



The legacy of Diponegoro's exile (1830–1855): Collective memory and its materialization at Fort Rotterdam and tomb sites in Makassar

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the transmission of contemporary collective memory surrounding the legacy of Prince Diponegoro's exile (1830–1855) in Makassar, focusing on the roles of his descendants, local communities, burial sites, and Fort Rotterdam in the materialization of memory. It explores how historical memory is not merely inherited but continuously constructed and reinterpreted within contemporary social contexts. Using a qualitative phenomenological approach, data were collected through in-depth interviews, observations, and documentation. The findings show that the collective memory of Diponegoro in Makassar is not static but is continuously reproduced through interactions between his descendants and local communities. The burial sites and Fort Rotterdam serve as important sites of materialized memory, bringing together genealogical memory, public memory, and the historical experience of Diponegoro's exile in Makassar. Intergenerational transmission also varies across generations: the older generation demonstrates a strong emotional attachment, the adult generation adopts a more adaptive relationship with this memory, while the younger generation tends to engage with it symbolically and through digital representations on social media. The relationship between descendants and local communities is interdependent and dialogical. While descendants contribute to preserving the continuity and authenticity of historical narratives, local communities extend their meanings into a broader and more inclusive social sphere. These findings demonstrate that preserving the collective memory of Diponegoro's exile in Makassar is an ongoing social process that sustains historical continuity while contributing to the formation of collective identity and historical consciousness in contemporary society.

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INTRODUCTION

The capture and exile of Prince Diponegoro by the Dutch colonial government in 1830 marked a crucial turning point in the Java War and the end of its major phase of armed resistance (Isnaeniah et al., 2024; Steenbrink et al., 2006). Beyond its immediate political and military consequences, Diponegoro's exile generated enduring socio-historical implications (Steenbrink et al., 2006). Following his capture in 1830, Diponegoro was removed from Java and eventually exiled to Makassar, where he spent the final period of his life under colonial confinement (P. B. R. Carey, 2022). This geographical displacement reflected a colonial strategy aimed at disrupting the social networks, political influence, and symbolic authority associated with his resistance.

During his exile in Makassar until his death in 1855, Diponegoro gradually shifted from being primarily remembered as a leader of armed resistance to becoming a symbolic figure imbued with historical, cultural, and spiritual significance (Lukman & Hartanti, 2022). Despite the

restrictions imposed upon him, interpretations of Diponegoro continued to develop within his family and the surrounding community (Sudardi & Istadiyantha, 2019). Exile was therefore not remembered solely as a form of colonial punishment, but also became associated with narratives of struggle, steadfastness, and spirituality (P. Carey, 2018). These narratives were subsequently reproduced through social interaction, oral tradition, and cultural practices transmitted across generations (Wasino et al., 2019). In this sense, the exile period contributed to the formation of a collective memory that not only preserved interpretations of the past but also shaped the social identities of descendants and communities associated with Diponegoro (Dari et al., 2022).

Collective memory is sustained not only through narratives but also through material and symbolic forms that connect past events with contemporary social life (Srikandi, 2019). In Makassar, Diponegoro's tomb and Fort Rotterdam constitute two prominent sites through which memories of his exile are spatially and materially represented. His tomb, together with those of his followers and descendants, has become a historical site of memory that connects his final years in Makassar with the broader history of his resistance in Java (P. Carey, 2018). Tomb sites can function as embodiments of collective memory because they provide tangible connections between historical events and present-day social realities (Heersmink, 2023). Beyond serving as burial places, they may become sites of pilgrimage, remembrance, social learning, and symbolic identification through which historical values are continually interpreted and transmitted (Ardiana et al., 2024; Mussatayeva & Yermagambetova, 2022; Nosova, 2021).

Fort Rotterdam represents another important material dimension of Diponegoro's collective memory in Makassar (Abbas, 2005). As a colonial fortress associated with Dutch authority, the site embodies the historical relationship between colonial power and Indonesian resistance (Chandra, 2013). In relation to Diponegoro, the fort can therefore be understood not merely as a surviving colonial structure but as a historical space associated with political control, exile, and the final period of his life (Jumardi & Suswandari, 2018). Its continued presence illustrates how built environments can become material anchors through which societies encounter, interpret, and reproduce memories of the past.

This relationship between memory and place corresponds with Nora's (1989) concept of *lieux de mémoire*, which describes particular sites as focal points through which collective memory is preserved, reproduced, and reactivated in social life (Nora, 1989). From this perspective, memory is sustained not only through oral narratives or written historical accounts but also through physical spaces that symbolically connect the past with contemporary social realities (Kończal, 2012; Rahmadani, 2025). Diponegoro's tomb and Fort Rotterdam can thus be approached as interconnected yet distinct memory spaces. The tomb carries sacred, genealogical, and emotional meanings maintained through pilgrimage, prayer, storytelling, and commemorative practices (Rukmi & Midhio, 2024), whereas Fort Rotterdam functions more prominently as a public historical space associated with colonial domination, exile, and heritage interpretation (Laikhuram, 2023). Their relationship demonstrates how collective memory may operate through multiple material forms in which genealogical, sacred, historical, and public meanings intersect.

These material sites, however, do not preserve memory independently of social actors. Collective memory is socially constructed through interactions, shared experiences, narratives, and cultural practices that continually reinterpret the past in relation to the present (Haas et al., 2025; Rahman et al., 2024). In the case of Diponegoro's legacy in Makassar, descendants and the surrounding community occupy important positions within this process. Descendants maintain genealogical connections and transmit historical narratives through family memory, oral traditions, rituals, and other social practices (Christian, 2012), while broader community participation allows these memories to extend beyond the genealogical sphere into collective social memory (Ibdalsyah et al., 2025; Nukman & Ayundasari, 2021). Rather than acting as passive inheritors of established narratives, these actors may continually reinterpret and reconstruct memory according to changing social experiences and contemporary needs (Rizal et al., 2022).

