



# The Perception of the Sasak Muslim Community Towards the Maleman Tradition (Study of Living Qur'an Surat Al-Qadr: 1-5 Analysis of Edmund Husserl's Phenomenological Approach)

Suke Indah Khumaero<sup>1\*</sup>, Nikmatullah<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Islamic University of Mataram, Mataram, Indonesia.

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Corresponding Author:

Suke Indah Khumaero

[210601001.mhs@uinmataram.ac.id](mailto:210601001.mhs@uinmataram.ac.id)

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**Abstract:** This article discusses the Maleman tradition which aims to commemorate the night of Lailatul Qadr in the Sasak Lombok Muslim community. Researchers emphasize understanding and increasing sensitivity to the phenomena seen to reveal the meaning behind the Maleman Tradition for each diverse individual. So, the study focuses on the community's view of the tradition by using Edmund Husserl's phenomenological approach. In general, research on the Maleman Tradition has been carried out a lot, such as in research such as in Hayadi's research which tries to reveal how the maleman tradition is practiced based on religious texts and motivated by local customs and culture through the frame of living hadis. The findings of this study are that the Maleman Tradition is a practice based on normative arguments and historical reasons as a religious practice that has taken root in the dynamics of the socio-cultural life of the Sasak Muslim community. Maleman tradition is preserved as an effort to welcome the night of Lailatul Qadr as a form of harmonization between religion and custom. Data from this qualitative research was obtained from observation, interviews and documentation. Through this tradition, the community has implemented Qur'anic values that have implications for aspects of religiosity and can foster a social spirit that builds harmony and togetherness.

**Keywords:** Edmund Husserl's phenomenology; Lailatul Qadr; Living Qur'an; Maleman tradition

## Introduction

Maleman tradition is simply defined as a tradition to welcome the night of Laylatul Qadr. People believe that the night of glory in the month of Ramadan can bring a servant to true piety. Quraish Shihab revealed that this natural phenomenon must be believed by every Muslim based on the Qur'anic statement, that "There is one night called Lailatul Qadr" (Qs Al-Qadr: 1) and that night is "a blessed night where all major affairs are explained or

determined with wisdom" (Qs. Ad-Dukhan: 3) (Shihab, 2007).

The phenomenon of reviving the night of Laylatul Qadr as a medium to commune with Allah on the night of glory has been applied since the time of the Prophet SAW, this is stated in the narration of Bukhari and Muslim that on the last 10 nights of Ramadan (Darmalaksana, 2020). Rasulullah SAW was serious in worship. Thus, Muslims generally welcome the night that is better than a thousand months by increasing the number of practices that are nuanced rituals of worship

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to Allah SWT, but it is different from the Sasak Muslim community which is coupled with the celebration of dile jojo (a type of torch whose raw material is made from jamplung fruit) and placed in every corner of the house as a form of harmonization between religion and custom. After that, the procession to welcome the night of glory is also enlivened by the Tahlilan Tradition and the reading of a series of prayers as a spiritual meal at the Mosque and then the community will hold the culmination of the Maleman Tradition in the form of eating together or what is called in Lombok language with the Begibung Tradition.

The occurrence of this socio-religious phenomenon is based on the acculturation of the Selaparang Kingdom Culture. According to historical records, in the 16th century AD, Lombok Island was ruled by the Selaparang Kingdom which was the largest Islamic kingdom in Lombok founded by Sayyid Dzulqarnain. Therefore, local wisdom is still preserved by the Sasak Tribe Community with high religious values based on the sunnah of the Prophet Muhammad SAW and influenced by the Selaparang kingdom culture. Thus, it is ironic if the amaliyah performed by the Sasak Muslim Community is considered an act of heresy, superstition, khurafat and so on considering that Islamic law is universal. If this Islamic law is only limited to the meaning of the text or *zdhahir* contained in the Al-Quran and al-Sunnah, it shows that this Islamic law is rigid and violates the concept of Islam rahmatan lil alamin. Thus, the law.

