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## *Suti Solo do Bina Bane:* Version II from the Domain of Thie

I recorded this version of *Suti Solo do Bina Bane* from Jonas Mooy on 25 October 2011. The recording was done during the seventh recording session in Bali of the Master Poets Project. This was the second session of the project that Jonas Mooy attended. Earlier, in 2009, Pak Mooy, as I usually referred to him, had come to Bali with a group of four poets from Thie, three of whom were capable poets. Of these poets, one died before he could be invited back to Bali for more recording. In the end, it was Pak Mooy who was able to return for another recording session, at which he offered his version of *Suti Solo do Bina Bane*. Thereafter he joined the recording sessions in 2013 and 2014.

From the outset, Jonas Mooy was something of a curiosity for me. Perhaps the most avid and earnest of all the poets, Pak Mooy did not fit the pattern of any of the other poets. He was curiously ‘bookish’: always taking notes on the other poets and especially the genealogies they evoked in their recitations. He would invariably be scribbling in his notebook or on a piece of paper during our recording sessions. Gradually, I came to realise that he, in his curious way, was much like my colleague Esau Pono with whom I had worked for years. He took an interest not just in his own traditions of Thie but also in all of the diverse traditions of the island. He could and would reflect on Rote’s different traditions and on

the different recitations by his fellow poets, interpreting and comparing their significance. In time, I came to rely on him for insights on some of the more cryptic passages in recitations from different domains.

Pak Mooy explained to me that, as a young man, he wanted to become a teacher but instead he married early and settled down to ordinary Rotenese life. In time, he became a respected elder and began to master the use of ritual language. Although he never displayed the innate fluency of some master poets, his recitations were clear and coherent. He used our recording sessions to develop his skills. Thus, for example, Pak Mooy was particularly taken by the skills of Yulius Iu from Landu, whose speciality was to retell passages from the Bible in strict parallelism. He told me that, as a church elder, he would on occasion deliver sermons in the local church but these sermons were never in ritual language. However, during the fourth session with the group, he took up the challenge that I posed to him and he gave his own recitation: the Biblical passage of the Sermon on the Mount in strict, formal parallelism.

In 1966 and again in 1973, on visits to Oe Handi in Thie, I had recorded a corpus of chants, first from Guru Pah, and then from Guru Pak and his companion Sam Ndun. Initially, I read one or another of these chants to Pak Mooy, but when I came to realise his depth of understanding of his traditions, I shared most of this original corpus from Thie with him, asking him to give me his translation and interpretation of the texts.

Jonas Mooy's recitation of *Suti Solo do Bina Bane* was done before I had the chance to share with him the Pah–Ndun version of *Suti Solo do Bina Bane* that I had recorded in 1973. I showed him this version and my translation of it in 2014 because there were a number of puzzling elements. He was able to elucidate many passages and certainly correct some of my misinterpretations. More significantly, he insisted that his version was the same telling of *Suti Solo do Bina Bane* as that of Guru Pah and Sam Ndun. By this, he did not imply an identity of recitation but rather that his recitation was intended to cover the same cast of events and was told for the same ritual purposes: the celebration of the origin of rice and millet in Thie. It is critical to recognise in Pak Mooy's version the points of juncture that make the two versions the 'same' ritual chant.

The final lines in this recitation describe the ancestral establishment of one of the two *limba* or 'origin' ceremonies in Thie whose celebration, under pressure from the church, has long ceased to be performed. These lines contain references to important ritual elements of the ceremony.



Figure 22: Jonas Mooy

## Suti Solo Liun Ma Bina Bane Saik

### Suti Solo and Bina Bane Arrive at the Reef's Base and Sea's Edge

- |     |                                     |                                      |
|-----|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 1.  | <i>Bei hida fan na</i>              | At a time long ago                   |
| 2.  | <i>Ma bei dalu don na</i>           | And in an age long past              |
| 3.  | <i>Lurik neu nala liun</i>          | A cyclone strikes the ocean's depths |
| 4.  | <i>Ma sanggu neu tao sain</i>       | And a storm strikes the sea's depths |
| 5.  | <i>Te inak ia Suti Solo sain</i>    | The woman Suti Solo of the sea       |
| 6.  | <i>Ma fetok ia Bina Bane liun</i>   | And the girl Bina Bane of the ocean  |
| 7.  | <i>Ara rama roko isi</i>            | They exude their insides             |
| 8.  | <i>Ma ara rama ketu nggi.</i>       | And they cut loose their pods.       |
| 9.  | <i>De rama tani sira nggin nara</i> | They cry for their pods              |
| 10. | <i>Ma rasa kedu sira isin nara</i>  | And they sob for their insides       |
| 11. | <i>Ruma posi pedan ma unuk hun.</i> | At the sea's edge and reef's base.   |
| 12. | <i>Tebu ina mana-adu lelek</i>      | The woman who creates beautifully    |
| 13. | <i>Ma feto mana-doki ladak</i>      | And the girl who designs wonderfully |
| 14. | <i>De rama tani unuk hun</i>        | They cry at the reef's base          |
| 15. | <i>Ma bele halu posi pedan.</i>     | And they are sad at the sea's edge.  |

