

Transforming Solidarity into Social Obligation: A Socio-Legal Analysis of the Massolo' Tradition

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Abstract

The *massolo'* tradition in Kuala Mandor B Village, West Kalimantan has undergone a significant normative transformation. What once functioned as voluntary mutual aid (*tabarru'*) is increasingly perceived as a binding social obligation resembling debt, generating moral, psychological, and economic pressure, particularly among economically vulnerable families. This study examines the symbolic transformation of *massolo'* and its normative implications under Islamic law. It employs a socio-legal approach with qualitative phenomenological methods, using in-depth interviews with five purposively selected informants and participant observation in Kuala Mandor B. The findings reveal three critical patterns. First, the systematic recording of contributions functions as a form of collective memory that generates reciprocal obligation. Second, a dualism of perception exists between economically secure community members, who view *massolo'* as solidarity, and those with limited resources, who experience it as coercive social debt. Third, the tradition operates as living customary law whose coercive force derives from the *siri'* (honor) system rather than formal legal authority. This article argues that while *massolo'* qualifies as '*urf ṣaḥīḥ*' in its original form, its shift toward coercive obligation risks violating Islamic principles of *tabarru'*, *maṣlaḥah*, and *lā ḍarar wa lā ḍirār*. This study contributes to Islamic legal studies and law-and-society scholarship by demonstrating how living customary law can undergo normative distortion and by proposing legal reintegration as a framework for reconciling local tradition with Islamic ethics.

[Tradisi massolo' di Desa Kuala Mandor B, Kalimantan Barat telah mengalami transformasi normatif yang signifikan. Praktik yang semula berfungsi sebagai bentuk tolong-menolong sukarela (tabarru') kini semakin dipersepsikan sebagai kewajiban sosial yang mengikat menyerupai utang, sehingga menimbulkan tekanan moral, psikologis, dan ekonomi, terutama bagi keluarga yang secara ekonomi rentan. Penelitian ini mengkaji transformasi simbolik massolo' serta implikasi normatifnya dalam perspektif hukum Islam. Penelitian menggunakan pendekatan sosio-legal dengan metode fenomenologi kualitatif melalui wawancara mendalam terhadap lima informan yang dipilih secara purposif serta observasi partisipatif di Desa Kuala Mandor B. Temuan penelitian menunjukkan tiga pola: Pertama, pencatatan kontribusi secara sistematis berfungsi sebagai bentuk memori kolektif yang menghasilkan kewajiban timbal balik. Kedua, terdapat dualisme persepsi antara anggota masyarakat yang secara ekonomi mapan, yang memandang massolo' sebagai bentuk solidaritas, dan mereka yang memiliki keterbatasan ekonomi, yang justru merasakannya sebagai utang sosial yang bersifat memaksa. Ketiga, tradisi ini beroperasi sebagai hukum adat hidup (living customary law) yang daya paksa normatifnya bersumber dari sistem siri' (kehormatan) dibandingkan dari otoritas hukum formal. Artikel ini berargumen bahwa meskipun massolo' dalam bentuk asalnya dapat dikategorikan sebagai 'urf ṣaḥīḥ, pergeserannya menuju kewajiban yang bersifat memaksa berpotensi melanggar prinsip-prinsip hukum Islam seperti tabarru', maṣlaḥah, serta lā ḍarar wa lā dirār. Kontribusi penelitian ini menunjukkan bagaimana hukum adat yang hidup dapat mengalami distorsi normatif, serta menawarkan konsep reintegrasi hukum sebagai kerangka untuk merekonsiliasi tradisi lokal dengan etika Islam.]

Keywords: Massolo', Social Solidarity, Social Obligation, Islamic Law, Socio-Legal.

Introduction

The relationship between customary tradition and religious normativity remains a central issue in Islamic legal studies, particularly in societies where local customs continue to regulate everyday social relations.¹ In many Muslim communities, customary practices are not merely cultural expressions but also operate as living norms that shape moral expectations, social obligations, and patterns of communal

¹ See: Zaimuariffudin Shukri Nordin et al., "Integrating Islamic Law and Customary Law: Codification and Religious Identity in the Malay Buyan Community of Kapuas Hulu," *Journal of Islamic Law* 6, no. 1 (2025): 89–111, <https://doi.org/10.24260/jil.v6i1.3410>; Munawar Munawar et al., "A Dialog Between Islamic Law and Adat (Customary Law) in the Social Context of West Kalimantan, Indonesia," *Al-'Adalah* 22, no. 1 (2025): 323–46, <https://doi.org/10.24042/adalah.v22i.24008>.

responsibility.² This dynamic becomes especially significant when a tradition originally rooted in solidarity gradually acquires a binding character and begins to generate social pressure. The *massolo*' tradition among the Bugis community of Kuala Mandor B Village, West Kalimantan, illustrates this tension. Although practiced as a form of mutual assistance in wedding ceremonies, *massolo*' increasingly raises socio-legal questions concerning the boundary between voluntary giving, reciprocal obligation, and coercive social debt.

