

Einstein's theory of happy living emerges in Tokyo note

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A note that Albert Einstein gave to a courier in Tokyo, briefly describing his theory on happy living, has surfaced after 95 years and is up for auction in Jerusalem.

The year was 1922, and the German-born physicist, most famous for his theory of relativity, was on a lecture tour in Japan.

He had recently been informed that he was to receive the Nobel Prize for physics, and his fame outside of scientific circles was growing.

A Japanese courier arrived at the Imperial Hotel in Tokyo to deliver Einstein a message. The courier either refused to accept a tip, in line with local practice, or Einstein had no small change available.

Either way, Einstein didn't want the messenger to leave empty-handed, so he wrote him two notes by hand in German, according to the seller, a relative of the messenger.

"Maybe if you're lucky those notes will become much more valuable than just a regular tip," Einstein told the messenger, according to the seller, a resident of the German city of Hamburg who wished to remain anonymous.

One note, on the stationery of the Imperial Hotel Tokyo, says that "a quiet and modest life brings more joy than a pursuit of success bound with constant unrest."

The other, on a blank piece of paper, simply reads: "where there's a will, there's a way."

It is impossible to determine if the notes were a reflection of Einstein's own musings on his growing fame, said Roni Grosz, the archivist in charge of the world's largest Einstein collection, at Jerusalem's Hebrew University.

While the notes, previously unknown to researchers, hold no scientific value, they may shed light on the private thoughts of the great physicist whose name has become synonymous with genius, according to Grosz.

"What we're doing here is painting the portrait of Einstein—the man, the scientist, his effect on the world—through his writings," said Grosz.

"This is a stone in the mosaic."

The two notes will go on sale on Tuesday at the Winner's auction house in Jerusalem, alongside other items including two letters Einstein wrote in later years.

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