

REVEALING THE LEADERSHIP CHARACTERS OF WOMEN OF ARFAK TRIBE, WEST PAPUA, THROUGH ORAL LITERATURE

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Abstract

Papua holds tight patrilineal or lineage on the part of men as a strong holder of leadership, and has the right to inheritance, while women have rights to use the inheritance. Regarding leadership rights, the oral literature of the Arfak Mountains of West Papua (PEGAF), reveals a unique fact about the role of women as strong and wise leaders. This study uses an ethnographic approach with the aim of (1) describing the female character of Arfak transmitted through oral literature, (2) describing the leadership role of Arfak women transmitted through oral literature and its relevance to daily life, and (3) describing social values culture transmitted through oral literature as the identity of the Hattam tribe, Meyah tribe, Sougb tribe, and Mulei tribe in Arfak mountains (Pegaf). The findings of this study provide the fact, that since the presence of the ancestors of Arfak on the land of Cenderawasih, there have been women who acted as leaders of society in the traditions and culture of Arfak.

Keywords: Arfak tribe, women's character, women's role, social-cultural values.

1. Introduction

Formerly, in West Papua traditions, women of some tribes did not have any rights in traditional land ownership, they even did not involve in custom-related discussions. These women only warranted the rights to use the land as a place to live. On the contrary, men are entitled to inheritance. Arfak Tribe consists of four ethnic groups. Those groups are Meyah, Hatam, Moile, and Sougb. In term of kinship system, the four groups hold the patrilineal descent system. In patrilineal system the inheritance goes through the male descendants. Sumiarni, et al. (2018, p. 98) to trace back the lineage of Arfak descendants, we must brought up to the fathers. We use unilateral patrilineal system, meaning that we trace the descendant from one line only, from the male lineage.

In this context, it is implied that men are leaders in their households. And they also have the communal land rights in their tribes. Women are considered as the companion of male

in marriage. Male and female are biologically different. However; they are similar in terms of intelligence and talents to make a self-actualization (Martha, Asri & Hayati, 2019). The differences do not have impact of the family harmony. The differences are complementary in nature. The reality was carried out in an orderly manner in which women realized the difference between them and men in customary rules. Ritzel & Douglas (2016, p. 496) highlights that cultural feminism has focused on exploring the values adopted by women, including the way they differ from men.

Along with the advance of time, women have started to participate in organization. From the experience and their experiences, they started to get their existence. This is a reflection the social image maintained in women. Sugihastuti (2000, p. 143) explained that the social image of women had to do with norm and value system of a society. The concept of women image is a concept embedded in the oral literature of the Arfak people.

Oral literature has a good impact upon the life of Arfak society. The content of the oral literature in the form of folktales had become the source of knowledge for Arfak people. They believe that the folktales send the messages from their ancestors about the custom and tradition.

The phenomenon of what, who, how, character, and the role of the women native to Arfak tribe in traditional and cultural perspectives was found through Arfak's oral literature. Oral literature has a good impact to the life of Arfak people. The content of oral literature which was known as folktales was the medium of the knowledge of Arfak society. They believe that those folktales are the messages from their ancestors Ratna (2018, p. 679), insisted that the characters of the society in the past are hidden in the oral literature. Oral literatures are inherited from the ancestors. Asri, (2019) explained that literary works may serve as a product that expresses the rights of the women. Those works may inform the readers about the fight of women over the bound cultural system. Turaeni (2010, p. 257) proposed that the existence of women in the literary works is a manifestation of a motto "hidden" in women about their real condition and their involvement in development.

The previous proposition is in line with the story in Arfak oral literature which indicates that the women of Arfak people have had the ability to lead the society. They care about the welfare of the people. They can differentiate between customs and the social demands for society. Their attitude and actions which were reflected in the oral literature are cultural facts of about the leadership of Arfak women. It is an evident that although leadership is on men in the patrilineal system, Arfak women also have the leadership talents as shown in the oral literature. This phenomenon proves that the study of Arfak oral literature is a very interesting study and may give an orientation about the role of women in leadership. Therefore, the study of Arfak oral literature is worth to be considered.

