



## **Contextualizing Sambisari Temple as a Learning Resource: Integrating Multicultural Values in High School History Education**

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**Abstract:** The cultivation of multicultural values in education has become an urgent necessity amid the increasing diversity of contemporary society. History education holds a strategic role in fostering awareness of cultural, religious, and social diversity within Indonesian society. This article aims to examine how the integration of multicultural values can be implemented through the utilization of local cultural heritage sites, particularly Sambisari Temple, as a contextual learning resource in history education. Employing a literature review approach, this study explores the symbolic, historical, and educational potential of Sambisari Temple as a medium for multicultural value learning. The findings indicate that Sambisari Temple is not only an archaeological legacy of the Ancient Mataram Hindu civilization but also a concrete representation of a social life characterized by tolerance and openness to differences. Through the exploration of the values of diversity embedded in the site, such as architectural diversity, socio-religious functions, and the heterogeneous surrounding community history, teachers can develop contextual learning models that foster empathy, tolerance, and inclusive attitudes among students. Integrating Sambisari Temple into history learning also supports the strengthening of the Pancasila Student Profile, particularly in the aspects of critical reasoning and global diversity awareness. This article recommends the development of culturally site-based instructional materials as well as teacher training programs to maximize the potential of multicultural education in history classrooms through a locality-based approach. These findings are relevant in addressing the challenges of 21st-century education in shaping citizens who possess historical awareness and multicultural character.

**Keywords:** history learning; multicultural values; Sambisari Temple; contextual learning resources

**Abstrak:** Penanaman nilai-nilai multikultural dalam dunia pendidikan menjadi kebutuhan mendesak di tengah dinamika masyarakat yang semakin majemuk. Pembelajaran sejarah memiliki peran strategis dalam menanamkan kesadaran akan keberagaman budaya, agama, dan nilai sosial yang hidup dalam masyarakat Indonesia. Artikel ini bertujuan untuk mengkaji bagaimana integrasi nilai-nilai multikultural dapat dilakukan melalui pemanfaatan situs budaya lokal, khususnya Candi Sambisari, sebagai sumber belajar kontekstual dalam pembelajaran sejarah. Dengan menggunakan pendekatan studi pustaka, artikel ini menelaah potensi simbolik, historis, dan edukatif Candi Sambisari sebagai wahana pembelajaran nilai multikultural. Hasil kajian menunjukkan bahwa Candi Sambisari bukan hanya warisan arkeologis dari peradaban Hindu Mataram Kuno, tetapi juga representasi konkret dari kehidupan sosial yang toleran dan terbuka terhadap perbedaan. Melalui eksplorasi nilai-nilai keberbhinnekaan yang terkandung dalam situs tersebut, seperti keberagaman arsitektur, fungsi sosial-keagamaan, serta keberadaan masyarakat sekitar yang heterogen, guru sejarah dapat mengembangkan model pembelajaran kontekstual yang menumbuhkan empati, toleransi, dan sikap inklusif di kalangan peserta didik. Integrasi Candi Sambisari ke dalam pembelajaran sejarah juga mendukung penguatan Profil

Pelajar Pancasila, khususnya dalam aspek bernalar kritis dan berkebinekaan global. Artikel ini merekomendasikan pengembangan perangkat ajar berbasis situs budaya serta pelatihan guru untuk memaksimalkan potensi pendidikan multikultural di kelas sejarah melalui pendekatan lokalitas. Temuan ini relevan untuk menjawab tantangan pendidikan abad ke-21 dalam membentuk warga negara yang berwawasan sejarah dan berkarakter multikultural.

**Kata Kunci:** Candi Sambisari; nilai-nilai multikultural; pembelajaran sejarah; sumber belajar kontekstual



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## Introduction

Indonesia is known as a nation built upon a rich diversity of cultures, ethnicities, religions, and languages. This diversity constitutes an important social capital, yet it also holds the potential for conflict if it is not managed through adequate collective awareness. In this context, education plays a strategic role in instilling multicultural values among the younger generation so that they are able to live together fairly and harmoniously within a pluralistic society (Tilaar, 2004). Education does not merely function as a medium for the transmission of knowledge, but also as a space for shaping students' attitudes, values, and social orientations. Among the various subjects taught in schools, history holds a particularly strategic position in the internalization of multicultural values. History learning enables students to understand the social, cultural, and political dynamics that have shaped national identity through experiences from the past. When taught reflectively, history can help students realize that Indonesia's national identity emerged from processes of interaction, negotiation, and dialogue among diverse cultural groups. (Wineburg, 2001). Such awareness is important to prevent the emergence of exclusive and ahistorical attitudes in interpreting diversity.

However, the reality of history learning in senior high schools reveals several fundamental problems. A number of studies indicate that history instruction is still dominated by a textual approach and rote memorization, with limited connection between the material and local contexts that are close to students' everyday lives. This condition has contributed to low interest in learning history and the weak internalization of multicultural values that should ideally be embedded within it (Anwar, 2024). History learning that is presented without concrete social and cultural contexts tends to fail in fostering a deep multicultural awareness.

