

Questionnaire

1. Description

1.1 Name(s) of society, language, and language family: Hmong Njua, Hmong-Mien, Hmongic, Chuanqiandian, language family is Hmong-Mien. Alternate names for this language group/society are: Blue Hmong, Blue Meo, Ching Miao, Green Hmong, Green Meo, Hmong Leng, Hmong Nzhua, Hmoob Leeg, Lu Miao, Meo Dam, Meo Lai, Mong Leng, Mong Ntsua, Qing Miao, Tak Miao (1).

1.2 ISO code (3 letter code from ethnologue.com): hnj

1.3 Location (latitude/longitude): Northern Laos. Also in Australia, Canada, China, France, French Guiana, Myanmar, Thailand, United States, Viet Nam – migrated due to warfare against the group for failure to assimilate into Chinese culture (1, 2).

1.4 Brief history: “For as long as it has been recorded, the history of the Hmong has been a marathon series of bloody scrimmages, punctuated by occasional periods of peace, though hardly any of plenty. Over and over again, the Hmong have responded to persecution and to pressures to assimilate by either fighting or migrating – a pattern that has been repeated so many times, in so many different eras and places, that it begins to seem almost a genetic trait, as inevitable in its recurrence as their straight hair or their short, sturdy stature” (2, pg 13).

1.5 Influence of missionaries/schools/governments/powerful neighbors: Because many of the Hmong are refugees that fled to the United States, they have a lot of interaction with westernized medicine to which they are very skeptical and have a lot of taboos about. Many of the Hmong patients that come to American doctors and hospitals refuse the prescribed treatment for fear that it will harm their soul, or because they don't believe that it has good effects but rather will harm them more. They are very strongly against western biomedicine, and instead prefer to practice traditional Hmong healing rituals (2, pg 61).

“The Hmong cannot be assimilated. The Chinese cannot assimilate the Hmong. The Pathet Lao cannot assimilate the Hmong. After two thousand years we can still say we are Hmong... Many highland Hmong were forcibly relocated to lowland or plateau areas, where they were assigned to state-owned collective farms. The traditional Hmong fear of the lowlands proved justified. Resettled families frequently contracted tropical diseases to which they had not previously been exposed” (2, pg 158).

1.6 Ecology (natural environment): Traditionally the Hmong lived in the high mountainous areas of Laos (2).

1.7 Population size, mean village size, home range size, density: 100,000 in Laos (Hattaway 2000). Population total in all countries: 312,020 (1). “In Laos recent estimates have ranged from 150,000 to 300,000. No reliable information has been obtained on numbers in Vietnam (3, pg 29).

2. Economy

2.1 Main carbohydrate staple(s): Rice (2, pg 15). Another means of profit for the Hmong is to grow opium poppies. Opium grows really well in the high, mountain regions where the Hmong traditionally live, and so they trade and sell opium bricks in order to make cash for purchases for their farms (2). “they are cultivating hill rice” (3, pg 33).

“They have more mountain farms than irrigated fields. Burning the thorny trees and decomposing plants and exploiting the mountain slopes, they plant sesamun, millet, rice, wheat, beans, calyx grain, Kao-liang, jungle-wheat – all these various crops” (3, pg 32).

2.2 Main protein-lipid sources: Cows, chickens, and other wild and/or domesticated animals (2).

2.3 Weapons: Bow and arrow, blowguns?:

2.4 Food storage:

2.5 Sexual division of production: Men and women both work the rice and opium fields together (2). “In agriculture, Miao men and women work together” (3, pg 32).

2.6 Land tenure: The Hmong traditionally practice slash-and-burn/swidden farming and so they stayed on the same plots of land for long periods of time (2, pg 158). “After having cultivated for three or four years, they relinquish the old land and exploit new places because the land becomes poor after intensive cultivation” (3, pg 33).

2.7 Ceramics:

2.8 Specified (prescribed or proscribed) sharing patterns:

2.9 Food taboos: They have food taboos for women that are pregnant. “Once a Hmong woman became pregnant, she could ensure the safety of her child by paying close attention to her food cravings. If she craved ginger and failed to eat it, her child would be born with an extra finger or toe. If she craved chicken flesh and did not eat it, her child would have a blemish near its ear. If she craved eggs and did not eat them, her child would have a lumpy head” (2, pg 4).

