



# RUBIKON

JOURNAL OF TRANSNATIONAL AMERICAN STUDIES

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Democracy as Hemispheric Views”**

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Nestiani Hutami



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RUBIKON, Journal of Transnational American Studies (JTAS) is a journal published by the Association of American Studies Society of Indonesia (ASSINDO) which is supported by UGM, UI, UAD, and UNS. It specializes in American Studies especially transnational studies of the U.S. It is also intended to communicate American Studies issues and challenges. This journal warmly welcomes contributors from American Studies scholars, researchers, and those related to the discipline.

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## A Brief Remark from ASSINDO

Along with the development of information technology and communication, national borders seems to disappear. Globalization generally assumed as a way of expanding market and lowering labor costs by making use of labor force from poor countries results in many different way of thinking. With globalization, American Studies experiences changes in the way scholars, researchers, and students approach the study of the United States culture and society in a more international framework. This is different from when it was founded, when the study focused on the uniqueness of the American culture.

At American Studies program of Universitas Gadjah Mada, for example, the study also focuses on much the same with what Parrington purposes: “to give some account of the genesis and development in American letters of certain germinal ideas that have come to be reckoned traditionally American— how they came into being here, how they were opposed, and what influence they have exerted in determining the form and scope of our characteristic ideals and institutions.” The students are then trained to deal with the United States as democratic country whose people rely on self-reliance, tolerance, freedom, brave, smartness, etc. It is a study of this nation in its historical moment that makes it become a great nation. As a result, students looked like celebrating the US rather than making academic judgment over the US. This is actually not at all surprising for those who study American literatures and culture.

I remember when American Studies was first established at Universitas Gadjah Mada, the general issues coming up in most seminars and discussions is whether or not it is a discipline or US propaganda with the purpose solely on the official US national interest. In its development, since the urge of studying literature and culture of the US is for the benefit of Indonesians and knowing from the fact that most students do not have chance to go to the US in doing research on American culture makes the students tend to work on comparative study. This often makes advisor question whether it belongs to American Studies or to Indonesian Studies. Students, for example, are getting more interested in linking research of Anglo-American writers with Indonesian writers, or they work on diasporic communities. The increasing interest in the research on American popular culture also shows the increasing call to internationalize the study of American culture. In popular culture context, for example, the increasing transnational practices in film production, funding, distribution or popular literature publication, writings are so strong that need to re-conceptualize the study of the US as it once was in the past. The shift in the study of American culture by not focusing only on localized subject but on a

more transnational is also a new concept in American Studies today, although it has already been voiced since 1990s.

The broad view on American Studies today a consequence of transnational turn. Robinson (2012) defines it: "transnational American studies explores the varieties of American culture and of American experience(s) in a larger framework that stretches beyond the national borders of the United States" or "The immediate import of transnational thinking lies in the scholarly arena. For American Studies, the effect is akin to looking through the reverse lens of a telescope. What once loomed large has shrunk to insignificance. To globalize American Studies is to displace American perspectives on the subject" (Gross, 2000).

The question is whether transnational American Studies is no longer American Studies. What I mean here is, whether the study in American culture in transnational American studies makes the study driven to different direction or to other disciplines. Many scholars argue that transnational approaches as intended in transnational American Studies also seek to gain insight into American culture. For example, when the analysis involves comparison between Indonesian and American literature, it does not mean that it becomes a comparative literary study as the goal of the study is the comprehension of American culture. This also the case with what is commonly practiced by the students when they see the strong influence of the American popular culture in Indonesia.

The new concept looks simple but complicated in practice. The complication mostly lies on theoretical framework operated among academicians. The moving far away from established disciplines, by the inventions of new theories, perspectives, thoughts create complication on the methodology of American Studies, especially to those studying American culture far away from the US. This makes discussions on the future of American Studies as intended in the publication of the Journal of Transnational American Studies important.

It is based on those thoughts that American Studies Society Indonesia (ASSINDO) publishes RUBIKON. This journal is intended to be a bowl in which all ideas of American Studies research and thoughts are exposed in order to meet the new challenges linked to the discourse of internationalization. This new parameter in critically exploring US culture, society and literature, however, is newly introduced in Indonesia. This indeed results in the scarcity of research dealing with, for example, cultural hybridities, diasporic identities, and literary comparative studies. Therefore, in the first publication of the journal, articles which are not that strong in their the aspects of transnationality are also most welcome.

**Reference:**

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President of ASSINDO

Ida Rochani Adi

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## GUIDELINES FOR AUTHORS

The editor of Rubikon Journal welcomes article submissions in accordance with the following guidelines:

1. Articles have not been published or accepted for publication, or are being considered for publication elsewhere. In addition to the manuscript, a written statement should be attached which clarifies that the article is original and does not contain any elements of plagiarism.
2. Types of article suitable for publication include the following; research report (laboratory, field, archives), conceptual ideas, studies, theory applications.
3. Another suitable type of article is book review. Please note the following requirements for submitting book reviews:
  - a. book being reviewed should be newly published (within the last one year for books in Indonesian and two years for books in other foreign languages),
  - b. book reviews should be between 3-5 pages in length, and
  - c. a copy/scan of the book cover should be attached.
4. Articles are written in Indonesian or English (preferable) using academic language along with standard academic writing structure and composition. Manuscripts are typed 1,5 spaced in a quarto paper size (A4), between 15-20 pages in length including references, pictures, and tables.
5. Article should be in essay form which includes:
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  - d. keyword in English (5-7 words),
  - e. author's personal information and e-mail address,
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  - i. references.
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