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The Discourse of History Writing: Mochtar Lubis' Social Criticism of Campus and Students through "Tadjuk Rentjana" Harian Indonesia Raya (HIR) in the Early New Order Period

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Abstract

This article examines the discourse of writing press history with a focus on Mochtar Lubis's social criticism of campuses and students. The discourse of writing the history of the press is sourced from the "tadjuk rentjana" of Harian Indonesia Raya written by Mochtar Lubis during the early span of the New Order in 1968-1974. This naturally gives rise to the question of how editorial plans that became the face of a press institution such as Harian Indonesia Raya became a medium for Mochtar Lubis to conduct social criticism. The methodology employed is a literature review and content analysis of pertinent sources. The initial section of this article delineates Mochtar Lubis' social and intellectual background. The subsequent section examines Mochtar Lubis' social criticism as manifested in HIR editorials. The concluding section elucidates the discourse surrounding the writing of his history.

Keywords: Harian Indonesia Raya; headlines; Mochtar Lubis; press history

Abstrak

Artikel ini mengkaji wacana penulisan sejarah pers dengan fokus pada kritik sosial Mochtar Lubis terhadap kampus dan mahasiswa. Wacana penulisan sejarah pers bersumber dari "tadjuk rentjana" Harian Indonesia Raya yang ditulis Mochtar Lubis pada awal Orde Baru tahun 1968-1974. Hal ini tentu saja menimbulkan pertanyaan bagaimana rencana redaksi yang menjadi wajah lembaga pers seperti Harian Indonesia Raya menjadi media bagi Mochtar Lubis untuk melakukan kritik sosial. Metodologi yang digunakan adalah telaah pustaka dan analisis isi dari sumber-sumber terkait. Bagian awal artikel ini menguraikan latar belakang sosial dan intelektual Mochtar Lubis. Bagian selanjutnya mengkaji kritik sosial Mochtar Lubis sebagaimana terwujud dalam tajuk rencana HIR. Bagian penutup menguraikan wacana seputar penulisan sejarahnya.

Kata Kunci: Harian Indonesia Raya; headlines; Mochtar Lubis; tajuk rencana



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Introduction

In its nascent stages, the New Order can be most accurately conceptualized as a coalition between the military and a diverse array of civilian entities, encompassing students, intellectuals, professionals, anti-communist party leaders, and a considerable proportion of rural and urban Muslims (Bourchier, & Hadiz, 2014). The

alliance in question has its origins in the demonstrations of 1966 and Suharto's appointment to the presidency in 1968. The economic and financial collapse resulting from inflation, coupled with the ideological rivalry that the regime exploited as a political instrument, constituted the foundation for the alliance. The early New Order government was confronted with a budget deficit, and a debt and interest burden that exceeded export earnings emerged as the regime's primary challenge at the outset of its tenure.

The change of power also prompted a shift in the dominant ideological paradigm of the era, namely the Cold War. The ideological rivalry between socialist leftist countries and capitalist countries was a significant factor that facilitated this transition. Even with regard to economic policy, the inclination towards capitalism, in addition to the 1967 investment law designed to attract foreign capital and the dominant laissez-faire strategy until the 1970s, was evidenced by the adoption of this system by Berkeley-educated economists working under the New Order government at a later point in time. These conditions were clearly the antithesis of the policies of the predecessor regime, which was closer to leftist countries that adhered to the socialist system.

The anomaly that prevailed at that time was that the initial foundation of the New Order was different from the general rule. The New Order's change of power was a military and civilian coalition, but in some ways the military with its dual function doctrine slowly co-opted civilian forces (students, intellectuals, professionals, anticommunist party leaders, and a large number of Muslims in rural and urban areas) until they could be controlled on the grounds of realizing national stability. At least three factors illustrate this phenomenon during the New Order era. Initially, the dwifungsi doctrine facilitated the military's expansion into strategic roles traditionally occupied by civilians. Secondly, the restructuring of civil and political institutions under the control of the regime was implemented. Thirdly, Pancasila ideology was positioned by the regime as the foundation for political control. Any actions or beliefs that contradicted this were considered to damage the harmony and even the character of the nation (Aspinall, 2005).

