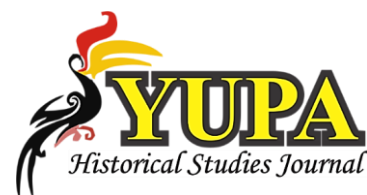


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## Local History and the Development of National Awareness from a Multicultural Education Perspective: A Historical Study of the Dugderan Tradition in Semarang City

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**Abstract** The purpose of this article is to examine Dugderan in Semarang City from a local historical perspective and within the context of community traditions. Dugderan is a collaborative routine ritual between the community and the Semarang City Government held before the month of Ramadan. Ramadan is considered a holy month by Muslims worldwide, including the people of Semarang City. The Dugderan tradition has been going on for hundreds of years and continues to this day. Dugderan is another term for a cultural festival that encompasses the complexities of social life, including religion, tolerance, diversity, and economics. This research was conducted using a qualitative method with an ethno-videography approach. The data collection process included audiovisual production through direct observation and interviews with informants related to the Dugderan tradition. In addition, the researcher used a literature study method to enrich the data beyond field sources. Religiously, Dugderan marks the implementation of fasting during the month of Ramadan by the people of Semarang City. The Dugderan tradition represents tolerance for the diversity of Semarang City's multi-ethnic society. From an economic perspective, the Dugderan tradition attracts buyers and traders, the majority of whom are from the lower middle class. Thus, Dugderan becomes a folk festival that can unite all groups amidst national diversity. Semarang is a miniature of diversity, a center of local civilization that has existed since the time of Ancient Mataram. As a center of diversity, Semarang can serve as an example of good practices on the national and global stage in building national awareness in any era.

**Keywords:** Multicultural Education, Dugderan Tradition, Local History, National Awareness

**Abstrak** Tujuan dari artikel ini adalah untuk mengkaji Dugderan di Kota Semarang dari perspektif sejarah lokal dan dalam konteks tradisi masyarakat. Dugderan merupakan ritual rutin kolaboratif antara masyarakat dengan Pemerintah Kota Semarang yang diselenggarakan menjelang bulan Ramadhan. Ramadhan dianggap sebagai bulan suci oleh umat Islam di seluruh dunia, termasuk masyarakat Kota Semarang. Tradisi Dugderan telah berlangsung selama ratusan tahun dan berlanjut hingga hari ini. Dugderan adalah istilah lain untuk festival budaya yang mencakup kompleksitas kehidupan sosial, termasuk agama, toleransi, keragaman, dan ekonomi. Penelitian ini dilakukan dengan menggunakan metode kualitatif dengan pendekatan etno-videografi. Proses



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*pengumpulan data meliputi produksi audiovisual melalui observasi langsung dan wawancara dengan informan terkait tradisi Dugderan. Selain itu, peneliti menggunakan metode studi literatur untuk memperkaya data di luar sumber lapangan. Secara religius, Dugderan menandai pelaksanaan puasa selama bulan Ramadhan oleh masyarakat Kota Semarang. Tradisi Dugderan mewakili toleransi terhadap keragaman masyarakat multi-etnis Kota Semarang. Dari perspektif ekonomi, tradisi Dugderan menarik pembeli dan pedagang, yang mayoritas berasal dari kelas menengah ke bawah. Dengan demikian, Dugderan menjadi festival rakyat yang dapat menyatukan semua kalangan di tengah keberagaman bangsa. Semarang merupakan miniatur keanekaragaman, pusat peradaban lokal yang telah ada sejak zaman Mataram Kuno. Sebagai pusat keberagaman, Semarang dapat menjadi contoh praktik baik di kancah nasional dan global dalam membangun kesadaran nasional di era apa pun.*

