

Machine-Rolling Kretek

Gamification and Individualization

What cultural ideals and social relations prevail in the mechanized factories that are the source of over three quarters of the clove cigarettes produced today? Yusuf, a production technician, claimed that culture was absent from rule-governed mechanized factories, lamenting, “What was great about Sampoerna in the past was Dji Sam Soe. Now it’s practically disappeared. . . . If we’re talking about culture, what built Sampoerna’s culture, it came from SKT [hand-rolled kretek]. In SKM [machine-rolled kretek] there’s just tight regulations.” Yusuf’s view of Sampoerna’s mechanized kretek factories as cultural voids was understandable. Humans are strikingly sparse in these cavernous buildings without natural light, dominated by imported machines that dwarf workers and drown out regular speech. Imported managerial techniques accompany imported machinery. Governing values and technocratic regulations are referred to in English, underscoring their foreign status: standard operating procedures (SOPs), safety, quality, volume, continuous improvement, best practices, lean manufacturing, key performance indicators (KPIs). Managerial orthodoxies often clash with practical realities; Sampoerna promotes “work-life balance” while imposing grueling shift schedules, for example, and emphasizes “safety” procedures while making a commodity that kills its consumers. There is little sense of the indigenous cultural and artisanal value that provokes kretek nationalist rhapsodizing in the hand-rolled context. From an anthropological perspective, however, imported managerial ideologies—as well as managerial techniques rooted in Indonesia’s domestic history—are also cultural artifacts, and understanding their attraction and uptake requires explanation, as do the social bonds and divisions among workers, managers, and machines.

Among Sampoerna’s methods of securing worker consent to difficult and deleterious working conditions, foremost on employees’ minds are the relatively

high pay and generous benefit packages the company offers in a tough labor market. Beyond these obvious material benefits, however, mechanized factories employ a range of other strategies for enrolling and controlling labor. Managerial techniques seek to capture increased value by gamifying labor—in doing so, transferring responsibility for factors like workplace safety on to individual employees. Workers' collective power is further undermined not only via the factories' use of machines but also by the unions that represent workers across Sampoerna's facilities. And both inside and outside of the wage relation, Sampoerna extracts value from their employees not only as producers but also as consumers of cigarettes.

Since acquiring Sampoerna, PMI has greatly expanded the company's investment in imported technologies and managerial practices, building on Putera Sampoerna's modernization efforts and construction of the Sukorejo facility in East Java in stages in the late 1980s and 1990s (as recounted in the introduction). PMI's 2008 investment of \$250 million in the new Karawang facility near Jakarta in West Java meant doubling down on kretek mechanization and conventional combustibles. It also mitigated disaster risk after supply and distribution lines to the company's Sukorejo plant were significantly disrupted by a fossil fuel industry–provoked mud volcano that erupted in Sidoarjo in May 2006 and proceeded to spew for over a decade.¹ In 2013, PMI consolidated its operations when it built a white cigarette factory adjacent to the Karawang kretek plant and transplanted machinery and workers from the PMI factory in Bekasi (on Jakarta's eastern outskirts). Whereas the Sampoerna plant in Karawang produces only three kretek brands—A-Mild, Magnum Blue, and Magnum Black—by 2015, the Philip Morris Indonesia (PMID) plant was producing 387 distinct products (stock keeping units or SKUs) under brands like Marlboro, Alpine, Chesterfield, Basic, L&M, Next, Peter Jackson, and Richmond. PMID sold 78 percent of its product domestically in 2015 and exported 22 percent, producing for thirty-one markets altogether, each of which had its own rules.² A quality assurance (QA) supervisor declared, “With PMID white cigarettes we have many more customers and they have higher standards. We have to uphold higher quality standards, expend extra effort.” Similarities in layout and operations across the Sampoerna and PMID factories, which are internally divided into primary factories for tobacco processing and mechanizing blending and secondary factories for making and packing cigarettes, illustrate how mechanized kretek production is closely modeled on white cigarette manufacturing. As part of its effort to expand the market for “smoke-free” tobacco and nicotine products, in late 2022 PMI opened a new US\$186 million manufacturing facility in Karawang to produce HEETS brand tobacco sticks (used with its IQOS device) for domestic and Asia Pacific distribution. This chapter draws on tours of Sampoerna and PMI's Sukorejo and Karawang factory facilities and interviews, many of which were conducted by Shahnaz and Fatma, who assisted me with this research.

THE FORTUNE AND MISERY OF KRETEK CAPITALIST EXPLOITATION

Economist Joan Robinson's (2021, 41) observation that "the misery of being exploited by capitalists is nothing compared to the misery of not being exploited at all" is salient for millions of Indonesians who live in a cash-based capitalist economy with growing unemployment and underemployment. In Sampoerna's mechanized factories, worker expressions of appreciation and gratitude for their jobs—and broader public sentiment about the economic importance of Indonesia's tobacco industry—must be understood against a national and global backdrop of jobless growth, economic precarity, underemployment, stymied middle-class aspirations, and swelling ranks of the educated unemployed (Ferguson 1999, 2015; Li 2017; Millar 2014; Muehlebach 2012; Standing 2011). Being exploited by kretek capitalism, and Sampoerna/PMI in particular, entails both specific fortunes and specific miseries. Factory hierarchies are rigid and gendered, grueling shift schedules lead to poor health and social isolation, and some workers are ambivalent about the moral status of their work. Despite their many understandable misgivings, for most workers, being exploited by a large, stable, and prestigious cigarette manufacturer remains preferable both to unemployment and to lower-paid employment elsewhere and enables them to meet moral obligations to family members, experience a rising standard of living, and plan for the future.

Sampoerna recruits and hires employees into a labor hierarchy that broadly distinguishes between outsourced labor, permanent daily workers, monthly workers, and managers. It outsources many support functions, such as security, cleaning, food services, and health-care services, while limiting its employees to core production functions as required by the government (Ford 2013, 237). Sampoerna uses headhunting agencies to recruit managers and fills its lower ranks by advertising openings on the popular website Jobstreet, setting up stands at general public and college job fairs, and recruiting recent graduates from nearby vocational high schools (*Sekolah Teknik Menengah*, *Sekolah Menengah Kejuruan*). Candidates must pass Sampoerna's written test, interviews, and health test.

