

The American Image of Starbucks Coffee  
as Perceived by Its Consumers  
(Case Study: Starbucks Coffee Paragon Mall Semarang)

A THESIS

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for  
Thesis project on American Cultural Studies in English Department  
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Submitted by:

Dini Hajarrahmah

NIM: A2B007039

**FACULTY OF HUMANITIES**

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**PRONOUNCEMENT**

The writer states truthfully that this thesis is completed by her without any taking from other researchers in S-1, S-2, S-3, and in diploma degree of any universities. In addition, the writer ascertains that she does not take the material from other thesis or someone's work except for the references mentioned in bibliography.

Semarang, 7 July 2011

## **MOTTO AND DEDICATION**

*Kalau kamu punya impian, harapan, dan cita-cita,*

Letakkan dia, 5 cm, di depan kening kamu dan jangan sampai kamu lepas.

*Donny Dhirgantoro*

*This paper is dedicated to*

My Dad & Mom: Mohammad Arifin & Noor Farida

My Sister and Brother: Faelasufa, Salma fitria, Rafly Al-Farabby, &

Marsha Camilla

“You are my candle in the darkness”

## **APPROVAL**

**Approved by,**

Thesis Advisor,

Arido Laksono, S.S, M. Hum

NIP. 19750711 199903 1 002

## **VALIDATION**

Accepted by,

Strata 1 Thesis Examination Committee

Faculty of Humanities Diponegoro University

on 4 August 2011

Chair Person

Dra. Dewi Murni, MA

NIP. 19491207 197603 2 001

First Member

Second Member

Arido Laksono, S.S, M. Hum  
19750711 199903 1 002

Dra. Christine Resnitriwati, M. Hum      NIP.  
NIP. 19560216 198303 2 001

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Finally, the writer expects that this thesis will be useful to the reader who wishes to learn something about the American image of Starbucks Coffee as perceived by its consumer in Starbucks Paragon Mall Semarang.

Semarang, 7 July 2011

The Writer

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## ABSTRACT

Fenomena globalisasi melalui produk-produk Amerika selalu menarik perhatian penulis. *Image* atau gambaran tentang Amerika yang disampaikan melalui Starbucks Coffee di Paragon Mall Semarang bagi para konsumen yang datang menjadi pilihan topik utama yang penulis angkat di dalam skripsi ini. Pertemuan antara merk global dengan penduduk lokal di Semarang ini pastinya menimbulkan penggambaran tentang Amerika yang berbeda-beda di mata para pengunjungnya.

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui apakah pengunjung mendapatkan *American image* melalui Starbucks Coffee serta menjabarkan apa saja *image* yang didapatkan oleh pengunjung ketika mereka mengonsumsi Starbucks Coffee.

Data yang dikumpulkan adalah kuisioner yang diajukan kepada 30 pengunjung

Starbucks yang berusia 15-25 tahun. Dalam menganalisis data yang ada, penulis menggunakan teori globalisasi dari Rahayu Kusasi mengenai *Tourist Gaze*, Arjun Appadurai mengenai *Disjuncture*, George Ritzer mengenai *Pastiche*.

Hasil analisa menunjukkan bahwa responden yang memiliki *mindset* Amerika menyadari dan merasakan *American image* dan globalisasi yang dihadirkan melalui Starbucks dan menempatkan gaya menyajikan sendiri (*self-service*) menjadi hal yang paling menggambarkan Amerika. Akan tetapi, penggambaran tentang Amerika yang mereka sadari ini tidak menjadi sebuah motivasi utama ketika mereka akan mengkonsumsi Starbucks.

*Keywords* : Starbucks Coffee, American Image, Disjuncture, Pastiche, Tourist Gaze, Globalisasi, Self-service.

## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1. Background of The Study

John Storey states that there are some definitions of Popular Culture. First, popular culture is culture which is widely well-liked by many people. Second, it is the culture which is left over after high culture or inferior culture. Third, it is a mass culture that is defined as a mass produced for mass consumption. Fourth, it is culture which is originated from 'the people', something that imposed on 'the people' from above. Fifth, it is one which draws on the political analysis of the Italian Marxist Antonio Gramsci, the concept of hegemony. Sixth, it is one informed by recent thinking around the debate on postmodernism (Storey: 6). There are a lot of artifacts or products of popular culture as it is explained above such as music, movie, fashion, food, drink, television programmes, and clothes. One of the pop culture artifacts that the writer will analyze in this thesis is popular beverage named Starbucks Coffee.

