

Forthcoming August 2014

Land's End: Capitalist Relations on an Indigenous Frontier Tania Murray Li

Drawing on two decades of ethnographic research in Sulawesi, Indonesia, Tania Murray Li offers an intimate account of the emergence of capitalist relations among indigenous highlanders who privatized their common land to plant a boom crop, cacao. Spurred by the hope of ending their poverty and isolation, some prospered, while others lost their land and struggled to sustain their families. Yet the winners and losers in this transition were not strangers—they were kin and neighbors. Li's richly peopled account takes the reader into the highlanders' world, exploring the dilemmas they faced as sharp inequalities emerged among them.

The book challenges complacent modernization narratives promoted by development agencies that assume inefficient farmers who lose out in the shift to high-value export crops can find jobs elsewhere. Decades of uneven and often jobless growth in Indonesia meant that for newly landless highlanders, land's end was a dead end. The book also has implications for social-movement activists, who seldom attend to instances where enclosure is initiated by farmers rather than coerced by the state or agribusiness corporations. Li's attention to the historical, cultural, and ecological dimensions of this conjuncture demonstrates the power of the ethnographic method and its relevance to theory and practice today.

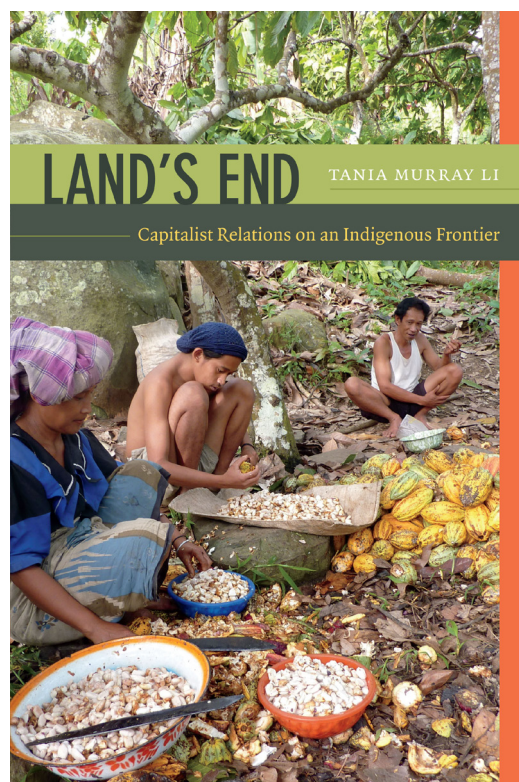
Tania Murray Li is Professor of Anthropology at the University of Toronto. She is the author of *The Will to Improve: Governmentality, Development, and the Practice of Politics*, also published by Duke University Press.

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240 pages, 14 illustrations

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"This is a wonderful book. It may have the biggest general impact of a book centered on Southeast Asian rural social dynamics since James Scott's seminal *Weapons of the Weak*. With unusual clarity and great persuasiveness, Tania Murray Li explores theoretical and methodological issues through vivid depictions of peoples' lives."—**Henry Bernstein**, Professor Emeritus of Development Studies, University of London

"Tania Murray Li, one of the foremost scholars of the native peoples, economies, and ecologies of Southeast Asia, here tells the subtle and challenging story of the Lauje, a group who defy clichés of indigeneity and whose destructive involvement in commodity production was willingly embraced. Her analysis complicates our understanding of the expansion of global capitalism, and the millions of people who do not fit easily into narratives of modern rural transformation."—**Michael R. Dove**, Coeditor of *Beyond the Sacred Forest: Complicating Conservation in Southeast Asia*



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