Islam, which regulates all areas of life, especially Muslims, must be interpreted contextually, so, in this study with the frame of living Al-Qur'an. This study tries to see how socio-religious phenomena as a response and interpretation of the community towards QS. Al-Qadr (97): 1-5 implemented through local culture with a phenomenological approach. This study focuses on the community's reception of the verses of the book of Allah relating to the glory of Lailatul Qadr. The community's understanding of the glory of lailatul qadr which is full of virtue can be a motivation to revive it by organizing the Maleman Tradition. With the approach used in the form of a phenomenological approach, the author assumes that the reception of the Sasak Community in Lombok towards Qs. Al-Qadr: 1-5 has formed a socio-religious phenomenon that is implemented through the Maleman Tradition as a form of harmonization between religion and culture.

This research is included in descriptive qualitative research, which is research that tries to describe a situation that actually occurs in the field by collecting data through observation, interviews and documentation. In this case, field studies are useful to see the typology of the Qur'an reception tradition.

As for data analysis, the researcher uses Edmund Husserl's phenomenological approach to reveal the

meaning behind the Maleman Tradition for each diverse individual. Based on this, Husserl's phenomenology emphasizes that any phenomenon always consists of subjective and objective activities. Subjective actions are always related to objects, while subjective actions will interpret, give identity and form the original meaning of the object (Asih, 2005).

Thus, the theoretical approach in this study uses a phenomenological approach because researchers emphasize understanding and increasing sensitivity to the phenomena seen. Researchers utilize the concept in compiling and classifying initial assumptions about the phenomenon to understand what respondents say. Therefore, this concept is used by researchers to understand how the Sasak Muslim community practices the Maleman Tradition.

Based on the information above, this research aims to examine the behavior of individuals and groups of Sasak Muslim communities regarding their views on the Maleman tradition and researchers want to reveal how this culture is so crucial to the community that this tradition is more than just a tradition. Based on the research context above, the research focus can be arranged as follows: How is the Harmonization between religion and culture on Lombok Island?; How is the Living Qur'anic Study Analysis related to Community Reception of QS. Al-Qadr (97) 1-5 through the Maleman Tradition on Lombok Island?; and How does the practice of Maleman Tradition affect the religious spirit of the Sasak Muslim community on Lombok Island.

These three questions will be the focus of the study in this paper. These questions illustrate a model of community diversity that cannot be separated from the local elements of culture that have been rooted in the community for generations.

## Method

This research falls under descriptive qualitative research, which seeks to describe the actual situation in the field by collecting data through observation, interviews, and documentation. In this case, the field study is useful for observing the typology of the Qur'an reception tradition.

Regarding data analysis, the researcher employs Edmund Husserl's phenomenological approach to uncover the meaning behind the "Maleman" tradition for each diverse individual. Based on this, Husserl's phenomenology emphasizes that any phenomenon always consists of subjective and objective activities. Subjective actions are always related to an object, while subjective actions interpret, assign identity, and shape the original meaning of the object (Dewi, 2014).

Thus, the theoretical approach in this research uses a phenomenological approach, as the researcher focuses on understanding and increasing sensitivity to the observed phenomenon. The researcher utilizes this concept to develop and classify initial assumptions about the phenomenon in order to understand what the respondents are conveying. Therefore, this concept is employed by the researcher to comprehend how the Muslim Sasak community practices the "Maleman" tradition.

## Results and Discussion

### *Maleman Tradition as Harmonization between Religion and Culture*

Epistemologically, the word culture comes from the words *budi* and *daya*. *Budi* means reason, ingenuity, cleverness and wisdom, while *daya* means endeavor, effort or trickery. Thus, it can be understood that culture is all the work, taste and creation of society (Supriyadi, 2008). The Indonesian nation has a high cultural diversity given the multi-ethnic style of society, religion, beliefs and so on (Darwis, 2017). In addition to the outline of culture, human interaction in their community has norms, values, and hereditary habits called traditions which are one part of culture. In the Big Indonesian Dictionary, tradition is defined as hereditary customs (from ancestors) that are still practiced in society. Traditions will be preserved in accordance with what is inherited, but sometimes in practice a tradition will experience modifications due to external influences into the community that carries out the tradition. For example, the influence of religions into certain cultural communities and traditions (Amar, 2013).

