

UNSETTLING
TEACHING

Re+frame Narrative

"A Toolkit for Navigating Political,
Cultural, and Historical Trauma"



Context of the Document

This toolkit guides youth in understanding trauma narratives. Created to acknowledge the Indonesian mass killings of 1965–66 and the emergence of the film "Eksil" (2022), it helps recognize the lasting impact on exiles who faced prolonged displacement.

During this period, over half a million people were killed, millions arrested, and PKI members targeted. The era marked by Suharto's rule saw suppression of communist beliefs, leading to Sukarno's downfall. Exiles experienced lifelong status, with some passing away without returning home, causing distress among families and communities.

At ProyekDekolonial, this pedagogical material is part of the praxis of the Unsettling Teach-in.

Disclaimer

This material is a work in progress and is meant to evolve over time. The current ideas reflect the voices of the contributors and reviewers, Frendy Kurniawan and Kinanti Munggaran, from ProyekDekolonial.

We are always seeking to incorporate more voices from people with knowledge and experience on this topic. If this applies to you, please contact us at proyekdekolonial@proton.me.

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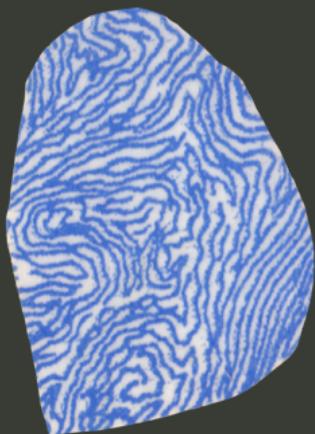
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Introduction

The toolkit's decolonial framework encourages a critical reexamination of historical narratives, challenging the dominant perspectives that have long shaped our understanding of events. By reframing these stories through the lens of marginalized individuals and groups, the toolkit empowers young people to uncover the multifaceted layers of political, cultural, and social trauma that have been obscured or silenced.

This process of reframing is essential for disrupting the hegemonic narratives that have perpetuated the marginalization of certain communities. When we shift our focus to the experiences and viewpoints of those who have been historically excluded, we gain a deeper, more nuanced understanding of the complexities and consequences of events like the Indonesian mass killings of 1965–66



By adopting a decolonial lens, the toolkit encourages young people to question the prevailing narratives, to challenge the assumptions and biases that have shaped our collective understanding of the past. This critical examination is not merely an academic exercise; it is a necessary step towards dismantling the structures of power and privilege that have long dominated our historical discourse.

Through this process of reframing, the toolkit equips young people with the tools to discern truth from fiction, to recognize the biases and agendas that have shaped the narratives we have inherited. In doing so, it empowers them to become active agents in the ongoing struggle for a more just and inclusive society, one that acknowledges the diverse experiences and perspectives of all its members.

How to ... learning objectives



ANALYZE METAPHOR, TRUTH, & IDEOLOGY

1

In the iceberg metaphor, stories have visible and hidden layers. By focusing on frames, metaphors, logics, and ideologies, we can uncover the underlying perspectives and beliefs that shape them.

CHANGE THE METAPHOR, TRUTH, & IDEOLOGY

2

Let's explore narratives like a forest. Truth lies among the trees while ideologies are the roots beneath. We'll uncover hidden perspectives and beliefs by examining frames, metaphors, and logical pathways.

CREATE A NEW FRAME

3

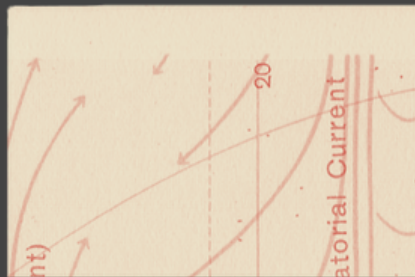
In our forest narrative, truth is the sunlight, ideologies are the soil, and new narrative frames are like seeds. These frames are the foundation for reshaping political, cultural, and historical narratives effectively.

NAVIGATING POLITICAL, CULTURAL, & HISTORICAL TRAUMA

4

Understanding how past events affect us, recognizing our connections to society and our identities, uncovering hidden stories, questioning different viewpoints, and promoting healing through thinking and praxis.

Navigating the lesson



Keep an eye out for these symbols throughout the lesson. They're your go-to guide, helping you pace yourself to learn, discuss, practice, and reflect on what you've discovered.

60 MINUTES *

1

A guess of how much time the activity or challenge might need. *Adjust as needed. It's fine because everyone is unique.

2

GROUP OR COMMUNITY DISCUSSION

Time to pause and and talk with the group or community.

CRITICAL THINKING CHALLENGE

3

Exercise your critical thinking to evaluate an issue or topic.



So, what's Re+frame Narrative

This process entails changing how a specific story or narrative is understood or portrayed. It could mean adjusting the viewpoint, highlighting various themes or characters, or questioning prevailing narratives.

For instance, reinterpreting a narrative about a historical event through the lens of marginalized individuals or groups can offer a deeper insight into their experiences and viewpoints.



Can you spot the difference ?

It seems like everyone has their own story or viewpoint, but not all of these narratives greatly affect how we see and understand the world. In the first part, we talk about what a narrative is. The second part explores narrative reframing.

NARRATIVE

Narratives stories are like frameworks that help us make sense of the world. They add meaning to our lives and affect the decisions we make every day. But stories are more than just tales—they're complex, ever-changing systems we call narrative forms.

These forms are alive; they can change, grow, or even come to an end, blending with other stories within a particular culture. Ultimately, narrative forms shape how we see the world.

RE+FRAME NARRATIVE

Narrative reframing is about adjusting how stories are told in the groups you've recognized, so they match your goals better within those communities.

