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### Forever Narrating “Merdeka”

*Memori Melompat, Popular Culture, and the Indonesian War of Independence*

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## Appendix: Respondents' details

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### Komunitas Djokjakarta 1945

Participant code	Age	Gender	Education	Occupation	Religion	Date
Mas Abimana	28	Male	S2 (Master's degree)	Event organizer and freelance photographer	Islam	27-02-2018
Mas Taslim	27	Male	S2 (Master's degree)	Elementary school teacher	Islam	21-02-2018
Mas Chicco	26	Male	S2 (Master's degree)	Entrepreneur	Islam	20-08-2017
Mbak Devita	20	Female	SMA (High School)	University student	Islam	20-08-2017
Mas Ario	34	Male	S1 (Bachelor's degree)	Artist and unspecified	Islam	21-02-2018
Mas Lukman	26	Male	SMK (Vocational High School)	Manager	Islam	09-03-2018

Mbak Della	20	Female	SMA (High School)	University student	Islam	09-03-2018
Mas Nicholas	18	Male	SMP (Middle School)	High school student	-	08-03-2018
Mbak Pevita	21	Female	S1 (Bachelor's degree)	University student	Islam	09-03-2018
Mbak Hannah	24	Female	S1 (Bachelor's degree)	University student	Islam	09-03-2018
Mbak Asmara	18	Female	SMA (High School)	University student	Islam	09-03-2018

### Elderly

Participant Code	Age	Gender	Education	Occupation	Religion	Date
Pak Dhanus	94	M	SMP (Middle School)	Livestock dealer	Islam	17-08-2017
Ibu Marianne	85	F	SMP (Middle School)	Typewriter	Islam	25-02-2018

Pak Eko	90	M	SMA (High School)	Farmer and later Abdi Dalem (Royal servants at the Kraton of Yogyakarta)	Islam	26-02-2018
Ibu Marni	88	F	Sekolah Kesultanan	Milk seller	Islam	01-03-2018
Pak Awang	82	M	Technical School for Electrical Engineering	Accountant and financial auditor at bank	All religions (“Semua agama”)	15-03-2018
Pak Supriyadi	95	M	SD (Primary School)	Farmer and cassava seller	Islam	12-03-2018
Pak Marno	85	M	IKIP (now Yogyakarta State University)	Middle school teacher in Indonesia and abroad	Islam	19-12-2019
Pak Kanigara	83	M	SLA (Secondary education)	Teacher	Islam	24-12-2019

Pak Nelson	90	M	None	Farmer	Islam	24-12-2019
Pak Reo	87	M	SD (Primary School)	Train maintenance worker	Islam	29-12-2019
Pak Tangguh	81	M	SLA (Secondary education)	Employee UGM	Islam	26-01-2020
Pak Ganes	92	M	SMP (Middle School)	Farmer	Islam	21-12-2020
Ibu Purnama	90	F	None	Merchant	Islam	21-12-2019
Pak Harya	78	M	D3 (Associate's degree)	Teacher	Islam	31-01-2020
Ibu Rahayu	83	F	None	Merchant	Islam	27-12-2019
Pak Jan	80	M	S1 (Bachelor's degree)	Civil Servant	Roman Catholic	27-01-2020
Ibu Nani	86	F	SGTK (Kindergarten Teacher School)	Housewife	Christian	26-01-2020

Ibu Susie	80	F	SMP (Middle School)	Hospital worker	Roman Catholic	23-01-2020
Pak Mansyur	93	M	S3 (Doctoral degree)	Professor	Christian	11-02-2020

#### Middle-aged

Participant Code	Age	Gender	Education	Occupation	Religion	Date
Pak Ahmad	37	M	SMA (High School)	Bamboo curtain craftsman	Islam	23-09-2020
Pak Noor	39	M	SLTA (Secondary education)	Entrepreneur	Islam	23-09-2020
Ibu Wijaya	41	F	SMA (High School)	Housewife and Tailor	Islam	23-09-2020
Ibu Sartikawati	47	F	SLTP (Middle School)	Housewife and merchant	Islam	14-10-2020

