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Cultural Policy on Balinese Performing Arts: The First Decade of LISTIBIYA

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The Commission for Evaluating and Promoting Culture (LISTIBIYA, Majelis Pertimbangan dan Pembinaan Kebudayaan),¹ a cultural policy agency under the jurisdiction of the Balinese Government, was established in 1966 to direct and supervise the development of Balinese culture and art.² As a pioneer in the cultural policy of Bali, it has had a considerable influence on Balinese performing arts since the late 1960s, with the dawn of the Suharto regime, the New Order Era. By presenting an overview of LISTIBIYA through the background of its founding and its activities, an attempt is made here to define the impact it had in promoting Balinese performing arts during LISTIBIYA's first decade of existence, and thereby illuminate the role and place such a provincial agency had in the framework of national cultural policy under the Suharto regime.

Cultural Organizations Prior to LISTIBIYA

The East Indies, which had been under the Dutch Colonial Government until 1942, was then occupied by the Japanese Army until the end of the Second World War. Although Sukarno proclaimed independence on August 17, 1945, it was only after the several years of a war of independence against the former colonial ruler, Holland, that the Republic of Indonesia as we know it today came into being under President Sukarno in August 1950. Having had a Balinese mother and first wife, Sukarno's fascination with Balinese culture led him to believe it to be the culture proper of Indonesia, unchanged from that of the ancient Javanese Kingdom of Majapahit (1293-1520). In this regard, Sukarno's perspective on cultural policy can be understood as an extension of that of the Dutch Colonial Government (Vickers 2001: 287-288).

Under the Sukarno regime, fundamental cultural policies were advanced for Balinese performing arts by the following four agencies: the Regional Office of the Ministry of Education and Culture in the Province of Bali (Kantor Perwakilan Departemen Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan); the Conservatory for Traditional Balinese Music and Dance (KOKAR, Konservatori Karawitan³); the Balinese regional radio stations of the national radio network (RRI, Radio Republik Indonesia); and the cultural organizations affiliated with the National and Communist Parties.

With the designation of Bali as a province in 1958, the Regional Offices of the Ministry of Education and Culture in the Province of Bali were established in

Denpasar, the provincial capital of Bali, and in Singaraja, the main city of northern Bali. The Singaraja office in particular served as an effective agent for advancing political propaganda by appointing prominent musicians, composers, and dancers across the northern villages of Bali to direct productions that conveyed the essence of Sukarno's cultural policy.⁴ For example, a series referred to as "Socialistic Dance" by Vickers (the weavers' dance *Tari Tenun*, the farmers' dance *Tari Tani*, and the fishermen's dance *Tari Nurayan*) spread across Bali through the promotions and performances of this agency and KOKAR.⁵



Photo 1 The weavers' dance, Tari Tenun

In 1959, the Regional Office of the Ministry of Education and Culture in Singaraja requested the Ministry of Education and Culture of Jakarta to found a Bali branch of the Conservatory for Traditional Music and Dance like that already established in Solo, central Java.⁶ As a result, in 1960 KOKAR was established in Denpasar, southern Bali, with a supporting role to fulfill the cultural policy designated by the Singaraja office in northern Bali (Ramstedt 1992: 68). Acclaimed musicians and dancers from around Bali were recruited as educators, and new teaching methods were introduced—dance training in a mirrored studio (Ramstedt 1992: 68), acceptance of female students to gamelan studies (Ornstein 1971: 41), and the creation of a new musical notation system for gamelan (Tantra and Parmi 1985: 17-19). One of KOKAR's lasting achievements to date is that this notation is still used by educational establishments and the government. Furthermore, some of the graduates became teachers in public schools and others returned to their villages, where they taught the musical and dance repertoires acquired in the Conservatory.

Established in 1945, RRI was the exclusive broadcasting medium until the opening of a national television station in 1962, as commercial radio broadcasting

was prohibited by the Indonesian Government until 1965. By 1950, RRI had two branch offices in Denpasar and Singaraja with an official staff of elite musicians and dancers in order to effectively campaign for Sukarno's cultural policies through the broadcast media.

