

Carnap's Route to the *Aufbau*. An Examination of Newly Available Archival Sources

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Overview

1. Introduction
2. Carnap's diaries and reading lists
3. The networks of the early Carnap
4. Assessments of influences on the *Aufbau*

1. Introduction

Formation of research on the early Carnap

From the 1980s onwards research on the early Carnap became innovative in at least two respects:

- A. The importance of the German philosophy scene (Marburg school, Southwest German school, Dilthey-school, Husserl) for the early Carnap was underlined
- B. The involvement of the early Carnap with the German youth-movement and Bauhaus-modernism was pointed out

In the US: Coffa, Friedman, Richardson, Carus, Galison, ...

In Europe: Mormann, Dahms, Gabriel, Uebel, Stadler, ...

Two aspects: Philosophy and culture

- Actually there are two aspects for research on the early Carnap being non-identical though overlapping in some respects
- Influences on Carnap at a more general **cultural level**, with the inclusion of philosophy, science, politics, and social phenomena such as the German youth movement and the Bauhaus
- **Philosophical influences** in the narrower sense

- Besides a number of innovative *systematic* interpretations (e.g., on the role of purely structural definite descriptions in the *Aufbau*, and on quasi-analysis) the *historical* point of these new lines of research on Carnap has been essentially the following:
- The early Carnap has to be understood as part of the contemporary German intellectual scene
- **Thus, it is necessary to understand the German intellectual and philosophical scene of the early 20th century in order to be able to understand the early Carnap**

Different sources for an assessment of influences

1. Carnap's own published writings
2. Carnap's unpublished manuscripts and lectures
3. Carnap's scientific correspondence
- 4. Carnap's diaries and reading lists**
5. Carnap's private correspondence
6. *The writings of intellectuals that influenced Carnap*
7. *Other relevant archival sources*
8. The general historiographical literature

2. Carnap's diaries and reading lists

Archival sources being crucial for the formation of research

1980s and 1990s

- „Vom Chaos zur Wirklichkeit“ (1922)
- „Die Quasizerlegung“ (1923)
- „Topologie der Raum-Zeit-Welt“ (1924)
- The Bauhaus-Lectures (1929)
- Parts of Carnap's correspondence with Dingler, Schlick, Neurath

In the 2000s (in particular, in Carus (2007)!) a number of further archival sources were investigated:

- The circular letters and the manuscript „Deutschlands Niederlage“ from 1918
- A number of further manuscripts, lectures, and circular letters from the 1920s
- Further correspondences with Wilhelm Flitner, Franz Roh, Arne Naess, Russell, ...
- The first version of Carnap's autobiography

Newly available archival sources

Two years after the appearance of Carus (2007) a number of further archival sources were opened for research. In particular:

- Carnap's **diaries**
- Carnap's **reading lists**
- The **private correspondence** with Carnap's mother, his first wife Elisabeth, his girlfriend Maue Gramm, and a number of further correspondence partners

Carnap's diaries 1911-1970

- They are available in shorthand, approx. 3500 pages
- There are transcriptions of parts of the material from 1927-1933, made (without permission of the Pittsburgh archives) by Karl Müller (Vienna) in the 1990s
- Recently, Brigitte Parakenings (Konstanz) and Brigitta Arden (Pittsburgh) started to transcribe parts of the early diaries (approx. 40% of the diaries from 1911 until 1936 already have been transcribed)

- The diaries are written from a strongly empiricist point of view:
- They contain sketches on what happened during the day, which people Carnap met, what they talked about, etc.
- The diaries contain virtually no „internal“ observations, i.e., philosophical reflections or scientific notices
- Thus, in a way the diaries document exactly that kind of material we may not find in Carnap’s published writings, unpublished manuscripts and lectures

Carnap's reading lists

- As a supplement to the diaries Carnap documented (at least for some parts of his life) in a chronological way all kinds of texts he read
- This is true, in particular, for the time period between 1909 and spring 1924 where Carnap documented a consecutively numbered list of 1918 books and articles he read
- Than there is a gap (as far as I can see now), and the reading lists start again in 1928

- The question has to be asked, however, whether and in what sense these sources might be relevant for our understanding of the early (and even the later) Carnap?
- Do these sources (especially, the diaries) contain material of an exclusively private nature? Or will they allow us to learn something new about the philosopher Rudolf Carnap?
- I will try to suggest an answer to these questions by means (1) of a case-study „The networks of the early Carnap“ on the broader cultural context of the early Carnap, and (2) by means of some consideration on the assessment of philosophical influences

