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

Brief von Charles Cutler Torrey an Adolf Erman

Torrey, Charles Cutler

Cranberry Isles, Maine, 18.08.1925

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Cranberry Isles, Maine
August 18, 1925.

My dear Colleague!

I hardly know how it happened that I waited so long before reading carefully the two publications which you were so kind as to send me; namely, Eine ägyptische Quelle der „Sprüche Salomos" (Sitzungsber. der Preuss. Akad., 1924); and Das Weisheitsbuch des Amen-em-ope (O.L.Z., Mai, 1924).

I looked through both publications, somewhat hastily, at the time of receiving them, and gained a distinct impression that your rather startling conclusion was justified. I put the two articles aside, meaning to go through them carefully at the first opportunity; but in the pressure of work, and the attempt to get some things of my own ready for publication, the matter was delayed in a manner that I had not at all intended.

Your comparison seems to me extremely interesting and important. It is the first

plausible demonstration of the direct contact of old Hebrew literature with the literature of Egypt. Of course we have known, all along, that the relation of the Hebrews to Egypt was always very close.

You seem to me to have made it at least very probable that the section Prov. 22:17–24:22 originated in a translation made from this Egyptian 'wisdom-book'. The parallels in your sections A, D and E are striking, and in the two latter instances there certainly seems to be evidence of the transcription of a document and not simply reproduction from memory. There could hardly be doubt of this if your suggestion (very ingenious) as to the שלשום (!) is assented to. I for my part know of no other explanation equally plausible.

I thank you very cordially for sending me the two publications.

Very sincerely yours,

Charles C. Torrey.

(Yale University)