

LINKING COMMUNICATION PRACTICE TO THE IDENTITY NEGOTIATION THEORY: A CASE OF BENOA BAY RECLAMATION

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ABSTRACT

The reclamation case of Benoa Bay, Bali, involves businessmen and cultural observers who want reclamation against residents, artists, cultural observers, and environmentalists who reject reclamation. The fact that there are economic, cultural, and environmental debates between the two sides, in this case, shows that a win-win solution could be achieved. Even so, the end of this case is a zero-sum game, where the party who rejects the reclamation wins the conflict. The future of Benoa Bay is still uncertain because the threat of reclamation always exists. This study applies identity negotiation theory as a cross-cultural communication instrument that can produce win-win solutions. The analysis was carried out on communication events that were documented in the course of the Benoa Bay reclamation case. The results show that the communication problems that occur in the Benoa Bay reclamation case can be resolved using the identity negotiation theory approach. Specifically, it was shown that the Benoa Bay reclamation case occurred multi-level in the socio-historical system of the Balinese and Indonesian people, that this conflict contained elements of moral conflict, that each party had a collection of multifaceted identities, respectful dialogue supported by an open and listening attitude did not occur. The frame that is built is bipolar, and inclusive pluralism does not work. Some recommendations were formulated to lead to a win-win situation in such cases.

Keywords: Benoa Bay, identity negotiation theory, intercultural communication, win-win solution

1. BACKGROUND

Conflicts over the use of maritime areas are increasingly occurring in various parts of the world (Bennett *et al.*, 2021). One of the problems that arise is due to the lack of involvement, participation, or consideration of the interests of local communities (Ablo and Asamoah, 2018; Cooley *et al.*, 2006; Ertör and Ortega-Cerdà, 2015; Hadjimichael *et al.*, 2014; Liu *et al.*, 2013; McFarlane-Morris, 2019; Page, 2007; Reilly *et al.*, 2016; Rosyida *et al.*, 2018). In many cases, the lack of communication about the meeting as well as information on the benefits and negative impacts was not provided sufficiently and led to local community protests and discontent (Bennett *et al.*, 2021). Poor communication results in protracted conflicts and causes losses for both parties (Clarke and Flannery, 2020; Flannery *et al.*, 2018; Smith and Jentoft, 2017; Tafon, 2018, 2019).

Based on identity negotiation theory (Dorjee and Ting-Toomey, 2020; Brewer, 1991, 2010), we examine various communication problems that arise in the case of the reclamation conflict of Benoa Bay, Bali. The purpose of this article is to formulate a win-win solution from the case of the Benoa Bay reclamation conflict which is likely to recur in the future (Wardana, 2019). We contribute to the literature by showing that the problems in the community's resistance to the Benoa Bay reclamation can be resolved if all parties pay attention to aspects of identity negotiations. In this background section, we explain the characteristics of maritime-based conflicts in the world and then focus on the issue of the Benoa Bay conflict. Next, we discuss the theory of identity negotiation as a theory of intercultural communication that can be a solution to similar conflicts.

Maritime Development and Conflicts

Maritime development is a complex issue and requires a lot of consideration (Bradford *et al.*, 2020; Brinson *et al.*, 2011; Campbell *et al.*, 2014; 2021; Klain *et al.*, 2019; Sisson, 2016; Smith, 2019; UNDP, 2018). Maritime development activities have a great risk of generating social injustice (Adusah-Karikari, 2015; Caswell *et al.*, 2020; Cormier-Salem, 2017; Jentoft, 2013; O'Rourke and Connolly, 2003; Page, 2007; Ratner *et al.*, 2014; Stonich *et al.*, 1997; Thomas, 2016; Too Big To Ignore, 2019; Watts, 2012). This social injustice can be seen in the form of local marginalization as well as various social and environmental problems (Nogué-Algueró, 2020; Sabau and van Zyll de Jong, 2015). Included in this risky maritime development problem are spatial planning and maritime areas (European Commission, 2018; Josse *et al.*, 2019).

