'Half Naked Fakir'

The Story of Gandhi’s Personal Search for Sartorial Integrity

By Peter Gonsalves*

ABSTRACT

‘Half-naked Fakir’ - the story of Gandhi's personal search for sartorial integrity brings together M. K. Gandhi's essential thoughts and anecdotes on his exploration of truth via attire. The reader is invited to grasp the nuances of Gandhi's progressive journey towards personal and sartorial authenticity, from imitating the English in London, to searching for an Indian identity in South Africa, to becoming the dhoti-clad Mahatma of India's millions.

Winston Churchill disparagingly referred to Mohandas Gandhi as the ‘half-naked fakir’. ¹ Gandhi regarded the expression as a compliment. He felt unworthy of being called “a fakir and that (too) naked - a more difficult task.”² He then implored Churchill: “[T]rust and use me for the sake of your people and mine and through them those of the world.”³ A recent collection of visual images from around the world reveals Gandhi’s impact on popular culture as ‘the conscience of humanity’.⁴ But it also demonstrates how globally identifiable the man in the loincloth⁵ is. What may not be common knowledge, however, are the reasons that spurred him on to dress the way he did.

Sartorial integrity is a state in which one's moral well-being affects the way one dresses and presents oneself to others.

It is common knowledge that clothing is an important way through which one's personality is communicated. In the presence of sartorially integrated individuals one is aware of their genuineness, that they are not merely playing a role or dressing solely to impress.

Attire is a given datum, a product of our culture and context. We usually follow the status quo or the dominant trends in fashion promoted by our peers and associates. Gandhi, too, began his clothing experiments in similar circumstances. But he gradually evolved, thanks to his habitual soul-searching in pursuit of deeper significance. He interpreted and reinterpreted the personal and social meanings of his sartorial identity through nearly sixty years of his life: from a shy and impressionable adolescent eager to imitate the English dress code he learned to discover his Indian identity and its implications amidst the rabid racism of South Africa, until, on his return to India, he dared to choose the loincloth as a powerful political statement before the imperial world.

1. The passion to be an ‘English Gentleman’: 1869 -1891

The earliest photograph of Mohandas, probably taken at seven years of age, shows him elegantly attired in a dark coloured coat, wearing a dhoti with a shining necklace and a velvet Kathiawad cap. It is a testament to the political and economic advantages he enjoyed as a descendant of a prominent official in the princely courts of Kathiawad.⁷

After his marriage and the death of his father he decided to leave for London. Gandhi’s acute shyness, fear of ridicule and touchiness in matters of clothing initially impeded him from adapting to English customs. On reaching Southampton he was exceedingly ashamed of his attire. His Indian host who came to receive him smiled at his being in flannels.⁸

It took some time to adjust to the new climate and culture. He struggled to maintain a strictly vegetarian diet - a promise he had made to his mother, but a great embarrassment to his friends. To compensate for this social disadvantage, he strove to dress like the perfect English gentleman.

He took lessons in elocution, dancing and playing the violin. The infatuation lasted barely three months. In contrast, he admitted that “the punctiliousness in dress persisted for years.”⁹

In his unpublished handbook entitled Guide to London¹⁰ which was meant to help Indian students desirous of travelling to England, Gandhi reserved a section on the importance of dressing correctly. Although an inconsequential work, it reflects Gandhi's meticulous observation of English clothing etiquette. The advice he provides his readers may be summed up as follows: Attention to clothing is important. It gives oneself respect in the company of
Gandhi reached Durban in South Africa as a well-attired, twenty-four year old advocate ‘with a due sense of his importance’. His conviction that the English dress code would give Indians social respectability was in for a rude shock.

Not only was an Indian attired in European dress a strange site in Durban, Gandhi had to learn that an Indian in decent *indian dress* was also unacceptable. On his first visit to the court the Magistrate kept staring at him and finally asked him to take off his turban, which he refused to do and left the court. This incident was reported in the *The Natal Mercury* on 26 May, 1893. The very same day, Gandhi explained to the editor of the newspaper that retaining his Indian headgear was a sign of respect according to Indian custom and that he did not mean to offend the Magistrate by retaining a trivial sign of his Indian identity.

