

## Analysis of the Application of Freudian Theory in the Pattern of Fascist Propaganda in Indonesia

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### KEYWORDS

Propaganda; Fascism; Freudian Theory; New Order

### ABSTRACT

Propaganda is a powerful tool for shaping public perception, especially in the context of fascism. This study analyzes the application of Freudian theory to fascist propaganda in Indonesia, particularly during the New Order era under Soeharto's regime. Fascism in Indonesia began in 1933 with the rise of organizations like the Nederlandsche Indische Fascisten Organisatie (NIFO) and the Indonesian Fascist Party (PFI). During the New Order, propaganda was used to manipulate public opinion, suppress opposition, and maintain power. This research employs a qualitative literature review method, analyzing historical records, media sources, and academic writings. The study specifically examines how Freudian concepts, such as unconscious fears and mass psychology, were used to influence public perceptions, particularly in relation to the G30S/PKI case. The findings reveal that the regime exploited public fears of communism, using propaganda to justify repression and control. This research highlights the importance of understanding the psychological underpinnings of propaganda and suggests that further studies could explore the broader implications of these techniques in different political contexts.

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### Introduction

Propaganda is a powerful tool that influences people's perceptions and actions. Fascism is a form of understanding that prioritizes one's nation and looks down on other nations, so it is excessive nationalism. Fascism began to emerge during World War II. It developed during the war due to the development of fascist ideology in Italy, Germany, and Japan, which wanted to expand its extra-nationalist influence. In Indonesia, fascism developed in early 1933, marked by establishing the Nederlandsche Indische Fascisten Organisatie (NIFO) in Batavia. This organization was oriented towards fascist organizations in Germany and claimed to be part of the National Socialistische Beweging (NSB) founded by Ir Mussert. Fascist influence in Indonesia was then well received by some indigenous figures, as evidenced by the establishment of the Indonesian Fascist Party (PFI) in Bandung in August 1933. Dr. Notonindito founded the PFI. This party promotes fascism for the sake

of romanticizing the history of cultural glory in the past, namely building the glory of ancient Indonesian kingdoms such as Sriwijaya or Majapahit, as well as Musolini's romanticism of Roman glory, Italia La Prima (Maruta, 2015).

In the context of fascism, propaganda is used to shape narratives that support the ruling regime. One of the psychological theories often used in propaganda analysis is Freudian theory, which focuses on the influence of the subconscious and human psychological drives. This research aims to analyze the application of Freudian theory in fascist propaganda patterns in Indonesia by reviewing the history of fascist movements in Indonesia, including the New Order period, as well as concrete examples of the use of propaganda by fascist regimes in Indonesia.

The fascist movement in Indonesia has long historical roots, especially during the New Order period under Soeharto. During this period, the New Order regime used various propaganda tools to maintain its power and create a narrative that supported its ideology. This propaganda was not only used to shape public opinion but also to suppress and silence the opposition.

One clear example in Indonesia is the G30S/PKI case. One of the main examples of the use of fascist propaganda in Indonesia is the manipulation of history and the use of documentaries to create a narrative that supports the regime. Fascists seek to control the state based on certain values, involving corporatized economic and political arrangements (Daben et al., 2024). In the aftermath of the G30S/PKI, the New Order government produced documentaries that portrayed the events in a way that was highly favorable to the regime while demonizing the PKI and groups opposed to the government. This narrative was supported by the use of Freudian theory, where the regime played on people's unconscious fears of communism and threats to national stability.

In addition, there was a press crackdown in Indonesia during the New Order era. During the New Order period, the media experienced the worst period due to intervention from the authorities. According to Imron (2016), press crackdowns were carried out systematically to ensure that only narratives that supported the regime could be widely disseminated. Bakri (2019) also mentioned that the media was directly intervened by the authorities to control the information received by the public. This intervention is done by using propaganda techniques that manipulate people's subconscious so that they accept the narrative conveyed by the government without much question.