Pak Nono	57	M	D3 (Associate's degree)	Village official	Islam	21- 10- 2020
Pak Banuarli	54	M	S1 (Bachelor's degree)	Principal and teacher	Islam	14- 10- 2020
Pak Andy	53	M	SMP (Middle School)	Farmer	Roman Catholic	04- 04- 2020
Pak Yuniarto	54	M	S2 (Master's degree)	Middle School teacher	Islam	04- 04- 2020
Ibu Sedhah	43	F	SMA (High School)	Bamboo curtain crafter	Islam	03- 08- 2020
Pak Iwan	51	M	S1 (Bachelor's degree)	Middle School Teacher	Islam	23- 03- 2020
Pak Bimo	56	M	SMP (Middle School)	Government employee	Islam	23- 03- 2020
Ibu Esti	49	F	SMA (High School)	Housewife	Islam	03- 08- 2020
Ibu Dewiyanti	43	F	SMK (Vocational High School)	Kindergarten teacher	Islam	03- 08- 2020

Pak Har	57	M	SMA (High School)	Farmer	Islam	14-10-2020
Pak Aristo	56	M	D3 (Baccalaureate vocational degree)	Civil servant	Islam	02-08-2020

### Students

Participant Code	Age	Gender	Place of birth	Religion	Date
Mas Sancaka	19	M	Denpasar, Bali	Islam	20-02-2018
Mbak Rini	19	F	Tangerang, Java	Islam	21-02-2018
Mbak Wulan	20	F	Tebing Tinggi, Sumatra	Islam	21-02-2018
Mbak Siti	20	F	Yogyakarta, Java	Islam	21-02-2018
Mas Wim	17	M	Kediri, Java	Islam	21-02-2018
Mas Agung	20	M	Jakarta, Java	Islam	22-02-2018
Mbak Motila	19	F	Yogyakarta, Java	Islam	22-02-2018



Mas Agus	20	M	Semarang, Java	Islam	22-02- 2018
Mas Djoni	19	M	Depok, Java	Islam	22-02- 2018
Mbak Aprilia	19	F	Solo, Java	Roman Catholic	23-02- 2018
Mbak Maya	20	F	Yogyakarta, Java	Islam	23-02- 2018
Mas Is	19	M	Madiun, Java	Islam	23-02- 2018
Mbak Hildy	19	F	Jakarta, Java	Islam	23-02- 2018
Mas Fajar	20	M	Madiun, Java	Islam	23-02- 2018

## Summary

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### **Forever Narrating “Merdeka”: Memori Melompat, Popular Culture, and the Indonesian War of Independence**

This dissertation asks how cultural memories of the Indonesian War of Independence (1945-1949) have been produced, represented, and consumed through contemporary Indonesian war-themed popular culture released between 2009 and 2019. The Indonesian War of Independence is ubiquitous in Indonesian popular culture, exemplified, for instance, by its presence in the multitude of films produced since Indonesia’s independence. This dissertation aims to reframe people’s understanding of how contemporary memories of the Indonesian War of Independence have come into being by showing which elements are represented today.

Analysing case studies from historical re-enactment, cinema, and music, the foundational observation of this dissertation is that contemporary memory culture about the war in Indonesia is inherently temporal (as it inevitably relates to the colonial past) and increasingly prosthetic (as it comprises mediated cultural memories of the war rather than personally experienced memories), yet simultaneously spatial (as it relates to the local, national, and beyond). Theories in memory studies of the last decades suggest that memory travels freely across political, cultural, and national borders (Landsberg 2004; Rothberg 2009; Erll 2011b; Assmann 2014; Bond, Craps, and Vermeulen 2017; Erll and Rigney 2018). However, the case studies in this dissertation show that this straightforward mobility of cultural memory does not apply to every local context as frictions do occur when memory travels. In Indonesia, memory travels temporarily, briefly, and not far. It therefore suggests more of a jump rather than a journey.

