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COVID19 and Redefining Human Security

Edited by Nergis Canefe

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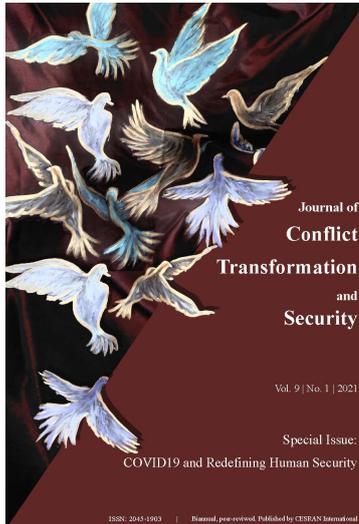
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INDEXING & ABSTRACTING



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The Journal of Conflict Transformation and Security (JCTS) provides a platform to analyse conflict transformation and security as processes for managing change in non-violent ways to produce equitable outcomes for all parties that are sustainable. A wide range of human security concerns can be tackled by both hard and soft measures, therefore the Journal's scope not only covers such security sector reform issues as restructuring security apparatus, reintegration of ex-combatants, clearance of explosive remnants of war and cross-border management, but also the protection of human rights, justice, rule of law and governance. JCTS explores the view that by addressing conflict transformation and security holistically it is possible to achieve a high level of stability and human security, requiring interventions at both policy and practitioner level. These would include conflict management, negotiated peace agreements, peacekeeping, physical reconstruction, economic recovery, psycho-social support, rebuilding of primary services such as education and health, and enabling social cohesion. Other macro-level governance issues from constitution writing to state accountability and human resource management also need to be considered as part of this process of change.

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Editor's Introduction to the Special Issue on COVID 19 and Redefining Human Security

Nergis Canefe - Co-editor

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a vast array of social, economic and legal implications, necessitating us to critically revisit the notion of human security. In addition to political and civil rights such as liberty and privacy being curtailed in relation to public health measures, social, economic and legal responses to the pandemic continue to have a far greater impact upon populations who are marginalized, who are on the move, as well as displaced communities and refugees, in radically unequal ways. The dimensions of specific populations' subjectification to unequal measures are related to their nationality, legal status, race, gender, disability, vulnerability and social class. In particular, interventions and resort to extreme measures cause further hardship in the plight of temporary and migrant workers, asylum seekers, internally displaced peoples under COVID-19 governance regimes.

In order to deepen the public understanding of the socio-political and economic dimensions of the current crisis related to the COVID 19 Pandemic in a global context, this special issue of JCTS addresses:

- Global differences in public access to healthcare;
- The situation in conflict zones, refugee camps, border areas, marginalized communities concerning the differential effects of the Pandemic;
- Exclusion of vulnerable communities, non-status peoples, minorities and precarious labour from the networks of protection put in place in relation to the Pandemic;
- Comparative analyses of social justice issues associated with COVID 19;
- Global forms of precarity that this Pandemic makes more visible;
- Regional and national effects of health care cuts or insufficient access to publicly funded medicine;
- Long-term implications of the Pandemic on our perception of human security.

The special issue includes three full articles, a commentary, and a lengthy interview. The proliferation of narratives on COVID 19 measures makes it much harder to make sense of the prevailing cacophony and to engage in critical reflections to such an unstable landscape of policy, politics and law, as pointed out by our authors. As an alternative to this chaotic and panic-ridden environment, the authors contributing to our special issue discuss how they see COVID affecting specific communities in relation to the larger society as well as developments in their area/region of research in relation to the global context. The contributions as a whole also identify potential transformative outcomes arising from the Pandemic, and share with us the ongoing work required to build those outcomes. As such, we invite our readers to think above and beyond the politics of exigency that continues to silence critical debate on uses and abuses of power in the name of redefining human security under pandemic conditions as part of the global response to COVID 19.

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COVID-19, Resistance, and Exclusion: Experiencing “Local Lockdowns” and Interpreting The Signposts of “Local Lockdowns” in Yogyakarta, Indonesia

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ABSTRACT

This paper looks at the experience of grassroots “local lockdown” in response to the COVID-19 pandemic in Yogyakarta, Indonesia. We ethnographically describe our experiences of a “local lockdown” and analyze the street signposts that accompanied the closure of roads and entrances into neighbourhoods. We argue that “local lockdowns” were a form of resistance to the belated response of the provincial and national government to the pandemic. The reading of the signposts shows that there was a tendency to exclude outsiders, which then gave way to comforting and caring messages that aimed to sustain the community resilience.

