

Representation of Power and Nationalism in the Guided Democracy Material: A Perspective of Philosophy of Science and Wodak's Critical Discourse Analysis

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Abstract. This study applies the Discourse-Historical Approach (DHA) within Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) to examine how ideological power and nationalism were represented in Indonesian history education during the Guided Democracy era (1959–1965). Using textbooks, curriculum documents, and political speeches as primary data, the research explores how discourse functioned to legitimize Sukarno's vision of "guided leadership," unity, and revolutionary identity. The findings reveal that educational texts operated as ideological tools constructing a moral-political version of history that reinforced state authority and excluded plural perspectives. Through Fairclough's and Wodak's frameworks, the study identifies recurring lexical strategies—such as "revolutionary struggle" and "anti-imperialism"—as linguistic mechanisms shaping collective identity. The discussion extends to the postcolonial context, emphasizing that decolonizing education in Indonesia still faces epistemic dependency on state-centered and Eurocentric narratives. Aligning with recent scholarship on curriculum decolonization, the study concludes that historical education must move toward epistemic justice and critical pedagogy to reframe national identity and historical consciousness.

Keywords: Critical Discourse Analysis, Discourse-Historical Approach, Guided Democracy, nationalism, ideological power, decolonizing education

INTRODUCTION

Education, particularly history education, plays a pivotal role in shaping how a nation understands its past and legitimizes its collective identity in the present. In Indonesia, the entanglement between political power and education has been historically pronounced, especially during Sukarno's Demokrasi Terpimpin (Guided Democracy) period between 1959 and 1965. This era marked a paradigmatic shift in nation-building discourse, in which historical narratives were strategically rearticulated to consolidate nationalist ideology and political authority. The Guided Democracy framework redefined "nationalism" not merely as loyalty to the state but as ideological alignment with Sukarno's charismatic leadership and revolutionary vision (Purwanta, 2018). Within this ideological constellation, history textbooks functioned as instruments of political pedagogy—discursive vehicles through which the state projected narratives of unity, sovereignty, and anti-imperialist struggle. Drawing on Wodak's (2018) Discourse-Historical Approach (DHA), power is understood not solely as coercive force but as something discursively constructed through linguistic and semiotic choices that normalize certain interpretations of the past while marginalizing others. Thus, the language of history curricula during the Guided Democracy period encoded both epistemic and political power: it defined what counted as historical truth and who possessed the authority to define it (Silalahi, Malik, & Yuwono, 2018; Foucault, 1980). Understanding this process is crucial, as it reveals how education mediates state ideology, knowledge production, and cultural memory, forming what Foucault conceptualizes as a historically situated "regime of truth."

Nationalism within the Indonesian curriculum is therefore not merely an academic theme but a moral and ideological imperative embedded in pedagogical discourse. It has long been tied to the project of constructing a cohesive national identity amid deep social and cultural pluralism. Merrita (2021) demonstrates how political discourse—particularly presidential speeches—employs legitimization strategies that connect nationalism with moral authority, historical continuity, and developmental progress. Similar

rhetorical patterns permeate curricular documents and history textbooks, which frequently present the nation's past as a linear and heroic narrative, echoing Anderson's (1983) notion of the nation as an "imagined community." However, such representations often obscure the plurality of historical experiences and marginalize subaltern perspectives, including regional, ethnic, and dissenting voices. Purwanta (2018) shows that Indonesian history textbooks remain entangled in colonial and postcolonial discursive legacies that reproduce dominant state ideologies. Likewise, Ardianto and Sutimin (2024) reveal how representations of the 1965 G30S events vary across curricula, reflecting shifting ideological interests across political regimes. While existing studies have richly examined *what* historical content is included or excluded, they often stop at the level of representation. This study addresses a critical gap by shifting the analytical focus toward *how historical truth itself is produced*, stabilized, and legitimized through language. As Wodak (2019) argues, nationalism operates discursively through strategic recontextualization of historical events, sustaining hegemonic identities by shaping the very conditions under which certain truths become thinkable and others unspeakable.

