



Selected Political Writings

Mahatma Gandhi , Dennis Dalton (Editor)

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The first collection of Gandhi's writings to be based on the complete edition of his works, this new volume presents Gandhi's most important political writings arranged around the two central themes of his political teachings: satyagraha (the power of nonviolence) and swaraj (freedom). Dennis Dalton's general introduction and headnotes highlight the life of Gandhi, set the readings in historical context, and provide insight into the conceptual framework of Gandhi's political theory. Complete with bibliography, glossary, and index.

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Margie says

The Mahatma's collected works run to about 100 volumes. Having never read them (obviously) I can't address whether this slim volume is a good sampling. I can say, however, that Gandhi's writing style is wonderful. Clear and powerful, but also very personal and compelling.

The book is divided into two sections. The first contains writings related to *satyagraha* or nonviolent resistance. The second is devoted to *swaraj*: freedom or self-rule.

Recommended.

Literature-lauren says

All Americans should read this book right now.

Sergei Moska says

A very good book. Very easy to read, and it clearly explains some key and surprisingly (subtle) notions in Gandhi's political thought and rationales undergirding his civil disobedience. Before reading this book, I both (1)thought that Gandhi's thought was politically unsophisticated, and (2)that (1) was almost certainly incorrect. This book confirmed that Gandhi's thought is quite nuanced and much more defensible than I expected. I have thought at various times "Oh! This reminds me of what Rawls / Lenin / Rousseau said!" The consequence is that having read the book, I have a lot of questions - does his thought constitute a comprehensive doctrine? is his insistence that all religions share certain core tenets analogous to Rawls' "reasonableness"? how deeply do his differences from Lenin really lie? is his insistence on "strength" and "discipline" analogous to what virtue ethicists and republicans advocate? Etc.

The book is really short, and since I'm not a Gandhi expert, I have no idea if it covers an appropriate range of his thought.

Zoe says

Summer 2014

Fer Castillo says

This is one of the best books I've ever read.

Maughn Gregory says

Rarely have I read such a clear philosophical treatise on the unity of "swaraj" (freedom, independence, liberation) as necessarily both a political and a personal / spiritual agenda -- what I call, "working on the self, working on the world." The main ingredients of satyagraha are (1) a shared perception of an extreme injustice, (2) a shared conviction that civil disobedience offers a remedy, and (3) a community's willingness to overcome fear and recover self-respect through collective, nonviolent, direct action.

J-russ says

I read this book along with Ronald Tercheck's "Gandhi: Struggle for Autonomy". Tercheck was my professor at the University of Maryland and he has done the legwork for the layman reader by sifting through the many writings of Gandhi to find the patterns and the many challenges that lead to the writings. To the western reader the notion of spinning our own clothes may seem outdated and even backwards but when we educate ourselves as to what was happening in India at that time the idea doesn't seem so outdated. Much of what Gandhi is warning the reader of about modernity has been magnified with the emergence of "free trade" especially as we see the exploitation of the third world exemplified even more profoundly in the world around us today. Gandhi was ahead of his time and his insights are very useful to us as we look not only at the problems facing the world, but also the problem of individual autonomy within the current political and economic systems. Gandhi had a great deal of wisdom and much of it is contained in these selected readings. This is a must read for anyone feeling that materialism is the most prolific threat to the self. He offers power to the personal truth as he challenges both tradition and modernity. Read it along with Tercheck's book. If you can't find it, I will loan it to you.