Keywords: COVID-19, local lockdown, signposts, Yogyakarta

Biographical Note: Masha Kardashevskaya is a PhD Candidate at the Department of Peace and Conflict Studies, University of Manitoba. Her research interests are inspired by her passion and curiosity about social movements, nonviolent social change, and the often-neglected roles of women in these. Since graduating with her MA, she has worked in various parts of South-East Asia focusing on protection of human rights defenders, peace education, women’s and indigenous peoples’ issues using both advocacy and popular education approaches. These experiences led to the development of her PhD research project that is focused on the role of women in social movements, environmental and indigenous politics, and nonviolence.

Introduction

COVID-19 presents a new social context globally due to the unprecedented experience of a global pandemic of this scale. As COVID-19 spread throughout the world, governments responded in various ways, some have implemented total lockdown, others have implemented the so-called partial lockdown. In Yogyakarta, due to the low number of cases reported, as well as the fear of an economic crisis (because its economy heavily depends upon domestic and international tourism), the city did not implement a total lockdown. However, the local neighborhoods implemented their own “local lockdowns”. Hand-written signposts accompanied these lockdowns carrying messages of care, humour, or threat. Most importantly, however, they indicated that only insiders are allowed to be within the neighborhood and outsiders are not welcome.

In this article we discuss the local lockdowns and the accompanying signposts in Yogyakarta. We use a mix of methodologies: newspaper articles review, ethnographic method of participant observation, photo documentation, and thematic analysis of the signposts. We have visually documented the local lockdown signposts and completed this stock with the open-access images we found in the media: online newspapers and social media, such as Instagram and Facebook.

We suggest that the local lockdowns were a form of resistance by the local communities towards the lack of a harsher implementation of a national/city-wide lockdown to prevent the spread of COVID-19 and limit the exposure of the residents of Yogyakarta. We do not know what the epidemiological implications are of these local lockdowns are to limit the spread of COVID-19, however, it increased the awareness of the local residents about the seriousness of the pandemic, limited human interaction at the local level, increased and encouraged the development of new habits, such as washing hands and wearing masks, and finally, it protected communities from violence and the rise of crime.

The reading of the signposts illustrated the diversity of thoughts and feelings that Yogyakarta residents experienced. These signposts articulated the love and care towards

family and the community, others included messages of hope that life will be back to normal when the pandemic is over. Some residents refused rent-seekers and debt collectors citing economic difficulties. Often, the messages were addressed towards women by men, suggesting that the owner of the public space is male. Some messages were addressed to other men in a friendly, unobjectifying manner. One of the dominant messages was the exclusion of outsiders who are seen as a threat to one’s home, and the residents’ view of their homes as a safe heaven. In a well-known tourist and student city, the *kampung* residents in Yogyakarta had to reframe and reformulate for themselves who belongs and who does not. The presence of the potential to exclude means that this tendency needs to be considered and addressed constructively and creatively as the residents of Yogyakarta learn to live in a post-COVID-19 world.

COVID-19: social exclusion, conflicts, and resistance

In this article we see the reaction of Yogyakarta residents to COVID-19 as representing a potential for resistance to the vertical and horizontal powers of the local government, and the inclination to exclude those whom they may consider as “others”. Health-related issues are one of the reasons for social exclusion. Within the context of COVID-19, there were several cases of discrimination and exclusion of Chinese and Asians throughout the world. In China itself, the residents of Hubei province were excluded and discriminated against (He et al 2020). In Japan and in Indonesia,¹ health workers experienced social exclusion due to their exposure to COVID-19 at the hospital (Honda 2020).

Social exclusion can often lead to social conflicts. In several parts of Indonesia, there were several vertical and horizontal conflicts due to COVID-19. One example is a conflict between street hawkers and security forces due to the enforcement of physical and social distancing (PSBB). Another example is a

¹ WE Online. “Dokter Sebut Sejumlah Perawat Dilarang Pulang karena Berpotensi Tularkan Corona.” *Warta Ekonomi*. March 25, 2020. Accessed July 15, 2020. <https://www.wartaekonomi.co.id/read277960/dokter-sebut-sejumlah-perawat-dilarang-pulang-karena-berpotensi-tularkan-corona>.

conflict between residents near a cemetery who refused the burial of COVID-19 victims in the neighbouring cemetery (Ansori 2020). The finance Minister Sri Mulyani estimates that there will be 5.2 million people unemployed and 3.78 million “new poor people” in Indonesia (Satya 2020). Satya (2020) argues that this rise of the “new poor people” may exacerbate the potential for social conflict due to the lack of the national preparedness for a pandemic of this scale and the lack of a “social net” for the vulnerable.