To address this gap, the present study situates its inquiry at the intersection of the Philosophy of Science and Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA). From a philosophy of science perspective, historical knowledge cannot be separated from its epistemological foundations—specifically, how truth claims are constructed, validated, and institutionalized. Kurniawan (2023) conceptualizes the curriculum as a "power-curriculum," emphasizing that educational knowledge is shaped by epistemic authority, political interests, and collective memory. This view resonates with Kuhn's notion of paradigm-bound knowledge and Habermas's theory of communicative rationality, both of which highlight that truth is socially produced within specific historical and discursive contexts. In this sense, the Philosophy of Science provides the *analytical lens*—the "kacamata epistemologis"—for understanding *why* historical truth is constructed in particular ways. CDA, particularly Wodak's DHA, then functions as the *analytical instrument*—the "alat bedah"—that enables systematic examination of *how* those epistemic constructions are realized linguistically in texts (Fairclough, 2018; Wodak, 2018). By bridging these perspectives, this study moves beyond content analysis toward an epistemological critique of curriculum as a site where truth, power, and ideology intersect.

Within this framework, educational discourse is understood as operating through both visible and invisible mechanisms of power. Supriadi et al. (2023) argue that language functions not merely as a medium of communication but as a semiotic structure through which ideology is reproduced and authority is legitimized. CDA thus provides a methodological apparatus for analyzing how lexical choices, narrative structures, metaphors, and intertextual references naturalize specific power relations. During the Guided Democracy era, political authority was linguistically materialized through recurring concepts such as "revolutionary spirit," "guided leadership," and "anti-imperialism," which operated as discursive markers of loyalty to Sukarno's ideological project. Saefudin et al. (2024) further show how conflict and resolution are narratively organized in history textbooks to promote harmony, obedience, and national unity, often at the expense of historical complexity and contestation. These findings align with van Dijk's (2008) assertion that elite control over discourse shapes public cognition by determining who speaks, about what, and in what manner. In the Indonesian context, state dominance over curriculum production institutionalized a singular historical narrative that prioritized unity and ideological coherence over pluralism, exemplifying what Wodak (2018) describes as "discursive authoritarianism."

Examining how nationalism and power were discursively constructed in the Guided Democracy curriculum carries important implications for contemporary educational reform. Yulianawati and Utami (2025) observe that discursive patterns of national identity persist in current textbooks, where civic loyalty frequently outweighs critical historical consciousness. This continuity highlights the enduring influence of past epistemic regimes and underscores the urgency of reflexive curriculum development grounded in epistemic pluralism and critical pedagogy. Maulidiah et al. (2023) advocate integrating multicultural and critical discourse perspectives to counter the homogenizing tendencies of nationalist education, while Rajamuddin and Arbi (2025) emphasize the role of critical education in enabling students to interrogate, rather than merely internalize, ideological assumptions. By integrating Wodak's discourse-historical analysis with insights from the Philosophy of Science, this study reconceptualizes curriculum not as a neutral repository of facts but as a contested site of epistemological negotiation. Revisiting the Guided Democracy curriculum thus allows for a deeper understanding of how the politics of knowledge continues to shape national identity formation and democratic imagination in Indonesia—not merely as a historical legacy, but as an ongoing epistemic challenge.

METHOD

This study employs the Discourse-Historical Approach (DHA) within Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) as developed by Wodak (2018). DHA conceptualizes discourse as historically embedded and intrinsically connected to power relations, making it particularly appropriate for examining history education texts not as neutral narratives but as ideological constructions produced within specific socio-political regimes (Purwanta, 2018). In the context of Indonesia's Guided Democracy (1959–1965), history education functioned as a discursive instrument through which the state legitimized Sukarno's vision of revolutionary nationalism, guided leadership, and national unity. Drawing on Fairclough's (2018) conception of discourse as social practice, this study analyzes curricula, state-approved history textbooks, and political speeches to reveal how power and nationalism were linguistically and semiotically articulated.

The research corpus consists of state-approved history textbooks, national curriculum documents, and official educational directives published between 1959 and 1965. These materials were selected purposively based on their institutional authority and their explicit role in shaping national identity and ideological orientation in secondary education. To ensure transparency and verifiability of the data, this study explicitly documents the textbooks analyzed, including their titles, authors, years of publication, and publishers, as presented in Table 1. In accordance with DHA principles, the textbook corpus is triangulated with Sukarno's political speeches and official state education policies in order to situate educational discourse within the broader ideological and political framework of Guided Democracy (Merrita, 2021; Rajamuddin & Arbi, 2025).

