FUNCTIONS IN TRADITIONAL NATIVE AMERICAN LITERATURE: A STUDY ON LEGENDS, MYTHS, AND SONGS

Fungsi - Fungsi dalam Kesusastraan Tradisional Penduduk Asli Amerika: Suatu Studi Tentang Legenda, Mitos, dan Nyanyian

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INTISAR

Tujuan utama dan tesis ini adalah untuk menguraikan fungsi - fungsi sastra tradisional penduduk asli Amerika, yakni legenda dan mitos yang berfungsi sebagai alat pendidikan untuk mengajar pemuda - pemudi penduduk asli Amerika tentang kepercayaan - kepercayaan dan nilai - nilai. Lagu berfungsi untuk menyemai semangat penyakit dan untuk membangkitkan semangat sehat seumur berpanggang. Tesis ini juga bermuara untuk membahas urusan yang paling sering kesusastraan penduduk asli Amerika dan seberapa penting sastra ini bagi penduduk asli Amerika, karena setiap ini tidak dapat dipisahkan dan merupakan bagian kehidupan mereka sehari-hari.

Dengan menerapkan pendekatan Interdisciplinary, pendekatan Past-Present-Future, dan pendekatan Micro to Macro sebagai dasar ilmu dalam Pengkajian Amerika, penulis berusaha menunjukkan bagaimana sastra ini tidak terlepas dan menjadi bagian kehidupan sehari-hari penduduk asli Amerika, jadi sebelum kedatangan kulit putih ke "New world" sampai dengan sekarang.

Tesis ini menunjukkan bahwa pencoretan legenda, kitab petualangan, dan mitos adalah alasan yang terbaik bagi penduduk asli Amerika untuk mengajar pemuda - pemudi mereka tentang kehidupan hidup yang baik menurut penduduk asli Amerika. Dalam setiap kegemaan, dalam setiap pekerjaan, dan dalam setiap pernyataan, penduduk asli Amerika selalu menekankan pentingnya kehidupan kepada kehidupan lagu.

Kata kunci: Penduduk Asli Amerika - Kesusastraan Tradisional - Fungsi.

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INTRODUCTION

Since colonial times, Native Americans have felt that there was something missing in the white man's idea of education, which was the Indian's intuitive feeling about nature and life. The Native Indian way of life and manner of thinking and observing the world is different from the white man's way. This impact is seen much in their young generations. They live in limbo between two worlds: one of these worlds is represented by tribal life and the beauty of the ancient ways and customs, but this world offers no share in the wealth of technological civilization and it has grown almost incomprehensible to a generation no longer brought up in the old way. The other world promises material goods and outer success but with inner emptiness. Thus in despair, Indian youths often seek refuge in a shadow world of alcohol and drugs that are honorable in neither the one world nor the other world (Motey, 1968:20). Indeed, Native American do not refuse the white men's intellect and modern technology, but they want their culture to be used as the foundation. Indian youth's bodies and hearts should be trained in the Indian way and their minds should be prepared to tackle the challenges of the American scientific age.

Today's generation of Native American faces many demands to survive and excel in the modern world. They face the challenge of maintaining Native American way of life. In the past, Native American elders handed down traditions to younger generations through the spoken word. Young Native American were responsible for seeking out this knowledge from the elders. They have to keep the Native American oral traditions alive. These oral traditions are found in their literature for Indians cannot live apart from their literature ("Traditional Values and Roles of Elders need to be incorporated into Program Design").

Native American literature has different types and purposes compared to American Literature. Native American literature consists of two types, Traditional Literature and Mainstream Literature. Traditional Literature, which includes tales, songs, and oratory, originally composed in tribal language for a tribal audience, but today the works have been composed in English. Mainstream Literature includes the works of...

Native American writers have written in English in one of the standard American genres: fiction, poetry, biography, and history (Velis, 1999:3) The American literature is written either for literature's sake or for entertainment, and to stir people's sense of beauty but it has no practical purposes, while Native American literature, on the other hand, becomes the organic part of their everyday lives and becomes the educational tool which is accepted by all, the children, youth, parents, women,
and men. Indians are not able to survive apart from their culture which is mostly handed down by their traditional literature.

