

# The Hoax Phenomenon in Indonesian Society: Observing Anti-Diversity Memes since 2014

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## ABSTRACT

This article seeks to explain whether anti-diversity hoaxes that become viral on mass media disrupt the institutional memory of *kebhinekaan* (diversity) in Indonesian society. The spreading of hoaxes is a phenomenon of postmodern society, and thus this study uses a post-structural approach, in this case, using the theory of Slavoj Zizek. Memes used as data mostly deal with themes of nationality, ethnicity, and religion. The results of this study show that anti-diversity hoaxes are used for short-term purposes (power politics), so they do not intervene the institutional memory of Indonesian society and its belief in diversity.

**Keywords:** *hoax; social media; post structural theory; discourse; Indonesia society*

## INTRODUCTION

The conversation about hoaxes is not new, having already been questioned by MacDougall in 1958 (MacDougall, 1958). It is said that hoaxes have been studied as far back as the 17th century, and have been perpetrated in the fields of academia, science, religion, myth, humor, legend, and so on. In recent years, hoaxes have again stolen the attention of the international public. The international community has entered what is called the post-truth era, an era when we (and society in general) do not need to check (again) all the information scattered in public spaces, especially various types of news or information on the internet. It is an era when the public does not want to know whether the news or information that reaches them reflects the facts or is filled with misinformation (in other words, a hoax). We know that most people today get their information or news from the internet, and that access to the internet is becoming easier and cheaper.

The issue of hoaxes is also very problematic in Indonesia. There are several issues about how to identify news or information called "hoaxes". These include whether statements, expressions, and

information that are categorically "parole" can be called hoaxes, how hoaxes and hate speech can be differentiated, and whether hate speech can be a hoax. These issues need to be studied, to ensure that there is clarity about hoaxes, hate speech, and their various implications.

One type of misinformation spread rapidly in public spaces (especially on the internet) is information or news that questions the Indonesian people's memories of their nation, religions, ethnic groups, or history. Many such hoaxes have been accused of damaging and disturbing the institutional memory of the Indonesian people's unity. Hoaxes are considered to cause, and accused of causing, various conflicts, divisions, and even fights in various parts of Indonesia. The problem, now, is how to prove this allegation, or whether it itself is a hoax.

This study, thus, questions whether hoaxes interfere with Indonesians' institutional memory of their nation, religion, and ethnicity, or various other historical cultural memories. To answer these questions, this article is organized as follows: (1) the theoretical basis and method of this study; (2) the

understanding of hoax memes and their relationship to the character of cyberspace; (3) the history and memory of diversity among the Indonesian people; (4) the implications of the problem of identifying hoaxes and Indonesian institutional memory of diversity.

## THEORETICAL BASIS AND METHODOLOGY

Four theoretical concepts require explanation. First, a theoretical understanding of social media (especially online/internet culture) and its relationship to hoaxes. Second, post-structural theory as related to the development of social media technology. Third, the elements that form hoaxes. Fourth, the process through which hoaxes are contested and negotiated in public space (social media).

Internet technology, which is inherently cyber technology, has opened up a new space known as digital space; it is a virtual space, a false space. In cyber technology, all things can be presented. All types of representation (various forms of information) can be spread quickly and globally. In cyberspace, information spreaders (producers) can get in and out quickly, without rules to question their activities. Cyberspace users can likewise go in and out, either with a clear/official identity or fake identity. Indeed, although internet technology authorities can control the distribution of information on the internet, this control is used with consideration of the benefits (or lack thereof) for internet technology authorities.

Internet technology, also popularly known as social media, is characterized as discursive space. Of course, there is information that is not discursive. However, as they are using discursive space, social media users have the opportunity to post various types of information. In that context, the criteria for whether or not information is incorrect (a hoax) is not a problem; this is what is also called "post-truth". Persons with an interest in the information will pay attention, as shown by the number of "likes", "shares", and so on; this will draw further attention. Such attention is then included in the mechanisms of internet technology algorithms, which unite users with the same preferences, interests, or positions.

