

RE-THINKING MALARIA AND OTHER INFECTIOUS DISEASES IN THE BORNEO MALAY WORLD: TEXTS AND CONTEXTS

(Memikirkan Semula Malaria dan Penyakit Berjangkit Lain di Alam Melayu Borneo: Teks dan Konteks)

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Abstract

The COVID-19 pandemic has made people aware of the importance of attention to infectious diseases. Malaria is one of the infectious diseases in the tropics and is a disease that many literary writers have depicted in their works. Malaria and other infectious diseases emerged and spread very quickly among workers since the colonial period, when large-scale plantations and mining in the Malay World was carried out, primarily supported by the construction of roads connecting the plantation and mining areas. This article will analyse the emergence of discourse about the spread of malaria and other infectious diseases in literary works, especially in short stories about the Malay World of Borneo. This study will also analyse two works by two authors, namely “*Penari Dari Kutai*” in *Dunia Sukab*, a short stories collection by Seno Gumira Adjidharma (2015), and “*Kampung Beremai*” in *Kayu Naga* short stories collection by Korrie Layun Rampan (2007). The

two works tell the story of the spread of malaria and other infectious diseases in the Borneo Malay World, especially in the East Kalimantan region of Indonesia. The method used in this study is based on close reading method with data collection and data analysis through textual analysis or document analysis. The results of this study demonstrate that literary works about the of Borneo Malay World also record the presence of infectious diseases, such as malaria, syphilis, and the plague, which coincide with forest clearing for plantation and mining activities.

Keywords: Borneo Malay World, infectious diseases, malaria, short stories, Korrie Layun Rampan, Seno Gumira Adjidharma

Abstrak

Pandemik COVID-19 telah menyedarkan orang ramai tentang kepentingan memberi perhatian kepada penyakit berjangkit. Malaria merupakan salah satu penyakit berjangkit di kawasan tropika yang telah ditimbulkan oleh ramai penulis sastera. Sejak zaman penjajahan memulakan perladangan dan perlombongan secara besar-besaran di Alam Melayu, terutamanya disokong oleh pembinaan jalan raya yang menghubungkan kawasan ladang dan perlombongan, malaria muncul dan merebak dengan cepat dalam kalangan pekerja. Artikel ini akan menganalisis kemunculan wacana tentang penularan malaria dalam karya sastera khususnya cerpen tentang alam Melayu Borneo. Kajian ini akan menganalisis dua karya dua orang pengarang, iaitu "Penari Dari Kutai" dalam kumpulan cerpen Dunia Sukab karya Seno Gumira Adjidharma (2015) dan "Kampung Beremai" dalam kumpulan cerpen Kayu Naga karya Korrie Layun Rampan (2007). Kedua-dua karya tersebut mengisahkan penularan penyakit malaria dan penyakit berjangkit lainnya di Alam Melayu Borneo khususnya wilayah Kalimantan Timur, Indonesia. Kaedah yang digunakan dalam kajian ini ialah kaedah kualitatif dengan pengumpulan data dan analisis data melalui analisis teks atau analisis dokumen. Hasil kajian ini merumuskan bahawa karya sastera tentang Alam Melayu Borneo turut merekodkan kehadiran penyakit berjangkit malaria, rajasinga (sifilis), dan sampar, yang bertepatan dengan pembukaan hutan untuk aktiviti perladangan dan perlombongan.

Kata kunci: Alam Melayu Borneo, cerita pendek, malaria, penyakit menular, Korrie Layun Rampan, Seno Gumira Adjidharma

INTRODUCTION

The COVID-19 pandemic has generated many notable discussions on the issue of infectious diseases. In health and culture, pandemics and infectious diseases have become the subject of serious study lately. Since its appearance at the end of 2019, the coronavirus, better known as Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19), has captured the attention of many researchers, including environmental and literary researchers. Environmental experts and critics have posited the view that the coronavirus infects humans through closer interactions and direct human contact with wild animals whose habitat is mainly in the wilderness (Grusin, 2015; Schwab & Malleret, 2020; Morton, 2018).

