

ECOTEOLGY OF THE TRADITIONAL LOCAL WISDOM OF LARUNG SESAJI TELAGA NGEBEL

(Analysis of Educational Values in the Larung Sesaji Tradition of Telaga Ngebel in the Wilis Mountains, Ngebel District, Ponorogo Regency)

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Abstract: *Larung Sesaji at Telaga Ngebel, Ponorogo Regency is a unique local wisdom tradition. Telaga Ngebel is located at the foot of Mount Wilis. Telaga Ngebel is at an altitude of 737.23 meters above sea level. The surrounding community holds fast to the teachings of their ancestors. The ancestral teachings that are still preserved and exist are Purwa Ayu Mardi Utomo (PAMU). This belief system is a figure in the preservation of the Larung Sesaji tradition of Telaga Ngebel. The purpose of this research is to reveal the ecotheology of the local wisdom tradition of Larung Sesaji Telaga Ngebel which contains educational values, namely a non-formal educational process with an Eco theological approach that places the heterarchical order of the cosmos between humans, God, and nature. The research method uses a qualitative approach of the field study type. Data collection is carried out through observation, documentation, and interviews with community leaders (spiritual schools). Meanwhile, data analysis is carried out in four stages, namely data collection, data display, data reduction, and conclusion and verification. The results of the Larung Sesaji research contain Eco theological educational values of respect for nature, recognition of human limitations, and building harmony between living things and the environment (global tolerance). This local wisdom has proven to be a medium for ecological and spiritual education that grows from the cultural roots of the local community.*

Key words: *Eco theology, Local Wisdom, Larung Sesaji, Educational Values.*

INTRODUCTION

Indonesia is a country rich in traditions and local wisdom. These traditions and local wisdom are not merely cultural symbols but also contain special values that can serve as educational resources for local and global communities. One such tradition is the Larung Sesaji (offering ceremony) at Lake Ngebel. Larung Sesaji is routinely held every month of the Javanese calendar in Ngebel District, Ponorogo Regency. This tradition is not merely a traditional and religious ritual procession, but also rich in symbolic meaning,



demonstrating the relationship between humans, nature, and God. This relationship symbolizes harmony, demonstrating that nature holds equal status with humans in the eyes of God. Anyone who is grateful for God's blessings will maintain the harmony of the universe, thus creating sustainable life. Therefore, the tradition of local wisdom in Indonesia serves as an educational tool for local and global communities to build harmony between humans, nature, and God.

Research conducted by Maulana Mitanto ¹ informs that the local wisdom of Larung Sesaji at Lake Ngebel contains several aspects, namely educational aspects, religious aspects, livelihood aspects, and cultural aspects. These aspects are what make the Larung Sesaji culture at Lake Ngebel firmly exist and develop until now. In the educational aspect, this research provides information, that the simplicity of the community's way of thinking at that time caused the educational process to be carried out by simply continuing what already existed. This characteristic makes the Larung Sesaji culture still exist in the Ngebel community. However, in its development, the Ponorogo Regency Government provided assistance by including the Larung Sesaji activity as a cultural and tourism calendar. The Ponorogo Regency Government stated that Larung Sesaji contains many values, namely a medium for cultural preservation, natural alms, sharing sustenance with living creatures, and maintaining natural (ecological) balance. ²In addition, this tradition also has spiritual messages, arts (dance and gamelan), strengthening the local economy, and building social relations between communities of different faiths in a pluralistic environment. The local wisdom of Larung Sesaji contains many messages, including education and culture.

Meanwhile, amidst the increasing modernization, environmental changes, global challenges, marked by the climate crisis, environmental degradation, and the loss of environmental awareness, the Larung Sesaji tradition offers a perspective from *the perspective of ecotheology*, culture, and non-formal education. From an ecotheological perspective, humans serve as leaders on earth, responsible for preserving nature. Religious scholars explain that nature is *a manifestation* of God in a form that can be witnessed by creatures. ³God did not create nature from the outside, but manifests (*tajalli*) Himself in various forms. Nature is not God, but a reflection or shadow of God's attributes. Thus, nature and creatures are manifestations of God's absolute being, not independent entities. Therefore, preserving nature (ecology) becomes a deed that reflects obedience to God or respect for Him. Otherwise, or behavior that damages nature, it is essentially an act of disobedience to God. Meanwhile, the Larung Sesaji culture of Telaga Ngebel is a cultural aspect that contains ecotheological teachings. Culture is the result of human thought, creativity, and creation. The results of this thought and intellect are expressed in the form of Larung Sesaji (offerings). It symbolizes the relationship between humans and their God (*tajalli*). The ecotheological relationship combined with the cultural tradition of Larung Sesaji shows that local wisdom can be a relevant educational resource for the community in shaping character, environmental ethics, and ecotheology. This is certainly relevant to the message of the Minister of

¹ Maulana Mitanto and Abraham Nurcahyo, “Larung Sesaji Ritual of Telaga Ngebel Ponorogo (Historical and Cultural Study),” *Agastya: Journal of History and Learning* 2, no. 2 (2012), <https://doi.org/10.25273/ajsp.v2i2.1459>.

² Ponorogo Regency Communication, Informatics and Statistics Office: *Still Attractive, Larungan Telaga Ngebel 2025 Highlights the Element of Sharing with Nature* (Ponorogo Regency Government, 2025).

³ William C. Chittick, *The Sufi Path of Knowledge: Ibn al-'Arabi's Metaphysics of Imagination* (State University of New York Press (SUNY Press), 1989).



Religion who proposed that the curriculum of religious and religious education include aspects of ecoteology. ⁴This message from the Minister of Religion shows that religion must be interpreted not only in the realm of text but also in the context and future of the environment. Amid modernization and environmental issues such as global warming, environmental damage, and a lack of awareness of nature, religion and culture, local wisdom is present as an alternative medium for educating the community.