Cultural tradition is a form of intangible heritage that plays a vital role in building the identity of a community.³ In various aspects of life, tradition holds a special place within society, particularly in marriage.⁴ Across the globe, marriage rituals and traditions serve as a tangible manifestation of the continuity of ancestral values passed down through generations.⁵ Traditions in marriage not only reflect aesthetic and moral values but also function as a medium to strengthen social solidarity within society.⁶ In Indonesian society, known for its cultural diversity, marriage traditions possess rich and varied symbolic meanings depending on the customs upheld by specific communities.⁷

This study explores the dynamics between customary values and the principles of Islamic law. In Bugis tradition, gift-giving such as *passolo*' is not only a form of solidarity but also creates a social obligation in the form of a reciprocal pattern. This creates a complex interplay between custom, economy, and religion, warranting closer analysis of its impact on communal life.⁸ As a form of respect and a symbol of responsibility, this tradition is laden with symbolism reflecting

² Erniwati Erniwati et al., "Customary Sanctions for Strengthening Moral Order and Social Harmony in South Sumatra Communities," *De Jure: Jurnal Hukum dan Syar'iah* 17, no. 2 (2025): 417–37, <https://doi.org/10.18860/j-fsh.v17i2.32262>.

³ Hua Yu, "A Vernacular Way of Safeguarding Intangible Heritage: The Fall and Rise of Rituals in Gouliang Miao Village," *International Journal of Heritage Studies* 21, no. 10 (2015): 1016–35, <https://doi.org/10.1080/13527258.2015.1048813>.

⁴ Anvita Dixit et al., "Association of Traditional Marital Practices with Contraceptive Decision-Making, Couple Communication, and Method Use among Couples in Rural Maharashtra, India," *Culture, Health & Sexuality* 25, no. 4 (2023): 521–36, <https://doi.org/10.1080/13691058.2022.2062052>.

⁵ Elisna Huan et al., "Features of Traditional Marriage as Cultural Identity Marker of Dawan Community," *Jurnal Review Pendidikan dan Pengajaran (JRPP)* 7, no. 4 (2024): 15583–91.

⁶ Setognal Birara Aychiluhm et al., "Early Marriage and Its Determinants among Married Reproductive Age Group Women in Amhara Regional State, Ethiopia: A Multilevel Analysis," *BioMed Research International*, no. 1 (2021): 1969721–1969721.

⁷ Wendy Leeds-Hurwitz, *Wedding as Text: Communicating Cultural Identities through Ritual* (Routledge, 2002).

⁸ Susmihara, *Akulturası Islam dan Budaya dalam Tradisi Massolo Pada Perkawinan Masyarakat Suku Bugis di Kecamatan Baranti (Perspektif Hukum Islam)*, 2023. <https://repository.iainpare.ac.id/id/eprint/7886/>.

customary values, kinship ties, and the interpretation of family responsibility.⁹ Previous studies on wedding traditions across various Indonesian ethnic communities have consistently demonstrated the dynamics of negotiation between customary law and Islamic law. *Mepahukh* tradition of the Alas people functions as a space for value negotiation between *adat* and Islamic jurisprudence,¹⁰ while the *Banjarese jujuran* practice illustrates that customary traditions can be reformulated as a form of solidarity aligned with Islamic law.¹¹ Research on *Banjarese* traditions in Samarinda further classifies customary practices into the category of *'urf ṣaḥīḥ* when they conform to sharia principles, and *'urf fāsid* when they deviate from them.¹² Within Bugis–Makassar traditions, the *Sompa Tanah* practice and the *Mappasikarawa* ritual can be accommodated within the framework of Islamic law through the concept of *'urf*, while simultaneously strengthening women's rights within the existing social structure.¹³

Studies on Javanese, Sundanese, and Madurese traditions reinforce the same pattern. Raanti et al. demonstrate that Javanese Muslim communities harmonize customs such as *rewang*, *slametan*, and *nyumbang* with Islamic marriage law through a process of dialectics and negotiation.¹⁴ The Sundanese *Ngeuyeuk Seureuh* tradition serves as an instrument for transmitting Islamic values across generations,¹⁵ while the Madurese *Jambu* tradition can function as valid *'urf* as long

⁹ Brian Bates and Allison Newman Turner, “Imagery and Symbolism in the Birth Practices of Traditional Cultures,” *Birth* 12, no. 1 (1985): 29–36, <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1523-536X.1985.tb00927.x>.

¹⁰ Alfarisi, Muhammad Adib et al., “Negotiating Customary Law and Fiqh Norms: The Transformation of the *Mepahukh* Tradition in the Indigenous Marriage Practices of the Alas People in Southeast Aceh,” *Indonesian Journal of Sharia and Socio-Legal Studies* 1, no. 1 (2025): 72–93, <https://doi.org/10.24260/ijssls.1.1.9>.

¹¹ Gusti Muzainah et al., “Integrating Religious and Customary Financial Obligations in *Banjarese* Marriages: Muhammad Arsyad al-Banjari’s Islamic Legal Thought on *Balanja al-Nikāḥ*,” *Journal of Islamic Law* 6, no. 2 (2025): 358–76, <https://doi.org/10.24260/jil.v6i2.4888>.

¹² Zahidah Alvi Qonita et al., “Islamic Law and Local Wisdom: Acculturation in *Banjar* Marriage Traditions in Samarinda,” *Fundamentum: Journal of Legal and Judicial Reform* 1, no. 2, 108–121, <https://doi.org/10.70992/3wqmad10>.

