

THE NIELS BOHR ARCHIVE Annual Report 1991

Staff	Director	Finn Aaserud (from 1 September 1991; previously Acting Director)
	Secretary	Helle Bonaparte (one-year leave from 1 July 1991)
	Librarian	Anne Lis Rasmussen (from 15 August 1991)
	Preservation	Judith Hjartbro
	Programming	Felicity Pors
	Scientific Staff	Hilde Levi Abraham Pais (also at Rockefeller University, New York)

Board of directors

For the President of Copenhagen University	Ove Nathan
For the Niels Bohr Institute	Aage Winther (chair)
For the Royal Danish Society of Science and Letters	David Favrholt
For the Minister of Education	Birgit Andersen
For the family of Niels Bohr	Ernest Bohr

General remarks

The Niels Bohr Archive (NBA) is a repository of primary material for the history of modern physics, pertaining in particular to the early development of quantum mechanics and the life and career of Niels Bohr. Shortly after Bohr's death in 1962, the NBA began an uncertain existence on the premises of the Niels Bohr Institute. In

connection with the centennial of Niels Bohr's birth in 1985, it was finally established as an independent non-profit institution on the basis of a deed of gift from Bohr's wife, Margrethe. From then on, the NBA has had its own board of directors and received financial support from the Danish Ministry of Education and private sources.

The core of the collections consists of Niels Bohr's scientific correspondence (6000 letters and drafts) and manuscripts (500 units). This material was cataloged and microfilmed in the early 1960s as part of the Archive for History of Quantum Physics (AHQP), a project sponsored by the American Philosophical Society and the American Physical Society. By now, the AHQP, which consists of 290 microfilms of a wide variety of historical collections, has been placed in several repositories worldwide.

In addition, the NBA houses several historical collections that cannot be consulted elsewhere. Thus, in 1985 the Bohr family donated the bulk of Bohr's extensive private correspondence. The equally extensive "Bohr General Correspondence" contains mostly letters of an administrative nature. Bohr's family correspondence will become available to researchers in 2012.

Among the papers of Niels Bohr's closest colleagues deposited at the NBA, only the George Hevesy Scientific Correspondence has been organized. Yet, correspondence of H.A. Kramers, Christian Møller, Oskar Klein, and Léon Rosenfeld is of great historical interest. The extensive collection of photographs relating to Niels Bohr's career is an especially popular resource. Finally, there are book, reprint, film, sound tape, and video tape col-

lections.

Activities in 1991

The NBA's archival collections are kept in fireproof safes purchased some years ago with a grant from the Ib Henriksen Foundation. At the end of 1991, the safes and collections were moved to the basement of the building now housing the NBA's offices. This completed the move, begun in 1990 and supported by a special grant from the Ministry of Education, to larger quarters kindly provided by the Niels Bohr Institute.

One of the major tasks is the publication by North-Holland Physics Publishing of the *Niels Bohr Collected Works*, the first volume of which appeared in 1972. The series is planned to comprise eleven volumes, of which three remain to be published. Volume 10, under the editorship of David Favrholt, philosophy professor at the University of Odense, deals with Bohr's extensions of his complementarity argument outside physics. It is expected to appear in 1992. Volume 7, *Foundations of Quantum Physics II*, edited by Jørgen Kalckar, is planned for publication in 1993. Volume 11, to be edited by Finn Aaserud, will cover Bohr's extra-scientific activities and contain a bibliography of Bohr's writings as well as a general index to the whole series. A complete list of all the *Collected Works* was given in the Activities Report for 1988.

During 1991, a Chinese edition of volume 5 was published, while volume 6 is in print. The Chinese version is edited by Professor Ge Ge in Beijing, with financial

support from the (Danish) Sonning Foundation. During his current six-months stay at the NBA on a grant from the Daloon Foundation, Professor Ge Ge has submitted a manuscript on Niels Bohr as a philosopher, to appear as a book in Taiwan.

The conservation of the Hevesy Scientific Correspondence and Bohr's private correspondence have been completed with support from the Alfred Benzon Foundation and the Tuborg Foundation, respectively. These collections are presently being cataloged and prepared for microfilming. The NBA's move unearthed a substantial number of previously unknown letters to and from Niels Bohr on scientific matters. The majority of these have been conserved with support from the Tuborg Foundation and registered on computer. They will be organized as a collection supplementing the Bohr Scientific Correspondence and microfilmed as part of the AHQP.

A history of science library, which will constitute a useful supplement to the archival collections, is being developed with a grant from the Sloan Foundation. The TISK project at Roskilde University Center is cataloging the extensive records of the Danish Society for the Dissemination of Natural Science [Selskabet for Naturlærens Udbredelse], which will subsequently be made available to researchers at the NBA. An extensive photo collection for the history of science has been temporarily deposited by Knud Max Møller.

In November, the NBA hosted part of the annual conference of the Danish Committee for the History and Philosophy of Science. This meeting was called in con-

nection with a project, led by Finn Aaserud and Helge Kragh of TISK, to prepare a catalog of historical collections in Denmark pertaining to the history of science.

In the course of the year, several researchers paid short visits. In addition to the long stay of professor Ge Ge, professor Victor Frenkel from Leningrad spent two months with support from the Soros Foundation and the Niels Bohr Fund. Bavarian Television and the BBC visited to produce TV films about Werner Heisenberg and the German atomic bomb project during the Second World War, respectively.

Publications

Finn Aaserud: Various articles about the Niels Bohr Archive in international newsletters.

Abraham Pais: *Niels Bohr's times: In science, philosophy, and polity* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991).