The continuity of such memory therefore depends on processes of intergenerational transmission and interaction. Oral traditions, cultural activities, everyday encounters, and relationships between descendants and communities enable historical narratives to remain socially meaningful across generations (Hirst et al., 2018; Wasino et al., 2021). At the same time, differences

in age, experience, and modes of communication may influence how these narratives are understood and reproduced (Nadjamuddin, 2024). Collective memory in Makassar can consequently be understood as an intersection between genealogical memory, local social experience, and broader narratives of national history (Wasino, 2013).

Contemporary changes in communication further complicate this process. The development of digital media has expanded the spaces through which younger generations encounter and interpret historical memory (Lattu, 2019). Narratives of Diponegoro are increasingly encountered through social media, online historical information, visual documentation, and popular cultural discourse alongside conventional oral and communal forms of transmission (Bizawie, 2020). Such developments suggest that collective memory is not merely transferred intact from one generation to another; it may also be selected, reinterpreted, and reconstructed as it moves between familial, communal, material, and digital spaces. Understanding contemporary collective memory therefore requires attention both to the physical sites in which memory is anchored and to the social processes through which meanings are continually negotiated.

Recent scholarship increasingly conceptualizes collective memory as a dynamic social process constructed through spaces, symbols, cultural practices, and social relationships rather than merely as a shared recollection of past events (Danugroho, 2020; Susanti et al., 2020). Research on lieux de mémoire has similarly demonstrated the importance of graves, monuments, and historical landscapes in preserving and transmitting memory across generations (Igarashi et al., 2022). Interdisciplinary approaches drawing on history, sociology, geography, and cultural studies have further examined how memory becomes materialized within social and political spaces (Hebel, 2008; Rizal & Qaiyimah, 2025), while memorialization practices have been associated with historical awareness, reconciliation, and the reproduction of collective values (Orianne & Eustache, 2023). Nevertheless, memory sites may also become arenas in which meanings are negotiated among state institutions, communities, descendants, and other social groups, particularly amid changing social and cultural conditions (Assmann, 2011; Sya'adah & Wahyudi, 2024).

Despite these developments, two related gaps remain insufficiently explored in the context of Prince Diponegoro's exile in Makassar. First, existing studies have provided important accounts of Diponegoro's history, exile, heritage sites, and collective memory, yet limited attention has been given to how his post-exile memory is transmitted and reconstructed through contemporary relationships between descendants and the broader community in Makassar (Subekti & Hendriyanto, 2021; Wattimena, 2009). Second, relatively little research has examined how this social transmission of memory interacts with its materialization in interconnected historical sites, particularly Diponegoro's tomb and Fort Rotterdam, while also considering the emerging role of digital representations and contemporary practices (Donahue, 2024; Lestari & Parihala, 2020; Rizal, 2026). Consequently, the relationship among social actors, intergenerational transmission, material memory sites, and contemporary forms of memory reconstruction remains insufficiently integrated within a single analytical framework.

To address these gaps, this study examines the contemporary collective memory of Prince Diponegoro's exile in Makassar by focusing on the interaction between social transmission and materialized memory. Specifically, it investigates (1) how the collective memory of Prince Diponegoro is transmitted, maintained, and reconstructed across generations through relationships between descendants and the broader community, including its transformation through contemporary and digital practices; and (2) how Diponegoro's tomb and Fort Rotterdam function as materialized memory spaces through which memories of exile are preserved, reproduced, and interpreted in contemporary social life. By integrating the social actors who transmit memory with the physical sites through which memory becomes materially anchored, this study seeks to provide a more comprehensive understanding of how the legacy of Diponegoro's exile continues to acquire meaning in present-day Makassar.

The study contributes to collective memory scholarship by connecting genealogical memory, community-based transmission, material memory, and contemporary modes of representation within the specific historical context of exile. Rather than treating descendants, communities, and historical sites as separate components, it examines their interaction as part of an ongoing process through which the past is socially reproduced and reinterpreted. Practically, the

findings may also inform heritage preservation and history education by demonstrating how historical sites and living social practices can jointly support intergenerational historical awareness.

METHOD

This study employed a qualitative approach with a phenomenological design to explore the lived experiences, meanings, and social realities associated with the transmission and materialization of collective memory among Prince Diponegoro's descendants and members of the community in Makassar City. A phenomenological design was considered appropriate because the study sought not merely to document historical events but to understand how individuals experience, interpret, and assign meaning to memories of Diponegoro's exile (1830–1855) in contemporary social life. Particular attention was given to participants' subjective experiences, emotional attachments, symbolic interpretations, and social consciousness associated with memory spaces such as Fort Rotterdam and Prince Diponegoro's tomb. To maintain phenomenological sensitivity, the researcher applied the principle of epoché by consciously reflecting on and setting aside personal assumptions and prior interpretations as far as possible during data collection and analysis, allowing participants' accounts and meanings to remain central to the interpretation. This approach was relevant because collective memory is not preserved solely through historical narratives but is also experienced, interpreted, and continuously reconstructed through social interactions, cultural practices, and intergenerational experiences (Lim, 2025).

