

## Research Article

## Open Access

Tam Ngo\*<sup>1</sup>

# Missionary Encounters at the China-Vietnam Border: The case of the Hmong

**Abstract:** This paper examines missionary encounters that facilitate the extraordinary conversion of nearly one third of approximately one million Hmong in Vietnam to Evangelical Protestantism in the last two decades. Since this conversion is not officially approved by the Vietnamese government, these missionary encounters and the networks that facilitate them are highly informal and largely underground. This paper argues that the informality of Hmong evangelical networks as well as the conversion that they facilitate can only be fully understood if one seriously takes into account their ethnic and transnational aspects. Ethnic ties are important factors that motivate overseas Hmong to carry out missionary work in Vietnam, and such ties are also the primary reason why evangelism, carried out by Hmong missionaries, was and is so readily accepted by so many Hmong people in the country. In other words, it is from an ethnic aspiration to change their group's marginal position and to become modern that many Hmong in Vietnam decide to convert to Christianity. Similarly, the missionary zeal of many American Hmong Christians is connected to their ethnic commitment to the Hmong in Asia while simultaneously shaped by their conversion to Protestantism during and after their migration to America. In this paper, I will show that it is also because of an ethnic commitment that many Hmong missionaries undertake the risk and danger to evangelize in Vietnam.

DOI 10.1515/cdc-2015-0003

Received August 20, 2014; accepted October 25, 2014

---

<sup>1</sup> I would like to thank the WOTRO/NWO foundation, the Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam, and the Max Planck Institute for the study of Ethnic and Religious Diversity for their generous financial and institutional supports of my research.

---

\*Corresponding author: **Tam Ngo:** Research Fellow, Department of Religious Diversity, Max Planck Institute for the Study of Religious and Ethnic Diversity, Hermann-Föge-Weg 11 37073 Göttingen, Fon: +49 (551) 4956 – 222, Fax: +49 (551) 4956 – 170, E-mail: ngo@mmg.mpg.de

## 1 Introduction

Over just two decades, from the end of the 1980s, nearly one third of approximately one million Hmong in Vietnam have converted from animism and ancestral worship to Evangelical Protestantism. Since this conversion is not officially approved by Vietnamese government, there are only few ways for the Hmong Christian converts to acquire theological knowledge about their new faith. Recently, thanks to the flexibility and resourcefulness of global Protestant networks, theological training courses are specially organized by overseas Hmong missionaries and by the Chinese underground churches in various border towns in China for the Hmong converts in Vietnam. Illegally in the eyes of both Chinese and Vietnamese police, many Hmong converts from Vietnam cross the border to attend these courses often at high risk for their personal security.

The conversion to Christianity of Hmong people in Vietnam today is caught in political trouble and conflicts with the state. Among many other reasons is the very fact that the majority of Hmong people live in Vietnam's highly sensitive borderland. The Vietnamese state, like many other Asian states, is not in favor of conversion to Protestantism of ethnic minorities and of those who live in national borderlands (and who, like the Hmong, still maintain strong ties with their ethnic fellows at the other side of the border). This is connected to the way in which Protestant converts themselves perceive their new faith and what benefits it can offer. Various scholars have observed that Protestant conversion, aside from being seen as a form of 'modernization' through its alliance with a major world religion, also entails an attitude of being different from the dominant religion of the nation or state, thus helping to express and/or maintain ethnic difference without inferiority (Keyes 1996; Saleminck 2003, 2004). Hefner (1998:5) offers us a useful insight into this by asserting that "Protestantism takes hold among long-marginalized populations seeking to maintain an identity apart from the dominant culture even by appropriating the symbols and instruments of modernity (Van der Veer,

1996). In this case, conversion reproduces the binary logic of ethnic categories even as it transforms their cultural content.” Moreover, besides its impeccable “world building” ability (Hefner 1993) by which it relocates local custom and dogmas in the higher religious truths and transcendence, a world religion like Christianity also has an immense institutional capacity to standardize knowledge and identity across history and culture. In Hefner’s (1993:20) view, it is precisely this capacity that “has allowed the religions we know as world faiths to take advantage of the conditions that have accompanied the emergence of multiethnic, state-based societies.”

In today’s globalizing world wherein non-stop transnational flows of people and expanding networks unsettle the conventional ground of membership and belonging, the important questions are to what extent world religions like Christianity take advantage of such novel conditions, and what implications this might have in explaining the widespread conversion to world religions by indigenous communities across the globe in the last few decades. In this paper I argue that the informality of Hmong evangelical networks as well as the conversion that they facilitate can only be fully understood if one seriously takes into account their ethnic and transnational aspects. Ethnic ties are important factors that motivate overseas Hmong to carry out missionary work in Vietnam, and such ties are also the primary reason why evangelism, carried out by Hmong missionaries, was and is so readily accepted by so many Hmong people in the country. Hmong conversion to Protestantism in Vietnam is deeply ethnic in nature (Ngo, 2010; 2011). In other words, it is from an ethnic aspiration to change their group’s marginal position and to become modern that many Hmong in Vietnam decide to convert to Christianity. Similarly, the missionary zeal of many American Hmong Christians is connected to their ethnic commitment to the Hmong in Asia while simultaneously shaped by their conversion to Protestantism during and after their migration to America (Ngo, 2011). I will show that it is also because of an ethnic commitment that many Hmong missionaries undertake the risk and danger to evangelize in Vietnam. I shall start with a description of an encounter between present-day missionaries and their Hmong converts in Vietnam. I will then move on to a broader discussion of the politics of Hmong conversion in contemporary Vietnam, as well as the significance of the incomplete nature of conversion among the Hmong in the US. By way of conclusion, I will make clear how Hmong conversion and their underground acquisition of Christian knowledge contribute to our understanding of the encounter of religious people in the world today.

## 2 An encounter

On a spring day in early 2007, Sua, a recent convert and a very active Christian Hmong who since 2006 has been the leader of one of the two large Protestant congregations in a place I shall call Cardamom Hill<sup>2</sup> located near Vietnam’s border with China, encountered two Hmong pastors from the U.S. These two pastors, whom Sua called *xib fwb* (pastor) Pao and Fu, were roaming around Cardamom Hill pretending to be tourists. In Cardamon Hamlet 3, where Sua and the large part of his congregation live, they asked some Dao people who owned souvenir shops and herb sauna services whether there were “Hmong ntseeg Vaj Tswv” [believe in God] here and who was the leader of this group. Very soon they were directed to Sua’s house. It turned out that Fu’s wife was from Sua’s clan and that Pao’s uncle married a woman whose parents were born in a village near where Sua’s grandmother was born. Sua was very impressed by their rhetorical skill and he found the two pastors to be very pleasant people. They talked and prayed for awhile, and then Sua and another man in his congregation took the pastor around to nearby Hmong Christian communities.

Everywhere they went, they were received very warmly. They managed to establish one or another kind of kinship relationship with the local people just as they did with Sua’s family. Many villagers wanted to hear about where they came from, about how the Hmong people lived in America, and whether it was true that all Hmong people in America owned cars and lived in three-story houses. Young girls asked whether it was true that in a Hmong Christian wedding in America the bride always wears a beautiful white gown and the groom wears a beautiful suit, just like in Korean movies. Some middle-aged women wanted to know whether all Hmong people in America were Christian and whether the government in America, instead of persecuting, encouraged Christian people in America to believe in God. To this question, the pastors gave an affirmative answer. Upon hearing that, a Christian woman whose husband suffered persecution for being a Christian convert, broke out crying. Perhaps to comfort her, Pao added that many Hmong people in the U.S. not only believed in God but also believed that all Hmong people in the world should be blessed like them, live in prosperity and have the freedom to believe in God. Their mission (as well as that of many other Hmong people in the U.S.) was to help their Hmong “brothers and sisters around the whole world” to reach salvation via God. They

<sup>2</sup> All names of people and places in this essay are pseudonyms.

said they couldn't make promises but they would always do their best to "ask the American government to talk to the Vietnamese government" so that the Vietnamese government would stop harassing the Hmong Christians.

A few hours later, the two pastors and their local guides were stopped by policemen when they arrived in the neighbouring district. The four of them were arrested immediately. Pao and Fu were detained separately from Sua and his fellow congregation man for one night. That night, Sua prayed for a very long time to ask God for help. The two pastors only had tourist visas for China, and not for Vietnam. They came to Vietnam through an informal border route, and so the police wanted to seize their passports and fine them fifteen million Vietnamese Dong, equivalent to one thousand USD. Sua believes that because he kept on praying, God answered his prayer. The next morning, he was allowed to see the pastors and translated for them while the police interrogated them. After some time, the policemen decided to give them back their passports and only fined each of the pastors three million dong (two hundred USD), then deported them to China. Sua went with them and at the border, before the pastors left, they told Sua that they would call him as soon as they reached the other side of the border. Half an hour later, Sua received their call and was instructed to take the river way (*đường sông*, a common way to cross the border illegally) to go to China. Once Sua was on the Chinese side of the border, he was picked up and brought to a house where he met with the head pastor of an underground Protestant church for Han Chinese in Hekou. The pastor was Han Chinese and was very friendly to Sua and encouraged him, from now on, to not hesitate to ask if he needed any help. He informed Sua that next month they would organize a theological training course and asked whether Sua and other Hmong brothers and sisters in Vietnam would like to attend.

From then on, Sua became a frequent attendant of theological workshops in China and very soon a large number of Hmong Christian congregational leaders in Lào Cai, Hà Giang, and Lai Châu province also frequently participated in the courses. Each course would be two to four weeks long with about 30 attendants. Aside from the Chinese pastor and a deacon of his church who took care of logistic arrangements, each course has different lecturers and many of them were, and still are, American Hmong pastors. Through them, the course attendants were provided with Bibles (printed in Hmong Romanized Phonetic Alphabet), learning materials, and other financial support for travel costs (for leaders of congregations that lived far away from the border) and living costs for their stay in China. In the harsh winter of 2007 and 2008, several loads of second-hand winter clothes donated by

the Hekou Protestant church were taken to Vietnam to be distributed in Hmong villages high up on the mountain.