Traditional Native American literature is not similar to Western literature because the basic assumption about the universe and the basic reality experienced by tribal people and by Western people is not the same. Their literary traditions differ greatly in the assumed purposes they serve. The purpose of Traditional Native American literature is never purely self-expression. The tribes do not celebrate the individual’s ability to feel emotion, for they assume all people are able to do so. One’s emotions are one’s own. The tribes seek—through song, ceremony, legend, sacred stories (myth) and tales—to embody, articulate, and share reality (Velle, 1991:7).

Traditional Native American literature is more functional than American literature. Their myths and tales are educational tools that teach the young tribal beliefs and values, which are important in creating a peaceful life. Songs are sung to cure illness, to raise the morale of the warriors before battle, and to increase the fertility of the fields. (Allen, 1983:15). Such kinds of functions almost cannot be found in mainstream American literature.

Native American people are known as the myth—maker and tellers of tales (Appleton, 1980:1). They are brought up with their culture that is learned or mostly taught orally from one generation to the next generation through their tales, orations, myths, songs, premonitions and prophecies. Most of the Native American myths are considered to be truthful accounts of what happened in the remote past, typically deal with the activities of their ancestors, the activities of gods and demigods, the creation of the world and its inhabitants, and the origin of religious rituals (Brunwawd, 1978: 99). Native American myths always address or provide answers for the questions concerning where humanity or the devil, animals and plants came from. Being the descendants, the Indian people consider these accounts as sacred and embrace them as their own beliefs and customs.

Native American tales and legends are not only narratives or stories but they contain values and prohibitions as well as the purposes and functions to teach the Indian youth moral standards such as courage, generosity, kindness, honesty, and also to teach how to live a proper life according to Indian culture. The moral teaching of those stories are strong, and they have a very effective influence on Indian character and personality. These tends to take the form of tale-telling and it tends to be more concerned with secular topic. It is most often used to transfer the lessons
of history, and the secular information which is necessary for the sur-
vival of the culture (Moye, 1970: 14, 22). The tale - tellers are usually
old men, though women and some younger individuals with specialized
knowledge also contributed. They have a wide range of purposes and
topics, ranging from mundane hunting, farming, and gathering tales in-
tended to merely instruct in the simplest, yet most necessary tasks of the
tribe, to theological tales of mythic proportions whose intent is to answer
questions basic to the human condition. Other commonly told tales are
tales of ancient times, animal tales, medicine tales, and tales of the su-
pernatural (Moye, 1970:21).

For Native American, songs and music cannot be separated. Music
has long been used as an integral part of nonsacred activities, both reli-
gious and secular. It is valued for its magical power rather than for its
aesthetic component, with its chief value to articulate the singer’s indi-
vidual relationship to the world (Allen, 1983:41). Indian songs are pro-
duced for particular purposes, such as songs for gambling and game,
and songs for the work in order to lighten labors like rowing and farming.
There are also songs that are used for the purpose of ridicule, boasting,
and in lovemaking. Magical songs are used to ensure successful hunting
or a good harvest of food or tobacco. Native American songs have some
functions, such as, to cure illness, to raise morale before battle and to
ensure the fertility of the field.

Oratory, which plays an extremely important part in Indian life, is
used by the Indian chiefs as a medium to persuade their people. Red
Jacket, a Seneca’s orator, uses his rhetorical prowess refusing the Whites
through his orations Speech to Missionary Crem, Speech to Mr.
Richardson (Vele, 1991:15). Tecumseh, the Shawnee chief as reported
to have a voice that resounded over the multitude, hurling out his words
like a succession of thunderbolts (Newton, 1992:23).

All these kinds of literature are sacred, important and involved in
Native Americans daily lives. They are the parts of the Native American
people’s spiritual development.

