As discussed in the last chapter, the state in the New Order era has been marked by a rapid expansion of its capabilities. Driven firstly by foreign aid and foreign investment and then the boom in oil prices, real government receipts between 1966 and 1978 grew at an average annual rate of 27 percent compared with a 21 percent average decline in receipts between 1961 and 1966 (Schiller 1996). In 1977–8, government expenditures were 22.6 percent of gross domestic product (GDP) compared with 9.3 percent of a vastly smaller GDP in 1966. The increasing level of state intervention into the lives of Indonesians through a rapid growth in personnel and programmes has been characterized as the rise of the powerhouse state (C. Geertz 1972; Schiller 1996). To execute its broadening ambitions, the state hired personnel and expanded programmes to promote national culture and the arts. The Directorate of Culture was the primary beneficiary of the funding boosts to cultural policy. An exploration of the trends, policies, and tensions within the Directorate provides a picture of the approaches and pressures within New Order era cultural policy.

This chapter is tied to the preceding chapter in that it explores how the ‘cultural processes’ of the New Order period were translated into policies and programmes. In particular, it argues New Order cultural policy was authoritarian due to the way it justified intervention in the cultural practices of its subjects, which was engrained in the mechanisms for generating and funding cultural policy. After assessing the broad influences on cultural policy across the New Order period, this chapter addresses three broad areas of policy making: archaeology, museums, and history; languages policy; and arts policy. While the focus here is on the broad direction of policies, the two case study chapters in Part II provide a detailed analysis of the application of programmes. Assessing the policies and programmes provides an opportunity to explore the extent to which New Order cultural policy operated as a command culture model, a form of cultural provision that always centres the state in planning, creating, policing, and revising cultural practices, in a country where cultural consumption in many places occurred through strong regional cultural
practices, but was also changing due to sustained economic growth driving consumption of mass cultural forms.

**Cultural Policy Trends and Influences**

In his article 'Old State, New Society', Benedict Anderson (1990b) argues that an important break between policy behaviour at the end of Guided Democracy and the start of the New Order periods is the change from encouraging popular mobilization behind nationalist policies to an overriding concern with state strength and stability. While the concern with state strength and stability was present in New Order cultural policy, there is also evidence of continuities in the techniques through which culture was used within governance. General evidence of culture’s continued use as a civilizing tool are the continued association of culture with education and the absence of significant changes to the internal structure of the Directorate of Culture beyond reorganizing the various policy areas within different branches, which occurred ten years after the New Order regime took power.\(^1\) The major structural change of the Suharto period was the creation of the Directorate of Local Beliefs (Direktorat Pembinaan Penghayat Kepercayaan Terhadap Tuhan Yang Maha Esa, Ditbinyat), which focussed on Javanese spirituality, at the request of President Suharto and the consternation of Islamic groups.\(^2\) The Cultural Office under Sukarno and the Directorate of Culture under Suharto both viewed culture as a necessary part of the development of Indonesia as a nation. However, the understanding of what it meant to be Indonesian and how Indonesians should behave differed considerably.

While the focus here is clearly on the Directorate of Culture, it is worth reviewing the other state institutions that had an influence on cultural practices, particularly in the context of expanding consumer culture, particularly mass media. While the Directorate of Culture focussed on fields designated as cultural by the state, the Department of Internal Affairs could

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\(^1\) For instance, an Office of History and Anthropology existed alongside an Institute of Archaeology and National Relics from 1960 until 1975 when an Office of History and Archaeology was formed alongside a Research Institute of Archaeology and National Relics and a Research Institute of History and Culture.

\(^2\) The existence of Ditbinyat, proclaimed in a Suharto speech on 16 August 1978, was strongly criticized by the Muslim United Development Party (Partai Persatuan Pembangunan, PPP) at the time and in 1997 the conservative Indonesian Committee for World Solidarity (Komite Indonesia untuk Solidaritas Dunia, KISDI) called once again for Ditbinyat to be abolished (AS 1997).