As suggested by biologists and environmentalists, the rampant clearings of forests for large-scale plantations and large-scale mining have caused wild animals to no longer have a habitat. Humans have also penetrated closer to their habitats through the construction of roads and railways to give open access to large-scale plantations and mining. Thus, human interactions with animals, which are pathogens of infectious diseases that live in the wilderness, have caused the spread of viruses and bacteria that in turn have caused infectious diseases to infect humans and eventually spread to become endemic diseases until some become pandemics (Wallace, 2016; Alatas, 1977).

The clearing of forests into large-scale plantations and mining can be said to be one of the leading causes of human interactions with animals carrying viral pathogens; as a result, infectious diseases are becoming more intense. Therefore, the infections of the virus from wild animals to humans occur rapidly. From there, the spread of infectious disease viruses began to spread on a large scale (Wallace, 2016). At this point, the virus becomes dangerous because it threatens human survival, both on an individual scale and large scale.

More significantly, malaria is an infectious disease that has long been a concern of scholars in various fields, especially in health, environment, culture, and literature. The variety of disciplines that study infectious diseases has been due to the importance of studying infectious diseases for human survival, especially malaria in tropical forest environments. The tropical rainforest of Kalimantan, in Eastern Kalimantan, is one of the areas where the spread of malaria is high (CNN, 2022; Dinas Kesehatan Prov. Kaltim, 2022).

Literary works have long recorded the phenomenon of malaria outbreaks in the Borneo Malay World; primarily when large-scale forest clearings occurred in the 1970s when the Indonesian government promoted development and made forestry, plantation, and mining sectors (especially minerals and coal) one of the sources of the country's foreign export income (Peluso, 1992; Awang Azman, 2014:33). Large-scale forest clearings for forestry, plantation and mining industries created a need for workers to enter the forest and surrounding tropical forests of Kalimantan to work. Wealth promised by exploitation of natural resources of Kalimantan's forests seduced communities around the forest as well who did not want to be left behind. The workers and people from around the forest areas were the first to fall victims to the spread of the infectious malaria disease.

From a different perspective, literature is a product and a cultural practice. Literary works also play a role in recording the events of the spread of infectious diseases in society, especially in the communities around the Borneo Malay World. In addition to this, the presence of literary works that describe the existence of malaria and other infectious diseases in the Borneo Malay World can be read and analysed from the point of view of literature from past approach or the point of view of cultural studies, which is new and currently developing, both in the field of literary studies in particular, as well as cultural studies, in general (Awang Azman, 2012:80). Therefore, this study will use cultural studies to analyse the depictions of malaria in short stories set in Borneo/Kalimantan, especially in Eastern Kalimantan.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The perspective of literary studies has dominated the study of ecological aspects in analysing literary works. In literary studies, ecocriticism is a study of the ecological aspect of literary works. This study emphasises that literary criticism has an ecological perspective that pays attention to the relationship between human and nature. In addition, contemporary studies associate ecological literary criticism and women's problems in feminist studies. This study area has also developed into a literary criticism of ecological feminism or ecofeminism studies. Both ecocriticism and ecofeminism are literary criticisms under the auspices of a literary science/studies perspective, which is different from the perspective of cultural studies (Bressler, 2011; Wiyatmi, 2017; Wiyatmi et al., 2017).

From the perspective of cultural studies, literary works are seen as

cultural practices, not as mere cultural products as the study of culture, but namely the study of literature, cultural anthropology, and cultural sociology understanding. In addition, one of the characteristics of cultural studies is its critical paradigm in viewing cultural practices. Cultural studies also view the role of the subject in every cultural practice as an active subject, no matter how small the role of the subject is, even those that have been ignored, including non-human subjects, such as animals, environment, viruses, germs and bacteria among others. An alignment with the marginalised is also one of the characteristics of cultural studies (Barker, 2016; Wening, 2020, Budiawan, 2020).