“Cold foods during the postpartum [pregnancy] period make the blood congeal in the womb instead of cleansing it by flowing freely, and that a woman who does not observe the taboo against [cold foods] will develop itchy skin or diarrhea in her old age” (2, pg 9).

Hmong women have specific food that they must eat after pregnancy for thirty days following the birth of a child. It consists of “steamed rice, chicken boiled in water with five special postpartum herbs” (2, pg 9).

2.10 Canoes/watercraft?

3. Anthropometry

3.1 Mean adult height (m and f):

3.2 Mean adult weight (m and f):

4. Life History, mating, marriage

4.1 Age at menarche (f):

4.2 Age at first birth (m and f): Probably around 16 or 17 for both males and females; although males may be a little older (2).

4.25 Birthing Rituals: Within the Hmong, women birth their babies alone in their huts squatting on the floor, delivering their babies into their own hands. “She remains proud to this day that she delivered each of them into her own hands, reaching between her legs to ease out the head and then letting the rest of the body slip out onto her bent forearms. No birth attendant was present, though if her throat became dry during labor, her husband... was permitted to bring her a cup of hot water, as long as he averted his eyes from her body” (2, pg 3).

4.3 Completed family size (m and f): Most Hmong families have at least ten to twelve children, although many do not live to be of reproductive age. Only a few children may survive, although infant mortality has lowered since many of the Hmong have become refugees of countries in Europe and the United States (2).

4.4 Inter-birth-interval (f): Hmong women will nurse their infants for at least three years and will have babies as frequently as their bodies naturally allow for as long as they are fertile. Women will produce infants into their fifties if they are still menstruating (2).

4.5 Age first marriage (m and f): Girls and boys get married at relatively young ages around fifteen or sixteen years of age. “The Hmong have a phrase “a flower full of honey and ready for the bee,” which is used to describe a marriageable girl of fifteen or sixteen” (2, pg 101).

4.6 Proportion of marriages ending in divorce: It seems that divorce is not common among the Hmong (2). “If a woman’s husband dies, his younger brother has a superior right over anyone else to take her as a wife without the payment of bride-price” (3, pg 57).

“If a marriage breaks up she [the wife] may take her children with her provided arrangements are made to compensate her husband for their loss” (3, pg 59).

4.7 Percent marriages polygynous, percent males married polygynously: During the Vietnam war “the dwindling practice of polygyny, which at the beginning of the war was observed mainly by community leaders as a status symbol, became common again as a response to the mismatched wartime survival rates of men and women” (2, pg 135).

“In some polygynous systems elsewhere in the world, the wives each have their separate dwelling places and the husband will visit each of them on different occasions, so that the situation is in effect a number of nuclear families with a common father. The Miao situation is by no means so clear-cut. The wives do not have separate dwelling places. They do not even have separate beds, but share a common bed with their husband” (3, pg 75).

“A majority of Miao men who survive until middle age will have had more than one wife simultaneously. Sometimes they have three wives and very occasionally more, but two simultaneously is the most common polygynous situation. Because men do not usually take second wives until some years after their first marriage, a majority of families at any given time in a village will have a monogamous form...” (3, pg 83).

4.8 Bride purchase (price), bride service, dowry?: Hmong men pay bride-price which is generally pretty high and paid in Indian silver rupees (3, pg 57-58).

4.9 Inheritance patterns: Families are patrilineal – although women keep their clan name (2). “Wives come from outside but are incorporated into the family. Daughters move away on marriage but, as they have once been members, the family retains a kind of residual interest in them and members of the separate family lines into which they have been incorporated will constitute a special class of remote and remoter relatives closer than others in the vast range which the passage of years creates” (3, pg 51).

