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## *Suti Solo do Bina Bane:* A Version from the Domain of Ringgou

This version of *Suti Solo do Bina Bane* was recorded from the master poet Ande Ruy during the first recording session held in Bali in July 2006. I had travelled earlier in the year to Rote to meet Ande and to persuade him to join the first group invited to Bali. He agreed and joined all subsequent recording sessions.

When we met, Ande Ruy's reputation was already considerable. He is the best-known chanter (*manahelo*) on Rote. A farmer in his ordinary day-to-day activities in the domain of Ringgou, Ande is a natural and enthusiastic performer: energetic, talented and versatile. He is able to recite, to sing, to chant to the accompaniment of the drum and to play the Rotenese *sesandu*. All of these talents have made him the first choice among the chanters on Rote at government functions, at official performances and cultural competitions.

Unlike most other poets on the island, Ande Ruy has had wide experience: he has travelled to, and performed in, different parts of Indonesia including Jakarta. Despite this experience, he remains deeply traditional. When we first met, we talked about the restrictions on recitation that he felt applied to key segments of the traditional canon. After many years of recording him, he has not yet revealed more than a portion of his ritual knowledge.

In our recording sessions over the years, Ande Ruy's approach to the exegesis of his recitations has expanded. Initially, for him, explication involved further ritual elaboration of what he had already said. Gradually, however, in the course of his participation with other poets, particularly Esau Pono, Ande developed a wider view of Rotenese ritual language and could begin to offer clearer explication of his performances in relation to others.

Initially, I struggled to understand Ande's recitation of *Suti Solo do Bina Bane*. It was my first serious encounter with the dialect of Ringgou and it took many sessions with Ande Ruy to comprehend his recitation properly. After the first rough transcription of his performance by Lintje Pellu and joint work on a preliminary translation, I continued to work with him, checking and correcting this recitation. After recording and translating this version in 2006, I worked through the translation with Ande when we met again in October 2007 and again worked further with him in June 2009. By 2009, I had recorded many other of his recitations and had slowly begun to understand his performance style and incredible command of ritual language.

This recitation consists of 182 lines. It begins with a standard formula that locates the narrative in the distant past and then goes on to describe Oli Masi ma Bisa Oli's search for the two ritual fish, here identified as Tio Holu//Dusu Lake. In their search, Oli Masi ma Bisa Oli find Suti Solo and Bina Bane, who immediately voice their plea, insisting that they are 'widow and orphan'. They beg to be taken up by Oli Masi and Masi Oli as 'aunt and mother'.



Figure 16: Ande Ruy



Figure 17: Ande Ruy reciting

## Oli Masi and Bisa Oli Encounter Suti Solo do Bina Bane

- |     |                                     |                                   |
|-----|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1.  | <i>Hida bei leo hatan</i>           | At a time long ago                |
| 2.  | <i>Ma data bei leo dona</i>         | At a period long past             |
| 3.  | <i>Ina a Oli Masi</i>               | The woman Oli Masi                |
| 4.  | <i>Ma fetu a Bisa Oli</i>           | And the girl Bisa Oli             |
| 5.  | <i>Neu nama-rai rarano</i>          | Goes to thrust her fishnet        |
| 6.  | <i>Ma neu nama-se'ò toto'ò,</i>     | And goes to throw her scoop-net,  |
| 7.  | <i>Nama-rai saka Tio Holu</i>       | To fish forth Tio Holu            |
| 8.  | <i>Ma nama-se'ò saka Dusu Lake.</i> | And to scoop up Dusu Lake.        |
| 9.  | <i>Tehu nama-rai nala le esa,</i>   | She net-fishes in one tidal pond, |
| 10. | <i>Na rai na Suti Solo</i>          | But only nets Suti Solo           |
| 11. | <i>Ma nama se'ò nala lifu esa,</i>  | And she scoop-fishes in one pool, |
| 12. | <i>Na se'ò na Bina Bane.</i>        | But only scoops Bina Bane.        |
| 13. | <i>Boe ma ina Oli Masi</i>          | So the woman Oli Masi             |

