

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

pattern of *After Modernity*, seeks to spell out "the trajectory towards tomorrow" (125).

The depth and anguish of Oden's concern regarding theological education are reflected in the title of the section, "Out of the Depths" (33). The seminaries are variously described as still mesmerized by the enchantments of liberation from the classical Christian past, intolerant of traditionalists of any sort, without any sense of what constitutes heresy, and without resistance to the aberrations of the ultra-feminist movement. He is not optimistic regarding reform but sees signs of hope in various quarters and calls upon influential laypersons, trustees, and cadres of evangelical students to affirm the classic Christian faith and insist on responsible accountability.

In the Second Movement, Oden laments the "fiscal, membership and morale hemorrhage" (91) of the churches and the near-paralysis of the ecumenical movement. The latter he regards as being largely due to its failure to gain the support of moderates and traditionalists, and to the quota ideology of its representational structure. He calls for a refocusing of ecumenical concern upon those elements of the tradition that can facilitate renewal. It becomes clear in all of this that Oden is not simply addressing his own community of faith—the United Methodist Church; his vision is the renewal of all Christendom.

In the Third Movement, Oden seeks to engender the consciousness that modernity is not simply corrupt, but is now defunct and passing away. He regards the current use of the term "post-modern" as a misnomer and describes the stance of thinkers like Foucault, Derrida, Rorty, and Lyotard, etc., as ultramodernism rather than postmodernism. He describes genuine Christian postmodernism as an "upbeat, grace-formed, providence-recognizing, hope-bearing venturesome passage beyond modernity" (111). He regards the present crisis as both a turning point and an opportunity and spells out some dimensions of a possible recovery.

Requiem closes with a letter of hope and advice to Christian post-modernists to the effect that they will find their way to the future via the texts of the primitive apostolic witness.

The gravity and pathos of the *Requiem* is relieved in three interludes—descriptions of three feasts—which accentuate the theme of the book. Four appendices provide support for the thesis of the book. These include a case study, documents of ancient Christian orthodoxy, and lists of contemporary paleo-orthodox authors.

The substance of this critique comes as no surprise to those who have followed Oden's writing. What is new is the polemic; and inasmuch as it comes from one inside the system it has particular force. Response was immediate from those in theological education and church administration who felt they had been misrepresented. Abingdon Press has been severely criticized for publishing the book. In response the CEO and

editorial director of the Press have felt constrained to publish a defense and explanation of their publishing policy in a book release. And Neal F. Fisher, president of United Methodist-related Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary, has put together an edited volume *Truth & Tradition: A Conversation About the Future of United Methodist Education*, also published by Abingdon, in response to *Requiem*. At least four major articles relating to the book in one way or another, and six letters—about 16 pages in all—appeared in the *Christian Century* between March 1 and June 28, 1995. There is doubtless much more to come.

The two major issues this study forces upon the consciousness relate, in the first place, to the adequacy of Oden's analysis of, and theological response to, contemporary patterns of thought; and in the second, to his critique of mainline Protestant theological education. It is the second that is center stage here and for which this book will be remembered. The religiously conservative reader is likely to be carried along by an emotionally-tinged affirmation of Oden's critique. Upon calmer reflection, however, one wonders whether this critique is sufficiently qualified to protect it from misuse by extremists on the right? Whatever the judgment, like Barth's *Römerbrief*, this book is like a bell tolling loudly at midnight awakening the entire Protestant community to issues that demand attention.

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RUSSELL STAPLES

Schneck, Richard. *Isaiah in the Gospel of Mark, I-VIII*. Dissertation Series, vol. 1. Berkeley, CA: BIBAL Press, 1994. 352 pp. Paper, \$19.95.

This work is a revision and amplification of the author's doctoral dissertation. His stated objective is to discern the thematic linkages between the book of Isaiah and the first eight chapters of the Gospel of Mark. Taking guidance from the work of such scholars as Dodds, Lindars, Fitzmyer, and Kiley, Schneck proposes a method to discern the Old Testament allusions to Isaiah in Mark. The methodological steps in establishing allusions include contextual parallels, genre parallels, and verbal and thematic contacts.

Schneck then reviews passages from Mark 1-8 for their allusions to Isaiah. He discusses Mark 1:1-4a; 1:9-11; 2:7; 2:16-20; 3:27; 4:1-34; 5:1-20; 6:34-44; 7:1-23; 7:31-37; 8:14-21; and 8:22-26. He concludes that similar themes are indeed recurrent in Isaiah and Mark. The prologue of Mark and the prologue of Deutero-Isaiah (Isa 40) have seven points of contact which link them. Mark 1:10-11 links with Isa 42, which helps explain Markan Christology. Isa 58 explains the linking of disparate units of the Jesus tradition in Mark 2. Isa 49:24-25 has a similar message as that of