Resistance is often a conscious or unconscious response to power-over.² The continuum of resistance ranges from the hidden, unaware and unorganized “weapons of the weak” and “counter discourses”³ to rightful resistance, and nonviolent resistance that involves direct action, protests, and various other overt nonviolent campaigns to achieve an objective (Mittelman and Chin 2000; O’Brien and Li 2006; Scott 1985, 1990; Sharp 2005). More recently, within Peace and Conflict Studies, the question of culture and its role in conflict, violence, and peacebuilding are studied more extensively. Following Avruch and Black (2001), we see culture in the context of a conflict, “a prism through which conflict is perceived”. Violence as well as peace is also a complex, historical and a cultural phenomenon that can be understood and practiced in many ways (Roy, Burdick and Kriesberg 2010) (Dietrich and Sutzl 1997; Mac Ginty and Firchow 2016). We hypothesize that resistance is also a cultural phenomenon.⁴ Looking at conflict, peace and resistance through a cultural lens, we argue that “local lockdowns” in Yogyakarta during COVID-19 can be interpreted as a *resistance* against the inability of the Government of Yogyakarta to prevent

the spread of COVID-19 in anticipation of *Idul Fitri* (Eid al-Fitr)⁵.

The majority ethnic group in the city of Yogyakarta is the Javanese. Yogyakarta is a sultanate (*Kesultanan Ngayogyakarta Hadiningrat*) and is a territory known as the Special Region of Yogyakarta, where the head of the government is a lifetime position, The governor is the Sultan of Yogyakarta, Hamengkubowono X (HB X). Suseno (1988) explains that the Javanese adhere to an ethical system termed “ethics of harmony.” This means that the Javanese place harmony with others, nature, the supernatural and the self as the utmost importance for one’s being. This involves avoiding open conflicts, respecting others according to their social standing and not expressing one’s emotions openly. At the same time, however, the Javanese also have a sense of collective and individual justice and dignity. Social conflicts take place, although are often hidden (Ariani, 2006). Therefore, resistance is also more likely to be a hidden form of resistance rather than an open conflict. Although within the context of Yogyakarta there are cases of direct action, such as the case of the Kulon Progo farmers, who resisted the land grabbing for iron sand mining and for a new Yogyakarta international airport.⁶⁷ There are some traditional forms of protest that Yogyakartaans resort to within the context of vertical conflict, such as “*topo pepe*” – sitting down cross-legged in front of the *Kraton* (the Sultan palace).⁸ In the case of COVID-19, the

² Power can be understood both in negative and positive sense. In a negative sense power can turn into domination and oppression (“power-over”). In a positive sense, power can be shared (“power to” and “power with”) (Taylor and Beinstein Miller 1994, 1-17).

³ Power can be seen in our discourse and it can also resisted in our discourse: “discourse transmits and produces power; it reinforces it, but also undermines and exposes it, renders it fragile and makes it possible to thwart it” (Foucault 1978, 101).

⁴ See Chabot and Vinthagen 2015 for a discussion on decolonization of resistance studies.

⁵ The highest migration flow in Indonesia is during the Ramadhan and a week after Eid. This migration rite is called *mudik - pemudik* (internal migrants) go back to their homeland (*kampung*) to celebrate the holy day with their families.

⁶ Yunas, Muhammad Gustirha. “Aksi Ribuan Petani Tolak Penambangan Pasir Besi di Kulon Progo.” *Liputan6.com*, April 1, 2019. Accessed on June 20, 2020.

<https://www.liputan6.com/news/read/3930755/aksi-ribuan-petani-tolak-penambangan-pasir-besi-di-kulon-progo>.

⁷ Suryana, Wahyu. “Gelombang Penolakan Bandara Kulon Progo Masih Bermunculan.” *Republika*. March 29, 2019. Accessed on June 20, 2020.

<https://nasional.republika.co.id/berita/nasional/daerah/pp3wpj459/gelombang-penolakan-bandara-kulon-progo-masih-bermunculan>.

⁸ Kusuma, Wijaya Kusuma. “Lapak Akan Digusur, 5 PKL Aksi “Topo Pepe” Di Depan Keraton Yogyakarta.” *Kompas*. November 11, 2019. Accessed on July 20, 2020. <https://regional.kompas.com/read/2019/11/11/220417>

belated and inappropriate response of the national and the local governments, Yogyakartaans chose to act and implement their own lockdowns independently. We see this as a form of resistance.