Two cultural organizations were affiliated with the political parties under the Sukarno regim – the National Organization for the Arts and Culture (LKN, Lembaga Kesenian/Kebudayaan Nasional; est. in 1958) with the National Party (PNI, Partai Nasional Indonesia) and the People's Organization for the Arts and Culture (LEKRA, Lembaga Kebudayaan Rakyat; est. date unknown) under the Communist Party (PKI, Partai Komunis Indonesia). These organizations, particularly LEKRA, not only promoted Sukarno's cultural policies, but also played a key role in propagating the interests and policies of the respective parties. Both organizations acquired gamelan and theater troupes in the villages of Bali and used these as organs of political propaganda (Ramstedt 1992: 70; Vickers 2000: 270-271). The Sukarno regime's subsequent accelerating political intimacy with the Communist Party ultimately triggered its overthrow, and after the attempted coup by disaffected elements within the Communist Party and the military on September 30 1965, a ruthless red witch-hunt followed. The outcome was tragic, with many communists, including artists cooperating with LEKRA, being executed as rebels.⁷ This historical incident underlies the founding of LISTIBIYA discussed in the next section. Subsequent to the collapse of the Sukarno regime, the aforementioned cultural policies were nevertheless continued, under the new Suharto regime, by cultural organizations other than those belonging to the Communist Party.

The Founding of LISTIBIYA and Its Purpose

With the formal inauguration of Suharto as Indonesia's second President in 1968, a New Order (*Orde Baru*) was declared. This political term designates a policy which proscribed the Communist Party, raised the profile of law and order, and within this sought to further economic development and bring about prosperity for the general population. As Ramstedt states, "Tourism was a major economic sector, profiting from new economic policy of the Suharto regime. Bali was chosen to become one of ten tourist centers, having already become famous for its unique culture among Western travelers in the nineteen-twenties and -thirties" (1990: 73). The establishment of LISTIBIYA was part of this new development policy.

In June 1966, the Governor of Bali Province issued a decree establishing LISTIBIYA. The decree, summarized below, specified the founding background and objectives, clearly indicating its immediate connection with tourism development:

“Bali is known as the island of tourism, and the number of tourists will continue to increase in the future. While tourism will benefit us greatly, it might also bring unwelcome effects on the treasured arts and culture of Bali. If we fail to pay heed to tourism, our native heritage will lose its splendor.” (SK 623/05/2/26)

As a solution to such cultural problems associated with the tourism development, the objectives of LISTIBIYA were presented in the next provision:

“Earnest and persevering endeavors are essential for furthering Balinese arts and culture, and preventing tourism from degrading them. To realize this end, a commission comprised of experts is to be established to report on Balinese culture to the Bali Provincial Government and to support the government with regard to cultural development.” (SK 623/05/2/26)

However, in addition to the role of guardian-promoter of Balinese arts and culture indicated above, LISTIBIYA had another important and unpublicized mission of eliminating values that were in conflict with Sukarno’s cultural policy. The role was not independent of the massacre of communists begun in October 1965 in Bali, leading many dancers and actors who performed for LEKRA to unfortunate deaths (deBoer 1996: 165). 1966 marks the year of both the establishment of LISTIBIYA and the approximate end of communists’ bloodshed in Bali, a fact that alludes to LISTIBIYA’s function as an intelligence agency in the field of arts and culture, through which political propagandization of creative activities was monitored. Such a political role is clear when one looks at the makeup of LISTIBIYA. Administrative document SK 21/Pemb.233/I/a/67 clearly records that the Udayana 16th Regional Military Command⁸ of the National Army contributed to its foundation and its role as an advisory organization. Top of the personnel list is Brigadier-General Soekertijo as sponsor (*Pelindung*), and Commander Soetedjo is listed as advisor (*Penasehat*). Furthermore, the Chairman of LISTIBIYA, I Gusti Ngurah Pindha, the then Lieutenant Governor of Bali, was a retired army officer. From this too, it can be concluded that LISTIBIYA fulfilled the role of monitoring the artistic and cultural activities of the communists.