The question of Indian identity in South Africa was complex. The indentured Indians or contract workers were of Tamil, Telugu and North Indian origin. The white races of South Africa called them ‘coolies’, a term that was often used in a disparaging manner for all Indians. It was a term that the so-called *free* Indians (non-indentured Indians) in South Africa resented.

Most Indians were required to take their turbans off on entering the court, except Muslims who wore the turban as part of their Muslim costume. Since Gandhi was to frequent the courts due to his profession, he thought of discarding the use of the turban altogether and decided to use an English hat instead. He was immediately warned by his host Abdulla Sheth that such a move would pass him off as a waiter. He decided to keep the turban - a choice he ‘practically’ maintained till the end of his stay in South Africa.

There were deeper lessons in the significance of clothing in store. Gandhi was accustomed to a way of living typical of a barrister. He travelled first class, used European dress and expected to receive the same courtesies that he received back in England. But life in South Africa was starkly prejudiced against the coloured races. He had to swallow this bitter pill on a wintry night in 1893 when he was thrown out of the train at Pietermaritzburg station. Neither his first class ticket nor his European attire could convince the white constable that he, an Indian, was worthy to travel as he liked. This truth was made even clearer as he continued to suffer more hardships for the rest of the journey to Pretoria.

On reaching Pretoria, he lost no time in gathering together the Indians settled there. I, thus, made an intimate study of the hard condition of the Indian settlers, not only by reading and hearing about it, but by personal experience. I saw that South Africa was no country for *self-respecting Indians*, and my mind became more and more occupied with the question as to how this state of things might be improved.

He wrote out a petition to the railway authorities asking that certain Indians be given permission to travel first and second class instead of consigning all of them to the “tin compartment reserved for natives and other coloured people in which we are literally packed like sheep, without regard to our dress, our behaviour or our position.”

The reply he received declared that “first and second class tickets would be issued to Indians who were *properly dressed*.” Gandhi was quick to discover the catch: “This was far from giving adequate relief, as it rested with the Station Master to decide who was ‘properly dressed’.” Gandhi felt that at the bottom of the law was a deep prejudice against all Indians. He believed that the whites did not wish to make a distinction between well-dressed Indians and indented Indians and the railway law was merely an articulation of this point of view.

It appears that, at this stage of his life, Gandhi approves of discrimination. He is surprised at the inability of the Government to discriminate between Indians who are well-dressed from those who are not. He resents the Government's method of treating all Indians as underdogs: “the Asian dirt to be heartily cursed.”

Gandhi's bourgeois slant in favour of wealthier Indians was suddenly challenged in 1884 when he met Balasundaram, an indentured labourer. I had put in scarcely three or four months' practice [...], when a Tamil man in tattered clothes, head-gear in hand, two front teeth broken and his mouth bleeding, stood before me trembling and weeping. He had been heavily belaboured by his master.

For the first time Gandhi was confronted with the sad plight of indentured Indians. His understanding of Indian identity began to change. He began to see himself as a servant-leader of all Indians, not merely of the elite. He started his own newspaper called *Indian Opinion* to serve the community. He made a detailed study of the condition of indentured labourers and began a campaign to free them from an unjust tax which gave birth to an unprecedented phenomenon in South Africa: the unity of indentured and free Indians who fought for their rights on one platform.

During this period, we are not told of major alterations in his attire till 1912. Photographs between 1894 and 1912 continue to show him wearing English clothes and a turban. Interally, however, there were stirrings of change. He felt dissatisfied with limiting his activity to legal practice alone and sensed the urge for selfless social work. Contrarily, he found it difficult to compromise the dignity of his profession or to exchange his European attire for clothes and a turban.

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the urge for selfless social work. Contrarily, he found it difficult to compromise the dignity of his profession or to exchange his European attire for something more simple. This dilemma is best expressed by Gandhi himself when he brought his family to South Africa for the first time in 1896:

I believed, at the time of which I am writing, that in order to look civilized, our dress and manners had as far as possible to approximate to the European standard. Because I thought only thus could we have some influence, and without influence it would not be possible to serve the community.