¹³ See: M. Tahir Maloko et al., “*Sompa Tanah* in Makassar Bugis Customary Marriages: Legal, Religious, and Cultural Perspectives,” *Jurnal Ilmiah Peuradeun* 12, no. 3 (2024): 1213–1213, <https://doi.org/10.26811/peuradeun.v12i3.1309>; Achmad Musyahid Idrus et al., “The Tradition of *Mappasikarawa* in the Bugis–Makassar Community Marriage: A Study of Islamic Law Philosophy,” *Samarah: Jurnal Hukum Keluarga dan Hukum Islam* 7, no. 2 (2023): 848, <https://doi.org/10.22373/sjhk.v7i2.17125>.

¹⁴ Fitri Rafianti et al., “The Dialectics of Islamic Law and Customary Law on Marriage Concept of Javanese Muslim in Malaysia,” *Justicia Islamica* 18, no. 2 (2021): 298–317, <https://doi.org/10.21154/justicia.v18i2.3126>.

¹⁵ Muhamad Faisal and Makinuddin Makinuddin, “*Ngeuyeuk Seureuh* Tradition in Sundanese Wedding: Conflict between Custom and Islam Law”, *Jurnal Penelitian* 16, no. 2 (2019), <https://e-journal.uingusdur.ac.id/Penelitian/article/view/7733>.

as it upholds *maqāṣid al-sharī'a*.¹⁶ Most relevant to the present study, the Ompangan tradition in Kubu Raya reveals a normative shift from *hibah* to *qarḍ* as a result of social transformation,¹⁷ while research conducted by Djawas et al. emphasizes that the integration between *syara'* and *ade'* in Bugis Bone wedding traditions can be sustained through continuous dialogue between religious and customary leaders.¹⁸

However, research specifically exploring the symbolic meaning of the *Massolo'* tradition in the Bugis community of Kuala Mandor B remains scarce. This gap opens the door for a deeper analysis of how this tradition is understood and enacted within its local context. The prevailing view holds that in Islam, attending a *walimah* invitation and giving gifts are commendable and permissible acts, if they are performed sincerely and without coercion.¹⁹ Nevertheless, in practice, a shift in meaning has occurred; gift-giving, which should be voluntary, is often perceived as a form of debt that must be repaid. This shift contradicts the concept of giving in Islam, where a gift is not accompanied by an obligation to receive reciprocity in the future.²⁰

Research Methodology

This study is an empirical legal inquiry employing a qualitative approach grounded in a socio-legal perspective. This approach was chosen because the study does not simply examine Islamic legal norms in the abstract but also investigates how those norms interact with lived social practices. The study was conducted in Kuala Mandor B Village, West Kalimantan, a location that culturally maintains the *Massolo'* tradition within wedding ceremonies. The research design is phenomenological in orientation because it focuses on how community members experience, interpret, and negotiate the changing meaning of *passolo'* within everyday social relations.

¹⁶ M. Ghufron, "The Tradition of Madurese Wedding Ceremony: Islamic Law and Local Tradition within the Framework of *Maqāṣid al-Sharī'a*," *Ulumuna* 22, no. 1 (2018): 155–71, <https://doi.org/10.20414/ujs.v22i1.298>.

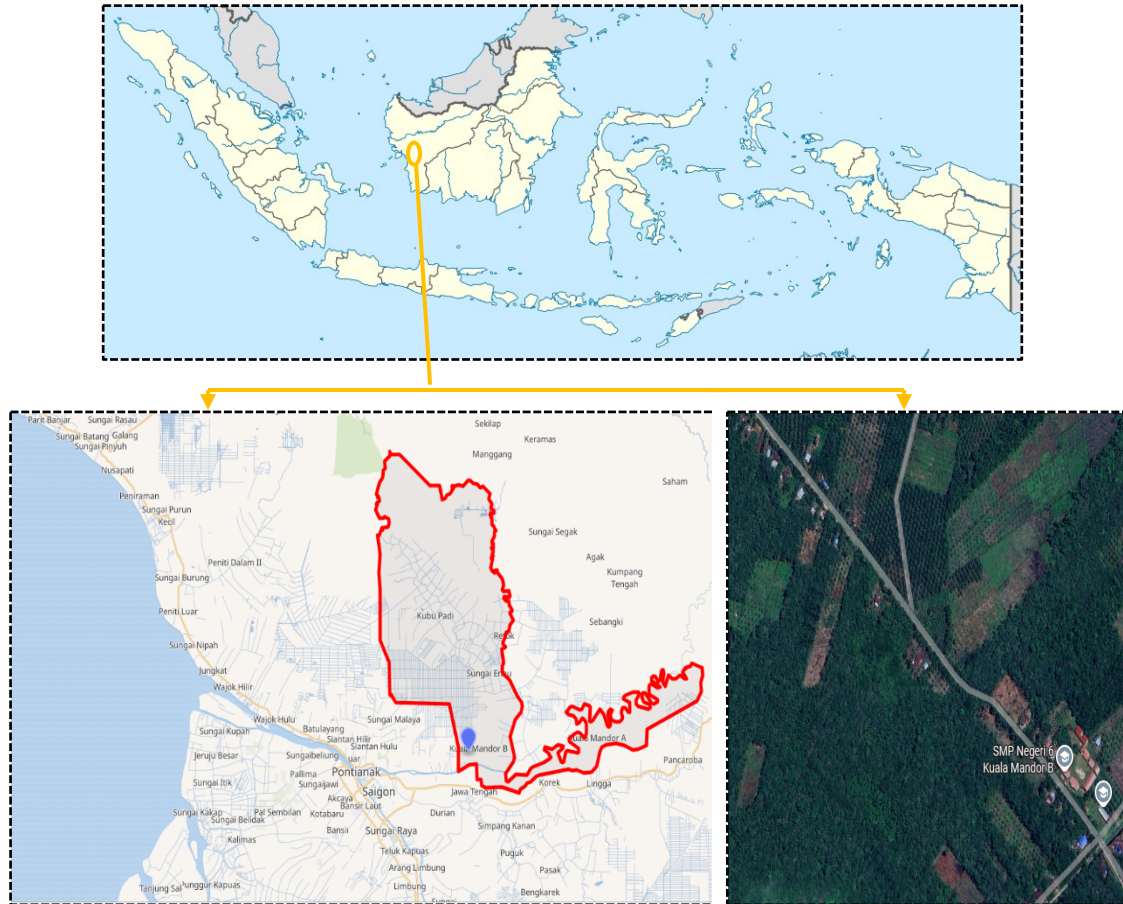
¹⁷ Susanti, Susi et al., "From Social Solidarity to Transactional Relations: The Transformation of the Ompangan Tradition in Marriage Celebrations Among the Madurese Muslim Community in Kubu Raya," *Indonesian Journal of Sharia and Socio-Legal Studies* 1, no. 1 (2025): 1–24, <https://doi.org/10.24260/ijssls.1.1.23>.