Research conducted by (Anwar, 2024) shows that history learning designed in a reflective manner can equip students with an understanding of the diversity of historical experiences in past societies. Through the study of social and cultural differences in local history, students can develop multicultural awareness as an integral part of national identity rather than merely as an abstract discourse. These findings affirm that local history holds significant potential as an entry point for fostering empathy, tolerance, and respect for diversity.

The contextual aspect of history learning has also been shown to influence students' learning motivation. Research conducted by Orza presents statistical data indicating that the use of a contextual approach in history instruction significantly increases students' learning motivation. In the study, the level of motivation rose from 37.50% in the initial cycle to 58.33% in the following cycle after the learning process was linked to real local historical contexts (Orza, 2019). These findings strengthen the argument that history learning closely connected to students' realities can simultaneously enhance both cognitive and affective engagement.

One pedagogical strategy relevant to addressing these issues is the integration of local cultural heritage sites into history learning. Historical sites function not only as tourist

attractions or remnants of the past, but also as authentic learning resources that allow students to interact directly with traces of history. Sambisari Temple is one of the cultural heritage sites that holds significant historical and cultural value. The temple represents the Hindu–Shaivite civilization of the ninth century while also recording processes of cultural acculturation and the continuity of traditions amid changes in the religious landscape of Javanese society. Utilizing Sambisari Temple as a contextual learning resource opens opportunities for students to understand history as a living and meaningful social experience.

The use of cultural heritage site–based learning resources, including Sambisari Temple, contributes to the enhancement of historical awareness and students’ understanding of the values of diversity (Syaputra et al., 2020). Through direct interaction with historical sites, students not only acquire factual knowledge but also develop reflective attitudes toward cultural diversity and the collective identity of the nation. This aligns with the perspective of multicultural education, which emphasizes the importance of contextual and meaningful learning experiences (McGee & Banks, 2010).

The urgency of this study lies in the need to develop history learning that integrates cognitive, affective, and psychomotor dimensions in a balanced manner through a contextual approach based on local cultural heritage. The focus on Sambisari Temple is intended to address the question of how multicultural values such as tolerance, mutual cooperation, inclusivity, and intercultural dialogue can be systematically integrated into history learning in schools. This study aims to examine the potential of Sambisari Temple as a contextual learning resource in fostering students’ multicultural awareness while simultaneously strengthening the role of history education in responding to the social challenges of contemporary plural societies.

## **Research Method**

This study employs a library research method aimed at obtaining a comprehensive understanding of the integration of multicultural values in history learning based on local cultural heritage sites, particularly Sambisari Temple. Library research was chosen because it enables researchers to systematically examine various relevant scholarly sources, including books, journal articles, and official documents, thereby providing a comprehensive conceptual overview (Zed, 2008). This approach focuses on literature analysis to identify, describe, and synthesize existing ideas related to multicultural education and the utilization of historical sites in the learning process.

The data in this study were obtained from various credible literature sources, particularly nationally and internationally accredited journal articles published within the last five years, as well as classical reference books that remain relevant. The analysis technique was carried out by classifying the literature based on several themes: (1) multicultural education in the Indonesian context, (2) the utilization of cultural heritage sites as learning resources in history education, and (3) local wisdom values embedded in Sambisari Temple. The collected literature was then critically analyzed to identify the relationship between multicultural education theory and the practice of history learning based on local cultural heritage sites.

The selection of Sambisari Temple as the focus of this study is based on its potential as a cultural heritage site that reflects tolerance, inclusivity, and cultural acculturation in the past. By examining relevant literature, this research is expected to provide a conceptual foundation for history teachers in integrating multicultural values into classroom learning practices. Furthermore, the results of this literature review may serve as a reference for future researchers to develop more in-depth field studies.

## Research Findings

### Educational Potential of Sambisari Temple

Sambisari Temple is an important archaeological relic from the Ancient Mataram period that was rediscovered in 1966 in Sleman, Yogyakarta, after being buried for centuries under volcanic material resulting from the activity of Mount Merapi (Masyhudi, 2005). The circumstances of its discovery make Sambisari an example of a relatively intact archaeological context in situ, giving it significant value as a source of material history (Ardinata et al., 2024). In Indonesian archaeological studies, Hindu–Buddhist remains in Central Java, including Sambisari, are understood as representations of the religious systems and cosmology of ninth-century Javanese agrarian societies that had already developed considerable complexity (Soekmono, 2002). Therefore, Sambisari Temple does not merely represent a religious ritual function but also records the social, political, and cultural systems of the Ancient Mataram society.



