

## Enflamed Livelihoods: An Urban Political Ecology of Tourism and the Haze Crisis in Northern Thailand

Mary Mostafanezhad, University of Hawai'i at Manoa

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In May of 2016 the Haze Free Thailand Campaign was launched in a collaborative and ongoing effort to ameliorate the haze crisis in northern Thailand. In this talk I examine how urban tourism practitioners interpret the impact of the haze on their livelihoods, as well as their perceptions of its causes, implications and solutions. Additionally, I consider how these actors reimagine the interdependency of their livelihoods with rural agriculturalists who are widely blamed as culprits of haze production in the region. In doing so, I examine the



relationship between, on the one hand, the role of tourism in environmental discourse and governance, and on the other, the environmental geopolitics of urban-rural relations in order to explore how the "geo" is "graphed" through tourism and a range of place- and space-making processes and ideas (Sparke 2007). Drawing on discourse analysis of popular media reports on the haze as well as ethnographic fieldwork with urban tourism practitioners in Chiang Mai, I argue that geopolitical imaginaries of urban-rural relations are remapped via escalating attention to the impact of the haze on the tourism industry. This research contributes to emerging work on the environmental geopolitics of tourism in Montane Mainland Southeast Asia.

*Mary Mostafanezhad* is an assistant professor in the Department of Geography at the University of Hawai'i at Manoa. Mary's current research examines tourism, development and socio-environmental change across two distinct geographic sites. In mainland Southeast Asia, she examines the political ecology of transboundary haze and environmental governance and the interrelated livelihoods of agriculturalist and tourism practitioners in the region. In Hawai'i, her work addresses the value and viability of agro-food initiatives and contextualizes these agendas within the broader shifting political economy of agriculture in the state. Mary is the author of *Volunteer Tourism: Popular Humanitarianism in Neoliberal Times* (Routledge, 2014) and co-editor of *At Home and in the Field: Ethnographic Encounters in Asia and the Pacific Islands* (University of Hawai'i Press, 2015) and *Political Ecology of Tourism* (Routledge, 2016). She is also a board member for the Association of American Geographers Cultural and Political Ecology and Recreation, Tourism and Sport Specialty Groups, the co-founder of the American Anthropological Association Anthropology of Tourism Interest Group as well as Critical Tourism Studies Asia-Pacific, an affiliated faculty member in the Thai Studies Department at the University of Hawai'i at Manoa and an affiliated researcher in the Research Network on Celebrity and North-South Relations.