The worker hierarchy turns those at the apex into a labor aristocracy and helps preclude the emergence of a common identity and solidarity that would put organizational pressure on management. The tantalizing possibility of individual advancement across grades and categories (e.g., from contract to permanent worker) also dissuades workers from challenging management. "Daily workers" receive lower pay and enjoy fewer privileges than monthly workers and are identified as "general workers" or under more specific titles, such as forklift operator, that require technical training and testing. In tobacco warehouses, forklift operators are accompanied by lower tier "checkers" who ensure safety and cross-check that items being loaded or unloaded bear the correct barcode labels. On the shop floor, daily workers assist monthly workers with tasks like stocking, cleaning, neatening supplies, and manual feeds. Monthly workers are in turn organized into



FIGURE 11. Filter machine production technician and daily worker. Photo by author.

a technical-skills hierarchy that rises from operators to production technician or “prodtech,” maintenance mechanics and electricians, up to those with supervisory responsibilities such as team leaders and managers. Whereas monthly workers enjoyed access to cafeterias with extensive buffets and foosball tables to encourage interactive play, daily workers either brought food from home or purchased it from a limited canteen. This had the effect of reinforcing hierarchies; one daily worker, who described eating as a basic matter of refueling, was teased by colleagues for his monotonous diet of canteen meatball soup (*bakso*). Uniforms further underscored distinctions between workers, with Sampoerna hiring tailors to customize beige and batik uniforms for monthly workers and issuing daily workers polo shirts and black slacks in standard sizes.

Gender influences the experience of kretek capitalist exploitation in mechanized factory jobs that are gender polarized and favor men overall. Daily workers conducting quality checks in the print pack factory were all women, whereas warehouses were overwhelmingly staffed by men. Quality assurance was more gender balanced, while machine operation and maintenance was masculinized. Ani, a female production technician who had operated packing machines for five years, reflected, “Women aren’t as strong as men but must try to be equal.” In her experience, gender differences in strength were insignificant, since most tasks on heavily automated machines could either be performed solo or necessitated two workers, regardless of strength. She was very nervous initially about handling machine keys (*pegang kunci*), breaking out in a cold sweat and working slowly. “Women

tend to be more detail oriented. Thankfully there was another trainee who took even longer than me although he was a man.” She reflected on her longer-term experience: “There’s a tendency to underestimate women and treat them as inferior [*suka minder*]. [Male] colleagues will say, ‘Just let me do it!’ [*biar saya aja*] I let them sometimes!” A primary-team leader insisted that the company did not discriminate based on gender, but he naturalized the dominance of male workers by claiming that they were better suited to the enormous (*gede-gede*) leaf and clove processing and blending machines in primary with their tanks and pipes, where monitoring often required scaling tall ladders and the odor was powerful. Appealing to gender stereotypes, he claimed that smaller machines in the kitchen amid flavorant sacks or the rolling and packing machines in secondary were more appropriate for female workers.

In particular, gender could shape interactions that crossed departmental lines. Ika, a female QA technician, was often in the uncomfortable position of instructing more senior male employees to halt their machines. Whereas production workers regarded maintenance workers as partners in keeping machines running, QA always threatened to slow things down. Quality might trump volume as an official company value, but QA structurally favored the former and production the latter. As a QA technician working in the print pack factory, Ika was responsible for inspecting products on the floor and making appropriate and timely determinations about whether they were fit for market release. During afternoon and night shifts, she often had to decide without consulting a QA engineer or supervisor, since they typically went home by 5:30 p.m. Sampoerna tried to set a narrow tolerance zone for defects and to offer clear guidance, but there were always gray areas and multiple factors to weigh. Implementing technical knowledge about defects necessitated her social skills, and she worked to be nice yet authoritative with production employees so they would take her concerns seriously. She performed random inspections on pallets once every two hours, initiated investigations if she discovered defects, and worked with production technicians to devise corrective actions to ensure that they would not recur. She had to cross-check to ensure that the number of reported and actual defects matched. On the floor, she was known as “Miss Hold” because she often put products “on hold” with a yellow stamp (red stamps indicated rejects). Indra, a male QA supervisor, acknowledged that a tough aspect of the QA technician’s work was that they “need to face lots of production workers alone. There are lots of different characters and attitudes among production workers. Some readily accept feedback, others prefer not to hear it or actively oppose it.” He claimed that he had developed a successful approach by making “an effort to interact with them, befriend them, hang out with them, join them when they’re eating a meal together even though we’re not in the same department. People are more willing to accept suggestions from someone close who they already know, rather than having a stranger suddenly make suggestions or blame them because their product is substandard.” Making these social overtures among men would be easier for Indra than for Ika, who

would have to cross gender lines and whose motives for approaching male workers might be subject to speculation.

In contrast to Sampoerna's flexible requisitioning of overtime labor in hand-rolled factories to meet high market demand or take advantage of lower excise tax rates, shift work is a steady feature of certain shop floors in mechanized kretek factories. Prolonging the working day, according to Marx (1992, 367), was but a palliative to quench capitalism's "vampire thirst for the living blood of labour"; to overcome individual physical limits to being exploited night and day, capitalists developed shift systems that enabled the appropriation of labor twenty-four hours a day and ensured that expensive machinery would not sit idle. Sampoerna's shift demands were tied to mechanized processes and capacities, which meant that a higher position in the labor hierarchy would not necessarily protect workers from shift demands just as a lower position would not necessarily expose them. Logistics and the tobacco and clove warehouses operate a single day shift from Monday through Saturday and close on Sundays, with workers expected to complete tasks within normal hours and, barring special circumstances, to avoid overtime. Other departments operate double shifts or around-the-clock triple shifts to continuously produce cigarettes, demanding the presence and labor of daily workers, production technicians, maintenance engineers, QA technicians, and contracted cafeteria and medical support staff. The primary tobacco leaf-processing side of the Sampoerna and PMID factories runs a morning and an afternoon shift, only occasionally adding a third to cope with a problem or high demand. In the print pack and secondary factories, four groups of workers rotate through three shifts. After five days on the morning shift (6:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.), workers get one day off, followed by five days on the night shift (10:00 p.m. to 6:00 a.m.) and two days off, five days of afternoon shift (2:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m.) and two days off, then back to the morning shift. The single day off after the morning shift, as well as the various holidays, mean that which days workers have off keep changing and only occasionally correspond to weekends when friends, spouses, and children are also off from work or school. For their grueling schedules, these "4G" (group) workers receive an extra allowance.

Researchers have found that shift work increases occupational injury risks, leads to sleep deprivation, impairs mental health, disrupts social and family life, may lead to preterm births and low birth weight outcomes for pregnant workers, is associated with gastrointestinal and cardiovascular disorders, and is a probable carcinogen.³ "The antidote for sleepiness should be sleep," Iqbal lamented, "but instead we drink coffee to stay awake." In addition to chugging caffeinated drinks, workers counteracted sleepiness with vitamins and by washing their faces with cold water. Night-shift meals were accompanied by small milk cartons that were supposed to nourish workers. "We are encouraged to maintain work-life balance," Wahid, an EHS manager, insisted. In reality, Sampoerna's schedules and demands often precluded any healthy balance and placed responsibility on workers to regularize their eating and opportunistically rest and sleep.

