



Australian  
National  
University



## LANDING ON THE EARTH: ORGANIC FARMERS REASSEMBLE THEIR LOCAL IN CENTRAL VIETNAM

**Monday 25 May**  
**3-4 pm**

### Speaker

Dr. Ashley Carruthers,  
Australian National University

### Location

Zoom ONLINE Free and open  
to all. Please register via  
contact email to obtain Zoom  
link.

This paper tells the story of a small group of Central Vietnamese farmers living near the tourist town of Hoi An who avoided being forced out of farming by starting a co-operative, the Thanh Dong Organic Vegetable Garden. Faced by the economic crisis of smallholder farming, the creeping gentrification of their hamlet and the seemingly inevitable fate of becoming peri-urban labourers, the farmers found a way to return to working their own land in a style that is economically, environmentally and socially durable. With a little help from local government, NGOs and even the ANU, it is as though they succeeded in reassembling their fractured local world. For now, the Thanh Dong farmers have endured the waves of deterritorialisation acting on their community and found a way of turning towards the terrestrial or “landing on the earth” (Latour 2018). They certainly don’t inhabit the world of simple localism evoked in the organics literature, but rather have assembled a local networked with a variety of other actors and institutions. They currently happily and productively dwell in a space of “traditional” smallholder farming thought to have been left behind by the

advancing front of modernisation. Informed by Bruno Latour and influential New Materialisms work in anthropology by Tsing, Haraway and others, this paper seeks to join the venture of telling hopeful stories about “life in the ruins” of capitalist modernity, unlikely endeavours of multi-species worldmaking, and situated technological projects that occupy a nonmodern orientation to the unfolding of time.

### About the Speaker

Ashley Carruthers is a lecturer in the School of Archaeology and Anthropology at the ANU. His recent publications include: “Taking the Road for Play: Cyclist Appropriations of Automobile Infrastructures in Vietnam” in *Transfers* (8):1-27, 2018; & “On the Myth of Uncivilized Rural People in the City”, *Mythbusting Vietnam: Facts, Fictions, Fantasies*, with Dang D.T., in Earl, C. (Ed.) (2018) NIAS, 163–181.

### Contact

E [soaa.admin.cass@anu.edu.au](mailto:soaa.admin.cass@anu.edu.au)  
W [archanth.cass.anu.edu.au](http://archanth.cass.anu.edu.au)

ANU College of  
Arts & Social  
Sciences