4.10 Parent-offspring interactions and conflict: Hmong parents are really loving towards their children, especially children that exhibit illnesses that are attributed to being a divine healer (*txiv neeb*). Hmong women breastfeed their children until at least the age of three, but favored children may breastfeed even longer than three years. Hmong parents are always holding their babies, and young babies are carried around by mothers’ papoose style. Hmong children are really affectionate because they receive so much of it from their parents and family members (2, pg 44).

“Almost exclusively, the Hmong are hard-working, quick-learning students. Their parents are eager to attend conferences, in spite of language barriers. On many occasions students have acted as interpreters for their parents and me. Typically the parents thank me for teaching their child, ask if he or she is working hard enough, wonder if there is any problem with the child showing proper respect and inquire if there is anything that they can do at home to help” (2, pg 239).

4.11 Homosexual activities, social attitudes towards homosexuals: No mention of...

4.12 Pattern of exogamy (endogamy): “Marrying a member of one’s own clan is strictly taboo” (2, pg 8). “The Miao are divided in to approximately eleven clans: Tang, Wang, Yang, Jang, Tong, Goo, Kloo, Mow, Jow, Her, and Tchai” (3, pg 55).

4.13 What is the belief of the role of males in conception; is paternity partible? Are these “other fathers” recognized? No partible paternity in this area of the world.

4.14 What is the belief of the mother’s role in procreation exactly? (e.g., “receptacle in which fetus grows”): Women can be impregnated by evil *dabs*. A Hmong woman of childbearing age should never step foot inside of a cave for fear of being impregnated or made sterile by sexual intercourse with the evil *dabs* that live inside caves (2, pg 4).

4.15 Is conception believed to be an incremental process (i.e., semen builds up over time)?

4.16 Occurrence of sexual coercion, rape

4.17 Preferential category for spouse (e.g., cross cousin) Someone that is Hmong, and is not in the same clan as you (2).

“Men must marry outside of their clan. This does not mean that they must necessarily marry outside of their village, or village area, since most local communities are multi-clan in composition. Yet extra-local marriage is regarded as preferable” (3, pg 81).

4.18 Do females enjoy sexual freedoms? “Women are not treated simply as property to be bought and sold...Miao society is not autocratic. The concept of individual rights is strongly imbedded into the culture” (3, pg 59).

“Love play is a permitted and highly popular game of the young unmarried men and women of different clans. Although it usually takes the form of small groups of men laying siege to one or two girls and is confined for the most part to teasing, a girl may agree to go off alone with a favoured partner, and no criticism is made of her if she does. Although it is a stated ideal of the Miao that a girl should maintain her virginity until marriage, it is also a code amongst the young that she should not resist intercourse for more than two such private meetings with the same boyfriend” (3, pg 81).

4.19 Evidence of giving gifts to extramarital partners or extramarital offspring

4.20 If mother dies, whose raises children? Most likely one of the other mothers within the household or extended family members of the father’s clan (3).

4.21 Adult sex ratio: number of adult males divided by number of (reproductive) females

4.22 Evidence for couvades

4.23 Different distinctions for potential fathers (e.g., lesser/younger vs. major/older)

4.24 Kin avoidance and respect? The Hmong have extreme amounts of respect for elders and ancestors and children are raised with those respectful beliefs intact. “Hmong children rarely caused disciplinary problems” (2, pg 238).

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4.24 Joking relationships?

4.25 Patterns of descent (e.g., bilateral, matrilineal) for certain rights, names or associations: It looks like patrilineal descent but women are keeping clan names. “Children belong to their father’s clan, but women traditionally retain their clan name after marriage” (2, pg 8).

“At all generation levels brothers of the father are classified with the father as also are wives of these fathers’ brothers with the mother, although distinctive terms for them are normally used in daily life” (3, pg 50).

“The ancestral cult symbolizes the spiritual unity of the family household. Husbands of daughters are included because they are directly linked to persons who have shared in the communion” (3, pg 51).

4.26 Incest avoidance rules: “To increase its strength, or even to maintain itself, a clan must acquire new members. It could do so by children being born to women who have themselves been born into the clan. But this rarely happens because sexual relations between clan members are incestuous and cohabitation within her parental house between a girl and any man offends the house spirits” (3, pg 57).

