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Facing the Tiger

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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

an intense examination of her life, her inheritance and what that needs to mean for her at this time. True to her feminist viewpoint, she ponders how life was for her and how biblical texts can interact in her living, augmenting meaning and understanding. Her sociological background gives a different stance to critical examination of current scholarship, biblical and feminist. But her disclosure of the effects her new beliefs had on her lifestyle, her family and community of friends, add a human dimension to the academic insights.

Miriam never entered the promised land. Shirley writes, "This ordeal was a journey and it, too, was my home: the struggle against the tiger does not end; the cycle of Gethsemane, Calvary and Resurrection will be repeated—again and again" (217). Her book provides insight into the struggle of a woman attempting to integrate old and new ideas, a raised consciousness with romantic fantasies of a "promised land". Women will find affirmation and men another perspective, hopefully leading all to move to more empathetic inter-relationships. For those involved with the Canadian church in the first half of the twentieth century, there will be remembering, especially of the enthusiasm of the "missionary movement". Whatever reactions to our recollections and her revelations, Shirley challenges us to turn and face our own tigers and relive authentically our life's experiences. As we do, we will be strengthened by the knowledge that others, both present and past, are with us in the struggle and our companions in the wilderness.

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Formation and Reflection: The Promise of Practical Theology

Lewis S. Mudge and James N. Poling, eds.

Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1987

164 pp.

What is practical theology? "What is the relation between 'theology' as an academic discipline and living, worshiping, serving communities of faith?" What is the relationship between what goes on in the theological school known as the seminary and what goes on in the parish?

These are the questions—timely questions indeed—to which this scholarly collection of essays is seeking some creative direction and constructive response. Within this volume, eight theologians—Don S. Browning, Rebecca S. Chopp, Edward Farley, Thomas H. Groome, Lewis S. Mudge, James N. Poling, David Tracy, James D. Whitehead and Charles E. Winquist—search for ways in which the academic theological world and the practising parish simultaneously can be a critique of each other, a challenge for each other, a partner in ministry with each other, and a creative stimulant with one another for the sake of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.