- |     |                                    |                                  |
|-----|------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 14. | <i>Ma fetu a Bisa Oli</i>          | And the girl Bisa Oli            |
| 15. | <i>Lole harana neu</i>             | Raises her voice                 |
| 16. | <i>Ma selu dasi na neu:</i>        | And lifts her words:             |
| 17. | <i>'Tute hata leo hata</i>         | 'What is amiss                   |
| 18. | <i>De Suti Solo masa-edu</i>       | That you, Suti Solo, sob         |
| 19. | <i>Ma sala hata leo hata</i>       | What is wrong                    |
| 20. | <i>De Bina Bane mama-tani?'</i>    | That you, Bina Bane, cry?'       |
| 21. | <i>Boe ma Suti Solo lole haran</i> | So Suti Solo raises his voice    |
| 22. | <i>Ma Bina Bane selu dasin:</i>    | And Bina Bane lifts his words:   |
| 23. | <i>'Ami ia ana ma</i>              | 'We here are orphans             |
| 24. | <i>Ami ia falu ina.</i>            | We here are widows.              |
| 25. | <i>Awe, ami inam o ta'a</i>        | Awe, our mother is no more       |
| 26. | <i>Ma ami amam o ta'a,</i>         | And our father is no more,       |
| 27. | <i>Ami tiam o ta'a</i>             | Our friend exists no more        |
| 28. | <i>Ma senam o ta'a.</i>            | Our companion exists no more.    |
| 29. | <i>De ami tesa tei bei ta'a</i>    | Our contentment is no more       |
| 30. | <i>Ma ami tama dale bei ta'a.</i>  | And our satisfaction is no more. |
| 31. | <i>De mama-tani meu dua</i>        | We cry forth together [as two]   |
| 32. | <i>Ma masa-edu meu telu.</i>       | And we sob in unison [as three]. |
| 33. | <i>De o ina ko nou</i>             | You, dear mother                 |
| 34. | <i>Ma o te'o ko nei,</i>           | And you, dear aunt,              |
| 35. | <i>Ifa muni ami leo</i>            | Lift and carry us away           |
| 36. | <i>Ma o'o muni ami leo</i>         | And cradle and carry us away     |
| 37. | <i>Fo saka fe ami tesa tei</i>     | To give us contentment           |
| 38. | <i>Ma tuka fe ami tama dale</i>    | And provide us satisfaction      |
| 39. | <i>Nai te'ok oen</i>               | In an aunt's water               |
| 40. | <i>Ma nai inak daen.'</i>          | And in a mother's land.'         |

Oli Masi and Bisa Oli carry the shells home and then issue the first directive to go with the 'rice basket and syrup vat'. Suti Solo and Bina Bane question the permanence of this option because the 'rice will be doled from the basket and syrup scooped from the vat'.

