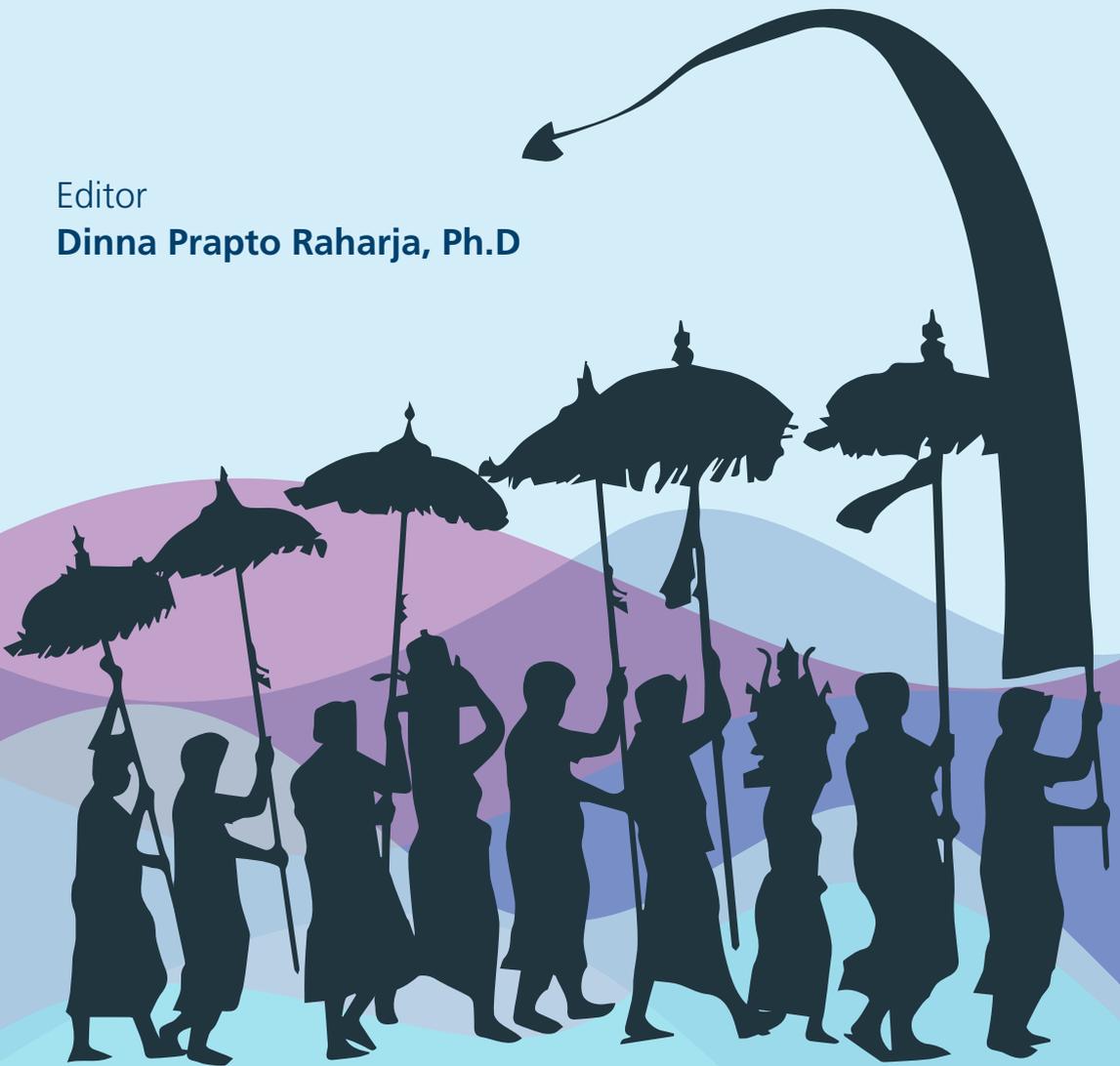


Democracy and Inclusivity:

A Reflection from
the 2019 Bali Civil Society and Media Forum

Editor

Dinna Prapto Raharja, Ph.D



**FRIEDRICH
EBERT
STIFTUNG**



COORDINATING MINISTRY FOR
HUMAN DEVELOPMENT AND CULTURE
REPUBLIC OF INDONESIA



INDONESIAN MINISTRY OF
FOREIGN AFFAIRS



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Foreword

from the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung

The Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung Indonesia Office (FES) felt pleased when the Indonesian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (KEMLU) invited FES for the second time to become a co-organizer of the »Bali Democracy Media and Civil Society Forum (BCSMF)«, which was held again as a parallel and integral part of the Bali Democracy Forum (BDF).

The first track of 12th BDF took place on 5-6 December 2019 in Nusa Dua, Bali, with the overarching topic of »Democracy and Inclusivity«. Policymakers, diplomats and experts from Asia and other parts of the world addressed the question, what level of inclusivity is needed to guarantee a stable and thriving democracy. This reflects the consensus that a democracy cannot be sustainable, if it is only confined to the electoral process, by having parliamentary debates and/or enacting laws. The success of democracy is instead judged by the living culture of democracy, by the extent to which all people could contribute to democratic processes, as well as the extent of their equal access in benefiting from the fruits of democracy. The welfare and care of every single member of the society, especially the underprivileged, marginalized, and the excluded, needs to be taken into consideration. Inclusive democracy must necessarily evolve into inclusive development, while development cannot be viewed narrowly as only economic progress but also ensuring economic and social justice to every section of population. In a nutshell, political and civil human rights are mutually dependent with social, economic and cultural human rights, and they need to be developed at the same time.

In her BDF opening speech, Indonesian Minister of Foreign Affairs Retno Marsudi correspondingly emphasized the strong correlation of freedom, inclusivity and

democracy. Based on this, she diagnosed a higher level of fragility and unrest across the region as well as worldwide. As one recipe, she suggested to empower the millennial generation and to involve more women in political decision-making and in preserving peace and inclusion.

Accordingly, another focus area of the 2019 BDF debates was women leadership; which was prominently highlighted in Ibu Retno's panel discussion with Marise Payne, Australian Minister for Foreign Affairs and for Women; Monica Juma, Cabinet Secretary for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Kenya; as well as Nandi Ndaitwah, Minister for International Relations and Cooperation of Namibia.

The parallel 2019 Bali Civil Society and Media Forum (#BCSMF) addressed the theme of »Rising Exclusivity and Declining Democracy«. Experts from civil society and media discussed the current challenges for democracies worldwide as well as possible remedies. In this spirit, they also debated the exclusion in digital space, the challenge of fragmented opinion making through information filter bubbles as well as hate speech and hoaxes.

According to Anita Wahid, representative of the Indonesian Anti-hoax Association (MAFINDO) and daughter of former Indonesian president Abdurrahman Wahid, we are challenged by a post-truth era, in which it is more important, if a certain message is in favor of my group or not, rather than if it is true and fact-based.

Syahredzan Johan, human rights lawyer from Malaysia, explained in his presentation Malaysia's experience with the introduction and abolishment of the fake news law. Introduced under the former authoritarian government in Malaysia, it was removed by the subsequent democratically legitimized government in Malaysia. However, also the democratically elected government was looking for the right formula to guarantee freedom of speech on the one hand, while preventing hate speech and hoax on the other hand, Syahredzan explained.

Dr. Hasan Wirajuda, Indonesian Minister of Foreign Affairs (2001 - 2009) and founder of the Bali Democracy Forum, pointed out in his presentation that the US is not anymore the beacon of democracy, Europe is struggling mostly with its own problems, while economically successful but authoritarian countries like China are challenging weakened liberal democracies. Against this background, Wirajuda emphasized the need for liberal democracies to guarantee a high level of inclusion and respectively social justice. »*Social Justice is nothing else but economic democracy*«, he said. Prof. Mohammad Nuh, Chairman of the Indonesian Press Council, reflected in his presentation about the conditions to guarantee quality press freedom under the current challenges. »*Media sustainability in the digital era becomes crucial*«, stressed Nuh. Andina Dwifatma pointed out that media freedom and literacy help citizens in making informed decisions and, when needed, organizing themselves to demand for their unfulfilled rights.

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The 2019 BCSMF build on the 2018 BCSMF, which was dedicated to the topic of »Populism, Identity Politics, and the Erosion of Democracy«. As a testimony of the 2018 BCSMF, the FES Indonesia Office, together with KEMLU and with support of the Coordinating Ministry of Human Development and Culture (Kemenko PMK), produced a book with related papers of distinguished 2018 BCSMF experts. The book was launched officially at the 2019 BCSMF through a handover ceremony between FES and BDF icon Hasan Wirajuda. The present 2019 BDF publication will continue with this welcomed documentation of the vibrant exchange in Bali. Especially since representatives of KEMLU also supported the idea to distribute publications at the 2020 BDF.

In conclusion, the exchange at the 2019 BDF showed impressively, that it takes strategic decisions by politicians as well as efforts by the entire society to realize a high degree of inclusivity and to preserve democracy. The exchange with social media giants and critics also illustrated evidently that governments, but also influential companies like *Facebook*, must find the right formula to guarantee freedom of expression on one hand, while preventing hate speech and hoax on the other hand. Amidst the current national, regional and global challenges, it is certainly laudable that the BDF has been continuously strengthened by the Indonesian government and civil society to promote democratization, inclusivity, and media freedom. The Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung is proud to take part in this endeavor.

Jakarta, July 2020

Sergio Grassi

Resident Director

Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung Indonesia Office

Foreword

from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of
the Republic of Indonesia

For over a decade, Bali Democracy Forum (BDF) has succeeded in making democracy a strategic agenda in the Asia-Pacific. BDF has become the premier forum for discussions on democracy. Our Minister for Foreign Affairs, H.E. Retno L.P. Marsudi has stated in the opening of 12th Bali Democracy Forum that key success factors for this are evolution and inclusivity. Inclusivity lies at the core of democracy and its underpinning principle of equal participation for all.

Since its inception in 2018, Bali Civil Society and Media Forum (BCSMF) has become an integral and inseparable part of BDF. This is because safeguarding democracy is a multi-stakeholder endeavor that cannot rely solely on the efforts of government agencies but also requires the participation of all facets of a democratic society, including civil society, academics, and the media. In this sense, every year the Ministry of Foreign Affairs try to increase involvements of civil society, and enables them to play more significant role in the BDF. Under the auspice of the 12th BDF, "Democracy and Inclusivity", the theme chosen for the 2nd BCSMF 2019 was "Rising Exclusivity and Declining Democracy".

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia once conducted a research on the correlation between the quality of freedom (democracy), inclusivity and fragility. The basic assumption is that the three concepts are intertwined. The research concluded that 49 percent of the subjects of study show an inclination toward correlation between freedom, inclusivity and level of fragility.



BALI CIVIL SOCIETY AND MEDIA FORUM

"RISING EXCLUSIVITY AND DECLINING DEMOCRACY"

NUSA DUA, BALI, INDONESIA | 5 - 6 DECEMBER 2019



Photo: Doc. FES

EXIT

Today, we see the rise of narrow nationalism and populism. It hinders democratic processes in some advanced countries across Europe. Echo chamber, hoaxes, and disinformation (particularly through social media) have also increasingly become problems for democratic institutions. Disinformation poses new difficulties for the voters to make sense of all information they can access to make political decisions, regardless of their level of expertise and education.

Hence, civil society and media need to strengthen their role, mainly by countering false discourses, encouraging institutional innovations, encouraging structural changes, forming new social coalitions, and stimulating cultural changes. Civil society and media also need to broaden their influence by becoming more transdisciplinary, transboundary, and transparent.

It is equally important to teach the public to verify sources of information and/or only obtain information from trusted sources. This can be done through the promotion of good journalism, development of strong civil society, robust academia, and independent fact checkers initiated by the public itself. Moreover, social media companies could potentially be a partner to democracy. As a platform, social media companies cannot remain neutral let alone distance themselves from critical issues such as inclusion in democracies.

This is the second year that the Ministry for Foreign Affairs endorse the publication of reflection book of the BCSMF. The writers of this year's publication have discussed thoroughly how democracy declined and grew. We thank the writers for also highlighting the impacts of COVID-19 pandemic, the devastating disruption of today's era, into the reflection.

To this end, I would like to welcome this publication. I hope this book would serve a meaningful contribution to the intellectual discourse and become an important reference for all to promote inclusive democracy.

Jakarta, July 2020

Dindin Wahyudin

Director of Center for Policy Analysis and Development on Multilateral Affairs
Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Republic of Indonesia

Acronym and Abbreviation

ADN	: Asia Democracy Network, or Jaringan Demokrasi Asia
AICHR	: Intergovernmental Commission on Human Rights, or Komisi Antar-Pemerintah ASEAN tentang HAM
AJI	: Aliansi Jurnalis Independen, or Alliance of Independent Journalists
ANM	: Action Network for Migrants, or Jaringan Aksi untuk Migran
ARCM	: Asian Research Center for Migration, or Pusat Penelitian Asia untuk Migrasi
AS	: Amerika Serikat, or the United States of America
ASEAN	: Association of Southeast Asian Nations
BCSMF	: Bali Civil Society and Media Forum, or Forum Demokrasi Bali untuk Media dan Masyarakat Sipil
BDF	: Bali Democracy Forum, or Forum Demokrasi Bali
BDSC	: Bali Democracy Student Conference, or Konferensi Mahasiswa Demokrasi Bali
BLM	: Black Lives Matter, or Kehidupan Orang Kulit Hitam itu Penting
BN	: Barisan Nasional, or National Front
CBO	: Community-Based Organizations, or Organisasi Berbasis Komunitas
CSDS	: Centre for the Study of Developing Societies
CSOs	: Civil Society Organizations, or Organisasi Masyarakat Sipil
DAP	: Democratic Action Party, or Partai Aksi Demokrasi
EIU	: Economist Intelligence Unit
FES	: Friedrich-Ebert Stiftung
GDP	: Gross Domestic Product, or Produk Domestik Bruto

GMS	: Greater Mekong Subregion, or Subwilayah Mekong Raya
HAM	: Hak Asasi Manusia, or Human Rights
ILO	: International Labour Organization
Kemenko PMK	: Kementerian Koordinator Pembangunan Manusia dan Kebudayaan, or Coordinating Ministry of Human Development and Culture
KEMLU	: Kementerian Luar Negeri, or Ministry of Foreign Affairs
KPK	: Komisi Pemberantasan Korupsi, or Corruption Eradication Commission
KPU	: Komisi Pemilihan Umum, or General Election Commission
LGBT	: Lesbian Gay Biseksual Transgender
LSM	: Lembaga Swadaya Masyarakat, or Non-Governmental Organizations
MAFINDO	: Masyarakat Anti Fitnah Indonesia, or Indonesian Anti-hoax Association
MKVL	: Myanmar, Kamboja, Vietnam dan Laos, or Myanmar, Cambodia, Vietnam and Laos
NCPO	: National Council for Peace and Order
NGOs	: Non-Governmental Organizations, or Lembaga Swadaya Masyarakat
OFW	: Overseas Foreign Workers, or Pekerja Filipina di Luar Negeri
OMS	: Organisasi Masyarakat Sipil, or Civil Society Organizations
PDB	: Produk Domestik Bruto, or Gross Domestic Product
PH	: Pakatan Harapan, or Alliance of Hope
POs	: People's Organizations, or Organisasi Rakyat
SAFENet	: Southeast Asia Freedom of Expression Network
US(A)	: United States (of America), or Amerika Serikat
UU	: Undang-Undang, or Law

Social Inclusion in Today's Democracies

Dinna Prapto Raharja

Social inclusion is the guarantee of social and political participation for all citizens, part of the living democratic culture and respectively the basis of a functioning democracy. As a principle, this is easy to say, but many challenges and competing perspectives may come in the way of creating an inclusive democracy. There are even some more challenging situations. People may still believe in the idea of democracy, but they may become disappointed by the performance of public institutions, and thus skeptical about the competence of democratic institutions in responding to citizens. There are instances where critics to government may be perceived as “overly critical” by those in power. In its defense, a democratic regime could respond to those critics by suppressing, limiting, censoring, and sacrificing the inclusion of various views on ongoing issues at hand. Some governments even turned less democratic for its rejection to be inclusive and open-minded.

The 12th Bali Democracy Forum (BDF), which was held on 5-6 December 2019, addressed the theme of “Democracy and Inclusivity”. The forum served as a platform of dialog for sharing experiences among state and non-state actors to understand the challenges for making democracy inclusive. As the Indonesian Ministry for Foreign Affairs mentioned, BDF is the most prestigious and the largest gathering for democratic countries. The government believes that continuous supports are critical, not only for the democracies but also to inspire other countries on how to engage democratic countries. On inclusivity, the organizer believes that success of democracy is judged by the opportunity for all people to contribute to democratic process; and the extend of which members of the

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society, even when they tend to be underprivileged, marginalized, and excluded, are heard and can participate in democracy.

This book is the reflection of the parallel sessions of BDF: the Bali Civil Society and Media Forum (BCSMF), a forum dedicated to welcome inputs and thoughts from civil society, academics, and media professionals on designated issues, namely the rising exclusivity and declining democracy, by engaging the first track of (government) representatives in BDF in the discussion of inclusive democracy. Just as the year before, BCSMF has now become an integral part of BDF; where speakers from BCSMF appeared before the BDF, and points raised in BCSMF were presented in BDF conclusion. The participation level in the 2019 BCSMF has doubled compared to the year before. There were participants from various parts of Indonesia, parts of Asia (Thailand, Malaysia, India, Pakistan, Indonesia, South Korea, Singapore, and Timor Leste), Middle East (Tunisia), Europe (UK, Sweden), United States, and Australia. The participation of these individuals is based on self-sponsorship and co-sponsorship from the attending groups. In short, there were enthusiasm to join in the forum, and the purpose of this book is to capture the points raised by the participants and speakers, reflecting on it against the trend of democracies across nations, particularly in Asia.

Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung (FES) was among the organizing partners of the 12th BCSMF, and FES is committed to documenting the forum's dialogues by producing this book. The book is expected to become a reference to enrich future programs and activities by civil society and government along the theme of supporting democracies. It is strongly shared in the forum that democracy needs cooperation from other democracies, and the experience from one region helps other regions to build decision on how to respond to their own challenges in practicing democracy. Regional and multilateral cooperations nurture democratic practices & nourish them.

Since this is the second book on BCSMF and BDF, it will incorporate items raised in last year's book that were aligned with what the participants have mentioned during the 2019 forum. The first book published in 2019 goes deep on populism and identity politics, including aspects of ways to mitigating hoaxes, sensationalism, and political bias. Incorporating issues on the role of civil society that were raised in 2018 would be helpful due to its relevance to what happened the year after. The intent is to connect discussion across time period.