In addition to shift work, the factory location distanced many workers from social connections and from their families, whose economic well-being often justifies their sacrifices. As a QA technician hired fresh out of his undergraduate degree program, Indra said he soon stopped hanging out with college friends due to his shift schedule. Many employees bought homes or rented in bedroom communities where neighbors interacted little and were not bothered by irregular comings and goings. Although Sampoerna made a shuttle available to take employees from the industrial park to residential areas, those who could avoided it because it was inconvenient for reaching their ultimate destinations and/or because they did not want to prolong an already long day. One claimed that the shuttle was typically populated by workers who lacked their own vehicle and by women, suggesting that the factory's location and work hours could also deter female jobseekers and impose extra time costs on them. On motorbikes, workers risked daytime traffic jams and nighttime accidents. After dark, some coordinated with coworkers headed in the same direction to travel as a group for safety. Workers' wives sometimes opted to live in houses elsewhere or with their natal families, especially after having children. These workers often stayed in simple rentals and visited their spouse and children every few months when their schedules permitted travel, which could be draining and expensive. Locally recruited workers were more likely to live with their families, but the bustle and inescapable demands of family life could also make rest and recuperation from shift work challenging.

Other downsides of Sampoerna factory jobs were more specific to different arenas and tasks and exacted different mental and physical tolls on workers. As I detail further below, key performance indicators tailored to different jobs imposed a permeating stress on workers. Some tasks exposed workers to cumulative or catastrophic risk. In the clove warehouse, Julmansyah, a daily general worker who helped assemble production order loads, described lifting and hauling fifty- to fifty-five-kilogram sacks as "hot, exhausting, painful, hard work. There is nothing good about it."⁴ Tears streamed down his face when he started in the hot and fiercely pungent warehouse; masks had little effect on the clove scent that would fill his nose and throat. He had grown more accustomed to it over time but still found it overpowering each morning when they opened the warehouse, crying, "Ahhh, it really smarts!" (Aduh! Pedih banget!). A warehouse assistant unkindly joked that these workers got their exercise at work and didn't need to go to the gym. Sampoerna's print pack factory is also hot and filled with a vile and choking chemical stench. The plant manager assured us that EHS had determined that the air quality was fine and cheerfully boasted that the heat had helped him shed five kilograms. Fire risk in print pack was exacerbated by pictorial health warning labels. Whereas the company-branded portion of the label thickly applied a limited number of colors, machines used electrostatic assistance to create these thin and delicate multicolored warnings. The primary and especially secondary and print pack shop floors are also marked by high noise volume. Earplugs are mandatory, albeit not

consistently worn, in many of these spaces.⁵ In primary, the smell hovers between a deliciously sweet aroma and an overpowering synthetic stench. After inhaling this aroma day after day, one worker switched from smoking kretek to white cigarettes.

Despite these specific and sometimes severe miseries, workers often felt fortunate to have escaped the threat of unemployment and to be exploited by Sampoerna with its relatively high wages, benefits, and possibilities for advancement. Daily general workers in secondary described their pay as “decent,” with one adding that it was an improvement over his previous job at Yamaha. Hasan, a filter prodtech who used to work at a bank and pursued a bachelor’s degree in informatics through night classes, doubled his wages when he joined Sampoerna. Fajar, a maker prodtech whose pay “sometimes fell short of the minimum wage” in previous factories, was elated “to secure a job that paid 50 percent more than the regional minimum!” Tomas, a daily general worker in primary, enthused, “There are opportunities [*peluang*] at Sampoerna. It’s not easy to land a job here. My parents are proud. It’s much better than me becoming a thug [*preman*]!” Jarod, a daily forklift operator in secondary, said that between his and his wife’s wages, his family could “live well and afford everything we need, but it’s human to always feel dissatisfied and want more. As the Karawang saying goes: small and insufficient, large but still not enough [*kecil kurang, besar belum cukup*].”

Some workers experience moral ambivalence around the product they make and their working for a cigarette company, although others confidently pronounce their work as “good and halal.” After Yusuf completed a two-year contract in Batam working for an electronics firm in laptop assembly, he was interested in getting hired by a company like Nestle. “I didn’t want to work for a cigarette company,” said the maker prodtech. “Then a friend explained Sampoerna’s compensation structure, and I realized it was the most competitive job. Some colleagues at Sampoerna say it’s haram, but they still work here. They want to leave, but it’s hard because of their wages.” Like many male workers, Yusuf was himself a smoker with firsthand experience of the downsides of smoking. These and other drawbacks of the work, though, are for many workers weighed against the covetable material advantages of a Sampoerna job in the context of Indonesia’s difficult labor economy. Beyond the obvious draw of relatively high wages, mechanized factories employ a range of other strategies for enrolling labor and for controlling workers once they have first been enrolled.

WORKER GAMES AND CORPORATE GAINS

Sampoerna gamifies the workplace to more effectively extract value from workers and align their activities with company goals such as making cigarettes faster and more cheaply. In Hon’s (2022) critical appraisal, workplace gamification is often introduced under the pretext of making work more fun and fulfilling, but entails uncreatively layering “points, badges, rewards, and leaderboards on top of

existing task-tracking systems” to extract more effort and output, reduce labor costs and effective pay, and thereby respond to the market’s demand that capital and productivity grow unendingly (55, 61, 67, 230–31). Echoing a wider drumbeat of competition in society, such gamification instills “a drive for constant progress and improvement” regardless of particular circumstances, illness, aging, or frailty (41, 49). Governments employ this “fundamentally conservative technic” to uphold rather than transform existing systems and relations, while companies similarly use gamification to maintain stasis, keep workers in line, and funnel “profits to those who already have capital” (131, 241). Hon draws on Mumford to argue that where gamification is inescapable and constantly reinforces behavior, it is authoritarian. Those who accept its “magnificent bribe” (e.g., provisioning of food, housing, transportation, communication, medical care, entertainment, education) must in return consent to the gamification system’s rigidly defined goals and terms (160).

Kretek capitalism benefits from the myopia inherent in workplace gamification strategies. By encouraging workers to focus narrowly on specific tasks (e.g., reducing costs), Sampoerna obscures how accomplishing these tasks primarily benefits those who already have capital and may decrease broader social benefits (by reducing employment, for example) and perpetuate harms that are part and parcel of the tobacco industry (Benson and Kirsch 2010).