Howard Schultz, the CEO of Starbucks, stated that Starbucks represents something beyond a cup of coffee. Starbucks is a coffee company which also represents Globalization or Americanization since it is an American product that is produced all over the world. Starbucks Coffee originally comes from Seattle, USA and now it spreads out around the globe, including Indonesia. The expansion of Starbucks Coffee is very huge; it can open hundreds of new store in different countries within a year. In many Hollywood movies, Starbucks often becomes one of the important parts of American daily life where they go to there everyday, buy the specific taste of

Starbucks and bring it on the way to their office (Kusasi: 23). That is why the writer thinks that Starbucks Coffee is successfully establishing its image all over the world.

Nowadays, Starbucks Coffee has become a famous brand. People can find Starbucks in the big cities of Indonesia such as Jakarta, Bandung, Yogyakarta, Bali, and also Semarang. People can also see Starbucks through the Hollywood movies which often show people who bring the cup of Starbucks. People can also find the products which have Starbucks image such as T-Shirt, bag, sticker, tumbler, etc. Those phenomena increase the writer's curiosity on how the process of Globalization on Starbucks exists and influences people in Indonesia especially in Semarang. The writer believes that popular culture's artifacts are everywhere and have different image and impact towards the society. In this case, since this is the first store opened in Semarang, the Starbucks phenomena would be an interesting topic to be discussed about globalization and American images in a thesis on American Studies.

## **1.2. Scope of The Study**

The writer will analyze the artifact of American popular culture, namely Starbucks Coffee in Semarang. The topic that occurs in this thesis is the American image of Starbucks Coffee towards its consumer. The writer will analyze about the globalization process that happen through Starbucks coffee and what are the American image that the consumer get from Starbucks Coffee.

## **1.3. Aims of The Study**

The aims of the study are to know whether or not they get the American image while consuming Starbucks Coffee and then how it correlates with the theory. The writer would like to get the result from the consumer's perspective on how they perceived the American image of Starbucks Coffee.

## **1.4. Hypothesis**

Hypothesis is a conceptual assumption about the result of the research before the research is done (Stokes: 58). The hypotheses in this research are: first, the consumers get the image about America and globalization through Starbucks Coffee. Second, based on the first hypothesis, it proves that the expansion of Americanization and Globalization exists in Semarang and it influences the consumer to consume Starbucks Coffee.

## **1.5. Method of The Study**

### **1. Method of Research**

The writer uses field research in collecting the data. This field research will use quantitative and qualitative method. Quantitative is a method that is based on numeric information. This method uses particular respondents to answer such questionnaire that results in a numeric information to be analyzed. During the process, there is an interview with the respondents to collect the data (Dawson: 19).

On the other hand, qualitative is a research method that uses the interpretation of the writer towards the topic by reading several supporting books, and searching addition from the internet sources (Stokes: XI).

## 2. Method of Approach

The study will use the globalization and American image theory to approach and analyze the research. The writer will use the globalization theory for analyzing the process of globalization that happens in Starbucks. Meanwhile American image theory will be used to show the American image experience felt by the customer after consuming Starbucks Coffee.

### 1.6. Organization of The Study

#### CHAPTER 1 : INTRODUCTION

It contains the Background of the study, Scope of the study Aims of the study, Hypothesis, Methods of the study, and The Organization of the study.

#### CHAPTER 2 : LITERARY REVIEW

It consists of the theoretical judgment which can maintain the writing of the thesis.

#### CHAPTER 3 : RESEARCH METHOD

It contains the Type of Research Method, Data Source, Population and Samples, Technique of Collecting Data, and Technique of Analyzing Data.

#### CHAPTER 4 : DATA ANALYSIS

This is the main part of the thesis because it reveals the discussion of the theoretical review in correlation with the result of field research.