Also added to this year's book is the unprecedented COVID-19 pandemic that started in Wuhan, Hubei Province in China. Although the disease had yet to emerge when the 12th BDF and BCSMF were held, the time of this book's writing coincided with the spread of the pandemic and the tough economic pressures that followed it. By the time the book is published, the pandemic and the related multidimensional crisis may have left deep scars in various parts of the world that it is only appropriate to be mindful of the impacts of such an unexpected disaster.

When this book was submitted for publishing in July 2020, 210 countries and territories around the world have reported cases of COVID-19 infections and deaths. Over 10.9 million of positive infections were recorded, a significant increase from 2.2 million in mid-April 2020 (Worldometers, 3 July 2020). Initially thought and treated as “just another flu virus”, COVID-19 is now recorded as among the deadliest and fastest-spreading disease in the world. But unlike other diseases, the deadly impacts of COVID-19 is not determined only by the “relative strength” or contagiousness of the virus, but also by the relative capacity of nations to provide health services and to ensure compliance to health protocol, and somehow the health posture of the population matters too.

The virus also “attacks” the economy badly. With the protocol to restrict mobility to contain the virus, many economic sectors’ operations are suddenly stalled. While some businesses choose to slim down operations, others cannot afford to continue on. Consequently, at least 25 million people have gone unemployed, which added to the existing number of global unemployment of 190 million, according to International Labour Organization (ILO) on 8 April 2020. World Economic Forum mentioned the massive number of current unemployment among the G7-members, from 30 million in the US to 1.76 million in Japan.

The impacts of such crisis are unprecedented. If uncertainty is bad for the economy and investment, it is the time to evaluate on how to benefit from global markets and how governments could connect all citizens to access those markets. The target of inclusive economy is just getting even harder to achieve. The number of non-salaried workers, whom governments wished to protect, has increased even more in the developing countries and these workers would need help to rebound. The ILO also reported the emergence of a “lockdown generation”, those affected by multiple shocks of the pandemic: disruption of access to education, training, and employment; income losses; and greater difficulty in finding jobs. The report showed that one of six young people has stopped working since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic (ILO Monitor, 2020).

While discussions about curbing the infection are ongoing, students of democracy should not underestimate the impacts of COVID-19 on democratic practices. Transparency of the crisis, monitoring and evaluation of the crisis handling, as well as freedom of speech and expression, are among the items to highlight here. The Inter-American Commission for Human Rights and the Council of Europe have issued warning that human health depends on the availability of access to accurate information about the nature of threat and the means to protect oneself, one’s family, and one’s community. Thus, the rights to access media in order to seek, receive, and impart all kinds of information and ideas regardless of countries’ frontiers may only be the subject to narrow restrictions (OHCHR, 2020, Council of Europe, 2020). The Commission also mentioned about the importance of internet access that it should not be blocked, the protection of journalists, and the protection of society against hoaxes and disinformation. The Council of Europe offers guidelines on protecting freedom of expression in times of crisis.

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And indeed, this reminder is critical because there are indicators that some countries have experienced regression of democratic practices during this crisis. The Bolivian Government would punish anyone of one to ten years in prison for every information that the government sees “incorrect”; Thailand threatens medical staffs with disciplinary action for speaking up about shortages of essential supplies in hospitals across the country, while the “anti-fake news” laws are used to prosecute people that are critical towards the government’s response to the pandemic and seen as causing panic among the public. In Tunisia, a draft law to combat disinformation during the COVID-19 crisis is proposed by risking the flow of information on social media platforms because the authorities would rather anticipate the impact of those kinds of information to the “national security and order”. Whistleblowers in the journalism, civil society, and health sectors are facing double threats: a poor protection against the virus and threat of punishment for speaking up against the government’s choices.

Unfortunately, it is not an exaggeration that assessing how to handle a global crisis such as COVID-19 pandemic may suffocate democracies. Rules of unprecedented pervasiveness to regulate people’s lives are now considered “normal” and “expected”. People are at the mercy and skillfulness of the leaders, which as cases show is risky, as leaders are also struggling to adjust themselves to the changing opportunity structure (Körösényi, 2013), undress stress to the point of failing to take necessary immediate response (Kapucu, 2009), and try to avoid blame (Weaver, 1986) that their measures to protect the people may be less than optimal. Larry Diamond (2020) argued that if the country’s democratic institutions cannot function effectively during a crisis, especially when there is a view that authoritarian regimes are managing the crisis more decisively, a grim future lies ahead of democracy. Diamond refers to the failure of democracies to help each other in time of crisis by resorting to isolation and self-saving actions rather than cooperation.

This chapter provides a modest framework for the subsequent chapters. I will provide an introduction about democracy and democrats and how they are “traditionally” expected to treat differences and prevent exclusion. This backdrop shall highlight the tradition of democracy and how norms about democracy have shaped discourses on inclusion. Which attitudes that have been categorized contradictive to democracy when treating the opposition or people with different political orientation? What are acceptable on how to treat differences? The contexts of democracies would certainly affect expectations, especially in Southeast Asia. The civil society members and media professionals in consolidated democracies may see challenges differently than those from the less consolidated ones. The forum’s attention to discuss regional and international context would be reviewed here. The chapter will then highlight some blind spots of democracies, the gap between practices of these principles and the ideals, as well as the difficulty of newer democracies to replicate practices from the more consolidated democracies.

Democracy and Prevention of Exclusion: Are We Still Seeing the Functioning Democracy?

Democracy is dynamic as it is social and political. That is my starting point to reflecting democracy as raised in the 12th BCSMF. Democracy is the work of many, from leadership to bureaucracy, political parties, businesses, civil society groups and certainly grassroots communities. Having democratic regulations and institutions alone is insufficient, let alone to guarantee democratic practices because the people as individuals and communities are central in ensuring that everyone without exception can enjoy the fruits of democratic rules and institutions.

This book, as did the participants of BCSMF, do not see democracy as a mere practice of holding regular elections, seeking voters' consent to allow politicians to represent themselves in democratic institutions, or carrying out the in-between-election activities from politicians to offer perspectives, activities, and rules to achieve what the electorate wants. Democracy is seen here as the substance and identity of a nation that the participants believe should be upheld high and guarded amid the many possible ways to erode it.

When democracy is seen as the substance and identity, participation, monitoring, and evaluation of what the elected leaders and representatives have done becomes non-negotiable. Contestation becomes broader, not only horizontally among the elected leaders and representatives but also vertically between the active voters, activists, media, and business tycoons. Perspectives of direction, of what is appropriate and what is dangerous, will multiply according to the dynamic of the interaction and relationship between these actors. In its minimal definition, however, inclusivity in democracy is understood as universal suffrage, which is extending the rights to vote to all people with certain qualifications.

Participants of the 12th BCSMF came from different backgrounds, from civil society activists, academics, business personnel, media, and former civil servants, but one thing was clear is that all of them are among the diehards of democracy. They voice strong passion to defend democracy. Some participants were vocal about their own experience of working for democracy, but it did not turn out as expected. A speaker spoke strongly by listing the violations of democratic principles that she thought her country had committed. A participant asked whether his country ever cares about the minority groups? Another was so skeptical about the power monopoly in his country that he said had created political exclusion, economic inequality, and social discrimination. When those in power insulate themselves from the populace and strengthen the elite integration with other elite networks, the power center would become coercive and exclusive. There were reflections of the conditions of civil society organizations (CSOs), noting that these organizations often time are pragmatist, fragmented, more philanthropy than advocacy, or even funded partially by the state that their fighting spirit

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for democracy may have been more limited than expected. Journalists questioned how the social media took over the job of disseminating information that news verification became absent and hoaxes multiplied. There were heated debates on the responsibility of social media companies to nurturing democracy instead of just “doing business”.

A question that best represent the troubled feeling of the participants is: are we still seeing the functioning democracies? Or, are these governments just saying that they are democrats and the countries are democracies, but in fact they are not? If we want democracies to function, what shall we do better together?

The streams of studies on democracy understand inclusivity from at least four perspectives. *First*, the democratic inclusivity that focuses on the executive actors, by comparing the model of consensus and majority principle in making decisions within the executive branch, namely between the presidential and parliamentary models. This includes the work of Lijphart (1997). *Second*, the democratic inclusivity that focuses on the legislative actors, by noting inclusivity throughout the process, where all relevant groups have is the opportunity to express their opinions based on the account that those groups have resources to further their interests even if they have no veto over the outcomes (Ganghof, 2010). *Third*, the democratic inclusivity that welcomes the participation of civil society in the governance, including at the decision-making level. In this segment, there are some studies on how deliberation is done at the cross-country levels following the emergence of global governance regimes where the chance to respond to problems has become transnational rather than national alone. At this juncture, the discussion on inclusivity pertains to resources available for stakeholders, the technical and knowledge gap, and the institutions (Steffek and Nanz, 2008). *Fourth*, the democratic inclusivity means accountability of decision-makers to markets, peers, or constituents (Blair, 2000). Unless a democracy is open to check and balances, its accountability and therefore legitimacy would remain to be in question. Popular impatience with low quality of public services could degrade trust to democracy, as happened in Brazil (Hagopian, 2016).

Other studies see the challenges in implementing inclusivity. *First*, there is the trade-off between having competitive participation and representativeness in participation (Rahat, Hazan, and Katz, 2008). Maximizing competition would create deficit in representation, and vice versa. *Second*, many values are not always mutually compatible; they are messy, and when interact among multiple levels of government or among groups, they may generate concerns (Rahat, Hazan, and Katz, 2008). *Third*, deliberation is distinct from understanding and transforming practices (Healy, 2011). Participation comes in many forms and unless there are methods and mechanisms, the outcomes may be far from expectation. Intermediate institutions suggest different impacts on democracy, by separating representative democracy from the delegative one, which O’Donnell said is a different entity from a consolidated democracy (O’Donnell, 1994).



Photo: Doc. FES

Inclusivity, therefore, does not have a singular meaning in the world of democracy. At least existing studies said so. Some see inclusivity from the aspect of participation and how decisions are made by the participating groups or individuals, either through consensus or voting by majority rule. Others see inclusivity as deliberation to maximize cognitive diversity, namely by adding to the diversity of perceiving and interpreting the world due to the larger pool of information (Hong and Page, 2001), and it is therefore important to maximize representation rather than selecting representation (Mill, 2010) or through sorting (Landemore, 2013).

As a consequence, inclusivity is either limited or regulated. Institutionalized consultation with the broader public is either done only at a certain level or on limited aspects. Decision-making at the security level, for instance, tends to be secretive. Intergovernmental negotiations are a case in point where government representatives have been extremely reluctant to surrender their privileged position as decision-makers (Kissling and Steffek, 2008). To some extent, inclusivity is a contrast to the idea of having a competent leader. In leadership theories, the qualification of an individual, his/her personal integrity and vision matter as there would be time where decisions need to be taken fast with so many or without inputs.

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In these streams of studies, one can see that managing inclusion is getting great emphasis, perhaps greater than discussing the need for expanding the scope of inclusivity. Expansion of inclusivity is more prevalent in the study on human rights, as well as in media and communication studies.

The participants of 12th BCSMF comprised those who see managing inclusion as a bad sign for democracy and those who believe inclusion is hard unless there is regulation. Speakers and participants coming from society where diversity is everywhere in the country but poverty is large and access to education is limited, such as from India and Indonesia. They discussed the history of governance, the participation of CSOs, media, and academics. Those participants coming from a more homogeneous society such as South Korea focused more on the positive aspects of technology and social media. At the same time, these latter participants also discussed how technology creates a new mainstream: while 70-80 percent may have similar opinion on something, the dissenting views would be easily “attacked” by the rest. Disinformation and echo chamber became threats to democracy. Indeed, the participants do sense some similarities of challenges to their democracies following the prevalent use of technology and social media, but the way outs that countries consider vary.

In the human rights stream, where the rights of every individual matter in order to observe and secure human rights values, inclusivity means the same opportunity to all kinds of groups and individuals to express needs and suggestions on policies that would affect their lives. Every different individual deserves attention because one victim is too many for any human rights activists. Freedom of expression and opinion becomes central in observing the rights. Curbing voices, censorship, suppressing opinions, and limiting transparency in decision-making are the beginning of obstruction to inclusivity. The inclusion of vulnerable groups such as women, children, persons with disability, and the poor would suggest the willingness of those in power to understand how things are experienced by these groups; pushing the authorities to challenge their own conventional wisdoms on what is right and appropriate for the people or communities.

The media and communication studies, on the other hand, saw the prominence of media to improve democratic participation and civic engagement. Among prominent theorists is Jurgen Habermas (1962), who argues that media is playing a crucial role in forming constituent and as a catalyst for the existence of the public sphere. Media is seen as an embodiment of the openness of issues of general concern. Exposing issues to public could prevent the worst of policy impacts given that media is assumed to be interested in ensuring good governance and transparency in decision-making. Unfortunately, as time progresses following the growth of private media, government starts to control private ownership of media to the point of controlling the content. It is not just the authoritarian regime that controls media, but even democracies experience propaganda and disinformation.

The emergence of digital media has transformed the landscape for people's engagement, sending greater energy to ordinary citizens to post opinions and forward content that they think is newsworthy. The rapid fall in the cost of telecommunication and the spread of new communication technologies allow for more interactive communication between rulers and their followers. Leaders send out information through *Twitter* and update the public through *Instagram*, even dances on *TikTok* and send updates and program reports through *Facebook*. While communication with the public may be more intensive and information is updated on more regular basis, the challenge to this digital media is also quite serious: from bombardment of hoaxes and disinformation that stirs emotion and created fiery debates to the slow death of conventional media as they too must compete for obtaining advertisers rather than investing in promoting issues of concern in rural areas, of the poor and other minorities; commercial priority has grown and profit becomes the motive of any media today (Deane, 2005).

The participants of the 12th BCSMF captures a lot of the governments' concern on inclusivity and see inclusion as a challenge rather than an opportunity to strengthen democratic values and practices. Global State of Democracy 2019 conducted by International IDEA revealed an alarming trend of declining democracy index in both old and young democracies. Young democracies are often weak, ineffective, and fragile, while old democracies struggle to deliver promised sustainable economic development and are besieged by populist policies. The rise of narrow nationalism and populism has hindered the existing democracy in advanced countries and consolidated democracies across Europe, as well as in the United States, to maintain inclusivity. Discussion came to the tentative conclusion that the lack of leadership in the promotion of democracy tends to exclude some from democracies.

Subsequent chapters in this book would capture the views of the authorities when expanding decision-making participation to the public sphere. Some countries are more concerned than others that inclusivity may lead to destabilization of certain national order, risking the achievement of "the greater importance" such as economic growth and economic certainty for business to grow and social protection to be provided for taxpayers. In the 12th BCSMF there were quite extensive discussions on how the state has limited citizens' access to social media, especially the minority voices, and closed eyes to the action of technology companies in limiting certain individual or people's access to the social media platform for making someone else unhappy about what the people write. There were also sharings about hoaxes and disinformation. Others talk about the uncomfortable truth of countries in Southeast Asia, which is argued as keeping some countries farther from democracy. Only this year it goes deeper in understanding of how hoax works for different groups. Just like last year, election time sees higher likelihood of finding hoaxes. The Indonesians shared the experience during 2014 and 2019 elections where hoaxes use religion, race, and ethnicity to stir people's emotion. The more hoaxes, the stronger is the

effect of echo chamber, namely the tendency of people to only listen to information that aligns with what they already believe. This phenomenon was raised as bad impact for democracy because it is counterproductive to the idea of participation and freedom of expression.

Recently we also learn about *doxing*, the intentional online abuse where a malicious party harms another by releasing sensitive information that would humiliate, threaten, intimidate, or punish the identified individual (Douglas, 2016), and the practice has been commercialized (Snyder, *et al.*, 2017). Doxing has happened in Indonesia, targeting journalists and activists who have been critical toward those in power. The Alliance of Independent Journalists (AJI) issued a report in 2018 that is dedicated to document the rise of doxing practices.

And indeed the use of social media for spreading information became a heated debate during the 12th BCSMF. A representative of *Facebook* shared how the company hired government relations professionals for every country to give rooms of views exchange on the rules application to users that is not supposed to compromise freedom of expression. Interestingly, the discussion grew into sharing about how difficult it is to enforce certain standard on information exchange through social media; even at the community level this has not quite worked as expected. *Facebook* also has self-limitation on managing hoaxes, disinformation, and hate speech.

Journalists from conventional media were quite critical toward social media by raising the issue of commercialization of information rather than quality of information and pushing conventional media to compete for advertisements to survive, despite being the one upholding the ethics of journalism. There was a wish for companies of social media and other online media platforms to start taking responsibility to democracies beyond operating as profit-oriented companies.

The Contexts that Affect Democracies

Democracy is never isolated from the context where it grows. In last year's BCSMF book (Wisnu, 2019), it was specifically mentioned about how it takes the world to nurture democracies. That is because democracy learns from one another, about the good and the bad. When leaders of more consolidated democracies are practicing exclusivity, by rejecting the recognition of rights for migrants and practicing disinformation, hate speech, and stereotypes, these become precedents that democracy may eventually prioritize its own narrow self-interest rather than advancing the universal values of democracy.

The forum also discussed about how liberal market capitalism and internationalization of economies have increased the chance of cooperation between countries but at the same time put democracy under pressure. Human rights and civil liberty have been suppressed in order to pursue rapid economic development. Youth in older democracies

are disillusioned and apathetic to democratic processes in the country, as depicted by the low voter turnout rate in decades. In younger democracy, the youth faces disinformation that polarizes them, which creates a false image of what democracy is all about.

In session one there were three speakers representing different parts of the world, namely Dr. Martin Brusic from International IDEA, Nejjib Friji from International Peace Institute Middle East and North Africa, as well as Dr. Peter de Souza from CSDS India (Centre for the Study of Developing Societies), who shared about comparative democratic practices. Democracy may practice diverse rules and participation, but International IDEA suggests that legitimacy from the populace is key in democracy. Measurement of democracy, according to International IDEA, is not just economic growth but also sustainable development goals and inclusive societies. Checks on the government were also mentioned as the measure of democracy. Session one also discussed that transition to democracy is tough and it takes a long time to achieve the consolidation of democracy.

That year's points somehow echoed the previous year's attention on populism and identity politics. Politics is about perspective on problems and speaking from that angle may easily divide the countries and the populace; when the political elite talks about migration problem, the issue is not the migration but rather the nationalism and perspectives of cooperation (Wisnu, 2019, 20-21). Andreas Ufen (2019) in the same book told us about how politics that would always mobilize constituencies would challenge the established elites. Polarization and conflict are indeed part of politics, but when the competition despised the existing democratic institutions, the impacts would be felt broadly, even globally.

The Blind Spots of Inclusivity

The questions raised by the participants suggest that while the diehards of democracy have heard about the variation in democracy and understood that democracies battle their own challenges on a regular basis, as well as how similar challenges may need to be treated differently given the societal and the regional or international context, there are harder things to reconcile among democracy supporters.