The next lines introduce the women Lutu Koe and Rema Ko, who scoop in the sea and fish in the tide. They hear the shells calling and are told of their sad condition. The shells beg to be scooped up and placed on the edge of the shore.

### The Woman Lutu Koe and the Girl Rema Ko Encounter Suti Solo and Bina Bane

- |     |                                  |                                      |
|-----|----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 16. | <i>Boe ma neu faik ia dalen</i>  | Then on a particular day             |
| 17. | <i>Ma ledok ia tein</i>          | And at a certain time                |
| 18. | <i>Feto mana-ndai tasi</i>       | The girl who scoops in the sea       |
| 19. | <i>Fetok nade Lutu Koe</i>       | The girl named Lutu Koe              |
| 20. | <i>Boema inak mana-seko meti</i> | And the woman who fishes in the tide |
| 21. | <i>Inak nade Rema Ko</i>         | The woman named Rema Ko              |

22. *Ara su seko neu langgan* They rest the fishnet on their heads  
 23. *Ma ara ndae ndai neu arun.* And they hang the scoop-net on their shoulders.  
 24. *De ara loe mada loak reu* They descend to the wide drying area  
 25. *Ma ara loe meti naruk reu* And they descend to the long tidal area  
 26. *Ara losa posi pedan ma unuk hun* They arrive at the sea's edge and reef's base  
 27. *Boema ara rama-nene dasik kara ra-nggou* They hear a voice shouting  
 28. *Ma barakara haru kara ralo'o* And they discern a tongue calling  
 29. *Dua de'a-de'a dua* The two speak with one another  
 30. *Ma telu kola-kola telu:* And the three talk with each other:  
 31. *'Ai mama ketu nggi* 'We have cut our pods  
 32. *Ma ai mama roko isi ia* And exuded our insides  
 33. *De ai mamatani ai nggi* We are crying for our pods  
 34. *Ma ai masakedu ai isin ia* And sobbing for our insides  
 35. *Hu sanggu ana tao ai* A storm has done this to us  
 36. *Ma lurik ana tao ai.* And a cyclone has done this to us.  
 37. *De torano dua nggarene* My two relatives  
 38. *Ma takadena dua nggarene,* And my two companions,  
 39. *Mai ndai tasi mini ai* Come fish us from the sea  
 40. *Ma seko meti mini ai dei* And scoop us from the tide  
 41. *Mbeda ai miu nembe hun dei* Place us at the shore's edge  
 42. *Ma tao ai miu oli su'un dei.'* And put us at the estuary's mouth.'

The women agree to scoop up the shells and leave them near two trees along the shore. The shells ask that they come back and visit them at their resting place.

## The Shells are Scooped Up and Placed Near Two Trees at the Edge of the Estuary

43. *Boe ma dua sara rahik rala.* So the two agree.  
 44. *Ara seko meti reni sara* They fish them up  
 45. *Ma ara ndai tasi reni sara* And they scoop them up  
 46. *Tehu bei ra-ndeni aru* But they are heavy on the shoulder