Table 1. State-Approved History Textbooks Analyzed (1959–1965)

No.	Title of Textbook	Author(s)	Year	Publisher / Institution
1	<i>Sedjarah Nasional Indonesia</i>	Nugroho Notosusanto	1961	Departemen Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan
2	<i>Sedjarah Pergerakan Nasional Indonesia</i>	Sartono Kartodirdjo	1963	Balai Pustaka
3	<i>Sedjarah Revolusi Indonesia</i>	Tim Penyusun Depdikbud	1964	Departemen Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan
4	<i>Pedoman Pengajaran Sedjarah Nasional</i>	Kementerian P.P. dan K.	1962	Kementerian Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan

Analytically, the study applies core DHA instruments, including nomination strategies, predication strategies, argumentation schemes, and discursive topoi, to trace how nationalism, authority, and revolutionary legitimacy are constructed and normalized within history education texts (Wodak, 2018). Epistemologically, the research adopts a constructivist philosophy of knowledge, recognizing that historical knowledge is socially produced, politically situated, and institutionally mediated (Kurniawan, 2023). From this perspective, the curriculum is conceptualized as a power-curriculum, a site where epistemic authority, collective memory, and political ideology intersect. The Philosophy of Science thus provides the epistemological lens for understanding *why* certain historical truths are constructed and institutionalized, while CDA—particularly DHA—functions as the methodological instrument for examining *how* those truths are linguistically produced and legitimized.

The analytical procedure follows a discourse-historical workflow that moves across interconnected levels of analysis. At the micro level, the analysis focuses on textual features such as lexical choices, metaphors, evaluative language, narrative sequencing, and visual elements in textbooks and curriculum documents. At the meso level, texts are examined interdiscursively and intertextually by comparing educational materials with Sukarno's speeches and official policy documents, enabling the identification of recurring ideological patterns and legitimization strategies. At the macro level, these discursive findings are interpreted within the broader socio-political context of Guided Democracy, particularly in relation to state power, nation-building strategies, and ideological consolidation. This analytical movement is summarized in Figure 1.

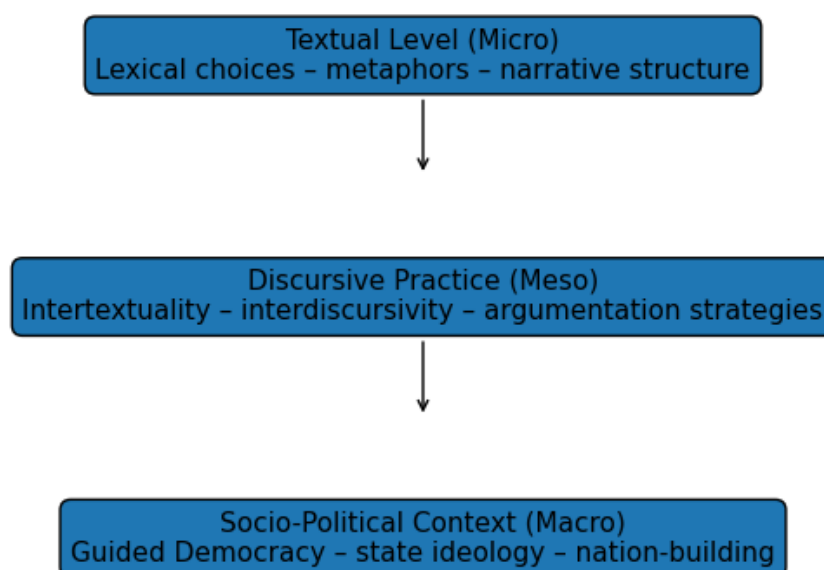


Figure 1. Discourse-Historical Analysis Workflow

To strengthen analytical validity, findings are systematically cross-referenced with prior research on nationalism, ideology, and educational discourse in Indonesia (Supriadi, Jufri, & Sultan, 2023; Maulidiah et al., 2023). By integrating CDA with philosophical reflection on knowledge production, this study conceptualizes the history curriculum not merely as an instructional medium but as an epistemic arena in which ideology, power, and historical meaning are co-produced, negotiated, and institutionalized.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Result

The analysis of Indonesian history textbooks and curriculum materials from the Guided Democracy era (1959–1965) demonstrates a strong ideological framing of national unity and guided leadership that is not only thematic but also linguistically demonstrable. Lexical items such as “*Demokrasi Terpimpin*,” “*revolusi*,” “*perjuangan nasional*,” and “*persatuan nasional*” recur systematically in textbook narratives of independence and nation-building. These terms function as discursive legitimation strategies, framing Sukarno’s leadership as the moral embodiment of the national will rather than as a contested political authority. In line with Wodak’s (2018) argument, authority in political discourse is often legitimized through moralized historical narratives that transform ideological positions into taken-for-granted truths. Consistent with Purwanta (2018), the textbooks analyzed convert political ideology into pedagogical certainty, positioning history as a unifying moral mission rather than a space for critical inquiry.