The study focused on how descendants and members of the surrounding community preserve, transmit, interpret, and reconstruct the collective memory of Diponegoro's exile in Makassar. Data were collected through observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation. Observations were conducted at Fort Rotterdam and Prince Diponegoro's tomb complex to examine how these historical sites function as material and social spaces of memory. In-depth interviews were conducted with informants selected purposively based on their knowledge, experience, genealogical connection, involvement in the management of historical sites, or engagement with the collective memory of Prince Diponegoro. Snowball sampling was subsequently used to identify additional informants through recommendations from initial participants, enabling the study to access individuals with relevant knowledge and experiences that might not have been identified during the initial selection process. Documentary data were collected from available archives, photographs, historical records, social media materials, and relevant literature concerning Diponegoro's exile and collective memory in Makassar. The use of multiple sources of evidence supported a more comprehensive understanding of participants' experiences and the social contexts in which collective memory is maintained and interpreted (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

Table 1. Categories and Characteristics of Informants

Informant Code	Initial	Age	Informant Category
I-01	RH	70	Tomb caretaker and fifth-generation descendant of Prince Diponegoro
I-02	SA	56	Fifth-generation descendant of Prince Diponegoro
I-03	PS	53	Seventh-generation descendant of Prince Diponegoro
I-04	AR	13	Younger-generation member of the community surrounding the tomb site
I-05	KM	50	Older-generation member of the community surrounding the tomb site
I-06	AS	47	Family member from the community surrounding the tomb site and wife of a fifth-generation descendant of Prince Diponegoro
I-07	AZ	26	Younger-generation resident of Makassar City
I-08	AK	30	Representative involved in the management of Fort Rotterdam
I-09	DC	23	Younger-generation resident of Makassar City and visitor to Fort Rotterdam

A total of nine informants participated in the study, representing descendants of Prince Diponegoro, members of communities surrounding the tomb site, younger residents of Makassar, a family member connected to the descendants, a representative involved in the management of Fort Rotterdam, and a visitor to the fort. Informants ranged in age from 13 to 70 years, allowing the study to capture experiences and interpretations across different generations. This generational variation was particularly relevant for examining how memories of Diponegoro are transmitted and interpreted

across age groups, how descendants and communities interact in maintaining these memories, and how younger generations encounter historical narratives through contemporary and digital forms of representation. The categories and characteristics of the informants are presented in [Table 1](#).

Data analysis was conducted using the interactive model of [Miles et al. \(2014\)](#), involving data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing and verification as interconnected processes conducted throughout the study ([Miles et al., 2014](#)). Interview, observation, and documentary data were organized and examined to identify recurring meanings, experiences, social practices, and patterns related to the transmission and materialization of collective memory. Particular attention was given to how participants interpreted Diponegoro's exile, how memory was transmitted through relationships between descendants and the broader community, how Fort Rotterdam and the tomb functioned as material spaces of memory, and how these meanings differed or developed across generations. The interpretations generated from these processes were continuously compared with the available data to ensure that the findings remained grounded in participants' accounts and the observed social context.

The credibility and trustworthiness of the findings were strengthened through source and method triangulation. Source triangulation involved comparing information obtained from descendants, community members, younger participants, site-related informants, and visitors, while method triangulation involved comparing evidence obtained through interviews, observations, and documentation. This process enabled the researcher to identify convergences and differences across data sources and to avoid relying on a single participant or type of evidence when constructing interpretations. The continuous process of data analysis, comparison, and verification was used to support the credibility of the findings ([Miles et al., 2014](#)).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Fort Rotterdam as a Materialized Memory of Pangeran Diponegoro's Exile (1830–1855) within Contemporary Collective Memory among Descendants and the Community in Makassar City

The collective memory of Prince Diponegoro's exile in Makassar demonstrates that historical memory is not simply inherited or preserved but is socially constructed and continuously reproduced through relationships between descendants and the broader community. For Diponegoro's descendants, memories of exile are closely associated with genealogical identity, family narratives, and inherited values of struggle, steadfastness, and historical continuity. Within the broader community, however, these memories extend beyond genealogical boundaries and become part of a shared historical consciousness through which Diponegoro is interpreted as both a national historical figure and a figure connected to Makassar's local history. The interaction between these two groups demonstrates how genealogical memory can gradually enter the public sphere and acquire broader social and cultural meanings.

In everyday social life, this collective memory is sustained through oral narratives, informal discussions, intergenerational interactions, and symbolic representations expressed in various cultural and historical practices. These processes enable narratives of Diponegoro's exile to remain present within contemporary society rather than being confined to written historical records. Memory is therefore not transmitted as a fixed account of the past; its meanings are continually interpreted and reconstructed according to the social contexts in which remembering takes place. Descendants and community members consequently function not merely as recipients of inherited memory but as social actors who participate in maintaining, interpreting, and reproducing historical narratives.

Intergenerational differences, however, reveal changes in the depth and form of this memory. Among younger generations, Prince Diponegoro tends to be recognized primarily as a symbolic figure in Indonesian national history, while his specific socio-historical connection to Makassar is less strongly understood. This indicates a growing distance between inherited historical narratives and the contemporary social experiences of younger generations. Although the symbolic recognition of Diponegoro remains present, the local meanings associated with his exile may become less prominent when they are not reinforced through direct interaction with descendants, historical

sites, and locally situated narratives. This generational shift represents an important challenge to the continuity of collective memory because the persistence of memory depends not only on recognition of a historical figure but also on the continued interpretation of the social and spatial contexts associated with that figure.



Figure 1. Seventeenth–Eighteenth-Century Map of Makassar and Fort Rotterdam

Source: Nationaal Archief, 2026.

Within this process, Fort Rotterdam provides an important material context for interpreting the memory of Prince Diponegoro's exile in Makassar. The fort represents more than a surviving example of colonial architecture; it constitutes a historical space through which the relationship between Dutch colonial authority and exiled resistance figures can be encountered and interpreted. In relation to Diponegoro, the site connects the material legacy of colonial power with narratives of resistance and exile, allowing different layers of Makassar's local and national history to intersect within a single historical landscape.

Viewed as a *lieu de mémoire*, Fort Rotterdam is therefore not merely a passive remnant of the colonial past but a space in which historical meanings can be continually produced and reconstructed through social interaction. Visitors encounter the site through different forms of historical knowledge, personal experience, and cultural understanding, creating opportunities for the history of Diponegoro's exile to be interpreted within broader narratives of colonialism, resistance, and social transformation. The significance of the fort consequently lies not only in its physical

preservation but also in its capacity to connect material traces of the past with contemporary processes of remembering.



