

HUMANITIES INSTITUTE
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The Making of the Mahatma/Gandhi se Mahatma tak (1996) Shyam Benegal

OVERVIEW

Auteur Shyam Benegal is a renowned South Asian film director who hails from Hyderabad, India. Many of Benegal's films explore the human condition, with special attention to social contradictions along the lines of caste, class, and gender. He brings his directorial flair to screen Gandhi's early life before he became the Mahatma ('Great Soul'). In his earlier films, such as *Night's End (Nishant)*, *Ankur*, and *The Role (Bhumika)*, Shyam Benegal laid the groundwork for parallel cinema in India, an alternative to mainstream commercial Indian cinema. Accordingly, directors angled towards realistic plots, often critiquing the sociopolitical climate. Many South Asian directors in 1940s tired of cinema geared towards entertainment purposes. They wanted to use the film medium to reflect on societal issues and enlighten the general public. Shyam Benegal, among others such as Bimal Roy, Satyajit Ray, and Ritwik Ghatak, played an important role in shaping the genre.

Film *The Making of the Mahatma* takes readers into Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi's formative years in South Africa as a newly minted barrister before he became the Mahatma. While Richard Attenborough's *Gandhi* (1982) broke box office records with its narration of Gandhi's active years in the limelight, Benegal's film is the necessary prequel to understand the full life of Gandhi. The film won the National Film Award for Best Actor for Rajit Kapur and the National Film Award for Best Feature Film in English.

Background The film's script is loosely based on a book *Apprenticeship of a Mahatma*, written by Fatima Meer, who also wrote the film's screenplay. Gandhi's lesser-known years in South Africa, where he developed, tested, and solidified *satyagraha* – the concept of passive resistance – are highlighted in *The Making of the Mahatma*. Gandhi spent twenty-one years in South Africa, building the tenets of satyagraha and eliminating any weaknesses or shortcomings in his own person. The film pays attention to this, showing Gandhi's commitment to self-control and self-discipline, in order to persist in his chosen path of truth-seeking.

SYNOPSIS

The film is a biopic on Mahatma Gandhi's early life in South Africa (1893-1914). Gandhi arrives in South Africa as a fresh law graduate of University college, London, having little experience practicing law. He compares his experiences as an Indian in India, and as a student in the UK, and struggles to accept the harsh conditions of racial segregation in South Africa, a British colony at that time. He joins hands with local Indians to fight for their rights. However, the colonial administration, headed by General Smuts, continued legislating new laws to oppress natives and immigrants. Furthermore, they resort to violence to establish their authority over people of other races. Gandhi extended his stay in South Africa many times because of his commitment to liberate the Indians in South Africa. His wife, Kastur, and sons join him in South Africa. While dealing with the treacherous colonial administration and the tensions within the Indian immigrant community, Gandhi develops his *satyagraha* or truth-based non-violent struggle to achieve justice. Finally, after 21 years of living in South Africa, Gandhi returns to colonial India as the Mahatma, who would win India's independence from the British.

MAIN CHARACTERS

<i>Mahatma Gandhi</i>	Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi
<i>Kastur</i>	Kasturba Gandhi, Gandhi's wife
<i>Mr. Cachalia</i>	a Parsi; one of Gandhi's followers
<i>General Jan Smuts</i>	colonial secretary in South Africa
<i>Mr. Collinberg</i>	an admirer of Gandhian philosophy
<i>Harilal</i>	Gandhi and Kastur's eldest son

CHARACTER ANALYSIS

Gandhi

Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi was a freedom fighter, thinker, and philosopher. He was known for his truth-based non-violent struggle, or *satyagraha* (lit. 'truth-strength'). The biopic captures Gandhi's formative years in South Africa and traces the Gandhian leadership style that later informed the Indian freedom struggle.

Stubborn Gandhi is a stubborn man, who sticks to his principles at all costs and never goes back on his word. His stubbornness is a strength in his practice of *satyagraha*. Gandhi's stubbornness allows him to withstand humiliation, abuse, and assault put in his path. However, when he extends the same stubbornness to his roles as husband and father, he ruffles his family members. His wife, Kastur, and eldest son, Harilal, often complain that Gandhi is too stubborn. Gandhi believes in simple living and giving up material possessions. He insists on his family following the same rules. An example is Gandhi ordering his wife Kastur to clean the chamber pots, which was traditionally done by lower castes. Kastur found it humiliating because their family belonged to an upper caste, and she had always had lower caste servants to help with all household chores. Gandhi's practice of doing the household chores without servants' help does not sit well with his family members. Despite their disapproval, Gandhi continues to stick to his principles and refuses to compromise.

