

Samuel 14:19; מִיִּחָא : Micha 6:10). In another document from the time of Bar Kokhba we find מִיִּחָא (i.e. מִיִּחָא : Murabāat 24c, 7), but here the *aleph* can be interpreted as representing the vowel of the particle $\text{וְ$ (i.e. מִיִּחָא). It is also found in a letter of Bar Kokhba (Hever 49).³⁹ In Ecclesiasticus מִיִּחָא (i.e. מִיִּחָא , 13:18) occurs.⁴⁰ Perhaps מִיִּחָא (13, 5) could be interpreted as מִיִּחָא ? On the shift $ye > e$ cf. Qimron.⁴¹

Morphology

The verb מִיִּחָא (line 3) is an Aramaism (= מִיִּחָא). This indicates the strong influence of the Aramaic on Hebrew, especially in the legal and administrative vocabulary.

Of special interest to the history of the Hebrew language is the word מִיִּחָא . This preposition occurs also in other Bar Kokhba documents (e.g. Murabāat 24b, 13; c, 6; e, 8). M. Bar Asher has already pointed out its importance to the study of the dialects of Mishnaic Hebrew and their reflection in the different types of manuscripts. The forms מִיִּחָא , מִיִּחָא are characteristic of the eastern branch and not the western which was using the forms מִיִּחָא , מִיִּחָא etc. This is one of the isoglosses uniting the eastern branch and the Bar Kokhba documents.⁴² We wish to discuss another aspect of the form מִיִּחָא . This word is made of three components: מִי + יִחָא +(א) חָא . The *nun* of יִחָא before the חָא was dropped, and this could have happened only if there was no vowel after the *nun*. In standard Mishnaic Hebrew, however, there is a vowel before the second person masculine pronominal suffix. Thus the form must have been מִיִּיחָא .⁴³ It is possible to explain the elision of the *nun* only if it occurred when the second person pronominal suffix still had a vowel after the *kaf*, e.g. *hēmīnaka → *hēmīnka → *hēmīnka → *hēmīnka → *hēmīnka .

If our reconstruction is correct, it would indicate that this mishnaic form originated in an early period, before the elision of the final vowel in this suffix.

³⁹ I. Naveh, 'Hebrew and Aramaic in the Epigraphic Finds of the Second Temple—Bar Kokhba Period', *Lešonenu* 56 (1992), p. 311 (in Hebrew).

⁴⁰ M. Kister, 'Marginal Notes to Ecclesiasticus', *Lešonenu* 47 (1983), p. 132 (in Hebrew).

⁴¹ E. Qimron, 'Diphthongs and Glides in the Dead Sea Scrolls', in M. Ben Asher (ed.), *Language Studies II—III* (Jerusalem, 1987), p. 268 (in Hebrew). In the Semitic languages there are forms with an *aleph*. Cf. C. H. Gordon, *Ugaritic Textbook* (Rome, 1965), pp. 368–69 (no. 418).

⁴² Cf. M. Bar Asher, 'The Different Traditions of Mishnaic Hebrew', *Tarbiz* 53 (1984), pp. 213–15 (in Hebrew).

⁴³ On the use of this form in the Mishnah cf. E. Ben Jehuda, *Thesaurus* 2, p. 1081.

Posidonius, Strabo and Marcus Vipsanius Agrippa as Sources on Essenes

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Among the remaining enigmas surrounding the Essenes are the manner in which their name, *Essaioi/Essēnoi*,¹ arose and the reason it does not appear in some places, e.g. the New Testament,² where it might be expected to appear. Further insight into the sources on Essenes used by Philo, Josephus, and Pliny could help illuminate the origin and eventual disappearance of the Essenes. These sources, I suggest, include Posidonius, Strabo, and Marcus Vipsanius Agrippa.

