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Beyond the forest boundary: A transnational literary study of the novella *Diyawa Si Kaki Merah*

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Abstract: *The climate crisis is not only an environmental issue but also brings together different ways of understanding the world, time, nature, and life; That's an issue central to transnational literature, since ecological impacts and economic interests extend beyond geographical and national boundaries. This article examines the novella* Diyawa si Kaki Merah *by Abroorza A. Yusra (2025) to explore how the encounter between different worlds is formed through the concept of worlding. Using a descriptive qualitative method and close reading, this study analyzes narrative passages relating to world formation, temporality, and ecological relations through Pheng Cheah's concepts of world and worlding. The findings show that the novella forms two worlds with distinct temporalities: the Outer World, constructed through the logic of money, ownership, state language, and development; and the Heart of the Forest and the Kaki Merah community, constructed through relations among humans, nature, animals, and ancestral spirits, which reveals an alternative temporality not oriented toward accumulation. The novella also depicts the dispossession of the Kaki Merah world through forest mapping, state territorial claims, and road construction. Amid this clash, openness toward difference grounds relationships and solidarity, presenting transnationalism as encounters between worlds shaped by state interests, markets, and ecological relations beyond geography.*

Keywords: *worlding, transnational literature, climate fiction, alternative worlds, Heart of the Forest.*

INTRODUCTION

Abroorza A. Yusra's climate fiction *Diyawa Si Kaki Merah* (2025) resists being read solely within the frame of national literature. This literary work addresses climate issues that extend beyond national borders. The novella can be studied from the perspective of transnational literature because the ecological issues it raises bring together different ways of understanding space, nature, ownership, and life. The author, Abroorza, is a writer and cultural and environmental activist whose work is rooted in the social and ecological realities of Kalimantan.

The novella tells the story of Diyawa, a woman from the Kaki Merah group who has been expelled and lives alone in the Heart of the Forest. A man from the Outer World, who is searching for agarwood trees. He becomes lost and is rescued by Diyawa. They marry, but their story leads to separation, the birth and death of a child, and Diyawa's expulsion. Years later, they meet again when a greater threat reveals itself: a giant black snake that, in both their dreams, lies across the forest and, by the end of the story, symbolizes the highway and the greed that accompanies it.

The text does not name any particular country or region. Instead, it depicts a space in the form of a "wilderness" that differs from the "outer world." The government claims that the forest belongs to the state. Meanwhile, the Kaki Merah community

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is depicted as the descendants of survivors who escaped the predation of outsiders. What stands out is the encounter between these two different worlds in how they experience time, treat nature, and understand ownership. Such an understanding is consistent with developments in literary studies that use worlding to move beyond the category of national literature and read works through transnational relations and processes of world formation. Pokrivčák and Zelenka (2023) show that worlding can serve as a methodological orientation for reading literature beyond national categories.

To read the novella, this study uses Cheah's concepts of world and worlding. In What Is a World? (2016), Cheah develops a theory of literature's power to make worlds by combining four philosophical understandings of the world as a temporal process: idealism, Marxist materialism, phenomenology, and deconstruction. The world is understood as a capitalist and colonial construction built and sustained by particular temporal structures, so literature can play a role in creating another world rather than merely reacting to one that already exists. The Heart of the Forest and the Kaki Merah community are understood as an alternative world with its own temporality, for example, a community without a long-term temporal frame of reference and one threatened by a world driven by the market and state projects. The extension of worlding studies to Asia and the Anthropocene also shows the importance of attending to the relationship among space, temporality, the environment, and world formation. Chou et al. (2022) use the framework of worlding to discuss Asian and Oceanic literature in relation to climate change, the environment, planetary consciousness, and the dynamics of space and time.

In the context of climate fiction, this approach is also important because recent scholarship has begun to question the dominance of Global North perspectives in climate literature and to situate Asian ecological experiences as an important part of understanding the climate crisis. Studies of Asian literature show that the relationship among world literature, the Anthropocene, and climate change cannot be separated from the question of who forms a "world" and whose experiences are regarded as universal. Johns-Putra et al. (2024) discuss this issue in their study of climate fiction in China, while research on Indonesian and Philippine climate fiction indicates that Southeast Asian works have received limited scholarly attention (Yunanto & Sa'adiyah Sy, 2025). This opens a space for reading *Diyawa Si Kaki Merah* not only as a work of ecocriticism but also as a text that forms and brings together different worlds.