Friendly Gandhi believes in maintaining friendly relationships with everyone, even the ones who do him wrong and betray his friendship. He demonstrates this in multiple instances when he opts not to sue the people who assault him. His friendliness stuns people, forcing them to revise their position towards him. The film shows an example through an Indian leader who attacked Gandhi for complying with General Smuts' orders. Since Gandhi did not sue him, the attacker changed his mind, begged for Gandhi's forgiveness, and supported Gandhi's next plan of action. Another example is Gandhi's relationship with General Smuts. Although the general frequently betrays Gandhi and goes back on his promises, Gandhi gives him a pair of handmade sandals as a sign of friendship when departing from South Africa.

Optimist Gandhi's optimism emerged early in life and remained a defining characteristic throughout his life. Gandhi remains optimistic about the struggle's result, even when the others around him grow disheartened. When the others ask how Gandhi can expect the colonial administration's leaders to keep up their end of the bargain, Gandhi responds, "We must trust our enemies to do the right thing first and not doubt all their actions and decisions." He hopes they will keep their word even when circumstances show otherwise.

Tolerant Tolerance defines Gandhi's personality and his concept of *satyagraha*. Even when he is unjustly mistreated and assaulted, Gandhi tries to be tolerant and peace-loving. The film shows examples in the scenes where Gandhi tolerates being jailed despite the discomfort and suffering he experiences in jail. When Gandhi learns about Kastur's illness while carrying out his prison sentence, he represses his desire to escape imprisonment to be with Kastur. Instead, Gandhi stays put and tolerates his disappointment at not being with Kastur in her illness. There are multiple instances where Gandhi opts out of filing a case or reporting the assault, preferring to forgive them. He often reasons that they were acting on higher authorities' orders, so they had no say in the matter.

Kastur

Kastur Gandhi is Gandhi's wife. Although she struggles to understand her husband's eccentricities and absurd demands, she never gives up on him and his vision. Kastur's active role in running the household allows Gandhi more time to devote to public service and developing satyagraha.

Complainer Kastur grew up in an affluent upper-caste family. Consequently, she struggles to understand and follow Gandhi's simplistic lifestyle. Every time Gandhi cuts down on something that he considers a luxury, Kastur complains that Gandhi is a heartless and uncaring man. An example is Gandhi's decision regarding the jewels gifted by friends in South Africa. As the Gandhi family prepares to move back to India, their friends in South Africa give them costly diamond and gold necklaces as presents. Kastur is delighted and plans to save them for her future daughters-in-law. However, Gandhi decides to use the jewels to set up a trust fund to help the poor people in South Africa. Kastur feels slighted and complains that Gandhi is taking away her fair share of compensation for putting up with Gandhi neglecting his family and their hard life in South Africa. She also complains that Gandhi does not care for his sons' future.

Tolerant As Gandhi's wife, Kastur is often the first test for Gandhi's efforts to simplify life and live as a *satyagrahi*. Although Kastur does not fully understand Gandhi's passion to eliminate all unnecessary materialistic needs in the pursuit of truth, she learns to tolerate and accept his eccentricities. An early example is when Gandhi moved to South Africa for a job opportunity instead of staying with her and their children in India. When Gandhi explains his reason for taking up the job and his commitment to pursue justice, she caves in and sacrifices her need to have her husband close to her. Similarly, when Gandhi sees his desire for Kastur as a burden and strives to overcome it, Kastur feels slighted but tolerates Gandhi's behavior and tries to adjust to his way of thinking.

General Smuts General Jan Smuts is the colonial administrative officer responsible for maintaining a smooth-functioning and orderly colony. He explained to Gandhi and other activists that he represented the European colonial enterprises. Accordingly, he takes their side and prioritizes their demands in all conflicts involving the Europeans and others, such as natives, immigrants, and indentured laborers.