## First Directive: To Go with the Rice Basket and Syrup Vat

- |     |  |   |
|-----|--|---|
| 41. | <i>Boe ma ina a Oli Masi</i>               | So the woman Oli Masi                             |
| 42. | <i>Ma fetu o Bisa Oli o</i>                | And the girl Bisa Oli                             |
| 43. | <i>O'o neni Suti Solo</i>                  | Cradle Suti Solo                                  |
| 44. | <i>Ma ifa neni Bina Bane</i>               | And lift Bina Bane                                |
| 45. | <i>Leo lon mai</i>                         | Bringing them to their home                       |
| 46. | <i>Ma leo uma mai.</i>                     | And bringing them to their house.                 |
| 47. | <i>Mai losa lo na</i>                      | They come to the home                             |
| 48. | <i>Mai ru'u uma na.</i>                    | They come to the house.                           |
| 49. | <i>Boe ma ina Oli Masi</i>                 | Then the woman Oli Masi                           |
| 50. | <i>Ma fetu a Bisa Oli</i>                  | And the girl Bisa Oli                             |
| 51. | <i>Nadasi neu Suti Solo</i>                | Speaks to Suti Solo                               |
| 52. | <i>Ma nahara neu Bina Bane:</i>            | And says to Bina Bane:                            |
| 53. | <i>'Iku fo mo nea hade</i>                 | 'Your land is with the rice basket                |
| 54. | <i>Ma leo fo mo bou tua.'</i>              | And your lineage is with the syrup vat.'          |
| 55. | <i>Tehu Suti Solo lole haran</i>           | But Suti Solo raises his voice                    |
| 56. | <i>Ma Bina Bane selu dasin:</i>            | And Bina Bane lifts his words:                    |
| 57. | <i>'Ami iku fo mo ne'a hade</i>            | 'Our land is with the rice basket                 |
| 58. | <i>Ma ami leo fo mo bou<br/>tua, tebe!</i> | And our lineage is with the syrup<br>vat, indeed! |
| 59. | <i>Tehu fai esa nai na</i>                 | But on some day                                   |
| 60. | <i>Ma ledo esa nai ria,</i>                | And at some time,                                 |
| 61. | <i>Ne'a sasau hade,</i>                    | [If] the basket continually doles out rice,       |
| 62. | <i>Sau heni nea hade</i>                   | This will dole the rice basket empty              |
| 63. | <i>Ma rui kokola tuan,</i>                 | And [if] the vat continually scoops syrup,        |
| 64. | <i>Rui heni bou tua.</i>                   | This will scoop the syrup vat clean.              |
| 65. | <i>Na ami iku fo mo be a</i>               | Then with whom will our land be                   |
| 66. | <i>Ma ami leo fo mo be a?</i>              | And with whom will our lineage be?                |
| 67. | <i>Te [bei] ta tesa tei</i>                | This is not yet contentment                       |
| 68. | <i>Ma bei ta tama dale.</i>                | And not yet a satisfaction.                       |
| 69. | <i>Hu fo fai bea ma</i>                    | For from time to time                             |

70. *Fui hene lo* Outsiders climb up into the home  
 71. *Ma pa'u ae uma* And strangers ascend to the house  
 72. *Na neu ko sau heni nea hade* Then rice will be doled from the basket  
 73. *Ma rui heni bou tua.'* And syrup will be scooped from the vat.'

The second directive is to go with the 'rice field's wide embankment and the dry field's long boundary'. The directive highlights a contrast between two kinds of field and their respective boundaries. Suti Solo and Bina Bane question the permanence of this option because both boundaries can be washed by flooding rain.

## Second Directive: To Go to the Rice Field's Wide Embankment and Dry Field's Long Boundary

74. *De la'o fo tarali* So they go forth  
 75. *Ma lope fo tabi.* And they walk out.  
 76. *Boe ma lope tarali dae* They walk forth through the land  
 77. *Ma lao tabi oe.* And they go forth through the waters.  
 78. *De reu losa opa loa ara* They go to the rice field's wide embankment  
 79. *Ma reu ru'u e naru ara.* And they go to the dry field's long boundary.  
 80. *Oli Masi lole haran* Oli Masi raises her voice  
 81. *Ma Bisa Oli selu dasin:* And Bisa Oli lifts her words:  
 82. *'Nea mo opa loa* 'Shelter with the wide embankment  
 83. *Ma tama mo e naru.'* And join with the long boundary.'  
 84. *Tehu Suti Solo selu dasin* But Suti Solo lifts his words  
 85. *Ma Bina Bane lole haran:* And Bina Bane raises his voice:  
 86. *'Fai esa nai na* 'Yet some day  
 87. *Ma ledo esa nai ria* And at some time  
 88. *Uda te mai lasi* The rain will spear through the forest  
 89. *Fo fa rama henu le* So the flood fills the river  
 90. *Fo seki heni opa loa* So washes away the wide embankment

- |     |                                |                                      |
|-----|--------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 91. | <i>Ma sea heni enaru.</i>      | And carries away the long boundary.  |
| 92. | <i>Na ami iku fo mo be a</i>   | Then with whom will our land be      |
| 93. | <i>Ma ami leo fo mo be a?</i>  | And with whom will our lineage be?   |
| 94. | <i>Te tesa tei bei ta'a</i>    | There is no contentment there        |
| 95. | <i>Ma tama dale bei ta'a.'</i> | And there is no satisfaction there.' |

The third directive, to go with the raised horns and waving tails, is a proposal to take refuge with buffalo and goat herds. For Suti Solo and Bina Bane, these animals could die and leave them abandoned.