Meanwhile, the situational conditions related to the realization of "national stability" created by the New Order regime during 1968-1974—often referred to as the early New Order government—gave rise to upheavals from groups or civilian forces in events related to the existence of both. Conversely, the early New Order government constituted a pivotal phase in the formation of the New Order's political structure.

In Salim Said's expression, which quoted Taufik Abdullah's opinion, the political format was related to party elements. These elements included those representing the American-style dual party, which was proposed by the Bandung group (proposed by Sumarno, a PSI member who sat on the West Java government advisory board). Additionally, Suharto's own ideas in February 1970 related to elements representing nationalists, spirituals, and employees. Suharto's ideas ultimately constituted the political format utilized by the New Order, as evidenced by the streamlining of the multi-party system and the incorporation of the PPP (spiritual), which was a synthesis of the NU, Parmusi, PSII, and PERTI. The PDI (nationalist) was a coalition of the PNI, the Catholic Party, the Murba Party, the Indonesian Independence Support

Association (IPKI), and the Indonesian Christian Party (Parkindo). Ultimately, Golkar emerged as the dominant force within the New Order (Ramadhan, 1995).

As the country moved towards national stability and a confirmed political format, it became inevitable that there would be intersections and friction with civilian forces on a number of issues and events. The journalistic content of both Mochtar Lubis and the HIR itself provided comprehensive coverage of the period in question. Following the reissue of the HIR in 1968, Mochtar Lubis demonstrated a keen interest in the newly formed government. This interest manifested itself in the journalistic content published at the outset of the New Order government. For example, headlines included open letters to the president, as well as Mochtar Lubis' travel reports on modern countries at that time, particularly capitalist countries, and special content on developed countries issued by HIR. However, throughout the 1970s, Mochtar Lubis and the HIR began to focus intensively on a number of cases that attracted criticism and media attention, including incidents related to universities and students.

It is evident that an investigation into Mochtar Lubis' contributions to social critique through his editorials on campus and his commentary on students in the daily Indonesia Raya would be a fascinating avenue for further research. This article aims to situate the concept of writing within the context of historical discourse, a subject that will be explored in greater depth in subsequent sections.

Method

This article employs a literature study method and content analysis. In general, research employing any given scheme will utilize literature studies. In some instances, the terms "literature study" and "field research" are used to denote distinct approaches, yet both entail the examination of relevant literature. The distinction between the two hinges on the substance, i.e., the purpose, function, and position of the literature study in the context of the research being conducted. A primary objective of field research is to prepare a research outline or proposal to obtain information about similar research through literature searches. This is mainly intended as a preliminary step in preparing, deepening theoretical studies, or refining methodology. In addition to the functions already mentioned in field research, literature research utilizes literature searches and existing literature sources to obtain research data (Zed, 2004).

This article employs a two-pronged approach, combining literature study and content analysis, to unravel the discourse of historical writing related to Mochtar Lubis' social criticism and editorials on campus and students written in Indonesia Raya Daily. The preliminary phase of the study entails the collection of pertinent literature sources. The subsequent phase involves the analysis of the content of these sources, which serves as the foundation for the argumentation presented in this article. Conversely, the author also incorporated the findings of field research, namely interviews with former editors of Harian Indonesia Raya, into the analysis.

Results and Discussion

Social and Intellectual Background of Mochtar Lubis

Mochtar Lubis was a prominent figure in Indonesian literature, culture, and politics from the early 1950s until his death in 2004. He served as an editor-in-chief,

author, and cultural figure at the national, regional, and international levels. Mochtar Lubis existed during the early period of Indonesian independence (the second half of the 20th century), a time when influential individuals exercised considerable influence over the print media, which played a significant role in shaping the nation's political, economic, social, and cultural life. At this time, personal journalism and the character of the editor-in-chief (including Mochtar Lubis) were the dominant forces in the press industry, and they had the ability to directly criticize national leaders. During this period, Mochtar Lubis was a vocal critic of the abuse of power by the governments of Demokrasi Terpimpin and New Order, which resulted in the banning of HIR in both eras. (Hill, 2011)