Several studies have discussed local wisdom-based character education in schools, but their focus has been on religious values, tolerance, patriotism, hard work, and social awareness. ⁵Meanwhile, research that combines ecoteology, the Larung Sesaji tradition, and educational analysis is still relatively rare. Education should continue to be developed in a manner relevant to needs. These needs can arise from local and global changes. Issues of environmental change and awareness of nature have become local and global crises. Ecoteology, culture, and educational values are the three centers of educational development that uphold the local wisdom of the Larung Sesaji of Telaga Ngebel Ponorogo. Indonesian scholar Ki Hajar Dewantara explained that there are three centers of education, or the tricenter of education: family, school, and community. Education must be able to guide all the natural powers that exist in children or students so that they achieve the highest safety and happiness. Through the tricenter of education, children or students can achieve these hopes. Ki Hajar Dewantara further emphasized that education can develop noble character, harmony with nature, mental and physical balance, and strengthening the nation's cultural identity.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study uses a qualitative approach of *field research*. The qualitative approach was chosen to gain a deep understanding of the educational values in the local wisdom tradition of Larung Sesaji Telaga Ngebel as well as the ecoteological principles of the local community. The research location is Telaga Ngebel, Ngebel District, Ponorogo Regency, East Java. The location was chosen because it is the center of the Larung Sesaji Tradition every Sura month of the Javanese calendar. The data sources in this study are divided into two, namely primary data; traditional leaders, Larung Sesaji organizing committee, local religious leaders, surrounding communities, and ritual participants. While secondary data;

Documents, archives, articles, books, and literature relevant to ecoteology, local wisdom, and educational values in traditional culture. Data collection techniques are carried out by; 1) *In-depth Interview*. Interviews are conducted to explore information on the values, meanings, and understanding of local communities related to Larung Sesaji. 2) Researchers become passive participants in the Larung Sesaji tradition to understand the social context, symbolic meaning, and religious spiritual messages of the Larung Sesaji process. 3) Documentation Study. Collecting references in the form of documents, photos, videos, tourism service news, historical records related to Larung Sesaji. Data analysis is carried out in three stages, namely data reduction by selecting and sorting data obtained through interviews, observations, and documentation. Data review, namely

⁴ Muhammad Yunus, *Minister of Religion (Menag) Requests Ecoteology and Nature Conservation to be Included in the Religious Education Curriculum* (Jakarta, 2025), https://kemenag.go.id/nasional/menag-minta-ekoteologi-dan-pelestarian-alam-masuk-kurikulum-pendidikan-agama-eomLd?utm_source=chatgpt.com.

⁵ Enjen Zaenal Mutaqin et al., "Character Education Model Based on Local Wisdom," *Journal of Religious Research* 25, no. 1 (2024): 17–33, <https://doi.org/10.24090/jpa.v25i1.2024.pp17-33>.



compiling data in the form of descriptive narratives to draw conclusions. Conclusion drawing and verification, namely drawing conclusions about the educational values contained in the Larung Sesaji tradition and its relationship to ecotheological theory.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A. Ecotheology and Larung Sesaji

- I. The tradition of offering offerings at Lake Ngebel is a manifestation of the community's belief in a harmonious relationship between humans, nature, and God (local ecotheology).

The people of Ngebel District and its surroundings believe that the Larung Sesaji culture at Ngebel Lake is a symbol or form of maintaining a harmonious relationship between humans, nature, and God. Religious figures explain that nature is a *tajalli* or manifestation of God. Protecting nature, expressed in the form of local wisdom, Larung Sesaji at Ngebel Lake, is a form of maintaining a harmonious relationship between humans and nature (*tajalli* of God). This principle is relevant to the narrative of community leaders at Ngebel Lake, who said that Larung Sesaji at Ngebel Lake is a form of gratitude from Ngebel residents for blessings, sustenance, and safety. ⁶Islam emphasizes gratitude in all things. Gratitude is the embryo of the birth of various blessings that God will give to humans. It is even emphasized that if you are grateful, I will surely increase (favors) to you (Surah Ibrahim (14): Verse 7). ⁷According to some commentators, gratitude is not just an expression of thanks in the heart or verbally, but an act that shows these blessings through good use. Good utilization is of course in line with the rules or provisions that provide blessings, namely Allah SWT.

Relevant to the form of gratitude for the blessings, gifts, and sustenance that God has bestowed upon the people of Ngebel and its surroundings, an expression of gratitude is manifested through Larung Sesaji (offerings). Offerings thrown into Lake Ngebel serve as a way of maintaining a good relationship with nature or Lake Ngebel. Through Lake Ngebel, the community receives many benefits in the form of abundant natural resources. The abundant water of Lake Ngebel allows the trees, plants, and fish to be enjoyed by the residents. This blessing is certainly not solely the result of human endeavor, but also the intervention of a supernatural power, namely God Almighty. The generosity of God Almighty in the form of the water of Lake Ngebel which can produce various sources of livelihood needs to be appreciated. The form of gratitude by maintaining, preserving, and protecting these water sources creates an ecological relationship between humans, nature, and God. Relevant to research conducted by Alfahdli ⁸et al., which informs that Islamic ecotheology emphasizes the concept of monotheism as the main foundation in maintaining a balanced relationship between humans, nature, and the creator. The

⁶ Community Leader, "Interviews, Observations, and Documentation Studies at Telaga Ngebel, Ponorogo Regency," August 2025.

⁷ Mohamad Taufiq, *Qur'an Kemenag In MS. Word*, Indonesia, version of the Qur'an in Microsoft Word, Lajnah Pentashihan Mushaf Al-Qur'an (LPMQ), Indonesia, released 2019.

⁸ Alfahdli et al., "Islamic Ecotheology: Exploring the Spiritual Relationship Between Humans, Nature, and God in the Islamic Tradition," *Ta'wiluna: Journal of Al-Qur'an Science, Tafsir and Islamic Thought* 6 (April 2025), <https://ejournal.iaifa.ac.id/index.php/>.



people of Telaga Ngebel and its surroundings believe that nature possesses supernatural powers. This means that the spirit of life complements the mutual relationship between humans and nature. In Javanese tradition, humans hold fast to the teachings of their ancestors. Javanese people discover truth through spiritual practices (methods) or inner practice. Everything that lives, grows, develops, and possesses benefits must be protected, respected, and cared for like a creature with a soul. Therefore, preserving the waters of Telaga Ngebel through the Larung Sesaji (offering offerings) culture is a way of maintaining harmony between humans, nature, and God.