LISTIBIYA was made up of three councils—Evaluation, Development, and Promotion. In 1966, each council consisted of six subdivisions: 1) Traditional Dance and Music; 2) Fine Arts; 3) The National Music and Dance; 4) Traditional Balinese Literature, Sung Literature, and Shadow Play; 5) The National Theatre, Films, Recitation, and Literature; 6) Research, Library, Museum, and Education. An Architecture Division was added in 1967, and in 1972, with the first major organizational change, each council of LISTIBIYA was reorganized into five divisions: 1) Traditional Dance and Music; 2) Traditional Literature and Shadow Play; 3) Art and Architecture; 4) The National Music and Dance; and 5) National

Literature and Drama (SK 23/PERBANG70/VI/C/72). In 1999 this was reduced to four divisions: 1) Performing Arts (traditional dance/music, music, *wayang*, and drama); 2) Recorded Media Arts (film, television, and photography); 3) Literature and Language Arts; and 4) Art and Sculpture (SK 441 Tahun 1999).

LISTIBIYA extended its activities to the local level by setting up branches in each district, with the headquarters in Denpasar. Staff other than clerical workers were officially appointed by the Governor. However, these positions were essentially honorary with few occasional emoluments, and most of the appointees had other income as teachers, civil servants, or performing artists. Despite such professional conditions, coupled with the exhaustive evaluation and promotion work to be done across Bali, the staff were remarkably devoted to LISTIBIYA during the first decade.

Activities of LISTIBIYA

From 1968, LISTIBIYA began producing tangible developments in three areas: evaluation, education and promotion, and elevation of artists' rights and status. Its activities can be broadly grouped into the following eight categories.

Evaluation and Direction for Traditional Music, Dance and Theatre Groups

LISTIBIYA classified evaluation into three categories—general evaluation, evaluation to grant permission to perform outside Bali, and licensing to perform for tourists in Bali (LISTIBIYA 1976: 6). General evaluation was a central function of LISTIBIYA, which it performed on an annual basis. The developmental status and performance qualities of village gamelan and dance groups were assessed with advisory feedback, and the evaluations were officially reported to the Balinese Government.

Permission to perform outside Bali and abroad was granted based on two criteria: appropriate presentation and promotion of Bali in the content of the production and performance quality of national and international standards that can guarantee the satisfaction of audiences. During this evaluation process, detailed instructions were given to re-write aspects of performances which did not meet with the satisfaction of LISTIBIYA.

The evaluation to license the performance groups who entertain tourists in Bali (*Peramana Patram Budaya*) has been a requirement by the Governor since 1968 (LISTIBIYA 1976: 6). Introduced to maintain the quality of Balinese performing arts in the face of developing tourism, the license is valid for three years (Umeda 2001: 40), extendable solely by reassessment.

Hosting Contests

In contests called *festival* or *lomba* in Bali, performers compete within different categories according to the art involved, and are ranked by judges.⁹ Such competitions date back to the Dutch colonial period when, it is recorded, the Balinese were most enthusiastic about competitions held by the royal court of Bali, the colonial government, and villages (Covarrubias 1937; McPhee 1947: 31; Tokai et al. 1990: 124-30). As a governmental organization, however, LISTIBIYA was the first to host such contests since the independence of Indonesia.

In 1968, LISTIBIYA held its first *gong* contest (*gong utsawa*)¹⁰ for gamelan ensembles (*gamelan gong kebyar*). This is a popular style created in northern Bali in the early twentieth century,¹¹ and has been performed extensively in Bali since. *Lomba mekakawin*, a competition for chanting poems in Old Javanese (*kakawin*) was held at the same time. With LISTIBIYA's Chairman, I Gusti Ngurah Pindha, being an ardent aficionado, *kakawin* received special attention from and promotion by LISTIBIYA (Rubinstein 1992: 103-106).



Figure 1 License for tourist performance, Peramana Patram Budaya

Other contests were to follow: *drama gong*, for plays written in the late 1960s was hosted in 1970; *wayang* the shadow play in 1971; and several years thereafter mask dance (*topeng*) and musical (*arja*) competitions were also organized. Not limited to the traditional performing arts, LISTIBIYA hosted contests in a variety of genres, including contemporary poetry reading and popular music (1973).

