

the mention of Heshbon in Numbers 21:21-31 remains unresolved in the current state of investigation and begs from biblical scholars and others an answer to the question, where is Biblical Heshbon? (most recently see André Lemaire, "Heshbôn = Hisbân?" *Eretz-Israel* 23 (1992) 64*-70*; and H. C. Schmidt, "Das Hesbonlied Num. 21,27aßb-30 und die Geschichte der Stadt Hesbon." *ZDPV* 104 [1988] 26-43). This volume encourages us to continue seeking possible explanations. Current excavations at Tell Jalul as well as further analysis of the Hesban material in its final stage of publication may yet provide further data along these lines.

The editors, David Merling and Lawrence T. Geraty, deserve credit for bringing together a succinct volume on the current status of interpretation of Hesban. The studies presented here are well organized and testify to the innovative tradition set forth by the excavators of this type site. The style of writing is clear and engaging. Some typographical errors can be noted (for example, on p. 352, *Journal of the Society for the Study of Egyptian Archaeology* should read *Journal of the Society for the Study of Egyptian Antiquities*), but these do not overshadow the quality of presentation. Because of the unresolved questions raised above, it will be intriguing to see the additional volumes of the final reports of Hesban and to continue to follow the methodological developments of its successor, the Madaba Plains Project, as we enter into a post-postprocessual era.

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Mungello, D. E. *The Forgotten Christians of Hangzhou*. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1994. xii + 249 pp. Cloth, \$36.00.

At a time when interest in Christian mission to China—past and present—has reached high levels, Mungello's work on seventeenth-century Christians in Hangzhou is timely. Not only does it permit glimpses into a period of Roman Catholic mission history about which little was written; the work describes a valiant attempt at contextualization of the gospel, undertaken by a "local," Zhang Xingyao.

In 1986 Mungello gained access to the old Jesuit library of Zikawei in Shanghai. There he discovered the manuscripts on which this book is based. These Mungello translated and studied, aided by other seventeenth-century documents and manuscripts.

For 177 pages of text, there are 34 pages of endnotes. In addition there is a glossary of Chinese characters and their transliteration. The bibliography consists of four pages of primary sources and seven pages of secondary works. A detailed index completes the book.

Each of the seven chapters is prefaced by a Chinese woodcut of West Lake in Hangzhou. In addition there are maps of the city, both ancient and modern, and pictures of the Immaculate Conception Church, standing in Hangzhou since 1699. The chapters begin and end with an imaginative narrative, based on historical facts and fitting the research findings of the chapter. A brief sketch of the contents of the book follows.

When the first three Jesuits arrived in 1611, Hangzhou was a rich city, with well-known scholars. The mission founded there was largely dependent on the patronage of the literati, some of whom became Christians. Two missionaries, Martino Martini and Prospero Intorcetta, dominated church life in Hangzhou, were active in translating Confucian writings, wrote extensively about their life and travels in China, and constructed a church, modeled after the Chiesa del Gesu in Rome. It still stands.

In the late seventeenth century, Zhang Xingyao, a Confucian scholar, was introduced to Christianity in Hangzhou. He perceived the Jesuits to be the European counterpart of the Chinese literati and began to search for similarities between the classics and the "Lord of Heaven teaching from the Far West." Concluding that this teaching "was not created in the Far West, but that Chinese emperors, kings, and sages had honored and served Heaven from earliest antiquity," Zhang accepted Christianity and was baptized in 1678, feeling he was "coming home to the religion of the ancients" (81).

To persuade his fellow literati of the "compatibility of Confucianism and Christianity," Zhang wrote his *Similarities* (99). In it Zhang affirmed that the Lord of Heaven Teaching corresponded to, supplemented, and transcended the Literati Teaching (83). The ancient Chinese teachings had been corrupted by later Confucian scholars, and even more so by Buddhism. Thus it was good that the Jesuits had brought back what was rightly part of the ancient and noble heritage of the Chinese.

In the first part of the *Similarities*, Zhang arranged the classical passages under 14 basic statements about the Lord of Heaven Teaching; in this logical presentation, he led his readers "to the conclusion that the Lord of Heaven was not at all alien to the teachings contained in the ancient Classics" (100). The second part dealt with the way "the Heavenly Teaching supplements or completes concepts already in the Literati Teaching" (101). In the third part Zhang considered the differences between the two systems. By carefully constructing the first two parts as bridges to the third, he was able to show more similarities than differences. Fortunately for his purposes, the Jesuits had played down the doctrine of original sin, so the differences with Confucius' concept of the basic goodness of man were not outstanding.

The task was evidently arduous, for differing prefaces to Zhang's work are dated to 1672, 1702, and 1715. To show that Christianity could supplement the ancient religion of China without causing a loss of face

was a daunting enterprise. To achieve it, Zhang referred to Chinese philosophy, legend, and history. His references to the Christian Bible were limited, evidently because he knew little about it. In the seventeenth century, the Jesuits had prepared only a Chinese prayer book which contained some Bible stories.

Zhang disappeared from the scene in the early eighteenth century. His attempts to inculturate Christianity into Chinese life were undone by the Chinese Rites Controversy and the papal rulings forbidding the practice of ancestral and Confucian ceremonies. Yet more than two centuries later, Communism again contributed to the inculturation of Christianity by forcing the rupture of all ties with Rome. Mungello affirms that "Catholicism, although foreign in origin, is now viewed by many Chinese as fully in harmony with the reverence for familial obligations that forms the core of China's historical heritage" (176). Thus, the foundation laid by Zhang has endured.

While Zhang's efforts at inculturation deserve admiration, one can only wonder what he would have written had he had access to the full Bible. Perhaps his success was partly dependent on the fact that he did not know Scripture.

Mungello's book gives access to a great deal of information on a period of Chinese mission history about which little was known. Mission historians are deeply indebted to Mungello's work for a carefully researched and detailed, yet highly readable, presentation of Zhang's endeavors to make Christianity Chinese.

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Oden, Thomas C. *Requiem: A Lament in Three Movements*. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1995. 208 pp. Cloth, \$16.95.

There is a poignancy about the title of this book which signifies that it is not simply another academic study. *Requiem* is a strident indictment of the "dysfunctionality" of contemporary mainline theological education, of the shortcomings of church bureaucracies, and of the ecumenical failure of the Protestant Churches. It celebrates the passing and laying to rest of a decadent modernity and the birth of a new age of postliberal, classical Christianity.

In *Requiem*, Oden takes stock of the results of three decades of liberalism and laments that his own generation of liberals has "squandered away the muscular institutions bequeathed to it" (15). This lament is expressed in Three Movements. The first and hardest hitting is a broad criticism of what he calls "tradition-impaired seminaries"; the second turns to the ecumenical movement and the church; and the third, much after the