

**THE NIELS BOHR ARCHIVE**  
**Annual Report 1992**

<b>Staff</b>	Director	Finn Aaserud
	Secretary	Anne Lis Rasmussen
	Preservation	Judith Hjartbro (until 31 July)
	Programming	Felicity Pors
	Miscellaneous tasks	Virma Rasmussen (April to September) Martin Sørensen Henning Veik (from 15 July)
	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 Sciences 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. The NBA has existed since shortly after Bohr's death in 1962. However, its future was only secured at the centennial of

Bohr's birth in 1985, when a deed of gift from Bohr's wife, Margrethe, provided the opportunity to establish the NBA as an independent non-profit institution. The NBA has now its own board of directors and receives a fixed annual sum for running expenses from the Danish Ministry of Education as well as project support from private sources. Having housed the NBA from the outset, in 1990 the Niels Bohr Institute supplied improved and expanded quarters.

The core of the collections comprises 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), the work for which was sponsored by the American Philosophical Society and the American Physical Society. Since then, 290 microfilms of a wide variety of relevant historical material have been placed in several repositories world-wide.

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 private correspondence, which includes letters to and from central personalities in culture and politics inside and outside Denmark. The equally extensive "Bohr General Correspondence" documents Bohr's substantial administrative involvements. Bohr's family correspondence will become available to researchers in 2012.

Among papers of Bohr's closest colleagues deposited in the NBA, only the George Hevesy Scientific Correspondence has been organized. Yet correspondence of in particular H.A. Kramers, Christian Møller, Oskar Klein, and

Léon Rosenfeld is of great historical interest. The large collection of photographs relating to Bohr's career is an especially popular resource. Finally, there are reprint, film, sound tape, and video tape collections, as well as a growing library.

### **Activities in 1992**

The NBA's highest priority continues to be 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. Of these, volume 7, *Foundations of Quantum Physics II*, is a continuation of volume 6, which was also edited by Jørgen Kalckar. Volume 10, dealing with Bohr's extensions of his complementarity argument outside physics, is edited by David Favrholt, professor of philosophy at the University of Odense. These two volumes are planned for publication in 1993 or 1994. Volume 11, to be edited by Finn Aaserud and planned for publication in 1995, will cover Bohr's activities outside science and philosophy as well as contain a bibliography of Bohr's writings and an index to the whole series. A complete list of the *Collected Works* was given in the Activities Report for 1988. In the course of 1992, volume 6 was published in China. The Chinese edition is prepared by Professor Ge Ge in Beijing, with financial support from the (Danish) Sonning Foundation.

Finn Aaserud continues his historical project on the JASON group of elite academic scientists established in

1959 to advise the U.S. government on technical questions related to national security. In August, he lectured on this topic at the joint annual meeting in Gothenburg of the European Association of Science and Technology and the (U.S.) Society for Social Studies of Science. During the first half of 1993, he will be on leave from the NBA to work full-time on the project with grants from the American Council of Learned Societies and the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation.

The Hevesy Scientific Correspondence has now been cataloged and prepared for microfilming with the grant from the Alfred Benzon Foundation. A substantial part of Bohr's family correspondence has been conserved with support from the Niels Bohr Fund, the Augustinus Foundation, Danisco's Foundation, Queen Margrethe's and Prince Henrik's Foundation, the Rockwool Foundation, and the Foundation of the Danish Bank. After this grant was spent, the Bohr family has placed many more valuable family letters in the NBA. During the same period additional items to be included in the planned collection supplementing Bohr's original scientific correspondence in the AHQP have been donated. A five-year grant from the American Lounsbery Foundation has made it possible to begin a much-needed concerted effort to organize and register the NBA's multifarious archival material.

The reprints of Bohr's published articles have been organized and an inventory prepared. The original ringbinders of newspaper clippings pertaining to Bohr and his times have been reorganized, and a substantial number of new clippings have been added.

The NBA's original book collection, which includes

rare books from the private libraries of Bohr and his close collaborator Léon Rosenfeld (an ardent book collector), has been organized, and a library of more recent history of science books has been purchased with a grant from the American Sloan Foundation. All books will be registered on the ALIN computer system used by the library of the Niels Bohr Institute.

Professor Ge Ge from China departed in March after a half-year visit. Emeritus professor Stefan Rozental has been assigned an office in the NBA, where he is organizing his private archive from a long career which included a close collaboration with Bohr. Professor Allan Mackintosh from the H.C. Ørsted Institute visits the NBA regularly in connection with his historical researches. Several foreign scholars have paid short visits.

### **Publications**

Abraham Pais, “De Tweede Wereldoorlog en natuurkunde in Amerika,” *Nederlands Tijdschrift voor Natuurkunde* 59, no. 9 (1992): 145–148.