The study of Bennet *et al.* (2021) identified ten problems in maritime development, namely issues of access and use rights, food security, gender equality, small-scale fisheries, environmental justice, economic benefits, socio-cultural impacts, ecosystem services, human rights, and inclusive governance. However, maritime development provides great benefits for the economic growth of a region. The Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development says that maritime development can be a solution to the world economic slowdown (OECD, 2016). This becomes even more important during the pandemic, where the world economy is experiencing a severe downturn due to various structural impacts of activity restrictions (Debata *et al.*, 2020). In a situation like this, it is important to find a win-win solution for the conflicting parties to avoid various problems that can be caused by maritime development.

History of Reclamation in Bali

The history of reclamation on the island of Bali can be referred to from the start of the construction of the Tuban airport by-pass road in 1960 connecting Nusa Dua, Sanur, Kuta, and Denpasar with the 23 km long Tuban airport. Subsequently, the Tuban Airport runway was extended in 1963-1969. The beach reclamation process is carried out to increase the length of the runway from 1200 meters to 2700 meters. After the runway was extended, the name of Tuban Airport was changed to Ngurah Rai Airport by President Soeharto. In 1990-1992, the runway was extended again to 3,000 meters with the addition of various facilities. In 1998-2000, the Directorate General of Civil Aviation developed a 12-hectare mangrove forest for aviation safety facilities (Balipedia, 2020).

In 2004, the land reclamation of Serangan Island which is located at the mouth of Benoa Bay was carried out by converting 103 Ha of mangrove land by Bali Turtle Island Development (BTID) (Wardana, 2019; PEMSEA and Bali PMO, 2004). BTID is a consortium led by the Bimantara Group, owned by President Suharto's son, Bambang Suharto. As a result of this land reclamation, a large environmental impact is obtained, such as the loss of mangroves, the destruction of coral reefs, and the loss of fish which are the livelihoods of local fishermen. As a response to the environmental damage that occurred, the local government issued Provincial Regulation on Spatial Planning for Bali No. 3/2005, one of which stated the need for rehabilitation of the Serangan-Benoa waters area (Wardana, 2019). In 2017, reclamation for the benefit of the construction of Benoa Port began to be carried out on an area of 85 hectares and resulted in the death of mangrove forest vegetation and its ecosystem covering an area of 17 hectares. At the urging of the local government and environmentalists, Pelindo immediately repaired the damage starting in October 2018 by building canals and providing 100 thousand mangrove seedlings for planting (Suriyani, 2019).

Benoa Bay Reclamation Case

Benoa Bay is a semi-open harbor located on the southeastern tip of the island of Bali. Benoa Bay is an estuary of seven rivers with an average river width of 100 – 150 meters (Hendrawan *et al.*, 2005; Dharma Putra, 2009). These rivers pass through agricultural, residential, and industrial areas, bringing organic and chemical effluents and solid wastes to the bay (Sudiarta *et al.*, 2013; Wardana, 2019). The bay is also surrounded by a 1374 ha mangrove forest called Great Forest Park belonging to Ngurah Rai airport (Wardana, 2019).

The Benoa Bay reclamation, in this case, stems from a proposal from Tirta Wahana Bali Internasional (TWBI), a company owned by businessman Tomy Winata, who has close ties to Taufik Kiemas, a PDI-Perjuangan politician and husband of former president Megawati Soekarnoputri. TWBI submitted a proposal to revitalize Benoa Bay

covering an area of 1,400 hectares, of which 810 hectares was used for reclamation by building nine artificial islands for tourism facilities, while the rest was used to deepen water flow to protect the existence of mangrove forests and the accessibility of fishermen and water sports companies (Wardana, 2019). Furthermore, TWBI promised to allocate 40% of its artificial island to open green space to promote the ecological function of Benoa Bay (Wardana, 2019). TWBI also promised to manage mangrove forests through Winata's NGO called Forum Peduli Mangrove (FPM) (Wardana, 2019). Balinese culturalists who are under the auspices of the Bumi Bali Bagus Foundation (YBBB) also provide support to TWBI because the nature conservation promoted by TWBI is considered to save the environment and support the cultural preservation of the Balinese people (Antara Bali, 2016).