In the beginning of 2008, Sua was looking for a house to rent in Lào Cai town as the office and training center for the Hmong Christians of Lào Cai. He asked me for help. It appeared that many missionaries who worked with Sua decided that it was better to have a training center near the Lào Cai border instead of in Cardimon Hill, so that for security reasons Hmong missionaries could just hop in for a day to give a lecture and then return to China in the evening. If the center were located in Lào Cai, it could be more easily reached by Hmong people on the eastern side of the province than if it were in Cardimon Hill. Sua told me that the missionaries and the Chinese church were willing to give a maximum of six million dong per month (four hundred USD) to cover the rent. As far as I know, before I left Lào Cai at the end of June 2008, Sua was still looking, and the training center was still being planned. The only difference was that the police heard of this plan and became very watchful of Sua's actions. They began to constantly call upon him to question him about this or that.

### 3 Ethnic commitment in the Hmong transnational conversion

I met and became friends with Sua in the middle of my in-depth ethnographical study of the massive, recent, ongoing, and politically controversial conversion to Protestantism amongst members of the Hmong group in Northern Vietnam<sup>3</sup>. Starting somewhere in the middle of the

<sup>3</sup> In order to do so, I didn't conduct single-location based ethnography but carried out fieldwork research for 15 months in Vietnam and 6 months in the US, along with 8 short fieldtrips to the other side of Chinese border, one visit to Chiang Mai, Thailand, and one trip to several provinces in Laos. In Vietnam, a preliminary research was conducted in three months (11/2004-02/2005), follow up by two one-month long trips (January 2006, and January 2007), and a long intensive 10 month research (09/2007 – 06/2008). The research in the US started with a three weeks visit to Minnesota in March 2006 (initially planned to attend the first International Hmong studies conference. Summer 2006, I return to the Midwest to attend Hmong language course at Madison, Wisconsin, while taking various trips to visit Hmong communities in Milwaukee, Sheboygan, Wassau, St. Paul, and Minneapolis. The contacts established in this year formed the morphology of my fieldwork networks in summer 2008. The major methodology employed throughout the fieldwork is participant observation and personal in-depth interviews. Information that I aimed to collect is mainly qualitative. It includes personal narratives, life stories, description of relation, behaviour and interaction that I observed in the field. A considerable number of scholarly works in and outside Vietnam are analysed to provide understanding and different perspectives of Hmong conversion. In Vietnam, three times I attempted to use questionnaires to gather quantitative data, three times I failed, the reason for which is explain elsewhere (Ngo, 2011). The quantitative information needed for the argument is mainly second-hand data and government census.

1980s, this conversion movement was intricately linked to global movements of Christian mission and conversion in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. It is clear in Sua's story, which is just one among many, that conversion, like that of the Hmong, involves national and regional histories, the impact of states, the power of religious institutions in imposing orthodoxy as well as transnational and global processes. Various forms of religious networks, operating on a global scale play an important role in the widespread conversion to Christianity of people in many places in the world.

Locally, being the 'poorest of the poorest' in Vietnam, the Hmong have experienced increasing difficulties, especially when it comes to the question of continuing to practice their costly traditional religious and healing rituals. *Đổi mới*, the transformative economic reform programme started in 1986, has deregulated many subsidized programmes to mountainous regions while imposing stricter regulation on land use and ownership and has prohibited slash-and-burn farming and opium poppy cultivation. The consequences of these changes combining with population increase, dislocation and migration, environmental degradation have increased poverty and intensified the socio-political and cultural marginality of the Hmong. Parallel with these mounting local difficulties is the intensified contacts and exchanges of ideas and good between the Hmong in Vietnam with their ethnic fellowmen who became war refugees in the US at the aftermath of the Secret War in Lao (Ngo, 2010). These contacts and exchanges help to form part of the aspiration to be modern and to belong to an emerging 'global Hmong community' (Lee, 1996) that is widely shared by member of the Hmong group in Vietnam (Ngo, 2011). The combination of all these factors has directly and indirectly created a fertile ground for conversion among this group. On the global scale, the dynamics of global religious revivals has activated transnational religious networks, which make use of ethnic affinities overseas, and of the organizational and communicative strength of Protestant Churches, to facilitate the Hmong conversion by circulating religious symbols and goods, financing and using evangelical transnational radio broadcasts in vernacular languages (the FEBC) (Ngo, 2009). The Hmong conversion is a powerful example of how globalization enables the socio-cultural and identity transformation of marginalized ethnic minorities and non-state people.

For the recently converted Hmong in China, Laos, and Vietnam, most of their conversions to Evangelical Protestantism are not (yet) fully approved by state authorities and some Protestant worship therefore remains illegal and operates within the realm of

underground house churches, and informal religious networks are the main channels of missionization. This very much resembles what Castells (1996) sees as being a result of the network society in which movements and flows are more important than formal organizations and in which transnationality is an element of globalization. Although, in this case, informality is primarily the result of government restrictions on religious organizations, one can see a process in which under changing government policies informality may change into formal structures. However, behind this process of formalization transnationality plays itself out in informal networks, whatever the government policy may be.

Sua and the two missionaries in the encounter above were from different places, even different continents. But, as shown in the encounter, there were few obstacles preventing them from connecting to each other. The two missionaries found their way into Hmong communities within a very short amount of time. Such a connection is possible because both parties are bound together by a shared ethnic identity: being Hmong. In one way, this ethnic tie is inherent in the basic nature of the Hmong kinship system (Ngo, 2010, Trần 1996; Phạm 1995; Lepreecha 2001; Tapp 1989a; Cooper 1984; Lee 1996; Julian 2003). Regardless of where they come from, whichever region or country they inhabit, all Hmong who bear the same clan name are supposed to consider each other as brothers and sisters. Also, ethnic ties are reinforced by the shared situation of being marginalized ethnic minorities in all the countries in which the Hmong live (Schein 2004, 2007), and wherein they are all well known for their persistence in resisting cultural assimilation and preserving their ethnic identity. This resembles what Eriksen (1993) and Barth (1969) saw as the configuration of ethnicity by locally interactive relations between different ethnic groups. In the Hmong case, however, the configuration of ethnicity seems to occur not only in a local, but also in a transnational, context. Transnational connections between various groups that reside in various countries transcend the locally constructed ethnicity to respond to a global Hmong identity (Julian 2003; Lee 1996).

It is important to identify the ethnic ties between the two groups since this can explain most of the encounters and transnational linkages between them. It is also important to identify the nature of what I shall call "double transnationality" in this case (Bhachu 1985). Since they are also a part of an older Southeast Asian diaspora, the Hmong in Vietnam share with their Laotian, Thai, and Burmese Hmong counterparts a history of southward migration from China and memory of a historic

‘homeland’ situated in China which influenced/influences messianic tendencies (as mentioned previously) (Tapp 1989a and Trần Hữu Sơn 1996). This characterizes the “first transnationality” of the Hmong in Vietnam and elsewhere in Southeast Asia.

The “second transnationality” began after the end of the Secret War in Laos in 1975 as hundreds of thousands of Hmong and other upland Laotians were forced to leave the country and become political refugees in the West.<sup>44</sup> The result of this “double transnationality” is the ambiguity of homeland. In fact, as Schein (2004) notices, there is a strong tendency among American Hmong to imagine and create a double homeland in both Laos and China. The South-east Asian Hmong are related to the Chinese Hmong who are classified as Miao in China. Similarly, although these people came mainly from Laos, the notion of national boundaries does not converge with the Hmong’s notion of ethnic boundaries. As various forms of global connections have emerged in the past decades thanks to the availability of communication and the increasing affordability of travel, the image of a geographical homeland has been enlarged to include other locations in Southeast Asia where there are Hmong residents, such as Thailand and Vietnam. Many Hmong in the U.S. whom I encountered told me that they or their relatives were born in Vietnam, then moved to Laos, and that often they still have relatives who live in Vietnam. This is the reason why in the encounter above, one of the American Hmong missionaries could claim the same place of origin with one of the Vietnamese Hmong villagers.

There are interesting connections between overseas Hmong groups and those left behind in Southeast Asia. I have encountered many Hmong in Madison, Milwaukee, St. Paul, and Minneapolis who told me about their recent visits to Vietnam to look for their long separated relatives. One successful banker in St. Paul told me about a trip that she made in early 2007 with her husband to a village all the

way up in Ha Giang province in Vietnam, to visit her father-in-law’s younger brother. The brothers were separated for more than 60 years because of war and migration. Only in early 2000 did her father-in-law learn that his brother was still alive, but he was too old to make the trip to Vietnam to see him. After much hassle, they managed to establish contact, first by sending cassette tapes via the missionary networks, and then later by phone. In 2006, her father-in-law passed away without realizing the dream of seeing his brother again. On his death bed, he told his son—her husband—to go to Vietnam and realize that dream for him. The wife told me this story between her tears, but once the emotional part was over, she became very joyful and talked non-stop about how beautiful, how traditional, and how “authentic [her] Hmong people” in Vietnam were.

I witnessed another example of this kind of enthusiasm at the First International Hmong Studies Conference held at Concordia University in St. Paul in 2006. One presentation was about the Hmong population in Vietnam, given by a Hmong high school teacher who had led a group of Hmong students on a school tour to Vietnam. Although it was not really an academic paper, her paper was among the best attended at the entire conference, with standing room only. The school teacher proudly presented general background information on the socio-economic and cultural life of her “Hmong brothers and sisters” in Vietnam despite the fact that she did not manage to visit any Hmong areas during her stay but just remained in Hanoi. The materials she used to illustrate her talk were pictures and printed materials about the Hmong population in Vietnam which she gathered from Hanoi bookstores and from the Vietnam Museum of Ethnology. Even more interesting, the main part of her talk praised how “authentic” and how “traditional” the Hmong in Vietnam are. During the discussion, several young Hmong audience members made remarks, not so much about the presenter or presentation, but about the Vietnamese Hmong and how admirable it is for them to be so poor and still be able to preserve “our” beautiful Hmong culture.

