

# The Hand-Print Tradition of the Community from Maros Karst

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# The Hand-Print Tradition of the Community from Maros Karst

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## ABSTRACT

This study aims to describe the ritual of the handprint tradition (mabbedda' bola) and its symbolic message to obtain an overview of the essence of the handprint concept in the culture of the Karst Maros community. Methods of collecting data through literature research, in-depth interviews, and participatory observation. In this research, triangulation of data, sources, and methods was carried out. Three aspects were discussed: (1) the material of the hand-print; (2) the hand-print ritual process; and (3) the symbolic meaning of the hand-print. The results of this research indicate that hand-print is not only mythical-magical, but the process also shows gender statements, messages about the meaning of home and family, including statements of life existence or strengthening one's soul after going through a disaster.

**Keywords:** Karst Maros, handprint, home, symbol.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Prehistoric hand-prints painting is a universal culture found on almost all continents. In Indonesia, prehistoric hand-prints are found in South Sulawesi (Heekeren, 1958), Southeast Sulawesi (Kosasih, 1982; 1987), East Kalimantan (Chazine, 1994), Maluku (Roder, 1938), and West Papua (Arifin, et.al, 2004). In South Sulawesi, hundreds of scattered hand-print sites are quite close to each other and clustered together to provide evidence of cultural traces of early modern human populations in the Maros karst region. The group of earlier inhabitants who occupied the foot of the southern side of the island of Sulawesi, left the world's oldest hand-print at the Leang Timpuseng site, dated to a minimum of 39,900 years ago (Aubert, et.al., 2014: 225). Today's people of Maros prehistoric hand-print as *petta*, meaning drawing or *ukiri*, parallel in meaning to painting (Mahmud, 2021: 217).

The prehistoric hand-print of Maros was first recorded from the Leang Pattae site and published by C.H.M Heeren-Palm in 1950 are still generally viewed as mere myth-magical and religious expressions. Until now, Solomon Reinach's view (1903: 257-266) has become one of the sources of concepts that have influenced scientists in explaining the symbolic meaning of prehistoric paintings, namely: (1)

sympathetic magic, namely rituals with magical objects or symbolic actions related to events or people who are respected; (2) hunting magic, driven by hopes of successful hunting; (3) fertility magic, namely the belief in the existence of forces beyond human reach that affect fertility related to human survival in the world, both natural and hereditary.

Although the developed theories have explained the meaning of prehistoric hand-print in terms of myth-magical and religion until now the description of ritual practice is still difficult to explain so analogical material is still very much needed from ethnoarchaeological studies. Several ethnoarchaeological studies of handprints in South Sulawesi, including the study of Driwantoro (1989), Muhammad Nur (2011) and R. Cecep Eka Permana and colleagues (Permana, 2014: 149-202; Permana, 2015: 125-154). From their research, it is illustrated that the rite of printing the hand is related to *tolak bala*, that is fight against dark powers. The results of this research strengthen the notion that hand-print paintings on the walls of prehistoric caves are related to myth-magical. All related studies seem to tend to elaborate on myth-magical issues and do not yet have ethnoarchaeological references to develop interpretations of concepts and symbolic messages from a rite that may be related to the inheritance of basic human knowledge. Ethnoarchaeological studies of

handprints in South Sulawesi are very important to be further elaborated to find a description of the meaning of handprints in the context of the principles of local wisdom to add references for future research. The question, is handprint have any meaning other than myth-magical and religious-magical aspects? What is the meaning of the handprint rite in the context of the life of the Maros karst people?

