The History of the Hmong

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GANYING JEFF VANG
HMONG LANGUAGE & CULTURE, 3HMONGTV
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My Background

- Director & Professor of the Center for Hmong Studies.
  - Teach Hmong Studies
  - Teach Political Science /American Government.
- Director of Housing Policy & Development.
- President & CEO of Urban Coalition.
- Director of Gov’t & Community Relations
- Executive Director of State Council on Asian Pacific-Minnesotans.
- Executive Director of Hmong American Partnership.
- Appointed positions:
  - President Clinton’s Administration
  - Governor Ventura’s Administration
- Other political experiences
  - US Sen. Carl Levin
  - MN State Sen. Joe Bertram
- Served on many non-profit and foundation boards.
Jeff’s Background

Hmong History, Language & Culture
Research/Reporter, 3HMONGTV

- Research & document Hmong Cultural Events in the US, Southeast Asia, and China
- Research & document different Hmong Dialects in China, Southeast Asia and the West
- Research & document Hmong history

NON-PROFIT
- Co-founder & President of the Temple of Hmongism
- MN China Friendship Garden Society Board
- Hmong American New Year Board

EDUCATION
- University of MN (TC)
  East Asian Studies, BA
The Hmong

- When did the Hmong first arrived in the Minnesota?
- Where did the Hmong originated from?
- How many Hmong are in the world?
- How many Hmong in Minnesota?
- Who was the first Hmong elected official in the United States?
Perception/Stereotype
What defines a people?

- Clothing?
- Food?
- Language?
- Culture/Religion/Traditions
- History?
Who are the Hmong?
Hmong History in China
by Jeff Vang
Ancient Kingdoms

Huang Di – Yellow Emperor

Chi You (Txiv Yawg) – Hmong Emperor

Yan Di – Red Emperor
Chi You  Huang Di  Yan Di

The Three Ancestors (sanzu)
Chi You Statues
Chi You Palace
Chi You Symbols
OX-HORN SYMBOL
Chi You’s Legend Continue
Know our History
Know Our History
Know our History
HMONG/MIAO - The 3 Main Dialects
Xong, Hmu, Hmong

Eastern Dialect
- Hunan Province
-XONG (Red Hmong/Hong Miao)

Central Dialect
- Guizhou Province
- HMU (Black Hmong - Hei Miao)
(Southeastern Quizhou)

Western Dialect
- Yunnan, Guangxi, Sichuan, Western
Guizhou, Southeast Asia, Western Hmong
- HMONG (White, Green, Flowery Hmong,
and more...)
The 5 major migrations of the Hmong/Miao people

1. Zhoulu, north of the Yellow River, to the south of the Yellow River. Later formed the San Miao Kingdom
2. San Miao (Yao Shun Yu period)
3. Chu State (Hunan, Hubei area), Chin (Qin) unified
4. Sichuan, Guangxi, Yunnan (late Ming into Qing)
5. Southeast Asia (Out of the mainland, China) in the early 1800
Hmong History in SE Asia
by
Lee Pao Xiong
Know Our/Your History
The Hmong

- The French Indo-China War (1900 – 1954)
  - To Assist the French to fight against the Japanese during WWII, and the Vietnamese during the battle for Dien Bien Phu.

- The Secret War (1961 – 1975)
  - The Hmong fought to defend their homeland.
  - To engage the North Vietnamese Army in combats using guerilla tactics.
  - To rescue downed American pilots.
  - To gather intelligence.
  - To guard radar sites.

- Refugee years
  - 1975 – 1980 – Military leaders & family
  - 1993 – 2011 – Children of Soldiers
Know Our/Your History
The Hmong Migration

Demographic:
- 10 millions in China
- 1 million in Vietnam
- 460,000 in Laos
- 120,000 in Thailand
- 2000-3000 in Myanmar, and
After the end of the Lao civil war in 1975:
- more than 260,000 in the USA
- 15,000 in France
- 1,800 in Australia
- 1,400 in Canada
- 200 to Argentina,
- 110 in Germany  (Lemoine, 2005).
The Hmong

Demographic

Based on 2010 Census (The actual number may be more)

1. California 91,224;
2. Minnesota 66,181;
3. Wisconsin 49,240;
4. N. Carolina 10,864;
5. Michigan 5,924.
The Hmong
The Hmong Demographic

Asians & Pacific Islanders groups in Minnesota

Percentages are based on the estimated total Asian Pacific population size of 213,259

Asian Pacific ethnic groups based on 2010 ACS 1-year estimates

Source: 2010 American Community Survey, 1 year estimates
The Hmong Market

- Specific niche marketing
Between Two Worlds
Family Values
Solo or combo?
The way you see yourself may shape the way you think. If the characteristics associated with collectivism describe you, then your world view will tend to be holistic. If you fit the description of an individualist you are likely to think in a more analytical way.