4.27 Is there a formal marriage ceremony? Yes there are formal marriage ceremonies that take place after bride-price has been paid (3).

4.28 In what way(s) does one get a name, change their name, and obtain another name? When a child is born, there is a special ceremony called a *hu plig* or “soul calling” ceremony in which they get their name. In traditional Hmong cultures, this naming ceremony takes place three days after the birth of the child. “Until this ceremony is performed, a Hmong baby is not considered to be fully a member of the human race, and if it died during its first three days it was not accorded the customary funerary rites” (2, pg 9). A soul calling ceremony is one in which the family of the newly born child will sacrifice animals and make lots of food in the hopes that one of the baby’s ancestors will accept the offering and decide to take up residence inside of the baby’s new body. The child’s parents and elders all tie a string around the baby’s wrist in order to bind the soul securely to the body of the newborn. The baby is also blessed and prayed for by its elders so that it will be healthy and have a long life (2, pg 11).

Your parents can choose to change your name at any time if there is a reasonable explanation for doing so. “Finally, she and Nao Kao tried changing Lia’s name to Kou, a last-ditch Hmong remedy based on the premise that if a patient is called by a new name, the *dab* who stole her soul will be tricked into thinking that she is someone else, and the soul can return” (2, pg 111).

4.29 Is marriage usually (or preferred to be) within community or outside community? (m/f difference?) Hmong generally always marry Hmong, even those that are living in Westernized societies. It is taboo to marry a member of one's own clan though, so you must marry outside of your clan group (2, pg 8). Hmong women marry outside of their clan, and women marry into a new clan (3).

4.30 Are marriages arranged? Who arranges (e.g., parents, close kin)? It sounds as though most young Hmong girls and boys choose their own mates preferentially based on rules about marrying outside of one's clan. As long as those rules are followed, it seems like who marries who is pretty relaxed (3).

4.31 Evidence for conflict of interest over who marries who:

Warfare/homicide

4.31 Percent adult (male) deaths due to warfare:

4.32 Outgroup vs ingroup cause of violent death: Hmong people are extremely prideful and if their name is slandered in any way, they would much rather kill themselves than suffer the shame of the community that even a falsehood brings to their name. For example, a Hmong man was falsely accused of killing his wife and child and so while in prison he hung himself before he could even have a trial because he was so ashamed that the people in his community might think him a murderer. "Two months after Lia had been taken from her family, Nao Kao [her father] came home to find Foua [his wife] pointing a knife at herself... hysterical and threatening suicide" because the fact that her child was taken away because the American doctors had reported the Lees for not administering medication to their child in correct dosages (2, pg 89).

4.33 Reported causes of in-group and out-group killing: The Hmong do not harm one another and believe in treating one another with the utmost respect. "I learned that...if I wronged another person, I might be reborn in my next life as my victims water buffalo and used for farm work" (2, pg 245).

4.34 Number, diversity and relationship with neighboring societies (external relations):

4.35 Cannibalism?

5. Socio-Political organization and interaction

5.1 Mean local residential (village) group size: No size specified for each village. Can be a mixture of different clan members, or one clan alone. It varies from village to village (3).

5.2 Mobility pattern: (seasonality): The group will only move if the land that is being cultivated becomes too poor to farm any longer. Generally, a family will work a plot of land for several years (3).

5.3 Political system: (chiefs, clans etc, wealth or status classes): "The identification of members with a village and the concept of collective interest which the shared activities and common ceremonies promote is important for its successful operation as a political unit, but in Thailand, as in most other modern situations of the Miao, its position in this respect has been affected by the national administration, which may give official status to a selected headman. How well he succeeds will depend upon how closely his qualities accord with those which the people consider desirable in a leader" (3, pg 94).

5.4 Post-marital residence: Men generally stay in their villages; women live with the man in his house. Extended family may or may not live with the married couple, there are no standard rules (2, 3).

5.5 Territoriality? (defined boundaries, active defense): "Hmong do not like to take orders; they do not like to lose; they would rather flee, fight, or die than surrender; they are not intimidated by being outnumbered; they are rarely persuaded that the customs of other cultures, even those more powerful than their own, are superior; they are capable of getting very angry" (2, pg 17).

