

Forgiveness In Javanese and Batak Ethnic:

A Theoretical Framework

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Forgiveness is one of positive character which helps the individual to reach the optimal level in physical, psychological, social and spiritual health. In some years, forgiveness is used as psychotherapy to accept and release negative emotions such as anger, depression, guilty feeling as the result of unfair, facilitating the healing, self improvement, and interpersonal reconciliation in any kind of situations (Walton, 2005). Further more, forgiveness is also institutionalized so it is not only occurred on individual relationship context but also organized by institution/organization (Carroll, 2004) or even by government/country (Yancey, 2003).

Forgiveness then directly influences stabilization and mental health by reducing the level of anger, enhances immunities on cells and neuro-endocrine, releases the antibody and influences the process in central nervous system (Worthington & Scherer, 2004), forgiving enhances the healing of heart and blood vessel diseases (Worthington, 2005).

Anger, resentful, hateful which are felt by Indonesian people are interesting to be more explored, especially related to values of life and the pattern of special behavior of ethnics in Indonesia in responding the problems. Ethnic Java is known as the ethnic that gives a priority to the harmony (Koentjaraningrat, 1999). By its harmony values on Java people, every individual is demanded to place their personal necessity on second level or even release it for people's necessity. Suseno (1999) described, Java people are expected to be able to do self-control so they can be calm and do not show their surprise or confuse when they meet the people or unpleasant situations.

Java people are trained not to express unpleasant things directly. In general, Java people are considered polite if they can avoid the frank opinions (Suseno, 1999). The reactions that are developed in facing the traumatic event always show the toleration. Toleration is very useful in avoiding the conflict and keeping the interpersonal relationship or relationship between individual and group run normal.

However, the tendency of Java people to manage the traumatic event in themselves results anger and resentful in their soul. The research by Ekawati and Nashori (2006) showed that Java ethnic has aggressive and hateful which are saved in their soul.

Research by Ekawati and Nashori (2006) showed the different emotional map on Batak ethnic. Batak ethnic does not keep their aggressive too much in anger and hateful, but they show them directly. Specifically, this research showed that Batak ethnic has the more verbal and phisic aggressive. These are based on their values of life. Masrun et. all (1986) revealed that Batak people more appreciate the people who are frank, dynamic and brave. Assenting to Masrun et. all (1986), Mulder (1996) described that Batak people are critical and frank. Meanwhile, Bangun (1999) revealed that Batak Karo tribes are

honesty, undoubtful and brave, confident, not greedy and knowing their rights, pragmatic, polite, keeping the reputation of their family-name and self-esteem, rational, critical, adaptable, persistent in study and jealous. They like to express their opinion. If their self-esteem is broken by others, they will use the force as a way to prove that they are more powerful than other.

Related to the forgiveness in Java and Batak ethnic, it is interesting to investigate is the tendency of tolerant on Java ethnic will be followed by forgiving or vice versa? Is the frank in expressing the thought and feeling on Batak ethnic makes them do not like to keep anger and hateful so they easy to forgive other?

In perspective of Pennabaker (2002), when the individuals do self-express, especially when they express negative emotion verbally, it will help them release their disappointed, hatefulness, hostility, and many more. Batak ethnics who accustomed themselves to express emotion will not keep the negative emotions on themselves. Further more, negative emotion will not destruct their thoughts and feelings. If it is needed, the individuals can ask for ask for forgiveness directly, they will easy to forgive.

It is different form Java ethnic. As mentioned, Java people are considered polite if they can avoid the frank (Suseno, 1999). In this situation, people should manage their negative emotions. When they keep them, there are two possibilities. First, they release them or forgive them. Usually it is for ones who are wise and religious. Second, they trapped to keep the negative emotions, which will make them become worst because unexpressed. The serious effect is the appearance of unpredictable aggressive behaviors and no forgiveness.

Key words: forgiveness, negative emotion, Javanese, Batak