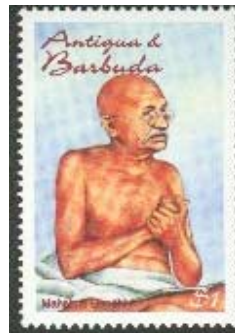


# Lasting Impressions

## The Simple Attire



It is not by accident that Gandhi suddenly started to shed clothes.

As a young professional, he took pleasure in sporting a western attire.

Upon return to India from South Africa, he wore traditional Indian clothing that covered most of his body.

What changed?



Stamps of Gandhi from several issuing entities have featured the Gandhi who was referred to as the "half Naked fakir" by Winston Churchill.

It is unusual that stamps of Gandhi from India always featured him clothed, many times with an artificial cover that was an artist's construction!





Records indicate that during a visit to a remote region of Madras Presidency, Gandhi was met by several villagers who were scantily dressed, only in what is commonly referred to as "loincloth".

Gandhi chastised them for being dressed indecently and they replied that this was all they could afford to wear.



The incident made a strong impression on Gandhi.

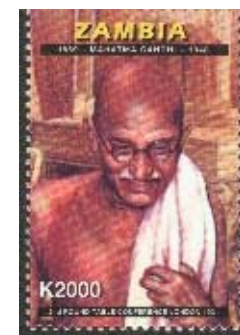
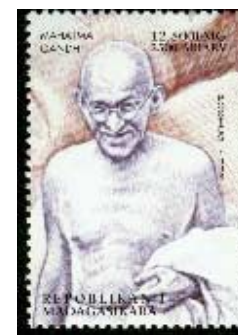
He questioned if a true leader could represent his people if he did not live and feel like them.

Progressive color proofs of a recent issue from Turkmenistan, showing the "scantily clad" Gandhi.

Gandhi had always said that Independence was not replacing a few rich lawyers from London with a few rich lawyers and businessmen from Delhi and Bombay.

He insisted that India lives in her hundreds and thousands of villages and made every effort to live like the common Indian.

It was natural for him, then, to adopt the simplistic clothing of his fellow peasants.



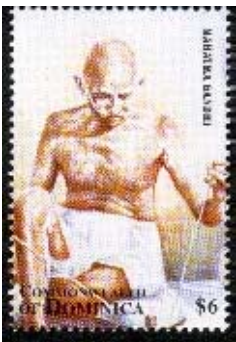
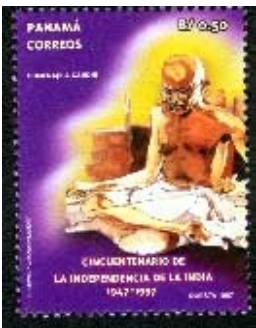
In his later years, Gandhi never changed his appearances even when he traveled overseas.

His favorite retort was that he'd do that only if he "lived" in the other land, instead of just visiting.