**Figure 1.** Main Structure of Sambisari Temple



**Figure 2.** The Lingga–Yoni Inside the Main Chamber of Sambisari Temple

Source: Research Data, 2025

In the context of history education, the use of sites such as Sambisari Temple has strong relevance to an authentic source–based learning approach. Wineburg (2001) emphasizes that effective history learning requires students to interact directly with historical evidence so that they can understand history as the result of human interpretation rather than merely a finished narrative. In line with this, (Seixas, 2012) explains that historical consciousness develops when individuals are able to connect experiences from the past with their orientations toward the present and the future. Through the study of the architecture, spatial layout, and symbolism of Sambisari Temple, students are trained to interpret traces of the past reflectively, enabling history to be understood as a dynamic construction of human civilization.

In addition to its cognitive dimension, learning based on cultural heritage sites such as Sambisari Temple also has significant affective impacts. Direct interaction with historical remains can foster students' emotional connection to the past and to their cultural environment. (Marcus, 2017) demonstrates that history learning through museums and historical sites can increase students' learning motivation as well as their historical empathy. Therefore, Sambisari Temple can be positioned as an open laboratory that allows students to experience history in a contextual rather than abstract manner. This sense of proximity also contributes to strengthening local identity, which forms an integral part of a broader national identity (Wiratama et al., 2025).

From the perspective of multicultural education, Sambisari Temple reflects a process of cultural acculturation between Hindu–Shaivite teachings and local Javanese traditions. This phenomenon of acculturation is important to examine critically so that students understand that cultural plurality has been an integral part of the history of Nusantara societies since the past. Multicultural education, as proposed by (Banks, 2016) should help students understand how cultural identities are formed through complex historical interactions. In line with this view, (Halpern & Aydin, 2020) emphasize that multiculturalism is not merely about recognizing differences, but also about understanding the social and historical processes that give rise to them. By studying Sambisari Temple, students can recognize that diversity is not a modern phenomenon, but rather a historical foundation of the Indonesian nation.

Sambisari Temple also holds strong potential as a medium for character education. The process of temple construction in the past, as well as its excavation and preservation in the present, reflects values such as cooperation, collective responsibility, and respect for ancestral heritage. These values are aligned with the concept of heritage education, which emphasizes the importance of preserving cultural heritage as part of forming responsible citizens (Graham et al., 2016). In history learning, students can be involved in reflective projects or community-based activities to foster social awareness and a sense of responsibility for preserving cultural heritage (Aldi Cahya & Tarunasena, 2024).

In the context of 21st-century education, the educational potential of Sambisari Temple can be further expanded through the use of digital technology. Three-dimensional modeling, virtual tours, and digital reconstructions enable site-based learning experiences to remain accessible even when students are not physically present at the temple location. Digital heritage can broaden access to cultural heritage while simultaneously encouraging students' visual and interactive engagement, although it still requires pedagogical guidance to prevent the learning experience from becoming superficial (Champion, 2016). This approach is consistent with the recommendations of (Tasliyah et al., 2024) regarding the use of digital technology to support inclusive and sustainable learning. Therefore, Sambisari Temple can be positioned as a dynamic learning resource capable of bridging local historical heritage with the demands of global learning in the contemporary era.

Overall, the educational potential of Sambisari Temple lies in its ability to integrate cognitive, affective, and social dimensions within history learning. Based on authentic sources, historical thinking frameworks, and multicultural perspectives, learning through Sambisari Temple not only enriches students' understanding of the past but also equips them with critical awareness of diversity and a sense of responsibility as members of a pluralistic society.

### **Relevance of Sambisari Temple and Modern Social Challenges**

The rapid development of globalization has transformed the social, cultural, and identity landscape of modern societies. In this context, history education is no longer sufficient if it is presented merely as chronological and factual narratives. Various contemporary social



challenges such as socio-economic inequality, identity fragmentation, social polarization, and the rise of intolerance based on religion and ethnicity demand educational approaches that are more reflective and inclusive (Tilaar, 2004). History education, particularly when grounded in a multicultural perspective, holds a strategic position in helping students understand the complexity of plural societies while also developing critical attitudes toward differences.

Multicultural education itself is not free from structural challenges, such as unequal access to education, biases in dominant narratives, the homogenization of culture through global media, and the marginalization of certain identities. However, these challenges simultaneously create opportunities for education to become a space for constructive intercultural dialogue (Banks, 2016). Multicultural education that is consciously and contextually designed can function as an instrument for mitigating social conflict by instilling cross-cultural understanding from an early stage (Azimi, 2024). Within this framework, history learning that incorporates cultural heritage sites such as Sambisari Temple holds high relevance, as it presents concrete examples of cultural plurality rooted in the historical experiences of Nusantara societies.

History learning contributes significantly to equipping students with an understanding of the diversity of past societies. Through the study of the historical experiences of various groups, students are not only exposed to a single dominant narrative but also come to understand that history is shaped by interactions among diverse communities (Anwar, 2024). This approach is important because multicultural awareness does not emerge instantly; rather, it develops through continuous processes of historical reflection. In metropolitan areas such as Jakarta which function as melting pots of various ethnicities, religions, and cultural backgrounds, inclusive history learning serves as an empathetic foundation for students in confronting everyday social realities.

