Performing the state: Everyday practices, corruption and reciprocity in Middle Indonesian civil service
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Chapter IV

Disciplining civil service networks

The movie clip begins by showing rows of young men lined up in an open space, sporting the same short-trimmed hairstyle, wearing the same khaki colored pants, black boots, black belts, white and blue t-shirts, dark blue cap in hands. The music starts to swell: a lonely violin is joined by the sound of a drum, after which an electric guitar enters, mingling the sounds into a bombastic rhythm accompanying the images. We then see a group of young women in full khaki outfits consisting of pants and blouses, head covered in dark blue baseball caps or white headscarfs running down a flight of stairs, smiling at the camera. These women are soon followed by the young men we just saw lined up, who wave at the camera as they run down the steps. The next scene depicts young women wearing blue track suits and the familiar baseball caps, jogging along tiled paths and up and down steps, followed by images of young men doing the same and wearing the same outfits. Various scenes of young men and women jogging in track suits follow. Then we watch several young men - presumably in the same surroundings, only wearing dark green pants and shirts this time - crawling and rolling over on a square, watched by other young men dressed in khaki outfits. We switch back to the group of women in track suits who are now doing push-ups. With their caps off, it is clear that all have the same short haircut.

In the next scene we return to the young men in dark green, all lined up in rows again. A young man dressed in track pants and a white and blue long-sleeved shirt casually walks past these men. One by one, he kicks them in the chest. In anticipation of the kicks the men hold their arms close to their bodies and crouch slightly. Following this, we see these same men, still lined up, getting punched in the stomach. The music in the meantime has changed: the fast-paced drums have disappeared and we only hear the calming tones of a flute, which contrasts sharply with the discomfort I feel at watching these images. As if this disturbing intermezzo was just an awkward incongruity, we return to watching young men and women in their track suits running, standing in orderly lines, or rolling around on the floor. At the 05:49 mark, however, the music changes again: the flute makes way for sinister sounding drums that enter with increasing speed and volume. We now watch young men in khaki outfits walking up a number of steps, only to get punched in the stomach upon arrival at the top by another young man clad in blue track pants and a white long-sleeved shirt that spells ‘Provost’ on the back. This ritual is repeated at the top of the next flight of steps. After reaching the top, all khaki clad men are kicked in the chest. The final scene shows four young men who just ran up the stairs - getting kicked and punched on their way up- lined up on top of the stairs. The young man wearing the ‘Provost’ T-shirt comes into

56 I watched the movie clip described here on a home-made VCD that was lent to me by a graduate of the academy depicted in the movie. This VCD was widely circulated among students and alumni of this academy. Short excerpts from this video can also be found on Youtube and were shown during a broadcast of TV station Metro TV in under the title of ‘violence at STPDN in 2003’: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7Rs3FpxxeVY&feature=PlayList&p=5DEB2D9B9D7074EC&playnext_from=PL&playnext=1&index=38.
frame again. He takes a run-up, jumps in the air, and forcefully kicks the first in line in the chest. Unable to stay standing, the young man in khaki trips backwards and falls down the steps. We hear him gasp and cough. The ‘Provost’ repeats this with the remaining three men. And so this video clip continues for the remainder of its 25:25 minutes.

The images just described depict training sessions at the STPDN academy (Sekolah Tinggi Pemerintahan Dalam Negeri) in Bandung. The uniforms, physical exercise, intensive drilling and corporal punishment displayed in the video clips I just described give the impression that the students of this academy are being trained for a position in Indonesia’s military. Somewhat surprisingly, these students are, in fact, being prepared to face the hardships of sitting behind a desk, participate in meetings and check and approve letters. The STPDN academy is not a military academy but, rather, a civil servant preparatory school which aims to educate the future upper level civil servants of Indonesia.

In the previous chapters I have shown the embeddedness of reciprocal obligations in family- and other networks in Kupang. I have refuted the assumption that ethnicity is the main marker for social stratification and, instead, argued that Kupang is better characterized by a separation of a particular kind of class –the state dependent political class (and political elite), whose members depend on the accumulation and conversion of various kind of capital for inclusion. I have explained one important way in Kupang of entering the ranks of the political class, namely by obtaining a civil service position, in terms of such accumulation and exchange of capital in order to, again, nuance the assumption popular in Kupang that ethnic favoring colors informal preferencing in civil. In short, in order to understand how to ‘get things done’ in Kupang we need to consider not the analytical value ethnicity as a primordial concepts holds but, rather, the importance of relationships and networks, and the reciprocal exchange of various forms of capital in those networks. With that in mind, we turn to particular kinds of networks in Kupang, namely those of civil servants. In this chapter and the next I focus on the techniques used to discipline civil servants into ‘proper’ civil servants and on some of the unintended consequences of these disciplinary techniques. I argue that the continuation of those ‘actual practices’ that contradict a ‘state image’ of wholeness and coherence (Migdal 2001) are actually facilitated by the successful disciplining of civil servants.

The topic of this chapter is the processes by which civil servants are disciplined into a distinct group of people, characterized by their own kinds of sociabilities and their own particular networks. I will address and compare two institutional contexts in which aspiring civil servants are disciplined. The first is the STPDN academy described above, in which during a four-year trajectory ‘career civil servants’ are trained for upper-level civil service positions. The second is the diklat, a short intensive crash course all civil servants have to follow before full, official acceptance into civil service. Even though, as we will see, these
two ways of training differ to a certain extent, they also have a lot in common. In both training settings, civil servants are disciplined to the notions of, on the one hand, hierarchy, and on the other, adherence to form. These notions are, furthermore, continuously repeated in everyday office life, and, thereby, increase the disciplining of civil service networks that are characterized by hierarchical relations and an adherence to form. I will address some of the unintended consequences of this disciplining in Chapter Five.

**Discipline**

In Bourdieuan terms, this chapter thus deals with the ways in which a certain kind of civil service ‘habitus’ is produced (Bourdieu 1977: 72). Despite Bourdieu’s attention to the dialectics implied in the relation between agency and structure (Ibid.: 3), he pays more attention to the effects of agents on structure -through acquired habitus and capital exchange and accumulation, but less to the ways in which habitus is acquired. For the purposes of this chapter it is therefore more useful to take a Foucauldian approach to subject formation.