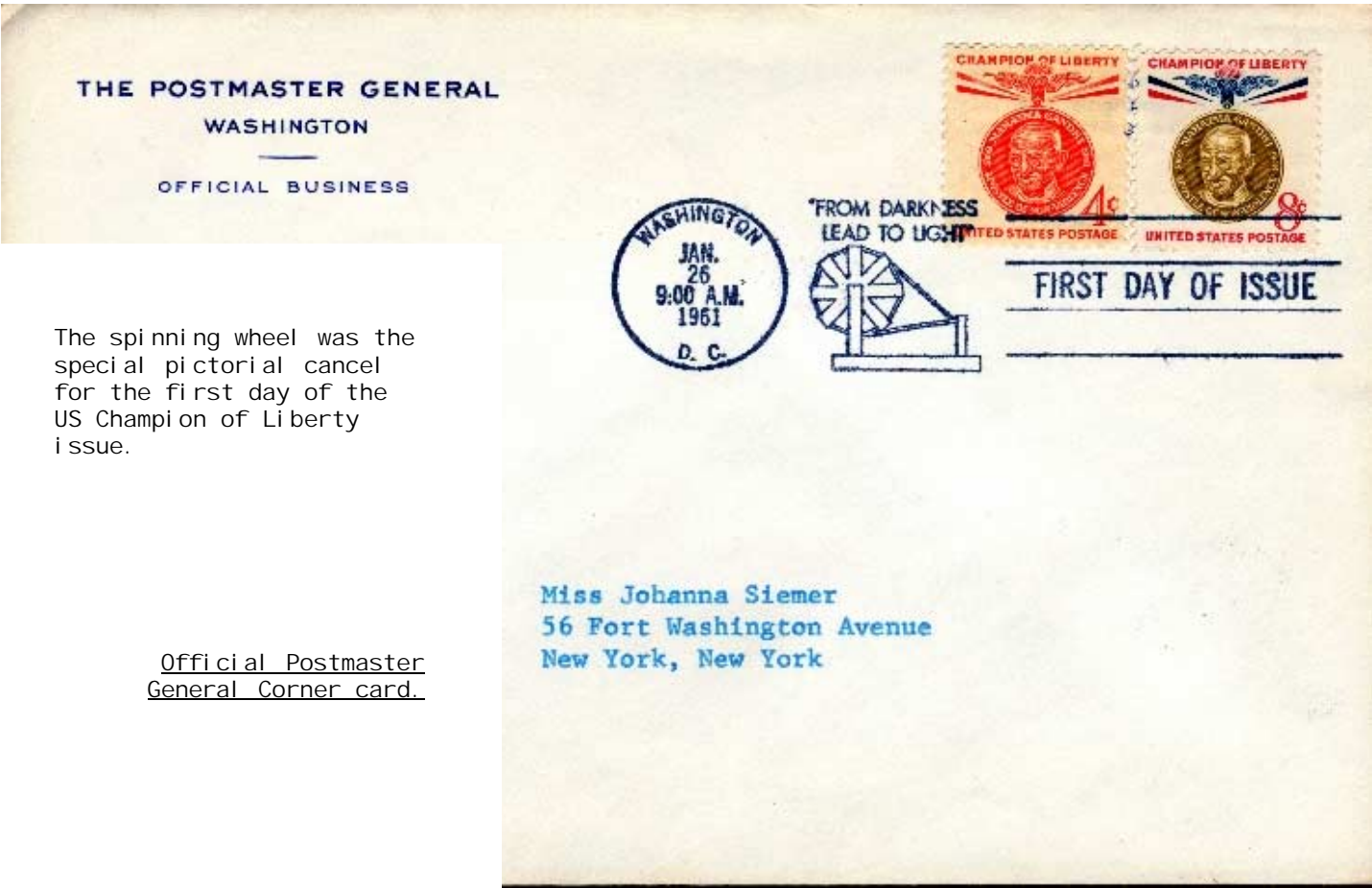


# The Spinning Wheel

More philatelic material on Gandhi has represented the spinning wheel than any other subject.



Besides using the spinning wheel as a tool to organize and energize the boycott of machine made yarn from England, Gandhi believed that hand loom would lead to social upliftment in the rural economy.

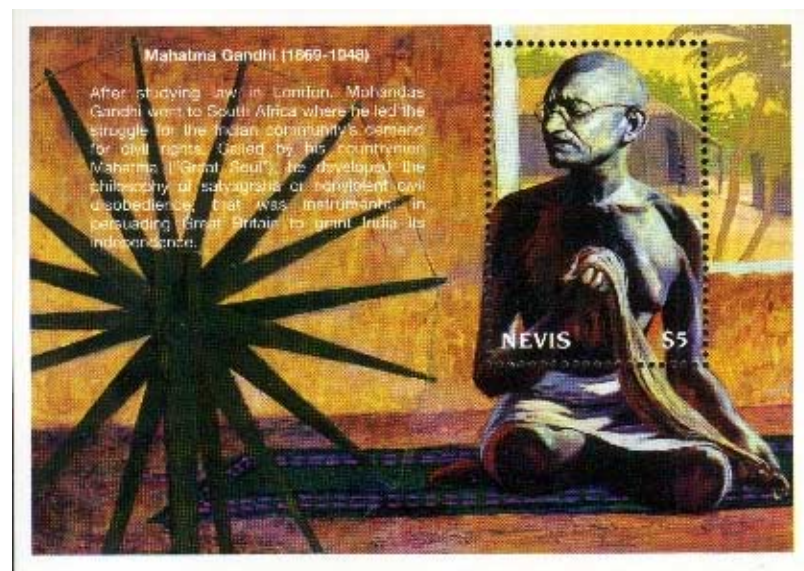


The spinning wheel was the special pictorial cancel for the first day of the US Champion of Liberty issue.