Ethnic ties are also recognized by missiologists as a strategy to bring Hmong people to Christianity. Pastor Timothy Vang (1998), for example, points out that the third major factor that contributed to the fast growth of Hmong Christian populations was the fact that Hmong evangelize the other Hmong. He explains it in missiological terms as the “homogeneous units principle,” a principle drawn from the idea that “people become Christian most rapidly when the least change of race or clan is involved” (McGavran 1955: cited in Vang 1998:129). That is, people are more likely to convert to Christianity, presumably, if they do not have to deal with ethnic, racial, linguistic,

<sup>44</sup> This war was secret because, according to the 1954 Geneva Accords, Laos had been designated as a neutral territory. Yet, with the escalation of the Vietnam war in the 1960s, America’s Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) started recruiting Hmong men, among other hill tribal groups in Laos, to rescue American pilots who had to parachute down in the jungle of Laos after their planes were shot while bombing the Hồ Chí Minh trail, the main supply line for the Vietnamese communist force (*Việt Cộng*) from North to South Vietnam through some parts of Laos territory. While the Hmong were told that the Americans would come to their aid should the war go badly, most Americans were not informed about U.S. involvement in Laos until 1970. Americans mostly did not know how the Secret War in Laos has disrupted the life of the Hmong and many other ethnic minorities in Laos.

and other social differences during and after their conversion. Quoting McGavran, Vang writes “people like to become Christians without crossing racial, linguistic, or class barriers” and “they want to join churches whose members look, talk, eat, and dress like them” (1998:166). In conclusion, Vang argues, the Hmong Christian and Missionary Alliance’s (CMA) application of this principle has contributed “significantly” to the growth of the Hmong CMA in Laos from the 1950s to 1990s.

According to Julian (2003), Schein (2002, 2004) and Lee (1996), the Hmong diaspora in the West tends to reconstruct its identity by erasing cultural and linguistic differences between them and all the Miao in China. By reclaiming a common identity for all Hmong and Miao in the world, the Hmong diasporas assume membership of a much larger community (about ten million Miao rather than roughly three million Hmong). This diaspora is closely associated with Christian evangelical broadcasts, such as those of the FEBC, which in turn are closely linked to the conversion of the Hmong in Southeast Asia (Ngo 2009). Every year the CMA Hmong district organizes its annual church conference which often attracts a massive crowd of several to fifteen hundred people. In the last few years, missions among Vietnamese Hmong increasingly became the major theme of the conference.

## 4 American Hmong missionaries in contemporary Vietnam’s borderland

In the 2008 CMA annual church conference, a session called “Prayer for Mission” was organized in a large hall on the ground floor of Denver’s Renaissance Hotel, with at least 500 participants. Four large maps of the world were put on the walls of the hall. The session started with long prayers, several speeches by missionaries who were working mainly in China, Thailand, Laos, and Vietnam, and a video film made for fundraising purposes about a mission among the Dahua Miao in Guizhou, China. At the end of the session, all attendants were called to group themselves and stand under the part of the map which has the country or region where they either were doing mission work or wished to go to do mission work. After several chaotic minutes with people running from one side of the room to the other, the groups were formed. Because the maps were rather small and the groups were formed very unequally, someone proposed the idea that one person from each group should write the name of the country where his/her group was intending to go on a piece of paper and hold it up. All participants started praying for each group. It was interesting that the two largest groups

where members wanted to conduct missionary work were those targeting Vietnam and China. After the long murmuring of prayers, the crowd dispersed and I started wandering around the hall and tried to take as many photos as possible of the displayed exhibitions of objects, photos, and stories about missions in Vietnam by CMA Hmong members. Tswj (an acquaintance I made during the conference) came with several young missionaries to whom he introduced me as “tus muam Hmong nyaj laj” [sister Hmong Vietnam]. As we engaged in a conversation, these missionaries told me that their ultimate wish was to go to Vietnam and do missionary work among the Hmong there.

Most of our knowledge today of Protestant missions in Southeast Asia is limited to those that took place in the colonial and neo-colonial era (Tapp 1989b; Keane 2007; Kammerer 1990; Aragon 1996, Salemink 2003, to name but a few). Much less known is the work of Protestant missionaries operating in the context of postcolonial and contemporary societies in Southeast Asia today. As I have shown, the majority of Protestant missionaries who are responsible for the conversion of the Hmong are of Hmong ethnic background. They come from America and are carrying out underground missions that are strictly prohibited by state authorities. There are a number of similarities and differences between the current Hmong missionaries and the missionaries from Europe and America who came to Southeast Asia in the early nineteenth century. Let me first sketch out the differences.

Whereas mostly the latter carried out their missions under the protection and encouragement of colonial authorities (with the exception of missionaries in French Indochina and in Thailand), the former operate their work in secretive circumstances to avoid being arrested because their work has been strictly prohibited by the state authorities in Vietnam, China, and Laos, where they operate. The charismatic aura surrounding the act of becoming a missionary for both groups works differently. For colonial missionaries, this job entailed leaving home, perhaps forever, working among people of wholly alien cultures, and undergoing the hardships of physical discomfort and disease (Keyes 1996: 282). For the Hmong missionaries, the secretive and dangerous nature of the underground missions gives a heroic aura to their work. Unlike their colonial colleagues, going to Asia for missionary works is not an act of leaving home forever, but more like extended transnational travel which makes them more cosmopolitan in the eyes of their community in the U.S. and in the eyes of the marginalized fellows they encounter in Vietnam, Laos, and China. While hardships

of physical discomfort and disease were life threatening factors to colonial European and American missionaries, today these factors are rarely at extreme levels and often give an adventurous tone to their missionary narratives.

The most important difference between the Hmong missionaries and their colonial colleagues is their relationship to the people and the culture they aim to convert. For European and American missionaries, being missionaries was to be working among people of wholly alien languages and cultures. In the alien worlds of Southeast Asia, European and American missionaries had no authority when they entered societies where “their very strangeness made them a curiosity, they were outsiders whose spoken language, much less written language, was totally incomprehensible to almost everyone they sought to convert” (Keyes 1996:282). For the Hmong missionaries, this is not the case. The fast growth of the Hmong Christian population in Asia today is attributed the fact that it was Hmong missionaries who evangelized the other Hmong, something that pastor Timothy Vang (1998) coins in missiological terms as the “homogeneous unit principle” that I mentioned above.

Despite these differences, there are some obvious similarities between the two groups of missionaries. First, to some extent, both groups seem to share the same conviction that they had and have a moral obligation to bring the truth of the Gospel to those who have not yet heard it. Second, their missionary zeal—the wish to become a missionary—has its roots in the conversion experience that they themselves had gone through, something similar to Brumberg’s (1980) finding that the roots of the first American foreign missions could be traced back to the “Second Awakening” of the early nineteenth century. As I describe in detail elsewhere, the American social context of the diasporic community that today’s missionaries come from and the conversion experience that they went through are crucially important factors that explain their wish to become a missionary.

Against the general background of colonialism wherein missionaries are often seen as siding with colonial power, several anthropologists have pointed out that many such relationships were often rather ambiguous; there has always been tension between the colonial state that wanted to guarantee peace and quiet, and the missionaries who attacked native customs and created unrest. This is because, as Pels (1997:172) explains, “[I]ndividually, missionaries often resisted collaboration with colonial authorities, but they supported them by education and conversion.” Missionaries occupied a special position at the juncture of colonial technologies of domination and self-control via the combination of their

religious teaching and massive involvement in colonial education, but at the same time they were relatively independent from the practice of colonial control. Pels (1997:172) also notes that for the colonized “education and conversion became technologies of self-control that enabled subordination of, [but] at the same time structured resistance to Christianity, colonialism, and their trappings.” Similarly, in the case of marginalized ethnic minorities who become the major subject of evangelical missions in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, conversion has often been interpreted as entailing a much more complicated power relation in these cases than in the cases of majority groups converting to Christianity. It is seen as both a “mimicry” (Bhabha 1994) of the Western power and turn to modernity by disadvantaged minorities and at the same time as a resistance to their adversary, i.e., the majority’s domination and authority (Cheung 1993; Keyes 1996; Salemink 2009).

Since Protestantism first reached the Hmong, the Northern Evangelical Church of Vietnam (NECV) has been a mediator for most of the actual contact between Hmong converts and Hmong missionaries. The church receives Bibles and religious materials as well as funding from overseas missionary organizations. These resources are then distributed to Hmong converts via a network of house churches that the church approves. If overseas Hmong missionaries want to organize pastoral and theological training for Hmong converts, they need permission from the NECV. Then they must facilitate local logistics, and course participants are chosen by the NECV. In the beginning, the NECV was more eager to facilitate these activities, but has been much less so in the last five years. According to the complaints of many missionaries and house church leaders, the church became much pickier in which missionaries they wanted to give local support to and it asserts more control and censorship over the contents of the courses that Hmong missionaries want to offer.

One reason for this is that the NECV, like any established Protestant church, has the tendency to assert as much control as possible over the activity of its branch churches, which always have the potential to break up and form a new congregation. The NECV did not want this to happen in the case of the Hmong church, which was still largely underground and thus the church had limited control for its organization and development. Another reason has to do with the NECV’s own political status in Vietnam. Protestant missionaries started exploring Vietnam as a potential evangelical target in the late nineteenth century, but did not succeed in getting permission from the French colonial authority

to proselytize until 1911. In that year, Robert A. Jaffray, Paul M. Hosler, and G. Lloyd Huglers, missionaries of the Christian and Missionary Alliance, bought a small property in Da Nang in order to open the first Protestant chapel and seminary in Indochina. In 1927, the Vietnamese Protestant church was established under the name of the Vietnamese General Confederation of Evangelical Churches. In 1945, it was renamed as the Northern Vietnamese Evangelical Church. At the time, it had 15,000 Protestants with 100 chapters. In 1954, there were more than 60,000 Protestants in 154 chapters and nearly 100 pastors and missionaries. Among them were 6,000 ethnic minority people from the Central Highlands. After the Geneva Agreement (1954), Protestantism developed differently in the North and the South. The majority of followers and clergy in the North fled to the south. The headquarters of the Vietnamese General Confederation of Evangelical Churches moved to Sai Gon. In the North, only about 1,000 followers and a dozen pastors and preachers remained. After three years maintaining these chapters, in 1955, the followers established their own church and named it the Vietnamese Confederation of Evangelicals. From 1945 until today, the Evangelical Protestant Church of Vietnam in the North generally has not had an easy relationship with the Vietnamese government. The church origin and link with American Protestant churches have made it a constant object of surveillance by the Vietnamese state authority. In the relatively short history of facilitating Protestant conversion of the Hmong, the Church came into many conflicts with the state and several times senior pastors were arrested by provincial authorities for proselytizing 'illegally' while touring Hmong villages. It is understandable that today the NECV has become more selective in what activities they want to facilitate and what kind of evangelism they support.