Several readings of *Diyawa Si Kaki Merah* have appeared with a focus on ecological issues. A preliminary review indicates that research has examined the relationship between humans and the environment in the novella through an ecocritical approach (Mukattash, 2022). Nevertheless, reading this work through worlding and transnational literature, particularly by placing different temporalities and the encounter between the Kaki Merah world and the Outer World at the center of the analysis, still offers room for further study. The novelty of this research lies in its attempt to understand transnationality as a process of world formation that brings together different ways of life, temporalities, and ecological relations.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Studies of transnational literature often focus on the movement and circulation of works. Demeyer (2023), for example, examines novels written from the outset with translation as a medium rather than as a final stage. That framework is productive for works designed to circulate across languages. In the novella examined here, such a formal feature is not prominent. What stands out is the conflict between two ways of imagining the world. This study therefore turns to a more fundamental question: what kind of world does the text form, and what kind of world places it under pressure?

Cheah begins from the problem that studies of world literature often use the term "world" without explaining what the world itself means. He therefore develops a theory of literature's capacity to open and form worlds. His thought combines four philosophical traditions, namely, idealism, Marxist materialism, phenomenology, and deconstruction. All of which understand the world in relation to temporal processes (Cheah, 2016).

For Cheah, the world is not something fixed but something continually formed through time. In this sense, worlding refers to the process by which a world is formed through temporality. A world is not merely geographical space; it is a world that is lived and continuously changes. Differences between worlds can therefore arise from differences in how a community experiences and organizes time.

Cheah also positions literature as a force capable of opening worlds. Literature possesses receptivity, or the capacity to receive possibilities that have not yet been fully determined. Through this capacity, literature does not merely portray a world that already exists; it can open possibilities for another world.

This concept relates to Cheah's critique of the world formed by capitalism and colonialism. The modern world order operates not only through the control of space but also through the regulation of time. Worlding can therefore be a way to see how literature presents a temporality different from dominant time. Cheah shows that postcolonial literature can open possibilities for other worlds through alternative temporalities that do not fully submit to the logic of capitalist globalization.

On the basis of this framework, the study uses five operational concepts. First, the dominant world is the world formed by market and state power. Second, worlding and the alternative world refer to the process through which the text forms a world with its own way of life and system of meaning. Third, alternative temporality is a way of experiencing and organizing time that differs from the temporality of the dominant world. Fourth, the dispossession of a subaltern world is the process by which a world in a weaker position is appropriated, displaced, or erased by more dominant forces. Fifth is openness, or receptivity. Openness is an action that makes shared life with those who are unfamiliar or different possible. In using these concepts, the term "the inhuman" in Cheah's thought must be distinguished from the ecological concept of nonhuman beings. In Cheah's framework, the inhuman refers to the force that gives time, not to nonhuman creatures. This distinction is important so that Cheah's concept of worlding remains distinct from the ecological concepts used in this study.

The novella *Diyawa si Kaki Merah* reveals ecological dimensions and the relationships between humans and nonhuman beings. Cheah does not focus on the climate crisis, so the main framework needs to be extended. D'Haen (2025) proposes eco-cosmopolitanism, an awareness of environmental citizenship that moves beyond a

sense of place toward a sense of the planet. Kluck (2026) emphasizes that humans live among many agents and that nonhuman beings also play a determining role. Ojeda et al. (2022) propose the idea of building kinship across species (making kin) and "staying with the trouble." Barthold et al. (2022) criticize development that damages nature and community livelihoods while highlighting women's knowledge as a support for life. These four thinkers are not used as a framework equivalent to Cheah's but to explain the ecological dimension of the alternative world read through Cheah.

The operationalization of each concept in the novella is presented through specific textual indicators and corresponding narrative examples.