Official Postmaster  
General Corner card.



Spinning wheel stamps from several nations in the Americas.



Most recent "spinning wheel issue" from Nevis.



Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi, Indian nationalist leader and campaigner against all forms of violence, was born on 2nd October 1869 at Porbandar in Western India.

His father was a local government minister and an administrator of some ability and his mother was a religious woman who spent much time on humanitarian and social welfare activities. This produced the religious and non-violent home atmosphere in which Mohandas Gandhi grew up.

At the start of his career he travelled to London to study law at University College and was eventually called to the bar by the Inner Temple. This was followed by return to India in July 1891 to start a practice in Bombay.

Difficulties over beginning this practice caused him to accept a position in Natal in 1893, but he soon found that conditions in South Africa were oppressive. Much of his time in South Africa (as it became), was spent working for the improvement of the position of

Indian settlers and in 1894 he founded the Natal Indian Congress to further this aim.

Upon his return to India in 1914, he began to work for the unification and eventual freedom of the native peoples of British India. By 1920 he was a major political leader in India and, because of his views and activities, was imprisoned on a number of occasions. He was in prison during 1922-4, led the Congress Party in the late 20's and was then imprisoned again.

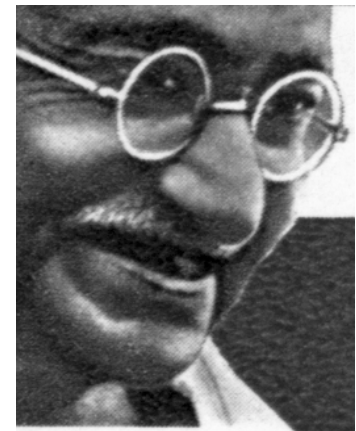
Eventually he left the Congress Party and concentrated on religious and anti-violence teachings in more rural surroundings.

Indian Independence in 1947 unfortunately brought out deep differences between Hindus and Moslems and his efforts were mainly turned towards teaching peaceful co-existence. He was known by this time by the title Mahatma – meaning Great Soul. Shortly after Indian independence Mahatma Gandhi was assassinated – shot by a young Hindu extremist.

The centenary of the birth of Mahatma Gandhi is commemorated by this stamp which was designed by Mr. Biman Mullick and printed in photogravure by Harrison & Sons Ltd. of High Wycombe.



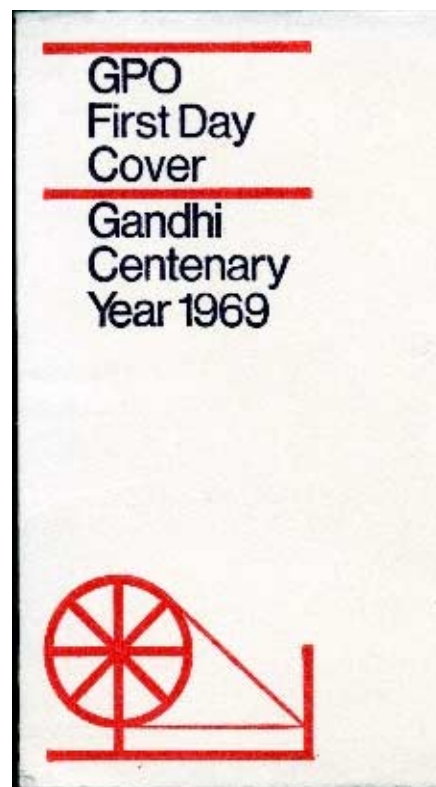
Gandhi  
CENTENARY YEAR 1969



Block of 4 stamp with the bottom left stamp showing the "tooth flaw". A printing error that was subsequently corrected by filling in.

See enlargement above.





The spinning wheel, which became the symbol of the Indian National Congress, also served as the motif for the official FDC from the UK in 1969.