Religion and culture are two important elements in people's lives that influence each other. In the context of the archipelago, religion needs culture as a tool to transmit religious teachings. This allows people to understand Sharia in accordance with the culture that lives in that society. Gus Dur once said that Islam in Indonesia was spread in a peaceful way through a cultural approach. Thus, it can be understood that religion and culture are two continuous aspects. Both have their own symbols and meanings. Religion symbolizes religious values, while culture symbolizes the values and symbols in which humans are expected to live. Here we can see that religion requires a symbol system and also requires culture. When religion enters a community, it often undergoes a process of transformation assimilation with pre-existing cultures, there is a process of negotiation and compromise of symbols or values between the incoming religion and the existing culture (Adnan, 2020). Sutardi (2007) in his book says that religion will not spread without culture, and culture will be lost without religion.

Based on the explanation above, it can be understood that there will be no religion that enters into people's lives intact as its original form, there will always be a mixture of values between religion and culture. The mixture makes cultural symbols transform into new meanings. The creativity of religious adherents leads to the emergence of various religious cultures. The creativity in question is born from the interaction between humans and the scriptures and is also shaped by living conditions and contexts, including natural and geographical factors (Adnan, 2020).

The Sasak Muslim community's acceptance of the verses of the book of Allah relating to the virtues of the night of Laylatul Qadr was formed since the beginning of the entry of Islam so that it was realized through the practices carried out (Hayadi, 2021). Public understanding of the reception of the Qur'an, which in this case is QS. Al-Qadr (97): 1-5 forming a religious practice that harmonizes culture and religion. Harmonization between absolute religion and relative culture will create a sustainable fit between one another. When there is contact between religion and culture, the result is that there are religious teachings that are added or reduced (Taufik, 2013). In this case, maleman in the sense of looking for laylatul qadr, there will be additions to the ceremony, namely accompanied by lighting *dile jojo*, enlivened by *tahlilan* rituals followed by the *Begibung* Tradition. This indicates that the Maleman Tradition is a religious tradition that connects or harmonizes religion and custom.

### *Living Qur'an Analysis: Community Reception of QS. Al-Qadr (97): 1-5 Through Maleman Tradition in Lombok Island*

Etymologically, living Qur'an consists of two words, namely living and Qur'an which means life and al-Qur'an (Syamsudin, 2007). Textually, the Qur'an is understood as a sacred text but contextually, the text lives or is lived by the community. This confirms that the Living Qur'an refers to the social phenomenon of the practice of practicing the Qur'an in the community. Practicing the Qur'an is an association of religion as a cultural system as well as a social phenomenon (Sudarmoko, 2016).

In academic research, the phenomenon of practicing the Qur'an is an interesting topic to study because this practice combines different scientific principles. Among them are interpretations of the interpretation of the Qur'an, ranging from sociology to anthropology (culture). So, when taking the object of study on the phenomenon, it has basically interpreted the Qur'an with a broader and varied perspective (Ahimsa-Putra, 2012).

Based on the explanation above, the socio-cultural phenomenon in the Sasak Muslim community is realized on the community's functional reception of the Qur'an. So, in this case the reception of the Qur'an can be said to be the community's response to the presence of the Qur'an. This welcome can be in the form of community interpretation of the Qur'anic verse, implementation of its moral teachings and community behavior patterns that position the Qur'an in their lives. Yet despite this, Qur'anic Studies and tafsir continue to be studied and are now taught in ways that do not focus on the meaning in the text alone. Particularly in the context of community responses or practices in developing the presence of the Qur'ān (Mustaqim, 2015).

Various traditions that are present in Islamic societies in Indonesia arise from religious awareness. As well as the Sasak Tribe Community which is known as a tribe that still holds customs and culture that have been rooted since ancient times. Islamic culture and traditions are closely embedded in the lives of the Sasak Muslim community, one of which is the Maleman Tradition which is preserved and held festively and solemnly as an effort to get closer to Allah SWT as well as a momentum in welcoming the arrival of the night of glory in the holy month.

