

Archives of Scientific Philosophy (ASP), Hillman Library, University of Pittsburgh

Rudolf Carnap Collection

Overview of the material and perspectives of digitization in VALEP

Christian Damböck, April 2021

A) General overview

Where is the Carnap Nachlass located?

Most parts of the Carnap Nachlass are located at the ASP (about 90% of the manuscripts, correspondence, etc. plus Carnap's library) and at the UCLA, Young Research Library (about 10% of the manuscripts, correspondence, etc. as well as most parts of Carnap's collection of offprints)

Overview of the ASP material

The Rudolf Carnap collection at the ASP is organized into "boxes" being subdivided into "folders". Whereas folders with few exceptions contain material that is also physically represented in a paper folder (though the amount ranges from a single sheet of paper to several hundred pages), boxes usually are stored in several cardboard boxes ("Box" 25, for example, is stored in about 20 cardboard boxes). Therefore, an estimation of the amount of material in the Carnap papers is possible only in view of the folders.

Altogether, the Rudolf Carnap papers comprise (VERY rough estimate!!!)

- About 2,000 folders and about 70,000 pp
- More than 31,000 pp are available online at the ASP homepage
- About 22,000 pp being not available at the ASP homepage were digitized by Christian Damböck (CD)
- There might be between 10,000 and 20,000 pp being not yet digitized

VALEP is aiming at making available online the entire ASP material:

- **CD's scans and the ASP original scans are already available**
- A digitization of the entire scientific correspondence after 1935 which comprises about 8,000 pp is planned to be done in fall 2021
- Digitization of further parts of the Carnap papers being not digitized yet is planned for 2022 and 2023

For a detailed overview of the content of the boxes and folders of the Carnap collection see the attached copy of the finding aid that was produced very carefully by the Pitt archivists. It is particularly useful because for each folder the finding aid provides a brief (and generally very accurate) description of its content, together with a (widely accurate) indication of the time when the material was produced

In general, the material of the Carnap papers is hardly structured, i.e., the boxes seem to mainly represent an ordering that was established by chance. However, the particular folders and also

certain (parts of) boxes mostly contain material that seem to represent an ordering that might have been established by Carnap himself.

- Letters are very often deposited in a (reverse) chronological way
- Correspondence is mostly grouped by correspondence partners
- Manuscripts are in some ways arranged topic-wise and also chronologically
- However, still manuscripts on a topic A and correspondence with a person B might be spread over the entire archive and parts, of course, might also be located elsewhere (at the UCLA etc.)

The boxes are not consecutively numbered, e.g., there is no box with No. 1-17, 29-77; it is unclear to me what these numbers could represent.

Very roughly, the boxes can be categorized as follows:

- Mainly private correspondence, diaries, and photographs: Box 22, 23, 24, 25 (~ 400 folders)
- Mainly professional correspondence: Box 27, 28, 29, 84, 85, 88, 90, 102 (~ 400 folders)
- Mainly manuscripts and other material but scattered with correspondence as well
Box 18, 19, 20 (~ 150 folder), 78, 79, 80, 81, 82, 83 (~ 300 folders), 86, 87 (~ 35 folders), 89 (~ 100 folders), 91, 92, 93, 94, 95 (~ 300 folders), 106, 107, 109, 110, 111, (~ 200 folders)
[total: ~ 1,000 folders]
- Carnap's card files: Box 103, 104, 105, 113, 114 (~ 16,500 file cards, format ~ 7x10cm)
- Paper copies of material (mainly correspondence) from other archives: Box 115 (17 folders)

This leads to the following percentage regarding folders: 20 % private material, 20 % professional correspondence, 60 % manuscripts and other material

What did the ASP scan? As a general rule, the ASP scanned

- most of the professional material (manuscripts, printed matter) by Carnap
- those parts of the correspondence where the ASP was sure about copyright matters.

The ASP generally did not scan

- private material (though they scanned also parts of the diaries and the private correspondence)
- correspondence and other material where the ASP was not entirely clear about copyright matters

CD started to digitize parts of the material that was not yet scanned by the ASP in spring term 2015, while spending a semester at Pitt as a fellow of the Center of Philosophy of Science. Further work was done in June 2016, June 2019 and February 2020.

B) Boxes of the ASP collection / available digitization

See also the finding aid, which provides a detailed overview of all folders of the ASP collection. The aim of the following is only to get a rough picture and some estimates of the volume of the material.

In this overview, page counts and other figures are estimates. In the overview in section A) I counted estimates of the numbers of paper folders as being represented in the finding aid where

one logical folder X often disintegrates into several paper folders Xa, Xb, Xc, ... In the following overview, for matters of simplicity, I only count the number of logical folders of each box

Box 18 (27 folders, 0pp ASP, 70pp CD)

Mainly private material, interesting material on political topics, no ASP scans, only small parts are digitized by CD

Box 19 (35 folders, 900pp ASP, 40pp CD)

Mainly inductive logic, large parts are scanned by the ASP, some letters are digitized by CD.