The spinning wheel is featured in the FDC and the stamps from the 1995 Kazakhstan issue.





Interesting cover labeled the "American Homemaker", showing a crude spinning wheel.

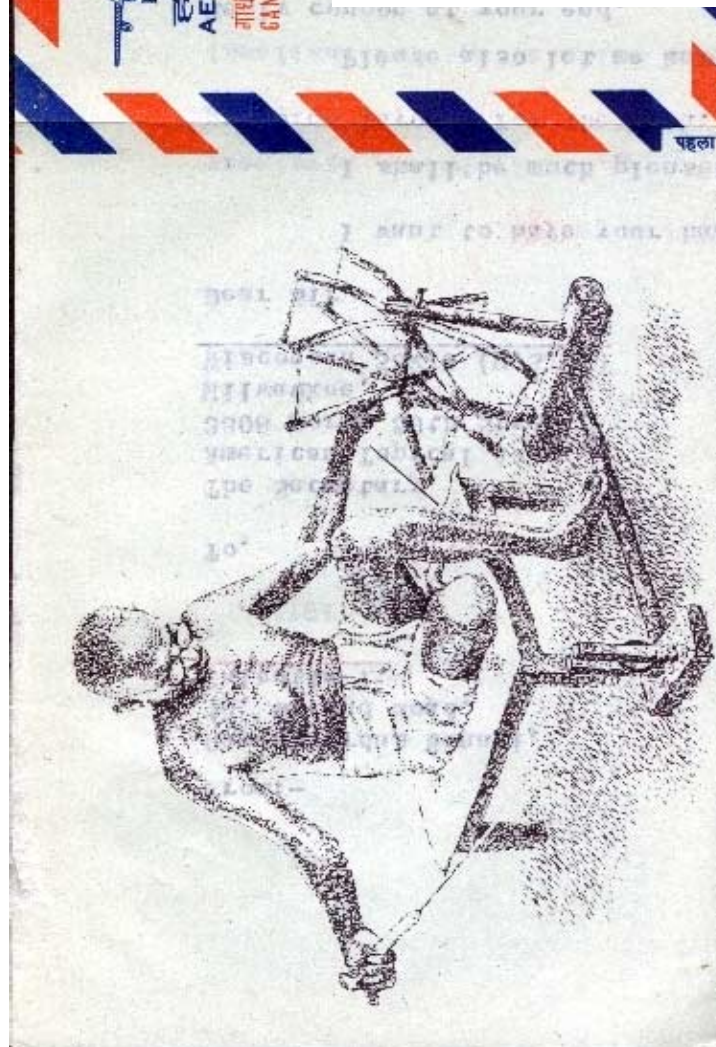
This is similar to one of the wheels Gandhi used.

Contrary to popular notions, Gandhi was not aware of the spinning wheel until much later in life and never got very good at spinning!

Eleanor Roosevelt tried the spinning wheel on her visit to India and captured the hearts and minds of all Indian!