Applying Wodak’s (2018) three-level DHA model, the analysis reveals how nomination and predication strategies construct Indonesia as a moral community constantly threatened by imperialism and internal disunity. Social actors are repeatedly nominated as “*kaum revolusioner*,” “*pemuda pejuang*,” and “*anti-imperialis*,” while opposing forces are implicitly or explicitly framed as destabilizing, reactionary, or counter-revolutionary. These predications produce a binary moral structure—patriots versus traitors—that simplifies political complexity into ethical clarity. As Fairclough (2018) notes, such binary constructions are powerful ideological devices that naturalize asymmetrical power relations. Similar patterns are identified by Maulidiah et al. (2023), who show how Indonesian textbooks embed nationalism within ostensibly inclusive rhetoric while subordinating plural perspectives to a dominant state-centered ideology.

Crucially, intertextual analysis demonstrates verbatim and near-verbatim alignment between history textbooks and Sukarno’s political speeches, confirming that the curriculum functioned as an extension of elite political discourse. Key ideological expressions such as “*revolusi belum selesai*,” “*Manipol*,” “*sosialisme Indonesia*,” and “*Demokrasi Terpimpin*” appear consistently across both genres, indicating deliberate discursive synchronization. This alignment is illustrated in Table 2, which compares excerpts from Sukarno’s speeches with corresponding textbook formulations, showing direct lexical repetition and parallel evaluative framing. Such convergence exemplifies what Fairclough (2018) defines as discursive hegemony, whereby dominant political meanings circulate across institutional domains and become normalized through

education. Merrita (2021) similarly observes that Indonesian political authority is sustained linguistically through repetitive emotional and collective appeals, reinforcing charismatic leadership across time.

Table 2. Intertextual Alignment between Sukarno’s Speeches and History Textbooks (1959–1965)

Ideological Expression	Sukarno’s Speech (Excerpt)	History Textbook (Excerpt)
Revolusi belum selesai	“Revolusi kita belum selesai dan harus terus dipimpin”	“Revolusi Indonesia belum selesai dan memerlukan pimpinan nasional”
Demokrasi Terpimpin	“Demokrasi Terpimpin adalah kepribadian bangsa”	“Bangsa Indonesia melaksanakan Demokrasi Terpimpin sesuai kepribadiannya”
Manipol	“Manipol menjadi pedoman revolusi”	“Manipol dijadikan pedoman dasar perjuangan nasional”
Sosialisme Indonesia	“Sosialisme Indonesia adalah jalan bangsa”	“Sosialisme Indonesia merupakan cita-cita revolusi nasional”

Beyond qualitative alignment, lexical frequency analysis further demonstrates the dominance of ideological language within educational texts. Certain keywords associated with Guided Democracy ideology appear with striking regularity, suggesting systematic normalization rather than incidental usage. Table 3 presents the frequency of selected ideological terms across the analyzed textbooks, indicating the discursive saturation of revolutionary and leadership-centered vocabulary.

Table 3. Frequency of Ideological Keywords in History Textbooks (1959–1965)

Keyword	Frequency (Occurrences)
Revolusi	87
Demokrasi Terpimpin	54
Manipol	31
Anti-imperialisme	46
Persatuan Nasional	62

The high frequency of these terms reinforces the argument that history education during the Guided Democracy era functioned as an ideological apparatus rather than a neutral pedagogical space. Historical narratives were framed as collective duties, where epistemic truth was aligned with moral unity, obedience, and loyalty to guided leadership. This finding supports Kurniawan’s (2023) assertion that Indonesian history curricula often present ideology as epistemic certainty rather than as an object of inquiry. Reinforcing this perspective, Supriadi, Jufri, and Sultan (2023) argue that CDA-based analysis is crucial for exposing the ideological layers embedded in educational discourse and for enabling learners to critically reinterpret nationalist narratives. Overall, the results demonstrate that history education during the Guided Democracy period intertwined knowledge, ideology, and authority, transforming the classroom into a powerful vehicle for political legitimation.