Building on this observation, and in order to understand them, I propose to see these cultural memories as a form of *memori melompat*. Composed of *memori* (meaning ‘memory’) and *melompat* (meaning ‘jumping or to jump’), it is translated into English as ‘jumping memory’. Together, the term encapsulates both time (through *memori*) and space (through *melompat*). *Memori melompat* is not a theoretical concept, but, like Astrid Erll’s travelling memory, must be seen as a metaphorical shorthand (2011b, 12). *Memori melompat* is an abbreviation for cultural memories that jump rather than travel between forms of popular culture; intra- and international borders; and people. It consists of three pillars that consistently return in the analyses of the case studies: mediality, scales, and mobility of memory. *Memori melompat* exhibits a narrower and more precise mnemonic motion than flows or scapes (Appadurai 1996, 33). In the context of the Indonesian War of Independence, these memories create meaning about how colonial oppression informs post-colonial nationalism. This dissertation argues that Indonesia’s jumping memory remains consistently close to its point of departure as there is always a sense of nationalism involved. In other words, *memori melompat* is always about the nation and, even though it jumps away from it, like stretched elastic, it inevitably snaps back to it. This begs the question how do the case studies illustrate that contemporary Indonesian cultural memories of the Indonesian War of Independence do not travel beyond but rather jump from and return to the nation?

Chapter 1 addresses *memori melompat* through the performative memories of Indonesian historical re-enactment, that is growing increasingly popular in the country. This chapter takes the Yogyakarta-based historical re-enactor community Komunitas Djokjakarta 1945 as its case study and analyses how its members mediate the war through street performances called *teatrikals* and social-media use. Both in the street and in the constructed online narratives, authenticity is used as a tool for authority over the image of historical re-enactment. Based on principal fieldwork carried out in 2017 and 2018, I argue that the ways in which re-enactors

create, circulate, and engage with images of the Indonesian War of Independence constitute an unfolding mnemonic image-event that creates a struggle over the role of the past in the present and future (Strassler 2020). Historical re-enactment shows how authenticity can make memory jump. The local Yogyakarta and national Indonesian past during the war are simultaneously remembered through the historical re-enactment, however this chapter shows that historical re-enactment is grounded in the gravitas of locality, in this case Yogyakarta.

Chapter 2 continues on a national rather than a local scale by taking Indonesian war-themed films called *film perjuangan* as its case study. Using a synthesis of narrative and formal-aesthetic analysis, this chapter demonstrates that the jumping character of cinematic memories is established by memory tropes that counter the nation's birth myths. This is achieved by examining the specific social and historical contexts of the locations in which these memory tropes and narratives have been produced and received. The soldier figure, the figure of the perpetrator, and the hero figure are the central memory tropes analysed in the *Merdeka*-trilogy (Yadi Sugandi and Conor Allyn, 2009-2011), *Soegija* (Garin Nugroho, 2012), and *Battle of Surabaya* (Aryanto Yuniawan, 2015). As commodified products films are considered to travel easily and, consequently it is theorised that cinematic memories are more portable and transportable than others, opening up the possibility to transcend race, class, and gender (Landsberg 2004, 21, 27). Even though cinema and the memories it produces has the potential to travel beyond these boundaries, the films in the genre of *film perjuangan* illustrate that this is not the case in the specific context of Indonesia. Although narrative elements that go beyond the nation are included in the analysed memory tropes, in Indonesian cinema the nation remains central in the remembrance of the war.

In Chapter 3, I analyse sonic memories created via the music videos of Alffy Rev on the online video platform YouTube. This chapter explores how narrative shapes our understanding of Indonesia's colonial past through three online music

videos. The combination of lyrics, music, and images constructs nationalistic and patriotic electronic reiterations of *Tanah Air* (2017), *Mengheningkan Cipta* (2018), and *Ibu Pertiwi* (2018), while the music videos simultaneously jump towards a world beyond Indonesia, gesturing elsewhere (Baulch 2003). The chapter embraces both the spatial and temporal elements of Indonesian popular music in an attempt to understand how it can ‘remake’ the nation. Drawing on Edwin Jurriëns and Jeroen de Kloet’s concept of the *cosmopatriot* (2007), I propose to call the sonic memories of Alffy Rev *cosmopatriot memories* as they reflect a tension between past and present, but also the spatial imagination of belonging between the patriotic space and a world beyond. In this sense, the *cosmopatriot memories* become chronotopic as “spatial and temporal indicators are fused into one carefully thought-out, concrete whole” (Bakhtin 1981, 84). In this chapter, I argue that the construction of cosmopatriot memories through music is centred on three chronotopes (Bakhtin 1981): the homeland-chronotope, the patriot-chronotope, and the motherland-chronotope. Whereas cosmopatriotism suggests cosmopolitan travels and global affiliations, the chronotopes of cosmopatriot memory show a jump towards the global but, as always, not as far as a journey, and therefore not travelling in Astrid Erll’s sense (2011b).