PART 1

Analyze Metaphor, Truth, & Ideology

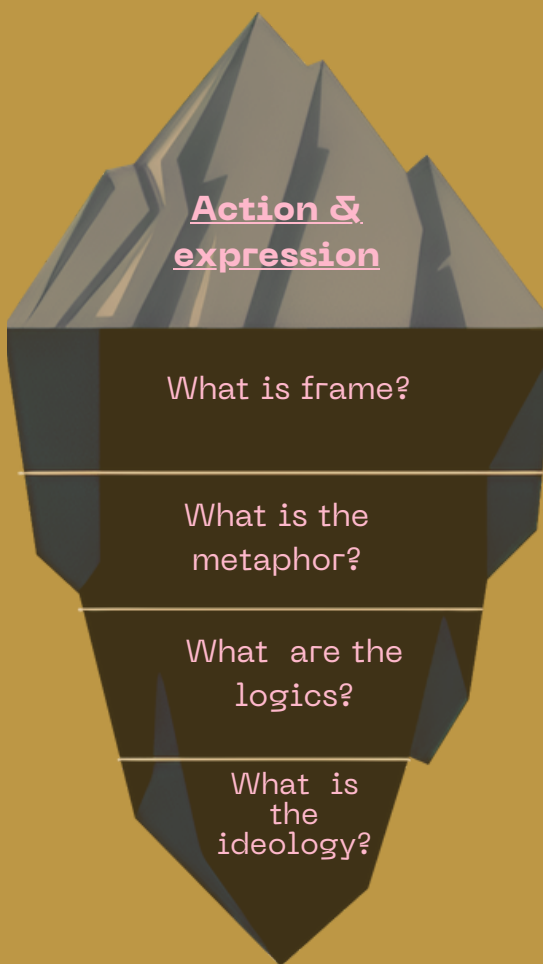
The iceberg metaphor helps us quickly understand the 'narrative form'.

Think of narratives like icebergs: there's a visible part above the surface and a hidden part below.

- What we're really interested in are the 'frames' because they tie the whole narrative together into a clear view.
- To spot these frames, we need to look at the metaphors, logics, and ideologies in the messages.

Metaphors are especially important because they give us valuable insights. They're comparisons between two things.

So, when we look at a narrative—like a movie or a story—we're not just seeing actions and expressions on the screen. We're also seeing the frame, the metaphor, the logic, and the ideology behind it all. It's like peeling back the layers of a story to understand what it's really about.



Imagine you're watching a movie. The screen you're looking at is like a frame—it shows you what's happening, but there's more to the story than just what's on the screen.

Think of the movie's theme as a metaphor. It's like a hidden message or idea that the movie is trying to tell you.

Now, let's talk about the logic. It's like the rules of the movie's world. For example, in a superhero movie, the logic might be that superheroes have special powers.

Finally, there's the ideology. This is like the big idea behind the movie. It could be about justice, friendship, or anything else the movie wants to say.

PART 2

Change the Metaphor, Truth, & Ideology

In the next part of the iceberg exercise, we'll use your goals to change the hidden reasons or beliefs (called "deep logics").

This means flipping these deep logics to match your point of view. It's like rearranging the puzzle pieces to fit the picture you want to see.

Actions & Expressions

What is frame?

What is the metaphor?

What are the logics?

What is
the
ideology?



Reframed message

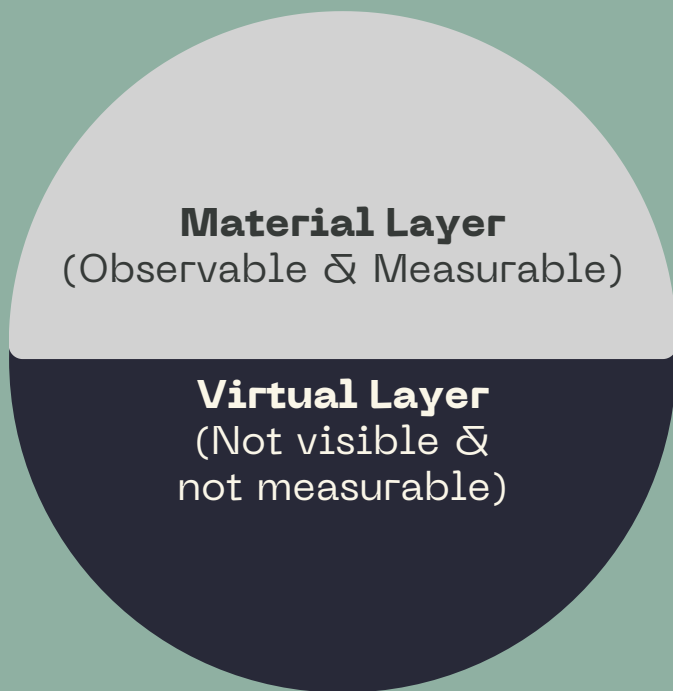
What should the frame
change to?

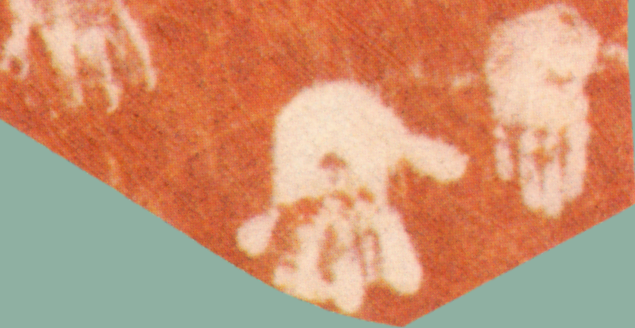
What are the logis for
the new message?

What are the logis for
the new message?

What ideology
supports the
new message?

Narrative frames are like mental schemas that contain all the information we have learned throughout our life; as such it contains the virtual layer of the narrative form.





Imagine your brain is like a big library filled with books. Each book is a narrative frame, like a mental blueprint that holds all the things you've learned in your life. These frames shape how you see the world and make decisions.

Now, picture your culture as a huge library with many different kinds of books—these are the narrative forms. You have access to all these books, but the ones you've been taught and influenced by the most are the ones you'll use the most.

So, depending on which "book" or narrative frame you've been raised with, you might act and think differently from someone with a different frame. It's like having different maps to navigate the world, but each map leads you to different places and ways of thinking.

The assumption behind narrative reframing is that we can change the current narrative frames around a particular topic to activate new logics, new ideas, truths and beliefs.

In this way we can generate new intentions and everyday actions that eventually lead to different material expressions of the narrative form: new speeches, new texts, new images, new sounds, etc.