In particular, ecocriticism is an approach that makes non-human subjects a subject with a place in cultural analysis. No matter how small the role of the non-human subject is, even when the dominant literary analysis and mainstream cultural analysis ignore it, cultural studies make it the main subject in the study. It is at that point that ecocriticism and cultural studies find similarities where nature in ecocriticism is the central theme or main subject as a critique of the Anthropocene; meanwhile, in cultural studies, the dominant subject, in this case, humans, allows it to be opposed by subordinate subjects or marginal subjects, in this case, nature, environment, mosquitoes and viruses among others (Awang Azman, 2013:143; Bressler, 2011:231; Barry, 2017:212; Dobie, 2012:176-177).

In literary works, environmental or ecological criticism puts the environment as a non-human subject. Another non-human subject is a virus. Viruses are organisms that cause the emergence of various diseases in humans. The imbalance of nature and excessive human domination make non-human subjects respond to it. It examines non-human subjects, such as mosquitoes and viruses, which can be in dominant positions when the diseases these have caused overwhelmed humans due to their own actions that of exploiting nature for their benefit (Barry, 2017:202-211; Alatas, 1977:226; Grusin, 2015).

In addition, cultural studies, where ecocriticism is also part of its studies, provide ample space for marginal and subordinate subjects, including non-human subjects, which have been under anthropocentric human powers, such as viruses, germs, mosquitoes, and environment in general. Therefore, the subject of malaria carrying mosquitoes, viruses, bacteria, and germs that cause other infectious diseases in literature in this study will be seen as a marginal subject's response to the dominant human subject so far. Those are the way of ecocriticism that emphasises the analysis of the relationship between culture (of human) and nature. Ecocriticism tends to analyse the

representation of ecological inequality or exploitation of natural resources in literary works and reveals the resistance to the inequality and exploitation of nature (Barker, 2016; Nayar, 2010). About ecocriticism, Nayar (2010) states that:

Ecocriticism originates in a bio-social context of unrestrained capitalism, excessive exploitation of nature, worrying definitions, and shapes of ‘development’ and environmental hazard. While it does not seek to alter the course of any of these genuine factors, its task is to see how theoretically informed readings of cultural texts can contribute to consciousness-raising and look into the politics of development and the construction of “nature”.

.....

Ecocriticism focuses on the material contexts of industrialisation, development, pollution, and ecocide while developing a frame for reading. (Nayar, 2010:241-242)

Nayar explains that the essential bio-social context of ecocriticism is unrestrained capitalism, excessive exploitation of nature, worrying definitions and shapes of ‘development’, and environmental hazards. All these are the issues represented in the literary text and criticised using the ecocriticism approach. The quote of Nayar above emphasised how literary text provides the voice of nature through its presence in literary works. Ecocriticism aims to read and criticise literary texts representing the relationship between humans and nature, culture and nature. The relationship between humans and nature has been assessed so far as not taking place equally (Branch and Slovic in Zainal, 2009; Rueckert, 1978).

Humans tend to be dominant and consider exploiting nature for their interests. It is through such relationships that ecocriticism analyses and literary studies critique. With these unequal even tending to be domineering and exploitative actions of humans, the perspective assumes that humans destroy the balance of nature. Thus, ecocriticism is here to criticise as a warning against the behaviour of the Anthropocene. However, from the perspective of cultural studies, nature and other non-human subjects, considered passive towards human domination and exploitative behaviour so far, are not entirely passive subjects. Nature and non-human subjects such as bacteria and viruses also provide reactions and even resistance to human behaviour. In this case, ecocriticism in the perspective of cultural studies sees that the presence of infectious diseases due to viral and bacterial infections in plantation and mining areas that clear forests for

their activities are a response to non-human subjects on human behaviour. The relationship is an intersubjective relationship between humans and nature (Branch and Slovic in Zainal, 2009; Rueckert, 1978; Glotfelty & Fromm, 1996).

Finally, the writers of the works analysed in this study, in cultural studies, are political and ideological subjects that see the struggle against the domination of rulers and corporations which, in the Suharto and post-Suharto eras, have continued to make profit by exploiting the natural world of Kalimantan, especially East Kalimantan. Thus, the non-human subjects in the work and the authors' subjects actively resist power—even if it is not visible or not openly stated—powers by humans are dominant over non-humans and over other weaker humans.