Discussion

The findings of this study invite a broader discussion on the continuity of ideological mechanisms in Indonesian history education, particularly when juxtaposing the Guided Democracy period with the contemporary implementation of the Kurikulum Merdeka. At first glance, the two contexts appear fundamentally different: Guided Democracy was overtly authoritarian, while Kurikulum Merdeka is framed within democratic reform and pedagogical flexibility. However, this study does not argue for ideological equivalence but rather for a continuity of discursive mechanisms, especially in the way the state selectively curates historical memory and channels it into educational practice.

One key mechanism of continuity lies in the top-down structuring of curricular authority. During the Guided Democracy era, the state exercised centralized control over historical narratives through officially sanctioned textbooks and curriculum directives, ensuring alignment with Sukarno’s ideological vision. Similarly, while Kurikulum Merdeka rhetorically emphasizes teacher autonomy and student-centered

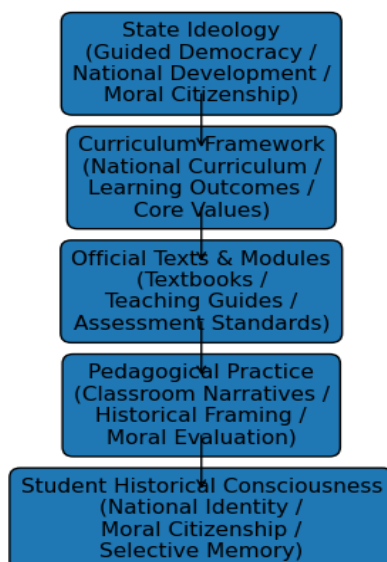
learning, the core narrative frameworks of nationalism, unity, and moral citizenship remain centrally defined through national learning outcomes, profile Pelajar Pancasila, and state-authored teaching modules. In both periods, ideological direction flows from the state to educational institutions, even if the contemporary version operates through softer, more technocratic governance rather than explicit political command.

Another significant point of continuity is the use of moralistic and ethical jargon to legitimize historical narratives. In Guided Democracy textbooks, concepts such as “*revolusi*,” “*persatuan nasional*,” and “*anti-imperialisme*” functioned as moral signifiers that framed obedience and unity as ethical imperatives. In Kurikulum Merdeka, similar moralization occurs through terms such as “*karakter*,” “*profil pelajar*,” “*nilai kebangsaan*,” and “*moderasi*”. Although the ideological content has shifted, the discursive strategy remains consistent: history is framed less as a field of critical inquiry and more as a moral guide for desirable citizenship. This supports Wodak’s (2019) argument that nationalism operates discursively through recontextualization rather than repetition, allowing old ideological logics to persist under new terminologies.

This continuity can be conceptualized as a process of selective memory transmission, where certain historical interpretations are preserved, normalized, and depoliticized over time, while others are marginalized or silenced. The Guided Democracy curriculum explicitly constructed a heroic and unified national past to stabilize political authority, whereas Kurikulum Merdeka implicitly maintains a consensual national narrative by prioritizing harmony and moral cohesion over historical contestation. As a result, critical engagement with controversial or conflicting historical interpretations remains limited, even within a formally more open educational framework. This pattern reinforces what Kurniawan (2023) describes as the epistemic closure of curriculum, where ideology is presented as moral certainty rather than as a product of historical debate.

From the perspective of Critical Discourse Analysis, this process exemplifies the enduring function of education as an Ideological State Apparatus (Althusser, 1971), albeit in a transformed mode. While the Guided Democracy era relied on explicit ideological indoctrination, contemporary curricula operate through discursive normalization—embedding values within competencies, learning outcomes, and character education. The classroom thus remains a crucial site where state ideology is translated into pedagogical practice, shaping students’ historical consciousness and civic identity.

To clarify this mechanism, Figure 2 illustrates how state ideology is discursively transformed into classroom practice across different historical periods. The diagram demonstrates that despite changes in political regime and curricular rhetoric, the structural flow of ideology—from the state to pedagogical enactment—remains largely intact.