So, just like exploring different parts of a library can open your mind to new stories and ideas, exploring different narrative frames can open your mind to new ways of thinking and acting.

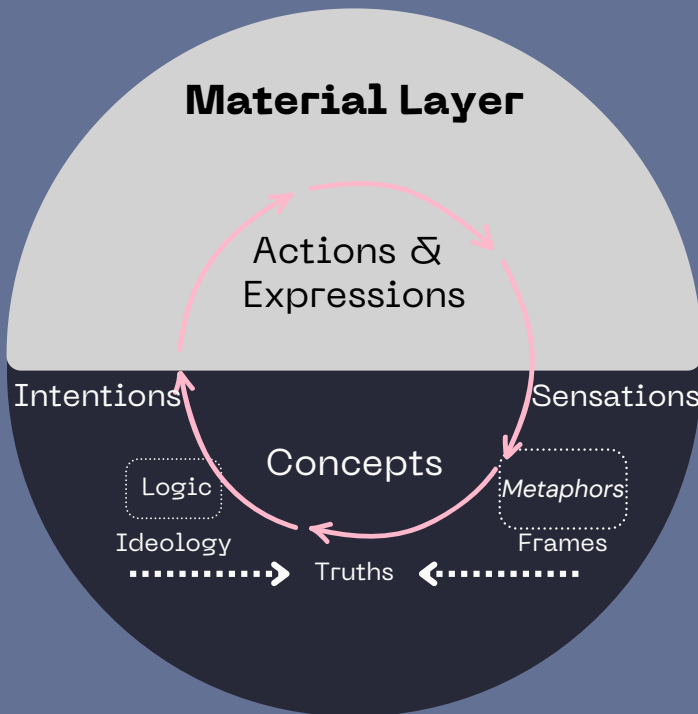
It's like having an endless adventure where you get to choose which paths to take and which stories to believe. And that's what makes your journey through life so exciting and full of possibilities!

PART 3

Create a New Frame

In this step, you will come up with a new narrative frame that embodies your new metaphor, truth construct, and ideology.

These new frames will be used to create the narrative strategy for your reframe narrative.



Remember the previous section “just like exploring different parts of a library can open your mind to new stories and ideas”.

ACTION: Charting Our Journey

CONCEPTS: Plotting the Course

Just like mapping out a route before a voyage, we need a clear concept of where we're headed. This concept acts as our guiding map, directing us toward our destination.

Intentions: Steering Our Path

Having a map isn't enough; we also need the intention to navigate through challenges. Our intention acts as the wind in our sails, pushing us onward toward our goal.

Sensations: Feeling the Journey

As we sail, our sensations—the sights, sounds, and feelings of the journey—fuel our experiences and guide our actions.

FRAME: The Bedrock of Our Journey
The frame serves as the sturdy foundation of our voyage, guiding and supporting us through endless possibilities. It's comprised of three essential elements: "Ideology," "Logic," and "Metaphor."

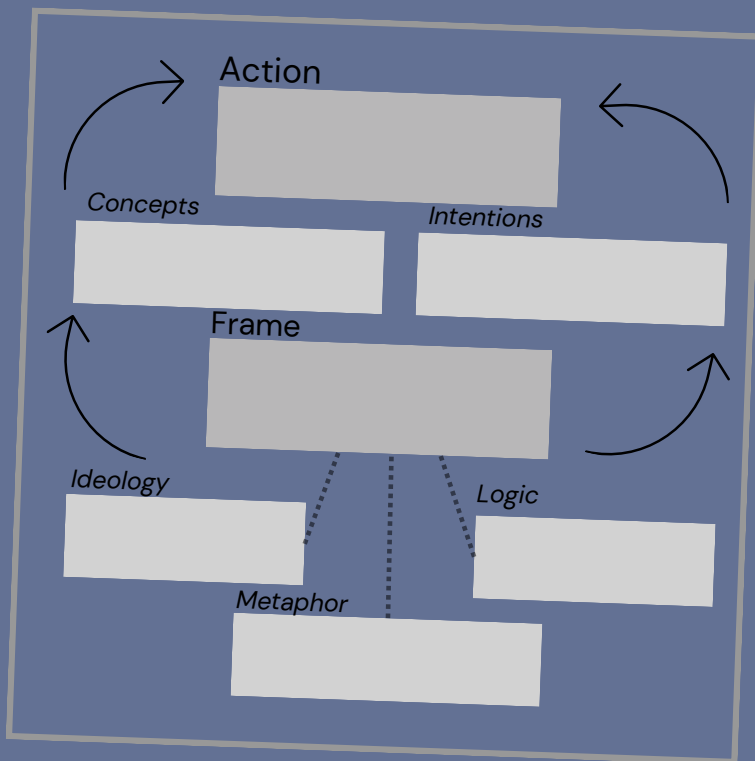
Ideology: Our Guiding Light
Our ideology is akin to the North Star, illuminating our true purpose and values. It shapes our beliefs and principles, giving direction and meaning to our journey.

Logic: Plotting Our Path
Logic acts as the compass, helping us navigate the twists and turns of our expedition. It provides the rational framework for our decisions, ensuring we stay on track toward our destination.

Metaphor: The Sea of Imagination
Metaphor is the boundless sea of creativity, enriching our journey with depth and insight. It shapes our perceptions and interpretations, infusing our adventure with richness and color.

In this step, you will come up with a new narrative frame that embodies your new metaphor, truth construct, and ideology.

We advise you to come up with several frames.



By creating this new narrative, you're not just telling a story—you're shaping the way people think and act. And that's pretty powerful stuff! So, think big, be bold, and imagine the kind of impact your new story could have on the world.

Imagine you're creating a new story—a fresh way of looking at things. It's like painting a picture with words, where you get to decide what the story is about and what it means. So, in this step, you're going to come up with a new story that reflects your new ideas, truths, and beliefs.

Here's a tip: trust your gut feelings and what you already know. Think about what you want to achieve and what you believe in. And try to think ahead—imagine what the world could look like if everyone embraced this new story.