Sampoerna’s workplace gamification falls on fertile soil in Indonesia because it resonates with New Order government practices of engaging individuals, communities, and institutions in projects of competitive development, uplift, and improvement. Indonesia’s New Order government mobilized competitions (*lomba*) as a staple strategy for imposing social order, cultivating a mania for contests over village and household cleanliness and development that even extended into graveyards and domestic interiors (Baulch 2007, 90; Li and Semedi 2021, 135–36; Strassler 2010, 51–59). Building on the state’s imposition of values and invasive requisitioning of labor and resources under the guise of self-improvement and fun, Sampoerna brings competitions to (and beyond) factory shop floors. Corporate value judgements determine what constitutes improvement and uplift (*pembinaan*) and restricts the field of judgement to those arenas that further company goals. Participants are enrolled in a “system of desire” that posits rewards and potential advancement and mobility (Larasati 2013, 22, 77).

The ideology of continuous improvement helps secure workers’ participation and productivity by simultaneously recognizing their work and pressuring them to always improve it. Both people and processes are subject to this business orthodoxy, which pervades Sampoerna’s factories. Marketed since the 1980s as a key to Japan’s industrial success, continuous improvement enrolls workers to proffer suggestions that reduce expenses and improve efficiency, quality, and safety (Imai 1986). Sampoerna has also adopted and translated the Japanese 5S management ideology, which encourages workers to participate in creating and maintaining a

clean and lean workplace, into the five *Rs*: *rajin* (diligent), *rawat* (care and maintain), *resik* (clean Jv), *rapi* (tidy), and *ringkas* (practical).⁶

Sampoerna institutionalizes continuous improvement by setting targets, soliciting suggestions, and deploying rewards in ways that elicit the pursuit of both individual distinction and group participation (Prentice 2022). A factory poster explained that the company created “mini factories” to “give authority and responsibility” to lower organizational levels so “they can take actions to actively remove inefficiencies in their processes.” On a quarterly basis, monthly workers in each mini factory were eligible for awards for excellent, advanced, or good performance (450,000, 375,000, or 300,000 rupiah, respectively) based on points awarded—or subtracted—for key performance indicators tied to parameters such as safety (e.g., zero LTI [lost time injury] and medical treatment), quality (e.g., beetle population), productivity, cost, culture (e.g., number of implemented employee suggestions), and organized workplace (the 5S/5R patrol).⁷ Sampoerna awarded one point per implemented suggestion system idea. Production technicians and daily workers could also win “break the record” awards for beating previous figures for volume and quality (e.g., 500,000 or 200,000 rupiah on-the-spot vouchers for monthly and daily workers, respectively). Sampoerna evaluated teams on a shift and weekly basis for performance highs and lows. Maintenance workers could also win vouchers for accomplishing repair work under the target time for set tasks. The maintenance worker who processed the most work orders in a month or quarter also received rewards redeemable for household goods.

Many workers contributed to Sampoerna’s “suggestion system” (SS, also *sumbang saran*), submitting ideas to lower costs or improve quality, safety, or productivity. Sampoerna scaled its rewards and recognition to the suggestion’s impact, offering 50,000 rupiah at the low end for small suggestions that could be implemented or trialed by individuals and valuing suggestions with a safety component more highly. Ari, a tobacco warehouse daily worker, won a 100,000 rupiah reward voucher for his stock reorganization proposal, while a clove warehouse worker won the same amount for proposing a new forklift. Jarod, a daily forklift operator, won an award for his waste disposal improvement suggestion. “I’m proud of having received three stars in awards from the company,” he explained. “To be the best employee [*karyawan terbaik*], you have to closely follow the 5S and offer successful suggestions.” Tobacco warehouse assistant Razak’s proposal that Sampoerna reduce its tobacco warehouses from six to four won a gold award at the Sampoerna Open Convention and reduced annual expenditures by well over \$100,000. He explained that it was aligned with Sampoerna’s “lean program” for keeping stocks close to anticipated demand rather than maintaining a massive stockpile.

The lean program applied to workers, too. When Julmansyah began hauling sacks of cloves, he had ten coworkers. A few years later, six workers performed the same amount of labor. In another “special project,” Sampoerna reduced the size of its team of filter machine production technicians from six to four, putting

each production technician in charge of two machines rather than one, with a relief production technician on duty to assist colleagues and cover their breaks. Fajar had been a filter prodtech for only seven months when the new system was implemented and, as one of the most recent hires, had little choice but to switch positions and get retrained as a cigarette maker prodtech.

Sampoerna inculcates in workers the idea that their own advancement is linked to company advancement and that anyone, including those with limited formal education, can be promoted if they are sufficiently hardworking and motivated to learn new skills and contribute ideas. "Once you're permanent," a technical trainer effused, "you get your ID and login, access to the intranet, Sampoerna TV, email, career information, steps to advancement. We're very open! If you're enterprising [*giat*] and want to advance quickly, you can. If you're lazy, you can just move slowly." Maker prodtech Yusuf eagerly embraced opportunities to train on the filter and packing machines: "The more cross skills we get, the greater our chances of being promoted a grade. We're evaluated, and asked if we want to stay where we are or change." Lukman, a print pack factory team leader who had started out as a production technician, exemplified the idealized upward career trajectory, and contrasted Sampoerna favorably to the family-owned printing firm where he had previously worked; there, being a member of the owner's family was an unspoken prerequisite for promotion. Sunario, meanwhile, rose to his permanent monthly position from a contract position he took fresh out of his high school degree in mechanical automation. He was initially responsible for production waste, then quality checking. In 2011, he was among seven contract workers whom managers selected to try out for Sampoerna jobs. He and two others passed the initial tests and continued to three months of on-the-job training. Although he was younger and less experienced than the other two, he was the only one who passed and became a Sampoerna worker. He was thrilled: "Becoming a Sampoerna worker was my goal due to the better wages, benefits, meals and facilities." He advanced into a rotogravure printing press production technician position in 2015.

Sampoerna's mechanisms for evaluating and promoting workers include detailed job descriptions, performance review targets, biannual reviews, and a career development system. In their biannual reviews, workers present to senior panels (for example, a production technician might face a production team leader and maintenance representative) who have examined their written performance reviews and grades (on work efficiency, quantity, quality, and safety) and give them situational challenges: "Your machine develops problem X. How would you work to resolve it? At what point would you seek external help?" The panel dispenses advice about arenas for development. "Each year, we get a list of what we need to study, train in," Ika explained. "If we want to follow a certain career path, then our training should follow that direction." Sunario saw team leaders as equipped with trainings and strategies that help them make prudent decisions when confronted with dilemmas like "How do we deal with this person's issue? Do we need to stop

this machine?" He added, "We need to treat those below us as friends, not oppress them, make them upset."