Josephus used a source in *Ant.* 13, 171–2 in presenting Essenes as a 'heresy' apparently similar to Stoics, since Essenes believed in fate or predestination (*heimarmenē*).³ Sources aside and left to his own devices, Josephus, in *Vita* 12, described Pharisees, rather than Essenes, as Stoics.⁴ Josephus' source in *Ant.* 13, 171–2 is probably Strabo, who is one of the main sources for book 13. Strabo, a Stoic, drew on Posidonius of Apamea, Syria, another Stoic. Strabo asserted (in *Geography* 16.2.10) that 'Poseidonius, the Stoic [was] the most learned of all philosophers of my time'. Posidonius and Strabo each wrote a *History* which began where Polybius left off, that is, in 146 B.C.E. That is the decade during Jonathan's reign in which Josephus' *Ant.* 13, 171–2 placed the earliest description of the three already existing Jewish philosophic sects. The placement has nothing to do with the narrative about Jonathan,⁵ Josephus placed it there because the histories of Posidonius and Strabo began at that time, with their outsider's view of Jewish philosophic 'heresies'.⁶

It is in Philo's treatment of the maxim—a Stoic maxim—'every good man is free' that Philo introduced Essenes, by saying that in Palestinian Syria virtuous Essenes lived. I suggest that Philo and Josephus got some of their reports on Essenes from Strabo, who in turn drew on Posidonius. For instance, Philo esti-

¹ Among ancient authors only Josephus and Epiphanius used both forms of the name; that other ancient authors each used only one of these forms can assist source investigations. E.g. in *Ant.* 15, 371–373, Josephus introduces 'a group we call *Essaioi*', using the more Semitic ending, then gives his source's story about Menachem the Essene, '*Essēnoi Manaimos*', using the more Hellenistic ending. For ancient texts on Essenes, see A. Adam and C. Burchard, *Antike Berichte über die Essener* (Berlin, 1972), and G. Vermes and M. D. Goodman, *The Essenes According to the Classical Sources* (Sheffield, 1989).

² NT includes the names Pharisees and Sadducees but not Essenes; conversely, Philo and Pliny both include the name Essenes but not Pharisees or Sadducees.

³ Cf. Luther H. Martin, 'Josephus' Use of *heimarmenē* in the *Jewish Antiquities* XIII, 171–3, *Namen* 28 (1981), pp. 127–137, and George Foot Moore, 'Fate and Free Will in the Jewish Philosophies According to Josephus', *HTR* 22 (1929), pp. 371–389.

⁴ On Josephus appealing to Stoics in his audience, see e.g. L. H. Feldman, 'Abraham the Greek Philosopher in Josephus', *Transactions of the American Philological Association* 99 (1968), pp. 147–149. I thank Professor Feldman for comments on an previous draft of this paper.

⁵ Pace Martin, *op. cit.*

⁶ Josephus clearly used Strabo as a source but apparently had not read Posidonius directly.

mated the Essene population as 'more than 4000' (*Impertetrakischiloi*). Philo would not have been in a position to make his own estimate of a population in Palestine Syria; he probably relied on a source. Decades later, Josephus estimated the Essenes as numbering 'more than 4000' (*Impertetrakischiloi*).⁷ Since it is extremely unlikely that Josephus independently arrived at precisely the same estimate, Josephus used a source, whether Philo's source or Philo's text itself.

Josephus also (*Ant.* 18.22) compared Essenes to an obscure Dacian group; the only known parallel is in Strabo (*Geo.* 7.3.3), who at that point was quoting Posidonius.⁸

Strabo described Moses in very favourable terms, but then claimed that 'afterward superstitious (*deisidaimonoi*) men were appointed to the priesthood and then tyrannical people.'⁹ Such anti-Hasmonean claims also appear in various Essene texts from Qumran.¹⁰

Philo presented the lawgiver—namely, Moses—as the founder of Essenes,¹¹ and made a comparison between the Essenes and Persian magi and Indian gymnosophists (*Every Good Man* 74); Strabo also compared the followers of Moses to Indian gymnosophists and Persian magi (*Geo.* 16.2.39).

⁷ *Every Good Man* 75 and *Ant.* 18.20.

⁸ E. Lozovan, 'Dacia Sacra', *History of Religions* 7 (1967–68), pp. 209–243, esp. pp. 219–228, for a detailed discussion of the relevant texts on Dacian ascetics called *pleistoi*. On the parallel here between Josephus and Strabo see also L. H. Feldman's discussion in his Loeb Classical Library edition of Josephus (vol. IX, 1969, pp. 20–21), and Todd Beall, *Josephus' Description of the Essenes Illustrated by the Dead Sea Scrolls* (Cambridge, 1988), pp. 24–25, 121–22.