I Gradually, the burden of settling the family in South Africa in a well-furnished house was beginning to take its toll. He realized he could not live in comfort anymore. He began to cut down on expenses. He started to wash his own clothes, shave himself and cut his own hair - his first experiences of the practice of 'self-reliance' which would later develop into the concept of swadeshi. Determined to choose the simple life, he surrendered nonessential things and found the experience liberating.28 A remark he made in reference to the difficult task of cleaning his own shirt collars is noteworthy: "The result was that, though the collar was fairly stiff, the superfluous starch continually dropped off it. I went to court with the collar on, thus inviting the ridicule of brother barristers, but even in those days / could be impervious to ridicule."

This attitude - standing up to ridicule - was an indication of how much he had matured from the once shy schoolboy who fled his companions for fear of being teased. He was now beginning to see the importance of placing personal integrity above social acceptability. This perspective developed into an attitude that paved the way for a wide variety of courageous sartorial experiments. It is important to look briefly at eight key experiences that steered his character and prepared him for the challenges ahead.30

Gandhi's longing for humanitarian work of a permanent nature led him to Dr. Booth, the head of the St. Aidan's Mission. Here he served for some time as a nurse in the hospital. He made time from office work to spend one to two hours daily. It brought him some peace and deeper contact with human suffering.31

The mission hospital trained him for the more difficult task of nursing the wounded soldiers during the Boer War of 1899. His group of volunteers consisted of "300 free Indians and 800 indentured labourers"32

Inspired by John Ruskin's Unto This Last,33 Gandhi founded the Phoenix Settlement in 1904. It was the locus for a series of experiments in communal living, simplicity of lifestyle, ethical behaviour, service-oriented education, agricultural work, handicrafts and dietetics.

In June 1910, he received 1100 acres of farm land as a gift from his friend and admirer Hermann Kallenbach.34 It was called Tolstoy Farm.35 Here Gandhi, his family and Kallenbach lived and worked with the families of jailed satyagrahis in Spartan simplicity and discipline. Self-sufficiency through self-reliance was the key. It extended to other aspects of living a common life.36

In February 1906, the so-called 'Zulu Rebellion' broke out. Gandhi's loyalty to the British Empire and his sympathies for the Zulu cause spurred him once again to form the Indian Ambulance Corps. Through this experience he saw the excruciating pain of the hunted Zulus who were mercilessly flogged, and whose lacerated flesh no white nurses were willing to tend. Exposure to this horrible spectacle of man's cruelty to man brought about a deep anguish. Gandhi could see the self-purification and the choice for simplicity leading him to a very special way of life. The principle underpinning their commitment he called Satyagraha, which means 'soul force' or 'truth force'.

The profound interior transformation caused by his adoption of brahmacharya and satyagraha motivated Gandhi to symbolise the change through a new form of dress. He called it the 'mourning robe'. It consisted of a white kurta and dhoti.37 Although this transition was not definitive, he considered it sufficiently important to actually pose alone for a photograph.

In 1909, on his return from London to South Africa, Gandhi wrote Hind Swaraj,38 it is a "compendious political manifesto",39 the "quintessence of Gandhian thought at its purest, its fiercest and its crudest"40, the crystallization of his most radical ideas directed at young Indian anarchists who sought to violently retaliate against British subjugation. In it he fiercely criticizes Western civilization as being one that feeds on bodily rather than spiritual needs. He criticizes the view that the European dress would have a civilizing effect on Indians. He criticizes India's dependence on Manchester for cloth requirements as well as India's use of mills and machinery.