METHOD OF RESEARCH

The method applied in this study is library research that used to
collect the data, written sources as well as electronic sources. The written
sources include books relevant to the study of Native American litera-
ture, their cultural anthropology, are (songs), history, philosophy and
social science. The electronic sources which are derived from the Internet
also provide much information related to Native American. Films and
Electronic journals are very useful and helpful for comparison and as additional resources in discussing Native American literature. All the selected data are focused on the Native American literature, especially on the traditional Native American literature. The compiled sources are interpreted to give clear explanations about the traditional and mainstream Native American literature and their functions. All of the data are obtained from the American Studies Library of Gadjah Mada University, Graduate Program Library of Gadjah Mada University, Library of Philosophy of Gadjah Mada, Kajian Wilayah Amerika of University of Indonesia, Jakarta, Dr. Djuhertti Imam Muhri M.A., private collection, and from the internet. In elaborating the functions of Native American literature, the writer uses the American Studies perspectives of Henry Nash Smith's Interdisciplinary approach, McDowell's Past-Present-Future approach, and Leo Marx' Micro to Macro approach.

As the objects of the writer are artifacts or the product of cultural phenomenon, the writer follows what Henry Nash Smith in his essay "Can American Studies Develop A Method?" suggested the students of Literature 'to take account sociological, historical and anthropological data and method' (Kwit, 1980:14). Sociology as the science of nature and the growth of society and sociological behavior needs to be applied to study about the nature and social behavior of the Indians, and how they lived. Anthropology, which studies about man and the development of mankind, needs to be applied for the Indians live dynamic lives and they face some significant developments. The process of this development influenced their literature, that is from the Oral Literature to Life History then to Written Literature. History is very important to be dealt with for the past and the description of the past events will be the major data for this research. History, Anthropology, and Sociology cannot be separated for they all have the same recognition of aspects of the culture.

In his American Studies: Time and the College, McDowell prints out that the past has continuity with the present and the future. They are an interlocking sequence. There would be no present without the past, and the present is and becomes the bridge of the past and the future, in terms which both the historian and the scientist can accept (McDowell, 1948:1-5). People in the present can learn from the past, like the American Indians do. For the future of their lives, Indians must defend their culture, especially their literature so that what happened to their ancestors will not happen again to them.

Leo Marx's Micro to Macro approach said that from a small object or artifact we can grasp the big picture. Literary work represents the situation of time when the work was written. Through a literary work,
we can understand many aspects, such as the politics, economy, culture, and history of a particular time and place. The 'micro' work is the representation of the 'macro' universe. In this thesis, the writer will apply the Micro to Macro approach in which the life of Black Elk and the Sioux people will represent the hundred Native American tribes.

ANALYSIS

The primary objective of this study is to elaborate on the functions of traditional American Indian literature. Legends and myths are the educational tools that teach the young tribesmen about beliefs and values, and songs are sung to cure illness and to raise morale before battle.

The Educational Functions in Legends and Myths

Culture has the responsibility to pass customs onward, especially to pass the information to the youth. It is essential to have these values passed on to the young for 'values are instrumental to give direction to human lives' (Gleason, 1995:5), just like the rail function to keep a train moving on its way. Parents may use both examples of behavior and discipline to emphasize values, and a society's system of education and religious institutions are usually significantly involved in passing these to the young. Fundamental values are also picked up by media of communication and by the arts and by literature (Benedict, 1934: 56).

Native American life centers on the seasons and the natural world. The traditional Native American value and belief systems are still based on a uniquely Indian way of life. They consider their traditions not a discrete, intact thing, but rather a treasure which can only be taught by example. It is alive in Indian people and is not codified in a set body of knowledge that can be learned from a book, a CD-Rom or a video.

