

The Truth Behind the Name Mong and Hmong

(*Qhov Tseeb Ntawm Lub Npe Moob hab Hmoob*)

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Lug Moob (Mong)

Lub hauvpaug hab tug caag ntawm Moob tes muaj ib paab xwb, tabsis thaum Moob hab Suav ua tsuvrog tes Moob tawg ua-saab ua-sua ua ntau paab ntau pawg lawm. Txij ntawd lug, Moob has ntau hom lug hab muaj ntau paab, xws le Moob Dlub, Moob Yaub Tshuab hab lwm yaam Moob kws peb tub paub tsi tau has tas puab yog hom Moob dlaabtsi. Tabsis lub suab has tas "Moob" (Mong) nuav yog ib lub suab kws meej tshaaj rua suavdlawg. Lub suab kws has tas "Hmoob" (Hmong) nua tsuas yog has tau meej rua ib paab kws puab tau txa lug ntawm cov lug Moob xwb. Lu-lug "Moob" (Mong) yog tug caag tag tag kws yog lug ntawm hom lug kws cov Moob Leeg tseem siv najnub nua.

Qhov tseeb ntawm cov "Moob Leeg" hab "Hmoob Dawb" mas nwg yog tuab cov tuabneeg. Suavdlawg siskoom sab lug tivthaiv tuav lub npe "Moob." Suavdlawg lug tawmtsiam tuab tug yeebncuab ua ntu zug lug tsi has nthwv rog twg.

Vim txuj kev ua tsuvrog, Moob txhaj tau hu sav lug ua ob lub npe, los yog ua ob paab tuabneeg. Ib txha Moob txhale tau txa hab hloov puab cov lug Moob lawm. Thaum puab txa lawm, puab hu puab tug kheej ua "Hmoob" hab puab has tas puab yog "Hmoob Dawb" (Hmong Der), txhais has tas yog tug tsim muaj txim.

Lub hauvpaug thaus muaj lub npe "Hmoob Dawb" ntawd tsi yog sistawg losyog tsis muaj kev tsi sishum ntawm Moob. Nwg tsuas yog ib txuj kev cawmsav ntawm ib pawg tuabneeg Moob xwb. Pawg tuabneeg Moob nuav muaj ib tug muam kws muaj txujci zoo. Nwg txhajle nrhav kev lug cawm cov txivneej ntawm pawg ntawd vim lub sijhawm ntawd, Moob hab Suav ua tsuvrog sistua luj heev. Thaum kws Moob swb Suav lawm tes, Suav txhaj caum Moob tua. Suav yuav muab cov txivneej Moob tua kuas tuag taag. Pawg Moob ntawd tug muam txhaj tau muab lub tswvyim has tas, "ca muab mej cov lug hloov ib qho mivntsiv kuas txawv hab muab mej cov roogtsho hloov, mas kuv txhaj yuav has tau rua

English Version

In the beginning, there was only one group of Mong, but when the Mong and the Chinese fought against each other, the Mong were scattered and divided into many groups. Since then, the Mong began to speak different dialects and form various groups, such as Mong Dlu, Mong Yao Chua and other Mong that may be unknown to us today. Nevertheless, the articulation of the term "Mong" is still the best pronunciation for everyone. The pronunciation of the word "Hmong" (Hmoob) is just for one group that had outshouted or transformed from those speaking the original version. The term "Mong" is the original or proto root word for the Mong language that the Mong Leng still use today.

The truth behind the "Mong Leng" and the "Hmong Der" is that they are one group of people. Everyone was united with one goal in mind, which was to protect the name "Mong." Everyone fought against the same enemy from era to era regardless of the wars they were involved in.

Due to wars, the term Mong evolved into two names or two distinguishable groups of people. A Mong group transformed itself and changed their language. After this transformation, they called themselves "Hmong" and stated that they were "Hmong Der" (Hmoob Dawb), meaning the innocent one.

