A recent series of elections in Cambodia, Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand, the Philippines and indeed across Asia has highlighted the salience of digital media in political campaigns and insidious modes of electoral manipulation. This two-day workshop aims to gather evidence into the operations and impact of digital disinformation in the context of recent Asian elections.

The conference approaches Asia as a site in which disinformation in various digital and analog forms have not only deep local histories but also radical acceleration and innovation the likes of which have little to no precedent in advanced liberal democracies in the West. Many Asian countries lead in both scale and intensity of technological adoption and use while serving as “laboratories” for testing and experimentation by Big Tech firms, with minimal oversight and accountability to the potentially grave consequences of algorithmic tweaks, the dispersed labor of content moderation, and new platform rollouts. Thus we seek to develop a framework that examines the social and political ramifications of this process beyond the region.

The two-day event aims for interdisciplinary and collaborative approaches to thinking through issues of disinformation that draw from areas of sociology, politics, media and communication studies, journalism studies, critical legal studies, information science, and anthropology.

Venue: World Room, Pulitzer Hall, Graduate School of Journalism, Columbia University

Oct. 3

4 PM. PLENARY PANEL – Asian Histories and Architectures of Political Disinformation

*Extreme Speech in Election Times: Innovation and Shirking in India’s Disinformation Complex*
Sahana Udupa

*Disinformation, Moral Panic, and Legislative Opportunism*
Cherian George

*Investigating Inauthentic Behavior in Elections: Regional Patterns, Institutional Collaborations, and Methodological Reflections*
Camille Francois

Moderator: Sheila Coronel
9 AM. Registration
9.10 AM. Opening remarks

9:30 AM. PANEL 1 – Digital Armies and Organized Violence

Drivers of Election Disinformation in Indonesia and Malaysia
Ross Tapsell

Rumors to Rampage: When Does Misinformation on Social Media Lead to Mob Violence in Indonesian Elections
Ihsan Ali-Fauzi, Moh. Irsyad Rafsadie, Dyah Ayu Kartika

Moderator: Margaret Scott

10.45 AM. PANEL 2 – State-Sponsored Propaganda and Its Digital Artilleries

Digital Contestation and Thailand’s 2019 Elections
Duncan McCargo

“Facebook Broke Democracy”: Repairing the Public Sphere in Philippine and Indonesian Elections
Mary McCoy

When “Digital Mercenaries” Fight the War of Misinformation: Where Governance, Propaganda, and Fake News Collide
Chiaoning Su

Moderator: Jonathan Corpus Ong

1 PM. PANEL 3 – Influencer Operations and Networked Disinformation

Who Influences What in the Political Marketing Industry in Indonesia
Indah S. Pratidina

Dynamic Network Analysis of (Dis)information Communities on Twitter: Bots, Trolls, and News Agencies in the Philippine and Indonesian Elections
Joshua Uyheng and Kathleen Carley

Moderator: Duncan McCargo

2.15 PM. PANEL 4 – Securing Election Integrity

Securing Elections in the Age of Disinformation: Online Threats and A Digital Campaign Index for East and Southeast Asia
Netina Tan

Towards a Process Regulation Framework for Social Media in Elections: Disinformation Innovations and Interventions in the 2019 Philippine Election
Jonathan Corpus Ong with Ross Tapsell

Moderator: Sheila Coronel

3.15 PM. Discussion and Planning Ahead