Freudian theory focuses on the human subconscious and how unconscious drives and fears can influence behavior. In the context of propaganda, this theory is used to create messages that are able to manipulate people's subconscious emotions and fears. The New Order government, for example, used propaganda that capitalized on people's fears of communism and threats to national stability to control and mobilize the public.

The use of Freudian theory in fascist propaganda patterns in Indonesia, especially during the New Order, shows how propaganda can be used to manipulate people's subconscious and create a narrative that supports the regime. Through the manipulation of history, divisive issues, and control over the media, the New Order regime managed to shape public opinion and maintain its power. This research shows the importance of understanding propaganda techniques and their impact on society and being more critical in receiving information and protecting ourselves from psychological manipulation. This research is expected to contribute to understanding the dynamics of fascist propaganda in Indonesia and how the analysis can apply Freudian theory.

## **Conceptual Framework**

This research aims to analyze the application of Freudian theory in fascist propaganda patterns in Indonesia. By examining the history and real-life examples of the use of propaganda by fascist regimes in Indonesia, especially during the New Order era, this research tries to understand how mass psychology can be manipulated by fascist propaganda. In this context, Freudian theory and fascist propaganda patterns become important theoretical foundations.

## **Freudian Theory and Fascist Propaganda Patterns**

Freud's theory of mass psychology suggests that people are often influenced by unconscious drives that shape their behavior. In the context of propaganda, fascist leaders use this knowledge to manipulate the emotions and thoughts of the masses. Freud explained that individuals in a crowd often lose their identity and become more easily influenced by primitive and emotional drives. Fascist propaganda often uses personal attacks and systematic methods to influence mass psychology. In the United States, for example, it is known for personal attacks aimed at discrediting certain individuals or groups and using systematic techniques to shape public opinion.

## **The Influence of Psychology: Freudian Analysis in Fascist Propaganda**

Freudian analysis helps to understand how fascist propaganda manipulates mass psychology. Fascist leaders often have oral character types and exploit their irrationality to manipulate followers. They use techniques designed to target unconscious drives, such as fear, aggression, and the need for group identification.

Mass psychology plays an important role in fascism. According to Freud, individuals in crowds tend to lose their sense of personal responsibility and become more easily influenced by charismatic leaders who can evoke strong emotions such as hatred, fear, and loyalty. Fascist leaders utilize these dynamics to control and direct the actions of the masses according to their agenda.

Fascist leaders use various techniques to manipulate their followers. They create a common enemy to fight against, use powerful symbols and rhetoric to evoke emotions, and propagate narratives that support their ideology. Fascism is characterized by hatred and intolerance towards out-groups, which is reinforced through constant propaganda.

**Narcissistic Advantage and Intolerance:** Fascism offers narcissistic gains to its followers by providing a strong sense of superiority and identification with the group. This allows individuals to feel a sense of purpose and meaning in their lives, albeit through intolerance and hatred towards out-groups.

In Indonesia, fascist propaganda during the New Order era is a relevant example of how Freudian theory can be applied. The New Order regime used various propaganda techniques to create narratives that supported its power and manipulated mass psychology.

In the case of G30S/PKI, the New Order government used historical manipulation and documentary films to create a narrative that supported the regime. The movie "Pengkhiranatan G30S/PKI" is a classic example of how propaganda shaped public opinion and instilled fear of communism. This narrative was intended to justify repressive measures against the PKI and groups deemed a threat to national stability. In addition, during the New Order period, the government tightly controlled the media to ensure that only narratives that supported the regime could be widely

disseminated. This press crackdown reflected a systematic effort to control information and shape public opinion by the ruler's political agenda.

The application of Freudian theory in analyzing fascist propaganda patterns in Indonesia shows how mass psychology can be manipulated to achieve political goals. Fascist leaders use techniques that target unconscious drives, such as fear and aggression, to shape public opinion and control the actions of the masses. This research highlights the importance of understanding the dynamics of mass psychology and propaganda techniques in analyzing today's media and cultural industries so that we can be more critical in receiving information and protecting ourselves from psychological manipulation.