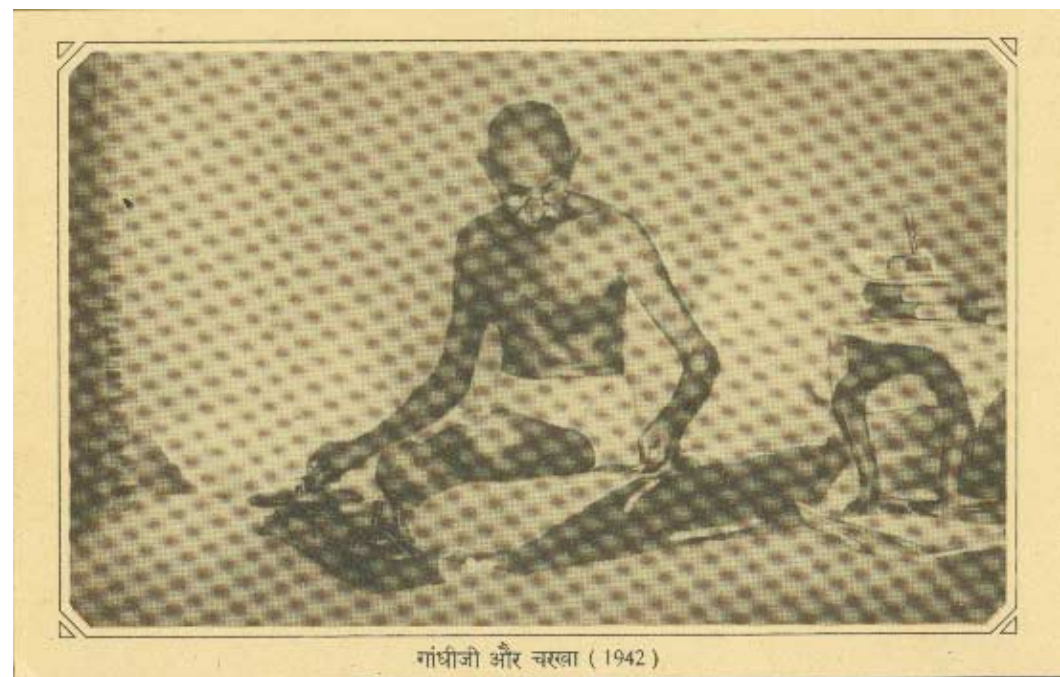
Gandhi using the spinning wheel was also featured in the preprinted aerogramme shown here.

Note the similar aerogramme from the Gandhi centenary shown above. The Refugee relief surcharge was for Bangladesh refugees.

The format of the overprint is unique and is specific to one location- the home base of the India Security Press in Nasik.

Note that that aerogramme was mailed from Nasik.

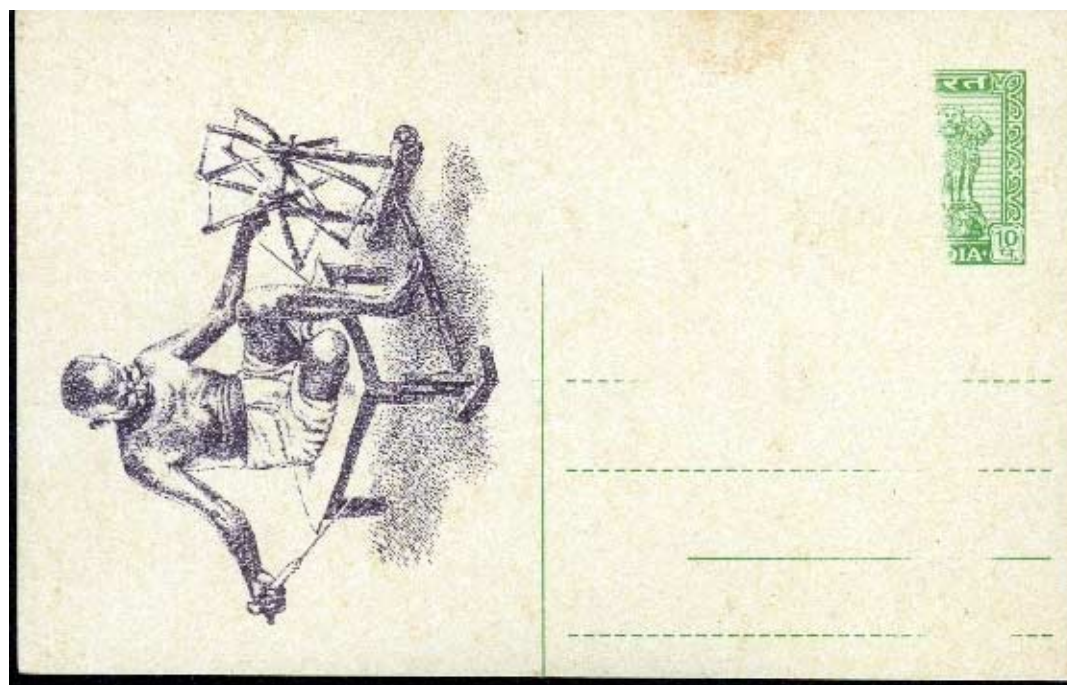




The card shown below is from a similar set issued in 1969.

Note the printing error with a large section of the address details missing.