**Kata kunci :** Pendidikan Multikultural, Tradisi Dugderan, Sejarah Lokal, Kesadaran Nasional

## INTRODUCTION

Semarang, the capital of Central Java Province, boasts a rich and diverse array of traditions and cultures. Located on the north coast of Java, Semarang serves as a melting pot of diverse cultures, from Javanese, Chinese, Arab, and Dutch colonialism. This makes Semarang a unique hub for tradition and a rich cultural heritage. Semarang boasts a rich historical background, serving as a hub for cultural diversity. As one of the oldest cities in Indonesia, Semarang has been a meeting point for various cultures, ethnicities, and religions for centuries. Its strategic location on the north coast of Java makes Semarang a hub for trade, port, and cultural exchange. Semarang is a hub of tradition and culture, rich in heritage, from Javanese, Chinese, Dutch colonialism, to coastal heritage. This diversity makes Semarang a unique and interesting city, serving as an example of intercultural harmony. By preserving and promoting these traditions, Semarang not only maintains its cultural identity but also strengthens Indonesia's national identity as a nation of Unity in Diversity (Bhinneka Tunggal Ika).

The Dugderan tradition is an annual cultural festival held in Semarang to welcome the holy month of Ramadan. This tradition has become an important part of Semarang's life and reflects the intercultural harmony that exists in the city. Dugderan not only has religious value, but is also rich in cultural elements, history, and local wisdom. The word "Dugderan" comes from the sound of the bedug (dug) and the cannon (der) that are sounded to mark the beginning of Ramadan. This tradition has existed since the reign of Regent Raden Tumenggung Aryo Purbaningrat in the 19th century (1). Initially, Dugderan was a simple ceremony to mark the beginning of fasting, but over time it evolved into a lively cultural festival. Dugderan is enlivened by a parade featuring various community groups in traditional costumes, dance, and music. Warak Ngendog is the center of attention in this parade. Around the Dugderan location, a night market is usually held selling various foods, drinks, and toys typical of Semarang City.

The Dugderan tradition is a unique and meaningful cultural heritage for the people of Semarang. This festival not only marks the beginning of Ramadan but also reflects the harmony,

unity, and cultural diversity that exist in Semarang. By preserving this tradition, Semarang not only maintains its cultural identity but also strengthens the values of *Bhinneka Tunggal Ika* (Unity in Diversity) as part of Indonesia's national identity. The Dugderan tradition in Semarang plays a vital role in developing local historical knowledge. As a tradition that has been practiced since the 19th century, Dugderan holds many stories, values, and local wisdom that can serve as a source of learning about the history and culture of Semarang. The Dugderan tradition is a treasure trove of local history that not only enriches Semarang's culture but also serves as a source of learning about local history, values, and wisdom. By preserving and promoting Dugderan, the people of Semarang can develop local historical knowledge while strengthening their cultural identity. This tradition also serves as a concrete example of how local culture can be an integral part of Indonesia's national history, which is rich in diversity and unity.

## **METHOD**

The research was conducted using qualitative methods, namely through a study of the social reality that exists around the community (2). The approach in this research uses ethno-videography as a procedure in collecting data both through observation and interviews with informants (3). In addition, this research data is enriched with a literature review collected using library methods that are useful for strengthening the studies or studies obtained from the research field (4). Checking the validity of data (trustworthiness) is a very important and inseparable part of qualitative research. The implementation of checking the validity of data is based on four criteria, namely the degree of trust (credibility), transferability (transferability), dependability (dependability), and certainty (confirmability). Testing the validity of data is carried out by triangulating sources and methods. Source triangulation is used in order to check the accuracy of data viewed from the parties interested in obtaining research data. Method triangulation is carried out by examining data in different ways viewed from the methods used in the research (5). Data analysis in this research includes: 1) data reduction, namely classifying, directing, removing unnecessary data and organizing data; 2) data display, namely finding meaningful relationship patterns and providing the possibility of drawing conclusions; and 3) drawing conclusions/verification (conclusion drawing/verification) (6).