The question boiled down to ways to materialize inclusivity as a democratic principle. This is where the forum revealed the blind spots of inclusivity. *First*, the discussion touched on the national prerequisites to inclusivity by acknowledging that the national levels need to welcome inclusivity to show its commitment to democracy. Nejjib Friji mentioned about the importance of women's rights. Tunisia was taken as an example where it is the only Muslim country that legally prohibits polygamy; women are given different tools, including the legal ones, to avoid arbitrary decisions against them, on divorce, heritage, adoption, education, and so on.

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Second, what the countries in the region can do to support democracies. Nejjib mentioned about the importance of regional integration to avoid the worst conflicts between neighbors and to nurture democratic practices. Of course, the experience of Middle East is the context for his suggestion. Being supportive of one another, including on economic development aspect, will take some burdens for making democracy works. Meanwhile, Peter Souza saw the importance of international and regional platform of cooperation such as International IDEA and BDF in helping democracy to overcome challenges. He argued on the importance of setting a framework for democracy, thus diversity may still be appreciated but the principles are universal. Countries in Southeast Asia benefit from the framework of political security cooperation in ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) that is inclusive of the principle of democracy in human rights. But, because the majority of the countries in that region is not democracies, support for democracy would come from the national or the international level.

Third, what the world trend does to affect other democracies. When older democracies slide back from democracy, by showing signs of intolerance, exclusivity, stereotyping, and rejection to dissenting views, as well as strong pragmatism in politics, the younger democracies are in a wobbly place when engaging with the older democracies. Nobody would associate the slide back of older democracies as similar to what happen in the younger ones; in other words, the younger democracies would continue to be seen as the lesser democracy, even if they remain loyal to the values of democracies. Even if International IDEA said there has been concerning development in the US or European countries, the attention when discussing democracies in Asia tends to be belittling. Rules and regulations suggested for Asia are not based on the growing experience but on the perceived recipe of success that has worked elsewhere.

This brings us to the desire of the organizer, which is to figure out better ways to support democracies, although we always have little time to discuss it. Democratic activists do keep certain image of an ideal democracy that realities on the ground, either at societal level, national level, regional level, or international level often escape from their attention. It is easier to say that democracies are not of one kind, than defining what then would be the better ways of supporting each other. This is what I think should be highlighted in the next forum of BCSMF.

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Trust and Confidence in Democracy

Syahredzan Johan

Introduction: The Malaysian Experience

The year 2019 was a busy year for elections. The United Kingdom, one of the oldest democracies in the world, held its general election which saw the Conservative Party, led by Boris Johnson, returning to power with a big mandate to 'get Brexit done'. Major elections too were held by emerging democracies in Asia and Africa. Tunisia held both its presidential and parliamentary elections, while Sri Lanka held its presidential elections in the same year. India and Indonesia, two of the biggest democracies in the world, also held its general elections in 2019.

Yet despite these celebration of democracy, many commentators have noted that democracy worldwide is in retreat. Free elections may have taken place (even if in parts, they are not entirely fair), but in many of these democracies various issues have emerged that have eroded the trust and confidence that citizens have in democracy. These issues will be explored further in this chapter.

In exploring these issues, it is also useful to take lessons from what Malaysia has gone through over the past few years. In order to do so, some contexts of what happened in Malaysia is required.

May 9, 2018 was a historic day for Malaysia. It was the day of the 14th General Election. Some 12 million people came out to vote. By the time the votes were counted late that night, it was clear that the *Barisan Nasional/BN* ('National Front') coalition, which

had won the past 13 General Elections and held power for 60 years, had lost. The opposition alliance of *Pakatan Harapan/PH* ('Alliance of Hope') swept into power at the federal level, and was also voted into government in several states.

The loss of Barisan Nasional can be attributed to many factors. Mega scandals such as sovereign wealth fund 1MDB and the rising cost of living have often been stated to have been major reasons why the BN lost. Yet in the years leading up to the historic election, the Malaysian government has increasingly become more authoritarian. In a bid to shore up its dwindling support, the government cracked down on freedom of speech and press freedom. Many dissidents were arrested and charged for criticising the government. Journalists were arrested and a publication was suspended for reporting on 1MDB scandal. In the last days of the Barisan Nasional government, democracy in Malaysia was certainly in decline. This contributed to BN's fall.

The historic win of PH represented a rebirth of sorts for Malaysia. The term '*Malaysia Baharu*' or 'New Malaysia' was used to distinguish between the BN era Malaysia and the 'new' Malaysia under the PH government. It would appear then that Malaysia had hit the reset button and could finally arrest the decline in democracy.

For as long as the 'New Malaysia' lasted, all international indicators appeared to show that democracy in Malaysia has been reinvigorated. Malaysia climbed by 44 places in the 2018 RSF's Press Freedom Index. Malaysia climbed by 9 places in the past 2 years in WJP's Rule of Law index. Meanwhile, it scored 52/100 in Freedom House's Freedom of the World Index in 2019, compared to 45/100 in 2018.

Yet despite its reformist election manifesto, including the promise to repeal certain draconian and repressive laws, the new government struggled with managing freedoms in the more open environment post-elections. Certain quarters with vested interests utilised race and religion to attack the PH government, and fuelling the narrative that the new government has failed to take care of the interest of the majority ethnic and religious group in Malaysia, the Malays. Identity politics, which have always been a part of Malaysian politics, took an even uglier turn in the 'new Malaysia'.

Social media became the main mediums to spread racial and religious hatred against minorities. Fake news and hoaxes were also deployed to great effect, and most of the time it was to further the narrative that the majority Malays were under siege. The 'new Malaysia' was a curious case in which the state became more tolerant in many ways, but democracy was still under stress due to non-state actors.

Yet in the end, this 'new Malaysia' suffered a pre-mature end. At the end of February 2020, Barisan Nasional came back to power when several lawmakers from the Pakatan Harapan defected. The King appointed a new Prime Minister, one of the defectors, and Malaysia changed government in the period of less than 2 years.



Photo: Doc. FES

This new government was built on the premise of the identity politics that was so prevalent in the Pakatan Harapan's 22-month rule. This was the 'Malay-Muslim government' many sought for, the result of the identity narrative which caused much stress to democracy in Malaysia.

More importantly for the purpose of this chapter, this experience eroded trust and confidence in democracy in Malaysia. Not just from the establishment of this new government, dubbed as '*Perikatan Nasional*'/PN(National Alliance), but also from the slow pace of reforms and what was seen as 'unbridled freedoms'. The failure of the PH government to offer meaningful reforms in democratic and public institutions, along with the increasingly polarised public sphere, meant that apathy and disillusionment is on the rise in Malaysia. With the change of government, the general feeling of disappointment turned into disillusionment. The increasingly prevalent feeling that since the act of voting is ultimately rendered meaningless by the mid-term change of government.

Throughout this chapter, I will be making references to the Malaysian experience, an emerging democracy, removing a half century old regime only to revert to the same political equation after 2 years. This is in order to provide examples of how trust and confidence in democracy may erode, and why it is important that they are maintained and nurtured. The Malaysian experience is also relevant for new democracies to take note of when it comes to ensuring inclusivity.

2019 Bali Democracy Forum (BDF)

The 12th Bali Democracy Forum was held on 5-6 December 2019. Established in 2008, it sought to create a 'progressive democratic architecture in the Asia-Pacific region'. According to the organisers, the forum facilitated dialogues through sharing of experiences and best practices in managing diversity that encourages equality, mutual understanding and respect. Throughout the years, this has become the foundation of the forum.

The Indonesian government believes that support for democracies are critical. This support is important not only for democracies but also to inspire other countries on how best to engage democratic countries. The theme of this year's forum is "Democracy and Inclusivity". According to Retno L.P Marsudi, the Indonesian Minister for Foreign Affairs, the Indonesian government's approach to inclusivity is firstly maintaining the trust of the people towards democracy. According to the minister, this can be achieved by ensuring that democratic institutions fulfil the hopes and aspirations of the people. "We must also work to ensure that sufficient space remains available for all voices to be heard. Moreover, if views that democracy has failed arise, it must be addressed democratically... and not through actions that are in contradiction to democratic values," she said.

The second approach to inclusive democracy, according to the Indonesian government is to ensure the involvement of women. The third approach is to empower and involve the youth. The Indonesian government sees the future of democracy with the youth. Parallel to the BDF, two other concurrent forums also took place: the Bali Democracy Student Conference (BDSC) and the Bali Civil Society and Media Forum (BCSMF). The theme of 2019 BCSMF is "Rising Exclusivity and Declining Democracy". This theme can be linked back to the focus on the challenges to democracies that emanate from populism, identity politics, hoaxes, sensationalism, and political bias.

Democracy in Retreat

In the 2019 edition of The Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU)'s annual Democracy Index, which provides a snapshot of the state of democracy worldwide, the average global score fell from 5.48 in 2018 to 5.44 (on a scale of 0-10). According to them, "This is the worst score since the index was first produced in 2006." The report, amongst others, listed down instances of regressions in Latin America, Middle East, and Africa, as well as stagnation in other regions.

In "Populism, Identity Politics and the Erosion of Democracies: A Reflection from the Bali Civil Society and Media Forum 2018", ("2018 book") Dr. Dinna Wisnu (now Dinna Prapto Raharja) wrote on the 'growing challenges to democracy'. Authoritarian regimes clamping down on liberties is one such challenge. But even in countries that have

longer democratic traditions, challenges exist. She cited erosion of liberties in the US and the UK because of the fight against terrorism and low level of political participation in voting turnout and membership of political parties.

Authoritarian regimes, however, which have always been the bane of democracies, are no longer the sole prominent cause for the erosion of democracy worldwide. In the past few years, the world has witnessed the rise of identity politics, hoaxes, and populism, all of which result in the erosion of democracy.

As referred to earlier, Minister Retno L.P Marsudi mentioned that people's trust towards democracy must be maintained. Democracy can only function effectively if there is trust and confidence in democracy. It goes without saying that this is not merely trust in the electoral process, but also in the other institutions within a country that serve a democratic function. It is also the trust and confidence that the state will uphold the rule of law in service to democracy.

A citizen must not only know that he/she has the right to freedom of speech, but also be confident in the knowledge that he/she will not be prosecuted for dissenting views against his or her government. He/she must also have trust that the legal process is free from interference, and that he/she will be given a fair trial even if he or she is subjected to prosecution. A citizen must not feel that freedoms are the exclusive rights of the privileged; minorities (ethnic, religious, and sexual), oppressed persons, and marginalised communities must also be given freedom to participate in democratic practices.

Democracy can only function properly if it is inclusive, and inclusivity goes towards greater trust and confidence in democracy.

Exclusivity Eroding Democracy

During the BCSMF, it was noted by several participants of certain types of exclusion that have come about due to the rise of social media. Two of them are exclusion by state actors and by non-state actors or citizen groups.

Exclusion by the state is not a new phenomenon, as governments in 'flawed democracies' always seek to suppress expressions which are critical to them or disturb the status quo. The role of civil society groups and the free press has always been to resist the state's efforts in narrowing the democratic spaces. 'Flawed democracies' here refers to the categorisation given by the EIU in its Democracy Index. According to the EIU, flawed democracies are nations where elections are fair and free and basic civil liberties are honoured but may have issues (for example, infringement on press freedom and minor suppression of political opposition and critics).

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Meanwhile, in both full and flawed democracies (again referring to the EIU categorisation), the world has also witnessed the rise of populist leaders such as Donald Trump. These political leaders are elected because they appeal to the majority, usually by demonising or excluding minority groups. Minority ethnic groups and women are usually the targets of such leaders. It is difficult for these minorities to have much trust in democracy if they are disenfranchised by populist politics.

In the 2018 book, Andreas Ufen wrote about populism and its political impact. Populism, according to him, is connected to polarisation, dramatisation and moralisation of politics. It is a 'sub-type' of identity politics. He wrote that once populists have won elections, they tend to cement their hold on power, resulting in the unravelling of checks and balances and undermining of established democratic institutions.

It can therefore be concluded that populists that come to power may grow exclusion by the state. For example, the Associated Press reported that black and Latino Americans think that Donald Trump's actions as president have made things worse for people like them, according to a poll conducted by The Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research in 2019 (<https://www.nbcnews.com/news/nbcblk/poll-black-latino-americans-think-donald-trump-s-actions-have-n1062821>).

A more recent phenomenon, especially with the rise of social media, is the rise of exclusion by non-state actors. The exclusion by state actors is the act of limiting citizens' access to social media; whereas, the exclusion among citizen groups is limiting minority voices and dissenting views. In Malaysia for example, conservative and far right groups have taken to social media to deride, belittle, and attack individuals and civil society groups that advocate a more liberal worldview on issues. Over the past few years, the annual Women's March organised by various civil society organisations have been the target of online attacks orchestrated by certain conservative and right wing groups.

People with similar worldviews tend to group together and reinforce the belief that their point of view is absolute. Coupled with identity politics, this has the effect of excluding certain minority groups from mainstream democratic participation. The notion that certain groups, usually the majority ethnicity, have rights and privilege that override those of minorities have the effect of reducing the confidence people have in democracy. As one of the 12th BDF panel noted, democracy can only function well when there is diversity of views and opinions, and not when exclusivity is reinforced and established.

Back to the Malaysian experience. As mentioned before, the 'new Malaysia' was a curious case of a relatively more 'tolerant' regime having to grapple with issues of exclusivity occasioned by non-state actors. This can be seen in the then PH government approach to the repressive Sedition Act, a colonial era law which was kept alive by the previous government. In its election promise, the PH coalition had promised to abolish

this, and a slew of other draconian laws. Yet when it came to power, it found resistance from within the coalition and from the majority populace in implementing this promise.

The main cause for resistance is the misguided notion that the Act was kept around to ensure that the interests of the majority Malay-Muslim population are preserved. Non-state actors reinforced this belief during the PH regime, and made it difficult for the state to abolish the law for fear of political backlash. Dissenting views, from minorities are excluded and labelled as anti-national, effectively silencing them. Until its fall in late February 2020, the PH government did not abolish the Sedition Act.

There is a larger discussion here that needs to be explored with what happened in Malaysia. Challenges to democracy not only come vertically (from the state to the people), but also in a horizontal manner (between individuals). As noted by the participants in the BCSMF discussions, exclusion by non-state actors can also reduce the trust and confidence in democracy.

Hoaxes and Disinformation

Donald Trump popularised the term ‘fake news’ using the term to attack the press freedom in his country. However, it cannot be denied that ‘fake news’, hoaxes, and disinformation through social media are major threats to democracy.

Agus Sudibyo, member of the Indonesian Press Council shared in one of the panels on the hoaxes during the last Indonesian Presidential Election (Pilpres 2019). According to him, there are specific elements which were frequently targeted by those attacking both presidential candidates, Jokowi and Prabowo. Yet as noted by him, it would appear that hoaxes did not cause supporters to shift support from one candidate to another, but they instead reinforced the support for each candidate and created an echo chamber effect.

In one panel, participants noted that that disinformation affects a voter’s ability to make sense of the available information in order to make a political decision. They noted that there is a real danger that democratic values and principles can be undermined by disinformation.

Tying it back to the Malaysian experience, the PH government abolished Anti-Fake News Act, a legislation that was heavily criticised when it was enacted just before the elections in 2018. Critics say the legislation allowed the state to determine what ‘truth’ is, and clampdown dissenting views on the pretext of ‘combating fake news’. Yet throughout its 22-month tenure, the PH government struggled to contain the rise of disinformation and hoaxes, many of which contain racial or religious elements to them.

The failure of the PH government to deal with online falsehoods outside of enacting legislation has the unfortunate effect of reducing the people’s belief in the basic

principles of democracy, including freedom of speech. The populace began to yearn for state's intervention to control disinformation and hoaxes, and some lament that the Anti-Fake News Act is no longer part of the statute books.

Building Trust and Confidence

We cannot deny that issues of rising exclusivity, populism, and disinformation share many parallels across the world. Yet, the biggest mistake we can make is to think that there is a universal solution to our challenges. We should not fall into the trap of thinking that the way democracy is practiced should be the same across the board. Human rights may be universal, but best democratic practices differ from country to country and from community to community.

A country like Indonesia, where democracy is relatively new, has a more vibrant democracy than perhaps Singapore, despite the latter's experience with democracy being longer and more ingrained. The issue in Singapore is that there are not enough avenues for democratic expressions, while in Indonesia, the issue is how to deal with increasingly polarised democratic expressions. Singapore does not need a media council. Singapore needs independent media.

There should also be a difference in approach between democracies with high political apathy compared to those with lower apathy. Compare for example, the presidential elections in Indonesia and in the USA, as mentioned by Dindin Wahyudin from the Indonesian Ministry of Foreign Affairs in his closing remarks. USA has 330 million population compared to Indonesia's 270 million. However, the last presidential elections in Indonesia saw a more than 80 percent turnout, while recent elections in the USA could only muster not more than 60 percent turnout.

But, regardless of different contexts prevailing in these countries, trust and confidence in democracy cannot be nurtured if there is no trust and confidence in the public institutions. Any discussion on strengthening democracy cannot run away from the need to empower institutions so that the public would have faith in them. In this regard, it seems that there was a lack of discussion amongst the participants of BCSMF on how to empower these institutions. This could possibly be because the discussions were dominated by participants from countries where the institutions have a sufficiently high degree of trust amongst the people, and where the institutions are at least seen to be free.

But what about countries where there is a lesser degree of trust, or where the institutions are not free? For such countries, focus must be on educating the public on the role of these institutions and how these institutions, in their current forms, have failed to play that crucial role expected of them. Dr. Martin Brusis in BCSMF 2019 touched upon how citizens become disillusioned and disappointed with democratic institutions in delivering results.

In Malaysia, two factors have contributed to such sentiments. Firstly, during the PH government's 22-month tenure, the slow pace of democratic reforms have fed into the feeling that nothing significant has changed through the electoral process. Secondly, after the change of government mid-term, the fact that a democratically elected government can be toppled by elite politicians has also contributed to the feeling that at the end of the day, democracy means very little to the man on the street. These sentiments must be addressed. Once faith in these institutions are eroded, it would be difficult to regain it, which may result in the apathy we are seeing in certain countries. Or worse, they could fuel anti-democratic sentiments and cause people to turn into other forms of government such as a theocracy.

Social Media as the Democratic Leveller

Apart from public institutions, social media must again be the democratic leveller that it once was. At the advent of the social media revolution more than a decade ago, social media provided a powerful balance to the power of the state. Where once information was controlled by the state, with social media the state is now merely one of the many merchants of information, albeit a more powerful one. Social media ensured that the state no longer has a monopoly on 'truth' or 'falsehoods'. Elections in Indonesia, Malaysia, and Singapore especially have shown how social media played a key role in how voters cast their votes.