#### CHAPTER 5 : CONCLUSION

It serves the review of analysis results from previous chapter.

## CHAPTER 2

### LITERARY REVIEW

#### 2.1. Profile of The Research Object

Starbucks is one of the franchising coffee shops from the United States. The central office is in Seattle, Washington and the first store was built in 1971 by Baldwin, Zev Siegel, and Gordon Bowker. The former name of this company was *Il Giornalo*. Howard Schultz also joined this company in 1982 and he bought it in 1987 then changed its name into Starbucks. Starbucks derives from one of the names of old mining camp in Rainier mountain and also one of the names of place in Pequod boat in the novel *Moby Dick* (Kusasi: 21).

Nowadays, Starbucks becomes the biggest coffee shop in the world with 17.009 stores in more than 50 countries as of January, 2, 2011 including Indonesia. In Indonesia, Starbucks is owned by PT. MITRA ADI PERKASA (MAP) Tbk known as a retail company that has other franchising products such as *Sogo, Seibu, Debenhams, Converse, Reebok, Nike, Zara, Kinokuniya, Krispy Krem, and Burger King*. After PT. MITRA ADI PERKASA sent the hospitality experts, Anthony Cottan and team from Jakarta, to Seattle to have 3 months intensive training, then on 20 May 2002, Starbucks opened its first store in Plaza Indonesia, Jakarta, Indonesia (“Starbucks in Indonesia”).

Then, to improve the quality and performance of PT. MITRA ADI PERKASA, the management opens another company named PT. Sari Coffee and then this company finally manages Starbucks Coffee Indonesia. Nowadays, Starbucks has maintained its 72 stores which spread out in every big city in Indonesia. Those phenomena increase other foreign coffee companies to open their market in Indonesia such as Gloria Jean’s Coffee (Canada), Dome (Australia), The Coffee Bean & Tea Leaf (USA) and also the local company such as Café Excelso, Tator Café, Café Rollaas, and many more.

##### 2.1.1. Starbucks Coffee In Semarang

Starbucks Coffee expanded the store into the capital city of Central Java, Semarang, in April 2010 together with other 20 new Starbucks stores in some big cities in Indonesia. The location is at the entrance of Paragon Mall Semarang. These are the picture of Starbucks Coffee at Paragon Mall Semarang:

*Picture 2. Personal Documentation of Starbuks Coffee Semarang*

The demography of this American artifact in Semarang is the high class and middle up people; the teenager, adult, and old people from diverse background. In Semarang, long before Starbucks opened its store, there were some coffee shops which became the places to hang out for some people, such as *Buket Coffee*, *I-Cos*, *Coffee Time*, *Blue Lotus*, *Tebuko*, *Peacock Coffee*, *Deoholic*, *Gahwa*, etc. Those coffee shops are basically adopting the idea of '*romantization in drinking a cup of coffee*'. It means that drinking coffee becomes something important and people also have different ways to drink coffee.

## 2.2. Theoretical Framework

### 2.2.1. Theory of Globalization

Globalization is not only the distribution of American products but also the effort to create the western culture as the standards of the world's lifestyle and world uniform (Kusasi: 31). The writer uses three points to analyze the theory of globalization: tourist gaze, pastiche, and disjuncture.

#### 1. Tourist Gaze

Kusasi states in *Globucksisasi* book that Starbucks Coffee is like the *tourist gaze*. When people become the tourist of this coffee shop, people do not have to go to America to experience that country, they just need to go to Starbucks and feel the *tourist gaze* inside Starbucks (Kusasi: 128).

*Tourist gaze dan reverse orientalism terjadi pada fenomena Starbucks – toko kopi yang menjadi sebuah medan petualangan yang menarik dari Amerika. Starbucks adalah sebuah tempat di Barat yang memberikan pengalaman yang khas, lalu Starbucks dihadirkan di Indonesia. Ini menimbulkan keterpukauan dan harapan bagi orang-orang untuk mendapatkan sebuah pengalaman Amerika dengan mengonsumsi sebuah ruang bernama Starbucks. Bayang-bayang Starbucks sebagai sebuah ikon “kebaratan” hadir melalui citra visual di berbagai media, dimana kehidupan warga Amerika digambarkan tidak terpisahkan dari Starbucks (Kusasi: 128).*

The statements above emphasize that people do not need to go to America to feel the habit of America, they just visit this '*tourist gaze*' to experience and feel America. That is why, the writer believes that this is what the Starbucks' CEO, Howard Schultz, aims to introduce the image of America towards other country through Starbucks Coffee.

