

# Acknowledgements

A book like this, which is the work of some 50 years, would normally call for a great number of acknowledgements. This book is, however, focused specifically on the oral poetry of a group of remarkable and talented individuals and it is to these poets whom I feel I owe my greatest debt of gratitude. Many of them have long since died, but they are remembered by their families and ought to be remembered more widely. I must begin by thanking those poets whose recitations are included in this volume: Stefanus Adulanu, Eli Pellondou, Petrus Malesi, Mikael Pellondou, Joel Pellondou, Esau Pono, Zet Apulugi, Alex Mada, Anderias (Ande) Ruy, Kornalius Medah, Laazar Manoeain, Samuel Ndun, N. D. Pah, Jonas Mooy, Simon Lesik, Frans Lau and Hendrik Foeh. Of these master poets, I owe a special debt to Stefanus Adulanu ('Old Meno'), who taught me the beginnings of ritual language during my first period of fieldwork in 1965–66; Petrus Malesi, who was a frequent companion and my personal poet during my second period of fieldwork in 1972–73; and Esau Pono, who became, over many years, my closest Rotenese friend and confidant until his death in 2014. I was able to compose a short mortuary chant on his behalf and send it as an email to my former student and colleague Dr Lintje Pellu, in Kupang, who travelled to Termanu and saw that it was recited at his funeral.

These poets are only a small number of the poets whom I have recorded over the past 50 years. During my first fieldwork, Stefanus Adulanu and Stefanus Amalo—the two master poets in the domain of Termanu at that time—both competed and cooperated to provide me with a variety of recitations. I also recorded important recitations from A. Amalo and Lisbet Adulanu—a formidable figure and the only woman to offer to recite for me. N. D. Pah also supplied me with a wealth of materials from Thie. During my second period of fieldwork, I continued to record from Petrus Malesi and Eli Pellondou, who were rivals to one another.

I also recorded material from Hendrik Muskanan and obtained various recitations from Daniel Ndun from Talae, as I did from N. D. Pah and Samuel Ndun in Thie.

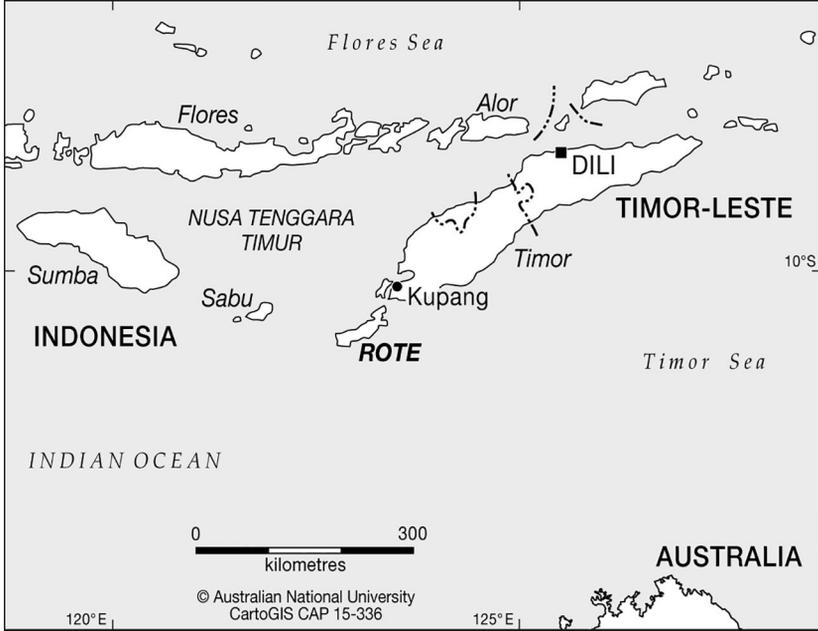
One special group of poets were those who took part in one or another of my nine recording sessions on Bali, which began in 2006. The list of these poets, besides those already named, is as follows: Yulius Iu and Jeskial Elimanafe from Landu; Mateos Poij from Oepao; Marthinus Teluain, Markus Bolla and Lefinus Penu from Bilba; Yunus Longo and Bernat S. Tasy, both Bilba-speakers from Semau; Efrain J. Ndeo and Jakobis Ndun from Korbaffo; Lief Keluanan and Yeri Fanggidae from Termanu; Chornelis Tuy from Keka; G. A. Foeh, Benjamin Sah and Alex Koan from Thie; and Gotlif Tungga and Lasarus Fanggi Idu from Dengka. My student and colleague Dr Tom Therik was an enthusiastic supporter of my Master Poets Project and he joined me on the first two recording sessions; when he died suddenly, another of my students, Dr Lintje Pellu, took over from him and helped organise each of the subsequent groups who travelled from Rote, via Kupang, to Bali. Apart from the occasional bout of malaria, which is endemic to the population of Rote, these gatherings on Bali were both fruitful and enjoyable.

The photographs in this volume cover the same period as my recordings. The black and white photographs were taken during my first two field trips: they date from the mid-1960s and the early 1970s. I wish to thank David Brazil for his help in digitising a large number of my early photographs. Colour photographs were taken on later visits to Rote and during various recording sessions on Bali. I would have liked to have photographs of all the poets whom I recorded but unfortunately I have no photographs of Mikael Pellondou and Laazar Manoeain.

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and Elouise Ball and Emily Tinker for their proofreading. Finally, I wish to express my special thanks to my wife, Irmgard, who has read and reread drafts of the chapters in this book more often than I would wish to enumerate.



**Figure 1: Rote Location Map**

Source: © The Australian National University CartoGIS

This text is taken from *Master Poets, Ritual Masters: The Art of Oral Composition Among the Rotenese of Eastern Indonesia*, by James J. Fox, published 2016 by ANU Press, The Australian National University, Canberra, Australia.