Now, once you've come up with your new story, think about how it could change things. What kind of ideas, intentions, actions, behaviors, and even physical things could come from this new way of seeing the world? How could it change the way people talk about things or the decisions they make?

EXERCISE

Check out these examples and see if you can correctly sort them into 'Narrative' or 'Reframe Narrative'.

INDONESIAN MASS KILLINGS OF 1965–66 & 'EXILES'

During 1965 to 1966, Indonesia experienced widespread violence and social unrest primarily directed at members of the Communist Party (PKI). Originating from a contentious attempted coup by the 30 September Movement, this period saw a brutal anti-communist purge unfold under the leadership of General Soeharto, who subsequently held the presidency for 32 years. The toll was staggering, with over half a million people killed, millions more arrested, and numerous subjected to imprisonment, torture, or forced labor on Buru Island. Additionally, hundreds were left stranded in foreign nations.

EXERCISE

The ban on the PKI and the prohibition of Marxist–Leninist ideologies marked a turning point, with any affiliation with communism or leftist beliefs becoming grounds for incarceration or internment. This marked the shift to the "New Order" regime and the eradication of the PKI as a political entity, influencing the dynamics of the global Cold War. The aftermath led to the downfall of President Sukarno and the rise of Suharto's authoritarian rule for three decades.

Amidst the tragedy, those labeled as "exiles," individuals abroad during the coup, faced prolonged displacement. For many, exile became a lifelong status, devoid of resolution or victory, with some passing away without returning home, leaving a lasting impact on their families and communities.

EXERCISE

NARRATIVE FROM STORIES

Action

Indonesian political exiles
are not recognized

Concepts

Political Labeling

During the Cold War era, communism was viewed as a threat. Branding of many exiles as communists.

Intentions

Consolidating Power

By promoting anti-communist narratives, the government aimed to solidify its grip on power and maintain control over the population.

Frame

The context of political upheaval and
response to the purge of communists
in 1965-66

Ideology

Western capitalist democracies

This ideology is rooted in Cold War geopolitics, portrays communism as a grave threat to national security, social stability, and ideological purity.

Logic

Antithetical to nation's values-interests

Prevent the spread of communist ideology. A preemptive measure to eliminate potential threats and preserve the integrity of the state.

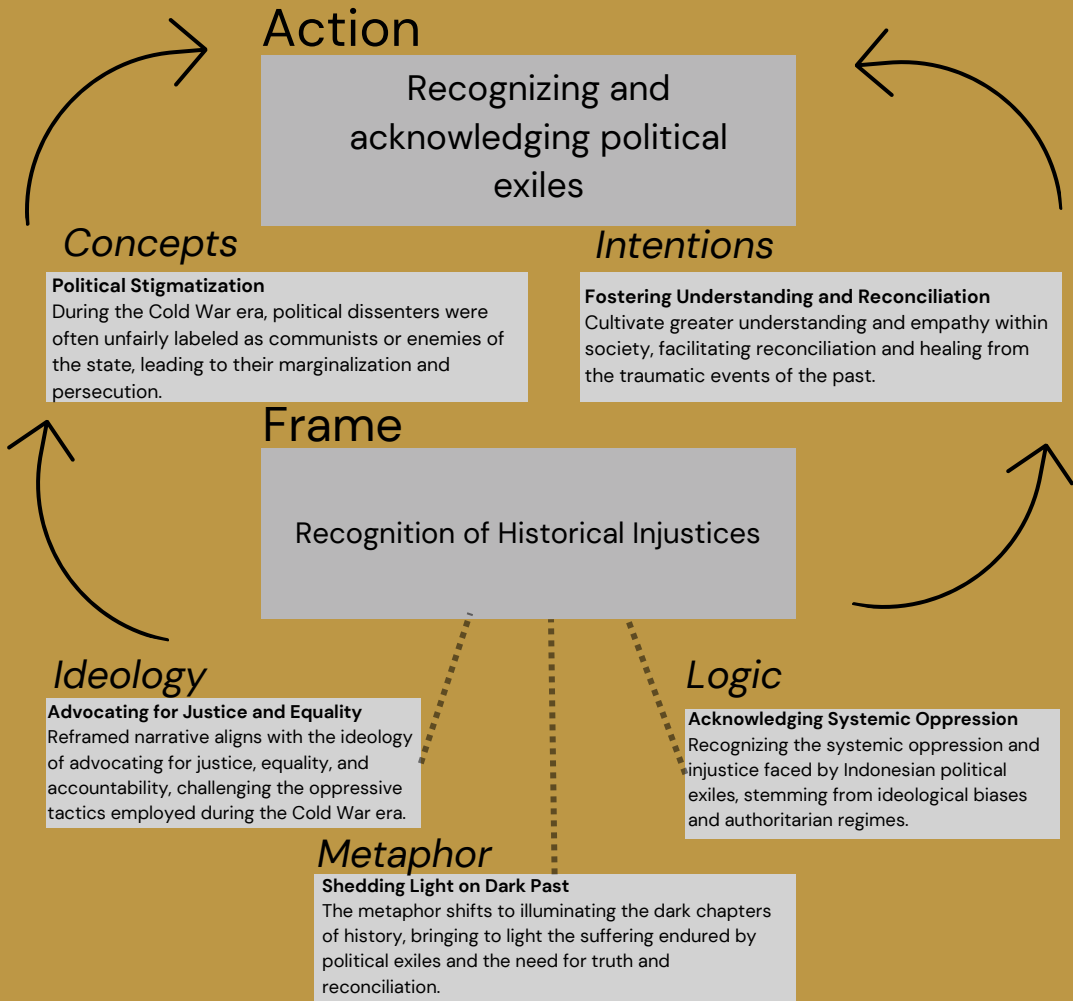
Metaphor

Communism is depicted as a dark force lurking within society

The purge of communists is framed as a righteous struggle, akin to a war for the nation's soul, where sacrifices must be made to secure victory.