As a historical record of malaria, in the Malay World at the beginning of the 20th century, infectious diseases, especially malaria, were rampant and widespread. This fact comes from Alatas, who examined the impacts of mining and European colonial plantations throughout the 19th and early 20th centuries. One of the causes of malaria, as proposed by Alatas, is construction of a railway line by clearing forests that are along the route. In addition, mining and colonial plantations were also the leading causes of the emergence of malaria in the Malay World:

The location of the labourer's capitalism in Malaya, in the forms of mining and plantation quarters near ravines in estates or hill land, contributed to the rise in agriculture in terms of the cost to human lives. The thousands who have Malaria among the workers. A twenty-eight-mile railway line died under the rubber trees and along the mining pools, along the roads completed in 1914 caused an outbreak of malaria. Whenever there were railways, they deserve our memory and attention. There should not be an outbreak in a particular district; it re-infected districts that had cynically brushed aside as digits in the colonial balance sheet previously cleared of malaria. (Alatas, 1977:226)

Workers were the first to be infected by this disease, as quoted from Alatas' study above. Thousands of workers died trying to build the railway while clearing the rubber trees and mining pools. It was the result of the construction of railways along thousands of miles. Railways workers, mining workers (mainly tin mines at that time), and colonial rubber plantation workers became victims of the malignancy of malaria due to clearing of forests for colonial capitalism (Alatas, 1977).

The above approaches, which position viruses, mosquitoes, and other non-human subjects as subjects equal to humans and the writers' subject in the political practice of authorship, will be applied in this paper to analyse the depictions of malaria and other infectious diseases in the literary works of Seno Gumira Adjidharma and Korrie Layun Rampan, whose settings in their works is the Borneo Malay World.

METHODOLOGY

This study used a literary lens by applying an ecocritical approach and a cultural studies perspective as the analytical tool based on the method of textual/document analysis. The texts analysed here are Seno Gumira Adjidharma's short story in the collection of short stories from *Dunia Sukab* (2015) entitled "*Penari Dari Kutai*" written by Seno in 1984 and Korrie Layun Rampa's work entitled "*Kampung Beremai*" written in 2002 and published in the book collection of short stories *Kayu Naga* (2007).

The methodology used was a close reading, meaning that the researcher conducted a textual analysis of the selected texts and then collected textual evidence from them according to the study's objective, namely the depictions of malaria and other infectious diseases in the two selected literary works above. After collecting the textual evidence, the next step was categorising the data. The first data category is data that precisely depicts the theme of malaria. Meanwhile, the second data category is data that depict the theme of other infectious diseases besides malaria in the two works above—"Kampung Beremai" in Korrie Layun Rampan's collection of short stories book *Kayu Naga* and the short story "*Penari dari Kutai*" in *Dunia Sukab* short stories collection by Seno Gumira Adjidharma.

The data analysis method in this study is text analysis using an ecocriticism approach with a cultural studies perspective. Analysis with an ecocritical approach makes the themes of nature and the environment the central theme. In this case, this approach focuses on analysing the representation of nature and the environment in literary works. Furthermore, analysis using cultural studies positions put the writer's subject as an active subject with a political and ideological agenda in creating the work. Thus, the hypothesis of the authorship activity of the two writers analysed in this study is as political and ideological practices that practice resistance, negotiation, or domination in mainstream discourse at that time, namely in the Suharto era and post-Suharto rule in Indonesia. This particular political era is also known as a time of development ideology or developmentalism

which relies heavily on the exploitation of natural, especially forestry resources, plantations, and mineral and coal mining in Kalimantan.

