

# The Ignorant Perfection of Ordinary People (Suny Series in Constructive Postmodern Thought)

Robert Inchausti



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"I think it is a powerful statement that deserves to be widely read and circulated. I could hardly be more enthusiastic about it. It hangs together compellingly and really does what it sets out to do." -- Maurice Friedman, San Diego State University

This book examines how the spiritual longings of ordinary people have shaped the most progressive political and cultural movements of the twentieth century and given birth to a new postmodern perspective on existence that recoups the traditional religious verities on the far side of both literary modernism and neo-Marxism. Inchausti focuses on figures who have been instrumental in defending the sacred traditions of indigenous cultures and oppressed minorities. He demonstrates that Mahatma Gandhi, Alexander Solzhenitsyn, Elie Wiesel, Martin Luther King Jr., Mother Teresa, and Lech Walesa share an ethic that is, at once, plebeian in origin and yet sublime in aspiration.

"The author has a heartfelt commitment to the people about whom he writes, which gives a luminosity to his accounts of their lives, works, and visions. There is pressing need in scholarship for writing that fuses the intellectual and the moral/spiritual; the author dares to push the moral and spiritual implications of the material he offers. The book comes to life in the accounts of the six persons he chooses to exemplify as the "ignorant perfection of ordinary people." At the same time, he never lapses into sentimentality; the moral/spiritual aspect is as rigorously presented as the best of scholarly analysis." -- Mary E. Giles, California State University

"It offers an imaginative, largely original, interpretation of ethical and political choice that is rooted in the portrayal of exemplary lives and made coherent by a postmodern vision of human possibility. It is very engaging, erudite without being 'academic,' and informed by a very strong intelligence. It is a work of cultural reconstruction that could be of great importance in the emergent political dialogue of the 1990s. I found it invaluable, and highly suggestive." -- Richard Falk, Princeton University



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