Figure 2. Memory Room Associated with Prince Diponegoro's Detention and Exile at Fort Rotterdam

Source: Research documentation, 2026.

The contemporary function of Fort Rotterdam further illustrates how a historical site can develop from a preserved heritage object into a public arena for historical interpretation. Visitors are not merely passive observers of the physical structure; they engage with the meanings attached to the site through their knowledge, experiences, and interpretations. In this sense, Fort Rotterdam serves as a bridge between past and present, connecting the historical narrative of Diponegoro's exile with contemporary historical consciousness in Makassar. This function was reflected in the account of a representative involved in the management of Fort Rotterdam:

"Fort Rotterdam is not only a colonial heritage site, but also a historical space that reminds people about Prince Diponegoro's exile and struggle in Makassar. Visitors come here not only to see the fort, but also to understand the historical values attached to Diponegoro's presence" (I-08, AK – Interview, 2026).

This account demonstrates how the institutional and public interpretation of Fort Rotterdam extends beyond its architectural significance. The site provides a material setting in which narratives

of colonialism, resistance, and exile can be connected to contemporary public memory. At the same time, the meanings attached to the site are not produced by institutional actors alone. Descendants, local communities, visitors, and site managers participate in different ways in interpreting and sustaining its historical significance. Fort Rotterdam can therefore be understood as a point of intersection between genealogical memory and public memory, where family-based narratives of Diponegoro's exile encounter broader interpretations of national and local history.

This finding is consistent with Halbwachs' understanding that memory is constructed and sustained within social frameworks rather than existing solely as an individual recollection (Halbwachs & Coser, 1992). In the context of this study, the memory of Prince Diponegoro's exile is maintained not only through genealogical transmission among descendants but also through interactions involving communities, visitors, institutional actors, and historical spaces. Fort Rotterdam provides a material framework within which these different forms of remembering can intersect and acquire contemporary meaning. The persistence of Diponegoro's collective memory in Makassar can therefore be understood as a dynamic relationship among social actors, inherited narratives, material sites, and changing forms of historical interpretation, rather than as the passive preservation of a fixed account of the past.

Prince Diponegoro's Tomb Site as a Materialization of Memory and a Place of Remembrance for Descendants and the Community in Makassar City

Prince Diponegoro's exile in Makassar from 1830 until his death in 1855 established a lasting historical connection between the city and the final period of his life. His burial in Makassar extended the significance of the city beyond its role as a place of exile, making it a site where the historical trajectory of his resistance, exile, and death converges. The tomb therefore provides a tangible connection between the historical experience of exile and the collective memory that has subsequently developed among his descendants and the broader community.

Over time, the tomb has become a memory space through which Diponegoro's life, exile, and death are connected within a continuing historical narrative. Its significance extends beyond its function as a burial place because its physical presence provides a material anchor through which memories of Diponegoro can be encountered, transmitted, and interpreted. In this sense, the tomb contributes to Makassar's position within the broader historical geography of Diponegoro's life by preserving a material connection to his final years and providing a space in which memories of his struggle and exile continue to acquire social meaning.

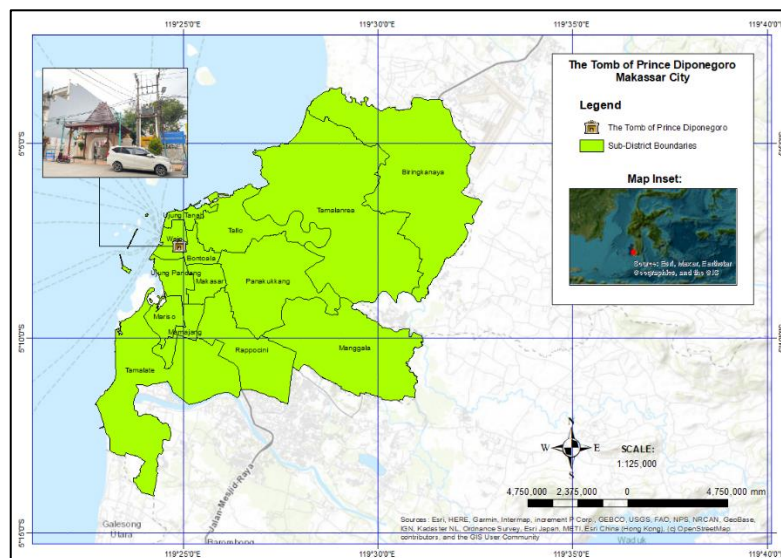


Figure 3. Location of Prince Diponegoro's Tomb in Makassar City

Source: Research data, 2026.

Prince Diponegoro's tomb can therefore be understood as a materialization of collective memory through which historical memory is anchored in a tangible and accessible space. Rather than functioning solely as a burial site, the tomb operates as a social and historical artifact that connects the exile period (1830–1855) with contemporary processes of remembrance. Its physical presence enables descendants, community members, and visitors to encounter a material trace associated with Diponegoro and to interpret its significance through their own historical knowledge, social relationships, and experiences. The importance of this connection was reflected in the account of the tomb custodian, who stated:

“Many people come here not only to visit the grave, but because they feel connected to the history of Prince Diponegoro. The tomb reminds people that his struggle and exile are still remembered by society until today” (I-01, RH – Interview, 2026)

This account illustrates that visiting the tomb involves more than physical presence at a historical site. The tomb provides a setting in which historical narratives can be connected to contemporary experiences of remembrance. Its significance is therefore produced not only by its material existence but also through the meanings attributed to it by the people who visit, maintain, and interact with the site.

From the perspective of descendants, the tomb carries a particularly strong genealogical and affective significance. It represents continuity between present generations and their ancestral past, while simultaneously providing a material focus for maintaining family memory. Feelings of respect, attachment, and responsibility toward Diponegoro's historical legacy contribute to the construction of the tomb as an intimate and sacred memory space connecting past, present, and future generations. In this context, remembrance is closely intertwined with genealogy and family identity.