Social media also gave a voice to those who usually are side-lined from mainstream discourse. In Malaysia, voices from those living in the Borneo states of Sabah and Sarawak could now be heard as loudly as voices coming from West Malaysia. The physical geographic distance that usually hindered engagements does not exist in cyberspace. So do voices of minorities which are usually kept away from the mainstream media; social media gave them the avenues for expressions.

But as posited above, in the past half a decade or so social media has been used to create divisions and polarised society. Social media no longer encourage full and frank discussions, and instead has become a place where views become entrenched and in some instances, encouraged extremism. Social media has also contributed to increasing exclusivity in democracy, with identity politics and disinformation. There is also, as mentioned earlier, the 'echo chamber effect', where people only listen and seek information that would reinforce or enhance their beliefs and worldview, rather than to seek those that challenge them.

Thus, social media must return to becoming the tool to empower democracy, not the means of the elite to hinder democracy. During the BCSMF discussions, the forum also discussed how social media could be a partner to democracy. Social media companies, the participants noted, cannot remain neutral let alone distance from critical issues such as inclusion in democracies.

One interesting suggestion raised during the discussions is to develop an international convention on the use of social media which can be applied globally. Presumably, this would be a sort of common ethical code, or best practices, for social media use. Conventional media already have journalistic standards and ethics, so this would apply to 'new' media. This suggestion should be explored further, despite the apparent difficulties in determining what these standards should be and how to ensure that they are sufficiently universal to be applied across the board.

The aim, at the end of the day, is to make social media more inclusive. Only when social media becomes more inclusive, as it once was, will people be confident with democracy.

The Role of Civil Society and Media

What role can the civil society and media play to build trust and confidence in democracy? The role of civil society organisations was also touched upon during the 2018 forum, as noted by Indrasari Tjandraningsih in the 2018 book.

Certainly, the ideal solution would be a government working hand in hand with civil society and media towards this end. This does not mean that civil society and media should be less critical towards the government, as they can work together on common goals without sacrificing their roles.

But often times, such cooperation is not possible. The relationship between civil society, media, and government can be hostile or non-existent. In such situations, civil society and media must find a way to build trust by promoting inclusivity in democracy apart from the government.

The BSCMF participants noted that media plays key roles: they must remain vocal and independent, and they need to take bold initiative in promoting inclusive democracy. Public faith in democracy must be nurtured and maintained during the transition process through comprehensive civic education and continuous transparent performance of democratic institutions. Civil society and media should also strive to work with social media companies on these public education and awareness initiatives.

On the issue of hoaxes and disinformation, it is clear from the discussions at the BCSMF that there are civil society organisations (CSOs) in Indonesia such as MAFINDO that works on information disorder and deals with hoaxes. The media in Indonesia too have special factchecker desks to verify fake news. This provides the citizens with means to verify the information floating in social media.

Malaysia, on the other hand, does not have civil society organisations that specialize on handling the issue of hoaxes and disinformation. Media organisations in Malaysia rarely fact check any claims, and certainly do not have dedicated journalists for this

role. In the absence of civil society and media playing this role, the citizens believe that less democratic spaces are better for the social fabric of society and begin to yearn for state's intervention.

Malaysia can learn from Indonesia on how to deal with hoaxes and disinformation. In the same vein, the experiences in other countries can provide a starting point for civil society and media to explore the same solutions in their own country, again with the strict caveat that there can never be a "one size fits all" solution.

There needs to be constant cross-country engagement between civil society groups and media. The BCSMF is a starting point, but there needs to be a more permanent framework for knowledge and experience sharing. This is something that was briefly touched upon by some participants of the BCSMF, but has not been explored fully in the discussions.

Conclusion

Challenges to democracy must be addressed. They also realise that civil society and media have important roles to play in building or recovering the faith in democracy, which is under assault. Significant discussions took place on how to arrest the increasing exclusivity in democracy, as well as the issues of hoaxes and disinformation.

There will not be clear or easy answers on how to solve these issues. These are works in progress. What is certain is that democracy must be tactical and practical. If people feel that democratic institutions have failed them, or if people feel that democracy is a bane instead of a boon, there is every likelihood that they will turn away from democracy. This may result in tensions within the social fabric of the country, and could even result in violent upheavals.

For democracy to succeed, it must have the trust and confidence of the populace. Democracy must not fail in the eyes of the people.

Exclusivity and Democracy in Decline in Southeast Asia¹

Naruemon Thabchumpon²

Introduction

This chapter examines democratization in Southeast Asian countries and its exclusivity. It comes as part of reflection of the 2019 Bali Civil Society and Media Forum with more analysis from the dynamism of this region due to COVID-19 pandemic. It will also discuss political and economic projects and policy platforms dealing with the COVID-2019 pandemic as a political project even if the situation occurred after the 2019 Bali Democracy Forum. Throughout this chapter, the study argues that democracy in Southeast Asia is in decline and authoritarian state are either on the rise or in the process of consolidating power facing the contestation challenges by civil society on universal democratic norms.

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- 1 This chapter is part of the reflection of the 2019 Bali Civil Society and Media Forum. The author would like to thank Friedrich Ebert Stiftung (FES) Thailand and Faculty of Political Science of Chulalongkorn University for supporting all work and be patient for all delay due to COVID-19 and its consequences.
 - 2 Naruemon Thabchumpon is a Deputy Director for Research Affairs of the Institute of Asian Studies and Assistant Professor in Politics of the Faculty of Political Science, Chulalongkorn University, Thailand.

Inclusivity and Democracy

This chapter defines inclusivity as the practice or policy of including people who might otherwise be excluded or marginalized. In linking with democracy, this chapter considers democracy as a single and unified concept (Rousseau 1762: 14-57; Schumpeter 1976: 269-283; Pateman 1970: 1-14; Dahl 1985: 372-373, and Beetham 1999: 1-30). In contemporary politics, however, a number of political theorists such as Pizano (1970: 29-61), Wolin (1994: 11-25) and Blaug (2001: 1-21) argued that democracy does not only have one meaning that anyone can claim as a universal term. As Blaug (2001: 17) comments, “democracy, as a struggle of power, provides a different experience between those who hold power and those who do not”. Democracy and inclusivity, therefore, involves an open opportunity for all people including the underprivileged, marginalized and excluded people to participate in the democracy. To examine exclusivity, the composite elements of exclusion are as follows:

1. Multidimensional: exclusion concept that comprises social, civic, political, cultural, and economic dimensions. In other word, it examines social services, economic life, and social networks and participation as a way to see the in/exclusivity of such country.
2. Dynamic: exclusion is not a static state experienced by the same groups and in the same manner over time. Exclusionary processes happen in different ways, are experienced at different degrees and with different intensity, and operate at different social levels.
3. Relational: it considers power relation between people and the society resulting in disadvantage and/or the inability to enjoy shared opportunities that are available to other as the product of unequal social relationships by differential power.
4. Contextual: exclusion is often understood as the inability to participate and enjoy economic, social and civic opportunities that are considered “normal” in a given society. Such shared opportunities vary across countries and time being shaped by cultural, institutional and socio-economic factors (Rothman, 2002).

In the context of Southeast Asia, the politics of exclusion is clearly seen through political decisions of the state to decide the levels of inclusion or exclusion of citizens and minority groups. The challenges of political inclusion in this chapter, therefore, addresses unequal power relations experienced by people on the grounds of gender, wealth, ability, location, ethnicity, language, and agency, or a combination of these dimensions. To create democratic inclusion, the system needs to re-balance the power relations, reduce disparities and ensure equal rights, opportunities and respect for all individuals regardless of their political, economic, and social identity.

In the following sections, the chapter will first discuss politics of exclusion in Southeast Asia and its challenges. Secondly, it will examine the roles of civil society organization and digital media in challenging social exclusion. Finally, this chapter will consider the way civil society employs various innovative arrangements to create different form of

partnership in order to contest the mainstreaming dominant power and to aim for the betterment of democratization process.

Exclusion in Southeast Asia: Politics and Society

The politics in Thailand and its neighboring countries have been concentrated by the executive power under the umbrella of either military uniform or strong elected elite or the one party system. In the case of Thailand, the country's political system has become the new professional authoritarianism, a term coined by Alfred Stepan (1973) within the argument that the junta has active roles in political, economic, and social development. These situations demonstrate that the government does not only monopolize political entity, but also centralizes the economy and society. The repetitive scenario of coup, constitution and election is also tied to a relationship between business and politics, and political exclusion that then impacts on the quality of democracy. It affirms that the military and the bureaucracy continue to play a major role in the country's political affairs, including electoral politics, and reveals where real power resides behind the electoral theatre.

In comparison, Cambodia, Myanmar and Malaysia have transformed their political system to become a 'hybrid regime' or 'electoral authoritarianism' that not only has been challenged by domestic groups but also subject to external pressure from international institutions (Levitsky and Way, 2010). These countries have continued to focus on a struggle for democracy and face a long haul in resolving political conflicts between elected powers and the non-elected ones, especially in the context of the challenge of globalization and the relationship between processes of democracy and core institutions of the countries. All these governments have enacted a significant number of regulations and decrees to control political movements and deployed several economic and political policies that facilitated the centralization of power. These governments use development and economic growth as a justification to retain power. As Tilly (2007) discusses, problems of de-democratization can be seen from the integration between trust networks (kinship, religious membership) and public politics, the insulation of major categorical inequalities (gender, race, class) from public politics and the autonomy of major power centers (meaning especially those with coercive means, such as the Monarchy and the military in public politics of Thailand). From 2014 to 2019, in the case of Thailand, there have been several indications of problems within the oligarchic political structure that has shifted from politician-businessmen networks towards military networks and related business networks. This includes business networks that can influence the direction of Thailand, that have a close connection with the military government and links with other neighboring countries and six special economic zones along the border districts with Myanmar, Laos, Cambodia, and Malaysia (e.g. see Thabchumpon, et al, 2014).

Comparatively in the Philippines, Duterte's rise certainly challenges the previous notions of where Philippines' democratization is headed and stands for. During the last 10

year, Philippines' democratization had stagnated, consistently been dragged down by persistent inequality, and later a seemingly weakening civil society.

In terms of social exclusion and inequality, there is an uncomfortable truth about Southeast Asia. The widening gap between the 'haves' and the 'have nots' is clearly seen in this region. While the richest one percent in Thailand controls 58 percent of the country's wealth and the top 10 percent earned 35 times more than the bottom 10 percent, 50 percent of Indonesian's wealth is in the hands of the top one percent. While only 0.6 percent of 31 million people in Malaysia are living under the poverty line, 34 percent of the country's indigenous people and seven percent of children in urban low-cost housing projects live in poverty. Most people admit that the income or asset inequality in the Philippines remains very high; and some people are willing to address the issue of inequality and exclusion via voluntarism or through their electoral choices. In Vietnam, the country's richest man earns more in a day than the poorest person earns in 10 years, while the average annual family income of the top 10 percent in the Philippines is nine times more than the lowest 10 percent (<https://theaseanpost.com/article/southeast-asias-widening-inequalities>).

Like many other countries in the East Asia Pacific, Thailand has been successful in reducing poverty over the last few decades. In 2017, the extreme poverty rate in Thailand was only 0.03 percent and the number of extreme poor now measures in the thousands. With a rapidly aging population, a conflict-affected Southern region, and one-third of the labor force still employed in low-productivity agriculture, Thailand's poverty and equity remain relevant topics for this upper-middle-income country. Due to heavy drought and economic downturns, the rural poor in Thailand faces more vulnerabilities, as poverty has been increasing during certain poor agricultural year. Within the regions, the conflict-affected South became the region with the highest poverty rate.

Civil Society, Mainstream Media and Public Sphere

The political climate in Southeast Asia has been one of the most influential factors in shaping the limited role and fragmented condition of civil society in the process of democratization. One example is the level of freedom of citizen's social activities from government intervention that shows a particular low and reflects the intervention of government in social and political gatherings in public spaces. In the case of Thailand, the uses of National Council for Peace and Order (NCPO)'s article 44 (from 2014 to 2019 election) and the executive emergency decree (during COVID-19 outbreak) have been one of the political tools in allowing the government staff, mainly military and police, to claim their legitimacy in checking, intruding upon, and detaining any people whom they consider taking part in activities deemed as threatening to the security of the nation, or in fact of the government itself. In the case of the Philippines, the country is in the cusp of a civil society resurgence, bolstered hopefully by performing leftist

members of the Duterte cabinet, which might force the Duterte administration to be more transparent on and accountable for the unabated extrajudicial killings, despite Duterte's seemingly counter-democratic tendencies.

While the government seems to dominate the roles and extent to which the civil society can express their concerns in the public arena, the private sector is also considered important in providing funds and at the same time influencing some civil society organizations based on their own corporate agendas. Funding from private companies to support philanthropy activities has been under discussion whether it aims for public relation or as a corporate social responsibility project to support civil society. Some consumer campaigns through television broadcasting as well as social media such as Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram have become more popular and are able to form different kinds of networks in Thai society. These new groups of people have gradually built up activities based on their interests in improving social understanding, tolerance, and access to basic needs. These people's initiatives have gained wide popularity and influences over the year especially in the big cities. While some non-government organizations are struggling to find funding for the continuity of their activities and campaigns, these independent, loosely structured people's initiatives have received greater support from private companies during recent years.

Several Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) used to rely on foreign funds but now most foreign donors believe that the middle income country, such as Thailand, is able to raise local funding support. The EU's reallocation of funds is a prime example of this belief and this shift is also apparent in the decision of some donors to support the activities of CSOs in MCVL countries (Myanmar, Cambodia, Vietnam, and Laos). While the Filipino Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) are distinguished from People's Organizations (POs), with the latter refers to membership associations of people at grassroots level organized by people themselves, there is generally not much difference between grassroots NGOs and Community-Based Organizations (CBOs) in the Thai case. Among countries in Southeast Asia, some scholars argue that state-led CSOs are on the rise and that make a number of grassroots CSOs remains fragmented and do not form a large movement independent from the state and ruling political society. And since there is no equal power distribution among the members of civil society, those who are closer to political and financial sources of power are generally more privileged than those who are further.

Considering the pluralization process for inclusive democracy in civil society, mainstream media can be a good example depicting the divide in Thai society (and possible neighboring countries). The mainstream media has been perceived as taking sides with political parties, political movements, or private companies. In other words, neutral or objective mainstream media is considered rare in daily broadcasting and print. In the case of Thailand and Malaysia, the freedom of expression and information seems to have taken a backseat as a result of state-sponsored libel lawsuits against CSOs.

The consequence is that many newspapers both offline and online have imposed self-censorship and refrained from printing any news that might offend the incumbents. In the case of Thailand, there have been several libel lawsuits against academics, NGO staff, community leaders and editors of newspapers in the name of 'national security', including *the lèse majesté* and other related security laws. Local interests have been firmly subordinated to the national interest, especially in areas of infrastructure development and economic recovery. Very often, the rhetoric of 'national sovereignty' is invoked to protect government's cronies instead of siding with the ordinary people.

While more and more people have better access to information through different and cheaper media channels especially the online platforms, there persist information gaps due to tendency to develop attachment to their own preferred media sphere. The government's intervention to transform internet access in Thailand into the so-called "single gateway" was protested by general public. The intervention is seen as a step towards centralizing the media – including social media – aimed at strengthening the regulation, control and surveillance of media under the government authority.

To make the online platform as the new political battlefield for democratization, therefore, certain supports is needed. For example, not all stakeholders can participate online. As internet may increase its natural carrying capacity, others, particularly the elderly, may not exist in that space if they do not have enough support or they are digital illiteracy. They may also not be able to participate actively due to limited technological and economic capacity. Moreover, the cost of access to online modes of communication and purchasing is still relatively high compared to physical public spaces. This situation will look similar in Thailand, the Philippines, and other Southeast Asia countries.

Possibility of New Partnership and the Challenges

The global pandemic COVID-19 has unprecedented impacts on people' lives worldwide but people faced impacts disproportionately based on their social classes and status. The pandemic brought disruption of social and economic connection on land, air borders closure, restricting movement, lockdown, quarantine, thus stagnation of economy with the implication on employment and global supply chain.

In ASEAN, the COVID-19 outbreak is particularly harmful to those social groups in the most vulnerable situations especially people living in poverty situations, older persons, persons with disabilities, youth, and indigenous people. For example, homeless people who are unable to get safe shelter are highly exposed to the danger of the virus. Displaced person People, refugees and migrants may be suffer both from the pandemic and its impacts – such as limited movement, fewer employment opportunities, increased xenophobia or even racism against immigrants from the locals. It also shows the problem of deepened inequality as well social exclusion in the society.

However, this event had also bring about an opportunity to be more connected virtually as the internet and tools allow people to work from home but elsewhere connected. Due to the new situation after COVID-19, the question remains whether the online theater can be seen as a new frontier of the struggle for democratic inclusion.

Thailand and other Southeast Asian countries have been praised that they managed the pandemic well due to the authoritarian measure led by medical technocrats in cooperation with the emergency decree. There is a contested argument on battling the outbreak of pandemic whether the authoritarian model, which comes from China, has more success to combat the virus by restricting and controlling people's movements. The governments of Southeast Asian region followed the same path and they has been criticized that such authoritarian measures are what this government is best at - taking human rights out of the equation of the governance. The debate between the technocrat-led approach and the human right liberal approach is also seen during the outbreak. The Philippines' authoritarian mechanisms, for example, use the concept of "disaster capitalism" by using new technologies, executing border closures, and pushing exit bans. As these could pose some threats to human rights, regulatory and governance mechanisms should be instituted to make sure that those regulations and mechanisms would only be used for the purpose of controlling the effects of pandemic.

As part of the impact of COVID-19, the issue of equal safety nets for women is very crucial since the services and agriculture are the sectors where most women and migrant workers are at risk from this pandemic. So, this pandemic is expected to adversely impact women. While at least 20 percent of export earnings and 5.2 percent of the Gross Domestic Products (GDP) of the Philippines comes from Overseas Filipino Workers (OFWs) remittances, approximately 2.8 million migrant workers are in Thailand running local economy of Thailand and Greater Mekong Subregion (GMS) countries. These migrant workers, however, have limited access to protective equipment if their employers do not provide necessary protective gear. The most common problems raised by migrant workers are lay-off and termination of contract. To solve the problem, civil society groups such as the Action Network for Migrants (ANM), which is a national network of NGOs working with migrants from Burma, Laos, and Cambodia in Thailand, have tried to promote safe migration and fair work including the protection of migrant workers during and after the COVID-19. This network is seen as a trans-border movement in this region to negotiate with ASEAN state members.

Although there are several human rights cases related to the rights of marginal people and resource politics concerning the livelihood of the poor in this region, the judicial process and justice system remains in doubt. Under the regional body of the ASEAN Intergovernmental Commission on Human Rights (AICHR), prospects for increasing human rights protection, including civil and political rights, for citizens of ASEAN member states have been discussed. Local CSOs argue that ASEAN needs to provide more space for civil society rather than depending upon its member states to do so in

order to create a 'real' ASEAN for the people in line with the Vision 2020.

