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## **Justifying Human Rights in the Diverse World**

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Abstract

James Griffin indicates that there is a problem of ethnocentricity concerning the universal applicability of human rights: if the only available justification for human rights is in Western terms, they are not universally authoritative. This article examines two coherentist approaches to this problem, the Top-Down and the Bottom-Up Models. The Top-Down Model tries to provide two kinds of solution, ontological and comparative, which we contend, fail to solve the problem. The more preferable solution which we defend is the Bottom-Up one. It provides a local case for “human rights” and justifies them in the local framework of moral evaluation. To support the claim, we provide the case of justifying human rights in the Javanese ethical system. According to the Western thought, the fact that justifies human rights is the unique value of the individual human being, whereas in the Javanese ethical system, the fact that justifies the fundamental “rights” and “duties” is the value of social harmony. In the Western thought, since human being has a special kind of value (dignity) in herself, there are some fundamental rights that must be respected and promoted in the social life. In the Javanese ethical thought, since the harmonious social state, in which everyone lives in justice and peace, is the primal state of human life, what we should do is not to promote the fundamental rights but to defend them so that human being can always live in this primal state. The upshot of this article is that this model is plausible and more preferable to solve the problem of ethnocentricity. It will also enrich our understanding of human rights and encourage us to find new ways in promoting human rights in our diverse world.

Keywords: ethnocentricity, justification of human rights, human dignity, social harmony, Javanese perspective.

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