Looking at “local lockdowns” in Yogyakarta

The first cases of “unknown pneumonia” were reported on 31 December, 2020 by the Chinese government to the World Health Organization (WHO).⁹ This was followed by a local lockdown of Wuhan city in Hubei province of China starting from 23 January, 2020. The lockdown lasted for 76 days.¹⁰ The Wuhan-style total lockdown, to contain the “virus” now known as COVID-19, was adopted and implemented in different parts of the world, such as France and Italy. Partial lockdowns were implemented in several Asian countries, such as Malaysia and the Philippines.¹¹

Despite one of the major industries being tourism and the abundance of tourists from already COVID-affected countries, the first coronavirus cases in Indonesia were reported on 2 March 2020 in Depok area of Jakarta¹². As of 31 July 2020, there were 108,376 cases and 5,131 deaths. All of the provinces of Indonesia were affected by the novel coronavirus.¹³ In Yogyakarta, the first case was reported on 14

March 2020.¹⁴ As of 31 July, 2020, there were 610 confirmed cases of coronavirus in Yogyakarta.¹⁵ The cases have been rising since the residents opened up their neighbourhoods.

Government of Indonesia’s (GoI) response to COVID-19 pandemic was confusing and belated. It refused to implement a nation-wide or city-specific total or partial “lockdown” and instead, on 16 March 2020, advised Indonesians to “stay at home” and, for those who can, “work from home” (WFH)¹⁶. Later, responding to pressures from lower-level officials (mayors), the GoI suggested locally implementing a large-scale social distancing policy called PSBB (*Pembatasan Sosial Berskala Besar*) which is like a partial lockdown. Thus, in mid-April, cities, including Jakarta, applied PSBB practices. PSBB, in practical terms meant that schools, work and praying were all done from home, and no public gatherings were allowed, however, markets, shops, drugstores, banks, and other essential services remained open.¹⁷ Before the PSBB, several towns started implementing their own local lockdowns at the end of March. One of the first cities was the Central Javanese town of Tegal¹⁸.

In Yogyakarta, despite the rising levels of COVID-positive patients, the local government refused to implement the policy of PSBB arguing that one, it would destroy the economy

51/lapak-akan-digusur-5-pkl-aksi-topo-pepe-di-depan-keraton-yogyakarta?page=all#page5.

⁹ WHO. “Archived: WHO Timeline – COVID-19.” April 27, 2020. Accessed on June 20, 2020.

<https://www.who.int/news-room/detail/27-04-2020-who-timeline---covid-19>.

¹⁰ BBC. “Virus Corona: ‘Lockdown’ di Wuhan berakhir, warga bisa keluar kota pertama kali sejak Januari.” April 8, 2020. Accessed on June 20, 2020.

<https://www.bbc.com/indonesia/dunia-52209927>.

¹¹ Fachriansyah, Rizqi and Gemma Holliani Cahya. “Covid-19: Does Indonesia need a Lockdown? It depends on how you define it.” The Jakarta Post. March 19, 2020. Accessed on June 20, 2020.

<https://www.thejakartapost.com/news/2020/03/19/covid-19-does-indonesia-need-a-lockdown-it-depends-on-how-you-define-it.html>.

¹² Massola, James. “WHO concerned Indonesia appears to be coronavirus free.” The Sydney Morning Herald. February 5, 2020. Accessed on June 21, 2020.

<https://www.smh.com.au/world/asia/who-concerned-indonesia-appears-to-be-coronavirus-free-20200205-p53xjz.html>.

¹³ The Jakarta Post. “Indonesia’s latest official COVID-19 figures.” The Jakarta Post. July 31, 2020. Accessed July 31, 2020.

<https://www.thejakartapost.com/news/2020/03/23/indonesias-latest-covid-19-figures.html>.

¹⁴ Wijana, Eleonora Padmasta Ekaristi. “Balita di Jogja Positif Corona”. Suarajogja. March 15, 2020. Accessed June 21, 2020.

<https://jogja.suara.com/read/2020/03/15/140216/balita-a-di-jogja-positif-corona>.

¹⁵ Tribun Jogja. “Peta Sebaran 23 Kasus Baru COVID-19 di DIY: Kota Yogyakarta, Bantul, Sleman, Gunungkidul, Kulonprogo.” Tribun Jogja. July 31, 2020. Accessed July 31, 2020.

<https://jogja.tribunnews.com/2020/07/31/peta-sebaran-23-kasus-baru-covid-19-di-diy-kota-yogyakarta-bantul-sleman-gunungkidul-kulonprogo>.