Through this lens, the connection between Guided Democracy and Kurikulum Merdeka should not be read as a claim of political sameness, but as evidence of discursive continuity in the governance of memory. The persistence of top-down curricular authority and moralized historical language suggests that reforms in educational structure do not automatically dismantle entrenched epistemic practices. Instead, they often repackage them in more acceptable and contemporary forms. This insight strengthens the argument that

Indonesian history education continues to operate within a framework of selective memory, where ideology, knowledge, and authority intersect to shape national identity across generations.

Ideological Framing and the Discursive Construction of National Identity

The findings indicate that during Indonesia's Guided Democracy (1959–1965), historical education functioned as a medium for ideological framing rather than neutral knowledge transmission. This aligns with Wodak's (2018) argument that discourse serves as a semiotic battlefield where power relations are negotiated through linguistic strategies. The frequent recurrence of terms such as "*guided leadership*" and "*revolutionary unity*" constructs Sukarno not only as a political leader but as a symbolic father of the nation. This mirrors the *mythical personalization of leadership* often observed in populist regimes, where language legitimizes authority by merging individual charisma with national destiny (van Dijk, 2008; Wodak & Meyer, 2016).

In the Indonesian context, this ideological personalization of Sukarno reflects what van Dijk (2008) calls the "*ideological square*", where in-group heroism is emphasized while out-group dissent is silenced. Such discursive polarization sustains moral superiority and collective unity. History textbooks during Guided Democracy functioned as instruments to propagate this ideological alignment, transforming historical facts into moral exemplars of loyalty and sacrifice. As Anderson (2006) argued in *Imagined Communities*, nations are socially constructed through shared narratives, and education plays a central role in reproducing those narratives within the collective imagination. Thus, Indonesian history education under Guided Democracy cultivated a sense of moral-national identity grounded in loyalty to Sukarno's vision of revolutionary nationalism.

Furthermore, the *Discourse-Historical Approach* (DHA) reveals how historical narratives were strategically contextualized to justify contemporary political goals. For instance, the glorification of the 1945 revolution and anti-imperialist struggle was discursively linked to Sukarno's call for unity under guided leadership. This interdiscursivity illustrates Fairclough's (2013) concept of "discursive colonization," where dominant ideologies infiltrate social domains like education to reproduce consent. The rhetoric of unity thus served a dual function—promoting moral virtue and suppressing political pluralism. Similar patterns have been observed in other postcolonial contexts, where national identity is discursively constructed as homogeneous and morally righteous (Blommaert, 2005; Chilton, 2004).

Finally, the intertwining of discourse and ideology in Indonesia's historical curriculum reflects the performative function of language in nation-building. History was not merely taught as a chronicle of events but as a moral discourse of belonging. This transformation of education into an ideological ritual aligns with Habermas's (1989) notion of the "public sphere" being colonized by state rationality. By framing national unity as both historical truth and moral duty, the state successfully merged knowledge with ideology. This discursive process demonstrates how linguistic strategies sustain hegemony, embedding political legitimacy within the epistemic foundations of education.

Ideological Reproduction in Curriculum and Civic Education

The Indonesian education system has long functioned as an ideological state apparatus (ISA), shaping civic consciousness and political loyalty through curriculum design. During Sukarno's Guided Democracy era, education was used to reinforce socialist-nationalist ideals emphasizing unity and state loyalty over liberal democracy (Yasin, Fanani, & Murniati, 2020). The curriculum, particularly civic education, was imbued with political messaging aimed at legitimizing centralized authority and national cohesion. This ideological orientation persisted, evolving through the New Order and beyond, illustrating how curriculum serves as a tool for ideological continuity rather than a purely pedagogical instrument.

In the post-Reformasi era, the ideological function of education has undergone transformation yet remains politically charged. Studies by Bourchier (2019) and Nurrohmah & Latifa (2025) demonstrate that curriculum reforms such as *Merdeka Belajar* continue to reproduce state-defined notions of citizenship and morality. Although framed under democratic and liberal educational discourse, these reforms still prioritize national ideology (Pancasila) as the moral core of civic identity. Critical discourse analyses of policy documents and textbooks reveal that nationalism is recontextualized to align with neoliberal and developmentalist agendas, ensuring ideological continuity under different political regimes (Malik & Yuwono, 2018).