The dramatic example described in the introduction of the kinds of training undergone by STPDN students is but one instance of a wide range of training that emphasizes values such as nationalism, discipline and hierarchy undergone by Indonesians in institutional contexts. More violent ones are found in military institutions, whereas less intense bureaucratic means of training are found in diklat courses for government officials or factory administrative staff. Examples of targeting young ones are found in schools (Performances of Authority 2011: chapter 1) or scouting organizations (Semedi 2010). As such, Indonesia exemplifies the idea of a ‘disciplinary society’ that Foucault claims characterizes contemporary society (Foucault 1994: 52). As is well-known, according to Foucault present-day society is characterized by power-relations that differ from those that typified sovereignty. Whereas sovereign rule entailed a top-down type of power-relation based on ruling aimed to keep the sovereign in power, current disciplinary society is characterized by the more subtle power-dynamics of governmentality, a means of governing in order to maintain and improve the welfare of the population. The object of rule (or government) has thereby shifted from territory to populations, and the sovereign as a source of power has given way to a more ‘capillary-like’ system of dispersed institutions working on individuals through biopower. In the current age of governmentality institutions function in order to enable individuals to reach their greatest possible capacities, which –with the transformation and acceleration of capitalism since the late 18th century- primarily entails increasing individuals’ productive force (Foucault 1994:201-222). The means for doing this are surveillance, control and correction –panopticism. This does not only occur in panopticum-like institutions, such as 19th century factories, correctional, educational and therapeutic institutions, as Foucault traces beautifully back to the early nineteenth century,
but has rather evolved into a more general ‘social panopticism’ that characterizes our contemporary disciplinary society (Foucault 1977: 195-228; Ibid.1994: 70-87).

This kind of approach has found its way into anthropological thinking in various ways. Talal Asad, for example, transformed anthropological studies of religion by persuasively showing that what comes to count as religion is better understood as the result of the production of institutional disciplinary practices rather than as a more Geertzian system of meaning (Asad 1993). Foucauldian analyses of disciplinary techniques have also been employed in the post-Socialist contexts of Eastern Europe, one which in some regards is quite comparable with the transformations in the Indonesian Post-Suharto period, and have revealed the production of some unintended consequences of, for example, retraining employees in a baby food factory in Poland (Dunn : 112-113) or on participants in a Orthodox Church-run rehabilitation center near St. Petersburg (Zigon 2011). In Indonesia, Simon Philpott, uses this kind of Foucauldian approach to urge a move away from viewing New Order political power relations in terms of antagonistic state and civil society, and instead to adopt a governmentality approach. This analytic shift is important, so Philpott claims, because it reveals not who governs -a (central) New Order state in binary opposition to ‘civil society’- but rather how one is governed (Philpott 2000: 148-152; Hindess: 1996). Similarly, Tanya Murray Li recently uses Foucauldian insights to dwell on problems in attempts to ‘improve’ landscapes and livelihoods in Indonesia (Li 2007). Closer to my own intentions in this chapter on disciplinary practices is Saba Mahmood (2005), who has taken an approach significantly influenced by Butler’s combination of a Foucauldian and performative perspective (Butler 1993) in discussing the paradox of subjectivation in an Egyptian women’s movement. She describes this disciplining paradox as, ‘the very processes and conditions that secure a subject’s subordination are also the means by which she becomes a self-conscious identity and agent’ (Mahmood 2005: 17).

Therefore, I draw from this Foucauldian tradition within anthropology in this chapter on civil servant disciplining because the examples I use fit into this wider framework of disciplinary society, and enable me to look at how civil formation takes place. That is, it enables me to consider how civil servants are made and what consequences come from this process. Most importantly, this approach helps me answer the main problem of this chapter and the next: why the various disciplinary techniques employed to produce proper civil servants also help maintain practices that contradict proper civil service propriety. If we take some of the goals stated by institutions and instructors that train civil servants as the ultimate consequences of the disciplinary techniques employed, we will be disappointed: crudely said, instead of disciplined civil servants that shy away from corrupt practices we get civil servants who show up late, play cards all day and accept thank-you money.

Whereas many authors tend to focus on Foucauldian insights to analyze how specific types of subject-formation are realized, such as Mahmood’s pious women, I also focus on
some unintended consequences of disciplining practices, for an understanding of which Yurchak’s concept of performative shift proves to be more helpful.\textsuperscript{57} Thus, even though my focus is on a specific subject—civil servants and the institutional contexts in which they are disciplined—I do not claim that what is created through the disciplinary techniques employed in these contexts are necessarily proper civil servants.\textsuperscript{58} Rather, what these disciplinary techniques do is create subjects that become tied to new networks that work through the power-relations characteristic of contemporary disciplinary society. Some of the unintended consequences I will describe in the next chapter are therefore not surprising, but make sense when looking at the techniques employed to discipline civil servants. From this perspective, what will become clear, then, is that similar to Foucault’s original perspective where, even though subjects are disciplined individually, the purpose of disciplining is tying individuals to a collective\textsuperscript{59}, in the context of Indonesia civil servants become disciplined into new networks as well—networks that are characterized by hierarchy and adherence to form. Unintentionally, however, these new civil service networks enable new kinds of sociabilities, and—more importantly—enable a continuation of the corrupt practices in civil service that these disciplinary techniques aim to avoid.\textsuperscript{60} These unintended consequences of successful disciplining will be addressed in the next chapter, however, whereas this one focuses solely on the techniques employed in various institutional settings to discipline civil servants.