This explains why many of the Hmong American pastors say that they prefer to work directly with Hmong Christian leaders in Vietnam via the intermediary role of the Chinese church. It is too difficult to obtain permission and support to work among the Hmong population via the NECV, especially when they do not have clear institutional linkages. Sua proudly praised the spirit of brotherly generosity presented to him and his Christian villagers by their American Hmong brothers. He told me about how "Hmong brothers and sisters in America are always willing to help the Hmong in Vietnam." For example, last year he secretly brought a group of three American Hmong missionaries to his house church. Seeing how shabby and small the house church was, one of the missionaries suggested that Sua and his congregation rebuild their house church. Sua told them that it had

always been a dream of his and his congregation to have a big church to honor God, but unfortunately, they did not have the financial means to pursue that dream. Another missionary then asked how much money they would need to build such a church. Sua answered that it would cost around one billion dong (seventy thousand USD). The missionaries said "without hesitation" that they could "easily" contribute that money. Sua told me this story while we were sitting in his newly built house/house church which is a little less shabby, but still rather small and does not look like one that was built with one billion dong. Perhaps seeing a cloud of doubt pass over my face, Sua added: "But after discussing the matter with others, we decided not to do it [build the church] yet. The government does not allow us to build a big church and they will certainly give us trouble about why we suddenly have such a big sum of money. So in the end, we just received a smaller sum, just enough to erect this wooden house, using the grounds of my house, so that we would have enough space for everybody in Cardamom Hill to use it as a prayer hall."

## 5 Conclusion

In this chapter, I have addressed the ethnic and transnational dimensions of the Hmong conversion. I have shown that thanks to the work of media and the continued importance of kinship and ethnic relationships, at both local and transnational levels, the overseas Hmong missionaries with their Vietnamese Hmong fellows are bound together in a "single field of social relation" (Basch et al. 1994:5). I argue that ethnic ties were one of the most important motivations for overseas Hmong to carry out missionary work in Vietnam and it is also the primary reason why evangelism, carried out by Hmong missionaries, was so readily accepted by so many Hmong people in the country.

Missionary zeal is the result of an incomplete conversion from the Hmong traditional religion to Christianity and at the same time from being Hmong refugees to becoming Hmong Americans. The incompleteness of both conversions is explainable by the binary logics of American assimilation and minority identity politics. In the second section I examined the ethnic and transnational dimensions of the Hmong conversion. Becoming a missionary, for many Hmong Americans, is one of the solutions to the contradictions they experience in their lives. Evangelism to their Asian Hmong ethnic fellows is an act of paying one's dues to one's kinsmen elsewhere as well as an act of remitting



modernity. This remittance of faith and remittance of modernity is double edged. It transforms Hmong society in Vietnam via massive conversion, but by doing so it effectively causes the disappearance of traditional culture for which American Hmong have a longing.

## Bibliography

- Aragon, Lorraine. (1996) Reorganizing the Cosmology: The Reinterpretation of Deities and Religious Practice by Protestants in Centreal Sulawesi, Indonesia. *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies* 27 (2): 350-373.
- Basch, L., Glick-Schiller, N. and Szanton-Blanc, C. (1994) *Nations Unbound: Transnational Projects, Post-colonial Predicaments and Deterritorialized Nation-States* London and New York: Routledge.
- Barth, F. (1969) "Introduction", in F. Barth (ed.) *Ethnic Change and Boundaries* Boston: Little, Brown.
- Bhabha, Homi K. (1994) *The Location of Culture*. London, New York: Routledge.
- Bhachu, Parminder (1985) *Twice Migrants: East African Sikh Settlers in Britain*. New York : Taristock Publication Ltd.
- Brumberg, Joan Jacobs. 1980. *Mission for Life: The Story of the Family of Adoniram Judson, the Dramatic Events of the First American Foreign Mission, and the Course of Evangelical Religion in the Nineteenth Century*. New York: The Free Press. London: Collier Macmillan
- Castells, M (1996) *The Rise of the Network Society* Oxford: Blackwell.
- Cooper, Robert G 1984 *Resource Scarcity and the Hmong Response: Patterns of Settlement and Economy in Transition*. Singapore: Singapore University Press.
- Cheung, Siu-woo. (1993) Millenarianism, Christian Movements, and Ethnic Change among the Miao in Southwest China. In *Cultural Encounters on China's Ethnic Frontiers*. Stevan Harrell, ed. Seattle, London: University of Washington Press.
- Eriksen, T.H. (1993) *Ethnicity and Nationalism: Anthropological Perspectives* London and Chicago: Pluto Press.
- Hefner, Robert. (1993) World building and the rationality of conversion. In *Conversion to Christianity: Historical and Anthropological Perspectives on a Great Transformation*. Robert W. Hefner, ed. Berkeley, Los Angeles, Oxford: University of California Press.
- (1998). Multiple Modernities: Christianity, Islam, and Hinduism in a Globalizing Age. *Annual Review of Anthropology* 27.
- Julian, Roberta. (2003) Transnational Identities in the Hmong Diaspora. In *Globalisation, Culture and Inequality in Asia*. Timothy J. Scase, Todd Joseph Miles Holden, and Scott Baum, eds. Melbourne: Trans Pacific Press.
- Kammerer, Cornelia. (1990) Customs and Christian Conversion among Akha Highlanders of Burma and Thailand. *American Ethnologist* 17 (2): 277-291.
- Keane, Webb (2007) *Christian Moderns: Freedom and Fetish in the Mission Encounter*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Keyes, Charles F. (1996) Being Protestant Christian in Southeast Asian Worlds. *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies* 27 (2).
- Lee, Gary Yia. 1996. "Cultural Identity in Post-Modern Society: Reflection on What is Hmong" in *Hmong Studies Journal*, Vol.1, No.1, Fall 1996.
- Lepreecha, Prasit. 2001. *Kinship and Identity among Hmong in Thailand*. (Dissertation Thesis) Seattle: University of Washington
- Ngo, Tam T.T. (2009) "Transnational Religious Broadcasting and Protestant Conversion among the Hmong in Northern Vietnam" in F. Lim (ed.) *Mediating Piety: Technology and Religion in Contemporary Asia*. Leiden : Brill.
- 2010 Ethnic and Transnational Dimensions of Recent Protestant Conversion among the Hmong in Northern Vietnam. *Social Compass*. September 2010.
- 2011. The New Way: Becoming Protestant Hmong in Contemporary Vietnam. Unpublished Ph.D dissertation. Department of Social and Cultural Anthropology. Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam
- Pels, P.J. (1997) The Anthropology of Colonialism: Culture, History and the Emergence of Western Governmentality. *Annual Review of Anthropology* 26: 163-83.
- Pham Quang Hoan (1995) "The Role of Traditional Social Institutions in Community Management of Resources among the Hmong in Vietnam" *EWC Indochina Series Working Papers*, No 5.
- Salemink, O. (2003) "Enclosing the Highlands: Socialist, Capitalist and Protestant Conversions of Vietnamese Highlanders" <http://dlc.dlib.indiana.edu/archive/00001142/>
- (2004) Tại sao người Tây Nguyên Việt Nam theo đạo Tin Lành? [Why do Vietnam's Central Highlanders convert to Protestantism?] Lecture (in Vietnamese, translated by Trương Huyền Chi) for policy makers and researchers, hosted by the Vietnamese Association of Ethnologists, Vietnam Museum of Ethnology, Hanoi, 9 July 2004.
- (2009) "Is Protestant Conversion a Form of Protest? Urban and Upland Protestants in Southeast Asia." In: Julius Bautista and Francis Lim (eds.), *Christianity and the State in Asia: Complicity and Conflict*. London and New York: Routledge.
- Schein, L. (2002) "Mapping Hmong Media in Diasporic Space" in Ginsburg, Faye, L. Abu-Lughod and B. Larkin (eds.) *Media Worlds: Anthropology on New Terrain* Berkeley: University of California Press.
- (2004) "Hmong/Miao Transnationality: Identity Beyond Culture" in N. Tapp, J. Michaud, C. Culas, and G. Lee (eds.) *Hmong/Miao in Asia* Chaingmai: Silkworm Books.
- (2007) "Souls, Labor, Landscapes and Loves: Hmong American Transnational Quests" (paper to be presented in conference: *Religion, Ethnicity and Nation-States in a Globalizing World*, Vrije University Amsterdam, June 7-8 2007)
- Tapp, N. (1989a) *Sovereignty and Rebellion: the White Hmong of Northern Thailand* Singapore, Oxford, New York: Oxford University press.
- (1989b) "The Impact of Missionary Christianity upon Marginalized Ethnic Minorities: The case of the Hmong" *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies* 20 (1).
- Trần, Hữu Sơn (1996) *Văn Hóa Hmong/Hmong's Culture* Hà nội: Nhà Xuất Bản Văn Hóa Dân Tộc.
- Vang, Timothy (1998) *Coming a Full Circle: Historical Analysis of the Hmong Church Growth, 1950-1998*. D. Min. dissertation, School of Theology, Fuller Theological Seminary
- Van der Veer, P. (1996) "Introduction" in van der Veer (ed.) *Conversion to Modernities: The Globalization of Christianity* New York & London: Routledge.
- Wanner, C. (2007). *Communities of the converted : Ukrainians and global evangelism*. Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press.