Chapter 4 demonstrates how popular culture has been used to remember the past. The focus here shifts from a focus on cultural object to that on consumers. Based on in-depth interviews with three generations of Indonesians, this chapter recognises three dominant repertoires (Wetherell and Potter 1988; Hermes 2005) that extend across, or jump, generations. The repertoires are the ‘similarity-repertoire’, that deals with the extent to which popular culture reflects a respondent’s idea of (historical) reality; the ‘connection-repertoire’, that deals with how the Indonesian War of Independence is understood in connection to other histories (of violence); and the ‘experience-repertoire’, that deals with how respondents compared popular culture with their own lived experiences. These

repertoires show the jumping nature of *memori melompat* as they move from the personal to the collective, from one historical period to another, and from lived memories to prosthetic memories.

The Conclusion returns to the central question of how cultural memories of the Indonesian War of Independence are produced, represented, and consumed through contemporary Indonesian war-themed popular culture. It once again proposes that Indonesian memory culture about the Indonesian War of Independence be understood as *memori melompat*. A metaphorical shorthand that illustrates how these memories jump, rather than travel as is more dominantly accepted in the transnational turn of memory studies. This section concludes by exploring multiple avenues for follow-up research into where *memori melompat* might be heading and how it can foster cross-cultural ethical engagement.

# Samenvatting

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## **Voor Altijd “Merdeka” Verhalen: Memori Melompat, Populaire Cultuur en de Indonesische Onafhankelijkheidsoorlog**

Dit proefschrift stelt de vraag hoe culturele herinneringen aan de Indonesische Onafhankelijkheidsoorlog (1945-1949) worden geproduceerd, gerepresenteerd en geconsumeerd door hedendaagse Indonesische populaire cultuur uitgebracht tussen 2009 en 2019 met deze oorlog als thema. De Indonesische Onafhankelijkheidsoorlog is alomtegenwoordig in Indonesische populaire cultuur. Illusterend is de aanwezigheid van de oorlog in het grote aantal films dat geproduceerd is sinds de onafhankelijkheid van Indonesië. Het doel van dit proefschrift is om het begrip van mensen over hoe de Indonesische Onafhankelijkheidsoorlog in Indonesië wordt herinnerd in nieuwe kaders te plaatsen. Dit wordt gedaan door uiteen te zetten welke elementen vandaag de dag in populaire cultuur gerepresenteerd zijn.

Dit proefschrift analyseert historical re-enactment, film en muziek. Daarbij is de fundamentele observatie dat de hedendaagse Indonesische herinneringscultuur over de oorlog inherent temporeel is (het is onvermijdelijk verbonden met het koloniale verleden) en in toenemende mate prothetisch (gemedieerde culturele herinneringen aan de oorlog vervangen steeds meer persoonlijk ervaren herinneringen, niettemin tegelijkertijd ruimtelijk (het verhoudt zich tot het lokale, het nationale en daar voorbij). In het onderzoeksveld van memory studies suggereren theorieën van de afgelopen decennia dat culturele herinneringen vrijelijk over politieke, culturele en nationale grenzen kunnen reizen (Landsberg 2004; Rothberg 2009; Erll 2011b; Assmann 2014; Bond, Craps en Vermeulen 2017; Erll en Rigney 2018). De casestudy's in dit proefschrift laten echter zien dat deze ogenschijnlijke ongecompliceerde mobiliteit van herinneringen niet van toepassing

is op elke lokale context, aangezien er wrijvingen optreden wanneer herinneringen reizen. In Indonesië reizen herinneringen tijdelijk, kort en niet ver. Dit suggereert daarom meer een sprong dan een reis.

