



**Letters from One: Correspondence (and more) of
Leo Tolstoy and Mohandas Gandhi; including
'Letter to a Hindu' [a selected edit] (River Drafting
Spirit Series Book 3)**

Mohandas Gandhi, Leo Tolstoy

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Mohandas Gandhi, Leo Tolstoy

Letters from One: Correspondence (and more) of Leo Tolstoy and Mohandas Gandhi; including 'Letter to a Hindu' [a selected edit] (River Drafting Spirit Series Book 3) Mohandas Gandhi, Leo Tolstoy from Wikipedia:

In 1908, Tolstoy wrote A Letter to a Hindoo outlining his belief in non-violence as a means for India to gain independence from British colonial rule. In 1909, a copy of the letter fell into the hands of Mohandas Gandhi who was working as a lawyer in South Africa at the time and in the beginnings of becoming an activist. Tolstoy's letter was significant for Gandhi who wrote to the famous writer seeking proof that he was the real author, leading to further correspondence between them. Reading Tolstoy's *The Kingdom of God is Within You* also convinced Gandhi to avoid violence and espouse nonviolent resistance, a debt Gandhi acknowledged in his autobiography, calling Tolstoy "the greatest apostle of non-violence that the present age has produced". The correspondence between Tolstoy and Gandhi would only last a year, from October 1909 until Tolstoy's death in November 1910, but led Gandhi to give the name, the Tolstoy Colony, to his second ashram in South Africa. Besides non-violent resistance, the two men shared a common belief in the merits of vegetarianism, the subject of several of Tolstoy's essays.

Moreover, *The Tale About Ivan the Fool* remained to the end one of Gandhi's favourite works. Three days before his death, on January 27, 1948, he mentioned that very tale while talking to the American journalist Martin, explaining to him the idea of "non-violent resistance." Some researchers of Tolstoy made the supposition that the *Tale About Ivan the Fool* was a Russian version of the Buddhist jataka about a prince who preached non-violence (Ahimsa). If that is really so (which is quite likely since Tolstoy read many jatakas), that means that the Indian story returned home in Russian adaptation to capture the Indian heart once again. The *Tale* was translated into many Indian languages, possibly not without Gandhi's influence.

–from GANDHI AS A READER OF TOLSTOY by S. SEREBRYANY Gorky Institute of World Literature, USSR]

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