### Third Directive: To Go with the Raised Horns and Waving Tails

- |      |   |   |
|------|---|---|
| 96.  | <i>De lope tarali dae</i>                   | So they walk forth through the land         |
| 97.  | <i>Ma lao tarali oe.</i>                    | And go forth through the waters.            |
| 98.  | <i>Boe ma reu losa mo tale hade a</i>       | They go to the dry rice field               |
| 99.  | <i>Ma reu ru'u lete batu lau.</i>           | And to the hill's rocky grassland.          |
| 100. | <i>Boe ma ina a Oli Masi</i>                | So the woman Oli Masi                       |
| 101. | <i>Ma feto a Bisa Oli nae:</i>              | And the girl Bisa Oli says:                 |
| 102. | <i>'Sana nea mo sura mana<br/>mamasua</i>   | 'Your shelter will be with the raised horns |
| 103. | <i>Ma iku fo mo iko mana<br/>fefelo a.'</i> | And your land with the waving tails.'       |
| 104. | <i>Tebu Suti Solo lole haran</i>            | But Suti Solo raises his voice              |
| 105. | <i>Ma Bina Bane selu dasin:</i>             | And Bina Bane lifts his words:              |
| 106. | <i>'Fai esa nai ria</i>                     | 'On some day like this                      |
| 107. | <i>Ma ledo esa nai na,</i>                  | And at some time like that,                 |
| 108. | <i>Roe apa a mai</i>                        | The water buffalo disease will come         |
| 109. | <i>Sapu heni tena apa</i>                   | So that the water buffalo herds die         |
| 110. | <i>Ma lalo heni bote bibi.</i>              | And the goat flocks perish.                 |
| 111. | <i>Na ami iku fo be a</i>                   | Then with whom will our land be             |
| 112. | <i>Ma ami leo fo mo be a?</i>               | And with whom will our lineage be?          |
| 113. | <i>De ami tetum bei ta'a</i>                | For us, there is yet no order               |
| 114. | <i>Ma ami temam bei ta'a.'</i>              | And for us, there is yet no integrity.'     |

The fourth directive is not voiced but only responded to by the shells: neither the lontar palm nor the harvested rice offers any permanence or fellowship.

## A Fourth Directive: To Go with the Lontar Palm and Rice Field

- |      |   |   |
|------|---|---|
| 115. | <i>De lope tarali oe</i>                  | So they walk forth through the waters   |
| 116. | <i>Ma lao tarali dae,</i>                 | And they go forth through the land,     |
| 117. | <i>Te tesa tei bei ta'a</i>               | There is yet no contentment             |
| 118. | <i>Ma tama dale bei ta'a.</i>             | And yet no satisfaction.                |
| 119. | <i>Boe ma reu peu tua</i>                 | They go to tap the lontar               |
| 120. | <i>Ma reu lele hade a.</i>                | And they go to harvest the rice fields. |
| 121. | <i>Tebu Suti Solo selu dasin</i>          | But Suti Solo raises his voice          |
| 122. | <i>Ma Bina Bane lolé haran:</i>           | And Bina Bane lifts his words:          |
| 123. | <i>'Fai esa nai ria</i>                   | 'On some day like this                  |
| 124. | <i>Ma ledo esa nai na</i>                 | And at some time like that              |
| 125. | <i>Tua rama loe suma</i>                  | The lontar lower the tapping baskets    |
| 126. | <i>Ma modo [hade?] rama<br/>pelu polo</i> | And the rice has its panicles cut       |
| 127. | <i>Na ami iku fo mo be a</i>              | Then with whom will our land be         |
| 128. | <i>Ma ami nea fo mo be a?</i>             | And with whom will our shelter be?      |
| 129. | <i>De bei ta tesa tei</i>                 | Yet no contentment                      |
| 130. | <i>Ma bei ta tama dale.'</i>              | And yet no satisfaction.'               |
| 131. | <i>De lope tarali oe</i>                  | So they walk forth through the waters   |
| 132. | <i>Ma lao tarali dae.</i>                 | And they go forth through the land.     |
| 133. | <i>Tetun bei ta'a</i>                     | There is yet no order                   |
| 134. | <i>Ma teman bei ta'a.</i>                 | And there is yet no integrity.          |