Evaluation of Traditional Music and Performing Arts, and Permission for Recording

Traditional music cassettes were available commercially from around 1970 in Bali (Yampolsky 1987: 20). In 1974, the Governor issued a decree that all recordings be evaluated (13/Kesra.II/d/209/74) in response to LISTIBIYA (LISTIBIYA, 272/VIII/S.D/1974) pointing out to the Government the need to monitor questionable expressions and anti-government sentiment found, notably, in the storylines of shadow plays and lyrics of traditional vocal compositions.

Every cassette offered commercially since 1968 in the genres of traditional vocal music, shadow play, and musical, was officially evaluated by LISTIBIYA,¹² and the findings were presented to the Governor.¹³ In 1975, a decree was enacted to permit only recordings of traditional music and performing arts that have been authorized by LISTIBIYA following evaluation—be it for sale locally, or recorded by foreigners for documentation or publicity purposes (51/Kesra.II/d/327/75). Since then, LISTIBIYA has been involved with the evaluation of, not only performing groups, but also with the subject matter of all recorded performing arts.

Organizing Seminars

Seminars on traditional performing arts organized by or affiliated with LISTIBIYA are classified into the following three categories: creation and promotion of new genres, tourism, and revitalization of endangered arts.

LISTIBIYA's first seminar was held in June 1970 on the subject of *drama gong*, a genre created by Anak Agung Gde Raka Payadna in Abian Baseh village and first performed on February 24, 1966.¹⁴ The fusion of Balinese traditional theatre and modern western theatre won the approval of I Gusti Ngrah Bagus Panji, the official responsible for the evaluation council of LISTIBIYA and the head teacher of KOKAR. The seminar was held because it was proposed to include *drama gong* in Bali's new cultural policy (Anonymous 1975: 33). With support of the ruling National Party and a subsidy from the Indonesian government, *drama gong* soon became popular across Bali (deBoer 1996:166).¹⁵

The Seminar on Sacred and Profane Arts in the Field of Dance (*Seminar Seni Sacral dan Provan Bidang Tari*) held in 1971 had a considerable impact on the field of tourism. Discussion on the Balinese performing arts that are presentable to tourists was invited from researchers of Balinese music and dance, performers,

anthropologists, literati, and the religious sphere to draw the line between religious arts (not for tourists) and secular arts (for tourists).¹⁶ Although the seminar was organized by the Project for the Conservation and Creation of Balinese Culture with its chairman elected from the regional office of the Ministry of Education and Culture in the Province of Bali, LISTIBIYA played a vital role with many of its members participating as presenters.

As one of the seminar activities for restoring traditional performing arts, a workshop on the classical dance called *gambuh* was organized in 1973. Groups from the five villages where *gambuh* was still extant performed in their respective styles after scholars gave oral presentations. Subsequently, LISTIBIYA invited *gambuh* performers from throughout Bali and established a training center for *gambuh* dance and music in Denpasar (Moerdowo 1983: 106). With the same objective, another seminar was held in 1976 by Yayasan Pewayangan Bali (Foundation of Balinese Wayang) to provide direction in the narrative, religious, and spiritual qualities of the *wayang* tradition.

Reports on Research and Other Activities

In total, eleven reports have been published under the name of LISTIBIYA including those by provincial committees (Stuart-Fox 1992), and of those, eight were issued between 1968 and 1978, showing that publishing by LISTIBIYA was most active during the first decade of its existence. The subjects of the reports were—the aforementioned *drama gong* seminar (1970), the *gambuh* seminar (1973), research into *wayang* and transcription of *lontar* archives (1974), new works of merit in Balinese and Indonesian literature by public participation (1972), and an anthology of poetry (1976).

Broadcasting by RRI

Between 1970 and 1973, LISTIBIYA broadcast programs on Balinese culture every two weeks from the Denpasar station of RRI (LISTIBIYA 1976). Exact dates are unknown, but Rubinstein indicates that LISTIBIYA also sponsored a program on traditional vocal music every Sunday, which was recorded and broadcast from the Singaraja station of RRI. Performers from the Singaraja, East Buleleng, and West Buleleng regions would take turns performing once every three weeks for the program (Rubinstein 1992:105).

