teronomy's "Law of the King," but that narrow segment of the Priestly Torah did not influence the overall shape of the Psalter very much.

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Ancient Place Names in the Holy Land: Preservation and History. By YOEL ELITZUR. Jerusalem: The Hebrew University, Magnes Press; Winona Lake, Indiana: Eisenbrauns, 2004. Pp. xiii + 466. $59.50.

For many, a visit to Israel-Palestine is about "place," more specifically, the setting for most biblical events. And one of the simplest, and oldest, methods for making the connection between geographic now and then is by means of the Arabic toponyms. Perhaps the most well-known person to do this was the nineteenth-century explorer Edward Robinson, whose narrative in *Biblical Researches in Palestine, and in the Adjacent Regions: A Journal of Travels in the Year 1838*, 3 vols. (Boston, 1874) is a captivating account of his excursions in Egypt, the Sinai, and Palestine in the "attempt to lay open the treasures of Biblical Geography and History still remaining in the Holy Land" (p. xi).

With *Ancient Place Names in the Holy Land: Preservation and History*, a revision of his 1993 dissertation, Y. Elitzur contributes to our fascination with historical geography. A crucial difference from the type of work done by Robinson and those who followed him is Elitzur's focus: the nexus of historical geography and philology, with contributions to Hebrew grammar, one of the project's primary goals. As such, his study fills a niche empty for over a century. Not since G. Kampffmeyer's *Alte Namen im heutigen Palästina und Syrien* (Leipzig, 1892–93) has there been a systematic treatment of biblical toponymic philology, and it is not surprising that Elitzur finds fault with much of Kampffmeyer's century-old methodology, data, and conclusions, thereby justifying this new investigation.

After a brief introduction in which he describes his goals and methodology and provides a list of the 177 toponyms from Eusebius's *Onomasticon* that formed the basis for his research, the bulk of Elitzur's volume consists of the detailed description of the sixty toponyms he has chosen to analyze. Following this list, which includes many familiar biblical names as well as a number of less familiar ones (no doubt chosen to illustrate various linguistic phenomena), is a summary of the historical and comparative linguistic evidence that can be gleaned from the study of the toponyms. This section is divided according to normal grammatical tradition, starting with comments on spelling, followed by discussions of "phonology," "morphology," the "definite article and syntax," "etymology and semantics," and, finally, "historical matters, transmission of Hebrew, confluence of languages." Part 4 concludes the work with "a brief summary of new discoveries and insights in historical geography," in which eighty topics, mostly site identifications, are presented as the major contributions of the study as a whole to the field of historical geography.

Each section is well organized and clearly written. The English translation reads easily, and Elitzur's style and attention to cross-reference makes the weight of detail easier to bear. And make no mistake, the book is full of detail; it is a massive repository of toponym data, primarily from Biblical Hebrew, Greek, and Arabic, although it includes Aramaic references as well as Samaritan and Modern Hebrew examples when helpful and even the occasional pronunciation elicited from modern Arabic informants by Elitzur himself. It would be no small task for any one site to acquire the type of information that Elitzur provides for *sixty*!

At first glance, it might seem odd that Elitzur uses historical-geographical data in order to contribute to historical Hebrew grammar. He is explicit with his rationale for such a project, though: with Arabic toponyms we have "a linguistic inventory from a historical period of major significance for linguistic research—an inventory independent of the masoretes and of the traditions of manuscript transmission" (p. 3). Following a lead provided by E. Y. Kutscher, Elitzur believes toponym research has the potential to be, as he says, "an Archimedean point outside the system" (p. 11). And perhaps it is so, with

enough qualification concerning the conversative nature of proper nouns like toponyms and with a historical-linguistic framework adequately sensitive to account for the variety of ways in which borrowed lexical items (Hebrew toponyms) are manifested in the borrowing language(s) (Greek, Arabic).

And after reading the book, I agree with Elitzur that the study of toponyms has great potential to provide greater nuance and sometimes even significant revision to our reconstruction of pre-Tiberian Hebrew grammar, particularly phonology. For example, Elitzur asserts that the toponymic evidence does not support the double pronunciation of the 'begadkefat' consonants before the Masoretes, but rather that b, d, k, and t represented the plosives /b/, /d/, /k/, and /t/, respectively, and g and p represented the fricatives /ğ/ and /f/, respectively. Does this mean that Kautzsch is wrong in the statement "[t]he harder sound is the original" (*Gesenius' Hebrew Grammar* [1847; Oxford, 1910], p. 34) or that g and p represent consonants that underwent two sound changes, from plosive to fricative and then back? The latter option is unlikely, and the data from Elitzur's study raise questions about the former option.

Certainly, this work provides the reader with a wealth of information, but it also suffers from a bit of an identity crisis. By the midpoint of the book, I began asking myself what this book was really about. On the one hand, the title, most of the introduction, the sections on the "identification" of the sites for some of the sixty toponyms, and the final section suggest that it is about historical geography and the identification of biblical sites based on later Arabic names. On the other hand, the explicit linguistic goals, the grammatical summary in the third section, and a surprising statement in the introduction raise doubts about its historical-geographic focus: Elitzur states that it "is important to stress that in this context we are interested in the preservation of the name, not necessarily in the specific location of the settlement in a given period" (p. 13). Interdisciplinary work like this is needed, but then the challenge and necessity of providing clarity of purpose are greater.

Additionally, Elitzur places a great deal of emphasis on the need for a linguistic framework and explicit methodology, but nowhere does he actually describe his own. Another issue Elitzur leaves for his reader to uncover on his or her own is the rationale for his citation of language data, at times transcribed but quite often in the native script. Although this was an irritant (as was the lack of a table specifying his transcription scheme), thankfully it does not take the entire book to sort it out. This does raise a larger question for such works, though: if it is linguistically oriented and aimed at a sufficiently broad audience, then should not transcription be used throughout? Non-roman fonts are unnecessary for linguistic analysis and simply serve to exclude linguists who are not from within our specific fields (and IPA fonts would be even better).

In the end, this book is a valuable addition to my shelf (the closer shelf, with the linguistic and philology works), but with clearer focus, an explicit linguistic framework, and transcription of linguistic data throughout, it would be a much more powerful tool and accessible to a larger readership.

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Treasures Old and New: Essays in the Theology of the Pentateuch. By JOSEPH BLENKINSOPP. Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2004. Pp. x + 228. $26.

The author of these essays has deservedly made a name for himself as one of the leading North-American specialists of Pentateuchal criticism according to the historical-critical method and of the implications of this sort of criticism for the understanding of the rest of the Hebrew Bible. The twelve essays gathered here are not intended to constitute "a theology of the Pentateuch, much less of the Old Testament" (p. vii); they are, rather, of the nature of reflections on particular topics or passages within the Pentateuch or on relationships between a Pentateuchal text and other biblical passages. If there is a primary over-