Native American passed down the traditional ways by learning and growing from each other through everyday practice and oral tradition. They learn through practices of observation, listening and doing. Everything in their living was a lesson. For example, the parents taught their children to feed guests and practice hospitality, share and respect elders. They taught the American Indian the family. Native American are just Native American passed down the traditional ways by learning and growing from each other through everyday practice and oral tradition. They learnt through practices of observation, listening and doing. Everything in their living was a lesson. Storytelling is another way of learning about traditional ways. In the old time, stories in the Ojibwe and Dakota tribes were told only when there was snow on the ground. This was
because they believed that certain stories and words were too powerful to be talked about at other times of the year. Once the harvest and hunting were over, and the wood was collected, people sat around, told stories and talked about their ways of life when they were growing up.

The storytelling tradition is still integral to Native Americans. Stories were for entertainment during the long winter months, and so served to hand down values and beliefs. Many values are presented in the Sioux tale of The Story of Two Young Friends.

Through the characters of Chaske and Hake, the Indian youths are taught how to live in a proper Indian life that they should help respect, be loyal, be honest, and be kind to anybody (McLaughlin, 1960: 120). A Navaho myth of The Creation or Age of Beginning provides many Indians beliefs which are respected and believed by the Indian descendants. This story tells about Native American Navaho ancestors’ daily lives, which their were embraced as their beliefs (Turner, 1974: 190-195).

Native American elders want the younger generations to live and learn according to Native American values. The younger generations need to learn about the values system. They need to learn the values of fortitude, industry, generosity, love, honor, respect, courage, wisdom, leadership, duty and reverence ("Important Knowledge for Younger Generation"). They need to be taught to share as well as to respect — not taught to fear, because when someone is respectful, there will be no fear. The youth and the kids are taught to use only what is necessary and to give thanks for that which they have and not to forget to give to their neighbors. In the old days, the elders employed these communal values, for they had to help others to survive. The value of sharing manifests itself in Native American practice of adopting people into their families. They used take a child who had no parents, as orphan, into their hands. Sharing and helping others were values and qualities especially important in Native American leadership in which the leader had to show respect, to take care of and feed his people. Hake in the tale of The Story of Two Young Friends was very happy when his friend’s father took him to be one of the Chaske’s family (the name of Hake’s friend). Chaske and his father took pity on Hake for being a poor orphan. They realized that it was their responsibility to help and care for such kind of boy (McLaughlin, 1960:120).

Native American values of moral standards

Moral cannot be separated from the existence of the human themselves. Morals are inherent in human life. It is a fact that whole nations in
this world have their rules of moral 
"... the universal existence of a body of base rules of morality present in all societies without distinction of race and culture" (Gieseck, 1959: 183), with no exception of the primitives.

In living together as a society, contradiction cannot be avoided. Different cultures have different values which bring different views, ethics, ideal and will. What is good for one culture can be bad for others, or what is beautiful for a community can be ugly for other communities. What makes these differences are the differences of place and time and characterization which usually become the source of conflicts (Gazabba, 1978: 468-510). Therefore, in order to create a harmonious life, moral values are adopted as an instrument to manage human behavior and conduct (Poesoprodjo, 1986: 102). Such conflict can be seen between American and Native American cultures. In the United States of America, ethical and religious values have connection with the basic ideas of the Puritanism, their forbearers' beliefs, but this can not be accepted by Native Americans for they have their own set of beliefs long before the coming of the white people to America. These two cultures have different ways of life because they adopt different perceptions on this world, and as the result, conflicts cannot be avoided.

Indians used to live in simplicity, honesty, happiness and harmony with the respect to all the gifts and the elders. But since the emergence of Industrialism in the early decades of the twentieth century, the Americans changed. They put aside many moral values and created a new lifestyle which led to the degradation and destruction of society. Indians honor all part of the earth and 'any pretty pebble was valuable, every growing tree an object of reverence' (Eastman, 1908: 58), while the Americans tend to be materialistic for they estimate every thing in dollars. Most of them do not care about ethical and religious doctrines in gaining wealth (Horton, 1967: 543). 3.1.2 Native American moral standards Native American built a rigid system of physical training, a social and moral code that was the law of life. This system was based upon the truth that 'no man can hope to maintain a perfect body, supple, symmetrical, graceful, and enduring beyond the period of adolescence, unless he is able to control his indulgence in the pleasure of the senses' (Eastman, 1908: 91-92). They believe that silence is the Corner-Stone and the basic idea of morality is the absolute balance of body, mind, and spirit. The fruits of this silence are self-control, true courage or endurance, patience, dignity, and reverence.
Courage