ANALYSIS

As discussed earlier, Alatas' study on *The Myth of Lazy Native* (1977), which is a study on colonial history in the Malay World, analyses how the activities of building railways, mining, and colonial plantations in the early 20th century were related to the deaths of thousands of workers due to malignancy of malaria. Therefore, the literary works in the form of short stories by Seno Gumira Adjidharma and Korrie Layun Rampan, set in the late 20th and early 21st centuries in Kalimantan, also depict the same phenomenon. Both Seno's work, "*Penari Dari Kutai*" and Korrie's "*Kampung Beremai*", which are both set in the Borneo Malay World, have more or less the same theme, namely the emergence of infectious diseases, such as malaria and other diseases, due to the clearings of forests by forestry, plantation and mining activities.

In his work "*Penari Dari Kutai*", written in 1984 and published in the book collection of short stories *Dunia Sukab* (2015), Seno describes how the transport of the woods of East Kalimantan from the interior to Samarinda where thousands of cubic meters of logs from the tropical forests of Borneo were transported by large ships, dragging thousands of cubic meters of logs and making canoes and small boats rock hard on the banks of the Mahakam River pier:

Sampan itu meluncur tanpa suara menuju dermaga. Perahu-perahu yang datang dari Samarinda bertambah. Mereka akan melakukan perjalanan jauh ke pedalaman Long Apari, Tanjung Isuy, Muara Ancalong, dan Batu Ampar. Retno melompat-lompat di atas atap perahu-perahu itu. Perahu-perahu itu bergoyang keras ketika satu perahu besar lewat menyeret balok-balok kayu ribuan kubik. Di atas balok-balok kayu yang telah dihela selama satu minggu itu orang-orang menanak nasi sambil berdiang. (Seno, 2015:20)

[The canoe glided silently toward the pier. Boats coming from Samarinda were moored there. They will travel deep into the interior of Long Apari, Tanjung Isuy, Muara Ancalong, and Batu Ampar. Retno jumped up and down on the roofs of the boats. The boats rocked violently as a large boat passed by, dragging thousands of cubical logs. People cook rice while warming themselves on the wooden blocks pulled for a week.]

Those thousands of cubic meters of wood come from the cutting down of thousands and even millions of trees in the tropical forests of Borneo. The logging activities during the Suharto era also interfered with the farming activities of the local community, especially the Dayak and Kutai Malays. According to Alatas (1977), this forest clearing activity is the leading cause of malaria and other infectious diseases whose carriers of these viruses and germs are organisms that make forests their habitat.

Seno depicts the presence of prolonged drought as the cause why many residents became gold hunters around the Kalimantan forests, which logging activities had cleared with government permits under the name of the “Hak Penguasaan Hutan” (HPH) or the Forest Concession Rights at that time (around the 1980s):

Kemarau yang panjang membuat orang tak bisa berharap kepada ladang. Retno teringat alangkah banyaknya para pemburu emas. Berbondong-bondong mereka merendamkan diri di sungai tanpa hasil yang pasti. (Seno, 2015:20)

[The long drought made people unable to put faith in the fields. Retno remembered the many gold hunters there were. They immersed themselves in the river in droves with no definite results.]

The economic difficulties of residents made some of them switch from cultivators to gold miners in the rivers of Kalimantan. Forests that saw many trees cut down and recently become the location of large-scale plantations or places for planting industrial timber and mining have caused malaria carrying mosquitoes to lose their habitat. Thus, it was easier to infect humans around them.

Residents who congregated in gold mining activities became the first victims of the malaria carrying mosquito bite, including Retno and other Dayak people who soaked in the river in search of gold, which also turned out to be uncertain. Seno describes this malignancy of malaria:

Betapa mereka berkaparan diserang malaria. Emas belum lagi didapat, utang makan kepada tauke bagaikan tiada pernah tertebus oleh satu atau dua gram pendapatan dalam seminggu. Kalau tak ada Batu, ia pun sudah mati di tepi rawa itu. Ia tak suka mencari emas di sungai bercampur dengan orang-orang Dayak yang disebut Kenyah, yang juga bermimpi mendapatkan emas setelah gagal berladang di tanah baru. Ia menyendiri ke hutan.