Furthermore, modern social challenges such as media polarization, social segregation, and the strengthening of individualism require history education to move beyond merely reproducing dominant narratives. (Seixas & Morton, 2013) emphasize that history learning should encourage students to understand the diversity of perspectives and critically examine claims of a single, absolute truth. By beginning with local contexts such as identity, cultural expressions, and the values reflected in Sambisari Temple, students are invited to view history as a shared heritage rather than as a tool for legitimizing particular groups. Inclusive local historiography has proven effective in challenging homogenizing narratives and helping students formulate critical positions toward contemporary issues, including the relationship between religion and the state, ethnic sentiments, and the politicization of identity.

The integration of multicultural education into history learning also plays an important role in strengthening national identity amid the currents of globalization. Globalization not only facilitates cultural exchange but also has the potential to generate cultural consumerism and identity distortion through the dominance of uniform global values (Setiyonugroho et al., 2022). In this context, local history functions as an anchor of identity that enables students to understand their position within the local–global relationship. By examining Sambisari Temple as a local symbol that carries universal values, students are encouraged to recognize that local knowledge is not a static or outdated legacy, but rather a valuable source of meaning that remains relevant for addressing global challenges.

Multicultural education, when systematically integrated into history learning, can become a strategic solution for addressing intolerance and social conflict. Research conducted by (Rizqiyah et al., 2025) emphasizes that multicultural education, when structured both within the formal curriculum and classroom practices, is capable of shaping citizens who are sensitive to social justice and diversity. In the context of history learning at the senior high school (SMA)

level, this integration becomes particularly relevant, especially in Phase E of the Merdeka Curriculum, which includes material on the development of Hindu–Buddhist kingdoms in Indonesia. At this stage, students are expected not only to understand historical chronology but also to analyze the social, cultural, and political dynamics that shaped the nation’s identity. Inclusive local historical narratives, such as the plurality of values reflected in Sambisari Temple, provide a reflective space for students to examine how intercultural interactions in the past contributed to the formation of Indonesia’s collective identity. Site-based history learning encourages students to recognize that national identity emerged from processes of historical dialogue and negotiation rather than from a single uniform tradition. In practice, the material on the development of Hindu–Buddhist civilizations in Indonesia can be enriched through the symbolic and social study of Sambisari Temple, including analysis of the *lingga–yoni* structure, architectural acculturation, and the social context of the surrounding community. This approach aligns with the Learning Outcomes that emphasize the development of historical, reflective, and critical thinking skills. Consequently, history learning does not merely involve the transfer of factual knowledge but also functions as a space for cultivating social awareness, encouraging students to become tolerant, inclusive, and responsible individuals within a pluralistic society.

### **History Learning Model Based on Sambisari Temple**

The implementation of history learning based on Sambisari Temple requires a pedagogical model capable of bridging knowledge of the past with the realities of students’ contemporary lives. In this context, history learning cannot rely solely on the transmission of information; rather, it must be designed as a process of meaning construction that involves experience, reflection, and critical dialogue. A contextual approach becomes crucial because it enables students to understand history as part of real social life rather than as an abstract narrative detached from their own experiences (Barton & Levstik, 2004).

One relevant model is Contextual Teaching and Learning (CTL). CTL emphasizes the connection between learning materials and the real-life context of students, so that the knowledge acquired becomes more meaningful and sustainable (Johnson, 2002). In history learning based on Sambisari Temple, CTL can be implemented by inviting students to analyze the temple’s architectural structure, reliefs, spatial orientation, and geographical context in order to understand the religious, social, and cosmological systems of the Ancient Mataram society. Through this process, students not only learn “what” happened in the past, but also “why” and “how” past societies constructed their civilizations. Research conducted by (Sepriady, 2018) shows that the implementation of CTL in history learning significantly improves students’ critical thinking skills and active participation, as they are directly involved in the process of discovering historical meaning.

From the perspective of history education, CTL is also relevant for developing historical thinking. (Seixas & Morton, 2013) emphasize that a deep understanding of history emerges when students are able to connect historical evidence with its social context. By using Sambisari Temple as a learning context, students can be trained to analyze primary sources, formulate historical questions, and construct evidence-based interpretations. This process strengthens the awareness that history is interpretative and open to multiple perspectives, thereby supporting the development of multicultural awareness.

In addition to CTL, Project-Based Learning (PjBL) is a highly relevant learning model for optimizing the educational potential of Sambisari Temple. PjBL positions students as active learners who engage in meaningful projects over a certain period of time and produce tangible outputs as learning outcomes (Rahmatillah et al., 2025). In the context of history learning, PjBL enables students to integrate historical knowledge, research skills, and collaborative abilities.

For example, students may work in groups to investigate the symbolic functions of temple statues, the construction techniques of the temple, or the relationship between Sambisari Temple and the social life of ancient Javanese communities. They can then present their findings in the form of written reports, documentary videos, or mini historical exhibitions.