¹⁶ Cahya, Gemma Holliani. “Stay home, President says.” The Jakarta Post. March 16, 2020. Accessed on June 21, 2020.

<https://www.thejakartapost.com/news/2020/03/16/stay-home-president-says.html>.

¹⁷ Debora, Yantina. “Update Corona Indonesia: Daftar 20 Wilayah yang Terapkan PSBB.” Tirto. April 21, 2020.

Accessed June 21, 2020. <https://tirto.id/update-corona-indonesia-daftar-20-wilayah-yang-terapkan-psbb-ePVK>.

¹⁸ Toher, Adrian Pratama. “Alasan Pemkot Tegal Terapkan Local Lockdown Darurat Covid-19.” Tirto. March 27, 2020. Accessed July 10, 2020.

<https://www.google.com/amp/s/amp.tirto.id/alasan-pemkot-tegal-terapkan-local-lockdown-darurat-covid-19-eH3M>.

of the city;¹⁹ two, that a strict policy of lockdown would not be beneficial and that its up to citizens themselves need to be aware and disciplined, control their own communities to make sure no outsiders come into their families and communities;²⁰ three, there was no evidence of community transmission nor an escalation of cases.²¹ The Governor announced “*tanggap darurat*” (an emergency response) on 20 March, 2020.²² “*Tanggap darurat*” is different from PSBB. PSBB is more restrictive of movement, allowing only for essential services to remain open, whereas “*tanggap darurat*” allows for all the shops, cinemas, amusement parks, tourism destinations and services to remain open but with minimal restrictions, such as, they are required to follow the health and sanitation protocol and social distancing measures with a visitor number limitation.

Despite the refusal of the local government to implement PSBB, neighbourhoods (*kampung*) in Yogyakarta started to enforce their local lockdowns. The local government refused these by suggesting that the communities in Yogyakarta needed to “calm down,” not “lockdown”.²³ Local lockdowns seem to have been initiated by the communities at the

RT/RW level (neighbourhood/community), whereas the government officials, including *lurah* (head of the urban village) and *camat* (head of the sub-district), refused this initiative.²⁴ Thus, local lockdowns in Yogyakarta were the bottom-level initiatives and were in opposition to the official policy of the provincial government.

In our *kampung*, for example, since the end of March, the villagers closed all the smaller roads leading into the village, except for the main road where they installed a small checkpoint made from bamboo, to monitor those who leave and visit the village. They also made a daily schedule of those who will guard the checkpoint *ronda* (community-based security night patrol). These guards were mostly men. Women were involved only when the men went to mosque for *Jumatan* (Friday prayer for Muslims).²⁵ The villagers brought snacks and coffee or tea to support these guarding teams. They installed a tank with running water for washing hands, set-up tables for snacks, hot drinks and disinfectants. One of the nearby houses installed a water dispenser to provide drinking water to the guards. The guards sometimes wore masks and sometimes did not. With time, this checkpoint post became the neighbourhood hangout place. The guards worked from early morning until late evening. At nighttime the gate closed, and no one could come in or go out.

Residents were required to open their car windows, disinfect their hands and the handles of their cars upon returning from outside. Those who rode motorbikes or scooters also stopped to make sure the guards recognized them as residents of the neighbourhood and disinfected their hands and handles. When an outsider came to the village, they inquired about who they were visiting and why, making visitors feel uneasy and uncomfortable entering the village. With time, due to these practices, many residents changed their

¹⁹ Wicaksono, Pribadi. “Sultan HB X: Kalau Yogya Lockdown, Ekonominya Hancur Nggak?”. *Tempo*. March 15, 2020. Accessed June 20, 2020.

<https://nasional.tempo.co/read/1319901/sultan-hb-x-kalau-yogya-lockdown-ekonominya-hancur-nggak/full&view=ok>.

²⁰ Priatmojo, Galih. “Sri Sultan Bakal Ambil Opsi PSBB untuk DIY, Ini Pertimbangannya.” *Suara Jogja*. May 15, 2020. Accessed June 21, 2020.

<https://jogja.suara.com/read/2020/05/15/163714/sri-sultan-bakal-ambil-opsi-psbb-untuk-diy-ini-pertimbangannya>.

²¹ Pertana, Pradito Rida. “Sultan HB X: Belum Waktunya Yogya Terapkan PSBB.” *Detik News*. April 15, 2020. Accessed June 21, 2020. <https://news.detik.com/berita-jawa-tengah/d-4969697/sultan-hb-x-belum-waktunya-yogya-terapkan-psbb>.

