

# The Covid 19 in the Literature Work

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## ABSTRACT

The world is currently disaster in be stricken. The corona virus which was discovered in 2019 - termed Covid 19-- is currently endemic and is eyeing living things on the surface of the earth. Every country, especially the Indonesian government, strives to take various countermeasures so that people do not become victims of a pandemic. Starting from preventive measures, the healing process for exposed people, making vaccinations, and distributing assistance to people affected by the corona. However, all of them require synergy from various elements according to their respective fields so that this outbreak can be overcome. One element that is also involved is literary art activist. In the history of Indonesian literature, literary works have become a medium of education on various problems of the nation. Starting from the time when Indonesia was shackled by a system of colonialism, rebellion, feudalism, ethnocentrism, religiosity, discrimination, and various forms of social conflict and social change.

**Keywords:** literature, media, covid 19

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Since it was assumed that the works of M. Yamin and Merari Siregar were the momentum for the birth of modern Indonesian literature in 1920 until now, literary works have become media that document social phenomena, especially those that have a negative impact on society.

Based on the historical literary records disclosed by HB Jassin, Ajip Rosidi, Teuw, and Korrie Layun Rampan in their books, the development of literary themes from the 19th century to the present always describes three things about human life, namely humans as individual beings, between humans, humans with the environment, and godliness. The theme that is more quantitatively found is the problem of life among humans. However, what must not be forgotten is that a "work" is always marked by a human touch; a word assumes something, because work always means the work of man (or God).

According to Goenawan Mohamad (in Foulcher dan Day, [1]), the Indonesian novel in its present form which first appeared in the twentieth century relies on a different strength of memory, determined by a 'post-auratic' atmosphere. Events are presented to the reader's mind with the power of the words in the first line, without reference to tradition. The author engages the reader's memory by maintaining maps of events, characters, settings and dialogues, each with its own weight and significance.

Current conditions make the people's economy experience disruption. The impact on art is that people's purchasing power of literature decreases. This means, that the fulfillment of basic needs is a priority. Add more, the need for fulfilling learning in the

network (online). Starting from elementary school to university level, nowadays it is developing online-based learning. Consequently, parents must provide facilities that support the process at home. Online learning binds people to always co-exist with the internet.

Literary work as art is a secondary need so that it is neglected when the reading community is faced with conditions that require satisfy primary needs. This incident happened when Indonesia just got out of the Japanese regime and just became independent. Time span 1940 to 1950, the Indonesian economy was stagnant due to the poor management of the country. The political scene in Indonesia at that time still focused on the interests of the bourgeois parties and groups, thus ignore the improvement of the nation's economy. The price of basic commodities such as rice, cooking oil, and so on has soar high because it is rare. The queue of residents to get food is very long. The Japanese era was a difficult time and for intellectuals and artists it was a time when tough choices had to be made. At this time, Indonesian poetry was part of the euphoria of liberation from living under Japanese military rule (Mohamad in Foulcher dan Day [1]).

This phenomenon had an impact on the number of literary works that were born and published very little at that time. Several works recorded in literary history include works by Nugroho Notokusanto, WS. Rendra, A.A. Navis, and so on. More works have appeared in the form of collections of short stories and poetry. On the other hand, there are not many published novels.

The Covid-19 pandemic that is currently striking is indeed slowing the development of all sectors of people's lives. Indonesia's economic growth in the second quarter to August 5 contracted so that it fell by

5.23 percent (<https://www.bps.go.id/> downloaded 08 August 2020). Social behavior shifts because society is faced with behaviors or rules that aim to prevent us from disease outbreaks. Each of us is required to always wear a mask, keep our distance, wash our hands frequently with soap, do virtual social activities, and so on. Covid-19 opens a space for social change that encourages new life orders.