Sebetulnya ia bisa mendapatkan cukup banyak emas kalau tak sakit.
(Seno, 2015:20-21)

[Malaria attacked them ferociously until they were in miserable conditions. They had not obtained gold, and food debt to the *tauke* seems to have never been paid off by a gram or two of income in a week. She would have died at the swamp's edge without Balu. She did not like looking for gold in the river mixing with the Kenyah Dayaks, who also dreamed of getting gold after failing to cultivate fields in a new land. They, therefore, retreated into the forest.

She could definitely get more gold if she were not sick.]

The life difficulties faced by the main character, Retno, in Seno's work above, is similar to the difficulties faced by the Kenyah Dayak people. Retno, a descendant of transmigrants from Java who migrated to the interior of Kalimantan, was not very happy to mingle with the Kenyah Dayaks. Retno looks for gold in the swamps where the place is known as a breeding ground for malaria carrying mosquitoes, unlike the Kenyahs who look for gold in the river. It was from her activities in the swamp that Retno contracted malaria; she became weak and met her future husband, Balu. Apart from malaria, debts to traders was also a burden to the miners. They owed the traders for supplies, in the hope that they can pay when they eventually obtain the gold. However, there are also other complications apart from malaria, which gets more virulent in attacking the workers and gold miners.

Apart from Seno, Korrie Layun Rampan in "*Kampung Beremai*" also depicts the infectious diseases that emerged around the activities of forest clearing workers for the HPH activities in the tropical forest environment of East Kalimantan. The pestilence, commonly known to attack domesticated chickens then, was likened to rampant gambling activities when the flood season arrived. Korrie describes the gambling activity metaphorically as the pestilence (bubonic plague) among forestry workers in the Borneo Malay World:

Para pekerja hutan kadang menganggur, tapi sebagian yang memiliki kerja di luar HPH, mereka dengan giat menghiliri gelondong untuk ditumpuk di logpond. Biasanya musim banjir adalah musim panen para penebang kayu gelondong, dan itu bermakna judi tongkok

dan judi ceki bersama dadu gurak makin marak. Bagaikan penyakit sampar yang menghabisi berkandang-kandang ayam peliharaan.

Memang bagaikan ayam terkena sampar, para penjudi, biasanya yang kalah, akan bermenung bermuram durja karena menyesali kerja yang berat tapi uang habis begitu saja tanpa guna! (Korrie, 2007:169)

[The forest workers are sometimes unemployed, but some of them have work outside the HPH, they diligently go down the log to be piled up in the log pond. Usually, the flood season is the harvest season for the log loggers, meaning that *tongkok* gambling and *ceki* gambling with *gurak* dice are increasingly prevalent, like a plague that kills pet chicken in their cages. Like a chicken with pestilence, the gamblers; usually, the losers will be pensive as if in mourning because they regret the hard work, but the money went to waste!]

When the workers had earned large sums of money, they practised various types of gambling. They later regret it after running out of money from working hard while simultaneously at risk of being attacked by malaria and other infectious diseases. The Forest Concession Rights, or the HPH, are rights to cut down trees in forests granted by the Suharto government during the New Order era, even after the reformation period in Indonesia (FWI, 2003, Siburian, 2004:124; KLHK, 2022).

Regarding logging in the forest and the HPH activities around Kampung Beremai, Korrie depicts the following:

Lama sekali kayu-kayu itu dapat tumbuh menjadi besar, dan akibatnya pencarian mereka makin hari makin jauh hingga tiba masanya pengusaha HPH masuk dan terjepitlah para penebang liar itu diantara ketiak meranti dan ketiak pengusaha HPH. Patok-patok hutan bersama pembangunan jalan “logging” menghumbalang sana-sini membuat hutan yang tadi sepi berubah menjadi ramai. Kawin-mawin antara pekerja HPH dengan gadis-gadis pehuma meninggalkan anak-anak blasteran yang menciap bagaikan burung patah sayap ketika kontrak pekerja habis di hutan yang habis. Ibu – ibu yang reot kadang muncul di “lou”, kadang menghilang di huma yang makin sempit karena dikangkangi areal HPH. (Korrie, 2007:168)

[It took a long time for the logs to grow large, and as a result, their search was getting farther until the time came for the HPH business people to step in, and the illegal loggers squeezed between the “armpits” of

the meranti and the “armpits” of the HPH entrepreneur. The forest stakes, together with the construction of the “logging” road, are piling up here and there, making the forest that was previously deserted turn into a bustling forest. Marriages between HPH workers and Pehuma girls leave half-blooded children who chirp like birds with broken wings when the labour contract expires in an exhausted forest. Dirty mothers sometimes appear in the “lou” and sometimes disappear in the increasingly narrow *huma* because the HPH area straddles them.]

