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## ***Wayfinding Women: The Generation of Landscapes and Society through Female Entrepreneurship<sup>1</sup>***

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In the monsoonal archipelago of Eastern Indonesia, the seasonally arid island of Sumba is a very challenging place to live. How do the islanders who live in this region endure the harsh conditions? What economic strategies do islanders pursue to ensure their survival? This paper seeks to gain a better understanding of exchange activities among indigenous women and girls on the island of Sumba in Eastern Indonesia. Women entrepreneurs on Sumba produce and process natural products and handicrafts. Women work together with their kin and allies — in groups composed, for instance, of mothers, daughters, nieces and sister-in-laws — to create value, to produce tradable goods and to generate income in a limited environment. Sumbanese women exchange products informally among one another, formally with buyers who pass through their hamlets on trading excursions, and as vendors in biweekly marketplaces. This paper discusses female entrepreneurship in open-air markets and describes the characteristics of the female driven natural products and craft trades on Sumba. Ethnographic data are presented about the locations where trade objects are produced, processed and exchanged and these data are used to map the movements of female entrepreneurs through the island landscape. Geographic maps of entrepreneurs' movements are the basis for an evaluation of the connections between exchange-driven wayfinding and the production of identities, social networks and landscapes. Evaluations of the wayfinding practices of women entrepreneurs reveal the power women have to form economic systems and ethnic identities.

**Keywords:** Wayfinding, trade, identity, market women, Eastern Indonesia.

### **Seeking Her Livelihood**

The entrepreneurial identity of Sumbanese female traders is based, in part, on their movements through landscapes and on their social, economic and biophysical interactions within markets both rural and urban. 'Markets' here refers to actual marketplaces as well as to the principles driving and structuring women's participation in commodity trading. In spite of the strength of the market principle in the globalization of trade on Sumba, the exchanges that Sumbanese women have with other people, symbols and biota, and with the biophysical world continues to bear upon their identities. In this article I trace the geographic paths of several Sumbanese market women in order to address the continuing significance of market places and other spaces related to trade and the significance of movement within those spaces in identity-making processes.

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## Images and Captions



Image 1a: Adat Producer Traders



Image 1b: Adat Producer Traders

One category of female entrepreneurs on Sumba are the 'local' women who live in rural areas and who sell portions of the products they harvest from their gardens, agroforests, fields, and forests. Most of the vendors who sell plant (as opposed to animals, which men peddle) in the island's marketplaces are women, like the ones selling peanuts, tomatoes, greens, bananas, cassava, areca nuts, squash and papaya flowers in these images.



Image 2: Intra Island Traders

Female entrepreneurs populate the trade routes that carry merchants and goods from their sites of production and from smaller marketplaces to mid-size marketplaces and to the island's regional market hubs in Tambolaka, Waikabubak, and Waingapu. The woman in this image sells products such as chayote, betel catkins, areca nuts, scallions, greens and garlic from other marketplaces in western, central, and eastern Sumba as well as from off-island sources.



Image 3a: Muslim Inter Island Traders



Image 3b: Muslim Inter Island Traders

A community of women, most of whom are Muslim and have multiple geographic affiliations, move buy-and-sell products from the land and the sea in Sumba's and other island's markets and carry products back-and-forth across the shipping lanes between Sumba and neighbouring islands in Eastern Indonesia. The women in these images are en route to collect fish from their husbands who recently returned from their nightly offshore fishing expedition.

Mobility is a predominant component in the economic strategies of Eastern Indonesians in the sense that islanders move around frequently — on foot, atop mopeds, in minibuses, aboard boats — as they manage resources. *Cari hidup* (seeking a livelihood) is a popular saying among Eastern Indonesians that people use to explain where they are going or why they travel far from their homes. Fitri, for example, says that the reason she sails weekly back and forth across the Sumba Strait, along her trade route between Sumba and Sumbawa, is to *cari hidup* (seek her livelihood). Some Eastern Indonesians seek their livelihoods along land-based routes, such as Yuliana who transports agricultural goods between Waikabubak and Waingapu, the urban capitals of Southwest Sumba and East Sumba, respectively. Yuliana's land-based route is fairly large compared to the majority of Sumbanese women who both produce and trade; Nunu Lele, for example, travels almost daily out of the valley where her hamlet of Wewarko is, along dirt footpaths, through orchards, across creeks, up and down hills and across mosaics of gardens, fallows, fields and forests. Mobility is predominant in the lives of Fitri, Yuliana, Nunu Lele and the many other women on Sumba whose strong presence at most locations of trade and production indicate their great contribution to local and regional economies.<sup>2</sup>