Post-structural theory, pioneered by Foucault, holds that individuals/subjects are shaped by discourse (Foucault, 1973; 1976). Thus, this theory is not based on the concept of structure. As discourse, individuals/subjects are constructed by different experiences, based on their respective local experiences. Post-structuralism rejects the idea of "universal truths"

(grand narratives), focusing instead on the conditions of the discourse that forms the subject. Post-structuralism does not reject logic/reason completely, but accommodates feelings, intuition, and even irrational things that are rejected by the modern order. Post-structural theory also defends the voices that are oppressed, marginalized, or buried. It also takes a decentralization approach, which directly affects that shaping and formulation of the postmodern world.

Consideration must be given to how social media posts, as text, work when appreciated or perceived by users. Posts that become viral can be interpreted in various ways and directions. Interpretation of posted codes can occur in a literal sense, without clarification, and these codes become discourses that constitute subjects (users). In this context, direction refers to the discourse moving towards "the Real" or "the Symbolic" (to borrow from Zizek). If discourse goes towards "the Real", then there are deconstructions and explications of something that is considered different (for example, the human body). However, if interpretation takes the direction towards "the Symbolic", then the process is one of establishing the structure. Different parties treating the text may create contention because of differences in ways and directions in interpreting and/or understanding text.

Methodologically, this study places hoaxes as texts and at the same time as discourses. The texts studied were chosen randomly, with consideration of viral texts. As texts, hoaxes consist of verbal and visual elements. In clarifying the existence of their verbal and visual elements, there are relationships between markers and signifiers, denotations and connotations, and symbolic things, which in this case refers to the theory developed by Barthes (Barthes, 1973 and 1976; see also Sunardi, 2003). Meanwhile, reading the elements that shape hoaxes also means examining the iconic, index, and symbolic elements (Peirce, 1977). To validate the data, three steps are followed: first, material is tested for textual data. Second, the source is checked, to see whether or not it comes from a trustworthy/official website. Third, information is confirmed directly with the authorities, in this case the Ministry of Communication and Information (*Menkominfo*).

Contestation, meanwhile, refers to anything that is contested by hoaxes. The structural order of modern society involves a contestation of ideologies, intended to monopolize truth. At the post-structural level, contestation is discourse. Ideologies emerge

from discourse, but not all discourses become ideologies. Meanwhile, negotiation refers to the implication of what happens after contestation, which may be reconciliation, conflict (violent or non-violent), or even the creation of new constructs.

### **VIRAL HOAXES: A CHARACTER OF CYBER SPACE**

Online space, cyberspace, or the *on* world, is a public (virtual) space, in which everyone—regardless of the background of ethnic, racial, religious, gender, age, education, economic, or political background—can participate equally. Theoretically, it has no established hierarchy or structure. Indeed, server owners can do things that interfere with freedom of participation, or exclude participants/force them to be non-active. However, free participation is always possible in this virtual public space. A user can arbitrarily be involved or not involved in virtual public space, using an official account, unofficial account, or an account under another name.

Based on observations, posts attract attention if, among other things, they relate to well-known public figures, sensitive issues (i.e. primordial/SARA issues), and human interests, including announcements considered important by the public. These posts, if they receive "like" or "share" responses, may quickly spread to thousands, hundreds of thousands, or millions of users and become viral. In the case of cyberspace, not all users have the same understandings. Their offline awareness still dominates them when dealing with this online space. It is also possible that online space cannot fully interrupt the offline consciousness. This happens because whatever is posted in cyberspace, there is a fact, history, language, or representation at the iconic, indicative, and symbolic level, which also exists in social reality. The difference is that the things being posted have gone through a certain ideological selection process (Eagleton, 1999).

As such, any statement that is realized or represented is not entirely true, but also not entirely false. As such, the boundary between what is real and what is virtual (representation) becomes blurred/unclear. In memes, this it must also be accompanied by additional explanation, as problems are introduced when some statements are ideological and others are not. The statement "President Jokowi is an egalitarian and democratic person", for example, is an ideological statement. Meanwhile, the sentence "There are eagles in your eyes" is not ideological. However, neither

sentence is necessarily true.