\textbf{STPDN disciplining}

To start off a description of an institutional context in which civil servants encounter disciplinary techniques, I turn to the most extreme example of STPDN, the elite civil service academy we briefly encountered in the introduction to this chapter. STPDN graduates form what I refer to as ‘career civil servants’, young professionals that enter (local) civil service at fairly high ranks and have all necessary capital to move up in civil service, and, therefore, can expect to approach the elusive political elite circles of the political class. Even though STPDN graduates form a minority in Kupang’s city level government—annually only a handful of students from Kupang get accepted into the academy and graduate from it—most of the government officials (\textit{pejabat}) I spoke with, nevertheless, have an educational background in institutions akin to STPDN, albeit usually in regional rather than national ones. This means that a large part of higher-level officials have undergone similar disciplinary techniques. For this reason it is interesting to zoom in on one such institution to see how career civil servants are disciplined.

\textsuperscript{57} I have elaborated on the concept of ‘performative shift’ (Yurchak 2006) in Chapter One and will address its relevance in the current context in more detail in the next chapter.

\textsuperscript{58} Just as one would not want to claim that schools necessarily produce ‘proper’ scholars or scouting organization produce ‘proper’ scouts.

\textsuperscript{59} Via a process called ‘normalization’ (Foucault 1977: 182-183).

\textsuperscript{60} For instance, I refer to the institutionalized clientelistic practice of Bapakism that I will address in more detail in the next chapter.
The IPDN (Institut Pemerintahan Dalam Negeri – Institute for Domestic Governance), as the STPDN is currently known, is located approximately forty-five kilometers northeast of Bandung in Sumedang, West Java. Along with a cluster of other institutes for higher education aiming at preparing ‘cadres’ for civil service, it is integrated into the Institute for Governance (Institut Ilmu Pemerintahan – IIP) in Jakarta. STPDN traces its origins back to a long line of institutes focused on educating civil servants. The school currently has two faculties offering a total of six majors. The faculty of Governmental Politics (Politik Pemerintahan) offers a major in Knowledge of Governance and Empowerment of Society. The Faculty of Governmental Management offers a major in Management of Institutional Resources, a major in Regional Development, one in Regional Finances and one in Citizenship and Civil Affairs. In short, the STPDN academy offers its students a high-level, specialized education in governance, thus endowing future career civil servants with precious cultural capital.

In order to get into STPDN, eligible senior high-school graduates first follow a series of harsh selection procedures consisting of tests and formal interviews in their regions of origin. After having passed this first selection round, prospective students are invited for a new series of tests and interviews at the school itself in Bandung. Only very few candidates pass all the test procedures and enter the school. During their education students do not have...
to pay tuition fees or rent. Quite the contrary, students actually receive a small monthly allowance. Furthermore, STPDN provides its students with free housing, free meals, free uniforms and shoes, and even a free laundry service. The only condition tied to these benefits is that after graduation students have to return to their regions of origin to join regional civil service ranks and, therefore, cannot decide on a different profession. The state thus invests a lot in training skilled, educated and professional civil servants that -upon graduation with a Bachelor’s Degree- are sent back to the regions in order to take up reasonably high-ranked positions in local civil service.

I suspect that one of the reasons for investing so much in training professional civil servants is to counter some of the ills associated with Indonesian bureaucracy, in particular regional civil service –corruption, favoritism, and ethnic and religious conflicts. This suspicion gets supported when browsing the STPDN’s website. According to the website, the educational system at STPDN is based on the ‘central trinity’ of education (pendidikan), training (pelatihan) and ‘upbringing’ (pengasuhan). ‘Education’ refers to the transfer of knowledge, ‘upbringing’ entails the internalization of civil service values in the students and ‘training’ involves the transferring of motor skills necessary for executing civil service tasks. Accordingly to the ‘vision and mission’ part of the STPDN website, the goal of its education is to, ‘educate civil service cadres with the following three capabilities:

- The ability to manage the diversity of the nation and country in becoming a national force in the process of preserving the unity and integrity of the nation (unity in diversity).
- The ability to function as a conductor, namely the ability to manage several different positions and tasks, to identify conflict and discord however small and correct these so harmony between parties is realized and [they] in turn produce maximum accomplishments for the wellbeing of society.
- The ability to coordinate with other parties with different functions and to function as coordinator between several operational units and other institutions that operate in the region.

In addition, STPDN’s code of honor reads that the ‘servants of the Institute for Domestic Governance’ are:

- The cadre of the apparatus of domestic governance and regional autonomy is dedicated to the Almighty God, true to the Pancasila and constitution of 1945.
- A spirited service which prioritizes the unity and unit of the nation for the Government of the Republic of Indonesia.

63 www.ipdn.ac.id
- As son of the nation, who is ready to serve and volunteer as a sacrifice, [I] will maintain working hard and never give up with the execution of tasks in the interests of the nation and state.
- Trustworthy, disciplined, responsible, defender of truth/justice and honesty.
- Knowledgeable personnel that are willing and qualified with trustworthiness in fulfilling freedom.

One desired goal of the STPDN educational trajectory is thus to install students with a sense of nationalism. As the code of honor states, students ought to ‘prioritize the unity of the nation’, and, ‘as sons of the nation’ should be ‘ready to serve and volunteer as a sacrifice.’ Although regional communal and religious differences are recognized, this sense of nationalism should override regional sentiments, since students should be able to ‘manage diversity, while preserving the unity of the nation’, as stated in the vision and mission part of the website. STPDN students are also educated to be professional, ‘knowledgeable personnel’ able to ‘manage several different positions and tasks’. Additionally, the students are prepared for leadership positions, since they are to ‘function as a conductor’ and ‘as a coordinator’. Another value aimed for is that of a work ethic: students ought to ‘maintain working hard and never give up with the execution of tasks’. Furthermore, students learn to be ‘trustworthy, disciplined, responsible, defender of truth/justice and honesty’. In short, the civil servants STPDN wants to train are civil servants whose allegiance to the nation overrides local and religious loyalties, who are professional, and who are destined for leadership positions from which they can dispense their learnt values of professionalism, work ethic, discipline and trustworthiness.