Table 1. Matrix of concepts, indicators, and textual examples

Concept	Indicators in the text	Examples in the novella
Dominant world	Money, ownership, writing and the state language, state projects	Agarwood used to buy land and an entertainment venue; a foreman who does not pay; the road project; gold mining by the Man's son; the claim that the forest "belongs to the state"
Alternative temporality	Ways of measuring and understanding time	The Kaki Merah have no long-term temporal frame of reference; Diyawa does not understand "years"; names are given after the coming-of-age trial; death is the return of the spirit
Worlding / alternative world	Ways of life, beliefs, relations with nature	The Heart of the Forest as "not a place ... us"; Diyawa's communication with monkeys, leeches, and frogs; children are cared for collectively
Dispossession of the subaltern world	Maps, claims, eviction, expulsion	A map that leaves a white expanse; the Man's expulsion from the hut; a road heading toward the Heart of the Forest
Openness (receptivity)	Actions that welcome a stranger	Diyawa helps the stranger and later Ewa; guns are set down; the Kaki Merah gather around Diyawa
Ecological dimension	Kinship, threats, greed	Leeches as a life force and healers; the giant black snake as greed and the highway; the message "Protect"

Table 1 maps five key concepts that construct the analytical framework for the novella *Diyawa si Kaki Merah* each accompanied by textual indicators and concrete examples from the work. First, the "dominant world" is characterized by the logic of money, ownership, the language of the state, and state-driven projects. This is evidenced by the use of gaharu (agarwood) to purchase land and entertainment venues, a foreman who withholds wages, the construction of roads, and the assertion that the forest "belongs to the state." Second, "alternative temporality" refers to a way of perceiving

time that differs from that of the dominant world. The Red Feet society lacks a long-term temporal framework; Diyawa does not grasp the concept of a "year," names are bestowed following rites of passage, and death is understood as the return of the spirit. Third, "worlding" or the creation of an alternative world, encompasses ways of life, beliefs, and relationships with the natural environment. The "Heart of the Forest" is depicted as a space that is "more than just a place," characterized by Diyawa's communication with forest animals and the collective rearing of children. Fourth, the "dispossession" of the subaltern world is manifested through practices such as mapping, territorial claims, and forced displacement, illustrated by maps that leave areas blank, the eviction of "The Man" from his hut, and the encroachment of a road toward the Heart of the Forest. Fifth, "openness" is demonstrated through the act of welcoming the "other", seen when Diyawa assists a stranger and later Ewa, the laying down of weapons, and the Red Feet community gathering around Diyawa. Finally, the "ecological dimension" encompasses kinship relations, perceived threats, and human greed. Leeches are portrayed as a life force and a source of healing, while a giant black snake serves as a symbol of both greed and the highway, as well as a bearer of a message.

METHOD

This is a qualitative study using a descriptive analytical approach in the form of a textual study of a literary work. This approach was chosen because the study seeks not the frequency with which particular elements occur but how the text constructs worlds, time, and relations between worlds.

The object of study is the novella *Diyawa si Kaki Merah*: Sebuah Novela Climate Fiction by Abroorza A. Yusra, published by Rua Aksara in collaboration with *Komunitas Bukit Buku* and Hysteria, first printed in February 2025, and comprising 156 pages. The primary data consist of textual units (words, phrases, sentences, dialogue, and narrative passages) related to the five operational concepts in Table 1. The secondary data consist of relevant theoretical literature and studies. Data were collected through repeated close reading of the novella, accompanied by recording textual units and page numbers according to the print edition used. The data collected were then analyzed in four stages. First, the textual units were coded according to the five predetermined operational concepts of worlding and the ecological dimension. Second, these codes were grouped into a matrix containing concepts, indicators, and textual examples. Third, the data were interpreted relationally by examining the relationship between the dominant and alternative worlds, particularly concerning temporality and the dispossession of a world. Fourth, all interpretations were synthesized to answer the research question concerning the meaning of "transnational" in the novella *Diyawa si Kaki Merah.*

The validity of the analysis was maintained through rereading the text, checking each quotation against the print edition, and using several theoretical sources to cross-check one another. The study is limited to one novella, and Cheah's theory is used as an interpretive approach.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Result

The reading of *Diyawa Si Kaki Merah* reveals the formation of two different worlds: the Outer World and the Kaki Merah–Heart of the Forest world. These worlds differ not only geographically but also in how they understand ownership, social life, time, nature, and relations among people. The textual reading identified five principal findings, summarized in the following table.

