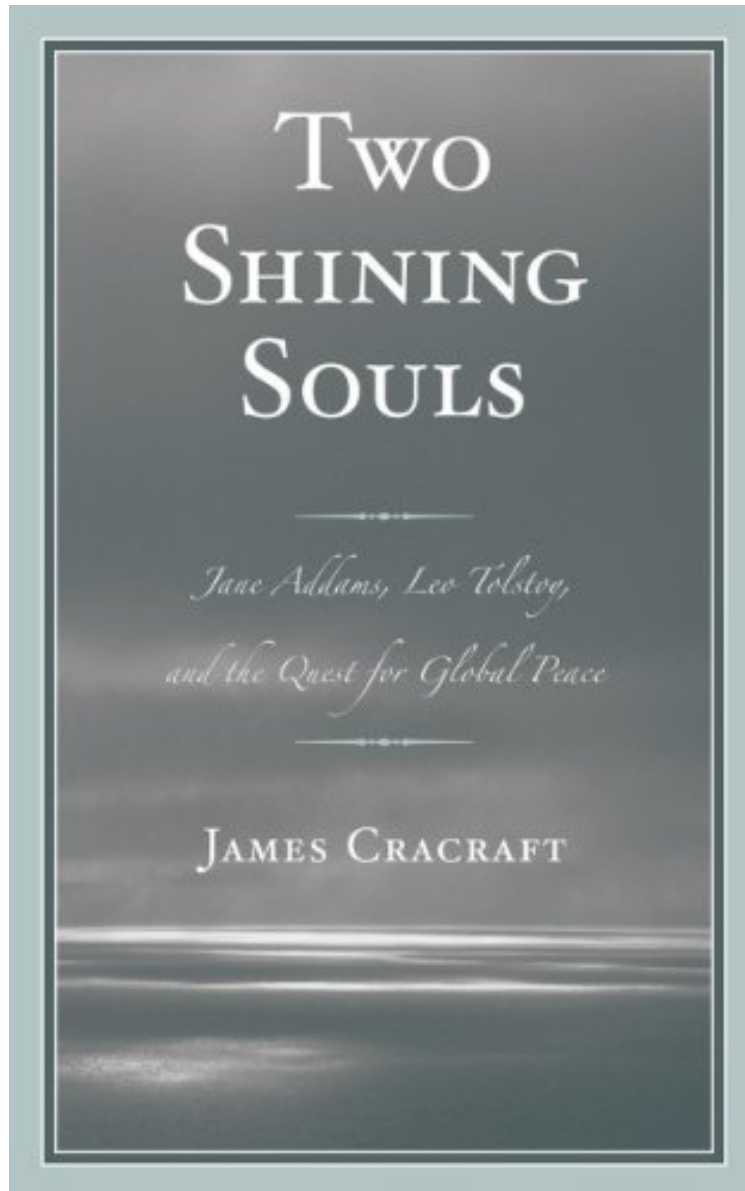


(Read ebook) Two Shining Souls: Jane Addams, Leo Tolstoy, and the Quest for Global Peace

Two Shining Souls: Jane Addams, Leo Tolstoy, and the Quest for Global Peace

James Cracraft

**Download PDF | ePub | DOC | audiobook | ebooks*



[Download](#)

[Read Online](#)

#5393404 in Books Lexington Books 2012-06-14 Original language: English PDF # 1 9.29 x .70 x 6.331, .92
#File Name: 0739174509206 pages | File size: 73.Mb

James Cracraft : Two Shining Souls: Jane Addams, Leo Tolstoy, and the Quest for Global Peace before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Two Shining Souls: Jane

Addams, Leo Tolstoy, and the Quest for Global Peace:

In his new book, *Two Shining Souls*, James Cracraft explores the decades-long encounter of Jane Addams, the famous American social reformer and peace activist, with Leo Tolstoy, the acclaimed Russian writer and sage. He documents Tolstoy's influence in Progressive-era America and particularly on Addams's career, citing previously unknown or neglected sources. In addition to her study of Tolstoy's writings—his now largely forgotten religious tracts more than his celebrated fiction—Addams traveled to Russia to see him personally, a meeting that is recounted in detail. Late in her life, Addams described Tolstoy as a rare “shining soul,” a term, Cracraft suggests, that applies equally well to her. His book adds an enduring religious dimension to Addams's rich legacy while newly delimiting, by contrast, the legacy of Tolstoy. The story of Addams and Tolstoy brings into focus issues of continuing public concern, including the often conflicting demands on the individual—particularly women—of family and society; the legitimacy of violence in pursuit of political aims; the problem of poverty; the role of government in social reform; and the place of religion in both public and private life. The distinctive ways in which these emblematic figures dealt with such controversial issues offer insights that may be valuable even today. Yet the single most important link between Addams and Tolstoy was their preoccupation with the question of peace, which they understood as a value subsuming all other values or goods. So *Two Shining Souls* is also about the invention and spread of “pacifism” in 19th-century Europe and America and the great crisis in its history precipitated by World War I.

The stories of Tolstoy the idealist and Addams the pragmatist have been told before, but by bringing them together in a single narrative, James Cracraft casts new light on how America's pioneering settlement worker and peace activist drew inspiration from Russia's preeminent writer, and then blazed her own path to engage some of the modern world's most pressing problems: urban poverty and war. Told in lucid prose and framed by a broad understanding of intellectual trends and international politics, *Two Shining Souls* is compelling history. (Timothy B. Spears, Middlebury College) James Cracraft makes the character of Jane Addams both alive and interesting. The presentations of pacifism and related political movements against the violence of war are stirring and compelling—eloquently articulated. They are also welded nicely into the demonstrations of Addams' personality and experience. *Two Shining Souls* evinces contagious enthusiasm without blindness to the weaknesses of the characters in the story. (Irwin A. Weil, Northwestern University) Leo Tolstoy's interactions with American social thinkers are well known, but until James Cracraft's fine effort, no one has written a book on the subject. *Two Shining Souls: Jane Addams, Leo Tolstoy, and the Quest for Global Peace* spirals out from an 1896 meeting of Tolstoy and Jane Addams at Yasnaya Polyana to reconstruct the background of the meeting and its consequences. Although Cracraft is a Russian historian, he focuses more on Addams as a social reformer and pacifist. In both roles she was indebted to Tolstoy, but also disagreed with him. Tolstoy was a radical Russian theorist while Addams was a social activist influenced by the pragmatic philosophy of William James. Tolstoy inspired Addams with his clarity and moral courage, but she considered his unbending idealism impractical. Preaching non-resistance, Tolstoy resisted all compromise; Addams, by compromising, got things done. Cracraft places his main protagonists in a broad historical canvas that brings together figures usually considered only separately. In one of his most fascinating discoveries, for instance, he argues convincingly that Addams helped convert Tolstoy translator Aylmer Maude from intransigent Tolstoyan idealism to her more conciliatory and political approach to reform. (Donna Tussing Orwin, University of Toronto) In *Two Shining Souls: Jane Addams, Leo Tolstoy, and the Quest for Global Peace*, James Cracraft, Professor of History Emeritus at the University of Illinois, Chicago, uses a meeting between two international figures in 1896 as the organizing principle to address their comparative philosophies and histories. . . . Skilfully crafted, *Two Shining Souls* brings the events surrounding the meeting alive — providing the right balance between sufficient detail to give the events texture and tangibility and offering the sweep of history to present context and meaning. . . I strongly recommend [this] work. . . the most important contribution that *Two Shining Souls* makes is to return our attention to a public discourse of peace. (Slavonic East European) About the Author James Cracraft is professor of history emeritus at the University of Illinois, Chicago.