Since the coming of the white men to America, the Indians had been facing anxiety of spiritual. Indeed they had been working out to get their first victory, a conquest over anxiety of spiritual, their fear of loss of power to keep their identity as Native American.

Native Americans assert the truly brave man would bear no fear, no anger, or no mental or physical suffering for he has to master himself in all times. He has to have the ideal qualities of courage, honor, courtesy and love of his country, even be ready to defend it. In the old days, the Indian chiefs described courage as follows: "Let neither cold, hunger, nor pain, nor the fear of them, neither the bristling teeth of danger nor the very jaws of death itself, prevent you from doing the right deed." (Eastman, 1908: 119) to motivate their people before going to hunt buffaloes for food.

In the legend of The Brave Who Went on the Warpath Alone and Won the Name of the Lone Warrior, courage was found in a very poor Lone warrior, who had no fear when leaving his village to go on the warpath alone without any provisions, gun, or anything which could be used to protect himself from the enemies. He carried nothing except a small knife given by his father, which was unusual for Indians who wanted to go on the warpath. Usually they go with friends, and took provisions guns and horses. By using his only knife, Lone Warrior succeed to kill his enemies and brought home the enemies' horses, and he became a warrior. (McLaughlin, 1960: 89-90).

Warfare was regarded as a custom and an organized tournament or trial of courage and skill. It was the time for the warriors to be honored with the eagle feathers as a symbol of their success. Warfare helped to develop the quality of man-lines and its motive was chivalric or patriotic, never the desire to increase the territory or to overthrow a brother nation.

Lone warrior had to be victorious his struggle, whatever came to against him. He realized that the enemy's head and horses were the symbols he had to obtain if he wanted to live among his people. Killing an enemy was the way of the Indian self-actualization. If he failed, he would be cast out by his people for he was not able to fulfill the conditions to be an Indian man. Failure meant a violation of the rules, and was considered an immoral thing. This made Lone Warrior have to defend himself when the owner of the horses he had stolen came after him. He had to, if not, he would be killed. What made Lone warrior fearless was that he thought he was doing a right deed. Indians believed that anytime they
were doing or working a good thing, they would finish it successfully for
the Great Spirit was always with them to help and to bless. Since the
American Indians have become civilized, killing, which once was con-
sidered an honor and the right thing to do, against the law and is consid-
ered immoral, but that courage itself still exists. If in the old days cour-
age was needed and tested in war, now it is needed to defend the Indi-
ans' identity and way of life, as one of the American nations, and also
needed to do everything that is considered right and is accepted as the
true.

Generosity

Native Americans have a belief that the love of possessions is a weak-
ness to be overcome. Materialism's appeal is to human greed, and, if al-
lowed its way, it will disturb the spiritual balance of man. Therefore, a
child must learn early the beauty of generosity. He is taught to give what
he prizes most that he will taste the happiness of giving. At an early age,
he is made to be the family almoner, to be a man who likes to give money
and help the poor. If a child is inclined to be grasping or to cling to any of
his little possession, legends are related to him, telling of the contempt
and disgrace upon the ungenerous man. When Chaske, in the legend of
the Story of Two Young Friends, knew that the girl he loved so much in
fact did not return his love but chose his friend Hake, it made him very
sad (McLaughlin, 1960:120). But there was no hatred in his heart. Chaske
never asked Hake to pay back all the help of protection and food he had
given to Hake even though he had right to. He had a right to compel
Hake to give Pretty Feather to him, but he did not do it because he loved
Hake. He had learnt the value of giving since he was young. He gave
what he prized most, Pretty Feather, the girl he loved, to Hake, and he
felt happiness in doing it. Chaske realized that Hake needed Pretty Feather
and he was sure she needed Hake too. Chaske would feel happy when
Hake was happy.

