



Kawalu

Vol. 2, No. 1 (January-June), 2015



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International Symposium on Religious
Literature and Heritage (ISLAGE)



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Kawalu: Journal of Local Culture is an interdisciplinary journal that explores the history, politics, economics, linguistics, sociology and anthropology of world's local culture. The journal brings together original and innovative articles which deploy interdisciplinary and comparative research methods and also welcomes progress reports on research projects, fieldwork notes, book reviews, and notes on conferences. *Kawalu: Journal of Local Culture* is published by Laboratorium Bantenologi, State Institute for Islamic Studies (IAIN) "Sultan Maulana Hasanuddin" Banten in June and December each year. The journal accepts articles in English and Indonesian.

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Notes from the Editors

This is to launch the fifth number of *Kawalu: Journal of Local Culture*, a publication issued twice a year. *Kawalu: Journal of Local Culture* is an interdisciplinary journal that explores the history, politics, economics, linguistics, sociology and anthropology of world's local culture.

We hope to provide an opportunity for all those interested in world's local culture to exchange views and information. As the reader will see from the first issue, we have included contributions covering research book reviews; and notes on conferences/seminar.

We recognize that it is necessary to understand local culture in order to understand global culture; therefore we would like to connect others' analysis of local culture while conducting educational work on the relationship between local culture and global culture. Our intention has also been to include articles which, though still tentative or exploratory, will help stir discussion and criticism. We look forward to correspondence on any article in *Kawalu: Journal of Local Culture* in order to further the exchange of ideas and experiences.



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Local Politics and the Formation of Sub-National Imagined
Communities:
The Cases of *Tabanan Lovers* and *Buleleng Jengah* in Bali¹

Gde Dwitya Arief Metera²

Abstract

This essay looks at two cases of cyber citizen organizations namely Tabanan Lovers and Buleleng jengah. The two cyber citizen organizations emerged from some initiatives to organize members of Facebook community who come from the same hometown, namely Tabanan and Buleleng regency in Bali. In their later development, the two Facebook groups evolve into a space as well as a medium for the cyber citizens to voice their critical political aspiration. Early observation shows that the two groups share similar characteristic of becoming “imagined communities” mediated by not necessarily print media, but instead social media like Facebook. A question that this essay would like to suggest as a future research agenda is what necessitates the formation of these “subnational imagined communities” which takes place at the regency level and not at provincial level? Through tracing the history of their conception and through online participatory observation, this essay aims at providing a preliminary discussion to help illuminate the formation of these two sub-national “imagined communities”. More specifically, the discussion points to a link connecting local politics of pilkada and the formation of Tabanan Lovers and Buleleng jengah.

Keywords: Local Politics, Tabanan, Bali, Buleleng Jengah

A Facebook notification alerted me in the middle of June 2011. One high school friend included me into a group called *Buleleng jengah*. The name of the group would be very familiar for a Balinese, especially those

from North Bali, but definitely not so much for the non-Balinese. On the one hand, Buleleng is a name of a regency in North Bali where I spent a good deal of my childhood including my formative high school times. *Jengah*, on the other hand, is a specific North Balinese term. It is not easy to render it in English but it roughly means a mixed feeling of self-consciousness, being ashamed of one's lack in achievement, and a determination to show that one is actually capable of achieving.

The group itself has a large number of members.³ At the time the notes for this paper were prepared, *Buleleng jengah* has already had around 11,000 members. All members seem to either come from Buleleng, to live in the regency, or to have an attachment despite not currently living in the region. The geographical dispersal of members is quite wide: the majority of them seemingly live in Bali while some of them live in Java or even abroad, like Verona, Italy. I recognized some of the members as part of my social circle during my childhood as they were mostly young people of various backgrounds.