## 2. DISCUSSION

### **Shades of *Nelangsa* (Sadness) about Covid 19 in Indonesian Poetry**

Literary works that appear in the period from the end of 2019 to August 2020, especially poetry questioning the pandemic, are more commonly found on the internet. The poets whose works include: Eka Budianta, Gus Mus, Marhalim Zaini, Farhan Zuhri Baihaqi, Sulaiman Juned, Isbedy Setiawan, Putu Fajar Arcana, Willy Ana, Badaruddin Amir, Sudiyanto, Indah Masdar, Mezra E. Pellondou, Rita Jassin, Gonawan Monoharto, Daniel Owen, M. Jusuf Kalla, and other poets who have not been mentioned

The condition of the outbreak that occurs requires people to communicate using the internet. The current era is the fourth era which is also called the network era. The era of bitcoin and the internet, where some of the basic principles are challenged by the internet (Skinner [2]. Skinner said the main difference between the fourth era and the previous eras is the collapse of time and space. Increasingly, the concept of distance is collapsing due to global connectivity. People can talk, socialize, communicate, and trade globally, in real time, and almost for free. Skinner [2].

Schwab [3] mentions that ten years ago, a person present in the digital world meant that he had a cell phone number, email address, and personal websites or MySpace pages. The presence of a person digitally can be seen from the traces recorded in the media and online platforms. Many people have more than one form of digital presence, such as a Facebook account, Twitter account, LinkedIn profile, Tumblr blog, Instagram account, and so on.

One of the works of an Indonesian poet who questioned the corona plague using the internet media was Eka Budianta. His poem entitled "Debar-Debar Karantina" illustrates how this epidemic can torment human life.

#### **DEBAR-DEBAR KARANTINA**

Eka Budianta:

Apakah kita gembira hari ini?  
Positif kena virus lebih 1,7 juta  
Tekanan Covid-19 tembus 209 negara?  
Atau berdebar mengingat seratus tahun silam  
Flu Spanyol merenggut 50 juta jiwa?  
Apa katamu kalau besok pagi aku mati  
Meski sudah karantina mandiri  
Mewaspadai wabah corona ini?  
Kubayangkan kamu akan menulis pesan singkat:  
"Selamat jalan, sahabat."  
Lalu dari alam abadi aku membalas

"Terima kasih kepada Allah  
Telah diberi pengalaman  
Menjadi manusia  
Dan mengenyam nikmat dunia  
Yang tidak membuat kami peka  
Sebelum dijemput virus corona."  
2020

(downloaded from <https://cakradunia.com/news/>  
21 August 2018)

The number of people who have tested positive for the virus is approximately 1.7 million from 209 countries in the world. Eka's poem implies a message that we must be very careful so that Covid 19 does not claim as many victims as the Spanish flu. The sentence 'Yang tidak membuat kami peka, Sebelum dijemput virus corona' implies that human sensitivity to infectious diseases should be high because they have experienced various dangerous plague long before. Epidemics ranging from flu, bubonic plague, SARS, mers, and so on make experiences useful for not doing actions that cause various diseases.

However, in the poem "Berkah Covidologi", Eka said that this epidemic gave blessings on the other side because it made humans understand the existence of other humans. Humans are the same because they breathe each other so that they are brothers. Covid 19 has made humans aware not to differentiate themselves from other humans, especially because of social status. Humans no longer oppress other humans with the power of weapons and various tricks. Corona attacks anyone indiscriminately, whether he is a farmer, fisherman, driver, factory worker, sub-district head, regent, governor, minister, even if he is a 'saint' or a religious leader.

The same thing was expressed by Kalla in his poem entitled "Corona Virus" which was broadcast on his Instagram account. Even though as a novice poet, Kalla tries to voice his thoughts about the nation's problems facing Covid 19 in art. He revealed that the origin of the virus came from Wuhan, an area in China. Then, the spread of the virus went beyond national borders and positions. In Indonesia, this virus spread initially in entertainment venues.

The implicit message in the poetry is that the poet hopes that experts can find a vaccine to prevent the spread so that it can destroy human life. The poet also expressed high appreciation for health workers and volunteers who sacrificed their lives to go into the field in anticipation of exposed communities. Against Corona, it is said that poets must create unity in the community and a high sense of enthusiasm to help each other according to their respective abilities and expertise.

This plague would not have just arisen if it weren't for human action. However, Mezra revealed that Corona should not be feared in the poem entitled "Kepada Kawan". The I-Lyric reveals that humans should not be afraid, let alone face death, because death is also a gift (tak ada hari yang sesat/di setiap waktumu/sebab kematian sekalipun adalah anugerah) (downloaded from <https://cakradunia.com/news/> 21 August 2018). Fear will diminish the spirit so that it

will have an impact on the vulnerability of a person to be exposed not only to Corona but other dangerous diseases such as antisocial. Spirit is symbolized by light. Any light that flashes will extinguish the virus.