In the prehistoric area of Maros (South Sulawesi, Indonesia), the tradition of hand-print when entering a new house is still carried out today, an important cultural event is documented because it is rarely carried out due to the influence of modernization. Currently not practised as frequently as it was in the past, some families from Dusun Leko (Kaluku) still preserve that tradition, and much fewer do so in Kampung Leang-Leang and Tompobalang; while Kampung Berua (Rammang-Rammang) has completely abandoned it since the 1970s. Muhammad Nur suspects that the hand-printing tradition is evidence of the cultural contact of the prehistoric Toala cave dwellers with Austronesian immigrants, the ancestors of the present Bugis and Makassar people (Nur, 2011: 39). More are needed to contribute ethnographic data so that the reference for archaeological analogies can continue to develop from time to time through interviews and observations of hand-print tradition. The current study aims to investigate the significance of hand-print through participatory observation and interviews in the hand-print (*mabbedda bola*) tradition, seeking to validate the religious aspects deemed to be the ultimate part of the traditional communities.

## 2. HAND-PRINT PRACTICE IN MAROS

The hand-printing tradition is called *mabbedda' bola* by the community in the Maros area, a landscape where hundreds of prehistoric painting cave sites have been found. *Mabbedda' bola* or hand-print practice is a ritual that is carried out on moving into a new house. In Buginese context, *mabbedda' bola* means to smear a house, which those of their Makassarese counterparts refer to as *a'barra balla*, tracing its naming from the powder used to mark hand-prints. The naming is related to the traditional hand-print material used in the ritual as well as a mixture of Bugis-Makassar women's powder. Making handprints is a discursive symbol. In Sussane Langer's conception, the discursive symbol is the meaning of a worldview within the reach of logic (Gazali, 2017: 60).

*Mabbedda'* or using powder for the Maros and Bugis-Makassar people in general has two purposes and meanings in practice, namely to beautify and protect. *Mabbedda'* is done to improve women's self-image; while in daily routine activities, it is used to protect

themselves from the heat or the scorching heat of the sun. In the *mabbedda' bola* ritual, the mixture of ingredients is the same as that of Bugis and Makassar women's powder. The similarity reflects the "discourse of analogy", that the house is like a woman.

### 2.1. The Ingredients of Hand Prints in *Mabbedda' Bola*

The hand-print material in the *mabbedda' bola* ritual (entering the house), is made from a mixture of *labbu* (rice flour) mixture; *uyyi'* (turmeric), *panini'* (Bugis) or Bangle (*Zingiber cassumunar*), dan and *Daung Tampung Tawara'* or tampung fresh leaves (*Cheilocostus speciosus*). These ingredients are ground until smooth, then put in *palekko* (pottery pot) which is already filled with water, then stirred until it looks light yellow.

The *mabbedda' bola* tradition contains a symbolic narrative of hope that can be understood through the statement of the material context used. From the meaning of language, the material symbol contains a prayer to get permanent or visible sustenance (*dakki'*) and continuous (*labbu*) to achieve to the life of *salewangeng*. The use of rice flour (*labbu'*) is because it is seen as *pa'dakki*, which is a symbol of hope so that the results of work are visible and not scattered, unlike when using rice that is sown directly. *Labbu* in the Bugis language also means "long" (time), so the use of rice flour contains a narrative meaning of the discursive symbol of a prayer of hope for a long, healthy, sustainable family life and a harmonious family.

A mixture of turmeric or *uyyi'* (*Curcuma longa*), besides being useful for gluing materials on the stamp media, also means *mita unyi'-unyi'*, which means seeing the golden sheen. In the view of the Maros Karst people, turmeric represents gold, so mixing it in the *mabbedda' bola* contains the hope of being able to see life bright and firm like a golden lustre that sticks firmly/faithfully. They see turmeric as a symbol of the narrative of hope "*riboko kunyi'-kunyi'ka*", namely in the future it will be brighter and reach the light (voice)". While *Tampung Tawar'* means continuing to shine brightly (eternally). *Tampung Tawara'* or *Rimpang pacing* is an annual herbal plant that is also known by the Karst Maros people as an antidote (antitoxic) and medicinal ingredients for various diseases.

*Panini* (Bugis) or *bale* (Makassar) is one of the spice plants used by women in Maros as a mixture of *mabbedda' bola*. Every day, women use *panini* (*Zingiber purpureum* Roxb.) as a mixture of powder and spices. Maros karst people use *panini* as an ingredient for worming, phlegm laxative, blood purifier, fever and they drink it to shrink the stomach after giving birth.