Meanwhile, research conducted by Irsyad Ibadullah and Rizal Samsul Muttaqin⁹ explains that the local wisdom of *taboos* is an effort to preserve the environment in Dukuh Village. *Pamali* in Sundanese means prohibition or *taboo*. This term refers to actions that deviate from customary norms or certain rules, therefore called *pamali* (forbidden/taboo). Prohibitions that can disrupt the survival of or even endanger the people of Dukuh Village can be a medium for environmental preservation. According to residents, there was once a person who violated the prohibition and suffered mental disorders. From this incident, no one dared to violate the prohibition for fear of dire consequences and respect for ancestral cultural traditions. The local wisdom of *taboos* is relevant to the Larung Sesaji tradition at Lake Ngebel in Ponorogo Regency. Traditional communities learn from experience. These experiences serve as advice and valuable lessons for survival. Nature, consisting of water, plants, and various animals, is an integral part of life. They must be respected and protected like humans. If someone destroys the environment, they are essentially destroying life. Destroying life means disrespecting ancestral culture and God. In a folk tale, Lake Ngebel is said to have been created by a dragon¹⁰ named Baru Klinting. The legend of Lake Ngebel is related to a dragon named Baru Klinting. Baru Klinting was a young man often mocked by local residents for his arrogance, pride (rejecting the truth), and greed (exploitation). Baru Klinting was actually a human incarnation of a dragon snake who was killed by local residents to be used as a feast dish (exploitation). The arrival of Baru Klinting, who appeared to be a beggar and looked disgusting, sparked the anger of the residents. However, there was a kind person who helped him, namely Nyai Latung. Baru Klinting was angry, and through his supernatural powers, he drowned the entire village in a flood. However, only Nyai Latung survived (care for the environment). The flood is now known as Lake Ngebel.

The story of Naga Baru Klinting contains ecotheological messages. This means that humans are encouraged to be friendly with and protect nature, including the water, trees, and mountains around Lake Ngebel. The incarnation of Baru Klinting, who came to the residents, informed them that nature had been damaged (due to exploitation). He then warned them that a disaster (nature's wrath) would soon occur. However, the people were not sensitive and instead continued to carry

⁹ Irsyad Ibadulloh and Rizal Samsul Mutaqin, "Islamic Eco-Theological as Local Wisdom for the Preservation of the Natural Environment," *Transformative Islam: Journal of Islamic Studies* 6, no. 2 (2023): 145, <https://doi.org/10.30983/it.v6i2.5913>.

¹⁰ Nabila Nindya Desri Cahyaningtyas and Aprianto Zulkarnain, "Myths and Semiotics of the Legend of Telaga Ngebel (Larangan Tradition in Ngebel District, Ponorogo Regency)," *Klitika: Scientific Journal of Indonesian Language and Literature Education* 3, no. 2 (2021), <https://doi.org/10.32585/klitika.v3i2.1551>.



out actions that damaged the environment. This message is contained in the Qur'anic verse, which forbids environmental damage. Surah ar-Rum verse 41: *Corruption has appeared on land and at sea because of what the hands of men have done. (Through this) Allah makes them taste a portion of the consequences of their actions so that they may return (to the right path).* This verse explains that environmental damage does not occur by chance. It is caused by human actions. Humans are the cause of environmental damage. The causes of this damage are sin, disobedience, neglect of ecological responsibility, and excessive exploitation of nature without regard for the laws of natural balance.

Tri Hita Karana is known, namely *parahyangan* (God), *palemahan* (nature), *pawongan* (human). These three elements are the cause of the presence of prosperity.¹¹ Balinese people believe that in every life, they depend on the transcendent to maintain nature and welfare of life. The welfare of life depends on *Tri Hita Karana*. Harmony in the relationship between God, nature, and humans will give birth to prosperity. Without harmony, disasters or chaos will befall human life. Nature always provides its instructions before damage occurs. As research in the local wisdom of *the Pangujanan mantra*, before disasters (floods, landslides, and earthquakes) begins with rain. Quite high rainfall and a lack of water-absorbing trees, the potential for flooding is quite high. The lack of trees or forests to absorb water is caused by humans. Excessive deforestation replaced with vegetable crops causes the soil to become loose and prone to landslides and flooding. Therefore, the local wisdom mantra *Pangujanan emerged*, namely prayers for the rain to stop quickly. This study also found similarities in the beginning before the disaster occurred, namely the presence of a dragon (compare with the Naga Baru Klinting in Ngebel). This mythological animal is a sign of the coming disaster. Meanwhile, research by Deby Rahmadani et al.¹² reported that the signs of the Aia Taganang disaster (Flood) were the emergence of large black ants from their nests in very large numbers. Black ants are sensitive to heavy rain. So, they leave their nests to avoid the water that inundates their nests. Nature always provides signs before natural disasters occur. Therefore, it is important to maintain harmony between humans, nature, and God (*Tri Hita Karana*) to create prosperity, safety, and happiness in this world and the hereafter.

2. The community believes that maintaining the balance of nature (through the Larung Sesaji ritual) is part of their spiritual and moral obligations to God Almighty.

The larungan ceremony is routinely held at the beginning of the Islamic New Year, or 1 Suro, as a form of gratitude by the Ngebel community to God Almighty. The larungan sesaji ritual is believed to ward off disaster (a deterrent to tempest, danger, and disaster) for the people of Ponorogo, especially those living around Lake Ngebel, to protect them from all danger. The community believes that with

¹¹ Muhammad Heno Wijayanto and I Made Suparta, “Natural Disaster Phenomena in the Pangujanan Mantra Text,” *Jumantara: Jurnal Manuskrip Nusantara* 13, no. 1 (2022): 59–75, <https://doi.org/10.37014/jumantara.v13i1.2890>.

¹² Deby Rahmadani et al., “Local Knowledge of Coastal Communities and Disaster Mitigation in West Sumatra,” *Indonesian Journal of Anthropology and Sociology Students (JuMASI)*, advance online publication, June 30, 2024, <https://doi.org/10.29103/jumasi.v%vi%i.15220>.



the larung sesaji, no further disasters will occur, and they hope to seek God's blessing. However, he does not want this ceremony to be interpreted as an attempt to offer offerings to supernatural beings at Lake Ngebel. According to him, the activity is simply a form of gratitude to the Almighty.¹³