The cause for having the name "Hmong Der" was not due to conflicts or problems within the Mong. It was a means devised by a Mong female to save one group of Mong only. She sought ways to save the men of her group. During that time, the Mong and the Chinese fought a major battle. When the Mong lost the battle, the Chinese went after them. The Chinese marked all the Mong men for extinction. The sister of this group came up with an idea that "they needed to change their language and costumes to make them look different from the proto-Mong; in that way, she could justify to the Chinese that her group was the innocent one. They looked different from the Mong

dlawbhuv. Mej txhaj tsi zoo le paab Moob kws nrug Suav sistua." Puab txhajle hloov puab cov roogtsho hab puab cov lug. Txij thaum ntawd lug, pawg Moob nuav cov quaspuj txhaj hloov lug naav tab dlawb hab rig sa sev nrug. Cov txivneej txhaj hloov lug naav taugrig tuablu lawm. Pawg Moob nuav txawm hloov lug has cov lug kws suavdlawg has tas lug "Hmoob Dawb" (Hmong Der) hab puab siv lu-lug "Hmoob"(Hmong) najnub nwgnuav. Qhov povthawj kws qha zaaj lug nuav kws muaj tseeb mas yog najnub nwgnuav cov Moob Dlawb tseem saib puab tug "muamphauj" (pujnyaa) rua lub saamxeeb luj heev. Yog has tas tug nug tau taag simneej mas tug muam yuavtsum yog ib tug tseemceeb ntawm tug nug lub nteeg. Vim muaj puab tug muam cawm puab, puab txhaj tau dlim txuj kev tsimtxom ntawm Suav zag ntawd. Yog muaj tej yaam tsi zoo mas cov Moob Dlawb txhajle hu puab tug muamphauj tuaj rawm kuam txuj kev tsi zoo ntawd pluj moog es txhob muaj tshwmsim rua tej xeebleej xeebntxwv tomqaab.

Has txug paab Moob kws tseem has losyog tseem siv hom lugcaag, losyog hom lug hauvpaug mas puab lub npe sav lug hu ua "Moob Leeg" (Mong Leng). Tsi yog has tas puab muaj "leeg" es puab txhajle hu puab ua Moob Leeg, tabsis vim puab yog paab kws tsi muaj kev cawmdlim, puab txhajle yuavtsum tau "leeg" rua Suav has tas puab yog cov tau nrug Suav sistua ua tsuvrog. Pawg Moob nuav yog pawg coob hab puab yog cov kws raug Suav tsimtxom luj heev rua lub sijhawm ntawd vim pawg Moob nuav tuav puab lub npe, puab cov lug hab puab tej roogtsho hab puab tsi muaj tug pujnyaa (muamphauj) lug cawm puab. Txij ntawd lug, puab txhajle muaj lub npe has tas "Moob Leeg" vim puab leeg rua Suav has tas puab yog cov kws nrug Suav sistua ua tsuvrog. Najnub nwgnuav, cov Moob Leeg txhaj tseem tuav lu-lug "Moob." Puab txhajle tsi ua kevcai le cov Hmoob Dawb (Hmong Der) hab muab puab tug pujnyaa saib hlub le cov Hmoob Dawb (Hmong Der).

Txawm has tas paab Moob Dlawb dlim zag nuav, Suav yeej tsi tseg txuj kev tsimtxom Moob le. Txawm yog puab yuav has lug txawv, naav roogtsho txawv, los puab yeej tuav teg ua-ke nrug Moob Leeg ua tsuv ua rog tawmstaam yeebncuab hab sispaa ua ntu zuzug lug txug najnub nwgnuav. Moob tau swb tsuvrog rua Suav ntau zag. Tomqaab nuav, Moob txhaj muaj zag tsuvrog kws hu ua "Peb Moob." Qhov nuav txhais has tas yog peb paab Moob lug sissau uake tua Suav. Peb txhaj najnub has tas "peb Moob."