Insensitive As a representative of European colonial interests in South Africa, General Smuts is required to be insensitive to the struggles of those oppressed by the Europeans, such as native South Africans, South Asian immigrants, and indentured laborers. Consequently, he passes bills that favor the Europeans at the cost of oppressing non-Europeans living in South Africa. He refuses to consider the reality of unfairness leading to poverty, exploitation, and death for non-Europeans.

Loyal General Smuts is highly loyal to the Europeans. So, he uses his power and authority to maintain an exploitative structure that favors the success and prosperity of European establishments and companies. As an administrator, Smuts takes advantage of loopholes in the law to restrict and undercut non-European interests. In particular, he designs new bills to curtail non-European rights and freedom in the colony.

Disloyal General Smuts' disloyalty to non-Europeans is in stark contrast to his loyalty to Europeans. The film provides multiple examples of General Smuts reneging on his promises to the Natal Indian Congress. When the colonial administration imposed restrictions on Indians for refusing to register their fingerprints for local passes, Gandhi met General Smuts for talks. Although General Smuts agrees to remove sanctions on Indians in exchange for their registration, he quickly reneges on his word. General Smut does not remove the sanctions placed on Indians in the colony despite their compliance with the registration requirement.

Mr. Cachalia

Mr. Cachalia is a merchant trader in the colony and a member of the Parsi community. He became friends with Gandhi during Gandhi's early years in South Africa and continued to be a friend and supporter of Gandhi in founding and running the Natal Indian Congress.

Determined Mr. Cachalia faithfully follows Gandhi's determination not to comply with the identification registration law. As a result, Mr. Cachalia is one of the first to be thrown in prison, where he experiences the jailors' insults and humiliation for defying the colonial administration. The discomfort does not dissuade Mr. Cachalia from his determination to follow Gandhian ways.

Loyal As one of Gandhi's earliest friends, Mr. Cachalia remains loyal to Gandhi throughout the film. In the face of adversity and discomfort, Mr. Cachalia continues supporting Gandhian ideas. Even when other leaders and local Indians question the soundness of Gandhi's decisions and actions, Mr. Cachalia remains loyal.

Mr. Collinberg

Mr. Collinberg is one of the Europeans who got to know Gandhi and aligned himself with Gandhian ways of life and *satyagraha* for social justice in the colonies. Their friendship grows on the mutual appreciation they hold for Tolstoy's writings.

Curious When Mr. Collinberg first met Gandhi, he was curious about Gandhi. Gandhi's infamous reputation as the man who constantly thwarts the colonial administration's efforts to suppress non-European communities preceded him. However, after getting to know Gandhi and his quest to secure everyone's rights and welfare in the colonies, he joins Gandhi's quest.

Helpful Mr. Collinberg proved helpful on multiple occasions. When Gandhi's crowd of peaceful satyagrahi marchers was about to enter a mining town, their European masters feared the marchers' intentions. However, Mr. Collinberg addresses them as fellow Europeans and reassures them that it is a peaceful crowd with no intentions of causing harm. Furthermore, Mr. Collinberg helps the cause by donating land to Gandhi's farmstead. It is the same farmstead where Gandhi developed and practiced simple and sustainable living in the quest for truth against injustice.

Harilal

Harilal is Gandhi and Kastur's eldest son. He takes after his mother more than his father. They align in their approach to life and worldviews. Although he faithfully followed his father, Gandhi, as a young boy, he grew disillusioned with the Gandhian lifestyle during his later years.

Dissatisfied Harilal expresses dissatisfaction at being forced to follow Gandhi's orders all his life. Since he does not believe in the Gandhian way of life, Harilal is dissatisfied with their austerity in everyday living practices. He regrets missed opportunities, such as higher education in the UK and marriage to his childhood sweetheart, Chanchal. Gandhi had strongly opposed both and had stopped Harilal from pursuing them.

Complainer Gandhi wanted his eldest son, Harilal, to follow in his footsteps and choose the life of a *satyagrahi*. However, in stark contrast, Harilal prefers a quiet and comfortable life. Harilal openly complains about Gandhi's authoritarian hold on the household and his family members in more than one instance. One of Gandhi's shortcomings was taking away his family members' choices by forcing them to emulate his austere lifestyle.