The community believes that maintaining the balance of nature, expressed in the Larung Sesaji (offering offerings), can ward off all dangers. The Larungan ceremony does not mean worshiping the supernatural beings inhabiting the lake, but rather as a symbol of gratitude to the Almighty God. Larung Sesaji contains spiritual and moral values. Spirituality is the most fundamental human experience, a search beyond oneself to find meaning and purpose in life through relationships with others, nature, and God, and not always through formal religion.¹⁴ The search for meaning in life through relationships with nature has been carried out by the people of Telaga Ngebel and its surroundings. Larung Sesaji serves as a symbol of maintaining the relationship between humans and nature. Larung Sesaji was born from the spiritual relationship between humans and nature. Nature is dynamic, meaning it easily adapts to its surroundings. Humans give their best to nature, and nature will also provide benefits for human survival. This is relevant to the thoughts of Imam al-Ghazali in the research of Uup Gufron et al.¹⁵ on ecosufism, which explains that ecosufism is a solution to the ecological crisis. This principle explains the ethics of humans with God and human ethics towards nature, as well as the reciprocal relationship between the two. The results of his research inform that the source of disharmony in the relationship between humans, nature, and God is caused by human consumerism for their life needs. Humans tend to be excessive and greedy, thus making nature an object to fulfill their life needs. In fact, nature is a manifestation of God's love on earth. Therefore, to know and understand God's love must be through love for nature. Religious scholars offer the ethical concepts of *uzlah*, *mahabbah*, *wara'*, *zuhud*, and gratitude to form an ethical relationship between humans, nature, and God. Some of these religious formulations are relevant to the spiritual expression in the Larung Sesaji Telaga Ngebel culture to maintain harmony between humans, nature, and God.

In the Larung Sesaji tradition, various agricultural products, fruits, grains, and vegetables are offered as alms to nature. This is relevant to the principle of *mahabbah*, or love for nature. There is a formula, that to know God's love, one must go through love for nature. By providing agricultural products that can be enjoyed by the local community, even the fish in Lake Ngebel, is a form of expression of love for nature that will lead to a gentle heart to recognize the touch of God's guidance. Regarding gentleness of heart and the gentle touch of God's hand, there is relevant research, namely that meditation based on *kindness/copassion* can improve emotional well-being, prosocial behavior, and

¹³ Community Leader, "Interviews, Observations, and Documentation Studies at Telaga Ngebel, Ponorogo Regency," August 2025.

¹⁴ Harleah G. Buck, MSN, RN, "Spirituality Concept Analysis and Model Development," *Holistic Nursing Practice*, advance online publication, November 2006, <https://doi.org/10.1097/00004650-200611000-00006>.

¹⁵ Uup Gufron and Radea Yuli A. Hambali, "Humans, Nature, and God in Al-Ghazali's Eco-Sufism," *Jaqqi: Journal of Islamic Aqidah and Philosophy* 7, no. 1 (2022): 86–103, <https://doi.org/10.15575/jaqqi.v7i1.16275>.



support cognitive function. ¹⁶This research supports that gentleness/empathy strengthens human emotional sensitivity and cognitive abilities. From this, it can be understood why? Communities that uphold the values of local wisdom Larung Sesaji have emotional sensitivity and cognitive intelligence that are far more advanced than their time. They are trained to care for nature, protect it, and preserve it through traditional ceremonial rituals as a form of expression of maintaining a harmonious relationship between humans, nature, and God. Even in certain cases, traditional communities have a keen sense of natural signs. This is relevant to the story of the kind-hearted figure Nyai Latung, who was saved from the flood at Lake Ngebel.

B. The Value of Environmental Education (Ecopedagogy) in the Larung Sesaji Tradition

- I. Larung Sesaji contains environmental education values, namely instilling collective awareness of the importance of preserving Lake Ngebel as a source of life and prosperity.

Education is a conscious and planned effort to create a learning atmosphere and learning process so that students actively develop their potential. ¹⁷The potential of students that is developed, namely religious spirituality, self-control, personality, intelligence, noble morals, skills needed by themselves, society, nation & state. The procession of Larung Sesaji Telaga Ngebel begins with a procession around the tumpeng accompanied by a traditional dance performance full of educational messages. The dance performance and tumpeng procession convey educational messages to local residents and other visitors. Buceng or mountains of agricultural produce (vegetables, fruit, red rice, ingkung) symbolize the abundant harvest of local natural resources. ¹⁸The packaging of buceng that displays agricultural produce conveys an educational message to cultivate spiritual religious potential. Abundant agricultural produce certainly does not come suddenly but through God's intervention. Humans are encouraged to be grateful for these blessings. The Larung Sesaji or tumpeng procession activity provides a direct educational experience to the community. John Dewey emphasized *learning by doing*, namely learning through real experience. ¹⁹The Larung Sesaji tradition at Telaga Ngebel serves as a contextual educational medium for the community, who witness the ritual and participate in a symbolic reverence for nature (Telaga Ngebel). This resonates with John Dewey's concept that education is effective when it connects students to the issues and values of life in the local community.

Local communities play a strategic role in transferring knowledge. The transfer of knowledge carried out by the community is carried out through cultural

¹⁶ Nicole Perkins et al., “Effects of Kindness- and Compassion-Based Meditation on Wellbeing, Prosociality, and Cognitive Functioning in Children and Adolescents: A Systematic Review,” *Mindfulness* 13, no. 9 (2022): 2103–27, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12671-022-01925-4>.

¹⁷ “Law of the Republic of Indonesia Number 20 of 2003 concerning the National Education System,” PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF INDONESIA, July 8, 2003.

¹⁸ Community Leader, “Interviews, Observations, and Documentation Studies at Telaga Ngebel, Ponorogo Regency,” August 2025.

¹⁹ Elaine B. Johnson, *Contextual Teaching and Learning: What It Is and Why It's Here to Stay* (Corwin Press, Inc. A Sage Publications Company, 2002).



activities. The cultural activity of offerings at Lake Ngebel becomes a hidden curriculum medium *for* transmitting noble character values. Yuksel in Shanbagavalli Nadaraj,²⁰ the hidden curriculum is more effective than the official curriculum in the process of learning values. The values of ecotheological education are instilled in the Larung Sesaji activity at Lake Ngebel. Collective activities involving many people are carried out solemnly and sacredly, adding a meaningful and profound impression to all those present. The Ngebel community strives to educate the public on the importance of preserving the water source of Lake Ngebel as a source of life and prosperity. The Ngebel community in particular and humans in general will survive *if* they are able to manage water sources. The water source of Lake Ngebel has provided many benefits, both directly and indirectly, to the surrounding community. Therefore, efforts to preserve and protect Lake Ngebel are a shared obligation. After conducting observational studies at Lake Ngebel, several points were found in the process of transmitting educational values in Larung Sesaji, namely;