2. Literature Review

This concept is also emphasized in the contemporary literature about the latest cultural feminism developed in Carol Gilligan's argument that women run a method of moral reasoning that is different from men. Gilligan compared these two ethical styles as "ethics of compassion", which issued by women and focus on achievement of results when all parties feel that their needs are being addressed and responded to, and "ethics of justice" that is used by men and focused on the protection of the equality of rights of all parties (Gilligan & Attanucci, 1988). Women realize that they play their roles as wives and mothers. They are the partners of the husband, and they should also raise and care for their children. Besides that, they also play their social roles in the society.

There has been a lot of writing about the role of women, where most of the publicized literatures are in gender issues. For example, the concepts of transition from domestic to

public: a long search for women's identity which was proposed by Abdullah (2006, p. 18). He mentioned that by observing the domestic and public domains, it is clearly seen how the realities of women's lives are built and produced to strengthen the gender ideology which is directly related to the ideology of familialism in society. Harsono (2006, p. 272) explains the concept of the women's movement in: Between women's interests and gender politics. She described gender as the core formulation of women's movement which is a concrete action of gender equality efforts. As known, the formulation of women's interests will conceptually affect the praxis. The concept is known as gender political interests. In the study of Ecofeminism, Yuliati (2014, p.17) explained her idea about Tengger women's knowledge of Land, Water and Forests. She found Tengger women's perceptions of land conversion and land function changes were generally similar to men's. Mulyadi (2018), in revealing the image of women in Maria the short story, a feminist literary analysis, described how the writer told the story of Maria's struggle to fight for gender inequality. Samosir Lefaan & Heppy (2016) wrote about "The Identity of Fakfak Women", that described the personality of women native to the Mbaham-Matta-Wuh tribe who were provided by ancestral mandates through tradition and customs, as the reflection of cultural values that should be upheld, respected, valued because women are the "spirit of humanity" that save all people of Mbaham-Matta-Wuh. The female figure is a meaningful mirror. Therefore, the Mbaham-Matta-Wuh tribe has a philosophy that says woman is "the land, nutmeg, and womb of a mother". There had been a lot of studies about the roles, character, and position of women in Indonesia.

Based on the preposition, the special topic regarding the role of women native to West Papua is not yet largely publicized, in contrary to the numerous publications on this issue outside West Papua. This was due to the influence of strict customary rules in certain ethnic environments. If observed deeply, the preservation of the traditional customs and culture on one side are actually closely related to the values of maintaining women's dignity which are remarkable. On the other hand, in the perspective of modern life, the context has an impact on the slow pace of women to step forward in development. Another impact on the attachment of indigenous traditions and ethnic culture is that women are labeled as the subordinates of men. In line with the concept. Gobay (2007, p. xiv) explains that almost all tribes in West Papua, perhaps because of paternalistic culture, has a generally prevailing view that values women as the second-class (subordinate) of men. Therefore, there is a kind of social division based on sex.

3. Research Methods

This research uses qualitative approach of ethnographical type. This method is used in order to prevent from misinterpretation in regards with the identity of the tribe communities. This research is categorized as a qualitative research because of the following reasons. First, data of the research were derived from the story tellers in the form of written or spoken stories, not in numbers. Second, as stated in the background of the study, the problems of the study were taken from the phenomenon of Arfak people. Third, the techniques of the research involve the important role of the researchers from start to finish. Research has an active role in collecting, selecting, determining, and interpreting data.