¹⁸ M. Djawas et al., *The Integration between Syara'and Ade'in Wedding Tradition of Bugis Bone, South Sulawesi: Islamic Law Perspective*. *Al-Ihkam: Jurnal Hukum Dan Pranata Sosial*, 18 (2), 342–364, 2023. <https://doi.org/10.19105/al-lhkam.v18i2.10373>.

¹⁹ Syufa'at and Muchimah, "The Shifting Meaning of *Walimatul 'Urs* in the Era of Society 5.0 in Indonesia: Islamic Law Perspective," *Samarah: Jurnal Hukum Keluarga dan Hukum Islam* 7, no. 3 (2023): 1514–1514, <https://doi.org/10.22373/sjhk.v7i3.18765>.

²⁰ Alias Azhar and Mohd Zakhiri Md Nor, "Hibah in the Administration of Islamic Property: Ijtihadi Elements and Reality in Malaysia," *UUM Journal of Legal Studies* 10, no. 2 (2019): 103–19.

Figure 1
Study Area Map



Source: Author's compilation based on Wikipedia/OpenStreetMap data and satellite imagery, accessed February 6, 2025.

As shown in Figure 1, the selection of Kuala Mandor B as the research site was based on the consideration that the Bugis community in this area continues to actively practice *Massolo'* and is experiencing a dynamic transformation of meaning, as formulated in the focus of this research.

Primary data were obtained through in-depth interviews with five purposively selected informants, consisting of a religious leader, a customary leader, a community figure, and two direct participants who had personally organized wedding celebrations and experienced the *massolo'* tradition as event hosts. The informant profile is summarized in Table 1. Informants were selected based on their direct involvement in and representative understanding of different dimensions of the practice, ensuring that both normative-institutional and experiential-phenomenological perspectives were adequately captured. In addition, participant observation was conducted to directly examine the implementation of the tradition within its social context.

The use of five informants is justified by the study’s phenomenological and socio-legal orientation, which prioritizes depth of lived experience rather than statistical representativeness. Data credibility was strengthened through source triangulation between customary, religious, community, and direct-participant perspectives, as well as methodological triangulation between interview data and participant observation.

The data were collected through in-depth interviews with five informants in Kuala Mandor B Village between February and March 2025. All informants were informed about the purpose of the study, the academic use of the interview data, and the possibility that their statements would be cited in the article. They gave consent to participate in the research and explicitly permitted the use of their real names. Therefore, the informants are identified by name in Table 1 rather than anonymized through coded labels.

Table 1
Selected Informants Profiles

Name	Role	Reason for Informant Selection
Muhammad Yusuf	Customary Leader	Selected due to his authority and knowledge of customary norms governing the <i>massolo</i> ’ tradition and its traditional procedures
Hairin	Religious Leader	Selected to provide Islamic legal perspectives regarding the permissibility, values, and normative implications of the <i>massolo</i> ’ practice
Susana	Community Figure	Selected to represent the broader community’s social perceptions and collective understanding of the tradition
Jaminah	Direct Participant	Selected based on her direct experience organizing wedding celebrations and implementing the <i>massolo</i> ’ tradition as a host
Ratnasari	Direct Participant	Selected to provide additional experiential data and support triangulation through personal involvement as a host in the <i>massolo</i> ’ tradition

Source: Author’s Purposive Selection

The collected data were analyzed using qualitative analytical techniques, including data reduction, categorization, and thematic interpretation. Interview and observation data were first organized around recurring themes, including contribution recording, reciprocal expectation, social pressure, economic burden, and Islamic legal evaluation. These themes were then interpreted through Islamic

legal theory and the law-and-society approach to assess the transformation of a social practice into a binding customary norm. This analysis is directed toward achieving the research objectives, namely identifying the shift in the symbolic meaning of *massolo'* and evaluating its normative implications from the perspective of Islamic law, particularly concerning the principles of voluntariness (*tabarru'*), social welfare (*maṣlahah*), and the prohibition of harm (*lā ḍarar wa lā ḍirār*).

