

98?

## ARCHIVE OF THEOPHANES

Album 125

P.Herm. 4

Hermopolis Magna(?)

c. 317-323

Manchester, John Rylands Library. Ed.pr. \* B.R. Rees (1964) pl. 3b; N. 38 with pp. 438-39; Moscadi, 'Le lettere dell'archivio di Teofane', no.9, pp.130-32. Montevecchi, *La papirologia*, pl. 87; Cavallo-Maehler, *Greek Bookhands*, pl. 2a, p.11.

Single sheet, 14.5 (B) x 13.2 (H) (24.7 according to Rees, an error?) cm. Complete on all sides. Recto (→): margins: left: 2.5 cm at l.1, narrowing to 2 cm by last line; right: c. 0.5-1.5 cm; top: 1.5 cm. bottom: c. 2 cm (? see above). Semi-rounded informal literary hand occasionally cursive in style; the same as writes P.Herm. 5 (cf. Turner's description of the latter, *GMAW* no. 70); dated by association with the Theophanes archive to c. 317-323. Iota adscript used regularly; inorganic diairesis (2). *Nomina sacra*: none. Verso (↓): address.

<p>Θεοφάνει ἀγαπητῶι ἀδελφῶι          Ἰωάννης καὶ Λέων χαίρειν.          ἀναγκαῖον ἡγησάμεθα προσαγο-          ρεῦσαί σε διὰ γραμμάτων, εὐχό-          5 μνοι ὑγιαίνοντί σοι καὶ ἐν πᾶσιν          εὐθυμοῦντι δοθῆναι τὴν ἐπιστολὴν·          εὐχόμεθα δὲ καὶ ἐν τάχει σε ἀπολα-          βεῖν ὀλοκληροῦντα. ἀσπάζονται σε          πάντες οἱ σὺν ἡμῖν ἀδελφοὶ καὶ          10 Διονύσιος ὁ ἀπὸ Ἀττίνου ὁ συντυ-          χῶν σοι ἐν τῇ Ἀθρίβει. ἐρρωσθαί σε          πολλοῖς χρόνοις          εὐχόμεθα.</p>	<p>To (our) beloved brother Theophanes,          Johannes and Leon, greetings.          We thought it necessary to address          you in writing, praying          that the letter might find you healthy          and in good spirits about everything.          We pray also to get you back soon          safe and sound. All the brothers          with us greet you, as does          Dionysios from Attinou who met          you at Athribis. We pray that you          may be well          for many years.</p>
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Verso(↓):

<p>Θεοφάνει ἀγαπητῶι ἀδελφῶι          Ἰ[ωάν]νης καὶ Λέων.</p>	<p>To (our) beloved brother Theophanes          (from) Johannes and Leon.</p>
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2 Ἰωαννης pap.

Johannes and Leon address Theophanes as 'beloved brother', ἀγαπητός ἀδελφος. The salutation has its origins in the Pauline epistles, and is commonly considered as a certain indicator of Christian context (cf. *Intro.*, V 4). Yet the first editor (Rees) assumed that such could not be the case here, on the basis of the presence of worshippers of Hermes Trismegistus among Theophanes' acquaintances (P.Herm. 4, *Intro.*; cf. Rees, 'Theophanes of Hermopolis'; P.Herm. 2 and 3 (cf. *SB* 12.10803) display explicit non-Christian influence). Opinion has since been divided: support for the position of Rees (Cadell) may be contrasted with the opinions of (e.g.) Naldini, Moscadi and Wipszycka ('La Christianisation', 85; compare her earlier opinion in 'Remarques', 214-26) that the writers are Christian.

Further elements point, albeit less conclusively, towards a Christian context: the name Johannes is suggestive (although not conclusive, cf. 17); so too the phrase 'the brothers with us' (οἱ σὺν ἡμῖν ἀδελφοί) used frequently in letters between monastic communities. If Johannes and Leon are not themselves Christian, then Christian influence in their use of the phraseology seems impossible to avoid. The letter is written by the scribe of P.Herm. 5, from Hermodorus, likely to have been Theophanes' brother-in-law (Bastianini, 'Note a P. Herm. Rees 5') and perhaps one of the 'brothers with' Johannes and Leon (Moscadi, 'Le Lettere', 133). His letter also displays Christian influence, albeit less strongly than does the present text. If this letter is to be seen as Christian, we may suppose that Theophanes' 'circle' included worshippers both of the Christian God and of Hermes. Nor, however, does anything prohibit the assumption that in such elite metropolitan circles epistolary vocabulary (as well as names?) were not the exclusive property of any one tradition. The letter would in this case stand as an indication of Christian influence rather than as a 'Christian letter' *per se*.

G **Bastianini**, 'Note a P. Herm.Rees 5. Lettera di Ermodoro a Teofane', *Anagennesis* 3 (1983) 161-65; H. **Cadell**, 'Les archives de Théophanès d'Hermopolis: Documents pour l'histoire', *Egitto e storia antica dall'ellenismo all'età araba* (Bologna 1989) 315-323; A. **Moscadi**, 'Le lettere dell'archivio di Teofane', *Aeg.* 50 (1970) 88-154; B.R. **Rees**, 'Theophanes of Hermopolis Magna', *BJRL* 51 (1968) 164-83; E. **Wipszycka**, 'Remarques sur les lettres privées chrétiennes des II<sup>e</sup>-IV<sup>e</sup> siècles (a propos d'un livre de M. Naldini)', *JJP* 18(1974) 203-221, esp. 214-16; *idem*, 'La christianisation de l'Égypte aux iv<sup>e</sup>-vi<sup>e</sup> siècles. Aspects sociaux et ethniques', *Études sur le christianisme dans l'Égypte de l'antiquité tardive* (Rome 1996) 63-105, esp. 85.