What are the connections between mobility and livelihoods for these women and other Sumbanese? What routes do Sumbanese take as they engage in production and exchange, and why? This article describes geographical patterns among women on Sumba who seek their livelihoods in horticulture and trade. Maps of their traverses across the landscape reveal four major groups of female producers and traders defined on the bases of type of trade and the expanse of routes. The first group is producers-traders (Images 1a and 1b), who contribute to the subsistence of their households and also exchange products at several nearby locations in the commodity chain; these women have the smallest home range. The second group is intra-island merchants (Image 2), who buy products from the producers, sell them in marketplaces, and sometimes transport products to alternate marketplaces. The third group of women is inter-island merchants (Images 3a and 3b), who ferry products across the Sumba Sea between Sumba and Sumbawa. These women have the largest home range. The fourth group is shopkeepers, some of whom do not travel to trade because shop keeping is their primary occupation, while others do travel because shop keeping is one among several of their economic endeavours.

While women in these categories share similar routes and trades, they also share ethnicities. Ethnicity is fluid and shifts through time (Ong and Peletz 1995, Scott 2009), like women's routes and strategies. Wayfinding (Ingold 2000) while managing one's resources is an integral part of the construction of one's identity. Wayfinding generates knowledge, and relays information about senses of self and perceptions of the environment. If ethnicity is continuously under construction, and if identity is constructed while moving, then we can learn about the processes of identity construction by studying people's wayfinding activities. The present discussion is based on ethnographic descriptions of women's movements through

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<sup>2</sup> Women play significant roles in marketplaces also on Java (Brenner 1995) and throughout Indonesia and Southeast Asia. This has been the case since at least the nineteenth century (Raffles 1965 [1817]).

space, their social and ecological activities in trading spaces as well as spaces connected to trading and the symbols that women attach to themselves in order to discuss processes of ethnicity and identity.

## **Social Groups in the Marketplaces**

### *Inter-Island Traders*

Maimuna and her husband, Samsudin, have been trading products between Sumba and Sumbawa since 1976. The port of Bima on Sumbawa is their hometown, but they maintain residences on both islands. On Thursdays, the couple leaves Bima, crosses the Sumba Strait, docks in Waikelo and takes trucks to the Weimangura marketplace, which is about two hours inland from the port. In the Weimangura market, the couple sells products that they purchase in Bima and buys products they purchase from Sumba's farmers. Typical products they buy in Weimangura are bananas (purchased at US\$00.42 per hand), golden apples (purchased at US\$00.63 per large sack) and avocados (purchased at US\$00.01 for five fruits). Maimuna and Samsudin travel the route in reverse on Saturdays when they load the goods from Weimangura on trucks, take them to Waikelo and load them on boats that cross the Sumba Strait and return to Bima. When the boat anchors in the shallow waters just off the shore of Bima, Maimuna and Samsudin's trading partners buy the Sumbanese products directly from the boat and haul them away to the next location in the Eastern Indonesian commodity chain.

Nurmin Usman and her husband, Abdul Ahmat, work together in their family trading business. Nurmin is a native Sumbanese whose father grew up on Sumba and whose mother is a Chinese Indonesian woman originally from the island of Lombok. Both Nurmin and Abdul sell produce in several of Sumba's marketplaces and both of Nurmin's parents are vendors in the Waikabubak market. Nurmin met Abdul, a native of Sumbawa, when he first began 'looking for a livelihood' as an importer-exporter on Sumba. Nowadays, the couple lives with their six children in Waitabula, which is the nearest town to the port at Waikelo. Nurmin travels between Waitabula (where a large, biweekly market also exists) and two of western Sumba's marketplaces. On Wednesdays, she sells dried fish, scallions and chili peppers in Waikabubak. On Saturdays, she sells the same in the Weimangura marketplace. Nurmin's younger sister-in-law, Fitri, is the family member who carries products back-and-forth between Sumba and Sumbawa. Fitri travels in the overnight ferry that departs from the Bima port on Tuesday evenings and arrives in Waikelo in the pre-dawn hours of Wednesday morning. After she off-loads the produce from the boat, Fitri brings the produce to Nurmin's house. Nurmin transports the fresh-off-the-boat products to Sumbanese consumers.