*Panini* is also considered a protector from human interference (*Parakang*), namely a demonic human figure who can change shape, --- animals, plants or objects he wants. *Parakang* is considered a person who has misunderstood black magic and likes to suck the intestines of babies and the blood of mothers after childbirth or the sick. If *Parakang* is inhaled, they

believe they will suffer from stomach pain, stool mixed with blood which can be fatal, and even death. *Panini* is used to protect babies, pregnant women and sick people by wearing like pins that are attached to clothes using safety pins to increase the power of magical shields because *parakang* is also considered to be afraid of the element of iron.

**Table 1.** Ingredients for handprints in mabbedda' bola tradition

No	Ingredients	Lokal Name	Meaning of the word	Binomial Name	Community Utilization	Meaning in Rites	Source of Meaning
1	Rice flour	<i>Labbu'</i>	Long (time); eternal	--	Main food and powder	cultural fundamentals	Word and utilization
2	Turmeric	<i>Uyyi'</i>	Yellow (gold)	<i>Curcuma longa</i>	Powder, Spices; medicinal ingredients	Symbol of hope	Color
3	Bangle	<i>Panini'</i>	Be careful; Protect yourself (soul/heart)	<i>Zingiber cassumunar</i>	Powder, spices, and medicinal ingredients	Antidote to immaterial danger	Word and utilization
4	Galangal Leaves	<i>Leko' tampung Tawara or tepu tawa</i>	Able to ward off	<i>Cheilocostus speciosus</i>	Powder, medicine and antidote	Material hazard	Word and Utilization

In addition to handprints, in the *mabbedda' bola* tradition, a pair of chickens and a clay cauldron (*palekko*) are also prepared for a container of water mixture of *passili'* (reject reinforcements) to be sprinkled by parents/in-laws in the procession. The chicken used in the ritual requires *manuk cau komba'*, which is a chicken that has been able to mate. *Manuk cau komba'* signs: if the male can crow, has spurs, and can mate; while the hen can lay eggs immediately.

a symbol of hope and affirmation of the value of wisdom, as the basis for protection from fear of the supernatural outside of humans. *Tuli* wood leaves with the hope of *tulibaji* (always getting good); *tammate* wood leaves in the hope of always getting eternal existence; sugarcane leaves with the hope of always getting sweet and useful to others; *bunga rappo* (betel nut) with the hope of always bearing fruit and success continuously; *bunga pucuk kepala* means more old age, the benefits are wider; the *sirih* leaf means to always maintain self-respect (*siri'*); the soursop leaf is used to mean that you are rich physically and mentally, not influenced by the temptations of the devil and not greedy for illicit wealth.

The water in the *palekko* (clay cauldron) as the *passili'* is a mixture of concoction of *daung kaju tuli* (*tuli* wood leaves), *kaju temmate* leaves, sugar cane leaves, *rappo* (betel nut) flowers, coconut shoots, *daung srikaya* (soursop leaves). The mixed ingredients contain

**Table 2.** Passili' Ingredients for the mabbedda bola rite

NO	Ingredients	Lokal Name	Binomial Name	Community Utilization	Meaning	Meaning Context
1	<i>Sirih</i> leaves	<i>Leko' ota</i>	<i>Piper betle L.</i>	Happy (bersugi); Medicine	Value of <i>siri'</i>	Word
2	Soursop leaves	<i>Leko Serikaja</i>	<i>Annona squamosa L.</i>	Medicine (fever)	Hope	Word
3	<i>Tuli</i> wood leaves	<i>Aju tuli</i>	--	Firewood; splash stalk	Hope	Word
4	<i>Aju temmate</i> leaves	<i>Leko' aju temmate</i>	<i>Lannea coromandelica Houtt. Merr.</i>	Medicine (wound; diabetes)	Hope	Word
5	Sugarcane leaves	<i>Leko' tebbu</i>	<i>Saccharum officinarum Linn</i>	Sweetener & snacks	Hope	Taste
6	Betel nut flowers	<i>Bunga rappo/alosi</i>	<i>Annona squamosa</i>	Medicine (digestion)	Hope	Nature
7	Coconut shoots	<i>Bunga kaluku</i>	<i>Spatha Cocos nucifera</i>	Vinegar; alcohol	Hope	Nature

