



International Journal of Humanity Studies
<http://e-journal.usd.ac.id/index.php/IJHS>
Sanata Dharma University, Yogyakarta, Indonesia

BOOK REVIEW

Title : Beyond Borders: Notes on the Colonial and Post-colonial
Dynamics in the Americas, Europe and Indonesia
ISBN : 978-602-6369-66-6
Author : Baskara T. Wardaya, S.J.
Publisher : Yogyakarta, Sanata Dharma University Press, 2017
Page : 230 pages

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DOI: <https://doi.org/10.24071/ijhs.2017.010114>

received 19 June 2017; revised 10 July 2017; accepted 5 August 2017

Beyond Border is an inside look of what people across the globe have done for a long time. They all find themselves constantly engaged in action, reaction and interaction. The book answers the question of what colonial and postcolonial society has in common, i.e. crossing border.

Baskara T. Wardaya, the author of the book, is an ordained Jesuit priest and recognized historian and writer specializing in American History with an emphasis on democracy. In addition to teaching History, Religion and Politics, and Development of Cultural Studies in Sanata Dharma University, he also serves as the director of PUSDEMA (Centre for Democracy and Human Rights Studies) at the same university. Earning both Masters and Doctorate degrees from Marquette University, the recipient of numerous scholarships and other research accomplishments has given us assurance that he had conducted thorough research for *Beyond Borders*. In 2011-12 he was granted a Fulbright scholarship to teach history at the University of California-Riverside. In 2014, he conducted archival research on US-Indonesian relations during President Nixon's administration (1969-74) in the US with the generous grant from AIFIS (American Institute for Indonesian Studies). *Beyond Borders* is his second book written in English after *Cold War Shadow: United States Policy toward Indonesia 1953-1963* (2007). Among his best-sellers are *Bung Karno Menggugat!* [Sukarno Accuses] published 7 times since 2006, and *Membongkar Supersemar* [Dismantling "Supersemar"] (2007) that has seen its fourth printing.

Beyond Borders delivers an entertaining account and perspective on history of colonialism and postcolonialism all over the world. This book is an excellent resource to students of American History, specifically, and history enthusiasts in general, to say nothing of those interested in (post)coloniality.

The Introduction of the book is very helpful. Unusually placed before the “Acknowledgements” page, it helps navigate readers as to see that living in a deeply interconnected world, people cannot help but move from place to place and influence each other. Citing the top four border crossers being the Romans, Genghis Khan, Christopher Colombus and the CIA, Wardaya sets out to remind us that border-crossing has been done since times of yore and is now even more important. Placed in today’s postcolonial context, the book helps to underline that borderless society is real and necessary because people need to interact and work with diverse communities beyond borders to solve world issues such as human rights abuses, gender inequity, ecological damage, poverty, and radicalism.

The book comprises of 13 chapters, 9 of which mainly talk about America beginning from the colonial times to the end of World War II. Regrettably, in Chapter 11, *Beyond Border* stops short of where it should ideally begin. As shown in the title of the book, Europe is the area of coverage. But here we see that UK integration/disintegration is taken as the only example of European border crossing included in the book. It is, however, a comprehensive account of the history of Britain’s participation and lack thereof in EU. The next two chapters on Indonesia are well-written, although the author says that these chapters are “a bit different” (xi). One may ask what the different is. If the book is addressed to international, beyond-border-readers, no Othering is necessary. What does the author mean when saying “While chapter one to eleven talk about other places, especially the Americas and Europe, chapter 12 and 13 will focus on Indonesia” (xi)? Does it mean that the target readers are Indonesians?

Nonetheless, *Beyond Borders* is important to non-specialists as well. To take but one example is the Puritan history section. Salem witch trials are dark history in America that remains puzzling to date. But are not slandering, bigotry, and injustice political cards we are keen to play even today? Chapter 2 is a must-read for students of American literature. It provides us with some historical context for reading Puritan-themed novels from Nathaniel Hawthorne to Arthur Miller.

Throughout the book, Wardaya presents topics that can be read against and relevant to international politics of today. Media supremacy and sectarianism that give colours and shapes to the U.S. policy are among the topics that also ring true in current’s Indonesian politics.

Almost every chapter is filled with pictures to illustrate the discussion. But what picked out for praise are the pertinent quotes from famous people. The epigraph shown in each chapter is aptly chosen. Not only does it show the author’s enthusiasm for the topic, but it also prepares readers to feel the thrills inside the chapter.

The bibliography is well-referenced, making clear division of first and secondary sources which will be useful for snow-ball reading to obtain more information.

Finally, paratextual comments are like mini-reviews. While illustrations and pictures are helpful, the quality thereof is quite poor. Internet sources are often not satisfactory. Editing errors are also hard to hide. Spelling, punctuation, lower case/capitalization and typos are plagues that will likely be lightened by later editions. These shortcomings are only a minor distraction to the narratives; they do not take away from the border-crossing story being told.