## 2. Disjuncture

This theory is supported also by Arjun Appadurai on his *Disjuncture and Difference in The Global Cultural Economy* research.

Appadurai believes that globalization not only create homogenization but also heterogenization. There are chaos and disjunctive in the globalization process nowadays. This can be seen through different characteristic in different area. People may have various image and perspective about such global product. This is what happened when globalization meets glocalization, when global meets local (Appadurai: 5, 2010).

## 3. Pastiche

George Ritzer states that Globalization of culture can be seen as the transnational expansion of codes and homogeneity. In other words, he states that this is a process where the local and global input interact each other to create *pastiche* or the mixture of them which can be called as heterogenization (Ritzer: 104, 2010).

Ritzer also states that globalization is a process of codes and signs transformation or homogenization. It means that globalization transfers the specific cultural codes towards different people and across the limitation of geographic inter- country. Therefore, those particular codes are accepted by the people in different areas. In the end, this process of reception towards the codes could create homogeneity in the world. Furthermore, Ritzer also assumes that globalization is not always perfect. There is a possibility that globalization process can be broken in the end of the process of reception. There is a possibility that local people will interact with the product and create a mixed phenomenon between local and global culture. Ritzer calls this phenomenon as a *pastiche* (Ritzer: 97).

### 2.2.2. Image of Starbucks Coffee

Image is impression that a person, company, and product gives to the public (Oxford Learner's Pocket Dictionary: 213). Image which occurs from such a product or company is very important to the consumer.

Amin Taufiq Kurniawan in his study about *Komodifikasi dalam Secangkir Kopi* believes that every company or product has its own symbol or image that persuades consumers to consume it. As a result, a producer will produce that product based on the market demand. Hence, a cup of coffee will not only function as beverage that makes people stay awake but also become the symbol to communicate, identify, and actualize the consumer's position in the social group ("Komodifikasi dalam Secangkir Kopi")

*Kopi telah melewati sejarahnya sebagai minuman yang populer dan disukai oleh masyarakat di berbagai belahan dunia. Bahkan lebih dari itu, biji kopi adalah*



*penggerak sejarah. Intensifikasi perdagangan antar benua, globalisasi tahap pertama yang belum mengenal telepon, bahkan monopoli, peperangan, hingga kolonialisme dengan kebijakan keji tanam paksa, terjadi demi memastikan secangkir kopi tersedia di atas meja para peminumnya. Dan kini, kopi menjadi penggerak globalisasi melalui Starbucks. Starbucks menghadirkan pengalaman yang berbeda, bahkan mengubah hidup orang di berbagai ranah yang dipijak tokonya. Lokalitas Amerika dibawa ke Indonesia melalui Starbucks, dan orang mengkonsumsi sebuah kilasan dan harapan akan negeri Abang Sam melalui tokonya. Keinginan dan tindakan mengkonsumsi ini juga dikarakterisasi oleh pemujaan karena adanya rasa inferior sebagai bagian masyarakat pasca-kolonial (Kusasi: 139).*

Furthermore, the statement above tell that coffee has undergone its history as a popular beverage in the world. Moreover, coffee seed has become the history trigger or media to change history.

Nowadays, Starbucks coffee becomes the catalysator of globalization. Starbucks requires a different experience of consuming coffee in which American locality is presented to Indonesian. It is expected that people will attain the American experience through the Starbucks store.

Kusasi through her auto-ethnography as a barista in Starbucks Coffee states that Starbucks brings the identity and image of America's Globalization. In every part of the world, the image of Starbucks Coffee always represents America and when people consume Starbucks, whether they realize it or not, they consume the product of Globalization that comes to Indonesia. In other word, they are also part of post-colonialism citizen.