Mochtar Lubis was born in Padang on March 7, 1922, the sixth child of Mara Hussein Lubis and his wife Madinah Nasution. His father held a prominent position in the Dutch colonial government prior to his appointment as assistant demang in Padang in 1915. Previously, he had been a local Mandailing nobleman, bearing the noble title of Raja Pandapotan and serving as a member of the court assembly, or Namora-Natoras (Nobles or Elders). His mother, Siti Madinah, was the daughter of the head of the village complex (kuria) with the title Mangaraja Sorik Merapi, a title that refers to Mount Sorik Merapi in Madina Regency (Mandailing Natal), North Sumatra Province. In 1929, his father was appointed demang of Kerinci, and Mochtar Lubis and his nine siblings relocated to the interior of Sumatra, specifically to Kerinci, which is situated at the border of Jambi and West Sumatra. Subsequently, he relocated to Sungai Penuh (the administrative city of Kerinci), where he attended the People's School for one year and then the Hollandsch Inlandsche School (HIS). In 1935, Mochtar Lubis was enrolled by his father in an economics school that had recently been established by S.M. Latif (1888-1978) in Kayutanam, West Sumatra. (Hill, 2011)

During his tenure at the Kayutanam School of Economics, the adolescent Mochtar Lubis (aged 13) affiliated with the Young Indonesia Movement, an organization that engaged in marching activities accompanied by the national anthem, "Indonesia Raya." During his tenure at the educational institution, SM Latif and other members of the teaching staff impressed upon Mochtar Lubis the significance of education as a catalyst for societal transformation. Mochtar Lubis's access to the library of the Kayu Tanam School of Economics facilitated his comprehension of nationalist ideologies and movements, as well as his ability to recognize the writings of prominent leaders such as Mohammad Hatta, Sutan Sjahrir, and Sukarno. These texts, which were required reading during his education, significantly influenced the young Mochtar Lubis. (Hill, 2011)

Upon completion of his studies, Mochtar Lubis relocated to Padang, situated 53 kilometers from Kayu Tanam. There, he developed an interest in pursuing a career in teaching after encountering an advertisement for a position as an HIS teacher, posted by the demang of the Teluk Dalam region of Nias. Mochtar Lubis was relieved of his teaching duties by the local controller due to his allowing his students to sing the Indonesian national anthem, "Indonesia Raya," beneath the red and white flag. At the age of 17, Lubis was encouraged to participate in a series of Mandailing traditional arranged marriages, a common practice among the educated children of West Sumatra at that time (1920s). However, he chose to ignore this and instead migrated to Batavia to meet his brother, Bachtar Lubis, who had also completed his

studies at an American Methodist school. While in Batavia, he was employed as a pharmacy accountant for a period of time, subsequently assuming the role of a clerk at the colonial government-owned bank, N.V. Nederlandsche Handel Maatschappij (NHM). Additionally, his affiliation with intellectuals, particularly those hailing from the Indonesian island of Sumatra, influenced Mochtar Lubis's personal development, alongside the discriminatory treatment he faced from his Dutch colleagues at work. (Hill, 2011)

Prior to the Japanese invasion in 1942, he was gainfully employed as a radio monitor and propagandist filmmaker. During the Japanese occupation, Mochtar Lubis was exposed to a variety of literary influences, including those of a Japanese prisoner, Dr. Leo F. Jansen, who possessed a considerable collection of books and permitted Lubis access to them. Following the conclusion of the Japanese occupation in 1945, Mochtar Lubis assumed a role at Antara, initially serving as a foreign relations editor. He continued in this capacity throughout the Revolutionary period and into the subsequent Liberal Democracy period. During this period, Mochtar Lubis exhibited a closer alignment with the intellectual perspectives espoused by Sutan Sjahrir and his associates (Hill, 2011). He held Sutan Sjahrir in high regard and, in a voice recording that was preserved and transcribed by Tamalia Alisjahbana, he requested an interview with the Dutch delegation, led by Van Mook and Prime Minister Sutan Sjahrir, following the conclusion of their initial meeting. The young Mochtar Lubis, aged 23, was granted an audience at his residence. (Alisjahbana, 2022)

At the age of 25, he was a member of Prime Minister Sjahrir's delegation at the Asian Conference in India in 1947. He served as co-editor of several newspapers, including the Weekly Masa Indonesia (1947), editor-in-chief of Masa magazine (1948), Mutiara magazine (1949), and the magazine of Sutan Sjahrir's PSI exponent, Siasat (1947). In the cultural journal Gelanggang, edited by Mochtar Lubis and published in 1949, the liberal humanism that characterised Sjahrir's group of admirers was discussed. (Hill, 2011)

