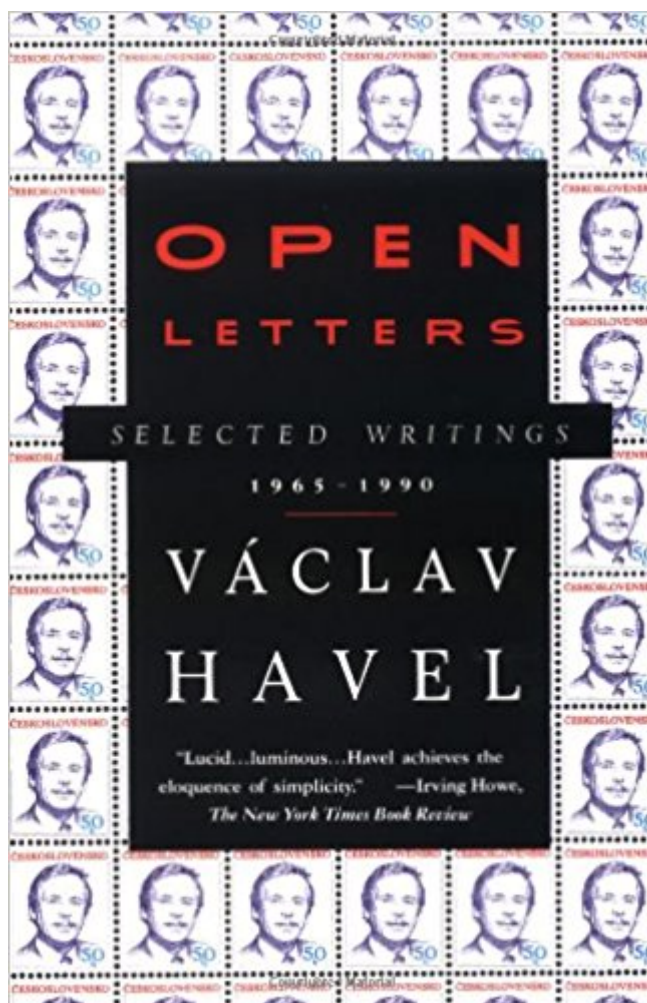


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# Open Letters: Selected Writings, 1965-1990



## Synopsis

Spanning twenty-five years, this historic collection of writings shows Vaclav Havel's evolution from a modestly known playwright who had the courage to advise and criticize Czechoslovakia's leaders to a newly elected president whose first address to his fellow citizens begins, "I assume you did not propose me for this office so that I, too, would lie to you." Some of the pieces in *Open Letters*, such as "Dear Dr. Husak" and the essay "The Power of the Powerless," are by now almost legendary for their influence on a generation of Eastern European dissidents; others, such as some of Havel's prison correspondence and his private letter to Alexander Dubcek, appear in English for the first time. All of them bear the unmistakable imprint of Havel's intellectual rigor, moral conviction, and unassuming eloquence, while standing as important additions to the world's literature of conscience.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

A stirring collection of political essays, letters, speeches, autobiographical sketches, interviews and musings, mostly from the years that Havel, now Czechoslovakia's president, spent as his nation's leading dissident. Copyright 1992 Reed Business Information, Inc.

This selection of Havel's 25 best essays written since 1965 is a fascinating chronicle of the development and ideas of the greatly admired Czechoslovakian dissident turned president. Whether he muses on Gorbachev, his harassment by the police, or the ever-present danger of injustices being committed in service of noble words, Havel writes with clarity, wit, eloquence, a steadfast

optimism, and remarkable courage. Although some of the pieces were already published in Vaclav Havel, or Living in Truth ( LJ 8/87), such as the influential essays on the nature of totalitarianism ("Power of the Powerless") and on the global crises of human responsibility ("Politics and Conscience"), this is an important book that belongs in both academic and public libraries.- Marie Bednar, Pennsylvania State Univ. Libs., University ParkCopyright 1991 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to the Hardcover edition.

An incredible talented writer . An incredible witness to social responsibility and the common good. His is a story and witness of the dignity of life.

Great price, quick service -- a classic for those wanting to understand Czech modern literature.

Good as expected

great

Vaclav Havel has been called "the greatest moral thinker of our time" and "a sort of EuroGhandi." While most noted as a playwright, Havel's most important works have been of prose; essays such as "Power of the Powerless" and his "Open Letter to Gustav Husak" allowed his nation to retain hope under brutal conditions. Now, Havel's greatest essays, from the early sixties to his "New Year's Address" after his 1989 election to the presidency, have been collected in a volume that will, unlike most political texts, make you think as well as feel. The most impressive of Havel's essays would have to be "Power of the Powerless" which was written in only a few days during the mid-1970's at the urging of a Polish dissident. It stresses that, when a government holds its citizens actions, words and even minds at bay, that gives the citizens a power that the government can only dream of; the power of truth. This idea of truth, which is contained in one form or another in all of Havel's writings, serves as the very basis of his political thought, which outlines man's current journey towards moral politics. A thought-provoking and deeply illuminating book

I first heard about this book on NPR. for anyone interested in reading about the trouble with Politics and how far off course America has gone, here is someone capable of dissecting the same collection of bad actors in a different country not too long ago. Havel is a master at uncovering the truth and exposing those who are out to destroy democracy and have most of us living in a system where

only the few make out. He's right along side the greatest writers or all time.

Interesting!

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