## Bionotes

Tam Ngo has done her dissertation at the Free University in Amsterdam and is currently a research fellow at the Max Planck Institute for the Study of Religious and Ethnic Diversity, Göttingen, Germany. For her doctoral research, she has conducted fieldwork among the Hmong population in Northern

Vietnam and in Midwestern America. She obtained a MA in Cultural Anthropology and Development Sociology at University of Leiden (2006), a Msc in Comparative Asian Studies from the University of Amsterdam in 2004, and a BA in Philosophy in 2002 at Vietnam National University, Hanoi, Vietnam. She is developing two projects, one on the social memory of the 1979 Sino-Vietnamese border war, and the other on Northern and Southern Vietnamese in Germany.

# 中越边境的传教士活动——以赫蒙人为例<sup>1</sup>

Tam Ngo

**【摘要】**20世纪80年代末至今,越南30万赫蒙人(Hmong)皈依了福音教,该数字占赫蒙人总人口(约为一百万)的近三分之一。这种快速发展,与传教士活动密切相关。由于越南政府官方并不准许这种皈依行为,这些传教士活动及促成传教活动的关系网具有高度的民间性质和地下性质。本文认为,只有充分考查赫蒙人福音教民间关系网的民族性和跨国性,才能充分理解这种关系网及其对赫蒙人皈依基督教的促成作用。民族纽带是激励海外赫蒙人到越南开展传教活动的重要因素,也是大量越南赫蒙人欣然接受他们所带来的福音的主要原因。换句话说,出于改变自身边缘状况,进入现代社会的民族渴望,很多越南赫蒙人决定皈依基督教;同样,很多在移民美国时或移民美国后皈依基督教的赫蒙人教徒,除了受宗教影响对传教抱有极大热情之外,还对自己身处亚洲的族人抱有深厚民族感情,正是出于这种民族感情,很多赫蒙人传教士甘愿冒着风险和危险在越南传播福音。

## 前言

20世纪80年代末至今仅二十年的时间,近三分之一的越南赫蒙人由信仰万物有灵,祖先崇拜的原始宗教皈依基督教新教。由于越南政府官方并不准许这种皈依行为,越南赫蒙人基督教徒获取神学教义理论的途径极为有限。近来,由于全球新教组织的灵活性和应变力,海外赫蒙人传教士经由中国边境地区的地下教会,专门面向越南赫蒙人教徒组织神学培训课程。由于中方和越方均视此为非法行为,因此,很多越南赫蒙人通常在人身安全得不到保护的情况下跨越中越边境来参加课程。

目前,在越南,赫蒙人皈依基督教意味着陷入政治麻烦,与政府冲突的境地。其中一个原因是,大多数赫蒙人生活在越南高度敏感的边境地区。如亚洲很多国家一样,越南政府不赞成少数民族和边民(特别是像赫蒙人这样仍与境外本民族群体保持密切关系的族群)皈依新教。这与皈依新教,在哪些方面受益于新教有关。很多学者注意到,皈依基督教这一世界性宗教的行为,既被视为一种“现代化”行为,也被视为一种保持自我的意愿,即通过皈依与本国,本地主导宗教不同的信仰,来理直气壮地表达

或维护民族特征(Keyes, 1996; Saleminck, 2003, 2004)。其中, Hefiner (1998:5)的观点极具洞察力,他认为,“新教在那些被长期边缘化,试图借助象征现代性的符号和工具来维护自身不同于(本土)主流文化的身份认同的群体中扎下了根(Van der Veer, 1996)。在这种情况下,即使受洗皈依改变了该群体自身的民族文化,但它有助于二元逻辑在群体中的滋生”。此外,除了能将当地习俗和信条纳入更高级的宗教真理层级并进行超越之外(Hefiner, 1993),基督教这样的世界性宗教机构,还在规范那些历史,文化背景不同的常识和身份认同方面具备巨大能力。Hefiner (1993:20)认为,正是这种能力,“使得那些世界性宗教在基于国家统治的,多民族社会中得以繁荣”。

当今世界日趋全球化,跨国人口流动日趋频繁,人们之间的关系纽带日益扩大,为传统层面上的从属感与归属感带来了不安因素。基督教这样的世界性宗教在多大程度上受益于此,而新形式对于解读过去几十年中世界各地的原住民纷纷皈依世界性宗教的现象有哪些启发,这些都是重要课题。我认为,只有充分考查赫蒙人福音教民间关系网的民族性和跨国性,才能充分理解这种关系网及其对赫蒙人皈依基督教的促成作用。民族纽带是激励海外赫蒙人到越南开展传教活动的重要因素,也是大量越南赫蒙人欣然接受他们所带来的福音的主要原因。从本质上看,越南赫蒙人皈依新教的行为具有深刻的民族性(Ngo, 2010;2011)。出于改变自身边缘状况,进入现代社会的民族渴望,很多越南赫蒙人决定皈依基督教;同样,很多在移民美国时或移民美国后皈依基督教的赫蒙人教徒,除了受宗教影响对传教抱有极大热情之外,还对自己身处亚洲的族人抱有深厚的民族感情,正是出于这种民族感情,很多赫蒙人传教士甘愿冒着风险和危险在越南传播福音。

下面,我将首先讲述传教士和越南赫蒙人教徒的一些活动,然后讨论当代越南赫蒙人受洗皈依的政治问题以及美籍赫蒙人皈依的不彻底性。在结论中,我将阐述赫蒙人受洗皈依及其获取基督教教义的方式对于我们理解当今世界信教群体的宗教活动的启示。

## 一次际遇

在越南与中国边境的豆蔻山<sup>2</sup>,新受洗的Sua是一位非常活跃的赫蒙人基督教领袖人物,他自2006年起负责豆蔻山两个较大的新教教会中的一个。2007年春天,他认识了两位从美国来的赫蒙人牧师,Sua称他们为xib fw(牧师)Pao和Fu。那时Pao和Fu正扮作游客在豆蔻山闲游,在Sua和他的大部分教友居住的豆蔻山第3小村,他们向一些经营纪念品商店和香草桑拿服务的瑶族人询问附近是否有“Hmong ntseeg Vaj Tswv”(信教赫蒙人)以及谁是教徒的领袖。Pao和Fu很快就找到了Sua家,原来,傅的妻子与Sua属于同一家族,Pao的叔母的父母与Sua的祖母出生在相临近的村子里。两位牧师的谈吐给Sua留下了非常深刻

<sup>1</sup> 感谢WOTRO/NWO基金会,阿姆斯特丹自由大学,马克斯普朗克研究所种族和宗教多样性研究中心的慷慨资助。

<sup>2</sup> 文中所涉及人名,地名均为化名

的印象，他认为他们令人非常愉快。他们交谈了一会儿，并在一起做了祈祷，然后Sua和另一位男性教友带着两位牧师到附近的赫蒙人基督教徒村落。

他们所到之处受到了热烈款待。不管在哪个村落，他们都有办法与当地建立起这样或那样的亲属关系。很多村民打听他们是从哪里来的，赫蒙人在美国生活得怎么样，是不是所有赫蒙人都拥有私家车，住在三层楼高的房子里。年轻女孩问在美国，赫蒙人基督教徒的婚礼上，是不是新娘都穿着漂亮的白色礼服，新郎都穿着漂亮的西服，就像她们在韩国电影里看到的那样。一些中年妇女想知道在美国是不是所有赫蒙人都是基督教徒，美国政府是否不但不迫害基督教徒，反而鼓励基督教徒信奉上帝。对于这个问题，牧师做了肯定的答复。此时，一位女性教友——她丈夫因皈依基督教遭受迫害——哭了起来。可能是为了安慰她，Pao补充说，在美国，很多赫蒙人不仅信仰上帝，也相信世界上其他地方的赫蒙人应该像他们一样得到神的护佑，生活富裕，信仰自由。他们（以及其他很多在美国的赫蒙人）的使命就是帮助“全世界赫蒙人兄弟姐妹”通过上帝获得拯救。虽然无法承诺，但他们会尽全力“促成美国政府与越南政府对话”，提请越南政府停止对赫蒙人基督教徒的侵扰。

几个小时后，在两位牧师及其导游抵达邻近地区时，警察拦住并立即逮捕了他们。Pao，傅和Sua及其男性教友被分开拘留了一晚。那天晚上，Sua用了很长一段时间向上帝祈求帮助。两位牧师持有中国旅游签证，而不是越南签证。他们是非法偷渡到越南境内的，所以警方想扣留他们的护照，并处以一千万越南盾（折合为一千美元）的罚金。Sua觉得，由于他不停地祈祷，上帝应允了他的祈求。第二天早上，警察审问两位美国牧师时允许他进行翻译。随后，警察决定发还两位牧师的护照，每人处以三百万越南盾（折合为二百美元）的罚金，然后将他们驱逐出境。Sua去给他们送行，两位牧师在离开之前告诉Sua，他们到达中国境内后会马上给他打电话。半个小时后，Sua接到了他们的电话，并在他们的指导下经由水路（*đường sông*，非法越境的惯用方式）到达中国境内。Sua到达中国境内后，马上有人接应，Sua被带到河口一处汉族地下新教教会，牧师是汉族，对Sua非常友好，并鼓励他说，从现在起，无论他需要什么帮助都可提出。这位牧师还告诉Sua，下个月他们将组织神学培训课程，他问Sua和其他越南的赫蒙人兄弟姐妹是否愿意参加。

从那时起，Sua和大量来自越南老街，河江，莱洲省的赫蒙人基督教会领袖一起，开始频繁参加在中国举办的神学研讨会。培训课程每次持续2-4周，约30人参加。除了那位汉族牧师和他负责后勤的教会执事外，每次课程都有不同的牧师来宣讲，他们中很多人是美籍赫蒙人，他们向参会人员提供《圣经》（新苗文版），学习材料，车旅费（通常付给那些居住地离边境较远的教会骨干）和在中国逗留所需费用。2007年冬季和2008年冬季，河口新教教会捐赠了大量二手棉服，并送到分布在高山上的越南赫蒙人村落。