THEMES

Race *The Making of the Mahatma* is set in segregated colonial South Africa and explores race relations. The film sheds light on white and non-white tensions, as well as native and immigrant tensions. Although Gandhi is an Indian and is keen on alleviating the prejudice and discrimination experienced by Indians, he also expresses solidarity with other non-white communities in the colony. Moreover, Gandhi also strives to express empathy and understanding towards white colonial administrators despite their apparent lack of concern towards non-whites and deliberate actions targeting non-white people. Parallel to Gandhian *satyagraha*, built on the concept of non-violent struggle, the film shows violent confrontations

between Europeans and South African native communities through wars and conflicts, such as the Boer Wars. Although Europeans were newly arrived, they relied on their political power and military prowess to rise above other races in the region. They suppressed the native African communities, as well as other immigrant communities with a longer trading history. As the European sphere of influence expanded, the conflict between whites and non-whites continued to grow exponentially. The other communities considered the Europeans to be upstarts and resented being denied their rights. Racism also caused the different racial groups to turn on each other. An example is Gandhi's decision to fight on the British side during the regional wars, to secure political and legal gains from the colonial administration; however, the situation changed by the end of Gandhi's time in South Africa. Although many initial *satyagrahis* were Indians, members from other races, also similarly oppressed, joined the movement and protested against racist practices in South Africa.

Injustice The film highlights injustices meted out to non-white individuals and communities in colonial South Africa. The administration repeatedly introduced new laws and revised old laws to further colonial interests at the cost of curtailing non-white peoples' rights and freedom. Some of these include laws regarding residential registration, labor laws, and immigration permits. Immigrants and indentured laborers suffered the worst from these unfair laws. When they peacefully protested these unfair changes, the colonial administration under General Smuts did not hesitate to use force to quash the protest marches and gatherings. Laws were adjusted to permit the armed forces to imprison individuals without proper justification. They were designed to intimidate communities into submission. The film explores this in the death of an infant. The infant's mother was a maid in a white household. Due to the mistress' explicit orders, the mother was forced to leave her child unattended, which caused the infant's unfortunate death. The incident demonstrates that indentured laborers and workers were expected to put their masters' commands over and above their own lives and the lives of their children and families.

Punishment When non-white natives and immigrants protest the colonial administration's unjust laws and refuse to comply, they are often punished severely. Gandhi and many congress leaders suffered prison sentences, where they were targeted for assault and abuse because they chose not to fight back and followed the path of non-violent struggle. Moreover, the colonial administrators targeted Gandhi with harsh and lengthy prison sentences, often in isolation cells, because they saw his strong moral leadership as an immediate threat to their power and authority in the colonies. Gandhi's family members, such as Kastur and Harilal, also suffer prison sentences alongside Gandhi. The film shows Gandhi being put to hard labor alongside his first-born son, Harilal. In another scene, Mr. Cachalia is thrown in prison and humiliated there for refusing to submit his fingerprints and register as a non-native worker in South Africa.

Leadership *The Making of the Mahatma* explores different leadership styles by closely studying Gandhi and General Smuts. While both demonstrate sternness as an immutable leadership quality, it takes different shapes in the two individuals. General Smuts embodies sternness backed by force, threat, and fear. The colonial administration values General Smuts for his authoritative presence. He used the power bestowed by the colonial government to decisively bring order and obedience to the colony among diverse masses with varied interests and cultural backgrounds. As a ruthless leader, he inspired fear and subordination in his subjects. In contrast, Gandhi embodies a moral sternness and a decisiveness built on personal conviction. He applies coercion and irrefutable rhetoric to convince people to follow his example. Gandhi's strong morale greatly pressurizes his wife and children to walk the same path, albeit grudgingly at times. Gandhi inspires his followers to follow his lead. Thus, leadership is a central theme in *The Making of the Mahatma*. The crucial difference between Gandhi and General Smuts is the former's non-violent leadership and the latter's violent leadership.

Growth Character growth is also a recurring theme in *The Making of the Mahatma*. Several characters, including Gandhi, show significant growth over the course of events. Gandhi grows from a quiet, shy barrister to an enigmatic thinker and leader. Kastur, Gandhi's wife, also demonstrates a parallel character growth. She goes from being a snobby upper-caste wife to embracing a lifestyle of austerity and community service. However, their son, Harilal, walks a different growth trajectory. Although Harilal was very devoted to his father as a child, he becomes disillusioned with his parents' life choices as a young man. Ultimately, he decides to leave them and opt for a different future. Beyond the Gandhi family, the film shows growth in several members belonging to the local Indian community. Initially, many of them

believed in taking up arms to defend themselves against an increasingly repressive colonial administration. However, a growing majority relinquished violence and embraced the hardship of Gandhi's non-violent *satyagraha* movement.

