



Lecture Series of the Department of Development Studies

Nora Faltmann

PhD Candidate (pre doc) at the Department of
Development Studies, University of Vienna

Organic Consumption in Urban Vietnam: A Matter of Food Anxiety and Consumer Agency

Wednesday, 3rd May 2017, 4.15-5.45 pm

Seminar room, IE, Department of African Studies
Spitalgasse 2, Courtyard 5, 1090 Vienna

Moderation:

Judith Ehlert

(Department of Development Studies, University of Vienna)

Explicitly advertised organic food is a rather new phenomenon in Vietnam. Unlike the early rise of organic consumption and lifestyle elsewhere, empirical research indicates that environmental concerns are not a rationale for organic consumption in urban Vietnam. Rather, the motivation for consuming organic has to be viewed in the context of widely debated food safety issues in present-day Vietnam. Accordingly, anxiety towards what people incorporate into their bodies states a major societal health concern, to which organic consumption becomes one reaction. Yet despite high demands for perceived safe food, organic is a high-priced niche market only accessible to a specific clientele. Based on empirical research in Ho Chi Minh City, the presentation analyses organic consumption in the context of food safety and uses it as a lens to understand questions of social access and exclusion in a country characterized by rapidly growing social disparities and the fierce modernization of the agriculture and food system.