Table 2. Principal findings discussed

Focus of the finding	The Outer World	The Kaki Merah–Heart of the Forest world
World formation	Formed through money, ownership, work, education, the state language, the state, and development	Formed through connections among humans, the forest, water, animals, spirits, and communal life
Relationship with space	The forest is understood as territory that can be owned and used for development	The Heart of the Forest is understood as part of the community's life and identity
Temporality	Tends to be linear, ordered, and related to work and material achievement	Related to the seasons, life cycles, death, and changes in nature
Social relations	Marked by ownership, economic inequality,	Communal; children are cared for collectively and
	education, and command of language	death is understood as the return of the spirit
Relationship with another world	Appears through the state, the market, road construction, and the entry of outside interests	Shows openness toward strangers through Diyawa's actions in helping the man from the Outer World and Ewa

This table presents key findings by directly comparing the two worlds depicted in the novella: the "Outer World" *(Dunia Luar)* and the world of the "Red Feet" *(Kaki Merah)* the Heart of the Jungle, based on five aspects. First, world formation: The Outer World is shaped by money, ownership, labor, formal education, the state's language, the state itself, and development. In contrast, the world of the Red Feet is formed through the interconnectedness of humans, the forest, water, animals, spirits, and communal life. Second, the relationship with space: The Outer World perceives the forest as a territory that can be owned and exploited for development, whereas the Heart of the Jungle is understood as an integral part of the community's own life and identity. Third, temporality: The Outer World tends to be linear and structured, revolving around labor and material achievements; the world of the Red Feet is tied to

the seasons, life cycles, death, and natural transformations. Fourth, social relations: The Outer World is characterized by ownership, economic inequality, formal education, and linguistic dominance. The world of the Red Feet is communal: children are raised collectively, and death is understood as the return of the spirit. Fifth, the relationship with the "other" world: from the perspective of the Outer World, this relationship manifests through the state, the market, road construction, and the encroachment of external interests. From the perspective of the world of the Red Feet, this relationship is demonstrated through an openness toward outsiders as seen when Diyawa helps the man from the Outer World and Ewa.

Discussion

The results show that the Outer World is formed as a world oriented toward money, ownership, work, education, the state language, and development. This world is not only the space in which the Man lives; it also shapes how he understands success, life, and his relationship with nature. This is apparent from the moment he sees agarwood as a means of acquiring material property. The narrator states:

> "Usually, he spends about two months searching for the finest agarwood—the sale of which, provided they find the right buyer, yields enough for him to purchase another plot of land". [*"Biasanya, ia menghabiskan sekitar dua bulan untuk mencari gaharu yang paling bagus, yang mana harganya, bila mereka mendapatkan pembeli yang tepat, cukup baginya untuk membeli sepetak tanah lagi"]* (Yusra, 2025: 19).

This quotation shows that agarwood has been placed within the logic of economic exchange. Its value does not end with its existence as part of the forest; rather, it is determined by its price and its ability to generate landownership. The Man's relationship with nature begins to be mediated by economic value. His desire to own land then develops into a desire for a more luxurious life. He imagines the land as a place to build an entertainment space with "branded drinks," a television, loudspeakers, and a microphone (Yusra, 2025: 19).

This desire is shaped even by the stories and experiences of people who come from outside. The narrator says that the Man's "dream" was shaped by the "stories and boasts" brought by people who stopped there (Yusra, 2025: 23). When he hears stories about love and a better life, a desire to become rich arises*:*

> "Love? What a beautiful thing that is. Where could one buy it? He would have to become incredibly wealthy. That was the thought that shot into his mind". [*"Cinta? Indah nian barang itu. Di mana ia bisa membelinya? Ia harus menjadi kaya raya. Itu yang melesat masuk ke dalam otaknya"]* (Yusra, 2025: 24).