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|-----|--|---|
| 47. | <i>Ma bei ra-ta'a langga</i>                   | And weighty on the head                         |
| 48. | <i>De ara losa nembe hun</i>                   | They come to the shore's edge                   |
| 49. | <i>Ma oli su'un [bifin].</i>                   | And to the estuary's mouth.                     |
| 50. | <i>Boema ara dua de'a-de'a dua<br/>ma rae:</i> | The two speak with each other and say:          |
| 51. | <i>'Ela ei mai ia leo</i>                      | 'Let us set you here                            |
| 52. | <i>Boema ai mbeda ei mai ia leo.</i>           | Let us place you here.                          |
| 53. | <i>Tehu ai helu ela ei duangga</i>             | But we promise you two                          |
| 54. | <i>Ai fedu ai sauk neu</i>                     | We will bend the <i>ai sauk</i> tree            |
| 55. | <i>Ma tumbu lenggu-ha'ik neu</i>               | And we load the <i>lenggu-hai'k</i> tree        |
| 56. | <i>De ama rada mai ia leo</i>                  | That you may lean here                          |
| 57. | <i>Ma ama tia mai ia leo.'</i>                 | And that you may attach here.'                  |
| 58. | <i>Boe ma rae:</i>                             | So they say:                                    |
| 59. | <i>'Ei ela ai duangga mai ia</i>               | 'If you leave the two of us here                |
| 60. | <i>Do tehu, mai la'o ladi ai dei</i>           | Do still come stop and see us                   |
| 61. | <i>Ma mai lope tule ai dei</i>                 | And come swing past and visit us                |
| 62. | <i>Tehu ai mai bengga lada<br/>mbeda</i>       | For we come to offer delicious<br>nourishment   |
| 63. | <i>Ma ai mai tou lole heu ia.</i>              | And we come to provide fine attire here.        |
| 64. | <i>Ai tu'u sara sira</i>                       | We can hold ourselves here                      |
| 65. | <i>Ai mbeda sara sira</i>                      | We can place ourselves here                     |
| 66. | <i>Ara reu de ara losa uma.'</i>               | When you leave and return to your house.'       |
| 67. | <i>Boe ma ara rama nene</i>                    | They listen                                     |
| 68. | <i>Ma ara raka-se'e bebenggu</i>               | And they are noisy as horses' bells             |
| 69. | <i>Ma ara raka-doto kokoro,</i>                | And they are as lively as <i>kokolo</i> birds,  |
| 70. | <i>Numa olik su'un ma<br/>nembe hun.</i>       | At the edge of the estuary and<br>shore's base. |

The ancestral founders of Thie, Tola Mesa and Le'e Lunu, go to see what has happened after the storm. They arm themselves but they only encounter the two shells, who plead with them not to fire their flintlocks or draw their swords. The shells ask to be wrapped in cloth and taken to the house.

## Tola Mesa and Le'e Lunu Encounter Suti Solo and Bina Bane

71. *Boe ma bai ia baing Tola Mesa* Our grandfather of grandfathers,  
Tola Mesa
72. *Ma ai soro ia sorong Le'e Lunu* And our ancestor of ancestors, Le'e Lunu
73. *Ara henge bosan nara reu* They tie their pouch
74. *De ara ndae tafa nara reu* And they hang their sword
75. *De rae fama kate* They then consider
76. *Lurik mai tao sira* The cyclone comes to strike them
77. *Do sanggu mai tao sira* And the storm comes to strike them
78. *De reu mete ma reu suri.* They go to look and go to see.
79. *Reu de ara sudi sira su'u reu sara* They go, ready to fire their flintlocks
80. *Ma ara ndae tafa dale reu sara* And set to draw out their swords
81. *Ara rahara ma rae:* They answer and say:
82. *'Boso sudi sira su'u ai* 'Don't fire your flintlocks at us
83. *Ma boso ndae tafa dale ai.* And don't draw your swords at us.
84. *Te ai mini lola heu rai ia* For we bring fine attire here
85. *Ma ai mini lada mbeda rai ia.* And we bring delicious nourishment here.
86. *De ei lai ai* Have sympathy for us
87. *Boe ma ei sue ai boe* And have care for us
88. *Na pa'a pou su'u mini ai dei* Wrap us in a sarong and take us
89. *Ma henge bosa dale mini ai dei* Tie us in a pouch and take us
90. *Miu ndae ai miu fara tanar dei* Hang us on the door post
91. *Ma mbeda ai miu lulutu nasun dei.'* And place us at the fence's base.'

The shells instruct Tola Mesa and Le'e Lulu to take up a flat stone from the harbour and cut a tree from near the shore and bring them, along with the shells, to become the focus for the first origin feast. These critical ritual instructions include preparation for the 'coconut-holding post'.