The notification to join *Buleleng jengah* turned out not the only interesting notification I received that year. A couple of months later in late 2010, I ran into a Balinese friend—a social media activist—during my fieldwork in Denpasar as a research assistant in an urban ethnography project. He invited me to join a Facebook group called *Tabanan Lover* (or popularly referred to as *Talov*). While the name of the group might suggest a rather kinky interpretation, in actuality it is not. The name purely refers to those people who love Tabanan regency in South Bali. That friend of mine invited me perhaps because he knew that originally my family, especially my Father, comes from Tabanan before moving to Buleleng in the mid 1990s.

A few months of joining the group, I began to feel a sort of identification and attachment to this online Facebook community. Perhaps this feeling of identification grew due to familiarity with the topics of discussion posted on its wall. Perhaps, the names of places and other references mentioned by my fellow Buleleng and Tabanan *Facebookers* were all too familiar. One thing that I was sure, however, was the real feeling of comradeship that slowly takes shape as I follow the discussion in these groups' Facebook wall. I hope it is not too far-fetched if I suggest that Anderson's concept of "imagined community" (Anderson 1991) would be very helpful in initiating an exploration on the question of what it means to be a member of these two Facebook groups.

In his seminal work capturing the phenomenon of the nation and nationalism, an often-mined monograph for sure, Anderson (1991)

proposes his concept of the nation as an imagined community. The gist of his argument is that the wide array of people who will probably never see each other in real life is connected by a common practice of imagining a horizontal-comradeship. Concretely, this practice of imagining a community is facilitated by the presence of print capitalism and the ritual of reading newspapers. Technology, therefore, is a central structural feature that enables this mode of imagination. The people, the horizontal comrades, are perpetually having a common ritual that establishes their sense of togetherness in their mind.

To a certain degree, imagined community as a concept might be quite useful to bear upon the task of capturing the two phenomena of *Tabanan Lover* and *Buleleng jengah*. The members of these two Facebook groups shared a practice of not so much reading daily newspaper than reading the wall of the groups. Different the Facebook wall as a medium might be from daily newspapers, it nonetheless serves as a platform upon which is built the imagination of being-togetherness as a part of a bounded community. It is bounded since the members have to belong or have to have the sense of belonging to either Buleleng or Tabanan regency respectively. The imagined community is distinct to ethnicity. If ethnic identity as Balinese comprises a set of people, these Facebook groups are more specific than the set of Balinese as an ethnic identity. They are subsets of it: people from other regencies arguably are excluded from the practice of imagining these, if you will, sub-national imagined communities. In addition, the imagined geo-bodies (Winichakul, 1994) of these sub-nations are also clearly delineated as the two regencies, Buleleng and Tabanan, have had stable boundaries for quite a long time.

The adjective sub-national is deemed appropriate since the nation is arguably only one constructed imaginary worlds of individuals subjected under the political framework of modern nation-state. Individual subjects in the context of contemporary advanced globalization (*viz.* where rapid flows of images facilitate the work of imagination in an ever increasing intensity) constitute many imaginary worlds and not least of them is the work of imagination at the local, sub-national level. Possibility of scaling down the imagined community has been mentioned by Appadurai's discussion on imagination as a social practice and the 'scalar dynamics' of interactions between constructed imaginary worlds.⁴

What we are dealing with here is thus a set of examples of a bounded community in a very real sense connected through the common practice of reading posts on the respective group's Facebook wall and through sharing an imagined identity as comrades. They are simultaneously

bounded (as a community) and borderless (in its geographical dispersal) as well as constituting a grouping of deterritorialized people in the context of advanced globalization. The nature of the two Facebook groups in itself poses a fascinating methodological challenge for an ethnographer to explore the contour of these two group about which I shall return later at the end of the essay with a short methodological note.

A pressing question that I in the mean time would like to suggest as part of a future broad research agenda is a question pertaining to origin and function: why the formation of these groups takes place at the regency level and not, for example, provincial or even district level? What role do these groups serve?

Structural Background: the Decentralization Process after Democratization

In April 2012 I managed to secure an interview appointment with Wahyu,⁵ the founder of *Tabanan Lover* through my social media activist friend. The interview took place in Denpasar and was conducted in a semi-structured way as I asked some initial questions and then followed the flows thereon. The following information regarding the story behind the creation of the group and its reasoning is extracted from this roughly one and half an hour interview.