²² Hidayah, Kurniatul. “Sri Sultan HB X Tetapkan Status Tanggap Darurat Bencana Covid-19 di DIY, Ini Pertimbangannya.” *Tribun Jogja*. March 20, 2020. Accessed 21 June 2020. <https://jogja.tribunnews.com/2020/03/20/sri-sultan-hb-x-tetapkan-status-tanggap-darurat-bencana-covid-19-di-diy-ini-pertimbangannya>.

²³ Setiawan, Silvy Dian. “Sultan: Yogyakarta Belum Lockdown, Tapi Calmdown.” *Republika*. March 23, 2020. Accessed 20 June 2020. <https://republika.co.id/berita/q7muix377/sultan-yogyakarta-belum-lockdown-tapi-calmdown>.

²⁴ Pertana, Pradito Rida. “Ramai Soal Kampung di Kota Yogya ‘Lockdown’, Ini Kata Wawalkot.” *Detik News*. March 29, 2020. Accessed June 21, 2020.

<https://news.detik.com/berita-jawa-tengah/d-4957467/ramai-soal-kampung-di-kota-yogya-lockdown-ini-kata-wawalkot/2>.

²⁵ In our neighbourhood of Sanggrahan, villagers did not attend the mosque, while in the neighbouring *kampung*, men went to the mosque on Fridays.

shopping habits and relied more heavily on the local shop rather than on the market or the bigger grocery store. This local shop provided running water and soap for washing hands. Additionally, our neighbouring organic farmer's shop started to sell vegetables twice a week. People felt increasingly more uneasy traveling outside of their neighbourhoods to avoid going through the checkpoint. The checkpoint also made it easier for residents to refuse outside visitors. For example, in our experience, there were several instances when friends wanted to visit but we explained that our local neighbourhood was under a lockdown and, therefore, they could not visit. In a culture where it is hard to refuse a request from a friend, this provided a good excuse to ensure social and physical distancing practices.

The function of the checkpoint with time, took on additional purposes. In the beginning, the checkpoint was intended to limit human interaction and ensure social distancing practices. By mid-April, with many people losing their jobs, and the release of prisoners as prisons were a hot bed for spreading the virus, people feared there would be a rise of crime rates²⁶ therefore the checkpoint evolved to provide multiple facets of protection to the community. Towards the end of April, with the celebrations of *Idul Fitri* nearing and no discernable rise in criminality, the checkpoint returned to primarily focusing on ensuring social distancing practices.

The local lockdown in our village lasted from 20 March until the beginning of June. The Ramadhan month started on 23 April and lasted until 23 May 2020. Throughout the *Idul Fitri*, our neighbourhood was totally closed, nobody was allowed to leave the village except for farmers who work in their fields. We understood that this was the consensus of friends and families to ensure social distancing practices. *Idul Fitri* celebrations are major in Indonesia where traditionally family and friends visit and hold an Open House. Two weeks after *Idul Fitri* the checkpoint was dismantled and the signposts were removed.

²⁶ Sunartono. "Antisipasi Peningkatan Kriminal, PP DIY Siap Ikut Jaga Keamanan." *Harian Jogja*. April 25, 2020. Accessed June 21, 2020. <https://jogjapolitan.harianjogja.com/read/2020/04/25/510/1037693/antisipasi-peningkatan-kriminal-pp-diy-siap-ikut-jaga-keamanan>.

Thus, one may posit that the local lockdowns implemented by the neighbourhoods in Yogyakarta were initiated in resistance to the inaction of the provincial and national authorities. Locally, the lockdowns raised awareness to the residents of the seriousness of the pandemic, and served as a mechanism to limit human interaction. Which in turn, encouraged the development of new habits, such as washing hands and wearing masks. In Yogyakarta, the lockdowns were also in anticipation of the homecoming of the internal migrants (*pemudik*), who had been laid-off or were away visiting their families for the *Idul Fitri* celebrations.

Reading signposts

As we got used to this situation of a local lockdown, we decided to drive around the city to see whether there were other neighbourhoods that implemented their own lockdowns. We saw that many areas in Sleman and Bantul of Yogyakarta had done so. The roads were not only blocked with a gate made of bamboo and aluminum but were usually accompanied by texts (often hand-written), sometimes with visuals. We started to pay attention to these texts, became interested in the types of stories the messages tell, and documented them using our camera. Thus, we had 30 of our own photographic documentation of these signposts in the city, Bantul and Sleman regions of Yogyakarta and scanned 30 additional photographs we collected from the mass media and social media, such as Facebook and Instagram. We analyzed them thematically. The analysis of the signposts shows that there were several dominant messages that were conveyed by the villagers.