The felling of trees in the forest depicted by Korrie was initially carried out on a small scale by residents of the Bengkirai village who live in the *lou* (longhouse of the Dayak Benuaq people in West Kutai, East Kalimantan). Then, on a larger scale, forest logging is carried out by companies holding the HPH; thus, causing the cultivation of *huma*, where the Dayak people farm in Kalimantan were squeezed even more by the HPH area. In addition to logging trees in the forest, constructing “logging” roads that cut down the Kalimantan forest trees were becoming increasingly crowded. Marriages between HPH company workers and residents of the Beramai village were unavoidable, resulting in the birth of half-blood HPH workers- cultivators (*Huma*) where workers would soon abandon them as the HPH contract expired, which coincided with the end of the timber trees in Kalimantan’s forests around Kampung Beramai. Thus, large-scale forest destruction occurred after the government permitted companies holding the HPH permits to cut down trees in Kalimantan forests, especially East Kalimantan as the setting for Korrie’s “*Kampung Beramai*” story, leaving many social and health problems for the villagers around the HPH.

With regards to infectious diseases, apart from malaria in Seno’s work discussed earlier, other infectious diseases suffered by forestry workers and around the HPH area, as depicted by Korrie in the “*Kampung Beramai*” short story, is syphilis (*rajasinga*). The cause of the disease suffered by these men is sexual relations involving multiple partners. Men who often have sexual relations in areas dominated by prostitution suffered the disease. In several stories in the collection of short stories, Kayu Naga describes prostitution around the plantation and mining areas, and the HPH areas as rampant. Some local women are often impregnated out of wedlock by workers from outside the area. Thus, their children are often born without a father who left after the workers’ contract is over:

Dan memang, sesal tak pernah datang duluan, selalu menyusul setelah semuanya ludes dan bahkan setelah kaum lelaki terkena

rajasinga. Ada juga yang menyesali seumur hidup, setelah istri mereka melahirkan anak cacat — tangan atau kaki — buta, bisu, tuli, atau berbibir sumbing! (Korrie, 2007:170)

[And indeed, regret never came first, after everything was sold out and even after the men were hit by syphilis. Some regret the rest of their lives after their wives give birth to a deformed child — an arm or a leg — blind, dumb, deaf, or cleft-lipped!]

In the textual evidence above, the *rajasinga* disease (syphilis) is an infectious disease that infects men around the HPH area. In addition, due to rampant sexual relations outside of marriage, or the practice of prostitution around the company area, children with disabilities are born in large numbers. If this is the case, then regret surrounds the workers and the community around the company area. Infectious diseases arise from forestry, plantation, and mining companies operating in clearing the Kalimantan's tropical forests.

FINDINGS

There are three types of infectious diseases depicted in the work of Seno Gumira Adjidharma, namely the short story “*Penari Dari Kutai*” and “*Kampung Beremai*” by Korrie Layun Rampan, namely malaria, pestilence (plague), and syphilis (*rajasinga*). However, only two diseases directly infect humans: malaria and syphilis. Meanwhile, the pestilence is an example of workers in the Kalimantan forestry companies who like to gamble when they earn their hard-earned money.

Malaria is depicted in the short story “*Penari Dari Kutai*” by Seno Gumira Adjidharma, while pestilence and syphilis (*rajasinga*) are depicted in the short story “*Kampung Beremai*” by Korrie Layun Rampan. These two works have shown how the relationship between the presence of the forestry, plantation, and mining industries have been the cause of the presence and spread of infectious diseases in the communities surrounding the tropical forests of the Borneo Malay World.