## The Ancestors are Instructed to Obtain the 'Rock and Tree' for the Origin Ceremony

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|------|--|---|
| 92.  | <i>Boe ma bai-ia baing<br/>Tola Mesa</i>       | So my grandfather of grandfathers,<br>Tola Mesa   |
| 93.  | <i>Ma soro ia sorong Le'e<br/>Lulu rae:</i>    | And my ancestor of ancestors, Le'e Lulu<br>say:   |
| 94.  | <i>'Mete ma leonak</i>                         | 'If this is so, then                              |
| 95.  | <i>Na ma hebere fo ita la'o</i>                | Fold it so that we may go                         |
| 96.  | <i>Do ma bebenda fo ita la'o.'</i>             | Or save it so that we may go.'                    |
| 97.  | <i>Ara pa'a pou su'u reu sara</i>              | They wrap a woman's sarong around them            |
| 98.  | <i>Ma ara mboti lafa una neu sara</i>          | And they fold a man's cloth around them           |
| 99.  | <i>Ma ara ra selu reu sara rae:</i>            | They reply, saying:                               |
| 100. | <i>'Mete ma ei pa'a pou</i>                    | 'If you wrap the sarong                           |
| 101. | <i>Ma hengge bosa meni ai</i>                  | And strap the pouch to take us                    |
| 102. | <i>Na tati ai nia nembe dei</i>                | Then cut the tree near the shore                  |
| 103. | <i>Ma ei hengge bosa muni ai</i>               | And strap with the belt to take us                |
| 104. | <i>Na ko'o batu bela namo dei</i>              | Cradle a flat stone by the harbour                |
| 105. | <i>Fo mu tian neu tu'u batu</i>                | Balance it as a resting stone                     |
| 106. | <i>Ma ama fara neu rai ai</i>                  | And plant it as a standing pole                   |
| 107. | <i>Fo ai masa-rai dei</i>                      | For us to lean upon                               |
| 108. | <i>Ma ai mangga-tu'u dei.</i>                  | And for us to rest upon.                          |
| 109. | <i>Boe ma ama sau leli sara dei</i>            | So we may comb ourselves gently                   |
| 110. | <i>Ma ama tusi bangga na'us<br/>sara dei.'</i> | And we may rub ourselves softly.'                 |
| 111. | <i>Boe ma ko'o reni batu bela<br/>namo</i>     | Then they cradle a flat stone from<br>the harbour |
| 112. | <i>De reu de ara tao neu tu'u batu</i>         | They go and make it a resting stone               |
| 113. | <i>De ana dadi neu oli do limba</i>            | To be used for an origin and harvest<br>ceremony  |
| 114. | <i>Boe ma ara ha'i rala ai<br/>nia nembe</i>   | And they take a tree from the shore               |
| 115. | <i>De ara fara no tu'u batu</i>                | They plant it with the resting stone              |
| 116. | <i>De ana dadi neu rai ai</i>                  | To make it a leaning post                         |
| 117. | <i>Fo dadi neu fara no.</i>                    | To become the coconut-holding post.               |

The lines that follow indicate the performance of an initial ritual celebration intended to bring the rains and prepare the earth for the planting of seeds. The instructions for the ceremony centre on the coconut that will 'distribute the dew and allot the rain' to prepare the earth for planting. When, after the ceremony, the rains have fallen, the shells give instructions for their own planting at particular named fields.

## A Celebration Brings the Rains and Prepares the Earth for the Planting of Seeds

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|------|---|--|
| 118. | <i>De ara hene Tola Mesa non</i>            | They climb Tola Mesa's coconut                 |
| 119. | <i>Ma ketu Le'e Lulu non</i>                | And they pluck Le'e Lulu's coconut             |
| 120. | <i>De ara leli sau neu sara.</i>            | They soften and cool them.                     |
| 121. | <i>Boe ma ara bamba lololo<br/>neu sara</i> | They beat the drum steadily                    |
| 122. | <i>De ana ba'e dinis mai dae</i>            | It distributes the dew upon the earth          |
| 123. | <i>Ma ana bati udan mai lane.</i>           | And it allots the rain upon the fields.        |
| 124. | <i>Boe ma rae:</i>                          | So they say:                                   |
| 125. | <i>'Udan dai dae ena</i>                    | 'If the rain is sufficient for the earth       |
| 126. | <i>Ma dinis konda lane ena</i>              | And the dew falls upon the fields              |
| 127. | <i>Tehu ai mini bini buik nai ia</i>        | Then we bring the basic grains with<br>us here |
| 128. | <i>Ma mbule sio nai ia.</i>                 | And the nine seeds with us here.               |
| 129. | <i>De mete-ma ei mai pake<br/>do hambu</i>  | If you want to use them and have them          |
| 130. | <i>Na keko seluk ai dei</i>                 | Then move us again                             |
| 131. | <i>Ma lali seluk ai dei</i>                 | And shift us again                             |
| 132. | <i>Fo ela neu lada mbeda</i>                | To become delicious nourishment                |
| 133. | <i>Ma ela neu lole heu.</i>                 | And become fine attire.                        |
| 134. | <i>De mete ma ei mae leo nak</i>            | If you agree to this                           |
| 135. | <i>Na keko ai miu</i>                       | Then move us                                   |
| 136. | <i>Fafa'e Tali Somba dei</i>                | To Fafa'e Tali Somba                           |
| 137. | <i>Fo tande ai miu na</i>                   | To plant us there                              |
| 138. | <i>Boema lali ai miu</i>                    | And shift us                                   |
| 139. | <i>Teke Me Re'ik Oen dei</i>                | To Teke Me Re'ik Oen                           |
| 140. | <i>Fo sele ai miu na.'</i>                  | To sow us there.'                              |