Voortbouwend op deze observatie, en om deze culturele herinneringen te begrijpen, stel ik voor om hen te zien als een vorm van *memori melompat*. Samengesteld uit *memori* (wat 'herinneringen' of 'geheugen' betekent) en *melompat* (wat 'springen' of 'sprong' betekent), wordt het in het Nederlands als 'springende herinneringen' vertaald. Samen omvat de term zowel tijd (*memori*) als ruimte (*melompat*). *Memori melompat* is geen theoretisch concept, maar moet, net als *travelling memory* van Astrid Erll, worden begrepen als een metaforische afkorting (2011b, 12). Daarmee is *memori melompat* een afkorting voor culturele herinneringen die springen in plaats van reizen tussen vormen van populaire cultuur, intra- en internationale grenzen en mensen. Het bestaat uit drie pijlers die consequent terugkomen in de analyses van de casestudy's: de medialiteit, schalen en mobiliteit van herinneringen. *Memori melompat* vertoont een smallere en preciezere mnemonische beweging dan zogenaamde *flows of scapes* (Appadurai 1996, 33). In de context van de Indonesische Onafhankelijkheidsoorlog creëren deze herinneringen betekenis over hoe koloniale onderdrukking doordringt in post-koloniaal nationalisme. Dit proefschrift betoogt dat de Indonesische springende herinneringen consequent dicht bij het vertrekpunt blijven, omdat er altijd een gevoel van nationalisme bij betrokken is. Met andere woorden, *memori melompat* gaat altijd over de natie en, ook al springt het ervan weg, als uitgerekt elastiek, het springt er onvermijdelijk weer naar terug. Dit roept de vraag op hoe de casestudy's illustreren dat hedendaagse Indonesische culturele herinneringen aan de Indonesische Onafhankelijkheidsoorlog niet verder reizen dan de natie, maar eerder hiervandaan springen en er weer naar terugkeren.

Hoofdstuk 1 richt zich op *memori melompat* aan de hand van de performatieve herinneringen van Indonesische historical re-enactment, een in



populariteit groeiende vorm van populaire cultuur in het land. Het is gebaseerd op veldwerk dat in 2017 en 2018 in Indonesië is uitgevoerd. Dit hoofdstuk neemt de in Yogyakarta gevestigde historical re-enactment gemeenschap Komunitas Djokjakarta 1945 als casus en analyseert hoe haar leden de oorlog mediëren door middel van straatoptredens, teatrikals genaamd, en het gebruik van sociale media. Zowel op straat als in de geconstrueerde verhalen online wordt authenticiteit gebruik als een middel om autoriteit te krijgen over het beeld van historical re-enactment. Ik beargumenteer dat de manieren waarop re-enactors omgaan met beelden van de Indonesische Onafhankelijkheidsoorlog, en hoe zij deze creëren en circuleren, een ontvouwend mnemonisch *image-event* tot stand brengt (Strassler 2020). Dit creëert een strijd over de rol van het verleden in het heden en de toekomst. Historical re-enactment laat zien hoe authenticiteit herinneringen kan doen laten springen. Het lokale oorlogsverleden van Yogyakarta en het nationale oorlogsverleden van Indonesië wordt gelijktijdig herinnerd in historical re-enactment, echter laat dit hoofdstuk zien dat historical re-enactment daarbij gestoeld is op plaatselijke gravitas van, in dit geval Yogyakarta,

Hoofdstuk 2 gaat verder op nationale schaal in plaats van op lokale schaal door films met een Indonesisch oorlogsthema, genaamd *film perjuangan*, als casus te nemen. Aan de hand van een synthese van narratieve en formeel-esthetische analyse laat dit hoofdstuk zien dat het springende karakter van filmische herinneringen wordt bepaald door herinneringstropen die de geboortemythes van de natie tegengaan. Hierbij worden de specifieke sociale en historische contexten onderzocht van de locaties waar deze herinneringstropen en verhalen zijn geproduceerd en verworven. Het figuur van de soldaat, de figuur van de dader en de heldfiguur zijn de centrale herinneringstropen die worden geanalyseerd in de *Merdeka*-trilogie (Yadi Sugandi en Conor Allyn, 2009-2011), *Soegija* (Garin Nugroho, 2012) en *Battle of Surabaya* (Aryanto Yuniawan, 2015). Als gecommuniceerde producten wordt aangenomen dat films gemakkelijk reizen. Derhalve wordt er getheoretiseerd dat

filmische herinneringen meer draagbaar en transporteerbaar zijn dan andere herinneringen, waardoor de mogelijkheid ontstaat om ras, klasse en gender te overstijgen (Landsberg 2004, 21, 27). Ondanks dat cinema en de herinneringen die het produceert het potentieel hebben om voorbij deze grenzen te reizen, illustreren de films in het *film perjuangan*-genre dat dit niet het geval is in de specifieke context van Indonesië. Hoewel narratieve elementen die de natie overstijgen zijn opgenomen in de geanalyseerde herinneringstropen, blijft in de Indonesische cinema de natie centraal staan in de herinnering aan de oorlog.