Spradley (2007, p. 4) suggested that the objectives of ethnography are to understand the perspective of the native, their relationship with the world to get their worldview. Data of the research are from interviews inquiring on ideas, events, and actions of the informants to show the focus of the problems. The collected data are then explicated based on the sub focus of Arfak cultural orientation through the characters of Arfak women, leadership role

of Arfak women, and sociocultural aspects of Arfak transmitted to the oral literature. The source of research data are the stories from the informants. The informants were selected based on the following criteria (1) the natives of Arfak, (2) 40-70 years old, (3) physically and mentally healthy, (4) are fluent in telling stories in the Arfak language, (5) heard the stories from their parents, (6) live in Arfak mountains, and (7), know the custom and culture of the Arfak. Data were collected using the techniques of observation and interview. Observation was conducted by recording the story tellers, by observing the events in the story, observing the social condition of Arfak people and nature described in the folktales of Ntay people and sago palm tree. Recording was conducted using Canon camera and Panasonic handycam. Observation and field record were used to observe and record important things in regard with the story telling when it was performed by the story tellers. Data analysis was conducted since the beginning of data collection. In collecting data, the researcher also conducted data reduction, data presentation, data interpretation, and making conclusion. Data analysis was performed based on the concept analysis of Miles and Huberman (1992, pp. 16-20).

4. Results and Discussion

Arfak people aware that women are not only mothers in their family, but they also play their role as the survivor of Arfak tribe. This idea had been proved by the ancestors of the Arfak people. In tradition and custom, women only have the rights to use the heritage, but they did not make it as a problem. Women reflects the peaceful life of family and Arfak society. The messages are transmitted through the oral literature. Humanism values in terms of moral, social, and culture are transmitted through Arfak oral literature, as the dignity of the identity of Arfak women in West Papua.

4.1 Revealing the Leadership Characters of Women Native to Arfak Tribe, West Papua, through Oral Literature (Getting to Know Arfak Tribe Women in Customs and Tradition)

The personality of Arfak women are shaped and derived first from their parents. When they are still in the childhood period, the knowledge about Arfak women tradition had been taught by the parents in the family. The physical change in Arfak girls in a certain age are easily known by the parents, especially the mother. If the mother sees the changes, she will teach her daughter how to take care of herself, how to cook, how to help parents working in the garden, and how to raise pigs. The teaching continues until the girl grows up, and get prepared to get married. Not only has the mother, the father also transferred his knowledge about family life to his daughter. This tradition is performed when they are at home or in the garden. Usually the father will give advises first in the morning when they have breakfast. The basic knowledge for Arfak women is the knowledge or gardening and raising pigs. Plantation is the source of their life which produces taro and sweet potato. Pigs should be taken care such as they take care of themselves because pigs are the highest value for the dowry.

In addition, the Arfak tribe's also has a teaching about the nature of women who will later conceive and give birth to their husband's offspring. Therefore, Arfak has a special house for women who at a certain age will experience the maturity process through menstruation. This house is called "House of Centipedes/*Rumah Kaki Seribu*".



Figure 1. On the left, the shape of Arfak traditional house. On the middle and right, the interior of house of centipede (Lefaan's document, 2019).

A special house for women during menstrual period is located not far from the main house (the family house) but smaller and is positioned next to the main house. During menstruation, the girls will stay separate from their parents. After the menstrual period ended, she returns to live with her parents and siblings in the main house. Similarly when a married woman is pregnant, she and all the supplies for her baby birth needs are placed in the special house, made especially for the baby's birth process. It has become a customary rule that women who will give birth may not live with her husband. She will be accompanied by her mother or siblings and mother-in-law and sister-in-law in a separate house, like the women in menstrual period. She must stay in the house until the umbilical cord of the child falls (cut off) or forty days after the baby delivery. After this period, the newborn and the mother then return to their main house to live with the husband.

In term of domestic sphere, Arfak women realize their role in reproduction system. Besides that, they also know that they are the partners of their husbands. They use the skills that had been taught by their parents for housekeeping, cooking, gardening and planting, raising pigs, and harvesting.

Arfak women natives are very important for the family and community. Arfak women are hard workers and loyal to the family. They knew their obligation when they are in menstrual period, in pregnancy, give birth, raising, nurturing, and educating their children about the tradition. Sometimes they should also take over the husband's role when the husband goes far away or work outside for a long time, or when the women turn to be widows. They take all the obligations, and do not see them as burdens.