The term "liberal humanism" is used to describe the humanitarian aspect of humanism, which encompasses the potential for cooperation and collaboration within the human species. Liberal humanism regards religious conviction as a matter of individual conscience and is preoccupied with forward-thinking concepts of collective collaboration and personal accountability, self-education, and active citizenship (Jones, 2017). The term "liberal humanism" gained prominence in the 1970s as a concise designation for a particular form of critical discourse that privileged theoretical inquiry. In this context, the term "liberal" is used to indicate a lack of radical political views and a general avoidance of political issues. Additionally, there is an implication that liberal humanists adhere to the notion of a fixed and constant "human nature," as elucidated by the great literary works. (Barry, 2002)

An analysis of Mochtar Lubis's social and intellectual background reveals that he exhibited an early interest in activism. His scholarship was established at an early age, and even the name HIR was inspired by him when he joined Indonesia Muda. HIR was regarded as an intellectual press, along with other similar publications such as KAMI Daily, Nusantara Daily, and Pedoman Daily (Sen, 2001). HIR and Mochtar Lubis were prominent and vocal critics of the ruling government during the era of

Demokrasi Terpimpin until the New Order Era. Their criticism resulted in the daily being banned during that period. In Lubis's view, the government of the Demokrasi Terpimpin era had the effect of impeding the intellectual, economic, cultural, and political advancement of the Indonesian nation. This was due to the destructive methods employed by the government towards all elements of society. (Lubis, 1987). Tentu saja pengalaman Mochtar Lubis di masa Demokrasi Terpimpin turut mendorong dirinya mendukung terbentuknya pemerintahan Orde Baru. HIR bahkan menjadi bagian yang vokal menyuarakan agenda pemerintahan Orde Baru yang baru terbentuk dan gencar menyuarakan harapan besar akan perubahan.

Mochtar Lubis, Social Criticism and HIR Headlines on Campus and Students

In an interview with the author on February 6, 2024, Atmakusumah (2024), a former editor of Harian Indonesia Raya, explained that his wife, Sri Rumiati Atmakusumah, was the individual responsible for compiling approximately one thousand HIR headlines that have been identified as Mochtar Lubis's writings. Prior to this endeavor, she had worked as a librarian in the library unit of Harian Indonesia Raya. Sri Rumiati Atmakusumah was able to identify Mochtar Lubis's writing style and, in collaboration with Atmakusumah, classified the headlines into various themes, which were recorded in the collection of Mochtar Lubis's headlines in Harian Indonesia Raya series 1-3, published by Yayasan Obor Indonesia. Additionally, Atmakusumah (2024) disclosed that the Harian Indonesia Raya headlines were authored by at least four individuals, including Mochtar Lubis (editor-in-chief), who contributed the majority of the content, as well as Enggak Bahaudin, Kustiniyati Mochtar, and himself. In composing these headlines, "Bung Mochtar" (as Atmakusumah referred to him) did not intend to adhere to a specific thematic agenda. Instead, his approach was more organic, shaped by the unfolding events and subjects that resonated with him and aligned with the interests of Harian Indonesia Raya. Conversely, Atmakusumah (2024) disclosed that during the 1968-1974 period, HIR and Tempo Magazine allocated considerable coverage to students and campuses in their news and other journalistic products.

Prior to his literary career, Mochtar Lubis was associated with the world of students and campuses through articles he wrote for the Indonesian Student newspaper. This newspaper was known for its high-quality intellectual content and was published by a group of prominent intellectuals from the city of Bandung who were in opposition to Guided Democracy. The newspaper's primary focus was on criticizing Guided Democracy, and its content was widely circulated among the student population (Rallion, 1985). During the period in which HIR was published, spanning from 1968 to 1974, Mochtar Lubis appointed a number of campus intellectuals, student activists, and even his former teachers at the Kayutanam School of Economics to contribute to the publication on a regular basis, either as authors or editors.