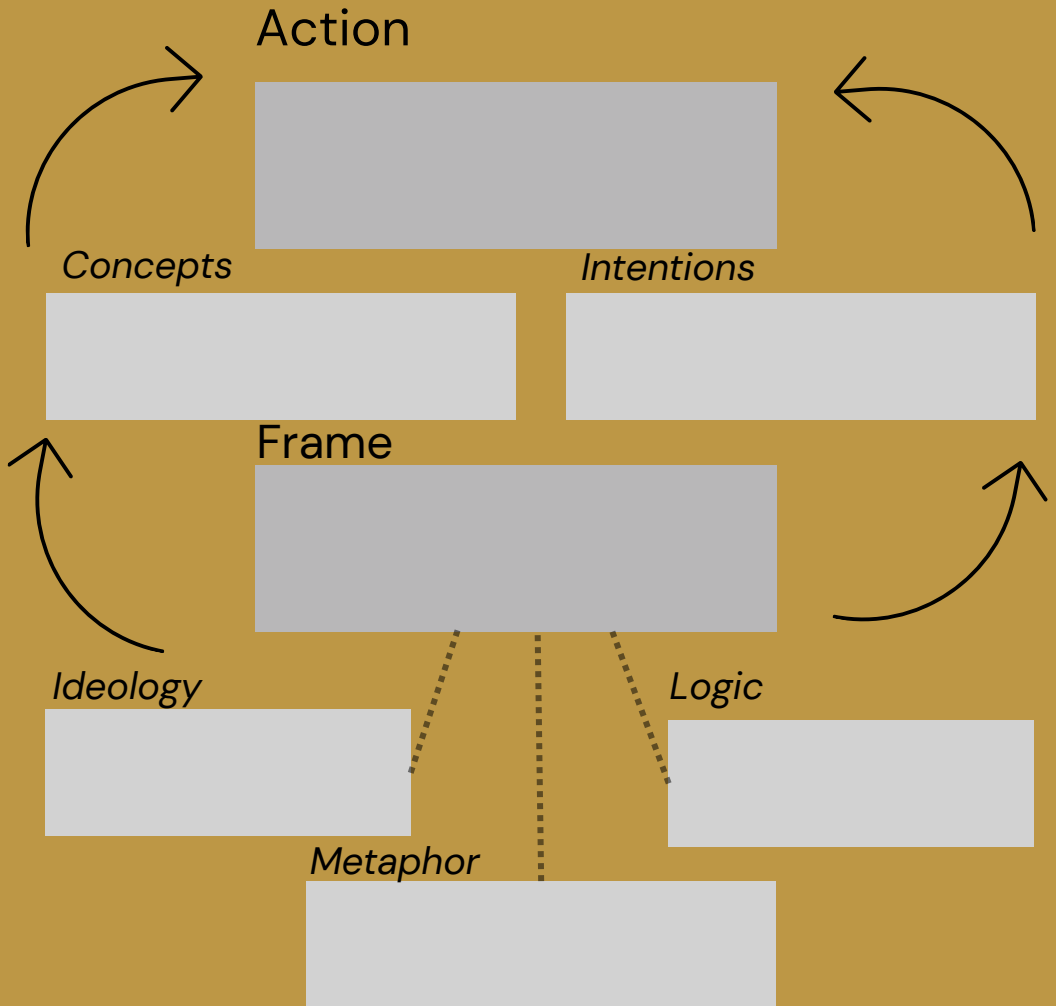
EXERCISE

RE+FRAMING NARRATIVE FROM STORIES



EXERCISE

Get your own version and see if you can correctly sort them into 'Narrative' or 'Reframe Narrative'.



Annex

Selected resources for additional learning

Books:

Bevins, Vincent (2020). *The Jakarta Method: Washington's Anticommunist Crusade and the Mass Murder Program that Shaped Our World*. PublicAffairs.

Melvin, Jess (2018). *The Army and the Indonesian Genocide Mechanics of Mass Murder*. Routledge.

Pohlman, Annie (2015). *Women, Sexual Violence and the Indonesian Killings of 1965–66*. Routledge.

Robinson, Geoffrey B. (2018). *The Killing Season: A History of the Indonesian Massacres, 1965–66*. Princeton University Press.

Roosa, John (2006). *Pretext for Mass Murder: The September 30th Movement and Suharto's Coup d'État in Indonesia*. The University of Wisconsin Press.

Roosa, John (2020). *Buried Histories: The Anticommunist Massacres of 1965–1966 in Indonesia*. University of Wisconsin Press.

Annex

Selected resources for additional learning

Journal Articles:

Chambert-Loir, Henri. "Bibliography of Exile Literature (Sastra Eksil)." *Archipel*, no. 91 (May 15, 2016): 177–83.

Leksana, Grace. "Collaboration in Mass Violence: The Case of the Indonesian Anti-Leftist Mass Killings in 1965–66 in East Java." *Journal of Genocide Research*, Volume 23, 2021 – Issue 1.

Clavé, Elsa, and Asvi Warman Adam. "Dossier The aftermath of 1965: an Indonesian perspective." *Archipel* 95 (2018): 1–2

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<https://www.jroosa.org/1965-bibliography-trial>.

"Newly Declassified U.S. Embassy Jakarta Files Detail Army Killings, U.S. support for Quashing Leftist Labor Movement."
<https://nsarchive.gwu.edu/briefing-book/indonesia/2017-10-17/indonesia-mass-murder-1965-us-embassy-files>.

Annex

Selected resources for additional learning

Archives, Articles, Websites, etc.:

"FOREIGN RELATIONS OF THE UNITED STATES, 1964–1968, VOLUME XXVI, INDONESIA; MALAYSIA–SINGAPORE; PHILIPPINES Coup and Counter Reaction: October 1965–March 1966."
<https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1964-68v26/ch3>.

Simpson, Brad (Ed.). "Suharto: A Declassified Documentary Obit. National Security Archive Electronic Briefing Book No. 242." Posted – January 28, 2008.
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"Operation ICEBERG: Transitioning into CIA: The Strategic Services Unit in Indonesia."
<https://web.archive.org/web/20161216084808/https://www.cia.gov/library/center-for-the-study-of-intelligence/csi-publications/csi-studies/studies/vol-60-no-1/operation-iceberg.html>.