### *Intra-Island Traders*

Hochi is a young woman who grew up in the village Wee Limbu in Elopada sub-district. When she was twenty years old, Hochi moved to Waingapu, the capital of East Sumba to, she says, '*cari hidup.*' Hochi joined her older sister and brother who were already living in Waingapu and were operating a stall in the town's largest marketplace. In their stall, they sell tomatoes, pumpkins, citrus, rose apples, eggplant, chili peppers, chayote, eggs, green beans, ginger and palm sugar. The siblings work together to collect produce from farmers across the

island. Hochi's sister, Maria, travels by bus to Waikabubak, the most populated town in western Sumba, every Tuesday and Friday so that she can purchase produce on Wednesdays and Saturdays which are the busiest market days island-wide. Maria can purchase products from farmers who deliver their produce to the Waikabubak market, which is western Sumba's largest, for a low enough price that she can sell it for a profit in Waingapu where agricultural production is less bountiful because the climate is drier. For example, Maria buys tomatoes in Waikabubak to sell in Waingapu.

An example of a product from East Sumba is the palm sugar. Rural East Sumbanese make palm sugar from trees growing in their villages and sell it to middlemen traders who in this case are immigrants from Sabu, another Eastern Indonesian island. The Sabunese traders bring palm sugar to the Waingapu market where Hochi and her siblings purchase it for their stall. Hochi sometimes makes the trip to the Waikabubak market (instead of or together with Maria) where she purchases produce for her stall in Waingapu.

Yuliana is a nineteen-year-old woman from the hamlet of Ngadu Tana in Mata Piasu Village which is in the sub-district of East Wejéwa. Yuliana and her forty-something-year-old business partner, Sintha, operate a stall in the Waingapu market together. On Tuesdays, Yuliana takes the bus home so that she can shop in the marketplace in the hamlet of Homba Rade. There, Yuliana buys products to bring back to her Waingapu stall; including guava, chayote, green beans, tomatoes, chili peppers, ginger, turmeric, avocados, bananas and citrus. Whenever their inventory gets low and they need to increase their stock, Sintha travels to her home village, Wei Limbu, which is also in western Sumba. Sintha's husband and children reside there, and Sintha regrets leaving her family behind when she stays in Waingapu, but she continues to vend because, she says, 'the most important thing for me to do is to *cari hidup* (earn a living)'.

Yuliana and Sintha earn a modest income from their work, they make just 'a little profit,' Yuliana says. Sintha estimates that they make about US \$00.01 from each sale by marking up their merchandise. An example Sintha gives is that, when she buys a whole basket of guava in Waikabubak for US \$00.53 (Rp5000), she brings them to Waingapu and divides them into units of seventeen fruits which she sells for US \$00.50. Yuliana explains that she and Sintha 'buy produce in West Sumba because it is still cheap there, and [she] can sell it for a higher price [in Waingapu].' So, when she goes home to West Sumba, she brings back to Waingapu anything that she can sell for a profit. Yuliana transports goods in both directions, really, since she purchases items in East Sumba that she sells in her hometown marketplace, such as onions and garlic that are not as plentiful in western Sumba.

