



# **Critical Christianity: Translation and Denominational Conflict in Papua New Guinea (The Anthropology of Christianity)**

*Courtney Handman*

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In *Critical Christianity*, Courtney Handman analyzes the complex and conflicting forms of sociality that Guhu-Samane Christians of rural Papua New Guinea privilege and celebrate as "the body of Christ." Within Guhu-Samane churches, processes of denominational schism—long relegated to the secular study of politics or identity—are moments of critique through which Christians constitute themselves and their social worlds. Far from being a practice of individualism, Protestantism offers local people ways to make social groups sacred units of critique. Bible translation, produced by members of the Summer Institute of Linguistics, is a crucial resource for these critical projects of religious formation. From early interaction with German Lutheran missionaries to engagements with the Summer Institute of Linguistics to the contemporary moment of conflict, Handman presents some of the many models of Christian sociality that are debated among Guhu-Samane Christians. Central to the study are Handman's rich analyses of the media through which this critical Christian sociality is practiced, including language, sound, bodily movement, and everyday objects. This original and thought-provoking book is essential reading for students and scholars of anthropology and religious studies.

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