The impact of the above experiences on Gandhi's personal life began to be reflected in his sartorial choices. They were less an expression of European culture and more a symbol of satyagraha in solidarity with suffering humanity. On 21 December 1931, he appeared at a mass gathering in Durban dressed as an indentured Indian and for the first time explained his motives for dressing differently before a crowd of about seven thousand persons including some prominent Europeans. His chronicler notes:

They [the Indians] would notice he has changed his dress from that he had formerly adopted for the last 20 years, and he had decided on the change when he heard of the shooting of their fellow-countrymen. No matter whether the shooting was found to be justified or not, the fact was that they were shot, and those bullets shot him (Mr. Gandhi) through the heart also [...]. He felt that he should go into mourning at least for a period [...]. He was not prepared himself to accept the European mourning dress for this purpose, and, with some modification in deference to the feelings of his European friends, he had adopted the dress similar to that of an indentured India. He asked his fellow-countrymen to adopt some sign of mourning [...], and further to adopt some inward observance also.41

It was probably the first of many public speeches in which Gandhi would appeal for a change of dress as a symbol, as a collaborative sign of solidarity for a worthy cause. The mere change to simple clothes was not enough, he told them. Those who chose to display their sorrow through dress should also conform their inner selves to their outer appearance, by suffering, self-sacrifice, renunciation of physical comfort and, eventually, preparation to embrace death whenever and however it comes.42

Gandhi had come a long way in his discovery of the significance of attire. He had begun to value the semiotic properties of clothing for personal integrity as an extension and expression of one's moral and political convictions in social and political spaces. It was a realization he would exploit fully in India.
On 19 December 1914, Gandhi and Kasturba sailed for India on board the S S Arabia. On disembarking at Bombay, Gandhi’s unexpected attire startled the elite crowd of admirers and well-wishers who had thronged to welcome him. He wore a “Kathiawadi suit of clothes consisting of a shirt, a dhoti, a cloak and a white scarf, all made of Indian mill cloth.”

Before he entered into public service he took Gokhale’s advice and travelled the length and breadth of India in order to deepen his experience of the complex Indian reality. He went a step further than the advice he received by choosing to travel third class, intending to expose himself to the terrible conditions of the poor and to view life from their perspective. He believed that “no reform is possible unless some of the educated and the rich voluntarily accept the status of the poor, travel third class, refuse to enjoy the hardships, discourtesies and injustice as a matter of course, fight for their removal.”

The experience profoundly disturbed him. He became aware that political enslavement from British rule was not the only evil to be eradicated. India needed to be set free from many more constraints such as untouchability, poverty, communalism, lack of sanitation, selfishness and even religious hypocrisy.

In May 1915 he set up the Satyagraha Ashram on the outskirts of the city of Ahmedabad at a place called Kochrab. An outbreak of plague at Kochrab that same year led him to relocate the Satyagraha Ashram to a solitary place on the banks of the Sabarmati river. It was near the Central Jail, a position Gandhi saw as an advantage since “jail-going was understood to be the normal lot of Satyagrahis.”

Gandhi’s legal expertise was solicited in the struggle of the Champaran peasants of Bihar. Here he wore khadi, as was his custom even at the Sabarmati Ashram. A certain journalist named Irwin, who was accustomed to seeing the Indian educated elite take pride in their superiority over the illiterate masses through a Western lifestyle, considered Gandhi’s manner of dress a ploy to impress the exploited peasants of the indigo plantations. He wrote an article in The Pioneer accusing Gandhi of hypocrisy.

His letter to the same newspaper, dated 30 June 1917, effectively summarises the lessons he had learned on the significance of clothing.

H having taken to the occupation of weaving and agriculture and having taken the vow of swadeshi, my clothing is now entirely hand-woven and hand-sewn and made by me or my fellow-workers. Mr. Irwin’s letter suggests that I appear before the ryots in a dress I have temporarily and specially adopted in Champaran to produce an effect. The fact is that I wear the national dress because it is the most natural and the most becoming for an Indian. I believe that our copying of the European dress is a sign of our degradation, humiliation and our weakness; and that we are committing a national sin in discarding a dress which is best suited to the Indian climate and which, for its simplicity, art and cheapness, is not to be beaten on the face of the earth and which answers hygienic requirements. Had it not been for a false pride and equally false notions of prestige, Englishmen here would long ago have adopted the Indian costume [...]. I may mention incidentally that I do not go about Champaran bare-headed. I do avoid shoes for sacred reasons, but I find too that it is more natural and healthier to avoid them whenever possible.