Conflict Although events in *The Making of the Mahatma* focus on the political conflict between the European colonial administrators and Native African and other non-European resident communities, such as Indians, economic interests also contributed to conflict. The European colony in South Africa is a bustling center of commerce consisting of farming and mining enterprises. Therefore, there was a considerable need for different kinds of labor. While the Europeans held positions in the upper levels of the hierarchy, the immigrants and locals entered the workforce on lower rungs, carrying out much of the grunt work. The arrival of more and more immigrants (mostly from British India), their families, and indentured workers threatened the existing power structure and the division of profits. Therefore, the European colonial administrators used their political might and legislative powers to restrain non-white communities and churn profits from various colonial enterprises. One of the bills introduced at a later point restricted entry to only indentured laborers and not their families. The bill was designed to limit immigrant workers from settling in South Africa. Moreover, the bill aimed to restrict skilled immigrant workers, who earn more than indentured laborers. Unlike indentured laborers, skilled immigrant workers tend to send back monetary benefits to their families in Asian countries, such as India. The colonial administrators did not have a favorable view of this outflow of profits outside the colony's economy. At times, these restrictions became sore points, erupting into violent confrontations and demonstrations against the European colonial administrators.

Power / Abuse of Power The colonial enterprises in South Africa were satellites of powerful European empires. As such, the European colonial masters, who owned economic enterprises in the colonies, derived their power and position directly from the empire. As representatives of the empire and its economic and political interests, they also have the backing of its armed forces and legislative system. Thus, a blatant power inequality exists between the different races working and co-existing in the colony of South Africa, leading to deep resentment in those without power. All the cases Gandhi represented in court involved an abuse of power meted out to a worker or an indentured laborer of the Indian community. Although Gandhi successfully got justice for his clients in isolated cases, the skewed power dynamics continued to wound new victims. Ultimately, Gandhi chose to stay in South Africa, extending his stay by twenty-one years, to challenge the abuses of power and redress the power imbalances between different communities in South Africa.

Gandhi and most of his *satyagrahis* were non-Europeans; therefore, they did not possess the conventional modes of power available to colonial masters. Nonetheless, they chose to create and claim a new brand of power through the practice of non-violent resistance. Although it was an arduous path, where many were shot, beaten, and imprisoned, they strived in their purpose to secure justice. Ultimately, their efforts did not go in vain. The might of truth and non-violence eventually grew strong enough to counter the colonial masters' powers.

SCENES

Stumbled beginnings Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi arrives in South Africa for a special court case. Gandhi experiences racist discrimination everywhere he goes and is baffled by the status quo in the colony. Not only is he thrown out of the whites-only first-class compartment on the train, but he also faces the same problem on the stagecoach, and at the various inns, where he stops along the way to Pretoria.



The Natal Bill Gandhi's success in a notably complex case convinces Indians in Natal of his brilliance. They request him to stay longer and look into the newly introduced Natal Bill, aimed at challenging Indians' right to vote. Although the Indians did not see the bill as a direct threat, Gandhi reminds them that it could be the front-runner to other forthcoming stricter legislation.



Natal Indian Congress Following Gandhi's advice, the local leaders of the Indian community create a political party on August 22, 1894 to represent their political interests. The Natal Indian Congress upholds key objectives aiming for better understanding between Europeans and the people of color in Natal, to spread information for awareness in the colony, to discuss grievances and plan constitutional means to address them, and lastly, to inquire into the condition of indentured Indians and help them overcome hardships.



Injustices People flock to Gandhi to represent them in court and get justice. A wounded and bleeding indentured laborer flees his master and finds safety. Gandhi fulfills his promise to him and secures his release from his old contract to get a new master. Similarly, Gandhi also wins justice for Jadhubansi, an indentured woman laborer whose child has died from negligence. Her mistress kept her too busy and unable to care for her own child. Gandhi is visibly moved by the evil perpetuated under the indenture system.