The four-year long subjection to STPDN’s disciplinary techniques aimed to dispose these future career civil servants with abovementioned values at once brings to mind the ‘betwixt and between’ character of Turner’s liminality (Turner 1967: 93-111), and the panopticum-like institutions of the 19th century, described by Foucault (1994: 70-87). For four years STPDN encompasses almost all aspects of students’ life. Students study, eat, sleep, exercise and observe their various religions on the STPDN campus. Visits home are rare, especially for students from outside Java who have to take boats or pay for expensive plane tickets to go back. This means that students are wholly subjugated to STPDN’s educational disciplining and for sociability are fully dependent on fellow students. Thus -akin to Turner’s characterization of liminality- for the duration of four years students find themselves in a spatial and temporal context in which the regular structure of society is suspended, and in

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64 Although these values most likely overlap with aims of previous civil service preparatory institutions and the harsh disciplining is reminiscent of a more military style of disciplining under Suharto’s New Order, the institution tries to make a break with the past by emphasizing the importance of Good Governance principles in post-Suharto and post-Reformasi government in a special section of the website: http://www.ipdn.ac.id/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=106%3Agood-governance&catid=40%3Aartikel-&lang=en
which usual everyday differences between students make place for a new, more egalitarian social relationships, spurring a sense of communitas (Turner 1967: 93-111).

However, STPDN is not merely an ‘anti-structure’ in which egalitarian youth are temporarily suspended before entrance into a newly achieved status. As we have seen, STPDN wishes to turn out nationalistic, loyal, professional, and disciplined elite civil servants. Therefore, in a Foucauldian sense, bodies of students are disciplined into productive bodies, and individual bodies are tied to hierarchical wholes. Spatiality plays one part in this. As said, students are confined to the STPDN campus -with the exception of outings to nightclubs on a Saturday night or trips home for holidays. Besides educational facilities such as classrooms, computer rooms, libraries and laboratories, the campus also offers a dining hall, 30 dormitories, a clinic, a mosque a Protestant and a Catholic church, spaces for student activities such as drum band practice, theater or arts, and a wide range of sports fields. All activities students could possibly engage in, therefore -from studying, to social interaction, to leisure, to religious worship, take place on campus, using campus facilities, with fellow students. Students are also tied to a strict temporal regime, that regulates what time to get up, what time to have meals in the designated dining hall, when to take which classes, when to exercise, when to study, when to pray and when to go to bed. STPDN thus successfully, ‘take[s] charge of the whole temporal dimension of individuals’ lives (Foucault 1994: 80).

Furthermore, individual differentiation makes place for belonging to an STPDN whole that is, nevertheless, clearly hierarchical. Students have the same haircuts, the same exercise outfits, the same uniforms and the same boots. At best one can distinguish the men from the women and derive some clues on religious preference from women wearing a headscarf. However, upon entering students are immediately placed with fellow newcomers into cohorts (angkatan) and housed in dormitories. Juniors from younger cohorts are to respect their seniors from older ones. Seniors also have the privilege to punish their juniors in painful and humiliating ways, as we will see later. Students are thus immediately tied to a specific, hierarchical collective of social relations. This hierarchical collective is not (merely) the STPDN ‘communitas’, but, rather, a professional, skilled, and educated national elite of career civil servants.

Let us keep in mind that one goal of this emphasizing of a national sense of belonging in STPDN training is to overcome some of the problems associated with regional civil service, such as adherence to religious or ‘communal’ identities. This goal appears to have been obtained quite well by the alumni. Budi, a Muslim STPDN alumnus in his late twenties who works as a lurah in Kupang, lists as positive aspects he has taken from his education ‘discipline and nationalism’. While studying at STPDN he has met students from places as disparate as Java, Sumatera, Irian and the Molucca’s, and now has friends in Bandung, Surabaya and other places. While at STPDN, he mingled with Christians, Muslims and those
with other religions alike. He claims that through this experience regionalism and religious differences have disappeared to him, and that he is left with feelings of nationalism.

The disciplining of collectives is an intended consequence of STPDN’s training, for instance, the STPDN website repeatedly talks of ‘cadres’, thus already framing its students in terms of collectives. The nation-wide networks of STPDN students do not cease to exist after graduation: alumni stay in touch with their cohorts, seniors and juniors through well-organized alumni networks that are active on both regional and national level. STPDN alumni networks are even abundantly represented on social networking sites such as Facebook. Some of these networks hold formal ties to the academy, whereas networks are also used for more fun purposes. Valentino, a 2007 STPDN graduate who we briefly met in Chapter Two, embodies the ‘fun’ benefits of STPDN alumni-network membership. After his graduation and return to Kupang, he was appointed the position of aide (adjudan) to the mayor. This meant, among other tasks, that he accompanied the mayor on his frequent trips throughout the archipelago. Before travelling to Jakarta or Bandung, however, he always made sure to get in touch with his former cohort members or other STPDN alumni so they could take him out to swanky night-clubs while he was there. He told me it is a common courtesy among STPDN-alumni to show fellow alumni a good time whenever they happened to visit your city. Valentino returned this hospitality every time one of them visited Kupang.

These lasting personal bonds are also an unsurprising effect of the style of disciplining employed at STPDN- that at times is quite akin to hazing. As an extreme version of a rite of passage –spurring some to refer to it as ‘wrongs of passage’ instead (Nuwer 2004: XIV), hazing can entail extremely violent and coercive initiation practices that are undergone to gain acceptance into an exclusive community -for instance, fraternities, sororities or military institutions. Undergoing such ‘ritual torment and abuse‘ (Foster 2008: 3) collectively, however, creates a sense of camaraderie, loyalty and solidarity among prospective members. Again, Valentino serves as a good example. Although I found it quite difficult to get STPDN alumni in Kupang to open up about their experiences at the academy –especially when I fished for more violent ones such as exemplified in the introduction of this chapter or sensational newspaper articles, every now and then Valentino would share some thrilling STPDN story. He would recall, for instance, how sometimes he and his dorm friends would

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65 When typing in either ‘STPDN’ or ‘IPDN’ on the Facebook ‘search’ option, nine Facebook groups immediately come up, plus two specific cohort STPDN groups (‘IPDN 2008’ and ‘STPDN Angkatan 15’). The largest Facebook STPDN group –STPDN/IPDN- is ‘liked’ by 10,691 Facebook members, indicating a considerable degree of emotional support from STPDN students and alumni.