After Champaran, Gandhi was involved in the Ahmedabad Textile Mill-workers Strike on the banks of the Sabarmati. A third agitation that Gandhi was drawn into was the Kheda Peasants’ Struggle in March 1918. These campaigns helped him test the resilience of the satyagraha method which he had ingeniously created in South Africa. They steeled him for the greatest all-India satyagraha campaign that would soon follow...

On 31 August 1920, Gandhi took the khadi vow: “From today for life I declare that I shall purchase for my (wear) only khaddar cloth hand-made of hand-spun yarn, cap or head-dress and socks excepted.” The following year he began the promotion of swadeshi and the boycott of British goods which sent ripples of energy across the subcontinent. He organized bonfires of foreign cloth as an act of self-purification for the sin of compliance to imperial rule: “The English have not taken India: we have given it to them. They are not in India because of their strength, but because we keep them.”

Gandhi’s insistence on using khadi instead of foreign cloth began to take effect. It was for him “the symbol of unity of Indian humanity, of its economic freedom and equality.” Public gatherings were impressively bathed in a sea of white khadi. The psychological effect this visual scenario had on the millions who participated was electrifying. Even Congress members who once preferred western garb were now proudly attired in khadi and the Gandhi top)

There were the poor who could not participate in wearing khadi nor in burning foreign cloth simply because they could not afford either. The abject misery of this latter section of the population put Gandhi in a dilemma. On the one hand, he preached the importance of khadi for puma swaraj, which, by its very meaning, included the emancipation of the poor as well. On the other hand, the khadi revolution as the means to obtaining swaraj was too expensive to include the poverty stricken. Yet, Gandhi felt they could not be left out of the freedom struggle. They had to participate, even if they were reduced to wearing loincloths.

He found it difficult to communicate these thoughts because he did not want to demand obedience to a precept that he himself had not practised. A few days later he wrote an article entitled, “My Loin-cloth.” He admitted that the change of dress was the result of ‘deep deliberation’ and the mark of a ‘momentous occasion’ in his life which ‘he could not help doing’. He also confessed that he had restrained himself from taking the plunge on two previous occasions; that the choice filled him with a legitimate apprehension of how such a public act by the leader of the Indian national movement would be received and interpreted by his contemporaries.

As one reads through the text, one is able to glimpse the anguish of Gandhi’s soul - a political leader at the head of a 300 million population yearning for...
Notes and References:

The masses in Madras watch me with bewilderment. But if India calls me a lunatic, what then? [...] Unless I went about with a loin-cloth, how might I advise others to do likewise? What should I do where millions have to go naked? [...] The dress of the millions of agriculturists in India is really only the loin-cloth, and nothing more. [...] I want the reader to measure from this the agony of my soul. I do not want either my co-workers or readers to adopt the loincloth. But I do wish that they should thoroughly realize the meaning of the boycott of foreign cloth and put forth their best effort to get it boycotted, and to get khadi manufactured. I do wish that they may understand that swadeshi means everything.59

The agony of his soul to ‘reduce himself to zero’60, not just in words but in the physicality of his public presentation was excruciatingly painful. On being asked at a conference to share his views on this manifestation of voluntary poverty he replied: “To possess nothing is, at first, not like taking your clothes off your body but like taking your flesh off your bones.”61

In September-December, 1931, Gandhi attended the Second Round Table Conference62 in London wearing open-strapped slippers notwithstanding the changes in the autumnal climate and the onset of winter.63 He insisted on wearing the loincloth because it was the ‘symbol of his mission’. 64 It was a symbol in two senses: to reveal his sincere solidarity with the poor of India whom he represented, and to show how imperialism had impoverished his country. “Millions of Indians own nothing in the world but that little strip of cloth which preserves them from disgrace. I am not leading a ‘back to the loin cloth’ movement. We have been in these straits ever since the British have ruled India.”65

In his desire for sartorial consistency with his values he even refused to compromise his attire for King George V at Buckingham Palace: "In any other dress I should be most discourteous to him because I should be artificial."66

Conclusion:

Mohandas Gandhi’s personal search for sartorial integrity is a remarkable story without parallel in the political history of the world. To him, clothing was not merely a means to a cultural or political revolution. Clothing was an essential part of his inner quest for truth. From these biographical details, one can abstract the important insights that shaped the various stages on this solitary journey towards greater authenticity.

