



L.N. TOLSTOY AND M.K. GANDHI

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ANNOTATION

This article is about a friendly relationship between the great Russian writer L.N. Tolstoy and the great leader of the national liberation movement of India M.K. Gandhi.

KEYWORDS: *East, religion, India, public figure, religious and philosophical views.*

Л.Н. ТОЛСТОЙ И М.К. ГАНДИ

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Аннотация:

В данной статье идет речь о дружественном отношении между великим русским писателем Л.Н.Толстым и великим лидером национально-освободительного движения Индии М.К.Ганди.

Ключевые слова: *Восток, религия, Индия, общественный деятель, религиозно-философские взгляды.*

DISCUSSION

The great Russian writer, classic Iek Nikolayevich Tolstoy had a rich library in the East. Along with the work of Western philosophers, he was deeply interested in the teachings of Lao Tzu, Confucius, Buddha, Muhammad. He praised the achievements of ancient Indian philosophy and culture, wrote articles, stories, tales related to the religious ideas of the East: "On Faiths" (1886), "Siddart, nicknamed Buddha, that is, a saint. His life

and teaching" (1884–1887), "Karma" (1894), "Buddha" (1904), "Teachings of Lao Tze" (1907), "Mohammedan sayings that did not enter the Koran" (1908) and others. Tolstoy made translations of Krishna's sayings from Premananda Bharati's book "Shree Krishna. The Lord of Love" (N.Y., 1904).

L. Tolstoy was close to public figures of the East, including Gandhi, mainly due to his religious and philosophical works, his moral and ethical concept of non-resistance to evil, propaganda of the



“Law of Love”, and a call to observe the moral commandments of Christ in the life of the state and society, and at the same time a fierce and vivid denunciation of oppression and violence.

On these issues, L. Tolstoy had a rather large correspondence with representatives of the intelligentsia of the East, including India. Correspondence began in the second half of the 1890s. The first Indian correspondent of Leo Tolstoy was Upendra Krishna Dutt. The publisher of The *Agua* magazine from Madras, A. Ramazeskhan, wrote to him in 1901, in 1903 the publisher of *Review of Religion*, the head of Indian Muslim Sunnis, Mufti Muhammad Sadyk, who, having read about Tolstoy in *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, says that he denies the Trinity and the divinity of Christ, considered that Tolstoy is Muslim in his religious views. In the same year, a letter came from P. M. Das Sharma, a researcher of ancient Indian philosophy. In 1905–1907, he was written by the publisher of *The Light of India* magazine in Los Angeles, Baba Premanand Bharati, reporting on his solidarity with the religious and moral views of Leo Tolstoy, in 1907 - D. Gopal Chetti - editor and publisher *The New Reformer* magazine (Madras), who wrote the book *Count L. Tolstoy: his Life and Teaching* (Madras, 1909), as well as an article about L. N. Tolstoy on his 80th birthday. Tolstoy received his magazine “*The New Reformer*” until his death. In 1907–1908, Abdullah al-Mamun Zuravardi, doctor of philosophy, publisher of *The Light of the World* magazine (London) wrote to Tolstoy, in 1908, philosopher S. R. Chittal, as well as editor of *Free Hindustan* magazine Taraknath Das, in 1909 - Bishen Narain, a lawyer by training, who also shared the religious and philosophical views of Tolstoy, then the editor of *The Vedic Magazine*, Professor Rama Deva (Kangra) and others.

Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi (1869–1948), leader of the national liberation movement of India, became interested in the teachings of Leo Tolstoy in South Africa, where he arrived in 1893. He wrote: “I intensively studied the works of Tolstoy. *The Brief Gospel*, *So What Do We Do?* and his other books made a strong impression on me. I increasingly understood the limitless possibilities of love” (Gandhi M.K. *My life*. M., 1969).

Later, he recommended to his supporters for reading Tolstoy's work “*The Kingdom of God is within us*” (1890–1893), “*Slavery of our time*” (1900), “*The First Step*” (1891–1892), “*What is Art*” (1897–1898), “*Where is the way out*” (1900), “*Letter to the Hindu*” (1908).

October 1, 1909. A letter to M.K. Gandhi to L.N. Tolstoy asking him to express his opinion on the struggle of Indian immigrants in South Africa against discrimination by the method of non-violent

resistance and asking for permission to translate and publish an article by L.N. Tolstoy.

The views of Leo Tolstoy helped, according to Gandhi, to give a stable form to the idea of non-violent resistance, which became the basis of the anti-discrimination movement and for the rights of Indian immigrants in South Africa and was soon called *satyagraha* (“*satya*” - truth, “*agraha*” - firmness, that is, firmness in truth). Subsequently, non-violent protest led by Gandhi became the most widespread form of national liberation struggle in India.

Despite differences on some issues, the views of Tolstoy and Gandhi coincided in many respects. The worldview of each of them was based on religion, which, according to their conviction, like religious scriptures, could not be approached dogmatically. They considered true religiosity not ritualism, but righteous behavior. Both rejected violence, negatively related to what they called modern civilization, called for simplification, manual labor, etc.

Even before his correspondence with L.N. Tolstoy, M.K. Gandhi, in his weekly newspaper *Indian Opinion*, published in 1905 an article entitled *Count Tolstoy* (September 2), as well as several instructive stories by Tolstoy: “*Are there a lot of people Do you need land?*” (published under the title “*Greed*”), “*God sees the truth, but he will not soon tell*” (“*God loves the truth*”), “*How are people alive*” (“*The thread of life*”), etc. And on November 26, 1910, that is, soon after the death of Leo Tolstoy, Gandhi published in the *Indian Opinion* the last letter he received from Tolstoy on September 7, 1910, and a long article about Tolstoy.

Other Indian newspapers, such as the *Hindu Leader*, the essay in *Hindu*, called *Russian from the Russians*, and *Modern Review* magazine, reported about Leo Tolstoy's death, as well as earlier about his departure from home. In his December issue wrote: “In the person of Count Tolstoy, one of the greatest personalities has left mankind. We will no longer see it in a bodily shell, but over time, its influence will undoubtedly increase and will be read even more. His novels even touch those who are not used to indulging in serious thought. However, everyone who is interested in the progress of mankind cannot help but think about what he has written about peace and war, about non-resistance and about philosophical anarchy

L. Tolstoy loved India, the Indian people, who fight for freedom and justice. Therefore, he has many books in his library about India. He translated a lot of works of Indian writers into Russian.ism.”



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