66 One example of hazing-like practices at STPDN was given in the introduction –the examples of physical violence experienced by students from the movie clip. Occasionally, hazing practices at STPDN even lead to fatal casualties. Rinra Sujjwa Syarul Putra, the daughter of the Governor of South Sulawesi, died on campus on January 31 2011. On a visit home her father had already noticed bruising on her stomach, to which Rinra replied that this is common at STPDN (Kompas 31/01/2011: Ibid.). In terms of gender relations, these examples show that STPDN’s hazing practices are not gender-discriminatory: men and women alike are subjected to violence.
be woken up by a senior in the middle of the night and ordered to run laps, even in the cold or in the rain. He also remembered standing outside the dorm with his fellow cohort-members for hours over some futile offense one of them committed. The most gruesome incident he recollected occurred after a senior inspected his dorm’s bathroom and found it too dirty. The senior took out a toothbrush, stuck it in the toilet and rubbed it against the sides as if to clean it, and then made all dorm members brush their teeth with it. With a big grin on his face, Valentino claimed he could still taste the disgusting flavor.

Interestingly, whenever relaying such anecdotes Valentino would not dwell on feelings of anger over harsh or ridiculous punishments, but, instead, recollect how all of the students in that dorm shared feelings of disgust by their communal punishment, how they would laugh together afterwards, or how they would cover up each others missteps. To Valentino, punishments were about experiencing a sense of togetherness, and about obedience and respect towards seniors. Such informal hazing practices thus result in strong bonds of loyalty, camaraderie and solidarity among students and alumni, as is well documented in other instances of hazing (Nuwer 2004; Foster 2008).

To summarize, the disciplinary strategies employed at STPDN, revolving around notions of separation, hierarchy, and anonymization, may –and do- lead to the institutional result of disciplining networks of good civil servants. Budi, for instance, still emphasizes learnt values such as discipline and nationalism. The tying of individual students into larger STPDN networks –cohorts and alumni-networks- is one of the, if not the primary, intended consequence of STPDN’s educational trajectory, as I suggested above Foucault argued it is the primary consequence of disciplining in general. Similar to hazing practices, the strength of these networks partly lies in the emotional gravity and loyalty of these ties based on shared experiences between members, as Valentino’s example shows. Therefore, STPDN disciplining creates alumni networks that remain intact and loyal even once dispersed throughout the vast civil servant system of Indonesia.

**Diklat disciplining: a crash course in civil serving**

The vast majority of civil servants do not go through the STPDN academy or a comparably strict regional preparatory academy before entering civil service. I previously referred to STPDN alumni as ‘career civil servants’ who enter civil service with the capital, skills and oftentimes strategic plans to move up, and who are also in a position to join the political elite ranks of the political class. I contrast these with the ‘content civil servants’ who occupy the lower ranks of civil service, who might not mind moving up in rank, status and salary, but who for the most part seem quite pleased having attained the much coveted position of civil servant and all extras made possible by their position. These civil servants most likely have a Bachelor’s Degree, more often than not in a discipline unrelated to their current position, while some older employees may have only finished high school. They acquired their
position either after having worked as a temporary (honorer) employee for some time before getting accepted as a ‘full’ civil servant, or by entering one of the official application procedures advertised by departments whenever vacancies are available. This application procedure is an extensive and uncertain one, not in the least because over a thousand applicants can sign up for a mere handful of positions.

The lucky few that manage to make it through all application rounds are not accepted as ‘full’ civil servants immediately. Instead, they have to fulfill a year-long trial period during which they get paid 80 percent of the salary a civil servant of their service rank would receive. Furthermore, since these new recruits are not actual civil servants yet they are not allowed to wear the blue-white Indonesian Civil Service Corps (KORPRI) uniforms worn on the 17th of every month in commemoration of Indonesia’s independence. During most of the year these ‘80 percent’ employees get adjusted to everyday activities and routines in the office, get acquainted with the tasks relevant to their position, and settle into the organizational structure. After having successfully completed the trial period, the final hurdle to be taken before full acceptance into civil service is the Pendidikan dan Pelatihan Pra-Jabatan (diklat, Pre-Office Training and Education), a rite of passage type of civil service crash course during which the 80 percent civil servants make a transition to the status of ‘full’ civil servant.67

Following a diklat course is obligatory for all ‘80 percent’ civil servants. The exact duration of a diklat differs, however. The one I attended in Kupang lasted three weeks and took place from 07:00 till 17:00 from Monday till Saturday. Another diklat held in Kupang a year later lasted for only two weeks. An exhausted recent mother who joined this diklat complained to me that it started at 06:00, often did not end before midnight, and took place on Sundays as well. Not joining a diklat can mean the end of your civil service career. An Indonesian PhD candidate at a Dutch university who also recently obtained her ‘100 percent’ lecturer’s position at a Yogyakartan university told me she could not take the diklat she was supposed to with other university lecturers since she was in the Netherlands. Therefore, she instead joined another diklat that happened to take place while she was in Yogyakarta in order not to lose her university position. Fitting in a diklat in her busy schedule was somewhat of an inconvenience, but the inconvenience was even greater for the other participants of her course - junior and senior high school teachers from the island of Kalimantan. Even though their stay at a local hotel and food was paid for, the trainees had to pay for their travel costs to and from Yogyakarta themselves. To them, benefits of diklat as acceptance into civil service outweighed the costs and troubles involved in following this course.