The question that has yet to be answered is why something categorized as a hoax can become viral. As mentioned, *first*, all posts that attract attention have the opportunity to become viral. *Second*, at first, users of cyberspace do not question the boundary between hoaxes, because in cyberspace this boundary is thin and obscure. *Third*, in this situation, many accounts, both official and fake, have an interest in multiplying posts by making them go viral. This is evidenced, for example, by the discovery of the Saracen group, which produced and spread memes and hoaxes (with 800,000 random accounts) to ensure other users were trapped in the "game". However, as will be explained later, not all viral hoaxes have an effect on institutional memory, as many hoaxes are addressed in a manner that anticipates disturbances to the institutional memory of diversity. This contestation relates to the direction in which hoaxes are interpreted and perceived by users (or by society in general).

### **THE INSTITUTIONAL MEMORY OF DIVERSITY (KEBHINEKAAN)**

The Indonesian archipelago (*Nusantara*) is home to various tribes, religions, races, and languages, with a diverse social and cultural geography. As such, individuals in Indonesian society have different experiences and memories, but share the same memory of certain historical events. According to this shared memory, based in historical fact, in 1928 the people of Indonesia made a joint decision to be united in a common imagined community, i.e. as an Indonesian nation. This concept of nation is not intended to eliminate or ignore differences. Rather, it is held that, since this joint decision was made, the Indonesian nation has united and included all different groups into its structure and shared memory. This has created an institutional memory, one that is shared among Indonesians.

The event known as the Youth Pledge agreed upon Indonesia as having one land, one nation, and one language, while recognizing diverse differences in religions, ethnicities, and races under the umbrella of the Indonesian people; this implied the dominance of the Indonesian language over the more than 470 regional languages spoken in the region. After Indonesia became independent, the "sacred agreement" of *bhineka tunggal ika* (unity in diversity) was reaffirmed by the determination of Pancasila as the state's fundamental ideology.

The national journey of the Indonesian people has involved a lengthy history of contestation, conflict, and negotiation. Historically, consolidation efforts have been made to subordinate, suppress, attack, or eliminate differences. This study does not seek to dwell too long on history, but it should note that incidents of conflict and violence in the name of religion have occurred several times in Indonesia. In addition, several groups have sought to "legitimize" the Indonesian people in the way they dress (see, for example, the polemics over the Pornography Law), to require respect for people who fast during the month of Ramadan, the necessity for leaders to be the same religion as their voters, and so on in an effort to eliminate the recognition of difference.

Various contestations, conflicts, and negotiations are particularly common when there is succession in leadership at all levels (i.e. elections), especially in the elections of regents/mayors, governors, and presidents. In these contests, all means are used to win. As communication technology has developed (especially Android and digital technology), the Indonesian people have used it to win these contests. In such a context, what we refer to as hoaxes play a very significant role. Obviously, the term hoax here refers to false/incorrect news or information. In such misinformation or fake news, of course, not all information is untrue, but certain elements do not reflect the social and historical reality or reflect the facts that are generally perceived as true and real.

It must be explained how difference and diversity are understood here. Humans are socially constructed in a manner that differentiates them based on ethnicity, religion, and language. Such constructions become a reality, viewed as being rooted in natural genetic differences, such as gender and skin color. However, in substance all persons are the same, consisting of body and soul. The space that accommodates these differences is called the nation space. In this case, the nation space is an imaginary space, a common space in which differences exist together. Inclusion therein must involve entering a symbolic space (*the Symbolic*), in which someone (a subject) is always demanded to be like another. The subject's ultimate goal is to become *the Other*, but it is never achieved because only emptiness lays behind *the Other*. *The Other* is the thinkable version of *the Real*, the latter being never known, being unthinkable, even as the subject tries to explain it continuously. The concept adopts the perspective first put forward by Slavoj Zizek (2008, 2009).

Looking at the development of Android and digital technology, which has become increasingly prevalent in this decade, this study has focused on the period following the 2014 presidential election. In the 2014 presidential election, in which the Indonesian people elected their next leader, there was a viral and massive mobilization of hoaxes. The impact of hoax information could be felt together, as there were concerns that these hoaxes could impact the experiences and institutional memories of Indonesia's diversity. This, in turn, was feared to result in various forms of conflict in the community.