5.6 Social interaction divisions ? (age and sex): Have extreme respect for elders and ancestors. "It is important to remember that the Hmong revere their elders" (2, pg 163).

The Hmong do not harm one another and believe in treating one another with the utmost respect. "I learned that...if I wronged another person, I might be reborn in my next life as my victims water buffalo and used for farm work" (2, pg 245).

“Miao (Hmong) may visit Miao anywhere and expect to be received with courtesy, not as strangers but as belonging to the same brand of humankind” (3, pg 45).

“Order and authority in the household are maintained by respect for age tempered by recognition of capacity. Through the kinship terminology, through the birth-order titles, through the attitudes encouraged in the children, respect for age is constantly emphasized” (3, pg 73).

5.7 Special friendships/joking relationships:

5.8 Village and house organization: “The primary local group in Miao society is the household comprising the people resident in a single dwelling. It may consist of one person, although this is extremely rare, a married couple, a simple family of parents and children, a polygynous family, or a patrilineally extended family which may or may not have polygynous extensions” (3, pg 73).

“The largest household...had twenty-six members” (3, pg 73).

5.9 Specialized village structures (mens' houses): None mentioned

5.10 Sleep in hammocks or on ground or elsewhere? Mention of “beds” (3, pg 75). No description of what said “beds” are comprised of.

5.11 Social organization, clans, moieties, lineages, etc: The Hmong have approximately eleven known recognized clans (2,3).

5.12 Trade: Traditionally the Hmong traded and sold opium (2).

5.13 Indications of social hierarchies? General rules for meeting Hmong people: “Don't raise your voice. Take off your shoes. Don't offer to shake hands with a man or people will think you're a whore. If a man offers to shake hands with you, indicate your lower status by placing your left hand under your right wrist in order to support the weight of his honored and important hand. If you walk with a Hmong leader, stay behind him and to his left. Don't ever say no to an offer of food, even if it's chicken feet” (2, pg 93).

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6. Ritual/Ceremony/Religion (RCR)

6.0 Time allocation to RCR: Hmong men and women place a lot of emphasis on Hmong traditional healing techniques and many of them (even ones living in modern America) still have their own herb gardens and know to and prefer to use traditional, herbal remedies to treat illnesses of the physical body and of the soul (2, pg 101).

6.1 Specialization (shamans and medicine): If you are a person who suffers from “*quag dab peg*” or what biomedical experts refer to as epilepsy, you are considered an esteemed and important person among the Hmong. People that exhibit signs of epilepsy are generally fit for divine office and are called to be shamans. Shamans in the Hmong culture are called “*txiv neeb*” and “becoming a *txiv neeb* is not a choice; it is a vocation” (2, pg 21). “*Txiv neeb* means “person with a healing spirit”. It is an offer that the sick person cannot refuse, since if he rejects his vocation, he will die. In any case, few Hmong would choose to decline. Although shamanism in an arduous calling that requires years of training with a master in order to learn the ritual techniques and chants, it confers an enormous amount of social status in the community and publicly marks the *txiv neeb* as a person of high moral character, since a healing spirit would never choose a no-account host” (2, pg 21).

“They were particularly frightened of pelvic exams performed by male [American] doctors. (In the Hmong healing system, *txiv neeb*s and herbalists, who do not touch their patients, may treat people of the opposite sex, but in the more intimate sphere of dermal therapy – massage, acupuncture, pinching, coin rubbing – men usually treat men and women women)” (2, pg 73).

“Relatively few persons become shamans. They must have the right mentality for it, have undergone an ordeal by illness, and possess the memory, acting ability, and energy to carry out the ritual, which involves continuous rapid shaking and chanting, interspersed with acrobatic jumps, for several hours. Shamans even of average capacity are fairly rare” (3, pg 99).

6.2 Stimulants: During ceremonies the *txiv neeb*s may use a burning joss stick, divination horns, and chanting as a means of going into altered states of consciousness (2, pg 287).