2008年初，Sua想在老街镇上租一处房子作为老街赫

蒙人基督教会的办公室和培训中心，他向我寻求帮助。这一想法是由与Sua一起工作的那些传教士提出来的，他们认为，出于安全方面的考虑，最好在老街边境附近（而不是豆蔻山）设立一处培训中心，这样，赫蒙人传教士就可以白天来此进行宣讲，晚上回到中国境内。培训中心设在老街比设在豆蔻山更便利东部省份的赫蒙人参加培训。Sua告诉我，传教士和中国教会愿意支付每月最高六百万越南盾（折合为四百美元）的租金。据我所知，在我2008年6月末离开老街之前，Sua仍在看房子，培训中心仍在筹备之中。唯一不同的是，警方得知这个计划后，对Sua的行为非常警惕，他们开始不断地传唤询问Sua。

## 赫蒙人跨国传教和皈依行为中的民族感情

在对越南北部赫蒙人近期大量皈依与当局存在政治争议的新教的现象进行深入民族志研究时<sup>3</sup>，我遇到了Sua，并与其成为朋友。这种皈依运动开始于19世纪80年代中期，与20世纪50年代后全球范围内的基督教传教活动有着复杂联系。正如我们在Sua的经历里所看到的那样，赫蒙人皈依基督教的行为，与民族和地区历史，国家影响，宗教机构推行正统信仰的力量以及跨国化和全球化进程密切相关。全球范围内存在的各种形式的宗教关系网对世界各地人们皈依基督教起了重要作用。

在越南，赫蒙人是“穷人中的穷人”，他们所面临的艰辛与日俱增，如果继续信奉原始宗教，生病要做鬼，经济方面的负担将更为沉重。始于1986年的经济转型改革（*Đổi mới*）取消了很多对山林地区的补贴项目，对土地使用权和所有权实施更为严格的监管，禁止刀耕火种和罂粟种植。这一变革，加上人口增长，混乱，迁移，环境恶化，加剧了赫蒙人的贫穷，社会政治文化边缘化的进程。与此

<sup>3</sup> 为进行深度民族志研究，我没有将考察地点限于一个地区，而是在多个地方进行了实地考察：其中越南15个月，美国6个月，中国边境8次短期田野调查，泰国清迈1次，老挝的一些省1次。在越南，先是进行了三个月（2004年11月至2005年2月）的前期研究，随后又进行了两次为期一个月（2006年1月和2007年1月）的长途旅行，一次为期10个月（2007年9月至2008年6月）的深入研究。在美国的研究始于2006年3月，当时我在美国明尼苏达进行了为期三周的访问（最初计划是参加第一届国际赫蒙族研讨会）。2006年夏天，我在威斯康辛州的麦迪逊参加赫蒙族语言培训课程，随后拜访了密尔沃基，希博伊根（Sheboygan），Wassau，圣保罗，明尼阿波利斯各处的赫蒙族社区。这次行程所确立的关系网为我2008年夏天进行实地考察奠定了基础。在田野调查中，主要采用了参与观察，个人深入访谈的方式，我的目标是收集定性信息，包括调查对象对个人经历，生活经历的叙述和我对实地观察到的各种关系，行为和互动的描写。我分析了越南国内外相当一部分学者的研究，以便为读者理解，分析赫蒙族的皈依现象提供不同角度。在越南，我曾三次试着使用调查问卷来收集定量数据，都未能成功，我在其他文章中分析了失败原因（Ngo, 2011）。本文论证中所用定量信息主要来自二手数据和政府的人口普查数据。

同时，越南赫蒙人与那些老挝秘密战争<sup>4</sup>后到美国避难的同胞之间的思想接触和物质交往日益频繁 (Ngo, 2010)。这些接触和交往促成了融入现代社会，归属新兴“全球赫蒙人群体”的想法 (Lee, 1996)，越南赫蒙人广泛接受这一想法 (Ngo, 2011)。所有这些因素的结合，直接或间接地形成了赫蒙人皈依基督教的沃土。在全球范围内，宗教复兴运动激活了跨国宗教关系网，这些关系网借助与海外同胞的姻亲关系，加上新教教会在组织和通讯方面的实力，通过散布宗教信条和物品，资助福音派跨国电台 (FEBC) 使用本土语言进行广播，为赫蒙人皈依基督教提供了极大便利 (Ngo, 2009)。赫蒙人皈依基督教的案例，有力证明了全球化促成了边缘化少数民族和非邦国族群的社会文化和身份认同的转型。

目前，在中国，老挝，越南，大部分赫蒙人教徒皈依福音教的行为尚未完全被当局批准，一些新教活动仍被视为非法，只能在地下教堂进行，而民间宗教关系网成为传教的主要渠道。Castells (1996) 认为，在社会关系网中，运转和流动能力的作用比其在官方机构中的作用要重要得多；在社会关系网中，跨国性是全球化的元素之一。在上述案例中，政府对宗教组织的限制政策，是促使这种关系网转入民间的主要因素；当政府政策改变时，民间性质就可能转为官方性质。不过，不管政府政策如何改变，在这种从民间向官方转化的背后，民间关系网中的跨国性质始终不变。

Sua和他遇到的那两位传教士来自不同大陆，不同地方，但他们之间的交往几乎没有障碍。两位传教士在很短时间内就融入了赫蒙人群体。这种交往之所以可能，是因为双方都是赫蒙人，拥有共同的民族认同。在某种程度上，这种民族纽带本质上根植于赫蒙人亲属体系 (Ngo, 2010; Trần, 1996; Phạm, 1995; Lepreecha, 2001; Tapp, 1989a; Cooper, 1984; Lee, 1996; Julian, 2003)。无论来自哪里，居住在哪个地区或国家，所有赫蒙人都视彼此为兄弟姐妹。同时，他们都有在居住国被边缘化的共同经历，这种经历强化了民族纽带 (Schein, 2004, 2007)，在所有居住国，赫蒙人都以坚决抵制同化，试图保留本民族身份认同而闻名。正如Eriksen (1993) 和Barth (1969) 所提出：民族认同是通过本地不同民族之间的互动而形成的。在赫蒙人的案例中，这种民族认同的形成不仅发生在当地，还具有跨国性。跨国关系将居住在不同国家的群体连接起来，超越了本地构建的族群认同，回应着全球赫蒙人的民族认同 (Julian, 2003; Lee, 1996)。

确定两个群体之间的民族纽带十分重要，这种纽带可以解释他们之间的大部分交往和跨国联系。在这种情

<sup>4</sup> 老挝秘密战争：根据1954年《日内瓦协定》，老挝属于中立国家。但二十世纪60年代越南战争升级后，美国中央情报局 (CIA) 开始招募老挝赫蒙族及其他山地民族士兵，营救降落在老挝丛林中的美国飞行员，这些飞行员所驾驶的战斗机在轰炸胡志明小道——越南共产党 (Việt Cộng) 从南至北的主要补给线——时被击落。赫蒙族人被告知，如果战事恶化，美国就会前来援助。大多数美国人直到1970年才知道美国参与了老挝战争，但并不知道老挝秘密战争使生活在老挝的赫蒙族及其他少数民族深陷困境。

况下，识别“双重跨国性”的本质也同样重要 (Bhachu 1985)。赫蒙人是东南亚古老的侨民之一，越南赫蒙人与老挝、泰国、缅甸赫蒙人拥有同样的迁徙史，都是从中国迁徙而来，中国是他们的“故土”，他们期待着救世主降临 (如前所述) (Tapp, 1989; Trần Hữu Sơn, 1996)。这是越南和东南亚其他地区赫蒙人的“第一重跨国性”。

“第二重跨国性”始于1975年老挝秘密战争，成千上万的赫蒙人和其他山地老挝人一起，被迫离开老挝到西方国家政治避难。“双重跨国性”带来的结果是对家园模棱两可的认知。事实上，正如Schein (2004) 所指出的，美籍赫蒙人有一种把老挝和中国都想象为故土的强烈倾向。东南亚赫蒙人与中国苗族同宗同源。同样，尽管美籍赫蒙人主要来自老挝，但国界概念并未限制他们的族界概念。在过去几十年中，通讯技术的发展，跨国交通费用的降低，催生了各种形式的全球性联络，地理意义上的故土也因此扩大到东南亚其他有赫蒙人居民的地方，如泰国和越南。在美国，我遇到的很多赫蒙人告诉我，他们或他们的亲戚是在越南出生的，后来搬到了老挝，他们至今仍有亲戚住在越南。正如上述故事中那位美籍赫蒙人传教士称自己的老家与越南赫蒙人村民们的老家是同一个地方一样。

海外赫蒙人与那些被留在东南亚的赫蒙人之间的联络很有意思。在麦迪逊，密尔沃基，圣保罗，明尼阿波利斯，我遇到了很多赫蒙人，他们向我讲述了他们近期访问越南寻找自己分离多年的亲戚的经历。在圣保罗，一位成功的银行家向我讲述了她和丈夫在2007年到越南河江省一个村子寻访她丈夫的叔叔的经历。由于战争和移民，两位老人分离了60多年，2000年初，丈夫的父亲得知自己的弟弟还活着，想到越南去看望他，因为年迈未能成行。经过多重努力，他们通过传教士的关系网设法建立了联系，起先只能通过互寄录音带来交流，后来开始互通电话。2006年，丈夫的父亲还未能实现兄弟团聚的梦想就去世了，在病榻前，他告诉儿子一定要去越南帮他实现这个梦想。这位女士在讲述往事时满眼泪水，不过情绪平定之后，她就开始兴致勃勃地讲述“(她的)越南赫蒙人同胞”的生活是如何美丽，传统乃至“正宗”。

在2006年圣保罗康科迪亚大学举办的首届国际赫蒙人研讨会上，我再次目睹了这种热情。一位曾经带学生到越南进行暑期访问的赫蒙人高中老师做了一份有关越南赫蒙人口的报告。尽管她的论文并不是真正意义上的学术论文，却在整个会议上最受关注，几乎是座无虚席。这位高中老师自豪地展示了关于她的生活在越南的“赫蒙人兄弟姐妹”的社会经济和文化生活情况。尽管在越南停留期间她只是待在河内，未能参观任何赫蒙人地区，演讲中有关赫蒙人口的照片和印刷材料是从越南河内的一些书店和民族博物馆收集而来的。更有意思的是，她演讲的主要部分是称赞越南赫蒙人如何“正宗”，如何“传统”。在讨论环节，几位年轻的赫蒙人听众发了言，但并不是针对演讲人或演讲内容，而是称赞越南赫蒙人是多么令人钦佩，他们那么穷，仍能保持“我们”美丽的赫蒙人文化。