For Strabo's appreciation of Posidonius' views on the etymology of names of ethnic groups, see *Geo.* 1.2.34 and XVII.4.27.

⁹ *Geo.* 16.2.35 f. J. Gager (*Moses in Greco-Roman Paganism*, Nashville, 1972, pp. 38–47) argued that Strabo here presented the views not of Posidonius but of a Hellenized Jew. But, in addition to the skepticism of E. Norden (in Gager, *op. cit.* p. 47) and M. Stern (*Greek and Latin Authors on Jews and Judaism*, I, Jerusalem, 1974, p. 266) that a Jew would thus describe Moses, one could add that it is unlikely that a Jew who opposed the Hasmonean priests on biblical grounds would simultaneously accept an Egyptian origin of Judaism.

As in the case of Horace writing on sabbath numbering (*Sermones* I, 9:60–78), Strabo or Posidonius apparently heard an Essene-influenced version; such is the inference from some Cave 4 Qumran calendar texts which do number the year's sabbaths. Cf. Louis H. Feldman, 'The Enigma of Horace's Thirtieth Sabbath', *Scripta Classica Israelica* 10 (1989–90), pp. 87–112.

Posidonius is often considered the source of Diodorus on the Jerusalem Temple (*Bibliotheca Historica* 34–35, 1:1–5; see M. Stern, *op. cit.* #63 for the text and discussion); if so, it should be recalled that Posidonius (if he is accepted as the source for Strabo on Jews in *Geo.* 16) appreciated the anticonic teachings of Moses and therefore would assign the temple statue described in Diodorus as the work of the 'superstitious and tyrannical' priests. Consequently, Posidonius may not have been anti-Semitic, at least toward Moses and those Posidonius considered his 'true' followers.

¹⁰ Strabo (*Geo.* 16.2.40) is specifically negative toward Alexander; so was the author of 4Qpesher Nahum.

¹¹ *Hypothetica* (also called *Apology for the Jews*) in Eusebius, *Præp. Evang.* viii. 11. 1. (In the Loeb edition of F. H. Colson, *Philo* vol. IX, pp. 436–7: 'Multitudes of his disciples had the lawgiver trained for the life of fellowship. These people are called Essenes . . .') Cf. David Balch, 'Two Apologetic Encomia: Dionysius on Rome and Josephus on the Jews', *JSS* 13 (1968) 102–122, esp. 114–122, which compares *Contra Apion* II, 145–295 and Philo's *Hypothetica*. Apparently, Porphyry (*De Absentia* IV, 11) and Jerome (*Adversus Iovinianum* II, 14) considered *Contra Apion* book 2 relevant to Essenes.

Posidonius wrote that the purpose of life is 'to live contemplating (*hêdronia*) the truth and order of the universe and promoting it as far as possible, never being led by the irrational part of the soul'.¹² This view of the Platonizing Stoic Posidonius is paralleled in some works of Philo, who was also influenced by Plato and Stoics. Philo's work on the Therapeutae, *On the Contemplative Life* (*peri biou theōretikou*) presented the first of these two ideals. In his works on Essenes, Philo related Posidonius' second ideal type of life, an ideal active life (*praktikos*).¹³ At least in these works Philo shared Posidonius' two-fold goal of contemplation and action.

The source of Pliny's account on Essenes by the Dead Sea,¹⁴ I suggest, is Marcus Vipsanius Agrippa, a powerful ally and son-in-law of Augustus and an ally of Herod the Great.¹⁵ One of Herod's grandsons was evidently named after this Agrippa.¹⁶ Marcus Agrippa made a world map—which was displayed in Rome in the Portus Vipsania—and wrote a commentary on it. Pliny¹⁷ and Strabo¹⁸ used Agrippa's work.