PART 4

NAVIGATING POLITICAL, CULTURAL, & HISTORICAL TRAUMA

Navigating political, cultural, and historical trauma is like untangling a knot — it's complicated, but it's crucial for understanding and consequences on societal frameworks, identities, and lived experiences.

Understanding What Happened:

1 We start by looking back at the tough stuff — the wars, conflicts, or injustices that happened in the past. These events can still affect us today, shaping how we see the world and how we treat each other.

PART 4

NAVIGATING POLITICAL, CULTURAL, & HISTORICAL TRAUMA

Feeling the Effects:

2

Trauma doesn't just disappear once the event is over. It sticks around, affecting how we think, feel, and act. It might show up as fear, anger, or sadness, making it hard to trust others or feel safe in our own communities.

Finding Ways to Overcome:

3

Overcoming trauma takes time and effort, but it's possible. It means facing the pain of the past, talking about it with others, and finding ways to make things right. It's about learning from our mistakes and working together to build a better future.

So, what's Political Trauma ?

This is when political events, like wars, oppression, or authoritarian rule, leave a deep emotional mark on people. It can make you feel powerless, scared, angry, or like you can't trust the people in charge.

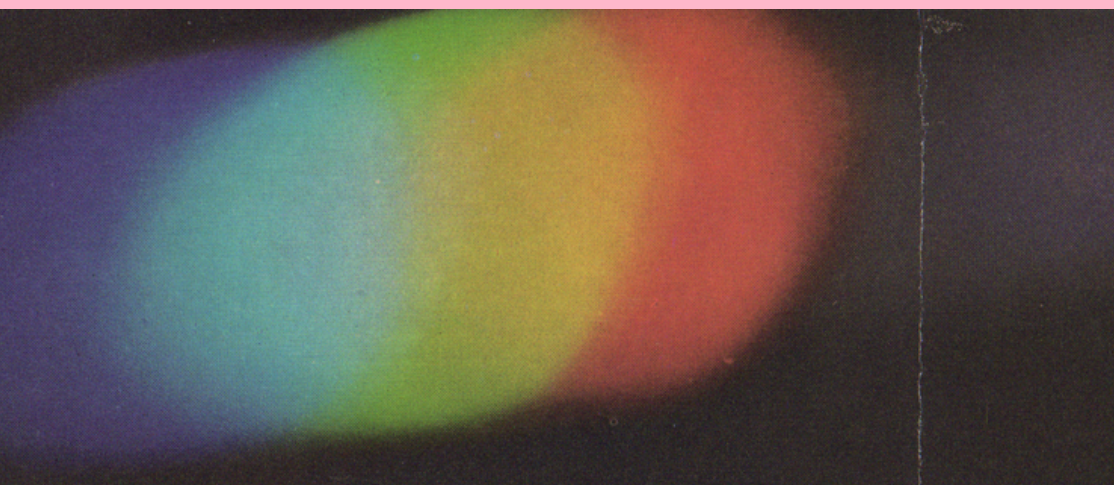
Dealing with political trauma means recognizing it, speaking up for what's right, and creating safe spaces where everyone's voices are heard and respected.



So, what's Cultural Trauma ?

Cultural trauma happens when something threatens the beliefs, values, and identity of a whole group of people. This might include things like discrimination, persecution, or efforts to erase a culture's language or traditions.

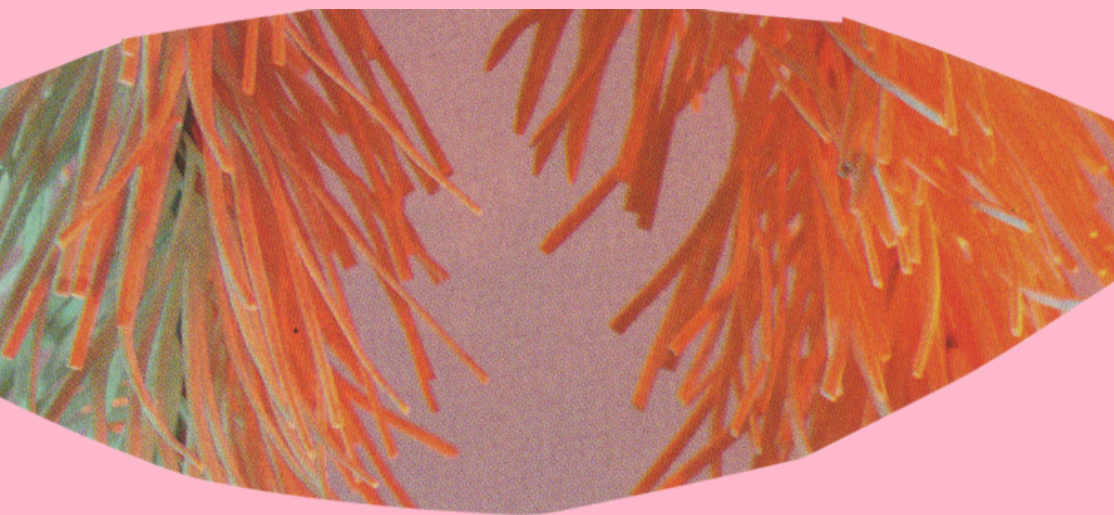
To navigate cultural trauma, it's important to support each other's cultural ways, and create communities where everyone feels like they belong.



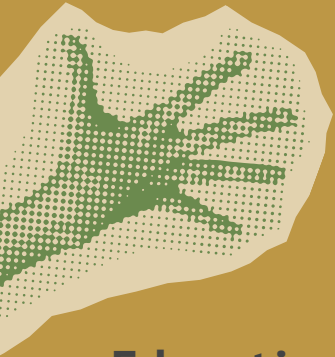
So, what's Historical Trauma ?

This is the long-lasting impact of past injustices that still affect people today. It could be things like slavery, colonization, or forced assimilation that have left scars on communities for generations.

Coping with historical trauma means facing up to the truth about the past, working towards about it collectively, where everyone has equal opportunities and respect.



YOUTH TAKING PRAXIS



WHAT'S POSSIBLE?