The fifth directive is to go with boundary stone and border tree and the response is that these markers can be trampled and shifted by the 'moon's buffalo and the sun's goats'. Hence, there is still no permanence—no contentment or satisfaction.

## Suti Solo and Bina Bane Go among Boundary Stone and Border Tree

- |      |                                  |                                 |
|------|----------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 135. | <i>Boe ma reu losa to batu</i>   | So they go to boundary stone    |
| 136. | <i>Ma reu ru'u peu ai.</i>       | And they go to border tree.     |
| 137. | <i>Tehu Suti Solo lole haran</i> | But Suti Solo lifts his words   |
| 138. | <i>Ma Bina Bane selu dasin:</i>  | And Bina Bane raises his voice: |
| 139. | <i>'Fai esa nai na</i>           | 'On some day like that          |
| 140. | <i>Ma ledo esa nai ria,</i>      | And some time like this,        |
| 141. | <i>Bulan apa nara mai</i>        | The moon's buffalo will come    |
| 142. | <i>Fo hake heni to batu</i>      | To change the boundary stone    |
| 143. | <i>Ma ledo bote nara mai</i>     | And sun's goats will come       |
| 144. | <i>Fetu heni peu ai.</i>         | To shift the border tree.       |
| 145. | <i>Na ami iku mo be a</i>        | Then with whom is our land      |
| 146. | <i>Ma ami leo mo be a?</i>       | And with whom is our lineage?   |
| 147. | <i>De tesa tei bei ta'a</i>      | There is yet no contentment     |
| 148. | <i>Ma tama dale bei ta'a.'</i>   | And yet no satisfaction.'       |

Finally and perhaps somewhat abruptly, Suti Solo and Bina Bane's quest comes to an end. They find rest at the base of the *ko-nau* tree, a bidara or Indian plum tree (*Ziziphus mauritana*), and in the shade of the *nilu-foi* tree, a tamarind tree (*Tamarindus indica*). Both species are fruit-bearing dryland trees and their steady production of fruit is an attraction for the shells. One has only to pick and eat, pluck and consume the abundant fruit. For the shells, there is no return to the sea, no indication of the symbolic significance of these trees and no explanation (in this recitation) of why the shells find their rest among these trees.

## Suti Solo and Bina Bane Find Rest at the Ko-Nau Tree and Nilu-Foi Tree

- |      |                           |                                 |
|------|---------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 149. | <i>Lope tarali oe</i>     | So they walk through the waters |
| 150. | <i>Ma lao tarali dae.</i> | And they go through the land.   |
| 151. | <i>Boe ma reu to telu</i> | They go to the three markers    |
| 152. | <i>Ma reu lane dua.</i>   | And go to the two boundaries.   |

