversary of the human rights movement in the Soviet Union.

**Box/Folder 1 : 11**

"Ob"iasnenie," 1960

"Ia i Rossiia," 1965

"Po povodu donosa i begstva A. Anatolia," 1969


"In Defense of Individual Freedoms in the USSR," 1974

"On the Struggle for Civil Rights in the USSR," 1974

"On Freedom, Power, Law, and Dissidents in the USSR," 1987
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Box/Folder 1</th>
<th>&quot;5 dekabria 1965 g. i t.d.,&quot; memoirs, circa 2000</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Scope and Contents note</td>
<td>Includes drafts and copyright agreement with Lowry Wyman of Wyman &amp; Johnson.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Box/Folder 2 : 1-3</th>
<th>Untitled manuscripts and drafts, 1959-2001</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Scope and Contents note</td>
<td>Includes draft appeal for permission to immigrate addressed to the First Secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union Nikita Sergeevich Khrushchev.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Box/Folder 2 : 4</th>
<th>Writings by Others, 1978-2002</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Scope and Contents note</td>
<td>Includes articles, newsletters, and fragments on civil rights violations in the USSR.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Printed Matter, 1903-2006**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Box/Folder 2 : 5</th>
<th>Ugolovnoe ulozhenie, 1903</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Box/Folder 2 : 6</td>
<td>Triptikh, poems, 1920</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box/Folder 2 : 7</td>
<td>Tekhnologiia vlasti, A. Avtorkhanov, circa 1960</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box/Folder 2 : 8</td>
<td>S. Esenin, postcard kit, 1976</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box/Folder 2 : 9</td>
<td>Sergei Esenin: Selected Poetry, translated by Peter Tempest, 1982</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box/Folder 2 : 10</td>
<td>Chernaia noch' nad Belym Domom, 1991 August</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box/Folder 2 : 11</td>
<td>Pervaia Konferentsiia Bostonskogo Obshchestva &quot;Memorial&quot;, basic reports, Boston University, 2006</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Box 3**

**Oversize Material, 2009**

| Scope and Contents note | Portrait of Esenin-Volpin by Peter Elkin. |