Nevertheless, even those who praised Sampoerna's work in "developing people" acknowledged that opportunities for advancement were curtailed by limited job openings and interpersonal and structural antagonisms. Julmansyah felt stuck in his physically brutal dead-end clove warehouse work because for the foreseeable future, the number of employees and positions matched. Maintenance mechanic Rendy similarly lamented that "if you want to become a team leader, you might have to wait a long time for an opening." Dismissing unrealistic expectations of upward mobility, an industrial and employee relations manager said, "Any daily worker can pour their heart out [*curhat*] to their boss and share their interests and aspirations, but they have to have abilities that fit with our business needs." Not all bosses supported their subordinates' advancement. One warehouse assistant complained that his previous boss had stifled rather than fostered his abilities and autonomy, rendering him passive. Evaluations also played a role, and Ika believed that the structural antagonism between QA's quality drive and production's quantity drive could creep into her evaluation: "Our bosses have to gather information from people we interact with in production. It can be a bit subjective since people in production might not like to hear about quality issues." Maintenance workers and production technicians were also subject to competing imperatives when it came to reporting how long it took to resolve an issue; maintenance wanted the shortest time possible recorded for their task completion, whereas the prodtech who filled out the report might claim the machine was offline for longer to justify a production target shortfall. Iqbal found it aggravating when prodtechs exaggerated offline time, but he appreciated both perspectives, having spent a year as a prodtech before being selected for maintenance training: "As a prodtech, you're concerned with safety and attaining volume. As maintenance, you're concerned with troubleshooting and organization. Your KPI are safety first, quality, and productivity."

Continuous improvement, and all the incentive systems that accompany it, can make factory labor more appealing to workers by recognizing and responding to their knowledge and ideas. But it can also function like a treadmill that keeps increasing its intensity, forcing everyone to always run a little harder and faster. And it is each individual worker, notably, who is responsible for keeping pace and for dealing with any obstacles that might prevent them from matching their employer's expectation: continuous improvement and its accompanying gamification, that is, transfer risk and responsibility onto workers. Discussing key performance indicators such as safety, inventory accuracy, and quality, Razak admitted that outside of the tobacco warehouse, he frequently ruminated on his KPIs and feared he would fall short as they were set higher every year. Sampoerna declared the tobacco beetle "our biggest enemy." Traps were distributed around the tobacco warehouse, which also underwent monthly fumigation. To avoid stimulating

beetles into activity and reproduction, warehouse temperatures were kept within five degrees of 30°C (86°F), and human activity was supposed to conclude by 3:00 p.m., since the beetles became more active in warmer temperatures and later in the day. Despite such precautions, the beetles could eat substantial quantities of tobacco and could even appear in the finished product. At three millimeters in their larval and adult stages, they are visible to the naked eye. “If someone found a worm in their cigarette,” Razak fretted, “they might not want to buy them again!” (Indeed, cigarette company archives record customer complaints about bugs and revulsion over the idea of smoking worms and insect feces [Proctor 2011, 487–88]).

Sampoerna instills safety as a top priority through a range of globally circulated ideologies, tools, and mechanisms that economize safety, punish protocol breaches, and shift responsibility from the company to workers. Workers undergo general and machine-specific safety trainings, learn codified safety procedures, receive place- and task-specific personal protective equipment (e.g., earplugs, goggles, respirators, steel toe shoes, body harnesses, back support), perform pre-shift safety briefings, win prizes for accident-free work quarters and safety enhancement suggestions, face punishment when safety incident investigations find them at fault, and confront an environment embedded with safety reminders, from hazard warning stickers on specific machine parts to banners, posters, and doors decorated with safety themes. While safety has become a conventional shibboleth for large companies, its prominence in a setting where the product being manufactured kills its consumers when used as intended contains an element of irony. This is compounded by Sampoerna’s predilection for marketing safety to workers with the same slogans and trademark humor that it has so successfully deployed to attract customers to cigarettes (see chapter 4). A-Mild advertising slogans such as “Ask why” (*Tanya kenapa*) and “No bull” (*Bukan basa basi*) are recycled in factory safety messaging, marking a parallel between securing the labor of workers and consumption of smokers.

The hazards workers face are real and consequential. They recounted stories of colleagues suffering injuries—a worker who fell in the clove warehouse and was later transferred to a different department, a general worker who was hospitalized after a heavy box toppled on him in the tobacco warehouse, a fatally electrocuted maintenance worker, and workers caught in moving machines parts that cracked bones but fortunately did not lead to amputated limbs. Posters list the hazards associated with different work zones and machines—falls, back injuries, hand injuries, moving parts, forklift collisions, burn risk, chemical exposure, and so forth. A doctor or paramedic is present in the factory polyclinic around the clock.

Consistent with global corporate orthodoxy, Sampoerna tends to render safety as an economic concern over potential loss of productivity and profits rather than a moral concern over worker welfare and well-being. Concepts such as lost time injury (LTI) reinforce the economic risks rather than moral consequences of accidents (Welker 2014). “Our target is clear,” an EHS manager explained. “We must

avoid LTI, accidents that lead to lost work time, whether due to death or injury. They aren't allowed, they must be null. We also have targets for TRIR, the Total Recordable Incident Rate arising from accidents that require medical treatment, such as stitches and workplace injuries that prevent workers from carrying out their primary job, like a hand injury." This economization of safety can serve to legitimize it internally and help secure resources and funding, but it also directs attention toward (often more catastrophic) injuries that threaten profits and away from routine and accretive injuries due to loud noise, chemical exposure, shift work, and repetitive motion tasks. In this respect, too, workers and smokers occupy kindred positions within kretek capitalism; the slower forms of harm embedded in factory labor parallel the slow violence inflicted by cigarette consumption.

Sampoerna also follows global corporate safety orthodoxy with an approach that aims to instill safety "culture" and responsibility into workers. The EHS manager insisted that EHS representatives do not want to be "like traffic cops patrolling the facility. Our aim is to plant safety awareness and culture. We welcome ideas from users [workers] who directly experience the dangers of their work environments. We want them to report small incidents that could indicate potential for larger accidents." On the one hand, this approach demonstrates an appreciation for workers' knowledge, experience, and ideas. "Speak up" and "Demand a safe work environment," urges one poster. "Report safety hazards no matter how small," prods another, alongside an image of a deer encountering a future threat in the form of an adorable little lion cub. On the other hand, blame often follows where responsibility leads, and the "responsibilizing" of individuals tends to correspond to an "irresponsibilizing" of powerful institutions (Trnka and Trundle 2017). One poster brandishes the statistic "96% of accidents are caused by unsafe behaviors." Another shows how workers in a maze who obediently adhere to safety procedures return home to their loved ones, while careless, negligent, rule-violating workers wind up in the hospital. Workers have a duty to police themselves.