Rules for Employers of Tourist Performing Arts

As noted earlier, the Balinese Government granted the licenses for the groups that perform for tourists based on LISTIBIYA's evaluation. Following on from the Seminar on Sacred and Profane Arts in the Field of Dance, the Governor of Bali officially proclaimed an ordinance in 1973 prohibiting the performance of sacred

arts in the context of tourism (SK Nomor 2/Kesra.II/d/26/73). By restricting what is presentable, the provincial government was able to strictly control the content and quality of performances targeted at tourists. Nevertheless, there remained problems, not with the performing side, but with employers such as hotels and travel agencies. LISTIBIYA presented an opinion brief to the Balinese Government recommending the regulation of contractual items including financial affairs, the number of weekly performances in hotels, and the marketing approach. As a result, another decree was enacted to regulate employers.

Grants and Awards for the Arts

Since its establishment, LISTIBIYA has supported artists of merit financially. It established the Dharma Kusuma prize in 1977, with a monetary award, an award ceremony, and publication of a booklet with a detailed account of the winner's background and artistic activities.

Changes Brought About by LISTIBIYA in Music and Performing Arts

As already been noted, LISTIBIYA was founded to maintain and develop the quality of Balinese art and culture in the face of developing tourism. As an independent agency, it has been active in various operations, from reporting the status quo to the provincial government, to facilitating evaluation and promotional programs. The cultural policies advocated by LISTIBIYA have had significant effects on the Balinese performing arts.

First was the promotion of Balinese performing arts to cater for tourists. LISTIBIYA was a pioneer in encouraging the creation of new works and the refinement of traditional styles. Issuing of licenses for performances for tourists, and facilitation of the Seminar on Sacred and Profane Arts in the Field of Dance, both resulted in a greater understanding of the effective presentation of performing arts within the context of tourism. In particular, the classification system introduced to distinguish arts for the tourist market from those not to be performed for tourists stimulated the creation of secular works under the supervision of performing arts' institutions, and these are still performed for tourists today.

Second came the acknowledgement and promotion of artists' rights and the commercial value of traditional performing arts. Regulation of employment contracts, and the consequent elevation of Balinese performing arts to the level of a state-recognized business encouraged performance groups to obtain licenses to perform for tourists, and this eventually impacted on the perception of how Balinese music and performing arts should be.

Third, away from tourism, further dynamism was added to the theatrical and classical genres with new productions and the revival of traditional repertoires. Notably, the introduction of *drama gong* created a new genre which has come to be performed throughout Bali, and the revitalization of the *kekawin singing* through LISTIBIYA's efforts has resulted in the younger generation learning this traditional art (Rubinstein 1992: 103-104). Also, *gamelan gong kebyar*, part of the cultural policy since the Sukarno regime, became the object of contests and, incorporated into *drama gong*, came to be widely played in Bali.

It is possible to claim that all three of the above are positive contributions made by LISTIBIYA that faithfully fulfill the objectives of its foundation—with creditable success in the protection and promotion of Balinese performing arts and the rights of artists against the wave of tourism development. On the other hand, such achievements can also be understood as a product of “cultural control” by the Balinese government.

Fourth was LISTIBIYA's controlist function that standardized and homogenized the ways of expression and artistic styles of the Balinese performing arts. Under the umbrella of LISTIBIYA, as an official body, various evaluation programs, contest hosting, monitoring of cassette tapes, and broadcasting were utilized as tools for re-creating Balinese performing arts to the Government's advantage. This was the first step toward a regulated style by means of both direct education and indirect processes of control as represented by contests. The Balinese were fervent about competitions, and to win, performers unwittingly catered to the artistic expressions and styles desired by the Government. Especially from the 1980s, such standardization and homogenization were further reinforced through *Kuliah Kerja Nyata* (a three-month practical training program) directed by the students of the Academy of Indonesian Dance and Music (ASTI, Akademi Seni Tari Indonesia) in Denpasar,¹⁷ and via the activities of KOKAR graduates throughout Bali.