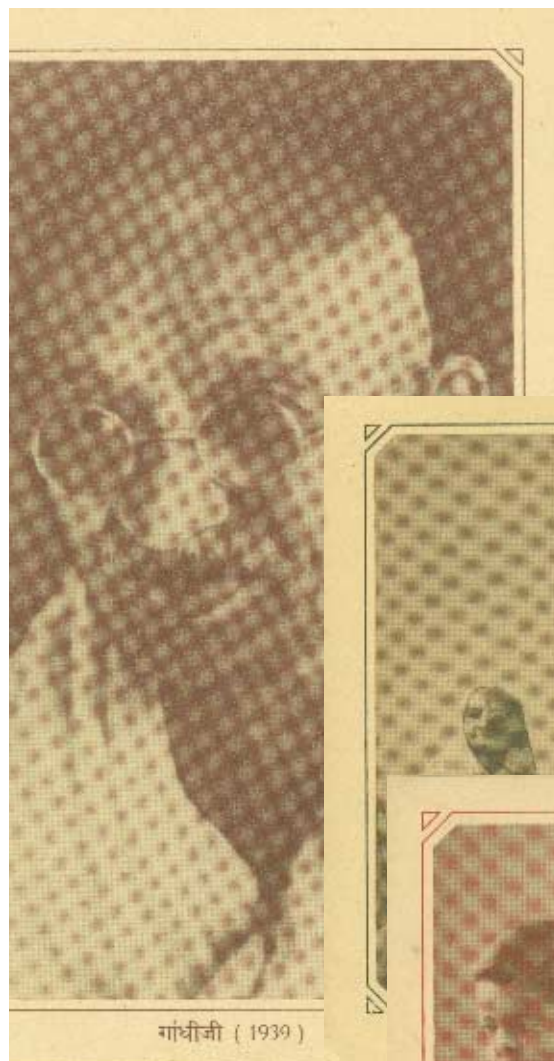
A picture of Gandhi spinning was used for the first picture postal card set from India, shown above.



## The Postal Card he Always Used

Right from his years as a Lawyer in South Africa, Gandhi always preferred the simplest and cheapest form of communication.

A postcard.



गांधीजी ( 1939 )



गांधीजी का शिशु प्रेम ( 1944 )



The pictures reproduced on the card were obtained from the collection of Kanu Gandhi, who is reported to have demanded a royalty payment of 12½% on their sale. Then minister of communications, Princess Amrit Kaur, was instrumental in persuading him to settle for a token royalty of Rs. 2,500.

Note that the markings are in Hindi only, while the pre-printed stamp has "India" spelt in English. The Hindi markings say: "Post Card-address only".





A second set of commemorative postal cards was issued in 1969. This time, an artist's drawings were used for the design, to avoid the thorny issue of photographs!

Note that after experimenting with mono-lingual stationery in 1951, India reverted back to bi-lingual.

## The Third-Class Train Ticket

Gandhi, whose brush with racism began with being thrown out of a first class compartment, spent the rest of his life in India traveling "Third Class"!

He always joked that it cost Congress and the Government more to keep him poor, with all the security they needed to provide [which he always turned down].



Interesting railway cover from a Welsh Line. Showing First Day use of the UK Gandhi stamp.