Figure 4. Prince Diponegoro's Tomb as a Site of Materialized Memory for Descendants and the Community

Source: Research documentation, 2026.

For the broader community, the tomb acquires a different but complementary meaning. Rather than being grounded primarily in genealogical attachment, community engagement with the site reflects recognition of Diponegoro as a historical figure associated with resistance and national history. The tomb consequently carries educational, symbolic, and commemorative significance, providing a physical setting through which members of the public can encounter and reflect on historical narratives. Emotional engagement in this context is expressed through respect, admiration, historical awareness, and recognition of the values associated with Diponegoro's struggle.

The findings therefore reveal two interconnected layers of memory within the same historical space. For descendants, the tomb primarily functions as a genealogical and affective memory space, whereas for the broader community it functions as a public and historical memory space. These meanings are not mutually exclusive. Instead, they intersect at the tomb site, allowing personal and familial remembrance to coexist with broader forms of public historical consciousness. The tomb thus becomes a relational space in which genealogical identity, collective remembrance, emotional attachment, and historical interpretation are continually brought into contact.

This dynamic can be understood through the concept of the materialization of memory, whereby collective memory is sustained not only through narratives but also through physical sites that can be visited, experienced, and socially interpreted. From [Nora's \(1989\)](#) perspective, Prince Diponegoro's tomb can be approached as a *lieu de mémoire*: a site in which memory becomes materially anchored and can be reactivated through practices of remembrance. Within the context of this study, the tomb functions as a meeting point between the genealogical memory maintained by descendants and the broader public memory constructed by the community. Its significance therefore lies not simply in preserving a material trace of the past, but in providing a social space through which the memory of Diponegoro's exile continues to be experienced, interpreted, and transmitted in contemporary Makassar.

Intergenerational Transmission of Collective Memory among Descendants and Communities in Makassar City

The intergenerational transmission of collective memory related to Prince Diponegoro in Makassar occurs through continuous interactions between descendants and the broader community. Descendants play an important role in preserving genealogical memory through family narratives, inherited historical knowledge, and values associated with Diponegoro's life and struggle. The community, meanwhile, contributes to extending this memory beyond the genealogical sphere by incorporating it into broader social and public forms of remembrance. Through these interconnected processes, memory is transmitted not merely as historical knowledge but also through values, symbols, social practices, and forms of identification that allow the significance of Diponegoro to remain present across generations.

The findings reveal distinct yet complementary patterns of memory transmission between descendants and the community. Among descendants, transmission tends to occur within family-based and genealogical contexts through oral storytelling, the preservation of genealogical narratives, and the transmission of historical values within the family. These practices emphasize continuity between generations and contribute to maintaining Diponegoro's memory as part of family identity. For older descendants in particular, such forms of remembrance carry strong emotional and symbolic significance because historical narratives are understood not simply as accounts of the past but as part of an inherited identity that should be preserved and transmitted.

Within the broader community, collective memory is transmitted through more open and participatory forms of social engagement. Visits to historical sites, informal discussions, interactions around the tomb, and other commemorative or symbolic practices provide opportunities for individuals without genealogical connections to Diponegoro to participate in processes of remembrance. Through these activities, memories that originate partly within family and historical narratives enter a wider social sphere in which their meanings can be encountered and reinterpreted by different members of the community. The interaction between these patterns indicates two interconnected orientations of memory transmission: an internal-genealogical orientation, primarily maintained through descendants and family relationships, and an external-social orientation, through

which memory circulates within the broader community. Rather than functioning separately, these orientations intersect and contribute to the continuity of Diponegoro's collective memory in Makassar.

Intergenerational differences further demonstrate that collective memory is not transmitted in an identical form from one generation to another. Among older descendants, memories of Diponegoro tend to be closely associated with genealogical continuity, family responsibility, and emotional attachment. Their relationship with the past is therefore strongly shaped by inherited narratives and the perceived responsibility to preserve them. Among adult descendants and community members, the meanings attached to Diponegoro's memory appear more contextual, connecting inherited historical narratives with educational, social, and contemporary concerns. For this group, Diponegoro's memory can function simultaneously as family heritage, national history, and a source of social and educational values.

Among younger participants, the relationship with collective memory takes a different form. Their engagement does not necessarily demonstrate the same depth of genealogical or historical attachment found among older generations. Instead, their relationship with memory can emerge through formal education, digital representations, visual encounters with historical sites, and everyday social experiences surrounding places of remembrance. Importantly, this does not necessarily indicate the absence of emotional engagement. Rather, the findings suggest that younger participants may develop different forms of attachment to historical memory, shaped more strongly by contemporary modes of interaction and their immediate experiences with memory spaces.



Figure 5. Interview with a Young Community Member Living near Prince Diponegoro's Tomb

Source: Research documentation, 2026.

This pattern is particularly visible in the involvement of younger community members living around Prince Diponegoro's tomb. Their engagement with the site is not always initiated by an explicit intention to learn about Diponegoro's history. Instead, familiarity with the tomb environment and positive relationships with people associated with the site can encourage repeated visits and everyday participation. One young participant explained:

"I often come to this tomb because the person who cares for the tomb is kind and pleasant, so we feel comfortable coming. Sometimes, with friends or other children, we also help clean the tomb area when there are activities." (I-04, AR - Interview, 2026).

This account illustrates how intergenerational memory transmission can occur through ordinary social relationships rather than exclusively through deliberate historical instruction. The participant's initial attachment to the site appears to be grounded in social familiarity, interpersonal comfort, and participation in everyday activities such as helping to maintain the tomb area. Through repeated engagement with the site, however, the young participant becomes socially connected to a space associated with Diponegoro's historical memory. The tomb therefore functions not only as a site of formal remembrance but also as an everyday social environment through which younger community members can gradually encounter and participate in practices associated with collective memory.