First, bathe the *Kendhit goat*. In Javanese tradition, *Kendhit goats* are black with a white belt around their bodies. Javanese people believe that *Kendhit goats* can prevent bad luck, cure all diseases, and all disasters. The tradition or belief in *Kendhit goats* is related to the belief in *Bathara Kala* as a source of joy. In the²¹ *Ruwatan* tradition, *Bathara Kala* is seen as a symbol of respect for ancestors for protection from danger. *Ruwatan* in Javanese tradition aims to cleanse and free someone from bad luck (*Sengkala*). The implementation of *Ruwatan* is identical with shadow puppet performances, special prayers, and thanksgiving led by spiritual figures. This process contains educational values explained by several Muslim scholars. Abdul Fatah Jalal in Komaruddin Sassi, the process of providing²² *ta'lim* knowledge, understanding, comprehension, responsibility, and instilling trust so that *tazkiyyah* (purification) or cleansing humans from all impurities so that humans are in a condition ready to receive *al-hikmah*. Purification is required before receiving knowledge. This relates to the slaughter of the *Kendhit goat* in the Larung Sesaji Telaga Ngebel tradition. Before engaging in the process of knowledge transfer (*hidden* curriculum education), the community must first align their intentions. The goal is, of course, to benefit from the wisdom (knowledge), and even to gain insight into what they previously knew.

Purification of the soul is also relevant to Imam al-Ghazali's thoughts. Al-Ghazali's concept of²³ *tazkiyyah al-nafs* has three stages, namely 1) *takhalli*, which is emptying, eliminating, and purifying the heart. In this stage, students are encouraged to cleanse the soul from reprehensible behavior that can pollute the

²⁰ Shanbagavalli Nadaraj, "Assessing Students Socialization Processes through Hidden Curriculum in Schools," *International Journal of Assessment and Evaluation in Education* 4 (2014).

²¹ Eny Junyanti and Ika Septiana, "The Slaughter of the Wedhus Kendit at the Demak Broken Dam: Myth, Theological and Socio-Cultural Perspectives of Javanese Society," *Morfologi: Journal of Education, Language, Literature and Culture* 2, no. 4 (2024): 221–33, <https://doi.org/10.61132/morfologi.v2i4.819>.

²² Komaruddin Sassi, "Ta'dib As A Concept of Islamic Education Purification: Study on The Thoughts of Syed Muhammad Naquib Al-Attas," *Journal of Malay Islamic Studies* 2, no. 1 (2018): 1–14, <https://doi.org/10.19109/JMIS.v2i1.2541>.

²³ Masmuni Mahatma, "The Concept of Purification of The Soul In Al-Ghazali's View Is Related To Inner Peace," *Syifa Al-Qulub: Journal of Sufistic Psychotherapy Studies*, advanced online publication, 2023, <https://doi.org/10.15575/saq.v7i1.23763>.



heart and mind. A dirty heart in the religious view has two indications, namely a full stomach and genital orgasm. From these two indicators, it will give birth to verbal disasters, anger, envy, and jealousy as well as love of the world in the form of material possessions and stinginess. Therefore, cleansing the heart or *tazkiyyah al-nafs* is a key point in the educational process in Islam. 2) *tahali*, which is filling or adorning the soul. After cleansing the heart, students must adorn themselves with commendable qualities such as happiness, sincerity, honesty, generosity, and gratitude for the blessings of Allah. 3) *tajalli*, namely students believe in the majesty and greatness of Allah SWT. Through cleansing the heart, the heart will show visions of light (*musyahada al-anwar*), supernatural revelations (*mukasyaafah*), and divine manifestations (*al-tajalliyyat al-rububiyyah*). The spiritual journey undertaken by the people of Ngebel District and its surroundings when slaughtering *kendhit goats* is nothing more than an effort to purify themselves. To be able to receive knowledge, a person must cleanse himself of all despicable qualities. Disgraceful qualities that are still attached to the heart must be removed so that God's guidance can come through communication with nature (Telaga Ngebel).

Second, the scattering of the blood of the *Kendhit goat*. The process of scattering the blood of the *Kendhit goat* in Ngebel Lake signifies the removal of impurities. Blood, from a religious perspective, is considered unclean and forbidden for consumption. Meanwhile, the people of Ngebel and its surroundings scatter the blood of the slaughtered *Kendhit goat* in Ngebel Lake to be fed to the fish and all animals in the lake's water. This stage, when linked to the educational process above, falls into the realm of *takhalli*, namely eliminating anger through the symbol of blood. The wisdom of the Ngebel people has surpassed its time. Blood that is not thrown away or scattered may be consumed by local residents (boiled). Therefore, from an ecotheological perspective, harmony between humans, nature, and God is necessary to maintain the ecosystem of aquatic biota in Ngebel Lake. Animal blood has many benefits for fish growth. Research conducted by Yuli Andriani ²⁴ informs that livestock blood waste has significant potential to be used as an alternative feed ingredient because it contains high protein, reaching 80%. Blood waste is quite helpful for fish farmers. Even if properly managed, through fermentation of blood waste, it can increase protein content by up to 94.66%. Based on this scientific research, spiritual leaders of the Telaga Ngebel community and its surroundings are actually encouraging the community to conduct research on the benefits of blood as an alternative fish feed. *The hidden curriculum* they are attempting to convey is the implicit message that everything has benefits when harmonized with nature.

Third, communal prayer (thanksgiving prayer, *istigotsah*, *tahlil akbar*, *khataman al-Quran*, *tirakatan*). Collective prayer is the stage in the Larung Sesaji process. At this stage all requests, hopes, and goals are raised or presented to God Almighty. All residents across elements gather to pray for safety. Each elder or respected figure leads the prayer. Spiritual expressions across beliefs join hands in one assembly. This expression can be seen from the meaning of the night of

²⁴ Yuli Andriani et al., "Fermentation of Livestock Blood Waste as Fish Feed Ingredient," *Journal of Coastal and Ocean Sciences* 6 (January 2025), jocos.ejournal.unri.ac.id.



tirakatan. *Tirakatan* from an educational perspective can be linked to training student discipline through various spiritual worship activities. Spiritual exercises carried out by educational institutions to train their students so that discipline can be achieved through *habituation* or habituation, such as reading holy books, prayers at the beginning and end of lessons, congregational prayers, giving alms, commemorating religious holidays, short-term Islamic boarding schools, religious expressions in social forms, religious study groups, and others. Research conducted by Ma'ruf²⁵ explains that training students' discipline through spiritual activities can help shape their character. Discipline learning, embodied in spiritual activities, can aid student development. Student growth and development in the cognitive, affective, and psychomotor aspects can be effective if students possess a disciplined character. Therefore, *self-discipline*, or self-training through any spiritual activity, can help the community of Ngebel District and its surroundings grow and reach maturity.