This quotation shows that the Outer World shapes life not only directly through economic structures but also through ideas about the kind of life considered valuable. Wealth becomes an imagined prerequisite for obtaining happiness and certain life experiences. The dominant world operates by shaping desire as well as through material structures.

Yet when the Man enters the world of work, he instead encounters inequality within that system. He "never" receives money from the foreman, although money is described as the "basic requirement for becoming rich" (Yusra, 2025: 26–27). His only compensation is a scribble called a "signature" and a lunch of canned fish. This situation reveals a gap between the imagined prospect of wealth and the economic reality the character experiences. The inequality is reinforced by language and education. When he encounters an outsider, the Man is asked:

> "Oh, you don't know the national language? Didn't you go to school?" *["Oh, kau tidak bisa Bahasa Negara? Tidak sekolah kau?"]* (Yusra, 2025: 26).

The question does not merely show a difference in language ability. The "State Language" and schooling become markers that determine a person's position in the Outer World. A character who possesses neither is placed in a lower position. The dominant world is formed by a set of values that determines who is considered to have knowledge, ability, and social standing.

This finding can be read through Cheah's concept of worlding. In Cheah's thought, a world is not a finished geographical space but something continually formed through how people live and organize time. Money, ownership, work, education, and language in the novella can therefore be understood as elements that contribute to forming the order of the Outer World.

This logic takes a more institutional form when the state enters the forest. Officials arrive with a map and declare:

> "This forest belongs to the state. The plan is to clear the forest for a state road". [*"Hutan ini punya negara. Rencananya, hutan akan dibuka untuk jalur jalan negara"]* (Yusra, 2025: 81).

This statement shows a change in how the forest is understood. The forest is no longer understood primarily as a living space but as territory that the state can own and use for development. The Man, however, immediately questions this claim:

> "Belongs to the state? When did they buy it? This has never belonged to anyone. [*"Punya negara? Kapan mereka membelinya? Dari dulu ini bukan punya siapa-siapa."]* (Yusra, 2025: 82).

This dialogue reveals a clash between two ways of understanding space. The state bases its claim on administrative ownership, whereas the Man questions the basis of that claim from the perspective of the community's experience of the forest. The resulting conflict concerns not only who owns the forest but also which world has the right to determine what the forest means.

Unlike the Outer World, the Kaki Merah world is formed through close relations between people and the environment. This is most evident when Diyawa explains her relationship with the Heart of the Forest:

"Ini bukan tempat, hanya. Ini kita." ("This is not merely a place. This is us") (Yusra, 2025: 54).

This statement matters because it changes how space is understood. The Heart of the Forest is not merely a place inhabited by Diyawa and the Kaki Merah community. It is part of their identity and existence. This understanding is reinforced by the narrative:

> "The Heart of the Forest, including its waterfall, was indeed a complete life" (Yusra, 2025: 55). Their relationship is even described as a unity: [*"Antara dirinya dan Jantung Rimba, terjalin urat nadi yang kokoh, menjadikan mereka satu kesatuan yang saling melengkapi"].*(Yusra, 2025: 55).

These three quotations show that the Kaki Merah world is formed through relationships rather than ownership. Whereas the Outer World sees space as something that can be owned and exploited, the Heart of the Forest is understood as part of life itself. From Cheah's perspective, a world is formed through the ongoing process of living. Literature can also open another world through temporalities and experiences that differ from those of the dominant world. In the context of the novella, the Heart of the Forest can be read as a form of alternative worlding because it has a system of relationships and meanings distinct from the Outer World.

This alternative dimension appears not only in the relationship with nature but also in the Kaki Merah social system. The narrative states:

> "The Red Feet do not recognize 'mother' or 'father.' To them, anyone can be a mother or a father to any child who is born". *["Kaki Merah tidak mengenal ibu-ayah. Bagi mereka, siapa pun adalah ibu dan bapak bagi setiap anak yang lahir"]* (Yusra, 2025: 92)).