# No Man is an Island

## Those who Inspired his Thoughts

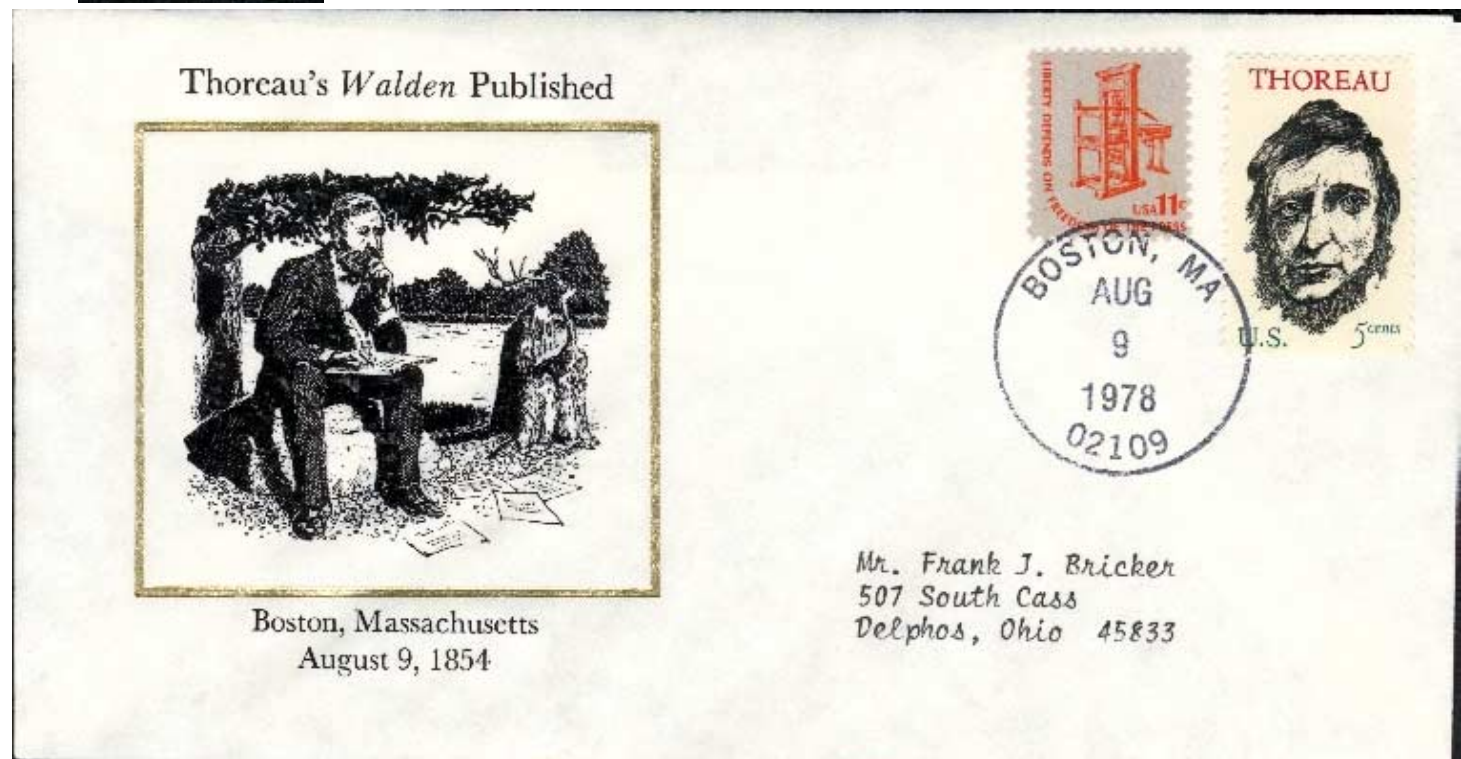


Count Leo Tolstoy was a living spiritual influence on Mahatma Gandhi.

The two corresponded frequently and Gandhi named his second Ashram in South Africa "Tolstoy Farm".

Gandhi's legal assistant Polak speaks of giving him a copy of Thoreau's writings to read.

It has been said that Gandhi's "satyagraha" concept was influenced by Thoreau's essays on "Civil Disobedience".



More recently, a letter from Gandhi [written in 1935] to a member of the Servants of India Society has surfaced which seems to refute that assumption.

In that letter, Gandhi states specifically that the resistance to authority in South Africa was far advanced before he read Thoreau's essay.

He did state that the actions of Indians was referred to as passive resistance.

To coin a more dynamic expression that would inspire the masses, he came up with Satyagraha.

As the word did not mean much to English speakers, he caught on to the title of Thoreau's essays when communicating with western audience about his effort.

And so, it appears that Gandhi's inspiration from Thoreau was in the "name" not the actions themselves.

## Adversaries and Associates

### Muhammad Ali Jinnah



Commercial cover from Pakistan with Jinnah and two other prominent Indian Muslims- Muhammad Iqbal and Li aquat Ali Khan.