According to an informant, once entering the world of civilization, Arfak's women were enlightened in terms of discussion about traditions. Formerly, women who were able to speak about traditions and were able to become leaders were those who came from wealthy families (having lots of pigs, original Eastern fabrics or so called old Eastern fabrics with high social class motifs). The wealth defines the influence in social status and has a positive impact on the children of the family, especially women. Henceforth, native women of Arfak began to step forward in various fields of education along with the rapid demands of times. Through this research, one of the Arfak women, Mrs. Salomina Injanmusi, M.Kes. who is now one of the representatives of the indigenous Arfak women with a health education background, contributed her thoughts. Mrs. Salomina has a lot of experience in her life, especially in her ministry in the community.

With her capacities, she is now has a position in West Papua, representing the Arfak women figure as a women's commission in the West Papua People's Assembly. Even though she is in the best position, Mrs. Salomina still respected the traditional customs and Arfak culture that she had gone through in a series of live chapters. She said that, it cannot be denied that in ancient times in the Arfak tradition, women did not play much role in talking about custom, because only men have the rights.

4.2 Mrs. Salomina Injanmusi, M.Kes.

Tradition is not carried out wisely, in fact it is used as a social control in the developing world they are now living in. Along with the development eras and in facing the world of

technology competition, traditions are still upheld, used as experience, learning material, history for the generation of Arfak women.

According to Mrs. Salomina, now Arfak women are competing in various fields, even in the political world. One of the important phenomena that disclosed the character and leadership role of the Arfak women, is the oral literature that was narrated by Mr. Yairus Dowansiba, one of the Arfak tribal community leaders. An oral literature of Arfak tribe under the title “Ntay and Sago Tree”, as the source of the discussion was included in the collection of West Papua folktales, West Papua LPMP (2018, pp. 61-72).

4.3 The Characters of Arfak Women in the Arfak Oral Literature and Culture

The story of women in oral literature “Ntay and Sago Trees” is affecting the embodiment of noble character of indigenous women of the Arfak. The following quote describes the character of Arfak women. “The village was led by a woman native to Arfak tribe named “Ntay”. She is a woman of excellent character: patient, firm, brave, honest, loyal, and willing to sacrifice, and care for others’ life, agile, smart, wise, and most friendly to her people. It is these basic characters that make “Ntay” figures a woman from Arfak tribe could firmly maintain life with her people.

The cultural, social, and character values of the tribe implied in the text represent the activities, attitudes, and behavior of Arfak women. The proposition shows that the text of oral literature instills moral teachings related to character building. Ratna (2014, p. 323) explains that oral literature needs to get more attention, because it contains education, especially character building. Oral literature holds character values that are closely related to human actions and behavior. Arfak’s oral literature has shown that Arfak culture-based character values should be used as learning for the Arfak community. Lickona (2015, p. 60) emphasizes that characters are related to moral knowing, moral feeling, and moral behavior. Character education in works of art can be seen through the role of characters and characterizations, themes, mandates, and messages, while cultural works can be seen through figures, characterizations, local wisdom and local knowledge, beliefs and religions, character and morals, and knowledge and science (Ratna, 2015, p. 323).

Another uniqueness of the role of Arfak women leadership in the society can be found in the following quote: “Compassionately Ntay tried to get food for the starving people in the community. The attitude of Ntai is a representation of Arfak women in daily life in Arfak Mountains. From the direct observation to the Arfak people, their characters match the ones told in the story of Ntay and the sago tree.

Oral literature is a fact that occurs in human consciousness, is told and inherited through oral messages, contains a mandate, as well as the traditions of life norms. According to Pratiwi, Andalas & Dermawan (2017, p. 65), oral literature constitutes an awareness related to language as a mechanism that regulates human behavior in community life. Concerning this statement, oral literature is not a meaningless story.