LISTIBIYA was even called the “Art Police” (*Polisi Seni*) as it is an organization reporting directly to the Balinese government with the absolute power to direct and supervise Balinese performing arts.¹⁸ Although never officially stated, the Government's surveillance and regulation of Balinese culture, which were in reaction to the leftist cultural activities that threatened the Sukarno regime, cannot be denied. As mentioned above, the lyrics and speech in all recorded vocal music and musicals were monitored for any “element misrepresentative of Indonesian Society.”¹⁹

LISTIBIYA and the Suharto Regime's Cultural Policy

Picard (1995: 60) writes, “the eagerness of Balinese to preserve their cultural heritage is not only an admission of their interest to profit from their tourist capital,

but above all an attempt to root their identity in their filiation.” Certainly, LISTIBIYA’s contribution to the policy of “cultural tourism” of Bali was considerable, with its expertise in producing tourist performances and maintaining their quality through various measures. Not only did this commitment benefit Bali, but it also stimulated and fostered an appreciation on the part of the Balinese of their own culture as a whole by raising the profile of artists through evaluations and competitions. Nevertheless, in order to obtain a true picture of LISTIBIYA’s roles and activities, one should take the discussion to the level of national cultural policy. As part of the state policy, Suharto’s cultural policy is deeply rooted in Article 32 of the Constitution promulgated in 1945, with the preamble of the five principles (the *Panca sila*) for the nation of Indonesia. Advocated within Article 32 is that “the Government will advance the national culture (*kebudayaan nasional*).” This is explained in the supplementary text as follows: “Culture of the people (*kebudayaan bangsa*) is the culture, the ultimate crystallization of every ideal and endeavor that had been exerted by the people of Indonesia as a whole. Being open to new inspirations from other cultures, pursuit of culture, should therefore, be of inspiration to the progress and enrichment of the Culture of the People, as well as, to the elevation of human qualities of the Indonesian people, so that it works towards the progress of time and the national unity.” According to Kagami (2000: 83), “the National Culture” is synonymous with “the Culture of the People.” On the basis of ideal, the Suharto regime took the lead in integrating regional cultures with the Culture of the Indonesian Nation through diverse policies implemented by the Directorate General of Culture of the Department of Education and Culture (Direktorat Jenderal Kebudayaan Departemen Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan) (Hough 1992: 239-242; Kagami 2000: 86-90). LISTIBIYA states in one of its reports that it needs to carry out its cultural policies based on the cultural policies (the report uses the English term “cultural clearance”) of the Department of Education and Culture, the former organization being provincial whereas the latter is a state organ.²⁰

It is clear from the above account that at the national level, “national culturalization of the regional cultures” was overtly put into effect by a state institution, the Department of Education and Culture. In comparison, the “national culturalization at the regional level” of local cultures implemented by LISTIBIYA should be understood as an initial process within the ultimate national mission. This policy started out, in the early days of the Suharto era, with the aim of elevating the culture of the Balinese people to the level of a national culture, in the process of “setting aside ideology, and making itself one piece in the mosaic which is an unified national culture” (Kagami 2000: 96). LISTIBIYA started a process of homogenizing the Balinese performing arts, by way of intervention and regulation in the face of the threat posed to its culture by tourism. In the Governor’s decree on the content of recorded materials (51/Kesra.II/d/327/75), it is stated that the

content should not conflict with morality or religion, in other words, with the *Panca Sila*²¹ contained in the preamble of the Constitution, and that it must be in accordance with the development of Balinese culture as evaluated by LISTIBIYA. As this document shows, the national culture developed in accordance with the *Panca Sila* at the national level is one and the same as the culture fostered by LISTIBIYA at the regional level.

Conclusion

In this paper I have attempted to present the social background behind the establishment of LISTIBIYA, its history and position within the cultural policy of the Sukarno regime, its activities, and its influence on Balinese culture over the first decade of its existence. I have argued that two social issues were major factors behind the establishment of LISTIBIYA. One was apprehension regarding the quality of Balinese culture declining in the wake of tourism, and the other was concern about communist activities.

LISTIBIYA, through its mandate to put forward concrete policies to support the preservation and development of Balinese performing arts, not only produced a number of reports on the subject, but also instigated a revival of the performing arts in Bali. However, LISTIBIYA also contributed to the standardization and homogenization of Balinese performing arts through its system of evaluations. LISTIBIYA fulfilled, at the provincial level, part of the cultural policy of the Suharto regime.