This Maleman tradition is a tradition inherited by their ancestors which is carried out on the last 10 nights of Ramadan which is called lailatul qadr. That Allah revealed the Qur'an on that night which can provide guidance to achieve happiness in this world and in the hereafter (Zarkasih, 2019). On that night the angels descended bringing peace (Nafis, 2015) of course the first thing to do is to enliven the night with various kinds of worship. In a Hadith narrated by Imam Bukhari that Rasullulah SAW said:

عَائِشَةُ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا قَالَتْ: كَانَ النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ إِذَا دَخَلَ الْعَشْرَ شَدَّ مِئْزَرَهُ ، وَأُحْيَى لَيْلَهُ ، وَأَيَّقَطُ أَهْلَهُ

*From Aisha R.A, she said, "When the last 10 days (of Ramadan) entered, the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) tightened his belt, turned on the night, and woke up his wife".*

Interpretation of hadith is not only based on contextual meaning. However, an analytical study is needed to uncover other variables related to the text so that the hadith can be interpreted in an applicable manner and can be easily contextualized with the current situation and conditions, so that it can make an effective contribution to the harmony of human life. Thus, the word "revive" in the above Hadith is a general word which means that what is done on this night is not limited to one type of worship (Zarkasih, 2019).

The maleman tradition practiced by the community is their understanding of religious texts both al-Qur'an

and hadith. This becomes the basis for how the concept of living Qur'an, especially those contained in QS. Al-Qadr (97): 1-5 as a response to the Sasak Muslim community on Lombok Island. Allah SWT says in QS. Al-Qadr (97):1-5 which means:

1. Indeed We have revealed it (the Qur'an) on the night of Qadr.
2. And do you know what the night of glory is?
3. The night of glory is better than a thousand months.
4. On that night the Angels and the Spirit (Gabriel) descend with the permission of their Lord to manage all affairs.
5. It is prosperous until the dawn breaks.

In Tafsir Al-Misbah, it is explained that Allah SWT has revealed the Qur'an on a noble night. The night became glorious because of the glory of the Qur'an, as His Prophet Muhammad PBUH, got glory with the revelation he received. There are also those who understand this glory in relation to worship, in the sense that worship on that night has additional value in the form of glory and its own rewards, different from other nights (Shihab, 2009).

Allah did not make your adopted children your biological children, therefore call them by the names of their own biological parents (fathers), not their adoptive fathers. Such a call is fair according to Allah SWT. and you do not know the name of their biological father, then call them all your brothers in the same religion, and there is no sin on your part if you do not know the law regarding this. But what becomes a sin is if it is intentional and it is known that it is wrong.

The community makes the two arguments above to carry out the Maleman Tradition. The Sasak Muslim community carries out the Maleman Tradition on every odd night in the last 10 days of Ramadan as a means to get closer to Allah SWT with various rituals starting with lighting the dile jojor (A Kind of Torch). Then placed after the maghrib prayer service in every corner of the house, even the grave becomes a place of lighting from the dile jojor ritual part of the Maleman Tradition. The purpose of the dile jojor ritual is so that every corner of the place will become bright because of the lighting of the dile jojor so that the community remains awake in worship to welcome the night of Lailatul Qadar by expecting His pleasure and prosperity.

Tradition is carried out after performing tarawih prayers with a series of tahlilan as the main agenda of this tradition which is attended by the community together with religious leaders. After enlivening the sacred event, the local community, especially mothers, play a role in preparing and serving pesaji'. Brought voluntarily with dulang as a serving container and tembolak as a food cover made of bamboo and then served with high-quality Lombok specialties as a form of love and affection for fellow believers. As stated by

Mr. Sahdan who is one of the religious leaders in Lombok that Islam is a religion of love and a pioneer of peace, so that through the maleman tradition with the ritual of pesaji' dulang and eating together it is hoped that it can lead the community towards togetherness in faith and Islam. This is in accordance with the recommendation of Rasullullah SAW for his people to feed and spread love to others like brothers and sisters. As Allah has commanded in Qs. Al-Hujurat (49): 10.

إِنَّمَا الْمُؤْمِنُونَ إِخْوَةٌ فَأَصْلِحُوا بَيْنَ أَخَوَيْكُمْ ۗ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُرْحَمُونَ

"The believers are indeed brothers. Therefore reconcile (mend relations) between your brothers and fear Allah, that you may find mercy."