The majority of the documented signposts expressed the exclusion of outsiders. The outsiders were the online motorcycle taxi drivers, who were asked to stop at the checkpoint and not go into the village. Guests were asked not to come into the neighbourhood and those who must, such as the *pemudik*, were asked to report to the local authorities and isolate themselves for 14 days before interacting with the villagers. "*Bank plecit*"²⁷ or rent-seekers and debt collectors

²⁷ There are two kinds of rent-seekers in Yogyakarta: the first is those who lend cash to the villagers and the second

were asked to not come into the villages. This was communicated heavily in many signposts we have documented and conveyed a threatening message that if they were stubborn (*ngeyel*) and still came into the village to seek their rents, there would be repercussions. The smaller roads were blocked to make sure no outsiders used the village road as a shortcut and the signposts communicated that the villagers owned the roads. Some of the public spots were also closed, for example, one of the signposts communicated that the small lake used for fishing²⁸ was closed. Some of the other signposts specifically addressed the rituals that Indonesians perform during *Idul Fitri* celebrations, such as visiting one’s family members in the cemetery and hosting an open house for relatives and friends during the Holy Month. Outsiders were also excluded from popular destinations. For example, one of the signposts installed at the main entrance to the Tembi tourist village, read “we don’t care who you are, Tembi people just want to be healthy.”



Photo 1: A blocked road with a signpost reading: “There is PSBL (local lockdown). Guests from outsider are to report to the neighbourhood head.”



Photo 2: Signposts on the side road: “Stay at home, COVID-19 is cruel, just like ex.”



Photo 3: A blocked road with a signpost reading: Lockdown. Rent-seekers... Still coming in, we will fight.



Photo 4: A fishing spot closed reading: “Sorry, it is closed. At this moment outsiders are forbidden to go fishing.”

are those who come to sell things on credit to the small neighborhood shop owners.

²⁸ In the city of Yogyakarta there are several fishing spots that the fishing communities use and these normally can be accessed through a fee payment. These fishing spots may be a source of income for the local authorities.

Visuals used to communicate these messages were often threatening. For example, in one

area in Sleman, the visual of Arnold Schwarzenegger with a bazooka from the film “Terminator” was installed to humorously communicate this message to the outsiders. Some of the messages, however, explained that outsider exclusion was not a personal matter, rather a matter of life and death.

The next set of messages warned the villagers about the danger of COVID-19. For example, one of the messages compared COVID-19 with “*santet*” or black magic. Some of these then connected the danger and exclusion of outsiders to one’s love for the family and care for the community. One of the messages read: “Klebengan is on lockdown, love your family, stay at home”. In this way, they requested their neighbours to care for each other by ensuring they stay at home.



Photo 5: A blocked entrance into a neighbourhood with a checkpoint further down and Arnold Schwarzenegger’s life-size cardboard cutout with a bazooka.

Some signposts encouraged adopting new habits, such as washing hands, wearing masks, making healthy lifestyle choices, practicing social distancing protocols and reporting any outsiders to the authorities. Some of these were conveyed in a humorous manner. For example, one of the messages referred to the word “*ambyar*” to convey a message about washing hands thoroughly. Next to this sign, there was an image of Didi Kempot, a popular singer who is called the “Godfather of Broken Heart” because of his melancholic songs. He passed away in the middle of the pandemic on 5 May 2020. Fans of Didi Kempot are referred to as “*Sobat Ambyar*”, “*ambyar*” refers to fans of this singer romantic songs about a broken heart. Another message encouraged eating vegetables with wordplay - replacing

“lockdown” with “laukdaun.” The Indonesian diet normally consists of *lauk* (egg, fish, meat, tempeh, or tofu), vegetables, and rice. *Laukdaun*, then, on the one hand, is wordplay, referred to as “*plesetan*,” where the writer made a homophonic analogy between “lockdown” and “laukdaun.” On the other hand, it can also be interpreted as humorously referring to the economic difficulties that communities were facing due to the loss of jobs. In this case, it carries an empathic component and intends to comfort the residents to feel less sad that they now replaced their *lauk* with *daun* (vegetables, lit. leaves).