67 See website on diklat:
To get a sense of the goals of diklat and the disciplinary techniques used during the course I draw both on clips from the documentary *Performances of Authority* (2011: chapter 1) which depicts some great scenes of diklat training and on my own two-day participation of a diklat course in Kupang.\(^{68}\) One of the diklats filmed in *Performances of Authority* takes place in Hotel Mangkuto in Payakumbuh, West-Sumatra. The Hotel Mangkuto scenes mainly focus on teaching civil servants how to march. Under the watchful eye of an instructor trainees wearing the same black sweatpants and white shirts are singled out in small groups of three or four to march up and down in front of the hotel. Every misstep is immediately corrected by the instructor. With the marching going on in the background field coordinator Suhardi, dressed in civil service khaki, explains the purpose of these marching exercises and diklat training in general in front of the camera:

This is a marching drill, a part of the training for civil servants candidates. The purpose of this drill is to create discipline. In marching, people have to obey commands. So later in their duty as civil servants, they will also be disciplined. They march in good order, following commands. We are not trying to bring militarism into civil service. In fact, we just take from the UN philosophy to develop discipline and cooperation among the participants. This is not a militarization of civil service.

- *Performances of Authority* (2011: chapter 1)

Suhardi thus claims the most important goals of diklat training is the creation of discipline among participants. Learning how to march properly is therefore analogous to learning how to be a proper civil servant: those that can march in order and follow commands while marching will also execute office tasks properly in an obedient and cooperative manner. Interestingly, Suhardi explicitly shies away from making a military comparison, and, instead, traces this emphasis on discipline and network building to ‘UN philosophy’.

The methods employed to create these disciplined and cooperative civil servants bring to mind those used in the STPDN academy: separation, normalization/anonymization, and hierarchy, albeit in a crash-course rather than four-year trajectory. No diklat takes place in a government office. Instead, the departments organizing the diklat rent out a space in a local hotel (or in the case of the Kalimantan teachers diklat, a hotel in far-away Yogyakarta) for the duration of the course. The confinement to hotels then marks a separation from both family and work environments. For the trainees in Kupang, this separation existed for only a part of the day since they got to go home at the end of the day, whereas the Kalimantan teachers were in Yogyakarta for three weeks.

\(^{68}\)The *Performances of Authority* (2011) documentary is part of the larger KITLV (Royal Netherlands Institute of Southeast Asian and Caribbean Studies) initiated *Recording the Future* project, an audiovisual archive of everyday Indonesia in the 21st century. For more details, see: http://www.kitlv.nl/home/Projects?id=20.
Separation also became apparent in visual sameness of participants. Most clues regarding professional rank, occupation, personal style, and wealth made way for uniform clothing. The diklat I followed took place in the Spring of 2008 and was held in the conference room of a local hotel. Both structural and functional trainees from city level civil service, thus administrators as well as teachers and nurses of different ranks joined in. The differences that would exist in the workplace with regards to rank and tasks disappeared in the diklat setting: all participants were required to wear the same outfits for the duration of the diklat, thereby effectively anonymizing all trainees. Except for the first introduction day when trainees wore sports outfits, the dress code entailed black shoes, black pants or skirts, white shirts and black ties. The poorer ones among the trainees borrowed parts of their outfits from family members and friends to assemble their obligatory diklat costume.

The training sessions that make up the diklat course–physical exercise, lectures on governance and marching sessions–continue to stress this need for the not-quite-yet civil servants to conform to the proper form of civil servant propriety, in other words, the need to ‘normalize’ (Foucault 1977: 182-183). The means for doing this are through repetition, constant correction and punishment. This is exemplified by another clip from Performances of Authority (2011: chapter 1) from a diklat held in the little West-Indonesian island of Bintan. It depicts a trainees’ attempt at marching and practicing roll call followed by a superior’s scolding outburst. The clip shows a female trainee dressed in a white blouse, long black skirt and jilbab carrying a folder under her left arm. Her eventual task is to lead her fellow trainees into reading the text of the Panca Prasetya Civil Service Corps of the Republic of Indonesia, but in marching up to the spot where she can start reading, she receives constant shouted commands from her instructor, correcting her every flaw:

A woman walks up, right hand swinging in concordance with her steps in the style practiced by trainees in a scene depicted previously. She stops and turns 90 degrees to the right and now faces the instructor.

Instructor: “Can you stop Ma’am. Then turn right”

The woman turn back 90 degrees to the position she had when walking up, makes an exaggerated 90 degree turn back so she faces the instructor again.

Instructor: “Move to the right”

The woman takes a step to the left.

Instructor: “To the right!”

The woman steps to the right

Instructor: “One [step] more” … “One more”... “Lower your folder”

-Performances of Authority (2011: chapter 1)
As she starts reading the instructor interrupts her several times by shouting, ‘Again!’, after which she starts over until, with her arm holding her folder stretched out and speaking in a loud voice, she finally exclaims all sentences of the Panca Prasetya, repeated by her fellow trainees:

We the members of the Civil Service Corps of the Republic of Indonesia (trainees repeat) Are people of faith (trainees repeat) and subservient to the One God (trainees repeat) Loyal and obedient to the Unified State and Government of the Republic of Indonesia (trainees repeat) Prioritizing the interests of the State (trainees repeat) And the society (trainees repeat) Above our personal or group interests (trainees repeat).
-Performances of Authority (2011: chapter 1)

Afterwards the instructor singles out a woman in the assembled row of trainees who apparently squatted while everyone was repeating the lines. He now forces her to squat while everybody else remains standing. His reasons for punishing are:

Please heed this. When there is a command to stay in attention, stay in good attention. When you return to your own duties later, if you ask help from your colleagues, let alone your subordinates, what would you feel if they don’t obey you? Especially you who are educators. If you don’t follow my command here, it will also happen to you at work.
-Performances of Authority (2011: chapter 1)

What this clip thus shows are attempts at normalization or conformation to proper civil servants behavior by means of constant correction -asking the woman to restart reading and telling her to step right when she stepped left; repetition –practicing marching, repeating the lines of Panca Prasetya several times; and punishment –the young woman being forced to squat while being scolded for her inattentive and disobedient behavior. What this clip also shows is the stressing of subservience to a greater good as stated in the Panca Prasetya, whether this is loyalty to God, to the State or the following of commands of coworkers, in particular those of higher rank. Not one’s own private or group interests are important, but rather ones place in a hierarchical structure that emphasizes loyalty and obedience to those above you. This emphasis on obedience, internal hierarchy, loyalty to the nation and cooperation again echo the ideals STPDN student are confronted with and thus give us a more general sense of a general kind of civil servant propriety.