## IDENTIFYING ANTI-DIVERSITY HOAXES

In simple terms, several practical rules can be used to identify hoaxes, as delineated by Hartley (2012). First, hoax information usually has the characteristics of chain letters, including sentences such as "Spread this to everyone you know, otherwise something unpleasant will happen." Second, hoax information usually does not include the date of the incident discussed, or other realistic or verifiable information, using statements such as "yesterday" or "issued by ..." that lack clarity. Third, hoax information usually does not include an expiration date, even though the presence of such a date would not prove anything. Fourth, no identifiable organization is cited as the source of the information, or an organization is identified that is usually not related to the information being shared. Anyone can say, "I heard it from someone who works at Microsoft" (or another well-known company). However, the shape, nature, format, and appearance of hoaxes have recently been far more sophisticated than what Hartley has formulated.

Figure 1. (Source: [facebook.com](https://facebook.com) by Kahfi212 posted at 15<sup>th</sup> Februari 2017 accessed at 15<sup>th</sup> October 2017)



Based on their content, hoaxes as misinformation cover various categories, including health, law, politics, economics, religion, ethnicity, race, and history. Almost all of these categories can be used to make lies intended to attack differences. This can be seen in the sentence "even when the chicken noodles are halal, when cooked with pig fat it is *haraam*", as seen in the figure 1.

The term infidels (*kaafir*) can be understood as meaning "non-Muslim", it can also be directed to certain races that are stereotyped as not Muslim. Muslims perceive pork as a forbidden food because, in their belief, certain elements of pork are not good for their health. This also relates, in certain aspects, to issues of law (*sharia*) for Muslims. This means three things are implied here: the position of Muslims is different from the position of non-Muslims, the position of Muslims is different from the position of the Chinese race, and Muslims have their own legal issues.

Certain elements of the sentence may be considered to not contain misinformation. However, the word *kaafir* has a pejorative meaning, and targets its accusation against a group of people that are not Muslim. The word conveys a pejorative hatred of difference, also seen in another example; "Jokowi is the slave of the *kaafir*". Although some Muslims do not believe this sentence to be true, it cannot entirely be considered a hoax either. However, the sentence is problematic because it does not recognize that the Indonesian nation is pluralistic in terms of race and religion. In this, the sentence exploits hatred.

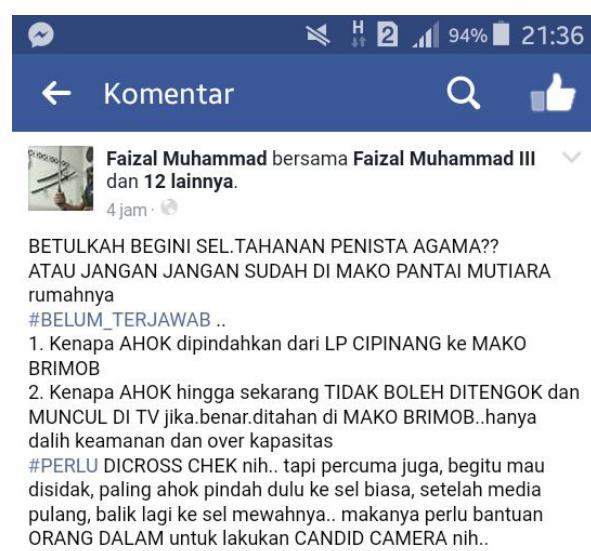
**Figure 2. (Source: facebook.com group PECINTA FPI, accessed at 10<sup>th</sup> July 2017, posted by Abisa Indriani from Rindu Baitullah group post at 9<sup>th</sup> July 2017 09.13 WIB.)**



There is another statement, "I pray that all those who say 'Amen' to this prayer, can go to the temple and make a pilgrimage to the tomb of the Prophet Muhammad, Amen". This statement is a hoax, because it does not match reality. However, the statement does not involve a differential positioning. In other words, not all hoaxes are oriented towards the institutional memory of diversity. See figure 2.