Another issue is the new face of globalization as the phrase 'the nexus of global-modern and local-rural' (cited by Development Discourse) is most relevant after COVID-19. With expanding digital technologies, people should be able to engage virtual with each other. By paying more attention on health and quality of life, people may decide to slow their speedy capital accumulation but rather spend more free time and do things that really matter on the ground. They can work less and be connected with their community on the ground, localized supply chain and market. In other word, create a "Glocalization" on the ground. In this sense, the COVID-19 is an opportunity factor for social progress which we might be introducing post-globalization era in the future.

Online platform and digital technology can be seen as a new partnership between different social movements. Since the 2000s, internet activism have grown into a new phenomenon for the struggle for democracy and inclusivity. Several digital campaigns using internet technologies and online platforms have been developed and expanded as part of the movement, even before the COVID-19 pandemic. In the case of Thailand, for example, Facebook has been a central platform for political contestation since 2005. In comparison, Twitter, Instagram and TikTok application have been used by new generation for raising social concerns on gender, race, inequality and democracy.

This new social movement can be seen as a new partnership for democratic movement as it is leaderless, decentralized and depended upon diversity of its members to create a wide variety of activities on the online platform. It allows for innovation in the struggle for democracy. In the case of Southeast Asia, an example of a youth movement called the Free Youth Movement in Thailand that drew more than 2,000 activists involving LGBTQ, undergraduates, and high school students is seen as a biggest anti-government protest since the coup in 2014. This youth movement has used parodies, novel gimmicks and sarcasm mottos to show their anxieties and ask for structural changes. While the university students use Harry Potter's gimmick on Death Eater to mention about the need for Monarchy reform, the high school student's movement comes with an innovative tactic of using a Japanese cartoon jingle with lyrics to mock the government as hungry hamsters feasting on taxpayer cash. "The most delicious food is taxpayers' money," they sang. "Dissolve the parliament! Dissolve the parliament! Dissolve the parliament!"

Conclusion

This chapter examines democratization in Southeast Asian countries and its exclusivity. It looks at the politics of exclusion, roles and concerned issues of civil society and media with the possibility of partnership resulting from trans-border issues and a new generation using internet technologies as a new way forward. Due to the political and social impacts of COVID-19 pandemic and the speed up of digital technology, the

study argues that authoritarian states in Southeast Asia are in the process of contesting the power of the government with the civil society and digital movements on political rights and democracy. The platforms of contestation grew beyond economic, political and social to using internet technologies. Such social movement can be seen as a new partnership for democracy.

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Beyond Numbers, Ensuring Inclusivity in a Growingly Exclusive Democratic Realm

Sylvia Yazid and Mireille Marcia Karman

2019 BDF and BSCMF: Desire to Increase Inclusivity Amidst Persisting Exclusion

On its 12th year in 2019, Bali Democracy Forum (BDF) has been significantly expanded through the participation of students, civil society, media, and business entities in its parallel sessions. Thus, the theme “Democracy and Inclusivity” become substantively relevant. As stated by Indonesian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Retno Marsudi, in an all women leaders’ session of the 12th BDF, every person can benefit from the fruit of democracy; therefore, there should be more inclusivity and less fragility. Noble and challenging tasks amid the grievingly observed the rise of exclusivity and the decline of democracy.

Inclusivity is instrumental in ensuring that democracy delivers what it promised. For democracy to thrive, it needs the trust of the people who believe that the democratic institutions will fulfill their expectations and needs. To be able to deliver, democracy needs to actively involve all members of the society at every stage of its process, which requires enabling environments, a living democratic culture, and collaborative actions. As stated by Minister Marsudi during the 12th BDF, for women to play a significant role, they need to be supported by education, community and policy maker. The environment and the society as a whole need to ensure that in any democratic process, no one is left behind and no one is marginalized.

In democracy, issues in the society should be seen as interconnected, not segregated based on the group assumed to have experienced it. Marise Payne, Australia’s Minister

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for Foreign Affairs and for Women, in addressing the 12th BDF participants, underlined the impacts of gender-based violence, which she said is not only a women's issue but rather an issue for men, women, children, societies, countries, and economies. Women, youth, those with disabilities, the poor, and other marginalized groups in the society should be considered, present, and actively involved in ongoing discussions on climate change, sustainable development, economic development, or security.

Meanwhile, the parallel session Bali Civil Society and Media Forum (BSCMF) was more cautious, or maybe realistic, in assessing the current condition of democracy. An important point made during the BSCMF is that no „one size fits all“ understanding of democracy. Thus, every country will and should have their own understanding of democracy. At present, the challenge is harder than ever since as described by Hassan Wirajuda, the Founder and Patron of Institute for Peace and Democracy, as democracy in Asia is growing at a slower pace, or rather experiencing a backlash, and there is a declining trend of democracy as populism and narrow nationalism rise, leadership in the promotion of democracy is lacking, and exclusivity is rising.

As an idea, democracy is still trusted by the people but it is the institutions that they do not trust. The very institutions that supposedly promote, implement, and safeguard democracy are tainted, or even worse, violate the basic principles of democracy itself. This condition can be seen as a threat to inclusivity, when members of the society who were relatively participating in the democratic process then chose to distant themselves due to distrust toward the institutions. While the marginalized are excluded, this particular group excludes themselves. This phenomenon is frequently found among the middle-class society who become increasingly pessimistic toward the political system and democracy.

How to substantially include the minorities has been the focus to any discussions on the promotion of democracy. Peter de Souza of CSDS India highlighted 4 important elements in India's model of inclusion: laws that ensure recognition and protection for minority, institutions specifically assigned for minorities, inclusive policies that protect cultural aspects of minorities, and continuous discourses on minority groups. The case of India underlines the need to recognize that it is a plural society that we live in, a gesture which may lead to the growth of minority groups and eventually the growth of democratic politics. However, the case of India also brings up the question, are minorities dependent on the generosity of the majorities? The infamous national policy on citizen residence registration has exhibited growing exclusion in India. In Indonesia, this growing exclusion trend is fueled by government policies, particularly on economic matters, which has led to persistent growth of oligarch and unequal wealth.

The discussions during BSCMF emphasized the need to reframe the debate on inclusivity in democracy, especially in this digital age. There are two points to be highlighted, which are the importance of agency in striving towards inclusivity and the new ways

of exclusion in digital era. The first point puts a strong emphasis on the need to allow democracy to grow and mature from the grassroots, initiated and led by the people, with the support from the government. Inclusion is not merely about counting who are present and in what number, but rather about how they are involved and whether their voices are being heard and accommodated. Inclusivity in democracy should ensure equal access and substantial contribution of all toward the democratic process. Those who were underprivileged, marginalized, and excluded in the context of development such as women, youth, people with disabilities, and many others should not be treated merely as beneficiaries of national and international development initiatives. They should be involved and enabled from the very beginning as determining actors in deciding the direction of the policies and are actively involved in the implementation. This call to shift the focus of discussion echoes the political concept offered by Hannah Arendt, which focuses on the individual agency within the political realm (Lang, 2014, p. 197). In this sense, democratic political activity is not measured only by the existence of an individual within the political realm, but the capacity of such individual to act and speak as equal within such realm. Only through empowerment and continuous involvement in public debate can women and minority groups further advance their interests and improve their positions as equal in decision-making process and its implementation.

The second point is on the discussion regarding digital space as the new political space that needs to be managed and protected by the community and the state. The question whether the digital space can be an ideal political space is also interesting since in many countries, political elites, media, and civil society groups have been treating this space as an alternative political realm since geographically it can reach wider participants to engage in debate and discussion with minimum cost. However, treating digital space as an alternative political realm comes with certain challenges, mainly because the same space which can reach numerous people across geographical area has the potential to exclude numerous other people through corporate oligopoly, exclusion mechanisms such as economic barrier to access digital space, the ease of dismissing certain opinions and creating echo chamber, and unequal capacity to immerse within the fast traffic and over-abundant topics of digital culture (Lim, 2013, p. 9).

As described above, both state and non-state actors that came to Bali in December 2019 seem to agree on one objective, namely to continuously increase inclusivity amid the growingly exclusive world. The global developments only months after the forum have unfortunately made this mission even more challenging. The spread of COVID-19, which immediately turned into a pandemic situation, have further heightened the exclusive nature of states. Despite the continuous call for collaborative actions between actors and countries, the immediate initiatives have been to retract their own territories and isolate. Initiatives to address problems related to the pandemic have so far been based on bilateral or limited multilateral arrangements which are highly influenced by political decisions. The decisions of major powers and the tensions between them such as that of the US and China, have regrettably stood on the way of a more concerted

global initiatives to fight the spread of the virus and anticipate, as well as address the impacts.

Furthermore, the distancing policies may turn from physical to political and social forms, which are counterproductive to the initiatives of making democracies more inclusive. As has been discussed on many platforms and media, social distancing is a privilege which cannot be enjoyed by those who have been marginalized due to their limited economic capabilities such as those dependent to daily incomes. This condition may create further challenges for the mission of making democracies more inclusive. When countries limit mobility, people are forced to being jobless due to halted economic activities, which creates new strands of marginalized groups in the society. A situation which will further put democratic institutions to a test. This has made the quest for ensuring that democracy includes everyone and leaves no one behind has become more important than ever, as discussed below.

General Strategies to Ensure Inclusivity in a Democratic Political Realm

Inclusivity is a term inherently embedded to the concept of a socially balanced democracy. Generally, the level of inclusivity can be measured by the level of public participation during election, as well as by fairly equal life chances and social and economic participatory rights. However, such measurement is not the only way to measure the quality of democracy as Dahl proposes another dimension of democratic conduct, namely the existence of public contestation (Dahl, 1971, p. 4). A political community may expand its public participation in numbers, but prohibit a competitive opposition to enter the political realm. This condition is termed an inclusive hegemony that marginalizes certain opinions of minorities (Dahl, 1971, pp. 5-7). This echoes the discussion in the preceding section that the problem of inclusivity arises not only because the political realm prohibits minorities to join the political activities, but more because the majorities and the government discriminate opposing views and interests of those minorities. Hence, this section offers four general strategies to expand the political realm not only by increasing the number of participants but also letting diverse ideas in.

The first strategy is to reorient the political realm that is often overly obsessed in finding consensus and upholding the principle of rationality. Such orientation is not entirely wrong since it helps people to prioritize which opinion matters most. However, when consensus and rationality become the sole basis of politics, it acts not only as filter but also as a barrier which exclude certain opinions and interests from public deliberation. Rationality and consensus-based political realm tends to ignore the basic essence of democratic politics which is the freedom of expression and equal treatment to every opinion (Heather and Stolz, 1979, 21; Fish, 1999, 89-92; Lowndes and Paxton, 2018, 13). In the long run, the conduct of consensual politics, which dismisses any

radical views, creates an authoritarian political realm where middle-ground ideas are moralized and alternative ideas are harshly discriminated. Even in a mature liberal democratic society, this practice persists and it explains the reason why minority groups with opposing views seek other outlet of expressing their opinions in the form of strengthening primordial identities or even violence. As Lipset rightly notes, prolonged exclusion of certain minority groups encourages the use of violence to delegitimize the whole democratic structure (Lipset, 1959, pp. 88-89).

In order to prevent such development, a democratic political realm need to reorient itself by changing its basic foundation from consensus and rationality to equality and freedom of expression. Opposing ideas and dissent voices need to be nurtured within the political realm since it is much wiser to let conflicting perspectives manifest into debate and deliberation than to let such opposing views evolve into antagonistic relations among the society, which may find outlet outside democratic procedure (Mouffe, 2002, p. 58). The aim to reach consensus remains as the ultimate goal of public debate but it needs to go through a lengthy process, and even when the debate does not produce any consensus, peaceful coexistence can still be achieved through an agreement of 'to live and let live' (Galston, 1999, p. 42). Inviting everyone to join public debate can be messy and exhausting, but the sense of trust and community can be strengthened throughout the debate, which enable them to find consensus in some areas while tolerate their differences in other areas.

Second, the capacity of political institution is as important as the orientation of political realm. A strong political institution is needed to manage power relations within the political realm since the inequality outside may affect equal relations among citizens within political realm. In this sense, state needs to recognize the existence of structural inequality within social and economic life and that restructuring socioeconomic life to close inequality gap needs continuous effort. During such continuous effort, state also needs to ensure that the socioeconomic inequality does not permeate into political realm (Tilly, 2007, pp. 117-118). The failure to do so will enable stronger socioeconomic actors to dominate, manipulate, marginalize, or even stall deliberation process within political realm for their own vested interests (Shapiro, 2003, p. 148).

Schumpeter notes that strong political institution needs strong democratic tradition and well-trained bureaucrats (Schumpeter, 2003, pp. 292-293). Furthermore, political institution also needs to have sufficient infrastructural power, which refers to the capacity of the institution to establish effective authority throughout its territory and among its society through organizational coherence (Slater & Fenner, 2011, p. 19). By having decent amount of infrastructural power, enforcing policies to protect freedom and equality within the political realm will equally be effective for all citizens throughout the territory. On the contrary, democratic states with limited infrastructural power may only be able to protect the freedom and equality of citizens who live within close proximity to the central government or only among certain groups of people. Hence,

even with skilful bureaucrats and strong democratic tradition, some democratic states may still face exclusion issue because of their limited infrastructural power.

The third strategy is to increase the quantity and quality of public deliberation rather than relying solely on aggregative democracy. While deliberation promotes mutual understanding and possibility to find consensus, aggregative democracy tends to promote competition and adversary among groups, which may widen political cleavage. In other words, deliberation gives way to reach non-zero sum game through complex interaction, while simplifying democratic conduct into voting procedures promotes zero sum game perspective which favour majorities over minorities (Humphrey, 2017, pp. 201-202). Deliberation promotes inclusivity in a way that it inquires not only citizens' preferences, but also the justification behind such preferences (Gutmann & Thompson, 2004, p. 13). By this means, women and minority groups get more space to elaborate their preferences and the justification of such preferences, thus giving them the chance to influence others to shift their original preferences and meet in the middle in order to raise the possibility of converging incompatible preferences within the political realm. In the case of unchangeable preferences, usually those rooted in moral values such as religious teachings or deep-rooted tradition, deliberation process is still required to help sorting between issues which arise from incompatible moral values and issues that are more resolvable (Gutmann & Thompson, 2004, p. 11). The former issues may only be solved through mutual toleration and forbearance, while the latter need continuous deliberation process. Only by understanding the justification of individual preferences through deliberation we can differentiate between the two and formulate sensible political decision which does not undermine citizens' preferences and basic values.

Nevertheless, we do not suggest to completely replace all conducts of aggregative democracy with deliberation. We recognize that aggregative democracy holds virtue of its own. For one, it offers the most effective and efficient mechanism to ensure equal political participation for all. In a populated and territorially extensive state like Indonesia or India, aggregative democracy offers mechanism that enables all citizens across the territory to participate in political activity in equal manners. Moreover, aggregative democracy has easier way to formulate mechanism to ensure accountability since the quantification of preferences enable citizens to see how their preferences affect policy making process. Hence, rather than obliterating existing aggregative democracy mechanism, we instead propose an increase of quality and quantity in deliberation conduct which precede aggregative democracy conduct. As Dewey notes, it is important to remember that voting in public engagement is the culmination of extensive civic engagement activities such as public campaign, public debate, and public deliberation (Macedo & al., 2005, p. 7). The voting activity is just as important as activities preceding it.

The fourth strategy is to increase the quality and equality of civic education so that citizens can articulate their preferences and values better. The democratic capacity of citizens in larger political realm needs to be constantly maintained so that the democratic values

are sustained and deliberation process can be conducted peacefully, effectively, and efficiently (Fesnic, 2015, p. 6). The aim of deliberation and other democratic activities is still to reach a binding decision for certain period of time (Gutmann & Thompson, 2004, p. 5), and only by ensuring equal capacity for deliberation can the political realm produce decisions that satisfy diverse preferences. Civic education in democratic state needs to train citizens to cooperate, compromise, and persuade others with different preferences across racial, ethnic, and religious cleavages. Furthermore, civic education also involves learning about public issues, political system, constitution, and diversity so that each citizen can tolerate differences within the political realm, while at the same time, understand their common bond reflected in the political system and constitution (Macedo & al., 2005, p. 9).

The 4 strategies suggested above are inter-related and should be implemented simultaneously in order to raise the level of inclusivity not only in terms of number of participants but also in terms of conduct of welcoming alternative ideas.

Fulfilling the Desire of Inclusive Political Realm in Democracy

A more inclusive political realm is an ultimate goal for all democratic political community, and it should be recognized that no political community has yet to achieve the ultimate inclusivity. Hence, in every democratic political community, there should be constant and consistent effort to increase the level of inclusivity in every political activity. We note that the BDF itself is consistently increasing the level of inclusivity by expanding its participants each year. Started in 2008 with 40 countries, the number of countries participating in this annual forum has increased significantly each year. Moreover, parallel forums are now conducted with Bali Democracy Students Conference (BDSC) started in 2017, Bali Civil Society and Media Forum (BSCMF) started in 2018, and the most recent one is Business Community Forum (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Republic of Indonesia, n.d.).

However, again, inclusivity is not only measured in terms of the existence of diverse groups within the forum, but also whether or not they are significantly communicating and interacting with each other. During the discussion in 2019 BSCMF, civil society and media representatives encouraged the forum to provide more chances to conduct interactive cross-panel discussion with other parallel forums. They also suggested to make such forum more frequent so that more issues can be discussed in the quest of searching for more tangible solution to safeguard democracy in national, regional, and global arena. Finally, it was also suggested to offer participating organizations to showcase and distribute their publications during the forum.

The desire to increase inclusivity in terms of equal freedom to listen and be heard, as well as the freedom to raise new issues to be deliberated, is also felt in the political realm. Reorienting political realm and strengthening political institution are both long

term strategies which need gradual changes and consistent efforts from both the state and the society. Meanwhile, certain affirmative actions need to be enforced in order to include minority groups and let them voice out their concerns in political realm. Their alternative ideas should not be undermined and instead, should be encouraged because every opinion matters. The political moderates need to tolerate wider spectrum of preferences, engage them in deliberation process, and see their preferences as legitimate ideas. Listening to like-minded ideas may help forging bond and produce collective action, but listening to alternative ideas creates the possibility to build connection across groups when common concerns are found (Hendriks, Ercan, & Duus, 2019, p. 143). In this sense, listening to alternative ideas may help in discovering common interests in certain area. Such discovery can produce cooperation between moderate groups and more extreme groups, which generates bigger power and legitimacy for collective action. For example, cooperation between secular-liberal groups and religious groups are possible to support bills against domestic sexual abuse because both groups share the interest to protect women and children within private realm (The Conversation, 2019). There is a possibility that certain ideas from formerly-excluded groups are not well-articulated since they are not trained in public deliberation. Civil society groups can empower them by giving proper civic education and social training to equip them with deliberation skills, which are certainly not aimed to shift their values or preferences.

