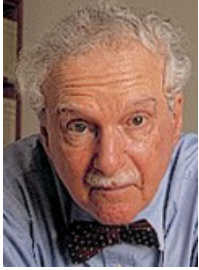


Nathan Sivin, History and Sociology of Science

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Nathan Sivin

Nathan Sivin, an eminent scholar of Chinese medicine and science and a professor emeritus of Chinese Culture in the department of history and sociology of science in Penn's School of Arts and Sciences, passed away on June 24. He was 91.

Dr. Sivin served in the U.S. Army from 1954 to 1956, and while there, enrolled in a Chinese language program. He then went on to receive a SB in humanities with a chemistry minor at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in 1958. He then earned an MA in the history of science from Harvard University in 1960, and a PhD in the history of science from Harvard University in 1966. During his graduate studies, he became more entrenched in his passion for eastern Asian history, studying Chinese language and philosophy in Taipei and Chinese alchemy in Singapore. After graduating from Harvard, his first appointment was at MIT,

where he was hired as an assistant professor of humanities. He rose through the ranks at MIT, becoming a full professor there in 1972. While at MIT, Dr. Sivin founded what is now the Science, Technology, and Society program.

In 1977, Dr. Sivin came to Penn as a professor of "Oriental studies," a title that was later revised to Chinese culture and the history of science. Dr. Sivin contributed significantly to Penn's scholarly engagement with China, visiting China in 1977 with a delegation of astronomers to compare findings with Chinese scientists. Dr. Sivin organized and participated in several Penn-related conferences in China over the decades and headed Penn's Committee on Scholarly Exchange with China, which Provost Eliot Stellar founded in 1978. Dr. Sivin served on Penn's Research Fund Committee, which dealt out research awards to faculty members, and served on other Penn-wide committees that regulated faculty life. He taught courses that surveyed the Scientific Revolution in Europe and advanced classical Chinese, as well as the sociology of professionalization and ritual in science, technology, and medicine. He received an honorary MA from Penn in 1978. In 2006, Dr. Sivin retired from Penn and took emeritus status.

Dr. Sivin traveled widely, studying and lecturing at Needham Research Institute, Gonville and Caius College, and St. John's College at Cambridge University most summers between 1974 and 2000. He was a visiting professor at the Research Institute of Humanistic Studies in Kyoto, Japan and delivered over 250 guest lectures in Europe, Asia, Australia, and North America. He served on the boards of several learned societies, including the T'ang Studies Society, the American Society for the Study of Religion, the International Society for the History of East Asian Science, Medicine, and Technology, and the Franklin Inn Club. He was the editor of *Chinese Science* from 1973 to 1992 and served on the editorial boards of several other journals and monograph series. Dr. Sivin wrote or edited over fifteen books, studying the sociology, ritual, and philosophy of medicine around the world (often using China as a case study) and the intellectual history of philosopher Shen Kua (1031-1095). His most recent book, *Health Care in Eleventh-Century China*, was published in 2015 by Springer Publishing. He also wrote several dozen peer-reviewed journal articles.

He received many honors for his work, including two National Science Foundation Scientific Research Grants, a Guggenheim Fellowship, a National Library of Medicine grant, and travel grants from the American Philosophical Society, American Council of Learned Societies, and European Association for Chinese Studies. He was elected to the American Academy of Arts & Sciences in 1977 and was named an honorary professor in the Chinese Academy of Sciences in 1989.

"During his active career, Nathan Sivin was a Sinologist of the highest caliber, producing papers and books that are of great significance to Taoist Studies, Chinese medicine and science, and other fields," said his colleague Victor Mair, a professor of Chinese language and literature. "What is perhaps even more remarkable is that, after his retirement, he continued to meet with graduate students for hours each week."

Funeral information is forthcoming.