On the other hand, local Balinese people who live as fishermen have been traumatized by the failure of the Serangan Island reclamation project which damaged their livelihoods. Meanwhile, the area that will be affected by the reclamation project is also a sacred customary area so that indigenous peoples also oppose it. In addition, environmental activists questioned the environmental and social impacts that could arise from the reclamation project. Socially, they highlight TWBI's track record in Tambling Wildlife Nature Conservation (TWNK), Lampung, which claims to have rehabilitated forests and coral reefs, but on the other hand makes local people lose access to forest resources, making them poorer (Wardana, 2019). In the end, three groups rejected the reclamation of Benoa Bay: ForBali (Balinese People's Forum against Reclamation), KNPRTB (National Coordinating Forum for the Rejection of Benoa Bay Reclamation), and TBTR (Tanjung Benoa Against Reclamation). ForBali is a coalition of NGOs, musicians, and youth; KNPRTB is a lobby task force composed of academics, individuals, and NGOs; and TBTR who are residents from Tanjung Benoa village, the area most affected by the reclamation.

The conflict seemed to have ended after TWBI's location permit finally expired on August 25, 2018, and was not extended by the Ministry of Marine and Fisheries. This momentarily stopped the wave of public protests and facilitated the 2018 Annual Meetings of the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank which was held in October 2018 in Bali. After the international delegates returned without witnessing the demonstration, in December 2018 the Ministry of Marine and Fisheries extended the permit for TWBI's location and the community again demonstrated. In the end, in October 2019, the Minister of Maritime Affairs and Fisheries issued Decree No. 46 of 2019 which declared the waters of Benoa Bay as a maritime cultural protection area. People who refuse are still fighting for the status of the Benoa Bay maritime protected area to be stated in a higher regulation, namely a Presidential Regulation as a substitute for the old Presidential Regulation which still states that Benoa Bay

is a public use area. Public consultation on the National Strategic Area Zoning Plan in February 2020 for the urban areas of Denpasar, Badung, Gianyar, and Tabanan (including Bena Bay) was held (Muhajir, 2020) and as of the writing of this article, a replacement Presidential Regulation has not yet been issued. At the end of October 2020, the Regional Government of Bali Province ratified the Zoning Plan for Coastal Areas and Small Islands of Bali Province (Ranperda RZWP3K Bali) which reaffirmed the status of Bena Bay as a maritime conservation area (Bali Politics, 2020). But at the same time, there are still reclamation permits issued in Bena Bay related to sand mining, the expansion of Ngurah Rai airport, and the construction of Bena Harbor. In line with this, a new wave of community protests have begun (Suriyani, 2020).

Identity Negotiation Theory

Identity negotiation theory is a theory of cross-cultural communication based on identity. Identity in the perspective of identity negotiation theory is a self-conception or reflective self-image that is obtained by each individual from the process of cultural, ethnic, and gender socialization (Ting-Toomey, 1999, p.28). Everyone has eight domains of identity, four are primary identities that cannot be separated from everyday life and the other four are situational identities. Primary identity includes cultural identity, ethnic identity, gender identity, and personal identity. Situational identity includes role identity, relational identity, facework identity, and symbolic interaction identity. Identity can also be an avowed identity, which is an identity given by oneself and ascribed identity, an identity given by others (Chen and Collier, 2012).

Identity negotiation theory proposes 10 propositions, including: (1) the core dynamics of the group and personal membership identities are formed through symbolic communication with others, (2) individuals have basic motivational needs for security, trust, inclusion, connection, and identity stability, both in group and personal identity levels, (3) individuals tend to experience identity security in culturally familiar environments and feel vulnerable in culturally unfamiliar environments, (4) individuals tend to experience identity trust when communicating with other culturally similar people and vice versa, feel distrustful when communicating with people who are culturally different, (5) individuals tend to feel identity inclusive if their membership in the group is positively recognized and differentiated if they are stigmatized within the group, (6) individuals feel an interpersonal connection through close relationships and experience autonomy if the relationship is separated, (7) individuals feel identity stability in predictable situations and will experience chaos if they are in unpredictable cultural situations, (8) dimensions of cultural, personal, and situational variations affect the meaning, interpretation, and evaluation of themes These identity themes, (9) satisfying identity negotiations lead to feelings of being understood, valued, and supported,

and (10) meaningful cross-cultural communication emphasizes the importance of integrating knowledge, motivation, and cross-cultural skills to communicate satisfactorily, appropriately, and effectively. effective (Ting-Toomey, 1999).