America's number one virtue is material comfort. Obviously, this may not represent every individual in America, not the people scrapping by, but the ideology of Americans, as a whole has become this cushy materialistic lifestyle. People are foreclosing on their homes, but yet are still getting their nails done, having their Starbucks every day, and continually racking up their credit cards to buy more crap they don't need. I can't say I am not completely different from the whole. I have a ridiculous amount of credit card debit that I am trying to pay down, and I do get Starbucks when I really should be using that \$5 for something I really need, like groceries. It has become the new American Standard: Buy Now pay for Eternity! ("The New American Ideology")

From the statement above, we can conclude that Starbucks has become the image and icon of America. Image and icon of America can be seen on these three following books: *Globucksisasi, Posmodernisme dan Budaya Konsumen* and *Fast Food Nation*. They are:

### **1. Service**

Starbucks gives the self-service which is different from east culture. Consumers have to take their own cup of coffee in the table of barista after the coffee is ready to drink. This new culture makes Indonesian feel the different way of enjoying coffee, this is one of “Starbucks Experience” (Kusasi: 82).

## **2. Leading the global market**

Starbucks as well as other American fast food and products, mostly lead the global market in the world as they have the power in the global market and have big number of consumers all over the world (Kusasi: 28). It can be seen on the chart:

## **3. Western Lifestyle**

Starbucks represents the western lifestyle inside the coffee store such as hanging out while drinking coffee, wearing jeans and western clothes style, using western name for the various coffee offered in the Starbucks which is taken from the west, playing exclusive jazz music in the store and many other. Starbucks consumer can see the western lifestyle here and it is also part of the *tourist gaze* and Starbucks Experience (Kusasi: 130).

#### **4. Freedom**

America is identical with freedom as it is a liberal country. Starbucks as the icon of America represents the freedom itself. Starbucks allows the consumer to feel the freedom by enjoying a cup of coffee at Starbucks (Kusasi: 134).

#### **5. Materialism and Consumerism**

Mostly, American product is expensive for our country but there are still a lot of people who consume something that basically they do not really need it. This condition could make the people in our country become materialistic and it can turn into consumerism. Thus, the basic function of consumption does not exist any longer (Featherstone: 201). This condition represents American ideology now and through its artifact such as Starbucks, we can see that this is also the image of America.

#### **6. Technological Innovation**

Technological innovation can be seen through the development of Starbucks Coffee store as well as other American products. Almost all of the technology and material used in Starbucks are imported from its origin country. This condition makes Starbucks different from other products in our country. This is another “Starbucks Experience” that can be felt by consumers when they entered Starbucks (Kusasi: 81).

Those 6 images are in line with Starbucks’ vision and mission. Starbucks has vision “to inspire and nurture the human spirit - one person, one cup, and one neighbourhood at a time.” While its mission is “to establish Starbucks as the premier purveyor of the finest coffee in the world while maintaining our uncompromising principles as we grow.” (“The Way We Do Business”).

Starbucks tries to follow six principles in order to realize its vision and mission:

##### 1) Our Coffee

*“It has always been, and will always be, about quality. We are passionate about ethically sourcing the finest coffee beans, roasting them with great care, and improving the lives of people who grow them. We care deeply about all of this; our work is never done.”*

## 2) Our Partners

*“We’re called partners, because it’s not just a job, it’s our passion. Together, we embrace diversity to create a place where each of us can be ourselves. We always treat each other with respect and dignity. And we hold each other to that standard.”*

## 3) Our Customers

*“When we are fully engaged, we connect with, laugh with, and uplift the lives of our customers— even if just for a few moments. Sure, it starts with the promise of a perfectly made beverage, but our work goes far beyond that. It’s really about human connection.”*

## 4) Our Stores

*“When our customers feel this sense of belonging, our stores become a heaven, a break from the worries outside, a place where you can meet with friends. It’s about enjoyment at the speed of life—sometimes slow and savored, sometimes faster. Always full of humanity.”*

## 5) Our Neighborhood

*“Every store is part of a community, and we take our responsibility to be good neighbors seriously. We want to be invited in wherever we do business. We can be a force for positive action— bringing together our partners, customers, and the community to contribute every day. Now we see that our responsibility—and our potential for good—is even larger. The world is looking to Starbucks to set the new standard, yet again. We will lead.”*

