

Location: Linguist Michael Johnson listed a figure of 15,000 members of the Hmong Dlex Nchab ethnic group. They live in and around Tongchang Township in Jinping County¹ — the only place they are found in China. Jinping is located in the southern part of Yunnan Province close to China's border with Vietnam. There are a total of 80,000 Miao in Jinping County. The largest group is the Hmong Leng, followed by the Hmong Bua and the Hmong Daw. There are also a small number of Hmong Shuad in the area.

Identity: The Chinese call this group *Qingshui Miao*, meaning “clear water” Miao. This name corresponds to their autonym, *Hmong Dlex Nchab* (Clear Water Hmong). They also call themselves *Black Hmong*, but they are not the same group as the local Black Hmong (Hmong Bua) living in the same area.

Language: The Hmong Dlex Nchab are closely related to the Hmong Leng. The two groups can communicate without much difficulty. The major differences between the various Hmong groups in Jinping are ethnocultural, rather than linguistic. Johnson notes, “This dialect preserves the most number of features within the Southern Hua Miao group and both Hmong Leng and Hmong Njua could be synchronically derived from it.”²

History: Historically, the Chinese have viewed the Hmong with contempt, believing them to be “uncivilized barbarians.” Visitors to the minority

peoples of China, however, have generally found them an extremely warm and hospitable people, often more than the Han Chinese themselves. Father De Mailla's comments on the tribes of Taiwan in the early 1700s still stand true for many of the minorities in China today. De Mailla wrote, “Savages though they may be according to the maxims of the Chinese world, I believe them to be nearer to the true philosophy than a great number of the most celebrated Chinese sages. One never sees among them, even upon Christian testimony, either cheating or quarreling, or robbery or litigation.... Their dealings are equitable, and they are attached to each other... they are circumspect in their words, and upright and pure in heart.”³

Customs: The Hmong Dlex Nchab join with other ethnic groups in the area to celebrate several major festivals each year, including the Chinese New Year and Spring festivals.

Religion: Most Hmong Dlex Nchab are polytheistic animists. Despite their fear of the spirit world, no Hmong in



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China are idolaters in the true sense of the word. They worship no idols or images in their rituals.

Christianity: Generations of Hmong Dlex Nchab have perished without receiving news of the sacrifice of Christ for their sins. The Jinping area is tightly controlled by the Chinese authorities. In 1994, in response to thousands of Hmong Daw coming to Christ through radio broadcasts, the local police arrested 18 church leaders, beat local Christians, and destroyed numerous Bibles and much Christian literature.⁴



Population in China:

15,000 (1998)
15,870 (2000)
20,400 (2010)

Location: Yunnan

Religion: Animism

Christians: None Known

Overview of the Hmong Dlex Nchab

Countries: China

Pronunciation: “Hmong-Dley-Ncha”

Other Names: Clear Water Hmong, Clear Water Miao, Qingshui Miao, Hmong Dlob, Black Hmong

Population Source: 15,000 (1998 M. Johnson); Out of a total Miao population of 7,398,035 (1990 census)

Location: SE Yunnan: Tongchang Township of Jinping County

Status: Officially included under Miao

Language: Hmong-Mien, Hmongic, Western Hmongic, Hua Miao, Southern Hua Miao, Qingshui Miao

Dialects: 0

Religion: Animism, Polytheism, Ancestor Worship

Christians: None known

Scripture: None

Jesus film: None

Gospel Recordings: None

Christian Broadcasting: None

ROPAL code: None