In the context of the meaning of material *passili'*, reject bala contains a discursive symbol of rejecting "bad character" which is seen as "bala", so that goodness will come to achieve the life of *salewangeng*, namely sincerity (*siangmaseang*), patience (*sabbara'*), and simplicity (*ma'rusung-rusung*). Buginese saying

"*Inimmawa Sabbarae*". A line that goes: *deceng enre'ki ri bola* is meant to ask for good fortune in the house. Their local wisdom illustrates the view that the plague that is considered the root of calamity for human life is a bad character.

**Table 3.** Dichotomy of the character of hope or otherwise bad character in the context of the meaning of Passili' ingredients

No	Ingredients	Hope Character	Bad Characters ( <i>Bala'</i> )
1	<i>Sirih</i> leaves	Dignified (civilized)	Disgrace (uncivilized)
2	Soursop leaves	Thankful and sincere	greedy
3	<i>Tuli</i> wood leaves ( <i>ajutuli</i> )	Positive Thinking (lucky)	negative thinking (damn)
4	<i>Aju temmate</i> leaves	Eternity of existence (actualized)	Low self-esteem (marginal)
5	Sugarcane leaves	Helpful and loved	Poor and hated
6	Betel nut flowers	Diligent (always successful)	Lazy (always fail)
7	Coconut shoots	Mature (adult)	Labile (childish)

**2.2. The Procession of Mabbedda Bola Tradition**

*Mabbedda' bola* (Buginese) or its Makasere equivalent *a'barra balla* is an integral part of life in the karst area of Maros, allowing them to entertain their imagination about *assennu-sennuang*, that is their dreams of good fortune and goal (*telos*) of family life. In general, the ritual takes place around 8 or 9 in the morning, when the sun tilts 45 degrees or the exposure to the sun does not create any reflection (*taung-taung* or *bajo-bajo*). All the ingredients must be prepared before the *panrita bola*, the ceremony priest, reads mantras and prayers. Next, the *mabbedda' bola* officer leads the family and all those present around the house, walking to the right three times (counter clockwise), then turning left (clockwise) once until in front of the stairs. No one is allowed to overtake *panrita bola* throughout the procession.

When turning, parents/in-laws and homeowners take turns inscribed handprint on the outer side of the post. The rotation pattern in the traditional practice of *mabbedda' bola*, produces hand-prints at several posts, sometimes even forming a stacked images. In the procession around the house as an effort to *passili' bola* (Bugis) or *appasili' balla* (Makassar) in every corner, *Panrita bola* will stop reciting mantras/prayer, followed by the parents/in-laws of the owner of the house while sprinkling the *passili'* water concoction that was brought. Here it is seen that the symbolic act of rejecting reinforcements is not a handprint, but a *passili'* water concoction. Hand-print as a symbol of "approvalessing" which contains a cultural statement.



**Figure 1** The house on stilts (left) and the hand-print traces (right) of the mabbedda bola rite on October 4, 2018 in Leang-Leang Village.

In the procession around the house, the father/mother/in-law sprinkle water from *palekko* (clay cauldron) onto all the outer pillars using *daung passili'* which consists of *daung passili'*, *daung parang-parang*, and *daung takka*. The *passili' bola* procession aims to keep the house and everything in it cool and safe; fortify and stay away from harm (reject reinforcements) magic and supernatural powers in nature, where homeowners are expected to be safe from danger with good character. *Passili'* means cleaning (purification) and protecting the house from harm and evil things. Symbolically, it is meant to clean up dirt or bad luck from the home environment, both real and unreal (occult).