### **Materials and Methods**

This study employs a qualitative research approach, specifically a literature review, to analyze the application of Freudian theory in the patterns of fascist propaganda in Indonesia. The literature review focuses on various sources, including historical records, journal articles, books, and media publications related to the New Order regime, Freudian psychology, and propaganda techniques. To ensure the validity of the results, the research uses triangulation of sources. This process involves cross-referencing different types of literature, such as academic papers, primary historical documents, and media reports, to compare various perspectives on the same events or propaganda techniques. Triangulation helps verify findings' consistency across different sources and reduces potential bias. Source selection criteria were based on several factors: Relevance: Sources directly related to fascist propaganda in Indonesia, the New Order regime or Freudian theory were prioritized. Credibility: To ensure the reliability of the information, only peer-reviewed journal articles, published books, and verified historical documents were included. Diversity of Perspectives: The study deliberately includes sources from both pro-government and opposition viewpoints to present a balanced analysis of how propaganda was perceived and its psychological impact on the masses.

### **Results and Discussions**

This discussion explores the application of Freudian theory in fascist propaganda patterns in Indonesia. By reviewing the history of the fascist regime's use of propaganda in Indonesia, especially during the New Order, we can understand how Freudian techniques were applied to manipulate mass psychology.

#### **Freudian Theory and Fascist Propaganda Patterns**

Freudian theory provides a framework for understanding how unconscious drives can be exploited in fascist propaganda. Freud argued that individuals are often influenced by unconscious drives and fears, which charismatic leaders can exploit to control the masses. In the context of fascist propaganda, leaders use knowledge of mass psychology to create narratives that support their ideology and instill fear, hatred, and loyalty in the population.

#### **Implications of Freud's Theory in Fascist Propaganda in Indonesia**

Fascist leaders often identify themselves as the savior of the nation, replacing individual narcissism with collective identification. In Indonesia, Soeharto, as the leader of the New Order, positioned himself as the country's protector from the threat of communism, so people shifted their narcissism to an authoritarian figure who was considered a savior. During the New Order era, the

government spread propaganda by using various existing media. The New Order's control and dominance made propaganda rapidly spread to the public. Print and electronic media, such as television, seemed unable to refuse to become the mouthpiece of the New Order government with its various propaganda agendas. The New Order government used the means or media of newspaper propaganda and TVRI television as the only national television at that time. At this time, the mass media was only an intermediary between communicators sitting in the Government, so the information circulating was only for the benefit of the government (Hadi & Kasuma, 2012).

According to the researcher, there was a Mass Psychological Deprivation in this case. The use of media to cultivate a leader and strengthen identification with an authoritarian figure is an effective technique in fascist propaganda. The government tightly controlled the mass media in Indonesia during the New Order to spread the image of Soeharto as a paternalistic figure who always knew what was best for the nation. In addition, there was an exploitation of Psychological Dispositions in Indonesia. The government capitalized on the fear of the threat of communism and national disintegration to strengthen support. By using rhetoric that portrayed communism as a major threat, the New Order government managed to mobilize public support and justify its repressive actions. The use of security forces and propaganda to maintain power and social control is a hallmark of fascist regimes. In Indonesia, the security apparatus was used to suppress opposition and maintain regime stability, while propaganda was constantly disseminated to ensure people remained loyal to the government.

The manipulation of history and the use of documentary films to create a narrative in favor of the regime are prime examples of the use of fascist propaganda. The movie "Betrayal of G30S/PKI" was produced by the New Order government to portray the PKI as the nation's main enemy and justify violence against those deemed to be involved with the PKI. The movie tells the story of the Soeharto government's version of a coup, which the Indonesian Communist Party or PKI orchestrated. The film made by the New Order regime succeeded in shaping opinions/perceptions and even beliefs that the mastermind of the September 30, 1965 incident was the PKI (Mirnawati, 1970; Wardani, 2019). The public must watch this film; the Government asked all agencies in Indonesia to watch the G30S PKI film with the aim of preventing radicalism and fostering students, especially to always protect the Indonesian homeland well and always fortify themselves so as not to fall into radical groups (Fiqlly, 2018) (Suhartana, 2021).