The impression we are left with thus far is that diklat training emphasizes the training of physical skills and obedience in a hierarchical structure. By repeatedly practicing how to march, trainees learn how to move their arms and legs, when to stop, where to turn, how loud to speak, when to answer and who to answer to. When not quite conforming, trainees are
brought back in line through corrective and punitive means. In short, trainees thus on the one hand learn how to perform being a civil servant well —which is aptly captured by the title of the film *Performances of Authority*, and on the other how to relate to others in a hierarchical structure.

Learning how to adhere to the form of proper civil servant conduct in a *diklat* setting is not very exciting, but rather, as I found out when sitting in on two days of *diklat* training in Kupang, quite boring. The sessions I partook in concerned lectures on governance. Like all trainees in the *diklat* I had received a booklet with necessary information about government that I was leafing through. After apparently having learned about ‘law’ and the ‘role of the executive part of government’ during previous sessions, the topic of the day was the ‘implementation of governance’. In a neat powerpoint presentation, as well as in the booklets handed out, the entire structure of the city level government was drawn and each part explained. The instructor’s story didn’t differ much from what was written in the booklets and stated in the powerpoint and mainly consisted of naming each level and Department that was part of the government apparatus. I was not entirely enticed by the contents of the lecture and, luckily for me, neither was my neighbor, a young female trainee named Lidia. In whispered conversation she told me she found the *diklat* overall very boring, but since this was the last requirement before full acceptance into civil service (and a ‘100 percent’ paycheck and pension after retirement) she was very excited as well. Another young woman, who had recently become a mother, slipped out of the conference room for a little while every now and then to nurse her newborn who was brought to the *diklat* hotel by her sister. She confided to me that she did not actually have to breastfeed her child for as long and often as she did. In fact, she did not have to breastfeed at all since the infant could drink formula. She found the *diklat* so tedious, however, that she was happy to have an excuse to get out of the conference room for a bit occasionally. The baby also proved a good reason to miss the required *diklat* physical exercise every morning and to go home early without being scolded or considered a spoilsport.

Not just the trainees recognized the set up and content of the *diklat* as boring. The class instructor, a male upper-level official whom I knew from the mayor’s office, recognized the curriculum needed some special packaging as well. He told me he lectures at every *diklat* and by now knows the texts of his speeches by heart. Since the trainees at times have difficulties staying focused he told me he introduced some little tricks to keep their attention. An important way of making the sessions more fun was by interacting with the trainees. One trick to keep the trainees’ attention was by having them finish his sentences. When dissatisfied with the trainees’ response, he would make them repeat the same sentence with more volume until he was satisfied. Another trick he used to induce interaction was regularly making jokes. Indeed, he managed
to evoke laughter from the trainees by lacing his speeches with small jokes or funny comments. Every now and then he would call out a particular participant for not paying attention or participating properly. In a joking manner he would then bring the participant back in line either by mockingly scolding the participant or by asking a specific question. As I saw on a few occasions, however, the questions asked did not have to be answered correctly - or at all. Rather, they merely seemed to be asked to induce a short moment of embarrassment for the trainee targeted and, after some good-natured laughter from all trainees, bring this trainee back to order. In other words, participants, when failing to adhere to the proper form of listening, repetition and obedience, were ‘normalized’ through slight punitive correction. This resembles the corrective technique used by the instructor described previously who made a digressing trainee squat while scolding her unfitting inattentive behavior.

As with the ‘performances of authority’ displayed in the marching sessions, this last example again underscores the importance of adherence to the overall form of civil servants’ conduct in a diklat. Trainees were expected to dress the part, finish sentences loud and convincingly enough, and pay attention. The content of the materials addressed during diklat training, nevertheless, took a backseat to this performative dimension. Knowing the content of the lectures was not of great importance: when asked a question it was fine and even expected not to have an answer. Initiative, input, creativity, or critical reflection was invited nor expected of the trainees. Instead, information was poured out over the trainees regardless of subsequent understanding. All trainees had to do was to arrive on time, wear the right outfit, sit still and reproduce given information by repeating after the speaker or finishing his sentences.

Failing to join in the form of diklat is a more serious matter than failing to keep up with the content. Not finishing a sentence loud enough will earn you a scolding from the speaker. Stepping left when you ought to step right will get you yelled at. Stumbling over words when reading the assembly text will make you have to repeat it. Trainees will go through a lot of trouble assembling the required diklat outfits, borrowing clothes when not having enough money to buy them. The transition taking place is this liminal period is therefore one of compliance to the form of authority rather than a submission to the values and norms of authority.

In the previous section I claimed that the STPDN academy creates strong, internally loyal networks that span the vast Indonesian bureaucracy – a primary consequence of disciplining in general. Some of the disciplinary techniques employed to facilitate this – separation, anonymization, normalization- also surface in the ‘light’ version of this disciplinary institution, the diklat crash course, and similarly tie participants together. The Yogyakartan lecturer mentioned previously who took a diklat course with junior and senior high school teachers from Central Kalimantan, for instance, told me that one of the best
consequences of following the diklat–besides full acceptance into civil service–is that she now has an abundance of places to stay if she would ever visit Central Kalimantan. Although it took her some effort to fit in with her fellow diklat participants, she managed to leave the course with new friends and acquaintances. A more important effect of diklat, however, is the disciplining of an adherence to bureaucratic form for civil servants. This adherence to form takes precedence over content and is constantly reiterated through the disciplinary strategies of correction and punishment of individual participants described in this chapter.

**Reiterating civil service norms: emphasizing hierarchy.**

Returning to Foucault, this is exactly how disciplining works, it ‘compares, differentiates, hierarchizes, homogenizes, excludes. In short, it normalizes.’ (Foucault 1977: 183). At the same time disciplining, ‘refers individual actions to a whole that is at once a field of comparison, a space of differentiation and the principle of a rule to be followed.’(Foucault 1977: 182). That is, through disciplining individuals become tied to a homogenized collective that is nevertheless hierarchized and rule-based. Differentiation therefore does not isolate individuals from their collective but rather ties them to this collective by placing them in hierarchical relations with others. Punishment in disciplining is therefore to be understood as corrective action in order to normalize –return to a standardized norm of a collective-individuals.