### *Producers-Traders*

Nunu Lele woke up on a Wednesday morning in March just as the planet Venus rose above the tops of the trees on the eastern border of her hamlet. The glow from her kitchen hearth provided enough light in the dark pre-dawn hours for her to dress and gather her goods. By the time she had lowered three stacks of bananas onto her back porch and climbed through the doorway, one of her daughters, Dita Walu, and two of her granddaughters had gathered on the path that leads out of their hamlet which is named Wai Rawewok. These women set out

together on the uphill path that leads out of the forested territory that their clan occupies to the narrow paved road that runs east to west through the interior of western Sumba. Nunu Lele hauled the heavy stems of three different banana varieties; on her head, she carried jackfruit bananas (*kalogho nanga* in Kodi) and golden bananas (*kalogho mas*), and she cradled creamy bananas (*kalogho susu*) in her right arm. Dita Walu carried three-quarters of a sack of maize and a full sack of rice. One granddaughter carried six stems of bananas while the other granddaughter carried one stem of rice bananas (*kalogho nghagha*), a sack of avocados (*alpokat*) and a sack of golden apples (*wu dinjo*).

Nunu Lele's crew reached the roadside just as the sun began to rise and only several minutes before the first truck of the day passed by their stop. They climbed into the open bed of the bulky, diesel truck and headed to the Weimangura market. On his way toward Weimangura, the truck driver stopped to pick up lots of other folks carrying their goods to the market: more bananas, avocados, golden apples, taro, coconuts, copra, areca, candlenut, kapok and a buffalo skin.

The Weimangura market (Images 1a and 1b) was full of Sumbawan buyers who were so eager to get first choice of the high quality produce coming out of Sumba's forests that, before it stopped moving, they jumped onto the truck and began bargaining with these Kodi and Wejéwan farmers (Image 2). Bananas prices vary depending on the size and variety. Bigger hands sell for US\$.0053 and smaller hands sell for US\$0.26. A buyer from Bima named Yuri asked Nunu Lele how much she was selling her banana hands for and Nunu Lele said, '4000 rupiah [US\$0.42].' Yuri countered with the price of US\$0.16 (IDR 1500). Nunu Lele said, 'No, I won't take less than IDR 3000 [US\$0.32]'. Yuri walked away. Another Sumbawan buyer approached Nunu Lele and asked, 'How much?' Nunu Lele said, '3000 [US\$0.32].' The buyer agreed and bought all three of her banana bunches for IDR3000 each. Nunu Lele's granddaughter, Dulci, haggled with another Sumbawan trader over the prices of her six bunches of bananas. Dulci stated her selling price of IDR3000 per bunch, the buyer offered her IDR2000 (US\$0.21), she countered with IDR2500 (US\$0.26), and the buyer agreed to purchase two at that price, so Dulci sold them to him and he handed her IDR5000 (US\$0.53).

Dulci stood beside her remaining four bunches, and chatted with other girls who were also selling produce in the market that day. A young mother from Dulci's hamlet, Wai Rawewok, was there to sell three hands of bananas and a quarter of a sack of avocados. Another teenage girl from a neighbouring hamlet sold two hands of bananas. A middle-aged woman from Wejéwa sold one hand of smaller bananas for US\$0.21 (IDR2000). Piles of produce — bananas in one area, and candlenuts, avocados, areca, taro, golden apples in their own separate areas — accumulated as farmers unloaded their produce from the trucks and buses that carried them from their homes out in the countryside to the marketplace. Some of the women fussed at each other when their bananas got stepped on. People and produce overflowed the roadside.

Eventually, another trader bought Nunu Lele's granddaughter's remaining bananas for IDR2500 (US\$0.26) per hand. Later that night, the Sumbawan buyers — men and women — hauled the produce they purchased from the Sumbanese farmers to the Waikelo port, loaded it

on boats and transported it to Sumbawa. About seven boats full of agricultural products sailed from Waikelo to Bima that night. Some of the traders sold their produce on the docks as soon as they landed the next morning and other traders sold their goods in Sumbawa's Tente marketplace.

Within twenty minutes, Nunu Lele, Dita Walu and the granddaughters had sold all their produce for the prices they were aiming to receive so they set off into the market to use their newly earned income to purchase the products for themselves and their families back home in Wai Rawewok. Dita Walu purchased slaked lime, coffee, kerosene, salt and dried fish. Nunu Lele purchased chili peppers, shallots and dried fish. The granddaughters used their money to buy sugar, tea and rice. That was a typical March day in the Weimangura market for Nunu Lele's family in the sense that they produced a standard set of commodities in the late rainy season time of the year, and they had typical experiences with the buyers and the other producers. While commodity production varies during the year in response to the seasonality of rainfall, the model of exchange between horticulturalists and traders that occurred in the Weimangura market on that day in March endures throughout the year.