3. Networks of the early Carnap

A. Philosophers and scientists (1920s)

- I. Dilthey-school: Nohl, Flitner, Roh, Freyer
- II. Marburg school: Natorp, Cassirer
- III. Southwest German school: Bauch, Rickert, Cohn, Christiansen
- IV. Phenomenology: Husserl, Landgrebe
- V. Logicism: Frege, Russell, Wittgenstein
- VI. Vienna Circle: Schlick, Neurath, Kaufmann, Waismann
- VII. The Berlin Group: Reichenbach, Dubislav, Burkamp
- VIII. Other Germans: Dingler, Driesch, Fraenkel, Gerhards, Lewin

B. Other intellectual networks (1920s)

- I. Sera circle (Jena): Roh, Flitner, Freyer
- II. Freideutsche Bewegung (Freiburg)
- III. Hohenrodter Bund: Filtner, Klatt, Merten
- IV. The Bauhaus scene: Roh, Carola Giedion-Welcker, Sigfried Giedion, Lucia Moholy, Laszlo Moholy-Nagy, Hannes Meyer
- V. The Esperanto community

How do these networks interact and overlap?

- There are several overlappings (besides Carnap himself) between these networks
- Most importantly, Roh belongs to the youth-movement scene as well as to the Bauhaus scene, and he also has been a close personal friend of Otto Neurath
- Thus it seems likely that these different networks also overlap in some theoretical (philosophical) respects

The missing link between A and B

- The diaries show that Carnap discussed the ideas of *Konstitutionstheorie* between 1925 and 1928 with members of all networks as mentioned above
- In these discussions „Konstitutionstheorie“ is mostly tied in some way to the notion of a cultural reform
- The idea of a convergence of the theoretical programs of *Aufbau* and *Bauhaus* is by no means new (Galison, Dahms)
- However, the diaries and further archival sources may allow us to understand in which way the German youth movement (and Roh, in particular) may function as missing link between the Vienna Circle and Bauhaus modernism

4. Assessments of influences on the *Aufbau*

Assessing influences I: The Dilthey school

- The reading lists show that Carnap obviously did not read Dilthey (until spring 1924)
- However, the diaries and other sources from the Nachlass show the great importance of a number of intellectuals that belong to the Dilthey school: Nohl, Flitner, Roh, Freyer
- Freyer, most importantly, wrote his essay „Theorie des objektiven Geistes“ which is heavily influenced by Dilthey's *Aufbau* in interaction with Carnap
- The interactions with Freyer, Flitner, and Roh, remain highly intensive during the whole period 1920-1928

Assessing influences II: The Marburg school

- The key figure here seems to be Paul Natorp, at least for the time period until 1924
- It seems likely that Carnap crossed Natorp's traces already very early in his intellectual carrier
- Natorp's *Sozialpädagogik* (which Carnap read as early as 1912) refers to Carnap's grandfather F. W. Dörpfelt
- Natorp is mentioned twice in the diary from 11.1912
- Until 1924 Carnap read Natorp (6), Cohen (1), and Cassirer (2)
- However, until 1929 there seems to have been no personal interaction between Carnap and any member of the Marburg school (possible exception Natorp)

Assessing influences III: The Southwest German school

- Before 1920 Carnap read just a single small article by Rickert (on psychophysical parallelism) with whom he studied at Freiburg in 1911/12
- However, in preparation for the 1920 workshop at Buchenbach (cf. Dahms 2015) Carnap read *KW und NW* and *Grenzen*
- Carnap obviously did not read Rickert's *System* until 1924
- But we also have to consider the influences by Jonas Cohn, Bruno Bauch, and, most importantly, Broder Christiansen

Assessing influences IV: Husserl

- Carnap did not read Husserl before the Buchenbach workshop in 1920
- Thus, there is obviously no influence by Husserl on the first draft to the *Aufbau*
- Between fall 1920 and fall 1923 he studied several writings by Husserl (3 x Ideen 1)
- However, at the end Carnap gave up crucial aspects of Husserl's philosophy
- Cf. (Carus 2015) as a paradigm case of how to deal with the diaries in order to assess influences

- We may not expect from the diaries any groundbreaking new insights that totally change our picture of the philosophy of the early Carnap
- Instead, what we can expect are details that may allow us to sharpen and refine the existing picture (in the long run) in a significant way
- In other words, the diaries would hardly be appropriate as starting points for a revolution of research on (the early) Carnap, rather, they may support normal scientific puzzle solving activities in that field of research