In the book of Tafsir Al-Misbah, it is explained that the verse has signaled harmonious relationships between members of the community will bring abundance of grace. Conversely, a split relationship can trigger dissension and bloodshed (Shihab, 2009). This is in accordance with the concept of Islam as a pioneer of peace. Therefore, Muslims should be able to spread peace and prosperity and submit and obey according to the demands of Islamic law. In this case, the Sasak Muslim community has implemented Qur'anic values in their lives through the Maleman Tradition which has implications for brotherhood and togetherness.

The terminology above illustrates that the Sasak Muslim community perceives the Qur'an through the Maleman Tradition. This practice can be said to be a reception of the Qur'an, namely the attitude of a community to give meaning to what they understand of the Qur'an, so that they can provide reactions and responses to that understanding.

Although reception is basically a response that a person produces in understanding literature (Ratna, 2009). However, this response is also produced when someone understands the Qur'an. This is because the literary text (al-Qur'an) cannot find its significance unless it has been understood (read). Likewise, with the Maleman tradition in Lombok, the community has understood and believes that on the night of glory the angels descend to earth so that we must live that night to get blessings by performing various worship rituals that can lead to divine pleasure. Thus, the Maleman Tradition is an effort to increase worship to Allah and purify oneself in order to reach Lailatul Qadr and win the month of Ramadan.

*The Influence of the Maleman Tradition on the Religious Behavior of the Sasak Muslim Community on Lombok Island*

Lombok Island is a small island in West Nusa Tenggara Province located in the middle of the Indonesian archipelago with an ethnic group that upholds traditional

and religious values known as the Sasak Tribe. The series of rituals contained in the Maleman Tradition is thought to have started since the beginning of the entry of Islam on Lombok Island brought by Sunan Prapen whose real name is Muhammad Fadlullah or Raden Patikal during the heyday of the Islamic kingdom on Lombok Island, namely the Selaparang kingdom (Bahri, 2014). According to historical records, Sunan Perapen brought the teachings of Islam to Gumi Sasak. In addition to bringing the teachings of Islam, Sunan Perapen also taught rituals or religious practices that became a form of harmonization between custom and religion (Tribun Lombok, 2022). That Islamic values are very attached to the characteristics of the Sasak people. Thus, when viewed from a historical perspective, it is certain that the Sasak tribe, especially the Muslim Sasak, has a religious social character that is manifested in the form of religious social behavior that gives birth to Islamic culture and traditions.

In the view of the Sasak Muslim community, religion is not only understood as a dogma and moral system, but must be seen as a phenomenon of life. In essence, religion is not just values aimed at a person, but more deeply religion actually fosters social values in humans. Thus, religion becomes one of the important elements in the formation of cultural values, this is a real contribution from religion to the formation of moral systems and social norms for society. Religious teachings are embraced and practiced as a guide to life, various actions and patterns of human behavior, and religious values can be contracted into values that are believed and practiced by society.

The Maleman tradition as a religious practice that has taken root in the dynamics of the socio-cultural life of the Sasak Muslim community will provide meaning and influence both in social form and from the aspect of community regality. Based on the results of an interview with Mr. Sahdan, the maleman tradition in this case is a form of cultivating the heart and soul as a form of applying Qur'anic values without having to erase the characteristics of the cultured Sasak community.

Maleman tradition is enlivened as a syi'ar for the community to be motivated to live the night of laylatul qadr in accordance with religious guidance but not leaving the heritage of the ancestors. People who initially do not have the motivation to live the night of laylatul qadr will be encouraged to participate when they see a group of other people celebrating maleman so that in a community community will jointly try to live the night of laylatul qadr which is practiced in the form of maleman.

Manifestations of the community's high religious spirit which is based on religious texts or doctrines that are perceived by the community into a practice that has

a basis for transmission and transformation of knowledge to early Muslims (Hayadi, 2021). When religion and culture come into contact, the result is that religious teachings are added or subtracted. As explained in the previous discussion that maleman in the sense of looking for laylatul qadr, there will be additions to the ceremony, namely accompanied by lighting dile jojor, enlivened by tahlilan rituals followed by the begibung tradition. According to statements from informants that the rituals and symbols of the Melamen Tradition in Lombok have philosophical meanings contained in them.

Based on the results of Mr. Sahdan's interview, epistemologically the word "JOJOR" means honest. Mr. Sahdan continued that in Qs. At-Taubah (49): 119 Allah SWT has said regarding the command to be honest and true.