4.4 West Papua Oral Literature, Perspective of Life Philosophy

In the perspective of oral literature in West Papua, there is a unique story about the role of women which later became the life philosophy of each tribe. Through this article, I quote valuable messages transmitted through oral literature by the ancestors of Kembaran, which is relayed by the Kembaran ethnic elders in Bintuni Bay, West Papua in the book “Representation of Ethnic Identity of Kembaran Papua through Myth/ *Representasi Identitas Etnis Kembaran Papua melalui Mitos*” (Samosir Lefaan, 2015) and her documentary film (2016). A life philosophy that reflects the “dignity of Kembaran women in Weriagar” through myth which in Kembaran language called “Ajo Rembine”, meaning “the land is

compared to Mama's Womb". Kembaran believes that the land is a place of salvation and protection of the human soul which is likened to the womb of women. This philosophy can be seen in the oral literature of Kembaran tribe, as told by Bauw clan, "Nimanado and Matirete". "... When there was a "Great Flood" on Earth, many people died or stranded, but the ancestors of Kembaran were saved from tragedy because they were inside the earth.

The concept to be inside the ground is the philosophy of Kembaran people who compared the land/earth to "Womb". Womb protects the embryo inside. In their view, Kembaran ancestors were safe from Great Flood because they lived inside the earth. Kembaran people believe that earth is the savior of the human lives just like the womb of a mother. Therefore, the event of Bauw ancestors went out of the earth, and lived on earth signifies that they were born from the past and started a new life. And then, they conquered the earth to live peacefully. They live and survive by cultivating the earth. Earth gives fertility and has become the source of life for Kembaran people.

In West Papua custom, women appreciation is shown by giving dowry. Women are highly valued because they got properties from the men. The strict process of tradition should be gone through for a marriage. The people hold the tradition very firmly. Respecting women may also mean sacrifice in men side. To protect the dignity of his sister, a brother may sacrifice himself. He will take a revenge to whoever do a harm on his sister.

The values of respecting women in Mbaham-Matta-Wuh ethnic group in Fakfak district are no different from other ethnic groups in West Papua. The ancestral cultural heritage of this particular ethnic group is very unique and aesthetic, using the concept of life philosophy of "Hengi or Nutmeg (*pala*)". Nutmeg tree is compared to the figure of women native to Fakfak. The women of Fakfak are the main figures in the lives of indigenous people in Fakfak, who have a very important role in settling the welfare of the family and indigenous people of Fakfak (Samosir Lefaan & Heppy, 2016, p. 130). Nutmeg tree is a symbol of the true identity of Fakfak women, who stand firm and produce abundant fruit. The abundance of nutmeg represents the soul, body, and the peace of heart of a woman native to Fakfak. That is, when the nutmeg tree yields abundant harvest, it is a sign that the woman's hearts is at peace and vice versa. Therefore, the women of Fakfak are valued by the nobleness of their heart, they were comparable to nutmeg, whereas the nutmeg was considered as the symbol of a woman called "Mama", who produces food and drinks, and protects life. Mama is associated to land and nutmeg trees, because it produces life. The values of respecting the women of Fakfak are demonstrated through the dowry in the form of pure gold, brought for her during the marriage procession.

It is important to understand that the philosophical value of dowry given to women in this context does not mean to put a price on the woman, but the dowry is a symbol that anyone who marries a woman native to West Papua must be able to protect, look after, and respect for the woman with full responsibility.

4.5 The Leadership Role of Arfak Women

As previously explained, the role of women native to the Arfak tribe began from their childhood, adolescence, adulthood, up to the period they entered into a marriage life. The Arfak's women are not only serving as a domestic woman, who later in her family life referred to as "the queen of the house". Furthermore, they also plays a role in the communal life of the tribe, even outside their tribe. Even though only in oral form, the basis of customary law, has been well comprehended by Arfak women. Loyalty, integrity and solidarity are the foundations of faith and love in life to serve others. These attitudes, behaviors, and meaningful actions are not only revealed through daily actions, but have become the mandates relayed by the ancestors through the oral literature of Arfak tribe. The

mandates are contained in the quote of “Arfak Oral Literature (*Sastra Lisan Arfak*)”, hereinafter abbreviated as SLA. The following paragraph of SLA 01 contains the proof of leadership role of Arfak women.