However, the I-Lyrics confirmed that he did not invite to forget the virus. Poetry will invite you to be alert and faithful to the slightest light. The I-Lyrics stated that there was no need to predict death even if the virus was transformed into air. Humans only need to be introspective and keep the spirit of living life because every life will always be paired with returning (death).

Another poem written by Mezra is for the Covid 19 fighters who died with the title "Virus Menjelma Vaksin". The implied meaning that can be understood is that medical personnel and volunteers put their duties ahead of their lives because they are driven by love for fellow humans. They work to keep human humanity unharmed. They are called in the poem as fighters for humanity.

As an enemy, Corona is invisible to the naked eye. It attacks through media that humans are not aware of. Slowly eating away the vital organs in the human body, especially the lungs (Matthew B. Frieman, <https://nationalgeographic.grid.id>, 21 August 2020). Marhalim Zaini in his poem entitled "Siapakah Engkau, Corona" (downloaded from <https://langgam.id>, 21 August 2020) expresses a fundamental question that exists in the minds of confused people who are suddenly forced to change their lifestyle and daily habits. Perform daily activities from home. In fact, it is advisable to do worship in a place of worship at home. A condition which contradicts the previous condition.

Marhalim in his poetry also implies that Indonesia will not surrender even though it is being fought with thousands of bullets of anxiety. Even though, I was locking myself in my house, I-Lyrics was still enthusiastic about fighting the virus, at least by praying to God. Faith in God fosters the spirit to survive.

However, the other side of the poet reminds us that we have been complacent about the sparkling world. Sin became a habit. This virus outbreak is an attempt to contemplate rediscovering Indonesian identity that develops religious-socialist understanding. Prioritizing divinity, humanity, unity, democratic principles, and social justice. A state that is founded on the foundation of kinship and mutual cooperation with the principle of diversity. A large country with many islands, sea and land which are rich in natural resources. All of this should not be tainted with ethnocentrism from the desires of a group of people who impose beliefs. Ethnicity, religion and race became the corner of the clash that triggered the disintegration of the nation. This behavior must be dealt with firmly. Even though the perpetrators have rank and position. Marhalim reveal (Karena hari ini, kami sedang berdiam dalam diri/mencari tahu, siapakah kami sesungguhnya/dalam tubuh yang fana).

Mustofa Bisri (Gus Mus) views the other side of the virus plague in a poem entitled "Talbiyah dalam Kesendirian". Gus Mus seemed to be praying to

question this plague to his Lord. If this plague was not a manifestation of His wrath, We-lyrics would not care. However, if because of His longing, We-lyrics begs to be guided so that He immediately fulfills His calling. The poet thinks that the attitude of remembering God is only because of personal interest. To enliven the place of worship is just to worship yourself. In other words, We-Lyric is hypocritical because religion is only used as an image. The implicit message contained in Gus Mus's poem is that the catastrophic plague of a deadly virus is God's wrath against a hypocrite.

### 3. CONCLUSION

Literary works become educational media for readers about various problems currently facing the nation. Not only poetry, prose, both novels, short stories, and also drama, have become media that can teach readers to see the problems of human life with language. Reading literature means struggling with language. According to Hergenahn and Olson [4] the learning process of each individual is different. One of the most important human components in the development of the learning process is language. Conversely, the development of a language results primarily from the learning process.

The problem of plague in modern Indonesian literary works since the 19th century has not yet existed. In historical records, Indonesia has never experienced a devastating plague like the current corona plague. During that time, this nation was undergoing a transition from a colonial system to an independent nation. This is a problem that adorns conflicts of literary works in addition to romantic issues based on culture and natural disasters such as matchmaking, social conflicts, volcanoes erupting, floods, tsunamis, pollution, and so on.

The message that is implicit in literary works and in general works of art is a function of the existence of art for human life. Art refines human sensitivity so as to minimize human friction. The waning attitude of nationalism and patriotism can also be revived through works of art. Artwork will never depart from something empty. The universality is the main reference and at the same time a forum for the development of the function of *dulce et utile* works of art as presented by Horatius in his book *Ars Poetica*.

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