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READING GANDHI

Ranu Uniyal • Nazneen Khan • Raj Gaurav Verma



# READING GANDHI

Perspectives in the 21st Century

Edited by  
**Ranu Uniyal  
Nazneen Khan  
Raj Gaurav Verma**

This book explores the relevance of M.K. Gandhi in the present times. Justice, human rights, conflict, ecological healing, along with his alternative method of non-violent resistance or Satyagraha are dealt with. The scope is the relevance lies in his moral strength, tenacity, and self-discipline. His personal freedom is also an alternative to the post-colonial era. Home on foot, dress and living are included in the study and also his impact on world literature. The philosophical ideas and spiritual experiences reflect his views on truth, identity and non-violence. This book covers the impact of Gandhian thought on neo-capitalism, neo-colonialism and post-truth. It opens debates on many significant issues touching material. It will be a resource to scholars of postcolonial literature, gender and cultural studies.

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## CONTENTS

### Introduction

Ranu Uniyal, Nazneen Khan and Raj Gaurav Verma  
xi

### Some Reflections on Gandhi

Bhikhu Parekh  
19

### R. K. Narayan, Politics and Gandhi

John Thieme  
25

### On Gandhi

Neelum Saran Gour  
46

### Mahatma Gandhi and the Champaran *Satyagraha*

Pritish Acharya  
55

### Truth, Ethics and Theory: Gandhi and the Heuristics of Living

Alok Kumar  
63

### Mahatma Gandhi's Thoughts on Common Language for India

Papia Sengupta  
77

### The Purpose and Perfection: Two Gujarati Translations of *Bhagvat Gita* by Mohandas K. Gandhi

Hardeepsinh Ranjitsinh Gohil  
84

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<b>The Syncretic Morality of the Mahatma: Conquest through Contrast</b>	
Neena Gupta Vij	
94	
<b>Gandhi and Food: A Study</b>	
Roopa Vijay and Meenakshi Vijay	
111	
<b>Gandhi and His Dressing Codes: Reading Nationalist Symbols as Signs of Colonial Protest</b>	
Amrita Sharma	
130	
<b>On 'True Civilization' and 'Education': Gandhiji's Views in <i>Hind Swaraj</i></b>	
Suchitra Awasthi	
142	
<b>From 'Abala' to 'Sabala': Feminist Subjectivity in Sudhir Kakar's <i>Mira and the Mahatma</i></b>	
Vishakha Sen	
154	
<b>Significance of Mahatma Gandhi's Values: 'A Man of Simple Living and High Thinking'</b>	
Fatima Sahrish	
166	
<b>Disobedience as a Virtue: From <i>Satyagraha</i> to Post-Truth</b>	
Raj Gaurav Verma	
177	
<b>Notes on Contributors</b>	
189	

## Significance of Mahatma Gandhi's Values: 'A Man of Simple Living and High Thinking'

Fatma Sahrish

"Man is born to die and great men, like the rest of creation, die in their own day, but really they live for ever in the work that they leave behind" (*Homage to Mahatma Gandhi* 24). The greatness of M. K. Gandhi was the greatness of a common man. The latter part of his life after 1920 till his death comprises a major part of the history of India. He is known as our General, our Guide and the "Father of our Nation." The impact of Gandhi on the contemporary Indian literature was manifested at various levels, one of which is the preference of the mother tongue or the emphasis on regional languages. The period of the nineteenth century also saw a plethora of women's issues coming to light which in turn led to widespread reforms. "Treatment of the female sex, full of confidence, respect and delicacy, are among the signs which denote a civilised people" (Parel 120).

This paper aims to study Gandhian literature; to reevaluate Babu's ideology and philosophy once again with a view to meeting our own existing challenges and for speeding up our responsibility of fulfilling the great tasks he has left for us, using the methods that he has taught us. It is not easy to be Gandhian. He earned great respect as the Father of the Nation due to his insistence on *Ahimsa* and truth and his devotion to a life of sacrifice. The 150<sup>th</sup> year of his birth is a God-sent opportunity for India to honour the greatness of this exemplary human being. All the nations of the world have been asked by UNESCO to arrange Gandhi Centenary programmes. Gandhi always laid emphasis on the necessity

to raise the moral stature of Indians. He constantly reminded us that a nation does not become great only by establishing giant buildings, supersized factories and by augmenting wealth. The *Upanishads* clearly state that man's hunger cannot be satiated by wealth alone. Long ago, Goldsmith believed that "wealth accumulates and men decay". Romain Rolland also believes that "the more I have, the less I am." Although materialistic things are important for raising the standard of living of the people but a country becomes great in the true sense only when the people imbibe the quality of serving the nation from the head and the heart.

The period between 1920 and 1947 is said to be the third phase of Indo - Anglican literature which was largely dominated by Mahatma Gandhi. The literature of the Indo - Anglican writers was imbued with realism as they sought a down-to-earth image of India in their writings after World War I. Their preoccupation with the present became an important means for the nationalists to popularize the cause for the freedom struggle. The fall in human values resulted in a feeling of disillusionment which led the writers to search for inner reality and by the 1920s they had started getting influenced by modernistic trends like Freudianism and Marxism.

A strong feeling of Indian consciousness developed which became increasingly rooted under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi who holds an important place in Indian English prose. His influence has given a new dimension to Indian literature. K. R. S. Iyengar believes that our languages and literatures are greatly influenced by Gandhi, directly through his own writings in English and Gujarati and indirectly by his revolutionary thoughts which led to various revolutionary movements.

Gandhi had no desire to be counted among writers. His purpose was to propagate his ideas. He was a believer of true art which must have the attribute of amalgamating the soul to its inner self. He held that a newspaper should be a "viewpaper" because he wanted to spread his ideas to the common people. Keeping this in mind, his writing style was simple, transparent and energetic and thus he succeeded in communicating with an honest directness which establishes his superiority to the two outstanding Indian English writers of the period viz. Jawaharlal Nehru and Nirad C. Chaudhuri. He wrote in a lucid and idiomatic manner. His simple and transparent style gave Indian English prose a new direction. This lucidity, directness and brevity was later followed by other Indian English writers.