Wahyu initiated the Facebook group sometime in the middle of 2009 with the help of his close friends as administrators. At that time he has already been an IT professional with his own IT consultant company—Lumonata—based in Denpasar. He graduated from STIKOM Surabaya, a university he first entered in 2001, with a bachelor degree in Informatics. The three friends—Dwitanaya, Jubel, and Jayak—helped to promote and manage *Tabanan Lover* as a Facebook group. In its first two weeks it garnered 600 followers, and during the time of the interview the group has already reached around 2,123 members.⁶ The group geographical dispersal, again, is quite wide with members scattered all around Indonesia. The core group of people who meet physically, however, are mostly residents of Tabanan or living in Bali.

When asked about the story behind the creation of the group, Wahyu mentioned about the need to find alternative voice during the local general election (*Pilkada*) in Tabanan in 2010. Indeed, the group during its early formative phase has been filled by discussion responding to the dynamics of the local *Pilkada*. The *Pilkada*Tabanan, therefore should be central or at least part of the explanation for the initiation of this group.

The following discussion will serve as a background story to the *Pilkada* Tabanan in 2010. Indeed, I have noted that it was quite dramatic. One would not be surprised if such a dramatic local political event prompted a response from the well-educated public and members of the digital civil society.

The Tabanan Local General Election in 2010

Political observers and commentators of local politics in Indonesia would agree that in general *Pilkada* is always intense and competitive. Some competitive *Pilkada* might even close with dramatic ends. However, I guess not all *Pilkada* involve a drama in the running. Tabanan local general election in 2010 is one of those exceptional *Pilkadas* with a stint of drama. The aforementioned drama started with a letter of recommendation from Megawati Soekarnoputri to the Tabanan branch of the party in January, 2010, three months before the d-day of the ballot. Megawati recommended that the pair who should run would be Eka Wiryastuti as the Bupati and Komang Gede Sanjaya as the Wakil Bupati. The letter itself, numbered 317/IN/DPP/2010, was co-signed by Tjahjo Kumolo as the Ketua Bappilu DPP PDI-P and Pramono Anung as the Secretary General of the Party, with the consent of Megawati.⁷

The coming of the letter was shocking to a great extent since it annulled the previous agreement on the pair who will compete for PDI-P in Tabanan. In a previous letter from the year before, an SK DPP PDI-P numbered 3075/IN/DPP/XII/2009, the pair who was about to run was Wayan Sukaja as the Bupati and Eka Wiryastuti as the Wakil Bupati. With the new recommendation, Eka was uplifted to the Bupati position and a new name, Komang Gede Sanjaya was put as the Wakil Bupati. There was no clear reason behind the annulment of previous pair and this new shuffling as has been reported in the media. However, observers would be inclined to see the symptoms of dynastic politics since Eka is the daughter of the incumbent Bupati, Adi Wiryatama, who cannot run again for the third time. Eka could be seen as the extension of her father political power. PDI-P on the other hand was probably still convinced by the lingering influence and networks of Adi Wiryatama in Tabanan local politics and hoping by clinging to the dynasty it will reap victory in the coming *Pilkada* in 2010.

Wayan Sukaja, the then head of the local parliament (Ketua DPRD), was clearly furious with the turns of events and the changing plan unfavorable to his position. The new letter of recommendation from Megawati as a consequence has incited internal conflict within the Tabanan

branch of the party. Sukaja's group mobilized their mass followers for protest and mentioned to the media that Megawati has probably become a victim of *pelet*⁸ and they will soon go their separate way from the party.⁹ Sukaja's group indeed meant their threat and they crossed to Golkar as the opposition party. His group seems to be powerful enough that Golkar agreed to accommodate his pair. Sukaja took as his pair IGN Anom and ran as Sukaja-Anom (or Sukarno). During the drawing process for contestants of 5 *Pilkada* in Bali on March 5, 2010, Sukaja-Anom got the number 2, while Eka Wiryastuti-Komang Gede Sanjaya (Eka-Jaya) got number 1 and the third pair from Democrat Party, Wirasana-Mahendra got number 3.