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَكُونُوا مَعَ الصَّادِقِينَ

*O you who believe, fear Allah, and be with those who are righteous."*

In the interpretation of Al-Misbah, it is explained that the word الصَّادِقِينَ in the verse above means right in all aspects, be it from attitude, speech or behavior. Mr. Sahdan said that the dile jojor ritual is the implementation of the verse above. The Sasak Muslim community believes that honesty is very important to be applied in life so that the heart will be bright, if the heart is bright then life will be calm, this calmness will reflect light to its surroundings as dile jojor reflects light as lighting for its surroundings. And vice versa, if we are dishonest then the heart will be dark like the environment without dile jojor. Thus, the dile jojor ritual in the Maleman Tradition in this case can have a positive influence on the Sasak Muslim community to apply Qur'anic values in life.

Islam cannot be separated from the island of a thousand mosques or better known as the island of Lombok, because the people of Lombok strongly reflect Islamic values in their lives, even though not all Lombok people are Muslims. This is how the community maintains good relations with each other, in this case through the activeness of the community in the tradition of begibung or eating together with the aim of minimizing hunger so that it is maintained as an effort to welcome the night of lailatul qadr and none other than the community wants to maintain the bond of friendship as recommended in Islam.

As the author has explained, the begibung tradition will be held at the mosque after performing tarawih and Tahlilan prayers. The food served will be served with *dulang pesaji*'. In general, the *pesaji*' dish is consumed by two or even more people. Therefore, this ritual is known as the "begibung" tradition which means eating together. Based on the results of interviews with Mr. Sahdan that

in this case the Sasak Muslims' reception of Qs. Al-Hujurat (49): 10 can be realized through the Begibung Tradition or eating together. This is because the begibung tradition is believed to strengthen ukhuwah islamiyah and a sense of brotherly solidarity so as to create a harmonious and prosperous society.

إِنَّمَا الْمُؤْمِنُونَ إِخْوَةٌ فَأَصْلِحُوا بَيْنَ أَخَوَيْكُمْ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُرْحَمُونَ {١٠}

*"The believers are indeed brothers. Therefore reconcile (mend relations) between your brothers and fear Allah, that you may find mercy." (Qs. Al-Hujurat: 10)*

The verse emphasizes that a believer is a brother to another believer. Ukhwah in Arabic comes from the word "akha" which gave birth to the word "al-akh, "akhu" which means giving an attention. Then it develops its meaning into a friend or friend, namely how the conditions are always together and join each other in a community. From this understanding it can be concluded that every human being has an obligation to look after each other, give birth to a harmonious and harmonious life, participate in all situations because humans are social creatures who need each other (Amalia, 2020).

*Ukhuwah Islamiyah* will create unity and increase social awareness in society. Brotherhood will make life harmonious, filled with love, peace and unity. As expressed by Prof. M. Quraish Shihab in his tafsir that the above verse clearly indicates that unity and harmony and harmonious relationships between members of small or large communities will give birth to an abundance of grace.

The Maleman tradition is also a form of harmony among the local community. This can be seen when all levels of society, adults and children, men and women, participate in activities that culminate in a meal together. Therefore, the spirit of gotong royong, brotherhood and concern for fellow citizens is harmoniously intertwined with a sense of responsibility for each individual in the community through the Maleman Tradition.

## Conclusion

Based on the explanation of the research results above, it can be concluded that for the Sasak Muslim community, religion is not only understood as a dogma and moral system, but must be seen as a phenomenon of life. The socio-cultural phenomenon in Lombok society is manifested in the community's functional reception of the Qur'an as a form of harmony between religion and culture. The Maleman tradition practiced by the community is the result of their interpretation of

religious texts, both the Qur'an and Hadith. This is the basis of how the concept of Living Al-Qur'an, in this case contained in QS. Al-Qadr (97): 1- 5 as a response to the Sasak Muslim community regarding the glory of the night of Lailatul Qadr. The community has understood and believes that on the night of glory, angels descend to earth so that they must enliven the night to get blessings by performing various worship rituals that can lead to divine pleasure. Thus, the Maleman Tradition is an effort to increase worship to Allah and purify oneself in order to reach Lailatul Qadr and win the month of Ramadan.

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The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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