The advent of digital age provides easier method to gain information and communicate with citizens across country. This enables inclusivity since more people can listen and be heard in the same space. Throughout the deliberation process, community bond across the country can also be strengthened and mutual understanding among conflicting preferences can be achieved. However, should the digital space be utilized as political space, the state, along with other political stakeholders such as private sectors, civil society groups, and general public, are all responsible to provide and support the establishment of universal access to such space for all its citizens, while also ensuring the security of citizens' activities in the digital realm. Moreover, a multi-stakeholder coalition is also important to ensure the quality of political space by giving universal civic education for all, including the introduction of digital space as the new alternative political realm. Citizens need to be well-equipped in filtering information and exercising their freedom of expression in the digital realm.

Digital political realm needs to be seen as an opportunity rather than a threat since it offers new form of political activities and as a result, increases the frequency of political activities along with increased volume of information from the media (Ercan, Hendriks, & Dryzek, 2019, p. 21). However, such opportunity needs to be managed wisely by the authority, just like it manages physical political realm. The presence of political institution as an authority in digital realm is by no means supporting the use of digital technology to conduct mass surveillance. Rather, it suggests that the digital realm needs to be managed in a way that is not only giving the freedom of expression and access to information, but also encouraging people to listen and reflect on others' expression

(Ercan, Hendriks, & Dryzek, 2019, p. 21). Too much emphasis on freedom of expression turns deliberation into echo chambers, where people only want to hear similar opinions to strengthen their own preferences without wanting to listen to opposing opinions. In turn, this condition leads to segregation within the society as every group prefers to exclude other groups in the digital realm. Hence, political institution needs to be the authority that is capable to blend various groups within the digital space and encourage them to not only express their opinion, but also to listen to others and reflect on the possibility to find common grounds.

Furthermore, people and civil society organizations (CSOs) also need to support the effort of political institution to manage and secure the digital political realm. The authority in democratic political realm needs to constantly scrutinize its people in order to ensure government's accountability. Hence, the people need to encourage political institution to also utilize the digital political realm as a way to boost its institutional transparency. Besides scrutinizing political institution, the digital political realm can also be utilized by the people and CSOs to enhance the democratic quality of their community through building networks of transnational society so that they can learn about democratic experience of other communities, discuss the obstacles of democratic advancements, and implement positive initiatives in their own communities. Such network building can be seen in the form of regional and international forum of civil societies as we can see during the conduct of 2019 BSCMF 2019. The digital space that offers vast information and easier interaction among people across political boundaries creates limitless opportunity for the people to share democratic experiences and in turn, strengthen their democratic values and confidence in the democratic system. More importantly, with the current state of the world, with physical distancing looming to be conducted longer than initially anticipated, digital platform seems to be the enabling alternative to sustain and develop connectivity. With digital realm and initiatives, democratic consolidation is still possible to be achieved.

Amidst the worrying trend of declining democracy and rising intolerance, exclusivity, and populism, which are often exacerbated by digital technology, forums like BDF constantly evolve to include more representatives from the state and the society because it believes in the importance of inclusive deliberation to strengthen democratic values. Such aspiration is also shared by its participants. Although it is not the most ideal political system, democracy remains the best existing political system. It guarantees the freedom of every individual to decide their own fate through speech and act in political realm. Moreover, it believes in the power of collectivity to steer common future of the community. With that being said, we should believe in democracy just like democracy believes in people. The future of democracy is always with the people and if we still believe in democracy, we can always make democracy works.

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Democracy, Capitalism and The New Media

Andina Dwifatma

Information disclosure to the public and freedom of expression are prerequisites to democracy. In an ideal theory of democracy, both prerequisites are safeguarded by the media as the fourth pillar of democracy. In addition to ensuring that the other three pillars, namely the executive (the president and his/her cabinet), the legislative (the assemblies and the people's representatives), and the judiciary (the supreme court, constitutional court, and the judicial commission) function optimally in serving the people, the media also accommodates the people's voices in the forms of criticism, ideas, and comments on the government. News from the media also helps citizens in making informed decisions and, when needed, organizing themselves to demand for their unfulfilled rights.

Then came the technology called the internet, coinciding with the increasingly reduced citizen's political participation. As a result, internet is seen as the "magic potion" that can increase people's interest in politics, and eventually lead to participatory democracy (Stromer-Galley, 2000). In general, the media has shifted from offline to online. It is increasingly rare to find people who read newspapers and magazines, yet instead, they now more often use websites or the social media to access information. This is clearly more helpful for political communicators since they can now target the audience individually rather than in the form of the 'mass' as in conventional media. The audiences themselves now have more freedom to express their views because it is facilitated with spaces for comments, blogs, and online discussion forums. The internet has reduced the barrier to entry into rooms for public discussion.

The conventional media has also been replaced by the new media network's logic. Conventional media's audiences are wider, anonymous, and they receive information in a one-way manner from the media as the source. Meanwhile, with the new media, users carry out the process of producing and selecting the content so it is less expensive, distributing the content within their own groups, and forming networks that interact on the basis of shared interests and values (Klinger and Svensson, 2015). In essence, the new media puts greater control and authority in the hands of the audience. However, can public space be considered more inclusive by that reason? What are the consequences that come up from such 'digital democracy' model? These questions were discussed during the 2019 Bali Civil Society and Media Forum (BCSMF). This chapter attempts to summarize several points from the forum and highlight various events in Indonesia as illustrations.

The New Media

The term new media is used in this article as the umbrella term to understand various phenomena within the media realm since the advent of the internet. Other terms would have limitations, for instance digital media that focuses more on the technology aspect as opposed to analog, online media on the connectivity aspect, and social media on the users interactivity aspect. The new media includes all technologies, platforms, and the continuously changing users interactivity (Siapera, 2017). Mainstream media, alternative media, citizen media, and social media which will be discussed in this chapter fall under the new media category.

In the "Rising Exclusivity and Declining Democracy" panel, Prof. Sook Jong Lee (Director of Asia Democracy Research Network) mentioned the increasingly important role of social media in politics. Social media users are increasingly accustomed to discuss political choices and react to situations in countries, regions, and across the globe, through social media platforms. As a result, it is difficult to distinguish between truth and disinformation. Meanwhile, according to Michael Bak (Head of Public Policy of Facebook Thailand), Facebook as a social media platform will not fact-check every post. The information verification function should be performed by the users or the media. Facebook will only take steps to take down a certain content if there are reports or the post has violated Facebook's standards as a community in the first place. In order to understand how social media plays a crucial role in forming an opinion, we need to understand first how the digital age has brought a huge change to the media landscape. For this purpose, it is useful to study the media industry in Indonesia as an example.

Researches on the economic and political aspects of the media in Indonesia show that business and political interests of media owners highly influence the existing news pattern (Lim, 2012) (Tapsell, 2017). Of the eight media conglomerates in Indonesia, namely Chairul Tanjung (CT Corp); Hary Tanoesoedibjo (Global Mediacom); Eddy Kusnadi Sariaatmadja (EMTEK); Bakrie Group (Visi Media Asia); Surya Paloh (Media

Group); the Riady Family (BeritaSatu Media Holding); Dahlan Iskan (Jawa Pos); and Jakoeb Oetama (Kompas Group), three are also political party owners. Media framing of issues has been practiced not just once or twice. For example, Metro TV consistently referred to the disaster of eruption of hot mud in Porong (East Java) in 2006 as the 'Lapindo mud', while TV One called it the 'Sidoarjo mud'. Calling it 'Lapindo mud' shows how Metro TV intended to highlight PT Lapindo Brantas as the party responsible for the disaster, while TV One used the term 'Sidoarjo mud' to frame the incident as a natural disaster, equivalent to the 'Aceh tsunami' or 'Jakarta flood'. Such analysis points to the owners of the two media: Surya Paloh and his business opponent Aburizal Bakrie, with PT Lapindo Brantas as a subsidiary of Bakrie Group.

In addition to the fact that media ownership remains concentrated in the hands of ruler/business, another issue with mainstream media is the content that tends to focus its attention mainly to Jakarta and Java (CIPG, 2013). An analysis conducted on 10 private television stations shows that reports about Java reached 69.9 percent, of which 49 percent is about Jakarta. In terms of ethnicity, the Javanese also dominates with 42.8 percent, followed by the Betawi (8,5 percent), and the Sundanese (8 percent). Two problems rise from this finding. First, it seems to denote that Indonesia is just about Java, while other ethnicities only play a supporting role. This is certainly unhealthy for the country's truly rich cultural diversity. Second, too much reporting about Jakarta/Java would leave too little space for people from other regions to discuss community issues in their respective environments. Originally created to provide information as ammunition for citizens to launch movement, journalism has become blunted.

The digital era has provided an opportunity for the emergence of non-mainstream media as an alternative for the people in accessing news. Foreign media that have a franchise in Indonesia such as Vice, or other alternative media with no affiliation to large conglomerations such as Tirto.id or Asumsi, raise issues untouched (or, when they do get discussed, it is usually done with outdated narratives) by mainstream media, such as communism, racism in Papua, or Lesbian Gay Bisexual & Transgender (LGBT) (Sasmita, 2019) (Adi Perkasa, 2018). The internet also provides a platform for citizen media for the people to raise issues that are important for their community. Research on the community media shows that citizen journalism is able to encourage citizens' discussion on issues pertaining to their nearest environment, which has even led to bringing about tangible solution such as assistance from village administration (Birowo, Mario Antonius, *et.al.*, 2016).

With the presence of citizen media, the community no longer needs to pay attention to "central" or Jakarta-related issues only. They are learning to recognize, discuss, and move together to find solution for their own problems. However, the problem faced by both the alternative media and the citizen media is similar, namely money. Alternative media suffer from paying the operational cost with miniscule income from advertising. A similar problem is actually experienced by the mainstream media, but they are



Photo: Doc. FES

relatively stronger in terms of capital and have more diverse business units. Whereas the citizen media usually rely on volunteers' donations. Such militant dedication is truly admirable, but unless there are other ways for them to at least pay their operational cost, it is almost certain that the media will not be sustainable.

The Echo Chamber Effect

The internet also provides space for another form of the new media, namely social media. Unlike mainstream media and other alternative media which adhere to the journalistic guidelines in producing news, for social media content is king. Issues of who produces it and how it is produced are no longer important. In social media people may become prosumers, namely producers and consumers at the same time (McQuail, 2010). The content in the social media platform like YouTube, for instance, is user-generated. Videos that appear in YouTube are works created by users and enjoyed by other fellow users. Users are free to choose which content they would like to enjoy and with whom they want to connect with.

The freedom, however, brings with it a variety of new problems such as echo chamber and filter bubble. The echo chamber effect takes place when users of a social media connect and interact only with other users with shared values and worldviews

(Quattrociocchi, Scala and Sunstein, 2016). As a result, they are like being in a room that continuously echoes the same sound. This is made possible by the various features in social media, for instance the 'mute' feature in Twitter to exclude content with certain keywords, or certain users that one follows but does not want their tweets to appear in his/her timeline. A supporter of Donald Trump, for instance, in the upcoming US presidential election may use the 'mute' feature for keywords containing Joe Biden. Also, they can 'unfollow' people who support Biden and actively tweet the greatness of their hero. As a result, the timelines of the Republican Party's sympathizers will be full of supports for Trump. They feel that Trump is superior than Biden, while it is nothing more than the echo chamber effect of their own creation by selecting what they want to read in their timelines.

Another concept similar to the echo chamber effect is the filter bubble, a metaphor for how social media platform works. Facebook and Google, for instance, present information for users based on the data they entered, for instance search history, past click behavior, or location (Pariser, 2011). Consequently, users end up like living in a filter bubble filled with things that they like, believe in, and trust. The impact of this bubble is huge. For example, suppose someone is a fan of conspiracy theory. From the data that he/she enters into the search engines, the articles read and the pictures clicked, Facebook and Google will bombard him/her with similar content that voice the truth of conspiracy theory. Once you click words like 'covid conspiracy' in YouTube, for instance, you will continue getting recommendations of similar videos. You will also become more convinced that COVID-19 is actually a scam by the global elite. Social media platforms have no concern for your belief, because they work based on the principle of surveillance capitalism, which main purpose is to maximize profit.

The echo chamber effect and the filter bubble are not easy to overcome as humans have the tendency of confirmation bias. People like to receive new information that confirms their existing beliefs, and vice versa, are more likely to reject anything not in agreement with what they believe, even when the information is supported by scientific facts and valid evidence. Even when people become aware of and want to find out about other narratives beyond their beliefs, the social media bubble, based on its algorithms, will make that difficult. The ease of expressing one's opinion in Twitter sometimes may also overwhelm users with the high speed of opinion flow. Situations like hashtag war, for instance, may provoke people to become more emotional in 'uniforming' their timelines (by unfollowing users with differing opinion and muting certain keywords). Options become anonymous or use pseudonyms, making it easier for people to judge and attack opinions that are inappropriate or disagree with theirs. Users then use the 'mute/block/unfollow' feature and only talk to people with like-minded opinion in order to lessen the possibility for their opinions to be attacked. On the one hand, social media has indeed provided a platform for freedom of expression, but on the other hand it has also put a threat on the deliberation function in democracy.

Death of the Expertise

Social media has also become a fertile ground for the growth of buzzers and influencers as professions. They are similar but not the same. Buzzers are owners of social media accounts with more than 2,000 followers, who are paid to raise certain issues (Paramaditha, 2013), whereas influencers are third-party endorsers that shape audience's behavior through blogs, tweets, and other social media uses (Freberg *et al.*, 2011). Influencers usually promote certain products or services, but some of them are involved in discussing current issues with a viewpoint that is intentionally made different from the mainstream media discussion.

The success of buzzers are usually measured by their success in raising a certain hashtag (#) to become a trending topic in social media. The Jokowi government in particular, often uses buzzers to herd public opinion despite buzzers' habit of using dirty strategy, such as using false numbers and sending fake messages (Dwifatma, 2019). Buzzers also often use the technique of distributing giveaways in the forms of mobile phone credits or transferring electronic money balances to increase hashtag reach. The content or tone of the tweets does not seem to be important, but the more important thing is to increase hashtag reach quantitatively to make it trending.

If buzzers are easily recognized from the language and hashtag they use, influencers are more tricky. The popularity of influencers on social media platforms is usually followed by a high level of trust in the content they deliver. Unfortunately, since influencers are utilizing social platforms to make money, they tend to raise controversial issues as their content. An Indonesian YouTuber named Deddy Corbuzier, for instance, uploaded his interview with former Indonesia's Minister of Health who had also been convicted for corruption, Siti Fadilah Supari in May 2020, and until the time of this chapter's writing, the video has been watched nearly seven million times. The content was controversial because the former minister described herself as a victim of a global elite conspiracy: she said she was imprisoned because she was against the WHO during the bird flu case. Despite the fact that Siti Fadilah was convicted of medical devices procurement issue, the angle that became immediately trending among the viewers was that COVID-19 was not more than a lie. A similar case took place in the United States. A number of celebrities such as the actor Woody Harrelson and musician Keri Hilson were using their platforms to spread conspiracy theory that COVID-19 was transmitted through 5G network waves. As a result, people are reluctant to wear masks, continue to gather in crowds, to the extent that people demolished 5G towers in several places in the UK.

The phenomenon of influencer and buzzer is one of the clear examples of the "death of the expertise" concept echoed by a foreign relations professor from the US, Tom Nichols. In his book with the same title, Nichols describes how freedom of expressing opinions in the social media has instead promoted public antagonism against expertise. People no longer have trust in experts, and conversely feel there is no need to become

an expert to comment. Using the US as a case, Nichols highlights how democracy that actually means 'political equality' (one man, one vote), has become 'actual equality' that means every person's opinion (whether scientifically-based or not) is equal (Nichols, 2017). This shift in meaning has a big impact. If there are people who believe that vaccines cause autism in children, or the earth is actually flat, or corona virus is fictional, and we refute those opinions based on scientific facts, we can be accused of being 'elitist' or 'undemocratic'. People think they are free to trust celebrities with no expertise background to discuss certain topics, such as celebrities who are fans of conspiracy theory discussing the pandemic, and then act according to what they believe. This is why there are people who refuse to wear masks, maintain physical distance, and continue to gather in crowds. For them, the corona virus is non-existent and it is their right not to believe that. Nichols has an interesting terms for the phenomenon, namely 'oppressive ignorance'.

The New Media Literacy

Issues of democracy, capitalism, and the new media are not as simple as combating mis/disinformation by using science. The digital era has proven that lack of information is not the root of ignorance and access to information does not automatically make people smarter. Confirmation bias, for instance, prevents us from information that is against our own point of view and instead drives us to read sources that reinforce our previous beliefs. The social media algorithm will continue to present information that is consistent with one's digital footprint because this method has proven to be the most profitable in business terms. If this condition is allowed to continue, polarization in communities will be increasingly sharper and continuously maintained. People will feel ever more comfortable in their respective virtual bubbles and deliberative democracy will fall short of expectation.

Despite the ongoing problems, social media will continue to exist. People of the digital era are accustomed to sharing experiences and searching for information through the internet. Therefore, activists of democracy and academics, particularly in the field of communication, must keep working out a solution. For now, the most sustainable and organic solution is the universal struggle called the (new) media literacy. Media literacy is understood as education for audiences to be more critical when consuming media content. Audiences are encouraged to dig more deeply to explore the meaning behind the content, investigate its producer, and find out about its context in the community. In the new media literacy, this education has to be made as specifically as follows.

First, the audience needs to be trained to recognize sources of news. In the midst of a wave of information coming from various online media sites, people need to be aware of the characteristics of a trusted media: it has certification issued by the Press Council, an editorial address, an editorial board, a profile, etc. The audience also needs to be able to distinguish between the characteristics of buzzers and influencers and those

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of ordinary social media users. There should be a logic of capitalism in its content, and this needs to be understood by the audience. Tweets or videos created by buzzers and influencers highly depend on who pays them or which groups of society they are marketed to. *Second*, the audience needs to understand that it is most likely for them to have confirmation bias, which in turn will make them feel comfortable to be in the echo chamber and filter bubble of their respective social media. Once they are aware of these, they should then be encouraged to consume information outside the comfort zone of their beliefs and communicate with people beyond their circle of friends. *Third*, the audience needs to be trained to positively participate in debates. The habit of denouncing people with different views by using harsh words and *ad hominem* must be eradicated. To discuss different opinions in the social media with maturity in thinking must be our new normal.

Conclusion

Despite all problems surrounding it, democracy remains the most ideal state system. Democracy differs from the authoritarian system that represses citizens' voice. Democracy works with the assumption that the state is not God, and therefore could make a mistake. There is openness of information in democracy. The government's performance is guarded together by both the press and the people. State power must not be absolute. Every citizen must be treated equally before the law with no exception. Citizens are free to express their opinion as long as they do so within the applicable legal corridors.