In this analytical framework, the Islamic legal terms used in this article, including '*urf ṣaḥīḥ*, *tabarru'*, *hibah*, *qard*, *maṣlahah*, and *lā ḍarar wa lā ḍirār*, are employed as analytical categories developed by the author to interpret the normative transformation of the *massolo'* tradition. These terms were not necessarily used explicitly by the informants during interviews. Rather, they function as conceptual tools for assessing whether the contemporary practice of *massolo'* remains consistent with Islamic legal principles or has shifted toward a socially coercive obligation.

Results and Discussion

Massolo' in Practice

The *massolo'* in Kuala Mandor B is an inseparable part of the customary wedding procession within the Bugis community. The implementation of this tradition begins with the host distributing invitations to close relatives, neighbors, and family members. These invitations are usually delivered directly by visiting the guests' homes, reflecting the close social relationships and strong kinship values within the local community. As one informant explained by Hairin, "*We usually deliver the invitations directly to their homes because it feels more intimate*".²¹ The distribution of invitations is generally carried out at least seven days before the event as a form of respect for the invited guests and to ensure their attendance, which also reflects the community's strong appreciation for the values of kinship and togetherness.²² This practice is more than a logistical formality; it reflects the social fabric of the Bugis community, which is deeply oriented toward the values of mutual respect and shared responsibility—two principles that normatively govern social interaction within Bugis custom.

On the day of the event, invited guests arrive bringing *passolo'*, which may take the form of money or goods. These contributions are then placed in a special box or container provided by the host. The presence of guests is not only intended to give contributions but also to offer prayers and blessings for the family organizing the event. In this context, the *massolo'* tradition functions as a form of *gotong royong* (cooperation), in which members of the community provide material assistance to support families who are hosting important social occasions. Susana, explained that

²¹ Hairin, religious reader in depth interview, 2025.

²² Muhammad Yusuf, customary leader in depth interview, 2025.

this practice reflects the spirit of solidarity within the community, where people help each other when a family organizes a wedding or other celebration.²³

After the event concludes, the *passolo*' contributions are counted and recorded by the host or by a designated family member. Figure 2 illustrates the practical form of *passolo*' delivery within the *massolo*' tradition. This record then becomes a reference when the previous contributor organizes a similar event in the future. However, over time, the practice of recording these contributions has gradually influenced the social meaning of *passolo*'. What began as a voluntary gift gradually takes on the character of reciprocal exchange. Community members often feel a moral pull to return the contribution in equal or greater measure when the original giver later holds a wedding or family event. As a result, giving *passolo*' shifts from a free expression of generosity into a more socially structured system of reciprocity.

Figure 2
Illustration of the Massolo' Practice
(Delivery of Pre-Agreed Passolo' Contributions)



Source: Author's documentation, reproduced with permission, 2025

Three patterns emerge from this tradition. First, the recording of contributions by some hosts after an event serves as a reference for future reciprocation, though some communities still rely on shared social memory rather than formal records. Second, a perceptual divide exists within the community:

²³ Susana, community figure in depth interview, 2025.

economically well-off groups tend to interpret *massolo'* as voluntary solidarity, while groups with economic limitations perceive it as an obligation to return contributions of equivalent value and type—a pattern that analytically reflects the Bugis concept of social honor, even if the informants do not explicitly articulate it as such.

Most members of the community still perceive *massolo'* as a manifestation of solidarity and mutual assistance in social life. This view is generally held by older generations and community leaders who regard the tradition as part of Bugis cultural values emphasizing togetherness and social support. As one informant, Ratnasari, stated, “*This activity is important for maintaining family relationships. We help those who are holding an event, and it becomes a form of mutual support.*”²⁴ From this perspective, *massolo'* is understood as a cultural mechanism for strengthening brotherhood and maintaining harmonious relationships among community members, in which giving *passolo'* is considered a form of social participation based on the spirit of cooperation.

However, different perceptions have begun to emerge among certain members of the community, particularly families with limited economic resources and some younger generations who directly experience the social pressure associated with the practice. This group tends to interpret *passolo'* as a form of “repayment” or social debt that must eventually be returned when they organize a similar event. The practice of recording contributions creates an unwritten expectation that each gift will eventually be returned in kind or exceeded.²⁵ These differing perceptions demonstrate the social dynamics in the interpretation of the *massolo'* tradition, where for some groups the practice remains a symbol of solidarity and collective support, while for others especially those facing economic limitations *massolo'* is increasingly perceived as a social obligation that may create moral and economic pressure.

This view reflects a gradual transformation in the symbolic meaning of the practice. When expectations of reciprocity become more widely shared within the community, the act of giving is no longer interpreted solely as a voluntary gift but rather as part of an informal system of social exchange. Under such circumstances, individuals often feel a moral obligation to reciprocate to maintain their social reputation and avoid negative judgments from the community. As a result, families with limited economic resources may experience psychological pressure when they are unable to provide contributions equivalent to those they previously received.