Signposts also communicated the kinds of feelings one associates with the impositions of a global pandemic, such as sadness, melancholia, anxiety, and hope. “My pocket is 0 percent,” and “Virus Corona when are you gonna leave? I don’t have money anymore, Rupiah 0” illustrated the economic challenges residents are grappling with due to COVID-19. The loneliness and limitations social distancing has on social events, such as weddings were depicted in signs that read “Stay at home? I am missing you.” Another was talking to the coronavirus as if it were a foreign girl who broke the writer’s heart and finished the line with saying that Indonesian girls can also break hearts, which another way of saying that COVID-19 originated from abroad. Along similar lines, one signpost read: Stay at home. Covid-19 is cruel, just like my ex.” Many messages suggested that when the coronavirus left, they will marry. Oftentimes, in Yogyakarta, people who marry come from different neighbourhoods. This statement depicts someone whose girlfriend lives in a different area. It is important to note that many of these analogies were likely composed by men expressing their sentiments towards women. Interestingly, very few messages were addressed towards other men and when they were, they assumed an equal status and talked as if they were talking to a friend. This could be seen in usage of such words as “*bung*” or “*dab*” (which translates into English as “dude”).

The reading of the signposts found in Yogyakarta demonstrates that the residents were defining anew what is home, who belongs and who does not. Most likely, those who stayed in throughout the lockdown were then

considered as belonging to the community, even if they were migrants. Through the messages we can conclude that expression of emotions was important not only to understand one's feelings but also to show solidarity, sympathy, and provide encouragement and strength to overcome the ordeal of social and physical isolation. We can see in the messages that the owner of the public space in Yogyakarta is often male.

In Yogyakarta, as the "local lockdowns" started to be implemented by the local communities, reading the exclusionary signposts, we thought that this shows that there is a high probability of a horizontal conflict between the "insiders" and "outsiders." However, as months passed, the opposite of social conflict happened in Yogyakarta: the neighbourhood residents initiated food-sharing, now known as "*canthelan*" – plastic bags full of vegetables or the basic necessities (such as, rice, sugar, tea, and other basic foods) were hung on the roadside to help those affected by COVID-19;²⁹ volunteers developed relationships with farmers affected by COVID-19 and helped them distribute their produce to customers; others have organized public kitchen to help the informal workers affected by the pandemic and the decrease of tourists into Yogyakarta.³⁰ There were also some who stigmatized and refused to extend rental contracts of health-workers,³¹ but most showed support.³² While we have seen numerous solidarity initiatives

²⁹ Puryani, Sri Cahyani Putri. "Aksi Kepedulian Sosial Melalui Gerakan Sayuran Gratis di Kampung Blunyahrejo Yogyakarta." *Tribun Jogja*. June 23, 2020. Accessed July 10, 2020.

<https://jogja.tribunnews.com/2020/06/23/aksi-kepedulian-sosial-melalui-gerakan-sayuran-gratis-di-kampung-blunyahrejo-yogyakarta>.

³⁰ Syambudi, Irwan. "Aksi Solidaritas Pandemi Corona: Dapur Umum Hingga Donasi Rp 50 Juta." *Tirto*. April 1, 2020. Accessed July 10, 2020. <https://tirto.id/aksi-solidaritas-pandemi-corona-dapur-umum-hingga-donasi-rp50-juta-ejVL>.

³¹ Iqbal, Muhammad. "Tangani Covid-19, Tenaga Medis di Yogya Dikucilkan Warga." *CNBC Indonesia*. April 08, 2020. Accessed July 10, 2020.

<https://www.cnbcindonesia.com/news/20200408130143-4-150590/tangani-covid-19-tenaga-medis-di-yogya-dikucilkan-warga>.

³² H, Yanuar. "Sebatang Coklat Cinta untuk Perawat dan Dokter Pasien Covid-19 di Yogyakarta." *Liputan 6*. April 13, 2020. Accessed 10 July, 2020. <https://www.liputan6.com/regional/read/4225723/sebatang-cokelat-cinta-untuk-perawat-dan-dokter-pasien-covid-19-di-yogyakarta>.

by the Yogyakartaans, we have not observed major vertical or horizontal conflicts in Yogyakarta. Therefore, we see "local lockdowns" more as resistance towards the lack of proper handling of the COVID-19 pandemic, rather than an intention to aggressively exclude outsiders, although the potential for violence was present throughout the "local lockdowns."

Conclusions

We may not know right now what the likely long-term impact the self-isolation experience will have, but we can guess from reading the signposts that people will be more place- and family-oriented and most people will continue to wash hands thoroughly and wear masks. Previous research in the beginning of the pandemic showed that there was a fear of social conflicts, however, no major social conflicts took place at this moment despite the presence of various economic and social problems in Yogyakarta. The efficiency of the implementation of "local lockdowns" can potentially deepen our understanding about the role of neighborhoods in management of health crises/pandemics, social conflicts, and social welfare in Indonesia. The challenges and the opportunities present can be studied further.

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