Workers were swift to acknowledge Sampoerna's emphasis on safety, and some subscribed to the company perspective that human behavior was the primary source of workplace injuries. Signaling the global origins of safety discourse, they consistently used the English term, inserting "safety first" or "safety, safety, safety is prioritized [*diutamakan*]" into Indonesian speech. Regarding safety lapses, prodtech Hasan observed, "Incidents occur. It's human nature to be careless now and then." A maintenance electrician attributed his colleague's death to his failure to follow appropriate procedures. "Electricians are supposed to work in pairs, but he was working alone. He was trying to install the emergency stop but hadn't turned the panel off and got electrocuted by the emergency stop cable itself." Of himself he said, "Of course there is a sense of fear. But we follow LOTO [lock out, tag out] procedures so when we're working on a machine or taking it apart, it can't be activated. Machines are long and large, and we often don't know which part of it requires repair." Sampoerna's elaborate safety procedures and instructions support

forensic accounts of incidents and injuries that blame workers (Did someone bypass a sensor? Fail to store solvents in the flammable materials cabinet? Leave a veil dangling or long hair loose? Disregard prescribed work postures and lifting procedures? Neglect to wear or properly fasten their personal protective equipment?). This directs attention away from the intense time pressure and exhausting shift schedules under which they labor to continuously produce cigarettes.

MACHINE RELATIONS

If managerial strategies focused on gamification and safety procedures have the effect of inculcating a sense of individual responsibility on the part of each worker, a related series of strategies bring about a complementary outcome: undermining any sense of collective power among workers. This manifests perhaps most obviously in the factories' compromised and compliant labor union, as discussed below, but also in the role that machines have come to play in these facilities. Rizal recalled that when the machines arrived at the Karawang plant in 2008, they were "exactly as the Creator made them," evoking God (*Mesin masih full murni dari Sang Pencipta*). "We modified machines a lot so they'd meet our needs," the primary factory team leader explained. "For example, if a machine was supposed to process ten tons an hour, could we enlarge it and raise it to fifteen tons? If we found something unsafe, could we add extra protection?" Maintenance performed some modifications in house, while Sampoerna contracted others out to vendors. Cloves undergo cleaning, conditioning, cutting, and drying on retrofitted tobacco machinery from Italy.

Workers occasionally underscored how fully automated the machines were (*serba otomatis*), rendering humans marginal, mere accessories to the machines that performed the actual labor. Fajar, a cigarette maker prodtech, said the machines "appear complicated, but it's all computerized, so you control it at the screen." "Everything is standardized, all aspects of the product," his colleague Yusuf affirmed, "so the machine runs its own quality checks. If it's not up to spec, it will immediately shut down. It checks itself. Rejections are rare." Eko concurred: "We program the machines to produce a certain quantity of cigarettes or packs, and they shut down once they reach that number."

But despite the promise of simple, error-free production that these technologies held out, a hierarchy of experts and a raft of protocols were involved in monitoring, cleaning, and repairing the complex and temperamental machines. If a cigarette maker broke down five or fewer times per week, according to a maintenance technician, they were doing their jobs well. Maintenance scheduled regular parts replacement and conducted both "predictive maintenance," anticipating parts that were likely to break down (e.g., bearings that would need to be changed within a week), and "reactive maintenance," in which service team members were called to respond to indicator lights or larger issues. Workers' views of machines as



FIGURE 12. Cigarette maker. Photo by author.

largely self-operating and self-checking are troubled by the procedures, problems, and layered human oversight actually involved in keeping machines running, but this perspective is nevertheless suggestive of how such mechanized factory atmospheres can deemphasize the collective human labor involved.

Before workers interact with the machines for which they are responsible, they spend a week or longer acquiring general and machine-specific training in the Technical Training Department. The department's manager explained that Sampoerna's machines, like a domestic refrigerator, might arrive with a manual, but it wouldn't cover all the knowledge needed to run it. In training, they used simple, universal language (*bahasa global*) and a discussion-based approach to discover what workers understand. Questions are posed and then answered in short, concrete words: "What does a motor do? It converts electrical into mechanical energy." Technical Training modules covered general knowledge, safety, troubleshooting, cleaning, and maintenance. After they leave the classroom, workers are typically assigned to work "in tandem" with experienced operators, gradually working more independently. Under the oversight of a more senior employee, Fajar recalled being allowed to work until he made a mistake or showed he didn't understand what to do. Fajar was initially trained on filter machines, which he described as not only more dangerous than cigarette makers and packers but also more fraught: "Filters are very expensive so you get in trouble when you waste them. Once something went wrong with mine and there was a huge amount of waste. Fortunately, the investigation found that I wasn't at fault." Due to the speed

and scale of the machines, a primary supervisor observed, it was easy to spew out a “bus-sized” reject batch before workers detected any problem. After three months of “on the job training,” Sampoerna evaluates new hires and decides whether to make them permanent. Technical training issues certificates to workers who pass their training and evaluation as operators of specific machine types. In addition to new hires, the division also trains workers who switch functions or are seeking more advanced skills.

Machine operators often described machines in warm, mutualistic, and intimate terms. Adib, a primary prodtech, explained that direct experience over time builds machinic awareness, using the English word *aware*. “It’s like knowing the voice of your child,” he elaborated, “when something is unusual, off, and the reason why. If it’s a new model, then you don’t yet know its voice, so you have to run it and get to know its voice first.” Ani also used a domestic analogy: “Packing machines are all the same, yet each feels different. Each has its own distinctive characteristics, its own tendencies towards problems. It’s like your own house, you want to keep it clean and orderly.” After spending five years with filter machines, Hasan knew the “small sounds” they made “where there’s trouble, like in the roller. And you know when they’re running well. Like a human, they need to be cared for, cleaned. I try to do my best for the machine. Before starting it, I do all my checks and cleaning.” Rizal explained that machines signal and communicate if one knows what to look for and listen to: “We know the flow of the machine. The longer we work with a machine, the easier it is to diagnose what’s normal and abnormal. The air pressure, the motor running. Maybe something’s going out, *dak-dak-dak*, *dacit-dacit*. We get the feeling, ‘This is going to have trouble.’ It’s nice. When machines change or act differently, we’ll feel it. Maybe it’s a dirty screen or the ventilator.”

Some workers used the idiom of friendship to describe their relations with machines. Yusuf regarded them as animate “partners” with souls (*nyawa*): “At first the machines are confusing, but after a while we know what they’re like. ‘You’re acting like this, I need to adjust that.’ Like with a friend. ‘Oh, you’re doing this, so that’s what you want.’” He nevertheless kept machines’ instrumental purpose in sight: “They have to be respected and handled with care so that we will walk in sync together. They have to keep running so that we will achieve our target volume.” When one worker first encountered the machines, he felt clumsy and tense (*kikuk*, *tegang*). As his knowledge and confidence grew, he developed a more alert and mindfully vigilant (*waspada*) disposition: “We know which areas are dangerous.”

