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On Earth as It Is in Heaven: Jews, Christians, and Liberation Theology

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the *homoiousion* position is attributed to Arius at Nicaea (it emerged as an explicit theological alternative two decades later). The latter error arises, again, because of a too general treatment. Chapter six provides a good discussion of Christian worship and at last a discussion of the Orthodox tradition. Here the cultural perspective helps to illuminate the importance of symbol and ritual in Christian worship. The final two chapters turn to issues of a more sociological nature. Troeltsch's sect and church types provide the structure for a description of contemporary Christianity's relationship to its culture. The book concludes with a brief glossary and a bibliography for further reading.

Because the same phenomena are often viewed from the particular vantage points of the various chapters, there is a tendency to be repetitious. Given the economy of space the authors have allowed themselves, this is unfortunate because in a book of this nature every word counts.

In the end one's assessment of the book will vary according to what one regards as the proper task of introductory university texts. If one thinks that they should provide a kind of intellectual "first date"—to titillate with a view to whetting the appetite for a more involved acquaintance—this book is successful. If, however, one desires of an introductory text both titillation and information, *Christianity* will leave one dissatisfied.

Harry O. Maier
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On Earth as it is in Heaven: Jews, Christians, and Liberation Theology

Dan Cohn-Sherbok
Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 1987

As the title suggests, Rabbi Cohn-Sherbok's recent work is a brief survey in comparative religion and ethics. He begins by presenting the differences of Judaism and traditional Christianity in such doctrinal categories as: God, Jesus Christ, the Law, free will, sin and atonement. Then, there follows a comparative study of the similarities of contemporary Christian liberation theology and the Jewish tradition. In the closing chapter, the rabbi gives his readers a good summary of the common ground shared by Jewish theology and liberation theology.

Cohn-Sherbok points out that the doctrine of the Trinity remains a continuing "fly in the ointment" for contemporary Jewish theologians. But those readers seeking a thorough, concise overview of the problem will be rather disappointed. The rabbi's discussion is far too brief.

In addition to Jewish thinkers rejecting the Incarnation, the two natures of Jesus, and Jesus as Messiah, there are several other problems concerning

traditional Christology. According to Cohn-Sherbok, Jesus has no special relationship with God, his view of sin and sinners is in conflict with traditional Judaism, as is his otherworldliness, his renunciation of all human ties, his interpretation of Jewish law and his violation of laws. In Jewish theology—ancient, medieval and modern—sin, evil and temptation can be overcome by human beings. Thus, Judaism has no need of Christ's atonement for sin. Repentance and atonement are the responsibility of every human being.

Cohn-Sherbok believes that modern Jewish thinkers share much in common with contemporary liberation theologians. Both are critical of abstract thought concerning Christ's divinity. Both focus on the Jesus of history. Jesus as prophet in historical continuity with the other great ancient Israelite prophets is "the" pivotal theological paradigm for contemporary Jews and liberation theologians. Christ as prophet critiqued the religious establishment of his day and pointed the people to authentic Judaism. Jesus, like the Israelite prophets, believed that wealth was the cause of poverty, exploitation and oppression. Wealth also hindered the quality of one's relationship to God. Christ's emphasis on love is also consistent with the prophets. This shared prophetic tradition affords modern Jews and Christians the opportunity to work together on many social justice projects.

A critique of the traditional Christian view of God's kingdom is offered with particular attention to Pauline theology as: too individual oriented, internalized and spiritualized. The rabbi once again sees a common thread for liberation and Jewish theologians in that they both view God's kingdom as a collective, ethical transformation of this world. The link between this-worldly justice and the kingdom is an extremely important one. For Jews, ethical primacy is what ushers in a realized kingdom of God. Is this ultimately in conflict with or radically different from Christianity's primacy of grace and love? The author once again suggests that there is much common ground.

According to Cohn-Sherbok, the Exodus-Passover is the universal event par excellence of freedom, redemption, and salvation for all humankind. The Exodus-Passover themes and motifs abound with richness and diversity. Today the Exodus-Passover is, among other things, a critique of oppressive modern society.

Liberation theology, similar to Jewish theology, has linked faith to orthopraxis and not orthodoxy. Moral action in concert with the poor and oppressed is not an option for Jews and liberation theologians. Moral action for Jews and liberation theologians ushers in the eschatological kingdom along the lines of utopian Marxist ideology. This assumes, on the part of both Jewish and liberation theologians a rather high view of humanity, a view of humanity which remains problematic for many Lutheran Christians.

Contemporary Jews and Christians have much in common and are thus enabled to work together for peace and justice for the poor, women, the unemployed and responsible stewardship of creation.

In light of the recent anti-Semitism in Canada (the Keegstra and Zundel cases, the conspiracy to murder a prominent Calgary Jew and bomb

the Calgary Jewish Centre, and, dare I say, the subtle and not-so-subtle anti-Semitic attitudes of some Canadian Lutherans) this is a very timely book. Rabbi Cohn-Sherbok presents a convincing case for the necessity of continuing dialogue and action between contemporary Jews and Christians for theological, practical, and historical reasons that are obvious to any sensitive reader.

Garth Wehrfritz-Hanson

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Facing the Tiger

Shirley Jane Endicott

Winfield, British Columbia: Wood Lake Books, 1987

121 pp.

Rooted in her earliest memories of life in China, Shirley Endicott remembers. "The tiger is coming"—the tiger that comes to disobedient children. After 50 years she turns. In the trauma of mental breakdown, her resistance is penetrated. She faces her tiger and relives her life experiences—her life as a "missionaries' kid", her idealistic involvement in her youth, her university lectures in Sociology, her discovery of a feministic context for life and faith

Shirley's companion in dialogue, for her reflections, is Miriam, protector of the baby Moses, co-leader of the Exodus and wanderer in the Wilderness. She muses, "Miriam began as a literary device... , however she became more... , a way of doing theology... She represents the life force within me, the creative energy which propels me in my quest for meaning" (11). Their life stories are reviewed, one as a foil for the other. Meaning and insight are discovered as the haze of forgetting is brushed aside, the tigers are revealed and the anticipation of a "Promised Land" is recalled.

The parallels enlarge her autobiography into a biblical and global exegesis: the tigers of our living, the fog of our misunderstandings. Readers will reflect and identify. They will find themselves caught in the imagery, exposing personal fears, contemporary issues and the nagging questions of the faith heritage: the "tiger" of living the faith of parents; the struggle to understand and authenticate a personal belief; the "tiger" of integrating the true self and the public image while gaining perception of and compassion for former struggles; the struggle and pain of questioning and being questioned, such as the disturbing queries of feminists, the examination of the patriarchy, the revelations concerning wife abuse. These are "tigers" we would rather avoid, the tigers we fear are coming.

We are drawn to admire Shirley's energy, her honesty and her authenticity. What could be seen as an egotistical exercise in navel gazing becomes