Families and neighbours who came from behind when circling the house, took part in picking up all the garbage, either used wood, scraps of material or anything that was passed and threw it under the house. This symbolic act contains the meaning of hope that the owner of the house can collect sustenance easily and

sustainably. The actions of family and neighbours in this procession stage contain a symbolic message that the hope of sustenance will be abundant through the approval and assistance of fellow human beings, namely family, neighbours, and everyone who comes to the house. They view that sustenance is not only the result of one's work but also related to all relatives and their social environment which is the basis for cooperation. This is a deep dream painting of the reality that every family in the Maros karst area hopes for, namely a prosperous and harmonious life which they call *salewangeng*.

After the procession around the house finished, the people present gathered in front of the stairs. *Panrita bola* stands at the front, right opposite the stairs. *Panrita bola* is a person who controls the ins and outs of building a house, both physically and metaphysically. Behind the *panrita bola*, the next second row consists of parents (father/mother/in-law) who will go up to the house; then in the third row followed by the husband/wife of the owner of the house, then in the next row the family and neighbours and other guests. (see, figure 2).

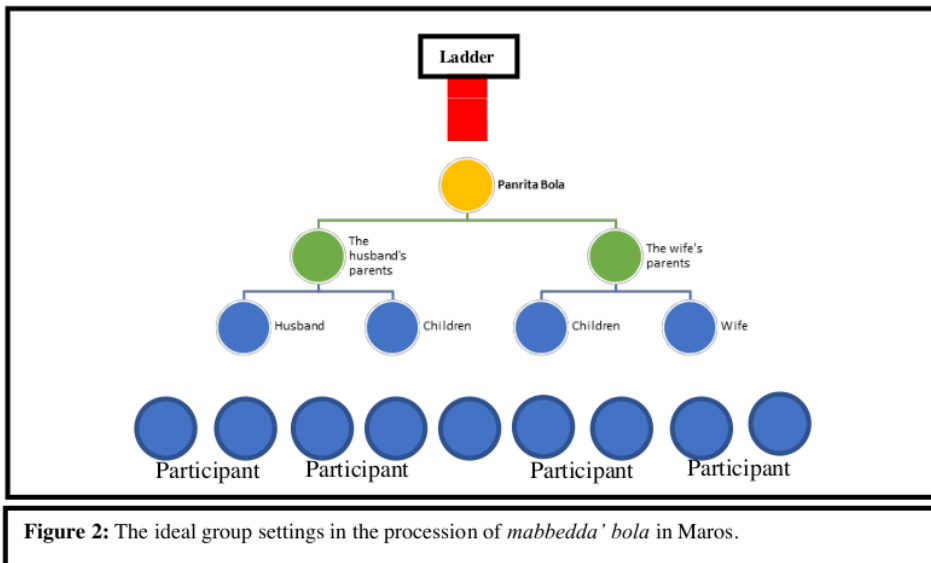


Figure 2: The ideal group settings in the procession of *mabbedda' bola* in Maros.



Figure 3 Process adat *mabbedda' bola*, held by Haji Lahab's Family, at Kampung Pakalu, Maros, on August 17, 2020.

*Panrita bola* then went up first, followed by the family and everyone present. The owner (husband/wife) couple climbed the house carrying the chicken and headed for two different sides of the window. The

rooster is held by the wife (female), while the hen is held by the husband (male). In front of the open window, the couple (husband/wife) of the owner of the house stared for a moment, then threw the chicken they were held outside. Chickens released from the window are taboo to be slaughtered until they have children. The pair of chickens are used as mother pets and guardians of the atmosphere of life in the home environment. This conception is based on their view, that the house must always be inhabited by living beings.

When the pair of house owners go to the window, the parents (father/mother/in-law) go to the centre pole of the house (*possi bola*) for make one hand-print at a position more than one meter above the floor. In the *possi bola* that has been stamped by their hands, the parents (father/mother/in-law) of the homeowner hang *sennu-sennuang* (good habits), in the form of a bunch of bananas (*utti*) with glutinous rice, brown sugar (*golla eja*), and coconut (*kaluku*) as a symbol of the family's

hope that the owner of the house given a *te'ne-te'ne* life (happy and safe).