“... Riyna village was in a long dry season, all plants were withered. It caused the entire community of Riyna to be overwhelmed by the difficulty of obtaining food. Ntay is very sad, she could not sleep well, and even eating did not feel like filling her stomach because she thought of the dryness that had befallen on her village. She tried her best to save her people from the misfortune that struck their lives. The next day, Ntay walked to Kobrai’s village, asking for help so that her people would be saved from the famine. (SLA 01).

The quote informs that Ntay is a woman native to Arfak tribe who acted the leader or head of the village. Based on these quotes, we may conclude that she is a strong and intelligent leader. Using her mind and senses, Ntay tried to save her community from natural disasters. This female figure demonstrates an attitude, behavior, acts of integrity, and solidarity as a leader. To save his community, she sought for help from others. Her motherly spirit awakens in the quest to save her people. SLA 01 story proves that Ntay is an Arfak female figure who has the ability to serve as a strong and wise leader. Her critical thinking ability is developed by the sensitivity of her conscience.

“...Kobrei was surprised because he saw a woman who is not from the village, came to see him. Afterwards, he heard from the woman that she is responsible for commanding the Riyna village. Then, he invited Ntay to enter his house...” (SLA 02)

The text of SLA 02 explains that the male figure named Kobrei was not only surprised at Ntay’s arrival in his village, but he was so impressed with the ability, courage, and toughness of the female figure, who was able to become a leader for her community in alarming conditions. The resilience of woman as a leader astonished the male figure (Kobrey).

Prior to the defined period, Ntay came once again, very much asking for another help from Kobrei. He is her last hope, despite the fact that she must face two choices forced by Kobrey’s mother. ... You come for help just a while ago, and now you come once again, we will help but your daughter must marry my son Kobrey. Ntai feels desperate... between the two hard choices ... she returns empty-handed... (SLA 03).

Next in SLA 03, Ntay character faced a really tough challenge in saving her people. She had to tackle a biggest test. Ntay, the ancestral figure of Arfak, wisely lived her life by showing high integrity for the safety of her people. In that difficult situation, she had to confront two big choices: facing a famine and the pressure from Kobrey’s mother to marry her daughter to Kobrey. If she did not agree to it, then she would not get the support from Kobrey. Ntay was very wise in making decisions. She appreciated everyone including her children. Even in this hard situation, she did not take side with the tradition of arranged marriage for her children. She did not want the dignity of her daughter to be a payment of debt to a man. She determined to save her people wisely.

To anticipate the coming famine which may be suffered by Riyna kampong, Ntay came to her good friend in the foot of Arfa Mountain. She said “Wuiiii....Tombrok...Ngibrou... Kobreibou... Riyna my good friends, you all knew what my people had suffered in the past”. I cannot rely on other people. Not even to my children. That’s why I come to you”. (SLA 04)

Ntay in SLA 04 is a character with a great talent. She tried to design a strategy for the survival of Arfak people. She was a hard worker for the life of Arfak people. She was good at communication so that she could live in harmony and peace. Ntay had become a good example for the next generation. A character building teaching can be learned from the traditional culture of Arfak. This quote sends a message that Arfak women should be independent and become a good example for other people. Living in harmony with nature, and good interaction with others can also be learned from Arfak oral literature.

“...Ntay, our good friend, what can we do to help your people? Ntay people “May we plant sago tree in your area? They responded, “Why not, Ntay? We knew you very well. You are wise, and you have led your people in hardship for a long time. You care for your people more than you care for yourself. You are a brave and wise woman. (SLA 05)

Ntay was clever at building a social relationship without any discrimination. Ntay was a very wise Arfak figurine. And because of her kindness, she got an equivalent reward. The quote from SLA 05 described that the women of Arfak are talented in leadership by nature. Essentially, the meaning of the oral literature of Arfak tribe, which is mandated through the story of “Ntay and Sago Tree” asserting that leaders on this earth are not only men. The fact of women leadership proves that the ancestors of the tribe did not look down at God’s creation or subordinate their partners. Before civilization, almost all humans lived in a very primitive tradition, but along with the civilization, the primitive customs are slowly converted to be learning stories for a civilization.

