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* この記事は、調査及び立法考査局内において、国政審議に係る有用性、記述の中立性、客観性及び正確性、論旨の明晰（めいせき）性等の観点からの審査を経たものです。

* 本文中の意見にわたる部分は、筆者の個人的見解です。

Summary

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What Is Social Media?

TANAKA Mikihiro

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Researcher, Education, Culture, Science and Technology Research Service,
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In recent years, “social media”, which has pervaded rapidly throughout society in recent years, is now a device to observe one aspect of public opinion, as well as a place where public opinion is formed, and is considered to be changing the nature of society. This paper introduces the achievements of academic research, mainly of media studies and of neighboring fields such as politics and social psychology, on social media. In order to give an overview of social media theory, which is still being debated, questions such as how social media affect people’s close human relations and greater social relationships, and how social media is defined, are discussed. Afterwards, the issues that our society faces in social media, such as cynicism and conspiracy theories, are summarized and a guiding principle of how to manage social media in the future is presented.

Interaction between SNS and Law from the Perspective of Freedom of Expression and Democratic Form of Government

MIZUTANI Ejiro

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Researcher, Education, Culture, Science and Technology Research Service,
Research and Legislative Reference Bureau, National Diet Library)

When considering the influence of the emergence and popularization of SNS, it is necessary to pay attention to the change in the theoretical foundation of freedom of expression that our society has taken for granted. What is important is to maintain the marketplace of ideas in which democratic deliberations take place, which is the foundation of the democratic political system. The “marketplace of ideas” formed online, however, has various effects on the behavior of us as users, through the architecture (codes) that designs the environment, of which “filter bubbles” are a typical case. Such a design, in democratic politics, is prone to lead to widespread issues such as digital gerrymandering, excessive political mobilization and fake news, and a decline in our democratic deliberations. On the other hand, when it comes to how the government confronts these issues, it is always necessary to be aware of the dilemma in the marketplace of ideas. Imprudent regulation of content can be counterproductive, so the government will need to duly consider the various measures which it can adopt.

Architecture of Social Media and Freedom of Expression

NARIHARA Satoshi

(Associate Professor, Faculty of Law, Kyushu University)

In this chapter, the structure and function of social media, focusing on the architecture (physical and technical structure) designed and managed by social media companies, is analyzed and the present state of freedom of expression and regulations in social media is examined. By doing so, the basic knowledge and issues necessary to discuss social media law and policy in Japan are summarized.

Wrongful Use of Personal Information in SNS: The Case of Cambridge Analytica

KAWANISHI Akihiro

(Director, Public Administration and Judicial Affairs Division,
Research and Legislative Reference Bureau, National Diet Library)

In March 2018, it was reported that personal information registered on Facebook had been misused. In this case, the profiles and like data of Facebook users and their “friends” were collected and analyzed using an application registered on Facebook. The US and UK personal information authorities are conducting law enforcement activities in response to the case under their respective legal systems.

In this case, the issue is whether appropriate information on the scope of use of personal information was provided and whether the user had valid consent or not. Another problem is how to handle data, algorithms, etc. generated by data processing.

Utilization of Social Media in Election Campaigns

SATO Ryo

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The use of the internet in election campaigns began in the United States in the 1990s, and since then internet campaigns making use of emails, websites, and blogs have become common in other countries as well. In the social media era, while election campaigns attracting support by using short texts, photos, videos, etc. are becoming popular in various countries, such movements are considered to have affinity with populism and cause social fragmentation.

With the development of social media, the use of personal information in election campaigns has become common. “Micro-targeting,” which uses databases built on vast amounts of information about voters to acquire supporters effectively based on data such as consumer behavior, has become more sophisticated. Furthermore, the hypothesis of “digital gerrymandering,” that election results can be manipulated by the intentions of social media and search engine operators, has been advocated, and it has also been pointed out that trust in elections is wavering.

The State of Affairs of “Fake News”/Disinformation and Their Countermeasures

KOTARI Yutaro

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Since attracting attention in the 2016 US presidential election, methods to cope with “fake news” spread through social media have been considered around the world. In certain cases, false information that is intentionally created for the purpose of harming the public or pursuing profits is defined as “disinformation” as a substitute for the ambiguous phrase “fake news”, and is used as a term of public policy. False information is being generated motivated by economic and political interests, and it may affect democratic political processes such as elections and referendums. In the United States and Europe, countermeasures focused on the verification and transparency of transmitted information are being studied and implemented, while legislation regulating false information has been enacted in Southeast Asia and elsewhere, raising the issue of freedom of expression. In this paper, based on existing discussions on the definition, distribution, and effects of false information, the countermeasures taken in various countries at different distribution stages such as generation, diffusion, and acceptance are introduced.

Media Literacy in the Social Media Age

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Media literacy is an interdisciplinary concept in which diverse fields such as education, communication, sociology, psychology, history, and politics intertwine. Also, the way media literacy is defined and accepted changes according to the region and the time. Conventionally, it has been said to be critical acceptance and/or independent utilization of information from mass media such as newspapers, magazines, radio, movies, and television as a recipient of information.

The media literacy required in the social media era is to acquire the knowledge of and ways to deal with various problems such as unauthorized use of personal information, rampant fake news, and the negative effects of contacting only personalized information, as well as the ability to understand the history and characteristics of the media, to analyze and evaluate the information received and shared through the media by critical thinking, to improve the ability to express oneself, and to think of a better communication environment.

As media literacy is a higher-order thinking skill, it is not easy to teach or learn, so it is important to keep conscious of it every day from a long-term perspective.