Following instructions from the shells, the planting is begun and the seeds sprout. The first fields in Thie where the seeds are planted are: 1) Fafa'e Tali Somba; 2) Teke Me Re'ik Oen; 3) Mundek Na'u Dale; and 4) Nggonggoer No Lasi Lain. Thereafter, these plants are spread throughout Rote. The place name Ledo So'u//Anda Iko indicates an area that extends from the east to the west of Rote, while the place name Pena Pua//Rene Kona connotes an area from the north to the south of Rote. Significantly, it is emphasised that orphans and widows are the ones to consume the harvest of rice and millet.

### The Planting of the Seeds Begins in Fields in Thie and Thereafter Throughout Rote

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|------|---|-----------------------------------|
| 141. | <i>Ara sele neu</i>                       | They sow them                     |
| 142. | <i>Fafa'e Tali Somba</i>                  | At Fafa'e Tali Somba              |
| 143. | <i>Ma ara tandu neu</i>                   | And they plant them               |
| 144. | <i>Teke Me Re'ik Oen.</i>                 | At Teke Me Re'ik Oen.             |
| 145. | <i>Boe ma ara do dua</i>                  | They form two leaves              |
| 146. | <i>Ma ara beba telu</i>                   | And form three stalks             |
| 147. | <i>De mbule na tatali</i>                 | Seeds with sprouts                |
| 148. | <i>Ma don na sese'i</i>                   | And leaves with spikes            |
| 149. | <i>Boe ma ara dadi reu<br/>lada mbeda</i> | They become delicious nourishment |
| 150. | <i>Ma ara moli reu lolu heu.</i>          | And they turn into fine attire.   |
| 151. | <i>Boema ara keko neu</i>                 | They move them                    |
| 152. | <i>Mundek Na'u Dale</i>                   | To Mundek Na'u Dale               |
| 153. | <i>Boema ara lali neu</i>                 | They shift them                   |
| 154. | <i>Nggonggoer No Lasi Lain.</i>           | To Nggonggoer No Lasi Lain.       |
| 155. | <i>De ana ndule losa Ledo So'u</i>        | It spreads to Ledo So'u           |
| 156. | <i>Ma ana losa nala Anda Iko</i>          | And to Anda Iko                   |
| 157. | <i>Ki losa Pena Pua</i>                   | North to Pena Pua                 |
| 158. | <i>Ma kona losa Rene Kona.</i>            | And south to Rene Kona.           |
| 159. | <i>De ana mar ara fati hade</i>           | The orphans consume rice          |
| 160. | <i>Ma ina falur ra ara hao bete</i>       | And the widows eat millet         |
| 161. | <i>Ela lolu heur bali</i>                 | Enjoy fine attire                 |
| 162. | <i>Ma lada mbeda bali.</i>                | And delicious food.               |

The next stage in this recitation marks the ‘institutionalisation’ of the origin ceremony. A sacred space is created around a ‘sitting stone and standing tree’ where there is dancing and the beating of drums and gongs to bring cooling rain down on the earth. Although initially rice and millet are planted, the chant expands its designation of what is planted, referring to ‘the nine seeds and the basic grains, the nine children of Lakamola’. This is a ritual designation for all of the seeds that Rotenese plant in their fields.