The essence of the night of *tirakatan* is character education with a spiritual approach. Daniel Goelman²⁶ in Ismail explains that an individual's success in society is 80% influenced by emotional intelligence, and 20% is determined by intellectual intelligence (IQ). From Goelman's opinion, it is clear that character education plays an effective role in helping individual growth and development. Several developed countries have also stated that systematically designed character education can help students' academic achievements. According to William Kilpatrick in Zulkifli Agus,²⁷ the reason individuals do not do good deeds, even though they have knowledge of goodness (*moral knowing*) is because they are not trained to do good (*moral doing*). To train morals (*moral doing*) several stages are required, namely; 1) *Moral Knowing/Learning to Know*, namely knowing and understanding knowledge about values and distinguishing between one value and another. The dimensions at this stage are reason, ratio, and logic. 2) *Moral Loving/Moral Feeling*, fostering feelings of love and need for moral values that have been known and understood. The dimensions are the heart or soul. 3) *Moral Doing/Learning to Do*, the practice of moral values in everyday life, becoming an ingrained habit and character. This is a crucial phase in cultivating noble character in individuals. The previous variables (*Moral Knowing/Learning to Know & Moral Loving/Moral Feeling*) will not apply if they are not trained to do good (*moral doing*).

The three stages of character education above are relevant to ecotheological education in the local wisdom tradition of Larung Sesaji Telaga Ngebel, Ponorogo Regency. Through the Larung Sesaji Tradition, there is a stage of the night of *tirakatan*. The night of *tirakatan* functions as an ecopedagogical tool that provides a deep contemplation of awareness of partnership with nature. Nature is not an object to be exploited, controlled, and exploited. Rather, nature is a creature of God that has a spirit or energy in the concept of physics. Nature must be protected and cared for so that it continues to live, exist, and provide benefits for the survival

²⁵ M. Ma'ruf, "Building Student Discipline Through Religious Activities (Case Study at SMKN 1 Grati Pasuruan East Java)," *journal EVALUASI* 2, no. 2 (2018): 451, <https://doi.org/10.32478/evaluasi.v2i2.166>.

²⁶ Ismail, "Religious-Based Character Education (A Theoretical Review)," *AL-QALAM Journal of Islamic Studies & Education* 7, no. 1 (2015), <http://journal.al-qalam.iaims.ac.id>.

²⁷ Zulkifli Agus, "Character Education According to Abdul Majid and Dian Andayani in an Islamic Perspective," *Journal of Islamic Education Studies*, January 9, 2023, 279–90, <https://doi.org/10.58561/jkpi.v2i1.56>.



of humanity. This is relevant to the research of Fawziah Zahrawati ²⁸ who stated that the local wisdom tradition of *appadekko* is an eco-pedagogic medium. The *appadekko tradition* is a farmer's activity carried out before the harvest as a form of gratitude for the abundance of rice. This tradition contains educational value, namely the importance of preserving nature as a source of livelihood. The awareness of indigenous peoples about nature as a source of livelihood is expressed in the local wisdom tradition of *appadekko*. The night of *meditation* is a time for reflection and *contemplation* regarding the blessings of Lake Ngebel. Lake Ngebel has provided numerous benefits to the Ngebel community. The abundance of fish and fruit due to the abundant water, and the tourist attractions provide a source of livelihood. Therefore, it is fitting that these blessings be appreciated. Understanding these blessings requires a pure heart, open to knowledge. The synergy between humans, nature, and God softens the heart and makes it more receptive to nature's messages as manifestations of God's nature.

Fourth, burning incense and burying the head of the *kendhit goat*. The process of burning incense or adorning oneself with commendable morals (fragrant). After passing through the phase of cleansing the heart and *penance*, the soul is ready to be decorated with various good qualities (fragrant incense). Burned incense gives a calming aroma to anyone who inhales it. Individuals who have established harmony between nature and God, all their actions emit a fragrant aroma (virtue). Compare it with the Islamic concept of *rahmatan lil alamin*. This means that Islam is a religion that brings mercy and peace to all of nature, this is reflected in the concept of *rahmatan lil 'alamin*. Sharia not only regulates the relationship between humans and God, but includes social, cultural and ecological relations, so that the presence of Islam is universal and contextual. ²⁹Indications of *rahmatan lil 'alamin*, namely; 1) Islam is comprehensive (*al-alamiyah*) and comprehensive (*as-syumul*). Islam is here to bring a system of order to all aspects of life. This coverage includes family, community and state structures. 2) Islamic teachings are practical. This means that Islamic rules are flexible and do not conflict with basic human needs. 3) Islamic teachings are gentle. Islam teaches compassion, peace, and tolerance. Therefore, if an individual or group commits violence in the name of religion, then it is not the teachings of Islam. 4) Upholding the values of brotherhood. Islam prioritizes brotherhood and mutual assistance in good deeds. Good deeds are a manifestation of piety. Therefore, there is a principle that the best provision is piety. 5) Tolerance and mutual understanding. Islam teaches tolerance (*tasamuh*). Therefore, mutual respect for humans regardless of ethnicity, nation, and religion. This principle will give birth to a civilized state or a civilized nation. Bonds are built on the basis of togetherness, complementarity, and working together to live side by side. Therefore, the substance of burning incense in the

²⁸ Fawziah Zahrawati, “Eco Pedagogic Based on Local Wisdom as an Effort to Grow Students' Ecological Awareness,” *ENTITA: Journal of Social Science Education and Social Sciences* 5, no. 1 (2023): 1–14, <https://doi.org/10.19105/ejps.v5i1.8241>.

²⁹ Faruq Alhasbi et al., “Religion as a Universal Gift: Understanding the Meaning of Islam Rahmatan lil 'Alamin,” *Pawarta: Journal of Communication and Da'wah* 2, no. 2 (2024): 113–31, <https://doi.org/10.54090/pawarta.718>.