According to identity negotiation theory, cross-cultural conflict resolution needs to apply five principles of inclusive pluralism, namely (Dorjee, 2013): (1) dialogue needs to be a central part in conflict resolution, (2) recognition of positive interdependence relationships in conflict situations to bring progress and mutual trust between parties, (3) harmony is built using great common interests, (4) the need to think imaginatively and creatively that overcomes the polarized and rigid position of hardliners, and (e) middle way peacebuilding programs can resolve conflicts responsively and authentic. The bottom line is that each group needs to come together to listen to, dialogue, reframe, and find common ground between their differences of opinion (Littlejohn and Domenici, 2007; Ellis, 2012; Dorjee and Ting-Toomey, 2020).

According to Dorjee and Ting-Toomey (2020) and Dorjee *et al.* (2013), conflicts that occur due to the complexity of overlapping identities are conflict situations that deserve to be resolved using identity negotiation theory. They use the case of the Citizenship Amendment Act in India as a case of identity complexity. We propose that the Bena Bay reclamation case is also a case of identity negotiation. We will show this further in the Results and Discussion section of this article.

2. METHODS

Scientific and gray literature on the Bena Bay reclamation case was studied and analyzed to obtain a comprehensive chronology of the progress of this case. After reading, the researcher compares the chronology with the theoretical framework of identity negotiation and draws some parallels between the characteristics of the identity negotiation conflict and the Bena Bay reclamation case. The identity negotiation theory framework is taken from the characteristics of the cultural identity negotiation conflict from Dorjee and Ting-Toomey (2020).

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Dorjee and Ting-Toomey (2020) identify the characteristics of cultural identity negotiation conflicts which are characterized by conflicts that are multilevel in the sociohistorical system of society, contain elements of moral conflict, that each party has a collection of multifaceted identities, there is no respectful dialogue supported by an open attitude and listening, the frame built is bipolar, and inclusive pluralism doesn't work. Here we show that this characteristic is also found in the case of Bena Bay.

Multilevel Conflict

The Bena Bay Reclamation conflict runs at least two levels, namely the policy level and the local level. At

the policy level, the conflict began with the granting of a reclamation permit to PT TWBI in 2012 by the Governor of Bali, Made Pastika, through Decree No. 2138/02-C/HK/2012 concerning the Granting of Permits and Utilization Rights for the Development and Management of the Benoa Bay Waters, Bali Province. to PT. Tirta Wahana Bali International. This decree was protested by the community because it was made without involving local communities and contradicts Presidential Regulation Number 45 of 2011 which states that Benoa Bay is a conservation area so it cannot be reclaimed. However, in 2014, this Presidential Regulation was revised through Presidential Decree No. 51 of 2014. In this presidential regulation, Benoa Bay becomes an area that can be reclaimed because the status of the Benoa Bay area is a cultivation area (Mahardika *et al.*, 2016). ForBali and other opposing elements immediately protested that the Perpres be revoked (ForBali, 2015).

At the local level, conflicts between parties claiming to represent Balinese culture also surfaced. YBBB as a supporter of reclamation considers that reclamation will ensure the preservation of culture, the environment, and increasing the welfare of the Balinese people and they guarantee it because YBBB is a participant and initiator of the reclamation project as well as a supervisor of developer compliance with their socio-cultural goals (Antara Bali, 2016). On the other hand, local people who also claim to represent Balinese culture assert that the reclamation will erase 70 points of the customary area in Benoa Bay. A total of 14 traditional village heads came to the Presidential Office to reject the reclamation of Benoa Bay (Nugraha, 2016).

Moral Conflict

In terms of identity negotiation theory, religion only exists through the local culture and local institutions (Gumucio, 2008). Religiosity is related to certain conflict attitudes and strategies (Soliz and Colaner, 2014). Benoa Bay reclamation conflict contains a great moral element. The traditional leaders who reject the reclamation of Benoa Bay feel they have a moral obligation to maintain traditional and religious values in Benoa Bay and the welfare of the universe. It was not only the traditional village chiefs who had a direct impact on the rejection, but also other village heads who were not affected based on strong moral and brotherly ties through pesdikaran (Nugraha, 2016). The Bali Post stated that the reclamation of Benoa Bay is a form of colonization and that those who oppose reclamation are people who care about the morals of the Balinese people (Maulina, 2016). But on the other hand, proponents of reclamation assert that the reclamation of Benoa Bay will reduce unemployment and improve the morale of the Balinese people (Rena, 2015).