The peak of LISTIBIYA's activity can be set at around the mid-1970s, since when it has seen a gradual reduction. Several reasons can be given for this decline in activity. Firstly, the Directorate General of Culture of the Department of Education and Culture, founded under the Suharto regime, began to implement cultural policy. A second factor was that teachers and graduates from ASTI began to revive and teach classical dance, and new pieces were taught to villagers through their period of field instruction in the villages.²² Also, the various competitions that LISTIBIYA had been central in organizing were brought together as the Bali Festival of Arts in 1967, under the sponsorship of the provincial government, and this was run independently of LISTIBIYA.

A further factor in the reduction of LISTIBIYA's activities was the establishment of the Bureau of Culture (Dinas Kebudayaan) in 1986. Reporting directly to the provincial government, the Bureau of Culture is in the same position as LISTIBIYA, and its functions, as detailed in the Governor's decree which approved the establishment of the bureau (SK 276 Tahun 1986), are almost identical to those of LISTIBIYA. The Bureau of Culture was to take the roles both of a reporting organization and an enforcing organization for cultural policy, whereas LISTIBIYA

was only a reporting organization. As a result, LISTIBIYA received almost no budget from the provincial government in the 1990s, and became an institution the sole function of which was to issue licenses for performances for tourists in Bali. The appearance of an article under the headline “*LISTIBIYA hampir tidur*” (“LISTIBIYA almost asleep”) in the *Bali Post* of June 8, 1994, and a number of articles concerning the continued existence of LISTIBIYA in the January 13, 1997 edition of the *Bali Post* indicate that LISTIBIYA had almost ceased functioning by the mid-1990s.



Photo 2 *Gong Balaganjur* competition in Tabanan (2001)

Since the fall of the Suharto regime in 1999, President Megawati has been decentralizing governmental functions (*otonomi daerah*), and as part of this the Bali Provincial Government has undertaken a major streamlining of its structure. LISTIBIYA retains its position as an agency reporting to the provincial government, but it remains almost dormant. However, there are signs that LISTIBIYA is trying to revive itself at the district level.²³ Due to decentralization, it is now possible for it to request funding from the district. For example, in Tabanan district, LISTIBIYA played an active role in judging the Tabanan District Gong Balaganjur competition in August 2001, and since then has been frequently involved in meetings discussing its policies and drawing up a budget proposal. At the provincial level too LISTIBIYA has been making efforts to revive itself. A new committee chairman lobbied the governor for an increased budget allocation, and as a result LISTIBIYA has been directing the performing arts in *Siwaratri*, a Hindu religious ritual, since 2000, and held a seminar on Balinese sacred performing arts in 2003. However, there remain many problems, including remuneration for staff and conflict with the Bureau of Culture. Only time will tell whether the current efforts will secure the long-term

survival of LISTIBIYA.

Notes

- 1 This is the official abbreviation as decreed by the Governor of Bali Province (623/05/2/26).
- 2 I am grateful to the Indonesian Institute of Science (*LIPi*) for sponsoring the field research (No.:4454/II/KS/2001, No.:4495/SU/KS/2002) on which this paper is based. The field research conducted in Bali during 2001 and 2002 was funded by the Japanese Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (Monbu-kagaku-sho), through Grants-in-Aid for Scientific Research of the Japan Society for the Promotion of Science. An earlier version of this paper was presented in Japanese at the conference for anthropological studies on the “transition period” in Indonesia held at the National Museum of Ethnology in Osaka, November 2001. I would like to express my gratitude to all the participants for their valuable critiques, in particular, Takashi Sugishima, Haruya Kagami, and Kiyoshi Nakamura. The staff of LISTIBIYA in Bali have generously shared their knowledge with me, and I thank them all.
- 3 Until 1974 it was under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Education and Culture, but from 1975 it came under the control of the General Office for Primary and Secondary Education and its name was changed to the Secondary School for Indonesian Traditional Music (Sekolah Menengah Karawitan Indonesia (SMKI)). In 1997 it became the Third Technical High School Sukawati (Sekolah Menengah Kejuruan Negeri (SMKN) 3 Sukawati) and was placed under the jurisdiction of Gianyar District in Bali.
- 4 The appointed instructors lived as teachers-in-residence. Meals, accommodation, and customary gifts were offered as salaries with no monetary rewards, reflecting the conventional way of teaching traditional performing arts in the region (Ornstein 1972: 42).
- 5 Vickers (1990: 182) defines the Socialistic dance as consisting “of a fairly simplistic series of movements meant to echo Socialist Realist painting and sculpture, and supposedly based on the daily lives of the peasantry. They included the ‘fishermen’s dance’ (fishermen casting their net) and the ‘weavers’ dance’ (with motions imitating weaving and spinning). Balinese dancers found that the new style required little virtuosity and skill of classical dance but nevertheless performed for the sake of Bali’s reputation.”
- 6 This information is presented on the first page of the English version of *Sumandhi* (1991), a guide to the Conservatories for Traditional Indonesian Music and Dance.
- 7 Although Robinson (1995: 273) estimates the total death toll at approximately 80,000, the actual number is unconfirmed. A different source indicates 100,000.
- 8 The Udayana 16th Regional Military Command was the name used in 1966, abolished in 1985 with the reorganization of the National Army. Bali is now under the Udayana 9th Division (Kimura 1989: 262-263).
- 9 The word “contest” is equivalent to *utsawa* (Balinese) and *lomba* (Indonesian). In Bali, an event referred to as *festival* often turns out to be an actual contest.
- 10 This contest is also called *Merdangga Utsawa*, where *Merdangga* is an Old Javanese term