Educational Resources:

1

Offers educational resources such as articles, books, and documentaries to help youth understand how consciousness constructs narratives and interprets traumatic experiences.

It encourages youth to critically examine the limitations of their perceptions and challenge subjective interpretations of trauma narratives.

Critical Thinking Skills:

2

Emphasizes the development of critical thinking skills to help youth discern underlying structures and power dynamics shaping trauma narratives.

It encourages youth to question dominant ideologies, recognize systemic inequalities, and critically analyze the socio-political contexts in which trauma occurs. One example is with praxis reframing narrative.

Empathy and Compassion:

3

Promotes empathy and compassion as essential for engaging with stories of trauma. It encourages youth to empathize with the lived experiences of trauma survivors while recognizing the socio-cultural factors influencing their narratives. By cultivating empathy, youth can foster supportive and understanding communities that facilitate healing and resilience.

Safe Spaces for Dialogue:

4

Advocates for creating safe spaces for dialogue where youth can critically engage with trauma narratives and challenge dominant discourses.

These spaces facilitate open and honest communication, encourage the exchange of diverse perspectives, and empower youth to deconstruct and reconstruct narratives in more inclusive and equitable ways.

Cultural Sensitivity:

5

Integrating insights from both perspectives, the toolkit underscores the importance of cultural sensitivity when navigating trauma narratives.

It encourages youth to approach stories of trauma with humility and respect for diverse cultural backgrounds, recognizing the socio-cultural nuances that shape individual and collective experiences of trauma.

Resilience-Building Strategies:

6

Provides resilience-building strategies and coping mechanisms that acknowledge the role of consciousness in processing traumatic experiences.

It offers guidance on self-care practices, stress management techniques, and seeking support to help youth navigate the emotional challenges associated with engaging with trauma narratives.



**Educate Yourself:
Learn about
political,
cultural, and
historical
trauma.**

1. Do research:

- Begin by researching key historical events and periods that have shaped societies and cultures around the world. This could include studying topics such as colonialism, slavery, apartheid, wars, genocides, civil rights movements, and cultural revolutions.
- Use reliable sources like books, documentaries, and online archives.

2. Explore Diverse Perspectives:

- Recognize that history is often told from multiple perspectives, and it's important to seek out diverse viewpoints and narratives.
- Explore the experiences of marginalized groups, indigenous peoples, immigrants, and others whose stories may have been overlooked or marginalized in mainstream historical accounts.
- Engage with literature, art, oral histories, and personal narratives to gain insights into different cultural and historical perspectives.

3. Examine Causes and Consequences:

- Think about why these events happened and how they affect society today.
- Consider the social, economic, political, and cultural factors that contribute to these traumatic events, as well as their far-reaching impacts on individuals, families, communities, and societies.
- Reflect on how these events continue to shape contemporary issues and social dynamics.

4. Visit Museums and Memorials:

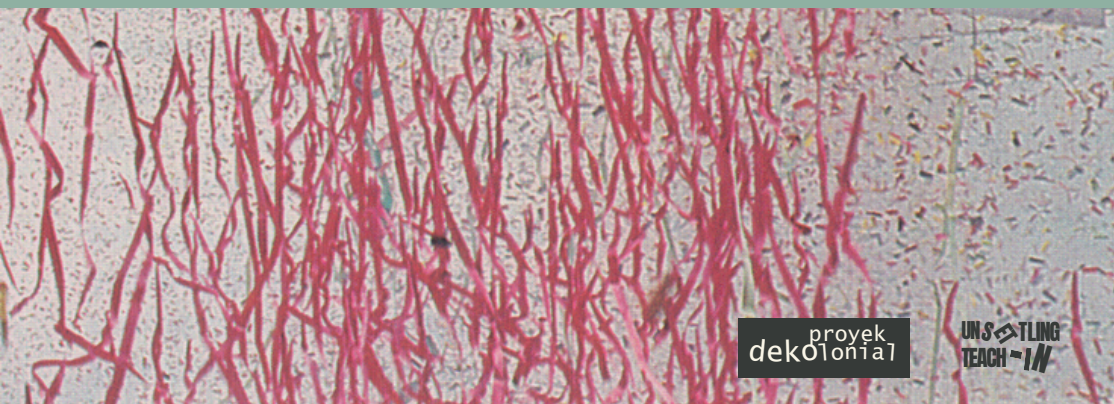
- Take trips to museums and memorials dedicated to past traumas.
- Connect with the stories of survivors and pay respect to their resilience.

5. Engage in Dialogue:

- Engage in open and respectful dialogue with peers, family members, educators, and community leaders about political, cultural, and historical trauma.
- Share your perspectives, ask questions, and listen attentively to the diverse viewpoints and experiences of others. This exchange of ideas fosters empathy, critical thinking, and mutual understanding.

6. Reflect on Your Learning:

- Take time to reflect on what you've learned and synthesize your understanding of political, cultural, and historical trauma.
- Consider how these past traumas have shaped your own identity, beliefs, and worldview.
- Reflect on your responsibilities as a global citizen and consider how you can contribute to healing, reconciliation, and social justice in your own community and beyond.



Recognize Signs:
Identify signs of
trauma in
yourself and
others.

1. Understand Common Reactions:

- Learn about common reactions to trauma, such as feelings of fear, sadness, anger, or numbness.
- Physical symptoms like headaches, stomachaches, or difficulty sleeping can also be indicators.
- Knowing these signs can help you recognize when trauma may be affecting someone's well-being.

2. Reflect on Personal Experiences:

- Take time to reflect on your own emotions and behaviors.
- Do you notice any changes in your mood, thoughts, or physical health that could be linked to past traumatic experiences?
- Pay attention to any recurring patterns or triggers that may be connected to trauma.

3. Observe Changes in Behavior:

- Pay attention to changes in behavior in yourself and those around you.
- This could include withdrawing from social activities, changes in appetite or sleep patterns, increased irritability or mood swings, or engaging in risky behaviors. These changes may indicate that someone is struggling with trauma.