## 14. A VERSION FROM THE DOMAIN OF RINGGOU

153. *Boe ma ina a Oli Masi* The woman Oli Masi  
 154. *Ma fetu a Bisa Oli* And the girl Bisa Oli  
 155. *Fai neu huru manu* When the day turns to the roosting  
 chicken  
 156. *Ma ledo neu hani bafi.* And the time comes to feed the pigs.  
 157. *De mai ko-nau laon* They arrive at the *ko-nau* tree's shade  
 158. *Fo iku mo ko-nau* A place with the *ko-nau* tree  
 159. *Ma mai nilu-foi hun* And they come to the *nilu-foi* tree's base  
 160. *Fo nea mo nilu-foi* A shelter at the *nilu-foi* tree's base  
 161. *Leo fo tatai* A lineage in which to stay  
 162. *Ma iku fo dodo.* And a land in which to ponder.  
 163. *Boe ma Suti Solo selu dasin* Then Suti Solo raises his voice  
 164. *Ma Bina Bane lole haran:* And Bina Bane lifts his words:  
 165. *'Ina sue o nei* 'O dearly loved woman  
 166. *Ma fetu lai o nei* And much beloved girl  
 167. *Tule diu dua leo* Go back, turn away  
 168. *Ma fali soro lele leo* And return, turn round  
 169. *Tē ra dale a so* This is pleasing here  
 170. *Ma to'è tei a so.* And this is satisfying here.  
 171. *Hu fo fai na neu fai* For when day passes day  
 172. *Ma ledo na neu ledo* And time passes time  
 173. *Ko-nau na boa* The *ko-nau* tree bears fruit  
 174. *Na ami here hao, here hao* Then we will pick, pick and eat  
 175. *Ma nilu-foi na petu* And the *nilu-foi* tree puts forth fruit  
 176. *Na ami etu folo, etu folo.* Then we will pluck, pluck and consume.  
 177. *De ra dale a so* It is pleasing here  
 178. *Ma to'è tei a so.'* And it is satisfying here.'  
 179. *Losa fai ia,* To this day  
 180. *Ma ru'u ledo ia* And until this time  
 181. *Suti Solo bei nai ko-nau hun* Suti Solo remains at the base of the  
*ko-nau* tree  
 182. *Ma Bina Bane bei nai nilu-foi* And Bina Bane remains in the *nilu-foi*'s  
*lā'on.* shade.

## An Analysis of Ande Ruy’s Ritual Language Usage

This recitation by Ande Ruy has 182 lines and is composed of 66 dyadic sets. Its compositional structure is roughly in proportion to the recitation by Alex Mada, which has 188 lines and is composed of 69 dyadic sets. Sound changes in Ringgou are similar to those in Landu. Both domains form part of a broadly similar dialect area: Dialect Area I. The two recitations would be easily intelligible to members of these domains but would present some problems of comprehension to speakers of dialects in central and western Rote. As in the case with the Landu recitation, the majority of dyadic sets form part of an island-wide core.

Some examples of dyadic sets whose phonology would be recognisable to Termanu speakers are: 1) *ail/batu* (‘tree’//‘rock’); 2) *amallina* (‘father’//‘mother’); 3) *dalel/tei* (‘inside, heart’//‘stomach’); 4) *dael/oe* (‘earth’//‘water’); 5) *falluda* (‘monsoon’//‘rain’); 6) *faill/edo* (‘day’//‘sun’); 7) *hadell/tua* (‘rice’//‘lontar palm juice’); 8) *lellif/ufu* (‘river’//‘waterhole, pool’); 9) *inal/te’o* (‘mother’//‘father’s sister’); 10) *senal/tia* (‘friend’//‘companion’); 11) *lol/uma* (‘house’//‘home’); 12) *lail/sue* (‘to have affection for’//‘to care for’).

Other dyadic sets show sound changes that are prominent in both Ringgou and Landu. Like Landu, Ringgou lacks initial ‘k’ and medial ‘k’; ‘ng’ occurs as ‘k’; ‘nd’ as ‘r’, while some medial ‘l’ also occur as ‘r’. Hence, for example, the variety of transformations of these following common dyadic sets:

Table 14: Termanu–Ringgou Dialect Comparisons

Termanu	Ringgou	Gloss
<i>kael/hene</i>	<i>ael/hene</i>	‘climb’//‘step’
<i>kapa/bote</i>	<i>apa bote</i>	‘water buffalo’//‘small livestock’
<i>ifa/ko’o</i>	<i>ifa/o’o</i>	‘to lift’//‘to cradle’
<i>bou/neka</i>	<i>bou/ne’a</i>	‘vat’//‘basket’
<i>losa/nduku</i>	<i>losa/ru’u</i>	‘up to’//‘until’
<i>na/ndia</i>	<i>na/ría</i>	‘this’//‘that’
<i>ndano/toko r</i>	<i>ano/to’o</i>	‘to thrust’//‘to throw’
<i>nduil/sau</i>	<i>ruiil/sau</i>	‘to ladle’//‘to scoop out’
<i>sanga/tunga</i>	<i>saka/tuka</i>	‘to seek’//‘to search, follow’

## Refrain and Counter-Refrain

Ande Ruy's composition is made particularly poignant by the use of refrain and counter-refrain. He combines this use of refrains with further repeated rephrasing of Suti Solo and Bina Bane's quest. This is all part of his performance style.

Suti Solo and Bina Bane's initial request (lines 37–38) is phrased as a plea:

<i>Fo saka fe ami tesa tei</i>	To give us contentment
<i>Ma tuka fe ami tama dale</i>	And provide us satisfaction

This quest for 'contentment and satisfaction' (*tesa tei//tama dale*) becomes a recurrent refrain that runs through the whole of the recitation. The expression *tesa tei//tama dale* is a formulaic expression that has wide currency in eastern Rote: it connotes a sense of inner peace and tranquility—an emotional state that is defined as a social ideal.

In the lines that propose the first directive, Suti Solo and Bina Bane's quest is phrased as a search for 'land and lineage' (*ikul//leo*)—a phrasing that is also repeated in later lines. In lines 53–54, Oli Masi and Bisa Oli reply to Suti Solo and Bina Bane, saying: 'Your land is with the rice basket and your lineage is with the syrup vat.'

In the passage that offers the second directive (lines 94–95), Suti Solo and Bina Bane's quest is voiced as a negative refrain:

<i>Te tesa tei bei ta'a</i>	There is no contentment there
<i>Ma tama dale bei ta'a.</i>	And there is no satisfaction there.

And at the end of the passage with the third directive (lines 113–14), another critical refrain is introduced. Instead of the refrain based on the set *tesa//tama*, the new refrain is based on *tema//tetu*. Whereas the *tesa//tama* refrain is common in eastern Rote, this refrain is more common in central Rote.

Suti Solo and Bina Bane voice this negative refrain in reference to themselves:

<i>De ami tetum bei ta'a</i>	For us, there is yet no order
<i>Ma ami temam bei ta'a.</i>	And for us, there is yet no integrity.

As the recitation proceeds to the passage that offers the fourth directive, both refrains occur (the primary refrain in lines 117–18, and secondary in lines 133–34). This only increases the momentum of the disappointment of the shells:

<i>Te tesa tei bei ta'a</i>	There is yet no contentment
<i>Ma tama dale bei ta'a.</i>	And yet no satisfaction.
<i>Tetun bei ta'a</i>	There is yet no order
<i>Ma teman bei ta'a.</i>	And there is yet no integrity.

By the time of the fifth directive (lines 147–48), there is again a repetition of the primary refrain of the recitation:

<i>De tesa tei bei ta'a</i>	There is yet no contentment
<i>Ma tama dale bei ta'a.</i>	And yet no satisfaction.

In the end, however, Suti Solo and Bina Bane do find a resting place: 'a lineage in which to stay and a land in which to ponder.' This place of rest is described by another distinctive expression—this one based on the dyadic formulae *to'e tei//ra dale* (in contrast with *tesa tei//tama dale*):

<i>De ra dale a so</i>	It is pleasing here
<i>Ma to'e tei a so.</i>	And it is satisfying here.

## Suti Solo and Bina Bane's Journey through the Landscape

While most Termanu versions of *Suti Solo do Bina Bane* trace the journey of the shells in a cycle from sea back to sea, both Landu and Ringgou versions focus on a journey that passes predominantly across a fixed landscape. In Ande Ruy's version, the shells are literally carried by Oli Masi and Basi Oli, who are described as 'walking' through the land and its waters. This journey through the landscape begins as soon as the shells are scooped from the sea: it is first explicitly spoken of in lines 76–77 and the lines that recount this walk are repeated four more times in similar lines: 96–97, 115–16, 131–32 and 149–50.