In England he believed that conformity to prevailing fashions was the quickest way to social acceptance. In South Africa he was surprised to discover that all Indians were objects of scorn. After his close encounter with a maltreated Indian labourer, Gandhi was suddenly struck by the shallowness of his life based on prestige and appearances. He began to value simplicity, selfless service, self-reliance and community living. His exposure to war and its consequences, convinced him that human hate and misery could only be won by the power of truth and non-violence. To achieve both, one had to aim for spiritual strength through self-discipline - even to the point of renouncing the lust of the flesh by embracing celibacy. A sober costume was needed to symbolise this life-changing commitment.

On his arrival in India, he believed that Indians needed to fully appropriate their Indian attire because of its climatic, pragmatic and aesthetic advantages. They had to reject stereotypical imitations of Western clothing in the craze for social approval. With the focus clearly on swaraj through ahimsa, the most appropriate choice before all Indians was to regain the dignity of self-reliance through the manufacture of home-spun khadi. Foreign cloth had to be consigned to flames as a symbol of atonement for the sin of complicity in their own servitude to foreign rule.

Finally, the fully clothed leader had no moral right to solicit participation in the freedom struggle from those who were too poor to be fully clothed. He needed to divest himself first to make his solicitation credible. Such an act demanded extreme humility and the fortitude to be “impervious to ridicule”. It was an act in pursuance of truth at all costs, the will to be sartorially integrated, the determination to make one’s personal morality transparent to the whole world, even through one’s dress.

These insights transformed Gandhi from an English dandy to India’s Mahatma. He desired that all Indians manifest their commitment to swaraj through khadi attire.68 This option for a special garb, per se, was not new. He was merely following India’s long and sublimate tradition of yogis, sadhus and fakirs who divest themselves, in the quest for enlightenment, sometimes even beyond accepted sartorial standards.

It is therefore unlikely that Churchill - at the head of a government determined to safeguard and propagate the ‘greatest empire on earth’ - understood the full significance of his own remark. He was inadvertently stating, albeit sarcastically, what Gandhi was already striving hard to be: a ‘half-naked fakir’ intent on becoming a perfectly integrated human being.

Notes and References:

1. Churchill said: “It is [...] alarming and also nauseating to see Mr. Gandhi, a sedulous middle temple lawyer, now posing as a fakir of a type well known in the East, striding half-naked up the steps of the Vice-regal palace, while he is still organizing and conducting a defiant campaign of civil disobedience, to parley on equal terms with the representative of the King-Emperor.” R. R. James (ed.), Winston S. Churchill: His complete speeches, 1897-1963, vol. 5, New York, Chelsea House, 1974, p. 4985.
3. Ibid.
5. The western media used the word ‘loin-cloth’ to refer to Gandhi’s dress, which was, in fact, a dhobi that covered his waist up to his knees. When speaking and writing about his dress in English, Gandhi continued to use the word ‘loin-cloth’. In this article I retain the popular English term without the hyphen.
7. For three generations Gandhi's forefathers were prime ministers in states that did not form part of the British Empire. In 1876 his father became Dewan or Prime Minister and a member of the Rajasthanik court in Rajkot - a very influential body for settling disputes between the chiefs and their fellow clansmen.


14. Autobiography, p. 99. This incident was reported in The Natal Mercury, 26-5-1893: "An Indian entered the Court House yesterday afternoon and took a seat at the horseshoe. He was well-dressed and it was understood that he was an English barrister, on his way to Pretoria, where he is reported to be engaged in an Indian case. He entered the Court without removing his head-covering or salaaming, and the Magistrate looked at him with disapproval."

