No date is mentioned, but they can be safely attributed to the vth century B. C., for the style is similar to the Aramaic style of the western provinces of the Persian Empire in the vth century B. C. A shrine of Darius found in the same gallery together with the papyri substantiates our inference. One of the most remarkable results of the present discovery is perhaps the proof it yields that within a century — or less — of the death of Jeremiah a colony of Jews, that worshipped the Queen of Heaven מלכת השמים and other deities אלהים אחרים had found their way to Hermopolis West.

There is nothing especially surprising in this, for we know from the Books of Kings (1 K. 15, 14; 22, 43. 2 K. 12, 3; 14, 4; 15, 4; 21, 3) that the worship of gods other than Yahweh was rife in the time of Jehoash, and Jeremiah denounces the Jews, dwelling in Egypt, who burned incense to the Queen of Heaven, even as their fathers, their kings and princes had done in the cities of Judah and the streets of Jerusalem (Jer. 44, 1; 15-17).

The different deities mentioned in our papyri are : Nebo נבו; Banit בנת, Bethel בתאל (*sic*) and Malkat Shamin (the Queen of Heaven) מלכת שמין. The mixture of Semitic and Egyptian proper names is of considerable interest. They show to what a great extent the Jews in Egypt were mingled with the Egyptians proper. We notice in the papyri Semitic proper names such as : 'Aḥatsin אחתסן; Bethelnatan ביתאלנתן; Bethelshazab ביתאלשזב; Nebunatan נבונתן; Neneḥem נניחם; Natatan נתתן; 'Ader עדר; 'Aḳab עקב; 'Aḳbah עקבה; Ṣebi צבי; She'al שאל; and Egyptian proper names such as : Usershut אסרשת; Bati בתי; *bti* [hieroglyphs], or *btj* [hieroglyphs]; Waḥpra' וחפרע *wsḥ-'b-r'* (Apries); Neki נכי *nkj* [hieroglyphs]; Tutusiri תטסרי *tdj wsir*; Tefmut תפמת *tf-mwt*.

The letters deal with family affairs, greetings and commissions to buy something or other. They may be notifying the addressee that the sender has bought something for him, and sometimes he is only waiting for somebody going there, to entrust it to him.

ולעד אשכח אש למושרתהם לכן

"And until I find any person to deliver them to you".