

The New Way: Protestantism and the Hmong in Vietnam

Editor's note: we're pleased to begin sharing the New Books in Southeast Asian Studies podcast, a part of the [New Books Network](#). Hosted by the Australian National University's Nick Cheesman, New Books in Southeast Asian Studies features conversations with the authors of new books on diverse Southeast Asian topics of interest to New Mandala readers. You can follow the podcast [on Facebook](#) or [on Twitter](#).

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Think of Christianity in Southeast Asia today and what might come to mind is the predominantly Catholic Philippines, or the work of the Baptist church among linguistic and cultural minorities in Myanmar, or any one of the thousands of Christian communities scattered throughout Indonesia. [Tam T. T. Ngo](#)'s new book is about none of these relatively familiar groups and places, but instead about the quite recent emergence and rather rapid growth of evangelical Christianity among the Hmong in the upland areas of Vietnam, on the border of China.



Her [The New Way: Protestantism and the Hmong in Vietnam](#) (University of Washington Press, 2016) is the first ethnography of Christian conversion in the borderlands of one of the only two formally communist states remaining in Southeast Asia today. Not only is the book remarkable for its collection and use of hard-to-get data from a wide array of sources in Vietnam and abroad, including extended periods of fieldwork in a Hmong village, but also for the story it recounts of conversion not by mission on the ground but via broadcast from the air.

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Tam Ngo joins [New Books in Southeast Asian Studies](#) to talk about Hmong converts and de-converts, family and neighborhood religious conflicts and their consequences, Pastor John Lee and the Far Eastern Broadcasting Company, the remittance of faith, ethnic relations and religious regulation in Vietnam, officials attempts through violence and persuasion to stop or reverse conversions, and the power of ethnography.

You may also be interested in:

Bradley Camp Davis, [Imperial Bandits: Outlaws and Rebels in the China-Vietnam Borderlands](#)

Sebastian and Kirsteen Kim, [A History of Korean Christianity](#)

Listen to the podcast here:

(Duration: 44:53 — 41.1MB)