But those words remain just the ideals, and ideals have to be idealistic anyway. In reality, according to a research conducted by The Economist Intelligence Unit, democracies in Asia experienced a fluctuating year throughout 2019. Thailand increased its democracy index score by 38 points and has its status changed from being a "hybrid regime" to become a "flawed democracy", while India's score dropped by 10 points due to regression of democracy triggered by erosion of civilian's freedom. Singapore also experienced a decline in its score after it introduced the anti-fake news law that has victimized many civilians. The same thing happened to Hong Kong due to the large number of civilian protests that ended up in violence.

In order for the ideals of democracy to be kept alive, conducting violence against civilians, silencing freedom of expression, and restricting access to information must be stopped. From the perspective of communication and the new media, restricting or blocking access to the internet and/or social media are not at all necessary. We should always remember that openness of information and freedom of expression are the very heart beat of democracy. What needs to be done is designing productive regulations, for instance those that will urge social media platforms such as Facebook and Twitter to provide signals to notify mis/disinformation content that may endanger the users, and then provide links to trusted and relevant sites on users' page. This should be done while continuing to carry out new media literacy efforts for all people throughout

Indonesia. It seems that the time has come for the new media literacy to be included in the national education curriculum. Only when we make Indonesian children get accustomed to selecting and sorting news sources, recognizing their own confirmation bias, and participating in debates with maturity of thinking without undermining each other in the internet, then the new media will have the opportunity to become a platform capable of cultivating deliberative democracy.

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Hoax, Polarization, and Democracy: a Civil Society Perspective

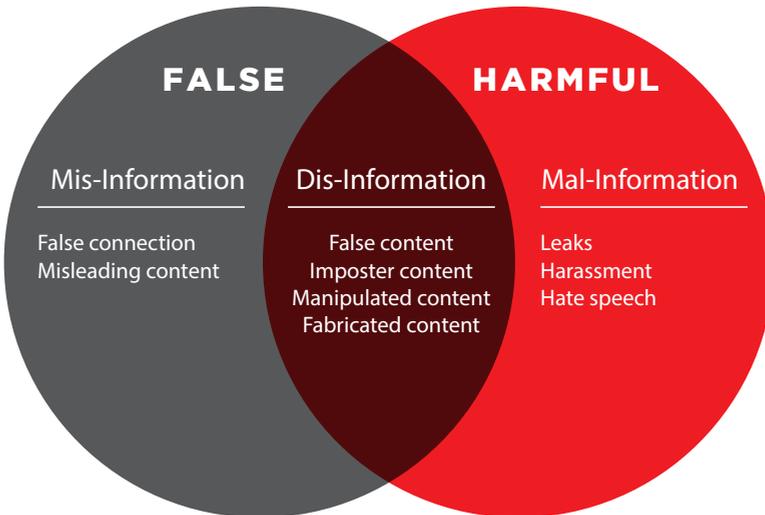
Anita Ashvini Wahid

Hoax is a term that is widely used in Indonesia, mainly for the reason that Indonesian public responds to it better than to any other terms that are used to describe the same phenomenon. Other terms that are also frequently used in other parts of the world include fake news, false news, junk news, pseudo-news, hoax news, information pollution, and others. While hoax is about falsifying information in general, fake news target more specific form of information, namely news, to deceive people. Information is fabricated, and presented in a way to resemble news media texts.

As a working definition, MAFINDO (*Masyarakat Anti Fitnah Indonesia*) focuses on the term Information Disorder as adopted by First Draft and the Council of Europe, to describe the complex phenomena of information pollution. The conceptual framework of Information Disorder identifies the three different types: misinformation, disinformation, and malinformation. Using the dimensions of harm and falseness, the differences between these three types of information are as follow:

- Misinformation is when false information is shared, but no harm is meant.
- Disinformation is when false information is knowingly shared to cause harm.
- Malinformation is when genuine information is shared to cause harm, often by moving information designed to stay private into the public sphere.

INFORMATION DISORDER



Indonesia, like many other democracies around the world, had seen how hoax has been used as weapon of political and ideological contestation. The use of hoax as a political and ideological weapon itself is a crucial part of computational propaganda (Woolley & Howard, 2019; Neudert & Marchal, 2019; Bradshaw & Howard, 2019; Howard, 2020). Computational propaganda is described as the use of technical tools made available by social media platforms, such as algorithms, automation, and big data, to shape public life. In different countries around the world, government and non-government actors have been using social media to manufacture consensus, manipulate and drive public opinion and behavior, and distribute fabricated information to the public for political agenda. In the study report on The Global Disinformation Order, Bradshaw and Howard (2019) found that during their 3 years of study by monitoring global organization of social media manipulation by government and political parties, there are evidences that reveal organized social media manipulation, which has taken place in 70 countries in 2019. This number has increased from 48 countries in 2018, and 28 countries in 2017. The increasing number alone should raise a question in us: how is the use of hoax (and other computational propaganda strategies) affecting democracies?

Hoax as weapon of political and ideological competition has long been used in Indonesia. Most major conflicts that had happened in the country had been preceded and/or accompanied by hoax. But it was not until the presidential election of 2014 had people become aware of the true capacity of hoax; the massive use of black campaign and hostile information that were deliberately used with the intention to deceive voters and to reduce the electability of candidates had been prevalent, with the help of digital technology, and social media in particular. Offline mode was also common, using flyers

distributed in public spaces, such as mosques, markets, and others, as well as words of mouth.

In Indonesia, the use of hoax had always been part of any power contestation, not necessarily during elections only. During the New Order era, for instance, hoax was spread through words of mouth about people who had tried to go against the regime. Hoax is also very rampant within the power struggle of ideologies, frequently used by caliphate supporters against democracy. But before 2014, the use of hoax, whether for political contestation events or not, was mostly done through words of mouths, magazines, newspapers, and flyers.

The presidential election of 2014, however, recorded a deluge of hoaxes that travelled fast and wide, because of digital technology and social media platforms. Joko Widodo (or Jokowi) was in his first presidential campaign and heavily attacked by hoaxes. The most commonly used hoaxes to attack him were on issues of religion and ethnicity. Some of the most alarming hoaxes about Jokowi included claims that he is a Chinese descendant and/or a Christian, that his father was a member of the Indonesian Communist Party, and that his mother was only 10 years apart of him in age.

Two years after the presidential election, Jakarta entered its gubernatorial election, where the use of hoaxes escalated, particularly because of, once again, identity issues. The incumbent, Basuki Tjahaja Purnama (or popularly known as Ahok), a Christian Chinese descendant, was Jokowi's vice governor. Prior to the election, he had quoted a Qur'an verse in front of a group of fishermen by urging to people 'not to be deceived by those who are using the verse 51 of Surah Al-Maidah'. In the election campaign context, he was criticizing his opponents of using religious issues as a campaign tool. A week later, a piece of his speech video went viral and ignited outrage among conservative Indonesian Muslims. Ahok then was accused of religious blasphemy and was sentenced 2 years of jail time. The anti-Ahok sentiment ignited a serious number of hoaxes related to the election, both attacking Ahok and his supporters. The election itself created an ideological polarization between the conservative Islam groups and the nationalists.

In the third quarter of 2018, Indonesia entered the presidential election campaign period with an already divided society. The seeds of polarization that had been sown during presidential election of 2014, and then was crystalized during Jakarta gubernatorial election of 2017, created a deep division between the two groups of ideology, long before the election process started. Moreover, the 2019 presidential election was a rematch between Jokowi and Prabowo Subianto, which brought the effect of a battle perpetuation from 2014. But, even though the candidates were the same, the political party coalitions were the same, and supporters of each candidate were more or less the same; there are several differences between 2014 election and 2019 election in terms of the use of hoax as weapons, as observed by MAFINDO. During the election process

of 2014, hoaxes were used to heavily attack one candidate, namely Jokowi. As the game of hoax-using in digital scale was quite new, Jokowi's campaign team seemed to be quite taken aback with the aggressive attack and could not successfully create an effective countermeasure. In 2019, however, since the polarization has been established quite strongly, MAFINDO saw the two-way attack using hoax as weapons, where both candidate's supporter groups attacked one another. MAFINDO recorded that from January to July 2019, the number of hoaxes used to attack Jokowi and Prabowo only differs by 17.8 percent, indicating the high number of hoaxes from both sides. This demonstrates that Jokowi's supporters had resorted to using hoaxes as weapon to attack Prabowo (Astuti *et al.*, 2019).

The second difference is the effectiveness of hoax in reducing the candidates' electability. The use of hoax in 2014 effectively reduced Jokowi's electability from around 70 percent before the campaign period started to only 53.2 percent at the end of the campaign period. However, in 2019, the use of hoax did not produce significant decrease in both candidates' electability. Many surveyors noted that throughout the campaign period the fluctuations of both candidates' electability were more or less inconsiderable. Moreover, surveyors noted that the fluxes happened after each candidate debate, showing that the dominant factor in the changes were the performance of candidates during the debate. MAFINDO, however, observed that while the hoaxes used to attack the candidates did not contribute to the shift in electability, a very significant rise within the public's tension was detected, in particular between the two candidates' supporter groups.

The third difference is the use of hoax to delegitimize the election. In 2014, the first hoax that came to surface to attack the election was on the election day, with only 2 or 3 hoaxes carrying the same tone. It was very much in contrast with what happened in 2019, where even before the campaign period started, hoaxes about the election had been spreading around with an overwhelming number. This was seen as attempts to delegitimize the election, thus the election result. Over the campaign period until end of July 2019, MAFINDO recorded 110 hoaxes that were specifically used to target the election. The hoaxes that were specifically produced and distributed to delegitimize the election range from the accusation of fraud and unfairness, failure of the General Election Commission (*Komisi Pemilihan Umum/KPU*) to organize a democratic and fair election, character assassinations and damaging reputation of members of General Election Commission (KPU), until the alleged crimes (such as intentional accidents, volunteers at voting stations being poisoned to death, etc.) to conceal the real election result.

As many studies have expressed, human beings are by their very nature irrational, not rational. Hoax is perfectly and effectively used as a weapon to exploit thoughts and feelings, as hoax feeds off emotion. Observing the way hoax works in the scope of Indonesia, I categorized at least two emotion groups that are being manipulated with the use of hoax:

1. The emotions that show up when there are perceived threats towards our wellbeing. Emotions like worry, anxiety, and fear drive people to share and forward information in the hope of keeping their loved ones safe and healthy. Hoaxes of criminality, natural disaster, and health-related are very efficient in manipulating this group of emotions, which drive us to act based on these emotions rather than verifying the information first before sharing.
2. The emotions that show up when there are perceived threats towards our identity. Emotions like feeling offended, suspicion, anger, distrust, and hate are very easily manipulated by hoaxes related to identities; in the case of Indonesia are religion, ethnicity, and ideology identities. These emotions are ones that can trigger people not only to share information without verifying them first, but also to incite hate speech and violence towards the perceived threats.

Looking back at the second difference between the use of hoax in 2014 and 2019 elections, I inclined to believe that hoaxes used to attack candidates were not aimed at decreasing opponent's electability, but rather at maintaining the hatred that has been built up since 2014. As emotions come and go, they should be maintained to be used for other targeted purposes. This hatred then drove people to attack opponents and different opinions from theirs in social media, hate speeches towards the other side, harassment, bullying, mass lynching, doxing, and even physical persecution, as evidently showed in the last three major elections in Indonesia.



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These anger, suspicion, distrust, and hate drive the society into a polarization. Many believe that polarization is not directly caused by hoax, but rather by the issues that are already problematic within the society but amplified and escalated by the combination of hoax and other computational propaganda strategies, such as the use of social media algorithm, utilization of the sharing imperative behaviour of users, microtargeting, media manipulation, attention-hacking, bots, and trolls.

These strategies created the political tribalism that enhances polarization, where the societal context becomes Us vs. Them, pushing people to political extremes. Within this context, no other group exists, and each group thinks that everything they do is motivated by their love of the country, while everything the other group does is motivated by the hatred towards them. Each group is unable to see the injustice caused by their side, while they see every single detail of the injustices caused by the other side. For both sides see everything from the glasses of tribalism, only the good stuffs are seen from their side and only the bad stuffs from the other side. Added to that the post-truth era, the echo chamber phenomenon and filter bubble, people from each side cognitively defend their group for whatever they are doing and conveniently leave facts that show the their side's wrongdoing. The deeper people get caught in polarization, the more susceptible they become to hoaxes and propaganda.

The effects of hoax and other computational propaganda strategies towards individuals, society, and nation are obvious. Individuals become irrational, lacking in critical thinking, full of hatred, suspicion, and resentment, and are easily manipulated into political or ideological agendas. Society becomes a hostile and violent society that cannot tolerate differences. Nation-wise, national disintegration is at stake, and the nation loses its capacity to trust, be honest, respectful, understanding, and fair. The nation also loses its capacity to find common ground and decide on a common vision. And at the heart of it all, the nation loses its core principles of humanity, justice, equality, and unity.

Democracy thrives on diversity of opinions. But, the use of hoax and other computational propaganda strategies reduces access to diverse sources of information and perspectives that enable democratic liberation. Within the context of electoral democracy, hoax and computational propaganda poses a very apparent threat: the disassemble of electoral integrity. The weaponization of hoax leaves voters misinformed about the people they vote for, and may choose candidate who does not meet their preferences. Where voters are well-informed in their decision making, they understand the consequences of their decisions and are able to hold their representatives accountable. Hoax, especially in a polarized circumstance, remove accountability from elections. It also undermines trust that should be present in a fair, free, and open election, by sowing doubt about the integrity of the election, the election management bodies, and spreading rumours and accusations on the legitimacy and accuracy of the election result.

Strongly polarized nation that intensified by the use of hoax also leaves many problematic issues, even well after the election process is finished. Within the context of polarization, people become dichotomic in thinking, following the pattern of Us vs. Them. They process information not based on facts, but on whether the information is congruent with what they have already believed in their group. They see opinions not based on the expertise of the speaker, but whether or not the speaker is identified as 'member', 'defender', or 'trusted opinion leader' of their group. This pattern keep continue in every aspect of societal lives and governance, especially when addressing public policies and regulations. Furthermore, as hoax and computational propaganda had proven to be effective in the elections, they are also utilized during non-election periods.

Several public issues that showed the utilization of polarization along with computational propaganda came into the surface not long after the election process is completed. The commissioners selection process of Corruption Eradication Commission (*Komisi Pemberantasan Korupsi/KPK*) were manipulated by the narration of Islamic radicalization process that has been going on within the commission body, to let public agree on and support the decision of electing candidates who had allegedly violated ethical conducts in the past for they were led to believe that these figures were strong enough to fight the alleged radicalization. In this case, the polarized people were manipulated by 'trusted opinion leaders' of their group that for them, there were only two ways of looking at the issue: defending the radicalization or rejecting the radicalization.

The case of KPK Law revision was very much the same. 'Trusted opinion leaders' manipulated their group into thinking that the law revision is essential for fighting radicalization; thus driving the group to believe that the law revision was a good thing, without needing to check the verses of the law revision, which ultimately reduced the authority and flexibility of the commission in their work. Again, the dichotomic thinking was at place: defending or rejecting radicalization.

The Papua case was similar, where public was led to believe that the mass demonstrations and riots in Papua were caused by the separatist group. Without eliminating the possibility of this claim being false, the polarized group however were led to believe that the only possible positions to take about the Papua case were pro-Indonesia or pro-separatism. The polarized group did not need to check and study the other things that might be the cause of it, such as the conditions of Papua and Papuans prior to the riots, the inequal treatment they received from the central government, and the human right violations that frequently happened.

This kind of dichotomic thinking poses a threat to democracy, for it limits the existence of the possibility of seeing anything from various different angles. As such, dichotomic thinking only drives people to look at public issues as 'our way or their way' and does not allow any other ways to be even be considered and discussed. Any other thoughts that are not aligned with 'my way' are automatically considered as 'their way'. Most of

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the time, 'their way' is seen as 'your way to destroy us', instead of as alternative views. Thus, dichotomic thinking eliminates other views to be heard, respected, and included in the discussion.

The problem does not stop on dichotomic thinking. Polarization had become so strong that it incited social media users in attacking people who have different opinions on these various cases. It has become very normal to see people of different stand getting harassed, bullied, and mass-lynched on various social media platforms, and even getting doxed and defamed. This poses a tremendous threat to inclusive democracy, for people have become accustomed to the practice of silencing others by these sometimes organized means of intimidation, which endangers freedom of expression and opinion. As Indonesia closed its chapter on the general election 2019, the use of computational propaganda, including hoax remains strong, by taking advantage of the polarization that had been built for 5 years. Buzzers (social media influencers), bots, and trolls are working hard to serve many political agendas, as apparent in the cases of KPK members selection, KPK Law revision and related student demonstration against it, as well as Papua incident. Hoaxes were being used as a smear campaign against people or institutions opposing the views of the government and the legislative body, including journalists reporting the events. Cyber-attacks – such as hacking social media accounts and chat apps – became a method that frequently happened. One such attack includes overtaking chat app accounts and releasing provocative messages out of these accounts. In September 2019, during the student demonstration period, two WhatsApp accounts belonging to two students that participated in the demonstration were hijacked, and from their account were sent messages that encourage people to create a suicide bomb to be blown up during the demonstration to create chaos, as well as inviting people to persecute and kill the Indonesian Chief of Police. In April 2020, an activist lost hold of his WhatsApp account, and during his inability to access his account, his number sent out a message to invite people to plunder and loot supermarkets throughout the country to create chaos. When people started to speak out against the attack, a series of slander was brought up to surface in social media to assassinate the activist's character.

It is unclear on who might be behind these attacks; nevertheless, these events undoubtedly showed how the civic space has become more and more shrinking, and there are increasing efforts to silence dissenting voices. Asian Democracy Network (ADN) reported that among the top 5 human rights violations in Indonesia are the violation against freedom of expression and association, with the top 3 victims and people at risk are the dissent and political opponents, minority groups, and poor and marginalized people. SAFEnet (Southeast Asia Freedom of Expression Network) also reported the increasing number of Indonesian draconian laws, particularly the hate speech articles of Law on Information and Electronic Transaction that are used against journalists.

Activists, CSOs, and journalists are becoming more vulnerable within this era of democracy manipulation and the use of computational propaganda. Nevertheless, these events do not deter CSOs and journalists to continue working on issues that pose threats and challenges towards human rights and democracy. Some CSOs such as SAFEnet focus on digital rights, while some other such as ADN on democracy. MAFINDO works with journalists of CekFakta network to ensure public gets valid information by fact-checking hoaxes and conducting public education workshops to fact-check. SiberKreasi, a network of more than 110 CSOs, information technology-related companies, content creators, and government agencies, work on digital literacy. However, with the constantly developing digital technology, democracies around the world will be facing many challenges in the future, including the challenges of the integrity of electoral democracy, the growing populism enabled by digital technology, the increasing sectarian identities, hate speech, intolerance, violence, extremism, and the silencing of dissenting opinions using cyber-attacks, and other computational propaganda strategies.