Larung Sesaji Telaga Ngebel tradition is to spread the behavior of *rahmatan lil 'alamin*.

Fifth, the procession of the tumpeng larung sesaji parade. The procession of the tumpeng parade can be interpreted as a demonstration of the party. In each party there are many dishes or various foods served. This process is relevant to the TANDUR learning model. Tandır is an acronym for; grow, experience, name, demonstrate, repeat, and celebrate.³⁰ The procession or accompaniment of the tumpeng Larung Sesaji parade contains dimensions, demonstration and celebration in the TANDUR learning model. Demonstration, namely an event to show off the presentation of the results of each work. Work (educational practice) symbolized in the creation of tumpeng, dance art, and accompanying troops (warok) becomes a symbol of the diversity of local wisdom products. Each procession or accompaniment of tumpeng, dance art, and has an implicit message for the community. The large tumpeng or also called *buceng agung* is in the form of cone-shaped red rice, decorated with agricultural produce, and is paraded around Lake Ngebel. One of the tumpeng (rice cones) is floated into the lake, then the others are eaten by local residents. The tumpeng is believed to be blessed food, because it has undergone a prayer process or night of *tirakatan*. Meanwhile, the accompanying dances include the tri murti wave dance, the bedoyo larung dance, the gambyong dance, and the reog ponorogo dance. The reog ponorogo dance, for example, conveys educational messages, that the warok and barongan dancers symbolize courage and resilience. Ponorogo residents have long been known for their bravery. This is symbolized by the warok or *wewarah*, namely people who give advice on virtue, are wise, knowledgeable, and serve as role models for the community. These are some of *the hidden curriculums conveyed in the Larung Sesaji tradition of Telaga Ngebel Ponorogo*. *The final concept of TANDUR is to celebrate. Celebrate, which is to offer congratulations and motivation to the community to enjoy participating in the Larung Sesaji procession. Efforts are made, namely the purak procession or blessed food tumpeng.* The people of Ngebel and the surrounding area believe that the Tumpeng Agung (Surat Ustaz) offers blessings to all who consume it. In Javanese tradition, Tumpeng³¹ symbolizes a broad and happy *path* for humanity. This resonates with the Islamic perspective, which yearns for the straight path (*sirat al-mustaqim*). Therefore, *the purak tumpeng* equates to receiving blessings in the form of guidance, salvation, and happiness in this world and the hereafter (blessings).

2. The Larung Sesaji tradition fosters social educational values in the form of cooperation, tolerance, shared responsibility, and preservation of local culture.

Larung Sesaji Telaga Ngebel conveys implicit messages in the context of social education. The social aspects transmitted in the Larung Sesaji Telaga Ngebel tradition are mutual cooperation, tolerance, shared responsibility, and preservation of local culture. Indonesia is a *pluralistic country*. Therefore,

³⁰ Awaludin Syarif Hidayatullah, "The Effect of the Tandır Learning Model and Adobe Flash Learning Media on Student Learning Outcomes," *Journal of Electrical Engineering Education* 09 (2020).

³¹ Ngadat, "The Symbolic Meaning of Tumpeng in Celebrations and the Values of Buddhist Teachings in the Buddhist Community in Kulon Progo," *PATISAMBHIDA: Journal of Buddhist Thought and Philosophy of Religion* 4, no. 1 (2023): 27–35, <https://doi.org/10.53565/patisambhida.v4i1.873>.



preserving local wisdom that contains social educational values is a formula for conflict mitigation. Local wisdom has proven to be an effective approach in building an attitude of tolerance in a pluralistic society. Research conducted by Fitri Mutmainnah and Panji Purnomo³² explains that local wisdom in Kayen Kidul village has proven effective in fostering an attitude of tolerance between religions. The local wisdom values of *Lembah Manah lan Andhap Asor*, *Wani ngalah mulia wekasane*, and *Mawas diri* shape the tolerant attitudes of individuals in Kayen Kidul. The values of local wisdom that are free from each religious belief in Kayen Kidul have proven effective in building a tolerant attitude. Relevant to the Larung Sesaji Telaga Ngebel culture, the community is taught to work together to clean the village, prepare the tumpeng (rice cone), and participate in the larungan ritual. These activities will blend differences in beliefs and unite them with a single goal: completing the Larung Sesaji task as a means of gratitude to God.

C. The Value of Spiritual and Religious Education in the Local Wisdom Tradition of Larung Sesaji

1. Cross-generational involvement in the ritual shows that Larung Sesaji is a medium for transmitting cultural values and character education from generation to generation.

Larung Sesaji becomes a transmission of values across generations. The values of human *rahmatan lil 'alamin*, ecotheological education, and ecology as well as the relationship between humans, nature, and God are woven into the Larung Sesaji ritual tradition. Ecopedagogy in the Larung Sesaji Telaga Ngebel tradition is effective for informal education processes. Informal education based on local wisdom through the culture of pantun, stories, traditional songs, and effective advice forms a generation of the nation with honest, religious, honest, disciplined, hardworking, creative, independent, patriotic, and communicative characters.³³ The stories, pantun, and advice generally contain noble advice. This advice is inserted by parents to children before bed. The calm and enjoyable atmosphere of the children gives a deep impression and meaning to each advice of the story conveyed. Relevant to the ecopedagogy of local wisdom, Larung Sesaji Telaga Ngebel is carried out by all elements of society with joy. This momentum offers the potential for meaningful educational messages conveyed through the Larung Sesaji ritual tradition. Thus, the Larung Sesaji tradition serves as an effective medium for transmitting cultural values across generations.

2. The Larung Sesaji ritual functions as a medium for community spiritual reflection on their relationship with God and their surrounding environment.

Every activity or deed will have an effect or impact on the person who does it. Spiritual activity between humans, nature, and God will also provide a reflection or reflection. If a good harmonious relationship occurs between humans, nature, and God, the resulting effect will also be good. But if the opposite occurs, then the

³² Fitri Mutmainnah and Panji Purnomo, “Analysis of Local Wisdom Values in Cultivating an Attitude of Tolerance Towards Differences in Beliefs in Kayen Kidul District, Kediri Regency,” *KOULUTUS JOURNAL* 5, no. 1 (2022): 117–34, <https://doi.org/10.51158/koulutus.v5i1.821>.