### **Seasonal Variations in Commodity Production**

In order to compare the types of commodities that producers sell during the rainy season to those they sell during the dry season, let us take a look into Mali Kaka's household on a Saturday afternoon in October.

The dry season, which begins in May or June, is typically over in October (give or take a few weeks into September or November) when the monsoon rains begin. Nevertheless, the production of garden crops is minimal due to extremely limited rainfall. So Sumbanese rely more heavily on wild plants, famine foods, tree crops and other supplemental goods to both consume within their own households and to sell in marketplaces. The commodities that flow through Mali Kaka's household generally illustrate the production patterns that exist throughout Kodi and across Sumba during the late dry season. Mali Kaka lives together with several of her children; several of her grandchildren, whose parents live in other households, also stay with her for varying intervals of time. Mali Kaka's home is in the hamlet of Obmol in the interior of the Kodi region of Southwest Sumba. She has two grain/vegetable gardens — one directly in front of her house and another on the northern slope of the hill that Obmol sits atop — an orchard, and a taro plot. Mali Kaka inherited ownership rights to her gardens when her husband died; he had inherited the rights from his mother when she died and she had inherited rights from her ancestors. Mali Kaka's family works with her to produce food in her gardens, orchards and taro plot: her daughters, Dorkas, Katrina, Maria, and Ribica; Dorkas's husband, Paulus; and her little brother, Jacob. On that day in October, Dorkas took the fruits of her family's productive activities to Kori, a small town to the west of Obmol where the market is open on Saturdays and Wednesdays. Her basket of produce included amaranth leaves, fern fiddleheads and fronds, cassava roots and sorghum grains. To get to Kori, Dorkas walked down from her house in Obmol, shortly after sunrise, along the single track dirt path to a minivan stop on the nearest paved road, and boarded the minivan which was overflowing with passengers bound for the Kori market. Most of the other women in the



minivan were carrying products to sell. These included elderly women with green coconuts, eggs and roosters; middle aged women with bundles of ferns, squash leaves, sweet potato leaves, candlenut and hand woven cloth; young women with cassava leaves, eggplants and chickens; and little girls with papaya flowers, cashew nuts and mangos. When Dorkas returned home from Kori she distributed the goodies she bought to her family: she gave a bundle of areca nuts and betel leaves, a small bag of sugar and a small pile of coffee to Mali Kaka, one sweet roll to each child, and a bag of ground corn meal to her Aunt who lived in the house next door. The other women who were on the minivan with Dorkas brought food home for their families too; rice and maize were especially important, but also salt, fish, coffee, sugar and other commodities.

### **Identity Relations and Transactions**

Inter-island traders, intra-island traders and producers are linked in a network of complex relationships that range from familial to friendly, complementary, competitive, tense, profitable and even to exploitative. The groups that constitute the network define themselves and others, in part, during exchange processes, when they are minding their businesses, positioning themselves to bargain, and playing their roles as producers, traders, importers and exporters. Identity is 'a nexus of relations and transactions actively engaging a subject' (Clifford 1988: 344). The boundaries of the main social groups that are found in Sumbanese marketplaces are permeable, and people's identities fluctuate so that, within their life courses, even multiple times throughout their biographies, they may change their affiliations.

