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Cold War ideology and international science politics: Rosenfeld versus Bohr

THE BELGIAN PHYSICIST LÉON ROSENFELD (1904–74) was Niels Bohr's close assistant and collaborator from 1930. They collaborated on the epistemology of quantum electrodynamics, and Rosenfeld is also known as a fierce defender of the so-called Copenhagen Interpretation of quantum mechanics. Soon after the Second World War, Rosenfeld took up a position in Manchester, from where he continued his close collaboration with Bohr in Copenhagen. The following years Rosenfeld's Marxist political engagement led him to incited outbursts against Bohr's political activities, a behaviour that was quite untypical for their collaboration. In my paper I wish to explore the tension between the two physicists as regards Cold War science politics, a tension which is revealed in their exchange of viewpoints and activities in connection with Bohr's idea of an open world, Einstein's idea of a world government, the Stockholm Appeal in 1950, activities of the World Federation of Scientific Workers, etc.

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