## **RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

### **Exploration of Historical Values in the Dugderan Tradition in Semarang City**

The Dugderan tradition in Semarang is inseparable from its long history as a region where Islam spread. According to Semarang City Government archives, Made Pandan (a cleric from the Demak Sultanate) was an Arab maulana, originally named Maulana Ibnu Abdul Salam. Sunan Kalijaga ordered him to replace Sheikh Siti Jenar, whose teachings were considered deviant. Made

Pandan left Demak with his son, cleared forests, and spread Islam on Tirangan Island. The area became more fertile over time, and amidst this fertility, a rare tamarind tree, known as Asem Arang in Javanese, emerged. Hence, the name Semarang. Made Pandan began his work by building a mosque. This mosque served as a hermitage and became a center for Islamic teaching.

As the village founder and religious figure in the region, Made Pandan was given the title Ki Ageng Pandan Arang. Over time, Ki Ageng Pandan Arang's influence grew, and the region flourished, attracting the attention of Sultan Hadiwijaya of Pajang. Because the requirements for regional development were met, it was decided to elevate Semarang to the same level as a regency. Finally, Pandan Arang was appointed the first Regent of Semarang by the Sultan of Pajang, in consultation with Sunan Kalijaga. This event coincided with the commemoration of the Prophet Muhammad's birthday on 12 Rabiul Awal, 954 AH, or May 2, 1547 AD. On that date, "traditionally and politically, the city of Semarang was founded."

The history of the development of Islam in Semarang has deep roots and is closely linked to the history of trade, culture, and politics in Java (7). As an important port city on the north coast of Java, Semarang served as a gateway for the spread of Islam in Central Java. Islam first entered Semarang through traders and scholars from Arabia, Persia, India, and China who docked at Semarang's port. They not only traded but also spread Islamic teachings. During this period, Islam began to spread along the north coast of Java, including Semarang, as the influence of Hindu-Buddhist kingdoms such as Majapahit weakened.

The Dugderan tradition is an annual cultural festival held in Semarang to welcome the holy month of Ramadan. This tradition has a long history and has become an important part of Semarang's community life. Dugderan was first held during the reign of Regent Raden Tumenggung Aryo Purbaningrat in the 19th century. He served as Regent of Semarang from 1881 to 1886. Initially, Dugderan was a simple ceremony to mark the beginning of fasting. Regent Purbaningrat wanted to create a tradition that could unite the community in welcoming the holy month of Ramadan.

The Dugderan Festival has become an important part of the traditions and cultural identity of the people of Semarang, combining elements of religion, art, and local culture. Dugderan is a manifestation of the joy and gratitude of the people of Semarang in welcoming the holy month of Ramadan. This festival serves as an opportunity to prepare physically and mentally for the fasting month. Dugderan serves as a means to preserve Semarang's local culture and traditions. Through this festival, the younger generation can learn about and appreciate the cultural heritage of their ancestors. The festival also serves as a moment to strengthen the bonds of brotherhood among Semarang residents. The community gathers, interacts, and celebrates togetherness.

Warak Ngendog is the mascot or main symbol of the Dugderan tradition in Semarang. This mythological creature has a unique shape and is rich in meaning, making it a highly synonymous icon with the Dugderan celebration. According to some sources, the word "warak" comes from Javanese and means "rhinoceros." However, others believe it comes from Arabic and means "holy." Warak ngendhog, or egg-laying, is depicted as the reward one receives after undergoing a previous purification process. Literally, this means that anyone who maintains purity during Ramadan will receive a reward on Eid al-Fitr at the end of the month.