In socio-legal terms, *massolo'* has shifted from a category of persuasive norm (value-based) toward a coercive norm (socially pressured) this constitutes a form of living customary law unwritten norms that nonetheless carry real coercive force,

²⁴ Ratnasari, direct participant in depth Interview, 2025.

²⁵ Jaminah, direct participant in depth interview, 2025

compelling individuals to give not out of genuine goodwill but out of fear of social exclusion and reputational harm. From a socio-legal perspective, this development indicates a shift in the normative orientation of the *massolo*' tradition. Initially, the tradition functioned as a form of voluntary assistance rooted in values of solidarity and cooperation. However, over time the practice has gradually evolved into a pattern of social exchange regulated by collective expectations within the community. The combination of contribution recording practices and prevailing social norms creates a subtle yet powerful mechanism of social control that encourages individuals to reciprocate contributions at similar events in the future. Consequently, *massolo*' not only functions as a cultural expression of generosity but also begins to operate as an informal social obligation embedded within community relations.

Nevertheless, *massolo*' continues to be regarded as an important symbol of cultural identity within the Bugis community of Kuala Mandor B. The tradition reflects strong values of kinship, solidarity, and mutual support that have long characterized communal life. However, greater awareness and education within the community are needed to ensure that the original spirit of *massolo*' is maintained as a voluntary gift rather than transforming into a burdensome obligation. From the perspective of Islamic law, this practice can be understood as a form of giving (*hibah*) or charity (*sedekah*) intended to strengthen *silaturahmi* (social ties). However, when the expectation of reciprocation becomes dominant, the practice risks shifting toward a social obligation resembling debt. Therefore, critical reflection is necessary to ensure that the *massolo*' tradition remains aligned with Islamic ethical principles of voluntary giving (*tabarru'*), allowing it to continue functioning as a source of social solidarity rather than becoming a social or economic burden for the community.

Transformation of *Massolo*': From Voluntary Solidarity to Coercive Social Debt

Drawing on Emile Durkheim's structural functionalism, traditions and rituals are understood to play a crucial role in sustaining social solidarity,²⁶ as observed in the *massolo*' tradition in Kuala Mandor B Village. This tradition combines two complementary forms of social solidarity: mechanical solidarity and organic solidarity.²⁷

Mechanical solidarity emerges in simple or traditional societies where the social structure is based on a shared set of values, norms, and activities.²⁸ Durkheim

²⁶ Emile Durkheim, "The Division of Labor in Society," in *Social Stratification* (Routledge, 2018).

²⁷ Alexander Gofman, "Tradition, Morality and Solidarity in Durkheim's Theory," *Istanbul University Journal of Sociology* 39, no. 1 (2019): 25–39.

²⁸ Ian R. Macneil, "Exchange Revisited: Individual Utility and Social Solidarity," *Ethics* 96, no. 3 (1986): 567–93, <https://doi.org/10.1086/292776>.

argued that mechanical solidarity characterizes societies in which individuals share a high degree of homogeneity.²⁹ This shared uniformity allows communities to remain cohesive, since members operate within a common set of values and expectations.³⁰ *Massolo'* reflects this phenomenon, where the community collectively delivers event invitations in a similar manner, specifically through direct interaction between residents. This underscores the importance of uniformity in communication and how the community shares the responsibility of inviting guests. As stated by one informant: "We usually deliver invitations directly to the house because it is more intimate here," a remark that underscores how face-to-face interaction reinforces kinship bonds. In this way, every member of society is bound by a strong social tie and feels a shared responsibility in carrying out the tradition. This form of mechanical solidarity also reflects an equality of participation,³¹ in which every individual, regardless of social or economic standing, offers *passolo'* (gifts in the form of money or goods) with a shared purpose: to help others mark a significant occasion. Collectively, this form of solidarity fosters a sense of belonging that reinforces the group identity of the Bugis community in Kuala Mandor B.³²

Massolo' also demonstrates a division of social tasks. Members of the community who provide *passolo'* do not only offer material assistance but also bear part of the economic responsibility of the event host. This creates a reciprocal system that maintains social balance. It forms a mechanical solidarity where everyone depends on one another to meet their life needs.³³ Concept of social debt embedded in this tradition resonates with Marcel Mauss's theory of moral obligation in gift exchange.³⁴ Mauss explained that a gift is never free from the moral obligation to reciprocate.³⁵ In the *massolo'* tradition, the records of *passolo'* gifts serve as a symbolic mechanism to ensure the continuity of reciprocal relationships within the community.

Massolo' tradition is a form of social solidarity expression that has become an integral part of the community's life the implementation of this tradition supports the concept of *mashlahat* (public interest) regulated in Islam through the application

²⁹ Emile Durkheim, "From Mechanical to Organic Solidarity," *Sociology: Introductory Readings* 2, no. 1 (2010): 25–29.

³⁰ Durkheim, "From Mechanical to Organic Solidarity."

³¹ Namkje Koudenburg et al., "Uniform and Complementary Social Interaction: Distinct Pathways to Solidarity," *PLoS One* 10, no. 6 (2015): e0129061–e0129061.

³² Peter Thijssen, "From Mechanical to Organic Solidarity, and Back: With Honneth beyond Durkheim," *European Journal of Social Theory* 15, no. 4 (2012): 454–70, <https://doi.org/10.1177/1368431011423589>.