The Hmong traditionally cultivated opium poppies for trade and commercial sale, but there is a taboo against able-bodied members of the community using it regularly. Young men who use it regularly are considered lazy and are not respected by the community. Older people are allowed to use opium if they have pain or if they are ill, and sometimes it may have been used for occasional ceremonial purposes (2).

6.3 Passage rituals (birth, death, puberty, seasonal): The Hmong believe that when a person dies, they must travel back to their burial place and put back on their “jacket” or placenta in order to be correctly clothed and continue on its life journey. “When a Hmong dies, his or her soul must travel back from place to place, retracing the path of its life geography, until it reaches the burial place of its placental jacket, and puts it on. Only after the soul is properly dressed in the clothing in which it was born can it continue its dangerous journey, past murderous dabs and giant poisonous caterpillars, around man-eating rocks and impassable oceans to the place beyond the sky where it is reunited with its ancestors and from which it will someday be sent to be reborn as the soul of a new baby” (2, pg 5).

The Hmong also believe that your soul can be lost, and resulting symptoms are termed “*quag dab peg*” meaning “the spirit catches you and you fall down.” It happens when your soul has been so profoundly frightened by an occurrence that it flees your body and becomes lost. The symptoms exhibited in *quag dab peg* are usually recognized as epilepsy in the modern, westernized world (2, pg 20). **See 6.1 “Specializations” for more information on what happens if you suffer from *quag dab peg*.**

“It is important to remember that the Hmong revere their elders, and also that the soul of anyone who is not accorded the proper funerary rites – being washed dressed in special clothes, honored with animal sacrifices, verbally guided back to the place where one’s placenta is buried, lamented with death drum *qeej*, and laid to rest in a hand-hewn coffin on the shoulder of a sloping mountain – is doomed to an eternity of restless wandering...not to bury the dead is terrible” (2, pg 163).

“In the Hmong moral code, foretelling a death is strongly taboo. It is an unpardonable insult to say to one’s aged grandparent “After you are dead...”” (2, pg 177-178).

6.4 Other rituals: After a baby is born, its placenta is buried with great care inside the family home. “If it was a girl, her placenta was buried under her parents’ bed; if it was a boy, his placenta was buried in a place of greater honor, near the base of the house’s central wooden pillar, in which a male spirit, a domestic guardian who held up the roof of the house and watched over its residents, made his home” (2, pg 5).

Sacrifice cows and chickens routinely for ceremonial purposes (2, pg 109).

6.5 Myths (Creation): The Hmong have many myths, some of these include: “It was important never to compliment a [Hmong] baby’s beauty out loud, lest a *dab* overhear and be unable to resist snatching its soul.” “A seventeen year old Hmong patient once asked if her failure to get pregnant might be attributable to the *dab* who frequently visited her in her dreams, sometimes sitting on the edge of her bed and sometimes having sexual intercourse with her” (2, pg 65).

“A folktale collected in 1924 by Francois Marie Savina, the French missionary, reports that when the Hmong lived in the primordial northern homeland where the days and nights were six months long, they were once involved in a land dispute with some neighboring tribes. Their king resolved it as follows. Each tribe would select an envoy who would walk as far as he could during the six months between sunset to sunrise, returning to the king’s golden palace at the end of the his journey. All the territory he covered would belong to his tribe. If one of the envoys failed to reach the palace, his tribe would be commanded to live wherever he stood at the moment the sun rose. At daybreak, the Hmong envoy was standing on a high pinnacle, and this is why, ever since then, the Hmong have always lived in the mountains, where they are the first to see the sun rise and the last to see it set” (2, pg 119).

6.6 Cultural material (art, music, games): There is a Hmong instrument that is mentioned several times called a *qeej* and it sounds as though it is a specialized thing to be able to play the *qeej* because people that play the instrument are called

“*qeej* players” and are called upon for ceremonies and other important events. The *qeej* is “made from six curing bamboo pipes attached to a wooden wind chamber...a musical instrument, highly esteemed by the Hmong” (2, pg 19).

“A Hmong man was said to value two qualities most highly in a wife: her ability to sing poetry and her skill at *paj ntaub* (needlework)” (2, pg 102).

