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MAHATMA GANDHI'S SOCIAL
THOUGHTS AND INFLUENCE
IN THE INDIAN CIVILIZATION

TEH JUNE LI

Submission of dissertation for the
fulfillment of
Masters of Arts

Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences
University of Malaya
October 2004

Perpustakaan Universiti Malaya



A511898352

ABSTRACT

The aim of this paper is to discuss the social ideas of a great man in the 20th century, Mohandas Kamarchand Gandhi, later known as Mahatma Gandhi. His selflessness in dedicating his life and all his supporters in freeing India is but a mere tip of the iceberg. Gandhi's preoccupation was with people, at all times, even his enemies are of a great concern to him. His theories and ideas though may be divided into different parts such as politics, religion and others, his overriding concern has always been society and the civilization around him. Most of his ideas are to better the lives of people around him and the world.

In the advent of the modern society and civilization, humankind has lost much of its bearing in life, yearning for peace and fellowship with others and yet not knowing how to reach it. Gandhi's social ideas might ring a bell deep within us to help us in building our society and civilization for a better future again.

This paper contains five chapters discussing Mahatma Gandhi and his social ideas. In the first chapter, the objectives of the study are clearly stated the reasons this study is being carried out. Then, a selected range of literature was studied to identify the main social ideas of Gandhi. In addition, this chapter introduces the methodology of study of using the library research of primary and secondary data.

In the second chapter, Gandhi's background was discussed and analyzed to gain a greater insight to his philosophy and values that forms the basis of his social ideas. As Gandhi's social ideas are a fermentation and germination of his family, friends,

culture and civilization, an understanding of their influences is crucial for further understanding. This chapter then scrutinizes the four major social ideas from its definitions to its principles of work, namely: (i) *satyagraha*, (ii) *sarvodaya*, (iii) trusteeship and (iv) decentralisation. It attempts to discuss them comparatively with social theories of similar dates such as capitalism and socialism.

In the third chapter, Gandhi's four social ideas are subsequently reviewed in terms of its application and practicability in the Indian society. It studies the short-term and long-term effects of Gandhi's social ideas when they were used within his lifetime and after his death.

Finally, Gandhi's ideas were studied to see its viability in Indian civilization and the world as a whole in the fourth chapter. The impact of Gandhi's social ideas was analyzed within the context of the Indian civilization and to extract any social ideas that may be applicable for the world civilization.

The fifth chapter summarizes the effects of Gandhi's social ideas and the relevance of its principles. This chapter is the conclusion of how far Gandhi's social ideas will go and the necessity of adapting and acknowledging the wisdom of his social ideas.

ABSTRAK

Tujuan kajian ini adalah untuk mengkaji idea-idea sosial seorang umat yang ulung dari abad ke-20, Mohandas Kamarchand Gandhi, juga dikenali sebagai Mahatma Gandhi. Penglibatannya dalam arena politik untuk kemerdekaan India hanya secebis sahaja daripada perjuangan hidupnya dengan penyokong-penyokongnya. Gandhi lebih tertarik kepada hal-ehwal manusia, pada setiap waktu, hinggakan musuh-musuhnya dia juga amat prihatin. Teori-teori dan idea-ideanya mungkin boleh dikategorikan kepada politik, agama dan lain-lain. Namun begitu, perkara yang terpenting untuknya adalah masyarakat dan peradaban yang di sekitar. Kebanyakan idea-ideanya adalah untuk meningkatkan kualiti kehidupan manusia.

Dengan perkembangan masyarakat dan peradaban moden, manusia sudah kehilangan arahnya kehidupan. Mereka inginkan keamanan and persaudaraan di antara satu sama lain, namun tidak mengetahui cara untuk mencapai keinginan ini. Idea-idea Gandhi mungkin dapat mencetuskan ilham dan naluri kita untuk membina satu masyarakat dan peradaban yang mempunyai masa depan yang lebih cerah.

Kajian ini mengandungi lima bab mengenai Mahatma Gandhi dan idea-idea sosialnya. Dalam bab yang pertama, dibincang tentang objektif kajian dan tujuan kajian. Penulisan-penulisan idea-idea sosialnya juga dibincang dalam bab ini. Tambahan pula, bab ini memperkenalkan metodologi yang digunakan yakni kajian perpustakaan yang menggunakan maklumat primer dan sekunder.

Dalam bab kedua, latarbelakang Gandhi dibicara dan dianalisa untuk mendapat pemahaman yang lebih teliti mengenai falsafah dan nilai-nilainya yang merupakan inspirasi kepada idea-idea sosialnya. Oleh kerana idea-idea sosialnya adalah perkembangan daripada kehidupannya, maka keluarga, kawan, budaya dan peradaban Gandhi perlu dikaji teliti untuk pemahaman yang lebih mendalam. Bab ini turut mengkaji empat idea-idea sosial yang dikenalpasti iaitu: i) *satyagraha*, ii) *sarvodaya*, iii) *trusteeship* dan iv) *decentralization*. Bab ini juga membandingkan idea-idea tersebut dengan idea-idea yang unggul pada zaman yang sama, yakni kapitalism dan sosialism untuk interpretasi yang berlainan.

Dalam bab ketiga, keempat-empat idea sosial Gandhi dikaji dari aspek penggunaannya dan kesannya dalam masyarakat India. Ia mengkaji kesan-kesan idea-idea sosial Gandhi jangka pendek dan jangka panjang di mana mereka digunakan semasa hayat beliau dan selepas peninggalannya.

Akhirnya, idea-idea Gandhi dikaji untuk menilai kepentingannya dalam peradaban India dan dunia keseluruhannya dalam bab keempat. Impak idea-idea Gandhi akan dikaji dalam kontek peradaban India untuk mencungkil idea-idea sosial yang dapat diaplikasikan ke atas peradaban-peradaban dunia.

Bab kelima meringkaskan kesan-kesan idea-idea sosial Gandhi dan relevan prinsip-prinsipnya. Bab ini merupakan ringkasan sejauh mana pengaruh idea-idea Gandhi dan keperluan untuk mengadaptasikan dan mengakui kebenaran dan kesahihan idea-idea sosialnya.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I would like to take this opportunity to thank my two supervisors. First of all, I would like to express my gratitude and appreciation to Encik Azharrudin Dali for all his help in the initial stage of my dissertation. His generous offer of books and journals is very much appreciated and used in this dissertation. Next, I would like to thank Associate Professor Dr. Kumaran Suberamanian for his willingness to continue with the supervision until the end. I would like to thank him for giving advice and guidance along the way. Furthermore, I would like to thank Professor Dr. Mohammad Raduan bin Mohd. Ariff, Dean of Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences for overall guidance for this dissertation. In addition, I would like to thank Associate Professor Dr. Mohammad Redzuan Othman for helping out in this dissertation especially in finding supervisors for the topic in this study. In addition, I would like to thank him for his care and patience for his students. Last but not least, I would also like to extend my gratitude to my family members and friends for supporting me in this endeavor.

Teh June Li.
Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences,
University of Malaya,
Kuala Lumpur.
October 2004

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