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Erasmus Gaß

Neah

Neah (MT *Nē'ā*, maybe "dwelling place, mobility, valley"; LXX *Ανωβα/Αοζα*) is a toponym on the northeastern border of the tribal allotment of Zebulun, located between Rimmon and Hannathon (Josh 19:13–14). Neah might be identified with Tell el-Wāwiyāt (1789.2449) or Tell el-Buṭme (1792.2468). The former has only archaeological remains from the Middle to Late Bronze Ages, whereas the latter has provided remains from the Early Bronze, the Iron Age, the Hellenistic and Roman periods. An identification of Tell el-Buṭme with the biblical Neah is thus possible. Nonetheless, Tell el-Buṭme (ruin of the terebinth) could also be identified with Aijalon in Galilee (Judg 12:12). Furthermore, the syntax of the name is problematic. The participle *hammētō'ār* (the encircling) in front of the determined place name Neah is often emended to *wētā'ar* (and it turns). However, with the transcription *Αμπαθαρημ/Αμαθαρ* referring to another place name, the LXX corresponds to a Hebrew participle. The text might indicate that there is a remarkable bend of the border at Neah. The difficult MT could be translated "delineation of Neah." Therefore, Neah might be a description of the fertile Sahl el-Baṭṭōf (180.250), which is included in the tribal territory of Zebulun, and not a place name. Although written as "Noah" by some versions, Neah cannot be related to one of the five daughters of the Manassite Zelophehad (Josh 17:3), since Neah is located in the territory of Zebulun. Jerome transcribes Neah as "Noa" and translates this toponym as "movable or commotion" (*Nom. hebr.* 29.14).

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