<i>Boe ma lope tarali dae</i>	They walk forth through the land
<i>Ma lao tabi oe.</i>	And they go forth through the waters.

This journey through the landscape is dotted with sites whose descriptions are distinctively phrased in the dialect of Ringgou. Some of these expressions are the following:

In lines 78–79, there occurs this formulaic expression:

<i>De reu losa opa loa ara</i>	They go to the rice field's wide bund
<i>Ma reu ru'u e naru ara.</i>	And they go to dry field's long boundary.

*Opa loal/e naru* are a specific dyadic formula that describes the boundaries of different kinds of fields.

In lines 98–99, this formulaic expression is used:

<i>Boe ma reu losa mo tale hade a</i>	They go to the dry rice field
<i>Ma reu ru'u lete batu lau.</i>	And to the hill's rocky grassland.

The dyadic components of this formula are *mo tale hadel/lete batu lau*.

Similarly, in lines 119–20, there occurs this phrase:

<i>Boe ma reu peu tua</i>	They go to tap the lontar
<i>Ma reu lele hade a.</i>	And they go to harvest the rice fields.

In all of these instances, although elements are similar, there are no precise equivalent formulae in Termanu.

## The Shells' Journey's End and its Significance

Suti Solo and Bina Bane's journey ends at the foot of the *ko-nau* tree and in the shadow of the *nilu-foi* tree. These two trees are large fruit-bearing trees. The consumption of the fruit of these trees is emphasised at the conclusion to this recitation.

In the interpretations of all his recitations, Ande Ruy is decidedly a 'literalist'. In his view, this narrative, like his other narratives, recounts events that occurred in the past—in his words: 'at a time long ago, at a period long past.' Hence, at the conclusion of the recitation he insisted that if one goes to a certain field on the border between Ringgou and

Bilba, it would be possible to find the remains of the shells. For Ande Ruy, his recitation prompts no symbolic interpretation and he can become irritated if any such interpretation is proposed.

Other poets, particularly Esau Pono, my closest collaborator from Termanu, Jonas Mooy from Thie, Frans Lau from Dengka and Hendrik Foeh from Oenale—and indeed most other poets—are less inclined to a literalist interpretation of each other's compositions. They are responsive to the significance of the particular use of expressions, particular pairs and the symbolic arrangement and direction of a composition.

After the first couple of recording sessions, I had accumulated the beginnings of a growing corpus of recordings that had been duly transcribed and which—between recording sessions—I struggled to understand and translate. In each subsequent session, in addition to continuing the recording of new compositions, my task was to check the transcriptions and my initial attempts at a translation for compositions that had already been recorded. I generally did this with the poet himself, but often after the first or second pass at a particular composition, other poets would join the discussion out of personal interest and with a concern that I get things right.

I made several attempts to work through Ande Ruy's version of *Suti Solo do Bina Bane*. It had been one of the earliest compositions I recorded on Bali. However, I kept coming back with further questions in successive sessions. One of my questions was why in this version from Ringgou, the shells came to rest at *ko-nau* and *nilu-foi* trees. Although Ande Ruy resisted any idea of symbolism in the significance of these trees, Jonas Mooy commented that the trees were of great significance. In Rotenese belief, there was a period in their most ancient history when they practised tree burial and the specific trees that they choose for such burials were the *ko-nau* and *nilu-foi*. If this were the case then the journey of the shells concludes at a place of tree burial. It is like so many other versions of this chant: a journey through life to death.

If this version of *Suti Solo do Bina Bane* involves a journey of the shells chiefly through a landscape, the next version of *Suti Solo do Bina Bane*, from Bilba, offers a narrative contrast, which focuses significantly on the shells' drifting journey at sea. In this version from Bilba, like that of Ringgou, the journey's end for the shells occurs at the *ko-nau* and *nilu-foi* trees.

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