Interestingly, the number of the contestant also reflects their end result in the *Pilkada* competition in May 2010. The Eka-Jaya pair finished as the victor in the race with 134,441 votes or 48,56%, followed by Sukaja-Anom with 116,153 votes or 41,95%, and the third pair from democrat got 26,256 votes or 9,48%.¹⁰ This result was not accepted well by the runner up, Sukaja-Anom. They filed a lawsuit to the Constitutional Court challenging Eka-Jaya and the result of the election. The conflict did not end with the lawsuit and was prolonged until July the same year with Sukarno-Anom filed a report to the Indonesian police and the Indonesian parliament (*Panja Mafia Hukum DPR*) accusing the local KPUD Tabanan of fraud and letter-forgery during *Pilkada*.¹¹ Aside from the series of lawsuit, Sukaja's mass followers also staged protests at several events including the meeting of local KPUD to finalize the *Pilkada*. Even after a year of *Pilkada*, in March 2011, a potential clash between mass-followers of Sukaja and Eka-Jaya's followers can still be observed during the issuance of court verdict in Tabanan.¹²

Critical Engagement of the Citizens

During the interview with Wahyu, he mentioned the reason of initiating *Tabanan Lover* as an effort to find alternative voices and independent medium to counters news surrounding *Pilkada* in Tabanan that surprisingly one-sided and always positive. The search for alternative voices stimulates the early discussions in the group that were mostly about local politics. The topic that was dominant in the early group discussion was about party politics as well as the subtopic such as 'don't blame the party but blame individual culprits (*oknum*)' and the likes.

One way to make sense of what Wahyu and his friends in the group of *Tabanan Lovers* trying to do is by perusing the conceptual categories offered by theorists of deliberative democracy. Democracy by these theorists is understood not in the procedural Schumpeterian term in which the

notion of common good and common will of the people is negated. Instead, deliberative democracy theorists assume that arriving at a consensus is possible. Democracy therefore consists of communicative action to arrive at a consensus that is agreed by virtually all members of the polity. Democracy is not a procedure to arrive at the aggregate, majoritarian interest of the populace as the elitist Schumpeterian conceptualization of democracy would normally posit. Critical engagement of the citizens is the necessary part of deliberative democracy in contrast to the market model of competing politicians offering political agenda as suggested by the Schumpeterian model of democracy.¹³

One problem with the deliberative democracy approach to political processes is its empirical feasibility.¹⁴ Among the many circumstances against the practice of deliberative democracy is the medium that the deliberative democrats might utilize to voice their aspiration in the public space so that their interest might be weighed in the process toward consensus. It is really difficult to ensure that every members of the polity have the access to the media and to further channel their interest and voice to the public sphere where the process of deliberation takes place. First and foremost is the nature of the media and the process of political deliberation itself that tend to be elitist. Not everyone can write in the media and voice their grievance. Similarly, modern form of political deliberation that takes place within the chambers of parliament ensures that the people do not attend the process of deliberation itself. Instead, they are necessarily represented.

Wahyu and his *Tabanan Lovers* as a group create a space that fills exactly this gap. The internet as a medium is inherently democratic in the sense that participation of adult is not restricted. Every adult can and are the members of the new virtual, borderless space. What *Tabanan Lovers* and its members do can be seen as to push forward the ideal of deliberative democracy in which they channel their grievance in the context of local general election in the newly-created space. Real process of deliberation is taking place in the newly created space chartered by *Tabanan Lovers*. The question is only to what extent it actually affects the political outcome. An attempt to answer this question certainly can be on the agenda for researchers studying local politics in Indonesia.

Tabanan Lovers' activities were put to some rest after the 2010 local general election. This is understandable since they lack a central topic that causes the establishment of the group in the first place. However, not until long its activities were revitalized and redirected to activism related to citizen journalism, education, and charity. *Tabanan Lovers* initiated

workshops, donated fund for the poor, and consolidate its members. Concretely, the members created a website that serves as outlet for their critical writings. Their latest activity as per 2012 was hosting the Tabanan Creative Festival.