³³ Thijssen, "From Mechanical to Organic Solidarity, and Back", 454–70.

³⁴ Marcel Mauss, *The Gift: The Form and Reason for Exchange in Archaic Societies* (Taylor & Francis, 2024). 2nd Edition, <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003572350>.

³⁵ Mauss, *The Gift: The Form and Reason for Exchange in Archaic Societies*.

of mutual aid to carry out certain events.³⁶ This tradition helps maintain social harmony by creating solidarity through collective participation in important moments, such as weddings. This support reflects Islamic values, which place social relationships as one of the aspects that must be maintained. *massolo'* can be seen as an implementation of religious values, particularly in terms of strengthening *silaturahmi* (social ties). In Islam, maintaining family and brotherhood ties is part of social worship.³⁷ By helping one another through *passolo'*, the community brings to life the teachings of mutual assistance encouraged in the Qur'an (Al-Maidah: 2). The social norms that underpin this tradition often create complex dynamics in society.³⁸

From the perspective of Islamic jurisprudence, *massolo'* can be classified as '*urf shahih*' a customary practice recognized as valid under Islamic law, as it does not contravene *nash* (scriptural texts), does not conflict with the principles of *maqashid al-syariah*, and serves a genuine public interest (*mashlaha*). The act of giving *Passolo'* aligns with the Islamic concept of *hibah* (voluntary gift) and *ta'awun* (mutual assistance), both of which are encouraged in the Quran (Al-Maidah: 2) and Hadith. Therefore, in its original form, *massolo'* does not contradict Islamic law. However, this legal standing is conditional. Once the practice drifts from voluntary giving (*tabarru'*) toward a socially enforced obligation resembling debt (*qard*), its Islamic legal status becomes questionable and calls for reexamination through contextual *ijtihad*.

An imbalance in how this tradition is carried out can give rise to potential harm (*mudarat*) that disrupts social harmony. One such imbalance involves social expectations about the size of *passolo'* given by invited guests. In some cases, community members who contribute a modest amount of *passolo'* may face reproach or social criticism from those around them. This not only causes embarrassment but can also undermine a person's standing within the community. Conversely, hosts face pressure to reciprocate with a *passolo'* of equal or greater value at a future event, even when doing so exceeds their financial means.

This imbalance also creates the potential for social conflict. When a host feels that the amount of *passolo'* received does not meet expectations it can breed resentment and strain personal relationships. Moreover, the social burden on economically vulnerable members can heighten psychological stress, as they feel compelled to meet traditional expectations even when circumstances make this difficult. Taken together, these dynamics reveal that although *massolo'* supports

³⁶ Mohammad Hashim Kamali, "Maqasid Al-Shari'ah: The Objectives of Islamic Law," *Islamic Studies* 38, no. 2 (1999): 193–208.

³⁷ Benjamin T. Gurrentz, "A Brotherhood of Believers: Religious Identity and Boundary-Work in a Christian Fraternity," *Sociology of Religion* 75, no. 1 (2014): 113–35.

³⁸ Tom R. Burns and Thomas Dietz, "Cultural Evolution: Social Rule Systems, Selection and Human Agency," *International Sociology* 7, no. 3 (1992): 259–83, <https://doi.org/10.1177/026858092007003001>.

mashlahat by creating solidarity and resource redistribution, its implementation must be guided so that it remains consistent with principles of social justice. Managing community expectations, raising awareness about flexibility within the tradition, and reaffirming the values of *gotong royong* (cooperation) free from coercion—are important steps to ensure the tradition remains a source of benefit rather than harm for individuals and the community.

Beyond the individual economic and psychological pressures already identified, the transformation of *massolo'* carries broader social consequences. For women who are disproportionately involved in managing the logistics of contribution and reciprocation, the burden of tracking social debts and ensuring timely returns can constitute a form of invisible labor that intensifies domestic stress. At the community level, the coercive dimension of *massolo'* risks creating social stratification between those who can afford to participate generously and those who cannot, potentially undermining the very solidarity the tradition was designed to produce. In the multiethnic context of Kuala Mandor B, where Bugis families interact with Malay, Dayak, and other communities, an unexamined *Massolo'* obligation can also function as an implicit boundary marker, inadvertently excluding non-Bugis neighbors from full community participation.

In the aspect of giving, *massolo'* is positioned as an action that reflects two primary dimensions: gifts and donations. Gifts represent sincerity in giving without expecting anything in return,³⁹ while donations reflect a form of material solidarity intended to help the host cover the costs of the event. For many community members, *massolo'* is therefore understood as a form of *gotong royong* that strengthens kinship ties and social cohesion. However, this interpretation is not entirely uniform within the community. Alongside the understanding of *massolo'* as voluntary giving, another perception has gradually emerged. The practice of recording contributions and the expectation that similar assistance will be provided in future events have created a pattern of reciprocal exchange among community members.⁴⁰ In this context, individuals often feel encouraged to return the contribution when the original giver organizes a similar ceremony.⁴¹

The question of whether *massolo'* constitutes a religious ritual or simply a customary practice (*adah*) is key to evaluating its long-term legitimacy. In its current form, the tradition contains no formally prescribed religious elements—no obligatory recitation, no clerical officiation, and no textual basis that would elevate it to the status of *ibadah* (worship). It functions, instead, as a form of *muamalah*

³⁹ Barry Schwartz, “The Social Psychology of the Gift,” *American Journal of Sociology* 73, no. 1 (1967): 1–11, <https://doi.org/10.1086/224432>.