Multifaceted Identity

Identity negotiation theory is relevant to the case of stakeholders in the Benoa Bay reclamation case.

According to Ting-Toomey (1999), cross-cultural conflicts occur due to differences in goal orientation (*e.g.* content vs relational), degrees of perception of interdependence (*e.g.* independence vs. interdependence), degree of ethnocentrism/stereotyping (*e.g.* moderate vs high ethnocentrism), differences in cultural values (*e.g.*, moderate vs. *e.g.* individualism vs. collectivism), and individual-based differences (*e.g.* independent vs interdependent self). In particular, economic, cultural, and environmental identities emerged in the case of the Benoa Bay reclamation. The polarity of identity that occurs in economic identity is between the rich vs the poor; a cultural identity that sticks out is between Balinese vs. outsiders, and the environmental identity that sticks out is between environmentalists vs environmental destroyers. Despite the polarity of identity, the two opposing groups have common ground. The pro-reclamation group has a component of Balinese identity (YBBB) and at the same time outside Bali (TWBI) and also claims to be pro-environmental. Anti-reclamation groups also have Balinese identities (TBTR, indigenous groups) and also outside Bali (NGOs, artists) and also claim to be pro-environmental. In terms of identity, there is a middle ground between the two parties, it's just a matter of how this identity is used in negotiating conflicts between groups to lead to a win-win solution.

Lack of Respectful, Open, and Listening Dialogue

Conflict resolution in development communication needs to be carried out free from power and bureaucracy (Bhakti, 2004) and openly, respectfully and listening to each other (Dorjee and Ting-Toomey, 2020). However, this did not happen in the case of the Benoa Bay reclamation. As previously mentioned, this conflict stemmed from the issuance of a reclamation permit to PT TWBI in 2012 by the Governor of Bali, Made Pastika, who was protested by the community for not conducting any public consultations at all. The public consultation that brought together the two opposing groups was finally carried out in early August 2013 which resulted in the revocation of the Governor's Decree and the issuance of a New Decree, namely Governor's Decision No. 1727/01-B/HK/2013. Even so, this new decree was still not accepted by ForBali because it only revised bureaucratic issues, not substance issues.

At the same time, in Benoa Bay there is also the village of Tanjung Benoa. This village was most affected by the reclamation of Serangan Island in the early 2000s in the form of coastal erosion, loss of fish and livelihoods, as well as severe damage to Pudut Island which is still included in the village area. Community leaders have requested letters of the proposal for the rehabilitation of their villages in 2008 and 2011 from the Badung Regency Government.

On the other hand, TWBI cooperates with Udayana University as a partner to conduct a feasibility study. In the process of this feasibility study, the research

team came to Tanjung Bena village in February 2013 to hold two focus group discussions. From the local community's perspective, this team came to prepare for the rehabilitation of their area so that they are open and enthusiastic in focus group discussions. The research team itself did not reveal that they intend to start a new reclamation, namely reclamation for the benefit of TWBI. After the research team returned home, the public realized that the focus group discussion they were participating in was for further reclamation purposes. The community felt cheated because the research team was not transparent to them. This distrust grew when it was revealed that the Bendesa had made a secret agreement with TWBI to grant the reclamation permit. The community immediately held a customary assembly and lowered the village head, replacing him with a new one who was considered more committed to the rejection of reclamation. The new Bendesa immediately canceled the secret agreement (Wardana, 2019).

Meanwhile, the research team finally completed their feasibility study with the conclusion that reclamation is feasible. Even so, pressure from the media and the public forced a Udayana University senate meeting to review the results of the feasibility study. In September 2013, the Udayana university senate meeting decided that Bena Bay was not suitable for reclamation. However, the meeting did not decide if there was a need to revise the results of the previous feasibility study which stated that reclamation was feasible. Wardana (2019) highlighted that this inconsistency shows the great importance of TWBI in making their project environmentally viable. Not satisfied with the unclear feasibility study results from Udayana University, TWBI hired five universities from outside Bali to conduct a re-study. These five universities are Hassanuddin University, Gadjah Mada University, Bandung Institute of Technology, Surabaya Institute of Technology, and Bogor Institute of Agriculture. All research teams from the five consultants from these universities decided that Bena Bay needs to be reclaimed. The general argument put forward is that the condition of Bena Bay has become so bad that it needs to be revitalized. Wardana (2019) criticizes that this argument is illogical because basically, this argument says that reclamation is feasible because Bena Bay has already been damaged by previous reclamations.