Warak Ngendog is a fictional creature that represents an acculturation/unification of various ethnic groups in Semarang, namely the Chinese, Arabs, and Javanese. Its head resembles a dragon's head, typical of Chinese culture; its body is shaped like a camel, typical of Arab culture; and its four legs resemble goat's legs, typical of Javanese culture. Warak Ngendog symbolizes the process of self-purification before entering the holy month of Ramadan. This creature reminds people to cleanse their hearts and minds in preparation for fasting. The Warak Ngendog, a combination of three animals, symbolizes the cultural, religious, and ethnic diversity of Semarang. This reflects the spirit of tolerance and unity within the community. The eggs carried by the Warak Ngendog symbolize prosperity, fertility, and new hope. This symbolizes a prayer for abundant sustenance for the people of Semarang during Ramadan. Warak Ngendog also symbolizes local wisdom and Javanese culture, rich in noble values. Its presence teaches the community to appreciate and preserve ancestral traditions.

The traditional market is an important element of the Dugderan tradition in Semarang. Its presence not only serves as a center of activity but also reflects the spirit of togetherness and joy of the community in welcoming the holy month of Ramadan. The Dugderan traditional market serves as a place for small traders and MSMEs (Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises) to sell various goods. This helps boost the local economy and provides an opportunity for people to shop for Ramadan necessities. The Dugderan traditional market not only offers merchandise but also serves as a family entertainment venue. Visitors can enjoy the festive atmosphere, sample a variety of traditional foods, and play on the rides provided. Furthermore, the Dugderan traditional market serves as a means of preserving local culture and traditions. Various goods, such as handicrafts, traditional toys, and local foods, reflect Semarang's rich cultural heritage.

### **The Dugderan Tradition as a Means of Developing Multicultural Education Oriented towards National Awareness Based on Local Historical Wisdom**

Multicultural education is the process of developing the potential of each individual by respecting the heterogeneity and plurality that arise from cultural, ethnic, tribal, religious, or religious diversity. Multicultural education emphasizes the development of a way of life that is mutually respectful, sincere, and tolerant of cultural diversity in diverse societies (8). Multicultural education is an educational approach that recognizes, values, and promotes

cultural, ethnic, religious, and social diversity in the learning process. In Indonesia, which has enormous cultural diversity, multicultural education is crucial. The younger generation plays a strategic role in the implementation of multicultural education because they are agents of change and the successors of the nation who will determine Indonesia's future. Amidst Indonesia's cultural, religious, ethnic, and linguistic diversity, the younger generation has a significant responsibility to maintain unity and promote multicultural values.

National awareness is the understanding and appreciation of identity, responsibility, and commitment as part of a nation. This encompasses a sense of belonging, pride, and loyalty to the nation, as well as a willingness to contribute to advancing and maintaining national integrity (9). National awareness is crucial for maintaining unity, especially in a country as culturally, religiously, and ethnically diverse as Indonesia. Indonesia is a country with immense cultural, ethnic, religious, and linguistic diversity. While this diversity represents a national treasure, it also has the potential to lead to conflict if not managed properly. Efforts from various parties to prevent conflict within this diversity are crucial, particularly in Indonesia, which boasts a vast array of cultures, religions, ethnicities, and languages. Conflicts arising from diversity can threaten unity, social stability, and national development. Therefore, collaboration and synergy between all elements of society, the government, and other institutions are needed to create a harmonious and inclusive environment.

Local history and multicultural awareness are closely linked in building an understanding of cultural diversity, appreciating differences, and strengthening national identity (10). Local history encompasses events, figures, and cultural values that occurred in a region, while multicultural awareness is the understanding and appreciation of existing cultural diversity. This includes local languages, arts, customs, and beliefs. Local history often tells how people in a region interacted with other groups differing culturally, religiously, or ethnically (11). Local history fosters mutual respect because it helps people understand the foundations of their own culture. Local history is a resource that can be utilized to increase multicultural awareness. Communities can learn about cultural diversity, eliminate prejudice, and build unity by understanding and appreciating local history. Indonesia has the potential to produce a more tolerant, inclusive generation that is proud of its cultural diversity through education, preservation, and promotion of local history.