Arrival in South Africa Gandhi's wife, Kastur, and son, Harilal, arrive in South Africa. However, their ship is not allowed to disembark on bogus charges that the ship is carrying some unknown plague. The colony's prominent leaders engineer the charges to oppose Gandhi and force him back to India. Furthermore, anti-coolie protestors gather at the docks and express their disapproval of immigrants, demanding the colonial government ban their entry and order the emigration of already-arrived coolies and indentured laborers. The ship disembarks, and passengers enter the South African colony despite the threats. A timely judicial order protects the new arrivals from the protestors' vitriol.



Street assault On his way home from the dock, those protesting Gandhi's arrival beat him up on the streets. A friendly police superintendent stops the attackers and escorts Gandhi to his family. When he recommends that Gandhi press charges against his attackers, Gandhi refuses. He does not wish to prosecute and explains that the people only acted on their leaders' ill-advised talk. He asks, "Will you or the government of Natal be willing to prosecute yourself, sir?"



New rules Kastur notices many changes in Gandhi, such as doing household chores without waiting for servants. Gandhi's decision to give up caste and class privileges and live a simple life also shocks Kastur. Moreover, Gandhi wants to homeschool his sons because of the segregated school system in South Africa. According to religious and caste laws, lower caste servants should empty and clean the chamber pots. However, Gandhi believes in equality, especially in cleaning and other household chores. When Kastur refuses to clean chamber pots, Gandhi carries out the dirty task himself and sets an example. Although Kastur eventually gives in to Gandhi's ideas, her pride is wounded.



Birth of second son Soon Gandhi and Kastur are expecting their second child, after Harilal. When Kastur's labor pains start, Gandhi does not panic. Instead, he takes charge of the process, assures Kastur and ensures a safe birth for their second son.



Indians on British side When the news breaks that the British troops will fight the Boers, Gandhi presents the idea that Indians should participate in the war on the British side. He believed this would prove to the colonial administration that Indians *were* British citizens. Under Gandhi's leadership, the Indians form a stretcher corps to carry out and tend to the wounded British soldiers. The stretcher corps, comprised of Indian volunteers, makes the British more amenable to Indian requests.



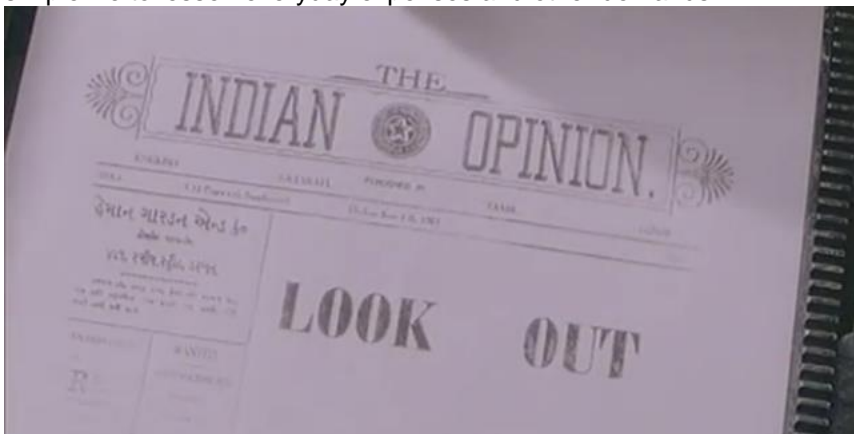
Redistributing gifts

When the Gandhis plan their return to India, their friends in South Africa give them jewels and other costly presents, much to Kastur's delight. Unfortunately, Gandhi is against receiving such expensive material gifts. He decides to put them into a trust to be used by the local community members, much to Kastur's chagrin.



Return to South Africa

Gandhi returns to South Africa once again because of continuing oppression. He decides to start a newspaper that will serve as the local people's mouthpiece. The newspaper covers many recent laws and injunctions passed against Indian residents. Although the printing press goes bust because of a lack of funds, Gandhi presses on. He insists that everyone live a simple life to lessen everyday expenses and other demands.



Farmstead model

After meeting John Dube, the leader of a local farmstead community, Gandhi proposes building a similar model among his followers in South Africa. He believes it will be a sustainable solution to continue running their newspaper, the *Indian Opinion*.