教会使命团也将民族纽带视为促成赫蒙人皈依基督教的重要策略。例如，牧师Timothy Vang (1998)指出，促使赫蒙人基督教徒人数快速增长的第三个主要因素是赫蒙人牧师向其他赫蒙人传播福音。他将此命名为“同质原则”：“当人们意识到皈依基督教无需改变其民族或宗族时，他们会迅速成为基督徒” (Vang, 1998:129引自 McGavran, 1955)。也就是说，当人们在皈依期间或皈依之后无需处理民族、种族、语言和其他社会分歧时，他们往往更愿意皈依基督教。Vang援引了McGavran的说法，他是这样表述的，“当人们无需跨越种族、语言或阶层障碍时”，“当他们看到教会其他成员的长相，语言，饮食，衣着与他们一样时，人们将愿意皈依基督” (1998:166)。总之，Vang认为，二十世纪50年代到90年代，赫蒙人教徒和传教士联盟(CMA)对这一原则的应用，促成了赫蒙人传教士联盟在老挝的“显著”发展。

Julian (2003年), Schein (2002, 2004)和Lee (1996)认为，西方赫蒙人移民倾向于通过消除他们与中国苗族之间的文化、语言差异，重建自身民族认同。他们称世界上所有的赫蒙人和苗族是同一个民族，这样就将所有赫蒙人侨民与一个更大的族群(苗族人口约一千万，赫蒙人口约三百万)连接了起来。侨民群体与基督教福音广播(如FEBC)密切相关，而福音广播又与东南亚赫蒙人皈依基督教密切相关(Ngo, 2009)。每年赫蒙人传教士联盟会组织的教友大会，通常会吸引大量人士参加(少则几人，多则一千五百人)。在过去几年中，到越南赫蒙人中传教逐渐成为会议的重要主题。

## 当代越南边境的美籍赫蒙人传教士

2008的CMA教友大会，其中有个环节被称为“为使命而祈祷”：在丹佛文艺复兴酒店一楼大厅，至少有500位参会者。大厅墙壁上挂着四大幅世界地图。先是长长的祈祷，之后几位在中国，泰国，老挝，越南工作的传教士发表了演说，然后播放了一段为中国贵州大花苗族筹款的视频，最后，组织方要求所有参会者以小组为单位，站到自己传教或想去传教的国家或地区的地图前面。人们从房间的一头跑到另一头，经过最初几分钟的混乱，各小组都已站好。由于地图相当小，每个小组人数又很不均等，有人提议每组抽一个人在纸上写出他们组想要去的国家，并高高举起来，然后所有参会者开始为每个小组祈祷。有意思的是，想到越南和中国从事传教活动的两个小组人数最多。长长的祈祷之后，人群散开。我开始在大厅里徘徊，想尽可能多拍一些关于赫蒙人CMA成员在越南传教的物品，照片和报道的照片。Tswj (我和他是在会议期间认识的)带着几位年轻传教士来到我跟前，他是这样向他们介绍我的，他说我是“tus muam Hmong nyaj laj”(越南赫蒙人姐妹)。我们聊了一会儿，这些传教士告诉我，他们最大的愿望是到越南赫蒙人中传教。

目前，我们对于新教在东南亚的传教活动的绝大多数了解还局限于殖民和新殖民主义时代 (Tapp,

1989b; Keane, 2007; Kammerer, 1990; Aragon, 1996; Salemin, 2003;等等)。对于后殖民时代和当代社会背景下新教传教士在东南亚的传教活动所知甚少。正如我们所看到的，大多数负责向赫蒙人传播福音的新教传教士拥有赫蒙人背景，他们来自美国，所进行的地下传教活动被当局严令禁止。当前赫蒙人传教士和19世纪早期来东南亚传教的欧美传教士之间有很多异同之处。我先说明不同之处。

19世纪早期来东南亚传教的欧美传教士，多数受到殖民当局的保护和鼓励(除了那些在法属中南半岛和泰国的传教士)，而当前赫蒙人传教士是秘密传教，要避免被当局逮捕，他们在越南，中国和老挝的传教活动被当局严令禁止。前者和后者头上的光环也不同。殖民时期的传教士，要远离家乡(有些终生不曾回国)，在完全陌生的文化中传教，要承受物质匮乏和疾病折磨的痛苦(Keyes1996:282)。而笼罩在赫蒙人传教士头上的光环却是地下传教活动的秘密性和危险性。与殖民时代相比，现在到亚洲传教不再意味着永远背井离乡，倒更像是一次时段稍长的跨国旅行，这种旅行足以使他们远在美国的同胞和他们在越南，老挝，中国遇到的被边缘化的同胞，视他们为更具国际视野的人。对殖民时代的欧美传教士来说，物质匮乏和疾病折磨可能是威胁生命的因素，而今天这些困难相对要小得多，充其量只够给传教活动添加一些探险色彩。

最重要的是赫蒙人传教士和殖民时代的传教士与各自的传教对象及其文化的关系不同。欧美传教士是在完全陌生的族群、语言和文化中传教。在东南亚，欧美传教士在他们所进入的社会中没有权威，“他们是如此格格不入，他们是完全的外来者，他们说的语言(更别提他们写的文字)，在那些他们试图传教的族群中几乎无人能懂”(Keyes1996:282)。而对于赫蒙人传教士，情况并非如此。当前亚洲赫蒙人基督教徒人数快速增长的主要原因是由赫蒙人传教士向赫蒙人传教，正如牧师Timothy Vang (1998)在“同质原则”中所阐述的那样。

尽管存在这些差异，两者之间仍有一些明显的相似之处。首先，在某种程度上，两者似乎有着共同信念，即有义务向那些还未听到耶和華真理的人们传播福音。其次，两者希望成为传教士并进行传教的热情都源于自身皈依基督教的经历。Brumberg (1980)指出，美国第一个外国传教使团，可追溯到“十九世纪初美国第二次宗教大觉醒”时期。正如我在其他文章中所详述的，美国侨民群体所处的社会环境及其皈依经历是他们成为传教士的关键因素。

针对视传教士为殖民地当局的支持者的观点，一些人类学家指出，通常这种支持关系相当模糊，殖民地当局想要维持和平与平静，而传教士意味着不安定，意味着对当地海关的冲击。正如Pels (1997:172)所阐释的：“从个人方面来说，传教士往往是拒绝与殖民地当局合作的，不过，他们会向殖民地当局提供教育资源，并支持他们皈依基督教。”在殖民时代，通过将传播宗教与推广教育相结合，传教士在殖民地统治与自治的结合部占据了特殊位置，不

过，与此同时，他们相对独立于殖民地当局的控制。Pels (1997:172) 还指出，当教育和皈依成为使人们自愿从属于当局的自治手段时，也同时促使人们抵制基督教，殖民主义及其圈套”。对于19世纪和20世纪那些成为福音教主要传教对象的边缘化少数民族来说，情况与此类似。少数民族皈依基督教比多数民族皈依基督教有着更为复杂的权力关系。它既被视为西方势力的“伪装” (Bhabha, 1994)，也被视为弱势少数民族向现代社会转变的标志，同时还被视为少数民族对多数民族（即对手）统治和权威的抵制 (Cheung, 1993; Keyes, 1996; Salemink, 1996)。

新教进入赫蒙人地区以来，越南北方福音圣会 (NECV) 就一直作为中介机构，来调控大多数赫蒙人信徒和赫蒙人传教士之间的实际接触活动。教会接受来自海外传教组织的圣经，宗教物资及资金，然后通过教会所批准的家庭教会的关系网，将这些资源分配给赫蒙人基督徒。海外赫蒙人传教士如想为赫蒙人信徒组织牧师或神学培训，需得到NECV的许可，然后自己负责当地的后勤事务，参会者则由NECV挑选。起初，NECV很有兴致促成这些活动，但最近五年的表现则冷淡得多。很多传教士和家庭教会领袖抱怨称，NECV在给予哪些传教士本地支持方面越来越挑剔，而对赫蒙人传教士要讲授的课程内容的控制和审查则越来越严格。

原因之一是NECV像其他任何已确立地位的新教教会一样，倾向于尽可能多地控制其分支教会，因为这些分支有可能与其分裂并组建新教会。NECV不希望这种情况在赫蒙人教会发生，加上这些赫蒙人教会在很大程度上仍然是地下教会，因此NECV在如何组织和这些教会方面的控制权是相当有限的。另一个原因是NECV自身在越南的政治地位。19世纪晚期，新教传教士开始将越南作为福音教潜在的传教目的地，但一直未能取得法属殖民地当局的许可，直到1911年情况才有所改变。1911年，基督教传教士联盟的传教士Robert A. Jaffray, Paul M. Hosler 和G. Lloyd Huglers, 在岬港买了一小块土地，建造了中南半岛第一个新教教堂兼神学院，1927年，越南新教教会以越南福音派教会总工会的名义成立。1945年，更名为越南北方福音派教会，当时有100处分会，15000新教徒。1954年，有154处分会，近100名牧师和传教士和60000多名新教徒，其中来自中部高地的少数民族教徒6000人。日内瓦协议 (1954) 后，南北新教发展情况不同。北方大多数教徒和神职人员逃到南方。越南福音派教会总工会的总部搬到了西贡。只有十几名牧师，传教士和大约1000名教徒留在了北方。这些分会维持了三年，到1955年，他们建立了自己的教会，并命名为越南福音派联盟。1945年至今，越南北部的福音派新教教会与越南政府的关系一直不太融洽。教会起源于美国新教教会，并与之保持联系，因而成为越南政府监督的对象。由于支持在赫蒙人中传播新教，教会与政府发生过多冲突，几名高级牧师曾因在赫蒙人村子“非法”传教而被省政府逮捕。所以不难理解为什么目前NECV在促成哪些活动，支持哪些福音方面越