4. Listen and Offer Support:

- Be present and attentive when others share their experiences.
- Listen with empathy and validate their feelings without judgment.
- Encourage them to seek professional help if needed and offer your support in finding resources and assistance.

5. Explore Multiple Perspectives:

- Seek out diverse perspectives and alternative interpretations of the narrative.
- Consider how different individuals or groups might experience or interpret the events depicted in the story.
- Engage with sources that offer contrasting viewpoints to challenge your own assumptions and broaden your understanding.

6. Reflect on Power Dynamics:

- Reflect on the power dynamics at play within the narrative. Consider whose voices are centered or marginalized, who benefits from the narrative, and who is excluded or silenced.
- Pay attention to how power imbalances shape the construction and dissemination of the story.

7. Critique Representation:

- Critically evaluate how individuals, communities, or events are represented within the narrative.
- Consider whether certain groups are stereotyped, misrepresented, or erased altogether.
- Challenge stereotypes and biases that perpetuate harmful narratives and advocate for more accurate and inclusive representations.

- **8. Examine Effects and Implications:**
Consider the effects and implications of the narrative on individuals, communities, and society as a whole.
- Reflect on how the narrative shapes perceptions, influences behavior, and reinforces or challenges existing power structures.
- Consider the potential consequences of uncritically accepting or perpetuating the narrative.

**Analyze
Narratives:
Critically
analyze complex
narratives.
(Re+frame)**

1. Question Assumptions:

- Start by questioning assumptions and considering the perspective from which the narrative is presented.
- Ask yourself who created the narrative, why they might have done so, and what their intentions or biases might be.
- Consider how the narrative might be influenced by factors such as culture, ideology, or power dynamics.

2. Identify Themes and Patterns:

- Look for recurring themes, symbols, or patterns within the narrative.
- Consider how these elements contribute to the overall message or interpretation of the story.
- Pay attention to the language used, the framing of events, and the portrayal of characters or groups.

3. Evaluate Sources:

- Assess the credibility and reliability of the sources used to construct the narrative. Look for evidence, facts, and corroborating accounts that support the claims made within the story.
- Be cautious of sources that rely heavily on hearsay, speculation, or misinformation.

4. Consider Context:

- Examine the historical, cultural, and social context in which the narrative is situated.
- Consider how factors such as time period, location, and societal norms might shape the interpretation of events.
- Contextualize the narrative within broader historical or cultural movements to better understand its significance.

5. Explore Multiple Perspectives:

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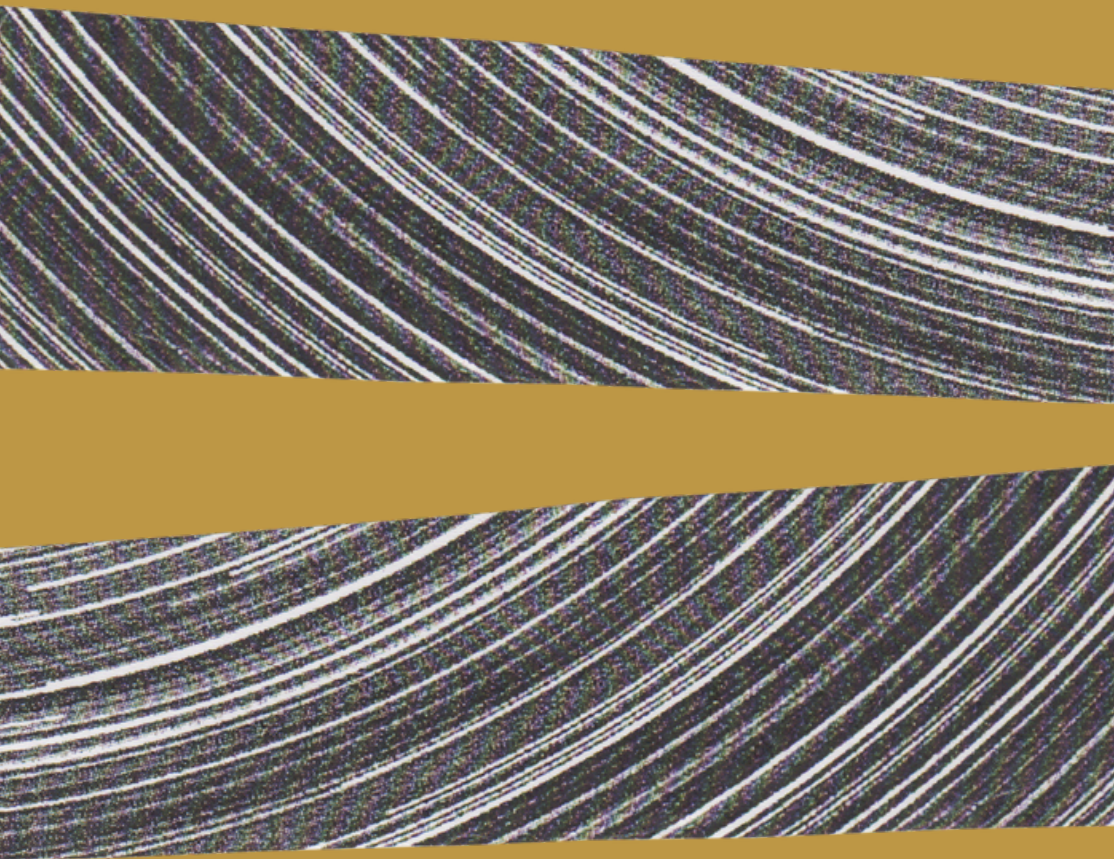
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7. Critique Representation:

- Critically evaluate how individuals, communities, or events are represented within the narrative.
- Consider whether certain groups are stereotyped, misrepresented, or erased altogether.
- Challenge stereotypes and biases that perpetuate harmful narratives and advocate for more accurate and inclusive representations.

- **8. Examine Effects and Implications:**
Consider the effects and implications of the narrative on individuals, communities, and society as a whole.
- Reflect on how the narrative shapes perceptions, influences behavior, and reinforces or challenges existing power structures.
- Consider the potential consequences of uncritically accepting or perpetuating the narrative.



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