The implementation of site-based Project-Based Learning (PjBL) also has important implications for strengthening multicultural values. Through heterogeneous group collaboration and dialogue grounded in historical data, students are trained to appreciate differing viewpoints and to build shared understanding. This aligns with the perspective of (McGee & Banks, 2010), who emphasize that multicultural learning should encourage collaboration and critical reflection on diversity. Furthermore, PjBL based on Sambisari Temple can function as a platform for integrating history learning with character education, as students not only study the past but also reflect on its relevance to contemporary social issues such as tolerance, cultural preservation, and collective responsibility.

Pedagogically, the combination of Contextual Teaching and Learning (CTL) and Project-Based Learning (PjBL) makes history learning based on Sambisari Temple more comprehensive. CTL plays a role in building contextual understanding and meaningful connections, while PjBL strengthens 21st-century skills such as critical thinking, creativity, communication, and collaboration (Bell, 2010). Thus, this learning model not only improves students' cognitive achievements but also equips them with social and multicultural awareness that is relevant to the challenges of modern society. Within this framework, Sambisari Temple is positioned not merely as an object of historical study, but as a strategic pedagogical medium that integrates knowledge, values, and skills in a holistic manner.

Operationally, the CTL syntax in history learning based on Sambisari Temple can be designed through several stages. The first stage is constructivism, where the teacher begins the lesson with guiding questions about diversity and tolerance in everyday life, and then connects these ideas with the context of local history. The second stage is inquiry, in which students observe documentation or visual materials of the *lingga-yoni* structure, the *naga* ornament on the *jaladwara*, and the spatial layout of the temple to identify their symbolic and social meanings. The third stage involves questioning and learning community, where students engage in group discussions to analyze how the interaction between Hindu culture and local Javanese traditions is reflected in the architecture of Sambisari Temple. The next stage is reflection and authentic assessment, in which students write reflective responses or present their analyses regarding the relevance of values such as tolerance and inclusivity for contemporary society.

Meanwhile, the PjBL syntax begins with the formulation of a driving question, for example: "How does Sambisari Temple represent multicultural values in Indonesian history?" Students then design a group-based project, such as producing a documentary video, writing an analytical essay, or creating a classroom exhibition on topics such as the symbolism of the *lingga-yoni*, the process of cultural acculturation, or the preservation of the site by local communities. The next stages include developing a project timeline, collecting and analyzing data, teacher monitoring throughout the process, and presenting the final product. The process concludes with evaluation and reflection, allowing students to assess the contributions of each group member and connect the project outcomes with contemporary social issues such as tolerance and social cohesion.

This sequence of syntax demonstrates that the integration of CTL and PjBL in history learning does not stop at the symbolic exploration of Sambisari Temple, but is translated into systematic and measurable learning steps. Through this approach, history learning at the senior high school level particularly in the topic of the development of Hindu-Buddhist kingdoms can



develop students' historical understanding while simultaneously fostering their multicultural awareness in a more concrete and applicable manner.

## **Integration of Multicultural Values Based on Sambisari Temple**

### **a. Religious Tolerance**

Sambisari Temple provides an important historical example of how ancient Javanese society managed religious diversity over an extended period. As a Hindu–Shaivite temple built in the ninth century CE, Sambisari represents the Hindu religious system that once formed a dominant part of the social and cosmological structure of the Ancient Mataram society (Soekmono, 2002). However, what is historically significant is not only the temple's original function, but also its continuity as a cultural heritage site that has been preserved despite significant changes in the religious landscape of Javanese society, particularly through the process of Islamization beginning in the fourteenth century.

The continued existence of Sambisari Temple, which did not experience destruction or symbolic erasure after the shift in dominant religious practices, indicates a pattern of respect toward the spiritual heritage of the past. In studies of Javanese cultural history, this attitude is often understood as a form of cultural tolerance rooted in Javanese cosmological perspectives that tend to be accommodative of differences (Geertz, 1996). Therefore, the tolerance reflected in the preservation of Sambisari Temple should not be interpreted simplistically as “harmony without conflict,” but rather as the result of historical negotiations between older and newer belief systems within Javanese society.

In the context of history learning at the senior high school level, this historical fact holds significant pedagogical value. Multicultural history education does not merely aim to instill tolerant attitudes in a normative sense, but also helps students understand that tolerance is a socio-historical construct that emerges from the long experiences of societies in managing differences (McGee & Banks, 2010). By examining Sambisari Temple, students are encouraged to recognize that mutual respect among religions is not a modern imported concept, but rather has deep roots in the history of the Indonesian archipelago. This approach is important to prevent ahistorical interpretations that view tolerance as an abstract value detached from historical context.

Furthermore, (McGee & Banks, 2010) emphasize that effective multicultural education must stress the recognition and respect of different religious identities as a prerequisite for the formation of a democratic society. In this regard, Sambisari Temple can function as a concrete case study for discussing how past societies were able to preserve certain religious heritages without turning them into sources of open conflict. Teachers can facilitate critical classroom discussions on how religious tolerance in the past was formed, negotiated, and transmitted across generations, while also comparing it with the challenges of intolerance faced by contemporary Indonesian society.