This finding is important because it demonstrates that the continuity of collective memory does not necessarily require each generation to reproduce precisely the same forms of remembrance. Older generations may sustain memory primarily through genealogical narratives and inherited historical meanings, whereas younger generations may initially engage with the same memory through social relationships, spatial familiarity, educational experiences, or contemporary media. These differences represent a transformation in the mode of remembering rather than necessarily a disappearance of collective memory. Intergenerational transmission can therefore be understood as a dynamic process in which inherited narratives are selectively encountered, interpreted, and given new meanings according to the social experiences of each generation.

From Halbwachs and Coser (1992) perspective, this process reflects the socially situated nature of collective memory. Memories are constructed and sustained within social frameworks, and these frameworks may change as relationships, environments, and forms of communication develop across generations. In the Makassar context, Prince Diponegoro's memory is consequently not transmitted as a fixed historical narrative. Instead, it is continually reconstructed through interactions among descendants, community members, younger generations, and the social spaces in which remembrance takes place. The sustainability of this collective memory therefore depends not only on preserving historical narratives but also on maintaining social relationships and memory spaces that enable successive generations to encounter, interpret, and recontextualize the significance of Diponegoro's exile within their own contemporary experiences.

The Relationship between Descendants and the Community in Preserving Collective Memory

The preservation of Prince Diponegoro's collective memory in Makassar is shaped by an interdependent relationship between his descendants and the broader community. Although these groups occupy different positions and engage with the past through different forms of historical attachment, both contribute to maintaining the continuity of Diponegoro's memory. Descendants primarily preserve genealogical memory through inherited narratives, family histories, and values associated with Diponegoro's historical legacy. Their genealogical proximity provides an important point of reference for maintaining the continuity and perceived authenticity of family-based narratives. The community, meanwhile, extends these memories beyond the genealogical sphere by incorporating them into broader forms of public remembrance, historical interpretation, and social interaction.

For descendants, preserving Diponegoro's memory involves more than transmitting information about family history. It is also understood as a responsibility to maintain narratives and meanings inherited across generations. These narratives carry affective, symbolic, and ethical significance because they are closely connected to family identity and historical continuity. Consequently, descendants position themselves as custodians of genealogical memory whose role includes preserving inherited accounts while communicating their significance to a wider public. This position does not necessarily imply exclusive ownership of historical memory; rather, it reflects a particular responsibility derived from genealogical proximity to the historical figure being remembered.

At the same time, descendants recognize that collective memory cannot remain confined to the family sphere if it is to retain broader social relevance. Their relationship with the community is therefore characterized by both openness and concern for the continuity of inherited narratives. Community engagement enables Diponegoro's memory to circulate beyond genealogical networks

and become part of a wider historical consciousness. However, descendants also emphasize the importance of preserving the contextual integrity of family narratives as they enter the public sphere. This position was articulated by one descendant:

"We are not closed off from the community; in fact, we feel compelled to share these stories, but we also want the community to understand that there are parts of history whose authenticity must be preserved, because they are not just common stories, but family legacies with profound meaning." (I-02, SA - Interview, 2026)

This account illustrates the dual position occupied by descendants in the preservation of collective memory. They seek to make inherited narratives accessible to the broader community while simultaneously maintaining what they understand as their historical and genealogical integrity. The relationship between descendants and the community can therefore be understood not simply in terms of one group transmitting memory and another receiving it, but as an ongoing interaction in which the boundaries between family memory and public memory are continually negotiated.

From the community's perspective, Prince Diponegoro's memory has become part of Makassar's local historical consciousness despite the geographical origins of his armed resistance in Java. The Java War itself did not take place in Makassar, yet Diponegoro's exile and death in the city established a significant historical connection between his life trajectory and Makassar. This connection enables community members to interpret his presence as part of the city's historical landscape and to incorporate the narrative of his exile into broader understandings of local and national history.

Community members therefore do not function merely as recipients of narratives maintained by descendants. Through visits to memory sites, historical discussions, commemorative practices, educational encounters, and everyday interactions surrounding the tomb and other historically associated spaces, the community participates in reproducing and contextualizing Diponegoro's memory. From this perspective, descendants remain an important source of genealogically transmitted narratives, while the broader meanings of those narratives are also shaped through public engagement and contemporary social experience. This understanding was reflected in the statement of one community participant:

"We do know that his struggle was in Java, not in Makassar, but because he was exiled and died here, we feel that Makassar also has a part of his history." (I-05, KM - Interview, 2026)

This statement demonstrates how a historical narrative originating outside Makassar can acquire local meaning through Diponegoro's experience of exile and death in the city. The participant does not relocate the Java War to Makassar; rather, the statement recognizes Makassar as part of Diponegoro's subsequent historical trajectory. In this way, the community contributes to expanding the spatial and social dimensions of his memory, connecting national history with local historical consciousness.

The relationship between descendants and the community consequently reveals two interconnected forms of memory preservation. The first can be understood as genealogical memory, grounded primarily in family relationships, inherited narratives, and affective attachment. The second operates as public-social memory, in which Diponegoro's historical significance is encountered, interpreted, and reproduced within a wider social context. These forms of memory are neither entirely separate nor identical. They intersect through social relationships, historical narratives, commemorative practices, and material memory sites, producing a shared space in which different claims, experiences, and interpretations of the past can coexist.

This intersection can be understood as a process of negotiating memory, in which genealogical proximity and public participation provide different but complementary bases for historical meaning. Descendants contribute inherited knowledge and family-based interpretations, while the community extends the social reach of memory through collective recognition and public engagement. Rather than producing a single fixed interpretation, this interaction enables Diponegoro's memory to remain socially active and responsive to changing contexts. The preservation of collective memory in Makassar therefore depends not only on the transmission of

historical narratives but also on the relationships through which those narratives are communicated, interpreted, and incorporated into contemporary social life.