DISCUSSION

The short stories “*Penari Dari Kutai*” by Seno Gumira Adjidharma and “*Kampung Beremai*” by Korrie Layun Rampan depicted the presence of the plantation, forestry, and mining industries in Kalimantan and their

relationship to various infectious diseases that accompany them. The works of Korrie and Seno depict malaria and bubonic plague. In addition, Korrie's short story also depicts the *rajasinga* disease (syphilis), suffered by male workers in companies holding the HPH during Suharto's new order and after that in the Reformation era in Indonesia were granted to them.

The examination of Alatas's *The Myth of Lazy Native* elaborates on the situation at the beginning of the 20th century when colonial capitalism with its plantation and mining industries, and the construction of the railway line as a support for the transportation sector, concluded that it was the leading cause of malaria among workers. It continued until the end of the 20th century and early 21st century in the Borneo Malay World. It could still occur today in East Kalimantan, where the government of Indonesia set that areas become Indonesia's future new State Capital (IKN) (CNN, 2022, Antaranews, 2022). Therefore, in ecocriticism analysis, both Seno's "*Penari Dari Kutai*" and Korrie's "*Kampung Beremai*" short stories represent the continuity of natural resources exploitation that emphasise the unequal relationship between human and nature in Kalimantan. These findings show us how human domination toward nature still exists in Kalimantan Malay World, specifically in a tropical rainforest environment.

In addition, the past workers' outbreak eventually spread to the broader community, and the forest clearing for the benefit of colonial capitalism in mining and large-scale plantations brought many infectious disease cases to inhabitants. From an ecocriticism perspective, mainly based on Branch & Slovic (2003) and Ruecket (1978) theories, Korrie and Seno's selected short stories can be seen as depictions of environmental and natural issues in literary works and also represents the unequal relationship between human and nature. As a result, these unequal relationships produced several impacts in Korrie and Seno's works as infectious diseases infect the workers and inhabitants around the forest concession, mining and plantation areas.

Meanwhile, from the perspective of cultural studies (Barker, 2016; Morton, 2018; Grusin, 2015), the presence of malaria and other infectious diseases can be read as the dynamism of non-human subjects, namely viruses from malaria carrying mosquitoes and syphilis, in fighting against human domination which is very central in destroying nature in the tropical forests of the Borneo Malay World through forestry extractive industries, plantations, and mining. Therefore, nature and other non-humans subject have their resistances against human domination and exploitation of tropical rainforest resources in Kalimantan Malay World.

CONCLUSION

The short story “*Penari Dari Kutai*” and “*Kampung Beremai*” by Seno Gumira Adjidharma and Korrie Layun Rampan are short stories published in the short story collections, *Dunia Sukab* (2015) and *Kayu Naga* (2007). The two short stories contain depictions of how malaria and *rajasinga* (syphilis) infect workers and residents around the tropical forests of Kalimantan after the forests were exploited for their natural products by companies with state permission during the New Order era and after in Indonesia.

In an ecocriticism analysis, the realistic depiction of Kalimantan, whose natural resources have been dredged, is the writers’ way of highlighting the exploitations of natural resources and their impacts on local people in Kalimantan areas. In addition, from the perspective of cultural studies, writers, namely Seno Gumira Adjidharma and Korrie Layun Rampan, are subjects who actively criticise the policies of the new order and reform in Indonesia through literary works in very subtle and implicit manners. Korrie and Seno also revealed the existence of malaria and other infectious diseases as non-human active subjects against human domination and exploitation of nature in tropical rainforest Kalimantan Malay World.

Finally, the critical depictions of natural damage and social damage due to the presence of companies that exploit Kalimantan’s forests are political and ideological practices of the two writers in voicing criticism of the conditions that occurred during their time. Therefore, the perspective of cultural studies conducted are the subjects of viruses and diseases that arise from the nature and environment exploitations of Kalimantan as a response or the resistance of non-human subjects to very dominant humans (Anthropocene). These findings reveal that nature always has a way to protect itself, including and primarily from unfriendly human interference with its equilibrium.

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