### The Perpetuation of the *Limba* Ceremony in Thie

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|------|---|--|
| 163. | <i>De ara tia neu tu'u batu</i>                 | They create a sitting stone                      |
| 164. | <i>De ara tao neni rai ai</i>                   | They make a standing tree                        |
| 165. | <i>De mete ma fain na-nda</i>                   | So that when the day comes                       |
| 166. | <i>Ma ledo na-tetu</i>                          | And the time arrives                             |
| 167. | <i>Na ha'i nala babamba mba'u<br/>bibi rouk</i> | They take a drum sounding with<br>goat's skin    |
| 168. | <i>No meko riti fani oen</i>                    | And a gong whose beat is sweet as<br>bees' honey |
| 169. | <i>Fo mu lutu mbatu lain</i>                    | To climb on top of piled stone                   |
| 170. | <i>Fo bamba mbaun kurudo</i>                    | To drum with a begging sound                     |
| 171. | <i>Ma dali sole hara doe</i>                    | And dance with a requesting voice                |
| 172. | <i>Ma lo neu Mana Adu Lain</i>                  | Calling upon the Creator of the Heaven           |
| 173. | <i>Fo Mana Adu Deti Ledo</i>                    | The Creator who shaped the Sun                   |
| 174. | <i>Ma Mana Sura Ndu Bulan</i>                   | And who drew the Stars and Moon                  |
| 175. | <i>Ma lo neu Mana Adu Lalai</i>                 | Calling to the Creator Above                     |
| 176. | <i>Ma dae bafok</i>                             | For the surface of the earth                     |
| 177. | <i>Tasi oe no isin</i>                          | The sea with its contents                        |
| 178. | <i>Ma batahori do andi ana</i>                  | Mankind and humankind                            |
| 179. | <i>Fo ana monu fei</i>                          | To let fall                                      |
| 180. | <i>Ha'u dini makasufuk</i>                      | A gentle dampening dew                           |
| 181. | <i>Ma uda oe makarinik</i>                      | And cooling rain water                           |
| 182. | <i>Fo ana tolite batu poik</i>                  | To pour upon the world                           |
| 183. | <i>Ma ana bibiru dae bafak.</i>                 | And to cool the earth.                           |
| 184. | <i>Boe ma ana tocoli laner</i>                  | It pours upon the rice fields                    |
| 185. | <i>Ma ana tete tiner</i>                        | And it drips upon the dry fields                 |

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|------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 186. | <i>Fo tande mpule sio neun</i>      | To plant the nine seeds             |
| 187. | <i>Ma sele bini bui'k neun.</i>     | And sow the basic grains.           |
| 188. | <i>Fo Laka Mola anan sio.</i>       | The nine children of Laka Mola.     |
| 189. | <i>Fo ela leo be na</i>             | So it is thus                       |
| 190. | <i>Ara rabuna fefeo</i>             | They carry flowers that wind round  |
| 191. | <i>Na ra fefeo rifuk</i>            | Wind a thousandfold                 |
| 192. | <i>Na deta leo rifu ana tali do</i> | Like a thousand winding cords       |
| 193. | <i>Boe ara rambule roroso</i>       | They set seeds that spread round    |
| 194. | <i>Na ra roroso natu</i>            | Spread round a hundredfold          |
| 195. | <i>Na leo natu ana bolao.</i>       | Like a hundred tiny spiders.        |
| 196. | <i>Fo ha'i malan fo mu'a</i>        | Take them to eat                    |
| 197. | <i>Fo tengga malan fo pake</i>      | Grab them to use                    |
| 198. | <i>Ma lo neu falu inar</i>          | And provide for the widows          |
| 199. | <i>Fo ita tesik be na</i>           | For those of us present             |
| 200. | <i>Teik esa ma dalek esa</i>        | One stomach and one heart           |
| 201. | <i>Boe ma ita hambu lada mbeda</i>  | We have delicious food              |
| 202. | <i>Ma lolé heu</i>                  | And fine clothing                   |
| 203. | <i>Tuda ma monu mai dae bafok</i>   | Fallen and descended upon the earth |
| 204. | <i>Boe ma lenak Rote Ndao.</i>      | Particularly on Rote Ndao.          |

## Comparing the Two Versions of *Suti Solo do Bina Bane* as Origin Chants

There is a span of 38 years between my recording of the first version of *Suti Solo do Bina Bane* and my recording of the second version. Guru Pah and Sam Ndun, from whom I recorded the first version, were among the oldest members of their community in 1973 and had undoubtedly seen, and possibly participated in, the origin celebration for which their recitation provides a cosmological foundation. Yet there is no mention of the origin ceremonies in their recitation; their composition is an account of the origins of the planting of rice and millet in Thie.

By contrast, for Jonas Mooy, who was 63 at the time of my recording in 2011, Thie's origin ceremonies could only be a memory; yet his recitation is concerned both with the planting of rice and millet and with the establishment of the first origin ceremonies.

A most interesting contrast between the two versions of *Suti Solo do Bina Bane* from Thie and most other versions is that almost from the moment the shells are fished from the sea, they begin issuing instructions about precisely where they should be placed and how they should be treated. There is no dialogue in their interaction with those who carry them from the sea.

It is also interesting to compare the ritual sites named in the first version with those in the second version. The first version recounts a succession of seven named sites; by contrast, the second version names only three sites, two of which are, however, the same as in the first version.

