

of a formal discipline called ethics, displayed concretely over medical practice, results in the comforting illusion that this society can sustain an intelligible practice of medicine, even though we have no way of determining what purposes medicine should serve—other than the prolonging of each individual's life" (158).

Dispatches From the Front is an insightful work that will both repel and attract the reader. The random feel of the essay selections, the questionable choice to focus on the writings of Anthony Trollope, and chapter titles that serve to antagonize ("Why Gays [As A Group] are Morally Superior to Christians [As A Group]") will, no doubt, trouble some readers. While the correlation Hauerwas makes in the opening chapters between constancy and forgiveness is an enlightening one and his demonstration of the novel as a school of virtue in keeping with prior projects in narrative theology, his argument is nonetheless marred by the incessant need he feels to quote lengthy passages from the work of Trollope. This not only provokes the reader, it interrupts the flow of the argument.

Hauerwas has a reputation as a writer who, while given to extreme bouts of hyperbole, grabs the reader's attentions with jarring claims and clever turns of phrase. Having said that, *Dispatches From the Front* will satisfy those familiar with the author's work and delight those first-time readers of Hauerwas who are not expecting a work of systematic theology.

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***Gandhi's Responses to Islam.* By Sheila McDonough. New Delhi: D.K. Print-world (P) Ltd., 1994. ISBN 81-246-0035-X. Pp. 133.**

As a result of her interest in and involvement with South Asia, Sheila McDonough has contributed much to this area of research. She has published four works to date, including *The Authority of the Past* (1970) and *Muslim Ethics and Modernity* (1985). *Gandhi's Responses to Islam* is a much welcomed and timely addition, especially in light of the continued tensions between Hindus and Muslims in South Asia. The book is written in memory of Mushir ul-Haq, a graduate of Islamic Studies at McGill University, who was killed in Kashmir in 1990 for espousing and promoting a more liberal understanding of the nature of Islam.

McDonough begins with a strong statement about the respect with which researchers should approach religious phenomena. It is with this kind of respect that she endeavors to combine Gandhi's many observations about Islam and to discern significant patterns and/or changes in his thought. In disentangling religion from politics in Gandhi's life, McDonough is concerned with his use of religious language as a response to the critical events surrounding his life, paying close attention to the different contexts in which he spoke. By discussing the significance of the Qur'an for Gandhi, McDonough highlights Gandhi's use of religious symbols, modes of religious practice, and education as a means of

conveying his views on the religious history of humanity, not to mention the problems and benefits of communication across religious boundaries.

Chapter one vividly traces Gandhi's childhood and the Islamic influences that helped shape the culture in which he was reared. His father's political involvement, as well as his friendship with certain Muslims, Jains, and Parsis, represented for Gandhi the kind of authoritative guidance from which he could learn and later apply in his life. Bhakti devotionalism, characteristic of his mother's spirituality, with its appeal to both Muslims and Hindus, greatly influenced the young Gandhi's pursuit of the divine, shaping the foundation of his religious consciousness. McDonough traces the seriousness with which Gandhi approached issues of Hindu-Muslim mutual respect to his congenial relationship with Muslims at primary school, and also to the social and religious attitudes which his parents set forth.

Chapter two is particularly interesting from a religious standpoint with respect to the Hindu-Muslim brotherhood which Gandhi experienced in South Africa. McDonough understands this brotherhood as "a bonding based on similar backgrounds" (18), a united front against the degradation which the South African government tried to impose on Indians. It is in light of this setting that Gandhi used symbols as catalysts to "stimulate direction and purpose in specific contexts" (27). Thus McDonough provides her readers with a fascinating study of Gandhi's use of both Hindu and Muslim religious symbols and creative-poetic imagery to generate the courage needed to unite Indians of all backgrounds in the common effort to oppose their enemy.

The following chapters of the book neatly set the historical stage for Gandhi's return to India, and his subsequent support of the policies of the Indian Congress, as well as his attempts at religious reform. McDonough probes deeper into the nature of religious language, rhetoric, and metaphors by means of Gandhi's critique of Muslim values and the Khilafat movements of 1919-22, taking into account their shared Hindu-Muslim context by a comparison of their respective political agendas. Particular attention is paid to Gandhi's statements about Islam after the collapse of the revolutionary struggle, and consequent indifference between Hindu and Muslim communities. The examination of the personal and educational backgrounds and professional aspirations of the likes of Zakir Husain, Jinnah, Maulana Azad, Iqbal, and Tagore, highlights the pertinence of the ongoing dialogue between the two communities. McDonough infers that even through to the last twenty horror-filled years of his life, Gandhi's response to Islam was based on his belief that significant truth and energy could be found in the Qur'an, and in the example of the Prophet, to encourage people to communicate and to find hope for the future.

In the last and most compelling chapter of the book, McDonough breaks away from her historical analysis to reflect on the intellectual influences which modelled Gandhi's vision of Islam. She also attempts to substantiate how, in the writings of authors such as Carlyle, Gandhi found that his own values, derived from his tradition, were common to Muslims. Gandhi's readings, comments, and views on the Qur'an (as well as Qur'anic commentary) also receive the attention they deserve.

There has been much scholarly preoccupation with Gandhi but, ironically, very little emphasis has been placed on his dealings with contemporary Muslims. This book is a long-awaited and necessary contribution to Gandhian scholarship. It is written in a manner which is straightforward and clear, filled with moments of surprising insight so characteristic of McDonough's style. This book should illicit more scholarly discussion.

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Buddhism after Patriarchy: A Feminist History, Analysis, and Reconstruction of Buddhism. By Rita M. Gross. Albany: State University of New York Press, 1993. ISBN 0-7914-1404-3. Pp. x+365.

In *Buddhism After Patriarchy* Rita Gross provides what must be considered a ground-breaking attempt to survey the history and doctrines of Buddhism in terms of feminist issues, and to suggest a "revalorization" of the tradition in light of feminist concerns.

The book is divided into four main parts. In the first, "Orientations," Gross gives an outline of basic Buddhist teachings for the benefit of readers who have little or no familiarity with the tradition. She also describes her approach to the topic as both that of an "outsider," studying Buddhism from the perspective of a religious historian, and that of an "insider," practicing Tibetan Vajrayana Buddhism (Karma Kagyu school). This orientation proves to be an asset and, simultaneously, a drawback to the book, for, as an insider, she has a heightened sensitivity to the motivations and rationale behind ostensibly misogynist statements found in Buddhist texts. However, it also lends a bias to her treatment of Buddhism in favor of the Vajrayana tradition. Such a bias is problematic in a book which purports to assess and reconstruct the Buddhist tradition as a whole.

Gross's examination of the history of women in Buddhism, in part two, is guided by the search for "an accurate and usable past" (passim). Here she describes the various roles and images of women found in the three main periods of Buddhist development: Indian Buddhism, Mahayana Buddhism, and Indo-Tibetan Vajrayana Buddhism. From this survey Gross identifies two opposing attitudes to women in Buddhism: one stream of thought suggests that women are impure and incapable of enlightenment, while the other holds that gender is irrelevant to spiritual endeavors. While she concedes that the former view has probably always been the predominant one, she suggests that the presence of the latter view throughout Buddhist history is the most "usable" dimension of Buddhist history for feminism (chap. 7). Her assessment is that the "feminist" stream of thought, which takes gender to be irrelevant, has always been more "normative and appropriate" for Buddhism, because the feminist view is more compatible with the "core teachings" of Buddhism (116). This view is elaborated in part three, in which Gross analyzes key concepts in each of the three main systems of Buddhist thought from a feminist point of view: "egolessness" in early Buddhism;