⁴⁰ Sandy Bogaert et al., “Social Value Orientation and Cooperation in Social Dilemmas: A Review and Conceptual Model,” *British Journal of Social Psychology* 47, no. 3 (2008): 453–80, <https://doi.org/10.1348/014466607X244970>.

⁴¹ Macneil, “Exchange Revisited: Individual Utility and Social Solidarity.”

(social transaction) governed by customary norms rather than religious prescription. However, participants consistently invoke Islamic values *silaturahmi*, *ta'awun*, and *mashlahat* as the moral foundation of the practice, pointing to an organic process of Islamization in which the tradition has absorbed Islamic ethical framing without formally becoming a religious rite. This distinction matters: as *muamalah*, *Massolo'* remains subject to the Islamic principle of *lā ḍarar wa lā ḍirār* (no harm shall be inflicted), meaning that any implementation causing demonstrable harm—economic, psychological, or social—can be legitimately reformed or restricted under Islamic legal reasoning.

The preceding findings indicate that reciprocity is the central mechanism through which *massolo'* changes its normative character. When contribution records, collective memory, and concern for reputation operate together, the practice no longer functions solely as voluntary generosity. It becomes a socially enforced expectation that is experienced most heavily by families with limited economic capacity.

A significant contemporary challenge to the *massolo'* tradition stems from the growing trend of modest weddings and interethnic or interfaith marriages. In cases where one partner is not from the Bugis community, the normative expectations embedded in *massolo'* including the obligation to return contributions—may not be understood or shared by the non-Bugis family, creating potential asymmetries of obligation and misunderstanding. Similarly, among younger Bugis couples who prefer modest celebrations, the social pressure to receive and reciprocate *passolo'* contributions can generate friction between personal values and community expectations. This raises the question of whether *massolo'* can evolve through normative negotiation, enabling participation to be genuinely voluntary rather than structurally compelled—a form of *ijtima'i ijtihad* (collective legal reasoning) that preserves cultural identity while accommodating contemporary social realities.

This transformation should therefore be understood not as the disappearance of solidarity, but as a distortion of solidarity under conditions of social pressure. The tradition continues to contain strong values of kinship and mutual aid; however, those values require normative correction so that participation remains voluntary, proportionate, and free from reputational coercion.

Islamic Legal Evaluation and Legal Reintegration of *Massolo'*

From the perspective of Islamic law, the original form of *massolo'* may be classified as a valid customary practice (*'urf sahih*) because it is rooted in mutual assistance, strengthens social ties, and does not inherently contradict scriptural norms. If *passolo'* is given as *hibah*, *sedekah*, or *tabarru'*, the practice supports the objectives of Islamic law by promoting social welfare (*maṣlahah*) and communal solidarity. In this form, *massolo'* remains a permissible and socially beneficial expression of Bugis customary identity.

The legal status becomes more problematic when reciprocity is socially enforced through records, stigma, or reputational pressure. When a contribution is treated as something that must be returned in equal or greater amount, the practice moves away from *tabarru'* and begins to resemble a social debt. This shift risks conflicting with the principle of *lā ʿdarar wa lā ʿdirār* because it can produce economic, psychological, and relational harm, particularly for vulnerable families. In such circumstances, the issue is not the existence of the custom itself, but the coercive mechanism that distorts its original ethical purpose.

Legal reintegration is therefore necessary. This does not require abolishing *massolo'*, but rather restoring its voluntary character through community education, religious guidance, and customary deliberation. Customary and religious leaders may jointly emphasize that *passolo'* is not a legally or religiously enforceable debt; contribution records should function only as family memory rather than repayment registers; and families should be encouraged to give according to ability without shame or social sanction. Through this reintegration, *massolo'* can remain part of living customary law while being realigned with the Islamic principles of sincerity, benefit, proportionality, and non-harm.

Conclusion

This study confirms that the *massolo'* tradition in Kuala Mandor B Village has undergone a significant shift in meaning. Originally practiced as a manifestation of social solidarity and collective support in communal celebrations, this tradition has gradually transformed into a social practice burdened with unwritten obligations. The findings show that the systematic recording of contributions (*passolo'*) creates a mechanism of social debt that implicitly binds community members to reciprocate with an equal or greater contribution in the future. While the tradition continues to strengthen kinship ties, the normative expectation of reciprocity generates economic and psychological pressure, particularly for lower-income families.

Theoretically, this study contributes to Islamic law and socio-legal studies by showing how living customary law can undergo normative distortion when solidarity is reorganized through coercive social expectations. In its original form, *massolo'* can be understood as *ʿurf ṣaḥīḥ* because it embodies mutual assistance, voluntary giving (*tabarru'*), and social welfare (*maṣlaḥah*). However, when *passolo'* is treated as a repayable obligation, the practice risks contradicting the Islamic legal principles of voluntary giving and the prohibition of harm (*lā ʿdarar wa-lā ʿdirār*). The article therefore proposes legal reintegration as a framework for preserving local tradition while restoring its ethical alignment with Islamic law.

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