It is therefore imperative that collective measure needs to be taken to make sure that digital rights are safeguarded, including the right to information, the right to know who is trying to influence our political views and how they are doing it, the right to public oversight of the social impact of technologies that automate control over mass information markets, and the right to data privacy. Furthermore, democracies around the world have the duties to protect the public from fraudulent communication, duty to protect the public against the exploitation of concentrated market power, duty to protect the integrity of our democratic institutions and values, duty to educate the public about the social and political impact of new technologies, as well as the duty to foster a robust public sphere and an informed electorate.

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Way Forward

Dinna Prapto Raharja

As a closing, I will start by saying that democracy is sustained by multiple actors, not just at the national but also at regional and international levels. And that the virtue of democracy is in the uncertainty of how actors affect the system and shape the structure of politics, as well as the outputs and outcomes of such process. One may not be able to predict exactly what will happen to democracies and the kinds of hurdles the people inside of democracies must sort, but we know that given the multiplicity of actors who matter in a democracy, it is a wishful thinking to imagine a linear path of analysis about democracies. Suggesting on way forward to sustain or improve inclusivity in democracies, therefore, is a daunting task. With that caveat in mind, I attempt to highlight the points raised in earlier chapters for tentative take home points. The flow is the following: I will note the most recent events around us in 2019-2020 that speak about inclusivity in democracies: the US attack to Iran, China and Hong Kong protests, the COVID-19 pandemic, and the Black Lives Matter movement. And then I will reflect on how countries could work together to enhance inclusivity in democracies.

First, the US attack to Iran. Last year, in the book about 11th BCSMF, I raised the point of expectation that democracies tend to be peaceful and seek peace amidst disagreements because such norm is what sustains democracies. Ironically, I observe that it has not been the case. Democracies could be confident in taking unilateral actions against other countries with various security-related reasons. We saw the case of US invasion to Iraq, Afghanistan, Syria, and this year an attack to Iran. In return, Iran launched counterattacks to US military base sparking questions whether the Third World War is imminent. What can we learn about from this action and reaction?

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With Iran, the US has troublesome relationship. Despite theories that democracy brings countries closer, democracy has never been the factor that brought Iran and the US together. In my analysis (Wisnu, 2020a, Wisnu, 2020b), I highlight the irony of how inclusivity in politics of one nation (Iran) deters other country (US) from cooperating with the country (Iran). A regime change democracy in Iran grows movements and groups, thus challenging the concentration of power politics and shaking the certainty of access to energy and other resources that the US usually have exclusive access to. Atom for peace program that was introduced by the US to equip Iran in facing the influence from Russia became the program heightening tensions between US and Iran.

There may be an inherent negative correlation between the rise of inclusivity at the domestic level of one country with the support of inclusivity from other countries. After all, democracy never happens overnight; once introduced, there will be a pull and push between political forces which may be used as an excuse, both by external forces or internal forces, to stop democracy from taking roots. For countries with geopolitical importance to the world and rich natural resources, having inclusive democracy that is stable and perceived externally as relatively acceptable is challenging. Iran learned it the hard way.

Now on the second event of 2020: the China and Hong Kong protests. It was unprecedented to see waves of seemingly unstoppable street demonstrations in Hong

Kong that started in February 2019 and lasted until May 2020. It all started with China's decision to impose the National Security Law on Hong Kong that the people in Hong Kong saw as an erosion of freedom in the city and a way to curb anti-government voices. Tens of thousands marched in Hong Kong to protest the law. Chaos after chaos happened but China did not budge. In May 2020, Beijing imposed national security legislation on Hong Kong. Disagreements is now linked to secession, subversion, terrorism and foreign interference.

What happened in Hong Kong, a city wishing to remain different from mainland China in its political system, demonstrates how fragile popular movement can be when legally the rules are against dissenting opinions. The people residing in a territory may wish for freedom of speech and suffrage, but these voices could be suppressed for the excuse of political stability, loyalty, anti-terrorism and anti-foreign interference. Once again, the issue of foreign support to democracy appears here as a hurdle to democracy rather than a factor that would support one.

The third event in 2020 is the COVID-19 pandemic. As a health crisis, there may be a tentative conclusion that the world needs to work better to prevent the spread of such communicable and deadly disease. No country in the world is reasonably prepared for such disease. But as a political issue, COVID-19 brought theory of conspiracy up. Some says that COVID-19 is hoax, an exaggeration of problem. US President Donald Trump said that the Democrats spread the hoax after its failure to bring down Trump with the Russian scandal of election interference. In Canada, half of its population believes that the virus is China made to cover up the bad impacts of 5G technology that China is championing. Others believe that the virus is leaked, escaped, the Wuhan laboratory and that the virus is human fabricated.

Conspiracy theory is a belief that something bad has been well planned to generate certain benefits for limited segment or groups. Whenever conspiracy theory appears, there are little facts that link one thing to another thing; none of the issue is grounded on any research but people believe there must be something being hidden and untold to the public. In other words, conspiracy theory thrives in certain time in certain communities. The lower the trust of society to those in power, the easier it is for conspiracy theory to grow. Is the society sick? I think it is more appropriate to say that there are those taking advantage of the vulnerability and curiosity of society. Guarding our society from hoaxes and speculation is tough to do. The fact that suspicion of something is being hidden from the public shows that inclusivity is also about feeling, about perception of being left out rather than whether the country has the law to prevent anyone from being left out or uninformed. The fast spreading access to information and technology contributes to such perception of being left out, which democracies must be aware of.

Last, the Black Lives Matter (BLM) movement: the movement fights against violence and systemic racism and discrimination against Black people. BLM movement started

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in 2013 but one of the most recent death of a Black American civilian, George Floyd, spurred the movement to the roof. Floyd is not the first Black American experiencing discrimination and excessive violence from the police; nor is Floyd case the most severe one, but the spread of video on the last minutes of his life was so touching that even people from outside of US felt the anger to speak up by demonstrating on streets. Waves of demonstration happened across cities in the US and beyond in most Western democracies, reaching London, Berlin, Sydney, Toronto, Stockholm, and more.

The BLM movement shows at least three things. First, that inclusivity is still challenging, if not problematic, even in the “most advanced” democracies of Western hemisphere. Second, that keeping inclusivity consistent across public service is challenging. The issues span from budgeting appropriation problem, police training, police procedure for handling suspects, to society sending false alarm and excessive suspicion against Black people. Third, freedom of speech and freedom of expression help channel grievances and energy for change in democracies. When these two types of freedom are curbed, not only through counter-violence and disinformation (e.g. in the US), but also through law (e.g. in Hong Kong), inclusivity is under serious threat.

These events suggest that progresses in a democratic state and government may be made to improve inclusivity, for instance through law amendment, negotiation such as two systems under one government, affirmative action or an election of Black representative to power as president, however, these progresses do not necessarily change the structural problems in a society. Inclusivity is a relational and social problem as it is structural. Disruptions such as technology and media could change the dynamics of relations, social problems or structural problems, but not everything would turn into better; more often things turn in ways that are never predicted before. The White people in the US welcomes the Black people, but some of the White people see the welcoming attitude as dangerous given the remaining social problems among Black community; and similarly the Black people see that the White people remain overly violent against them. Technology such as smartphone may help capture violence and document it as the basis to justify claims, but the documentation also flares up anger faster & wider.

It is humane that we may be tempted to categorize the “new” phenomenon around us as “good” or “bad”, “advantageous” or “disadvantageous”. But, the writers in this book also remind us that to remain inclusive, having a mindset of dichotomy is counterproductive to democracy. Syahredzan noted how racial and religious hate against minorities emerged during election period. Anita Ashvini Wahid warned us about disinformation, hoaxes, and fabrication of information. Andina mentioned about the danger of echo chamber effects. Naruemon described the factors creating divide in Thai society and possibly also in neighboring countries. All warned us that the so-called neutral media is rare. Naruemon also mentioned how some media imposed self-censorship to avoid offending the incumbent. In chapter 1, I also mentioned how we

may witness that speaking up against the choices of governments. This is the kinds of challenge inherent in democracies.

We shall not forget that stable economies attract people to move in from across border. Practically, this is not “bad” because stable economies also need additional workers and as the better-off labour improve their skill to go up the ladder of production. What remains challenging is that the structure of redistribution in the society does not adapt as quickly. There is a lag of structural change and institutional adaptation.

If I may simplify for sharper analysis, writers in this book have sensed that democracy as a concept has multiple dimensions of inclusion:

1. Elite and leadership level (the government and political parties). At this level, inclusion is aimed at enlarging and sustaining followership and political influence. They cannot appeal to the farthest in the ideological or programmatic spectrum because they may then lose support from their traditional followership. A democratic transition and flawed democracy would particularly face the challenge for being inclusive at this level, which may end up eliminating inclusivity at the levels mentioned below.
2. Elite and leadership level (the civil society). At this level, inclusion among civil society elite and leaders is aimed at sustaining sympathy, if not support, from the government for the causes they champion. Some of these people may be absorbed into power. This level faces the limit in appealing to all groups of civil society because there are competitions too among these groups. Some of these elite, as the chapters above also alluded, may also be attracted to philanthropy activities by funding for projects, so that inclusivity may be compromised.
3. The means level: technology, media. At this level, inclusion may be filtered by commonality of ideas. Echo chamber is an example of how people today would rather listen or read what strengthen their viewpoints.
4. Mass level as a crowd and as followers. At the crowd and followers’ level, loyalty to leaders is key. It is challenging to imagine the crowd and followers diverting from what the leaders call for.

Dialogues such as BDF and BCSMF reach mostly the level 1 and level 2. As a procedure and in terms of resources, both BDF and BCSMF are challenged at the means level to be fully inclusive in their dialogues.

Enabling Cross-country Support to Democracies

At the end of the day, we must develop ideas on how to enable cross-country support to democracies. As I mentioned earlier, the challenge for cross-country support is that the agenda of democracy is often far from alignment with the issue of national, regional let alone international security. Others’ democracies are not always seen as beneficial to other countries.

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At the diplomatic level, a breakthrough must be considered. Discourses about democracies should no longer be limited to standards and practices as seen in the Western countries. Democracies vary by the society that sustain these democracies. The means for “assessing” and “evaluating” democracies in Asia or ASEAN, for instance, should be based on the growing experiences and stages that these countries have gone through. The principles of inclusivity raised in this book should guide us on what should be avoided in order to nurture inclusivity in democracies.

Disruptions such as COVID-19 pandemic have proven dangerous to democracies, which Sylvia & Mireille mentioned has brought states to retract to own territories and isolate. So, one must wonder whether democracies have yet the tool and preparedness to deal with unexpected twist of events in history. This is another reason to bring together democracies in forums.

Profile of Writers

Associate Prof. Dinna Prapto Raharja, Ph.D



is an Associate Professor of International Relations specializing in comparative political economy, Faculty Member of Binus University, Co-founder of Paramadina Graduate School of Diplomacy, Co-founder of University of Indonesia's Center for Social Protection Studies, Co-founder of Executive Programs of Social Protection between Gadjah Mada University and University of Melbourne, Co-founder of Atma Jaya Institute of Public Policy, Founder of Synergy Policies consulting and training institute. She graduated with Doctoral degree of

Philosophy and Master of Arts from the Department of Political Science, The Ohio State University (USA) and Bachelor of Political Science from the Department of International Relations University of Indonesia. Active as writer and speakers, Dinna train diplomats and policymakers on various strategic issues including foreign policy, development and social protection. She served as Indonesian Representative to ASEAN Intergovernmental Commission on Human Rights (2016-2018). She can be reached at dinna.prapto.raharja@gmail.com or *Twitter*: @Dinna_PR.

Syahredzan Johan



read law at Cardiff University, United Kingdom and graduated in 2005. He completed his Bar Vocational Course in 2006 and then called to the Bar of England and Wales. He returned to Malaysia on the same year and read in chambers at Messrs RamRais & Partners. He was admitted as an advocate and solicitor of the High Court of Malaya on 05 October 2007. He is now a partner at Messrs Ram Caroline Sha & Syah (formerly known as RamRais & Partners), a law firm in Kuala Lumpur. Syahredzan's areas of practice include general litigation,

criminal and public interest litigation such relating to human rights and the Constitution. In 2009, he was appointed as the Co-deputy Chairperson of the Bar Council's Constitutional Law Committee, the committee behind the successful MyConstitution campaign. The Bar Council subsequently appointed him as Chairperson of the Constitutional Law Committee for the 2011/2012 term and re-appointed him for a second term in 2012. In 2011, he was elected as a Committee member of the Kuala Lumpur Bar Committee. He was then appointed as Chair of the Information Technology and Communications Committee of the Kuala Lumpur Bar. Syahredzan was an elected member of the Bar Council and served from 2012 to 2017. He chaired the Bar Council National Young Lawyers Committee for 3 terms.

In 2017, Syahredzan was one of the recipients of the then inaugural Inspiring Young Leaders Awards by The Edge. He was also selected as one of the 40 under 40 of 2018 by Prestige magazine. Syahredzan was listed as one of the young leaders in Asia by Tatler in their annual Generation.T Asia list in 2019. In 2018, he began his political career by joining the Democratic Action Party (DAP) and was appointed as the political secretary to DAP veteran and Iskandar Puteri Member of Parliament, Yang Berhormat Lim Kit Siang.

He has also written articles which are published in the mainstream media and the internet. He had a fortnightly column with The Star from 2011 to 2018 and currently writes in Malay language daily Sinar Harian and English language news portal Malaysiakini. His views and comments on legal and human rights issues have also been published by the media.

Naruemon Thabchumpon, Ph.D

is an Assistant Professor in Politics at the Faculty of Political Science and Deputy Director for Research Affairs at the Institute of Asian Studies, Chulalongkorn University. Her expertise remains in comparative politics and democracy, cross-border migration and human development. She got her M.A. and Ph.D from the School of Politics and International Studies from University of Leeds, United Kingdom. Beside her research, teaching and social works, Naruemon is one of the founders and former director of the Master of International Development Studies at Chulalongkorn (www.maids-chula.org) and Director of the Asian Research Center for Migration (ARCM) <https://arcmthailandchula.wixsite.com/mysite> Examples of her published articles and book chapters include: Urbanized Villagers in the 2010 Thai Redshirt Protests: Not Just Poor Farmers, 'Living with and against Floods: Socio-Economic Adaptation of Communities in Bangkok and Thailand's Central Plain; and 'Militant Far-right Royalist Groups on Facebook in Thailand: Methodological and Ethical Challenges of Internet-based Research'. She is currently doing research on Multi-lateral Knowledge Networks of Transdisciplinary Studies with European and Southeast Asian Universities (www.knots-eu.com) and start a new research on the Economic and Social Impacts of Covid-19 Crisis: People, Planet and Inclusive Society. She can be reached at naruemon.t@chula.ac.th or nthabchumpon@gmail.com.



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Sylvia Yazid, Ph.D



is a Lecturer and Researcher at Department of International Relations, Parahyangan Catholic University, focusing on issues of migration, civil society organizations, democracy, and human rights. Sylvia holds a bachelor's degree on International Relations from Parahyangan Catholic University, Master of Public Policy and Management from Monash University, and Doctor of Philosophy from School of Political and Social Inquiry, Monash University. She was a Guest Professor at TU

Dortmund, Germany under the Gambirinus Fellowship programme. Besides teaching, researching, and publishing works on issues such as migration, democratization, and human rights, Sylvia has also been involved in various activities related to empowerment and development funded by national and international institutions such as Australia Awards Indonesia, Save the Children Indonesia, Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung Korea and Indonesia, and Raoul Wallenberg Institute. She is currently the Head of Office for International Affairs and Cooperation in Parahyangan Catholic University. She can be reached at s_yazid@unpar.ac.id.

Mireille Marcia Karman



is a Junior Lecturer in Parahyangan Catholic University, Bandung. She obtained her bachelor's degree from Universitas Indonesia, majoring in International Relations and finished her master's degree in International Political Theory, University of St. Andrews, UK. Her research interests focus around issues of democracy and political violence which includes the question of freedom and authority in a democratic regime. She published an opinion in daily newspaper *The Jakarta Post* in 2017 titled "Restoring Peace and Order in Jakarta: A Choice for Anies-

Sandiaga." In 2018, she published an article with Sylvia Yazid in *Journal of Conflict and Integration* titled "The Persistent Horizontal Antagonism within the Democratic Regime: The Case of Indonesia post-1998." From 2019 up until now, Mireille is part of a research team observing and encouraging the establishment of human rights city in Bandung, particularly on the possibility to adopt a deliberative democracy concept within democratic regime in Indonesia. Mireille is available to be contacted in mireille.marcia@unpar.ac.id or +62811-1772608.

Andina Dwifatma

is a Lecturer at the School of Communication, Atma Jaya Catholic University of Indonesia. Her research and pedagogical interests include media studies, journalism, digital sphere and freedom of expression. Andina graduated with Master of Science from the Department of Communication, University of Indonesia, and Bachelor's degree in Communication from Diponegoro University. She co-founded a longform journalism website, PanaJournal.com. The website, where she is currently the editor, collects non-fiction features from storytellers all around Indonesia, as well as some foreign contributors. Prior to joining Atma Jaya, Andina worked as a journalist at *Kompas Gramedia* where she once won the highly prestigious national award on journalism, *Anugrah Adiwarta 2011*. She also has a life in creative writing. Her debut novel, "*Semusim, dan Semusim Lagi*" ("A Season, and Then Another") won the Novel Writing Competition 2012 held by the Jakarta Arts Council.



Anita A. Wahid

is an activist on issues of human rights and democracy, mainly on three issues: anti-corruption, religious tolerance, and information disorders. She graduated from University of Indonesia for her bachelor's degree in International Relations, and got her master's degree from Ruhr-Universität-Bochum, Germany in Development Management. She now serves as Presidium of Masyarakat Anti Fitnah Indonesia (MAFINDO), a volunteer-based organization that works on information disorders. The organization works on two domains: online and offline. Anita also serves on SiberKreasi as Vice Chairman on Research and Curriculum Development. SiberKreasi is a collaboration between 120 organizations and communities as a digital literacy national movement. She also plays active role in Jaringan Gusdurian (Gusdurian Network), a network of more than 130 Gusdurian (disciples of Gus Dur) communities throughout Indonesia, to emulate his dream for Indonesia. The Network is striving to actualize Gus Dur's ideals and works alive as inspirations and guidance to strengthen democracy, pluralism, and multiculturalism based on Gus Dur's 9 Principles, which includes humanity, justice, equality, and solidarity. She can be reached at Twitter @AnitaWahid.