As already known, memes usually go viral on social media in the form of pictures and writing (visual-verbal memes), although some also take audio visual form. Hoaxes on iconic aspects, for example, may replace faces, backgrounds, and other objects that can directly refer to reality to suit their purpose. This type of deception happens quite often. Take, for example, the viral hoax that begins "Is this really a prison cell for a blasphemer? Or maybe he's moved to Mako Pantai Mutiara?"

**Figure 3. (Source: facebook.com, accessed at 18<sup>th</sup> May 2017, posted by Faizal Muhammad)**



The original photo used in the making of this hoax news is a photograph that depicts a police officer describing the capturing of drug users. The figure 4 is the photograph used in the creation of this meme.

Meanwhile, exchanges that are indicative (that exchange indirect markers) can be visual or verbal statements. Visually, for example, a hoax may depict a group of people facing each other while carrying clubs or weapons. This could also take the form of the

statement; "Two mass groups faced each other". The statement implies that they could perpetrate violence, but this might not happen.

As shown in the figure 6, the opposing masses are depicted as wearing different costume colors and accessories (turbans, skullcaps). These markers are symbolic markers. By convention, we know that groups are not acting in the name of religion, but in the name of nationalism, wear red or black clothes.

**Figure 4. ( Source: facebook.com accessed at 18<sup>th</sup> May 2017, posted by Faizal Muhammad)**



**Figure 5. (Source: http://dakwahislampage.blogspot.com/2017/01/waspada-islam-jadi-target-ulama.html accessed 29<sup>th</sup> September 2018)**



**Figure 6. (Source: Accessed from http://www.voa-islam.com/read/indonesiana/2017/01/17/48437/api-jabar-polisi-biarkan-masa-gmbi-serang-sa/ posted at 17<sup>th</sup> January 2017 19.31 WIB, accessed at 15<sup>th</sup> October 2017)**

Meanwhile, those who wear white, as well as a turban/skullcap, are perceived as acting in the name of their religion, as white (or green) are conventionally considered to represent religious groups. Indeed, in terms of clothing, as shown in the picture, not all are uniform. However, these colors are considered dominant in the groups being depicted.

The case of a viral post by Buni Yani, related to a speech by Basuki Tjahaja Purnama (best known as Ahok) at Pulau Seribu in 2015, shows the relationship of these markers and the three aspects of hoaxes. The iconic aspect is Ahok, while the independent aspect is that Buni Yani sought to attack and bring down Ahok, then the governor of Jakarta. The symbolic marker is the Quran, the holy book of Islam. In this post, symbolic construction brought the speech into ideological territory because there is a "sacred agreement" for Muslims about the Quran. This speech was edited by Buni Yani, and on August 30, 2017, he was found guilty of editing Ahok's statement to ensure it was misunderstood, especially in symbolic areas.

Not all hoaxes are interpreted and have implications for the separate recognition of differences. There are hoaxes intended as counter hoaxes, as seen in the figure 7.

Although some of this news is unclear in source and occurrence, if considered a hoax, it is more precisely a hoax intended to resist anti-diversity hoaxes. That is, not all hoaxes in Indonesia since 2014 have anti-diversity pretensions; some receive counter-hoaxes that seek to confirm and assert diversity.

It must be emphasized, *first*, that not all hoaxes intervene in the collective understanding and recognition of difference. Many observers have paid too much attention to anti-diversity hoaxes, especially those with contents that ideologically and symbolically disturb others' "beliefs and feelings", which are usually referred to as hate speech. Hate speech targets certain groups as being guilty, despicable, unbelieving, hypocritical, and dishonest, while other groups are positioned as right, pure, religious, sportsmanly, and honest. These groups are

**Figure 7. (Source: <http://www.tribunnews.com/2017/05/10/surat-yang-bikin-nangis-dan-viral-di-medsos-ini-ternyata-bukan-ditulis-oleh-ahok>, accessed at 15th October 2017)**



perceived as holding different positions, or otherwise differentiated, following a structural paradigm of the world (to borrow from Habermas [1987], the "world of life").

Such an understanding influences the formation of the modern world, the order of which is built on a coherent structure within itself. The modern world, which gave rise to modernism, is seen as promoting progress, individuality, rationality, and scientism. These ideas are embedded within and confirmed by the order of capitalism, which pretends to master its structure and monopolize the truth by holding on to something considered a universal truth (see also Bauman, 1991, or Harvey, 1998). Things in the structure that are incoherent are considered untrue and odd. Two possibilities may occur: the difference may be commodified to fit the structure, or it may be removed.