The quotation reveals a form of communal life different from a more individual family structure. A child is not the exclusive responsibility of their biological parents but part of the community's shared responsibility. Their understanding of life also relates to how the community understands death*:*

> "For death is a certainty; only the timing varies. For death is the return of the spirit to its source". *["Sebab, kematian adalah sesuatu yang pasti, hanya waktunya saja yang berbeda. Sebab, kematian adalah kembalinya roh pada asal semula"] (Yusra, 2025: 93)*

In the *Kaki Merah* world, death is not understood entirely as an ending but as part of the cycle of life. This shows that the Kaki Merah world has its own system of meanings concerning life, death, human beings, and the environment.

The alternative world formed by the novella does not mean a world that is entirely ideal or free of problems. It is a world with different ways of life, a different social system, and different ecological relationships. This corresponds to the study's matrix, which places ways of life, beliefs, and relations with nature among the indicators

of worlding or an alternative world.

The difference between the two worlds becomes clearer through how each understands time. In Cheah's theory, temporality is an important part of world formation because a world has not only space but also particular ways of experiencing and organizing time. In the Kaki Merah world, time is closely related to natural cycles. One depiction of this appears in the relationship with leeches:

> "Thus the cycle of life and death takes place" (Yusra, 2025: 60).

This quotation shows that life is understood as a cycle. Life does not move in a straight line from beginning to end but unfolds through processes of emergence, disappearance, and return to nature.

The relationship between time and nature can also be seen in the community's rituals:

> "The beginning of the rainy season is always a time for a test of maturity." *["Awal musim hujan selalu menjadi waktu untuk melakukan ujian kedewasaan"] (Yusra, 2025: 108).*

The rainy season marks the time for an important event in Kaki Merah social life. Time is not separated from environmental change. Nature becomes part of the system that organizes social life. This differs from the Man's experience of time in the Outer World. When dealing with inner turmoil, work becomes his way of filling time. The narrator states, "Without work, he sank into a black hole" (Yusra, 2025: 70). Work functions not only as an economic activity but also as a mechanism for organizing the Man's experience of life. As a result, his attachment to work draws him further away from the forest world:

> "Life in the forest grew ever more distant from him" (Yusra, 2025: 71).

These two quotations show that time in the Outer World is associated with activity, work, and productivity. Time becomes something that must be filled and used, whereas in the Kaki Merah world time is more closely connected to natural rhythms and the cycles of life. The difference in temporality becomes most evident when the Man tries to understand Diyawa's experience using the Outer World's measure of time. The narrator states:

> "Diyawa did not understand years" (Yusra, 2025: 125).

Diyawa's unfamiliarity with the concept of a "year" shows that the measure of time used in the Outer World is not universal. A "year" is part of a particular cultural system. For the Kaki Merah, time is understood more through seasons, changes in nature, and lived experience.

The difference in temporality in the novella is not merely a difference in how time is counted. It shows two ways of making a world. The Outer World uses a more linear and productive understanding of time, whereas the Kaki Merah experience time

through ecological cycles. This finding reinforces Cheah's concept that world formation is closely related to temporality.

The difference between these worlds then becomes a conflict when the dominant world enters *Kaki Merah* space. In Cheah's concept, a subaltern world may be dispossessed when its existence and way of life are not recognized by the dominant world order. Such dispossession involves not only the appropriation of territory but also the erasure of the meanings and ways of life attached to a place.

In the novella, this process is visible in the arrival of officials with a map. Their statement, "This forest belongs to the state. The plan is to open the forest for a state road" (Yusra, 2025: 81), shows that the Heart of the Forest begins to be translated into the language of the state and development. The forest, previously part of the community's life, is now placed within the state's administrative system.

The map is important because it allows a space that is ecologically and culturally complex to be reduced to administrative territory. This also relates to the finding that the map in the novella leaves a "white expanse" where the Heart of the Forest is located. Symbolically, this can be read as the absence of the Kaki Merah world from the dominant world's representation of space (Redondo-Olmedilla, 2023). This dispossession becomes clearer through the construction of the road. The highway symbolizes the entry of the outside world into the Heart of the Forest. Near the end, the threat takes the form of a giant black snake in the dreams of Diyawa and the Man, later recognized as the highway and the greed that accompanies it (Ajeesh & Rukmini, 2022).