来越有选择性。

这也解释了为什么很多美籍赫蒙人牧师声称他们更愿意通过中国教堂的中介作用，与越南赫蒙人基督教领袖合作。通过NECV获得在赫蒙人地区传教的许可和支持太难了，特别是当这些传教士没有明确的机构背景时。Sua自豪地称赞他的美籍赫蒙人兄弟给予他和他的基督徒兄弟们的慷慨援助。他告诉我，“美国的赫蒙人兄弟姐妹总是十分愿意帮助越南的赫蒙人”。去年，他曾悄悄带三位美籍赫蒙人传教士到他的家庭教会。当他们看到他的家庭教会既简陋又窄小时，一位传教士建议Sua和他的教友对这个家庭教会进行重建。Sua告诉他们，重建一个足以荣耀神的大教堂一直是他和教友的梦想，但不幸的是，他们没有那么多钱来实现这个梦想。另一位传教士问他们需要多少钱。Sua说，大约十亿越南盾（折合为七万美元）。三位传教士“毫不犹豫”地说，他们可以“轻松”提供这笔资金。我坐在Sua新建的家庭教会前，边听这个故事，边看眼前这个教堂，它不像之前的那个教堂那样简陋，但仍相当狭小，远不像花费十亿越南盾建成的。也许是看到我满面疑云，Sua补充说：“我和其他教友讨论了这个问题，我们决定暂时不那样做。政府不允许我们建大教堂，他们肯定会因为我们突然得到这笔巨款而为难我们。所以最后，我们只接受了一小笔钱，刚好够在我家庭院里建造这个木头房子，这样，豆蔻山每个信徒就都有足够空间在大厅里祈祷了。”

## 结论

在本文中，我考查了赫蒙人皈依基督教行为的民族性和跨国性。研究表明，由于媒体介质，亲属关系和民族纽带在本地和国际上的重要作用，海外赫蒙人传教士与越南赫蒙人被绑定到了“同一个社会关系网”上 (Basch等, 1994:5)。我认为民族纽带是激励海外赫蒙人到越南开展传教活动的重要因素，也是大量越南赫蒙人欣然接受他们所带来的福音的主要原因。

传教热情是赫蒙人由传统宗教皈依基督教的不彻底性的表现，也是赫蒙人由起初的难民身份转换为美国公民的不彻底性的表现。这两种转换的不彻底性可以通过美国的同化政策与少数民族的身份认同政策之间的二元逻辑来解释。我在本文第二部分考查了赫蒙人行为的民族性和跨国性。对很多美籍赫蒙人来说，成为传教士，是解决他们在现实生活中经历的矛盾的一个方案。到亚洲赫蒙人同胞那里传播福音，既是在补偿生活在这些地方的亲人，又是在引导他们走进现代生活。引导这些人走进宗教和现代生活是一把双刃剑。一方面，它使越南赫蒙人群体大规模皈依基督教，另一方面，这样做实际上会导致美籍赫蒙人所憧憬的传统文化的消失。

## 参考书目

- Aragon, Lorraine. (1996). 重组宇宙观:印度尼西亚中苏拉威西的新教信徒对神性和宗教行为的再阐释[J]. 东南亚研究, 27 (2): 350 - 373.
- Basch, L., Glick-Schiller, N. 和 Szanton-Blanc, C. (1994). “自由国度:跨国事业,后殖民困境与去疆域化的民族国家” [M]伦敦和纽约:劳特利奇出版社.
- Barth, F. (1969). 前言[A], F·巴斯(主编). 族群变迁与疆界. 波士顿: Little Brown出版社.
- Bhabha, Homi K. (1994) 文化的位置[M]. 伦敦和纽约:劳特利奇出版社.
- Bhachu, Parminder (1985) 双重移民:英国的东非锡克教移民[M]. 纽约: Taristock出版有限公司
- Brumberg, Joan Jacobs. (1980). 使命:贾德森亚多尼兰家族的故事, 美国首个对外传教团戏剧性事件记, 19世纪福音教派的历程 [M]. 纽约:自由出版社. 伦敦: Collier Macmillan出版社
- Castells, M (1996). 网络社会的崛起. [M]. 牛津:布莱克威尔出版社.
- Cooper, Robert G (1984). 资源稀缺和苗族蒙人的对策:转型期的解决方案和经济模式[M]. 新加坡:新加坡大学出版社.
- Cheung, Siu-woo (1993). 千禧年,基督教运动与中国西南地区苗族的变化[A]. Stevan Harrell (主编). 中国边境少数民族地区的文化接触. 西雅图, 伦敦:华盛顿大学出版社.
- Eriksen, T. H. (1993) 人类学视角下的种族主义和民族主义[M]. 伦敦和芝加哥: Pluto出版社.
- Hefner, Robert (1993) 世界构建和皈依的合理性[A]. Robert W. Hefner (主编). 皈依基督教:从历史和人类学视角对大变革进行的思考. 伯克利分校洛杉矶, 牛津大学:加州大学出版社.
- (1998). 多重现代性:全球化背景下的基督教, 伊斯兰教和印度教[J]. 人类学年度回顾27.
- Julian, Roberta. (2003) 苗族蒙人侨民的跨国身份[A]. Timothy J. Scase, Todd Joseph Miles Holden, Scott Baum (主编). 全球化, 文化与亚洲的不平等性. 墨尔本:泛太平洋战略经济出版社.
- Kammerer, Cornelia. (1990) 习俗与皈依基督教:以缅甸, 泰国的高地阿卡族为例[J]. 美国民族学学者 17 (2): 277-291.
- Keane, Webb (2007) 现代基督教信徒:传教任务中的自由与神物崇拜[M]. 柏克莱:加州大学出版社.
- Keyes, Charles F. (1996) 东南亚的基督教新教信徒[J]. 东南亚研究 27 (2).
- Lee, Gary Yia. (1996). 后现代社会的文化认同:反思苗族蒙人的特征 [J]. 苗族蒙人研究杂志, 第1卷, 一, 1996年秋季.
- Lepreecha, Prasit. (2001). 泰国苗族蒙人的亲属关系和身份认同 [D]. 西雅图:华盛顿大学
- Ngo, Tam T. T. (2009) 跨国宗教广播与越南北部苗族蒙人皈依新教 [A]. F. Lim (主编). 推介虔诚:当代亚洲的技术与宗教. 莱顿:布理尔出版社.
- (2010). 近期越南北部苗族蒙人皈依新教的民族性和跨国性[J]. 社会指南. 2010年9月.
- (2011). 当代越南苗族蒙人皈依新教的新途径. [D]未发表. 阿姆斯特丹自由大学社会和文化人类学系.
- Pels, P. J. (1997) 殖民主义人类学:文化, 历史和西方治理术的出现 [J]. 人类学年度回顾 26: 163 - 83.
- Pham Quang Hoan (1995). 传统社会秩序在越南苗族蒙人对资源进行群体管理中的作用[Z]. 印度支那系列工作文件5.
- Salemink, O. (2003). 封锁高地:越南高地的社会主义, 资本主义和新教皈依[E]. <http://dlc.dlib.indiana.edu/archive/00001142/>
- (2004) Tại sao người Tây Nguyên Việt Nam theo đạo Tin Lành? (为什么越南中部高地居民皈依新教?) (原稿为越南语, 由Trương Huyền Chi 翻译). 由越南民族学者协会和越南民族学博物馆主办的面向政策制定者和研究人员的专题讲座, 河内, 2004年7月9日.
- (2009). 皈依新教是一种抗议? 东南亚城市与高地的新教信徒[A]. Julius Bautista和Francis Lim (编), 基督教和亚洲国家:共谋和冲突. 伦敦和纽约:劳特利奇出版社.
- Schein, L. (2002). 苗族蒙人在侨居国的媒体[A]. Ginsburg, Faye, L. Abu-Lughod 和 B. Larkin (编). 媒体世界:新天地中的人类学. 柏克莱:加州大学出版社.
- (2004). 苗族蒙人/苗族的跨国性:超越文化的身份认同[A]. N. Tapp, J. Michaud, C. Culas和G·Lee (编). 亚洲的苗族蒙人/苗族. 清迈:Silkworm Books出版社.
- (2007) 灵魂, 劳动, 风景和爱:美籍苗族蒙人的跨国探寻[C]全球化时代的宗教, 种族和民族国家, 阿姆斯特丹自由大学, 2007年6月7日至8日)
- Tapp, N. (1989) 主权与叛乱:泰国北部的白苗[M]. 新加坡, 纽约, 牛津:牛津大学出版社.
- (1989 b). 基督教传教士对边缘化少数民族的影响:以苗族蒙人为例[J]. 东南亚研究 20 (1).
- Trần, Hữu Sơn (1996). 苗族蒙人文化[M]. 河内:民族文化出版社.
- Vang, Timothy. (1998) 周而复始:1950年至1998年苗族蒙人教会增长情况的历史分析[D. Min.]. 富勒神学院神学部
- Van der Veer, P. (1996), 前言[A]. 节选自Van der Veer (主编). 现代性转换:基督教的全球化[M]. 纽约和伦敦:劳特利奇出版社.
- Wanner, C. (2007). 皈依的族群:乌克兰人和全球福音传道[M]. 纽约州伊萨卡:康奈尔大学出版社.

作者简介:Tam Ngo是阿姆斯特丹自由大学的博士毕业生, 目前是德国哥廷根马克斯普朗克研究所民族与宗教多样性研究中心的博士后研究员。Ngo博士阶段的研究是在越南北部和美国中西部苗族蒙人群体中进行田野调查。Ngo于2006年获得莱顿大学文化人类学与发展社会学硕士学位, 2004年获得阿姆斯特丹大学亚洲研究硕士学位, 2002年获得越南国立大学哲学学士学位(越南, 河内)。Ngo目前正在进行的两项研究一是关于1979年中越边境战争的社会记忆, 二是关于散居德国的越南北部和南部侨民。