15. A 'cooler' is a menial labourer.


18. Cf. Ibid., p. 103.

19. Ibid., p. 121 (italics mine).


21. Ibid., p. 118.

22. Ibid.

23. Ibid. (italics mine).


25. "In the very first month of Indian Opinion, I realized that the soul aim of journalism should be service." Autobiography, p. 263.

26. For details of the story of this campaign see: Autobiography, pp. 143-146.

27. Ibid, p. 98.

28. This spirit of simplicity motivated him to declare, "I can see today that we feel all the freer and lighter for having cast off the tinsel of 'civilization'." Ibid., p. 172.

29. Ibid., p. 196 (italics mine).

30. The time-fame of these experiences is from 1897 to 1914.

31. Ibid., p. 186.


33. Unto This Last is a series of essays on social economy and simple living that was first published as a book in 1862.

34. Hermann Kallenbach was a gifted Jewish architect who was born and trained in Germany.

35. The Tolstoy Farm was Gandhi's second experiment in simple living after the Phoenix Settlement. He called it the "cooperative commonwealth... (where) families of Satyagrhis would be trained to live a new and simple life in harmony with one another." Gandhi, Satyagraha in South Africa, p. 145.


37. The combination of a kurta and a dhoti is common among men in India. The kurta is a loose long-sleeve shirt that extends beyond the waist and hangs loose over the lower garment. The dhoti is a lower garment that consists of cloth wrapped around the waist. It reaches down to the knees or to the ankles in such a way that the feet are left unimpeded for free movement.


41. CWMG, vol. 12, p. 274-276. Gandhi disclosed that his inner mourning would be to restrict himself to one meal a day.

42. "Now is the time for thinking, and having made up your minds, stick to it, even unto death." Autobiography, p. 346.

43. Ibid.

44. Ibid., p. 348.

45. Ibid.

46. See, for example, his visit to the kumbham mela at Hardvar and his decision to atone for the excesses he witnessed there. Autobiography, p. 359.


48. The full detail of this campaign is described in, Rajendraprasad, Satyagraha in Champaran, Ahmedabad, Navajivan, (1928) 1949.


52. Hind Swaraj, p. 39.


55. Cf. CWMG, vol. 21, pp. 225-227. The article was first published in Gujarati in Navajivan, 2-10-1921. Its translation in The Hindu (15-10-1921) was reproduced from the
57. Ibid.
58. The first occasion was on behalf of the famine stricken people at Khulna, the second was to protest the arrest of his friend Maulana Mahomed Ali. Cf. Ibid.
59. CWMG, vol. 21, p. 350 (italics mine). In a letter dated 23-9-1921 to his personal secretary Mahadev Desai, Gandhi wrote: “You must have noticed the great change I have introduced in my dress - I could bear the pain no longer.”
62. From November 1930 to December 1932 three Round Table Conferences were held by the British to meet the increasing demand of the Indians for self-rule.
63. Gandhi visited Europe from August to December 1931.
64. The complete quotation is: "My dress, which is described in the newspapers as a loin-cloth, is criticized, made fun of. I am asked why I wear it. Some seem to resent me wearing it [...]. But I am here on a great and special mission and my loin-cloth [...] is the dress of my principles, the people of India. Into my keeping a sacred trust has been put [...] I must therefore wear the symbol of my mission." CWMG, vol. 48, pp. 79-80.
68. This focus can be seen in Gandhi's enumeration of essential traits of a satyagrahi. The fourth criteria on the list (after faith in God, belief in satya - ahimsa, and chastity) was habitual dressing in khadi. CWMG, vol. 69, pp. 69-70. At the Dandi march he insisted that all participants be dressed exclusively in khadi. CWMG, vol. 43, pp. 178,182-183.
69. In 1901 England was in control of over one-quarter of the surface area of the world, and of most of the seas as well. Its colonies spanned the globe from East to West, such that it was often said: "The sun never sets on the British Empire." Learn History, http://learnhistory.org.uk/course/view.php?id=13 (23-12-2008)

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