Second, in this context, it should be recognized that some hoaxes actually lead to and legitimize diversity. These hoaxes are contested against anti-diversity hoaxes, creating a situation in which hoaxes compete with hoaxes. Expressing opinions and forming perceptions occurs on both sides. There are differences between the groups seeking to defend their religion and those with a homogeneous affiliation. In the case of Indonesia, differences are mainly based on religion and race. Conflict can be open (horizontal conflict leading to violence), but can also be only hostile discourse on social media itself.

In the lead up to September 2017, the "explosion" of hoaxes (especially on social media) finally decreased slightly. There are several reasons for this decrease in hoax propagation. First, the government became increasingly strict in applying the rules of the game and various regulations relating to the use of social media. Social media users increasingly became subject to legal charges when seen as using the social media in a way that violates the rules. Several creators and disseminators of anti-diversity (hate) hoaxes have been arrested, and some have been imprisoned; this has had a panoptic effect on society. Second, social media users have experienced an increase in internet literacy and dissatisfaction with hoaxes, but simultaneously consolidated their awareness that hoaxes are an uncertain way to achieve their goals.

## HOAXES AND INSTITUTIONAL MEMORY

A post can only function as a hoax when it is not recognized as a hoax, no matter the content. If a post

is recognized as a hoax, it cannot operate as a hoax. There will be resistance towards hoaxes that are known as hoaxes, as social users do not believe them. The problem is, not all posts are given recognition as hoaxes; at times, social media users may identify a post as containing hoax information, but because of a secondary agenda they will pretend not to know this and immediately share the (mis)information. This is also what Zizek identifies as the appearance of cynical awareness, defined basically as continuing to do incorrect actions despite knowledge of their incorrectness.

This study, thus, assumes that most people who spread hoaxes do not know that the information is a hoax, or pretend not to know (cf. Zizek, 2009). This study thus questions what anti-diversity hoaxes target, and their potential for interacting with Indonesian institutional memories. In this case, there are short and long term considerations. In the case of elections, such as the election of regional leaders, hoaxes are intended as having short-term goals. In their space, people feel that they have an interest in the issues in which they are involved. Examples of hoaxes follow.

Figure 8. (Source: Facebook.com by Jonru Ginting, 21 November 2016, accessed at 15<sup>th</sup> October 2017)



Although hoaxes may fit different categories, with differences in discourses, these comparisons do not usually enter the symbolic area. For example, when comparing two characters, if one is a blasphemer then the other one is religious. Comparisons can also include other things; one being hard and arrogant

implies another is gentle and polite; one sacrificing the people implies another defends the people. Such hoaxes, thus, are intended as character assassination. Character assassination can use two approaches: psychological and ideological. Characterizing someone as hard, arrogant, foolish, or deviant are all psychological means of character assassination. Characterizing someone as blaspheming religion, displacing people, and sacrificing the common people, meanwhile, are all forms of ideological characters.

If such distinction enters the space of ideology, including religion, ethnicity, and race, it intervenes in symbolic space. In fact, there is a symbolic and "sacral" agreement shared among the Indonesian people, as formulated in the phrase *Bhinneka Tunggal Ika* ("unity in diversity"); this is accommodated in the symbolic space of the nation. Historically, socially, culturally, and politically, the Indonesian people have created a "sacred agreement" to not manipulate diversity or reject difference. As such, the problem lies not in what is *the Real* and what is *the Symbolic*, but in the structure of the world of knowledge, which holds that if the nation's space embodying *the Symbolic* is supported or upheld, there will be peace and brotherhood. Such a sacred convention, thus, must be fought for.