This historical approach is also aligned with the concept of historical empathy, which refers to the ability to understand the perspectives and values of past societies without judging them solely by present-day standards (Wineburg, 2001). By developing historical empathy, students are not merely encouraged to “admire” tolerance in the past, but also to reflect on its complexity. Such reflection is important so that tolerance is not understood as a passive attitude, but rather as a social practice that requires awareness, dialogue, and sustained commitment.

Thus, Sambisari Temple functions not only as an archaeological artifact but also as a pedagogical medium for integrating the value of religious tolerance in a contextual and historical manner. Through history learning based on critical analysis of this site, students can understand that religious diversity has long been part of the collective experience of the

Indonesian nation. This understanding is expected to foster tolerant attitudes grounded in historical awareness, rather than merely in moral exhortations or normative doctrines.

### **b. Mutual Cooperation and Solidarity**

The values of mutual cooperation (*gotong royong*) and social solidarity are clearly reflected in the history of the rediscovery and preservation of Sambisari Temple. The temple was buried under volcanic material from the activity of Mount Merapi since approximately the eleventh century and was only rediscovered in 1966 (Ryanto, 2016). The process of excavating and reconstructing Sambisari Temple was not solely a technical undertaking by archaeologists, but also involved the active participation of local communities who contributed to the initial excavation, the safeguarding of the site, and the maintenance of the temple environment. In public archaeology studies, community involvement in site preservation is understood as a form of community-based heritage management, reflecting a collective responsibility for cultural heritage (Merriman, 2004).

From a historical–sociological perspective, *gotong royong* (mutual cooperation) is a cultural value that has long been rooted in Indonesian society and functions as a social mechanism for maintaining community cohesion. (Koentjaraningrat, 2009) emphasizes that *gotong royong* is not merely collective labor, but a value system that prioritizes solidarity, equality, and collective interests over individual interests. In the context of Sambisari Temple, the collaborative work between the state, experts, and local communities demonstrates that the preservation of cultural heritage cannot be separated from participatory and inclusive social relations.

In history learning, the narrative of the excavation and preservation of Sambisari Temple carries strong pedagogical value for instilling the understanding that history is not only inherited but also socially maintained. Multicultural history education, according to (Tilaar, 2004) needs to emphasize practices of cooperation across different groups as a foundation for democratic social life. By studying Sambisari Temple, students can understand that social solidarity is not an abstract concept, but a concrete practice that enables cultural heritage across generations to be preserved. This understanding is important for fostering the awareness that cultural diversity can only be sustained through collective contributions.

Furthermore, the integration of the value of *gotong royong* in history learning is also relevant to the development of civic competence. (McGee & Banks, 2010) emphasize that multicultural education should encourage students to actively participate in the social and cultural life of their communities. In this context, Sambisari Temple can serve as a case study demonstrating how collective work across different social and cultural backgrounds plays an important role in preserving a shared identity. Teachers can connect this historical narrative with project-based learning activities, such as simulations of heritage preservation or collaborative group tasks with different roles, so that the value of solidarity is not confined to the cognitive level but becomes internalized through meaningful learning experiences.

This approach is also aligned with the concept of heritage education, which positions students as members of a community that inherits and preserves cultural heritage. (Graham et al., 2016) similarly emphasize that cultural heritage gains social meaning when it is understood as both the result of collective efforts and a shared responsibility. Therefore, history learning based on Sambisari Temple not only strengthens students' understanding of the past but also fosters attitudes of care, social responsibility, and multicultural awareness that are relevant to life in today's pluralistic society.

Based on the explanation above, it can be concluded that the values of *gotong royong* (mutual cooperation) and social solidarity reflected in the history of Sambisari Temple can be

contextually integrated into history learning as part of multicultural education. Through critical and reflective historical analysis, students are encouraged to understand that the sustainability of cultural heritage and diversity itself depends on the collective commitment of all elements of society. This understanding is expected to shape a generation that not only respects differences but is also willing to work together to preserve and maintain them.

### **c. Cultural Inclusivity**

Sambisari Temple reflects the ability of Javanese culture to accommodate and adapt external influences without losing its local identity. Although it was built within the Hindu–Shaivite tradition, the architectural elements, spatial layout, and symbolism of the temple demonstrate a strong process of localization, in which Hindu teachings and aesthetics interacted with Javanese cosmology and local wisdom. In studies of Javanese archaeology and cultural history, this process is understood as a form of cultural adaptation or local genius, referring to the capacity of local communities to selectively and creatively absorb external influences (Miksic, 2017). In other words, cultural inclusivity reflected in Sambisari Temple does not imply cultural uniformity, but rather an integration that preserves distinctive local characteristics.