Josephus reported that Herod the Great brought Marcus Agrippa to several places in Judea, including Jerusalem (where M. Agrippa made an offering), and to three fortresses, Alexandria, Herodeion, and Hyrcania—the latter also known as Khirbet Mir. So Marcus Agrippa is known to have been at least within a few kilometers of Qumran in 15 B.C.E.¹⁹ Marcus Agrippa, the

¹² In Clement of Alexandria, *Stromateis* II xxi 129.1–5 (=Posidonius Fragment 186.12–15/428.4). Cf. David Halvick, 'Posidonius' Theory of Historical Causation', *ANRW* II 36.3, pp. 1325–63, here p. 1359 on contemplation and action as the *telos* of Posidonius.

¹³ Not incidentally, the proposed etymology of 'Essene' from Hebrew 'azah, as in 'performers of torah' and 'doers of his will'—self-identifications attested in Qumran texts—is entirely consonant with the perspectives of the sources suggested here. Cf. my "'Essenes?": Etymology from 'azah', *RQ* 11 (1984), pp. 483–98, and, for further observations on this and other ancient sectarian names, my 1990 Duke Univ. dissertation, *The Joseph of Tiberias Episode in Epiphanius' Studies in Jewish and Christian Relations*, pp. 73–97.

Several sixteenth-century writers, including Philip Melancthon, wrote that 'Essenes' was derived from *azah*. In a forthcoming study I intend to explore why this etymology became less frequently affirmed after alternate proposals were made by Azariah de Rossi (in 1573–75) and Joseph Scaliger (from 1583).

¹⁴ Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* V, 73. Dio Chrysostom, whose account (in Synesius, *Dio* 3, 2) of the Essene 'prosperous (*eudaimonoi*) city' by the Dead Sea, which may be independent of Pliny, was also a Stoic. Hippolytus, *Ref.* 9.27, claimed that 'Pythagoras especially and the Stoics among the Egyptians' learned their discipline from Jewish legislation as practised by Essenes. Josephus *Ant.* 15.371 compared the practices of Essenes and Pythagoreans.

¹⁵ Klaus Sallman, *Die Geographie des älteren Plinius* (Berlin, 1971); J. I. Tierney, 'The Map of Agrippa', *Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy*, vol. 63.C no. 4 (1963), pp. 151–66; Alfred Klötz, 'Die geographischen commentarii des Agrippa und ihre Überreste', *Klio* 24 (1931), pp. 38 f., 386 f.; M. Reinhold, *Marcus Agrippa* (Geneva, 1933); Jean-Michel Roddaz, *Marcus Agrippa* (Palais Farnèse: Ecole Française de Rome (Fasc. 253), 1984); D. Dettliffen, *Die geographischen Bücher (II 242–VI schloss) der Naturalis historia des C. Plinius Secundus . . .* (Berlin, 1904).

¹⁶ Daniel R. Schwartz, *Agrippa I: The Last King of Judaea* (Tübingen, 1990), pp. 39–42.

¹⁷ Pliny cited M. Agrippa thirty times in books 3–6. Pliny listed M. Agrippa first in his list of sources for book V; Pliny also listed Posidonius as a source for book V.

¹⁸ Strabo spent considerable time in Rome and Alexandria.

¹⁹ *Ant.* 16, 12–65. Cf. Philo, *Legatione ad Gaium* 291, 294–7. M. Agrippa died in 12 B.C.E.; Herod Agrippa was born in 11 or 10 B.C.E. and became a friend of Drusus, M. Agrippa's grandson.

governor of Syria,²⁰ was in a position to know about and be interested in the Essenes.

In conclusion, if these proposed sources on Essenes—Posidonius, Strabo, and Marcus Agrippa—withstand critical evaluation, this information may help us understand the origin, and eventual disappearance, of the Essenes.

²⁰ A. Kloiz had suggested that Licinius Mucianus, governor of Syria in 68/69 C.E., might have been a source in this section of Pliny, *N.H. V. Quaestiones Plantanae geographicae* (Berlin, 1906), p. 160 (*Quellen und Forschungen zur alten Geschichte und Geographie*, h. 11). Cf. C. Burchard, 'Pliny et les Esseniens', *RB* 69 (1962), p. 550. M. Stern, *op. cit.*, I, p. 466, observed that for describing the administrative division of Judaea proper he [Pliny] used a source reflecting the conditions of the age of Herod.