One of the important Indian ceremonies is the Public giving. It prop-
erly belongs to the celebration of birth, marriage, death, or the event of
giving special honor to someone. Upon such an occasion, it is common to
give things to others. In their simplicity, they give away all that they have
to relatives, to guests of other tribes or clans, but above all to the poor and
the aged, from whom they can hope for nothing in return (Eastman,
1908:100-102).

The true Indian sets no price upon either his property or his labor.
His generosity is only limited by his strength and ability. He regards it as
an honor to be selected for a difficult or dangerous service, and would
think it shame to ask for any reward. He would rather say: “Let him whom I serve express his thanks according to his own bringing up and his sense of honor!” (Eastman, 1908:165).

A time of giving to one another took place during the ceremony when a girl entered womanhood. In that ceremony, the girl would be given much advice as to how to be a good girl and do the women’s daily work. People would come and give gifts to one another. They would give anything they could or had. This was one of the main ways the Indians were taught to be kind and generous to their fellow men. Those people instilled in that young girl that she had to be kind and generous to all those people who were in need, to all those who came in contact with who needed to be helped.

**Kindness**

Kindness is very important for the Indians’ live in order for them to live in harmonious relationship. All people, the youths, the adults and old need to practice kindness. Chaske in the legend of Story of the Two Young Friends, was the figure of a good and kind person. He loved to help people, especially those who were poor, unfortunate and helpless. Even though he belonged to a very rich family, he was not selfish and spiteful. Being a son of the leading war chief made him always be sought after by the rest of the boys in their village. Those boys thought that Chaske would choose one of them to be his close friend but Chaske never did, for he was more interested in a generous and truthful poor Hake. Chaske chose Hake as his Koda (friend) and they became brothers which made Hake happy. The reason why Chaske helped Hake was because Chaske knew that as a human Hake needed clothes, food, friends and protection to survive. He had no parents to give him food while Chaske had everything he needed. Chaske wanted to support Hake’s life by sharing what he had.

Adopting and caring for the orphans and the aged were not done by the parents, but by the whole clan. After Chaske chose Hake as his Koda, Hake was taken to the lodge of Chaske’s parents and dressed up in fine clothes and mocasins. For the Indians “when a son claimed any one as his friend, the friend thus chosen was adopted into the family as their own son.” (McLaughlin, 1960:120). Since then, Hake had a new family, place to live, and sufficient food. The Indian parents would be very happy and proud to have their daughters visit the unfortunate and the helpless, carry them food, comb their hair and mend their garments. When people came together to comb hair it was a kind of leisure period for them. In those periods they would talk about many things related to their com-
munity. Combing hair served the purpose that they had time to visit (Morey, 1970:83).

Honesty

In the very early days, lying was a capital offense among the Indians. They believed that the deliberate liar is capable of committing any crime behind the screen of cowardly untruth. He was to put to death, then so that the evil might not go further. Honesty was taught among the Indians in their daily life. If anyone had a habit of lying, he became an outcast to the tribe. This was to advise the people that this person had become a liar and the tribe would not accept any of his promises or other actions (Eagawon, 1908:114-114-116). Honesty was also found between the two friends, Chaske and Hake. Chaske loved and respected Hake more and more every day because he found Hake was really a good, honest friend and a brother to him. When both of them came to the age to select a sweetheart, they would go together and make love to a girl. They always helped each other to win the affection of the girls they liked. Once Chaske loved the most beautiful girl in their village, Pretty Feather. But when Pretty Feather told Chaske that Hake was the man she chose, Chaske felt that Hake had betrayed him and did not tell him the truth and thought that Hake must have made love to her. But he did not let that bad thought influence him. Silence was what Chaske needed so that he could think positively. It was true that Hake was never dishonest to Chaske. He found that Hake himself did not know that Pretty Feather loved him. Hake was always honest in his words, deeds and thought toward Chaske.