It is important to emphasize that cultural inclusivity does not imply the absence of boundaries or conflicts. Ricklefs, in his work, demonstrates that Javanese cultural history was shaped through continuous negotiations between local traditions and external influences, including those from India, Islam, and later the West (Ricklefs, 2006). In this context, Sambisari Temple can be understood as a product of dynamic cultural dialogue rather than the result of passive adoption. This understanding is crucial in history learning so that students do not view the past in an ahistorical or romanticized manner, but rather as a complex and contextual social process.

In history education, the value of cultural inclusivity reflected in Sambisari Temple holds significant pedagogical importance. Multicultural education requires students to recognize the interconnection between local identity and global influences as a foundation for developing an open and reflective identity. emphasize that multicultural education should help students understand how identities are shaped through intercultural interactions and power relations, rather than merely through symbolic recognition of differences. By using Sambisari Temple as a case study, students can be encouraged to analyze how past societies constructed inclusive cultural identities without losing their local foundations (Setiyonugroho et al., 2022).

Furthermore, this approach is consistent with the perspective of historical empathy in history education, which encourages students to understand the choices and values of past societies within the context of their own time (Wineburg, 2001). Through the analysis of cultural inclusivity reflected in Sambisari Temple, students not only learn that cultural blending is an inevitable aspect of history, but also understand the social mechanisms that allowed such interactions to occur in relatively harmonious ways. This understanding is important in preparing students to face the realities of contemporary globalization, which are characterized by cultural mobility, cross-border flows of information, and the potential for identity-based tensions.

In the practice of history learning at the senior high school level, teachers can facilitate critical discussions regarding the processes of cultural interaction reflected in the structure and historical context of Sambisari Temple. This discussion is not intended to simplistically conclude that the Ancient Mataram society was already “modern” or fully inclusive, but rather to analyze historical evidence that indicates processes of adaptation and localization of Hindu–Shaivite culture within the framework of Javanese traditions. For instance, the architectural

form and spatial layout of the temple demonstrate the integration of Hindu cosmological elements with local construction patterns of ninth-century Central Java, which in archaeological studies is understood as a process of cultural acculturation rather than passive adoption.

Based on this evidence, teachers can guide discussions toward reflective questions such as: how did the process of cultural adaptation during the Ancient Mataram period occur within its social and political context, and how do similar processes take place in today's multicultural societies? This approach avoids anachronism because students are not asked to judge the past using contemporary moral standards, but rather are encouraged to understand its historical dynamics contextually. Such a perspective aligns with the principles of multicultural education, which emphasize critical analysis of cultural relations and identity formation (Banks, 2016).

The expected outcome of such discussions is not the direct application of values, but rather the internalization of historical understanding that encourages students to reflect on their attitudes toward differences. Through processes of analysis and reflection, students can actualize values of openness and respect for diversity in their everyday social interactions within the school environment and the wider community. Within this framework, Sambisari Temple functions as a historical learning resource that facilitates the development of multicultural awareness through reflective engagement, rather than as a normative symbol imposed to represent modern values.

This reflective approach shows that inclusivity is not positioned as a direct claim inherent in the temple's structure, but rather as the result of a historical interpretation of the processes of cultural acculturation and continuity surrounding it. Through history learning based on contextual analysis of this site, students learn to understand that cultural identity is formed through long-term processes of interaction and negotiation. Such awareness becomes an important foundation for developing open-minded and responsible attitudes within contemporary pluralistic societies.

#### **d. Intercultural Dialogue and Collective Identity**

Sambisari Temple preserves important traces of intercultural dialogue that unfolded throughout the long history of societies in the Indonesian archipelago. The existence of this Hindu–Shaivite temple cannot be separated from the context of encounters among various cultural and religious traditions, ranging from Hindu–Buddhist influences originating from India, their interaction with local Javanese traditions, to the transformation of the cultural landscape through the process of Islamization in later periods. In Southeast Asian historical studies, such cross-cultural encounters are understood as dynamic processes of interaction in which cultural elements do not merely coexist, but negotiate with one another and form new configurations of identity (Ricklefs, 2006).

The cultural identity that emerged from this process of intercultural dialogue is plural yet not fragmented. Javanese history shows that collective identity was constructed through mechanisms of cultural synthesis rather than through the elimination of differing elements. The historical experience of Javanese society demonstrates a tendency to blend various religious and cultural influences within a relatively inclusive local cosmological framework (Ricklefs, 2006). In this context, Sambisari Temple can be understood as a material representation of such cultural dialogue, as it reflects the encounter between Hindu–Shaivite values and local traditions, which continued to be respected even after changes in the dominant religious landscape of the surrounding society.

In history learning at the senior high school level, interpreting Sambisari Temple as a product of cultural interaction has pedagogical implications in three main domains: teaching methods, student character formation, and the strengthening of curriculum content. In terms of

teaching methods, teachers can apply source analysis and evidence-based discussions to examine how Sambisari Temple as a ninth-century Hindu–Shaivite temple stood within the cultural landscape of Ancient Mataram, which was also influenced by Buddhist traditions. In historical studies of Central Java during this period, the presence of Hindu and Buddhist temple complexes located close to one another, such as Prambanan and Sewu, is often interpreted as an indicator of religious coexistence within the political context of different ruling dynasties (Miksic, 2017). However, this condition should not automatically be labeled as syncretism without clear textual or iconographic evidence; rather, it is more accurately understood as a form of interaction and coexistence within the socio-political system of Ancient Mataram.