### 2.3. Final Prayers

At the end of the procession, the *panrita bola* sits facing the food package in *kappara'* and recites a mantra/prayer. The outline of the prayer offered by the family who owns the house led by *panrita bola* concerns the objectives: (1) rejecting reinforcements (*tolak bala*) from the four main elements of the universe (macrocosm), namely: *api* (fire), *anging* (wind), *wae* (water), and *tana* (earth). In her prayer, the *panrita bola* expressed hope that the family of the owner of the house would be safe from harm: the fire did not burn; blowing strong winds; the deluge that washes away and drowns; and landslides do not override, (2) hope for happiness in life. For them, the good life is happy to meet the standard of living as a discursive concept contained in a mixture of handprints and innate produce that is hung in the centre of the house.

## 3. THE MEANING OF HAND-PRINT TRADITION

The handprints have closely been associated with paintings of religious-magical or myth-magical significance (Kosasih, 1987: 18-19), reject reinforcements (*tolak-bala*) and signs of grief or depression. This view is in line with the theory of cultural stages that is still commonly held by humanities and social scientists that culture goes through ontological, mythical, and functional stages (Paursen, 1988: 34-54). With this view, the meaning of other cultural statements has the potential to go unnoticed, moreover, there is very little evidence of ritual practice that can describe the ritual behaviour. With this ethnographic analogy, of course, it is hoped that it can provide analogy material for the development of arkeologi interpretation. The *mabbedda' bola* tradition gives us the possibility to find out evidence of three cultural statements concerning prehistoric culture based on the analogy of the ritual process of making handprints practised by the Maros people: (1) existential expressions; (2) gender aspects; and (3) the message of family meaning.

### 3.1. Existence Statement

Existence is the object of abstract thinking or direct cognitive experience (Bagus, 1996: 187). Soren Kierkegaard (Hamersma, 1985: 73) views human existence in three levels of attitude towards life. **First**, is the aesthetic attitude, namely the continuous effort of humans to openly choose a better life. The hand-print is understood as a sign of social "approval" for the

existence that the owner of the house is ready to be born and in the heart. The hand-print on the outer pillar of the house is a sign of the main physical part to express the family's acknowledgment and their willingness to share to strengthen their common existence, namely the dignity of the family (*siri'*).

The hand-print tradition in the Maros karst culture has two meanings according to the aesthetic attitude context: (1) a sign of a natural or artificial thing, event or situation; the sign refers to the object, meaning that there is a relationship between the sign and the object. For example, hand-prints are made when entering a new home, changing household stairs or a family member survives an accident. Until the 1970s the ritual of making hand-print was not only when going up to a new house, but also during a traditional wedding party (*mappacci*) and the replacement of household stairs. In fact, in the Karst area of Maros, some old people tell stories that if someone survives a big disaster, they will make a hand-print which means a sign to strengthen the soul of the person affected by the disaster that almost took their life; a statement of the existence of life that the person concerned is still there to continue the mission of life after surviving a disaster. (2) discursive symbols, namely rational signs or signs that can be understood logically, are revealed in literacy and the analysis of statements (Gazali, 2017: 60). The essence of the practice of rejecting reinforcements (*tolak-bala*) is in the hand-print, as is the context of the meaning of the material symbol (see table 1).

**Second**, ethical attitude, namely listening to conscience with awareness of limitations beyond their capabilities and feeling the need for protection in social life. The hand-prints become a central sign of ethical action that symbolically reflects attitudes and behaviour. Their ethical attitude is shown in the involvement of extended family members to give a hand-print by giving the main role to the *panrita bola* and parents giving a sign of approval. The awareness of their hopes is poured out in the *passili'* procession, as in the context of the meaning of the symbol for the ingredients (see table 2), namely the hope of goodness, prosperity, benefits and dignity (*siri'*) throughout life. This practice depicts a symbol of hope that the way to obtain goodness is *salewageng*.