The road is not merely infrastructure. It is the material form of the dominant world entering another space. The ecological threat in the novella therefore concerns the relationship between development and the destruction of living space (Hughes, 2018; Spencer et al., 2023). This reading can be enriched by ecological studies that criticize development that damages nature and community livelihoods, as discussed within the study's framework through Barthold et al. (2022).

Although the relationship between the Outer World and the *Kaki Merah* world is largely marked by conflict, the novella also presents a form of openness. This is particularly visible in Diyawa's actions when she meets the man from the Outer World. She does not immediately regard the stranger as a threat but instead rescues him when he becomes lost in the Heart of the Forest. This action can be read through Cheah's concept of receptivity, or openness toward what has not yet been fully determined. In this framework, literature not only shows a clash of worlds but also opens possibilities for new relationships.

Openness is also visible in Ewa's presence and the *Kaki Merah* community's response. The guns are set down, and the *Kaki Merah* draw close to Diyawa. This action shows that a relationship with outsiders need not always result in domination. An encounter can produce solidarity.

The novella does not, however, make this openness a resolution of the conflict. The threat to the forest remains. The ending therefore does not show the *Kaki Merah* world triumphing over the Outer World; it shows the defense of life amid a continuing threat. This is consistent with the end of the novella, which calls for protection with "tears" and "blood." Openness in *Diyawa si Kaki Merah* can be understood as a possibility for living together amid differences between worlds (Gasperini, 2022). This is important in the context of climate fiction because ecological threats may ultimately

bring together groups whose ways of life previously differed.

Taken together, these findings show that transnationality in *Diyawa si Kaki Merah* is not primarily constructed through the movement of characters between countries. The novel does not even name a particular country. Yet the world constructed in the story remains connected to forces that extend beyond the local space, especially the state, the market, development, and economic interests.

Transnationality in the novella can therefore be understood through the encounter and clash between worlds. The Outer World enters the Heart of the Forest through maps, roads, work, and the state's claims. Conversely, the Kaki Merah world presents ways of life, temporalities, and ecological relations that differ from the dominant world. This reading is consistent with Pokrivčák and Zelenka (2023), who place worlding among approaches to reading literature beyond national categories. In the context of Asia and the Anthropocene, Johns-Putra (2021) also show the importance of relationships among space, time, environment, and world formation.

What moves beyond boundaries in the novella is not its characters but forces, values, systems, and ecological threats. The highway entering the Heart of the Forest exemplifies how decisions and interests from a wider world can change the life of a local community. At the same time, the Kaki Merah world is not positioned merely as a passive victim. Through Diyawa's relationship with the Heart of the Forest, its communal system, its understanding of time, and its openness to outsiders, the novella presents an alternative world with its own system of meanings (Bishop, 2022). This makes Diyawa si Kaki Merah readable as climate fiction that brings local issues into contact with broader ecological issues. As stated in the study's framework, studies of Asian climate fiction must also ask who forms a "world" and whose experiences are then considered universal.

The conflict in the novella is not simply a conflict between human beings and nature. It is a clash between two ways of making a world: the Outer World, driven by money, ownership, the state, and development, and the *Kaki Merah* world, formed through connections among people, nature, community, and the cycles of life (Scott, 2025). When the first world enters the second, what is threatened is not only the forest as a physical space but also the temporalities, social systems, knowledge, and ways of life that make the Heart of the Forest a world.

CONCLUSION

Reading Abroorza A. Yusra's *Diyawa si Kaki Merah* through Pheng Cheah's concept of worlding shows that the novella constructs and brings together two worlds with different ways of life, temporalities, systems of meaning, and ecological relations. The Outer World is formed through the logic of money, ownership, the state, work, and development. In contrast, the Kaki Merah and Heart of the Forest world is formed through connections among humans, nature, animals, spirits, and communal life. This difference also reveals different temporalities: linear and productive time in the Outer World and time that follows the seasons, life cycles, and nature in the Kaki Merah world. The encounter between the two worlds then results in the dispossession of the subaltern world through maps, the state's claim to the forest, and road construction, but the novella also opens the possibility of connection through openness toward outsiders

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