M.T. Zen, a prolific author from the Bandung Institute of Technology, has published extensively on the subjects of science and technology. Aoh Karta Hadimadja offers insights on literature. The room designated for the "Psychology Consultation Bureau" is filled to capacity. Chaidir A. Makarim, a student activist, organized the "Student Youth Forum," which served as a platform for the articulation of numerous perspectives from young individuals, particularly those affiliated with academic

institutions. Suardi Tasrif, an acquaintance of Mochtar Lubis who assisted with Mutiara magazine in 1949-1950, provided a review of press and legal issues in the "Criticism and Commentary" section. S.M. Latif, Mochtar Lubis's former instructor at the Kayutanam School of Economics in West Sumatra, initiated the "Review" section, which assessed scientific literature, particularly from international sources. (Surjomihardjo, 2002)

The 1970s saw the emergence of a distinct moral force on campuses and among students. This force was characterised by a critical attitude that differed from that of the 1966 Generation. It could even be interpreted as a corrective movement, seeking to address some of the shortcomings of their predecessors. Nevertheless, residual ties remain, confined to the vestiges of memories of the romanticism of the 1966 struggle with the theme of upholding justice and truth (Aly, 2004). In contrast to their predecessors, this new post-1966 generation felt unrepresented in formal and political institutions that they did not trust. As a result, they eventually emerged as new critics of power. Moreover, in contrast to their predecessors in 1966, who remained emotionally attached to the generals who collectively brought about the end of the guided democracy. The new generation of students did not exhibit the same profound emotional attachment to the military as their predecessors. Furthermore, the military they observed in practice was, in the majority of cases, complicit in the new corruption, including instances within state-owned enterprises such as Pertamina and the Logistics Agency established at the outset of the New Order. (Aly, 2004).

In the 1970s, the role of the student movement as a "moral force" began to emerge. This term refers to intellectuals who were imbued with idealism and sought to rectify various deviations in the life of the nation and state. However, they were not part of a group of political elites who sought to gain power. In some instances, the regime demonstrated a willingness to negotiate, yet it was also capable of employing a harsh response to the demands of the student movement.

The moral fortitude of the student movement manifested as a social phenomenon that prompted Mochtar Lubis to engage in social critique through his editorials from 1968 to 1974. This aligns with his role as a journalist and the editorin-chief of Harian Indonesia Raya, a publication known for its critical stance. Consequently, Mochtar Lubis, within the domain of moral philosophy, was compelled to engage in social critique. The moral philosophy in question is the capacity of Mochtar Lubis' journalism to collect and assess incoming information, which prompted him to engage in social criticism of events and occurrences related to campus life and students.

The Discourse of History Writing: Purpose, Methodology and Novelty

The objective of this study is to examine the ideas presented in journalistic texts, specifically press editorials, in order to gain insights into Mochtar Lubis' social critique of students and campuses. By analysing these texts, it is possible to gain a deeper understanding of the historical context and reconstruct history based on the information provided in the editorials. The research objectives are as follows: (1) To analyse the editorials written by Mochtar Lubis in HIR; (2) To analyse the reasons behind Mochtar Lubis' social criticism of campus and students in HIR editorials; (3) To analyse the editorials to ascertain their social criticism of campus and students.

From an academic perspective, this research offers a valuable opportunity to examine the history of press headlines in Indonesia, a topic that has not been extensively explored in previous studies. In practice, the analysis considers how the editorial provides readers with a framework and initial perspectives on the events of the time the editorial was written and the present, where the editorial is interpreted in the historical reconstruction of the complex dynamics surrounding students, campuses, and the broader landscape of scholarship and intellectualism.

To elucidate the reasons behind Mochtar Lubis' social criticism of campus life and students as expressed in his editorials in HIR between 1968 and 1974, the author employs discourse analysis, also known as content analysis. Given that historians are required to analyse the content of their data sources (in this case, documents), it can be argued that all historical research employs content analysis. It should be noted that this term is too general and has a different meaning from what is understood by "content analysis" as an autonomous method. For purposes of clarity, it is first necessary to understand what is meant by content analysis. In this context, we adopt the definition of content analysis proposed by Ole Holsti, which defines it as "a research technique for drawing inferences from available data by identifying specific 'message' characteristics objectively and systematically." (Zed, 2011)