**Third**, religious attitude, namely existence in relation to belief in the Creator and worship and submission to His decision. The existence of religious attitudes is depicted in the *mabbedda' bola* ritual in a symbolic statement of prayer about hopes, expressed by actions and the narrative meaning of the materials used. When the hand-print is attached to the pole, the person holding the *mabbedda' bola* is also followed by a *mappasili* whose material contains the meaning of hope.

In the narration of mantras and *hand-print* materials, the meaning of the effort to reject reinforcements (*tolak-bala*) is presented by *panrita bola*.

### 3.2. Gender Statement

The hand-print not only contains a magical meaning with the power of the universe but also contains a statement of the concept of gender. Gender is understood as differences in values and behaviours that can be identified in the social construction of relationships between women and men (Neufeldt, 1984: 561; Showalter, 1989: 3). The structural-functional view of the division of roles related to gender (Umar, 1999: 53), can be identified through cultural attributes (Narwoko & Bagong Yuryanto, 2004: 334). In gender analysis, there are four main indicators, namely access, benefits, participation, and control (Anonymous, 2007: 3-4).

From the access indicators, it was found that women were represented symbolically by the hand-printed attributes used in the *mabbedda' bola* rite procession, namely the powder material commonly used by women. The use of these materials shows that in the culture of the Maros Karst, the house is seen as legitimate property and the world of women culturally. The use of materials whose daily access is closer to women, for example, illustrates the meaning of the relationship between handprints and the social construction of Maros women in the context of the home or affirmation of reproductive roles. *Labbu'* represents the element of rice, an ingredient that is highly valued in the Maros and Bugis-Makassar karst cultures in general. *Labbu'* (rice flour) shows a gender relationship, comes from rice (women's symbol) which is produced from men's efforts and processed through a process of pounding in a mortar by women. *Labbu'* also describes the relationship of women's beauty powder as an honour for men.

The benefits of hand-printed symbols confirm the customary norm, that if one day a family gets divorced, then the right to own the house and everything in it becomes the property of the wife, not the husband. This conception describes indicators of control of cultural values in the context of protecting the sustainability of women's lives (social saving). Symbolically, the handprints of both biological parents and parents-in-law who are the subject of the ritual around the outer pillar of the house and the centre pole of the house (*possi bola*) represent the true protection of the woman (the owner of the house) from both sides of the family. In this case, the property that can be divided is only land and gardens, while the land, houses, buildings, and all their contents belong to the woman (the wife left behind).

Women in the *mabbedda' bola* procession are the main actors in making hand-prints, while men have the main role of sprinkling *passili'*. The participation of family and neighbours in collecting garbage and throwing it under the house illustrates the value of *siri* or the value of shame (Abidin, 1999: 98) and *pecce* which means solidarity, empathy, and brotherhood (Abidin, 1999: 202). They also view that sustenance is not only the result of the individual work of the homeowner, but also the support of all relatives and their social environment which is a form of cooperation (*siangmaseang*).

The participation of family and neighbours in making handprints on certain parts of the house (walls or beams), then collecting garbage and throwing it under the house illustrates stating to be part of the value of *siri'* or shame (Abidin, 1999: 98) and *pecce* which means solidarity, empathy, brotherhood (Abidin, 1999: 202). They also view that sustenance is not only the result of the individual work of the homeowner but also the support of all relatives and their social environment which is a form of cooperation (*siangmaseng*).

The meaning of gender relations in access and control is also revealed from the statement of conditions and prohibitions (*pemali*). Before the stage of the hand-print procession on the pillars around the house is complete, the wife is not allowed (*pemali*) to go up or enter the house. If there is an important need, only the husband can enter the house. The wife is not allowed to enter the house before the hand-print ritual procession is complete as a sign that the woman (wife) who will be the real owner is protected and cared for, escorted by her husband and family into a new world with dignity.