Table 16: Ritual Sites in Thie's Two Versions of *Suti Solo do Bina Bane*

First version:	Second version:
	1) Teke Me//Re'ik Oen
1) Deras//Le Lena	
2) Mundek//Na'u Dalek	2) Mundek//Na'u Dale
3) Rote//Kode Ana	
4) Oe Batu//Bau Foe	
5) Kone Ama//Sai Fua	
6) Nggonggoer//Lasi Lai	3) Nggonggoer No//Lasi Lain
7) Liti//Sera Dale	

The second version goes on to extend the planting of rice and millet—and of seeds in general—from Thie to the rest of the island. The ritual names Ledo So'u//Anda Iko and Pena Pua//Rene Kona are not actual place names but are dyadic sets that Jonas Mooy has created (from well-known domain names) to indicate the whole of the island. Ledo So'u is taken from the name of the domain of Oepao, Fai Fua ma Ledo Sou, at the eastern end of the island; Anda Iko from the name of the domain of Delha, Deli Muri ma Anda Iko, at the western end of Rote; Pena Pua from the name of the domain of Ba'a, Pena Pua ma Maka Lama, on the northern coast; while Rene Kona comes from one of the names for Thie, Tada Muri ma Rene Kona, on the southern coast.

## The Role of the Coconut in the Origin Ceremony of Thie

In the second version, there is a particular emphasis on the coconut that the ancestors must gather and bring to the ceremony. Although it is not made explicit, this coconut is the focus of the origin ceremony: it brings ‘gentle dampening dew and the cool rainwater’ that pour down upon the earth.

In 1921, the Dutch colonial officer B. Koopmans, at the end of his tour of duty, wrote a long report on Rote, *Memorie van Overgave*, for his successor. In this *Memorie*, he describes an origin ceremony, which he apparently observed in Thie. His observations are, however, brief and inserted in a rambling disquisition on the comparative religions of the world, which makes up almost one-quarter of his transfer report.

According to these observations, an uneven number of women would first form a row by locking arms across each other’s backs and then would dance in a circle around a pole that was less than 1m high on which was placed a young coconut. As they circled the pole, one of the dancers—the one who was the most decorated with golden ornaments—reached out and took the coconut and placed it three times between her legs. Thereafter all of the women adjourned to a nearby sacred house, where they were sprinkled with coconut water so that they would have as many children as ‘the stars in the heavens and the sands on the beach’ (Koopmans 1921: 18).

In Thie, the traditional marriage ceremony also centred on the use of a coconut whose fertility was invoked. This invocation gives some idea of the symbolism of the coconut:

<i>No ia, tadak lima:</i>	This coconut has five layers:
<i>Mbunu holu so'en</i>	The husk embraces the shell
<i>So'en holu isin</i>	The shell embraces the flesh
<i>Isin holu oen</i>	The flesh embraces the water
<i>Ma oen holu mbolon.</i>	And the water embraces the kernel.
<i>De ela leo be na:</i>	So let it be:
<i>Ana touk ma ana inak-kia</i>	That this boy and this girl
<i>Ela esa holu esa</i>	Let one embrace the other
<i>Ma ela lili esa</i>	And let one cling to the other

<i>Fo ela numbu non ana dadi</i>	That the sprout of the coconut may come forth
<i>Ma sadu mbuan ana mori</i>	And the core of areca nut may appear
<i>Fo ela bonggi sio lai sio</i>	That they may give birth to nine times nine
<i>Ma rae falu lai falu.</i>	And bring forth eight times eight.

## Ritual Language Usage in Jonas Mooy's Version of *Suti Solo do Bina Bane*

Jonas Mooy's recitation of 204 lines is composed of 93 dyadic sets. This includes several formulaic sets that cannot be meaningfully analysed into component sets: 1) *data don//hida fan*; 2) *fara tanar//lulutu nasun*; or 3) *bini buik//mbule sio*. However, the majority of these dyadic sets, as in other versions of *Suti Solo do Bina Bane*, belong to a recognisable island-wide repertoire of similar dyadic sets. Given the similar focus of each of the texts, it is not surprising that these sets are familiar: 1) *liun//sain* ('ocean'/'sea'); 2) *fetok//linak* ('girl'/'woman'); 3) *lafal//pou* ('male cloth'/'female cloth'); 4) *fail//ledo* ('day'/'sun'); 5) *dale//tei* ('inside, heart'/'stomach'); 6) *-ndail//seko* ('to fish with a net'/'to use a scoop-net'); 7) *metil//tasi* ('tide'/'sea'); 8) *ail//batu* ('tree'/'rock'); 9) *de//all kola* ('to speak'/'to talk'); 10) *dual//telu* ('two'/'three'); 11) *kil//kona* ('left, north'/'right, south'); 12) *betel//hade* ('millet'/'rice').