This content analysis method is also referred to as "text analysis" or "discourse analysis." The method was initially developed within the field of communication science, particularly in the context of political communication. Nevertheless, it can be applied to all social science and humanities disciplines. Such studies encompass a range of disciplines, including law, art, music, marketing, history, journalism, and psychology. These analyses are, in essence, based on the same fundamental principles that underpin the entire research process. For example, the researcher must initially determine or limit the focus of the research problem, develop the necessary working hypothesis, and select available sources. In some instances, content analysis research necessitates a rigorous hypothesis due to the constraints imposed by the availability of sources. To illustrate, it is only present in a select number of newspapers or texts, including state speeches, correspondences, and advertisements in specific media outlets. Conversely, if a substantial number of sources are employed, the challenge is compounded by the necessity of establishing more rigorous sample selection criteria. Furthermore, the working procedure must be made more specific, including the implications, the wording (or, in more complex procedures, the context to be identified). (Zed, 2011)

HIR is recognized as an intellectual press, characterized by a critical approach to its actions. The decision to employ content or discourse analysis methodology is well-suited to the "editorial analysis" of the events criticized by Mochtar Lubis, as a pivotal element in the composition of HIR editorials. Nevertheless, it appears that this approach is unable to fully address the question of the situation at that time (structure). Consequently, the author suggests the Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) method, which is a branch of the study of communication science, for an examination of Mochtar Lubis' editorials in Harian Indonesia Raya.

Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) is a discourse analysis research method that primarily examines the perpetuation of power abuse and injustice in social and political contexts. This is achieved by analysing the ways in which these issues are

reproduced, legitimised and resisted through the use of texts and conversations. CDA's status as research that opposes the abuse of power and injustice positions it to understand and expose such practices. This is also why CDA can be characterized as a social movement of politically committed discourse analysts. All methods employed across the disciplines of discourse studies, as well as other relevant methods utilized in the social sciences and humanities, can be applied in CDA. As an analytical practice, CDA is not a standalone research analysis in discourse studies. Conversely, CDA represents a critical perspective that can be found in all areas of discourse studies, including discourse grammar, conversation analysis, discourse pragmatics, rhetoric, stylistics, narrative analysis, argumentation analysis, multimodal discourse analysis, social semiotics, sociolinguistics, and ethnography of communication or psychology of discourse processing, among others. (Dijk, 2015)

The emergence of events on campus and students can be seen as the foundation for Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), which in turn became the main raw material for the headlines written by Mochtar Lubis. This basis can be observed at the nexus of civil authority (students and campuses) with New Order operations pertaining to "national stability and the establishment of political formats." Structurally, this was based on the search for the initial form of the New Order, which frequently referred to itself (the New Order) as a comprehensive correction of its predecessor's Guided Democracy system. Subsequently, academics emerged from the sphere of students and campuses, which had previously collaborated with the New Order in the overthrow of the Guided Democracy era. Ultimately, the press (Mochtar Lubis and Harian Indonesia Raya), which served as a conduit for social criticism and played a role in maintaining social control over the system.

Moreover, this research contributes to the field by highlighting the emergence of the moral power of the student movement (which encompasses the campus) as a social phenomenon. Additionally, it examines Mochtar Lubis's professional approach to moral philosophy, particularly his emphasis on moral responsibility as a journalist, which informed his social criticism in headlines from 1968 to 1974. Conversely, Mochtar Lubis' social criticism was not solely directed at the government; it also encompassed all national institutions engaged in social critique, including Lubis himself.

Conclusion

The discussion above revealed the moral strength of students and the moral philosophy as described by the journalist, which subsequently formed the basis for Mochtar Lubis and HIR to issue editorials on campus and students. The editorials were Mochtar Lubis' analytical response to the events that occurred during the early days of the New Order, which he then expressed in the form of social criticism on matters related to students and campus. From the aforementioned description, it becomes evident that there are several intriguing aspects to be explored. Primarily, the situational and conditional climate of the New Order era had a profound impact on campuses and students, which in turn prompted Mochtar Lubis to engage in social criticism through editorials in HIR. Secondly, Mochtar Lubis's professionalism as a journalist during the early New Order era is worthy of note. Thirdly, a series of factors, stemming from Mochtar Lubis's social and intellectual background,

provided the impetus for him to engage in social criticism regarding campuses and students. In light of the aforementioned considerations, this article proposes a discourse on the writing of a history of Mochtar Lubis' social criticism of campuses and students through editorials in HIR. This discourse will continue to represent the author's scientific work in the future.

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