Buleleng jengah

As a Facebook group, Buleleng jengah has a much bigger posture than Tabanan Lovers. Buleleng jengah has 12,577 members (as per 2011, now it has more than 24,000 members in 2015) scattered in various localities beyond Buleleng, Bali, and even Indonesia which pretty much reflecting the tendency of people from Buleleng to make a living beyond their hometown (*merantau*). The group itself was initiated by a succesful entrepreneur named Komang Priya¹⁵ who lives in Jakarta. Later in its development the group has been managed by its own members registering around 200 admins.

Komang Priya appears as a central figure in this group. He is active in proposing topics for discussion in the early days of the group. Mostly the topics were pertinent to the problems of development in Buleleng and the response from the other group members were mostly on how these problems should be able to be addressed collectively. The phrase often being utilized to address the group members was “*Para Muda Buleleng*” or roughly translated “Buleleleng Youth”. The group also has its common cheering phrase utilized by its members to address each other in their conversation. This cheering phrase is “*maibeee*” which means “come on” and “let’s go” roughly translated into English.

From Komang Priya’s Facebook account we might be able to illuminate his background. He graduated from SMA 1 Singaraja (Singaraja Public High school No. 1)—which is the best high school in North Bali and arguably in Bali in general—in 1985 before continuing to study tourism at the *Sekolah Tinggi Pariwisata Bali* (Bali Tourism Advanced School) and graduated in 1988. He started his career working at the Holland American Line for two years from 1989 to 1991 before resigned and started working in the hotel industry by taking a position at Hyatt hotel. His career at the hotel industry lasted for 7 years from 1991-1998 before moved on to banking by working at the Citibank group. He did not spend too long at the banking industry since he moved to insurance in 2004 by studying and finishing his study at *Sekolah Tinggi Risk Management & Asuransi* (Advanced School of Risk Management and Insurance) in 2006. From the business of

insurance he moved to the world of investment by joining the Alihdaya Group as a CEO and eventually to Indigo Investama as a CEO.

Komang makes a lot of effort in his Facebook profile page to appear as full of achievement in his career and to appear especially excellent at motivating people. His initiative to create the group *Buleleng jengah* has helped to boost his popularity in Buleleng. It is interesting to note that there was often an allusion to nominate Komang as a candidate in the coming 2012 local election then (the group was initiated and most active in middle of 2011). *Buleleng jengah* as a group then appears as a tool to promote the popularity and visibility of Komang Priya.

A note from the history of local politics in Buleleng might be helpful to make sense of the creation of *Buleleng jengah*. The incumbent *bupati* in 2012, Putu Bagiada, has a rather similar background with Komang Priya. Bagiada's victory against Wirata Sindhu in 2002 should be noted since Bagiada was not exactly a figure that was well-known in Buleleng. He is far less known than his competition, Sudharmaja Duniaji, which has succeeded to craft an image as local reformist. Bagiada was primarily known as somebody from Jakarta who went back to his hometown Buleleng. He nevertheless managed to win the race in the local election and assumed the position of *bupati* from 2002-2012.

This historical note might help a little bit in understanding the creation of *Buleleng jengah*. We can see it as a foundation toward introducing Komang Priya to the broader public of Buleleng. Komang appeared in the group as a successful figure who come from Buleleng and decided to go back to his hometown with a mission to develop it. The extraordinary part is how this branding is done through the medium of internet couched in the form of online activism. It is important to note that Komang is not only active in the virtual world, he turned out to be active in real life by visiting Buleleng and attending a public discussion.¹⁶

However, the increase of his popularity turned out not enough. In the actual Buleleng local election of 2012, Komang's name did not come up. It seems that Komang did not get any party that is interested in supporting him during the race and it might be the case that it was too expensive to run independently. In this case Komang was not alone, another local entrepreneur whose name was circulated in the public sphere as a potential candidate, Ray Yusa, also did not compete in the race. Most likely he did not get any party supporting him in the race.