Theoretically, this finding is consistent with Halbwachs and Coser (1992) perspective that collective memory is constructed and sustained within social frameworks. In this study, descendants represent a genealogically grounded social framework through which family memory is transmitted, whereas the broader community provides a more public social framework in which that memory can circulate and acquire wider meanings. The interaction between these frameworks demonstrates that collective memory is neither exclusively private nor entirely public; rather, it develops through relationships among social groups that remember the same historical figure from different positions.

This process can also be interpreted through Berger and Luckmann (1966) social construction perspective. The interaction between descendants and the community illustrates how historical meanings can be expressed, socially recognized, and subsequently incorporated into shared understandings of the past. Through repeated narratives, social practices, and interactions around historical sites, memories associated with Diponegoro become part of an intersubjective historical reality within Makassar. Nora's (1989) concept of lieux de mémoire further clarifies the role of material sites in this process. Places such as Prince Diponegoro's tomb and Fort Rotterdam provide physical settings in which genealogical and public forms of memory can encounter one another. Memory preservation, therefore, depends not only on inherited narratives but also on the social relationships and material spaces through which those narratives are continually encountered, negotiated, and reactivated.

Digital Representation and the Transformation of Collective Memory Narratives among Younger Generations in Makassar City

The findings indicate that the collective memory of Prince Diponegoro among younger generations in Makassar has been transformed by the growing role of digital media and contemporary communication practices. While older generations tend to encounter Diponegoro's memory through oral traditions, family narratives, pilgrimages, and direct interactions with descendants and community members, younger generations increasingly access this history through social media, short historical videos, visual documentation, heritage tourism content, and online information about Fort Rotterdam and Prince Diponegoro's tomb. Collective memory is therefore no longer transmitted exclusively through interpersonal and place-based practices but is increasingly mediated through digital spaces that make historical narratives more visual, accessible, and widely circulated.

This transformation does not necessarily indicate the disappearance of historical memory. Rather, it reflects a shift in the ways younger generations encounter, interpret, and engage with the past. For some younger participants, Prince Diponegoro is initially encountered as a national historical figure or symbol of resistance through digital representations rather than through genealogically transmitted or emotionally embedded narratives. Digital media therefore creates a different point of entry into collective memory, one that is less dependent on direct transmission from older generations and more closely connected to contemporary visual and participatory media practices.

This generational shift is also reflected in perceptions of Fort Rotterdam and Prince Diponegoro's tomb. Among older descendants and community members, the tomb is closely associated with genealogical continuity, remembrance, and spiritual and emotional attachment, whereas Fort Rotterdam represents the historical context of exile and colonial power. Younger participants, however, often encounter these sites initially through their public and digitally mediated representations. Fort Rotterdam may be recognized as a heritage tourism destination, a photographic space, or a historical landmark frequently represented on social media, while Prince Diponegoro's tomb may be encountered as a site of historical remembrance and symbolic respect. One young community informant explained:

"I first learned about Diponegoro's exile from social media and content about Fort Rotterdam. Many friends came to take photos or create historical content. I believe Diponegoro's tomb is an important place to honor his struggle, although the current generation probably knows more about him from the internet than from their parents." (I-09, DC – Interview, 2026)

This account illustrates how digital media has become an important intermediary between younger generations and historical memory. Rather than replacing physical memory sites, digital representations may introduce these sites to younger audiences and shape their initial interpretations before direct engagement occurs. The transformation can therefore be understood less as a simple movement from “sacred” to “non-sacred” memory and more as a transition toward increasingly mediated, visual, and publicly circulated forms of remembrance.

Institutional initiatives further demonstrate how collective memory is being adapted to contemporary forms of public engagement. One example is the collaboration between the Yogyakarta Special Region Cultural Office and the Makassar City Government in organizing the temporary exhibition *Jejak Pangeran Diponegoro: Sulawesi (Selarong hingga Sulawesi)*. The exhibition sought to connect historical narratives associated with Yogyakarta and Makassar through Diponegoro's struggle and subsequent exile, thereby situating Makassar within the broader trajectory of his life. Organized in connection with International Museum Day and Makassar City Culture Day in 2022, the exhibition also illustrates how museums and local governments can function as active mediators of collective memory rather than merely as custodians of historical objects. Through visual displays, public exhibitions, and educational engagement, historical narratives can be recontextualized in forms that are more accessible to contemporary audiences, particularly younger generations.



Figure 6. Interinstitutional Collaboration in Preserving the Collective Memory of Prince Diponegoro in Makassar

Source: Makassar City Museum Archives, 2026

The findings further reveal that digital media has a dual role in the continuity and transformation of collective memory. On the one hand, digital platforms broaden access to historical information and allow narratives of Diponegoro's exile to circulate beyond family networks, historical institutions, and physical memory sites. Social media platforms such as Instagram, TikTok, and YouTube provide younger audiences with visual and concise forms of historical content that correspond with their everyday communication practices. In this sense, digital media expands opportunities for historical narratives to remain visible and socially relevant within contemporary communication environments.