The content of Arfak oral literature shows us a message that natives of Arfa women do not only has the ability to lead, but also has the right to speak in their custom. From the quotes of Arfak oral literature we learn that Arfak do not limit the women in voicing their argument in their custom provided that the ideas are spoken politely, peacefully, and wise fully like what had been done by Ntay.

Before planting sago tree, they held a traditional ceremony. After that, Ntay said, “O sago trees, with you, I planted all the future and hopes of Rinya people, so that my people will flourish as fertile as you and our generation in the future will get a lot of food and no longer feel hunger”. (SLA 06)

These quotes end the story of Ntay and Sago Tree with an important mandate for the entire generation of Arfak, that the ancestors of Arfak has made the moral teachings imprinted in their cultural values.

The symbol of sago plant instructs Arfak people, especially the women, to maintain ecological sustainability. Nature the touch of women. Nature will give peace and wealth through the hands of Arfak women. Sago tree is the symbol of a new life for Arfak people. As strong people they should work hard to survive. Arfak women are the extension of the ancestor’s and God’s hands to harmonize human life with the nature, with other humans, and with God as the Creator. Nature will give us signs about human behavior. Based on the mandate of oral literature, the character Ntay proved to have the ability to lead since the ancestors started their civilization on the land of Cenderawasih. Therefore, now is the time for Arfak women to continue their ancestral mandate wisely. Traditional ceremony implies that Arfak women should be loyal to custom, and to be thankful to the God for all the enjoyment.

4.6 The Role of Arfak Women in the New World

In line with the rapid demands of the development of the world of modern technology, in their former existence as an agrarian society up to now, some Arfak women have gained higher education. It means that Arfak women are currently lived in modern life, but they

did not forget the traditions of Arfak. The traditional pattern remains valued as the beginning of their civilization and a learning of past experiences. Mr. Hengky Towansiba, S.Th. one of the native son of the Arfak tribe who is now the head of the Arfak State Vocational School in his critical thinking said that tradition is not static but dynamic because the people who practice the traditions are the owners of traditions, customs, and culture itself. In his view as a man of Arfak, he responded that Arfak women could also be leaders.

In the past, leader women were those who had a lot of wealth. That means that Arfak women have always been allowed to lead, and to participate in the community. The story that is told in oral literature is a picture of the ancestral figure of Arfak women leader in ancient times. As the successor of ancestral culture, current generation must maintain and preserve this culture. At least in this era of technological development, it still used as a learning for all of us. Regarding the original Arfak women, he said that like other women on the land of Cenderawasih, all women must be treasured and respected, and their dignity must be upheld because the descendants of Arfak tribe were born from women. Now, there have been Arfak women who have a respectable role in government, even in politics. Towansiba Hengki is very proud to have a mother, Mrs. Deihoda Towansiba (almost 103 years) who is one of the Arfak women who is very fluent in Arfak language. She is not fluent in Indonesian, but instinctively she understands every other person's conversation. Ms. Deihoda Towansiba in her speech translated by her son, Hengky Towansiba, said that the parents had provided Arfak's daughters with the skills to work hard in the plantation and raising pigs, because the main livelihood was planting in plantation.

Arfak women who can discuss about customs used to be women who have inherited the properties from the parents, women whose family were in a good welfare (especially who have pigs and high class pattern East fabrics). Mama Towansiba is still strong and energetic working in the plantation. She was still speaking Arfak language fluently to give information about Arfak custom and tradition.

In regards with the fact in life such as suggested by sources, the story of Arfak "Ntay and Sago", we have found the expression of Arfak culture there, especially about a woman and her leadership talent. The quotes from SLA 04 implied the recognition of other people to Ntay. It showed us the message about the learning of Arfak women in the new world. Critical thinking ability told in the story lead the leader to think that Arfak ancestors had mandated women as responsible leaders. Another implication is that the next generation should be wise in stating their opinion about the service to community. Ntay was an Arfak figure who reflected the characteristics of tough, brave, patient, critical, altruistic, and responsible in leadership, and wise in decision making.