In addition, there was a press ban during the New Order period. The violence of the New Order is the strict control of the press (Eddyono, 2021). During this period, there were many mass media bans. Initially, the New Order promised press freedom through Law Number 11 of 1966 concerning Basic Press Principles, but over time, press freedom was no longer realized. Based on historical records, nearly 70 newspapers were banned during the New Order era (Adryamarthanino & Ningsih, 2022). In addition, many journalists were arrested and exiled by the government. The New Order government, which did not accept criticism from the mass media, banned many media. The muzzling of mass media was done to prevent news or narratives critical of the government. President Soeharto banned the publication of several critical mass media at that time.

During the New Order era, the press was systematically silenced. The New Order government supervised and controlled the press through government policies in the form of laws and ministerial regulations. During this period, the Indonesian MPRS Decree Number XXXII/MPRS/1966 was issued at the beginning of the New Order. MPRS Decree No. XXXIII/MPRS/1966 regulates the development

of the Indonesian press. In addition, during the New Order period, a law was born that regulates the Basic Provisions of the Press, namely Law Number 11 of 1966 which is the result of the Indonesian MPRS Decree Number XXXII / MPRS / 1966. The New Order government also issued Law Number 21 of 1982 and Minister of Information Regulation Number 1 of 1984. The Law and Ministerial Regulation became repressive tools for the government to monitor and manage press information and communication in Indonesia (Imron, 2016). With these various regulations, it appears how tightly the government supervises the media and the press.

The New Order regime shaped the mass media to play a role in positive reporting about the government. The government blocked many mass media during the New Order regime. The ban on mass media was carried out in the form of broadcasting violations that stopped publishing and circulating or broadcasting the masses (Maulana et al., 2023). Media banning began in October 1965, 46 out of 163 newspapers were closed by the Government by force. The government also intervened by sacking the membership of the Indonesian Journalists Association (PWI) of hundreds of journalists affiliated with communists and "leftists". They were even arrested and interrogated by Government officials (Hill, 2011). Press gagging is an effective form of social control. According to Imron (2016), press gagging ensures that only narratives supporting the regime can be widely disseminated. Bakri (2019) also mentioned that government intervention in the media caused the media to experience the worst period in its history, with press freedom being severely restricted.

The application of Freudian theory to analyze fascist propaganda patterns in Indonesia shows how fascist leaders manipulated mass psychology to achieve their political goals. By replacing individual narcissism with collective identification, using the media to cultivate leaders, and exploiting people's fear of constructed threats, the New Order government managed to create a narrative that supported its power. This research highlights the importance of understanding propaganda techniques and their impact on society so that we can be more critical in receiving information and protecting ourselves from psychological manipulation.

## **Conclusion**

This research analyzes the application of Freudian theory in fascist propaganda patterns in Indonesia, particularly during the New Order. The regime used propaganda to shape narratives in favor of power and suppress opposition by manipulating mass psychology. Leaders like Soeharto identified themselves as the savior of the nation, shifting individual narcissism to collective identification with the authoritarian leader, creating strong loyalty from the public. The New Order government utilized the media to cultivate the leader and strengthen identification with the authoritarian figure. It used the fear of the threat of communism and national disintegration to strengthen public support. The G30S/PKI case is a prime example of the manipulation of history and the use of documentary films to create a narrative in favor of the regime. At the same time, the banning of the press shows how the media was controlled to spread a narrative in favor of the regime, significantly limiting press freedom. This research emphasizes the importance of understanding propaganda techniques and their impact on mass psychology to analyze media and propaganda in the current social and political context. By understanding how fascist propaganda utilizes Freudian theory to manipulate people's emotions and subconscious fears, we can be more critical in receiving information and protect ourselves from psychological manipulation. Awareness of these techniques is essential to preserve freedom of thought and prevent the abuse of power by authoritarian regimes.

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