Valuable Indian Beliefs

Native American beliefs are handed down orally by the elders through myths, legends, and tales. Some of their beliefs are found in the myth of The Creation or Age of Beginning. It was believed to be the story of their ancestor which made them follow what the figures used to do in their daily lives, especially what the protagonists, First Man and his wife, First woman did. They embraced those daily activities as their beliefs and customs, such as:

- When someone makes a mistake, he does not get down on his hands and knees and ask for forgiveness. He has a medicine or sage to cleanse himself of his mistakes, of his bad feelings and thoughts. He just lights sage and smudges his body and it will purify his body from bad feel-

ings.

- Wherever an Indian enters his new house or place to live, he will
pray and give offerings to the Great Spirit so that the Great Spirit will bless the house and the dwellers.

- Sweat houses or lodge houses will be built to revitalize those who are tired physically and spiritually, and this must be done sacrificially. Indians believe in the world of Spirits, which is placed above the world they live in now. They consider the Spirits so sacred, powerful, and holy that they always worship those Spirits for guarding and giving them places to live.

- Telling stories of myths, tales, and legends is forbidden in the working season or time. They do not do it anytime except at night during winter time, after the time of working has passed (Turner, 1974:181-195). Such beliefs that the Indians have held since long ago make them live peacefully, for they respect all life as sacred, and it is a fundamental American Indian value. This respect involves being humble and thankful for the gifts in life. The traditional values are linked to caring for other living things because everything created by the Creator is sacred and caring for nature is a reciprocal relationship.

The Functions of Songs

Music can give not only joy and comfort, but it also has strong power to control body as well as mind. Music enveloped the Indian’s individual and social life like an atmosphere. There was no important experience where music did not play a part, nor any ceremony where it was not essential to the expression of religious feeling. Indians adopted this universal use of music because they believed music was a medium of communication between man and the unseen. The invisible voice could reach the invisible power which permeated through all nature. As success depended upon the help of this mysterious power, therefore, in every avocation, in every undertaking, and in every ceremony, the Indian appealed to this power through songs (Fletcher 1995: 114).

Songs are sung to cure illness

Besides giving joy and comfort, song is also one of the ways of expressing feelings of happiness and sadness. For the Indians, a song is more than an expression. It is a medium to have contact with their Great Spirit. When religious people need something they usually ask their God in prayer, so do the Indians. But before coming to the prayer, first they sing songs dedicated to their Great Spirit. Each time they have need of food, guidance, comfort, healing a sickness or anything, they would ask for help from the Great Spirit through songs. These songs are used as
"the medium of communication between the man and mysterious power typified in the vision" (Fletcher, 1978:22). Indian people believe their Great Spirit loves songs.

Indian songs are not the medicines to cure the illness but they are one of the means in the process of curing. Indian medicine men have medicine as well as other western doctors. White doctors apply the chemical medicine but the Indians have the healing herbs, roots, and water to cure the illness. Their songs are used to comfort or to calm the patient. Medicine can not work if the patient’s nerves are strained. He has to be calmed down first so that his body can accept the medicine and let it do its work. Songs and music can be used to stimulate the patient’s nerves. In supporting the curing of the sickness, the patient needs the comfort which can be given by curing, love, or soft music and song (Osborne, 1987:97).

In the process of curing the sickness, song takes the first step which is then followed by others. Why are songs first, or very, beside, using the herbs, pipe and water, does Black Elk, Indian medicine-man in the Narrative of Black Elk Speaks, have to sing a song? Because it is their belief which Black Elk sees, hears, and is taught in his vision that all creatures, animals, and the sun in the world of the Six Grandfathers, used to sing songs whenever they want to express something. Through his vision, Black Elk finds that the Six Grandfathers are pleased by songs. He is very sure that after hearing the songs of the Indian, the Great Spirit will be pleased, and He will bless His people and fulfill His people’s need (Nethardt, 1961:200-203). The Indians’ songs really have great function in the process of curing sickness. Many people think it is only a suggestion, but that is the fact, they still exist until now. From the first time the Native Indians came to America, they never knew or accepted any kind of white doctors for they had their own - the shamans or medicinal men - and they were able to help cure illness with their own methods.