While some workers compared machines to human companions, others appreciated their nonhuman qualities and found upsides to collaborating with machines rather than humans. A maintenance technician said, “Machines are easier to work with than people. They are inanimate objects [*benda mati*], so we can just decide what needs to be done. People have to be evaluated. ‘What’s this person like? How are they going to respond?’” Rizal was nostalgic for the machine-centered tasks he had engaged in before being promoted to team leader. “The keys, the oil, it’s a

pleasure for me. I enjoy managing machines. They don't get angry or feel offended. Managing people is different. Overseeing the performance of a machine is different to overseeing the performance of a person." He fondly evoked his motorbike: "I care for it, routinely change the oil, wipe it down after it rains." Such warm feelings toward machines, and the spatial and sonic dominance of machinery on the shop floor, do little to foster solidarity among workers. And neither, perhaps unexpectedly, does the labor union that workers belong to.

THE ANTI-UNION UNION

Daily workers in Sampoerna's mechanized factories, like daily workers and pieceworkers in Sampoerna's hand-rolled factories, belong to the cigarette, tobacco, food, and drink sector of the umbrella All Indonesia Workers' Union (Serikat Pekerja Seluruh Indonesia or SPSI) introduced in chapter 2. They share the same pro-management attitude, aspirations for individual worker promotion, and staunch opposition to labor radicalism and tobacco control.

The mechanized factory unions reinforced managerial efforts to make workers see themselves as agents of, and assume responsibility for, company productivity, quality, safety, and continuous improvement. The union examined worker performance, one leader explained, and asked, "What did we do wrong in 2015? For example, absenteeism. How do we adhere to disciplinary rules and prevent workers from reaching the stage where management sends them a warning letter?" The union advocated for workers accused of wrongdoing when charges seemed misplaced but supported management decisions if follow-up investigations found them guilty. Taufik, a Sampoerna union leader, cautioned workers to avoid the temptation to steal. "This is where we make our living. Don't even try taking something small; it might become an addiction, and you'll be tempted to take more, larger things." For Idham, the leader of the Philip Morris Indonesia union, informing workers about procedures was a priority—for example, how small violations (*pelanggaran kecil*) could be recorded, lead to warning letters, and get raised in annual reviews as disciplinary problems. "If you're absent, it will affect your work team's performance. The team leader will want someone different."

Managers contributed resources to SPSI, and representatives reciprocated by routinely informing them about workers. Management funded events, such as their annual meeting and invited speakers, and furnished Idham with a laptop that he used to document and record meetings. Taufik claimed that the union successfully lobbied management for better facilities like coffeemakers and a tripling of transport and meal subsidies. The union also requested representation and involvement in factory planning as part of a bid to be more valued and given an active role rather than being seen "solely as the helpers of operators and prodtechs." The unions submitted weekly reports to managers and met with them monthly, where, Idham explained, "mostly we discuss small issues [*kasus ringan*]. We tell

them what the problems are, and they send this information on to IR [Internal Relations] and HR [Human Resources] in Surabaya. We are the managers' eyes and ears on the floor. If anything inappropriate is going on, we let them know. We are their spies." The union leader declared, "I'm anti-demonstration. Let's take actions that will benefit us and the company."

Union leaders pursued internal hiring and promotions for members and recommended promising candidates to managers for monthly positions. Workers promoted to monthly status were not unionized but automatically became members of the internal Bipartite Cooperation Institution (Lembaga Kerja Sama Bipartit or LKSB), which heard complaints and suggestions at monthly meetings attended by managers and monthly workers representing various departments. LKSB dealt mostly with uncontroversial matters like parking, safety, projects, rules, and department-specific issues, but a maintenance electrician noted it could be used to circumvent hierarchies, "If you raise an issue with your boss, they might not bring it up to their boss, but if it is brought to LKSB then it comes up at the meeting."

Union leaders framed their approach as the antithesis of that taken by contract workers for the Swiss firm ISS who demonstrated for several months in 2013 for higher wages and better positions. Sampoerna's permanent workers had negative recollections of this period— long overtime shifts, sleeping at the factory, eating what was left at the canteen, getting stuck at work when they were sick, and being escorted by mobile brigade police after demonstrators beat up a manager. They blamed demonstrators for using violent tactics and making irrational demands for permanent workforce inclusion without submitting to Sampoerna's testing process. ISS demonstrators were fired, but Sampoerna kept working with the firm. Sampoerna added several hundred new trainee positions for daily workers in August 2013, but only a minority of ISS workers successfully passed Sampoerna's tests. Sampoerna sought to depoliticize permanent daily workers by encouraging them to form a local chapter of SPSI-RTMM under the guidance of a worker seconded from Sukorejo to the Karawang plant. Taufik explicitly contrasted their approach to that of the ISS union, which he claimed took advantage of the "hot culture" in Karawang:

They were very reactive. They blew up small problems. They only regarded demonstrations and actions [*aksi*] as real and didn't appreciate what can be accomplished by negotiating. We take a more familial approach and seek win-win solutions. Others call us the most aristocratic [*priyayi*] organization. The 2013 clashes made workers mistrust unions. We're trying to build a positive union image. We engage in positive rather than negative activities, team sports not demonstrations and anarchy. Our product is positive. We want to create industrial peace and harmony.⁸ Managers appreciate our good intentions.

Taufik seemed unperturbed by his union's aristocratic reputation, and he embraced marketing language and goals (positive image and product) and the union's success in pleasing managers.

Most daily workers readily identified as SPSI members (*anggota*) but were circumspect about their knowledge of or investment in union activities, maintaining a scrupulously neutral and distanced stance. Tobacco warehouse workers said they were uninterested in union positions since this required being articulate (*pintar omong*) and dealing with lots of people (*ngurusin banyak orang*). Rudi, a daily worker in secondary, said he was traumatized after witnessing layoffs in the wake of demonstrations at his prior job at Yamaha. He felt that workers were doing well enough and appreciated a consensus-building approach (*musyawarah*). Tomas described himself as “passive” vis-à-vis the union. He put the division of labor in simple terms that emphasized the union’s managerial function: “I’m here, earning money, they coordinate us.” Philip Morris daily workers ascribed neither positive nor negative impact to the union, remarking that the leaders were the active ones who held meetings, and ordinary workers didn’t know what union leaders did.

While they are reluctant to use street demonstrations or the idiom of struggle (*berjuang*) against the company, union representatives readily oppose government attempts to institute tobacco control measures aimed at protecting public health. Idham joined a group organized by Sampoerna’s public relations department that went to Sukabumi to express opposition to regional laws (*peraturan daerah*) introducing smoke-free zones. “If smokers start getting the impression that they’re not allowed to smoke over here and over there, they’ll be intimidated! It will also have an impact on cigarette sellers.” They left satisfied that the local (regency) government understood that if they created smoke-free areas in places like hospitals, they would need to invest in creating spaces where smoking was allowed. In his view, “The company has to prosper along with employees. It would be unfortunate if a clash occurred, or a production slowdown or other problems. We want stability for the company.” The union’s prioritization of company interests thus undermines both public health goals externally and effective collective action internally.