## 6) Our Shareholders

*“We know that as we deliver in each of these areas, we enjoy the kind of success that rewards our shareholders. We are fully accountable to get each of these elements right so that Starbucks—and everyone it touches—can endure and thrive.”*

Starbucks fulfills this mission by implement these commitments:

- a) Understanding of environmental issues and sharing information with our partners.*
- b) Developing innovative and flexible solutions to bring about change.*
- c) Striving to buy, sell and use environmentally friendly products.*
- d) Recognizing that fiscal responsibility is essential to our environmental future.*
- e) Instilling environmental responsibility as a corporate value.*
- f) Measuring and monitoring our progress for each project.*

*g) Encouraging all partners to share in our mission.*

## **CHAPTER 3**

### **RESEARCH METHOD**

#### **3.1. Type of Research Method**

This research uses field research to collect the data. Field Research means the writer comes to the area or object of the research during the process of research. The field research will use Quantitative and Qualitative research as the method of research and use an interview approach to collect the data. Interview means collecting the data by asking some questions related to the topic to Starbucks consumers. Quantitative means collecting the data by measuring the number of result by using questionnaire. Questionnaire is an efficient mechanism to collect the data (Uma Sekaran: 82). Qualitative means collecting the data and information by reading several books and collecting sources from the internet, etc.

#### **3.2. Data Source**

There are two kinds of data sources: primary data and secondary data. The primary data is obtained when the researcher collects the data directly from the sources and the secondary data is when the researcher uses the information from the second party (Dawson: 49). This research uses the result of questionnaire and interview with Starbucks consumers as the primary data. Then, the writer also rechecks the interview result as the secondary data.

#### **3.3. Population and Samples**

Population is the total number of analysis elements in which characteristics is being observed (Dawson: 52). Meanwhile, sample is a part of population which can symbolize the nature of the population being observed (Dawson: 53). The population of this research is specific consumer of Starbucks Coffee, Paragon Mall Semarang in a week. The samples are the consumer selected by the writer as the informant of this research.

Bayu Febrianto, one of the Starbucks' baristas stated that the average number of people in a day who come to Starbucks Coffee Paragon Mall Semarang is around 200 people. Based on Arikunto, sample is taken from 15% of the average number of consumer per day (Arikunto: 117). Therefore, the writer will take 15% of respondents from 200 people who come to

Starbucks in a day. That is why, the number of respondent is  $15\% \times 200 \text{ people} = 30 \text{ people}$ . The samples are the consumers who consume Starbucks from 15-25 years old since that is the teenager and young people's age.

The writer used teenagers and young people because they are the typical demographic who are easy to imitate popular culture product and habit. Teenagers and young people are easy to follow the trend both in their own group and society. They are the main object and demographic of popular culture such as Starbucks Coffee (Pengantar Ilmu Budaya: 36).

### **3.4. Technique of Collecting Data**

The writer used the questionnaire and interview. The writer used questionnaire to know the comment of the consumer about Starbucks image in their mind (Sudaryanto: 135). The questionnaire spread to the number of consumers who consume Starbucks from teenager and young people backgrounds. The writer chose 30 respondents for this research. This method is used to get deeper information about Starbucks in Semarang.

The interview method is used to get deeper information and comments about Starbucks Coffee directly from the consumer. The writer also made a note of the important information from the research which related to the topic (Sudaryanto: 135).

### **3.5. Technique of Analyzing Data**

The following points are the steps of analyzing the data:

1. Spread out the questionnaire to Starbucks' consumers (teenager and young people background) and after that doing an interview with the Starbucks' consumers,
3. Collect the result of questionnaire and interview from the method above,
4. Group the consumer's questionnaire that has the same image and view about Starbucks and find what are the most American images that comes up from the consumer,
5. Analyze the result of point number 4 and correlate it with the theory that the writer used,
6. Write the result of analysis from the data, interview, and other method.

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Picture 2. Chart of Starbucks in Global Market (Globucksisasi)