Equally familiar are terms that reflect the sound changes that distinguish the dialect of Thie from that of Termanu. Among these differences are the use of 'r' in Thie where Termanu uses 'l'; the use of 'ngg' where Termanu has 'ng'; the use of 'mb' where Termanu has 'p'; and the use of final 'r' for emphasis where Termanu would use final 'k'. Examples of these sets are the following:

Table 17: Termanu–Thie Dialect Comparisons

Termanu	Thie	Gloss
<i>alu//langa</i>	<i>aru//langga</i>	'shoulder'/'head'
<i>loa//naru</i>	<i>loa//naru</i>	'wide'/'long'
<i>lulik//sangu</i>	<i>lurik//sanggu</i>	'storm'/'cyclone'
<i>dasi//halu</i>	<i>dasi//haru</i>	'song'/'voice'
<i>bebengu//kokolo</i>	<i>bebengu//kokoro</i>	'to sound'/'to ring'
<i>henge//pa'a</i>	<i>hengge//pa'a</i>	'to tie'/'to bind, fence'
<i>-lai//tu'u</i>	<i>-rai//tu'u</i>	'to stand'/'to sit'

Termanu	Thie	Gloss
<i>do//pule</i>	<i>do//mbule</i>	'leaf'/'seed'
<i>ana mak//falu inak</i>	<i>ana mar//falu inar</i>	'orphan'/'widow'
<i>natu//lifu</i>	<i>natu//rifu</i>	'hundred'/'thousand'
<i>feo//loso</i>	<i>fefeo//roroso</i>	'to wind'/'to creep'
<i>-linik//sufuk</i>	<i>-rinik//sufuk</i>	'to cool'/'to make fresh'
<i>bapa//meko</i>	<i>bamba//meko</i>	'drum'/'gong'

Yet more interesting are the dyadic sets in Jonas Mooy's recitation that are distinctive to Thie: first among these expressions is the set *limbal//oli*. This is a dyadic set used to designate Thie's origin ceremony; in Termanu, this ceremony is referred to by the dyadic set *hu(s)//sio*, which may be translated as 'the feast of origin'/'the celebration of nine'. Another set is *takadenal//torano*, which is used to refer to a 'relative, close companion'; the equivalent in Termanu is *tola-tungal//dudi-no*. Both expressions relate to the term *tolano* (Thie: *torano*), which is used, in ordinary language, for a 'relative'. For 'human being or person', Thie uses the dyadic set *andianal//hatahori*. Thie also has a special expression for 'ancestors', *ba'il//soro*, which combines the terms for 'grandfather' and 'great grandfather'. Another set of particular relevance to this composition is *bini buik//mbule sio* ('the basic grains'/'the nine seeds'). There is no exact equivalent in Termanu but Ringgou's ritual language uses the set *pule siol//poko falu* ('the nine seeds'/'the eight kernels'); Dengka has *mbule siol//la'a mola* ('the nine seeds and eaten grains'). Finally, Thie utilises the set *lada mbedal//lole beu*, for which it is difficult to find an appropriate translation. This formula has as one of its components the well-known set *ladal//lole*. *Lada* carries the notion of 'taste, good taste', while *lole* connotes what is 'beautiful, lovely, pleasant'. The only explanation that I was able to obtain for this formula as a whole is that it refers to the 'taste of food'/'attractiveness of clothing'.

## The Formula for 'A Time Long Ago'

Some of the most recurrent formulae in ritual language are difficult to translate in any literal sense. In the first lines of his recitation, Jonas Mooy uses a formula of this kind:

<i>Bei hida fan na</i>	At a time long ago
<i>Ma bei dalu don na</i>	And in an age long past

This is a common formula with which to begin an origin narrative. To translate it literally makes little sense: 'still (how) much little'/'still long time'. More interesting is the variety of forms that this formula takes.

Guru Pah uses the following formula:

<i>Hida bei fan na</i>	At a time long ago
<i>Dalu bei don na</i>	At a period long past

But he also uses this formula in slightly abbreviated form:

<i>Bei dalu don</i>	Still in a former time
<i>Do hida fan</i>	Or in a bygone period

The poet Pe'u Malesi also uses this formula as follows:

<i>Hida dodo bei leo fan</i>	Once long ago
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The poet A. Amalo, from Termanu, uses yet another variation on this formula:

<i>Hida hatan ma data don-na</i>	In a former period and a past time
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Ande Ruy, in his version of *Suti Solo do Bina Bane*, uses the formula in this way:

<i>Hida bei leo hatan</i>	At a time long ago
<i>Ma data bei leo dona</i>	At a period long past

Each of these expressions is translated in a slightly different way to convey the range of variation in this formula. To some extent, each poet uses a slightly different variant as a personal signature of his style of composition.

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