4.7 The Identity of Arfak Women in Socio-Cultural Values

Article 58 on Papua Special Autonomy Law stipulated that (1) the provincial government is obliged to foster, develop and preserve the diversity of local languages and literature in order to maintain and strengthen the identity of Papuans. Related to the mandate of the Special Autonomy Law, the following excerpts explain the meaning of Arfak women's identity that are delivered through its oral literature.

From the yard, she heard the melodious chant of the song in Arfak language amenya...akonya....amenya...akonya. (SLA 06)

SLA 06 quote explains language as a tangible manifestation of Arfak women. Language unites the perception in carrying out the mandate of ancestors and God, and in avoiding His prohibitions. The Arfak language or the language of "mother's breast milk" is the identity of the tribe. It becomes the symbol of authority figure of Arfak women in leadership.

The sound of tifa relieved Ntay. Ntay was pretty sure that this was a sign. A sign that she was going to be helped. "...” (SLA 07)

Tifa (a traditional percussion instrument) is a symbol of Arfak culture as the manifestation of the feelings of a person or a community. When a tifa is played with a certain rhythm, it will signify a certain human psychology, and signify the natural signs. Tifa signifies the expression of tradition and custom of Arfak tribe. Tifa is an identity symbol of the social life of Arfak tribe. Until now tifa has become a cultural item which signifies that social values in the life of Arfak tribe. The sound of tifa accompanied with human voice implies the expression of a peaceful and happy woman.

Before planting sago tree, they held a traditional ceremony. After that, Ntay said, "O sago trees, with you, I planted all the future and hopes of Rinya people, so that my people will flourish as fertile as you and our generation in the future will get a lot of food and no longer feel hunger". (SLA 08)

An identity that underlies the life of the Arfak tribe in the Arfak Mountains of West Papua revealed through quotes (SLA 08). Arfak indigenous people had never known how to plant and consume sago. As time goes by, Arfak people started to plant sago tree, and it becomes the main staple of Arfak people, and other West Papua communities as well. In addition, the attitude and behavior of Ntay show us the native Arfak women have critical minds, are good in strategy, and wise.

SLA 08 emphasizes on traditional ceremonies as a system of belief for the Arfak people as a part of their cultural life. The context signifies that the nature is provided by the Creator to fulfil the necessity of human life on earth, and for that reason, human must manage, maintain, utilize, and preserve the ecological environment as they care for and nurture themselves. The concept of traditional ceremonies expresses the importance that religiosity/customary beliefs of the Arfak people. The Arfak people must live in harmony with the nature, with God as the creator, so that everything God has provided for life will become a source of welfare for the people in the Arfak Mountains.

5. Conclusion

The uniqueness of Arfak tribe is embedded in the Arfak oral literature. One of the uniqueness which is transmitted in the Arfak oral literature is the ability to lead Arfak people. "Ntay and sago tree" is an oral story which tell us about the leadership of Arfak women since their ancestors lived in this region. This story tell us about the leadership ability of an Arfak woman who could wisely save her society from famine. It indicates that the oral literature of Arfak is not a nonsense. The works of oral literature of Arfak send the messages from the ancestors about the role of Arfak women as leaders. The oral literature of Arfak has enlightened us that from the start of their life in Papua, women has had the ability to lead, to save, and to give a meaningful life for Arfak people. The attitude and behavior of Ntay in the story of "Ntay and sago tree" is a representation of women of Arfak tribe in West Papua. The awareness and sensitivity of Ntay indicate that she had a talent as a wise leader. She knew the custom and tradition of Arfak very well. She tried to manage her society well with her patience, calmness, friendliness, and care. Thus, the oral literature of Arfak is a part of Indonesian literature which brings moral teachings, cultural knowledge, and social knowledge. The oral literature of Arfak gives an orientation to the people of Arfak cultural heirs in preserving the dignity of Arfak people in West Papua.

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