**Collectivism**
- Harmony
- Belong
- Related
- Duty
- Context
- Advice
- Hierarchy

**Individualism**
- Compete
- Private
- Self-knowing
- Direct communication
- Unique
- Independent
- Goals

Concern for group harmony and that groups get along
Wanting to belong to and enjoy being part of groups
Considering close others as an integral part of self
Duties and sacrifices being a group member entails
Self changes according to context or situation
Turning to close others for help with decisions
Focus on hierarchy and status issues

Personal competition and winning
Thoughts and actions private from others
Knowing oneself, having a strong identity
Clearly articulating one’s wants and needs
Focus on one’s unique, idiosyncratic qualities
Freedom, self-sufficiency, control over one’s life
Striving for one’s own goals, desires and achievements
Society (Pej Kum Tebchaw)

Community (Yus ib Haiv)

Clan (Yus ib Xeem)

Family (Tsev Neeg thiab Pawg Kwvtij)

Individual (Tus Kheej)
Hmong Culture and Society

- **Hmong Worldview**
  - Holistic notion of the world
  - Speculative
  - Human and ecological co-existence
  - Harmony
  - Vertical relationship
  - Extended family
  - Interdependent
  - Respect for old age and authority
  - Group-oriented
  - Adult-oriented
  - Past-oriented
  - Status-quo oriented (poj ua tseg yawm ua cia)
  - Take a day at a time or as it comes
  - Weigh and internalize needs, problems and frustration
  - Shame conscious

- **Western Worldview**
  - Things can be broken down and analyzed
  - Analytical, scientific
  - Survival of the fittest, man controls nature
  - Competition
  - Horizontal relationship
  - Nucleus family
  - Independent and autonomous
  - Challenge authority
  - Individual-oriented
  - Future-oriented
  - Change-oriented
  - Time is precise, prompt
  - Express needs and problems verbally and publicly
  - Guilt conscious

Sources: http://www.laofamily.org/pdfs/Hmong_Worldview.pdf
Family Names
18 CLANS

CLAN NAMES

Chang / Tsab  Lee, Ly / Lis
Cheng / Tsheej  Lor, Lo / Lauj
Chue / Tswb  Moua, Mua / Muas
Fang / Faj, Faaj  Pha / Phab
Hang / Ham, Haam  Thao, Thor / Thoj
Her, Heu / Hawj  Vang / Vaj
Khang / Khab  Vue, Vu / Vwj
Kong / Koo  Xiong / Xyooj
Kue / Kwm  Yang / Yaj

Anglicized name / Hmong name
What are our religious beliefs?
Hmong Religious Beliefs
by
Jeff Vang
Hmong Spiritual Beliefs

- **Animism**
  - All things living or nonliving have a spirit or a spirit of its own.
  - Goal-To be in harmony.

- **Shaman**
  - Restores balance or healing (kho)
  - Siv Yis, the first Shaman.
Hmong 3 Levels of Spiritual Beliefs

1. **Poj Yawm / Tej laus li Ntsuj Plig**
   Ancestors Spirits / Protector spirits of those who passed

2. **Tim Tswv Teb Chaws**
   Local Spirits/Specific Location

3. **Tswv Ntuj** (NTUJ) - Creator
   (the owner of the earth, world, and the universe)
the 1 body 3 souls

• **First Soul**
  - Reborn - To be reborn into another shape i.e human race, animal, or something else

• **Second Soul**
  - Travels back to heaven to be with the ancestors - Protects its owner from harm

• **Third Soul**
  - Stays with body – stays with the grave upon death.
Important Musical Instrument

QEEJ (bamboo pipe instrument)

Entertainment

Religious Purpose
(Funeral & Wedding)
Hmong religious movements

Belief Systems:

- Niam Ntawv (mother of writing—Yang Shong Lue (1959 - Laos)
- Poj Koob Yawm Ntxwy – Ancestor worship (2000 - USA)
- Hmongism (2012 - USA) a simplified form of Hmong traditional belief
- Short/convenient to practice
  - Funeral/Wedding/Spiritual Healing/Teaching
Hmong Christian Movements

By
Lee Pao Xiong
Christianity and the Hmong

- **Samuel Pollard of the London Missionary Society (1899)**
  - 1797 and 1856 rebellion
    - Desperate for recovery
  - Campaigned for land rights.
  - Launched Small Pox Vaccination Program.
  - Reformed traditional Hmong culture.
  - 1905 Created the Pollard Miao text with Yang Yage and Li Shitifan.
  - 1936 became established with the translation and publication of the New Testament.
Hmong Christianity