SMOKING WORK

Kretek capitalism exploits human labor in the classic Marxist sense and also exploits populations as consumers. And in certain circumstances, exploitation via wage labor is coterminous with exploitation via consumption: cigarette consumption is part of the work that unfolds at Sampoerna’s Sukorejo Science and Development Center.

Machines perform a portion of the consumption work in the center’s ISO-certified (International Organization for Standardization) lab. The lab’s ISO certification and imported machines enabled Sampoerna to produce “export-quality” cigarettes that met international regulations, which also affect the additives and flavorants in Sampoerna products.⁹ Whereas Indonesia required only tar and nicotine testing, Brazil set limits on sugar content, Malaysia and Singapore on testable tar. A lab technician showed us how twenty cigarettes turned a dry white filter

pad dark brown and moist with the tar that coats smokers' lungs. The Borgwaldt machine smoked twenty cigarettes in a rotating carousel, inhaling thirty-five milliliters per puff with a two-second puff duration and one-minute intervals between puffs (a Marlboro Red stick yielded seven or eight machine puffs). The lab also offered free testing services to various small domestic kretek companies. Helping these small competitors was a strategic move for two reasons. First, it encouraged companies to sell their product legally with excise tax and the required tar and nicotine labels rather than produce cheap black-market cigarettes that threaten to erode the market share of legal producers. (Sampoerna is a staunch and devoted ally in the state crusade against black market cigarettes.) Second, it fostered good relations and paved the way for Sampoerna to call on appealingly diminutive domestic companies to lobby the government on behalf of the industry.

The center also requires humans and their lung capital (*modal paru-paru*) for product testing. In the center's blender room, we encountered one young woman and eight men sitting around a table smoking, coffee pots in the background. The setting's resemblance to a break room belied the fact that the lead blender, two junior blenders, and trainees were engrossed in professional smoking work. The trainees were undergoing a compressed one-year training during which they would learn from seasoned blenders, make field observations in tobacco cultivation from planting to harvesting, and then assume responsibility for unspecified "special projects." Many of the cigarettes in the ashtrays were only partially smoked because, as with wine tasting, the purpose was to judge the product without getting intoxicated and dulling their senses. Didit, the lead blender, explained that mornings were the best time to taste. After lunch, their ability declined, although they kept working. He liked to inhale along the length of cigarettes before lighting up. Packs from different countries lay about; a manager joked that the fifty-pack from Australia adorned with an image of gangrenous flesh was a "family pack." In contrast to the convivial scene of collective sensory work in the blending room, a second lead blender, whom the manager had to coax out to meet us, labored alone in his office behind closed doors. He looked unhealthy, and his body was misshapen. He carried out his blending duties without actually smoking anymore, having stopped in 2012 after a severe but unspecified illness, which he said had made it easy to quit. It was hard not to speculate that he had experienced a life-threatening tobacco-related disease, but he nevertheless returned to his work, where his semi-sequestered presence served as a chilling reminder of smoking's potential consequences.

Sampoerna invited Sukorejo employees to volunteer for internal smoking panels at the center to help compare products and ensure taste consistency. Volunteers were rewarded with vouchers after serving for six months.¹⁰ When we visited the smoking panel room, one of the (lucky number) nine smoking booths was occupied by a worker. He typed his identity number into a keyboard and then received



FIGURE 13. Smoking panel volunteer. Photo by author.

trial cigarettes, lighter, ashtray, crackers, and a small water container for stubbing out cigarettes. On the other side of the wall, two employees monitored the switchboard that lit up when it was time to dispense trial cigarettes or collect waste. The company once had a roster of over a hundred internal test smokers, but by 2015, it attracted fewer volunteers. Those who remained were increasingly drawn from lower employee ranks, reflecting class stratification in who smoked.¹¹

Outside of formal testing, Sampoerna had ways of coercing and cajoling workers to smoke. A marketing consultant recalled that when Putera Sampoerna headed Sampoerna, he insisted that senior employees smoke Sampoerna products and that he tossed cigarettes at those who abstained during meetings. Taking a less bullying approach, company media like Sampoerna TV, which plays continuously in places like the spacious air-conditioned lobby of Sampoerna's Surabaya Rungkut headquarters and the open-air workers' canteen behind the building, screen Sampoerna/PMI-brand ads in addition to program updates, company news, and comical didactic segments on themes such as how to hold a good mentoring meeting. Sampoerna TV also featured a company campaign to drum up pride in—and consumption of—Sampoerna products. Mottoes included “I’m proud of Sampoerna” (*Saya bangga Sampoerna*) and “I’m proud of Sampoerna’s products” (*Saya bangga produk Sampoerna*). Employees paraded around offices in Sampoerna pride T-shirts (including Sampoerna president Paul Janelle, his T-shirt worn over his black uniform) and held signs aloft with declarations like “I’m not ashamed to smoke” (*gak malu merokok*). Sampoerna pride stickers adorned food vendors’ glass display cases in the canteen, too. The campaign thus countered the general public health shaming of smoking and disciplined workers who smoked non-Sampoerna products to fall into line with their employer. A Sampoerna factory production technician reluctantly admitted that he smoked Djarum’s LA Lights, but he tried to make light of his disloyalty by saying that he switched around and was not a very active smoker, consuming only one pack every two days.

Some workers who were happy to have their labor power exploited were tormented by their inability to withhold their consumer power. A Sampoerna factory worker whom we met at a café in Malang smoked ten Marlboros a day and pleaded for effective advice on quitting. He had tried hypnotherapy, which involved accessing memories of cigarettes that were not delicious, but he had failed to quit. He appreciated his job and its advancement opportunities for workers like him with low education levels, but he was desperate to quit the product he helped make. A supervisor at Sampoerna’s factory power plant was deeply disappointed when he discovered that his son, a first-year high school student, was spending his allowance (*uang saku*) on cigarettes. The adolescent met his parents’ scolding with silence. Hamzah, who chaperoned us around Sampoerna’s factory grounds, revealed that he had been a heavy smoker for years, consuming as many as three or four packs a day. He stopped after his third child, who had only recently begun talking, asked, “Why does father always smoke?” (*Kenapa ayah selalu merokok?*)

In machine-rolled factories, Sampoerna has secured worker consent not only by offering relatively high pay in a tough labor market but also, just as importantly, via managerial techniques that magnify personal responsibility on the part of each worker and render collective organizing unappealing and ineffective. Sampoerna gamifies smoking and production-line work in ways that classify participation as voluntary fun or forms of self-improvement rather than labor. In the chapters that follow, we will see how Sampoerna adopts contests and games outside of its factory settings to recruit and exploit paid and unpaid branding, distribution, and consumption work.