Waitabula, Waikabubak, Waingapu, Homba Rade, Weimangura, Bima, Tente, and dozens of other Eastern Indonesian markets are spaces where people compare, contrast and discuss their economies, religions and ethnicities. On Sumba, traders and producers appear to occupy three categories: Muslim Inter-Island Traders, Intra-Island Traders and Adat producer-traders. Muslim Inter-Island traders define their identities mostly in terms of their religion and careers. They mark their identities by wearing clothes associated with Muslims in Indonesia and by working together with their husbands and other family members to import and export products across the land and sea. Their names also indicate their identity since they use 'Muslim' names such as Maimuna, Nurmin Usman and Fitri. Intra-Island Traders express their identities by wearing clothes associated with global culture (especially pants and T-shirts), by speaking the national Bahasa Indonesia language and by using 'Christian' names such as Yuliana and Maria. Adat producer-traders define their identities in terms of genealogy, language and territory, such that 'Kodi' people descend from Kodi ancestors, speak the Kodi language and live in the Kodi sub-districts. Members of the 'Wejéwa' ethnic group descend from Wejéwans, speak Wejéwan and live in the Wejéwa sub-districts; however, Wejéwans are more widespread and also live in other Sumbanese districts. Clothes also mark the identities of Adat producer-traders since they typically wear woven sarongs composed of colours and graphics that are associated with their particular ethnic groups. Like people in the other groups, names symbolize membership in Adat communities, hence Nunu Lele and Dita Walu.



## Mapping Market Women on Sumba

One lesson that emerges from studying the strategic interactions of Sumba's traders and producers is that people produce their identities in the process of negotiating their ways through marketplaces and navigating along the routes into and out of marketplaces. The routes, then, are characteristics of identity — along with economic strategies, religion, language, clothes and names. Enacting routes is an identity process.

Maimuna has both maritime and land trade routes. The maritime portion of her route takes her and her bundles of commodities from Sumbawa, across the Sumba Strait in a boat, to Sumba. The land-based portion of her route goes from the markets of Sumbawa to the docks of Bima and from the docks at Waikelo to her home in Waitabula and the market in Weimangura.

Nurmin Usman has two main trade routes. The first is from her home in Waitabula to the Waitabula market. The second is from her home in Waitabula to the Waikabubak market. Nurmin's trade is land-based, but she works in tandem with her sister-in-law, Fitri, who handles the maritime portion of their import-export business.

Fitri's maritime trade route runs between the ports at Bima on Sumbawa and Waikelo on Sumba.

As in the case of the other traders and producers discussed in this article, Hochi's routes have changed during her life course. Her routes when she lived in her family's farming household in Wee Limbu Village differ from the paths she follows as a market trader in the capital town of Waingapu. In Waingapu, she moves back and forth between her house and the marketplace. She occasionally travels the route from Waingapu to her home in Elopada sub-district and from the capital of East Sumba to the capital of West Sumba. Hochi's economic endeavours depend on her collaboration with other traders and producers, especially Maria.

Maria routinely traverses the route from East Sumba to West Sumba for the purpose of buying and selling products between the island's two largest marketplaces in Waingapu and Waikabubak.

Yuliana's personal history is similar to Hochi's and to that of many other Sumbanese market vendors, since she also migrated from her small village to the capital for the purpose of earning income. Yuliana's migration took her from Ngadu Tana in the West Wejéwa sub-district of West Sumba to Waingapu in East Sumba. In search of merchandise for her market stall, Yuliana retraces the route between Waingapu and the market nearest her home.

Sintha's mapping routines are very similar to Yuliana's. Sintha also migrated from West Sumba to East Sumba, and she retraces that path periodically for, among other incentives, the purpose of buying and selling commodities.

Nunu Lele, Dita Walu, Dulci and the other granddaughter routinely follow several routes through the West Sumbanese landscape. On a daily basis, they walk between their hamlet and their gardens, orchards and forests as they manage those sites of production and as they plant, tend and harvest domesticated, semi-domesticated and wild plants. They also, like all of the other women whom they encounter in the Weimangura market, periodically make their ways from their rural hamlets to centres of trade; in the case of Nunu Lele and her kin, they walk and ride the bus from Kodi to Weimangura.

