

# Acknowledgments

This book is the outcome of a marriage between reality and the science of complexity. While Professor John Holland's work in complex adaptive systems inspired my thinking in the sustainability of human-environment systems, many farmers around Poyang Lake provided me a reality check. I found a match between the two following several visits to the area, especially after I'd spent a summer in the villages.

During my visits to the villages, many farmers took the time to talk to me and served me meals, sometimes simply because I happened to be visiting at lunchtime or dinnertime. Some offered me a place to stay, welcoming me as if I were family, and giving me the privilege of observing their private lives. They taught me many things beyond books. Professor Holland was also a constant source of encouragement for this work and contributed to some of the ideas implemented in the agent-based model. I'd like to dedicate this book to the farmers around Poyang Lake and to the memory of John Holland.

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## About the Author

**Qing Tian** is an Assistant Professor of Computational Social Science in the College of Science at George Mason University, affiliated with the Center for Social Complexity at the Krasnow Institute for Advanced Study. She is an interdisciplinary researcher with interests in land use, development, and human-environment systems more generally. She applies complex adaptive systems theory and combines a range of empirical methods with computer modeling to analyze the complex processes and dynamics in human-environment systems. She is interested in policy analysis from the viewpoint of complex systems, and related to this, human cognition and decision making. Email: [qtian2@gmu.edu](mailto:qtian2@gmu.edu). Website: [mason.gmu.edu/~qtian2](http://mason.gmu.edu/~qtian2). Mailing address: Research Hall, Room 374, George Mason University, 4400 University Drive, Fairfax, VA 22030, USA.

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