changed their costumes and language into something different. From that time on, this group of Mong began to wear white skirts and pants with sashes when they dressed. The men changed from wearing full-length pants and extended crotches to fitted pants with short crotches. This group of Mong began to speak the language called Hmong Der ("Hmoob Dawb") and use the term "Hmong" ("Hmoob") as we know today. The truth behind this story is firmly supported, evidenced by a funeral ritual still practiced by the Hmong Der today. The Hmong Der still highly regarded their "sisters," sometimes referred to "aunts" with great respect. When a brother dies, the sister plays an important role in his funeral ceremony. It is because at one time in history a sister had saved their ancestors from Chinese persecution. When there is a misfortune in their families, Hmong Der will call on their sisters or aunts to dwarf off or drive away the misfortune, so that the misfortune will not occur and do harm to their future generation or their descendants.

As for the Mong who have kept their original or proto language, their name has come to be known as the "Mong Leng" (Moob Leeg). It was not that they had "leng" [meaning they have "veins," but in this context "leng" means to "admitt"] so they called themselves Mong Leng. They were the ones who had to admit that they had fought against the Chinese. They were the majority who faced the consequences and who were persecuted very harshly by the Chinese during this period because they hold on to their name, their language and culture, and their costumes. This group did not have a sister or an aunt to save them at that crucial time. Since then, they have always called themselves "Mong Leng" because they admitted to the Chinese that they were the ones who had fought against the Chinese. Today, Mong Leng still hold on to the name "Mong." They do not practice the funeral rituals like the Hmong Der who have regarded their sisters or aunts highly during funeral ceremonies.

Even though Hmong Der had escaped persecution that time, the Chinese never ceased to persecute the Mong as a people. Despite their different languages and different costumes, both groups remained committed to fight their enemy and helped each other until this day. The Mong had fought many wars with the Chinese. One time, three Mong combined their forces to fight against the Chinese. So the term "Three Mong" stuck, which later became known as "Peb Moob" or "We Mong" as "peb" also means we or us.

Thaibteb, Nplogteb, Nyaab-laajteb, hab cov tebchaws saab nubpoob los kuj muaj Moob Dlawb hab Moob Leeg tuabsi. Ib paab yuav coob tsi tshaaj ib paab npaum twg, tabsis taagnrho Moob nyob rua huv nplajteb nuav mas, cov Moob kws has hom lug Moob Leeg yog cov coob dlua.

Zaaj lug nuav tsi yog sau lug qhuas losyog thuum ib leeg ib tug twg, tabsis yog sau lug qha keebkwm ntawm peb ob lub npe "Moob" hab "Hmoob" xwb. Zaaj lug nuav tsi yog nyob nyob xaav tau es laam tau laam sau, tabsis yog sau lawvle tej lug cojqha kws tej laug yeej ibtxwm has txheej dlhau txheej tam dlhau tam ua ntu quaszug lug txug najnub nwgnuav.

Tej zaaj lug zoo le nuav, yog has tas tsi muab sau ca tes tsi ntev yuav pluj moog. Vim le nuav, kuv txhajle muab zaaj lug nuav sau ca rua suavdlawg tau nyeem. Yog kwvtij Moob leejtwg muaj tej zaaj lug kws zoo los yijmeem sau tuaj rua peb suavdlawg tau nyeem es sub peb txhaj kawm tau peb le teejtug.

There are Mong living in China, Myanmar (Burma), Thailand, Laos, Vietnam, and other western countries. We have both Mong Leng and Hmong Der. One group may not have more population than the other, but when comparing all the Mong population combined in the world, the Mong who speak Mong Leng are the majority.

This story is not written to compliment or offend anyone, but it is written to dispel the truth behind the two names "Mong" and "Hmong." This story is not coming out of the blue, but it is written to record the story that has been retold time after time by our ancestors who have passed on this story to us from grandparents to grandchildren and from generation to generation until today.

A story such as this one, if not preserved and written down, it may disappear. Given this reason, I've decided to write this story down and share it with you. If there is anyone who knows any story about the Mong people, I encourage you to write and share it with us so that we can all learn from our past history.