Box 20/21 (numbers interchangeable) (76 folders, 1,100pp ASP, 300pp CD)

Note that this box is referred by two numbers (20, 21) interchangeably.

Continues material on inductive logic (see box 19), mostly scanned by the ASP.

Folder 63-76 contains interesting private material and correspondence, all these folders are in part digitized by CD.

Box 22 and 23 (231 folders, 0pp ASP, 2,300pp CD)

Main parts of Carnap's photo-collection. About 2,000 photographs (rough estimate).

- About 1/3 of the folders were not available when I digitized the material in February 2020; these missing folders may all contain very important material
- The material is regrettably unsorted
- Many photographs show up in the collection on various places in sometimes dozens of different prints; this increases the complexity of the material
- To process the photos as VALEP documents is a plan with high priority
- The collection by Erika Thost as being digitized by André Carus seems to mainly contain copies of material that is to be localized here
- *Note that each photograph also has a backside, which often contains important information. It is crucial to digitize not just the photographs in themselves but also the backsides.*

Box 24 (43 folders, approx. 3,000 pp, almost all digitized by CD)

Carnap's correspondence with his girlfriend Maue Gramm and related material. The digitization by CD is pretty complete (only folder RC 024-06 that consist of a Reisetagebuch bei Gerhard Gramm is missing)

Box 25 (101 folders, approx. 12,000 pp, most parts are already digitized by the ASP:5,000pp and CD:6,000pp)

Carnap's private correspondence, his diaries, and related material.

- The diaries comprise approx. 4,500 pp of shorthand material (see the edition at Meiner Verlag Hamburg)
- Extending to approx. 8,000 pp (plus the Maue material and scattered private correspondence from the rest of the files) the private correspondence covers the period from around 1908 until Carnap's death; it is an indispensable source of biographical information

Box 27 (59 folders, only 200pp scanned by the ASP, 700pp CD)

Correspondence which is called "Old" because it is older than 1963 or so. Main parts are from the time after 1945 but there is also some older material.

Box 28 and 29 (65 folders, almost everything is digitized, ASP 300pp, CD 1,500pp)

Main parts of the professional correspondence until 1935

Box 78, 79, 80, 81, 82, 83 (244 folders, 8,000pp ASP, 1,300pp CD)

Large parts of these folders seem to be digitized. What is still lacking, is digitization of correspondence after 1935 being scattered over these boxes. Here, CD mostly photographed only parts of the material (often only Carnap's letters and not the letters to Carnap)

Box 84, 85, 88, 90, 102 (399 folders, ASP 1,700pp, CD 4,600pp)

Mainly correspondence after 1935 but also other material. CD mostly photographed only parts of the material (often only Carnap's letters and not the letters to Carnap).

Box 86, 87, 89, 91, 92, 93, 94, 95, 106, 107, 109, 110, 111 (472 folders, ASP 13,000pp, CD 1,000pp)

Mainly manuscripts and proofs but also other material. There might be important material (correspondence, private stuff) here, which is not digitized yet.

Box 103, 104, 105, 113, 114 (Carnap's card files that contain approx. 16,500 file cards)

These boxes contain Carnap's file cards. Carnap used the same file card format from around 1930 to his death. The format is approx. A7 (7x10 cm) but this needs to be verified. He put much stress in using these filecards for writing down excerpts of texts he read as well as biographical notes. So, we might expect that the file card also contain information of biographical and philosophical relevance.

None of the material is digitized yet. The file cards cover

- bibliographical information plus excerpts, addresses and biographical notes (11,000 cards)
- reading notes (5,500 cards)

The material is almost exclusively in shorthand. It is hardly investigated yet.

Box 115 (17 folders)

These are paper copies of material from other archives that were donated to the ASP. Main parts cover the correspondence with Wilhelm Flitner, Hugo Dingler, W.V.O. Quine, Otto Neurath, Kurt Gödel, Heinrich Behmann. This material can be found in a better quality in the respective archives that house the papers of these persons. More relevant are the following items:

- A list of books owed by Carnap
- Transcriptions of Carnap's shorthand annotations in books

Books and offprints in the ASP collection

The ASP collection also houses large parts of Carnap's library (most of the offprints are at the UCLA). However, it is still not clear to me to what extent this material is already available. Around 2016 the material seems to have been stored outside the archive, and there were no files of the material, except for an old list that is available in RC 015-13. The latter list is huge but it is unclear which parts of the material might be actually in Pittsburgh.

At any rate, the material that is to be found in the finding aid in box 111 is definitely only a tiny part of Carnap's library as being represented at Pitt. One might find further parts in the Pitt library catalogue. As soon as I can find out anything in this regard, I will update this file.