Mali Kaka, Dorkas, and their kinfolk have wayfinding practices that are very similar to Nunu Lele and her kin. Mali Kaka and her family walk every day between their houses, gardens, orchards, taro plots and forest patches; most days they take several outings. Many people also periodically plod the path between Obmol Hamlet and the market centres, usually Kori but also sometimes Weimangura, Bondo Kodi or Hombo Karipit. Nunu Lele's hamlet is several miles further into the interior of the island than Mali Kaka's hamlet; therefore, it has slightly more rainfall and slightly higher crop production rates and ripening schedules, so people's wayfinding patterns may vary slightly because of seasonality and in response to the plants themselves. The 'culture' of the residents of Mali Kaka and Nunu Lele's hamlets might be expected to be different because they belong to different clans with different genealogies. In spite of these factors, farming strategies and mapping practices are fairly consistent between the two hamlets, if not across the entire Kodi region and throughout Southwest Sumba and Sumba.

### **Wayfinding, Social Networks and Economic Security**

Routes, especially people moving along them, constitute, in part, people's perceptions of society and ecology. As people move through landscapes, they encounter other people, nonhuman biological organisms, non-living entities and meteorological phenomena. As they find their ways through these encounters, people locate the resources to sustain them (or not) physically and metaphysically: calories, cash, meanings and relationships. While marketplaces are contact zones (Clifford 1997) where different communities of people within a society forge identities relative to one another, routes are also contact zones where different types of biotic and abiotic entities within an ecosystem produce one another. An important function of the movement of people and goods is to connect the urban markets to the rural centres.

In Eastern Indonesia, women connect with other women by moving through space and by weaving together their movements with those of other women. They create networks that bind them to other people, to other organisms and to the landscape. Their agro-economic choices create interdependencies. Market women possess individual identities at the same time as they enjoy a shared identity in relation to other market women. This — the coexistence, that is, of specific and group identities — is especially true when women are in the marketplace, on their way to or from marketplaces, or engaging in conversations or activities related to markets. This is the reality of complex identities, and is an indicator of the dynamic, processual character of identity production. While it might seem like a contradiction to portray marketplaces as sites of individual transcendence and collective co-creation, both of these aspects of identity result from complex social relationships and contemporary market 'places'.

Spatial mobility is vital in creating and sustaining the safety nets that surround female producers and traders on Sumba. Scott (2009) speaking of mainland Southeast Asian hill peoples — following Clastres (1987) speaking of American Indians, Griaiznov describing Central Asians (1969) and Gellner discussing Arabs and Berbers in the Maghreb (1969) — claims that many foragers, swiddeners and seafarers purposively choose to be mobile and

marginal (relative to political centres) as part of their political strategies to evade incorporation into states or exploitation by oppressive regimes. In the mountains of mainland Southeast Asia, people use their mobility to 'integrate themselves more closely with the neighbouring polities or, alternatively, to keep them at a distance' (Scott 2009: 333). The mobility of women producers and traders who circulate around Eastern Indonesia contribute to the strength of their safety nets.

In the daily and biweekly marketplaces, the common identity of the women who gather together transcends their separate identities as Kodi, Wejéwan, Biman, Sumbawan, Sumban, Muslim, Catholic, Protestant or Marapu (the local ancestral religion). Sumbanese marketplaces are trans-ethnic spaces where exchange is 'a sphere of interest that cut[s] across ethnic categories' (Robinne and Sadan 2007: 300). Mobility and exchange define Sumba's transethnic marketplaces. A 'radical flux' (Scott 2009) in identities occurs as people circulate around markets, along paths and across oceans, and causes the social landscape to be as dynamic as the region's monsoonal landscape.

The tenacious women who farm and trade on Sumba work together with their kin and allies — in groups composed, for instance, of mothers, daughters, granddaughters, nieces and sister-in-laws — to create value, to produce consumable and marketable goods and to generate income in a limited environment. Most Sumbanese women manage natural resources to produce food and crafts. Many women trade their products informally among one another, as well as more formally with buyers who pass through their hamlets on trading excursions, and with vendors in biweekly marketplaces. As practitioners of horticulture, agroforestry, animal husbandry, fibre arts and trade (and so much more), Sumbanese women find their ways through relationships and resources as they make maps of places and landscapes. Wayfinding and mapping are necessary for the survival of Sumbanese women and their families.

The study of wayfinding provides us with insights about both the social relationships that connect people together into communities and the ways people perceive their landscapes. As people weave together their identities with their terrain, they increase their knowledge about resources and their ability to survive.

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