³³ Lilis Sumantri, “The Process of Internalizing Intangible Local Wisdom Through Informal Education to Strengthen National Character,” *Journal of Education* 30, no. 3 (2021): 421–32, <https://doi.org/10.32585/jp.v30i3.1759>.



wrath of nature and God will come to the person who does it. This is relevant *to the messages in the holy book, which explains that if you do good, you have done good for yourself. If you do evil, then (the loss) is for yourself.*³⁴ This verse explains the principle of moral cause and effect. This means that the good and bad deeds done by an individual will return to them. Every deed is not free from accountability. Meanwhile, in the *Javanese tradition* or Javanese beliefs, there is a belief in karma. Karma, from the Hindu perspective, is an individual's destiny in samsara, determined by the actions (deeds and thoughts) carried out by a person. Good deeds will produce good consequences, while bad deeds will result in bad.³⁵ This belief is the philosophy of Javanese society. Humans, nature, and God constitute the *heterarchical order of the cosmos*. The harmonious relationship between the three embodies the state of the universe. Therefore, the Larung Sesaji Telaga Ngebel ritual serves as a spiritual reflection of the Ngebel community and its surroundings in maintaining the relationship between humans, nature, and God.

Maintaining harmony between humans, nature, and God is a form of spiritual quality. If this relationship is not maintained harmoniously, it indicates an indication of violation or distance from divine/divinity attributes. Humans who are far from divine spiritual values have the potential to violate or not in accordance with *the Sunnat Ullah*. Religious experts explain that the process of human spiritual quality declines when moving away from the One and towards worldly plurality. Relevant to the descent of Adam (peace be upon him), it means Adam's distance from God, because he made a mistake, in the form of violating God's prohibitions.³⁶ Traditional societies are very careful in maintaining *the cosmic herarchy*. Nature becomes a spiritual medium that guides humans to the light of truth. Protecting nature becomes a form of spiritual connection with God. Harmony between humans and nature is evidence of their closeness to God. If nature is angry (causing disasters, floods, and not producing crops) then it is a sign, a sign, and a reflection of humans' distance from God. If so, then there is a violation of God's prohibitions. Therefore, Larung Sesaji becomes a form of education and reflection of harmony to maintain harmony between humans, nature, and God.

Javanese society is synonymous with spiritual traditions. Research conducted by Erwanda Mareta Putri et al³⁷. reveals that the interaction between humans and nature is expressed in the earth alms ritual. The interaction between humans and nature in earth alms involves using crops from one's own fields, such as rice, for traditional ceremonies. Rice, the community's primary crop, is served as traditional snacks. This embodies harmony between humans and nature (*tajalli*). (God). The market snacks will be brought to a *punden* (earth offering). *Punden* is a gathering place for Javanese people to perform the earth offering ritual. *Punden* is synonymous with large trees, water sources, and rivers. The educational meaning of *punden* is a fertile, shady, and abundant place. Thus, nature, preserved through

³⁴ *Mushaf Al-Qur'an*.

³⁵ Husnul Khotimah and Muhammad Sandi Rosyadi, "Karma in the Hinduism and Buddhism Perspective," *Jurnal Ilmiah Ilmu Ushuluddin* 22, no. 1 (2023): 47–55, <https://doi.org/10.18592/jiiu.v22i1.9997>.

³⁶ Sukman, "Cosmology and the Urgency of Spirituality," *Journal of Islamic Thought* 19, no. 2 (2025), <https://doi.org/10.32332/akademika.v30i2>.

³⁷ Erwanda Mareta Putri et al., "Human and natural interactions in the earth alms tradition in Japon Blora," *Dimensia: Journal of Sociological Studies* 12, no. 2 (2023): 151–60, <https://doi.org/10.21831/dimensia.v12i2.60988>.



earth offerings, will provide fertility, coolness, and abundant sustenance. *The cosmic hierarchy* between humans, nature, and God creates a reciprocal effect. This reciprocity is relevant to human behavior towards nature. Therefore, earth offerings or Larung Sesaji (offering offerings) are forms of spiritual expression that impact human survival.

Spirituality is an important instrument for supporting physical and psychological well-being. Research conducted by Suk-Sun Kim³⁸ et al. reports that spiritual journaling can be integrated into various spiritual expressions such as prayer, meditation, worship, and therapeutic religious activities. These findings are helpful for healthcare providers seeking to facilitate patient care. Patients with high spirituality have the potential to achieve better mental health and adapt more quickly to health problems than individuals with low spirituality. Spiritual activities expressed through prayer, meditation, and other forms of worship serve as a medium for physical and psychological well-being. Physical and psychological well-being are the goals and hopes of every individual. This is relevant to the practice of the Larung Sesaji (offering) tradition of Telaga Ngebel in Ponorogo Regency, which is imbued with spiritual values. This tradition is not only a cultural symbol but also a spiritual reflection of the Telaga Ngebel community, which strives to maintain *the cosmic harmony* between humans, nature, and God. If this harmony is well-established, human well-being will be achieved. Well-being in both physical and psychological aspects is present with individuals with high spirituality.

CONCLUSION

Larung Sesaji contains ecotheological educational values of respect for nature, recognition of human limitations, and building harmony between living things and the environment (global tolerance). The educational values of the Larung Sesaji tradition are expressed in the procession; bathing the *kendhit goat*, the blood of the *kendhit goat*, the night of *tirakatan*, burning incense, and the procession of the tumpeng larung sesaji. Each stage of the procession supports the theory of education, *tazkiyyah al-nafs*, character education with a spiritual approach (night of *tirakatan*), spreading the behavior of *rahmatan lil 'alamin* (burning incense), and *purak tumpeng* as well as getting blessings in the form of guidance, salvation, and happiness in life in this world and the hereafter (blessings).

Meanwhile, this aspect of local wisdom has proven to be a medium for ecological and spiritual education, growing from the cultural roots of the local community. The local wisdom of Larung Sesaji (offering offerings) serves as a medium for building global tolerance. Javanese society firmly upholds the philosophy of karma. Good deeds will be rewarded with good, while bad deeds will yield bad. Therefore, an attitude of caution, mutual care, and mutual respect (for humans, nature, and God) becomes the spiritual pedagogy that underpins theology.

³⁸ Suk-Sun Kim et al., “The Benefits of Spiritual Diaries: A Mixed-Method Study in Korea,” *Journal of Religion and Health* 60, no. 6 (2021): 3978–92, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10943-021-01277-8>.



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