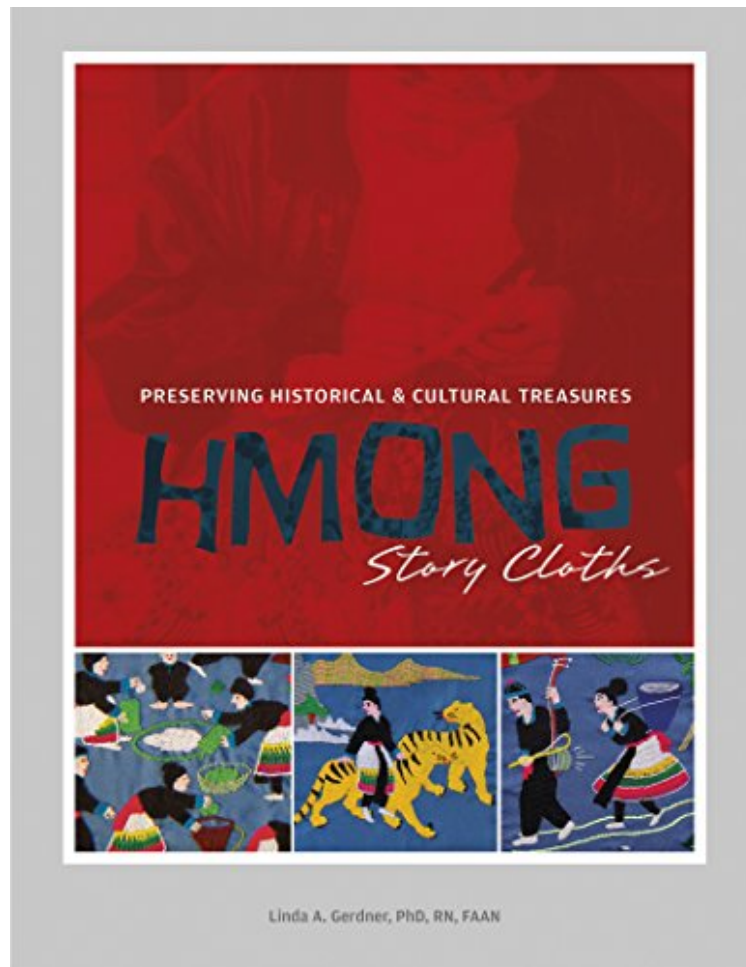


Hmong Story Cloths: Preserving Historical Cultural Treasures

Linda Gerdner

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Linda Gerdner : Hmong Story Cloths: Preserving Historical Cultural Treasures before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Hmong Story Cloths: Preserving Historical Cultural Treasures:

0 of 1 people found the following review helpful. An Outsider Vernacular Account of an Indigenous Experience By Mai XiongWell, this text is positioned as some kind of historical account, when in fact, it is another person's collection and re-account of an indigenous group's art, history, and artifacts. There are issues that need to be address: one of them mainly being the claim of the "first story cloth." Making such an assertive statement based on personal (hobbyist) collection that is presented as a fact is alarming. Gerdner brings attention to the Hmong experience, but the central focus of this text is not the indigenous Hmong, it's more about Gerdner's collection. I also found it strange that Gerdner who is a geriatric nurse would try to position herself as a "Phd" in social or cultural studies when she has a

Phd in Nursing. 2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. *Hmong Story Cloths: History, Culture, and Art* By Nancy A. The Hmong people have struggled to preserve their ethnic identity for centuries, pressured to leave China for Laos in the mid-1800s. During the Vietnam War the Hmong people of Laos assisted the American Troops. America left Laos and in 1975 the royal government fell to the Communists, who persecuted the Hmong. Perhaps 100,000 Hmong died in the conflict and the Communist persecution. The Hmong fled to Thailand where they lived in refugee camps. In the refugee camps the Hmong women created Story Cloths, applique and embroidered art depicting their old way of life, the Communist persecution, and their escape to the refugee camps. America accepted Hmong immigrants in the late 1970s, with about 150,000 settling in the US; about 5,000 settled in Philadelphia and Eastern Pennsylvania. It was a time of economic distress and many Americans resented the special treatment the Hmong received from the government. The extent of the Hmong people's support to America during Vietnam was not well known. Since we lived in Philly in the 1970s and 1980s I was familiar with the Hmong and their reverse applique and Story Cloths. I requested Hmong Story Cloths by Linda A. Gerdner to learn more about the Hmong and their amazing applique historical documents. Gerdner has worked with the Hmong and traveled to Laos and has an extensive collection of Story Cloths, cultural artifacts, and photographs. Gerdner first offers a background to the Hmong people, their history, and how they created their Story Cloths. Beautiful photography of the whole cloths and significant details accompany the text. Chapters address specific Story Cloth themes, including The Hmong People's Journey, Traditional Life in Laos, the Hmong New Year, Hmong Folktales, and Neighboring Ethnic People. The detail in the cloths can be overwhelming but Gerdner's analysis explains the message and significance of the motifs. In an interview with the Hmong Times, Gerdner gave her purpose for writing this book: As a tribute to a special cohort of Laotian Hmong who created a new form of textile art as a means of sharing their cultural heritage As a legacy for subsequent generations of Hmong Americans who wish to learn about their historical and cultural heritage To promote cultural awareness and understanding for those who do not have a Hmong heritage To pay tribute to the extraordinary needlework skills that were used to create this new art form The book can be enjoyed on many levels: as a social and cultural study, a history, and as a study of a particular art and craft. I received a free ebook from the publisher through NetGalley in exchange for a fair and unbiased review. 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. An interesting book By Leyla What a lovely book on both the history of the Hmong people and an translation of it through the art in cloth. The book is beautifully laid out with chapters covering the time under the protection of the US, their folklore, their culture and sub-groups or clans and how it effects their cloth art and the history and stories that are depicted in it. This book brings out the story of a little known culture and lives of the Laos Hmong people. A beautiful book, well written with glorious photography, beautiful art, and well told history. This book was supplied to me in return for a honest and unbiased review.

Hmong story cloths provide a visual documentation of the historical and cultural legacy of the Hmong people from the country of Laos. The Hmong first began making the story cloths during their time in refugee camps, and featured here are 48 vibrant story cloths that provide a comprehensive look at their lives and culture. The creation of a story cloth begins with the selection of fabric and images outlined onto the fabric. Long satin stitches of multi-colored threads fill in the image, while details are applied with intricate satin stitches and borders pieced together and hand-stitched. Topics include history, traditional life in Laos, Hmong New Year, folk tales, and neighboring people. The quality and diversity of content of the story cloths build upon one another to provide a holistic understanding of the Hmong culture and history. Augmented with personal stories and artifacts, this book is perfect for history buffs and textile artisans alike.

About the Author Linda A. Gerdner's love of the Hmong people led to her passion for collecting story cloths and for the learning opportunities they provide. She has traveled to the Hmong villages in rural Laos and the last refugee settlement in Thailand.