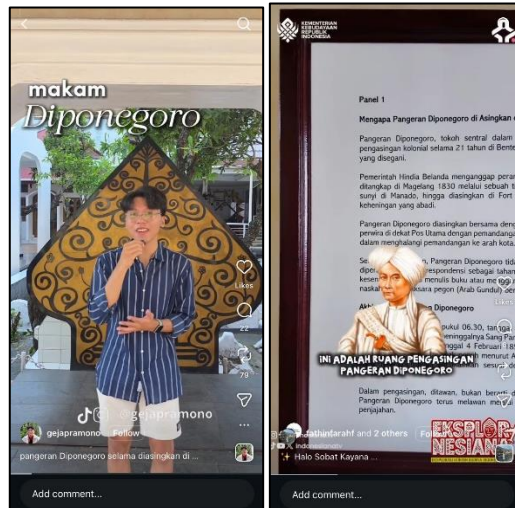


Figure 7. Social Media as a Digital Representation of Collective Memory Among Younger Generations

Source: Social Media Documentation Study—Instagram, 2026

On the other hand, digitally mediated memory may alter the depth, form, and context through which historical narratives are encountered. Narratives traditionally transmitted through extended family stories, pilgrimage practices, and interpersonal encounters may contain emotional, moral, spiritual, and genealogical meanings that are difficult to reproduce fully in short-form digital content. When these narratives circulate through photographs, short videos, captions, and fragmented historical information, certain dimensions of memory may become condensed or selectively emphasized. Digitalization should therefore not be interpreted simply as either strengthening or weakening collective memory; instead, it changes the conditions under which memory is produced, circulated, and interpreted.

Importantly, digital engagement can also stimulate subsequent encounters with physical memory sites. One younger informant described how exposure to online content generated curiosity about the historical significance of Fort Rotterdam:

“Initially, I only knew Fort Rotterdam as a Dutch colonial relic and part of Makassar's history. But after seeing content on social media, I learned that the site was also connected to the exile of Prince Diponegoro. That piqued my curiosity, and I ultimately visited Fort Rotterdam to experience its history firsthand.” (I-07, AZ – Interview, 2026).

This experience demonstrates that digital and material forms of memory do not necessarily operate in opposition. Digital representation can function as an entry point that encourages physical engagement with historical sites, while visits to those sites can subsequently deepen, modify, or contextualize knowledge first acquired online. The relationship between digital representation and physical memory sites is therefore reciprocal: digital media can direct attention toward material heritage, while encounters with material heritage can provide experiential depth to digitally acquired historical knowledge.

This interaction suggests the emergence of what may be described as a hybrid form of collective memory, in which physical sites, interpersonal narratives, institutional practices, and digital representations operate simultaneously. Fort Rotterdam and Prince Diponegoro's tomb continue to function as lieux de mémoire in **Nora's (1989)** sense because they provide material anchors through which historical memory can be encountered and reactivated. However, their meanings increasingly circulate beyond their physical locations through photographs, videos, social media posts, online discussions, and other forms of digital representation. The contemporary life of these memory sites therefore extends into digital environments, where their meanings are reproduced and potentially reinterpreted by audiences who may not have initially encountered them through direct physical experience.

Rather than describing this process as the disappearance of sacred memory, the findings suggest a reconfiguration of how sacredness and historical significance are mediated. Younger generations may engage with memory sites through practices such as photography, content creation, social media sharing, and heritage tourism, but these practices can coexist with respect, historical curiosity, and subsequent forms of reflection. In this sense, what might be termed digitally mediated sacredness reflects the extension of historically significant spaces into contemporary communication practices. This interpretation extends [Nora's \(1989\)](#) concept of *lieux de mémoire* by demonstrating how material sites of memory can acquire an additional digital dimension through their circulation and reinterpretation in mediated environments.

The findings can also be understood through [Olick's \(1999\)](#) conceptualization of collective memory as a social and cultural process that is continuously produced and reproduced through narratives, symbols, institutions, and practices. From this perspective, collective memory cannot be reduced to the aggregation of individual recollections; it is also embedded in cultural forms and social mechanisms through which societies represent the past. The digital circulation of narratives surrounding Prince Diponegoro, Fort Rotterdam, and the tomb therefore represents a contemporary mechanism through which collective memory is reproduced and transformed. Digital media does not simply transmit an unchanged historical narrative to younger generations; it participates in reshaping the forms, contexts, and meanings through which that narrative becomes socially available.

Taken together, these findings demonstrate that the contemporary collective memory of Prince Diponegoro in Makassar is increasingly characterized by an interaction between material memory and digital representation. Fort Rotterdam and the tomb remain important physical anchors of remembrance, while digital media expands their visibility, accessibility, and interpretive reach among younger generations. The resulting form of memory is neither exclusively oral nor exclusively digital, neither entirely sacred nor merely informational. Rather, it constitutes a hybrid and evolving memory ecology in which historical sites, social relationships, institutional initiatives, and digital practices interact in sustaining and transforming the meaning of Diponegoro's exile in contemporary Makassar.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that the contemporary collective memory of Prince Diponegoro's exile (1830–1855) in Makassar is a dynamic social process continuously constructed through interactions among descendants, local communities, historical sites, and contemporary forms of representation. Prince Diponegoro's tomb and Fort Rotterdam function as interconnected *lieux de mémoire* that materialize different but complementary dimensions of memory: the tomb primarily embodies genealogical, spiritual, and affective meanings, while Fort Rotterdam represents the historical experience of exile, colonial power, and public memory. Intergenerational transmission further demonstrates that memory is not reproduced identically across generations. Older generations tend to maintain genealogical and emotional attachments, adults contextualize inherited memory within broader social and educational meanings, while younger generations increasingly encounter and reinterpret Diponegoro's memory through digital media and contemporary social practices. The relationship between descendants and the community is therefore dialogical and interdependent, connecting genealogical memory with broader public remembrance.

Theoretically, these findings extend Nora's concept of *lieux de mémoire* by showing that material memory sites in a contemporary postcolonial context are not static repositories of the past but interact with social relationships and digital representations to produce a hybrid form of collective memory. Digital media does not replace physical memory sites; rather, it expands the ways historical memory is accessed, circulated, and reinterpreted, particularly among younger generations. Practically, the findings highlight the importance of integrating heritage sites, community participation, and digital media in history education and cultural heritage preservation. However, this study is limited to the social and geographical context of Makassar. Future research could compare collective memory across locations associated with Diponegoro, particularly Makassar and Yogyakarta, or further examine how digital culture transforms historical memory among younger generations.

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