Furthermore, the integration of neoliberal logic within educational governance has subtly transformed ideological dissemination. Rosser (2016) argues that while decentralization and autonomy were introduced to

democratize education, they simultaneously entrenched elite interests through market-oriented reforms. The result is an ideological hybrid in which civic education merges patriotic narratives with neoliberal meritocracy. This duality reflects the state's effort to balance democratic rhetoric with social control, confirming Althusser's theory that ideology operates through both coercive and persuasive mechanisms in state institutions.

Thus, Indonesian curriculum reform embodies a dynamic field of ideological contestation. It is neither a simple transition from authoritarian to democratic paradigms nor an entirely neutral educational endeavor. Instead, as Zamjani (2016) highlights, it reflects the state's ongoing negotiation between legitimacy and control. The persistence of ideological frameworks across political eras indicates that education continues to function as a stabilizing structure for national identity and governance legitimacy, making curriculum a vital space for examining how ideology is constructed, transmitted, and reimagined in Indonesia.

Ideological Reconstruction and Decolonial Curriculum Praxis

The ideological reconstruction of Indonesia's curriculum requires reexamining how state ideology and pedagogical practices have shaped collective consciousness since the postcolonial era. According to Utami et al. (2024), Indonesia's historical curriculum reforms, particularly between 1946–1964, attempted to foreground national identity while implicitly reproducing centralized state ideology. Their study reveals that despite efforts to “decolonize” the curriculum, many historical narratives continued to privilege dominant power structures. This condition underscores how decolonization in curriculum must involve not only replacing colonial content but also dismantling the ideological apparatus that sustains hierarchy and exclusion (Utami, Sapto, Leksana, & Ayundasari, 2024).

The integration of critical pedagogy and decolonial frameworks into Indonesian educational reform reflects a global intellectual movement toward epistemic justice. Shahjahan et al. (2022) argue that decolonizing pedagogy is not merely about including marginalized voices but about transforming institutional logics that perpetuate colonial relations of power. Their comparative review demonstrates that such transformation requires rethinking curriculum epistemologies through the lens of relational ethics and pluriversal knowledge systems (Shahjahan, Estera, & Surla, 2022).

At the local level, educational decolonization intersects with socio-cultural reconstruction. Yulindrasari and Djoehaeni (2019) illustrate this in their study of *Rebo Nyunda*, a cultural education program in Bandung that reintroduces local Sundanese traditions within early childhood curricula. They argue that this initiative exemplifies a micro-decolonial practice—challenging homogenizing national ideologies and promoting pedagogical pluralism. Such practices, though limited in scope, signal a shift from ideological imposition toward participatory cultural citizenship (Yulindrasari & Djoehaeni, 2019).

Finally, the ideological reconstruction of education in Indonesia must align with what Sakhiyya (2023) describes as the tension between internationalization and decolonization. Her research on Indonesian universities shows that while institutions adopt global frameworks for academic competitiveness, these often reproduce epistemic dependency on Western paradigms. True curriculum decolonization, she argues, must not reject international engagement but rather redefine it through reciprocal epistemologies and locally grounded intellectual autonomy (Sakhiyya, 2023).

CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that history education during Indonesia's Guided Democracy period (1959–1965) functioned not merely as an educational medium but as a political instrument of legitimation. Through moralized language, heroic narratives, and the simplification of ideological conflicts, history curricula and textbooks wrapped state ideology in the mantle of “moral truth,” rendering it natural and incontestable. History was framed as a vehicle for loyalty and national unity rather than as a space for critical inquiry, allowing political authority to secure symbolic legitimacy through the educational apparatus.

These findings suggest that efforts toward decolonizing history education cannot be reduced to the replacement of curricular content or administrative reform alone. Decolonization requires dismantling the epistemic structures that normalize power relations in the production of historical knowledge, including how the state defines truth, morality, and national identity. Without interrogating these epistemological foundations, history education risks continuing to reproduce selective memory and symbolic compliance, even when presented through ostensibly progressive pedagogical discourse.

Therefore, fostering *critical historical consciousness* emerges as an urgent imperative for Indonesian history education. Such consciousness enables younger generations to understand history as a socially

constructed and contestable narrative rather than a fixed moral doctrine. Only through this approach can history education function as a means of intellectual emancipation—strengthening democratic critical capacity and preventing the re-emergence of ideological legitimation disguised as pedagogy.

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