meaning an ensemble of percussion instruments. In the first contest, held in 1968, *gamelan* groups from five districts participated: Badung, Buleleng, Tabanan, Gianyar, and Jembrana.

- 11 *Gamelan gong kebyar* is the most famous bronze *gamelan* ensemble in Bali. It is the ensemble that visitors are most likely to encounter in a formal performance setting and the kind of *gamelan* that most Balinese are likely to know something about. Musicians of certain villages in the Dutch colonial territory (1840s-1942) of northern Bali probably transformed the traditional *gamelan* ensemble into the modernized form known as *gong kebyar* in the early twentieth century. *Kebyar* is usually translated as “to burst open,” like a flower suddenly coming into bloom.
- 12 According to I Wayan Madra Aryasa, the present Chief Secretary of LISTIBIYA, he assessed about a hundred cassettes at home until midnight every day (p.c. Aryasa, September 2002).
- 13 No reports are found either in the office of LISTIBIYA or in the Governmental archives.
- 14 Payadna was one of the members of a *gamelan* group called Wijaya Kusuma.
- 15 A book on *drama gong* was published by the Directorate General of Culture, Department of Education and Culture in Jakarta (Anonymous 1975).
- 16 At this seminar, Balinese performing arts were divided into three categories based on the level of sacredness: *Seni Tari Wari* (sacred, religious dance), *Seni Tari Bebali* (ceremonial dance), and *Seni Tari Balih-balihan* (secular dance). Although referred to as dance, this classification is not limited to dance (*tari*), and applies to all other forms of performing arts, including *wayang*. Therefore it would be more appropriate for the classification titles to be *Seni Wali*, *Seni Bebali* and *Seni Balih-balihan* respectively.
- 17 ASTI was founded in 1967 by a local initiative, and brought under the control of the Department of Education and Culture in 1969. In 1988, it was upgraded in status from academy (ASTI) to college and renamed STSI, Sekolah Tinggi Seni Indonesia, which remains its name to this day (Hough 1999: 243).
- 18 Information obtained through the researcher’s interviews with villagers (August, 2001).
- 19 Excerpt from the Governor’s Decree of 1974 (272/VIII/S.D./1974).
- 20 This is noted in *Listibiya 1973, Organisasi dan Kedudukan Listibiya*, but pages in this report are not numbered.
- 21 The five basic principles of the Republic of Indonesia, namely: Belief in one God; humanism; national unity; democracy through consultation and representation; and social justice.
- 22 Students of ASTI were required to visit an assigned village two or three times a week for a period of three months and give instruction in music and dance. In most cases, pieces composed at ASTI were taught. When the three months of field instruction was over, it was usual for each village to give a performance of the items learned (Hough 1999: 248-249).
- 23 The *Bali Post* of August 18 2001 reports that LISTIBIYA in the Tabanan district has insufficient members to actively pursue its mandate.

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