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**DFG-Projekt "Digitalisierung und Erschließung des Nachlasses des
Ägyptologen Adolf Erman (1854-1937)"**

Brief von Norman de Garis Davies an Adolf Erman

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Heddelys
Brasserie
Oxford
May 20/24

My dear Roman,

It is a long while since I heard from you and I have not heard much of you either. But I received in Egypt the little copy of Borchardt's bibliography which you kindly sent me, and I took that as a message of friendship.

The feature of the present regime in Germany which I find intolerable is that my friends evidently feel it unwise to express any dissatisfaction or doubts they may have as to the wisdom of some features of the present administration, and on the other hand English correspondents are debarred from expressing their feelings lest it should be supposed that the German friends to whom they write are expected to be in sympathy with these expressions. Englishmen at any rate would sooner not write at all than submit to this suppression of liberty of thought - their pretence is short.

As you know I have always been a lover of Germany and deeply grateful for what I owe to German University life & German books &

German friends. Since the war to I have continued
to believe & hope. Now I feel sad to ~~see~~ find that all
this is beginning to fall away and I find that it is
the same, or more so, with others who were no less
bound to Germany in sympathy & friendships. A
Germany contra Mundum is threatened of far
greater intensity than in 1914: indeed I think it
will very soon include Germany of the Dispersion.
It is all very, very sad. What Hitler has done to
unite Germany & fill her with younger people with
enthusiasm will command sympathy abroad
but if young Germany is placated because men
women & children who are also Germans, and
patriotic Germans too, are being thrown to them
for moral and social torture, this renaissance
wears a far different aspect. I don't love
Democracy and I hate Communism but I
begin to think there may be something worse.
Pardon this outburst, with which you can
scarcely agree, and which of course needs no
reply. I am not far off deciding to send
back to the Preussische Akademie der Wissen-
schaften that silver medal which I was so
proud to receive many years ago.
Well: enough of politics, the most unsatisfactory
of all human activities & the most futile.

You know how happy it would make me to hear that you are enjoying a quietly serene old age with the partners of your long life, and that the young people whom I knew as children are happy and doing sufficiently well in these hard & difficult times which have been so protracted in Germany and yet will probably, when history is written, count as a short & passing & exceptional phase. One must try and take a long view forward as well as backward & ignore personal fortunes a little if possible. The soul of a people takes a lot of stifling: Goethe, Luther, Lessing, Heine and so many more can hardly have lived in vain or for their age only. I am afraid Egyptology in Germany is likely to suffer even more than other humanisms in the general chaos & if Germany's contribution, Blackens, with France, America & England be able to atone? There is little sign yet. Present is old, fardiner perhaps past his early enthusiasms. Young Ormelmann are rarely better than those contemporary with us but some is outstanding. I feel that if my vitality and interest enables

me to finish the enterprises I have already carried
half way through it will be all. I begin to
tire of my rather monotonous and single-handed
job especially the last year or so. Like most
of those who were brought up in the ideals of
the 19th century, I find little inspiration in the
life and thought of the 20th. Will our books
be put away on the top shelves with the patriotic
fathers, with Comte & Fichte & Carlyle or ranged
along with Piazzi Smith. I marvelled at as
musty marvels? Well; we did our best and
found a lot of satisfaction in doing so.

My very best regards (and my wishes) to you
and Frau Erman. I almost wish I could find
that I had a Jewish great-grandmother of
whom I could boast to the nincompoops of
pure race, and if any of my friends get into
Concentration camps I shall have an increased
respect for them. And there will be dullies
with me.

Tear this up in a rage if you will; but if I
write at all I must write as

Yours honestly & sincerely

W defauis Davies