

## *Editor's Introduction:*

### *Questioning Who the People Are*

In this first edition of the Journal of Contemporary Sociological Issues, we want to elaborate on how sociology discusses people. In the existing theoretical landscape, both in classical and postmodern terms, it is not easy to imagine an agreement on people concept. It is interesting, not only because there is no common ground, but also because it has consequences on the plurality of using it. This dimension becomes essential to think about where people concept will create certain discourses. Furthermore, even though this discourse coincides, different social spaces will present a singularity of social formations, which become an alternative reading in today's conditions.

The imagination of people concept becomes a space interpreted and practiced in various thinking periods. In this case, Foucault (2009) presents an interesting discussion, an issue marginalized in Marx's studies<sup>1</sup>. Marx saw Lumpenproletariat as ambiguity working-class character, both ideologically and social position<sup>2</sup>. More seriously, without directly aiming at subjectivity on the Lumpenproletariat in the Marxian tradition, Foucault saw that social entities are categorized as objects that must be controlled to emphasize the normality in society. Starting from crazy people, leprosy sufferers to criminals, Foucault discussed the argument that civilization is built on the discourse of knowledge about what the body is and how it functions politically.

Meanwhile, Stallybrass (1990) gave a different emphasis referring to the heterogeneity of social characters conceptualized as Lumpenproletariat<sup>3</sup>. Then it is necessary to reflect on why this conception should be placed in the imagination of the people. Of course, this cannot be separated from how the term people is extended to the farthest point, where economic determinants play their power to move the people's pragmatic side. People become objects that can be sorted, separated, placed in specific categories according to particular practical needs.

In the article written by M. Iqbal Fardian, it showed how democracy intended for the people to determine their needs, especially for the existence of a leader, has been reduced to patronage. In the case elaborated by him, society is no longer a subject who can critically reflect his ideals on the figure of the leader he chooses. By looking at the

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<sup>1</sup> Michel Foucault, *Madness and Civilization: A History of Insanity in the Age of Reason*, 1st edition (New York: Vintage, 1988).

<sup>2</sup> Karl Marx dkk., *The communist manifesto* (London: Pluto Press, 2008).

<sup>3</sup> Mark Cowling, "The Lumpenproletariat as the Criminal Class?," dalam *Marxism and Criminological Theory: A Critique and a Toolkit*, ed. oleh Mark Cowling (London: Palgrave Macmillan UK, 2008), 149–61, [https://doi.org/10.1057/9780230234710\\_7](https://doi.org/10.1057/9780230234710_7).

miraculous alliance between lineage, religion and finance, the author underscored a turn of democracy into an elite need.

Another dimension targeted by Maulida Zulia Irmajayanti, Totok Sudaryanto, and Antikowati is discussing the existence of a set of legal rules and how the laws are practiced intended to be the basis for the elite. The elite, in this sense, talks explicitly about regional heads. The contradiction between public officials on the one hand and political officials is vital to be framed legally. This point is how a regional head often slips on public and private issues, where corruption looms. Topics such as the private versus the public and political to bureaucratic regulations, continue to echo along with the State apparatus's professionalism.

People who are imaginatively separated or put on different ideas seem to continue to be a never-ending debate. The elite is always imagined to form an economic and political system that presents a form of cultural formation, which is a belief that thinkers maintain in the Marxian tradition. Even though this is not necessarily shared and cultured in the texts produced, what becomes interesting is how debates and cracks of thought have presented research issues.

Meanwhile, Ratna Istriyani wanted to elaborate on the consumptive space and free time. She presented a discourse for capital expansion, although it is necessary to further reflect on how the strength of capital has shaped and reversed the presence of time in the façade. And how it did not rule out the existence of blurring between cities and villages. Or even emphasize how the village becomes a productive place to create an urban middle class. Ratna Istriyani herself cannot be sure how this change will form an imaginary network between tastes and ideology.

Nevertheless, she tries to ensure that capital and style have become the creative economy sector. Furthermore, she saw the complexity of the urban character she wanted to bring to rural areas. It becomes interesting that technological expansion has made mobility easier, but what will survive in this situation? There is still a question that needs to be looked at more seriously in the future.

In a not much different setting, Windu Bramantio presented the romanticism of subjectivity that thinks of an identity attached to itself in this issue, radio, which was imagined to have been displaced by a more modern media, still had an audience. The voice of the disseminated people through radio frequency is a form of narrative covered by an identity that, incidentally, currently breathes along with the massive regional development. Another thing that appears in the community radio voice is that specific identities no longer appear monolithic. However, they are manipulated by intentional intimacy and a form of celebration of freedom in the pressure of work. Thus, community radio has found space to release desire in sound and tone.

The last article that is important to be published in this first edition presented the bodies of criminals in the Foucauldian figuration are part of power. Foucault talked about

how discipline in practice offers the practice of punishment as an effective way of creating horror and terror<sup>4</sup>. Of course, this punitive practice can raise many questions, especially from the dimension of human rights and how the social consequences that are present follow. However, the people who are seen as a group of masses and discussed as a mere population are formed and processed by a set of rules requiring a sadistic appearance to bring about obedience<sup>5</sup>. Why should obedience which is meant to subdue the people's imagination for the power operating on itself need to be present in this dimension? None other than it is intended to multiply the appearance through linguistic circularity. The language which in this case mediates between events and cannot always be precise and the same is the power that the authorities try to use in shaping the limits of their power and forming what is allowed in the territory of the ruler.

From the authors' issues, this edition aims to continue to voice the discourse between the people, the rulers, and the market. The social changes that occur when bias is confirmed because of the tug of war from the rulers' beneficial interests to maintain their power formation while the people continue to play within the distance and boundaries are surrounding them. While the market and the character inherent in the destiny of capital, it tries to make the best use of the opportunity to continue to create tension in the existing social system. Therefore, impossible for the people to have a voice without knowledge and strategies that can find loopholes from the tight practice of power.

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Dien Vidia Rosa  
Editor in Chief

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<sup>4</sup> Michel Foucault, *Discipline and punish: the birth of the prison* (New York: Vintage Books, 1995).

<sup>5</sup> M. Foucault, *Security, Territory, Population: Lectures at the College De France, 1977 - 78*, ed. oleh Arnold I. Davidson, Michel Foucault, *Lectures at the Collège de France* (Palgrave Macmillan UK, 2009), <https://doi.org/10.1057/9780230245075>.

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