- Rev. Ted Andrianoff & Lao Kheng (1950)
  - Boua Ya and first 1,700 converts.
- Touby Lyfoung
  - Study Bible twice a week
  - Does not discouraged villagers from conversion
  - Wife became those of first baptized.
Missionaries & Hmong Writing Systems
History of Hmong Romanized Popular Alphabet (RPA)

Developed in 1953 by:

- Father Yves Bertrais (Txiv Plig Nyiaj Pov Yaj)
- Dr. William Smalley
- Dr. Linwood Barney
- Yaj Yeeb
- Thoj Hwj
- Cov Hmoob Roob Nyuj Qus thlab Iwm cov Hmoob, Los Tsuas Teb.
Mloog (listen), Sau (write), & Nyeem (read)

NTAWV HMOOB

- Hmoob Las Tees (RPA System)
  - 26 Cov Tsiaj Ntawv (alphabets)
  - 14 Tsiaj Ntawv Niam (vowels)
    - 6 Tab (singular)
    - 8 Txooj (double)

- Tsiaj Ntawv Txiv (Consonants)
  - Tab (Singular): 17
  - Txooj (Plural):
    - Cov 2 Tug(Double): 23
    - Cov 3 Tug(Triple): 15
    - Cov 4
      - Tug(Quadruple): 3
  - Cov Tsiaj Ntawv Cim (tone markers): 8
History of Pahawh Hmong Text (Phaj Hauj):

- Developed in 1959 by Shong Lue Yang
  - Messianic based
    - Proclaimed to be the son of God
    - Sent to earth to develop a writing system for Hmong and Khamu
  - Was assassinated in 1971
**Modified Pahawh Hmong Vowels (Yub Phaj Hauj):**

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<th>Low Glottalized</th>
<th>Low Rising</th>
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1. Nyob zoo! Koj dabtsis os?
2. Kuv mus tod khw os.
3. Koj mus dabtsis tod khw?
4. Kuv mus yuav zaub noj os.
Xyaum Nyeem Ntawv Hmoob

1. Koj tuaj ua dabtsis os?
2. Kuv tuaj nrhiav haujlwm os.
3. Los zaum.
4. Koj puas haus dej dabtsis?
5. Haus dej dawb os.
Our Progress
New Generation of Leaders

- Elected leadership
  - Sen. Foung Hawj
  - Councilmember Dai Thao
  - Councilmember Tou Xiong
  - Councilmember Blong Yang

- Organizational Leadership
  - MayKao Hang
  - Doua Thao
  - Bo Thao-Urabe

- Business Leaders
  - Toua Xiong, Hmongtown Marketplace
  - Yong Yia Vang et al. Hmong Village
  - Pao Choua Yang, Long Cheng Hmong Livestock
New Generation of Leaders

- Appointed leadership
  - William Yang
    - Mayoral appointee
  - Lee Pao Xiong
    - Clinton appointee
    - Obama AAPI leadership team
    - Ventura appointee
  - Sia Lo
    - Mayor appointee
  - Vameng Thao
    - Mayoral appointee
  - Chai Lee
    - Mayor appointee
  - Doua Thao
    - Obama appointee – White House Initiative on AAPI
  - Judge Sophia Vuelo
    - Governor Mark Dayton Appointee

-Liz Kalia Xiong, Press Secretary for Mayor Carter.
-Kaohly Her, Policy Director
-ThaoMee Xiong, Director of Intergovernmental Relations.
-Daniel Yang, Senior Policy Advisor
Hmong Culture and Society

- Non-profit & government leadership
  - Bao Vang, ED of HND & HAP.
  - Bao Thao-Urabe, ED of CAAL.
  - Sia Her, ED of the State Council on Asian-Pacific Minnesotans.
  - MayKao Hang, President & CEO of Wilder Foundation.
  - Kazoua Kong-Thao, ED of CSE.
  - Kabo Yang, ED of MN Women Consortium.
Implications & So what?
Implications

- **Societal Level**
  - Community is still very young. Sixty percent are under the age of 19.
    - Dependency – access to services
    - Preparatory – access to opportunities
    - Contributions – Access to opportunities

- **Community Level**
  - Mistrust of institutions and people in leadership positions due to war.
    - Must win trust by opening doors (institution and etc.)
    - Must win trust by showing up – functions, sponsorship, and etc.
Implications

Family Level
- Parents, male, and educated leaders wield enormous power as far as choice.
- High expectations on the student/youth to perform or be the next Ph.D, MD, JD etc.

Individual Level
- High pressure to succeed.
- Balance multiple priorities (work, home responsibilities, cultural ceremonies, and etc.
- Limited choices due to influence from parents.
- Less engaged in non-work related activities.
Q&A
Thank You!!!!!

If you have ANY questions at all, please do not hesitate to contact us:

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jeff.hmonglc@gmail.com