Familial disagreements

Gandhi recalls his family back to South Africa. Gandhi's eldest son, Harilal, opts to stay back and marry his sweetheart, Chanchal. Although Kastur agrees with Harilal's wishes, Gandhi believes that Harilal is too young to decide his marriage. Therefore, he orders Harilal to join the rest of the family in South Africa. As a result, Gandhi has a falling out with his son and Kastur over this decision. Gandhi continues vouching for simplicity, saying, "We must give up possessions because we have each other."



Stretcher corps revival

Despite other Indians' opposition, Gandhi revives the stretcher corps during the Zulu rebellion. As a member himself, he witnesses the atrocities committed on the battlefield. He is horrified by the colonial government's blatant disregard for Zulu soldiers' sufferings.



Registration rules

The colonial government passes a new law requiring all Indians to carry identity passes, acquired by submitting finger and thumb prints. The prominent members of the Indian community are in disagreement. While one faction believes in fighting back with violence, Gandhi proposes *satyagraha* to express their protest: "Our demands are just. Therefore, our means must be just. *Satyagraha* is based on truth. And truth means our actions cannot be violent. Violence only begets greater violence. Through suffering, we can change the hearts and minds of the people who are oppressing us."



Broken deals

After meeting and conversing with General Smuts, Gandhi attempts to reconcile with the colonial government by agreeing to the registration rule. Despite the Indian community's compliance, General Smuts reneges on his word and introduces a new bill that further oppresses Indians in South Africa. Gandhi denounces the registration law this time and publicly burns his papers in protest.

**Jail and hard labor**

Gandhi and several other *satyagrahis*, including his eldest son, Harilal, are imprisoned for their participation in the protest. The disagreement between Gandhi and Harilal deepens. Harilal wishes to continue his higher education and improve his status, like his father did, by studying in the UK. But, Gandhi wants him to stay close to the movement and work on *satyagraha*.

**Farmsteads**

With Mr. Cullinberg's help, Gandhi establishes his own cooperative communities (Phoenix and Tolstoy) to run his newspaper sustainably. At the same time, General Smuts continues to go back on his promises to the Indian community and introduces ever more restrictive bills.



Women satyagrahis One of the new bills targets and delegitimizes Indian marriages. Therefore, Gandhi insists that women should participate this time. He proposes that women should lead the protest to fight for their marriage rights and the recently announced poll taxes. Kastur reluctantly agrees and says, "If I can survive you, I can survive *satyagraha* too."



Determined satyagrahis A group of miners join the *satyagrahis* after the colonial government passed restrictive legislation against miners. Even when the *satyagrahis* are stoned and physically assaulted, the peaceful protesters do not give up. They carry their injured members and continue marching. When the colonial government tries to suspend the protest march, Gandhi refuses to cooperate. He responds, "The workers have no weapon but to strike."



Ally's intervention Mr. Collinberg, a Gandhi sympathizer, attempts to soothe the mine owners and colonial administrators. But they refuse to listen to reason and instead demand that the protesting miners be shot down before they display any further insubordination.



Gandhi's determination When Gandhi is imprisoned again, he leaves Mr. Naidoo responsible for leading the protest. Gandhi pleads 'guilty' at the hearing. He states, "I am now convinced that our non-violent resistance and our own suffering will ensure success." On release, he goes back to *satyagraha*. At a loss, the colonial government orders the mass imprisonment of all *satyagrahis*.



World pays attention News of Gandhi's non-violent protest in South Africa reaches other parts of the world and puts pressure on the British empire. General Smuts faces backlash and his superiors' reprimand for failing to run a smooth administration and economic enterprise in South Africa. General Smuts meets Gandhi again and agrees to all of *satyagrahis*' requests. This time, Gandhi demands General Smuts' word in writing.



Meeting Satyagrahis When Gandhi returns from prison, he learns about the violent turn at a recent *satyagraha* protest and the resulting injuries suffered by protestors. He meets the injured and comforts families who had lost members to the colonial police force's acts of violence. Gandhi shaves all facial hair as a sign of mourning for those killed during *satyagraha*.



Gandhi's return to India

General Smuts' agreement reassures Gandhi. Finally, Gandhi turns his attention to the anti-colonial freedom struggle in India. The last scene shows Gandhi leaving South Africa after 21 years. The off-screen narrator explains that Gandhi would continue to see himself as a South African Indian.