In Hoofdstuk 3 analyseer ik sonische herinneringen die zijn gecreëerd via de muziekvideo's van Alffy Rev op het online videoplatform YouTube. Dit hoofdstuk onderzoekt aan de hand van drie online muziekvideo's hoe narratief ons begrip van het koloniale verleden van Indonesië vormt. De combinatie van songteksten, muziek en beelden construeert nationalistische en patriottische elektronische reïteraties van *Tanah Air* (2017), *Mengheningkan Cipta* (2018) en *Ibu Pertiwi* (2018), terwijl de muziekvideo's tegelijkertijd naar een wereld buiten Indonesië springen, zodoende *gesturing elsewhere* (Baulch 2003). Het hoofdstuk behelst zowel de ruimtelijke als temporele elementen van Indonesische populaire muziek in een poging te begrijpen hoe het de natie kan 'herschepjen'. Voortbouwend op Edwin Jurriëns' en Jeroen de Kloets concept van de *cosmopatriot* (2007), stel ik voor om de sonische herinneringen van Alffy Rev *cosmopatriot memories* te noemen. Zij weerspiegelen een spanning tussen verleden en heden, alsook tussen de ruimtelijke verbeelding van behoren bij de patriottische ruimte en een wereld daarbuiten. In deze zin worden *cosmopatriot memories* chronotopisch, aangezien "ruimtelijke en temporele indicatoren worden versmolten tot één zorgvuldig doordacht, concreet geheel" (Bakhtin 1981, 84). In dit hoofdstuk beargumenteer ik dat de constructie van *cosmopatriot memories* door middel van muziek is gecentreerd rond drie chronotopen (Bakhtin 1981): de thuisland-chronotoop, de patriot-chronotoop en de moederland-chronotoop. Cosmopatriotism suggereert kosmopolitische reizen en

wereldwijde affiliaties. De chronotopen van *cosmopatriot memories* laten daarentegen wel een sprong naar de wereld zien, maar, zoals altijd, niet zo ver als een reis, en daarom niet reizen in de zin van Astrid Erll (2011b).

Hoofdstuk 4 laat zien hoe populaire cultuur is gebruikt om het verleden te herinneren. De focus verschuift hier van cultuurobjecten naar consumenten. Gebaseerd op diepte-interviews met drie generaties Indonesiërs, herkent dit hoofdstuk drie dominante repertoires (Wetherell en Potter 1988; Hermes 2005) die zich over generaties uitstrekken, of over generaties heen springen. Deze repertoires zijn het ‘gelijkenis-repertoire’, dat gaat over de mate waarin populaire cultuur een weerspiegeling is van het idee dat een respondent heeft van de (historische) werkelijkheid; het ‘verbinding-repertoire’, dat behandelt hoe de Indonesische Onafhankelijkheidsoorlog wordt begrepen in samenhang met andere (gewelddadige) geschiedenissen; en het ‘ervaring-repertoire’, dat gaat over hoe respondenten de populaire cultuur vergelijken met hun eigen geleefde ervaringen. Deze repertoires tonen het springende karakter van *memori melompat* terwijl ze van het persoonlijke naar het collectieve bewegen, van de ene historische periode naar de andere, en van geleefde herinneringen naar prothetische herinneringen.

De Conclusie keert terug naar de centrale onderzoeksvraag hoe culturele herinneringen aan de Indonesische Onafhankelijkheidsoorlog worden geproduceerd, gerepresenteerd en geconsumeerd door hedendaagse Indonesische populaire cultuur met deze oorlog als thema. Het stelt nogmaals voor om de Indonesische herinneringscultuur over de Indonesische Onafhankelijkheidsoorlog te begrijpen als *memori melompat*. Een metaforische afkorting die illustreert hoe deze herinneringen springen in plaats van reizen, waarbij dit laatste dominant wordt geaccepteerd in de transnationale stroming binnen het vakgebied memory studies. Dit hoofdstuk concludeert met een verkenning van verscheidene wegen voor vervolgonderzoek naar waar *memori melompat* naartoe zou kunnen gaan en hoe het cross-culturele ethische engagement kan bevorderen.