To Conclude: Why *Kabupaten*? A Future Research Agenda

One important element of modern citizenship under the political framework of nation-states is the suffrage as a form of political right. Only the legal citizen who are bestowed the right to vote and participate in election to establish the government. There is a clear line of demarcation between citizen and non-citizen under a well-defined territory and juridical reach of a political community. This one marker of political identity can be utilized to mark the online community of *Buleleng jengah* and *Tabanan Lovers* as a coherent bounded community. They are legitimate citizens of Buleleng and Tabanan regency respectively that is entitled to the political right of suffrage should they decide to exercise it back in their hometown. However, this political boundary is getting deterritorialized due to the external migration in which these citizens travel to new localities as a result of economic reason such as work and education. The process of deterritorialization does not hinder the process of cultural reproduction, including the reproduction of political imagination as a citizen of Buleleng or Tabanan.

As has been persuasively argued by Anderson (1991) the process of imagining a shared identity of the nation is through the mediation of a common practice. In the case of Anderson, he explained it through the common practice of reading newspapers. This theory seems to fit well to explain the emergence of subnational citizenship identity in the group of *Buleleng jengah* and *Tabanan Lover*. The common practice connecting the imagination of the members, however, is not reading newspapers. Instead, their common practice is reading the news updates in their Facebook group as well as interacting with each others in the group discussions. These practices are conducted in almost day to day basis, as the experience of the author as a member would testify.

This phenomenon also highlights the working of imagination as a social practice constitutive of collective identity in the era of globalization where flows of images and narrative is increasingly faster and more intensive (Appadurai 1996). The members of *Tabanan Lover* and *Buleleng jengah* mostly never meet each other physically but they can find the marker of their collective identity through the images, narrative and interactions that they share in the groups. As they interact, they also realize that there are others who belong to the same identity as a Buleleng or Tabanan folks in the groups.

What becomes an interesting question, however, is why this subnational citizenship as a collective identity takes place at the *kabupaten*

and not for example, provincial level? This question, I would propose, is a possible research agenda for those interested in the intersection between dynamics of digital civil society and political processes in Indonesia after democratization in 1999.¹⁷ A good starting point perhaps is to explore the effect of political decentralization after the passing of UU No.22 in 1999 and UU No. 32 in 2004 to the power struggle and resource struggle among political actors. One clear observation is the shifting arena where the struggles are played out, namely from the national level toward increasingly regional level in Indonesia. Since the direct election at the regional level becomes effective, local political actors especially at the *kabupaten* level are directly competing with each others attracting voters. Voters on the other hand are pushed to engage with the new reality of local politics and to some degree are in the position of actively responding to the campaign by local politicians. This is a stark contrast with the situation during the reign of the New Order where politics at the local level were deliberately suppressed for security reasons. Local *bupatis* and governors back then were appointed with much intervention from national interest.

One more thing to be noted is the shift of executive power that increasingly is deposited at the *kabupaten* level. Governor is now play a much more coordinative role instead of executing policies as the proportion of policies is increasingly made at the *kabupaten*.¹⁸ At times the governor might express his frustration in regard to the *bupati* that are not always cooperative. This frustration shows the real balance of power at the regional level and why perhaps the politics at the *kabupaten* level is much more influential. For one example, in the case of the emergence of Sarbagita (Denpasar, Badung, Gianyar, and Tabanan) as a form of inter-*kabupaten* governing partnership, we can see the role of the governor is taking the backseat. All these new developments at the subnational level perhaps are causal factors that are worth explored in order to throw some lights into the emergence of subnational civil society movements that increasingly exhibit qualities of politically critical and very engaging in the dynamic of local democracy.

Some Notes on Methodology

This short essay is also concerned with the question of methodology, and I will try to touch upon it however lightly here. The effort to approach a virtual community is not as straightforward as it is in approaching a real-world community. The difficulty lies in the preliminary effort to define the members as a *bounded entity* while at the same time they are also *borderless*.