Many Hmong words are related to the “natural world” and have an onomatopoeic / musical quality to them (2, pg 121).

6.7 Sex differences in RCR: *Txiv neeb*s approach males and females differently when treating them. What is considered an appropriate way to approach a male in a healing ceremony may not be an appropriate way to approach a female (2, pg 33).

6.8 Missionary effect: “Seventeen years [after moving to America], Foua and Nao Kao use American appliances, but they still speak only Hmong, celebrate only Hmong holidays, practice only the Hmong religion, cook only Hmong dishes, sing only Hmong songs, play only Hmong musical instruments, tell only Hmong stories, and know far more about current political events in Laos and Thailand than about those in the United States” (2, pg 182).

6.9 RCR revival: Hmong people are extremely proud of Hmong traditions and even children that have been Americanized practice most of the traditional Hmong ways of life (2, pg 182).

6.10 Death and afterlife beliefs: They are highly respectful of their ancestors. They believe that after you die and your soul returns to “that place beyond the sky” you are eventually reunited with your ancestors and one day will be reborn into another body as a baby (2, pg 5).

The Hmong believe in evil *dabs* (spirits) who can come snatch souls away, make women infertile, make someone sick, etc (2).

6.11 Taboo of naming dead people?

6.12 Is there teknonymy?

6.13 Briefly describe religion (animism, ancestor worship, deism, magic, totems etc.) I would describe their religion as ancestor worship because they don't make mention of a “god” but they do reference ancestors a lot and the fact that when you die, you will be “reunited with your ancestors” in the “place beyond the sky.” So they definitely believe in an afterlife, but it is based more on familial ties than it is to a god or creation myth. Also, they believe in *dabs*, which are evil spirits that can attack people at any given time throughout their lives, so they take a lot of precaution against *dabs* (2, pg 5).

7. Adornment

7.1 Body paint:

7.2 Piercings:

7.3 Haircut:

7.4 Scarification:

7.5 Adornment (beads, feathers, lip plates, etc.): Hmong women practice an intricate, time-consuming type of needlework called “*paj ntaub*.” A traditional Hmong garment will take hours to make and will be brightly colored with intricate, embroidery and needlework. The more favored family members will have the most intricate garments. Hmong women sew traditional wedding garments for all of their daughters dowries (2, pg 103).

7.6 Ceremonial/Ritual adornment: Traditional Hmong clothing for women is exquisitely stitched *paj ntaub* worn mostly during special occasions and ceremonies. It includes pieces such as a *phuam* (a sash), a *tiab* (a skirt with several hundred accordion pleats), a *sev* (a kind of apron), a *tsho* (a kind of jacket meant to symbolize a placenta), some *hnab tshos* (pocketlike bags), *nrhoob* (a pair of black calf wraps), and finally a *kausmom* (a kind of traditional Hmong headpiece) (2, pg 102).

7.7 Sex differences in adornment: Women seem to have more traditional ceremonial garb than do men (2).

7.8 Missionary/Westernization effect: When the Hmong became refugees during the Vietnam War, they became more acculturated in their ways of dressing, choosing to wear the clothing that was given to them by the government. The same thing happens when they decide to migrate to more Westernized places, like the United States, where they tend to buy/wear clothing that is cheap and made available to them by the government (2).

7.9 Types of clothing: See 7.6 “Ceremonial and Ritual Adornment” for a list of clothing pieces (2).

8. Kinship systems

8.1 Sibling classification system:

8.2 Sororate, levirate: During the Vietnam war “the institution of levirate marriage, in which a widow was expected to wed her dead husband’s brother was revived” (2, pg 135).

8.3 Other notable kinship typology, especially cross-cousin (MBD/FZD) typology (Crow/Hawaiian/Omaha etc.):

9. Other interesting cultural features (list them):

Numbered references

1. www.ethnologue.com
2. Fadiman, A. (1997). The spirit catches you and you fall down: A Hmong child and her American doctors, and the collision of two cultures. Print.
3. Geddes, WR. (1976). Migrants of the mountains: the cultural ecology of the Blue Mia (Hmong Njua) of Thailand. Print.