Local history and national awareness are closely linked in building national identity and strengthening national unity. Local history encompasses events, figures, and cultural values that occur in a region, while national awareness is the understanding and appreciation of identity, responsibility, and commitment as part of a nation (12). Building a national identity is an important process in creating unity, oneness, and pride as a nation. National identity reflects the shared values, culture, history, and ideals held by a country. In Indonesia, which has a very large

diversity of cultures, religions, ethnicities, and languages, building a national identity is both a challenge and an urgent need. Local history plays an important role in building a national identity, especially in Indonesia which has a very large diversity of cultures, ethnicities, religions, and languages. Local history encompasses events, figures, and cultural values that occurred in a region, and this can be a foundation for building national awareness and strengthening national unity.

The Dugderan tradition in Semarang City has great potential as a vehicle for developing multicultural education oriented toward national awareness and based on local historical wisdom. Multicultural education aims to instill the values of tolerance, respect for diversity, and intercultural understanding (13). Dugderan, as a tradition rich in cultural and historical values, can be an effective medium for achieving this goal. Dugderan combines various cultural elements, such as art, music, dance, and culinary arts, reflecting the ethnic and religious diversity of Semarang. Through this festival, the community is encouraged to appreciate differences and celebrate togetherness. Warak Ngendog, the Dugderan mascot, is a symbol of cultural harmony. Its shape, a combination of a dragon, a goat, and a bird, symbolizes diversity and unity. This can serve as a concrete example in multicultural education of how differences can be united in harmony. Dugderan serves as a venue for social interaction between residents from various backgrounds. This helps build understanding and empathy between individuals, which are the core of multicultural education.

National awareness is a sense of love and pride for one's nation and state, as well as a willingness to maintain unity and integrity (14). Dugderan can be a means to strengthen this awareness. By preserving the Dugderan tradition, the people of Semarang demonstrate their commitment to preserving local cultural heritage. This is a tangible manifestation of their love for their homeland and nation. Dugderan teaches the values of togetherness and mutual cooperation, which are essential foundations for building national awareness. This festival exemplifies how communities can unite in diversity. Government support and active community participation in organizing Dugderan reflect the strong collaboration between the government and the people, a crucial principle in national life.

Local historical wisdom is the values and lessons that can be learned from the history and culture of a region (15). Dugderan, which has deep historical roots, can be a valuable source of local wisdom. Dugderan has existed since the 19th century and continues to be preserved to this day. This history teaches about cultural resilience and the importance of maintaining tradition amidst changing times. The Dugderan tradition contains noble values such as purity, prosperity, and togetherness. These values can be integrated into education to shape the character of the younger generation. By studying Dugderan, students can understand the concepts of multiculturalism and national awareness in a context that is real and relevant to their lives.

Material about Dugderan and its values can be integrated into the school curriculum, either through history, culture, or civics lessons. Schools can hold extracurricular activities related to Dugderan, such as making replicas of Warak Ngendog, holding mini carnivals, or studying the arts and culture associated with this festival. Schools can organize visits to Dugderan events as part of extracurricular learning. This will provide students with first-hand experience of cultural diversity and national values.

## CONCLUSION

Based on the results and discussions, the following conclusions can be drawn. First, the Dugderan tradition is a cultural festival rich in historical, artistic, and traditional values. Through this festival, the people of Semarang not only celebrate the arrival of Ramadan but also preserve local culture and strengthen a sense of togetherness. Dugderan is proof that tradition and modernity can go hand in hand, creating a meaningful and memorable celebration. Dugderan has become an inseparable part of Semarang City's cultural identity. This festival attracts not only local residents but also tourists from outside the city who want to witness the uniqueness of this tradition. The Semarang City Government continues to strive to promote and preserve Dugderan as a valuable cultural heritage. Second, the Dugderan tradition has great potential as a vehicle for developing multicultural education oriented towards national awareness and based on local historical wisdom. Through this festival, the community can learn about diversity, tolerance, and togetherness, while strengthening a love for culture and nation. With proper integration into the education system, Dugderan can be an effective tool for shaping a young generation that appreciates differences and has a strong sense of national awareness.

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