A man born to neither Sunni or mainstream Shi-ite family, anglicized in demeanor and secular in faith, opposed to mixing religion and politics, incapable of oratory in any Indian language and a proponent of Hindu-Muslim unity for most of his life, the twists and turns of Indian nationalism had picked Jinnah to be the Quaid-I-Azam (Great Leader)- founder of a separate Muslim homeland.

Jinnah had personally welcomed Gandhi on his return from South Africa in 1915 and invited him to address the Muslim League's session that year. A strong link between Jinnah and Gandhi was Gopal Krishna Gokhle, a man they had both come to know, like and respect. Of Jinnah, Gokhle said: "He has true stuff in him, and that freedom from all sectarian prejudice which will make him the best ambassador of Hindu-Muslim unity". And Jinnah has stated that it was his "one ambition to become the Muslim Gokhle".



## India's other Muslim Leaders who Influenced Gandhi

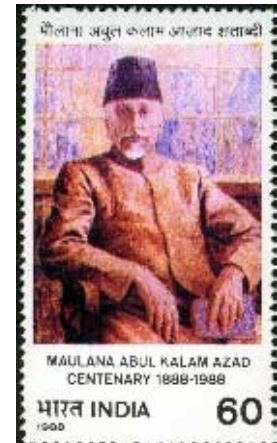


Cast in history as the founder of Muslim separatism on the subcontinent, he was one of the earliest to warn the Indian National Congress that many of their actions could lead India's Muslims to equate Congress rule to Hindu rule.

Attacked by Muslim orthodoxy for being the modernizer of Islam in this part of the world, "Sir Syed" saw Urdu, the language at the heart of northern Indian culture, as the bridge that could build on Hindu-Muslim unity.

Decades later, Mahatma Gandhi carried this strong belief, that if there could be a common language for all in the subcontinent, it would be this "simple spoken language of Delhi, which was current among the city's Hindus and Muslims". The year Gandhi was born, Sir Syed wrote of "the men and women of Hindustan, who are really one...."

Known as the "frontier Gandhi" from the Northwest frontier province, this *Pathan* warrior was the strongest proponent of Gandhi's ideals. Like Gandhi, he stayed home and mourned the partition, instead of celebrating Pakistani independence in 1947.



Born in Mecca, an accomplished poet and author in his teens, eloquent in Arabic and Persian and proud of his nom de plume (Azad, or "free" - since he had "felt free of all conventional ties"), this descendent of sufis met Gandhi for the first time in 1920.

Interned by the British for most of WWI for his support of Turkey, he plunged into the joint Hindu-Muslim nationalist struggle with Gandhi and the Nehrus.

He spent several years in jail with Gandhi and Nehru and had twice served as President of the Indian National Congress, first in 1923 as its youngest President.

"Maulana", as he was called by many (including Gandhi), was one of the Mahatma's closest lieutenants during the final years of the non-violent nationalist struggle.

## His English Friends and Admirers in India



As the founder of the Theosophical Society in India, Annie Besant was closely associated with Gandhi and the rest of Congress.



Gandhi's closest associate who was English, "Charlie" was a pastor who followed Gandhi to South Africa, upon hearing about his activities there.

He has written several books on Gandhi and later served as his emissary to the Indian community in Fiji.



Introduced to India as the Supreme Allied Commander of South East Asian Operation in WWII, Mountbatten returned to India as its last British Governor General.

His association with Gandhi and Nehru was strong enough for them to pick him as the first Governor General of Independent India.

During the partition riots, Mountbatten referred to Gandhi as his "one-man security force" better than all armies he commanded.



## Churchill and Gandhi

The only issue to show Gandhi with Churchill. Progressive Color Proofs of the Swedish "Local issue" from 1974 [Churchill Centenary].



Churchill was in the Boer War as a correspondent in 1899 and was one of the first group of Englishmen captured by the Boers.

Gandhi met Churchill in London when he was part of the Transvaal Indian Delegation in 1906.

Churchill gave Gandhi the famous title "half naked fakir" and was furious that such a man could negotiate with a representative of the Crown!

Biographers have stated that Churchill could not help "but foam in the mouth" every time he uttered Gandhi's name.

He did say that he did not become the First Minister of His Majesty to dismantle his empire. And since that's exactly what Gandhi wanted to do, it makes sense that Churchill did not take to him kindly!