### 3.3. Family Message Statement

Handprints are oriented to habituation of family meaning messages in their minds: (i) reference mark; (ii) social capital sign, and (iii) family sign. . The hand is seen as the main instrument of ethos and ethical habituation. Giving a handprint on the outer side of the pole shows a picture discourse that the hand is the main part of the habit of the mind: producing, giving, protecting, nurturing, and developing family dignity. The discursive symbol gives a message that to achieve a prosperous family (*salewangeng*) hands must work a lot (diligent and diligent), many hands must be nurtured (honest); hands should give a lot (care); hands must pray a lot (sincerely). The handprint is a symbol of practice that clearly shows the spirit of work, honesty, warmth, sincerity, and joy.

Handprints also provide social integration (social capital) reminder messages. *Siri na pecce* (shame and care) is promoted by the parents since the early days,

making it only logical for them to leave a handprint on their children's house. People of Maros take it to heart that it is a blessing from the parents that will allow them to go further in life. The parents have shown them a lot of exemplary actions to choose from. Their handprints are a sign of reminder messages that parents/in-laws are the centre and orientation in navigating the joys and sorrows of household life as expected by customs. A handprint in the tradition of *mabbedda' bola* is a reminder for a family to move as one, creating social cohesion.

The handprint tradition also shows a symbolic narrative of knowledge of the resilience of the basic resources of an agricultural family: rice flour (*labbu'*), medicine, and spices. The narrative shows the multi-complex relationship of life in an agrarian society, that the pumpkin with its adhesive power becomes the basis of a symbol of integration, accompanied by the hope of protection (medicine) and enjoyment of life (spice). The yellow colour of the handprint material represents the highest value in the cultural perception of the Maros people, namely gold.

When compared with the hand-print material on the red ancient cave, we can find the main essence of the perception of life control. Ochre (Fe<sub>2</sub>O<sub>3</sub>) is derived from hematite pigmented clay or reddish minerals containing oxidized iron or iron that has been mixed with oxygen. Its durability and adhesion made it the ideal choice of dye for prehistoric humans. Ochre as the basic material for ancient handprints is also related to the meaning of the symbol of the multi-complex relationship between life and fertility in prehistoric human culture, namely blood (Kosasih, 1987: 28). Ochre base material is a source that describes the things that are held in high esteem by a group of hunting communities. Apart from being a dye analogous to blood, ochre as a natural colouring pigment can also be used to treat skin, repel mosquitoes, protect the body from the sun and cold, treat plants, as well as adhesive stone tools.

#### 4. CONCLUSION

Ethnographic research of the hand-print tradition (*mabbedda' bola*) in Maros found that the ritual contained messages about the basic concepts of life and knowledge (medicine and food) as well as cultural messages about the meaning of life, gender and family. Myth-magical functions to maintain order, discipline actions, and ensure the transmission of knowledge according to the aims of tradition (*sennu-sennuang*). The hand-prints are made to state the five contexts of the purpose of the tradition, namely: (1) blessing or acknowledgment; (2) kinship identity and social integration; (3) gratitude; (4) a sign of salvation from

calamity, and (5) experience and knowledge. The practice of the *mabbedda' bola* tradition illustrates for us to try again to explore the view of prehistoric handprint in the context of the attribute of analogical statements, not merely containing the meaning of sympathetic magic, hunting magic, or fertility magic as Solomon Reinach (1903) views.

From the ritual process of the *mabbedda bola* tradition Maros Karst people, it was found that in the realm of thought and practice, the house is seen in a cosmological conception and conveys the meaning of homological attribute messages, namely women with all their characteristics. Meanwhile, the signature of the signature, the practice of the procession, and the material requirements (offerings) in the *mabbedda bola* rite contain the meaning of hope and prayer which is understood as analogically. In the *mabbedda' bola* rite, the concept of magic is attached to the immaterial act of rejecting reinforcements, the prayer of *panrita bola* and the herb *passili'*. Based on the meaning of the symbol of the ingredients *passili'*, it is known that the life disaster that the Maros People fear the most is related to the loss of their main character and values in maintaining natural and socio-cultural harmony. By rejecting bad characters, they hope to achieve a *salewangeng* life, namely harmony and prosperity.

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