There are still problems with the information above. First, the existence of hoaxes presupposes the existence of one truth, both among anti-diversity parties and among people defending diversity. Anti-diversity parties seek a direction towards *the Real*, holding that humans are basically destined to be God's creatures, God's creations, with the same flesh, bones, skin, and blood, even with differences in skin color, religion, and ethnicity. Second, where anti-diversity hoaxes are considered wrong, who owns the truth? If the owner of truth is the one who recognizes the "sacred agreement" of diversity, that means the struggle to maintain this "sacred agreement" is the struggle to maintain an established structure. It is in this context that the structure of the modern world of knowledge functions.

The explanation shows that what has happened is Indonesian society is a modern world order, an order that recognizes a single truth. The modern order is an ambitious order intended to fully master the structure, to monopolize the truth, and compete for power. Those who challenge anti-diversity hoaxes, meanwhile, know that if the current national life is dismantled, not only will the structure collapse but anti-diversity parties will be destroyed. This group implicitly seeks to explain hoaxes as weapons against

diversity, not as supporting an anti-diversity in and of itself. However, in practice, these anti-diversity hoaxes are only used to "shake the power structure" through an electoral power struggle. Once the anti-difference party wins the electoral contestation, the symbolic structure will return as it was; indeed, this situation occurred in Indonesia in 2017.

More specifically, in the 2017 Jakarta gubernatorial election, the running mates of Anies Baswedan and Sandiaga Uno emerged victorious in the contestation. As with the 2014 presidential election, the 2017 Jakarta gubernatorial election saw a peak in hoax dissemination. Thematically, the most widely circulated hoaxes, aside from containing speech, provided specific information or solicitation; Muslims must have leaders who are Muslim, not non-Muslims. Indigenous people must be led by indigenous people, not by people of other races. This is seen, for example, in the following post:

**Picture 9.** (Source: <http://www.beritaharian303.com/2017/03/pilihlah-anies-dijamin-masuk-surga.html> posted at 15<sup>th</sup> March 2017, accessed at 21st March 2017)



This study does not pretend to prove that Anies and Sandiaga's victory was due to the massive support of hoaxes. After the gubernatorial election was finished, the situation went "back to normal", and community members returned to their respective routines. Of course, there would always be dissatisfaction, because some parties would lose and others would win. Based on the above explanation, it can be seen that anti-diversity hoaxes were not intended to attack or intervene in the "sacred agreement" of diversity, but

rather as a strategy to achieve electoral victory and gain power. The discourse of anti-diversity hoaxes only changed the positions of power or the people in power, but did not change the underlying structure.

This is one reason why some experts continue to hold onto the structure of modernism (like Habermas, for example) and do not believe that a post-structural order has been built, which is the paradigm of the postmodern world. Indeed, in theory, internet technology and cyberspace require and demand a post-structural reading. However, the Indonesian case shows that the public has read modern postmodern phenomena. It is proven that, every time there is a breakdown with broad implications, not only political, but also social, economic and cultural, these do not change the structure; the only changes are to the positions of power and the persons who hold them.

It should be explained that, in everyday life, people do not only consume hoaxes. They also consume various non-hoax news stories and experience various empirical events. These non-hoaxes still balance out the hoaxes. Although the level of public literacy on the internet and cyberspace is uneven, gradually communities are becoming more aware and can thus resolve issues themselves, without hoaxes interfering with symbolic "sacred agreements". The panoptic effect implemented by the state also plays an important role in the process for creating resistance against hoaxes. In the case of the victory of Anies/Sandi, anti-diversity hoaxes present nothing to worry about, as they do not target the symbolic "holy agreement", but are used to seize power.

## CONCLUSION

As a phenomenon, hoaxes need to be understood and placed in the frame of postmodern society. Understanding and placing hoaxes in accordance with their character means recognizing them as a symptom of postmodernity in modern structures. The meme phenomenon, including information and hoaxes, are not monopolized by anti-diversity hoaxes; memes on diversity also provide a form of resistance. In their contestation, communities show their alignments. Various means of regulating and supervising the internet have helped create a panoptic effect, thereby increasing user awareness of the need for care when spreading misinformation or hoaxes. In this study's perspective, it can be concluded that hoaxes do not interfere with the institutional memory of the "sacred agreement" (*the symbolic*) regarding the diversity of

the nation, but are only used for contemporary power struggles. Although power struggles can cause the positions of people in power to change, nothing is changed in the established modern structure.

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