Nevertheless, subject formation -the disposing of a proper civil servant habitus- is not just a matter of long-term drilling in a panopticum-like academy or something accomplished during a rite of passage crash course. Just as to Butler (1993: 8-10) a girl is not just ‘girled’ by existing in a matrix of gendered relations but also by a constant reiteration of a regulatory norm, civil servants cannot become proper civil servants merely by existing in a matrix of bureaucratic propriety. An important part in the maintenance of an authoritative discourse, therefore, is repetition of a regulatory norm (Ibid.: 10). Becoming a proper civil servant, therefore, also hinges on the constant reiteration of civil service propriety. Reiteration in the form of constant normalization through correction and punishment is a disciplinary technique used in both STPDN and diklat. This reiteration, however, does not stop upon STPDN or diklat graduation. Having spent approximately a year in government offices in Kupang it seems to me as if everyday office life is laced with continuous performances of civil service propriety, which serves as a constant reminder and shaping of proper civil servant conduct.

Of all everyday office interactions the continuous emphasis on office hierarchy struck me the most. Differentiation in rank of civil servants was visible in the Monday morning roll calls when lower-level civil servants stood out in the open field while upper-level officials stood on an elevated stage shielded from the sun. Additionally, in most departments I visited ordinary staff were seated behind desks facing one direction, whereas the heads of sub-departments sat behind desks facing the staff directly. The department heads furthermore had
private offices in their departments, usually with a TV. In every office set-up hierarchical differences thus became clear immediately. Employees address coworkers with either ‘senior’ or ‘junior’. When passing someone of higher rank subordinates would often lower their postures, stretch out a right arm signaling their intention to pass and mumble an ‘excuse me’ with lowered head. In a more mocking way of showing a senior respect some bold young men would give certain seniors a military salute, but only when knowing their exaggerated showing of respect would be taken in good nature.

We have seen this emphasizing of hierarchical relations already in the disciplinary context of STPDN, for instance, in the power to punish ‘seniors’ hold over ‘juniors’. During diklat this similarly came to the fore in the little punishments of participants by instructors, and in the repeated stressing of the importance of subordination and following of commands. I was, nevertheless, not quite aware of how much this sense of hierarchy had become engrained in civil servants until I conducted a network analysis in the Department of Public Works. My analysis consisted of asking every employee to look at a list of names of all Public Works employees and describe the kind of relationship the employee had with every one of them. My intention was to find out if there were any non-work related connections in the department, which I explained when handing out my questionnaires. Almost every employee, however, returned to me quickly after having received the questionnaires wanting to know how they were supposed to refer to those of higher rank and those of lower rank. Even after assuring them that I really did not care too much about difference in rank –I just wanted to know if they had any friends, family members, fellow alumni, or church friends in the department- this remained an issue until we finally agreed on the acronyms AT (atasan – superior) and BW (bawahan – subordinate).

Internal relations of hierarchy were, furthermore, reiterated through the different colors of uniforms worn. Lower level civil servants wear khaki colored uniforms whereas upper level officials wear dark blue, dark green or purple. Civil service uniforms also serve as a subtle means of internal differentiation in other ways. On the 17th of every month, for instance, civil servants commemorate their nation’s independence from Dutch (and Japanese) rule. All members of the civil servants’ corps (Korps Pegawai Negeri Republik Indonesia – KORPRI) wear the blouses in the corps’ signature light blue designs with the corps’ logo. Temporary workers, who do wear the regular khaki, are not members of KORPRI and therefore do not wear the light blue expressing their loyalty to the nation-state. They also do not have the KORPRI insigne on their khaki uniforms.

Just as the hazing-like practices of STPDN tie alumni to a strong and loyal nationwide network of educated career civil servants, and the constant corrections and punishments of diklat normalize individual participants into content civil servant networks, the constant reiteration of regulatory norms also ties civil servants to a civil service collective. The examples of reiteration given, however, clearly underline Foucault’s statement that the
collectives individuals are disciplined into are based on relations of hierarchy. For instance - taking office uniforms as an example- while uniforms on the one hand set civil servants apart from the rest of society and perform a visible belonging to the Corps, they on the other hand suggest internal differentiation of hierarchy. Therefore, every time civil servants put on their office uniform, they are not only reminded of their gender (wearing a skirt or pants), religion (headscarf or not), rank (wearing khaki or not), or status (temporary, ’80 percent’ or ‘full’), they are also reminded of the fact that they belong to those lucky few that have managed to somehow get a position in the civil service.

**Disciplining civil service networks**

In this chapter I have tried to show some of the processes by which civil servants are disciplined into a particular civil service network. Even though the STPDN alumni networks are national in scale, whereas the networks enabled through *diklat* are more local, all aspiring civil servants encounter comparable disciplinary strategies that target, correct and punish individual subjects in order to tie them into the joint collective of civil service. The various disciplinary techniques described thus successfully discipline civil service networks. A second important consequence of the disciplining of these networks is that the networks created are based on hierarchical relations. A third consequence, however, that came to the fore most clearly during *diklat*, is that disciplinary strategies encourage an adherence to bureaucratic form over meaning.

If adherence to form indeed takes precedence over constative meanings such as, for instance, a condemnation of bureaucratic ills of corruption, collusion and nepotism, the question arises if this successful disciplining of hierarchical networks that value loyalty and the following of commands also has some unintended consequences that, perhaps, even help continue such bureaucratic ills. I started this chapter with a confrontational example of institutional disciplining of civil servants from a movie clip, and I will end with a question asked at the end of another movie – *Performances of Authority* – drawn upon in this chapter,

> *Maybe performing authority*  
> *Is caught up in its own performance?*  
> *-Performances of Authority (2011)*

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69 This question was asked at the end of a previous version of the *Performances of Authority* documentary but has been dropped from its final version. Nevertheless, due to its appropriateness in the current context, I chose to include it anyway.