Geographically speaking, the members of these communities are dispersed in various localities hence the problem of characterizing them through a geographical property such as Buleleng or Tabanan. Therefore in the effort of defining these communities as bounded entities, instead of finding *rigid borders* it is more productive to find *a shared feature* among the members. In this paper as has been suggested the shared feature is a common practice of imagining a virtual community through the engagement within the Facebook groups.

This challenge then reminds us to the call for anthropology as a discipline in the context of deterritorialization of culture to find “other anthropology” and not only anthropology about “the other” (Abdullah, 1999). Internet and virtual community become a new frontier that awaits ethnographers to embark and explore this terrain with new method and methodology. During the writing of this essay, Facebook’s timeline becomes the field where the ethnographer scraps volumes of data among the busy conversations among group members. Key informants are found after hours and days of observation before the computer screen. Interviews also could potentially be done without physical meeting but instead through Skype.

Endnotes:

¹ The original paper was prepared and circulated for the 13th International Seminar on “*Dinamika Politik Lokal di Indonesia: Kewargaan Subnasional dan Cita-Cita Negara Bangsa dalam Dinamika dan*

² Ph. D. Student, Political Science Department, Northwestern University and Arryman Scholar at the Equality, Development, and Globalization Studies (EDGS), Buffet Institute, Evanston Illinois. He studies the intersection of religion and politics through comparative historical and ethnographic method. Currently he is working on the questions regarding causes and consequences of different religious governance in Southeast Asia. Correspondence can be directed at gdemetera2018@u.northwestern.edu.

³ At least compared to other Facebook groups of which I am a member. But also, if we look at the population of eligible voters (*Daftar Pemilih Tetap*) that is around 550,000, it means the ratio of Buleleng’s digital civil society (using members of Buleleng jengah as one indicator) to its eligible voters is roughly 0.02. This is far higher than the ratio in Tabanan, another regency of concern in this paper although we do not know yet how high is this ration in comparison to other region nationally.

⁴ This essay, however, stops short from borrowing wholesale Appadurai’s various concept of -scapes since it is more concerned with the ontology of the two Facebook communities than facilitating comparisons between national and subnational imaginary worlds or even the fluid flow of cultural images. See Appadurai (1996).

⁵I render most of the name of characters in this essay pseudonym for ethical concerns due to the factuality of local election which impact was still felt around the time of the interview. Further rewriting of this essay, I found no reason to disclose the real names since it does not change much of the narrative structure of this essay.

⁶ In September 2015 the members has reached around 7,900 people.

⁷VivaNews, “*Megawati Anulir Rekomendasi Pilkada Tabanan*”, Sabtu 16/1/2010.

⁸ Black magic utilized usually for attracting a person toward romantic ends.

⁹Kompas, *Megawati KenaPelet*, 18 January 2010.

¹⁰See KPU Bali, *Hasil Penghitungan Suara Pemilukada Kab/Kota Se-Bali 2010*, Thursday May 20, 2010.

¹¹Tempo Interaktif, *Silang Sengketa Pilkada Tabanan*, 05/19/2010.

¹²Beritabali.com, *Massa Sukarno vs Pro Eka-Jaya Nyaris Bentrok*, 15 March 2011.

¹³For an introduction to the work of Habermas and the Frankfurt School see Raymond Geuss (1981)

¹⁴One such critique is whether deliberative democracy assumes an unrealistic capability of agent to deliberate. Is there really any deliberative democrat in the real world? See for example Riestra & Hook (2006).

¹⁵This is the pseudonym for his real name.

¹⁶I got this information from an academic in Buleleng who happened to facilitate the discussion in which Komang was present.

¹⁷Literature on the role of digital civil society in promoting democratization is a burgeoning one. See for example the case of Arab Spring in the book Howard, Phillip & Hussain M Muzzamil (2013). The question on the role of digital civil society after democratization however is not yet become a salient agenda of research.

¹⁸This information is based on interviews with local bureaucrats at the *Propinsi* level.

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