In this context, the term “intercultural dialogue” is not intended to imply a literal conversation, nor to claim that Sambisari Temple directly represents a theological synthesis between Hinduism and Buddhism. Rather, the term refers to the historical processes of cultural interaction and negotiation reflected in the temple’s architectural patterns, spatial organization, and the continuity of the site amid changes in the religious landscape of Java in later periods. This approach avoids anachronism because it does not project modern values onto the past, but instead situates Sambisari Temple within the socio-political context of its own historical period.

The pedagogical implications for character formation emerge when students are guided to understand that cultural identity is not formed in a singular or static manner, but rather through complex historical processes of interaction (McGee & Banks, 2010). Through this kind of contextual analysis, students are trained to develop historical empathy and critical thinking toward exclusive narratives of identity. In this approach, the value of openness is not taught as a normative slogan, but instead emerges from students’ own understanding of the historical dynamics they examine.

In the curricular domain, the study of Sambisari Temple can be integrated into the topic of the development of Hindu–Buddhist kingdoms in Indonesia (Phase E of the Merdeka Curriculum), particularly in discussions of the social and cultural dynamics of the Ancient Mataram Kingdom. The focus is not on glorifying the past, but on analyzing how religious and cultural systems could coexist within certain political configurations.

The expected learning outcome is the internalization of the awareness that diversity is part of the historical process through which the Indonesian nation was formed, which can then be actualized through open and responsible attitudes within school environments and the wider community. Through this approach, Sambisari Temple is understood as a historical learning resource that enables students to critically and contextually interpret traces of cultural interaction. As a result, the learning process produces not only factual knowledge about the Ancient Mataram period, but also the development of reflective awareness regarding the complexity of Indonesia’s cultural identity.

The intercultural dialogue reflected in the history of Sambisari Temple is also relevant for fostering civic awareness in a pluralistic society. Multicultural education should be directed toward forming global citizens who are critical, reflective, and inclusive, while still remaining grounded in their local context (Tilaar, 2004). Through the study of cultural heritage sites such as Sambisari, students can be encouraged to discuss how intercultural dialogue in the past contributed to the formation of social cohesion, while also comparing it with contemporary challenges such as identity polarization and the strengthening of exclusivist politics.

This approach is consistent with the concept of historical dialogue in history education, which emphasizes the importance of understanding the past as a space for conversation among various voices and perspectives (Seixas & Morton, 2013). By examining Sambisari Temple, students do not merely learn about the final outcomes of historical processes, but also about the dynamics of interactions that shaped them. Teachers can facilitate critical discussions on how

such intercultural dialogue occurred, who the actors involved were, and what values enabled the continuity of coexistence amid differences.

History learning based on intercultural dialogue also contributes to the formation of a reflective collective identity. National identity is understood not as a fixed inheritance, but as a social construction that is continuously renewed through interaction and dialogue. This perspective is important for equipping students to face the realities of modern societies that are increasingly diverse and interconnected. By using Sambisari Temple as a concrete example, students can understand that intercultural dialogue has been a historical foundation in building cohesive, peaceful, and just societies, while also serving as an important social capital for responding to contemporary global challenges.

## Conclusion

This study shows that Sambisari Temple has strong potential as a contextual learning resource in history education at the senior high school level, particularly in the topic of the development of Hindu–Buddhist kingdoms. As a relatively well-preserved archaeological relic of the Ancient Mataram Kingdom, the site provides historical evidence that enables students to develop historical thinking skills, historical empathy, and an understanding of processes of cultural acculturation. Through the analysis of its architecture, the symbolism of the lingga–yoni, and its socio-historical context, Sambisari Temple can be utilized to build awareness that cultural identity is formed through long processes of interaction and negotiation.

The integration of multicultural values such as religious tolerance, gotong royong (mutual cooperation), cultural inclusivity, and intercultural dialogue within history learning based on Sambisari Temple is not carried out normatively, but through critical and contextual historical interpretation. These values are understood as the result of the social experiences of past societies in managing differences, rather than as projections of modern values onto history. Through this approach, students are guided to internalize multicultural awareness grounded in reflective historical understanding.

From a pedagogical perspective, the implementation of Contextual Teaching and Learning (CTL) and Project-Based Learning (PjBL) enables the integration of cognitive, affective, and social dimensions in a more systematic manner. History learning thus functions not only as the transfer of factual knowledge but also as a space for character formation and the development of civic awareness in a pluralistic society. By utilizing Sambisari Temple as a pedagogical medium, history education can contribute to shaping students who are critical, inclusive, and responsible in responding to contemporary social challenges.

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