

# **Confession, Cosmopolitanism, and Catholic Identity in Early Modern Vietnam**

## **Nhung Tuyet Tran**

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Early Vietnamese Christians learned the teachings of their new way by reading and listening to the broad range of stories circulating in oral and written form in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The stories of the martyrs' and saints' lives, recast in cultural, ecological, and linguistic forms legible to Vietnamese speakers, gave members of this community of believers (các bản đạo 各本道) models of virtue and suffering in the Christian cosmopolis. Drawing from the books, letters and transcripts from religious tribunals in the seventeenth and eighteenth century, I examine how Vietnamese Christians articulated a community identity that was no less deserving of grace and attention than any other part of the global church. This talk focuses on how local believers articulated their religious sensibilities as a community of believers for themselves, to the European Church leaders who seemed not to care for their souls, and against the non-believers (kẻ vô đạo 仇無道) around them.

**Nhung Tuyet Tran** is Associate Professor in the Department of History at the University of Toronto. She is the author of *Familial Properties: Gender, State, and Society in Early Modern Vietnam* and co-editor of *Vietnam: Borderless Histories*. She has just completed a monograph on the cultural history of Vietnamese Catholicism and has started on a new study on the idea of property, based on contracts made between Cham women and Vietnamese settlers in eighteenth century south-central Vietnam.

**Wednesday, March 4**

**12:00 Noon**

**Room 203, Luce Hall, 34 Hillhouse Avenue**