Even during the Bali DPRD session, the discussion of the RZWP3K Ranperda prohibited representatives from Walhi from speaking at the meeting. This creates problems related to the right to speak for non-governmental organizations in the discussion of the RZWP3K (Walhi Bali, 2020).

Bipolar Framing

The bipolar frame that is built is between reclamation advocates and reclamation opponents. There is no middle ground that sticks out to the surface from the start. Even

Wardana (2019) who has intensively researched this issue sees it as a zero-sum game where one party will get everything while the other party gets nothing. There is a middle ground but neither side has taken it. The middle way of the economy, for example, can accommodate the needs of local communities who are fishermen by creating sources of fish life while making an economic contribution to the community through employment in the tourism sector. A cultural middle ground can also be negotiated considering that there is a YBBB that claims to maintain Balinese customs and also local indigenous people who are trying to preserve important traditional points in Tanjung Bena Village and its surroundings. The environmental middle ground is available. YBBB argues that the existence of artificial islands will facilitate the inflow and outflow of existing river estuaries so that silting can be prevented. Meanwhile, those who reject the reclamation argue that the reclamation process will further destroy the mangrove ecosystem and fish resources which are the economic support of the local community. The middle way can be taken if the use of green technology, as well as conservation efforts, are strictly and closely monitored.

Inclusive Pluralism Absent

The bipolar frame that is built and the absence of respectful dialogue in effect show that inclusive pluralism is not working. In this case, dialogue does not become a central part of conflict resolution, there is no recognition of the interdependence of each party, efforts to find common interests are not brought forward, imaginative and creative thinking as a middle way solution does not appear, and responsive and responsive conflict resolution authentic does not work.

Need for Identity Negotiation

The identity negotiations in the Bena Bay reclamation case did not take place and the final solution to the case was a zero-sum game. Of course in the future, there will be new challenges for the people of Bena Bay and those who reject the reclamation considering that Bena Bay is very strategic for tourism needs which are the mainstay of Bali's economy. In the end, the community must be ready to negotiate their identity in the future when new spatial use needs arise in the Bena Bay area. The group that opposes reclamation needs to seek common interests that can elevate their identity as an identity that advances Bali in terms of economy, culture, and the environment. Inclusive pluralist dialogue needs to be carried out and targets some aspects as found in the study of Bennet *et al.* (2021) namely issues of access and use rights, food security, gender equality, small-scale fisheries, environmental justice, economic benefits, socio-cultural impacts, ecosystem services, human rights, and inclusive governance.

CONCLUSION

Our research shows that the Benoa Bay reclamation case is a case of intercultural conflict that characterizes identity negotiations. We show that in this case, the conflict that occurs is multilevel, there is an element of moral conflict, each party has a multifaceted identity, the dialogue runs in an unfriendly situation, based on power, and without respect, openness, and mutual listening, bipolarity becomes the frame that is built, and inclusive pluralism is not developing. Under these findings, we suggest the need for discussion efforts based on inclusive pluralism, namely (Dorjee, 2013): dialogue needs to be central in conflict resolution, recognition of positive interdependence relationships in conflict situations to build mutual trust between parties, harmony is built using common interests, imaginative and creative thinking that overcomes hard-line positions, and middle ground development programs capable of responsive and authentic conflict resolution. In addition, the issues discussed in this dialogue must be comprehensive, covering aspects of issues of access and use rights, food security, equity, small-scale fisheries, environmental and economic justice, socio-cultural and ecosystem impacts, human rights, and governance. inclusive (Bennett *et al.*, 2021).

This research is certainly not without limitations. We use secondary data to analyze the characteristics of cross-cultural communication that occurs. Further research needs to use primary data such as interviews with the parties involved in the conflict. In addition, the case in this study has ended through a zero-sum game resolution, so the resulting practical implications can no longer be applied to this case. However, this practical implication can be applied to similar cases in Indonesia as well as to similar conflicts that may occur again in the Benoa Bay area in the future.

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