Songs are sung to raise morale before battle

Beside being used in curing sickness, song also is very much needed for war. Indian war songs are sung in many times and places: the night before going to the battlefield, in the battlefield or after the battle. Before going to the battle - field, the Indians used to hold a war party the night before. They dance and sing to stimulate the warriors and to promote courage and to raise morale "of confidence, enthusiasm, and determination" (Oxford Advanced Learners Dictionary, 1989: 804) of the warriors. The women sing and men dance acting as warriors in the battle - field.
Singing war - songs did not guarantee the victory in the battle-field, but they made the warriors braver, at least to survive. Even though the women never join in battle, they also have responsibility for the victory their men seek. They participate by singing songs for they believe their songs will be heard by the warriors hence will arouse the warriors' courage to keep fighting (Nethardt, 1987:116-117).

CONCLUSIONS

There is a unique thing can be found when we study about Native American literature, especially the traditional Native American Literature. Most people or nations in this world consider or use literature as a social institution or a communication medium in giving the information, but Native Americans make their literature as the organic part of their every day lives. They can not live without their literature. Their literature takes part in every experience of their every day lives from their cradles to their graves, and it is usually handed down from parents to the children or from one generation to other generations orally, either by telling the stories, by singing the songs, or by performing dances.

People used to educate their children by taking them to schools, but Native American family is better qualified to teach their youth at home or acquire somebody who has knowledge of the legends, tales and myths who can teach at home. They consider schools as the secondary efforts. It is found that Indian's moral teaching of legends and tales are strong and have a very effective influence on Indian character and personality. The elders who have responsibility to pass on their culture to their young generations choose telling stories as the efficient way in educating their youth for almost Native American legends, tales, and myths contain moral values.

The two Sioux legends entitled The Brave Who Went on the Warpath Alone and Won the Name of the Lone Warrior and The Story of Two Young Friends, and A Navaho myth of The Creation or The Age of Beginning contain many Indian beliefs, customs, and moral standard of courage, generosity, kindness and honesty. These Seflies, customs and morals standard are very important for Native American people in creating a harmonious life. These values are needed very much to give direction to their lives. If in the old days, Native American people did not know any kind of printed media, but nowadays, we can see hundreds of Indian tribe's stories have been printed, and these make the Indian elders easier in educating and passing on their culture to their youth.

By studying Native American literature, it is found that songs, as
one of the form of traditional Native American literature, really have
great functions for Native American people. Songs are not only the way
to express their feeling of happiness and sadness, but they also use songs
as their medium to have contact with their Great Spirit whenever they
need food, guidance, comfort, protection, or anything they need. Native
American songs are interwoven throughout the whole texture of Indian
society. From the old days until now, gratitude, either for success in hunt-
ing, for triumphs in war, or for any community feast and religious cer-
emony, is expressed through songs. When people need help or power
from God, they will pray, but Native Americans dedicate their songs first,
then they say their prayer to their Great Spirit.

It is true and has proved that songs can not be separated or is an
organic part of Native Americans daily lives. This proof can be seen in
Black Elk narrative. Black Elk Speaks. In every avocation, especially in
preparing the war and curing the sickness, the Sioux people always ap-
teal to the power of songs. There are more than five times of the process
of curing the sickness are told in that narrative and not even one of them
do not use songs. Medicine would not work or be applied as long as
songs had not sung yet. Many people think such power of songs is only a
suggestion. But that is the fact, that many Native American people are
cured and the Indians still exist until now.

It is really interesting to study Native American literature, especially
traditional native American literature for it can enrich our knowledge
about Native American people and it may wipe off the images of savage
people or noble animal which once given to Native American people.

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